



Upper Arkansas Conservation District 3-Year Plan (2021 to 2023)

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BACKGROUND

Organization of the Upper Arkansas Conservation District

The Upper Arkansas Conservation District was organized under the Colorado Soil Conservation Act of 1937. Conservation Districts are political subdivisions of the State of Colorado. Authorities, powers, and structure are contained in Colorado Revised Statutes, Title 35, Article 70.

All incorporated areas devoted excessively to commercial or industrial uses, as they existed at the original time the District was formed, are excluded from the District.

Function of the Upper Arkansas 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 soil, water and related natural resources.

Mission of the Upper Arkansas Conservation District

The intent of the Upper Arkansas Conservation District is to assist landowners with land improvements on irrigation water management, ranch management, and soil erosion, while securing cost-share funding and providing natural resource education and outreach.

RESOURCE DESCRIPTION

Natural Resource Data

Land Ownership within the District:

Private Lands	201,510 acres
Federal Lands	294,414 acres
State Lands	17,000 acres

Land Uses within the District:

Rangeland	220,000 acres
Pasture/Hay land	18,000 acres
Woodland	250,000 acres
Other lands	25,000 acres

RESOURCE PLANNING

Trends Impacting Conservation in the Upper Arkansas Conservation District

Pressure from development, the sale of agricultural water (buy and dry), potential losses of grazing leases on public lands, threats to agricultural water rights, conversion of historic agricultural land to other uses, and economic conditions have impacted the viability of agriculture and closeness of the rural community.

Prioritized Natural Resource Issues & Goals

- Water Quality/Water Quantity

Goal: Ensure a resilient, sustainable water supply that protects water quality and quantity in the Upper Arkansas Conservation District

Objective: Collaborate with public and private organizations to develop a watershed health plan that protects water quality and quantity, supports agricultural operators with protection of water rights and improvement of irrigation infrastructure, provides community education about the value of the watershed and ecosystem functions and builds watershed resilience to drought, fire and flooding.

Strategy: Convene and lead an integrated watershed management planning process (IWMP) locally including an Agricultural Needs Assessment to:

- Strengthen relationships with local agricultural water users
- Better understand critical issues and priorities of agricultural producers and large landowners in the Arkansas Valley
- Identify mutually-beneficial projects that can address those needs through a collaborative approach
- Provide support for agricultural water users through education, future system optimization, and protection of existing water rights

- Soil Health/Erosion

Goal: Reduce erosion and improve soil health.

Objective: Improve soil health, infiltration rates, and strong rooted vegetation.

Strategy: Provide technical assistance, education and funding resources to support private landowners and organizations in planning and implementing projects that improve soil health and reduce erosion.

- Repair and prevention of gullies and head-cuts
- Establish living windbreaks,
- Restore/maintain streambanks, wetlands and riparian areas.

- Economic Viability of Agriculture

Goal: Support and sustain the economic viability of agriculture in the Upper Arkansas Conservation District.

Objective: Serve as a resource center connecting landowners with education, technical assistance and funding opportunities.

Strategy: Develop and lead targeted outreach and community education campaigns designed to connect agricultural producers to emerging technologies and policies regarding soil health, water security and conservation funding for agriculture

- Connect landowners with local, state and federal funding sources and opportunities
- Provide information and technical assistance on innovative educational/experimental opportunities
- Lead advanced workshops with educational materials and professional consultation tailored to landowner's unique situations to achieve higher net yields

- Engage landowners in County and Community planning initiatives to ensure awareness and opportunity for comment on issues related to impacts of development, recreation/tourism and grazing on public lands.

- Small Acreage Stewardship

Goal: Mitigate impacts of rapidly increasing urban development and division of large tracts of land into small acreage lots.

Objective: Improve land/water management (stewardship) on small acreage lots through outreach and education to new community members and small acreage landowners.

Strategy: Targeted workshops and outreach in collaboration with other community conservation organizations.

- Soil health on small acreage
- Water rights, quality and quantity
- How to be a good neighbor/Right to ranch

- Local Foods and Diversified Agriculture

Goal: Collaborate with organizations working on local foods and diversified agriculture.

Natural Resource Information /Education Priorities and Goals

Goal: Deepen our community's appreciation and understanding of agriculture and our land and water resources.

