



**COLORADO**

**Department of  
Natural Resources**



# **Performance Plan**

2025-2026 Fiscal Year



# Department of Natural Resources FY 2025-26 Performance Plan

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# Department of Natural Resources (DNR) 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's 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. Enforce the rules that ensure water users receive their lawful supplies and maintain the safety of the many water storage facilities in Colorado.
- **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.
- **Forest Health and Wildfire Mitigation** - Support strategic forest health and wildfire mitigation projects that reduce risk to life, property, infrastructure, and watersheds through a shared stewardship approach.

## DNR Strategic Priorities

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.

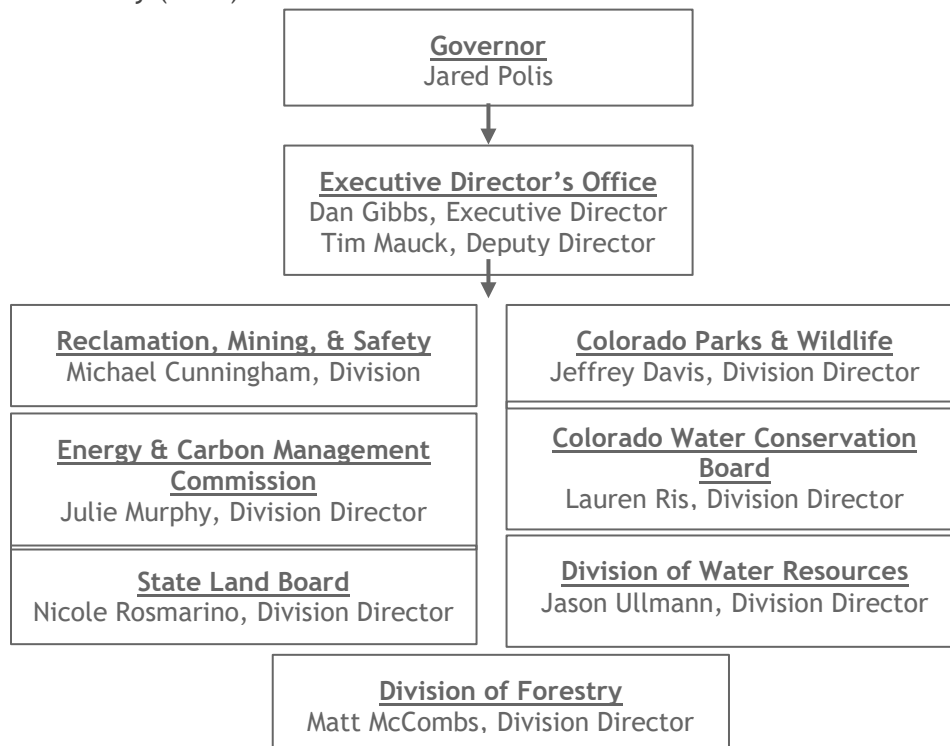
The following strategic priorities build upon existing work in our Department and provide a platform for internal coordination across our Divisions on these issues. This performance plan identifies the Department's specific goals in support of these priorities and highlights the important ongoing work each Division is undertaking to serve all Coloradans.

- **Biodiversity:** Implement biodiversity conservation practices to help manage and conserve Colorado's land, habitats, and species.
- **Energy Transition:** Plan for a coordinated, strategic approach to support the transition to zero-emission energy while avoiding, minimizing, or mitigating the impacts on species and habitats. Identify and manage the fiscal impacts of the transition to zero-emissions energy. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other pollution within DNR's operations. Implement the State's Greenhouse Gas Pollution Reduction Roadmap 2.0 and DNR Energy Goals.
- **Tribal Engagement:** Through the development of a Tribal Relations Program, cooperatively build capacity and further cultural understanding within and across DNR for consistent, meaningful, and sustainable Tribal government-to-government and greater Native/Indigenous community engagement, with a goal of facilitating lasting working partnerships.
- **Balance Conservation and Recreation:** 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 demand.
- **Climate Resilience:** Strengthen climate resilience by aligning DNR's actions with statewide energy and climate goals, including but not limited to implementation of the State's Strategic Plan for Natural and Working Lands, the Colorado Water Plan, the Colorado Forest Action Plan, and DNR Actions in the Climate Preparedness Roadmap.

# 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 (EDO), DNR has seven 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),
- State Land Board (SLB), and
- Division of Forestry (CSFS)



The Colorado Avalanche Information Center (CAIC), the Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program (COSWAP), and the Colorado Produced Water Consortium (CPWC) are administered as special programs within EDO. DNR's Division of Forestry is administered and staffed in partnership with the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) 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.

\*Organizational Chart showing Department Leadership. The Executive Branch is led by Governor Jared Polis, the Department is led by Executive Director Dan Gibbs and Deputy Director Tim Mauck, the Division of Reclamation, Mining & Safety by Director Michael Cunningham, Colorado Parks and Wildlife by Director Jeffrey Davis, the Energy & Carbon Management Commission by Director Julie Murphy, the Colorado Water Conservation Board by Director Lauren Ris, the State Land Board by Director Nicole Rosmarino, the Division of Water Resources by State Engineer Jason Ullman, and the Division of Forestry by Director Matt McCombs.

# Performance Environment

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

## Population Growth

Colorado has experienced relatively significant growth over the last two decades and that growth continues although at a slower rate. According to the State Demographer's Office (SDO), the population of Colorado was 5,876,300 as of July 2023. Adding close to 36,000 from the previous year means a 0.6% growth rate, slightly higher than 2022, which was the slowest growth since 1989. 2019 data showed an expected population growth ranging from between 7.7 million to 9.3 million by 2050. The most current SDO projections for growth expect the population to be 7.4 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, (3) outdoor recreation, and (4) energy.

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 acre-feet per year (AFY) 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 Colorado's Outdoors Strategy and Regional Partnership Program, updating its State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, and by developing a new Statewide Habitat Conservation and Connectivity Plan in partnership with stakeholders around the state.
3. According to the 2025 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), outdoor recreation in Colorado drove \$52.1 billion in consumer spending in 2023, and supported 404,000 jobs. 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. The state's financial shortages to manage growing recreational demands and use on the landscape have been compounded by recent budget and staffing cuts to our federal land management agencies. Partners are looking to the state to help fill this void.

## Energy Development and Associated 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 renewable and non-renewable energy and 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). In addition, the importance of other energy development and carbon management work with DNR's divisions is increasing. The Energy and Carbon Management Commission's regulatory role has been expanded to include carbon sequestration, underground natural gas storage, and deep geothermal development, and the Division of Water Resources now has the authority to regulate shallow geothermal development. Both the Energy and Carbon Management Commission and Colorado Parks and Wildlife also have a role in providing technical assistance and informing the design, siting, and permitting of renewable energy projects. Finally, the State Land Board is actively increasing the development of state lands for solar and wind generation, geothermal development, and carbon sequestration. Renewable generation on state lands now generates approximately \$4.5 million annually.

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. 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. In addition to severance tax revenue, the Energy and Carbon Management Commission's regulatory work is supported by a conservation levy on value of oil and gas production. That levy revenue is characterized by a lower degree of volatility, but is subject to similar long-term uncertainty as Severance Tax. Finally, starting July 1, 2025, production fees on oil and gas will begin generating revenue that will, in part, support wildlife and habitat conservation activities at CPW. Revenue generated by those production fees will be subject to similar volatility as the ECMC conservation levy.

Through all of the annual ups and downs of energy-related revenue collections, DNR continues to work diligently to manage its cash funds conservatively and effectively to ensure consistent support for its programs on a multi-year time horizon.

However, medium- to long-term changes in energy production and use are likely to impact severance tax revenues and other revenues associated with coal, oil and gas, renewable energy, and other energy and mineral production in Colorado. While the pace and magnitude of these changes are uncertain, identifying strategies to continue the funding of critical state and local programs as fossil fuel related revenues decline will be necessary.

## **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. However, the Trump

Administration's staffing and budget cuts to federal land management partners has been at the forefront of conversations regarding management of mineral resources, drought, wildfire, recreation and wildlife on federal lands across the state, and these cuts at federal agencies impact a wide range of DNR programs across the department's entire portfolio.

Currently, DNR has more than 300 federal grants that support approximately \$300M in program capacity and 490 federally funded staff positions. A number DNR divisions rely on federal funding to support staff and operations, as well as important cost shares to partnership programs, including for habitat restoration, wildlife mitigation, water infrastructure, land reclamation, fuels treatment and other projects. Overall, the availability of federal funding will affect the extent to which DNR divisions can continue to provide services and complete projects in the future.

The Department is also closely tracking federal funds that have been awarded to the state and other partners, but have not yet been contracted. The most pressing example is the release of Bucket 2 Environmental Drought Mitigation funding from the Bureau of Reclamation which awarded \$177 million for water projects in the Upper Rio Grande and Upper Colorado River basins in Colorado. As of the publishing of this plan, the vast majority of these funds have not yet been released. Staff within EDO and across the DNR are working on strategies to ensure these funds are distributed.

DNR staff continue to monitor the emerging impacts of policy changes at the federal level, working in coordination with the Governor's Office to respond and advocate for natural resources priorities when appropriate. For example, Colorado has benefited from federal funding for methane emissions reduction and the plugging of orphaned and marginal oil and gas wells which reduces the impacts of energy production on public health, the environment, and the natural resources DNR is charged with protecting. However, during the beginning of the Trump Administration, some of these funds, among others, were implicated in the "Federal Funding Freeze" memo that was circulated by the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on January 29, 2025. The state of Colorado participated in a lawsuit challenging this pause of funds from being distributed to the states and a District Judge in Rhode Island ultimately issued a preliminary injunction, which prevented the OMB memo from going into effect. Even with this court win, the availability of future federal funding remains uncertain. Therefore, the DNR has been communicating closely with congressional delegation staff through verbal and written communications to continue to advocate for critical federal funds.

The significant changes underway at the federal level embolden Colorado to continue leading on efforts to protect Colorado's wildlife and conservation priorities, and the state's meaningful participation, for example by providing public comments, continues to ensure the expertise of our department is accurately represented in federal issues. In spite of the ongoing uncertainty, the state has been successful in working to advance several partnerships with the United States Forest Service (USFS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM). For example, this past year, Governor Polis announced a new recreation management partnership between Colorado Parks & Wildlife and the U.S. Forest Service at Pikes Peak. Colorado Parks & Wildlife is also working in close coordination with the Bureau of Land Management on a shared recreation management approach for the Sandhills Offhighway Vehicle area located in North Park. We also continue to follow the principles of Shared Stewardship and are hopeful that we will be able to complete an MOU with the BLM, similar to our current agreement with the USFS,



outlining how we will work together to conduct targeted, on the ground work with focuses on forest health and outdoor recreation.

