



# State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet Colorado 2019



## Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2018 Final
Community Forestry and Open Space	\$0
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	\$735,247
Forest Legacy	\$0
Forest Stewardship	\$319,561
Landscape Scale Restoration	\$300,000
State Fire Assistance	\$2,596,029
Urban and Community Forestry	\$512,714
Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$122,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,585,551</b>

NOTE: This funding is for all entities within the state, not just the State Forester's office.

The mission of the Colorado State Forest Service is to achieve stewardship of Colorado's diverse forest environments for the benefit of present and future generations.

Cooperative programs are administered and implemented through a partnership between the State of Colorado, USDA Forest Service and many other private and government entities. These programs promote the health, protection and productivity of Colorado's forestlands and rural economies, emphasizing reduction of risk to people, property and resources; management for timber and other forest products; wildlife; water resources; and conservation practices.

### Program Goals

- Maintain and improve the health of Colorado's urban and rural forests and related economies
- Increase cost effectiveness and efficiencies through the use of partnerships in delivery
- Increase values through sustained productivity of forests
- Deliver programs that are voluntary using non-regulatory approaches

### Key Issues

- Fragmentation of forest landscapes
- Loss of forest products manufacturing capacity
- Unprecedented levels of forest insect and disease activity
- Threat of wildfire in the wildland-urban interface
- Threat of wildfire outside the wildland-urban interface
- Community forests at risk to invasive insects and disease
- Risk of diminished forest resiliency and adaptability due to changing climate conditions
- Declining forest watershed health
- Declining riparian ecosystems
- Air quality issues associated with forest conditions

## Forest Facts and Accomplishments

<b>Selected Facts</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>FY 2018 Accomplishments</b>	<b>Value</b>
Population	5,029,196	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	7,214
Acres of Forest Land	22,804,159	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	11,851
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	5,360,000	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	10,563
Number of NIPF Landowners	186,000	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	0
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	24,240,000	State Fire Communities Assisted	197
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	41,432,979	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	1,220
Number of Rural Fire Departments	424	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	0
Cities and Towns	271	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	83
Forest Based Employment	4,000	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	3,316,251
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	0	Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	2,665
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	36,254,000		

## Program Highlights

### **Cooperative Fire Protection**

The Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) role is to provide statewide service in prevention, fire ecology, natural resource management, wildfire risk assessment, community protection planning, and fuels mitigation. The CSFS has the responsibility for forestry and fuels mitigation while the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control (DFPC) has the responsibility of wildland fire preparedness and response. The CSFS works in partnership with the DFPC to provide a complete package of wildland fire management programs to the state.

CSFS staff interactions with landowners, communities and local governments have yielded: 262 Community Wildfire Protection Plans and 178 Firewise Communities, which is 1st among states that have an active Firewise USA program.

Cooperative Fire Funding received by CSFS is instrumental in providing service to: achieve stewardship and resiliency of Colorado's diverse forest environments, mitigate the negative effects of fire across landscapes, and protect people and property through assessment, collaboration, planning, and implementation for individuals and communities. In 2018 Community Assistance Funds Adjacent to National Forest Lands were awarded to four projects affecting the Front Range and western Colorado with over 626 acres planned for treatment. State Fire Assistance WUI Competitive Funds were awarded to five projects affecting the Front Range with over 1200 acres planned for treatment.

The CSFS developed the Colorado Wildfire Risk Assessment (CO-WRA) in 2012 to help assess wildfire risk. The Colorado Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal (CO -WRAP) is a web-mapping tool that provides access to statewide data associated with CO -WRA. In 2018, CSFS completed a new CO -WRA based on the best available data, and updated CO -WRAP with products from this analysis (<https://csfs.colostate.edu/wildfire-mitigation/cowrap/>). CO-WRAP applications can be used create awareness of wildfire risk and inform state and local decision-making.

