

# Colorado

Our Land, Our Water, Our Heritage



## LWCF Funded Places in Colorado

### Federal Units

- Arapaho and Roosevelt NFs
- Arapaho NF
- Arapaho NWR
- Arkansas Canyonlands ACEC
- Arkansas River
- Baca NWR
- Bangs Canyon SRMA
- Bent's Old Fort NHS
- Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP
- Blanca Wildlife Habitat Area
- Browns Canyon NM
- Browns Park NWR
- Camel Back Wilderness Study Area
- Canyons of the Ancients NM
- Colorado NM
- Cross Mountain WSA
- Curecanti National Recreation Area
- Dinosaur NM
- Dolores River Riparian ACEC
- Dominguez/Escalante NCA
- Florissant Fossil Beds NM
- Garden Park
- Goldbelt National Scenic Byway
- Grand Mesa Slopes
- Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre & Gunnison
- Grape Creek WSA
- Great Sand Dunes National Park
- Gunnison Basin ACEC
- Gunnison Gorge NCA
- Gunnison NF
- Little Book Cliffs WSA
- McInnis Canyons NCA
- Medicine Bow-Routt NF
- Mesa Verde National Park
- Other BLM Lands
- Phantom Canyon ACEC
- Pike and San Isabel NFs
- Pike NF
- Powderhorn Wilderness
- Río Grande del Norte NM
- Río Grande NF
- Rocky Mountain National Park
- Roosevelt NF
- San Isabel NF
- San Juan NF
- San Miguel River ACEC
- Sand Creek Massacre NHS
- Sarvis Creek
- The Palisade ACEC
- Trickle Mountain
- Two Ponds NWR
- Uncompahgre NF
- Upper Colorado River SRMA
- West Antelope Creek ACEC
- White River NF

## LWCF Success in Colorado

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has provided funding to help protect some of Colorado's most special places and ensure recreational access for hunting, fishing and other outdoor activities. Colorado has received approximately \$357 million in LWCF funding over the past five decades, protecting places such as the Great Sand Dunes National Park, Uncompahgre, Arapahoe-Roosevelt, Gunnison and Rio Grande National Forests, and Canyon of the Ancients National Monument.

Forest Legacy Program (FLP) grants are also funded under LWCF, to help protect working forests. The FLP cost-share funding supports timber sector jobs and sustainable forest operations while enhancing wildlife habitat, water quality and recreation. For example, the FLP contributed to places such as the Catspaw Ranch along the headwaters of the Navajo River in Southern Colorado and Ben Delatour Scout Ranch along the Front Range near Fort Collins. The FLP assists states and private forest owners to maintain working forest lands through matching grants for permanent conservation easement and fee acquisitions and has leveraged approximately \$27.2 million in federal funds to invest in Colorado's forests, while protecting air and water quality, wildlife habitat, access for recreation and other public benefits provided by forests.

LWCF state assistance grants have further supported hundreds of projects across Colorado's state and local parks including trails development in Lory and Cheyenne Mountain State Parks and park acquisitions at Golden Gate Canyon, Boyd Lake, and Roxborough State Parks. Additionally, the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program (ORLP), which funds city park projects in economically disadvantaged areas, supported the Montbello Open Space Park in Denver.

## Economic Benefits

Active outdoor recreation is an important part of Colorado's economy. The Bureau of Economic Analysis has found that outdoor recreation generates \$13.9 billion in value added to Colorado's economy, 129,773 homegrown jobs, and accounts for 2.8% of the state's economy. Further, the U.S. Census reports that each year 2.2 million people hunt, fish, or enjoy wildlife-watching in Colorado, contributing over \$3 billion in wildlife recreation spending to the state economy.

Federal Total \$259,930,226

### State Programs

Forest Legacy Program \$27,221,000

Habitat Conservation (Sec. 6) \$1,754,302

ORLP \$250,000

Stateside \$67,916,326

**Total \$357,071,854**

**LWCF is a simple idea:** that a portion of offshore drilling fees should be used to protect important land and water for all Americans. These are not taxpayer dollars.

Unfortunately, for 55 years the promise of LWCF was broken as \$22 billion was diverted from the program.

The **Great American Outdoors Act** ended the diversion and ensures that

LWCF 's permanently authorized \$900 million is used for conservation and recreation projects each year.

LWCF supports the acquisition of land and conservation easements to **protect our national parks, wildlife refuges, forests, trails, and BLM sites**, grants funds to the states for local and state park needs, protects critical wildlife habitat, watersheds and recreational access, and conserves working farms, ranches and forestlands that enhance local economies.



[www.lwcfcoalition.org](http://www.lwcfcoalition.org)

## LWCF in Colorado

### Cross Mountain Ranch

LWCF funding in FY2013 was used to acquire the 920-acre Cross Mountain Ranch on the Yampa River in northwest Colorado. Previously, access to the area was difficult at best because the only feasible routes were through private property or by boat. Now, the conservation lands, as well as the access they provide, are open to all hunters, anglers, boaters, hikers and other outdoor recreationists. The project area includes 2.8 miles of frontage on the Yampa River and provides habitat to 400 elk (including a large number of trophy bulls), mule deer and all four species of Colorado warm-water fish.

### Fiscal Year 2025 Agency LWCF Project List for Colorado

Agency	Project	Amount	Delegation
BLM	South San Juan Project Area	\$9,000,000	Bennet, Hickenlooper/Boebert
BLM	South San Juan Project Area (Supplemental List)	\$11,146,000	Bennet, Hickenlooper/Boebert
NPS	Great Sand Dunes NP&P (Supplemental List)	\$3,685,000	Bennet, Hickenlooper/Boebert
NPS	Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP (Supplemental List)	\$4,000,000	Bennet, Hickenlooper/Boebert
USFS	Rio Grande NF	\$5,281,000	Bennet, Hickenlooper/Boebert
USFS	San Juan NF I	\$3,500,000	Bennet, Hickenlooper/Boebert
USFS	San Juan NF II (Supplemental List)	\$4,690,000	Bennet, Hickenlooper/Boebert



### Status of the Land and Water Conservation Fund

In August 2020, permanent, dedicated funding for LWCF was secured through the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) – ensuring that each year the \$900 million deposited into the LWCF account is directed to conservation and recreation priorities; however, in FY24 Congress backtracked on that promise when they rescinded \$94 million of unobligated LWCF funding (\$89M from the NPS State & Local Assistance Program & \$5M from BLM). GAOA has not eliminated the backlog of LWCF priorities that are waiting in line as nearly all LWCF programs remain oversubscribed - each year the LWCF supplemental project list includes about \$200 million in urgent needs that are authorized to use this funding. To support these critical projects, unspent LWCF funding should be reallocated to the states by the Secretary of the Interior (per the LWCF Act) or reprogrammed by Congress to LWCF sub-programs with outstanding funding need. If funding is rescinded rather than reallocated or reprogrammed, landowners and communities miss out on LWCF funding, and these critical priorities could be lost forever.

**FY25 Budget Update:** The Biden Administration's FY25 budget proposal included detailed LWCF priority project lists and balanced program allocations, as well supplemental project lists over and above LWCF's current \$900 million funding level. [Click here to view a map of past LWCF projects](#)