



# Environmental Report



Colorado Springs Utilities  
*It's how we're all connected*

2025

# Introduction

## Who we are

For more than 100 years, we have proudly served the Colorado Springs community with safe, reliable and competitively-priced utility services.

Today, we remain committed to providing electric, natural gas, water and wastewater services to the Pikes Peak region, ensuring our customers continue to benefit from competitive rates, exceptional hometown service, responsible environmental stewardship and a meaningful voice in how their utility operates.

**As a municipally owned utility, environmental stewardship is a key driver in our strategic planning and expected by our customers.**

This report outlines how our operations meet environmental laws and regulations, how we advance environmental stewardship within the community and how we communicate our commitment to responsible environmental practices that support the long-term vitality of our region. Our environmental strategies are



applied to all aspects of the planning, construction and maintenance of our systems, enabling us to reduce operating costs, minimize financial and regulatory liabilities, enhance employee health and safety and increase environmental awareness among employees.

## Letter from the CEO

I am proud that we continued to make meaningful progress toward a more efficient, sustainable and resilient future in 2025. Environmental stewardship is fundamental to how we plan, operate and serve our community every day. As a customer-owned utility, we are entrusted not only with delivering safe, reliable and affordable services, but also with protecting public health and safeguarding natural resources for the people of the Pikes Peak region. That responsibility guides every decision we make.

This Environmental Report highlights the progress we made in 2025 to conserve resources, reduce our environmental footprint and invest in long-term resilience. From improving energy and water efficiency and expanding cleaner energy solutions to protecting watersheds, wildlife habitat and water quality, our work reflects a thoughtful and deliberate commitment to stewardship.

We made important investments to enhance system resilience and environmental performance, including progress under our Sustainable Energy Plan. Placing our first large-scale battery energy storage system into service at the Jackson Fuller Substation marked a significant step toward improving grid flexibility and supporting a cleaner, more reliable energy future for Colorado Springs.

Protecting water quality and ensuring a sustainable water supply remain core responsibilities. Through watershed



CEO Travas Deal

protection, water treatment, rigorous monitoring and long-range system planning, we work every day to safeguard our region's high-quality water resources. We also continued to invest in our wastewater system to protect public health, support environmental compliance and prepare our infrastructure for future growth. These efforts are made possible by our employees, whose expertise and dedication drive responsible operations across our electric, natural gas, water and wastewater systems.

Environmental stewardship extends beyond utility operations. We remain committed to conserving wildlife habitat, protecting sensitive natural resources and responsibly balancing recreational access across our service territory. Meaningful environmental progress also requires collaboration. By working closely with

regulators, community partners and customers, we ensure our actions reflect shared values and local priorities. Through education, outreach and transparent decision-making, we strive to empower our community to use resources wisely and to have a voice in how their utility operates.

As our community continues to grow and evolve, we remain committed to thoughtful planning and caring for our resources. We know how important it is to keep your service reliable and affordable while also protecting the environment we all share. Through investments in modern infrastructure, cleaner energy, watershed protection and improved efficiency, we're taking meaningful steps today to ensure our utility and our community are ready for what's ahead.



Travas Deal, CEO

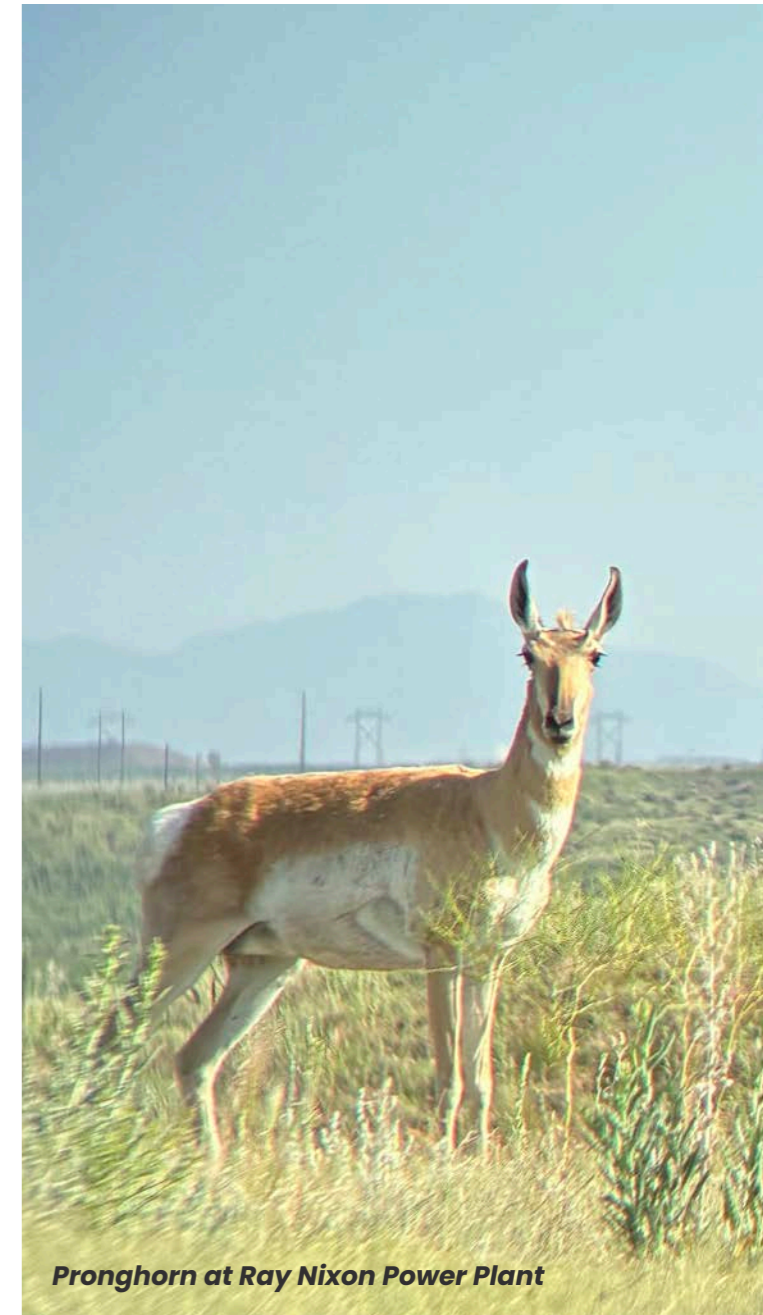
## Environmental stewardship expectations

Our customers entrust us to protect public health and the environment while providing reliable and competitive utilities. To honor that trust, our work is guided by a set of Environmental Stewardship Commitments established by our Utilities Board. These commitments define how we lead, operate, and serve our community across ten key areas of environmental responsibility.

- Provide customers with educational materials and solutions to promote energy and water conservation and renewable energy technologies.
- Promote efficient energy and water consumption in new buildings and landscapes.
- Ensure emissions from operations meet or surpass air quality regulations.
- Ensure local ground and surface water discharge from operations meet or surpass surface water and groundwater quality standards.
- Maintain or enhance the visual appeal of utility operations where cost effective.
- Ensure the community receives a portion of its electric needs from renewable sources.
- Strive to preserve and protect wildlife, wildlife habitat, and wetlands during construction and operation of facilities and infrastructure.
- Strive to preserve and protect cultural

and historic sites during construction and operation of facilities and infrastructure.

