

Flood Related River Restoration & Coalition Planning Final Report

**Implemented by Wildlands Restoration Volunteers
November, 2013 - June, 2014**

Background:

In September of 2013 Weld, Larimer, and Boulder Counties experienced the largest and most broad flood in Colorado history, resulting in significant impacts to infrastructure, loss of life, immense property damage, and immense impacts to riverine systems. In response to this disaster, Wildlands Restoration Volunteers (WRV) was approached by several community partners to convene and help build coalitions whose aim is to facilitate the restoration and recovery of flood-afflicted areas. Pursuant to initial meetings, the Big Thompson River Restoration Coalition (BTRRC) formed a Technical Advisory Committee to develop best management practices and rapid assessment protocols, in addition to other technical needs. A steering committee was developed to provide outreach, fundraising, public relations, and organizational structure, and to facilitate coalition actions. In order to appropriately facilitate coalitions, and to achieve a broad enough outreach and planning effort in a short time frame, CWCB provided \$20,000 in funding. WRV is deeply grateful for this support, which kicked off crucial post- flood efforts and set the stage for Master Planning, none of which would have been possible without funding.

Over 60 stakeholders have joined the Big Thompson River Restoration Coalition. By working closely together, and coordinating with other coalitions, we are building synergy, promoting Best Management Practices, raising funds, and building volunteer and partnership capacity.

WRV also took the lead convening a wide array of stakeholders in Boulder County and began a strategic plan. Shortly thereafter, Boulder County began the coalition-building and strategic planning process again, with an overlapping but slightly different array of stakeholders. WRV accepted Boulder County's leadership, submitted the results of prior strategic planning meetings, and became a participant in their process. Our flood-restoration activities on the ground in Boulder County have continued as planned.

Timeline:

Program Management & Coalition Planning -----	Oct 2013 – June 2014
Rapid Assessments -----	Nov 2013 – Mar 2014
Volunteer Leader Training -----	Nov 2013 – May 2014
Volunteer Recruitment, Mgt. & Coord. -----	Nov 2013 – May 2014
Marketing Materials Acquisition -----	Nov 2013 – May 2014
Outreach & Marketing -----	Nov 2013 – May 2014
Volunteer Restoration Projects -----	Mar 2013 – June 2014
Project debriefs/evaluation -----	June, 2014

Marketing Summary:

A mass mailing was sent out to all landowners along the Big Thompson River in Larimer County as identified using the Larimer County parcels GIS dataset. This mailing introduced the Big Thompson River Restoration Coalition (BTRRC), and asked landowners to become stakeholders by completing a participation form. Between November and March, Wildlands Restoration Volunteers attended several post-flood community meetings to invite landowners and other stakeholders to become members of the stakeholder database so that they could be on the BTRRC mailing list for periodic updates on the Coalition's activities. These events include January 29, 2014 at the Chilson Center in Loveland, February 5th at the Colorado Spirit Ag Forum in Kersey, February 8th at the Poudre River Forum in Loveland, and March 8th Flood Recovery meeting in Estes Park.

WRV held two well-attended events for the purposes of continued leadership and general volunteer recruitment in February of 2014. Facebook posts on WRV's ~1,500 member fan page, and emails to WRV's 6,000-member listserv on dates approaching projects helped recruit volunteers. Project teams were assembled including volunteer leaders with extensive expertise, and met prior to project dates for planning.

Rapid Assessment Summary:

On November 6, 2013, a team of ecological professionals spent several hours in the field reviewing methods from the Colorado Stream Visual Assessment Protocol (SVAP) under the guidance of Steve Yochum (NRCS). Certain metrics of the SVAP (i.e. water condition) were omitted because it was determined that they were not useful measurements in post-flood conditions. The SVAP was chosen as the best means to identify sections of the river that have the highest need for restoration efforts.

Attendees included John Giordanengo (WRV), Steve Yochum (NRCS), Katie Jagt (Walsh Environmental), Chris Carlson (City of Loveland), Patrick Hickey (CDOT), Zach Shelley (Big Thompson Watershed), Jeff Crane (Crane Associates), Geoff Elliot (Grand Environmental Services), and Amy Gage (Oikographica LLC).

Using the National Hydrography Dataset as a basis, GIS was used to identify river reaches for assessment. Over the following two months, teams of volunteers used the modified SVAP methods to assess the Big Thompson River from the Olympus Dam in Estes Park downstream to the intersection of I-25. Pictures were taken along every reach, and at-risk structures were identified and ranked as the teams completed the assessments.

A final map of the results of the river assessment is attached.

Meeting Summary:

WRV is the lead agency of the BTRRC. Over 36 agencies have participated in monthly inter-agency meetings of the BTRRC starting in December. A list of agencies in attendance is attached.

