

**Upper Gallatin River Watershed
Restoration Planning & Project Design**

Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Phase I
Opportunity Number: R23AS00362

Gallatin River Task Force
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Executive Summary

Date: September 3, 2024

Applicant Name: Gallatin River Task Force

City, County, State: Big Sky, Gallatin County, Montana

The Gallatin River Task Force will develop the Upper Gallatin River Watershed Restoration Planning & Project Design in collaboration with a diverse group of stakeholders and partners, including the Water Forum and the Custer-Gallatin National Forest. The project will take place within the Upper Gallatin Watershed. The Upper Gallatin Watershed is the upstream portion of the greater Gallatin River Watershed beginning in Yellowstone National Park and traveling north where it confluences with the Madison and Jefferson Rivers to form the headwaters of the Missouri River. The majority of the watershed comprises federal land managed by the Custer-Gallatin National Forest. Big Sky, an unincorporated community and census-designated place located centrally in the watershed, is a rapidly developing mountain resort community. Concerns for the watershed in this area include the ecological health of the river systems and water supply and availability. The ecological health of the rivers and streams have been impacted by changes in water quality and instream habitat. Growth, climatic variability, drought, and cumulative impacts from land use and recreation also challenge the future ability to preserve high quality river, riparian and wetland systems. Water supply and availability are affected by increasing levels of development and predicted changes to precipitation and runoff patterns.

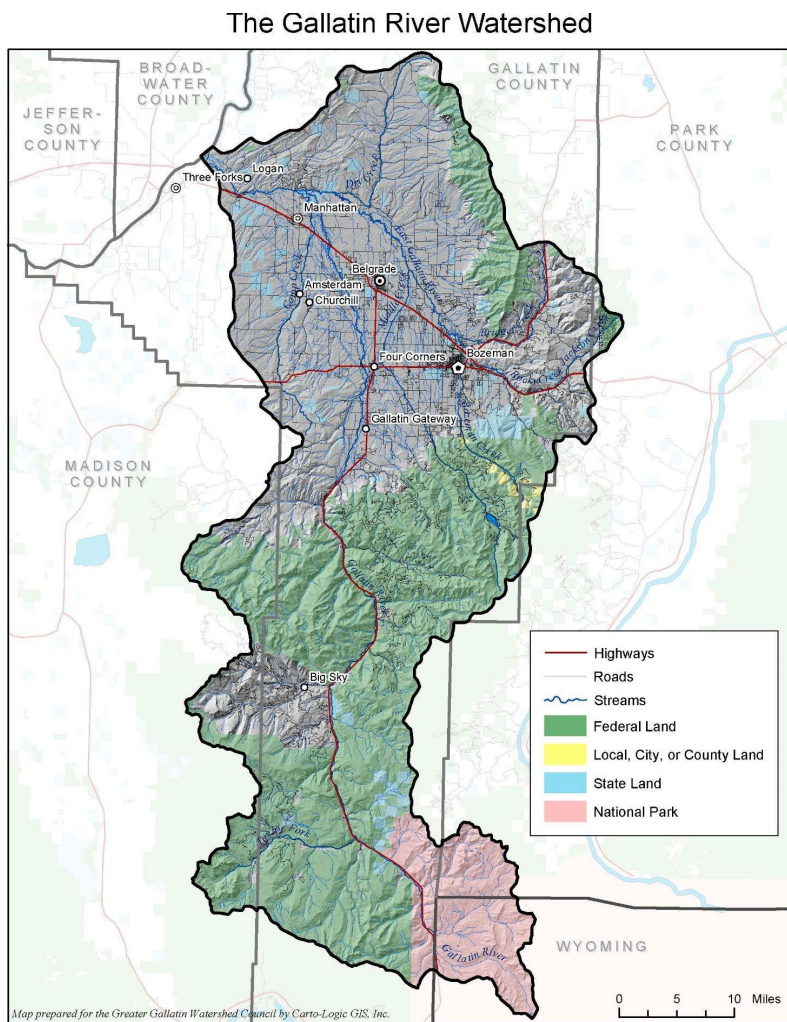
GRTF will carry out watershed restoration planning and project design activities as follows: complete the West Fork Master Restoration Plan, advance 1-2 designs for projects identified in the West Fork Master Restoration Plan, advance 2-3 designs for projects identified in the Gallatin River Restoration Strategy. The restoration planning and project design efforts will involve both private land and federal land managed by the Custer-Gallatin National Forest. Activities carried out by GRTF and its partners are expected to address both ecological health and water supply concerns by developing on-the-ground projects that will reduce sediment inputs, filter pollutants, manage stormwater, slow the flow of water through the system, encourage groundwater infiltration to support late season baseflows, expand wetland and riparian buffers along streams, and support fish passage. The Project is anticipated to take 3 years to complete, commencing in September 2025 and completing in September 2028.

Project Location

The Upper Gallatin Watershed (UGW) is located in Southwest Montana, the upstream-most portion of the Gallatin River Watershed (Hydrologic Unit Code: 10020008). The UGW

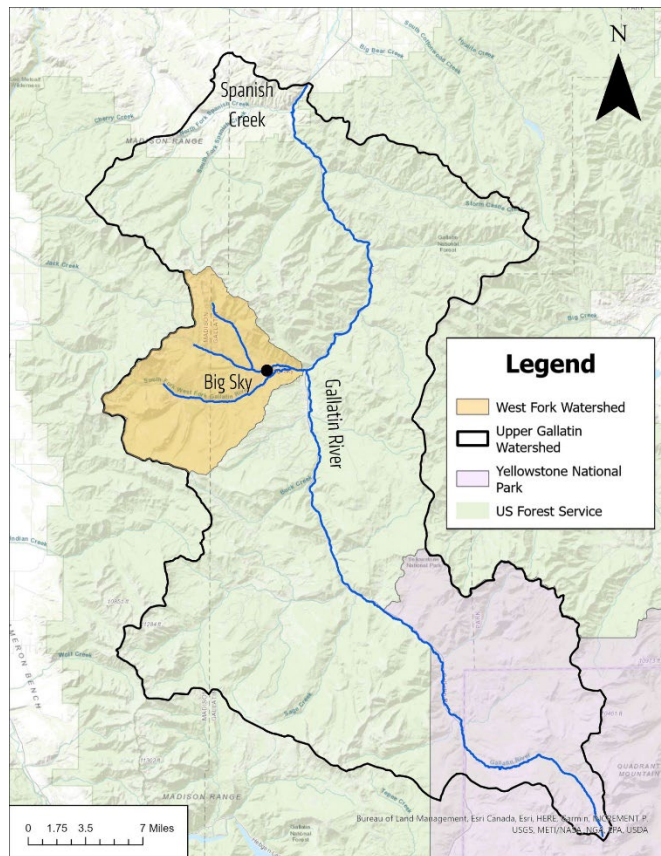
comprises the southern part of Gallatin County and a small part of Madison County, Montana. The majority of the watershed comprises federal land managed by the Custer-Gallatin National Forest. Big Sky, an unincorporated community and census-designated place (CDP) located centrally in the UGW, is a rapidly developing mountain resort community. All proposed Upper Gallatin River Watershed Restoration Planning & Project Design (Project) tasks will occur within the UGW and will be led by the Gallatin River Task Force, the watershed group serving the UGW.

