



CO L O R A D O

**Department of
Natural Resources**

FY 2023-24 Performance Plan

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Executive Director

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Department of Natural Resources Vision and Mission Statements

Vision

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

Mission

The Colorado Department of Natural Resources' mission is to develop, preserve, and enhance the state's natural resources for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future citizens and visitors.

- **Water** - Provide for the long-term municipal, industrial, and agricultural water needs for the state in a way that recognizes and provides for the instream flow needs of fish, wildlife, and recreation.
- **State Parks** - Maintain accessible, affordable, and diverse outdoor recreation opportunities and promote natural resource education.
- **Minerals & Energy** - Responsibly regulate the sustainable development of Colorado's energy and mineral resources in a manner that protects public safety, the environment, wildlife, and maintains Colorado's quality of life.
- **Wildlife** - Manage and conserve healthy and sustainable wildlife populations for the benefit of current and future Coloradans.
- **State Trust Lands** - Manage state lands held in perpetual, inter-generational trusts for the benefit and support of public schools and other public institutions.

Department Description and Organizational Chart

The Colorado Department of Natural Resources (DNR or the Department) is responsible for the management of the water, land, wildlife, minerals/energy resources, and outdoor recreation of the state. In addition to the Executive Director’s Office, DNR has six divisions:

- Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW),
- Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB),
- Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety (DRMS),
- Division of Water Resources (DWR),
- Colorado Energy & Carbon Management Commission (ECMC), and
- State Board of Land Commissioners (SLB).

The Colorado Avalanche Information Center and the Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program are administered as special programs within the Executive Director’s Office. DNR also has a Division of Forestry, administered and staffed in partnership with the Colorado State Forest Service within Colorado State University. Collectively, these divisions carry out the Department’s responsibilities for natural resource management, which includes providing access to and protecting or preserving Colorado’s natural resources.



Performance Environment

This section highlights some important outside factors that shape DNR's performance.

COVID-19

The public health, economic, and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing recovery continued to affect the performance environment for state agencies in notable ways. From a financial standpoint, Colorado has had to contend with a profound revenue shortfall due to the COVID-driven economic recession, followed by an unprecedented infusion of federal aid paired with a strong economic recovery, which has supported extensive investments in stimulus initiatives. A substantial amount of state and federal stimulus funding has been directed toward critical natural resources needs, including wildfire mitigation and recovery, watershed restoration, water projects, infrastructure and capacity development at state parks, and public safety support for outdoor recreation.

DNR's response to COVID-19 resulted in lasting operational changes, shifting office personnel to remote work and hybrid schedules, reducing the Department's physical footprint. The majority of DNR's workforce continues to be in person serving the public, at places like fish hatcheries, state parks, customer-facing offices, and in the field conducting inspections. The Department has implemented a flexible work arrangements framework and space planning efforts to think creatively about its "new normal" while continuing to provide excellent customer service. DNR continues to evaluate what future operations may look like, and how to best achieve Division and Department goals with balancing employee's needs and the opportunity to address commuting, parking, space allocation and employer of choice in the post-COVID performance environment.

Population Growth

Colorado has experienced significant growth and that growth continues although at a slower rate. According to the State Demographer's Office (SDO) - the population of Colorado was 5, 814,707 as of July 2021. Adding just 30,000 from the previous year means a 0.5% growth rate - the slowest since 1989. 2019 data showed an expected population growth ranging from between 7.7 million to 9.3 million. The most current SDO projections for growth expect the population to be 7.5 million by 2050. In either case, the population is growing and a growing population presents both opportunities and challenges for DNR, especially in terms of increasing demand for: (1) water, (2) residential and commercial development, and (3) outdoor recreation.

1. The 2019 Technical Update to the Colorado Water Plan analyzed five future scenarios from the 2015 Water Plan using improved methods from 2010. This update quantified statewide supply gap estimates for the year 2050, ranging from 250,000 to 750,000 AFY (acre-feet per year) for municipal and industrial needs and 23,000 to 1,053,000 AFY for agricultural needs compared to today's baseline. The 2023 Colorado Water Plan was adopted by the Colorado Water Conservation Board in January, 2023. The water plan focuses on ways the state and partners can work to address this gap responsibly and build greater resilience to Colorado's existing and future water challenges.
2. Population growth increases contact between citizens and natural resources as urban development expands into new areas giving rise to human/wildlife conflicts, and development within critical

seasonal habitat and wildlife corridors. DNR seeks to navigate these interactions as they arise in a manner that minimizes the short and long term impact on natural resources. In particular, CPW is working to balance conservation and recreation by investing in the Colorado Outdoor Regional Partnership Program and by developing a statewide Conservation, Recreation and Climate Resilience Plan in partnership with stakeholders around the state.

3. According to the 2019 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), outdoor recreation in Colorado drove \$37 billion in consumer spending, supported 511,000 jobs, and generated \$21 billion in wages and salaries. DNR works on multiple fronts to support outdoor recreation opportunities that minimize impacts on wildlife and the environment. However, responding to increased demand for outdoor recreation with limited financial resources is an ongoing challenge for the agency.

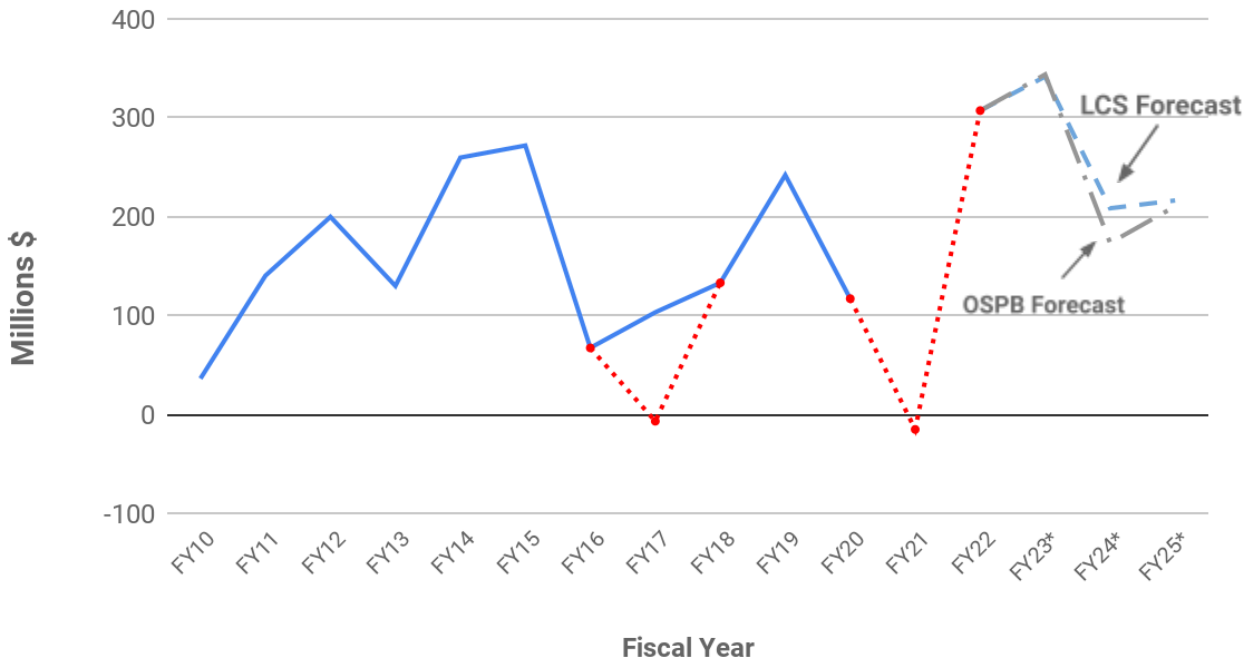
Non-Renewable Energy Development and Severance Tax Revenue

The Energy and Carbon Management Commission and the Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety are tasked with regulating the development of Colorado's mineral and energy resources in a manner that protects public health, safety, and the environment. The level and location of non-renewable mineral development can have a significant impact on the workload for these two regulatory divisions, as well as sources of funding for the Department of Natural Resources and other state programs, including the Public School Trust that supports K-12 education, and capacity-building programs for communities and local governments in the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA).

Many divisions and programs within DNR depend on state severance tax revenue, collected on non-renewable minerals as they are extracted from the earth, to support permanent staff, ongoing operations, and important water project grant and loan programs. As illustrated in the following figure, severance tax is an unusually volatile revenue stream because: (1) collections are tied to energy commodity markets, primarily oil and natural gas; and (2) Colorado has a unique tax credit that offsets state severance tax liability by a percentage of local property taxes, amplifying baseline fluctuations in revenue. Historically, severance tax revenues have varied by hundreds of millions of dollars from one year to the next, which has been challenging for program management and long-term planning.

