

# GRAND RIVER MOSQUITO CONTROL DISTRICT



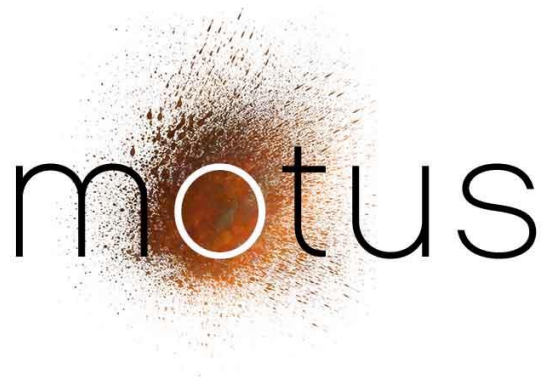
## STRATEGIC PLAN

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2024-2028

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This plan has been created in conjunction with



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# GRAND RIVER MOSQUITO CONTROL DISTRICT

*Strategic Plan 2024-2028*

## INTRODUCTION

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This Strategic Plan has been developed by the Board of Directors of the Grand River Mosquito Control District to provide guidance for the operation of the District through the year 2028.

The GRMCD Strategic Plan is intended to create awareness of the District's goals, how and why those goals were chosen, and align the efforts of the District Directors and staff toward achieving meaningful and relevant objectives that are in line with its mission.

This plan should be regarded as a living document, aiding the District in maintaining a proactive approach to fulfilling its mission. Periodic reviews, progress evaluations, updates, and modifications will be necessary to ensure its relevance and value to the District.

## MISSION STATEMENT

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“ To suppress mosquito populations within District boundaries, to provide public education, and to develop subsequent mosquito control strategies. ”

## CORE VALUES

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This plan is based on a set of core values that form the basis of our vision. Those core values include honesty, integrity, respect, responsibility, accountability, earning the public trust, and expanding the District boundary in an environmentally conscious manner.

## BACKGROUND

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In 1982, a group of citizens raised a growing concern about a serious mosquito problem in the Redlands area. After conducting a petition drive and a random survey of homeowners in the area, the concerned citizen group organized a vote to create a mosquito control program in their neighborhoods. With the help of Colorado Mesa University (then Mesa State College), a citizen board was formed, and the Redlands Mosquito Control District was formed.

The organization was established as a Title 32 Special District and is funded by a property tax assessed to all landowners within the District's boundary and governed by a five-member citizen board elected by property owners within this boundary.

Over time, a series of elections and inclusions have increased the District boundary from the original 8 square miles to the current size of approximately 150 square miles, including the communities of Grand Junction, Fruita, Clifton, and Palisade. Through these elections and inclusions, the Redlands Mosquito District became the Grand River Mosquito Control District in 2005.

During the past five years, the District has been successful in achieving its goals set forth in the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan. Some of the more noteworthy accomplishments include adopting a pay-for-performance program, creating a safety manual, establishing core values, adopting a continuing education program, updating District policies and documents, updating the service plan and statement of purpose, and modernizing equipment such as GPS monitoring systems and nighttime fogging systems.

Today, the District is well-managed and financially sound. With modern equipment and facilities and a positive reputation in the community, the organization is poised to successfully complete the objectives defined in this updated 2024-2028 Strategic Plan.

# ANALYSIS

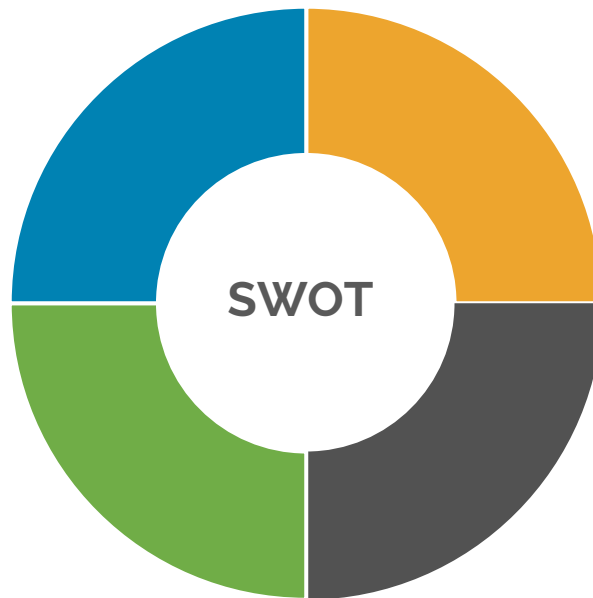
In the development of this Strategic Plan, the Board conducted a planning retreat on October 19, 2023. The Directors analyzed the current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats ("SWOT") that could affect the District's ability to provide services over the next five years. From this SWOT analysis, the five focus areas and subsequent action steps for the plan were developed.

