



PROGRAM PORTFOLIO AND GRANTMAKING

A TRAIL GUIDE TO GOCO FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

MAY 5, 2026

TRAILHEAD: GETTING ORIENTED

TODAY'S ROUTE

- > The GOCO landscape: who we are and what we fund
- > Funding opportunities across programs
- > How to navigate the grant process
- > Tools and resources to support your project



*Generation Wild, Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge.
Photo by Louisa Albanese.*

GOCO 101

OUR MISSION

To help the people of Colorado preserve, protect, enhance, and manage the state's wildlife, park, river, trails, and open space heritage

- > Created by voters in 1992 (Colorado Constitution, Article XXVII)
- > Funded entirely from Colorado Lottery proceeds, no tax dollars
- > Independent political subdivision of the state
- > Governor-appointed board



THE LANDSCAPE WE STEWARD

GOCO invests across four core landscapes – these are our funding quadrants. We allocate funds to ensure substantially equal investment over time.

The Constitution outlines conservation and recreation outcomes as well as entities eligible to receive funding in each quadrant.



APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

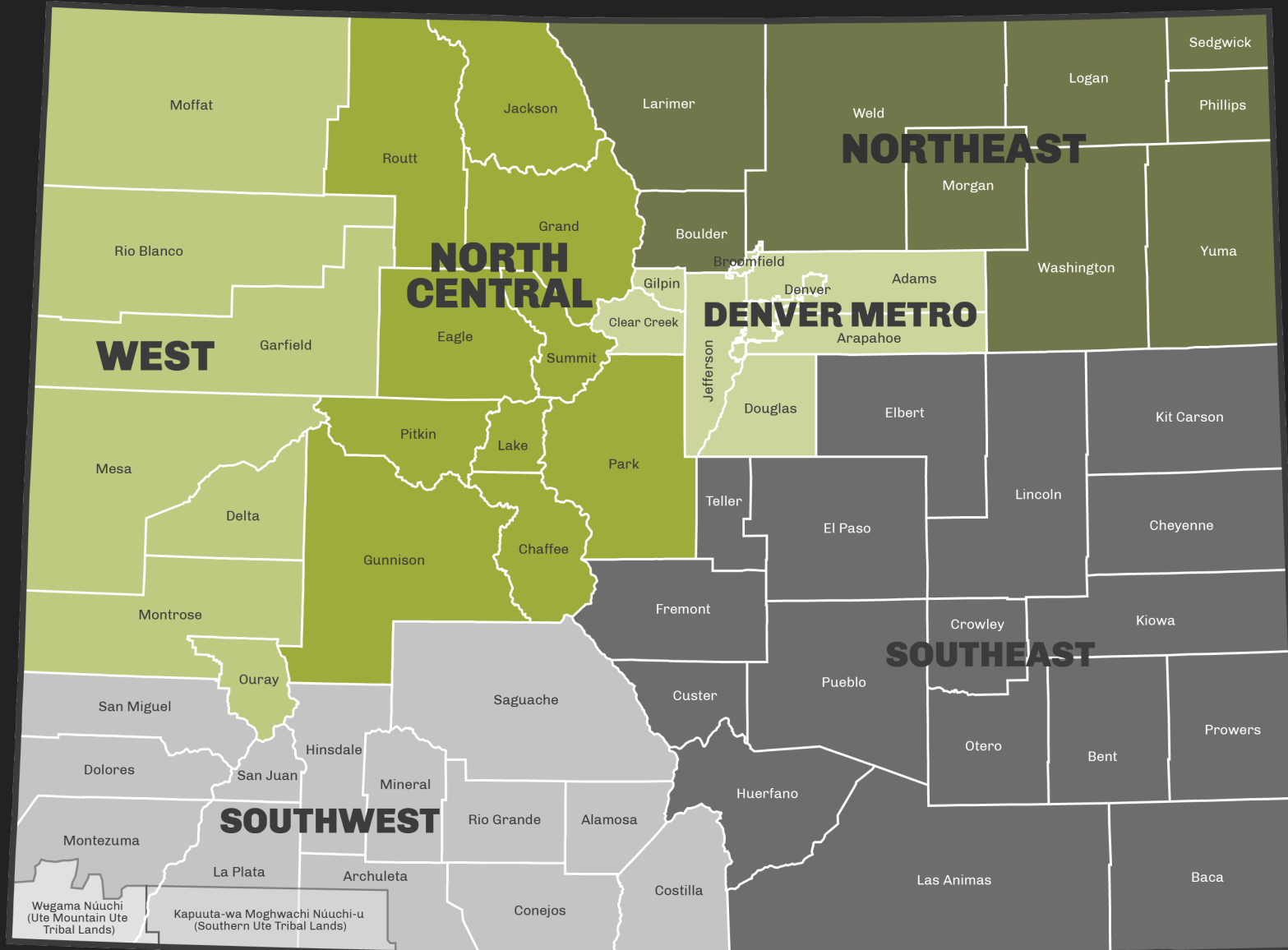


WHO CAN APPLY

- > Colorado cities, towns and counties
- > Title 32 special districts receiving Conservation Trust Funds
- > Land conservation organizations that support open space and natural area acquisitions
- > Political subdivision of the State of Colorado whose missions are to identify, manage, or acquire open space and natural areas
- > Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Please note: School districts, libraries, and other nonprofit organizations are not eligible for GOCO funding. Organizations may partner with eligible entities to apply for funding. Please reach out to eligible organizations directly to discuss opportunities.

KNOW YOUR REGION



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CHOOSE YOUR PATH

GOCO Programs Overview

WHAT GUIDES OUR WORK



RESOURCE CONSERVATION

We value strategic land conservation and resource protection work.



OUTDOOR STEWARDSHIP

We support sustainability and improvements to the state's natural and recreational resources.



COMMUNITY VITALITY

We invest in conservation and outdoor recreation efforts that support communities and quality of life.



EQUITABLE ACCESS



We partner with communities to break down barriers to the outdoors.



YOUTH CONNECTIONS

We support projects and programs that help children and families get outside more often and experience all the benefits of doing so.

CHOOSE YOUR PATH

 BASE PROGRAMS	 PARTNER PROGRAMS
Land Acquisition Community Impact Pathways Generation Wild	RESTORE Colorado Conservation Service Corps Transaction Cost Assistance Program Regional Partnerships Initiative

BASE PROGRAMS



LAND ACQUISITION

Protects high-value landscapes, waterways, and habitat.

