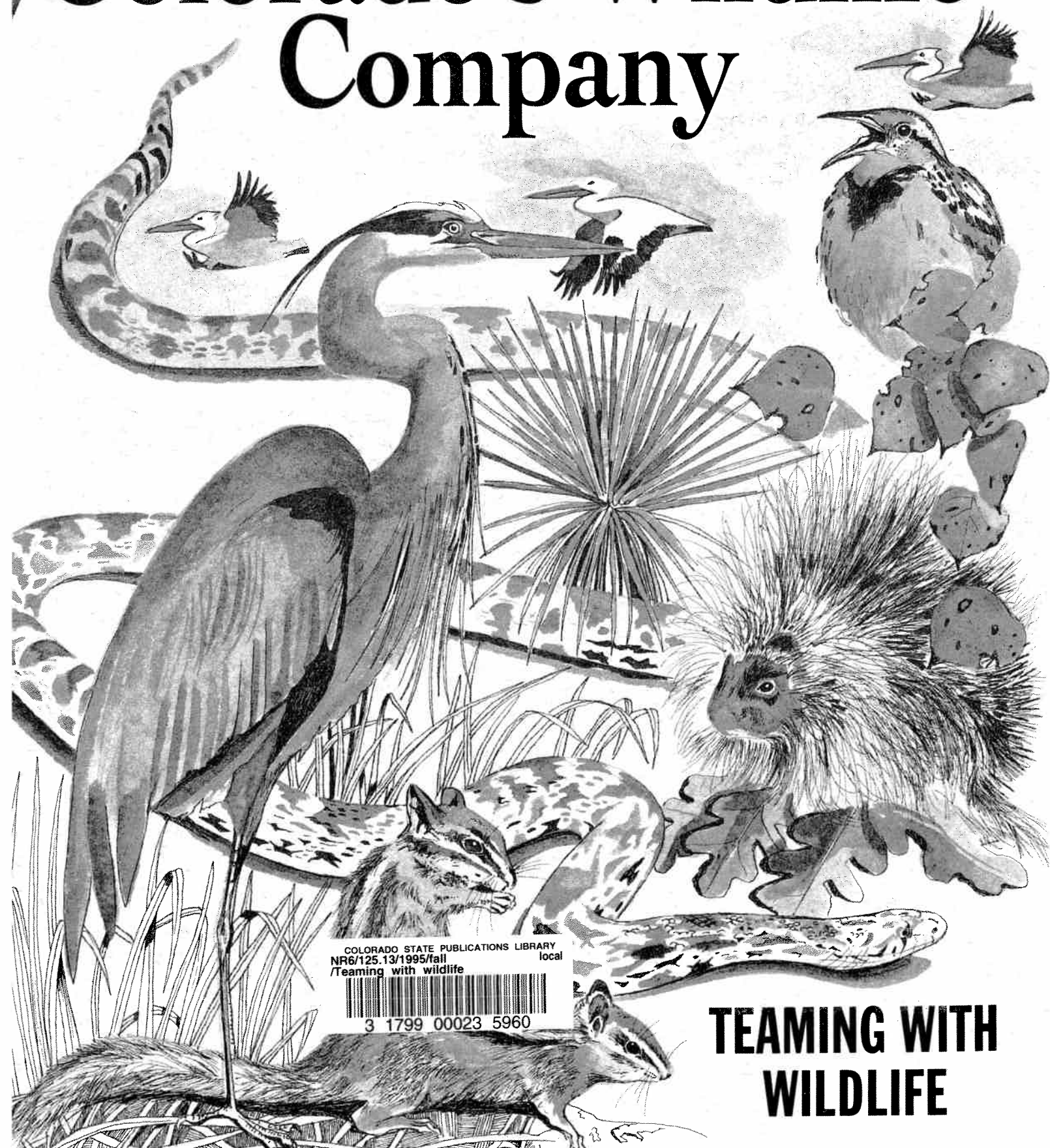


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1995 FALL COMPENDIUM OF WILDLIFE APPRECIATION



Colorado's Wildlife Company

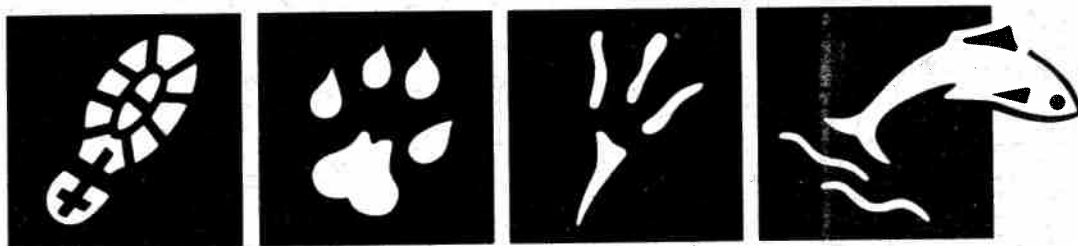


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Teaming with wildlife



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**TEAMING WITH
WILDLIFE**



TEAMING WITH WILDLIFE

a natural investment

Do you like to camp, hike or canoe? Do you watch birds, or feed birds in your back yard? Is photography a hobby of yours? If you enjoy any of these activities, you may soon be contributing to wildlife conservation through a proposed user fee in the form of a surcharge on outdoors equipment.

We all know that wildlife in America face serious challenges. Many people, agencies and organizations are working for wildlife conservation, and many citizens support such efforts. But conservation costs money. A user fee on hunting and fishing equipment, as well as license fees, have long paid for the management of game animals. At the other end of the spectrum, efforts to manage threatened or endangered wildlife are funded through federal and state dollars. But there is a lack of secure, reliable and adequate funding for the wildlife in the middle—the nearly 1800 species which are neither hunted or fished for, nor threatened or endangered. These species, because they have no dedicated funding source, currently receive only 5% of the money allocated for wildlife.

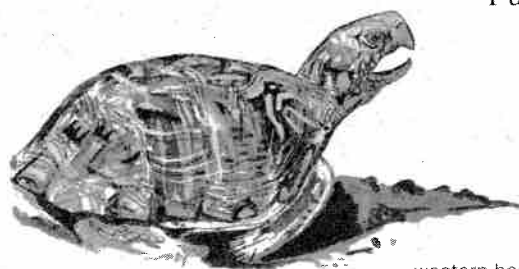
