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Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) receives half of Colorado Lottery profits each year, and invests that funding in improving Colorado's trails, parks, wildlife, open spaces, and rivers.

Created by a vote of the people in 1992, GOCO is managed by an independent board and uses no tax dollars.



Colorado Parks and Wildlife programs and facilities receive half of GOCO's funding each year for state parks and wildlife work.

El informe anual está en español a goco.org/informe.

Designed by **Signify**.
Cover photo by **moxie82inc**.



ANNUAL REPORT 2017

PROTECT

CONNECT

INSPIRE

25 Years of Serving Coloradans



I'm rarely happier than when I'm outside, regardless of the season. **I'm a fourth-generation Coloradan with incredible pride in my home state, and now I'm lucky enough to lead Great Outdoors Colorado.**

I joined GOCO as executive director in March 2017 after spending much of my career working at organizations connected to GOCO's work—at Colorado Counties, Inc., the Colorado State Land Board, and the governor's office—and as past chair of the Colorado Parks & Wildlife Commission.

Since day one, I've met Coloradans from every corner of the state working on critical projects in their hometowns, cities, and counties—work that protects land, connects people to nature, and inspires the next generation to value what we have. These partners epitomize the best of Colorado.

I've seen firsthand how vital GOCO is in supporting the projects of those passionate people. I've come to know board members and staff who are tireless in their commitment to our mission. And I've learned we have challenges ahead.

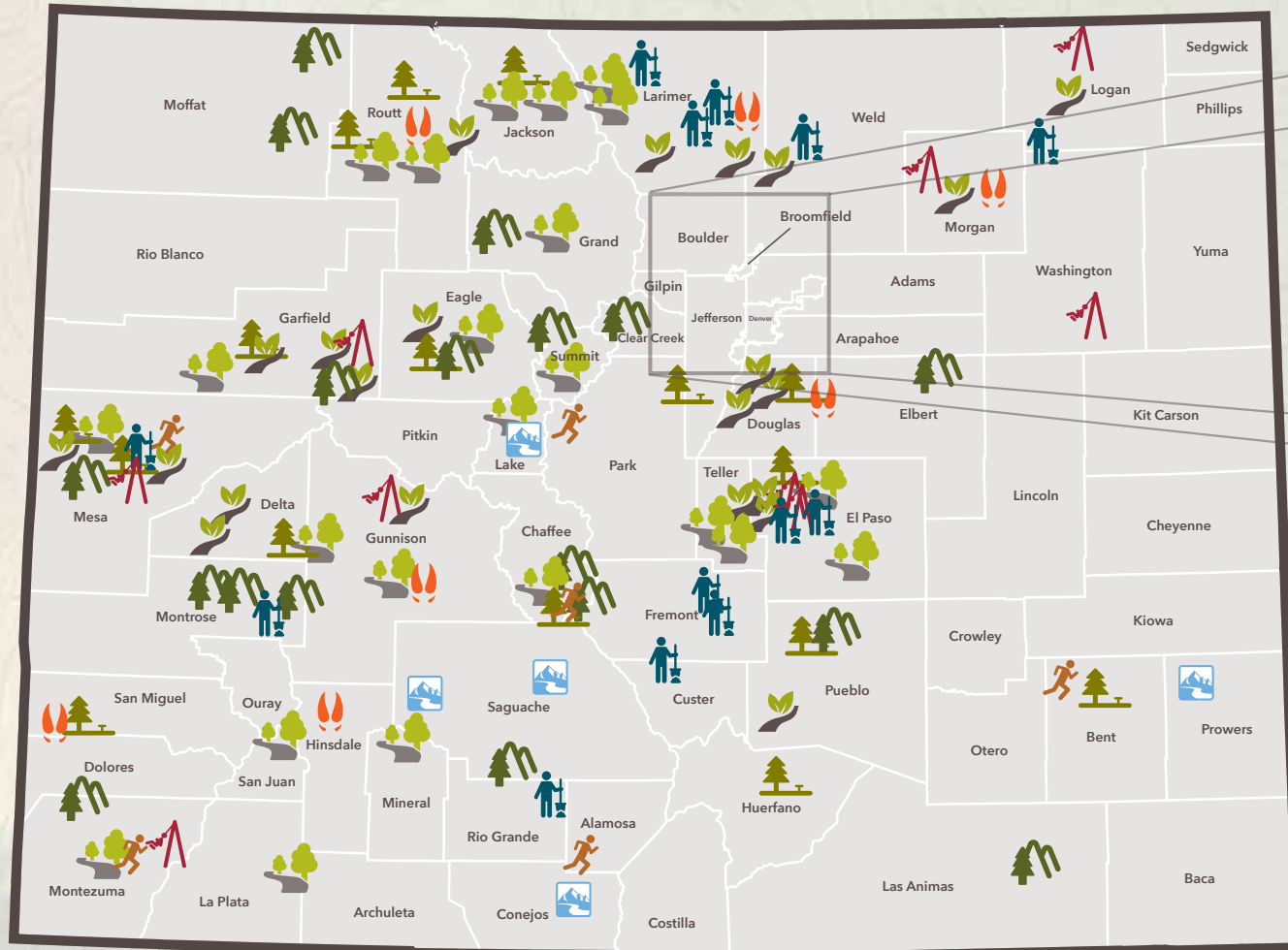
With demand for GOCO grants on the rise, and our state's population also growing, our work is only beginning. Together we have to prepare for our state's long-term land conservation and wildlife habitat needs, and also balance creating access to outdoor recreation with caring for our great outdoors.

