

# Department of Natural Resources

## SMART Act Hearing



Joint Agriculture Committee  
January 23rd, 2026



**COLORADO**  
Department of  
Natural Resources

# Agenda

- Department Overview
- Wildly Important Goals
- Budget Request Overview
- Legislative Agenda
- Regulatory Agenda
- Federal Impacts
- Colorado for All
- Program Updates
  - Colorado River Update (Becky Mitchell)
  - South Platte River Update (Jason Ullmann)



# DNR Mission & Vision

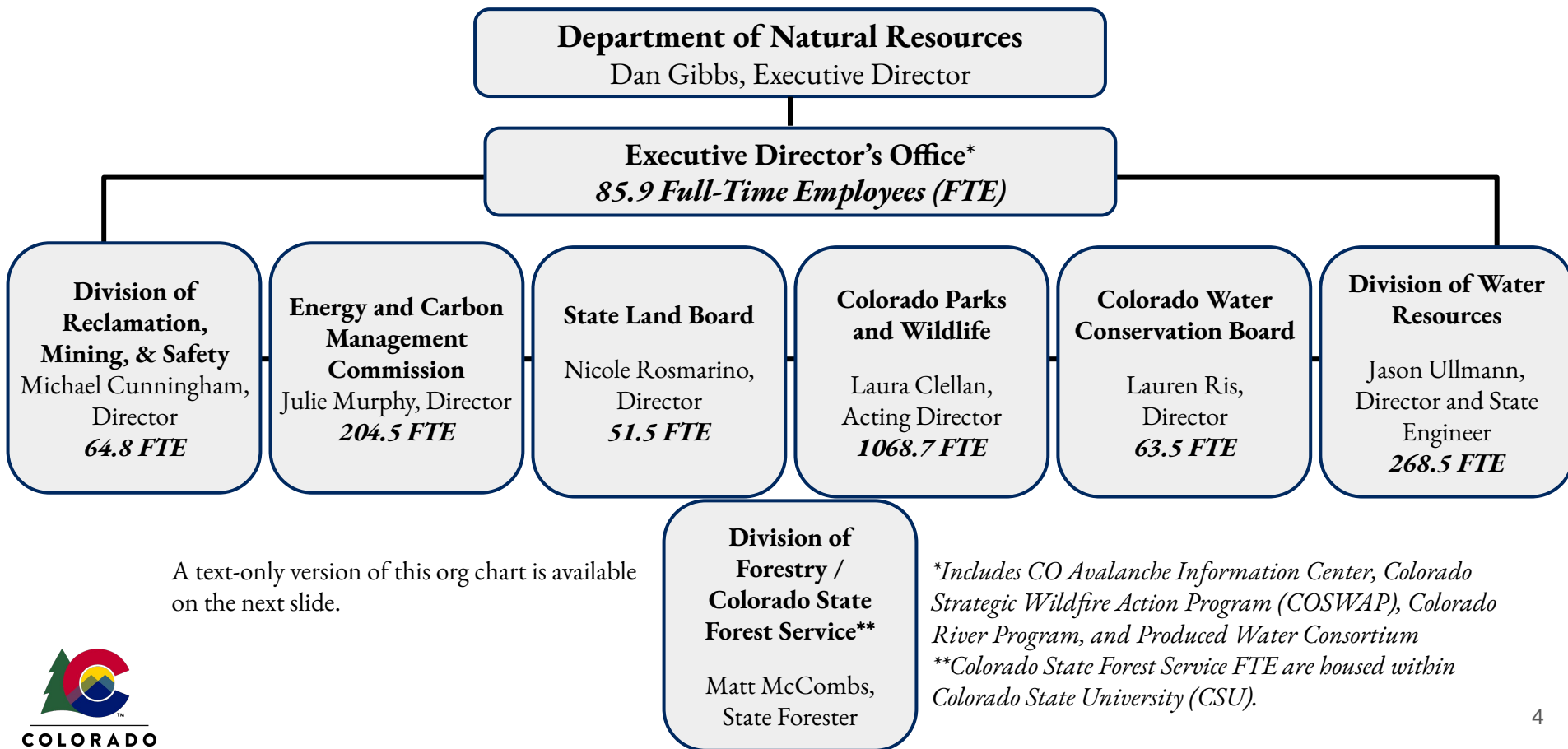
DNR's mission:

**To develop, preserve, and enhance the state's natural resources for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future citizens and visitors.**

DNR's vision:

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

# DNR Organizational Chart





# DNR Organization Chart - Text-Only Version

Below is a text-only version of the organization chart on the previous slide

## **Dan Gibbs, Executive Director, Department of Natural Resources (DNR)**

Reporting to the Executive Director:

- Executive Director's Office (EDO) (85.9 Full-Time Employees [FTE])
- EDO includes CO Avalanche Information Center, Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program (COSWAP), Colorado River Program, and Produced Water Consortium. Colorado State Forest Service FTE are housed within Colorado State University [CSU].

## **Divisions within DNR, reporting to the Executive Director's Office:**

- Reclamation, Mining, & Safety: Michael Cunningham, Director (64.8 FTE)
- Energy and Carbon Management Commission: Julie Murphy, Director (204.5 FTE)
- State Land Board: Nicole Rosmarino, Director (51.5 FTE)
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife: Laura Clellan, Acting Director (1068.7 FTE)
- CO Water Conservation Board: Lauren Ris, Director (63.5 FTE)
- Division of Water Resources: Jason Ullmann, Director and State Engineer (268.5 FTE)
- Division of Forestry: Matt McCombs, Director and State Forester

# Department Divisions

# Division of Reclamation, Mining & Safety (DRMS)

**DRMS's mission is to return Colorado's mined lands to a beneficial use. The Mined Land Reclamation Board is the Regulatory Authority under statute.**

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

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

**The Mine Safety Program** provides safety education and training at operating mines to ensure miners can perform their jobs safely. This Program also provides oversight of the tourist mines throughout Colorado by conducting annual safety inspections.



*Michael Cunningham,  
Director*

# Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW)

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



*Laura Clellan,  
Acting Director*



*Tim Mauck,  
Deputy Director*



*Reid DeWalt,  
Deputy Director*

## **13 Commission Members**

- Richard Reading, Public-at-large, Chair
- Jay Tutchton, Outdoor Rec, Parks and Utilization and Nonconsumptive Wildlife
- Eden Vardy, Production Ag
- Jess Beaulieu, Outdoor Rec and Parks Utilization
- Frances Silva Blaney, Sportsperson and Outfitters
- John Emerick, Public-at-large
- Tai Jacober, Ag Producers
- Dallas May, Ag
- Jack Murphy, Outdoor Rec and Parks Utilization,
- Gabe Otero, Sportspeople West of Continental Divide
- Kate Greenberg, CDA
- Dan Gibbs, DNR
- Laura Clellan, CPW

# Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB)

**CWCB's mission is to conserve, develop, protect, and manage Colorado's water for present and future generations.**

The Division's responsibilities include developing and implementing the Colorado Water Plan, protecting Colorado's streams and lakes, flood mitigation, watershed protection, stream restoration, drought planning, water supply planning, water project financing, and grant management.



*Lauren Ris,  
Director*

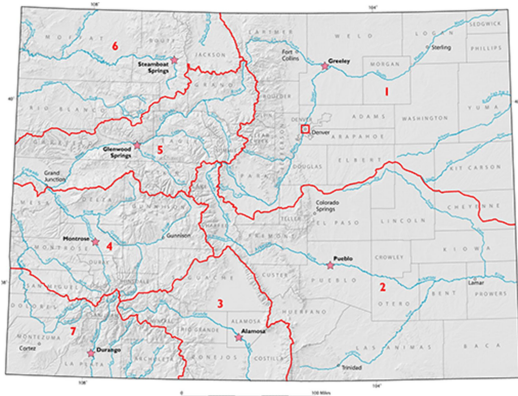
## 15 Board Members

- Lorelei Cloud, San Miguel, Dolores, Animas & San Juan Rivers, Chair
- Greg Felt, Arkansas River
- Taylor Hawes, Colorado River
- Greg Johnson, City and County of Denver
- John McCloy, Gunnison-Uncompahgre River
- Barbara Vasquez, North Platte River
- Nathan Coombs, Rio Grande River
- Brad Wind, South Platte River
- Mike Camblin, Yampa/White Rivers
- Lauren Ris, CWCB
- Dan Gibbs, DNR
- Kate Greenberg, CDA
- Jason Ullmann, DWR
- Phil Weiser, Attorney General
- Laura Clellan, CPW

# Division of Water Resources (DWR), State Engineer's Office

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

DWR includes the Office of the State Engineer and the 7 Division Offices in each River basin.



