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Left: Colorado Farm to Table hired part-time farm hand Sarah Kurmin, pictured, with support from Common Ground in 2021 to help the organization that feeds the hungry grow food more sustainably. Top: Southwest Conservation Corp crews are helping manage the impacts of recreation growth on natural resources.

# Thank You to the Chaffee County Community

**I**t's amazing to me that we are issuing our third annual report for Chaffee Common Ground.

You will find the details of what has been done in 2021 and the proceeding years in the following report. I am very thankful to have been a part of the Chaffee Common Ground process. Out of the Envision Chaffee County community discussions there were many great ideas advanced on how we can save the best of what we have in Chaffee County while accommodating the inevitable growth that is going to occur.

There were three significant visions expressed in the Envision process that appeared to need new funding sources and leadership to provide for the community's desired future. The first of these was Forest Health and Wildfire Resilience. The second was work that keeps agricultural lands sustainable and viable into the future. The third was to find ways to balance the impact of growing recreational use to preserve our natural resources.

To address the funding needs for these three areas, the County Commissioners proposed Ballot Initiative 1A to establish a quarter-percent sales tax. The measure was approved by the county voters and has since raised almost \$4 million dollars in 3 years. Because of this dedicated funding source, the Chaffee Common Ground Citizen Advisory Committee has recommended, and the County Commissioners have approved, funding for specific projects and programs through 2025. By committing future-year funding, our grantees are able to attract very significant matching funds.

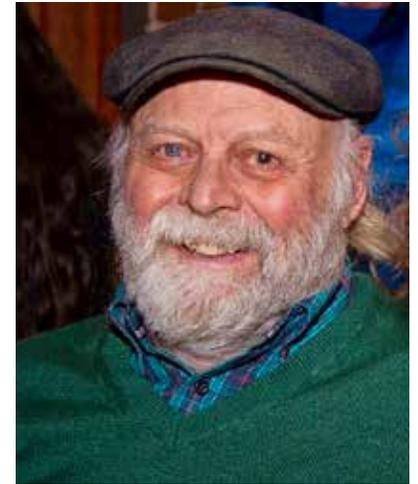
The first step toward Forest Health and Wildfire Resilience was to update the Chaffee County Wildfire Protection Plan that was over 10 years old. In a significant collaborative process, the federal land management agencies, local fire departments, and local government representatives, with excellent technical assistance from Colorado Forest Restoration Institute at Colorado State University, developed a next-generation community wildfire projection plan that is being implemented with the guidance of the Envision Forest Health Council. Over three years, Chaffee Common Ground has approved grants for these programs of \$3.2 million with matching funds of \$9.5 million for projects in the southern, central, and northern parts of the county that were classified as having the highest priority for mitigation efforts.

The traditional way to preserve lands in agricultural use is to negotiate conservation easements that keep the land in agricultural use in perpetuity. Thus far, Chaffee Common Ground has approved funding for 4 significant conservation easements with substantial matching funds from Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), the landowners, and others. In addition, agricultural producers expressed interest in protecting their lands but did not want to commit future generations to conservation easements in perpetuity. Along with the Central Colorado Conservancy, the Chaffee Conservation Connection program was initiated to conserve land through 5-year conservation leases. Common Ground also has developed an Ag Enhancement grant program to provide ditch companies or agricultural producers a grant process to help keep their working lands working. Through the first 3 years, Common Ground has approved funding of over \$1.7 million to agricultural sustainability with matching funds of \$3.4 million.

Community interest to manage recreation impacts on natural resources has also led to a collaborative effort in developing the Chaffee County Outdoor Recreational Management Plan. This plan will continue to evolve and be managed by the Chaffee Recreation Council. As per the ballot measure, this area is not funded at the same level as the other two categories but significant projects and programs have evolved. To date, Common Ground has approved funding for almost \$350,000 with matching funds of over \$850,000.

The community owes a great deal of thanks to the support of nonprofits, federal and state agencies and the many volunteers who have proposed and made all these great programs possible. The leadership and tireless work of Cindy Williams and Greg Felt is also recognized for all they have accomplished.

