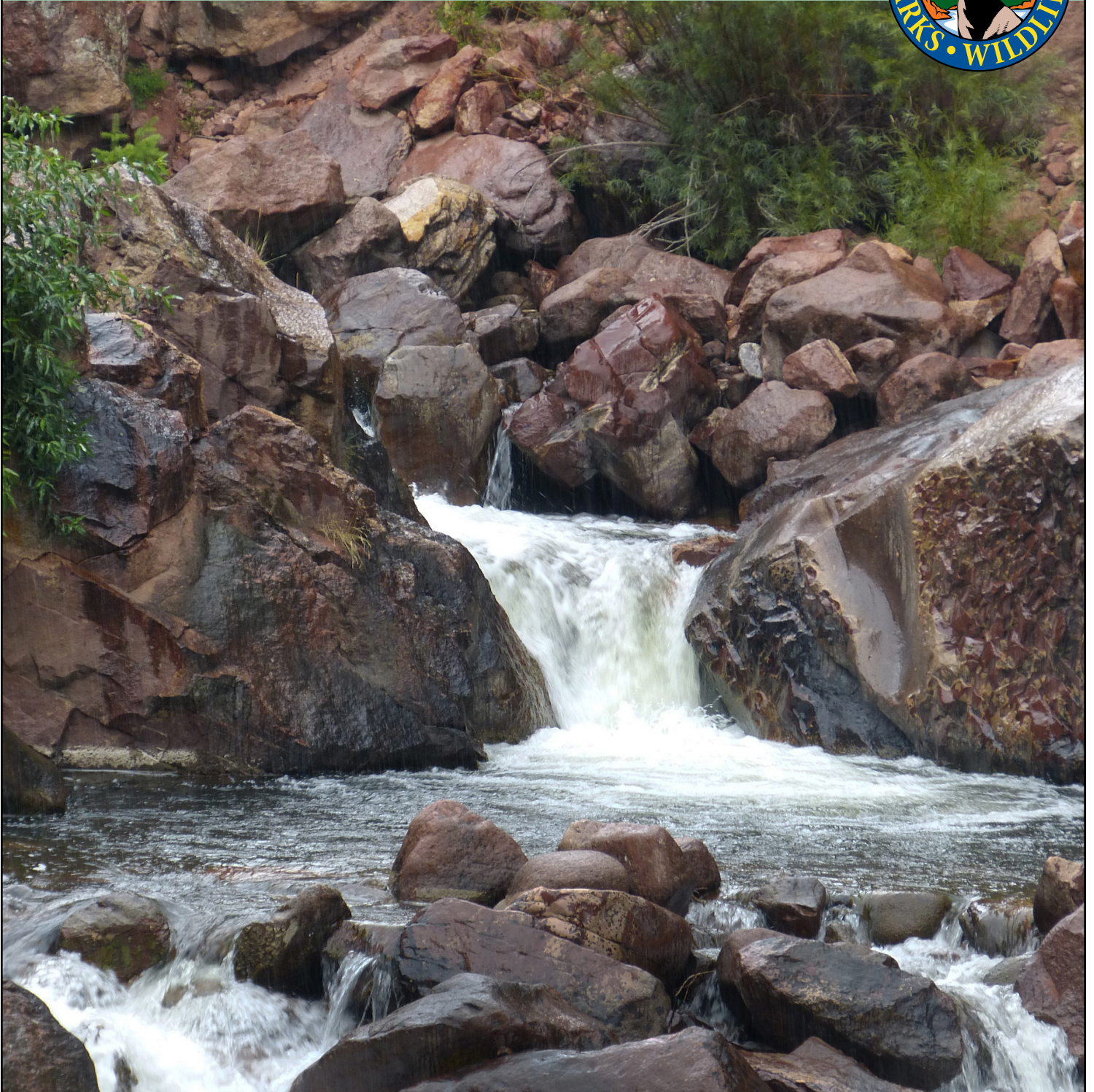


C O L O R A D O P A R K S & W I L D L I F E

Colorado Outdoor Regional Partnership Initiative Report 2023

Published March, 2023



Introduction

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) presents the first Colorado Outdoor Regional Partnerships Report, providing an overview of an initiative to advance regional and statewide collaboration to ensure that Colorado’s land, water, and wildlife thrive while enhancing equitable access to Colorado’s world-class outdoors.

