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Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) receives half of Colorado Lottery proceeds 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.



# For Great Outdoors Colorado and its partners, 2019 was a year of MOMENTUM.

As dollars became projects, and visions became reality, we felt the power of our network of hard-working, passionate partners advancing a mission. By the fourth year of its current strategic plan, GOCO had awarded \$291.7 million in funding, marking an unprecedented level of investment in Colorado's great outdoors.

GOCO's stakeholders—local governments, land trusts, and Colorado Parks and Wildlife—and a growing network of entities that work collaboratively with those, set out to achieve an ambitious plan with three pillars:

- PROTECT more urban and rural land for places to recreate, to safeguard rivers and wildlife habitat, and to sustain local agriculture.
- CONNECT people to the outdoors, filling gaps in important trail systems and improving outdoor access.
- **INSPIRE** more kids and their families to get outside and grow their love for the outdoors.

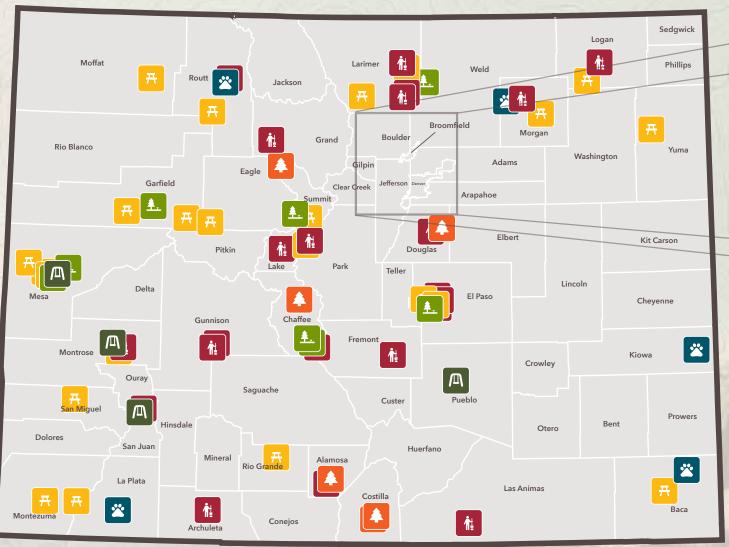
From the ground up, GOCO's stakeholders and partners were hard at work bringing large-scale and eagerly anticipated projects to life in their communities. They put open space dollars to work in closing land conservation projects that were decades in the making. They broke ground on new parks, playgrounds, and trails. And they motivated a generation of Coloradans to get up and get out.

Here's to a momentous year of conservation and outdoor recreation progress. And cheers to you who made leaps forward possible.



## GOCO At-a-Glance

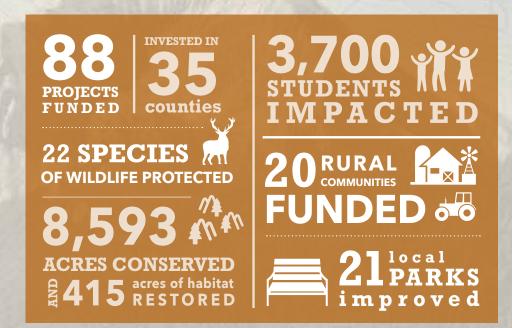
Projects funded in FY 2019\*







In FY 2019, our grantees put GOCO funds to work for:





GOCO also funds regional and statewide projects through our conservation excellence grant program and Colorado Parks and Wildlife, which receives half of our funding. Find out more at GOCO.org/cpw.

# Colorado

Since our inception in 1992:

projects were funded in all

**COUNTIES** across the state

**INVESTED IN** efforts supporting

**OR THREATENED SPECIES** 

community parks and outdoor recreation areas

TRANSFORMED



四24,000

**DOLLARS PROCEEDS** 

IN LOTTERY INVESTED **BACK INTO** 

COLORADO

RESTORED/RECONSTRUCTED

miles of rivers protected

acres to the State Parks system

have been conserved

young people through the Colorado Youth Corps Association

#### **Economic Impact**



Colorado Parks and Wildlife Fact Sheet (2019) The OUTDOOR RECREATION INDUSTRY delivers an economic contribution of 62 billion dollars to Colorado each year and accounts for more than **500,000** jobs in the state.

