

COLORADO PARKS & WILDLIFE

# Great Outdoors Colorado

## FY 2023-24 Investment Proposal



## **Table of Contents**

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Outdoor Recreation Tables .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b><i>Outdoor Recreation: Establish and Improve State Parks and Recreation .....</i></b>	<b>9</b>
Park Improvements .....	10
Capital Development Program .....	12
Recreation Management on State Parks.....	13
Natural Resource Management Program .....	14
Fuels Mitigation Management Program .....	16
Invasive and Noxious Weed Management Program .....	17
Director’s Innovation Fund .....	18
<b><i>Outdoor Recreation: Public Information and Environmental Education .....</i></b>	<b>19</b>
Public Information .....	20
Volunteer Program.....	21
Environmental Education and Youth Programs.....	23
<b><i>Outdoor Recreation: Trails and River Greenways .....</i></b>	<b>26</b>
State Trails Program.....	27
Trail Grant Program .....	28
Trails in State Parks .....	28
<b><i>Outdoor Recreation: Water for Recreation Purposes .....</i></b>	<b>30</b>
Water Program .....	31

## **Table of Contents Cont.**

<b>Wildlife Tables.....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b><i>Wildlife: Habitat Management .....</i></b>	<b>34</b>
Acquire High Priority Habitat .....	35
Enhance Habitat on Land and Water .....	37
Wetlands Conservation.....	39
GIS Habitat Information.....	41
Director’s Innovation Fund .....	42
<b><i>Wildlife: Wildlife Heritage .....</i></b>	<b>43</b>
Threatened, Endangered, and Native Species Conservation.....	44
Propagation of Aquatic Species at Risk.....	47
<b><i>Wildlife: Wildlife Education and Environment.....</i></b>	<b>48</b>
Education and Volunteer Program .....	49
Youth Programs .....	50
Angler Education .....	52
<b><i>Wildlife: Wildlife Viewing .....</i></b>	<b>53</b>
Wildlife Viewing.....	54

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 2023-24 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 is also a vital partner in helping CPW to meet Governor Polis' Wildly Important Goals, or WIGs. The two WIGs CPW is responsible for meeting are to balance outdoor recreation and conservation and to achieve financial sustainability. 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. GOCO funding supports CPW in engaging their employees and partner organizations in shared dialogue to continually work toward inclusivity and equity at CPW, which also supports the Governor's Equity, Diversity,

and Inclusion Wildly Important Goal for all state agencies. Additionally, GOCO's flexibility has helped CPW make significant strides toward financial sustainability by offering increased flexibility in both the timing and the use of grant funds. CPW built its FY 2023-24 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 work of CPW. The CPW FY 2023-24 investment proposal requests \$16,131,965 in Outdoor Recreation purpose funding and \$10,012,272 in Wildlife purpose funding. 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, which will invest in high-value, once-in-a-lifetime projects that will have lasting impacts for the state and future generations of its people. By FY2025, CPW will have allocated approximately \$43.2 million in GOCO funding to the program. The Centennial Program operates independently from this annual investment proposal. However, funding for this program is sourced and retained separately within the existing Parks and Wildlife constitutional funding quadrants. A parallel project identification and funding allocation process is being utilized to deploy these dollars, enabling CPW to move quickly when unforeseen opportunities arise.

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. 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. As CPW continues to implement the Future Generations Act and Keep Colorado Wild Pass Fee, and responds 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.

Some important highlights to consider in this year's Investment Proposal include:

- adjusting to GOCO grant amounts across programs to maximize GOCO contributions based on expenditure history;

- increasing the GOCO contribution to the Trails Grant Program funding by \$500,000 for a new non-motorized Good Maintenance/Good Stewardship grant program to better support the maintenance backlogs across the state;
- eliminating GOCO capital funding for acquiring high priority wildlife habitat, while still maintaining GOCO support for program operating; and
- combining Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery and the Native Species Protection grants due to the fluid nature of federal listings that may change during a year.

*Colorado Parks and Wildlife Fiscal Year 2023-24*  
*Great Outdoors Colorado Investment Plan*  
*Outdoor Recreation Funds*  
**Summary Table #1: Comparison of GOCO Funds**  
*FY 2022-23 to FY 2023-24*

	FY 2022-23			FY 2023-24		
	Capital	Program Operating	Total	Capital	Program Operating	Total
<b>INVESTMENT REQUEST</b>						
<b>Establish and Improve State Parks</b>						
Park Improvements	6,119,195	-	6,119,195	5,183,550	-	5,183,550
Capital Development Program	-	1,020,000	1,020,000	-	1,010,749	1,010,749
Recreational Management on State Parks	-	4,111,420	4,111,420	-	4,111,420	4,111,420
Natural Resource Management Program	-	1,292,500	1,292,500	-	1,292,500	1,292,500
Fuels Mitigation Management Program	300,000	-	300,000	100,000	-	100,000
Invasive and Noxious Weed Management Program	-	350,000	350,000	-	266,726	266,726
Director's Innovation Fund	-	75,000	75,000	-	75,000	75,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>6,419,195</b>	<b>6,848,920</b>	<b>13,268,115</b>	<b>5,283,550</b>	<b>6,756,395</b>	<b>12,039,945</b>
<b>Public Information and Environmental Education</b>						
Public Information	-	296,000	296,000	-	296,000	296,000
Volunteer Programs	-	231,000	231,000	-	189,459	189,459
Environmental Education and Youth Programs	-	1,273,500	1,273,500	-	1,167,603	1,167,603
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,800,500</b>	<b>1,800,500</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,653,062</b>	<b>1,653,062</b>
<b>Trails and River Greenways</b>						
State Trails Program	-	370,935	370,935	-	352,039	352,039
Trails Grant Program	1,000,000	-	1,000,000	1,500,000	-	1,500,000
Trails in State Parks	500,000	-	500,000	500,000	-	500,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1,500,000</b>	<b>370,935</b>	<b>1,870,935</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>	<b>352,039</b>	<b>2,352,039</b>
<b>Water for Recreational Purposes</b>						
Water Program	-	150,000	150,000	-	86,919	86,919
Water Acquisitions and Leases	300,000	-	300,000	-	-	-
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>300,000</b>	<b>150,000</b>	<b>450,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>86,919</b>	<b>86,919</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>8,219,195</b>	<b>9,170,355</b>	<b>17,389,550</b>	<b>7,283,550</b>	<b>8,848,416</b>	<b>16,131,965</b>

