

Department of Natural Resources

SMART Act Presentation



Joint Agriculture Committee
January 24, 2024



COLORADO
Department of
Natural Resources



Agenda

1. Department Overview
2. Wildly Important Goals
3. Stimulus Update
4. DNR Budget Request Overview
5. Legislative Agenda
6. Regulatory Agenda
7. Program Updates



DNR Mission & Vision

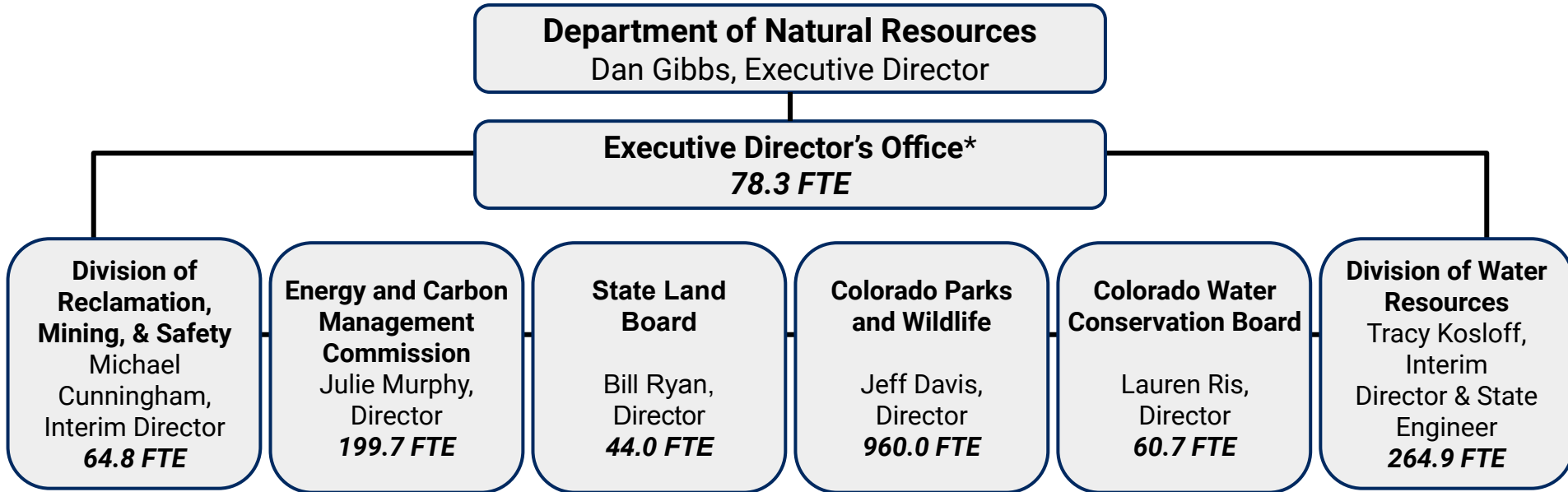
The mission of the Department of Natural Resources is:

To manage and conserve Colorado's natural resources for the benefit and enjoyment of people today and tomorrow.

DNR's vision:

Colorado will be a national leader in promoting the responsible use and conservation of natural resources for this and future generations.

DNR Organizational Chart



**Includes CO Avalanche Information Center, COSWAP, Colorado River Program, and Produced Water Consortium*

Other Staffing Updates



Hope Dalton
Produced Water
Consortium Director



Becky Mitchell
Upper Colorado
River Commissioner



Aaron Ray
Assistant Director for
Energy Innovation



Tim Brass
Assistant Director for
Parks, Wildlife and Lands



Stacy Coleman
Tribal Liaison



Michael Sakas
Colorado River Communications
Specialist

Division of Reclamation, Mining & Safety

The Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety's mission is to return Colorado's mined lands to a beneficial use. The Mined Land Reclamation Board is the Regulatory Authority under statute.

The Active Mines Program consists of the Coal Program and Minerals Program that have oversight of all active mining in the state since 1976. Staff conducts inspections on a regular basis, initiates enforcement, and reviews all permitting actions. Minimizing environmental impacts is a key component of permitting and this includes water quality, heavy metal monitoring, and revegetation. Staff ensures there are adequate funds for reclamation of disturbed lands if an operator fails to reclaim.