Approximately 92% of Coloradans recreate in the outdoors at least once every few weeks.

2019 Colorado Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)



FISHING, HUNTING, AND WILDLIFE WATCHING contribute more than \$5 billion to Colorado's economy.

Economic Contributions of Outdoor Recreation in Colorado (2017)



Grants from GOCO and the Conservation Trust Fund (CTF) support 11,800 jobs and \$507 million in labor income.

The Trust for Public Land: The economic benefits of Great Outdoors Colorado and the Conservation Trust Fund (2018)

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)

## **Protect**

As a key pillar of its 2015 strategic plan, GOCO created the Protect Initiative to conserve more land for wildlife and people.

Since then, GOCO has invested \$44.5 million in 11 projects, several of which marked the culmination of decades of work by diverse partnerships across Colorado. In FY 2019, partners were hard at work closing projects funded in previous years.

In total, the projects will conserve 130,063 acres of land, protecting open spaces, rivers and streams, and wildlife habitat—safeguarding large scale or urgently needed areas of land forever.

In 2019, The Trust for Public Land and The Nature Conservancy officially acquired Crazy French Ranch with the support of GOCO, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and the City of Trinidad. In coming years, the ranch and its Fishers Peak, the iconic backdrop to Las Animas County, will open to the public as part of Colorado's 42nd state park. The 30-square-mile property will be an outdoor recreation destination for Southern Colorado locals and visitors alike.

Pictured: Fishers Peak overlooking Trinidad's Crazy French Ranch. PHOTO BY LAURYN WACHS, COURTESY OF THE NATURE CONSERVANCY.

FY 2016 | GOCO awarded its largest-ever, single transaction grant of \$10 million to The Trust for Public Land and partners for the conservation of nearly 5,000 acres of Trampe Ranch, a working cattle ranch that generates 20% of Gunnison County's agricultural economy. The property is home to some of the most outstanding scenery Colorado has to offer.

Pictured: Trampe Ranch in Gunnison County. PHOTO BY BARB EAST.

FY 2017 | GOCO helped Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust and The Nature Conservancy fund easements to conserve an additional 25,039 acres of JE Canyon Ranch in Las Animas County. The easements protect the area's agricultural heritage and native shortgrass prairie, one of the most threatened habitats in the world.

Pictured: Southeast Colorado Prairie Canyonlands. PHOTO COURTESY OF COLORADO CATTLEMEN'S AGRICULTURAL LAND TRUS

**FY 2018** | GOCO funds helped Douglas County purchase the **2,038-acre** Sandstone Ranch near Larkspur. The property, which **will become public open space**, will alleviate crowding at other popular area destinations and allow visitors to enjoy its magnificent red rock formations.

Pictured: Sandstone Ranch. PHOTO COURTESY OF DOUGLAS COUNTY.



FY 2017 | GOCO funds helped the City of Fruita complete the 4.5-mile Kokopelli section of the Colorado Riverfront Trail. The new segment, stretching from Fruita to Loma, builds on a multi-partner, two-decade effort to better connect recreationalists to Colorado's regional trail systems.

Pictured: Kokopelli Section of the Colorado Riverfront Trail. PHOTO BY MILKHAUS.

Pictured: Peaks to Plains Trail. PHOTO BY MOXIE82INC.

FY 2018 | GOCO awarded Clear Creek County \$2 million to extend the Peaks to Plains Trail through Clear Creek Canyon. The new section provides easier access to river recreation and creates a safer route for pedestrians and cyclists traveling through Clear Creek Canyon Park where people fish, wade in the water, rock climb, and enjoy nature.



## Connect

The second pillar of GOCO's 2015 strategic plan, the Connect Initiative was created to fund projects that close critical gaps in trail networks across the state. Connected trail systems bring safer, more close-to-home recreation opportunities to Coloradans.

