



2026-2027 Colorado Wildlife Council Operational Plan and Budget

As Approved by

Laura Clellan Director
Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Table of Contents

2026-2027 Colorado Wildlife Council Operational Plan and Budget.....	0
Table of Contents.....	1
Wildlife Council Information.....	3
Wildlife Council Members.....	3
The Objective of this Plan Document.....	3
Council Activities Summary.....	4
Introduction:.....	4
Accountability to the CPW Director:.....	4
Meetings:.....	4
Colorado Parks and Wildlife/Wildlife Council Webpage:.....	5
Wildlife Council Website:.....	5
Wildlife Council Email Address:.....	5
Bylaws:.....	5
Council Member Commitment:.....	5
Council Member Term Updates:.....	5
Annual Budget:.....	6
Wildlife Council Media-based Public Information Campaign.....	6
Executive Summary:.....	6
Section I: Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Wildlife Council Report of Accomplishments	
2025/2026 Campaign Summary:.....	6
Total Fiscal Year Media Budget: \$1,944,660.....	7
Total Estimated Impressions (July-June): 212,501,857.....	7
Television:.....	7
Out-of-Home (OOH):.....	7
Digital Media:.....	8
YouTube:.....	8
Facebook/Instagram:.....	8
Spotify:.....	8
Influencers:.....	8
Page Grabber:.....	9
Reddit:.....	9
Snapchat:.....	9
TikTok:.....	9
Paid Search/Demand Gen:.....	9

Email Newsletter:.....	9
Creative Production:.....	10
Organic Social Media:.....	10
Web Maintenance:.....	10
Rockies Partnership:.....	11
Experiential Pieces:.....	12
Research:.....	12
Annual Tracking Survey Findings:.....	12
Operations.....	13
CWC Subcommittees:.....	13
2025-2026 Accomplishments:.....	14
2026-2027 Priorities:.....	14
In Conclusion:.....	16
2026-2027 Contract Management.....	16
Annual Budget Review.....	17
2026-2027 Budget:.....	17

Wildlife Council Information

The Colorado Wildlife Council (CWC), formed by the state legislature in 1998, was conceived and developed by a diverse coalition of conservationists, outdoor recreationalists, hunters, anglers, farmers, ranchers, and community leaders, all working to ensure a bright future for Colorado's wildlife. By statute, its mission is to oversee the design of a comprehensive, media-based public information program to educate the public about the benefits of wildlife, wildlife management, and wildlife-related recreational opportunities in Colorado, specifically hunting and fishing. The program receives funds from a \$1.50 surcharge (Wildlife Management Public Education Fund) on each hunting and fishing license sold.

The Colorado Wildlife Council is appointed by the director of Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), who approves the annual operational plan. The nine council members represent various interests throughout Colorado.

Wildlife Council Members

Lani Kitching, West Slope Angler Representative (Chair)

Dan Williams, County Representative (Vice Chair)

Don Anderson, Agricultural Representative (Treasurer)

Vacant, East Slope Angler Representative

Bryan Gwinn, East Slope Hunter Representative

Kelly Weyand, West Slope Hunter Representative

Tim Twinem, Media and Marketing Representative

Brittini Ehrhart-Gemmill, Colorado Parks and Wildlife Representative

Kristen Bertuglia, Municipalities Representative

Megan Schulz, Program Assistant

The Objective of this Plan Document

The Colorado Wildlife Council's (CWC) annual Operational Plan, mandated by Statute 33-4-120, details the scope of its expenditures and activities for the upcoming fiscal year. It includes a mission statement, identifies council members, highlights

accomplishments from the previous year, sets goals for the upcoming year, and summarizes current strategies to achieve them. This plan ensures CWC's effective stewardship of funds and underscores its integral role in attaining tangible conservation and outdoor recreation outcomes for Colorado.

Council Activities Summary

Introduction:

The Colorado Wildlife Council's (CWC) statutory mission is to educate the public about the benefits of wildlife, wildlife management, and related recreational opportunities, particularly hunting and fishing. The council orchestrates its multimedia public education campaigns through data-driven, targeted messaging across various media platforms. A recurring theme emphasizes the centrality of quality science to Colorado Parks and Wildlife's (CPW) management of the state's wildlife and natural resources. This concept is epitomized in CWC's "Science in the Wild" initiative, which has resonated significantly with target audiences.