*Colorado Parks and Wildlife*  
*Fiscal Year 2023-24*  
*Great Outdoors Colorado Investment Plan*  
**Table 2: Comparative Summary of Program Costs**  
*FY 2022-23 to FY 2023-24*

Outdoor Recreation Grant Name		FY 22-23 Request			FY 23-24 Request		
		GOCO	CPW	Total	GOCO	CPW	Total
<b>Establish and Improve State Parks</b>							
	Park Improvements	6,119,195	6,405,655	12,524,850	5,183,550	13,513,086	18,696,636
	Capital Development Program	1,020,000	713,776	1,733,776	1,010,749	558,062	1,568,811
	Recreation Management on State Parks	4,111,420	9,593,312	13,704,732	4,111,420	10,821,805	14,933,225
	Natural Resource Management Program	1,292,500	632,571	1,925,071	1,292,500	868,855	2,161,355
	Fuels Mitigation Management Program	300,000	-	300,000	100,000	200,000	300,000
	Invasive and Noxious Weed Management Program	350,000	72,029	422,029	266,726	145,201	411,927
	Director's Innovation Fund	75,000	-	75,000	75,000	-	75,000
<b>Subtotal:</b>		13,268,115	17,417,343	30,685,458	12,039,945	26,107,009	38,146,954
<b>Public Information and Environmental Education</b>							
	Public Information Program	296,000	197,359	493,359	296,000	1,942,984	2,238,984
	Volunteer Program	231,000	56,554	287,554	189,459	93,690	283,149
	Environmental Education and Youth Programs	1,273,500	415,692	1,689,192	1,167,603	318,504	1,486,107
<b>Subtotal:</b>		1,800,500	669,605	2,470,105	1,653,062	2,355,178	4,008,240
<b>Trails and River Greenways</b>							
	State Trails Program	370,935	157,849	528,784	352,039	77,962	430,001
	Trails Grant Program	1,000,000	3,938,015	4,938,015	1,500,000	3,024,453	4,524,453
	Trails in State Parks	500,000	500,000	1,000,000	500,000	1,386,438	1,886,438
<b>Subtotal:</b>		1,870,935	4,595,864	6,466,799	2,352,039	4,488,853	6,840,892
<b>Water for Recreational Purposes</b>							
	Water Program	150,000	3,251	153,251	86,919	43,740	130,659
	Water Acquisitions and Leases	300,000	300,000	600,000	-	700,000	700,000
<b>Subtotal:</b>		450,000	303,251	753,251	86,919	743,740	830,659
<b>Grand Total:</b>		17,389,550	22,986,063	40,375,613	16,131,965	33,694,780	49,826,745

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.

### ***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.

<b>Establish and Improve State Parks</b>	<b>Great Outdoors Colorado Funding FY 2023-24</b>
Park Improvements	\$5,183,550
Capital Development Program	1,010,749
Recreational Management on State Parks	4,111,420
Natural Resource Management Program	1,292,500
Fuels Mitigation Management Program	100,000
Invasive and Noxious Weed Management Program	266,726
Director's Innovation Fund	75,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$12,039,945</b>

## **Park Improvements**

FY 2023-24 Total Projected Budget: \$ 18,696,636  
FY 2023-24 GOCO Funding Request: \$ 5,183,550 (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.

Proposed FY 2023-24 capital projects include the following:

Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area Parkdale Boat Ramp, \$378,300: The Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area is recognized as one of the nation's most popular whitewater rafting and kayaking locations and is noted for world-class fishing. To keep the users of this resource safe and to keep the banks from eroding, the project will regrade an existing gravel boat ramp and construct a long concrete ramp. The project will also fund parking lot improvements to improve accessibility for individuals of all abilities.

Chatfield State Park Gravel Ponds Water Access, \$479,900: Chatfield State Park offers boating, fishing, and camping and is one of the busiest Colorado state parks for outdoor recreation. The project will provide safer water sports access to the gravel pond from the south parking lot. Improvements will include three concrete masonry stairs, one ADA ramp, shoreline stabilization, and site restoration. This is a cost-share project between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and CPW and a portion of the funding will be provided by the USACOE.

Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure, \$1,000,000: This is the parks portion of estimated costs for installing electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure to support transition of state fleet to electric. CPW is prioritizing charging infrastructure based on type and use of vehicles at each location and cost estimates include dedicated power source, ports, and chargers.

