



COLORADO

Department of Natural Resources

FY 2024-25 DNR Performance Plan

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Department of Natural Resources Vision and Mission Statements

Vision

Colorado will be a national leader in promoting the responsible use and conservation of natural resources for this and future generations.

Mission

The Colorado Department of Natural Resources's mission is to develop, preserve, and enhance the state's natural resources for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future citizens and visitors.

- **Water** - Provide for the long-term municipal, industrial, and agricultural water needs for the state in a way that recognizes and provides for the instream flow needs of fish, wildlife, and recreation.
- **State Parks** - Maintain accessible, affordable, and diverse outdoor recreation opportunities and promote natural resource education.
- **Minerals & Energy** - Responsibly regulate the sustainable development of Colorado's energy and mineral resources in a manner that protects public safety, the environment, wildlife, and maintains Colorado's quality of life.
- **Wildlife** - Manage and conserve healthy and sustainable wildlife populations for the benefit of current and future Coloradans.
- **State Trust Lands** - Manage state lands held in perpetual, inter-generational trusts for the benefit and support of public schools and other public institutions.



Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Strategic Priorities

In a state known for its stunning mountains, forests, rivers, and plains, the Department plays a key role in protecting the environment for future generations as the steward of Colorado's abundant natural resources. Additionally, the Department supports the Governor's vision for a resilient and robust economy through its engagement across a number of important natural resource-related economic sectors and Colorado industries. It also provides opportunities for improved health and wellness by engaging with Coloradans to facilitate recreation and encourage the enjoyment of our public lands. The Department seeks to make the outdoors and healthy living more inclusive of, and available to, all Coloradans.

The following strategic priorities build upon existing work in our Department and provide a platform for internal coordination across our Divisions on these issues. This performance plan identifies the Department's specific goals in support of these priorities and highlights the important ongoing work each Division is undertaking to serve all Coloradans.

- **Biodiversity:** Implement biodiversity conservation practices to help manage and conserve Colorado's land, habitats, and species.
- **Energy Transition:** Plan for a coordinated, strategic approach to support the transition to zero-emission energy while avoiding, minimizing, or mitigating the impacts on species and habitats. Identify and manage the fiscal impacts of the transition to zero-emissions energy. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other pollution within DNR's operations. Implement the State's Greenhouse Gas Pollution Reduction Roadmap 2.0 and DNR Energy Goals.
- **Tribal Engagement:** Through the development of a Tribal Relations Program, cooperatively build capacity and further cultural understanding within and across DNR for consistent, meaningful, and sustainable Tribal government-to-government and greater Native/Indigenous community engagement, with a goal of facilitating lasting working partnerships.
- **Balance Conservation and Recreation:** Prioritize the conservation of the state's wildlife, landscapes and agricultural lands while enhancing public access or management in areas most suitable for meeting recreation demand.
- **Climate Resilience:** Strengthen climate resilience by aligning DNR's actions with statewide energy and climate goals, including but not limited to implementation of the State's Strategic Plan for Natural and Working Lands, the Colorado Water Plan, the Colorado Forest Action Plan, and DNR Actions in the Climate Preparedness Roadmap.

Department Description and Organizational Chart

The Colorado Department of Natural Resources (DNR or the Department) is responsible for the management of the water, land, wildlife, minerals/energy resources, and outdoor recreation of the state. In addition to the Executive Director's Office, DNR has six divisions:

- Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW),
- Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB),
- Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety (DRMS),
- Division of Water Resources (DWR),
- Colorado Energy & Carbon Management Commission (ECMC), and
- State Land Board (SLB).

The Colorado Avalanche Information Center (CAIC), the Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program (COSWAP), and the Colorado Produced Water Consortium (CPWC) are administered as special programs within the Executive Director's Office. DNR also has a Division of Forestry, administered and staffed in partnership with the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) within Colorado State University. Collectively, these divisions carry out the Department's responsibilities for natural resource management, which includes providing access to and protecting or preserving Colorado's natural resources.



*Organizational Chart showing Department and Division Leadership. The Executive Branch is led by Governor Jared Polis, the Department is led by Executive Director Dan Gibbs and Deputy Director Tim Mauck, the Division of Reclamation, Mining & Safety is led by Director Michael Cunningham, Colorado Parks and Wildlife is led by Director Jeffrey Davis, the Energy & Carbon Management Commission is led by Director Julie Murphy, the Colorado Water Conservation Board is led by Director Lauren Ris, the State Land Board is led by Director Bill Ryan, and the Division of Water Resources is led by State Engineer and Director Jason Ullman.

Performance Environment

This section highlights some important outside factors that shape DNR's performance.

Population Growth

Colorado has experienced relatively significant growth over the last two decades and that growth continues although at a slower rate. According to the State Demographer's Office (SDO), the population of Colorado was 5,838,622 as of July 2022. Adding close to 30,000 from the previous year means a 0.5% growth rate, the slowest since 1989. 2019 data showed an expected population growth ranging from between 7.7 million to 9.3 million. The most current SDO projections for growth expect the population to be 7.5 million by 2050. In either case, the population is growing and a growing population presents both opportunities and challenges for DNR, especially in terms of increasing demand for: (1) water, (2) residential and commercial development, and (3) outdoor recreation.

1. The 2019 Technical Update to the Colorado Water Plan analyzed five future scenarios from the 2015 Water Plan using improved methods from 2010. This update quantified statewide supply gap estimates for the year 2050, ranging from 250,000 to 750,000 acre-feet per year (AFY) for municipal and industrial needs and 23,000 to 1,053,000 AFY for agricultural needs compared to today's baseline. The 2023 Colorado Water Plan was adopted by the Colorado Water Conservation Board in January, 2023. The water plan focuses on ways the state and partners can work to address this gap responsibly and build greater resilience to Colorado's existing and future water challenges.
2. Population growth increases contact between citizens and natural resources as urban development expands into new areas, giving rise to human/wildlife conflicts, and development within critical seasonal habitat and wildlife corridors. DNR seeks to navigate these interactions as they arise in a manner that minimizes the short- and long-term impact on natural resources. In particular, CPW is working to balance conservation and recreation by investing in Colorado's Outdoors Strategy and Regional Partnership Program, updating its State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, and by developing a new Statewide Habitat Conservation and Connectivity Plan in partnership with stakeholders around the state.
3. According to the 2019 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), outdoor recreation in Colorado drove \$37 billion in consumer spending, supported 511,000 jobs, and generated \$21 billion in wages and salaries. DNR works on multiple fronts to support outdoor recreation opportunities that minimize impacts on wildlife and the environment. However, responding to increased demand for outdoor recreation with limited financial resources is an ongoing challenge for the agency.

Energy Development and Severance Tax Revenue

The Energy and Carbon Management Commission and the Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety are tasked with regulating the development of Colorado's mineral and energy resources in a manner that protects public health, safety, and the environment. The level and location of non-renewable mineral development can have a significant impact on the workload for these two regulatory divisions,

as well as sources of funding for the Department of Natural Resources and other state programs, including the Public School Trust that supports K-12 education, and capacity-building programs for communities and local governments in the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA). In addition, the importance of other energy development and carbon management work with DNR's divisions is increasing. The Energy and Carbon Management Commission's regulatory role has been expanded to include carbon sequestration, underground natural gas storage, and deep geothermal development. Both the Energy and Carbon Management Commission and Colorado Parks and Wildlife also have a role in providing technical assistance and informing the design, siting, and permitting of renewable energy projects. Finally, the State Land Board is actively increasing the development of state lands for solar and wind generation, geothermal development, and carbon sequestration.

Many divisions and programs within DNR depend on state severance tax revenue, collected on non-renewable minerals as they are extracted from the earth, to support permanent staff, ongoing operations, and important water project grant and loan programs. Severance tax is an unusually volatile revenue stream because: (1) collections are tied to energy commodity markets, primarily oil and natural gas; and (2) Colorado has a unique tax credit that offsets state severance tax liability by a percentage of local property taxes, amplifying baseline fluctuations in revenue. Historically, severance tax revenues have varied by hundreds of millions of dollars from one year to the next, which has been challenging for program management and long-term planning. In addition to severance tax revenue, the Energy and Carbon Management Commission's regulatory work is supported by a conservation levy on value of oil and gas production. That levy revenue is characterized by similar volatility and is subject to similar long-term uncertainty as Severance Tax.

Through all of the annual ups and downs of severance tax revenue collections, DNR continues to work diligently to manage its severance tax cash funds conservatively and effectively to ensure consistent support for its programs on a multi-year time horizon. Fiscal Year 2020-21 had the lowest severance tax revenue collections on record, which were driven by the historic and sustained collapse in oil prices starting in spring 2020 and delayed refund activity in early 2021. Based on year-end data from the Department of Revenue, refunds to severance taxpayers exceeded revenue by \$15.3 million resulting in a withdrawal of \$3.8 million from both of DNR's severance tax cash funds each, equal to their proportional share of 25% of the total year-end deficit. In sharp contrast, the state saw unprecedented highs in severance tax revenue in FYs 2021-22 and 2022-23, with \$306.8 million and \$346.0 million in net collections, respectively. However, net collections for FY 2023-24 were only \$177.4 million year-to-date by the end of May 2024. The June 2024 Legislative Council Staff (LCS) revenue forecast anticipates a decreasing trend through the remaining forecast period: \$192.7 million in FY 2023-24 and \$212.8 million in FY 2024-25. The forecast from the Office of State Planning and Budgeting (OSPB) indicates revenues falling to \$192.8 million in FY 2023-24 and slightly rebounding to \$216.7 million in FY 2024-25.

Importantly, H.B. 23-1272 included a provision to reduce the severance tax ad valorem credit from its historical rate of 87.5% to 75% of local property tax in tax years 2024 and 2025, and redirects excess revenue attributable to the reduction to support various energy-related tax credits. This means that the total collections forecasted for FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25 will not be subject to the traditional distribution model. Legislative Council Staff estimate the contributions to the Decarbonization Tax Credits Administration Cash Fund will be \$13.9 million in FY 2023-24 and \$28.3 million in FY 2024-25,

while OSPB estimates \$16.8 million and \$35.3 million for the same periods, respectively, reducing the total amount distributed to the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Local Affairs by the same amount.

Regardless of future trends, the current influx of revenue has supported a much-needed recovery and return to financial stability for DNR programs, as well as an increase in the amount of funding available for water projects loans and grant programs to address critical water challenges, such as aging infrastructure, drought, fire, climate change, and population growth. However, medium- to long-term changes in energy production and use are likely to impact severance tax revenues and other revenues associated with coal, oil, and gas production in Colorado. While the pace and magnitude of these changes are uncertain, identifying strategies to continue the funding of critical state and local programs as fossil fuel related revenues decline will be necessary.