Map 1: Gallatin River Watershed

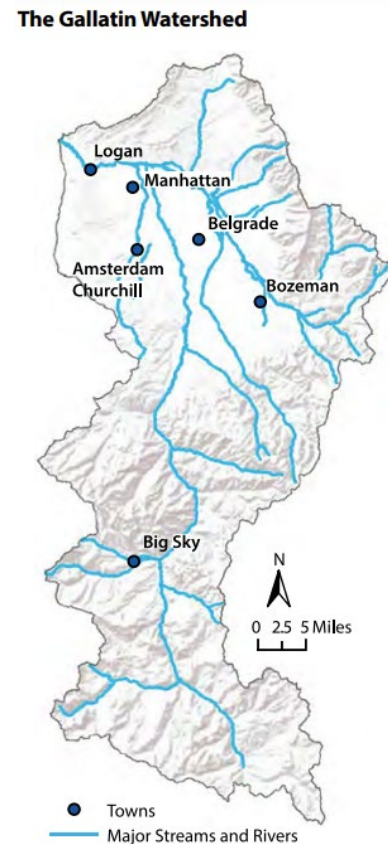


The greater Gallatin Watershed originates in Yellowstone National Park then flows north out of Wyoming, cascading between the Madison Mountain Range to the west and the Gallatin Range to the east descending through the narrow Gallatin Canyon. At the canyon's mouth, the river bursts into a broad valley before joining the Jefferson and Madison Rivers to form the headwaters of the Missouri River. In an average year, the Gallatin's rivers and streams carry enough water to cover 1,200 square miles, an area the size of Rhode Island (Gallatin Watershed Sourcebook, 2017).

Map 2: Upper Gallatin Watershed Watershed



Map 3: Cities w/in the Gallatin



The UGW begins at the headwaters in Yellowstone National Park and extends to the confluence of Spanish Creek. The Lower Gallatin Watershed (LGW) extends from Spanish Creek downstream to the Missouri headwaters. The LGW primarily consists of the agricultural lands of the Gallatin Valley along with several cities and towns including Bozeman, Belgrade, Amsterdam, Logan, and Manhattan. GRTF partners with the Gallatin Watershed Council, who leads stewardship of the lower portion of the watershed.

The UGW is defined by its mountainous terrain, the watershed's headwaters, receives an average of 400 inches of snow annually (equivalent to 67 inches of rain) compared to the lower watershed, near Logan, MT, receiving less than 12 inches of rain annually (Gallatin Watershed Sourcebook, 2017). This climatic diversity between the upper and lower sections of the watershed leads to variation in the issues faced by the watershed communities and their respective water resource management. The mainstem Gallatin River is surrounded primarily by Forest Service lands where it is accessed for its diverse recreational opportunities. The West Fork Watershed, a sub watershed of the UGW, is influenced by a rapidly developing unincorporated resort community, Big Sky, Montana.

Applicant Category

Established in 2005, the Gallatin River Task Force (GRTF) is an existing watershed group whose mission is to partner with our greater community to lead conservation and inspire stewardship of the Gallatin River.

GRTF traces its origins back to the year 2000, when a small group of dedicated community members expressed deep concerns over a proposed permit to release treated wastewater into the Gallatin River. To ensure the Gallatin's water was not decreasing in quality, volunteers began sampling the river at various sites along its upper stretches, directed by Montana State University's Water Center. It was this initial spark that led to the formation of a nonprofit organization known as the Blue Water Task Force, with a primary objective of expanding water quality monitoring efforts within the UGW. The combined efforts of the Blue Water Task Force and other dedicated individuals ultimately prevented wastewater release into the Gallatin River, demonstrating the unique power of community-driven action and highlighting the urgent need for ongoing monitoring and conservation efforts within the watershed. As our local community grew, we transformed our organization in 2015, changing our name to Gallatin River Task Force, expanding our mission, and introducing new programs, allowing us to effectively address evolving needs and challenges in the Upper Gallatin River Watershed.

In 2015, GRTF spearheaded the Gallatin Canyon River Access Site Assessment, which examined 39.6 miles of the Upper Gallatin River and mapped 111 developed and undeveloped public river access points within the Custer-Gallatin National Forest (CGNF) between the Yellowstone National Park boundary and Spanish Creek to identify sites for restoration work.

The GRTF and CGNF subsequently entered into a Challenge Cost Share Agreement to collaborate on restoration activities. In 2018, the first project was completed at the Moose Creek Flat Recreation Area, a heavily trafficked public day-use area and campground with severe erosion and streamside vegetation damage. Success of the Moose Creek Project prompted the CGNF and GRTF to develop the Gallatin River Restoration Strategy and pursue additional restoration opportunities along the Gallatin River, resulting in completion of the second restoration project at the Upper Deer Creek (Beatis Alley) in October 2020. The Gallatin River Restoration Strategy, completed in June 2022, identified short-term, mid-term, and long-term actions to guide GRTF and CGNF implementation of river access improvements and ecological restoration projects over the next 10-15 years.

In 2016-2018, GRTF hosted the collaborative Big Sky Sustainable Water Solutions Forum (Water Forum), bringing together nonprofit, private, local, state, and federal entities with an interest in water management of the UGW to develop the Big Sky Area Sustainable Watershed

Stewardship Plan (Water Plan), a roadmap for ensuring future water health. Through consensus, Water Forum stakeholders identified three key water resource focus areas:

1. **Ecological Health of River Systems:** A healthy and resilient river system sustained through a principled approach to watershed stewardship that includes human activities and natural processes which maintain and enhance stream, riparian and wetland conditions and connections, ensuring water remains clean and cold.
2. **Water Supply and Availability:** Manage and balance surface and groundwater supplies for a vibrant community sustaining a broad spectrum of uses and values including fisheries, wildlife, recreation, agriculture, municipal and domestic needs.
3. **Wastewater Treatment and Reuse:** Develop and implement holistic wastewater and stormwater management, utilizing best available technologies and practices, to meet Big Sky's long-term community needs and protect and improve the ecological health of river systems.

Over the past 6 years, progress toward many of the objectives in that initial plan have been accomplished, benefiting the Gallatin River, its contributing waters, surrounding land, and human and economic health. In 2024, Water Forum stakeholders came together to update the Water Plan and focus attention on actions that will address new challenges and build on past success.

Today, the Gallatin River Task Force is a trusted leader in river and watershed conservation. We engage and empower our community, fostering partnerships with individuals, organizations, businesses, and government agencies. Together, we protect and restore the health of the Gallatin River for present and future generations. Through comprehensive monitoring, innovative conservation practices, on-the-ground restoration projects, and community education, we remain at the forefront of safeguarding the Upper Gallatin Watershed.

Eligibility of Applicant

The Gallatin River Task Force (GRTF) meets the eligibility requirements described in Section C.1. Eligible Applicants as a legally incorporated 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located in the United States and operating as an existing Watershed Group located in the state of Montana. The role of the Task Force (applicant) in the existing Watershed Group is the project manager. As the local Watershed Group focused solely on the Upper Gallatin Watershed, GRTF serves as the convenor of the stakeholders and partners that have developed restoration plans for the Upper Gallatin River Watershed, including the Big Sky Area Sustainable Watershed Stewardship Plan and the Gallatin River Restoration Strategy, as well as serving as the project manager responsible for implementing several of the recommended projects that were identified as priorities in the restoration plans.

Project Description

The Gallatin River Task Force (GRTF) has not previously received a CWMP Phase I grant. The Task Areas described in Section C.4. Eligible Projects which will be addressed in this Project are Task B: Watershed Restoration Planning and Task C: Watershed Management Project Design. The overall goals of the Project are to advance watershed restoration planning and project design including:

1. Complete the West Fork Master Restoration Plan.
2. Advance 1-2 designs for projects identified in the West Fork Master Restoration Plan.
3. Advance 2-3 designs for projects identified in the Gallatin River Restoration Strategy.

