

# Denver Regional Council of Governments Transportation Planning Region - The Federal Highway Administration & Federal Lands Highways



The Federal Highway Administration recognizes the vital role transportation plays in the lives of the traveling public, influencing economic growth, public safety, and many other aspects of daily life.

Federal Lands Highways, a division of the Federal Highway Administration, provides financial resources, planning, transportation engineering, and project delivery for mobility networks that service the transportation needs of US federal lands and tribal partners. These include the National Park Service, the US Forest Service, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Tribal Governments, the Bureau of Land Management, the Department of Defense, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and the Bureau of Reclamation.

Its mission is to provide efficient, reliable, and effective transportation systems while enhancing natural resources, protecting the environment, and ensuring recreational access for the traveling public. These essential services are delivered in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and US Territories through the Headquarters, Eastern, Central, and Western Federal Lands Highway Division offices.

Federal Lands Highways recognizes that transportation systems are more than just a means of travel—they are often integral to the experience itself. Scenic byways, mountain passes, and historic routes are destinations in their own right, shaping how people connect with the landscapes they traverse. Federal Lands Highway's projects and services are designed to support and seamlessly integrate with the environment, fostering a deeper appreciation for the natural world and enhancing outdoor recreation. By improving access to national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, and public lands, these investments ensure that all Americans can continue to explore and enjoy our shared natural heritage. At the same time, they fuel economic growth by supporting local businesses, outdoor tourism, and gateway communities, generating jobs and revenue that benefit both rural and urban economies across the country.

# Enhanced FLMA Coordination: Legislative Basis & Approach

State DOTs, MPOs, and local transportation agencies are responsible for considering Federal Land Management Agency (FLMA) transportation access needs in their planning and capital improvement processes<sup>i</sup>. The Mesa County Regional Transportation Planning Office (RTPO) oversees the transportation planning in both the urban part of the county, the Grand Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (GVMPO), and the rural areas of Mesa County, the Grand Valley Transportation Planning Region (GVTPR).

However, recreational and FLMA access needs are qualitatively different from transportation needs on the urban, suburban, and inter-urban networks. Whereas the latter systems are built on high-volume, paved facilities, recreational travel tends to occur on low-volume, typically unpaved systems in rural or remote contexts. Furthermore, recreational travel patterns are less predictable than typical 'rush hour' pulses of activity and can be dependent on external factors such as weather and special events.

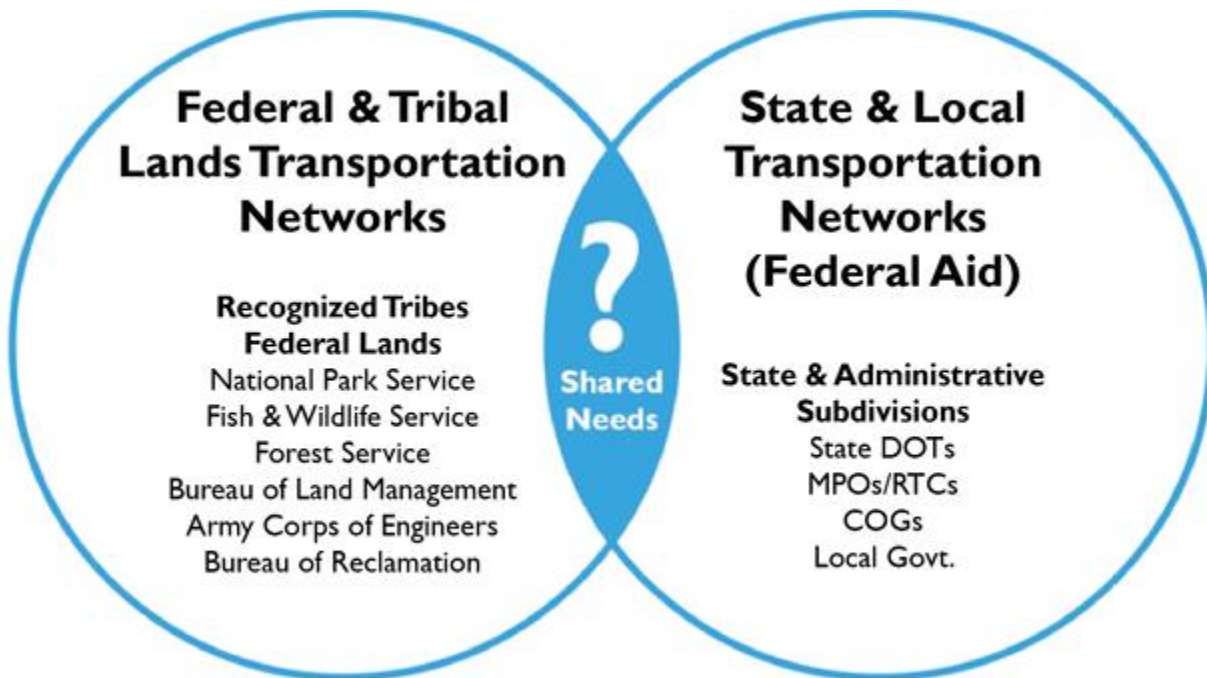
As such, determining the relative priority of projects on discretionary (or recreational) systems versus non-discretionary systems (commute, school, and other daily transportation needs) can be challenging.

The Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) was created to plan, design, and fund projects in this unique travel niche, however lack of consistent coordination between federal, state, and local agencies can hinder the development of a broad, multi-agency consensus for enhanced recreational travel. This limits chances for partnerships and funds-leveraging and can lead to missed opportunities where shared needs could be aligned in the planning or design processes.

Led by Federal Lands Highways (FLH), enhanced FLMA coordination attempts to solve this challenge through the identification of shared needs through cross-sector, multi-agency workshops (see **Figure 1**). Multi-agency workshops can reveal and elevate projects and opportunities that are:

- Beneficial to multiple agencies and supported by the general public
- Most likely to receive (or have received) state or local investment
- Projects of mutual interest where planning and design can be aligned before final programming and funding decisions are made
- Eligible and competitive for a broad set of state and federal grant funding opportunities (like FLAP, or other discretionary sources at the state or federal levels)

Figure 1 : Shared Needs Schematic



Venn Diagram of Shared Needs between the Federal & Tribal Lands Transportation Networks on the left and State & Local Transportation Networks (Federal Aid) on the right. The blue left circle includes the Recognized Tribes Federal Lands, National Park Service, Fish & Wildlife Service, Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation. The blue right circle includes the State & Administrative Subdivisions, State DOTs, MPOs/RTCs, COGs, Local Govt. The overlap section in the middle is blue with white text labeled "Shared Needs" with a icon of a white question mark.

Enhanced coordination can help FLMAs, along with state and local agencies, better align improvement programs, seek partnerships, leverage resources, and advance shared goals.

Needs identification through the enhanced FLMA coordination process is mostly an exercise with a long-range (10-20 year) time horizon where agencies have flexibility in determining priorities and identifying projects (the top tier of **Figure 2** below). Sometimes referred to as 'blue sky' strategy, the FLMA coordination process is a financially unconstrained assessment of current and future needs such that capital investments can be identified before safety, congestion, state of good repair, or other concerns become acute. Most needs identified in this study are within this top 'Long Range' tier.

Some projects require additional planning, studies, scope refinement, or risk mitigation (e.g., through a public engagement process) before capital investments or programming decisions can be made. Concept planning, in the forms of corridor plans, site plans, modal plans, and other planning projects/studies can ready projects for implementation by reducing risk, refining scope, and/or determining relative priority. A small number of needs identified in this study are in this 'Mid-Range' tier. Step-down planning efforts, initiated based on the needs identified in the process, can transition a

project from conceptual phases to shovel readiness, as depicted in the implementation, or 'Programming', bottom tier of the pyramid. This process is intended to help guide the best projects toward implementation, by highlighting the projects of greatest need and broadest benefit while demonstrating alignment with planning goals and funding streams.

Figure 2: Planning to Programming Continuum

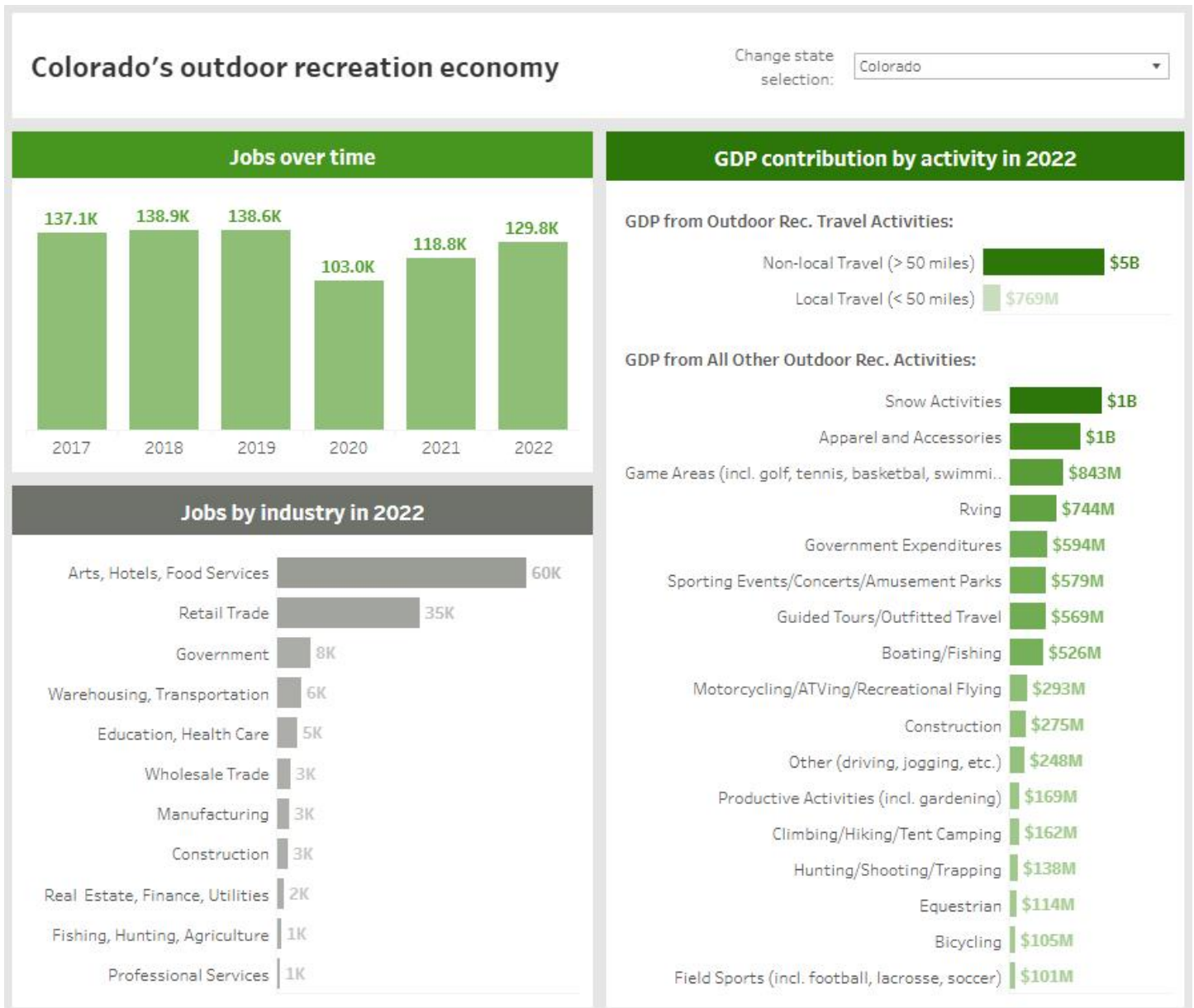


Planning to Programming Graphic is an upside-down triangle divided into three sections. The base of the triangle and largest dark blue section states “Long-Range: Multi-Agency Workshops & FLMA Coordination, Unconstrained Needs Assessments 10 to 20 Year Time Horizon”. The middle light blue section states “Mid-Range: Concept Planning, Step-Down Plans & Prioritization Feasibility/Corridor Studies 3 to 5 Year Time Horizon”. The tip of the triangle green section states “Programming: Projects TIPs/STIPs & Grants”. At the top left corner of the graphic there is a document icon. There is an arrow with the text, “Planning to Programming” along the left side of the triangle pointing down the graphic of an excavator at the bottom of the graphic.

# Colorado's Outdoor Recreation Economy

Driven in large part by the vast amounts of federal public lands, the state's outdoor recreation industry is a major contributor to Colorado's economy. Colorado ranks 12th in the nation for outdoor recreational economic activity with \$5.77B in value-add contribution to the state's GDP while also supporting 129.8K direct employment jobs (2022, see **Figure 3<sup>ii</sup>**).

**Figure 3: Economic Impact of Outdoor Recreation**



The graphic depicts three bar charts. The dark green horizontal bar graph title is “GDP Contribution by activity in 2020”. The first section in the bar graph is “GDP from Outdoor Rec. Travel Activities” with two types of travel. The second section is “GDP from All Other Outdoor Rec. Travel Activities” with seventeen types of travel. The light green vertical bar graph title is “Jobs over time” that depict the years 2017 to 2022 over the number of jobs. The last gray horizontal bar graph title is “Jobs by Industry in 2022”. There are eleven types of industries over the number of jobs.

Non-local travel, defined as greater than 50 miles, alone contributes \$5B to this figure and is driven largely by the internationally renowned ski destinations (on USFS lands) and National Parks throughout the state.

# Colorado's Recreational Transportation Network

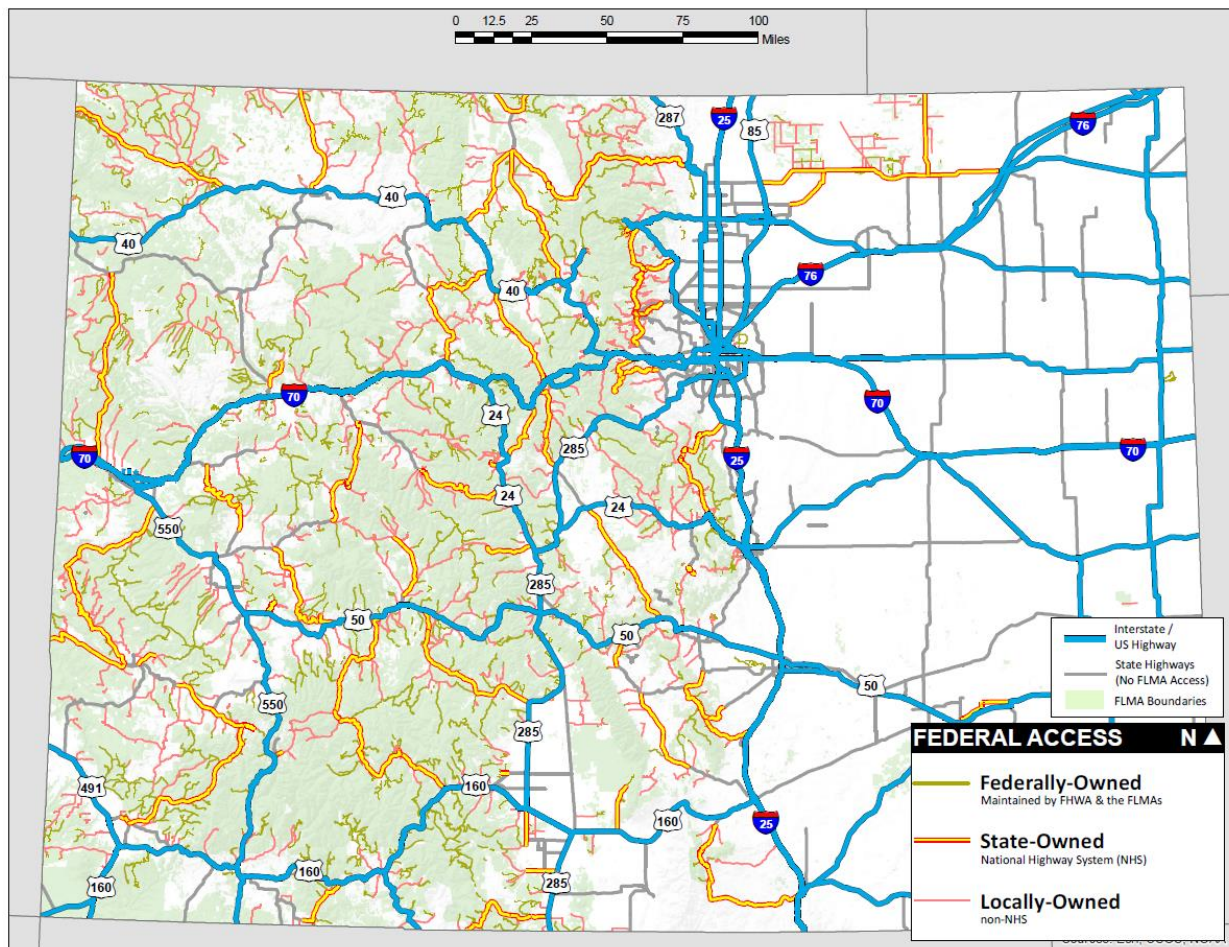
Access to the outdoor recreational opportunities on federal lands is dependent on safe and reliable mobility on local, state, and federally owned roadway and trail systems. From major highways to rural roads, from developed campsites to backcountry trails, the traveling public expects to be able to move seamlessly between systems and modes, regardless of ownership, to reach their destination.

## Colorado's Recreational Transportation Systems

Table 1: Colorado's Recreational Transportation Systems

Transportation System Ownership Status	Total Miles
Federally Owned Roadway Miles (all FLMAs, paved & unpaved)	7,672 Miles
State Owned FLMA Access Routes	3,897 Miles
Locally Owned FLMA Access Routes	7,154 Miles
Trails & Multi Use Paths, all Ownership	Between 40,000 and 45,000 Miles

Figure 4: FLMA Access Routes in Colorado



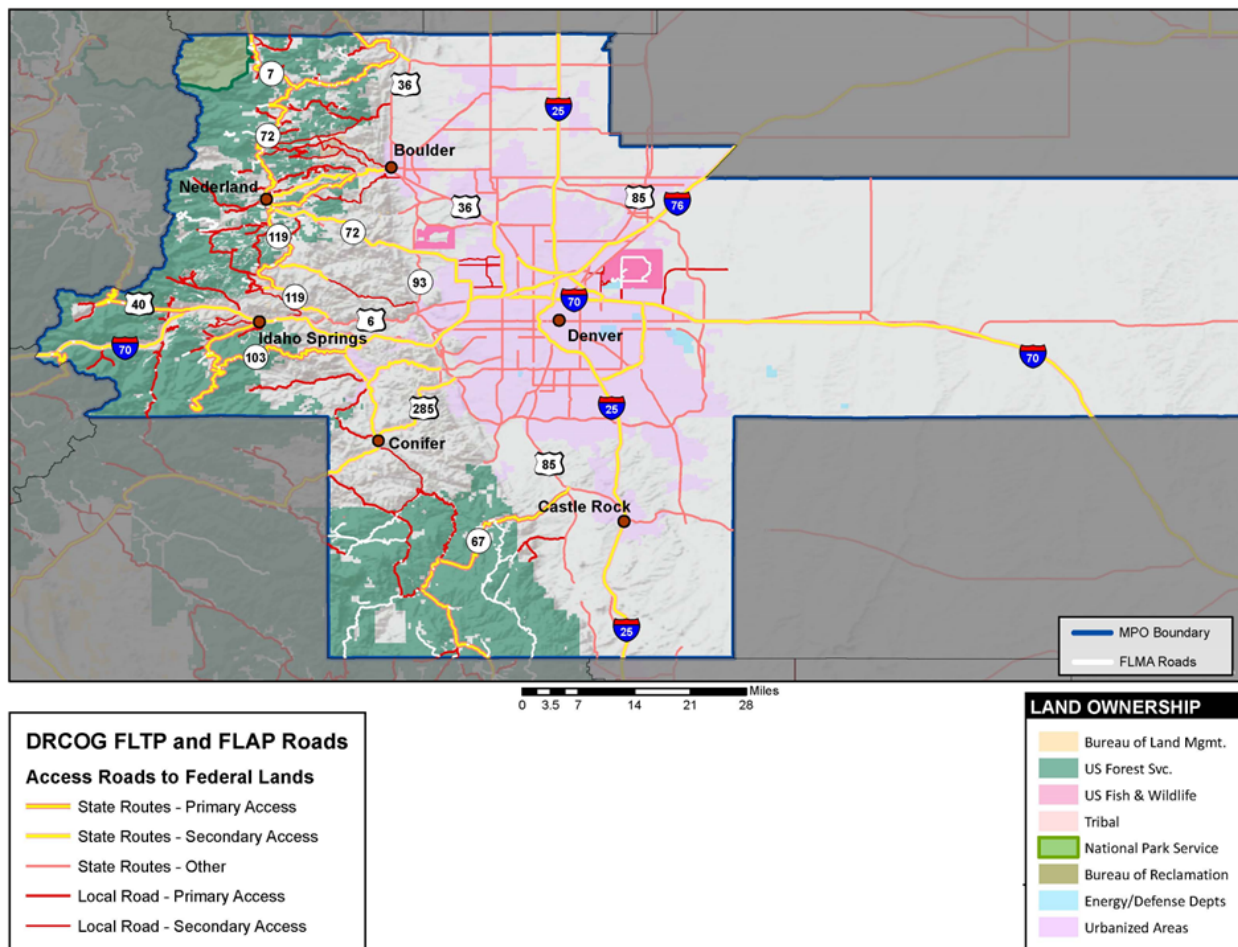
Map of Colorado depicts three types of owned roads based on the color-coded road segment labels in the map legend. The gray road segments are Federally-Owned Maintained by FHWA and the FLMAs, orange road segments are State-Owned National Highway System (NHS), and red road segments are Locally-Owned non-NHS. The legend on the bottom left corner of the map describes the geographic boundaries, dark yellow lines for the interstate/US Highway and dark blue lines for the TPR Boundary and its label on the map.

## Denver Regional COG Recreational Transportation Systems

Table 2: Denver Regional COG Recreational Transportation Systems

Transportation System Ownership Status	Total Miles
Federally Owned Roadway Miles (all FLMAs, paved & unpaved)	174 Miles
State Owned FLMA Access Routes	297 Miles
Locally Owned FLMA Access Routes	340 Miles
Trails	4,937 Miles (est.)

Figure 5: FLMA Access Routes in DRCOG



Map of FLMA Access Routes in the DRCOG Transportation Planning Region in Colorado. The legend on the bottom left corner of the map is for the DRCOG FLTP and FLAP Roads, Access Roads to Federal Lands. Five different levels of state or local roads and their types of access are depicted by colors. Orange segments are State Routes with Primary Access, yellow segments are State Routes with Secondary Access, pink segments are State Routes with Other Access, red segments are Local Road with Primary Access, and dark red segments are Local Road with Secondary Access. This map helps identify roads of the six types of FLMA Lands and Roads and three types of FLTP. The six types of FLMA Lands and Roads are US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation. The three types of FLTP are FLTP/FLTP Subset, FLTP Proposed (USFS) and Open to Passenger Vehicles. The source is from Esri, USGS, NOAA.

Each system, and its underlying ownership structure, dictates which programs and funding sources can be used for planning and improvements.

### Federally Owned System

The federally owned high-use transportation system (and associated facilities, like bridges, trails, trailheads, etc.) is funded by US Congress under the current surface transportation act (the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, or BIL, 2022-2026). Federal Lands Highways is responsible for improvements to this system under the Federal Lands Transportation Program, or FLTP.

The National Park Service, the US Fish & Wildlife Service, and the US Forest Service all receive a fixed yearly amount (set-aside) to allocate as agency needs dictate. The Bureau of Land Management, US Army Corps of Engineers, and the Bureau of Reclamation compete for the remainder of the yearly funding (see **Table 3**).

**Table 3: FLTP Funding**

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
<b>FLTP Total Funding (National)</b>	\$422 M	\$430 M	\$439 M	\$448 M	\$456 M
<b>Set-aside for National Park Service</b>	\$332 M	\$339 M	\$346 M	\$354 M	\$360 M
<b>Set-aside for Fish &amp; Wildlife Service</b>	\$36 M	\$36 M	\$36 M	\$36 M	\$36 M
<b>Set-aside for Forest Service</b>	\$24 M	\$25 M	\$26 M	\$27 M	\$28 M
<b>Remaining Amount for:</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bureau of Land Mgmt.</li> <li>• US Army Corps.</li> <li>• Bureau of Reclamation</li> </ul>	\$30 M	\$30 M	\$31 M	\$31 M	\$32 M

All other federally owned transportation facilities (such as administrative or low volume public roads) are managed by the various FLMAs with departmental or agency specific funds.

In Colorado, 7,672 miles of federally owned roadways are eligible for FLTP investment. Within the Grand Valley MPO/TPR, 343 miles of roadway qualify (FLTP Subset shown in **Figure 5**). This total excludes trails, trailheads, bridges, and other federally owned transportation systems also eligible for FLTP funding. Note that federally owned transportation assets are eligible for funding under the Access Program (FLAP, see next section) with an agreement whereby a state or local agency agrees to assume operations and maintenance costs of the facility.

### State Owned Access System

The state-owned access system, which includes US routes, interstate routes, and some local roads that are crucial to freight transport and airport access, falls under the jurisdiction of state DOTs to maintain and improve as needs dictate. State DOTs receive formulaic funding under the Federal Aid system, and are also eligible for a variety of discretionary (competitive grant) programs under BIL.

Given the prevalence of federal lands in Colorado, many state routes are also eligible for funding from the Federal Lands Access Program or FLAP. FLAP is a formulaic program administered by FLH to

improve and expand access to public federal lands that support high-use recreation or economic generation.

By legislative formula, every US state receives a yearly allocation under FLAP. Due to the abundance of federal lands and federal public roadway in Colorado, the state receives one of the largest yearly allocations in the country (see **Table 4**).

**Table 4: FLAP Funding**

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
<b>FLAP Total Funding (National)</b>	\$286 M	\$292 M	\$297 M	\$304 M	\$309M
<b>FLAP Colorado Funding</b>	\$8.07 M	\$8.21 M	\$8.3 M	\$8.48 M	\$8.62 M

In Colorado, there are 3,897 miles of CDOT roadway that provide primary access to various FLMA units (gold routes in **Figures 4 & 5**). In the DRCOG region, there are 297 miles of CDOT roadway that provide FLMA access.

The next call for FLAP projects in Colorado is scheduled for mid to late-2025. To request to be placed on a distribution list, please send an email to: [CFL.Planning@dot.gov](mailto:CFL.Planning@dot.gov) or visit <https://highways.dot.gov/federal-lands/flap> for more information.

### Locally Owned Access System

The locally owned system is comprised of various county and municipal facilities (such as roads, streets, bridges, sidewalks, and public transit systems) that provide urban, inter-urban, and rural mobility. Counties and municipalities play a crucial role in the planning, development, and maintenance of these transportation systems. Local governments are responsible for tailoring transportation solutions to meet the unique needs and demands of their communities. They must address issues such as traffic congestion, road safety, public transit accessibility, and infrastructure resilience.

To fund projects, local governments often rely on a combination of revenue sources, including property taxes, sales taxes, vehicle registration fees, and grants from state and federal agencies. While MPOs typically do not own transportation assets, they play a crucial role in planning and funding transportation systems in urbanized regions. MPOs can bring multiple jurisdictions together, develop funding strategies for projects of regional significance, and provide an excellent forum to discuss shared needs across federal, state, and local systems. In Colorado, there are 7,154 miles of roadway that provide primary access to federal lands and are owned and maintained by counties and incorporated municipalities (red routes in **Figure 4 & Figure 5**). Within DRCOG there are 340 miles of local roads that provide FLMA access. These routes are also eligible for funding under FLAP.

### Trails & Multi-Use Paths

The vast array of natural surface trails, paved trails, and multi-use paths are integral components of Colorado's transportation and recreation infrastructure. Trails and multi-use paths can connect neighborhoods, schools, parks, and commercial areas, fostering community, building resilience, promoting economic growth, and improving public health. More than merely providing multi-modal

access, very often these systems are destinations in and of themselves and can provide users with unique and valuable recreational experiences.

The expansive systems of trails and paths throughout the United States are owned and maintained by a mosaic of local, state, and federal agencies, and can also include some non-governmental agencies. Trails are also eligible for a wide variety of formulaic and discretionary funding sources from local, state, and federal agencies. State, local, and some federally-owned trails are eligible for funding under FLAP. The National Park Service manages the Scenic, Historic, and Recreational trail systems, with many state and local trail systems feeding into these world-class recreational corridors.

Within the DRCOG boundary, there are an estimated 4,937 miles of recreational trails (not counting trailheads, pedestrian bridges, and other access infrastructure), many of which are eligible for funding under FLAP and/or FLTP (not pictured in **Figure 5**).

# Federal Land Management in the Denver Regional COG

With 24M acres, constituting 36.3% of the state's total landmass, federal lands play a significant role in Colorado's environmental, recreational, and economic landscape. DRCOG is home to a diverse array of federally managed lands totaling approximately 734,018 acres that shape the region's outdoor recreation, natural resource management, and economic activity in urban, suburban, and rural areas. These lands support a wide range of recreational activities from epic hiking, biking and backcountry exploration to scenic drives, conservation and hunting/fishing.

- **U.S. Forest Service (USFS):** USFS lands within DRCOG total 677,194 acres. Portions of the Arapahoe, Pike and Roosevelt National Forests (NF) are within the DRCOG boundary and offer extensive opportunities for world class outdoor recreation. Buffalo Creek is a premier destination for mountain biking within the Pike NF in the southern part of the DRCOG boundary and in Jefferson County. The Winter Park area within the Arapahoe NF located in the west part of the DRCOG boundary is a premier destination for winter sports as well hiking, biking, and many other recreational opportunities in the Summer months. The Roosevelt NF, located in the northeast part of the boundary, is also home to an abundance of recreational opportunities surrounded by mountainous terrain abutting Rocky Mountain National Park.

- **Bureau of Land Management (BLM):** The BLM manages 8.3 million acres of public lands in Colorado with most concentrated on Colorado's Western Slope. The BLM lands within DRCOG are managed by BLM's Royal Gorge Field Office and total 4,083 acres.

- **National Park Service (NPS):** Rocky Mountain National Park, one of the crown jewels and one of the most visited parks in the NPS system, is known for its towering peaks and home to an abundance of wildlife and natural habitats with over 300 miles of hiking trails. The southeastern portion of the park is encompassed by the DRCOG boundary with 27,438 acres (of 265,807 acres). This area within DRCOG also holds one of Colorado's most epic 14er hikes in Longs Peak.

- **Bureau of Reclamation (BOR):** BOR has several facilities in the Denver region which are primarily focused on water resources management.

- **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS):** The USFWS has three primary sites located within DRCOG. At 15,820 acres, Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge is one of the largest urban refuges in the country. The site was once a war time chemical weapons manufacturing facility during World War II, and now is a refuge to see native wildlife such as bison, deer, raptors, songbirds, waterfowl, prairie dogs, coyotes and others. The refuge also has hiking and biking opportunities.

Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge is a 6,199-acre site located 20 miles northwest of Denver adjacent to the Front Range. It was established in 2007 to preserve and protect more than 630 species of plants, as well as the globally rare xeric tallgrass prairie. Recreation opportunities include wildlife viewing, 15 miles of hiking trails, bicycling, horseback riding, cross country skiing snowshoeing, and archery.

Two Ponds National Wildlife Refuge is a 77-acre gem located in the heart of the city of Arvada. This urban refuge is home to more than 120 species of birds, coyotes, red fox, beaver, turtles, deer, and more with hiking, birding, photography and environmental education opportunities.

DRCOG's blend of federal lands offer residents and visitors extensive opportunities for recreation and solitude, but also serve as economic drivers, supporting local businesses, tourism, and sustainable land use practices.

# Identified Needs for DRCOG

The DRCOG region includes the eight counties of Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Clear Creek, Denver, Douglas, Gilpin, and Jefferson. All of these counties are experiencing population growth which coincides with transportation demand especially to access the world class recreation found throughout the region. There are Federal land assets and economic generators such as Rocky Mountain Arsenal in the eastern part of the DRCOG in Adams County, but most of the desired outdoor recreation on federal lands lie in the four western counties of DRCOG in Jefferson, Clear Creek, Gilpin and Boulder.

This surge in outdoor tourism has placed significant strain on the region's transportation infrastructure, leading to congestion, increased seasonal traffic, and roadway maintenance challenges. Key corridors such as I-70, US 6 (Clear Creek Canyon Rd.), US 285, Highway 93 and CO 119 (Boulder Canyon Dr.) experience higher traffic volumes, particularly on weekends and holidays, as visitors travel to and from public lands. Additionally, access roads to these key corridors are seeing increased use, leading to parking shortages, roadway wear, and safety concerns for both motorists and non-motorized travelers. Within its boundary, DRCOG has especially pointed out sections of I-70, US 6, US 285, and Highway 93 as 'Regional Vision Zero High Injury Networks.'

With continued growth in outdoor recreation and public lands visitation, regional transportation planning must address federal, state, and local coordination needs to ensure safe, efficient, and sustainable access to these recreation areas. Investments in infrastructure, multimodal connectivity, and traffic management strategies will be essential to balance increasing travel demand with the preservation of DRCOG's natural landscapes, rural character and access to world class recreation opportunities.

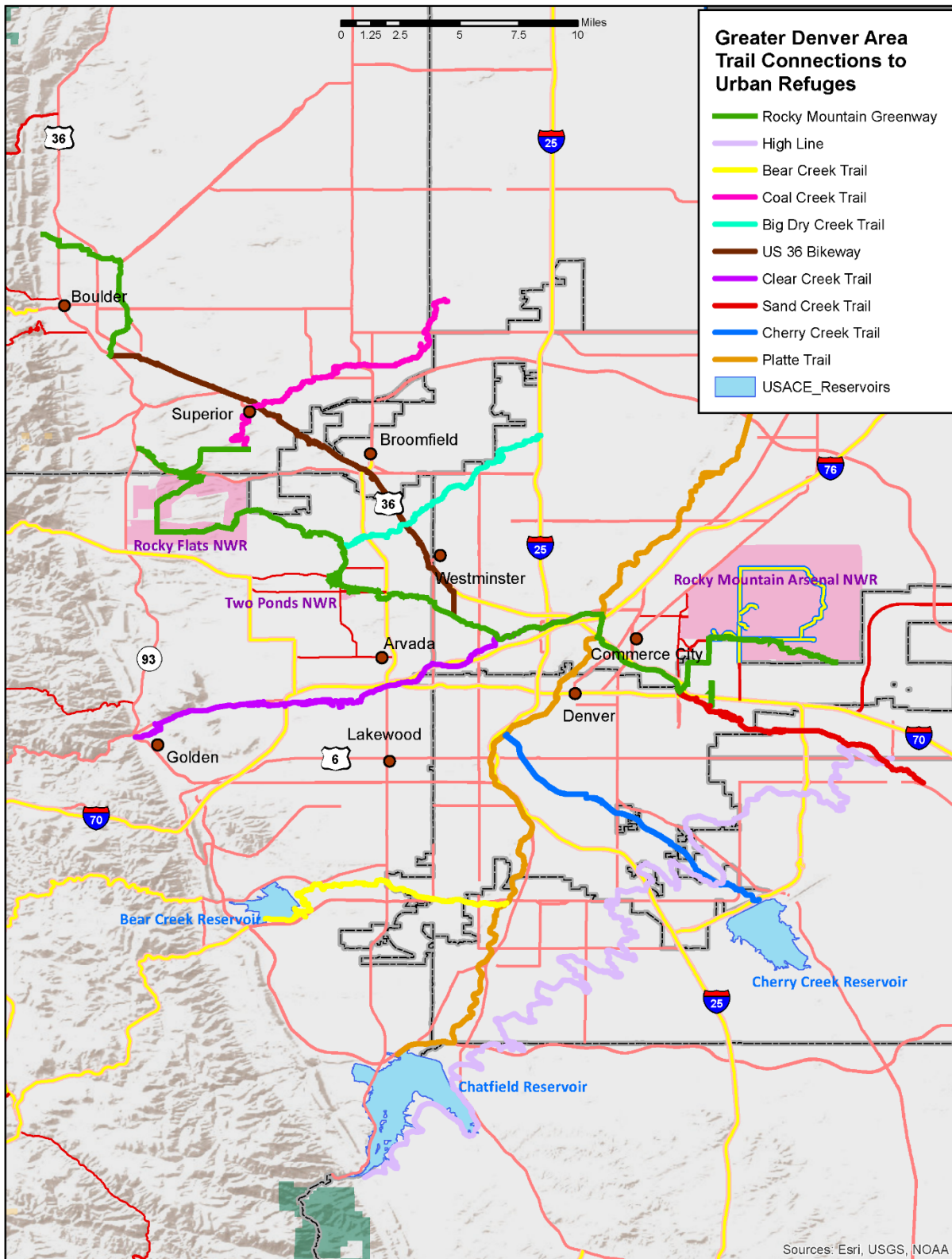
Workshops and one-on-one public agency meetings in DRCOG led to identification of 5 transportation needs in the planning area. These workshops emphasized the importance of strategic planning, funding alignment, and innovative approaches to address transportation infrastructure challenges. Participants included representatives from the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Colorado

Department of Transportation (CDOT), and DRCOG, among others. The discussions focused on enhancing connectivity to public lands, supporting recreational travel, and balancing growth with visitor experience quality and security concerns.

Where appropriate, project needs should be integrated into state and local planning processes to ensure their consideration for inclusion in improvement programs or implementation through discretionary funding sources, such as grants. Simultaneously, FLAP planners and programmers will explore opportunities for joint funding and partnerships with state and local entities to advance projects that align with shared priorities.

The map below depicts the regional multi-use trail system in the Denver-Boulder Metro region

Figure 6: Greater Denver Area Trail Connections to Urban Refuges



Map of Trail Connections to Urban Refuges in the Greater Denver Area, organized by color. The ten identified trails are Rocky Mountain Greenway in green, High Line in light pink, Bear Creek Trail in yellow, Coal Creek trail in hot pink, Big Dry Creek Trail in teal, US 36 Bikeway in brown, Clear Creek Trail in purple, Sand Creek Trail in red, Cherry Creek Trail in blue, and Platte Trail in orange. The map also displays USACE reservoirs in light blue.

# Project Needs: USFWS Within DRCOG

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- Total Number of Projects: 3
- Total Estimated Planning Need: \$400,000 - \$800,000
- Total Estimated Capital Need: \$500,000 - \$700,000

## Overview of Identified Needs

### Prairie Parkway at Gateway Road Intersection Improvements (Project No. 205)

- The Prairie Parkway at Gateway Road intersection lies in Commerce City, CO and is the gateway entry into Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge by motorists, cyclists and pedestrians alike. The intersection also serves as an entry point for parking for events at Dick's Sporting Goods Park- home of Major League Soccer's Colorado Rapids – which can hold upwards of 27,000 spectators.

With the continued increase in access to destinations through this gateway, this project proposes making this intersection safer through reconfiguration and/or added infrastructure to more safely accommodate vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians. This improvement will support local economic growth by attracting visitors, improving access to outdoor recreation and nearby events, and reducing congestion.