Federal Partnerships and Funding

DNR works closely with federal agencies to manage and protect the state's natural resources by collaborating directly, sharing data and technical expertise, and providing input regarding management and regulatory decisions affecting federal lands and natural resources. The Biden Administration has continued working aggressively and collaboratively with states, Tribes and local governments to implement climate and conservation agendas. Colorado is closely involved in many of these planning processes, including to revise and provide input on the USFS National Old Growth amendment, BLM's Western Solar Plan and Rangeland Greater Sage Grouse Plan, new statewide plan amendments focused on reducing oil and gas impacts to big game species habitat and protecting habitat for ESA-listed Gunnison sage-grouse, and the USFS's Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forest Plan, Colorado BLM's Big Game Resource Management Plan Amendment (RMPA) and several other project-level proposals related to recreational trails, forest and watershed health, and renewable energy and oil and gas development. The Administration has also initiated a number of significant rulemakings to strengthen regulations governing conservation, forest health, wildlife connectivity, greenhouse gas emissions, endangered species protections.

DNR also engages with Colorado Congressional Delegation members to provide input on proposed legislation, much of it targeting USDA and DOI landscape resilience and water source protection programs for consideration in the omnibus 2024 Farm Bill, as well as public lands protection, and support for State Wildlife Action Plan implementation (including reintroduction of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act, a longstanding priority for state wildlife agencies); federal appropriations priorities; and more. One primary example is DNR's work to spearhead an effort to reauthorize the Upper Colorado and San Juan Basin Recovery Act. Additionally, DNR and its divisions are regularly applying for major federal grant opportunities, like the America the Beautiful initiative, to support habitat restoration, safe passage infrastructure, water conservation, and landscape resilience, and are coordinating with state agencies to develop a pipeline of eligible priority projects. Our alignment with much of the new Administration's agenda presents an opportunity to accelerate progress on Colorado's wildlife and conservation priorities, but the state's meaningful participation continues to place significant demands on DNR and division staff resources and workloads.

This year, DNR has also renewed and extended Colorado's Shared Stewardship Memorandum of Understanding with the U.S. Forest Service for another 10-years, in partnership with the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS). Together, State and USFS Region 2 will continue to proactively identify priority watersheds and landscapes, coordinate investments, and carry out projects to improve the health and productivity of forest, rangeland, and habitat in Colorado.

Shifting priorities in the federal budget could also affect DNR divisions that receive federal funding, which accounts for about 8.0% of DNR's total annual operating appropriation, or rely on federal funding as important cost shares to partnership programs, including for habitat restoration, wildlife mitigation, water infrastructure, land reclamation, fuels treatment and other projects. The availability of federal funding will affect the extent to which DNR divisions can continue to provide services and complete projects in the future. Much of the stimulus funds allocated to the Department to date have been appropriated by the Colorado General Assembly, both from the General Fund (\$114M total) and the Economic Recovery and Relief Cash Fund (\$77M total). Stimulus funding bills impacting the Department include: SB21-054 (Transfers for Wildfire Mitigation and Response), SB21-240 (Watershed Restoration Grant Program Stimulus), SB21-258 (Wildfire Risk Mitigation), HB21-1260 (General Fund Transfer Implement State Water Plan), HB21-1326 (General Fund Transfer Support Natural Resources Programs), SB22-028 (Groundwater Compact Compliance Fund), and HB22-1379 (Wildfire Prevention Watershed Restoration Funding). To date, DNR has not received any direct funding through federal stimulus packages related to COVID-19. However, DNR has also received direct federal recovery funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) during the course of FY 2022-23, for the plugging and reclamation of orphaned oil & gas wells (\$25M) and the safeguarding and reclamation of abandoned coal mines (\$10M). Finally, DNR has applied for significant new federal funding from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). IRA grants include the Methane Emission Reduction Program (MERP) Marginal Conventional Well Grant (\$12.6M awarded) and the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) Implementation Grants (\$7.4M awarded).

Environmental Trends and Natural Hazards

Climate change is contributing to long-term environmental trends that DNR must account for to manage and protect Colorado's natural resources. Average annual temperatures in Colorado have warmed over 2 degrees Fahrenheit since 1980 (NOAA), and this warming is shortening Colorado winters and raising concerns about future water availability. DNR is increasingly integrating climate change projections into agency planning processes, including water supply planning and species conservation planning, as well as forest management planning in partnership with the Colorado State Forest Service.

Average temperatures in Colorado were above or well above average all but one month over the past fiscal year. Notably, December 2023 ranked the 7th warmest December in NOAA's 129-year record. Late summer and fall were dry, but big winter storms in February and March 2024 brought the state's snowpack levels up to near normal. Peak snow water equivalent (SWE) at the beginning of April 2024 ended up at 98 percent of the statewide median. May 2024 brought snowy conditions to high elevation areas, and as of June 4, 2024 statewide SWE is 136 percent of the statewide median. This number, however, doesn't provide a complete picture of snow conditions in each basin. Snowpack in the Upper Rio Grande and the combined San Miguel-Dolores-Animas-San Juan basins (each located in southwestern Colorado) stayed below normal for most of the year. As of late May 2024, snowpack in each of these

basins has almost completely melted and runoff, while the rest of the basins are all above 100 percent of the median. At the beginning of the fiscal year in July 2023, the US Drought Monitor indicated that Colorado was drought free. However, by the beginning of January 2024, two-thirds of the state was classified at D0 (Abnormally Dry) or above, and portions of the Rio Grande basin were experiencing D3 conditions (Extreme Drought). These were the worst drought conditions our state faced over the course of this fiscal year.

Looking at current conditions, a snowy winter in 2024 reduced drought across the state. As of late May 2024, approximately 30 percent of the state is classified in at least D0 drought. The state's reservoirs have stayed resilient, hovering at about 100 percent of the statewide median throughout the entire fiscal year. Due to a near average snowpack season, wildfire potential remains near normal for the beginning of summer. However, NOAA's Climate Prediction Center projects a hot and dry summer and fall across the Rocky Mountain region, which could increase fire and drought potential in Colorado heading into late summer and fall.

As CWCB continues to monitor potential drought conditions, it will utilize the Water Conditions Monitoring Committee (formerly the Water Availability Task Force) and the work within the 2023-2028 Enhanced State Hazard Mitigation Plan (Plan). The Plan has been used to provide consistent support for evaluating local conditions, identifying possible support measures, raising awareness and providing consistent messaging to the Governor and/or federal government on local needs. Given the significant easing of drought conditions across the state in 2023, the Plan is not currently activated, although the Water Conditions Monitoring Committee continues to meet monthly to assess current and future water supply conditions and evaluate long-term mitigation through cooperation, coalition-building, and education.

In 2023-2024, DNR supported the development of the State's updated Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Pollution Reduction Roadmap. The updated Roadmap includes 49 new near-term actions to help the state meet our statutorily mandated GHG reduction targets. DNR Divisions will be working to implement those new near-term actions to achieve emissions reduction goals, including by reducing emissions from oil and gas operations, expanding renewable generation on state lands, supporting and regulating the development of carbon sequestration and hydrogen projects, and implementing strategies related to Natural and Working Lands.

DNR is heavily involved whenever Colorado experiences certain types of natural hazards and disasters, including drought, floods, and wildfires. The Colorado Water Conservation Board leads drought response efforts and continues to support climate analysis like the update to the Climate Change in Colorado Report released in January 2024 (more information provided in CWCB section below). The DNR divisions administer programs that support wildfire prevention and flood mitigation projects to help prevent future events, and provide both expertise and funding for recovery efforts when they do occur.

Wildfire Impacts, Mitigation, and Recovery

Colorado forests are overly dense and lack age class diversity after decades of fire suppression and lack of forest management at the necessary pace and scale. When you suppress fires it causes an increase in density of trees/fuels in our forested ecosystems. There is a lack of age diversity in our forests due to

lack of management and disturbance. Forests are increasingly vulnerable to insect outbreaks, disease, and uncharacteristic wildfires that are growing in size and severity as the climate warms. Climate change also increases wildfire risk in Colorado's grasslands. Colorado is experiencing an increasing number of human-caused wildfires due to development and recreation in the wildland-urban interface (WUI).

In 2020, the state experienced the three largest wildfires on record (Cameron Peak, East Troublesome, and Pine Gulch fires), burning over 600,000 acres, over 1,000 structures, and taking the lives of two Coloradans. Large portions of these wildfires burned at medium or high severity, increasing flood and debris flow risks. These burn scars are still impacting water resources in 2023. In December 2021, the Marshall Fire destroyed over 1,000 homes and businesses in Boulder County and also took two lives. Estimated losses total over \$500 million. DNR led Colorado's first ever state-led Colorado Burned Area Emergency Response (CoBAER) analysis to assess soil burn severity and post-fire hydrological hazards following the Marshall Fire.

In 2023, building on significant state investment in wildfire mitigation and recovery in the 2021 and 2022 legislative sessions, the General Assembly funded updates to the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) tree nursery and new workforce development programs in the wildfire mitigation and forestry sectors. There have been two dedicated efforts in workforce development - HB23-1246, which provides free community college education for forestry and wildland fire, and SB23-005, which is working closely with community colleges to drive industry internship opportunities in the mitigation and wildfire space. In conjunction with Wildfire Awareness Month, the Colorado State Forest Service also launched the Live Wildfire Ready campaign in 2023 as a key outreach and education effort to educate homeowners about the risk of, and how to be prepared for, living in a wildfire-prone state. With nearly 6 million total impressions across an array of media, including almost 9,000 direct mailers to homeowners, the campaign will continue to inform those living in the WUI on protective measures that can be taken. In addition to these new programs and efforts, the Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program (COSWAP) received \$10 million in one-time general funds and is now funded annually with \$5 million in severance tax cash funds and \$1 million general fund. COSWAP also received \$2 million of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding specifically invested into a partnership with CWCB's Wildfire Ready Watersheds program. COSWAP will continue to provide Landscape Resilience Investment and Workforce Development grant opportunities. To date, over 90 projects have been supported by COSWAP totalling \$28 million and 16,425 acres of implementation. Likewise, the Forest Restoration and Wildfire Risk Mitigation (FRWRM) Program administered by the Colorado State Forest Service continues to support community-level actions across the state with grant funding opportunities. Over 80 applications were received for this program in the 2023-2024 funding cycle, of which 40 were funded with the program's annual \$8 million appropriation.

Additionally, DNR's EDO is working with CSFS to update operating agreements for the Division of Forestry. The Division of Forestry currently has no budget of its own, but its functions are executed by CSFS in collaboration with DNR. DNR and CSFS will be working on a new annual planning process which will be integrated into the FY 2025-2026 Performance Plan beginning with an internal planning phase from the Colorado State Forest Service which began in February 2024. The Leadership and Management teams from the agency have been tasked with rolling out a plan by year's end for implementation beginning in 2025.

Continuous Improvements

Over the past year, DNR has made significant progress in achieving our Wildly Important Goals (WIGs). These goals represent core values of the Department, and our promise to the people of Colorado to achieve our mission to develop, preserve, and enhance the state's natural resources for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future citizens and visitors.

