



Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) receives up to half of Colorado Lottery proceeds each year and invests that funding in Colorado's trails, parks, wildlife, open spaces, and rivers and in protecting our outdoor heritage. Created by a vote of the people in 1992, GOCO is managed by an independent board and uses no tax dollars.



Colorado Parks and Wildlife receives half of GOCO's funding each year for state parks and wildlife programs.

El informe anual está en español a [goco.org/es](https://goco.org/es).



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Cover photo: Mount Tom Conservation Corridor in Jefferson County.  
Photo by Bergreen Photography.

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

[GOCO.ORG](https://goco.org)

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We should never forget that the lands and waters of our beautiful state are the homeland of many tribes. They include the Apache Nation, Arapaho Nation, Cheyenne Nation, Pueblo Tribes, Shoshone Tribe, and Ute Nation. We recognize the past and ongoing injustices perpetrated against Indigenous peoples including the painful history of genocide, forced removal, and stolen land. We respect and honor Elders past, present, and future, and all Indigenous peoples for their relationship with this land throughout generations.

## FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

# Hello, friends.



It has been another incredible year of partnership in service of Colorado's great outdoors. I remain honored to be a part of this statewide community of individuals and organizations who work tirelessly to protect, enhance, and expand access to the outdoors.

Last year, we worked together to turn \$72.5 million of Colorado Lottery proceeds into 91 projects that advance resource conservation, outdoor stewardship, community vitality, equitable access, and youth connections in 57 of Colorado's 64 counties. The impacts of our partnership will benefit Colorado today and long into the future.

At GOCO, we continuously strive to ensure our public dollars are invested for the highest and best use and are leveraged to meet the moment for Colorado. Like so many of you, we feel an urgency to move through the many

challenges we face, including climate change, increased stress on our public lands, barriers to equitable outdoor access, development pressure, and threatened natural resources, habitat, and species. We're confident in our ability to make progress on these challenges because of the passion, expertise, and collaborative spirit we have in our state and with GOCO's dedicated resources that help accelerate important outcomes.

In that spirit, this year, we launched a collaborative effort with Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), the Department of Natural Resources, and the Governor's Office, and began development of Colorado's Outdoors Strategy, a regionally rooted statewide vision and action plan for conservation, climate resilience, and sustainable recreation. This is a moment for Colorado, one in which we aim to balance state-level leadership and guidance with regional perspectives and to engage in the hard conversations that lead us to north star goals we can rally around as a community.

GOCO also saw our first ever Centennial Program implementation grant come to fruition, supporting a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create lasting impact. A \$9.5 million investment helped The Conservation Fund, CPW, and Jefferson County protect

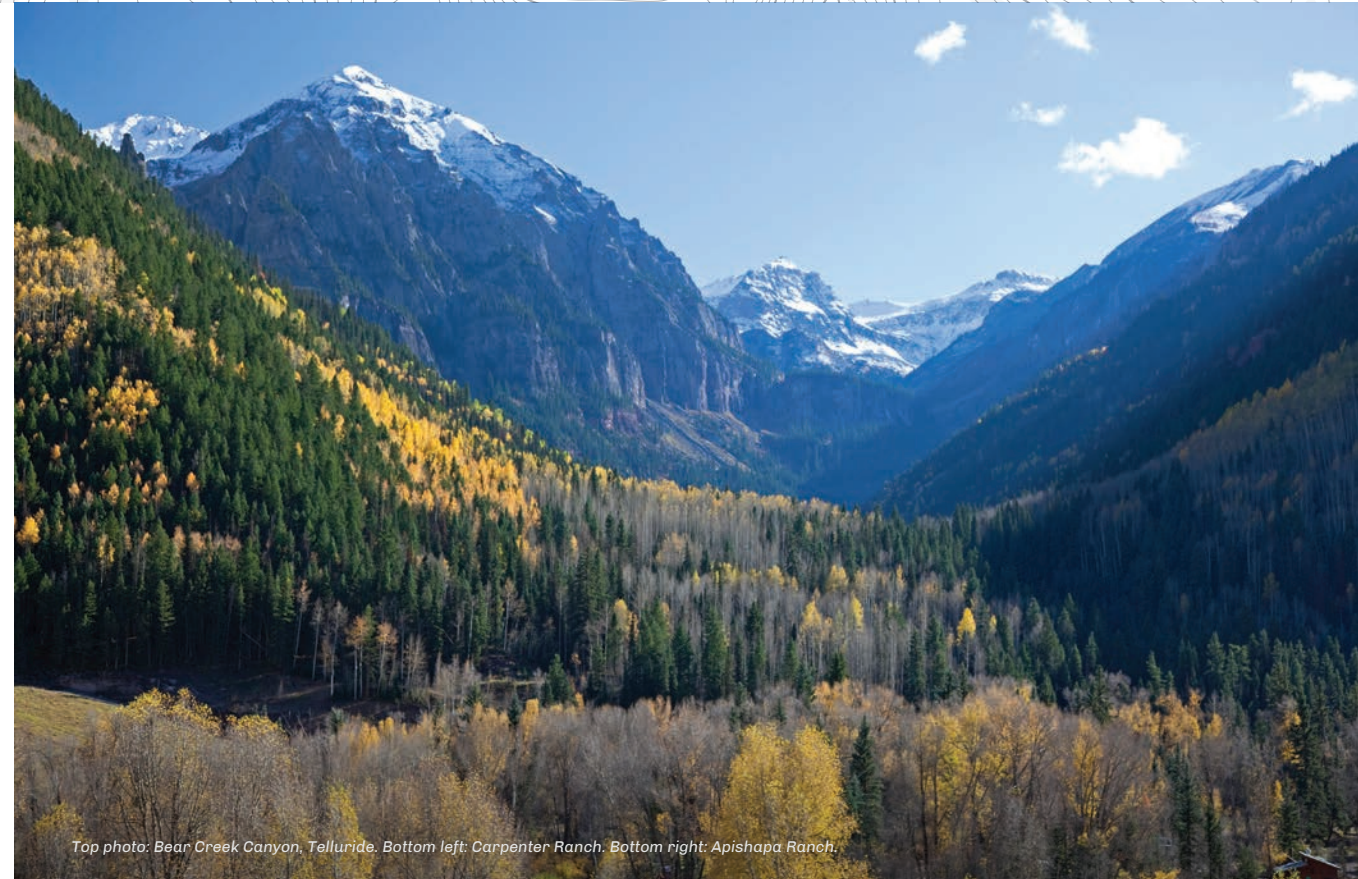
2,315 acres of the Mount Tom Conservation Corridor just northwest of Denver. We're looking forward to future public access, including a new trail to the 9,741-foot summit of Mount Tom.

We remain committed to being a trusted funding partner for the outdoors and continually look at how we can do better for our partners and Colorado. To check in on how we're doing, we completed a partner survey that helped us home in on what we're doing well and where we can continue to improve. A special thanks to all who participated; your insights help us be more responsive to you and community needs.

Lastly, I want to honor and celebrate John Fielder, one of GOCO's founding board members who passed away this year. John was a conservation champion and dedicated photographer who showcased every corner of our state, and we'll continue to take inspiration from his legacy of public service.

I hope this report sparks a sense of pride in what we've accomplished together and excitement for what comes next. Keep up the great work, Colorado. Thank you, as always, for your passion and partnership.