In alignment with the Colorado Outdoor Strategy's focus on climate resilience, biodiversity, and other environmental objectives, the Wildlife Council's advocacy for sound science strengthens one of the state's key priorities. Similarly, promoting CPW's commitment to science-based outcomes helps publicize the agency's adherence to this foundational principle, which is essential for its success.

Hunting and fishing have been integral to the human experience since antiquity, and their continued practice honors this legacy. These activities offer unique, high-quality outdoor experiences with positive emotional, physical, social, and nutritional benefits. Such time-tested endeavors exemplify the "exceptional and sustainable outdoor recreation" defined in the Outdoor Strategy, fostering connections among lands, people, wildlife, and communities.

Accountability to the CPW Director:

The director approves the council's operational plan, which defines the scope of its activities and expenditure levels.

Meetings:

The CWC meets monthly either in person or virtually. Meeting dates are posted on the CPW and CWC websites. All meetings offer a Zoom component for virtual participation. A Zoom call is scheduled for the alternate months when an in-person meeting is not held. The meeting and call dates calendar is set for the upcoming

calendar year in December. Meeting minutes are kept by the program assistant, approved by the council, and posted on the website for public view. Subcommittees may meet separately. The subcommittee details can be found starting on page 13.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife/Wildlife Council Webpage:

A Wildlife Council has a webpage on the Colorado Parks and Wildlife website: [CWC Webpage](#). The council's program assistant manages the webpage. Meetings are announced to the public on this webpage. The public and council members can view all meeting materials from this site, including agendas, presentations, and minutes.

Wildlife Council Website:

The Wildlife Council website, cowildlifecouncil.org, is currently managed by the advertising agency R&R Partners, with the CWC's approval.

Wildlife Council Email Address:

A Wildlife Council email address is wildlife.council@state.co.us. The above council website lists the email address as a public contact point, and the council program assistant monitors it.

Bylaws:

The bylaws were last updated during FY25/26.

Council Member Commitment:

Council members are expected to:

- Contribute their professional expertise and represent their constituency
- Guide creative campaigns that promote the benefits of hunting and fishing
- Attend monthly meetings that alternate between in-person and virtual, with in-person meetings lasting 4-6 hours and virtual meetings lasting 2-3 hours.
- Review meeting materials (1 hour) ahead of each meeting
- Provide input between meetings on the campaign
- Represent the Council's mission to various partners and stakeholders
- Participate in council-assigned subcommittees and contribute their expertise, input, and ideation

Council Member Term Updates:

Council members may serve two consecutive, four-year terms.

New Council Member Appointments: 2026

- East Slope Angler - Currently Vacant (7/6/26)

Annual Budget:

The council conducts an annual planning retreat in the spring (March 18-19, 2026). The CWC will be transitioning from R&R Partners to Karsh Hagen as their advertising partner in FY 26/27 because of this transition CWC used the planning retreat to have R&R present a recap of the previous fiscal year (FY25/26), do a final comprehensive review of the target audience, email performance, social media performance, webpage performance, Colorado Rockies performance, and recommendations on the successes and areas of improvement for future campaigns. The council discussed the FY 26/27 budget at this meeting and approved the proposed budget. See more details in the budget section of this report on page 17.

Wildlife Council Media-based Public Information Campaign

Support Science in the Wild

Executive Summary:

In FY2025/2026, CWC produced the third year of the "A Day in the Life" campaign, highlighting Colorado Parks and Wildlife biologists, wildlife officers, and staff through uplifting stories of wildlife science. The campaign aims to raise awareness among Coloradans about the impact hunting and fishing license fees have on supporting science in the wild.

Section I: Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Wildlife Council Report of Accomplishments 2025/2026 Campaign Summary:

This fiscal year, the council continued with an always-on paid media approach across both traditional and digital media channels to increase awareness and further educate our new primary Adventurous Environmentalist (AE) target audience about the benefits of hunting and angling, and to highlight wildlife conservation stories. The exploratory qualitative and quantitative research conducted in FY22/23 resulted in this new audience, the AE audience are non-hunter/angler Colorado residents who are indifferent towards hunting, have specific moral issues with hunting specifically around hunting as a sport, they also struggle with understanding how hunting contributes to maintaining a healthy ecosystem in Colorado and finally, they do not believe restrictions on hunting would impact them personally.