The Inactive Mines Program has oversight of pre-1977 mining disturbances and any revoked permits from the Active Mines Program. The Program completes safety closures on hazardous mine features, monitors and mitigates historic coal mine fires, and conducts reclamation projects on legacy mine sites.



*Michael Cunningham,
Interim Director*



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Division of Reclamation, Mining & Safety

Active Mines: Mineral Program - 2023

- 1368 permitted mine sites
(1142 Construction Materials, 110 Hard Rock, 116 Prospecting)
- 194,230 permitted acres, 2,668 acres reclaimed and released
- Holds \$535.3 million in financial warranties for reclamation

Active Mines: Coal Program - 2023

- 6 actively producing sites, 20 sites in reclamation
- 162,693 permitted acres, 37 reclaimed and released
- Holds \$247 million in financial warranties for reclamation

Inactive Active Mines - 2023

- Safeguarded 353 hazardous mine features
- Injected \$7.3M into local economies for abandoned mine reclamation
- Recent infrastructure funding is focused on addressing Colorado's highest priority coal mine fire sites



Colorado Parks and Wildlife

CPW's mission is to perpetuate the wildlife resources of the state, to provide a quality state parks system, and to provide enjoyable and sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities that educate and inspire current and future generations to serve as active stewards of Colorado's natural resources.

2023 Accomplishments

- Introduced the \$29 Keep Colorado Wild Pass
- Completed, with partners, the acquisition of Mt Tom
- Celebrated 10 years of efforts to reintroduce Black Footed Ferrets
- Parks and Wildlife Commission approves final Wolf Reintroduction Plan
- Completed year two of the Aquatic Nuisance Species roadside inspection pilot program
- Trail to the summit opens at Fishers Peak
- First successful reintroduction of Gray wolves to implement Proposition 114
- Human and Bear conflict grant program grants \$1 million to reduce conflict
- Motorized Trails grants \$6.24 million to expand and maintain recreation opportunities
- Partnered with Colorado Youth Core to perform \$519,000 of OHV trail work
- Colorado Outdoor Regional Partnerships grows to \$3 million
- Outdoor Equity Grant Program awards \$2.2 million for youth outdoor programming



*Jeff Davis,
Director*



*Heather Disney Dugan,
Deputy Director*

Colorado Water Conservation Board

The Colorado Water Conservation Board's mission is to conserve, develop, protect, and manage Colorado's water for present and future generations.



Lauren Ris, Director

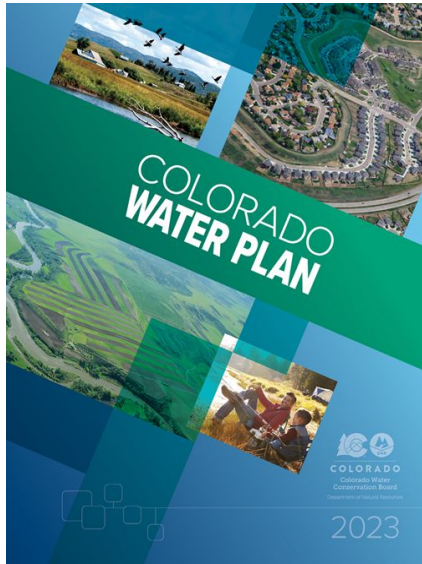


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Colorado Water Conservation Board

2023 Water Plan



Turf Program



Colorado River



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Division of Water Resources (State Engineer's Office)

The Division of Water Resources' mission is to administer the waters of the State to maximize lawful beneficial use, ensure that dams and water wells are properly constructed and safe, and provide information about water resources to the public.

