

C O L O R A D O P A R K S & W I L D L I F E

Great Outdoors Colorado



FISCAL YEAR 2025-26 INVESTMENT PROPOSAL



South Cathedral Bluffs Natural Area ©Brittany Norden/CPW

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Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) is a vital funding partner for Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), helping Colorado become a national leader in a broad range of outdoor recreation and wildlife programs. Section I of Article XXVII of the Colorado Constitution describes eight basic objectives for GOCO investments in outdoor recreation and wildlife programs.

Outdoor Recreation:

- Establish and improve state parks and recreation areas throughout Colorado.
- Develop appropriate public information and environmental education resources on Colorado's natural resources at state parks, recreation areas, and other locations throughout the state.
- Acquire, construct, and maintain trails and river greenways.
- Provide water for recreational purposes through the acquisition of water rights or through agreements with holders of water rights, all in accord with applicable state water law.

Wildlife:

- Develop wildlife watching opportunities.
- Implement educational programs about wildlife and wildlife environment.
- Provide appropriate programs for maintaining Colorado's diverse wildlife heritage.
- Protect crucial wildlife habitats through the acquisition of lands, leases, or easements and restore critical areas.

In 2015, CPW adopted a strategic plan and GOCO adopted a new strategic plan in 2020. These plans include input from stakeholders, partners, and the public. This FY 2025-26 investment proposal addresses many priorities from these two strategic plans.

CPW's strategic plan identifies six goals:

1. Conserve wildlife and habitat to ensure healthy sustainable populations and ecosystems.
2. Manage state parks for world-class outdoor recreation.
3. Achieve and maintain financial sustainability.
4. Maintain dedicated personnel and volunteers.
5. Increase awareness and trust for CPW.
6. Connect people to Colorado's outdoors.

GOCO also partners with CPW to meet Governor Polis' Wildly Important Goals, or WIGs. The two WIGs CPW is responsible for meeting are: 1) to balance outdoor recreation and conservation, and 2) to increase the percentage of vehicle registration renewals that opt into the Keep Colorado Wild Pass. GOCO has helped CPW make significant strides toward financial sustainability by offering increased flexibility in both the timing and the use of grant funds. GOCO support is critical to CPW's continued efforts in balancing outdoor recreation and conservation interests and in investing in important work addressing Colorado's land, water, wildlife, and recreation infrastructure needs, including efforts like the Regional Partnership

Initiative and Colorado's Outdoors Strategy. CPW built its FY 2025-26 investment proposal to be consistent with these goals and with the values of GOCO's strategic plan: Resource Conservation, Outdoor Stewardship, Community Vitality, Equitable Access, and Youth Connections.

This investment proposal represents work conducted by CPW programs, parks, and wildlife areas and does not include information about all the work of CPW. The CPW FY 2025-26 investment proposal requests \$15,883,849 in outdoor recreation purpose funding, comprised of \$15,663,783 approved in the 5 year spending plan, and \$220,066 in reauthorized funds. This proposal includes \$12,602,583 in wildlife purpose funding, comprised of \$12,163,783 approved in the spending plan and \$438,800 in reauthorized funds. The total request is \$28,486,432. Grant requests show both total projected expenditures and the requested GOCO funding.

In addition to the funding included in this investment proposal, CPW sets aside funding for participation in the Centennial Program, which began in FY 2022-23. GOCO and CPW collaboratively established the Centennial Program to invest in high-value, once-in-a-lifetime projects that will have lasting impacts for the state and future generations of its people. As of January 2025, CPW has allocated and the GOCO Board has authorized \$43.2 million in Centennial funding totaling \$31.3 million in wildlife purpose funds and \$11.9 million in outdoor recreation purpose funds. The Centennial Program operates independently from this annual investment proposal. However, funding for this program is sourced and retained separately within the existing outdoor recreation and wildlife constitutional funding quadrants. As of January 2025, CPW has spent \$7,814,500 in wildlife purpose Centennial funds and has the authority to acquire land for additional projects. Before expending funds for project development, construction improvements, operations, or any other aspects, CPW will report back to the GOCO board to provide detailed information on the planned improvements.

Like all environments, the condition of the Colorado outdoors is in a constant state of flux, and CPW's planned budget for a given year can change significantly due to changing circumstances. The total budget amounts reflected in the tables represent the current budget for next fiscal year and additional decisions that impact these budgets may be made after this proposal has been approved. The GOCO amounts reflected in the investment proposal will not change. Any changes to investments would be requested and reflected separately. As Colorado's population continues to grow and use of outdoor spaces increases, additional resources are needed for operations and maintenance and estimates in this plan may change. CPW has implemented the Keep Colorado Wild pass fee and continues to implement the Future Generations Act. In response to the governor's priorities and emergent opportunities, the division may need to embark on discussions with the GOCO board to discuss future funding plans or reprioritization of existing grants.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife uses an activity-based budgeting system, and narratives for each grant list a series of activities that staff may perform under the grant. The listed activities include the primary activities that CPW will perform within each grant, but the list is not exhaustive. Staff may undertake unlisted activities when reasonable and when necessary to

accomplish the grant's purpose and intent. If questions arise about activities that are not included in these lists, CPW and GOCO staff will work together to determine if they fall within the intent of the grant described in this investment proposal.

This investment proposal continues many of the activities funded in prior years, while balancing GOCO grant amounts based on available funding. When GOCO funding is reduced, other CPW fund sources supplement the decrease to ensure the program's budget is covered. This proposal includes continuation of the non-motorized trail stewardship grant program that began in FY 2024-25. One change to note is volunteer program activities for both outdoor recreation and wildlife purpose will no longer receive GOCO funds. Volunteer program funding is distributed to parks and wildlife areas statewide and do not always get coded back to the separate outdoor recreation or wildlife activity, leading to underspending on the grants when spending is coded to the volunteer combined purpose activity. CPW greatly values the volunteer program's contributions to the agency and this change does not impact the total budget for the volunteer program.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife Fiscal Year 2025-26
Great Outdoors Colorado Investment Plan
Outdoor Recreation Funds
Table 1: Comparison of GOCO Funds
FY 2024-25 to FY 2025-26

INVESTMENT REQUEST	FY 2024-25			FY 2025-26		
	Capital	Program Operating	Total	Capital	Program Operating	Total
Establish and Improve State Parks						
Park Improvements	6,656,269	-	6,656,269	4,750,234	-	4,750,234
Capital Development Program	-	1,010,749	1,010,749	-	1,008,222	1,008,222
Recreational Management on State Parks	-	4,211,420	4,211,420	-	4,211,420	4,211,420
Natural Resource Management Program	-	1,292,500	1,292,500	-	1,292,500	1,292,500
Fuels Mitigation Management Program	-	-	-	-	-	-
Invasive and Noxious Weed Management Program	-	225,530	225,530	-	329,358	329,358
Director's Innovation Fund	-	75,000	75,000	-	75,000	75,000
Subtotal	6,656,269	6,815,199	13,471,468	4,750,234	6,916,500	11,666,734
Public Information and Environmental Education						
Public Information	-	296,000	296,000	-	296,000	296,000
Volunteer Programs	-	73,040	73,040	-	-	-
Environmental Education and Youth Programs	-	1,500,000	1,500,000	-	1,500,000	1,500,000
Subtotal	-	1,869,040	1,869,040	-	1,796,000	1,796,000
Trails and River Greenways						
State Trails Program	-	400,000	400,000	-	400,000	400,000
Trails Grant Program	1,500,000	-	1,500,000	1,500,000	-	1,500,000
Trails in State Parks	500,000	-	500,000	500,000	-	500,000
Subtotal	2,000,000	400,000	2,400,000	2,000,000	400,000	2,400,000
Water for Recreational Purposes						
Water Program	-	22,056	22,056	-	21,115	21,115
Water Acquisitions and Leases	-	-	-	-	-	-
Subtotal	-	22,056	22,056	-	21,115	21,115
GRAND TOTAL	8,656,269	9,106,295	17,762,564	6,750,234	9,133,615	15,883,849

*Colorado Parks and Wildlife
Fiscal Year 2025-26
Great Outdoors Colorado Investment Plan
Table 2: Comparative Summary of Program Costs
FY 2024-25 to FY 2025-26*

Outdoor Recreation Grant Name		FY 24-25 Request			FY 25-26 Request		
		GOCO	CPW	Total	GOCO	CPW	Total
Establish and Improve State Parks							
	Park Improvements	6,656,269	13,782,581	20,438,850	4,750,234	28,183,901	32,934,135
	Capital Development Program	1,010,749	942,764	1,953,513	1,008,222	769,629	1,777,851
	Recreation Management on State Parks	4,211,420	11,233,590	15,445,010	4,211,420	14,274,412	18,485,832
	Natural Resource Management Program	1,292,500	952,846	2,245,346	1,292,500	1,188,410	2,480,910
	Fuels Mitigation Management Program	-	300,000	300,000	-	450,000	450,000
	Invasive and Noxious Weed Management Program	225,530	618,337	843,867	329,358	129,977	459,335
	Director's Innovation Fund	75,000	-	75,000	75,000	-	75,000
	Subtotal:	13,471,468	27,830,118	41,301,586	11,666,734	44,996,329	56,663,063
Public Information and Environmental Education							
	Public Information Program	296,000	1,917,651	2,213,651	296,000	230,316	526,316
	Volunteer Program	73,040	170,286	243,326	-	-	-
	Environmental Education and Youth Programs	1,500,000	130,140	1,630,140	1,500,000	217,342	1,717,342
	Subtotal:	1,869,040	2,218,077	4,087,117	1,796,000	447,658	2,243,658
Trails and River Greenways							
	State Trails Program	400,000	57,708	457,708	400,000	83,414	483,414
	Trails Grant Program	1,500,000	5,620,916	7,120,916	1,500,000	6,217,907	7,717,907
	Trails in State Parks	500,000	1,000,000	1,500,000	500,000	1,000,000	1,500,000
	Subtotal:	2,400,000	6,678,624	9,078,624	2,400,000	7,301,321	9,701,321
Water for Recreational Purposes							
	Water Program	22,056	132,090	154,146	21,115	72,857	93,972
	Water Acquisitions and Leases	-	-	-	-	723,000	723,000
	Subtotal:	22,056	132,090	154,146	21,115	795,857	816,972
	Grand Total:	17,762,564	36,858,909	54,621,473	15,883,849	53,541,165	69,425,014

Outdoor Recreation: Establish and Improve State Parks and Recreation

CPW uses GOCO funding to provide a quality state parks system and provide enjoyable and sustainable outdoor recreation that educates and inspires current and future generations to serve as active stewards of Colorado’s natural resources. These outcomes align activities with the goals and objectives from CPW’s and GOCO’s strategic plans.