### **Economic Action**

The CSFS participated in technical and economic assistance towards the establishment of a new 20 million board foot sawmill in southern Colorado and the reopening under new ownership, following a facility fire, of aspen excelsior mill in southwestern Colorado. New facilities and capacity helped local national forest units (San Juan, Rio Grande) retain and expand needed biomass outlets and each effort resulted in significant job creation in their respective local communities. The CSFS Forest Business Loan portfolio grew to fourteen businesses and 4 million dollars of biomass harvesting, manufacturing, and

marketing infrastructure investment. CSFS forest products staff was active participant in filling the vacant USFS Region 2 Biomass Coordinator position in 2018 and active participant in Council of Western State Foresters Forest Utilization Network.

### **Forest Health Advisory Council**

The Forest Health Advisory Council (FHAC) was created by HB16-1255 to provide a collaborative forum to advise the State Forester on a range of issues, opportunities and threats with regard to Colorado's forests. The FHAC currently consists of 21 members who were appointed by the Colorado Governor and General Assembly. The members consist of well-respected experts in fields/industries including wildfire, forestry, on and off-road recreation, public utilities, conservation, ranching, wildlife management, irrigation water supply and municipal drinking water, and also includes municipalities and county commissioners. The FHAC is scheduled to sunset in 2021.

During 2018, the FHAC met four times. Accomplishments to date include:

- The creation of an "Opportunities/Barriers" Document regarding forest health in Colorado to strategically guide the FHAC
- A Tribute to forest health and active management of forests passed by the House during 2018 legislative session
- The creation of "A Call to Action" document for outreach purposes that emphasizes the importance of proactive forest management to reduce risk of wildfires and spread of insects and disease
- Completed outreach to the legislature regarding the importance of having all the tools in the toolbox in order to effectively manage forest landscapes, including prescribed burning
- Members presented at meetings of the interim Water Resources Review Committee and the interim Wildfire Matters Review Committee regarding the importance of forest management in order to reduce suppression costs from wildfires and the integral connection between Colorado's forests and water quality and quantity
- Currently working in cooperation with the Colorado Water Congress on the creation of a Colorado Forest Health and Watershed Advocacy group to broaden the reach of the importance of forest health and active management of forestlands.

For additional information, visit <http://csfs.colostate.edu/forest-health-advisory-council/>.

### **Forest Health Protection**

The CSFS, in collaboration with the USFS, conducts annual aerial detection surveys to map and quantify insect and disease activity in forested areas of Colorado. In 2018, the survey identified widespread mortality from spruce beetle as the predominant native forest concern for the seventh consecutive year with 1.8 million cumulative acres affected by this beetle in CO since 2000. Spruce beetle-caused mortality continued to expand with 178,000 active acres of high-elevation Engelmann spruce affected in 2018 of which 59,000 acres were new or previously not infested. Roundheaded pine beetle and associated bark beetles impacted 27,000 new acres in Dolores County in southwestern Colorado in 2018. Widespread areas of Douglas-fir and white fir were defoliated by western spruce budworm on 131,000 acres, predominately in central and southwest CO. Douglas-fir beetle affected 14,000 acres of Douglas-fir forests statewide. White fir mortality declined across affected areas while Western balsam bark beetle and associated root disease fungi continued to cause tree mortality over 24,000 acres in high elevation subalpine fir. In 2018 the non-native emerald ash borer was detected in two new communities, Lyons and Superior, adding to the cities of Boulder, Longmont, Lafayette and the community of Gunbarrel all detected between 2013-2017. Infestations along the Front Range from the community forest pest, Japanese beetle, were at the highest levels ever reported, most heavily impacting the cities of Boulder, Denver and Pueblo. No additional detections of walnut twig beetle, the insect that vectors the fungus responsible for thousand cankers disease, were found in 2018.

In the 2018 water year (Oct. 1-Sep. 30), Colorado experienced the warmest annual temperatures on record and the second lowest precipitation levels which impacts the insect and disease activity in the state.

### **Forest Legacy**

The Colorado State Forest Service works with local groups and NGOs to identify potential projects for the Forest Legacy Program (FLP). In 2018, in cooperation with The Conservation Fund (TCF) and the United States Forest Service (USFS) Rocky Mountain Region, the CSFS submitted an application for funding for a conservation easement on the Banded Peaks Ranch, located in Archuleta County.