*Jason Ullmann,  
State Engineer/Director*



*Tracy Kosloff,  
Deputy Director*

## **7 Division Engineers**

- Corey DeAngelis - South Platte
- Rachel Zancanella - Arkansas
- Craig Cotten - Rio Grande
- Bob Hurford - Gunnison
- Tyler Benton - Colorado
- Erin Light - Yampa/White/North Platte
- Robert Genualdi - San Juan/Dolores



# State Land Board (SLB)

*An innovative land trust funding Colorado schools since 1876*

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

- Created by Constitution Article IX
- 2.8m acres of land and 4m acres of subsurface minerals
- **Natural and working lands** leased for agriculture, oil & gas, recreation, renewable energy, commercial buildings, ecosystem services
- No General Fund support; 51.5 FTE



## 5 Board Members

- Deb Froeb, Natural Resources
- Mark Harvey, Agriculture
- James Pribyl, Citizen-at-large
- Josie Heath, Local Government
- Christine Scanlan, Education



*Nicole Rosmarino,  
Director*



*Nick Massie,  
Deputy Director*



# Energy and Carbon Management Commission (ECMC)

**ECMC's mission is to regulate the development and production of oil & gas, deep geothermal resources, the capture and sequestration of carbon, and the underground storage of natural gas in a manner that protects public health, safety, welfare, wildlife resources and the environment.**

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

**204.5 FTE** (includes the 45 new FTE allotted from FY23)

## **5 Full-Time Commissioners**

- Jeff Robbins, Chair
- Brett Ackerman, Environmental and Wildlife Protection
- Mike Cross, Oil and Gas Experience
- John Messner, Planning and Land Use
- Trisha Oeth, Environmental Health

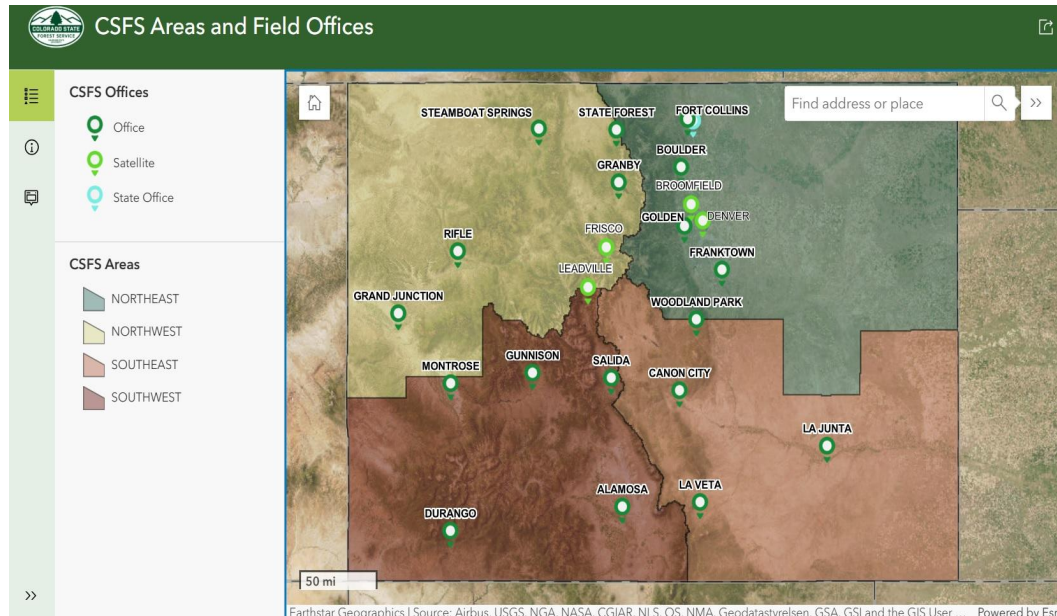


*Julie Murphy,  
Director*

# Division of Forestry, Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS)

**CSFS's mission is to achieve stewardship of Colorado's diverse forest environments for the benefit of present and future generations.**

CSFS provides technical forestry assistance, wildfire mitigation expertise and outreach and education to help landowners and communities achieve their forest management goals.



*Matt McCombs,  
Director*

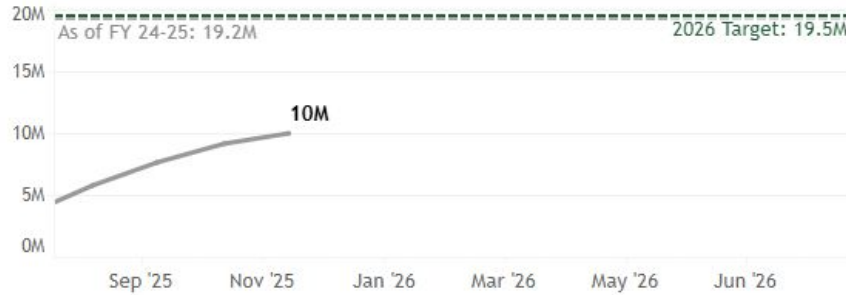
# Wildly Important Goals



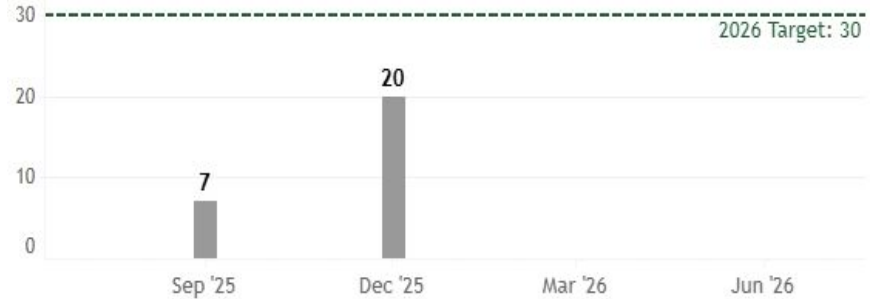
**COLORADO**  
Department of  
Natural Resources

# DNR FY 2025-26 Wildly Important Goals (WIGs)

**Balance Conservation & Outdoor Recreation:** Increase State Park visitation from 19.2M visitors in FY 24-25 to 19.5M visitors in FY 25-26 (1.5% increase) by June 30, 2026, and complete 30 conservation and restoration projects on State Land Board lands and at State Parks by June 30, 2026.



*State Park Visitation*



*Completed Conservation & Restoration Projects*

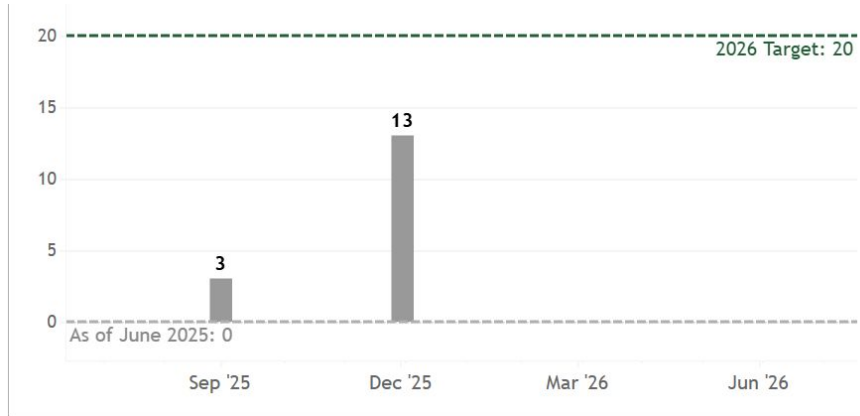
**Context:** Successful completion of these goals will advance conservation, outdoor recreation, and climate resilience across the state, in alignment with the vision articulated in Colorado's Outdoors Strategy. We will move forward two goals in fiscal year 2026 to highlight the work we are doing at the State level 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.

# How DNR will accomplish this WIG

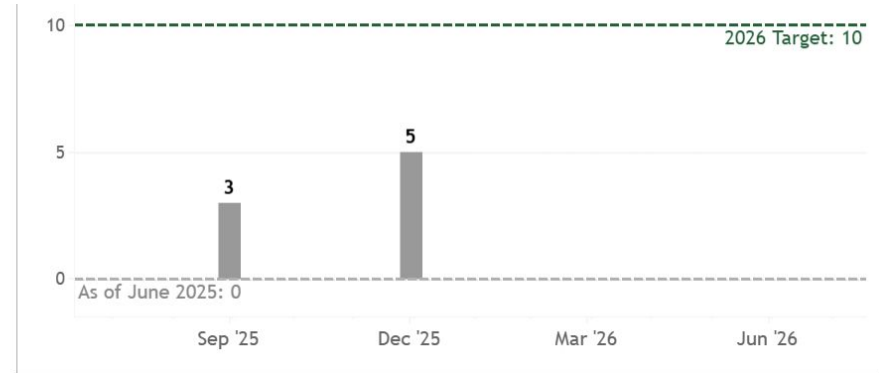
The Department of Natural Resources will pursue and track completion of the following strategies to achieve this goal:

## State Park Conservation Projects:

Complete 20 conservation and restoration projects at State Parks by June 30, 2026



**Capital Improvement Projects to State Parks:** Complete 10 capital improvement projects at State Parks to improve amenities and encourage visitation by June 30, 2026

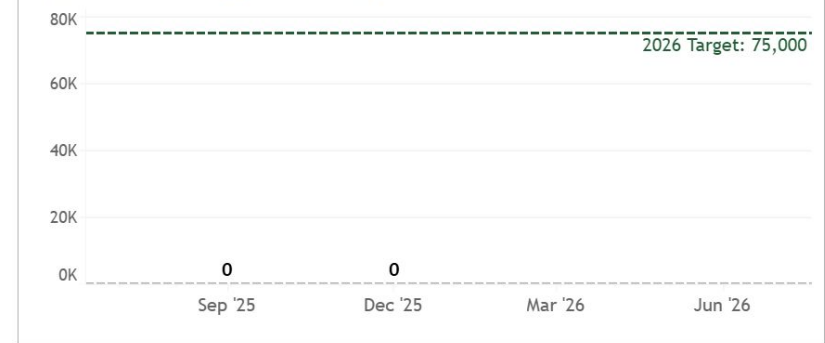


# How DNR will accomplish this WIG (Pt.2)

The Department of Natural Resources will pursue and track completion of the following strategies to achieve this goal:

## State Land Board Grassland Carbon

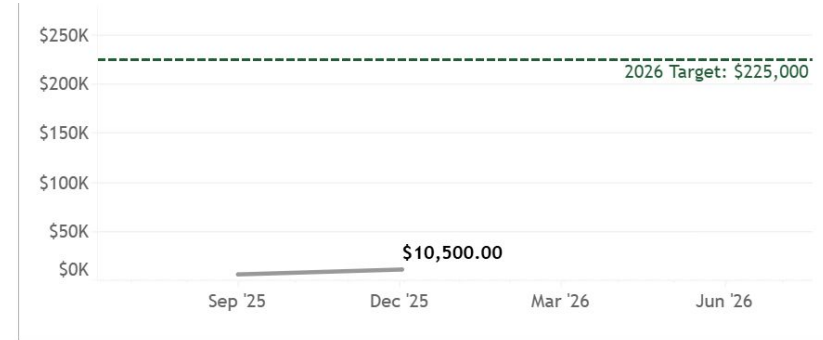
**Management:** The Colorado State Land Board will enroll 75,000 acres in grassland carbon mitigation programs to conserve native grasslands and wildlife on those lands by employing regenerative agriculture best practices by June 30, 2026.



