

**Second Regular Session
Seventy-fourth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO**

REVISED

*This Version Includes All Amendments Adopted
on Second Reading in the Second House*

LLS NO. 24-0423.01 Jennifer Berman x3286

HOUSE BILL 24-1006

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

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House Committees

Agriculture, Water & Natural Resources
Appropriations

Senate Committees

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Appropriations

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 **CONCERNING ASSISTANCE FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES TO APPLY FOR**
102 **WILDFIRE-RELATED GRANT MONEY, AND, IN CONNECTION**
103 **THEREWITH, MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.**

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://leg.colorado.gov/>.)

Wildfire Matters Review Committee. The bill directs the rural opportunity office (office) in the Colorado office of economic development to assist rural communities with identifying and applying for state or federal grants for wildfire mitigation, prevention, response, or risk management efforts (wildfire-related grants).

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
*Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing law.
Dashes through the words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law.*

SENATE
Amended 2nd Reading
May 7, 2024

HOUSE
3rd Reading Unamended
April 30, 2024

HOUSE
Amended 2nd Reading
April 29, 2024

On or before July 1, 2025, and on or before July 1 of every odd year thereafter, the office is required to prepare a report summarizing its work to assist rural communities with identifying and applying for wildfire-related grants. The report must include information about the rural communities that the office assists and the grants awarded to rural communities that the office assists. The office is required to submit the report to the wildfire matters review committee or, if the committee no longer exists, to the legislative committees with jurisdiction over natural resources matters.

1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, add 23-31-321 as
3 follows:

4 **23-31-321. Wildfire mitigation and preparedness - rural grant**
5 **navigator grant program - creation - administration - reporting -**

6 **definitions.** (1) AS USED IN THIS SECTION, UNLESS THE CONTEXT
7 OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

8 (a) "DEPARTMENT" MEANS THE DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL AFFAIRS
9 CREATED IN SECTION 24-1-125.

10 (b) "FOREST SERVICE" MEANS THE COLORADO STATE FOREST
11 SERVICE IDENTIFIED IN SECTION 23-31-302.

12 (c) "NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION" OR "NGO" HAS THE
13 MEANING SET FORTH IN SECTION 24-37.5-102 (20).

14 (d) "RURAL GRANT NAVIGATOR GRANT PROGRAM" OR
15 "COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM" MEANS THE COMPETITIVE GRANT
16 PROGRAM AUTHORIZED UNDER SUBSECTION (2)(a) OF THIS SECTION.

17 (2) (a) THE FOREST SERVICE SHALL ESTABLISH A RURAL GRANT
18 NAVIGATOR GRANT PROGRAM TO PROVIDE GRANT MONEY FOR
19 NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDING OUTREACH AND
20 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, INCLUDING GRANT WRITING ASSISTANCE, TO

1 RURAL COMMUNITIES SEEKING TO APPLY FOR FEDERAL OR STATE GRANTS
2 RELATED TO WILDFIRE MITIGATION AND PREPAREDNESS.

3 (b) ON OR AFTER MARCH 1, 2025, AN NGO ASSISTING ONE OR
4 MORE RURAL COMMUNITIES WITH OBTAINING FEDERAL OR STATE GRANTS
5 RELATED TO WILDFIRE MITIGATION OR PREPAREDNESS MAY APPLY TO THE
6 FOREST SERVICE FOR GRANT MONEY IN ACCORDANCE WITH APPLICATION
7 AND ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES THAT THE FOREST SERVICE ESTABLISHES
8 PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (3) OF THIS SECTION FOR THE COMPETITIVE
9 GRANT PROGRAM.

10 (3) (a) THE FOREST SERVICE SHALL CONSULT WITH NGOS THAT
11 CURRENTLY ASSIST OR ARE SEEKING TO ASSIST COLORADO COMMUNITIES
12 WITH WILDFIRE MITIGATION AND PREPAREDNESS TO DEVELOP CRITERIA
13 AND GUIDELINES FOR THE COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM.

