**State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet**
**Colorado 2023**

### Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>FY 2022 Final</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Forestry and Open Space</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management</td>
<td>$615,929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Legacy</td>
<td>$159,055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Stewardship</td>
<td>$383,139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape Scale Restoration</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>State Fire Assistance</td>
<td>$3,371,807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban and Community Forestry</td>
<td>$803,258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Fire Assistance</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$5,708,188</strong></td>
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*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 (CSFS) 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
Selected Facts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fact</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>5,773,714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acres of Forest Land</td>
<td>22,758,929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land</td>
<td>4,763,563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of NIPF Landowners</td>
<td>52,614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection</td>
<td>24,240,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection</td>
<td>41,432,979</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Rural Fire Departments</td>
<td>424</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cities and Towns</td>
<td>272</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forest Based Employment</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Forestry Budget (All Sources)</td>
<td>36,254,000</td>
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FY 2022 Accomplishments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accomplishments</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance</td>
<td>1,144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans</td>
<td>25,162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans</td>
<td>9,080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Fire Communities Assisted</td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coop Forest Health Acres Protected</td>
<td>20,741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Living in Communities</td>
<td>4,072,201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance</td>
<td>12,438</td>
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Program Highlights

**Colorado Forest Action Plan**

The CSFS completed the Colorado Forest Action Plan (CFAP) in 2020. Since that time, data, maps, and reports are hosted in the Forest Action Plan web application of the Colorado Forest Atlas. This web application had 2,000 users in 2022, based on Google Analytics.

Both CSFS and its partners continue to use the composite priority map to evaluate optimal landscapes for achieving improved forest conditions, watershed protection, and reduction in wildfire risk to communities. Goals, strategies, and approaches from the CFAP are incorporated into forest management plans at the CSFS, used to evaluate state grant applications such as the Forest Restoration and Wildfire Risk Mitigation grant that is administered by CSFS, and to develop an internal outcome-based framework for work planning.

In 2022, the CFAP informed other statewide prioritization and planning, including the Colorado Natural and Working Lands Climate Task Force (part of the US Climate Alliance), the State Hazard Mitigation Plan, the Wildfire-ready Watershed analysis of the Colorado Water Conservation Board, one of the Governors' Wildly Important Goals (WIGs) that tracks fuels treatments funded by the state in high priority subwatersheds identified in the composite priority map, and water quality impact evaluation at the Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment's Water Quality Control Division.

**Conservation Education**

The CSFS partners with the Colorado Alliance of Environmental Education (CAEE) to coordinate the Colorado Project Learning Tree (PLT) program. This program uses trees and forests as windows on the world to teach youth how to think, not what to think, about complex environmental issues. In 2022, 25 facilitators from across the state volunteered 821 hours in training and offering professional development to 447 educators. These educators come from a variety of formal classroom teaching, non-formal education, and natural resource professional backgrounds and reach thousands of youth with important forest literacy education. PLT trainings were offered in partnership with five colleges/universities, four outdoor education centers, two school districts, the Colorado Department of Education, Women's Forest Congress, Nebraska Forest Service, and Colorado Association of Science Teachers. In 2022, Colorado PLT received a grant from the Sustainable Forestry Initiative which enabled the program to cultivate PLT facilitator networks, grow PLT’s reach and excellence for educators, and strengthen PLT programs. Initiatives from this included contracting a consultant to develop Colorado PLT equity strategies; hosting regional in-person volunteer gatherings for program updates, training, and networking; delivering quarterly volunteer trainings on environmental education best practices and resources; collaborating with
facilitators teaching at colleges that serve Indigenous and communities of color; and partnering with CAEE's regional councils to deliver place-based professional development in each area of the state. CSFS continues to be engaged in this important program that develops the public's awareness, appreciation, and stewardship of Colorado's trees and forests.

**Cooperative Fire Protection**

The CSFS role is to provide statewide service in 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. Together the CSFS and DFPC provide a complete package of wildland fire management programs to the state.

CSFS staff interactions with landowners, communities and local governments have yielded 251 Community Wildfire Protection Plans and 195 Firewise USA® Communities, which is 3rd among states in the nation that have an active Firewise USA® program. Cooperative Fire Funding received by CSFS is instrumental to: achieve stewardship and resiliency of 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 2022, Community Assistance Funds Adjacent to National Forest Lands (CAFA) were awarded to one project in south-central Colorado to treat 122 acres. State Fire Assistance WUI Competitive Funds were awarded to four projects affecting the Front Range and Western Slope regions with 640 acres planned for treatment.

Significant progress has been made updating the state's wildfire risk assessment (CO-WRA) to improve spatial resolution, refine fuel model expression and associated risk, and to develop new analysis layers. The most recent update to the assessment was in 2018 and future updates will be scheduled on three-year cycles to provide an accessible and useful resource for wildfire risk analysis and collaborative planning.

