



# VISION STATEMENT

## Septic-to-Sewer Conversion Project

The Grand Lake and Three Lakes community should take considerable pride in its history: The community initiated a self-taxing authority to build a sewerage network to protect the Three Lakes beginning in the early 1970's.... three decades before communities in the Chesapeake or Florida were ever forced by regulatory authorities to remedy septic pollution. Today, our treatment plant is state of the art and poised for growth demands.

Grand County has seen significant growth in the last few years. Real estate sales and tourism are exploding. More homes are being utilized as short-term rentals with sleeping capacities that exceed typical home occupancy. Existing septic systems on these homes are being used beyond their intended capacity. The health and clarity of our waters has never been more important, and we, the Three Lakes Water & Sanitation District Board, continue to hold that as our primary responsibility.

However, historic policies (above) --- particularly those requiring that homeowners shoulder the entire financial burden for new sewer line extensions and septic retirement costs---places an extraordinary economic burden on ratepayers, and has arrested extension of the community's wastewater collection system and robust protection of the Three Lakes water quality. As the most successful septic retirement programs rely on government funding, and because the demand for sewer services here is primarily driven by the 4.5 million visitors to adjacent National Parks and National Forests annually, the district is attempting to find and secure various sources of federal funds to support line extensions and septic retirement.

The precise source and size of funding that we may be successful in securing is unknown at this time, and entirely dependent on the level of support the district receives from the Three Lakes community, Congress and the Administration. As such, the form and design of septic retirement and build-out financing, and the associated funding formulas are not yet known. The district encourages the Three Lakes community to provide input and counsel as to how such programs should be designed.

Our attempts to seek funding sources --- even if successful --- represent a long-term endeavor. Completing the buildout of the sewerage network throughout the district is estimated to require no less than \$17.5 Million. The community's support in this endeavor is greatly appreciated, and we are particularly thankful for support from the Town of Grand Lake, the Grand County Commissioners, Northern Water, The Grand Foundation, Three Lakes Watershed Association and the Upper Colorado River Watershed Group.

*~ Board of Directors, 5/9/22*