

C O L O R A D O P A R K S & W I L D L I F E

# Great Outdoors Colorado

## FY 2021-2022 Annual Report



# Letter from the Director

We are pleased to submit the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Annual Report for the 2021-22 fiscal year to the Board of the Great Outdoors Colorado Trust. For 125 years, members of this agency have dedicated their careers to perpetuate the wildlife resources of the state, provide a quality state parks system, and to provide enjoyable and sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities that inspire current and future generations to serve as active stewards of our natural resources.

GOCO funding contributes to nearly every aspect of CPW's mission, from the day-to-day management of state parks and wildlife areas to long-term research to protect Colorado's native plant and animal species. GOCO funding helps CPW protect and maintain Colorado's beautiful landscapes for recreation, hunting, angling, and species conservation. One of the most exciting developments is the forthcoming Keep Colorado Wild Pass. The pass fee will help us engage many more outdoor recreationists and add stability to the parks' funding stream. In this report you will see specific examples of the way GOCO benefits Colorado, including:

- Operating support for Colorado's state parks, which continued to host record visitation, totaling over 19 million visitor days in FY 2021-22.
- Support for more than 310,000 volunteer hours at Colorado's wildlife areas and state parks.
- Funding 11 regional partnerships to join a statewide initiative working to ensure that Colorado's land, water, and wildlife thrive while also providing for equitable access to quality outdoor recreation experiences.

With GOCO support, we continued important partnerships and programs that expand education and opportunities for young people to envision a career in natural resources, and maintained a strong and dedicated volunteer base. GOCO's continuing support of the Regional Partnerships Initiative and a one-time contribution to the Outdoor Equity Grant Program demonstrates a commitment to innovative approaches, providing new opportunities for outdoor recreation and conservation. CPW is expanding the number of hunters and anglers in Colorado through hunter outreach and angler education, holding in-person and virtual outreach events, contests, seminars and managing grant programs. The return of the Free Fishing Weekend events and promotions was a huge highlight for CPW in 2022 since it had been limited by the pandemic the past two years.

State Parks continue to draw more visitors and we continue exploring opportunities to expand the state park system. Fishers Peak State Park, opened in fall 2020, currently offers hiker access to six trails, three of which are open to mountain biking, and one biking only downhill trail, and a scenic drive-in picnic area easily accessed from the parking lot. The park master planning process is in full swing, which includes striking the appropriate design and management balance that supports conservation and outdoor recreation.

Sincerely,



Heather Disney Dugan  
Acting Director, Colorado Parks and Wildlife

# Working Together for Colorado

Colorado is recognized around the country and the world for its beautiful landscapes and diverse and healthy wildlife populations. At the same time access to outdoor recreation and the state's wildlife is a cornerstone of the Colorado lifestyle and quality of life. Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) is a major funding partner in Colorado Parks and Wildlife's (CPW) efforts. GOCO funding supports a wide variety of volunteer, youth and education programs, and park operating and management activities. GOCO investments also support statewide initiatives in species conservation efforts, habitat protection and enhancement, maintenance and development of trails, and infrastructure projects.

In 2020, the GOCO Board adopted a new strategic plan to guide future funding priorities. GOCO grant programs are rooted in the core values of the plan: Resource Conservation, Outdoor Stewardship, Community Vitality, Equitable Access, and Youth Connections. This annual report is structured around these ideas. There is significant overlap between the missions of CPW and GOCO and a wide variety of programs, projects, and activities managed by CPW are supported with GOCO funding. This annual report highlights the great things that CPW has been able to accomplish in state fiscal year 2021-22 with GOCO's help.

CPW receives minimal general tax support, and GOCO funding is vital to the ongoing mission of CPW making many of the accomplishments possible. At the end of this report, you will find financial tables detailing GOCO's support for CPW in FY 2021-22 organized by Constitutional purpose and grant. CPW leveraged GOCO funding to conserve natural resources, promote outdoor stewardship, enhance community vitality, improve equitable access to the outdoors, and connect youth and families with nature.

**\$15,913,269**

**FY 2021-22**  
INVESTMENT PLAN TOTAL  
AWARD FOR STATE PARKS

**\$13,999,923**

**FY 2021-22**  
INVESTMENT PLAN TOTAL  
AWARD FOR WILDLIFE

# Resource

## CONSERVATION AND OUTDOOR STEWARDSHIP

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*Protecting Colorado's most valuable natural resources.* Protection of Colorado's resources is the shared mission of GOCO and CPW. GOCO funding helps CPW protect new habitat and landscapes and maintain areas already under CPW's care.







**Douglas Mountain Ranch**

**1,160**

**FY 2021-22**  
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION  
EASEMENT ACRES FUNDED

**510**

**FY 2021-22**  
WILDLIFE ACCESS  
EASEMENT ACRES  
ACQUIRED

**\$2,821,445**

**FY 2021-22**  
GOCO REIMBURSEMENTS  
FOR LAND ACQUISITION



# LAND AND WATER PROTECTION

In addition to managing Colorado's wildlife and state park system, CPW is responsible for the acquisition, protection, and management of lands, water resources, and water rights in coordination with private landowners and local, state, federal, and non-governmental partners.

Colorado's 66 million acres of land includes 31.8 million acres of agricultural lands, which sustains more than 39,000 ranches and farms<sup>1</sup>. Without private landowner support, conservation of Colorado's abundant wildlife habitat and access to world-class recreation opportunities would be severely limited. GOCO funding helps CPW leverage opportunities to protect these resources in perpetuity.

## GOCO-SUPPORTED PROJECTS IN FY 2021-22

### DOUGLAS MOUNTAIN RANCH

1,659 ACRES

Through a collaboration with GOCO, Douglas Mountain Ranch, the Mountain Area Land Trust, Clear Creek County Open Space, and Friends of Clear Creek, CPW acquired 123 acres of the Douglas Mountain Ranch, which is contiguous to the Georgetown Wildlife Watchable Area (WWA). The acquisition represents a once in a lifetime opportunity to expand the WWA, protect critical Rocky Mountain Bighorn sheep habitat and a migration corridor while

preserving scenic view sheds. Elk, deer, and moose can be seen in the open meadows and along the West Fork of Clear Creek, which passes through the property. The riparian habitat benefits game and non-game species including the boreal toad, bald eagle, and the Lewis's woodpecker. The property is also within a buffer zone for peregrine falcon nesting grounds.

<sup>1</sup>[https://www.nass.usda.gov/Quick\\_Stats/Ag\\_Overview/stateOverview.php?state=COLORADO](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Quick_Stats/Ag_Overview/stateOverview.php?state=COLORADO)

# CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Colorado's system of state parks and wildlife areas is more than 60 years old and requires continuous maintenance, restoration, and upgrading to the standards expected by today's visitors. The CPW Capital Development program manages construction and maintenance of more than 1,400 structures and 115 dams across the state. GOCO funding supports Capital Development program operations and is the primary funding source for many capital projects.

## **PARKS LARGE CAPITAL STATE FOREST STATE PARK**

North Michigan Dam  
Rehabilitation

**\$7,000,000**

In the ultimate rugged Colorado, State Forest State Park offers visitors 71,000 acres of forest, jagged peaks, alpine lakes, wildlife, and miles of trails. The park stretches along the west side of the Medicine Bow Mountains and into the north end of the Never Summer mountain range. One of the many popular locations in the park is the North Michigan reservoir. This dam is one of the highest CPW priorities to repair as it had been identified to have several failure risk factors. This project was a challenging full rehabilitation due to the elevation and limited season for work due to weather conditions. Even with these challenges, the majority of work was completed in one season. In addition to dam rehabilitation, the project also added aquatic habitat and increased fishing access.

## **CRAWFORD STATE PARK**

Clear Fork Campground  
Renovation

**\$1,537,487**

Located near the Black Canyon of the Gunnison, Crawford's major draws are its reservoir and camping facilities. It is the rare place on the western slope where people can enjoy fishing, waterskiing, swimming, and even scuba diving. The park has two campgrounds, and this project is an exciting upgrade for visitors. The renovations include replacing multiple campsites with better ADA accessible campsites, more space, shade shelters, picnic tables, and full hookups.

## **TRINIDAD LAKE STATE PARK**

Road Rehabilitation

**\$2,313,000**

Trinidad Lake State Park, nestled in the Southern Colorado foothills of the Culebra Range of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, is a great place to enjoy trails, camping, hunting, and easy access to the City of Trinidad. The park's 800-acre lake provides ample opportunities for boating and fishing. The park was acquired in 1978 and many of the facilities are in need of replacement. The existing roads in the park are more 40 years old and need to be removed and replaced. This project made it possible to rehabilitate approximately 3 miles of roads and parking lots in some of the most popular places for visitors.





**Crawford State Park's Clearfork Campground renovation**

## **WILDLIFE LARGE CAPITAL**

### **AQUATIC HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECTS**

**\$2,000,000 (in total)**

In 2020, CPW began the process of completing nine aquatic habitat restoration projects in three CPW regions (Northeast, Southwest, and Northwest). Each of the projects had slightly different goals, but the overarching benefits of this work include increased and improved aquatic habitat and better angling satisfaction. This project required challenging coordination between the regions, aquatic and research biologists, and engineers, while working in a limited construction season due to fish spawning and water fluctuations. Most of the sites are complete with some work still underway. CPW plans to complete more collaborative projects like this in the future.

