



Mancos Conservation District

3-Year Plan (2017 to 2019)

For More Information Contact: Gretchen Rank at 970-533-7317

Organization of the Mancos Conservation District

Conservation Districts are political subdivisions of the State of Colorado –The authorities; powers and structure are contained in Colorado Revised Statutes, Title 35, Article 70.

The Mancos Conservation District was organized under the authority of the Colorado Soil Conservation District law. The Mancos Conservation District was established on August 31, 1948. Tourism, farming, and ranching constitute the major industries in the Mancos area.

Function of the Mancos Conservation District

To make available technical, financial and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land manager with conservation of water, soil and related natural resources.

Mission of the Mancos Conservation District

The mission of the Mancos Conservation District is to promote the long-term sustainable use and protection of the natural resources of the Mancos River Watershed by providing educational opportunities for residents and financial and technical assistance to landowners and managers seeking to meet conservation goals.

Trends Impacting Conservation in the Mancos Conservation District

- Trends toward proper soil and range management, understanding of conservation practices and proper lawful water usage and improving sustainability and profitability.
 - Trends toward smaller property allotments and the production of food for human consumption instead of other agricultural products.
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Natural Resource Data

Land Ownership: 61,400 acres privately owned; 68,400 acres US Forest Service; 23,800 acres Bureau of Land Management; 1,700 acres County and State land; 700 acres Bureau of Reclamation.

Land Usage: 16,000 acres irrigated hay fields and pastures; 400 dry cropland; 45,000 acres range and woodland.

Conservation Easements: 5,500 acres in conservation easements.

Prioritized Natural Resource Issues & Goals

- **Watershed Health**

Goal: Improve watershed health through education, partnership collaboration and identify opportunities for building resilience in the watershed.

Objective 1: Lead in the growth and reconnection of the Mancos River Watershed Group to ensure we have clean water for future generations.

Objective 2: Continue to refine the river management plan for assessed concerns for the Mancos Watershed.

Objective 2: Continue and improve upon the water quality database and involve and educate students and landowners regarding the watershed plan.

- **Water Quality and Quantity**

Goal: Improve water quality/quantity and conservation practices through education and on-the-ground projects.

Objective 1: Continue with education outreach through IWM workshops.

Objective 2: Continue to assess past diversions on the Mancos River and research future projects.

Objective 3: Meet with current ditch companies and assist them to qualify for design and construction. Complete projects as funding allow.

- **Soil Health**

Goal: Educate local landowners on the importance of soil health and implementation of practices.

Objective 1: Educate local landowners on the following: cover crops, reduced tillage and no till practices, grazing management, how to address specific soil health concerns, the connection between a lack of soil health and noxious weeds, and invasive species issues.

Objective 2: Increase outreach and soil health practices over a three year period.

Natural Resource Information /Education Priorities and Goals

Goal: It is imperative that landowners and partners are able to find information about the district as easily as possible. Mancos Conservation District also realizes that agriculture is disappearing from our way of life in the Mancos Valley and its heritage is not understood by youth. The knowledge base of how to produce food and fiber needs to be kept alive.

Objective 1: Continue with regular updates on our new website resources page and Facebook page that will keep information current and provide convenient information to the public we serve.

Objective 2: Continue to hold workshops that increase development and collaboration with partners and that inform and motivate landowners, agencies, the general public and future generations about the importance of water stewardship, pasture management, soil erosion and health.

Objective 3: Continue to work with local landowners and school-age students to educate them about their natural resources and further develop awareness of conservation practices and opportunities.

Objective 4: Continue to partner with the NRCS and hold our Local Work Group Meeting once a year.

Objective 5: Continue to support Camp Rocky, the Ag Expo, 4-H and the Montezuma County Fair.

Objective 6: Continue to support, encourage and sustain the Montezuma School to Farm Project as an educational priority.

Conservation District Operational Goals & Objectives

Priorities: Visually communicating our organization's vision, mission and values concerning resource issues in the Mancos River Watershed and partner with landowners and organizations that share our goals.