- Engage the community in Utilities Board decisions on our operations that affect the environment.
- Strive to minimize or reuse our waste to reduce impact on the environment.



*Pronghorn at Ray Nixon Power Plant*

# Conserving resources for a sustainable future

Energy and water efficiency are essential to our mission of environmental stewardship and community responsibility. As our region grows, wise use of these limited natural resources supports longterm economic vitality and quality of life. Much of our work is helping customers understand how their choices impact resource use. Through educational programs, outreach events and demonstration projects, we empower our community to conserve energy and water, reduce costs and protect the environment. Our goal is to build a culture of conservation that benefits everyone.



## Conservation and Environmental Center (CEC) and Water Wise Demonstration Garden

We promote energy and water efficiency through a balanced approach of education, incentives and policy. We support environmentally responsible operations by monitoring outdoor water use, upgrading irrigation systems to reduce waste, and replacing high-water-use turfgrass with native and water-wise plants to enhance landscape sustainability. These efforts are reinforced through educational events, community partnerships, csu.org and our CEC, which serves as a hub for learning and a model for responsible resource management.

### Be one of the 3,000 visitors to the CEC each year



Energy and water demonstration programs



High-efficiency appliances and interactive displays



Water and energy experts on hand to answer your questions

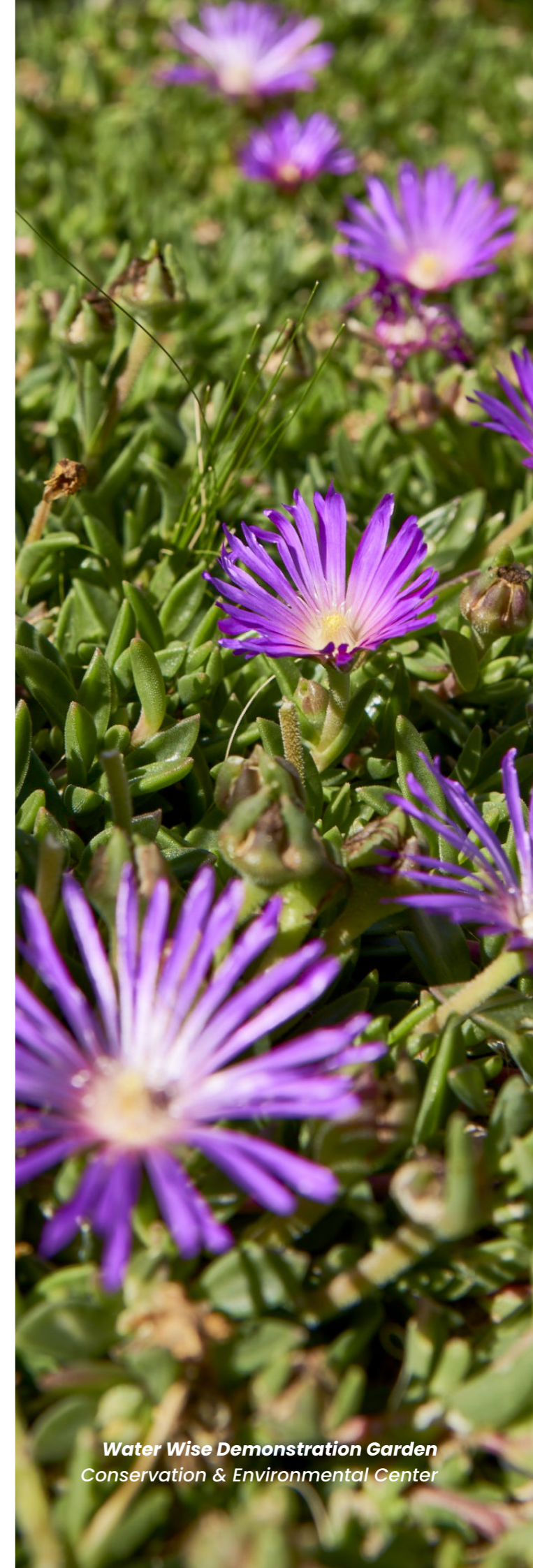


Surrounding gardens with native and water-wise plants

**2855 Mesa Road**  
**8 a.m. - 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.**  
**Monday - Friday**

The Water Wise Demonstration Garden surrounding the CEC is recognized as one of the finest of its kind in the country. Despite Colorado Springs' semi-arid climate, a wide range of vibrant, native, and water-wise plants thrive here. At this garden you can explore plant varieties that use significantly less water than traditional warm-season turf grasses, helping you conserve water while creating beautiful, relaxing outdoor spaces for your home or business. The facility also features do-it-yourself landscape displays showcasing low-water lawn alternatives, plant beds, and other landscape elements each accompanied by plans, details, and tips to help you design and maintain your own water-wise landscape.

When voluntary programs aren't enough to drive lasting change, we implement policies like the Water Shortage Ordinance, which includes Water Wise Rules that prohibit wasteful outdoor water practices such as overwatering. The ReToolCOS zoning code introduced a modern Unified Development Code, including a 25% limit on high-water-use turfgrass in new developments. Since its implementation in 2024, our Water Conservation team has tracked landscape trends and found that new commercial properties consistently use less than the allowed turfgrass limit.



*Water Wise Demonstration Garden  
Conservation & Environmental Center*

## Efficiency programs, services and rebates

Our customers can save energy, water and money by participating in our efficiency programs and services. From smart irrigation controls to insulation, we offer money-saving rebates on a variety of water and energy-efficient products to meet customer needs. We also offer free landscape design consultations, energy and water efficiency audits (indoor and outdoor) and many educational resources.

Energy and water efficiency start with thoughtful planning. Our daily operations are guided by the long term goals outlined in our Integrated Resource Plans, including the Sustainable Water Plan, the Sustainable Energy Plan, the Water Efficiency Plan and the Clean Heat Plan.

## Energy Wise time-of-day rates

In 2025, we initiated Energy Wise rates, which allow our customers to save on their bills by using electricity during times of lower demand, called “off-peak” hours.

Scan the code for tips on shifting energy use and lowering your bill.



[csu.org/energywise](https://csu.org/energywise)

# ENERGY WISE

## Our commitment in action: Clean facilities and fleet

Just as we encourage our customers to use energy and water wisely, we hold ourselves to the same standard. Through sustainable building practices, efficient landscapes and a cleaner fleet, we’re reducing our environmental footprint while supporting long-term resource stewardship. From LEED-certified facilities to electric vehicles (EV) and public EV charging stations, our commitment to efficiency is reflected in how we build, operate and serve our community.

### Sustainable building achievements

Our state-certified water quality laboratory uses advanced instrumentation to ensure the reliability and safety of our drinking water. The 48,500-square-foot facility achieved LEED™ Silver certification from the U.S. Green Building Council in 2005, a recognition awarded to buildings that meet rigorous standards for energy efficiency, water conservation, and sustainable design.

We received the 2024 Market Leader Award from the ENERGY STAR Residential New Construction program, which recognizes our organization’s significant commitment and success in providing ENERGY STAR certified homes and apartments for families across the country.

