



2014

ANNUAL REPORT

*blue water*

TASK FORCE



# BLUE WATER TASK FORCE BY THE NUMBERS

# 787

river miles in the Upper Gallatin are monitored by the BWTF

# THIRTY-ONE

fourth grade students who participated in the Trout in the Classroom program



# 3,049

average estimated rainbow trout per mile at a river reach monitored by the BWTF

# 260

willow cuttings were collected by BWTF volunteers for stream restoration

# FOURTEEN

sites in the Upper Gallatin routinely monitored by the BWTF

# 14

years the BWTF has been collecting routine data in the Upper Gallatin Watershed

# FOUR

years in a row the BWTF has been chosen to host a Big Sky Watershed Corps Member



# THREE

truckloads of trash were picked up by BWTF volunteers at the 2014 River cleanup

# 56

river miles in the Upper Gallatin drainage are being proposed for Wild and Scenic designation

# 2 DAYS

average lifespan of adult mayflies



# 3

streams in the West Fork Watershed do not meet Montana state water quality standards

# BLUE WATER TASK FORCE PROGRAMS

## COMMUNITY WATER QUALITY MONITORING:

Our monitoring program routinely measures water quality to assess and track the health of the Upper Gallatin River and its tributaries. We have been collecting routine water data since 2000. All of our water data is available to the public on the BWTF website. Currently, we monitor six sites on the mainstem Gallatin, three sites on the West Fork, two sites on the South Fork, two sites on the Middle Fork, and one site on the North Fork. In 2014, the BWTF:

- Conducted three water quality and one aquatic insect monitoring events at fourteen sites in the Upper Gallatin Watershed
- Conducted pebble counts to assess for fine sediment levels at the fourteen sites
- Maintained four continuous streamflow stations in the West Fork Watershed
- Was chosen as a host site for the Big Sky Watershed Corps program for the fourth year in a row





## COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND OUTREACH:

This program provides important water resource information to the residents and visitors of the Big Sky community. Over the past year, the BWTF:

- Completed a year-long service learning project with the Ophir Elementary School 4th Grade Class on native fish and water quality. This project included the Trout in the Classroom module in which trout were raised in the classroom from fry to fingerlings
- Installed Phase 2 of the Stormwater Conservation Garden along the entrance road of Ophir and Lone Peak High Schools that included an interpretive sign
- Conducted a workshop on Trout Friendly Landscaping for local landscapers
- Partnered with Montanans for Healthy Rivers to begin work on Wild and Scenic River designation for the Upper Gallatin
- Organized and executed the Big Sky Fly Fishing Festival in July



## **WATERSHED ASSESSMENT:**

Our watershed assessment program involves intensive measurement and assessment of pollutants that have been identified as interfering with proper watershed function. Accomplishments this year include:

- Collecting nutrient and algae data to refine our understanding of nitrogen sources to the South Fork of the West Fork of the Gallatin River
- Serving as the local liaison for the Big Sky Groundwater Project as part of the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology's Groundwater Investigation Program
- Beginning partnership with Montana State University on a graduate research project to examine stream metabolism. Stream metabolism is a measurement of how streams "breathe" or how much oxygen is produced through photosynthesis and consumed through respiration.



## WATERSHED RESTORATION:

This program aims to improve water quality and natural hydrologic function of streams in the Upper Gallatin Watershed. Over 2014, the BWTF:

- Conducted a cleanup on the Upper Gallatin River in September
- Hosted two river tours with the Gallatin National Forest to enhance river access sites along the Upper Gallatin River

- Began design work to improve the Moose Creek Flat Recreational site
- Received notification of a 319 grant from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality in November to enhance streamside vegetation along the Upper West Fork. Project work will begin in 2015.
- Hosted a willow planting training workshop



## BLUE WATER TASK FORCE

# FLY FISHING FESTIVAL



The Big Sky Fly Fishing Festival connects the community to the rivers, fish, and riparian habitats that are vital to the sport of fly fishing. The proceeds raised from the Big Sky Fly Fishing Festival support conservation and restoration efforts by the Blue Water Task Force within the Upper Gallatin River Watershed.