Energy and Carbon Management Commission

Orphan Well Program

ECMC's Orphan Well Program (OWP) continues to meet its aggressive goal to plug and abandon orphaned wells in the state. Since 2018, the OWP has increased the number of orphaned wells plugged and abandoned from 18 to 100 per year. The recent infusion of federal funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), has resulted in the OWP obligating \$25M for work on orphaned sites, and performing work on approximately 294 sites this year.

Expanded Regulatory Authority

The ECMC continues to move forward with implementation of its expanded regulatory authority over geothermal wells, carbon capture and sequestration (CCS) wells, and underground natural gas storage. The 2023 legislative session saw ECMC being vested with the authority to bring forward a regulatory framework to oversee these nascent technologies in Colorado. These technologies are critical to helping Colorado meet its net zero emissions goal by 2050. Establishing a sound regulatory regime for these emerging technologies provides operators the confidence to invest in Colorado. ECMC brings to these regulatory efforts its expertise in siting oil and gas operations in a manner that ensures the protection of public health, safety, welfare and the environment. The Commission adopted new deep geothermal rules in August 2025. The CCS rulemaking is currently scheduled for November 2024 and the natural gas storage rulemaking will occur in 2025. In the 2024 legislative session, ECMC was also directed to provide technical support to local and tribal governments on the review of proposed renewable energy projects and the development of local codes governing renewable development.

Colorado Water Conservation Board

Water Plan Update

The CWCB continues to implement the 2023 Colorado Water Plan, a 10 year plan for working to collaboratively address Colorado's water challenges. First released in 2015, the Water Plan provides a comprehensive framework to guide collaborative action from water partners, agencies, and Coloradans. From securing supplies that provide safe drinking water to improving farm irrigation to rehabilitating streams – the 2023 Water Plan targets specific, key actions to contribute to a stronger, more water-resilient Colorado. The plan features a set of 100 actions to be completed over the next decade including 50 "Agency Actions" the CWCB will take (with collaborating agencies) and examples of 50 Partner Actions others can take and the CWCB can support through the Water Plan Grant program. The

Water Plan Executive Summary provides an overview of the plan as does the Water Plan [video](#). The [full plan and executive summary](#) are also translated into Spanish and are available online.

Drought Coordination

The CWCB leads the Water Conditions Monitoring Committee (formerly the Water Availability Task Force), the Drought Task Force and two subsidiary drought action task forces on Agriculture and Municipal water use). This work partners with agencies like the Division of Water Resources (DWR), the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA), and the Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA) as well as other stakeholders to explore ongoing issues, possible solutions and works to coordinate drought discussions across the state. In keeping with FEMA requirements, the CWCB worked extensively with the Department of Homeland Security and of Emergency Management to update the drought and flood sections of Colorado's Enhanced State Hazard Mitigation Plan, an effort that concluded in December of 2023.

Wildfire and Other Natural Hazards

Work is continuing on the Wildfire Ready Watersheds program authorized under SB 21-240 and on the award of grants to develop Wildfire Ready Watershed Action Plans (WRAPs) and implementation through the Colorado Watershed Restoration Grant Program authorized under HB 22-1379. This program assesses wildfire risk for flooding and other impacts to public safety and water resources, and exists to focus future mitigation in areas that will positively and cost-effectively address these impacts the most. The CWCB completed a statewide susceptibility study in December 2022 to investigate the susceptibility to life, safety, infrastructure, and water supplies to post-wildfire debris flow, sedimentation, flooding, and water quality degradation. An interactive website, WildfireReadyWatersheds.com, was launched and houses interactive maps and illustrations, comprehensive and easy-to-understand overviews of all aspects of the program, videos, podcasts, resources, and more. The CWCB continues to collaborate with community leaders on guidance for local watershed agency groups and government agencies to produce high-resolution post-fire susceptibility information and to identify fire mitigation and impact reduction projects to lessen the hurt that communities feel after a wildfire. As of June 2024, 13 Wildfire Ready Action Plans have been initiated statewide under this program, and six implementation projects have been funded, with another two WRAPs and two implementation projects currently under review.

Transformational Landscape Change

The 2023 Colorado Water Plan calls for Transformational Landscape Change, a move away from water intensive landscapes (e.g. turf) and embracing a One Water ethic - leveraging water conservation, land use planning and alternative water supplies to drive waterwise landscapes.

At the direction of the Governor, the CWCB initiated and led an Urban Landscape Conservation Task Force to help identify pathways to creating more climate appropriate landscapes. The Task Force met in 2023 and released a [final report in January of 2024](#) which includes areas of consensus around how to drive landscape change forward and the suite of tools that will be needed to support it.

CWCB also worked to further refine and deepen the understanding of the water savings potential of turf replacement through a second [exploratory analysis](#). This analysis builds on the first addition and helps better understand the range of water saving potential and associated costs. Additionally, CWCB funded a

second [Transformative Landscape Change \(TLC\) Challenge](#) that aims to support local water providers/municipalities to develop demonstration projects that replace up to 2,000 square feet of nonfunctional turf with low-water xeriscape gardens.

Strategic Operational Plan

In FY 2023-24, the CWCB staff and board assessed annual operational needs in keeping with Agency Action 5.10 in the 2023 Colorado Water Plan to “develop annual operational plans that identify targeted work for CWCB.” This included a retreat, facilitated discussion and creation of two work products: 1) the CWCB calendar, and 2) the CWCB Board onboarding checklist. This work will be integrated into the CWCB Guide.

Colorado Division of Water Resources

Expanded Telemetry for Administration

DWR obtained funding from multiple state and federal sources to expand the Division’s telemetry network that allows DWR staff, water users, and the public to access streamflows and diversions in real-time in a cost-effective way. This effort improves the accuracy and transparency of administration in stream systems where it is implemented while better informing water resources and reservoir operations. Funding for installation of streamgages at critical sites in the Colorado River basin was received from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. For gages on the Bear River, funds were received from the CWCB and the Yampa, White, Green River Roundtable. For diversion telemetry statewide, \$1.827 million was provided by the General Assembly through the CWCB Projects Bill (HB24-1435).

Hiring Additional Colorado River Policy and Technical Support Positions

The 2023 Legislature approved funds for DNR, DWR, and CWCB to hire 13.9 FTE to apply focused policy, technical, and communications support to manage the Colorado River System. Each of these positions has successfully been filled, including 8.5 positions for DWR. These new FTEs include a number of positions in DWR’s hydrography program, including two full time hydrographer positions in Division 5 (Colorado River mainstem), one full time hydrographer in Division 4 (Gunnison River), half of an FTE in Division 6 (Yampa and White Rivers) to create a full time hydrographer position, and an electronics specialist position that will assist with telemetry installations and measurements statewide. These positions will help to expand DWR’s capability to manage gaging and telemetry infrastructure in the Colorado River basin. Two of the added positions are River Operations Coordinators that will assist in coordinating river administration across water districts in Division 5 and Division 6. Finally, DWR is adding a GIS specialist to the team who will assist the Division in updating irrigated lands coverage across the west slope divisions where it historically has been updated every five years.

Mobile Field Data Application

In FY24, DWR received \$800,000 in funding from the CWCB Projects Bill (HB24-1435) to develop a fully functional field data application to run on mobile devices. DWR staff perform numerous different activities in the field that include diversion record collection, well inspections, dam inspections, well meter testing, field inspections for water court applications, etc. Many of these activities currently require cumbersome processes to collect data and re-enter it or use multiple types of software to get it

into the DWR database and document storage solutions. A goal of this project is to create a way to efficiently collect the field data and documents in a mobile application that will then easily upload into the system.

Deep Geothermal Operations

DWR continues to coordinate with ECMC to streamline the permitting process and remove regulatory hurdles for deep geothermal operations. DWR staff also supported ECMC's 2024 rulemaking on deep geothermal operations.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Keep Colorado Wild Pass

Under Governor Polis, CPW has a renewed focus on making sure we have diverse, stable, long-term funding that is equitable, supported by a broad set of stakeholders and meets the current and future needs of all Coloradans. To this end, we were pleased to launch the Keep Colorado Wild (KCW) Pass in January 2023. The new annual pass grants access to all 43 Colorado state parks at a reduced price. CPW launched a robust marketing campaign around the pass, which has driven more than 28% of Coloradans to include the KCW Pass with their vehicle registration. Since becoming available to purchase in January 2023, the KCW Pass has raised approximately \$62 million through June 30, 2024. Funds generated from the pass are dedicated to supporting state parks, wildlife, and recreation programs.

Private Donations

In FY 24, CPW set out to increase private donations, including both restricted and unrestricted funds, from \$964,544 received in FY 22 to \$985,000 in FY 23 and \$1,000,000 in FY 24. By the end of FY24, CPW raised \$1,163,000 from private donations, exceeding the target amount.

Wolf Reintroduction and Management

After the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission approved the Gray Wolf Restoration and Management Plan in May 2023 and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service completed its 10(j) rule, CPW released a total of 10 gray wolves onto state-owned land in Summit and Grand counties in December 2024, continuing the agency's efforts to create a permanent, self-sustaining gray wolf population in Colorado. CPW and the Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on how the agencies will collaborate to minimize wolf-livestock conflicts. Additional staff have been added at the field level to assist private landowners in reducing wolf-livestock conflicts, and a position that will oversee the wolf damage program has been added, enhancing the assistance CPW provides to landowners when damage occurs.

Division of Mining, Reclamation, and Safety

Wildfire Risk Reduction

The Inactive Mine Reclamation Program has prioritized mitigative measures at abandoned coal mine fires throughout the state and worked to reduce the potential for wildfire ignition associated with these legacy coal sites. The Program is actively engaged with the City of Glenwood Springs to reduce wildfire ignition risks associated with the South Canyon Coal Mine Fire on the western edge of the City's property. There are at least 38 active coal mine fires throughout the State that the Program works cooperatively with landowners to monitor and potentially mitigate. With increased funding under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the Program has increased focus and mitigation efforts at many of the highest priority sites.

State Land Board

Public Hunting and Fishing Access Program

The Public Hunting and Fishing Access Program is a cooperative lease between the State Land Board and Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Renewed in 2023 for another ten year term, the lease allows limited public access to enrolled state trust land for hunting and fishing on 973,000 acres across the state. Thirty years after its inception, the interest in the program remains high and the benefits to Colorado Parks and Wildlife, the citizens of Colorado and the beneficiaries of the trusts managed by the State Land Board continue to be positive.