— Rick Hum is Vice-chair of the Chaffee Common Ground Citizens Advisory Committee





## Supporting Community Assets

Major investments by Common Ground in 2021 include a \$1.64 million grant over 5 years to seed the Upper Arkansas Forest Fund, to aggregate and manage forest treatments that reduce wildfire threat as outlined in the Chaffee County Community Wildfire Protection Plan. The expenditure was leveraged 350% with a \$5.7 million federal grant from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

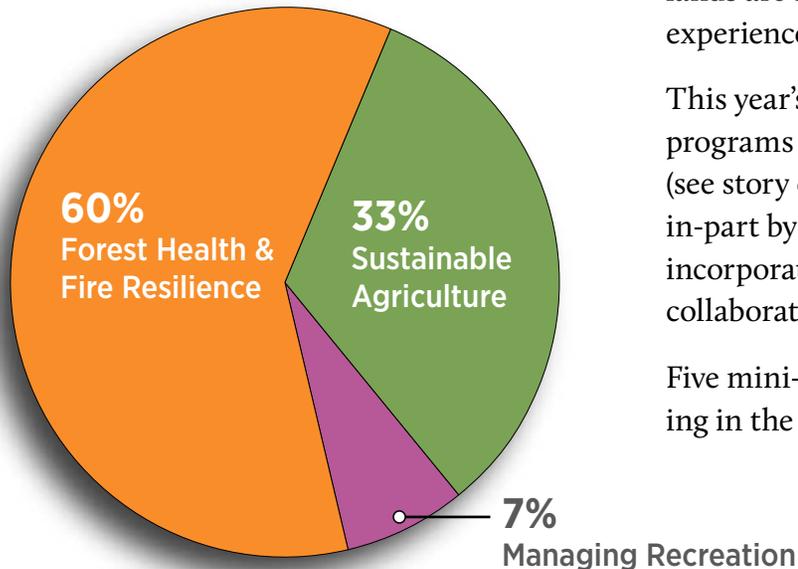
“I’m thrilled USDA funding will support grassroots efforts in Chaffee County to reduce the risk of wildfires and protect this vital watershed that hundreds of thousands of Coloradans rely on,” U.S. Senator Michael Bennet said in the federal announcement. NRCS monies help pay for private property treatments that are a vital to implementing the community wildfire plan.

In 2021, Common Ground continued to directly support agricultural sustainability by funding two irrigation ditch maintenance projects (see page 12). The program also committed funding to a new conservation easement opportunity, bringing the total acres to be protected forever to nearly 3,000 among four of the county’s working ranches. An additional 3,300 acres of working lands are being protected through an innovative new program (see story page 13) as the county experiences a period of fast-paced growth and development.

This year’s investments in recreation management focused on two new and complimentary programs that support better management of the county’s busiest dispersed camping areas (see story on page 17). The Chaffee County Outdoor Recreation Management Plan, financed in-part by a Common Ground planning grant in 2020, was approved this year (see page 14) and incorporated into the county’s Comprehensive Plan. The community plan will continue to drive collaborative recreation management proposals in the coming years.

Five mini-grants of less than \$5,000 each were awarded for small projects by local groups working in the Common Ground Fund’s three focus areas.

### Distribution of Funds





## Leveraging Public Funding

Common Ground strives to balance investments among its three focus areas per the ballot measure as follows: 25% to strengthening forest health; 25% to conserving and supporting working ranches and farms and rural landscapes; and 5% to managing the impacts of recreation growth. The remaining 45% is allocated among the three categories, minus administrative costs that are capped at 5%. Administrative expenses in 2021 were \$18,981 or less than 1.2% of total sales tax receipts.

Common Ground’s grant process encourages collaborative partnerships that produce results across the landscape by assigning greater value to proposals that address multiple program goals. Annual revenues are balanced through long-term funding commitments of up to five years to increase cash and in-kind matches and leverage local dollars to the highest extent.

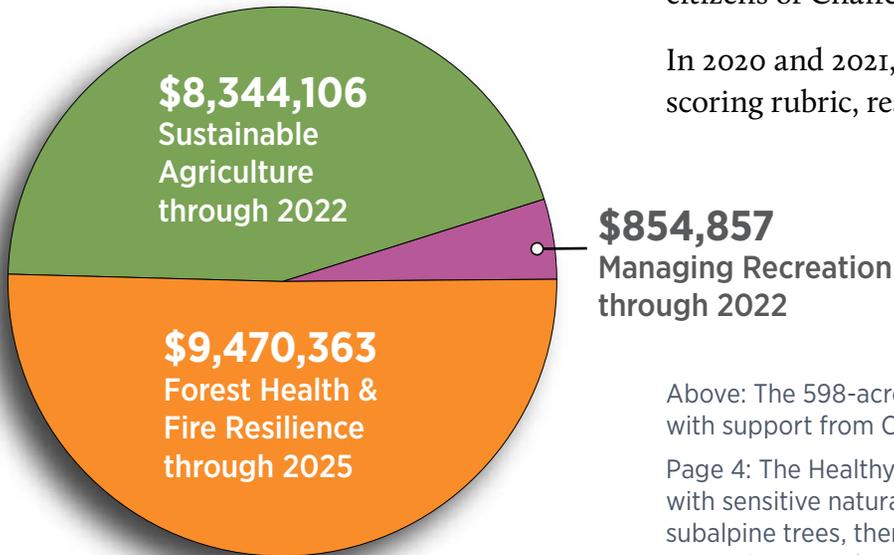
This year marked the third funding cycle since the ballot measure passed in 2018. Matching investments for all approved grants will bring \$24 million in value to the community by 2026, meaning that the dedicated sales tax is being leveraged by three-and-a-half times to benefit the citizens of Chaffee County.