Through all of the annual ups and downs of severance tax revenue collections, DNR continues to work diligently to manage its severance tax cash funds conservatively and effectively to ensure consistent support for its programs. Fiscal Year 2020-21 had the lowest severance tax revenue collections on record, which were driven by the historic and sustained collapse in oil prices starting in spring 2020 and delayed refund activity in early 2021. Based on year-end data from the Department of Revenue, refunds to severance taxpayers exceeded revenue by \$15.3 million resulting in a withdrawal of \$3.8 million from both of DNR's severance tax cash funds each, equal to their proportional share of 25% of the total year-end deficit. In sharp contrast, the state saw unprecedented highs in severance tax revenue in FY 2021-22, with \$306.8 million in net collections, while net collections for FY 2022-23 were \$325.7 million by the end of May 2023. The June 2023 Legislative Council Staff (LCS) revenue forecast anticipates a decreasing trend through the remaining forecast period: \$222.7 million in FY 2023-24 and \$230.7 million in FY 2024-25. The forecast from the Office of State Planning and Budgeting (OSPB) indicates revenues falling to \$183.6 million in FY 2023-24 and slightly rebounding to \$223.2 million in FY 2024-25.

Total Annual Statewide Severance Tax Revenue (Non-Interest)



* = Projected severance tax revenue based on the June 2023 Revenue Forecast from Legislative Council Staff (LCS) and the Office of State Planning and Budgeting (OSPB). Fiscal Years 2024-25 and FY 2025-26 include revenue increases resulting from the reduction to the severance tax ad valorem tax credit enacted by H.B. 23-1272. Red dotted line in FY 2016-17 shows net negative severance tax collections without General Fund assistance provided by S.B. 16-218 (blue line) and the net negative collections in FY 2020-21 based year-end data from the Department of Revenue.

Importantly, H.B. 23-1272 included a provision to reduce the severance tax ad valorem credit from its historical rate of 87.5% to 75% of local property tax in tax years 2024 and 2025, and redirects excess revenue attributable to the reduction to support various energy-related tax credits. This means that the total collections forecasted for FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25 will not be subject to the traditional distribution model. Legislative Council Staff estimate the contributions to the Decarbonization Tax Credits Administration Cash Fund will be \$13.9 million in FY 2023-24 and \$28.3 million in FY 2024-25, while OSPB estimates \$16.8 million and \$35.3 million for the same periods, respectively, reducing the total amount distributed to the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Local Affairs by the same amount.

Regardless of future trends, the current influx of revenue has supported a much-needed recovery and return to financial stability for DNR programs, as well as an increase in the amount of funding available for water projects loans and grant programs to address critical water challenges.

Federal Partnerships and Funding

DNR works closely with federal agencies to manage and protect the state's natural resources by collaborating directly, sharing data and technical expertise, and providing input regarding management and regulatory decisions affecting federal lands and natural resources. The Biden Administration has continued working aggressively and collaboratively with states, Tribes and local governments to implement climate and conservation agendas. Colorado is closely involved in many of these planning processes, including to revise and provide input on the BLM's West-wide Solar Plan and Rangewide Greater Sage Grouse Plan, new statewide plan amendments focused on reducing oil and gas impacts to big game species habitat and protecting habitat for ESA-listed Gunnison sage-grouse, and the first land use plan covering Eastern Colorado, the U.S. Forest Service's Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forest Plan, and several other project-level proposals related to recreational trails, forest and watershed health, and renewable energy and oil and gas development. The Administration has also initiated a number of significant rulemakings to strengthen regulations governing conservation, forest health, wildlife connectivity, greenhouse gas emissions, endangered species protections.

DNR also engages with Colorado Congressional Delegation members to provide input on proposed legislation, much of it targeting USDA and DOI landscape resilience and water source protection programs for consideration in the omnibus 2023 Farm Bill, as well as public lands protection, and support for State Wildlife Action Plan implementation (including reintroduction of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act, a longstanding priority for state wildlife agencies); federal appropriations priorities; and more. One primary example is DNR's work to spearhead an effort to reauthorize the Upper Colorado and San Juan Basin Recovery Act. Additionally, DNR and its divisions are regularly applying for major federal grant opportunities to support habitat restoration, safe passage infrastructure, water conservation, and landscape resilience, and are coordinating with state agencies to develop a pipeline of eligible priority projects. Our alignment with much of the new Administration's agenda presents an opportunity to accelerate progress on Colorado's wildlife and conservation priorities, but the state's meaningful participation continues to place significant demands on DNR and division staff resources and workloads.

DNR also continues to implement Colorado's Shared Stewardship Memorandum of Understanding with the U.S. Forest Service, in partnership with the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS). Together, State and USFS Region 2 staff are setting Wildly Important Goals to work towards over the next decade.

Shifting priorities in the federal budget could also affect DNR divisions that receive federal funding, which accounts for about 8.0% of DNR's total annual operating appropriation, or rely on federal funding as important cost shares to partnership programs, including for habitat restoration, wildlife mitigation, water infrastructure, land reclamation, fuels treatment and other projects. The availability of federal funding will affect the extent to which DNR divisions can continue to provide services and complete projects in the future. Most stimulus funds allocated to the Department to date have been appropriated by the Colorado General Assembly, both from the General Fund (\$114M total) and the Economic Recovery and Relief Cash Fund (\$77M total). Stimulus funding bills impacting the Department include: SB21-054 (Transfers for Wildfire Mitigation and Response), SB21-240 (Watershed Restoration Grant Program Stimulus), SB21-258 (Wildfire Risk Mitigation), HB21-1260 (General Fund Transfer Implement State Water Plan), HB21-1326 (General Fund Transfer Support Natural Resources Programs), SB22-028

(Groundwater Compact Compliance Fund), and HB22-1379 (Wildfire Prevention Watershed Restoration Funding). To date, DNR has not received any direct funding through federal stimulus packages related to COVID-19. However, DNR has also received direct federal recovery funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) during the course of FY 2022-23, for the plugging and reclamation of orphaned oil & gas wells (\$25M) and the safeguarding and reclamation of abandoned coal mines (\$10M).

Environmental Trends and Natural Hazards

Climate change is contributing to long-term environmental trends that DNR must account for to manage and protect Colorado's natural resources. Average annual temperatures in Colorado have warmed over 2 degrees Fahrenheit since 1980 (NOAA), and this warming is shortening Colorado winters and raising concerns about future water availability. DNR is increasingly integrating climate change projections into agency planning processes, including water supply planning and species conservation planning, as well as forest management planning in partnership with the Colorado State Forest Service.

Colorado experienced colder than average temperatures and above-normal snowpack statewide peaking at 95th percentile of historical observations. As of May 20th, 2023 precipitation was at 111% of the statewide median. The strong snow year offers a respite from the prolonged drought conditions experienced across the state in preceding years. Depleted reservoir volumes are being restored by above average runoff and a cool and wet spring has prolonged the peak hydrographs, particularly in the Rio Grande and the Western Slope. The Eastern Plains have benefitted from a notably wet spring with May 2023 ranked as the 6th wettest May on record. Less than 8% of the state's geographical area was in drought going into summer compared to June 2022 when 90% of the state was experiencing some degree of drought. The strong high elevation snowpack will likely translate into a delayed wildfire season and greater fuel moistures that will buffer against summer forecasts of above normal temperatures across western Colorado. Normal fire patterns are anticipated for the remainder of the year, although the wetter than average spring on the Eastern Plains may promote the accumulation of fuels that are susceptible to burning. Pockets of enhanced fire activity are possible given localized fuel loads, but normal significant fire potential is anticipated on a statewide-scale.

In 2020, Governor Jared Polis activated Colorado's Drought Task Force and the State Drought Mitigation and Response Plan (Drought Plan) to respond to deepening drought conditions across the state. The Drought Task Force has provided consistent support for evaluating local conditions, identifying possible support measures, organizing local tours of impacted areas to raise awareness and provide consistent messaging to the Governor and/or federal government on local needs. The Drought Plan and supporting task forces have remained activated through May of 2023. Given the significant easing of drought conditions across the state the Drought Task Force and any subsidiary workinggroups (e.g. Drought Action Task Forces) are formally being deescalated in keeping with the triggers in the Drought Plan - now folding into the Enhanced State Hazard Mitigation Plan. The ongoing Water Availability Task Force will continue to meet monthly to assess conditions and evaluate ongoing mitigation measures for drought as well.

DNR is heavily involved whenever Colorado experiences certain types of natural hazards and disasters, including drought, floods, and wildfires. The Colorado Water Conservation Board leads drought response, and DNR divisions administer programs that support wildfire prevention and flood mitigation

projects to help prevent future events, and provide both expertise and funding for recovery efforts when they do occur.

Wildfire Impacts, Mitigation, and Recovery

Colorado forests are overly dense after decades of fire suppression, and are increasingly vulnerable to insect outbreaks, disease, and high-severity wildfires as the climate warms. Climate change also increases wildfire risk in Colorado's grasslands. Colorado is experiencing an increasing number of human-caused wildfires due to development and recreation in the wildland-urban interface.

