



SOUTH PUEBLO COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

2024 Accomplishments

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the South Pueblo County Conservation District is to collaborate with landowners, educators, and natural resource users to provide guidance and information to promote conservation of natural resources within the District.

FUNCTION OF THE DISTRICT

To make available technical, financial, and educational resources, whatever their source, and coordinate them so they meet the needs of the local land manager and promote conservation of soil, water, and related natural resources.

FINANCIALS

The South Pueblo County Conservation District utilizes Direct Assistance dollars from the Colorado State Conservation Board for District operations. The District does not levy a tax.

Our website has information about meeting dates and Zoom links.

southpuebloccd.colorado.gov

Office

200 South Santa Fe Ave
4th Floor

Pueblo, CO 81007
(719) 744-5475

<https://southpuebloccd.colorado.gov>

Monthly Meetings

3rd Thursday of each month

District Established

January 18, 1974

The district is a combination of the Bessemer Soil Conservation District (1947) and the Pueblo Soil Conservation District (1941).

District Priorities

1. Irrigated Cropland
2. Rangeland
3. Forestland
4. Noxious Weeds

Land Ownership

Private Land – 867,245 acres

State Land – 118,240 acres

Federal Land – 49,600 acres

Land Use

Rangeland – 894,071 acres

Irr.Crop - 33,883 acres

Forestland – 60,769 acres

Non-Irr. Crop - 10,643 acres

Urban Lands 13,129 acres

Other Lands 22,590 acres

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

SOUTH PUEBLO COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT



L-R

George Pigg; Mark Koch, Vice-President; TJ Knecht; Ryan Froman, President; Devin Cossel
Secretary-Treasurer; *Kristi Bartolo, Extension Agent, and Ex-Officio board member*

Not Pictured: Lana Pearson, Resource Team Leader; Rich Rhoades, *Contract District Manager*

PERSONNEL AND PARTNERS

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

“Helping people, help the land” is the NRCS mission. NRCS provides technical assistance in implementing soil and water conservation practices. NRCS also administers cost-share programs to implement conservation practices. Refer to the District website for contact information.

(Left) Wes Castro, Natural Resources Specialist; Lana Pearson, Resource Team Leader, Pueblo, and Rocky Ford; Zach Jannusch, Civil Engineer; Carl Beeman, Soil Conservationist



DISTRICT SUPPORT

In cooperation with CSU Extension and Turkey Creek Conservation District, the board sponsored a Drought Workshop featuring dinner and speakers on general drought information, Colorado Climate Center, local weather officials, and drought strategies and programs.

The board supports the Pueblo Chile Growers Association to help promote Pueblo Chiles.

The board continues with their district website <https://southpuebloccd.colorado.gov>.

The site went live in May 2021.

The board supports a long-term plan to assist the Bessemer Ditch in applying for funds to place the ditch in pipelines to save water and make delivery systems more efficient. The project is called the Salt Creek PFIR (Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report). The funds are part of the NRCS PL-566 Watershed and Flood Protection Operations.

LOCAL WORK GROUP MEETING

The Local Work Group meeting was held this year in conjunction with the Drought Workshop. Participants completed questionnaires to determine their most pressing resource concerns. Their input helped to prioritize our District's top concerns, recent technologies, or practices. This information helps with district planning and provides specific conservation/natural resource concerns from the landowners to our federal partners, Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS). NRCS will consider adopting these recommendations for conservation program administration or delivery at the Federal level. The District's top natural resource priority concerns were water and soil on the following land uses:

1. Irrigated Cropland – Irrigation Efficiency, new technology, and more dollars for improvements
2. Rangeland – livestock water

Barriers to implementing conservation practices were drought and the cost of implementing new technologies.

CONSERVATION EDUCATION

SOUTH PUEBLO COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Working with CSU Extension, the board planned and promoted the Master Irrigator Program to be held in Pueblo in 2025. The program offers advanced training on conservation and irrigation efficiency-oriented water management.

The board supported the Rye High School Envirothon team. The Envirothon promotes environmental literacy. Area schools compete to demonstrate their knowledge.

In 2024, we sponsored a youth to Camp Rocky, a natural resource summer camp emphasizing Forestry, Soil, Wildlife, Fisheries, and Rangeland.

The board sponsored awards for the Colorado State FFA Range Judging Contest and the regional contest. Approximately 230 students from 20 FFA Chapters participated. The students compete in plant identification and rangeland evaluation.

The board sponsored an "Ag in the Classroom" for three classes plus the literacy project.

The board sponsored the "Women in Ag" program. The program's goal is to empower and strengthen women in agriculture.

The board provided scholarships for those attending "Building Farmers," which emphasizes business management, marketing, and managing risk.

The District sells “Weeds of the Great Plains,” “Colorado Grasses,” and the “2019 Guide of Weed Disease and Insect Management in Nebraska” to provide technical resources for producers.