Now there is a proposal for a national funding source for wildlife conservation, outdoor recreation and environmental education that would be reliable and dedicated to these purposes. It's officially called the Fish & Wildlife Diversity Funding Initiative, though the moniker *Teaming With Wildlife* is easier to remember, and perhaps more descriptive. **Here's how it works.** A user fee in the form of a modest surcharge, never to exceed 5% of manufacturer's cost, would be added to outdoor recreation equipment such as tents, binoculars and mountain bikes, as well

as wildlife-oriented merchandise like bird seed and field guides. This would be done by the manufacturers, so the percentage would apply to the wholesale price. For example, a backpack costing \$100 in a store might wholesale for \$50. Five percent of this cost, added to the price charged the retailer, would be \$2.50. If high-ticket items such as recreational vehicles are ultimately included in the final initiative, the surcharge may be as low as .25% (that would be only \$125 on a wholesale price of \$50,000).

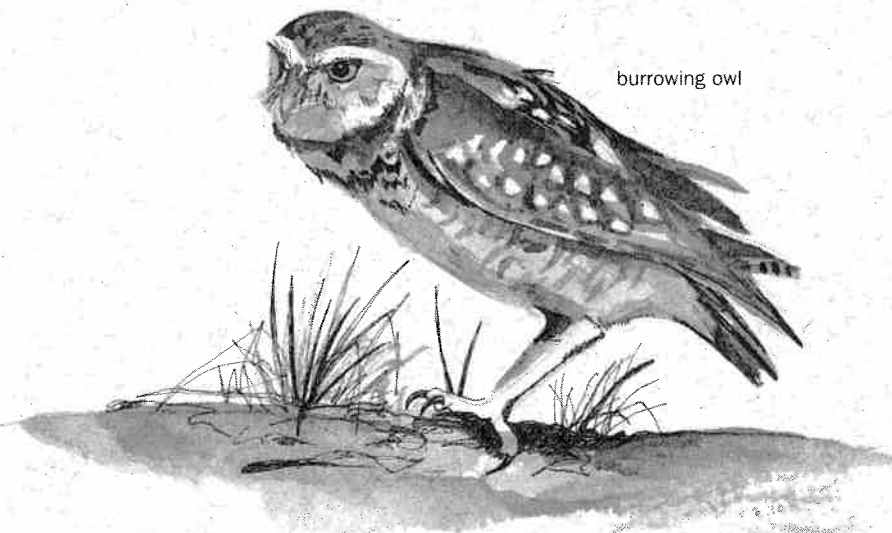
These funds would be collected by the federal government and distributed to the states using a formula based on the geographic area of the state and its population size. The federal funds would be matched by a state contribution at a rate of one state dollar for every three federal dollars. Of the \$350 million the surcharge is projected to collect nationally each year, Colorado would receive \$7 million. With a match of about \$2.2 million from the state, Colorado would realize \$9.2 million in funding each year for wildlife conservation, outdoor recreation and environmental education.