SEO Leadership



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Division of Water Resources (State Engineer's Office)

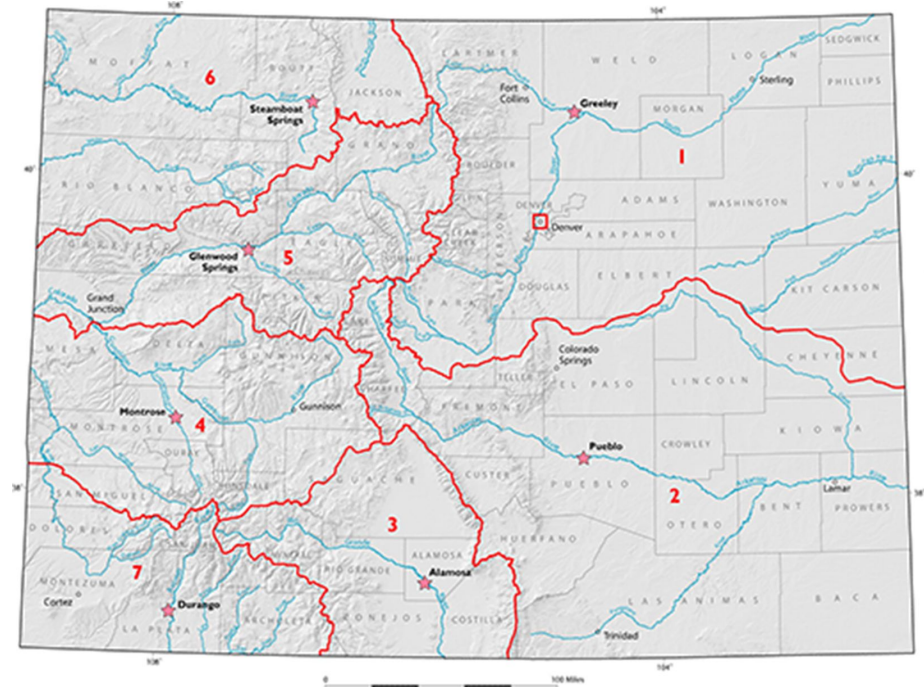
DWR is responsible for:

Water Administration - Ensuring maximum beneficial use of Colorado's water

- Over 140 years - directing water use
- Large portion of staff is on the ground
- Full compliance with interstate compacts

Safe Dams and Well Construction

Water Resource Information



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State Board of Land Commissioners

An innovative land trust funding Colorado schools since 1876

Mission: manage an endowment of assets held in perpetual, intergenerational public trusts for the financial support of Colorado's public schools and other public institutions to generate reasonable and consistent income over time by protecting and enhancing the long-term productivity and sound stewardship of working trust lands.

- Created by Constitution Article IX
- 2.8m acres of land and 4m acres of subsurface minerals
- **Working lands** leased for agriculture, oil & gas, recreation, renewable energy, commercial buildings, ecosystem services
- No General Fund support; 44 FTE



Bill Ryan, Director



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State Board of Land Commissioners

- FY 22-23 School Trust Revenues & Permanent Fund Interest: **\$301m**
- CDE BEST Distribution: \$153m (\$1.1billion since 2008)



- FY 23-24 Revenues & Interest Forecast **\$286m**
- Renewable energy from Trust lands can power 275,000 homes
- 1m acres in CPW Hunting & Fishing Access Program



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Energy & Carbon Management Commission

As a result of **SB 23-016 & SB 23-285**, the Division became the Colorado Energy & Carbon Management Commission (ECMC) with increased regulatory oversight on July 1, 2023.

ECMC Mission: To regulate the development and production of oil & gas, deep geothermal resources, the capture and sequestration of carbon, and the underground storage of natural gas in a manner that protects public health, safety, welfare, wildlife resources and the environment.

5 Full-time Commissioners

199 FTE (includes the 43 new FTE allotted from FY23)



Julie Murphy, Director



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FY23-24 Wildly Important Goals