This report highlights the Regional Partnerships Initiative (RPI) progress since its inception in 2020, including the creation of a new CPW grant program and the engagement of coalitions across the state to build a collective and community-driven vision for Colorado’s outdoors.



Regional Partnerships Initiative (RPI)

In October 2020, Governor Polis signed Executive Order B 2020 008 creating the Colorado Outdoor Regional Partnerships Initiative (RPI). The goals of the RPI are to

1. Ensure that Colorado’s land, water, and wildlife thrive while also providing equitable and safe access to quality outdoor recreation experiences;
2. Convene voices from different outdoor interests, races, cultures, ages, and sectors through Regional Partnerships to identify regional priorities and strategies;
3. Collaborate to develop a State-level vision and plan for conservation and recreation that will inform future investments to conserve Colorado’s landscapes, rivers, wildlife, sensitive habitats, and recreational opportunities.

Central to the Regional Partnership Initiative is the [Colorado Outdoor Partnership](#) (CO-OP). Established in 2017, the Colorado Outdoor Partnership believes that leaders across the State must collaborate and innovate to ensure our private and public lands and water remain healthy to support Colorado’s diverse wildlife, outdoor and agricultural heritage, and economic wellbeing. The CO-OP is committed to promoting the importance and stewardship of public and private lands and waters to support sustainable habitat conservation and responsible outdoor recreation. The CO-OP brings outdoor sectors, including government, nonprofits, and private citizens together to advance thoughtful planning, strategic investment, and engagement with regional and State-level partnerships.

Colorado is renowned worldwide for its diverse and spectacular landscapes, abundant wildlife, and exceptional outdoor recreation experiences. However, Colorado’s outdoor resources face increasing challenges today due to population growth, climate change, natural disasters, habitat loss, and increased demand for outdoor recreation. To tackle these challenges, the CO-OP adopted a vision for balancing recreation and conservation and ensuring equitable and sustainable access to outdoor recreation.

Colorado Vision 2050
The CO-OP shares a state-level vision that in 2050, Colorado’s people and the economy will thrive because of our healthy lands, water, wildlife, working farms, and ranches, accompanied by improved, inclusive outdoor recreation, hunting, and angling opportunities for all.