**\$15,679,878**

#### **FY 2021-22**

GOCO REIMBURSEMENTS FOR PARKS AND WILDLIFE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

**\$5,054,334**

#### **FY 2021-22**

TOTAL GOCO FUNDING AWARDED, SUPPORTING 14 STATE PARKS

### **SPRING CREEK DAM PHASE II-OUTLET REHABILITATION**

**\$1,070,000**

Spring Creek is a picturesque CPW-owned dam surrounded by United States Forest Service land and located outside Crested Butte. The dam has been identified as one of CPW's highest ranked dams in need of repairs due to deterioration, age, and the potential damage that would be caused downstream if it were to fail. Inspections completed by Colorado State Engineer's Office of Dam Safety indicated that the non-functioning gate, which allows staff to open and close it to store and release water when needed, and the lack of remote monitoring at the dam increased the potential for dam failure. Remote monitoring, using a computer program and electronic equipment, saves staff time and provides real time information on dam function, improving safety. This project remedied these deficiencies and highlights GOCO's support of CPW's continued commitment to dam safety maintenance.

**\$2,000,000**

#### **FY 2021-22**

TOTAL GOCO FUNDING AWARDED, SUPPORTING NUMEROUS WILDLIFE SMALL CAPITAL PROJECTS

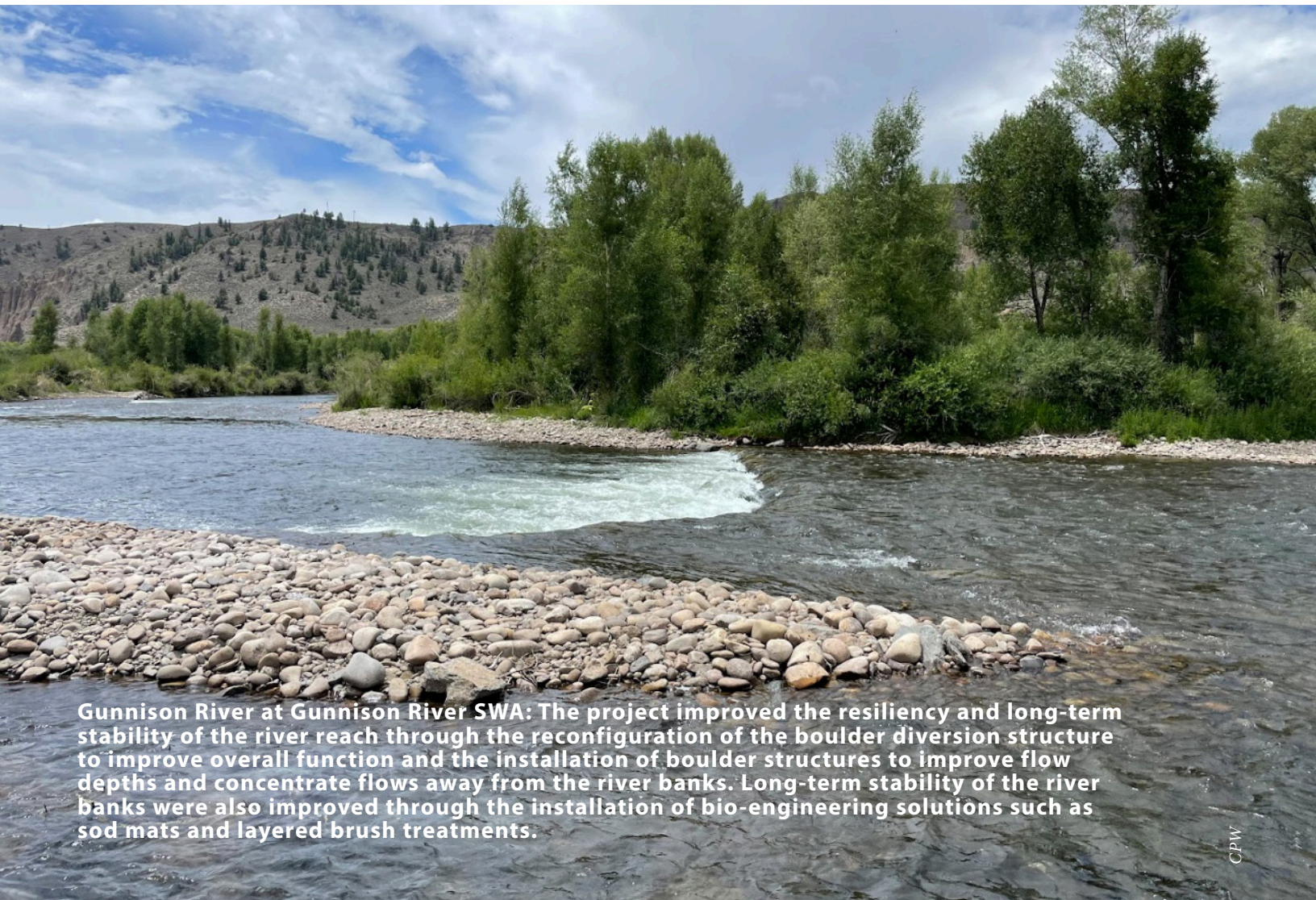
## WILDLIFE SMALL CAPITAL

Maintaining existing facilities is one of the top priorities of the CPW Capital Development Program. CPW dedicates a portion of its overall capital budget to small capital projects, defined as projects with a total cost between \$5,000 and \$150,000. These projects are primarily maintenance or minor improvements and address health and safety issues or repair minor issues before they become major problems.

This program has proved to be successful for state parks and in the last few years, has been expanded to include wildlife owned or managed properties. Regions and branches are assigned an annual budget for the small capital program. Projects are selected and prioritized at the regional or branch level and managed by field managers, allowing them to address highest priorities without competition from other regions or branches. The program averages about 120

projects completed per year.

Many of the division's hatchery facilities are 70 to 100 years old and with 574 wildlife facilities statewide, the maintenance needs are significant. Beginning in the FY 2018-19 investment proposal, GOCO awarded CPW two million dollars to initiate a wildlife small capital program, which CPW has matched with federal funds and agency cash funds, maintaining a Wildlife Small Capital Program with an overall budget of five million dollars. This program has been crucial in addressing the maintenance and rehabilitation needs of the wildlife areas. Although FY 2021-22 will be the last year that GOCO funds will be allocated to the wildlife small capital program, CPW plans to continue the program.



**Gunnison River at Gunnison River SWA: The project improved the resiliency and long-term stability of the river reach through the reconfiguration of the boulder diversion structure to improve overall function and the installation of boulder structures to improve flow depths and concentrate flows away from the river banks. Long-term stability of the river banks were also improved through the installation of bio-engineering solutions such as sod mats and layered brush treatments.**

# SPECIES CONSERVATION, NATURAL AREAS PROGRAM AND WETLANDS CONSERVATION

Colorado boasts some of the most diverse and abundant wildlife populations in North America including an astonishing 960 wildlife species. CPW species conservation and wildlife

reintroduction programs help many of the state's most cherished and iconic species prosper today despite emerging habitat and climate challenges.

**Ptarmigan**



## ALPINE SPECIES

Colorado is known for its high elevation “Alpine Zone” that begins at around 11,500 feet. At this elevation, trees can no longer grow and native habitats are comprised of short statured herbaceous vegetation, steep scree and rock talus slopes, alpine lakes, cliffs, and large boulder fields. The weather in the alpine is harsh and consists of short growing seasons, long winters, high winds, and afternoon summer thunderstorms that keep mean daily temperatures low. Climate change can affect the alpine zone with warming temperatures and more frequent droughts, intensified weather events, and changes in snow cover. Because Colorado contains the majority of alpine habitats in the lower 48 states, it is imperative for CPW to conserve the few species that call these habitats home. Two of these alpine species; the southern white-tailed ptarmigan and the brown-capped rosy-finch are almost completely endemic to Colorado. As part of a long-term monitoring program beginning in 2011, CPW conducted occupancy surveys in 2022 for both of these species as well as the American pika. Survey plots were arrayed across the state from the southern La Plata Mountains north to the Mount Zirkel Wilderness. Hardy CPW technicians endured long hikes across difficult terrain to reach alpine habitats to survey for these species. Preliminary information suggests that all three species are maintaining, but continued monitoring is needed as recreation in the high country increases and environmental conditions change.

# \$5,537,552

**FY 2021-22**  
GOCO REIMBURSEMENTS  
FOR SPECIES  
CONSERVATION



## CANADA LYNX

Beginning in 1999 with GOCO funding, CPW initiated a reintroduction of this subalpine species to southwest Colorado. After declaring the reintroduction a success in 2010 based on benchmarks that indicate a self-sustaining population, biologists began monitoring the species using non-invasive techniques. This means that animals were no longer being captured and fitted with telemetry collars. Trail cameras and snow tracking efforts continue to be used to document occupancy in the region. Results thus far indicate a stable population. Information developed through on-going studies are also informative to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as they consider the federal status of the species.

## Male Gunnison sage-grouse



### **GUNNISON SAGE-GROUSE**

To monitor population trends of the threatened Gunnison sage-grouse, staff counted birds on their mating sites. A total of 135 mating sites, known as leks, were counted across all seven populations in Colorado. Although the estimated population size of about 4,300 birds is up 24 percent from last year, all populations are still below U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and CPW recommended targets. CPW is working with partners and stakeholders to conduct a population viability analysis that will be used to guide the translocation program. Understanding the best methods to ensure success is the first step in developing a translocation program. If the Gunnison sage-grouse population continues to increase translocations can likely begin in 2024. Translocations will be from Gunnison Basin into one of the satellite populations.

### **PINYON JAYS**

Pinyon jays were recently petitioned for listing under the Endangered Species Act based on

information suggesting that populations were in steep decline. Pinyon jays are residents of pinyon-juniper woodlands in Colorado. These woodlands make up about 21 percent of the forested landscape in the state, making CPW an important contributor to pinyon jay conservation. The majority of Colorado's pinyon-juniper habitat is managed by federal agencies responsible for habitat treatments that focus on multiple species management and reduction of fuel loads. CPW biologists' have been studying pinyon jay breeding areas since 2019 and advise federal agencies on protocol development to locate breeding areas when planning habitat treatments, how to best implement habitat treatments to avoid disturbing breeding jays, and providing timing recommendations when treatments should be completed.