# How DNR will accomplish this WIG (Pt.3)

The Department of Natural Resources will pursue and track completion of the following strategies to achieve this goal:

**State Land Board Wildlife Conservation and Wildfire Mitigation:** The Colorado State Land Board will invest \$225,000 in enhancement funds into wildlife conservation and wildfire mitigation activities that promote ecosystem resilience by June 30, 2026.

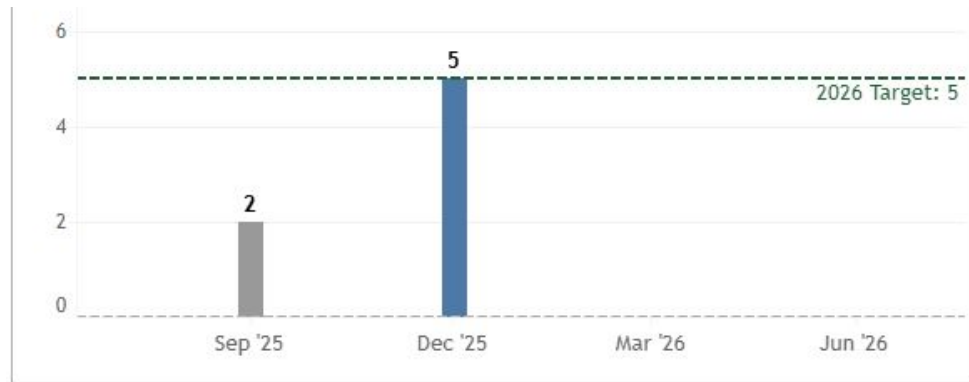




# How DNR will accomplish this WIG (Pt. 4)

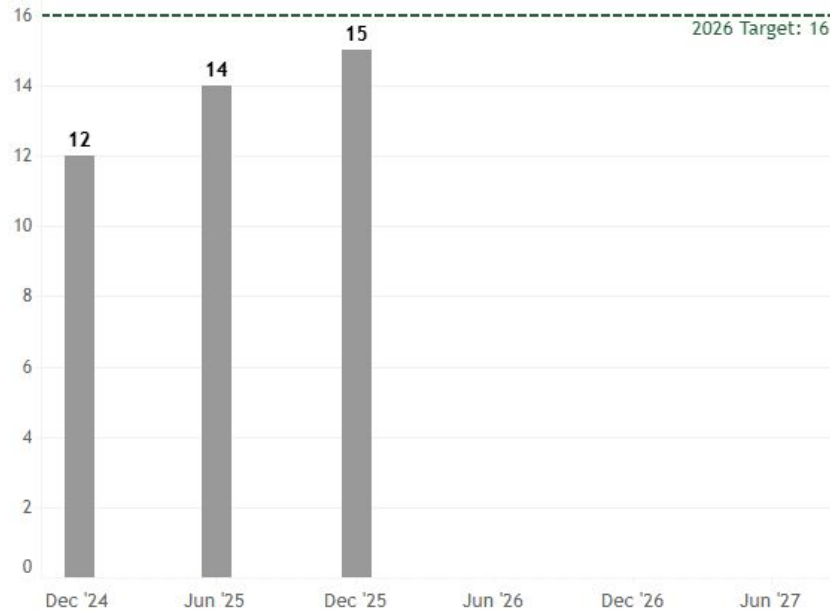
The Department of Natural Resources will pursue and track completion of the following strategies to achieve this goal:

**Expanding Outdoor Recreation Opportunities on State Land Board Lands:** The Colorado State Land Board will support the development of new outdoor recreation opportunities on State Land Board lands by issuing 5 outdoor recreation leases by June 30, 2026.



# DNR FY 2025-26 Wildly Important Goals (WIGs), (Pt. 1)

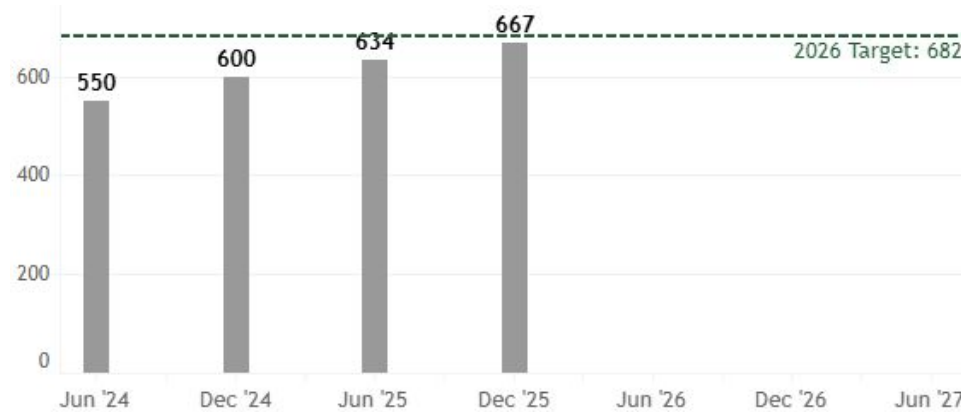
**Water Plan Implementation:** The Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) will take action on 22 Agency Actions from the Colorado Water Plan by June 30, 2027.



**Context:** Successful completion of this goal will ensure the Colorado 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.

# DNR FY 2025-26 Wildly Important Goals (WIGs), (Pt. 2)

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



**Context:** 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 installed capacity on state lands in support of the state's greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.

# DNR FY 2025-26 Wildly Important Goals (WIGs), (Pt. 3)

**Increase Colorado Parks and Wildlife Revenue:** 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.

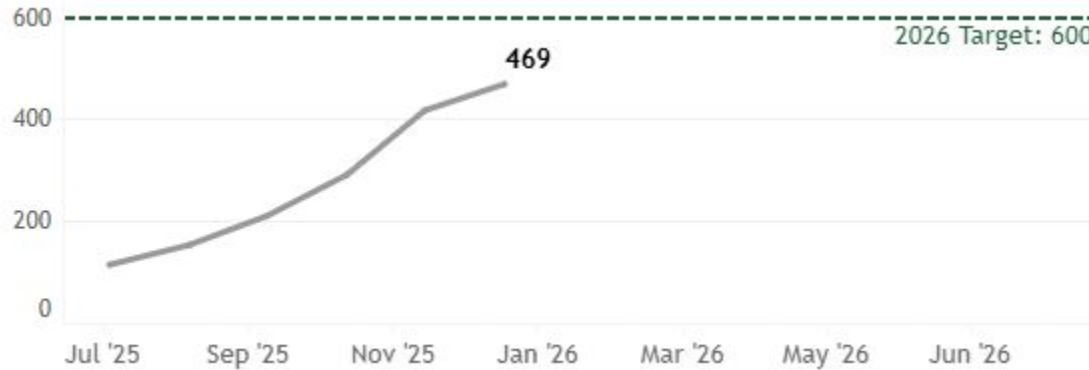


**Context:** Successful completion of this goal will provide diverse, stable, long-term funding that is equitable and supported by a broad set of stakeholders to adequately support parks, wildlife conservation, and recreation in Colorado for years to come. To learn more about the Keep Colorado Wild Pass, please visit the Colorado Parks and Wildlife website.



# DNR FY 2025-26 Wildly Important Goals (WIGs), (Pt. 4)

**Non-lethal Wolf Conflict Reduction:** Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) and the Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA) 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.

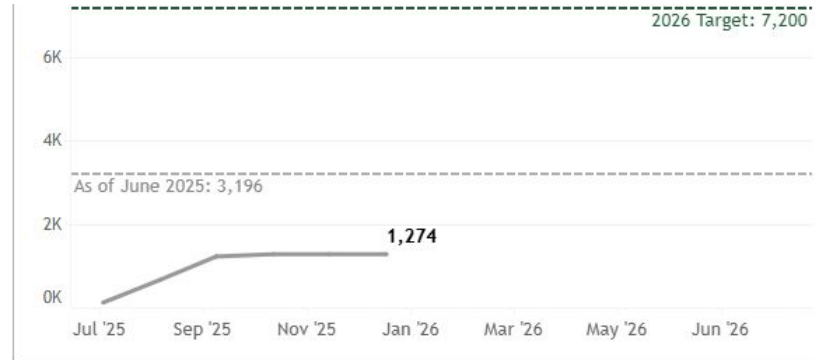


**Context:** Successful completion of this goal will provide Colorado livestock producers with the tools and knowledge to effectively reduce wolf-livestock conflicts, helping to protect their livelihoods and ensure the viability of ranching operations.