### Fleet management

We take great pride in operating a diverse and forward-thinking alternative-fuel fleet of vehicles. Our current fleet of alternative-fuel vehicles includes four electric hybrid vehicles, 15 EVs, 299 ethanol flex-fuel vehicles, and 42 compressed natural gas vehicles. Included in this number are six hybrid bucket trucks, showcasing our commitment to integrating sustainable technology, even in specialized utility operations. This investment reflects our dedication to reducing emissions, improving fuel efficiency and supporting cleaner transportation solutions. By embracing a wide range of alternative fuels, we’re not only lowering our environmental impact, we are setting a strong example for responsible fleet management and innovation in public service.

### EV charging

As more people switch to EVs in Colorado Springs, we are monitoring increased electric usage related to charging and how that might affect our overall electric system. We offer several public charging stations at many of our facilities as well as at the City Administration Building downtown parking garage.

## Cleaner energy, clearer skies

We know that clean air is essential to the health and well-being of our community. Meeting air quality regulations is a responsibility we take seriously. We've made significant progress reducing emissions from our electric generation facilities, working closely with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) and other partners. Our continued investments in advanced technologies and cleaner energy sources reflect our commitment to reducing our environmental impact.

Through effective operations and maintenance, state of the art pollution controls, thoughtful fuel choices, and a growing use of renewable energy, we've built a diverse and increasingly sustainable electric generation portfolio. Today, our system includes a mix of coal and natural gas units alongside a rising share of hydroelectric, wind, and solar resources. This evolving balance demonstrates our



Palmer Solar Array

long-term commitment to cleaner, more resilient energy solutions.

These improvements were driven largely by retiring coal-fired generation at the Martin Drake Power Plant in 2022 and implementing our Sustainable Energy Plan, a forward-looking strategy designed to cut carbon emissions, manage long-term costs and maintain our industry-leading reliability. As a result of these efforts, El Paso County meets all national air quality standards.

Our work is not just about expanding our system, it is about ensuring our customers have access to safe, reliable and cleaner energy as technologies evolve and community needs change. With power available more than 99.99% of the time, our electric system remains one of the most dependable in the nation. At the same time, we continue investing in clean energy solutions to ensure Colorado Springs is powered by resilient, renewable resources for generations to come.

### Generation sources

A diverse mix of energy resources powers our community. This balanced approach helps us deliver electricity that's affordable, reliable and environmentally responsible. Thoughtfully managing our energy portfolio helps ensure low rates, dependable service and our commitment to environmental stewardship.

Between 2005 and 2025 we achieved major reductions in emissions from our electric generating resources:

Sulfur dioxide (SO <sub>2</sub> )	more than ↓ 96%
Nitrogen oxides (NO <sub>x</sub> )	more than ↓ 80%
Carbon dioxide (CO <sub>2</sub> )	more than ↓ 49%

### Hydroelectric

Hydroelectric power uses the energy of flowing water to produce clean, renewable electricity. Through our own facilities and our Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) allocation, we generate 110 megawatts (MW) of hydroelectric power, about 7.6% of our community's electricity needs.

### Solar

Colorado's abundant sunshine plays a major role in our energy mix. From community solar gardens to large-scale arrays, solar energy continues to grow. In 2025 solar generation totaled 290 MW, supplying 14.4% of our electricity.

### Wind

60 MW of wind generation currently supplies 4.3% of our energy. As we move toward a more sustainable future, we plan to expand our wind portfolio.

### Coal

Coal creates energy by being burned to make hot steam that turns a turbine to produce electricity. While we plan to eventually retire all coal-fired plants, the coal-fired unit at the Ray D. Nixon Power Plant remains an important part of our fleet. At 208 MW, it is still one of our largest generating units. In 2022, we retired the Martin Drake Power Plant, ending nearly a century of coal-powered generation at that site.

### Natural gas

Natural gas generation is a key part of providing reliable service. The Front Range Power Plant is our largest facility at 460 MW. In 2023, we commissioned six natural gas combustion turbines (150 MW total) at the former Drake site to support peak demand. We also operate two natural gas turbines at Nixon (60 MW) and are working towards developing an additional 400 MW of natural gas generation. In 2025, we retired three natural gas units at Birdsall Power Plant.



One of six natural gas generators at the former Drake site



## Battery storage

Battery storage boosts reliability by supporting renewable sources like solar and wind. It can deliver energy when demand is high or when weather reduces renewable output, and it recharges during low-demand periods or when excess, lower-cost power is available.

**As part of our Sustainable Energy Plan, we added 100 MW of battery storage at the Jackson Fuller Substation in 2025, with plans to add another 100 MW in the coming years.**

## Southwest Power Pool

Colorado energy providers are competing for many of the same clean energy resources and limited transmission capacity. To manage costs and maintain reliability, we joined the Southwest Power Pool (SPP) Western Energy Imbalance Service Market in 2022. Participation has already saved customers millions while helping us maintain a reliable energy supply. Through SPP, we can buy excess electricity from other utilities at a lower cost and sell our own excess power when demand is higher elsewhere in the country, bringing value back to our customers.



## Sustainable energy projects

We are working on projects across our community that improve the electric grid, reduce emissions, increase clean energy use and provide safe, affordable energy. Examples of current and completed projects include:

- **Jackson Fuller Energy Storage Project:** Large-scale lithium-ion battery system placed in service in April 2025.
- **Kelker Substation Expansion:** Replacing aging infrastructure and expanding capacity; completion expected in 2028.
- **Horizon Substation Project:** Supporting new battery storage near the airport; online in 2028.
- **Briargate Substation and Transmission Project:** Expanded in 2023 to increase capacity and reliability on the north side of our service area.
- **Cottonwood-Fuller Transmission Line:** Completed in 2023 using specialty conductors to boost capacity with minimal disruption.
- **Midway-Kelker Transmission Line:** Upgrading poles, circuits and substation equipment to increase import capacity; phased completion 2026–2028.
- **Williams Creek Substation:** Expanded in 2023 to support the Pike Solar Array and improve operational flexibility.



Kelker Substation

## Sustainable Energy Plan and renewable energy certificates

Our Sustainable Energy Plan is our roadmap to a cleaner, more resilient energy future. It guides our efforts to reduce carbon emissions, diversify our energy mix, and strengthen grid reliability while keeping costs low. We also purchase and sell Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) to generate revenue and comply with Colorado's Renewable Energy Standard, which requires municipal utilities to obtain 10% of retail electricity from eligible renewable sources.

**In 2025, 26.5% of our total generation mix came from carbon-free resources.**

This reflects our overall energy portfolio and does not represent Renewable Energy Standard compliance or ownership of environmental attributes.

# Water and groundwater quality

Our customers benefit from one of the nation’s most pristine sources of drinking water – the Rocky Mountains. Nearly 75% of our water originates as snowmelt near the Continental Divide, making our customers primarily first-time users of the water. Because it has not been previously treated, consumed, or recycled, it is naturally free of many chemicals and pollutants. To preserve this exceptional quality, we are diligent in areas such as watershed protection and water treatment. We take great pride in providing our customers with drinking water that meets or exceeds all state and federal water quality standards.