### **PRAIRIE DOGS**

Concern about Gunnison's and white-tailed prairie dog populations in Colorado stem from apparent declines in distribution caused by multiple factors including agricultural conversion, energy and mineral development, poisoning, recreational shooting, climate change, and urban development. However, the biggest threat to the species is plague, a nonnative disease. Both species have been petitioned for listing under the Endangered Species Act, but were found not to be warranted for listing based partially on the efforts put forward by the states to manage and conserve the two species range-wide. As part of this coordinated effort, range-wide occupancy surveys are completed every six years to assess if states are maintaining occupancy across at least 75 percent of the geographic range of the two species. This will ensure long-term population viability. In 2022, staff completed occupancy surveys of 381 plots for both species on the ground and from fixed

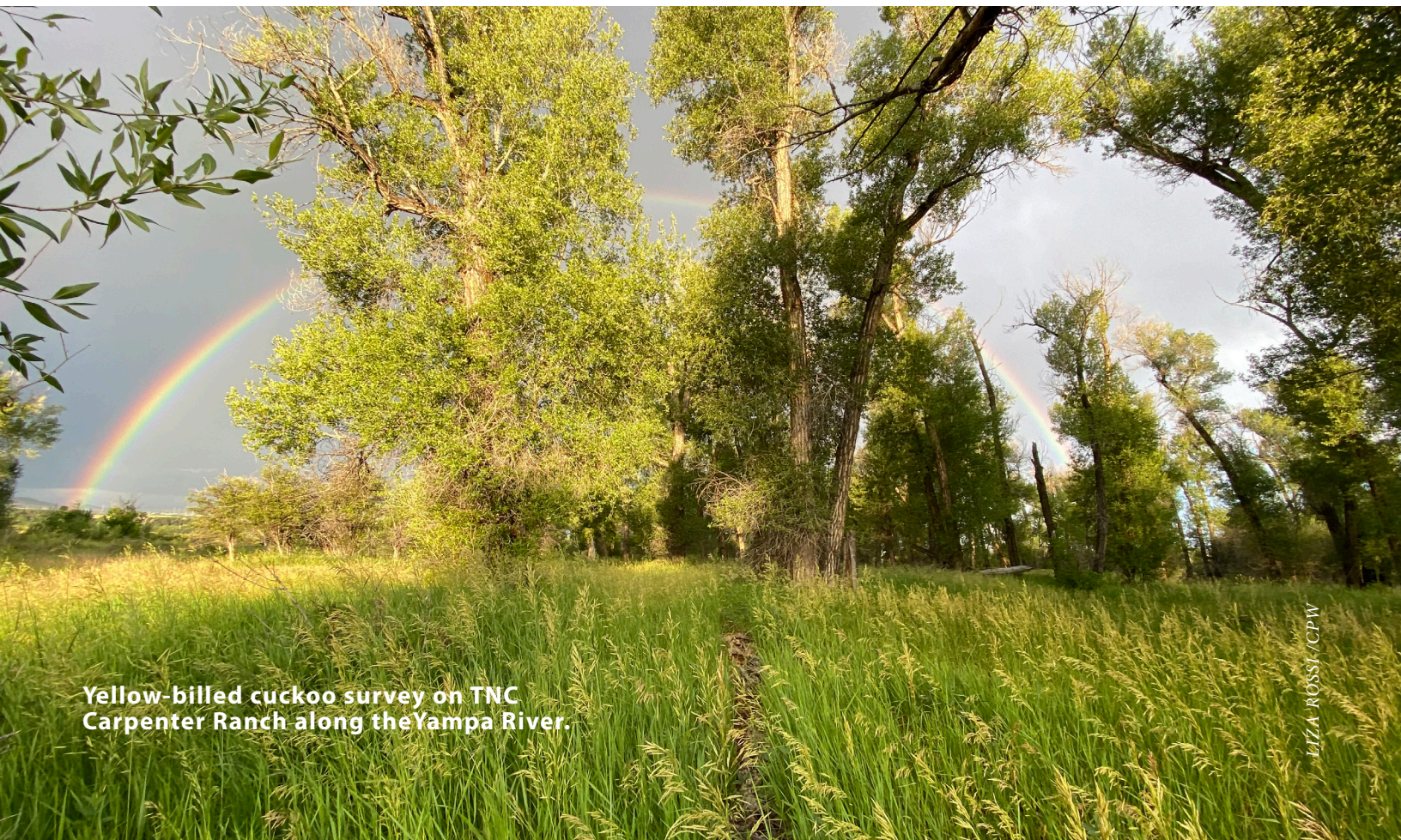


Prairie dog

wing aircraft. A written report of these findings became available in January 2023. These reports provide information about ongoing, long-term monitoring for both species. In 2022, populations were stable and increasing. Efforts to maintain populations through the management of plague are being successful.

## WESTERN YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO

Biologists participated in the first range-wide survey for the western yellow-billed cuckoo. With 11 partnering states from Washington to Texas, biologists surveyed grids across the distinct population segment in an effort to document range-wide occupancy for this nomadic and rare species. The 2022 survey effort was the most thorough survey effort to date in Colorado. CPW biologists and partners surveyed over 2,750 call points at approximately 50 sites and detected over 20 cuckoos. Although the vast majority of these birds were likely passing through rather than establishing breeding territories, the survey provided an enormous amount of information about western yellow-billed cuckoo rarity and habitat use in Colorado.



Yellow-billed cuckoo survey on TNC Carpenter Ranch along the Yampa River.



CPW

## **COLORADO NATURAL AREAS PROGRAM**

The Colorado Natural Areas Program (CNAP) is celebrating 45 years of identifying, designating, and helping protect Colorado’s most special natural places. With the help of GOCO, CNAP has designated 95 State Natural Areas and has helped to protect over 150 species of greatest conservation need. Colorado’s State Natural Areas contain the state’s most rare and unique natural features including plants, wildlife, insects, natural communities, geologic features, and fossils. During FY 2021-22, CNAP accomplished the following:

## **STATE NATURAL AREAS MONITORING**

One of the many benefits of designating State Natural Areas is ongoing, long-term monitoring of each site. Program staff monitor each State Natural Area every three years, while dedicated volunteer stewards monitor their assigned State Natural Area(s) annually. Program staff monitored 39 State Natural Areas and a total of 112 monitoring visits were made between staff and volunteer stewards. Nearly 90 species of greatest conservation need, including plants, were observed and documented on State Natural Areas.



## CNAP VOLUNTEER STEWARD PROGRAM

The program's volunteer steward program has been in existence for over 20 years. Volunteer stewards conduct annual monitoring on State Natural Areas including documentation of rare or tracked species, photo monitoring, and vegetation surveys. Over half of CNAP's volunteers have been serving the program for over 10 years, providing long-term monitoring and knowledge of assigned State Natural Areas. In FY 2021-22, CNAP volunteer stewards collectively contributed 1,830 hours and monitored 44 State Natural Areas.

## STATE NATURAL AREAS REGISTRATION AND DESIGNATION

In FY 2021-22, the Colorado Natural Areas Council, a seven member Governor-appointed advisory council to CNAP, registered the Coal Creek Tallgrass Prairie Natural Area. Registration is an administrative step taken prior to designation. The Coal Creek Tallgrass Prairie Registered State Natural Area is a 1,458 acre property containing high-quality remnant tallgrass prairie, owned and managed by the City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks. The property is expected to become officially designated by 2023.

## RARE PLANT CONSERVATION

The Colorado Natural Areas Program serves as a leader in rare plant conservation and is the only program within Colorado state government with a focus on rare plants. The program works closely with rare plant conservation partners, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, to conserve and protect the state's 117 Plant Species of Greatest Conservation Need. CNAP conducted and/or supported monitoring of over ten federally listed plant species, including Pagosa skyrocket, Parachute penstemon, Dudley Bluff bladderpod, North Park phacelia.

Pagosa skyrocket monitoring



Parachute penstemon monitoring



Coal Creek Tallgrass Prairie Registered State Natural Area



# RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP

Thanks to the continued support of GOCO, the CPW Resource Stewardship Program exists to protect, preserve, restore, and enhance the natural, scenic, scientific, and outdoor

recreation values of Colorado's State Parks and Recreation Areas. GOCO funding supports full-time and part time staff, conservation and planning projects, and program operations.

## THE RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM ADDRESSES SIX MAIN TOPIC AREAS:

- the development of Resource Stewardship Plans and resource management standards for each state park;
- the development and management of GIS natural and cultural resource data;
- environmental and cultural resource reviews to promote resource conservation during capital projects;
- invasive species management, revegetation, and restoration;
- forest management; and
- volunteer citizen science project management.

During FY 2021-22, CPW's Resource Stewardship Program utilized GOCO funds to accomplish many significant projects:

## RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP PLANNING

The first step in building a Resource Stewardship Plan for a state park is the collection and creation of natural and cultural resource data specific to each state park property. During the past fiscal year, inventory projects were performed at Sweetwater

Lake, Fishers Peak, Ridgway, Yampa River, Elkhead Reservoir, Rifle Gap, John Martin Reservoir, and Mueller State Parks. These inventories included breeding bird surveys, cultural resource surveys, geologic mapping, paleontology surveys, raptor surveys, reptile and amphibian surveys, vegetation surveys and vegetation monitoring. Additionally, GOCO funds continue to be instrumental in supporting work to conserve natural and cultural resources while supporting the planning and opening of Fishers Peak State Park.