Sincerely,  
**Jackie Miller**  
Executive Director



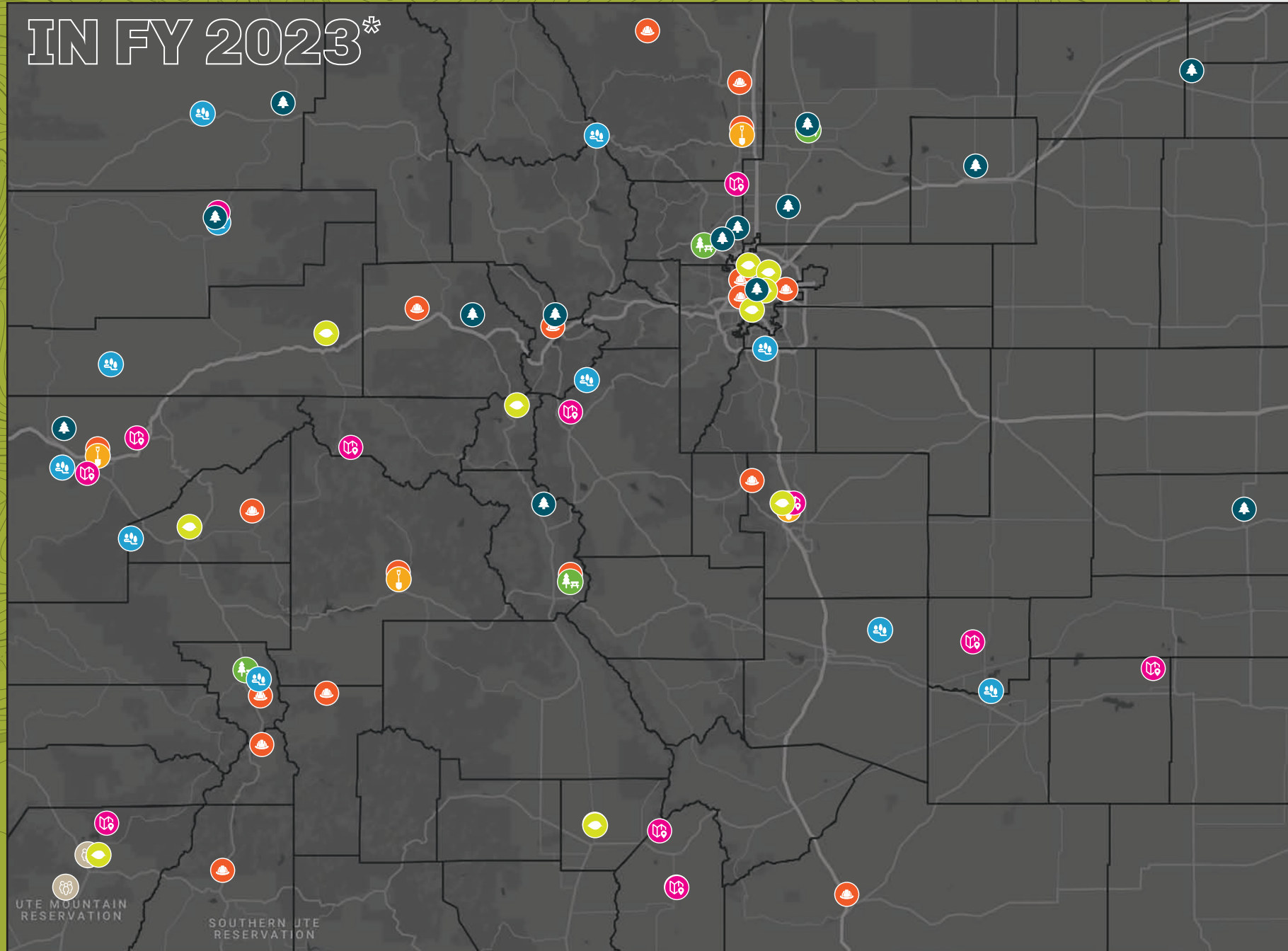
Top photo: Bear Creek Canyon, Telluride. Bottom left: Carpenter Ranch. Bottom right: Apishapa Ranch.



PHOTOS BY GOCO FOUNDING BOARD MEMBER JOHN FIELDER, 1950-2023.

# PROJECTS FUNDED

## IN FY 2023\*



### GOCO PROJECTS

#### Key

-  Service Corps
-  Land Acquisition
-  Recreation
-  Stewardship
-  Generation Wild Community
-  Planning & Capacity
-  Restoration
-  CPW Innovation Fund



GOCO also funded several regional and statewide projects through our base programs and Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW). Those projects are not included on this map. For a complete list of grants, please see pages 21-26.

To learn more about our investments through CPW, visit [GOCO.org/CPW](https://goco.org/CPW).

\*GOCO's FY 2023 ran from July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023.



# FY 2023 SNAPSHOT

Colorado West Land Trust stewardship in Grand Junction.  
Photo by Jeff Stoddart Photography.



**91**

PROJECTS FUNDED



**82,534**

ACRES CONSERVED

**57**

COUNTIES  
INVESTED IN

**975**

ACRES OF  
HABITAT RESTORED



**17 PARKS AND OUTDOOR  
RECREATION AREAS**  
created and improved



**65 MILES OF TRAIL**  
built or reconstructed



**267 YOUNG PEOPLE**  
through conservation service corps

## OUTDOOR TRENDS

Colorado's outdoor recreation economy generates \$62 billion annually and contributes 511,000 direct jobs (*Source: Colorado Outdoor Recreation Industry Office, 2023*). Those who work in the industry earn \$21 billion in wages and salaries, and consumers spend \$37 billion on these activities.

Coloradans' most popular motivations for getting outside include enjoying nature, relaxing, socializing, and improving personal health (*Source: SCORP, 2019-2023*). However, the top three barriers to recreation participation are limited time, traffic congestion, and crowding.

Diverse and low-income communities continue to face significant barriers to accessing public lands, open spaces, and parks. To date, Colorado's Outdoor Equity Grant Program (OEGP) established in 2021 has invested \$3,084,808 of Colorado Lottery proceeds in organizations connecting diverse youth with outdoor recreation, education, and careers. The OEGP has received over 300 applications with 69 grants awarded so far.

The majority (70 to 90%) of voters in eight Mountain States, including Colorado, support conservation goals like protecting wildlife habitats and migration routes, ensuring healthier forests, preventing light pollution that blocks out stars, and safeguarding drinking water (*Source: Colorado College State of the Rockies Project, 2023*).

The majority of lands in Colorado (about 60%) are privately owned. Private land conservation continues to be an important strategy to protect and sustain their critical resources. Keep It Colorado's "Conserving Colorado" 10-year roadmap lays out a plan to protect more landscapes, support and engage more people in conservation and stewardship, and build a strong, healthy, and impactful conservation movement.

Climate change and water consumption threaten the Colorado River and its tributaries. It provides drinking water for 40 million people, is vital to our food supply, flows through nine National Parks, and is essential habitat for more than a dozen species of endangered fish and wildlife (*Source: American Rivers Colorado River Report, 2023*).

In 2023, President Joe Biden announced the American Climate Corps initiative to train young people for jobs in the clean energy economy and address climate change impacts, with hopes to employ 20,000 people in the first year (*Source: Roll Call, 2023*). Inspiration was drawn, in part, from several of Colorado's own organizations, such as the Colorado Youth Corps Association and Serve Colorado, which established the Colorado Climate Corps in 2022.