## Watershed protection

We maintain water infrastructure across 11 counties and within three of Colorado’s major river basins – the Colorado, Arkansas and the South Platte. To ensure the delivery of high-quality water, we are committed to managing and protecting the health of the watersheds that supply our community. Our watershed planning team, consisting of biologists, natural resource planners, raw water operators and environmental engineers, works collaboratively to monitor water quality, mitigate erosion and safeguard our water supply from threats such as poor forest health, wildfires, invasive species and other environmental stressors.

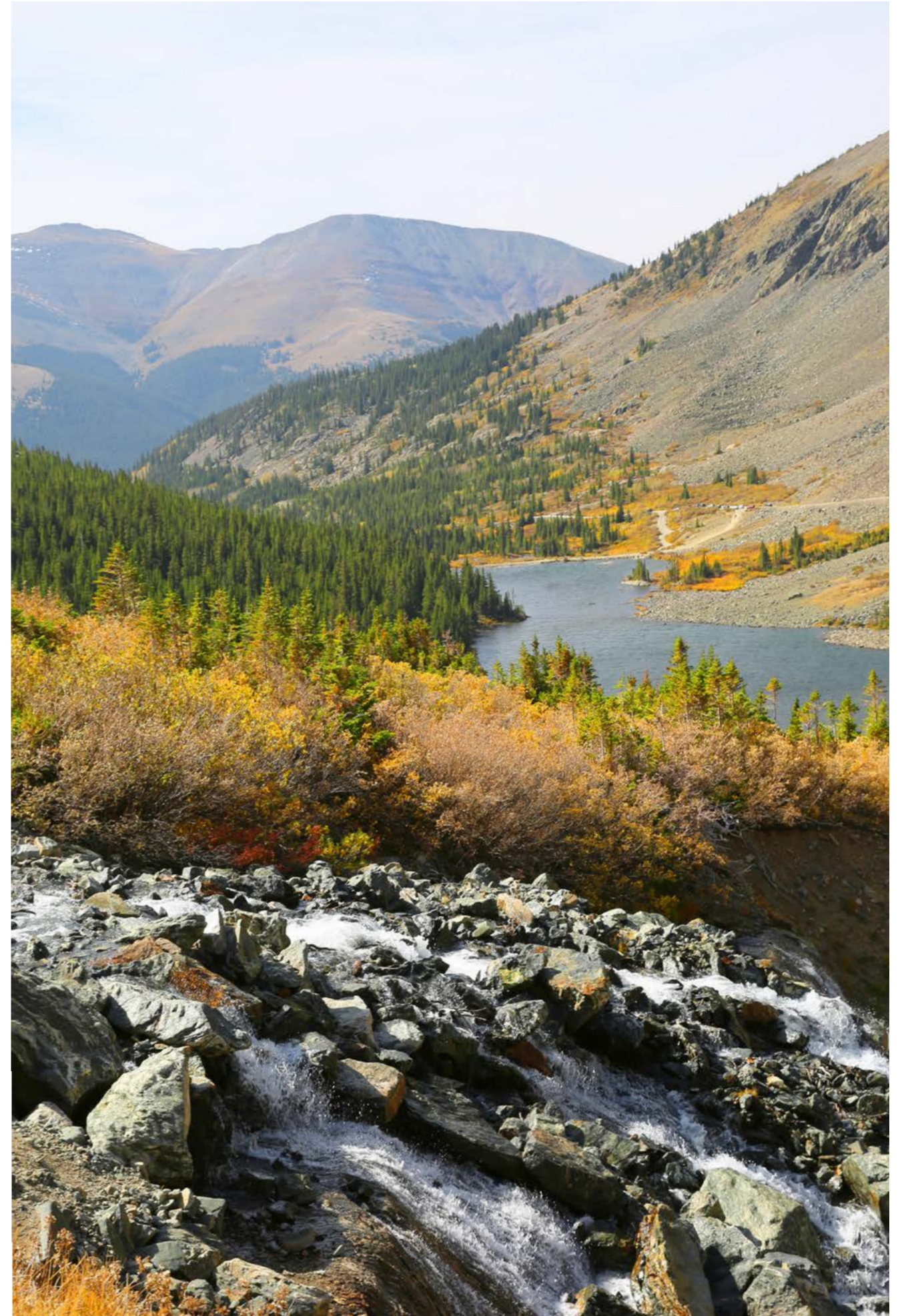
## Water system

Our reliable water system is rooted in the foresight of early planners who recognized that our community would one day outgrow its local water supplies. Their vision continues to benefit us today. Our employees carry forward this legacy by responsibly managing every aspect of the system, from securing water rights to delivering high-quality water to homes and businesses. From the highest peaks of the Continental Divide to the Arkansas River Valley in the eastern plains, we draw water from a diverse range of sources. Our delivery system spans more than 100 miles into the mountains and nearly 100 miles south and east into the plains. Within and around Colorado Springs, we operate an extensive network of water treatment facilities and manage over 2,500 miles of water mains.

## Water treatment

At our treatment plants, raw (untreated) water passes through a series of processes designed to remove suspended particles and ensure proper disinfection. Once treated, this finished water flows into our distribution system and ultimately reaches customers through a water meter.

To maintain the highest quality drinking water throughout this process, our laboratory continuously monitors both raw and finished water. We conduct ongoing testing and analysis for a wide range of chemical and biological indicators. This includes testing for contaminants such as viruses and bacteria, metals, pesticides and herbicides, PFAS, and more. Many



of these tests are required by state and federal regulations, while others – such as taste and odor evaluations – are part of our broader commitment to quality.

We believe our customers deserve to know what's in their drinking water. Each year, we compile all testing results into our annual Water Quality Report, created in accordance with the Safe Drinking Water Act and state requirements. The report is available at [csu.org](http://csu.org).

### Water quality lab

To ensure the water quality meets or exceeds permitted levels, we routinely examine samples from a variety of water and wastewater sources. We also analyze samples from Fountain Creek to ensure the effluent from our water resource recovery facilities does not negatively impact the ecosystem or downstream users. Our laboratory is state-certified and uses advanced technology to operate 365 days a year.

**We collect and analyze more than 20,000 water samples and perform more than 70,000 tests in our water lab each year.**

These steps are important and necessary to deliver on our commitment to provide safe, quality drinking water.

### Groundwater protection

To track the environmental impacts of our operations, we conduct regular groundwater quality monitoring at Clear Spring Ranch. This monitoring is associated with the onsite

placement of biosolids, coal combustion residuals, and water treatment residuals. Results are reported annually to the CDPHE.

### Backflow prevention

Backflow happens when water that is supposed to flow into a facility reverses direction and flows back toward the water distribution system. Depending on the facility's activities and potential hazards, this reverse flow can introduce pollutants or contaminants into the water supply.

To prevent this, businesses and multifamily properties are required to install backflow prevention assemblies on their plumbing systems. Each business is responsible for ensuring these assemblies are properly installed and tested every year by licensed backflow testers.