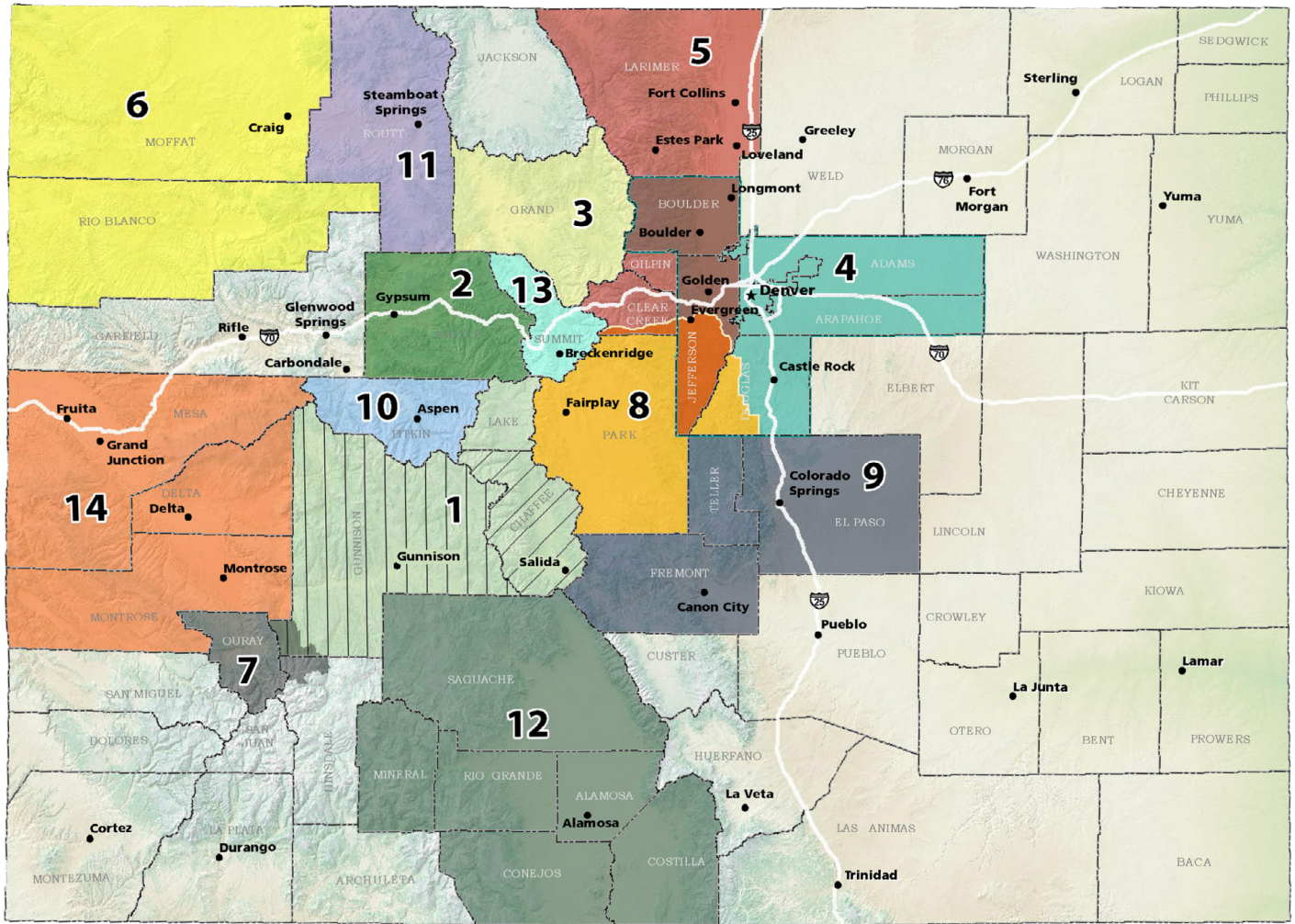
Regional Partnership Initiative Grant Program

CPW is collaborating with Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) to provide funding for new and existing coalitions participating in the Regional Partnership Initiative with a CPW-administered grant program. Since 1992, GOCO has been investing a portion of Colorado Lottery proceeds to help preserve and enhance the state’s parks, trails, wildlife, rivers, and open spaces.

Through three grant cycles between 2021 and 2022, the Regional Partnership Initiative Grant Program awarded \$1.587 million to 15 coalitions for collaboration and conservation and recreation planning. Fifteen coalitions are working to advance the goals of the Outdoor Regional Partnership Initiative. Collectively, they cover 51 percent of Colorado and represent the broad range of conservation and recreation interests while bringing their region’s unique perspectives, values, and priorities to a statewide planning effort.

Grant Cycle	Number of Awards	Total Awards
Spring 2021	7	\$610,000
Spring 2022	6	\$674,500
Fall 2022	4	\$303,080
Total	17*	\$1,587,580

*Pikes Peak Outdoor Recreation Alliance and NoCo PLACES 2050 were awarded funding in 2021 and 2022.

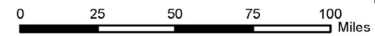


- 1. Central Colorado Recreation Partnership
 - Envision Chaffee
 - Gunnison STOR
- 2. Eagle County Community Wildlife Roundtable
- 3. Grand PLACES 2050
- 4. Metro Denver Nature Alliance (Metro DNA)
- 5. NoCo PLACES 2050
- 6. Northwest Colorado Outdoor Coalition (NCOC)
- 7. Ouray Regional Recreation and Conservation Alliance (ORRCA)
- 8. Outside 285
- 9. Pikes Peak Outdoor Recreation Alliance (PPORA)
- 10. Roaring Fork Outdoor Coalition
- 11. Routt Recreation and Conservation Roundtable
- 12. San Luis Valley Great Outdoors
- 13. Summit County Outdoor Coalition
- 14. Two Rivers Conservation & Recreation Roundtable



Colorado Outdoor Regional Partnerships February 2023

www.copartnership.org



Land Acknowledgement

The Colorado Outdoor Regional Partnership honors and acknowledges that the areas that make up the regional partnerships continue to be home to the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Southern Ute Indian Tribe, 46 other contemporary Tribes with historic and cultural ties to the State, and Indigenous peoples from more than 200 Tribal Nations. We recognize the Indigenous peoples as original stewards of this land and affirm Indigenous sovereignty, history, knowledge, and experiences. In building relationships with Indigenous communities across Colorado, we highlight the importance of actively working towards regional planning practices that benefit the original peoples of this land.