# How DNR will accomplish Non-lethal Wolf Conflict Reduction

The Department of Natural Resources will pursue and track completion of the following strategies to achieve this goal:

**DNR Range Riding Support:** To proactively deter wolf-livestock conflicts, increase from 3,196 hours of direct range riding assistance delivered to livestock producers in FY 24-25 to 7,200 hours delivered in FY 25-26 by June 30, 2026.

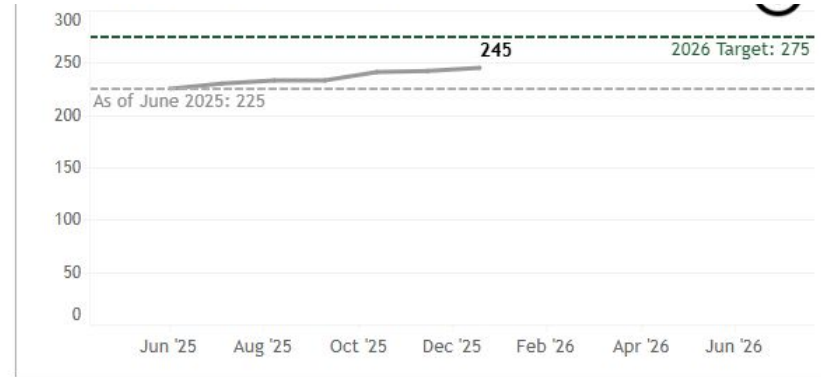


# How DNR will accomplish Non-lethal Wolf Conflict Reduction (Cont'd)

The Department of Natural Resources will pursue and track completion of the following strategies to achieve this goal:

## DNR Site Assessments

**Conducted:** Identify which deterrent methods are most effective for individual ranching operations by conducting an additional 50 site assessments of producers' ranches, for a total of 275 since January 1, 2024, by June 30, 2026.





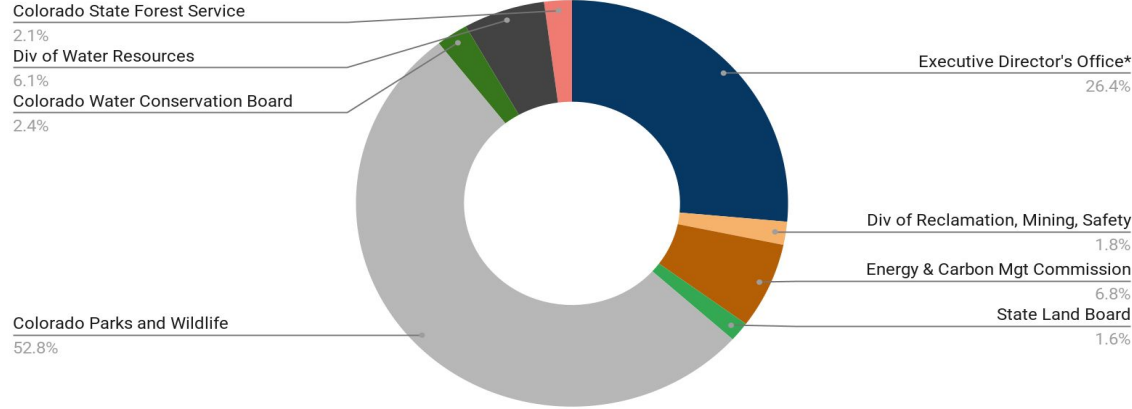
# Legislative, Budget & Regulatory Agendas



**COLORADO**  
Department of  
Natural Resources

# DNR FY 2026-27 Budget Request

## Total Funds by Division



**Total Funds: \$501.2M**

**General Fund: \$60.2M**

- Executive Director's Office/Central Appropriations: \$18.6M GF
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife: \$2.8M GF
- Division of Water Resources: \$28.5M
- Colorado State Forest Service: \$10.4M

**FTE: 1,840.7**

# DNR FY 2026-27 Budget Request Detail



## Colorado Parks and Wildlife Capacity Building

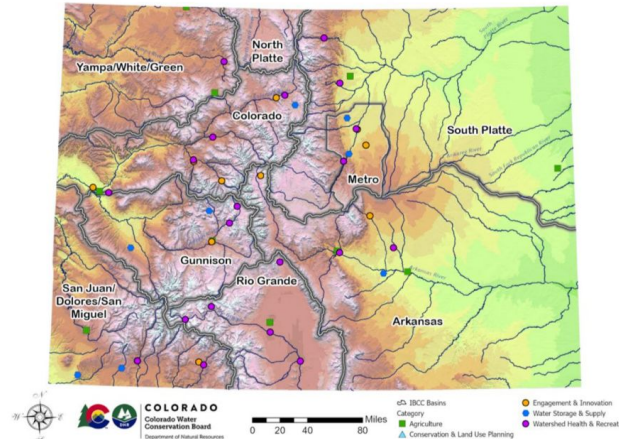
- **New State Parks to Expand Recreational Opportunities (R-01)**  
\$2.2M cash funds, 7.4 FTE
- **CPW Resources to Assist Livestock Producers (R-03)** \$513K cash funds.



# DNR FY 2026-27 Budget Request Detail, Pt. 2

## Water

- **CWCB Water Plan Grant Program Development and Support**  
(R-02) \$273K cash funds, 1.7 FTE



# DNR FY 2026-27 Budget Request Detail, Pt. 3

## State Land Board (SLB) and Division of Reclamation, Mining & Safety (DRMS)

- SLB Enhance Lease Compliance and Oversight (R-04) \$634K cash funds and 3.7 FTE.
- SLB Enhance Tribal Consultation and Engagement (R-05) \$138K cash funds and 0.9 FTE.
- DRMS Mine Safety Inspections and Training Support (R-06) \$157K cash funds and 0.9 FTE



## DNR and DOLA Severance Tax Transfers for Budget Balancing (Statewide R-4)

- For DNR this request will transfer \$4,152,996 from the Severance Tax Operational Fund and a similar amount from the Severance Tax Perpetual Base Fund into the General Fund in FY 2025-26.
- This request will transfer an additional \$2.5M from each of these funds to the General Fund in FY 2026-27.
- These requests are proposed specifically for statewide budget balancing needs.



# DNR FY 2026-27 Legislative Agenda

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

- HB26-1008, Outdoor Opportunities Act
- Human-Bear Conflict Minimization
- State Regulation of Underground Injection Control Wells
- Water Vessel Registration Sunset
- Forest Health Council Sunset
- Biomass Utilization Grant Program Sunset
- Annual Water Project Funding
- Annual Species Conservation Trust Fund Project Funding





# DNR FY 2026-27 Regulatory Agenda

Some Upcoming Rulemakings and Regulations Hearings:

- ECMC - High priority habitat, full underground injection control primacy, produced water
- DRMS - Hard rock, metals, designated mining operations, construction materials extraction, and mine safety & training for tourist mines
- CPW - Ongoing annual rules for properties, wildlife, passes, licensing, boating, and outfitter regulations
- DWR - Measurement of surface and groundwater rules in various Divisions, well construction licensing, agriculture water protection water right process update, geothermal use in wells
- More information available in the 2026 DNR Regulatory Agenda Report

# Colorado for All Efforts



**COLORADO**  
Department of  
Natural Resources

# Colorado for All

- Organizational development and workforce efforts, including Employee Resource Groups
- Implementing Environmental Justice Task Force Recommendations
  - Increasing Tribal engagement touchpoints
  - Enviroscreen and disproportionately impacted communities considerations in permitting and rulemaking
  - Spanish language access to information and public meeting content
- Digital Accessibility & Outdoors for All
  - [accessdnr@state.co.us](mailto:accessdnr@state.co.us) - Central email for immediate contacts at all divisions
  - CPW expanded Aira (digital tool for low vision/blind) to access State Parks info in real time and expanded track chair program



# Federal Impacts to DNR



**COLORADO**  
Department of  
Natural Resources

# Three DNR Federal Grants Defended

- Three DNR Federal Grants have been successfully defended through a multi state lawsuit that the State of Colorado joined.
- Funds were reinstated after being put on pause by the Federal government at the start of this year.
- These grants include:
  - Community Assistance Program - State Support Services Element (CAP-SSSE); Risk Mapping, Assessment, and Planning - Cooperating Technical Partners Program (Risk MAP CTP)
  - National Dam Safety State Assistance Grant Program
  - State Recreational Boating Safety Grant Program

# Statutorily Required Program Updates

# HB21-1318, Create Outdoor Equity Grant Program

Since its inception, the Outdoor Equity Grant Program (OEGP):

- Reached over 79,000 participants
- Awarded \$10.5 million to over 150 organizations to increase access to the outdoors

During the 2025 legislative session:

- CPW bolstered funding for the OEGP by \$1.3 million to bring annual funding for grants to \$4 million and to provide administrative support;
- The passage of HB25-1215 redistributed lottery spillover to further increase funding for the OEGP.