In 2020 and 2021, large forest health and wildfire protection proposals ranked well through the scoring rubric, resulting in \$3.2 million in investments in this funding category. These commitments balance spending with a strong agricultural focus the first year, when \$1.5 million was awarded to support opportunities to protect privately owned rural landscapes.

Above: The 598-acre Arrowpoint Ranch, pictured, was placed under a conservation easement in 2021 with support from Common Ground.

Page 4: The Healthy Horn Fork project, supported by a Common Ground mini-grant, identifies areas with sensitive natural resources such as water, wetlands, boreal toad breeding habitat (pictured), and subalpine trees, then remediates campsites and social trails that threaten resources while encouraging recreation use where it can be accommodated. USFS wildlife biologist Stephanie Shivley is a project partner focused on managing recreation impacts in sensitive habitat.

## Matching Funds



## Multiplying Local Dollars by More Than 3X

	2019		2020		2021		TOTAL	
	Grant Awards	Match	Grant Awards	Match	Grant Awards	Match	Grant Awards	Match
<b>Forest Health and Fire Resilience</b>	\$258,330	\$16,804	\$747,650	\$711,838	\$2,195,690	\$8,741,721	\$3,201,670	\$9,470,363
<b>Sustainable Agriculture</b>	\$1,445,000	\$6,988,900	\$54,884	\$94,555	\$249,640	\$1,260,651	\$1,749,524	\$8,344,106
<b>Recreation Management</b>	\$110,499	\$102,077	\$48,571	\$264,507	\$183,001	\$488,273	\$342,071	\$854,857
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$1,813,829</b>	<b>\$7,107,781</b>	<b>\$851,105</b>	<b>\$1,070,900</b>	<b>\$2,628,331</b>	<b>\$10,490,644</b>	<b>\$5,293,265</b>	<b>\$18,669,325</b>



“There is a sentiment in Chaffee County that the landscape — a shared foundation of our community — is not a given. Its healthy existence depends on the continued investment and support of the people who benefit from it.”

— Chaffee County Commissioner Greg Felt



Chaffee Chips has helped 330 landowners remove 1,000 piles of slash from wildland-urban interface neighborhoods.



## Investing in Forest Health & Wildfire Resilience

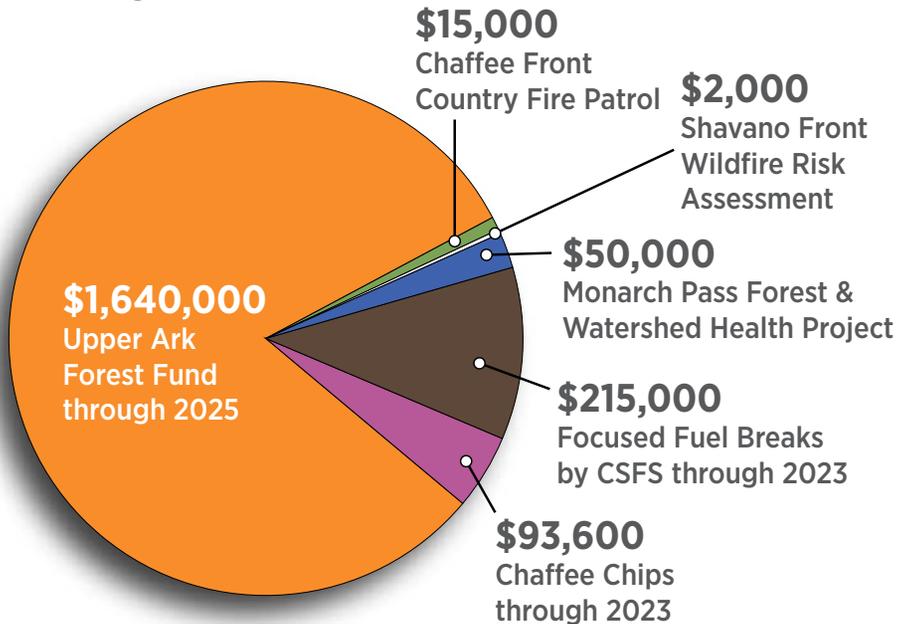
In 2021, Common Ground invested \$1,640,000 in the Upper Arkansas Forest Fund, developed to accelerate forest treatments as outlined in the Chaffee County Community Wildfire Protection Plan. As the Congressionally chartered partner of the U.S. Forest Service, the fund’s National Forest Foundation (NFF) manages on-the-ground projects that reduce wildfire risk and improve forest health and wildlife habitat.