Three Annual Scholarships for 4-H, Young farmers projects
Camp Rocky scholarship
Agrisummit – support and participation
Hands for Lands Volunteers
Good Neighbors Education and Materials – Realtors and new community members
Soil Health Workshop(s)/Webinars
Small Acreage Workshop(s)/Webinars

Conservation District Operational Goals & Objectives

Increase capacity and impact of Conservation District
Board recruitment and training
Update district records and systems
Improve community engagement/communication

Staffing Needs

Current Board Members: Nancy Roberts, Brady Everett, Susan Evans, Ed Berg, Becky Longberg
Current Staff: Natalie Allio, District Manager; Joni Burr, NRCS Soil Conservationist

Goal: Grow the existing collaboration with Central Colorado Conservancy and NRCS to establish a partner program to support a full time District Manager position.

UPPER ARKANSAS CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Natural Resource Goals & Objectives

Long Range Plan for: 2021 – 2023

Natural Resource Priority: Water Quality and Quantity

Why is this a concern and what is the location: By 2035, the population within Upper Arkansas CD is expected to increase by 33%, which will result in development of limited open space and continued encroachment on agricultural operations, riparian corridors and floodplains, and increased demand for municipal water supplies. This will lead to ongoing challenges related to maintaining water rights, ditch easements, and economic factors including ever-increasing time and financial resources required to resolve conflicts with a growing population. Additionally, there are the ongoing challenges of climate change, drought, and the intensified risk of buy and dry due to the increased demand.

Three Year Goal(s): Ensure a resilient, sustainable water supply that protects water quality and quantity in the Upper Arkansas Conservation District. Support agricultural water users through education, future system optimization, and protection of existing water rights.

PROGRAM YEAR	MEASURABLE ANNUAL OBJECTIVES	COOPERATING AGENCY/GROUP	TIME AND FUNDING NEEDED	SOURCE OF FUNDING
2021	<p>A. Continue integrated watershed management planning process (IWMP).</p> <p>B. Complete an Agricultural Needs Assessment; meet with landowners, conduct site visits, compile survey data including a prioritization matrix to identify key issues.</p> <p>C. Educational workshop on agriculture water use, demand management, and water rights issues.</p>	Upper Arkansas Watershed Partnership (UAWP)	\$20,000	Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB), Common Ground, District Reserves and Direct Assistance
2022	<p>A. Complete a diversion infrastructure assessment</p> <p>B. Compilation of assessment data and identification of multi-beneficial projects(s), including prioritization matrix.</p> <p>C. Educational workshop on water quality/quantity issues in Upper Arkansas River Basin</p>	UAWP, NRCS, Ditch Association, Landowners	\$50,000	CWCB, Common Ground, EQUIP, District Reserves, Direct Assistance

2023	<p>A. Phase 1 implementation work on irrigation infrastructure project to serve as demonstration site.</p> <p>B. Identification of additional multi-beneficial project(s) and required funding sources.</p> <p>C. Educational workshop on water quality/quantity issues in Upper Arkansas River Basin.</p>	UAWP, NRCS, Ditch Association, Landowners	\$50,000	CWCB, Common Ground, EQUIP, District Reserves, Direct Assistance
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UPPER ARKANSAS CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Natural Resource Goals & Objectives

Long Range Plan for: 2021 – 2023

Natural Resource Priority: Soil Health/Erosion

Why is this a concern and what is the location: Gullies are eroding on hillsides, flash floods are occurring, silt is clogging ditches. River banks can be restored to reduce erosion and improve habitat. Windbreaks can reduce erosion and encourage plant growth. Sand Park, the South Arkansas River, Badger Creek Watershed and other areas have been affected.

Three Year Goal(s): Assist private landowners and organizations with funding and completing projects that repair and prevent gullies, establish living windbreaks, and restore or maintain streambanks, wetlands and riparian areas.

PROGRAM YEAR	MEASURABLE ANNUAL OBJECTIVES	COOPERATING AGENCY/GROUP	TIME AND FUNDING NEEDED	SOURCE OF FUNDING
2021	<p>A. Gully erosion repair project, including educational erosion control workshop</p> <p>B. Stream restoration project in Badger Creek Watershed.</p> <p>C. Collaborate with Colorado Coalition for Healthy Soils (CCHS) to explore participation in pilot Soil Health programs.</p>	Central Colorado Conservancy(CCC), Badger Creek Watershed Partnership, CCHS	\$5,000	District Reserves, Direct Assistance, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation
2022	<p>A. Gully erosion repair project, including educational erosion control workshop</p> <p>B. Stream restoration project in Badger Creek Watershed.</p> <p>C. Collaborate with Colorado Coalition for Healthy Soils (CCHS) to explore participation in pilot Soil Health programs.</p>	Central Colorado Conservancy(CCC), Badger Creek Watershed	\$5,000	District Reserves, Direct Assistance, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation

		Partnership, CCHS		
2022	<p>A. Gully erosion repair project, including educational erosion control workshop</p> <p>B. Stream restoration project in Badger Creek Watershed.</p> <p>C. Collaborate with Colorado Coalition for Healthy Soils (CCHS) to explore participation in pilot Soil Health programs.</p>	<p>Central Colorado Conservancy(CCC), Badger Creek Watershed Partnership, CCHS</p>	\$5,000	<p>District Reserves, Direct Assistance, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation</p>

UPPER ARKANSAS CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Natural Resource Goals & Objectives

Long Range Plan for: 2021 – 2023

Natural Resource Priority: Economic Viability of Agriculture

Why is this a concern and what is the location: By 2035, the population within the UACD is expected to increase by 33%, which will result in development of limited open space and continued encroachment on agricultural (30% of agricultural lands have been lost since 1982). Nine out of ten local producers state they want to keep their lands in production but express concern around sustainability in the face of challenges related to maintaining water rights, ditch easements, and economic factors including ever-increasing time and financial resources required to resolve conflicts with a growing population.

Three Year Goal(s): Serve as a resource center connecting landowners with education, technical assistance and funding opportunities to support and sustain the economic viability of agriculture in the Upper Arkansas Conservation District.

PROGRAM YEAR	MEASURABLE ANNUAL OBJECTIVES	COOPERATING AGENCY/GROUP	TIME AND FUNDING NEEDED	SOURCE OF FUNDING
2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Lead advanced workshop(s) with educational materials and professional consultation tailored to landowner’s unique situations to achieve higher net yields B. Provide information and technical assistance on innovative educational/experimental opportunities C. Connect landowners with local, state and federal funding sources and opportunities D. Engage landowners in County and Community planning initiatives to ensure awareness and opportunity for comment on issues related to impacts of development, recreation/tourism and grazing on public lands 	CCHS, NRCS, Landowners, Envision Chaffee County, Chaffee County Planning Commission, CCC	\$2,500	NRCS, Common Ground, District Reserves, Direct Assistance
2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Lead advanced workshop(s) with educational materials and professional consultation tailored to landowner’s unique situations to achieve higher net yields B. Provide information and technical assistance on innovative educational/experimental opportunities C. Connect landowners with local, state and federal funding 	CCHS, NRCS, Landowners, Envision Chaffee County, Chaffee County Planning	\$2,500	NRCS, Common Ground, District Reserves, Direct Assistance

	<p>sources and opportunities</p> <p>D. Engage landowners in County and Community planning initiatives to ensure awareness and opportunity for comment on issues related to impacts of development, recreation/tourism and grazing on public lands</p>	Commission, CCC		
2023	<p>A. Lead advanced workshop(s) with educational materials and professional consultation tailored to landowner's unique situations to achieve higher net yields</p> <p>B. Provide information and technical assistance on innovative educational/experimental opportunities</p> <p>C. Connect landowners with local, state and federal funding sources and opportunities</p> <p>D. Engage landowners in County and Community planning initiatives to ensure awareness and opportunity for comment on issues related to impacts of development, recreation/tourism and grazing on public lands</p>	CCHS, NRCS, Landowners, Envision Chaffee County, Chaffee County Planning Commission, CCC	\$2,500	NRCS, Common Ground, District Reserves, Direct Assistance

UPPER ARKANSAS CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Natural Resource Goals & Objectives

Long Range Plan for: 2021 – 2023

Natural Resource priority: Small Acreage Stewardship

Why is this a concern and what is the location: There is an increasing number of small acreages with owners unfamiliar with managing land and water resources.

Three Year Goal(s): Improve land/water management (stewardship) on small acreage lots through outreach and education to new community members and small acreage landowners.

Strategy: Targeted workshops and outreach in collaboration with other community conservation organizations.

