



1900 Grant St., Ste. 725
Denver, CO 80203

303.226.4500
info@GOCO.org
GOCO.org

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) invests a portion of Colorado Lottery proceeds in Colorado's trails, parks, wildlife, open spaces, rivers, playgrounds, and Youth Corps. Colorado Parks and Wildlife programs and facilities receive half of GOCO's funding each year, and the other half is administered through our competitive grant programs.

Created by a vote of the people in 1992, GOCO is managed by an independent board and uses no tax dollars. Lottery proceeds also directly support state parks, the Colorado Conservation Trust Fund, and school capital construction.

This annual report is available in Spanish at GOCO.org/informe

Este informe anual está en español a GOCO.org/informe



A Colorado Lottery Beneficiary

Designed by **Signify**.
Cover photo by **Caveman Collective**.



ANNUAL REPORT 2016

PROTECT

CONNECT

INSPIRE



Realizing your vision

2016 was a year Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) and its partners put a vision for the future into action. **A plan became inspired projects. A strategy became reality.**

To address the needs of our state's vibrant and resourceful communities, GOCO launched three special initiatives anchored by goals in our five-year strategic plan:

- **Protect** land for parks, trails, wildlife, and people.
- **Connect** trails and improve accessibility.
- **Inspire** Coloradans to get outside and take care of the outdoors.

As we implemented these initiatives, our grantees were on the ground investing Lottery proceeds in communities from the Eastern Plains to the Western Slope. In Colorado's biggest cities and smallest towns, and everywhere in between, GOCO grantees built more parks and trails, conserved more land and rivers, and safeguarded more wildlife and its habitat.

Together we're keeping pace with change in our state and bringing Coloradans more of what makes it great.

Protect

Amid a booming population, land conservation remains urgent in Colorado. The Protect Initiative was created to address large-scale, once-in-a-lifetime conservation opportunities across the state.

In Fiscal Year 2016,* GOCO awarded the first round of funding to four urgent and significant projects. In total, the Protect Initiative will invest \$47 million over the next three years in important land conservation projects in urban and rural areas.

The Trust for Public Land will **conserve more than 4,800 acres** of Trampe Ranch, an iconic working ranch that accounts for 20% of agriculture in Gunnison County and offers outstanding views from more than 100 miles of surrounding trails.

In partnership with the City of Fort Collins, Larimer County will **conserve approximately 2,400 acres** near Horsetooth Mountain Open Space, connecting a patchwork of remaining undeveloped land to expand recreational opportunities.

With a grant to **protect three properties totaling more than 18,000 acres**, Western Rivers Conservancy will create new public land access for rural Costilla County in the San Luis Valley, where 99% of land is privately owned.

Prospect Park and Recreation District will **protect Golden's Applewood Golf Course**—a rare tract of urban open space that was facing potential development—conserving the land for recreation, wildlife habitat, and a new trail connection.

Connect

80% of Coloradans use trails for outdoor recreation, and the Connect Initiative will help get them where they want to go. Whether it's closing critical trail gaps or providing Coloradans with close-to-home parks, Connect will create expansive, accessible, and safe-to-navigate networks for outdoor recreation in Colorado communities.

The Connect Initiative is the culmination of two decades dedicated to providing better access to the outdoors. GOCO's Paths to Parks Initiative previously invested \$8 million to build 37 miles of trails across the state, and earlier "legacy" grant programs invested tens of millions of dollars in revamping entire river corridors to better connect local residents with the outdoors.

Closing these trail gaps and building easily accessible parks and playgrounds not only creates vibrant, connected communities but also bolsters in-state tourism and boosts local economies.

In the fall of 2016 (FY 2017*), the GOCO Board awarded the first round of Connect Initiative grants.

*GOCO's FY 2016 ran from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016. This annual report summarizes those funding decisions.