Progress Across the State

Central Colorado Recreation Partnership (CCRP) | \$95,000 | Awarded Spring 2022

In 2022, two separate coalitions, Envision Recreation in Balance Partnership (Chaffee County) and the Gunnison County Sustainable Tourism & Outdoor Recreation Committee (Gunnison County) collaborated to form the Central Colorado Recreation Partnership and expanded their boundaries to include Lake County.

Envision Recreation in Balance Partnership (ERiB) | \$95,000 | Awarded 2021

Envision Chaffee County launched when a group of citizens came together in 2016 with concerns that population, tourism, traffic, recreation, and housing challenges were impacting Chaffee County's future. They developed a Shared Community Vision and Recreation and Resource Protection Plan with three community-driven goals: Retain healthy forests, waters, wildlife, and working agricultural lands; Maintain exceptional multi-use experience; and Sustain the economic benefits of outdoor recreation. The Recreation in Balance Partnership provides transferable tools and stories of success by working with land managers and community volunteers to advance stewardship efforts. They have proudly added 14 new staff positions in the area to support better management of public lands. Their successful Wildlife Decision Support Tool provides the community with science-based data to support community strategies that protect wildlife. In 2022 this important tool began being implemented in Gunnison and Lake County.

Gunnison County Sustainable Tourism & Outdoor Recreation Committee (STOR) | \$95,000 | Awarded Spring 2022

The Sustainable Tourism and Outdoor Recreation Committee (STOR Committee) is a community coalition, created in 2017 by the Gunnison County Board of Commissioners to improve and maintain tourism and outdoor recreation in a manner that is sustainable (environmentally, socially, and financially) and aligns with their community values. With RPI grant funding, STOR teamed up with Envision Chaffee County and Lake County Open Space Initiative to form the Central Colorado Recreation Partnership (CCRP). The Partnership began implementing the Wildlife Decision Support Tools in Lake County and Gunnison County in late 2022, with coaching and leadership from the Envision Recreation in Balance Partnership. Working alongside multiple partners, the CCRP has been able to create a Planning for Wildlife Tool development process and have laid the groundwork for a Lake County collaborative, focusing on local partners able to contribute technical expertise and community outreach.

Eagle County Community Wildlife Roundtable (ECCWR) | \$75,000 | Awarded Fall 2022

Community members and organizations established the ECCWR in 2020 with the goal of leveraging diverse values, creativity, and resources to move toward positive action and enduring solutions to the complex wildlife issues in Eagle County. As a newly funded Partnership, ECCWR will convene existing conservation and outdoor recreation-focused coalitions, review comprehensive resource, habitat, and project data, and work toward identifying prioritized projects, an implementation plan, and metrics for success.

Grand PLACES 2050* (GP2050) | \$78,080 | Awarded Fall 2022

Grand PLACES 2050 (GP2050) is a coalition of local government entities, nonprofit groups, state and federal land and wildlife managers, and businesses. They focus on Grand County's PLACES - people, land, access, conservation, ecosystems, and sustainability. Grand PLACES strives to become a model coalition that sustainably manages natural and cultural resources in balance with quality outdoor recreation experiences. This coalition first convened in 2019 in response to an unprecedented recreation surge and noticeable ecological impacts in Grand County. RPI funding for Grand PLACES 2050 will support conservation and recreation planning at the landscape scale by focusing on both short-term responsive planning and long-term prioritization as they work on addressing issues involving population growth, mountain migration, water quality and forest health, burgeoning recreation impacts, wildfire recovery, and wildlife habitat fragmentation.