## STRENGTHS

- Strong leadership
- Knowledgeable staff
- Healthy organizational culture
- Engaged Board of Directors
- Defined operational guidelines, manuals, and procedures
- Financial stability with reserves and balanced budget
- Positive reputation for community health and environmental responsibility
- Modern facility and equipment
- Competitive employee wages and benefits
- Contiguous District boundaries
- Proactive approach to mosquito control
- Professional community presentation
- Control of District boundaries
- Responsible chemical use

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Limited public understanding of District's value to community
- Unserved areas within Mesa County
- New mosquito-borne diseases
- Technological and chemical advances
- Advanced scientific resources
- Additional funding through increased population and property values
- Urbanization-driven habitat changes



## WEAKNESSES

- Limited public outreach
- Knowledge sharing with other Districts
- Limited public awareness of value
- Single funding source
- Challenging Board of Director recruitment
- Limited technical knowledge specific to District ecosystem
- Unfinished succession plan

## THREATS

- Unpredictable climate conditions
- Government chemical regulation
- Growing public distaste for chemical use
- Emergence of community opposition
- Lack of available seasonal workforce
- New diseases, invasive or chemical-resistant species
- Legislation to reduce funding
- Urbanization of District
- Increased threat of crime
- Supply shortages

## FOCUS AREAS

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Conducting a SWOT analysis enabled the Board of Directors to identify the District's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. By analyzing these factors, the Board determined where the District can build upon strengths, address weaknesses, capitalize on opportunities, and mitigate potential threats. Using the SWOT analysis framework, the leadership team developed specific focus areas for the 5-year Strategic Plan.

The identified focus areas are:

### **Public Relations**

As a publicly-funded special district, it is responsible for the GRMCD to take a more active approach in enhancing the awareness of its mission and communicating the value it is delivering within the community it serves.

### **Education Programs**

Engaging, informing, and educating varied and diverse segments of the community about mosquitos, and the necessity and means of mitigation is fundamental to the GRMCD mission.

### **Technical Development**

Maintaining a proactive approach to mosquito suppression necessitates the active pursuit of greater industry knowledge, and awareness of scientific and technological advances that may be beneficial for more effectively fulfilling the District's mission.

### **District Expansion**

As the population of Mesa County continues to grow, and shift from agricultural to urban densities, the GRMCD must assess the need of expanding the District boundaries in order to effectively serve the community.

### **Board of Directors Recruitment**

The continued success of the GRMCD is dependent upon thoughtful and committed leadership. Raising awareness of the District and its value to interested community service leaders will aid in creating a more methodical, competitive, and long-term approach to Board recruitment.

## ACTION STEPS

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The following action steps have been developed using the principles of SMART goals. The acronym stands for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound. By creating action steps using these five criteria, this plan provides clear, concise, and achievable objectives.

Specific steps help to eliminate ambiguity, while measurable steps allow progress to be tracked and monitored. Attainable steps ensure that objectives are realistic and achievable, while relevant steps ensure that the effort is focused on areas that matter. Finally, time-bound steps create a clear timeline for success.

Rather than quantifying a measure for each action step, this plan defines a relevant metric to measure the attainment of each objective. The District Manager and Board of Directors will use the developed metric to determine a quantifiable measure for each action step.

The following action steps have been identified for each of these five focus areas.

## Public Relations

The District's focus on public relations is a specific approach to communication with the citizens of our community. The public relations action steps are designed to positively influence community perceptions and attitudes toward the District. Public relations build awareness and credibility that bolsters the District's reputation in order to create support for our current and future programs.

Currently, the GRMCD logo, websites, branding of fleet vehicles, and employee visibility with yellow shirts and hats raise awareness of the District's daily operations. Our partnerships with the Mesa County Health Department and State Health Department help create a positive image of the District.

The following action steps are designed to enhance community awareness, reputation, and credibility.

