



COLORADO **WATER PLAN** AGENCY ACTIONS



COLORADO
Colorado Water
Conservation Board
Department of Natural Resources

2023

AGENCY ACTIONS

Agency actions are work that the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCBC) in collaboration with other state agencies will complete during the current Colorado Water Plan (Water Plan) cycle to help move toward the Colorado vision of our water future (see next page for a description of the vision). The Water Plan describes the vision and our needed actions in the context of four action areas. Each action area has ten agency actions, and another ten actions are included that are more general or administrative. In total, 50 agency actions are identified. The agency actions support the work stakeholders throughout the state can take to implement the Water Plan and address local challenges (i.e., partner actions).

ACTION AREAS

The Water Plan is organized around four overarching action areas that loosely translate to cities, farms, streams, and people. The action areas are interrelated in that issues focused on streams, river recreation, commerce, agriculture, diversity, and climate challenges often are interwoven and connected. The action areas are presented separately for organizational purposes, but the Water Plan also describes how they integrate. The action areas include:

VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

counties, municipalities, utilities, cities, towns, businesses, large industries, large and small urban and rural communities, etc.

ROBUST AGRICULTURE

established crops and farms, local food, orchards, ranching, ditch companies, acequias, urban agriculture, livestock, dairy, etc.



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 EDI (equity, diversity, inclusivity), education, outreach and engagement, supportive government, etc.

TOOLS FOR ACTION

While many factors can increase Colorado’s water risks, we have a wide variety of tools, or shared solutions, to address these risks. “Tools” are strategies and projects typically used to collaborate and meet water needs across Colorado. Tools are implemented at various geographic levels, for a variety of purposes, and by a wide variety of agencies, organizations, and water users.

Each agency action references one or more tools that may be considered during the implementation of or informed by the results of the agency action.



Public outreach and education



Equity



Conveyance infrastructure



Funding



Endangered and threatened species recovery programs



Water efficiency and conservation programs



Policy and regulatory changes



Natural hazard planning



Water reuse



Collaboration groups



Land use and water planning integration



Collaborative water sharing agreements



Watershed planning



Data collection and sharing



Stream/watershed restoration and enhancement



Climate adaptation



Water storage



Flow enhancement and maintenance



Innovation

THE COLORADO VISION

The Colorado Vision, outlined in Chapter 6 of the Water Plan, is captured across the visions of the four action areas—Vibrant Communities, Robust Agriculture, Thriving Watersheds, and Resilient Planning. Taken together, the action area visions provide a roadmap for achieving greater water resilience as we look to the planning horizon of 2050.

Local actions by stakeholders and partners should align with and help realize the vision. Example actions are grouped into categories, including thoughtful storage, meeting future water needs, wise water use, healthy lands, and engaged partners. In addition, each action area vision describes ways in which it intersects and integrates with other action areas to demonstrate how the areas are intertwined and relate. The overarching vision for each action area is described below.



VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

Holistic water management is essential for creating vibrant communities that balance water supply and demand needs to create a sustainable urban landscape. Colorado communities need resilient water supplies, water-conscious and attractive urban landscapes, planning that integrates land use and water solutions, and residents who understand the importance of water to their lives and economy. An integrated One Water ethic is necessary to create the transformative change needed to meet the moment and the future.¹



ROBUST AGRICULTURE

Agriculture not only provides food and fiber, but it is also important to Colorado's culture, heritage, and economy, and it faces unprecedented challenges. Innovations are needed to sustain irrigated agriculture, including strategies to stretch available water supplies, increase resiliency, enhance food production, and maintain profitability. Water supplies for Colorado's urban growth should not come at the expense of our rural communities through indiscriminate buy and dry methods. Collaborative partnerships among agriculture, environmental groups, and municipal water providers should be used to create multi-purpose projects that help keep irrigated lands in production and maintain ecosystem services.



THRIVING WATERSHEDS

Colorado's watersheds hold the future of our water supply security. Comprehensive water resources planning should incorporate conditions of forests, streams, wetlands, and wildlife habitat. As our state's water source, the health of watersheds affects agriculture, downstream communities, recreation, tourism, and ecosystem function. Colorado will continue to follow a shared stewardship ethic to plan and implement multi-benefit projects to enhance the health of our watersheds.

















































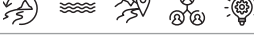
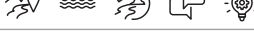



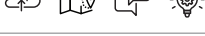

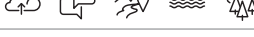







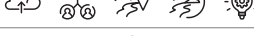
















































































































RESILIENT PLANNING

Water security is critical to the quality of life, environment, and economy of Colorado. The future is uncertain, and Colorado needs to be adaptive and resilient to face the challenges ahead. Water security roadmaps, inclusively developed at a local level and informed by strong state leadership, can identify acute and chronic risks to water supply, integrate local planning strategies, prioritize collaborative solutions, and build adaptive capacity and resilience.

