

# Stream Management Plan Grantee Project Summary

## Mancos Watershed Stream Management Plan, Phase I

**Geographic Description:**  
Southwest Basin:  
Mancos River Watershed

**Project Homepage:**  
[www.mancoscd.org](http://www.mancoscd.org)

**Size:**  
116 square miles

**Primary Contact:**  
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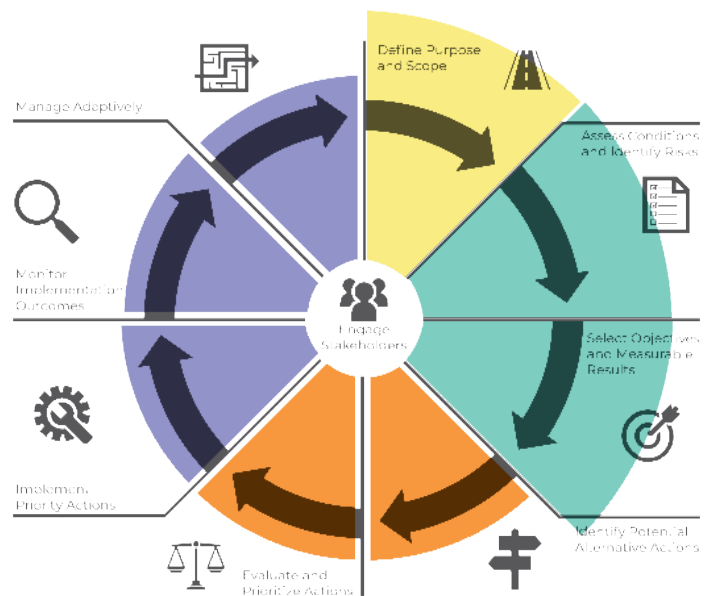
### Project Timeline



### Stakeholder Groups Involved in Planning Process

●	Agricultural producers
●	Riparian landowners
●	Aquatic and riparian science
●	Environmental advocacy
●	Utilities or other water management
●	Recreation & tourism
●	Local government & land use planners

### Current Planning Phase



## Project Goals

The Mancos Watershed Stream Management Plan (SMP) seeks to improve water security for all water uses and values in the Mancos watershed by protecting existing uses, meeting user shortages, and maintaining a healthy riverine ecosystem in the face of future demands and climate uncertainty.

Phase I Objectives Include:

- Regularly convene the Mancos Watershed Group to direct the stream management plan process and coordinate it with other ongoing relevant work.
- Include irrigation water users' and the Mancos Water Conservancy District's input and ideas inw project tasks.
- Improve understanding of Mancos River hydrology.
- Identify legal opportunities for management options or actions that private landowners or land managers can collectively or individually take to improve river health and flow.
- Assess recreational needs and opportunities throughout the Mancos watershed and develop project plans to meet those values.
- Expand the collection of data for key variables that have previously been identified as information gaps.
- Develop a coordinated monitoring strategy and integrated data sharing plan.
- Review and use existing data and stakeholder input to identify recommendations and management options.

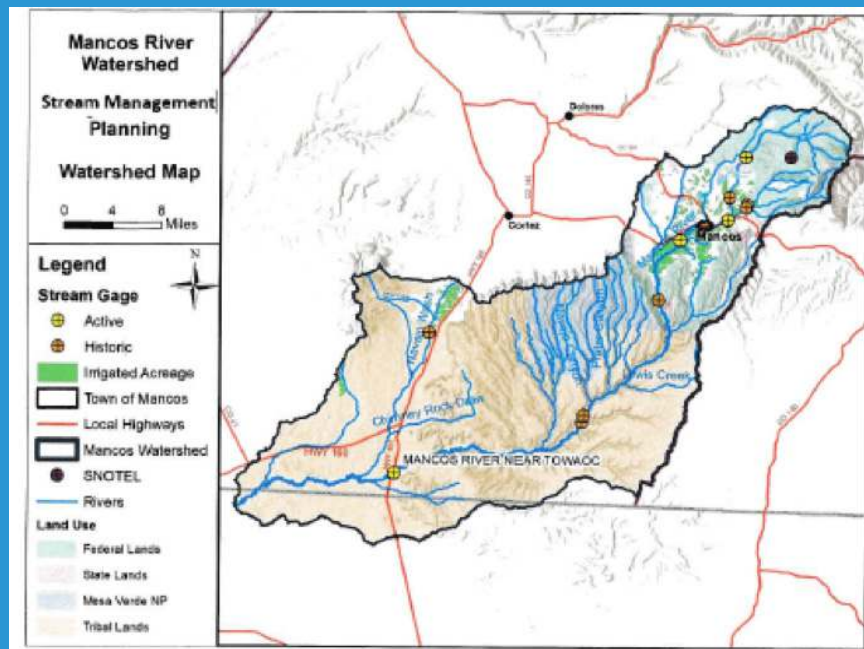
## Overview

### Geography:

The Mancos Watershed SMP includes the entire Mancos River watershed. This diverse area encompasses Forest Service lands and Bureau of Reclamation facilities at the top end of the watershed, a productive irrigated valley in the middle, and Tribal, National Park, and Bureau of Land Management lands towards the bottom end.

### Users:

The diverse users of the Mancos River include farmers, ranchers, community members, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Mancos Water Conservancy, Town of Mancos, Mancos Rural Water Company and Mesa Verde National Park.



## Need for Planning:

The droughts of 2012 and 2018 underscored the need to develop and implement a plan that improves water security for all water uses and values within the watershed. Changes in land use, agricultural uses and a growing emphasis on recreation further demand collaborative thinking and planning. This project aims to ensure protection of the current water rights, continued outreach and engagement with the community, and will allow for the implementation of prioritized projects.

## Approach

The Mancos Conservation District (MCD) is leading the SMP, along with other members of the Mancos Watershed Group such as the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Mesa Verde National Park, Town of Mancos, Mancos Water Conservancy District, Mountain Studies Institute, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Bureau of Land Management, and Natural Resources Conservation Service. Work will be performed by MCD staff, and hired consultants will include an agricultural outreach consultant and Wilson Water Group (WWG). The SMP will be completed through the following tasks:

- **Stakeholder Engagement:** The above partners and others will regularly convene to discuss the SMP, gather feedback, address challenges and concerns, and to better understand needs and values.

- **Improve Understanding of River Hydrology & Legal Frameworks:** Partners will implement recommendations from the Mancos Watershed Drought Resilience Plan, and run scenarios of river hydrology under current and potential future scenarios. Partners will improve understanding of legal mechanisms for protecting water rights of users who may be interested in participating in future streamflow enhancement projects.

- **Identify Recreational Opportunities:** The project group will identify and plan for projects that consider recreational values within the Town of Mancos.

- **Conduct Assessments:** Partners will collect data on: functional riparian condition, water quality, water temperature, macroinvertebrates, channel morphology, and hydrology. Additionally, partners will develop a coordinated monitoring strategy and identify opportunities to streamline data sharing.



## Budget

Contributing Entity	Amount and Form of Match
CWCB Watershed Restoration Fund	\$98,650 cash
Mancos Conservation District	\$31,004 cash
UMUT	\$25,840 cash
MSI	\$2,000 cash
Southwestern Water Conservation District	\$13,746 cash
Mancos Conservation District	\$25,000 in-kind
UMUT	\$4,712 In-kind
MVWG	\$15,000 in-kind
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$215,952</b>



Photos courtesy of the Mancos Conservation District



**COLORADO**  
Colorado Water  
Conservation Board  
Department of Natural Resources