**Economic Action**

The CSFS offered a new biomass utilization grants program for timber removal, fuels mitigation, and wood products manufacturing businesses with state funding in 2022. Ten grants totaling $500,000 were awarded to support equipment purchases related to wood pellet, cross laminated timber, wood panel, firewood, and biochar production. Funding from the CSFS complemented recent USDA Wood Innovation program awards. The CSFS Wood Utilization Program Specialist served a final year as Chair of the Forest Products Committee of the Council of Western State Foresters and continued to serve on the biomass utilization and workforce subcommittees of the Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative. New support was provided to recently awarded Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Programs on the San Juan and Rio Grand national forests. Additionally, new loans were awarded in support of hazardous fuels reduction contractors under the CSFS Wildfire Risk Mitigation Loan Fund.

**Forest Health Protection**

In 2022, Colorado experienced well above-average temperatures leading into the winter. Spring was uncharacteristically windy and warm. Recorded precipitation was considerably down from the long-term average. Drought conditions compounded by increased temperatures continued to allow bark beetles and tree-defoliating insects to build populations.

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 2022, the aerial detection survey conducted flights over 29.9 M acres. Western balsam bark beetle-caused mortality in subalpine fir increased by 35,000 acres affected in the central and northern areas of the state. The ongoing spruce beetle epidemic continues to cause significant mortality in high-elevation Engelmann spruce-fir forests. The statewide infestation continues to decrease in most areas, with approximately 29,000 acres affected in 2022, compared to 53,000 acres affected in 2021. The cumulative acres affected since 2001 are approximately 1.9 M, close to 40% of the State’s high-elevation Engelmann spruce forests. The CSFS continues implementing semiochemical use, direct removals, and management activities to reduce the outbreak intensity. Douglas-fir beetle continues to cause mortality in lower elevation forests in the central and southern forests. Semiochemicals are the primary protections used against Douglas-fir beetle. Other insect pests causing significant damage and mortality include the western spruce budworm, which has repeatedly defoliated forests in south-central Colorado.
Colorado, roundheaded pine beetle and associated native bark beetles impacting ponderosa pine forests in the southwest, and piñon Ips beetle affecting lowland piñon-juniper forests along the west slope and SW corner of the state.

The non-native emerald ash borer was detected in Thornton adjacent to currently infested communities suggesting long-range dispersal is not occurring.

**Forest Legacy**
During 2022, the Forest Legacy Program in Colorado submitted one application for funding to the national panel for review. This project would conserve a 3,327 acre property in Delta County, Colorado. The CSFS worked on developing this project with the Trust for Public Land.

In addition, the CSFS spoke with partners and interested landowners on two potential properties for Forest Legacy funding. The CSFS and partners continue to have conversations on future project development and ways to increase capacity of the program in Colorado given the increase in program funding.

**Forest Stewardship**
The Forest Stewardship Program provides landowners technical assistance with the development and implementation of comprehensive resource management plans. The CSFS provided assistance and education to 1,144 landowners and developed/revised plans covering 25,162 acres in 2022. Of those plans, 9,080 acres are in high priority areas.

The Colorado State Forest Action Plan continues to guide the priority of fuels and forest health treatments. The Forest Action Plan along with the Forest Stewardship Priority area map are used extensively to help identify future outreach and education efforts on private lands.

The Restoring Colorado's Forest Fund distributed 10,950 seedlings to landowners in 2022 to help restore private forestlands affected by wildfire.

The Forest Stewardship Program Specialist will continue to engage landowners and partners through Forest Ag Newsletters. These newsletters are distributed to landowners, consulting foresters and partners twice a year to keep them informed of program updates, forest health issues and forest management assistance opportunities.

The Colorado Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee continues to meet and provide guidance on state and private forestry issues and provides input on Forest Legacy applications.

Through funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the CSFS hired four Lead Stewardship Foresters to provide support on private land initiatives including landowner outreach & education, plan writing, modernization of the Colorado Forest Ag program and development of Landscape Scale Management Plans.

**Good Neighbor Authority**
In 2022 the CSFS developed four new Supplemental Project Agreements (SPAs) under the Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) master agreement between Colorado and the USFS for additional timber sales, timber salvage, fuels treatments and capacity expansion on federal and high priority lands. The CSFS currently has 20 active SPAs across the state. Notably, the USFS and CSFS completed the Colorado Shared Stewardship Capacity Expansion SPA that allowed the CSFS to add critical capacity along Colorado's Front Range to assist with cross-boundary management within mutually identified priority landscapes. Added capacity will also include a forester intern "strike team" to provide experience and attract new talent to the forestry profession in Colorado. Future investments under this agreement are intended to add critical capacity throughout the state and go above and beyond the current expanse of the GNA program. Of the new agreements signed in 2022, three included Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding to assist with forest restoration in Colorado. In addition to the four SPAs, six modifications of existing agreements occurred adding additional funding and support to new and ongoing projects across several areas of Colorado.

