Big Thompson Watershed Coalition
Presentation to the Water Literate Leaders
2/19/20

BIG THOMPSON
WATERSHED COALITION

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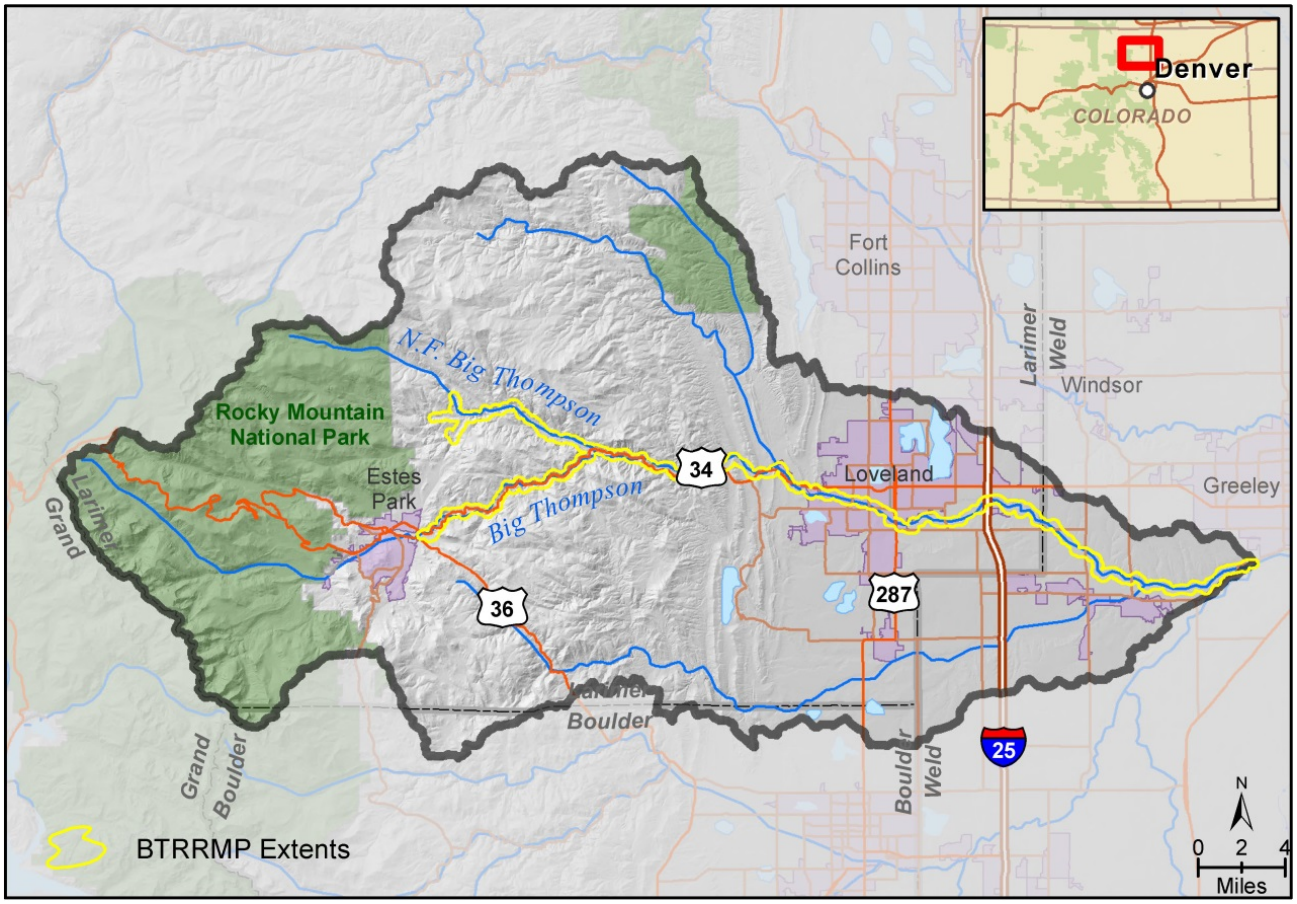
The Big Thompson River + watershed