Item/Subitem	Description	Metrics	Lead / Date
<b>PR Campaign</b>			
	Create a PR campaign plan, encompassing the strategic objectives of public relations and outreach, and the tactics by which to achieve the objectives.	A written, comprehensive PR plan	DM March 2024
<b>PR Staff</b>			
	Assess the need for bringing public relations duties in-house through additional staffing resources.	A written report for Board review	DM/ADM June 2025
<b>Monthly Events</b>			
Create event calendar	Form and maintain an annual calendar of community events where the District should create a presence.	Number of event attendees; number of giveaways handed out	UAC January 2025 and February annually
Booth design	Make an educational, interactive event booth, packaged and easily transportable.	Completed booth with displays for various ages & interests, highlighting awareness strategies	UAC June 2024



Develop handouts	Produce a series of free, relevant giveaways to use at events; e.g. stickers, small bottles of mosquito repellent with informative labels, backyard treatment kits, etc.	Define budget for promotional items; track number of units given away	UAC/ADM March 2024
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### Partnerships

Identify	Identify potential community organizations to partner with; e.g. , FFA, 4-H, Co. Canyons Assoc., Downtown GJ, COPMOBA, Friends of Riverfront Trail, One Riverfront, CO. Discover Ability, Eureka! (2024), Parks & Rec, dog parks, Royce Hurst, etc.	Number of partnership relationships formed	UAC/ADM June 2025
Presentations	Seek to offer presentations at board or general meetings of community partners.	Number of presentations given	DM/ADM April
Paid Internship	Working with CMU, develop a paid public relations internship program.	Onboard a PR intern	DM January 2025 and ongoing annually
Joint PR	Create PR campaigns in partnership with community organizations.	Number of campaigns created	DM/ADM April 2026

### Social Media

Create accounts	Create X, Instagram accounts to utilize in conjunction with Facebook and LinkedIn, Instagram.	Active accounts	DM/ADM October 2027/2024 and ongoing annually
Post content	Post visual, informative, educational content.	Define and track posts per month per social channel	ADM/UAC October 2026

## Education

The District's strategic focus on education takes a different approach to community communication. The action steps related to education aim to educate citizens and visitors about mosquito-related concerns, as well as encourage their participation in mosquito control strategies and self-protection techniques. These efforts will provide valuable information to create informed support for District activities. Education will be particularly crucial as new species of mosquitoes capable of transmitting new viruses and diseases are establishing populations within the District.

The District's current education efforts include retaining the Lewis Agency to provide professional communication and marketing services to assist in implementing a communication program each season. These efforts include social media, digital marketing, print, radio, and billboards. The District Biologist meets with 3rd-grade classes each year to provide educational materials and a presentation related to the life cycle of a mosquito. District staff also participate in local events, including farmers markets, the annual water festival, and the Mesa County Fair.

The following action steps will enhance the District's efforts to educate the community about mosquito control and mosquito-related issues.

Item/Subitem	Description	Metrics	Lead / Date
Content	Create educational curriculums for additional grades.	Completed curriculum	Bio/UAC December 2024
Partnerships	Cultivate relationships with school administrators and teachers.	Number of contacts	Bio/UAC September 2025
Package & Deliver	Package and deliver curriculum and supporting supplies to classrooms.	Number of classes	Bio/UAC November 2025

### Eureka!

Establish relationship	Contact Eureka! to pursue possible partnership.	Contact made	UAC March 2024
Design	Design hands-on scientific display.	Completed design	UAC August 2024
Installation	Create and install display.	Installation of display	UAC November 2024

### Educational Presentations

	Develop and package 5, 10, 20-minute educational presentations for staff use.	Completed presentations	ADM/UAC June 2025
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### Service Clubs

Identify	Identify diverse selection of local service clubs and organizations.	Finalize list of contacts	UAC September 2027
Create partnerships	Contact and create relationships with club leaders.	Number of clubs	UAC December 2027
Deliver	Deliver presentations to clubs.	Number of presentations	UAC June 2028

### HOAs

Identify	Identify diverse selection of local HOAs.	Finalize list of contacts	UAC September 2024
Create partnerships	Contact and create relationships with HOA leaders.	Number of HOAs	UAC December 2024
Deliver	Deliver presentations to HOAs.	Number of presentations	UAC April 2025

### Retirement Communities

Identify	Identify diverse selection of local retirement communities.	Finalize list of contacts	UAC April 2027
Create partnerships	Contact and create relationships with community leaders.	Number of communities	UAC October 2027
Deliver	Deliver presentations to communities.	Number of presentations	UAC March 2028

## Technical Development

The District strives to be recognized for its proactive approach to mosquito control, modern facilities and equipment, and responsible use of chemicals. Technical development already in place for 2024 and 2025 includes larvae identification for *Aedes aegypti* and expanding public education in core urban areas where *Aedes aegypti* breed.

