



# Water Supply Reserve Fund

Annual Report FY 2024

Submitted by the Colorado Water Conservation Board to the House Agriculture, Water and Natural Resources Committee and the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee

October 31, 2024

# OVERVIEW

The Water Supply Reserve Fund (referred to as WSRF hereafter) is administered by the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) in collaboration with the Interbasin Compact Committee (IBCC) and the nine basin roundtables, which were all established under House Bill 05-1177 (the Colorado Water for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act). In keeping with Senate Bill 21-281, the CWCB aims to provide a set amount of money to support WSRF each year, which is held for basin roundtables to promote. Applications for WSRF funding require matching funds and begin at the respective basin roundtables. Each basin roundtable considers the applications and makes funding recommendations to the CWCB for the board's consideration and approval.

Monies from the WSRF are distributed according to the WSRF Criteria and Guidelines (criteria), which were developed by the CWCB in consultation with the WSRF Criteria & Guidelines Subcommittee, a group composed of representatives from the IBCC and CWCB Board in collaboration with the basin roundtables. The WSRF criteria are reviewed annually. The review of the WSRF Criteria and Guidelines allows CWCB to adapt the WSRF program to the changing needs of Colorado's water community and to meet the diverse needs of projects throughout the state. The WSRF criteria, and other application materials are available on the [CWCB website](#).

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*WSRF HAS GRANTED OVER \$123 MILLION TO 933 PROJECTS ACROSS COLORADO, LEVERAGING OVER \$308 MILLION IN MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS FROM STATE, FEDERAL AND LOCAL PARTNERS.*

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# BACKGROUND

The WSRF was originally created in 2006 by Senate Bill 06-179 to help Coloradans identify and meet critical water supply and management needs. Funds from the WSRF may be used to:

1. Identify human, environmental, or recreational water needs (also commonly referred to as "Needs Assessments")
2. Evaluate water supplies in each basin
3. Build projects or identify methods to meet the water supply needs of the river basin

# DISTRIBUTION OF WSRF BASIN & STATEWIDE ACCOUNT FUNDING

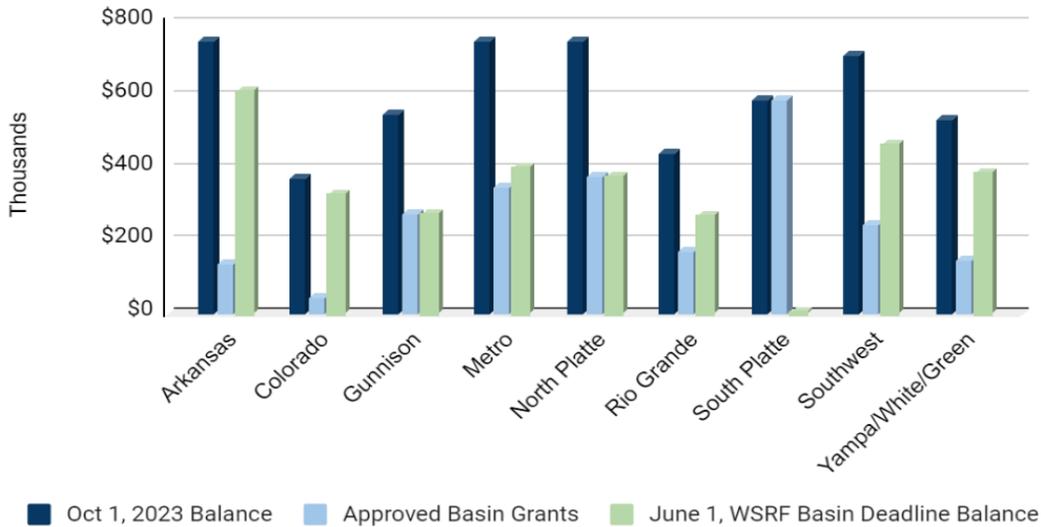
Historically, the WSRF criteria split the funds into Basin Accounts and a Statewide Account. However, at the September 2022 CWCB Board meeting, the Board approved a revision to the grant guidelines to highlight a change in how the two accounts would operate following a significant influx of Severance Tax revenue. The "WSRF Operating Procedures for Standard and Special Funding Conditions" can be found on page 2 of the [criteria](#).