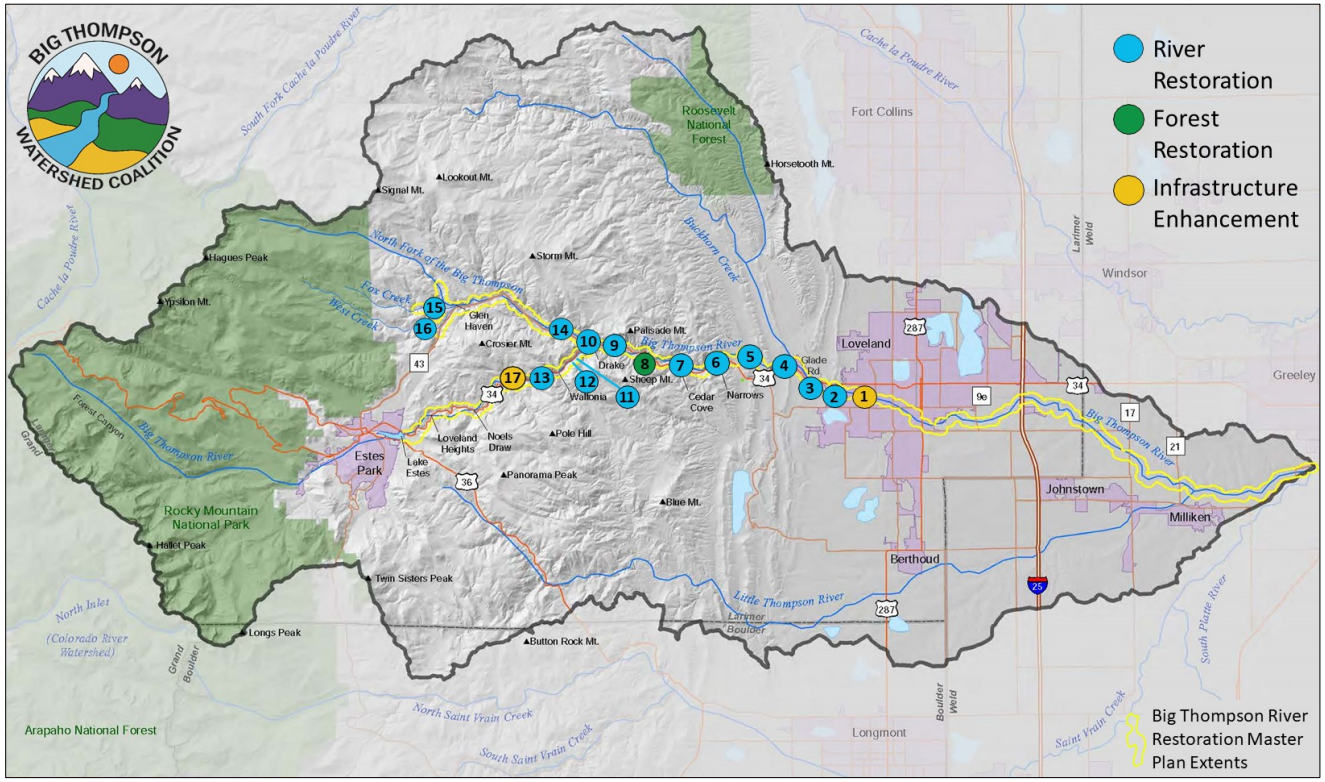
- 832 square miles of land
- 4 million+ annual visitors
- Serves up to 800,000 people across 32 cities
- 60,000 in unincorporated Larimer County

The Big Thompson Watershed Coalition

Our mission:

To protect and restore the ecological health of the Big Thompson Watershed for the use and enjoyment of our community today and for future generations.