## 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.

Average temperatures in Colorado were above or well above average all but two months throughout this past fiscal year. Notably, October 2024 ranked as the 2nd warmest October in NOAA's 130-year record. Following a decent late summer monsoon and near record-breaking fall snowstorms, conditions in Colorado began to dry out in January 2025. This year's snowpack accumulation was slightly below average in the northern basins and significantly below average in the southern basins. By April 1st, Colorado's peak snow water equivalent reached only 85 percent of the median, with the Southwest and Upper Rio Grande basins experiencing particularly low snowpack. In fact, snowpack peaked 11 days earlier than average across the state this year. Warm and dry conditions in April spurred rapid snowmelt, especially across southern Colorado. This combination of below-normal snow accumulation and hotter, drier spring conditions led to rapidly developing drought across the West Slope and southern Colorado by early summer 2025. As of June 5, 2025, approximately 65% of Colorado's cumulative land area is in D0 drought (Abnormally Dry), and 6% is in D3 (Extreme Drought). Large portions of the lower elevations of the Colorado and Gunnison basins are experiencing D3 drought, along with parts of the Upper Rio Grande basin. Conversely, drought conditions have improved in the lower Arkansas valley and across the northern Front Range over this same period.

NOAA's Climate Prediction Center has high confidence that summer and fall 2025 will be warmer than normal across Colorado. There are equal chances for above normal, near normal, or below normal precipitation for southwestern Colorado this summer, while eastern Colorado is likely to experience a drier than normal summer and fall 2025.

As CWCB continues to monitor potential drought conditions, it will utilize the Water Conditions Monitoring Committee (formerly the Water Availability Task Force) and the work within the 2023-2028 Enhanced State Hazard Mitigation Plan (Plan). The Plan has been used to provide consistent support for evaluating local conditions, identifying possible support measures, raising awareness and providing consistent messaging to the Governor and/or federal government on local needs. The Plan is not currently activated, although the Water Conditions Monitoring Committee continues to meet monthly to assess current and future water supply conditions as the summer months progress.

In 2023-2024, DNR supported the development of the State's updated [Greenhouse Gas \(GHG\) Pollution Reduction Roadmap](#). The updated Roadmap includes 49 new near-term actions to help the state meet our statutorily mandated GHG reduction targets. DNR Divisions are implementing those new near-term actions to achieve emissions reduction goals, including by reducing emissions from oil and gas

operations, expanding renewable generation on state lands, supporting and regulating the development of carbon sequestration, and implementing strategies related to Natural and Working Lands. In 2025, DNR supported the development of the [State's Carbon Management Roadmap](#). That Roadmap included 68 recommendations to inform the development of carbon management strategies as a complement to the State's ambitious efforts to reduce direct GHG emissions.

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 efforts and continues to support climate analysis like the update to the Climate Change in Colorado Report released in January 2024, and the Climate Impacts Report which will be released in late 2025 (more information provided in CWCB section below). The 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 and lack age class diversity after decades of fire suppression and lack of forest management at the necessary pace and scale. When you suppress fires it causes an increase in density of trees/fuels in our forested ecosystems. There is a lack of age diversity in our forests due to lack of management and disturbance. Forests are increasingly vulnerable to insect outbreaks, disease, and uncharacteristic wildfires that are growing in size and severity 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 (WUI).

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 2025. In December 2021, the Marshall Fire destroyed over 1,000 homes and businesses in Boulder County and also took two lives. Estimated losses total over \$500 million. DNR led Colorado's first ever state-led Colorado Burned Area Emergency Response (CoBAER) analysis, now known as the Watershed Emergency Response Team (WERT), to assess soil burn severity and post-fire hydrological hazards following the Marshall Fire. Overall, this analysis indicated minor or no anticipated risks to values-at-risk from post-fire hazards and that recommended local agencies conduct monitoring in "hotspots" with increased erosion risks rather than recommending specific control measures at particular locations. DNR will continue to engage with impacted communities on wildfire mitigation and post-wildfire impacts.

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. There have been two dedicated efforts in workforce development - HB23-1246, which provides free community college education for forestry and wildland fire, and SB23-005, which is working closely with community colleges to drive industry internship opportunities in the mitigation and wildfire space. The Colorado State Forest Service also launched the Forest Tracker in 2025, which is currently live. The Forest Tracker project provides a resource where data can be visualized, summarized, and streamed in

mapping software for additional analyses. The dataset includes publicly accessible federal data, but also voluntary data submissions from state, local, non-governmental, and other partners carrying out forest management activities. This need has been recognized in Colorado for decades - having a centralized, accessible location of cross-boundary forest management data to better understand the impacts of work across large landscapes, better leverage resources, implement adaptive monitoring to improve treatments, and inform future policy. Additionally, the tree nursery is currently under construction. Demolition was completed early in 2025 with ongoing construction currently happening. The project is expected to be finalized by early 2026.

In addition to these new programs and efforts, the Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program (COSWAP) housed within DNR's Executive Director's Office received its annual funding of \$5 million in severance tax cash funds and \$1 million general fund. This year COSWAP made 31 awards for strategic wildfire mitigation, including workforce development projects supporting conservation corps and Department of Corrections State Wildland Inmate Fire Teams (SWIFT) crews and landscape scale investments for crossboundary impacts. COSWAP continued the investment into a partnership with CWCB's Wildfire Ready Watersheds program by funding 5 new projects that reduce wildfire risk to critical water infrastructure and high priority watersheds. Additionally, a new ten-year master agreement was signed in May 2025 with the Colorado Youth Corps Association, supporting workforce development in youth and veterans in wildfire mitigation, a cornerstone of the COSWAP. COSWAP will continue to provide Landscape Resilience Investment and Workforce Development grant opportunities. To date, 117 projects have been supported by COSWAP totalling over \$40 million and 16,900 acres of implementation on all landownerships in Colorado.

Additionally, DNR's EDO is working with CSFS to update operating agreements and clarify budget and programmatic functionality of the Division of Forestry. A first step in this process included moving CSFS budget lines from the Department of Higher Education to DNR, formalizing our growing partnership with CSFS. This includes the Forest Restoration and Wildfire Risk Mitigation (FRWRM) Program. FRWRM is administered by the CSFS and continues to support community-level actions across the state with grant funding opportunities. 100 applications were received for this program in the 2024-2025 funding cycle, of which 37 (23 fuels and forest health projects and 14 capacity building projects) were funded with the program's annual \$8 million appropriation.

# 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.

## Energy and Carbon Management Commission

### Orphan Well Program

ECMC's Orphan Well Program (OWP) continues to meet its aggressive goal to plug and abandon orphaned wells in the state. Since 2018, the OWP has increased the number of orphaned wells plugged and abandoned annually from 18 to more than 100. The on-going infusions of federal funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), has resulted in the OWP obligating more than \$25M for work on orphaned sites, and performing work on approximately 548 sites as of May 2025.

### Expanded Regulatory Authority

The ECMC continues to move forward with implementation of its expanded regulatory authority over geothermal wells, carbon capture and sequestration (CCS) wells, and underground natural gas storage. The 2023 legislative session saw ECMC being vested with the authority to bring forward a regulatory framework to oversee these nascent technologies in Colorado. These technologies are critical to helping Colorado meet its net zero emissions goal by 2050. Establishing a sound regulatory regime for these emerging technologies protects public health, safety, and the environment and provides operators the confidence to invest in Colorado. ECMC brings to these regulatory efforts its expertise in siting oil and gas operations in a manner that ensures the protection of public health, safety, welfare and the environment. The Commission adopted new deep geothermal rules in August 2024 and state rules to govern the injection of carbon dioxide in December 2024. The State has also applied to the US EPA for primacy to regulate carbon sequestration in Colorado. In the 2024 legislative session, ECMC was also directed to provide technical support to local and tribal governments on the review of proposed renewable energy projects and the development of local codes governing renewable development. Finally, in the 2025 legislative session HB25-1165 created a new enterprise, funded by a fee on carbon sequestration, to take on the long term stewardship of carbon sequestration wells and streamline the development of geothermal energy.

## Colorado Water Conservation Board

### Water Plan Update

The CWCB continues to implement the 2023 Colorado Water Plan, a 10 year plan for working to collaboratively address Colorado's water challenges. 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 “Agency Actions” the CWCB will take (with collaborating agencies) and examples of 50 Partner 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.

In January 2025, the CWCB published a [two-year progress report](#) which offers a glimpse into the hard work of advancing actions that the agency and its partners have accomplished so far. The report highlighted that over the last 2 years, CWCB has made progress on just over 20% of the 50 agency actions identified in the Water Plan, putting the agency on track for full completion of the 50 agency actions over the next ten years. Because one of the most influential ways that the CWCB is able to move the Water Plan forward is through funding via loans and grants, the majority of the report focuses on the results of those funded projects through case studies of exemplary grantees. The report also shares that since the 2023 Water Plan was published, nearly \$38 million has been awarded to 147 projects across the state through Water Plan Grants.

### **Climate and Water Workshops**

CWCB and partners from CDA, DHSEM, CDPHE, DOLA, CEO, and CPW hosted two workshops in April of 2025 that support a forthcoming Climate Impacts Report, a collaborative effort with Colorado State University’s Water Center and CWCB. The workshops included presentations from agency partners on their climate and water-related resources, tools, and funding opportunities and an interactive table-top exercise that revealed gaps that might exist when planning for water and climate resilience. The workshops offered an opportunity for exploring the impacts, exposures, and vulnerabilities Colorado communities might face to different climate hazards (wildfire, drought, flooding, extreme heat, etc.).

### **Wildfire and Other Natural Hazards**

Work is continuing on the Wildfire Ready Watersheds program authorized under SB 21-240 and on the award of grants to develop Wildfire Ready Watershed Action Plans (WRAPs) and implementation through the Colorado Watershed Restoration Grant Program authorized under HB 22-1379. 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 and cost-effectively address these impacts the most. The CWCB completed a statewide susceptibility study in December 2022 to investigate the susceptibility to life, safety, infrastructure, and water supplies to post-wildfire debris flow, sedimentation, flooding, and water quality degradation. An interactive website, [WildfireReadyWatersheds.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 continues to collaborate 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. As of June 2025, 21 Wildfire Ready Action Plans have been initiated statewide under this program, and nine implementation projects have been funded. Three of the 21 WRAPs are complete and are available at [wildfirereadywatersheds.com](#).

