



FY 2024-25 ANNUAL REPORT

Water Supply Reserve Fund



COLORADO

Colorado Water
Conservation Board

Department of Natural Resources

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

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 established under House Bill 05-1177 (the Colorado Water for the 21st Century Act). Requests for funding begin at the basin roundtables. Applications which the local basin roundtables have recommended for approval by the CWCB board are submitted to the CWCB and include matching funds. Monies from the WSRF are distributed according to the WSRF Criteria and Guidelines, 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 and Guidelines are reviewed annually. The WSRF Criteria and Guidelines, and other application materials are available on the [CWCB website](#).

The annual review of the WSRF Criteria and Guidelines allows for program adjustments. Adjustments to the WSRF Criteria and Guidelines have enabled the WSRF to adapt to the changing needs of Colorado's water community and meet the diverse needs of projects throughout the state.

WSRF HAS GRANTED OVER \$127 MILLION TO 1,002 PROJECTS ACROSS COLORADO, LEVERAGING OVER \$317 MILLION IN MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS (CASH AND IN-KIND) FROM STATE, FEDERAL AND LOCAL PARTNERS.

BACKGROUND

The WSRF was created in 2006 by Senate Bill 06-179. The legislature created the WSRF to help individuals and organizations identify and meet their 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 and Guidelines split the funds into Basin Accounts and a Statewide Account.

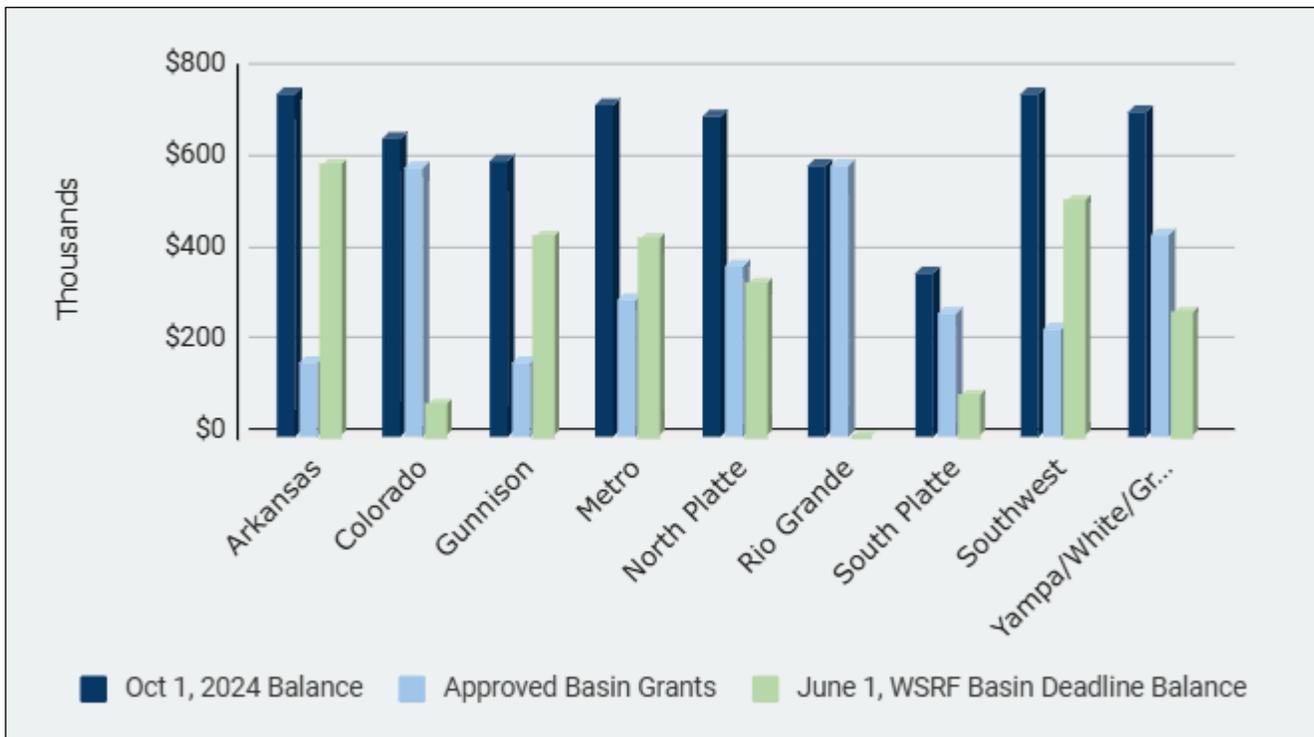
At the September 2022 CWCB Board meeting, the Board approved a revision to the grant guidelines to highlight a change in how the Basin and Statewide Accounts would operate following a significant amount of Severance Tax revenue. “*WSRF Operating Procedures for Standard and Special Funding Conditions*” can be found on page 2 of the [grant guidelines](#).