Goal: Mancos Conservation District will have organizational systems, policies and procedures to ensure the Board of Supervisors and staff can effectively accomplish our mission.

Objective 1: Mancos Conservation District's official, public documents will be available to the public and posted on our website for accessibility.

Objective 2: Mancos Conservation District will encourage both Board Supervisor and staff training in areas which will assist in performing required duties.

Objective 3: Mancos Conservation District will continue to research and acquire funding that is available for accomplishing our resource goals.

Staffing Needs:

The Mancos Conservation District has 5 active and dedicated board members, each member is a volunteer and spends time on a project assigned or chosen. The 5 member board follows state statutes and governs the District and its staff, while being the voice of the local landowner and carrying out the mission of our District.

The Mancos Conservation District currently has a staff of 14 dedicated people working toward the same conservation goals, including a district manager to manage day to day operations of the district and its projects, as well as 2 conservation technicians to manage the technical and educational needs of local landowners for their on-the-ground conservation projects. District staff also includes the Montezuma School to Farm Project employees, including a director that oversees all operation and staff management; 4 school garden coordinators that teach integrated classroom lessons to 1,600 students; 5 Direct Service AmeriCorps assistant school garden coordinators; and an education manager and a production manager who both oversee curriculum and vegetable production for all school gardens.

Acronyms

BLM – Bureau of Land Management
BSP – Basin States Salinity Program
CSU – Colorado State University
CWCB – Colorado Water Conservation Board
HD CD – High Desert Conservation District
IWM – Irrigation Water Management
MIC – Montezuma Inspire Coalition
MLC – Montezuma Land Conservancy
MORP – Montezuma Orchard Restoration Project
MSI – Mountain Studies Institute
MSTFP – Montezuma School to Farm Project
MWCD – Mancos Water Conservancy District
NAU – Northern Arizona University
NPS – National Park Service
NRCS – Natural Resources Conservation Services
SWCD – Southwestern Water Conservation District
TU – Trout Unlimited
USACE – Army Corp of Engineers
USDA – United States Department of Agriculture
USFS – United States Forest Service

MANCOS CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Natural Resource Goals & Objectives

Long Range Plan for: 2017 – 2019

Natural Resource priority: Watershed Health

Why is this a concern and what is the location: Our watershed is facing several concerns, including current and future conditions of the Mancos River, wildfire and fire mitigation, and watershed education.

Three Year Goal(s): Improve watershed health through education and partnership collaboration and identify opportunities for building resilience in the watershed.

PROGRAM YEAR	MEASURABLE ANNUAL OBJECTIVES	COOPERATING AGENCY/GROUP	TIME AND FUNDING NEEDED	SOURCE OF FUNDING
2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Collaborate with landowners and partner agencies to hold two Mancos River Watershed Group stakeholder meetings a year. B. Complete the Mancos River Resilience Report through a partnership with Mountain Studies Institute, which includes the functional assessment of past studies and documentation. C. Seek funding for yearly maintenance on CoAgMet weather station and educate landowners on its technology and how it can help with Irrigation Water Management (IWM). 	NRCS, NAU, USFS, BLM, NPS, UTE TRIBE, MSI, FIREWISE, MWCD, SWCD, CSU, VOLUNTEERS	134 HOURS \$12,500	CWCB, TU, SWCD
2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Collaborate with landowners and partner agencies to hold two Mancos River Watershed Group stakeholder meetings a year. B. Plan for the next phase of the Mancos River Resiliency effort that would include determining future priorities, gaps in data assessment-and shared stakeholder goals. C. Seek funding for yearly maintenance on CoAgMet weather station and continue to educate landowners. 	NRCS, NAU, USFS, BLM, NPS, UTE TRIBE, MSI, FIREWISE, MWCD, SWCD, CSU, VOLUNTEERS	200 HOURS \$10,000	CWCB, TU, SWCD
2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Collaborate with landowners and partner agencies to hold two Mancos River Watershed Group stakeholder meetings a year. B. Repeat and expand watershed assessment using Rapid Stream Riparian Assessment Protocols. C. Seek funding for yearly maintenance on CoAgMet weather station and continue to educate landowners. 	NRCS, NAU, USFS, BLM, NPS, UTE TRIBE, MSI, FIREWISE, MWCD, SWCD, CSU, VOLUNTEERS	250 HOURS \$15,000	CWCB, TU, SWCD

