

SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

The 2008 SCORP guides development of a diverse and balanced statewide outdoor recreation system to meet current and future outdoor recreation needs. The plan assesses statewide outdoor recreation issues and trends, and recommends actions to help address identified needs. The SCORP also evaluates supply and demand for Colorado’s outdoor recreation resources, including public lands, open spaces, trails, and other recreation facilities.

When outdoor recreation is discussed in the 2008 Colorado Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), it needs to be considered within the context of numerous interconnected industries and relevant factors that influence recreation, as depicted in Figure 1. Some of these include:

- Provides background information on recreation for stakeholders and managers
- Recommends strategies aimed at ensuring Colorado’s outdoor recreation heritage is maintained improved for future generations
- Supports local and statewide initiatives guiding the long-term maintenance and enhancement of Colorado’s outdoor recreation resources, which provide a basis for further improving the quality of lives of Coloradans for future generations

In accordance with the LWCF requirements, Colorado updates its SCORP once every five years. The SCORP addresses statewide issues comprehensively, incorporates broad public, private, and nonprofit stakeholder participation, includes a sufficiently detailed strategy for allocation of LWCF monies, and identifies which wetlands need priority protection. The SCORP is submitted to the National Park Service, the administrator of the LWCF program, by Colorado Governor Bill Ritter.

1.1 LWCF Background

In 1964, Congress passed the LWCF Act. Using revenues from offshore oil and gas receipts, its intent is to provide for the acquisition and development of public lands to meet the needs of Americans for outdoor recreation and open space. Through FY 2006, more than \$3.6 billion has been awarded to some 40,000 nationwide projects that support acquiring open space or developing parks and other outdoor recreation facilities. LWCF has helped protect nearly seven million acres of recreation lands across the U.S.¹

One purpose of the SCORP is to direct each state’s Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) appropriations. The 2007 SCORP Local Government Survey helped identify the most important priorities for local recreation managers, which will be used as a guide for allocating LWCF grants. The SCORP describes the role LWCF plays in the provision of outdoor recreation opportunities in the state, as well as Colorado’s policies for LWCF apportionment. The SCORP addresses plans to use LWCF monies and provides a basis for determining eligibility for LWCF funds.

¹“Land and Water Conservation Fund.” History of the Program. National Park Service. 19 May 2008 <<http://www.nps.gov/nrcr/programs/lwcf/history.html>>.



To ensure an integrated approach to conservation and recreation, LWCF has two components:

- A *federal program* that funds the purchase of federal agency land and water areas for conservation and recreation purposes. These funds are appropriated annually by Congress directly to federal agencies (e.g., Forest Service, National Park Service, and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service).
- A “*stateside*” *matching-grants program* that provides funds to states and local governments for planning, developing, and acquiring land and water areas, natural resource protection, and recreation enhancement. Congress appropriates these funds directly to the stateside program. The act stipulates that each state is required to complete a SCORP to be eligible for the annual LWCF allocations.

Reflecting the goals of the LWCF Act, the goals of the Stateside Assistance Program are to:

- Meet state and public outdoor recreation resources needs to strengthen the health and vitality of Americans.
- Increase protected state and local outdoor recreation resources and ensure they are available for public use in perpetuity.
- Encourage sound planning and long-term partnerships to expand the quantity and ensure the quality of state and local outdoor recreation resources.

1.2 Colorado LWCF Stateside Appropriations

Statute (CRS 33-10-108 (c)) designates the Colorado Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (State Parks) as the agency to administer and serve as the liaison between the State of Colorado and the Secretary of the Interior for the LWCF.

As such, the Colorado State Board of Parks and Outdoor Recreation is responsible for receiving and spending LWCF monies. The Director of State Parks establishes procedures and requirements for all LWCF applications. Projects involving federal-aid funds are limited to planning, acquiring, and developing recreation facilities or sites.

LWCF grants intend to increase recreational opportunities for Colorado citizens and its visitors through cooperation with local communities, non-profit organizations, and various state agencies. Such projects acquired or developed through these grants are operated and maintained in perpetuity for public outdoor recreation use; State Parks inspects them every five years.

In their role as the recipient and arbiter for LWCF monies, the Board of Parks and Outdoor Recreation historically divides Colorado’s appropriation in two; half supporting state projects and half allocated to locally sponsored projects. Before Congress ended stateside LWCF appropriations in 1995, the State Parks Department used a comprehensive grant solicitation, application, and award process for local government grants.

