



# Colorado Water Conservation Board

## Strategic Framework

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## Strategic Framework

### **Mission**

Conserve, develop, protect and manage Colorado's water for present and future generations.

### **Role**

The CWCB is the State's water policy agency. The Board is objective and has a statewide perspective. The Board: 1) provides common technical platforms for planning and policy decisions; 2) builds and manages information to guide actions; 3) helps reduce the impacts of floods and droughts; 4) takes actions to protect Colorado's compact entitlements; 5) holds instream flow water rights to preserve the natural environment to a reasonable degree; and 6) works with partners to develop policies and implement strategies for meeting Colorado's consumptive and non-consumptive water needs.

### **Priority**

The CWCB's priority is to help ensure that Colorado has adequate water to meet all of Colorado's water needs and to reduce the impacts of natural hazards through ***Policy, Projects, and Partnerships***.

### **Focus**

The CWCB helps implement water resource strategies that are informed by broad stakeholder input, the best available data, and objective analyses. The focus is on action, serving as a valued partner, and coordinating across programs.

### **Measures of Success**

The CWCB measures its success by the number of projects, processes, and strategies it moves forward to accomplish and meet its mission and statutory obligations. By doing so, the CWCB enables its partners to be successful.

## Introduction

### Overview

The Colorado Water Conservation Board Strategic Framework (Framework) creates a strategy that enables the agency to successfully implement its mission. **The Framework's focus is to emphasize implementation of projects, policies, and partnerships** resulting from intense planning activities.

### Mission

The CWCB's mission to *conserve, develop, protect and manage Colorado's water for present and future generations* is described below:

- To *Conserve* the waters of the State for beneficial use by working with partners;
- To *Develop* waters of the State in partnership with Colorado's water stakeholders in a manner that:
  - Fully utilizes State's compact and U.S. Supreme Court decree entitlements; and
  - Helps ensure that Colorado has an adequate water supply for non-consumptive and consumptive needs;
- To *Protect* the waters of the State by:
  - assuring maximum beneficial use of the State's water allocations; and
  - preserving the natural environment;
- To *Manage* the waters of the State by supporting planning efforts of state and local authorities to prepare for varying and extreme (e.g. floods and droughts) hydrologic conditions.

Authorities and responsibilities of the Board and staff are defined in Articles 60 and 92 of Title 37, C.R.S. and in Titles 24, 29, 30, 31, 36, and 39, C.R.S.

## Agency Role

The CWCB is Colorado's statewide water policy agency. The CWCB performs numerous functions through distinct program areas in support of this role. The Board: 1) provides common technical platforms for planning and policy decisions; 2) builds and manages information to guide actions; 3) helps reduce the impacts of floods and droughts; 4) takes actions to protect Colorado's compact entitlements; 5) holds instream flow water rights to preserve the natural environment to a reasonable degree; and 6) works with partners to develop policies and implement strategies for meeting Colorado's consumptive and non-consumptive water needs.

The CWCB supports strategy implementation through:

- Funding
- Policy development and implementation
- Planning
- Data collection and analysis
- Outreach and technical assistance

## **Description of the Framework**

The Framework specifically addresses the CWCB's role, strategic focus, and priority. In addition, the Framework describes implementation priorities. It provides direction for Board policy that guides agency programs and tasks. It also helps to distinguish the relationship between the CWCB and the Interbasin Compact Committee (IBCC).

The Framework focuses the agency on outcomes and is intended to foster agency-wide coordination and effective resource management. With substantial Board input on policy direction, the CWCB staff will align programs, resources and operations to facilitate implementation of the Framework. It is fully recognized that there are fiscal and political constraints on potential outcomes, but the agency will adapt to those constraints to achieve optimal effectiveness.

As part of the Framework development, the CWCB conducted an analysis that highlighted the complexity and controversy surrounding Colorado water issues. This analysis identified the following issues that form the context for the CWCB's work.

### **Balance**

Balance is perhaps the most important factor when discussing all of Colorado's water uses and needs. Competition for Colorado's limited water resources will only increase over time. Defining and achieving balance among competing uses will continue to be the greatest challenge for the CWCB and the larger water community.

