



The Southwestern Water Conservation District
The West Building, 841 E Second Avenue
Durango, CO 81301

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN FOR
SOUTHWESTERN WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT'S
Regular Board Meeting

Location

SWCD Office & Via Zoom

841 E 2nd Avenue, Durango CO, 81301

Date and Time

02/12/2025 & 02/13/2025

Remote Connection

[Click here to join via Zoom](#)

Meeting ID: 835 9975 3537

Passcode: 474186

Phone Number: (346) 248 – 7799

To be recognized by the chair, please raise your hand. To raise your hand by phone, dial*9. To mute and unmute by phone, dial *6.

Other Details

Posted and Noticed February 11, 2025

Please email Mo Rock at morock@swwcd.org if you have difficulty attending the meeting.

Except the time indicated for when the meeting is scheduled to begin, the times noted for each agenda item are estimates and subject to change. The Board may address and act on agenda items in any order to accommodate the needs of the Board and the audience. Agenda items can also be added during the meeting at the consensus of the Board.

Agenda items may be placed on the Consent Agenda when the recommended action is non-controversial. The Consent Agenda may be voted on without reading or discussing individual items. Any Board member may request clarification about items on the Consent Agenda. The Board may remove items from the Consent Agenda at their discretion for further discussion.



The Southwestern Water Conservation District
The West Building, 841 E Second Avenue
Durango, CO 81301

SWCD Regular Board Meeting Agenda February 12 & 13, 2025

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2025

- | | | |
|----------|--|----------------|
| 1 | Call to Order – Roll Call, Verification of Quorum | 1:00 PM |
| 2 | Review and Approve Agenda | 1:02 PM |
| 3 | SWCD Board of Director Appointments for Dolores, Mineral, and Montrose Counties. (Steve/Beth) | 1:04 PM |
| 4 | SWCD Annual Election of Board Officers (Beth)..... Page 1 | 1:05 PM |
| 5 | Approve and/or Remove Consent Agenda Items | 1:30 PM |
| 6 | Consent AgendaPage 3 | 1:35 PM |
| | 6.1 Summary and Acceptance of Treasurer’s Year-End 2024 Report | |
| | 6.2 Minutes (06-12 & 13-2024) | |
| | 6.3 Resolution 2025-01 Designation of Meeting Posting Location | |
| | 6.4 Final SWCD Annual Budget Package Submitted to the State | |
| 7 | SWCD Grant Program (Mo)Page 37 | 1:45 PM |
| | 7.1 2024 Grant Program Summary Report | |
| | 7.2 Review of SWCD Grant Program Criteria | |
| | 7.3 Review and Consideration of 2025 SWCD Grant Applications | |
| | 7.3.1 Lone Cone Ditch and Reservoir Co. – Water supply - \$19,000 | |
| | 7.3.2 Fort Lewis College - Education - \$7,000 | |
| | 7.3.3 Mountain Studies Institute – Education - \$10,000 | |
| | 7.3.4 Mancos Conservation District – Education - \$10,000 | |
| | 7.3.5 Mancos Conservation District – Public Forums - \$20,000 | |
| | 7.4 Staff and Board Review of 2025 Grant Applications | |
| | 7.5 Board Action on 2025 Grant Applications | |
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Break	3:00 PM
8 General Counsel Legal Report (Beth)Page 71	3:15 PM
8.1 Professional Services Agreement with Hainey & Co for SWCD's 2024 Audit	
8.2 Renewal of SWCD's Consulting Service Agreement with Colorado Legislative Strategies	
8.3 Monthly Water Court Resume Review	
8.3.1 Proposed Protest to the Rules and Regulations Governing the Measurement of Surface Water and Groundwater Diversions and Storage, Release and Delivery of Water Located in Water Division 7, Case No. 2024CW3042	
9 Executive Session	3:30 PM
9.1 Burrows Creek proposed instream flow appropriation and future use of Mineral Point Ditch water right	
10 Summary and Action Items from Executive Session	4:30 PM
11 Adjourn Day 1	4:45 PM

Three or more board members may meet at Carvers Brewery for dinner.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2025

12 Call to Order – Roll Call, Verification of Quorum 8:30 AM

13 Review and Approve Agenda 8:32 AM

14 Legislative AffairsPage 127 8:35 AM

- 14.1 Federal Affairs Update – Christine Arbogast
 - 14.2 State Affairs Update and Possible Board Position on Pending Legislation - Garin Vorthmann
-

15 Staff Reports.....Page 129 9:00 AM

- 15.1 Draft Agenda for SWCD's 41st Annual Water Seminar (Mo/Elaine)
 - 15.2 Proposed Assignment of a Portion of the FY2024 Year-End Fund Balance (Steve/Mo)
 - 15.3 2025 Action Plan (federal grant dependent, postponed until April)
 - 15.4 SWCD Partnership and B2E Grant Update (Steve/Mo)
 - 15.4.1 Discussion of potential new staff position – Accounting & Grants Coordinator
 - 15.5 Mineral Point Ditch Water Right Acquisition/Burrows Creek Proposed Instream Flow Appropriation (Steve/Beth)
 - 15.6 Update on Colorado River Basin Activities (Steve)
 - 15.7 General Manager Activities (Steve)
 - 15.8 Programs Coordinator Activities (Mo)
-

16 Contractor and Partner UpdatesPage 211 9:45 AM

- 16.1 Water Information Program Report - Elaine Chick
- 16.2 Harris Water Engineering - Carrie Padgett
- 16.3 SWCD Water Education Colorado Scholarship Recipient 2024 –Blake Mammich
- 16.4 Update from Southwest Basin Roundtable & Interbasin Compact Committee – Ed Tolen & Ken Curtis
- 16.5 CWCB Update – Jeff Rodriguez

17 Hydrologic Updates.....	Page 217	10:15 AM
17.1 Hydrologic and Other Updates for Division 4 from Division Engineer Bob Hurford		
17.2 Colorado River Conditions (Steve)		
18 Special Presentation:		10:30 AM
Dolores River Basin Airborne Snow Observation – Ken Curtis, Dolores Water Conservancy District		
19 Thank you to Dagan Chadd for his service on the.....	Page 229	
SWCD Board		11:00 AM
20 Questions and Comments from the Public		11:05 AM
21 Director’s Updates and Concerns		11:20 AM
22 Upcoming Meetings and Announcements		11:20 AM
22.1 February 27	SWCD Legislative Call (if needed)	
22.2 March 13	SWCD Legislative Call (if needed)	
22.3 March 28	SWCD Annual Seminar – Sky Ute Casino	
22.4 April 28-30	Growing Water Smart Workshop – Montrose, CO	
22.5 2025	Joint Meeting with CRWCD?	
23 Adjournment		11:30 AM



THE SOUTHWESTERN WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Developing and Conserving the Waters in the
SAN JUAN AND DOLORES RIVERS AND THEIR TRIBUTARIES
West Building – 841 East Second Avenue
DURANGO, COLORADO 81301
(970) 247-1302

BOARD MEMORANDUM

From: Steve Wolff, General Manager
Beth Van Vurst, General Counsel

Subject: 4.0 Officer Elections

Date: January 27, 2025

As is required by our enabling act, the Board needs to hold officer elections at the beginning of our February meeting. Officer elections will be held early on the first day, Wednesday, of your two-day board meeting. The process outlined below is essentially the same SWCD has used in previous years with in-person meetings. The process seemed to provide for elections that were both respectful and efficient. This will all occur in open session, but your nomination, your vote, and the vote count are confidential. All nominations and elections will be held via paper ballot, and Beth will be the only one to see each ballot. **Please text Beth on her cell phone to submit your nomination and/or vote.** Beth has confirmed that the Colorado Open Meetings statute allows for confidential nominations and voting for officers.

At the Meeting:

Elections will occur shortly after the meeting begins on Wednesday (*Agenda Item 4.0*). You will vote for president first. The current president will open the floor for nominations for president. Nominations, including any self-nominations, will then take place via paper ballot. No second is required for a nomination. Who made a nomination as well as the number of nominations for an individual will remain confidential; only one nomination is required to hold a vote. Beth will announce publicly the nominations for president and then will confirm that the nominee(s) is/are willing to serve in the office. If there is only one nominee for president, then that individual may simply be elected by acclamation upon a motion from one of the other board members. If there is more than one nominee, we will move into a confidential voting process. Beth will tabulate your votes and announce publicly the new president but not the vote count.

If there is more than one candidate for president and no one receives a majority of the vote, we will then have a runoff between the top two vote-getters following the same voting procedure, and the winner will be announced. In the event of a tie vote, Beth will share publicly the tied individuals and allow the tied nominees to address the board, then ask for a new vote. Each office will require a majority vote of the quorum present.

After electing the president, the gavel will pass to the new president, and we will follow the same procedure for vice president and then secretary-treasurer. Again, Beth will receive and count your nominations and votes. An unsuccessful nominee for one office may be a nominee for another office.

Grant Program



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BOARD MEMORANDUM

From: Monika Rock
Subject: 2024 Grant Update
Date: 02/06/25

In 2024, the SWCD Board approved \$144,155 in local grant funding, plus \$50,000 of emergency funding in late summer, bringing the total 2024 grant program to \$194,115. They also approved the extension of two 2023 grants (\$47,000). The total amount paid out by the District for the 2024 grant program is \$120,963, plus the \$47,000 in 2023 extended grants.

This value is lower than expected, as multiple projects were also under budget. At year-end, two grants were approved for an extension through 2025 (\$15,000 and \$50,000). Although the \$50,000 Emergency grant was disbursed in late 2024, the work will not occur until the Spring of 2025. For this reason, the \$50,000 will be booked for the 2025 year and not in the 2024 year.

All grants have submitted their final report. Below is a quick rundown of the grants.

2023 Grants Extended Thru 2024– Amount Disbursed/Approved

1. Town of Pagosa Springs - Yamaguchi South Project - \$30,000/\$30,000
2. Trout Unlimited – Pagosa Gateway Project – \$17,000/\$17,000

2024 Grants – Amount Disbursed/Approved

1. **Emergency Grant:** Farmers Water Development Company, Gurley Dam Slip Repair – \$50,000/\$50,000 – **Work extended through 2025**
2. Animas Watershed Partnership – Animas River Plan Interim Phase and Demonstration Projects \$3,003/\$20,000 – **Extended through 2025**

3. **Emergency Grant: Montezuma Valley Irrigation Company – Beaver Creek Ditch Repair Phase 2 - \$50,000/\$50,000**



4. **Mancos Conservation District - Conserving Natural Resources in Montezuma County Through Robust Education and Outreach \$5,805.10/\$12,000 (under budget)**



5. **Wright Ingram Institute – Nexus of Land and Water: Addressing the Issue of Dust no Snow - \$20,000/\$20,000**

WRIGHT-INGRAHAM INSTITUTE & MOUNTAIN STUDIES INSTITUTE

NEXUS OF LAND AND WATER SOUTHWEST INITIATIVE ON LAND HEALTH AND WATER RESOURCES

SYMPOSIUM
CORTEZ, CO

OCTOBER 30, 2024

A PROJECT FUNDED BY NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS, SOUTHWESTERN WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT AND COLORADO WATER CONSERVATION BOARD. LOGO DESIGN BY JULIA SALAME.

6. Fort Lewis College - Tribal Water Media Fellowship - \$10,000/\$10,000



7. Montezuma Land Conservancy – Water Education at Fozzie’s Farm \$9,000/\$9,000



Apprentices cleaning headgate at Fozzie’s Farm

ARC Interns adjusting side roll sprinkler at Fozzie’s Farm

8. Hermosa Company Ditch – HCD Mid-System Parshall Flume \$1,155/\$1,155



9. Southwest Conservation Corps – Dolores River Restoration Partnership – Montrose Tamarisk Removal - \$22,000/\$22,000



Please reach out if you'd like to see each project's full final report.

SWCD 2025 Guidelines can be found here:

<https://www.swwcd.org/files/2d901960b/2025+Grant+Program+Guidelines.pdf>



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BOARD MEMORANDUM

From: SWCD Staff
Subject: 2025 Grant Review
Date: 02/06/25

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a summary of the grant applications received for the 2025 SWCD Grant Program. SWCD staff reviewed and critiqued five applications received during the submittal period. A total of \$66,000 was requested in grant applications for activities occurring in 2025. SWCD has budgeted \$250,000 for 2025 requests. **Staff recommend approval of all five grants for their full request.** The following memorandum summarizes each application, their proposed budget, and recommendations and comments from staff. A summary table is attached. If you have any questions about the grant review or recommendations, please contact Mo Rock or Steve Wolff. Carrie Padgett, a Professional Engineer with Harris Water Engineering, assisted in the review process, serving as the engineering expert when we had questions and helping create charts for easy review.

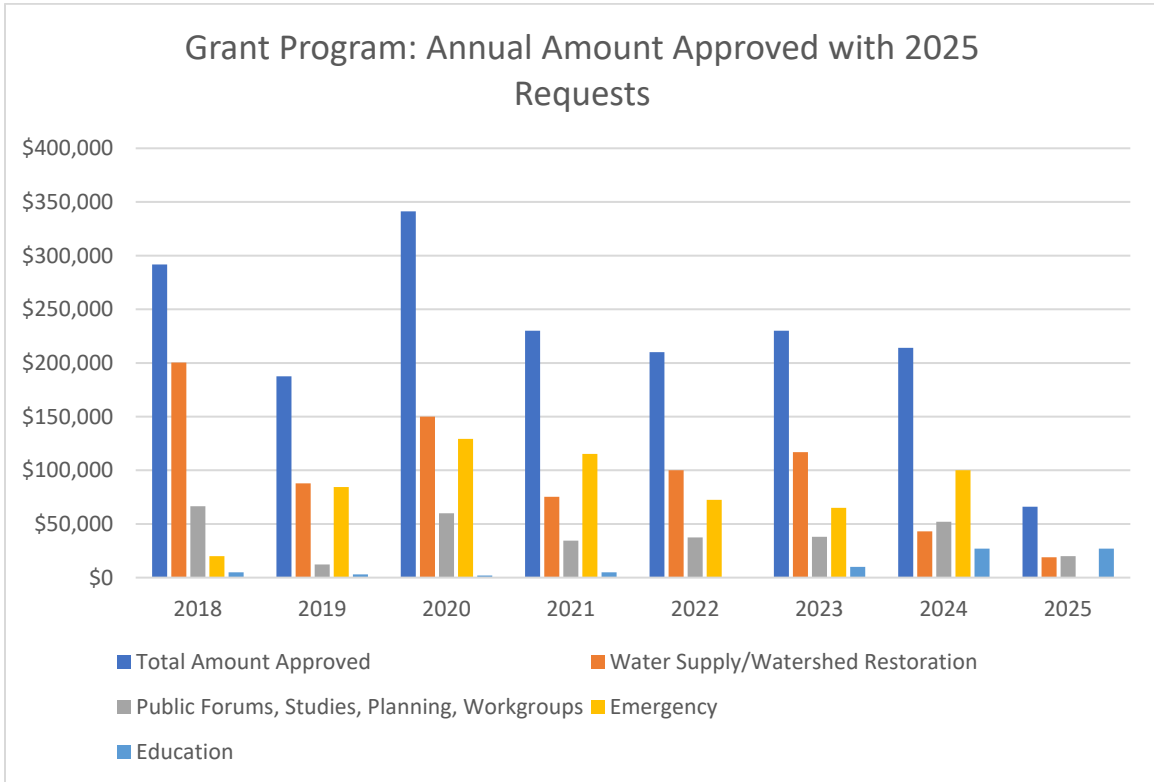
Some things to note before diving in:

- Folks may not utilize our grant program this year due to federal funds currently available and our ongoing Partnership applications.
- Three of the five applications were in the Education Bucket, which has been a popular bucket for multiple years and may highlight the lack of educational funding available for water-focused entities.
- Mancos Conservation District submitted two applications this year. Both applications fall within the annual and five-year limit for the category of funding sought.
- Upon request, we extended the grant application deadline to December 27th. A few entities were considering applying during this extended period but ultimately did not submit an application.
- Matching requirements between SWCD and CWCB grants do not allow for seamless leveraging. Mo met with Laura Spann to brainstorm ideas.

2025 Quick Guide

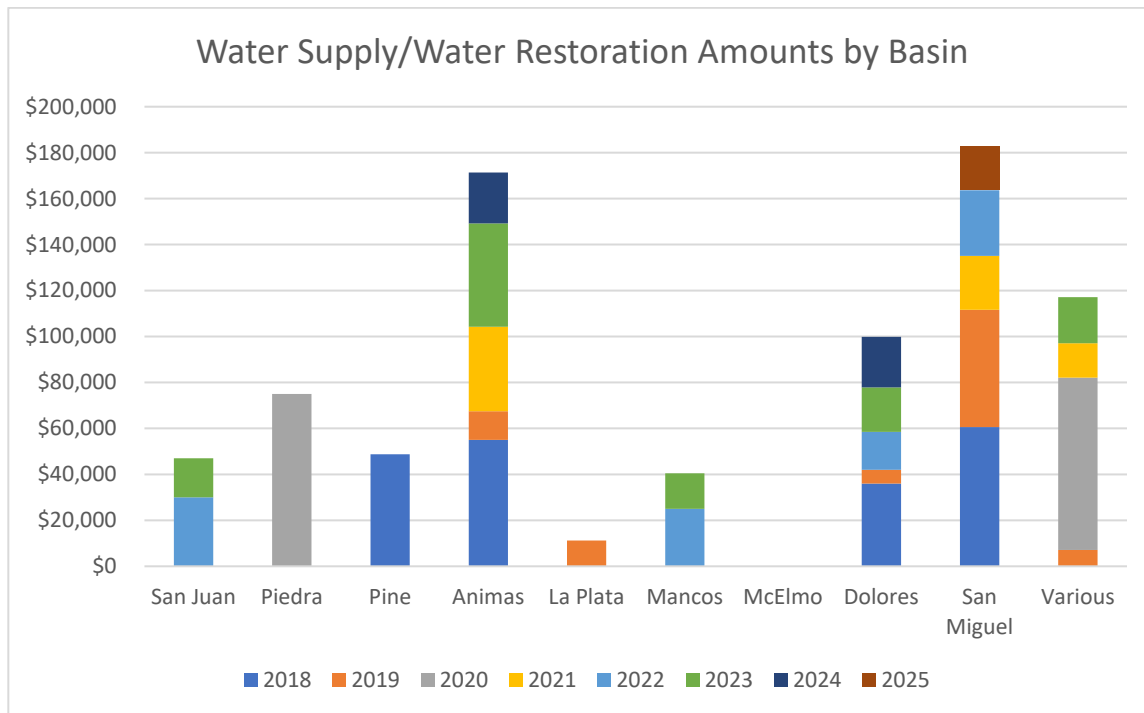
Category	Applicant	Project	Amount	Page
Water Supply Restoration	Lone Cone Ditch and Reservoir Company	Lone Cone Reservoir Rehab Phase 2: Construction	\$19,000	
Public Forums/Studies	Mancos Conservation District	Mancos Watershed Wildfire Ready Action Plan	\$20,000	
Education	Mancos Conservation District	Furthering Education in the Mancos Conservation District	\$10,000	
	Mountain Studies Institute	Southwest Colorado Watershed Education	\$10,000	
	Fort Lewis College	Tribal Water Media Fellowship Summer Intensive	\$7,000	

Historic Grant Review



2025 Water Supply/Watershed Restoration Funding Category

The grant funding category for “development or improvement of water supply and watershed restoration or enhancement projects, including related design, engineering and construction” has a total of \$125,000 available for allocation in 2025. A maximum grant request per application in this category is \$60,000. The total maximum amount any applicant can receive in a five-year period is \$120,000. One applicant applied for these funds from this category. The total amount being requested from this category is \$19,000.