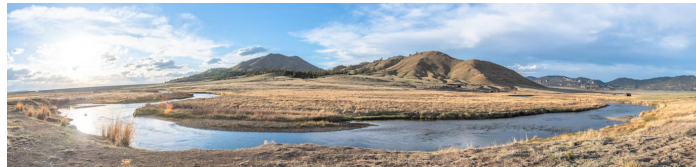
# HB23-1242, Water Conservation in Oil & Gas Operations

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

Established in July 2023, the 31-member Colorado Produced Water Consortium completed the following in 2025:

- Annual Update (April 1, 2025)
- Completed final legislatively required, data-driven reports on produced water (HB23-1242)
  - Analytical and Toxicological Methods and Evaluation Tools for Produced Water Treatment and Potential Use Outside of the Oilfield (July 1, 2025)
- Provided written recommendations to ECMC (September 5, 2025)
  - Colorado Produced Water Consortium Exploration of Alternatives to a Complete Prohibition of Centralized Produced Water Facilities in Disproportionately Impacted Communities Resulting in Recommendations for Enhanced Protections in Disproportionately Impacted Communities
  - Attachment: Analysis of Rules and Regulations for Centralized Produced Water Storage and Treatment Facilities

In accordance with HB23-1242, the Colorado Produced Water Consortium's future work will include an annual update in 2026 and future annual review of the ECMC Produced Water Rules (informed by Consortium's 2024 recommendations; effective April 30, 2025).





# HB24-1117, Invertebrates and Rare Plants

- **In the last year, CPW hired 6 new staff** to establish its Invertebrate and Rare Plant team.
- **235 Invertebrate and 195 Rare Plant Species of Greatest Conservation Need were incorporated into the 2025 State Wildlife Action Plan** to guide the next 10 years of work.

## Invertebrate Updates:

- Documented 2,751 bumble bees in CO in partnership with the Xerces Society
- Pilot Pollinator Demonstration Gardens installed at two State Parks in collaboration with Wildland Restoration Volunteers
- Funded two graduate students at CSU Pueblo studying bumble bee community response to pinyon-juniper forest management.
- Ran a Teacher Externship Program with CPW's Education Program, which trained Denver area teachers in pollinator ecology, conservation, and research.

## Rare Plant Updates:

- Conducted targeted rare plant surveys for 20 different species, over 30 unique locations
- Led a long-term monitoring project for the endangered Pagosa skyrocket (*Ipomopsis polyantha*) at the CPW-owned Pagosa Skyrocket Natural Area
- Incorporated recommendations into agency land-use planning efforts and advised external partners on best management practices
- Rare Plant Communication: 10 presentations, participation in the Colorado rare plant symposium, podcasts, and print media



# SB24-026, Ag & Nat Resources Public Engagement Requirement

- Senate Bill 24-026 requires the Governor-appointed members of the Parks and Wildlife Commission (PWC) and the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) within DNR to participate in two public meetings each year.
- This bill just took effect starting January 1, 2025, with one full calendar year for members to meet the requirements of the bill.
- As of December 31, 2025 all current voting members of the PWC and CWCB met their statutory obligation to participate in at least two public meetings.

# HB25-1163, Free Access to State Parks for Colorado Ute Tribes

- HB25-1163 provides enrolled members of the Southern Ute Indian Tribe and the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe free entrance to all Colorado state parks. (Effective August 5, 2025)
- Requires a current Tribal identification card with a photo for free park entrance.
- *CPW State Parks Public Comment Form* (December 2024 - April 2025)
  - Submitted responses to the CPW public comment form are informing continued CPW outreach and engagement.
- *CPW State Parks American Indian/Indigenous Community Listening Sessions* (January - March 2026)
  - Seven (7) in-person listening sessions scheduled statewide; virtual session is pending.
- *CPW Tribal Summit at Annual Partners in the Outdoors Conference* (April 2026)
  - Outreach and engagement completed through the comment form and community listening sessions will be summarized during Tribal Summit and a public report issued by July 2026.

# SB22-028, Groundwater Compact Compliance Fund

- SB22-028 created the Groundwater Compact Compliance Fund and made an appropriation of \$60 million in American Rescue Plan Act funding
- Funds were divided evenly between the Rio Grande Water Conservation District and the Republican River Water Conservation District for well retirement efforts in the two basins
- By the end of 2025, nearly 24,000 acres had been retired—9,000 in the Rio Grande Basin and 15,000 in the Republican Basin
- Retirement efforts will continue through 2026 and all SB22-028 funds will be spent by the end of the year

# Other Updates

# CPW Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) Program

- In 2025, CPW and our partners:
  - Inspected more than 438,272 watercraft
  - Decontaminated 30,039 watercraft
  - Intercepted 136 mussel-fouled watercraft
  - Sampled more than 260 waters of the state
- CPW CSP Port of Entry continue implementation of HB21-1226
  - Continued operation of Loma & Trinidad Ports of Entry
  - Added two new stations at Ft. Morgan and Limon Ports of Entry
  - 60 mussel-fouled watercraft intercepted across the 4 POE stations
- CPW detected adult zebra mussels in Colorado River & Several Grand Junction Area Ponds
  - Private lake in Eagle County with large population of zebra mussels identified and treated
  - Colorado River “Infested” with zebra mussels from confluence of Eagle River to State Line
- CPW has increased FTE, budget, sampling & lab capacity in response to these ongoing detections.





# Mountain Pine Beetle Outbreak



Native bark beetle producing popcorn-shaped masses of resin, called "pitch tubes," on the trunk where beetles tunneled into the bark.



# Mountain Pine Beetle Outbreak- Slide 2

- Executive Actions
  - Governor Polis signed an [Executive Order](#) on December 15, 2026 establishing the Ponderosa Mountain Pine Beetle Task Force co-chaired by DNR, CSFS and DFPC.
- Colorado State Forest Service & Department of Natural Resources Actions
  - Outreach and Education around the current MPB outbreak including updated websites and landowner information
  - Interested in pursuing a tax credit extension for Forest Products/Wood Utilization from MPB infected wood
- Partner Engagement
  - DNR, CSFS and DFPC are engaging with the Governor's Office, State House and State Senate, Federal Delegation, Local Governments and wildfire mitigation practitioners.



# Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program (COSWAP)

COSWAP supports strategic wildfire mitigation and forest health projects that reduce wildfire risk, improve watershed health and support workforce development through two funding opportunities, including partnerships with conservation corps, Department of Corrections SWIFT and CWCB.

- Annual budget: \$6 million
- Since its inception in 2021, \$47.36 million has been invested into 140 projects, mitigating 17,177 acres
- **Since the 2025 SMART Act hearing COSWAP released the 4th Workforce Development grant round, awarding \$6.9million to 23 projects**



Photos from Cub Creek project managed by Evergreen Fire Rescue



# Forest Restoration & Wildfire Risk Mitigation Program



The FRWRM Grant Program invests in projects that reduce wildfire risk, protect communities, and improve the long-term health and resilience of Colorado's forests.



Before



After



Project that will protect drinking water at Button Rock Preserve that provides drinking water to over 100,000 residents in Longmont and Lyons.