The NFF has worked in Colorado for nearly 20 years. It chose the Upper Arkansas River Basin because of strong community support for reducing wildfire risk. Chaffee is one of only a few communities in the West to vote for public funding of forest restoration projects. “The tax proves a local commitment to this work,” said Marcus Selig, vice president of field programs for the NFF.

Selig is a Salida resident and member of the Envision Forest Health Council, a group of 35 leaders implementing the community wildfire plan by collaboratively planning and funding 30,000 acres of treatments to cut the risk wildfire poses to community assets by half in a decade. The plan shows that cross-boundary work on both public and private lands is needed to meet this goal, as one-third of the treatment priority areas are privately owned. Treatments include thinning trees, low-intensity prescribed fire and mastication — a patch-clearing method used in the piñon-juniper forest.

By leveraging \$3.2 million from the Common Ground Fund, the Forest Health Council has raised more than \$12 million in less than two years for community wildfire resiliency such as a strategically placed fuel break on Methodist Mountain (see story on page 10), and programs like Chaffee Chips and Chaffee Treats, which connects large-scale private and public land treatments to be financed by the Upper Ark Forest Fund.

### Investing in Forest Health





Above:  
Josh Kuehn, left, Sam Scavo and Adam Moore, with the Colorado State Forest Service, prepare to mark trees for removal in the Methodist Front community fuel break.  
Common Ground invested in Monarch Pass forest mitigation to help protect the watershed and improve forest health after an intense spruce beetle infestation.

Total funding raised includes a \$5.7 million grant from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announced in October 2021. “The investment by NRCS in our community is the result of years of engagement and unprecedented collaboration that really began when citizens identified wildfire as a top concern,” said Cindy Williams, Chair of the Common Ground Citizens Advisory Committee and Co-lead of Envision, which facilitates Forest Health Council activities.

In addition to seeding the UAFF in 2021, Common Ground awarded \$215,000 over three years to the Colorado State Forest Service to create fuel breaks in five new high priority treatment areas. Roadside thinning will take place near the Three Elk, Broadview, Mesa Antero and Lost Creek Ranch subdivisions as well as on Poncha Pass.

Common Ground invested \$50,000 in a project managed by the Arkansas River Watershed Collaborative on Monarch Pass, where a spruce beetle infestation killed nearly all of the trees. Timber harvests removed standing dead trees from steep slopes using specialized equipment that is less expensive than helicopter logging. The US Forest Service is a project partner and primary funder.

Wildfire resiliency programs supported in 2021 include Chaffee Front Country Fire Patrol, a program in development by the county fire department to patrol dispersed camping areas and educate visitors about campfire safety, encourage fire restriction compliance and extinguish abandoned campfires.

Chaffee Chips helps community members create defensible space around their homes by coordinating neighborhood slash removal and chipping services. In two years since the program started with financial support from Common Ground, 330 landowners have spent 4,300 hours building nearly 1,000 slash piles that were removed from wildland-urban interface neighborhoods by the service partners.

Like many communities in the American West, Chaffee County’s forest health is poor due to insect infestations, drought, and decades of fire suppression. Wildfires are a serious threat as forests, waters and wildlife remain at-risk yet they are valuable to citizens living in this beautiful environment. Common Ground revenues are delivering measurable and significant results through multi-jurisdictional treatment projects as well as collaborative programs that help citizens build a more fire-ready future.

## Salida-area wildfire fuel break on track

Dozens of landowners in the foothills of Methodist Mountain agreed in 2021 to forest treatments that are necessary to create a community fuel break designed to protect Salida and Poncha Springs from a wildfire. Private property treatments in the fuel break will be complete in 2022, said J.T. Shaver, a forester with the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS).

Work started in February of this year on the Hutchinson Ranch and continued on large tracts of nearby land that included town of Poncha Springs and City of Salida property. Nearly all of the homeowners who were asked in The Canyons and Piñon Ridge Estates subdivisions agreed to thinning that will contribute to the fuel break. “It is important to keep a fuel break linear across the landscape for it to be truly effective.

Connectivity is key and we are achieving that,” Shaver said.

CSFS worked with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in 2021 to extend treatments along the foothills of the mountain.

“We’re treating cross-boundary with connectivity right from private to federal

Southwest Conservation Corp crew leader Anna Allegretti cuts a juniper branch at the Poncha Springs Disc Golf Course. The sawyer crew spent a week in late October felling trees and stacking slash at the town recreation area. Forest treatments on private land that help create the Methodist Front community fuel break will be complete in 2022.



lands in a good collaboration with the BLM,” Shaver said.

More frequent and intense fires across the state and the West in recent years include the 2019 Decker Fire on the eastern side of Methodist Mountain that burned for five weeks and caused hundreds of evacuations. Methodist Front was the first project designed and funded by the Envision Forest Health Council’s 35 members, which formed after updating the wildfire plan in 2020.

