

COLORADO PARKS & WILDLIFE

Habitat Partnership Program



2024 Annual Report



Photo Provided by Justin Park/CPW



COLORADO

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Outdoor Recreation and Lands
Habitat Partnership Program
711 Independent Avenue
Grand Junction, CO 81505

TO: Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission; Dan Gibbs, Executive Director, Colorado Department of Natural Resources; Members Agriculture Livestock, Natural Resources Committee, Colorado House of Representatives Members; Agriculture Natural Resources, and Energy Committee, Colorado State Senate

FROM: State Council, Habitat Partnership Program
Jeff Davis, Director, Colorado Parks and Wildlife

DATE: September 25, 2024

RE: Habitat Partnership Program Annual Report - FY 2024

Attached is the FY2024 (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024) report for the Habitat Partnership Program (HPP). In FY2024, HPP revenue was \$3,108,491, of which \$2,975,867 was derived from 5% of big game (deer, elk, pronghorn, and moose) license revenues used within HPP committee boundaries, as provided for in 33-1-112 (8) & (1) CRS. The difference in these figures represents the interest earned.

The program is comprised of 19 local committees and the State Council, encompassing nearly 150 volunteers representing agricultural producers, sportspersons, federal land management agencies, and CPW staff. Operating under CPW Commission-approved distribution management plans, the program expended and leveraged cash contributions of \$6,480,438, in-kind services valued at \$5,200,724, and 14,187 hours of labor from our partners in efforts to reduce conflicts and meet game management objectives. With matching funds from project applicants, HPP contributed to the following efforts statewide:

- Strengthening CPW's relationships with the Agricultural Community
- Habitat Improvements: seeding, water development, weed control, mechanical habitat treatments
- Fence Improvements/repair: wildlife-friendly construction, including virtual fencing
- Conservation Easements: transaction costs
- Research and Monitoring
- Enhancement of Migratory Corridors
- Assistance with Conservation Efforts on Private Land
- Information and Education

Challenges:

Despite significant reductions in hunting licenses issued after the harsh winter of 2022-2023, which reduced the HPP revenue derived from license sales, the program remains committed to its mission. HPP's expenses associated with funding relief efforts in the Northwest corner of the state further reduced the amount of funds available to the program. The cost of fuel, materials, and contractor labor has remained elevated, but the program is dedicated to overcoming these challenges.

Committee representatives were tasked with prioritizing the use of their funds to accomplish HPP's goals. HPP remains committed to strengthening CPW's crucial working relationship with the agricultural community. Private land habitat is vital to Colorado's wildlife species, and HPP strives to maintain and build wildlife tolerance in agricultural operations.

Please reference the pages below for the Habitat Partnership Program's FY2024 accomplishments, further details about the program organization, and the updated statute. For more information on the program, please visit the HPP website: <https://cpw.state.co.us/habitat-partnership-program>. If you have any further questions or require additional information, please contact the HPP Manager, Michael Blanck, at (970) 260-9855 or michael.blanck@state.co.us.

HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM - STATE COUNCIL MEMBERS 2024:

Ty Bevan - Livestock Grower Representative, Molina

Casey Cooley - Colorado Parks and Wildlife Representative

Greg Jungman - Sportsperson Representative, Dillon

Sheila Lamb - US Forest Service Representative, Pike/San Isabel National Forest, Fairplay

Robbie LeValley - CO State University Range Extension Service Representative, Delta

Riley May - Agricultural Crop Producer Representative, Lamar

Todd Peterson - Sportsperson Representative, Walden

Hunter Seim - US Bureau of Land Management Representative, Little Snake Field Office, Craig

Gary Visintainer - Livestock Grower Representative, Craig

Habitat Partnership Program

2024 PROJECT HIGHLIGHT



HPP Sponsored Agricultural Short Courses

The goals of these courses were to help CPW employees better understand agriculture and interact more effectively with local agriculture producers.

Stanko Ranch - Steamboat Springs, Colorado

18 CPW employees from the Northwest Region were invited to spend the day on Stanko Ranch with Jo Stanko and several other presenters.

Members of the Stanko family, Jim, Pat, and Jan, explained the history of their cattle and hay operation, provided a hands-on demonstration of hay production equipment, and spoke from their perspective of Colorado agriculture and their family's working relationship with CPW.

CDA range rider and expert sheep dog handler, Marianne Sasak, spoke about sheep production and conflict avoidance. She provided a demonstration of her dogs working with sheep.