14 (b) THE CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES DEVELOPED PURSUANT TO
15 SUBSECTION (3)(a) OF THIS SECTION MUST:

16 (I) BE COMPLETED AND POSTED ON THE WEBSITE OF THE FOREST
17 SERVICE ON OR BEFORE FEBRUARY 28, 2025; AND

18 (II) INCLUDE CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES FOR AT LEAST THE
19 FOLLOWING ASPECTS OF THE COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM:

20 (A) ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR NGO APPLICANTS ASSISTING
21 RURAL COMMUNITIES IN SEEKING FEDERAL OR STATE GRANT MONEY FOR
22 WILDFIRE MITIGATION AND PREPAREDNESS EFFORTS;

23 (B) APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS; AND

24 (C) PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SELECTED NGOS,
25 INCLUDING REQUIREMENTS FOR COORDINATION BETWEEN SELECTED
26 NGOS TO ENSURE NONDUPLICATION OF EFFORTS AND FOR PERIODIC
27 REPORTING.

1 (c) (I) AFTER THE FOREST SERVICE HAS CREATED THE COMPETITIVE
2 GRANT PROGRAM, THE FOREST SERVICE, TO THE BEST OF ITS ABILITY,
3 SHALL CONSULT ON EFFECTIVE USES OF THE GRANT MONEY AND
4 SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES WITH:

- 5 (A) THE DEPARTMENT;
- 6 (B) THE DIVISION OF FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL CREATED IN
7 SECTION 24-33.5-1201 (1)(a);
- 8 (C) THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE;
- 9 (D) A RURAL COUNTY ON THE WESTERN SLOPE;
- 10 (E) A RURAL COUNTY ON THE EASTERN PLAINS; AND
- 11 (F) A RURAL COUNTY IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE STATE.

12 (II) THE FOREST SERVICE, IN CONSULTATION WITH SELECTED
13 NGOs, SHALL DEVELOP METRICS TO HELP THE FOREST SERVICE ASSESS
14 THE SUCCESS OF THE COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM.

15 (4) (a) ON OR BEFORE MARCH 1, 2026, AND ON OR BEFORE MARCH
16 1 EACH YEAR THEREAFTER, THE FOREST SERVICE SHALL SUBMIT A
17 WRITTEN REPORT SUMMARIZING THE COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM TO
18 THE WILDFIRE MATTERS REVIEW COMMITTEE CREATED IN SECTION
19 2-3-1602 (1)(a) OR, IF THE COMMITTEE NO LONGER EXISTS, TO BOTH THE
20 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AGRICULTURE, WATER, AND NATURAL
21 RESOURCES COMMITTEE AND THE SENATE AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL
22 RESOURCES COMMITTEE, OR THEIR SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES. THE FOREST
23 SERVICE SHALL POST COPIES OF THE REPORTS ON ITS WEBSITE.

24 (b) NOTWITHSTANDING SECTION 24-1-136 (11)(a)(I), THE WRITTEN
25 REPORT SPECIFIED IN SUBSECTION (4)(a) OF THIS SECTION CONTINUES
26 INDEFINITELY.

27 **SECTION 2. Appropriation.** For the 2024-25 state fiscal year,

1 \$300,000 is appropriated to the department of higher education for use by
2 the Colorado commission on higher education and higher education
3 special purpose programs. This appropriation is from the general fund and
4 is based on an assumption that the department will require an additional
5 0.4 FTE. To implement this act, the department may use this
6 appropriation for the Colorado state forest service at Colorado state
7 university. Any money appropriated in this section not expended prior to
8 July 1, 2025, is further appropriated to the department of higher education
9 for the 2025-26, 2026-27, and 2027-28 state fiscal years for the same
10 purpose.

11 **SECTION 3. Act subject to petition - effective date.** This act
12 takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the
13 ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly; except
14 that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V
15 of the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this
16 act within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take
17 effect unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in
18 November 2024 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the
19 official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.