

# CLARK FORK COALITION



## STRATEGIC PLAN | 2013-2017





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## OUR MISSION

The Clark Fork Coalition is dedicated to protecting and restoring the Clark Fork River basin.

## OUR VISION

The Clark Fork Coalition envisions a future when the Clark Fork River system flows with clean, cold, and abundant waters that ensure the people, fish, and wildlife of the region flourish for generations to come. We work toward the day when policies and practices fully support this vision and when the basin's residents are engaged in active caretaking of their local rivers and streams.





# introduction

## THE NEXT 5 YEARS

The Clark Fork Coalition's **Strategic Plan, 2013 – 2017** builds on 27 years of experience and success working to protect and restore the waters of the Clark Fork River basin, along with the human communities and wild habitats they sustain. This plan reflects the idea that water is central to everything we care about in the West. And it incorporates the view that the rivers carrying this essential element define our landscapes, drive our economies, connect our communities, and provide for people, fish, and wildlife in countless ways. At the Coalition, we believe that protecting and

restoring these “ribbons of life” forms a compelling, logical, and effective organizing principle for building a sustainable future in our region.

As the Coalition moves toward its fourth decade as “the voice for clean water and healthy rivers,” we recognize that we are at a historic crossroads in an ecologically-crucial reach of the West. The removal of Milltown Dam and the launch of large-scale Superfund cleanups in the Upper Clark Fork and Blackfoot drainages means the door is now open to a nationally significant restoration from the river's headwaters to its mouth at Idaho's

Lake Pend Oreille. We will see few opportunities as broad as this one, with its unparalleled capacity for revitalizing river systems, reconnecting wildlife corridors, energizing local economies, and engaging people in the health of their backyard streams.

Yet this is a time-limited opportunity. Between a shifting climate, lingering pollution problems, urbanization, and increasing demands for dwindling water supplies, we are seeing a convergence of threats that put our region's waters, landscapes, communities, and western lifestyles at risk in ways that can be hard to mitigate and manage.

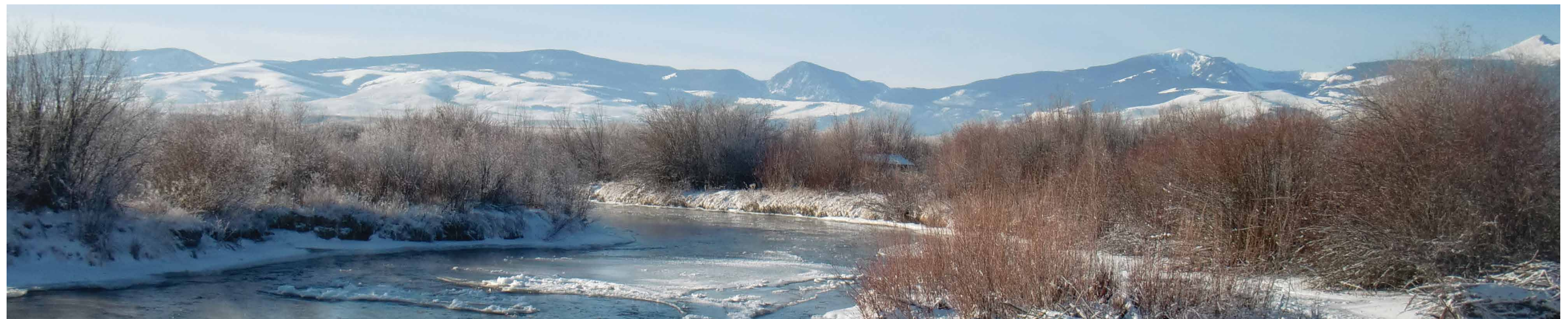
The Coalition is responding to these challenges in this Strategic Plan with a focused and integrated framework that keys in on these complementary priorities:

- ▶ protect clean water strongholds and intact reaches of the basin,
- ▶ restore ecological integrity to degraded waterways and damaged river corridors, and
- ▶ engage people in sustaining these efforts, now and into the future.