Coloradans can be proud of voting GOCO into existence 25 years ago. With continued, strong public support, our partners' meaningful work will endure, and our outdoors will bring joy to generations of Coloradans to come.

Chris Castilian
Executive Director

GOCO At-a-Glance

Projects funded in FY 2017*



KEY

- Inspire Coalition
- Wildlife Project
- Park/Planning
- Open Space
- Athletic Facility
- Trail
- Habitat Restoration
- School Playground
- State Park

Visit GOCO.org/FY17 for an interactive version of this map.

In FY 2017, our grantees put GOCO funds to work for:

120 PROJECTS | **44** counties

49,000 KIDS IMPACTED

28 SPECIES OF WILDLIFE

23 miles of trails **MORE THAN 160 miles** RIVERS & STREAMS

NEARLY 100,000 ACRES CONSERVED OR RESTORED

17 local PARKS



GOCO also funds regional and statewide projects through our investments in Colorado Parks and Wildlife and 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 2017 ran from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017.

25 Years of GOCO

Since our inception in 1992:

3:1 DEMAND
FOR REQUESTED VS. AVAILABLE FUNDING

INVESTED IN efforts supporting **43** ENDANGERED OR THREATENED SPECIES

CREATED & IMPROVED MORE THAN **1,600** community parks and outdoor recreation areas **\$1.1 BILLION**

TRANSFORMED **44** school playgrounds that serve **17,000** STUDENTS IN LOTTERY PROCEEDS INVESTED BACK INTO COLORADO

5,046 projects were funded in all **64** COUNTIES | **EMPLOYED 9,200** people through the Colorado Youth Corps Association

RESTORED/RECONSTRUCTED **900** miles of trails

NEARLY **1,000** miles of rivers protected

ADDED OVER **47,000** acres to the State Parks system

MORE THAN **1 MILLION ACRES** have been conserved

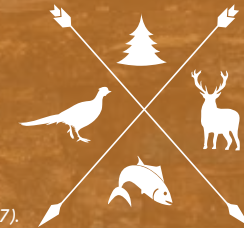
Economic Impact



OUTDOOR RECREATION contributes **\$28 billion** to the Colorado economy, creating **229,000 jobs** in the state.

Outdoor Industry Association: Outdoor Recreation Economy Report (2017).

HUNTING AND FISHING contribute more than **\$2.8 billion** to Colorado's economy.



Colorado Parks and Wildlife Fact Sheet (2017).



In Colorado Springs, close-to-home access to recreation yielded an **annual medical costs savings of \$56.6 million.**

The Trust for Public Land: Economic Benefits of Parks and Recreation in Colorado Springs (2017).

GOCO grants and the state's conservation easement tax credit program's investments in land conservation have resulted in **\$13.7 billion** in benefits for Coloradans, a **\$4-\$12 return for every dollar spent on conservation.**

Colorado State University: Investing in Colorado (2017).



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.**

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



Kids grow better *outside.*

Playing outside is more than just a way to pass the time. It's an integral part of children's development.

