

Public Access



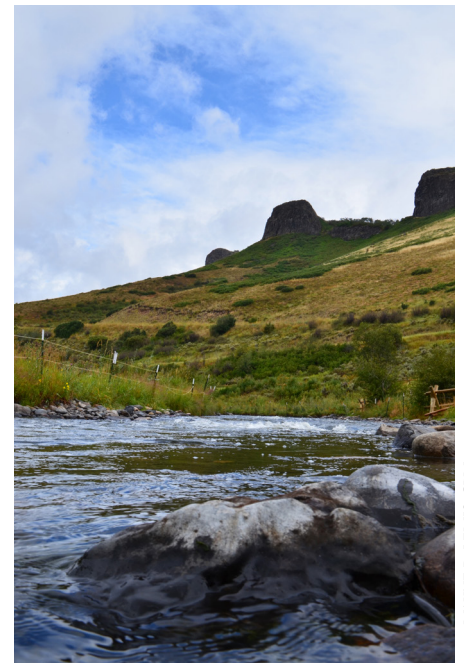
HUNTING, FISHING AND OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Introduction

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) offers hunters, anglers, wildlife watchers and other outdoor recreationists a variety of locations to access the outdoors. Through cooperation with private landowners and the Colorado State Land Board as well as through properties and conservation easements owned or managed by CPW, over **2.5 million** acres of land are made available to Colorado's outdoor recreationists.

Quick Facts:

Program	Number of Properties	Number of Acres
State Wildlife Areas	348	769,000
State Trust Land	241	490,000
Walk-in Access	900	200,000
State Parks	43 ¹	200,000
Ranching for Wildlife ²	29	1,200,000



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State Wildlife Areas

State wildlife areas (SWAs) are state-owned lands that provide habitat for Colorado's 950 species of wildlife as well as wildlife-related recreation to the public. While most activities focus on hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing, each SWA has different permitted activities, based on location and available resources. These parcels of SWA land are paid for primarily by sportsmen and managed for the benefit of wildlife. CPW manages about 769,000 acres of land within 348 SWA lands around the state. SWAs range in size from just a few acres to several thousand. In general, there is no access fee to utilize a SWA. Since many SWAs are managed for wildlife and wildlife habitat, seasonal closures may limit public access. CPW encourages people to check online or check the *Colorado State Recreational Lands* brochure for the specific regulations of SWAs.

(cpw.state.co.us/Documents/RulesRegs/Brochure/lands.pdf)

State Fish Units

There are 18 state fish units (SFUs) around Colorado that offer limited public access. SFUs include fish hatcheries like Durango and rearing operations like Chalk Cliffs. Although the primary purpose of a SFU is the hatching and rearing of stockable fish, SFUs do allow self-guided tours and a few offer limited wildlife recreation.



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State Trust Lands

The State Land Board (SLB), an agency within the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, owns and manages approximately 3 million acres of state-owned land commonly referred to as State Trust Land. These properties were set aside at statehood for the specific purpose of generating revenue and providing on going support for Colorado public schools and other public institutions. Because these are working lands, State Trust Land is generally closed to the public. In 1993, CPW entered into a long-term lease agreement with the SLB to provide limited sportsmen access on approximately 500,000 acres of State Trust Land. Through the program, sportsmen may enjoy a variety of wildlife-related uses including hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing. Opportunities vary among properties, as do rules and regulations for authorized use. Currently, there are 241 STL parcels providing almost 490,000 acres of wildlife-related recreational access.

(cpw.state.co.us/Documents/RulesRegs/Brochure/lands.pdf)

¹ This includes Lone Mesa State Park which is currently open for limited big-game hunting opportunities through a special permit

² Access permitted only with a limited number of big-game hunting licenses acquired through the limited draw process

Walk-In Access Program

The Walk-In Access (WIA) program is designed to open privately owned land to public small-game hunting by entering into public access agreements with landowners willing to allow public hunting. Each year, CPW holds an enrollment period for landowners to offer their land into the WIA Program. CPW then inspects the land and either accepts or rejects it based on its value for hunting. All properties that are accepted into the program are published in the regular *Walk-In Atlas* (late August) or the *Late Cropland Walk-In Atlas* (late October) brochures. Enrolled lands are posted with WIA boundary signs so that hunters can clearly identify properties that are open to WIA hunting. In 2015, CPW enrolled almost 200,000 acres in the WIA program. A small-game license is required to utilize a WIA property as small-game hunting is the only allowable use of WIA properties. Locations of WIA properties can be found in the *Small Game Walk-in Atlas* or the *Late Croplands* brochure.

(cpw.state.co.us/Documents/RulesRegs/Brochure/WalkInAtlas.pdf)

(cpw.state.co.us/Documents/RulesRegs/Brochure/LateCropland.pdf)



State Parks

Colorado manages 43³ state parks around the state. State parks offer a variety of activities such as boating, hiking, fishing, hunting, camping and more. Colorado's state parks are open every day of the year. All state parks require an entrance fee. Daily passes range from \$7 - \$9 and an annual park pass is \$70. Thirty-four parks offer camping at over 4,000 campsites and 58 cabins and yurts. Many state parks are built around a lake or waterway, which means boating, fishing and other water sports are among the headliners. In addition to water sports, over 700 miles of trails offer recreational activities for many park users. Limited hunting opportunities are available on many state parks.

(cpw.state.co.us/placestogo/parks)

Ranching for Wildlife

Ranching for Wildlife (RFW) started as a pilot program in 1986 with the intent to improve public hunting access to private land and to form a wildlife management partnership with participating landowners. The program provides Colorado residents a unique opportunity to hunt on private ranchland that would normally be closed to the public. Participating ranches provide public hunting recreation access to their land free of charge to those who draw licenses. Public licenses on each ranch are available through CPW's draw process. The number of licenses on each ranch is determined by negotiations between the landowner and CPW. Currently, 29 ranches provide over 1.2 million acres of hunting access to Colorado residents who draw one of these limited licenses.

(cpw.state.co.us/thingstodo/Pages/RFW.aspx)



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