



## *Thanks for your support of the BTWC!*

2018 was another great year for the long-term health of the Big Thompson River! Here at the Big Thompson Watershed Coalition, we are gearing up for 2019. Our success at improving the Big Thompson River and its surrounding forests and lands would not be possible without support from community members like you. During the holiday season of giving and reflection, we wanted to thank each of you for your help and support to improve and steward the Big Thompson Watershed.

Below is a short note from a BTWC supporter and participant in the Waltonia River Project, Beth Low, which gives a great account of what the BTWC has been up to in 2018 and the type of work we will continue in 2019. *We hope this holiday season that you will consider donating to the BTWC, like Beth and many others who support a healthy Big Thompson River and Watershed.*

You can increase the value of your contribution by making it part of Colorado Gives Day on December 4. This annual statewide incentive fund is one of the largest in the country. **Here's how it works:** If a nonprofit organization receives 10 percent of the total amount of money raised on Colorado Gives Day, that same nonprofit receives 10 percent of the \$1 Million Incentive Fund. In other words, you get a multiplier effect.

**You can schedule your donation for December 4<sup>th</sup> ahead of time by clicking [here](#).**

We are enormously grateful for your support.

With many thanks,  
*~The BTWC Board of Directors and Staff*

Colorado Gives Day  
COMMUNITY FIRST FOUNDATION  
12.04.18  
1STBANK Corporate Partner  
BIG THOMPSON WATERSHED COALITION

Your donation supports  
*A healthy Big Thompson watershed for today and future generations*  
make your donation TODAY at  
[www.coloradogives.org/BigThompsonWatershedCoalition/overview](http://www.coloradogives.org/BigThompsonWatershedCoalition/overview)

**Hear more from Beth about her experience in Waltonia and with the BTWC below.**

"On September 7, 2013, I drove up the Big Thompson Canyon to close up the family summer cabin. It was a beautiful fall day and there was a slight breeze. The blue sky and the gold colors of the foliage were calendar perfect. I drained the plumbing and took care of all the tasks which come with winterization and then sat on a rock by the river to enjoy the sun. Less than a week later life changed.

I am a third generation landowner in the Big Thompson Canyon, specifically in Waltonia, an area located 2 miles above Drake, Colorado. I was 14 years old when Colorado was celebrating it's Centennial on August 1, 1976. That was the day after the catastrophic flood which claimed the lives of 143 people in the canyon. My dad was in his 50s. Now that I am in my 50s I have had to again contend with the flood waters from September 13, 2013 of the Big Thompson River. Rebuilding after TWO 500 year flood events is not something one expects to do in their lifetime. The question now is not will it happen again, but when? We live in a different era of climate dynamics with higher density development which drains more water into the river. There are more intense storms and more people who are affected by flood events today.

Rebuilding after the 2013 floods yielded much different results than in 1976. Why?

The sense of community was stronger because of the efforts of a stakeholder group which came together known as the Big Thompson River Restoration Coalition. This original coalition of government, private landowners, and non-profit organizations established teams of technical advisors to visit sections of river, providing ecological and restoration recommendations for rapid

and comprehensive approach to restoring a healthy, resilient watershed in the Big Thompson Canyon. Today, that original group has become **Big Thompson Watershed Coalition**, <http://www.bigthompson.co/>, and has completed over 13 major projects throughout the canyon, helping to fill the gap of restoration for hundreds of people who call the canyon their home in small communities all along the Big Thompson River. Waltonia was one of these communities. Beginning in October of 2016 through this past September, Waltonia and Mountain Shadow residents have worked closely with the Big Thompson Watershed Coalition to assess, design and implement the restoration and resilience of this stretch of the river. The results are stunning. Here is the report with before and after pictures which show the magnitude of the work: [http://www.bigthompson.co/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/SuccessStories\\_Waltonia\\_MS12\\_fin.pdf](http://www.bigthompson.co/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/SuccessStories_Waltonia_MS12_fin.pdf)

The Waltonia and Mountain Shadows projects improved protection of multiple homes along the river in Waltonia and Mountain Shadows neighborhoods, as well as recreating the natural habitat of aquatic life and the scenic beauty of the area.