Accomplishments 2016-2019



- 16 restoration projects completed, 2 under construction
- Over $10 million raised (since 2015)
- 3 high-view river corridor plans constructed

Our Programs

River Restoration

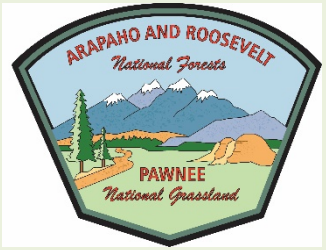
Community Involvement

Forest Management

Planning for Resilience

River Partners

150+
private
landowners



Colorado Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program
Sponsored by the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB)
Administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

COLORADO
Department of Local Affairs

COLORADO
Department of
Transportation

COLORADO
Colorado Water
Conservation Board
Department of Natural Resources

Program Goals – River Program

-Reduce loss of life and property -> improve resilience

-Connect the river to its floodplain

-Stabilize erosion

-Enhance aquatic and riparian habitat

-Provide recreation and aesthetics

River & Ditch Improvements – Rossum/Wilson

Program Goals – Forest Program

-Reduce fire severity

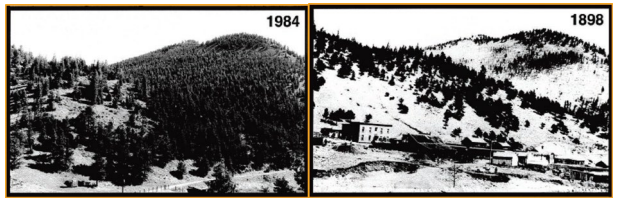
-Protect water supply

-Restore healthy forest conditions

-Enhance community resilience to wildfire

Program Goals – Forest Program

Workshop 1: Forestry and Wildfire Ecology

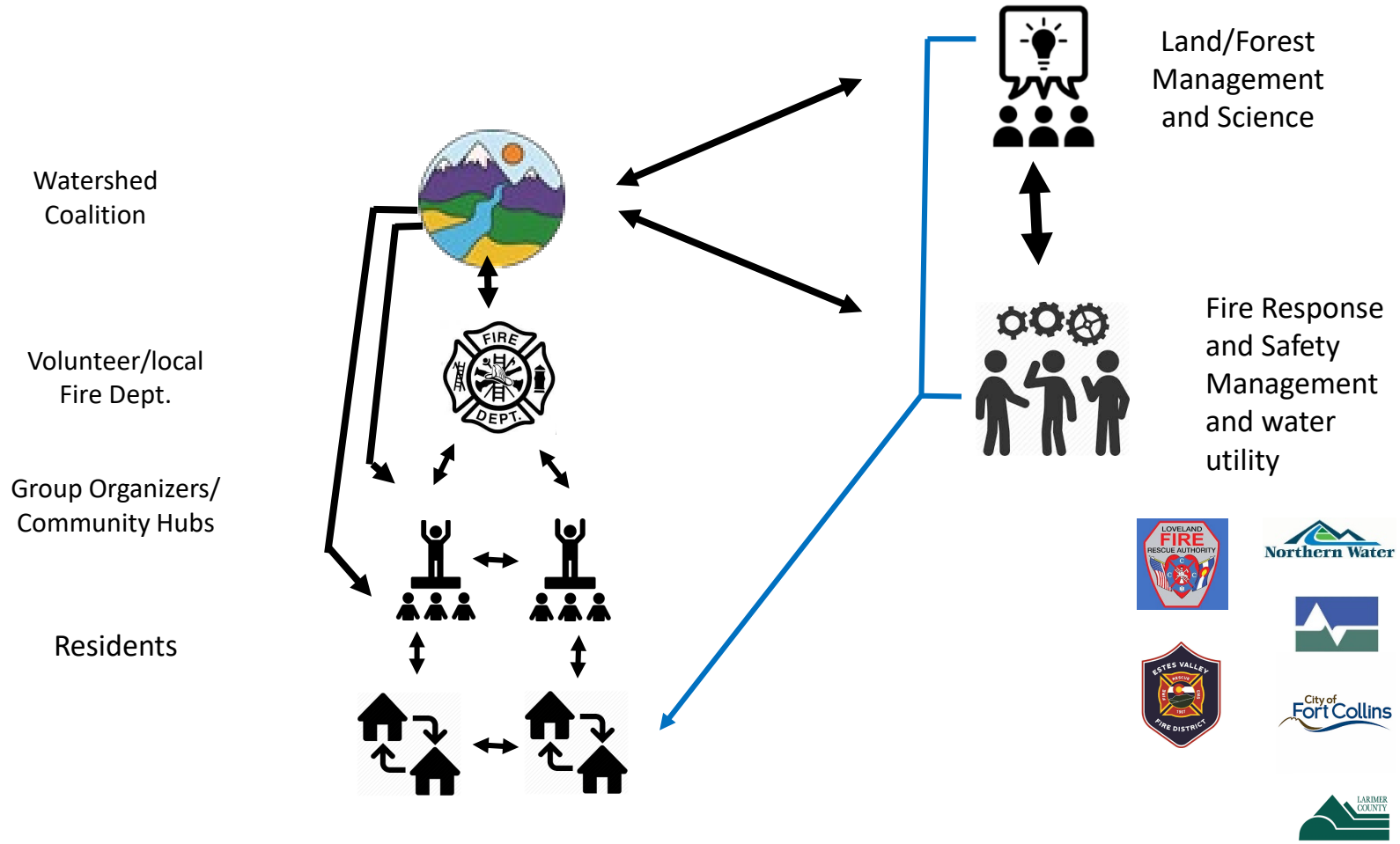


Workshop 2: Interactive Tour

Workshop 3: Wildfire preparedness

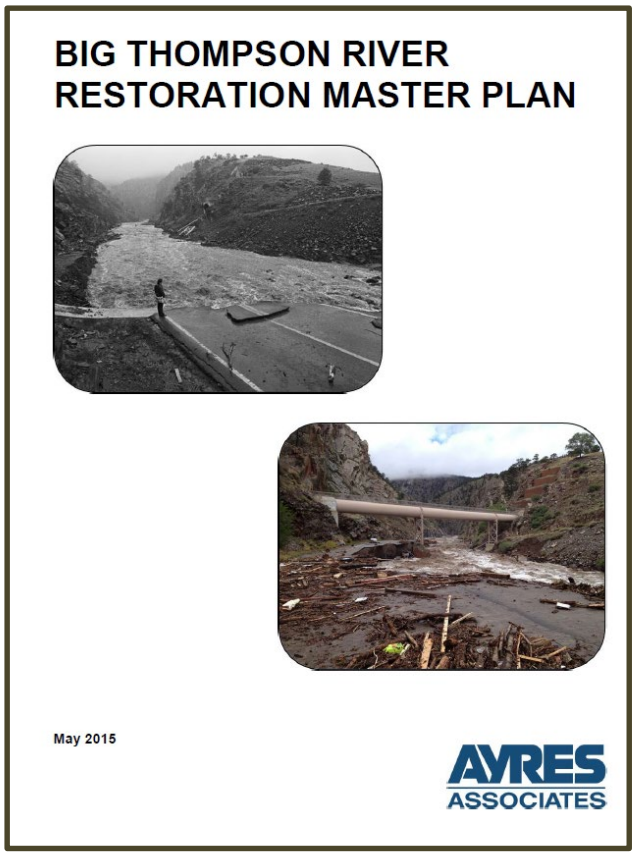
In 2020, BTWC will continue to bring these conversations and develop new relations to improve forest management in targeted communities