Inspire

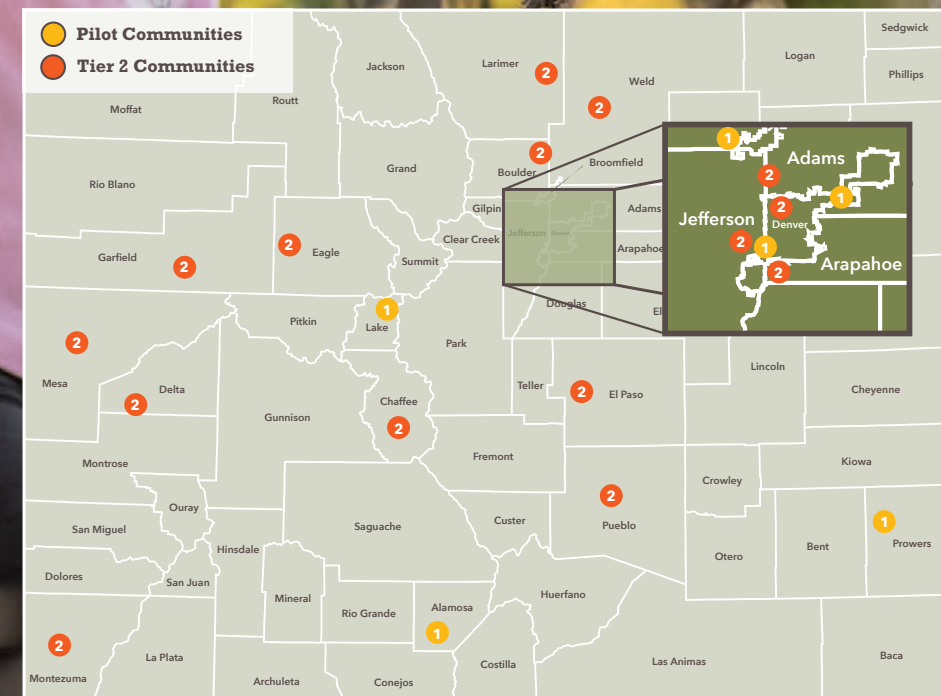
Money. Transportation. Not feeling welcome. A variety of barriers keep Colorado kids and their families from getting outside and experiencing all our state has to offer.

That's why GOCO has committed more than \$25 million in funding over a five-year period, empowering local coalitions to identify and tackle these barriers in Colorado's rural, mountain, urban, and suburban communities. The six pilots leading the way are Northeast Metro Denver (the Montbello neighborhood, Commerce City, and northeast Aurora); Denver's Westwood neighborhood; the San Luis Valley; Lafayette; Lake County; and Lamar.

In FY 2016, these coalitions and additional Tier 2 communities received a total of \$1.4 million in initial grants to engage local kids and their families in the planning effort. All 21 coalitions are eligible to apply for implementation funding beginning in FY 2017.*

THIS YEAR | \$1.4 MILLION IN PLANNING GRANTS • 21 COALITIONS

- 6 PILOTS LEADING THE WAY
- 15 TIER 2 COMMUNITIES MOBILIZING
- 2 WORKSHOPS AND 1 ONLINE COMMUNITY FOR SHARED LEARNING
- 303 YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL PARTICIPANTS



*GOCO's FY 2016 ran from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016. This annual report summarizes those funding decisions.