When reduced annual congressional appropriations resumed in 2000, State Parks began working with local government parks and recreation leaders to use the existing Colorado State Trails Program grants process to award LWCF funds.

Colorado has been an active participant in the LWCF program since its inception in 1965. The highest amount Colorado has received was in 1979, with nearly \$5.4 million in LWCF awards. Amounts in recent years have dropped to a fraction of that level (Table 1-1). Since 1965, more than 1,100 grants totaling \$58 million have made a significant contribution to investments in Colorado’s outdoors in every corner of the state.



This process is consistent with the 2003 and 2007 Local Government Surveys, which ranked community trail systems as the highest priority. (See the Introduction to the Regional Profiles for more details on the 2007 Local Government Survey). State Parks will continue collaborating with local government leaders to determine the most effective way to grant LWCF funds, ensuring grants are consistent with federal program guidelines and that they meet the priorities of local government recreation providers.

Colorado receives annual congressional appropriations from LWCF, administered through State Parks for state and local government sponsored recreation projects. As of 2008, Colorado has received approximately \$58 million for planning, acquiring, and developing public outdoor recreation areas and facilities – securing in perpetuity 58,624 acres for recreation purposes.

LWCF is authorized to receive \$900 million each year, with Colorado eligible for about \$7-8 million, if Congress chooses to fully fund the LWCF program. However, since the program’s inception, Congress has chosen to allocate a significant portion of the fund for purposes other than conservation and recreation. For five years, starting in 1995, no stateside LWCF funds were allocated (Table 1). Between 2000 and 2008, Congress resumed funding at levels ranging from \$394,719 (in 2008) and \$2.4 million (in 2002).

Table 1: Total Colorado Stateside LWCF Apportionment

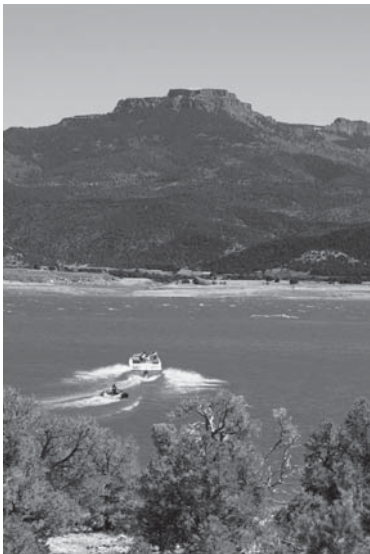
Fiscal Year	Regular Fund	Contingency Fund	Total Amount
1965	\$ 139,657		\$ 139,657
1966	\$1,125,357	\$24,941	\$1,150,298
1967	\$ 766,850		\$ 766,850
1968	\$ 833,601		\$ 833,601
1969	\$ 609,952		\$ 609,952
1970	\$ 846,674		\$ 846,674
1971	\$1,940,920		\$1,940,920
1972	\$3,578,925		\$3,578,925
1973	\$2,533,383		\$2,533,383
1974	\$1,308,016		\$1,308,016
1975	\$2,508,300	\$928,500	\$3,436,800
1976	\$3,062,913		\$3,062,913
1977	\$2,586,895		\$2,586,895
1978	\$4,430,013		\$4,430,013
1979	\$5,368,486		\$5,368,486
1980	\$4,401,518		\$4,401,518
1981	\$2,607,843		\$2,607,843
1982	\$ -		\$ -
1983	\$1,734,371		\$1,734,371
1984	\$1,143,260		\$1,143,260
1985	\$1,164,973		\$1,164,973
1986	\$ 730,881		\$ 730,881
1987	\$ 519,664		\$ 519,664
1988	\$ 263,481		\$ 263,481
1989	\$ 273,606		\$ 273,606
1990	\$ 257,975		\$ 257,975
1991	\$ 477,280		\$ 477,280
1992	\$ 316,330		\$ 316,330
1993	\$ 363,484		\$ 363,484
1994	\$ 390,608		\$ 390,608
1995	\$ 392,947		\$ 392,947
1996	\$ -		\$ -
1997	\$ -		\$ -
1998	\$ -		\$ -
1999	\$ -		\$ -
2000	\$ 635,000		\$ 635,000
2001	\$1,485,321		\$1,485,321
2002	\$2,369,012		\$2,369,012
2003	\$1,590,503		\$1,590,503
2004	\$1,568,336		\$1,568,336
2005	\$1,540,396		\$1,540,396
2006	\$ 478,347		\$ 478,347
2007	\$ 478,347		\$ 478,347
2008	\$ 394,719		\$ 394,719
TOTAL	\$57,218,144		\$58,171,585

SCORP



When you walk through your local park, push your children on the swings at a nearby playground, or bike on a trail in your community, you are likely enjoying the benefits of the LWCF program in Colorado. Fifty-nine of Colorado's 64 counties have received LWCF funding.² For example, as featured in the 2007 LWCF Annual Report, the newest link on the Swan Mountain Recpath around Dillon Reservoir (Summit County) was awarded over \$300,000 in 2004-2005 and now allows cyclists to bypass the busy Swan Mountain Road. This recpath is used by 500,000 cyclists annually and hosts the Courage Classic, The Triple Bypass, Ride the Rockies, and the Bicycle Tour of Colorado.^{3,4} Colorado's newest state park, Cheyenne Mountain State Park near Colorado Springs, has received \$320,000 for campgrounds, \$717,000 for a visitor's center, and \$1,090,000⁵ for other facilities. Examples of other projects throughout Colorado's six SCORP Regions receiving LWCF funding include:

- Front Range: Sloan Lake Park (Denver County -1966), \$57,441
- Northeast: Pioneer Park Tennis Courts (Logan County - 1976), \$21,640
- Northwest: Steamboat Lake Renovation (Routt County - 1994), \$570,624
- South Central: Eleven Mile S.R.A. #2 (Park County - 1973), \$161,975
- Southeast: Huerfano County Fairgrounds (Huerfano County - 1976), \$2,750
- Southwest: Dolores Community Park (Montezuma County - 1986), \$40,158.



²Compiled from county-level data. "Detailed Listing of Grants - with County Totals." Land and Water Conservation Fund. National Park Service. 1 July 2008 <<http://waso-lwcf.nrc.nps.gov/public/index.cfm>>.

³Unites States. National Park Service. Land and Water Conservation Fund State Assistance Program. 2 July 2008.

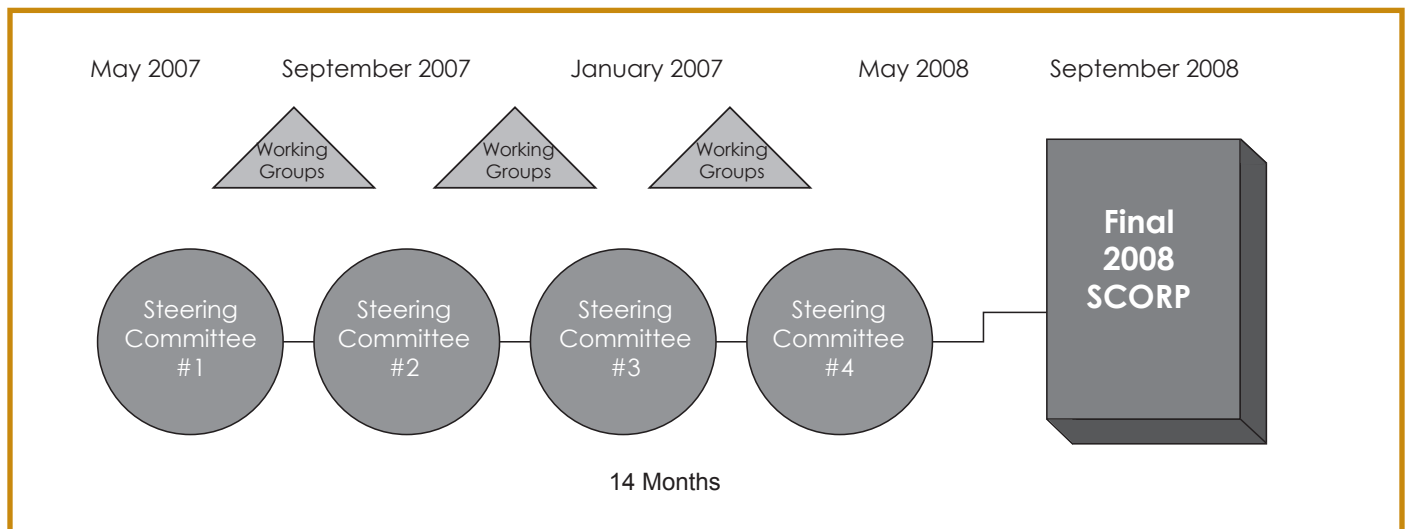
⁴ "Detailed Listing of Grants - with County Totals." Land and Water Conservation Fund. National Park Service. 1 July 2008 <<http://waso-lwcf.nrc.nps.gov/public/index.cfm>>.