Fishers Peak State Park North Access Buildout, Phase 2, \$2,849,900: Fishers Peak State Park in Trinidad opened in fall 2020 and construction is guided by the master plan that was recently completed. This project includes the entry gate and road, road improvements, and utility extension. Trails will also be added including a trailhead and interpretive loop, northeast trail loops, and a mountain bike downhill trail.

Golden Gate Canyon State Park Wastewater Treatment Improvement, \$1,748,010: Golden Gate Canyon State Park offers camping at several campgrounds, including the Reverend's Ridge Campground with 97 campsites, 59 of which have electrical hookups. The wastewater treatment plant at Reverend's Ridge Campground currently does not meet the total dissolved solids (TDS) requirements in the discharge permit. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) has requested CPW meet this standard and has approved a five-year compliance plan. This project will fund improvements needed to meet standards, including five evapotranspiration fields, a forced sewer pipeline, renovation of an existing sewer lift

station, and other improvements as needed to meet CDPHE requirements. Ground water monitoring wells will be installed to monitor the ground water quality. The planned construction is contingent on being able to develop and execute an augmentation plan. If a plan cannot be developed, the improvements will be changed to land application of the effluent into absorption fields in the adjacent drainage basin.

John Martin Reservoir State Park Wastewater System Repairs, \$225,600: John Martin Reservoir State Park provides opportunities for outdoor recreation including boating, camping, fishing, and birding. This project includes upgrades to the polishing pond (used in the final treatment of the wastewater), replacement of deteriorating overflow pond liners, regrading berms and substructure to be relined as lagoons, repairing valves, installing a fence around the polishing pond, and other associated improvements.

Lake Pueblo State Park and Area 11 Combined Service Center, Phase 1, \$327,900: Lake Pueblo State Park is one of the busiest state parks year round and the project will fund design of a combined Lake Pueblo State Park and Area 11 customer service center. The project scope includes obtaining clearances and determining estimates for construction costs. The project cost for the combined center is being split evenly between parks nonappropriated and wildlife appropriated request.

Littleton Office Complex West Parking Lot, \$242,500: The Littleton Office is a Front Range customer service location and houses CPW's registration unit, boat safety, and state trails program. This project will install an asphalt parking lot where the new garage is being built and will complete the area around the garage.

North Sterling State Park Visitor Center Maintenance Complex, \$5,117,100: North Sterling State Park's visitor center is inadequate, located in an enclosed porch in a trailer house, and does not meet ADA accessibility requirements. The project will construct a visitor center, storage building, and maintenance building at the southern portion of the park. Funds will also be used for additional renovations on the site of the current visitor center, including new picnic sites, a playground structure, and additional parking.

Ridgway State Park G Loop Electric Upgrades, \$1,103,500: Ridgway State Park's popular campgrounds, reservoir, picnic and playground areas, extensive trails, and diverse wildlife offer year-round activities for outdoor recreation. The project will upgrade antiquated and inadequate electrical service at 44 campsites in the Pa-Co-Chu-Puk campground. The project scope includes, but is not limited to, replacing wiring, trenching for underground utilities, and re-seeding any disturbance post project.

Southeast Regional Office Roof Replacement, \$207,900: The project replaces an aging roof to eliminate leaks at the Southeast Regional Office and Service Center. Total project cost, \$415,800, is split evenly between nonappropriated parks and appropriated wildlife cash funds.

State Parks Capital Projects Programmatic Contingency, \$1,419,226: 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, 17 of which are at state parks. Dams are like any other capital infrastructure in that they slowly deteriorate over time due to use and exposure to the elements. Regular maintenance and minor repairs are necessary for continued safe and efficient operation. High and significant hazard dams

also present a hazard to the downstream public so timely maintenance is a critical risk reduction activity for the agency. Major dam repair and renovation projects are funded through the agency's regular project selection process; this funding is for smaller cost regular maintenance, repairs, and associated design work.

Steamboat Lake State Park Water System, \$631,900: Steamboat Lake State Park offers fishing, camping, picnicking, hiking, boating and many winter outdoor recreational activities. The project will replace the water line between the maintenance shop and the wastewater plant. Funds will be used to replace secondary service lines, valves, and hydrants and demolish the old and outdated water treatment plant that has been replaced.

Sweitzer Lake State Park Garnet Mesa Dam Spillway Rehabilitation Construction, \$2,196,300: This project is for the construction services to rehabilitate the concrete spillway and add remote monitoring for an early warning system at Garnet Mesa Dam. During the dam safety inspection in June 2021, Colorado Dam Safety and CPW observed severe deterioration of the concrete in the spillway control section and chute. This funding will be used to procure an engineering consultant for oversight and a contractor for the construction. This funding request also takes into account provisions for a new bridge over the spillway that can handle vehicle loads and potential improvement of the boat ramp. This is a high hazard dam with no remote monitoring.

Vega State Park Roadways and Parking Lots, \$468,600: Vega State Park offers four campgrounds and is a year round destination for birding, hiking, fishing, and cross country skiing. This project will perform maintenance of existing asphalt roadways and parking lots along the west side of the lake and at Aspen Grove Campground.

### **Capital Development Program**

FY 2023-24 Total Projected Budget:	\$ 1,568,811
FY 2023-24 GOCO Funding Request:	\$ 1,010,749

### **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, 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 2023-24 Total Projected Budget:	\$14,933,225
FY 2023-24 GOCO Funding Request:	\$ 4,111,420

#### **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, volunteer activities, 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 2023-24 Total Projected Budget:	\$ 2,161,355
FY 2023-24 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, and improvements to park administrative facilities. These activities are supported through specific grants within this investment proposal.

