



Boulder County's Wildfire Mitigation Tax 2025: Year Three Annual Report—The Numbers



Executive Summary

Boulder County passed a 0.1% Wildfire Mitigation Sales and Use Tax—one penny on \$10—in November of 2022, with 72% of voters supporting the ballot measure. Tax funding is intended to increase the pace and scale of wildfire mitigation efforts¹ across the county. Wildfire Partners is Boulder County's wildfire mitigation program — located in the county's Community Planning and Permitting Department (CPP). CPP and Wildfire Partners staff are responsible for managing the Wildfire Mitigation Tax.

The tax went into effect on January 1, 2023. Sales and use taxes collected in 2025 totaled \$8,900,246 compared to \$9,031,401 in 2023 and \$8,957,997 in 2024. The 2025 funding table lists nine program areas ranked by the amount of tax funding that was committed to each area.

2025 Wildfire Mitigation Tax Funding Table 1		
Wildfire Mitigation Program Areas	Spending and Commitments	Percentage
1. Strategic Fuels Mitigation Grant Program	\$ 2,451,994	29%
2. Individual Home Assessment and Certification Programs	\$ 1,206,570	14%
3. Rebate Program	\$ 1,115,952	13%
4. Community Mitigation Programs*	\$ 848,988	10%
5. Community Chipping Program	\$ 768,821	9%
6. Organizational Support for Partners	\$ 645,945	8%
7. Ditch and Other Fuels Mitigation Programs*	\$ 634,991	7%
8. Education and Public Awareness Campaign*	\$ 580,692	7%
9. Youth Services Program*	\$ 300,198	4%
TOTAL	\$ 8,554,151	100%

*These programs are also funded by grants and other sources.

¹ Wildfire mitigation is action taken before a wildfire ignites to reduce its severity and negative impacts such as the destruction of homes. Forest management, home hardening, and defensible space are common wildfire mitigation strategies. Action taken after a wildfire ignites— emergency notification, fire suppression, and recovery programs—are not included in the definition of wildfire mitigation.

The Strategic Fuels Mitigation Grant (SFMG) Program (1) funds landscape-scale forest and grassland management projects. **The Individual Home Assessment and Certification Programs (2)** includes both voluntary and regulatory programs (new homes, additions and short-term rentals). Wildfire Partners **Rebate Program (3)** includes general rebates, rebates for multi-family dwelling units, and rebates for residents who achieve a Wildfire Partners Certificate. **Community Mitigation Programs (4)** include costs associated with the Boulder County Community Forest Sort Yards, the Community Mitigation Planning Program, and our training program for realtors. **The Community Chipping Program (5)** offers free chipping of slash to all county residents at both roadside and central-collection events. Funding staff positions for local non-profit and local conservation district partners is part of the county's **Organizational Support for Partners (6)**. **Ditches and Other Fuels Mitigation Programs (7)** include Boulder County Parks and Open Space's Ditch Mitigation and Forest Management efforts, and the Boulder County Sheriff's Office mitigation work. Wildfire Partners **Education and the Public Awareness Campaign (8)**, Wildfire Happens Here, includes Wildfire Partners outreach and marketing efforts in the community. **Youth Services Program (9)** provides free mitigation work for vulnerable individuals and communities. For more information on these efforts, see details that follow in this report and visit www.WildfirePartners.org.

Table 1 lists Wildfire Mitigation Tax funding amounts. However, to support wildfire mitigation programs, the county also obtains grants and draws upon other funding sources. In 2025, grant funding came from FEMA (for education and the public awareness campaign). County general fund revenue and other sales taxes also contribute to these programs. This report, however, is limited to just Wildfire Mitigation Tax funding.

Table 1 funding amounts include both operational and personnel costs. In 2025, the Wildfire Mitigation Tax provided \$2.2 million for Boulder County staff salaries and benefits to design and implement the nine program areas listed in Table 1. These expenses for county staff equaled 26% of total 2025 commitments.

The following tables include information for the first two years of the Wildfire Mitigation Tax (2023 and 2024) and three-year totals (2023-2025):

Wildfire Mitigation Tax Program Areas	2023		2024	
	Commitments	Percent	Commitments	Percent
Strategic Fuels Mitigation Grant Program	\$ 1,610,159	50%	\$ 1,585,042	28%
Organizational Support for Partners	\$ 550,000	17%	\$ 642,815	11%
Individual Home Assessment Programs	\$ 254,732	8%	\$ 818,139	14%
Community Chipping Program	\$ 283,058	9%	\$ 764,608	13%
Other Fuels Mitigation Programs	\$ 233,153	7%	\$ 378,501	7%
Other Community Mitigation Programs	\$ 189,989	6%	\$ 415,645	7%
Education and Public Awareness Campaign	\$ 124,903	4%	\$ 412,817	7%
Rebate Program	\$ -	0%	\$ 515,812	9%
Youth Program	\$ -	0%	\$ 220,999	4%
Total	\$ 3,245,993	100%	\$ 5,754,378	100%

Wildfire Mitigation Tax Program Areas	2023-2025	
	Commitments	Percentage
Strategic Fuels Mitigation Grant Program	\$ 5,647,195	32%
Individual Home Assessment Programs	\$ 2,279,441	13%
Organizational Support for Partners	\$ 1,838,760	10%
Community Chipping Program	\$ 1,816,487	10%
Rebate Program	\$ 1,631,764	9%
Community Mitigation Programs	\$ 1,454,622	8%
Other Fuels Mitigation Programs	\$ 1,246,645	7%
Education and Public Awareness Campaign	\$ 1,118,412	6%
Youth Program	\$ 521,197	3%
Total	\$ 17,554,523	100%

Program Details

The financial information for the following nine sections is for operational costs only. These numbers do not match the figures in Table 1 because the numbers in Table 1 include both operational and personnel costs.

1. Strategic Fuels Mitigation Grants (SFMG)

In 2025, 12 strategic forest and grasslands management projects were approved, totaling \$2,332,288. This funding is projected to leverage \$3,105,488 of “matching” contributions for total project costs of \$5,437,776. The 12 projects plan to treat 1,040 acres. A story map with information on all SFMG projects is available at www.WildfirePartners.org. The awards included:

- Boulder Mountain Fire Protection District: Boulder Mountain Forest Fuels Reduction Project (\$245,000)
- Boulder Watershed Collective (2): Crescent Park Fuels Reduction Project (\$235,870.00) and Pinecliffe Forest Resilience Project (\$343,000)
- City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks: Wonderland Lake Cross-boundary Risk Reduction Project (\$201,619)
- City of Longmont: East and West Rattlesnake Gulch Project (\$110,300)
- Colorado State Forest Service (2): Crescent Park Forest Project (\$84,300) and Eldorado Canyon - Kneale Road Project (\$119,650)
- Four Mile Fire Protection District: Forest Arroyo Chico II East Fuel Break (\$319,500)
- Sunshine Fire Protection District: Forest Dry Gulch North Fuels Reduction Project (\$188,846)
- The Watershed Center (2): Girl Scout Camp Mitigation Project (\$413,145) and Plateau Road Grazing Project (\$31,058)
- Town of Lyons: Town of Lyons Fuels Reduction Project (\$40,000)

2. Individual Home Assessment and Certification Programs

In 2025, Wildfire Partners launched its individual home assessment program for portions of eastern Boulder County, completing 73 eastern assessments. For the entire county, Wildfire Partners completed 806 total assessments: 568 initial assessments, 153 re-certification assessments, and 86 re-assessments. Wildfire Partners issued a total of 421 certificates in 2025, including 286 initial certificates and 135 re-certifications. These numbers do not include assessments and inspections for residents constructing new homes or retrofitting existing homes who chose to complete mitigation without receiving a Wildfire Partners Certificate. Most participants complete mitigation measures on their own; however, Wildfire Partners offers forestry cost-share assistance if participants use a contractor from the Wildfire Partners Forestry Contractors list. In 2025, Wildfire Partners issued 161 forestry awards totaling \$213,574 and the homeowners contributed an additional \$225,983 to complete these 161 projects. Eleven of these projects qualified for the Wildfire Partners need-based program that paid 100% of the cost.