John Fields, a sheep rancher from Montrose and president of the Colorado Woolgrowers Association Board of Directors, discussed the challenges the sheep industry faces and answered pertaining questions.

Todd Hagenbuch, Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Specialist and Director for Colorado State University, spoke on the importance of developing and maintaining relationships within the agricultural community.

Jackie Brown with the Colorado Water Conservation Board discussed Colorado Water Law and how it affects agriculture.



"I think this course did an excellent job. It definitely humanizes producers and helps give a reference from where people are coming from. As demonstrated by the Stankos, it is not just a 'job' but a family heritage and a way of life."

Rebekah Ryan, DWM Area 8

Habitat Partnership Program

2024 PROJECT HIGHLIGHT



Hanna Ranch - Fountain, Colorado

14 CPW employees from the Southeast Region gathered at Hanna Ranch to learn from cattle rancher Maggie Hanna.

Maggie provided a history and transparent overview of her cattle and hay production operation. She also provided a hands-on demonstration of pasture irrigation and a tour of her State Land Board grazing allotment and expanding solar energy fields.

Maggie led a candid discussion of the challenges the agricultural community faces as well as practical suggestions for meeting with, interacting with, and developing relationships with agricultural producers.



"I enjoyed the opportunity to ask questions that were more relevant to us as we continue to navigate a shifting dynamic and partnering opportunity. This provided us with more tools on our toolbox and insight as to how to approach these situations and relationships."

John Barkowski, Forest and Montane Habitat Coordinator

Habitat Partnership Program



STATUTE 33-1-110,112

HPP Statutes

33-1-110

(6.7) The director shall certify to the state controller that commitment or payment vouchers submitted by local habitat partnership committees are consistent with distribution management plans and guidelines approved by the commission. Such certification is the only requirement necessary to authorize the state controller to disburse funds from the habitat partnership cash fund.

(7) (a) The director shall appoint a council of nine persons to act as the “habitat partnership council”, referred to in this section as the “council”. The council has statewide responsibility and authority.

(b) (I) The council shall consist of the following members: Two sports persons who purchase big game licenses on a regular basis in Colorado; two persons representing livestock growers in Colorado; one person from the United States department of agriculture forest service; one person from the United States department of the interior bureau of land management; one person from the Colorado state university range extension program; one person representing agricultural crop producers; and one person from the Colorado division of parks and wildlife. All persons on the council shall be residents of the state of Colorado.

(II) Members of the council who will represent livestock growers and agricultural crop producers shall be chosen by the director from persons nominated by the local habitat partnership committees, pursuant to subparagraph (VI) of paragraph (d) of subsection (8) of this section.

(III) For the initial appointments to the council, the terms of the four members representing sports persons and livestock growers shall be two years for one member of each group and four years for the other member of each group, after which all appointments shall be for four years. The term lengths for the members representing the various agencies shall be at the discretion of the respective agencies. There shall be no limit on the number of terms a member may serve.

(c) The duties of the council are:

- (I) To advise local habitat partnership committees;
- (II) To assist in the dissemination of information concerning the habitat partnership program;
- (III) To review draft plans for compliance with program guidelines established by the commission and to recommend appropriate action by the commission;
- (IV) To monitor program effectiveness and to propose to the commission changes in guidelines and land acquisition planning and review as appropriate;
- (V) To advise the director whether or not payment vouchers submitted by local habitat partnership committees are consistent with distribution management plans approved by the commission;
- (VI) To report to the commission and to the senate agriculture, natural resources, and energy committee and the house of representatives agriculture, livestock, and natural resources committee pursuant to section 33-1-112 (8);
- (VII) To allocate an annual budget to each local habitat partnership committee and submit each committee’s budget for the director’s final approval; and

(VIII) To expend money as necessary in areas that are not covered by a local habitat partnership committee formed pursuant to subsection (8)(b) of this section to reduce wildlife and land management conflicts as the conflicts relate to big game ungulate species forage and fence issues, assist with private land conservation efforts, enhance wildlife migration corridors, and implement other management objectives.

(d) (Deleted by amendment, L. 96, p. 1727, § 1, effective June 3, 1996.) **33-1-112**

(8) (a) There is hereby created in the state treasury the habitat partnership cash fund. The moneys in the habitat partnership cash fund shall consist of those moneys annually transferred from the wildlife cash fund in accordance with paragraph (e) of this subsection (8) for the partnership program and any gifts, grants, donations, and reimbursements made to the program from other sources. The moneys in the fund shall be used in accordance with the duties of the habitat partnership council as specified in section 33-1-110 (7) and (8), including, but not limited to, reasonable and necessary expenses incurred by council members in the fulfillment of their duties, as approved by the director. All interest derived from the investment of moneys in the habitat partnership cash fund shall be credited to the fund. Any balance remaining in the fund at the end of any fiscal year shall remain in the fund subject to the limitations provided in paragraph (e) of this subsection (8).