1. Sustainable Funding for Parks & Wildlife
2. Balance Outdoor Recreation and Conservation
3. Water Plan Implementation



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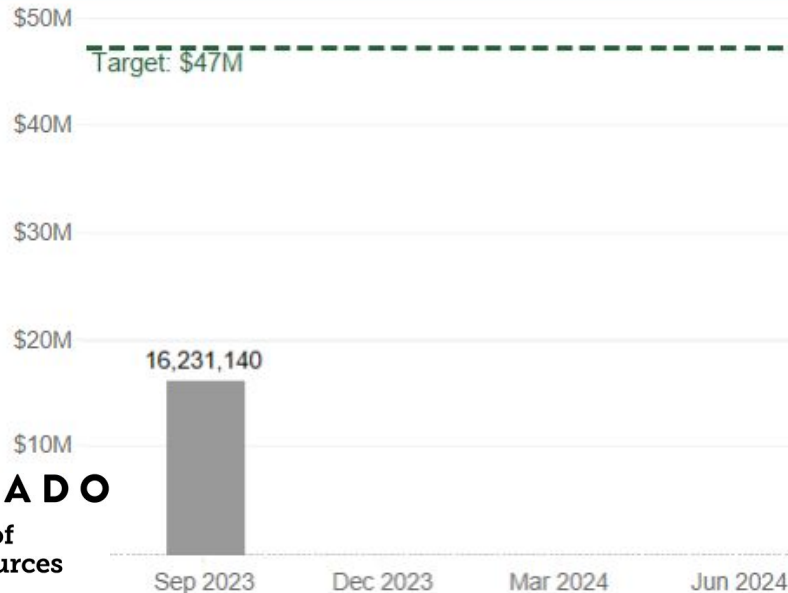


WIG - Sustainable Funding for CPW

- Increase Park Pass Revenue
- Promote the Keep Colorado Wild Pass
- Increase Donations and Fundraising Campaign Proceeds

Keep Colorado Wild

Develop new, diverse funding sources for Colorado Parks and Wildlife by increasing from \$28,160,000 to \$47,200,000 in parks pass entry fee and private donations revenues by June 30, 2024.



Successful completion of this goal will provide diverse, stable, long-term funding that is equitable and supported by a broad set of stakeholders to adequately support parks, wildlife conservation and recreation in Colorado for years to come.



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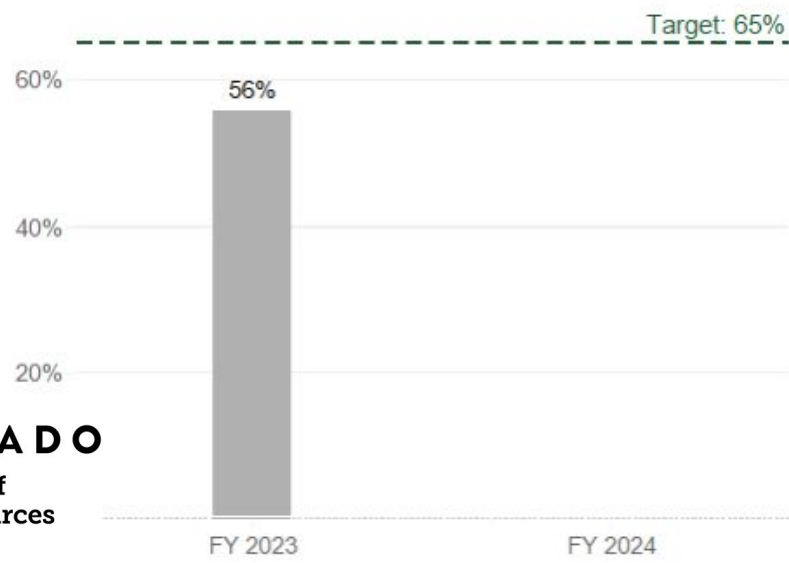


WIG - Balance Outdoor Recreation and Conservation

- Hold the 3rd Annual Regional Partnerships Summit
- Complete an Organizational Assessment of the Colorado Outdoor Partnership (CO-OP)
- Work with GOCO on Development of a Statewide Conservation, Outdoor Recreation and Climate Resiliency Plan
- Increase Grant Funding for Regional Partnerships
- Increase Maintenance Hours Performed by Trail Crews

Balance Conservation and Outdoor Recreation

Increase the percentage of land mass of Colorado participating in CPW's Regional Partnerships Initiative from 56% to 65% by June 30, 2024.



Successful completion of this goal will prioritize the conservation of the state's wildlife, landscapes and agricultural lands while enhancing public access or management in areas most suitable for meeting recreation.



