



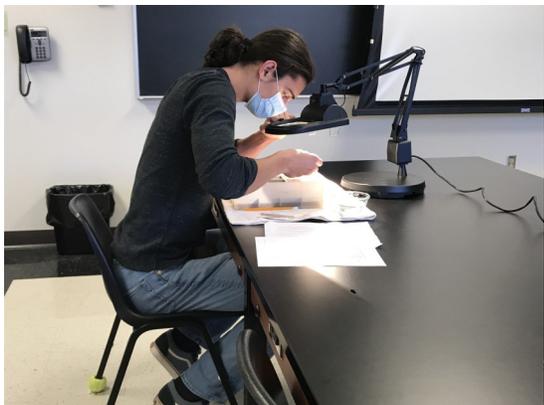
Blue Thumb—In Pictures

December 2021



End of Bug Season

December means a slow month overall, but staff has been busy all the same with lots of bug picking! The official term being subsampling, the bug picking will seek volunteers to sort through the creek sample we obtained in the summer to find 100 bugs. These bugs will be sent off to a taxonomist after all is said and done to be identified down to species to determine water quality. While some bugs are pollution tolerant and others are intolerant, the most important aspect of the bug sample is how diverse it is. Our taxonomist will be able to tell us those species and give us an overall letter grade on how the creek is doing.



Groundwater Screening!

Central North Canadian County and Blaine County hosted a groundwater/well water screening in Geary for local residents. Out of 17 samples tested for pH, Alkalinity, Chloride, Sulfate, and Nitrate, several tested high for Alkalinity, which could corrode or scale pipes and Sulfates, which effects the water taste and color. Two samples had high Nitrate, which could be harmful to elderly individuals and infants. Each sample's results were given back to the owners, including an explanation of what they meant.



Education, Education, Education

It's that time of year where we start asking volunteers to work on their data interpretations for their creeks! After a fish collection on their creek, Kim Shaw, our Quality Assurance Officer, will gather all the fish, bug, habitat, and chemistry data together and talk with the volunteer about what it all means when tied together. This allows the volunteer to see why the monitoring they do is important, as well as provide a better look at the creek from the bottom up. You can check out past data interpretations written by volunteers on our Blue Thumb website!