DNR's Management and Regulatory Responsibilities

FY 2024-25

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW):

- 43 state parks
- About 350 wildlife areas
- 960 wildlife species and new authority to study tens of thousands of invertebrates and rare plants

Division of Reclamation, Mining, & Safety (DRMS):

- 1,296 mine sites

Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB):

- \$1.1 billion loan portfolio
- 14 interstate agreements (with DWR)

Division of Water Resources (DWR):

- 178,415 water rights
- 3,046 jurisdictional dams
- 14 interstate agreements (with CWCB)

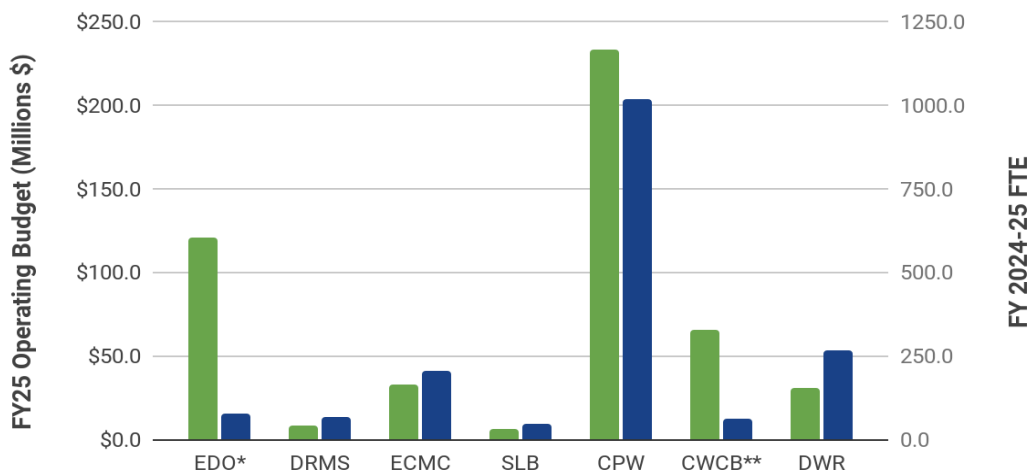
State Land Board (SLB):

- 3 million acres land
- 4 million acres minerals
- 7,800 leases and contracts

Energy & Carbon Management Commission (ECMC):

- 47,536 active oil and gas wells
- 45 oil and gas development plans (OGDPs) are under review
- 185 drilling permits (Applications for Permit to Drill (APDs) or Form 2s) are under review
- August rulemaking adopted permitting rules for deep geothermal wells
- November rulemaking to adopt CCS/Class VI well:

DNR FY 2024-25 Operating Budget: \$498.2million (1,739.5 FTE)



In Long Bill order: Executive Director's Office (EDO), Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety (DRMS), Energy & Carbon Management Commission (ECMC), State Land Board (SLB), Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB); and Division of Water Resources (DWR).

*The EDO budget includes appropriations for EDO personal services and operating expenses, centrally appropriated common policy line items, and the Colorado Avalanche Information Center (CAIC), the Colorado River Program (CRP), and Colorado Produced Water Consortium (CPWC). The EDO FTE count includes both central administrative staff and CAIC, CRP, and CPWC personnel.

**The CWCB budget includes appropriations made in the annual CWCB Projects Bill.

DNR Key Accomplishments in FY 2023-24

The Department of Natural Resources has made considerable progress on our efforts to advance three Wildly Important Goals (WIGs) for FY 2023-24 and beyond:

WIG #1: Sustainable Funding for Parks & Wildlife

This Wildly Important Goal is directly supported by Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) to develop new, diverse funding sources for CPW by increasing parks pass entry fee and private donations revenues from \$27,985,000 to \$47,000,000 by June 30, 2024. CPW relies heavily on hunting and fishing license fees and park entrance fees to achieve its mission, and prior to the creation of the KCW pass, there was no mechanism for many outdoor recreationists to support wildlife conservation or fund the trails and infrastructure many Coloradans demand. Long-term trends in the state, such as changing demographics, growth in demand for outdoor recreation, and a decline in participation in hunting are expected to challenge the state's ability to adequately fund wildlife management and outdoor recreation. Diverse, stable, long-term funding that is equitable and supported by a broad set of stakeholders is important to the success of CPW into the future.

Major Programs: CPW Policy & Planning Section, CPW Financial Services, CPW Creative Services and Marketing

Measure	FY23 Baseline Number	Q1 FY24	Q2 FY24	Q3 FY24	Q4 FY24	FY24 Actual	FY24 Target Number
Park pass entry fee and private donations raised*	\$28.2M	\$16.2M	\$26.4M	\$38.1M	\$52.4M	\$52.4M	\$47.2M
Park pass entry fee revenue raised*	\$27M	\$16M	\$25.9M	\$37.4M	\$51.2M	\$51.2M	\$46M
Amount invested in a targeted campaign encouraging Coloradans to purchase the Keep Colorado Wild Pass*	\$1.2M	\$409,650	\$739,391	\$1,049,891	\$1,544,891	\$1.5M	\$1.6M
Private donation proceeds raised	\$1.16M	\$247,503	\$297,221	\$189,852	\$428,424	\$1,163,000	\$1.2M

*Note: All measures with an asterisk are reported cumulatively from quarter to quarter.



WIG #2: Balance Outdoor Recreation and Conservation

This Wildly Important Goal is directly supported by Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), as well as the State Land Board (SLB) to increase the number of regional partnerships adopting our shared vision and guidelines to achieve sustainable outdoor recreation and conservation of natural resources and wildlife habitat by June 30, 2024. With this effort, Colorado is moving outdoor recreation and conservation planning in a more strategic and coordinated direction, positioning the state to be a national leader in balancing outdoor recreation with the conservation of natural resources. Our goals are to enhance public access or management in areas most suitable for meeting recreation interests while conserving the state’s wildlife, landscapes, and agricultural lands, and developing a comprehensive plan that reflects both a statewide vision and local community values that will inform funding efforts for conservation and outdoor recreation in Colorado, particularly for CPW. In an effort to balance outdoor recreation and conservation, the Department of Natural Resources will increase the percentage of Colorado participating in CPW’s Regional Partnerships from 56% (the total percentage of the state participating in Regional Partnerships in FY 22-23) to 65% (the goal for FY 23-24) by June 30, 2024.

Major Programs: CO Wildlife Habitat Program, CO State Parks, SLB Public Access Program, CPW Trails Program, CPW Terrestrial Program

Measure	FY23 Baseline Number	Q1 FY24	Q2 FY24	Q3 FY24	Q4 FY24	FY24 Actual	FY24 Target Number
Land mass of Colorado participating in CPW’s Regional Partnerships Initiative	56%	N/A	67%	67%	67%	67%	65%
Annual Regional Partnerships Summit held	1 Summit	0 Summits	0 Summits	0 Summits	1 Summit	1 Summit	1 Summit

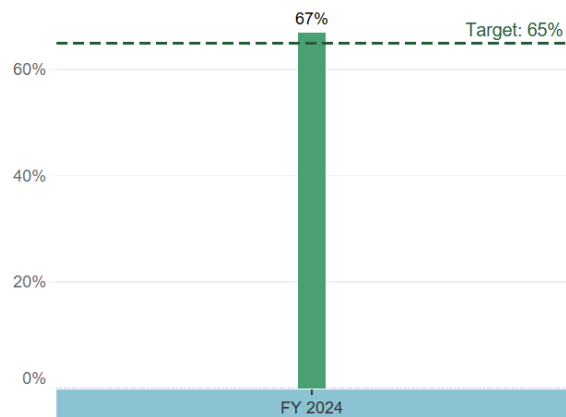
Measure	FY23 Baseline Number	Q1 FY24	Q2 FY24	Q3 FY24	Q4 FY24	FY24 Actual	FY24 Target Number
Total grant funding awarded for regional partnerships*	\$3M	\$0	\$3.5M	\$3.5M	\$4.8M	\$4.8M	\$4.5M
Complete Organizational Assessment of the CO-OP	0%	50%	90%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of maintenance hours performed by trail crews supported by grants*	145,000 hours	6,034 hours	0 hours	71,940 hours	72,568 hours	150,542 hours	150,000 hours
Complete Draft Strategy for development of a Statewide Conservation, Outdoor Recreation and Climate Resilience Plan	0%	25%	40%	90%	100%	100%	100%

*Note: All measures with an asterisk are reported cumulatively from quarter to quarter.

Balance Conservation and Outdoor Recreation

[Click here to see how we'll achieve this goal](#)

Increase the percentage of land mass of Colorado participating in CPW's Regional Partnerships Initiative from 56% to 65% by June 30, 2024.



Successful completion of this goal will prioritize the conservation of the state's wildlife, landscapes and agricultural lands while enhancing public access or management in areas most suitable for meeting recreation.

WIG #3: Increase Local Capacity to Implement the Colorado Water Plan

This Wildly Important Goal is directly supported by the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) to begin implementation of the 2023 Colorado Water Plan by implementing 10% of the Water Plan through the advancement of 5 of the 50 Agency Actions outlined in the Plan by June 30, 2024. Over the past decade, Colorado has experienced severe drought, extreme flooding, and an increasing population, resulting in increased demands and pressures on our water supply. The 2023 Colorado Water Plan sets out a roadmap for developing resilient responses to our water-related challenges using lessons learned and evaluating bold new actions that will support Colorado's watersheds, cities and rural communities, and farms.

Major Programs: CWCB Water Supply Planning Section, Water Supply Reserve Fund Grant Program, Water Plan Grant Program

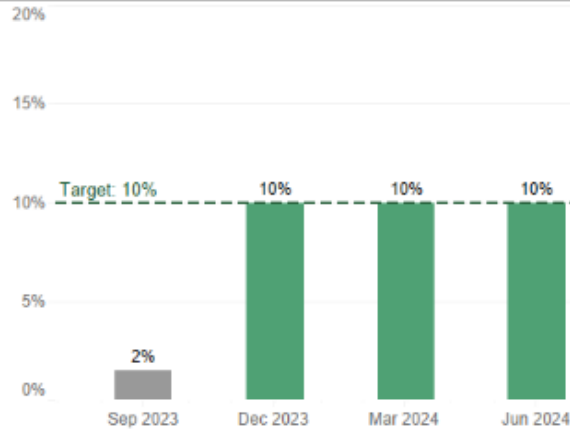
Measure	FY23 Baseline Number	Q1 FY24	Q2 FY24	Q3 FY24	Q4 FY24	FY24 Actual	FY24 Target Number
Implement 10% of the Colorado Water Plan by advancing 5 of 50 Agency Actions	0%	2%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%
Final set of recommendations identifying options to support transformative landscape change produced	0%	70%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Draft Report assessing the economic opportunities of avoided buy and dry to communities, ecosystems, and recreation developed	0%	25%	30%	70%	100%	100%	100%
4 grants that aim to develop or implement Wildfire Ready Watersheds supported*	0 grants	7 grants	9 grants	14 grants	23 grants	23 grants	7 grants
Draft Roundtable Handbook supporting the long-term stability and impact of Basin Roundtables developed	0%	15%	30%	75%	100%	100%	100%
CWCB Operational Plan developed	0%	30%	60%	90%	100%	100%	100%

*Note: All measures with an asterisk are reported cumulatively from quarter to quarter.

Water Plan Implementation

[Click here to see how we'll achieve this goal](#)

The Colorado Water Conservation Board will Implement 10% of the Colorado Water Plan by advancing Agency Actions by June 30, 2024.