We believe these actions could be successfully applied and

deliver results throughout our 14 million acre watershed. However, specific reaches—namely, the Upper Clark Fork, Bitterroot, and Middle Clark Fork, along with the Blackfoot's headwaters and the lower river's Rock Creek area—present particularly timely and unique openings for impact these next 5 years, because resources invested can be leveraged for maximum basin-wide impact. Although this plan concentrates energies in specific reaches, the Coalition will remain alert to threats and opportunities that arise elsewhere within the basin, and respond accordingly.

This Strategic Plan incorporates feedback and ideas from Coalition members, partners, and stakeholders interviewed for our strategic planning process. As a result, the board and staff of the Coalition believe the Plan reflects what our constituents look to us to provide, and sets a positive and proactive conservation agenda focused on water. Furthermore, we believe this Plan will allow us to expand our impact for the benefit of people, rivers, and wildlife now and into the future.





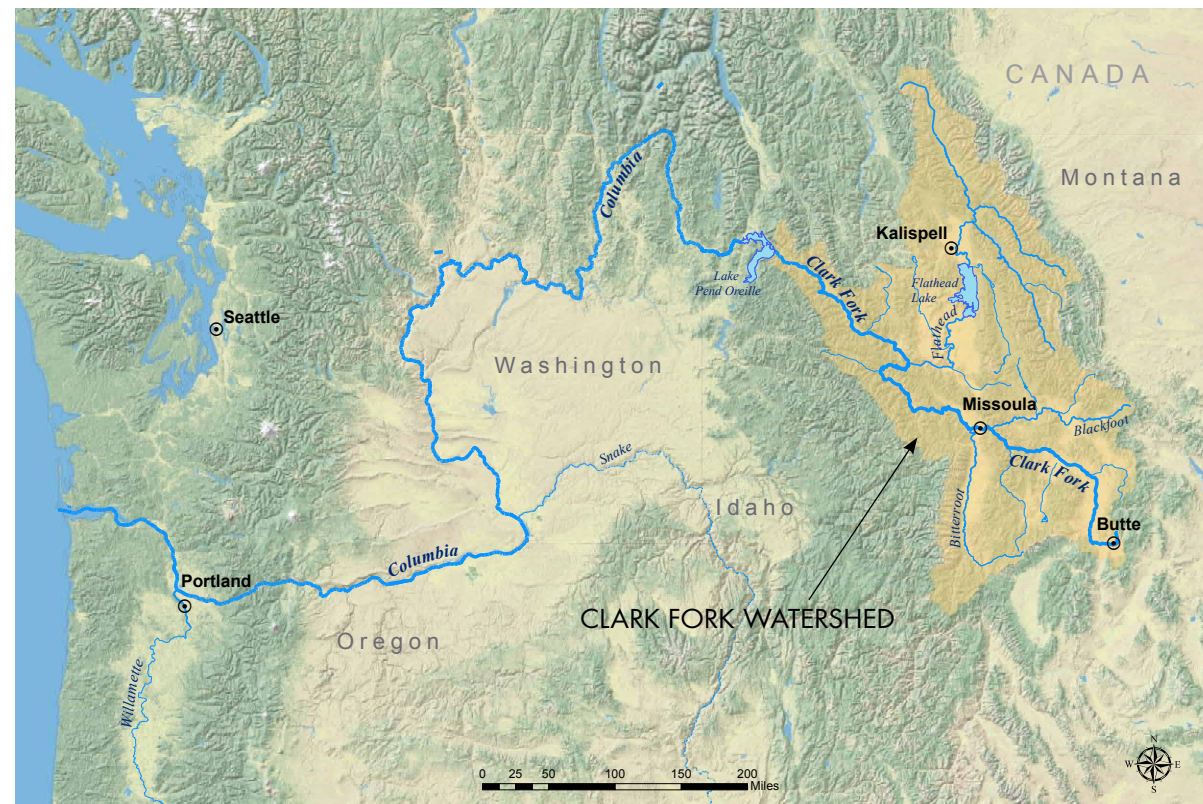
# introduction

## OUR METHODS

The Clark Fork Coalition formed in 1985 to protect and restore the Clark Fork River basin—an ecologically significant and culturally vibrant area making up the eastern headwaters of the Columbia River system, and draining 28,000 miles of creeks and streams in western Montana and northern Idaho. We view challenges and opportunities through a wide-range lens and in a holistic manner. To improve