Task A: Watershed Group Development

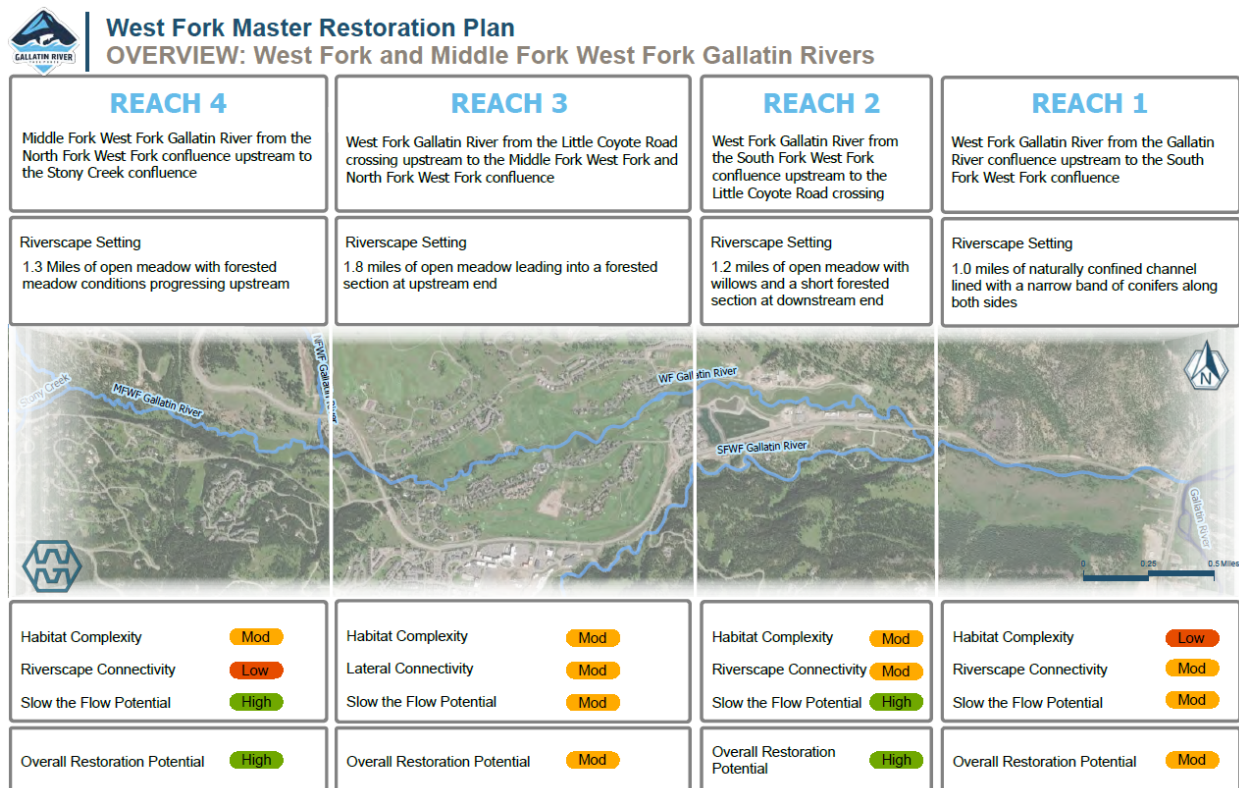
GRTF is not proposing any activities related to Task A. GRTF is already formed as an Existing Watershed Group, eliminating the need to complete Task A Watershed Group Development.

Task B: Watershed Restoration Planning

The activities performed by GRTF under Task B: Watershed Restoration Planning include completing the West Fork Master Restoration Plan. The West Fork Master Restoration Plan is a multi-phased restoration planning effort focused on identifying a suite of management recommendations and on-the-ground projects to preserve, restore, and enhance water resources within the West Fork Gallatin River Watershed, extending from the top of Lone Mountain to the confluence with the mainstem Gallatin River. Technical components of the plan include: field data collection and drone aerial mapping of existing conditions along prominent streams and their tributaries, identification of restoration projects, development of best management practices, and stakeholder engagement.

Phase 1 of the West Fork Master Plan was completed between August 2023 and June 2024 and included field data collection and drone aerial photography to assess existing conditions, with a primary focus on the Middle Fork West Fork Gallatin River and West Fork Gallatin River. Data collected during the summer of 2023 was compiled in GIS and developed into a series of map products (see Figure 1 below for example map deliverable) aimed at communicating restoration potential and advancing coordination and feedback from stakeholders. Drone aeriels will be compared to historic aerial imagery to evaluate change over time.

Figure 1: West Fork Master Restoration Plan - Example Map Deliverable



Phase 2 of the West Fork Master Restoration Plan will be completed between July 2024 and June 2025 and will include field data collection and drone aerial photography to assess existing conditions along prominent streams and their tributaries, with a primary focus on the Middle Fork West Fork Gallatin River and North Fork West Fork Gallatin River. Data collected during Phase 2 planning will be compiled in GIS and developed into existing conditions and restoration concept maps.

GRTF is seeking funding for Phase 3 of the West Fork Master Restoration Plan, which is anticipated to occur between September 2025 and April 2026. Phase 3 tasks will include field data collection and drone aerial photography to assess existing conditions with a primary focus on the South Fork West Fork Gallatin River. Data collected during Phase 3 planning will be compiled in GIS and developed into existing conditions and restoration concept maps. Actions taken in Phase 1-3 will ultimately result in the final West Fork Gallatin River Master Restoration Plan.

Task C: Watershed Management Project Design

The detailed activities the Task Force will undertake within Task C Watershed Management Project Design include the design of 1-2 site specific restoration projects identified in the West

Fork Master Plan, as well as the design of 2-3 site specific restoration projects identified in the Gallatin River Restoration Strategy.

C1 - West Fork Master Plan Project Design

GRTF proposes to develop site-specific project designs for 1-2 restoration projects identified in the West Fork Master Plan which includes the following activities:

- Project Selection - Select priority projects to advance to design through a series of conversations and field tours with project stakeholders. Our strategy for site selection includes reviewing: restoration potential, willingness of the landowner to enter into a cooperative agreement, stakeholder feedback, funding potential, etc.
- Contractor Procurement - Procure contractors to complete the site-specific project design and engineering for the selected sites and work to manage the project as they develop through the design phase. A contractor scope of work will be developed to select the contractor and finalize the contracts.
- Site Specific Designs - Complete site-specific project design and engineering for the prioritized projects which may include conceptual, 60%, and 90% designs to share with project stakeholders and partners for discussion and feedback. The design process typically includes the following components:
 - Contractors will develop design drawings and specifications for the construction of each restoration project for each specific site. The core design criteria will be documented by the contractors and approved by project partners, which will include the recommended project elements for each selected site, renderings depicting construction of the project, project activities and itemized cost estimates. Contractors are also required to provide an analysis of any potential challenges or constraints of the construction process. A detailed report of the methods for construction at each site will be procured from contractors, including the necessary equipment, personnel, and access to the site.
 - Contractors are required to make recommendations on a monitoring plan to measure the effectiveness of restoration outcomes including metrics for demonstrating project efficacy.
 - Contractors are required to research the site-specific environmental compliances necessary to implement restoration projects and draft applications as appropriate. To ensure our design is in compliance with these regulations, our contractors are included in the permitting process.
 - GRTF works with the design contractors and project partners to develop project construction timelines and milestones for each of the selected sites to facilitate project implementation.

C2 - Gallatin River Restoration Strategy Project Design

GRTF proposes to develop site-specific project designs for 2-3 restoration projects identified in the Gallatin River Restoration Strategy. Since the Gallatin River Restoration Strategy was completed in 2022, several projects have already been prioritized for design. Design activities that will occur for the Gallatin River Restoration projects include coordinating with our project partner the Custer-Gallatin National Forest to determine which projects are ready to advance through the design process, contractor procurement, and site specific design development as detailed above.