- Soil health on small acreage
- Water rights, quality and quantity
- How to be a good neighbor/Right to ranch

PROGRAM YEAR	MEASURABLE ANNUAL OBJECTIVES	COOPERATING AGENCY/GROUP	TIME AND FUNDING NEEDED	SOURCE OF FUNDING
2021	A. Co-host a one or two-day workshop with CSU Extension focused on small acreage design and management (Living on the Land on Small Acreages Curriculum) B. Participate in Guidestone’s AgriSummit C. Distribute “Good Neighbors” brochure. D. Increase number of small acreage landowners in UACD membership.	NRCS, CSU Extension, CCC, Landowners, Guidestone	\$500	District Reserves, Direct Assistance, and sponsors/donations

<p>2022</p>	<p>A. Co-host a one or two-day workshop with CSU Extension focused on small acreage design and management (Living on the Land on Small Acreages Curriculum) B. Participate in Guidestone’s AgriSummit C. Distribute “Good Neighbors” brochure. D. Increase number of small acreage landowners in UACD membership.</p>	<p>NRCS, CSU Extension, CCC, Landowners, Guidestone</p>	<p>\$500</p>	<p>District Reserves, Direct Assistance, and sponsors/donations</p>
<p>2023</p>	<p>A. Co-host a one or two-day workshop with CSU Extension focused on small acreage design and management (Living on the Land on Small Acreages Curriculum) B. Participate in Guidestone’s AgriSummit C. Distribute “Good Neighbors” brochure. D. Increase number of small acreage landowners in UACD membership.</p>	<p>NRCS, CSU Extension, CCC, Landowners, Guidestone</p>	<p>\$500</p>	<p>District Reserves, Direct Assistance, and sponsors/donations</p>

* Use of acronyms – **please spell out each acronym the first time it is used followed by the acronym. From that point on, use only the acronym.**

UPPER ARKANSAS CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Natural Resource Goals & Objectives

Long Range Plan for: 2021 – 2023

Natural Resource priority: Local Foods and Diversified Agriculture

Why is this a concern and what is the location: The community wants to build a more locally-based, self-reliant food economy and encourage diversified agriculture. This will enhance the economic, environmental, and social health of our area.

Three Year Goal(s): Assist, support and collaborate with organizations working on local foods and diversified agriculture

PROGRAM YEAR	MEASURABLE ANNUAL OBJECTIVES	COOPERATING AGENCY/GROUP	TIME AND FUNDING NEEDED	SOURCE OF FUNDING
2021	A. Support efforts in the community – Chaffee Local Food Coalition B. Participate in curriculum planning meeting for third annual Beginning Farmers class offered by CSU Extension	Chaffee Local Food Coalition (CLFA), CSU Extension	time	District Reserves, Direct Assistance, CSU Extension, and sponsors/donations
2022	A. Support efforts in the community – Chaffee Local Food Coalition B. Participate in curriculum planning meeting for third annual Beginning Farmers class offered by CSU Extension	CLFA, CSU Extension	time	District Reserves, Direct Assistance, and sponsors/donations
2023	A. Support efforts in the community – Chaffee Local Food Coalition B. Participate in curriculum planning meeting for third annual Beginning Farmers class offered by CSU Extension	CLFA, CSU Extension	time	District Reserves, Direct Assistance, and sponsors/donations

Education Goals & Objectives

Long Range Plan for: 2021 – 2023

Education priority: Expand appreciation and understanding of agriculture and our land and water resources

Why is this a concern and what is the location:

Three Year Goal(s): Annually partner with schools on conservation education projects. Assist with teacher trainings. Offer scholarships for student projects and regional events.

PROGRAM YEAR	MEASURABLE ANNUAL OBJECTIVES	COOPERATING AGENCY/GROUP	TIME AND FUNDING NEEDED	SOURCE OF FUNDING
2021	A. Three Annual Scholarships for 4-H, Young farmers projects B. Camp Rocky scholarship C. Agrisummit – support and participation D. Hands for Lands Volunteers E. Good Neighbors Education and Materials – Realtors and new community members	Guidestone, CCC, Chamber of Commerce/Visitor Center	\$500 & time	Common Ground Micro Grant, District Reserves, Direct Assistance, and sponsors/donations
2022	A. Three Annual Scholarships for 4-H, Young farmers projects B. Camp Rocky scholarship C. Agrisummit – support and participation D. Hands for Lands Volunteers E. Good Neighbors Education and Materials – Realtors and new community members	Guidestone, CCC, Chamber of Commerce/Visitor Center	\$500 & time	Common Ground Micro Grant, District Reserves, Direct Assistance, and sponsors/donations
2023	A. Three Annual Scholarships for 4-H, Young farmers projects B. Camp Rocky scholarship C. Agrisummit – support and participation D. Hands for Lands Volunteers E. Good Neighbors Education and Materials – Realtors and new community members	Guidestone, CCC, Chamber of Commerce/Visitor Center	\$500 & time	Common Ground Micro Grant, District Reserves, Direct Assistance, and sponsors/donations

UPPER ARKANSAS CONSERVATION DISTRICT

District Operational Goals & Objectives

Long Range Plan for: 2021 – 2023

Operational Priority: Board recruitment and training.

