



Fiscal Note

Legislative Council Staff

Nonpartisan Services for Colorado's Legislature

HB 25-1078: FORESTRY & FIREFIGHTER WORKFORCE & EDUCATION

Prime Sponsors:

Rep. Boesenecker; Velasco

Sen. Marchman; Cutter

Fiscal Analyst:

Anna Gerstle, 303-866-4375

anna.gerstle@coleg.gov

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Fiscal note status: The fiscal note reflects the introduced bill, which was recommended by the Wildfire Matters Review Committee.

Summary Information

Overview. The bill authorizes Colorado State University to implement various initiatives to engage youth in opportunities related to forestry and wildfire. It also requires the Department of Public Safety to award grants for firefighter certifications, provide train-the-trainer opportunities, and conduct an outreach campaign related to firefighting opportunities.

Types of impacts. The bill is projected to affect the following areas through FY 2027-28 for the Colorado State University and on an ongoing basis for the Department of Public Safety:

- State Revenue
- State Expenditures
- Local Government
- School Districts

Appropriations. For FY 2025-26, the bill requires an appropriation of up to \$1.0 million to multiple state agencies.

Table 1
State Fiscal Impacts

Type of Impact ¹	Budget Year FY 2025-26	Out Year FY 2026-27	Out Year FY 2027-28
State Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0
State Expenditures	up to \$1,041,364	up to \$1,175,436	up to \$1,091,966
Transferred Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0
Change in TABOR Refunds	\$0	\$0	\$0
Change in State FTE	1.3 FTE	1.4 FTE	1.4 FTE

¹ Fund sources for these impacts are shown in the table below.

Table 1A
State Expenditures

Fund Source	Budget Year FY 2025-26	Out Year FY 2026-27	Out Year FY 2027-28
General Fund	\$1,005,928	\$1,137,201	\$1,053,731
Cash Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0
Centrally Appropriated	\$35,436	\$38,235	\$38,235
Total Expenditures	up to \$1,041,364	up to \$1,175,436	up to \$1,091,966
Total FTE	1.3 FTE	1.4 FTE	1.4 FTE

Summary of Legislation

The bill creates an outreach program at Colorado State University and increases firefighter training from the Department of Public Safety (CDPS), as described below.

Outreach Program

For FY 2025-26 through FY 2027-28, the bill specifies that Colorado Cooperative Extension Service at Colorado State University (CSU) may create outreach programs and initiatives to engage youth and provide opportunities in forestry, wildland fire, and natural resources. Programs may include 4-H programs, internships and industry certifications, and career, workforce, and educational options.

CSU must submit a report by October 1, 2026, and the two years thereafter, that evaluates each program or initiative and includes the amount of funding used. CSU may accept and expend gifts, grants and donations for these initiatives, and the indirect administrative costs for off-campus programs may not exceed 10 percent of program costs.

Firefighter Training

Under current law, the Division of Fire Prevention and Control (DFPC) in the CDPS awards grants to fire departments to replace damaged equipment or provide training to increase safety. The bill:

- allows grants to be awarded for firefighter certification courses and materials;
- requires that DPFC create a train-the-trainer program to ensure that all instructors providing the grant-funded certification classes use a standard curriculum that can be shared across the fire service; and
- requires that DPFC develop an outreach campaign to inspire a new generation of firefighters, including maintaining an online portal for interested individuals and developing a variety of outreach and marketing content.

Assumptions

Colorado State University

The bill authorizes Colorado Cooperative Extension Service at CSU to implement a variety of outreach initiatives related to forestry, wildland fire, and natural resources, but does not specify which initiatives, if any, are required. As a result, the fiscal note reflects a maximum cost to implement all initiatives, including 4-H and STEM outreach activities, internships, regional outreach, and course work; however, actual funding is at the discretion of the General Assembly.

Division of Fire Prevention and Control

The DFPC currently awards grants to fire departments to replace damaged equipment or provide training to increase safety. Since the program's inception, DFPC has received \$57 million in requests, for a total of \$18 million in awards. Due to the demand for existing funds, the fiscal note assumes additional funding is needed to award grants for firefighter certification.

State Revenue

The bill potentially increases state revenue to CSU from gifts, grants, or donations; however, no sources have been identified at this time. Gifts, grants, and donations are exempt from TABOR revenue limits.

State Expenditures

The bill increases state expenditures by \$1.0 million in FY 2025-26, \$1.2 million in FY 2026-27, and \$1.1 million in FY 2027-28 in the CDPS and CSU, paid from the General Fund. Costs are shown in Tables 2 through 2B and described in the sections below. Costs in CSU are for three years, while CDPS costs continue on an ongoing basis.

Table 2
State Expenditures
All Departments

Department	Budget Year FY 2025-26	Out Year FY 2026-27	Out Year FY 2027-28
Department of Public Safety	\$453,814	\$441,906	\$441,906
Colorado State University	up to \$587,550	up to \$733,530	up to \$650,060
Total Costs	\$1,041,364	\$1,175,436	\$1,091,966

Department of Public Safety

The bill increases expenditure in CDPS by about \$450,000 in FY 2025-26 and about \$440,000 per year beginning in FY 2026-27 to award grants for firefighter certification, establish a train-the-trainer model, and conduct an outreach campaign.