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 2024-JUNE 2025

BASIN	OCT 1, 2024 BALANCE	APPROVED BASIN FUNDS	JUNE 1, 2025 WSRF DEADLINE BALANCE
Arkansas	\$750,000	\$159,237	\$590,763
Colorado	\$649,934	\$584,723	\$65,211
Gunnison	\$600,257	\$162,800	\$437,457
Metro	\$726,441	\$298,293	\$428,148
North Platte	\$699,565	\$369,651	\$329,914
Rio Grande	\$593,005	\$593,005	\$0
South Platte	\$356,334	\$268,409	\$87,925
Southwest	\$750,000	\$234,062	\$515,938
Yampa/White/Green	\$710,604	\$440,676	\$269,928

FIGURE 1: TOTAL, APPROVED, AND REMAINING BASIN ACCOUNT FUNDS 2006-JUNE 2025



The Statewide Account balance at the beginning of October 2024 was \$5,627,596 and the balance end of June 2025 is \$0. Because the current Statewide Account fund has been awarded down to zero following the March 2025 CWCB Board Meeting, the WSRF began operating at the standard funding procedures which can 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 2. Numbers are rounded for display purposes, see exact dollar amounts [here](#).

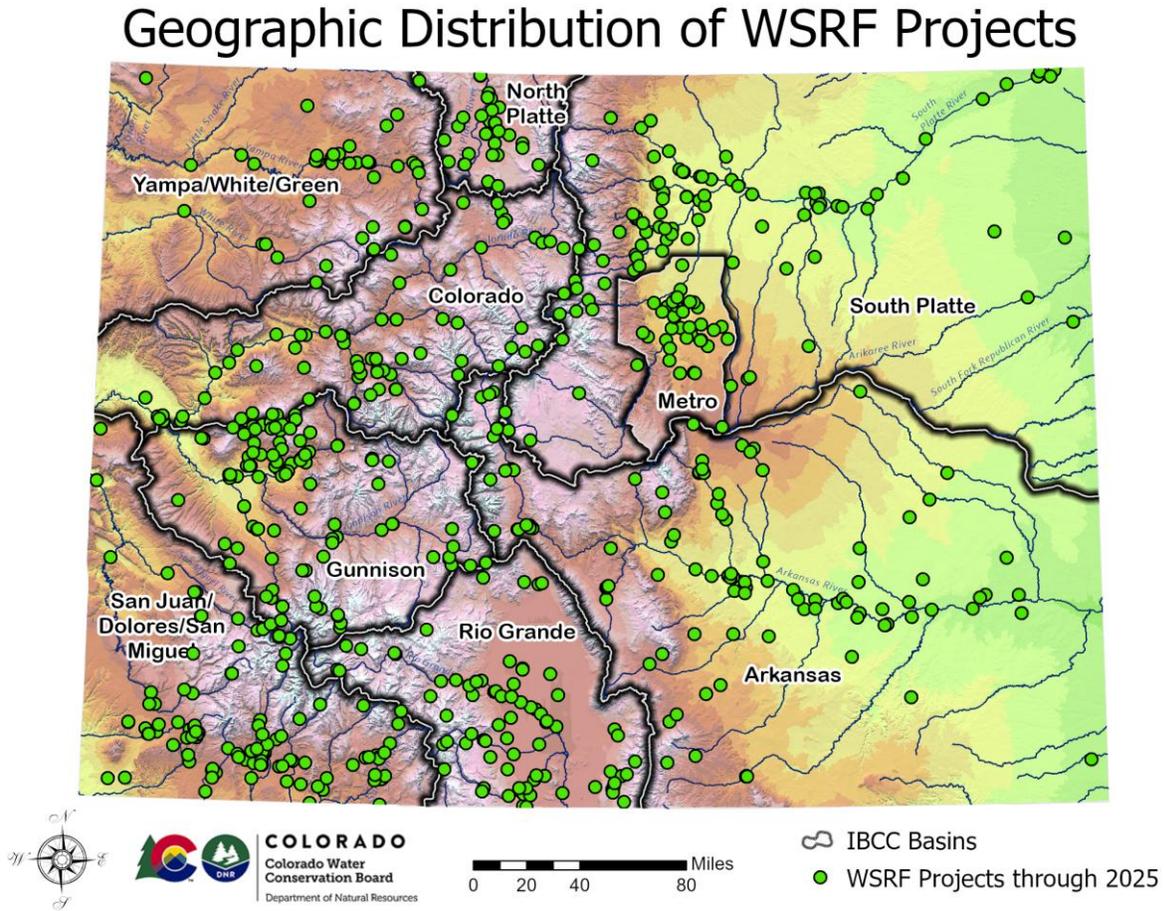
TABLE 2: STATEWIDE FUND DISTRIBUTION APPROVED BY BASIN