Why is this a concern: Increase engagement and effectiveness of board. Ensure a diverse board perspective.

Three Year Goal(s): Two more board members join the board and the entire board actively participates in meetings and activities. Board members feel that they are part of a team.

PROGRAM YEAR	MEASURABLE ANNUAL OBJECTIVES	COOPERATING AGENCY/GROUP	TIME AND FUNDING NEEDED	SOURCE OF FUNDING
2021	1. Prepare a position description and a list of desired skills for potential UACD board members. 2. Conduct search for new board members. 3. Conduct training for new and current board members.	UACD, CACD	time	Reserves
2022	1. Conduct training for new and current board members	UACD, CACD	time	Reserves
2023	1. Conduct training for new and current board members	UACD, CACD	time	Reserves

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Upper Arkansas District Operational Goals & Objectives
 Long Range Plan for: 2021 – 2023

Operational Priority: Update district records and systems.

Why is this a concern: We need to increase the usability and accessibility of district files in order to help the staff and board work effectively.

Three Year Goal(s): Create accurate, accessible electronic files and instructions for District operations. Update members’ files and mailing lists. Establish mailing lists organized by interest.

PROGRAM YEAR	MEASURABLE ANNUAL OBJECTIVES	COOPERATING AGENCY/GROUP	TIME AND FUNDING NEEDED	SOURCE OF FUNDING
2021	1. Review and organize existing paper files. 2. Review and organize electronic files. 3. Back up electronic files to external hard drive(s) 4. Establish share Google drive 5. Document electronic file organization protocol	UACD, NRCS	time	reserves
2022	1. Maintain electronic files 2. Back up electronic files to external hard drive(s) 3. Maintain shared Google drive	UACD, NRCS	time	reserves
2023	1. Maintain electronic files 2. Back up electronic files to external hard drive(s) 3. Maintain shared Google drive	UACD, NRCS	time	reserves

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District Operational Goals & Objectives

Long Range Plan for: 2021 – 2023

Operational Priority: Community engagement through outreach/communication.

Why is this a concern: Increase engagement with community.

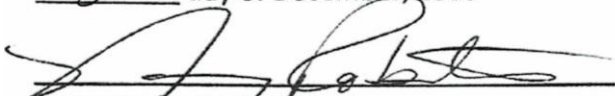
Three Year Goal(s): Increase UACD membership and community awareness of UACD mission, projects and goals.

PROGRAM YEAR	MEASURABLE ANNUAL OBJECTIVES	COOPERATING AGENCY/GROUP	TIME AND FUNDING NEEDED	SOURCE OF FUNDING
2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review membership list. 2. Consolidate/update membership contact and mailing list. 3. Create UACD Website. 4. Establish presence on Social Media (FaceBook? Instagram?) 	UACD, CACD	\$300/time	Reserves
2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain membership list. 2. Maintain Website 3. Maintain active presence on Social Media 4. Write quarterly articles for local publications 	UACD, CACD	\$300/time	Reserves
2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain membership list. 2. Maintain Website 3. Maintain active presence on Social Media 4. Write quarterly articles for local publications 	UACD, CACD	\$300/time	Reserves


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RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION

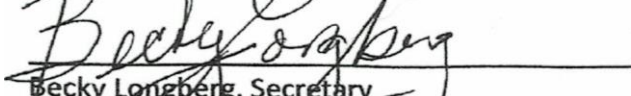
THEREFORE, Be It Resolved that this Long Range Program of the Upper Arkansas Conservation District be adopted as the official program of the District as of this 30th day of December, 2020



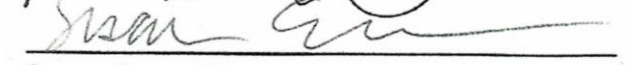
Nancy Roberts, President



Brady Everett, Vice President



Becky Longberg, Secretary



Susan Evans, Treasurer



Ed Berg, Member

Reviewed by the Colorado State Conservation Board

Colorado State Conservation Board, President

Cindy Lair, Program Manager

Date