(b) Notwithstanding section 24-1-136 (11)(a)(I), the council shall submit an annual report to the commission, the senate and house agriculture committees, and the executive director of the department of natural resources specifically stating the items for which it has expended money from the fund and the purpose of such items.

(c) If the council ceases to exist, all moneys in the habitat partnership cash fund shall revert to the wildlife cash fund.

(d) (Deleted by amendment, L. 96, p. 1729, § 2, effective June 3, 1996.)

(e)

(I) On July 1, 2002, and each year thereafter, there shall be transferred from the wildlife cash fund to the habitat partnership cash fund an amount equal to five percent of the net sales of big game licenses used in the geographic areas represented by local habitat partnership committees from the previous calendar year. (II) All moneys in the habitat partnership cash fund shall be continuously appropriated to the division of parks and wildlife for the purpose of funding the habitat partnership program.

(III) The balance of unexpended and unencumbered money in the habitat partnership cash fund at the end of each state fiscal year must not exceed the total amount of the wildlife cash fund transfer from the beginning of that state fiscal year. Any amount of unexpended and unencumbered money in the habitat partnership cash fund at the end of a state fiscal year that exceeds the amount transferred to the fund at the beginning of that state fiscal year reverts to the wildlife cash fund.

(IV) Repealed.

24-101-105

(1) (a) This code applies to all publicly funded contracts entered into by all governmental bodies of the executive branch of this state; except that this code does not apply to: (I) Bridge and highway construction or to contracts for unsolicited or comparable proposals for public-private initiatives under section 43-1-1203;

- (II) Contracts between the state and its political subdivisions or other governments, except as provided in article 110 of this title 24;
- (II.5) Grants;
- (III) Public printing, as defined in section 24-70-201, except for the provisions of article 109 of this title 24;
- (IV) Professional services, as defined in section 24-30-1402;
- (V) The Colorado state fair authority created pursuant to section 35-65-401 (1); (VI) The state board of land commissioners in connection with contract expenditures from the state board of land commissioners investment and development fund created in section 36-1-153 (1), or the commercial real property operating fund created in section 36-1-153.7;
- (VII) Repealed.
- (VIII) Utilities, including water, electricity, and natural gas;
- (IX) Works of art for display, purchase, or performance;
- (X) Copyrighted materials such as books, periodicals, collections, and subscriptions; (XI) Conference facilities at hotels or other venues that include, but need not to be limited to, meeting rooms, audio visual equipment, catering, and guest accommodation rooms;
- (XII) Client-based services including medical services or services where the client has the right to choose the vendor;
- (XIII) Dues and memberships;
- (XIV) Annuities;
- (XV) Real property or interest in real property;
- (XVI) The habitat partnership program created in section 33-1-110 (8)(a); (XVII) The department of early childhood in soliciting and selecting entities to serve as local coordinating organizations pursuant to section 26.5-2-103 and coordinating agreements entered into pursuant to section 26.5-2-105; or
- (XVIII) Public-private partnerships authorized by part 1 of article 94 of this title 24.

(a.5) If the procurement official or his or her designee determines that reasonable competition exists in the procurement of a good or service that is exempt from the code pursuant to subsection (1)(a) of this section, the procurement official or his or her designee may require a competitive process.

(b) The governing board of each institution of higher education, including the Auraria higher education center established in article 70 of title 23, by formal action of the board, and the Colorado commission on higher education, by formal action of the commission, may elect to be exempt from the provisions of this code and may enter into contracts independent of the terms specified in this code.

(c) Repealed.

(d) (Deleted by amendment, L. 2017.)

(e) Upon the request to purchase items for resale to the public, the procurement official may, by written determination, provide that this code shall not apply to items acquired for such resale.

(f) Nothing in this code or in rules promulgated under this code shall prevent any governmental body or political subdivision from complying with the terms and conditions of any grant, gift, bequest, or cooperative agreement.

(g) Upon the request to enter into a revenue-producing contract, the procurement official may, by written determination, provide that this code shall not apply to the revenue-producing contract. Governmental bodies shall maximize the return to the state when they are parties to revenue-producing contracts.