**Endangered New Mexico Meadow  
Jumping Mouse captured at Fishers Peak  
State Park**



## **FISHERS PEAK STATE PARK**

The Resource Stewardship Program continued working with the CPW Southeast Region staff, including park managers and the CPW master planning team, to bring public input, resource inventory, and research on local conservation topics into the development of the park. The Resource Stewardship Program continues to be involved in the design of Fishers Peak State Park to meet the goals of conservation and provision of recreation opportunities on the park. Program staff provide natural and cultural resource data, analysis and interpretation of this data, and application of the information in the design of the park. Biological surveys included in-depth data collection on the spatial distribution and habitat quality of the federally endangered New Mexico meadow jumping mouse, a species known to live on the property, and the spatial distribution and habitat quality of the Capulin goldenrod, a rare plant species known in only 5 locations globally. Additionally, surveys and monitoring of specific breeding locations of raptor species, analysis of the use of forest habitats for wildlife breeding, spatial distribution of reptiles and amphibians, and surveys for bat species on the property were completed. Additionally, cultural resource inventory work and paleontological surveys, geological surveys, and a

geologic hazards assessment including fault lines, landslide areas, and rock fall areas, for the property continue. The program is also collaborating with park management and capital development projects to guide activities away from impacting important park resources.

## **SWEETWATER LAKE**

The addition of Sweetwater Lake to the Colorado state park system began this year. Resource Stewardship is in the process of collecting the foundational biological and cultural data necessary to begin a park planning process. Surveys underway include breeding bird and songbird, raptors, waterfowl, amphibians, rare plants, pygmy shrews, noxious weeds, vegetation community mapping, and condition assessments. CPW staff are collaborating with partners at the U.S. Forest Service and their planning, biological and cultural resource staff, as well as with local partners on park planning. Outcomes of surveys include new populations of a rare penstemon plant, nests of 5 raptor species, a raptor conservation strategies document, and protections for cultural resources.

## **STEAMBOAT LAKE, PEARL LAKE, ELDORADO CANYON, AND GOLDEN GATE CANYON STATE PARKS**

CPW staff are working together and have finalized park management plans for each park. Plans incorporate data from resource stewardship plans, visitation information, and park operations to formulate a comprehensive path for the future of these properties. Plans balance the provision of recreation opportunities with the conservation of each park's valuable biological, natural, and cultural resources.

## **HIGHLINE LAKE STATE PARK**

Highline Lake State Park was recently expanded through the acquisition of a neighboring property where the development of visitor access is being planned. The Resource Stewardship Program has been a part of the property design team and has performed a rapid ecological assessment of the newly acquired property. The assessment identified existing and potential resources based on the habitats found to help steer conservation of resources during the planning and development of the new parcel.

## **SWEITZER LAKE STATE PARK**

Sweitzer Lake State Park was recently expanded through the acquisition of a neighboring property where the development of visitor access is being planned. The Resource Stewardship Program supported the federal grant process through its biological survey work. This included a rapid ecological assessment of the newly acquired property to identify existing and potential resources based on the habitats found. The assessment will help steer conservation of resources during the planning and future development phases of this project.

## **KESTREL NEST BOX PILOT PROJECT**

In 2020-21, Chatfield, Cherry Creek, and St. Vrain State Parks served as the locations to pilot the installation of nest boxes for American kestrels, a small falcon native to Colorado that is on the decline across the U.S. This pilot project's goal is to increase nesting habitat in state parks by providing nest boxes. During the 2021-22 season, successful use of kestrel boxes occurred at each of the pilot locations.

## **INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT**

The Resource Stewardship Program surveyed invasive plants (weeds) in ten state parks and created management plans for each park. Management plans include maps of known weed populations, weed species identification aids, identification of priority treatment areas and weed species, treatment method recommendations, seasonal treatment calendars by species and park location, and revegetation specifications and seed mixes, all created specific to each state park and their on-the-ground conditions. Tools were created and included in each plan to facilitate improved herbicide treatment efforts by contract sprayers and improved tracking of herbicide use by field staff.

## **REVEGETATION AND RESTORATION**

Seeding specifications and seed mixes were created specifically to support the creation of future pollinator habitats and gardens in state parks. These specifications outline how to perform seeding and planting projects, supply plant lists, seed mixes, and outline maintenance, care, and success criteria for pollinator habitat projects. Plant species are identified based on their presence in each park, their value to pollinators, and their availability with commercial seed and plant providers. Additionally, staff collaborated and consulted with CPW Dam Safety Engineers to create successful native planting specifications for dams on CPW properties to facilitate revegetation success using location appropriate native species and to improve past revegetation projects that had challenging results.

## **VOLUNTEER CITIZEN SCIENCE**

Citizen science is a critical tool for providing consistent real-time natural resource data and monitoring for use in park management decisions and projects managed across the state park system. In the last year, citizen scientists provided observation and location data on reptiles, amphibians, pollinators and other invertebrates, rare plants, breeding birds, and nesting raptors. In FY 2021-22, the raptor monitoring program operated in all state parks and has over 200 participant volunteers. Additionally, Resource Stewardship has expanded the iNaturalist State Park NatureFinder project which has over 49,000 observations, 3,800 species, and 3,400 participants. The program continued to utilize lessons learned during the pandemic via virtual resources with online tutorials, trainings, and volunteer resources to support these important citizen science projects. Additionally, the annual meeting of the State Park Raptor Monitoring Volunteer Program has moved to a hybrid of in-person and online format so that people from all sectors of the public and from all areas of the state could participate in real time.

## **COLORADO CONSERVATION DATA EXPLORER**

The Resource Stewardship Program led agency efforts in collaborating with the Colorado Natural Heritage Program for development of the Colorado Conservation Data Explorer or CODEX (<https://codex.cnhp.colostate.edu/>). This web-mapping tool allows users easy access to comprehensive spatial data related to habitats, occurrences of wildlife and rare plants, and other important natural resources. CODEX provides a critical decision support tool in advancing efforts to ensure that future development happens in ways that can maintain Colorado's rich wildlife and natural heritage. The tool officially launched in November 2021, already has over 350 organizations utilizing its features, including many of the coalitions participating in the Regional Partnerships Initiative.

## **FOREST MANAGEMENT**

The program's forest management efforts responded to changing conditions in the state and successfully coordinated with partners to obtain funding and perform forest management projects in key areas to keep parks open and safe. Forest management plans were completed for Fishers Peak and Ridgway State Park. Priority forest management projects were implemented on 56 acres at Golden Gate Canyon State Park, 3.5 acres at Roxborough State Park, and 20 acres at Vega State Park. Dozens of 2-inch caliper trees were planted across 3 acres at Jackson Lake State Park as part of a long term forest improvement effort. Significant amounts of slash pile burning occurred on Golden Gate Canyon State Park and Lory State Park over the winter. Continuing to invest in these forest management activities helps improve the resilience of state park areas to recover from the effects of wildfires, insects, and diseases and helps reduce the risk of wildfire to communities within the vicinity of many state parks.

# WETLANDS CONSERVATION

CPW's Wetlands Program annually awards competitive grants to CPW staff and partners for projects that restore wetlands and riparian areas. These projects create new managed wetlands, improve the function and efficiency of existing managed wetlands, remove non-native invasive vegetation and replace with native vegetation, manage invasive cattail growth in wetlands, restore riparian habitat impacted by mining, and reconnect incised creeks with their floodplains. Projects are conducted on state wildlife areas, state parks, and other public and private lands. The program drives funding priorities to those projects benefiting species of greatest conservation need identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan.

Wetlands are lands affected by water that support unique plants and soils, making up just two percent of Colorado's landscape, but providing benefits to over 75 percent of the state's wildlife species. The protection, restoration, and enhancement of wetlands and riparian areas is vital to the conservation of wildlife diversity in the state. Wetland and riparian landscapes provide crucial feeding, resting and rearing habitat, and movement corridors. They also improve water quality and quantity, and create open space, educational opportunities, and economic benefits from hunting, fishing, and bird watching.

In FY 2021-22, CPW awarded funds to 11 new wetlands projects and two previously-funded projects that will help to restore or enhance more than 14,000 acres of wetland and riparian habitat. The projects will improve habitat on four State Wildlife Areas and will benefit 8 waterfowl species and 22 Tier 1 or 2 species of greatest conservation need as identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan, including greater sandhill crane, southwestern willow flycatcher, western yellow-billed cuckoo, boreal toad, northern leopard frog, bluehead sucker, bonytail, northern redbelly dace, and plains topminnow.

Also in FY 2021-22, CPW staff and partners achieved more than 8,000 acres of wetland and riparian restoration in 24 completed projects. Landscape-scale wetlands conservation in the San Luis Valley continues to be a program priority. The San Luis Valley hosts Colorado's largest-scale wetlands, important to waterfowl and species of greatest conservation need such as greater sandhill crane, southwestern willow flycatcher, yellow-billed cuckoo, Rio Grande chub, and Rio Grande sucker. In FY 2021-22, seven projects in the San Luis Valley were completed in collaboration with private landowners, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, and the Bird Conservancy of the Rockies. This complements ongoing work on additional private

lands and public lands, including the Bureau of Land Management Blanca Wetlands, Rio Grande State Wildlife Area, and the Alamosa, Baca, and Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuges. These projects will improve water management infrastructure to allow efficient management of

natural wetland flow paths in the current time of limited water availability. Other restoration practices include installing wildlife-friendly fencing to better manage livestock grazing, and cottonwood and willow plantings to promote the native riparian plant community along the Rio Grande corridor.

## Blanca Wetlands



# Community Vitality and Equitable Access

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*Connecting all Coloradans to the outdoors. GOCO funding helps CPW manage and maintain 43 state parks and more than 350 state wildlife areas across the state. More than 3,500 volunteers and hundreds of partner organizations help CPW expand programs and activities. GOCO-supported trail projects provide a physical connection to Colorado's natural resources.*





Track chair program that provides accessibility to Staunton State Park's trails



# STATE PARK OPERATIONS

GOCO helps protect the places that Coloradans enjoy, and also supports the people who work there. GOCO funding helps cover staff and operating costs at all of Colorado's 43 state parks. GOCO's historic support for basic

state park operations has been invaluable to CPW, and has contributed to the enjoyment of millions of park visitors since the inception of the GOCO program.