### SR 93 at Rocky Flats NWR Trail Linkage (Project No. 206)

- Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge is a USFWS unit located adjacent to the Front Range and State Route 93, and in between Golden and Boulder, CO. The refuge is part of the Colorado Front Range National Wildlife Refuge Complex. This project will enhance trail linkages within the refuge and to adjacent public lands north, east and south of the refuge. Eligible for funding under FLAP and FLTP, trail linkage improvements will support safe, sustainable recreational access and bolster local economic opportunities.

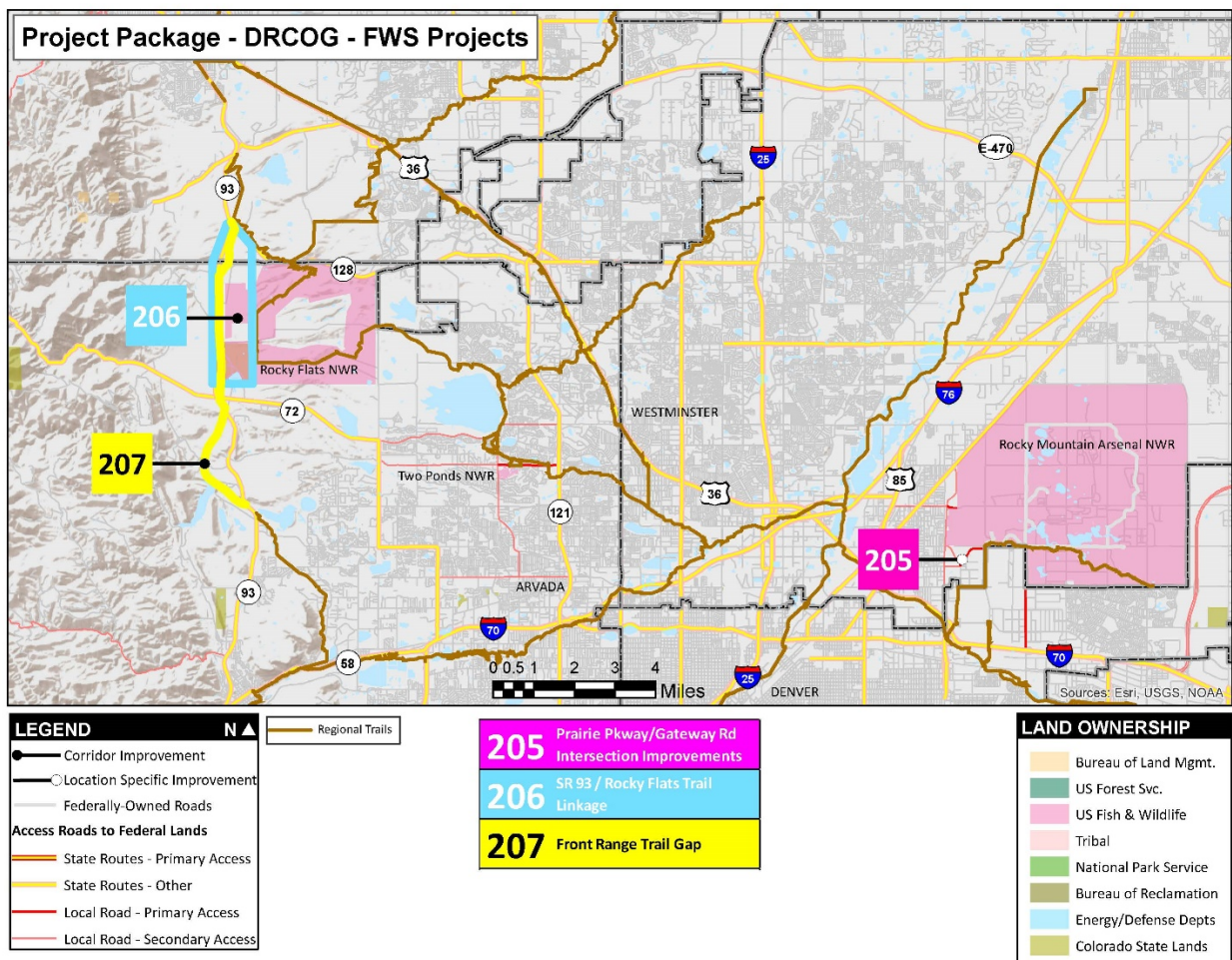
### Front Range Trail Gap (Project No. 207)

- This project aims to close trail gap linkages and connect recreational lands along the SR 93 corridor in both Boulder and Jefferson Counties. This gap study looks at connecting trails to Rocky Flats NWR, Flatirons recreational areas, Long Lake Regional Park, trails around Blunn Reservoir and others. Eligible for funding under FLAP and FLTP, trail linkage improvements will support safe, sustainable recreational access and bolster local economic opportunities.

**Table 5: Needs List for DRCOG USFWS**

Project Number	Name	Type	Ownership	FLMA Accessed	Cost Estimate	Fund Source
205	Prairie Parkway at Gateway Road Intersection Improvements	Intersection Improvements, Roadway	County, City, Federal	USFWS	\$500,000 - \$700,000	FLAP, Fed Aid/Local
206	SR 93 at Rocky Flats NWR Trail Linkage	Planning, Trails	County, Federal	USFWS	\$200,000 - \$400,000	FLAP, FLTP
207	Front Range Trail Gap	Planning, Trails	County	USFWS	\$200,000 - \$400,000	FLAP, FLTP

**Figure 7: DRCOG USFWS Projects**



Map of DRCOG USFWS Projects. Below the map there are two legends on the right and left corner, and a list of projects in between the legends.

The legend below the map on the bottom left corner labels the three project type labels and four levels of Access Roads to Federal Lands depicted by color-coded road segments. The project label for corridor improvements is a solid black line and solid black dot at the end of the line, location specific improvements are a solid black line, white dot and black outline at the end of the line, and federally-owned roads are light grey line. Orange segments are State Routes with Primary Access, yellow

segments are State Routes with Other Access, red segments are Local Road with Primary Access, and dark red segments are Local Road with Secondary Access.

The list of three projects in middle bottom of the map are in a single-columned list organized by project ID, project name and are colored by their matching-colored road segments. The three projects are 205 Prairie Parkway at Gateway Road Intersection Improvements in hot pink, 206 SR 93 at Rocky Flats NWR Trail Linkage in light blue, and 207 Front Range Trail Gap in yellow.

The legend on the bottom right corner of the map is land ownership depicted by color-coded areas. Tan areas are Bureau of Land Management, dark green areas are US Forest Service, dark pink areas are US Fish & Wildlife, light pink areas are Tribal Lands, light green areas are National Park Service, olive green areas are Bureau of Reclamation, light blue areas are Energy/Defense Departments, and the pear color areas are Colorado State Lands.

# Project Needs: USFS Within DRCOG

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- Total Number of Projects: 2
- Total Estimated Planning Need: \$300,000 - \$400,000
- Total Estimated Capital Need: \$1,000,000 - \$5,000,000

## Overview of Identified Needs

### Waterton Canyon Multiuse Trail Realignment & Waterton Road Bridge Replacement/Retrofit (Project No. 212)

- Waterton Canyon Trailhead is a popular destination in Jefferson County adjacent and just south of Chatfield State Park. It is the beginning of the epic 486-mile Colorado Trail that stretches to Durango, CO and traverses epic Rocky Mountain terrain. This trailhead is also about .4 of a mile from the High Line Canal (south) Origin Trailhead- a 71-mile Denver metro multiuse trail gem.

There are significant safety concerns for hikers, mountain bikers, anglers, etc. that start their journey from the Waterton Canyon Trailhead:

1. Waterton Rd., a 2-lane roadway separating the Waterton Canyon Trailhead and the start of the Waterton Canyon Trail (and Colorado Trail) can be very congested and pose dangers to recreationalists trying to cross the roadway even with the crossing signal and high visibility crosswalk in place (see pics below).