SINCE 1992, GOCO'S  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS  
INCLUDE:



**5,722**

projects funded in all 64  
counties across the state

**\$1.4 billion**

in Lottery proceeds invested  
back into Colorado



**1,173 MILES OF TRAIL**  
built or reconstructed

**1,102 MILES**  
of river protected

**1,816 PARKS AND  
OUTDOOR RECREATION**  
areas created and improved

**1,391,294 ACRES  
CONSERVED**

in urban and rural areas

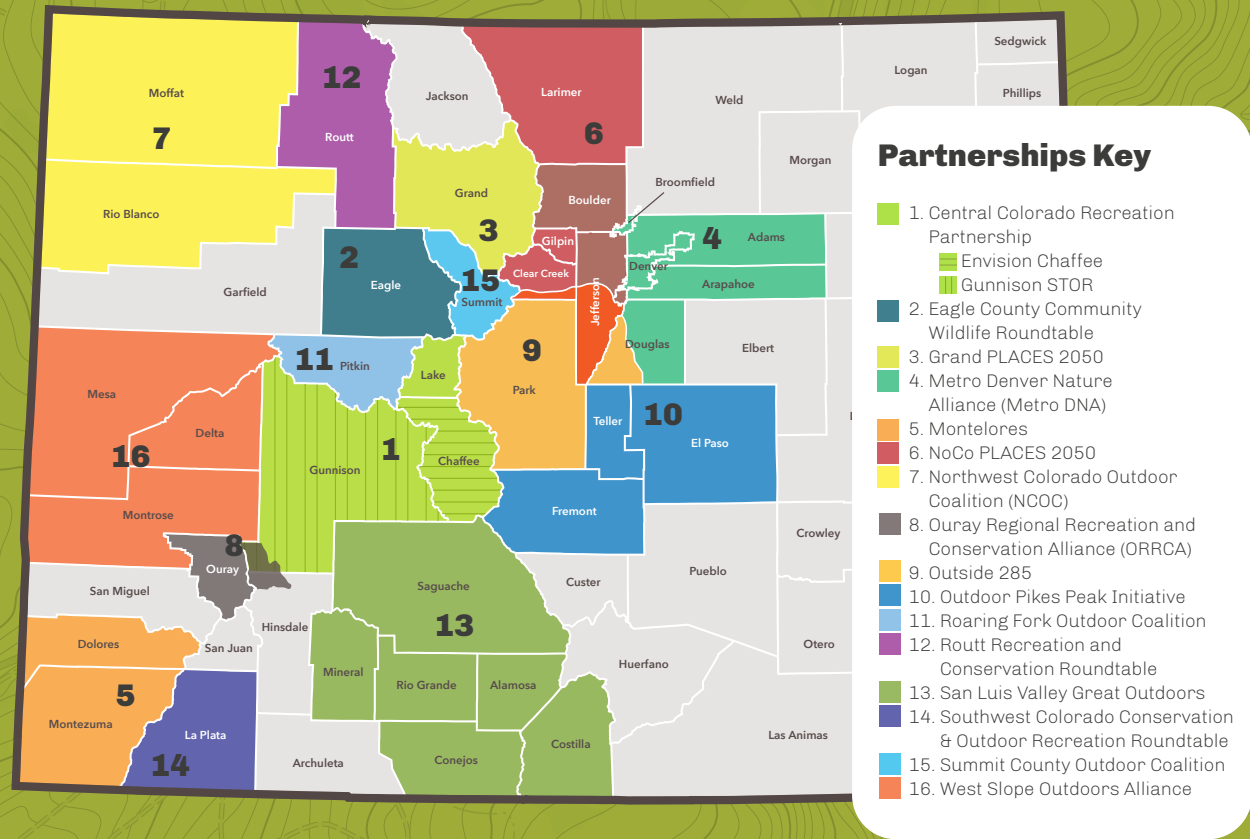
**66,688 ACRES ADDED**  
to the State Parks system

**10,745 YOUNG PEOPLE**  
employed through  
conservation service corps



Rito Seco Park in Costilla County.  
Photo by Christi Bode.

# STATEWIDE PLANNING



## REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS INITIATIVE

**From towering peaks to vast grasslands, Colorado's outdoor landscapes give us a lot to love, and a lot to protect.**

We're lucky to have organizations across the state working hard to sustain our land, water, wildlife, and recreation opportunities. Importantly, each one brings unique knowledge of local treasures and community priorities.

In 2020, Governor Jared Polis signed an executive order tasking the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) to work with the Colorado Outdoor Partnership (CO-OP) to create regional collaboratives made up of new and existing coalitions working to thoughtfully address

climate change impacts, increased recreation, inequitable access to the outdoors, and other pressing challenges.

Since the initiative's founding, CPW and GOCO have invested \$3.4 million in support of 16 new and existing regional partnerships, with more to come.

## COLORADO'S OUTDOORS STRATEGY

Coloradans deeply value our outdoors. Thriving landscapes support our plants and wildlife; offer recreational, cultural, economic, and agricultural opportunities for residents and visitors; and provide clean air and water. As Colorado's natural resources face increasing pressures from climate change and growing human populations and uses, we're developing a proactive strategy to protect and steward them and the many benefits they provide.

This year, GOCO, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, and the Colorado Governor's Office launched an effort to develop a regionally-rooted statewide vision and action plan for conservation, recreation, and climate resilience by June 2026. The strategy will reflect science, expertise, and data inclusive of a variety of disciplines and knowledge, and include input from diverse stakeholders across Colorado.



So far, we've been hard at work engaging stakeholders, conducting background research, and drafting up frameworks, maps, metrics, and tools with help from Keystone Policy Center, SE Group, the Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Mending Mountains Collective, and the University of Colorado-Boulder graduate program in Environmental Studies.

Stay updated on our progress and opportunities to engage at [GOCO.org/outdoors-strategy](https://goco.org/outdoors-strategy).

Arkansas River Community Preserve in Lake County.  
Photo by Bergreen Photography.



# STEWARDSHIP IMPACT

**There's nothing more rejuvenating than time spent outside. But just like our outdoor spaces take care of us, they need our care, too.**

Colorado's stewardship organizations, with their dedicated staff and volunteers, are making it happen in the places that need it the most.

In fiscal year 2023, GOCO invested \$1,066,950 in four projects through our Stewardship Impact program, which supports collaborative stewardship work that demonstrates meaningful

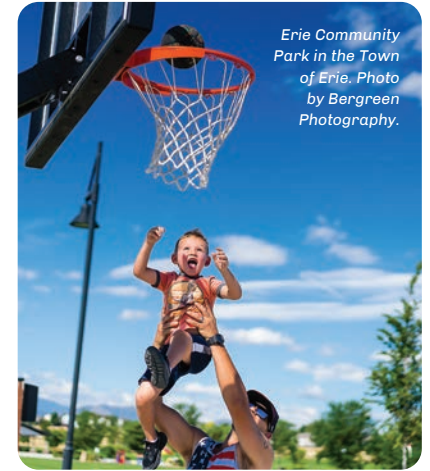
improvements to ecological and recreational amenities.

With one of the fastest population growth rates in the state, parks and open spaces in the Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak Region are feeling the pressure. With help from a \$296,700 Stewardship Impact grant, Rocky Mountain Field Institute is bringing in stewardship crews to complete urgent, community-driven projects over the next three years. With this support, they're able to hire paid seasonal staff, complete projects in more locations, and provide more training to crews and project managers.

# COMMUNITY IMPACT

Something special happens when a park is built. People get healthier from more time spent outside. Trees provide shade and support clean air. Residents have a place to connect with one another. Local economies get a boost from more visitors. By creating close-to-home opportunities to access the outdoors, we can help communities thrive.

In fiscal year 2023, GOCO invested \$8,971,815 in 14 projects as part of our Community Impact program, which develops and revitalizes parks, trails, school yards, fairgrounds, environmental



