



Conservation Report

July 2026

2026 Conservation Priorities:

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

Beyond Carbon

Rooftop Solar

Colorado Springs Utilities is proposing new billing options for customers with home solar panels. Future solar users would choose between two new rate structures, which are both expected to raise electric bills by about \$30 a month. Customers could choose either a per-day “grid access charge” or a “demand charge” based on highest net 15 min on-peak monthly demand. CSU estimates that either plan would raise solar customers’ rates by about \$38 per month (\$456 per year), but solar owners suggest the actual increase could be much greater. A public City Council hearing is tentatively scheduled for August 25, 2026 with Council to vote on the changes on September 22.

<https://www.csu.org/solar-energy-program/net-metering-changes>

Data Centers

On Thursday, June 11th, the Colorado Springs Planning Department administratively approved plans for Project Taurus, a data center proposed to be built near Garden of



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the Gods Road and Centennial Boulevard. Four appeals have been filed, arguing among other things that the project will be larger and more impactful than was presented to city staff, that the project did not qualify for “administrative” approval, but instead required a public hearing before the Planning Commission, and that the sound study was inadequate. The Planning Commission will hear the appeals at 9:00 a.m. on July 23. Because of the high level of public interest, this meeting has been moved to the Shockley-Zalabak Theater at the Ent Center. Only members of the public present in person can speak, virtual testimony will not be allowed. Public comments will be limited to 2 minutes and no ceding of time will be allowed.

For more information on the appeals, see

<https://www.integritymatterscos.org/project-taurus-data-center>

EIRP/Nixon Plant Decommission

SB 26-182 has been enacted into law and will allow CSU to delay meeting clean energy goals and closing down Nixon by 3 years until December 31, 2032. Colorado Springs has adopted an Electric Integrated Resource Management Plan under which an updated Clean Energy Plan will be submitted by the end of 2026 and will lay out Springs Utilities plan to achieve 80% emissions reduction by 2033, replace the Nixon coal plant, and seek to reduce emissions by 95% in 2040. The recommended resource plan includes adding 750 MW Solar, 425 MW Wind, 477 MW Nuclear and 50 MW Geothermal. <https://www.csu.org/hubfs/Document-Library/EIRP.pdf>

Nuclear Power

CSU is strongly supporting use of nuclear power as a means of meeting its clean energy goals and will be taking part in a feasibility study on small modular reactors. See report.

<https://www.cpr.org/2026/04/23/nuclear-reactor-colorado-springs-study/>

HB 26-1226

[HB 26-1226](#) has been enacted into law. It 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.



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Rockies Express Gas Pipeline

<https://www.criticalenergyreliabilitylink.com/#map>

Wilderness and Wildlands

Roadless Rule Rescission

The Department of Agriculture has announced that it is rescinding the 2001 Roadless Rule.

<https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/news/press-releases/2025/06/23/secretary-rollins-rescinds-roadless-rule-eliminating-impediment-responsible-forest-management>

It is not clear how this action will affect Colorado, which has a state-specific roadless rule, but there is concern that the Administration might interpret the decision to apply to Colorado.

[Millions of Colorado acres could see changes without roadless rule](#)

Pikes Peak Thinning

The Forest is proposing a combination of vegetation treatments and prescribed fire to reduce hazardous fuel loading and fire intensity while enhancing forest health and resiliency across the Pikes Peak Ranger District. The project is currently in the scoping phase, no NEPA date has been set. [Pike-San Isabel National Forests & Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands | Project Summary \(#303888\) | Forest Service](#) This is separate from the ongoing North-South Vegetation Management project (no new info).

The Greater Pikes Peak Region Sentinel Landscape (PPSL) Proposal

PPSL has been selected by the [Sentinel Landscapes Partnership](#), a national partnership led by the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Interior, and War that supports military readiness, conservation, working lands, and landscape resilience around military installations. A cornerstone of the PPSL proposal is the [Security, Open Space, and Agricultural Resilience \(SOAR\) Initiative](#), which aims to conserve over 80,000 acres in the region in order to maintain the effectiveness and sustainability of military installations under the United States Department of Defense. By limiting encroaching development and environmental degradation that can negatively impact defense-related



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operations.

<https://governoroffice.colorado.gov/governor/news/governor-polis-celebrates-federal-election-pikes-peak-region-protect-open-space-and-military>

Fountain Creek

COS Creek Plan Feasibility Study

There is a public meeting on the Colorado Springs Creek Plan scheduled for July 15th from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. at the Gold Hill police station for people to comment on the future of the area. This is the second of two public meetings, the first of which was held June 24th at UCCS Downtown Campus. These informal, drop-in events will provide an opportunity to review project information, speak with the project team, and share feedback that will help inform future recommendations. A brief presentation will begin at approximately 5:20 p.m., but attendees may arrive at any time during the event. For those unable to attend in person, a self-guided online open house providing the same information is available at coscreekplanopenhouse.com. The study will evaluate solutions to restore ecosystem health, reduce flood risk, improve water quality, and enhance parks, trails, and community access. [Public open houses planned for COS Creek Plan feasibility study | City of Colorado Springs](#)

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 timeline calls for a draft master plan to be tentatively released for a 1-month public comment period in the Summer of 2026. As of 07/06/2026, no release date has yet been announced and no public meetings have yet been scheduled.



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E-Bikes

No new info on impacts or whether City Parks has gathered info. [E-Bikes on City of Colorado Springs Trails | City of Colorado Springs](#)

Outdoor Pikes Peak Initiative

Pikes Peak Outdoor Recreation Association (PPORA) has merged with Pikes Peak Outdoor Organization. <https://pikespeakoutdoors.org/>

Land Annexations

The City of Colorado Springs has been working to update its 2006 Annexation Plan and has invited the public to review the draft AnnexCOS Plan and share their feedback through a survey, with a July 7th deadline. [AnnexCOS | City of Colorado Springs](#)
Karman Line annexation. A new proposal to annex the Karman Line area is reported to be under development. No details available. [Revised Karman Line development project in the works, according to new documents | FOX21 News Colorado](#)

Development

The Buc-ee's megacenter. The El Paso County Planning and Community Development Department has raised a question of whether the Buc-ee's megacenter meets the current zoning classification of a "convenience store," the current C-1, commercial use classification allows a convenience store but not a gas station or truck stop. The determination letter states that because it is unclear whether the use meets the definition of a 'Convenience Store,' county planning staff cannot determine whether it is sufficiently similar to allowed uses within the C-1 zoning district to qualify as an allowed use <https://www.fox21news.com/news/buc-ees-land-use-request-denied/> As noted in the May update, a company tied to the Buc-ee's chain bought a parcel of land along Interstate 25 in El Paso County near the site where developers previously proposed building Colorado's second Buc-ee's location.