### **Transformative Landscape Change**

The 2023 Colorado Water Plan calls for Transformative Landscape Change, a move away from water intensive landscapes (e.g., turf) to help embrace a One Water ethic - leveraging water conservation, land use planning, irrigation efficiency, and alternative water supplies to drive waterwise landscapes.

Over the last year CWCB pursued two initiatives to complete the Colorado Water Plan's Agency Action 1.7, which called for identifying turf replacement strategies that support transformative landscape change. First, the [Transformative Landscape Change State-of-the-Science Report](#) offered an extensive and holistic analysis of turf replacement and landscape change, including the potential costs, water savings, ecological benefits and risks, and lessons from the Turf Replacement Grant Program. Second, CWCB partnered with Denver Water, Resource Central, and various stakeholders to produce an adoptable statewide [DIY Landscape Transformation Guide](#) to assist residents in creating sustainable, resilient, pollinator-friendly, and drought-tolerant yards.

[Additionally, the Turf Replacement Grant Program](#) (TRGP) received a \$2 million funding infusion and a deadline extension to June 30, 2028, from the 2024 CWCB Projects Bill. In July 2024, the CWCB Board approved updated Guidelines, notably requiring irrigation considerations and eliminating the \$50,000 grant application cap. Over \$1.7 million was awarded to 20 eligible local entities to develop or advance voluntary turf replacement initiatives tailored to their communities. In total, the TRGP has provided over \$3 million in local support through 67 grants. CWCB also worked with Resource Central on the Transformative Landscape Change (TLC) Challenge's second phase, collaborating with 15 Colorado communities to convert up to 2,000 square feet of nonfunctional turf in public and visible spaces into water-wise landscapes to serve as visual examples of these aesthetic and functional shifts.

### **CWCB Guide**

The CWCB Guide was developed to provide a clear foundation for understanding how the Colorado Water Conservation Board (both the Board and staff) works with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and key stakeholder groups—most notably the Basin Roundtables and the Interbasin Compact Committee (IBCC). This effort also fulfills Agency Action 4.2 of the Colorado Water Plan, which called for a “universal handbook” to support onboarding for Roundtable and IBCC members and to address common stakeholder questions. The Guide serves as a centralized resource—part onboarding tool, part ongoing reference—that outlines the roles, responsibilities, and key procedures relevant to these groups. Finalized in January 2025, the CWCB Guide incorporates input gathered over the past year through extensive stakeholder engagement, including feedback from Basin Roundtables and an open online review process. CWCB is committed to keeping the Guide current, with annual reviews and updates as needed.

### **Strategies to Protect Irrigated Agriculture**

The CWCB completed the [10 Strategies to Protect Irrigated Agriculture report](#) which fulfills Agency Action 2.6 of the Colorado Water Plan: Assess the economic opportunities of avoided buy and dry to communities, ecosystems, and recreation. The report explores strategies that CWCB, local governments, and stakeholders can use to promote the benefits and protection of irrigated agriculture. The suite of strategies includes recognizing the ecosystem benefits of irrigated agriculture, utilizing conservation easements, and elevating agriculture in urban planning. The CWCB staff and partners at the Colorado Department of Agriculture are sharing this report with leaders in local government to promote exploration of these strategies. The report can also be used as guidance for creating multi-benefit projects that support both agriculture and environmental and recreational values.

## Colorado Division of Water Resources

### Expanded Telemetry for Administration

DWR obtained funding from multiple state and federal sources to expand the Division's telemetry network that allows DWR staff, water users, and the public to access streamflows and diversions in real-time in a cost-effective way. This effort improves the accuracy and transparency of administration in stream systems where it is implemented while better informing water resources and reservoir operations. Funding for installation of streamgages at critical sites in the Colorado River basin was received from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. For gages on the Bear River, funds were received from the CWCB and the Yampa-White-Green River Roundtable. For diversion telemetry statewide, \$1.827 million was provided by the General Assembly through the CWCB Projects Bill (HB24-1435).

### Proactive Risk Assessments of High Hazard Potential Dams

DWR is responsible for the safety of dams across the State. Over 2.1 million Coloradans live within the dam break inundation zone of approximately 400 high hazard potential dams. As existing dams age and new dams are constructed, the overall dam safety risk grows. DWR follows a consistent risk based approach to evaluating potential failure modes and consequences at specific high hazard dams. DWR has obtained federal and state grant funds to conduct comprehensive dam safety evaluation (CDSE) risk assessments at a rapid pace. DWR leads the nation in terms of championing proactive risk assessments to define the actions necessary to reduce risk on dams before they evolve into incidents and failures. In the last 5 years, DWR has completed risk assessments on over 90% of the high hazard potential dams that have a population at risk over 1,000. These CDSE risk assessment reports provide a clear road map for DWR and dam owners on actions necessary to reduce risk such as focused monitoring, dam rehabilitation projects, or improved emergency planning.

### Mobile Field Data Application

In FY24, DWR received \$800,000 in funding from the CWCB Projects Bill (HB24-1435) to develop a fully functional field data application to run on mobile devices. DWR staff perform numerous different activities in the field that include diversion record collection, well inspections, dam inspections, well meter testing, field inspections for water court applications, etc. Many of these activities currently require cumbersome processes to collect data and re-enter it or use multiple types of software to get it into the DWR database and document storage solutions. A goal of this project is to create a way to efficiently collect the field data and documents in a mobile application that will then easily upload into the system. The project is underway with an experienced consultant and initial field data collection forms are in development.

### Increasing Efficiency in DWR Processes

HB25-1014 implements process efficiencies to simplify, modernize and streamline various DWR work activities. The bill makes changes to treat non-exempt permits the same as exempt permits for the purposes of expiration, making it easier to keep those permits valid, splits the decennial water rights abandonment process into two groupings to reduce attorney workload and ensure careful consideration of each case, and removes unnecessary final permitting requirements for certain wells within the Designated Basins. Overall, these changes will reduce paperwork and save water users, DWR employees, and Attorney General staff time and money.

## **Responsible Development of Geothermal Resources**

DWR and ECMC worked with stakeholders and legislators to pass HB25-1165, which streamlines the permitting process for geothermal operations while protecting public health and groundwater resources, including historic hot springs. As a part of this bill, the regulation of shallow closed-loop geothermal systems, known as ground heat exchangers, will be transferred to the state Board of Examiners of Water Well Construction and Pump Installation Contractors, renaming them as the state Board of Examiners of Water Well and Ground Heat Exchanger Contractors, and an individual with 10 years of experience related to ground heat exchangers will be added as a member of the Board.

## **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 (KCW) Pass in January 2023. The new annual pass grants access to all 43 Colorado state parks at a reduced price. CPW launched a robust marketing campaign around the Pass, which has driven more than 28% of Coloradans to include the KCW Pass with their vehicle registration. Since becoming available to purchase in January 2023, the KCW Pass has raised approximately \$100 million through May 31, 2025. Funds generated from the pass are dedicated to supporting state parks, wildlife, and recreation programs.

### **Wolf Reintroduction and Management**

After the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission approved the [Gray Wolf Restoration and Management Plan](#) in May 2023 and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service completed its 10(j) rule, CPW released a total of 10 gray wolves onto state-owned land in Summit and Grand counties in December 2023. CPW released another 15 gray wolves onto state and privately-owned lands in Eagle and Pitkin counties in January 2025, continuing the agency's efforts to create a permanent, self-sustaining gray wolf population in Colorado. There have been five instances of reproduction since the 2023 translocation. In summer of 2024, there was one wolf den in Colorado, with five surviving pups to the end of 2024. The breeding female and four of the five pups were placed in temporary captivity in fall of 2024 following several livestock depredations, and released back into the wild in January 2025. In summer of 2025, there were four dens that continue to be monitored to quantify pup survival through 2025. Wolves translocated in both 2023 and 2025 have reproduced in Colorado. Eight translocated wolves have died of natural or anthropogenic causes, in addition to two wolves that were not translocated. CPW and the Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on how the agencies will collaborate to minimize wolf-livestock conflicts. Additional staff have been added at the field level to assist private landowners in reducing wolf-livestock conflicts, a range-riding program has been implemented, and a position that will oversee the wolf damage program has been added, enhancing the assistance CPW provides to landowners when damage occurs.



## **Division of Reclamation, Mining 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 is 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. The Program recently completed extinguishment of underground coal mine fires at the Lewis and Marshall Mines in Boulder County, and is currently completing mitigative measures at the Corely Mine in Fremont County. Completion of these projects significantly reduces wildfire risk in high population centers with significant infrastructure. 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 has increased 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 on 973,000 acres across the state. 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 2025-26

### Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW):

- 43 state parks
- About 350 wildlife areas
- 960 wildlife species and new authority to study tens of thousands of invertebrates and rare plants

### Division of Water Resources (DWR):

- 179,572 water rights
- 3,145 jurisdictional dams
- 9 interstate compacts (with CWCB)