Research has shown children who play outside are healthier, more creative, less aggressive, less stressed, and have reduced ADHD symptoms.

Today's kids, though, spend less than 10 minutes per day outside in unstructured play. They're growing up over-screened, over-scheduled, and over-protected.

If we're raising a generation of kids with no connection to nature, they won't grow up into adults who cherish the things that make Colorado such a great place.

GOCO is helping to change that.

We created Generation Wild to reconnect kids with nature and encourage them to experience the incredible things right outside the front door with the list of 100 things to do before you're 12. Because kids grow better outside.

Learn more at GenerationWild.com.

Protect

GOCO created the Protect Initiative as part of its 2015 strategic plan to conserve more land for wildlife and people. Ultimately, the initiative will invest \$47 million by 2020 in large-scale, once-in-a-lifetime conservation opportunities across the state.

In FY 2017,* GOCO conserved 84,000 acres that sustained local agricultural production; brought new outdoor recreation access to Coloradans; protected an iconic landscape under threat of development; and pioneered an innovative partnership between a military base, municipality, and nonprofit land trust.

THIS YEAR | \$13.8 MILLION AWARDED •
84,000 ACRES OF LAND PROTECTED, AN AREA
NEARLY THE SIZE OF DENVER IF COMBINED •
4 UNIQUE PUBLIC ACCESS OPPORTUNITIES
CREATED • 162 MILES OF RIVERS AND
SURROUNDING RIPARIAN HABITAT PROTECTED
• 878 ACRES IN URBAN AREAS PERMANENTLY
CONSERVED • \$3.6 MILLION IN LAND VALUE
DONATED BY LANDOWNERS CONSERVING
THEIR PROPERTIES • \$38 MILLION IN LOCAL
FUNDING LEVERAGED

*GOCO's FY 2017 ran from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017. This annual report summarizes those funding decisions.

Pictured: Hardscrabble Ranch Open Space, a Protect Initiative project funded this fiscal year to protect public access and critical wildlife habitat near Eagle. PHOTO BY ED ROBERSON, MIRR RANCH GROUP.

THIS YEAR | \$11 MILLION AWARDED TO BUILD TRAILS ACROSS THE STATE • 23 MILES OF TRAIL CONSTRUCTION FUNDED • 17 TRAIL PROJECTS FUNDED • 3 FIRST-EVER TRAIL MASTER PLANS FUNDED IN RURAL COMMUNITIES • \$25 MILLION IN LOCAL FUNDING LEVERAGED • 14 COUNTIES WITH FUNDED PROJECTS • 11 OF GOVERNOR HICKENLOOPER'S 16 PRIORITY TRAILS FUNDED

Connect

80% of Coloradans use trails for outdoor recreation, and the Connect Initiative is helping get Coloradans where they want to go.

Statewide, we have seen Coloradans prioritize the need for trail systems that are connected and safe to access. GOCO recognizes that well-connected trails that are easy to get to and close to home not only improve quality of life from a recreation standpoint, but are often also economic drivers for communities across the state.

In FY 2017,* GOCO awarded the first-ever round of Connect Initiative grants to close critical trail gaps, help rural communities diversify their economies with outdoor recreation, and create safe access to outdoor recreation in Colorado communities.