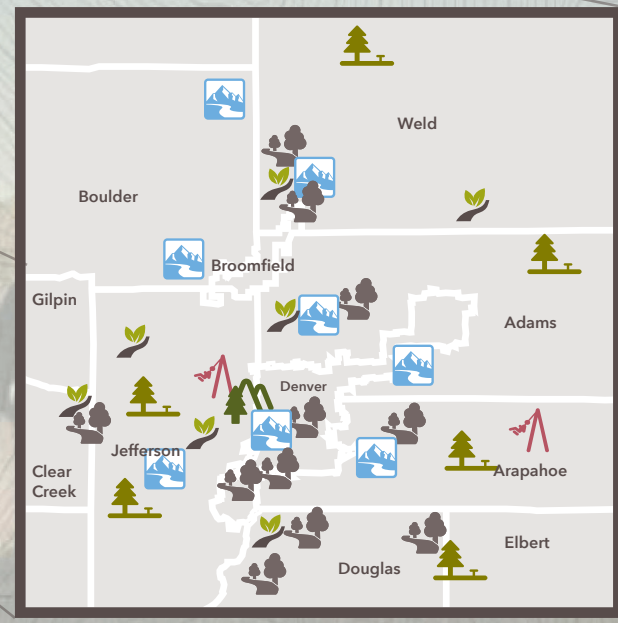
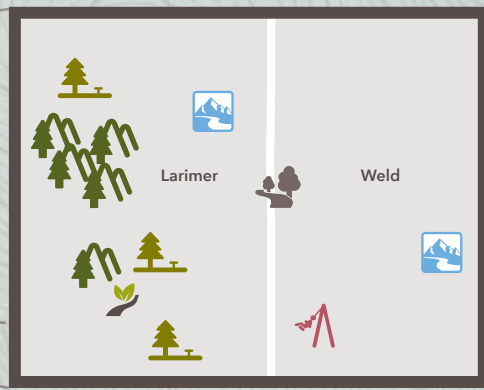
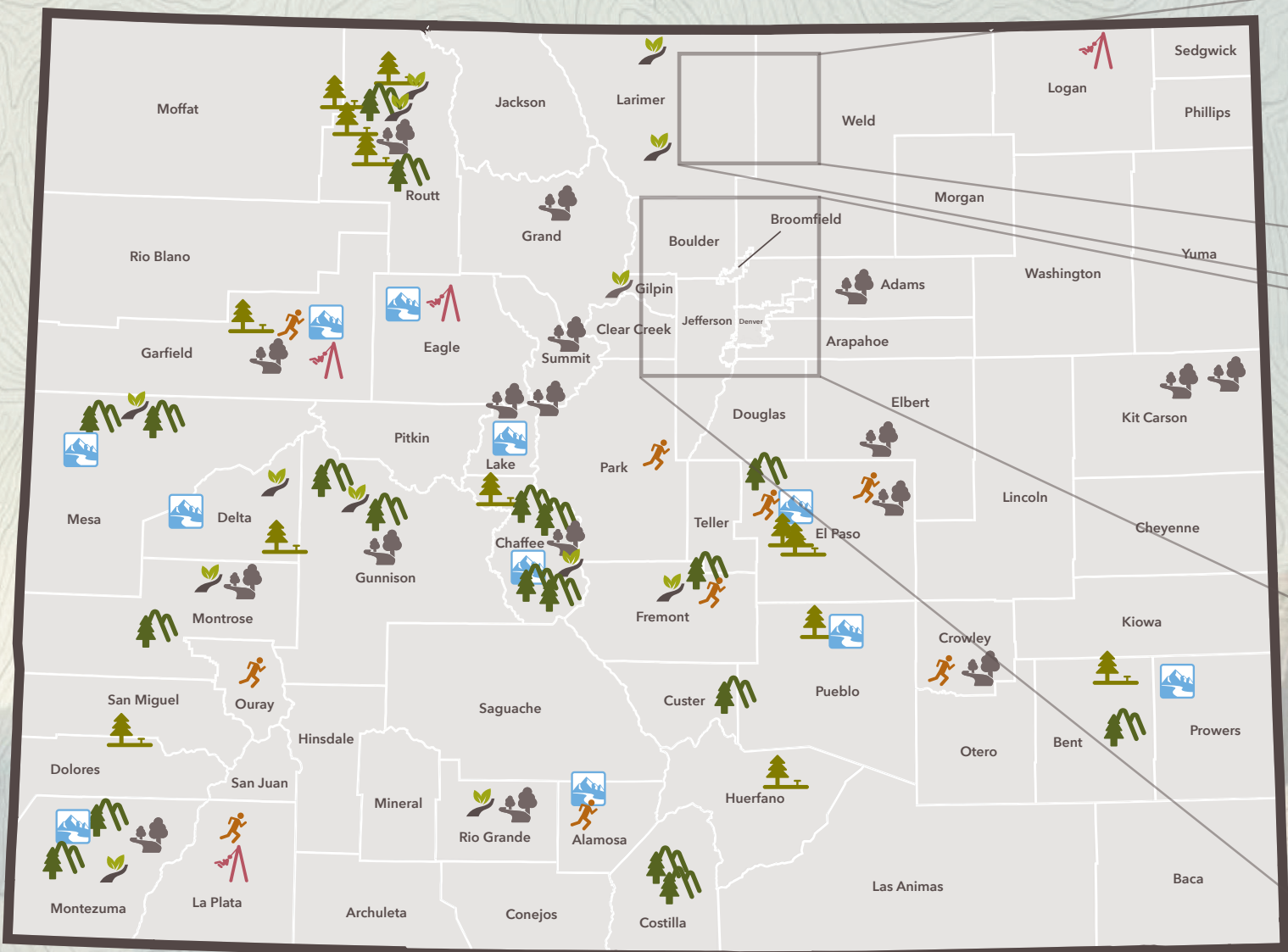
Pictured: Golden Gate Canyon State Park outside of Golden, one of 12 state parks that receive operational funding from GOCO. PHOTO BY CAVEMAN COLLECTIVE.