Grant awards: Generally, up to \$3 million, though there is no maximum and GOCO may consider larger investments for significant conservation opportunities when funding is available.



COMMUNITY IMPACT

Plan, build, and improve parks, trails, and outdoor spaces. Funding may also support stewardship.

Grant awards: \$100,000-\$2 million; large investment opportunities up to \$5 million.



PATHWAYS

Supports research; data-gathering and analysis; tools and models; and expanding staff capacity.

Grant awards: Generally, \$100,000-\$300,000, though there is no maximum.



GENERATION WILD

A youth in the outdoors movement that invests in community collaboratives creating new outdoor experiences and career opportunities.

Funding opportunity not currently open and next planned for in 2028.

PARTNER PROGRAMS



RESTORE COLORADO *in partnership with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation*

Supports significant habitat restoration and stewardship efforts across the state.

RFP anticipated: August 2026 | Grants awarded: March 2027 | Visit [NFWF.org](https://www.nfwf.org)



CONSERVATION SERVICE CORPS *in partnership with Colorado Youth Corps Association*

Supports projects that employ young people on critical outdoor recreation and restoration projects.

RFP anticipated: July 2026 | Late 2026 or early 2027 | Visit [CYCA.org](https://www.cyca.org)



TRANSACTION COST ASSISTANCE PROGRAM *in partnership with Keep It Colorado*

Covers costs associated with conservation easement transactions that advance statewide land protection priorities. Visit [KeepItCO.org/TCAP](https://www.KeepItCO.org/TCAP)

Cycle 1 RFP anticipated: August 2026 | Grants awarded: December 2026

Cycle 2 RFP anticipated: January 2027 | Grants awarded: June 2027



REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS INITIATIVE *in partnership with Colorado Parks and Wildlife*

Supports Regional Partnerships as they collaboratively plan and implement project outcomes that promote sustainable outdoor recreation and climate-resilient conservation and restoration.

RFP anticipated: April 2026 | Grants awarded: December 2026 | Visit [CPW.state.co.us](https://www.CPW.state.co.us)

FUNDING OVERVIEW

	Total Funding Available	Request Amount
BASE PROGRAMS		
Land Acquisition	Approx. \$25.9 million (\$15.1 million local government funds & \$10.8 million open space funds)	No Cap
Community Impact		\$100K to \$2M
Pathways		No Cap
PARTNER PROGRAMS		
Conservation Service Corps	\$1.2M	No Cap
Transaction Cost Assistance Program	\$1M	\$75,000
RESTORE Colorado	\$3M+	No Cap
Regional Partnerships Initiative	\$50M over 5 years	Varies

LARGE INVESTMENT REQUESTS

COMMUNITY IMPACT & PATHWAY OPPORTUNITIES (\$2-5 MILLION)

- > Proposals accepted during cycle 1
- > Typically, 1 to 2 projects funded annually

WE'RE LOOKING FOR PROJECTS THAT ARE:

- > High-impact and multi-benefit
- > Regional or statewide in scale
- > Backed by strong partnerships and match
- > Ready for implementation



TIMING YOUR TRIP

BASE PROGRAMS GRANT CALENDAR

Proposals for urgent land acquisitions will be accepted at any time.

