

Southwestern Water Conservation District

2022 Action Plan

Accepted by the SWCD Board on 31 March, 2022

SP #1: In coordination with the appropriate partners, ensure SWCD remains engaged in obtaining, updating and analyzing water supply, demand and quality data necessary to address the water management challenges facing southwest Colorado.

1. Continue work with Hydros Consulting to assess current water supply and demand conditions at a subbasin scale within the San Juan and Dolores River Basins, and assess future scenarios.
2. Continue engagement in the Outstanding Waters process to ensure identified concerns are adequately addressed.
3. Evaluate SWCD stream gaging funding program, including identifying additional local, state, and federal partners to support current efforts, and consider cap on SWCD funding.

SP #2: Lead advocacy for southwest Colorado in Colorado River, interstate, and transmountain issues.

1. SWCD staff will stay engaged in Colorado River interstate discussions. This includes within Colorado (Colorado Water Conservation Board and Colorado River District), Upper Division States (via Upper Colorado River Commission), and with the seven basin states as appropriate.
2. Monthly review of water court resumes (Divisions 3, 4 & 7) to identify water applications that need further evaluation and possible action by SWCD.

SP #3: Balance meeting multiple water needs amongst a diverse set of priorities, especially when there is potential for conflict or mutual benefit.

1. Continue to work on water planning issues within San Miguel and Montrose Counties.
2. Seek opportunities to hold discussions between the SWCD Board and representatives of the Southern Ute and Ute Mountain Ute tribes.

SP #4: Support investment in improvements to existing and development of new infrastructure for multiple uses in southwest Colorado.

1. Support efforts by Redmesa Ditch & Reservoir Co. to rehabilitate Redmesa Dam.
2. Work with local entities to seek available opportunities brought by the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill (BIL) are realized. Will entail working with federal, state and local entities to identify and develop projects eligible for funding.

SP #5: Strengthen the continued professional and efficient operation of SWCD while building a culture of mutual trust and respect.

1. The SWCD board will consider adoption of a SWCD investment policy to ensure appropriate financial management of its funds. *(Completed 2/16/2022)*
2. The SWCD board will consider adoption of a SWCD travel and reimbursement policy to ensure consistency in reimbursement claims among board and staff.
3. For the 2023 budget, SWCD will work to align the priorities identified in the strategic plan and the allocation of funds in its budget.
4. In the summer 2022, hold a 1-day Board planning workshop on a topic TBD.
5. SWCD staff in conjunction with General Counsel will work to ensure we have proper contracts in place for all consultants and related work efforts.

SP #6: Cultivate SWCD credibility with decisionmakers and public through targeted outreach efforts.

1. With support and coordination from the Board, SWCD staff shall continually seek opportunities to interact with and maintain good working relationships with elected officials at the local, state and federal level as well as with District water users and constituent groups, including water conservancy districts and the Southwest Basin Roundtable.
2. SWCD Board and staff will develop an “elevator speech” and tagline that adequately summarizes SWCD’s work.
3. SWCD staff and consultants will host the 38th annual Southwest Water Seminar and partner on the 3rd annual “Water Connections” educational event with Four Corners Water Center at Fort Lewis College and SGM Consulting.
4. SWCD staff, with board direction, will begin disseminating a regular e-newsletter to increase SWCD visibility.
5. Develop multi-year strategy for compiling SWCD history to present to the Board in late 2022.