Evaluation Criteria

E.1.1. Evaluation Criterion A Watershed Group Diversity and Geographic Scope

E.1.1.1. Sub-criterion No. A1. Watershed Group Diversity

GRTF encourages collaboration with a diverse array of stakeholders across the watershed. Efforts GRTF has undertaken to ensure stakeholder diversity include inviting stakeholder participation in the Water Forum and during site specific project design and implementation. Several “stakeholder groups” are described in detail below that represent the affected stakeholders within the watershed. Specific entities and organizations participating in GRTF’s collaborative efforts are identified in **Table 1: Upper Gallatin Watershed Stakeholders**. Stakeholder involvement is noted in Table 1 by indicating if the stakeholder has been involved in the Water Forum or as a project partner. Letters of support are included from the Water Forum Steering Committee and the Custer Gallatin National Forest.

Table 1: Upper Gallatin Watershed Stakeholders

Stakeholder Group	Stakeholder Representation	Stakeholder Involvement
Agriculture	Association of Gallatin Agricultural Irrigators	Water Forum
Federal Government	US Forest Service - Custer Gallatin National Forest	Water Forum, Project Partner
State Government	Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology	Water Forum, Project Partner
	Montana Department of Environmental Quality	Water Forum, Project Partner
	Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks	Water Forum, Project Partner

	MT Dept. of Natural Resources & Conservation	Water Forum, Project Partner
Local Government	Big Sky Resort Area District	Water Forum, Project Partner
	Big Sky Water and Sewer District	Water Forum, Project Partner
	Gallatin Canyon Water & Sewer District	Water Forum, Project Partner
	Gallatin County	Water Forum
	Madison County	Water Forum
	Madison Conservation District	Water Forum
	Gallatin Conservation District	Water Forum
	Gallatin Local Water Quality District	Water Forum, Project Partner
Environmental	Upper Missouri Waterkeeper	Water Forum
	American Rivers	Water Forum, Project Partner
	Trout Unlimited	Water Forum, Project Partner
	Greater Yellowstone Coalition	Water Forum
	Gallatin Watershed Council	Water Forum, Project Partner
	Gallatin Valley Land Trust	Water Form
	Grow Wild	Project Partner
	Big Sky Sustainability Network Organization	Project Partner
Business/Private Sector	Lone Mountain Land Company	Water Forum, Project Partner
	Big Sky Resort	Water Forum, Project Partner
	WGM Group	Water Forum
Community Organizations	Big Sky Community Organization	Water Forum, Project Partner
	Big Sky Housing Trust	Water Forum
	Big Sky Owners Association	Water Forum
Universities	Montana State University	Project Partner
Recreation/Tourism	Montana Whitewater	Project Partner
	Wave Train Kayak	Project Partner
	Gallatin River Guides	Project Partner
	East Slope Outdoors	Project Partner
	Jakes Horses	Project Partner
	Canyon Adventures	Project Partner
	Lone Mountain Ranch	Project Partner
	Big Sky Chamber of Commerce	Project Partner

Stakeholder Groups within the Upper Gallatin Watershed that affect or are affected by the quantity or quality of water within the watershed include:

- Agriculture - The UGW has several guest ranches but does not have crop producing agricultural activities due to its mountainous terrain and climate. That said, the UGW is the headwaters to the Gallatin Valley which is home to some of the most prime agricultural lands in the state. Montana is a Western Doctrine state, so water use is “first in time, first in right”. The Upper Missouri River basin and Jefferson and Madison basin are closed to new appropriations of water and the Gallatin River and Madison River are over-appropriated for irrigation and instream fishery purposes. Changes to water rights must provide mitigation for adverse effects caused to other existing water rights, including downstream senior water rights for agriculture.
- Municipal - Big Sky, centrally located in the UGW, is an unincorporated census designated place and is not a municipality. In the absence of a municipality, the community of Big Sky relies on local government and community organizations to serve the needs of the growing population.
- Recreation/Tourism - Outdoor recreation is an essential component of our economy within the UGW. The area provides countless opportunities for people to fish, swim, boat, and otherwise enjoy water resources. Winter simply shifts recreational activities uphill to snowshoeing, skiing, and ice climbing. Tourism brings more than eleven million visitors to Montana each year, supporting over 50,000 jobs and adding an estimated \$3.5 billion to the state’s economy. Fly fishing guides, rafting outfitters, innkeepers and sporting goods dealers are just a few of those directly employed in providing recreational services.
- Environmental - Environmental groups working within the UGW include several local, state, and national nonprofit organizations that represent diverse interests including noxious weed management, climate action, land conservation, water quality protections, fish and wildlife management, etc.
- Business/Private Sector - The leading business sectors in the UGW include tourism/hospitality followed by construction and real estate. Big Sky is an “R” destination where outdoor recreation is what draws visitors here and on what they choose to spend their money. Because of the strong tie between recreation and the economy businesses in the UGW have a vested interest in the health of the river for summer recreation and the winter snowpack that drives our winter recreation economy.
- Universities - Montana State University is a public land-grant research university located in Bozeman, MT. MSU is home to the Montana Water Center who aims to investigate and resolve water problems by fostering state-wide water-resources stewardship, research, education, and collaboration.
- Local Government - Local government agencies have a vested interest in the health of the UGW as it can relate to sewer and potable water distribution to the public, commerce and

health. Local government agencies in the UGW include Water & Sewer Districts who oversee water supply and wastewater management, County Government who oversees planning and zoning decisions, Conservation Districts who oversee stream permitting, and the Big Sky Resort Area District who collects a 4% tax on luxury goods and services and invests the funds to address critical community needs.

- State Government - State agencies in the UGW provide regulatory oversight relating to fish and wildlife management, water quality protections, and protect existing uses to promote adequate future supplies for domestic, industrial, agricultural, recreation, conservation, and other beneficial uses of water.
- Community Organizations - Big Sky relies on 100's of homeowners associations and a myriad of nonprofits that help mind the gap between the public and private sector - managing roadways, streetlights, landscaping, small water systems, and other infrastructure that impacts the UGW water quality and supply.
- Local residents and landowners - The UGW meanders through private property, making private residents a pivotal player for maintaining riparian health on a local scale.

Water Forum Stakeholders/Structure

The Water Forum is a diverse, community-based stakeholder group formed to identify and recommend priorities and actions to address water resources stewardship in the Big Sky area and surrounding Upper Gallatin Watershed. The Water Forum was convened in June of 2016 following an extensive community assessment process in the spring of 2016. GRTF hosted the Water Forum and an advisory committee guided the process. Participation as a stakeholder in the Water Forum was voluntary, and all stakeholders agreed to commit to engagement in the process and a set of ground rules. Water Forum stakeholder meetings were open to the public and members of the community participated throughout the process. Water Forum stakeholders were selected to represent community, conservation, business, agricultural, government, and agency perspectives in the Big Sky area and downstream, and stakeholders have a wide variety of expertise in water resources, economic and community issues. Water Forum stakeholders and other community members worked from June 2016 to November 2017 to identify opportunities and challenges, determine desired outcomes, and develop recommendations to achieve their goals and objectives which resulted in the Big Sky Area Watershed Stewardship Plan (Water Plan). Decisions on goals, objectives and recommended priorities and actions were made through consensus. The forum convened again in 2024 to develop a 5 year plan update and plans to meet yearly to discuss status updates and plan successes. Individual water forum members meet more regularly to coordinate on site specific project work.

Project Partners

GRTF engages with stakeholders on site-specific projects in a number of ways including coordinating on funding, feedback on project designs, consulting for subject area expertise,

hosting volunteer and other community engagement activities, and entering into cooperative landowner agreements to allow for restoration activities to occur on private and public land.

Gallatin River Task Force (Watershed Group) Structure

GRTF is a nonprofit organization therefore we have a governing board of directors. Our board members represent the diversity of the watershed. Board members oversee the fiduciary and strategic responsibilities of the organization with input from the greater community, stakeholders, and project partners.