The District plans to expand its knowledge-sharing relationships while also evaluating the necessity and value of additional staff to include specialists in various arenas. The following action steps will enhance the District's technical development.

Item/Subitem	Description	Metrics	Lead / Date
<b>Inventory Science Assets</b>			
Inventory	Assess scientific resources available in western Colorado for their ability to research needs specific to GRMCD, including resistance testing, product rotation, chemical trials, new and invasive species; e.g. Palisade Insectory, CSU Extension, CMU biology dept., chemical manufacturer R&D, etc.	Finalize inventory that can assist in these areas	DM/ADM March 2024
Gaps	Identify gaps in regional resources available with capabilities pertinent to GRMCD's needs.	Complete list of identified gaps	DM/ADM June 2024
Assess Mission Relevance	Assess whether filling gaps in scientific needs is relevant to GRMCD's mission.	Report to Board	DM/Board August 2024
Cost/Benefit	Create cost-benefit analysis of additional scientific testing and personnel if needed and mission-relevant.	Completed Analysis	DM/ADM October 2024
<b>District Partnerships</b>			
Identify	Identify other mosquito control districts with similar ecosystems and/or which precede GRMCD in migration of species.	Completed list of Districts	DM/ADM December 2024
Relationships	Establish professional relationships with other District managers for information sharing.	Document list of reciprocal contacts	DM/ADM June 2025
Communication	Task key staff to engage with other District staff and report finding on regular basis.	Quarterly reports	ADM/Bio December 2025
<b>Information Technology</b>			
Staffing	Assess the need for bringing IT duties in-house through additional staffing resources.	Completed analysis report	DM/OA/ADM June 2026

## District Expansion

One of the District's greatest strengths is its ability to control its own boundaries. In order to maintain the long-term health of the community, the District recognizes the value of expanding GRMCD boundaries to improve future mosquito control in areas transitioning from rural to urban densities.

Working in conjunction with existing Master Plans, the following action steps will expand the District's boundaries in a proactive and strategic manner.

Item/Subitem	Description	Metrics	Lead / Date
<b>Expansion</b>			
Service Areas	Identify potential new areas that the District could serve.	Compiled report	DM January 2024
Cost/Benefit	Analyze the cost of expanding the District boundaries, the revenue of such expansion, and the benefit to the overall mission to determine viability.	Completed cost-benefit analysis	DM June 2024
<b>Public Relations</b>			
Campaign	If cost-benefit analysis proves viable, create public relations campaign preceding District expansion to generate community support.	Launch PR campaign	DM/Board January 2026
<b>Election Process</b>			
Ballot	If determined to be beneficial, pursue ballot initiative.	Proposal presented for vote	DM November 2027

## Board of Directors Recruitment and Cultivation

One of the identified weaknesses of the District is the challenge faced in recruiting skilled and qualified community members to serve on the Board of Directors. This is a statewide challenge and should be addressed at a local level. To address this, the following action steps have been developed to raise awareness and credibility of the value of serving on the Board. The ultimate goal is to generate greater interest in the community to be involved in District leadership.

Item/Subitem	Description	Metrics	Lead / Date
<b>Business Networking</b>			
Grand Junction Chamber of Commerce	Establish membership with the Grand Junction Chamber of Commerce. Serve on committees, attend networking events and functions.	Committee participation, regular event attendance	DM June 2024
Fruita Area Chamber of Commerce	Establish membership with the Fruita Area Chamber of Commerce. Serve on committees, attend networking events and functions.	Committee participation, regular event attendance	DM/ADM June 2024
Palisade Chamber of Commerce	Establish membership with the Palisade Chamber of Commerce. Serve on committees, attend networking events and functions.	Committee participation, regular event attendance	ADM/UAC June 2025
<b>Presence on other community boards</b>			
Identify boards	Task staff to identify potential community boards they are interested in serving on, focusing on those that may serve as potential PR partners.	Report on identified boards	DM/ADM/UAC January 2026
Serve	Staff serve board terms.	Number of staff serving on community boards	DM/ADM/UAC June 2026
<b>Volunteers</b>			
Job description	Identify and task appropriate staff person to handle volunteer recruiting, training, and coordination.	Staff member identified and assigned duties	DM/UAC January 2027
Volunteer management	Select three events per year that are well-suited for volunteer participation. Recruit 3-5 volunteers per event to assist staff in activities such as answering community questions about our services and handing out giveaways.	Track volunteer participation	DM/UAC December 2027

