COLORADO WATER PLAN

COLLABORATIVE WATER MANAGEMENT
The Colorado Water Plan is built on decades of evolving water policy and collaboration. Our water challenges demand united focus and innovation. The institutional system governing how much water Colorado can use and consume within its boundaries is based on nine interstate compacts, two equitable apportionment decrees, and Colorado water law (called prior appropriation). State and local governments also govern water use and management with regulations, ordinances, and codes. These governing systems working together have allowed Colorado’s water users and stakeholders to develop strong relationships across regional divides.

COLORADO WATER VALUES
The spirit of collaboration that underscores our four core values, will be more critical than ever to achieve the collective vision for Colorado’s water future. These values include: 1) A productive economy that supports vibrant and sustainable cities, agriculture, recreation and tourism; 2) An efficient and effective water infrastructure system; 3) A strong environment with healthy watersheds, rivers, streams and wildlife; 4) An informed public with creative, forward-thinking solutions that are sustainable and resilient to changing conditions and result in strong, equitable communities that can adapt and thrive in the face of adversity.

The 2023 Water Plan organizes the values above into four action areas that connect to cities, farms, streams and people. These action areas organize the plan and direct readers to different water uses and planning needs. However, the four action areas are integrated, interdependent, and need equal support.

- **ROBUST Agriculture**
  - counties, municipalities, utilities, cities, towns, businesses, large industries, large/ small urban and rural communities, etc.
  - established crops and farms, local food, orchards, ranching, ditch companies, acequias, urban agriculture, etc.

- **VIBRANT Communities**

- **THRIVING Watersheds**
  - environment and recreation, river health, watershed health, forest health, wildfire mitigation, wildlife and aquatic species protection, etc.

- **RESILIENT Planning**
  - climate adaptation, planning for climate extremes, embracing equity, diversity, and inclusivity, education, outreach and engagement, supportive government, etc.

- **INTERCONNECTED ACTION AREAS**

80% WATER FALLS WEST OF THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE

24.5 MILLION ACRES OF FORESTS AND 150 WATERSHED GROUPS

27 TUNNELS & DITCHES MOVE 80,000 ACRE FEET OF WATER FROM WEST TO EAST EACH YEAR

40 PEOPLE LIVE EAST OF THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE

740 THOUSAND ACRE FOOT MUNICIPAL GAP AND OTHER RISKS FOR AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

91% AGRICULTURE, 7% MUNICIPALITIES, 2% LARGE INDUSTRY

27 FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED TRIBES, 8 MAJOR RIVER BASINS, 9 BASIN ROUNDTABLES, 9 COMPACTS

9 BASIN ROUNDTABLES

64 COUNTIES

To learn more, visit engagecwcb.org
THE WATER PLAN IS A BRIDGE TO ACTION
Meeting Colorado’s water challenges will take the whole state pulling together, with stakeholders working at the local level on projects and the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) providing support through tools and grant funding through the Colorado Water Plan Grant Program. Actions in the Water Plan are divided between partner and agency actions as explained below.

50 PARTNER ACTIONS
While the list of partner actions is limitless, the Water Plan describes about 50 project ideas that could be supported by Water Plan grants.

• Increased personal conservation
• Starting a new water initiative/project
• Developing collaborative solutions

50 AGENCY ACTIONS
The Water Plan lists 50 actions CWCB and collaborating agencies will take to support local projects, conservation and wise-water development.

• Developing frameworks and convening groups
• Advancing research and science
• Creating support tools

WATER PLAN GRANTS HELP FUND PROJECTS
The legislature created the Water Plan Grant Program categories for CWCB to fund local multi-beneficial water projects.

COMMENT. COMMIT. SHARE.
Visit engagecwcb.org to read the plan and share your comments or provide input at one of four online listening sessions from 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. on the following dates:

• July 27
• August 10
• September 1
• September 28

Commit to taking action to build a more water-secure future by submitting your idea for how to save water. Share a story of a water project that’s helping make Colorado more resilient to its water challenges. The top stories shared may be featured on CWCB’s website along with the final Water Plan!