In 2020, the state experienced the three largest wildfires on record (Cameron Peak, East Troublesome, and Pine Gulch fires), burning over 600,000 acres, over 1,000 structures, and taking the lives of two Coloradans. Large portions of these wildfires burned at medium or high severity, increasing flood and debris flow risks. These burn scars are still impacting water resources in 2023. In December 2021, the Marshall Fire destroyed over 1,000 homes and businesses in Boulder County and also took two lives. The Boulder County Sheriff's Office determined that the fire was caused by two ignition sources resulting from 100+ mile per hour winds: a downed Xcel energy transmission line, and the reignited coals from a burned trash pile on private property. Estimated losses total over \$500 million. DNR led Colorado's first ever state-led Colorado Burned Area Emergency Response (CoBAER) analysis to assess soil burn severity and post-fire hydrological hazards following the Marshall Fire.

In 2023, building on significant state investment in wildfire mitigation and recovery in the 2021 and 2022 legislative sessions, the general assembly funded updates to the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) tree nursery and new workforce development programs in the wildfire mitigation and forestry sectors. The Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program (COSWAP) also received \$10 million in one-time general funds and is now funded annually with \$5 million in severance tax cash funds and \$1 million general fund. COSWAP will continue to provide Landscape Resilience Investment and Workforce Development grant opportunities.

Additionally, DNR EDO is working with CSFS to update operating agreements for the Division of Forestry. The Division of Forestry currently has no budget of its own, but its functions are executed by CSFS in collaboration with DNR. DNR and CSFS will be working on a new annual planning process which will be integrated into the FY 2024-2025 Performance Plan.

Continuous Improvements

Over the past year, DNR has made significant progress in achieving our Wildly Important Goals (WIGs). These goals represent core values of the Department, and our promise to the people of Colorado to achieve our mission to develop, preserve, and enhance the state's natural resources for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future citizens and visitors.

Colorado Water Conservation Board

Water Plan Update

On January 24, 2023, to meet Colorado's most critical water challenges, the CWCB finalized and adopted the 2023 Colorado Water Plan. First released in 2015, the Water Plan provides a comprehensive framework to guide collaborative action from water partners, agencies, and Coloradans. From securing supplies that provide safe drinking water to improving farm irrigation to rehabilitating streams – the 2023 Water Plan targets specific, key actions to contribute to a stronger, more water-resilient Colorado. The plan features a set of 100 actions to be completed over the next decade including 50 actions the CWCB will take (with collaborating agencies) and examples of 50 actions others can take and the CWCB can support through the Water Plan Grant program. The Water Plan Executive Summary provides an overview of the plan as does the Water Plan video. The [full plan and executive summary](#) are also translated into Spanish and are available online.

Drought Coordination

The CWCB leads the Water Availability Task Force, the Drought Task Force and two subsidiary drought action task forces on Agriculture and Municipal water use. This work partners with agencies like DWR, DOLA and CDA as well as other stakeholders to explore ongoing issues, possible solutions and works to coordinate drought discussions across the state. In keeping with FEMA requirements, the CWCB has also been working extensively with The Department of Homeland Security and of Emergency Management to update the drought (and flood) section of the state's Enhanced State Hazard Mitigation Plan. As part of Board direction and the 2023 Colorado Water Plan Update, a major agency focus will be on increasing drought resilience and creating support tools for stakeholders.

Drought Summit

In January 2023, Governor Polis directed the CWCB to hold a Drought Summit. The event was held on May 31 and June 1, 2023. The focus of the summit was evaluating lessons-learned and adaptive solutions for addressing drought concerns. The sessions were strategically planned to advance agency actions across the four action areas of the 2023 Water Plan: vibrant communities, thriving watersheds, robust agriculture, and resilient planning.

Wildfire and Other Natural Hazards

Work is continuing on the Wildfire Ready Watersheds program authorized under SB 21-240. This program assesses wildfire risk for flooding and other impacts to public safety and water resources, and exists to focus future mitigation in areas that will positively address these impacts the most. The CWCB completed a statewide susceptibility study in December 2022 to investigate the susceptibility of life, safety, infrastructure, and water supplies to post-wildfire erosion, sedimentation, flooding, and water quality degradation. An interactive website WildfireReadWatersheds.com was launched and houses interactive maps and illustrations, comprehensive and easy-to-understand overviews of all aspects of the program, videos, podcasts, resources, and more. The CWCB is also collaborating with community leaders on guidance for local watershed agency groups and government agencies to produce high-resolution post-fire susceptibility information and to identify fire mitigation and impact reduction projects to lessen the hurt that communities feel after a wildfire. And in January 2023, the CWCB announced a special release of the Colorado Watershed Restoration Program to focus on the development of Wildfire Ready Watershed action plans and implementation of projects designed to mitigate post wildfire impacts utilizing \$10 million in funding authorized under HB 22-1379.

Urban Landscape Conservation Task Force

At the direction of the Governor, the CWCB is also leading an Urban landscape Conservation Task Force to help identify pathways to creating more climate appropriate landscapes. The 2023 Colorado Water Plan calls for Transformational Landscape Change, a move away from water intensive landscapes (e.g.turf) and embracing a One Water ethic - leveraging water conservation, land use planning and alternative water supplies to drive waterwise landscapes. The Task Force is meeting through 2023 and will work to create a final report which includes areas of consensus around how to drive landscape change forward and the suite of tools that will be needed to support it.

Turf Replacement Program

At the direction of the legislature and HB 22-1151 the CWCB was directed to hire staff and create a process for managing a turf replacement/rebate program that aimed to match funding from eligible entities (e.g. water utilities) to help expand their efforts. Funding supported staff, program development and database creation with the majority of funds providing rebates to eligible entities. CWCB launched the first round of the available \$1.5M in January of 2023.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Keep Colorado Wild Pass

Under Governor Polis, CPW has a renewed focus on making sure we have diverse, stable, long-term funding that is equitable, supported by a broad set of stakeholders and meets the current and future needs of all Coloradans. To this end, we were pleased to launch the Keep Colorado Wild Pass in January 2023. The new annual pass grants access to all 42 Colorado state parks and at a reduced price. New revenue is expected from the pass to support state parks, wildlife and recreation programs.

Private Donations

In FY 23, CPW set out to increase private donations, including both restricted and unrestricted funds, from the \$964,544 received in FY 22 to \$985,000 in FY 23 and \$1,000,000 in FY 24. As of April 2023, we have received \$974,974, well on our way to reaching and likely exceeding our stated FY 23 goal.

Division of Mining, Reclamation, and Safety

Wildfire Risk Reduction

The Inactive Mine Reclamation Program has prioritized mitigative measures at abandoned coal mine fires throughout the state and worked to reduce the potential for wildfire ignition associated with these legacy coal sites. The Program has been actively engaged with the City of Glenwood Springs to reduce wildfire ignition risks associated with the South Canyon Coal Mine Fire on the western edge of the City's property. There are at least 38 active coal mine fires throughout the State that the Program works cooperatively with landowners to monitor and potentially mitigate. With increased funding under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the Program expects to increase focus and mitigation efforts at many of the highest priority sites.

State Land Board

Public Hunting and Fishing Access Program

The Public Hunting and Fishing Access Program is a cooperative lease between the State Land Board and Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Renewed in 2023 for another ten year term, the lease allows limited public access to enrolled state trust land for hunting and fishing. The program started in 1993 and with the addition of 199,000 acres in 2021 provides public access to nearly one million acres of trust land in time for the fall 2021 hunting season. Thirty years after its inception, the interest in the program remains high and the benefits to Colorado Parks and Wildlife, the citizens of Colorado and the beneficiaries of the trusts managed by the State Land Board continue to be positive.