The proposal is being promoted by a coalition of more than 245 conservation and outdoor recreation groups, as well as state fish and wildlife agencies. The International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA) is the lead organization. In Colorado, the initiative is supported by the Colorado Wildlife Conservation

Funding Coalition, which includes such diverse members as the Colorado Bowhunters Association, Colorado Wildlife Federation, Denver Audubon Society, and the Colorado Division of Wildlife.



western box turtle



burrowing owl

Teaming With Wildlife is a chance for all people interested in wildlife, nature and the outdoors—from birdwatchers, hikers and mountain bike riders, to hunters, anglers and photographers—to contribute to the protection of wildlife and its habitat. It's a way to invest in the future today, before it's too late. And it's a prevention strategy for keeping wildlife from becoming threatened or endangered. The 11th-hour rescue of wildlife on the brink of extinction is enormously expensive. For example, over a 15-year period, the state of Colorado spent about \$100,000 annually on peregrine falcon recovery. Add to this the dollars spent by the federal government and many other states, and the total is in the millions for recovery of one species. It is wiser and far less expensive to prevent species from becoming endangered than to bring them back once they're in dire straits.

Americans who love the outdoors will not only be helping to conserve wildlife, they will see some direct benefits, too. By protecting land for wildlife, more of our nation's forests, waterways and mountains will be preserved for recreation as well.

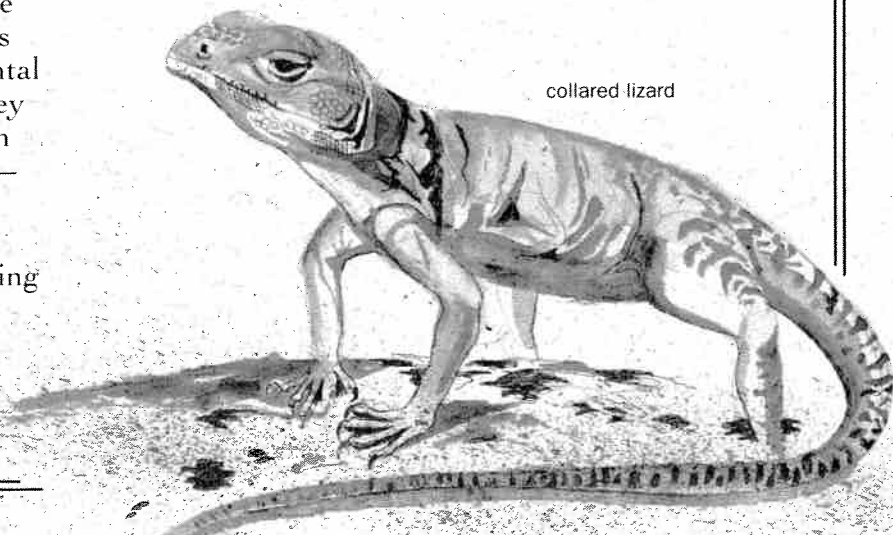
Since education and recreation are important components, the money won't just be spent on research projects to count birds. It will include trails development, the building of boardwalks and interpretive nature signs, and environmental education programs for school kids. The money will help not just rare species, but the common animals—the frogs, butterflies and songbirds—which enliven our world.

To find out how you can support the Teaming With Wildlife initiative, or to offer your input, contact Gary Skiba, c/o Colorado Division of Wildlife, 6060 Broadway, Denver, CO 80216; (303) 291-7466.