Successful completion of this goal will ensure the Water Plan's 10 year strategy to create vibrant communities, robust agriculture, thriving watersheds, and resilient planning will be achieved and help Colorado meet its water challenges through collaborative action around water development and water conservation.



Additional detail for these, and other WIGs is available in the Department's Performance Plan, which may be accessed [here](#).

Other Key Accomplishments

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

- Hosted 18.5 million state park visitors
- Issued 1.7 million hunting & fishing licenses
- Logged 274,000 volunteer hours
- Provided 1.9 million acres of public access for hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing
- Generated \$39.7 million in revenue from the Keep Colorado Wild pass

Colorado Water Conservation Board

- Provided \$177 million in loans & \$63 million in grants for water projects around the state.
- Advanced the Colorado Water Plan through Agency Actions and Partner Actions.
- Released the Climate Change in Colorado report with the Colorado Climate Center.
- Completed the Urban Landscape Conservation Task Force Final Report to help advance waterwise landscaping.
- Continued to integrate water efficiency into land use planning through Growing Water Smart workshops and co-chairing the Colorado Water and Land Use Planning Alliance with DOLA.
- Continued to implement Phase II of a 2.5 year Colorado Water Loss Initiative Training and strengthened state water loss reporting requirements.
- Enhanced water loss reporting requiring water providers include a validated water audit with their report on water use and conservation efforts.
- Funded the ongoing development of local Water Conservation and Drought Plans.
- Completed the Enhanced State Hazard Mitigation Plan update including flood and drought sections and delivered a final report to FEMA.
- Appropriated one natural lake level water rights and 11 instream flow rights covering 66 miles of streams.
- Continued acquisition of LIDAR throughout the state in pursuit of full up-to-date state coverage.

- Continued significant contributions to improve the habitat and river flow conditions for federally listed species through collaborative work with neighboring states, conservation partners, and the Upper Colorado Endangered Fish Recovery Program.
- Protected Colorado's significant interests in interstate Colorado River negotiations and meaningfully engaged the Upper Basin Tribal Nations through a formalized Tribal-State process.
- Utilized Federal American Rescue Plan Act funding to retire 15,805 acres of irrigated acreage in the Republican River and Rio Grande Basins, conserving 23,708 acre-feet of groundwater annually.

Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety

- Responded to and mitigated 3 coal mine fire emergencies.
- Mitigated Lewis Coal mine fire in Boulder County.
- Implemented electronic permitting for all coal mines and trial ePermitting for all hardrock and construction material mines is well under way.
- Conducted meetings with Colorado Soil Conservation, DWR, and others regarding public notice processes and agency comment importance in Minerals applications.

Division of Water Resources

- Supported the Republican River Water Conservation District to achieve early compliance with the interstate requirement to retire 10,000 acres of irrigated land in the South Fork.
- Finalized Measurement Rules in Division 6 that became effective on January 16, 2024 and held a workshop on April 22, 2024 to provide an in-depth overview of the new measurement rules and measurement devices.
- Conducted a total of five stakeholder meetings in 2023 to discuss proposed Measurement Rules in Water Division 7.
- Continued development of proposed changes to the Rules and Regulations for Water Well Construction, Pump Installation, Cistern Installation, and Monitoring and Observation Well/Hole Construction, including collecting and reviewing public comments.
- Completed 114 of the 157 protests to the 2020 Decennial Abandonment Lists.
- Leveraging CWCB funds to obtain a FEMA grant, contracted for and led Comprehensive Dam Safety Evaluation (CDSE) studies at 38 high-hazard reservoirs to better identify and mitigate risks at existing dams including identifying potential for opportunities to increase storage.
- Obtained \$2 Million from the 2024 legislature to install over 325 new automated water flow measurement sites in the next few years.

Energy & Carbon Management Commission

- Broadened the Oil and Gas Conservation Commission's historic authority over upstream oil and gas operations to include regulatory oversight of deep geothermal resources, underground natural gas storage, and carbon sequestration and renamed the Commission to reflect the authority over carbon management and related energy development projects.
- Implemented Financial Assurance Rules and Mission Change Rules
- Accomplished goal of increasing Orphaned Well Program activity from 61 sites per year to at least 100 sites per year. With the additional funding from the federal government, ECMC achieved this goal and performed work on approximately 294 sites this year. Successfully obligated Initial Grant Funds of \$25M from the bipartisan IIJA.
- Supported creation of Colorado's first Produced Water Consortium, which will consider how to

achieve additional recycling and reuse of produced water and decrease use of freshwater in oil and gas operations.

State Land Board

- Twelve consecutive years of more than \$100 million in annual trust revenues with a new record set in fiscal 2022-23 of \$246 million. The State Land Board has generated more than \$1.6 billion for trust beneficiaries in the past 10 years.
- Installed megawatts of renewable energy on state trust lands exceeded 500 megawatts for the first time with the completion of the 248 megawatt Thunderwolf utility scale solar installation on trust lands in El Paso county. Partner projects are anticipated to bring another 387 megawatts online in the next three years.
- Saw the first sales of habitat mitigation banking credits, validating more than ten years of planning and exploratory lease work.
- Promoted the use of regenerative grazing practices by hosting workshops for agricultural lessees.
- Transferred 15,200 acres of federal land to the school trust to begin the final resolution of the trust lands debt owed to the state since the Enabling Act of 1875. The final 1,900 acres is expected to be transferred in FY 2024-25.



Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

Organizational Development & Workforce Efforts

- Training - ADA and Accessibility, Skills-based Hiring for supervisors, Inclusive Leadership, POWR Act
- Employee Resource Groups began in 2024
- Implemented Cornerstone online performance management and Learning Management System to increase professional development opportunities
- Increased bandwidth for pay equity reviews

Environmental Justice Task Force Recommendations

- Tribal Assistant Director - first in organizational history, works with Tribes on a government-to-government basis, coordinates with the Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs, and works to engage the AI/AN population throughout the State on issues related to natural and cultural resources
- ECMC incorporated environmental justice considerations into its permitting review process, including Enviroscreen
- ECMC created a community liaison and systems to ensure that disproportionately impacted communities have greater access to information and can participate more easily in permitting and hearing processes
- Language Access for community meetings
- Increased community engagement through investments in technology for accessible meetings
- Environmental Justice Meetings with Executive Director & Advocacy Groups, with review of upcoming public processes and legislative updates

Partners in the Outdoors Conference

- Keynotes and speakers focused on Outdoors for All, accessibility for public lands, working with Tribes, mental health in the outdoors, and collaboration

Outdoor Equity Grant Program

- \$2.75M in grants planned for 2024
- Nearly \$3.1 million has been distributed to organizations since the program's inception in 2022

Digital Accessibility & Outdoors for All

- Accessibility program staff and contracted tested, remediated and planned for future remediation Department-wide to comply with HB 21-1110
- dnr.colorado.gov/accessibility
- Continued focus on accessibility to the outdoors and our public lands for people with mobility-related disabilities
- Expansion of available track-chairs and accessibility equipment on State Parks, including Ridgway, Cheyenne Mountain, Barr Lake, and Staunton State Parks
- [CPW Announces Expansion of Aira to State Parks](#) for visitors who are blind or have low vision

DNR Wildly Important Goals

The Department of Natural Resources has four wildly important goals (WIGs) for FY 2024-25, detailed below. These goals were developed with a particular emphasis on Environment and Renewables goals, as well as the mission and vision of the Department and its respective Divisions.

WIG #1: Keep Colorado Wild - Diversify CPW Funding

Colorado Parks and Wildlife relies heavily on hunting and fishing license fees and park entrance fees to achieve its mission, and there has not been a mechanism for many outdoor recreationists to support wildlife conservation or fund the trails and infrastructure many Coloradans demand. Long-term trends in the state, such as changing demographics, growth in demand for outdoor recreation, and a decline in participation in hunting are expected to challenge the state's ability to adequately fund wildlife management and outdoor recreation. With the creation of the Keep Colorado Wild pass, a new long-term funding stream is available that is equitable and supported by a broad set of stakeholders, which is critical to the success of CPW in the future.

Goal: The Department of Natural Resources working in collaboration with the Department of Revenue will increase the percentage of vehicle registration renewals that opt-in to the Keep Colorado Wild pass from 27% to 29% by June 30, 2025. Hunters and anglers fund a significant proportion of CPW's budget through license fees, however, there hasn't been a mechanism for many outdoor recreationists to support wildlife conservation or fund the recreation infrastructure that many Coloradans demand. To address this need, CPW launched the Keep Colorado Wild Pass in January 2023, creating new revenue to support state parks, wildlife and outdoor accessibility programs. The new annual pass is sold with annual vehicle registrations, and grants access to all 43 Colorado state parks and at a reduced price. In the Pass's first year from January to December 2023, \$41,088,650 was generated and 1,490,954 passes were sold. DNR is committed to continuing the success of this new program to ensure it continues to provide a valuable additional funding stream to advance the Department's and CPW's goals.

Potential strategies to accomplish the goal may include:

- Promote the Keep Colorado Wild Pass through a targeted campaign
- Develop new campsites at State Parks
- Implement a media campaign promoting the Keep Colorado Wild Pass to winter recreationists
- Seek promotion of Keep Colorado Wild Pass by other organizations

WIG #2: Balance Outdoor Recreation and Conservation

With increasing interest in Colorado's Great Outdoors comes increased impacts to our ecosystems, wildlife and recreational infrastructure. We need to balance outdoor recreation with the conservation of our natural resources and move outdoor recreation and conservation planning in a more strategic and coordinated direction. Colorado's Outdoors Strategy advances three interrelated goals for our outdoors. Each goal is essential to achieve a future where our people, outdoors, and way of life endure for

generations to come: (1) Climate-resilient conservation and restoration helps wildlife, landscapes, and communities thrive, (2) Outdoor recreation is exceptional and sustainable and (3) Inclusive planning and funding drive coordinated action for our outdoors. Colorado's Outdoors Strategy toolkit will deliver local communities critical conservation, wildlife, recreation, and climate resiliency mapping data that will enable these communities to better identify, coordinate, and prioritize outdoor strategies and outcomes.

Goal: In an effort to balance outdoor recreation and conservation, the Department of Natural Resources will complete Colorado's Outdoors Strategy that ensures a future where our outdoors, people and way of life endure by delivering to Colorado's communities a toolkit for conservation, climate resilience, and sustainable outdoor recreation by June 30, 2025.

Potential strategies to accomplish the goal may include:

- Increase the landmass of Colorado participating in CPW's Regional Partnerships Initiative
- Solicit and receive feedback and public input on the draft of Colorado's Outdoors Strategy from stakeholders, interest groups and regional sectors of partnership initiatives
- Hold trainings with communities on Colorado's Outdoors Strategy toolkit on utilization of critical conservation, wildlife, recreation and climate resilience mapping data
- Hold Interagency Council meetings extending pathways to other State departments and agencies to collaborate on a Regional Partnership Initiative project

WIG #3: Water Plan Implementation

Over the past decade, Colorado has experienced severe drought, extreme flooding, and an increasing population, resulting in increased demands and pressures on our water supply. The 2023 Colorado Water Plan captures a shared vision and sets out a roadmap for developing resilient responses to our water-related challenges. DNR, through the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB), is set to implement the recently released 2023 Water Plan. The update uses lessons learned, is more accessible, and evaluates bold new actions that will support Colorado's watersheds, cities and rural communities, and farms.