Staff

Beginning in FY 2025-26, the CDPS requires 1.4 FTE to implement the bill. Staff includes 0.2 FTE to manage the marketing and outreach campaign, 1.0 FTE to manage the grant program and train-the-trainer program, and 0.2 FTE to manage financial tasks related to the grant program. Staff costs are prorated for an August start date in FY 2025-26, and include standard operating and capital outlay costs.

Travel, Vehicle, and Equipment Costs

The CDPS will lease one vehicle with a fire package for training around the state and will incur travel costs for staff. Costs include an annual lease of about \$14,000, plus mileage costs. Additionally, the CDPS requires one-time purchase of firefighting equipment for FTE managing the training program, estimated at \$7,580, and one-time purchase of equipment to develop the media and outreach campaign, estimated at \$10,000.

Grants

As discussed above in the Assumptions section, the bill assumes that additional grant funding is required to award certification and training grants due to the demand for the existing grant program, estimated at \$250,000 per year. Funding is at the discretion of the General Assembly.

**Table 2A
State Expenditures
Department of Public Safety**

Cost Component	Budget Year FY 2025-26	Out Year FY 2026-27	Out Year FY 2027-28
Personal Services	\$112,184	\$121,599	\$121,599
Operating Expenses	\$1,664	\$1,792	\$1,792
Capital Outlay Costs	\$6,670	\$0	\$0
Training Grants (Discretionary)	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
Travel	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Vehicle Lease & Mileage	\$20,280	\$20,280	\$20,280
One-Time Equipment	\$17,580	\$0	\$0
Centrally Appropriated Costs	\$35,436	\$38,235	\$38,235
Total Costs	\$453,814	\$441,906	\$441,906
Total FTE	1.3 FTE	1.4 FTE	1.4 FTE

Colorado State University

The bill increases costs for CSU for three years, beginning in FY 2025-26. As discussed above, the fiscal note assumes full implementation of the initiatives identified in the bill resulting in “up to” costs; however, actual funding is at the discretion of the General Assembly.

Staff

CSU will incur staff costs of approximately \$305,000 in FY 2025-26, \$428,827 in FY 2026-27, and \$350,356 in FY 2027-28 to implement a variety of workforce and outreach initiatives. Staffing level is approximately 3.4 FTE, including a program manager, data evaluator, and regional coordinators to conduct outreach activities.

Travel

CSU will incur travel costs of about \$20,000 per year for the regional coordinators to visit high schools and conduct outreach around the state, as well as to cover travel costs for participants in the internship program.

Certification, Internships, and Tuition

Outreach initiatives include covering the cost of certification courses and select college credit for participating students, estimated at \$52,750 per year for three years, and paid internships for high school and extension students, estimated at about \$145,000 per year for three years.

Operating and Materials

CSU will incur about \$16,000 per year in operating and material costs, including curriculum development, advertising, translation, printing, and field equipment.

Indirect Costs

Indirect costs are estimated at 10 percent of expenditures, as specified by the bill.

Table 2B
Institution of Higher Education Expenditures
Colorado State University

Cost Component	Budget Year FY 2025-26	Out Year FY 2026-27	Out Year FY 2027-28
Personal Services (approx. 3.4 FTE)	\$305,397	\$428,827	\$350,356
Travel	\$17,550	\$20,100	\$20,100
Certification, Internships, Tuition Costs	\$188,563	\$208,563	\$208,563
Operating and Materials	\$16,308	\$16,308	\$11,308
Indirect Costs	\$59,732	\$59,732	\$59,732
Total Costs	up to \$587,550	up to \$733,530	up to \$650,060

Other State Agencies

Implementation of the educational and outreach program may increase workload for other institutions of higher education, including the State Forest Service at CSU. No change in appropriations is required.

Centrally Appropriated Costs

Pursuant to a Joint Budget Committee policy, certain costs associated with this bill are addressed through the annual budget process and centrally appropriated in the Long Bill or supplemental appropriations bills, rather than in this bill. These costs, which include employee insurance and supplemental employee retirement payments, are shown in the expenditure tables above.

Local Government

Implementation of the educational and outreach program may increase workload for school districts, local fire departments, or conservation districts. Participation is at the discretion of each local government.

Effective Date

The bill takes effect upon signature of the Governor, or upon becoming law without his signature.

State Appropriations

Based on the assumptions for full funding, for FY 2025-26, the bill requires the following General Fund appropriations:

- \$418,378 to the Department of Public Safety, and 1.3 FTE; and
- \$587,550 to the Department of Higher Education, for allocation to the governing board of Colorado State University.

State and Local Government Contacts

Forest Service

Public Safety

Higher Education

The revenue and expenditure impacts in this fiscal note represent changes from current law under the bill for each fiscal year. For additional information about fiscal notes, please visit the General Assembly website.