Proposals for large Community Impact and Pathway investments will be accepted in the First Cycle.

FIRST CYCLE

Concepts accepted up to:
July 23, 2026

Applications invited:
August 7, 2026

Application due date:
September 10, 2026

Grants awarded:
December 11, 2026

SECOND CYCLE

Concepts accepted up to:
January 21, 2027

Applications invited:
February 4, 2027

Application due date:
March 11, 2027

Grants awarded:
June 2027



Canyon Edge Open Space, Larimer County. Photo by Charlie Johnson.

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GOCO TRAIL GUIDE

A summary of GOCO's grantmaking process.

TRAIL MAP: FROM IDEA TO AWARD



EXPLORE GRANT PROGRAMS

Review our grant programs and requirements on our website.



CONNECT WITH YOUR REGIONAL OFFICER

Contact your regional officer to learn more and develop a concept if you have a project.



CONCEPT PAPER → APPLICATION

Regional officers are available to review draft concept paper materials and provide submission guidance.



PEER REVIEW & BOARD APPROVAL

Experienced peer reviewers evaluate proposals and advise GOCO in making funding recommendations to the Programs Committee; the Committee advances their recommendation to the board for review and approval.





COMPLETE YOUR PROJECT & SUBMIT FINAL REPORT

Projects are generally completed in 2-3 years.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

CONCEPT & APPLICATION DOCUMENT SUBMISSION

 CONCEPT	 APPLICATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Two Page Narrative<input type="checkbox"/> Budget & Optional Budget Narrative<input type="checkbox"/> Up to two maps<input type="checkbox"/> Up to two pages of photos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Five Page Narrative<input type="checkbox"/> Budget & Optional Budget Narrative<input type="checkbox"/> Resolution from governing body of each applicant<input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife Review<input type="checkbox"/> Indication of support<input type="checkbox"/> Maps<input type="checkbox"/> Planning documents<input type="checkbox"/> Photos<input type="checkbox"/> Timeline

TRAIL TIPS

VIEW QUESTIONS AS THEMES to make the most of limited narrative space.

CLEAR COMMUNITY NEED & ENGAGEMENT with key context, demographics, and intended users.

OUTCOMES ALIGN WITH GOCO VALUES, with a focused scope that reflects high impact.

OUTLINE A REALISTIC TIMELINE within the typical 2 to 3-year grant window.

SHOW LONG-TERM IMPACT, including sustainability, strong partnerships, and alignment with local or regional plans.



Mile High Youth Corps, Intemann Trail. Photo by Sean Sheridan.

KNOW THE TERRAIN



COMPETITIVENESS

We invest in large and small projects that advance the highest and best use of GOCO funds. For the upcoming fiscal year, we have \$25.9 million to invest across all base program projects.



PARTNERSHIP & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We encourage partners to take a community centered approach to their work and consider community engagement when appropriate.



EQUITY & ACCESS

We encourage partners to engage with a diversity of voices in project visioning, planning, and decision-making, especially those from disproportionately impacted populations, including Black, Indigenous, Latine, and racially and ethnically diverse people; those from people across the spectrum of sexual and gender identity; those with disabilities; and those from low-income, urban, and rural communities.

BEFORE YOU APPLY



CAPACITY

GOCO will fund capacity related to your project.



MATCH & LEVERAGE

Work with your program officer to discuss a reasonable match amount based on available local resources and other sources. GOCO does not have predefined match requirements for any programs.



REIMBURSEMENT FUNDING

Payments are made on a reimbursement basis except in cases of financial hardship.

GET ON THE TRAIL

HAVE AN IDEA? LET'S TALK.

It's never too early meet. The best projects start with a conversation. We want to hear about your ideas and provide feedback and resources.

ROADSHOW VISITS

We'll be hosting events throughout the state. Come check-in with us.



RESOURCES



GRANT CALENDAR

Schedule of grant program concept/application releases, decision dates, etc.



PROGRAM MATERIALS AND GUIDANCE

Grant program materials and guidance documents.



PARTNER RESOURCES

Relevant tools and resources to support your project and the Colorado Outdoors Strategy Resource Hub.



FAQ

A few of your questions answered.

[GOCO.ORG/APPLY](https://goco.org/apply)

Visit the website for more information.

WHERE WILL YOU

GO NEXT?

QUESTIONS? LET'S CONNECT.