Lone Cone Reservoir Rehab: Phase 2 – Construction

The **Lone Cone Ditch & Reservoir Company (LCDRC)**, established in 1904, serves 50 shareholders, providing water for 2,300 acres via 38 miles of ditches. With aging infrastructure threatening water delivery and storage, LCDRC has proactively raised assessments to fund improvements and ensure long-term maintenance. This project focuses on rehabilitating the Lone Cone Reservoir's intake structure, outlet conduit, and related components to prevent system failure and maximize storage capacity.

Project Objectives:

- Replace aging outlet infrastructure to secure storage of 1,750 acre-feet of senior water rights.

- Ensure sustainable water delivery to over 2,000 acres of agricultural land.
- Enhance resilience against drought and climate variability by maximizing storage.

Benefits: The project aligns with SWCD's mission to protect and develop water resources. It supports the strategic goal of investing in infrastructure improvements and preserving pre-compact water rights adjudicated in 1911 and 1914. These rights are critical for maintaining agricultural viability in the region and securing water storage senior to the Colorado River Compact.

Financial Overview:

- Total Project Cost: \$465,479
- SWCD Grant Request: \$19,000 (4% of total costs)
- Applicant Match: \$46,479 (10% of total costs)
- Other Funding: \$370,000 - TBD (CWCB), \$5,000 - Approved (San Miguel County), \$25,000 - TBD (US Fish and Wildlife) – CWCB and US Fish and Wildlife Determinations were made in late 2024.

Conclusion: Rehabilitating Lone Cone Reservoir will ensure the long-term availability of critical water storage, benefiting agriculture and regional water users. LCDRC seeks SWCD's support to leverage additional funding and achieve project completion.

Staff Recommendations and Comments

While the LCDRC falls short of SWCD's 25% match requirement, their proactive approach and active contributions to this project demonstrate a strong commitment to its success. The project's scope, which involves rehabilitating key infrastructure critical for securing 1,750 acre-feet of senior water rights and ensuring sustainable water delivery to over 2,000 acres of agricultural land, reflects the urgency of addressing aging infrastructure. Despite the match being below the threshold, LCDRC has shown responsibility in raising assessments to fund a significant portion of the project. Their efforts to raise the necessary funds underscore the importance of this project to the local agricultural community and to the preservation of pre-compact water rights.

Additionally, the engineering design for the project was reviewed by Carrie Padgett, who confirmed that it meets all necessary requirements and appears to be a well-structured plan. This endorsement further reinforces the project's viability and alignment with best practices in infrastructure rehabilitation.

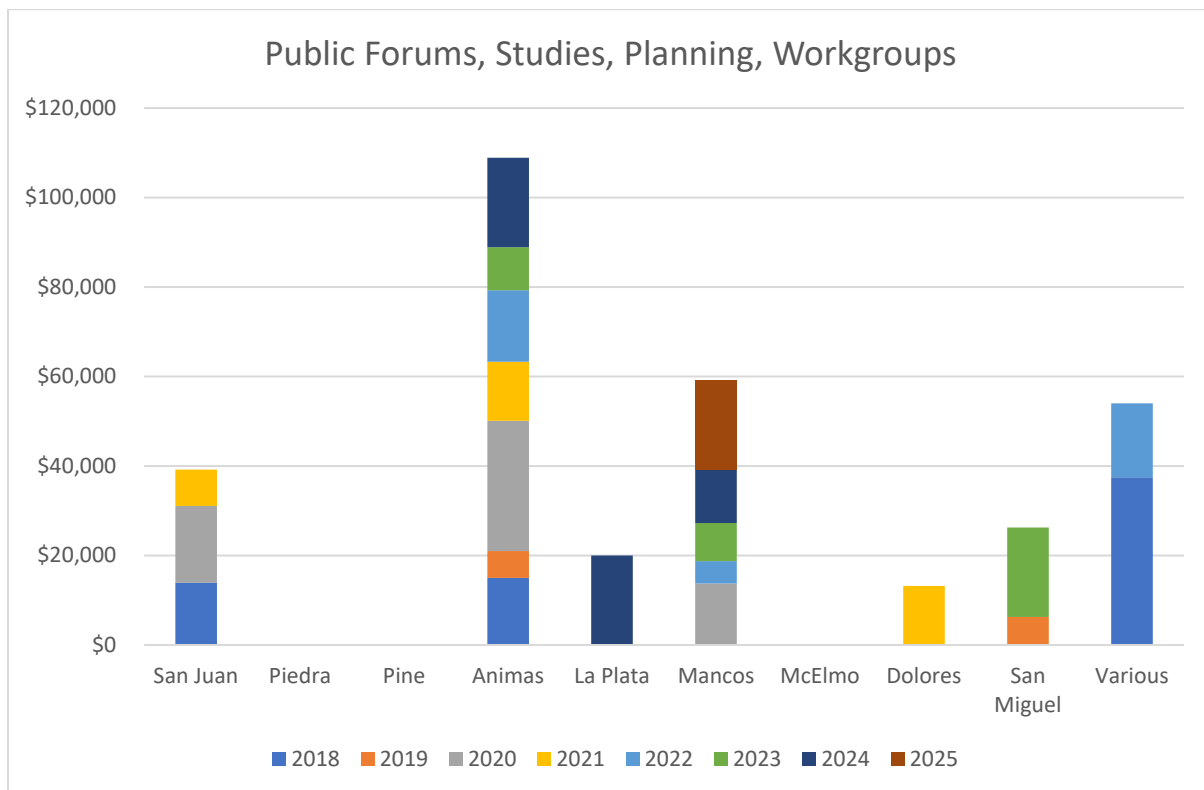
The request for SWCD funding will help bridge the gap and enable the completion of essential improvements to the intake structure and outlet conduit. This project aligns with SWCD's mission to protect regional water resources and will enhance resilience to climate variability,

ensuring reliable water access for future generations. LCDRC’s active participation and contribution to this large-scale infrastructure improvement effort makes a compelling case for their request and demonstrates a long-term investment in the sustainability of the water system.

Lastly, as a non-profit organization, LCDRC could fall into the written exception for reduced match in SWCD’s grant guidelines, although this exception is always up to the board's discretion. This funding is also just a small piece of the LCDRC funding package and is being used to leverage larger state dollars. This leveraging shows commitment to the project and that LCDRC has put thought and work into capturing diverse funding. Staff recommends approval of the entire \$19,000, based on LCDRC obtaining CWCB funding and demonstrating that the Dam Safety Branch has approved the proposed project. Staff also note that LCDRC is not currently under ‘Good Standing’ but only needs to file for the 2025 year to obtain this. Under the guidelines, LCDRC will not qualify for funding until they complete this step.

2025 Public Forums and Studies

The grant funding category for “public forums, workgroups, studies, and planning efforts” has a total of \$50,000 available for allocation in 2025. The maximum grant request per application in this category is \$20,000. The maximum amount any applicant can receive in a five-year period is \$40,000. One applicant applied for this bucket for 2025 with a request of \$20,000.



Mancos Watershed Wildfire Ready Action Plan

The **Mancos Conservation District** (MCD), a public entity founded in 1948, works to promote sustainable land and water resource management in the Mancos River Watershed. This project aims to develop a Wildfire Ready Action Plan (WRAP) to address the increasing risk of wildfire and its potential hydrologic effects on the watershed. The plan will assess wildfire risks, identify priority actions to protect water resources, and mitigate the impacts of post-fire hydrologic effects on critical infrastructure.

Project Objectives:

- Develop a comprehensive WRAP for the upper Mancos River watershed, identifying wildfire risks and mitigation strategies for water infrastructure, including agricultural and municipal systems.
- Conduct data collection, research, and gap analysis to inform decision-making, including hillslope erosion modeling to prioritize high-risk areas.
- Engage a Core Team of stakeholders from local, state, and federal agencies, nonprofits, agricultural producers, and other partners to guide the development of the WRAP.
- Host workshops and gatherings to involve the larger community in identifying and prioritizing wildfire mitigation actions.
- Integrate the WRAP with existing plans, such as the Mancos Source Water Protection Plan and the Stream Management Plan (SMP), to create a holistic approach to water and wildfire resilience.

Benefits:

This project supports SWCD's mission by enhancing water quality protection and infrastructure resilience against the risks posed by wildfire. It contributes to SWCD's strategic priorities 1 (water quality and climate change), 3 (balanced water management), and 4 (infrastructure improvements). The WRAP will help safeguard water resources for agricultural and municipal uses, especially those with pre-compact water rights, by addressing wildfire threats to the Mancos Watershed. By implementing proactive mitigation strategies, this project will reduce the impact of wildfire on water quality and the local economy.

Financial Overview:

- **Total Project Cost:** \$40,000
- **SWCD Grant Request:** \$20,000 (50% of total costs)

- **Applicant Match:** \$10,000 (25% of total costs) through in-kind contributions and staff time.
- **Other Funding:** \$10,000 (CWCB)

Conclusion:

This initiative will strengthen the resilience of the Mancos River Watershed to wildfire threats, supporting both water quality and infrastructure protection. SWCD funding will enable MCD to complete critical tasks such as hillslope erosion modeling, contributing to the long-term health and sustainability of the watershed. The project aligns with SWCD's goals to safeguard water resources in southwestern Colorado and promote collaborative, science-based solutions for watershed management.

Mancos Conservation District -Year Grant History

2025	Education	Pending	\$10,000.00	Forums/Studies 5-year total:
2025	Forums/Studies	Pending	\$20,000.00	
2024	Forums/Studies		\$5,800	\$33,500 out of
2023	Forums/Studies		\$8,500.00	\$40,000 Max
2022	Forums/Studies		\$5,000.00	
2022	Water Supply/Restoration		\$25,000.00	

[Staff Recommendations and Comments](#)

MCD has submitted a well-structured and impactful application for funding to support the development of a Wildfire Ready Action Plan (WRAP) for the Mancos River Watershed. The project aligns closely with SWCD’s mission and strategic priorities, particularly in areas of water quality protection, climate change adaptation, and infrastructure resilience.

MCD’s proposal meets the grant requirements by addressing critical wildfire risks that threaten water infrastructure and quality within the watershed. The inclusion of comprehensive data collection, research, and a stakeholder engagement process will ensure that the WRAP is both scientifically sound and community driven. The project’s integration with existing plans like the Mancos Source Water Protection Plan and the Stream Management Plan demonstrates a holistic and collaborative approach to watershed management, making it an exemplary initiative for SWCD funding.

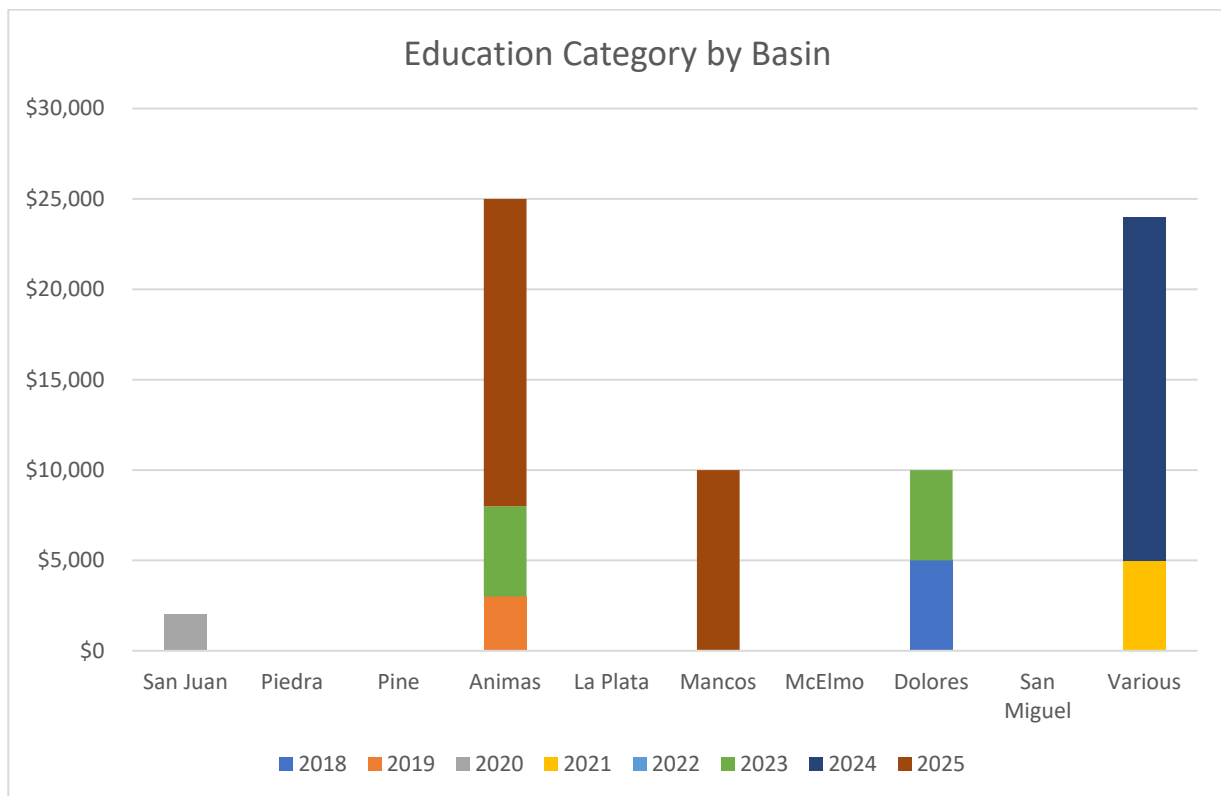
Additionally, MCD meets the financial match requirement with a combination of in-kind contributions and staff time, totaling 25% of the project cost. The grant request of \$20,000, covering 50% of the total project cost, is appropriate and falls within the allowable funding

parameters. The project also is within the maximum five-year funding cap for this category. The SWCD Board has not established a combined maximum five-year limit for grant funding but, in case this information is of interest to the Board, MCD will have obtained a total of \$44,300 in grants over the past five years if its 2025 applications are approved.

Given the strong alignment with SWCD’s goals and the thoughtful, strategic approach proposed by MCD, staff recommended approving this grant for funding. It will contribute to strengthening the resilience of the Mancos River Watershed, ensuring the long-term sustainability of water resources in the region.

2025 Education

The grant funding category for “teaching seminars, workshops, and related programs” has a total of \$25,000 available for allocation in 2025. The maximum grant request per application in this category is \$10,000. The maximum amount any applicant can receive in a five-year period is \$20,000. Three applicants applied for this funding, totaling \$27,000, bringing it slightly over the amount allocated to this category.



Funding Environmental Education and Knowledge in the Mancos Watershed

Mancos Conservation District (MCD), established in 1948, serves the Mancos community by promoting sustainable use and protection of the Mancos River Watershed. MCD provides technical assistance, education, and access to cost-sharing programs to support rural and urban landowners. This project builds on MCD's legacy of conservation leadership, aiming to enhance community education and environmental stewardship in the Mancos Watershed.

Project Objectives:

- Conduct eight climate-smart workshops, a watershed tour, and a water festival to educate 550 participants on water conservation, watershed health, and ecosystem services.
- Support fish migration studies through eDNA sampling and fish tagging, establishing baseline data and evaluating fish ladder effectiveness.
- Facilitate River Literacy lessons and field trips to engage local youth in understanding the Mancos River's ecological importance, emphasizing hands-on learning experiences.

Benefits:

The project aligns with SWCD's mission by improving water management and conservation education in the region. It supports SWCD's strategic priorities, including protecting water rights and fostering sustainable practices. Community feedback has highlighted the need for more educational outreach, prompting MCD to expand partnerships, such as with the Mancos Public Library, to provide bi-monthly River Literacy lessons. Supplies for these lessons and field trips will actively engage students in conservation efforts and watershed science. The project also supports a paid undergraduate research opportunity at Western Colorado University, fostering career development in fisheries and environmental management.

Financial Overview:

Total Project Cost: \$26,328

SWCD Grant Request: \$10,000 (38% of total costs)

Applicant Match: MCD (\$7,000 – 27%) and in-kind services from Western Colorado University (\$9,328).

Qualifications:

MCD is a qualified entity under SWCD guidelines. The project builds on a history of successful collaborations with federal and state agencies, private landowners, and tribal partners. In-kind support from Western Colorado University further enhances the project's value, enabling detailed fish migration studies and providing critical data for watershed management.

Conclusion:

This project enhances the Mancos Watershed's environmental health and strengthens community engagement through education and research. It provides practical, hands-on opportunities for youth and the community to connect with and protect the watershed. MCD seeks SWCD's support to advance its mission and secure long-term conservation outcomes for the Mancos community.

Staff Recommendations and Comments

The Mancos Conservation District (MCD) has submitted a well-rounded application for funding to enhance community education and environmental stewardship in the Mancos River Watershed. This project will serve as a cornerstone for strengthening water conservation efforts, providing a series of educational workshops, hands-on learning experiences, and research initiatives to improve the health and sustainability of the watershed.

The project objectives are well-aligned with SWCD's mission to promote sustainable water management. The proposed workshops, water festival, and educational lessons will engage over 550 participants, building awareness of water conservation, watershed health, and ecosystem services. The inclusion of fish migration studies and collaboration with Western Colorado University further strengthens the project by providing valuable baseline data and fostering research opportunities for future watershed management. Additionally, the River Literacy lessons will actively involve local youth, helping to cultivate the next generation of environmental stewards.

While this application demonstrates strong community outreach, there is some concern with the bundling of both community outreach and a student researcher under one project. Although both components fall within the education category, it may have been beneficial to clearly distinguish the two objectives and their respective impacts on the community. However, despite this concern, the project meets the established criteria for funding and presents a cohesive approach to education that integrates both community and student engagement.

MCD's application meets the financial requirements of the program, with a total project cost of \$26,328. The SWCD grant request of \$10,000 represents 38% of the total cost, and MCD's match of \$7,000 (27% of the project cost) is comprised of a combination of financial contributions from MCD. An additional \$9,328 of in-kind services from Western Colorado University. The in-kind support significantly increases the project's value, ensuring its success and long-term sustainability.

While MCD has submitted two separate applications, both of which are within the funding limits for their respective categories, it is important to note that this proposal also adheres to the five-year maximum for funding and remains well within the specified budget constraints. MCD's ability to manage and leverage resources effectively further demonstrates its capacity to implement the project and achieve the desired outcomes.

Given the strategic alignment with SWCD’s goals, the community-driven focus of the project, and the demonstrated capacity of MCD to execute successful conservation initiatives, this application is recommended for funding approval. The successful implementation of this project will enhance the resilience of the Mancos Watershed and provide long-term environmental and educational benefits for the community.

Southwest Colorado Watershed Education

Mountain Studies Institute (MSI), founded in 2002, is a nonprofit research and education organization focused on addressing environmental challenges in the San Juan Mountain region. MSI conducts research, facilitates education, and connects stakeholders to promote science-based solutions for watershed health and resilience.

Project Objectives:

- Deliver 10 watershed-based field trips in 2025 across eight rural southwest Colorado communities, focusing on water quality, snow science, river ecology, and drought.
- Engage over 3,400 participants through education programs, including underserved Title I schools with high Native American and Hispanic populations.
- Host hands-on service-learning opportunities for youth and community members, strengthening watershed stewardship and resilience.

Benefits:

The project aligns with SWCD’s mission by fostering water conservation education and addressing drought and water quality challenges in the Southwest Basin. MSI programs provide experiential learning and connect participants with actionable insights into watershed health, snowpack dynamics, and aquatic ecosystems. By instilling stewardship values in the youth and broader community, the project enhances long-term resilience for the basin’s water resources.

Financial Overview:

- **Total Project Cost:** \$50,000
- **SWCD Grant Request:** \$10,000 (20% of total costs)
- **Applicant Match:** \$10,000 (20% - asking for non-profit waive) plus \$30,000 (70% of total costs) from the City of Durango for watershed-based education programs.

Conclusion:

Through this initiative, MSI will provide transformative environmental education, support stewardship efforts, and inspire the next generation of water advocates in southwest Colorado.

SWCD funding will enable expanded outreach and critical watershed education, reinforcing MSI's mission to strengthen the region's environmental and community resilience.