Board Member	Stakeholder Group
Ennion Williams	Recreation, Business
Rob McRae	Business
Ryan Kunz	Recreation/Tourism, Business
JeNelle Johnson	Local Resident
Bill Collins	Business
Leslie Nogaret	Local Resident, Environmental
Ashley Wilson	Recreation
Eric Ladd	Recreation, Business
Rod Roy	Environmental
Todd Shaw	Local Resident, Environmental
Rich McEldowney	Business, Environmental

While significant work has gone into ensuring broad representation of stakeholders within the watershed, GRTF understands that stakeholder engagement is an ongoing process in which we will continue to engage in outreach by seeking additional input from existing stakeholders, seeking new stakeholders, and engaging the general public via in-person meetings, email newsletters, community events, and other marketing efforts.

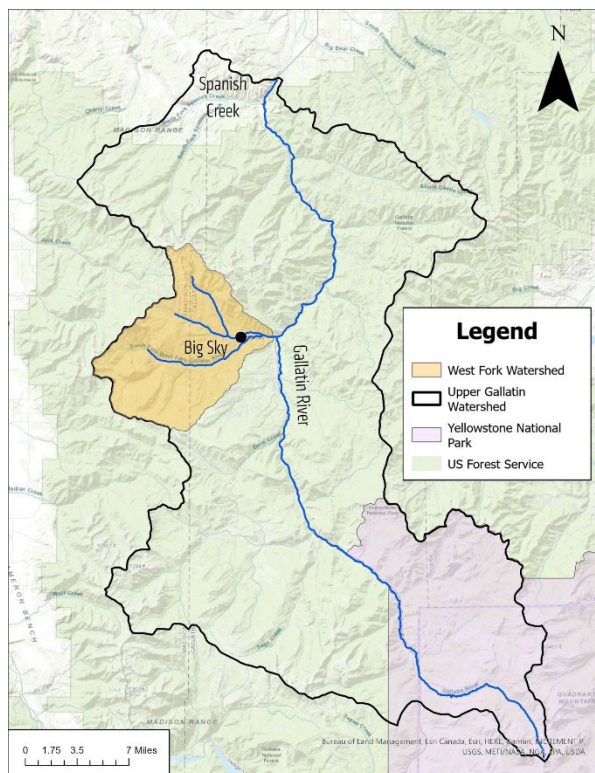
GRTF strives to partner with our greater community to lead conservation and inspire stewardship of the UGW, but we cannot properly do so without acknowledging the First Nations who have stewarded these lands for thousands of years prior to us, the Tukudika (Shoshone-Bannock), Séliš u Qlispé (Bitterroot Salish), Niitsítapiis-stahkoií ᑭᓯᑦᑭᓴᑦ (Niitsitapi/Blackfoot), Cayuse, Umatilla, Walla Walla, and the Tsésthó'e (Cheyenne) peoples whose invaluable knowledge of the *Cut-tuh-o'gwa*, now known as the Gallatin River, has been passed down throughout generations and has benefited our broader community. The Task Force seeks to honor and

respect the ancestors, elders, and youth of these nations who continue to hold important ties to the land and waters that we occupy. We aim to contact the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and the Blackfeet Nation to begin conversations on how we can support their efforts.

E.1.1.2. Sub-criterion No. A2. Geographic Scope

GRTF's work will include the full extent of the Upper Gallatin Watershed and will include all of the stakeholders described above with the exception of the portion of the watershed that is within Yellowstone National Park. Priorities in the Water Plan are focused on addressing water quality impairments and impacts from increased growth and development, therefore, the lands within the national park are not a high priority at this time.

Map 4: Upper Gallatin Watershed



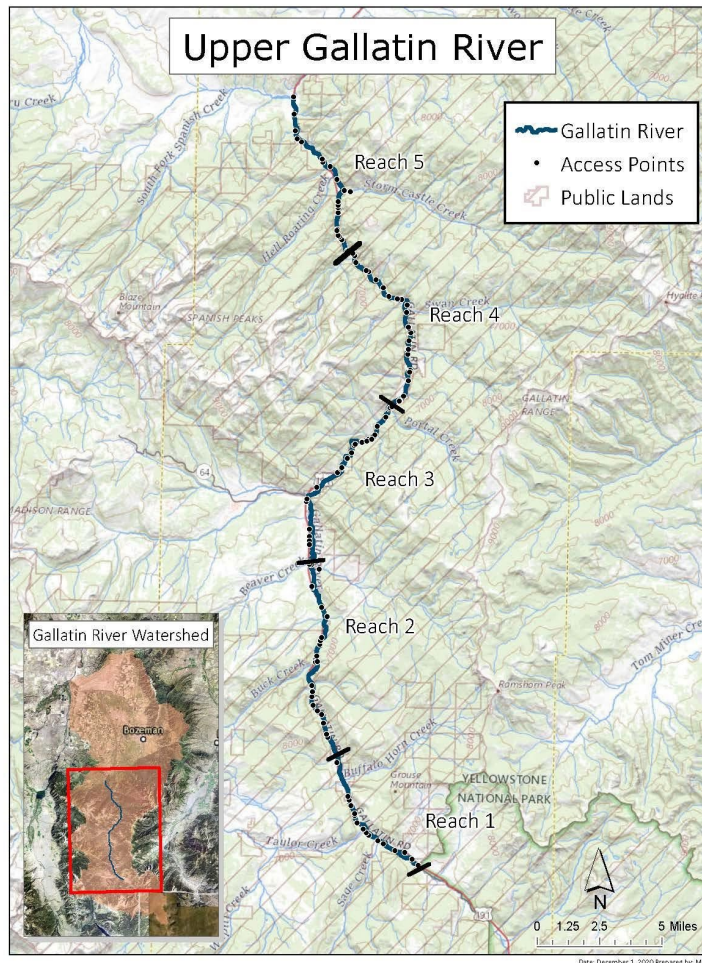
The project work will take place in the following areas of the watershed as depicted on the map:

West Fork Watershed (yellow): Development of the West Fork Master Plan and West Fork project design. Water Forum stakeholders are the primary partners/stakeholders for this area of the watershed.

UGW US Forest Service Lands (green): Development of the Gallatin River Restoration Strategy project design. The Custer-Gallatin National Forest is the primary partner/stakeholder for this area of the watershed. Project feedback and outreach occurs with the following stakeholder groups: recreation/tourism, environmental, business and private sector, local government, state

government, Montana State University, and local residents and landowners. The primary focus within the US Forest Service lands is the river corridor as depicted in Map 5: Upper Gallatin River Corridor because this is the area of the watershed that is experiencing the greatest impacts from roads and unmanaged recreation.

Map 5: Upper Gallatin River Corridor



E.1.2. Evaluation Criterion B Developing Strategies to Address Critical Watershed Needs

The Project will address several critical issues and needs in the Upper Gallatin Watershed as identified in the Water Plan, including:

- Ecological Health of River Systems
 - Water quality impairments
 - Declining ecological resilience
 - Aquatic and riparian ecosystem degradation
 - Habitat fragmentation and degradation
 - Impacts from unmanaged river recreation activities
- Water Supply & Availability
 - Climate variability and drought impacts
 - Increased flood potential

E.1.2.1. Sub-criterion No. B1. Critical Watershed Needs or Issues

Ecological Health of River Systems

Within the West Fork Gallatin River watershed, GRTF was the local liaison for the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) water quality assessment conducted between 2005 and 2010, which resulted in three streams being identified as impaired by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), including:

- Middle Fork West Fork Gallatin River (Nitrate+nitrite (NO_3+NO_2), Sediment, *E. coli*)
- South Fork West Fork Gallatin River (Nitrate+nitrite (NO_3+NO_2), Sediment)
- West Fork Gallatin River (Nitrate+nitrite (NO_3+NO_2), Total nitrogen (TN), Sediment)

For these three streams, the *West Fork Gallatin River Watershed Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) and Framework Watershed Water Quality Improvement Plan* (DEQ 2010) completed in 2010 identifies the maximum amount of a pollutant these water bodies can receive and still meet water quality standards. The West Fork Gallatin River Watershed TMDL document provides estimates of the percent reduction in pollutant loading that will be necessary for water quality standards to be met. In addition to establishing TMDLs, the West Fork Gallatin River Watershed TMDL document includes an assessment of road densities, traction sand application, riparian buffer conditions, instream habitat conditions, and fish passage through culverts.

