



2022 Annual Report

WHITE RIVER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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White River Conservation District

What is the function of the Conservation District?

To take available technical, financial, and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the standards and needs of the local land user with conservation of soil, water, and related natural resources. The authorities, power, and structure are contained in the Colorado Revised Statutes, Title 35, Article 70.

Mission:

To provide guidance and technical assistance to encourage and promote the wise use of natural resources within the district by private landowners and government land management agencies.

Board Members

- Marc Etchart, President
- Chris Collins, Vice President
- Bill Lake, Secretary-Treasurer
- Neil Brennan, Supervisor
- Kathy Nelson, Supervisor

Staff

- Callie Hendrickson, Executive Director
- Fayanna Seely, Office Manager
- Tristan McGee, Project Manager

Board Member & Staff Engagements in Addition to District Specific Business



BLM Resource Advisory Council



Club 20



RBC Extension Advisory Council



Miller Creek Ditch Company



Piceance Weed and Pest District



Rio Blanco Stockgrowers Association



Rocky Mountain Agribusiness Association



Upper Colorado Environmental Plant Center



White River Planning Advisory Committee



White River Technical Advisory Group



Yampa-White-Green Basin Round Table

Board member dedication!

 **1,290 Hours & 4,277 Miles**
to work on district-related natural resource issues!



A constituent driven **Long Range Plan of Work** for the White River Conservation District (WRCD)



Implementation of **locally led conservation efforts**

Drought Resiliency | Irrigation Infrastructure Improvement | White River Integrated Water Initiative | Restoration and Monitoring projects (rangeland, water, riparian) | Information and education on natural resource issues through the local newspaper, website, social media, newsletters, and demonstrations



Implementation of the **Rio Blanco Land and Natural Resources Plan and Policies (LUP)** which gives the District the power to have locally led input on federal land management issues. Examples of topics to which letters were submitted quoting policies from the LUP:

- Local BLM grazing permit renewals | Vegetation treatments | Removal of excess horses from Rio Blanco County | CO wolf introduction



Technical Assistance

- Offered at no-cost and provides the constituents with the knowledge and tools they need to conserve, maintain and restore the natural resources (soil, water, rangeland, wildlife) on their lands and improve their operations for the future. The goal is to give customers personalized advice and information to help them make informed decisions.

★ ACCOMPLISHMENTS ★

Land and Natural Resource Plan and Policies (LUP)

- ◇ The Districts and County updated the LUP. The LUP was reviewed by the local constituents and approved in 2022.
- ◇ Staff participate in weekly BLM National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) meetings.
- ◇ District staff work closely with multiple organizations such as Colorado Farm Bureau (CFB), Club 20, Colorado Association of Conservation Districts (CACD) and the Colorado Cattlemen's Association (CCA) on natural resource and policy issues. Policies in the LUP are used to provide input on policy issues and positions.

Intense Range Monitoring:

The Districts completed the 5th year of range monitoring in the Piceance East Douglas Herd Management Area (PEDHMA) to determine the forage use by species. The data collected and final analysis was instrumental in supporting the removal of the excess horses from the range in 2022. Range monitoring was expanded into West Douglas Herd Area in 2022. Range monitoring will continue to be a priority with the new BLM agreement that extends through 2027.

Coordinated Resource Management Plan (CRMP) Project:

The Districts have several completed CRMPs with public land permittees that are providing for conservation work across landownership. The Districts applied for grant funding and are working with partners to implement identified projects.

- CRMP Projects Completed in 2022 include
 - ⇒ 118 acres vegetation treatments and removal
 - ⇒ 7 water facilities
 - ⇒ 8 + miles of water pipeline
 - ⇒ 1+ miles of fencing
- CRMP planned projects include 17,490 acres of vegetation treatments, 30 water facilities, 12+ miles of pipeline and 4+ miles of fence.

Wolf Introduction: The Districts worked closely with members of the Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) to help inform the Wolf Management Plan.

- ◇ Staff attend the Colorado Parks & Wildlife Commission (CPW) meetings and provide public comment. Staff has worked to keep constituents engaged in the issue and encouraged them to provide written comments to the CPW Wildlife Commission members.
- ◇ The District staff and board members frequently communicate with SAG members to stay engaged in the process.
- ◇ The Districts are cooperating agencies with US Fish and Wildlife Service on the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) regarding Colorado Gray Wolf 10(j) Rulemaking. This provides an opportunity for government-to-government discussions and the ability to influence the documents before they are available for public comment.