Staff Recommendations and Comments

Mountain Studies Institute (MSI) has submitted an application that aligns closely with the goals and priorities of SWCD. This project aims to provide significant environmental education and foster community engagement in addressing water quality, snow science, river ecology, and drought—critical issues facing southwest Colorado.

The proposed project objectives are ambitious yet feasible, aiming to deliver 10 watershed-based field trips across eight rural southwest Colorado communities in 2025. These field trips will engage over 3,400 participants, including underserved Title I schools with high Native American and Hispanic populations. In addition, MSI plans to host hands-on service-learning opportunities for both youth and community members, which will promote watershed stewardship and resilience. These activities align with SWCD's mission to support water conservation education and the long-term sustainability of water resources in the region.

MSI's financial overview shows a total project cost of \$50,000, with a SWCD grant request for \$10,000, representing 20% of the total cost. The applicant match of \$10,000 falls just short of the 25% match requirement, but as a nonprofit entity, they have requested that we reduce this match requirement as is permitted under the grant program guidelines. Furthermore, an additional 70% of costs are provided by the City of Durango which highlights strong local support for the project. The proposed funding structure is well-balanced, ensuring the project will leverage financial and community resources to achieve maximum impact.

The project's focus on underserved populations, particularly youth in communities with high Native American and Hispanic representation, is an excellent strategy to build long-term awareness and commitment to watershed health. MSI's commitment to integrating experiential learning and service-learning opportunities enhances the educational value and community involvement of the initiative.

Given MSI's proven track record in conducting research, facilitating education, and promoting science-based solutions for watershed resilience, this project is poised to achieve measurable outcomes that support both SWCD's mission and the broader goals of environmental conservation and water stewardship in the Southwest Basin.

This application meets all necessary criteria and is recommended for funding approval. MSI's efforts will significantly contribute to building community resilience and ensuring the long-term health of the region's water resources.

Tribal Water Media Fellowship

Fort Lewis College (FLC), KSUT Public Radio, and Rocky Mountain Public Media (RMPM) Tribal Water Media Fellowship Summer Intensive

Fort Lewis College, in partnership with KSUT Public Radio and Rocky Mountain Public Media, is dedicated to addressing water issues affecting Indigenous communities in southwestern Colorado. Through the Tribal Water Media Fellowship Summer Intensive, the project aims to train students in media storytelling about tribal water topics, fostering a new generation of professionals equipped to communicate complex water issues to broader audiences.

02/12/2025	Pending	Education	\$7,000.00	5 Year- Education Total:
02/01/2024	Awarded	Education	\$10,000	\$22,000 out of
02/09/2023	Awarded	Education	\$ 5,000	\$20,000 max
02/15/2021	Awarded	Public Forums	\$13,200	

Project Objectives:

- Provide a two-phase Tribal Water Media Fellowship program, training 15 students in media production focused on water issues in Indigenous communities.
- Offer a two-week Summer Intensive in May 2025 with media training, lectures on water topics, field trips, and an overnight river trip along the San Juan or Chama River.
- Pair students with water and media professionals as mentors to guide independent media projects from June to November 2025.
- Host a public Project Showcase in Fall 2025 to highlight fellowship projects and distribute them to local, regional, and national media outlets.

Benefits:

The project aligns with the Southwestern Water Conservation District's (SWCD) mission by amplifying diverse voices in water conservation and management, particularly those of Indigenous communities. The Fellowship trains students to use media to communicate vital water-related issues, fostering greater public understanding and engagement. This initiative contributes to SWCD's priorities of enhancing water advocacy (Priority #2), building trust and collaboration (Priority #5), and expanding outreach (Priority #6). The program provides a platform for students to connect with traditional ecological knowledge while helping them build professional networks in water and media fields.

Financial Overview:

- **Total Project Cost:** \$134,368
- **SWCD Grant Request:** \$7,000 (5% of total costs)
- **Applicant Match:** \$33,530 (25% of total costs) from in-kind contributions, including faculty time, media personnel, and equipment usage from FLC, KSUT, and RMPM. Additional funding of \$93,838 is secured from the Walton Family Foundation.

Conclusion:

This project will expand water conservation education and media storytelling capabilities in southwestern Colorado, particularly by amplifying the voices of Indigenous communities. SWCD funding will help provide transformative educational opportunities for students while enhancing the region's efforts to address critical water challenges. By supporting this fellowship, SWCD will contribute to building a more resilient, informed, and engaged community dedicated to water conservation and stewardship.

Staff Recommendations and Comments

Fort Lewis College (FLC), in collaboration with KSUT Public Radio and Rocky Mountain Public Media (RMPM), has submitted an application for continued funding for the Tribal Water Media Fellowship Summer Intensive. This project has been funded by SWCD for the past two years, and with this being a repeat application, it exceeds the funding limit by \$2,000. Although it does this, Staff believe that the credit and relationships they have built have added value.

The program aims to train 15 students in media production focused on water issues in Indigenous communities, with a two-phase Tribal Water Media Fellowship. The Summer Intensive in May 2025 will include media training, field trips, lectures, and an overnight river trip along the San Juan or Chama River, followed by independent media projects guided by mentors. A public Project Showcase in Fall 2025 will allow the fellowship projects to be shared widely, expanding their impact.

This initiative is an important contribution to SWCD's mission, particularly in amplifying diverse voices in water conservation and management. By providing media training and professional development to students from Indigenous communities, this project strengthens water advocacy and builds trust through informed storytelling. It supports SWCD's strategic priorities, including enhancing public outreach, promoting collaboration, and expanding water advocacy.

SWCD's previous participation in the program's symposium each year has demonstrated the immense value of the project. The symposium has provided insightful and engaging discussions on Indigenous water issues and media's role in conveying these topics, further reinforcing the relevance and importance of the project to the district's mission.

The financial structure of this application is robust. The total project cost is \$134,368, with a request for \$7,000 from SWCD, which represents only 5% of the total costs. The applicant match of \$35,000, provided through in-kind contributions from FLC, KSUT, and RMPM, demonstrates strong local support. Additionally, the project has secured substantial funding from the Walton Family Foundation, ensuring financial sustainability.

Despite going over the \$20,000 5-year max, given the success and ongoing impact of this program, along with the continued alignment with SWCD's priorities, this application is recommended for funding. The project fosters greater public understanding of water issues in Indigenous communities and prepares the next generation of media professionals to tackle critical water challenges in the region. Supporting this initiative will contribute to the SWCD's goal of building a more resilient and informed community dedicated to water conservation and stewardship.

Fort Lewis College also addressed questions around the 5-year max and challenges that this presented to it as the only college institution in our region. Please see the attached letter to read their concerns and to facilitate more discussion around this concern.



November 15, 2024

Southwestern Water Conservation District
841 E Second Ave.
Durango, CO 81301

Re: Requested change to SWCD Financial Assistance Program eligibility guidelines

Dear members of the Board of the Southwestern Water Conservation District (SWCD),

On behalf of the Four Corners Water Center at Fort Lewis College and the Tribal Media Center at KSUT, thank you for your support of water work at our institutions, and particularly the Tribal Water Media Fellowship. Many FLC programs have benefitted significantly from SWCD support, and we deeply appreciate our collaborative relationship with your organization.

We are reaching out to propose a change in the eligibility of entities seeking educational funding from the SWCD Financial Assistance Program. Current guidelines for the program stipulate a five-year maximum per qualified entity in each funding category. Under these guidelines, entire educational institutions (e.g., all of Fort Lewis College) are viewed as single qualified entities. These guidelines currently restrict the ability of institutions like FLC to benefit holistically from the SWCD grant program. For example, SWCD funding for the Tribal Water Media Fellowship has been extremely beneficial in alleviating program costs and enhancing offerings for FLC students. However, other FLC departments and entities that could benefit from the SWCD's Education grants are currently unable to apply for more than \$5,000 over the next three years due to the five-year maximum for FLC as a whole. Examples of other FLC programs that could benefit from SWCD Education grant funds include student research projects (hosted across different FLC departments, including but not limited to the Department of Environment and Sustainability, the Biology Department, and the Sociology Department), FLC programs with a focus on water education (e.g., Fort Lewis on the Water), and internship programs (e.g., the FLC Tribal Water Leaders Internship Program). Thus, **we ask that the Board consider a change in which individual FLC programs and departments could be viewed as distinct qualified entities, rather than the entire institution being viewed as a single entity.**

As you are likely familiar, Fort Lewis College is the only four-year college in the nine counties served by the SWCD, and as such, our educational mission, responsibilities, and impact are significant in our region. Over 20 FLC faculty and staff are engaged in water-focused work, engaging students and community members in interdisciplinary solutions to water challenges. As a Native American-serving non-Tribal institution and with a student body composed of approximately 40% Indigenous students, 20% Hispanic and Latino students, and 44% first-generation students, our programs are uniquely positioned to bolster the next generation of diverse water leaders. Though FLC is the only institution of its kind in the region, there are many other regional educational organizations that are structured similarly (e.g., community colleges



or even K-12 schools that have different departments and programs). Thus, this change in the SWCD's eligibility guidelines would not only expand the impact of SWCD grant funds at FLC, but also contribute to a richer water education landscape in our region.

Furthermore, the nature of applications for educational programming are different than other funding requests for water supply projects, studies and processes, and emergencies that SWCD considers. Educational programs are uniquely far-reaching, and they amplify their impact over time through the training and other products that are generated and shared both during and after the funded project. At the same time, educational programs generally have less capacity to generate revenue and become financially independent over time. Therefore, the continued opportunity to apply for grant funding from SWCD when it is available (in competition with other educational proposals) has the potential to significantly enhance our community's access to educational programming related to water. **To further broaden the reach of this program, we additionally suggest that the five-year maximum in the education bucket be increased to reflect SWCD's interest in funding educational opportunities and the potential impact of these projects.** We specifically suggest a five-year maximum of \$40,000-\$50,000 with the recognition that funding is not guaranteed unless high quality programming is proposed to the SWCD board within the constraints of the application.

We want to reiterate our gratitude to the Board for their support of water work at FLC and for considering our proposed changes to the SWCD grant program. Please reach out with questions or if you would like to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carolyn Cummins".

Dr. Carolyn Cummins
Director, Four Corners Water Center
Fort Lewis College
ccummins@fortlewis.edu

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kaitlin J. Mattos".

Dr. Kaitlin Mattos
Assistant Professor, Environment and
Sustainability and Teacher Education
Fort Lewis College
kjmattos@fortlewis.edu

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Colten Ashley".

Colten Ashley
Coordinator, Tribal Media Center
KSUT
colten@ksut.org

Legislative Updates

Southwestern Water Conservation District

Bill Tracking List

February 5, 2025

Bills	Sponsors	Title	Last Action	Latest Version	Position
HB 25-1009	Tisha Mauro Lisa Cutter	<p>Vegetative Fuel Mitigation</p> <p>The bill allows a fire protection district or a metropolitan district providing fire protection services to create a program to mitigate the presence of dead or dry plant material that can burn and contribute to a fire on privately owned property within a district (vegetative fuel program). A district that creates a vegetative fuel program is required to adopt policies consistent with the 2024 International Wildland-urban Interface Code or the standards and codes adopted or issued by the Colorado Wildfire Resiliency Code Board. A district that creates a vegetative fuel program may require an owner or occupier with an interest in private real property that contains vegetative fuel within the district to remove the vegetative fuel and assess a fine per incident of noncompliance. A private property right owner that does not remove the vegetative fuel as provided in the first notice may be subject to a second notice requiring the removal of vegetative fuel. The private property owner has at least 10 days to comply with the second notice. Non-compliance within at least 10 days after the second notice may receive a third notice providing for a fine approximately equal to the cost of removing the vegetative fuel. The fine may not exceed \$300 per property per incident.</p> <p>An amendment was added in the House Agriculture, Water & Natural Resources Committee to exempt private property that is taxed as agricultural land.</p> <p>hearing item • House</p> <p>Feb 06, 2025 09:00am House Chamber</p> <p>Feb 03, 2025, House</p> <p>- House Committee on Agriculture, Water & Natural Resources Refer Amended to House Committee of the Whole</p>	<p>House, Feb 3, 2025: House Committee on Agriculture, Water & Natural Resources Refer Amended to House Committee of the Whole</p>	<p>Introduced (01/08/2025)</p>	
HB 25-1014	Dusty Johnson Meghan Lukens	<p>Increasing Efficiency Division of Water Resources</p> <p>This bill makes several modifications to the operations of the Division of Water Resources in the Department of Natural Resources. The bill includes general language cleanup and removal of obsolete provisions and changes some</p>	<p>House, Jan 27, 2025: House Committee on Agriculture, Water & Natural</p>	<p>Introduced (01/08/2025)</p>	

	Dylan Roberts	<p>procedures for how conditional permit holders can obtain a permanent permit to appropriate groundwater. Among its many changes, this bill:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increases from one to two years the deadline for the holder of a conditional permit to construct the well and apply the water to beneficial use; • increases from 30 to 35 days the time a conditional permit holder has to notify the division once a well has been constructed and water put to beneficial use from any bedrock aquifer; • increases from 30 to 35 days the time for filing written objections to notices made by the division; • reduces from \$60 to \$30 the fee required to reinstate an expired well permit if evidence is supplied that the well was constructed within two years; and • replaces a \$30 filing fee for late submittal of evidence of well completion with a \$30 filing fee for permit reinstatement. <p>Under current law, each water division engineer prepares a list of abandoned water rights every ten years. This bill staggers the preparation of the abandoned rights list, requiring that the division engineer prepare the next decennial list for water divisions 1, 2, and 3 by July 1, 2030, and for water divisions 4, 5, 6, and 7 by July 1, 2035, and then every ten years thereafter.</p> <p>Jan 27, 2025, House</p> <p>- House Committee on Agriculture, Water & Natural Resources Refer Amended to Appropriations</p>	Resources Refer Amended to Appropriations		
HB 25-1057	Monica Duran Ron Weinberg Cleave Simpson	<p>American Indian Affairs Interim Committee</p> <p>American Indian Affairs Interim Study Committee. The bill creates the American Indian affairs interim committee. The purpose of the committee is to examine issues and challenges that impact American Indian Tribal Nations. The committee consists of 6 members of the General Assembly. The bill allows the committee to meet up to 6 times and recommend up to 5 bills during each interim. On or before January 15, 2030, the bill requires the committee to submit a report summarizing the work of the committee during the preceding 5 years. The committee is repealed, effective June 30, 2030.</p> <p>Jan 27, 2025, House</p>	House, Jan 27, 2025: House Committee on State, Civic, Military, & Veterans Affairs Refer Unamended to Appropriations	Introduced (01/08/2025)	

		- House Committee on State, Civic, Military, & Veterans Affairs Refer Unamended to Appropriations			
HB 25-1077	Sheila Lieder Naquetta Ricks Dylan Roberts	<p>Backflow Prevention Devices Requirements</p> <p>Water Resources and Agriculture Review Committee.</p> <p>In 2024, the plumbing licensure sunset bill (HB24-1344) continued plumbing industry regulation and made several changes to plumbing occupational licensure. One change was to require plumbing licensure for all work on backflow prevention devices, including inspection, testing and repair. Prior to this change, licensure was only required for the installation or removal of backflow prevention devices. Backflow prevention devices are designed to protect clean water lines from wastewater contamination.</p> <p>HB25-1077 specifies that inspection, testing, or repair of backflow prevention devices does not require plumbing occupational licensure from the Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA).</p> <p>Feb 03, 2025, House</p> <p>- House Third Reading Passed - No Amendments</p>	House, Feb 3, 2025: House Third Reading Passed - No Amendments	Reengrossed (02/03/2025)	
HB 25-1099	Tisha Mauro Rick Taggart Nick Hinrichsen	<p>Water Quality Data Standards</p> <p>This bill requires the Water Quality Control Commission to issue written guidance on total maximum daily load (TMDL) development, including recommendations on data collection, analytic methods, data quality assurance, and accuracy by January 1, 2027. The bill defines TMDL as the “calculation of the daily maximum amount of a pollutant from all sources that is allowed to enter state waters so that an applicable water quality standard is met.”</p> <p>By January 1, 2028, CDPHE must determine a total maximum daily load for state waters and use this standard for pollutant permits. These standards must include data collected within the last five years and relevant historic data.</p> <p>Concerns have been raised about the impact to agricultural irrigation and conflicts with the Clean Water Act.</p> <p>Jan 27, 2025, House</p> <p>- Introduced In House - Assigned to Energy & Environment</p>	House, Jan 27, 2025: Introduced In House - Assigned to Energy & Environment	Introduced (01/27/2025)	
HB 25-1106	Larry Don Suckla	<p>Remove Precipitation Collection Limitations</p> <p>Under current law, rainfall may be collected from a residential rooftop up to 100 gallons. The collected rainwater may not be used for drinking water or indoor</p>	House, Jan 27, 2025: Introduced In House - Assigned to	Introduced (01/27/2025)	

		<p>household purposes. HB25-1106 removes these specific prohibitions on residential rooftop collection and use to allow rainwater to be collected without limits, and the water may be used for any purpose on the residential property where the precipitation is collected. CDPHE must revise best practices for the use of potable water collected from residential rooftops, in addition to the existing best practices for nonpotable use of water.</p> <p>hearing item • House Energy & Environment</p> <p>Feb 13, 2025 01:30pm Old State Library</p> <p>Jan 27, 2025, House</p> <p>- Introduced In House - Assigned to Energy & Environment</p>	Energy & Environment		
HB 25-1113	Lesley Smith Karen McCormick Dylan Roberts	<p>Limit Turf in New Residential Development</p> <p>Under current law, a local government is prohibited from using nonfunctional turf or invasive plants in any new or redeveloped government property beginning January 1, 2026. This bill expands the prohibition to include residential property used for apartment or condominium housing. Additionally, the bill states that no later than January 1, 2028, local governments must enact or amend ordinances to limit the installation of nonfunctional turf for all residential real property.</p> <p>hearing item • House Agriculture, Water & Natural Resources</p> <p>Feb 20, 2025 HCR 0107Upon Adjournment</p> <p>Jan 27, 2025, House</p> <p>- Introduced In House - Assigned to Agriculture, Water & Natural Resources</p>	House, Jan 27, 2025: Introduced In House - Assigned to Agriculture, Water & Natural Resources	Introduced (01/27/2025)	
HB 25-1115	Julie McCluskie Matt Soper Dylan Roberts	<p>Water Supply Measurement & Forecasting Program</p> <p>The bill expands the powers and duties of the CWCB to include administering a water supply measurement program that can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collect and disseminate data on snowpack levels; • investigate the latest technological advances in snowpack measurement and water supply forecasting; and • collect other data to assist in snowpack measurement, water supply forecasting, or flood hazard mapping. <p>hearing item • House Agriculture, Water & Natural Resources</p>	House, Jan 27, 2025: Introduced In House - Assigned to Agriculture, Water & Natural Resources	Introduced (01/27/2025)	

