



City Council Work Session

Salida Fire Station, 611 Oak Street, Colorado 81201

April 14, 2025 at 6:00 PM

Agenda

Please register for City Council Work Session https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_AlrC-BslRNIigokU1E5K4w

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. To watch live meetings:

<http://www.youtube.com/@cityofsalidacolorado>

Discussion Items

1. Joint City Council and Planning Commission Work Session - Conceptual Plan for Major Subdivision (Salida Quality Farms Annexation / Places to Age)
2. Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) Update
3. Xcel Energy Update
4. South Arkansas River Restoration Update

Adjourn

Individuals with disabilities needing auxiliary aid(s) may request assistance by contacting the City Clerk at 448 E. 1st Street, Ste. 112, Salida, CO 81201, Ph.719-530-2626 at least 48 hours in advance.



City Council Work Session Memo

DEPARTMENT	PRESENTED BY	DATE
Community Development	Carolyn Poissant - Senior Planner	April 7, 2025

Agenda Item

Conceptual Plan for Major Subdivision (Salida Quality Farms Annexation / Places to Age)

Background

“Places to Age” (PTA) is a non-profit organization focused on the goal of developing a variety of senior care and senior housing facilities in Chaffee County with the primary purpose of serving low- to moderate-income individuals. A Memorandum of Understanding between the organization and the City was approved on August 6, 2024 to delineate agreed upon conditions and responsibilities that pertain to the future development of their project. (See Attachment A.)

The goal for PTA at this stage is to secure ownership of an 8-acre parcel that is being donated to the organization by the landowner (Salida Quality Farms, LLC - James Treat). This will allow PTA to pursue funding and proceed with planning their senior housing communities.

The MOU included specific language concerning flexibility in the entitlement process:

10. Requests for fee waivers will be made by Places to Age, which fee waiver request shall be reasonably considered by the City Council during the applicable quasi-judicial land use hearings.

11. The City agrees to discuss options for flexibility in terms of the order and timing of required payments and submittals throughout the process of the Project, including completion of public improvements.

12. Through coordination with the City, Places to Age agrees to meet the intent of the City's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance. Places to Age will explore providing inclusionary housing within the Project through workforce housing, and/or independent living units.

In order to proceed with an application for a Major Subdivision, staff has identified what would be the minimal amount of public infrastructure needed to correspond to an initial phase of the development of the property by PTA. (See Attachment B.)



City Council Work Session Memo

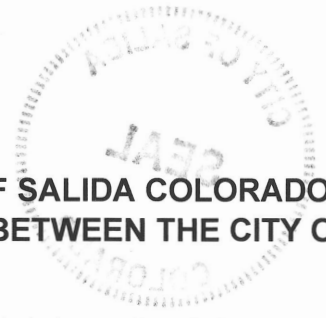
DEPARTMENT	PRESENTED BY	DATE
Community Development	Carolyn Poissant - Senior Planner	April 7, 2025

Requested Direction from Council

PTA may have specific requests for Council to deliberate on, however no action is required at this time. Previous input from the city attorney indicated that any specific fee reductions or waivers would need to be acted upon in association with an actual action item concerning the subdivision or other land development application. Staff would also like feedback regarding the potential phasing of park improvements.

ATTACHMENT A

CITY OF SALIDA, COLORADO
RESOLUTION NO. 46
(Series of 2024)



**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SALIDA COLORADO,
APPROVING THE MEMORADUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE CITY OF
SALIDA AND PLACES TO AGE**

WHEREAS, the City of Salida, Colorado ("City") is a statutory city, duly organized and existing under the laws of the state of Colorado; and

WHEREAS, the City recognizes the need for housing for all members of the community as well as the need to provide services to older citizens who require greater assistance as they age; and

WHEREAS, Places to Age is a non-profit organization that focuses on providing assisted living and memory care facilities to Chaffee County; and

WHEREAS, Places to Age has developed a project proposal for a senior housing development to potentially include independent living, assisted living, and memory care facilities within the City; and

WHEREAS, the City and Places to Age wish to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") to formally delineate agreed upon conditions and responsibilities that pertain to the future development of the Places to Age project; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the City Council to adopt this MOU between the City and Places to Age; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds it in the best interest of the City to adopt the MOU, attached and incorporated herein, to guide the City and Places to Age through the development of this senior housing development project.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SALIDA, COLORADO THAT:

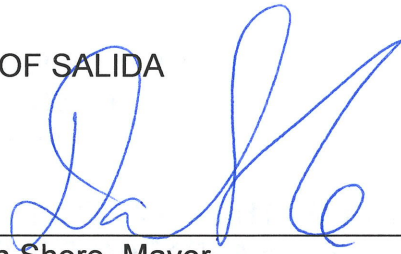
Section 1. The Salida City Council incorporates the foregoing recitals as its conclusions, facts, determinations and findings.

Section 2. The Memorandum of Understanding, attached and incorporated herein as Exhibit A, is hereby approved and adopted.

RESOLVED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 6th day of August, 2024.



CITY OF SALIDA

By 
Dan Shore, Mayor

[SEAL]

ATTEST: 
City Clerk/Deputy City Clerk

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
between the City of Salida and Places to Age Non-profit Corporation

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is made this ____ day of ____, 2024 between City of Salida ("City") and Places to Age, a Colorado non-profit corporation whose address is P.O. Box 502, Salida, CO 81201 ("Places to Age") :

I. Recitals

1. Places to Age is a non-profit corporation with the goal of bringing assisted living and memory care facilities to Chaffee County and has developed a project proposal for a senior housing development to include independent living, assisted living, and memory care facilities (the "Project");

2. The City of Salida and Places to Age wish to enter into this MOU to delineate agreed upon conditions and responsibilities that pertain to the future development of the Project;

3. The Project location is preliminarily identified as shown on "Exhibit A" attached; and

4. The Parties intend to bind themselves to the obligations stated in this Agreement.

II. Understanding between the Parties

5. The City agrees to establish one point of contact, Carolyn Poissant, Senior Planner, as the point of contact for the City to be available to provide Salida-specific information regarding the process. Places to Age agrees to provide Cheryl Brown-Kovacic as the point of contact.

6. The City further agrees to share examples of requests for proposals (RFPs) for construction and other samples to use as a guide and to complete the Annexation Impact report as requested by the County prior to the annexation public hearing by the City Council.

7. Places to Age agrees to utilize an architect/design team with expertise in senior housing and to contract with a programming/operations consultant with expertise in senior care facility management.

8. The City will assist with composing a template for letters of support ("LOS") for grant applications and helping to identify appropriate parties and entities to obtain LOS from. Additionally, the City will inform Places to Age of potential

funding sources and grant opportunities. The City is under no obligation, nor does it agree to provide any type of cash match for funding.

9. Places to Age will seek and apply for funding and grants for the Project available through a variety of sources, including other local entities and non-profits; state and federal programs; and private funders and foundations. Places to Age will further execute and comply with all applicable funding and grant requirements. Places to Age will complete, file, and obtain all applicable approvals for all contract reporting documentation.

10. Requests for fee waivers will be made by Places to Age, which fee waiver request shall be reasonably considered by the City Council during the applicable quasi-judicial land use hearings.

11. The City agrees to discuss options for flexibility in terms of the order and timing of required payments and submittals throughout the process of the Project, including completion of public improvements.

12. Through coordination with the City, Places to Age agrees to meet the intent of the City's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance. Places to Age will explore providing inclusionary housing within the Project through workforce housing, and/or independent living units.

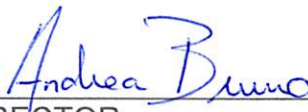
13. By executing this MOU, the parties do not waive any immunity or limit liability contained in the Colorado Governmental Immunity Act; do not create a multi-year fiscal obligation; and do not create any other financial obligation not supported by a current appropriation.

14. This MOU does not create any rights in any individual not a party to this document.

CITY OF SALIDA

By: 
CITY ADMINISTRATOR

PLACES TO AGE

By: 
DIRECTOR

ATTEST: 
CITY CLERK / DEPUTY CITY CLERK

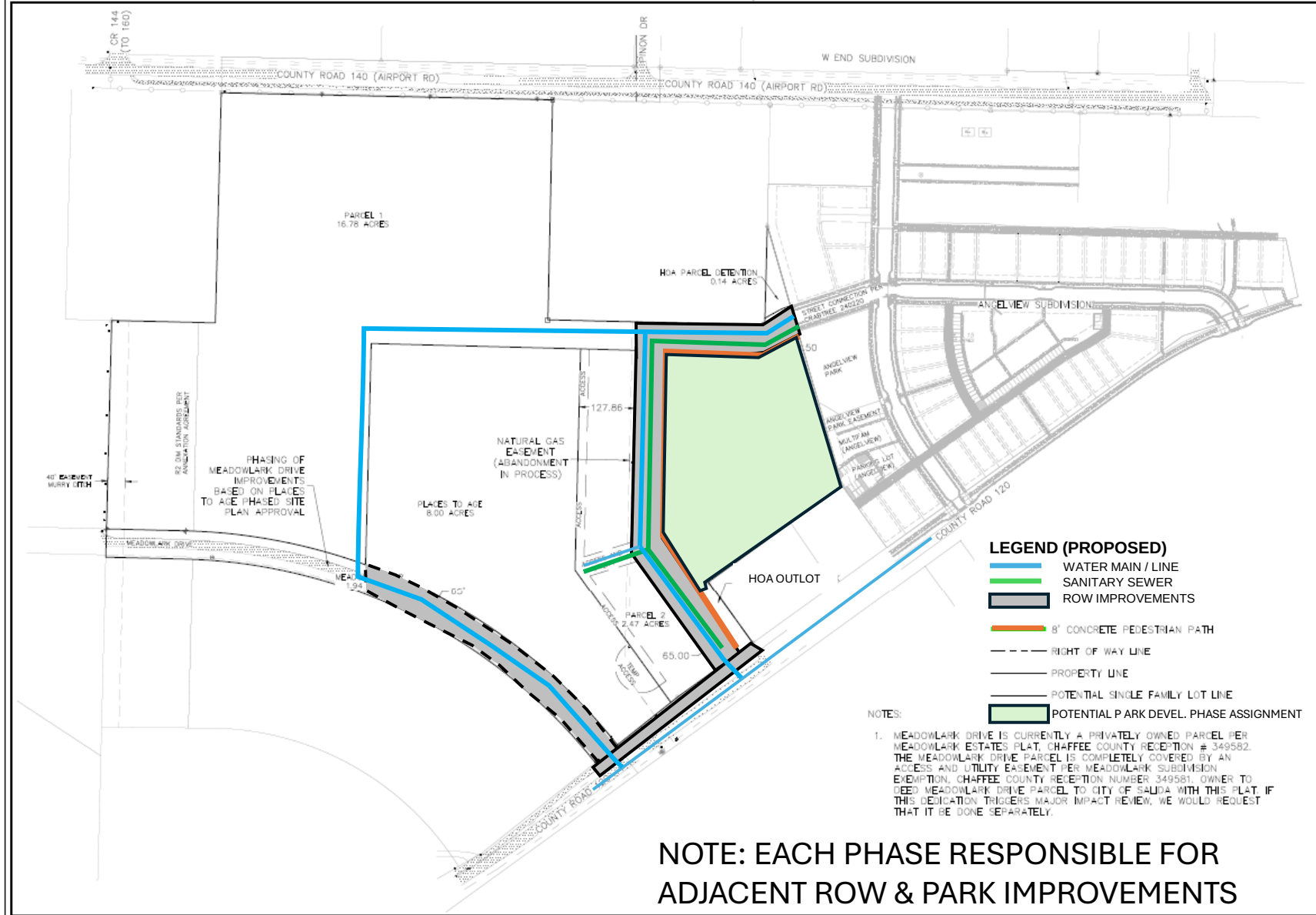
CONCEPTUAL PLAN

This aerial map illustrates a residential development project in the City of San Jose. The map features several key elements:

- Infrastructure:** COUNTY ROAD 140 (AIRPORT RD) runs horizontally across the top. A stormwater collector is shown running vertically through the center-right. A natural gas easement is located in the center. A city park is situated in the lower right quadrant.
- Property Lots:** Numerous lots are delineated with dashed lines. Some lots are labeled with numbers (e.g., 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878,

ATTACHMENT B

CONCEPTUAL PLAN PHASE 1, SALIDA QUALITY FARMS/MEADOWLARK DRIVE SUBDIVISION



0 100 200
1"=100'

PLACES TO AGE
JOB #24004

DRAWN BY BILL HUSSEY
SALIDA, CO

2/11/25

SHEET 1 OF 2



Chaffee County Community Wildfire Protection Plan

2024 Annual Community Report



Wind and fire are shaping the American West's future. Where does Chaffee County stand?

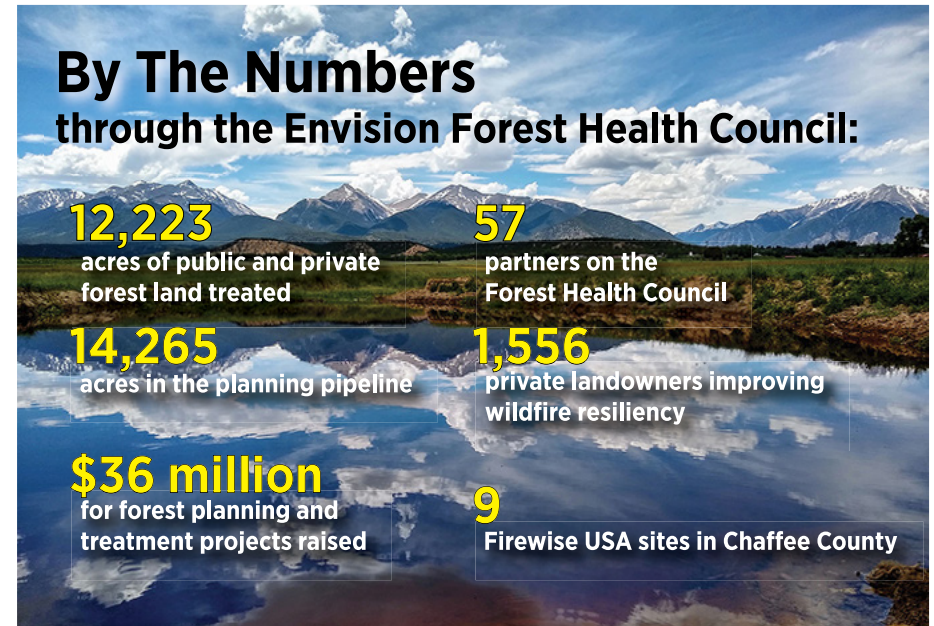
Did the L.A. wildfires cause you to wonder whether such a catastrophe could occur where you live? Prolonged dry conditions paired with vicious wind events are causing destructive fires, from northern California's Paradise fire in 2018, to Maui's deadly firestorm in 2023, to the Marshall fire near Boulder, where more than 1,000 homes burned in the timespan of a workday.

These "megafires" and others like them have started in the surrounding landscape — a downed power line, an errant campfire — on a day when the wind is blowing so hard that the fire cannot be extinguished before it moves into an urban area and burns home after home to the ground.

Such an event could occur in Chaffee County. Like everywhere else in the American West, acres of dead and dying trees, warmer temperatures, drier seasons and bigger wind events pose a big threat to life, property and infrastructure. Local foresters and firefighters say it's just a matter of time before the next wildfire. Whether it ignites during strong winds is a matter of chance.



Chaffee County's Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) works to decrease the risk and get residents ready for the next wildfire. The Forest Health Council is tasked with leading execution of the strategies outlined in the plan. The council is comprised of professionals from every land management agency and organization concerned with forest management and wildfire response in the county. See page 12 for a list of member organizations.



The council plans forest mitigation collaboratively so that each project and program is more effective than it could have been if done independently. Council members agree that one of the main CWPP goals is to strategically thin trees as mapped and prioritized, to help reduce wildfire risk and fight a fire. See the map on page 3. The goal is to treat 30,000 targeted acres by 2030 and at Year 5, more than 12,000 acres have been treated. Fundraising and planning is in place to double that number.

Additional goals in the wildfire plan are designed to help the community prepare. The council has created and supported programs that address homeowner responsibility and action, overall readiness to evacuate, and updated building codes for fire-ready future development.

More than 1,500 residents have taken action to decrease their individual risk, from participating in a Chaffee Chips slash haul away event to signing up for the county's emergency notification system. Residents have even volunteered to patrol public lands for unattended campfires (See page 9).

CWPP: Strategic Wildfire Mitigation

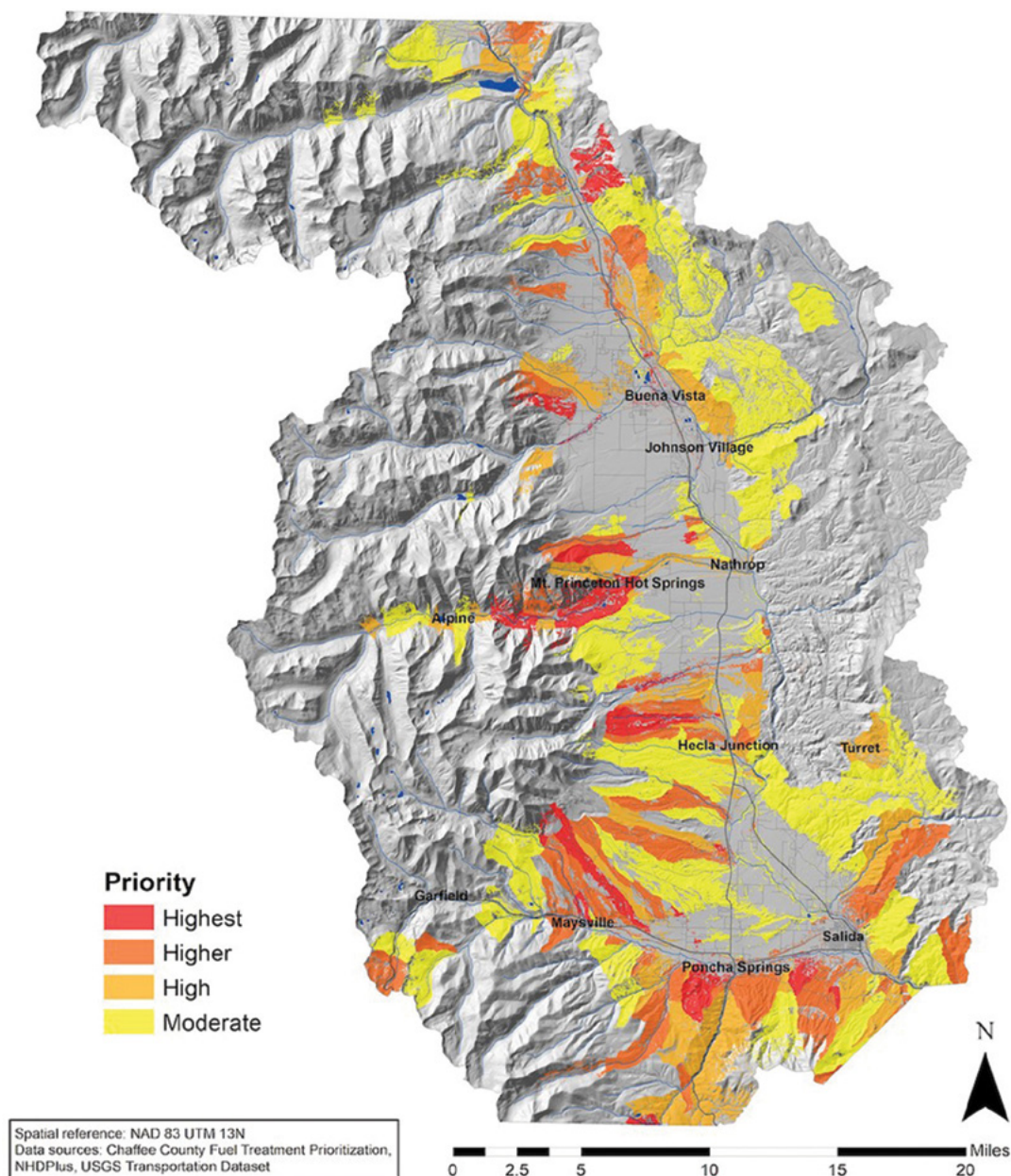
Chaffee County's wildfire plan identifies Treatment Priority Areas where thinning trees can most effectively reduce the risk of wildfire to the community assets that residents deemed the most important. The plan was created by first engaging residents in a survey to prioritize what to protect from a wildfire and post-fire flooding. Those, in order, are firefighter lives, human life, drinking water, infrastructure, homes, wildlife, Arkansas River recreation, scenic views and trail systems.

The Colorado Forest Restoration Institute (CFRI) at Colorado State University quantified wildfire's risk to the priorities listed above using GIS modeling. They mapped locations of power lines, evacuation routes, cell towers, water supply and more, and created maps showing where fire is most likely to happen and how intense it would be if it occurs.

All of these factors combine to produce a map that shows where the community's valued assets are at the highest risk. The cost of doing treatments is factored into the final map (right) to identify where treatments can do the most to lower fire risk for the least amount of money — or where to get the best “bang for the buck” with forest thinning. Treatment options include prescribed fire, cleaning up dead and downed trees by hand thinning with chainsaws, and a patch-clearing method used in the piñon-juniper forest called mastication.