the health of the waters we all share, the Coalition emphasizes collaborative partnerships and the involvement of our 2,700 members. Our methods are grounded in science, enriched by diverse viewpoints, geared towards results, and informed by the belief that the health of our waterways and the health of our communities are inextricably linked.

## OUR RIVER BASIN



## OUR FRAMEWORK FOR IMPACT

To achieve our vision, the Coalition will invest in the following interconnected initiatives:

**PROTECT**  
clean water  
strongholds, past  
gains, and ongoing  
restoration  
investments

**RESTORE**  
resiliency and  
improve the vital  
signs of our  
waterways

**SUSTAIN**  
the momentum and increase the Coalition's  
capacity to achieve the vision

**ENGAGE**  
and inspire people  
to care for the waters  
that provide  
for us all



# strategic plan

## PROTECT



### GOAL:

Protect clean water strongholds, past gains, and ongoing restoration investments.

### STRATEGIES:

**1. Shape policy:** Work in high-impact partnerships to develop and promote policies, rules, and tools for protecting clean water, river health, and aquatic resources.

- ▶ Engage in local, state, and federal initiatives, planning processes, and proposals that have openings to improve water quality, wetlands, river habitats, and key watersheds.
- ▶ Participate in broad collaborations to protect public and private lands that are critical to watershed health.
- ▶ Advocate for state policies that protect streamflows and give landowners and agencies improved flexibility to keep more water in rivers.
- ▶ Strengthen regulations, land-use practices, and land-management incentives that promote river-friendly development and sustainable groundwater use.

- ▶ Uphold and expand the use of existing laws and nutrient standards to protect water quality and prevent damage to water resources.
- ▶ Oppose initiatives that undercut the goals of maintaining clean water and healthy rivers.
- ▶ Support continued funding to prevent, monitor, and manage the spread of harmful aquatic invasive species.
- ▶ Provide technical assistance to citizens and policymakers to catalyze efforts that protect water quality and enhance water supplies.
- ▶ Serve as an information clearinghouse on potential new threats to clean water and policy actions that could impact the basin's natural assets. 💧

### 2. Activate solutions:

Prevent activities that could undo past gains or irreversibly degrade the basin's waters.

- ▶ Promote legal, regulatory, and financial solutions for solving pollution problems stemming from defunct or abandoned mines and industrial sites.
- ▶ Protect the basin's waters from damaging impacts of new mineral development, with a particular focus on the Rock Creek and Montanore mining proposals and Copper Cliffs explorations.
- ▶ Track emerging threats and cleanup opportunities in the basin. 💧





# strategic plan

## RESTORE



### GOAL:

Restore resiliency and improve the vital signs of our waterways.

### STRATEGIES:

#### 1. Build dynamic

**partnerships:** Activate the unique potential of local communities and agricultural landowners to lead the way on restoration actions that ensure long-term protection of restored areas.

- ▶ Incorporate community perspectives, values, and expertise into restoration visions for strategically important areas.
- ▶ Convene, coordinate, and maintain diverse partnerships around a shared restoration agenda that tackles water quality, water quantity, habitat improvements, and long-term management in priority watersheds.
- ▶ Build relationships with the agricultural community and other landowners to ensure projects support their operational needs, in addition to delivering conservation benefits. 💧

#### 2. Implement on-the-ground

**restoration projects:** Engage landowners and partners in direct rehabilitation of priority watersheds.

- ▶ Execute our integrated restoration strategy for the Upper Clark Fork, which aims to re-water, rehabilitate, and reconnect a targeted network of tributaries feeding the section of mainstem river undergoing Superfund cleanup. (See Appendix 1, *Aquatic Restoration Strategy for the Upper Clark Fork* for actions and benchmarks.)
- ▶ Participate in the Natural Resource Damage Program and provide full-service project management and technical support to ensure settlement funds deliver results that benefit fish, wildlife, and natural assets in the Upper Clark Fork.