		<p>Feb 20, 2025 HCR 0107Upon Adjournment</p> <p>Jan 27, 2025, House</p> <p>- Introduced In House - Assigned to Agriculture, Water & Natural Resources</p>			
HB 25-1120	Lesley Smith Dylan Roberts	<p>Septic-System Replacement Enterprise</p> <p>The bill creates the septic-system replacement enterprise which will collect a fee charged on septic-system permits. Revenue from the fee will be used to provide loans to replace failing septic systems. The enterprise is governed by a board that consists of 7 members appointed by the governor as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One member who is a county commissioner in a county that has rural areas; • One member who is a member of a county board of health in a county that has rural areas; • One member who is a member of a governing body of a municipality that has septic systems; • One member who represents the department of public health and environment; • One member who represents the department of local affairs; • One member who represents an association of counties within Colorado and who lives in a rural area; and • One member who is a rural homeowner with a septic system. <p>Starting January 15, 2027, and by January 15 each year through 2029, the enterprise will submit a written report to the governor and the General Assembly. The report must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An accounting of the number of loans made under the loan program, the total amount of the loans, the average amount of a loan, and the number of septic systems replaced as a result of the loan program; • An evaluation of the loan program; and • Any legislative recommendations for the loan program. <p>The enterprise will impose a septic-system enterprise fee on each permit to install or replace a septic system. The fee is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$10 if the fee for the septic-system permit is less than \$500; 	House, Jan 28, 2025: Introduced In House - Assigned to Energy & Environment	Introduced (01/28/2025)	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$50 if the fee for the septic-system permit is \$500 or more but less than \$1,000; • \$100 if the fee for the septic-system permit is \$1,000 or more but less than \$1,400; and • \$200 if the fee for the septic-system permit is \$1,400 or more. <p>The enterprise must consult with and coordinate with the WQCC and local boards of health that issue septic-system permits. The Division of Administration and the local government that issues the permit may retain up to 5% of the fee to cover administrative costs. The fee will be used by the enterprise to establish the loan program, which makes interest-free or low-interest loans to low-income or low-credit-score households to replace failing septic systems.</p> <p>hearing item • House Energy & Environment</p> <p>Feb 13, 2025 01:30pm Old State Library</p> <p>Jan 28, 2025, House</p> <p>- Introduced In House - Assigned to Energy & Environment</p>			
HJR 25-1004	Karen McCormick Ty Winter Dylan Roberts	<p>Water Project Eligibility Lists</p> <p>hearing item • Senate Agriculture & Natural Resources</p> <p>Feb 06, 2025 01:30pm SCR 352</p> <p>Jan 29, 2025, Senate</p> <p>- Introduced In Senate - Assigned to Agriculture & Natural Resources</p>	Senate, Jan 29, 2025: Introduced In Senate - Assigned to Agriculture & Natural Resources	Engrossed (01/29/2025)	
SB 25-037	Dylan Roberts Barbara Kirkmeyer Rick Taggart	<p>Coal Transition Grants</p> <p>The bill allows the Just Transition Office in the Department of Labor and Employment to coordinate with councils of government, employee associations, and economic development councils to implement projects in coal transition communities. The bill exempts funds received from a payment or settlement to offset community impacts from the closure of a coal mine or coal power plant from the state's investment restrictions.</p> <p>Under current law, the Department of Local Affairs allocates some severance tax revenues to local governments for purposes related to the impacts of mining and energy generation. This bill specifies how the department should prioritize allocating those funds, caps the amount that may be spent on each priority, and</p>	Senate, Feb 4, 2025: Senate Committee on Business, Labor, & Technology Refer Amended to Appropriations	Introduced (01/08/2025)	

		<p>adds communities impacted by the closure of coal mines or coal-fired power plants as a beneficiary. First, funds must be used to compensate local governments for property tax losses, including for the losses from the closure of coal-fired power plants, up to \$15 million. Second, funds must be awarded as grants to local governments impacted by mineral extraction for public facilities and public services, up to \$75 million. Any remaining funds must be distributed to local governments impacted by the closure of coal mines or coal-fired power plants, and for other uses permitted by current law.</p> <p>Feb 04, 2025, Senate</p> <p>- Senate Committee on Business, Labor, & Technology Refer Amended to Appropriations</p>			
SB 25-040	Dylan Roberts Cleave Simpson Karen McCormick	<p>Future of Severance Taxes & Water Funding Task Force</p> <p>The bill creates the Future of Severance Taxes and Water Funding Task Force at DNR. The 9-member task force will hire a contractor to conduct a study and develop recommendations on options to continue funding water needs for the state while severance tax revenue is expected to decrease. Appointments to the task force must be made by September 1, 2025. A draft report to the task force by January 15, 2026, and a final report from the task force is due to the Water Resources and Agriculture Review committee by July 15, 2026.</p> <p>An amendment was added to the bill to specify that the Task Force will be paid for through existing DNR funds and not the General Fund.</p> <p>Jan 29, 2025, Senate</p> <p>- Senate Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources Refer Amended to Appropriations</p>	Senate, Jan 29, 2025: Senate Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources Refer Amended to Appropriations	Introduced (01/08/2025)	
SB 25-061	Cleave Simpson Ron Weinberg Junie Joseph	<p>Federally Recognized Tribes & Construction of Laws</p> <p>Current Colorado laws do not always expressly provide whether the laws apply to the Southern Ute Indian Tribe. The bill creates a rule of construction that a law does not apply to the Tribe unless the law clearly and expressly states that the law applies to the Tribe.</p> <p>The bill further clarifies that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any law passed by the general assembly applies to persons other than Indians and to those persons' conduct on land within the Southern Ute 	Senate, Jan 21, 2025: Introduced In Senate - Assigned to Judiciary	Introduced (01/21/2025)	

		<p>Indian reservation in which no interest is owned by the Tribe or tribally controlled entities, or on lands in which no interest is owned by Indians and is held in trust or restricted status by the United States; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The civil and criminal laws of the state of Colorado apply to Indians and persons other than Indians within the boundaries of a municipality located within the reservation; except that this does not limit the concurrent jurisdiction of the Tribe over conduct of Indians enrolled in the Tribe within a municipality. The bill reinforces that these rules of construction do not: • Preclude or limit the authority of the Tribe's governing bodies from enacting legislation that consents to the application of laws passed by the general assembly; • Abrogate the sovereign immunity of the state or the Tribe; or • Affect the rights of the state, the Tribe, or other persons to pursue legal remedies that may be available to contest the application of laws passed by the general assembly. <p>Jan 21, 2025, Senate - Introduced In Senate - Assigned to Judiciary</p>			
SB 25-077	Cathy Kipp Janice Rich Michael Carter	<p>Modifications to Colorado Open Records Act</p> <p>The bill makes multiple changes to the Colorado Open Records Act primarily related to the time frame a custodian of public records at a public agency has to respond to a request.</p> <p>Under current law, CORA requires that the custodian of records respond to requests within a reasonable time frame, presumed to be three days, which can be extended for extenuating circumstances up to seven days. The bill maintains these timelines for requests from news media; for all other requests, the bill presumes that a reasonable time frame is five days, and any extension must not exceed ten days. The bill expands the circumstances that allow a public entity to have a longer response period to account for the work schedule of the custodian, and when records are in the custody of another authorized person. If the custodian is unable deliver public records in the custody of another employee, the custodian must provide available records and notify the requestor the date of the employee's return or other circumstances affecting the delivery of records. If a custodian determines a CORA request is for the direct solicitation of business or monetary gain, the custodian may take up to 30 days to respond and is entitled to</p>	Senate, Jan 23, 2025: Introduced In Senate - Assigned to State, Veterans, & Military Affairs	Introduced (01/23/2025)	

	<p>recover the full cost associated with responding. A requester may challenge the custodian's determination in district court.</p> <p>Among its other changes, the bill:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • requires that public entities post the rules for inspecting public records and their document retention policy on a website, or posted at the entity's physical location; • permits a custodian to deny records containing information that could allow a person to contact a public K-12 student through any method; • requires the custodian to provide a description of research and retrieval costs incurred, upon request • allows a custodian to treat a CORA request made within 14 days of another request for similar information by the same person as one request for the purposes of determining costs and fees; and • requires that a custodian of records permit a requester to pay fees with a credit card or electronic payment if the public entity allows those payments for any other service or product. <p>Jan 23, 2025, Senate - Introduced In Senate - Assigned to State, Veterans, & Military Affairs</p>			
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14 bills

Staff Reports



THE SOUTHWESTERN WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Developing and Conserving the Waters in the
SAN JUAN AND DOLORES RIVERS AND THEIR TRIBUTARIES

**West Building – 841 East Second Avenue
DURANGO, COLORADO 81301
(970) 247-1302**

BOARD MEMORANDUM

Date: January 31, 2025
From: 15.02 SWCD Staff
Subject: Recommendation regarding the assignment of a portion of the 2024 year-end fund balance to SWCD Water Defense and SWCD Water Development

Below is our recommendation regarding the assignment of a portion of the projected 2024 year-end fund balance to SWCD Water Defense and SWCD Water Development as follows:

Projected Fund Balances on December 31, 2024 (After the adoption of the below recommendations)		
Restricted		
	3% TABOR Reserve	\$60,806
Committed		
	Undisbursed Grants ¹	\$15,000
Assigned		
	SWCD Water Defense ² (\$2,551,355 - 2023 Approved Amount) - <i>Proposed increase of \$460,774</i> - <i>(60% of the remaining \$767,956)</i>	\$3,012,129
	SWCD Water Development ³ (\$1,700,904 2023 Approved Amount) - <i>Proposed increase of \$307,182</i> - <i>(40% of the remaining \$767,956)</i>	\$2,008,086
	Water Information Program ⁴	\$134,829
Unassigned⁵		\$506,715
	Total Projected Fund Balance	\$5,737,565

Notes:

- 1 A projection from the “Previously Committed Local Financial Support” budget line.
- 2 Created to defend the water resources of the District.
- 3 Created to develop and maintain the water resources of the District.
- 4 These assignments reflect prior contributions from external parties for these purposes and the District’s matching contributions.
- 5 The amount is a projection. The audited unassigned fund balance at year-end may vary.

At the February meeting, staff will be recommending that the Board confirm its intent to assign those portions of the general fund balance to SWCD Water Defense, SWCD Water Development, and Water Information Program as set forth in the Projected Fund Balance table above.

For reference, a helpful graphic explanation of the five classifications of fund balance is shown below.

**Governmental Accounting Standards Board
Statement No. 54 Fund Balance Classifications**

		Classification	Definition	Degree of Spendability
Restricted Fund Balance	}	Nonspendable	Resources that are not in a spendable form (inventories, prepaid items, or items required to be maintained intact).	Nonspendable
		Restricted	Resources constrained to specific purposes by external providers (creditors, grantors, contributors, and other levels of government) through laws and regulations.	
Unrestricted Fund Balance	}	Committed	Resources constrained by limitations the City imposes upon itself at its highest level of decision-making authority (City Council); limitations remain binding unless removed in the same manner.	
		Assigned	Resources a government intends to use for a specific purpose; intent can be expressed by the governing body or by an official or body to which the governing body delegates authority.	
		Unassigned	Resources available for any purpose; these resources are reported only in the General Fund.	Spendable

DRAFT
SOUTHWESTERN WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
ACCOUNTING & GRANTS COORDINATOR JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Accounting & Grants Coordinator

Reports to: General Manager

Type of Position: Full-time

Hours: Approximately 40 hrs/week

Status: Non-exempt

Effective Date:

Summary of Job Description:

The Accounting & Grants Coordinator (Coordinator) is responsible for overseeing the financial activities of the Southwestern Water Conservation District (SWCD) in close collaboration with its General Manager. This includes reviewing and submitting payroll for approval, accounts payable/receivable, budgeting, financial reporting, supporting the annual audit and coordinating grant reimbursements for the SWCD Grant Program. Additionally, the Coordinator manages the accounting and financial compliance activities associated with any state or federal grants SWCD receives. This includes both accounting activities associated with managing the grant with the granting agency and the associated disbursement of sub-awards to local partners.

Accounting Duties and Responsibilities (approximately 40%)

Accounts Payable and Receivable

- Process invoices, reconcile vendor statements, and follow up on past-due payments.
- Handle accounts receivable, including tax disbursements from nine counties and interest income from investments

Recording Financial Transactions:

- Posting daily transactions such as sales, purchases, receipts, and payments into accounting software

Budget Management

- Collaborate with the General Manager to help draft and monitor the annual SWCD budget.
- Coordinate with nine counties on mill levy certifications and ensure compliance with statutory budget requirements.
- Monitor the annual budget for the Water Information Program (WIP).
- Manage the general ledger for the recording of day-to-day financial activities

Financial Reporting & Reconciliation

- Reconcile SWCD accounts and generate regular financial reports
- Maintain accurate financial records for the District and ensure timely financial reporting.
- Generate expenditure tracking reports and program budget analyses as required.

Annual Audit Support

- Assist with the annual audit process by preparing required financial documents.
- Work directly with external auditors to provide necessary financial data and ensure compliance with audit procedures.

Payroll and Employee Benefits Administration

- Oversee payroll processing, including leave accounting and benefit programs such as insurance and retirement plans.
- Ensure compliance with federal, state, and local employment laws as they relate to payroll and financial operations.

Financial Planning and Analysis

- Assist the General Manager in financial forecasting and planning to ensure long-term financial sustainability for SWCD.
- Support the General Manager in analyzing financial performance and identifying cost-saving opportunities.

Bill Payments & Invoicing for SWCD Programs

- Work closely with the General Manager to ensure that all program-related bills are paid in a timely manner and that invoices are sent out correctly.
- Track incoming payments for services rendered under SWCD programs, including the collection of outstanding balances.
- Maintain accurate financial records related to invoicing and payments and generate periodic financial reports for the Board.
- Ensure that program expenditures align with approved budgets and provide regular updates on the financial status of programs to the General Manager.
- Establish a tracking document to manage SWCD programs, and coordinate contract invoices and payments are sent to the District in a timely manner.

Miscellaneous Financial Duties:

- Process and distribute incoming and outgoing mail related to financial matters.
- Provide financial documentation and support for special projects as requested by the General Manager or Board.
- Ensure adherence to SWCD's financial policies and compliance with applicable financial regulations.
- Provide support on financial matters to the SWCD Grants Program, which is managed by the Programs Coordinator

State and Federal Grant Administration – Southwestern Water Conservation and Infrastructure Partnership (Partnership) (approximately 60%)

Grant Management

- Communicate with grantors and funding partners to address discrepancies or changes in grant spending or project scope.

- Track and maintain records of grant reimbursements and ensure compliance with grant guidelines.
- Monitor and track grant spending to ensure budget and funding guidelines adherence.
- Maintain accurate and organized records of all grant activities, from application to project closeout.
- Establish and maintain systems for tracking grant expenses, budgets, and reporting deadlines.
- Monitor grant-funded projects for progress, making sure all activities comply with the terms and conditions of the grant.
- Assist the General Manager and project partners with establishing budget estimates for projects within grant proposals

Grant Disbursement to Sub-Award Recipients

- Manage the grant award process and ensure compliance with grant guidelines.
- Work closely with the Program’s Coordinator and General Manager to review grant documentation and ensure all reporting and financial requirements are met before disbursement.
- Process and disburse grant reimbursements for the Partnership.
- Ensure that all required documentation, such as contracts and agreements, are complete and accessible for auditing purposes.

Financial Management and Reporting

- Prepare, review, and submit financial reports to grantors according to grant requirements.
- Prepare and present periodic grant reports to the Board, outlining the financial status and overall performance of grants.
- Prepare periodic grant reimbursement reports for the Board, outlining disbursement status and any outstanding grant obligations.
- Provide regular status updates to the SWCD Board as requested by the General Manager or the Board.

Compliance and Audits

- Ensure adherence to all grant reporting requirements, including timely submission of financial reports, progress updates, and other required documentation to funding agencies.
- Maintain detailed records of grant expenditures, ensuring all spending complies with grant guidelines and budget allocations.
- Ensure that all required documentation, such as contracts, agreements, and reports, is complete and accessible for auditing purposes.
- Work with external auditors or grant evaluators to provide necessary financial and progress reports for grant compliance reviews.

Other Responsibilities

- Travel to meetings and events as directed by the General Manager.
- Assists with other financial and administrative duties as assigned by the General Manager.



Southwestern Water Conservation District
Durango, Colorado

Job Announcement/Description

Accounting & Grants Coordinator
DRAFT

The [Southwestern Water Conservation District](#) (“District”), based in Durango, Colorado, is seeking candidates for an *Accounting & Grants Coordinator*. The District was created by Colorado statute in 1941 to lead in the protection, conservation, use and development of the water resources of the San Juan and Dolores River basins for the welfare of the District, and to safeguard for Colorado all waters of the basin to which the state is entitled. The District encompasses all of La Plata, Montezuma, Archuleta, San Juan, San Miguel and Dolores counties and parts of Montrose, Hinsdale and Mineral counties. The District has a nine-member Board of Directors with an appointee from each Board of County Commissioners.

The Accounting & Grants Coordinator (“Coordinator”) works in collaboration with the General Manager to oversee the financial activities of the Southwestern Water Conservation District (SWCD). This includes reviewing and submitting payroll for approval, accounts payable/receivable, budgeting, financial reporting, supporting the annual audit, and coordinating grant reimbursements for the SWCD Grant Program. Additionally, the Coordinator manages the accounting and financial compliance activities associated with any state or federal grants SWCD is party to. This includes accounting and administrative activities associated with managing the grant with the granting agency and the associated disbursement of sub-awards to local partners. The General Manager supervises the position, with additional guidance and oversight provided by the SWCD Board of Directors (“Board”). The position is a full-time, non-exempt position that is based out of the District’s office in Durango. The successful candidate will be expected to be in the office Monday – Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM (with some allowance for flexibility). Please see the Job Description below for additional information about the position.

The ideal candidate will be self-motivated, have strong verbal and written communication skills, have a background in accounting, and have good public relations abilities.

The Minimum Requirements for the position are:

- Bachelor’s Degree
- At least three (3) years of professional experience in accounting, contract management, grant administration or management, budgeting, financial analysis, project coordination, or office support. Additional appropriate education may be substituted for the required experience on a year-for-year basis
- Strong Interpersonal skills
- Excellent writing and verbal communication skills
- Proficient with Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
- Experience with budget and accounting programs (i.e., QuickBooks)

- Excellent organizational and time management skills
- Ability to provide valid identification and work authorization documents as required by federal and state law. Acceptable documents include those listed on the Form I-9, such as a valid driver's license, state-issued ID, passport, or other approved identification

Highly Desirable Traits and Skills include:

- Bachelor's Degree in accounting, finance, business, public administration or a closely related field
- General knowledge of southwest Colorado
- Book-keeping, accounting, contract management and/or budgeting experience
- Background with taxing districts
- Experience with financial grant evaluation, data reporting as well as state and federal grant programs
- Excellent organizational skills and ability to multi-task
- Detail oriented
- Ability to work well independently as well as with a team

This is a full-time position with benefits including Paid Time Off (PTO), HFWA leave, 12 paid holidays annually, a 457 retirement plan match, and health and life insurance. The anticipated pay range is \$50,000 to \$70,000 annually. Although a pay range is listed, annual pay for this position will be set commensurate with the successful candidate's qualifications and in compliance with the State and Federal equal pay laws. **The Southwestern Water Conservation District is an "at-will employer".**

To apply, please submit: (1) a cover letter explaining the basis for your interest in the position and a short explanation of why you are a good candidate for the job; (2) a resume; (3) a fully completed Application for Employment form; and (4) a fully completed Disclosure Regarding Background Investigation form. Forms for #3 and #4 above are available at <https://swwcd.org>. All materials listed above must be received to be considered for this position and should be submitted electronically (PDF preferred) to the General Manager at: steve@swwcd.org. **The application period will remain open until [INSERT DATE]. Those interested in the position are encouraged to apply early.**

SWCD's Water Conservation and Infrastructure Partnership Website:

<https://www.swwcd.org/water-conservation-and-infrastructure-partnership>

SWCD's B2E Press Release:

<https://www.swwcd.org/press-release-swcd-awarded-25-6-million-in-federal-funds-to-address-aquatic-habitats-impacted-by-drought>

Upper Division States Alternative Refinements



December 30, 2024

Upper Division States Alternative Refinements

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Upper Division States Alternative Refinements

On December 19, 2024, the Commissioner of Reclamation invited refinements to the Upper Division States Alternative (UDS Alternative) for consideration in the NEPA process for post-2026 operations of Lake Powell and Lake Mead. Accordingly, we submit the following refinements to the UDS Alternative (UDS Alternative Refinements) as previously submitted. This submittal is from the Upper Division States collectively through the Upper Colorado River Commission (UCRC). Given the complexities of CRSS modeling, the UDS reserves the right to amend or modify these assumptions as appropriate.