GOCO At-a-Glance

Projects funded in FY 2016*

KEY

-  Inspire
-  Youth Corps
-  Parks/Planning
-  Athletic Facilities
-  Land Conserved/
Open Space
-  State Park
-  School Playground/
Outdoor Classroom



GOCO also funds regional and statewide projects through our investments in Colorado Parks and Wildlife and through our conservation excellence grant program.

CPW's GOCO-funded statewide programs include natural resource and invasive species management, fire fuel mitigation, and environmental education.








*GOCO's FY 2016 ran from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016.

Status Report

In FY 2016*, our grantees put GOCO funds to work for:

Since our inception in 1992:

107 PROJECTS	37 counties	 FIVE WATER RECREATION PROJECTS
28 SPECIES OF WILDLIFE		7 ATHLETIC FACILITIES & FIELDS
38,019 ACRES		5 SCHOOL playgrounds
FIVE new trails	 19 miles RIVERS & STREAMS	 3 OUTDOOR classrooms
		 15 community PARKS

3:1 DEMAND FOR REQUESTED VS. AVAILABLE FUNDING	 RESTORED/RECONSTRUCTED 900 miles of trails
INVESTED IN efforts supporting 43 ENDANGERED OR THREATENED SPECIES	MORE THAN 750  miles of rivers protected
CREATED & ENHANCED MORE THAN 1,000  community parks and outdoor recreation areas	INVESTED IN MORE THAN 9,000 youth corps members through the Colorado Youth Corps Association
TRANSFORMED 35 school playgrounds that serve 14,000 STUDENTS	ADDED OVER 47,000  acres to the State Parks system
	MORE THAN 1 MILLION ACRES  have been protected through fee simple acquisition or conservation easements

Economic Impact

- Outdoor recreation contributes **\$34.5 billion** to the Colorado economy, **creating 313,000 jobs** in the state.
- Wildlife activities account for **over \$5 billion** of economic output in Colorado, **supporting nearly 50,000 jobs** within the state.
- Operations and capital spending in local and regional parks in Colorado created **\$4.6 billion** in economic activity and **supported over 36,000 jobs** in 2013.

*GOCO's FY 2016 ran from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016. This annual report summarizes those funding decisions.

Pictured: John Martin Reservoir State Park, one of 12 state parks that receive operational funding from GOCO. PHOTO BY THOMAS KIMMEL COURTESY OF COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE.

2014 Colorado Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) and 2013 Economic Impact of Local and Regional Park Agencies' Spending study.

School Yards

Aging, outdated playgrounds are being transformed into nature-inspired havens where children can be wild and learn about the outdoors. The best part: kids are leading the charge.

GOCO's School Yard Initiative (SYI) is empowering youths and charting a course for what nature-inspired play looks like. Plus, elementary schools awarded SYI funding are eligible to participate in Colorado Parks and Wildlife's Schools and Outdoor Learning Environments (SOLE) program, which provides teacher training, family nature nights, and additional outdoor education opportunities.

