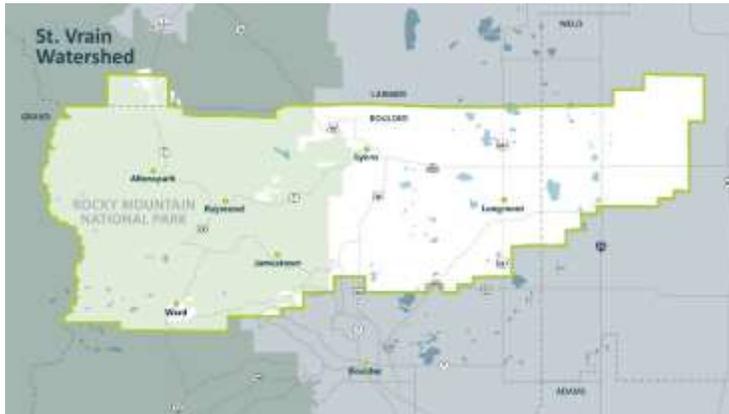




Water Vision and Action Plan – Funding Fact Sheet

Who is the St .Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District?

The St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District (District) was formed in 1971. It is one of 49 water conservancy districts in the state of Colorado formed to develop and manage water projects, facilitate water conservation, protect water quality, and educate the public. Specifically, the District works to protect local water quality and ensure we have water needed for generations to come. It does this by facilitating and implementing water programs and services and takes a comprehensive look at how all these components work together.



As a local government, non-profit agency formed at the request of our community

under state laws, we serve Longmont and the surrounding land area that drains into both the St. Vrain and Left Hand Creeks.

What is the Water Vision and Action Plan?

Water programs, services, and projects are more complex today than they were 50 years ago. To succeed in the future, the District must be creative and work collaboratively.

In response, the District has developed a 5-point Water Vision and Action Plan to continue to achieve the District's statutory purposes. With this Plan, the District has identified the key components of its mission and sets goals for achieving success under the Plan.

What are the 5 points?

1. Protect water quality and drinking water sources

Protecting the amount of water flowing in our rivers and creeks helps keep the water flowing out of our taps safe. The District plans ahead to ensure our community has water when it's needed. We proactively and offensively protect local water rights to benefit the local economy, families and farms. The District also works to keep forests healthy to reduce the risk of wildfires that can impair water quality.

2. Safeguard and conserve drinking water

Conservation is critical to helping us manage this precious resource. The more people know about their water, the more involved they become. We educate the public on how to conserve more water and do their part to protect water quality.

3. Grow food local

Local farms and ranches provide locally grown food and contribute to the local economy. The District is working to train the next generation of farmers and ranchers to understand water rights, water conservation and ditch management.



4. Store water for dry years

Like a bank account, saving water in wet years can help us get through the dry ones. Stored water can be released to streams and rivers to supplement their flows and also help protect water quality. Reservoirs provide places for recreational water sports and fishing.

5. Maintain healthy rivers and creeks

The District works to improve creeks and streams, and to store water along creeks and streams to benefit cities, recreation, and fish and wildlife. We also enhance environmental conservation and restoration that ensures healthy streams and rivers for general enjoyment and recreation.

What is the current property tax?

The District’s funding comes from property taxes. The District’s current property tax is 0.156 Mills and in 2020 the current mill levy provided \$421,000 in revenue to the District. As an example, the current levy equals \$0.46 per month for a \$500,000 residential property.

What are voters being asked to do?

To fund the Water Vision and Action Plan, voters will be asked to consider a ballot measure in the fall of 2020 for a property tax (mill levy) increase. This is the first time in its 50-year history that the District’s mill levy would increase. The ballot measure would add 1.25 mills to the District’s current levy of 0.156 mills and provide an additional approximately \$3.3 million annually.

What does this cost?

The adjacent graphic shows how the property tax increase would cost depending on the value and type of property.



The tax would sunset/expire in 10 years (2030), so would require future voter approval to continue. The District will publish an annual public expenditure report/audit that will identify the various uses of District funds. The appointed volunteer board of local residents will oversee spending.

Those in favor believe:

- This is a small tax that supports a necessary life ingredient.
- The threats to our water quality and quantity are ever increasing. The District’s Water Plan addresses those threats and new revenue will allow the District to leverage additional funding to meet those threats quicker.
- The tax would sunset or expire in 10 years so if the plan is not implemented to expectations, voters can decide not to renew it.
- Upfront creek improvements or wildfire prevention are far less costly than disaster recovery and dedicated funds for this kind of work is lacking.

Those opposed believe:

- This is not a small tax increase and will cost a \$500,000 property \$44.64 per year.
- This will result in increased storage. The creeks should just flow freely.
- The work and projects envisioned in the District’s plan can be achieved through a more long-term approach and thus funded through other means such as state grants or cost-shifting.
- There are other agencies and organizations that do some of the work and projects envisioned in the District’s plan, such as forest health and creek-side restoration.