Great Outdoors Colorado 2020 Strategic Plan:

- Secure our state’s natural resources and provide places for people to connect to the outdoors.
- Work with conservation partners to identify and support important landscape, waterway and habitat protection priorities from urban and rural areas and respond to Coloradans’ desire for increased access to the outdoors.
- Fund high-value, once-in-a-generation visions and projects that will create lasting impacts on the state and future generations.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife 2015 Strategic Plan:

- Goal II: Manage state parks for world-class outdoor recreation.
 - Objective A: Manage facilities and outdoor recreation amenities within state parks to provide positive experiences for Coloradans and visitors.
 - Objective B: Explore fiscally sound real estate opportunities for new or expanded state parks.
 - Objective C: Market the special qualities of Colorado’s state parks.
- Goal VI: Connect people to Colorado’s outdoors.
 - Objective A: Broaden the access and variety of recreation opportunities available to Coloradans and visitors.
 - Objective B: Provide facilities, infrastructure, and access to support opportunities for premier outdoor recreation experiences.

Establish and Improve State Parks	Great Outdoors Colorado Funding FY 2025-26
Park Improvements	\$4,750,234
Capital Development Program	1,008,222
Recreational Management on State Parks	4,211,420
Natural Resource Management Program	1,292,500
Invasive and Noxious Weed Management Program	329,358
Director’s Innovation Fund	75,000
Total:	\$11,666,734

Park Improvements

FY 2025-26 Total Projected Budget: \$ 32,934,135
FY 2025-26 GOCO Funding Request: \$ 4,750,234 (capital)

Description and Objectives:

Colorado's state parks system is over 60 years old and requires continuous maintenance, restoration, and improvement of facilities and infrastructure. Maintaining and improving basic park facilities is an important part of sustaining a solid visitation base and generating the revenue necessary to cover the majority of day-to-day operating costs for the state park system. Infrastructure on state parks is designed to enhance the outdoor recreation experience of visitors. Although the GOCO funding is decreasing from the prior year to balance to the total amount of GOCO funds available, CPW plans to increase the total amount of large capital funding for state park projects in FY 2025-26 utilizing additional revenue through Keep Colorado Wild Pass sales.

Proposed FY 2025-26 capital projects include the following:

Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area - Employee Housing, \$1,531,000: The Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area is recognized as one of the nation's most popular whitewater rafting and kayaking locations. CPW manages recreation in this 152-mile stretch of the Arkansas River. This project will construct three housing units for seasonal and full-time employees. Each unit will consist of a two-bedroom, one-bath apartment and will help to address housing supply and affordability issues for staff working in Chaffee County.

Cherry Creek State Park - Shooting Range Design, \$601,000: The Family Shooting Center has been providing recreational shooting opportunities since 1966 and continues to be popular. Over the range's life, many additions and updates have been made to ensure public safety and natural resource protection. CPW will complete a comprehensive design to strategically update the facility to ensure future use.

Crawford State Park - Aquatic Nuisance Species Inspection and Decontamination Station, \$573,012: Crawford State Park has a 400-acre reservoir offering watersports and fishing opportunities with amazing views. This project will construct a modest building to house and utilize boat decontamination tools, including tank less water heaters, hoses, pressure washers, etc. This will allow decontamination operations that currently take place in the shop parking area to occur near the Iron Creek Boat Ramp, reducing congestion and increasing efficiency.

Fishers Peak State Park - Park Improvement and Trails, \$4,510,000 Fishers Peak State Park in Trinidad opened in fall 2020 and construction is guided by the master plan. The project continues the park's development and expands access by growing the parking area, managing drainage, constructing a new road, installing a vault toilet, and building new stretches of trail for hiking and mountain biking.

Golden Gate Canyon State Park - Bathroom Replacement, \$637,000 Golden Gate Canyon State Park offers a variety of recreation opportunities within an hour's drive of the Denver metro area. This project will replace a highly utilized bathroom facility in a campground that is open year-round. The current building is more than 50 years old, and replacement will reduce the ongoing maintenance needs and provide a higher-quality experience to guests.

Harvey Gap State Park - Beach Parking Improvements, \$560,000: Harvey Gap State Park offers boating, paddle sports, and swimming at an elevation of 6,400 feet. The project will expand and improve the beach parking area to alleviate congestion and improve safety by providing more parking spaces and controlling the flow of vehicles.

Highline Lake State Park - Boat Decontamination Dip Tank, \$1,081,773: An oasis in the desert, Highline Lake State Park is an important location for inspecting and decontaminating boats to stop the movement of harmful invasive species into new waters from neighboring states. The lake has been drained for zebra mussel treatment and is planned to be refilled in the spring of 2025. This project adds a dip tank option, the first of its kind at a Colorado state park. This option is expected to reduce decontamination time and increase efficacy. Boat inspections and decontamination will be crucial to reopening the lake to boating, and this project will provide an alternative to technicians manually spraying and cleaning boat engines.

James M. Robb Colorado River State Park, Fruita Section - Irrigation Repairs, \$700,000: James M. Robb Colorado River State Park links together various trails along the river corridor offering outdoor recreation, including numerous picnic sites and fishing opportunities. This project will design and implement one watering system to simplify and modernize the park's irrigation. The current system, which consists of three separate systems, is underperforming due to many changes in water sources and delivery methodologies over the past 20 years.

James M. Robb Colorado River State Park, Island Acres Section - Lagoon liner replacement, \$1,395,000: The wastewater treatment plant at Island Acres was installed in 1995, and the lagoon liners are well past their design life. To address potential public health and environmental safety concerns, this project will replace the lagoon liners and lift stations to modernize the system and reduce ongoing maintenance issues.

Lake Pueblo State Park - North Shore Marina, \$1,000,000: Lake Pueblo State Park is rated a fishing hot spot and is a popular destination for water recreation with mountain views. This project will remove and demolish existing infrastructure at the marina to make way for improvements. The marina is in disrepair, and new facilities are needed to provide the amenities boaters and anglers need.

Lake Pueblo State Park - Southside Sewage Lagoon Liner Replacement, \$675,000: The wastewater lagoon liners at Lake Pueblo State Park have begun to fail by tearing and exposing soil underneath. Temporary fixes have been deployed to repair the tears, and a more permanent solution of liner replacement is needed. This project will provide the necessary liners for the lagoons.

Miscellaneous Park Road Projects, \$300,000: This funding will be used for the maintenance of roads and highways within state parks. This funding is allocated according to emerging priorities as part of work performed on eligible roads and highways.

Navajo State Park, Shade Shelters, \$500,000: Navajo State Park is a major recreational facility in southwest Colorado and the reservoir extends for 20 miles south into New Mexico. The park has very few trees to provide shade to campers, so the park will install shade structures at 50 campsites that most need it. Additionally, this project will expand hammock stands that provide opportunity at campsites for hammocks without damaging trees.

Ridgway State Park - Deck Repair and Replacement, \$505,000: Ridgway State Park's popular campgrounds, reservoir, picnic and playground areas, extensive trails, and diverse wildlife offer year-round activities for outdoor recreation. The park has three different buildings facilities that have wooden decks attached that offer amenities to park users. These decks are approximately 30 years old and need to be replaced to provide a safe experience for guests.

Roxborough State Park - Vehicle and Equipment Storage Building Construction, \$2,930,000: Roxborough State Park is just a short drive southwest of Denver and is filled with dramatic red-rock formations, distinct plant communities, and a variety of wildlife ranging from black bears to mule deer. The project will construct a shop and associated infrastructure to house vehicles and equipment critical to operations at the park, providing secure storage and longer lifespan of equipment currently stored outdoors. There is no shop or maintenance facility at the park, and with the workload demands for park operations and maintenance, a shop, equipment shed, paved area, and fencing are needed.

Stagecoach State Park - Water Plant Upgrade \$930,000: Stagecoach State Park is nestled in the Yampa Valley and offers renowned lake and river fishing. This project will upgrade the park's water treatment system, increasing production and expanding water storage capabilities to meet the park's demands. The current system can produce 10 gallons per minute, but based on needs and a consultant's assessment, 20 gallons per minute is necessary.

State Parks Capital Projects Programmatic Contingency, \$2,189,350: CPW calculates contingency on a per-project basis, based on a number of factors including project scope, inflation, complexity, location, and potential for delays.

State Parks Dam Maintenance, \$300,000: CPW owns and operates 110 dams around the state, 17 of which are at state parks. Dams are like any other constructed infrastructure in that they slowly deteriorate over time due to use and exposure to the elements. Funding will be used for dam safety efforts, including regular maintenance and repair activities on CPW's parks dams. Deferred maintenance, aging infrastructure, required upkeep of water-impounding structures, and emergency work will involve costs that cannot always be quantified and identified in advance.

Statewide Accessibility (ADA) Improvements, \$1,000,000: The ADA transition plan has begun identifying several opportunities to improve accessibility at state parks. This funding, in addition to small capital funds, will be used to begin addressing the critical items at state parks.

Statewide Greening Government Initiatives - Energy/Water Conservation, \$300,000: This funding will be used for energy and water conservation improvements around the state. Improvements may include installing solar panels, xeriscaping, LED lighting, insulation upgrades, electric heating systems, and water-reducing fixtures.

Staunton State Park - Davis Ponds Improvements and Group Picnic Area #2, \$2,115,000: Staunton State Park offers nearly 30 miles of trails for outdoor activities and is easily accessible from the Denver metro area. Parking lots in the park fill up. This project continues design and furthers plans to expand parking (including ADA access) to the Davis Ponds area. Additionally, this project will construct a second group picnic area and add a double vault toilet to provide amenities to this heavily utilized park.

