

Land Water Trust Fund Board (LWTFB)

Report to the Park County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC)

LWTFB is pleased to present February 12, 2026, report to the BOCC

The recommended projects are hyperlinked below, providing access to each project's folder containing the application and supporting documentation.

The following are for the Park County BOCC's consideration:

Project Name	Amount Requested	LWTFB Ranking	LWTFB Recommendation to Approve Application	LWTFB Recommendation to Approve Amount	Amount Recommended	
FAB - Mountain Pine Beetle Watershed Mitigation Project	\$653,213.00	1	Yes	Yes	\$653,213.00	
PCLL - Field Improvements	\$250,000.00	2	Yes	No	\$45,000.00 \$50,000.00 or \$74,000.00	
Total Project Funding Request						\$903,213.00
LWTFB Project Funding Recommendation						\$698,213.00 - \$727,213.00

Fire Adapted Bailey (FAB) – Mountain Pine Beetle Watershed Mitigation Project

- LWTFB recommends **funding** this project
- 6 LWTFB members recommend funding this project; one (1) LWTFB member *does not* recommend funding this project.
- 6 members provide the following comments for the BOCC consideration to **approve** funding:
 - Should be a priority project for Park County and Denver Water and Aurora Water. Projects that enhance the health of forests which protect our water sources is a strategic priority. This is way overdue. I think the deleted equipment should have been added to this project.
 - This type of project will be an ongoing need. Funding will be a yearly challenge. May require a set yearly carve-out from L&WTF budget.
 - FAB has done an excellent job stepping back and rewriting the application to address concerns from the LWTFB and the BOCC. I believe the first application served the community better however I see the greater good in the revision. See attached document representing my continued full support of this project.
 - I think this project has good intentions and I understand Park County needs to be proactive on this subject. I think this project will serve as a good test case moving forward and I will be interested to see the outcomes if the BOCC approves. My understanding is they will ask for continued funding at a later date. At that point If the BOCC decides that the project has failed they can always turn it down. I still have concerns about repeating the same issues we've had with similar fire mitigation programs initiated by our fire protection districts. e.g., Road Maintenance problems / Slash left in the Right of Ways for years at a time due to equipment breakdowns or a poorly managed program.

- FAB did a great job of updating their application and specifying the exact watershed that would benefit from this mitigation project. They have found cost savings and matching cash since the last application. They have sought out partners to help with the project. This project is critical for Park County. This should be approved in the interest of protecting the watershed of Park County as precedence has already been set regarding mitigation and watershed protection. This is the best way to get these taxpayer dollars to benefit the taxpayers of Park County and to set forth a template for the rest of the County regarding the mitigation of "red/dead" trees and preventing further "red/dead" trees due to the further proliferation of beetle larva infestation.
- Would like to see the equipment back in project. Without it, the project will be more labor intensive. Definite need for this project to start soon.
- One (1) member provides the following comment for the BOCC consideration to **not approve** funding:
 - While this is an excellent project for ALL of Park County, I cannot recommend this project because it only covers a small portion of Park County. Furthermore, there is no concrete plan for the project to move to all other areas of the County. While this project may develop the guidelines for how this POTENTIALLY could be rolled out County wide, the reality is that volunteer fire departments in other areas of the County cannot require or expect volunteers to do the kind of work that this project would do with paid staff to the tune of \$250,000. Until a plan for a countywide roll out is developed, this project should not move forward.

Platte Canyon Little League (PCLL) – Field Improvements

- LWTFB recommends **funding** this project
- 5 LWTFB members recommend funding this project; 2 LWTFB members do not recommend funding this project.
- 5 members provide the following comments for the BOCC consideration to **approve** funding:
 - As discussed with Little League, let's get the small field done this spring for \$45,000, then address the large field after the High School baseball season..
 - The application was incomplete. Agreement was reached in the LWTF meeting to try and get money to finish the small field first. It is a benefit to the youth in the Bailey area., keeps kids outdoors in a productive way.
 - I support this project, however, have serious concerns regarding the lack of professional engineering and design. Unanswered concerns leave me unable to score in any meaningful way See attached document recommending the project with greater oversight by Park County to ensure the project is the best it can be.
 - Funding to complete Little League portion of project. The remainder of project details loosely defined and therefore not funded. (suggested funding at \$50,000).
 - This is a worthy project but installation and sustainment questions were not answered. This project is being managed by a volunteer who is doing their best but does not have the professional background on the installation/sustainment questions. The board acknowledges the need to quickly approve for the small field to ensure it opens end of March which is why the value of \$74,000 be approved only at this time and solutions can be sought out going further.