(2) All political subdivisions and local public agencies of this state are authorized to adopt all or any part of this code and its accompanying rules.

(3) and (4) (Deleted by amendment, L. 2017.)

Fletcher Jacobs
Outdoor Recreation & Lands
Branch Manager

Michael Blanck
HPP Manager

Kim Berscheid
HPP Administrative Assistant

Kale Watson
HPP Administrative Assistant

Kayla Friedrich
HPP Administrative Assistant

Arkansas River

Grand Mesa

Lower Colorado River

Larimer County

Gunnison Basin

Middle Park

Mount Blanca

Montelores

North Park

Republican Rivers

North Fork

Northwest Colorado

Sangre de Cristo

San Juan Basin

Upper Yampa River

San Luis Valley

Uncompahgre

State Council

White River



Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Habitat Partnership Program Annual Report, Fiscal Year 2024

Summary of Committee Finances

Committee	HPP Cost	Match Amt	In-Kind Amt	Total Expenses	Private Cost	Public Cost	In-Kind Hrs
Arkansas River	\$41,784.47	\$16,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$63,784.47	\$19,463.82	\$11,916.08	271
Grand Mesa	\$190,359.31	\$527,501.23	\$161,949.00	\$879,809.54	\$158,886.60	\$10,956.00	2607
Gunnison Basin	\$14,428.99	\$4,000.00	\$2,500.00	\$20,928.99	\$9,452.35	\$4,500.00	174
Lower Colorado River	\$178,098.70	\$234,024.00	\$162,622.57	\$574,745.27	\$43,098.48	\$124,290.08	973
Middle Park	\$184,705.79	\$142,784.45	\$40,909.00	\$368,399.24	\$172,292.43	\$5,035.00	1076
Montelores	\$97,452.75	\$96,443.29	\$20,610.00	\$214,506.04	\$87,240.00	\$9,999.95	625
Mount Blanca	\$105,932.86	\$7,117.00	\$37,905.00	\$150,954.86	\$80,177.74	\$29,653.93	880
North Fork Gunnison	\$69,834.35	\$160,000.00	\$72,271.07	\$302,105.42	\$59,599.59	\$9,896.50	335
North Park	\$144,701.81	\$200,000.00	\$0.00	\$344,701.81	\$4,590.49	\$140,000.00	226
Northern Larimer County	\$25,176.05	\$45,635.00	\$1,200.00	\$72,011.05	\$17,439.22	\$7,500.00	172
Northwest Colorado	\$314,798.67	\$292,669.96	\$1,179,066.44	\$1,786,535.07	\$271,050.48	\$18,200.00	1925
Republican Rivers	\$115,537.85	\$3,496,435.36	\$0.00	\$3,611,973.21	\$39,528.56	\$15,017.20	315
San Juan Basin	\$112,987.88	\$112,112.00	\$36,321.19	\$261,421.07	\$80,191.35	\$21,951.76	567
San Luis Valley	\$92,844.24	\$73,320.00	\$86,812.00	\$252,976.24	\$18,944.30	\$71,284.40	350
Sangre de Cristo	\$90,755.39	\$217,949.32	\$2,900,000.00	\$3,208,704.71	\$20,335.11	\$50,192.22	283
South Park	\$87,101.80	\$34,224.00	\$185,114.53	\$306,440.33	\$32,290.88	\$54,065.16	679
State Council	\$1,839,984.23	\$410,179.20	\$0.00	\$2,250,163.43	\$22,521.50	\$873,615.15	600
Test Committee	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
Uncompahgre	\$148,271.73	\$176,522.40	\$247,570.00	\$572,364.13	\$85,023.01	\$57,256.77	277
Upper Yampa River	\$57,781.14	\$101,703.00	\$2,850.00	\$162,334.14	\$41,531.14	\$0.00	459
White River	\$192,933.13	\$131,818.17	\$57,023.26	\$381,774.56	\$78,720.86	\$63,911.95	1393
HPP Program Totals:	\$4,105,471.14	\$6,480,438.38	\$5,200,724.06	\$15,786,633.58	\$1,342,377.91	\$1,579,242.15	14187



Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Habitat Partnership Program

Program Accomplishments, HPP and Cooperators, Fiscal Year 2024

Units	Description	Accomplishments
Acres Burned	Habitat Improved	456
Acres Fertilized	Habitat Improved	710
Acres Irrigated	Habitat Improved	300
Acres Mech. or Hand-Treated	Habitat Improved	938
Acres of Weed Control	Habitat Improved	49558
Acres Seeded / Planted	Habitat Improved	1852
Cattleguards, Gates, etc	Constructed	6
Exclusionary Fence / Built	Projects	2
Fertilizer Vouchers	Projects	117
Hunt Coords	Hired	3
Miles of Fence Removed	Projects	4
Miles of New Fence	of New Fence Built	29
Plans	Written	5
Proj-repair,vouchers,etc	for Minor Fence Repair	229
Seeding/Planting	Projects	1
Stackyard Repair	Projects	8
Stackyards	Materials Provided	17
Tons	of Forage Purchased	390
Vinyl Rolls	Provided	177
Virtual Fence Base Stations	Projects	10
Water Dev	Built and/or Maintained	124
Weed control projects	Projects	100



Colorado Parks and Wildlife Habitat Partnership Program

Program Accomplishments, HPP and Cooperators, Fiscal Year 2024

Type	#Projects	Detail
Information/Education	2	
Monitoring/Research	7	
Other	6	Conservation Easements 2376.26 Acres Conserved

‘Acres of Weed Control’ is used when a treatment has been applied to a specific area and the acreage can be accurately determined.

‘Weed control projects’ is used when a treatment has been applied over a large area and the acreage cannot be accurately determined and if used, would inflate the actual number of acres treated. Costs vary greatly depending on scope of the project.

‘Water Dev’ denotes many types of water projects, such as the cleanout of an existing pond, well drilling, solar pump installations, new pond creation, spring development, pipeline installation, holding tanks and tire tanks. Costs vary greatly depending on the scope of the project.

Note:

Project accomplishments are shown as whole units but may have been rounded from actual project numbers.



Colorado Parks and Wildlife
Habitat Partnership Program
HPP Program Costs and Hours by GBL, Fiscal Year 2024

GBL	Description	Total Cost	HPP Cost	Match \$	In-Kind \$	In-Kind Hrs
ADM	Administrative	\$1,675,762.70	\$1,009,633.70	\$666,129.00	\$0.00	779
FEN	Fencing	\$1,326,696.82	\$552,970.97	\$489,866.75	\$283,859.10	5485
GDM	Game Damage	\$192,130.55	\$138,880.55	\$0.00	\$53,250.00	1810
INF	Information/Education	\$286.40	\$286.40			
MAN	Habitat Manipulation	\$7,579,756.13	\$2,232,745.54	\$4,749,840.63	\$597,169.96	5563
OTH	Other	\$4,769,453.00	\$60,508.00	\$482,500.00	\$4,226,445.00	0
RES	Monitoring & Research	\$242,547.98	\$110,445.98	\$92,102.00	\$40,000.00	550
Totals:		\$15,786,633.58	\$4,105,471.14	\$6,480,438.38	\$5,200,724.06	14187



Colorado Parks and Wildlife
Habitat Partnership Program Project
Project Cooperators, Fiscal Year 2024

HPP Program Totals

Cooperator Name	HPP Cost	Match Amt	In-Kind Amt	In-Kind Hrs
BLM		\$14,000.00	\$71,916.60	210
BLM Grazing Adv Board		\$30,160.00	\$22,960.25	0
County Gov't		\$192,529.00	\$18,781.00	96
CPW		\$217,150.34	\$56,801.94	1741
CSFS		\$0.00	\$0.00	160
HPP Committee Members		\$0.00	\$0.00	779
HPP State Council		\$15,000.00	\$0.00	0
Indian Tribe		\$5,200.00	\$0.00	0
Local Gov't		\$41,135.00	\$2,325.00	25
Local Soil Cons. Dist		\$755,235.00	\$0.00	30
Local Weed Control Dist		\$2,000.00	\$0.00	70
MDF		\$1,200.00	\$0.00	0
NPS		\$0.00	\$2,000.00	0
NRCS		\$2,005,000.00	\$1,505.00	0
Other HPP Committee		\$20,000.00	\$0.00	0
Other Wildlife Group		\$372,750.00	\$7,020.00	380
Private Business/Org		\$1,023,151.20	\$94,850.00	0
Private Landowner/Permittee		\$1,190,098.52	\$4,773,584.74	10014
Private Local Assoc.		\$94,195.00	\$0.00	0
RMEF		\$101,899.32	\$0.00	300
SLB		\$10,000.00	\$0.00	0
State Gov't		\$35,000.00	\$0.00	0
USFS		\$354,735.00	\$148,979.53	382
Totals	\$4,105,471.14	\$6,480,438.38	\$5,200,724.06	14,187