Sweitzer Lake State Park - Design and Construction (Utilities), \$8,090,000: This begins the implementation of the master plan to expand Sweitzer Lake State Park. This project will design and construct the park's expansion, including new utilities and the design of the campground loop.

Trinidad Lake State Park - Carpios Ridge Restroom Replacement, \$511,000: The existing restroom facility is beyond its useful life and has spent much of the past few years closed due to maintenance and safety issues. This project will demolish the existing structure, followed by the purchase and installation of a replacement facility that will provide amenities to park guests.

Capital Development Program

FY 2025-26 Total Projected Budget: \$ 1,777,851
FY 2025-26 GOCO Funding Request: \$ 1,008,222

Description and Objectives:

The Capital Development Program grant supports ongoing operations of CPW's Capital Development program, including designing capital construction projects; developing and updating maintenance schedules for CPW's properties, roads, infrastructure, dams, and buildings; and performing asset condition assessment and updating the division's maintenance schedules. This grant encompasses work on a wide variety of park capital projects funded by several different funding sources including GOCO, Lottery, Keep Colorado Wild Pass Fee revenue, and federal funds.

Primary Activities:

- Secure and manage consultants and contractors
- Provide consulting, preliminary design, and cost estimates for proposed capital construction projects
- Conduct site surveys and field investigations
- Perform engineering design and analysis
- Research products, methods, and materials
- Calculate quantities and prepare engineering cost estimates
- Prepare engineered drawings and specifications
- Review projects
- Prepare permit applications
- Establish and implement design-related policies
- Continual condition assessment
- Identify maintenance projects
- Prioritize and filter maintenance projects and prepare justification for projects
- Long-range planning
- Budget requests
- Track and monitor planning, design, implementation, and evaluation of asset maintenance projects
- Conduct pre-bid and pre-construction meetings
- Submittal and shop drawing review
- Materials testing
- Construction surveying

- Construction inspection
- Prepare appropriate construction and contract documents
- Project scheduling
- Review, negotiate, and mediate claims

(CPW activity 8321, Capital Planning and Design P/OR and activity 8331, Construction Management P/OR)

Recreation Management on State Parks

FY 2025-26 Total Projected Budget:	\$18,485,832
FY 2025-26 GOCO Funding Request:	\$ 4,211,420

Description and Objectives:

GOCO’s historic support for basic state park operations has been invaluable to CPW and has contributed to the enjoyment of millions of park visitors since the inception of the GOCO program. This funding has evolved over time from a series of park-specific grants that funded only some components of park operations to a single grant that funds nearly every aspect of day-to-day operations at the state parks. GOCO funding does not support law enforcement operations or equipment, and a few other park management activities.

The Recreation Management on State Parks activity is broad and encompasses most park operating work. Several other activity budgets also support park operations, including budgets for small capital projects, environmental education, weed and forest management, and trail development.

Primary activities:

- Activities specifically and directly related to maintaining and managing recreational opportunities on state parks and state recreation areas including: camping, picnicking, hiking, biking, walking, horseback riding, sightseeing, hunting, boating, fishing, swimming, water sports, and other recreational activities
- Generally maintain properties to support park activities and promote park recreational opportunities that benefit park visitors
- Maintain signs, fences, roads, structures, wells, and other improvements
- Develop and maintain public facilities
- Provide utilities that support and promote park and outdoor recreation
- Improve and manipulate habitat
- Public health water management activities such as testing of drinking, waste, and swim beach water at state parks

(CPW activity 5350, Recreation on State Parks Management)

Natural Resource Management Programs

FY 2025-26 Total Projected Budget:	\$ 2,480,910
FY 2025-26 GOCO Funding Request:	\$ 1,292,500

Description and Objectives:

The CPW Natural Resource Management Programs exist to protect, preserve, restore, and enhance the natural, scenic, scientific, cultural, and outdoor recreation values of Colorado's public recreation areas. As described in more detail below, this program is comprised of five major activities:

- Develop plans and standards for state parks
- Manage state park natural resources
- Natural Areas Management
- Geographical Information System (GIS)
- Cultural Resource Management

The grant does not support invasive and noxious weed management, large-scale statewide fuels mitigation, or improvements to park administrative facilities. These activities are supported through other activities.

Primary Activities:

Develop plans and standards for state parks:

- Establish stewardship plans for each state park
- Develop management plans or re-development plans to provide an overarching framework that serves as a resource and guide for property-level management or development decisions
- Develop annual work plans based on established policies, stewardship, and master management plans
- Plan, lead, or assist with the public involvement associated with the development of property management or master plans
- Includes general parks-related plans and studies, for example economic impact of the state parks system, etc.

Manage state park natural resources:

- Improve and maintain habitat and natural resources on state parks
- Individual tree management, including site specific effort to reduce risk of trees causing damage by falling on infrastructure or visitors
- Tree thinning, hazardous and dead tree removal at campgrounds and other areas requiring defensible space
- Various activities designed to combat the spread of pine beetle infestation, including spraying individual trees in selected locations and other activities
- Provide statewide forest health management and fuels mitigation including reducing risk of catastrophic wildfires, improving forest resiliency to insect and disease, and promoting biological diversity

- Evaluate and identify areas at-risk and plan additional projects for future years
- Overall effort to improve statewide forest health such as forest thinning or prescribed burn
- Provide interpretive materials containing education information about forests, wildfires, and forest insects
- Perform surveys of natural resources, e.g., bird and plant surveys
- Environmental and cultural reviews
- Conduct cultural and archaeological surveys
- Provide stewardship for cultural and archeological resources
- Re-vegetation and restoration efforts
- Payment of Impact Assistance Grants

Natural Areas Management:

- Administer the Colorado Natural Areas Council and the Colorado Natural Areas Program
- Identify, evaluate, and protect natural areas as defined by statute
- Develop, manage, and monitor a statewide system of designated natural areas

GIS:

- Provide data, data modeling, analysis, mapping, and other GIS services
- Maintain the existing data sets due to changes that occur over time
- Add new data regarding habitats, populations, natural resources, trails, and facilities
- Support agency personnel in working with county land use planners to understand the impacts of proposed developments on outdoor recreation and provide information for informed public participation in land use decisions as they relate to outdoor recreation
- Generate interactive maps on demand to the public through CPW's Internet site

(CPW activity 1481, Develop Plans and Standards for State Parks; activity 1491, Manage State Park Natural Resources P/OR; activity 1496, Natural Areas Management P/OR; and activity 8241, Geographic Information Systems P/OR)

Invasive and Noxious Weed Management Program

FY 2025-26 Total Projected Budget: \$ 459,335
 FY 2025-26 GOCO Funding Request: \$ 329,358

Description and Objectives:

GOCO investments for mechanical and other vegetative management efforts are important funding for on-the-ground resource protection on state parks. Primary efforts include identifying non-native plant areas through mapping, monitoring, and other means; development of integrated weed management plans, including weed management priorities; selective application of herbicides, bio-controls, and weed agents; and restoration with native grasses, shrubs, and trees best suited for habitat improvements. A large portion of CPW's state parks program management efforts are cooperative, with local county weed control coordinators, county land use officials, the Colorado State Forest Service, the Department of Agriculture, and adjoining landowners playing an important role.

Primary Activities:

- Develop weed management plans for each state park
- Identify areas containing invasive and noxious weeds
- Landscaping and restoration projects on state parks to enhance, re-vegetate, or repair vegetation
- Contracting for professional services to conduct weed spraying, mapping, and planning for Colorado listed noxious weeds like Canada thistle, musk thistle, white top, knapweed, as well as other terrestrial and aquatic nuisance weed species
- Purchase of herbicides and applicators and other weed, re-vegetation, and tree management equipment for staff use at parks
- Certification and training for park staff on weed treatment
- Tamarisk and Russian Olive removal at water-based parks throughout the system

(CPW activity 1501, Invasive and Noxious Weed Management on State Parks P/OR)

Director’s Innovation Fund (State Parks)

FY 2025-26 Total Projected Budget:	\$ 75,000
FY 2025-26 GOCO Funding Request:	\$ 75,000

Description and Objectives:

The CPW Director’s Innovation Fund allows CPW staff to apply for funding for unique, one-time projects and programs. This request represents the outdoor recreation purpose portion of the total requested grant.

Primary Activities:

Activities will vary depending on the projects selected for awards by the CPW Director and the selection committee.

Outdoor Recreation: Public Information and Environmental Education

CPW's Public Information and Environmental Education section supports programs and activities that educate and inform Colorado's residents and visitors about available outdoor activities and develop a new generation of wildlife advocates, park users, and outdoor enthusiasts. CPW aligns these activities with various strategic goals and objectives.

Great Outdoors Colorado 2020 Strategic Plan:

- Support projects and programs that help children and families get outside more often and experience all the benefits of doing so
- Invest in communication efforts designed to engage the public in outdoor stewardship, elevate understanding, promote action, and cultivate a stewardship ethic among Coloradans and its visitors.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife 2015 Strategic Plan:

- Goal VI: Connect people to Colorado's outdoors
 - Objective A: Broaden the access and variety of recreation opportunities available to Coloradans and visitors.
 - Objective C: Foster partnerships to enhance recreation opportunities.
 - Objective D: Promote the value of CPW's mission and services to expand awareness, grow CPW's volunteer network, and inspire stewardship.
 - Objective E: Become familiar with the needs, interests, and expectations of residents and visitors who are new to outdoor recreation.

Public Information and Environmental Education	Great Outdoors Colorado Funding FY 2025-26
Public Information Program	\$296,000
Environmental Education and Youth Programs	1,500,000
Total:	\$1,796,000

Public Information

FY 2025-26 Total Projected Budget: \$ 526,316
FY 2025-26 GOCO Funding Request: \$ 296,000

Description and Objectives:

The Public Information Program helps raise public awareness about Colorado's state parks. The objective of these activities is to increase Coloradans' knowledge beyond the one or two local state parks that are in their backyard, towards the many recreational activities and amenities that are available across the entire state park system. Awareness is the continued objective for the Public Information Program.