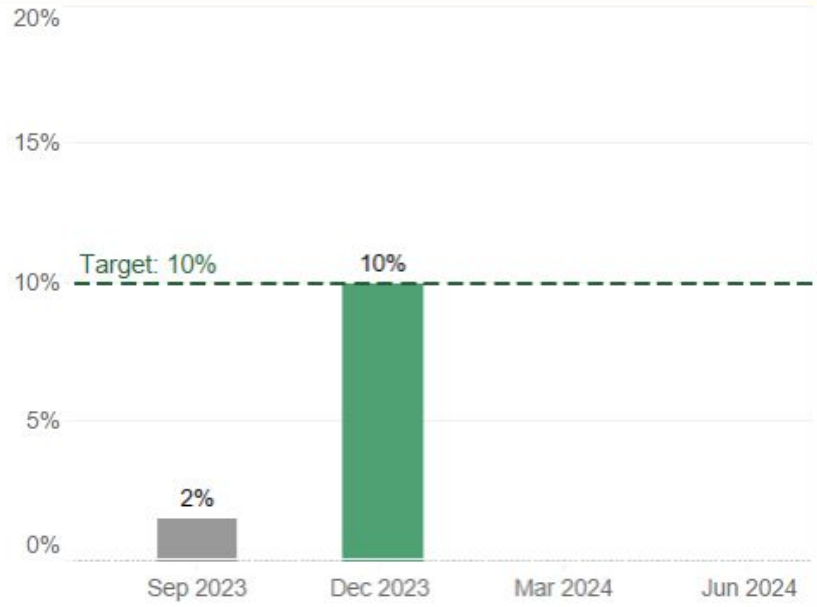
WIG - Water Plan Implementation

- Produce Final Recommendations to Support Transformative Landscape Change
- Support Wildfire Ready Watershed Grants
- Develop the CWCB Operational Plan
- Draft a Report on Economic Opportunities of Avoided Buy and Dry
- Develop a Draft Basin Roundtable Handbook

Water Plan Implementation

[Click here to see how we'll achieve this goal](#)

The Colorado Water Conservation Board will Implement 10% of the Colorado Water Plan by advancing Agency Actions by June 30, 2024.



Successful completion of this goal will ensure the Water Plan's 10 year strategy to create vibrant communities, robust agriculture, thriving watersheds, and resilient planning will be achieved and help Colorado meet its water challenges through collaborative action around water development and water conservation.



More information

To view monthly updates on Wildly Important Goals and corresponding lead measures, please visit the [Governor's Dashboard](#).

For more information on additional Department of Natural Resources goals, view our FY 2023-24 Performance Plan at:

<https://operations.colorado.gov/performance-management/department-performance-plans/natural-resources>

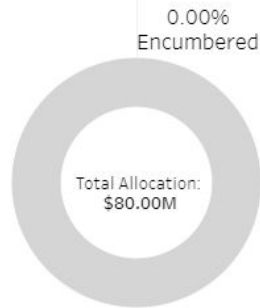
Stimulus Funds

The Department has been appropriated stimulus funds in the following categories:

- **Wildfire Mitigation:** \$19.5M total for the Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program (COSWAP). An additional \$16.5M one-time funds for wildfire mitigation at the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS).
- **Water:** \$85M total for groundwater sustainability efforts, state water plan projects, and technical assistance for federal grants.
- **Watershed Restoration:** \$44M total for post-fire watershed restoration efforts and CWCB's new Wildfire Ready Watersheds initiative.
- **Parks, Wildlife, and Recreation:** \$42.8M total for staff, operating, and capital projects at state parks, implementation of the State Wildlife Action Plan, and backcountry avalanche safety.

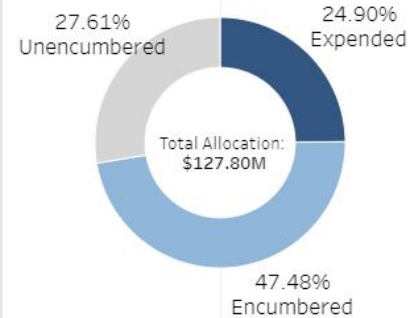
Stimulus Funds Status

ARPA State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF)



ARPA Direct to Agency Awards (DAA)