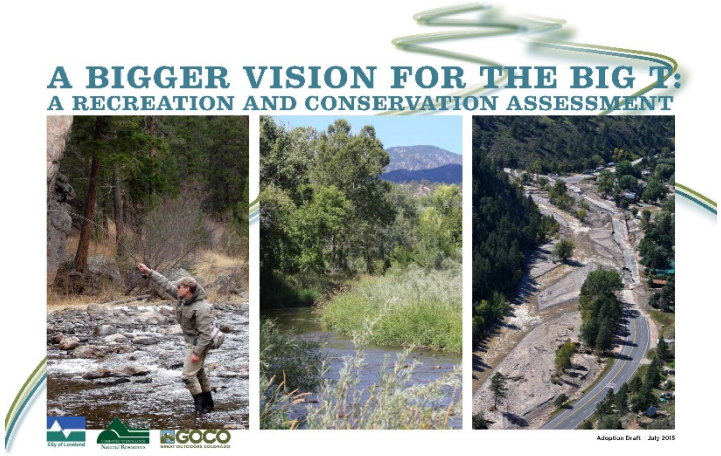
Forestry Partner Development

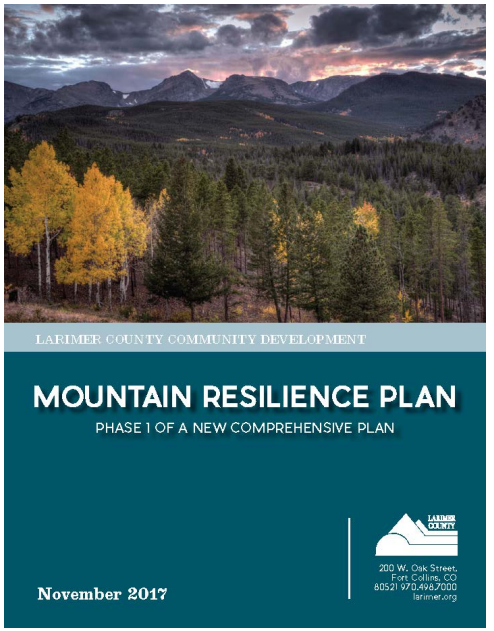


Big Thompson River Envisioning Project

Building on Existing Plans







BTWC SMP Advisory Group

Representative stakeholder categories and confirmed Advisory Committee participants:

Aquatic and Riparian Health

- Ben Swigle, CPW
- Andy Fayram, BTWForum

Ditch Companies/Agriculture

- Bill Wheeler, Southside
- Gary Gerrard, Home Supply

Recreation & Tourism

- Frank Bub, RMF
- Loveland Tourism Office

Riparian Landowners

- Carmen Farmer, COOL

Local Government & Land Use Planning

- Tina Kurtz, Larimer Co.
- Brian Hayes, CoL
- Nina Cudahey, CoG
- Jennifer Hewett-Apperson, CoL

Water Management & Utilities

- Jean Lever, CDWR
- Chris Carlson, CoL
- Larry Howard, CoL
- Katie Melander, NW

Local Business and Community

- Chamber of Commerce

BTWC Board affiliates include David Jessup, Gordon Gilstrap, Larry Rogstad, Rich Alper

