

Strategic Plan for the **Newhall County Water District**



NCWD

NEWHALL COUNTY WATER DISTRICT

APRIL 2009

Established: 2005

Last Update: April 9, 2009

The Mission Statement of the Newhall County Water District is to provide quality water service at a reasonable cost by practicing careful stewardship of natural resources, utilizing innovative measures, and providing a quality working environment.

The Vision Statement of the Newhall County Water District is to provide long-term availability of high quality water through leadership and collaborative partnerships.

Governing Board of Directors

Maria Gutzeit, President

Daniel Mortensen, Vice President

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District Staff

Stephen L. Cole, General Manager

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**A MESSAGE FROM THE
BOARD of DIRECTORS and GENERAL MANAGER**

For more than 50 years, Newhall County Water District has served its customers with quality drinking water at a reasonable cost. True to the District's history, we have taken a proactive approach in continuing to meet the changing needs of this community. In service to our rate-payers, the Board of Directors and District Management have focused on a living Strategic Plan to identify necessary measures to ensure the District remains productive and successful.

On behalf of the Newhall County Water District, its' Board of Directors and dedicated employees, we reaffirm our pledge to provide excellent water service to you, the residents and businesses of the Santa Clarita Valley.

Stephen L. Cole,
General Manager

Maria Gutzeit,
President of the Board of Directors for
Newhall County Water District



A. Introduction

A Strategic Plan serves as a framework for decision making over a 5-year period. It is a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions that shape what a District plans to accomplish by selecting a rational course of action. This plan has incorporated an assessment of the present state of District operations, gathering and analyzing information, setting goals, and making decisions for the future. This plan seeks to strengthen and build upon opportunities while addressing areas of concern.

This plan also identifies actions, activities, and planning efforts that are currently active and needed for continued success in operations and management of the District, and provides for periodic reviews and updates.

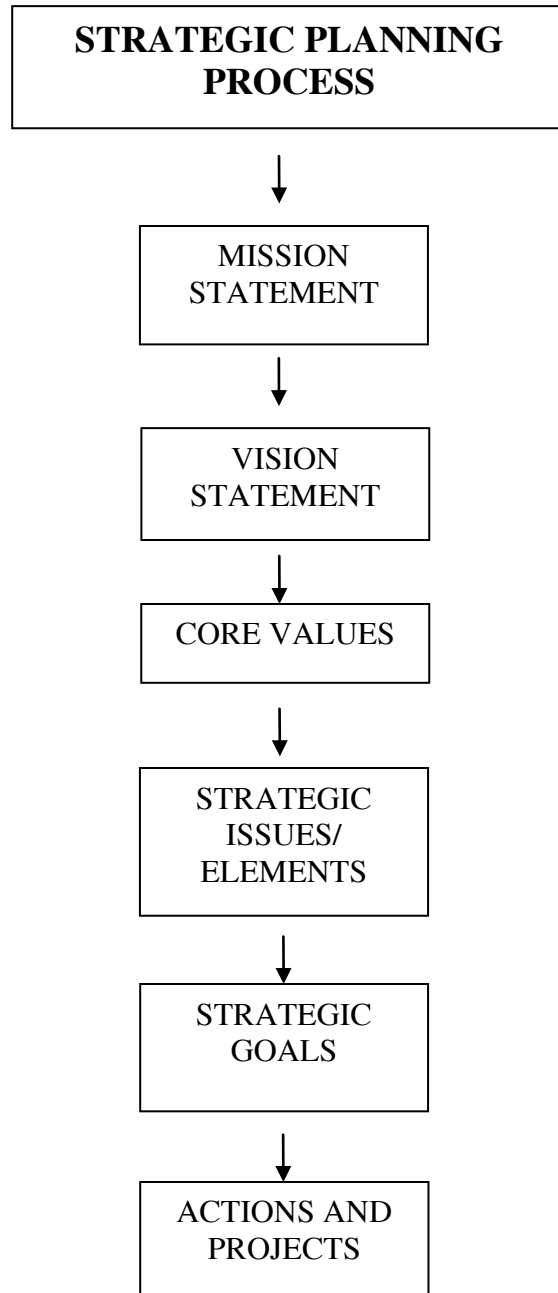
The strategic planning effort has focused on several or all of the following task areas:

- Collaboration with partner agencies.
- Technology that can provide new opportunities.
- Environmental changes that can significantly affect District operations.
- Changes in Federal, State and local laws and land use policies that can have significant effects on District operations.
- Employee development that is critical to meeting the District's service goals.