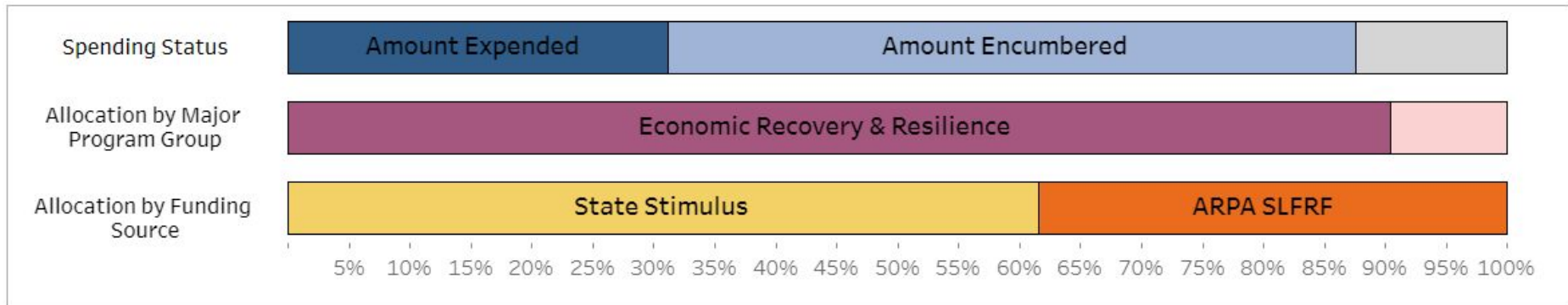
State Stimulus



<https://coforward.colorado.gov/data>



Stimulus Funds Status



<https://coforward.colorado.gov/data>



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DNR FY 2024-25 Budget Request

FY 2024-25 Budget Snapshot

Total Funds: \$443.0 M
General Fund: \$45.6 M
FTE: 1,730.3



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FY 2024-25 Budget Request Detail

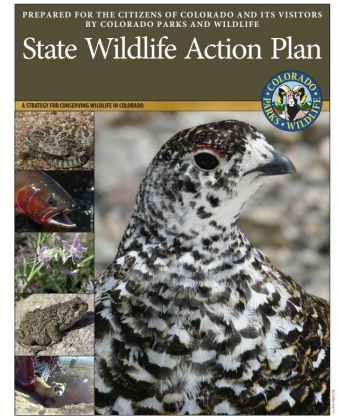


Biodiversity Package

- **Establish State Land Board Biodiversity Program (R-01)**
\$480,000 cash funds, 3.7 FTE
- **Colorado Parks and Wildlife Habitat Staffing (R-02)**
\$1.1 million cash funds, 8.3 FTE
- **Legislative Proposals**
 - Species Conservation Trust Fund
 - Wolverine Reintroduction
 - Invertebrates and Rare Plants



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FY 2024-25 Budget Request Detail

Water

- **River Operations Coordinators (R-05)**
\$394,000 General Fund, 2.8 FTE
- **Create CWCB Grants Section (R-06)**
\$155,000 cash funds, 0.9 FTE
- **Legislative Proposals: CWCB Projects Bill**



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FY 2024-25 Budget Request Detail

Colorado Parks & Wildlife Capacity Building

- Counter Poaching and Trafficking K9 Program (BA-01)
- Park Manager Equitable Career Progression (R-04)
- Wildlife Dam Safety Staffing (R-08)
- Wildlife Management Staffing (R-09)
- Aquatics Staffing and Hatchery Operations (R-10)
- Staff for Increased Demand at State Parks (R-11)
- Parks and Wildlife Info and Education (R-12)
- Parks and Wildlife Administrative Support (R-14)



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Legislative Agenda

The Department respectfully requests the General Assembly consider legislation on the following:

- Colorado Parks and Wildlife Wolverine Restoration
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife Invertebrate and Native Rare Plant Authority
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife Technical Clean-Up
- Energy and Carbon Management Clean-Up
- Annual Water Project Funding
- Annual Species Conservation Trust Fund Project Funding
- Division of Water Resources Water Well Permit Expirations



Globally imperiled cushion bladderpod (*Physaria congesta*) at Dan Noble State Wildlife Area



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Regulatory Agenda

Some Upcoming Rulemakings and Regulations Hearings:

ECMC - Geothermal, cumulative impacts, carbon capture & sequestration, NOx emission reductions, produced water, and underground natural gas storage

CPW - Big game season structure update and annual hunting and fishing season, bag limit and method of take

