

Sportsman's Pocket Guide to Climate Change in Colorado

Climate change poses a serious threat to Colorado's bountiful fish, wildlife, and other natural resources. From reduced and warming stream flows, which degrade valuable habitat for Colorado's trout population to declining wetlands habitat, climate change impacts on natural resources threaten Colorado's economy.

Every year, more than 2 million people spend nearly \$3 billion on hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing in Colorado. The value of Colorado's natural resource economy goes well beyond recreation: healthy forests keep wildfires from raging beyond what is containable and the abundant wildlife and fishing in the Rocky Mountains provide the cultural identity that keep people and businesses in the state.

3 Iconic Species & Habitats at Risk



Cutthroat Trout Native to much of the Rocky Mountains and the Great Basin, cutthroat trout are already threatened by habitat degradation and non-native fish species. Increased water temperatures threaten to further reduce habitat for this cold water species. The impact is being felt by anglers, as high water temperatures in 2007 led to unprecedented fishing restrictions on the upper Yampa River in northwest Colorado.



Sage Grouse The sage grouse must live in sagebrush habitats in order to find enough food and cover to survive. Habitat loss and degradation have already greatly reduced sage grouse range and abundance, and climate change threatens to change much of its remaining habitat by reducing the abundance and distribution of sagebrush.



Snowpack Climate change will cause a dramatic reduction in snowpack. Snowpack is the primary source for the water flowing down the rivers in many parts of the west during dry summer months. Less snowpack means less water when it is most needed, and will result in a considerable strain on the state's water supply.

Economic Benefits

Colorado's wildlife and natural resources are the backbone of Colorado's economy. In addition to providing essential services like safe drinking water and clean air, these resources sustain the state's booming hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation industry.

-Annual Participants in Wildlife Recreation:

2.2 million

-Consumer Spending:

\$2.9 billion

-Jobs Created:

46,134

-Funding for CO Natural Resources in Clean Energy and Climate Legislation:

\$11.2 million avg. per year

Source: 2006 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Survey on Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife
Associated Recreation

Call for Urgent Action

The single most important action to protect species and wildlife at risk from climate change is for our local, state, and national leaders to implement comprehensive clean energy and climate policies. These policies must cap and then reduce carbon pollution as well as safeguard America's natural resources. In order to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, the US must reduce emissions by around 80% by mid-century, and as much as possible in the near term.

State-Based Solutions:

The Rocky Mountain Youth Corps (RMYC) is part of a nationwide network of "Conservation Corps" which provide teens and young adults with an opportunity to learn green job skills and training while interacting with nature. Since 1999, RMYC has put local volunteers to work on trail projects, habitat restoration, and fuel reduction in Colorado and Wyoming. In recent years, the Corps has ramped up their focus on wildland fire management, invasive species reduction and streambank stabilization projects.

Safeguarding Wildlife & Natural Resources

To address the impacts we are already seeing on wildlife and habitat and to confront the inevitable impacts of climate change on our natural resources, comprehensive clean energy and climate policies must include funding to safeguard fish, wildlife and natural resources upon which we all rely. These funds should be provided through the revenue generated by the clean energy and climate policies and be dedicated to the federal, state and tribal agencies that manage natural resources. This funding will protect our natural resource based economy, and create tens of thousands of new "green" jobs – restoring wetlands and streams, removing invasive species, building and restoring wildlife corridors, and protecting habitat and natural watersheds.

The following groups support passing comprehensive climate and energy legislation this year. In order to safeguard fish, wildlife, and their habitats, we urge that legislation must include both reductions of greenhouse gas emissions and dedication of allowance value for natural resources adaptation programs.

National Hunting and Fishing Groups

*American Fisheries Society
*American Fly Fishing Trade Association
*American Sportfishing Association
*Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
*Berkley Conservation Institute
*Campfire Club
*Dallas Safari Club
*Ducks Unlimited
*Houston Safari Club
*Izaak Walton League of America
*Mule Deer Foundation
*National Trappers Association
*National Wildlife Federation
*Pheasants Forever
*Quality Deer Management Association
*The Wildlife Society
*Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
*Trout Unlimited
*Wildlife Forever
*Wildlife Management Institute

Colorado Conservation Groups

*Audubon Colorado
*Boulder County Audubon Society
*Boulder County Nature Association
*Center for Native Ecosystems
*Central Mountains and Plains Section of The Wildlife Society
*Colorado Chapter of the Wildlife Society
*Colorado Environmental Coalition
*Colorado Wildlife Federation
*Ferdinand Hayden Chapter of Trout Unlimited
*Great Old Broads for Wilderness
*High Country Citizens Alliance
*Quiet Use Coalition
*Rocky Mountain Flycasters
*Rocky Mountain Recreation Initiative
*San Juan Citizens Alliance
*San Luis Valley Ecosystem Council
*Sheep Mountain Alliance
*Western Resource Advocates
*Wilderness Workshop

Contact

Local:

Dave Dittloff
National Wildlife Federation
dittloff@nwf.org

DC:

Derek Brockbank
National Wildlife Federation
brockbankd@nwf.org

www.targetglobalwarming.org