### State Land Board (SLB):

- 3 million acres land
- 4 million acres minerals
- 7,800 leases and contracts

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

- 1,255 construction and hard rock mine sites
- 26 Coal Mines
- 19 Tourist Mines

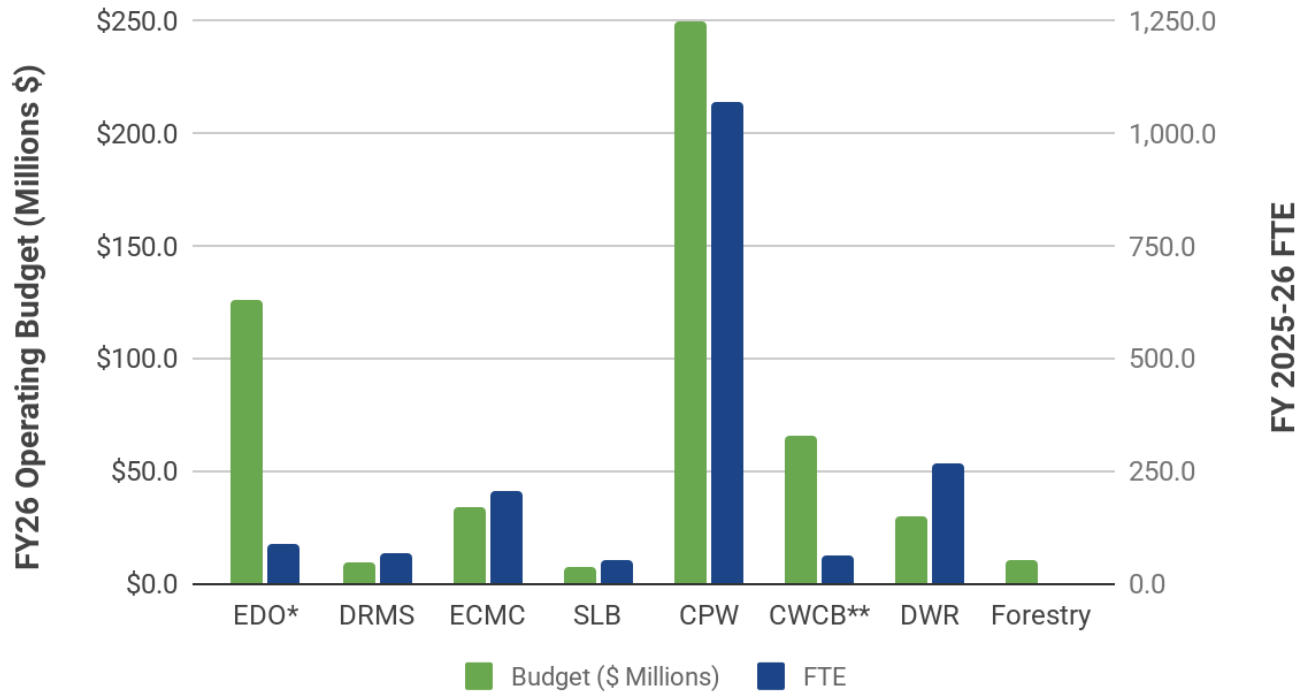
### Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB):

- \$1.1 billion loan portfolio
- 14 interstate agreements (with DWR)

### Energy & Carbon Management Commission (ECMC):

- 46,123 active oil and gas wells
- 54 oil and gas development plans (OGDPs) are under review
- 210 drilling permits (Applications for Permit to Drill (APDs) or Form 2s) are under review
- August 2024: adopted rules for deep geothermal wells
- October 2024: adopted Cumulative Impacts Rules
- December 2024: adopted CCS/Class VI well rules
- February 2025: adopted updates to High Priority Habitat Maps
- March 2025: adopted rules for produced water

## DNR FY 2025-26 Operating Budget: \$530.9million (1805.4 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), Division of Water Resources (DWR), Division of Forestry (Forestry)

\*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 Colorado River Program (CRP), and Colorado Produced Water Consortium (CPWC). The EDO FTE count includes both central administrative staff and CAIC, CRP, and CPWC personnel.

\*\*The CWCB and DWR budgets include appropriations made in the annual CWCB Projects Bill.

## DNR Key Accomplishments in FY 2024-25

The Department of Natural Resources has made considerable progress on our efforts to advance three Wildly Important Goals (WIGs) for FY 2024-25 and beyond:

Measure	FY24 Baseline Number	Q1 FY25	Q2 FY25	Q3 FY25	Q4 FY25	FY25 Actual	FY25 Target Number
Percentage of vehicle registration renewals that opt-into the KCW Pass*	27%	28%	27%	27%	N/A	N/A	29%
Number of meetings with non-government organizations about promoting the KCW Pass to increase public awareness of the Pass*	0 NGOs	0 NGOs	0 NGOs	19 NGOs	N/A	N/A	20 NGOs
Number of new campsites at State Parks to provide more opportunities for visitors*	0 campsites	0 campsites	0 campsites	108 campsites	N/A	N/A	70 campsites
Amount invested in a targeted campaign encouraging Coloradans to purchase the KCW Pass*	\$2.74M	\$2.97M	\$3.33M	\$4.10M	N/A	N/A	\$4.34M
Number of paid digital impressions for targeted campaigns encouraging Coloradans to purchase the KCW Pass*	0	6.5M	20.1M	34.4M	N/A	N/A	27M impressions

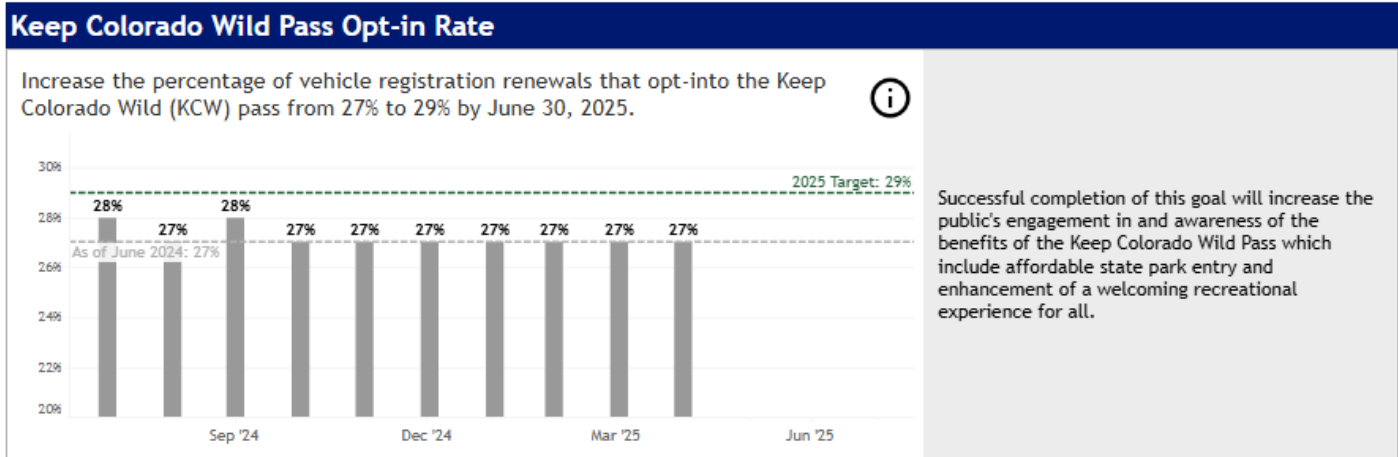


## WIG #1: Keep Colorado Wild Pass Opt-In Rate

This Wildly Important Goal is directly supported by Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) and Department of Revenue's Division of Motor Vehicles and aims to increase the percentage of vehicle registration renewals that opt-into the Keep Colorado Wild (KCW) pass from 27% to 29% by June 30, 2025. Historically, CPW has relied heavily on hunting and fishing license fees and park entrance fees to achieve its mission, and prior to the creation of the KCW pass, there was 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 into the future. Launched in January 2023, the KCW Pass helps to diversify CPW's funding streams as a new annual state park pass that grants access to all 43 Colorado state parks at a reduced price. Since becoming available to purchase in January 2023, the KCW Pass has raised approximately \$62 million through June 30, 2024. Funds generated from the pass are dedicated to supporting state parks, wildlife, and recreation programs, and this WIG represents CPW and DNR's commitment to continue promoting the KCW Pass as a significant new source of revenue to help achieve CPW's critical mission.

**Major Programs:** CPW Policy & Planning Section, CPW Financial Services, CPW Creative Services and Marketing

\*Note: All measures with an asterisk are reported cumulatively from quarter to quarter.



## WIG #2: Balance Outdoor Recreation and Conservation

This Wildly Important Goal is directly supported by Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) to complete [Colorado's Outdoors Strategy](#) that ensures a future where our outdoors, people, and way of life endure, by delivering Colorado's communities a toolkit for conservation, climate resilience, and sustainable outdoor recreation by June 30, 2025. 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. Officially launched in April 2025, Colorado's Outdoors Strategy advances three interrelated goals for our outdoors. Each goal is essential to achieve a future where our people, outdoors, and way of life endure for generations to come: (1) Climate-resilient conservation and restoration helps wildlife, landscapes, and communities thrive, (2) Outdoor recreation is exceptional and sustainable and (3) Inclusive planning and funding drive coordinated action for our outdoors. Colorado's Outdoors Strategy toolkit will deliver local communities critical conservation, wildlife, recreation, and climate resiliency mapping data that will enable these communities to better identify, coordinate, and prioritize outdoor strategies and outcomes.

**Major Programs:** CO Wildlife Habitat Program, CO State Parks, SLB Public Access Program, CPW Trails Program, CPW Terrestrial Program

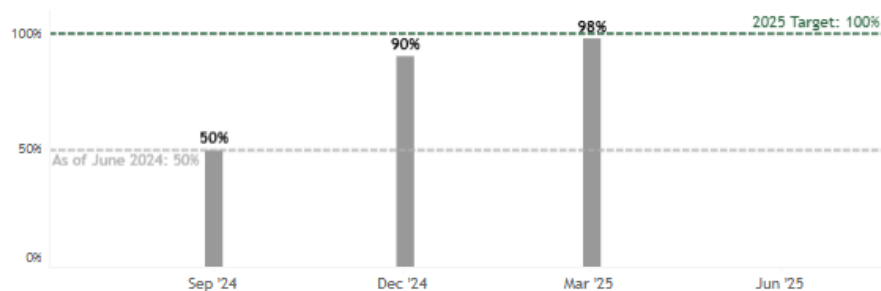
Measure	FY24 Baseline Number	Q1 FY25	Q2 FY25	Q3 FY25	Q4 FY25	FY25 Actual	FY25 Target Number
Complete Colorado's Outdoors Strategy that provides Colorado's communities with a toolkit for conservation, climate resilience, and sustainable outdoor recreation by June 30, 2025.	0%	50%	90%	98%	100%	100%	100%
Land mass of Colorado participating in CPW's Regional Partnerships Initiative	67%	67%	75%	75%	80%	80%	80%
Number of stakeholder groups and regional sectors of partnership initiatives (RPIs) solicited for feedback on the draft of Colorado's Outdoors Strategy	56 groups and RPIs	64 groups and RPIs	64 groups and RPIs	64 groups and RPIs	64 groups and RPIs	64 groups and RPIs	50 groups and RPIs

Measure	FY24 Baseline Number	Q1 FY25	Q2 FY25	Q3 FY25	Q4 FY25	FY25 Actual	FY25 Target Number
Number of trainings with communities and stakeholders on Colorado's Outdoors Strategy toolkit	0 trainings	0 trainings	0 trainings	0 trainings	4 trainings	4 trainings	4 trainings
Number of Interagency Council meetings held extending pathways to other State departments and agencies to collaborate on a Regional Partnership Initiative or Colorado's Outdoors Strategy	0 meetings	1 meeting	1 meeting	0 meetings	0 meetings	2 meetings	2 meetings

\*Note: All measures with an asterisk are reported cumulatively from quarter to quarter.