### FLY FISHING FESTIVAL COMMITTEE:

Katie Alvin, Jack Crowther, Jimmy Armijo-Grover, Kristin Gardner, Jon Holtzman, Brandin Krempasky, John McKinnie, Andrea Saari, Pat Straub, and Ennion Williams



### CUTTHROAT TROUT SPONSORS:

Big Sky Trout, Continental Construction, East Slope Outdoors, Gallatin River Guides, Gallatin Riverhouse Grill, Grizzly Outfitters, Lone Mountain Ranch, and SIMMS

### RAINBOW TROUT SPONSORS:

Big Sky Resort, Big Sky Vacation Rentals, Big Sky Western Bank, Cache Creek Outfitters, Lone Peak Brewery, Montana Living, Natalie's Estate Winery, Redbrain Media, Willie's Distillery, and the Yellowstone Club Community Foundation





#### **BROWN TROUT SPONSORS:**

Haas Builders, Montana Fly Company, Mountain Khakis, and the Spanish Peaks Community Foundation

#### **BROOK TROUT SPONSORS:**

Blue Ribbon Nets and Howler Brothers

#### **IN KIND DONATIONS:**

320 Ranch, Rich Addicks, Atwell Associates, Bent Lens, Big Sky Fitness Fusion, Blue Ribbon Flies, Pat Branting, Bridger Brewing, Burger Bobs, Carol McClerkin, Choppers, Dee-O-Gee, Derek DeYoung, Dr. Slick, Free Heel and Wheel, Girls Outdoors, Hart-Montgomery, Horse of a Different Color,

Innovative Woodworks, Jackie Rainford Corcoran, John Sniscak, Meriwether Metalworks, Montana Fish Company, Mountain Khakis, Oboz, Katie Powell, RC Cone, Santosha Wellness Center, Sitka, Sportsman's Warehouse, Wildwood Nursery, Tom Spruance, Veterinary Clinic of Big Sky, and Yeti Coolers

#### **VOLUNTEERS:**

Rich Addicks, Ben Almy, Katherine Boyk, Cami Armijo-Grover, Jeremy Harder, Maggie Kuhlman, Matthew Piper, Sandy Potter, Bruce Richards, Marc Sanson and Bob Tusken

## **GRANTS:**

Big Sky Resort Area Tax District, Montana Department of Environmental Quality 319 and Volunteer Monitoring Programs, Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Montana, Inc., and the Yellowstone Community Club Foundation

## **BWTF BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

Ron Bowlin (Chair Oct-Dec), Jon Holtzman (Chair Jan-Oct), Jack Crowther (Vice-Chair), San Schwalbe (Secretary/Treasurer), Eric Becker, Ron Edwards, Mike Richter, Nancy Sheil, and Tom Spruance

## **BWTF STAFF:**

Kristin Gardner, Executive Director  
Andrea Saari, Development Director  
Brandin Krempasky, Big Sky Watershed Corps Member (through November 2014)

## **FRIENDS OF THE GALLATIN:**

### **Individual Members**

*Lifetime:* Jon and Sharon Holtzman

*Salmonfly:* Mike and Sue Arneson, Ron Bowlin, Bill Morton

*Spruce Moth:* Andrew Roberts, Ennion Williams

*Grasshopper:* Mike and Sandy Brown, Rick and Michelle Donaldson

*Caddisfly:* Rich Addicks, Walter Ainsworth, Sue Barton, Suzanne and David Baetz, Bill Baskin, Jack and Debbie Crowther, Quint and Cicely Drennan, Mark Foley, Jon and Sharon Holtzman, Brandy Miller, Mike Scholz, Kent Volosin

*Mayfly:* Connie Barton, Bill and Phyllis Breeden, Debbie Bowlin, Joe Calto, Jon and Janet Ethen, Harder-Gardner Family, Scott and Alex Hoeksma, Brian Hurlbut, Stephanie Lynn, Chris and Twila Moon, Carolyn and Terry O'Neil, Andrea Saari, Tori and Tony Santos, John Schultz, Dan and Nancy Sheil, Marnie Smith, John Sniscack