**We currently manage roughly 21,000 backflow records and maintain oversight of about 16,000 active assemblies.**

### AF CURE participation

We continue to participate with other entities in the Arkansas-Fountain Coalition for Urban/Rural River Evaluation to coordinate regional water quality monitoring and share costs with other permit holders. This collaboration ensures consistent, high-quality watershed data, strengthens our ability to advocate for practical and protective regulations, and helps keep compliance costs – and ultimately customer rates – lower while safeguarding our local waterways.

## Wastewater treatment and sewer system performance

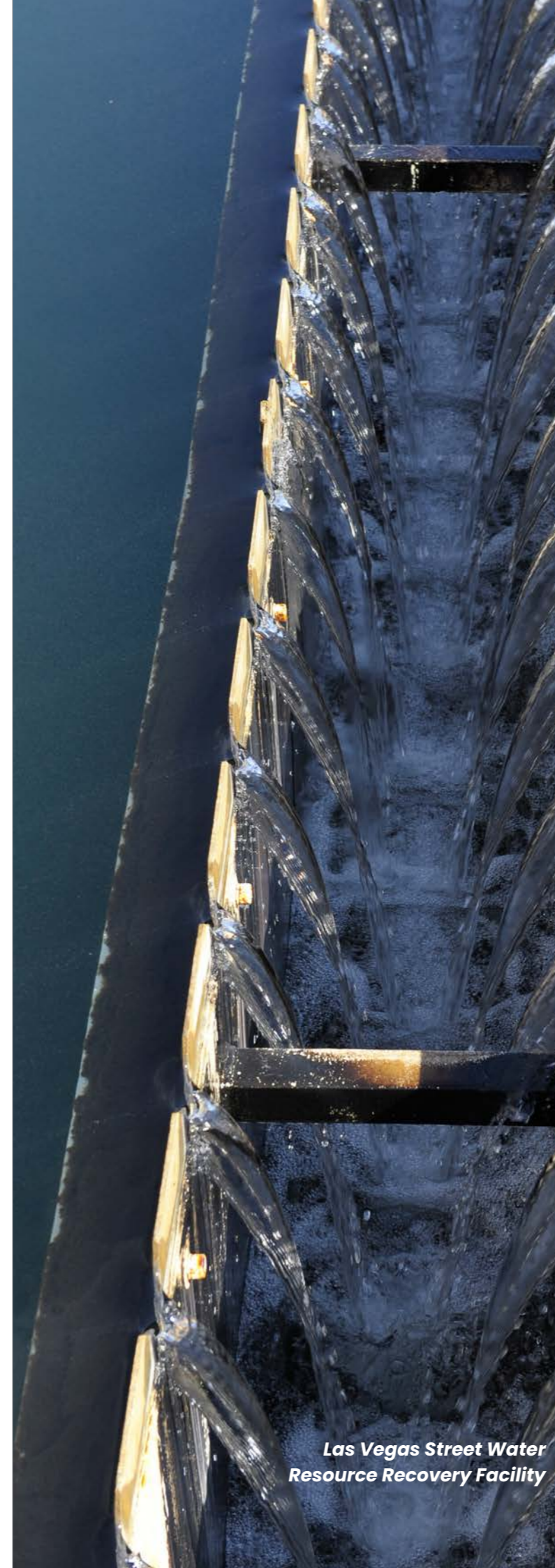
With so much taking place underground and behind the scenes, wastewater services are rarely given a second thought. More than the disposal of household and business waste, our complex system of pipes, pump stations and treatment facilities work in concert to ensure the health of our community. The maintenance and operation of wastewater infrastructure is a vital service that protects public health and our water supplies.

### Collection system

After water goes down drains in our homes and businesses, it enters the wastewater collection system and travels through a series of mains. Wastewater is delivered to our water resource recovery facilities (or treatment plants) by gravity or by pumping at one of our 19 lift stations around the city.

With 195 square miles of service territory, we operate one of Colorado's largest wastewater systems, providing reliable, environmentally responsible wastewater collection and treatment services.

**On any given day, more than 38 million gallons of wastewater flows from more than 150,000 service points through 1,800 miles of mains.**



*Las Vegas Street Water Resource Recovery Facility*

## Water resource recovery facilities

Using advanced technology, the wastewater treatment process ensures that final effluent meets all discharge requirements established by the CDPHE and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Both of our water resource recovery facilities use ultraviolet disinfection, an effective and safer alternative to traditional chlorine gas, to improve *E. coli* control and support consistent permit compliance.

We operate two water resource recovery facilities and a separate treatment facility that manages solids and other materials removed during the treatment process.

### Diversion structure

Our diversion structure, upstream of the J.D. Phillips Water Resource Recovery Facility, allows for the “peaks” in diurnal flow and load to be diverted to the Las Vegas Street Water Resource Recovery Facility, if necessary. The diversion structure is expected to assist operations by limiting peak diurnal flows and loadings, and was recently rehabilitated in 2024.

### Performance recognition

Our water recovery resource facilities consistently achieve awards in excellence in permit compliance from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies. In 2024 we received a Gold Peak Performance Award for the Las Vegas Street Water Resource Recovery Facility and a Silver Peak Performance Award for the J.D. Phillips Water Resource Recovery Facility.

## Las Vegas Street Water Resource Recovery Facility

- ▶ First facility of its type in Colorado Springs.
- ▶ City’s main water resource recovery facility.
- ▶ Built in 1930, upgrades in the ‘50s, ‘70s, ‘90s and ‘00s.
- ▶ Permitted capacity: 75 million gallons per day.

## J.D. Phillips Water Resource Recovery Facility

- ▶ Online in 2007 for growing north and northeast Springs.
- ▶ State-of-the-art facility, odor control and small staff.
- ▶ Permitted capacity: 20 million gallons per day.

## Clear Spring Ranch Solids Handling Facility

- ▶ Processes biosolids from other facilities.
- ▶ Solids travel through 17.6 miles of pipeline to facility.
- ▶ Methane gas generated is used for treatment process.
- ▶ Adjacent dam contains runoff and groundwater.

## We use a variety of methods to manage the wastewater collection system:

We clean more than  
**1/3**  
of the collection system  
each year



Crews use closed-circuit TV to monitor and make repairs of wastewater pipes.



Utility specialists work with the industrial pretreatment team to educate local restaurants and businesses on how fat, oil and grease can cause blockages in our system.

## Sanitary sewer system maintenance

We use a variety of methods to maintain the wastewater collection system, minimizing wastewater overflows and ensuring protection of human health and the environment. Mains and interceptors are managed and maintained by our wastewater operations team. Staff regularly perform preventative maintenance as well as system improvements to help protect our community.

Even with the above proactive measures, due to factors outside of our control, wastewater overflows and spills do occur on occasion. Known as “sanitary sewer overflows,” these events can be caused by vandalism, tree roots, pipeline settling or failure, crossbores, grease/debris blockage and damage from severe storm events. Our overflow response team is on standby 24 hours a day to promptly respond to spills.

Overflow is redirected to a functioning pipeline, the site is promptly cleaned, the blockage is removed, and any pipeline damage is repaired, usually within 24 hours.

We also take steps to address potential public health and safety issues associated with overflows. Each overflow site is cleaned through the recovery of pooled liquids, physical removal of residue and debris, and flushed with potable water. We notify downstream users (such as irrigation companies) of large overflows and work with regulatory agencies and local health officials to meet all reporting obligations and ensure protection of public health.