**19,718,024**

FY 2021-22

STATE PARKS VISITATION

**\$3,000,000**

FY 2021-22

GOCO REIMBURSEMENTS  
FOR PARK OPERATIONS



*Cheyenne Mountain State Park ranger visiting with a young camper.*

# VOLUNTEERS

## PARTNERSHIPS AND TRAININGS

Through a long-standing partnership, Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado (VOC) completed 13 service projects on properties that CPW stewards. VOC coordinated 301 volunteers for these projects, who contributed 2,087 hours of time, equivalent to 1 FTE and an economic value of \$65,761.

Thanks to GOCO, the statewide volunteer program funded five large volunteer projects at state wildlife areas. Projects featured tree planting, habitat

management and improvements, camp host site construction, and quail and cottontail monitoring. The annual education and volunteer training was back in person this year. 31 volunteers attended from all four regions. The theme was 'Navigating a New World: Reconnecting and Cultivating Resilience in a Time of Change.' Sessions focused on the power of storytelling, trends in interpretation and volunteerism, managing our programs through change, and learning resiliency from Colorado wildlife.

**311,150**  
FY 2021-22  
VOLUNTEER HOURS

**\$9,804,337**  
FY 2021-22  
VOLUNTEER VALUE

**150**  
FY 2021-22  
FTE EQUIVALENT OF  
VOLUNTEER HOURS

**\$429,782**  
FY 2021-22  
GOCO REIMBURSEMENTS FOR  
CPW VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

**4,459**  
FY 2021-22  
TOTAL VOLUNTEERS

## *Volunteer Spotlight:*

### **Doris Cruze, Roxborough State Park volunteer since 1982**

**As much as you can remember, tell us about the first time you volunteered with CPW.**

In March 2022, I started my 41st year of volunteering at Roxborough State Park. I began when the naturalist training class of 1982 first met - even before the park was open. I believe we were the first such group in the State Park system.

At Roxborough, we learned to give tours of the property for groups who made appointments through Chatfield State Park. We worked in pairs, picking up materials and keys from the Chatfield offices, meeting the groups at the first gate, selling park passes for \$3 a vehicle, and leading tours. We locked the place back up, returned radios and the cash box and keys to Chatfield to earn volunteer hours. There were no tours in bad weather or in winter for lack of a decent entrance road. Volunteer groups could gain entrance to the park for special projects. I joined a group doing a bird census of the park, going out twice a month and discovering which birds were there. When the Visitor Center

opened in 1987, things began to change, and things are still changing all these years later.

**What is your favorite volunteer memory / experience?**

I was leading a school group on a hike in Roxborough. We paused to look at something black across the way on the rocks, and it was a mother bear nursing her twin cubs. An unforgettable experience for me and for those ten students.

**What would you like future generations of CPW volunteers to know?**

Volunteers have made significant contributions to Colorado State Parks over the years. Future generations will find the same wonderful opportunities to carry on this work and make it possible for others to follow with the same love of the outdoors and the can-do spirit to serve in our parks for many more generations yet to come.

## **Stories:**

### **Trail Restoration at Rama State Wildlife Area**



The Southeast Region has been partnering with the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind for a few years now. As part of the school's curriculum, they offer a transition class to recent high school graduates, which finds opportunities for these young adults to volunteer in various roles to gain job skills, experience in their desired field, and the chance to practice communication skills.

This hard working group restored a trail at Ramah State Wildlife Area. The trail was overgrown and hard to find due to a deteriorating weed barrier. After two days of efforts working alongside staff, they removed the cloth barrier and reworked the path with shovels, hoes, and rakes to restore this beautiful trail that leads to a Memorial Tree honoring the late Pam Wagner, who was a liaison for the Department of Natural Resources.



**Volunteer, Megan Caraway, teaches bear awareness**



**Elise Lokey and volunteer Pat Grove teach Archery**

## Get Outdoors Day

The annual Get Outdoors Day event held at Prospect Lake in Colorado Springs on June 4th was a huge success, thanks to the nearly 50 volunteers, many CPW staff, and 20+ partner organizations and vendors that were there. This event brought in an estimated 3,000 members from the community and CPW handed out 800 fishing poles.

### *Statewide:*

## Volunteer Hosts Extraordinaire

As our state parks and state wildlife areas see more and more visitation, having quality volunteer hosts becomes more and more critical around the state. Volunteer hosts can have different areas of focus - helping manage campgrounds, supporting maintenance, working entrance gates or visitor centers, and more.

Activities encouraged participants to try different shooting sports, attempt new paddle sports, learn about bear safety, take a pledge to follow the Leave No Trace Principles, and even discover invertebrates found in the water. Initial survey results indicate that 96 percent of participants are likely to try some of the activities on their own because they attended the Get Outdoors Day.



**Bryan Salomone, Don Tressler (camp host at AHRA), and Judy Morgan**

# TRAILS

GOCO's partnership with the CPW Recreational Trails Program was especially important during FY 2021-22. The impacts felt from the COVID-19 pandemic continued into this fiscal year, but crews were back on the ground, completing several GOCO-funded projects. Price increases and material and supply delays caused some entities major setbacks. One project was canceled altogether, and others have needed to request time extensions. GOCO quickly approved these extensions and provided additional support as needed. The projects funded by GOCO include planning and development, trail maintenance and reroutes, and new construction on state and federal lands.

The Colorado the Beautiful Initiative grant program originated in 2018. This stand-alone offering was divided into two cycles, 2018-19 and 2019-20. Most projects should be complete and open to the public in 2023. This initiative represents a statewide effort to grow, enhance and connect outdoor recreation opportunities with the vision that within a generation every Coloradan will live within ten minutes of a park, trail, or vibrant green space. All Colorado the Beautiful Trails grants are funded by GOCO.



Volunteers work on Magic Meadows trail

9

FY 2021-22  
GOCO -FUNDED TRAIL  
PROJECTS COMPLETE

12.35 MILES

FY 2021-22  
TRAIL MAINTENANCE  
AND RECONSTRUCTION

11.5 MILES

FY 2021-22  
NEW TRAIL CONSTRUCTION

\$3,265,845

FY 2021-22  
GOCO REIMBURSEMENT FOR  
THE TRAILS PROGRAM

## Peaks to Plains trail



### *Highlights:*

During FY 2022 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022), nine GOCO funded trail projects were completed:

- › **Devil's Playground Trail, Phase 1 (Rocky Mountain Field Institute): \$250,000**
- › **Fruita Desert Cultural Surveys (City of Fruita): \$20,065**
- › **Loop to Gateway Trail (Town of Ault) - \$39,826**
- › **Magic Meadows Trail, Phase 2: \$87,374**
- › **North Elk Creek Trail Phase Plan (Colorado Mountain Bike Association): \$44,948**
- › **Partnership for Stewardship (Wildlands Restoration Volunteers): \$137,807**
- › **Peaks to Plains Trail, Phase 2 (Clear Creek County): \$500,000**
- › **Spring Valley Trails Plan (Colorado Mountain College): \$17,500**
- › **Twamore Farm Trail (City of Fort Morgan): \$225,750**

# CPW WEBSITE REDESIGN

Powered by a grant from GOCO, CPW is in the process of redesigning its website. As the primary marketing and communications tool for the agency, aside from CPW's incredibly knowledgeable staff, a modern, easy-to-use, accessible website is crucial to business activities, information communication, and customer satisfaction. The process of selecting a vendor began in

late 2021, with an extensive request for proposals and interview process. In the spring of 2022, the CPW team selected a digital team to design a new customer-focused website. Kickoff meetings for the project began in summer 2022, with a goal of launching the new site by the end of calendar year 2023.

**CPW wildlife officer checking big game hunter's license. Hunting and fishing licenses as well as campground reservations are available online at the CPW website.**





# COLORADO OUTDOOR REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

The Colorado Outdoor Regional Partnerships Initiative convenes a broad spectrum of interests to collaborate in advancing solutions to conserve Colorado's outdoors for people and wildlife. CPW and GOCO launched the initiative in 2021, offering grant funds to coalitions to join the Colorado Outdoor Partnership and commit to both regional and statewide conservation and recreation collaboration and planning. Following a second funding cycle in the spring of 2022, there are

now 10 Outdoor Regional Partnerships working across 26 counties. These partnerships are making inroads in their regions, including working with CPW and other partners to protect critical habitats, assess and address outdoor recreation needs, and integrate stewardship messages across county, state and federal public outreach campaigns. This initiative will continue to grow as CPW offers future grant rounds with the support of GOCO investments.



# Youth Connections

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*Inspiring the next generation of Coloradans. GOCO-supported programs help CPW provide opportunities to youth and students to learn first-hand about Colorado's natural resources.*





# OUTREACH, EDUCATION, AND INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS

With GOCO support, CPW is able to offer a wide variety of programming throughout the year to students, families, park visitors, teachers, and volunteers. While the goals of these

programs vary, they all work to spread CPW's passion and mission for the incredible parks and wildlife resources of the state.

## *Highlight*

### **ANGLER EDUCATION**

CPW's statewide angler education program increased the number of in-person events it hosted during FY2021-22. CPW hosted 275 fishing clinics during the fiscal year that were attended by 9,081 people.

Free fishing weekend promotions and events returned this year. Thousands of people attended Get Outdoors Day celebrations on free fishing weekend in Denver and Colorado Springs. CPW held 8 free fishing weekend events and gave away over 2,500 free rod and reel combos to new anglers statewide.

A photograph of two young boys fishing at Prospect Lake at Memorial Park in Colorado Springs. The boy on the left is wearing a dark hoodie and shorts, holding a fishing rod. The boy on the right is wearing a teal t-shirt and patterned shorts, also holding a fishing rod. They are standing on a grassy bank next to the lake. In the background, there are trees and a blue sky with some clouds. A red buoy is visible in the water.