Goal: The Colorado Water Conservation Board will take action on 20 Agency Actions from the Colorado Water Plan by June 30, 2027.

Potential strategies to accomplish the goal may include:

- Compile a progress report on the Water Plan
- Implement Transformative Landscape Change local projects
- Develop a free Do It Yourself Guide for Turf Removal informing residents how to transform lawns to more climate appropriate landscapes
- Develop a Turf Replacement Report for the public that summarizes concerns, water savings potential, and state of the science related to turf replacement

WIG #4: Energy Transition on State Lands

As the state pursues a transition to renewable energy over the coming decades, the State Land Board is uniquely positioned to partner with energy generation and transmission entities leading the effort. The recently updated Greenhouse Gas Pollution Reduction Roadmap 2.0 acknowledged the important role the State Land Board plays in supporting the Governor's Wildly Important Priority of achieving 100% renewable energy for the grid by 2040 and directed the State Land Board to increase clean energy generation on state lands. As of summer 2024, solar and wind energy projects located on state trust land generated approximately 550 MWs of electricity, representing approximately 10 percent of the total renewable energy produced in Colorado. The State Land Board owns 3 million acres of surface lands across the state, with land generally more concentrated on the eastern plains. In planning projects, partner entities find state trust lands accessible at reasonable cost in convenient locations supportive of the needs they identify in their larger plans. State Land Board staff ensure that land and species stewardship is maintained in the planning and development process, and across a project's productive lifecycle. Wind and solar energy production and cost effective transmission are possible at utility scale by putting state trust lands to work.

Goal: In support of the State's advancement towards a clean energy future, increase renewable energy generation on State Land Board Lands from 550 megawatts to 750 megawatts by June 30, 2027. An additional 200 MW of energy would provide power for 100,000 homes. As of summer 2023, solar and wind projects on SLB lands account for approximately 10% of total renewable energy produced in Colorado.

Potential strategies to accomplish the goal may include:

- Convert existing planning leases to production leases to facilitate the deployment of renewable energy projects on State Land Board Lands
- Hold meetings with existing planning lease operators to stay abreast of planning and permitting efforts
- Attend a renewable energy industry conference to generate additional renewable energy planning leases
- Update the State Land Board map server with most current National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) GIS layers of wind and solar resources to assist industry in identifying renewable resources available on State Land Board lands in Colorado

Colorado Water Conservation Board

The Colorado Water Conservation Board's (CWCB) strategic mission is to conserve, develop, protect, and manage Colorado's water for present and future generations. CWCB provides policy direction on water issues, is Colorado's most comprehensive water information resource, and provides technical assistance to further the utilization of Colorado's waters.

Customers and Constituents

CWCB serves several customers, including citizens and communities, water providers and users, governmental (local, municipal, state, and federal) and non-governmental (irrigation companies, agricultural entities, conservation groups, and businesses) organizations.

Primary Processes

1. Overseeing the implementation of Colorado's Water Plan.
2. Administering loans and grants to fund various water projects.
3. Continuously updating all aspects of the Colorado Water Plan, including the Analysis and Technical Update, Basin Implementation Plans, and comprehensive policy recommendations.
4. Negotiating and protecting interstate compact agreements.
5. Appropriating, acquiring, protecting, and monitoring instream flow and natural lake level water rights.
6. Addressing long-term flood protection for Coloradans' health, safety, and welfare.
7. Supporting watershed planning and projects that restore and protect watersheds.
8. Promoting water use efficiency and drought mitigation planning.
9. Participating in water-related endangered species initiatives and programs.

Major Funding Sources

The majority of the funding for the CWCB is from the CWCB Construction Fund, a large cash fund that receives revenue from various sources including interest on water project loans and investments, Federal mineral lease distributions, the Severance Tax Perpetual Base Fund, and the Water Plan Implementation Cash Fund supported by sports betting revenue. In addition, CWCB receives some funds from the Severance Tax Operational Fund as well as federal funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The division currently has an allocation of 60.7 FTE.

For more information about this division, please refer to [CWCB's website](#). Here is more [information about Colorado's Water Plan](#).



CWCB Division Goal #1

Advance Agency Actions in accordance with the 2023 Colorado Water Plan by 2033. Agency Actions are those that CWCB, in collaboration with other state agencies, will complete during the current Water Plan cycle.

Major Programs

- Water Supply Planning Section Programs
- Stream and Lake Protection Section Programs
- Watershed and Flood Protection Section Programs
- Interstate, Federal, and Water Information Section Programs
- CWCB Grant and Loan Programs

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
CWCB	Percent (%) complete on all 50 actions	↑	2023	0 (New metric with 2023 Water Plan)	2025	20%

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. The CWCB and partnering agencies will support and advance Colorado's vision for Vibrant Communities (10 actions).
2. The CWCB and partnering agencies will support and advance Colorado's vision for Robust Agriculture (10 actions).
3. The CWCB and partnering agencies will support and advance Colorado's vision for Thriving Watersheds (10 actions).
4. The CWCB and partnering agencies will support and advance Colorado's vision for Resilient Planning (10 actions).
5. In addition to these four action areas, CWCB will undertake additional agency actions that are more general in nature and do not focus on a particular action area even as they support them all (10 actions).

CWCB Division Goal #2

Advance Partner Actions in accordance with the 2023 Colorado Water Plan by 2033. Partner Actions are those which CWCB cannot do alone. Instead, they are opportunities for individuals and communities and will require effective engagement across the State.

Major Programs

- Water Plan Grants Program
- Water Supply Reserve Fund Grants Program
- Water Projects Loan Program

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
CWCB	Water Plan Grant \$ Awarded/Water Plan Grant \$ Available	→	2023	100%	2025	100%
CWCB	# of outreach meetings held with stakeholders regarding Agricultural projects	↑	2023	N/A*	2025	15
CWCB	# of outreach meetings held with stakeholders regarding Conservation and Land Use projects	↑	2023	N/A*	2025	15
CWCB	# of outreach meetings held with stakeholders regarding Engagement and Innovation projects	↑	2023	N/A*	2025	15
CWCB	# of outreach meetings held with stakeholders regarding Water Storage and Supply and Water Sharing Agreements projects	↑	2023	N/A*	2025	15
CWCB	# of outreach meetings held with stakeholders regarding Watershed Health and Recreation projects	↑	2023	N/A*	2025	15

CWCB	# of outreach meetings held with stakeholders not attributable to a single project category or funding program	↑	2023	N/A*	2025	75
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* The regionally based Water Plan Grant Managers were hired in FY 2023 so there is no baseline data. Trends will be tracked going forward beginning in FY 2025.

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. CWCB's primary mechanism for advancing Partner Actions is the awarding of loans and grants for water projects.
 - a. The General Assembly appropriates sports betting tax revenue authorizing the use of funds for Water Plan Grants. CWCB will aim to award every dollar appropriated for Water Plan Grants to projects annually.
2. CWCB's secondary mechanism for advancing Partner Actions is targeted outreach and engagement with stakeholders across the State who may develop an application for a Water Plan Grant. CWCB has four regionally based Water Plan Grant Managers whose roles include, among other duties, outreach and engagement with these stakeholders.
 - a. About half of the outreach and meetings conducted by the Water Plan Grant Managers are focused on one of the five Water Plan Grant Categories: Agriculture, Conservation and Land Use, Engagement and Innovation, Storage and Supply, and Watershed Health and Recreation. The Managers will aim to conduct 15 outreach meetings attributable to one of these categories for a total of 75 meetings.
 - b. About half of the outreach and meetings conducted by the Water Plan Grant Managers are more general in nature and not attributable to a single project category of funding program. These types of meetings are a critical prerequisite for further project development and advancement of the Water Plan's Partner Actions. The Managers will aim to conduct 75 of these outreach meetings.



Colorado Parks and Wildlife

The mission of Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) is to perpetuate the wildlife resources of the state, to provide a quality state parks system, and to provide enjoyable and sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities that educate and inspire current and future generations to serve as active stewards of Colorado's natural resources (Section 33-9-101 (12)(b), C.R.S.).

Customers and Constituents

CPW serves nearly all of Colorado's citizens as well as visitors from other states and countries, including: outdoor recreationalists, sportspeople and anglers, wildlife viewers, the outdoor recreation industry, landowners, and local communities and businesses. Outdoor recreation contributes \$62.5 billion in economic output to Colorado annually and supports 511,000 jobs.

Primary Processes

1. Managing and conserving 960 native species including mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, amphibians, mollusks and crustaceans, and now the authority to study tens of thousands of invertebrates and rare plants. This includes: managing deer, elk and other big and small game species for hunting and trapping; raising and stocking sport fish in Colorado's waters; and conserving "nongame" wildlife, listed species, and species of greatest conservation need.
2. Selling hunting and fishing licenses to in-state and out-of-state hunters and anglers, totaling 1.7 million licenses in FY 2023-24.
3. Conducting research, population monitoring, planning and public engagement programs to inform management decisions.
4. Providing hunters, anglers, wildlife watchers and other outdoor recreationists access to the outdoors on over 1.9 million acres.
5. Managing wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation opportunities on about 350 State Wildlife Areas and 43 State Parks.
6. Providing hunter education and outreach programs; enforcing wildlife rules and regulations.
7. Managing law enforcement, boater safety, acquisition, development, improvement and operations at Colorado's 43 state parks.
8. Supporting conservation, education and stewardship activities for adults, school children, and teachers that provide opportunities to learn how to hunt, fish, camp and be good stewards of Colorado's natural resources.
9. Distributing more than \$15.4 million in external grants supporting capital improvements that benefit trail users.

Major Funding Sources

CPW is funded through user fees from hunting and fishing licenses, passes, permits and registrations (58%), lottery proceeds and the Great Outdoors Colorado grant program (18%), other state and federal grants (13%), and a variety of other sources including general fund and donations (11%). The division currently has an allocation of 1003.7 FTE.

For more information about this division, please refer to [CPW's website](#).

CPW Division Goal #1

Enhance stewardship through increased conservation of land and water wildlife habitat.