## Non-potable water

Treated wastewater is returned to streams or reused in our non-potable distribution system. Wastewater that goes through additional treatment, including filtration, is delivered to our non-potable distribution system where it is used to irrigate parks, golf courses, campuses and community properties. Non-potable water development plays a critical role in water supply planning and management. Today, about 13% of our water portfolio is comprised of non-potable water.

## Industrial pretreatment

Wastewater from some industrial and commercial sources can contain higher levels of contaminants, which can affect water quality or potentially damage infrastructure. From dentist offices and car washes to large-scale manufacturing facilities, our industrial pretreatment program works with local businesses to protect our infrastructure and the environment.

Our industrial pretreatment program works to ensure that wastewater entering the system does not interfere with treatment processes or cause exceedances of permit limits. Our industrial pretreatment team conducts an extensive system-wide wastewater monitoring program and develops local limits for controlling industrial discharges to the wastewater system.



## Fats, oils, and grease

Liquid waste containing fats, oils and grease (FOG) that is sent down the drain can coagulate and congeal into a hardened layer on the inside of drainpipes and wastewater collection lines. FOG can accumulate on the inside of the wastewater pipes to the extent that they become completely blocked.

Our team partners with the El Paso County Health Department, the Pikes Peak Regional Building Department and Utilities' Development Services to ensure each new food service establishment meets specific requirements designed to protect the wastewater system. Liquid waste haulers in our service area are permitted to ensure that grease transported to the Las Vegas Street Water Resource Recovery Facility is managed properly and our system is protected. We also conduct customer-focused campaigns about the proper disposal of FOG during holidays such as Thanksgiving.

## Flushable wipes

So-called "flushable" wipes aren't actually flushable at all. They do not degrade once they reach water and readily accumulate in pipes. We supported the Wastewater Infrastructure Pollution Prevention and Environmental Safety (or WIPPES) Act which sought to require clear and conspicuous labeling of premoistened wipes. This U.S. House of Representatives passed the bipartisan bill in July 2025, and it now awaits passage by the U.S. Senate.



## Wastewater System Expansion

We are making a major investment in our wastewater system to ensure it continues to serve our community reliably – today and into the future. After a thorough analysis, we determined that improvements are necessary to provide a system that can meet long-term needs. Rather than constructing a new wastewater treatment plant, which is more costly and would face significant permitting and operational challenges, the wastewater system expansion was chosen as the most efficient, cost-effective path forward for all customers. Without expansion, the current system could reach capacity by 2028.

To address this, the Wastewater System Expansion (WSE) includes construction of 11 miles of new gravity pipeline that will carry wastewater from the northeast and eastern parts of the city to the Las Vegas Street Water Resource Recovery Facility; seven miles of pipeline that will carry future wastewater flow from the south to the Sand Creek Lift Station and then to the Las Vegas Street facility; and two lift stations and force mains.

A technically complex undertaking, this project will employ an innovative approach to managing wastewater. When completed in the early 2030s, the expanded system will have the capacity to handle nearly 18 million gallons of wastewater daily, ensuring reliable service for residents and businesses across Colorado Springs. This forward-thinking approach demonstrates our dedication to infrastructure investment, resiliency and operational excellence.

This project represents a shared investment in system reliability and growth. Initial costs will be covered through bonds and revenue generated from customer based-rates. City Council approved a phased 9% base-rate increase from 2025-2029, of which 5.5% will be annually dedicated to WSE. As new houses and businesses are built, developers will contribute through customer connection fees. These fees represent their proportional share of the infrastructure investment and will help offset future rate increases for all customers. This approach ensures that both current customers and new growth contribute fairly to the long-term affordability and sustainability of our wastewater system.

## Wildlife and habitat

We are deeply committed to ensuring that our operations do not harm the habitats of birds and other wildlife. We work closely with partners, including Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) and other conservation organizations, to strengthen our efforts and align with best practices. By proactively mitigating interactions between our infrastructure and wildlife, we help preserve local ecosystems and reduce the risk of costly and disruptive issues such as service outages and fire hazards. This approach reflects our dedication to environmental stewardship and operational resilience.

### Avian Protection Program and electric line protection

Birds of prey – or raptors – often use utility poles to hunt, feed and rest. Some of the more common raptor species found in our

service territory are the red-tailed hawk, great horned owl, ferruginous hawk, Swainson's hawk, rough-legged hawk, northern goshawk, Cooper's hawk, and burrowing owl.

Most birds in our area are protected through the Migratory Bird Protection Act and we also actively protect birds through our Avian Protection Program, which includes annual safety training for electric operations crews, pre-construction nest surveys, removal of inactive nests from active facilities as necessary, and retrofitting electric systems to protect avian wildlife from potential interactions with those systems.

We follow stringent construction standards when installing new poles and we retrofit existing ones with protective devices. Protective devices on utility poles and lines prevent birds and small mammals from

electric shock. In addition, we install electric lines underground when it is feasible.

Injured or fledgling raptors that have fallen out of a nest within our infrastructure are transported to a wildlife rehabilitation center for recovery and released back to the wild when possible. We continually update protection standards, postpone projects as necessary and improve safety procedures to keep wildlife safe. We also collaborate with birders who conduct annual bird surveys on our local properties to gather data on bird populations, habitat status, and migration patterns.

Our Raptor Protection Program educates students on the importance of respecting birds of prey. Our wildlife experts use interactive displays to share information on raptor characteristics, behavior, habitat conservation and raptor protection efforts.

**In 2025, we gave 71 presentations to over 3,000 individuals about powerline safety for birds.**

### Habitat protection

Pre-construction environmental reviews identify potential wildlife and wetland resources, allowing for avoidance, minimization and mitigation throughout the lifecycle of construction projects. Environmental reviews conducted during the planning phase of each construction project help us identify applicable regulations, permit requirements, and best management practices. This provides time to adjust design, obtain necessary permits, prepare environmental plans, and implement control measures without interrupting construction schedules.



Yellow-breasted chat

## Beaver engineering

Historically, beavers created natural fire breaks on Pikes Peak by building permeable dams, forming riparian corridors and meadows that slowed stream flows. With support from the Colorado Water Conservation Board's Wildfire Ready Watersheds Program, we are restoring this habitat near North Catamount Reservoir using low-tech, process-based restoration. The project includes removing conifers, improving culverts to flow water more efficiently, and installing simulated beaver structures and post assisted log structures to improve riparian corridors. Launched in 2025 and continuing through 2026, the effort aims to improve water quality, enhance ecosystem health and increase creek resiliency while encouraging beaver activity in the future.

## Threatened and endangered species

Because we operate across diverse habitats in Colorado, our service area includes many threatened and endangered species, such as the Preble's meadow jumping mouse, burrowing owl, eastern black rail, piping plover, monarch butterfly, tri-colored bat (pending listing), greenback cutthroat trout, Ute Ladies'-tresses, Colorado pikeminnow, humpback chub, razorback sucker and bonytail.