**Fishing at Prospect Lake at Memorial Park in Colorado Springs on Great Outdoors Colorado Day 2022.**

## *Program Highlights*

### **TAYLOR CHALLENGE**

At the beginning of the school year, the entire 8th grade class from Gunnison Middle School and their teachers visited The Adventure Experience Inc. by Taylor Reservoir over 3 days. The multi-day outdoor recreation and team building program uses the outdoors as the unifying theme to build and promote community trust, confidence, and healthy life choices for all involved. CPW

runs a fly fishing station each day and supports archery. Staff from Roaring Judy Hatchery, Pitkin Hatchery, Area 16, the Southwest Education Coordinator and Statewide Angler Outreach Coordinator come together to make this happen and lead the stations.

### **GET OUTDOORS LEADVILLE**

CPW supports Get Outdoors Leadville by providing training for Rockies Rock counselors and hosting events during the summer. This year, CPW provided field archery instructor training in Leadville so that the counselors could offer archery as an activity. CPW also ran a fishing clinic at Hayden Meadows for several youth

crews. Area 13 aquatic biologist Alex Townsend also led a crew of middle school students through a fish shocking exercise, which included recording the biological data from the fish caught and learning about fish adaptations through fish dissection.

### **INTERPRETIVE NATURALIST TRAINING**

In May, new and returning interpreters gathered in person, for the first time since 2019, at the La Foret Conference Center in Colorado Springs. Participants experienced interactive activities and sessions, such as volunteer management best practices, agency messaging

and education goals, relevancy video and discussion, program development and delivery skills, building audience-centered experiences, storytelling techniques, and more.

### **4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE WATER FESTIVAL IN GUNNISON**

At the end of the school year, CPW joined other local agencies for an annual water festival event with a learning focus on water in the Gunnison watershed. Area 16 staff

ran three of the eight offered stations: fisheries ecology, riparian wildlife, and waterfowl migration.

### **DURANGO WILDLIFE MUSEUM 125<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**

On a Saturday in June, a public event celebrated the re-opening of the Durango Wildlife Museum that closed during the COVID-19 pandemic with a fun day of education stations. Area 15 staff hosted topics and activities including wildlife conservation, fish and wildlife

management, wildlife careers and tours of the Durango Fish Hatchery. Activities included casting practice for youth, hides and skull displays, and a station where the public could learn how and why CPW uses dart guns to tranquilize animals.

## State Park Events

Each year, state parks host a variety of educational events geared toward advancing awareness of the importance of

both CPW's and GOCO's shared missions. A sampling from the wide variety of park programs include:

### FOREST MANAGEMENT GUIDED HIKE AT STATE FOREST STATE PARK

In partnership with members of the Colorado State Forest Service, CPW hosted a guided hike up the Beaver Lodge Nature Trail at the state's largest state park. As a multi-use park and Colorado's largest state park, staff work closely with the state forest service. This area was

greatly impacted by the recent pine beetle devastation, and Forestry experts helped guests understand the current conditions, the life cycle of pine beetles, and the ongoing management practices in the area.

### 4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE FIELD TRIP TO ARKANSAS HEADWATERS RECREATION AREA

In partnership with members of the Colorado State Forest Service, CPW hosted a guided hike up the Beaver Lodge Nature Trail at the state's largest state park. As a multi-use park and Colorado's largest state park, staff work closely with the state forest service. This area was

greatly impacted by the recent pine beetle devastation, and Forestry experts helped guests understand the current conditions, the life cycle of pine beetles, and the ongoing management practices in the area.

Eldorado Canyon State Park's Art in the Park participant





Eldorado Canyon State Park's BARK Ranger program

## ELDORADO CANYON STATE PARK PROGRAMS

Several events were held at Eldorado Canyon State Park, including BARK Ranger programs to bring awareness to dog safety at state parks. Park staff also partnered with the Boulder County Audubon Society to host a number of bird walks at Crescent Meadows, providing binoculars

and bird guide books to assist in identifying birds. The park also held 'Art in the Park' programs introducing attendees to observing and recording their surroundings through a naturalist approach. Participants used both science and art to recreate the animals they observed.

## DEBUNK THE WINTER FUNK AT STAGECOACH STATE PARK

In February, Stagecoach State Park hosted the annual event focused on inviting families and community members out to the park to enjoy a variety of winter activities. This year's activities included archery, fat tire

bike rides, ice fishing, sledding hill and ski bikes, skijoring demonstrations, and a snowshoe hike. Oak Creek Fire brought out fire trucks for kids to check out and hosted a fire and s'mores station.

## **LAKE PUEBLO STATE PARK PROGRAMS**

Boating safety programs were held at the park and at local community events throughout the summer. A highlight for participants is getting to try their hand at boat safety trivia, afterwards they are then able to pick a boat safety prize. Kids – many of which had never stepped foot on a boat before – were also able to get fitted for a life jacket and climb aboard a boat where they are able to explore, ask questions about boat safety, and learn about what it's like to be a ranger at the park.

Staff also hosted a Little Naturalist program at the park over four summer weeks. This program was held biweekly for a group of local kids with age ranges from one to ten years old and covered a variety of topics such as tracks and scats, fishing casting competition, pollinators, and geology. Most of these programs feature a short lesson on each topic, an activity to instill knowledge, and a craft that the kids could take home with them.

## **LIFE JACKETS SAVE LIVES AT CHATFIELD STATE PARK**

This program functions as a weekly opportunity to teach and remind park visitors about the life-saving nature of water safety equipment and the various water safety regulations required at the park. This event helps keep important safety measures on the minds of visitors in a positive and interactive way. To make these regulations fun and accessible, visitors can spin the Wheel of Safety and answer water safety questions to win prizes. In recent

years, the number of paddle boarders and kayakers has increased significantly which, while positive, presents a great number of visitors who are new to water activity and unfamiliar with water regulations. This makes the weekly program an extremely valuable and easily accessible event that can impart critically important knowledge to help maintain the safety of all park visitors.

## **ELEVEN MILE STATE PARK PROGRAMS**

Eleven Mile State Park's debut live painting event featured Ranger Kelli's step-by-step instruction of how to paint the landscape with acrylic paints. Participants of all ages and skillsets attended and added their own creative spin to create one-of-a-kind artwork.

Wildlife Officer Ian Petkash visits Eleven Mile State Park annually to put on a crowd favorite program about big game wildlife around Park County and beyond. People have an opportunity to ask a Colorado District Wildlife

Manager the questions they have always pondered about the job and about wildlife species of Colorado. This program also features the unique opportunity to meet the statewide-famous CPW K-9 Unit, Samson. Ian and Samson perform a K-9 demonstration and show real videos of hard releases of black bears that Samson has assisted with. This event illustrates one of the great ways parks and wildlife officers collaborate in our mission to educate the public about Colorado's great natural resources.



# SCHOOLS AND OUTDOOR LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

The mission of the Schools and Outdoor Learning Environments (SOLE) program is to connect schools with CPW and its network of partners to increase youth and family interest in the outdoors. The program supports 4th grade classrooms by: providing funding for field trip activities; developing in-class programs, curriculum support, and professional development for teachers and partners; facilitating opportunities for students and their families to engage with partner programs; and

providing opportunities to recreate outdoors. During the 2021-2022 school year, SOLE supported 50 schools across the state and utilized approximately \$275,000 GOCO funds. This year saw a return to in-person programming with Family Nature Nights and in-class lessons being allowed once again in the schools. CPW also offered other programs including an annual art contest, Family Workshops, and Family Fun Days.

**50**

**FY 2021-22  
PARTICIPATING  
SCHOOLS**

OVER

**1500**

**FY 2021-22  
STUDENTS IN 25  
4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE  
CLASSROOMS  
PARTICIPATED IN  
SOLE LED  
IN-CLASS  
PROGRAMMING**

**28**

**FY 2021-22  
FAMILY NATURE  
NIGHTS WITH  
3,677 PEOPLE  
ATTENDING**

**SOLE led in-class program**



# TEACHER TRAINING

## **GROWING UP WILD WORKSHOP: AUGUST 2021**

CPW had the opportunity to work with the entire teaching staff at Castlewood Community Preschool in Franktown to share the Growing up Wild curriculum. Teachers

engaged in hands-on activities learning new ways of bringing their preschool aged students outdoors for learning.

## **CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION (CTE) MID-WINTER CONFERENCE JANUARY 2022**

CPW provided a session for 22 middle and high school agriculture teachers interested in bringing more Natural Resources curriculum into their classrooms. This workshop focused on how current work in the development of wildlife crossings throughout Colorado

could lead to a rich scenario-based lesson for students to dig into the relationship between government agencies, human interactions, and wildlife management. Evaluations showed high engagement and interest in the content.

## **COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION(CDE) TEACHER INSTITUTE JUNE 2022**

This summer CPW staff co-developed and facilitated three sessions with the CDE at teacher Institutes across the state. Workshops were provided in Grand Junction, Greeley, and Pueblo for Kindergarten – 12th grade teachers

interested in adding more environmental education to their lessons. In this session we explored how local phenomenon could be used to support students in going deeper with their questioning and modeling.

### *Southeast*

## **PIKES PEAK TEACHING ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE NATURALLY (T.E.N.)**

Pikes Peak Teaching Environmental Science Naturally (T.E.N.) hosted engaged teachers for this year's "Things are Looking Up" class. The class was held at several sites in the Pikes Peak Region including Fountain Creek Nature Center, Ute Valley Park, Pinon Valley Park, and Mueller State Park. The theme of the class was looking up, and around, to learn about subjects such as birds, bats, Leave No Trace, drones,

trees, lichen, forest bathing, GPS, nature journaling, and pollinators. While at Mueller, teachers also had the opportunity to camp overnight, which they really enjoyed. Teachers walked away with not only background knowledge about many different natural resource topics, but also hands on activities to take back to their classrooms.