White River Integrated Water Initiative (WR Initiative):

Phase II of the White River Initiative is near completion. The Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) hosted multiple public meetings to identify the following priorities for the Phase III Scope of Work (SOW):

- Water Supply Study (Return Flow)
- Upland Vegetation Management
- Water Measurement Device Demonstration Project
- Riparian and Diversion Assessments

Four grants have been written to support the implementation of these priorities for the Phase III Scope of Work.

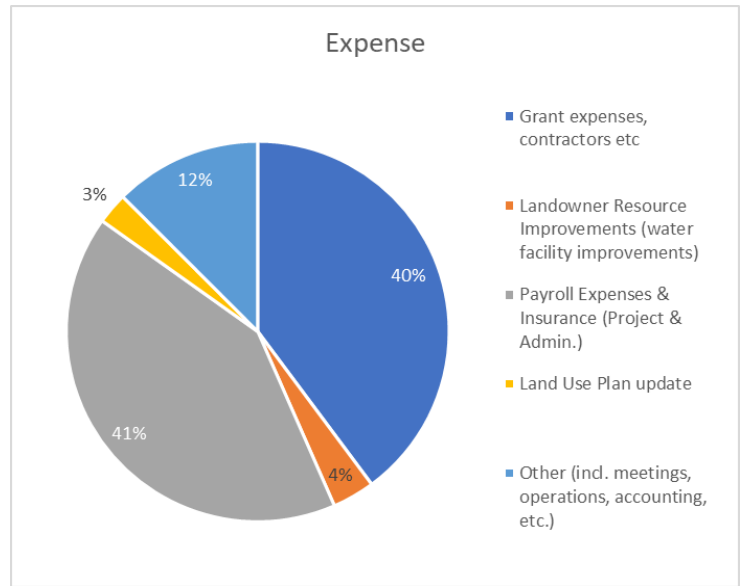
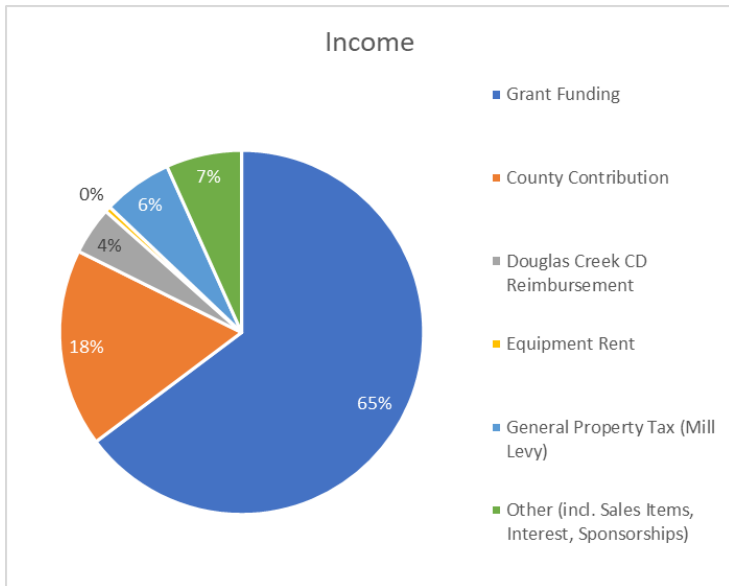
White River Algae Study:

- The USGS Algae Study presentation of the final report and the collected data is available on the Districts website at www.whiterivercd.com
- The final published USGS Algae Study reports are expected to be ran through all USGS quality control processes and available to the public by the spring of 2023.

Yampa-White-Green Basin Round Table (BRT):

District Executive Director, Callie Hendrickson, continues to serve on the BRT as the House-Senate appointee.

\$\$ Summary of 2021 Financials \$\$



Partners

Bureau of Land Management	Colorado Parks and Wildlife	Colorado River Water Conservation District	Douglas Creek Conservation District	Colorado Cattlemens Assoc	Meeker Sanitation District	Natural Resource Conservation Service
Rio Blanco County	Rio Blanco County Farm Bureau	Rio Blanco Stockgrowers Association	Rio Blanco Water Conservancy District	River's Edge West	Town of Meeker	Town of Rangely
Trout Unlimited	US Forest Service	US Geological Survey	West Slope Colorado Oil and Gas Assn.	White River Alliance	White River Conservation District	Yellow Jacket Water Conservancy District

The District funded 54 water maintenance and pond cleaning projects.

Below are 2 examples of drought resiliency projects completed.