Waltonia was established in 1908 by conservation minded folks who valued the use and protection of the natural mountain area. Whether it be fishing, hiking, or taking in the scenic views in the canyon, Waltonia and the Big Thompson Watershed Coalition share common values of conservancy and resilience of the natural beauty of the area. BTWC is a small but mighty group who is passionate about ensuring that restoration happens AND they are one of the most fiscally responsible small non-profits that I know of. **Creating a healthy watershed** (*the area of land where all of the water that falls in it and drains off of it goes to a common outlet; a watershed consists of surface water--lakes, streams, reservoirs, and wetlands--and all the underlying ground water*) **is of the utmost importance!**

**That is why I am asking for your support of the Big Thompson Watershed Coalition on Colorado Gives Day, December 4, 2018! The work done in the past and needed for the future will continue to RESTORE, SUSTAIN and ENGAGE through partnerships and input from the communities who are dependent upon the waters of the Big Thompson. Every dollar counts, please take a moment to support the future of our watershed and come and enjoy the beauty!** [https://www.coloradogives.org/BigThompsonWatershedCoalition/overview"](https://www.coloradogives.org/BigThompsonWatershedCoalition/overview)

*~Beth Low, Waltonia Property Owner*



### **ANOTHER GREAT WAY TO SUPPORT BTWC THIS HOLIDAY GIVING SEASON!**



Scheels Outdoor Store is running a campaign on Facebook where you can nominate BTWC as your favorite community non-profit. Nominate BTWC as your favorite environmental community group [here](#).

Scheels will select 15 winners from the campaign to receive a cash donation ranging from \$2500 to \$5000. Nominations are live on Facebook starting Tuesday November 27th through Colorado Gives Day (Tuesday Dec 4th), **Nominate BTWC today and help us continue watershed projects and events in the Big Thompson!**

### **NEW FACES AT THE BIG THOMPSON WATERSHED COALITION**

Recently, several great new Board Directors and staff have joined our team. Read on to learn more about these new faces at the BTWC. As always, we continue to meet the third Wednesday, every other month, at Northern Water in Berthoud from 4-6 pm. All meetings are open to the public, and we are always looking for new members to join the team! Questions? Contact BTWC Board President [David Jessup](#), or BTWC Director [Shayna Jones](#)

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## **New Board Directors - Welcome New Board Directors Larry Rogstad and Shayle Sabo**

Larry Rogstad is adapting to retirement after 37 years as a Wildlife Manager for Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Larry has been involved with varied work along the Big Thompson and lower South Platte for many, many years and looks forward to learning more about, being involved with and mostly just appreciating this stunning watershed and those who love it now and in the future.



Shayle Sabo, formerly a BTWC Advisory Member, works for the Larimer County Office of Emergency Management as an Emergency Management Coordinator. She also oversees the Larimer Connects Program, which seeks to build resilience and social capacity county-wide through outreach, education, and grassroots mobilization efforts.



