

# Funding the Future of Colorado's State Parks



Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) relies on park entrance and camping fees to support 42 state parks located across the state. Whether hiking through the geological wonders at Roxborough, gathering family together at Cherry Creek, or paddling with

the awe-inspiring backdrop of the San Juan Mountains at Ridgway, Colorado's state parks offer unique and outstanding opportunities for outdoor recreation.



**12 million people visit Colorado state parks each year.**

Demand for park services and amenities is growing. CPW wants to ensure we have the ability to meet this increasing demand and continue to provide high quality parks into the future.

## CPW is user supported.

Park entrance passes, camping fees and registration fees provide almost half of the budget for state parks. The Colorado Lottery and Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) provide an additional third. The remaining funds come from project-specific grants from federal and state sources, severance tax funding and other smaller sources of revenue.

## Commission Authority

The Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission has the authority to set park fees. The ability to raise these fees over time as the costs of managing state parks increase is essential for Colorado's state parks to thrive into the future. There is a statutory limit on the amount of revenue parks fees can generate and revenues are at that limit due to the high volume of park passes sold. The legislature must decide whether to address this constraint which prevents the Commission from adjusting fees.

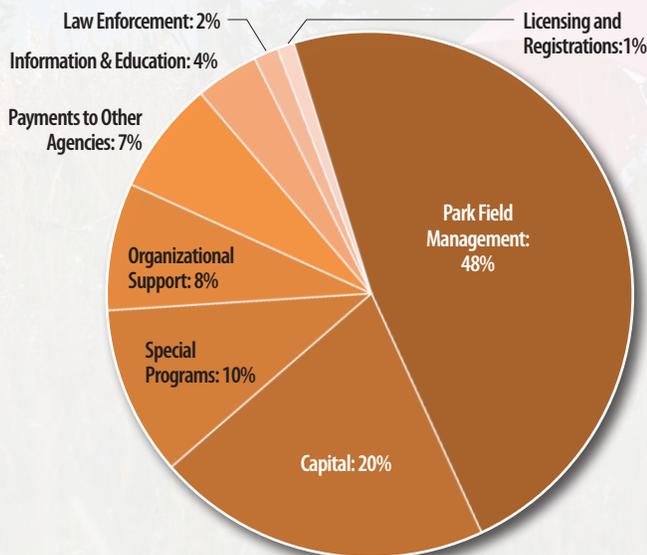
The Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission is a citizen board, appointed by the Governor. This 11-member board is made up of recreationalists, sportsmen, agricultural producers, and at-large members appointed to represent parks and wildlife related issues. Since 2010, the Commission has raised parks fees only once – a small increase in camping and cabin fees that went into effect in November of 2015.

**42**

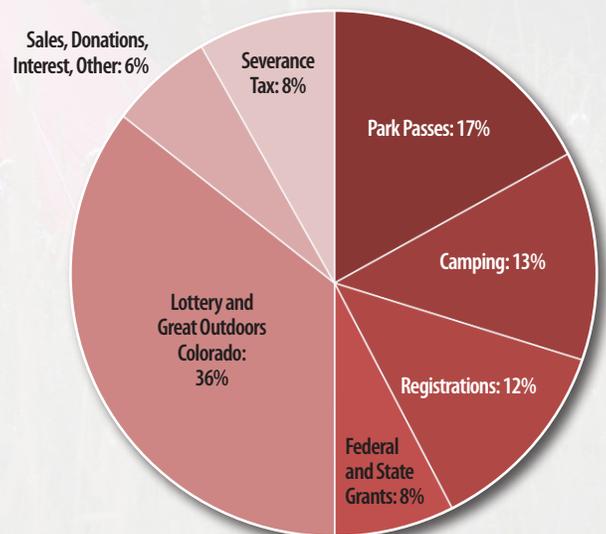
Percentage of parks funding derived directly from passes, fees and registrations



**State Parks Expenses**



**State Parks Revenue**



## Park Entrance and Camping Fees

Since 2010, state parks have not received funding from state general tax dollars except occasional small amounts (less than one percent of the budget) for special projects.

Colorado State Parks used to receive almost 30% of general operating dollars from the general fund. As this funding fell, fees have been raised to ensure the continued funding of state parks and outdoor recreation programs. The Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission currently has the ability to raise park entrance and camping fees. This ability has allowed for periodic increases in order to not fall too far behind inflation.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) measures the change in costs over time by tracking a specific market basket of goods. Based on the Denver-Boulder-Greeley CPI, prices in 2015 are about 8 times the amount they were in the 1960's.

**For more information, please visit:**  
[cpw.state.co.us/Funding-Parks](http://cpw.state.co.us/Funding-Parks)

