

*"(Conservation is)
the chief material
question that
confronts us,
second only —
and second
always —
to the great
fundamental
question
of morality."*

Theodore Roosevelt
Speech, White House
May 13, 1908



Dear Coloradan:

I am pleased to make available to you this brochure about Colorado Naturally — our effort to create a cleaner, safer and healthier environment for all Coloradans.

This may be the best time ever to live in Colorado. Our booming economy is among the most diversified in the nation. However, this prosperity brings challenges. As we enter the new millennium, Colorado must maintain a healthy environment while accommodating the needs of more than four million people and their visitors.


My Administration is committed to enhancing Colorado's quality of life. At my direction, the Colorado Departments of Natural Resources, Agriculture and Public Health and Environment are dedicating themselves to protecting the majestic wonder of Colorado while providing the infrastructure needed for our continued growth.

This brochure outlines some of the goals and successes of Colorado Naturally. This is by no means a complete list of everything we are doing. But it does provide a sense of the tremendous work being done by state employees, private sector agencies and countless citizen volunteers.

If you have an idea about how to preserve Colorado's legacy, I invite you to contact my office or any of the three departments working on these goals. Together, we can save what is best about the Colorado way of life and continue to improve upon the natural environment with which we are blessed.

Sincerely,

Bill Owens.



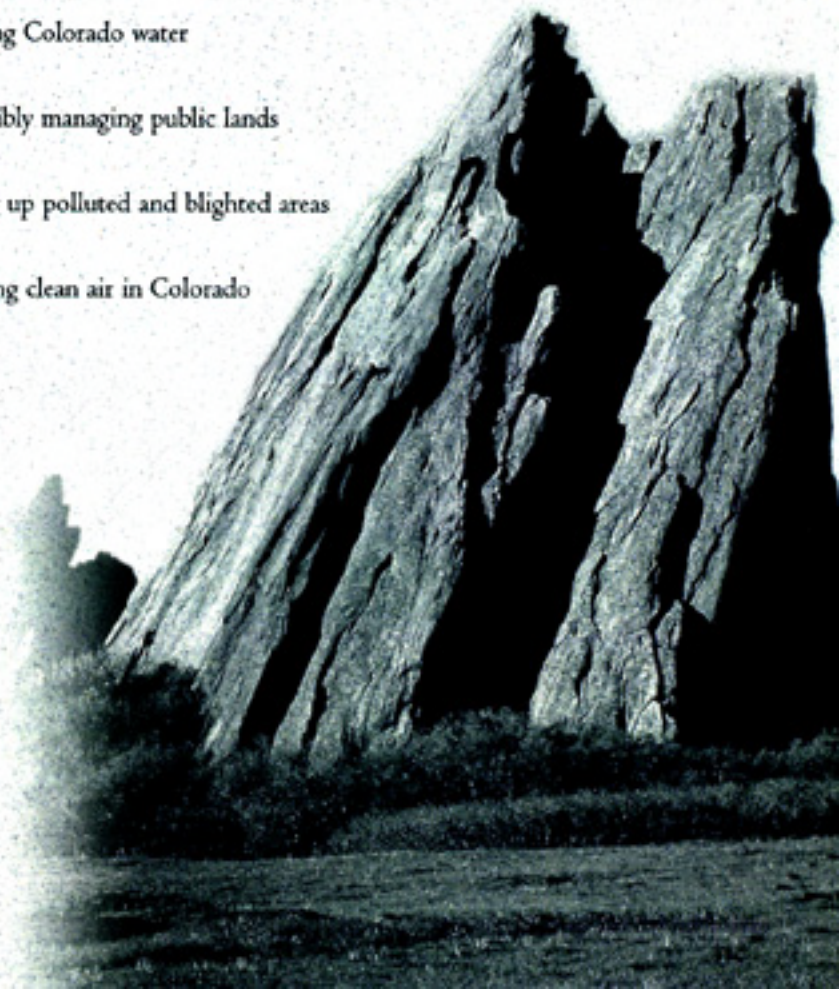
A black and white photograph of the Denver skyline, showing several prominent skyscrapers against a cloudy sky. The city is viewed from a distance, with some lower buildings and a river visible in the foreground.