The 15,744-acre Banded Peak Ranch project is a critical opportunity to complete the last large piece of several decades of public-private collaboration in the Navajo River Watershed, while also achieving Forest Legacy goals that will benefit Colorado and the nation. Due to the many federal, state and private conservation investments surrounding the Banded Peak Ranch, this project is an opportunity to complete the protection of an entire watershed comprised of forestlands, working ranches, and critical wildlife habitat.

The CSFS FLP manager attended a site visit for a potential Forest Legacy project in Southeastern Colorado with staff from The Nature Conservancy (TNC), The Trust for Public Land (TPL), and local County officials on a potential candidate for Forest Legacy funding in Southeastern Colorado. In addition the CSFS FLP manager met with staff from multiple NGO's including Colorado Open Lands, the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust (CCALT) to discuss other potential projects.

In 2018, The CSFS worked with the landowners of the Toll Ranch conservation easement property (already closed as an FLP property) and the U.S. Forest Service on designing and placing signage on the property that indicates that it is protected with a conservation easement, and acknowledging all funding sources, including the USFS.

The CSFS FLP manager will re-create a new version of the priority area map, involving a wide range of stakeholders, in order to avoid missing out on opportunities to work on high quality projects in all parts of Colorado.

### **Forest Stewardship**

The Forest Stewardship Program provides landowners technical assistance with the development and implementation of comprehensive resource management plans. The Colorado State Forest Service provided assistance to 7,214 landowners and developed/revised plans covering 11,851 acres in 2018. The Colorado State Forest Action Plan continues to guide the priority of fuels and forest health treatments and is used extensively to help identify future outreach and education efforts on private lands. Colorado continues to lead in stewardship training efforts. A comprehensive review of the Forest Ag Program was conducted in 2016. The CSFS continues to implement recommendations from the program review while coordinating closely with area managers, field offices, consultants and other partners to more effectively administer changes. A CSFS Forest Stewardship Program Specialist is now in place to provide leadership and oversight of the Forest Stewardship Programs. The FSP Specialist will continue to engage landowners and partners through Forest Ag Newsletters and the Colorado Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee, as well as other outreach materials and events.

### **Good Neighbor Authority**

The Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) allows CSFS resources and contracting procedures to be used on federally owned, U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management-administered lands. Although Colorado was initially the pilot state for this authority in the year 2000, the 2014 Farm Bill granted a permanent nationwide legislative authority. After the CSFS signed a GNA Master Agreement with the USFS Region 2 office in 2015, numerous Supplemental Project Agreements have been executed throughout Colorado at the more local forest level, between CSFS field offices and USFS Forest Supervisor offices. In addition, a cooperative agreement was signed with the BLM through their Grants.gov process and is updated annually through an agreement modification.

Between 2016 and 2018 over 11,500 acres were slated for treatment on federal lands in 13 project areas operating on 8 CSFS field offices, 10 national forests, and 1 BLM district. Management actions included aerial spraying, implementing timber sales and fuels treatments, removing hazardous trees, salvaging roadside timber with a CSFS sale permit, salvaging beetle-killed timber, and supporting CSFS staffing to build GNA planning and implementation capacity. Anticipated benefits from the GNA program include landscape-scale management over combined land ownerships, leveraged fuels treatments and defensible spaces, removal of impediments to cross-boundary watershed restoration, and cooperation between federal and state agencies, landowners, and other stakeholders. This, in turn, will improve the success of the National Fire Plan, Cohesive Strategy, and Shared Stewardship directives.

### **Landscape Scale Restoration**

The Colorado State Forest Service is an active participant in the LaSR program continually seeking

opportunities to develop projects. Implementation of 2014 & 2015 grants to improve forest resilience and reduce wildfire threat are underway. A 2018 LaSR grant award titled "Emerald Ash Borer Collective Response" will inventory existing ash populations in smaller communities and facilitate cooperation between all Front Range communities that will be dealing with issues like EAB control, tree removal, log storage, wood utilization and ash replacement.

