



BWTF board members Sue Barton and Mike Richter collect aquatic insects as part of the BWTF community water quality monitoring program. You too can get your feet wet and help BWTF monitor the health of the Gallatin watershed. For more information contact BWTF at (406) 993-2519 or kristin@bluewatertaskforce.org

Winter/Spring 2010

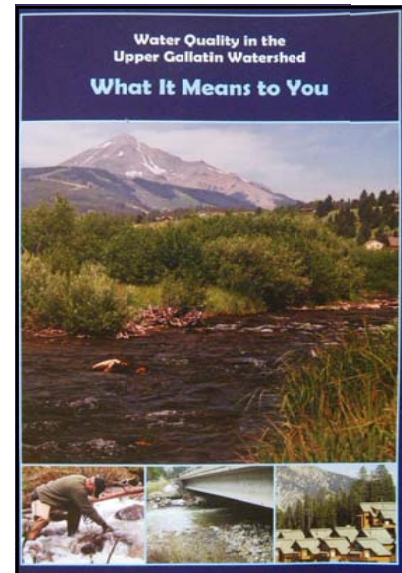
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A special thank you to **Highline Partners** of Big Sky and **North Star Consulting** of Bozeman for donating a portion of their profits to BWTF as part of the one percent for the planet program. For more details, check out www.onepercentfortheplanet.org.

Hot off the Press : BWTF publication releases the results of a 3 year water quality study

► This spring, BWTF released a new publication, "Water Quality in the Upper Gallatin Watershed — What it Means to you", which reveals the results of a three year water quality study conducted in the Big Sky area as part of the Montana Department of Environmental Quality's (MTDEQ) Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) program. BWTF is the liaison between the Big Sky community and the MTDEQ for the TMDL program. The study found that rivers and streams of the upper Gallatin watershed including the Big Sky area are relatively clean, however there are some areas of concern that could affect aquatic life and stream recreation. Elevated levels of nitrogen, algae, and sediment (sand and dirt) were found in some streams. To find out more details, including information on what you can do to make a difference in the water quality of our streams and rivers, please contact BWTF to obtain a hard copy of the pamphlet or download a copy at www.bluewatertaskforce.org under the "Document Libraries" tab.



BWTF receives state grant to investigate nitrogen sources to the Upper West Fork

► BWTF received a \$32,000 grant from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality to fund a study to investigate sources of high levels of nitrogen in the upper West Fork of the Gallatin River. High levels of nitrogen cause excess algae to grow in streams. Excess algae can deplete dissolved oxygen levels, harming fish and their main food source, stream insects. This summer BWTF will collect extensive ground and surface water nitrogen data as well as algae data. Results of the study are expected to be released in the spring of 2011.

Gallatin Local Water Quality District Expands Service Area

By Tammy Crone, Water Quality Specialist

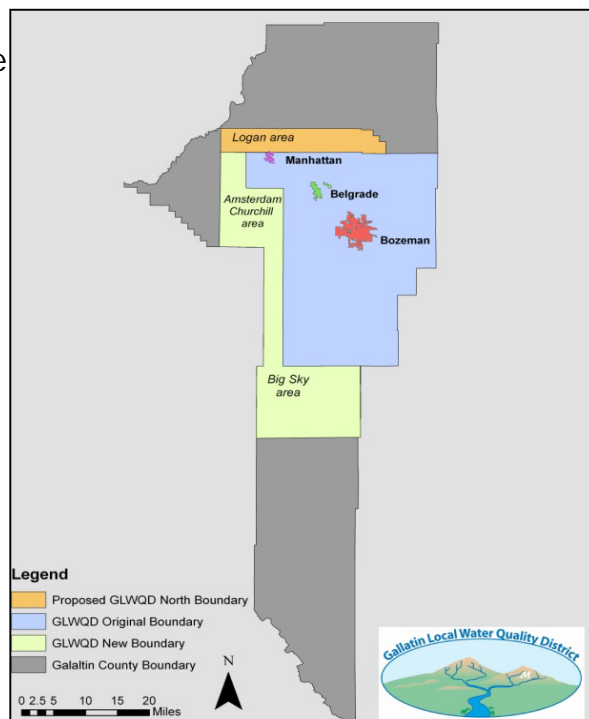
▶ In February, the Gallatin Local Water Quality District (GLWQD) Board of Directors approved expanding the District's boundary to the west to include the Amsterdam/Churchill area and to the south to include the Gallatin County portion of Big Sky. Expanding the service area north to include the Logan area is currently under consideration.

These boundary changes will allow GLWQD to assist residents with well water testing, monitor ground water and surface water quality, promote safe disposal of hazardous chemicals, conduct public education on water resource topics, and conduct special studies to evaluate water quality issues in these areas. District staff members are available to assist residents in the new GLWQD boundary by forwarding valid complaints to agencies responsible for enforcement of water resource regulations.

The mission of the GLWQD (created by the Gallatin County Commission in 1997) is to protect, preserve and improve ground water and surface water. Service efforts are focused on research, monitoring, education, outreach, and serving as a clearinghouse for water resource information. A non-regulatory department of Gallatin County, the GLWQD does not enforce regulations, issue permits or charge fines.

To maximize resources, GLWQD partners with other agencies and organizations to study local water issues and conduct outreach activities in water education. For example, Well water testing kits are available for domestic well owners at our office as part of a cooperative program with MSU-Extension Water Quality. Currently, GLWQD is working with local water quality districts in the State to raise awareness of streamside area protection, and completing a study in partnership with the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology (MBMG) to screen for pharmaceuticals and personal care products in ground water, surface water and wastewater.

GLWQD has also established a ground-water monitoring network consisting of 52 wells. The network includes GLWQD monitoring wells and wells in the MBMG State-Wide Monitoring Network. Water levels are monitored monthly to quarterly. Periodic water quality sampling is also conducted. Recently, a number of the wells were screened to look for volatile organic compounds. Water level and water quality data can be viewed at MBMG Ground-Water Information Center (GWIC) www.mgmggwic@mtech.edu or by visiting the GLWQD website www.gallatin.mt.gov/GLWQD and clicking on "Water Quality Data". Efforts to expand the monitoring network will include wells in the new service areas. For more information on local water resources, check out our website or contact us at 582-3148. Our office is located at 1709 W. College Street, Suite 104 in Bozeman.



The new boundary of the Gallatin Local Water Quality District now includes the Big Sky area.

Calling runners of all ages — come support local rivers and streams at the first annual Run for the Rivers

▶ Saturday, May 29th marks the first annual Run for the Rivers event taking place in Bozeman. There will be a 10k, 5k, and 1 mile kids fun run that start at 9:00am, 9:15am, and 9:30am, respectively. Proceeds will benefit three local groups working on water issues: the Blue Water Task Force, the Greater Gallatin Watershed Council, and the Montana Water Course. For more information on the race course, registration, volunteering to help, or sponsorships go to: www.runfortherivers.com.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

On any BWTF activities please contact:

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The mission of the Blue Water Task Force is to protect and preserve the health of the Gallatin River Watershed.