Colorado Naturally

A Cleaner, Safer and Healthier Colorado

Governor Owens believes that Colorado's natural environment is one of our state's most distinctive features and an essential part of our quality of life. Future generations of Coloradans should have the opportunity to enjoy an even better environment—one that's cleaner, safer and healthier. This requires good stewardship of our resources today and adapting to the dynamic changes in Colorado that will arise in the future. It also means focusing on results like cleaner air and water, a safer environment for our children, and open spaces we can all enjoy, not bureaucratic programs that squander limited taxpayer dollars.

This new approach to environmental issues centers on six specific areas:

- Saving open spaces, farms and ranches
 - Recovering endangered species
 - Protecting Colorado water
 - Responsibly managing public lands
 - Cleaning up polluted and blighted areas
 - Enhancing clean air in Colorado
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- A black and white photograph of a large, jagged rock formation, possibly a natural rock arch or a similar geological feature. The rock is dark and textured, with a prominent shadow cast across its face. The background is a bright, hazy sky.

Denver skyline

SAVING OPEN SPACES, FARMS & RANCHES



Greenland Ranch

Nearly two-thirds of Colorado's land is privately-owned. This means that land preservation must rely heavily on the efforts of private citizens. Governor Owens supports a number of innovative approaches designed to encourage landowners to preserve open space.

- **Open Space Preservation.** Governor Owens appointed a special Commission on Preservation of Open Spaces, Farms and Ranches to examine existing efforts and recommend new methods for preserving open spaces and agricultural lands.

- **Conservation Easements.** The best way to protect farms and ranches from over-development is to keep family farmers and ranchers productively working their lands. Conservation easements prohibit development of land during the term of the easement, thus allowing land agencies to preserve open space without paying for costly fee title acquisition and permitting landowners to keep their land in agricultural production.
- **Conservation Leases.** Conservation groups and state agencies save money—and stretch their dollars further while protecting more land—by leasing development rights from farmers and ranchers. Leases provide farmers and ranchers with much needed income without tying the hands of the children and grandchildren who will eventually inherit the land.
- **Water Easements.** These easements, similar to those used on land, protect areas of critical agricultural concern against the sale of water to growing urban centers. This approach can also enable farmers to benefit from the economic value of water, as many have already done with land easements.
- **Water Leasing.** Water leases provide another tool to help balance the water needs of regions around Colorado. Farmers and ranchers can lease unused water to growing cities and towns without permanently relinquishing the right to use the water.
- **Freedom from Over-regulation.** Governor Owens directed state agencies to reduce regulatory burden on farmers and ranchers in an effort to preserve a rural way of life, protect irreplaceable open space and habitat, and strengthen a \$5 billion annual contribution to Colorado's economy.

Accomplishments

- *The Divisions of Wildlife and State Parks helped preserve the Greenland Ranch in Douglas County, the largest open space project in the history of Great Outdoors Colorado, ensuring permanent community separation along the I-25 Corridor.*
- *East and West Brush Creek in Eagle County are finally under contract for \$14 million, thus protecting the last of the state's "crown jewels" and ending years of effort to preserve open space and wetlands by adding them to Sylvan Lake State Park.*
- *Land contracts were also executed preserving the JL Ranch as the first state park in El Paso County, and another preserving over 11,000 acres in Dolores County for the future Lone Mesa State Park.*

RECOVERING ENDANGERED SPECIES

Accomplishments

- Governor Owens cut the ribbon to open the first state-owned native species hatchery in the United States. Located in Alamosa, the hatchery provides resources to effectively recover populations of threatened and endangered aquatic species.
- The Division of Wildlife's program for recovery of the prairie chicken was so successful that the Commission authorized the first hunting season since 1937.
- Five state fish hatcheries were modernized to address whirling disease and native species propagation.
- Efforts to restore populations of greenback cutthroat trout are proving so successful that the Division of Wildlife can now allow for some catch-and-release fishing opportunities for the Colorado State Fish.
- Two new wildlife refuges were opened to the public: the 30,000-acre Bosque del Oso in Las Animas County and the 5,600-acre Bitter Brush Ranch in Moffat County.

Under Governor Owens' direction, the state is actively working to repopulate endangered species. This effort will help us maintain biodiversity in the natural environment while replacing Washington's bureaucratic controls with common sense decision-making that's good for Colorado.

- **Intergovernmental Cooperation.** By working closely with their federal counterparts, state agencies can ensure that endangered species are recovered in a manner that makes sense for Colorado.

- **Funding for Endangered Species.** In the past, Colorado funding for wildlife preservation was limited. Under Governor Owens, state agencies are working to dedicate significant state resources to support important species conservation programs, so endangered species can be recovered and returned to the wild.
- **Sound Science.** Colorado's top-notch biologists and wildlife authorities produce cutting edge research on endangered species every year. Through the help of these wildlife experts, state agencies can ensure that endangered species decisions are based on the best available scientific information.



Brooktail raised at the native species hatchery, Alamosa



Reverend Columbian sharp-tailed grouse inhabiting reclaimed coal mine in northeast Colorado

PROTECTING COLORADO WATER



Rafting—a popular Colorado sport.

Colorado's continued growth creates more demand for our limited supplies of water. Governor Owens directed state agencies to protect Colorado's interests through sound management and innovative thinking.

- **Legal Defense of Water.** The battle for water in the West continues as other states and the federal government attempt to claim parts of Colorado's water. Governor Owens is committed to ensuring that Colorado maintains control over all its entitled water. This means working with California to reduce its use of Colorado water, as well as negotiating with neighboring states and the federal government to protect Colorado's interests.
- **Water Quality.** Coloradans must have access to safe and clean drinking water, and the state is devoting significant resources to purification and treatment. This includes providing the projects necessary to supply our citizens with clean water and cleaning up pollution.
- **Preservation of the Water Environment.** State agencies are working to repopulate endangered aquatic species. This includes enforcing existing laws that require certain amounts of water to be left in-stream, thus providing habitat for fish and protecting the natural surroundings that are so important to Colorado.
- **Flood and Drought Preparedness.** Colorado's Water Conservation Board is focusing on water projects that can guard lives and property against floods and droughts.

Accomplishments

- *The long-standing legal case involving federal water rights in the Rio Grande Basin was finally settled, providing certainty to present and future water users in the San Luis Valley.*
- *Colorado's firm position in negotiations with other Colorado River Basin states helped push California to a historic agreement to limit use of Colorado River water to its compact entitlement, the first such agreement in the history of the interstate compact.*
- *The Governor's Conference on Flood and Drought Preparedness brought over 250 people together to assess Colorado's vulnerability, the economic impacts associated with these natural disasters, and options for structural and management remedies to mitigate impacts in the future.*
- *The database of potential reservoir sites was converted to a GIS map. Thus, a series of maps showing potential reservoir sites can now be produced for use by county planning commissions and local water users.*



Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area

RESPONSIBLY MANAGING PUBLIC LANDS



Sailing at Namay State Park

Accomplishments

- *The State Parks system hosted a record 10 million visitors. 140,000 visitors and schoolchildren experienced interpretive programs; and 60,000 hours of volunteer time was logged at 41 state parks.*
- *More than \$9 million in substantive improvements were made at State Forest, Eldorado Canyon, Rifle Falls, and Bonny Lake State Parks.*
- *The State Land Board designated over 215,000 acres for the Stewardship Trust as a result of an extensive public nomination process.*
- *An agreement was signed with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to create the first state park in Southeastern Colorado at John Martin Reservoir.*

Colorado's state-owned lands provide important benefits that everyone enjoys, and the state has a responsibility to be a good steward of these lands. This means ensuring that these lands are maintained and that the public enjoys access to them.

- **Healthy Forests.** The newly-created Forestry Division monitors the health of all forest lands in the state, including national and private forests. The Forestry Division focuses on forest health rather than the revenue generated from forest activities.
- **Forest Legacy Program.** Governor Owens designated the Colorado State Forest Service to lead Colorado's participation in the national Forest Legacy Program. Through the program, Colorado will protect private forest lands from being converted to non-forest uses through voluntary acquisitions of property and conservation easements.
- **State Parks.** Coloradans enjoy the outdoors in many ways—from camping and hiking to boating and fishing. State parks offer an excellent way to preserve open space while providing for



Biking at Colorado River State Park



Fishing at Chatfield State Park

recreational use. Governor Owens proclaimed 2000 the "Year of State Parks." Several new state parks are under development, with state agencies also placing additional emphasis on creating urban parks.

- **Wildlife Management.** A healthy and diverse wildlife population requires sound wildlife management to ensure the proper balance between game, predators, and other species. Proper management also means good maintenance of public lands and habitat, including control of noxious weeds.

CLEANING UP POLLUTED & BLIGHTED AREAS

Restoration of polluted areas enhances the quality of life for all Coloradans. Cleanup efforts provide a safer environment, often encouraging the redevelopment of polluted sites within urban areas. This, in turn, helps preserve Colorado's precious open space and wildlife habitat.

- **Land Recycling.** As more people move into Colorado, growth should be first accommodated where the supporting infrastructure already exists—in our cities and towns. Governor Owens led the fight for tax credits and other incentives to encourage the redevelopment of unsightly and polluted urban "brownfields," revitalizing downtown areas and preserving outlying open spaces, farms and ranches.
- **Disposal and Clean Up of Hazardous Waste.** Governor Owens directed state agencies to pursue vigorous enforcement of environmental laws to ensure that Coloradans live in a safe and healthy environment. This includes holding companies and the federal government accountable for their pollution and ensuring that they clean up and dispose of their waste. It also includes a priority program to address environmental and safety hazards at the 23,000 abandoned mine sites in Colorado.
- **Wetlands Habitat.** Wetlands areas often support numerous species of wildlife, making the loss of these sites a significant blow to Colorado's environment. Restoration of valuable wetlands is a priority, particularly where critical wildlife habitat has been lost.
- **Rewards for Good Stewardship.** Landowners who clean up their newly-acquired land should be rewarded, not punished with liability for the damage done by previous owners. This is why Governor Owens supports so-called "Good Samaritan" legislation, which will protect conscientious landowners from liability and foster a cleaner environment.



Reclaimed mine in Jackson County

Accomplishments

- *The Division of Minerals and Geology hosted international groups from the former Soviet Republics, Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines who reviewed Colorado's mining regulatory program as a world-class model for state-of-the-art environmental reclamation.*
- *Participation increased in the Habitat Partnership Program: new agreements with 65 private landowners will protect 1,750 acres of wetlands and another 5,000 acres under the Wetlands Initiative.*
- *The legislature passed legislation at the Governor's request that provides tax credits for redevelopment of "brownfields" in urban areas. The intent is to avoid sprawl by encouraging development in existing cities, rather than open space. The legislation also provides \$250,000 per year for the state to spend on redevelopment of "brownfields" throughout Colorado.*

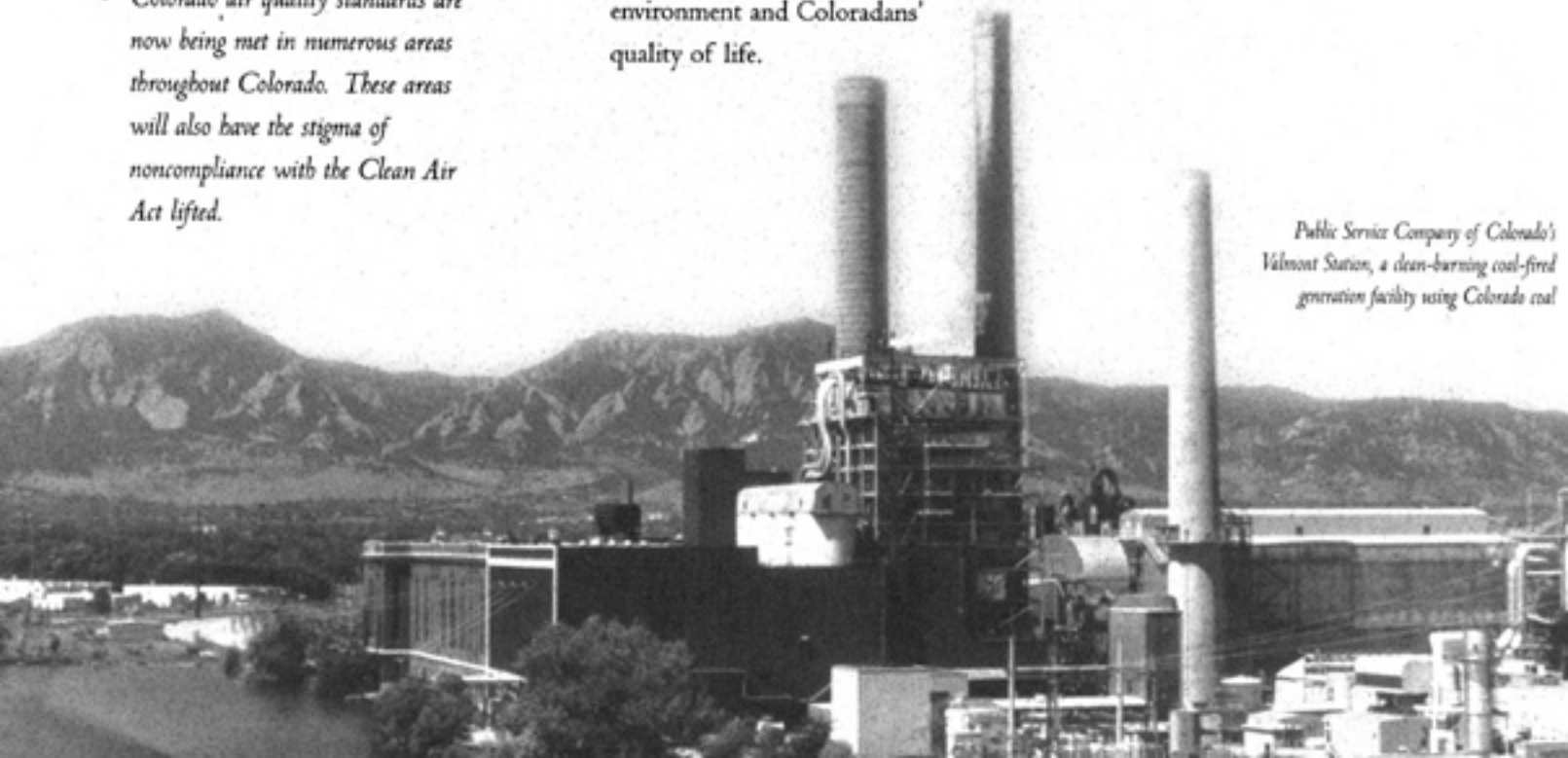
ENHANCING CLEAN AIR IN COLORADO

Accomplishments

- *The air quality in Colorado is the best it has been in recent memory. The Denver Metro Area is no longer violating the carbon monoxide standard and that will officially be recognized by EPA in the near future after it reviews the work Colorado has done to ensure the standard is maintained.*
- *The Department of Public Health and Environment implemented new rules to protect Colorado air quality against haze created by prescribed fires on Federal lands. The rules require smoke management plans before permitting such fires.*
- *Colorado air quality standards are now being met in numerous areas throughout Colorado. These areas will also have the stigma of noncompliance with the Clean Air Act lifted.*

A healthy environment means breathing clean air and enjoying blue skies and beautiful sunsets. This also means that some of the amenities that contribute to Colorado's quality of life are accomplished in an environmentally-friendly manner.

