



# 2023

# Strategic Plan

(2017-2032)



**Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District**

[www.secwcd.com](http://www.secwcd.com)

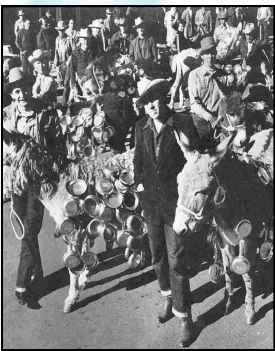


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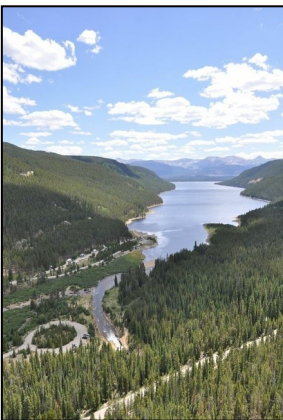


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## Purpose & Process



*Facing the future with a focused framework, your investment in water*

### Purpose

This Strategic Plan has been prepared by the Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District (District or SECWCD) as a mid- and long-term strategic roadmap to strengthen the District's organizational capacity and grow the District's core services to the Fryingspan-Arkansas Project (Project) beneficiaries.

This Strategic Plan, introduced in 2017, provides a new strategic framework to increase the organization's value and impact in a broader region through expanded and strengthened partnerships; enhanced outreach and communications; build or create new programs; organizational scaling; and capacity building.

The Plan initially was designed to encompass a 15-year planning horizon.

The plan establishes goals that the District sets, and the resources that are allocated must be consistent with the purpose of the organization. The context for all strategic planning is provided by the District's Mission, Vision and Values; that can only be realized through strong partnerships with our partners, stakeholders and project beneficiaries. The Plan is a living document intended to be reviewed annually and updated as necessary and appropriate.

### Strategic Planning Process

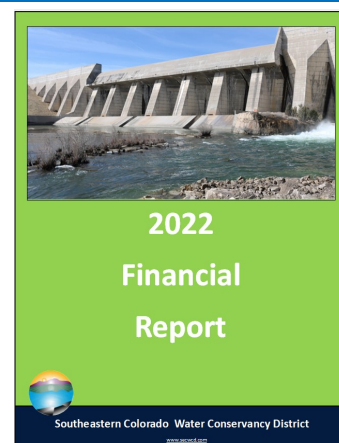
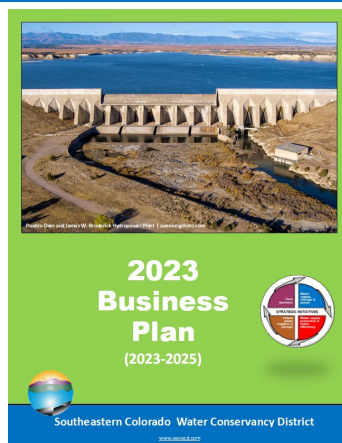
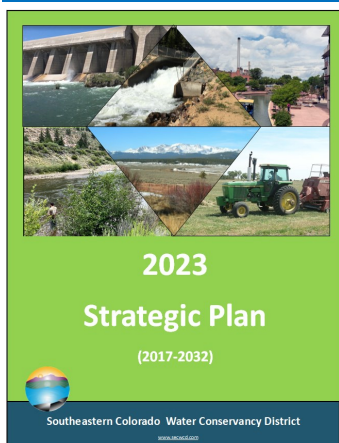
The District ensures operations are strategically aligned across the organization by developing a Strategic Plan that sets forth priorities and resources. The Strategic Plan is developed by the Executive Director based on the policies and initiatives set by the Board of Directors (Board), reviews of the issues, risks and opportunities facing the Arkansas River basin and reflects the changing environment, economy and District needs.

All District programs support at least one of four Strategic Initiatives:

- ◆ Water, Supply, Storage & Power
- ◆ Water Efficiency & Project Water Supplies
- ◆ Future Water Supplies & Storage
- ◆ Core Business

To ensure that the Strategic Plan incorporates a fiscal perspective, the Executive Director annually assesses the long-term fiscal health of the District and reviews a rolling three-year forecast of revenues and expenditures called the annual Business Plan.

This process leads to the development of preliminary long-term objectives and the resource appropriations necessary to achieve them. Appropriations are determined annually in the Adopted Budget. Summary of actual accomplishments associated with appropriated expenditures can be reviewed in the annual Financial Report.



# A look back, a look ahead...

Since the 2017 Strategic Plan was published, the Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District has made significant progress in focusing the efforts of the District on its primary purposes, while continuing to be involved in all phases of the Arkansas River basin water community, as well as in statewide water issues and activities.

The Strategic Plan is the basis for planning District and Enterprise activities on a long-term basis, and broadly guides and informs the activities of the staff members, Board members, and stakeholders of the Southeastern District.