### **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, GIS P/OR)

## **Fuels Mitigation Management Program**

FY 2023-24 Total Projected Budget:           \$ 300,000  
FY 2023-24 GOCO Funding Request:       \$ 100,000 (capital)

### **Description and Objectives:**

The Fuels Mitigation Program grant provides funding for on-the-ground fuels mitigation and forest health projects, primarily in conjunction with the Colorado State Forest Service as a both a funding and operational partner. The purpose of these projects is to improve the resilience of state park areas to recover from the effects of wildfire and insect/disease epidemics. By investing in the treatment of hazardous forest fuels every year, CPW can reduce long-term suppression costs, improve visitor safety, reduce impacts on water and air quality, improve wildlife habitat, and significantly reduce fire mitigation costs.

Investing in these forest treatments will reduce the risk of fire to homes and communities adjacent to many of Colorado's state parks. These projects will directly benefit park visitors and neighbors. The core of this effort is to reduce the wildfire hazard and to address the hazard of trees falling due to insects and disease. This is typically accomplished by contracting with specialized heavy equipment operators to remove trees in strategic areas.

Projects that are specific to mountain pine beetle and spruce beetle will have the added benefit of ensuring that these areas can continue to be used safely by visitors and park staff. CPW will also use this funding for limited pine beetle preventative spraying and tree seedling planting, or transplanting projects to reforest high-use areas and high priority habitats devastated by wildfire or insect and disease epidemics and in other declining forests. When necessary, CPW may use this funding to hire temporary staff to help manage forest management program contracts.

### **Primary Activities:**

- 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 to direct projects away from important resources
- Re-vegetation and restoration efforts
- Payment of Impact Assistance Grants

(CPW activity 1491, Manage State Park Natural Resources P/OR)

### **Invasive and Noxious Weed Management Program**

FY 2023-24 Total Projected Budget:	\$ 411,927
FY 2023-24 GOCO Funding Request:	\$ 266,726

#### **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 2023-24 Total Projected Budget:	\$ 75,000
FY 2023-24 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 state parks 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.

<b>Public Information and Environmental Education</b>	<b>Great Outdoors Colorado Funding FY 2023-24</b>
Public Information Program	\$296,000
Volunteer Program	189,459
Environmental Education and Youth Programs	1,167,603
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$1,653,062</b>

## **Public Information**

FY 2023-24 Total Projected Budget:           \$ 2,238,984  
FY 2023-24 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. While GOCO's contribution did not change, the total program budget increased significantly in FY 2023-24 to support costs to promote the Keep Colorado Wild Pass Fee. The new annual pass was available through the annual vehicle registration process starting in January 2023. The pass gives all Coloradans easy access to all state parks and the added benefit of investing in the great outdoors and wildlife in a meaningful way.

### **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 our 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 (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)

### **Volunteer Program**

FY 2023-24 Total Projected Budget: \$ 283,149

FY 2023-24 GOCO Funding Request: \$ 189,459

#### **Description and Objectives:**

The statewide volunteer program supports the achievement of quality outdoor recreation experiences and resource stewardship for present and future generations. The program provides an organized, efficient, well-guided, and cost-effective approach to managing a wide range of volunteer efforts in CPW. Cooperation and partnership between the public and private sector are enhanced and promoted through volunteer and community engagement. The promotion and cultivation of volunteerism plays a significant role in helping CPW meet its financial needs now and in the future. Activities supported under this grant are specific to state park activities and include direct recruitment, onboarding and training, supervision and support, and recognition and retention of volunteers at state parks.

The Volunteer Program has a statewide database that provides a management platform for all volunteers serving in a wide variety of roles across Colorado.

#### **Primary Activities:**

- Recruit, train, and retain skilled volunteers for state park activities
- Screen and place volunteers for projects and roles, based on location, skills, and interests
- Orient and train volunteers
- Provide adequate equipment and materials needed to complete projects and perform responsibilities successfully
- Manage volunteers and volunteer crews
- Recognize volunteers for their time, participation, and impact, which may include recognition items (pins, mugs, lunch bags) or awards (plaques and certificates)
- Provide miscellaneous reimbursement for costs related to volunteer activities required to complete projects (e.g., parking and mileage reimbursement, postage and printing, office supplies, uniforms, etc.)
- Train agency staff on volunteer program guidelines and policies
- Provide insurance coverage for volunteer events across the state

- Advise and educate agency staff and volunteer leaders regarding overall volunteer management: recruiting, orientating, training, supervising, evaluating, and rewarding/recognizing the performance of volunteers, for the purposes of gaining and retaining a diverse and inclusive volunteer strategy to meet the needs of projects
- Represent the volunteer program in communities, and promote the program and its benefits to the general public, service groups, clubs, partnerships, and other agencies
- Identify, create, and modify processes to measure the impact of volunteer contributions to state parks, and apply these processes for reporting purposes
- Plan, design, implement, and evaluate trainings for CPW staff in areas of volunteer engagement
- Communicate and work with community partners, non-profit, and governmental volunteer programs

(CPW activity 6261, Manage Volunteers P/OR and activity 6262, Manage Volunteers Combined)

## **Environmental Education and Youth Programs**

FY 2023-24 Total Projected Budget:           \$ 1,486,107  
FY 2023-24 GOCO Funding Request:         \$ 1,167,603

### **Description and Objectives:**

**Environmental Education.** The Environmental Education Program supports a wide variety of activities to develop environmental education resources for state parks visitors. By providing learning opportunities for visitors of all ages, CPW hopes that people will walk away with a desire to engage in outdoor experiences on their own while creating a stronger bond with, understanding of, and sense of stewardship towards the ecosystems in which we all live. The Environmental Education Program works closely with state parks to provide educational resources and support since their many venues and facilities make ideal outdoor classrooms for connecting visitors to and educating school groups about nature's wonders.