- **Reduce Air Pollution.** Colorado is completing an emissions inventory designed to provide a better understanding of air pollution. Good science is necessary to give regulatory authorities the necessary information to more accurately target major sources of pollution. Governor Owens streamlined and strengthened the organization responsible for Metropolitan Denver's air quality.
- **Better Air Quality.** Prescribed fires on federal land, often used to clear away dead or harmful vegetation, are also the largest source of regional haze. Governor Owens directed state agencies to ensure that the federal government's use of these fires does not harm Colorado air quality. State agencies are also assisting the Environmental Protection Agency to ensure that regional haze regulations target the actual causes of such haze.
- **Generation of Electric Power.** As Colorado continues to grow, there will be increased demand for electrical generation. State regulators, under Governor Owens' leadership, will ensure that power is produced in a way that will protect both the environment and Coloradans' quality of life.



*Public Service Company of Colorado's
Vailmont Station, a clean-burning coal-fired
generation facility using Colorado coal*

DEDICATED TO COLORADO...NATURALLY



Greg E. Walcher

Executive Director
Department of Natural Resources

Greg Walcher was appointed to Colorado Governor Bill Owens' Cabinet as Executive Director of the Department of Natural Resources in January, 1999. He brought to the position 20 years experience in natural resource issues.

From 1989-99 Walcher served as President of CLUB 20, the Western Slope promotional organization. During his tenure, CLUB 20 nearly tripled the size of its membership and budget, and he was credited with bringing a new level of activity, visibility and effectiveness to the Western Slope.

Prior to his CLUB 20 tenure, Walcher spent ten years in Washington, D.C. on the staff of U.S. Senator Bill Armstrong, including 5 years as Executive Director. He handled issues as diverse as transportation, agriculture, governmental affairs and natural resources.

A 5th generation native of Colorado, Walcher was born and raised in Grand Junction and received his degree from Mesa State College, where he served as student body president. He and his wife Diana operate a 15-acre peach orchard in Palisade.



Don Ament

Commissioner of Agriculture
State of Colorado

Governor Bill Owens appointed Don Ament Commissioner of Agriculture January 12, 1999. Don is a farmer and rancher from Iliff in Logan County, Colorado.

Don was a member of the Colorado General Assembly for sixteen years, twelve as state Senator and four as a member of the House of Representatives. He served as Chairman of the Agriculture, Natural Resources and Energy Committee and Chairman of the Capital Development Committee. He was a member of the State, Veterans and Military Affairs Committee and the Transportation Committee. Nationally, Commissioner Ament chaired the American Legislative Exchange Council's Task Force on Agriculture.

Don served five years on the State Board of Education, four of them as chairman. He also served on the RE-1 Valley School Board in Sterling, Colorado, for fourteen years. He is a former president of the Colorado Association of School Boards.

In recognition of his expertise in water and property rights, Governor Owens appointed Don to serve as the chief negotiator of the Platte River Endangered Species Partnership. In this capacity, Don is responsible for negotiating Colorado's position on achieving critical habitat requirements for endangered species that depend on water flows in the Platte River from Colorado, Wyoming and Nebraska.

Don and his wife Patty have three grown children and remain active in the Iliff community.



Jane E. Norton

Executive Director
Department Public Health & Environment

Jane E. Norton was appointed executive director of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment by Governor Bill Owens January 1999.

In addition, she serves as Secretary, State Board of Health; Co-Chair, Colorado Women's Health Campaign; Board of Directors, Regional Air Quality Council; and Natural Resource Damages Trustee. She is also a member of the Association of State and Territorial Health Officers; the Governor's Disaster Emergency Council; Children's Basic Health Plan Policy Board; and the Governor's Task Force on Victim Support for the Columbine High School Tragedy.

Ms. Norton comes to the Department after a decade of service in the fields of government, public policy, and health care, including a stint as director of the Office of State Government Relations for Medical Group Management Association; regional director for the six-state Region VIII Office of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; and served as a member of the Colorado House of Representatives, filling out the remainder of an unexpired term, from mid-1986 through January 1987.

A 1976 graduate of Colorado State University, Ms. Norton received her Bachelor of Science with distinction in health sciences. She also has a Master of Sciences in Management degree from Regis University, Denver.