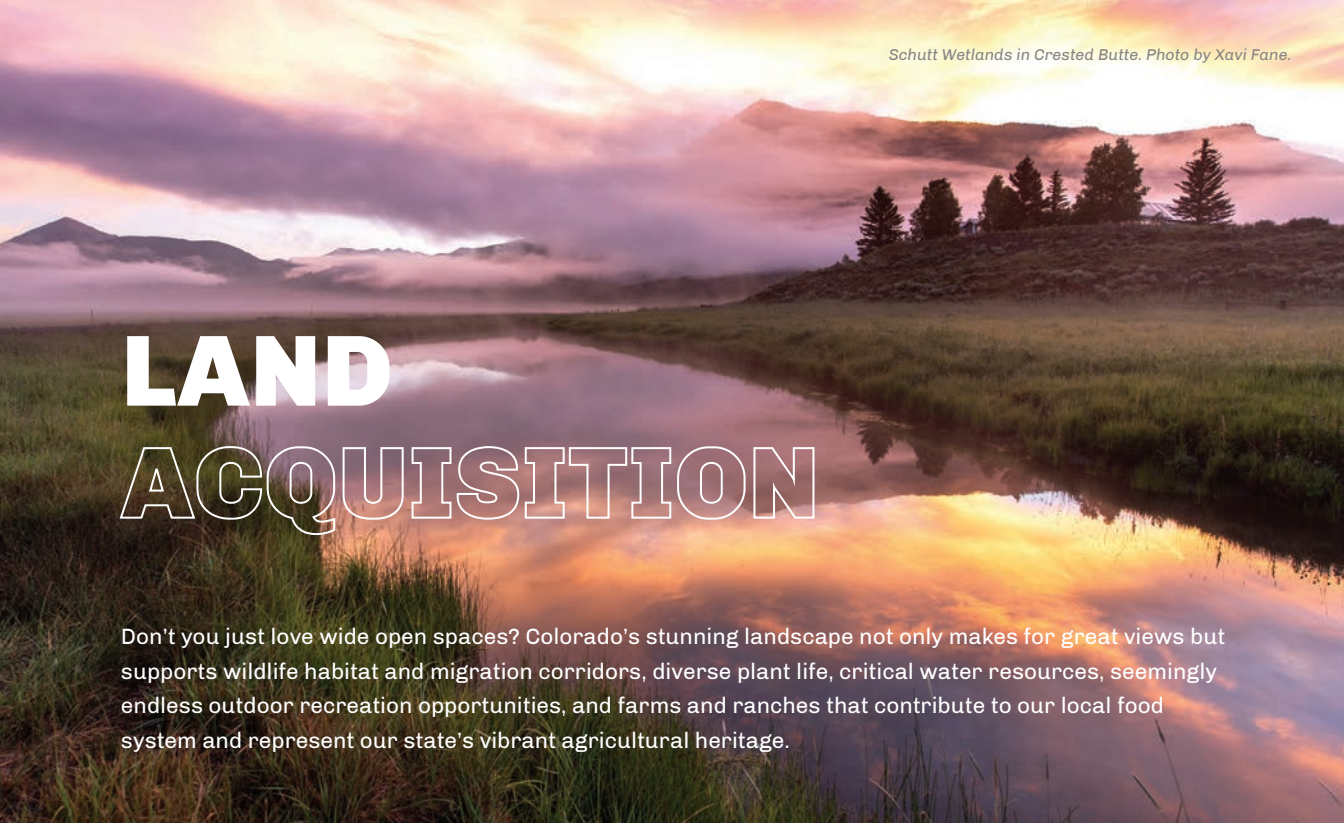
Erie Community Park in the Town of Erie. Photo by Bergreen Photography.

education facilities, and other outdoor projects that enhance a community's quality of life and access to the outdoors.

It's almost here. A \$750,000 grant awarded in March 2023 is helping Denver Parks and Recreation complete the final phase of the 80-acre Heron Pond/Heller/Carpio-Sanguinette Park project in the Globeville neighborhood adjacent to the South Platte River. Based on community input, partners seek to restore the property's natural area, create connections to the outdoors, enhance the park experience, and promote community health and well-being. It's set to be the largest of five natural areas in the Denver Park system and a symbol of Globeville's history, renewal, and transformation.



Heron Pond/Heller/Carpio-Sanguinette Park design. Provided by Dig Studio.



# LAND ACQUISITION

Don't you just love wide open spaces? Colorado's stunning landscape not only makes for great views but supports wildlife habitat and migration corridors, diverse plant life, critical water resources, seemingly endless outdoor recreation opportunities, and farms and ranches that contribute to our local food system and represent our state's vibrant agricultural heritage.

In fiscal year 2023, GOCO invested \$6,275,000 in six projects through our Land Acquisition program, which supports urban and rural landscape, waterway, and habitat protection priorities and improves access to the outdoors. In addition, \$412,000 went to Keep It Colorado's Transaction Cost Assistance Program (TCAP) helping landowners cover transaction costs associated with conservation easements. In total, these programs helped to permanently protect 82,534 acres of land.

A \$127,000 GOCO grant in June 2022 helped Crested Butte Land Trust permanently protect Schutt Wetlands, a 107-acre parcel representing one of the last undeveloped large open spaces separating the Town of Crested Butte and neighborhoods to the south. The effort protects critical wetlands, open grasslands used for grazing, and a significant stretch of the Slate River. Looking ahead, planning is underway for a future cross-country ski trail and pedestrian trail.

Verhoeff Reservoir. Photo courtesy of Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust.



The Verhoeff Family Farm and Ranch sits alongside John Martin Reservoir State Park in Southeast Colorado's shortgrass prairie. Its 5,344 acres include over 1,700 irrigated acres of crops and pasture, with the remaining grasslands used for grazing. The ranch provides rich wildlife habitat with more than 1,500 acres of wetlands, two reservoirs, and 3.5 miles of the Arkansas River. A \$45,000 TCAP grant in June 2023 to Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust helped the Verhoff family permanently protect the agricultural property, its water rights, and its biodiversity.

# PLANNING & CAPACITY

What do all of our favorite parks, trails, conservation, and stewardship efforts have in common? They start with a great plan and great people.

In a funding landscape where it can be challenging to find support to lay the groundwork for impact, it's critical to put resources in the hands of partners so they can bring their community-driven projects to life.

In fiscal year 2023, GOCO invested \$879,445 in four projects through our Planning & Capacity program, which supports projects that address opportunities, explore issues, engage communities, and examine trends in the outdoors. This

includes funding for staff positions because we know that it's talented and passionate people who make it all happen.

The Estes Valley includes a wide diversity of ecosystems, wildlife, and iconic outdoor experiences. Since 1987, Estes Valley Land Trust (EVLTL) has partnered with local landowners to conserve nearly 10,000 acres of land in the region. With help from a \$189,404 grant in March of 2022, EVLTL hired a stewardship manager, part-time land agent, and part-time high school intern. This added capacity is now helping to implement its GOCO-funded 2020 Estes Valley Open Space plan, build partnerships with forest health and fire management agencies, engage with historically underrepresented communities, and better engage local youth.



(from left to right) RisingBuffalo Maybee, District Supervisory Park Ranger at Rocky Mountain National Park; Alicia Rochambeau, Community Engagement Coordinator at Estes Valley Land Trust; Charlie Johnson, Land Agent for Estes Valley Land Trust. Photo by Dustin Deskocil.



My Outdoor Colorado community at Russell Square Park grand opening in Denver. Photo by Bergreen Photography.



# GENERATION WILD PROGRAM

The average kid spends less than seven minutes a day playing outside. But we know that access to nature supports health and well-being, and sparks curiosity and learning. Since 2015, GOCO has supported community-based groups in breaking down barriers to the outdoors through new places to play, outdoor programs and activities, and employment opportunities.

In fiscal year 2023, GOCO invested more than \$4.7 million in 10 Generation Wild communities across Colorado. Together, 12 existing communities made up of diverse groups like local governments,

schools, health-based organizations, and youth-serving nonprofits tap into their unique local knowledge and relationships to connect kids and families to outdoor experiences.

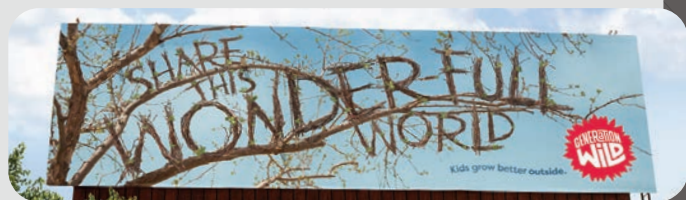
### IMPACTS TO DATE

- **7,649 outdoor programs delivered**
- **270,068 outdoor program participants**
- **3,313 pathways to outdoor careers created**



San Luis Valley Generation Wild youth conservation camp in South Fork. Photo by Christi Bode.

Serving the stunning 8,000 square miles that is the San Luis Valley in Colorado's Southwest, SLV Generation Wild delivers sustainable, culturally relevant land and water stewardship education programs for youth ages pre-K through college. In 2023, coalition partner Rio Grande Watershed Conservation & Education Initiative hosted a three-day, two-night youth conservation camp near South Fork, where participants learned from land management agencies and organizations from across the Valley, including wildland firefighters.