Stakeholder survey summary

Informed Public as stewards of the river

Public access & recreation that supports economy

Responsible development

Vision for the River

Water quality, quantity, & water use efficiency that exceeds regulation

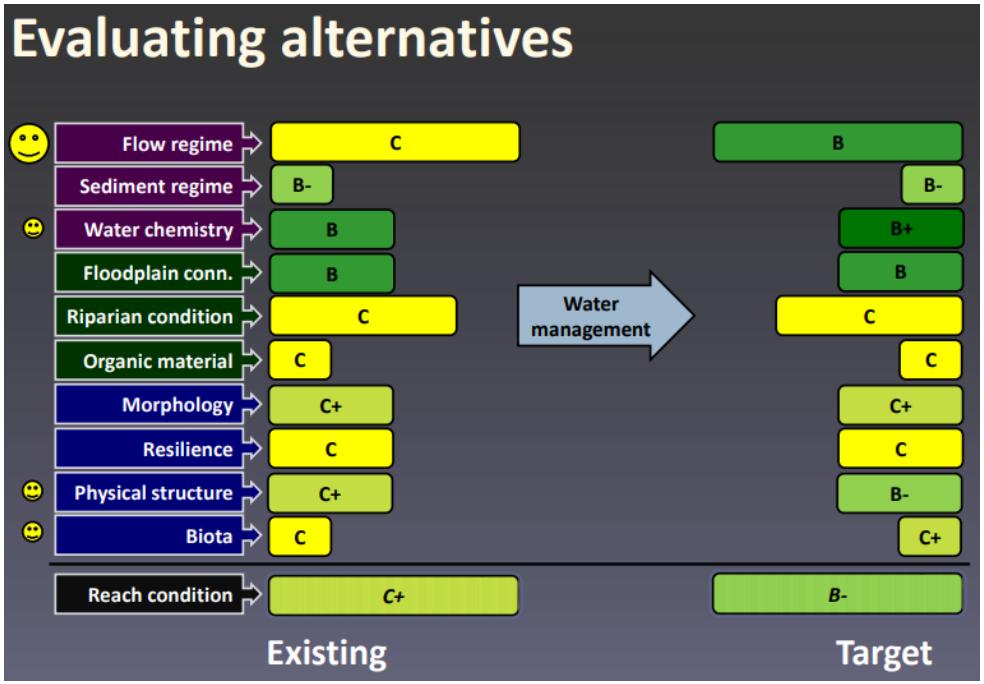
Protected and enhanced aquatic & riparian habitat

Scope of Work

Task	Task
1. Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach	5. Future Conditions: Growth & Development
2. Hydrology Characterization	6. Information Synthesis & Reporting
3. River Health & Benefits Assessments	7. Action Strategies and Implementation Plan
4. Irrigation & Infrastructure Assessment	8. Project Management

Progress to date

River Health Assessment



Engagement Plan

Outreach Method	Timeframe
MEDIA	
Project Webpage	Create in month of July 2018, updated regularly by MCWC Community Outreach Coordinator. Include calendar of upcoming meetings.
Press Releases OR Guest Commentary	Five press releases: 1) July 2018, 2) January 2019, 3) July 2019, 4) January 2020, 5) May 2020
E-Newsletters	Bi-monthly by MCWC Project Manager
Social Media	Periodically by the MCWC Community Outreach Coordinator
Surveys	Create on-line survey to post on website. Develop surveys to assist focus group meetings/discussions on an as-needed basis.
FOCUS GROUPS	
Consumptive Use	Winter 2018 - Kick-off meeting to discuss individual and common interests and needs. Meet as needed with focus on identifying project/processes/actions for feasibility analysis. Coordinate with Mt. Sopris, Bookcliff and Southside Conservation Districts as conduit to agricultural producers and water rights owners. Presentations or workshops to be developed as directed.
Aquatics	Winter 2018 – Request for data and feedback Quarterly meetings from 4th Quarter 2018 through 1st quarter 2020 to assess results, develop flow targets, identify non-flow mitigation options
Riparian Health	Utilize MCWC Riparian Restoration Advisory Group (RRAG) as initial group – add additional, interested participants. Winter 2018 – Meet to identify concerns, share data and information for study purposes Spring/Summer 2019 – Meet to review assessment results, provide feedback Winter 2019 – Meet to identify and discuss conceptual opportunities for new or modified programs/projects to address impairment issues Spring 2020 – Meet to develop specifics for prioritized projects/programs
Water Quality	Utilize MCWC Technical Advisory Group (TAC) as initial group – add additional, interested participants. Winter 2018 – Meet to identify concerns, share data and information for study purposes Spring/Summer 2019 – Meet to review assessment results, provide feedback Winter 2019 – Meet to identify and discuss conceptual opportunities for new or modified programs/projects to address impairment issues Spring 2020 – Meet to develop specifics for prioritized projects/programs

The Big Thompson Watershed Coalition

Questions?

Working for a healthy and resilient Big Thompson Watershed that benefits the fish, wildlife, and people it serves

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