		Arkansas	Colorado	Gunnison	Metro	North Platte	Rio Grande	South Platte	Southwest	Yampa/White/Green	Total
Statewide Account 2006-2025	# Projects	117	40	64	60	13	68	83	55	32	532
	\$ Approved	\$16.6M	\$8.2M	\$9.8M	\$8.8M	\$1.04M	\$17.5M	\$10.5M	\$10.96M	\$3.3M	\$86.6M
	% from Statewide/Approved	19.14%	9.52%	11.31%	10.16%	1.20%	20.19%	12.08%	12.66%	3.75%	100.00%
Aging Infrastructure 2022-2025	# Projects	10	4	13	2	0	8	11	3	9	60
	\$ Approved	\$1.8M	\$1.5M	\$1.95M	\$73K	\$0	\$1.3M	\$1.4M	\$741K	\$2.05M	\$10.8M
Drought Resiliency 2022-2025	# Projects	7	1	5	6	2	8	5	5	1	40
	\$ Approved	\$1.1M	\$43K	\$541K	\$809K	\$193K	\$2.5M	\$854K	\$957K	\$43K	\$7M

*Because funding for aging infrastructure and drought resilience 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 2: Map of WSRF Projects from 2006-June 2025



PROJECT STATUS SUMMARY

Of the 1,002 projects WSRF has funded from 2006-June 2025, 77% (770) have been completed. Another 20% (199) are in progress and 3% (33) are in the contracting process. Taken together, there are 232 active grants (in progress and contracting), involving approximately \$30.5 million. Per the WSRF Criteria and Guidelines, applications for the Basin Account and Statewide account (if available) 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, technical studies, amounting to roughly 25% (\$31,892,153) of efforts, whereas other efforts include infrastructure or other physical outcomes 75% (\$96,416,086).