**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 Boy and Girl 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 is providing 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 the outdoors by supporting and enhancing existing environmental education programs in Colorado schools and creating a network of sites and facilities to use as outdoor classrooms. The program has grown exponentially since its inception in 2013. There are now approximately 50 schools across the state participating in SOLE.

**Primary Activities:**

- Coordinate and recruit schools for participation in the SOLE;
- 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/or enhance outdoor learning classrooms;
- Administer pre- and post- program surveys for reporting and program evaluation of the SOLE program.
- 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 interpretive information;
- Create and maintain an Internet home page about interpretive education;
- Administer pre- and post- program surveys for reporting and program evaluation
- Offer guidance and support to state parks with their Community Connections Planning, and provide funds that help sustain and grow parks' education programs by covering costs for community outreach & marketing, printing, educational resources and other supplies;
- Develop a menu of online curricula templates for state parks to select from and implement with their education programs; 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 education interpretive programs, survival clinics, and general orienteering;
- Provide opportunities for experiential education to youth
- 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 program 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 self-directed interpretation hikes and experiences, discovery packs, trail brochures and maps, and interpretive signs and exhibits;
- Educational "campfire" programs and Junior Ranger program materials and packets;

- Classroom programs conducted for children of all ages;
- Staff educational exhibits and information centers in park visitor centers;
- Coordination and resources for volunteer naturalists providing programs for visitors;
- Write newspaper columns, park newsletters, plant identification booklets, web page updates, and hunting and fishing information packets;
- Support “kids and families outdoors” initiatives and events.
- Participate in local events that promote state park recreation activities;
- Providing career booths at large venues (e.g., the International Sportsmen’s Expo, Future Farmers of America events, Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences and the Colorado State Fair); Sponsor Natural Resource Law Enforcement Career Fairs;
- Respond to inquiries related to state parks and outdoor recreation careers.
- Day to day oversight of interns assigned to state parks activities
- Training the 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
- Attend college career fairs and job fairs throughout the state;
- Expand career services and professional contacts with these institutions;
- Provide regions with displays, photos and recruitment materials;
- Participate in events statewide, that promote and encourage Natural Resource careers;
- Provide career booths at large venues (e.g., the International Sportsmen’s Expo, Future Farmers of America events, Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences and the Colorado State Fair); Sponsor Natural Resource Law Enforcement Career Fairs;
- Expand CPW’s career page;
- Develop working relationships with community groups who share the same goal of increasing diversity in natural resource agencies;
- Develop and update career fair materials;
- Respond to inquiries statewide
- Provide statewide training to enhance the knowledge and skills towards conserving, protecting, and promoting future stewardship of natural resources
- Provide reimbursement for costs related to the overall management of the CPW internship program
- Solicit and evaluate intern qualifications to build and retain interns for the CPW youth internship program
- Identify, create, and modify processes to quantify and tabulate the impact of the youth internship program and apply these processes throughout the program
- Prepare reports that evaluate the progress of the internship program
- Plan, design, implement, and evaluate trainings for CPW staff regarding the process and execution of the CPW internship program

(CPW activity 6120, Schools Outdoor Learning Environments; activity 6132, Support Education Programs in Schools P/OR; activity 6135, Public Education and Outreach P/OR; activity 6221, Encourage Natural Resource Careers P/OR; and activity 6222, Encourage Natural Resource Careers combined)

### ***Outdoor Recreation: Trails and River Greenways***

Recreational trails are one of the most popular outdoor recreation amenities in Colorado. The 2019 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. 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.

<b>Trails and River Greenways</b>	<b>Great Outdoors Colorado Funding FY 2023-24</b>
State Trails Program	\$352,039
Trails Grant Program	1,500,000
Trails in State Parks Program	500,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$2,352,039</b>

## **State Trails Program**

FY 2023-24 Total Projected Budget:	\$ 430,001
FY 2023-24 GOCO Funding Request:	\$ 352,039

### **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, coordinate the development of these standards with federal land managers
- Promote, support, and work with volunteer organizations involved with recreation 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 2023-24 Total Projected Budget:	\$ 4,524,453
FY 2023-24 GOCO Funding Request:	\$ 1,500,000 (capital)

### **Description and Objectives:**

Colorado Parks and Wildlife will award this funding to trail management entities across Colorado for the construction of new trails, maintenance of existing trails, and planning 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 2023-24 Total Projected Budget:	\$ 1,886,438
FY 2023-24 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 in the 2016-2026 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.

CPW staff continue to incorporate changes into GIS regarding existing and new trails within the parks, including an assessment of their condition as well as identifying possible locations for new trails. CPW has completed a comprehensive effort to accurately map all designated trails in every state park that features trails maintained for public access and use. The interactive format enables a person to track and determine their exact location on any of the trails mapped using a smart phone or tablet with GPS capabilities.