Table 1 shows the beginning balances of each Basin Account, the total amount of basin funds the CWCB Board approved and their ending balance

TABLE 1: BEGINNING & REMAINING BALANCE OCT 2023-JUNE 2024

BASIN	OCT 1, 2023 BALANCE	APPROVED BASIN FUNDS	JUNE 1, 2024 WSRF DEADLINE BALANCE
Arkansas	\$750,000	\$137,760	\$612,240
Colorado	\$369,341	\$44,472	\$324,869
Gunnison	\$550,192	\$275,000	\$275,192
Metro	\$750,000	\$348,624	\$401,376
North Platte	\$750,000	\$375,500	\$374,500
Rio Grande	\$440,815	\$172,875	\$267,940
South Platte	\$588,346	\$557,077	\$31,270
Southwest	\$707,559	\$244,345	\$463,214
Yampa/White/Green	\$531,569	\$146,030	\$385,539

FIGURE 1: BEGINNING & REMAINING BALANCE OCT 2023-JUNE 2024



Since the WSRF’s inception in 2006, the Statewide Account has received \$84,148,562 (including interest), with \$80,691,660 in approved grants. The Statewide Account balance at the beginning of October 2023 was \$9,224,505 and the balance end of June 2024 is \$5,627,596.

Once the current Statewide Account fund is awarded down to zero, the WSRF will operate at standard funding procedures which would use Statewide as a reserve fund for future years when no severance tax revenue is received. The distribution of WSRF funds from the Statewide Account per basin is shown in Table 3 below.

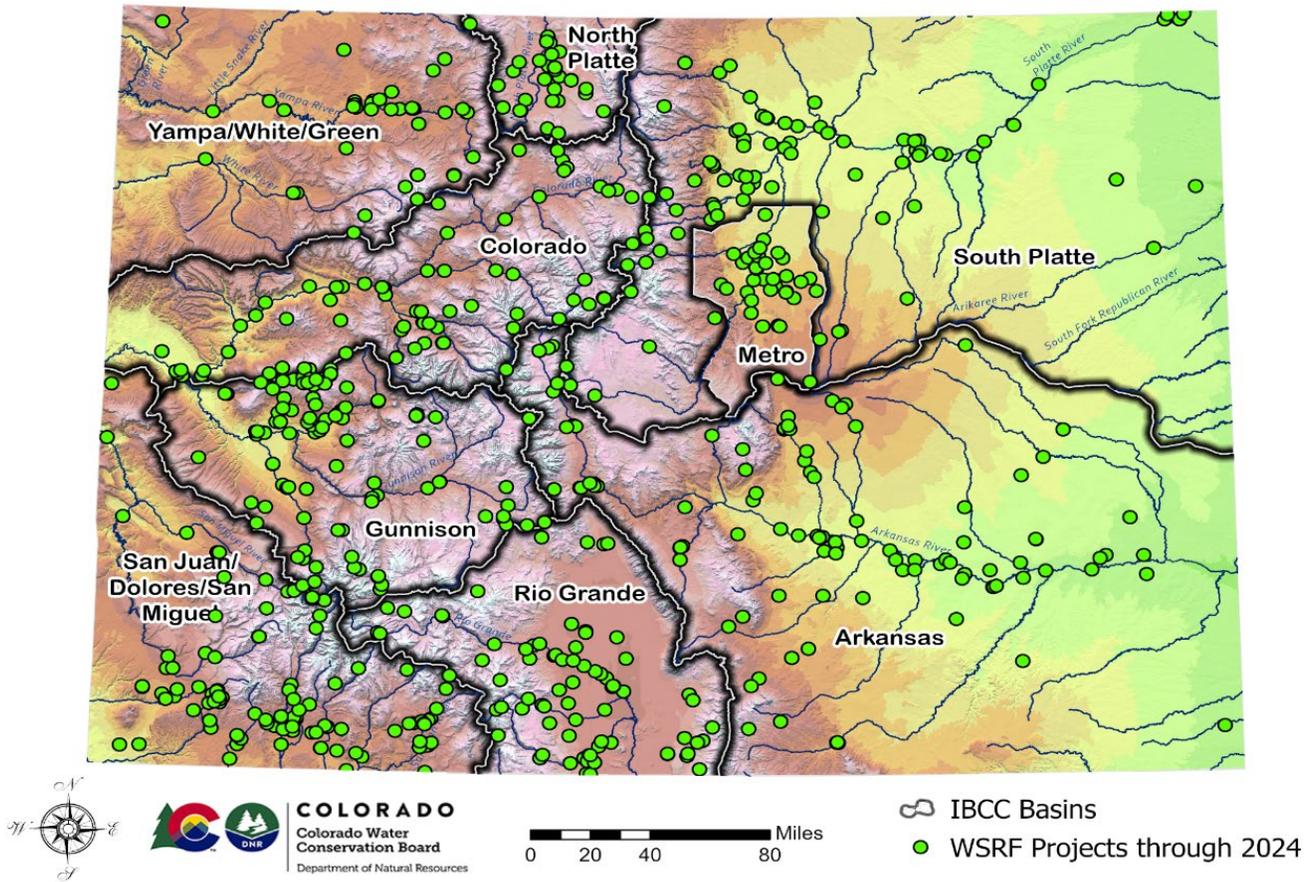
TABLE 3: STATEWIDE FUND DISTRIBUTION APPROVED BY BASIN