B. Definitions

1. Mission Statement: A declaration of an organization's purpose. Ideally, all activities of the District should be in support of the Mission Statement.
2. Vision Statement: Describes the program and its potential impact in the future. A District's Vision Statement provides a framework to achieve long range goals through strategic action plans.
3. Core Values: Statements of principal beliefs to which the District and its employees are committed. Activities and the general business of the District should be conducted with the Core Values in mind.
4. Strategic Elements: These are the broad, primary areas of District operations, planning, and management that need to be addressed and supported by Strategic Goals to ensure optimum progress.
5. Strategic Goals: Strategic Actions are specific and measurable activities or targets that address the strategic elements.
6. Actions and Projects: Day-to-day actions and projects (not covered in detail in the Strategic Plan) will be designed so that the Strategic Goals are accomplished.

Linkages – The following flow chart shows how Strategic Goals and resultant actions are linked to the Core Values, Mission and Vision of the District:



C. Plan Development and Continuation Process

In 2005, the Board of Directors retained BHI Management Consulting to facilitate and coordinate the initial Strategic Plan development. BHI first gathered input from District employees at two meetings. The following items were discussed; mission statement, core values, current and future issues. The Board supported this process as a way to allow all employees to participate in the foundation of the Strategic Plan. BHI then asked the Board of Directors to complete a questionnaire that was used to begin defining the framework for the desired plan elements for the District. Two Board/upper management workshops were conducted to develop the following plan elements: Mission Statement, Core Values, Strategic Elements, and initial work on Strategic Goals. A steering committee consisting of the Board president and upper management worked with BHI to complete the list of Strategic Goals and refine the Plan prior to presentation to the full Board for review and final approval.

Again in 2006 and 2007, the Board of Directors retained BHI Management Consulting to facilitate and update the Strategic Plan. A Board/upper management workshop was conducted to update the following plan elements: Mission Statement, Core Values, Strategic Elements, Strategic Goals and 5-year outlook. A steering committee consisting of the Board president and upper management worked with BHI to complete the list of Strategic Goals and refine the Plan prior to presentation to the full Board for review and final approval.

In 2008 the Board of Directors retained Charles Beesley of Special District Consulting to conduct the Strategic Planning Workshop and continue the District's commitment to maintain the Strategic Plan.

This year's plan was updated by the District's staff and Board and no formal workshop was held.



D. Mission Statement and Core Values

*The Mission of NCWD is
to provide quality water service at a reasonable cost by
practicing careful stewardship of natural resources, utilizing
innovative measures, and providing a*

quality-working environment.

NCWD Core Values:

- *We are committed to meeting or exceeding every Federal and State standard for public health and safety.*
- *We are committed to vigorously protecting the water supplies of the District from contamination or degradation and ensuring supply availability.*
- *We are committed to an efficient and cost effective operation.*
- *We are committed to prudent management of the District's infrastructure and resources.*
- *We are committed to providing excellent customer service including public information and outreach.*
- *We are committed to long range planning.*
- *We are committed to responsible regional and community relationships.*
- *We are committed to conducting our business in an open, honest and ethical manner.*

E. Vision Statement

***The Vision of NCWD is
to provide long term availability of high quality water
through leadership and collaborative partnerships.***

F. Strategic Elements and Goals

Strategic Elements and Strategic Goals represent the vital areas of the District's operation, planning, and management. Strategic Elements are derived from the

foundational Mission, Core Value, and Vision statements of the District. They are linked to action through Strategic Goals within the five-year period that serve to assure that important areas of the District are well supported and moved forward per Board direction. Strategic Elements and supportive Strategic Goals, along with action dates within the planning period, are presented in the following six (6) sections.

The Strategic Elements are:

- 1.0 External Relationships**
- 2.0 Resource Management**
- 3.0 Infrastructure Management**
- 4.0 Human Resources**
- 5.0 Administrative Management**
- 6.0 Financial Management**

1.0 External Relationships

Element Objective and Strategy: The objective is to establish a wide range of beneficial relationships to strengthen the District. We will do this by public outreach, establishing strategic ties with other governmental agencies, participation in professional associations and conducting our business in an open, honest and ethical manner.