- ▶ Carry out our restoration strategy for the Bitterroot, with an emphasis on augmenting our existing water contracts with additional flow, habitat, and fish passage projects. (See Appendix 2, *Strategic Restoration in the Bitterroot* for actions and benchmarks.)
- ▶ Identify watershed vulnerabilities in the Middle Clark Fork, and design and implement a package of restoration projects with public and private partners.
- ▶ Develop meaningful metrics and put in place monitoring protocols for measuring, evaluating, understanding, managing, and telling the story of our work to make key watersheds clean, healthy, and whole. 💧

#### 3. Create a cleanup and restoration success story at Dry Cottonwood Creek Ranch:

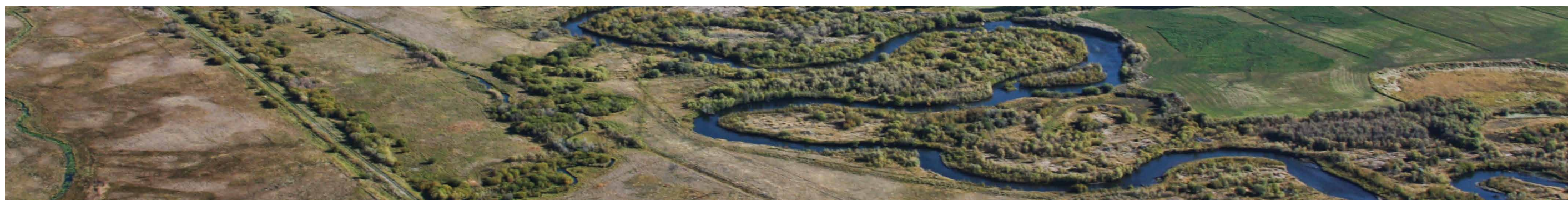
Pioneer a successful DCCR cleanup and rehabilitation that will be a centerpiece of a nationally-significant ecosystem restoration effort and a driver for broader basin-wide renewal. (See Appendix 3, *Dry Cottonwood Creek Ranch, Vision 2020* for actions and benchmarks.)

- ▶ Facilitate a successful Superfund cleanup of toxic mining waste and floodplain restoration along the stretch of river corridor flowing through our ranch.
- ▶ Create a learning site that explores the intersection of conservation and agriculture.
- ▶ Partner with ranchers to drive ecological and economic revitalization forward in the Upper Clark Fork. 💧

#### 4. Clean up pollution

**sources:** Remove environmental stressors that impair water quality and limit the Clark Fork's ability to achieve its natural potential.

- ▶ Ensure Superfund cleanup is scientifically and technically top-notch along the Upper Clark Fork, and that contaminant removals minimize disruption to affected landowners.
- ▶ Supply technical expertise for discussions and decisions on how best to clean up and redevelop abandoned mines, unresolved Superfund sites, and other contaminated areas polluting waterways. Priorities include: remove the tailings dam from the Blackfoot at Mike Horse Mine; fix water contamination problems stemming from the Beal Mountain Mine; and advocate for full cleanup and redevelopment at the shuttered Smurfit-Stone mill site along the Clark Fork. 💧





# strategic plan

## ENGAGE



### GOAL:

Foster an ethic of water stewardship that inspires people to care for and protect clean water, and respond to emerging challenges, now and into the future.