Primary Activities:

- Establish annual publication priorities
- Establish product criteria including format, content, and bid specifications
- Design publications and videos
- Write and edit stories and scripts
- Plan and execute illustrations
- Take or buy photographs and video
- Edit videos
- Narrate scripts
- Distribute publications through the mail and customer service centers
- Identify key activities and issues and formulate strategies to effectively address these through the media
- Develop and maintain relations with the media
- Provide information to the media for print and electronic distribution that meet accepted professional criteria for timeliness, format, and interest
- Proactively encourage coverage on issues critical to CPW
- Respond to specific requests from the media regardless of distribution source
- Evaluate the effectiveness of media relations
- Develop and maintain agency presence and information on the Internet
- Develop and implement marketing and promotional strategies that effectively engage customers in outdoor recreation
- Develop mail and distribution strategies
- Develop new products in response to customer demand
- Participate in recreational expos and staff booths with personnel and volunteers that educate and promote outdoor recreation
- Advise and assist state parks with special events, etc., as requested
- Conceptualize and implement promotional campaigns (e.g. spring reservations, holiday, etc.)
- Coordinating requests for speaking engagements, presentations, sponsorship requests, etc., from community groups
- Promoting community involvement and interest with potential visitors
- Assure availability of informational materials and products
- Support and promote Friends groups for state parks
- Provide informational materials to other agencies for distribution to the public in response to requests for information or assistance
- Keep Colorado Wild (KCW) marketing and promotion activities

(CPW activity 7121, Produce Publications P/OR; activity 7131, Provide Information through the Media P/OR; and activity 7141, Marketing and Promotion P/OR)

Environmental Education and Youth Programs

FY 2025-26 Total Projected Budget:	\$ 1,717,342
FY 2025-26 GOCO Funding Request:	\$ 1,500,000

Description and Objectives:

Interpretation and Experiential Education. The Interpretation and Experiential Education Program supports interpretation and education staff, volunteers, and programs across the state, providing interpretive and outreach materials, professional development training, and project support. Professional development training for staff and volunteers helps ensure the educational and interpretive program experiences we offer are of high quality and relevant to the diversity of audiences visiting state parks. Continuing education also keeps CPW staff up to date with best practices and current trends that connect to our professional standards. With knowledgeable and skilled staff, CPW can facilitate relevant, meaningful, and memorable educational experiences that inspire people to care for Colorado's natural resources. This program strives to help program participants or those reading interpretive signage leave inspired to engage in outdoor experiences that create a deeper understanding of and sense of stewardship towards the shared environment.

Youth Programs. Colorado Parks and Wildlife is a strong proponent of providing outdoor education programs and opportunities for all ages. This proposal expands CPW's youth outreach programs by expanding and creating new opportunities that capture the attention of Colorado's youth. In addition to these components, CPW continues to support opportunities for scout groups, 4-H clubs, and school community service organizations. CPW is uniquely positioned to introduce Colorado's youth to the outdoors, expose them to potential natural resource careers, encourage more physical activity, and educate them about outdoor issues to foster environmental and natural resource stewardship.

Colorado Youth Corps Association. CPW uses youth corps crews at state parks for a variety of resource management and trail projects. In the past, projects have included trail re-routes and new trail development; fuel mitigation and other forest management work; vegetation management activities, including Russian olive and tamarisk removal; fence removal, repair, and construction; and shoreline cleanup projects. This program support thus serves a dual role of improving conditions within the state parks while providing funding for CYCA and individual youth corps statewide.

Youth Internship Program. The purpose of the CPW Youth Internship Program is to prepare the next generation of natural resource professionals. This program provides training and hands-on experience for youth interested in pursuing natural resource careers. The CPW Youth Internship Program Coordinator is responsible for statewide coordination of the program and prepares extensive training for the interns and CPW staff, monitors and recommends placement of interns equitably throughout CPW, documents activities, and identifies needs of the interns and CPW throughout the year. This program has the capacity to support approximately 55-80 interns throughout both parks and wildlife purposes and solicits youth between the ages of 16-24.

Activities supported under this grant are specific to state park activities and include intern selection, direct supervision, training, intern wages, and oversight of interns. There may be instances when an intern assigned to park activities has the opportunity to work with a wildlife program. These activities will still be funded within the parks purpose, as long as the activity is primarily for the benefit of the parks purpose.

Schools and Outdoor Learning Environments.

The Schools and Outdoor Learning Environments (SOLE) program is designed to increase youth interest and participation in responsible recreation and conservation of the state's natural resources by supporting and enhancing existing standards-aligned environmental and conservation education programs in Colorado schools. SOLE has grown exponentially since its inception in 2013 from supporting 4 schools across the state with their 4th-grade programs to approximately 50 schools by 2018 and is now the overarching formal education program from CPW supporting early childhood, Kindergarten through 12th grade, community college, and university levels. Our goal is to be a leading source for natural resource-related education resources and experiences, directly aligned with state academic standards, so that educators and students have a strong relationship and knowledge base of the outdoors which inspire behavior changes that increase stewardship and conservation best practices. Programming for formal education audiences will directly connect to, and enhance the following to achieve our mission.

- **Career recruitment and retention:** By connecting with middle and high school students about career opportunities, we are able to inform students about the necessary educational trajectories to qualify for positions in our agency, and support them with the development of needed soft and hard skills to be successful in the work that we do.
- **Stewardship and conservation:** For future generations to become leaders in stewardship and conservation, we need to connect with them at an earlier age to establish meaningful relationships with the outdoors.
- **Economic Base:** Through building a solid knowledge base and awareness of recreation and wildlife management in our state, our future generations are more prepared to take on an active role as recreationists, voters and supporters.

Primary Activities:

- Coordinate with schools on work based learning opportunities for students
- Establish and coordinate field trips options, in-class programs and family nature night programs with SOLE participating schools and partners
- Provide funding for transportation and other expenses required for field trips
- Provide funding to K-12 schools to develop and/or enhance outdoor learning classrooms and experiences
- Administer program evaluations for related programs
- Present to students in a classroom or field trip settings
- Maintain and provide library materials and resource education kits for teachers
- Respond to requests for specific recreation activities and programming
- Provide methods and best practices training on how to create and implement meaningful and memorable site-based interpretive experiences
- Provide CPW employees training and professional development through partnerships with organizations such as the National Association of Interpretation and Leave No Trace (such as membership fees and other training related costs)
- Host booths at community or organization events or trade shows for parks and outdoor recreation only
- Develop and organize outdoor skills events that focus on parks and outdoor recreation
- Develop, implement, and manage outdoor experiential learning opportunities
- Provide opportunities for experiential education to the public

- Contract and program management for youth corps
- Solicit, review, and select parks and outdoor-recreation-related work sites for youth corps
- Establish youth corps work standards
- Enhance/approve environmental education curriculum for use by youth corps
- Evaluate programs and recommend improvements for youth corps
- Coordinate work projects with cost center managers for youth corps
- Provide assistance, information, educational programs, and events to park visitors
- Develop non-personal interpretation materials such as self-directed interpretive hikes and experiences, discovery packs, , and interpretive signs and exhibits
- Provide interpretive and outreach materials
- Staff park visitor centers
- Coordinate and provide resources for volunteer naturalists providing programs for visitors
- Write newspaper columns, park newsletters, plant identification booklets, web page updates, and fishing information packets
- Support “kids and families outdoors” initiatives and events
- Participate in local events that promote state park recreation activities
- Respond to inquiries related to state parks and outdoor recreation careers
- Day to day oversight of interns assigned to state parks activities
- Training to enhance the knowledge and skills towards conserving, protecting, and promoting future stewardship of natural resources in state parks
- Develop and coordinate projects for interns related to state park activities
- Provide reimbursement for costs related to interns assigned to state park projects
- Provide adequate equipment and materials needed to complete projects and duties as required

(CPW activity 6120, Schools Outdoor Learning Environments; activity 6132, Support Education Programs in Schools P/OR; activity 6135, Public Education and Outreach P/OR; and activity 6221, Encourage Natural Resource Careers P/OR)

Outdoor Recreation: Trails and River Greenways

Recreational trails are one of the most popular outdoor recreation amenities in Colorado. The 2025 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) identifies a very high level of demand for trail maintenance and development funding across all regions of the state. As part of the plan’s development, 479 land managers participated in a survey representing local parks, open space, and state and federal public lands. According to the survey, land managers identified trails as a top priority, including the need to invest in maintenance, development of new trails and connections for existing trails through loops and networks. CPW aligns these activities with various strategic goals and objectives.

Great Outdoors Colorado 2020 Strategic Plan:

- Improve the state’s natural and recreational resources.
- Build parks and trails that connect people with the outdoors and its many benefits.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife 2015 Strategic Plan:

- Goal VI: Connect people to Colorado’s outdoors.
 - Objective A: Broaden the access and variety of recreation opportunities available to Coloradans and visitors.
 - Objective B: Provide facilities, infrastructure, and access to support opportunities for premier outdoor recreation experiences.

Trails and River Greenways	Great Outdoors Colorado Funding FY 2025-26
State Trails Program	\$400,000
Trails Grant Program	1,500,000
Trails in State Parks Program	500,000
Total:	\$2,400,000

State Trails Program

FY 2025-26 Total Projected Budget: \$ 483,414
FY 2025-26 GOCO Funding Request: \$ 400,000

Description and Objectives:

The State Trails Program was established through the authority of the Recreational Trails System Act of 1971. The program’s primary goal is to provide funds for recreational trails throughout the state. Trail use continues to be by far the most popular outdoor recreation activity in Colorado.

A variety of project sponsors are eligible to receive Trails Program capital funding, including towns, cities, counties, school districts, nonprofit groups, state and federal land-management agencies. Project sponsors are matched to appropriate funding sources to ensure compliance with federal, state, and GOCO eligibility requirements. CPW awards grants for trail planning, maintenance, construction, special projects, and trail equipment.

CPW provides technical assistance to communities, other agencies, land managers, and organizations devoted to trails, conservation, and open space. This assistance includes help with planning, coordination with other agencies, trail volunteers, organization building, funding and other resources, land development regulations, and trail maintenance and management. CPW acts as a clearinghouse for trails information in Colorado and must stay apprised of trail development projects and processes across the country. The grant sponsors workshops and conferences to bring trail advocates, community planners, and agency representatives together to learn new techniques and discuss trails issues. CPW staff also provides assistance in planning, publicity, and programs for regional workshops and statewide conferences.