- 2 members provide the following comments for the BOCC consideration to **not approve** funding:
 - This organization has no maintenance plan in place to maintain the used astro turf they intend to install. Part of this application is for an indoor batting cage and that is not in alignment with the resolution as this is for OUTDOOR recreation. The large field cost should be absorbed by the Platte Canyon School District as they are the main user of this field and should not be paid for by County funds. Inasmuch this is a great project for the Bailey community there is very little return for Park County as a whole. The organization knows very little about installing and maintaining astroturf for a sports field and the dangers infill runoff can be to the surrounding environment and injures astroturf can cause. As this property is owned by the County this becomes a liability to the County. If any funding is granted ONLY \$45,000 should be allowed to upgrade both fields fences which may protect the County from liabilities related to open, unsupervised access to the fields.
 - Applicant did not seek funding from any other funding sources which are vast and wide for Little League. The project only covers approximately 125 youth in one area of Park County. Further, the school district has not provided funding and they use the facilities. There is no plan for ongoing maintenance. Once again, while the project may fall under the technical area of recreation, this project does not meet the "spirit" of what the Land and Water Trust Fund should be funding.

This project is one of the most important projects to come before Park County. It is vital the BOCC understands the risk wildfire poses to the county's water quality and share its knowledge with the public. An educated public will easily see the use of the Land and Water Trust Funds for this project protects water quality and is an appropriate use of the funds. Multiple resources are available to the BOCC such as:

- Colorado Water Conservation Board's Wildfire Ready Watersheds program

[Watershed Protection and Restoration | DNR CWCB](#)

[Wildfire Ready Watersheds](#)

Excerpt;



- United States Geological Survey (USGS)

[Water Quality After Wildfire | U.S. Geological Survey](#)

Excerpts include:

“Wildfire poses a substantial risk to water supplies because they can lead to severe flooding, erosion, and delivery of sediment, nutrients, and metals to rivers, lakes, and reservoirs.”

“Wildfires are a natural process in many ecosystems, but they are increasing in size, severity, and frequency in many areas of the United States. After wildfire, loss of canopy vegetation and changes to soil properties can result in more water flowing over the land surface during storms, leading to flooding, erosion, and delivery of sediment, ash, pollutants, and debris to surface water. This can result in decreased water quality, loss of reservoir storage capacity, stream habitat degradation, and increased treatment costs for drinking water providers”

[Wildfire-driven changes in hydrology mobilize arsenic and metals from legacy mine waste | U.S. Geological Survey](#)

[Chemistry of water, stream sediment, wildfire ash, soil, dust, and mine waste for Fourmile Creek Watershed, Colorado, 2010-2019 | U.S. Geological Survey](#)

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

[Wildland Fire Research: Water & Ecosystems | US EPA](#)

Excerpts include:

“Wildland Fire Research: Water & Ecosystems

Wildland fires can impact water quality and forested ecosystems. Wildland fires burn vegetation that holds soil in place and retains water. Erosion and flooding can follow and cause changes to runoff, streamflow, and water quality (e.g., temperature and chemical concentrations). This can affect aquatic habitats (a special concern for sensitive species such as salmon) and, along with deposited pollutants from the smoke and damage to water infrastructure, can contaminate drinking water supplies. Wildland fire can also change the resilience of forests to other types of disturbances, such as insect infestations.”

“Contaminant Levels

Pollutants mobilized during and after wildfires can threaten water quality. With an increase in wildfire activity, including in the wildland urban interface (WUI) near populous areas, more public water resource managers will need to proactively plan and prepare their water systems. What are the impacts of wildfires on contaminant levels in public drinking water systems”

- Colorado State University (CSU) / Warner College of Natural Resources

[Wildfire mitigation planning begins amid mountain pine beetle outbreak in Front Range forests | Warner College of Natural Resources | Colorado State University](#)

With quotes from Colorado State Forester Matt McCombs:

“The forests now showing expanding beetle activity sit adjacent to Colorado’s most populated communities,” “They overlap with areas at high wildfire risk and are visible along major transportation corridors like I-70 and U.S. Highway 285. These landscapes also protect critical watersheds, infrastructure and recreation opportunities that are foundational to Colorado’s economy and quality of life.”

“This is not just a forest health issue,” McCombs said. “It is a public safety issue, a water quality issue, and a recreation and economic issue. And it is a challenge that demands action before impacts accelerate.”

Park County has had a long-standing relationship with Platte Canyon Little League for the use of the Burland Ballfields. As with all mountain sports fields, maintaining natural turf is problematic. The Burland Ballfields are no exception, and an artificial turf field is no exception. The BOCC would do well to work direct the County Manager to work with Platte Canyon Little League to develop a safe playing environment for the community to enjoy for many years to come.

The current plan and corresponding application have excellent aspirations. The County Manager should collaborate with the applicant looking through the lens of public safety, ongoing maintenance, outdoor recreation, funding partnerships, and community participation.

Phase I of the application includes the use of demolished turf and infill mix with a plan to install over imported drainage materials. The installation plan does not include an engineered drainage system or manufacturers installation and maintenance instructions. This could be problematic for Park County eventually. Artificial turf requires a civil engineered drainage system to allow for better play access after heavy storms and to limit the migration of infill material from the play field. Without proper drainage, the “carpet” may experience premature failure including rippling, tearing, and seam failure. When asked about the infill mix, the applicant believed it consists of black crumb rubber. There are many articles posted regarding black crumb rubber as a potential source of cancer-causing toxins. The rubber, recycled from car and truck tires, can contain harmful contaminants like lead and benzene. Once distributed over a field, they can release these toxins at harmful concentrations. In addition to benzene and lead, the list of toxins includes mercury, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, heavy metals, arsenic, and other carcinogenic compounds. Reference:

[Artificial Turf Cancer Lawsuit: Compounds May Link to Cancer](#)

The combination of inadequately engineered drainage, leading to field flooding and black crumb rubber floating up and migrating downstream, off the playing field, is a very real concern.

Rather than moving forward as currently planned, the BOCC would do well to have the applicant step back and have the sports complex professionally designed and engineered, including proper drainage, environmentally friendly materials, and less toxic materials for young athletes that will be playing on the surface. A professionally engineered system will also take into consideration impact injuries that could occur from an improperly engineered turf.

Finally, the BOCC should ask the County Manager to oversee a Master Plan for the Burland Complex with the intent of capturing the two different projects currently under consideration. The Master Plan would develop tighter budgets for a professionally engineered and designed sports complex with an eye toward additional fund raising from other grant sources such as GOCO, Platte Canyon School District, and others that may enjoy the field improvements. We should all keep in mind that the Land and Water Trust Fund is available for Outdoor Recreation. Indoor facilities, such as indoor batting cages for use in inclement weather would require funds from other sources. Projects using public funds on public property require more planning than the public realizes. The BOCC and the County Manager would do well providing a little more guidance to help this project be the best it can be.

LAND AND WATER TRUST FUND BALANCE REPORT

2026

BEGINNING BALANCE (AS OF Jan 1):	10,350,741
REVENUES: TAX	-
REVENUES: INTEREST	-
EXPENDITURES:	23,638
CURRENT FUND BALANCE:	<u>10,327,103</u>
ENCUMBRANCES (COMMITMENTS):	4,124,378
WATER CONTINGENCY :	(1,500,000)
LANDFILL CONTINGENCY:	<u>(1,750,000)</u>
SPENDABLE FUND BALANCE:	
(AS OF February 11, 2026)	<u>2,952,725</u>

LWTF SALES TAX REVENUE

	<u>2018</u>		<u>2019</u>		<u>2020</u>		<u>2021</u>		<u>2022</u>		<u>2023</u>		<u>2024</u>		<u>2025</u>		<u>2026</u>	
1	53,923	1	68,457	1	111,712	1	201,514	1	155,854	1	164,392	1	173,881	1	176,264	1		*January's revenue, received in February
2	53,768	2	63,610	2	85,871	2	150,503	2	167,018	2	176,166	2	160,465	2	178,846	2		
3	68,313	3	80,872	3	99,595	3	182,670	3	193,261	3	185,282	3	181,065	3	223,016	3		
4	61,092	4	71,657	4	123,524	4	166,130	4	181,033	4	157,319	4	176,351	4	184,229	4		
5	73,334	5	122,138	5	141,470	5	183,615	5	203,972	5	206,852	5	215,820	5	229,116	5		
6	102,227	6	135,024	6	175,355	6	242,994	6	260,138	6	268,940	6	270,567	6	303,512	6		
7	98,048	7	149,845	7	200,629	7	228,684	7	263,807	7	276,928	7	288,987	7	313,582	7		
8	90,679	8	134,580	8	196,675	8	228,824	8	242,462	8	248,317	8	266,702	8	272,601	8		
9	99,686	9	143,997	9	206,255	9	229,818	9	260,087	9	261,287	9	281,878	9	296,273	9		
10	73,178	10	120,515	10	176,796	10	196,316	10	222,513	10	234,089	10	261,668	10	279,249	10		
11	61,506	11	125,885	11	156,196	11	196,304	11	192,157	11	201,565	11	209,155	11	240,151	11		
12	75,218	12	142,152	12	190,010	12	215,938	12	207,739	12	238,045	12	240,540	12	252,652	12		
	\$ 910,972		1,358,732		1,864,086		2,423,310		2,550,042		2,619,181		2,727,079		2,949,489		-	
	Increase over year before		447,760		505,355		559,224		126,732		69,140		107,898		222,410			

ACTIVE PROJECTS LIST

No.	PROJECT	COMMITTED	EXPENDED	BALANCE	STATUS
OPEN SPACE					
25-09	Colorado Open Lands (COL) Thirty-nine Mile Mountain Ranch C.E.	91,143		91,143	Active

OUTDOOR RECREATION					
24-03	Improve Recreational Access and Protect Water Resources (NFF)	125,530	-	125,530	Active
24-11	Town of Fairplay River Park (TOF)	250,000	216,575	33,425	Active
24-12	Phase II Protect Colo 14ers (MRHI)	120,000	33,473	86,527	Active
25-01	Marksbury Gulch Trailhead Improvements (CUSP)	74,914	-	74,914	Active
25-04	2025 Engaging Community in Conservation & Rec (MRHI)	199,185	139,442	59,743	Active
25-06	Park County Historical Society / McGraw Park Outdoor Pavillion	15,000	-	15,000	Active

WATER RESOURCES					
LFC	Landfill Contingency (Park Co.) water & air quality	1,750,000	218,571	1,531,429	Active
	Attorney Costs Landfill 19.0201.635210 (2023-Present) Doty & Assoc / Davis Graham	250,141	250,141		Active
20-10	Water Court Case Opposition Engineering (P.C.)	26,767	26,767	-	Active
	Attorney Costs Water Court 19.0201.635220 (Dietz & Davis)	52,967.27	52,967.27	-	Active
	Attorney Costs Water Rights	4,549.00	4,549.00	-	Active
23-01	Riparian Reconnect Phase 5 (COL)	544,485	497,273	47,212	Close-out
23-05	Camp Alexander (PTTR)	50,000	-	50,000	Active
23-07	Alma Wastewater Treatment Improvements (TOA)	500,000	-	500,000.00	Active
24-04	Ph 2 Bailey Water for Fire Suppression (FAB)	153,500	139,323	14,177	Active
24-07	Kite Lake Improvement Project (NFF)	542,300	55,000	487,300	Active
24-08	Crooked/Trout Creeks' Trails (WRV)	74,195	40,722	33,473	Active
24-08X	Crooked/Trout Creeks' Trails (WRV)	81,182	-	81,182	Active
24-09	Fire Suppression Ponds Study (Park County)	128,470	106,470	22,000	Active
25-02	South Platte River Restoration Lake George (CUSP)	100,000	-	100,000	Active
25-03	Fourmile Creek Property C.E. (MALT)	59,855	24,475	35,380	Active
25-05	Sacramento Gulch Mill Site Reclamation (TU)	120,000	-	120,000	Active
25-07	Shawnee Water Consumers Association (SWCA) Return to River Pipeline	7,500	-	7,500	Active
25-08	Bailey Water & Sanitation District (BWSD) Platte River Water Line Crossing &	45,600.00		45,600.00	Active
25-10	Y Recreation & Therapy LLC Tarryall Fishing Retreat Ranch Water Rights Reha	225,495.00		225,495.00	Active
25-11	Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust - Krain Ranch C.E. (CCALT)	85,000.00		85,000.00	Active
26-01	Colorado Open Lands Berrien Ranch C.E. (COL)	81,600.00		81,600.00	Active

WILDLIFE RESOURCES					
24-15	Colorado Parks & Wildlife Antero Jct-Chubb Park Habitat Restoration (CPW)	115,000	40,495.68	74,504	Active

			Remaining Project Balance
	Committed	Expended	
GRAND TOTAL	4,124,378	1,627,671	\$ 2,496,707
<i>As of 2/11/2026</i>			

LFC = Landfill Contingency Fund is not included in the total Committed/Expended/Remaining Project Balances, it is a separate line item deducted from the Fund Balance and is being reported for fiscal transparency

LWTF Landfill Contingency

Does the BOCC wish to apply current and upcoming landfill charges to the Landfill Contingency line item (current balance: \$218,571)?

- If no, should the application that was withdrawn from the December LWTF meeting be resubmitted, or would the BOCC prefer to discuss establishing a separate Landfill Reserve line item for these expenditures?
- If yes, what is the BOCC's preferred approach for replenishing the Contingency balance to its target of \$1,750,000?
 - Replenish on a concurrent basis, with expended amounts transferred from the Fund Balance and restored to Contingency as costs are incurred; or
 - Replenish on a scheduled basis (quarterly, semi-annually, or annually)?