The purpose and need for the proposed federal action allows for development of robust operating guidelines for Lake Powell and Lake Mead without precluding upstream or downstream actions needed to protect critical reservoir elevation at Lake Powell and Lake Mead. The UDS maintain that the scope of this EIS should be focused on the coordinated operations of Lake Powell and Lake Mead, including new operational elements in both reservoirs. The UDS have outlined how Parallel Activities will enhance the performance of the UDS Alternative and the coordinated operations of Lake Powell and Lake Mead so that the impacts of such actions can be analyzed in the consideration of the UDS Alternative.

Operations proposed under the UDS Alternative as described in these UDS Alternative Refinements, or in the previous submittals requested by and provided to Reclamation by the Upper Division States¹ do not represent interpretations of existing law by the Upper Division States. The Upper Division States expressly reserve their rights under applicable law, including, but not limited to the Law of the River. Nothing in this documentation is intended, nor shall be construed, to interpret, diminish, or modify the rights of the Upper Division States or the UCRC under federal or state law or administrative rule, regulation, or guideline. This documentation is not intended to be and shall not be construed in any way as a waiver of any such rights.

1. Model Configuration

The UDS Alternative was modeled using CRSS V6.1.0 Aug2023 *Release 2* in RiverWare and RiverSMART version 9.0.5 and the Interim Guidelines ruleset, CRSS.Baseline.2027IGDCPnoUBDRO.v6.1.0.rls, packaged with CRSS. The UDS Alternative modified these as necessary to simulate the UDS Alternative. The following criteria were used to define the boundary conditions:

- **Initial Conditions:** Reclamation's medium initial condition from the June 2023 SEIS Proposed Action CRMMS model projections of December 31, 2026
- **Run Period:** January 2024 through December 2053

2. Demands

The UDS Alternative uses variable Lower Basin and Upper Basin demands as provided by Reclamation's Demand Input Tool (DIT). Upper Basin current and future water uses are based on the Updated 2016 Upper Division States Depletion Demand Schedule (June 2022). The Depletion Demand Schedule includes settled Tribal rights in the Upper Basin demands. This provides predictability and helps accommodate future needs and growth, including for Upper Basin Tribes. Lower Basin water uses are as characterized in the model (BOR's CRSS V6.1.0 Aug2023 *Release 2*).

3. Upper Division States Alternative

The fundamental purpose of the UDS Alternative is to build a water budget to operate Lake Powell and Lake Mead based on annual supplies and to adjust downstream water uses to be consistent with those supplies. In so doing, the UDS Alternative provides new and innovative mechanisms for conservation, storage, and release of water supplies in Colorado River reservoirs so that water users can adjust demands to the available supplies. The release operations of Lake Powell are tied to Lake Powell storage contents based on a rule curve. The release operations of Lake Mead are tied to the combined storage contents of Lake Powell and Lake Mead.

¹ The UDS originally submitted the UDS Alternative on March 5, 2024, and provided further clarification and refinements to the Alternative on March 29, 2024, and May 10, 2024, respectively.

3.1 Upper Basin Operations

Annual Lake Powell releases are determined by a rule curve based on observed conditions in Lake Powell at the start of the water year beginning October 1st. As shown below and in Figure 1, the rule curve includes the following:

- Flood control operations as required by dam safety regulations above 3700'
- Static releases of 12.0 million acre-feet per year (MAFY) when the start of the water year Lake Powell elevation is between 3680' and 3700'
- Releases between 9.5 MAFY and 12.0 MAFY based on linear interpolation when the start of water year Lake Powell elevation is between 3650' and 3680'
- Releases between 6.0 MAFY and 9.5 MAFY based on linear interpolation when the start of water year Lake Powell elevation is between 3535' and 3650'
- Releases between 5.0 MAFY and 6.0 MAFY based on linear interpolation when the start of water year Lake Powell elevation is between 3510' and 3535'
- Static releases of 5.0 MAFY when the start of water year Lake Powell elevation is below 3510'
- The UDS Alternative does not include equalization and/or balancing operations

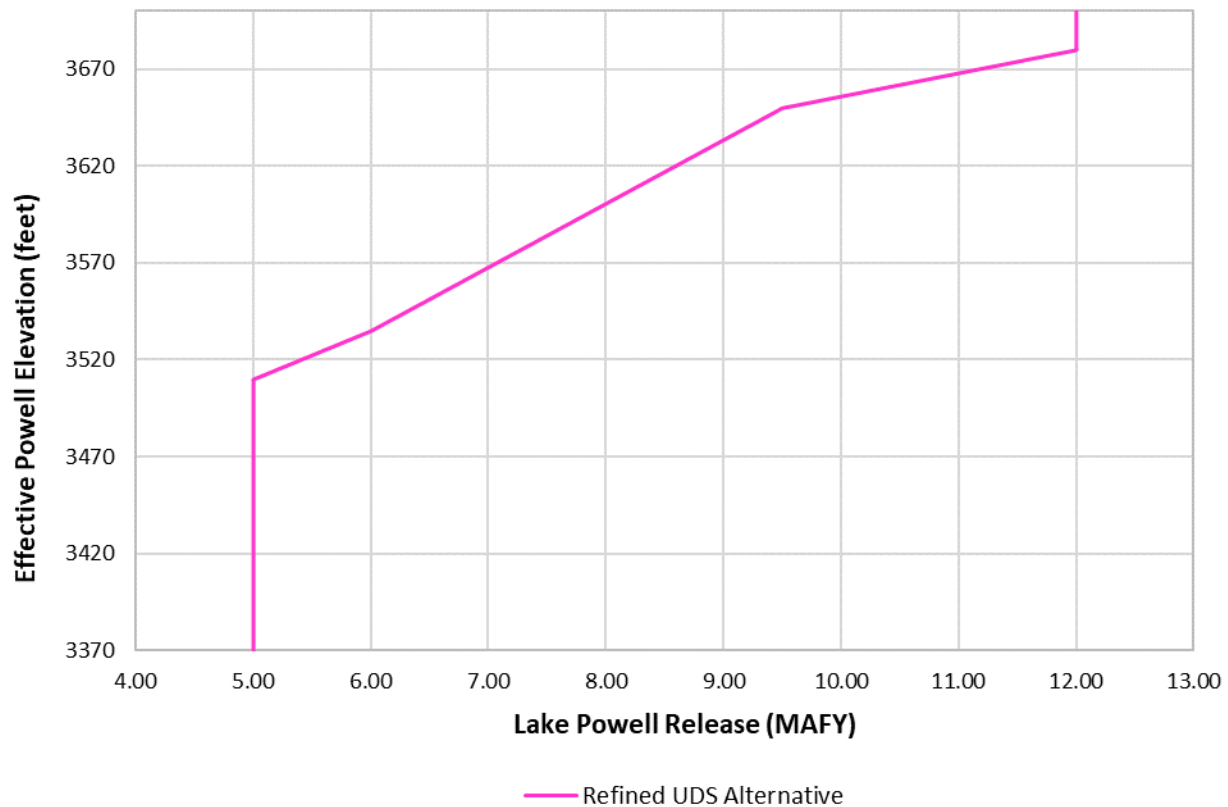


Figure 1 UDS Alternative Rule Curve for Lake Powell Releases

To provide a complete analysis of the UDS Alternative under the NEPA process, the Parallel Activities should be analyzed in conjunction with the UDS Alternative. The UDS Alternative describes the Parallel Activities that the Upper Division States will undertake in the event the UDS Alternative is adopted. These Parallel Activities include innovative uses of conservation in the Upper Division States and help address Tribal concerns regarding Colorado

Upper Division States Alternative Refinements

River Basin management in part by providing new and enhanced opportunities for Upper Basin Tribes to benefit from their water rights.

These potential future activities would be undertaken pursuant to separate measures or agreements and potential voluntary measures by others. These Parallel Activities would help build resiliency in the face of ongoing drought and provide additional mechanisms for conservation, storage, and conversion of water supplies. Because the water supply available to the Upper Division States is uncertain every year due to hydrologic variability, the volume of water that can be derived from Parallel Activities is variable. The operation of the Parallel Activities is at the discretion of the UDS. Parallel Activities are not intended to offset Lower Basin reductions, nor do they result in direct additional releases from Lake Powell. However, under low reservoir conditions, they could provide for incremental increased releases from Lake Powell and decreased Lower Basin reductions.

For the sole purpose of modeling these Parallel Activities to analyze such impacts, the UDS considered a reasonably foreseeable range of these activities informed by previous, similar activities. Previous similar activities include the Upper Basin’s System Conservation Pilot Program from 2015 through 2018 and 2023 through 2024, which produced significantly less than 100,000 acre-feet of conservation in every year. Also informing the Parallel Activities were the Drought Response Operation Plans from 2022 and 2023.

Moreover, potential Parallel Activities may include voluntary reductions in historical consumptive use and a program recognized by the Upper Division States for the forbearance of unused, settled, quantified, and decreed Tribal water rights, the details for which have not yet been developed.

Water from these Parallel Activities would be credited to, and be available for, the benefit of the Upper Division States, including helping to protect the ability of Lake Powell to make releases under certain conditions. The UDS Alternative includes explicit CRSS accounting for water in Lake Powell that could potentially be derived from Parallel Activities. The accounting rules include consideration of evaporation losses, “operational neutrality” such that the Parallel Activities do not influence Lake Powell or Lake Mead operational releases, conversion criteria for conserved water, and recovery rules for water contributed to Lake Powell from Upstream Initial Units (UIUs).

The following accounts are assumed to operate in Lake Powell:

1. **Lake Powell Conservation Account** – this represents storage of water that is neutral to Lake Powell and Lake Mead operational triggers and that is derived from conservation of Upper Basin Colorado River water, including from a potential UDS approved Upper Basin Tribal forbearance program.

Creation: Such conservation and Tribal forbearance activities, and the resulting accrual of conserved water in a Lake Powell Conservation Account, are most likely to occur during conditions of wetter hydrology. For modeling purposes, conservation water is created using a linear function based on Powell natural inflow compared to the 30-year historical natural flow (1991-2020), as shown below.

Percentile	Historical Annual Water Year Powell Natural Inflow 1991-2020	Lake Powell Conservation Account
Less than 25	<10.6 MAF	0 AFY
25-75	10.6 – 16.5 MAF	0 – 200,000 AFY
Greater than 75	>16.5 MAF	Up to 200,000 AFY

Water conserved as a result of these activities and accrued in the Lake Powell Conservation Account is subject to evaporation consistent with the current CRSS methods.

Conversion: For modeling purposes, Lake Powell Conservation Account water will be subject to the Lake Powell release rule curve up to an amount equivalent to 50% of the Lower Basin’s incremental reductions greater than 1.5 MAF, recognizing and incorporating Upper Basin hydrologic shortages, as represented by the following equation:

$$UDS \text{ Conversion from Lake Powell Conservation Account} =$$

BOR Post - 2026 Alternatives Report:

https://www.usbr.gov/ColoradoRiverBasin/documents/post2026/alternatives/Post-2026_Alternatives_Report_20250117_508.pdf

15.5 Information: The proposed instream flow on Burrows Creek is described at the bottom of the linked webpage:

https://dnrweblink.state.co.us/CWCB/0/edoc/223907/2024IFSAnnualWorkshop_BLMpresentation.pdf?searchid=88b50b77-a02f-40a7-99d2-7314e627f3c2



THE SOUTHWESTERN WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Developing and Conserving the Waters in the
SAN JUAN AND DOLORES RIVERS AND THEIR TRIBUTARIES
West Building – 841 East Second Avenue
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(970) 247-1302

BOARD MEMORANDUM

From: Steve Wolff

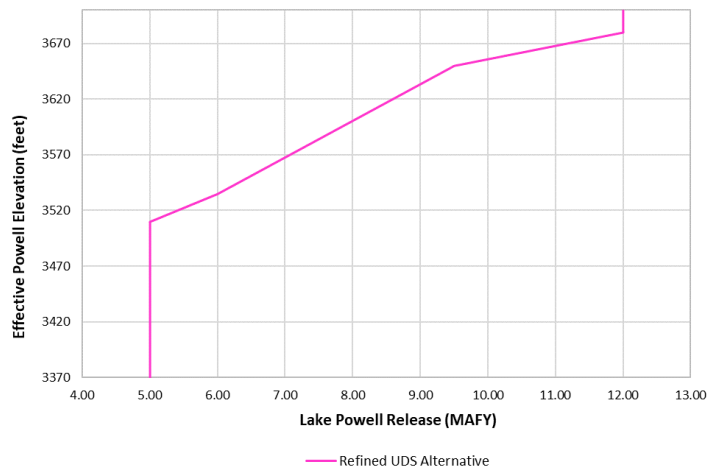
Subject: Agenda Item 15.6 – Update on Colorado River Activities

Date: January 31, 2025

1. Upper Division States Revised Alternative (12/30/24)

In late December, the Upper Division States (UDS) submitted a slightly revised alternative (as compared to the one they submitted in March 2024) to the Bureau of Reclamation. That document is in your packet. The main revisions included in this proposal included:

- A. Revised Powell Release Curve. The UDS indicated support for the Lake Powell release curve that had been included in much of Reclamation’s modeling work to date. The revised curve includes both lower releases from Powell (5 MAF) as well as higher releases (12 MAF) than their original proposal.



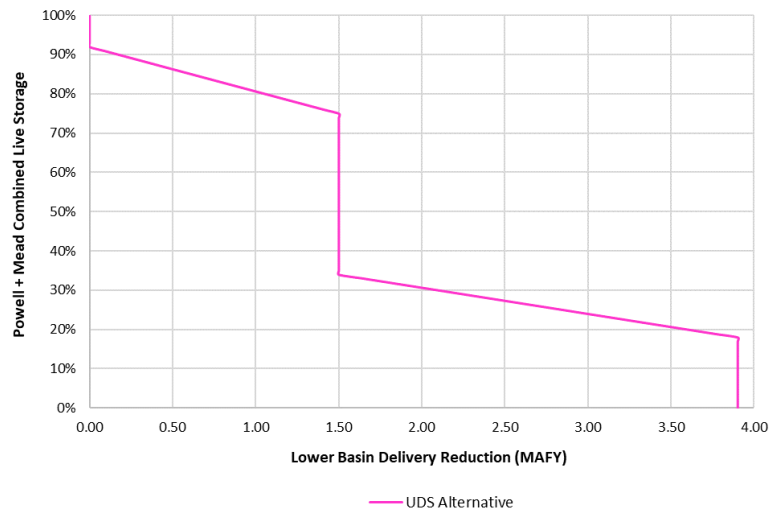
B. Lake Powell Accounts. The UDS are now recommending the creation of two “accounts” in Lake Powell. One account (Conservation Account) would be used to track water saved under any future UDS water conservation program and may include tribal water described under a forbearance agreement. The amount of water that may be created for this account is based on the hydrologic condition of any given year as shown below.

Percentile	Historical Annual Water Year Powell Natural Inflow 1991-2020	Lake Powell Conservation Account
Less than 25	<10.6 MAF	0 AFY
25-75	10.6 – 16.5 MAF	0 – 200,000 AFY
Greater than 75	>16.5 MAF	Up to 200,000 AFY

Water stored in this account would be invisible to any releases based on Lake Powell storage until such water was converted to “system water” under a described algorithm.

The second account (Protection Account) would be used to track any water released from the other three initial units (Navajo Reservoir, Blue Mesa Reservoir, and Flaming Gorge Reservoir) to protect the Lake Powell power pool. This is similar to activities described in the Drought Response Operations agreement that was implemented as part of the 2019 Drought Contingency Plans. Conversion of the water released from the initial units to “system water” would occur based on the same algorithm used for the conservation account.

C. Lower Division Shortages. The UDS also revised their recommended required reductions of use in the Lower Basin. The revised rule curve is shown below and has simply shifted up the x-axis slightly from their previous proposal.



The revisions, in part, came at the urging of Reclamation to address some clarifications needed to enable them to model the proposal. Some revisions from the Lower Division States were also expected but have not been released yet. There is some hope that the revisions from both basins may help the states to move the negotiation of the Post-2026 operations forward.

2. Alternatives Report: Post-2026 Operational Guidelines and Strategies for Lake Powell and Lake Mead

On November 20, 2024, the Bureau of Reclamation published the range of alternatives planned for analysis in the draft environmental impact statement and committed to providing additional information in a subsequent report. In mid-January, the Bureau of Reclamation released a report that describes these alternatives and the process for developing them in more detail.

The five alternatives include:

No Action Alternative – Included as a requirement of the National Environmental Policy Act, the No Action Alternative assumes Colorado River operations would revert to annual determinations announced through the Annual Operating Plan for Colorado River Reservoirs process and be based on operating guidance in place prior to the adoption of the 2007 Colorado River Interim Guidelines for Lower Basin Shortages and Coordinated Operations for Lake Powell and Lake Mead.

Federal Authorities Alternative – This alternative is designed to achieve protection of critical infrastructure within the Department of the Interior’s and Bureau of Reclamation’s current statutory authorities and absent new stakeholder agreements.

Federal Authorities Hybrid Alternative – This alternative is based on proposals and concepts from Tribes, federal agencies, and other stakeholders and is designed to achieve protection of critical infrastructure while benefitting key resources through an approach to distributing storage between Lake Powell and Lake Mead that enhances the reservoirs’ ability to support the Colorado River Basin.

Cooperative Conservation Alternative – This alternative is informed by a proposal submitted by a consortium of conservation organizations with the goal of stabilizing system storage, integrating stewardship and mitigation strategies of Lake Powell and Lake Mead, maintaining opportunities for binational cooperative measures, incentivizing water conservation, and designing flexible water management strategies.

Basin Hybrid Alternative – This alternative reflects components of the proposals and concepts submitted by the Upper Division States, Lower Division States, and Colorado River Basin Tribes that could provide a basis for coordinated operations and may facilitate greater agreement across the Basin.

The Basin Hybrid is the closest alternative to what was submitted individually by the Lower Division States and the Upper Division States in their respective alternative proposals. However, I am certain no state would accept the Basin Hybrid Alternative as currently described. I assume most discussions on developing an alternative that all 7 states could support will be focused on elements contained in the Basin Hybrid Alternative.

3. As we discussed earlier, the reauthorization of the System Conservation Pilot Program (SCPP) for 2025 and 2026 was introduced in Congress last session. However, that bill ultimately was not passed. Senator Hickenlooper has reintroduced the same legislation in the current session. The chances of it passing sometime this year are unclear, though even if it does it seems as though implementation of SCPP in 2025 would be very limited.

As I have expressed previously, I believe the SCPP as currently structured has little value in conserving water in the Upper Basin. The existing program is short-sighted, takes tremendous resources from the states to implement, and, to date, has conserved very little water. To enact a more valuable program that would support producers to remain economically viable and conserve water, a program needs to have a much longer tenure (~10 years) so a producer could plan to participate say 3 years in 10 (or similar) and actively mitigate secondary impacts. I also question the value of season-long fallowing in most situations. Projects that focus on alternative crops and new technologies would be preferred. The issue of shepherding any conserved water is still a point of much debate.



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BOARD MEMORANDUM

From: Steve Wolff

Subject: Agenda Item 15.6 – General Manager Activities

Date: January 31, 2025

This memo is provided to keep the Board of Directors informed of some of my more relevant activities/meetings that are not ongoing or regular duties. It covers the period from November 2024 to March 2025.

11/14-15/24 Upper Colorado River Commission. Attended a meeting of the Engineering Committee and a Commission work session in Denver.

Nov./Dec. 2024 Colorado River Water Users Association. Participated in the Program Planning Committee activities, attended the Annual Meeting, and attended the Board of Trustees business meeting.

1/7/25 Met with UCRC, Colorado & New Mexico staff to discuss options for getting ASO operating in the Upper San Juan basin in 2026.

1/9/25 Provided an SWCD update to the Dolores Water Conservancy Board (DWCD).

1/14/25 Ongoing discussion with ALP partners on possible outlet discussion.

1/18/25 Provided an SWCD update at the Pine River Irrigation District Annual meeting.

2/25-26/25 Plan to attend the IBCC meeting in Denver.