DNR's Management and Regulatory Responsibilities

FY 2023-24

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW):

- 42 state parks
- 354 wildlife areas
- 960 wildlife species

Division of Water Resources (DWR):

- 179,812 water rights
- 2,916 jurisdictional dams
- 14 interstate agreements (with CWCB)

State Land Board (SLB):

- 3 million acres land
- 4 million acres minerals
- 7,000 leases and contracts

Division of Reclamation, Mining, & Safety (DRMS):

- 1,458 mine sites

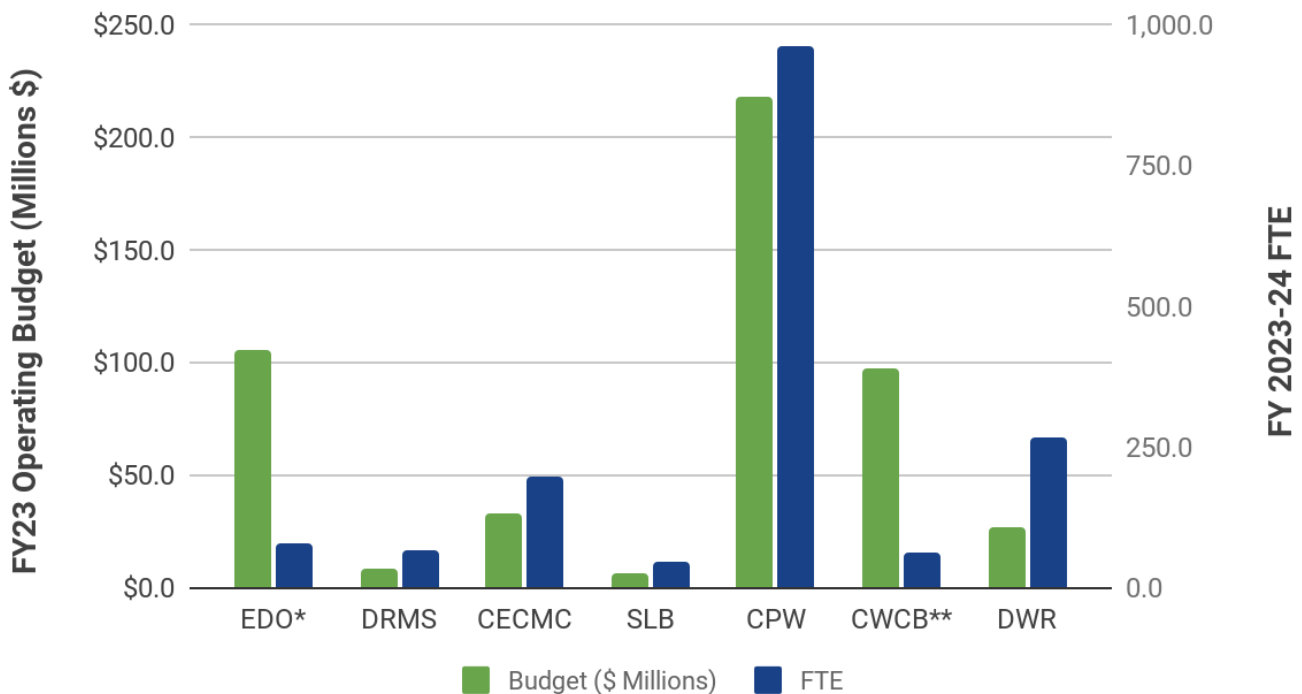
Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB):

- \$890 million loan portfolio
- 14 interstate agreements (with DWR)

Energy & Carbon Management Commission (ECMC):

- 48,779 active oil and gas wells
- 46 oil and gas development plans (OGDPs) are under review
- 167 drilling permits (APDs or Form 2s) are under review

DNR FY 2023-24 Operating Budget: \$494.1million (1,668.4 FTE)



In Long Bill order: Executive Director's Office (EDO), Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety (DRMS), Energy & Carbon Management Commission (ECMC), State Land Board (SLB), Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB); and Division of Water Resources (DWR).

*The EDO budget includes appropriations for EDO personal services and operating expenses, centrally appropriated common policy line items, and the Colorado Avalanche Information Center (CAIC). The EDO FTE count includes both central administrative staff and CAIC personnel.

**The CWCB budget includes appropriations made in the annual CWCB Projects Bill.

DNR Key Accomplishments in FY 2022-23

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

- 19.7 million state park visits
- Development of Fishers Peak property for Colorado's next state park
- 1.75 million hunting & fishing licenses
- 311,150 volunteer hours
- Provided 2.08 million acres of public access for hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing

Colorado Water Conservation Board

- Provided \$54 million in loans & \$22 million in grants for water projects around the state
- Launched the 2023 Colorado Water Plan with 50 Agency Actions and 50 Partner Actions.
- Held the 2023 Colorado Drought Summit highlighting climate data and adaptive management.
- Kicked-off the Turf Replacement Program to incentivize local municipalities to remove turf.
- Initiated the Urban Landscape Conservation Task Force to help advance waterwise landscaping.
- Continued to integrate water efficiency into land use planning through carrying out two Growing Water Smart workshops and co-chairing the Colorado Water and Land Use Planning Alliance with DOLA. Continued to implement Phase II of a 2.5 year Colorado Water Loss Initiative Training.
- Funded the ongoing development of local Water Conservation and Drought Plans.
- Streamlined state drought plans in the updated Enhanced State Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- Appropriated one natural lake level water rights and 13 instream flow rights covering 70 miles of streams
- Continued acquisition of LIDAR throughout the state in pursuit of full up-to-date state coverage
- Completed the Wildfire Ready Watersheds framework and state susceptibility assessment, which studies impacts to public safety and water resources in an effort to steer wildfire work from recovery to mitigation
- Continued significant contributions to improve the habitat and river flow conditions for federally listed species through collaborative work with neighboring states, conservation partners, and the Upper Colorado Endangered Fish Recovery Program.
- Protected Colorado's significant interests in interstate Colorado River negotiations and meaningfully engaged the Upper Basin Tribal Nations through a formalized Tribal-State process.

Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety

- Responded to and mitigated 8 coal mine fire emergencies
- Implemented electronic permitting for all coal mines and trial ePermitting for all hardrock and construction material mines is well under way.
- Conducted 68 inspections of high priority hard rock mines and high priority construction materials sites.

Division of Water Resources

- Supported the Republican River Water Conservation District to achieve early compliance with the interstate requirement to retire 10,000 acres of irrigated land in the South Fork.
- Filed Proposed Measurement Rules in Division 6 water court holding multiple stakeholder

meetings to gather input.

- Settled 57 of the 157 protests to the 2020 Decennial Abandonment Lists.
- Leveraging CWCB funds to obtain a FEMA grant, contracted for and led Comprehensive Dam Safety Evaluation (CDSE) studies at 38 high-hazard reservoirs to better identify and mitigate risks at existing dams including identifying potential for opportunities to increase storage.
- Worked with water users to apply for funding from the Yampa-White Roundtable to install telemetry on 18 diversion structures on the Bear River to improve administration. Infrastructure will be installed in 2023-24.

Energy & Carbon Management Commission

- Broadened the Oil and Gas Conservation Commission's historic authority over upstream oil and gas operations to include regulatory oversight of deep geothermal resources, gas storage, and carbon sequestration and renamed the Commission to reflect the authority over carbon management and related energy development projects.
- Implemented Financial Assurance Rules and Mission Change Rules
- Accomplished goal of increasing Orphaned Well Program activity from 61 sites per year to at least 100 sites per year. With the additional funding from the federal government, ECOM achieved this goal and performed work on approximately 294 sites this year. Successfully obligated Initial Grant Funds of \$25M from the bipartisan IJA.
- Supported creation of Colorado's first Produced Water Consortium, which will consider how to achieve additional recycling and reuse of produced water and decrease use of freshwater in oil and gas operations.

State Land Board

- Twelve consecutive years of more than \$100 million in annual trust revenues with a new record set in fiscal 2022-23 of \$246 million. The State Land Board has generated more than \$1.6 billion for trust beneficiaries in the past 10 years.
- Installed megawatts of renewable energy on state trust lands exceeded 500 megawatts for the first time with the completion of the 248 megawatt Thunderwolf utility scale solar installation on trust lands in El Paso county. Partner projects are anticipated to bring another 387 megawatts online in the next three years.
- Saw the first sales of habitat mitigation banking credits, validating more than ten years of planning and exploratory lease work.
- Transferred 15,200 acres of federal land to the school trust to begin the final resolution of the trust lands debt owed to the state since the Enabling Act of 1875. The final 1,900 acres is expected to be transferred in FY 2023-24.

Governor’s BOLD Five Priorities

Governor Polis has set out five BOLD priorities that align with the programs and goals of the Department of Natural Resources:

TOP 10 SAFEST STATES

MORE HOUSING NOW

SAVING PEOPLE MONEY ON HEALTHCARE

SAVING PEOPLE MONEY ON PROPERTY TAXES & PROVIDING RELIEF

ACHIEVING 100% RENEWABLE ENERGY BY 2040

In a state known for its stunning mountains, forests, rivers, and plains, the Department plays a key role in protecting the environment for future generations as the steward of Colorado’s abundant natural resources. Additionally, the Department supports the Governor’s vision for a resilient and robust economy through its engagement across a number of important natural resource-related economic sectors and Colorado industries. It also provides opportunities for improved health and wellness by engaging with Coloradans to facilitate recreation and encourage the enjoyment of our public lands. The Department seeks to make the outdoors and healthy living more inclusive of, and available to, all Coloradans. Finally, the Department manages state trust lands to provide a critical source of ongoing revenue to fund Colorado’s K-12 education system and capital improvements to school facilities across the state.

The Department of Natural Resources is proud to be a part of the Governor’s “Bold 5” priorities for Colorado. The following performance plan identifies the Department’s specific goals in support of these priorities and highlights the important ongoing work each Division is undertaking to serve all Coloradans.