The secondary target audience, Hunter Adjacent (HA), comprises neutral-minded individuals. Although not active hunters themselves, they are indifferent to or supportive of the activity. They understand that while they might not understand all aspects of the activity, it is every Coloradan's right to be able to hunt. The gun culture surrounding hunting does not bother them, as they are confident that hunters are responsible. While they are not hunters, they have a basic understanding of their

larger impact on Colorado.

CWC's paid media campaign aims to drive awareness and communicate how Colorado's wildlife and landscapes are balanced by conservation work, which is primarily funded with hunting and fishing license fees. The paid media campaign ran from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, with a more refined measurement approach that leveraged traditional media (TV, Out-of-Home), video (connected TV, pre-roll, YouTube), social (Meta, Reddit, Snapchat, TikTok), and streaming audio (Spotify and YouTube) as awareness-building media placements. Education tactics included website, paid search, paid social, digital, native advertising, influencers/earned media, with advocacy leveraging paid email.

The campaign delivered an impressive 212.5 million impressions for FY 2025/2026. This widespread reach significantly amplified public understanding of wildlife conservation's critical funding sources and the value of Colorado's outdoor experiences, directly contributing to the goals of the Colorado Outdoor Strategy.

The following summary describes media performance by tactic for **Fiscal Year Media Campaign: July 2025 – June 2026**.

Total Fiscal Year Media Budget: \$1,944,660

Total Estimated Impressions (July-June): 212,501,857

Television:

Of the total budget, 13% was allocated to broadcast television and cable, with Adults aged 18-49. An estimated 2,195,430 impressions were delivered in the Denver designated market area (DMA). The spots were targeted to run during sports and primetime programming, in line with the AE target audience's viewing habits, effectively reaching key demographics and raising awareness about the CWC's mission.

Out-of-Home (OOH):

CWC focused on outdoor static and digital billboards in high-traffic areas across metro Denver to educate the public about science-based wildlife management. In addition, the council ran gas station video ads to reach users throughout Denver during the fall, winter, and spring months. The ten outdoor billboards ran 12/1/25-4/19/26 with 94,093,778 estimated impressions. The gas station video ran 7/28/25-5/31/26. It generated 8,748,651 estimated impressions, significantly increasing visibility and reinforcing CWC's brand and message in key urban areas.

Digital Media:

The Trade Desk is the preferred demand-side platform (DSP). It was implemented in recent years because of its strength in inventory access across multiple digital tactics, including connected TV, pre-roll video, display, and native. The platform not only supports targeting the Adventurous Environmentalist (75% of the budget) and Hunter Adjacent (25% of the budget) audience demographics, but also layers behavioral, contextual, and geographic parameters to ensure messages reach high-quality impressions. Further, the platform serves to retarget website visitors and continues nurturing brand awareness and affinity. Connected TV placements achieved a 99% completion rate, exceeding the 96.4% benchmark. Overall, The Trade Desk delivered 21,406,058 impressions. Amazon CTV was added for FY 2025/2026, and while scale is relatively small, it produced solid VCR with an estimated 475,409 impressions delivered.

YouTube:

YouTube was leveraged to deliver CWC's messaging to audiences actively consuming video content. Six- and 15-second videos targeted outdoor enthusiasts, sports fans, and those looking for content on hiking and camping, local news, college sports, and other sports. YouTube delivered 21,135,690 impressions.

Facebook/Instagram:

Throughout the year, the social media campaign engaged and informed brand advocates on Facebook and Instagram by leveraging the platforms' robust first-party targeting capabilities to reach target audiences based on interests and demographics. Look-alike and retargeting audiences continued to be key to media performance (as learned over prior fiscal years).

The campaign generated an estimated 27,320,051 impressions. The campaign performance typically met or exceeded benchmark expectations.

Spotify:

Sponsored sessions on Spotify drove brand awareness and ad recall among the target audiences. The video creative rewarded the user for watching the video to completion. The campaign delivered 2,698,551 estimated impressions.

Influencers:

The influencer program amplified messaging and organically connected with CWC's target audiences. CWC partnered with four influencers in the Fall of 2025 and four in the Spring of 2026, totaling 4,732,438 estimated organic and paid impressions.

Page Grabber:

The eye-catching page-grabber video ads were layered over third-party website content to grab people's attention. The ads delivered 8,403,295 estimated impressions, including added-value impressions from the expandable mobile adhesion ad unit.

