



INSPIRING AMERICANS TO PROTECT WILDLIFE FOR OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE.

# Fact Sheet

## The Clean Power Plan and Colorado

Across the United States and around the world, climate change poses an increasingly dire threat to wildlife, communities, and public health. Changes to our climate are destroying critical wildlife habitat, causing habitat ranges to shift, increasing incidence of pests and invasive species, decreasing available food and water, and even increasing the rate of species' extinction. Luckily, the Environmental Protection Agency has stepped up to address the largest source of carbon pollution in the U.S.

### What is the Clean Power Plan

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014, the Environmental Protection Agency announced the Clean Power Plan – first-ever standards to reduce carbon pollution from existing power plants, our nation's largest source of climate-changing emissions. The Clean Power Plan establishes pollution targets for each state, based on each state's particular fuel mix and emissions-reduction potential. **Once implemented, the Clean Power Plan will reduce national carbon pollution by 30% by 2030, an important step towards protecting our wildlife heritage from the impacts of unchecked climate change.**

### Colorado wildlife is suffering because of climate change

Colorado wildlife are on the front lines of the climate change battle. The **CUTTHROAT TROUT**, a favorite of Colorado anglers, has been declining due to climate change as the species faces droughts, diminishing reservoir levels, decreased snowpack volumes and increasingly high temperatures.<sup>i</sup>

The **SAGE GROUSE**, another Colorado wildlife species, is also being impacted by increased temperatures and reduced water supply. The sage grouse lives in a habitat of sagebrush which is highly sensitive to wildfires. Droughts likely driven by climate change is also among the factors believed to be contributing to declines in western Colorado's **MULE DEER** herds, once among the nation's largest.<sup>ii</sup>



### Wildlife benefits of Clean Power Plan go beyond climate change

In addition to limiting carbon pollution to combat climate change, the Clean Power Plan will also reduce numerous other pollutants and harmful byproducts of coal-fired power that are damaging to wildlife and their habitats – delivering substantial additional benefits to our country's wildlife heritage. By moving us away from dirty fossil fuels like coal, **the Clean Power Plan will remove between 424,00 to 471,00 tons of sulfur dioxide and 407,000 to 428,000 ton of nitrogen oxides, which will mean less acid rain and nitrogen pollution in lakes and estuaries downwind of power plants.**<sup>iii</sup> By reducing reliance on coal-burning for power generation in the U.S., the Clean Power Plan will also help protect wildlife from mining practices that destroy habitat, and from leaking toxic coal waste ponds that poison our waterways. The Clean Power Plan is clearly a win for wildlife!



## Colorado and the Clean Power Plan

### Climate change is hurting Colorado's vibrant outdoor recreation economy

Outdoor recreation is a big part of Colorado's identity and economy. But climate change poses a direct threat to outdoor recreation, hunting and fishing as droughts and wildfires and higher temperatures impact fisheries and outdoor activities across the state.

- Every year, outdoor recreation generates \$13.2 billion in consumer spending and 125,000 direct Colorado jobs.<sup>iv</sup> **Of that consumer spending \$460 million is from hunting and \$650 million is from fishing.**<sup>v</sup>
- At least 65% of Colorado residents participate in outdoor recreation every year.<sup>iii</sup>
- Every year, at least 603,000 people in Colorado head out to watch wildlife like mule deer and big horned sheep<sup>vi</sup>.

### Extreme weather threatens Colorado's industry and infrastructure

Colorado is no stranger to climate-change driven extreme weather. In the summer of 2013, there were several damaging wildfires fueled by record-high temperatures and dry conditions across the state.

- The Black Forest Fire of 2013 was the most destructive wildfire in state history, destroying 468 homes and causing over \$85 million in damage.<sup>vii</sup> These catastrophic wildfires not only threaten peoples' homes and decrease revenues from outdoor recreation, but also destroy critical wildlife habitat.<sup>viii</sup>
- In late 2013, Colorado experienced severe rain events, when as much as 10 inches fell during a 24 hour period<sup>ix</sup> causing massive flooding and over \$2 billion in damages.<sup>x</sup>
- Climate change has also brought severe droughts to Colorado, with decreased snowpack and lower average river levels meaning more competition for scarce water resources for agriculture, cities, and wildlife alike.<sup>xi</sup>