#### Balance Conservation and Outdoor Recreation

Complete Colorado's Outdoors Strategy that ensures a future where our outdoors, people, and way of life endure by delivering Colorado's communities a toolkit for conservation, climate resilience, and sustainable outdoor recreation by June 30, 2025. ⓘ



Successful completion of this goal will prioritize the conservation of the state's wildlife, landscapes, and agricultural lands while enhancing public access, recreation management, and climate resiliency.

### WIG #3: Colorado Water Plan Implementation

This Wildly Important Goal is directly supported by the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) to continue implementation of the 2023 Colorado Water Plan by advancing 20 Agency Actions identified in the Plan by June 30, 2027. 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 sets out a roadmap for developing resilient responses to our water-related challenges using lessons learned and evaluating bold new actions that will support Colorado's watersheds, cities and rural communities, and farms. DNR, through the CWCB, is set to

implement the 2023 Plan by advancing Agency Actions that will support Colorado’s watersheds, cities and rural communities, and farms.

**Major Programs:** CWCB Water Supply Planning Section, Water Supply Reserve Fund Grant Program, Water Plan Grant Program

Measure	FY24 Baseline Number	Q1 FY25	Q2 FY25	Q3 FY25	Q4 FY25	FY25 Actual	FY25 Target Number
Implement 20 Agency Actions from the Colorado Water Plan (which equates to 40% implementation of the plan)	0 Actions	N/A*	12 Actions	N/A	N/A	N/A	5 Actions**
Compile and finalize a 2-year progress report on the Colorado Water Plan	0%	50%	90%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Implement Transformative Landscape Change local projects	0 projects	8 projects	0 projects	0 projects	N/A	N/A	15 projects
Develop and publish a free Do It Yourself Guide for Turf Removal informing residents how to transform lawns to more climate appropriate landscapes	0%	50%	80%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Develop and publish a Turf Replacement Report for the public that summarizes concerns, water savings potential, and the state of the science related to turf replacement	0%	50%	80%	100%	100%	100%	100%

\*Note: This metric is reported bi-annually, so no data is reported in Q1 or Q3.

\*\*Note: This metric was set as a three-year goal with a target of 20 actions, and recently increased to 22 actions due to significant progress occurring in FY 24-25.



## Water Plan Implementation

The Colorado Water Conservation Board will take action on 20 Agency Actions from the Colorado Water Plan by June 30, 2027.



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 needs through collaborative action around water development and water conservation.

Additional detail for these, and other WIGs is available in the [Department's Performance Plan](#) and on [DNR's WIG Dashboard](#).

## WIG #4: Clean Energy Transition on State Lands

This Wildly Important Goal is directly supported by the State Land Board (SLB) to increase renewable energy installed capacity on State Land Board properties from 550MW to 750MW by June 30, 2027. As the state pursues a transition to renewable energy over the coming decades, the State Land Board is uniquely positioned to partner with energy generation and transmission entities leading the effort. The recently updated Greenhouse Gas Pollution Reduction Roadmap 2.0 acknowledged the important role the State Land Board plays in supporting the Governor's Wildly Important Priority of achieving 100% renewable energy for the grid by 2040 and directed the State Land Board to increase clean energy generation on state lands. As of summer 2024, solar and wind energy projects located on state trust land had a rated capacity of 550 MW, representing approximately 6 percent of the total renewable energy capacity in Colorado. The State Land Board owns 3 million acres of surface lands across the state, with land generally more concentrated on the eastern plains. In planning projects, partner entities find state trust lands accessible at reasonable cost in convenient locations supportive of the needs they identify in their larger plans. State Land Board staff ensure that land and species stewardship is maintained in the planning and development process, and across a project's productive lifecycle. Wind and solar energy production and cost effective transmission are possible at utility scale by putting state trust lands to work.

**Major Programs:** Renewable Energy Development, Carbon Capture and Sequestration, Rights of Way and Access, Oil & Gas Development

Measure	FY24 Baseline Number	Q1 FY25	Q2 FY25	Q3 FY25	Q4 FY25	FY25 Actual	FY25 Target Number
Increase renewable energy installed capacity on State Land Board properties	550 Megawatts (MW)	550 MW	600 MW	600 MW	N/A	N/A	616 MW*

Measure	FY24 Baseline Number	Q1 FY25	Q2 FY25	Q3 FY25	Q4 FY25	FY25 Actual	FY25 Target Number
Convert existing planning leases to production leases to facilitate the deployment of renewable energy projects on State Land Board Lands	0 leases	0 leases	3 leases	0 leases	N/A	N/A	3 leases
Hold meetings with existing planning lease operators to stay abreast of planning and permitting efforts	0 meetings	7 meetings	9 meetings	9 meetings	N/A	N/A	10 meetings
Attend a renewable energy industry conference to generate additional renewable energy planning leases	0 conferences	0 conferences	0 conferences	0 conferences	N/A	N/A	1 conference
Update the State Land Board map server with most current National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) GIS layers of wind and solar resources	0%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

\*Note: This metric was set as a three-year goal with a target of 750 MWs by June 2027.

## Clean Energy Transition on State Lands

Increase renewable energy installed capacity on State Land Board properties from 550MW to 750MW by June 30, 2027.



Successful completion of this goal will result in the achievement of a near-term action articulated in the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Reduction Roadmap 2.0, which states that the State Land Board will aspire to increase clean energy generated from state lands in support of the state's greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals. As of summer 2023, solar and wind projects on State Land Board lands accounted for approximately 6% of total renewable energy generated in Colorado.

## Other Key Accomplishments in FY 2024-25

### Colorado Parks and Wildlife

- Hosted 18.5 million state park visitors
- Issued 1.7 million hunting & fishing licenses
- Logged 274,000 volunteer hours
- Provided 1.9 million acres of public access for hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing
- Generated \$39.7 million in revenue from the Keep Colorado Wild pass

### Colorado Water Conservation Board

- Provided \$67 million in loans & \$37 million in grants for water projects around the state
- Published the [Water Plan Progress Report](#) documenting 20% progress on the Plan's 50 Agency Actions and showcasing Partner Actions across the state
- Advanced transformative landscape change by finalizing a [State of the Science on Turf Replacement Report](#), a [DIY Guide for Landscape Transformation](#), and continuation of the state's turf replacement program
- Published the [CWCB Guide](#), which achieves Water Plan Agency Action 4.2 to develop a "universal handbook" to assist CWCB stakeholders, provide consistent answers to common questions, and create alignment among the Board, IBCC, and the Roundtables
- Published [10 Strategies to Protect Irrigated Agriculture](#), which offers CWCB, local governments, and stakeholders actionable approaches to assess and address the potential direct and indirect impacts of reducing irrigated acreage or converting agricultural land to other uses. This report fulfills the charge of Colorado Water Plan Agency Action 2.6, which aimed to evaluate the value of irrigated agriculture in Colorado and develop strategies to protect it
- Hosted two Water & Climate Workshops (in Pueblo & Clifton, Colorado) to achieve Agency Action 4.5 with the goal to assess climate hazards and their impact on water resources in Colorado, alongside local resilience efforts
- Finalized Phase II of a 2.5 year Colorado Water Loss Initiative Training and strengthened state water loss reporting requirements and initiated Phase III
- Enhanced water loss reporting requiring water providers include a validated water audit with their report on water use and conservation efforts
- Funded the ongoing development of local Water Conservation and Drought Plans
- Appropriated 13 instream flow rights covering 62 miles of streams

- Continued acquisition of LIDAR throughout the state in pursuit of full up-to-date state coverage
- 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
- Utilized Federal American Rescue Plan Act funding to retire 23,541 acres of irrigated acreage in the Republican River and Rio Grande Basins, conserving 35,312 acre-feet of groundwater annually

## **Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety**

- Responded to and mitigated 1 coal mine fire emergency
- Mitigated Marshall Coal mine fire in Boulder County
- Implemented electronic permitting for all coal mines and trial ePermitting for all hardrock and construction material mines is well under way
- Conducted meetings with Colorado Soil Conservation, DWR, and others regarding public notice processes and agency comment importance in Minerals applications

## **Division of Water Resources**

- Obtained a resolution from the Republican River Compact Administration noting Colorado's achievement of the required 10,000 acres of dry up in the South Fork
- Continued progress on west slope measurement rules with finalization in the Southwest basin as of June 1, 2025 and stakeholding in the Gunnison Basin. Coordinating with CWCB to provide Upper Colorado River Commission grant funds to water users for installation of new water measurement structures
- Completed a 3-day hearing in May 2025 to amend the Rules and Regulations for Water Well Construction, followed by adoption of the Amended Rules by the Board
- Completed 142 of the 157 protests to the 2020 Decennial Abandonment Lists
- The State Engineer declared the White River as over appropriated, effective May 1, 2025, above the Taylor Park Reservoir due to multiple periods in recent years when there was not adequate flow to satisfy the Taylor Park Hydropower water right. A report prepared in support of this designation shows that average annual flows in the White River have declined by up to 80,000 acre-feet during the past 100 years

## **Energy & Carbon Management Commission**

- Broadened ECMC's historic authority over upstream oil and gas operations to include regulatory oversight of deep geothermal resources, underground natural gas storage, and carbon sequestration, in addition to requiring the reuse and recycling of produced water
- Implemented first-in-the-nation Cumulative Impacts and Enhanced Systems and Practices Rules including the hiring of two Environmental Justice Community Liaisons (cumulative impacts refer to the combined effects on public health and the environment from the incremental impacts of a proposed oil and gas operation, alongside those from past, present, and foreseeable future developments)
- Increased Orphaned Well Program activity from over 100 sites per year to over 200 sites per year. With the additional funding from the federal government, ECMC has continued to accelerate the plugging of orphaned wells.
- Supported the Colorado Produced Water Consortium and adopted rules to require the reuse of produced water and reductions in fresh water use in oil and gas operations
- Engaged stakeholders and Colorado communities to inform the establishment of first of its kind regulations in Colorado for both Class VI injection wells and deep geothermal operations

- Released five studies related to the energy transition spanning geothermal resources and regulation, hydrogen operations, pipelines, and subsurface injection
- Collaborated with the DNR and DWR to establish regulatory certainty for geothermal and carbon storage industries through a recently signed law, HB25-1165
- Started providing technical support to local and tribal governments on renewable energy development, as directed by SB24-212