Reddit:

Reddit was introduced as a new channel during the 2023/2024 fiscal year. The platform saw strong engagement and cost-efficient reach, delivering 2,699,641 estimated impressions.

Snapchat:

Snapchat was introduced as a new channel during the 2023/2024 fiscal year. The platform has seen strong engagement and cost-efficient reach. Snapchat produced 4,593,975 estimated impressions.

TikTok:

TikTok has been a paid media tactic for five years and continues to produce strong performance. TikTok produced 10,223,213 estimated impressions.

Paid Search/Demand Gen:

Paid search through Google Ads was new as of FY 2024/2025 and has proven to be a strong click source, with Demand Gen having been tested in FY 2025/2026 as a complement to paid search. These two campaigns produced an estimated 3,639,672 impressions.

Email Newsletter:

The Wild Times Newsletter is a quarterly newsletter highlighting how CWC initiatives support science-based wildlife management. It also explains how CWC funding is derived from hunting and fishing licenses. The council's overarching goal is to equip readers with the information they need to make informed decisions about Colorado's wildlife, ensuring a thriving future for our state's natural heritage. The average open rate was 20.5%, and the CTR was 0.77%, both strong performances compared to industry standards.

4 Emails Deployed:

- Q3 2025: 24% Open rate - 1.0% CTR
- Q4 2025: 22% Open rate - 0.9% CTR
- Q1 2026: 25% Open rate - 0.9% CTR

- Q2 2026: 11% Open rate - 0.3% CTR

New subscribers added in FY25-26: 738

Creative Production:

Most of 2025 was dedicated to developing concepts for the next installment of the A Day in the Life campaign. Concepting and writing started during FY24/25, carrying over into FY25/26. Pre-production started in September, with production occurring in October. Post-production work was completed between October and December 2025. These efforts included copywriting, video editing, image retouching, and the development of campaign assets, including social media content, digital banners, and outdoor billboards. The new campaign officially launched in January 2026.

In addition to preparing the revised campaign, the creative and production teams continued to develop assets for Council sponsorships and the Hunter and Angler subcommittee. These assets included banners, stickers, postcards, signs, and QR codes. The team also collaborated with the Colorado Rockies' in-house staff to produce social videos and to design promotional giveaway totes, which were successfully distributed during the CWC Promotional Day at Coors Field in September 2025. R&R Partners is designing new tote bags in preparation for the 2026 CWC Rockies Promotional Day.

Throughout the 25/26 FY, the team provided ongoing creative support across various efforts, ensuring content was available as needed. These efforts include images for social media, creative materials for paid media ads, the quarterly newsletter, and other content required by the council.

Organic Social Media:

In FY 25/26, we managed the CWC Facebook page with weekly posts, the CWC Instagram page with 2 posts per week, and expanded CWC to TikTok with weekly posts. We submitted social calendars to the subcommittee each quarter for approval, developed content, scheduled posts, led community management on our organic platforms, and developed ad hoc posts as requested. Additionally, we managed online communities and communicated any questions or comments that required the council's response.

Web Maintenance:

The CWC website has been actively maintained throughout the year, with a focus on technical performance. This is the first full fiscal year since a site redesign made the

site “skinny,” with most content concentrated on the homepage and very few ancillary pages thereafter.

The site has lost referring traffic from Colorado. The 2024 average was about 75% of traffic from Colorado, moving to about 90% as of March 2025. Since July 2025, that number is 73%. No single state stands out as the culprit; there are a few thousand sessions from virtually every state, roughly proportional to each state's population.

File downloads, which were set as a key event in spring 2026, remain scant. The communications toolkit is the most-downloaded file, followed by the 2019 research. Beyond that, most files are single-digit downloads, with the vast majority being minutes from any given council meeting.

There have not been meaningful changes in referral patterns to the site over the last year.

Rockies Partnership:

In FY 25/26, CWC continued its partnership with the Colorado Rockies for the fifth consecutive year, strengthening brand visibility through a multi-channel presence at Coors Field and across digital and broadcast platforms. Throughout the 2025 season, CWC maintained a static outfield wall sign to ensure consistent in-stadium and televised exposure. Before every regular-season home game, a 30-second pregame video spotlighting CWC is played on the main jumbotron. At the same time, L-bar signage appears on concourse TVs across the stadium, providing approximately 30 minutes of exposure per game through rotating graphic placements. The popular concourse moose mural remained near Gate B, enhanced with an interactive augmented reality (AR) feature that let fans scan a QR code to bring the moose to life.

