



BACA GRANDE WATER AND  
SANITATION DISTRICT  
WELCOMES APPLICANTS FOR THE  
POSITION OF  
DISTRICT MANAGER

## **Organization History and Scope**

The Baca Grande Water and Sanitation District (BGWSD or District) is a quasi-municipal political subdivision of the State of Colorado located in eastern Saguache County near the town of Crestone. The District encompasses approximately 7,016 acres and is located approximately 180 miles southwest of Denver, northwest of the Great Sand Dunes National Park. Established in 1972, the District provides potable water and sanitary sewer service to customers within and outside its boundaries. The District is governed by a five-member Board of Directors (BOD). Board elections take place as specified by Colorado statute on odd years. Registered Colorado voters who are either residents of the District or owners of property within the District are eligible to vote in District elections.

According to the Special District Association of Colorado (SDA), the special district form of local government in Colorado fills a vital role in providing many of the basic services and public needs of the people of Colorado, including fire and rescue services, water and wastewater treatment and delivery, parks and recreation amenities, hospitals, libraries, and cemeteries. In Colorado, these governmental units perform vital roles to the public, with the SDA reporting over 1,500 special district members. A manager of a Special District is thereby developing a skillset which is widely understood and recognized within Colorado, and also in other parts of the country.

The District leases water from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. This water source is guaranteed by a water services agreement between the District and the US Federal government. The District operates its own wastewater treatment plant and is in the planning stages of upgrading the wastewater treatment capacity with a new plant. The District serves approximately 900 residential and commercial connections located within the Baca Grande subdivision and the town of Crestone.

The District provides only wastewater treatment services to about 70 residential and commercial customers in the town of Crestone. This service is provided through intergovernmental cooperation. A 20-year inter-governmental agreement expired at the end of February 2022. The District and the Town are presently negotiating the terms of a new relationship which will address the long-term wastewater needs of the town, as well as the funding of the new treatment facility of the District. The town pays the District monthly charges based on flows and strength of flows measured at the point where this waste enters the District system.

The District prepares its budget on the modified accrual basis of accounting and uses funds to budget and report on its financial position. The District imposes a mill levy of 54.000 mills. Of the 54.000 mills, 37.000 mills are certified to the General Fund and 17.000 mills dedicated to the Debt Service Fund. Specific ownership taxes are set by the State and collected by the County Clerk, primarily on vehicle licensing within the County as a whole. The specific ownership taxes are allocated by the County Treasurer to all taxing entities within, and including, the District.<sup>[1]</sup><sup>[SEP]</sup>The District imposes water and wastewater usage fees and tap fees through its Enterprise Fund. In addition, availability of service fees are imposed and collected by the Debt Service Fund.

## **District Boundaries**

The District maintains a business office at 57 Baca Grant Way South, in the Baca Grande Subdivision (“the Baca Grande”), as well as other infrastructure facilities including the Aspen Wastewater Treatment Plant. The District provides water and sewer service to residential customers in the areas of the Baca Grande known as Chalet I, II, and III, and the Casita Park

Mobile Home Estates. A limited number of undeveloped land parcels outside of the Baca Grande lie within the District also. The District has 65 miles of distribution system and 45 miles of collection system designed to provide ~2400 lots with water and sewer service. This area lies within the Baca Grande Property Owners Association, which is at present about 40% built out. New construction in the district ranges from 20-30 home starts per year. Residents include fulltime and part-time, and about 100 homes are short-term rentals.

### **The Greater Community**

The Baca Grande Water and Sanitation District is located in Saguache County, in a stunningly beautiful setting below 14,000-foot peaks of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, at an elevation of 7,500 feet in the San Luis Valley. Abundant outdoor recreation is available. The District is bounded on three sides by protected lands, lying adjacent to the northern boundary to the Great Sand Dunes National Park, to the Sangre de Cristo Wilderness Area to the east, and the Baca National Wildlife Refuge to the west. Three hot springs resorts are within a 30-minute drive. Monarch Mountain and Wolf Creek Ski areas are within a 2-hour drive. Saguache County is sparsely populated with no stop lights, and about 6,500 residents. The District is part of the unincorporated county and spans the wealthiest and most populous portion of the county. Sale prices of homes range from \$100,000 to \$800,000. Local schools include the Crestone Charter School, with limited enrollment by lottery, and the Moffat School, 12 miles away in the town of Moffat. Restaurants, two excellent grocery stores, a hardware store and lumber yard, a coffee shop, and gas pumps are available locally. Walmart and other national chains are an hour away either to the north or south in Salida or Alamosa.

### **The Position**

Appointed by the Board of Directors, the District Manager serves as chief executive officer of the District and implements Board policy. The District Manager interprets and executes the administrative, financial and operational policies of the organization, and further manages the administration of the business affairs of the District. This includes working with District legal counsel to lead negotiations with other organizations, and make members of the Board of Directors aware of relevant issues surrounding Board decisions. The District Manager reports directly to the Board of Directors. The District Manager supervises a staff of nine employees, with two direct reports being Operations and Administrative managers.

