
CONSERVATION COLORADO

2020
ANNUAL
REPORT

THE FUTURE IS WORTH THE FIGHT

June 2021

Dear Friend,

As I write to you from the midway point of 2021, I find myself needing to catch my breath and take stock of the work we've done together in just the first six months of the year. And I remind myself that in this moment of tremendous opportunity and once-in-a-generation change, the lessons of 2020 carry us forward and continue to resonate.

In 2020, amidst a year of great devastation, tragedy, and racial justice and public health reckonings, we showed our resilience, and acted on what mattered. And as you'll see in our 2020 Annual Report, it paid off across the board.

We fought for our communities that were hit hardest by COVID-19, pollution, and the climate crisis. We recognized the importance of strong leadership and recommitted ourselves to electing leaders who value science, public health, the environment, and justice. And we put forth a new vision for conserving Colorado's beloved public lands, parks, and open space where we sought respite and safe diversion as the pandemic raged.

If that sounds like a lot of work and very involved, it is! Conservation Colorado is a family of five entities that work together to capture the power and scale of the work that needs to happen. All of them have a role to play, and all of them offer different opportunities for you, our supporters and activists, to make change happen.

We're so grateful to all of you who stayed the course and even went further than ever before for us in a tremendously difficult year. I hope our 2020 Annual Report helps you take stock of all that we fought through together, and fills you with hope and determination for our future. The future we're fighting for together is so much bigger than even just Colorado — and all of it is possible because of you!

With warmest regards,



Kelly Nordini
Executive Director



OUR MISSIONS

Conservation Colorado Education Fund

Our mission is to protect Colorado's climate, air, land, water, and communities through organizing, advocacy, and education.

Conservation Colorado

Our mission is to protect Colorado's climate, air, land, water, and communities through organizing, advocacy, and elections.

OUR VISION

We're working with you, our champions, partners, activists, and supporters, to **achieve our shared vision of a better future for Colorado.**

When we close our eyes to picture that future, we see Colorado as a national leader on track to achieve **net-zero carbon emissions by 2050**, and a clean energy economy that promises **a just and equitable transition for all Coloradans.**

We have established the foundation for **conserving and restoring at least one-third of Colorado's lands from the impacts of development by 2030**, and ensuring that **sufficient clean water is available for both people and ecosystems.**



HOW WE'LL DO IT

Our goals are bold and ambitious, but with your partnership, we can make them happen.

We'll do it by working at the intersection of people, policy, and politics to advocate for solutions to environmental problems.

- We'll **organize and mobilize leaders**, like you, in communities across the state who believe that together we can build power and create great change.
- We'll **advocate for systemic change** through laws and policies by persuading decision-makers to act.
- We'll **advocate for proactive environmental justice policies** to advance towards a more equitable future.
- And we'll hold to our belief that lasting environmental and social change comes in large part from **electing the right decision-makers, and representatives** who share our desire to put the environment and people above corporations and profits.

WHO WE ARE

To tackle systemic change on all three fronts of people, policy, and politics, we need to use every tool in our toolbox.

That's why **Conservation Colorado is a family of five organizations, all working toward our mission but each with its own role to play.**



Conservation Colorado Education Fund

Our 501(c)3 tax-deductible entity works to organize communities and educate the public, media, and decision-makers about our issues and the importance of bold policy solutions.

Conservation Colorado

Our 501(c)4 entity advocates for policies at the state legislature and other decision-making venues, and works to elect climate and conservation champions.

Conservation Colorado Small Donor Committee and Conservation Colorado Action Fund

Directly collaborates with and supports pro-conservation candidates running for office.

Conservation Colorado Victory Fund

Supports independent efforts to elect pro-conservation champions and defeat candidates who stand in the way of environmental progress.



None of this work
would be possible without
your support and partnership.



And in the challenging year that was
2020, ***YOU helped make the***
difference.