## **BUSINESSES MEMBERS:**

*Gold:* Highline Partners

*Silver:* Bucks T4, Big Sky Conoco

*Bronze:* Big Sky Town Center, The Corral, The Hungry Moose, Olive B's

## **VOLUNTEERS:**

Mike Arneson, Katherine Boyk, Alli Bratton, Rob Goveia, Jeremy Harder, Sunni Heikes-Knapton, Nicole Henhoeffter, Chris Hanifen, Jon Holtzman, Ethan Kunard, Tariq Mansour, Taylor and Katie Middleton, Kevin Piccardo, Matt Piper, Sandy Potter, Mike and Jodi Richter, Alex Rothermal, Barbara Rowley, Rachid Schultz, San Schwalbe, Nancy, Cullen, and Mayla Sheil, Natalie Teegarden, Jessie Wiese, Amy Wiezalis, and Sam Woodger

## **GALLATIN BENEFACTOR**

Spruance II Foundation

## **GALLATIN GUARDIAN**

Big Sky PBR

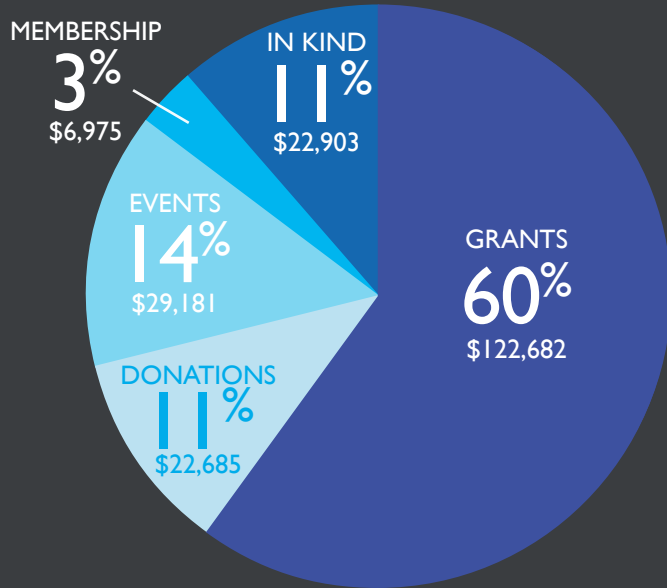
## **GALLATIN STEWARDS**

Gallatin Canyon Women's Club, Grizzly Outfitters, L&K Real Estate, Prometheus Trust

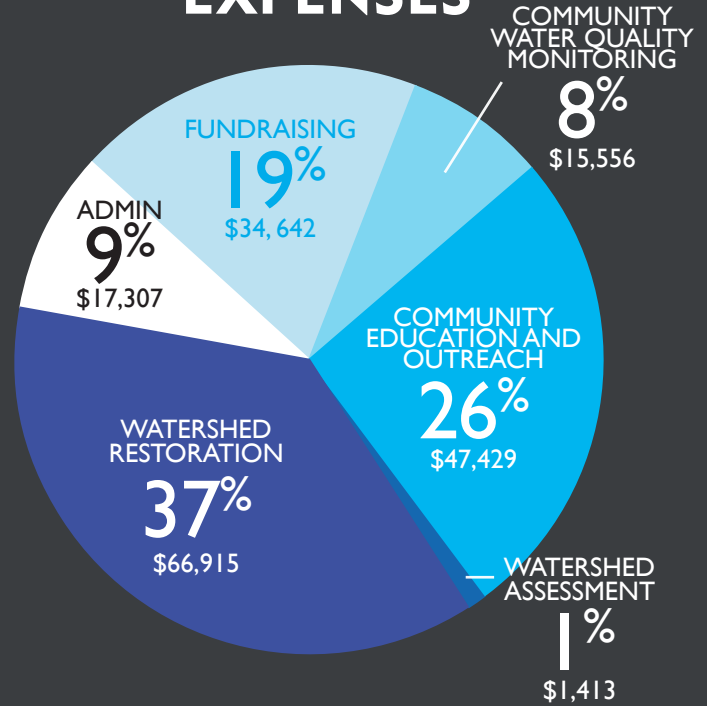
## **IN KIND DONATIONS**

Bill Farhat, Glacier Nursery, Grizzly Outfitters, Knaub & Co., Michel Tallichet, Patagonia, Outlaw Partners, Stein Servick, Stonefly Studio, and Wildwood Nursery

# INCOME



# EXPENSES





TASK FORCE

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[BLUEWATERTASKFORCE.ORG](http://BLUEWATERTASKFORCE.ORG)

[FACEBOOK.COM/BLUEWATERTASKFORCE](https://FACEBOOK.COM/BLUEWATERTASKFORCE)