## State Land Board

- Thirteen consecutive years of more than \$100 million in annual trust revenues with fiscal 2023-24 seeing \$229 million. The State Land Board has generated more than \$1.7 billion for trust beneficiaries in the past 10 years
- Installed megawatts of renewable energy on state trust lands exceeded 600 megawatts for the first time and development is on target to reach 750 megawatts by June 30, 2027. Partner projects are anticipated to bring another 125 megawatts online in the next two years
- Saw the first leasing for biological carbon sequestration with more than 1000 acres of Cameron Peak fire burned trust lands committed to reforestation
- Promoted the use of regenerative grazing practices by hosting workshops for agricultural lessees and hiring the first Regenerative Agriculture Program Manager

## Division of Forestry (Colorado State Forest Service)

- Compiled data with the Colorado Forest Restoration Institute and designed a new online dashboard to make information about forest management available to the public
- Launched the Colorado Forest Tracker, a first of its kind database of forest management activities, to help inform strategies, policies and investments for improving forest health and reducing wildfire risk across the state
- The CSFS Seedling Tree Nursery, located at Colorado State University, is the state's leader in producing low-cost, Colorado-grown seedling trees and shrubs for conservation purposes. It was established in 1957 and is currently undergoing needed renovations with a completion target date in 2026
- Developed in partnership with CSU's Natural Resource Ecology Laboratory, the CSFS released the state's first Forest Carbon Inventory, a statewide framework to track carbon stored and released by forests and wood products
- Supplemental tools including a data dashboard, podcast, and report summaries are available at <https://csfs.colostate.edu/forest-carbon/>



# Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

## Organizational Development & Workforce Efforts

- Training - ADA and Accessibility, Skills-based Hiring for supervisors, Inclusive Leadership, POWR Act, Work-based Learning
- Employee Resource Groups continue
- Implemented Cornerstone online performance management and Learning Management System to increase professional development opportunities
- Increased bandwidth for pay equity reviews

## Environmental Justice Task Force Recommendations

- Tribal Assistant Director - first in organizational history, works with Tribes on a government-to-government basis, coordinates with the Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs, and works to engage the AI/AN population throughout the State on issues related to natural and cultural resources
- ECMC incorporated environmental justice considerations into its permitting review process, including Enviroscreen
- ECMC created a community liaison and systems to ensure that disproportionately impacted communities have greater access to information and can participate more easily in permitting and hearing processes
- Language Access for community meetings
- Increased community engagement through investments in technology for accessible meetings
- Environmental Justice Meetings with Executive Director & Advocacy Groups, with review of upcoming public processes and legislative updates

## Partners in the Outdoors Conference

- Keynotes and speakers focused on Outdoors for All, accessibility for public lands, working with Tribes, mental health in the outdoors, and collaboration

## Outdoor Equity Grant Program

- Through funding from the Colorado Lottery, the program has invested over \$8.5 million, supporting environmental learning opportunities, outdoor education, exposure to career pathways, public health and outdoor fun for underserved youth and families.
- To date, the program has provided nearly 100,000 experiences in the outdoors for more than 63,000 Coloradans through 141 grant awards made to 111 organizations.
- Investments have been made in 51 Colorado counties.

## Digital Accessibility & Outdoors for All

- Overhauled internal documents and intranet site for digital accessibility
- Remediated websites
- Engagement with Coloradans with Disabilities Task Force Outdoors Subcommittee
- Accessibility program staff and contracted tested, remediated and planned for future remediation Department-wide to comply with HB 21-1110
- [dnr.colorado.gov/accessibility](https://dnr.colorado.gov/accessibility)
- Continued focus on accessibility to the outdoors and our public lands for people with mobility-related disabilities
- Expansion of available track-chairs and accessibility equipment on State Parks, including Ridgway, Cheyenne Mountain, Barr Lake, and Staunton State Parks

- [CPW Announces Expansion of Aira to State Parks](#) for visitors who are blind or have low vision

## DNR FY 2025-26 Wildly Important Goals

The Department of Natural Resources has four wildly important goals (WIGs) for FY 2025-26, detailed below. These goals were developed with a particular emphasis on Environment and Sustainability goals, as well as the mission and vision of the Department and its respective Divisions.

### WIG #1: Increase Colorado Parks and Wildlife Revenue

Colorado Parks and Wildlife relies heavily on hunting and fishing license fees and park entrance fees to achieve its mission, and there has not been a 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. With the creation of the Keep Colorado Wild pass, a new long-term funding stream is available that is equitable and supported by a broad set of stakeholders, which is critical to the success of CPW in the future. Even so, additional, diverse funding sources are needed to continue supporting the agency's important work.

**Goal:** The Department of Natural Resources will develop new, diverse funding sources for Colorado Parks and Wildlife by increasing Keep Colorado Wild pass revenues and other park pass entry fee revenues by at least \$2.5M by June 30, 2027.

Potential strategies to accomplish the goal may include:

- Work to increase non-KCW visitation to State Parks, including day pass purchases and camping use fees, through new, targeted marketing efforts informed by a formal market research study
- Collaborate with DOR to identify new opportunities to increase Keep Colorado Wild Pass sales in counties with high proximity to State Parks and lower pass opt-in rates. This effort will include:
  - Conducting a survey of county DMV staff to identify potential Keep Colorado Wild Pass sales best practices
  - Redistributing in-person marketing materials
  - Promoting identified pass sales best practices at monthly meetings with county DMV staff
- Increase visitation to State Parks and complete capital improvement projects at State Parks to encourage visitation

### 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. In FY 25, we focused on completing and launching Colorado's Outdoors Strategy, which was officially released in April 2025 (as noted above). In FY 26, we will leverage what was learned in developing the Strategy and will focus on driving forward a new two-part WIG to highlight

the work we are doing to balance two central outcomes for our outdoors-increasing and supporting opportunities for outdoor recreation to meet growing demand from the public, while effectively conserving and protecting our natural resources and ecosystems.

**Goals:** In an effort to balance outdoor recreation and conservation, the Department of Natural Resources will increase State Park visitation from 18.9M visitors in FY 25 to 19.1M visitors in FY 26 by June 30, 2026. Additionally, the Department will work to complete 30 conservation and restoration projects on State Land Board and State Parks lands by June 30, 2026.

Potential strategies to accomplish the goal may include:

- Announce new State Parks
- Support the development of new outdoor recreation opportunities on State Land Board lands
- Complete conservation and restoration projects on State Parks lands
- Complete capital improvement projects at State Parks to improve amenities and encourage visitation
- Enroll new acres in grassland carbon mitigation programs on State Land Board lands to conserve native grasslands and wildlife on those lands by employing regenerative agriculture best practices
- Invest enhancement funds into wildlife and wildfire mitigation activities that promote ecosystem resilience

### **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 Plan 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 take action on 22 Agency Actions from the Colorado Water Plan by June 30, 2027 (increased from an original goal of 20 Agency Actions, based on accelerated progress made in FY24-25).

Potential strategies to accomplish the goal may include:

- Develop guidance for enhanced municipal water efficiency reporting and data integration
- Develop streamlined collaborative water sharing agreement (CWSA) guidance across the Division of Water Resources, the Colorado Water Conservation Board, and the Colorado Department of Agriculture
- Develop a scenario planning methodology for forest health to inform statewide water planning
- Pilot a beta version of a capacity-building hub in partnership with CSU's Water Center to provide accessible educational opportunities and job opportunities for students, educators, and the general public

## WIG #4: Clean Energy Transition on State Lands

As the state pursues a transition to renewable energy over the coming decades, the State Land Board is uniquely positioned to partner with energy generation and transmission entities leading the effort. The recently updated Greenhouse Gas Pollution Reduction Roadmap 2.0 acknowledged the important role the State Land Board plays in supporting the Governor's Wildly Important Priority of achieving 100% renewable energy for the grid by 2040 and directed the State Land Board to increase clean energy generation on state lands. As of summer 2024, solar and wind energy projects located on state trust land have a nameplate capacity of approximately 550 MW of electricity, representing approximately 6 percent of the total renewable energy installed capacity in Colorado. The State Land Board owns 3 million acres of surface lands across the state, with land generally more concentrated on the eastern plains. In planning projects, partner entities find state trust lands accessible at reasonable cost in convenient locations supportive of the needs they identify in their larger plans. State Land Board staff ensure that land and species stewardship is maintained in the planning and development process, and across a project's productive lifecycle. Wind and solar energy production and cost effective transmission are possible at utility scale by putting state trust lands to work.

**Goal:** Increase renewable energy installed capacity on State Land Board properties from 550 megawatts to 750 megawatts by June 30, 2027.

- Note: An additional 200 MW of renewable energy installed capacity would provide power for approximately 32,000 to 56,000 homes, considering capacity factors and electricity consumption. As of summer 2023, solar and wind projects on SLB lands account for approximately 6% of total renewable energy installed capacity in Colorado.

Potential strategies to accomplish the goal may include:

- Convert existing planning leases to production leases to facilitate the deployment of renewable energy projects on State Land Board Lands
- Issue new planning leases to explore opportunities for suitable renewable energy development
- Hold meetings with existing planning lease operators to stay abreast of planning and permitting efforts
- Attend a renewable energy industry conference to generate additional renewable energy planning leases

## WIG #5: Non-Lethal Wolf Conflict Reduction

Proposition 114, now state statute 33-2-105.8, passed on November 3, 2020. The voters of Colorado directed the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission (commission) to develop a plan to introduce and manage gray wolves in Colorado west of the Continental Divide no later than December 31, 2023. Further, CPW is mandated to establish a self-sustaining population of wolves. The Colorado Wolf Restoration and Management Plan was created with the primary goal to reestablish and maintain a viable, self-sustaining wolf population in Colorado, while concurrently working to minimize wolf-related conflicts with domestic animals, other wildlife and people. In January 2025, CPW published a Wolf-Livestock Conflict Minimization Guide for agricultural producers, and the agency is actively employing various tools, methods, personnel and funding to support wolf recovery and maintain the coexistence of wolves and livestock in Colorado.

**Goal:** In support of the State’s mandate and voters’ intent through Proposition 114, Colorado Parks and Wildlife and the Colorado Department of Agriculture will provide direct assistance to 600 livestock producers in Colorado to mitigate wolf conflict, focusing on non-lethal methods such as range riding, carcass management, site assessments, and education by June 30, 2026. The common goal is to achieve a healthy, self-sustaining gray wolf population in the state, while supporting rural ways of life and the robust livestock industry that is such a critical component of Colorado’s culture and economy.