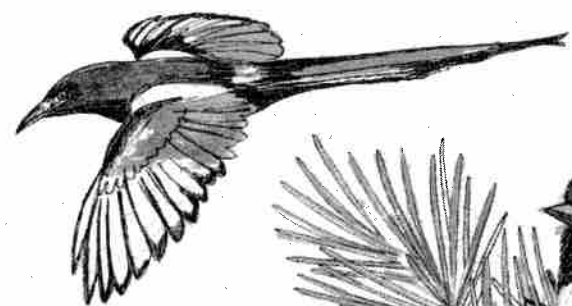
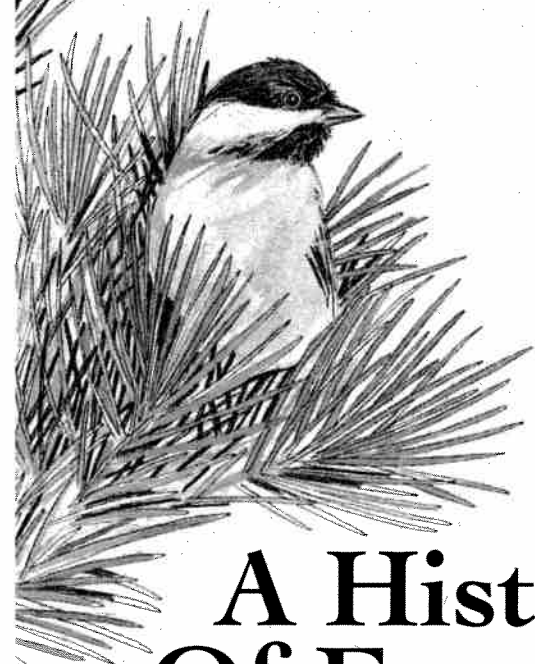
So What Sorts Of Things Would Be Subject To The User Fee?

The exact items which would be subject to the user fee have yet to be determined, but here's a list of probable products:

- Backpacks, sleeping bags, tents
- Binoculars, spotting scopes
- Film, cameras, lenses
- Bird feeders, bird seed, birdhouses, bird baths
- Recreational vehicles
- Canoes, kayaks
- Sport utility vehicles
- Mountain bikes
- Field guides and other outdoor guide books
- Hiking boots



collared lizard



A History Of Funding Wildlife

The *Teaming With Wildlife* initiative is not without precedent. For decades, hunters and anglers have been paying for the management of game animals through a user fee on hunting firearms, ammunition and fishing tackle. These highly successful programs are the models for the Wildlife Diversity Funding Initiative.

It was sometime late in the last century that Americans began to realize wildlife in our vast land wasn't always just going to "be there." Elk, deer, bison, and other large mammals were once abundant in the western United States, but their numbers had declined significantly by the late 19th century.

How much will this user fee be?

Based on a percentage of the manufacturer's price, it will vary from a low of .25% on high priced items, such as recreational vehicles, to a ceiling of 5%.

What assurances are there the funds will be used for their intended purposes?

The law will specify that the funds cannot be diverted for any other use. This will be patterned after the Sportfish and Wildlife Restoration programs, which have a remarkable fifty-year record of success. The Office of Federal Aid oversees compliance and there are periodic federal aid audits. Also, coalitions of outdoor enthusiasts in every state will be working with their fish and wildlife agency to insure the appropriate use of the funds.

Won't consumers object to this fee?

Users are very willing to pay these fees, as illustrated by the support of 245 organizations representing millions of outdoor enthusiasts and conservationists. Teaming With Wildlife is patterned after a very successful user fee which has been collected for decades on hunting and fishing equipment, with broad support from the affected consumers, namely hunters and anglers.

Q&A

How will fees be collected from manufacturers?

The fees would be collected as an excise tax and reported with the manufacturer's quarterly IRS reports, using Form 720.

How will items that should carry the user fee be differentiated from those which shouldn't?

The system of Standard Industrialized Classification Codes, used by businesses, government and the Sportfish and Wildlife Restoration programs will be utilized. Businesses will help work out the specific product list.

Won't this fee put a business at a competitive disadvantage?

No, because all businesses carrying the same types of products will collect the fee and price their products accordingly.

Isn't this a burden to businesses?

The quarterly reports and payment to IRS aren't due until 30 days after the quarter ends, giving up to four months for

accounts to be paid, well within normal accounting time frames. As a help to small businesses, there will likely be a minimum threshold for sales, below which quarterly reports would not be necessary.

With this fee a part of a product's purchase price, consumers are blind to it. How will consumers know the connection between the payer and the service delivered?

