



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sunburst Sensors LLC makes generous donation to Climate Smart Missoula

MISSOULA, MT (October 9, 2015) – Sunburst Sensors LLC announced they are donating \$10,000 from their recent Wendy Schmidt Ocean Health XPRIZE to the newly launched community initiative, Climate Smart Missoula. Sunburst Sensors is a Missoula-based manufacturing company which makes devices to measure changes in ocean chemistry and is co-owned by James Beck and Michael DeGrandpre.

“Climate Smart Missoula is a grass roots group working locally to reduce our climate impacts and we are excited to help support their efforts”, say Beck and DeGrandpre. “We’re not getting sufficient action from the top-down on this issue, so it’s up to cities and states to act on their own. Though we are a manufacturing company with customers around the world, we try to use local suppliers and want to support our community. Winning the recent XPRIZE awards gives us an opportunity to do something extra.”

“We are thrilled and honored to be the recipient of such a generous donation,” said Amy Cilimburg, Director of Climate Smart Missoula. “This donation is crucial seed money as we work to fulfill our mission: to be the hub that fosters partnerships and actions to address climate change in our community. We hope this encourages others in our community to consider being part of climate solutions by sharing their time, innovative ideas, or financial contributions with us. It’s an exciting time to catalyze change right here in Missoula, Montana.”

Why Climate Smart Missoula?

At the same time Sunburst Sensors was accepting the Ocean Health XPRIZE, Climate Smart’s Leadership Team was putting the finishing touches on Missoula’s *Community Climate Smart Action Plan V1.0* (available at climatesmartmissoula.org) which showcases goals, priorities and strategies across 12 focal areas. With the endorsement of this action plan from Mayor John Engen, Climate Smart is moving forward with implementation. Working with the City of Missoula, they have just initiated a first-ever community greenhouse gas inventory. This baseline carbon footprint is important to understanding when and where progress is made.

Climate Smart Missoula is also a partner in “Solarize Missoula”, a community campaign to dramatically increase the number of residential solar electric systems installed in Missoula by reducing complexity and cost.

Climate Smart Missoula is focused on building a healthy and resilient community, one that can adapt to and bounce back from stressors like increased wildfire smoke and warmer temperatures. They plan to initiate a “Summer Smart – Climate Smart” program in the coming year, and Sunburst’s donation will undoubtedly help jumpstart not only this effort, but many more.

As an initiative of the Missoula Community Foundation, Climate Smart Missoula works closely with the City of Missoula, Saint Patrick Hospital, the University of Montana, and many other non-profit organizations and businesses.

Meredith Printz, Executive Director of the Missoula Community Foundation, is excited to see this type of giving for this new, crucial initiative. “Our foundation’s mission is to ensure the diversity and vitality of the greater Missoula community. A smart, measured approach to community resiliency is key, and there is much work ahead. This generous and forward-thinking gift demonstrates how lucky we are to have community members giving back so we can ensure a vibrant community for future generations of Missoulians.”

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Sunburst Sensors, LLC was established in 1999 and is a global leader in the development of autonomous chemical sensors for marine and freshwater research. Their sensors have been deployed in rivers, lakes and oceans to study carbon cycling and ocean acidification.

Learn more about Sunburst Sensors LLC and their XPRIZE award at www.sunburstsensors.com

Learn more about Climate Smart Missoula here: climatesmartmissoula.org.

Learn more about Solarize Missoula here: solarizemissoula.org.

Climate Smart Missoula is also featured at this upcoming City Club event: *Climate Change and how Missoula is Shrinking its Carbon Footprint*. Amy Cilimburg, Climate Smart Missoula’s Director, joins Chase Jones, Energy Conservation Coordinator for the City of Missoula, and Eva Rocke, Sustainability Coordinator at The University of Montana, for a panel presentation and discussion. October 12th, 11:30 – 1:00 pm, Double Tree Edgewater. Learn more and register: CityClubMissoula.