CWC's digital and media presence was expanded through a 30-second radio spot that aired during all games on KOA, reaching fans across the state. Additional digital assets included a dedicated email to the Rockies.com subscriber base of over 250,000 users and two social media posts on the Rockies' official channels, extending the campaign's reach across key online platforms.

As part of this year's collaboration, CWC hosted a Promotional Day on August 31, 2025. Council member, Lani Kitching, cast her fishing line for the first ceremonial pitch ever by fly rod, joined by other members on the field. To further engage fans, the first 15,000 attendees received a reusable tote bag featuring CWC branding. This sustained partnership continues to offer CWC broad and meaningful exposure, connecting with Colorado residents through a strategic blend of in-person, digital,

and broadcast touchpoints.

Experiential Pieces:

The moose mural in Coors Field has been an enormous success, becoming a gathering place for Rockies fans to meet, interact with the AR experience, and learn more about the Colorado Wildlife Council. The elk and fish statues, which continue to reside in the Foothills Mall in Fort Collins, are significant assets for the council in educating Coloradans.

Research:

The Colorado Wildlife Council and R&R conduct an annual tracking survey and analyze findings from relevant ballot measures to gauge public opinion and measure the effectiveness of its public information program. The research consistently demonstrates the significant impact of CWC's efforts in fostering understanding and support for wildlife management and outdoor recreation in Colorado.

Annual Tracking Survey Findings:

The annual tracker study was conducted online with registered Colorado voters Sept. 3-19, 2025. The survey was fielded statewide with 1,000 participants, including oversamples of 176 hunters, 308 anglers, and 135 Adventurous Environmentalists (AEs). All participants were screened to ensure they were 18 or older and registered to vote in Colorado. Data were weighted to reflect census counts for key demographics and congressional districts. The sample size yields a +/-3.1% margin of error at a 95% confidence level.

Key findings from the 2025 survey included:

- **Approval for Hunting and Fishing:** The survey reveals strong public support. About 8 in 10 Colorado voters approve of legal, regulated hunting, and about 1 in 10 disapprove. And about 8 in 10 Colorado voters approve of legal, regulated fishing, and fewer than 1 in 10 disapprove. These high approval rates are a testament to CWC's successful public education efforts in fostering understanding and support for legal, regulated hunting and fishing, which are vital components of wildlife management.
- **Public Acceptance of Hunting:** 9 in 10 Colorado voters agree that it is OK for others to hunt if they do so legally and follow Colorado's hunting laws and regulations. And even if they would never hunt themselves.
- **Awareness of License Fees Supporting Wildlife Management:** A core measure of CWC's mission fulfillment is public awareness of how wildlife management is funded. The survey shows that almost 8 in 10 Colorado voters know that hunting and fishing license fees support wildlife management. This indicates the program's effectiveness in educating the public about this critical funding source for conservation efforts across the state.

- **Target Audience Insights:** Given the current political landscape, the cost of living and other economic topics drive the issue priorities over hunting and fishing policies. The research provides valuable insights into the perspectives of the primary Adventurous Environmentalist (AE) and secondary Hunter Adjacent (HA) target audiences, informing the refinement of messaging to address their specific concerns and foster greater appreciation for science-based conservation.

The research findings collectively underscore the profound value and impact of the Colorado Wildlife Council's work in educating the public, fostering support for wildlife management, and contributing to informed decision-making on critical issues facing Colorado's outdoors.

Operations

CWC Subcommittees:

Subcommittees are comprised of council members. They provide recommendations on decisions consistent with CWC direction to help move campaigns forward between regular council meetings. The subcommittees have the authority to execute and administer CWC directives within their respective scopes of authority.