We plan our work with these species in mind to ensure both regulatory compliance and responsible conservation. For example, when projects occur near potential habitat for the Preble's meadow jumping mouse, we conduct habitat assessments and apply

mitigation measures to avoid impacts during construction and operations. For sensitive plant species like Ute Ladies'-tresses, we either avoid disturbance entirely or, when necessary, relocate plants to suitable habitat. We update our practices to align with new requirements and evolving ecological needs as additional species are listed.



Beaver dam on Pikes Peak

## Fish protection

Our reservoirs and creeks on Pikes Peak play a vital role in CPW's fish-management efforts. Each spring, CPW collects and fertilizes eggs from the native greenback cutthroat trout and sends them to regional hatcheries, where young fish are raised for future stocking in lakes and streams across the state.

### At times, necessary reservoir repairs call for creative collaboration to protect native and sport fish.

When a leak was discovered in the Mason Reservoir transfer pipe in November 2024, repairs required the reservoir to be drawn down. Working closely with CPW, we carried out a coordinated fish-salvage operation to relocate as many Colorado cutthroat trout as possible before water levels reached dead pool. Through this partnership, more than 1,000 fish were safely relocated.



Colorado cutthroat trout

## Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program

The Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program involves the recovery of four federally listed fish species in the upper Colorado River basin including the Colorado pikeminnow, humpback chub, razorback sucker and bonytail. Participants in the program include four federal agencies the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Bureau of Reclamation, the National Park Service, and the Western Area Power Administration, the states of Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming, Upper Basin water users, Colorado River Storage Project power customers, and other environmental organizations.

### As of 2022, the Recovery Program has provided for over 2,000 water projects throughout the upper Colorado River basin.



## South Platte Protection Plan and Lake George Diversion Removal

Removing a former diversion dam was a critical step in restoring natural fish movement on the South Platte River. Working with the U.S. Forest Service and the non-profit Coalition for the Upper South Platte, this project was completed using natural stream design principles, allowing fish to move freely between Cheesman and Eleven Mile Reservoirs. Through strong partnerships and multiple grant funding sources, this effort also helped restore the surrounding landscape as an important gateway into Eleven Mile Canyon.

## Flood management

We are uniquely positioned to manage water movement within the Arkansas Basin. Our infrastructure allows us to help transfer water across reservoirs, reduce the risk of flooding or spills from Pueblo Reservoir and respond to high-flow events. These efforts are coordinated through our operations and in collaboration with other water users in both the Upper and Lower Arkansas reaches.

## Wetlands

Wetlands are among the most productive ecosystems on Earth and are protected under the Clean Water Act for their vital role in supporting wildlife habitat, controlling floods, recharging groundwater and naturally treating water. These ecosystems are found throughout our service territory, from remote mountain watersheds to creeks, streams, reservoirs and low-lying drainage areas. We also maintain designated wetland

Pinello Wetlands

mitigation sites at Pinello Ranch and Clear Spring Ranch. Through careful planning and management, we preserve and enhance these valuable resources as part of our broader environmental stewardship efforts.

## Noxious weeds

Noxious weeds are aggressive, non-native plants that pose a serious threat to Colorado's natural landscapes and agricultural areas. They outcompete native vegetation, reduce crop yields, contribute to soil erosion and increase the risk of devastating wildfires. Noxious weeds are identified and controlled on local and remote properties to promote healthier native ecosystems. Vegetation restoration processes are implemented on construction projects to establish native and desirable vegetation species and minimize noxious weed establishment in disturbed areas.

## Forest health

Wildfire is a natural part of life in the Pikes Peak region, and it poses significant risks to the high-mountain watersheds that supply most of our drinking water. Fires in these areas can damage utility infrastructure and affect water quality decades after a major event.

**For more than 35 years, our Watershed Planning group led a Forest Management Program to reduce wildfire risk and improve forest health.**

The program relies on strong partnerships and coordinated efforts across the Front Range and throughout our infrastructure.

We work closely with the Colorado State Forest Service and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) on year-round mitigation projects in our source watersheds. These efforts include thinning dense, fuel-heavy forest stands and implementing strategic restoration treatments that help reduce the severity and long-term impacts of future wildfires. Much of this work occurs near our reservoirs, where forest health, overpopulated forests and wildfire risk is highest.

In 2022, the USFS launched the Wildfire Crisis Strategy (WCS), identifying the greater Colorado Springs area – including Pikes Peak and the Pike National Forest – as one of 21 national priority landscapes for wildfire risk reduction. Using the WCS framework, local partners joined the USFS to form the Central Colorado Forest Collaborative. Members include the Colorado State Forest Service, Colorado Springs Fire Department, local municipalities, non-governmental organizations, military installations, and Teller and El Paso counties. Through a shared mapping process, the group is working to identify and support high-value opportunities for wildfire mitigation across the region.

This mapping approach helps partners align priorities, assess values at risk, and determine where investments will have the greatest impact. By pooling resources, including staffing, funding, contracting, and technical expertise, the collaborative can accelerate project work and strengthen protection of both natural landscapes and critical infrastructure.

We are proud to play a key role in this regional effort to reduce wildfire risk and safeguard the health of our watersheds and community.

## Waste management

Responsible waste management is essential to protecting our environment and supporting a sustainable future. Through a variety of programs focused on pollution prevention, recycling and proper disposal, we work to reduce waste across our operations and facilities. These efforts not only help conserve resources but also reflect our commitment to environmental stewardship and operational efficiency.

### Beneficial reuse

Fly ash is waste generated by burning coal to produce power. Reusing it as a low-cost ingredient in concrete helps reduce the environmental footprint from concrete production.

**Last year, 42,774 tons of fly ash was beneficially reused for liquid waste solidification and 10,993 tons of bottom ash was sold for cement.**

### Recycling

We own and operate three permitted landfills at our Clear Spring Ranch Resource Recovery Facility for the disposal of fly ash, biosolids and construction debris. They allow us to responsibly manage our waste, minimize disposal costs, and reduce potential environmental liability.

At the Sand Creek Recycling Center, we also recycle tree trimming waste and leaves, cable insulation and wiring, scrap metal, electric transformers, fluorescent lamps containing mercury, solvents, used oil, lead-acid and nickel cadmium batteries, antifreeze, aluminum and print cartridges.

In 2025, we recycled:



**7 tons**  
of electronic waste



**19,974 lamps**  
containing mercury



**8,525 gallons**  
of used oil



**584 gallons**  
of antifreeze



**515 tons**  
of steel, aluminum, copper,  
brass, iron and tin



**75,540 tons**  
of construction debris

## Cultural and historic sites

We are committed to protecting cultural and historic resources throughout our service territory. During property acquisitions and construction planning, we conduct comprehensive cultural and historical surveys to identify and preserve significant sites and artifacts. When we encounter resources such as buildings more than 50 years old or archaeological materials, professional archaeologists evaluate them to ensure preservation requirements are met. Our forest management work on watershed properties is also carefully planned to safeguard on-site cultural resources, reflecting our commitment to honoring the region's heritage and history.

## Supporting our community

A core part of our mission is to support the growth, vitality, and quality of life in the Pikes Peak region. As a community-owned utility, we take pride in being a trusted partner to our customers. We actively seek opportunities to collaborate, contribute and engage - because we believe that a strong utility is built on a strong community.