¹ "One Water" means matching the right water to the right use. See Water Plan glossary and Chapter 6 for details and graphic.

Listed below are the 50 agency actions identified in Chapter 6 of the Water Plan:

ACTION AREA, ACTION NUMBER, AND ACTION TITLE		SHARED SOLUTIONS	RELATED ACTION AREA
VIBRANT COMMUNITIES	1.1 Define, benchmark, and institutionalize water-saving communities		Not applicable (N/A)
	1.2 Enhance municipal water efficiency reporting and data integration		N/A
	1.3 Drive enhanced water loss tracking to help address future water needs		
	1.4 Coordinate funding opportunities for conservation, safety, and aging infrastructure		 
	1.5 Strategically expand water reuse and develop a water reuse progress report		N/A
	1.6 Promote outdoor One Water strategies for integrated land use planning		N/A
	1.7 Identify turf replacement options that support transformative landscape change		
	1.8 Develop a statewide spatial landscape feasibility assessment for supply and demand drivers		
	1.9 Develop a study for new and existing water storage opportunities		
	1.10 Create a positive discussion space for tough conversations on analyzing transmountain diversion projects in the Technical Update		  
ROBUST AGRICULTURE	2.1 Expand agricultural water conservation, education, and peer-to-peer programs that enhance innovation		
	2.2 Integrate capacity-building efforts to support agriculture		
	2.3 Expand the scale of collaborative water sharing agreements		
	2.4 Streamline collaborative water sharing agreement guidance across agencies		  
	2.5 Support the integration of robust agriculture into local government planning		 
	2.6 Assess the economic opportunities of avoided buy and dry to communities, ecosystems, and recreation		 
	2.7 Engage federal and state partners to streamline assistance for groundwater-dependent regions		 
	2.8 Streamline agricultural infrastructure funding		  
	2.9 Assess agricultural impacts and best practices for water quality protection		 
	2.10 Integrate soil health, water conservation, and adaptive practices that increase economic outputs with less water use		 
THRIVING WATERSHEDS	3.1 Develop Colorado River Health Assessment Framework (CoRHAF)		N/A
	3.2 Create a comprehensive stream construction guide		
	3.3 Create a Wildfire Ready Watersheds framework		
	3.4 Develop a scenario planning methodology for forest health to inform water planning		
	3.5 Expand the Fluvial Hazard Zone Mapping Program		 
	3.6 Enhance use of Water Plan grant funding for watersheds, environment, and recreation		
	3.7 Reduce barriers to participation in the Instream Flow Program		 
	3.8 Develop an interagency watershed planning platform		  
	3.9 Create a framework for prioritizing stream health with local stakeholders		
	3.10 Integrate and facilitate access to water-dependent, native species data		

ACTION AREA, ACTION NUMBER, AND ACTION TITLE		SHARED SOLUTIONS	RELATED ACTION AREA
RESILIENT PLANNING	4.1 Create a capacity-building hub to provide accessible educational opportunities	   	  
	4.2 Support the long-term stability and impact of Basin Roundtables	    	  
	4.3 Create a collaborative Colorado Water Plan education and outreach campaign	  	  
	4.4 Support an interagency environmental justice mapping working group	    	  
	4.5 Convene workshops on water and climate vulnerability, adaptation, and resilience	    	  
	4.6 Develop an interagency framework for increasing grant funding access and opportunities	    	  
	4.7 Update scenarios	   	  
	4.8 Update climate adaptation-related decision support tools	    	N/A
	4.9 Create innovation challenges and explore an innovation accelerator	    	  
	4.10 Create a drought resiliency toolkit that can be used to support local planning for water security	    	 
GENERAL CWCB ACTIONS	5.1 Update the Analysis and Technical Update to the Colorado Water Plan		N/A
	5.2 Update the Basin Implementation Plans	  	N/A
	5.3 Update the Colorado Water Plan by 2033	 	N/A
	5.4 Support Colorado's Commissioner in the negotiations for the post-2026 reservoir operations	  	N/A
	5.5 Support ongoing efforts related to the Demand Management Feasibility Investigation	    	N/A
	5.6 Meet Colorado's existing water shortages through collaborative multipurpose projects	    	N/A
	5.7 Strategically fund the Colorado Water Plan and find opportunities to leverage funding	 	N/A
	5.8 Identify collaborative survey efforts	   	N/A
	5.9 Identify opportunities for integrated water quantity and water quality efforts to better mitigate future risk	    	N/A
	5.10 Develop annual operational plans that identify targeted work for CWCB		N/A

THE COLORADO WATER PLAN IS A BRIDGE TO ACTION

Learn more and commit to helping build a more water secure future by joining the conversation and taking actions, big and small, to conserve water. Make your voice heard by participating in future cycles of the Water Plan.

Learn how to get involved.

Visit cwcb.colorado.gov to read the plan.



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