The Inter-Agency meetings have been crucial in keeping all of the partners working along the Big Thompson up to date on each other's activities. It has provided a forum for collaboration and compilation of resources and information.

The BTRRC Steering Committee has also met on these same dates to determine the direction of the BTRRC, strengthen the purpose of the BTRRC, and manage the Coalition funds.

Training Summary:

WRV held four leadership development trainings for community members to learn about safety and crew leadership for flood restoration and debris removal. These trainings were attended by 72 volunteers, who were then given immediate opportunities to apply their new skills on volunteer river restoration projects.

Project Summary:

WRV held three major Big Thompson River Restoration projects involving heavy equipment and 176 volunteers attending, who seeded 177,000 square feet of corridor with native riparian seed, planted over 1,000 willow cuttings, mitigated flood debris along a total of 3 miles of channel, staged 325 root wad trees for future habitat restoration, installed 735 feet of toe rock revetment to protect structures, installed 8,000 square feet of erosion matting along riverbank, built 700 feet of pool/riffle sequence while installing toe revetments, reconnected 600 feet of blocked side channel and re-graded slope to reconnect floodplain along 1000 linear feet of river channel. In addition, WRV held six stream-related restoration events in Boulder County with 417 volunteers in attendance. Statistical results of these events are still being compiled. More flood-related volunteer seed collections were held, as well as other pond-shoreline and trail-based volunteer flood restoration events. Several more are planned in both watersheds for 2014.

Fundraising Summary:

With the help of community partners, multiple fundraisers have been held to support the Big Thompson River Restoration Coalition (BTRRC) efforts, including a raffle held by Elkhorn Outdoors LLC, fundraising by St. Peter's Fly Shop, a movie screening held by Trout Unlimited at New Belgium Brewing, and a donation table set up at the Glen Haven Memorial Day Art and Craft Show. WRV staff has reached out to many of our biggest funders to request financial assistance, successfully pulling together match funders for Master Planning. In addition, the BTRRC has received mailed-in donations in response to requests for donations made on the electronic newsletters that are periodically mailed out to stakeholders.

Conclusion:

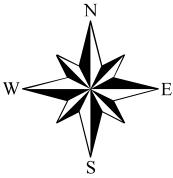
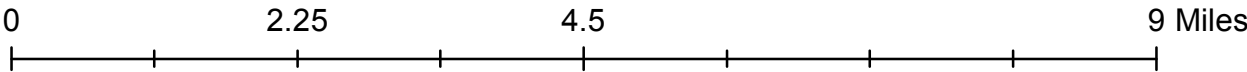
CWCB's \$20,000 made possible coalition-building, outreach, fundraising, rapid assessments, and on-the-ground successes in restoration after the 2013 flood. WRV is extremely grateful, and we hope you are pleased with the results of this investment.



SVAP scores

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| — 1.8 - 3.0 | — 5.4 - 6.5 |
| — 3.0 - 4.2 | — 6.5 - 7.7 |
| — 4.2 - 5.4 | |

**Big Thompson Rapid Assessment
Stream Visual Assessment Protocol Scores**



List of Agencies Represented at Inter-Agency Meetings

Ayres Associates
Big Thompson Conservation District
Big Thompson River Commissioner
Big Thompson Watershed Forum
Bureau of Reclamation
CDOT
Central Federal Lands
City of Fort Collins
City of Greeley
City of Loveland
Colorado Parks & Wildlife
Colorado State Forest Nursery
Crane Associates
CWCB
Elkhorn Fly Rod and Reel, LLC
Estes Valley Land Trust
Friends of The Big Thompson/Colorado Wildlife Federation
Handy's Ditch (mouth of Canyon)
Larimer County (multiple departments)
Logan Simpson Design
Loveland Emergency Management
National Park Service
North Front Range Water Quality Planning Association (NFRWQPA)
Northern Water
NRCS
Serve 6.8
Sylvan Dale Ranch
Town of Estes Park
Town of Milliken
Trout Unlimited, Rocky Mtn Flycasters
U.S. Senator Mark Udall's Office
US Senator Michael Bennet's Office
USFS
Walsh Environmental
Weld County
Wildlands Restoration Volunteers





How do we include entities that aren't here today? BOATING OTHERS
Water rights holders and landowners - large extended regional issue

Challenge the assumption of scope - include more than Boulder county
(Stream Team is looking at things on higher plane - sub-watershed level - FTR)

What is the scope of the condition?
Pace of work - bring assets for individual entities. Working on different time schedules

Write when
Scope
Collabor
Watersh



1993

POB acquires first National State Day Event.

Wendy Laska property purchased jointly with Lafayette and Luskville.

First contract for on-Open Space sales (0.25%) issued.

1994

Hot Birch & Hot Valley Ranch purchases begin and help form Nature Conservancy & Trust for Public Land.

1996

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1998

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