- Social Media (Williams, Twinem, & Kitching)
 - Review and provide feedback on quarterly calendars and ad hoc post opportunities throughout the year. (Reviews are in September, December, March, and June.)
- Campaign Influencers (Weyand, Anderson, Twinem, & Kitching)
 - Assist with selecting influencers from the provided options.
 - Review/approve influencers' posts and any rounds of revisions.
- Creative Production (Gray-Bertuglia, Kitching, Twinem, Ehrhart-Gemmill)
 - Review/approve final video/radio script production, casting, creative assets, and other campaign and non-campaign elements.
- Quarterly Newsletter (Weyand, Kitching, & Ehrhart-Gemmill)
 - Review/approve copy and images for the quarterly email newsletter.
- Hunter and Angler Outreach (Weyand, Kitching, Gwinn & Ehrhart-Gemmill)
 - Review/approve outreach activities and sponsorship opportunities with hunting & angling stakeholder groups.

Hunter & Angler Outreach Subcommittee:

The Hunter & Angler Outreach Subcommittee was established in 2024 after data collected during the R&R's annual tracking survey in 2023 revealed that hunters and anglers, referred to as advocates or constituents, had little awareness of the Wildlife Council. Additionally, there was a lack of understanding regarding how the \$1.50

education fee collected from hunting and fishing licenses was utilized. This data prompted the Council to find ways to engage this audience and educate them on the significance of this fee for wildlife management.

A budget of \$120,000 was allocated from the Council's operational budget. The goal for FY24/25 was to enhance the "Science in the Wild" messaging by strategically placing Colorado Wildlife Council messages in front of hunters and anglers, thereby creating opportunities for advocacy within these communities. Since then, in response to the subcommittee's success, the budget has increased to \$200,000 for FY 26/27.

To achieve this goal, the subcommittee established the following primary tactics:

- Secure sponsorships aimed at hunters and anglers.
- Identify and coordinate events such as booths, trailside talks, and other educational events to educate the hunter and angler audience.
- Design, produce, and distribute promotional items.
- Coordinate and execute the annual awards program.

2025-2026 Accomplishments:

- R&R and CWC's tenth year of collaboration
- Produced new work for the campaign "Supporting Science in the Wild."
- Achieved 165 million campaign impressions to date (an increase of over 39% compared to the same period last year), reflecting the media strategy's success.
- Had a successful fifth-year partnership with the Colorado Rockies MLB team and secured a sixth-year collaboration.
- 4 new newsletters were deployed throughout the year
- Leveraged social media influencers to amplify the messaging of CWC by tapping into the influencer's established communities of followers who trust and value the influencer's recommendations.
- Within the goals and purview of the Hunter/Angler subcommittee, sponsored 20 events geared towards hunters and anglers, retained outreach partner Nate Zelinsky to promote and host events to educate about CWC across the state, and improved the council's annual awards program, The Conservationist of the Year Award. The council also distributed flyers, rack cards, stickers, tote bags, and other promotional items at events, stores, and outfitters across the state.

2026-2027 Priorities:

The Colorado Wildlife Council's priorities for 2026-2027 are strategically aligned to amplify the significant value of wildlife management, primarily funded by hunting and fishing license fees, in safeguarding Colorado's natural heritage and advancing the broader goals of the Colorado Outdoor Strategy. Our focus will be on:

- **Marketing Agency Transition:** Wrap up a 10-year partnership with R&R Partners and smoothly transition, onboard, and begin creating a new educational

marketing strategy with the newly selected marketing agency, Karsh Hagan. This goal includes ensuring the continuity of existing messaging to avoid dark periods. At the same time, Karsh Hagan evaluates a long-term strategy and maintains the current campaign's momentum while remaining open to new creative directions.

