

CLIMATE TRENDS AND ECOSYSTEM RESPONSES IN MONTANA

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Although global warming trends are widely acknowledged around the world, substantial climate change is already occurring in Montana. The most obvious trend in Montana of the last 50 yrs is late winter warming and earlier spring snowmelt. This climate trend is generating longer growing seasons AND longer wildfire seasons. Impacts on Montana terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems are only now beginning to be noticed. This talk will summarize global, regional and Montana climate trends and some critical ecosystem responses now being detected, and speculate on where the biosphere will go from here.