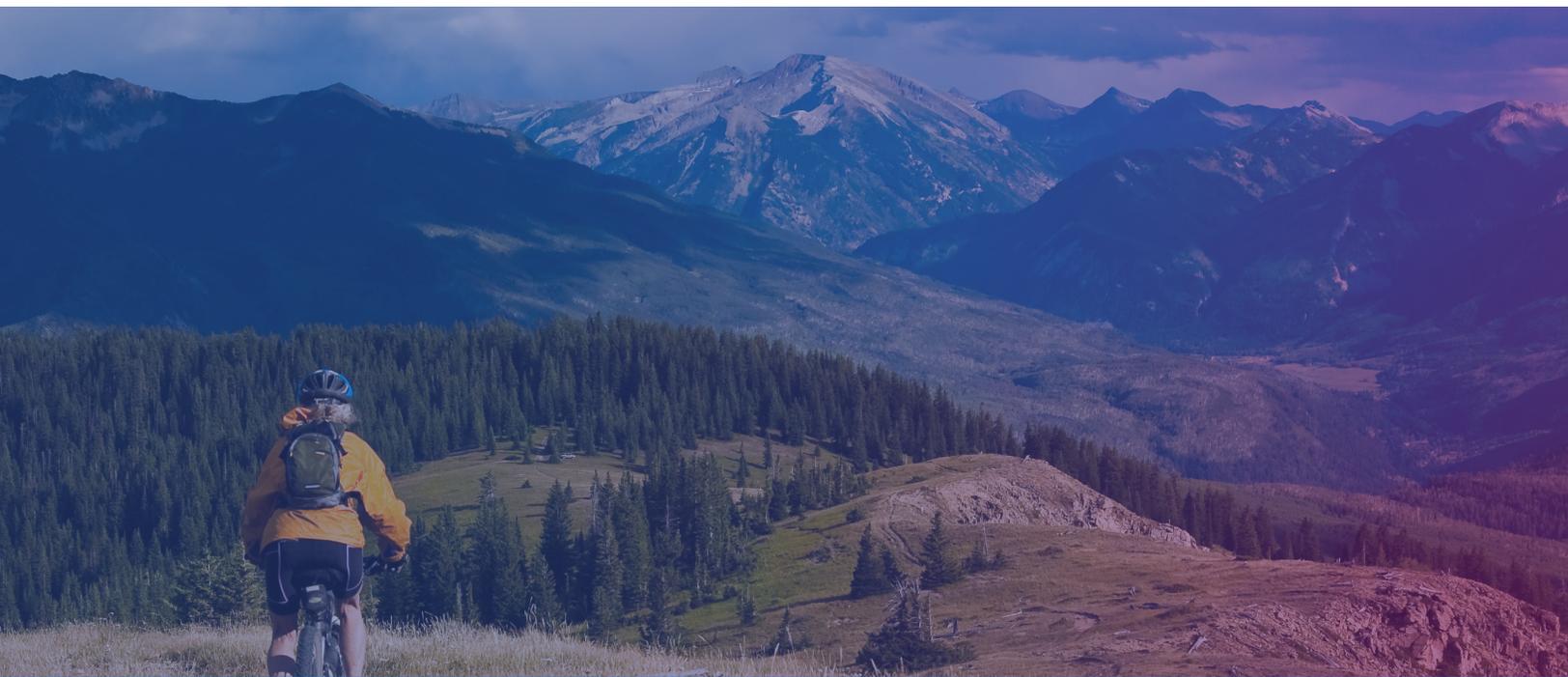
2020 ACHIEVEMENTS

HERE'S WHAT THE CONSERVATION COLORADO FAMILY ACHIEVED TOGETHER LAST YEAR:

- Built a powerful climate coalition of nearly 50 organizations, and sent **over 14,000 comments** from individual Coloradans directly to their decision-makers, **calling for bold, racially just and equitable, and measurable climate action now.**
- Brought activists to remote testimonies and **collected over 7,000 digital petition signatures** to secure **nationally leading oil and gas regulations** requiring a 2,000 foot buffer zone to protect homes and schools from the worst impacts of drilling, increased protections for disproportionately impacted communities, and comprehensive protections for wildlife habitat.
- **Protected our communities** by winning increased fees, fines, and community notification requirements on corporate air and water toxic polluters.



- **Released a visionary report** detailing how Colorado can do its part in the international “30 by 30” movement to **conserve 30 percent of lands and waters by 2030**. Our report made **Colorado the first U.S. state to have a blueprint for how to achieve 30x30**, a science-based goal to prevent the irreversible loss of nature and wildlife and also mitigate the worst impacts of climate change.
- Helped pass several **important state water bills**, including a bill that will protect recreation opportunities and fish habitat by keeping water in rivers when it’s needed most, and a bill that requires local municipalities to plan for water conservation.
- Contacted over 460,000 Colorado voters during the 2020 election and saw **85% of our endorsed state pro-conservation candidates** — including 32% candidates of color, 60% women, and 10% LGBTQ+ — **successfully elected to office!** These results expanded our pro-conservation majority in the Colorado state Senate; flipped or defended pro-conservation county commission majorities in Arapahoe, Adams, Gunnison, Jefferson, and La Plata Counties; and sent a resounding message that strong stances on environmental issues win in Colorado.