Major Programs

- CPW Terrestrial Wildlife Management
- CPW Aquatic Wildlife Management
- CPW Land and Water Conservation
- CPW Species Protection/Restoration
- CPW Law Enforcement

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
CPW	# of acres of habitat conserved statewide through 3 rd party and CPW owned Conservation Easements	↑	2024	513,739 acres	2025	515,500 acres
CPW	Acres of land improved through the Habitat Partnership Program (HPP)	↑	2024	50,400 acres	2025	51,000 acres
CPW	# of herd management plans updated annually	→	2024	25 plans ¹	2025	16 plans

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Continue to steward and conserve acres of critical wildlife habitat, maintain working lands and provide public access for wildlife-related recreational opportunities. Working with partners, including private landowners, foster greater understanding, support for and investment in habitat conservation work across Colorado.
 - a. Monitor conservation easements to ensure they meet conservation objectives.
 - b. Improve access for sportspeople to private and state lands.
 - c. Intercept infested watercraft and monitor for aquatic nuisance species.
2. Produce scientifically based research to inform management.
 - a. Publish scientific studies that inform and influence wildlife management.
 - b. Communicate wildlife research findings and recommendations through internal channels and CPW's website.
3. Wildlife populations meet agency objectives.
 - a. Update game population plans.
 - b. Complete work plans for Species of Greatest Conservation Need or related habitats advancing

¹ Annual target was 16 plans.

priority conservation actions identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan.

- c. Increase the number of water specific angler creel surveys across the state to better inform fish management decisions.
 - d. Increase the number of deer, elk and pronghorn herds that are within 10% of population objectives.
4. Achieve and maintain financial sustainability.
- a. Collaborate with stakeholders to identify, prioritize and build support for alternative sources of revenue.
 - b. Communicate future revenue projections and needs to the Parks and Wildlife Commission and to the public on CPW's webpage.



CPW Division Goal #2

Increase public participation in outdoor recreation through outdoor education and programs, activities, and increasing public access to hunting, angling, and wildlife watching.

Major Programs

- CPW Trail Development & Enhancement
- CPW State Park System
- CPW Public Outreach and Outdoor Education
- CPW Law Enforcement

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
CPW	# of State Park visitations	↑	2024	18.5 million visits	2025	18.6 million visits
CPW	# of fishing license sales	↑	2024	978,000 licenses sold	2025	984,000 licenses sold
CPW	# of hunting license sales	↑	2024	724,600 licenses sold	2025	728,000 licenses sold
CPW	# of trail crew hours supported by grants	↑	2024	150,542 hours	2025	155,000 hours
CPW	# of volunteer hours	→	2024	274,000 hours	2025	279,000 hours

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Provide a world-class system of trails.
 - a. Create a comprehensive map of Colorado trails that is available to the public.
 - b. Award trail grants to build, improve or restore trails across Colorado while conserving wildlife habitat and other natural resources.
2. Manage state parks for world-class outdoor recreation. CPW will maintain high state park visitor satisfaction and ensure park natural values are conserved.
 - a. Evaluations for large scale and routine maintenance plans for state parks to meet objectives.
3. Engage more youth and adults in hunting and fishing activities.
 - a. Outdoor education and recreation programs increase, measured by participants in fishing

clinics, hunter education classes, Teaching Environmental Science Naturally (TEN), Outdoor Understanding for Teachers (OUT), Schools and Outdoor Learning Environments (SOLE), Parks Interpretive Programs and the Novice Hunter Program.

4. Maintain dedicated personnel, volunteers, and partners to advance CPW's mission and leverage ability to do more with limited resources.
 - a. Number of volunteers working to advance CPW's mission continues to grow.
 - b. Participation at the annual Partners in the Outdoors Conference continues to grow.
5. Achieve and maintain financial sustainability.



Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety

The Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety (DRMS) regulates mining and reclamation activities at coal, hardrock and construction material mines, safeguards and reclaims mine sites that existed prior to mining laws, and provides safety and health training for miners and mining contractors.

Customers and Constituents

DRMS serves the mining industry, the public, landowners and land managers with property impacted by historic mining, and other local, state, and federal agencies.

Primary Processes

1. Issuing mining and reclamation permits. This process is defined by statutory timeframes that commence once the application or revision is received.
2. Conducting mine site inspections and enforcement. This process is defined by statutory timeframes, Mined Land Reclamation Board actions, citizen complaints and requests for site release.
3. Addressing hazards and environmental problems at abandoned mine sites. This process is defined by available funding and liability issues pertaining to water.
4. Training and certifying miners on health, safety, and occupational topics. This process is defined by the number of requests for training received from all mining sectors and requests for certification from coal mine employees.

Major Funding Sources

DRMS is supported by federal funds from the U.S Department of Interior and U.S. Department of Labor (42%), severance tax revenue (45%), and mine permitting fees (13%). The division's Inactive Mines Reclamation Program also receives non-appropriated funds from the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, Environmental Protection Agency, and other state agencies and local partners. The division currently has an allocation of 64.8 FTE, with 60 filled or soon to be filled.

For more information about this division, please refer to the [DRMS website](#).



DRMS Division Goal #1

Ensure DRMS files applications and that public notice processes are transparent and more easily accessible to the public and other agencies.

Major Programs

- DRMS Minerals Regulatory Program

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
DRMS	Conduct online survey and conduct stakeholder meetings regarding public notice and transparency	↑	2023	Conducted 3 agency information meetings	2025	3 stakeholder meetings
DRMS	Initiate full e-permitting for Minerals Program	↑	2022	Beta testing begins in July 2024 with full implementation of e-permitting in spring 2025	2025	100% e-submissions by June 2025
DRMS	The number of agency comment letters received in response to Division notifications.	↑	2023	15%	2025	40%

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Conduct online surveys to identify areas of concern from the public and operators regarding the current public notice system in order to identify regulatory changes that may be required to enhance the public notice system.
2. Make easily identifiable improvements to webpage and processes while working toward more difficult goals. This includes upfront improvements to make the website more “user friendly” and easier to navigate, especially for the general public. The more difficult goals include reviews of public notice processes and how to integrate those into the website and interfacing with social media.
3. DRMS held 3 meetings with other agencies on the regulatory comment process. For 24 - 25 DRMS will hold 3 stakeholder meetings to identify areas of concern and opportunities to modernize the agency and public notice process.
4. Complete e-Permitting initiative to effectively implement permitting actions in a timely manner to better serve our stakeholders. Beta testing begins July 1, 2024 and full implementation is set for January 1, 2025.

DRMS Division Goal #2

Ensure that on-the-ground conditions at Coal Mines reflect the approved and estimated costs as determined by the Division and the approved coal mine permit.

Major Programs

- DRMS Coal Regulatory Program

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
DRMS	Complete Bond Compliance Inspections	↑	2023	6	2025	6

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Due to the dynamic nature of Colorado coal mining, ensure that the Division holds the adequate amount of reclamation bond based on the on-the-ground conditions of the sites.
2. Ensure that all coal permits reflect the appropriate amount of liability based on the approved mining plan.
3. Continue to maintain 100% compliance inspection frequency on all Active Coal Mines.

DRMS Division Goal #3

Address mining activities that occurred prior to the establishment of the State's regulatory program, for which no responsible party can be determined, and which pose risks to public health and safety through safeguarding an additional 325 hazardous mine openings by 2025.

Major Programs

- DRMS Inactive Mines Reclamation Program

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
DRMS	# of additional safeguarded mine openings	→	2023	336	2025	325

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Utilize existing coal problem inventory database and CEQ Climate and Economic Justice Screening tool to identify disadvantaged communities where IJA coal reclamation projects could be developed and implemented.
2. Continue to safeguard hazardous and abandoned mine sites each year. These construction projects inject money directly into the local economy. Currently on track to meet safeguarding target metrics by the end of June 2024.
3. Conduct environmental reclamation activities on legacy mine sites through partnerships with federal, state and local entities.
4. Prioritize reclamation and mitigation of high priority coal mine fires and other legacy coal issues throughout the State with increased funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.
5. Continue to assist the U.S. Department of Energy, Legacy Management program to inventory and safeguard defense related uranium mine sites (DRUMs) by completing the inventory on private property and performing safety closures on both private and federally managed lands.

DRMS Division Goal #4

Ensure that on-the-ground conditions at Coal Mines reflect the approved and estimated costs as determined by the Division and the approved coal mine permit.

Major Programs

- DRMS Mine Safety and Training Program

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
DRMS	Train miners in the health and safety of the task at hand	↑	2023	1850	2024	90% of Baseline
DRMS	Inspect Tourist mines for the public's and employees safety	→	2024	16	New Target	100%

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Conduct MSHA compliant pt 46 and 48 Safety training in accordance with the Mine Act of 1977 and 30 CFR.
2. Conduct inspections of our state's tourist mine industry to insure safety for the public.



Division of Water Resources

It is the mission of the Colorado Division of Water Resources (DWR) to administer the waters of the State to maximize lawful beneficial use, ensure that dams and water wells are properly constructed and safe, and provide information about water resources to the public.

Customers and Constituents

DWR serves many customers including citizens, farmers, municipalities, recreationalists, anglers, property owners, real estate developers, attorneys, canal companies, water managers, other state and federal entities, and downstream states.

Primary Processes

1. Administering 178,400 surface water and groundwater rights at over 50,000 active structures by verifying surface and ground water diversions and uses, assuring augmentation and exchange plans provide replacement to prevent injury, and that compact deliveries are made. This involves making 1,500 to 2,000 changes to which water right is in priority on Colorado streams each year.
2. Issuing enforcement orders to curtail injurious diversions or uses.
3. Monitoring water supply through streamflow measurements at about 1,100 water flow gages (including some ditch and reservoir gages).
4. Collecting an average over 600,000 diversion record observations at nearly 50,000 structures across all seven water divisions.
5. Enforcing and ensuring compliance with 15 interstate obligations including compacts, decrees, treaties, and agreements.
6. Conducting periodic physical inspections of approximately 3,000 existing jurisdictional dams, including 400 high hazard dams that are inspected annually. Reviewing construction plans for new dams or dam repairs, restricting storage for defective dams, and requiring emergency action plans on high and significant hazard dams to ensure public safety.
7. Issuing over 6,000 permits for groundwater use annually and consulting with the Water Court on an average of approximately 950 new water rights cases each year to ensure that decrees are administrable.
8. Evaluation and approval of approximately 280 Substitute Water Supply Plan (SWSP) requests each year.

Major Funding Sources

DWR is mostly supported by General Fund (92%), with a small amount of fee revenue and minor federal funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (1%). The division currently has an allocation of 257.0 FTE.

For more information about this division, please refer to [DWR's website](#).



DWR Division Goal #1

Manage water to assure that it is put to beneficial use by legally entitled water right holders, including efforts to comply with Interstate Water Compacts through increasing the number of structures with diversion records published provisionally during the irrigation season from 10 percent to 30 percent by 2025.

Major Programs

- Administration of intrastate water rights
- Interstate water compact compliance

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
DWR	# of Structures w/provisional Diversion Records	↑	2024	10%	2025	30%

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Assure that water diversions occur when water is legally available.
2. Issue enforcement orders where necessary to curtail inappropriate diversions.
3. Assure that compact deliveries and obligations are met.
4. Consult with the water court in over 900 cases each year to assure new water rights are administrable.
5. Review over 6,000 groundwater use applications annually.
6. Operate or maintain over 1,100 stream, ditch, and reservoir gages to determine water availability for Colorado diversion and/or for compact obligation.
7. Interact with other compact states to assess compact performance.