MANCOS CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Natural Resource Goals & Objectives
 Long Range Plan for: 2017 – 2019

Natural Resource priority: Water Quality and Quantity

Why is this a concern and what is the location: Water is arguably the most valuable resource in the west. Current and future demands on water use and the availability of water in the valley is a concern watershed wide.

Three Year Goal(s): Maximize conservation and salinity savings and include more landowners in the Salinity Program. Assess future projects for the Mancos River and local ditch companies.

PROGRAM YEAR	MEASURABLE ANNUAL OBJECTIVES	COOPERATING AGENCY/GROUP	TIME AND FUNDING NEEDED	SOURCE OF FUNDING
2017	A. Continue to hold one IWM workshop a year. B. Continue to review all Mancos River diversion sites two times a year and assess how construction has held up. C. Continue board attendance at six ditch meetings held at the district office each year. D. Research the need for gauging systems, Mancos River Diversions Phase IV, and funding and cost share opportunities for two projects.	NRCS, BSP, USACE, CSCB(DCT), Ditch Companies	964 HOURS \$36,400	NRCS, CWCB, BSP, CSCB, SWCD
2018	A. Continue to hold one IWM workshop a year. B. Continue to review all Mancos River diversion sites two times a year and assess how construction has held up. C. Continue board attendance at six ditch meetings held at the district office each year. D. Research the need for replacing failing systems and investigate funding to assist landowners in installing new or replacing failing systems. E. Complete design for Phase IV if approval is received and begin construction.	NRCS, BSP, USACE, CSCB(DCT), Ditch Companies	1,200 \$85,000	NRCS, CWCB, BSP, CSCB, SWCD
2019	A. Continue to hold one IWM workshop a year. B. Continue to review all Mancos River diversion sites and assess how construction has held up two times a year. C. Continue board attendance at six ditch meetings held at the district office each year. D. Complete construction projects as approved.	NRCS, BSP, USACE, CSCB(DCT), Ditch Companies	2,500 \$250,000	NRCS, CWCB, BSP, CSCB, SWCD

MANCOS CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Natural Resource Goals & Objectives

Long Range Plan for: 2017 – 2019

Natural Resource priority: Soil Health

Why is this a concern and what is the location: Improving soil health improves productivity, water conservation and quality. Mancos Conservation District is seeing a decline in soil quality in the area and this will lead to erosion, poor water quality and the flourishing of invasive weed species watershed wide.

Three Year Goal(s): Educate local landowners on the importance of soil health and increase soil health practices over a three year period.

PROGRAM YEAR	MEASURABLE ANNUAL OBJECTIVES	COOPERATING AGENCY/GROUP	TIME AND FUNDING NEEDED	SOURCE OF FUNDING
2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Educate local landowners on cover crops, reduced tillage and no till practices, and grazing management, as well as address specific soil health concerns and the connection between a lack of soil health and noxious/invasive weed species issues, by holding one workshop per year. B. Start to address the noxious/invasive weed problem. C. Continue with soil training and education for MCD technicians. 	NRCS, CSU, CSCB, HMI, WARD LABS, USDA, HDCD	175 HOURS \$1,550	CSCB, NRCS
2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Continue to educate local landowners on cover crops, reduced tillage and no till practices, grazing management, how to address specific soil health concerns, and the connection between a lack of soil health and noxious/invasive weed species issues. B. Continue addressing the noxious/invasive weed problem. C. Continue with soil training and education for MCD technicians. D. Assist landowners in the implementation of soil health practices. 	NRCS, CSU, CSCB, HMI, WARD LABS, USDA, HDCD	250 HOURS \$2,750	CSCB, NRCS, USDA
2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Educate local landowners on cover crops, reduced tillage and no till practices, and grazing management, as well as address specific soil health concerns and the connection between a lack of soil health and noxious/invasive weed species issues, by holding one workshop per year. B. Continue addressing the noxious/invasive weed problem. C. Assist landowners in the implementation of soil health practices. 	NRCS, CSU, CSCB, HMI, WARD LABS, USDA, HDCD	350 HOURS \$5,000	CSCB, NRCS, USDA

