



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Subject: BIG THOMPSON WATERSHED FORUM ENHANCES MONITORING PROGRAM**

The Big Thompson Watershed Forum is expanding its cooperative water quality monitoring and assessment program that covers the Big Thompson River, its tributaries, canals and Horsetooth Reservoir. The river supplies water to the Town of Estes Park and the Cities of Loveland, Greeley, Fort Collins and other water districts. In 2008, the program is adding an additional sampling site, two new parameters at all sites and increasing the frequency of monitoring.

Ed Young, Chairman of the Forum's Board of Directors, commented, "Water quality monitoring has always been the Forum's primary activity. The Board, in consultation with retiring Executive Director Rob Buirgy, has decided to make a strategic adjustment in the Forum's goals for 2008. As we prepare for our next Director, we will be temporarily reducing some of our educational and restoration activities. Thanks to Rob and his leadership, we have an excellent track record to build on and we have concrete goals to make the Forum even better, more cost effective and more targeted to the critical issues in our basin."

Mr. Young said that the current Program Manager Zack Shelley has been promoted to Monitoring and Assessment Program Director. "Zack has demonstrated tremendous initiative in orchestrating the 2008 monitoring plan with partners as diverse as the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District, local municipalities, the U.S. Geological Survey, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and a network of committed volunteers. The Board and all of the Forum's major funders are pleased to have a person of Zack's caliber to manage and grow with the monitoring and assessment program."

Rob Buirgy, a founding member of the Forum and Executive Director, announced his resignation in November 2007. Mr. Buirgy believes that an intentional, well-timed transition from the founding director is essential for a healthy organization, adding that "this is the right time for us to take this important step. The past 12 years have been an auspicious beginning for the Forum, and I am very grateful for the experiences we've shared. With our strong Board membership and Zack Shelley to provide the experienced staffing for our key programs, the Forum is well positioned to accomplish its goals."

The mission of the Big Thompson Watershed Forum is to protect and improve water quality in the Big Thompson River Watershed through collaborative monitoring, assessment, education and restoration. The Forum fosters stakeholder teamwork by conducting scientifically sound watershed assessment, identifying priority protection measures, educating affected interests, and promoting voluntary practices that protect the quality of Big Thompson waters. The Forum monitors nutrients, pathogens, metals and other physical parameters, and annually reports on the health of the watershed.

For details on the 2008 sampling plan and more information about the Forum, visit [www.btwatershed.org](http://www.btwatershed.org). Zack Shelley may be reached at 970-613-6163.

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