In addition the CSFS developed three new modifications to the Statewide BLM Good Neighbor Authority
agreement that includes fuels reduction work as well as funding for the CSFS nursery to grow and provide
seedling trees for restoration activities on BLM lands.

Benefits from the GNA program include landscape-scale management over combined ownerships,
leveraged fuels treatments and defensible spaces, removal of impediments to cross-boundary watershed
restoration, and cooperation between county, federal, state, and tribal agencies, landowners, and other
stalkholders.

Urban and Community Forestry

The CSFS Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) Program provided financial and technical assistance to
108 communities in Federal FY 2022, reaching a total of 4,072,201 people or 70% of the state’s
population. In partnership with the Colorado Tree Coalition (CTC), CSFS awarded community grants
totaling $29,543. These grants are funded by the US Forest Service, CSFS, Xcel Energy, Xcel Energy
Foundation, Colorado Public Radio, and private donors. Ninety-two communities, six college campuses,
and one electric utility were recognized by CSFS and the Arbor Day Foundation through the Tree City
USA, Tree Campus Higher Education, and Tree Line USA programs. Of the 92 TCUSA communities, 18
received Growth Awards for additions and improvements to their community forestry programs. All
together, the 92 communities planted 14,103 trees and invested more than $34 million toward the care of
their tree resources. Colorado’s statewide urban tree inventory tool, CO TreeView, contains 606,671 trees
managed by 119 local government agencies, HOAs, colleges, and other organizations. We continue to
offer this tool as a free community resource, an introduction to the management value of inventory data,
and as a tool to understand the condition of our urban forests at multiple scales. The Front Range Urban
Forestry Council (a chapter of the CTC) met regularly in 2022 and continues to play a key role in shaping
and coordinating UCF efforts along the Front Range and across the state. Our ability to host effective
hybrid (in-person & virtual) meetings continues to improve and expand access to these networking and
educational opportunities beyond the Front Range. The CSFS and CTC continue to be a part of the
interagency Emerald Ash Borer Response Team.

Watershed Initiatives

The CSFS continues involvement in collaborative efforts to protect our state's forested watersheds with
guidance from the 2020 Colorado Forest Action Plan. Threats include uncharacteristic wildfire, insect and
disease outbreaks and an increasing population resulting in additional demands on limited water
resources. The From Forests to Faucets program is a partnership between Denver Water, the USFS and
the CSFS. This forest restoration partnership focuses on treating both public and private land with the
goal of mitigating the potentially negative effects of large-scale disturbance on Denver Water Reservoirs
and infrastructure. The CSFS has planned and implemented treatment on approximately 4,000 acres of
non-federal land within Denver Water's Zones of Concern and assesses potential GNA projects to
increase treatment effectiveness across land ownership boundaries on the landscape. Since 1987, the
CSFS has partnered with Colorado Springs Utilities to implement the Pikes Peak Watershed
Management Plan, which guides forest management in the 13,000-acre watershed. Under an MOU, the
USFS, Colorado Springs Utilities and the CSFS will facilitate work across boundaries. In 2021, CSFS
completed 365 acres of treatment on the South Slope of Pikes Peak with an additional 800 acres in
progress and 450 acres planned for treatment in 2023. The CSFS continues to partner with Northern
Water with the recent signing of a multi-year agreement in which Northern Water will fund the CSFS to
provide proactive forest health initiatives aimed at reducing the severity and impacts of future wildfires in
the region. The CSFS entered in to an agreement with Aurora Water for funding to establish and maintain
a website for the Upper South Platte Partnership and contribute to various forest thinning and restoration
projects. The CSFS continues to be engaged in post-fire recovery including the Colorado Post-Fire
Playbook, CSU Extension's Post-Fire Guidebook and local restoration efforts.
## Contact Information

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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Colorado State Forest Service</strong></th>
<th><strong>US Forest Service</strong></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Matt McCombs</strong>&lt;br&gt;State Forester and Director&lt;br&gt;Colorado State University&lt;br&gt;Foothills Campus - 1050&lt;br&gt;Fort Collins, CO 80523-5060&lt;br&gt;970-491-7290&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:matthew.mccombs@colostate.edu">matthew.mccombs@colostate.edu</a></td>
<td><strong>Sylvia Bierman</strong>&lt;br&gt;Director, State &amp; Private Forestry &amp; Tribal Relations&lt;br&gt;USDA Forest Service&lt;br&gt;1617 Cole Boulevard, Building 17&lt;br&gt;Lakewood, CO 80401-3305&lt;br&gt;303-304-0948&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:sylvia.bierman@usda.gov">sylvia.bierman@usda.gov</a></td>
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