### Education

Customers' decisions about water and energy are shaped by what they know and understand about these limited resources. Much of our efficiency work focuses on supporting and encouraging positive behavior change. Our educational programs help customers learn practical

ways to save water, energy and money. Through these programs, customers gain a better understanding of how to use resources more efficiently and how those actions benefit themselves, the community and the environment. Our continuing public education efforts include outreach to schools, libraries, businesses and community organizations. We also conduct and participate in local events, such as the annual Children's Water Festival, to further engage and inform the community.

**We connected with more than 18,000 customers through events, tours and presentations in 2025 alone.**

We also use a mix of channels to educate customers on efficient energy and water use and to promote our available rebate programs. This outreach includes sharing information through our Connection newsletter, csu.org, social media channels and internal communications. Throughout the year, we also receive earned media coverage highlighting conservation tips, tools, classes and programs.

### Community involvement

Our CEO and Executive Team support volunteerism by personally participating, recognizing employee volunteers and offering paid and unpaid opportunities to give back.

**In 2025, 861 employees contributed 6,114 volunteer hours for 114 nonprofit organizations.**

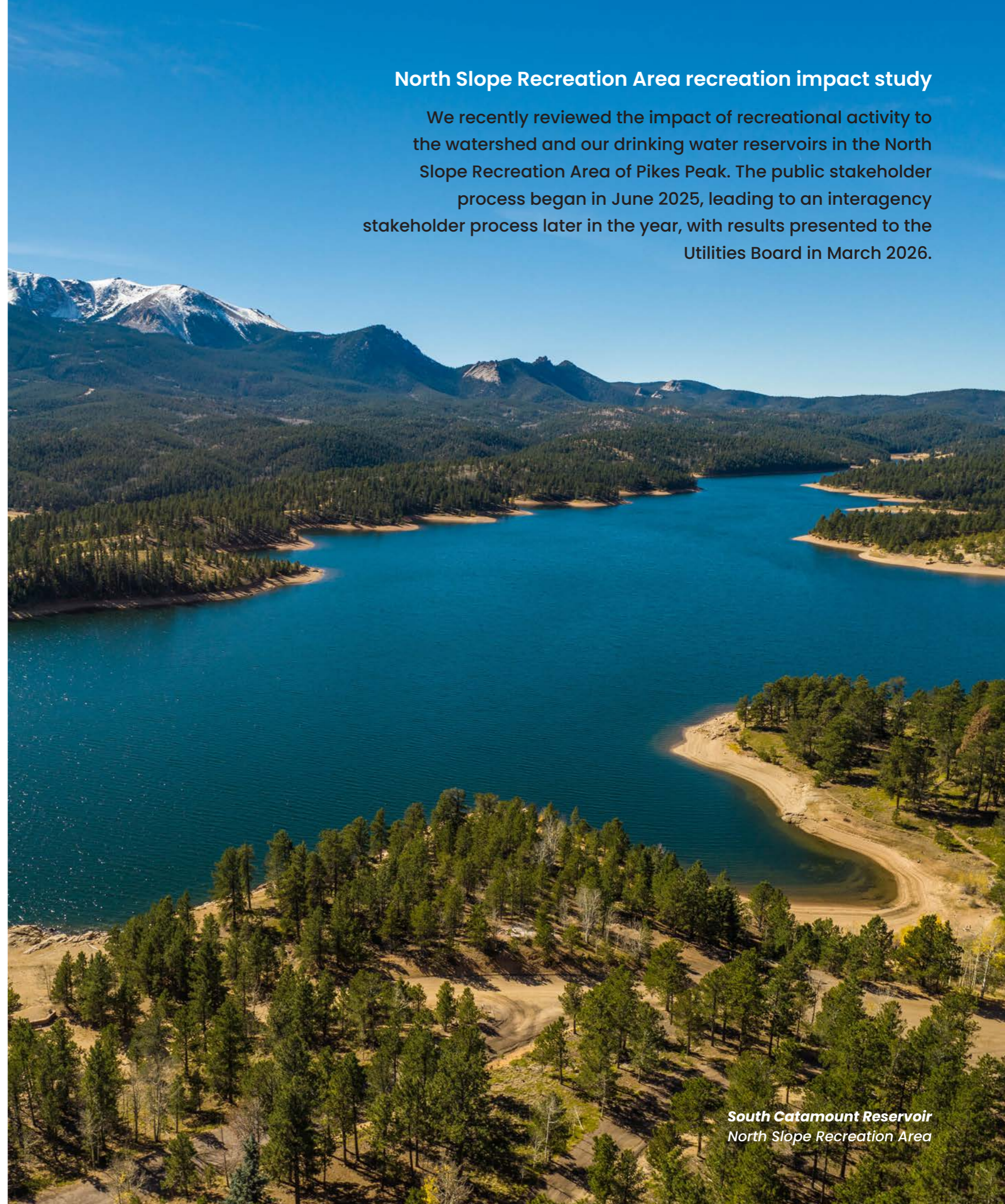
## Recreational opportunities

We are committed to supporting outdoor recreation and work to ensure that many local properties remain accessible for the community to enjoy.

- Clear Spring Ranch contains four miles of trails with abundant opportunities for wildlife viewing. This property opened in 2001 in partnership with El Paso County Parks.
- Pikeview Reservoir offers one of the few urban fishing opportunities in Colorado Springs where anglers can catch stocked game fish such as bluegill, largemouth bass and channel catfish.
- The North Slope Recreation Area on Pikes Peak is home to three reservoirs essential to the city's water supply system – North Catamount, South Catamount and Crystal Creek reservoirs. While we own and manage the reservoirs, recreation is managed by Pikes Peak – America's Mountain, an enterprise of the city. This recreation includes fishing, non-motorized boating, hiking and mountain biking.
- We are currently working with the public and key stakeholders, through robust surveys and public meetings, to review recreational offerings and develop a detailed plan that best serves multiple uses in the North Slope Recreation Area. Recommended changes to the current recreation plan will be presented to Utilities Board and City Council for consideration and approval in 2026.
- The South Slope watershed was Colorado Springs' first major water source in the late 1880s. It's a diverse and biologically rich landscape on the south side of Pikes Peak and is open seasonally by permit. This sensitive and rugged area, home to Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, cutthroat trout and a variety of migratory birds, provides a backcountry experience for visitors. Hiking and biking are allowed on trails, and fishing is allowed in Lake Moraine, McReynolds and Mason Reservoirs. State regulations apply.
- Additional Springs Utilities reservoirs that offer recreation opportunities include Rampart Reservoir, Nichols Reservoir and Rosemont Reservoir in the Pikes Peak region.

## North Slope Recreation Area recreation impact study

We recently reviewed the impact of recreational activity to the watershed and our drinking water reservoirs in the North Slope Recreation Area of Pikes Peak. The public stakeholder process began in June 2025, leading to an interagency stakeholder process later in the year, with results presented to the Utilities Board in March 2026.



*South Catamount Reservoir  
North Slope Recreation Area*



Colorado Springs Utilities<sup>®</sup>

*It's how we're all connected*

*Front cover: Blue River watershed*