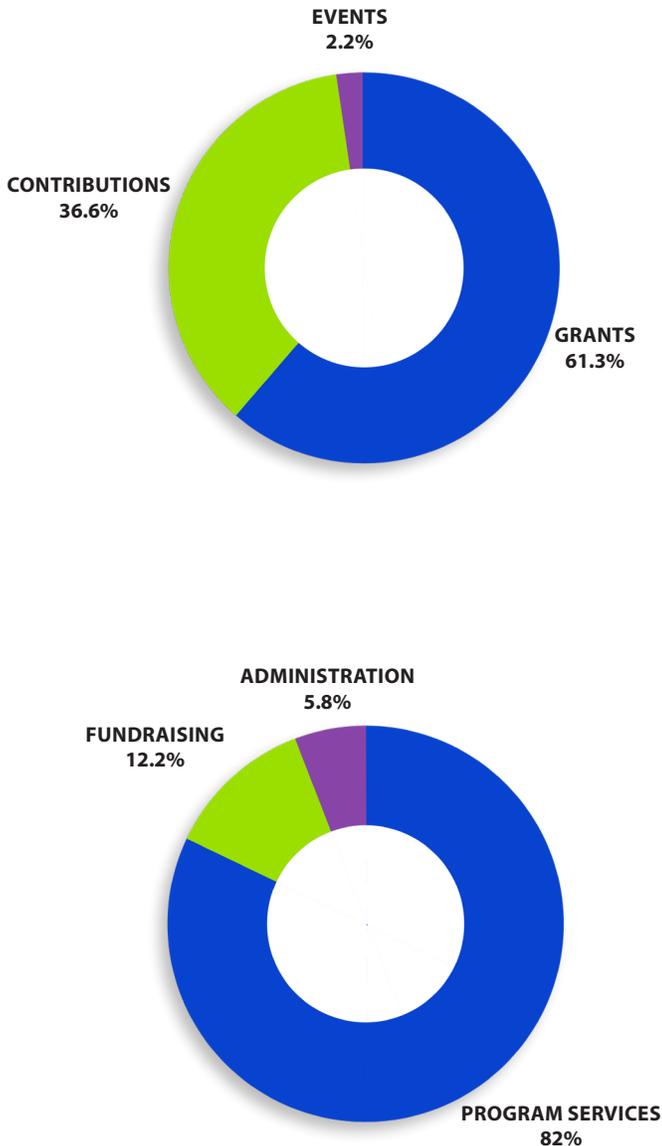
When we talk about our “people power,” **We Mean You.**

You took action, donated to our work, contacted your decision-makers, fought for your communities, and voted to make change happen in 2020.

Thank you for everything you have done, and continue to do to lead us into a better future for Colorado. The future is worth the fight — ***and together we can win that fight!***

CONSERVATION COLORADO EDUCATION FUND FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Below are the unaudited financials for Conservation Colorado Education Fund in the year ending December 31, 2020:



EXPENSES

Program Services

Climate Change	\$1,324,818
Public Lands	\$490,605
Water	\$245,487
Other	\$258,019
Total Program Services	\$2,318,929

Supporting Services

Fundraising	\$344,219
Administration	\$163,698
Total Supporting Services	\$507,917

TOTAL EXPENSES \$2,826,846

INCOME

Grants	\$1,954,500
Contributions	\$1,165,734
Events	\$69,074
TOTAL INCOME	\$3,189,308

Note: The balance of income over expenses is due to multiyear restricted grants that carried over into 2021.

