



COLORADO

Colorado Water Conservation Board

Department of Natural Resources

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TO: Colorado Water Conservation Board Members

FROM: Kat Weismiller, Section Chief, Water Supply Planning
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DATE: January 27, 2026

AGENDA ITEM: Colorado Water Plan Progress Update, Agenda Item #19

This is an informational item with no Board action required.

Water Supply Planning staff will present an overview of Colorado Water Plan progress to date.

Background

The CWCB is committed to advancing 50 agency actions as outlined in the 2023 Water Plan with a goal of 100% completion by 2033. To ensure accountability, staff tracks progress quarterly through an internal tracking tool. Notable progress milestones as of January 2026 include:

- Completed Actions: 10% of agency actions are complete.
- Total Completion Rate: 31.7% total Water Plan completion (calculated by the completion percentage of each individual action).
- Actions Underway: 44 agency actions are currently in progress.
- Funding: 46% of actions have secured all or some of their necessary funding.
- Stakeholder Engagement: 40% of actions have undergone workshops, data gathering, or commissioned research.

Completed Agency Actions to date include:

- Action 1.7: Identify turf replacement options that support transformative landscape change
- Action 2.6: Assess the economic opportunities of avoided buy and dry to communities, ecosystems, and recreation
- Action 3.1: Develop “Colorado River Health Assessment Framework” (CoRHA)
- Action 3.3: Create a Wildfire Ready Watersheds framework
- Action 4.5: Convene workshops on water and climate vulnerability, adaptation, and resilience

Current Work & Strategic Priorities

Currently the Governor’s Wildly Important Goals (WIGs) include four agency actions from the Colorado Water Plan. As such, these tasks are a high-priority focus over the coming months, with the following actions slated for completion by July 2026:



- **Action 1.2: Enhancing Municipal Water Efficiency Reporting and Data Integration** Staff will develop and bring before the Board updated guidelines to enhance water efficiency reporting and data integration for covered entities (water providers that provide 2000 acre feet per year.). This effort involves stakeholder engagement to refine the guidelines used by providers to update their mandatory water efficiency plans.
- **Action 2.4: Streamlining Collaborative Water Sharing Guidance** Staff will work with partner agencies to streamline guidance for Collaborative Water Sharing Agreements (CWSAs), including an update to the "Beginner's Guide." The project will produce a clear requirements matrix and updated digital resources to help stakeholders navigate sharing opportunities.
- **Action 3.4: Develop a Scenario Planning Methodology for Forest Health to Inform Water Planning** CWCB is establishing a methodology for incorporating forest health into statewide water supply scenario planning. Guided by a Technical Advisory Group and expert workshops, this initiative will create a finalized approach that describes how forest conditions impact future water availability.
- **Action 4.1: Creating a capacity-building hub for accessible educational opportunities** In partnership with the CSU Water Center, CWCB will pilot a beta version of a centralized online hub to provide accessible water education and career resources. This hub will bridge resource gaps for students, educators, and the general public across Colorado.

Additionally, staff have made meaningful advancement on the following agency actions this past year, including:

- **Action 1.4 - Coordinate funding opportunities for conservation, safety, and aging infrastructure** Staff have advanced interagency coordination on conservation and aging infrastructure funding and launched the Funding Explorer interactive tool.
- **Action 1.8 - Statewide Spatial Landscape Feasibility Assessment** The Request for Proposals was released and recently closed, positioning this action to move into contractor selection and execution.
- **Action 1.9 - Development of a Statewide Storage Study** Staff, in coordination with their consultant team at Jacobs, are advancing the development of case studies to support the statewide storage analysis.
- **Action 4.8: Update climate adaptation-related decision support tools** Staff are working with Colorado State University and Western Water Assessment to finalize a Climate Impacts Report, which will serve as a companion to the Climate Change in Colorado Report and strengthen climate-adaptation decision support tools.
- **Action 4.10 - Creation of a Drought Resiliency Toolkit** Staff contracted with the Sonoran Institute, branded the initiative as Water Secure Communities, established a statewide and agency Advisory Committee, and convened stakeholder meetings to advance program development.
- **Action 5.1 - Analysis and Technical Update** The Request for Proposals process was completed, proposals were reviewed, and Brown & Caldwell was selected and contracted as the primary contractor.
- **Action 5.2 - Basin Implementation Plans** Procurement and contracting were completed in parallel with Action 5.1, with Brown & Caldwell selected to support basin-level planning efforts.



Conclusion

Staff will walk the Board through these milestones and the roadmap for the upcoming year. This update serves to demonstrate CWCB's firm commitment to moving from planning to active implementation across all four project categories.