3/19/25 With Pete Foster (Wright Water Engineers), will make a presentation to DECD, MVIC and others on the Dolores/McElmo system compact risk modeling work.

3/25/25 With Pete Foster (Wright Water Engineers), will make a presentation at a public meeting on the Upper San Juan system compact risk modeling work.

March 2025 Plan to hold a meeting of the Southwestern Water Conservation and Infrastructure Partnership.

March 2025 Planning for a UCRC Engineering Committee meeting.



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BOARD MEMORANDUM

From: Monika Rock
Subject: 15.08 Programs Coordinator Activities
Date: 02/04/25

Colorado Water Congress:

I attended the Colorado Water Congress Conference in Aurora on January 28th – 31st. The conference was filled with panel discussions, water management presentations, and many productive conversations. David Guilliams and Gerald Koppenhafer also attended the event. Wednesday night, SWCD hosted a dinner for partners and constituents in the Southwest. Twenty guests joined us, everyone seemed pleased with dinner, and many folks had the opportunity to connect with others they had not previously had the opportunity to connect with. Beyond the conference, many folks chatted with me regarding the B2E application and the Partnership.

Upcoming Events/Planning:

WaterSmart Workshop:

Bi-weekly meetings continue regarding the logistics of the WaterSmart Workshop, which will be held in Montrose from April 28th to 30th. So far, we've heard that Durango is interested in applying, and other entities in our region have been asking questions.

WEco Southwest Tour 2025:

The first meeting regarding the logistics of the WEco Southwest Tour will take place on Monday before the board meeting. There are over 35 individuals included in the initial meeting, so we are hoping to get a diverse group of folks and find the areas that may be the most interesting to the tour. Please let me know if you'd like to be part of this group. The tour is anticipated to be on June 3rd and 4th.

Winter Water Professional Training:

At the end of this week, I will attend a winter water professional training course through the Snow and Avalanche School in Silverton. The training has a classroom-style format in the morning and a field portion in the afternoon. We will visit the Snowtel site on Red Mountain and Senator Beck Study Basin.

Partner Updates



Elaine Chick - WIP Update – Feb. 12, 2025

Hello SWCD Board members, I have a brief update on WIP for you this month.

- **WIP Partner Meeting:** WIP held its first partner meeting of 2025 on January 22nd, with nine partners in attendance. During our previous meeting in September 2024, Ed Tolen announced his decision to step down as WIP chair. Steve Krest, from the Animas-La Plata Water Conservancy District Board, was nominated and unanimously elected as the new chair. I am pleased to welcome Steve Krest to this leadership role.
- **2025 SWCD Water Seminar:** All speakers and panels are confirmed, and we will be scheduling Zoom meetings with each panel this month. So far, 29 people have registered, and coordination and planning are ongoing. We will have an agenda completed this week. Please help spread the word—registration is available on the SWCD website or via this link: <https://swgcd.specialdistrict.org/swgcd-annual-seminar-registration>. Elaine will be sending out an invitation to you all this week with logistical details for the board and speaker dinner.
- **Children’s Water Festival:** The 2025 Children’s Water Festival is set for Wednesday, May 14, at Fort Lewis College. Invitations have already been sent to schools and teachers, and invitations for presenters will go out this week. Planning and coordination are well underway.

Elaine is seeking volunteers to help support the festival. Please help spread the word or reach out if you or someone in your community or organization is interested. Volunteers can sign up on the WIP website here: <https://www.waterinfo.org/2025-05-14-2025-children-s-water-festival>.

- **Outreach & Conference Attended:** Elaine attended the 2025 Colorado Water Congress Annual Convention, "*A Gathering of Water Minds*," held January 29–31 at the Hyatt Regency Aurora-Denver Conference Center. The convention featured insightful presentations on water resource planning, the water-energy nexus, technological advancements in the water sector, state and federal affairs, conservation, and western water priorities, along with an interesting post-inauguration briefing.

During the event, the Colorado Water Congress honored Russell George, a lifelong advocate for Colorado water issues, with the 2025 Wayne N. Aspinnall **Water Leader of the Year** Award.

Elaine also had the opportunity to network with a wide range of attendees and introduce many to the mission and work of the Water Information Program.

HARRIS WATER ENGINEERING, INC.
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Memorandum
February 4, 2025

To: SWCD Board of Directors
From: Carrie Padgett
Subject: Engineering Report for the February 12, 2025 Board Meeting

The following is a summary of the topics Carrie Padgett worked on for SWCD between the last Board meeting and December and January. For more background information and details, please get in touch with me.

San Juan and Upper Basin Endangered Fish Recovery Programs

The Biology Committee met in early December of 2024. The next meeting of the Biology Committee will be in Durango in late February. The February meeting will focus on results from the previous year's fieldwork with discussions on interpreting these results as they relate to the Biology Committee's three main problem statements developed at the December meeting. These problem statements intend to help the Biology Committee inform future projects to correct recruitment bottlenecks in the San Juan Recovery Program. The problem statements are:

1. Improve survival of wild Razorback Sucker larvae to the juvenile life stage.
2. Increase # of effective spawning Razorback Sucker adults (currently estimated to be only 3% of the adult population).
3. Improve survival of age 1+, 2+, and 3+ stocked Colorado pikeminnow, i.e., more adults will eventually produce an adequate number of wild larvae.

As we started the new year, the reauthorization of the two programs was approved by the U.S. Congress under the Servicemember Quality of Life Improvement and National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025. The language for the Recovery Programs begins on page 675 under "Subtitle B – Other Matters" and provides authorization levels consistent with the agreement that Program partners developed and agreed to in 2023. This bill reauthorizes the programs through fiscal year 2031.

Navajo Reservoir

In late January I attend a Navajo Reservoir Operations meeting. Meeting highlights are below.

- The snowpack is currently below average at 69% of median in the Upper San Juan Basin.
- Navajo Reservoir runoff projections (as of January) range from 300 kaf (47% of average) to 670 kaf (106% of average) with a median projection of 430 kaf (68% of average).
- There is only a ten percent chance of a spring peak release; assuming an above-average snow accumulation this spring.
- No project shortages are forecast to occur in the water year 2025.

The next meeting will be held in late April in Farmington. Fingers crossed we see some snow between now and then.

Community Navigator Technical Support

I will leave this update primarily to Steve and Mo. Since we've completed the B2E application, I have been working on drafting two reports. The first report relates to the project pipeline and proposes approaches on how to best update projects throughout the year. The second report relates to a funding plan for 2025. I will be working with Steve and Mo to finalize this plan. In March we plan to host a partnership meeting to discuss future grant opportunities and lessons learned from the B2E efforts.

As part of my community navigator role, I also attend workgroup meetings regarding the Natural Resources Damage Funds (NRDF) available for the Animas River watershed. I see a future opportunity for the community navigator to work with these interested parties in pursuing projects in the basin that leverage these NRDF along with other local, state, and federal funding opportunities. I was able to include two projects in the B2E proposal that will leverage these NRDF in the Animas River watershed.

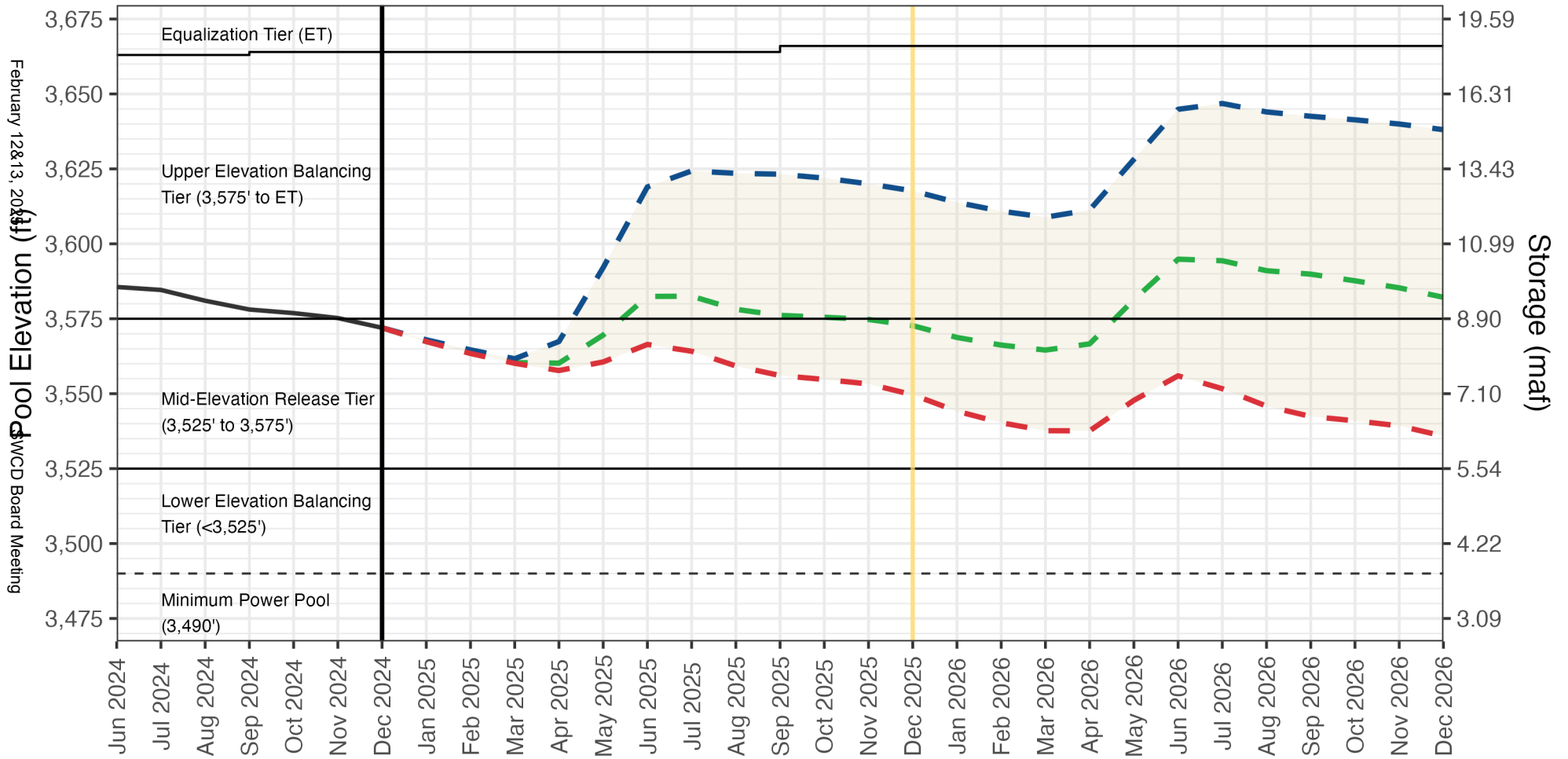
Animas Watershed Partnership

The Animas Watershed Partnership received a Colorado Water Plan grant that was executed in early January. The Steering Committee met last month to develop a job description for the coordinator's role. The group has also solicited new members for the committee to help guide the stream management planning process. Once a coordinator has been hired, the stream management process will kick off in March with a meeting with stakeholders. The plan is expected to take two years.

Hydrologic Update

Lake Powell End-of-Month Elevations

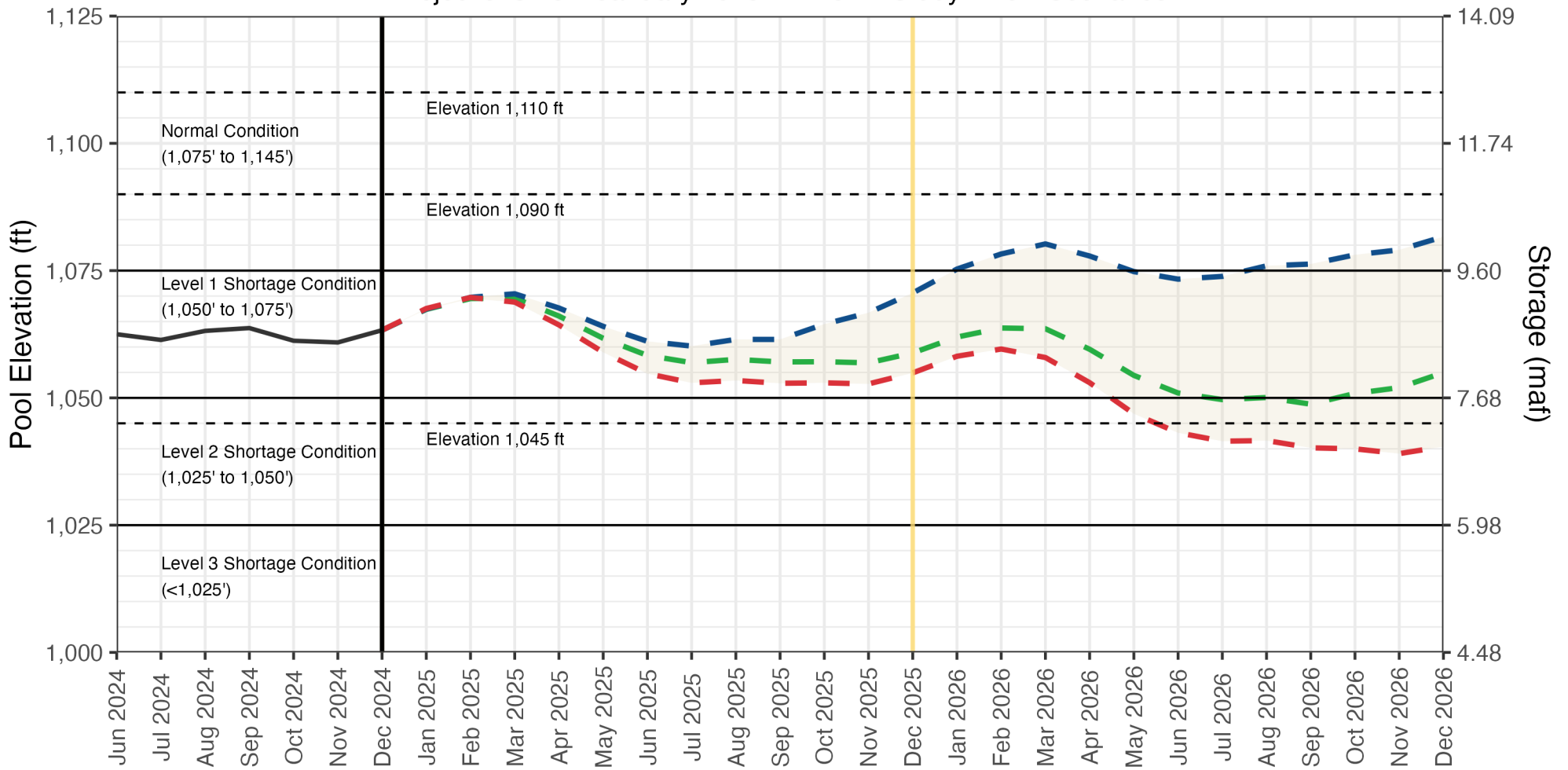
Projections from January 2025 24-Month Study Inflow Scenarios



- Historical Elevations
- January 2025 Probable Maximum Inflow with a Lake Powell release of 7.48 maf in WY 2025 and 9.00 maf in WY 2026
- January 2025 Most Probable Inflow with a Lake Powell release of 7.48 maf in WY 2025 and WY 2026
- January 2025 Probable Minimum Inflow with a Lake Powell release of 7.48 maf in WY 2025 and WY 2026

Lake Mead End-of-Month Elevations

Projections from January 2025 24-Month Study Inflow Scenarios



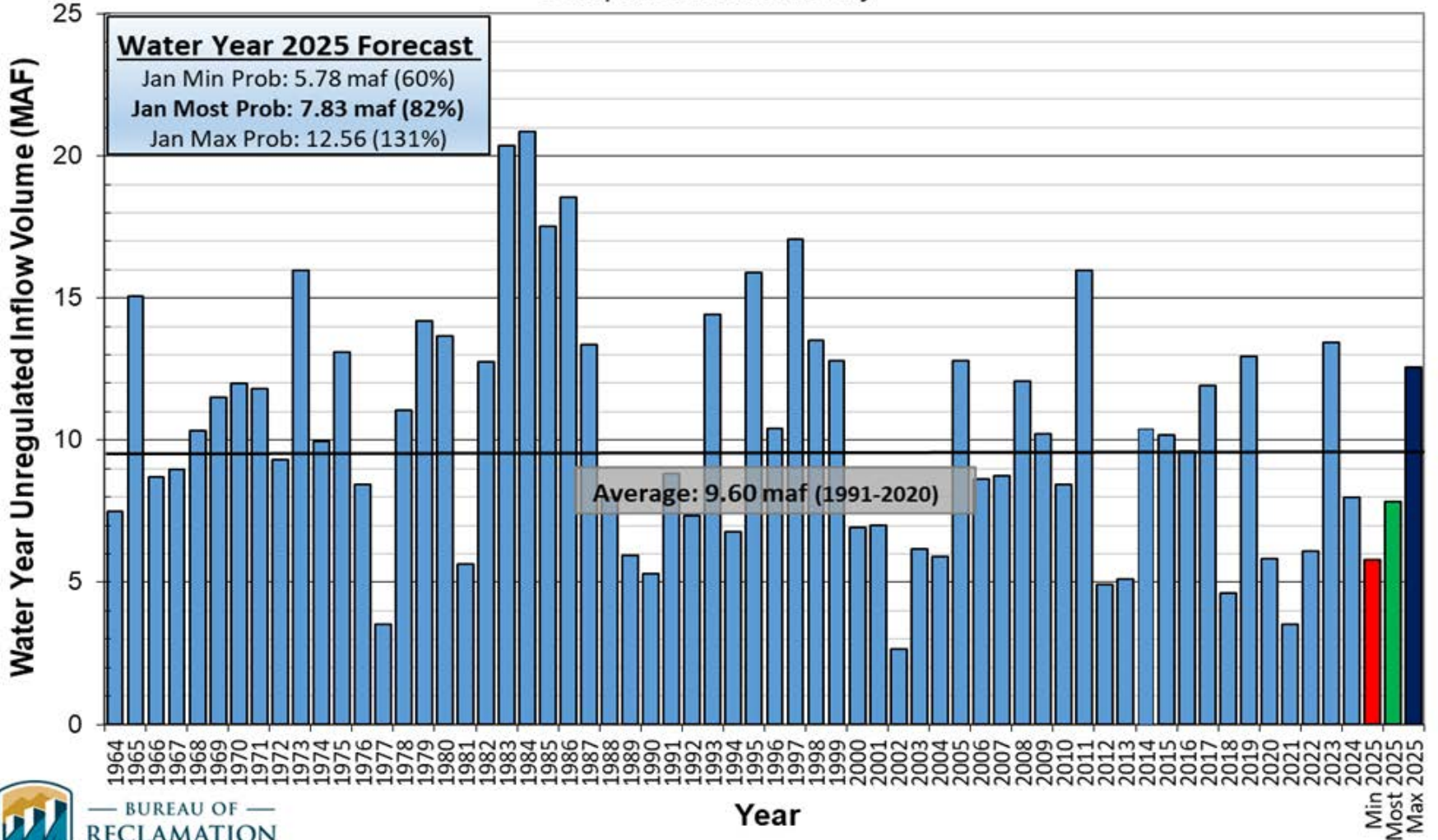
- Historical Elevations
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- January 2025 Probable Minimum Inflow with a Lake Powell release of 7.48 maf in WY 2025 and WY 2026



Lake Powell Unregulated Inflow

Water Year 2025 Forecast *(issued January 6)*

Comparison with History



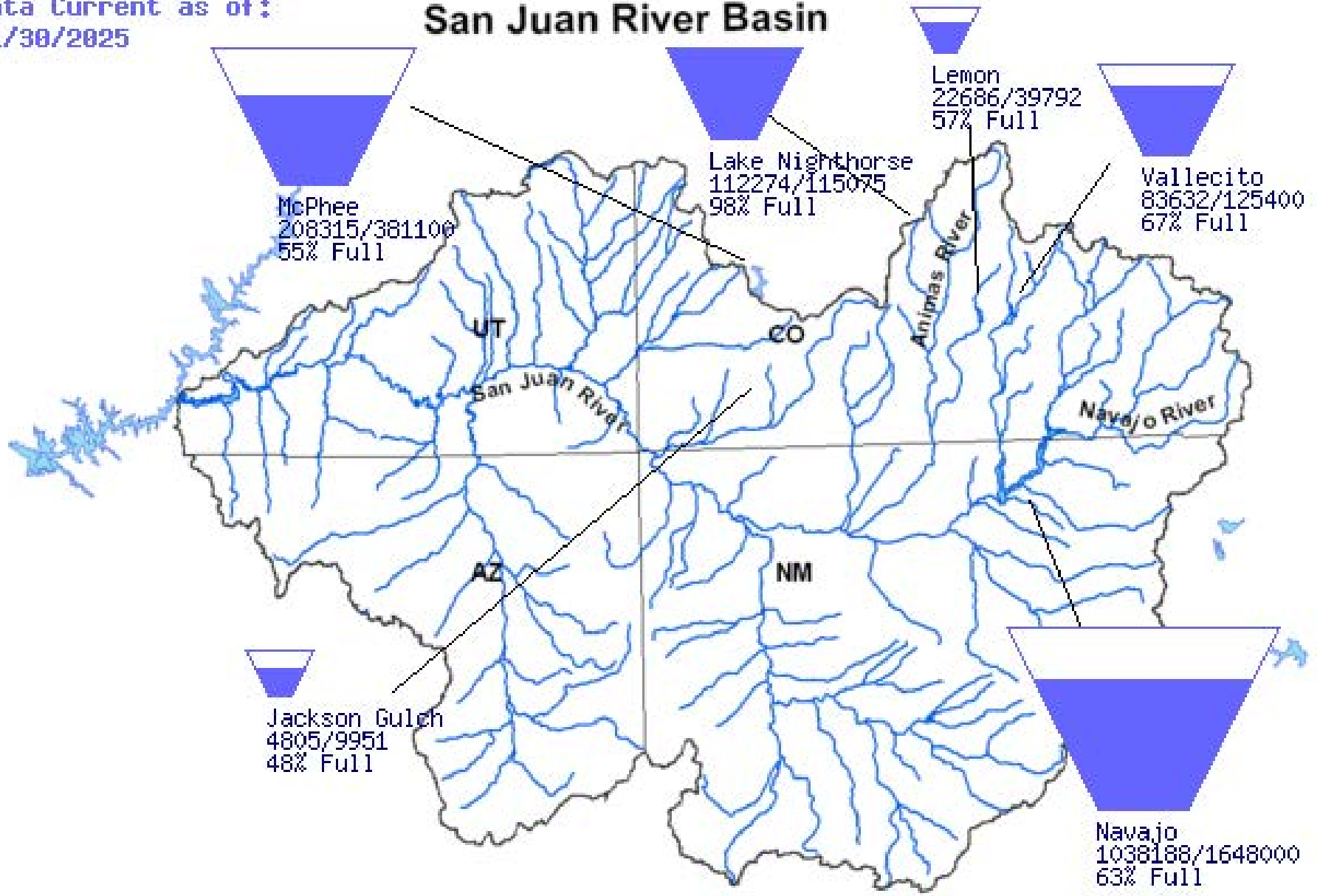
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Year

Min 2025
Most 2025
Max 2025

Data Current as of:
01/30/2025

San Juan River Basin

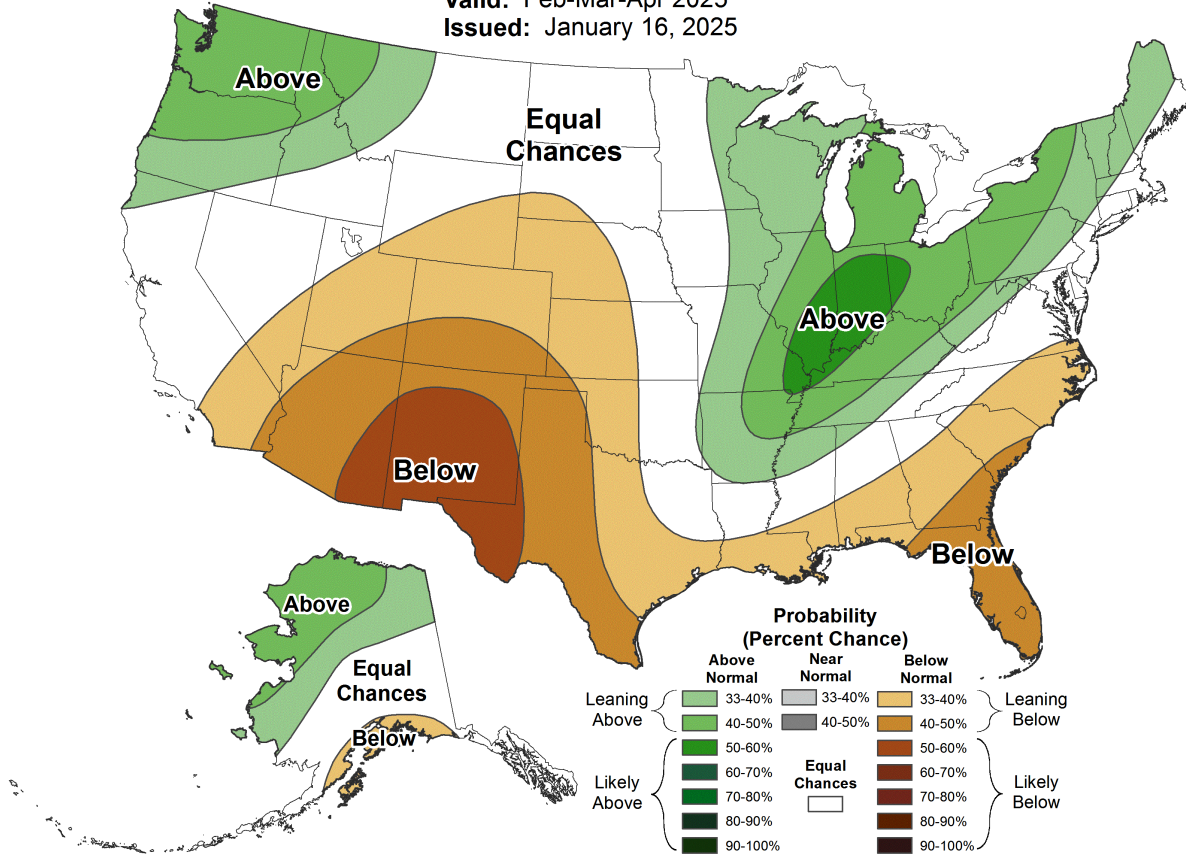




Seasonal Precipitation Outlook



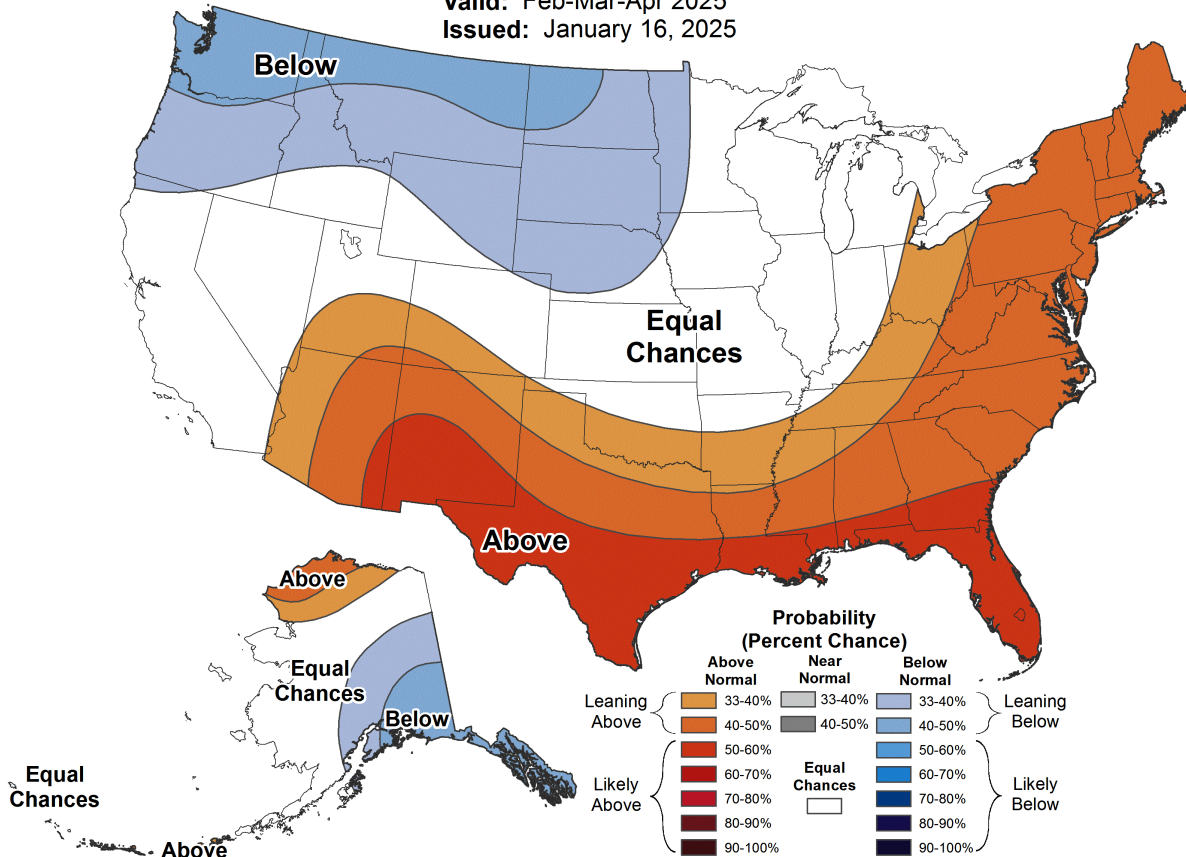
Valid: Feb-Mar-Apr 2025
Issued: January 16, 2025



Seasonal Temperature Outlook



Valid: Feb-Mar-Apr 2025
Issued: January 16, 2025



Upper Colorado Region Weekly Hydrology Summary

This hydrologic information is provided weekly to summarize the hydrologic conditions in the Upper Colorado Region. If additional information is required, please contact Heather Patno (hpatno@usbr.gov).

Selected Reservoir Status - Report Date: January 30, 2025

Reservoir	Elevation (ft)	Live Storage (1000 AF)	% of Live Capacity	Avg Daily Unreg Inflow (cfs)	Daily Release (cfs)
Lake Powell	3,566.98	8,293	36%	8,276	11,998
Blue Mesa	7,482.04	517	62%	772	635
Flaming Gorge	6,025.16	3,089	84%	153	1,200
Fontenelle	6,477.78	147	44%	324	841
Navajo*	6,037.85	1,038	63%	270	368
Elephant Butte**	4,316.76	230	11%	529	0

Current as of: 1/30/2025

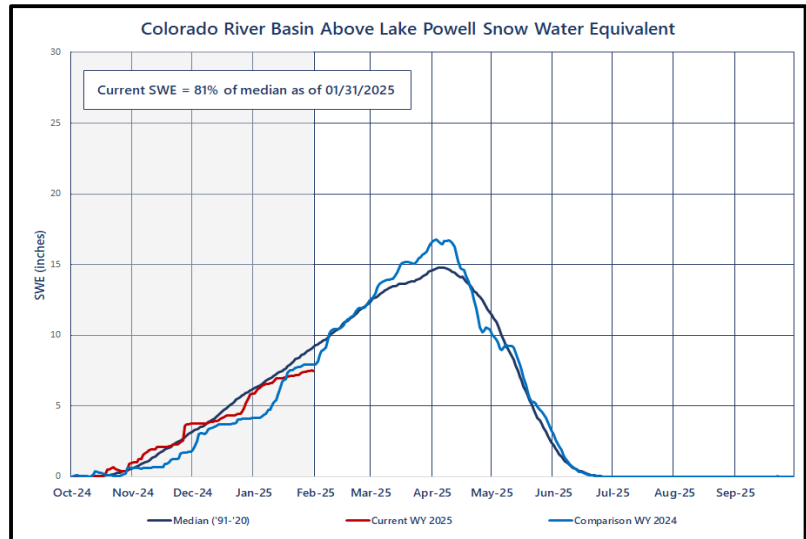
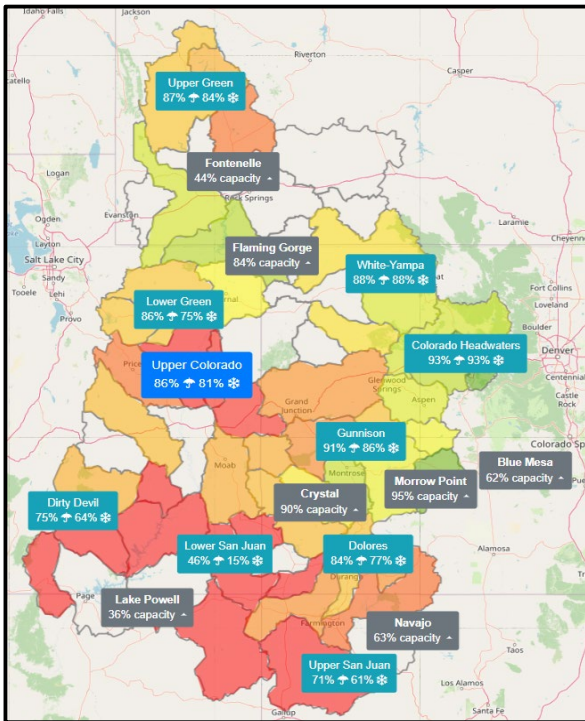
* Uses Modified Unregulated Inflow

** Unreg Inflow Current as of: 1/26/2025

Selected Reservoir Inflows - Unregulated Forecast and Observed Inflow

Reservoir	2025 WY Volume (kaf) (January Midmonth Forecast)	2025 WY % of Avg (January Midmonth Forecast)	2025 April-July Volume (kaf) (January Midmonth Forecast)	2025 April-July % of Avg (January Midmonth Forecast)	Dec Unreg Inflow Observed (Acre-Feet)	December Unreg Inflow Observed (% Avg)
Lake Powell	7,499	78%	4,850	76%	299	93%
Blue Mesa	868	96%	600	94%	27	108%
Fontenelle	783	73%	510	69%	29	92%
Flaming Gorge	968	69%	615	64%	31	95%
Navajo*	615	68%	430	68%	18	88%

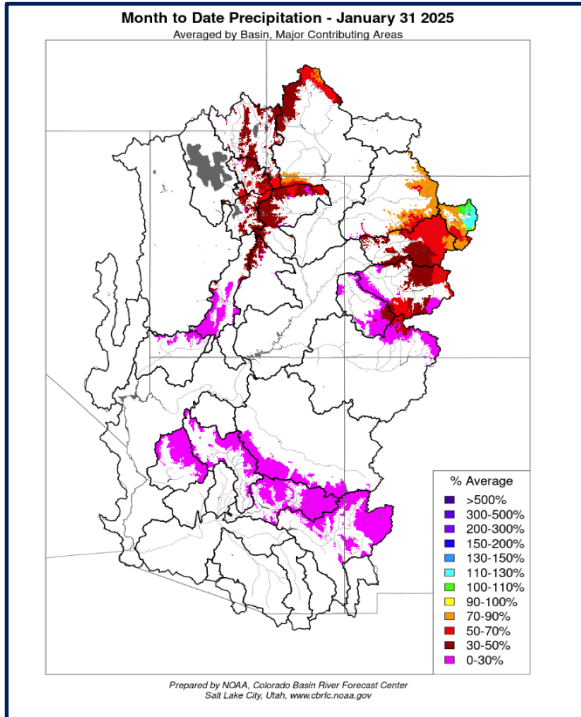
*When the MUI is negative, it indicates the upstream storage and transbasin diversion losses are greater than the total inflow.



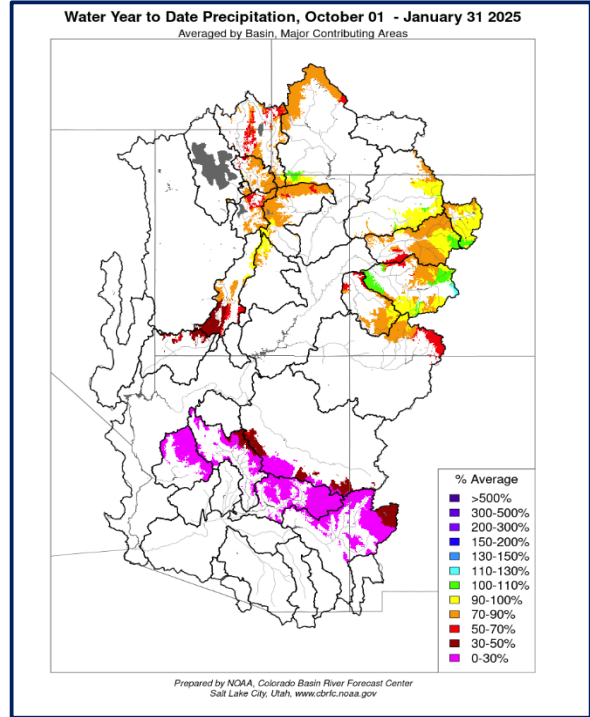
[SWE \(% median peak\)](#)

Note: The NRCS site list generating the aggregate SWE values in this graphic is limited to only those sites that have been in operation for the entire WY 1991 - 2020 comparison period. For this reason, the percent median may vary slightly from that reported directly from NRCS.