### STRATEGIES:

#### 1. Inspire stewardship:

Create enduring connections between people and their waterways in ways that increase knowledge, grow participation, and inspire leadership in the vital work of caring for clean water and irreplaceable rivers. (See Appendix 4, *Partners for Clean Water*, which outlines the Coalition's work in this area.)

- ▶ Invest in youth to create a durable conservation constituency that ensures the Coalition's efforts will endure and successes are sustained.
- ▶ Build community participation by connecting the basin's residents to ways they can care for the creeks and rivers that sustain us all.
- ▶ Give people opportunities to acquire skills, knowledge, and tools for fixing streams and protecting the waters we all share.
- ▶ Tap into the expertise of diverse partners to create new synergies, build collaborations, provide unique perspectives, and consolidate networks in water stewardship. 💧

#### 2. Foster a sense of river community:

Establish and emphasize connections among communities in priority watersheds to build a shared focus, create cohesion, and provide a focal point for life, commerce, and recreation in the Clark Fork basin.

- ▶ Grow participation (>10% annually) and expand the geographic reach of the annual *River Cleanup* in Missoula, while supporting cleanups and river festivals in other reaches of the watershed.
- ▶ Make the *Affinity Float* for disadvantaged children available to youth programs in rural reaches of the watershed.
- ▶ Resurrect and retool the *Milltown-to-Downtown* float/celebration and expand involvement to communities at the Clark Fork-Blackfoot confluence and upriver.
- ▶ Promote *Dry Cottonwood Creek Ranch* as a community learning site and gathering place where diverse groups can research, monitor, and witness cleanup, restoration, agriculture, conservation, and the ways we are all connected by water. 💧

#### 3. Promote awareness of climate change and motivate proactive responses:

Generate and share knowledge about the impacts of climate change in the Clark Fork watershed, and help the basin's waterways and communities adapt to and prepare for a changing future.

- ▶ Spark basin-wide discussion via forums, online tools, video, and publications about how best to help our rivers and communities buffer impacts of global warming.
- ▶ Prepare communities and river systems for the impacts of climate change by coordinating a cross-sector agenda for identifying watershed vulnerability, building resiliency, and conserving resources in the Middle Clark Fork Basin. (See Appendix 5, *Missoula County Climate Change Primer*, which guides the Coalition's work in this area.)
- ▶ Build alliances with agencies, elected officials, businesses, irrigators, and utilities to advance solutions that address climate stressors and sustainable resource use.

- ▶ Integrate climate science into the Coalition's protection and restoration strategies to ensure new policies and restored waterways stand up to predicted changes.
- ▶ Localize global climate change data and adaptation strategies, and make information accessible and engaging to the public and educators.
- ▶ Model proactive strategies for energy and water efficiencies that reduce the Coalition's carbon impact. (See Appendix 6, *Climate Action Business Plan*.) 💧





# strategic plan

## SUSTAIN



### GOAL:

Scale up the capacity of the Coalition to achieve ever-greater impact and address the long-term needs of the Clark Fork basin.

### STRATEGIES:

#### 1. Communicate for success:

Convey the value of the Coalition's work in ways that are clear, consistent, and compelling, and that attract and retain support.

- ▶ Develop and implement annual communications plans geared toward attracting and engaging members, increasing participation in conservation projects and learning opportunities, and helping achieve the Coalition's conservation and engagement goals.
- ▶ Create an internal structure that facilitates consistent and integrated messaging across all communication vehicles, including social media, websites, blogs, eBlasts, newsletters, earned media, grants, member correspondence, radio.
- ▶ Create innovative resource materials and social media that help people participate in conservation issues, projects, and learning opportunities.

- ▶ Conduct annual membership, partner, and stakeholder research and analysis to better understand our audiences and message around their interests.
- ▶ Periodically revisit the Coalition's brand image as the "voice for clean water and healthy rivers" and reinforce through communications.
- ▶ Emphasize marketing, branding, and corporate partnership opportunities afforded by the Coalition's 30th Anniversary in 2015.
- ▶ Ensure coverage of the Coalition's messages and stories in relevant local, regional, and national media and emphasize restoration successes by highlighting the multiple benefits for local economies and community health. ♦

#### 2. Finance the vision:

Secure the necessary funding to achieve our program goals and provide for long-term stability.