MANCOS CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Natural Resource Goals & Objectives

Long Range Plan for: 2017 – 2019

Educational priority: Montezuma School to Farm Project

Why is this a concern and what is the location: Agriculture is disappearing from our way of life in the Mancos Valley and its heritage is not understood by youth. The knowledge of food and fiber needs to be kept alive.

Three Year Goal(s): Implementing a program that can be passed to the school system as a continuing curriculum and used as an education tool for our future youth.


PROGRAM YEAR	MEASURABLE ANNUAL OBJECTIVES	COOPERATING AGENCY/GROUP	TIME AND FUNDING NEEDED	SOURCE OF FUNDING
2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Build sustainable funding sources. Ensure capacity building for program in all 3 school districts. B. Facilitate 10,000 hours of experimental education hours for 1,600 pre K-12th grade students using Common Core Standards. C. Continue with school garden production areas in all 3 school districts. D. Continue with youth Farmers Markets in each school. 	Local School Districts, AmeriCorps, CSU, NRCS, MLC, MORP, MIC, La Puente, Local Support	8,800 HOURS \$202,000	USDA, Livewell, CSCB, Ballantine, Anschutz, La Puente AmeriCorps, SWCD, donations and fundraising
2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Continue 10,000 educational hours for 1,600 students through school garden classes, farm field trips, and summer farm camps. B. Connect with similar programs and local experts to increase the impact of the program. C. Continue with Youth Farmer’s markets in each school. 	Local School Districts, AmeriCorps, CSU, NRCS, MLC, MORP, MIC, La Puente, Local Support	9,000 HOURS \$200,000	USDA, Livewell, CSCB, Ballantine, Anschutz, La Puente AmeriCorps, SWCD, donations and fundraising
2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Continue 10,000 educational hours for 1,600 students through school garden classes, farm field trips, and summer farm camps. B. Further community engagement. C. Expand on current classroom features and lessons. 	Local School Districts, AmeriCorps, CSU, NRCS, MLC, MORP, MIC, La Puente, Local Support	9,000 \$250,000	USDA, Livewell, CSCB, Ballantine, Anschutz, La Puente AmeriCorps, SWCD, donations and fundraising

RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION

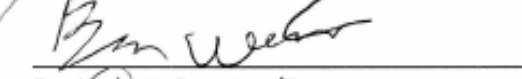
THEREFORE, Be It Resolved that this Long Range Program of the Mancos Conservation District be adopted as the official program of the District as of this 12th day of December, 2016.



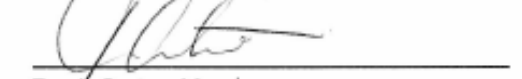
Robert Becker, President



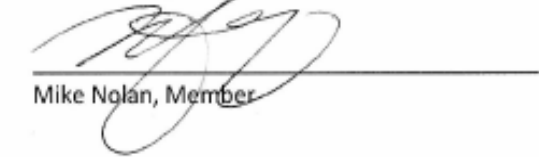
Jack Burk, Vice President



Ben Wolcott, Secretary/Treasurer



Travis Custer, Member



Mike Nolan, Member

Reviewed by the Colorado State Conservation Board

Colorado State Conservation Board, President

Cindy Lair, Program Manager

Date