⁵"State Development Projects by Park." Colorado State Parks. 2 July 2008 <<http://parks.state.co.us/NR/ronlyres/9F81610C-D491-4399-A4FC-49508F839771/0/StateDevelopmentProjectsbyPark040605.xls>>.



The SCORP Steering Committee, which included 33 representatives from local, state, and federal agencies, community recreation and open space programs, regional planning organizations, non-profit organizations, industry associations, outdoor retailers, and public health advocates collaborated to develop this document. Steering Committee members participated in four quarterly meetings between May 2007 and June 2008. Additional constituents gave regional perspective during a panel at the second planning session. Other local government and general public perspectives relevant to outdoor recreation were obtained through the 2007 Local Government Survey and 2007 Colorado Public Survey.

Figure 2: SCORP Planning Process



While every Steering Committee member offered insight on recreational issues, many contributed additional time as part of working groups. These groups assisted in developing particular sections of the plan, including the SCORP Strategic Plan (Section 7: 2008 SCORP Strategic Plan).

Committee members agreed that Colorado’s economy and lifestyle are inherently connected to the state’s abundant, diverse, high quality outdoor recreation opportunities. Maintaining these opportunities, while considering increased population growth and other pressing issues, presents serious challenges. Additionally, while Colorado is fortunate to have a comparatively large amount of public land (nearly 29 million acres, 83% of which are open to outdoor recreation pursuits), there remains a finite supply of recreation resources and funding to sustain the high quality outdoor recreation “experience” Colorado citizens have grown accustomed to.⁶ Colorado citizens and state agencies must plan proactively to ensure that we sustain and maintain recreation opportunities, as well as the unique outdoor experiences many of us actively seek.

⁶Wilcox, G., D. M. Theobald, J. Whisman, and N. Peterson. 2006. Colorado Ownership, Management, and Protection (CoMap) V5. <http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/projects/comap/contact.html>.



1.3 2008 SCORP Planning Process

1.3.1 Vision

The 2008 SCORP focuses public attention on ways to address the challenges that influence outdoor recreation planning and management. It provides strategies for sustainably expanding, improving, and maintaining recreation opportunities for Colorado's growing population and its visitors, while protecting the state's outdoors heritage. These themes are reflected in the vision statement created by the Steering Committee to guide development of the 2008 SCORP:

"Diverse recreation resources play a key role in the high quality of life enjoyed by Colorado's citizens and visitors. Recreation is more than just an activity; it is a conduit for people of all ages to connect to the outdoors and enjoy healthy, active lifestyles. With this in mind, the 2008 SCORP, in collaboration with Colorado's varied outdoor recreation stakeholders, establishes strategies to holistically and sustainably manage the state's outdoor heritage for current and future generations."

1.4 Contents of the Plan

The 2008 SCORP is comprehensive, with each section focusing on a particular area relevant to outdoor recreation, and ultimately leading to a framework for planning statewide outdoor recreation through 2013. A brief description of sections included in the 2008 SCORP follows:

- **Section 2: Outdoor Recreation Providers and Partners** provides a detailed inventory of recreation providers in Colorado, including federal, state, and local governments, as well as private sector and non-profit partners.
- **Section 3: Outdoor Recreation Trends** examines federal and statewide recreation participation and visitation trends impacting recreation user patterns and preferences.
- **Section 4: Economic Activity Attributed to Outdoor Recreation** highlights some of the statewide economic impacts of outdoor recreation to the state.
- **Section 5: SCORP Regional Profiles** describes the outdoor recreation assets and trends experienced in each of the six SCORP regions (Front Range, Northeast, Northwest, South Central, Southeast, and Southwest regions).
- **Section 6: Priority Recreation Issues and Influences** outlines the most significant factors affecting outdoor recreation in Colorado.
- **Section 7: 2008 SCORP Strategic Plan** provides specific, prioritized actions that will help maintain and enhance Colorado's outdoor recreation heritage. Included in the strategic plan are suggestions for lead implementers for each action, potential partners and key resources, and designated priorities.

Maps throughout the document supplement the text to illustrate regional attractions, key themes, and significant issues. The Appendix includes an Information Resources section with contact information for local, state, and federal recreation agencies and partners, the Wetlands Component, and a summary of the 2007 SCORP Local Government Survey.

Additional content can also be found on the SCORP website: www.coloradoscorp.org



Figure 3: Key Components of the 2008 SCORP