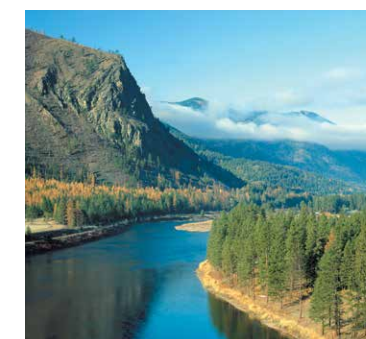
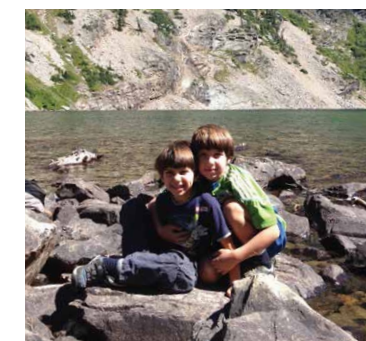
- ▶ Design and implement a 5-year fundraising effort to meet the Coalition's funding needs.
- ▶ Create and execute annual development plans with complementary strategies that leverage public, private, and corporate grants, major gifts, sponsorships, memberships, events, earned income, e-philanthropy, web-based giving, and endowments.
- ▶ Identify, develop, and set goals for income diversification.
- ▶ Increase annual operating income from \$1 million to >\$1.3 million.
- ▶ Increase reserve funds to a range of 6 – 8 months of operating cash.
- ▶ Develop and implement a planned giving campaign.
- ▶ Design and launch an endowment campaign. ♦

#### 3. Expand the organizational bandwidth:

Develop a mature, effective, stable organization poised to deepen programmatic impact and promote basin-wide health on a more meaningful scale.

- ▶ Enhance board capacity for meaningful engagement in governance, oversight, outreach, and fundraising through committees, task forces, field trips, trainings, and evaluations.
- ▶ Assess board member composition relative to the Coalition's strategic priorities each year, and establish recruitment criteria accordingly.
- ▶ Provide top-notch resources for staff to foster creativity and excellence, including trainings, software, supplies, and field equipment.
- ▶ Hire permanent staff as needed to deliver program goals, and supplement with part-time or temporary employees and/or contractors.
- ▶ Create and implement a succession plan to ensure sustainable and effective leadership.
- ▶ Contract with an accounting firm to conduct annual audits.

- ▶ Periodically review and update organizational documents, including personnel policies, internal controls procedures, investment plans, bylaws, board committee charters, board and employee manuals, and board skills inventories. ♦





STAFFING

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
SUSTAIN TEAM					
Executive Director	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Development & Communications Dir.	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Development Associate	0.50	0.50	0.50	1.00	1.00
Office Manager	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Associate Director	--	--	1.00	1.00	1.00
TOTAL SUSTAIN STAFF	3.00	3.00	4.00	4.50	4.50
ENGAGE TEAM					
Outreach Director	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Learning Coordinator	0.50	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Outreach Assistant	intern	intern	intern	0.50	0.50
TOTAL ENGAGE STAFF	1.50	2.00	2.00	2.50	2.50
PROTECT & RESTORE TEAM					
Science Director	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Stream Restoration Director	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Legal Director	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Project Manager	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Project Manager	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Ranch Foreman	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Field Technicians	interns	interns	interns	interns	interns
Stewardship Manager	--	--	--	0.50	1.00
TOTAL P&R STAFF	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.50	7.00
TOTAL STAFFING	10.50	11.00	12.00	13.50	14.00