Over the last four years, GOCO has invested \$19.9 million in 22 projects across Colorado that will construct new trails or create trail plans for future projects, with the final round of Connect funding awarded in FY 2020. The projects have leveraged \$36.8 million in local funding and will ultimately construct 30 miles of trail.

This fiscal year was one for groundbreakings, construction work, and grand openings as plans became paths and projects were brought to life.

In FY 2017, GOCO awarded \$1 million to help the Town of Castle Rock add a two-mile segment to the East Plum Creek Trail, the town's most widely used paved trail. The new segment, opened in September 2019, connects Castle Rock residents to their historic downtown and provides recreationalists of all levels and abilities with better access to scenic views, parks, and open spaces.

## Inspire

As the cornerstone of GOCO's current strategic plan, the Inspire Initiative—now known as Generation Wild—has encouraged youth and their families to connect to the outdoors by providing places for kids and families to play, culturally relevant programs that build off one another, and pathways to outdoor stewardship jobs and leadership roles.

GOCO has invested \$30 million in the initiative, funding 15 Generation Wild communities. Hard-working, local coalitions are bringing projects to life using a community-led, youth-driven, collaborative approach to creating equitable access to the outdoors. This innovative framework is being looked to as a national model, as each coalition's approach will serve as an example to other communities across the country.

Hundreds of partners—local governments, schools, and nonprofits in urban, suburban, and rural areas—are elevating the voices of community members, particularly the youth themselves, and collaborating in unprecedented ways to connect tens of thousands of kids to nature.



In 2019, Generation Wild got a little, well, Wilder. Coloradans welcomed an unlikely character into their world—a nearly eight-foot-tall friend of the outdoors on a mission to inspire outdoor play.

Wilder, who is part goat, part yeti, and all friend, set out to remind parents how the outdoors sparks kids' creativity and imagination. Wilder: A Tale of Love for the Outdoors, a short film featured on GenerationWild.com and across media channels as part of a statewide, integrated marketing campaign, was a media-metric blockbuster and sentimental smash hit.

Summer 2019 marked Generation Wild's third season in market across Colorado, a campaign created in partnership with Sukle Advertising and Design. The campaign continued its mission to change a generation of Colorado kids and support the hard work of more than 1,400 partner entities working in 15 GOCO-supported, Generation Wild communities across the state.

The result? A true movement with high early awareness rates and proven results in shifting Coloradans' outdoor attitudes.

Let's all live a little Wilder and help inspire children to become the next generation of healthy, happy outdoor enthusiasts.











Communities across the state are coming together to transform outdated school playgrounds into nature-inspired havens where kids can learn, grow, and let their imaginations run wild.

GOCO's School Yard Initiative promotes partnerships between schools, communities, and their local governments with kids leading the charge to design their own outdoor play spaces. Improvements to school playgrounds and outdoor spaces not only create more engaging and creative environments for students, but they also benefit whole communities as school yards are open to the public for play after school hours.

GOCO-funded elementary schools are also eligible to participate in Colorado Parks and Wildlife's School and Outdoor Learning Environments program, known as SOLE, which provides teacher training, family nature nights, and outdoor education opportunities for students.





## **State Parks**

Half of GOCO's annual funding supports Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), which includes our state's 41 state parks. In FY 2019, GOCO's investment in the state park system totaled \$18.3 million.

These funds support park expansions, capital improvement projects, operating budgets, and other facility needs.

Beyond the state park boundaries, GOCO funds also help CPW carry out its work to support the outdoor recreation needs of Coloradans in every corner of the state.



Since the late 1990s, GOCO has invested more than \$18 million in Staunton State Park. Most recently, GOCO funds supported the Staunton Visitor Center, which opened to the public in May 2019 and will serve as a gateway to many adventures at the park.

## Wildlife

GOCO invests half of its funding in Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) each year with \$16.3 million invested in wildlife projects in FY 2019.

These funds support efforts that help protect the rivers, plains, and mountains that nearly 1,000 species of wildlife in the state call home.

GOCO funds also support environmental education and internship programs, habitat management plans, water quality testing, wildlife research projects, and wildlife festivals.



