



News Release

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GREAT OUTDOORS COLORADO GRANTS PROMISE NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO ENJOY COLORADO'S RIVERS

DENVER – Gov. John Hickenlooper today joined the Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) Board to announce \$29.5 million in lottery grants to fund eight river and creek projects across the state. The River Corridor Initiative grants will provide close-to-home recreation opportunities for Coloradans to get outdoors and enjoy, experience and learn firsthand about nature and the state's waterways.

“Colorado's rivers and creeks form the living connection between our mountains, prairies and urban areas,” said Hickenlooper. “Many of the river projects funded today are close to cities, which will make it easy to play, walk, bike, fish, kayak and be outdoors.”

Five of the projects are located along Colorado's Front Range:

- **Poudre River Trail Corridor Improvement Project — \$5 million GOCO/Lottery Grant** – sponsored by Larimer County, the City of Fort Collins, the City of Greeley and the Towns of Timnath and Windsor
- **Denver South Platte River Vision Implementation Project — \$4.6 million GOCO/Lottery Grant** – sponsored by the City and County of Denver, the Greenway Foundation and The Trust for Public Land
- **Plains to Peaks Trail/Clear Creek Canyon Phase — \$4.6 million GOCO/Lottery Grant** – sponsored by Jefferson County and Clear Creek County
- **Triple Creek Greenway Corridor Project — \$3.4 million GOCO/Lottery Grant** – sponsored by the City of Aurora and The Trust for Public Land
- **Fountain Creek Watershed Trails and Recreation Projects — \$2.5 million GOCO/Lottery Grant** – sponsored by numerous partners including the City of Pueblo, the City of Colorado Springs, El Paso County, and the City of Fountain

Three other projects are along two of the state's most famed rivers – the Colorado River and the Yampa River:

- **The Colorado River Conservation and Recreation Project — \$3.9 million GOCO/Lottery Grant** – sponsored by Eagle County and The Conservation Fund
- **Colorado Riverfront Trail Project – Fruita Connection Phase III — \$2.9 million GOCO/Lottery Grant** sponsored by numerous partners including Mesa County, the City of Fruita, the Town of Palisade and the Riverfront Foundation
- **The Yampa River Legacy Project — \$2.4 million GOCO/Lottery Grant** – sponsored by the Yampa Valley Land Trust and the City of Steamboat Springs

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Denver Mayor Michael Hancock, along with numerous other officials of successful projects, was at the announcement at Confluence Park on the the South Platte River in downtown Denver. “Denver takes great pride in having one of the best urban park systems in America, and having the South Platte River running through the heart of the city enhances that distinction,” Mayor Hancock said. “This grant brings us one step closer to realizing the vision of making the Platte accessible to all Denver residents and visitors, and highlights how Denver is taking action to deliver a world class-city where everyone matters.”

GOCO offered the River Corridor Initiative at the urging of stakeholders, local governments and many land trusts. “Great Outdoors Colorado spends a lot of time out in communities across Colorado and we heard the same themes repeatedly over the last couple of years,” said GOCO Board Chair Peggy Moñtano. “People want recreational opportunities close to home, they value Colorado’s rivers and they want more trails.”

The GOCO Board awarded a total of \$37.3 million in GOCO/Lottery funds to 42 projects throughout the state at its meeting on June 19. GOCO’s special River Corridors Initiative will result in the protection of more than 3,000 acres of publicly-accessible open space and critical trail development, both of which will increase opportunities for recreation along creeks and rivers statewide. Other projects funded via GOCO’s regular grant cycle will enhance outdoor recreation opportunities throughout Colorado, create plans for future projects, and protect more than 21,638 acres of open space. In its spring 2012 grant cycle, GOCO received 113 eligible applications requesting \$90.6 million.

GOCO is the result of an initiative passed by the voters in 1992. As the recipient of approximately half of Colorado Lottery proceeds—\$56 million in Fiscal Year 2011—GOCO awards grants to local governments and land trusts, and makes investments through the Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife. Since 1994, nearly 3,500 projects in all 64 counties have received GOCO funding.

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SUMMARY OF RIVER CORRIDOR PROJECTS

FRONT RANGE RIVERS AND CREEKS

Denver South Platte River Vision Implementation Project — \$4.6 million GOCO/Lottery Grant — sponsored by the City and County of Denver — The South Platte River cuts through the middle of Denver and is a recreation destination in the Confluence Park area downtown. However, in South Denver, the parks as they currently exist simply do not fill the needs of the surrounding neighborhoods and its 16,500 residents. This project will reach youth via both the facilities to be built and programming to be offered. The City will use GOCO funds to help remake Grant-Frontier, Overland, Vanderbilt and Johnson-Habitat Park into wilderness-in-the-city spaces. There will also be improvement made to three miles of the South Platte trail between and extending past the parks.

Triple Creek Greenway Corridor Project — \$3.4 million GOCO/Lottery Grant — sponsored by the City of Aurora — The City of Aurora is home to the Triple Creek Corridor in the City's southeastern quadrant, stretching from the Star K Ranch Open Space to just north of the Aurora Reservoir. The Corridor is home to the terminus of the Sand Creek Trail, the Star K Ranch/Morrison Nature Center, Aurora Sports Park, and the Sand Creek Riparian Preserve. With GOCO funds, the City will be able to secure 275 acres of trail corridor that will add to and eventually link these amenities.