FUNDING

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
PROJECTED INCOME					
Earned Income	290,000	300,000	325,000	340,000	350,000
Foundation Grants	333,000	355,000	375,000	400,000	410,000
Government Grants	240,000	260,000	270,000	280,000	285,000
Membership Contributions	135,000	150,000	180,000	210,000	235,000
Sponsorships & Events	52,000	55,000	75,000	70,000	70,000
TOTAL	\$1,050,000	\$1,120,000	\$1,225,000	\$1,300,000	\$1,350,000
PROJECTED EXPENSES					
Advertising & PR	10,000	12,000	20,000	15,000	15,000
Equipment, Software	7,500	7,500	8,000	8,000	8,000
Fees & Insurance (Bank, condo, liab)	16,000	16,000	16,500	17,000	18,000
Legislature	2,000	-	5,000	-	5,000
Meetings	8,000	8,500	9,000	9,500	10,000
Mortgage Interest	20,000	19,500	19,000	18,500	18,000
Office Supplies	4,000	4,000	4,500	5,000	5,000
Outreach Events	17,000	20,000	25,000	22,000	25,000
Postage & Shipping	5,000	5,000	4,500	4,500	4,000
Printing & Reproduction	10,000	10,000	15,000	10,000	10,000
Product Costs	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
Professional Fees	90,000	91,000	95,000	97,500	100,000
Quick Response Fund	45,000	50,000	50,000	55,000	60,000
Repairs & Maintenance	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Salaries, P/R Taxes & Benefits	736,000	795,000	870,000	950,000	980,000
Subscriptions, Dues & Sponsorships	8,000	8,000	8,500	8,500	9,000
Telephone	12,000	12,500	12,500	13,500	13,500
Travel, Meals & Lodging	32,000	33,000	34,000	37,000	40,000
Utilities, Carbon Offsets	5,000	5,500	6,000	6,500	7,000
TOTAL	\$1,050,000	\$1,120,000	\$1,225,000	\$1,300,000	\$1,350,000



# BOARD & STAFF

as of January 2013

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sarah Bates	President
Cindy Poett	Vice President
Stuart Goldberg	Secretary
Tim Polich	Treasurer
Nick Babson	Missoula, MT
John Beighle	Missoula, MT
Beth Brennan	Missoula, MT
Trent Baker	Missoula, MT
Jim Flynn	Anaconda, MT
Cameron Lawrence	Missoula, MT
Paul Moseley	Missoula, MT
Paul Roos	Lincoln, MT
Traci Sylte	Missoula, MT
Beth Schenk	Missoula, MT
Germaine White	St. Ignatius, MT

## STAFF

Jill Alban	Outreach Director
Chris Brick, PhD	Science Director
Andy Fischer	Project Manager
Barbara Hall	Legal Director
Karen Knudsen	Executive Director
Ellie Long	Outreach Assistant
Will McDowell	Stream Restoration Director
Pat Ortmeyer	Development & Communications Director
Maggie Schmidt	Ranch Foreman
Liz Underwood	Development Associate
Jed Whiteley	Project Manager