		Arkansas	Colorado	Gunnison	Metro	North Platte	Rio Grande	South Platte	Southwest	Yampa/ White/ Green	Total
<b>Statewide Account 2006-2024</b>	# Projects	116	39	60	58	13	61	80	51	30	508
	\$ Approved	16,116,266	7,650,691	9,347,005	8,306,322	1,040,871	15,386,431	9,992,365	10,310,706	2,678,280	80,828,941
	% of Statewide Fund	19.94	9.47	11.56	10.28	1.29	19.04	12.36	12.76	3.31	100.00
<b>Aging Infrastructure 2022-2024*</b>	# Projects	9	3	9	2	0	5	9	1	7	45
	\$ Approved	1,354,978	941,422	1,512,995	73,000	0	893,077	990,022	306,013	1,474,017	7,545,524
<b>Drought Resiliency 2022-2024*</b>	# Projects	7	1	5	4	2	4	4	3	1	31
	\$ Approved	1,049,021	43,194	541,167	317,291	193,194	774,119	755,258	742,548	43,194	4,458,988

\*Because funding for aging infrastructure and drought resiliency are two identified needs that are not specifically the focus of other CWCB grant funds, the statewide account was modified in 2022 to provide grant funding for these two areas. CWCB began tracking aging infrastructure and drought resiliency projects beginning on the Dec. 1, 2022, grant submittal deadline.

# GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF WSRF PROJECTS

FIGURE 3: GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF WSRF PROJECTS FROM 2006 THROUGH JUNE 2024



## PROJECT STATUS SUMMARY

Of the 933 projects WSRF has funded from 2006 - June 2024, 77% (726) projects have been completed. Another 19% (182) projects are in progress and 4% (37) projects are in the contracting process. Taken together, there are 219 active grants (in progress and contracting), totaling approximately \$30.5 million. Per the WSRF criteria, applications for the Basin Account and Statewide Account are considered at each of the CWCB's bi-monthly board meetings following their approval from the appropriate basin roundtable and once supporting documentation has been provided in a letter from the roundtable's chair.

## PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY

As recognized in the Colorado Water Plan, projects and implementation can cover a broad spectrum of activities. Some implementation efforts focus on information gathering, planning, and technical studies, amounting to roughly 26% (\$31,480,036) of efforts, whereas other efforts include infrastructure or other physical outcomes 74% (\$88,041,101).

# DISTRIBUTION AND FUNDING BY PROJECT TYPE

WSRF funded projects have addressed both consumptive (agricultural and municipal) and nonconsumptive (environmental and recreational) needs with most of the projects addressing multiple needs. Table 4 shows the distribution of WSRF funding by primary category.