THIS YEAR | \$500,000 AWARDED • 2,000+ STUDENTS BENEFITTED • 6 PLAYGROUNDS COMPLETED • 1 PARTNERSHIP WITH SOLE LAUNCHED • 58% AVERAGE FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH (FRL) RATE AT SCHOOLS AWARDED FUNDING • 10 COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING EVENTS HOSTED BY CALICHE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Pictured: Westgate Elementary School playground grand opening. PHOTO BY SIGNIFY.

THIS YEAR | \$900,000+ AWARDED THROUGH GOCO AND CPW • 67 WEEKS OF WORK • 19 CREWS DEPLOYED • 200+ CORPS MEMBERS EMPLOYED • 37 MILES OF TRAILS IMPROVED • 100 ACRES OF FIRE FUELS MITIGATED • 51 ACRES OF WATER-HUNGRY INVASIVE PLANTS REMOVED • \$140,000 IN AMERICORPS SCHOLARSHIPS FORECASTED TO BE EARNED BY CORPS MEMBERS

Youth Corps

Tomorrow's outdoor stewards are cultivated in youth corps crews that GOCO grants help employ on vital environmental and outdoor recreation jobs.

Teenage and young adult unemployment rates are alarmingly high, and GOCO funding through competitive grants and Colorado Parks and Wildlife helps create more jobs and higher education opportunities for young people across the state.

Pictured: Crews in Steamboat Springs reconstruct Spring Creek Trail. PHOTO COURTESY OF COLORADO YOUTH CORPS ASSOCIATION.

THIS YEAR | \$6.7 MILLION
AWARDED • 24 PARKS
OR PLAYGROUNDS IN
COMMUNITIES OF EVERY SIZE,
FROM THE CITY OF DENVER
TO THE TOWN OF STRATTON
(POPULATION 664) AND
EVERYWHERE IN BETWEEN
• 2 COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS
THAT SERVE AS OUTDOOR
RECREATION HUBS • 3 WATER
RECREATION PROJECTS • 5
OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES
• 10 MASTER PLANS FOR
NEW PARKS, TRAILS, AND
COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS TO
GET KIDS OUTSIDE

Parks and Trails

As Coloradans we take pride in our state's great outdoors and how we use them. It's why many of us call this state home. But not every Coloradan has grown up with a high-quality park or trail in their backyard.

GOCO funding improves and enhances parks of all sizes and types. Whether our grantees are giving a small town its first-ever park, revamping unsafe but heavily utilized athletic facilities, or making improvements to a park's ADA accessibility, we're creating spaces that get Coloradans outdoors and engaged in their communities.



*Kids of all ages anxiously await their first skate of **El Centro del Quinto Sol Wheel Park**, which opened in May 2016 in Pueblo's East Side neighborhood.*

Open Space and Rivers

Conservation in Colorado has an important mission: maintain the quality of life that draws us in and makes this place what it is.

GOCO funds projects that sustain local agriculture and economies, give outdoor recreationists a place to play (or simply to enjoy the view), protect wildlife habitat, safeguard the state's water supply, and improve best practices and the land to help make sure we keep Colorado great.

THIS YEAR | \$6.5 MILLION AWARDED • 42,000 ACRES CONSERVED • 19 MILES OF RIVERS AND STREAMS PROTECTED • 4 PROJECTS OF REGIONAL OR STATEWIDE SIGNIFICANCE TO IMPROVE CONSERVATION BEST PRACTICES • 1 NEW TRANSACTION COSTS GRANT PROGRAM TO SUPPORT LANDOWNERS WHO DONATE PART OF THEIR LAND VALUE FOR CONSERVATION

THIS YEAR | 19 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS FUNDED AT 10 STATE PARKS

- 12 PARKS OPERATIONS FUNDED
- ADA COMPLIANCE PLANS FOR 4 CAMPGROUNDS AND 1 CAMPER SERVICES BUILDING
- 2 NEW FISHING PIERS AND 3 BOAT RAMPS IN THE WORKS
- 37 NEW SHADE SHELTERS TO BE INSTALLED
- 5,646 VOLUNTEER HOURS RECORDED
- \$1M INVESTED IN YOUTH PROGRAMS
- 7 TRAILS FUNDED
- 24 FAMILY NATURE NIGHTS HOSTED
- 38 INTERNS EMPLOYED BY GOCO FUNDING

State Parks

13.5 million people enjoy our state's 42 state parks each year, and GOCO funding helps Colorado Parks and Wildlife keep up with the demand.