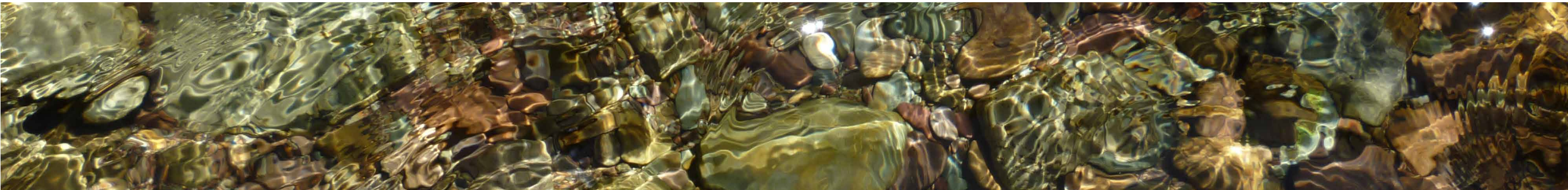
## TECHNICAL ADVISORS

Matt Clifford, Esq.  
Jim Kuipers, P.E.  
Vicki Watson, PhD

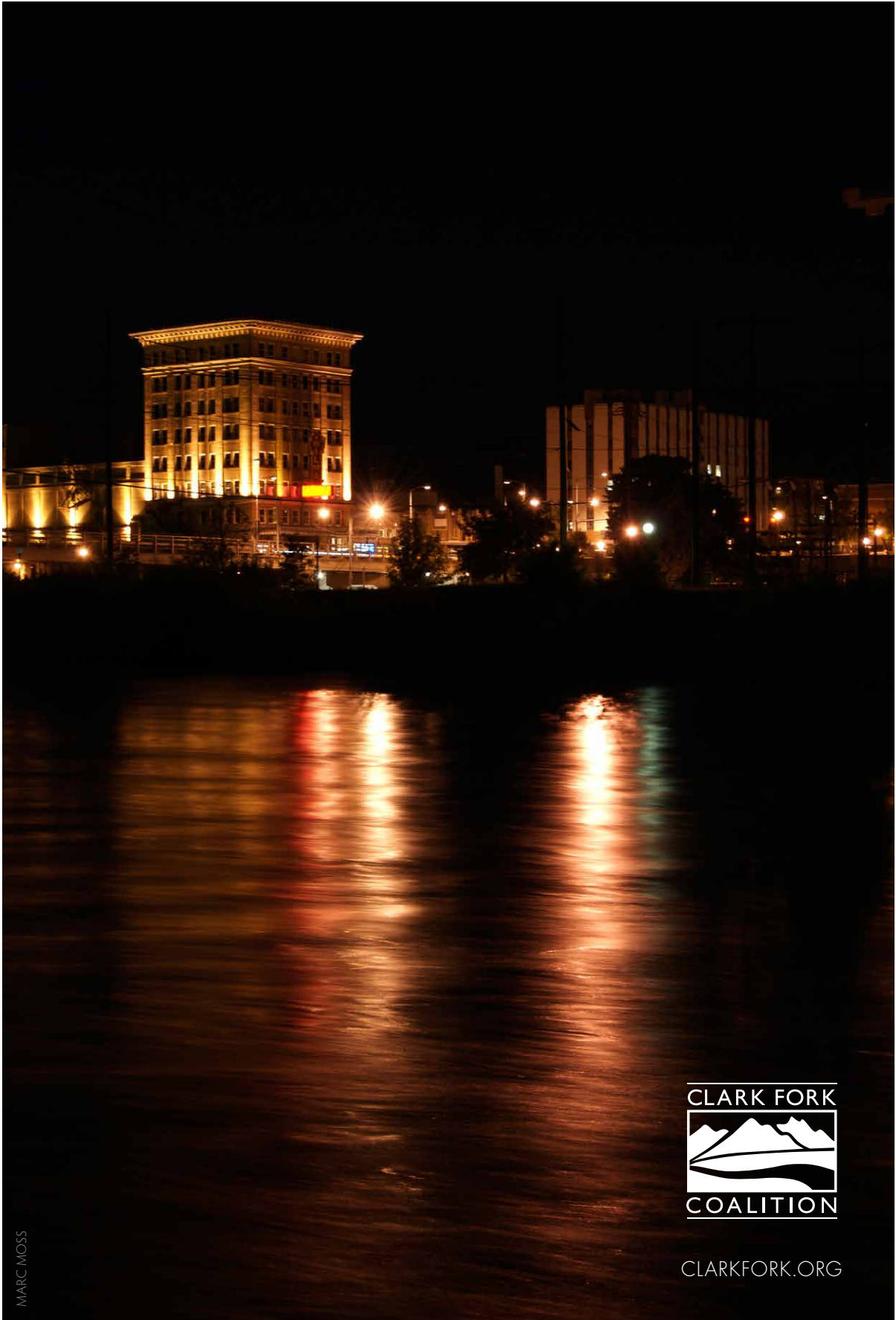
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