Potential strategies to accomplish the goal may include:

- To proactively deter wolf-livestock conflicts, increase direct range riding assistance delivered to livestock producers
- Identify which deterrent methods are most effective for individual ranching operations by conducting additional site assessments of producers' ranches



# 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 62.6 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

*Advance Agency Actions in accordance with the 2023 Colorado Water Plan by 2033. Agency Actions are those that CWCB, in collaboration with other state agencies, will complete during the current Water Plan cycle.*

### Major Programs

- Water Supply Planning Section Programs
- Stream and Lake Protection Section Programs
- Watershed and Flood Protection Section Programs
- Interstate, Federal, and Water Information Section Programs
- CWCB Grant and Loan Programs

### Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
CWCB	Percent (%) complete on all 50 actions	↑	2025	20%	2026	30%

### Critical Strategies and Activities

1. The CWCB and partnering agencies will support and advance Colorado's vision for Vibrant Communities (10 actions).
2. The CWCB and partnering agencies will support and advance Colorado's vision for Robust Agriculture (10 actions).
3. The CWCB and partnering agencies will support and advance Colorado's vision for Thriving Watersheds (10 actions).
4. The CWCB and partnering agencies will support and advance Colorado's vision for Resilient Planning (10 actions).
5. In addition to these four action areas, CWCB will undertake additional agency actions that are more general in nature and do not focus on a particular action area even as they support them all (10 actions).

## CWCB Division Goal #2

*Advance Partner Actions in accordance with the 2023 Colorado Water Plan by 2033. Partner Actions are those which CWCB cannot do alone. Instead, they are opportunities for individuals and communities and will require effective engagement across the State.*

### Major Programs

- Water Plan Grants Program
- Water Supply Reserve Fund Grants Program
- Water Projects Loan Program

### Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
CWCB	Water Plan Grant \$ Awarded/Water Plan Grant \$ Available	→	2023	100%	2026	100%
CWCB	# of outreach meetings held with stakeholders regarding Agricultural projects	↑	2025	35	2026	50
CWCB	# of outreach meetings held with stakeholders regarding Conservation and Land Use projects	↑	2025	20	2026	35
CWCB	# of outreach meetings held with stakeholders regarding Engagement and Innovation projects	→	2025	10	2026	10
CWCB	# of outreach meetings held with stakeholders regarding Water Storage and Supply and Water Sharing Agreements projects	↑	2025	20	2026	45
CWCB	# of outreach meetings held with stakeholders regarding Watershed Health and Recreation projects	↑	2025	35	2026	60

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
CWCB	# of outreach meetings held with stakeholders not attributable to a single project category or funding program	↓	2025	60	2026	50

## Critical Strategies and Activities

1. CWCB's primary mechanism for advancing Partner Actions is the awarding of loans and grants for water projects.
  - a. The General Assembly appropriates sports betting tax revenue authorizing the use of funds for Water Plan Grants. CWCB will aim to award every dollar appropriated for Water Plan Grants to projects annually.
2. CWCB's secondary mechanism for advancing Partner Actions is targeted outreach and engagement with stakeholders across the State who may develop an application for a Water Plan Grant. CWCB has four regionally based Water Plan Grant Managers whose roles include, among other duties, outreach and engagement with these stakeholders. These staff were hired in 2023, and FY24/25 was the first full baseline year.
  - a. Water Plan Grant Categories include Agriculture, Conservation and Land Use, Engagement and Innovation, Storage and Supply, and Watershed Health and Recreation. The baseline in FY24/25 (baseline year) is 180 outreach meetings. Approximately 66% of those meetings were attributable to a specific Water Plan Grant category, and the remaining 33% were more broad in nature and not attributable to a specific funding program or category. Both are critical prerequisites for further project development and advancement of the Water Plan's Partner Actions.
  - b. In FY25/26, Regional Water Plan Grant Managers have a target of 250 outreach meetings, with 200 (80%) of the meetings being category-specific and 50 (25%) being general. This reflects the more targeted approach to outreach, while also maintaining some broad-based outreach efforts.
  - c. The CWCB Board sets a target funding allocation for the five Water Plan Grant Categories. To strategically align outreach efforts with target funding levels for each category, the funding allocation percentages were applied to the category-specific meeting totals. Depending on the funding level for the respective category, as demonstrated in the table above, the target number of outreach meetings ranges from 10 to 60.

# 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. In 2023, outdoor recreation generated \$65.8 billion in economic output; \$36.5 billion in GDP (8.5% of the entire state GDP); supported 404,000 jobs (12.5% of the labor force); and generated \$11.2 billion in local, state, and federal tax revenue.

## Primary Processes

1. Managing and conserving 960 native species including mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, amphibians, mollusks and crustaceans, and now the authority to study tens of thousands of invertebrates and rare plants. 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 1.7 million licenses in FY 2023-24.
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 1.9 million acres.
5. Managing wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation opportunities on about 350 State Wildlife Areas and 43 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 43 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 \$15.4 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 (57%), lottery proceeds and the Great Outdoors Colorado grant program (17%), other state and federal grants (13%), and a variety of other sources including general fund, severance tax, and donations (13%). The division currently has an allocation of 1,068.7FTE.

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 <sup>rd</sup> party and CPW owned Conservation Easements	↑	2025	515,500 acres	2026	517,000 acres
CPW	Acres of land improved through the Habitat Partnership Program (HPP)	→	2025	acres	2026	40,000 - 50,000 acres / year
CPW	# of herd management plans updated annually	→	2025	29 plans <sup>1</sup>	2026	16 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

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<sup>1</sup> Annual target was 16 plans.

CPW's website.

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. Increase the number of water specific angler creel surveys across the state to better inform fish management decisions.
  - 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	↑	2025	X million visits	2026	19.1 million visits
CPW	# of fishing license sales	↑	2025	X licenses sold	2026	993,000 licenses sold
CPW	# of hunting license sales	↑	2025	X licenses sold	2026	734,000 licenses sold
CPW	# of trail crew hours supported by grants	↑	2025	X hours	2026	160,000 hours
CPW	# of volunteer hours	→	2025	X hours	2026	279,000 hours

\*Note: Baselines will be established once FY25 is complete.

### 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 60 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 that 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	Reduce the number of outdated reclamation bond estimates	↑	2025	247 permitted sites (19.7%) have out of date reclamation bond calculations	2026	Reduce the number of out of date bond calcs to less than 125 (10%)
DRMS	Complete full e-permitting for Minerals Program	↑	2022	Beta testing continues in July 2025 with full implementation of e-permitting in spring 2026	2026	100% e-submissions by January 1, 2026
DRMS	Conduct Rulemaking in both Hard Rock and Construction Materials to gain consistency between the Rules, review and modernize mine application processes, and implement SB250054, 110r Reclamation-Only permit and adjustments within the financial Warranty Rule 4.	↑	2025	N/A	2026	Hold a minimum of 9 informal and 6 formal stakeholder meetings with completion of Rulemaking in spring of 2026

### Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Over time, smaller permitted sites have not received updates to their reclamation liability estimates. This leads to larger than normal increases of reclamation bonds which is a hardship for some operators. DRMS Active Mines will be making it a focus for 2025-2026 to reduce the number of out of date bond reviews to both ensure sufficient bonds are held and current costs are reflected in estimates. The overall goal is to achieve less than 2% of estimates being older than 5 years by 2026-2027.
2. DRMS held 3 meetings with other agencies on the regulatory comment process. DRMS has met with

several agencies and counties to identify opportunities to modernize the agency and public notice process. DRMS has now established communications channels and has had most sign on to e-notifications for more efficient and timely notice on applications.

3. Complete e-Permitting initiative to effectively implement permitting actions in a timely manner to better serve our stakeholders. Beta testing has been ongoing and full implementation is scheduled for January 1, 2026.
4. DRMS / MLRB will be conducting Rulemaking in 2026. Leading up to the formal rulemaking, DRMS staff will be hosting informal stakeholder meetings throughout 2025 to address issues and finalize drafts in both Construction Materials and Hard Rock. Focus will be on implementation of SB25-054 and addressing inconsistencies between the two sets of rules that have developed over the course of more specific rulemaking in the past. Formal Rulemaking is tentatively scheduled for March and April 2026.

## 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	6	2026	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 2025.*

## Major Programs

- DRMS Inactive Mines Reclamation Program

## Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
DRMS	# of additional coal mine fire mitigation projects	↑	2025	0	2026	2
DRMS	# of additional coal mine fire investigation/design projects	↑	2025	0	2026	1
DRMS	# of additional safeguarded mine openings	→	2024	315	2026	225

## Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Prioritize investigation, design 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.
2. Continue to safeguard hazardous and abandoned mine sites each year. These construction projects inject money directly into the local economy. Closures for FY25 are down from previous years due to priority shift to coal mine fire mitigation projects resulting in fewer staff assigned to safeguarding projects.
3. Conduct environmental reclamation activities on legacy mine sites through partnerships with federal, state and local entities.
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.

## DRMS Division Goal #4

*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 Mine Safety and Training Program

## Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
DRMS	Train miners in the health and safety of the task at hand	↑	2023	1850	2026	2050
DRMS	Inspect Tourist mines for the public's and employees safety	→	2024	16	2026	16
DRMS	Conduct Rulemaking for the Regulations of the Mine Safety and Training Program for Tourist Mines	→	2025	0%	2026	100%

## Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Conduct MSHA compliant pt 46 and 48 Safety training in accordance with the Mine Act of 1977 and 30 CFR.
2. Conduct inspections of our state's tourist mine industry to insure safety for the public.



# 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. Collecting data and directing water use under the priority system for 180,000 water rights at over 50,000 active locations.
2. Issuing enforcement orders to curtail injurious diversions or uses.
3. Monitoring water supply through streamflow, reservoir, and diversion measurements at about 1,100 locations.
4. Enforcing and ensuring compliance with 9 interstate compacts and other agreements.
5. Conducting periodic physical inspections of approximately 3,000 existing jurisdictional dams.
6. Ensuring safe construction of water wells to protect groundwater resources through DWR Well Inspection Program and supporting the Board of Examiners of Water Well and Ground Heat Exchanger Contractors.
7. Issuing over 6,000 permits for groundwater use annually and consulting with the Water Court on an average of approximately 950 new water rights cases 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 268.5 FTE.