The Forest Service completed work on the Methodist Front this year in an area known as the Poncha Loop and started on the fuel break on Cleveland Mountain, where trees will continue to be thinned in 2022.

Common Ground has invested more than \$750,000 in the Methodist Front fuel break. The project encompasses 8,200 acres and significantly addresses the Forest Health Council’s goal of treating 30,000 acres to protect community water supply, infrastructure, wildlife habitat and recreation assets. Local funding was leveraged to win a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation’s RESTORE Colorado program, and the Forest Service, municipalities of Salida and Poncha Springs, and Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) also provided financial support.



Agricultural investments in 2021 involve \$142,500 in repairs on the Bowen and Sunnyside ditch systems to help keep them operational.



## Investing in Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Landscapes

In 2021, the Arrowpoint Ranch was protected in perpetuity through a Central Colorado Conservancy conservation agreement supported by Common Ground funds. The 598-acre working cattle ranch sits along the Arkansas River and the Collegiate Peaks Scenic Byway in Nathrop.

The agreement is part of a package of easements financed in part by Common Ground grant awards that will ultimately protect nearly 3,000 acres of working ranch lands in Chaffee County. Additional lands to be protected forever are the Centerville Ranch and Tri Lazy W Ranch, both located near Arrowpoint in the center of the valley, as well as the Lewis Ranch near Poncha Springs.

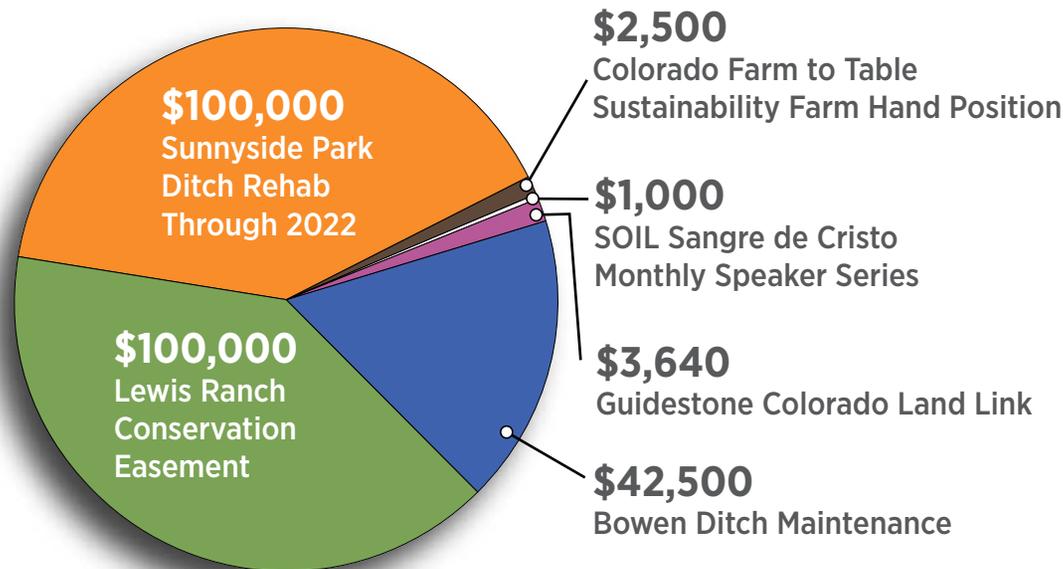
Common Ground continued this year to invest in the county's intricate yet aging irrigation ditch system that provides the vast green vistas gracing our valley floor. Agricultural irrigation

recharges ground water supply, preserves local water resources for the long-term, and supports critical wildlife habitat. Many of the county's ditches were hand-dug more than a century ago. Projects in 2021 involve \$142,500 in repairs on the Bowen and Sunnyside ditches to keep them operational, and follow an irrigation pipe installation at the historic Kelly Ranch in 2020.

Three mini-grants for programs that support continued working lands were awarded in 2021 to Colorado Farm to Table, SOIL Sangre de Cristo and Guidestone Colorado.

Common Ground grant awards to-date support conservation easements by the Central Colorado Conservancy that will ultimately protect nearly 3,000 acres of working ranch lands in Chaffee County.

### Working Agriculture Grant Awards



## Innovative program keeps working lands in operation

Community Conservation Connection, a new program by Central Colorado Conservancy and the Upper Arkansas Conservation District funded by Chaffee Common Ground, is seeing success as more rural lands stay in agricultural operation while Chaffee County experiences a period of fast-paced growth and changes.

During the first year, landowners enrolled more than 3,300 acres. The program provides annual payments on a per-acre basis in exchange for continuing

agricultural production, limiting new development and protecting scenic views, water resources and wildlife habitat.

The voluntary five-year agreements secure valuable time during a period of rapid growth, when it's more important than ever to keep land and water stewards on the land, Central Colorado Conservancy Executive Director Adam Beh said.

Common Ground earmarked from \$75,000 to \$125,000 per year through 2023 for the

pilot program, which is offered in addition to traditional conservation easements that preserve land in perpetuity.

Community Conservation Connection provides landowners an opportunity to “dip a toe into the water” rather than requiring a permanent commitment. “Whether they’re thinking of their legacy to their children or not wanting to tie everything up forever, this leasing approach allows us to buy a little bit of time and build important relationships with the county’s largest rural landowners,” Beh said.

The program is rooted in broad community appreciation for working agriculture’s contributions to quality of life and the local economy. It was catalyzed by Envision Chaffee County and developed with input from local producers.

Benefits are highly visible as protected lands provide expansive views, natural beauty and habitat for pronghorn, elk, wild turkey, raptors and many other animals. Additional, less obvious benefits include recharged aquifers through flood irrigation, wildlife migration corridors, and retaining the rural feel and quality of life in our community.



Community Conservation Connection helps rural lands stay in agricultural operation while Chaffee County experiences a period of fast-paced growth and changes.



## Investing in Recreation Management

In 2020, Common Ground supported a community process to create the Chaffee County Outdoor Recreation Management Plan. Approved in June of 2021 by the County Planning Commission, the new plan was incorporated into the 2020 Chaffee County Comprehensive Plan.

The recreation plan helps manage the impacts of growth in outdoor use through strategic efforts across the landscape, many of which are funded by Common Ground. The plan helps guide current and future recreation across all jurisdictions in the spirit of shared stewardship with state and federal land management agencies. Main goals are to protect natural resources and maintain exceptional outdoor experiences while sustaining the economic benefits of tourism.

Developed using best practices with input from residents and visitors as well as land management agencies and diverse user groups, the recreation plan follows recommendations by the National Association of Counties (NACo). It also is a pilot for the Colorado Regional Outdoor Partnerships Program created by Governor Polis in 2020, to, in the Governor's words, "take an eyes-wide-open and locally rooted approach to ensuring we remain a world-class outdoor recreation destination while preserving our land, water, wildlife and quality of life."

The plan's nine objectives and more than two dozen programs and projects are implemented by 21 members of the Chaffee Recreation Council and the Recreation Taskforce, both facilitated by Envision Chaffee County.

In 2021, Common Ground invested \$114,665 in two new recreation management programs that began this spring. The Chaffee Rec Rangers and Chaffee Rec Adopters (see story on page 17) are based on broad initiatives outlined in the recreation plan:

- Clean up overused campsites and slow site growth to ensure high-quality, low-impact camping opportunities across the county.



The Chaffee Rec Rangers (top) cleaned up popular camping areas in 2021 and Chaffee Rec Adopters (bottom) surveyed more than 2,200 road-accessed dispersed campsites. Both new programs are supported by Common Ground.



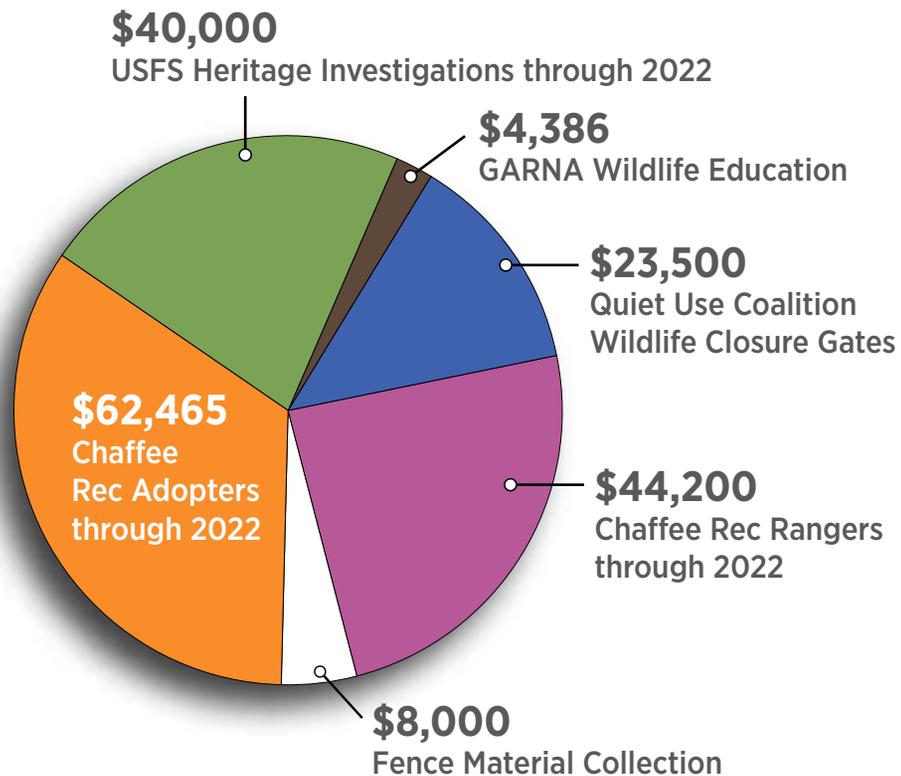
- Create new programs that support education and enforcement with more agency staff and by empowering volunteers.
- Invest in popular near-town assets that are appreciated by residents and visitors alike.
- Support the agricultural sector challenged by recreation’s impacts to operations.

Common Ground funding for the Rangers and Adopters programs continues in 2022 and, in 2021, included \$8,000 in support to the Southwest Conservation Corps for chainsaw crews that cut lodgepole pine for campsite containment fencing. The trees are felled in high wildfire risk stands and material is erected by the Rangers to help contain campsites and encourage vehicles to drive only in appropriate and legal access areas.



Top: Chaffee Rec Adopters Program Manager Joe Greiner, left, organizes a campsite ‘data blitz’ day in July with a volunteer. Bottom: The Chaffee County Outdoor Recreation Management Plan approved in 2021 helps manage growth in outdoor use through strategic efforts across the landscape, many of which are funded by Common Ground.

### Recreation Grant Awards





To advance another one of the community's top recreation management objectives, Common Ground awarded \$40,000 to the US Forest Service for heritage investigations that are required for any agency-approved camping management on national forest lands.

Common Ground also invested \$23,000 in 2021 to support bighorn sheep, mountain goat and elk populations that have declined over the last twenty years. CPW biologists indicate that habitat loss from development, increasing recreation pressure, and possibly drought and climate change are working in combination to cause the declines. The funded project helps the Quiet Use Coalition install gates on existing seasonal road closures to protect wintering animals.

A mini-grant for education was awarded to the Greater Arkansas River Nature Association this year. The program helps outdoor enthusiasts understand how enjoyment of public lands impacts wildlife and how they can minimize it.

Tourism in the years leading up to the Covid-19 pandemic grew in Chaffee County more than twice as fast as the rest of the state, according to an economic analysis by the Colorado Tourism Office. Since then, land managers report unprecedented growth in use and associated impacts to natural resources as land agency dollars to manage the use have not kept pace.

Like the community wildfire plan, Common Ground revenues are being leveraged to attract more funding to implement strategies on the landscape. Project examples include better signs, more restrooms, dispersed campsite containment and revegetation, as well as new programs described above. Visions described in the 5-year recreation plan — high-quality camping, new critical infrastructure, better user behaviors, sustained wildlife populations and more — will require \$20 million.

To date, \$341,071 in Common Ground investments has been matched by more than \$850,000 in cash and in-kind contributions for recreation growth management.

Common Ground revenues are being leveraged to attract more funding to implement recreation management strategies on the landscape. Project examples include better signs (pictured at top, as installed by Chaffee Rec Rangers), more restrooms and dispersed campsite containment (bottom).



## Common Ground puts boots on the ground

The Forest Service-managed Chaffee Rec Rangers focused on preventing resource damage and cleaning up at the county's most popular dispersed camping areas in the first year. The four-person crew installed nearly 3,500 feet of buck-and-rail fence, maintained or installed 270 signs and dismantled 125 campfire rings.

The management described above is meant to influence visitors to keep public lands as they found them, Rec Rangers Program Manager Lisa Mellick said. "If the area looks clean and taken care of when they arrive, visitors are more likely to help keep it that way." Clean and managed camping is a good reflection on the entire community, she added.

The county has more than 2,200 road-accessed dispersed campsites, according to surveys completed by Chaffee Rec Adopters this year. Volunteer "Adopters" used a new mobile app to collect surveys that were aggregated in an online dashboard to show where the highest concentrations of campsites are located. "Now that we mapped the sites, managing the impacts can be focused without having to drive every county road," Rec Adopters Program Manager Joe Greiner said.

The Chaffee Rec Rangers and Rec Adopters programs are complimentary, created by the Chaffee Recreation Council to address recreation growth's natural resource damage and declining experience quality. Growth impacts are a top concern identified by the 2020 Chaffee Recreation Survey, in which 98% of respondents said that seeing trash, human waste and damage to natural areas has a major to extreme effect on the quality of their outdoor experience.

Greiner, who led many survey "data blitz" events with Adopters this summer, said the most concerning impacts involve denuded ground caused by vehicles driving on grass and into forested areas, dirty piles of ash and human waste, and multiple fire rings. Surveys show 3,800 gallons of trash, 550 piles of human waste and 7,000 damaged trees, plus nearly 200 acres of denuded ground. About 50 Adopters were trained to use the mobile app in 2021 and 200 volunteers signed up for the program.