The 2015 Natural Capital LaSR grant was completed in 2017. This project: catalogued existing data sources, identified the most important natural assets in the watershed and then mapped the natural capital and valued the ecosystem services produced throughout the watershed. A decision support tool was produced to assist stakeholders with prioritizing future investments in the watershed. The Urban Waters Partnership will continue to use the resource assessment to prioritize future investments.

### ***Trees for Conservation - CSFS Nursery***

The Colorado State Forest Service Nursery prides itself on producing high-quality, low-cost plant material for conservation applications. The nursery features over 40 species suitable for the unique planting zones of Colorado and the region. Bare root trees and shrubs as well as container-grown plant material are grown at the nursery, and it also recently has diversified its inventory to accommodate special planting needs. Extra-large potted plants are grown for windbreak and snow fence replacements, tall potted plants ideally suited for riparian restoration are offered and some varieties of perennials have been introduced to improve pollinator habitat.

During the 2018 fiscal year, the nursery continued to produce riparian species in deep tube containers to support the completion of restoration work being done in Front Range watersheds impacted by the 2013 floods. In addition to these specialized plants, targeted specifically at watershed restoration efforts, the nursery also took efforts to increase production of the high demand native trees and shrubs which have been historically offered. These efforts will lead to greater quality and higher available quantities of plants to support the over 200 statewide and regional NRCS, University extension service, and CSFS field offices with whom the nursery works to distribute plant stock to private land owners seeking to plant for conservation purposes.

During the 2018 fiscal year, the nursery sold 442,000 seedling trees, shrubs and perennial grasses and flowers. In addition to producing plant material, the CSFS Nursery is active in research collaborations with CSU, providing outreach and education to the community and developing new species to meet the needs of conservation-minded landowners.

### ***Urban and Community Forestry***

The CSFS Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) Program provided technical and educational assistance to 83 communities in Federal FY 2018, which represents 3,316,251 people or 59% of the state's population based on estimates from the State of Colorado Demography Office (July 1, 2017). Ninety-one Tree City USA's were certified at the end of CY 2018 in Colorado with nine Growth Awards among those communities. And seven colleges were certified as a Tree Campus USA.

Colorado's statewide urban tree inventory web-tool (<https://cotreeview.com/coto/>) contains 577,933 trees in the database at the end CY 2018. These trees have been uploaded to the web-tool by eighty-seven organizations most of which are Colorado communities. The Tree Collections program (<https://treecollections.com/ctc/>) launched in 2017 continues to promote a state-wide network of diverse tree collections for public education.

The Front Range Urban Forestry Council met five times in 2018, and continues to play a key role in shaping and coordinating UCF efforts along the Front Range. Educational efforts at conferences around the State helped keep partners and stakeholders on the cutting edge of UCF in 2018. Key personnel from the CSFS UCF Program continue to be a part of the interagency Colorado Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Response Team.

The Colorado Tree Coalition awarded \$13,375 to nine organizations in 2018. Along with matching funds provided by the grant recipients this helped plant 295 trees in communities across Colorado. Each of these projects allowed residents the opportunity to make a difference in their Community.

**Watershed Protection - Partnerships**

The Colorado State Forest Service is involved in several collaborative efforts to protect watersheds. Over the next 4 years, Denver Water, the U.S. Forest Service, CSFS and Natural Resources Conservation Service will invest \$33 million in forest restoration projects to treat over 40,000 acres in Denver Water's critical watersheds, on federal and non-federal land. The goal is to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires and restore forests impacted by fires near reservoirs, and to minimize erosion and sedimentation. CSFS is in the process of identifying non-federal land treatments within Denver Water's Zones of Concern across five field offices and assessing potential Good Neighbor Authority projects to increase treatment effectiveness on the landscape. The CSFS created a Watershed Specialist position to provide oversight and administration of programs supporting the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) watershed activities in Colorado. Responsibilities include:

- Representing CSFS on various statewide watershed collaboratives
- Engaging with partners in strategic planning and funding activities
- Oversight and administration of programs supporting the CSFS watershed activities in Colorado
- Developing and managing contracts and agreements with water providers
- Identifying collaboratives at the local, state, and federal levels throughout the State and assess when/where the CSFS should invest their resources.

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