



# Fact Sheet

## ABOUT US

Keep it Colorado is a nonprofit coalition of conservation organizations working to protect the lands and waters that define our state. We are intent on creating a future in which conservation, protection and stewardship are priorities for Colorado's communities.

We are the only coalition in Colorado that is elevating the voice of organizations doing on-the-ground private lands conservation - and we do this by bringing together multiple sectors to advance conservation across this great state.

Land trusts form the core of our membership; we represent the interests of 25 land trusts from across the state. We are also a voice for public agencies, including county and open space agencies, and state and federal agencies; conservation professionals such as attorneys, appraisers and tax credit brokers; and nonprofits and other conservation champions that are conserving and stewarding Colorado's private and public lands and water.

Collectively, our coalition's work:

- continues the legacy and heritage of Colorado's working family farms and ranches;
- protects our state's large, connected natural areas that define Colorado - including open spaces and scenic vistas, rivers and lakes, and fish and animals;
- and enables Coloradans and visitors to enjoy our state's iconic beauty, from the prairies and deserts to the mountains, today and in the future.

## OUR WORK

Keep It Colorado provides a unified statewide voice and leadership for conservation and conservation planning, specifically around private lands. Our core service areas are:

- **Public Policy Advocacy:** We work to advance state and federal policy that protects and expands conservation tools, increases funding for conservation, supports sustainable outdoor access, protects working farms and ranches, and combats the climate crisis.
- **Coalition-Building and Sustainability:** We foster a collaborative and inclusive coalition by bringing diverse partners to the table to plan and problem-solve, providing opportunities for the conservation community to connect and collaborate on projects, and listening and responding to the needs of our members.
- **Public Outreach and Engagement:** We provide a unified voice that elevates the stories of private lands conservation. We aim to help people understand the critical impact of conservation on our land, water and wildlife; our outdoor lifestyle; the economy; and the future.
- **Emerging Issues and Opportunities Forum:** We boldly push the envelope, ask tough questions and seek out challenges – on topics from land trust sustainability to conservation tools – so that together we can create approaches and solutions that drive the conservation community forward for long-lasting impacts.

### VISION

We envision a Colorado where people, lands, waters and wildlife thrive.

### MISSION

Our mission is to unite, elevate and empower Colorado's conservation community to protect the lands and waters that define our state.

## WHY THIS WORK MATTERS

Conservation is and will always be important and relevant in Colorado and to the people who live in and visit our great state. **Local food access** is an ongoing critical need. **Clean water** is a requirement. Animals and fish rely on **healthy habitats** to survive. People place a high value on spending time **outdoors** and enjoying **nature**. And communities from rural to urban areas seek **connection** to the landscapes and natural outdoor areas that make Colorado special.

Our coalition members serve as leaders in all of these areas. And they have a critical role to play in a bigger vision for a Colorado where people, lands, waters and wildlife thrive.

But there are some challenges. There is a shifting movement and legacy of the way land trusts operate in Colorado. Our state faces environmental and human threats that make conservation more relevant and important than ever. And our members need a unified voice to advocate on their behalf to address these challenges in tandem with other conservation-minded organizations pursuing similar goals.

Keep It Colorado addresses these challenges by:

- providing leadership to ensure that land trusts have the tools, resources and support they need to maintain their strong legacy of private lands conservation, continue innovating in their conservation work, and remain connected to the broader conservation community;
- finding solutions in the intersections between conservation, outdoor recreation, economic development and sustainable energy;
- and operating under the notion that all aspects of conservation are valuable, and that many diverse conservation organizations play a role in moving conservation forward. Our coalition brings together those diverse voices under a unified front to ensure that the needs and challenges of local communities across the state are represented in Colorado's conservation movement.

## FUNDERS AND PARTNERS

Keep It Colorado and the membership can't do this work alone. Our coalition relies on working collaborations with conservation-minded organizations that prioritize conservation, protection and stewardship for our state's communities. A few of our key partners include:

1. **Great Outdoors Colorado:** Providing critical funding to sustain the coalition's legacy conservation work and expand our vision of a future that prioritizes conservation.
2. **Gates Family Foundation:** Providing critical funding to sustain the coalition's legacy conservation work and expand our vision of a future that prioritizes conservation.
3. **Land Trust Alliance:** Providing essential organizational support to our land trust members via trainings, workshops, and other capacity-building resources and tools.

## STAFF AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We are a small (but mighty!) staff of two. At the helm is Melissa Daruna, our executive director. Linda Lidov is our director of membership and communications. Our board members represent many different corners of the state and a variety of land trusts and conservancies, large and small.