During the TMDL process, riparian buffer conditions were assessed using National Agricultural Imagery Program (NAIP) color imagery from 2005 for several streams in the West Fork Gallatin River watershed. Riparian areas were classified as healthy (good), moderately disturbed (fair), or heavily disturbed (poor). In addition, the recently completed *Gallatin Canyon River Access Site Assessment* (Dunn and Collins 2015) identified areas where riparian vegetation has been degraded along the Gallatin River due to recreational use, while also identifying sites where traction sand applied to Highway 191 has a direct pathway into the Gallatin River due to the lack of a riparian buffer.

The mainstem Gallatin River, stretching from the Yellowstone National Park Boundary to the confluence of Spanish Creek, has experienced unprecedented algal blooms in the summers of 2018, 2020, and 2022, and was designated as impaired for nuisance algae by the DEQ in 2023.

The Gallatin River Restoration Strategy identified that without adequate management and infrastructure, increasing levels of recreation and tourism pressure within the Gallatin Canyon produce environmental impacts such as soil erosion and compaction, damage to vegetation, disturbance to wildlife, water pollution, increased fire frequency, vandalism, and noise. Some of the most notable environmental impacts are directly related to river access points which include visitor created trails, parking areas, and two track roads. Unsurfaced road and trail treads are susceptible to a variety of impacts including vegetation loss and compositional changes, soil

compaction, erosion, and muddiness, exposure of plant roots, widening, and the proliferation of visitor-created trails (Hammit & Cole 1998, Leung & Marion 1996, Tyser & Worley 1992). Soil erosion exposes rocks and plant roots, creating a rutted and uneven tread surface. Eroded soils may find their way into water bodies, increasing water turbidity and sedimentation impacts to aquatic organisms (Fritz 1993). Similarly, excessive muddiness aggravates tread widening and associated vegetation loss as visitors seek to circumvent mudholes and wet soils (Marion 1994). Trail widening and the creation of parallel treads and sidetrails unnecessarily increase the area of land disturbance (Liddle & Greig-Smith 1975). Trails, and the presence of visitors, can also impact wildlife, fragment wildlife habitat and cause avoidance behavior in some animals and attraction behavior in others seeking to obtain human food (Hellmund 1998, Knight & Cole 1991).

Water Supply & Availability Concerns

The Upper Gallatin River Basin has a limited supply of water that could be surpassed as the demand for water increases with community growth and climate variability. Groundwater is recharged annually by winter snowpack and large rain events and currently provides a sufficient water supply, though supplies may not be extensive enough to meet projected future needs without innovative water resources management. Some key factors guiding concerns for future water supply and availability include:

- The recently completed *2017 Montana Climate Assessment* (Witlock et al. 2017) predicts warming temperatures, increased precipitation in the winter, spring and fall, decreased precipitation in the summer, and increased year-to-year variability in precipitation. Montana's snowpack has declined since the 1930's and warming temperatures over the next century, especially during spring, are likely to reduce snowpack at mid and low elevations. Further, rising temperatures will likely exacerbate drought and particularly affect rural water systems because of the lack of redundancy and resources.
- Groundwater withdrawals from individual and community wells can have a significant impact on the availability of fresh water supplies and streamflows in the Big Sky area and downstream.
- Depending on the characteristics and severity of drought, the repercussions can be significant, impacting local economies, disrupting quality of life, and even affecting the health and welfare of a population and its environment.

E.1.2.2. Sub-criterion No. B2. Project Benefits

Task B: Watershed Restoration Planning Benefits

Completing the West Fork Master Restoration Plan is a critical next step in addressing the health of the Gallatin River systems because, while planning has been completed for individual tributaries of the West Fork Watershed, this is the first time a planning endeavor for the West Fork Watershed will include all tributaries of the watershed and address both ecological health

and water supply concerns holistically. Additionally, significant growth and development has occurred in the West Fork Watershed. The West Fork Master Restoration Plan is an opportunity to not only look at multiple concerns within the watershed but also address the impacts of continued growth and development in the area. Once completed the restoration planning effort will include the following deliverables and benefits:

- A suite of Best Management Practices to guide continued development within the West Fork watershed's hydrologically sensitive landscape to maximize climate resiliency, optimize water quality and quantity, and ensure long-term stability of water resources in the Big Sky area. This will include reviewing watershed-specific best management practices established by Federal, state, and local government agencies.
- Identification of on-the-ground projects that preserve and enhance wetland and riparian resources with a goal of slowing the flow of water through the system and increasing the number of times water is reused and recycled. This will set the stage for implementation of large-scale hydrologic optimization projects that create resilient watershed conditions to minimize the impacts of dramatic weather events.
- Identification of expanded data and monitoring activities such as water quality studies, water quantity studies, vegetation surveys, invertebrate surveys, etc. to effectively evaluate long-term trends and response from restoration actions and to inform an adaptive management approach to our watershed restoration efforts.
- Development of visual map projects to support stakeholder outreach activities including, but not limited to, interviewing and coordinating with stakeholders, landowners, Federal agencies, and state or local governments to gain feedback on proposed restoration actions and identify priority projects to advance to design.

The West Fork Master Restoration Plan will build upon the collaborative efforts of the Water Forum to create a roadmap for sustainable collaboration between landowners, land managers and the Gallatin River Task Force to wisely manage local water resources. The outcome of this effort will position the Big Sky community to be a leader in Montana on ensuring sustainable watershed hydrology for the ecological health of the river systems and the community's water supply.

Task C: Watershed Management Project Design Benefits

West Fork Master Plan Projects

It is unknown at this time which specific projects from the West Fork Master Restoration Plan will be advanced for design. Further assessment and project identification that will occur in phase 2 and 3 will determine which projects are chosen for design work. Several factors will be considered when selecting projects to advance to design including: restoration potential, willingness of the landowner to enter into a cooperative agreement, stakeholder feedback, etc.

Once a project is chosen for design, GRTF typically follows a conceptual design process, followed by 60% design, and then 90% and permitting. The West Fork Master Plan project designs will focus on three primary project benefit areas including:

- Habitat Complexity: projects will include design elements that improve instream, riparian, and wetland habitat complexity.
- Riverscape Connectivity: projects will include design elements that improve stream channel and floodplain connectivity.
- Slowing the Flow Potential: projects will include design elements that slow the flow of water through the system, encourage groundwater infiltration to support late season baseflows, and spread the water out to expand wetland and riparian buffers along streams.

Additional opportunities to manage the watershed to enhance water quality and quantity will be explored during the design process, including reducing sediment inputs from unpaved roads and traction sand, stormwater management options, fish passage through culverts to maximize trout population resiliency, and opportunities for native Westslope Trout restoration, opportunities to enhance natural water storage, optimization of water storage and releases, installation of treatment wetlands, and expand opportunities for water reuse and groundwater recharge.

Gallatin River Restoration Strategy Projects

It is unknown at this time which specific projects from the West Fork Master Restoration Plan will be advanced for design. Several projects have already been identified as a priority including: Bozeman District Restoration, Porcupine/Beaver Creek Restoration, Portal Creek Restoration, Lave Lake Restoration, and Doe Creek Restoration. Further discussion will occur with the project partners and stakeholders to select which of these projects are advanced for design.