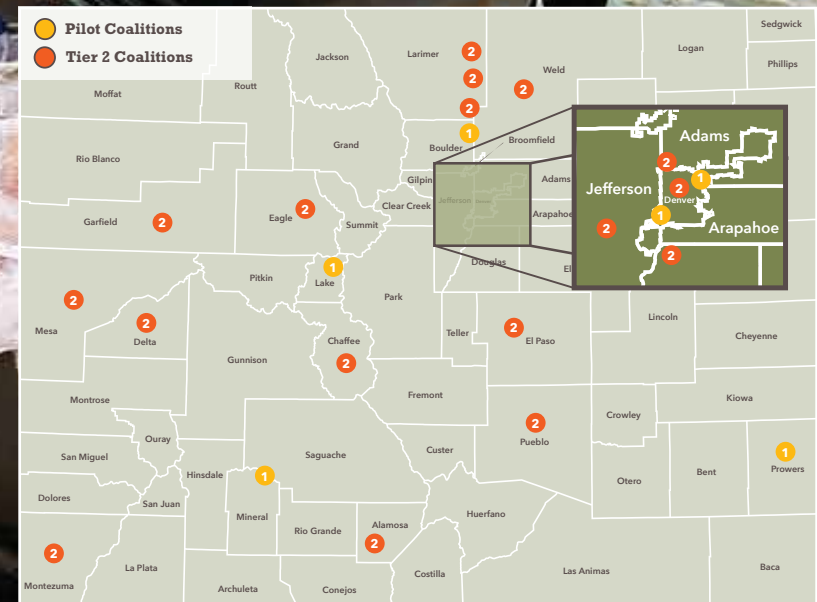
Inspire

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.

GOCO funding has empowered nearly two dozen community-based coalitions across the state, and for the last two years local youth have worked to identify solutions to these barriers.

In FY 2017,* we awarded the first implementation funding for six pilot coalitions to bring their visions to life, investing in places to get outside, programs to activate these spaces, and pathways to careers in the outdoors for young adults.

THIS YEAR | 41,000 KIDS IMPACTED • \$13.5 MILLION AWARDED • \$19 MILLION IN LOCAL FUNDING LEVERAGED • 72 YOUTH ENGAGED IN RESEARCH AND OUTREACH • 527 JOBS CREATED 58 PROGRAM PARTNERS • 6 PILOT COALITIONS • 17 TIER 2 COALITIONS



*GOCO's FY 2017 ran from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017. This annual report summarizes those funding decisions.

Pictured: Francisco Varga, an Urban Ranger with Environmental Learning for Kids (ELK), helps a young girl learn about marine life at a Commerce City Recreation Center event at Barr Lake State Park. PHOTO COURTESY OF ELK.

THIS YEAR | NEARLY \$1 MILLION AWARDED

- 663 ACRES OF HABITAT RESTORED •
- 3,000+ ACRES OF INVASIVE PLANTS REMOVED
- 100 ACRES OF FIRE FUEL REMOVED • 18 PROJECTS • 50,680 HOURS OF VOLUNTEER AND PAID YOUTH CORPS LABOR • 199 YOUNG ADULTS EMPLOYED • 2,110 HOURS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROVIDED TO YOUNG ADULTS • 24.3 MILES OF TRAIL WORK • 1,720 TREES PLANTED

Taking Care of Colorado

Natural beauty doesn't always mean untouched. Colorado's trails, wildlife habitat, and waterways often need a little human intervention to ensure our state's unique beauty endures for generations.

Colorado wouldn't be Colorado without stewardship and restoration, and we all share the responsibility of ensuring our natural resources are well maintained into the future.

From restoring habitat for Colorado's endangered state fish, to employing Youth Corps to build and maintain our state's much-envied trail systems, GOCO funds ensure that Colorado's water, lands, and trails continue to benefit people and wildlife.

This year, we increased our commitment to taking care of Colorado by investing in a comprehensive, statewide effort to proactively think about taking care of our great state: the Statewide Stewardship Initiative.

School Yard Initiative

Communities across the state are coming together to replace aging, outdated playgrounds at local schools with imaginative, nature-inspired places where kids can be wild and learn about the world around them.

GOCO's School Yard Initiative (SYI) empowers partnerships between schools, families, and their local governments, with kids leading the charge to design their dream schoolyards.

GOCO-funded elementary schools are also eligible to participate in Colorado Parks and Wildlife's Schools and Outdoor Learning Environments (SOLE) program, which provides teacher training, family nature nights, and other outdoor education opportunities.

THIS YEAR | 9 PLAYGROUNDS FUNDED •
55% AVERAGE FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH
RATE AT FUNDED SCHOOLS • ON AVERAGE,
FUNDED SCHOOLS HAVE PLAYGROUNDS THAT
ARE 4 DECADES OLD • \$990,000 AWARDED
• \$927,026 LOCAL MATCHING FUNDS
LEVERAGED • 3,735 STUDENTS IMPACTED



Pictured: A community build day at Arvada's Lawrence Elementary school, which received a 2017 SYI grant. PHOTO BY SIGNIFY.