TABLE 4: DISTRIBUTION AND FUNDING BY PROJECT TYPE

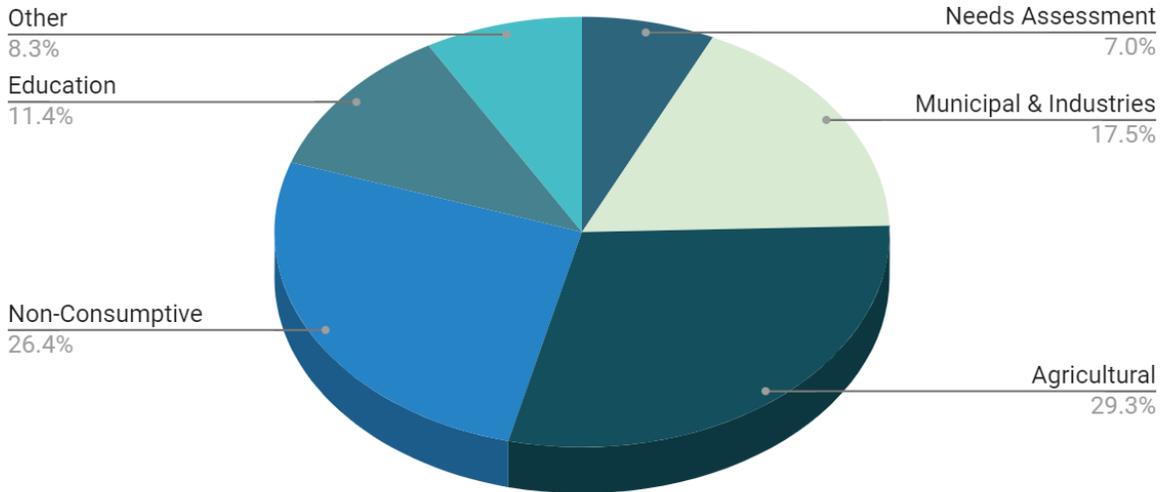
Type	Needs Assessment	Municipal & Industrial	Agricultural	Nonconsumptive	Education	Other
Arkansas	\$2,515,349	\$6,799,091	\$6,396,088	\$9,365,558	\$1,374,832	\$5,149,765
Colorado	\$1,243,512	\$1,485,408	\$5,625,875	\$7,827,770	\$784,746	\$1,554,926
Gunnison	\$572,186	\$4,187,090	\$8,234,564	\$4,703,750	\$625,921	\$1,278,242
Metro	\$1,550,084	\$7,655,210	\$832,554	\$2,841,042	\$775,389	\$753,843
North Platte	\$211,986	\$995,000	\$3,777,013	\$3,504,611	\$490,357	\$860,423
Rio Grande	\$783,123	\$530,600	\$13,229,390	\$14,194,046	\$1,047,965	\$1,393,487
South Platte	\$1,611,783	\$2,145,788	\$5,406,104	\$5,824,360	\$1,255,262	\$3,577,112
Southwest	\$510,743	\$5,982,624	\$5,382,987	\$3,457,125	\$755,161	\$887,336
Yampa/White/Green	\$1,071,243	\$1,735,990	\$4,098,257	\$2,176,501	\$1,283,597	\$947,368
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>\$10,070,009</b>	<b>\$31,516,801</b>	<b>\$52,982,823</b>	<b>\$53,894,764</b>	<b>\$8,393,230</b>	<b>\$16,402,501</b>
<b>NUMBER OF FUNDED IMPLEMENTATION EFFORTS (PROJECTS, STUDIES, ETC.)</b>						
Arkansas	13	46	48	52	17	33
Colorado	14	27	48	51	21	15
Gunnison	8	34	71	53	12	17
Metro	16	45	16	30	25	8
North Platte	2	3	36	21	4	5
Rio Grande	6	6	59	60	11	10
South Platte	20	32	49	44	31	13
Southwest	10	37	61	41	26	11
Yampa/White/Green	12	23	35	29	18	8
<b>Total Number of Grants<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>101</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>120</b>

<sup>1</sup> Grants can be designated into more than one project type. The total number of grants across all categories does not reflect the actual total number of grants.

## TOTAL WSRF FUNDING BY CATEGORY 2006-2024

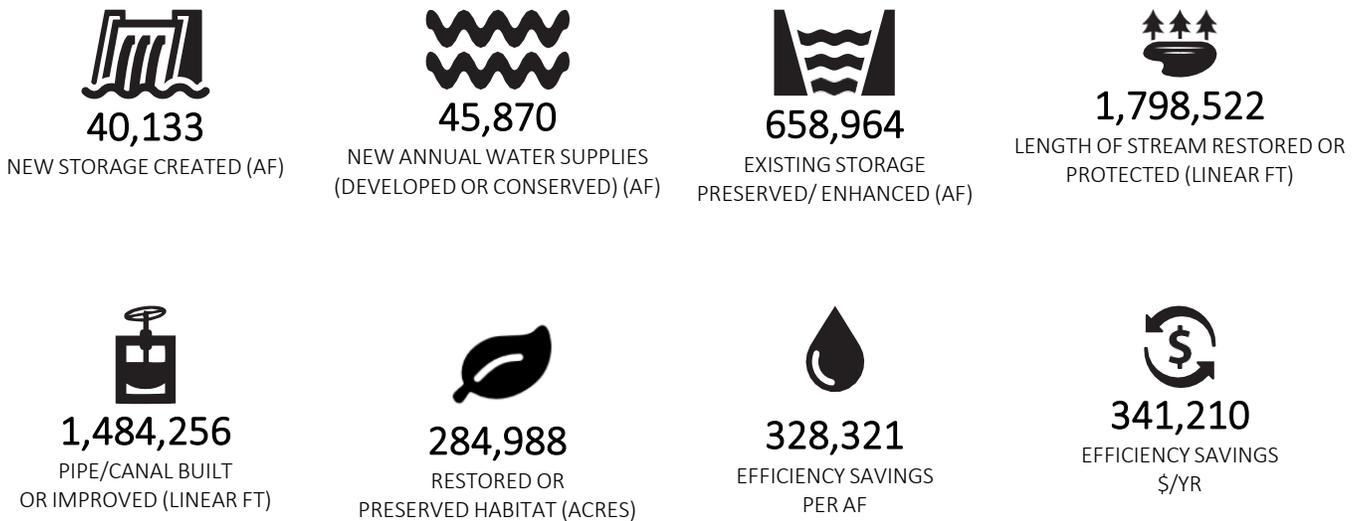
FIGURE 4: TOTAL WSRF FUNDING BY CATEGORY 2006-2024