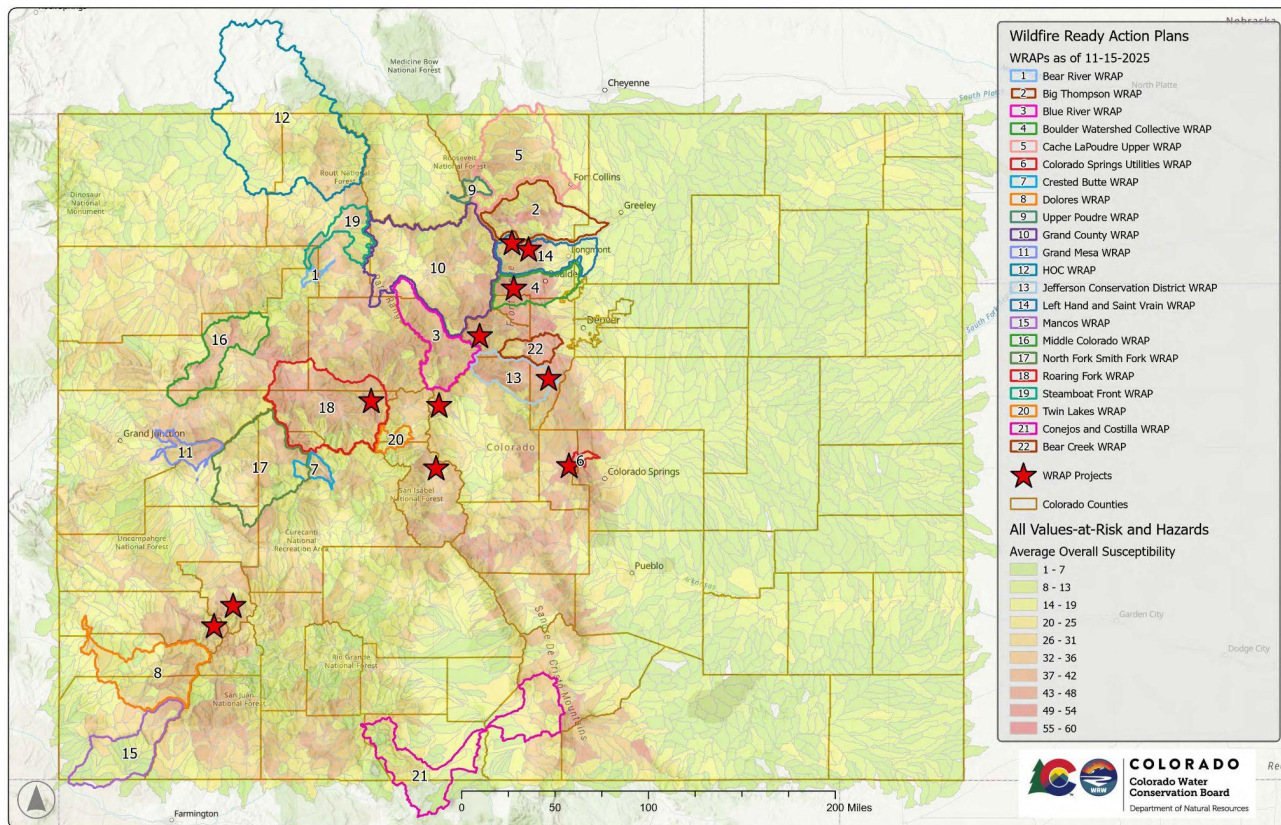
AFTER

# Wildfire Ready Watersheds - Wildfire Ready Action Plans

**Wildfire Ready Action  
Plans (WRAPs) Approved  
= 22**

**Projects Approved = 11**

**Total Amount Awarded =  
\$10.8 million**





# HB25-1332, State Trust Lands Work Group

- HB 25-1332 directed the Executive Director of DNR to convene State Trust Lands Conservation and Recreation Work Group to study opportunities to advance conservation, climate resilience, biodiversity, and sustainable, equitable, and low-conflict outdoor recreation.
- Work Group met twice in 2025 and has additional meetings planned for 2026.
- As required by HB25-1332, Work Group will submit to the General Assembly an interim report (by March 16, 2026) and a final report (by September 1, 2026).



# Keep Colorado Wild Pass

- SB21-249 established the Keep Colorado Wild Pass as a discounted state park pass available to Coloradans through their vehicle registrations
- In FY 2024-25 (and since inception through December 2025):
  - Sold 1,518,814 passes (3,735,580 since inception)
  - Maintained a 27.94% opt-in rate (27.8% since inception)
  - Generated \$41,629,471 in revenue (\$102,181,442 since inception)
    - The first \$32.5 million each year has gone to support park operations and offset losses of traditional license revenue
    - The next \$2.5 million will go towards search and rescue and \$1 million to the Colorado Avalanche Information Center
    - Additional revenue has been used to develop new and existing parks and support non-game wildlife work, including wolf depredation compensation and conflict minimization efforts, CPW's Invertebrate and Rare Plant team, and efforts to deter wildlife trafficking.

COLORADO VEHICLE REGISTRATION										Boulder		L0012345678	
Vehicle Type		Passenger		Vehicle ID 4TDKUFJN3J0S1234		Plate ABC12		Tab ABC23		Expire 10/31/2024			
Year	Make	Model	Fuel Type		Body Style								
2023	Toyota	Highlander	Gas		UP								
Color	Empty Weight		GVW	GVWR	GVW HIGH	Bus Type	Title Number						
Navy	4400						123456789						
Purchase Date	Fleet Number	Unit Number	H/AUT	Carrier	Miles	Emission Expire							
9/1/2022						10/31/2026							
Registered Owner/Address						Dual Registration Type							
Boulder						Dual ID						Dual Expire	
						No Collisions							
167363456789													

# Colorado's Outdoor Strategy



*\*\*A text-only version of this graphic is available on the next slide*

# Colorado's Outdoor Strategy, Pt. 2

*\*\*Below is a text-only version of the Colorado's Outdoors Strategy graphic on the previous slide*

- Colorado's Outdoors Strategy advances three interrelated 'North Star' goals for our outdoors. Each goal is essential to achieve a future where our people, outdoors, community character, and way of life endure for generations to come.
  - Exceptional and Sustainable Outdoor Recreation
    - A diversity of high quality outdoor recreation experiences are accessible, equitable, and inclusive; management and stewardship enhance benefits and minimize impacts for people, landscapes, and local communities.
  - Coordinated Planning and Funding
    - Conservation, outdoor recreation, and climate resilience planning and implementation efforts are integrated; supported by robust funding and capacity; inclusive of diverse partners, perspectives, and communities; and drive tangible actions for the outdoors.
  - Climate-Resilient Conservation & Restoration
    - Conservation and restoration actions help wildlife and landscapes thrive amidst climate change, increasing visitation, and other stressors; habitats are resilient and connected; communities benefit from healthy ecosystems including agricultural lands.



# SB24-171, Wolverine Restoration

- Wolverine Restoration Plan is complete and was simultaneously presented to CPW's Commission and released to the public in January.
- CPW initiated regulation changes to compensate livestock producers for confirmed losses to wolverine depredations at the January PWC meeting.
- CPW continues to coordinate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on development of the 10(j) rule.
- Stakeholder outreach was initiated as part of the compensation regulation process and it will occur throughout the 10(j) NEPA process and leading up to restoration.
- CPW will develop and implement a Communication Plan during 2026



# Proposition 114 Wolf Restoration Updates

- Continued implementation of CRS 33-2-105.8, following passage of Proposition 114
- CPW worked with USFWS to develop 10(j) rule prior to reintroductions occurring to allow for increased management flexibility of wolves
- 10 wolves were reintroduced to west slope of Colorado from Oregon in December 2023
- 15 wolves were reintroduced to the west slope of Colorado from British Columbia in January 2025
- Four packs had litters Spring 2025
- Plan calls for 3-5 years of releases of 10-15 wolves per year.
- Currently no plans for translocating additional gray wolves this release season and continues to explore options for translocations in winter 2026/2027.

# Efforts Toward Reducing Wolf-Livestock Conflict

- Provided direct assistance to 25+ livestock producers through ~4,500 hours and 14,800 miles of Range Riding.
- Intent to increase the number of riders for the 2026 range Riding Season (May 1-October 30).
- In June, 2025 CPW hired a public information officer focused on carnivores.
- A Wolf Damage and Conflict Manager was hired in December, 2025 and will lead the 2026 State Led Range Riding Program.
- Multi-Agency Cooperative Training on Depredation Investigations and Wolf Management delivered in Fall, 2025.
- Convened a Livestock Records Work Group to improve delivery of the indirect/itemized compensation program for 2025 claims.
- Completed MOU with USDA APHIS to assist with conflict reduction efforts and depredation investigations.
- Completed over 240 site assessments with concentrations on areas with heightened wolf activity.
- CPW undertook the removal of one wolf meeting the definition of chronic depredation.
- CDA continues to engage counties and livestock producers in the implementation of carcass management.
- CPW has increased available conflict reduction tools and geographic distribution of materials and to-date have had 19 fladry deployments totaling 27.75 miles with zero confirmed depredations during these deployments

# Colorado River Update

- Colorado remains committed to durable and sustainable post-2026 operating guidelines on the Colorado River.
- The Colorado River team continues to meet regularly with other Colorado River Basin States, including a recent in-person meeting in Salt Lake City and standing virtual meetings.
- The Department of the Interior recently released their Draft Environmental Impact Statement for operations of Lakes Powell and Mead.



# South Platte River Update

- **July 2025** - Nebraska files petition asking the US Supreme Court to hear complaints regarding the South Platte River Compact in two areas:
  - Nebraska's efforts to construct the Perkins County Canal, and;
  - Colorado's obligations during the irrigation season.
- **October, 2025** - Colorado files response brief to the US Supreme Court, urging the court not to take up these premature complaints.
- **November 2025** - the US Solicitor General is invited to file a brief expressing the views of the United States.
- **Perkins County Canal Permitting** - Nebraska will be required to obtain a federal permit under section 404 of the Clean Water Act in order to construct Perkins County Canal. As of today, that process has not be formally initiated. Colorado intends to engage in this federal permitting process as we do for all major water infrastructure projects.



# Questions?

*Daphne Gervais*

*DNR Director of Legislative Affairs*

*daphne.gervais@state.co.us*



**COLORADO**  
Department of  
Natural Resources





# Appendix A: Wildfire Mitigation Incentives Grant Report

- HB22-1011 created the Incentives for Local Government Grant Program, to be administered by the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS).
- This competitive grant program provided state funding assistance to local governments that dedicate revenue for local forest management and wildfire mitigation efforts. The funding is intended to either match revenue raised by such governments from a dedicated revenue source or to expand existing programs administered by the local government on a long-term basis.
- The CSFS received \$10 million to develop and administer the Program. A [summary of the program](#) and the program's [last report on these funds](#) (summarizing the use of all money awarded under the program in the preceding fiscal year, award recipients, grant amounts, and a description of each grant project), are linked above and can be found on [CSFS's website](#).



Figure 1. Colorado Counties with Successful ILG Applicants



# Appendix B: More Information on WIGs and Performance

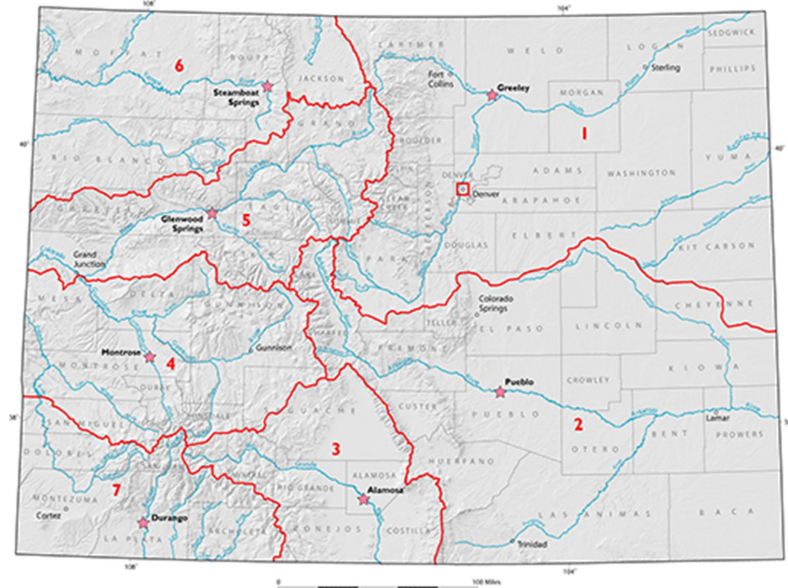
To view monthly updates on Wildly Important Goals and corresponding lead measures, please visit the [Governor's Dashboard](#).