THIS YEAR | \$5.9 MILLION AWARDED • 20 RURAL OR UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES FUNDED • \$6.5 MILLION IN LOCAL MATCHING FUNDS LEVERAGED • 35 PROJECTS IN 22 COUNTIES • 7 NATURE-THEMED PLAYGROUNDS • 3 UNIVERSALLY ACCESSIBLE PARKS FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS OF ALL ABILITIES • 5 UPGRADES TO SCHOOL ATHLETIC FACILITIES

Local Parks and Recreation

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. From building playgrounds accessible by children of all abilities, to expanding parks and creating safe ways to get to them, to revamping economic drivers and integral parts of a town's identity, GOCO's partners are creating places for Coloradans to get outdoors and engage in their communities.



Pictured: Swink's Reynolds Park, located in southeastern Colorado. PHOTO BY MOXIE82INC.

Open Space

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 enjoy the view), protect wildlife habitat, safeguard the state's water supply, and improve best practices and the land to make sure we keep Colorado great.

THIS YEAR | \$6.9 MILLION AWARDED •
MORE THAN 14,700 ACRES CONSERVED
• \$17.2 MILLION IN LOCAL MATCHING
FUNDS LEVERAGED • \$10.3 MILLION
WORTH OF LAND VALUE DONATED • 11
LAND CONSERVATION PROJECTS • 4 PILOT
PROJECTS TO HELP INFORM THE PUBLIC OF
LAND CONSERVATION'S IMPACT • \$10,000
AWARDED TO CONNECT URBAN YOUTH TO
RURAL CONSERVED LANDS • 9 PROJECTS
ADDING PUBLIC ACCESS FOR
OUTDOOR RECREATION

Pictured: Promontory Ranch, home of Crested Butte's popular Snodgrass Trailhead. A GOCO grant helped ensure the trailhead will always be open to the public for outdoor recreation. PHOTO BY ED ROBERSON, MIRR RANCH GROUP.

THIS YEAR | \$13.5 MILLION INVESTED •
25% INCREASE IN VISITORS SERVED WITH
THE ADDITION OF A FREE SHUTTLE AT BARR
LAKE STATE PARK • 100 NATURE PASSES
DISTRIBUTED TO LOW-INCOME FAMILIES
IN DOUGLAS COUNTY • 1 NEW 3D MODEL
TO HELP KIDS LEARN ABOUT WATER IN
THE ARKANSAS RIVER VALLEY • 43 KIDS
PARTICIPATED IN OUTDOOR WILDERNESS
LAB ON THE GRAND MESA IN WESTERN
COLORADO • 160 FEET OF BRIDGE TO BE
REPLACED AT RIFLE GAP STATE FISH HATCHERY
TO ALLOW VISITORS OF ALL ABILITIES TO
ENJOY NEARBY TRAILS • 43 INTERNS
EMPLOYED • 11 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT
PROJECTS AT STATE PARKS • 12 STATE PARKS'
OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

State Parks

Half of GOCO's annual funding supports Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), including our state parks system, totaling \$15.2 million invested in FY 2017.

GOCO funding goes beyond state park boundaries though, helping CPW carry out its work to support the outdoor recreation needs of Coloradans in every corner of the state.

In FY 2017,* GOCO also launched the CPW Director's Innovation Fund, a competitive opportunity for CPW employees to apply for GOCO funds for innovative, one-time projects.



Wildlife

GOCO invests half of our funding in Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) each year with \$15.2 million invested in wildlife projects during FY 2017.* That funding supports 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.



Wildlife K9 Cash, whose training was funded by a GOCO Director's Innovation Fund grant. PHOTO BY PAMELA JOHNSON, LOVELAND REPORTER HERALD.

*GOCO's FY 2017 ran from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017. This annual report summarizes those funding decisions.



THIS YEAR | \$15.2 MILLION INVESTED •
80 SPECIES STUDIED IN LONE MESA STATE PARK TO DETERMINE IMPACT OF OUTDOOR RECREATION AND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT •
300 FEET OF STREAMBANKS RESTORED AT CHUCK LEWIS STATE WILDLIFE AREA • 1,100 POUNDS OF VENISON DONATED TO FOOD BANKS BY ELIZABETH'S INNOVATIVE DEER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM • 1 WILDLIFE K9 TRAINED • \$2.3 BILLION ADDED TO COLORADO'S ECONOMY FROM WILDLIFE WATCHING • 47 INTERNS EMPLOYED

Pictured: A bull moose in Steamboat Lake State Park in northwestern Colorado. PHOTO BY VICK SCHENDEL, COURTESY OF CPW.