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

## DWR Division Goal #1

*Manage water to maximize 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 2025.*

### Major Programs

- Administration of intrastate water rights
- Interstate water compact compliance

### Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline WYTD*	Baseline Number	Target WYTD	Target Number
DWR	# of Structures w/provisional Diversion Records / # active structures	↑	2025	10%	2026	20%

\*Water Year to Date (records entered between October 1 and May 31)

### 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. Proactively coordinate with downstream state counterparts and 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 1,200 stream, ditch, and reservoir gages to determine water availability for Colorado diversion and/or for compact obligation.



## DWR Division Goal #2

*Protect the public 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 well 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)	→	2025	382	2026	414
DWR	% of High Hazard Dams with existing EAPs (Emergency Action Plan)/% EAPs updated(< 5 yrs old)	↑	2025	100%/86%	2026	100%/90%
DWR	Average design review days from receipt of plans to approval of plans for construction	→	2025	70 days	2026	150 days

## Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Inspection of high hazard dams:
  - a. There were 414 high hazard dams by the end of CY 2024 with a requirement for annual inspection by DWR.
  - b. The number of High Hazard Dams typically increases each year due to development downstream of existing dams (changing their classification to High Hazard) and new dam construction. The program will keep pace with annual inspections although the number continually increases.
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 as efficiently and rapidly as reasonable for new dams and modification or repair of existing dams. Measure monthly and accumulate a running average number of days for reporting.

# Energy and Carbon Management Commission

Through its permitting, compliance monitoring, quality assurance and quality control programs, enforcement, and restoration regulatory efforts, the Colorado Energy & Carbon Management Commission (ECMC) 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, welfare, 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, wind and solar industries, local and county officials and governments, federal agencies, other state agencies including the Departments of Local Affairs, Public Health and Environment, Colorado Energy Office, 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, deep geothermal, carbon sequestration, or injection wells and new locations for the related pads and production facilities.
2. Inspecting oil and gas, deep geothermal, carbon sequestration, or other injection 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 data and information, including detailed reports, to all stakeholders through extensive online databases, interactive GIS map, published reports, and other public outreach activities
8. Overseeing operator compliance with new cumulative impact rules regarding community engagement.

## 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 200.4 FTE. ECMC's Orphaned Well Program utilizes several funding sources for orphaned well plugging and orphaned site decommissioning, remediation, and reclamation work in Colorado. Orphaned Well Program funding sources include: 1) sureties collected from bond

claims, 2) the Orphaned Well Mitigation Enterprise, 3) the \$25 million federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) Initial Grant, awarded by the U.S. Department of Interior in FY 2022-23 (closed and fully spent in FY 2024-25), 4) \$6.3 million from a Bureau of Land Management five-year funding agreement for work on federal orphaned wells and sites, 5) \$25 million from the federal IIJA Formula Grant Phase 1, awarded by DOI in October 2024), and 6) \$12.6 million federal grant from DOE to assist operators in plugging marginal conventional wells.

## Major Programs

- Permitting
- Orphaned Well Program
- Engineering
- Environmental
- Compliance
- Enforcement
- Hearings
- Finance
- Strategic Development
- QA/QC
- Cumulative Impacts and Energy Transitions
- Community Relations

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, public health, safety, welfare, the environment and wildlife resources.*

### Key Metric

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
ECMC	Number of Wells Plugged (Annually)	↑	2025	100 wells	2026	129 wells

### Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Decrease backlog of known orphaned sites, acknowledging the variability of the program backlog based on the rate of bond claims.
2. Continue to increase workload to commence work at orphaned sites, including well plugging, flowline abandonment, equipment removal, environmental remediation, and surface reclamation.
3. Continue to prioritize new orphaned sites.
4. Continue to prepare an annual backlog list of orphaned wells and locations.
5. Continue to prepare the 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 49.9 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	→	2025	\$35 million	2026	\$35 million
SLB	Develop additional uses for water assets on state trust land	↑	2025	2 new leases	2026	4 new leases
SLB	Invest in commercial real estate to sustain occupancy such that trust income distribution remains steady	↑	2025	\$2.25m distributed	2026	\$2.75m distributed
SLB	Lease additional properties through competitive bidding	↑	2025	27 leases	2026	30 leases
SLB	Develop partnerships in agri voltaics to research and develop two projects for potential citing on trust lands	↑	2025	0 projects	2026	2 projects planned
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.	↑	2025	550 Installed Megawatts	2027	750 Installed Megawatts
SLB	Support Xcel's statewide Power Pathway project by encouraging right of way access across state trust land	↑	2025	X miles of ROW	2026	X+ miles of ROW

## 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 oil & gas wells	→	2025	750 inspections	2026	750 inspections
SLB	# of inspections of rangeland leases	→	2025	300 inspections	2026	300 inspections

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
SLB	Host Agriculture Industry Roundtables	→	2025	2 events	2026	2 events
SLB	Host Agriculture Industry Forums	↑	2025	2 events	2026	3 events
SLB	Stewardship Trust Properties Inspected	↑	2025	26 properties	2026	35 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.
4. Construct, implement and measure lease performance stipulations that uphold excellent stewardship of trust lands and the ecosystems and species found there.

# Division of Forestry (Colorado State Forest Service)

The mission of the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) is to achieve stewardship of Colorado's diverse forest environments for the benefit of present and future generations. The CSFS provides professional forestry assistance, wildfire mitigation expertise, and outreach and education to help landowners and communities achieve their forest management goals. The CSFS is part of Colorado State University and provides staffing for the Division of Forestry within the Colorado Department of Natural Resources.

With headquarters in Fort Collins on the CSU Foothills Campus, the CSFS has about 170 permanent employees; over 70 seasonal and student employees; and 18 field offices and several satellite offices throughout Colorado.

## Customers and Constituents

The CSFS serves all of Colorado's residents, communities, organizations, businesses, water providers, and local, state, federal, tribal and nonprofit agencies who own forested land in Colorado or participate in the management of Colorado's forests and trees, as well as wildfire mitigation and preparation. Colorado has about 24 million acres of forests that provide multiple social, environmental and economic benefits.

## Primary Processes

1. Forest health and fuels reduction projects, including cross-boundary efforts through programs such as Good Neighbor Authority
2. Wildfire mitigation programs, resources, publications and guidance for homeowners and communities, including administration of Firewise USA® and Community Wildfire Protection Plans
3. Insect and disease surveys, detection and research to inform management
4. Urban and community forestry assistance and education and administration of Tree City USA and other Arbor Day Foundation programs
5. Administration of state and federal grant programs projects to improve forest health and reduce wildfire risk for homeowners and communities, including Forest Restoration and Wildfire Risk Mitigation (FRWRM)
6. Trees and shrubs for conservation, restoration and reforestation through the CSFS Nursery, as well as seedling tree advice and tree planting plans
7. Support for the forest products industry through marketing, funding and workforce development programs
8. Research, data collection and data product creation for Colorado's forests, including the USDA FS Forest Inventory and Analysis Program, the Colorado Wildfire Risk Assessment and Colorado Forest Atlas, forest treatment and forest carbon monitoring.
9. Workshops for forest landowners, communities, homeowner associations, arborists and others that own and manage trees and forests
10. Outreach and education for adults and youth on trees, forests and wildfire
11. Experiential learning for undergraduate and graduate students
12. Management of timber resources on forested state trust lands
13. Collaboration with CPW on management of forested resources on State Parks and State Wildlife Areas

14. Work with various water providers on forest management planning and implementation, etc.
15. Administration of Healthy Forest and Vibrant Communities program to address the needs across Colorado to be proactive to ensure the long-term health and vitality of Colorado's forests. Provide private landowners, communities, and partners with the tools they need to address forest and watershed health, and wildfire risk to communities and the forests that surround them.

## Major Funding Sources

The CSFS is funded through federal grants (36%), Specialty Education Funding and Long Bill (36%), State General Fund (13%), self-funded operations, endowments and other revenues (12%) and state grants and agreements (3%). The CSFS currently has an allocation of 168 FTE.

## Key Priorities

### *Forestry Leadership and Expertise*

The Colorado State Forest Service is the state's forestry agency and primary resource for professional forestry services. This includes outreach, education, technical assistance and applied science for residents, as well as state, community and private forest landowners and managers in Colorado. The agency's services and outreach efforts are enhanced by its synergy with the Warner College of Natural Resources at Colorado State University.

### *Proactive Forest Stewardship*

Colorado has approximately 24 million acres of forestland, ranging from high-elevation alpine forests to low-elevation piñon pine and riparian forests on the plains. Equally important are the urban and community forests that offer essential benefits and enhanced quality of life. We strive to improve all of these environments, mitigate wildfire risk to communities in the wildland-urban interface, and help protect watersheds in priority areas. We accomplish this by increasing public awareness and implementing on-the-ground projects that conserve, protect, and enhance the state's diverse forests.

### *Strategic Partnerships and Collaboration*

Colorado's forests cover a complex pattern of private, federal, state, municipal, tribal and other lands. But forests transcend property lines, as do wildfires and forest insects and diseases. As a fundamental cornerstone of success, the Colorado State Forest Service works closely with partners and diverse landowners to achieve common objectives, with the CSFS leading and supporting an array of collaborative groups in Colorado.

### *Visibility*

Residents, communities and stakeholders must know about the Colorado State Forest Service and its contributions to managing Colorado's forests. We constantly seek to increase recognition and visibility of the agency and the broad array of services we provide to the people of Colorado, including historically underserved groups. By using targeted approaches, we can create a better understanding of each resident's relationship with Colorado's forests and the benefits of forest management in the mountains, on the plains and in urban and community settings.

### *Organizational Excellence*

A well-respected, enduring and responsive organization is necessary to provide the best resources, direction and services to address the needs of Colorado's residents and forest resources. We promote a motivated, productive, and engaged workforce by achieving a positive work environment and culture. We have strong leadership across the agency that supports employees, values innovation and quality, and develops a unified, effective, and efficient organization.

## **Critical Strategies and Activities**

1. Complete 5-year CO Forest Action Plan review
2. Implement CSFS Outcomes Based Work Plan
  - a. Outcome 1: The CSFS is the state's premier forestry agency, using the best research, science, technology and management practices to provide expertise, outreach and services.
  - b. Outcome 2: The CSFS improves forest conditions and mitigates risk to communities and watersheds in priority areas.
  - c. Outcome 3: The CSFS is a local, statewide, regional and national leader in collaborative efforts focused on trees and forests.
  - d. Outcome 4: Target audiences support and value the CSFS, the benefits of Colorado's forests and the importance of forest management.
  - e. Outcome 5: The CSFS is an employer of choice with a diverse, productive and engaged workforce and a positive and inclusive work environment.
3. Update CSFS 5-year strategic plan

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