Metro Denver Nature Alliance (Metro DNA) | \$110,000 | Awarded 2021

The Metro Denver Nature Alliance (Metro DNA) is a growing coalition of non-profit, government, research, and private sector members seeking to align nature-based efforts to ensure more equitable access to nature and to promote healthy people, communities, and natural places. With support from the RPI grant, Metro DNA is creating a Regional Vision for People + Nature, which will combine goals from a Regional Equity Assessment and a Regional Conservation Assessment to build up equitable access to nature, ecological health and connectivity, and climate resilience in the seven counties that make up the Denver Metro Area. The Regional Conservation Assessment was developed in partnership with The Nature Conservancy and focuses on identifying high-priority places to protect, connect, restore, and enhance. The Regional Equity Assessment will continue into 2023 and focuses on data in the region regarding equity, social vulnerability, and access to nature.



[Northern Colorado PLACES 2050 \(NoCo PLACES\)](#) | \$200,000 | Awarded Spring 2021 & Spring 2022

NoCo PLACES' mission is to provide equitable access and high-quality outdoor recreational experiences for current and future generations with a focus on people, land, access, conservation, ecosystems, and sustainability (PLACES). Eight county, state, and federal public land agencies from north-central Colorado are actively collaborating on ways to address the challenges that mountains and foothills in their region are facing. They are proving their commitment to sustainable solutions, equitable actions, and beneficial land management practices through a working conservation and recreation vision, map development, and a communication campaign focused on winter recreation safety. Into 2023 they will work with a consultant to integrate the public's values, desires, and concerns into their spatial analysis of the region.

[Northwest Colorado Outdoor Coalition \(NCOC\)](#) | \$100,000 | Awarded Spring 2022

The Northwest Colorado Outdoor Coalition's current purpose is to build capacity among stakeholders, raise awareness of local planning and statewide conservation and recreation planning efforts, and provide an opportunity for the region's values, needs, and priorities to be shared. As a new partnership serving Moffat and Rio Blanco counties, NCOC hired both a facilitator and coordinator in 2022. Stakeholder meetings will focus on developing a recreation and conservation plan for the region. Additional goals for 2023 include identifying additional stakeholders, updating their website, adopting a charter, and creating a map of priority areas to inform conservation and recreation planning.

[Ouray Regional Recreation and Conservation Alliance \(ORRCA\)](#) | \$60,000 | Awarded 2021

Created in 2021, ORRCA collaborates with regional stakeholders to expand land, water, and wildlife conservation while advancing their shared goals of outdoor recreation, natural resource management, priority setting, and planning for Ouray County and surrounding areas. ORRCA has worked to develop an organizing committee, stakeholder group, and subgroup to successfully develop a mission, vision, and geographic scope for the partnership. Since July 2022, an additional 19 members have been added to the initial stakeholder list, bringing the total stakeholders to 131. In 2023 ORRCA will focus on its community engagement plan, organizational structure, a high-priority outdoor recreation map, high-value wildlife conservation map, and updated website.

[Pikes Peak Outdoor Recreation Alliance \(PPORA\)](#) | \$225,000 | Awarded Spring 2021 & Spring 2022

PPORA works collaboratively to identify and advance priorities and innovative strategies to ensure the resilience and improvement of natural and recreational values for the Pikes Peak region, which includes El Paso, Teller, and Fremont counties. RPI funding supports PPORA's Outdoor Pikes Peak Initiative (OPPI) project, which is designed to advance recreation and conservation planning in the region. 2022 saw stakeholder involvement and collaboration to formalize their mission, vision, values, and goals. In partnership with the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, a data hub was created to showcase socio-economic, natural resources, recreation, and tourism data that is available to the public as a valuable resource in information-sharing and decision-making. January 2023 listening sessions will inform community priorities and help assist the continued development of the data hub.

Outside 285 (O285) | \$149,500 | Awarded Spring 2022

The Outside 285 partnership seeks to conserve wildlife habitat while improving trail-based recreation experiences within the US 285 corridor which includes Clear Creek, Douglas, Jefferson, and Park counties. The partnership was originally conceived by the Colorado Mountain Bike Association, CPW, and the U.S. Forest Service - Pike National Forest, South Platte Ranger District to work together and comprehensively develop a shared vision for trail-based recreation on public lands along US 285. The O285 Steering Committee has expanded to also include wildlife biologists, wildlife advocates, and recreation user groups. Awarded funding continues to support coalition expansion by integrating new partners, growing their geographical reach, engaging the public, implementing top-priority projects, and broadening their landscape analysis. In 2023 O285 will continue to expand its work into all of Park County.