Approximately \$15 million in annual funding from GOCO supports park expansions, capital improvement projects, operations, the state trails program, and other programs and facility needs in Colorado's state parks system.

GOCO also picked up the tab for state park entries for the state's first ever "Fresh Air Friday," inspired by REI's Opt Outside campaign to get people out of the mall and into nature on Black Friday.



Fishing at **John Martin Reservoir State Park** near Lamar, where one of the GOCO-funded boat ramps will be installed.

Wildlife

A photograph of a bull elk with large, multi-tined antlers, standing in a natural, rocky, and brushy environment. The elk is shown in profile, facing right. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the natural habitat with rocks and sparse vegetation.

GOCO awards approximately \$15 million each year to support Colorado Parks and Wildlife's efforts to preserve and improve wildlife habitat and to help protect the hundreds of diverse species that call our state home.

GOCO funds also support watchable wildlife opportunities as well as dozens of wildlife festivals across the state in rural communities that benefit from the festivals' economic impact.

THIS YEAR | \$1.4M
INVESTED IN WILDLIFE
EDUCATION • 32,815 ACRES
OF HIGH-PRIORITY HABITAT
FUNDED FOR CONSERVATION

- 1,010 VOLUNTEER HOURS RECORDED
- 140 ORGANIZATIONS VOLUNTEERING FOR RIVER WATCH, COLLECTING DATA ON EVERY WATERWAY IN THE STATE • 28 SPECIES SUPPORTED • 44 INTERNS EMPLOYED BY GOCO FUNDING

Finances

GOCO grants are awarded through competitive grant programs for local governments and land trusts. All of our grant programs require matching funds for any grant request.

Half of GOCO's funding is directly invested in Colorado Parks and Wildlife, which submits an investment proposal to the GOCO Board each year detailing how GOCO funds will be dispersed across the agency's facilities and programs. For more information on how GOCO funding impacts CPW, visit cpw.state.co.us.

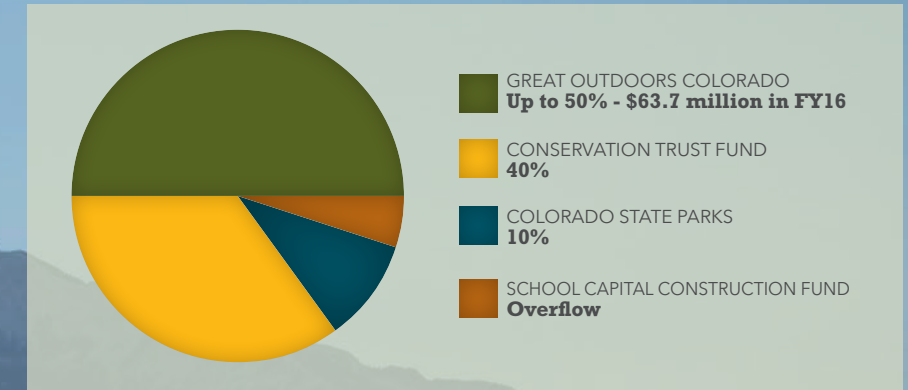
A vast majority of GOCO funding is distributed on a reimbursement basis, meaning grantees must submit budgets and documentation of their expenditures before receiving funds.

FY 2016 ran from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016. GOCO received \$63.7 million from the Colorado Lottery consistent with our constitutionally defined revenue cap. This cap is adjusted each year for inflation; for FY 2017 it is set at \$64.5 million, though GOCO budgets revenue conservatively and under the full cap amount.