Waldo Canyon Wildfire Aftermath, 2013, Colorado Springs

### Colorado on the path to a wildlife friendly energy future

In 2012, power plants and major industrial facilities in Colorado emitted more than 50 million metric tons of carbon pollution- that's equal to the yearly pollution from more than 11 million cars.<sup>xii</sup> Through the Clean Power Plan, EPA estimates that Colorado can reduce these emissions by 35% by 2030. **Under the Plan, EPA estimated Colorado can generate 14.9% of their power from renewable sources in 2020.**<sup>xiii</sup> This is less ambitious than Colorado's own statewide renewable energy goal of achieving 30% of their power from renewable sources by 2020.<sup>xiv</sup> The EPA should strengthen the standard to reflect Colorado's current goal and encourage the state to go even further in promoting wind and solar projects.



## Colorado and the Clean Power Plan

### Colorado can reduce carbon pollution and grow the economy

**Colorado can comply with the Clean Power Plan through continued emphasis on wildlife-friendly renewable energy and energy efficiency.**

- Since 2009, the Administration has supported 6,245 renewable energy projects in Colorado, generating enough energy to power nearly 130,000 homes.<sup>xv</sup>
- Colorado has great potential to expand solar and wind power across the state. Colorado is ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in the nation for solar energy potential.<sup>xvi</sup>
- The potential positive impacts of capping carbon pollution in Colorado could add \$622 million to the economy and create over 9,000 jobs.<sup>xvii</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> [http://www.nwf.org/pdf/Global-Warming/CAA\\_Factsheet\\_Colorado\\_2.pdf](http://www.nwf.org/pdf/Global-Warming/CAA_Factsheet_Colorado_2.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> *ibid*

<sup>iii</sup> <http://blog.nwf.org/2014/07/wildlife-benefits-of-clean-power-plan-go-way-beyond-climate-change/>

<sup>iv</sup> [http://outdoorindustry.org/images/ore\\_reports/CO-colorado-outdoorrecreationeconomy-oia.pdf](http://outdoorindustry.org/images/ore_reports/CO-colorado-outdoorrecreationeconomy-oia.pdf)

<sup>v</sup> <https://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/fhw11-co.pdf>

<sup>vi</sup> [http://www.nwf.org/~media/PDFs/Global-Warming/Reports/NowheretoRun-BigGameWildlife-LowResFinal\\_110613.ashx](http://www.nwf.org/~media/PDFs/Global-Warming/Reports/NowheretoRun-BigGameWildlife-LowResFinal_110613.ashx)

<sup>vii</sup> [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/07/10/black-forest-fire\\_n\\_3572931.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/07/10/black-forest-fire_n_3572931.html)

<sup>viii</sup> <http://blog.nwf.org/2012/06/5-ways-wildfires-threaten-western-wildlife/>

<sup>ix</sup> <http://www.climatecentral.org/news/biblical-1000-year-deluge-strikes-colorado-did-global-warming-play-a-role-16474>

<sup>x</sup> <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-09-20/colorado-flood-cost-to-top-2-billion-egecat-says.html>

<sup>xi</sup> <http://cier.umd.edu/climateadaptation/Climate%20change--COLORADO.pdf>

<sup>xii</sup> [http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/state-reports/COLORADO\\_NCA\\_2014.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/state-reports/COLORADO_NCA_2014.pdf)

<sup>xiii</sup> EPA Clean Power Plan technical support document “Goal Computation – Appendix 1 and 2.” <http://www2.epa.gov/carbon-pollution-standards/clean-power-plan-proposed-rule-technical-documents>

<sup>xiv</sup> <http://cnee.colostate.edu/graphics/uploads/HB10-1001-Colorados-30-percent-Renewable-Energy-Standard.pdf>

<sup>xv</sup> [http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/state-reports/COLORADO\\_NCA\\_2014.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/state-reports/COLORADO_NCA_2014.pdf)

<sup>xvi</sup> <http://www.trustlands.state.co.us/Projects/Pages/RenewableEnergy.aspx>

<sup>xvii</sup> [http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/state-reports/COLORADO\\_NCA\\_2014.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/state-reports/COLORADO_NCA_2014.pdf)