## *Southwest*

### **DELTA OUT (OUTDOOR UNDERSTANDING FOR TEACHERS): JANUARY 2021- DELTA**

We offered a virtual ‘Alpine Ecology’ workshop for educators to explore winter field trip ideas, academic lesson plans, & resources focused on nature ‘in the cold’ and Colorado alpine

species. Our group was joined by expert speakers from Ridgway State Park and CPW’s Species Conservation Coordinator, Amy Seglund for a wildlife education presentation.

### **DELTA OUT: JULY 2021- DELTA**

An ‘On the Fly’ workshop was held for 15 local teachers at Confluence Park in July. The group explored macroinvertebrates, practiced fly fishing

skills, spent time fishing, and ended with a review of CPW education kits available to check-out and utilize with students.

### **DELTA OUT: MAY 2022- HOTCHKISS**

The theme of this teacher workshop was ‘Forests & Fire Ecology’, where our group learned about how ecosystems changed over time through patterns of growth and succession, the role of fire in forests, and how to live ‘firewise’ and connect

those resources with students. We practiced hands-on related lesson plans from the Project WILD curriculum guide, and were joined by expert speakers from US Forest Service and CPW.

### **DELTA OUT: MAY 2022- RIDGWAY STATE PARK**

This ‘Wildlife on the Move’ workshop for local K-12 teachers at Ridgway State Park focused on exploring wildlife habitat connectivity issues in Colorado. Park Manager Kirstin Copeland provided a background on this topic relative to the Park, and Area 18 Terrestrial Biologist Alyssa Kircher joined us for a presentation with more local examples, focused on the complexity of wildlife management decisions as they must consider political, social, economic, & biological concerns. Our group piloted our new curriculum

based from Project Wild Activities, ‘Exploring Wildlife Crossings’, and provided feedback, as Education Coordinators are in the process of developing a Colorado-based unit on this topic for schools. For one of the activities, participants reviewed a scenario involving a state highway that interrupts the movement corridors of local wildlife. The teachers created 3D models to accompany their management recommendations, while considering how to balance the needs of both humans and wildlife.



# YOUTH INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The purpose of the CPW Youth Internship Program (YIP) is to employ and expose youth to natural resource careers and recruit new and diverse talent into the CPW workforce. YIP internships are designed to engage and mentor youth; provide practical experiences, skills, and opportunities; facilitate networking opportunities with CPW professionals; and provide exposure to various CPW career paths.

## *Highlights:*

- Hosted a series of virtual YIP Workshops and one large in-person event focused on career exploration including cover letter and resume writing.
- In-person orientation for all new interns and for all YIP supervisors.
- Developed new resources to help interns connect with opportunities, including a welcome and orientation packet, job search resources, and a training and events calendar.
- YIP places interns in a variety of positions throughout CPW. In FY 2021-2022, 77 internship positions were funded, utilizing approximately \$980,000 of GOCO funds. YIP interns assisted CPW program areas including state parks, aquatic biology, wildlife biology, fish hatcheries, engineering, water quality monitoring, administrative support, and education and interpretation.
- Created an updated YIP Supervisor Toolkit with information on mentorship, equitable hiring practices, and logistical details.
- Planned for a partnered internship program with Hispanic Access Foundation and Colorado Youth Corps Association, which is launching in FY 2022-23.
- Implemented new methods for quantitative and qualitative data collection.

# 44%

**FY 2021-22**

OF RESPONDENTS TO THE YIP SUPERVISOR SURVEY REPORTED THAT AT LEAST ONE OF THEIR PREVIOUS YIP INTERNS HAS BEEN HIRED INTO A PERMANENT, FULL-TIME POSITION WITH CPW.



Steamboat Lake State Park

“ The encouragement and flexibility to explore all aspects of CPW as well as professional networking and educational opportunities are a huge plus. I felt essential to the agency and able to explore everything out there. I feel that I was able to fit in everything that I desired to and I attribute that to the support and encouragement of my supervisor. ”

-Quote from YIP intern

“ This YIP program is critical in the recruitment of future employees. The internship work we provide is very unique in that there is a lot of independence with a structured outline and goals to engage with the public and staff. With that we can expand our reach within more of the community. They are a huge asset to the DWMs, Wildlife Techs and the whole team helping all of us deliver our mission more effectively. ”

-Quote from YIP supervisor

# COLORADO YOUTH CORPS ASSOCIATION

In total, CYCA crews completed:  
27 total weeks of work at 19 different State Parks supported by a GOCO investment of approximately \$460,000.

In addition to the valuable work completed, the partnership also provides young people with opportunities for professional development, skill building, environmental education, and career exploration. Corps members gain an awareness

of the agency, meet and work alongside CPW staff, and learn about the various job pathways available. CYCA engaged 298 corps members during the year, many of whom identify with traditionally underrepresented races, ethnicities, and genders. Ultimately, this partnership is helping to improve our lands, inspire stewardship, and train and recruit the next generation of natural resource professionals.

**13,733**

FY 2021-22  
HOURS OF  
CYCA LABOR



Colorado Youth Corps crew project

“ We had an amazing project partner [CPW] that helped me understand the importance of their job and how much one person can have a positive impact on the environment. We also got to see how different every single day was for our project partner. In the future, I want a job where I can try new things and have new experiences every day, so seeing that inspired me to consider working in this field.

-Quote from CYCA crew leader



“ Beyond the invaluable help they offer, these programs are paramount to getting these kids and young adults into the field and exposing them to potential careers. This is even more paramount when you consider there are decreasing amounts of applicants for our open jobs and long-term vacancies in the agency. I talk with the groups about potential careers in our agency and in natural resources as a whole. Of course simply educating them on the natural world, parks, wildlife, and land stewardship is rewarding in itself. I often wish I could've had these experiences when I was their age.”

-Quote from CPW staff member



Colorado Youth Corps crew project

# WATCHABLE WILDLIFE

The CPW Watchable Wildlife Program establishes new wildlife viewing and education opportunities and works with partners to develop and improve existing viewing resources. This program continues to identify, develop, and help establish wildlife viewing opportunities on

public lands, including CPW properties and state parks; develop and establish wildlife viewing opportunities in cooperation with landowners on private lands; and prepare and distribute informational materials on wildlife viewing techniques and opportunities.

The statewide Wildlife Viewing program was able to hire seasonal staff with the support of GOCO investments to help create and produce wildlife-related materials and social media content. Projects included stickers for wildlife festivals, a

dark sky interpretive panel, wildlife profile sheets, and more. The program also contracted with a local tattoo artist to create wildlife coloring pages for adults.

## MONTE VISTA CRANE FESTIVAL

CPW volunteers and staff had a great 'comeback' role in the annual Crane Festival bird-watching event this year offering tours,

answering questions from the public, and assisting attendees using viewing scopes to observe the cranes in action.



Monte Vista Crane Festival



Sandhill cranes in the San Luis Valley



CPW/GRETCHEN BAKER



CPW/GRETCHEN BAKER

# Grant Detail FY 2021-22

Section I of Article XXVII of the Colorado Constitution describes eight basic objectives for GOCO investments in outdoor recreation and wildlife programs:

## OUTDOOR RECREATION

- Establish and improve state parks and recreation areas throughout Colorado.
- Develop appropriate public information and environmental education resources on Colorado's natural resources at state parks, recreation areas, and other locations throughout the state.
- Acquire, construct and maintain trails and river greenways.
- Provide water for recreational purposes through the acquisition of water rights or through agreements with holders of water rights, all in accord with applicable state water law.

## WILDLIFE

- Develop wildlife watching opportunities.
- Implement educational programs about wildlife and wildlife environment.
- Provide appropriate programs for maintaining Colorado's diverse wildlife heritage.
- Protect crucial wildlife habitats through the acquisition of lands, leases or easements and restore critical areas.

The following tables contain information about GOCO reimbursements to CPW in FY 2021-22 organized by the structure outlined in the Colorado Constitution.

GOCO LOG	DESCRIPTION	AWARD (\$)	TOTAL PRIOR REIMBURSEMENTS (\$)	FY 2021-22 REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST (\$)
<b>STATE PARKS PURPOSE: ESTABLISH AND IMPROVE STATE PARKS AND RECREATION</b>				
16204	Crawford State Park- Clear Fork Campground Renovation	740,630	-	740,630
18200	Eldorado Canyon State Park Entrance Station Relo	650,000	166,263	58,179
18202	Highline State Park Infrastructure Improvements	870,000	41,232	828,000
18209	Staunton State Park Elk Falls Dam Report and Design	450,000	66,868	306,673
18210	Sweitzer State Park Water System Replacement	200,000	29,895	15,927
18223	Fuels Mitigation Management Program	300,000	205,028	94,972
18240	Envision Recreation in Balance	99,367	84,124	11,475
19171	Land Acquisition and Leases	700,000	-	700,000
19200	Park Improvements	8,352,917	5,295,316	1,328,763
19201	Park Improvements 2	3,942,000	1,282,566	1,592,100
19223	Fuels Mitigation Management Program	300,000	13,930	125,012
19225	Director's Innovation Fund	76,517	57,932	-
20171	Land Acquisition and Leases	700,000	-	10,741
20200	Park Improvements	6,991,024	1,302,209	1,911,399
20223	Fuels Mitigation Management Program	300,000	4,999	79,659
20225	Director's Innovation Fund	75,000	30,493	32,748
21172	Capital Development Program	1,020,000	-	1,010,749
21173	Natural Resource Management Program	1,292,500	-	1,292,500
21174	Invasive and Noxious Weed Management Program	350,000	-	266,726
21175	Recreation Management on State Parks	3,000,000	-	3,000,000
21200	Park Improvements	5,054,334	-	664,325
21223	Fuels Mitigation Management Program	300,000	-	5,033
21225	Director's Innovation Fund	75,000	-	40,413
22172	Capital Development Program	1,020,000	-	-
22173	Natural Resource Management Program	1,292,500	-	-
22174	Invasive and Noxious Weed Management Program	350,000	-	-
22175	Recreation Management on State Parks	4,111,420	-	-
22200	Park Improvements	6,119,195	-	339,584
22223	Fuels Mitigation Management Program	300,000	-	-
22225	Director's Innovation Fund	25,000	-	-
<b>Totals this section:</b>		<b>49,057,404</b>	<b>8,580,855</b>	<b>14,455,608</b>