Primary Activities:

- Administer sub-grant programs for trail planning, development, and maintenance projects
- Develop and maintain recreational trail and signing standards for Colorado, and coordinate the development of these standards with federal land managers
- Promote, support, and work with volunteer organizations involved with recreational trails throughout Colorado
- Construct, repair, maintain, and renovate recreational trails
- Promote the development of regional trail connections throughout Colorado

(CPW activity 5363, Recreational Trails Management)

Trails Grant Program

FY 2025-26 Total Projected Budget:	\$ 7,717,907
FY 2025-26 GOCO Funding Request:	\$ 1,500,000 (capital)

Description and Objectives:

Colorado Parks and Wildlife will award this funding to trail management entities across Colorado to construct new trails, maintain existing trails, and plan for new trail development. Grant funds are awarded each year for individual projects selected by the State Trails Committee. This program has one grant cycle annually, with the recreation trails grant applications due each October.

Each project receives a composite score derived from an average of the scores awarded by peer reviewers, GOCO staff, and CPW staff.

Project rankings and summary descriptions are provided to the State Trails Committee. This committee and CPW staff consider reviewer evaluations, with a focus on the relative merits and overall qualities of projects, from a statewide perspective. The State Trails Committee presents its funding recommendations to the Parks and Wildlife Commission, who consider the recommendations and make the final decisions on grant awards.

CPW supports a wide variety of trail development and planning projects; these projects vary in scope from relatively short natural surface trails to longer concrete trails that require significant engineering and other technical expertise. Because of this variation, costs can vary significantly from project to project, and CPW cannot estimate with certainty how many total

projects will be supported with this GOCO funding. Based on experience from previous trail grant cycles, CPW estimates that between 8-12 individual projects will be funded.

Trails in State Parks

FY 2025-26 Total Projected Budget:	\$ 1,500,000
FY 2025-26 GOCO Funding Request:	\$ 500,000 (capital)

Description and Objectives:

Colorado's state parks contain more than 700 miles of trails, many of which accommodate multiple uses including hiking, biking, and equestrian use. There are still many opportunities for new trails within the 225,000 acres that comprise the land base of the overall CPW State Parks system. Beginning in 2016, CPW and partners launched the multi-year *Statewide Trails Strategic Plan* with the goal of maintaining the existing trail opportunities in our parks and constructing high priority trail segments that will serve the ever-increasing demand for new trail opportunities.

Specific trail maintenance and development projects that will be supported during FY 2025-26 will be determined by CPW leadership at a later date. Upon approval, CPW will share this information with GOCO staff as part of the Trails in State Parks program.

Outdoor Recreation: Water for Recreational Purposes

CPW uses GOCO funding to support water conservation, leasing, purchasing, and constructing water storage for outdoor recreation to ensure that CPW state parks and other properties are managed sustainably for the long-term benefit of Colorado citizens and visitors. CPW aligns these activities with various strategic goals and objectives.

Great Outdoors Colorado 2020 Strategic Plan:

- Protect priority landscapes, waterways, and habitats across the state.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife 2015 Strategic Plan:

- Goal I: Conserve wildlife and habitat to ensure healthy sustainable populations and ecosystems.
 - Objective D: Protect and enhance water resources for fish and wildlife populations.
- Goal II: Manage state parks for world-class outdoor recreation.
 - Objective B: Explore fiscally sound real estate opportunities for new and expanded state parks.

Water for Recreational Purpose	Great Outdoors Colorado Funding FY 2025-26
Water Program	\$21,115
Total:	\$21,115

Water Program

FY 2025-26 Total Projected Budget: \$ 93,972

FY 2025-26 GOCO Funding Request: \$ 21,115

Description and Objectives:

The CPW Water Program manages the agency’s various water resources activities including assessing and adjudicating water rights, developing stream and reservoir operations, and developing and protecting groundwater assets. This grant allows CPW to provide technical, legal, and water policy expertise necessary to protect and expand CPW’s interests in all aspects of water resources management. The Attorney General’s office also provides additional legal assistance. Management of the program also includes supervising CPW’s water court actions, management of groundwater and well permitting, assessing water markets to acquire water for individual parks when necessary, and coordinating with federal, state, and local user groups to maximize the state’s water supplies for recreational benefits.

GOCO funds enable CPW to secure water supplies for a variety of state parks that experience inadequate water for drinking and sanitary, landscape irrigation, and recreational uses. This is accomplished in a number of ways, including water purchases and leases, innovative cooperative water management plans with larger water providers, and leasing, purchasing, or constructing water storage in reservoirs to store water for later uses.

Primary Activities:

- Maintain records of all transactions of real property in systematic, legally defensible, and readily retrievable fashion
- Administer appraisals of water rights
- Research, defend, maintain, file for, change, or acquire water rights
- Attend water court hearings, respond to user's actions, and draft water court applications
- Maintain records of water use in state parks
- Monitor minimum or conservation pools in reservoirs where the state has an interest
- Participate in multi-agency water management dialogues to ensure water needs for parks and outdoor recreation are addressed
- Manage water rights and engineering analysis of water
- Perform due diligence and other legal work to secure water
- Coordinate and negotiate appropriate mitigation and enhancement measures for federally permitted water projects with other cooperating agencies and ensure compliance with NEPA and other federal permitting guidelines and timetables as well as timeliness, adequacy, compliance of all mitigation obligations necessary to meet federal requirements
- Purchase or maintenance of specialized equipment needed to manage water obligations

(CPW activity 1351, Secure and Manage Water P/OR)

**Colorado Parks and Wildlife Fiscal Year 2025-26
Great Outdoors Colorado Investment Plan
Wildlife Funds**

**Table 1: Comparison of GOCO Funds
FY 2024-25 to FY 2025-26**

	FY 2024-25			FY 2025-26		
	Capital	Program Operating	Total	Capital	Program Operating	Total
INVESTMENT REQUEST						
Habitat Management						
Acquire High Priority Habitat	4,012,288	450,884	4,463,172	2,830,998	450,884	3,281,882
Enhance Habitat on Lands and Water	-	1,000,000	1,000,000	-	1,000,000	1,000,000
Wetlands Conservation	1,100,000	-	1,100,000	1,100,000	-	1,100,000
GIS Habitat Information	-	410,186	410,186	-	408,784	408,784
Director's Innovation Fund	-	75,000	75,000	-	75,000	75,000
Subtotal	5,112,288	1,936,070	7,048,358	3,930,998	1,934,668	5,865,666
Wildlife Heritage						
Threatened, Endangered, and Native Species Conservation	-	4,740,346	4,740,346	-	4,740,346	4,740,346
Propagation of Aquatic Species at Risk	-	488,129	488,129	-	465,110	465,110
Subtotal	-	5,228,475	5,228,475	-	5,205,456	5,205,456
Wildlife Education and Environment						
Education Programs	-	400,183	400,183	-	306,926	306,926
Youth Programs	-	918,637	918,637	-	918,637	918,637
Angler Education	-	161,000	161,000	-	161,000	161,000
Subtotal	-	1,479,820	1,479,820	-	1,386,563	1,386,563
Wildlife Viewing						
Wildlife Viewing	-	144,899	144,899	-	144,899	144,899
Subtotal	-	144,899	144,899	-	144,899	144,899
GRAND TOTAL	5,112,288	8,789,264	13,901,552	3,930,998	8,671,586	12,602,583

*Colorado Parks and Wildlife
Fiscal Year 2025-26
Great Outdoors Colorado Investment Plan
Table 2: Comparative Summary of Program Costs
FY 2024-25 to FY 2025-26*

Wildlife Grant Name		FY 24-25 Request			FY 25-26 Request		
		GOCO	CPW	Total	GOCO	CPW	Total
Habitat Management							
	Acquire High Priority Habitat	4,463,172	7,005,871	11,469,043	3,281,882	8,996,060	12,277,942
	Enhance Habitat on Lands and Waters	1,000,000	1,690,673	2,690,673	1,000,000	2,726,133	3,726,133
	Wetlands Conservation	1,100,000	400,000	1,500,000	1,100,000	400,000	1,500,000
	GIS Habitat Information	410,186	691,058	1,101,244	408,784	764,639	1,173,423
	Director's Innovation Fund	75,000	-	75,000	75,000	-	75,000
	Subtotal:	7,048,358	9,787,602	16,835,960	5,865,666	12,886,832	18,752,498
Wildlife Heritage							
	Threatened, Endangered, and Native Species Conservation	4,740,346	2,300,219	7,040,565	4,740,346	3,754,457	8,494,803
	Propagation of Aquatic Species at Risk	488,129	1,284,703	1,772,832	465,110	1,308,498	1,773,608
	Subtotal:	5,228,475	3,584,922	8,813,397	5,205,456	5,062,955	10,268,411
Wildlife Education and Environment							
	Education Programs	400,183	244,772	644,955	306,926	-	306,926
	Youth Programs	918,637	594,812	1,513,449	918,637	676,148	1,594,785
	Angler Education	161,000	214,269	375,269	161,000	254,311	415,311
	Subtotal:	1,479,820	1,053,853	2,533,673	1,386,563	930,459	2,317,022
Wildlife Viewing							
	Wildlife Viewing	144,899	122,569	267,468	144,899	1,461	146,360
	Subtotal:	144,899	122,569	267,468	144,899	1,461	146,360
	Grand Total:	13,901,552	14,548,946	28,450,498	12,602,583	18,881,708	31,484,291

Budget figures in the "CPW" column represent an estimate of the CPW contribution for projects where there is also GOCO funding, and are shown for informational purposes only. The figures only represent decisions made prior to this proposal being prepared and additional decisions may be made later that impact the total budget.

Wildlife: Habitat Management

Colorado Parks and Wildlife continues to demonstrate leadership in habitat protection and natural resource stewardship not only within our state parks and wildlife areas, but also in concert with our private landowner and public land management partners. These efforts will better protect and enhance Colorado’s natural values while also providing a wide range of sustainable recreational opportunities. CPW aligns these objectives with GOCO’s strategic plan goals.

Great Outdoors Colorado 2020 Strategic Plan:

- Safeguard essential wildlife habitat.
- Invest in significant habitat restoration and stewardship efforts across the state to meet an increasing demand on wildlife resources.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife 2015 Strategic Plan:

- Goal I: Conserve wildlife and habitat to ensure healthy sustainable populations and ecosystems.
 - Objective B: Preserve and enhance diverse habitat.

Activities funded under the Habitat Management section allow CPW to identify and map important wildlife habitat areas across the state; delineate priority habitat protection areas; implement habitat protection and enhancement efforts built on partnerships with landowners, land trusts, and conservation organizations; support monitoring and management of new and existing properties and easements; and protect wetland resources across the state.

Successful habitat management efforts may prevent the listing of species under the federal Endangered Species Act through the protection of important habitats. Migration corridors and winter range are maintained, providing support that is crucial to the health of Colorado’s big game resources. Migratory birds and waterfowl benefit from protection and enhancement of wetland areas. Public angling access to mountain streams and rivers is provided. Wildlife viewers have expanded opportunities to enjoy Colorado’s abundant wildlife resources. Additionally, more accurate and detailed habitat and land mapping leads to better-informed land use decisions, more effective species recovery plans, and easier public access to public lands.

Habitat Management	Great Outdoors Colorado Funding FY 2025-26
Acquire High Priority Habitat	\$3,281,882
Enhance Habitat on Lands and Water	1,000,000
Wetlands Conservation	1,100,000
GIS Habitat Information	408,784
Director’s Innovation Fund	75,000
Total:	\$5,865,666

Acquire High Priority Habitat

FY 2025-26 Total Projected Budget: \$ 12,277,942
FY 2025-26 GOCO Funding Request: \$ 3,281,882 (capital)

Description and Objectives:

The loss of important wildlife habitat is a primary cause for the decline of many wildlife species and outdoor recreational opportunities in Colorado. As ranches and natural areas are developed or converted to new uses, wildlife habitat can become degraded, destroyed, and fragmented. Habitat conversion and loss also reduces hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing opportunities.

Since 2002, joint initiatives between CPW and GOCO have protected hundreds of thousands of acres of wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities across the state. Priorities for this initiative will be guided by Colorado's Wildlife Action Plan, CPW's 2015 Strategic Plan, and specific funding sources.

Program priorities during FY 2025-26 include:

1. Acquisition of conservation easements, fee title, and permanent easements for habitat protection and public access to provide opportunities for hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing.
2. Review and rank real estate proposals received in response to a Request for Proposals. As required by statute, conservation easements are the preferred option in acquisitions. However, CPW will consider fee title acquisitions for properties that are interior or adjacent to SWAs, to provide a more manageable boundary or improved public access, or to enhance management of habitat and wildlife-related recreation.
3. Closing on real estate acquisitions negotiated in response to previous years' RFPs, protecting wildlife habitat.

Primary Activities:

- Acquire and dispose of legal interests in real property (lands)
- Gather information on and evaluate potential acquisition candidates
- Contact and negotiate with prospective sellers
- Work with counties and local governments on proposed acquisitions
- Work with Capital Development Committee and members of the General Assembly on proposed acquisitions
- Administer appraisals and boundary surveys
- File real estate actions
- Develop guidelines and criteria for property management agreements (which are central to landowner incentive programs)
- Negotiate with and enroll landowners in landowner incentive programs
- Participation in multi-agency partnerships to improve wildlife habitat

(CPW activity 1320, Acquire Land and Habitat H/F/W)

Enhance Habitat on Lands and Water

FY 2025-26 Total Projected Budget:	\$ 3,726,133
FY 2025-26 GOCO Funding Request:	\$ 1,000,000

Description and Objectives:

This program includes habitat conservation on private and public lands and waters. Wildlife habitats on private and public lands are vital to the maintenance and enhancement of wildlife species in Colorado. More than 60 percent of the land in Colorado is held in private ownership; in eastern Colorado more than 80 percent is privately owned. The conversion of wildlife habitat through urbanization and other uses continues to be a major threat to native wildlife species.

Land Program. CPW's land program initiates, coordinates, negotiates, and implements conservation, research, and habitat projects for priority game and at-risk species, including prairie grassland species. The program draws on resources from private conservation, hunters and anglers, and agricultural organizations, along with major support from Farm Bill conservation.

Primary Activities:

- Coordinate landscape level habitat planning efforts and habitat project planning
- Develop and implement habitat objectives and management plans
- Plan, coordinate, and facilitate the statewide implementation of habitat protection, improvement, and restoration projects for wildlife habitat
- Provide oversight of project implementation
- Determine and monitor the distribution, status and trends for biomes in Colorado
- Identification and formation of strategies to implement conservation actions in vegetation communities for the benefit of wildlife; conduct research to inform conservation actions and strategies
- Work collaboratively with conservation partners to form habitat management and projection partnerships at the federal, state, and local levels
- Coordinate, initiate, plan and implement cooperative habitat improvement projects
- Provide expertise in manipulating vegetation communities to land managers across the state
- Work related to the seed warehouse, including but not limited to oversight of shipping, receiving, inventory of seed being stored at the facility and operations and maintenance of the facility
- Native plant development efforts, including but not limited to representing CPW on native seed development efforts
- Provide comments to other agencies on activities impacting wildlife habitats, including comments on current or proposed regulations, Environmental Impact Statements, Environmental Assessments; BLM/USFS Resource Management Plans; Corps of Engineers' 404 permits, 201, 208, and 401 regulations, Mined Land Reclamation projects, SB 40 projects, and State Land Board leasing
- Influence and contribute towards wildlife habitat improvements on public and private lands and waters through cooperative and or voluntary programs
- Development and Implementation of the Big Game Policy Report
- Climate resiliency planning and implementation

Water Program. Among other duties, CPW’s water program coordinates efforts between CPW and the water quality divisions within the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE).

River Watch. The River Watch program started in 1989 with six schools collecting water samples along the Yampa River. It has grown to nearly 140 participating organizations (primarily middle and high schools, but also citizen groups, nature centers, youth programs, and individuals) covering every watershed in the state. River Watch volunteers collect water samples monthly for analysis at CPW laboratories. Water quality data collected through the River Watch program is the most prevalent in the state when measured by stations maintained, samples analyzed, and number of stream segments with data.

- Develop and recommend water quality standards
- Review and respond to standard changes by other entities
- Provide data and technical input to CDPHE for the sound scientific development of standard setting methodologies
- Monitor hatchery and other point source discharges
- Collect and analyze water quality samples, including those collected through the Rivers of Colorado Water Watch (River Watch) programs in schools and by volunteer organizations
- Analyze and incorporate water quality data into aquatic ecosystem modeling
- Fulfill interagency requests for water quality information

(CPW activity 1210, Habitat Management, Conservation and Protection, and activity 1360, Monitor and Improve Water Quality)

Wetlands Conservation

FY 2025-26 Total Projected Budget: \$ 1,500,000
FY 2025-26 GOCO Funding Request: \$ 1,100,000 (capital)

Description and Objectives:

The CPW Wetlands Program’s main objective is to conserve wetland and riparian habitats and their ecological functions by planning and delivering conservation actions on a landscape scale. Through these coordinated efforts, CPW and its partners will ensure that Colorado’s wetland and riparian habitat is sufficient to support self-sustaining populations of desired wildlife species. Wetlands and riparian areas make up less than two percent of Colorado’s land but provide benefits to more than 75 percent of the species in the state.

Major goals of the program are to improve the status of declining or at-risk species and to improve the abundance and distribution of ducks and opportunities for waterfowl hunting. The program funds wetland enhancement and restoration projects, conducts strategic planning to prioritize habitat conservation investments, facilitates partnerships, supports local Focus Area Committees, conducts education and outreach on wetlands conservation, and monitors and evaluates wetland projects. In cooperation with partner organizations and landowners, the Wetlands Program has protected, restored, or enhanced more than 300,000 acres of wetlands and adjacent habitats.

In FY 2025-26, CPW will continue to solicit and support low-tech, process-based restoration projects that reconnect incised stream channels with their floodplains. These projects typically are cost-effective, and improve both wildlife habitat and watershed health. Consistent with efforts to develop a beaver management plan and improve beaver populations, projects anticipated to benefit beavers will be prioritized.

Primary Activities:

- Provide project-related expertise, which includes ecology, species biology, and water rights
- Conduct project monitoring and evaluation
- Funding of wetland creation, enhancement, and restoration projects

(CPW activity 1436, Wetlands Conservation)

GIS Habitat Information

FY 2025-26 Total Projected Budget: \$ 1,173,423
FY 2025-26 GOCO Funding Request: \$ 408,784

Description and Objectives:

The Geographic Information System (GIS) unit compiles wildlife data into formats that are more useable by wildlife researchers and biologists and are more understandable by the public. GIS documents and analyses have been particularly important to CPW biologists assessing the impact of energy development across Colorado. Other GIS products have facilitated public access to state wildlife areas and supported CPW land use.

Primary Activities:

- Provide data, data modeling, analysis, mapping, and other GIS services for CPW
- Maintain existing data sets due to changes that occur over time
- Add new data on wildlife habitats, populations, natural resources, trails, and facilities
- Support CPW personnel in working with county land use planners to understand the impacts of proposed developments on wildlife and provide information for informed public participation in land use decisions as they relate to wildlife
- Generate interactive maps on demand to the public especially through CPW’s Internet site

(CPW activity 8240, GIS H/F/W)

Director’s Innovation Fund (Wildlife)

FY 2025-26 Total Projected Budget: \$ 75,000
FY 2025-26 GOCO Funding Request: \$ 75,000

Description and Objectives:

The CPW Director’s Innovation Fund allows CPW staff to apply for funding for unique, one-time projects and programs. This request represents the wildlife purpose portion of the total requested grant.

Primary Activities:

Activities will vary depending on the projects selected for awards by the CPW Director and the selection committee.

Wildlife: Wildlife Heritage

GOCO funding supports work to minimize the need for federal listings under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). These efforts require CPW to utilize the best science, employ models for efficient and effective resource planning, and conduct sound research to adequately protect and conserve Colorado’s fish and wildlife populations.

Great Outdoors Colorado 2020 Strategic Plan:

- Conserving land and protecting rivers for people and wildlife

Colorado Parks and Wildlife 2015 Strategic Plan:

- Goal I: Conserve wildlife and habitat to ensure healthy sustainable populations and ecosystems.
 - Objective C: Manage and monitor species of greatest conservation need while working with partners to maintain viable populations.
 - Objective E: Conduct research and monitoring to inform management decisions.
- Goal V: Increase awareness and trust for CPW.
 - Objective C: Increase public awareness about the importance of wildlife management.
- Goal VI: Connect people to the Colorado’s outdoors.
 - Objective D: Promote the value of CPW’s mission and services to expand awareness, grow CPW’s volunteer network, and inspire stewardship

Colorado is home to more than 900 wildlife species. Colorado’s State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) identified 210 of those species as being in “Greatest Conservation Need.” Activities funded under the three species protection grants allow CPW to monitor a wide range of wildlife populations in the state, assess population trends, determine distribution patterns, identify limiting factors, develop conservation or recovery plans, and work with other state, federal and local agencies, and private landowners on implementing recovery plans.

Programs and projects in support of species conservation are vital to Colorado’s efforts to avert threatened or endangered listings under the federal Endangered Species Act. Success in meeting recovery plan goals or in proactive actions on declining species are crucial to retain wildlife management authority at the state level, allowing water projects to move forward, and preventing potentially costly and burdensome federal actions.

Wildlife Heritage	Great Outdoors Colorado Funding FY 2025-26
Threatened, Endangered, and Native Species Conservation	\$4,740,346
Propagation of Aquatic Species At Risk	465,110
Total:	\$5,205,456

Threatened, Endangered, and Native Species Conservation

FY 2025-26 Total Projected Budget: \$ 8,494,803
FY 2025-26 GOCO Funding Request: \$ 4,740,346

Description and Objectives:

Activities performed within this program are focused on the goal of re-establishing and securing self-sustaining populations to prevent or remove the need to list as federally threatened or endangered and to support the de-listing of species within Colorado. Activities include species reintroductions/translocations, habitat enhancement and protection, research on factors affecting demographic parameters and habitat selection, mitigation of impacts to species and their habitats, and other activities as required to reach program goals. These activities are conducted by CPW and in partnership with federal land and wildlife management agencies, state and local governments, non-governmental organizations, and private landowners.

The activities performed within the program also support the protection, restoration, and enhancement of self-sustaining native species populations in Colorado. Activities conducted to benefit species may include, but are not limited to, conducting surveys and monitoring to determine status of species, developing conservation or recovery plans, monitoring populations for potential diseases, and investigating reproductive success and survival of individuals.

This funding will support a number of different projects and species. CPW will expand the management of cutthroat trout populations, continue monitoring and habitat assessments for alpine-obligate species, and implement additional bat monitoring activities, particularly since the detection and expansion of White-nose Syndrome in FY 2023-24. CPW will continue implementation of programs to help prevent prairie dog colonies from “plaguing out” - essentially being wiped out by disease. Supporting prairie dog populations also supports species that rely heavily or entirely on prairie dogs for food and habitat, including the black-footed ferret.

Listed below are potential species that benefit from these activities throughout the year:

- Bald Eagle
- Black-footed Ferret
- Canada Lynx
- Piping Plover
- Greenback Cutthroat Trout
- Preble’s Meadow Jumping Mouse
- New Mexico Meadow Jumping Mouse
- Colorado River Threatened and Endangered Fish
- Southwestern Willow Flycatcher
- Mexican Spotted Owl
- Gunnison Sage-grouse
- Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo
- Least Tern
- Lesser Prairie-chicken
- Black Rail
- River Otter
- Gunnison’s Prairie Dog
- Boreal Toad
- Mountain Plover
- Black-tailed Prairie Dog

- White-tailed Prairie Dog
- Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse
- Peregrine Falcon
- Plains Sharp-tailed Grouse
- Greater Sage-grouse
- Bats
- White-tailed Ptarmigan
- Colorado River Cutthroat Trout
- Native Fish within Colorado's tributaries
- Brown-capped Rosy Finch
- Burrowing Owl
- Wolverine

Primary Activities:

- Provide survey results and other data to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in response to requests for data as part of the ESA species assessment and listing process
- Identify, secure, and enhance habitat that meets the species' requirements
- Develop and implement recovery plans for species that are listed or candidates for listing under the ESA
- Reclaim streams, monitor, and research stream flows
- Stock, transplant, establish, and monitor the health, breeding, and migration patterns of populations to provide early detection of potential problems within a species
- Initiate cooperative agreements with private landowners regarding prevention of non-native species introductions
- Provide nesting alternatives as required by species
- Conduct research and monitor populations and productivity among reintroduced species
- Review and conduct statewide habitat assessments
- Construct fish passage structures
- Conduct multi-year surveys and monitor populations and habitats of species that are listed or candidates for listing under the ESA
- Update and analyze data and findings for incorporation into reports and studies that detail activities performed and how the results impact the species. This research information will be vital for decisions made by federal and state agencies in the determination to list or de-list a species
- Conduct extensive baseline surveys to determine occurrence, distribution, and relative abundance of species
- Protect and manage habitats of species that are listed or candidates for listing under the ESA and conduct research to improve knowledge of their species-habitat relationships
- Develop and implement recovery and conservation management plans and goals within CPW and external conservation stakeholders
- Implement and update the (SWAP) to address declining wildlife species recovery and conservation objectives
- Develop and implement basin management plans
- Propagate and augment depleted species stock
- Develop and implement inventory protocols to be used throughout the state

- Facilitate design and implementation of a long-term monitoring and evaluation system that measures population trends
- Survey historic and potential suitable habitats for new population introductions
- Monitor breeding populations annually
- Identify and evaluate limiting factors to species survival
- Research to better define suitable habitat and overall biology and ecology of species
- Develop and test techniques and protocols for captive breeding and rearing of species
- Experimental reintroduction of species to vacant historic habitat
- Increase public awareness of the efforts utilized to sustain native species populations
- Translocation of species
- Protect species and their habitat via coordination with land management agencies
- Work with local land use planners and developers to avoid or minimize potential impacts of private land development on species and their habitat
- Develop and finalize recovery goals and criteria
- Resolve genetic questions for broodstock development and stocking
- Conduct research into population dynamics and population genetics
- Protect and reclaim suitable river and stream habitats
- Evaluate stocking into new habitats
- Habitat restoration through riparian, stream channel, water quality, and hydrological considerations
- Monitor health of wild populations
- Other activities as listed in the CPW Activity Dictionary for the activity codes listed below

(CPW activity 1560, Inventory Native Terrestrial Species; activity 1638, Species Conservation Planning and Coordination; activity 1641, Reptile and Amphibian Conservation; activity 1642, Mollusks and Crustaceans Conservation; activity 1643, Boreal Toad Conservation; activity 1644, Eastern Plains Fish Recovery; activity 1645, Colorado River Native Species Conservation; activity 1646, Arkansas River Native Species Conservation; activity 1647, South Platte River Species Conservation; activity 1648, Rio Grande River Species Conservation; activity 1649, Republican River Species Conservation; activity 1650, Black-tailed Prairie Dog; activity 1651, Gunnison Prairie Dog; activity 1652, White-tailed Prairie Dog; activity 1656, Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse; activity 1657, Plains Sharp-tailed Grouse; activity 1658, Lesser Prairie Chicken; activity 1659, Gunnison Sage-grouse Conservation; activity 1662, Preble’s Meadow Jumping Mouse; activity 1663, Terrestrial Species of Special Concern/Species At Risk (SSC/SAR) Conservation; activity 1664, Wolverine Conservation; activity 1665, Mountain Plover Conservation; activity 1666, River Otter Conservation; activity 1670, Lynx Conservation; activity 1680, Bird Conservation; activity 1686, Small Mammal Conservation; activity 1810, Greenback Cutthroat Trout Recovery; activity 1820, Upper Colorado River Fish; activity 1841, Least Tern; activity 1842, Piping Plover; activity 1850; Peregrine Falcon Recovery; activity 1860, Bald Eagle Recovery; activity 1870, Mexican Spotted Owl Recovery; activity 1880, Black-footed Ferret Recovery)

Propagation of Aquatic Species at Risk

FY 2025-26 Total Projected Budget:	\$ 1,773,608
FY 2025-26 GOCO Funding Request:	\$ 465,110

Description and Objectives:

The prime purpose of the Native Aquatic Species Propagation Program is to collect eggs, produce and rear progeny, and stock a wide array of native aquatic species every year. These efforts are crucial to allow CPW to maintain and enhance existing species populations, reintroduce them in new areas where suitable habitat exists, prevent listings under the ESA, and meet recovery goal objectives.

Primary Activities:

- Obtain genetically appropriate brood stocks
- Captive rearing to obtain viable numbers for population re-establishment
- Stock species into suitable habitats to re-establish viable, sustainable wild populations
- Operation and maintenance of Native Aquatic Species Rearing Facility
- Includes work at other state fish hatcheries involved in the rearing of state and federal listed and Species of Special Concern (SSC)/Species at Risk (SAR) native aquatic species

(CPW activity 1570, Produce and Distribute Native Aquatic SSC/SAR)

Wildlife: Wildlife Education and Environment

The wildlife education and environment grants support outreach to Colorado citizens to educate, expand volunteer members, and promote natural resource stewardship. These programs are supported through these strategic goals and objectives:

Great Outdoors Colorado 2020 Strategic Plan:

- Partner with communities to break down barriers to the outdoors.
- Support projects and programs that help children and families get outside more often and experience all the benefits of doing so.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife 2015 Strategic Plan:

- Goal I: Conserve wildlife and habitat to ensure healthy sustainable populations and ecosystems.
 - Objective A: Manage sustainable populations of game and nongame species to support fishing, hunting, trapping, and wildlife viewing opportunities.
- Goal VI: Connect people to Colorado’s outdoors.
 - Objective A: Broaden the access and variety of recreation opportunities available to Coloradans and visitors.
 - Objective B: Provide facilities, infrastructure, and access to support opportunities for premier outdoor recreation opportunities.
 - Objective D: Promote the value of CPW’s mission services to expand awareness, grow CPW’s volunteer network, and inspire stewardship.
 - Objective E: Become familiar with the needs, interests, and expectations of residents and visitors who are new to outdoor recreation.