DISTRIBUTION AND FUNDING BY PROJECT TYPE

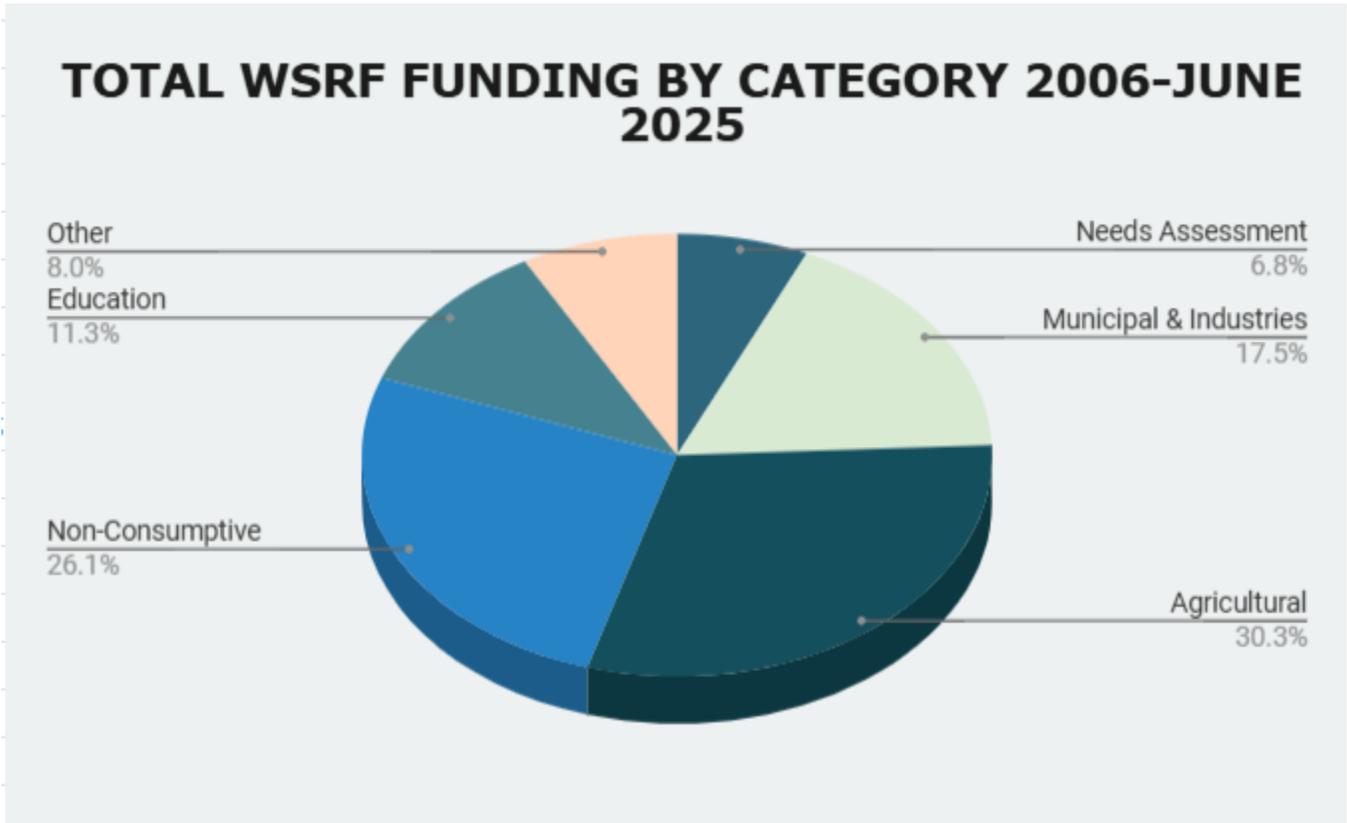
WSRF funded projects have addressed both consumptive (agricultural and municipal) and nonconsumptive (environmental and recreational) needs with most of the projects addressing multiple needs. Table 3 shows the distribution of WSRF funding by primary category.

TABLE 3: DISTRIBUTION AND FUNDING BY PROJECT TYPE

Type	Needs Assessment	Municipal & Industrial	Agricultural	Nonconsumptive	Education	Other
Arkansas	\$2,515,349	\$7,349,297	\$6,433,363	\$9,365,558	\$1,405,093	\$5,149,765
Colorado	\$1,243,512	\$1,506,408	\$5,806,742	\$8,748,795	\$784,746	\$1,554,926
Gunnison	\$572,186	\$4,187,090	\$8,841,714	\$4,703,750	\$625,921	\$1,278,242
Metro	\$1,550,084	\$8,119,546	\$972,794	\$2,881,042	\$822,264	\$753,843
North Platte	\$211,986	\$995,000	\$4,146,664	\$3,504,611	\$490,357	\$860,423
Rio Grande	\$783,123	\$852,750	\$15,201,641	\$14,295,974	\$1,047,965	\$1,393,487
South Platte	\$1,611,783	\$2,195,788	\$6,043,306	\$5,824,360	\$1,302,137	\$3,577,112
Southwest	\$510,743	\$6,099,932	\$6,018,761	\$3,613,947	\$755,161	\$887,336
YWG	\$1,071,243	\$2,240,988	\$4,457,443	\$2,225,434	\$1,383,321	\$947,368
Total Funding	\$10,070,009	\$33,600,799	\$57,922,429	\$55,163,472	\$8,616,965	\$16,402,501
NUMBER OF FUNDED IMPLEMENTATION EFFORTS (PROJECTS, STUDIES, ETC.)						
Arkansas	13	47	49	52	18	33
Colorado	14	28	50	56	21	15
Gunnison	8	34	75	53	12	17
Metro	16	47	17	31	26	8
North Platte	2	3	38	21	4	5
Rio Grande	6	7	66	61	11	10
South Platte	20	33	54	44	32	13
Southwest	10	39	65	42	26	11
YWG	12	24	39	30	19	8
Total # of Grants¹	101	262	453	390	169	120