GOCO LOG	DESCRIPTION	AWARD (\$)	TOTAL PRIOR REIMBURSEMENTS (\$)	FY 2021-22 REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST (\$)
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STATE PARKS PURPOSE: PUBLIC INFORMATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

21187	Public Information Program	296,000	-	296,000
21188	Environmental Education and Youth Programs	1,273,500	-	1,167,603
21189	Volunteer Programs	231,000	-	189,459
21222	Website Redesign	700,000	-	-
22187	Public Information Program	296,000	-	-
22188	Environmental Education and Youth Programs	1,323,500	-	-
22189	Volunteer Programs	231,000	-	-
<b>Totals this section:</b>		<b>4,351,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,653,062</b>

GOCO LOG	DESCRIPTION	AWARD (\$)	TOTAL PRIOR REIMBURSEMENTS (\$)	FY 2021-22 REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST (\$)
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STATE PARKS PURPOSE: TRAILS AND RIVER GREENWAYS

17229	Trail Mapping Application	1,000,000	811,452	100,901
17240	Loop to Gateway Trail	45,000	2,936	-
18192	Trails Grant Program	1,000,000	734,617	99,712
18230	Colorado The Beautiful Trails Grant Program	2,988,006	216,618	1,271,630
18231	Lunch Loop Connector Trail	400,000	400,000	-
18232	LOVA New Castle- Canyon Creek Trail	500,000	52,934	-
18233	Legacy Loop-Rock Island Trail	500,000	-	-
18234	Great Western Trail	250,000	197,500	-
18235	Methodist Mountain Trail	269,951	269,951	-
18236	Fremont Pass Rec Pathway	600,000	450,000	-
18237	Peaks to Plains Trail	500,000	-	500,000
18238	Stage and Rail Trail	205,400	205,356	-
18239	Palisade Plunge Phase 1	527,000	522,503	-
19192	Trails Grant Program - Capital	1,000,000	300,814	440,815
19221	Trails in State Parks	500,000	128,096	113,887
20192	Trails Grants Program	1,000,000	49,886	130,149
20221	Trails in State Parks	500,000	130,502	126,225
21191	State Trails Program	370,935	-	352,039
21192	Trails Grants Program	1,000,000	-	-
21221	Trails in State Parks	500,000	-	130,486
22191	State Trails Program	370,935	-	-
22192	Trails Grants Program	1,000,000	-	-
<b>Totals this section:</b>		<b>15,027,227</b>	<b>4,473,164</b>	<b>3,265,845</b>

GOCO LOG	DESCRIPTION	AWARD (\$)	TOTAL PRIOR REIMBURSEMENTS (\$)	FY 2021-22 REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST (\$)
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STATE PARKS PURPOSE: WATER FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES

19194	Water Acquisitions and Leases	300,000	250,094	41,880
20194	Water Acquisitions and Leases	300,000	112,146	135,774
21193	Water Program	150,000	-	86,919
21194	Water Acquisitions and Leases	300,000	-	131,908
22193	Water Program	150,000	-	-
22194	Water Acquisitions and Leases	300,000	-	-
<b>Totals this section:</b>		<b>1,500,000</b>	<b>362,240</b>	<b>396,482</b>
<b>Grand total, State Parks Purpose:</b>		<b>69,935,631</b>	<b>13,416,259</b>	<b>19,770,997</b>

GOCO LOG	DESCRIPTION	AWARD (\$)	TOTAL PRIOR REIMBURSEMENTS (\$)	FY 2021-22 REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST (\$)
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WILDLIFE PURPOSE: HABITAT MANAGEMENT

18251	Tarryall SWA Dam Study and Design	400,000	184,935	189,793
18253	Habitat Improvement	800,000	434,201	339,326
18254	Wildlife Crossings	1,000,000	311,458	665,653
18255	Mt. Shavano Structure Engineering Study	200,000	200,000	-
19150	Acquire High Priority Habitat - Capital	850,000	823,000	27,000
19153	Wetlands Conservation	1,500,000	490,470	959,838
19167	Statewide Dam Maintenance	600,000	598,554	1,446
19169	Spring Creek Dam Phase 2	1,070,000	79,180	781,471
19252	Wildlife Small Capital	2,000,000	2,000,000	-
19253	Aquatic Habitat Improvement	2,000,000	231,517	1,100,356
19258	Equipment for Habitat Protection and Restoration	1,000,000	1,000,000	-
19259	Fort Collins Service Center	2,500,000	104,587	65,894
19260	Fuels Mitigation	1,000,000	-	-
19261	Hatchery Study Phase 2	300,000	300,000	-
20150	Acquire High Priority Habitat - Capital	3,848,589	190,349	2,083,704
20153	Wetlands Conservation	1,100,000	308,240	58,975
20250	Protection and Restoration of Wildlife Habitat	3,600,000	1,198,748	736,223
20252	Wildlife Small Capital	2,000,000	1,947,832	52,168
21151	Acquire High Priority Habitat - Operations	693,000	-	519,659
21152	Enhance Habitat on Lands and Water	1,000,000	-	1,000,000
21153	Wetlands Conservation	1,100,000	-	212,407
21154	GIS Habitat Information	475,000	-	464,419
21252	Wildlife Small Capital	2,000,000	-	1,266,329
22150	Acquire High Priority Habitat- Capital	1,223,088	-	-
22151	Acquire High Priority Habitat- Operations	693,000	-	-
22152	Enhance Habitat on Lands and Water	1,000,000	-	-
22153	Wetlands Conservation	1,100,000	-	-
22154	GIS Habitat Information	475,000	-	-
<b>Totals this section:</b>		<b>35,527,677</b>	<b>10,403,071</b>	<b>10,524,662</b>

GOCO LOG	DESCRIPTION	AWARD (\$)	TOTAL PRIOR REIMBURSEMENTS (\$)	FY 2021-22 REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST (\$)
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WILDLIFE PURPOSE: SPECIES PROTECTION

21155	Propagation of Aquatic Species at Risk	575,000	-	488,129
21156	Native Species Protection	4,439,423	-	4,439,423
21157	Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery	610,000	-	610,000
22155	Propagation of Aquatic Species at Risk	575,000	-	-
22156	Native Species Protection	4,480,000	-	-
22157	Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery	610,000	-	-
<b>Totals this section:</b>		<b>11,289,423</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,537,552</b>

GOCO LOG	DESCRIPTION	AWARD (\$)	TOTAL PRIOR REIMBURSEMENTS (\$)	FY 2021-22 REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST (\$)
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WILDLIFE PURPOSE: WILDLIFE EDUCATION AND ENVIRONMENT

19163	Wildlife Director's Innovation Fund	73,483	68,271	5,201
19262	Internal Shooting Range Program	373,000	191,334	137,930
20163	Director's Innovation Fund	75,000	37,864	150
21158	Youth Programs	1,021,317	-	918,637
21159	Education and Volunteer Programs	400,183	-	400,183
21160	Angler Education	161,000	-	161,000
21163	Director's Innovation Fund	75,000	-	23,241
21166	Website Redesign	1,300,000	-	-
22158	Youth Programs	1,071,317	-	-
22159	Education and Volunteer Programs	400,183	-	-
22160	Angler Education	161,000	-	-
22163	Director's Innovation Fund	25,000	-	-
<b>Totals this section:</b>		<b>5,136,483</b>	<b>297,470</b>	<b>1,646,341</b>

GOCO LOG	DESCRIPTION	AWARD (\$)	TOTAL PRIOR REIMBURSEMENTS (\$)	FY 2021-22 REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST (\$)
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WILDLIFE PURPOSE: WILDLIFE VIEWING

21162	Wildlife Viewing	150,000	-	144,899
22162	Wildlife Viewing	150,000	-	-
<b>Totals this section:</b>		<b>300,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>144,899</b>

**Grand total, Wildlife Purpose: 52,253,583 10,700,541 17,853,454**

GOCO LOG	DESCRIPTION	AWARD (\$)	TOTAL PRIOR REIMBURSEMENTS (\$)	FY 2021-22 REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST (\$)
REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS, RESILIENT COMMUNITIES, AND RESTORE				
21048	Teamworks- State Park Collaborative	81,163	-	79,843
21049	Colorado Outdoor Regional Partnerships (comp)	320,000	-	109,564
21249	Colorado Outdoor Regional Partnerships Initiative	160,000	-	54,782
21298	RESTORE Program	250,000	-	-
21299	Colorado Outdoor Regional Partnerships Initiative	160,000	-	54,782
22351	Colorado Outdoor Regional Partnerships Initiative (Capacity)	500,000	-	-
22352	Colorado Outdoor Regional Partnerships (Regrant)	3,000,000	-	-
<b>Totals this section:</b>		<b>4,471,163</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>298,971</b>

# CPW Mission

The mission of Colorado Parks and Wildlife 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.

# GOCO's Mission

To help preserve, protect, enhance and manage the state's wildlife, park, river, trail and open space heritage.



6060 Broadway  
Denver, Co 80216  
[cpw.state.co.us](http://cpw.state.co.us)