CPW leadership will prioritize the trail maintenance and development projects that will be supported during FY 2023-24. 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.

<b>Water for Recreational Purpose</b>	<b>Great Outdoors Colorado Funding FY 2023-24</b>
Water Program	\$86,919
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$86,919</b>

## **Water Program**

FY 2023-24 Total Projected Budget:           \$ 130,659  
FY 2023-24 GOCO Funding Request:         \$ 86,919

### **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 2023-24**  
**Great Outdoors Colorado Investment Plan**  
**Wildlife Funds**  
**Summary Table #1: Comparison of GOCO Funds**  
**FY 2022-23 to FY 2023-24**

	FY 2022-23			FY 2023-24		
	Capital	Program Operating	Total	Capital	Program Operating	Total
<b>INVESTMENT REQUEST</b>						
<b>Habitat Management</b>						
Acquire High Priority Habitat	1,223,088	693,000	1,916,088	-	519,659	519,659
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	-	475,000	475,000	-	464,419	464,419
Director's Innovation Fund	-	75,000	75,000	-	75,000	75,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>2,323,088</b>	<b>2,243,000</b>	<b>4,566,088</b>	<b>1,100,000</b>	<b>2,059,078</b>	<b>3,159,078</b>
<b>Wildlife Heritage</b>						
Threatened, Endangered, and Native Species Conservation	-	5,090,000	5,090,000	-	4,740,346	4,740,346
Propagation of Aquatic Species at Risk	-	575,000	575,000	-	488,129	488,129
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,665,000</b>	<b>5,665,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,228,475</b>	<b>5,228,475</b>
<b>Wildlife Education and Environment</b>						
Education and Volunteer Programs	-	400,183	400,183	-	400,183	400,183
Youth Programs	-	1,021,317	1,021,317	-	918,637	918,637
Angler Education	-	161,000	161,000	-	161,000	161,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,582,500</b>	<b>1,582,500</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,479,820</b>	<b>1,479,820</b>
<b>Wildlife Viewing</b>						
Wildlife Viewing	-	150,000	150,000	-	144,899	144,899
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>144,899</b>	<b>144,899</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>2,323,088</b>	<b>9,640,500</b>	<b>11,963,588</b>	<b>1,100,000</b>	<b>8,912,272</b>	<b>10,012,272</b>

*Colorado Parks and Wildlife  
Fiscal Year 2023-24  
Great Outdoors Colorado Investment Plan  
Table 2: Comparative Summary of Program Costs  
FY 2022-23 to FY 2023-24*

Wildlife Grant Name		FY 22-23 Request			FY 23-24 Request		
		GOCO	CPW	Total	GOCO	CPW	Total
<b>Habitat Management</b>							
	Acquire High Priority Habitat	1,916,088	10,315,343	12,231,431	519,659	11,685,354	12,205,013
	Enhance Habitat on Lands and Waters	1,000,000	1,054,746	2,054,746	1,000,000	2,413,574	3,413,574
	Wetlands Conservation	1,100,000	940,949	2,040,949	1,100,000	400,000	1,500,000
	GIS Habitat Information	475,000	553,367	1,028,367	464,419	596,188	1,060,607
	Director's Innovation Fund	75,000	-	75,000	75,000	-	75,000
	<b>Subtotal:</b>	4,566,088	12,864,405	17,430,493	3,159,078	15,095,116	18,254,194
<b>Wildlife Heritage</b>							
	Threatened, Endangered, and Native Species Conservation	5,090,000	2,033,094	7,123,094	4,740,346	1,833,054	6,573,400
	Propagation of Aquatic Species at Risk	575,000	914,929	1,489,929	488,129	1,152,457	1,640,586
	<b>Subtotal:</b>	5,665,000	2,948,023	8,613,023	5,228,475	2,985,511	8,213,986
<b>Wildlife Education and Environment</b>							
	Education and Volunteer Programs	400,183	84,355	484,538	400,183	132,508	532,691
	Youth Programs	1,021,317	839,181	1,860,498	918,637	433,779	1,352,416
	Angler Education	161,000	247,133	408,133	161,000	259,487	420,487
	<b>Subtotal:</b>	1,582,500	1,170,669	2,753,169	1,479,820	825,774	2,305,594
<b>Wildlife Viewing</b>							
	Wildlife Viewing	150,000	119,180	269,180	144,899	128,832	273,731
	<b>Subtotal:</b>	150,000	119,180	269,180	144,899	128,832	273,731
	<b>Grand Total:</b>	11,963,588	17,102,277	29,065,865	10,012,272	19,035,233	29,047,505

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.

## ***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 the GOCO strategic 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.

<b>Habitat Management</b>	<b>Great Outdoors Colorado Funding FY 2023-24</b>
Acquire High Priority Habitat	\$519,659
Enhance Habitat on Lands and Water	1,000,000
Wetlands Conservation	1,100,000
GIS Habitat Information	464,419
Director's Innovation Fund	75,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$3,159,078</b>

### **Acquire High Priority Habitat**

FY 2023-24 Total Projected Budget:	\$ 12,205,013
FY 2023-24 GOCO Funding Request:	\$ 519,659

#### **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 opportunities for hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing.

Since 2002, joint initiatives between CPW and GOCO have protected more than 300,000 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. GOCO's contribution to this grant has been decreased in order to set aside funding for Centennial Program.