### GENERATION WILD COMMUNICATIONS

When you're a parent, you're the one your kids look up to most. Where you go, they follow. So when you go outside and introduce them to nature, you're not just finding something to occupy them, you're setting them up for a lifelong love of the outdoors. You don't need to go somewhere far off or expensive either. Right outside your door will do.

This year, Generation Wild asked Colorado parents and caregivers to *Share This Wonder-full World* with their kids. Outside is the perfect place to make memories, connect, and even experience awe. It turns out that regularly experiencing awe can improve both physical and mental health (Source: The Science of Awe, 2018). Yes, please!

We put up some magical billboards, including one that attracted real birds and another that played with shadows, and reached millions of Colorado parents with ideas and inspiration through digital ads, streaming platforms, and social media. And, of course, Wilder and the Generation Wild team hit the road for 16 community events and celebrations across the state.

One of our most exciting event giveaways were posters designed by three Denver-area artists depicting their childhood connections to the outdoors. Special thanks to Brayan Montes, Jahna Ray, and Ratha Sok for sharing their inspiration and making it ours, too.

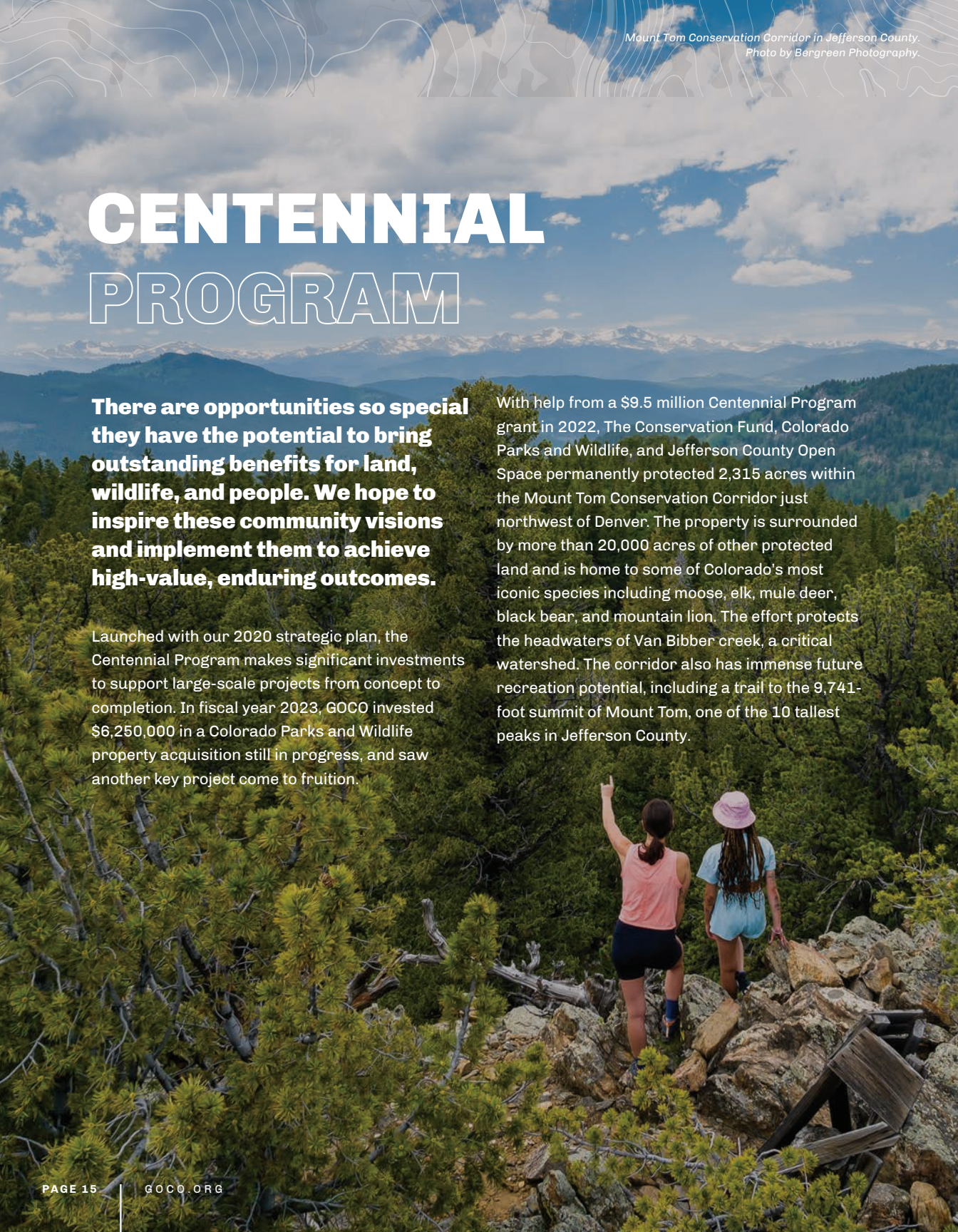


# CENTENNIAL PROGRAM

**There are opportunities so special they have the potential to bring outstanding benefits for land, wildlife, and people. We hope to inspire these community visions and implement them to achieve high-value, enduring outcomes.**

Launched with our 2020 strategic plan, the Centennial Program makes significant investments to support large-scale projects from concept to completion. In fiscal year 2023, GOCO invested \$6,250,000 in a Colorado Parks and Wildlife property acquisition still in progress, and saw another key project come to fruition.

With help from a \$9.5 million Centennial Program grant in 2022, The Conservation Fund, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and Jefferson County Open Space permanently protected 2,315 acres within the Mount Tom Conservation Corridor just northwest of Denver. The property is surrounded by more than 20,000 acres of other protected land and is home to some of Colorado's most iconic species including moose, elk, mule deer, black bear, and mountain lion. The effort protects the headwaters of Van Bibber creek, a critical watershed. The corridor also has immense future recreation potential, including a trail to the 9,741-foot summit of Mount Tom, one of the 10 tallest peaks in Jefferson County.



# FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

One of the best things we can do for our great outdoors is empower the next generation. Colorado's young people bring a wealth of experience, ideas, and passion that will help our land, water, and wildlife thrive long into the future.

In fiscal year 2023, GOCO invested \$450,000 in four positions at two organizations through our Fellowship Program, which funds two-year roles at select organizations for young people of diverse backgrounds to gain experience in the fields of conservation, outdoor recreation, and stewardship, while addressing organizational needs.



Andrea Torres at Colorado Outward Bound School retreat in Leadville. Photo courtesy of Colorado Outward Bound School.



*"Prior to joining TNC, I was unaware of all the working parts that go into making conservation happen... [It] was eye opening seeing all the different sectors working together for a shared mission. I feel re-inspired every day at my job."*

Andrea Torres, The Nature Conservancy



*"The most interesting and enjoyable part of my fellowship is that I feel like I am getting paid to learn and grow professionally! I feel like a sponge; I am absorbing so much information, getting connected to networks, and learning from my colleagues and the multitude of resources available at TNC."*

Anna Sofia Vera, The Nature Conservancy



*"I'm excited about the life-changing door to endless opportunity this fellowship offers me to devote my life to truly making a difference in the world."*

Jacob Cook Garza, The Nature Conservancy



*"It has become evident that effective collaboration and communication are the cornerstones of community progress. Understanding the unique attributes of each county's amenities requires exploration and on-ground experience, an undertaking I'm eager to embrace."*

Jonathan Silva, Southeast Colorado Enterprise Development

# CONSERVATION SERVICE CORPS



## Stewardship doesn't just change landscapes, it can change lives.

Here in Colorado, conservation corps allow youth, young adults, and veterans to help keep our state beautiful, while building experience and relationships they can take with them wherever they choose.