DWR Division Goal #2

Protect the public health, safety, and welfare from negative outcomes associated with dam failures through conducting annual inspections of all ‘high hazard’ classified dam structures in Colorado, and through improvements to the percentage of current (< 5 yrs old) Emergency Action Plans (EAP) for high hazard dams. A measure of the responsiveness of the program to the public (dam owners and their engineers) will be made by measuring DWR’s ability to approve plans for new dams and improvements to existing dams within the 180-day statutorily (CRS 37-87-105) defined criteria.

Major Programs

- Dam Safety

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
DWR	# of inspections of High Hazard Dams due for inspection. (CY data)	→	2024	384	2025	400
DWR	% of High Hazard Dams with existing EAPs (Emergency Action Plan)/% EAPs updated(< 5 yrs old)	↑	2024	100%/85%	2025	100%/90%
DWR	Average design review days from receipt of plans to approval of plans for construction	→	2024	96 days	2025	150 days

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Inspection of high hazard dams:
 - a. There were 414 non-federal high hazard dams by the end of CY 2023 and high hazard dams have a requirement for annual inspection*.
 - i. *High hazard normally dry flood control dams are inspected on a 3 year inspection frequency.
 - b. The number of High Hazard Dams typically increases each year due to development downstream of existing dams (changing their classification to High Hazard) and new dam construction. The program will keep pace with annual inspections although the number continually increases.
2. Work with dam owners whose dams have changed hazard classification from low to high to assist them with establishing an EAP, and identify dam owners with outdated EAP’s (> 5 years) for their existing high hazard dams and assist with updating.
3. Review design plans and specifications as efficiently and rapidly as reasonable for new dams and modification or repair of existing dams not exceeding the statutory requirement (180 days of review). Measure monthly and accumulate a running average number of days for reporting.

Energy and Carbon Management Commission

Through its permitting, monitoring, enforcement, and restoration regulatory efforts the Colorado Energy & Carbon Management Commission (ECMC and formerly known as the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission) ensures the state's energy resources are produced in a manner that holds operators to the highest standards in the nation for protecting public health, safety, and welfare, and the environment and wildlife resources.

Customers and Constituents

ECMC serves the general public, the oil and gas, geothermal, carbon sequestration, and underground natural gas storage industries, local and county officials and governments, federal agencies, other state agencies including the Departments of Local Affairs, Public Health and Environment, and Revenue, and other divisions in the Department of Natural Resources such as the State Land Board and Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

Primary Processes

1. Commission orders including spacing and pooling, permits, including new oil and gas wells and new locations for oil and gas well pads and production facilities.
2. Inspecting oil and gas locations and facilities around the state using a risk-based priority system.
3. Responding to public complaints, reported spills and releases, and overseeing environmental remediations.
4. Enforcing regulatory and permitting requirements, resolving violations through corrective actions, administrative orders by consent, or Commission orders.
5. Ensuring wells are properly plugged and abandoned and sites are properly reclaimed by operators or, in the case of orphaned wells, by the ECMC.
6. Conducting environmental studies, such as water quality studies that establish trends for groundwater quality in areas of significant oil and gas development.
7. Providing comprehensive oil and gas-related data and information to all stakeholders through extensive online databases, interactive GIS map, and other public outreach activities.

Major Funding Sources

ECMC is funded with severance tax revenue and a levy assessed on the value of oil and gas production. The division also receives a small federal grant related to the regulation of underground injection wells, as well as penalty revenue that must be used to fund specific program expenses associated with environmental response, remediation projects, and special environmental studies. The division currently has an allocation of 200.4 FTE. ECMC's Orphaned Well Program will utilize several funding sources for orphaned well plugging and orphaned site decommissioning, remediation, and reclamation work in Colorado. Orphaned Well Program funding sources include: 1) sureties collected from bond claims, 2) the Orphaned Well Mitigation Enterprise, 3) the remainder of the \$25 million federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) Initial Grant, awarded by the U.S. Department of Interior in FY 2022-23, 4) \$6.7 million from a Bureau of Land Management five-year funding agreement for work on federal orphaned wells and sites, 5) \$25 million from the federal IIJA Formula Grant Phase 1 (award

from DOI expected by September 2024), 6) \$12.6 million federal grant from DOE to assist operators in plugging marginal conventional wells, and 7) an estimated \$6 million from the federal IJA Matching Grant for Colorado FY 2024-25 to match state expenditures from bonds and OWME (application window opens July 1, 2024).

Major Programs

- Permitting
- Orphaned Well Program
- Engineering
- Environmental
- Field Inspection and Compliance
- Hearings
- Finance

For more information about this division, please refer to [ECMC's website](#).



ECMC Division Goal #1

Coordinate and prioritize efforts to inspect, plug, remediate, and reclaim known orphaned wells and locations to protect the environment, public health and safety, and wildlife.

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
ECMC	# of Known Orphaned Sites at Start of Fiscal Year	↓	2019	365 sites	2025	1,757 sites
ECMC	Number of Wells Plugged (Annually)	↑	2018	15 wells	2025	100 wells

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Decrease backlog of known orphaned sites.
2. Increase workload to commence work at orphaned sites, including well plugging, flowline abandonment, equipment removal, environmental remediation, and surface reclamation.
3. Prioritize new orphaned sites.
4. Prepare annual backlog list of orphaned wells and locations.
5. Prepare Orphaned Wells Program Annual Report.
6. Implement orphaned site reimbursement process.

State Board of Land Commissioners (State Land Board)

The Colorado State Board of Land Commissioners (the State Land Board) is a constitutionally created agency that manages a \$5 billion endowment of assets for the intergenerational benefit of Colorado's K-12 schoolchildren and public institutions. The agency is the second-largest landowner in Colorado and generates revenue on behalf of beneficiaries by leasing three million surface acres and four million subsurface acres for agriculture, grazing, recreation, commercial real estate, rights-of-way, renewable energy, oil, gas, carbon capture and storage, and solid minerals. Unlike public lands, trust lands are not open to the public unless a property has been leased for public access. The Colorado Constitution directs the State Land Board to: (a) generate reasonable and consistent income over time; and (b) protect and enhance the natural values of state trust lands.

Customers and Constituents

The agency serves the current and future trust beneficiaries (schoolchildren and other public institutions), as well as its stakeholders: lessees, the Governor, the General Assembly, and the local communities in which the State Land Board operates.

Primary Processes

1. Managing surface leases for agricultural, grazing, and recreational land use; commercial real estate; rights-of-way and renewable energy development.
2. Managing mineral leases for oil, natural gas, coal, solid mineral development and extraction.
3. Inspecting leases on trust lands to ensure good stewardship practices for intergenerational benefit to beneficiaries.
4. Generating trust revenue to provide financial support to beneficiaries, primarily public schools.

Revenue flows to schoolchildren in two ways:

- a. Funding the Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST) program, which offers competitive grants to rural school districts for the construction of new schools or for the renovation of existing school facilities.
- b. Contributing Public School Permanent Fund investment income to the operating budget of the Department of Education via the School Finance Act.

Major Funding Sources

The State Land Board is entirely self-funded by revenue generated from leasing state trust assets, and receives no tax dollars. The agency currently has an allocation of 48.6 FTE.

For more information about this division, please refer to the [State Land Board website](#).



SLB Division Goal #1

Deliver enhanced financial outcomes for the eight public trusts through operations improvements and diversification of investments. Make properties more valuable to leasing through investments that provide water and access. Sustain annual recurring revenue.

Major Programs

- SLB Field Operations
- SLB Real Estate
- SLB Minerals
- SLB Operations
- SLB Outreach

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
SLB	Sustain Trust Recurring Revenue	→	2024	\$30 million	2025	\$30 million
SLB	Develop additional uses for water assets on state trust land	→	2024	2 new leases	2025	2 new leases
SLB	Invest in commercial real estate to sustain occupancy such that trust income distribution remains steady	→	2024	\$2.5m distributed	2025	\$2.5m distributed
SLB	Lease additional properties through competitive bidding	→	2024	30 leases	2025	30 leases
SLB	Develop partnerships in agri voltaics to research and develop two projects for potential citing on trust lands	↑	2024	0 projects	2025	2 projects planned
SLB	Increase renewable energy leasing on state trust land in order to contribute to the state's goal of moving the electric grid to 100% renewable sources by 2040.	↑	2024	550 Installed Megawatts	2027	750 Installed Megawatts
SLB	Support Xcel's statewide Power Pathway project by encouraging right of way access across state trust land	↑	2024	X miles of ROW	2026	X+ miles of ROW

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Grow and diversify the portfolio of real property and financial assets to take advantage of market opportunities and to minimize the impact of market volatility.
2. Generate additional revenue by preserving, enhancing and communicating the value of Trust assets through strategic acquisitions, divestment, and property improvements including establishing access and acquiring water.
3. Increase organizational efficiency through investments in systems, training, policies, staff communication and planning.
4. Ensure organizational continuity by implementing succession planning and investing in staff professional and technical skills development in all critical roles.
5. Strengthen external communications to build awareness of leasing opportunities and promote the agency's role in supporting public education to key stakeholders and targeted customers. Solicit customer feedback to agency work.



SLB Division Goal #2

Provide excellent stewardship of lands held in the Trusts by increasing the number of stewardship management plans implemented, lease inspections performed, lease performance stipulations incorporated and lease deficiencies corrected.

Major Programs

- SLB Conservation Services
- SLB Outreach
- SLB Field Operations
- SLB Minerals

Key Metrics

Division	Measure	Desired Trend	Baseline FY	Baseline Number	Target FY	Target Number
SLB	# of inspections of oil & gas wells	→	2024	750 inspections	2025	750 inspections
SLB	# of inspections of rangeland leases	→	2024	300 inspections	2025	300 inspections
SLB	Host Agriculture Industry Roundtables	→	2024	2 events	2025	2 events
SLB	Host Agriculture Industry Forums	↑	2024	2 events	2025	3 events
SLB	Stewardship Trust Properties Inspected	↑	2024	30 properties	2025	35 properties

Critical Strategies and Activities

1. Protect natural values on trust lands by implementing holistic science-based asset management plans in partnership with lessees and other land management partners.
2. Solicit lessee input to evaluate the performance and condition of Stewardship Trust parcels and incorporate findings into management plans and staff processes.
3. Improve public and stakeholder understanding of the impact of SLB stewardship efforts across the portfolio to build interest in partnerships targeted at land stewardship.
4. Construct, implement and measure lease performance stipulations that uphold excellent stewardship of trust lands and the ecosystems and species found there.

Appendix A: FY 2023-24 SMART Act Performance Evaluation

Section 2-7-204(3)(c)(VI), C.R.S., requires a summary of the most recent performance evaluation, which can be found on the [Governor's Dashboard](#). The Governor's Dashboard is a public reporting tool that includes performance data on each agency's progress towards their WIGs and lead measures, and is updated on a monthly basis.

*Select "Department of Natural Resources" from the drop-down menu to view the most up-to-date DNR performance metrics and progress to date.