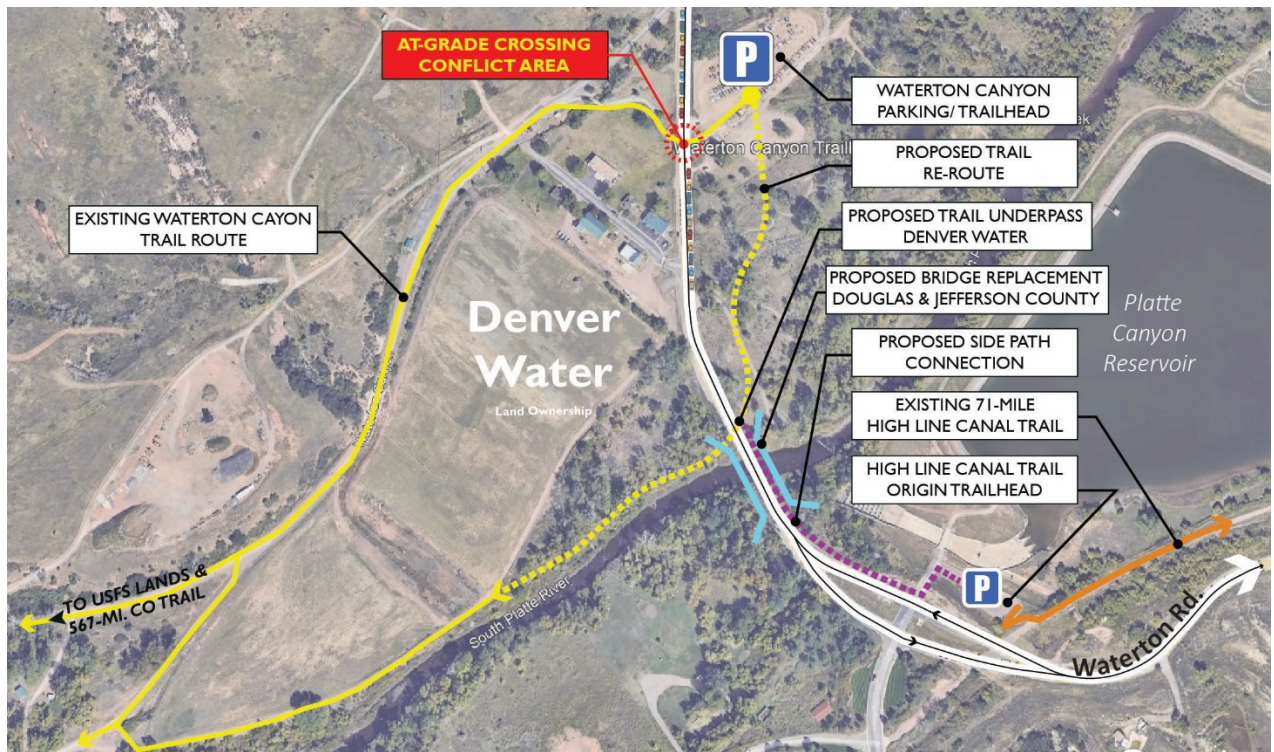
2. Waterton Canyon Trail and High Line Canal Trail are two regionally significant long distance multiuse trails and can be accessed at the corresponding trailheads off Waterton Road. Waterton Canyon Trail passes through Denver Water land first then USFS land. These two trailheads are approximately .4 of a mile apart. However, there is no safe, separated route for hikers and cyclists to connect the two trailheads despite being so close together. The unsafe situation is exacerbated when someone is crossing the bridge over the South Platte River along Waterton Road. See pics below of this Waterton Road corridor between the two trailheads.



3. The bridge in between Waterton Canyon Trailhead and High Line Canal Trailhead is old and needs a retrofit or replacement as well as a safer area either from a retrofit or a separate bike/ped bridge for pedestrians and cyclists to cross safely.



- This project will be to either replace or retrofit the bridge over the South Platte River along Waterton Road coinciding with a safer route for cyclists and pedestrians to cross the river. This project will also re-route the current Waterton Canyon Trail route with an underpass at the retrofitted bridge and eventually join the Waterton Canyon Trail route, and eliminating the need for an at grade roadway crossing. See diagram below:



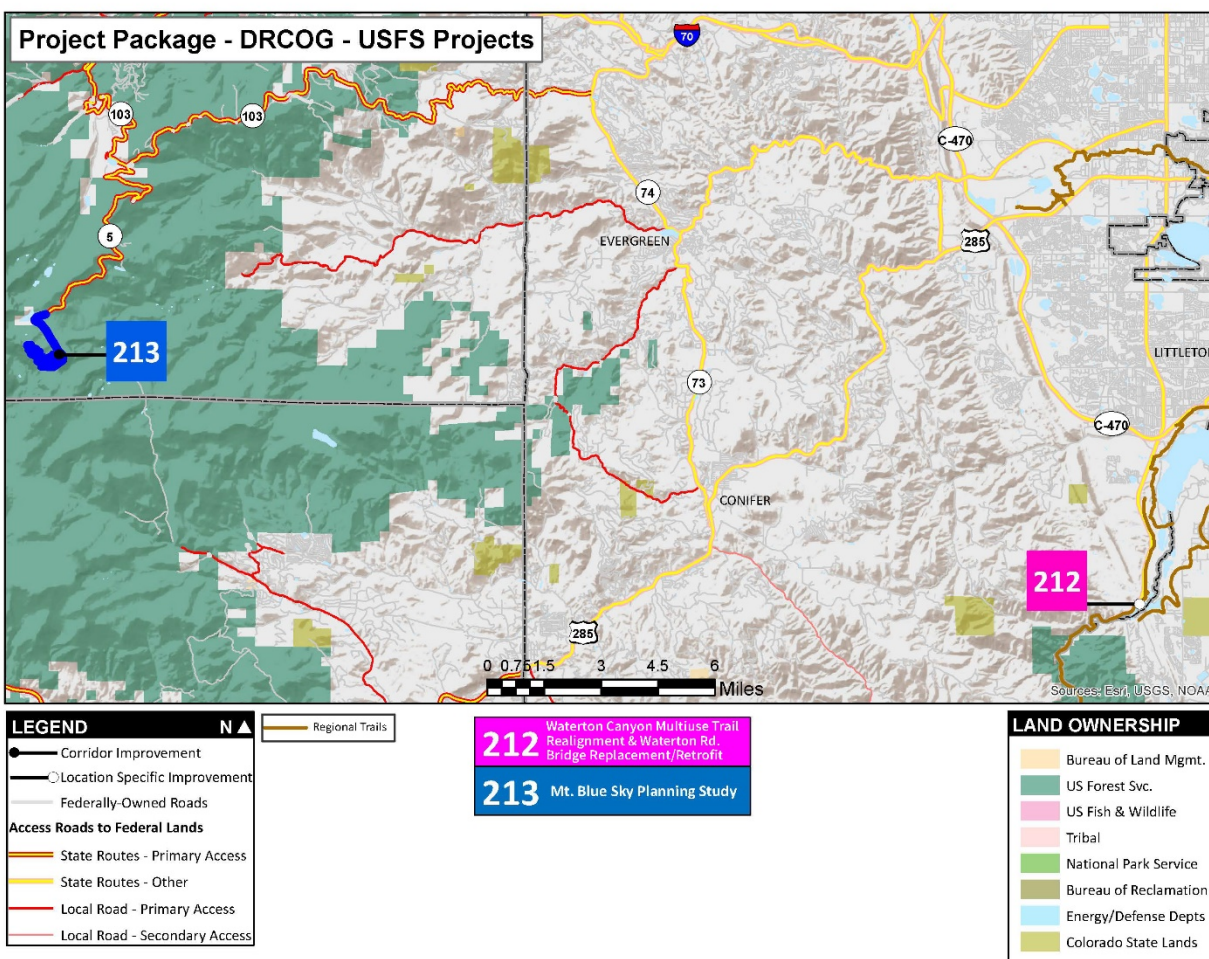
### Mt Blue Sky Planning Study (Project No. 213)

- This project's aim is a planning study to look at better ways to get visitors to the summit of Mt. Blue Sky. The study could include a shuttle from Echo Lake Park to the summit, the last third of the highway converted to trail with non-motorized use, reconfiguration of the roadway, etc. Managing the road has become presented major problems for both CDOT and USFS, especially due to the road being a paved facility.

**Table 6: Needs List for DRCOG USFS**

Project Number	Name	Type	Ownership	FLMA Accessed	Cost Estimate	Fund Source
212	Waterton Canyon Multiuse Trail Realignment & Waterton Road Bridge Replacement/Retrofit	Trails, Bridge Replacement	County, Public Agency	USFS	\$1,000,000 - \$5,000,000	FLAP, Fed Aid/Local
213	Mt Blue Sky Planning Study	Planning	County, Federal	USFS	\$300,000 - \$400,000	FLAP, Other

Figure 8: Project Map for DRCOG USFS Projects



Map of DRCOG USFS Projects. Below the map there are two legends on the right and left corner, and a list of projects in between the legends.

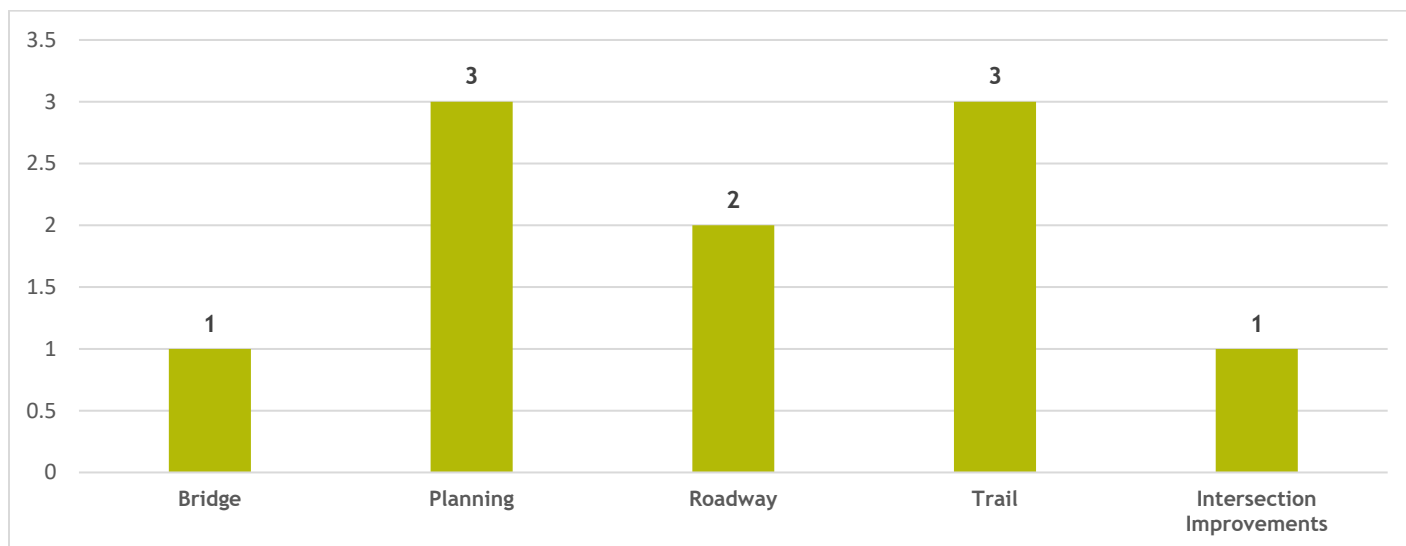
The legend below the map on the bottom left corner labels the three project type labels and four levels of Access Roads to Federal Lands depicted by color-coded road segments. The project label for corridor improvements is a solid black line and solid black dot at the end of the line, location specific improvements are a solid black line, white dot and black outline at the end of the line, and federally-owned roads are light grey line. Orange segments are State Routes with Primary Access, yellow segments are State Routes with Other Access, red segments are Local Road with Primary Access, and dark red segments are Local Road with Secondary Access.

The list of two projects in middle bottom of the map are in a single-columned list organized by project ID, project name and are colored by their matching-colored road segments. The two projects are 212 Waterton Canyon Multiuse Trail Realignment & Waterton Road Bridge Replacement/Retrofit in hot pink, and 213 Mt. Blue Sky Planning Study in dark blue.

The legend on the bottom right corner of the map is land ownership depicted by color-coded areas. Tan areas are Bureau of Land Management, dark green areas are US Forest Service, dark pink areas are US Fish & Wildlife, light pink areas are Tribal Lands, light green areas are National Park Service, olive green areas are Bureau of Reclamation, light blue areas are Energy/Defense Departments, and the pear color areas are Colorado State Lands.

# Summary Data

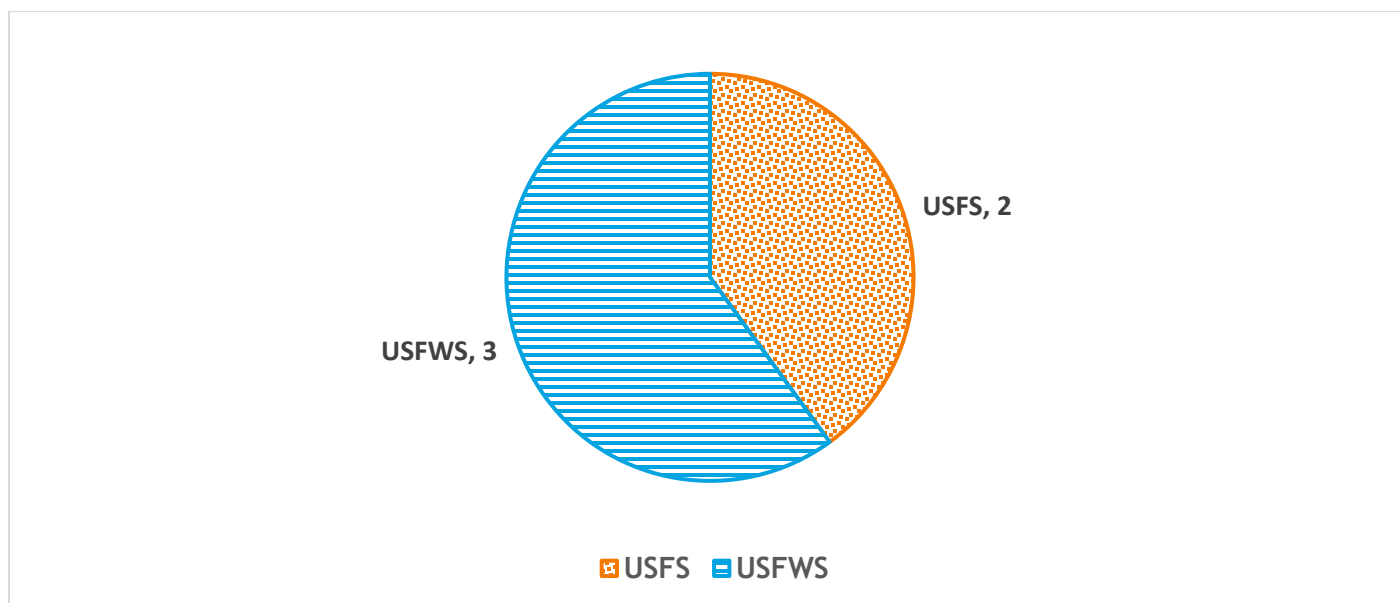
Figure 9 : Project Type



*Note:* Some projects include more than one type

Vertical bar graph for three project types on the x-axis. The y-axis depicts the number of projects for each type of project. Bridge has 1 project, Planning has 3 projects, Roadway has 2 projects, Trail has 1 project, and Intersection Improvements has 1 project.

Figure 10 : Public Land Accessed



*Note:* Some projects include more than one FLMA/Public Land Agency

Pie chart showcasing public lands accessed by projects, with the largest yellow section for USFWS with 3 projects. The next largest orange section for USFS with 2 projects.

<sup>i</sup> Title 23 United States Code (U.S.C.) Sections 134 and 135

<sup>ii</sup> <https://headwaterseconomics.org>