Conservation service corps members help build and restore trails, construct and remove fences, mitigate fire fuels, remove invasive species, and conserve energy and water. Through these projects, corps members grow to understand what it takes to ensure ecosystems thrive, while gaining paid professional experience that can be a jumping off point to outdoor careers. 2023 marked 12 years and \$8 million of GOCO investments in Colorado Youth Corps Association through our Conservation Service Corps program, and significant additional awards through other GOCO grant programs.

### CONSERVATION SERVICE CORPS HIGHLIGHTS

**\$1 million invested**

**9 miles of trail constructed/  
restored**

**1,048 invasive trees removed**

**24 acres of habitat restored**

**1,990 acres thinned to reduce  
wildfire risk**

**267 youth employed and 27,945  
hours worked**

Mule deer. Photo by Wayne D. Lewis, courtesy of Colorado Parks and Wildlife.



## RESTORE COLORADO

When it comes to addressing the many stewardship needs facing Colorado, we're far stronger when we work together. That was the thinking behind one of the most exciting collaborative efforts to date bringing together funders and stewardship organizations committed to restoring and enhancing critical wildlife habitat statewide.

The collaborative funding network Restoration and Stewardship of Outdoor Resources and Environment (RESTORE) Colorado was launched in 2020 to care for the rolling shortgrass prairies of the Great Plains to the crest of the Rocky Mountains, and on to the canyons of the desert Southwest, delivering \$30.7 million in impact to

date. In FY 2023, GOCO contributed \$1,200,000 of the total \$3.1 million invested by partners in the program, which leveraged more than \$2.3 million in match from the grantees for a total restoration impact of \$5.4 million.

RESTORE Colorado is managed by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and includes many partners, including GOCO, Gates Family Foundation, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Colorado Dept. of Natural Resources, Occidental Petroleum, Trinchera Blanca Foundation, Center for Disaster Philanthropy, Bezos Earth Fund, and others.

COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE

# WILDLIFE & STATE PARKS



Roxborough State Park.  
Photo by Ryan Jones, courtesy of  
Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

Colorado's state parks are where many outdoor stewards are born. From catching a glimpse of a moose or elk, the scent of a ponderosa pine, or a paddle across a pristine lake, we're not only filled with gratitude but also understand the value of protecting these resources.

A pivotal partnership, half of GOCO's annual funding is invested through Colorado Parks & Wildlife for outdoor recreation and wildlife projects. In FY23, CPW received a total of \$26.1 million in GOCO funding through its annual investment plan to support Colorado's 42 state parks, more than 300 state wildlife areas, and abundant wildlife habitat.

Within this investment, \$16.1 million went to state parks for capital construction, recreation management, environmental education, trails

and river greenways. CPW's State Trails Program also received \$2.4 million to advance trails projects statewide. \$10 million was directed to wildlife efforts that protected high priority habitat and supported the conservation of native species like the greenback cutthroat trout, lesser prairie-chicken, and boreal toad.

GOCO investments through CPW also support youth programming as CPW is uniquely positioned to introduce Colorado's youth to the outdoors. By exposing them to potential natural resource careers, encouraging more physical activity, and building awareness around outdoor recreation, wildlife management, and natural resource protection issues, the partnership helps to meet the long-term vision of creating future stewards of the land and wildlife.



Boreal toad in wetland.  
Photo by Jenn Logan.

## Conserving Colorado's Rare Aquatic Species

Located in Colorado's beautiful San Luis Valley, CPW's Native Aquatic Species Restoration Facility (NASRF) works to conserve rare species through breeding, supporting healthy genetic diversity, scientific research, and public education and awareness.

The facility raises a wide variety of species from across Colorado, including the Arkansas darter found in the Eastern Plains and the Rio Grande chub found in the Rio Grande river basin. In fiscal year 2023, the hatchery produced and stocked over 280,000 threatened and endangered fish and boreal toad tadpoles. Since its inception, the NASRF has released over 4 million aquatic animals into suitable waters and wetlands throughout Colorado.



**\$26.1  
MILLION INVESTED**

to support ongoing efforts in conservation, recreation, and wildlife management

**\$150,000 INVESTED**

in the Director's Innovation Fund to support 8 unique projects



**42 STATE PARKS**  
supported

**\$6.1 MILLION**

invested in state parks to support construction projects

**\$5.6 MILLION INVESTED**

in protecting and restoring native wildlife species



**\$3.1 MILLION  
COMMITTED**

to environmental education and youth programs

FY 2023

# GRANT AWARDS

Centennial Program	GRANTEE PARTNER	AWARD AMOUNT
Northeast Region Property Acquisition	Colorado Parks and Wildlife	\$6,250,000.00
<b>PROGRAM INVESTMENT</b>		<b>\$6,250,000.00</b>

Community Impact	GRANTEE PARTNER	AWARD AMOUNT
Billy Cordova Memorial Park and Trail	Town of Buena Vista	\$748,915.00
CentrePointe Park and Sports Fields	City of Fort Morgan	\$400,000.00
Community Park Renovation Project	City of Fort Lupton	\$790,000.00
Delta Park Renovation Project	City of Greeley, Trust for Public Land	\$350,000.00
Eaglebend Pocket Park Transformation Project	Town of Avon	\$375,000.00
Heron Pond/Heller/Carpio-Sanguinette Park	City and County of Denver	\$750,000.00
Lafayette Nature Center and Coal Creek Connections	City of Lafayette, Thorne Nature Experience	\$750,000.00
Meeker Riverfront Revitalization	Town of Meeker, Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation and Park District	\$750,000.00
Post-Fire Park and Playground Rebuild	Town of Superior	\$660,000.00
Reed Park Revitalization	City of Fruita	\$600,000.00
Step It Up! Your Health Matters	Cheyenne County	\$674,500.00
The Yampa River Corridor Project	City of Craig	\$600,000.00
Town of Haxtun Pool Renovation	Town of Haxtun	\$923,400.00
Trent Park Expansion Project	Town of Silverthorne	\$600,000.00
<b>PROGRAM INVESTMENT</b>		<b>\$8,971,815.00</b>

Conservation Service Corps	GRANTEE PARTNER	AWARD AMOUNT
2023 Eagle Area Collaborative Stewardship Projects	Town of Eagle	\$23,940.00
Adding Capacity and Reducing User Conflict on Salida's Trails	City of Salida	\$21,780.00
Alamosa Trails and Fire Mitigation	City of Alamosa	\$23,310.00
Baker's Park Trail System	San Juan County	\$58,800.00
City of Colorado Springs 2023 Open Space Preservation and Trail Construction	City of Colorado Springs	\$28,350.00
Durango Area Trails Alliance Climbing Stewardship	City of Durango	\$24,150.00
East Big Thompson Invasive Species Removal & Habitat Restoration	City of Loveland	\$75,600.00
Elkhorn Creek Forest Health Initiative	Larimer County	\$36,330.00
Enhancing Habitat and Outdoor Learning Opportunities near Delta County Schools	North Fork Pool, Park and Recreation District	\$37,800.00
Fire Mitigation Project	City of Lakewood	\$51,660.00
GMF Healthy Forest	Town of Green Mountain Falls	\$37,800.00
High Line Canal Restoration Through Russian Olive Mapping and Mitigation	High Line Canal Conservancy	\$28,350.00
Horsetooth Mountain Open Space Trail Construction and Improvements Project	Larimer County	\$31,920.00
Interpretive Trail Rehabilitation	La Plata Open Space Conservancy	\$53,760.00
Lake San Cristobal - Recreation Infrastructure	Hinsdale County	\$28,350.00
Peninsula Recreation Area Trail Improvements	Town of Frisco	\$28,350.00
Perimeter Trail Cascade Falls Improvement	City of Ouray	\$18,900.00
Pinyon Mesa Headwaters Restoration Project, Year 3	Colorado West Land Trust	\$43,050.00
Purgatoire-Cucharas Collaborative Forest Health & Stewardship Project - Phase 2	City of Trinidad	\$26,880.00
Rito Seco Trail Maintenance	Costilla County	\$160,650.00
Trail Build, Thinning, and Invasive Species Control	Colorado Open Lands	\$15,960.00
Upper Gunnison Basin Wet Meadows & Riparian Restoration Project	Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District	\$15,960.00
Wheat Ridge Greenbelt Fire Fuel Management	City of Wheat Ridge	\$28,350.00
<b>PROGRAM INVESTMENT</b>		<b>\$900,000.00</b>