***Financials presented are specifically for Conservation Colorado Education Fund, our 501(c)3 tax-deductible entity. We also fundraise separately for our other four entities, and in the year ending December 31, 2020 we raised a total of \$3,620,067 for Conservation Colorado; \$47,105 for Conservation Colorado Small Donor Committee; \$16,525 for Conservation Colorado Action Fund; and \$1,008,499 for Conservation Colorado Victory Fund.*

CONSERVATION COLORADO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sue Anderson | Community Leader

Katherine Archuleta | Latina Initiative 2020 Co-Founder

Diane Carman | Media Relations Consultant

Michele Christiansen (Secretary-Treasurer) | Voqal Program Officer

Tamra DeBrady | Colorado Black Women Political Action President

Jay Fetcher | Rancher

Helen Gemmill (Chair) | Community Leader

Maria Handley (Vice Chair) | Community Leader

Suzanne Jones | Ecocycle Executive Director

Steve Kaplan | Kaplan Kirsch Rockwell Managing Partner

Nicole Melaku | National Partnership for New Americans Executive Director

Heidi McIntosh | Earthjustice Managing Attorney

Ning Mosberger-Tang | Innovation Foundation President

J.W. Postal | Nikola Power CEO/Founder

Jim Pribyl | Public Policy Consultant

CONSERVATION COLORADO EDUCATION FUND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sue Anderson (Vice Chair) | Community Leader

Joe Breddan | Systems Engineering for Small Businesses Consultant

Diane Carman | Media Relations Consultant

Helen Gemmill (Chair) | Community Leader

Aaron Hoffman | Western Colorado EV Club Founder

Ernest House, Jr. | Keystone Policy Center Senior Policy Director

Sonrisa Lucero | City and County of Denver Sustainability Strategist

Suzanne Jones | Ecocycle Executive Director

J.W. Postal | Nikola Power CEO/Founder

Alex Sánchez | Voces Unidas De Las Montañas Co-Founder

Patricia Wells | Formerly Denver Water Chief Counsel

GIVING

All of the work we do is supported by individuals, businesses, and foundations that believe in fighting for the future of Colorado. We have five offices and over 40,000 activists and supporters across the state.

Our fundraising strategy aims to build a base of support that reflects the racial diversity and geographic breadth of the state of Colorado, and we are working hard to engage communities of color, rural and urban communities, and small business owners across the state, as well as our thousands of long-time supporters and institutional donors.

As a family of organizations, we have five different entities that are supported by donors like you, and each offers its own benefits and ways of engaging with our work. (Note: our five entities are legally separate, and any gifts made to one of our organizations are expended strictly in compliance with that organization's IRS status and any additional restrictions associated with the gift.)



Conservation Colorado Education Fund

Conducts public education and community organizing and is classified as a 501(c)3 organization. Donations to it are tax-deductible.

Conservation Colorado

Works on advocacy and elections. It is classified as a 501(c)4 organization and donations to it are not tax-deductible. Each year, the first \$50 of all eligible donations made to Conservation Colorado will be transferred to the **Conservation Colorado Small Donor Committee** to support pro-conservation candidates.

Conservation Colorado Action Fund

Is a state political committee that makes direct contributions to pro-conservation candidates. Each individual can give up to \$625 in an election cycle to the Action Fund and donations are not tax-deductible.

Conservation Colorado Victory Fund

Is a state independent expenditure committee that supports independent efforts to help elect pro-conservation champions and defeat candidates who stand in the way of environmental progress. Donors can give any amount to the Victory Fund. Donations to this fund are not tax-deductible.

WAYS TO GIVE

THERE ARE A VARIETY OF WAYS THAT YOU CAN MAKE A GIFT TO SUPPORT OUR WORK AND MEET YOUR GIVING GOALS.

- 1. Send a check or make a gift online:** You can access our donation portal at conservationco.org/giving.
- 2. Become a monthly donor:** Giving just a little bit every month really adds up! Monthly donations can be automatically deducted from your credit card.
- 3. Make a gift of stock:** Gifts of appreciated securities (stocks) are a popular alternative to making a cash gift and they may offer you additional tax advantages.
- 4. Explore matching gifts:** You can double your support with an employer matching gift. Find out if your employer participates and take advantage of this easy way to increase your contribution.
- 5. Remember Conservation Colorado in your will:** This is a way to leave a legacy for future generations of Coloradans.

Please let us know what questions you have about your giving to Conservation Colorado. We'd be very happy to talk about which might work best for your giving goals.

*You can call us at 303-333-7846 and ask for the Fundraising Team.
You can also email us at development@conservationco.org.*



**THANK YOU FOR ALL OF
YOUR SUPPORT!**