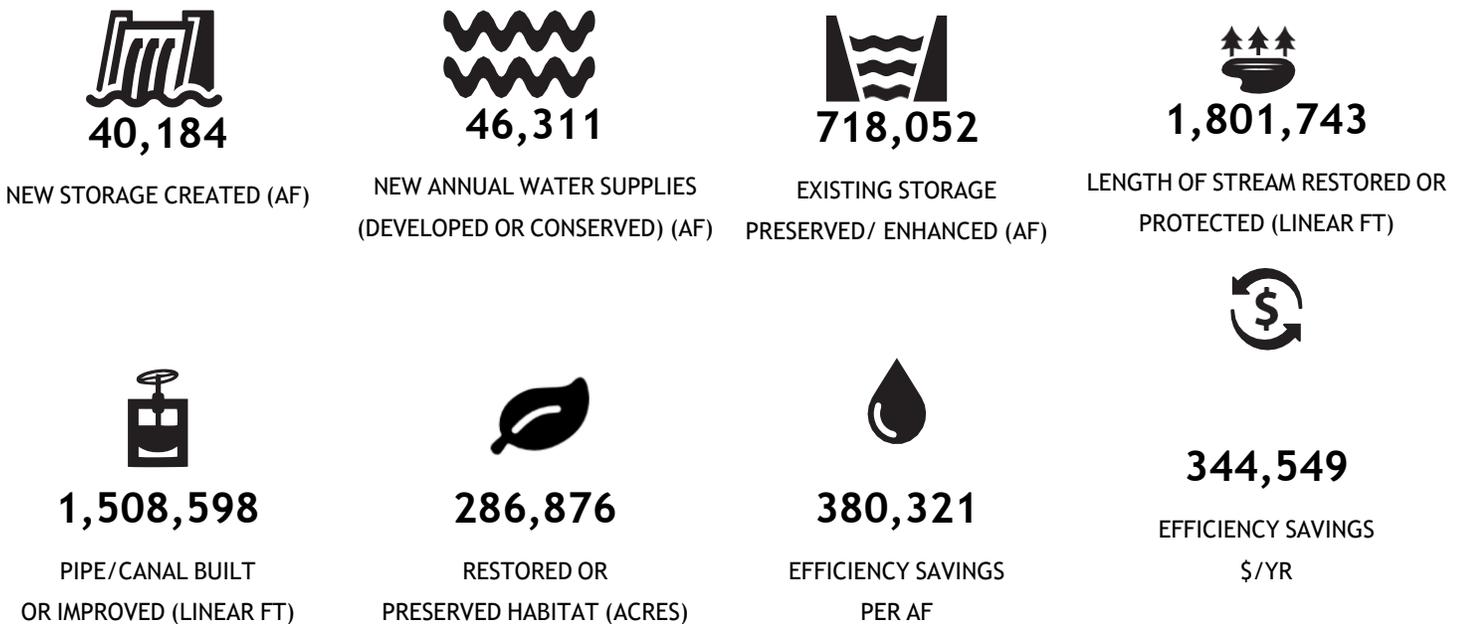
¹ Grants can be designated into more than one project type. The total number of grants across all categories does not reflect the actual total number of grants.

FIGURE 3: TOTAL WSRF FUNDING BY CATEGORY 2006-2025



WSRF IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

FIGURE 4: 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 21-1260 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) 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.

Intended Use PEPO Grants established 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 4: FUNDING BY PEPO PROJECT TYPE

BASIN	GRANT TYPE	GRANT AMOUNT
Arkansas	Basin Coordinator	\$25,000
Colorado	Basin Coordinator	\$25,000
Gunnison	Basin Coordinator	\$24,281
Metro/South Platte	Basin Coordinator	\$50,000
Rio Grande	Basin Coordinator	\$24,990
Southwest	Basin Coordinator	\$25,000
Yampa/White/Green	Basin Coordinator	\$25,000
Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory (dba Bird Conservancy of the Rockies)	Statewide Initiative	\$32,241.88

To learn more or if you have questions, please visit the Colorado Water Conservation Board website at <https://cwcb.colorado.gov>



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