Director's Innovation Fund	GRANTEE PARTNER	AWARD AMOUNT
AHRA - Vallie Bridge - ADA Improvements Project	Colorado Parks and Wildlife	\$22,500.00
Educational Resources for Bat and Other Interpretation Programs	Colorado Parks and Wildlife	\$8,500.00
Eldorado Canyon State Park Timed Entry Accessibility and the Latinx Community	Colorado Parks and Wildlife	\$32,500.00
Ridgway State Park / SW Region Camping Gear	Colorado Parks and Wildlife	\$10,500.00
State Forest State Park Dark Skies Project and Education Program	Colorado Parks and Wildlife	\$9,000.00
Thermal Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Area 6	Colorado Parks and Wildlife	\$11,500.00
Weld County Housing Navigation Center Guest Fishing Access	Colorado Parks and Wildlife	\$23,000.00
Wintering Wildlife Conservation Initiative	Colorado Parks and Wildlife	\$32,500.00
<b>PROGRAM INVESTMENT</b>		<b>\$150,000.00</b>

Generation Wild	GRANTEE PARTNER	AWARD AMOUNT
Garfield County Outdoors	Colorado State University Extension Office	\$300,288.00
Generation Wild Northeast Metro Coalition	City of Commerce City, City of Aurora	\$795,384.00
Generation Wild of the Pikes Peak Region	City of Colorado Springs	\$300,000.00
Get Outdoors Leadville! (GOLI)	Lake County	\$435,625.00
Montezuma Inspire Coalition	Montezuma Land Conservancy	\$370,955.00
My Outdoor Colorado	City and County of Denver	\$834,291.00
Sheridan Inspire	City of Sheridan	\$500,000.00
SLV Generation Wild	City of Alamosa	\$549,914.00
Nature Connection	Delta County	\$333,333.00
Westy POWER-PODER	City of Westminster	\$300,288.00
<b>PROGRAM INVESTMENT</b>		<b>\$4,720,078.00</b>

GOCO Fellowship Program	GRANTEE PARTNER	AWARD AMOUNT
Southeast Colorado Enterprise Development (SECED) Fellow	Southeast Colorado Enterprise Development, Inc.	\$150,000.00
The Nature Conservancy Fellowship Program	The Nature Conservancy	\$300,000.00
<b>PROGRAM INVESTMENT</b>		<b>\$450,000.00</b>

Keep It Colorado's Transaction Cost Assistance Program (TCAP)		
<i>Note: These projects were funded by GOCO through a program administered by Keep It Colorado.</i>		
Avant Vineyards	Colorado West Land Trust	\$45,000.00
Chris and Carol Kester Ranch	Colorado Open Lands	\$35,000.00
Flying Triangle Ranch	Colorado West Land Trust	\$50,000.00
Ivins Ranch	Montezuma Land Conservancy	\$45,000.00
Markus Family Ranch	Palmer Land Conservancy	\$50,000.00
Mesa Verde Landscape	Montezuma Land Conservancy	\$97,000.00
Theos Family Ranches	Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust	\$45,000.00
Verhoeff Family Farm and Ranch	Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust	\$45,000.00
<b>PROGRAM INVESTMENT</b>		<b>\$412,000.00</b>

More grant awards continued on page 25

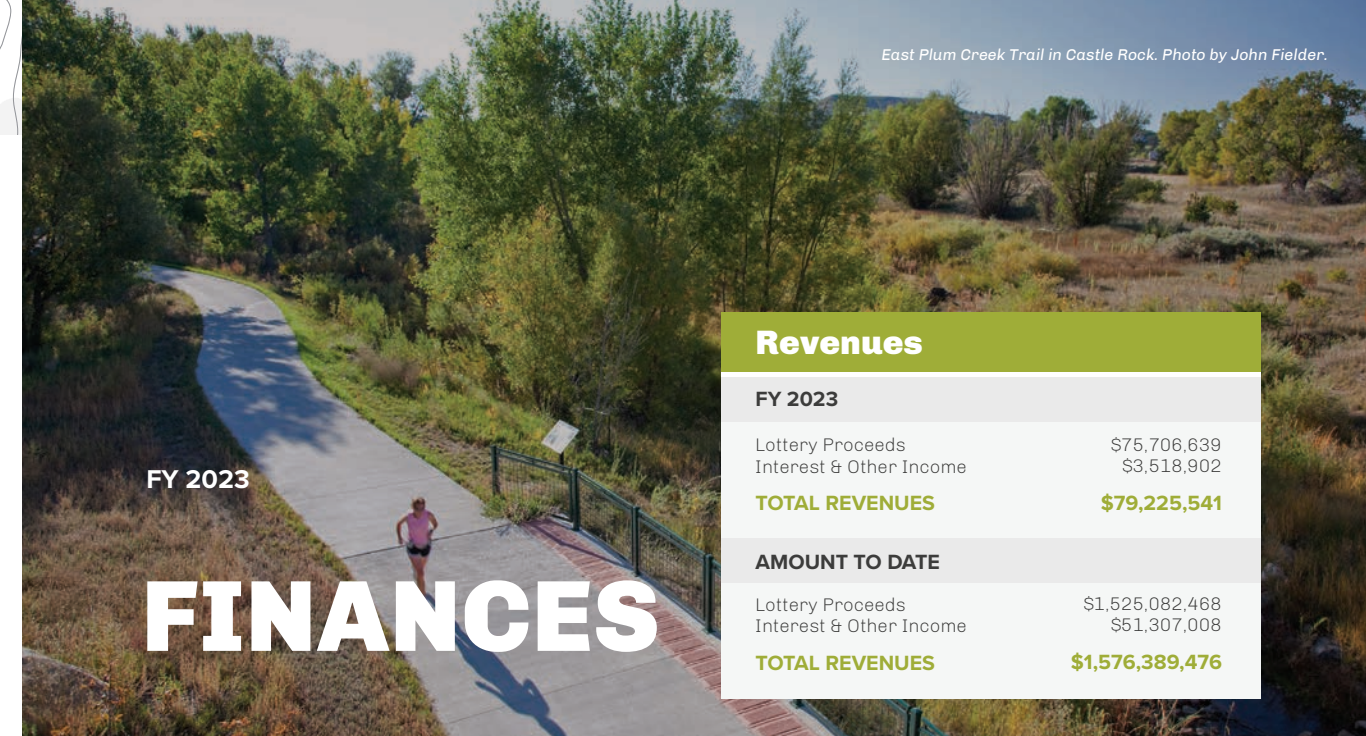
Land Acquisition	GRANTEE PARTNER	AWARD AMOUNT
Bohart Ranch Phases I & II	Trust for Public Land, The Nature Conservancy	\$2,175,000.00
Heart of Heil Valley Acquisition	Boulder County	\$1,500,000.00
High Line Canal Conservation Easement	High Line Canal Conservancy	\$350,000.00
Higher Ground Ranch Conservation Easement	Trust for Public Land	\$425,000.00
Marble Outdoors Basecamp Acquisition	Aspen Valley Land Trust	\$1,000,000.00
Rito Seco Park Expansion	Colorado Open Lands	\$825,000.00
<b>PROGRAM INVESTMENT</b>		<b>\$6,275,000.00</b>

Planning & Capacity	GRANTEE PARTNER	AWARD AMOUNT
Promoting Landscape Resilience at Scale	Colorado West Land Trust	\$87,000.00
Eastern Plains Conservation Corps Proof-of-Concept Project	Mile High Youth Corps	\$342,445.00
Elevating the Future of Conservation	Montezuma Land Conservancy	\$300,000.00
Ute Mountain Ute Recreation Master Plan	Ute Mountain Ute Tribe	\$150,000.00
<b>PROGRAM INVESTMENT</b>		<b>\$879,445.00</b>