Program priorities during FY 2023-24 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. Historically, CPW receives between 50-90 proposals in response to the RFP. Conservation easements will be 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 2023-24 Total Projected Budget:	\$ 3,413,574
FY 2023-24 GOCO Funding Request:	\$ 1,000,000

### **Description and Objectives:**

This program includes habitat conservation on private and public lands. 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. This program delivered more than \$3.5 million for wildlife habitat projects and leveraged program funds nearly 12:1 to enhance wildlife on private lands through the conservation title of the Farm Bill by educating private landowners on funding availability and eligibility requirements.

### **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 protection 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 O&M 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;
- Includes habitat work on the Big Game Policy Report;

**Water Resources Program.** The Water Resources Unit (WRU) is responsible for both water quality management and water quantity management (including managing, developing, and protecting the agency's water rights portfolio). The WRU coordinates efforts between CPW and the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) regarding in-stream flow protection and has similar coordinating roles with the water quality protection divisions within the Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment (CDPHE). WRU staff also work with a wide variety of state, federal, and private sector interests on the issues of drought response and climate change.

#### **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 on SWA's and hatcheries
- Monitor minimum or conservation pools in reservoirs where the state has an interest
- Develop, administer, and implement the In-stream Flow Program, including making recommendations to the CWCB, assisting CWCB staff with aquatic ecological expertise, and testifying before the CWCB
- Development of water storage and water recharge structures and mechanisms on the South Platte River as part of the Tri-State Agreement (Colorado, Wyoming, Nebraska)
- Participate in multi-agency water management dialogues to ensure water needs for aquatic and terrestrial wildlife are addressed
- 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

**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.

#### **Primary Activities:**

- Develop and recommend water quality standards
- Review and respond to standard changes proposed 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; activity 1350, Secure Water H/F/W; activity 1360, Monitor and Improve Water Quality;

### **Wetlands Conservation**

FY 2023-24 Total Projected Budget:	\$ 1,500,000
FY 2023-24 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 2023-24, CPW may fund a limited number of shallow wetland development projects that benefit primarily Tier 1 duck species and other wildlife, but where hunting is not allowed. , This includes urban or community wetland projects on city or county open space properties. These projects will emphasize educating the public on the value of wetlands for wildlife and other ecosystem services, equitable access, and benefitting traditionally underserved constituents

### **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 2023-24 Total Projected Budget:	\$ 1,060,607
FY 2023-24 GOCO Funding Request:	\$ 464,419

#### **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 the CPW
- Maintain the 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 2023-24 Total Projected Budget:	\$ 75,000
FY 2023-24 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***

CPW and GOCO funding to support 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. The Colorado Wildlife Action Plan 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 costly and burdensome federal actions.

<b>Wildlife Heritage</b>	<b>Great Outdoors Colorado Funding FY 2023-24</b>
Threatened, Endangered, and Native Species Conservation	\$4,740,346
Propagation of Aquatic Species At Risk	488,129
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$5,228,475</b>

## **Threatened, Endangered, and Native Species Conservation**

FY 2023-24 Total Projected Budget:           \$ 6,573,400  
FY 2023-24 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 in Colorado of the fungus that causes the disease White-nose Syndrome in 2022. CPW will also initiate an ongoing program 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, including the black-footed ferret.

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

- 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
- 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
- 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

#### **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 Colorado Wildlife Action Plan 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
- Conduct extensive baseline surveys to determine occurrence, distribution, and relative abundance of species
- 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 introduction
- 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
- Other activities as listed in the CPW Activity Dictionary for the activity codes listed below

(CPW activity 1658, Lesser Prairie Chicken; activity 1662, Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse; activity 1670, Lynx Conservation; activity 1659, Gunnison Sage-grouse Conservation; activity 1810, Greenback Cutthroat Trout Recovery; activity 1820, Upper Colorado River Fish; activity 1830, SW Willow Flycatcher Recovery; activity 1842, Piping Plover; activity 1850, activity 1870, Mexican Spotted Owl Recovery; activity 1880, Black-footed Ferret Recovery; 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 1663, Terrestrial SSC/SAR Conservation; activity 1664, Wolverine Conservation; activity 1665, Mountain Plover Conservation; activity 1666, River

Otter Conservation; activity 1680, Bird Conservation; activity 1686, Small Mammal Conservation)

### **Propagation of Aquatic Species at Risk**

FY 2023-24 Total Projected Budget:	\$ 1,640,586
FY 2023-24 GOCO Funding Request:	\$ 488,129

### **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 SSC/SAR native aquatic species

(CPW activity 1570, Produce and Distribute Native Aquatic Species of Special Concern)

### ***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 fishing clinics, training educators in wildlife management concepts that can be used in classroom and field instruction. 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.

<b>Wildlife Education and Environment</b>	<b>Great Outdoors Colorado Funding FY 2023-24</b>
Education and Volunteer Programs	\$400,183
Youth Programs	918,637
Angler Education	161,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$1,479,820</b>

## **Education and Volunteer Programs**

FY 2023-24 Total Projected Budget:           \$ 532,691  
FY 2023-24 GOCO Funding Request:       \$ 400,183

### **Description and Objectives:**

The statewide volunteer program supports the achievement of quality outdoor recreation experiences and resource stewardship for present and future generations. The program provides an organized, efficient, well-guided, and cost-effective approach to managing a wide range of volunteer efforts in CPW. Cooperation and partnership between the public and private sector are enhanced and promoted through volunteer and community engagement. The promotion and cultivation of volunteerism plays a key role in helping CPW meet its financial needs now and in the future. Engaging volunteers and providing them with the tools to volunteer effectively with CPW leadership support ensures success. The volunteer program has a statewide database that provides a management platform for all volunteers serving in a wide variety of roles across Colorado.