All project designs advanced from the Gallatin River Restoration will support the following goals and benefits identified in the Gallatin National Forest Travel Management Plan including:

- Manage the road and trail system in a manner that protects and maintains water quality, wildlife habitat, fish habitat, and other resources.
- Attain a road and trail system that fully supports the protection of water quality, and habitat for fish, riparian dependent species and other aquatic organisms with the intent to have all streams supporting westslope cutthroat trout or blue-ribbon fisheries.
- Support efforts to close and rehabilitate excess roads and trails and to prevent unacceptable sedimentation and stream impairment, and protect floodplains and wetlands.
- Designate the go-down access routes (i.e. river access locations) to the Gallatin River and cliff areas and improve the condition of facilities to prevent the pioneering of user-built parking areas.

Specific restoration actions and benefits identified for projects designed from the Gallatin River Restoration Strategy include:

- Manage/reestablish native vegetation to maintain and enhance the vegetative cover, with an emphasis on enhancing the riparian buffer width immediately adjacent to the stream corridor.
- Install temporary fencing and other barriers, surrounding newly planted areas, to limit trampling of vegetation, promote streambank stabilization, and improve fisheries habitat.
- Restore eroding streambanks using native materials appropriate to the landscape and enhance riparian buffers with vegetation plantings.
- Delineate parking areas utilizing boulders, gravel, etc. to reduce footprint of existing visitor created routes and parking areas.
- Develop parking areas and boat launches at key river access sites to protect riparian areas and minimize detrimental impacts to water quality.
- Maintain/improve existing river trail access in a way that minimizes detrimental impacts to water quality and riparian/wetland areas.
- Install BMP's to control nonpoint pollution and protect beneficial uses.

E.1.3. Evaluation Criterion C Readiness to Proceed

Tasks & Milestones	State Date	End Date	Responsible Party
Task B: West Fork Master Restoration Plan (Phase 3)			
South Fork assessments & drone aerial mapping	Sept 2025	Oct 2026	Contractor
Concept map development	Nov 2025	Feb 2026	Contractor
Stakeholder coordination & outreach	Mar 2026	April 2026	GRTF
Task C1: West Fork Master Plan Project Design			
Select priority projects to advance to design and engineering	May 2026	June 2026	GRTF
Contractor procurement	July 2026	Aug 2027	GRTF
Advance site specific designs for 1-2 projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop design plans • Stakeholder/partner review & feedback • Update design plans based on feedback 	Sept 2027	Sept 2028	Contractor/GRTF

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stakeholder/partner review & feedback ● If advancing to 90% design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Draft monitoring plan ○ Review permitting requirements ○ Develop project timelines for construction 			
Task C2: Gallatin River Restoration Strategy Project Design			
Contractor procurement	Sept 2025	Oct 2025	GRTF
Advance Site specific designs for 2-3 projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop design plans ● Stakeholder/partner review & feedback ● Update design plans based on feedback ● Stakeholder/partner review & feedback ● If advancing to 90% design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Draft monitoring plan ○ Review permitting requirements ○ Develop project timelines for construction 	Nov 2025	Sept 2028	Contractor/GRTF

Note: No new policies or administrative actions are required to implement the Project..

E.1.4. Evaluation Criterion D Presidential and Department of the Interior Priorities

The project demonstrates support for the Biden-Harris Administration’s priorities, including E.O. 14008: Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad and E.O. 13985: Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government, and the President’s memorandum, Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to Nation Relationships.

E.1.4.1. Climate Change

The project will address the impacts of climate change and help combat the climate crisis by mitigating the impacts of drought, creating fire resiliency, and strengthening water supply sustainability by developing on-the-ground restoration projects that utilize low-tech, process-based restoration techniques (LTPR). LTBR focuses on creating the right conditions for natural processes to resume in order to improve the ecological health of streams and surrounding wetlands. The results of these techniques which utilize restoration structures such as beaver dam analogs includes reconnected floodplains, flood mitigation, increasing water storage capacity in wetlands and groundwater aquifers all which help mitigate the impacts of climate change.

E.1.4.2. Benefits to Disadvantaged, Underserved, and Tribal Communities

Disadvantaged and Underserved Community Benefits: The Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool did not identify any disadvantaged communities within the project area. That said, the Big Sky Resort Area is a rapidly growing resort community and is underserved in relation to affordable housing. Between 2010 and 2020, Big Sky grew over 54%, putting pressure on existing infrastructure development to further accommodate the growth. Big Sky's recent capital improvement plan (CIP) has identified over \$770M in infrastructure needs to keep up with growing demand. Due to overwhelmingly high housing costs, 75% of the workforce lives in the surrounding county areas and commutes into Big Sky (Big Sky Economic Impact Report, 2024). Protecting water resources in a growing community with a housing shortage will support the improvement of public health and safety, conserve water supplies, and safeguard economic growth.

Tribal Benefits: The project presents an opportunity to establish a relationship with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and the Blackfeet Nation and begin conversations on how we can support their efforts including supporting self-determination efforts of the tribes & their access to clean water. For restoration projects, we will comply with all standards for known cultural sites and return all objects to the tribes if they can be identified by an archaeologist.

August 26, 2024

Bureau of Reclamation
Cooperative Watershed Management Program
PO Box 25007 Denver, CO 80225

RE: Support for the Gallatin River Task Force's Application to the BOR Cooperative Watershed Management Program

Dear CWMP Grant Review Committee,

As members of the Big Sky Sustainable Water Solutions Forum Steering Committee (Water Forum), we are pleased to submit this letter in support of the Gallatin River Task Force's (GRTF) grant proposal to the WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program. The Water Forum is a community-based, collaborative approach building a unified vision for future Big Sky water resources management within the Upper Gallatin River Watershed to maintain and enhance ecologically healthy river systems in the community and downstream while also identifying sustainable solutions for community water supply and wastewater treatment challenges. The Water Forum was convened to:

- Unify efforts to address water resources for the Big Sky area and surrounding Upper Gallatin River Watershed in three co-equal water resources focus areas:
 - Ecological Health of River Systems
 - Water Supply and Availability
 - Wastewater Treatment and Reuse
- Develop recommendations for solutions and actions to address current and future water needs for both the natural and human communities
- Support community implementation of the solutions

Over the last year, this group of diverse water stakeholders has reconvened to update the Big Sky Sustainable Watershed Stewardship Plan (Water Plan), originally developed in 2018, to celebrate plan successes and develop new goals and actions for the next five years in support of a shared mission to unify local efforts to protect, restore and enhance water resources in the Upper Gallatin River Watershed. Stakeholders have recognized that coming together to identify priorities, coordinate efforts, and leverage partnerships is critical to protecting the future of water. We have built momentum around taking actions strategically and in consideration of the watershed as a whole.

A successful CWMP grant would enable GRTF to complete the West Fork Gallatin River Master Restoration Plan and would allow for the planning, development and design of on-the-ground projects that the Water Forum identified as the highest priority for accomplishing our goals over the next five years. As our watershed continues to face rapid growth and increased water quality and availability challenges, it is critical that our community come together and work to build resilience. Funding from the Cooperative Watershed Management Program would ensure continued momentum and success. We encourage broad support of GRTF as a recipient of these funds as they continue to further our collective goals for conservation of Southwest Montana's most important water resources.



File Code: 2320; 2530

Date: August 29, 2024

RE: Gallatin River Task Force – WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program

Dear CWMP Representatives:

I am writing on behalf of the Custer Gallatin National Forest (Forest Service) to express support for the Gallatin River Task Force's (GRTF) application for funding to the WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program.

Since 2015, the Task Force has partnered with the Custer Gallatin National Forest to limit the damaging impacts of unmanaged recreation and improve river access sites along the Upper Gallatin River corridor. Since our partnership began, we have completed two restoration projects and developed the Gallatin River Restoration Strategy to prioritize sites for future habitat restoration and river access improvement work. By developing a strategy around which river access can be restored and enhanced, recreation can continue to be a staple of the river's vibrant economy, without contributing negatively to the Gallatin's overall health.

