

2020 Impact Report



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From left to right: Ellie, Andrea, Scott, Heather, Charlie, Estelle, Doug, and Katie

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Katie Vennie - Communications + Outreach
Andrea Price - Restoration Coordinator
Ellie DeVos - Big Sky Watershed Corps Member
Jenny West - Bookkeeper

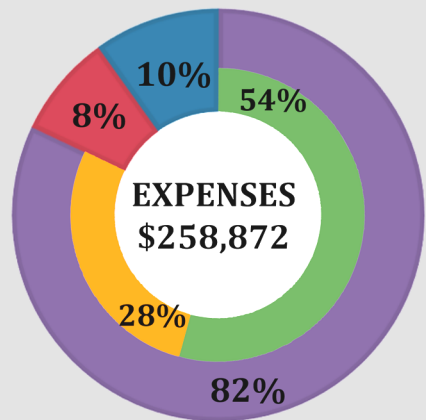
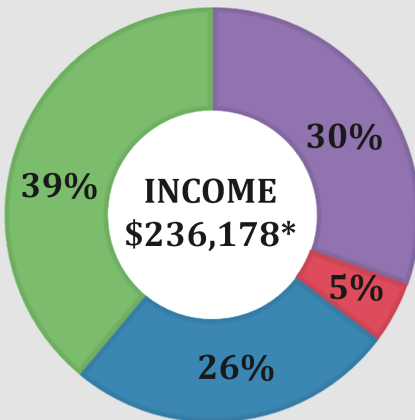
Agriculture Advisors

Dan Huls + Dan Severson

*Cover picture of Skalkaho Creek
courtesy of Estelle Shuttleworth*

All others courtesy of staff

2020 Financial Summary



- Individual Donors
- Corporate Donations + Earned Income
- Foundations + Private Grants
- State + Federal Grants

- Programs
- Education
- Projects
- Operations
- Fundraising

* Does not include \$24,500 of COVID relief funding from the PPP SBA Loan

Advancing Conservation

I am proud to say that every year at the Water Forum I see more conservation successes, more education, and more connections within our watershed community. 2020 was no different (at least on those fronts).

Our Big Sky Watershed Corps member and staff deepened relationships with teachers to find the best way to continue reaching students with quality watershed education. Our Projects Committee and Restoration Coordinator worked tirelessly to make sure we could break ground on Skalkaho Bend in 2021. Our board of directors engaged in strategic planning to guide our efforts for the next five years. And as always, our community stepped up to invest in the work.

We're grateful for all that you do to keep clean water in the Bitterroot for agriculture, recreation, and wildlife. After all, it's the people who believe in this work that make it all possible. Cheers to another great year for restoration and education!



Heather Barber
Executive Director



Work along the Burnt Fork

We partner with landowners to find solutions that address their needs and benefit water resources at the same time.



On the Burnt Fork we are working with Jay Meyer on his family ranch.

This year we will add plants and improve on cattle crossings to expand on activities from last year, like:

- Streamside fencing—to protect vegetation and the streambanks
- Protecting existing vegetation from wildlife nibbling with browse protectors
- Planting native trees and shrubs to add diversity and help reduce erosion
- Establishing an off-site watering system that will reduce cattle impact on the stream AND help make Jay's grazing operation even more efficient



Making Connections



Bringing the community and local schools together to learn about our water resources is vital.

Our Earth Stewardship Program participants, seventh graders from area schools, received virtual lessons throughout the winter and into spring.

A virtual field trip included six stations, with a new lesson on conservation easements made possible by a partnership with the Bitter Root Land Trust. Students learned about topics that ranged from Fire Ecology to Macroinvertebrates.

We also engaged youth in conservation with our project at Skalkaho Bend Park. Students from HHS Envirothon, B.E.A.R, 8th grade Earth Science classes, and more, got to experience restoration in action.



These connections are essential for building knowledge and encouraging the next generation of water stewards.

Top left: Hamilton 8th graders during educational planting day.

Bottom right: Hamilton High Schoolers collecting willows.



Preserving Skalkaho Bend Park

In March of this year we broke ground on “Roots Against Erosion” at Skalkaho Bend Park in Hamilton.

Over the past 25 years, the Bitterroot River at Skalkaho Bend Park has been migrating eastward, taking with it roughly one acre of park land every five years.

The Water Forum partnered with the City of Hamilton to address the rapid erosion on site.

The Project:

- An excavator dug a shallow swale/depression
- Nursery plants and willow cuttings were planted densely throughout this swale
- The planted area was surrounded by temporary 8-ft tall wildlife fencing, with openings to allow wildlife and park visitors to cross through
- All disturbed areas were re-seeded with a native seed mix



Within a few years, the plants will grow into a lush green swath; when the river eventually reaches the planted area, their roots will provide strength against the forces of flowing water.

Project Statistics:

Project length — 1,600 feet

Nursery plants — 950

Willow cuttings — 9,000

Volunteer hours — 1,000+



Thank you everyone who has helped make this project possible!

THANK YOU TO

In Memory of Alan Abel
Howard Anderson &
Pam Little
Kyle Anderson
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the next page*





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GIVE A MONTHLY OR STAND ALONE GIFT to support clean water in the Bitterroot through restoration and education

ONLINE	BY MAIL	IN PERSON
brwaterforum.org	Bitter Root Water Forum PO Box 1247 Hamilton, MT 59840	178 S 2nd St in Hamilton

GIVE THE GIFT OF YOUR TIME volunteering on our restoration projects, helping with events, or lending a hand in the office

BITTER ROOT WATER FORUM ACCEPTS PLANNED GIFTS

Make the greatest impact possible for cold, clean waters in your lifetime and for future generations

Types of planned gifts include, but are not limited to:
Stocks, bequests, and the Montana Endowment Tax Credit

Please contact Heather with questions about any of these types of gifts.

heather@brwaterforum.org | 406-375-2272

***Provided for informational purposes only; not intended to be tax or legal advice.*

Prior to making a planned gift to the Bitter Root Water Forum, please consult a qualified financial advisor.

BITTER ROOT
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PO Box 1247
Hamilton, MT 59840
www.brwaterforum.org
406-375-2272



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