This year was also one of GOCO's biggest yet, awarding \$64.3 million across 11 grant programs. GOCO maintained operating costs of 5.2% during FY16, significantly below the average for Colorado foundations and non-profits.

For our complete FY 2016 financial statements, visit GOCO.org/finance.

Lottery Proceeds Distribution



REVENUES | GREAT OUTDOORS COLORADO REVENUES ARE PRIMARILY FROM LOTTERY PROCEEDS AND INTEREST INCOME.

REVENUES	FY 2015-2016	AMOUNT TO DATE
Lottery Proceeds	\$63,714,505	\$1,034,965,084
Interest & Other Income	\$967,734	\$38,744,417
Total Revenues	\$64,682,239	\$1,073,709,501

EXPENDITURES | GREAT OUTDOORS COLORADO EXPENDITURES INCLUDE PAYMENTS TO GRANTEEES AND COVERING ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES. ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES INCLUDE OPERATING COSTS AND BOARD EXPENSES.

EXPENDITURES	FY 2015-2016	AMOUNT TO DATE
Grant Expenditures	\$44,934,958	\$962,153,898
Administrative Expenses	\$2,327,062	\$36,716,075
Total Expenditures	\$47,262,020	\$998,869,973

BUDGET | FISCAL YEAR 2016-2017 ESTIMATED BUDGET

Lottery Proceeds	\$61,885,372	Grant Expenditures	\$70,000,000
Interest & Other Income	\$300,000	Administrative Expenses	\$2,985,000
Total Revenues	\$62,185,372*	Total Expenditures	\$72,985,000*

*Difference between budget revenues and expenditures reflects monies designated for prior grant obligations.

Mission

The Great Outdoors Colorado Trust Fund was created in 1992 when voters approved Amendment Article XXVII to the Colorado Constitution to allocate Colorado Lottery proceeds.

It directs a portion to GOCO for projects that preserve, protect, and enhance the state's wildlife, park, river, trail, and open space heritage, and it created a board of trustees to govern distribution. The text is available at GOCO.org/amendment.

The Constitution requires GOCO to allocate funds to four areas in substantially equal portions over time:

**COLORADO'S
STATE PARKS**

**LOCAL
GOVERNMENTS**

**COLORADO'S
WILDLIFE**

OPEN SPACE

Governance

An Independent Board

Board members serve the role of approving GOCO funding of projects, new grant programs, and the organization's financial plans—remaining responsive to communities' needs and accountable as trustees of public funds.

Board members are appointed by the Governor and subject to confirmation by the Colorado State Senate. The 17-member board includes two members of different political parties from each of the state's seven congressional districts. Learn more at GOCO.org/board.

Members by Congressional District

- 1: Katherine Cattanach (R), Hollie Velasquez Horvath (D), both Denver
- 2: Jenn Dice (U), Boulder; Tony S. Lewis (D), Longmont
- 3: Tom Burke (R), Grand Junction; Alan Schwartz (D), Crested Butte
- 4: Chana Reed (R), Lamar; Jody Rogers (U), Yuma
- 5: Heather Carroll (D, chair), Dave Palenchar (R), both Colorado Springs
- 6: Jason Brinkley (R), Linda Strand (D), both Aurora
- 7: Jacy Rock (U); Karma Giulanelli (D), both Golden

State Agency Representatives

Natural Resources: Bob Randall
Parks and Wildlife Commission: John V. Howard, Jr. and William G. Kane

GOCO Leadership

Jim Spaanstra, Executive Director
Peter Ericson, Chief Operating Officer

GOCO UPDATES

In May 2016 GOCO bid a fond farewell to longtime executive director Lise Aangeenbrug who moved on to the role of executive vice president at the National Park Foundation. Esteemed board member Jim Spaanstra, who was partner at law firm Faegre Baker Daniels, took on the role of GOCO executive director while the board searches for a successor.

GOCO has relocated offices. Our new address is 1900 Grant St., Ste. 725, Denver, CO 80203.