### **IBCC and Basin Roundtables**

While the Board is state's water policy body, the Interbasin Compact Committee (IBCC) and Basin Roundtables serve as Colorado's grass roots think tanks for water issues. The IBCC and Roundtables were established by the Colorado Water for the 21st Century Act to: 1) facilitate conversations within and among Colorado's river basins; 2) broaden the range of stakeholders

actively participating in the state's water decisions; and 3) encourage locally-driven collaborative solutions.

The collaborative stakeholder forum provided by the IBCC and the Basin Roundtables generates ideas with grassroots support that may be integrated into the CWCB's policy development and implementation role. The CWCB implements water management, development, and protection strategies and ensures a common technical platform to inform and support the planning activities of the Board, the IBCC, and the Basin Roundtables.

### **SWSI Findings**

The key findings and recommendations of the Statewide Water Supply Initiative (SWSI) and subsequent updates provide a backdrop for this planning effort. The Board recognizes that Colorado faces a shortage of water for meeting the state's consumptive and non-consumptive water needs in the future. In order to meet Colorado's water management objectives, a mix of local water projects and plans, conservation, reuse, agricultural transfers and the development of new water supplies should be pursued concurrently. The Board is committed to working with stakeholders to use its diverse program areas to help Colorado maintain adequate water supplies for present and future generations.

### **Implementation**

The CWCB will focus on policy development and implementation, and will prioritize and measure agency outcomes. The CWCB will work to support strategy implementation through its funding, information and data, policy development, and technical assistance.

### **Priority**

The CWCB's priority is to help ensure that Colorado has adequate water to meet both consumptive and non-consumptive needs and reduce the impacts of natural hazards through ***Policy, Projects, and Partnerships***.

### **Agency Focus**

The CWCB is committed to taking action by:

- Serving as a valued partner in the implementation of strategies aimed at maximum utilization of Colorado's water resources;
- Coordinating and integrating across agency programs to achieve optimum synergy and to increase efficiencies;
- Collaborating with water stakeholders to leverage funds and maximize resources across the state; and

- Focusing on consumptive and non-consumptive water supply to meet the total needs of the state.

With the completion of SWSI and subsequent updates, the CWCB updated its analysis of the state's water supply needs. The CWCB deliberated on the information contained in SWSI and put forth its view of how to move forward. The CWCB will lead Colorado's water community into an implementation phase to determine and pursue solutions for meeting the state's consumptive and non-consumptive water needs. The CWCB and IBCC made specific recommendations to help accomplish this. This Framework helps define the CWCB's role in this implementation phase, and will guide how the CWCB approaches the recommendations.

Key components of the Framework implementation are:

- Developing and maintaining relationships with internal and external partners to ensure on the ground demand and supply strategy implementation;
- Focusing on end results using a variety of strategies; and
- Utilizing skills, knowledge, and expertise to enhance program outcomes.

### **Outcomes**

The CWCB aims to move projects, processes, and strategies forward. By doing so, the CWCB enables its partners to be successful. This Framework will guide the CWCB as it works to achieve its desired outcomes.

### **Impact and Measures of Success**

The CWCB will continue to be successful to the extent that it furthers progress in meeting its mission, statutory obligations, and statewide water supply goals. The CWCB will also be successful by enabling others to succeed in completing important water projects, natural hazard reduction measures (public safety improvements), environmental protections, and related water resource initiatives.

To add value the CWCB will maximize successes at the federal, regional, basin and local level. This is a different focus from managing projects. It requires relationship building and long-term strategic partnerships to which the CWCB adds meaningful value in addition to its loan and grant services. The CWCB staff provides expertise, policy development, tools and technical resources to assist in the planning, design and implementation of strategies to conserve, develop, protect, and manage Colorado's water resources.

## **Conclusion**

The CWCB's focus is on projects, policy and partnerships, all resulting from substantial planning efforts on a variety of issues. The CWCB works with input from its staff and other stakeholders to develop policies and implement strategies for meeting all of Colorado's water needs and for reducing the impacts of floods and droughts. The CWCB accomplishes the agency's mission through its core functions of hazard mitigation, water supply planning, environmental and legal protection, maximum utilization, compact protection, and financial and technical resources.