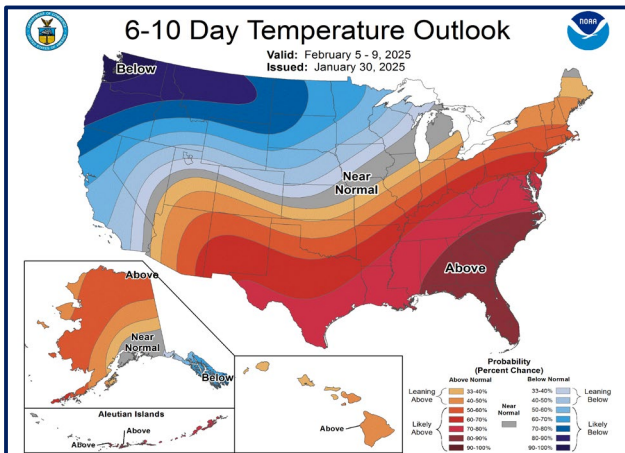
Upper Colorado Region Weekly Hydrology Summary



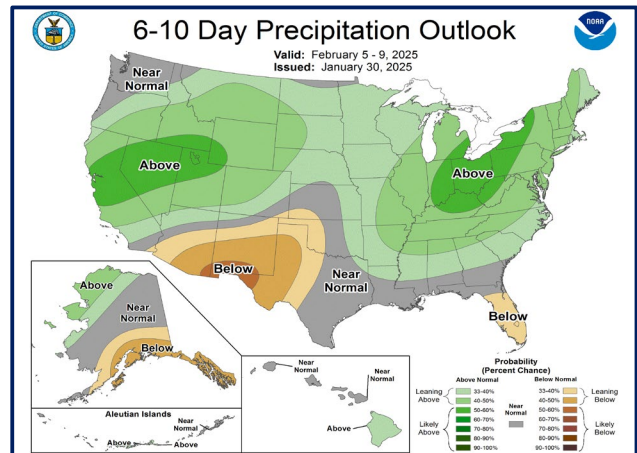
Month to Date Precipitation



Water Year to Date Precipitation



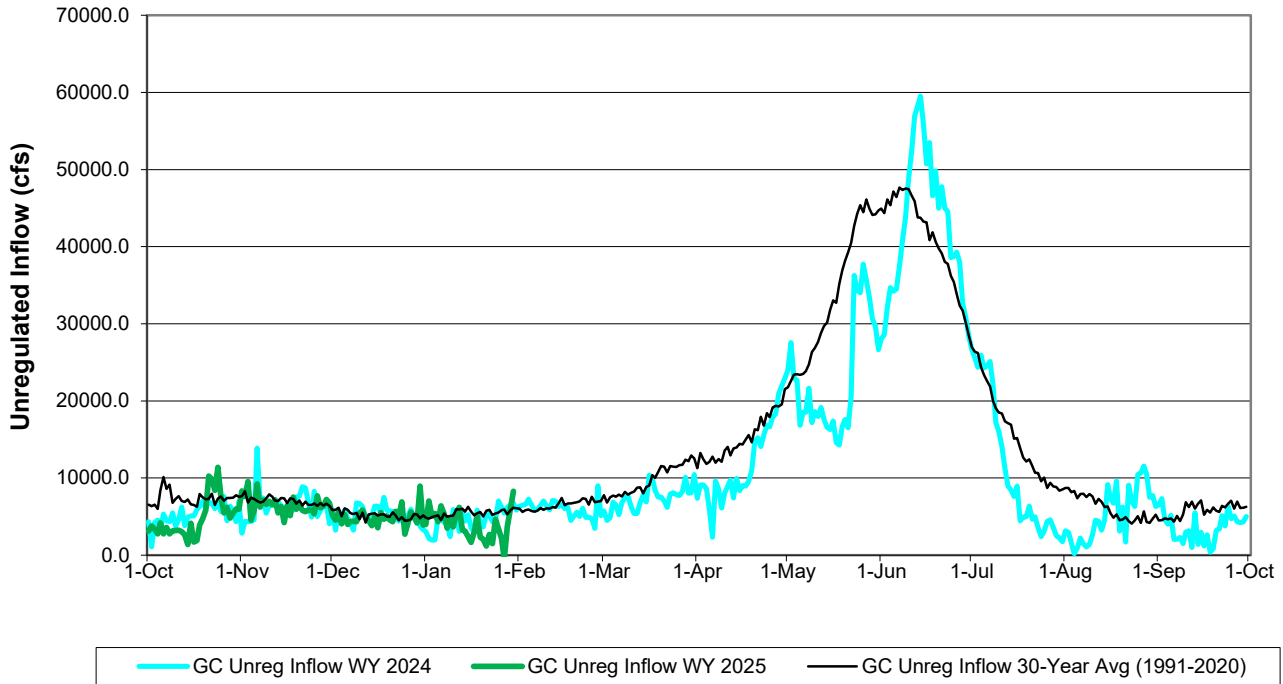
6-10 Day Temperature



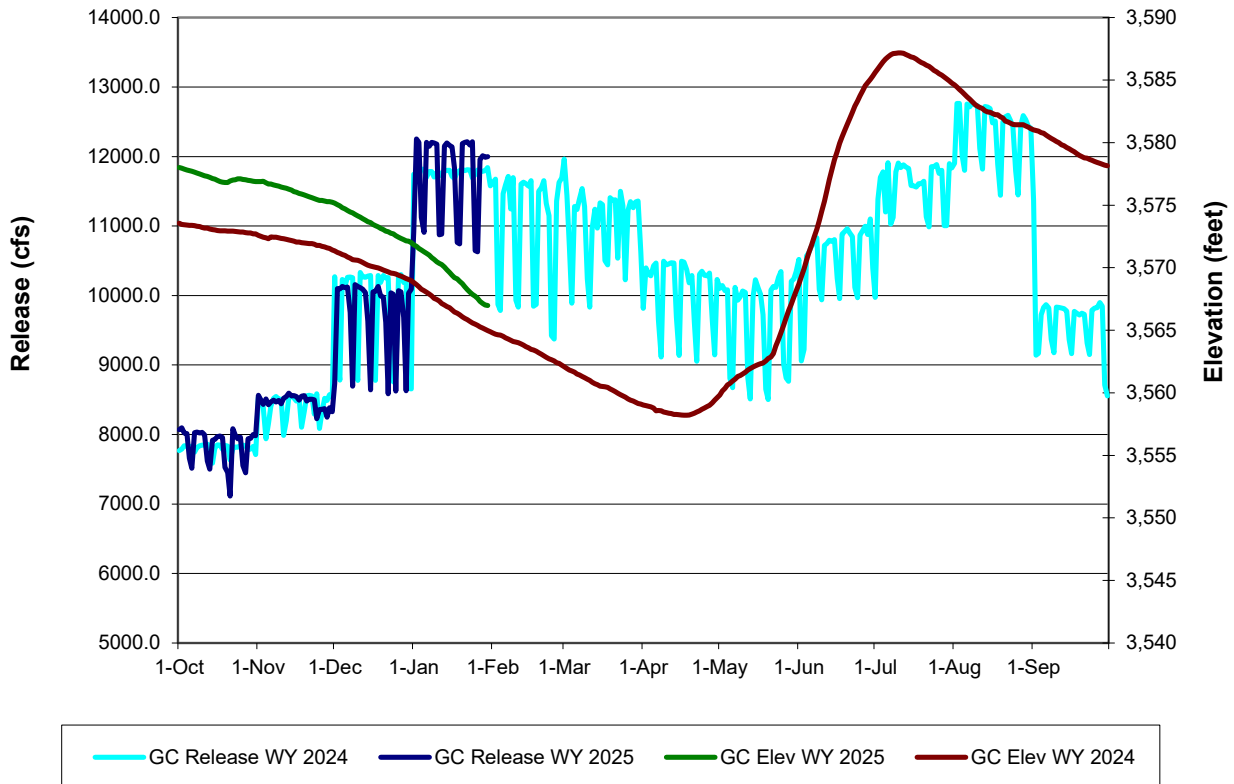
6-10 Day Precipitation

Upper Colorado Region Weekly Hydrology Summary

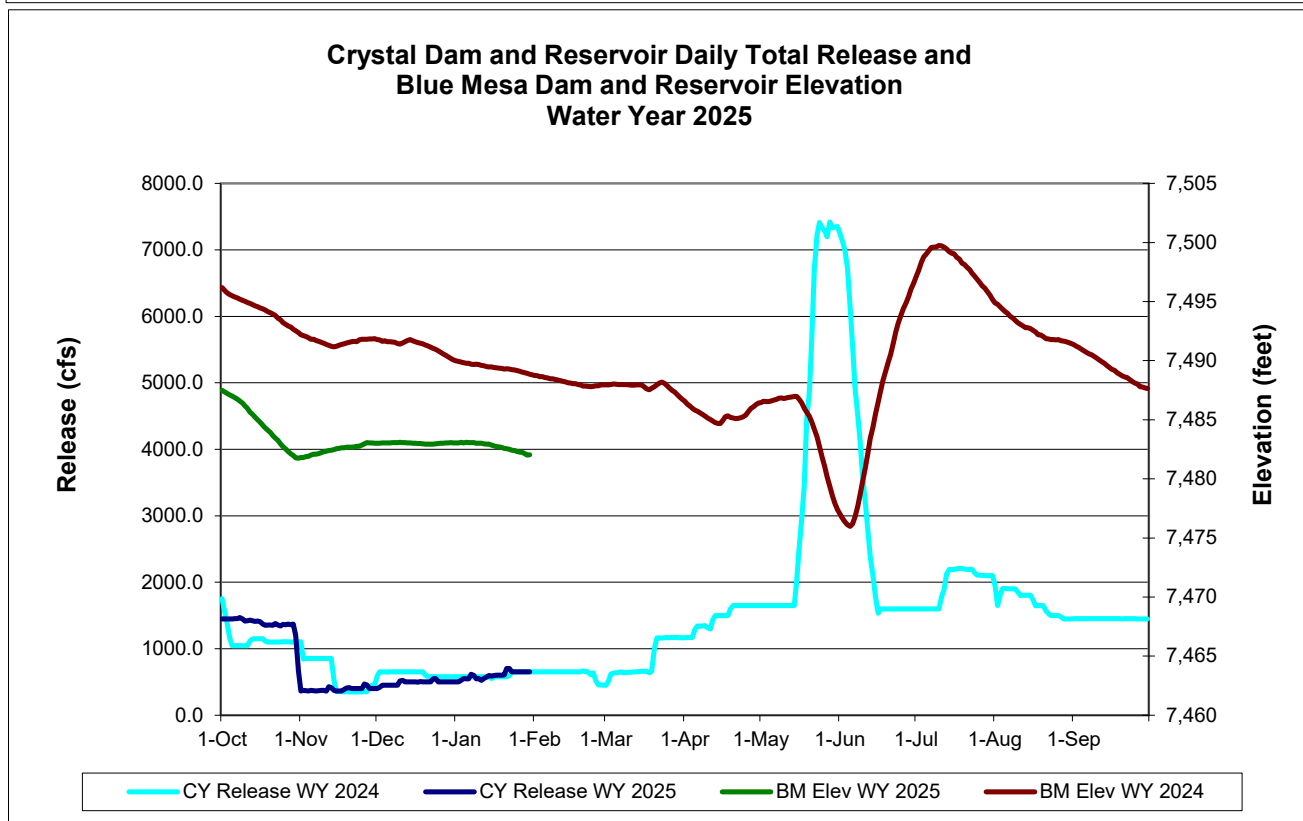
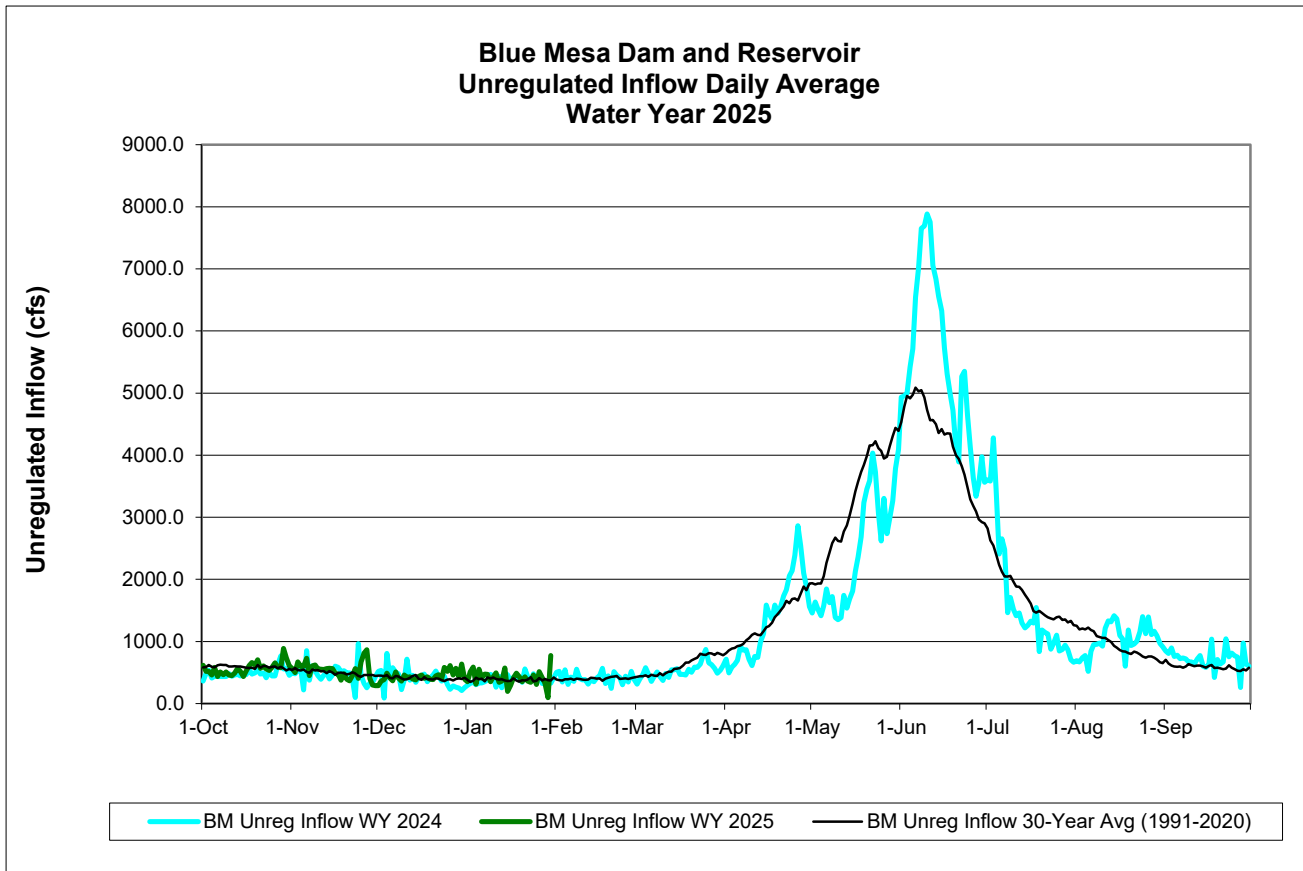
Lake Powell Reservoir and Glen Canyon Dam Daily Unregulated Inflow Water Year 2025



Lake Powell Reservoir and Glen Canyon Dam Daily Total Release and Elevation Water Year 2025

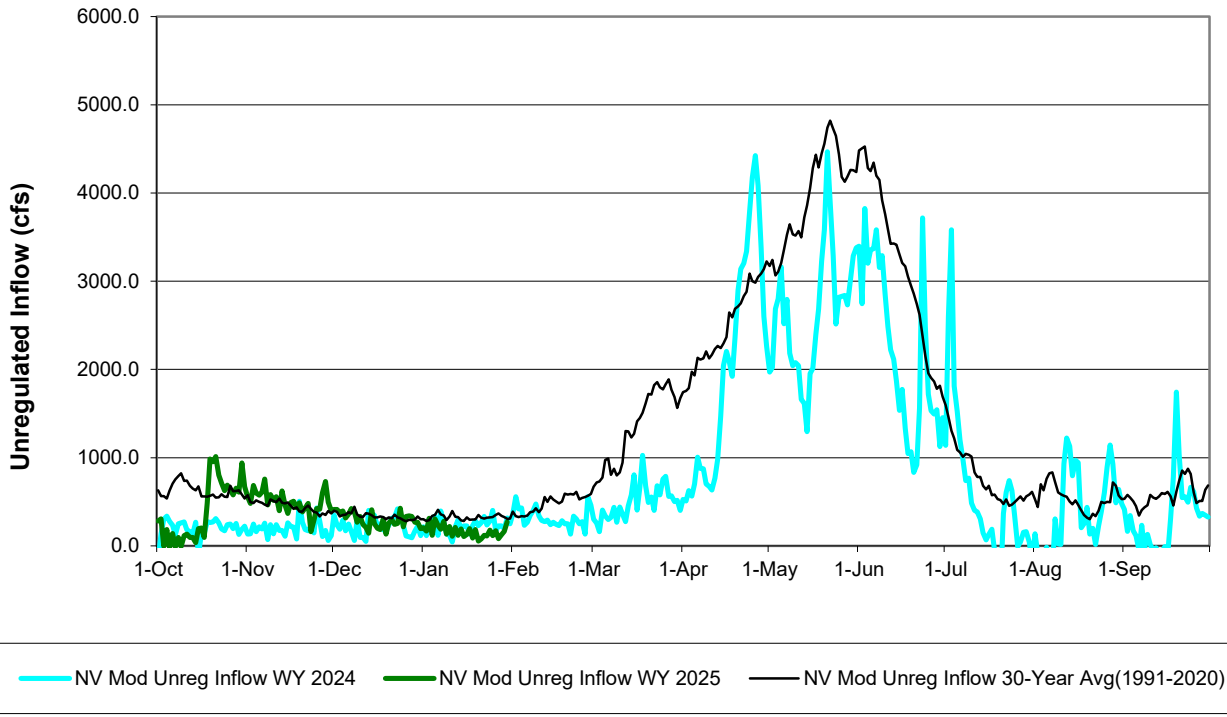


Upper Colorado Region Weekly Hydrology Summary

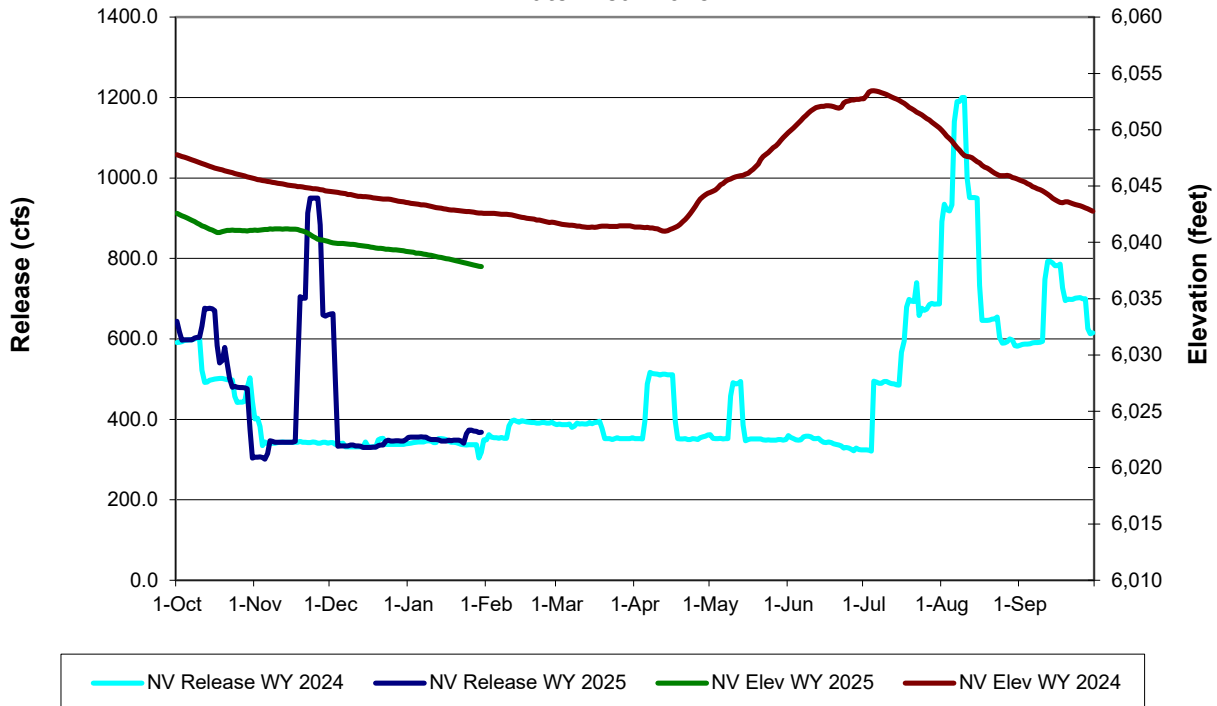


Upper Colorado Region Weekly Hydrology Summary

Navajo Dam and Reservoir Unregulated Inflow Daily Average Water Year 2025



Navajo Dam Daily Total Release and Elevation Water Year 2025





THE SOUTHWESTERN WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Developing and Conserving the Waters in the
SAN JUAN AND DOLORES RIVERS AND THEIR TRIBUTARIES
West Building – 841 East Second Avenue
DURANGO, COLORADO 81301
(970) 247-1302

RESOLUTION

Whereas, Dagan Chadd faithfully served as a Director of the Southwestern Water Conservation District, representing Dolores County and the entire District for over 3 years; and

Whereas, Director Chadd gave generously of his time and expertise in addressing matters important to Dolores County, the District, and the State;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT,

The Board of Directors of the Southwestern Water Conservation District at its first regular Board meeting of 2025 by this Resolution, expresses unanimous appreciation to Dagan Chadd for his services as a Southwestern Water Conservation District Director.

CERTIFICATE

I, _____, President of the Board of Directors of the Southwestern Water Conservation District, do hereby certify that the above and forgoing action was taken by the Board of Directors at its first quarterly meeting on the 13th day of February, 2025.

_____,
President