More information on the Governor’s BOLD 5 Priorities can be found on the [Governor’s Dashboard](#), which includes a wide variety of performance indicators for department and statewide goals.

DNR Wildly Important Goals

The Department of Natural Resources has four wildly important goals (WIGs), detailed below. These goals were developed in support of the Governor’s “Bold Five” priorities, with a particular emphasis on Environment and Renewables, as well as the mission and vision of the Department and its divisions.

WIG #1: Sustainable Funding for Parks & Wildlife

Colorado Parks and Wildlife relies heavily on hunting and fishing license fees and park entrance fees to achieve its mission, and there is no mechanism for many outdoor recreationists to support wildlife conservation or fund the trails and infrastructure many Coloradans demand. Long-term trends in the state, such as changing demographics, growth in demand for outdoor recreation, and a decline in participation in hunting are expected to challenge the state’s ability to adequately fund wildlife management and outdoor recreation. Diverse, stable, long-term funding that is equitable and supported by a broad set of stakeholders is important to the success of CPW in the future.

Goal: The Department of Natural Resources will develop new, diverse funding sources for Colorado Parks and Wildlife by raising from \$27,985,000 to \$47,000,000 in parks pass entry fee and private donations revenues by June 30, 2024. Colorado Parks and Wildlife relies heavily on hunting and fishing license fees and park entrance fees to achieve its mission, and while there hasn’t been a mechanism for many outdoor recreationists to support wildlife conservation or fund the trails and infrastructure many Coloradans demand, CPW launched the Keep Colorado Wild Pass in January 2023. The new annual pass is sold with annual vehicle registrations, and grants access to all 42 Colorado state parks and at a reduced price. New revenue is expected from the pass to support state parks, wildlife and outdoor accessibility programs. Long-term trends in the state, such as changing demographics, growth in demand for outdoor recreation, and a decline in participation in hunting are expected to challenge the state’s ability to adequately fund wildlife management and outdoor recreation. Diverse, stable, long-term funding that is equitable and supported by a broad set of stakeholders is important to the success of CPW in the future.

Potential strategies to accomplish the goal may include:

- Increase Park Pass Entry Revenues
- Promote the Keep Colorado Wild Pass
- Increase Private and Solicited Campaign Donations

WIG #2: Balance Outdoor Recreation and Conservation

With increasing interest in Colorado’s Great Outdoors comes increased impacts to our ecosystems, wildlife and recreational infrastructure. We need to balance outdoor recreation with the conservation of our natural resources and move outdoor recreation and conservation planning in a more strategic and coordinated direction.

Goal: In an effort to balance outdoor recreation and conservation, the Department of Natural Resources will increase the percentage of Colorado participating in CPW’s Regional Partnerships from 51% (the

total percentage of the state participating in Regional Partnerships in FY 22-23) to 60% (the goal for FY 23-24) by June 30, 2024.

Potential strategies to accomplish the goal may include:

- Promote America the Beautiful Initiative
- Maintain funding to regional partnerships plan development
- Complete Organizational Assessment of the Colorado Outdoor Partnerships (CO-OP)
- Complete Phase 1 of Draft of Conservation, Recreation & Climate Resilience Plan (Colorado Outdoor Strategy)
- Enhance Colorado's trail user experience

WIG #3: Water Plan Implementation

Over the past decade, Colorado has experienced severe drought, extreme flooding, and an increasing population, resulting in increased demands and pressures on our water supply. The 2023 Colorado Water Plan captures a shared vision and sets out a roadmap for developing resilient responses to our water-related challenges. DNR, through the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB), is set to implement the recently released 2023 Water Plan. The update uses lessons learned, is more accessible, and evaluates bold new actions that will support Colorado's watersheds, cities and rural communities, and farms.

Goal: The Colorado Water Conservation Board will implement from 0% (FY 22-23 baseline) to 10% (FY 23-24 goal) of the Colorado Water Plan by advancing 5 of the 50 Agency Actions by June 30, 2024.

Potential strategies to accomplish the goal may include:

- Identify Turf Replacement Options
- Assess Economic Opportunities of Avoided Buy and Dry to Communities, Ecosystems and Recreation
- Create a Wildfire Ready Watershed Framework
- Support Long-Term Stability of Basin Roundtables

Colorado Water Conservation Board

The Colorado Water Conservation Board's (CWCB) strategic mission is to conserve, develop, protect, and manage Colorado's water for present and future generations. CWCB provides policy direction on water issues, is Colorado's most comprehensive water information resource, and provides technical assistance to further the utilization of Colorado's waters.

Customers and Constituents

CWCB serves several customers, including citizens and communities, water providers and users, governmental (local, municipal, state, and federal) and non-governmental (irrigation companies, agricultural entities, conservation groups, and businesses) organizations.

Primary Processes

1. Overseeing the implementation of Colorado's Water Plan.
2. Administering loans and grants to fund various water projects.
3. Continuously updating all aspects of the Colorado Water Plan, including the Analysis and Technical Update, Basin Implementation Plans, and comprehensive policy recommendations.
4. Negotiating and protecting interstate compact agreements.
5. Appropriating, acquiring, protecting, and monitoring instream flow and natural lake level water rights.
6. Addressing long-term flood protection for Coloradans' health, safety, and welfare.
7. Supporting watershed planning and projects that restore and protect watersheds.
8. Promoting water use efficiency and drought mitigation planning.
9. Participating in water-related endangered species initiatives and programs.

Major Funding Sources

The majority of the funding for the CWCB is from the CWCB Construction Fund, a large cash fund that receives revenue from various sources including interest on water project loans and investments, Federal mineral lease distributions, the Severance Tax Perpetual Base Fund, and the Water Plan Implementation Cash Fund supported by sports betting revenue. In addition, CWCB receives some funds from the Severance Tax Operational Fund as well as federal funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The division currently has an allocation of 60.7 FTE.

For more information about this division, please refer to [CWCB's website](#). Here is more [information about Colorado's Water Plan](#).

CWCB Division Goal #1

Increase water storage by 400,000 acre feet by 2050. CWCB anticipates providing funding assistance for up to 25% of storage project costs (100,000 acre-feet). The CWCB has established an annual target of 2,500 acre feet of storage resulting from state financial support over a period of 40 years (2010-2050).

Major Programs

- Loan Program
- Water Supply Reserve Fund Grant Program
- Feasibility Study Grant Program
- Water Plan Grants

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
CWCB	# acre-feet created which has state financial support (based on % of completion)	↑	2023	68,104 acre feet	2024	70,604 acre feet
CWCB	# new acre feet of storage under development with state funding	⇒	2023	8,223 acre feet	2024	8,223 acre feet

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. CWCB makes financial assistance available for storage projects. Typically 15 storage projects receive financial support from the CWCB annually with loan and grant funds totalling \$25 million.
2. CWCB conducts marketing and outreach activities for its Loan & Grant Program through the following activities:
 - a. Conference vendor at Colorado Municipal League, Special District Association, Ditch and Reservoir Company Alliance, Water Congress, and 4 Basin Forums;
 - b. Speaking engagements;
 - c. Presentations to engineering firms and reservoir owner boards; and
 - d. Intra-department coordination (i.e. DWR, Dam Safety, CPW).
3. CWCB provides subsidized interest rates for reservoirs with safety restrictions and to agricultural borrowers to provide an incentive for improving high priority reservoir infrastructure and agricultural activities.
4. CWCB provides matching funds support through CWCB Loan-Grant leverage and coordination, leveraging other state funding, and providing 50/50 grants for feasibility studies.

CWCB Division Goal #2

Reduce municipal and industrial demand through water conservation by 400,000 acre feet by 2050.

Major Programs

- Water Plan Grant Program
- 1051 Conservation Plan Program and Data Reporting
- Water Supply Reserve Fund
- Water Efficiency and Land Use Integration Training Program
- Colorado Water Loss Control Initiative

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
CWCB	% of statewide municipal and industrial water demand covered by water efficiency plans	⇒	2023	67% covered	2024	68% covered
CWCB	# of acre-feet conserved as reported through approved conservation plans and the 1051 database	⇒	2023	53,500 acre feet conserved	2024	54,000acre feet conserved

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Prepare 1051 analysis and report.
 - a. Analyze water use and water conservation programming,
 - b. Calibrate 1051 data with water efficiency plans on file to ground truth planning vs. actual,
 - c. Redevelop the 1051 database into a new user interface and add reporting functionality.
2. Percentage of statewide demand (acre feet) represented in approved water efficiency plans.
 - a. Calibrate with 1051 data to ground truth planning vs. actual.
 - b. Encourage water providers to adopt leading edge water efficiency best practices into plans.
3. Optimize land use and water integration.
 - a. Ensure that water providers are evaluating and integrating their land use-water efficiency planning into their water conservation plans as described in Section 37-60-126, C.R.S.
 - b. With the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA), convene the Colorado Water and Land Use Planning Alliance on a quarterly basis to develop next steps for integrating land use and water planning for Colorado.
 - c. Develop additional training modules and webinars.
 - d. Annually measure implementation of water saving actions into land use planning decisions using water efficiency plans, 1051 data, and DOLA’s land use survey.

