



# Conservation Connection

## Events

- Sept. 12 - MCD Board of Supervisors Meeting
- Sept. 21 - River Watch Sampling
- Oct. 7 - River Literacy Lesson @ Mancos Public Library
- Oct. 31 - Nov. 2 - Community Consensus Institute Workshop (MWSMP, see below)



Photo by: Alex Krebs



## Board Member Spotlight

### Michael Nolan - President

#### 1.) What inspired you to serve on the Mancos Conservation District's Board?

I've always wanted to be in public service, and MCD seemed like a good fit. As a farmer, a farmer advocate, and someone who enjoys and applies conservation work on my farm, MCD is a great place to participate and contribute as a community member and farmer

#### 2.) What is your favorite natural resource available in the Mancos Watershed?

My favorite natural resource has to be its soil. The Mancos valley is very diverse in its soil types and uniqueness from property to property. I find that this creates both challenges and opportunities in a manner not found in many valleys in the region and it really piqued my interest in soil, soil health, and the challenges and solutions needed to build healthy soil.

#### 3.) Share a fun fact about yourself.

I grew up in Australia and moved to the US in 1989. Most of my family still resides there and I try to go back every few years to visit them in their summer (our winter)

# Mancos Watershed Stream Management Plan

## Management Plan

We are currently entering phase II of our Mancos Watershed Stream Management Plan. Continuing our work in stakeholder engagement and education will include preparing our team of technical advisors and agricultural committee for oversight. In addition, we will begin our first (of four) Community Consensus Institute Workshops to continue to bring watershed stakeholder voices to the table.

In terms of river and watershed health, we are continuing to model disaster scenarios to understand watershed hydrology with the aid of the Wilson Water group. Telemetry equipment installation is occurring at head-gates throughout the valley to give us consistent and accurate flow data. In addition, we have brought a GIS specialist in to help us complete fluvial hazard zone mapping to give insight into pre-fire actions that communities and private landowners can take to protect critical assets and infrastructure.



## Water Quality Program

The Mancos Conservation District has continued our monthly sampling with River Watch Colorado. Throughout the summer we've also been collecting macroinvertebrate samples at all of our River Watch sites. Macroinvertebrates are fantastic water quality indicators as certain species' presence tells us if pollutants are present.

## District Conservation Techs

Our District Conservation Techs (DCTs) continue to provide their expertise on engineering and design projects. While construction on some projects has been slowed down due to inflation and costs of labor and materials our DCTs have continued to assist in our field season. This includes our monthly river watch, probe calibration, beaver relocation, and culvert clean-up projects. You can read more about our DCTs [here](#).





# STAR Plus Soil Program

The Mancos Conservation District is participating in the Saving Tomorrow's Agricultural Resources (STAR) Plus program, a three year, state-wide soil health initiative that provides seven local farmers and ranchers with financial incentives to implement new soil health practices. These projects include no-till seed drilling, planting cover crops, and high intensity rotational grazing.



# Affordable Housing Project

On June 21st, 2022, the Town of Mancos, in partnership with the Mancos Conservation District, was awarded \$531,700 through the Department of Local Affairs [IHOI funding](#) to build a 2-story duplex on a vacant piece of residential property owned by MCD. This funding will allow the Town of Mancos, in partnership with the district, to increase workforce housing opportunities for families currently employed within the Town of Mancos and the Mancos Conservation District jurisdictional boundaries. While we know our project is small, we hope that this single duplex will provide great benefit to our community. For updates on our affordable housing project please see our [website](#).

# Mancos Watershed Group

The Mancos Watershed Group Leadership Team meets regularly to share updates with partners about projects happening in the watershed. A team of Technical Advisors is being formed to oversee Phase II of the Steam Management Plan as projects get underway! We are working on plans for a Fall Watershed meeting so stay tuned for more information as plans solidify!

The MWG is open to the public - for more information contact Sensa Wolcott at [mancoscd.coordinator@gmail.com](mailto:mancoscd.coordinator@gmail.com)



# Forestry

The Mancos Conservation District, in partnership with the Dolores Watershed Resilient Forest Collaborative, Wildfire Adapted Partnership, and Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, was recently awarded \$1,000,000 by the CO Department of Natural Resources through the Colorado Strategic Wildlife Action Program (COSWAP). This funding will provide targeted wildfire risk mitigation on private lands in the Mancos and Dolores watershed to increase community resilience and protect life, property, and infrastructure. Project activities include reducing fuels and increasing defensible space around homes; reducing fuels along important access and evacuation routes; supporting pile burning on private lands; thinning projects on private and Ute Mountain Ute lands; and strategic fuel breaks on private lands for community safety. For more information on CO-SWAP please go to our website's [forestry\\_page](#).



## Partner Updates



The Mancos Conservation District and neighboring High Desert Conservation District (HDCD) officially partnered in the fall of 2021. One of the first outcomes of the partnership was to hire a shared District Manager, bringing increased collaboration in both districts' operations. HDCD has partnered with Mancos CD on the STAR Plus soil health program, and both districts are working collaboratively on the HDCD's Master Land Steward Program.

**Mancos Conservation District**

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