RESTORE Colorado	GRANTEE PARTNER	AWARD AMOUNT
<i>Note: GOCO's investment in the collaboratively funded program was \$1,200,000, including a \$100,000 administration fee granted to National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. The partnering funders' total investment is reflected below; it amounts to \$3,102,000.</i>		
Enhancing Hydrology of the Yampa River to Benefit Endangered and Threatened Fish	The Nature Conservancy	\$250,800.00
Promoting Community-Level Conservation to Incentivize Private Land Stewardship	Bird Conservancy of the Rockies	\$102,400.00
Reducing Disease Transmission to Bighorn Sheep and Improving Big Game Seasonal Range	National Wildlife Federation	\$247,800.00
Removing Barriers to Big Game Movement on Colorado's Western Slope	Backcountry Hunters & Anglers	\$103,000.00
Restoring Floodplains and Mitigating Wildfire Risk Across Pinyon Mesa	Colorado West Land Trust	\$387,900.00
Restoring Landscape Resiliency on Baldy Mountain	National Forest Foundation	\$340,700.00
Restoring Shortgrass Prairie and Riparian Areas in the Denver Metropolitan Area	Denver Zoological Foundation	\$330,400.00
Restoring Shortgrass Prairie by Reintroducing Prairie Dogs and Black-Footed Ferrets	Colorado State University Pueblo	\$277,000.00
Restoring the Hydrology of the South Platte River	Colorado Open Lands	\$312,000.00
Restoring the Kawuneeche Valley to Benefit Wetlands in the North Fork Colorado River Basin	Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District	\$300,000.00
Using Low-Tech Process-Based Restoration Techniques to Restore Dry Fork Creek	National Audubon Society	\$450,000.00
<b>PROGRAM INVESTMENT</b>		<b>\$1,200,000.00</b>

Stewardship Impact	GRANTEE PARTNER	AWARD AMOUNT
Advancing Stewardship in Gunnison County	Gunnison County	\$300,000.00
Grand Valley Stewardship Crew	Mesa County	\$300,000.00
Multi-jurisdictional Stewardship in the Pikes Peak Region	Rocky Mountain Field Institute	\$296,700.00
Stewardship Impact through Community Engagement in Loveland	City of Loveland, Wildland Restoration Volunteers	\$170,250.00
<b>PROGRAM INVESTMENT</b>		<b>\$1,066,950.00</b>

GOCO Loan	PARTNERS	LOAN AMOUNT
Bohart Ranch	Trust for Public Land, The Nature Conservancy	<b>\$3,000,000.00</b>



Revenues	
<b>FY 2023</b>	
Lottery Proceeds	\$75,706,639
Interest & Other Income	\$3,518,902
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$79,225,541</b>
<b>AMOUNT TO DATE</b>	
Lottery Proceeds	\$1,525,082,468
Interest & Other Income	\$51,307,008
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$1,576,389,476</b>

Rito Seco Park in Castilla County. Photo by Christi Bode.



FY 2023 ran from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023. GOCO received \$75,706,639 from the Colorado Lottery, making this the twenty-second year in a row the Lottery has met GOCO's constitutionally mandated cap. The cap is adjusted each year for inflation; for FY24 it is set at \$81,771,604 million. In FY 2023, GOCO awarded \$72,545,099 in funding across its programs.

GOCO funds are distributed through competitive grant programs for local governments, land trusts, and collaborating entities and through an annual investment proposal from Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW). CPW submits an investment proposal to the GOCO board each year detailing how GOCO funds will be disbursed across the agency's facilities and programs. For more information on how GOCO funding impacts CPW, visit [GOCO.org/CPW](https://GOCO.org/CPW).

Most GOCO grant funding is distributed on a reimbursement basis, which means grantees must submit final documentation of their expenditures before receiving funds. For our complete FY 2023 financial statements, visit [GOCO.org/finances](https://GOCO.org/finances).

Expenditures	
<b>FY 2023</b>	
Grant Expenditures	\$72,545,099
Administrative Expenditures	\$5,479,929
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$78,025,028</b>
<b>AMOUNT TO DATE</b>	
Grant Expenditures	\$1,426,181,465
Administrative Expenditures	\$71,009,262
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$1,497,190,727</b>

Budget	
<b>FISCAL YEAR 2024 ESTIMATED BUDGET</b>	
Lottery Proceeds	\$80,136,172
Interest & Other Income	\$1,525,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$81,661,172</b>
Grant Expenditures	\$66,209,400
Administrative Expenditures	\$5,938,848
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$72,148,248</b>



Arkansas River rafting with staff and board during a Chaffee County site visit. Photo by Luke Urbine.



Colorado Front Range Trail ribbon cutting in Castle Rock, pictured (from left to right): Jeff Brauer, Director Parks and Recreation, Town of Castle Rock; Max Brooks, Councilmember District 5, Town of Castle Rock; Chris Aaby, GOCO Program Officer, Southern Front Range; Leah Kahler, GOCO Grants Officer; Kevin Bracken Councilmember District 3, Town of Castle Rock.



Alamosa Rio Trio with Matt Brady, Diane Metzger, and Crystal Medrano.

# STAFF UPDATES

GOCO is more than just a name; it's 25 passionate staff members who work across the state to support Colorado's exciting community-driven efforts in conservation, recreation, and outdoor access and elevate the value of this unique-in-the-nation resource to the public.

In fiscal year 2023, we were lucky to welcome Leah Kahler as grants officer and Keli Cavaleri as land acquisitions officer. In addition, our very own Matt Brady became GOCO's first dedicated program officer for the Denver Metro region. The communications team also welcomed two stellar interns who helped us share GOCO's good news: Nevaeh Booker and David Whittle.

GOCO staff spent a lot of time in Colorado communities this year, and we wouldn't have it any other way. Regional officers hosted 23 partner education and relationship-building events on a statewide tour. Staff from across the organization attended over 100 community events, site visits, and conferences. Special thanks to all of our partners for these opportunities to learn from, celebrate, and support your work.



Capital Creek in Snowmass.  
Photo by Bergreen Photography.

# MISSION & GOVERNANCE

## MISSION

The Great Outdoors Colorado Trust Fund was created in 1992 when voters approved Amendment Article XXVII to the Colorado Constitution to allocate Colorado Lottery proceeds. It directs a portion to GOCO for projects that preserve, protect, and enhance the state's wildlife, park, river, trail, and open space heritage, and it created a board of trustees to govern distribution. Read the amendment at [GOCO.org/amendment](http://GOCO.org/amendment).

The Constitution requires GOCO to allocate funds in a manner that is substantially equal over time to achieve outcomes across four areas:



## GOVERNANCE

GOCO is governed by a 19-member board whose members may serve for two four-year terms. Board members are appointed by the Governor and subject to confirmation by the Colorado State Senate. The GOCO board has two members of different political parties from each of the state's eight congressional districts and includes representatives from Colorado Parks and Wildlife and the Department of Natural Resources. Learn more at [GOCO.org/board](http://GOCO.org/board).

### Members by Congressional District

- 1** Leticia Martinez (U); Charles Garcia (U), both Denver
- 2** Turk Montepare (U), Breckenridge; Mo Siegel (D), Boulder
- 3** Pamela Denahy (R), La Junta; Craig Hughes (D), Edwards
- 4** Brenda May (U), Lamar; vacancy
- 5** Mina Liebert (U); Krithika Prashant (U), both Colorado Springs
- 6** Patty Imhoff (D); Tom Lee (R), both Greenwood Village
- 7** Carrie Curtiss (D), Golden; Jahi Simbai (U), Wheat Ridge
- 8** Mara Brosy-Wiwchar (D), Thornton; Ray Tschillard (U), Greeley

### State Agency Representatives

Colorado Department of Natural Resources: Dan Gibbs  
Parks and Wildlife Commission: Marie Haskett, Jay Tutchton