For more information on additional Department of Natural Resources goals, view our [FY 2025-26 Performance Plan](#).



# Appendix D: More information about DWR

- The Division of Water Resources (DWR) divides the state into seven Water Divisions, each based on major river basins (South Platte, Arkansas, Rio Grande, Colorado, Gunnison, Yampa, San Juan/Dolores) for local administration of water rights
- DWR is responsible for:
  - Water Administration - Ensuring maximum beneficial use of Colorado's water
    - Directing water use for over 140 years
    - Large portion of staff is on the ground
    - Full compliance with interstate compacts
  - Safe Dams and Well Construction
  - Water Resource Information



*DWR staff have a host of important responsibilities, including ensuring the water rights priority system is followed by enforcing the decrees and water laws of the State, managing use and measurement rules to ensure that Colorado remains in compliance with interstate and interbasin agreements, measuring streamflow and reservoir levels, managing the state-wide satellite monitoring program, analyzing well logs, measuring well levels to determine aquifer characteristics, and verifying the safety of Colorado's dams and inspect dam construction projects.*

# Appendix E: State Land Board (SLB) 2025 Performance

- FY 24-25 School Trust Revenues & Permanent Fund Interest: **\$314 million**
- CDE BEST Distribution: \$171 million (\$1.43 billion since 2008)



- FY 25-26 Revenues & Interest Forecast **\$289 million**
- Renewable energy from Trust lands can power 200,000 homes
- Approximately 1 million acres in CPW Hunting & Fishing Access Program

# Appendix F: More Information about ECMC

## Facts about Energy Production in Colorado:

- Most protective oil & gas regulations in the nation
- Top 10 state in total energy production
- Fourth largest oil producing state
- Eighth largest natural gas producing state
- Fourth state in nation to pursue Class VI primacy
- Renewable energy accounts for 39% of CO's total in-state electricity net generation



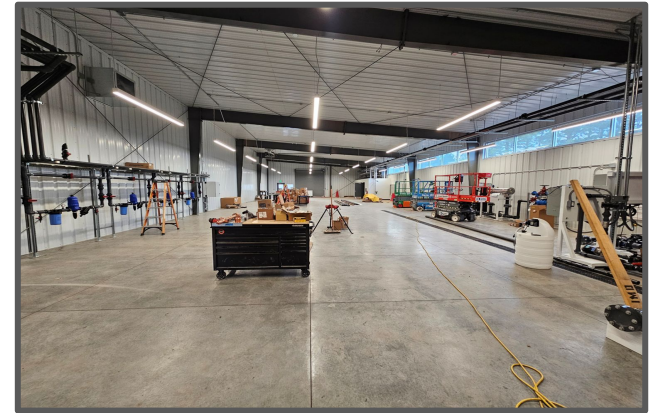
## Recent ECMC Accomplishments:

- Adopted and implemented first-in-the-nation Cumulative Impacts rules
- Adopted and implemented geothermal rules
- Adopted Class VI primacy rules
- Published six studies per direction from GA
- Reviewed 61 Oil and Gas Development Plans
- Grew team by 74% to account for expanded regulatory scope since 2019
- Presented to delegations from Canada, Iceland, Iraq, Lapland, Southeast Asian nations, and Turkmenistan on CO's regulatory approach



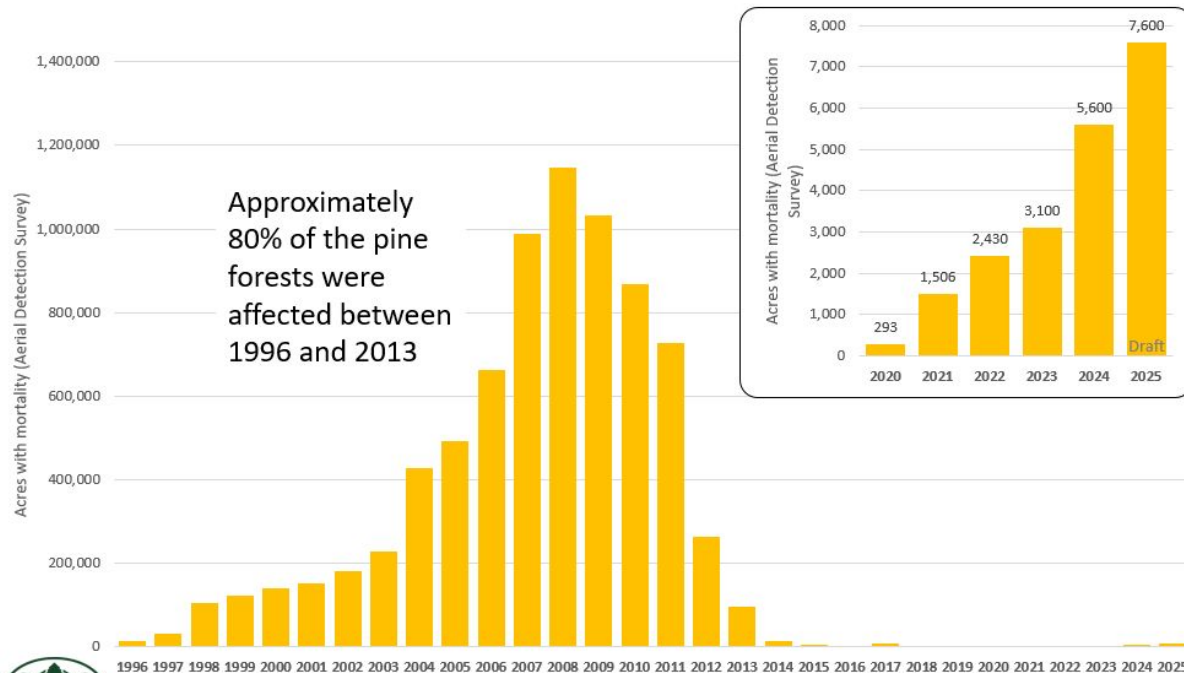
# Appendix G: Nursery Upgrade Project

- Recent legislation across two sessions provided CSFS with \$10.3M to complete an upgrade of our Seedling Tree Nursery, the state's leader in producing low-cost, Colorado-grown seedling trees and shrubs for conservation.
- Few conservation efforts provide the extensive and enduring benefits of planting seedling trees. Seedling trees reforest burned areas, enhance wildlife habitat, reduce soil erosion, protect water supplies and serve as living fences that provide protection from wind and snow.
- Project Completion expected Summer/Fall 2026



# Appendix H: More Info on Mountain Pine Beetle Outbreak

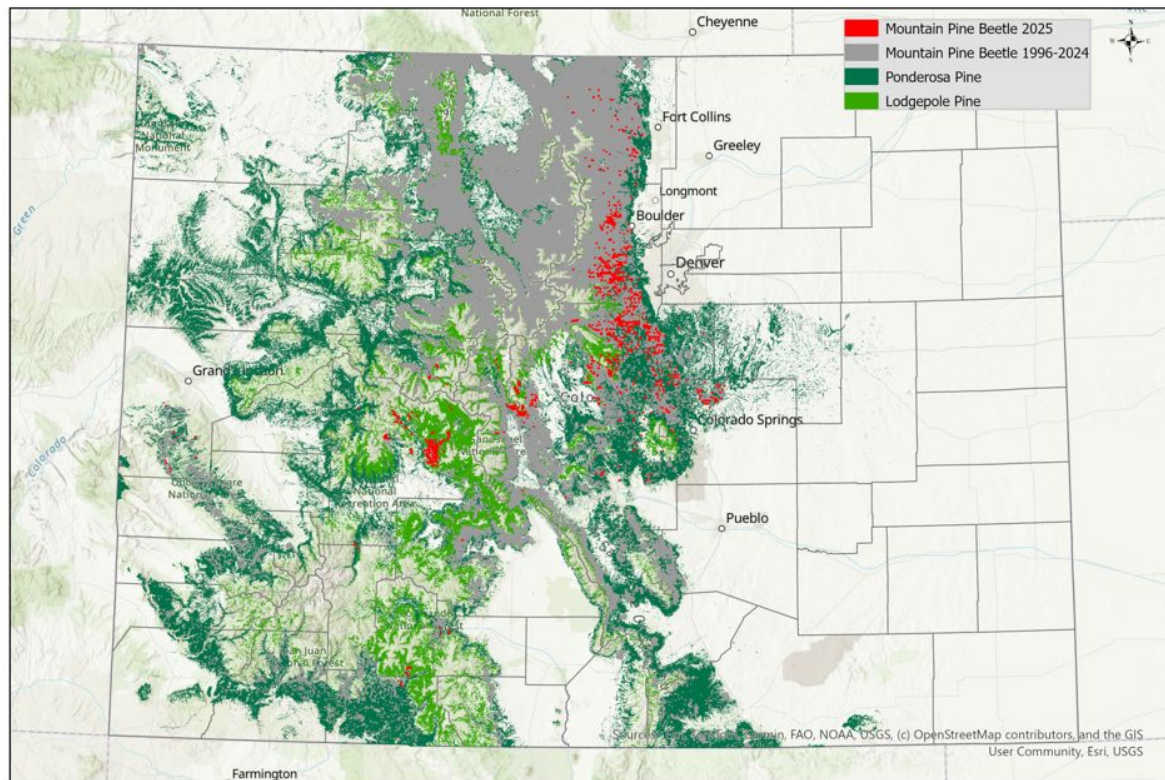
## Mountain pine beetle-caused mortality across Colorado



This graph is showing the correlation from 1996-2013 and current modeling from 2020-2025 showing similar increases.

# Appendix I: More Info on Mountain Pine Beetle Outbreak Pt. 2

## Mountain Pine Beetle-Caused Mortality 2025



\*Not every tree on every acre has been affected.

The information contained herein is provided as a public service. It is for non-commercial purposes only, with the understanding that the Colorado State Forest Service and Colorado State University make no warranties, either expressed or implied, concerning the accuracy, completeness, reliability, or suitability of the information. In no event will CSFS be liable to you or any third party for any direct, indirect, incidental, consequential, special, or exemplary damage, or for any loss of profit, arising from the use or misuse of this data, even if you have been advised of the possibility of such damages.

Aerial Survey Data Source:

\*\*\*[https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/2/forest-grasslandhealth/tod/tbden3\\_041623](https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/2/forest-grasslandhealth/tod/tbden3_041623)



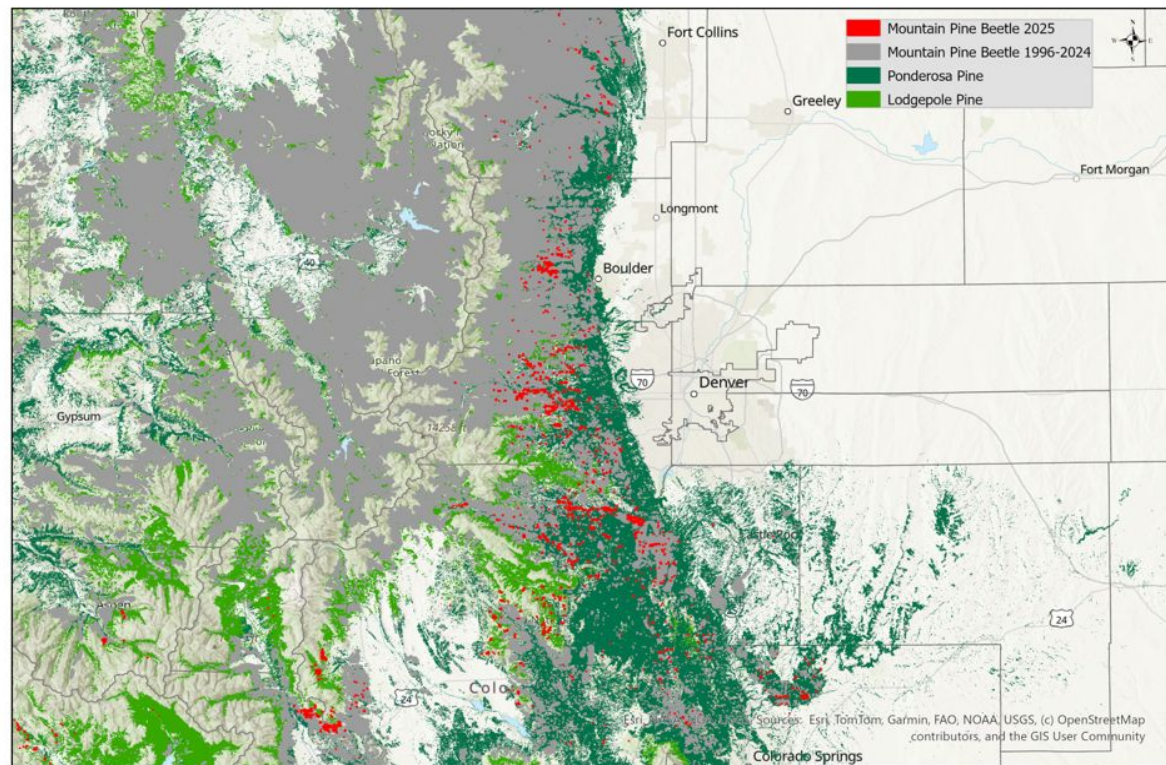
COLORADO





# Appendix J: More Info on Mountain Pine Beetle Outbreak Pt. 3

## Mountain Pine Beetle-Caused Mortality 2025



\*Not every tree on every acre has been affected.

The information contained herein is provided as a public service. It is for non-commercial purposes only, with the understanding that the Colorado State Forest Service and Colorado State University make no warranties, either expressed or implied, concerning the accuracy, completeness, reliability, or suitability of the information. In no event will CSFS be liable to you or any third party for any direct, indirect, incidental, consequential, special, or exemplary damage, or for any loss of profit, arising from the use or misuse of this data, even if you have been advised of the possibility of such damages.

Aerial Survey Data Source:

\*\*\*<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/12/forest-landscapehealth/12041829>



COLORADO



# Appendix K: Species Conservation Trust Fund (CWCBC)

## **FY 25-26 Prioritized CWCBC Projects include:**

- Construct a new boat ramp on the White River to increase field crew access and support more efficient non-native species removal work
- Hatchery equipment and maintenance supplies to support bonytail (federally endangered) production
- Purchase of stocking trailer tanks
- Purchase of antennas and tags to monitor native fish movement
- Leases of water from Ruedi Reservoir to support the native fish populations in the Colorado River
- On-going research of the effects of selenium on threatened and endangered fish in the Gunnison River basin.



# Appendix L: Species Conservation Trust Fund (CPW)

## FY 25-26 Prioritized CWCB Projects include:

- **Terrestrial projects**

- Projects to support and improve statewide sylvatic plague management
- Monitoring and population assessment projects for Golden Eagles, Black Swifts, forest carnivores, pollinators, and several bat species
- Seed banking programs for rare plants
- And others

- **Aquatic projects**

- Expanding genomic libraries to better understand the distribution of aquatic invertebrates
- Population monitoring of Wood Frogs and improved husbandry facilities for Boreal Toads
- Projects to assess water quality and impacts of urban runoff on wetland habitats and aquatic species
- And others



# Appendix M: SB25-003 Implementation

- SB25-003, Semi-automatic Firearms & Rapid-Fire Devices, was passed last session to prohibit the manufacture, distribution, transfer, sale, and purchase of specified semi-automatic firearms
- Newly formed “Firearms Safety Program” within Colorado Parks and Wildlife to carry out the new legislation.
- Firearms Safety Program has:
  - Completed hiring of the program manager, training specialist, and program assistant positions.
  - Created new web pages specifically for specified semiautomatic firearms on the main CPW website for the public.
  - Engaged with key stakeholder, 64 Sheriffs of Colorado, in virtual and in-person meetings.
  - Engaged with the public at in-person presentations in Ft. Collins and ISE Sportsmen’s Show.
  - Created direct email for any questions or those interested in more information at [dnr\\_cpw\\_firearmsafety@state.co.us](mailto:dnr_cpw_firearmsafety@state.co.us)
  - Press release on January 9 about the program to the public.
  - Scheduled virtual and in-person outreach sessions within the next 60-90 days with key stakeholder groups to include Sheriffs, Firearm Instructors, Gun Dealers (FFLs), and the general public.
- CPW has completed review and made selection of a vendor to build the Firearms Safety System database to administer the program and integrate with stakeholders.

# Appendix N: FRWRM Funding History

Funding Cycle	FRWRM Funding Received	# Applications Received	Funding Requests	# Projects Funded	Funding Awarded*	% of Projects Funded
2017-18	\$1,107,173	66	\$3,739,671	24	\$1,053,499	36%
2018-19	\$954,545	39	\$2,691,602	19	\$1,199,021	49%
2019-20	\$2,050,000	54	\$4,066,229	25	\$2,045,867	46%
2020-21	\$1,419,623	65	\$5,077,743	17	\$1,505,203	26%
2021**	\$14,000,000	92	\$14,709,849	54	\$7,424,301	59%
2022-23	\$10,200,000	122	\$29,739,400	70	\$14,994,592	57%
2023-24	\$8,000,000	82	\$21,608,242	31	\$7,241,580	38%
2024-25	\$8,000,000	100	\$25,196,441	37	\$7,040,000	37%
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>\$45,731,341</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>\$106,829,176</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>\$42,504,062</b>	<b>45%</b>

# Appendix O: FRWRM Project Completion

Year/Cycle	Amount Awarded	# Projects Funded	Completed Projects to Date	Acres Treated to Date
2017-2018	\$1,053,499	24	24	1610
2018-2019	\$1,199,021	19	19	1254
2019-2020	\$2,045,867	25	25	2822
2020-2021	\$1,505,204	17	15	1155
2021	\$7,424,301	54	40	4129
2022-2023	\$14,994,592	70	25	2642
2023-2024	\$7,241,580	31	2	29
2024-2025	\$7,040,000	37	3	9
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$42,504,064</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>13650</b>