CWCB Division Goal #3

Increase aquatic environmental protections, enhance recreation opportunities, and protect 1,000 additional stream miles by 2030.

Major Programs

- Instream Flow and Natural Lake Level Program
- Water Plan Grant Program
- Endangered Fish Recovery Programs
- Flood Recovery Program

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
CWCB	# of miles of stream protected	↑	2023	9,915miles	2024	10,015 miles
CWCB	Acre feet of water protected for the Recovery Programs through various mechanisms, including contracts and ISFs	⇒	2023	190,923 acre-feet	2024	194,307 acre-feet
CWCB	Acre feet of water provided by CWCB to the Recovery Programs through ISF leases	↑	2023	6,350 acre-feet	2024	12,350 acre-feet

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. CWCB supports design, construction and/or repair of whitewater parks throughout Colorado by providing grants to governmental and/or quasi-governmental organizations.
2. CWCB supports endangered species recovery through the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program (UC Program), the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program (SJ Program), and the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program (PRRIP). The UC Program and SJ Program are designed to recover three endangered and one threatened fish species in the Colorado River Basin; PRRIP is focused on the recovery of three bird and one fish species on the Platte River in Central Nebraska. These programs are designed to promote species recovery while allowing water development to proceed in accordance with federal and state laws and interstate compacts. Recovery strategies include conducting research, improving river habitat, providing adequate stream flows, managing non-native fish, and raising endangered fish in hatcheries for stocking.
3. CWCB supports watershed and stream health through stream management and watershed management plans.
4. CWCB protects Colorado’s streams and rivers by appropriating and adjudicating instream flow water rights every year, and by acquiring water, water rights, and interests in water for instream flow use.
5. CWCB supports flood mitigation through partnerships involved in various programs. CWCB works with local governments and other governmental entities to provide technical and financial assistance to

plans, studies, and project designs leading to effective flood mitigation measures.

6. CWCB supports healthy riparian ecosystems and keeps more water instream by supporting removal of non-native vegetation, including tamarisk.
7. CWCB will work to develop partnerships with state and local government organizations to promote environmental conservation and recreational activities.
8. A portion of Water Plan implementation grant funding is directed to environmental and recreation projects.

CWCB Division Goal #4

Promote Voluntary Alternative Transfer Methods to share 50,000 acre feet of agricultural water by 2030. Maintain Colorado’s agricultural productivity and support Colorado’s agricultural industry to make it more efficient, resilient, and able to reduce water consumption without impacting agricultural productivity.

Major Programs

- Low interest loans for Agriculture
- Colorado’s Water Plan Grants for Supply and Agriculture
- Colorado Water Supply Reserve Fund Grants
- Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program
- Gunnison Basin Selenium Management Program

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
CWCB	# of new ATM projects	↑	2023	22 projects	2024	25 projects
CWCB	# of acre-feet of water supplied annually through an ATM program	↑	2023	34,000 acre feet	2024	44,000 acre feet

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Engage the agricultural community on water efficiency programs that benefit water quality through changes to irrigation practices, including the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program and the Gunnison Basin Selenium Management Programs.
2. Support updates and improvements to Colorado’s aging irrigation infrastructure where multi-benefits can be achieved through Colorado’s Water Plan Grant Program.
3. A portion of the Water Plan implementation grant funding will be directed towards developing new ATM projects and conducting outreach to promote ATM projects across the state.
4. Work closely with the Colorado Department of Agriculture, Department of Local Affairs, and the Office of Economic Development and International Trade to expand local market opportunities to promote more drought resilient crops and soil health practices.
5. Tied to Action 2.3 in the 2023 Water Plan, the CWCB is working to expand the scale of collaborative water sharing agreements through grant making, convening conversations with the goals of facilitating knowledge sharing between current and potential water sharing agreement participants, attracting new and diverse participants, and moving towards larger-scale projects with lower transaction costs.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

The mission of Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) 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 (Section 33-9-101 (12)(b), C.R.S.).

Customers and Constituents

CPW serves nearly all of Colorado's citizens as well as visitors from other states and countries, including: outdoor recreationalists, sportspeople and anglers, wildlife viewers, the outdoor recreation industry, landowners, and local communities and businesses. Outdoor recreation contributes \$62.5 billion in economic output to Colorado annually and supports 511,000 jobs.

Primary Processes

1. Managing and conserving 960 native species including mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, amphibians, mollusks and crustaceans. This includes: managing deer, elk and other big and small game species for hunting and trapping; raising and stocking sport fish in Colorado's waters; and conserving "nongame" wildlife, listed species, and species of greatest conservation need.
2. Selling hunting and fishing licenses to in-state and out-of-state hunters and anglers, totaling 1.75 million licenses in FY 2021-22.
3. Conducting research, population monitoring, planning and public engagement programs to inform management decisions.
4. Providing hunters, anglers, wildlife watchers and other outdoor recreationists access to the outdoors on over 2.08 million acres.
5. Managing wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation opportunities on 354 State Wildlife Areas and 42 State Parks.
6. Providing hunter education and outreach programs; enforcing wildlife rules and regulations.
7. Managing law enforcement, boater safety, acquisition, development, improvement and operations at Colorado's 42 state parks.
8. Supporting conservation, education and stewardship activities for adults, school children, and teachers that provide opportunities to learn how to hunt, fish, camp and be good stewards of Colorado's natural resources.
9. Distributing more than \$14 million in external grants supporting capital improvements that benefit trail users.

Major Funding Sources

CPW is funded through user fees from hunting and fishing licenses, passes, permits and registrations (56%), lottery proceeds and the Great Outdoors Colorado grant program (19%), other state and federal grants (15%), and a variety of other sources including general fund and donations (10%). The division currently has an allocation of 918.2 FTE.

For more information about this division, please refer to [CPW's website](#).

CPW Division Goal #1

Enhance stewardship through increased conservation of land and water wildlife habitat.

Major Programs

- CPW Terrestrial Wildlife Management
- CPW Aquatic Wildlife Management
- CPW Land and Water Conservation
- CPW Species Protection/Restoration
- CPW Law Enforcement

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
CPW	# of acres of habitat conserved statewide through 3 rd party and CPW owned Conservation Easements	↑	2023	501,923 acres	2024	506,000 acres
CPW	Acres of land improved through the Habitat Partnership Program (HPP)	↑	2023	21,000 acres	2024	22,000 acres
CPW	# of herd management plans updated annually	⇒	2023	33 plans ¹	2024	20 plans

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Continue to steward and conserve acres of critical wildlife habitat, maintain working lands and provide public access for wildlife-related recreational opportunities. Working with partners, including private landowners, foster greater understanding, support for and investment in habitat conservation work across Colorado.
 - a. Monitor conservation easements to ensure they meet conservation objectives.
 - b. Improve access for sportspeople to private and state lands.
 - c. Intercept infested watercraft and monitor for aquatic nuisance species.
2. Produce scientifically based research to inform management.
 - a. Publish scientific studies that inform and influence wildlife management.
 - b. Communicate wildlife research findings and recommendations through internal channels and CPW’s website.

¹ Annual target was 16 plans.

3. Wildlife populations meet agency objectives.
 - a. Update game population plans.
 - b. Complete work plans for Species of Greatest Conservation Need or related habitats advancing priority conservation actions identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan.
 - c. Complete fishery inventories and angler creel surveys as part of updates to the Fishery Categorization System and Basin Plans.
 - d. Increase the number of deer, elk and pronghorn herds that are within 10% of population objectives.
4. Achieve and maintain financial sustainability.
 - a. Collaborate with stakeholders to identify, prioritize and build support for alternative sources of revenue.
 - b. Communicate future revenue projections and needs to the Parks and Wildlife Commission and to the public on CPW's webpage.

CPW Division Goal #2

Increase public participation in outdoor recreation through outdoor education and programs, activities, and increasing public access to hunting, angling, and wildlife watching.

Major Programs

- CPW Trail Development & Enhancement
- CPW State Park System
- CPW Public Outreach and Outdoor Education
- CPW Law Enforcement

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
CPW	# of State Park Visitations	↑	2023	19.8 million visits	2024	19.9 million visits
CPW	# of fishing license sales	↑	2023	996,000 licenses sold	2024	1,000,000 licenses sold
CPW	# of hunting license sales	↑	2023	767,000 licenses sold	2024	771,000 licenses sold
CPW	# of trail crew hours supported by grants	↑	2023	145,000 hours	2024	150,000 hours
CPW	# of volunteer hours	↔	2023	317,000 hours	2024	317,000 hours

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Provide a world-class system of trails.
 - a. Create a comprehensive map of Colorado trails that is available to the public.
 - b. Award trail grants to build, improve or restore trails across Colorado while conserving wildlife habitat and other natural resources.
2. Manage state parks for world-class outdoor recreation. CPW will maintain high state park visitor satisfaction and ensure park natural values are conserved.
 - a. Evaluations for large scale and routine maintenance plans for state parks to meet objectives.
3. Engage more youth and adults in hunting and fishing activities.
 - a. Outdoor education and recreation programs increase, measured by participants in fishing

clinics, hunter education classes, Teaching Environmental Science Naturally (TEN), Outdoor Understanding for Teachers (OUT), Schools and Outdoor Learning Environments (SOLE), Parks Interpretive Programs and the Novice Hunter Program.