First and foremost, the District exists to provide support, guidance, and protection of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project. The Project's history is detailed later in the Strategic Plan, and includes environmental and funding challenges that are found with any large scale project.

It is the benefits of the Project which have made it so successful. In 2020, Colorado Department of Water Resources Division Engineer Bill Tyner enumerated the benefits of supplemental water to agriculture in the Arkansas River basin. Canal companies reported that between 11 and 54 percent of their water supply during this particularly dry year was supplemental water. The Fry-Ark Project is the largest supplier of supplemental water in the Arkansas River basin.

For municipalities, the Project provides not only water in a dry year, but storage for both Project water and other native flows year-in and year-out.

Since 2017, much has changed for the District and Enterprise, and all of it flows along the lines sketched out in this current draft of the Strategic Plan.

The District was successful in negotiating an Amendment to the Fry-Ark Contract that allows for careful budgeting of resources by standardizing payments, pre-paying operation and maintenance costs and establishing a reserve fund for large, unexpected expenses.

The James W. Broderick Hydropower Plant was completed in May 2019, following a two-year building program coordinated by Enterprise staff using design-build principles which made the project economically feasible. Revenues from the project will fulfill another strategic long-term goal by helping to offset operation and maintenance costs of the Arkansas Valley Conduit (AVC).

The AVC is another blockbuster project the Enterprise is tackling. The influx of federal money for the AVC in 2020 launched a flurry of activity that resulted in the first construction contract in 2022. This came after a multiyear strategic effort to navigate federal and state funding sources, as well as reimagining how the AVC could be built. Now, design work is being completed and construction will begin soon.

Looking ahead, the District and Enterprise will continue to use the Strategic Plan as a beacon as we steer a course into the future, and the ever-increasing value of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project, and the activities associated with the Fry-Ark Project.

# Fryingpan-Arkansas Project History



*“When [people] come to this state and see how vitally important [water] is, not just to this state, but to the West, to the United States, then they realize how important it is that all the people of this country support this project that belongs to all of the people of this country.”*

— President John F. Kennedy, August 16, 1962, in Pueblo, where he signed the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project Act into law.



A farm truck tried to outrun a cloud of dirt during the 1930s.

**W**ater truly is the lifeblood of our communities. That was never more true than during the Dust Bowl days of the 1930s.

It was at that time in modern history that Arkansas River Basin leaders created the vision of a more prosperous future: a future that would include a plentiful supply of water through the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project.

The vision became a reality almost 60 years ago with the signing of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Act by President John F. Kennedy on August 16, 1962. A special celebration was held in Pueblo. The President provided memorable recognition of the Project and its long developmental history by saying:

Since this historic date in 1962, the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project has provided our communities nearly 60 years of benefits.

The vision of our forefathers and the continued investment and commitment of the citizens of today assures us an important resource of our future ... a natural

resource that is indeed the lifeblood of our community: water and storage for water.

The Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District was created under Colorado State Statutes on April 29, 1958, by the District Court of Pueblo, Colorado, for the purpose of developing and administering the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project.

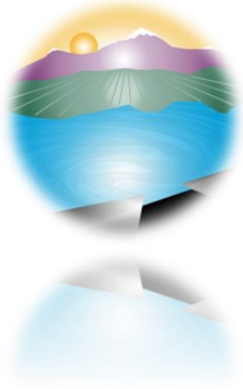
The District extends along the Arkansas River from Buena Vista to Lamar, and along Fountain Creek from Colorado Springs to Pueblo.

The District consists of parts of nine counties that provide support for and derive benefits from the Project.

On January 21, 1965, the U.S. Department of Interior Bureau of Reclamation and the Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District entered into a contract providing “construction of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project works for the purpose of supplying water for irrigation, municipal, domestic and industrial uses; generating and transmitting hydroelectric power and energy; controlling floods; and for other useful and beneficial purpose.”



# Fryingpan-Arkansas Project History



In 1859, the discovery of gold in the Arkansas River Valley brought many settlers to the area, but few were successful in their search for wealth. More and more gold seekers turned to farming to provide for themselves and their families. As permanent settlements were established, normal rainfall proved inadequate for farming and the era of irrigation began.

After years of drought and hardship, the residents of the Arkansas Valley sought government aid to plan and develop a project which would regulate existing water supplies for more efficient use and provide additional storage capacity for the conservation of flood flows, reservoir space for storage and new water supplies.

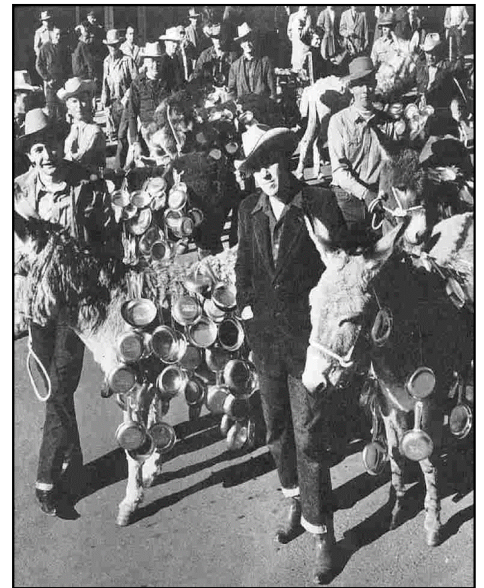


Arkansas Valley community leaders traveled to Washington, D.C., to promote the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project.

Community leaders and irrigators began pushing heavily for a project to bring water from the Western Slope, with its abundant snowfall and sparse population, to the Arkansas River Basin, where irrigated agriculture and city water systems depended on a river that was only a trickle by the time it reached the Kansas state line.

The Fryingpan-Arkansas Project was supported by the sale of golden frying pans up and down the Arkansas Valley. Burros were used to carry the frying pans. During Water Week in January 1955, groups were able to buy small frying pans for \$5, and larger ones for \$100 and more. More than \$30,000 was raised by the end of the week. The money was used to send Project backers to Washington, D.C.

Finally, on June 13, 1962, the House passed the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project Act. The Senate followed suit on August 6, 1962. President John F. Kennedy signed the Project into law on August 16, 1962.



The sale of golden frying pans helped to pay for lobbying efforts on behalf of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project.

# Fryingpan-Arkansas Project Construction



*The mission of the Southeastern District is to develop, protect and manage the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project for the benefit of its constituents.*

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) started construction of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project beginning with the Ruedi Dam and Reservoir in 1964, completed in 1968. The Charles H. Boustead Tunnel, which is used to transport water from the West Slope to the East Slope was built between 1965-1971.

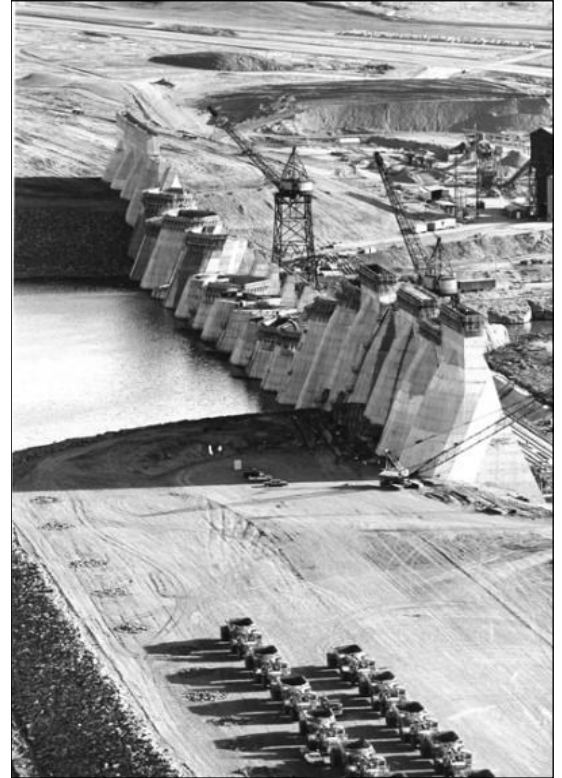
Turquoise and Twin Lakes Reservoirs were already in existence, but were enlarged by Reclamation. Turquoise was enlarged from 1965-68. Twin Lakes work began in 1975, and the Mount Elbert Power Plant on the north shore was under construction. Both were completed in 1981.

The first unit of Mount Elbert provided power to the Western Area Power Administration in 1981, and the second unit came online in 1984.

Pueblo Dam and Reservoir construction began in 1970 and was completed five years later. The first sale of Fry-Ark Project transmountain water was made in July 1972.

The Fountain Valley Conduit was constructed from 1980-1985.

Construction of the Project continued without interruption from 1964 until 1990, when the Pueblo Fish Hatchery was completed. The hatchery was dedicated on September 28, 1990, when the project was de-



Pueblo Dam construction in the 1970s.

clared completed in a public ceremony.

However, the last piece of the Project, the Arkansas Valley Conduit is yet to be completed.

## Elements of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project

Reservoirs	Capacity
Ruedi Reservoir	102,369 AF
Turquoise Lake	129,432 AF
Mount Elbert Forebay	11,530 AF
Twin Lakes	140,339 AF
Pueblo Reservoir	338,374 AF

Conduits, Tunnels	Length
Southside Collection	14.2 miles
Northside Collection	11.3 miles
Boustead Tunnel	5.4 miles
Mount Elbert Conduit	10.5 miles
Fountain Valley Conduit	45.5 miles

### Other Features

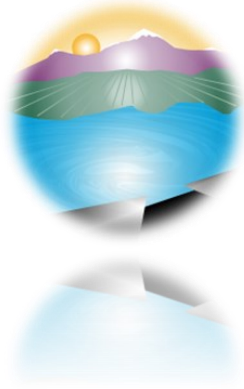
- Mount Elbert Power Plant, 200 megawatts
- Pueblo Fish Hatchery
- South Outlet Pueblo Dam
- North Outlet Pueblo Dam



Ruedi Dam Construction during the 1960s



# Framework of Strategic Plan



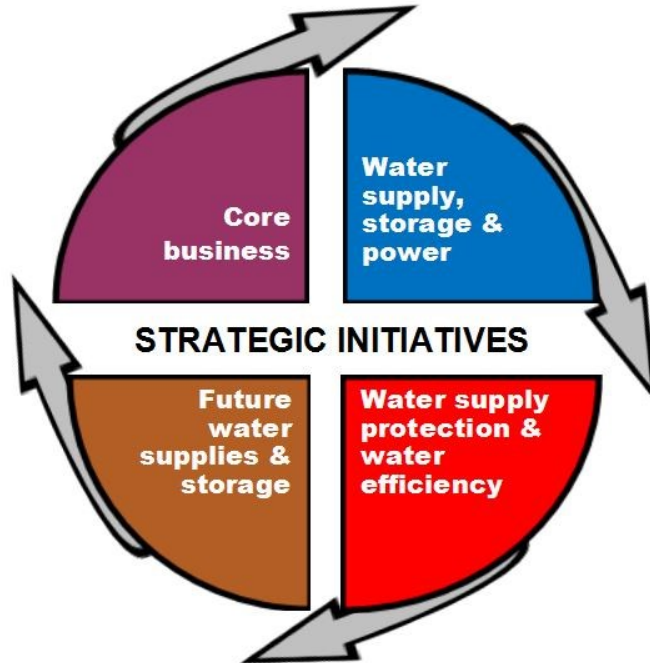
The Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District strives to strengthen its capacity to grow in order to serve beneficiaries of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project.

Strategic planning incorporates the Mission, Vision and Values of the district into all of its actions and partnerships through measurable goals and objectives.



**MISSION:**

Water is essential for life. We exist to make life better by effectively developing, protecting and managing water.



A long-term roadmap and strategic framework:  
Initiatives, visions, goals, objectives and  
measures

**VISION:**

As we strive to realize our vision of the future, all our actions and efforts will be guided by communication, consultation and cooperation, focused in the direction of better accountability through modernization and integration across the District.

**VALUES:**

- Honesty and Integrity
- Professional Service and Action
- Fairness and Equity

# Strategic Initiatives



## STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

*By focusing our priorities, we will continue to advance our vision.*

The District’s strategic planning process is an ongoing activity.

The purpose of the Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District (District) Strategic Plan (Plan) is to develop a clear picture of the future from the Board’s perspective as a policy-making body.

The Plan, first drafted for 2017 and continuing through 2032, sets into writing the District vision for this 15-year period.

It identifies the Strategic Initiatives of priorities that the Board must address to continue moving forward, and provides management and staff with clear strategic direction.

We will revisit the Plan each year to make minor adjustments, as necessary, to ensure that the priorities articulated in the Strategic Plan reflect the changing environment, economy and District needs.

The Strategic Plan is the first element of the Strategic Framework, four documents make up the full Strategic Framework. All four documents provide a disciplined approach to managing the District for maximum efficiency and effectiveness.



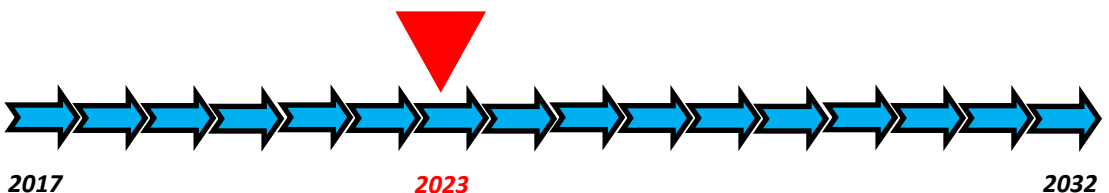
The District’s Business Plan is a three-year budget planning document.

The Annual Adopted Budget provides a one-year of Board of Director Adopted appropriations.

The Business Plan is a three-year rolling view of the work plan for the District and Enterprise, as executed by the Offices and Areas of Responsibility.

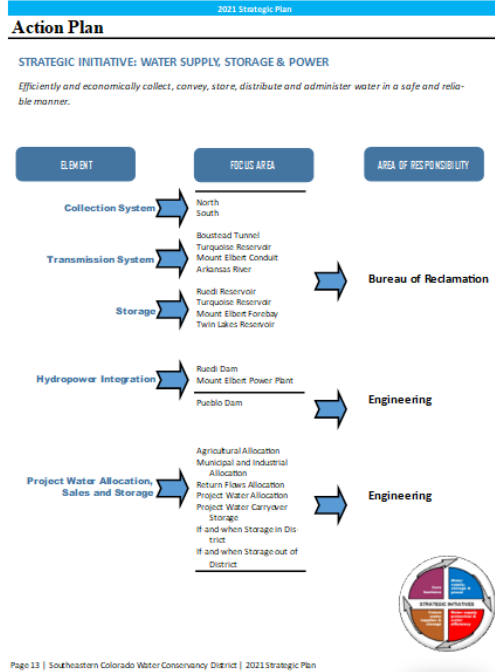
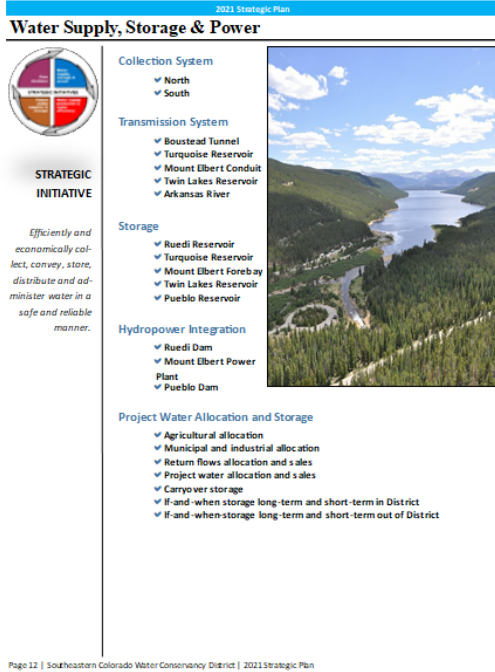
The Annual Financial Report is an audited statement of revenues and expenditures used to accomplish District and Enterprise objectives.

All four documents should be viewed together to provide a complete picture of the strategic vision.



# Understanding the Strategic Plan

The following pages are a visual representation of the four strategic initiatives of the Southeastern District and how they relate to the functions of the District, and responsible District Offices.

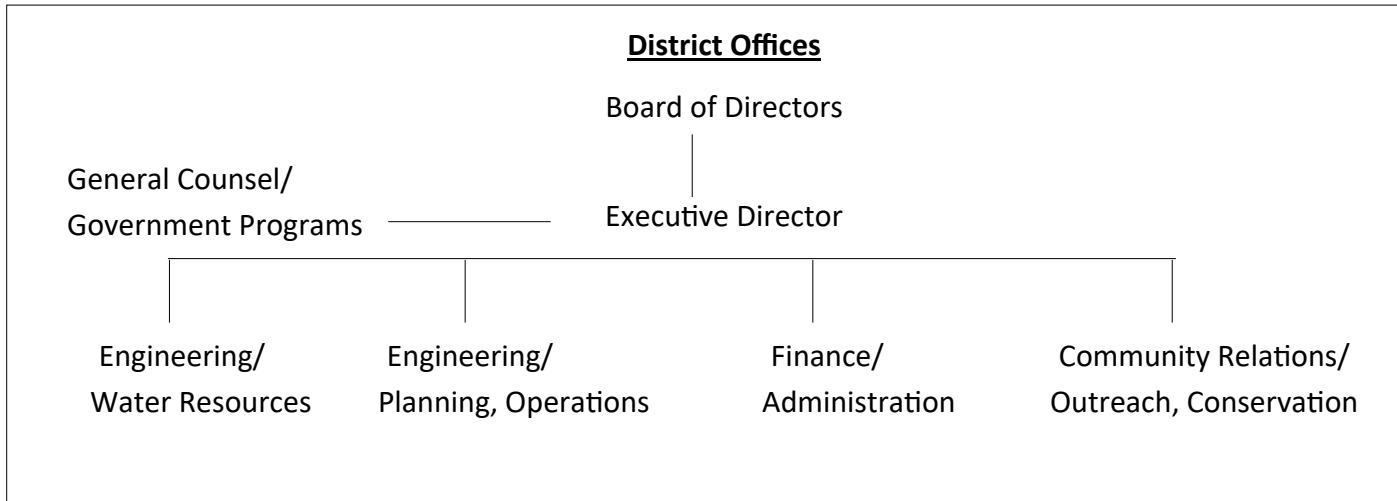


**Initiative Description**

This Initiative description provides the goals of the initiative, the elements of each initiative and the focus areas for each element. These are broad descriptions that are more specifically discussed in the Business Plan and Annual Adopted Budget.

**Action Plan**

The Action Plan pages show how each of the Elements and Focus areas move and which District office has responsibility. Reclamation operates the Fry-Ark Project, but the District guides support activities.





# Water Supply, Storage & Power



## STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

*Efficiently and economically collect, convey, store, distribute and administer water in a safe and reliable manner.*

### Collection System

- ✓ North
- ✓ South

### Transmission System

- ✓ Boustead Tunnel
- ✓ Turquoise Reservoir
- ✓ Mount Elbert Conduit
- ✓ Twin Lakes Reservoir
- ✓ Arkansas River

### Storage

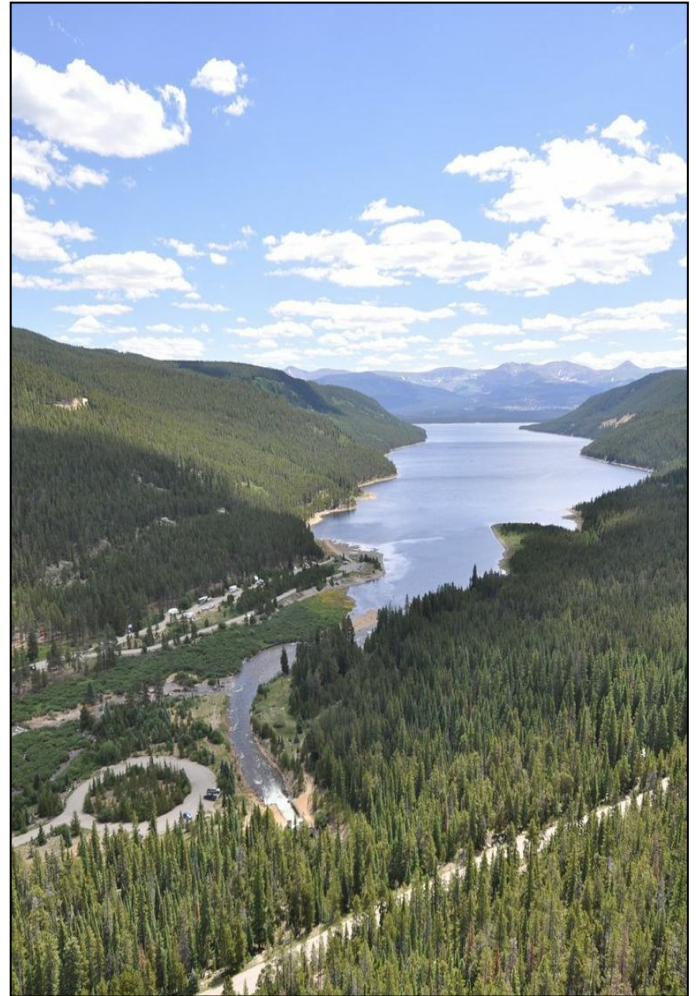
- ✓ Ruedi Reservoir
- ✓ Turquoise Reservoir
- ✓ Mount Elbert Forebay
- ✓ Twin Lakes Reservoir
- ✓ Pueblo Reservoir

### Hydropower Integration

- ✓ Ruedi Dam
- ✓ Mount Elbert Power Plant
- ✓ Pueblo Dam

### Project Water Allocation and Storage

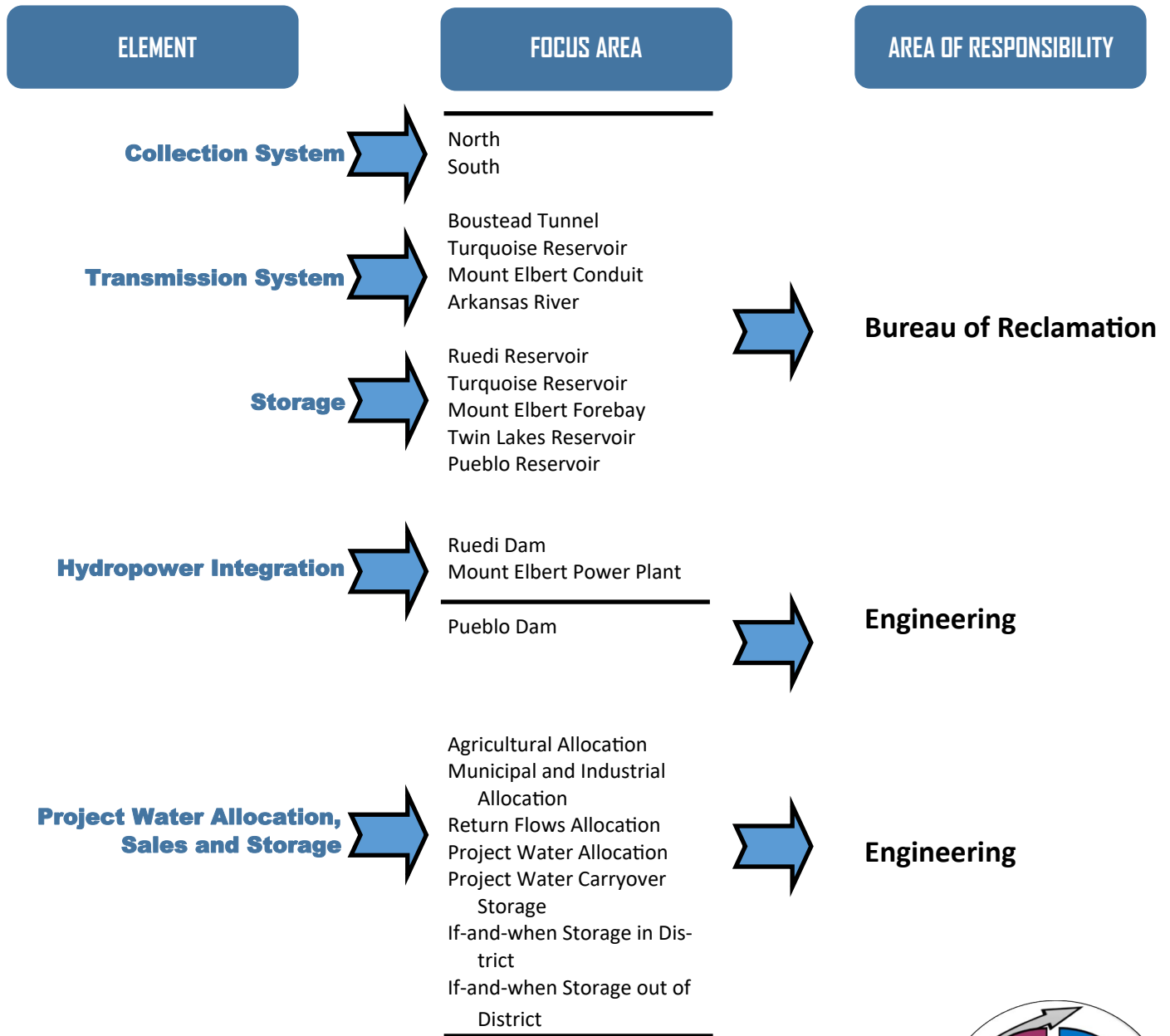
- ✓ Agricultural allocation
- ✓ Municipal and industrial allocation
- ✓ Return flows allocation and sales
- ✓ Project water allocation and sales
- ✓ Carryover storage
- ✓ If-and-when storage long-term and short-term in District
- ✓ If-and-when-storage long-term and short-term out of District



# Action Plan

## STRATEGIC INITIATIVE: WATER SUPPLY, STORAGE & POWER

*Efficiently and economically collect, convey, store, distribute and administer water in a safe and reliable manner.*



# Water Supply Protection & Efficiency



## STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

*Conserve and protect water supply and monitor water quality using all appropriate operational, engineering, legal and administrative services.*

### Base Water Supply

- ✓ Review of water rights in the Arkansas and Colorado River basins.

### Fryingpan-Arkansas Project Water and Return Flows

- ✓ Modeling, account for and monitoring return flows and Reclamation Reform Act administration.

### Conservation Programs

- ✓ Demonstration Garden and Conservation Plan updates.

### Arkansas River Voluntary Flow Management Program

- ✓ Monitor flows for fishing and boating programs in the Upper Arkansas River Basin.

### Water Quality Program

- ✓ Arkansas River USGS water quality programs.

### Watershed Management

- ✓ Monitor and participate in activities related to watershed and forest health, as well as the Lake Pueblo Management Plan.

### Arkansas River Compact

- ✓ Monitor and participate in activities associated with the compact.

### Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program

- ✓ Coordinate peak and low flow enhancement.

### Upper Colorado River Compact

- ✓ Colorado River Compact call Studies.





# Action Plan

## STRATEGIC INITIATIVE: WATER SUPPLY PROTECTION & EFFICIENCY

Conserve and protect water supply and monitor water quality using all appropriate operational, engineering, legal and administrative services.

ELEMENT	FOCUS AREA	AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY
<b>Base Water Supply</b>	Review of water rights in the Arkansas and Colorado River basins.	General Counsel
<b>Fry-Ark Project and Return Flows</b>	Modeling, account for and monitor return flows and Reclamation Reform Act administration.	Engineering
<b>Conservation Programs</b>	Demonstration Garden, publications update and Conservation Plan update	Administration Community Relations
<b>Arkansas River Voluntary Flow Management Program</b>	Monitor flows for fish and river rafting programs in the Upper Arkansas River Basin.	Engineering
<b>Water Quality Program</b>	Arkansas River USGS water quality programs.	Engineering
<b>Watershed Management</b>	Monitor and participate in activities related to watershed and forest health as well as the Lake Pueblo Watershed Plan.	Community Relations Engineering
<b>Arkansas River Compact</b>	Monitor and participate in activities related to the Arkansas River Compact with Kansas.	General Counsel
<b>Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program</b>	Coordinate peak and low flow enhancement.	General Counsel Engineering
<b>Upper Colorado River Compact</b>	Monitor and participate in activities related to the Colorado River Compact and Compact call studies.	General Counsel



# Future Water Supplies & Storage



## STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

*Plan, permit, design and construct projects to enhance water supplies for agricultural, domestic, municipal and industrial uses.*



### Agricultural/Urban Opportunities

- ✓ Alternative transfer methods.
- ✓ Water Bank program.
- ✓ Augmented deficit irrigation.

### Regional Water Storage Programs

- ✓ Feasibility and planning efforts.

### Arkansas Valley Conduit

- ✓ Project in design and construction phase.

### Excess Capacity Master Contract

- ✓ Regional water supply and Master Contract for District storage development.

### Storage Capacity Studies

- ✓ Recovery of storage, enlargement for future storage needs for agricultural, domestic, municipal and industrial uses within the Arkansas River basin.

### Interconnection at Pueblo Dam

- ✓ Redundant infrastructure for South and North Outlets in design phase.

### Hydrological Variability

- ✓ Potential impacts to Southeastern Colorado Water supplies.

# Action Plan

## STRATEGIC INITIATIVE: FUTURE WATER SUPPLIES & STORAGE

Plan, permit, design and construct projects to enhance water supplies and storage for agricultural, domestic, municipal and industrial uses.

ELEMENT	FOCUS AREA	AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY
<b>Agricultural/Urban Operations</b>	Monitor Alternative transfer methods, Water Bank programs and augmented deficit irrigation studies.	Engineering
<b>Regional Water Storage Programs</b>	Monitor and participate in regional water storage feasibility and planning efforts.	Engineering
<b>Arkansas Valley Conduit</b>	Contracting agency with Bureau of Reclamation for building the Conduit. Project in design and construction phase.	Executive Director Engineering Legal Finance
<b>Excess Capacity Master Contract</b>	Regional Water storage Master Contract for District storage and development. Project is in final contract review and execution for 2017.	General Counsel Community Relations
<b>Storage Capacity Studies</b>	Plan for recovery of storage, enlargement for future storage needs for agricultural, domestic, municipal and industrial uses within the basin.	Engineering
<b>Interconnection at Pueblo Dam</b>	Redundant infrastructure for North and South Outlets. Project in design phase.	Engineering
<b>Hydrological Variability</b>	Plan for potential impacts to Southeastern Colorado water supplies.	Engineering





# Core Business



## STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

*Development and implementation of the Core Business Focus Area programs are critical to achieving the vision. The Core Business programs can be grouped into five areas: planning for water supply, associated storage, power and infrastructure; building and maintaining external relations; ensuring financial capacity; maintaining qualified staff and technology; and managing the environmental processes that allow timely completion of our projects.*



### Financial Management Planning

- ✓ Comprehensive financial management plans.

### Emergency Management Planning

- ✓ Facilities and system emergency response plan; business continuity plans.

### Enterprise Resource Planning

- ✓ Programs and project report development.

### Headquarters Facility Planning

- ✓ Headquarters facilities improvements on main entrance and building security modifications; upgrades on the grounds.

### Information Technology

- ✓ Network and computer improvements and software purchases.

### Administrative Record Management

- ✓ Electronic filing system implementation, Phase I.

### Strategic & Budget Planning

- ✓ Strategic Plan, Business Plan and Budget integration.

### Human Resources

- ✓ Review and develop long-term organization and staff plans.

### Asset Management

- ✓ Develop a multi-year asset management forecasting tool.

### Water Operations

- ✓ Water records and accounting system development and software acquisition.

# Action Plan

## STRATEGIC INITIATIVE: CORE BUSINESS

Development and implementation of the Core Business Focus Area programs are critical to achieving the vision. The Core Business programs can be grouped into five areas: planning for water supply, associated storage, power and infrastructure; building and maintaining external relations; ensuring financial capacity; maintaining qualified staff and technology; and managing the environmental processes that allow timely completion of our projects.

ELEMENT	FOCUS AREA	AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY
<b>Financial Management Planning</b>	Comprehensive financial management plans, long-range financial planning.	Finance
<b>Emergency Management Planning</b>	Facilities and system emergency response plan and business continuity plans.	Administration
<b>Enterprise Resource Planning</b>	Develop and design programs and projects; report on progress.	Finance Engineering
<b>Headquarters Facilities Planning</b>	Headquarters facilities improvements plan on building security, and upgrades on the grounds.	Administration Engineering
<b>Information Technology</b>	Network and computer improvements and software purchases.	Administration
<b>Administrative Record Management</b>	Planning process for long-range electronic filing system, Phase One.	Administration
<b>Strategic and Budget Planning</b>	Monitor Strategic Plan, Business Plan and Budget integration, audit integration and performance reporting.	All Offices Included
<b>Human Resources</b>	Monitor and review long-term organization and staff plans.	Administration
<b>Asset Management</b>	Develop multi-year asset management, maintenance forecasting tools.	Finance Engineering
<b>Water Operations</b>	Water records and accounting system development and software acquisition.	Engineering



