



**COLORADO**

**Colorado Water  
Conservation Board**

Department of Natural Resources

CONSERVING, DEVELOPING,  
MANAGING, AND PROTECTING  
**COLORADO'S WATER**



**THE CWCB WORKING FOR YOU**

## FUNDING

Since 1971, the CWCB has been providing low interest loans to Colorado water providers for raw water projects that develop or preserve waters statewide. Loans are available for up to 90% of the total project costs (including engineering fees). Eligible projects include new construction or rehabilitation of existing raw water storage and delivery facilities, such as: reservoirs, ditches and canals, pipelines, diversion structures, groundwater wells, water rights purchases, flood control projects, and hydro projects.

The CWCB also provides a variety of grants to aid local communities with the protection, conservation, and development of water. These grants include: Water Efficiency Grant Program, Water Supply Reserve Account Grants, Colorado Healthy Rivers Fund Grants, Colorado Watershed Restoration Grants, Alternative Agricultural Water Transfer Methods Grant Program, Agricultural Emergency Drought Response Program, Fish and Wildlife Resources Fund Grant Program, Weather Modification Grants, Construction Fund Non-Reimbursable Project Investment Grant Program, Invasive Phreatophyte Control program Grants, and Severance Tax Trust Fund Operational Account Grant Program.

## ENVIRONMENT

In Colorado's semi-arid environment, water is scarce. There is an increasing population and many competing demands on our water including agricultural, municipal and industrial, and environmental and recreational. Recognizing the need to correlate the activities of mankind with the reasonable preservation of the natural environment, the CWCB is responsible for the appropriation, acquisition, protection and monitoring of instream flow (ISF) and natural lake level (NLL) water rights.

These rights are administered within the state's water right priority system to preserve and improve the natural environment to a reasonable degree. They are nonconsumptive, in-channel or in-lake uses of water made exclusively by the CWCB for minimum flows between specific points on a stream or levels in natural lakes. Since 1973, the CWCB has appropriated ISF water rights on more than 1,600 segments covering more than 9,250 stream miles and 480 natural lakes. The CWCB has also completed more than 40 voluntary water acquisition transactions.

The Watershed Protection Fund helps protect the natural heritage and quality of life in Colorado. The CWCB manages these funds in cooperation with the Colorado Water Quality Control Commission, and in consultation with the Colorado Watershed Assembly. These funds help with locally based collaborative approaches to the restoration and protection of lands and natural resources within Colorado's watersheds.

Another program is Colorado's Weather Modification Permit Program. The CWCB authorizes the issuance of weather modification permits for specific weather modification proposals.

## PLANNING & COORDINATION

Colorado contains the headwaters of eight major rivers, requiring coordination between us, our surrounding states, and the federal government. The CWCB helps represent Colorado's water interests on endangered species programs; the Colorado River, Upper Colorado River, and Arkansas River compacts; and the Platte River and San Juan River recovery programs. The CWCB also houses Colorado's Decision Support Systems - a statewide, data-centric water management system encompassing surface and groundwater modeling, data collection, GIS, and other data management tools.

One of the CWCB's roles is to coordinate statewide water planning efforts. In November of 2015, the CWCB released Colorado's Water Plan - our state's first comprehensive water plan - in collaboration with hundreds of partners and thousands of Coloradans. The CWCB also implements the Statewide Water Supply Initiative (SWSI), which is the technical planning report that details Colorado's existing and future water needs. The Interbasin Compact Committee, created to address statewide water issues, and the nine Basin Roundtables, created to facilitate discussions on water issues at the local level, work closely with the CWCB to encourage locally driven collaborative solutions.

Partnering with stakeholder groups and engaging the general public is a key component of the CWCB's work. The CWCB uses education and outreach to connect Coloradans with information about Colorado's water supply challenges, water efficiency, drought, climate change, floods, land use, technical resources, environmental health and protection, and other aspects of the CWCB.

Floods are a common natural disaster in Colorado. The CWCB has the responsibility and programmatic capabilities for flood preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation. The CWCB aids communities by providing local jurisdictions with technical assistance, critical information, and grant funds. The CWCB works with local, state, and federal partnering entities on post-flood actions. In addition, the CWCB serves as the State Coordinating Agency for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The CWCB works closely with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Army Corps of Engineers, and local communities in the development of floodplain regulations and in the designation of and mapping of floodplains.

## GOVERNANCE

The CWCB is governed by a 15-person Board of Directors with a statewide perspective. The Board has representatives from the eight major river basins: South Platte, North Platte, Arkansas, Rio Grande, Gunnison, Colorado Mainstem, Yampa/White/Green and the Southwest Basin and one representative from Metro Denver. In addition, the Executive Director of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), some Division Directors at DNR, and the Colorado Attorney General are on the Board. The Board: 1) provides common technical platforms for planning and policy decisions; 2) builds and manages information to guide actions; 3) helps

reduce the impacts of floods and droughts; 4) takes actions to protect Colorado's compact entitlements; 5) holds instream flow water rights to preserve the natural environment to a reasonable degree; 6) reviews and approves loans and grants; and 7) works with partners to develop policies and implement strategies for meeting Colorado's consumptive and non-consumptive water needs.

The work of the CWCB requires vast administration of resources and people, which includes directing the agency, coordination with other state agencies and the Governor's office, budgetary and fiscal needs, and logistical organization.