DWR - Water well construction, geothermal well permitting & development

More information available in the 2024 DNR Regulatory Agenda Report

Outdoor Equity Grant Program - An Update

Since its inception the Outdoor Equity Grant Program:

- Over 37,000 participants have been reached
- \$5 million has been awarded to 92 organizations to increase access to the outdoors

In calendar year 2023, demographics of participants reached were:

- 83% youth under 25, 17% adults
- 29% of participants were disabled
- Ethnic makeup of participants: 25% Hispanic or Latino, 17% White (not Hispanic/Latino), 7% Black or African American, 2% American Indian and Alaska Native, 6% Multiracial, 1% Asian American or Pacific Islander, 42% Unknown



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Keep Colorado Wild - An Update

Since launching the Keep Colorado Pass in January 2023, we have:

- Sold 1,490,954 passes
- Maintained a 28.6% opt-in rate
- Generated \$41,088,650 in revenue
 - The first \$32.5 million will go toward state park maintenance and development
 - The next \$2.5 million will go towards search and rescue and \$1 million to the Colorado Avalanche Information Center
 - Additional revenue will go to wildlife projects and outdoor educational programs

Colorado Native Pollinating Insects Health Study

Directed by Senate Bill 22-199, the Colorado Department of Natural Resources commissioned a study on native pollinating insects.

Outlines how Colorado is home to a rich community of native insects whose pollinating services are at the heart of healthy environments and economies, but concludes that overall, the status of Colorado's native pollinating insects is tenuous

The study, completed January 1, 2024 establishes:

- Baseline information including a synthesis of the research providing evidence for the importance of native pollinating insects to agricultural and natural resources within the state, including key factors impacting their diversity and health
- Conservation practices currently in place
- Future priorities for enhancing pollinating insect health

A copy of the study can be found on DNR's website.

Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program - An Update

COSWAP is a wildfire mitigation and forest health grant program designed to support strategic projects throughout Colorado that reduce wildfire risk and improve watershed health. COSWAP also supports workforce development through partnerships with the Colorado Youth Corps Association and the Department of Corrections SWIFT crews.

- To date, 54 projects totalling ~\$16M have been awarded using State stimulus funding
 - Received add'l \$16M between FY23/FY24 from Sevs. Tax Trust Fund and SB23-005
 - Beginning FY25, COSWAP will operate on a \$6M annual budget

Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program - An Update

Recent COSWAP News:

- COSWAP received 32 applications totalling \$4.7M during the second Workforce Development Grant release in 2023; currently awarding new projects to be announced 2/2024
- Special release ARPA funding is supporting two landscape scale projects in Jefferson and Routt Counties, totalling \$1,960,000
- Colorado Forest Restoration Institute (CFRI) performing a 4 year effectiveness monitoring study
- Organizational Analysis of state supported wildfire mitigation efforts in Colorado is complete

Colorado Produced Water Consortium - An Update

Primary Goal: To reduce the use of freshwater and increase the recycling of produced water in oil and gas operations

Established in July 2023, the Colorado Produced Water Consortium has:

- Appointed 31-member Consortium
- Created Strategic Plan and Priorities
 - Five strategic priorities: implementing legislative requirements, education, communities & environment, research, and identifying regulatory and policy recommendations
- Hired Director, in process of hiring Assistant Director for Research
- Begun development of required deliverables, including:
 - Guidance documents and case studies to promote best practices for infield reuse and recycling
 - Recommendations for better coordination between state and federal agencies related to produced water
 - Recommendations for legislation or agency rules needed to remove barriers to the safe recycling and reuse of produced water
- Served as an informational resource to ECMC
- Coordinated with ECMC on data needs



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Colorado Wolf Restoration Update

- Implementation of CRS 33-2-105.8, a result of the passage of Proposition 114
 - Mandated to establish a self-sustaining population of wolves
 - Provide compensation for confirmed wolf depredation
- Utilized important perspectives of the Stakeholder Advisory Group and Technical Working Group to develop the Wolf Restoration and Management Plan over a 2 year process
- Plan was unanimously supported by Parks and Wildlife Commission in May 2023
- 10 wolves were reintroduced to west slope of Colorado in December 2023
- There has been no livestock depredation from any of the reintroduced wolves
- There will be additional reintroductions in the coming years, all releases will be west of the continental divide



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