One of 12 Director's Innovation Fund projects awarded GOCO funding in FY 2019, CFW's Bat Acoustic Monitoring study will provide critical insights into bat presence and habitat use in state parks. With the help of bat-naturalist volunteers, park visitors will collaborate on the data collection effort using ultrasonic microphones paired with a smartphone app.



## **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 disbursed across the agency's facilities and programs. For more information on how GOCO funding impacts CPW, visit GOCO.org/CPW.

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 2019 ran from July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019. GOCO received \$68.4 million from the Colorado Lottery, making this the eighteenth year in a row we have met our Constitutionally-mandated cap. This cap is adjusted each year for inflation; for FY 2020 it is set at \$70.3 million.

In FY 2019 GOCO awarded \$60.3 million in funding across various grant programs.

For our complete FY 2019 financial statements, visit **GOCO.org/finance**.

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

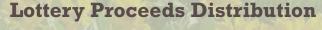
REVENUES	FY 2018-2019	AMOUNT TO DATE	
Lottery Proceeds	\$68,494,436	\$1,234,174,447	
Interest & Other Income	\$5,748,288	\$47,931,418	
Total Revenues	\$74,242,724	\$1,282,105,865	

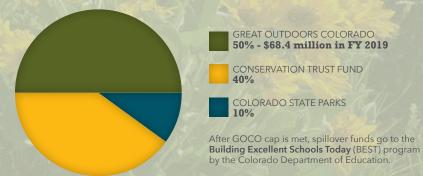
**EXPENDITURES** | GREAT OUTDOORS COLORADO EXPENDITURES INCLUDE PAYMENTS TO GRANTEES AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES. ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES INCLUDE OPERATING COSTS AND BOARD EXPENSES.

EXPENDITURES	FY 2018-2019	AMOUNT TO DATE	
Grant Expenditures	\$63,872,334	\$1,143,185,910	
Administrative Expenses	\$5,077,938	\$50,160,177	
Total Expenditures	\$68,950,272	\$1,193,346,087	

#### **BUDGET | FISCAL YEAR 2020 ESTIMATED BUDGET**

Total Revenues	\$69,915,670*	Total Expenditures	\$70,473,69
Interest & Other Income	\$1,500,000	Administrative Expenses	\$5,473,693
Lottery Proceeds	\$68,415,670	Grant Expenditures	\$65,000,00





\*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 created a board of trustees to govern distribution. Read the amendment language 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 may serve for two four-year terms. Board members are appointed by the Governor and subject to confirmation by the Colorado State Senate. The GOCO Board has 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

- by Leticia Martinez (U), Denver); Hollie Velasquez Horvath (D, chair), Denver
- 2: Jenn Dice (U), Boulder (now served by Turk Montepare (U), Breckenridge); Tony S. Lewis (D), Longmont (now served by Mo Siegel (D), Boulder)
- 3: Tom Burke (R), Grand Junction (now served by David Cockrell (U), Pueblo); Julie Thibodeau (D), Durango

- 1: Katherine Cattanach (R), Denver (now served 4: Chana Reed (R), Lamar (now served by Pamela Denahy (R), La Junta); Jody Rogers (U), Yuma
  - 5: Warren Dean (D), Colorado Springs; Dave Palenchar (R), Colorado Springs (now served by Mina Liebert (U), Colorado Springs)
  - 6: Jason Brinkley (R), Linda Strand (D), both Aurora
  - 7: Jacy Rock (U, immediate past chair), Golden (now served by Jahi Simbai (U), Wheat Ridge); Karma Giulianelli (D), Golden

#### **State Agency Representatives**

Natural Resources: Bob Randall (now served by Dan Gibbs)

Parks and Wildlife Commission: John V. Howard, Jr. (now served by Charles Garcia); Carrie Besnette Hauser

#### **GOCO UPDATES**

In March 2019, the GOCO Board elected Hollie Velasquez Horvath board chair. Hollie is the director of community affairs for Xcel Energy, is a volunteer for multiple Colorado nonprofit organizations, and brings over a decade of experience in political management and fundraising. In 2019, GOCO welcomed two new staff members: Josh Tenneson as director of finance and operations and Victoria Nava-Watson as communications officer.