1.1 Improve public outreach programs

Strategic Goal		Date to be Completed	Budget Costs
1.1.1	Maintain and enhance	6-2010	\$110,000
1.1.2	Maintain positive working relationship with the media	6-2010	
1.1.3	Create annual public relations plan	9-2009	
1.1.4	Attend and participate in community events and programs	6-2010	
1.1.5	Enhance customer relations	6-2010	

1.2 Strengthen partnerships with governmental agencies and within water industry

Strategic Goal		Date to be Completed	Budget Costs
1.2.1	Maintain positive relationships with local city, county and other inter-governmental agencies	6-2010	\$161,580
1.2.2	Annually select opportunities to increase visibility within the community	6-2010	
1.2.3	Attend and participate in ACWA, AWWA, CUWCC, and other water industry organizations meetings and events	6-2010	
1.2.4	Pursue legislative advocacy	6-2010	

2.0 Resource Management

Element Objective and Strategy: The objective is to manage water resources and pursue new water sources to insure a sustainable supply. We will do this by strategic collaboration, using sound conservation methods, evaluating technical information and carefully monitoring supply and demand projections.

2.1 Maintain and improve NCWD's conservation programs

	Strategic Goal	Date to be Completed	Budget Costs
2.1.1	Complete annual report on progress of BMP's in accordance with the requirements of the CUWCC's MOU	12-2009	\$182,890-
2.1.2	Implement Santa Clarita Valley Conservation Strategic Plan	6-2010	
2.1.3	Seek grants or other possible funding sources to expand NCWD's conservation programs	6-2010	
2.1.4	Incorporate and improve NCWD's conservation outreach efforts, including website	6-2010	
2.1.5	Maximize customer participation in established conservation programs	6-2010	

2.2 Study watershed options

	Strategic Goal	Date to be Completed	Budget Costs
2.2.1	Implement the IRWMP	6-2010	\$62,790

2.3 Maintain water supply reliability program

	Strategic Goal	Date to be Completed	Budget Costs
2.3.1	Work cooperatively with wholesaler (CLWA) to ensure necessary water banking programs, including consideration of local banking possibilities	6-2010	\$229,180
2.3.2	Assist in CLWA's completion of water recycling system master plan	6-2010	
2.3.3	Provide quarterly progress reports to Board on implementation of recycled water program	6-2010	
2.3.4	Participate in Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Santa Clara River Valley Upper Basin Water Purveyors and United Water Conservation District	6-2010	
2.3.5	Actively pursue recharge projects to enhance the yield of local aquifers	6-2010	

2.4 2010 Urban Water Management Plan participation

	Strategic Goal	Date to be Completed	Budget Costs
2.4.1	Attend and actively participate in the preparation of the regional 2010 UWMP	11-2010	\$0-

2.5 Water quality monitoring and protection program

	Strategic Goal	Date to be Completed	Budget Costs
2.5.1	Monitor and report water quality as required by government regulations	6-2010	\$463,240
2.5.2	Annually evaluate and update water supply and demand figures	6-2010	
2.5.3	Actively pursue the protection of local groundwater resources	6-2010	

3.0 Infrastructure Management

Element Objective and Strategy: The objective is to cost effectively maintain, replace and construct infrastructure to provide a safe and reliable water supply for current and future customers. We will do this by using quality materials, employing cost effective programs and progressive methods, and continuing preventive maintenance programs.

3.1 Infrastructure planning documents

	Strategic Goal	Date to be Completed	Budget Costs
3.1.1	Maintain the Long-Range Capital Improvement Program (CIP)	6-2010	\$62,790
3.1.2	Review and update NCWD's Standard Specifications to ensure adherence to current standards	6-2011	

3.2 New office building

	Strategic Goal	Date to be Completed	Budget Costs
3.2.1	Construct office building	6-2010	\$7,500,000

3.3 Sewer system solutions

	Strategic Goal	Date to be Completed	Budget Costs
3.3.1	Develop a feasible solution for the Pinetree Sewer System and Shadow Pines Sewer Lift Station	6-2010	\$69,790
3.3.2	General Manager actively participate in update of LA Co. Sanitation District's Sewer System Master Plan for the S.C.V.	6-2010	