For its 12-year history, Wildfire Partners has conducted 4,504 initial assessments and issued 2,023 initial certifications. Since the program was launched in 2014, three fire districts have achieved a participation rate of greater than 50%: Boulder Rural Fire Protection District (67%), Boulder Mountain Fire Protection District (62%), and Sugarloaf Fire Protection District (52%). Wildfire Partners continued to help residents obtain and retain insurance coverage: 24% of residents receiving assessments were facing an insurance deadline. While the quantity of assessments and certificates completed in 2025 is very impressive, what really sets this program apart is the quality of service it provides. Wildfire Partners staff provide the best in customer service, answering thousands of phone calls, emails, and in-person questions from participants. This service starts when participants first contact program staff and continues for as long as individuals live in their homes because ongoing vigilance and maintenance are key for effective mitigation.

3. Wildfire Partners Rebate Programs

Wildfire Partners offered three types of rebates in 2025. The General Rebate program is an innovative and effective way for residents to start wildfire mitigation work. All homeowners throughout the county are eligible — no home assessment is required for participation. We issued 774 general rebates totaling \$345,517. The total value of mitigation work completed by the 774 participating households was \$2,329,216. (\$2,126,348 was cash, and \$202,868 was the value of participant labor). The average time participants spent performing mitigation was 10.6 hours. Rebates were available for six specific “Calls to Action.” Participation rates by Calls to Action were:

Junk Your Junipers	56%
The First Five Feet	18%
Fences Are Fuses	10%
Protect Home Base	7%
Vents for Defense	6%
Cut the Clutter	3%

Wildfire Partners launched its Multi-Family Dwelling Rebate program in 2025. The Multi-Family Dwelling Rebate program provides financial assistance to residents residing in townhomes, apartments, condominiums, and other neighborhoods with common areas to reduce their wildfire risk by removing highly flammable junipers around the homes. The program is open to all multi-family dwelling properties in Boulder County. Rebates were issued to 43 communities, collectively representing 6,080 homes, and approximately 3,456

junipers were removed. Rebates totaled \$501,875 (approximately \$82.55 per home). Wildfire Partners incentivizes residents with property in western Boulder County to participate in a home assessment and complete all required mitigation work. Seventy-nine 79 rebates were issued, totaling \$39,500. Wildfire Partners staff oversee and support the

4. Community Mitigation Programs

Wildfire Partners encourages community mitigation. Residents, working with neighbors in addition to working on their own properties, will create community resiliency and enhance the effectiveness of individual efforts. In 2025, the mitigation tax supported: 1) the Boulder County Community Forestry Sort Yards and 2) the Wildfire Partners Community Mitigation Planning Program.

Boulder County Community Forestry Sort Yards (CFSYs): 2025 was the 18th year of operation for the sort yards, which have received 112,128 vehicle loads of material since opening. On June 20th, one day alone, the yards received 157 vehicle loads of material. The yards are open from May to November and are a free service provided by Boulder County. In 2025, the two yards were open a total of 218 operational days compared to 179 days in 2022. In total, individuals from 2,297 different property addresses used the yards, delivering a total of 10,655 vehicle loads. In 2025, individuals from 383 addresses used the yards for the first time. In 2025, the total material processed (wood, slash, chips, and yard debris) was 3,861 tons compared to 1,524 tons in 2023. The collection of yard debris (pine needles, grasses, and noxious weeds) is very popular and an essential service for supporting Wildfire Partners' wildfire mitigation efforts with homeowners.

Wildfire Partners Community Mitigation Planning Program: Wildfire Partners always encourages community mitigation. Working with neighbors creates community resiliency and enhances the effectiveness of individual efforts. Community effort is especially critical to effective wildfire mitigation in communities characterized by high-density development. This would include most neighborhoods, subdivisions, and HOAs in eastern Boulder County. In west Boulder County, this includes towns and historic townsites. Our approach begins with advising and often continues with community mitigation planning. In 2025, we accepted applications from, and produced Community Assessment Reports for, 18 communities. We also continued to provide services for nine communities that received reports in 2024. Of the 2025 communities, 14 were in eastern Boulder County, including five in Longmont, two in Louisville, and two in Lafayette. Combined, the 18 communities included 2,744 residents (2,608 single-family residents and 145 multi-family complexes), totaled 879 acres, and included 11 HOAs. In 2025, Cornerstone, a neighborhood in Louisville, and one of the 2024 communities, received its Firewise USA designation.

5. Community Chipping Program

Wildfire Partners Community Chipping Program helps all residents in Boulder County maintain their defensible space by providing free services to remove combustible material from their property. In 2025, there were 2,004 participants — the highest total in program history. There were 93 community chipping events, where a minimum of five neighbors staged slash piles along roadsides on their individual properties, with a total of 1,096 participants. These events were coordinated by a neighborhood chipping host, and the slash was chipped by one of nine chipping contractors on the Wildfire Partners-approved list. The contractors chip the slash piles, transport the chips off-site and deposit them at approved dump locations.

Wildfire Partners supported 24 special events and community dumpster events, where residents transport material to a central drop-off location, with an estimated 908 participants. These events included both chipping slash and depositing combustible material into roll-off dumpsters. They were coordinated by fire districts, municipalities, HOAs, Firewise USA communities, chipping hosts, and other organizations. The program continues to attract new participants each year, with 39% of community chipping participants being new to the program in 2025 and between 69-74% of special event contributors participating for the first time.

6. Organizational Support for Non-profits and Conservation Districts

In 2025, Boulder County provided \$200,000 each to three partner organizations.

Boulder Valley and Longmont Conservation Districts (BVLCD) completed two projects: Roaring Fork 2 (83.6 acres) and Tolland Ranch (33 acres). BVLCD worked on four additional projects (in progress and in development): Roaring Fork 3, Gold Hill Road, Button Rock, and Silver Spruce. In 2025, BVLCD spent \$922, 805 on five of these projects. In addition to the grant funding already secured for seven projects listed above (\$1.3 million in federal, state and Boulder County funding), BVLCD worked on developing eight additional projects in 2025: YMCA-Camp Tumbleson Lake, Fourmile Canyon, Sunshine Canyon, Coal Creek Canyon, County Road 68, Twin Sisters Road, Gunung Mas, and Weinstock.

Boulder Watershed Collective (BWC): In 2025, BWC completed three projects: Arkansas Mountain (114 acres), Copperdale (26 acres), and County Road 99 (56 acres). BWC worked on five additional projects (in progress): Gold Hill, Los Lagos, Pinecliffe, Porter Ranch, and Miramonte. In 2025, the Crescent Lake and Tucker Ranch projects were in development. Additional planning efforts included Wildfire Ready Watersheds, the Nederland Community Wildfire Protection Plan, and collaboration with Wonderland Hills HOA and the City of Boulder. BWC public engagement efforts included 1,705 individuals.

The Watershed Center (TWC): In 2025, TWC completed one project: Meeker Park (5.24 acres treated in 2025) and worked on four additional projects (in progress): Raymond-Riverside, Meadow Mountain, Girl Scout Camp, and Plateau Road. TWC spent a total of \$446,528 on five projects in 2025. The Conifer Hill Project was in development. TWC continued to lead the Saint Vrain Forest Health Partnership and provided critical support for the Boulder County Fireshed and the Fireshed's Grasslands Work Group. TWC led several events for the public and partner organizations, including field trips and tours, webinars, and tabling at community events.

7. Ditch and Other Fuels Mitigation Programs

Boulder County Parks and Open Space and the Boulder County Sheriff's Office conduct fuels mitigation work in forests, grasslands, and ditches.

Boulder County Parks and Open Space Ditch Mitigation

The Boulder County Parks and Open Space Ditch Wildfire Mitigation Program plays a critical role in reducing wildfire risk along agricultural ditch corridors and adjacent open space lands. Irrigation ditches often accumulate woody debris, excessive vegetation, and unmanaged fuels that potentially act as fire pathways across the landscape. In 2025, the program focused on strategic debris removal, targeted grazing, and collaborative project implementation to reduce hazardous fuels while supporting agricultural water infrastructure and ecological health. In total, crews completed 21 unique mitigation projects, removing 2,800

cubic yards of woody debris, transporting 365 tons of material, utilizing an additional 750 staff hours from outside sources, and deploying 300 goats for targeted grazing treatments. These efforts significantly reduced fuel loads and surface fuel continuity along high-risk corridors throughout the county.

Boulder County Parks and Open Space Forest Management

In 2025, Boulder County Parks and Open Space (POS) foresters worked on a wide range of projects. Below are some highlights.

- Collected data on seven properties, including Fabel, Engle, Currie, Park Creek, Prescott, Prescott 2 and Bald Mountain, totaling approximately 480 acres. This data collection included 134 plots and sampled 1,499 trees over approximately 480 acres.
- Completed project layout on approximately 93 acres at Tucker-Elk Draw and partner lands for the Middle Boulder Creek (MBC) Fuels Reduction Project, including boundary flagging and individual tree marking.
- Implemented two public comment periods and conducted three public meetings associated with the MBC Fuels Reduction Project.
- Worked collaboratively to approve two Scopes of Work (SOW): Tucker Elk Draw and Bearberry

Boulder County Sheriff's Office Mitigation Program

The Sheriff's Office wildland fire crew worked on a number of mitigation projects in 2025. They completed projects for Bella Farms, Allenspark, and The Ridge HOA. The following projects were started in 2025, and work will continue in 2026: Hidden Treasure, Highland Ditch Company, North Foothills, and Summit at Rock Creek HOA. Planning was conducted for the following projects: North Foothills 2, Titterington Estates, and Meeker Ranch. Future Pile Burn Projects include; Coyote Hill, Longmont Dam Road, and Ramond-Riverside. In 2025, the crew removed 285,000 cubic feet of material and mitigated 12 acres.

8. Education and Public Awareness Campaign

Education, outreach, and public awareness are key components of mitigation efforts and include the Wildfire Partners website, fact sheets, videos, advertising, social media, blog posts, and other printed materials. Wildfire Partners staff participated in 48 outreach events: 23 in-person presentations, 4 virtual presentations, and 21 tabling events.

Our public awareness campaign — Wildfire Happens Here — served 64 million impressions across all activations — traditional, digital, and experiential. This was four times more impressions than in 2024. Website traffic increased over five times compared to the same time in 2023.

The Wildfire Partners website received 76,000 visits in 2025, which is a 26% increase over 2024. The rebate page was the most visited page on WildfirePartners.org with over 34,100 visits. There were 5,609 clicks from the website to the rebate application, up 6.5% from 2024. Roughly 146,000 postcards were designed, printed, and mailed. The public awareness campaign was implemented by third-party marketing contractor, Vermillion.

9. Youth Services

The Youth Helping Vulnerable People and Communities program employs youth conservation crews from the Mile High Youth Corps and TEENS Inc., a Nederland-based non-profit organization. Over the summer and fall seasons, the youth crews accomplished critical mitigation projects for 21 homes and three mobile home parks. The teams removed over 400 cubic yards of inorganic and 530 cubic yards of organic household debris, enhancing safety and living conditions for hundreds of community members. Thirteen of these project sites filled a total of 47 dumpsters with combustible material that was removed from these communities. The youth performing this work, who came from diverse backgrounds across the region, gained tangible professional experience, valuable life skills, and noteworthy opportunities for personal growth. Residents receiving these free services were grateful they were able to receive this support. For one homeowner, Doris, working with the youth services program left a strong impression, not just because of the work completed, but because of the people who did it. “The teens worked so hard,” she said. “And they were all happy. Every single one of them.” She spoke about how each crew member brought their own personality to the job, and how kind and respectful they were throughout the project. “What they did, I would have never been able to do that,” she said simply.