- **Maximizing Public Understanding and Brand Visibility:** Strategically highlight the CWC brand, identity, and message across all platforms to reinforce public understanding of how hunting and fishing license fees directly fund Colorado's crucial wildlife conservation and climate resilience efforts. This includes leveraging our successful media campaigns, which achieved 212 million impressions in the last fiscal year, to drive awareness among target audiences.
- **Refining Targeted Messaging for Broader Impact:** Continuously refine and evolve messaging to resonate with our Adventurous Environmentalist (AE) and Hunter Adjacent (HA) audiences, and with any newly identified audiences identified by the new marketing agency, Karsh Hagan, fostering greater appreciation for the science-based conservation work supported by license fees. This will ensure our communications effectively address common misconceptions and apparent gaps in understanding and underscore the ecological, social, and economic benefits of hunting and fishing.
- **Empowering Hunter and Angler Advocacy:** Intensify focus on educating the Hunter and Angler audience about the direct utilization and profound importance of the \$1.50 education fee. By building stronger advocacy channels, CWC empowers these vital stakeholders to champion the benefits of wildlife management and its alignment with public interests.
- **Strengthening Council and Partner Networks:** Foster stronger networking opportunities for Council members to expand their reach and influence. Simultaneously, develop a comprehensive plan to multiply statewide CWC in-person presence through proxies, surrogates, or other CWC-aligned representatives. This will be complemented by creating robust partnerships with NGOs and stakeholder groups, amplifying our collective impact on conservation and outdoor recreation.
- **Strategic Public Information & Scientific Literacy:** The Colorado Wildlife Council actively provides science-based information to the public, recognizing that a well-informed populace is essential for sound wildlife management in our state. Our public education programs are designed to equip Coloradans with a critical scientific understanding of wildlife populations, ecosystem health, and the management practices vital for long-term sustainability. Insights from past public discussions have underscored the significant role that clear, expert-driven scientific information plays in fostering public confidence and decision-making on issues impacting Colorado's natural resources. The CWC prioritizes ensuring that accessible scientific data and expert perspectives are central to public discourse, thereby contributing to a collective understanding that supports effective wildlife conservation for all Coloradans.

In Conclusion:

The Wildlife Council was created to help all Coloradans understand the modern and historical benefits of hunting and angling. These traditions fortify Colorado's economy, monitor and improve healthy ecosystems, and provide vital funding for Colorado Parks and Wildlife's work. The Council builds awareness through coordinated outreach with partners and other common interest groups that share parallel goals. By championing these and CPW's science-based wildlife management practices, Council helps protect Colorado's natural wilderness, which encompasses wildlife habitats and conserves legendary wildlife-human interface communities. Recreator participation in nature has been shown to improve physical health, emotional resilience, and social connection, making it a goal to continue the Colorado way of life for generations.

2026-2027 Contract Management

The Colorado Wildlife Council conducted a competitive Request For Proposal (RFP) process in 2025, and the outcome was the award of the bid to the marketing agency Karsh Hagan, which will begin work on July 1, 2026.

The advertising agency will be responsible for the following work:

- Attend all council meetings and conference calls.
- Develop on-strategy message/content for the media campaign.
- Provide on-strategy creative concepts for selection by the Wildlife Council and the CPW director.
- Recommend appropriate media plans and associated vehicles/channels to meet the communication objectives.
- Upon approval, purchase media placements and other communication resources, within budget, as necessary.
- Pre-approve all marketing initiatives with the council.
- Design and execute research with the public sector to monitor and measure the program's effectiveness.
- Manage all production efforts via third-party vendors to secure the necessary assets for the media campaign.
- Review the effectiveness of message content and all media copy with the council.
- Work with the CPW video production staff to use pre-existing footage and imagery when possible.
- Seek input and feedback from the council before final messaging and/or media purchases.
- Provide monthly activity reports for distribution to the council. The reports will include completed projects since the last report, the status of ongoing activities, and anticipated timelines for upcoming projects.
- Before the operational plan year ends, make recommendations on the educational campaign strategies and budget for the upcoming year.

Annual Budget Review

- The council program coordinator and treasurer will account for and manage the spending of up to the maximum spending authority of \$3,000,000 to execute the plan in conjunction with the Colorado Wildlife Council.
- The council coordinator and treasurer will provide bi-monthly budget reports to the council showing projected revenue and expenditures.
- Throughout the fiscal year, the council will review and approve any changes to the proposed budget before submitting it to the director for review.

2026-2027 Budget:

The budget is based on projected fund revenue and the projected fund balance. The spending authority is \$3,000,000 for the fiscal year 2026-2027.

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| • Projected Revenue (average of FY25 and FY26 revenue) | \$2,502,281 |
| • Projected Fund Balance | \$1,800,977 |
| • Total Projected Available to Spend | \$4,303,258 |

The budget was set and approved at the March 18-19, 2026, planning retreat.

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| • Operating (e.g., administrative costs, meeting expenses, etc.) | \$30,000 |
| • Hunter & Angler Subcommittee | \$200,000 |
| • Karsh Hagan Advertising Contract | \$2,500,000 |

Total Estimated Expenditures	\$2,730,000
------------------------------	-------------

By setting the budget below \$2.8M, the Council aims to slow the negative trend of the reserve fund while remaining within its \$3M spending authority.