Through this partnership, we have seen firsthand the importance of funding restoration improvements but we need additional support and funding to continue these important projects. The restoration strategy identified 91 locations along the river in need of restoration with projected costs of over three million dollars.

Our partnership operates through a Cost-Share Agreement that is updated annually to reflect the scope of work and commitments from each partner. A successful CWMP grant would enable GRTF to continue support the partnership by planning and designing on-the-ground projects identified in the Gallatin River Restoration Strategy.

I strongly urge you to fund GRTF's request. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

COREY R LEWELLEN
District Ranger



Project Budget

Table 1. — Summary of Non-Federal and Federal Funding Sources

Funding Sources	Amount
Non-Federal Entities	\$0
Non-Federal Subtotal	\$0
Requested Reclamation Funding	\$290,014

Table 2. — Budget Summary

Budget Summary			
6. Budget Object Category	Total Cost	Federal Estimated Amount	Non-Federal Estimated Amount
a. Personnel	\$58,274		
b. Fringe Benefits	\$21,740		
c. Travel	\$0		
d. Equipment	\$0		
e. Supplies	\$0		
f. Contractual	\$210,000		
g. Construction	\$0		
h. Other Direct Costs	\$0		
i. Total Direct Costs	\$290,014		
i. Indirect Charges	\$0		
Total Costs	\$290,014	\$290,014	\$0
Cost Share Percentage		100%	0%

Budget Narrative

Personnel:

Personnel					
Position Title	Time (Hrs or %)	Rate (Hr or Salary)	Total Cost	Rate Basis	Comments
Chief Executive and Science Officer Y1	220	\$58	\$12,731	Current hourly rate	hourly rate based on current rate for personnel occupying this position
Chief Operating Officer Y1	160	\$48	\$7,680	Current hourly rate	hourly rate based on current rate for personnel occupying this position
Chief Executive and Science Officer Y2	180	\$60	\$10,753	Current hourly rate + 3% increase	increase based on the average annual increase for all personnel occupying this position
Chief Operating Officer Y2	160	\$49	\$7,910	Current hourly rate + 3% increase	increase based on the average annual increase for all personnel occupying this position
Chief Executive and Science Officer Y3	180	\$62	\$11,124	Current hourly rate + 3% increase	increase based on the average annual increase for all personnel occupying this position
Chief Operating Officer	160	\$50	\$8,075	Current hourly rate + 3% increase	increase based on the average annual increase for all personnel occupying this position
Total			\$58,274		
Additional Narrative/Comments: Kristin Gardner, Chief Executive and Science Officer (CESO) has a current hourly rate of x, not including fringe benefits. Project tasks that will be performed by the CESO include coordination and oversight for Task B (West Fork Master Plan) and Task C1 (West Fork Master Plan Designs). The number of hours for the CESO will decline after year 1 because Task B will be complete. The CESO's oversight of Task C1 will continue in years 2 and 3. Emily O'Connor, Chief Operating Officer (COO) has a current hourly rate of x, not including fringe benefits. Project tasks that will be performed by the COO include coordination and oversight for Task C2 and oversight of the grant including compliance with reporting requirements. The COO's level of effort for years Y1-Y3 will remain consistent. Both the CESO and the COO typically receive an annual cost of living increase that averages 3%.					

Fringe Benefits:

Fringe Benefits				
Position Title	Compensation	Quantity	Total Cost	Comments
Chief Executive and Science Officer Y1-Y3	\$24.00	580	\$13,920	FICA 7%, Unemployment 1%, WCI 1%, medical and dental 7%, retirement 6%, holidays and leave 8%
Chief Operating Officer Y1-Y3	\$17.00	460	\$7,820	FICA 6% Unemployment 1%, WCI 1%, medical and dental 6%, retirement 6%, holidays and leave 6%
Total			\$21,740	
Additional Narrative/Comments: The fringe benefit rate for the CESO is 30% of the estimated employee compensation. The yearly fringe benefit rate for the CESO is approximately \$4,640. The fringe benefit rate for the cOO is 26% of the estimated employee compensation and costs approximately \$2,606 per year.				

Travel: No travel expenses are included in the budget.

Equipment: No equipment expenses are included in the budget.

Supplies: No supply expenses are included in the budget.

Contractual:

Contractor Name	Purpose and Contracting Method	Total Cost	Description of costs	Basis of cost
Restoration Plan Consultant, WGM	West Fork Master Plan (Phase 3)	\$40,000	personnel costs	quote from current consultant working on the plan
Design & Engineering Consultant	Development of West Fork Master Plan project designs	\$70,000	personnel costs	average fees of consultants based on previous designs
Design & Engineering Consultant	Development of Gallatin River Restoration Strategy project designs	\$100,000	personnel costs	average fees of consultants based on previous designs
Subtotal		\$210,000		

Additional Narrative/Comments: Based on past contracts for design work the typical design ranges from \$20-\$60K depending on the scope of work. For our estimates we anticipate spending approximately \$35K for each design. \$70K = 2 designs from the West Fork Master Plan and \$100K = 3 designs from the Gallatin River Restoration Strategy.

Construction: No construction expenses are included in the budget.

Other Expenses: No "other expenses" are included in the budget.

Indirect Costs: No indirect costs are included in the budget.

Attachment – Recommended Application Components

Environmental and Cultural Resource Considerations

This project will include some field work and drone aerial photography; however, this work is not anticipated to impact the surrounding environment.

- No earth-disturbing work will occur that will affect the air, water, or animal habitat in the project area.
- No species listed or proposed to be listed as a Federal threatened or endangered species, or designated critical habitat will be impacted by the project.
- No wetlands or other surface waters will be impacted by the project.
- The proposed project does not involve a water delivery system, irrigation system or any buildings, structures, or features in an irrigation district.
- There are known archeological sites in the proposed project area. These areas are identified on maps so that the project team can work to avoid impacts to the sites.
- The project will not have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations.
- The project will not limit access to, and ceremonial use of, Indian sacred sites or result in other impacts on Tribal lands.
- The project will not contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area.

Required Permits or Approvals

GRTF has entered into a challenge cost-share agreement (21-CS-11011100-017) with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Forest Service, Custer Gallatin National Forest under the authority: Department of Interior and Related Agencies Appropriation Act of 1992, Pub. L. 102-154. The purpose of the agreement is to document the cooperation between the parties to work collaboratively to achieve a common mission in the management of the Gallatin River watershed in accordance with the annual Operating and Financial Plan developed by both parties. No additional permits or approvals are required for the proposed activities.

Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement

GRTF will likely submit funding proposals to support the Project to the following funding sources:

- Forest Service Cost Share Agreement - Expected Funding Decision March 2025
- Big Sky Resort Area District - Expected Funding Decision June 2025

We do not anticipate that any awarded funds would be duplicative of the funding requested from Reclamation because there are multiple site-specific projects in need of funding and it is possible to keep the scope of work separate for different funding sources. If GRTF is awarded any funding with overlapping activities, we will notify the CWMP Program Coordinator immediately.

Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement

No actual or potential conflict of interest exists at the time of grant submission.

Uniform Audit Reporting Statement

As a non-profit organization, GRTF does not expend \$750,000 USD or more in Federal award funds during our fiscal year. If this were to change for any reason we would submit a Single Audit report through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse's Internet Data Entry System.

Letters of Support

Letters of support for the Project are included from the Water Forum Steering Committee and the Custer Gallatin National Forest.

Official Resolution

If selected, GRTF will provide prior to award an official resolution adopted by our organization's board of directors to commit GRTF to the financial and legal obligations associated with receipt of a financial assistance award under this NOFO.