Roaring Fork Outdoor Coalition* (RFOC) | \$75,000 | Awarded Fall 2022

In 2021 the Roaring Fork Outdoor Coalition informally convened land managers and decision-makers to holistically look at regional recreation challenges and proactively move toward coordinated management and solutions for Pitkin County. The coalition has worked on collecting baseline visitor use and ecological data that is foundational to their shared understanding of challenges and opportunities and will provide a baseline for their strategic plan. Awarded funding will support engaging a facilitator to formalize the Roaring Fork Outdoor Coalition by creating a framework for collaboration, administering meetings, establishing a vision, and ultimately outlining goals for conservation and recreation in the region.

Routt Recreation and Conservation Roundtable (RRCR) | \$110,000 | Awarded 2021

The RRCR convened to provide non-binding insights and recommendations to land managers engaged in recreational planning processes and/or recreational policy decisions in Routt County. This community forum represents stakeholders and agencies who work to develop a collaborative environment for information sharing, understanding, discussion, collaboration, and input. The RRCR is currently focusing on providing insights and recommendations to land managers, developing a destination management program, and creating a conservation and recreation plan. New Know Before You Go websites are part of a larger information-sharing strategy including signage at popular trailheads, print materials at local shops, and a webcam installation at the Dry Lake camping area and parking lot. A Human Ecology Mapping Tool is being developed to capture the Roundtable members' and public values related to the land and will eventually inform the basis for their public outreach strategy. A Decision Support Tool is intended to inform future recreation and conservation planning by providing relevant spatial data, analysis, and information that will be released to the public in February 2023.



San Luis Valley Great Outdoors! (SLV GO!) | \$110,000 | Awarded 2021

Formed in 2013, SLV GO! brings together 45 organizations, businesses, municipalities, and agencies who recognize the importance of enhancing outdoor recreational experiences, improving wellness, and protecting the environment across the six-county region of the San Luis Valley. Since 2021, SLV GO! has worked on identifying coalition goals, strategies, and tactics that will push forward their vision that “the San Luis Valley is a place where conservation and outdoor recreation are balanced to create a landscape that preserves the natural and cultural resources, provides outdoor access for all people, and boosts the local economy.” As part of a community assessment, SLV GO! distributed a survey to evaluate progress towards providing and promoting recreation opportunities, improving access, increasing information sharing, and understanding perceptions of the outdoor recreation economy. This survey will help inform SLV GO! about the community’s priorities and challenges, and animate discussion topics for listening sessions across the Valley.

Summit County Outdoor Coalition* (SCOC) | \$75,000 | Awarded Fall 2022

SCOC is a new coalition between the Blue River Watershed Group, the Summit County Sustainability Department, and Friends of the Lower Blue River. The purpose of SCOC is to understand and address issues facing wildlife populations, recreation, and landscape-scale ecosystems across Summit County. The goal of the coalition is to manage the impacts of growth in outdoor recreation and support ecosystem health in the face of climate change. This new coalition will utilize roundtable formats and science-based mapping tools to promote unbiased planning, catalog needs, and prioritize proposed projects for their community. Awarded funding will support staff capacity, the development of an advisory committee, stakeholder outreach, and overall support for the formalization of this coalition.

Two Rivers Conservation and Recreation Roundtable* (2RCRR) | \$30,000 | Awarded Spring 2022

Two Rivers is a new regional partnership founded in 2022 that is laying the groundwork for recreation and conservation collaboration across Mesa, Delta, and Montrose counties. In its infancy, they have created a steering committee and undergone initial outreach to over 60 organizations and key individuals in their region. In early 2023, they will be conducting a number of outreach meetings to identify common goals and further build a core working group and steering committee before developing an action plan to move towards in the spring.