Every item subject to the user fee would be identified with a sticker or tag stating that a portion of the item's cost goes to conserve wildlife and provide related educational and recreational activities.

Won't the program cost a lot to administer?

Administrative costs will be capped by statute, not to exceed 6%.

People feeding birds in their back yards are already helping wildlife.

Backyard birds utilize other habitat as well. Without efforts to protect habitat and conserve wildlife on a comprehensive, even international, level, many of those feeder birds may not survive to visit our backyards.



land wasn't always just going to be there. Elk, deer, beavers, bighorn sheep, wild turkeys, and many other species had declined drastically; some species no longer could be found in areas where they had once been abundant. The need to manage game populations became painfully obvious.

The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act, known as Pittman-Robertson for the legislators who sponsored it, passed in 1937. It funnels an 11% federal user fee on hunting rifles, shotguns and ammunition to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which distributes it to the states. In 1970 a tax on handguns and archery equipment was added for wildlife management.

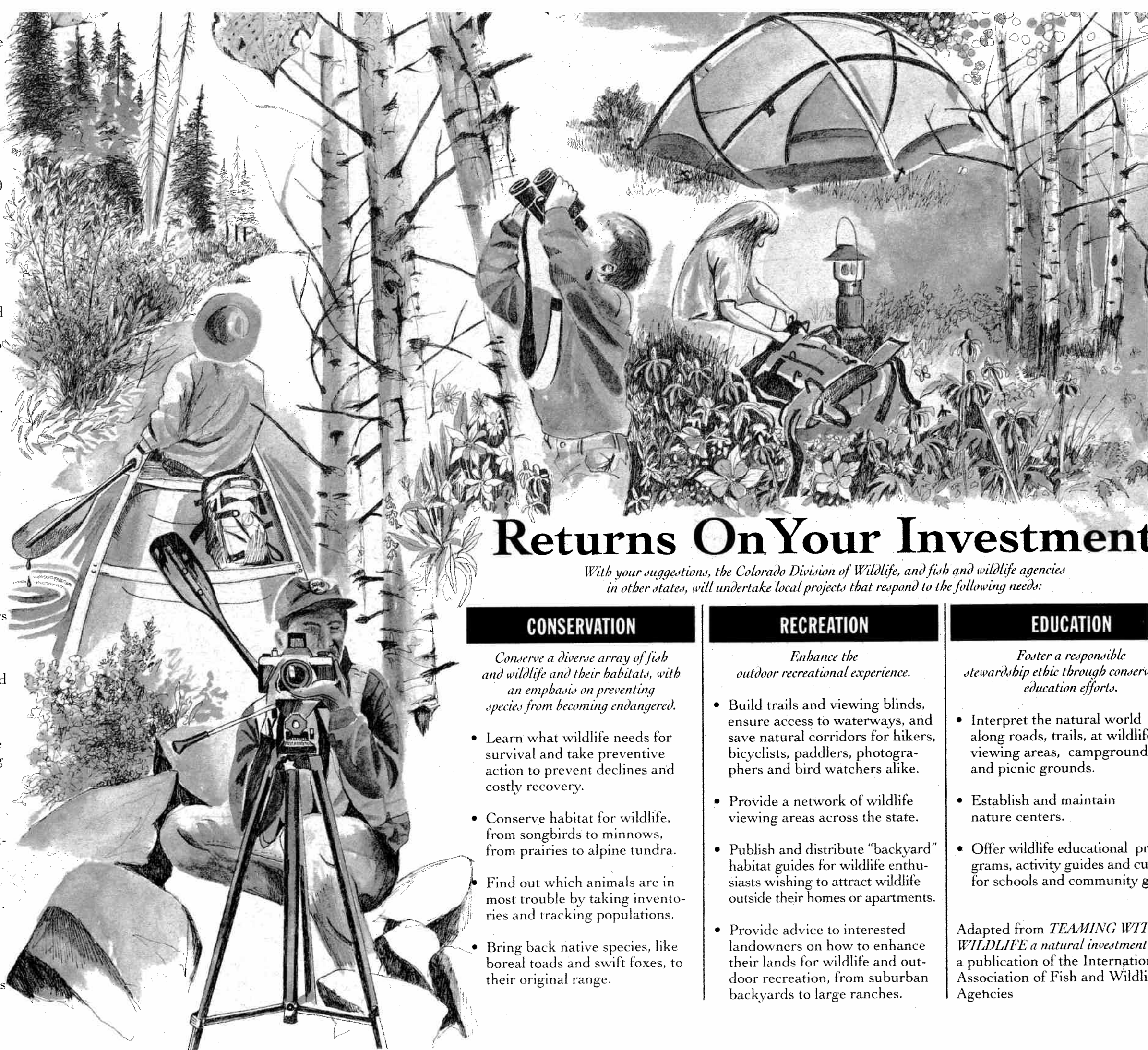
A similar arrangement provides funding for fisheries. The Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act, known as Dingell-Johnson (also named for the sponsoring members of Congress), passed in 1950. It collects a 10% manufacturer's user fee on fishing equipment and tackle to enhance recreational fishing. In 1984, the Wallop-Breaux Amendment expanded this to cover all fishing tackle, new motorboat fuel taxes and duties on imported tackle and boats.