3.0 Infrastructure Management *(Continued)*3.4 Infrastructure improvement and replacement program

Strategic Goal	Date to be Completed	Budget Costs
3.4.1 Complete Fiscal year CIP	6-2010	\$4,008,530
3.4.2 Complete Fiscal year maintenance activities	6-2010	
3.4.3 Develop Asset Management System	6-2010	

4.0 Human Resources

Element Objective and Strategy: The objective is to employ and retain a high quality, motivated workforce. We will do this by offering competitive compensation and benefits, insisting on a safe workplace, providing opportunities for training and advancement and utilizing sound management practices and policies.

4.1 Employee training, career development and retention

Strategic Goal	Date to be Completed	Budget Costs
4.1.1 Complete supervisory training program to ensure that supervisors have the skills/knowledge & abilities necessary to perform effectively	6-2010	\$101,895
4.1.2 Cross-train District employees	6-2010	
4.1.3 Monitor employee safety training program	6-2010	
4.1.4 Require District employees meet DPH operator certification requirements	6-2010	
4.1.5 Conduct annual employee performance evaluations to provide feedback and enhance professional development	6-2010	
4.1.6 Evaluate options for implementing an employee incentive program	6-2010	
4.1.7 Complete a comprehensive job description review for all District positions every two years, ensuring a standardized format that allows for proper use during employee recruitment, selection, and performance evaluation	6-2010	

4.2 Review employee compensation and benefits

Strategic Goal	Date to be Completed	Budget Costs
4.2.1 Complete annual compensation studies, including salary and benefit package value comparisons with similar competing agencies	6-2010	\$31,395
4.2.2 Utilize study results in determining compensation rates and in the recruiting process	6-2010	

5.0 Administrative Management

Element Objective and Strategy: The objective is to create, maintain and implement policies and procedures to ensure sound management of the District. We will accomplish this by periodic review, refinement and proper implementation of District policies and procedures.

5.1 Review District manuals

Strategic Goal	Date to be Completed	Budget Costs
5.1.1 Monitor the District's Policy, Procedures, Safety and Employee Manuals to assure updates are included and content is consistent throughout	6-2011	\$31,395
5.1.2 Provide training for Board of Directors and management staff in Ethics Training every two years as required by AB1234	12-2010	

5.2 Finalize annexation plan

Strategic Goal	Date to be Completed	Budget Costs
5.2.1 Process annexation with LAFCO for customers outside the current service area	9-2009	\$76,395

6.0 Financial Management

Element Objective and Strategy: The objective is to have sufficient funds when needed. NCWD will accomplish this by managing operating revenue and expenses to maximize value to the customer and ensuring developer agreements supporting the funding of long-term master plans.

6.1 Analyze budget for long-range (5 year) CIP program

Strategic Goal		Date to be Completed	Budget Costs
6.1.1	Evaluate funding of capital improvement programs	6-2010	\$57,325
6.1.2	Annually review and update master plan and buy-in fees	12-2009	
6.1.3	Monitor developer agreements to be sure they are financially supporting the District's funding of its long-term master plans	6-2010	

6.2 Fiscal budget plan

Strategic Goal		Date to be Completed	Budget Costs
6.2.1	Annually adopt fiscal budget plan	6-2010	\$87,790
6.2.2	Annually evaluate reserve policy funding and incorporate into budget process	3-2010	
6.2.3	Annually review and analyze legislative and regulatory impacts to budget forecasting	3-2010	
6.2.4	Develop funding mechanism of post-retirement benefit liability	6-2009	

6.3 Conduct an annual independent audit and evaluate District Auditing Policies and Procedures

	Strategic Goal	Date to be Completed	Budget Costs
6.3.1	Conduct an annual audit by an independent consultant to report District financial status in compliance with GASB regulations	10-2009	\$61,857

6.4 Integrate Strategic Planning Process with Annual Budgeting

	Strategic Goal	Date to be Completed	Budget Costs
6.4.1	Prepare a semi-annual strategic plan report	4-2010	\$21,094
6.4.2	Conduct bi-annual strategic workshop and individually consider the goals of the plan and integrate into the Budget	3-2010	

Appendix A – District Boundary Map

