



Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program

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**Water Resources and Agriculture Review Commission
August 7, 2024**

Agenda

DNR Mission

Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action
Program

Watershed Focus

Wildfire Ready Watersheds
Partnership

Project Highlights

Department Mission & Role

The mission of the Department of Natural Resources is:

To develop, preserve, and enhance Colorado's natural resources for the benefit and enjoyment of people today and tomorrow.



Interagency Collaboration

- Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) staffs DNR's Division of Forestry. CSFS is the lead state agency providing **forest stewardship and fuels reduction assistance** to private landowners.
- SB21-258 MOU between DNR, CSFS and the Division of Fire Prevention and Control (DFPC); framework of the National Cohesive Wildfire Management Strategy and the Wildfire Mitigation Capacity Development Fund



Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program

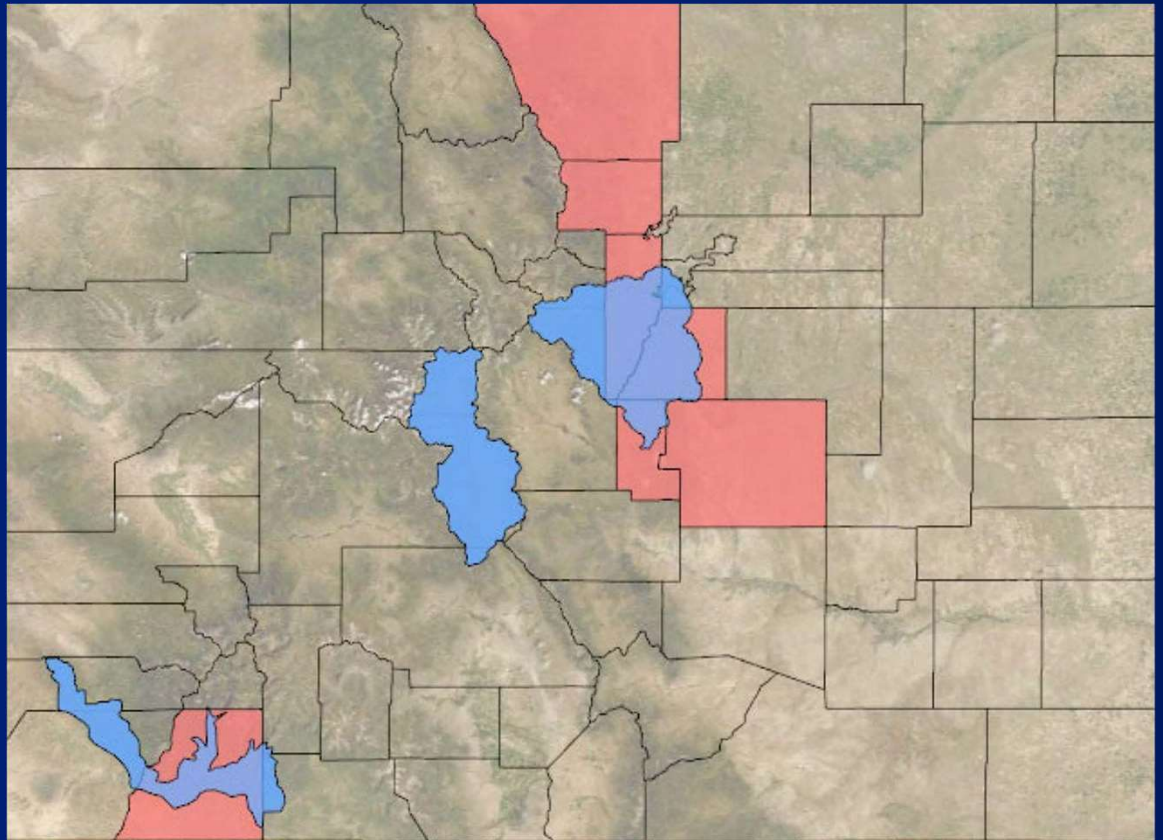
Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program (COSWAP) SB21-258

- Funding strategic on-the-ground work on fuels reduction projects
- Workforce development and training through youth conservation corps and the Department of Corrections SWIFT crews
- Support landscape-scale projects to protect **life, property, watersheds** and critical **infrastructure**



COSWAP Strategic Focus Areas

- Boulder County
- Douglas County
- El Paso County
- Jefferson County
- Larimer County
- La Plata County
- Teller County
- Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative Focal Areas
 - Southwest Colorado
 - Upper Arkansas
 - Upper South Platte



Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program

2024 Updates

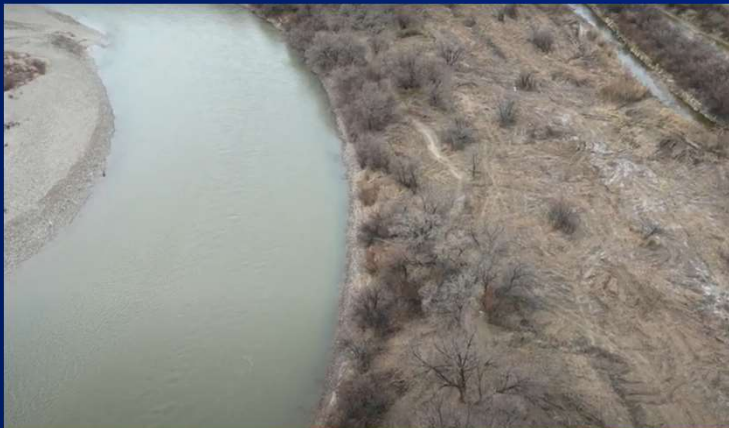
- Permanent program with \$6M annual budget: \$5M ongoing severance tax funding; \$1M ongoing General Fund.
- Colorado Forest Restoration Institute is monitoring the Landscape Resilience Investment programs for project effectiveness
- Working with DNR's Assistant Director for Tribal Affairs on opportunities with the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe and Southern Ute Indian Tribe to better support their tribal priorities



Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program

Watershed Focus

- Elevate workforce development projects in high priority subwatersheds per Colorado State Forest Service's Forest Action Plan Watershed Protection layer (5 points)
- Projects that directly protect critical water infrastructure receive 5 extra points
- Landscape ARPA projects align with anticipated Wildfire Ready Watershed Action Plans, and connect in some way with downstream water infrastructure.



Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program

Since 2022, the Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program has supported:

- 90 grants
- 16,000 contracted acres
- \$30.8 million investment



COSWAP Watershed Projects

Project Snapshot

Button Rock Watershed Protection

Grantee: City of Longmont

Location: Boulder County

Colorado Youth Corps Association: Larimer County Conservation Corps

- Reducing risk to critical water infrastructure including Ralph Price Reservoir, a virtual storage reservoir for Boulder County
- 18 weeks of crew time
- 35 acres



COSWAP Watershed Projects

Project Snapshot

City of Pueblo Wildfire Mitigation- Phase 2

Grantee: City of Pueblo

Location: El Paso County

Department of Corrections SWIFT

- Second phase of COSWAP work with the City of Pueblo
- Reducing wildfire risk within the city limits along riparian areas, drainages and neighborhoods
- 16 weeks SWIFT crew time
- 48 acres



COSWAP Watershed Projects

Project Snapshot

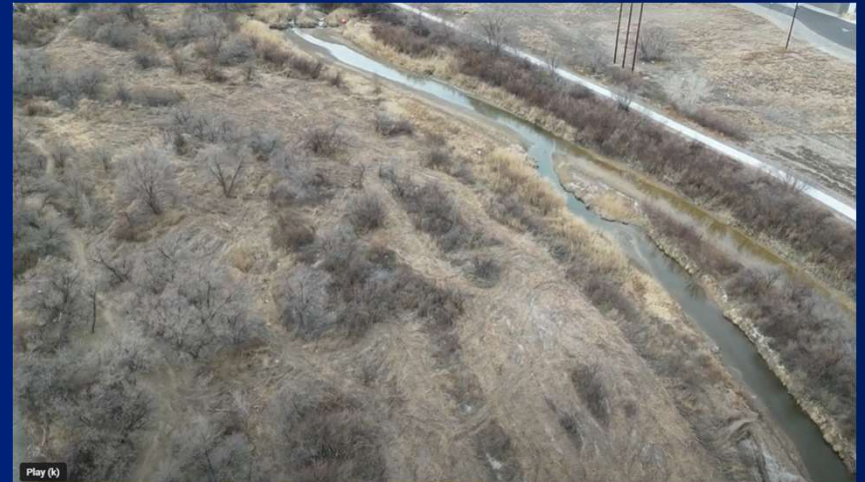
Protecting Critical Infrastructure in Riparian WUI- Grand Junction

Grantee: City of Grand Junction

Location: Mesa County

Cash grant for wildfire mitigation

- Mosaic fuel thinning & removal of ladder fuels along the Colorado River.
- Frequent fires in the area posed great risk to watersheds, businesses and infrastructure
- \$185,000
- 68 acres



COSWAP Watershed Projects

Project Snapshot

El Paso County Forest Health and Resilience Project

Grantee: Colorado State Forest Service

Location: El Paso County

- South Slope of Pikes Peak, Ruxton Creek drainage
- Highest risk rated drainage due to fuel loading and post fire debris modeling
- Historical and functioning hydro-electric power plants and other critical infrastructure
- \$500,000, treating 150 acres



COSWAP Watershed Projects

Project Snapshot

Upper South Platte Landscape Resilience 2

Grantee: Jefferson Conservation District
Location: Jefferson County

- Wildfire Ready Watershed Collaboration
- North Fork of the South Platte River
- Reduce future wildfire severity that risk to water quality and water infrastructure is lessened
- Private and State land
- \$980,000, treating 350 acres