** Regional Partnerships that do not have web pages.*



Looking Forward

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

Every five years, CPW leads the development of a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) to maintain eligibility for funding through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and to inform additional investments from other federal, state, local, and private programs. Given the significance of outdoor recreation in the state, this plan is much more than a federal requirement for funding. Colorado's 2019-2023 SCORP considers both conservation and recreation together as values that are closely intertwined. The 2019-2023 SCORP also looked at current and changing demographics and recreation trends to help the outdoor recreation sector be culturally relevant and respond to future shifts. As the current SCORP nears the end of its term, CPW is developing the next evolution of this plan that centers close collaboration with a wide range of partners to provide a shared vision for the future of Colorado's outdoors. The 2024-2028 SCORP planning process is underway, focusing on data collection, analysis, and reporting in early 2023, then shifting toward public engagement that will continue into 2024 with the presentation of the draft plan. After incorporating public input, a final plan is expected in the fall of 2024. The research agenda includes outdoor recreation interests, participation, motivations and constraints, recreation inventory and land managers survey, economic contributions of outdoor recreation to the state, and analysis of equitable access to parks and public land.



Colorado Conservation, Outdoor Recreation & Climate Resilience Plan

In partnership with CPW, Governor Polis, and the Department of Natural Resources, GOCO initiated the collaborative development of a statewide plan that establishes a vision, direction, and statewide metrics for climate-resilient, biodiversity-supporting, community-driven conservation, and recreation planning and management, that takes into consideration equitable outdoor access. This plan will build on and align with the Regional Partnership Initiative, the SCORP, the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP), and other planning efforts to provide a centralized resource and legacy of tools to support future resource management planning and decision-making. This effort will also look to capitalize on federal funding opportunities, including America the Beautiful Initiative and the Bipartisan Infrastructure and Inflation Reduction Act.

Appendix A: 2021 & 2022 Regional Partnership Grant Recipients

2021 Grant Recipients

Regional Partnership	2021 Awarded Amount	Grant Type
Envision Chaffee in Balance	\$95,000	Capacity
Metro Denver Nature Alliance	\$110,000	Capacity
Northern Colorado PLACES 2050	\$50,000	Capacity
Ouray Regional Recreation and Conservation Alliance	\$60,000	Capacity
Outdoor Pikes Peak Initiative	\$75,000	Planning & Research
Routt Recreation and Conservation Roundtable	\$110,000	Capacity
San Luis Valley Great Outdoors!	\$110,000	Capacity

2022 Grant Recipients

Regional Partnership	2022 Awarded Amount	Grant Type
Eagle County Community Wildlife Roundtable	\$75,000	Planning & Research
Grand PLACES 2050	\$78,080	Capacity
Gunnison Sustainable Tourism Committee	\$95,000	Planning & Research
Northern Colorado PLACES 2050	\$150,000	Planning & Research
Northwest Colorado Outdoor Coalition	\$100,000	Capacity
Outdoor Pikes Peak Initiative	\$150,000	Planning & Research
Outside 285	\$149,500	Planning & Research
Roaring Fork Outdoor Coalition	\$75,000	Capacity
Summit County Outdoor Coalition	\$75,000	Capacity
Two Rivers Conservation and Recreation Roundtable	\$30,000	Capacity

Appendix B: Shared Resources & Tools

- a. [CODEX: Colorado Conservation Data Explorer](#) - Colorado State University, Colorado Natural Heritage Program
- b. [Colorado EnviroScreen](#)
- c. [Colorado Outdoor Principles](#)
- d. [Colorado Water Plan](#)
- e. [Envision Chaffee Wildlife Decision Tool](#)
- f. Know Before You Go Webpages for Outdoor Recreation
 - i. [Routt Recreation and Conservation Roundtable](#)
 - ii. [Northern Colorado PLACES 2050](#)
- g. Envision Recreation in Balance - [Chaffee County Outdoor Recreation Management Plan](#)
- h. Pikes Peak Outdoor Recreation Alliance - [Pikes Peak Outdoor Data Hub](#)
- i. Metro Denver Nature Alliance - [Regional Vision for People + Nature StoryMap](#)
- j. Northern Colorado PLACES 2050 - [Core Topics Research](#)
- k. Outside 285 - [Master Plan](#)
- l. [Planning Trails with Wildlife in Mind](#)
- m. [Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan \(SCORP\)](#)
- n. [State Wildlife Action Plan \(SWAP\)](#)



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