Plains to Peaks Trail/Clear Creek Canyon Phase — \$4.6 million GOCO/Lottery Grant — sponsored by Jefferson County and Clear Creek County — Drive through Clear Creek Canyon and you'll notice there are many people using it for all kinds of recreation. Most are parked on the side of the busy highway and getting to the creek in any way they can. This project should help alleviate those safety issues by providing access to the area. Clear Creek and Jefferson Counties will build six miles of trail through the Canyon. The trail crosses the county line and will link existing amenities such as the Mayhem Gulch Trailhead in Jefferson County and the Oxbow Parcel in Clear Creek.

Poudre River Trail Corridor Improvement Project — \$5 million GOCO/Lottery Grant — sponsored by Larimer County, the City of Fort Collins, the City of Greeley and the Towns of Timnath and Windsor — GOCO funds will help achieve strategic land acquisitions and trail construction, giving the public new opportunities to get to and recreate along the Poudre including safer, convenient access for additional neighborhoods, schools and recreation centers. GOCO funds will help acquire close to 1,000 acres in Larimer and Weld counties. Each of the land acquisitions sits on the Poudre and will provide direct public access to the river. Funding will also assist with trail construction.

Fountain Creek Watershed Trails and Recreation Projects — \$2.5 million GOCO/Lottery — sponsored by numerous partners including the City of Pueblo, the City of Colorado Springs, El Paso County, and the City of Fountain — Long overlooked, the Fountain Creek Corridor is at the front end of what promises to be a long-term protection, restoration, and recreation effort.

Project components include improvements to Colorado Springs' America the Beautiful Park, expansion of the existing Fountain Creek Nature Center, construction of a trailhead and 4.3 miles of trail along the creek through the Colorado Springs' Clear Spring Ranch Open Space and construction of a creekside park in Pueblo's Eastside neighborhood, including a splash park and skatepark and direct creek access.

COLORADO AND YAMPA RIVER PROJECTS

Colorado River & Conservation Project — \$4.6 million GOCO/Lottery Grant — sponsored by Eagle County and The Conservation Fund — As the state's namesake river, the Colorado is one of the best-known, most heavily used rivers in the West. There is a stretch, though, in Eagle County where recreational use of the river is virtually non-existent. Now, more than 1,200 acres downstream will provide recreational access. Project components include:

- Acquiring a conservation easement on the 1,000-acre Colorado River Ranch, which straddles the upper Colorado north of Dotsero, provides two miles of river frontage, wildlife habitat, and scenic views, and will provide three separate areas for limited public access.
- Acquire fee title to the 230-acre Nottingham property and use it to provide primitive camping and river access. Nottingham is about two miles upstream of the Colorado River Ranch, contains two miles of river frontage, and provides riparian wildlife habitat.

Colorado Riverfront Trail — \$2.9 million GOCO/Lottery Grant — sponsored by numerous partners including Mesa County, the City of Fruita, the Town of Palisade and the Riverfront Foundation — In 1987, Mesa County and the City of Grand Junction formed the Colorado Riverfront Commission with the goal of using the Colorado River to its fullest natural and recreational potential. Twenty-five years later, the river through the county is home to state parks, local parks, and open spaces, and an extensive, but incomplete, trail network to link them. Mesa County will use its latest GOCO grant to construct a 4.2-mile concrete section of the Colorado Riverfront Trail, otherwise known as Phase 3 of the Fruita Connection. Phase 1, heading west from Grand Junction, is nearing completion, and Phase 2, heading east from Fruita, is slated to begin construction this fall. Phase 3 will close the gap between them, and construction is anticipated to start in 2013. Additionally, this portion of the Colorado Riverfront Trail will be so close to the river that trail users will be able to access the river directly from it.

Yampa River System Legacy Project — \$2.4 million GOCO/Lottery Grant — sponsored by the Yampa Valley Land Trust and the City of Steamboat Springs — Working in concert to continue nearly two decades' worth of work to protect and provide access to the Yampa, the Yampa Valley Land Trust and the City of Steamboat Springs will take advantage of a rare opportunity to provide public access to protected private land and to create a protected-lands corridor with multiple public uses.

- Yampa Valley Land Trust will work with a private landowner to place a conservation easement on a private property located south of Steamboat Springs that is surrounded by both protected private and public lands. The parcel is bisected by a significant reach of the Yampa River. The conservation easement project will protect important wildlife habitat as well provide certain public access opportunities that include a trail connector linking public lands along with a structured public fishing lease.
- The City of Steamboat Springs will improve river recreation and access opportunities on the Yampa River west of the City (at the Fournier Open Space located between Snowbowl/Blades and the KOA campground). Additionally, improvements within the "Town Run" of the Yampa River through downtown Steamboat Springs will include bank stabilization and constructing new and enhancing existing formal river access.

[Download the complete list of June 2012 Great Outdoors Colorado Grant Awards](#)