4. Maintain dedicated personnel, volunteers, and partners to advance CPW's mission and leverage ability to do more with limited resources.
 - a. Number of volunteers working to advance CPW's mission continues to grow.
 - b. Participation at the annual Partners in the Outdoors Conference continues to grow.
5. Achieve and maintain financial sustainability.

Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety

The Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety (DRMS) regulates mining and reclamation activities at coal, hardrock and construction material mines, safeguards and reclaims mine sites that existed prior to mining laws, and provides safety and health training for miners and mining contractors.

Customers and Constituents

DRMS serves the mining industry, the public, landowners and land managers with property impacted by historic mining, and other local, state, and federal agencies.

Primary Processes

1. Issuing mining and reclamation permits. This process is defined by statutory timeframes that commence once the application or revision is received.
2. Conducting mine site inspections and enforcement. This process is defined by statutory timeframes, Mined Land Reclamation Board actions, citizen complaints and requests for site release.
3. Addressing hazards and environmental problems at abandoned mine sites. This process is defined by available funding and liability issues pertaining to water.
4. Training and certifying miners on health, safety, and occupational topics. This process is defined by the number of requests for training received from all mining sectors and requests for certification from coal mine employees.

Major Funding Sources

DRMS is supported by federal funds from the U.S Department of Interior and U.S. Department of Labor (42%), severance tax revenue (45%), and mine permitting fees (13%). The division's Inactive Mines Reclamation Program also receives non-appropriated funds from the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, Environmental Protection Agency, and other state agencies and local partners. The division currently has an allocation of 64.8 FTE, with 58 filled or soon to be filled.

For more information about this division, please refer to the [DRMS website](#).

DRMS Division Goal #1

Ensure DRMS files, applications and the public notice processes are transparent and more easily accessible to the public and other agencies.

Major Programs

- DRMS Minerals Regulatory Program

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
DRMS	Conduct online survey and conduct stakeholder meetings	↑	2023	0 New metric	2024	3 stakeholder meetings
DRMS	Initiate full e-permitting for Minerals Program	↑	2022	Trial e-submissions Fall of 2023 through 2024	2024	100% e-submissions by June 2024
DRMS	The number of agency comment letters received in response to Division notifications.	↑	2023	15%	2024	25%

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Conduct online surveys to identify areas of concern from the public and operators regarding the current public notice system.
2. Make easily identifiable improvements to web page and processes while working toward more difficult goals
3. Hold 3 stakeholder meetings to identify areas of concern and opportunities to modernize the agency and public notice process.
4. Identify regulatory changes required to enhance the public notice system.
5. Initiate rulemaking to adopt new regulations. Complete e-permitting initiative to effectively implement permitting actions in a timely manner to better serve our stakeholders. Continue to push the vendor for completion of the project.

DRMS Division Goal #2

Ensure that on-the-ground conditions at Coal Mines reflect the approved and estimated costs as determined by the Division and the approved coal mine permit.

Major Programs

- DRMS Coal Regulatory Program

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
DRMS	Complete Bond Compliance Inspections	↑	2023	0 New Metric	2024	6

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Due to the dynamic nature of Colorado coal mining, ensure that the Division holds the adequate amount of reclamation bond based on the on-the-ground conditions of the sites.
2. Ensure that all coal permits reflect the appropriate amount of liability based on the approved mining plan.
3. Continue to maintain 100% compliance inspection frequency on all Active Coal Mines.

DRMS Division Goal #3

Address mining activities that occurred prior to the establishment of the State’s regulatory program, for which no responsible party can be determined, and which pose risks to public health and safety through safeguarding an additional 325 hazardous mine openings by 2024.

Major Programs

- DRMS Inactive Mines Reclamation Program

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
DRMS	# of additional safeguarded mine openings	⇨	2023	336	2024	325

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Continue to safeguard hazardous and abandoned mine sites each year. These construction projects inject money directly into the local economy.
2. Conduct environmental reclamation activities on legacy mine sites through partnerships with federal, state and local entities.
3. Prioritize reclamation and mitigation of high priority coal mine fires and other legacy coal issues throughout the State with increased funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.
4. Continue to assist the U.S. Department of Energy, Legacy Management program to inventory and safeguard defense related uranium mine sites (DRUMs) by completing the inventory on private property and performing safety closures on both private and federally managed lands.

Division of Water Resources

It is the mission of the Colorado Division of Water Resources (DWR) 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.

Customers and Constituents

DWR serves many customers including citizens, farmers, municipalities, recreationalists, anglers, property owners, real estate developers, attorneys, canal companies, water managers, other state and federal entities, and downstream states.

Primary Processes

1. Administering 179,812 surface water and groundwater rights at over 52,000 active structures by verifying surface and ground water diversions and uses, assuring augmentation and exchange plans provide replacement to prevent injury, and that compact deliveries are made. This involves making approximately 1,600 changes to the active administration priority on streams each year.
2. Issuing enforcement orders to curtail injurious diversions or uses.
3. Monitoring water supply through streamflow measurements at 1109 gages (including some ditch and reservoir gages).
4. Collecting an average over 600,000 diversion record observations at nearly 33,000 structures across all seven water divisions.
5. Enforcing and ensuring compliance with 15 interstate obligations including compacts, decrees, treaties, and agreements.
6. Conducting periodic physical inspections of approximately 2,916 existing jurisdictional dams, including 400 high hazard dams that are inspected annually. Reviewing construction plans for new dams or dam repairs, restricting storage for defective dams, and requiring emergency action plans on high and significant hazard dams to ensure public safety.
7. Issuing over 6,500 permits for groundwater use annually and consulting with the Water Court on an average of approximately 950 new water rights cases each year to ensure that decrees are administrable.
8. Evaluation and approval of approximately 280 Substitute Water Supply Plan (SWSP) applications each year.

Major Funding Sources

DWR is mostly supported by General Fund (92%), with a small amount of fee revenue and minor federal funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (1%). The division currently has an allocation of 254.0 FTE.

For more information about this division, please refer to [DWR's website](#).

DWR Division Goal #1

Manage water to assure that it is put to beneficial use by legally entitled water right holders, including efforts to comply with Interstate Water Compacts through increasing the number of structures with diversion records published provisionally during the irrigation season from 10 percent to 30 percent by 2024.

Major Programs

- Administration of intrastate water rights
- Interstate water compact enforcement

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
DWR	# of Structures w/provisional Diversion Records	↑	2023	10%	2024	30%
DWR	# Regulatory Orders and Notifications (annual)	⇒	2023	3,500 orders	2024	3,500 orders

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Assure that water diversions occur when water is legally available.
2. Issue enforcement orders where necessary to curtail inappropriate diversions.
3. Assure that compact deliveries and obligations are met.
4. Consult with the water court in over 900 cases each year to assure new water rights are administrable.
5. Review over 6,000 groundwater use applications annually.
6. Operate or maintain over 1060 stream, ditch, and reservoir gages to determine water availability for Colorado diversion and/or for compact obligation.
7. Interact with other compact states to assess compact performance.

DWR Division Goal #2

Protect the public health, safety, and welfare from negative outcomes associated with dam failures through conducting annual inspections of all ‘high hazard’ classified dam structures in Colorado, and through improvements to the percentage of current (< 5 yrs old) Emergency Action Plans (EAP) for high hazard dams. A measure of the responsiveness of the program to the public (dam owners and their engineers) will be made by measuring DWR’s ability to approve plans for new dams and improvements to existing dams within the 180-day statutorily (CRS 37-87-105) defined criteria.

Major Programs

- Dam Safety

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
DWR	# of inspections of High Hazard Dams due for inspection. (CY data)	⇨	2023	390	2024	400
DWR	% of High Hazard Dams with existing EAPs (Emergency Action Plan)/% EAPs updated(< 5 yrs old)	⇧	2023	100%/84%	2024	100%/90%
DWR	Average design review days from receipt of plans to approval of plans for construction	⇨	2023	80 days	2024	180 days

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Inspection of existing dams:
 - a. There were 400 non-federal high hazard dams by the end of CY 2022 and high hazard dams have a requirement for annual inspection.
 - b. High hazard normally dry flood control dams are inspected on a 3 year inspection frequency.
 - c. Hazard classification changes due to increased development and new dam construction have historically resulted in changes in the number of high hazard dams annually.
2. Work with dam owners whose dams have changed hazard classification from low to high to assist them with establishing an EAP, and identify dam owners with outdated EAP’s (> 5 years) for their existing high hazard dams and assist with updating.
3. Review design plans and specifications for new dams and modification or repair of existing dams in accordance with statute (180 days of review). Measure monthly and accumulate a running average number of days for reporting.

