



## **PRESS RELEASE**

Colorado Department of Law  
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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **ROCKY MOUNTAIN ARSENAL REGION TO RECEIVE \$17.4 MILLION FOR CONSERVATION PROJECTS**

*Total Funding for Rocky Mountain Greenway Project Now \$42.4 Million*

**DENVER**—The Colorado Natural Resources Damages Trustees today awarded \$17.4 million in funding for 10 conservation projects in the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge area. This money is in addition to a [prior award of \\$10.15 million that 11 projects](#) received in July 2012 and raises the total natural resources damages funding directed towards conserving and restoring the region to \$27.55 million. In addition, project sponsors have raised additional matching funds from various sources of \$25 million making the total value of restoration work approximately \$42.4 million. The projects approved by the Trustees will expand efforts to build a regional, integrated greenway and open space network that currently covers 2,160 acres and numerous riparian corridors.

“Watching the transformation of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal area is one of the most satisfying environmental developments during my tenure as Colorado Attorney General,” said John Suthers. “I encourage the public to visit the area and see how environmental litigation settlement money is being put to good use for the benefit of wildlife and for future generations to enjoy.”

In 2008 the State of Colorado announced the largest natural resources damage settlement in state history with the U.S. Army and Shell Oil Company. Those funds are held in a \$10 million Foundation Fund and a \$17.4 million Recovery Fund. The funds will be used for projects to restore, replace, or acquire the equivalent of the injured natural resources in the Rocky Mountain Arsenal region.

“This important funding not only helps to restore our natural resources, but means more opportunity for the public to experience the rivers, landscapes and wildlife that represent a local treasure to the Denver metro region,” said Mike King, Executive Director of the

Colorado Department of Natural Resources. "Getting kids and adults into our environment is one of the most important ways to instill in them an appreciation for these remarkable resources and ensure a conservation ethic into the future."

"The previous \$10 million from our settlement with Shell Oil Company provided a foundation for investment in the protection of at least 800 acres of the Front Range's natural resources," said Martha Rudolph, Director of Environmental Programs at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. "This \$27.4 million in natural resource damage settlement from the U.S. Army will further protect and restore an additional 1,400 acres of land and wildlife along the Front Range near and around the Rocky Mountain Arsenal, land that is otherwise threatened by development. Today's additional investment in the conservation of our wild places will preserve and enhance the natural character of the Front Range area as we move into the future."

The following ten new projects were approved. Additional details of the projects are posted in the [Northeast Greenway Regional Restoration Plan](#).

1. **Adams County - South Platte Acquisition**: \$3,685,901 was approved for Adams County to acquire two parcels of land totaling 224 acres of habitat, including a 100 acre lake and irrigated meadow
2. **Aurora - Triple Creek**: \$3,685,901 was approved to acquire approximately 300 acres of short grass prairie which will be protected by a conservation easement
3. **Bluff Lake Nature Center – Bluff Lake Dam**: \$605,946 was approved to reinforce the dam at Bluff Lake to create a year-round lake and improved wetlands habitat
4. **Brighton - Ken Mitchell Open Space**: \$1,842,951 was approved to acquire approximately 16 acres of land and to restore between 11 and 76 acres of land
5. **Commerce City - Second Creek**: \$3,086,942 was approved to create infrastructure to restore flows of a creek currently interrupted by raised irrigation canals.
6. **Denver - Northside Park**: \$741,788 was approved to convert a city park from bluegrass to native grasses, wetlands and riparian habitat
7. **Denver - Westerly Creek**: \$1,842,951 was approved to restore and enhance wetland, riparian and upland habitat at the confluence of Westerly Creek and Sand Creek in the Stapleton neighborhood
8. **Environmental Learning for Kids (ELK)– Montebello**: \$470,181 was approved to convert 4.5 acres of undeveloped land in the Montebello neighborhood to short grass prairie
9. **Groundwork Denver - Platte Farm Open Space**: \$552,885 was approved for the restoration of 5.6 acres of vacant land in north Denver to a short grass prairie natural area
10. **Sand Creek Regional Greenway - Bird Habitat**: \$921,475 was approved to restore short grass prairie habitat on hundreds of acres throughout the metro area.

The projects were evaluated by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, the Colorado Attorney General's Office and the Colorado Department of Natural Resources. The Colorado Natural Resources Damages Trustees are responsible for the management and direction of Colorado's natural resource damages program and include Colorado Attorney General John Suthers, Director of Environmental Programs at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Martha Rudolph and Deputy Director of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, Bob Randall.

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