In addition to engineering campsites, the Rangers helped manage impacts on agricultural operations, as local ranchers cite growing recreation use as a major economic challenge.



Chaffee Rec Rangers install buck-and-rail containment fencing in the Fourmile Recreation Area in July 2021. Rangers had contact with about 1,000 visitors this year, sharing information such as appropriate camping locations and campfire restrictions.

Gates are often left open or fences are cut, stock tanks are damaged, irrigation ditches are blocked with trash and livestock is chased by uncontrolled dogs, they say.

The USFS funds the majority of the Rec Ranger program with support through a two-year \$44,200 Common Ground grant award. Additional contributions came from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) and the Colorado State Land Board (SLB).

The Greater Arkansas River Nature Association received a two-year Common Ground grant to develop the Rec Adopters program with the USFS, BLM, CPW, SLB, Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area and Envision Chaffee County.



Common Ground revenues are delivering measurable results through collaborative programs such as Chaffee Chips and Chaffee Treats, which help citizens build a more fire-ready future.

## A Collaborative Culture

Common Ground thanks the following organizations and groups. They are the hard-working grant recipients implementing projects that help achieve Common Ground goals, as well as those who contributed matching and in-kind support to make the visions a reality.

American Forest Foundation

Antero Engineering

Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area

Arkansas River Watershed Collaborative

Bowen Ditch Company

Buena Vista Singletrack Coalition

Bureau of Land Management

Central Colorado Conservancy

Chaffee County

Chaffee County Community Foundation

Chaffee County Fire Protection District

Chaffee County Landfill

Chaffee County Visitors Bureau

City of Salida

Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger

Colorado Department of Natural Resources

Colorado Division of Fire Prevention & Control

Colorado Firecamp

Colorado Farm to Table

Colorado Parks & Wildlife

Colorado Springs Utilities

Colorado State Forest Service

Colorado State Land Board

Colorado Water Conservation Board

Envision Chaffee County

Friends of Fourmile

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO)

Greater Arkansas River Nature Association

Guidestone Colorado

High Mountain Disc Golf Club



Left: The community recreation plan helps guide management across all jurisdictions in the spirit of shared stewardship. Main goals are to protect natural resources and maintain exceptional outdoor experiences while sustaining the economic benefits of tourism. Right: A \$1.64 million investment in forest health was leveraged 350% in 2021 with a \$5.7 million federal grant from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Trees are marked and measured (pictured) before forest stands are thinned.

HydroGeo Designs

Kettering Family Foundation

Members of the Chaffee Recreation Council

Members of the Envision Forest Health Council

Members of the Envision Recreation in Balance Taskforce

Residents of Game Trail

Residents of Lost Creek Ranch

Residents of Mesa Antero & Mesa Antero Estates

Residents of Piñon Ridge Estates

Chaffee Common Ground Annual Report 2021

Residents of The Canyons

River Network

National Fish & Wildlife Foundation

National Forest Foundation

Noah's Ark Rafting & Adventure Co.

Pueblo Board of Water Works

Quiet Use Coalition

Salida Chamber of Commerce

Salida Mountain Trails

Sangre de Cristo Electric Association

Southwest Conservation Corps

SOIL Sangre de Cristo

Sunnyside Park Ditch Company

The Kelly Ranch family

The Summit Foundation

Town of Buena Vista

Town of Poncha Springs

Trout Unlimited

Upper Arkansas Water Conservancy District

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

US Forest Service

Wildlands Restoration Volunteers



## Contact and Follow Us!

This report is the third installment of Chaffee Common Ground's commitment to accountability made during the 1-A ballot initiative that funded the program through a 0.25% sales tax.

Common Ground promises transparency so the community is aware how public funds are distributed to achieve program goals as outlined to voters in 2018. All meetings are noticed and grant cycles are widely announced. Funding applications are evaluated using criteria that ties awards to values outlined in the ballot measure. Applications receiving the highest scores are funded.

The Citizens Advisory Committee oversees the program. Members in 2021 were Cindy Williams, Chair; Rick Hum, Vice-chair; Michael Hannigan; Kit Kuester; Ben Lenth; Brink Messick; and Andrew Richardson. Commissioner Greg Felt served as the county liaison. The program thanks former member Patti Arthur for two years of service on the committee.

For more information visit [chaffeecommonground.org](http://chaffeecommonground.org) or contact Program Administrator Ben Doon at [ccg.cac@gmail.com](mailto:ccg.cac@gmail.com).

[ccg.cac@gmail.com](mailto:ccg.cac@gmail.com)

[www.chaffeecommonground.org](http://www.chaffeecommonground.org)