Activities funded under the wildlife education and environment grants allow CPW to introduce children, youth, adults, and families to wildlife through programs such as fishing clinics, and educator trainings. The program also provides opportunities for partners to connect their audiences to wildlife using CPW materials, equipment, and expertise. These activities build awareness and understanding of wildlife and wildlife management, helping to meet the long-term vision of creating future stewards of the land and wildlife.

Wildlife Education and Environment	Great Outdoors Colorado Funding FY 2025-26
Education Programs	\$306,926
Youth Programs	918,637
Angler Education	161,000
Total:	\$1,386,563

Education Programs

FY 2025-26 Total Projected Budget: \$ 306,926
 FY 2025-26 GOCO Funding Request: \$ 306,926

Description and Objectives:

CPW operates a variety of services that provide the best available resources, training, and support to pre-K through college educators and youth. Training opportunities and resources

from CPW, support educators with reaching many more students than CPW employees could alone. Outcomes include creating Colorado communities that are knowledgeable about wildlife, wildlife management, and outdoor recreation. This program invests in efforts that provide educators the knowledge and training to develop future stewards who will make informed decisions about wildlife and their environment. Funding supports efforts to work with schools and partners to create wildlife education and professional development opportunities across the state.

Primary Activities:

- Provide standards-aligned lessons, educational resources, and training to educators to promote wildlife conservation messages in schools (Project WILD and CPW developed)
- Utilize both in-person and distance learning program options to better meet the needs of all Colorado educators and students
- Implement Outdoor Understanding for Teachers (OUT) place-based teacher workshops that bring teachers together and other natural resource education programs such as Water Education for Teachers (WET), Project Learning Tree (PLT), and Food, Land and People (FLP), which include and complement wildlife education

(CPW activity 6140, Educator Training and Support)

Youth Programs

FY 2025-26 Total Projected Budget: \$ 1,594,785

FY 2025-26 GOCO Funding Request: \$ 918,637

Description and Objectives:

Colorado Parks and Wildlife is a strong proponent of providing outdoor education programs and opportunities for all ages. This proposal expands CPW's youth outreach programs by expanding and creating new opportunities that capture the attention of Colorado's youth. In addition to these components, CPW will continue supporting opportunities for scout groups, 4-H clubs, and school community service organizations. CPW is uniquely positioned to introduce Colorado's youth to the outdoors, potential natural resource careers, encourage more physical activity, and educate them about outdoor issues to foster environmental and natural resource stewardship.

Primary activities include:

- Present to students in a classroom or field trip setting
- Maintain and provide library materials and resource education kits for teachers
- Respond to requests for specific wildlife education information or programming
- Create and maintain an internet home page about wildlife education
- Administer pre- and post-program surveys for reporting and program evaluation
- Develop cooperative agreements with schools and other entities
- Develop formal educational materials and activities for use at CPW's wildlife viewing sites
- Host booths at community or organization events or trade shows
- Develop and organize outdoor skills events that focus on wildlife-related recreation, survival skills and orienteering

- Develop, implement and manage wildlife interpretive programs, survival clinics, and general orienteering;
- Provide opportunities for experiential education to the public
- Contract and program management for youth corps
- Solicit, review, and select wildlife-related work sites for youth corps
- Establish youth corps work standards
- Enhance and approve wildlife education curriculum for use by youth corps
- Evaluate program and recommend improvements for youth corps
- Coordinate work projects with cost center managers for youth corps
- Coordinate and recruit schools for participation in the SOLE program
- Establish and coordinate field trips options, in-class programs, and family nature night programs with SOLE participating schools and partners
- Coordinate and provide funding for transportation to field trip locations
- Provide funding to SOLE participating schools to promote and enhance outdoor learning classrooms
- Participate in local events that promote wildlife-related activities
- Provide career booths at large venues
- Respond to inquiries related to wildlife natural resource careers
- Other activities as listed in the CPW Activity Dictionary for the activity codes listed below

(CPW activity 6120, Schools Outdoor Learning Environments (SOLE); activity 6131, Support Education Programs in Schools H/F/W; activity 6134, Public Education and Outreach H/F/W; activity 6220, Encourage Natural Resource Careers H/F/W)

Colorado Youth Corps Association. The Colorado Youth Corps Association (CYCA) is a statewide coalition of ten accredited youth conservation corps. For more than a decade, CYCA crews across Colorado have worked with CPW on angler education clinics, fence removal or repair at state wildlife areas, non-native invasive weed control, riparian habitat improvement projects, and hatchery maintenance projects among others. CYCA work crews learn first-hand about wildlife and habitat stewardship while developing job skills and experience that help them in future employment. CYCA uses a percentage of this allocation to help defray administrative and overhead costs, including project management and reporting, technical training, evaluation and data tracking, site visits, and accounting and support services. In previous years, this percentage has averaged approximately 12 percent.

Youth Internship Program. The purpose of the CPW Youth Internship Program is to prepare the next generation of natural resource professionals. This program provides training and hands-on experience for youth interested in pursuing natural resource careers. CPW has assigned a Youth Internship Program Coordinator that is responsible to provide statewide coordination for extensive training for the interns and CPW staff, monitor and recommend placement of interns equitably throughout CPW, document activities and identify needs of the interns and CPW throughout the years. This program has the capacity to support approximately 55-80 interns throughout both purposes and solicit youth between the ages of 16-24.

Activities supported under this grant are specific to wildlife activities and include intern selection, direct supervision, training, intern wages, and oversight of interns. There may be instances when an intern assigned to wildlife activities has the opportunity to work with a

parks program. These activities will still be funded within the wildlife purpose, as long as the activity is primarily for the benefit of the wildlife purpose.

Schools and Outdoor Learning Environments (SOLE).

The Schools and Outdoor Learning Environments (SOLE) program is designed to increase youth interest and participation in responsible recreation and conservation of the state's natural resources by supporting and enhancing existing standards aligned with environmental and conservation education programs in Colorado schools. SOLE has grown exponentially since its inception in 2013 from supporting approximately 50 schools across the state with their 4th grade programs, to becoming the overarching formal education program from CPW supporting early childhood, Kindergarten - 12 grade, community college and university levels. Our goal is to connect with younger audiences to develop long lasting relationships that lead to awareness and behavioral changes. Formal education programming will directly connect to, and enhance the following to achieve our mission.

- **Career recruitment and retention:** By connecting with middle and high school students about career opportunities, we are able to inform students about the necessary educational trajectories to qualify for positions in our agency, and support them with the development of needed soft and hard skills to be successful in the work that we do.
- **Stewardship and conservation:** For future generations to become leaders in stewardship and conservation, we need to connect with them at an earlier age to establish meaningful relationships with the outdoors.
- **Economic Base:** Through building a solid knowledge base and awareness of recreation and wildlife management in our state, our future generations are more prepared to take on an active role as recreationists, voters and supporters.

Angler Education

FY 2025-26 Total Projected Budget:	\$ 415,311
FY 2025-26 GOCO Funding Request:	\$ 161,000

Description and Objectives:

CPW's Angler Education Program reaches approximately 15,000 participants in over 300 fishing clinics statewide annually where participants are supported to learn and practice fishing skills. This program continues to promote fishery resource conservation and resource stewardship by providing volunteer and educational opportunities. A secondary goal is to have participants leave the clinic with a positive image of CPW and its mission. In addition, this program works to develop and enhance partnerships with local angling groups, park and recreation departments, and other community organizations.

Primary Activities:

- Assess demand for clinics
- Recruit and train instructors (paid and volunteer)
- Develop and maintain partnerships with government, business, and community groups
- Evaluate and obtain appropriate instructional materials
- Develop and print new angler education materials

- Work with manufacturers to obtain fishing equipment for distribution to clinic participants
- Conduct clinics for both youth and adults
- Hatchery tours for both students and adults
- Education programs for youth on hatcheries and angling

(CPW activity 6420, Angler Education)

Wildlife: Wildlife Viewing

According to the 2022 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, & Wildlife-Associated Recreation, 57.2% of U.S. Residents identify themselves as wildlife viewers. This program continues to identify, develop, and help establish wildlife viewing opportunities on public lands, including CPW properties and state parks; develop and establish wildlife viewing opportunities in cooperation with landowners on private lands; and prepare and distribute informational materials on wildlife viewing techniques and opportunities.

Great Outdoors Colorado 2020 Strategic Plan:

- Connect people with the outdoors and its many benefits.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife 2015 Strategic Plan:

- Goal I: Conserve wildlife and habitat to ensure healthy sustainable populations and ecosystems.
 - Objective A: Manage sustainable populations of game and nongame species to support fishing, hunting, trapping, and wildlife viewing opportunities.

Activities funded under the wildlife viewing grant allow CPW to produce and provide information to the public on how to safely and non-intrusively view wildlife in their natural setting. The grant also supports wildlife viewing and educational activities.

Wildlife Viewing	Great Outdoors Colorado Funding FY 2025-26
Wildlife Viewing Program	\$144,899
Total:	\$144,899

Wildlife Viewing

FY 2025-26 Total Projected Budget: \$ 146,360
FY 2025-26 GOCO Funding Request: \$ 144,899

Description and Objectives:

The Wildlife Viewing grant supports activities to establish new wildlife viewing and education opportunities – such as the increasingly popular wildlife festivals – and work with partners to develop and improve existing viewing resources.

Primary Activities:

- Review and update database of statewide wildlife viewing opportunities and prioritize these opportunities for future development
- Develop cooperative projects with local, state, and federal agencies
- Identify opportunities to develop wildlife viewing sites
- Design and construct wildlife viewing sites
- Publicize wildlife viewing opportunities on CPW properties
- Plan future projects
- Develop and maintain partnerships with a variety of federal, state, and private organizations to support activities that promote wildlife viewing opportunities throughout the state
- Develop information and interpretive materials to support wildlife viewing festivals around the state
- Develop brochures, guides, lists, newsletters/website articles, interpretive signs, highway signs, boardwalks, wildlife viewing stations, and other information that enhance wildlife viewing experience
- Promote and manage the Colorado Birding Trail

(CPW activity 5110, Watchable Wildlife with Partners; activity 5210, Watchable Wildlife on CPW Lands; activity 5260, Watchable Wildlife Interpretive Programs)