

Lewis and Clark County
Water Quality Protection District
Strategic Plan FY2024-2026
July 1, 2023 -June 30, 2026

MISSION

To preserve, protect, and improve water quality and quantity within District boundaries.

VALUES

We strive for **competent, knowledgeable stewardship** of the environment.

We practice **transparent** and **accountable** service.

We maintain a **culture of leadership, service, commitment, and integrity.**

We **collaborate** with partners, customers, and our community to preserve, protect, and improve water resources.

VISION

Every resident has access to sustainable and clean water and uses the water responsibly.

WQPD is best at:

- Leader in identifying and sharing important water quality and quantity issues and information
- Technical studies and monitoring
- Interpreting technical information and translating it for a wide variety of audiences, from community leaders to individual well owners
- Education and Outreach
- Partner or lead in restoration projects

- Partner in water quality and water quantity education, outreach, and decision-making
- Responsiveness to public and leadership questions and critical issues
- Trusted resource

Priorities:

1. Ensuring leaders, landowners, and citizens understand and are empowered to make good water decisions
2. Understanding climate change, hydrologic and meteorologic conditions, and weather extremes
3. Addressing water related implications of growth and water quality
4. Data are collected, understood, and shared. The WQPD is a long-term compiler and authority on high quality data.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal 1: Improve the public’s support for and understanding of WQPD mission.

Objective 1.1: Provide education to improve and enhance understanding of water issues.

Actions
1.1.1: Work with strategic partners to provide information on important water issues.
1.1.2: The WQPD will develop annual outreach programs
1.1.3: Develop and implement - Water Conservation Plan

Objective 1.2: Provide access to clear, concise data and information on public platforms.

Actions
1.2.1: Update Quality Assurance documentation for WQPD data collection activities as needed. Update with SOPs to include wells, SW, data management as appendices
1.2.2: Reassess the network to ensure priority areas are being monitored
1.2.3: Create and maintain a data management system for the WQPD surface and groundwater data
1.2.4: Create and maintain ESRI tools to display WQPD collected data

Objective 1.3: Encourage public participation in all district activities.

Actions
1.3.1: Promote activity through social media, printed materials, earned media, and other channels
1.3.2: Distribute water quality sampling options to interested residents

Goal 2: Design and implement projects that protect and improve water quality and water quantity.

Objective 2.1: Reassess and operate WQPD’s surface water and groundwater monitoring network.

Actions
2.1.1: Develop and review written work plans on monitoring networks on an annual basis
2.1.2: Collect groundwater measurements and sampling based on the annual plan schedule
2.1.3: Collect surface water measurements and sampling based on the annual plan schedule
2.1.4: Provide groundwater sampling at residential locations as needed

Objective 2.2: Identify, prioritize, and implement project opportunities.

Actions
2.2.1: Work with landowners and strategic partners to improve riparian areas and other water related projects
2.2.2: Work with partners on water resources, research, and other related projects.

Objective 2.3: Encourage public participation across all WQPD activities.

Actions
2.3.1: Develop and implement a volunteer effort in the Lake Helena Watershed

Objective 2.4: Identify, prioritize, and implement funding opportunities.

Action
2.4.1: Research and apply for appropriate grant opportunities

Goal 3: Inform public policies for the management of water quality and quantity.

Objective 3.1: Provide issue-specific information to stakeholders and decision makers

Actions
3.1.1: Provide information to the general public
3.1.2: Collaborate with City and County planning, sanitation, and developers on new developments
3.1.3: Collaborate and provide information to County Commissioners

Objective 3.2: Advocate for legislation that supports the WQPD’s activities.

Actions
3.2.1: Provide or present information to Legislative committees during the session
3.2.2: Research and track bills that affect the WQPD

Goal 4: Optimize internal organizational capacity to support the WQPD’s activities.

Objective 4.1: Maintain staffing and capacity levels to ensure ability to carry out WQPD priorities, within the base budget.

4.1.1: Ensure that adequate technical and supervisory staffing is funded annually
4.1.2: Create Updated recruiting and retention (check – in) plans as needed

Objective 4.2: Provide for training to WQPD staff and Board

Actions
4.2.1: Provide WQPD staff with adequate training
4.2.2: Provide WQPD board orientation and ongoing board development and education

Objective 4.3: Develop internal policies and procedures that enhance WQPD operations

Actions
4.3.1: Write and maintain updated policy that directs WQPD responses to public requests and queries
4.3.2: Develop and maintain procedures for external and internal review of documentation for public dissemination
4.3.3: Develop, implement, and evaluate staff work plans
4.3.4: Project protocol – Procedure, budget, and reporting process including research and data review procedures for funding requests
4.3.5: Update the Outreach & Education process and protocols for dissemination

Objective 4.4: Identify and implement Quality Improvement projects

Actions
4.4.1: Evaluate WQPD protocols and conduct a Plan, Do, Study, Act when necessary
4.4.2: Update QI project to track customer service

Objective 4.5: Study and plan for WQPD Boundary Expansion to meet needs of the community and resources.

Actions
4.5.1: Investigate scientific case for boundaries that support mission of the WQPD
4.5.2: Conduct activities to understand options for District expansion

Review Process

Each year, the board and staff will review progress on each goal, objective, and action.

- What worked well?
- What data and information does the WQPD have that indicates success?
- What challenges were encountered?
- Should the action be continued or changed in some way to better fulfill the mission of the Water Quality Protection District?
- Identify specific activities within an action for the following year (staff).

Budget: A budget will be developed, and resources assigned to objectives and goals. It is important to note that many actions primarily involve staff time, so overall guidance from the board is useful when the staff has to choose between specific activities over the course of the year.

After the review is completed, the staff shall update the actions, work plans, and budget for the following fiscal year.