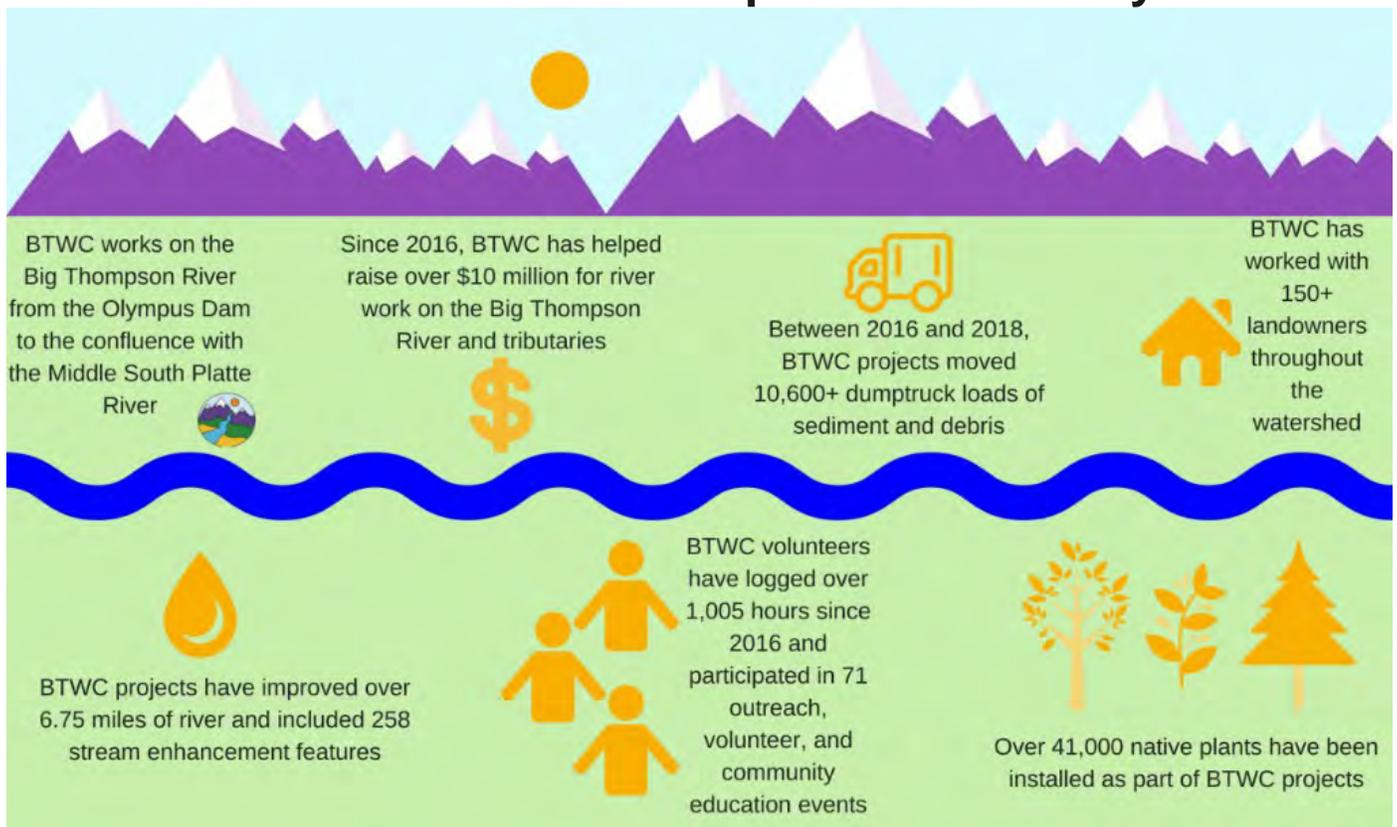
Interested in learning more about our BTWC Board of Directors and Advisory Members? [Click here](#)

## **BTWC Welcomes Courtney Gutman as its new Project Manager!**

Courtney brings ten years of habitat restoration, monitoring, community engagement, and outdoor education experience to our team. As a restoration project manager for Audubon California she fell in love with habitat resilience adaptations and community supported initiatives that prepare both wild and human communities for a changing environment. Having recently completed a M.S. degree in Conservation Leadership from Colorado State, she looks forward to a fruitful career with communities in the Big Thompson and the BTWC. Make sure to come say "Hi" if you see Courtney out and about our project sites and meetings.



## **What has the BTWC been up to the last few years?**



## *Coming in 2019:*



Learn more about two new river and ditch improvement projects near Loveland, including downstream of Glade Rd, and near Namaqua Park

Tour the BTWC's first Forest Restoration and Wildfire Mitigation Demonstration Project at Round Mountain Trailhead in the Big Thompson Canyon



Join us in ongoing monitoring, and volunteer planting and weeding days at BTWC project sites completed in 2017-2018

Construction of the Fishing Pier near Waltonia is underway! We are planning the Grand Opening event for Spring 2019! Stay tuned for more details!



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***Happy Holidays and thanks again for all you do to support the Big Thompson Watershed Coalition!***

***Big Thompson Watershed  
Coalition Staff***

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