Finances

GOCO funds are distributed through competitive grant programs for local governments and land trusts and an annual investment proposal from Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW).

CPW 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 final budgets and documentation of their expenditures before receiving funds. All of our grant opportunities require matching funds.

FY 2017 ran from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017. GOCO received \$64.4 million from the Colorado Lottery, making this year the eleventh year in a row we have met our Constitutionally-mandated cap. This cap is adjusted each year for inflation; for FY 2018 it is set at \$66.2 million.

In FY 2017 GOCO awarded \$82 million across 11 grant programs.

For our complete FY 2017 financial statements, visit GOCO.org/finance.

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

REVENUES	FY 2016-2017	AMOUNT TO DATE
Lottery Proceeds	\$64,463,929	\$1,099,429,013
Interest & Other Income	\$258,616	\$39,003,033
Total Revenues	\$64,722,545	\$1,138,432,046

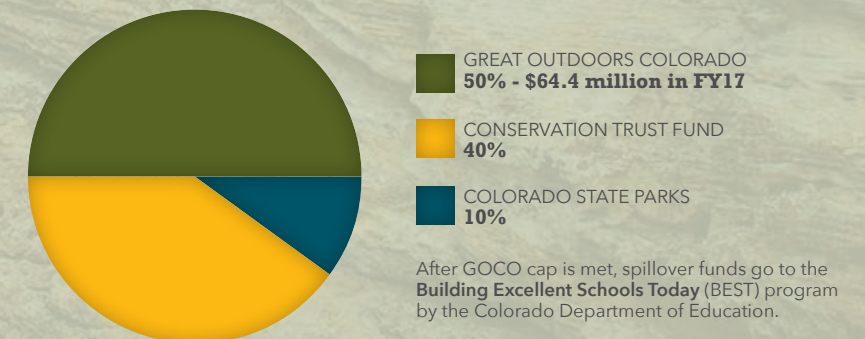
EXPENDITURES | GREAT OUTDOORS COLORADO EXPENDITURES INCLUDE PAYMENTS TO GRANTEES AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES. ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES INCLUDE OPERATING COSTS AND BOARD EXPENSES.

EXPENDITURES	FY 2016-2017	AMOUNT TO DATE
Grant Expenditures	\$50,782,305	\$1,012,936,203
Administrative Expenses	\$3,873,322	\$40,589,397
Total Expenditures	\$54,655,627	\$1,053,525,600

BUDGET | FISCAL YEAR 2018 ESTIMATED BUDGET

Lottery Proceeds	\$64,925,978	Grant Expenditures	\$65,000,000
Interest & Other Income	\$650,000	Administrative Expenses	\$4,754,304
Total Revenues	\$65,575,978*	Total Expenditures	\$69,754,304*

Lottery Proceeds Distribution



Mission

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

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

The Constitution requires GOCO to allocate funds in a manner that is substantially equal over time to achieve outcomes across four areas:

**OUTDOOR
RECREATION**

**LOCAL
GOVERNMENTS**

WILDLIFE

OPEN SPACE

Governance

GOCO is governed by a 17-member board, whose members serve two four-year terms. Board members are appointed by the Governor and subject to confirmation by the Colorado State Senate. The GOCO Board must have two members of different political parties from each of the state's seven congressional districts and also includes representatives from Colorado Parks and Wildlife and the Department of Natural Resources. 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), Dave Palenchar (R), both Colorado Springs
- 6: Jason Brinkley (R, chair), Linda Strand (D), both Aurora
- 7: Jacy Rock (U), Karma Giulianelli (D), both Golden

State Agency Representatives

Natural Resources: Bob Randall
Parks and Wildlife Commission: John V. Howard, Jr. and Michelle Zimmerman

GOCO UPDATES

Heather Carroll has retired from her GOCO Board duties after eight years of service, including two as the Board Chair. GOCO also bids a fond farewell to outgoing board member Alan Schwartz and CPW Commission representative Bill Kane. Thank you, Heather, Alan, and Bill, for your service to our organization and impact on our state.

GOCO also welcomed Chris Castilian as our new executive director in March 2017.