### TOTAL WSRF FUNDING BY CATEGORY 2006-JUNE 2024



## WSRF IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

FIGURE 5: CUMULATIVE WSRF GRANT IMPACT 2006-2024



# FUNDING SUMMARY

The WSRF Program has been very effective in its purpose. The Fund has provided grants for a mix of consumptive and nonconsumptive water projects and promoted multi-purpose projects throughout Colorado. Projects funded through the WSRF help the state meet its water supply needs with money that was not available until the passage of the legislation.

In 2009, the Water Supply Reserve Fund Program was reauthorized in perpetuity by SB 09-106. SB 09-106 appropriated \$10,000,000 per year from the Severance Tax Trust Fund, subject to available funding. Due to the lack of revenue from Severance Tax, the WSRF received reduced funding in some years. In 2021, the Colorado Legislature approved, and the Governor signed Senate Bill 21-160 adding \$5 million to the WSRF program from the General Fund. In 2021, SB 21-281 shifted WSRF’s funding source from the Severance Tax Operational Fund to the CWCB’s Severance Tax Perpetual Base Fund to provide an annual allocation determined by the Board based on available funds. The Board typically allocates \$3 million to the program each fiscal year.

## APPROVED APPLICATION LINKS BY BASIN

The following links show WSRF applications approved by the CWCB board by basin:

- [WSRF Projects Completed by Basin](#)
- [WSRF Projects In-Progress by Basin](#)
- [WSRF Projects in Contracting by Basin](#)

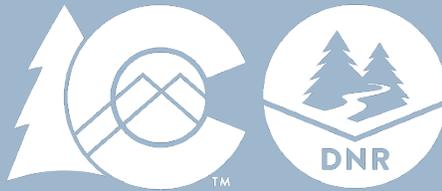
## PUBLIC EDUCATION, PARTICIPATION & OUTREACH (PEPO) GRANT PROGRAM

The Colorado Water Conservation Board has authority to transfer funds out of the Perpetual Base Fund to the Water Supply Reserve Fund (WSRF). When Senate Bill SB 21-281 restructured severance tax distributions, the CWCB opted to dedicate a portion of the Statewide Account funds to better support the roundtables’ Public Education Participation and Outreach (PEPO) liaisons in each of the basins and to support some larger statewide CWCB and PEPO led initiatives. The resultant Public Education Participation and Outreach Grants were developed for this purpose and are approved annually by the CWCB Board.

PEPO Grants establish a funding mechanism for the CWCB to provide monies for coordinated PEPO efforts across the state. Funds can be used for PEPO efforts including supporting basin coordinators and/or statewide initiatives.

TABLE 6: FY 23-24 PEPO GRANTS

BASIN	GRANT TYPE	GRANT AMOUNT
Arkansas	Basin Coordinator	\$25,000
Colorado	Basin Coordinator	\$25,000
Gunnison	Basin Coordinator	\$25,000
Metro/South Platte	Basin Coordinator	\$50,000
Rio Grande	Basin Coordinator	\$25,000
Southwest	Basin Coordinator	\$25,000
Yampa/White/Green	Basin Coordinator	\$25,000
Harris Engineering	Statewide Initiative	\$43,738
Resource Central	Statewide Initiative	\$99,000
Water Education Colorado	Statewide Initiative	\$67,460



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# COLORADO

## Colorado Water Conservation Board

Department of Natural Resources

To learn more or if you have **questions**, please email [waterplan.info@state.co.us](mailto:waterplan.info@state.co.us), call 303-866-3441 or visit the Colorado Water Conservation Board website at <https://cwcb.colorado.gov>.