CFRI's modeling demonstrates that treating a small, targeted portion of the total landscape can substantially reduce the risk of widespread damage to the assets. By implementing the elements of the CWPP, and focusing collaboratively on the Treatment Priority Areas, Chaffee County is using a disciplined approach to treat the right acres and make progress toward a fire-ready future.

Fuel Treatment Priority



Foresters are working with hundreds of residents from Granite to Poncha Pass to take steps toward better wildfire resiliency. Roadside thinning projects have been completed on land adjacent to large prescribed burns, which are next to subdivisions where homeowners have mitigated their individual lots.

In Chaffee County, the right acres are being thinned to decrease risk and the treatments are connecting across landscapes, from city to federal to private lands.

“We’re getting the acreage treated but that’s only half the story,” said J.T. Shaver, a supervisory forester with the Colorado State Forest Service. “The connectivity across boundaries is also coming to fruition, which means the results are much more effective.” See the map on page 5.

Forest Health Council partners produce this annual report as a progress update and to be transparent about activities surrounding the 10-year plan, such as forest treatment locations and fundraising.



Taking Action

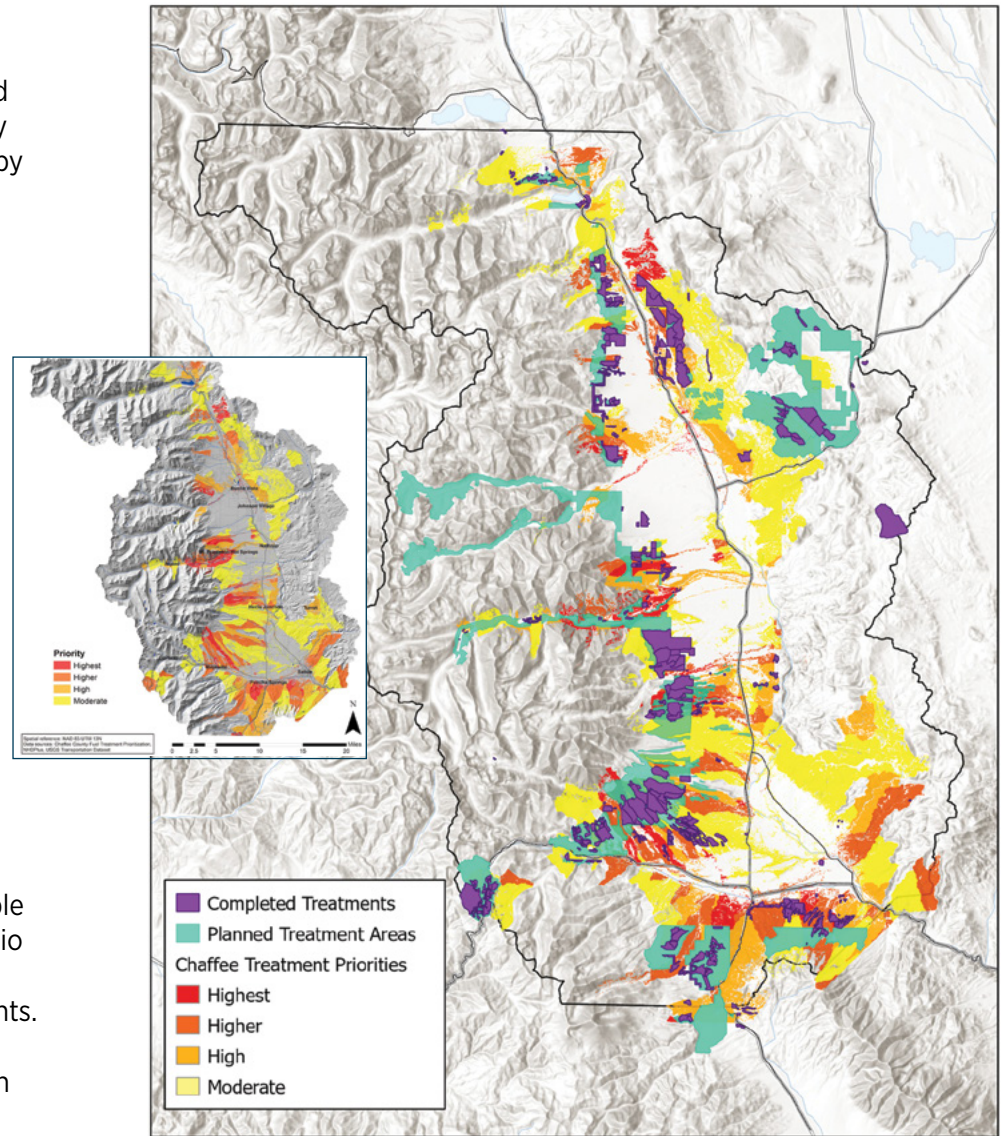
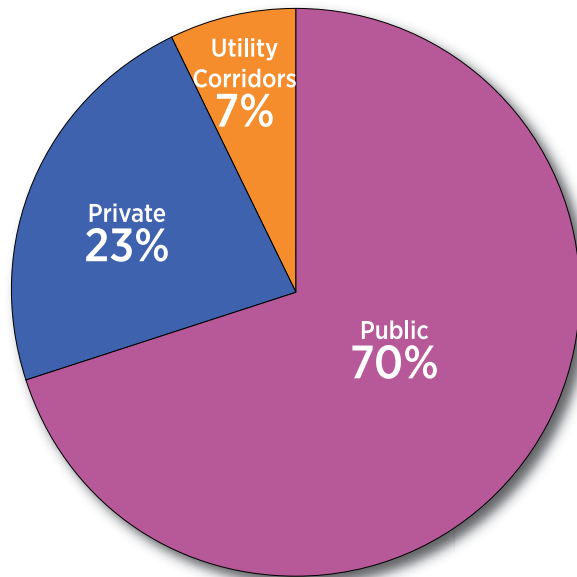
More than 1,600 forested acres of public and private lands were treated in 2024, bringing the total in five years to 12,223. That is 41% of the way toward achieving the CWPP's top goal to treat 30,000 targeted acres by 2030. Treatments span both public (70%) and private property (23%).

The U.S. Forest Service conducted a low-intensity prescribed burn on more than 400 acres south of the Browns Creek Trailhead in the fall of 2024. It marked the second year in a row the agency removed vegetation in the Threemile Creek landscape west of Centerville.

In addition to reducing the accumulation of fire fuels, prescribed burns help maintain healthy and diverse forest ecosystems and wildlife habitat. Burns are planned more than a year in advance and as the event approaches, the weather is closely watched so the burn is set under optimal conditions that minimize smoke dispersal into nearby neighborhoods and towns.

Fire personnel monitor burn units until the fire is completely out, using drones with heat detection as well as ground personnel for days or weeks afterward. The events are announced to the public ahead of time, as the agency makes an effort to inform as many residents as possible in newspapers, radio and social media about the treatments. Prescribed fire is more effective than other methods of removing fire fuels. The Interlaken fire in June 2024 near Chaffee's northern border with Lake County demonstrates this effectiveness. See Page 6 for the story.

Treatments by Ownership



Chaffee County's Treatment Priority Areas (red, orange and yellow) are based on computer modeling that identifies the right areas to treat to reduce fire's potential effects on critical community infrastructure and improve firefighter safety. 12K+ acres have been thinned (purple) since 2020, and 14K additional acres are planned (teal) to achieve the 10-year goal of treating 30K targeted acres by 2030.

Fuel Treatments Work

Interlaken fire lessons learned: Vegetation management prevents catastrophic wildfires

Two different types of forest treatments completed in the years before the Interlaken Fire likely helped prevent large-scale destruction:

- Defensible space saved historic structures on the south side of Twin Lakes, since the blaze started “a stone’s throw” from the buildings, according to Leadville District Ranger Pat Mercer.
- An area treated with a prescribed burn in 2018 “checked up” the wildfire, reducing its intensity and helping firefighters put it out, according to Mountain Zone Fire Management Officer Chris Naccarato.

The Interlaken fire started on June 11, 2024, on National Forest land on the south side of Twin Lakes, threatening historic structures along the lakeshore, homes in nearby Cache Creek, drinking water stored in the reservoir, scenic views, wildlife and access to recreation such as the Colorado Trail. Fire danger conditions were rated moderate — not high or extreme — during a time of no fire restrictions.

An abandoned campfire along the Interlaken Trail started the blaze. A western wind pushed the fire into a forested hillside, where it consumed heavy dead and downed timber for days and became an active, hot fire with flames shooting 60 feet into the air. But the fire’s intensity reduced significantly when it reached the site of the 2018 Flume Creek Prescribed Burn. Flames dropped to a few feet high as the fire slowed down and “ran” out of “fuel” to feed it. That allowed firefighters to move in and safely set a fire control line and eventually put it out.

The Forest Service and partners had been in the planning stages of treating the landscape around Twin Lakes that burned. The fire burned 700 acres over two weeks before it was extinguished — a contribution to the planned fuels reduction work — but at a cost of \$5 million to suppress.

The abandoned campfire had been made in a shallow ring using a single layer of stones on uncleared ground. The fire likely burned underground through organic matter such as pine needles, resurfacing outside the ring

on the forest floor. Wind set the emerged fire ablaze, moving it toward the east where the Interlaken site’s historic structures sat about 60 feet away. The prior removal of vegetation about 15 years ago from around the historic buildings likely saved them.

When a wildfire starts in a landscape with heavy dead and downed timber, fire behavior can become very intense and hard to predict. In many areas of Chaffee County, this is caused by insect infestations that killed most of the trees.

Naccarato said that more treatments like prescribed burns are needed: “The Interlaken fire is living proof that fuels treatments really do work, and they’re worth it.”

See page 9 to learn what is being done to manage human-caused wildfire risk such as errant campfires.

The 3 Things That Drive Wildfires – Watch Now!



“We can’t control the topography, and we can’t control the weather. But the one thing we can control is the fuels.”

– USFS Planner Kat Gray describes in this video how a 6-year-old prescribed burn became a “game changer” as firefighters tried to suppress the 2024 Interlaken wildfire near Twin Lakes.

Treating Private Lands

Fully one-third or 10,000 acres of Chaffee County's Treatment Priority Areas are privately owned. Forest Health Council partners collaborate with these landowners to increase the pace of private property treatments. In the past five years, 3,200 acres of private property have been treated.

The Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) added staff positions in the Salida Field Office to improve the pace of multi-property projects through the Chaffee Treats Forest Health & Wildfire Mitigation Program — a partnership dedicated to helping private landowners reduce wildfire risk and restore forest health on a landscape-scale basis.

Offered to landowners located in the CWPP Treatment Priority Areas, [Chaffee Treats](#) is the place for private landowners to go to connect with foresters and become part of the wildfire solution. The program includes large, multi-landowner projects as well as individual projects on small parcels using Colorado Firecamp sawyer trainees and the COSWAP-funded youth corp crews.

A ramp-up of the program since 2020 culminated in multiple projects occurring at the same time across the county. Chaffee Treats partners also include the National Forest Foundation and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, which has granted \$5.7 million to Chaffee County for these targeted private property treatments.

Several hundred landowners have now participated, contributing to 3,200 acres of private property treatments since 2020. Participating landowners in multiple neighborhoods, from north to south: Riverside, Game Trail, Younglife Camp, Trail West, Three Elk, Lost Creek Ranch, St. Elmo, Mesa Antero, Mesa Antero Estates, City of Salida, Hutchinson Ranch and nearby owners on the Little Ark River, The Canyons, Piñon Ridge Estates, Poncha Pass, Weldon Creek, North Fork above Maysville, Shavano Creek and Little Cochetopa west of Poncha Springs.

Chaffee Chips & Firewise USA

The Forest Health Council created the Chaffee Chips slash removal program to help landowners begin to create defensible space. A total 861 landowners have spent nearly 10,000 hours making slash piles with Chaffee Chips. Managed by Chaffee County Fire Protection District,



Gov. Jared Polis visited Chaffee County in 2024 to celebrate mitigation work funded by the Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program (COSWAP).

Colorado State Forest Service and Envision, the program is funded by Chaffee Common Ground with matching contributions from the program partners. To see where slash removal events are taking place in 2025, visit the [Chaffee Chips webpage](#).

The number of Firewise USA communities in the county has climbed from three to nine since 2020, surpassing the CWPP's goal to double the number of designations in 10 years. The program provides resources to help homeowners learn how to adapt to living with wildfire and encourages neighbors to work together to take action now to prevent losses.

Congratulations to landowners in the newest Firewise USA site at the Base of Mount Princeton, which includes residents from Pine Grove Estates, Lost Creek Ranch, Whispering Pines and The Journey's End. And a big thank you to members of the Firewise committees in these neighborhoods and towns: Alpine, Chateau Chapparal, Game Trail, Maysville, Mesa Antero, Mount Harvard Estates, Piñon Ridge Estates, and St. Elmo.



Utilities

Electric service providers continue to maintain and operate their systems to minimize the risk of a utility asset being the ignition source of a wildfire.

Sangre de Cristo Electric Association managed vegetation in Chaffee County along 4 miles of power lines, spending \$250,000 in 2024. Integrity Tree Service continues to be the contractor doing this work for the co-op in northern portions of the county.

SDCEA also adjusted system settings to be more sensitive during times of high fire danger. This causes outages, since the power is turned off for safety until the line can be inspected and power restored.

In 2024, Xcel Energy's wildfire mitigation crews inspected and replaced 310 wood distribution poles and repaired 77 in Chaffee County. This included 26 pole replacements in the mountains over Monarch Divide – serving the ski area and town of White Pine – that required multi-year federal permitting and construction in challenging terrain and conditions.

Xcel Energy also submitted its 2025-2027 Wildfire Mitigation Plan to the Colorado Public Utilities Commission, with plans to make further strategic investments and improvements to the system in the coming years.

Community Preparation

In addition to targeted forest treatments, the wildfire plan outlines goals related to community preparation. It is important that residents and homeowners remain personally prepared for a wildfire. The best protection is achieved by creating defensible space around your home and having a family evacuation plan in place. Make sure you will get timely emergency notifications by signing up for [Everbridge](#) to receive alerts through email, telephone and text messaging.

County Land Use and Building Codes Updated

Development projects in the unincorporated county came under new wildfire safety standards in 2024 that are based on the International Wildland Urban Interface Code and the defensible space plans as laid out by the Colorado State Forest Service. Part of the new Chaffee County Land Use Code includes driveway clearance and slope standards, turnaround access, ignition-resistant material requirements, and a requirement to remove vegetation around new structures — also known as defensible space. Pursuant to the County's building codes, the amount of treated area required depends on the level of fire danger at the property. For more details about new county codes, visit the county website or contact Miles Cottom at mcottom@chaffeecounty.org.

Defensible space is the area around a home or structure that has been modified to reduce fire hazards by creating space between potential fuel sources. It can increase the likelihood a home survives in a fire, and may also allow firefighters to safely attempt to protect the property, according to the Colorado State Forest Service. CSFS provides a [guide](#) as well as a [video](#) describing what property owners can do to lessen risk of wildfire by managing vegetation.

Managing Human-Caused Fire Risk

The majority of wildfires are caused by human activity — unattended campfires, burning lawn debris, and equipment malfunctions like downed power lines or sparks from dragged towing chains.

High concern among residents about errant and illegal campfires was highlighted in the Chaffee Wildfire Survey, administered by Envision in 2019 to help inform the wildfire plan. The 2024 Interlaken fire, sparked by an abandoned campfire, raised concerns even higher.



Chaffee Rec Adopters monitor campsites for errant and illegal campfires, and they manage campfire rings at designated sites for better safety.

The Chaffee Recreation Rangers program, in its fourth season, adds forest patrollers who encourage good visitor behavior through personalized outdoor education. The patrollers also check for smoldering and illegal campfires. In 2024, they had contact with more than 3,000 visitors and doused several abandoned campfires.

The [Chaffee Rec Adopters](#) program has empowered more than 650 volunteers to monitor camping areas. The work involves cleaning out, downsizing and removing campfire rings to promote safer fires, as well as checking for and dousing abandoned campfires. Rangers and Adopters also install metal campfire rings in some designated dispersed camping areas, which ensures safer campfires.

Signage has been added in dozens of locations around Chaffee County to communicate fire danger levels and fire restrictions. For example, Smokey Bear “fire danger” dial signs are now visible on top of Trout Creek Pass at the entrance to Chaffee County, and Chaffee Fire placed new dial signs at its stations throughout the county.



Funding A Fire Ready Future

Funding from diverse partners has been raised for projects that effectively address wildfire risk. And the local Common Ground tax dollars have been leveraged, as promised. About \$3 million was raised in 2024, bringing the total amount of funding to \$36 million from two dozen different sources to implement the CWPP. A major federal investor is the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), which contributed \$5.7 million from its Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) in 2021. Spending by the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management combine with the RCPP grant to deliver nearly half of the total investments.

Additional investors include the RESTORE Colorado grant program, which supports restoration projects that improve wildlife habitat, and the Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program (COSWAP), which has funded both treatment projects and workforce development in Chaffee and Lake counties since the program was created by the Colorado legislature in 2020.

Chaffee County also successfully participates in CSFS's many grant programs, contributing to the total of nearly \$5 million raised in state-level support. Success winning funding for wildfire resiliency stems from the local commitment to forest health approved by county voters in 2018. The 0.25% sales tax generates revenues for Chaffee Common Ground, which has invested \$5 million in forest health and fire resilience since 2019.

Regional & Statewide Partners

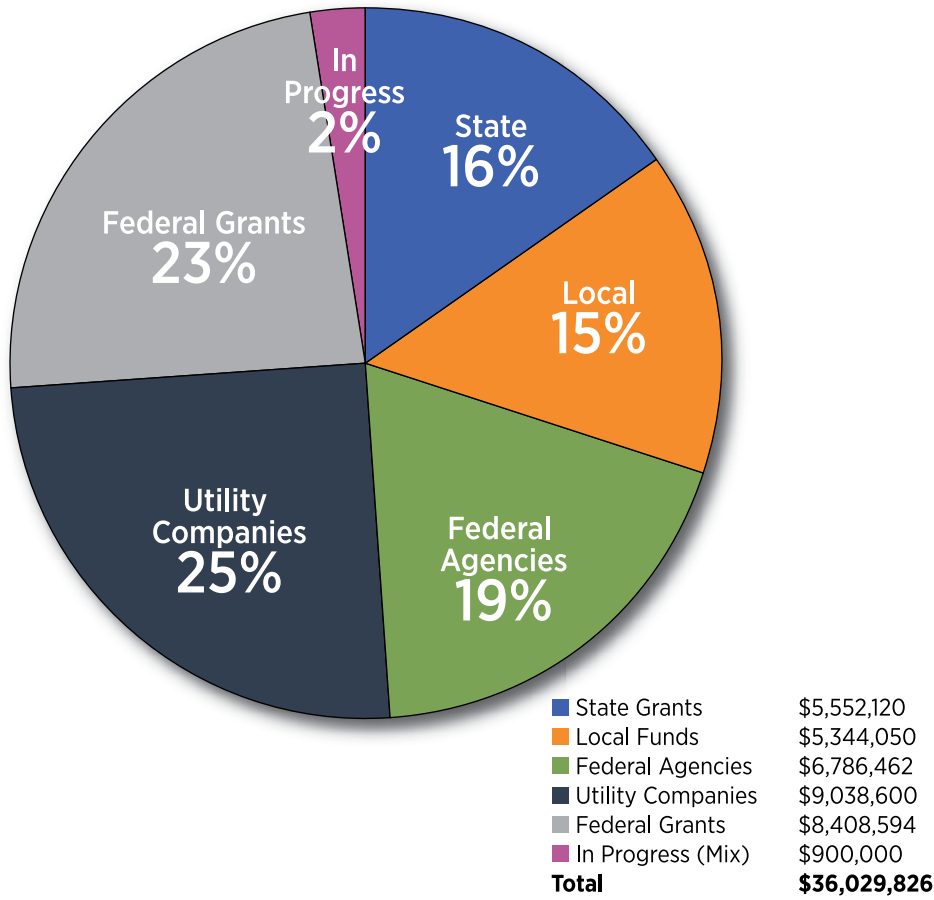
Envision hosted more than 100 Colorado leaders in Salida and Buena Vista in September 2024 for the Connecting Colorado event. Members of the Forest Health Council and other local partners shared Chaffee County's successful strategies, including how to identify treatment priority areas, how to achieve connectivity across treated landscapes for more effectiveness, and how to create a slate of community actions to further help in wildfire preparedness. The two-day event included presentations, site visits and discussions about streamlining funding across the state. The event was sponsored by Great Outdoors Colorado, Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative, Colorado Department of Natural Resources, Colorado Parks and Wildlife and the National Forest Foundation.



The Arkansas River Watershed Collaborative (ARWC) focuses on watershed health and post-fire recovery, launching the Twin Lakes Wildfire Ready Action Plan in 2024 to identify threats in post-fire scenarios such as the 2024 Interlaken fire on the border with Lake County (pictured). ARWC also manages a chipping program and fuel mitigation projects in Lake County.



Chaffee County CWPP Funding Sources



The National Forest Foundation is a major partner in Chaffee County, attaining and managing funds from both federal and state sources under the Upper Ark Forest Fund to support both wildfire and recreation projects. As a community partner, NFF helps address funding complexity and gaps in federal agency capacity, managing more than \$10 million and also managing contracts with private companies to complete forest treatments on federal lands in Chaffee and Lake counties.

The Forest Health Council is comprised of more than 50 leaders working on many fronts to implement the wildfire plan and connect that work regionally, for example in Lake County. The Leadville community updated its wildfire plan in 2022, mirroring Chaffee County’s methods, by incorporating resident priorities and developing a map that shows where to treat lands for the highest cost efficiency and overall benefit.

Both counties together are a Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative (RMRI) priority landscape. Co-convened by the National Wild Turkey Federation and the U.S. Forest Service, RMRI’s mission is to improve the resilience of forests, wildlife habitats, communities, recreation opportunities and water resources across all lands in the Rocky Mountains.



The Colorado State Forest Service burns piles in Little Cochetopa Creek, as part of a fuel break designed to protect Poncha Springs and surrounds.

2024 Forest Health Council Members

- Arkansas River Watershed Collaborative - Jonathan Paklaian
- Bird Conservancy of the Rockies - Kyle Deschenes
- Bureau of Land Management Rocky Mountain District - Doug Mayes, Matt Norden
- Chaffee Board of County Commissioners - Gina Lucrezi, PT Wood
- Chaffee County Fire Protection District - Kira Jones, Jeff Zechman
- Chaffee County Office of Emergency Management - Rich Atkins
- Chaffee County Administrative Staff - Don Reimer, Miles Cottom
- Chaffee County Weed Department - Kayla Malone
- Colorado Firecamp - Kent Maxwell
- Colorado Forest Restoration Institute at Colorado State University - Brett Wolk, Allison Rhea, Jarod Dunn, Jackie Edinger, Stephanie Mueller
- Colorado Congresswoman Brittany Pettersen (CO-7) - Justin Kurth
- Colorado Mountain College - Heidi Slaymaker
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife - Sean Sheppard
- Colorado Springs Utilities - Mark Shea
- Colorado State Forest Service - Damon Lange, JT Shaver, Leeza Vasko, Kellie Solis
- Colorado Water Conservation Board - Chris Sturm
- Envision Chaffee County - Cindy Williams, Kim Marquis, Kim Smoyer
- Lake County Conservation District - Harmony Jump
- National Forest Foundation - Sam Pankratz
- Salida Fire Department - Aaron Jonke
- Sangre de Cristo Electric Association - Ryan Doke, Chris McGinnis
- South Arkansas Fire Protection District - Aaron Jonke
- Upper Arkansas Water Conservation District - Greg Felt
- Upper Arkansas Watershed Partnership/ Central Colorado Conservancy - Nathan Ward
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service - Joni Burr
- US Forest Service Salida Ranger District - Perry Edwards
- US Forest Service Leadville Ranger District - Patrick Mercer
- US Forest Service Mountain Zone Fire - Chris Naccarato
- US Senator John Hickenlooper's Office - Patrick Ortiz
- US Senator Michael Bennet's Office - Erin Minks
- Xcel Energy - Ashley Valdez, Zoe DeVito



info@envisionchaffeecounty.org

<https://envisionchaffeecounty.org>



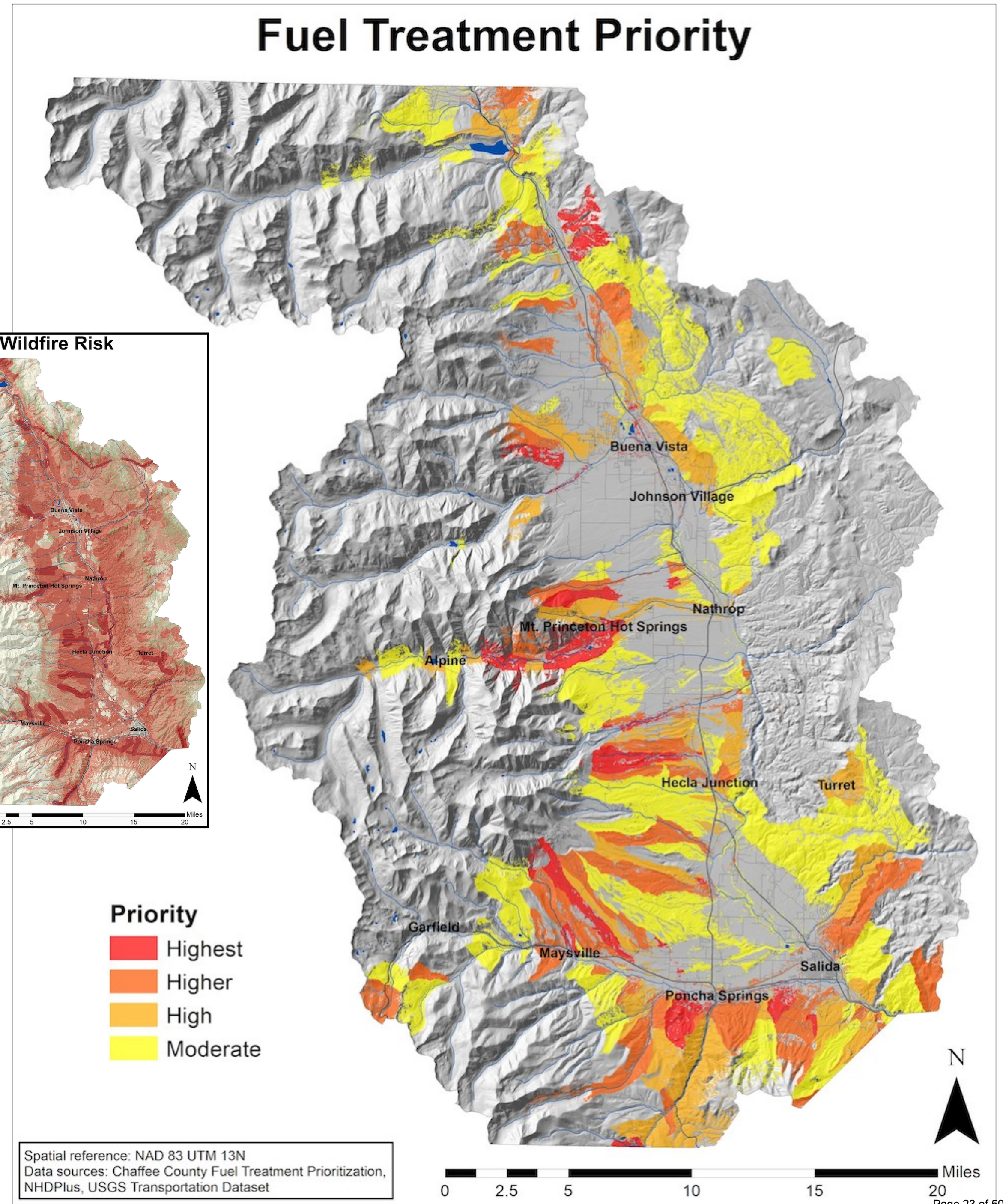
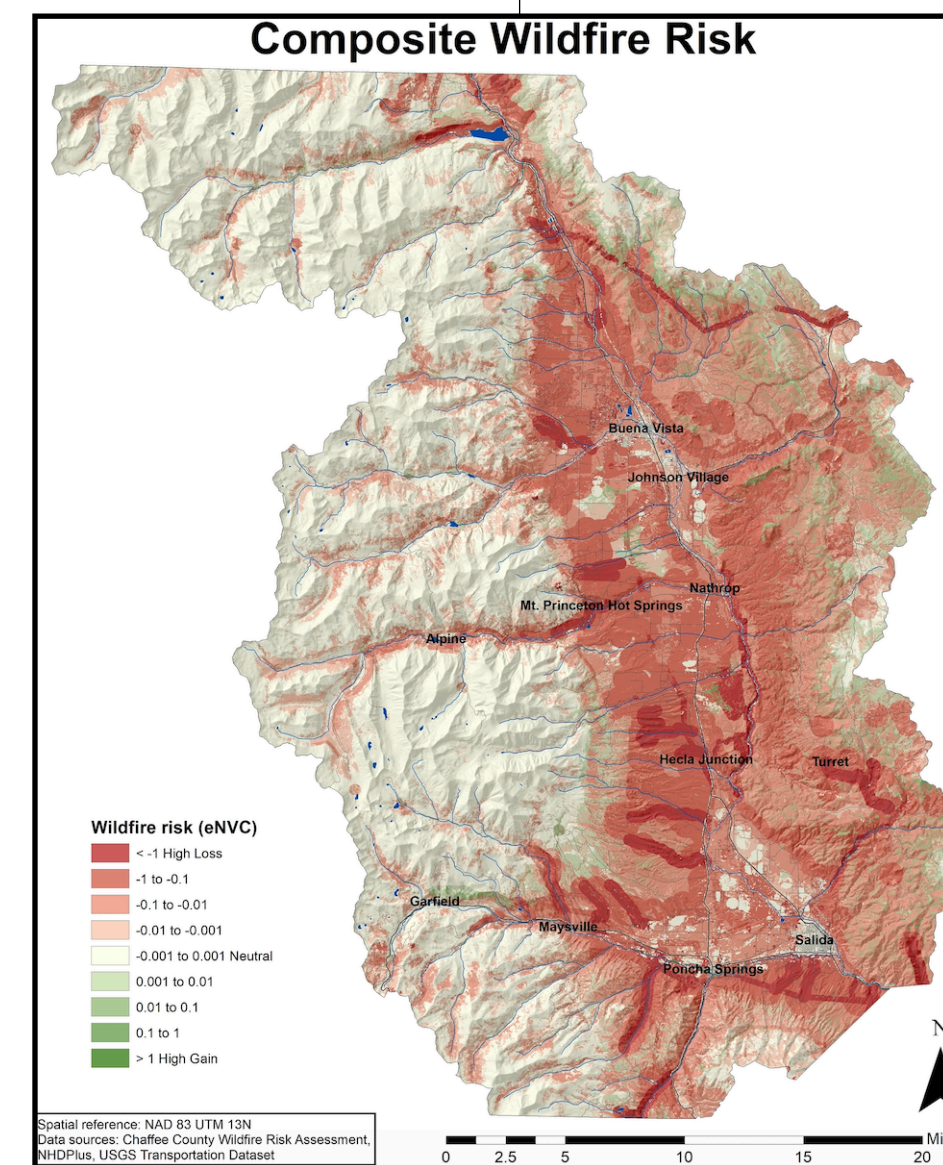
Chaffee County Community Wildfire Protection Plan

2024 Annual Community Report



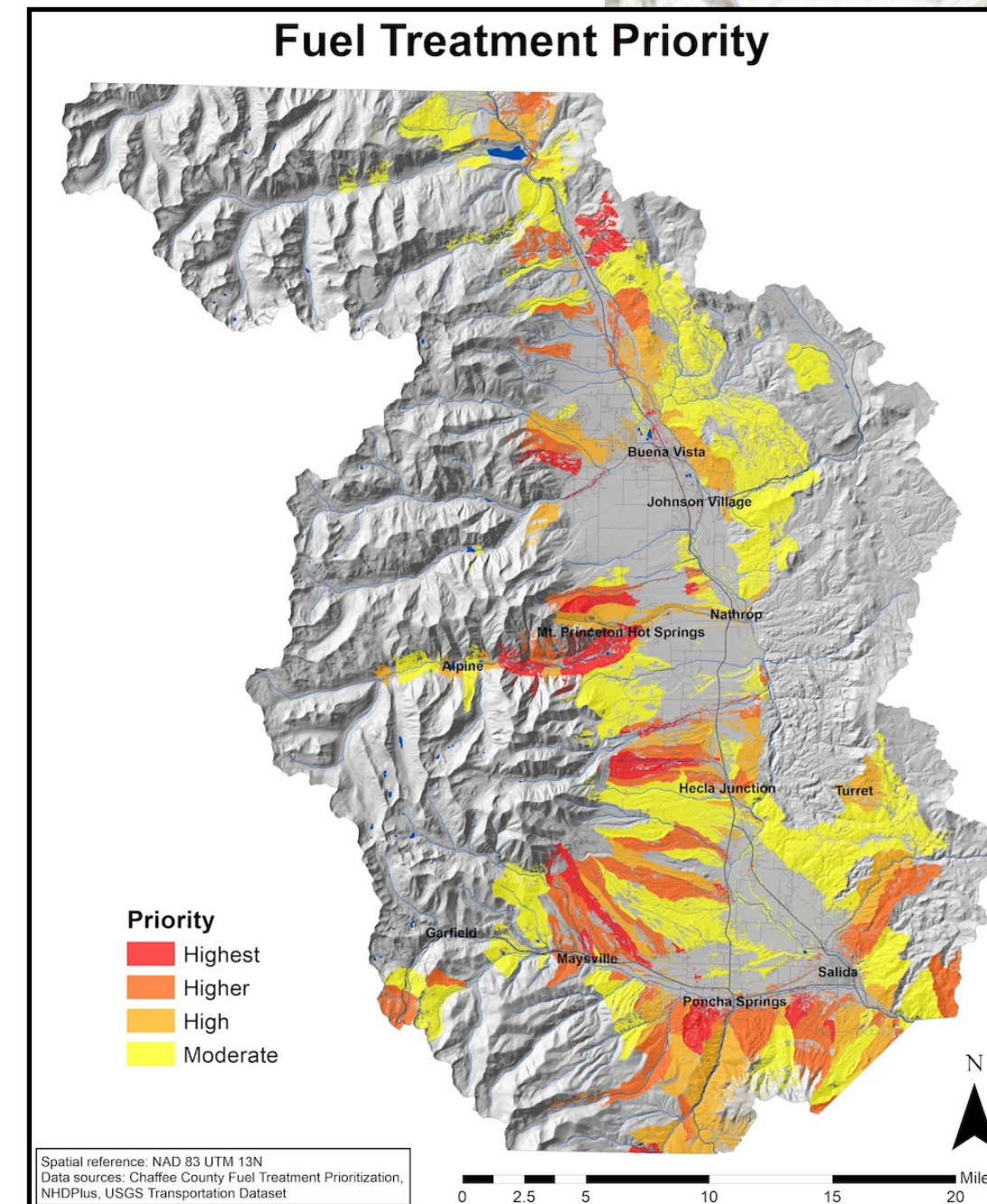
A fire-ready future

- Priorities: firefighter lives, human life, drinking water, infrastructure, homes, wildlife, recreation
- Valued assets at highest risk (inset)
- “Bang for the Buck” = highest cost efficiency & community benefit
- Treat a targeted portion of the landscape 30K acres by 2030
- A disciplined approach to treat the right acres and make progress toward a fire-ready future.



Strategic Treatments

- 12,223 acres treated (purple)
- + 14,265 acres in pipeline (teal)
- 50+ partners on the Forest Health Council
- 1,556 homeowners taking action
- 9 Firewise USA sites



USFS Rx Burns

- Fuel treatments work - Interlaken Fire June 2024
- Low-intensity burning is more effective than tree thinning along
- 3,500 acres in 2023-2024 @ Shavano Front & Threemile Creek



Private Lands

- High demand among landowners for Chaffee Chips & Chaffee Treats
- 3,200 acres treated since 2020
- Ramp-up for foresters, plans, funding and equipment
- Project examples Poncha Pass, Riverside, Rodeo Rd ...





Community Preparation



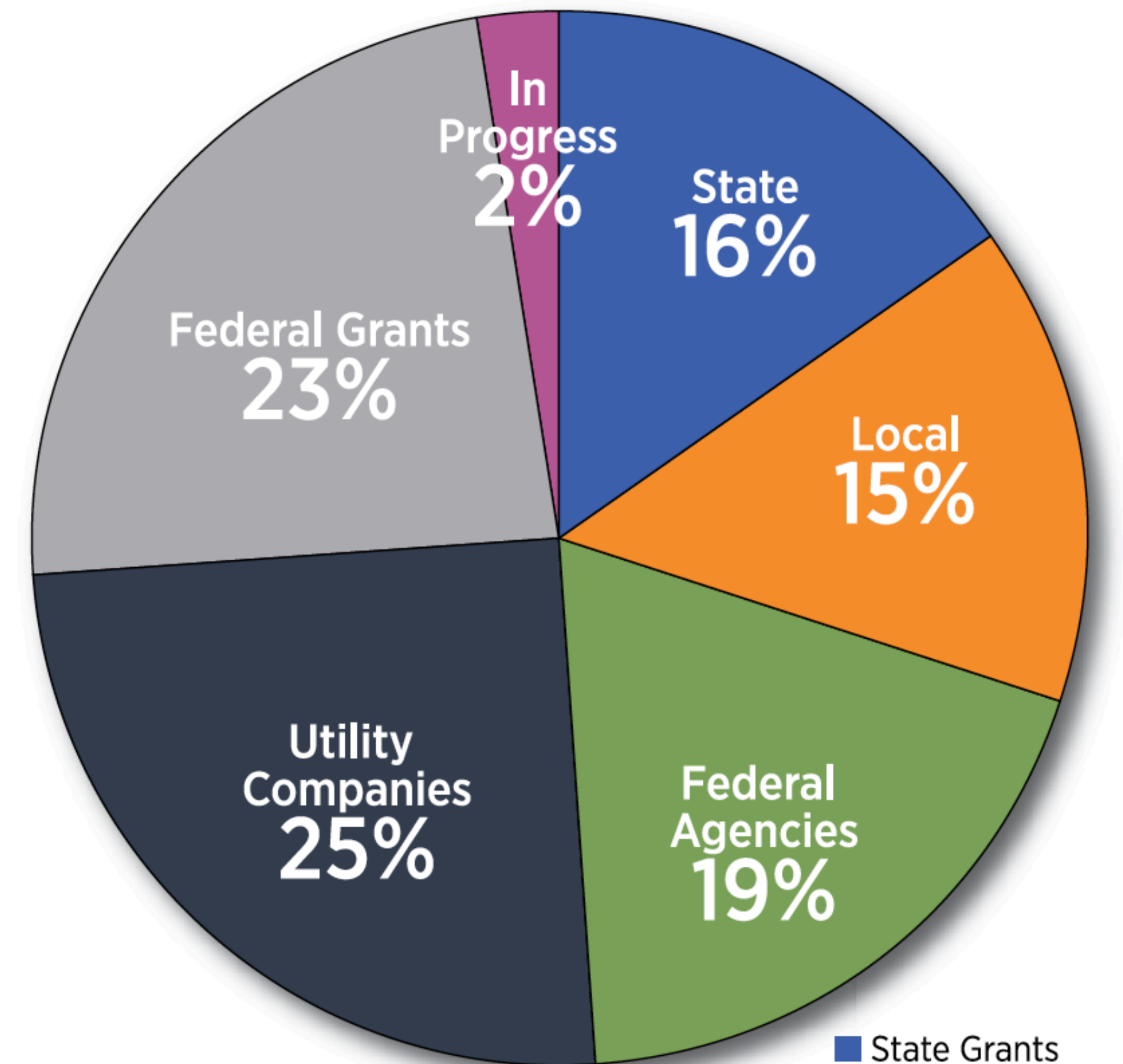
- Evacuation, notifications
- Land Use Code updates
- Managing human-caused risk



Funding a fire ready future

- \$36M raised since 2020 among multiple sources, Upper Ark Forest Fund
- Impacts of federal funding changes
- \$5M Chaffee Common Ground
- Regional partners: RMRI & Lake County

Chaffee County CWPP Funding Sources



State Grants	\$5,552,120
Local Funds	\$5,344,050
Federal Agencies	\$6,786,462
Utility Companies	\$9,038,600
Federal Grants	\$8,408,594
In Progress (Mix)	\$900,000
Total	\$36,029,826

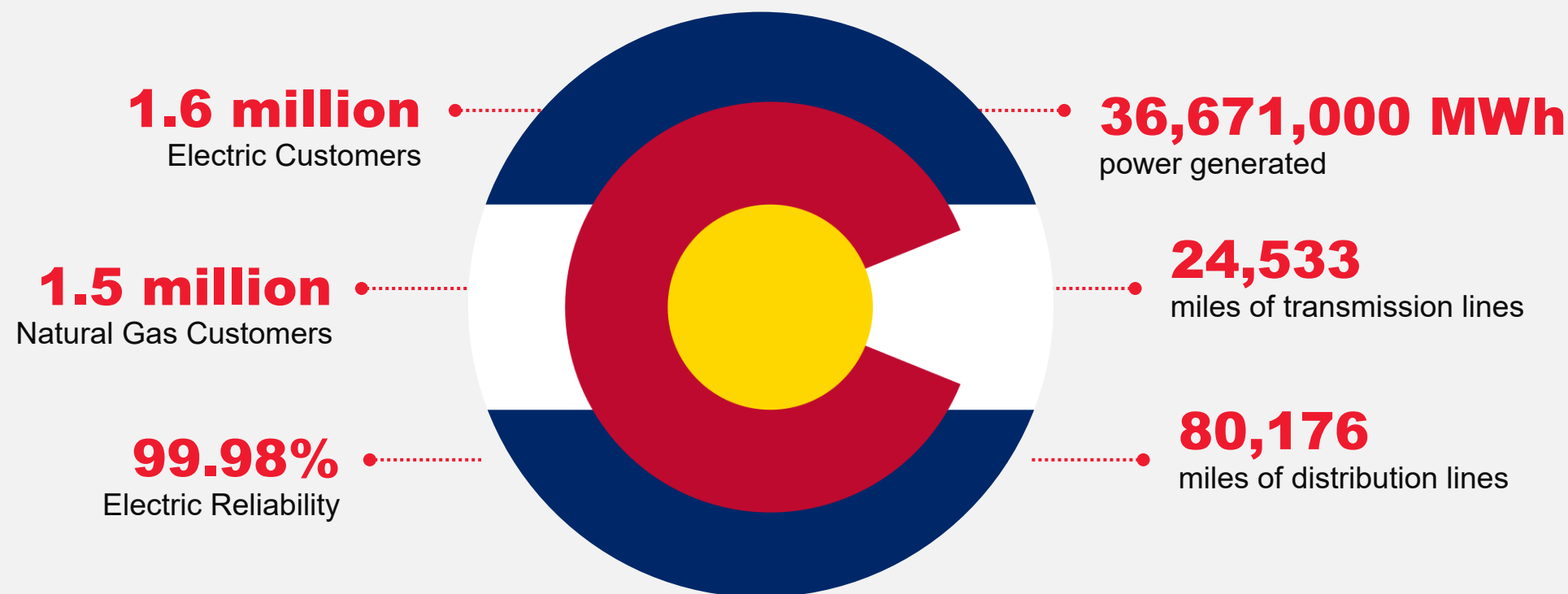
Q&A / Extra Slides



WILDFIRE MITIGATION EFFORTS IN COLORADO

April 2025

Delivering safe, reliable, affordable, and clean energy to Coloradoans



Wildfire Mitigation: Context

Extreme weather and drier conditions mean that **wildfires are a near year-round growing threat in regions across the country**, even in areas that haven't traditionally been wildfire prone.

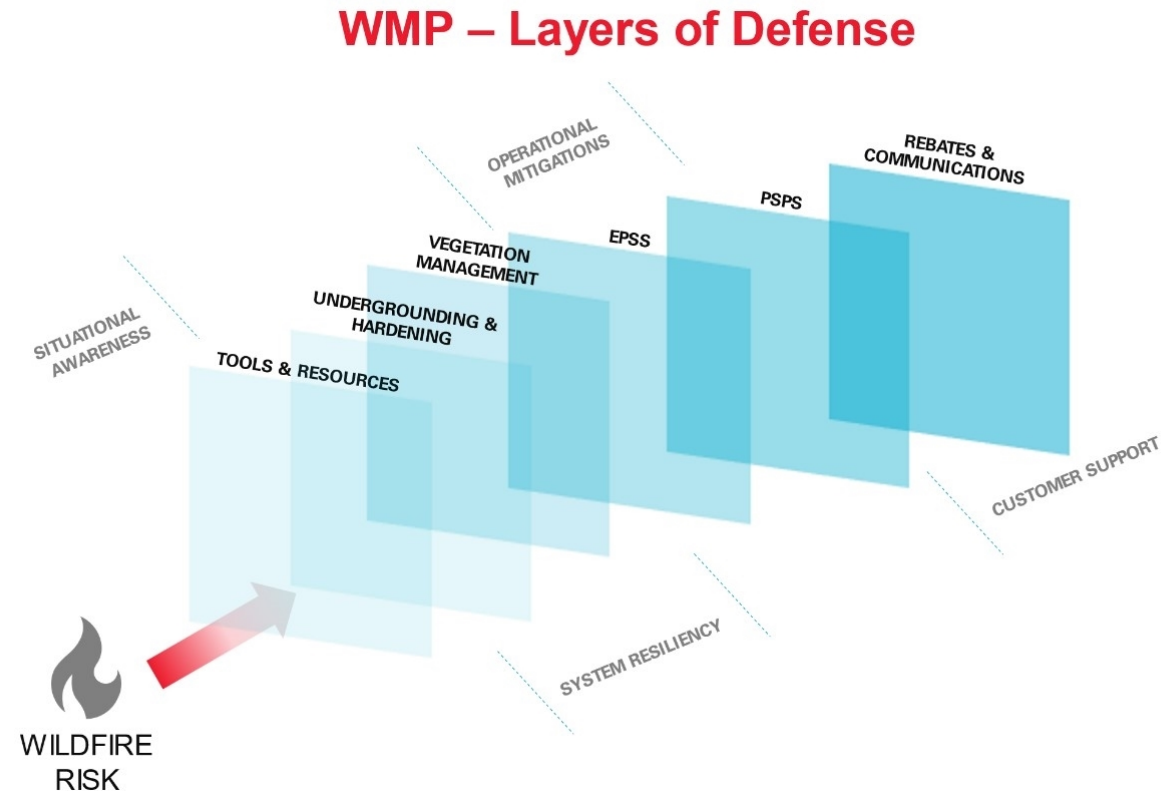
Xcel Energy is committed to doing our part and will continue to make strategic investments to help protect our customers, communities, and way of life.

Our goal is to ensure that no catastrophic wildfire is started by Xcel Energy assets—and our wildfire mitigation efforts are intended to support that goal.



Wildfire Mitigation: Layers of Defense

- **Situational Awareness**
 - Technologies
- **System Resiliency**
 - Hardening, undergrounding
 - Vegetation management
- **Operational Mitigations**
 - EPSS / PSPS
- **Customer Support**
 - Outreach & Communications
 - Rebates

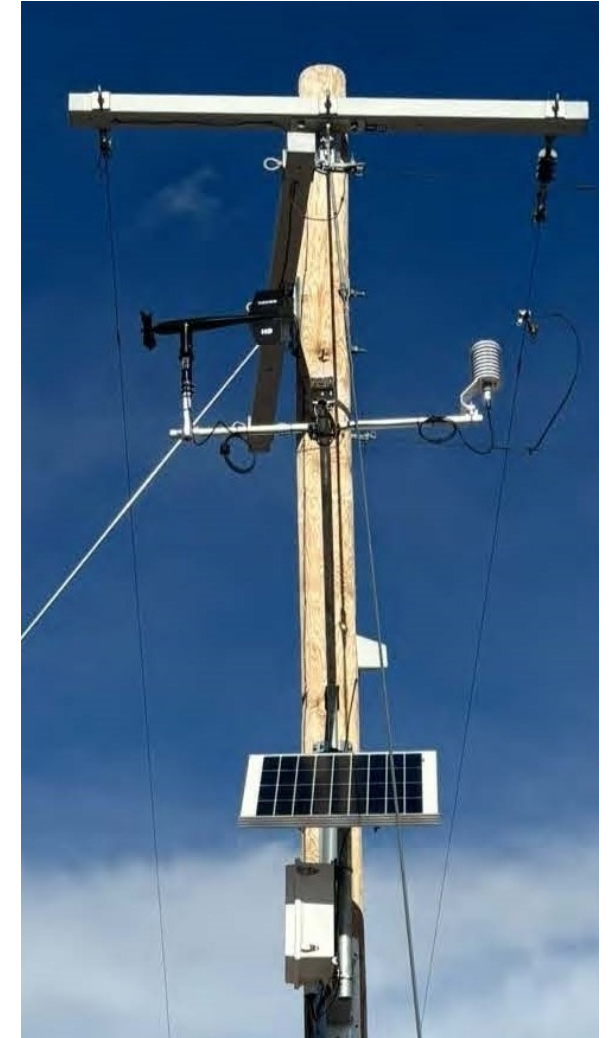


ONGOING WILDFIRE MITIGATION WORK

Ongoing Wildfire Mitigation Work

Situational Awareness: Weather Stations, AI Cameras

- Two Pano AI cameras overlook valley
 - Alerts sent directly to Emergency Managers
- NWS weather station located near distribution line in valley
 - Data accessible 24/7
- 274 Xcel Energy stations planned in Colorado
 - 3-5 Xcel stations planned near Chaffee County assets
 - Measures temperature, humidity, fuel moisture, wind/gust speed
 - Direct 24/7 communications with company meteorologists



Ongoing Wildfire Mitigation Work

System Resiliency: Pole maintenance, replacement in Chaffee County during 2023, 2024

- Conducted significant pole assessments in 2023, which led to more than 750 work orders
 - Replaced 310 poles
 - Including 26 poles set by helicopter over Monarch Divide
 - Repaired issues on 77 poles
 - Remaining work to be completed in 2025
- Will conduct overhead pole assessments (OPA) on more than 3,000 poles in Salida/Poncha Springs area during 2025
 - Approx. 100 pole replacements planned
 - 7 poles requiring helicopter to set are planned



Ongoing Wildfire Mitigation Work

System Resiliency: 2025 Planned Conductor Replacement Starting in 2025

Rebuild 9.5 miles of conductor in Salida, Smeltertown and Poncha Springs in 2025, 2026

- Replace bare copper conductor with ACSR (steel-core multi-strand aluminum)
 - Improved performance
 - Greater strength
 - Upgrade 2,564 system protective devices
- Proactive outreach for planned customer outages



Ongoing Wildfire Mitigation Work

System Resiliency: 2025 Planned Component Upgrades

In addition to conductor replacement, more than 2,500 components will be added to improve system reliability and resiliency

- 701 Expulsion Limiting Fuses (ELF)
- 663 Cutouts
- 585 Lightning Arresters
- 525 Wildlife Guards
- 90 Fault Indicators



Ongoing Wildfire Mitigation Work

System Resiliency: Vegetation Management

- Helps reduce power outages, allows crews to work safely on power lines
- Conducted on a three- to five-year maintenance schedule
- Enhanced work in Wildfire Risk Zones includes clearing trees, shrubs, dense grasses and other vegetation around structures, corridors and equipment
- Chaffee County VM work last completed in 2023 and 2024



Operational Mitigations: EPSS and PSPS

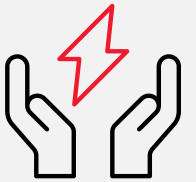
Both EPSS and PSPS are only used when the temperature, wind speed, relative humidity, and available fuel sources indicate a high risk for wildfires.

Enhanced Powerline Safety Settings (EPSS)



- EPSS allows for power lines to remain in-service during periods of elevated wildfire risk with protection settings enabled—unless an object actively causes a fault on the line.

Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS)



- In a PSPS event, power is proactively shut off for safety. This is not a step we take lightly.
- PSPS is a mitigation tool used when risk cannot be adequately reduced by EPSS and other methods.

Xcel Energy is continually investing in and building out our systems to limit the size, scale, and duration of potential power disruptions.

Customer Support

Outreach & Communications, rebates

- Enhanced PSPS communications
- O&C in advance of vegetation management
- O&C in advance of system upgrades, major maintenance
- Planned outage notification calls
- Rebates for backup generation, batteries proposed

48-72 Hours in Advance of PSPS

- Notification to OEMs, local and state officials, the Commission, Critical Customers, and Qualifying Medical Customers of Potential PSPS

24-48 Hours in Advance of PSPS

- Notification to OEMs, local and state officials, the Commission, and potentially affected customers (including Critical Customers and Qualifying Medical Customers) of PSPS

1-4 Hours in Advance of PSPS

- Notification to OEMs, local and state officials, the Commission, and potentially affected customers (including Critical Customers and Qualifying Medical Customers) of Imminent PSPS

Every 24 Hours during PSPS

- Restoration Updates to OEMs, local and state officials, the Commission, and affected customers (including Critical Customers and Qualifying Medical Customers)

Restoration Notification

- Confirmation of Restoration to OEMs, local and state officials, the Commission, and affected customers (including Critical Customers and Qualifying Medical Customers)

2025 – 2027 WILDFIRE MITIGATION PLAN





UPPER ARKANSAS WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP

April 7, 2025

Salida City Council
448 East 1st Street, Suite 112
Salida, CO 81201

RE: Presentation to Salida City Council Work Session on April 14, 2025

Dear Salida City Council,

The South Arkansas River Restoration Project (SARRP) - 1.2 Mile Reach project is being led by the Upper Arkansas Watershed Partnership (UAWP). The UAWP includes five founding organizations and works with a great variety of stakeholders throughout the Upper Arkansas River Watershed. The founding organizations include the Central Colorado Conservancy (CCC), Upper Arkansas Conservation District (UACD), Collegiate Peaks Chapter of Trout Unlimited (CPCTU), Arkansas River Watershed Collaborative (ARWC) and the Greater Arkansas River Nature Association (GARNA). www.uawp.org

The SARRP - 1.2 Mile Reach includes the South Arkansas River from County Road 107 downstream to the confluence with the Arkansas River. The UAWP identified this stretch of river as a site of concern and opportunity after conducting a Stream Health Assessment project on four major tributaries of the Arkansas River in Chaffee County. We also contracted an in-depth study of this reach in 2020.

The SARRP - 1.2 Mile Reach focuses on enhancing the ecological function of the river, including reconnecting the river to the floodplain (where appropriate), recharging wetlands, planting native species, improving fish habitat, and maintaining the wildlife corridor. In addition the project includes an environmental education trail and enhanced spaces for ecological immersion and learning.

Within the UAWP, the project is being led by the CPCTU and CCC. We have received a Water Plan Grant from the Colorado Water Conservation Board and are actively in the process of creating an initial 60% design for this reach. This work is being conducted by the local firm, WaterVation, led by Lucas Babbitt. Within the next two weeks we will have 30% design and will start our next round of stakeholder outreach with all landowners along this section of river.

This project includes approximately a quarter mile of river owned by the City of Salida, located in the Vandaveer Ranch Planned Development District. The project will help the City of Salida protect the valuable riparian corridor, as well as create educational opportunities and experiences for the public.

We plan to fund the project with a combination of federal and state grants. The timeline of the project is in the next three to five years.

Our presentation will focus primarily on the City of Salida section of the project. After the work session, if you have additional questions, please reach out to Nathan Ward, UAWP Coordinator at the addresses below. Thank you for your time and support.

Upper Arkansas Watershed Partnership
128 East First Street, Suite 2. Salida, Colorado 81201
719-679-8098 (Coordinator) info@uawp.org

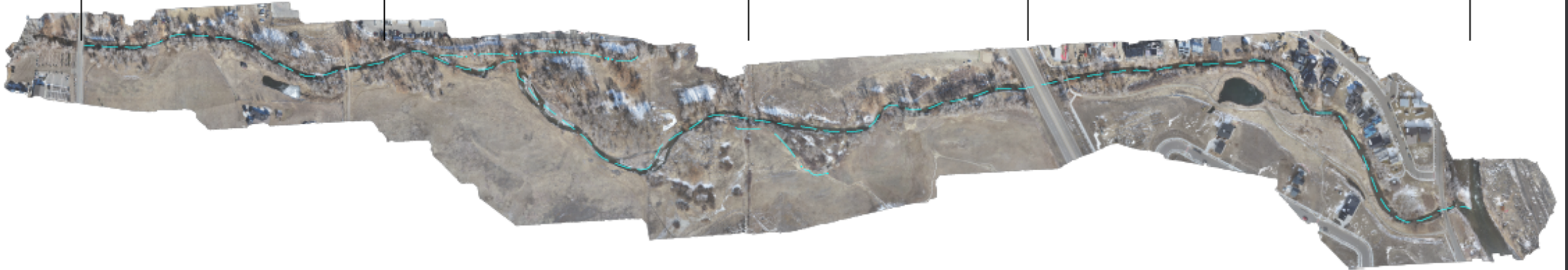
REACH OVERVIEW

REACH 1
CR 107 TO DOWNSTREAM OF
PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
LENGTH = 1,280 FEET

REACH 2
DOWNSTREAM OF PEDESTRIAN
BRIDGE TO CITY PROPERTY
BOUNDARY
LENGTH = 1,770 FEET

REACH 3
CITY PROPERTY BOUNDARY TO
HIGHWAY 50
LENGTH = 1,230 FEET

REACH 4
HIGHWAY 50 TO CONFLUENCE W/
ARKANSAS RIVER
LENGTH = 2,110 FEET



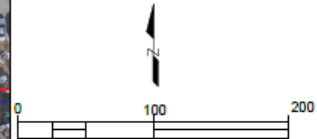
City Reach

- Realignment Required to Address Cause of River Instability
- Incorporating Education & Outreach Opportunities
- Incorporating Sustainable Trail Plans
- Coordinating with Ongoing City Utility Projects
- Coordinating with Vandevveer Development

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Horizontal Scale & Orientation



Legend

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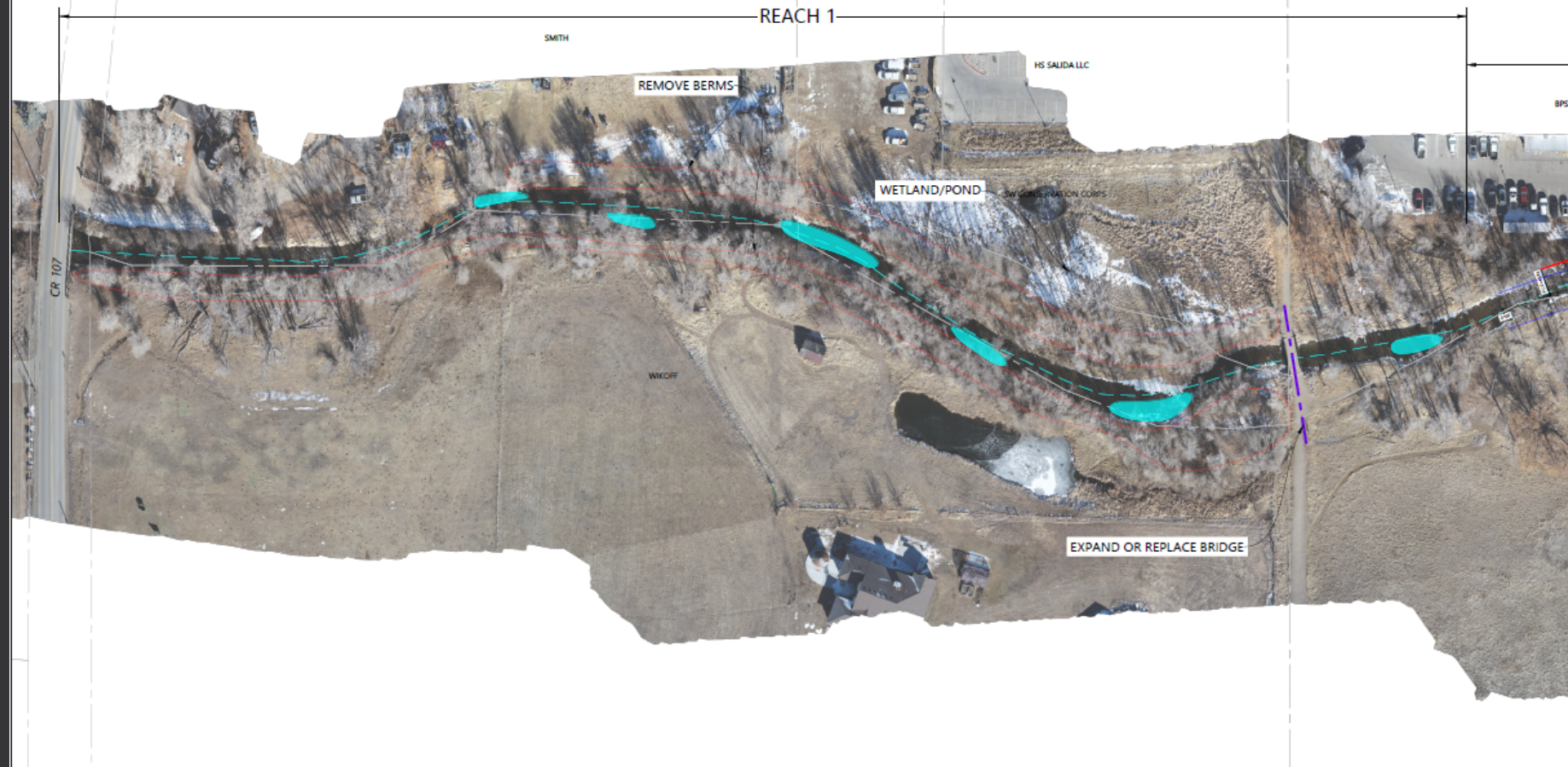
Client/Project

Project Milestone

Sheet Name

Project No. 1" = 50'
Horizontal Scale

Sheet 2 of 6



PRIMARY ISSUES:

1. ENTRENCHED FLOODPLAIN
2. LACK OF BEDFORM DIVERSITY
3. LACK OF IN-STREAM HABITAT

GENERAL APPROACH:

1. PASSIVE RESTORATION UPSTREAM OF BRIDGE
 - 1.1. EXCAVATE POOLS & BUILD POINT BARS
 - 1.2. INCORPORATE CHANNEL BANK ROUGHNESS ELEMENTS
 - 1.3. REMOVE BERMS
2. CONSIDER MODIFYING OR REPLACING BRIDGE

SUGGESTIONS & IDEAS:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

REACH 2

BPS PROPERTIES LLC

REMOVE CRIB WALL RESTORE & RESTORE BANK

ENHANCE BOOTS & HINTON DITCH DIVERSION

REMOVE CONCRETE RUBBLE & RESTORE BANK

CITY OF SALIDA

SAYORN

OVERBANK FLOWS DURING LARGER FLOODS

SEDIMENT TRAP FROM CONTRACTION

CHANNEL BANK EROSION RIVER WIDENING LATERAL MIGRATION

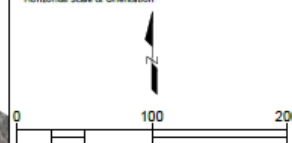
CITY OF SALIDA

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Sub-Consultants

Horizontal Scale & Orientation



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	Own.	Chkd.	Drawn
			YYMMDD

Permit-Seal

Client/Project

Project Milestone

Sheet Name

Project No.	1" = 50'
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Sheet 1 of 6

1. OVER-WIDENED BANKFULL CHANNEL
2. SIGNIFICANT CHANNEL BANK EROSION
3. TRAMPLED FLOODPLAIN
4. AGGRADATION

1. REALIGN RIVER
2. FILL OLD RIVER CORRIDOR
3. RELOCATE TRAIL

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.