A summary of the District Manager's responsibilities include:

- Managing the day-to-day operations of the District;
- Interfacing with customers (or directing that interface) including solving customer issues;
- Overseeing the preparation and management of the \$2 million annual operating budget;
- Managing the execution of the District Master Plan of capital improvement projects;
- Managing District finances;
- Applying for and managing grants;
- Managing preparation for all meetings of the Board of Directors, and presenting a formal report at regular monthly Board meetings;
- Updating District policies, rules, regulations, operations, and communications based on decisions of the BOD;

- Providing a framework for the BOD so that they may well understand future potentials for the District, and the costs and/or tradeoffs of Board decisions: Offering a vision for the District, and working with the BOD to inform and execute that vision;
- Developing and maintaining a close working relationship with District legal counsel, consulting engineer, and certified public accountant;
- Listening to all stakeholders, taking advantage of the knowledge/experience among employees and Board Members;
- Managing District elections;
- Negotiating and successfully navigating the complex relationships of customers, District voting constituency, other local organizations (private, municipal, county, and federal), in the best interests of the District;
- Overseeing public interface and operations during system outage or emergency; and
- Overseeing compliance with Colorado Department of Health regulations, and Colorado Statutes related to Special Districts.

### **The Successful Candidate**

The District Manager role represents a professional opportunity for a service-oriented individual with experience and/or aptitude for customer service management, infrastructure management, and public administration. The position offers a lifestyle opportunity and the opportunity to make a difference in a growing and changing rural area with a strong sense of community. Additionally, the position offers a unique opportunity to work with the Board and community members to plan for the future of a beautiful and diverse human community nestled within fragile natural ecosystems.

The successful candidate will have an overarching interest in community and relationship building, understanding that, while the District is only one of several entities that contribute to community governance, that the District provides a key role in directing the future of the community as it sets an example for leadership, integrity, and interface of government and local infrastructure with individuals and small groups. In practice, candidates who have knowledge of Saguache County and the Crestone/Baca Grande community or an abiding commitment to this community will have much knowledge relevant to success. Visioning for the District, and the day-to-day work of District management both require sensitivity to human needs and practical realities. Likewise, technical skills and/or aptitude in utilities, water and wastewater, and/or engineering, while not required, will be beneficial. The District is a small organization in which each staff member is called to wear many hats. In this regard, the successful candidate will be expected to have a diverse skill set, a willingness to be hands-on when needed, and a willingness to learn new skills, perhaps those not previously imagined.

### **Qualifications of the Successful Candidate**

The successful District Manager candidate will have experience administering and supervising both the operations and the maintenance services of a similar organization through effective leadership and management skills. Preferred qualifications include the following:

- A minimum of ten years multi-disciplinary experience, and five years management-level experience with multi-disciplinary responsibilities, preferably executive, involving many or all of the following: operations and administrative management, budget preparation and management, multi-department hiring, HR, customer service management, and high levels of public accountability.

- A minimum of 3 years executive or second-level management experience, either as head of an organization or a department with second-level management responsibility. Desired organization types would include Special Districts, Public utilities, Municipal Districts, Water and Wastewater, or executive level leadership of similarly complex organizations in a public oriented sector.
- Additional work or personal experience, or Bachelor's level education with coursework that informs a capacity for written and oral communication, understanding complex technical systems, and understanding, engaging, and leading complex human systems.
- Training in leading groups, or collecting individuals together, for addressing and solving technical, business, and public relations problems.
- Excellent people/HR skills to facilitate the current organizational culture and to lead engagement with the public. A demonstrated ability to work with a Board.
- Strong team building, oral and written communications skills.
- Understanding of water and sanitation regulatory requirements or the ability to obtain the knowledge and to come quickly up to speed on these issues.
- Effective management-level understanding of billing systems, accounting, payroll, and other office administrative systems.
- Business acumen including knowledge and/or experience in procurement, team development, fleet management, project management, complex operations.

### **Compensation and Benefits**

The compensation and benefits plan are competitive and the anticipated starting salary for the successful candidate is budgeted from \$90,000–\$120,000, depending upon leadership qualities, experience, qualifications, and record of professional achievement. In addition, all full-time District employees are eligible for a full benefit package, including vacation, family leave, medical, dental and vision insurance, PERA retirement package.

### **Application Process**

On or before July 31, 2023, interested candidates should submit a cover letter explaining their interest in the position, their professional resume detailing all related education, experience and related accomplishments, any compensation requirements, and limitations of availability to interview during the month of August (both Zoom and on site). The District anticipates selecting and announcing a finalist or finalists in September and appointing a new District Manager by no later than its October Board meeting.

Baca Grande Water and Sanitation District is an equal opportunity employer.

No phone calls please.

Applications may be emailed to: [hr@bacawater.com](mailto:hr@bacawater.com)

Please place “Baca Grande Water and Sanitation District Manager” in the subject line of your email.

Or, you may mail a hard copy to the following address:

Human Resources

Baca Grande Water & Sanitation District

PO Box 520

Crestone, CO 81131