Energy and Carbon Management Commission

Through its permitting, monitoring, enforcement, and restoration regulatory efforts the Colorado Energy & Carbon Management Commission (ECMC and formerly known as the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission) ensures the state's energy resources are produced in a manner that holds operators to the highest standards in the nation for protecting public health, safety, and welfare, and the environment and wildlife resources.

Customers and Constituents

ECMC serves the general public, the oil and gas, geothermal, carbon sequestration, and underground natural gas storage industries, local and county officials and governments, federal agencies, other state agencies including the Departments of Local Affairs, Public Health and Environment, and Revenue, and other divisions in the Department of Natural Resources such as the State Land Board and Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

Primary Processes

1. Commission orders including spacing and pooling, permits, including new oil and gas wells and new locations for oil and gas well pads and production facilities.
2. Inspecting oil and gas locations and facilities around the state using a risk-based priority system.
3. Responding to public complaints, reported spills and releases, and overseeing environmental remediations.
4. Enforcing regulatory and permitting requirements, resolving violations through corrective actions, administrative orders by consent, or Commission orders.
5. Ensuring wells are properly plugged and abandoned and sites are properly reclaimed by operators or, in the case of orphaned wells, by the ECMC.
6. Conducting environmental studies, such as water quality studies that establish trends for groundwater quality in areas of significant oil and gas development.
7. Providing comprehensive oil and gas-related data and information to all stakeholders through extensive online databases, interactive GIS map, and other public outreach activities.

Major Funding Sources

ECMC is funded with severance tax revenue and a levy assessed on the value of oil and gas production. The division also receives a small federal grant related to the regulation of underground injection wells, as well as penalty revenue that must be used to fund specific program expenses associated with environmental response, remediation projects, and special environmental studies. The division currently has an allocation of 147.3 FTE. ECMC received and obligated \$25M as an Initial Grant from the IJA to fund orphaned well and site plugging, remediation, and reclamation work in Colorado. ECMC also manages the collection of funds for the Orphaned Well Enterprise Board, which also funds orphaned well and site plugging, remediation, and reclamation work in Colorado.

Major Programs

- Permitting

- Orphaned Well Program
- Engineering
- Environmental
- Field Inspection and Compliance
- Hearings
- Finance

For more information about this division, please refer to [ECMC's website](#).

ECMC Division Goal #1

Coordinate and prioritize efforts to inspect, plug, remediate, and reclaim known orphaned wells and locations to protect the environment, public health and safety, and wildlife.

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
ECMC	# of Known Orphaned Sites at Start of Fiscal Year	↓	2019	365 sites	2025	100 sites
ECMC	Number of Wells Plugged (Annually)	↑	2018	15 wells	2025	38 wells

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Decrease backlog of known orphaned sites.
2. Increase workload to commence work at orphaned sites, including well plugging, flowline abandonment, equipment removal, environmental remediation, and surface reclamation.
3. Prioritize new orphaned sites.
4. Prepare annual backlog list of orphaned wells and locations.
5. Prepare Orphaned Wells Program Annual Report.
6. Implement orphaned site reimbursement process.

State Board of Land Commissioners (State Land Board)

The Colorado State Board of Land Commissioners (the State Land Board) is a constitutionally created agency that manages a \$5 billion endowment of assets for the intergenerational benefit of Colorado's K-12 schoolchildren and public institutions. The agency is the second-largest landowner in Colorado and generates revenue on behalf of beneficiaries by leasing three million surface acres and four million subsurface acres for agriculture, grazing, recreation, commercial real estate, rights-of-way, renewable energy, oil, gas, carbon capture and storage, and solid minerals. Unlike public lands, trust lands are not open to the public unless a property has been leased for public access. The Colorado Constitution directs the State Land Board to: (a) generate reasonable and consistent income over time; and (b) protect and enhance the natural values of state trust lands.

Customers and Constituents:

The agency serves the current and future trust beneficiaries (schoolchildren and other public institutions), as well as its stakeholders: lessees, the Governor, the General Assembly, and the local communities in which the State Land Board operates.

Primary Processes:

1. Managing surface leases for agricultural, grazing, and recreational land use; commercial real estate; rights-of-way and renewable energy development.
2. Managing mineral leases for oil, natural gas, coal, solid mineral development and extraction.
3. Inspecting leases on trust lands to ensure good stewardship practices for intergenerational benefit to beneficiaries.
4. Generating trust revenue to provide financial support to beneficiaries, primarily public schools.
Revenue flows to schoolchildren in two ways:
 - a. Funding the Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST) program, which offers competitive grants to rural school districts for the construction of new schools or for the renovation of existing school facilities.
 - b. Contributing Public School Permanent Fund investment income to the operating budget of the Department of Education via the School Finance Act.

Major Funding Sources

The State Land Board is entirely self-funded by revenue generated from leasing state trust assets, and receives no tax dollars. The agency currently has an allocation of 44.0 FTE.

For more information about this division, please refer to the [State Land Board website](#).

SLB Division Goal #1

Deliver enhanced financial outcomes for the eight public trusts through operations improvements and diversification of investments. Make properties more valuable to leasing through investments that provide water and access. Sustain annual recurring revenue.

Major Programs

- SLB Field Operations
- SLB Real Estate
- SLB Minerals
- SLB Operations
- SLB Outreach

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
SLB	Sustain Trust Recurring Revenue	⇨	2023	\$30 million	2024	\$30 million
SLB	Develop additional uses for water assets on state trust land	⇧	2023	2 new projects	2024	5 new projects
SLB	Increase occupancy in commercial real estate assets	⇧	2023	80% occupied	2024	85% occupied
SLB	Lease additional properties through competitive bidding	⇨	2023	30 leases	2024	30 leases
SLB	Identify suitable locations for siting agri-voltaic projects and take steps to implement one or more	⇧	2023	0 projects	2024	1 project located
SLB	Increase renewable energy leasing on state trust land in order to contribute to the state's goal of moving the electric grid to 100% renewable sources by 2040.	⇧	2023	525 Installed Megawatts	2026	915 Installed Megawatts

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Grow and diversify the portfolio of real property and financial assets to take advantage of market opportunities and to minimize the impact of market volatility.
2. Generate additional revenue by preserving, enhancing and communicating the value of Trust assets through strategic acquisitions, divestment, and property improvements including establishing access and acquiring water.

3. Increase organizational efficiency through investments in systems, training, policies, staff communication and planning.
4. Ensure organizational continuity by implementing succession planning and investing in staff professional and technical skills development in all critical roles.
5. Strengthen external communications to build awareness of leasing opportunities and promote the agency's role in supporting public education to key stakeholders and targeted customers. Solicit customer feedback to agency work.

SLB Division Goal #2

Provide excellent stewardship of lands held in the Trusts by increasing the number of stewardship management plans implemented, lease inspections performed, lease performance stipulations incorporated and lease deficiencies corrected.

Major Programs

- SLB Conservation Services
- SLB Outreach
- SLB Field Operations
- SLB Minerals

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
SLB	# of inspections of active oil & gas leases	⇨	2023	500 inspections	2024	500 inspections
SLB	# of inspections of rangeland leases	⇨	2023	300 inspections	2024	300 inspections
SLB	Host Agriculture Industry Roundtables	⇨	2023	2 events	2024	2 events
SLB	Host Agriculture Industry Forums	⇨	2023	2 events	2024	2 events
SLB	Stewardship Trust Properties Inspected	⇨	2023	30 properties	2024	30 properties

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Protect natural values on trust lands by implementing holistic science-based asset management plans in partnership with lessees and other land management partners.
2. Solicit lessee input to evaluate the performance and condition of Stewardship Trust parcels and incorporate findings into management plans and staff processes.
3. Improve public and stakeholder understanding of the impact of SLB stewardship efforts across the portfolio to build interest in partnerships targeted at land stewardship.

Appendix A: FY 2020-21 SMART Act Performance Evaluation

Section 2-7-204(3)(c)(VI), C.R.S., requires a summary of the most recent performance evaluation, which can be found on the [Governor’s Dashboard](#). The Governor’s Dashboard is a public reporting tool that includes performance data on each agency’s progress towards their WIGs and lead measures, and is updated on a monthly basis.

*Select “Department of Natural Resources” from the drop-down menu to view the most up-to-date DNR performance metrics.

Department of Natural Resources Wildly Important Goals FY 22-23

Green indicates goal was met | Gray indicates goal was not met



Select a goal area to view the wildly important goal and leading indicators:

