



Conservation Report

April 2026

2026 Conservation Priorities:

- Wilderness and Wildlands
- Fountain Creek
- Urban Issues (including Open Space and Development, Recycling)
- Beyond Carbon
- Wildlife

Beyond Carbon

Net Metering:

CSU plans to submit a modified net metering proposal for solar customers for decision by City Council as Utilities Board in the fall of 2026. Focus group discussions are supposed to begin in March, but we and the solar homeowners do not know at this point which entities or individuals have been invited to be part of the focus group.

<https://www.csu.org/solar-energy-program/net-metering-changes> No net metering items on the April CSU Board agenda.

HB 26-1007, enabling “plug-and-play” “balcony solar” technology, has passed the Colorado House and Senate. [Bill tracking in Colorado - HB 26-1007 \(2026A legislative session\) - FastDemocracy](#)

Nixon Plant Decommision:

State Senator Marc Snyder and State Representative Amy Paschal along with House Minority Leader Jarvis Caldwell (northern El Paso County) have proposed legislation in the 2026 state legislative session that would allow Colorado Springs Utilities to ask for



SIERRA CLUB
COLORADO

Pikes Peak *Timberlines*

an extension of the current 2030 deadline to close the Ray Nixon coal powerplant. See text of proposed bill at SB 26-022 D:\dist\text\022_01.txt CSU claims that the extension is necessary because it cannot meet the current deadline to close Nixon by the end of 2029. <https://www.csu.org/blog/new-legislation-clean-energy-plan> The proposed bill only requires that CSU propose a plan which would achieve 80% renewables by no later than 2040, and would not allow the Air Quality Control Commission or Air Pollution Division to impose conditions on the grant of an extension if it would appear to impact reliability or increase rates by more than 1.5%. The bill is presently pending before the State Senate Transportation and Energy Committee, no hearing date has been set.

A recent [Pikes Peak Bulletin news article](#) and a followup article [Data centers come knocking. Are local power and water supplies available? -](#) suggest that a major contributing factor to CSU's difficulty in meeting its clean energy plan goals and reducing reliance on fossil fuels is a push to bring data centers to Colorado Springs. According to these articles, CSU has received 10 requests for power from data centers between July 2024 and February 2026, for a total of 1,420 megawatts of power, more than five times the 260 megawatts that the Nixon plan produces. Although CSU has adopted a special large load rate schedule that would supposedly protect other ratepayers from shouldering the cost of data centers, at the last Colorado Springs Utilities Board meeting, CSU asked to have that schedule amended to make clear that CSU reserves the power to "execute Economic Development Special Contracts with selected customers receiving service under this rate schedule." This seems to allow these special protections to be waived or reduced to promote economic development. "We are willing and prepared to serve any large electric customers that want to come to Colorado Springs." CSU webpage blog [Serving big power users, protecting customer costs](#) (Published March 2, 2026) <https://www.csu.org/blog/big-power-users-protecting-costs> (Blog also says 10 megawatts is "thousands of times more energy than a typical home uses.")

HB 26-1226:

The Sierra Club is supporting a bill in the Colorado legislature that would mitigate the impacts of federal orders requiring aging coal plants to continue to operate beyond their planned closure date. Some of the provisions would specifically affect Colorado Springs Utilities if the Nixon plant continues to operate beyond its scheduled closure date at the end of 2029. The bill has passed the House Energy Committee with



SIERRA CLUB
COLORADO

Pikes Peak *Timberlines*

amendments and been referred to the House Appropriations Committee. [CO HB1226 | 2026 | Regular Session | LegiScan](#)

Lobby Day:

The Sierra Club hosted a lobby day on Monday, March 9th at the State Capitol. A number of people from the Colorado Springs area attended. We spoke to several local legislators, including Marc Snyder, Tony Exum, and Larry Liston concerning various Sierra Club supported or opposed bills. We provided follow-up information to Tony Exum on cost of pollution controls for the Nixon plant.

[04-06-2026-Utilities-Board-Special-Meeting-Agenda-April-2026.pdf](#)

Wilderness and Wildlands:

(Informational only) Roadless Rule rescission: The federal government is expected to release an updated proposal for rescission of the federal roadless rule and accompanying draft environmental impact statement, along with a request for additional public comments, by March 2026. A final decision is expected in late 2026. This rule change would not directly affect Colorado, which has a state-specific roadless rule. <https://www.pew.org/en/research-and-analysis/articles/2026/02/18/an-update-on-the-roadless-rule#:~:text=Implemented%20in%202001%20by%20the.and%20logging%20on%20these%20lands>.

Pikes Peak thinning:

No new information

Fountain Creek:

PPG is planning to host a cleanup of the Roswell Reach section of Monument Creek on May 2nd jointly with the Roswell Neighbors.

Urban Issues

Parks, Open Space, and Development:

Parks Master Plan: Colorado Springs has begun the process of updating its 2014 Parks Master Plan. <https://coloradosprings.gov/ParkSystemMasterPlan> The current



SIERRA CLUB
COLORADO

Pikes Peak *Timberlines*

timeline calls for a draft master plan to be released for public comment in Spring or Summer of 2026, no meetings yet scheduled.

E-Bikes: No new info on impacts or whether City Parks has gathered info.

Outdoor Pikes Peak Initiative: The Pikes Peak Outdoor Recreation Alliance (PPORA) proposal to have Colorado Parks and Wildlife would take a leading role in management of the Pikes Peak massif is reportedly moving forward. Jim is planning to attend their Outdoor Leadership Summit, April 10th. See below

Colorado Springs Utilities has published a draft master plan for recreation on the North Slope of Pikes Peak.

<https://www.csu.org/hubfs/Document-Library/NSRA-Recreation-Plan-Draft.pdf?hsLang=en> The draft plan had only a 3-week public comment period, ending March 31st. The final plan will be presented to the CSU Board (City Council) on April 22 and a resolution to adopt will be heard by City Council on April 28th.

Wildlife

Wolf Reintroduction:

No new information