In addition to volunteer activities, CPW operates a variety of services that provide the best available resources, training, and support to pre-K through college educators. With training from CPW, educators can reach many more students than CPW employees alone. Outcomes include a Colorado citizenry knowledgeable about wildlife, wildlife management, and outdoor recreation. This program invests in efforts that provide educators the knowledge and training so that in their classrooms they can create future stewards who will make informed decisions about wildlife and their environment. Funding supports efforts to work with partners to create wildlife education and professional development opportunities across the state.

### **Primary Activities:**

- Recruit, train and retain skilled volunteers for wildlife related activities
- Screen and place volunteers for projects and roles based on location, skills, and interests of volunteers and complexity of the project
- Orient and train volunteers for wildlife management, conservation, and outdoor recreational projects and needs
- Provide adequate equipment, materials, communication, and support needed to complete projects and perform responsibilities successfully
- Manage volunteers and volunteer crews
- Recognize volunteers for their time, participation, and impact, which may include recognition items (pins, mugs, lunch bags) or awards (plaques and certificates)
- Provide miscellaneous reimbursement for costs related to volunteer activities required to complete projects (e.g., parking and mileage reimbursement, postage and printing, office supplies, uniforms, etc.)
- Train CPW staff on volunteer program guidelines and policies
- Provide annual excess insurance coverage for volunteers across the state
- Advise and educate CPW staff and volunteer leaders regarding overall volunteer management: recruiting, orientating, training, supervising, evaluating, and rewarding/recognizing the performance of volunteers, for the purposes of engaging

and retaining a diverse and inclusive volunteer strategy to meet the needs of wildlife management and conservation projects

- Represent the Volunteer Program in communities, and promote the program and its benefits to the general public, service groups, clubs, partnerships, and other agencies
- Identify, create, and modify processes to measure the impact of volunteer contributions to wildlife management and conservation, and apply these processes for reporting purposes
- Plan, design, implement, and evaluate trainings for CPW staff in areas of volunteer engagement planning and implementation
- Communicate and work with community partners, nonprofit, and governmental volunteer programs
- Develop, evaluate, and implement education standards and incorporate those standards into the education program
- Provide wildlife curriculum and training to educators to promote wildlife conservation messages in schools (Project WILD)
- Other activities as listed in the CPW Activity Dictionary for the activity codes listed below

(CPW activity 6130, Wildlife Education Evaluation; activity 6140, Educator Training and Support; activity 6260, Manage Volunteers H/F/W; and activity 6262, Manage Volunteers Combined)

### **Youth Programs**

FY 2023-24 Total Projected Budget: \$ 1,352,416

FY 2023-24 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 Boy and Girl 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
- Provide opportunities for experiential education to youth
- 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
- Administer pre- and post-program surveys for reporting and program evaluation of the SOLE program
- Other activities as listed in the CPW Activity Dictionary for the activity codes listed below

(CPW activity 6120, Schools Outdoor Learning Environments; 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; and activity 6222, Encourage Natural Resource Careers Combined, 6140 Educator Training and Support)

**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 is providing 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) is designed to increase youth interest and participation in the outdoors by supporting and enhancing existing environmental education programs in Colorado schools and creating a network of sites and facilities to use as outdoor classrooms. The program has grown exponentially since its inception in 2013. There are now approximately 50 schools across the state participating in SOLE.

### **Angler Education**

FY 2023-24 Total Projected Budget:	\$ 420.487
FY 2023-24 GOCO Funding Request:	\$ 161,000

#### **Description and Objectives:**

CPW's Angler Education Program reaches 35,000 participants in 250 fishing clinics statewide. 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***

A 2008 study by BBC Research and Consulting for CPW estimated that wildlife viewing activities in Colorado generate more than \$1.2 billion in direct and secondary economic benefits, supporting more than 12,500 jobs. 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.

<b>Wildlife Viewing</b>	<b>Great Outdoors Colorado Funding FY 2023-24</b>
Wildlife Viewing Program	\$144,899
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$144,899</b>

## **Wildlife Viewing**

FY 2023-24 Total Projected Budget:           \$ 273,731  
FY 2023-24 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. Currently, these documents are available on the CPW website, at CPW Park Offices, and at Welcome Centers.

### **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
- 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
- Research to gain better understanding of viewer recreation typologies
- Research to gain an understanding of the impacts of wildlife feeding activities on both wildlife and people, and the success of various approaches to influencing behavior
- Research viewer impacts on resources including evaluation of resources before and after the development of recreation facilities
- Provide training by CPW personnel at professional organization meetings and specially designed workshops
- Initiate studies to determine how well specific projects and products meet CPW goals
- Develop annual and 5-year statewide watchable wildlife recreation plans
- Implement pilot projects to incorporate and evaluate results of research and assessments
- Pursue alternative funding for watchable projects
- Evaluate the efficacy of CPW efforts

(CPW activity 5110, Watchable Wildlife with Partners; activity 5210, Watchable Wildlife on CPW Lands; activity 5260, Watchable Wildlife Interpretive Programs; and activity 5310, Watchable Wildlife Evaluation and Research)