User fees collected from manufacturers are deposited in trust funds administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which then allocates the money to state fish and wildlife agencies. A maximum of 8% of the funds may be retained by the Service for administration. Together these two programs have pumped \$4.65 billion into game restoration and management.

Previous efforts to garner funding for nongame wildlife efforts have not met with great success. In the mid-seventies, Colorado tried a nongame stamp program, modeled on the duck stamp program, but it was not successful. The Great Outdoors Colorado program, which earmarks state lottery funds for a variety of outdoors efforts, is a boon to wildlife programs, but it is inadequate to meet the needs of more than 540 species of nongame wildlife in Colorado needing work. Projects seeking funding must be submitted and approved each year, making long-term programs vulnerable to a loss of funding.

Revenues from the Colorado Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Fund Checkoff on the state income tax form have been declining. This funding source relies upon voluntary donations from the public and as such is subject to downturns in the economy. Also, the checkoff "pie" is increasingly cut in smaller pieces. On the 1994 Colorado Individual Income Tax Return, the nongame check-off vied for taxpayer donations with three other funds—the Colorado Domestic Abuse Fund, the Colorado Homeless Prevention Activities Fund and the United States Olympic Committee Fund.

Proponents hope the Wildlife Diversity Funding Initiative will provide the same success for wildlife conservation, outdoor recreation and environmental education as the Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson funding programs did for game management.



Returns On Your Investment

With your suggestions, the Colorado Division of Wildlife, and fish and wildlife agencies in other states, will undertake local projects that respond to the following needs:

CONSERVATION

Conserve a diverse array of fish and wildlife and their habitats, with an emphasis on preventing species from becoming endangered.

- Learn what wildlife needs for survival and take preventive action to prevent declines and costly recovery.
- Conserve habitat for wildlife, from songbirds to minnows, from prairies to alpine tundra.
- Find out which animals are in most trouble by taking inventories and tracking populations.
- Bring back native species, like boreal toads and swift foxes, to their original range.

RECREATION

Enhance the outdoor recreational experience.

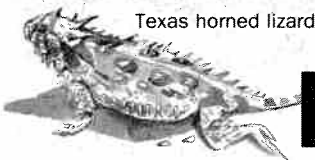
- Build trails and viewing blinds, ensure access to waterways, and save natural corridors for hikers, bicyclists, paddlers, photographers and bird watchers alike.
- Provide a network of wildlife viewing areas across the state.
- Publish and distribute "backyard" habitat guides for wildlife enthusiasts wishing to attract wildlife outside their homes or apartments.
- Provide advice to interested landowners on how to enhance their lands for wildlife and outdoor recreation, from suburban backyards to large ranches.

EDUCATION

Foster a responsible stewardship ethic through conservation education efforts.

- Interpret the natural world along roads, trails, at wildlife viewing areas, campground and picnic grounds.
- Establish and maintain nature centers.
- Offer wildlife educational programs, activity guides and curricula for schools and community groups.

Adapted from *TEAMING WIT WILDLIFE a natural investment*, a publication of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies



Texas horned lizard

DOW WORKING FOR WILDLIFE

The **Statewide Inventory of Amphibians and Reptiles** is one of many DOW projects that could benefit from the Fish & Wildlife Diversity Funding Initiative. This project seeks to learn more about the reptiles and amphibians, known collectively as herptiles, inhabiting Colorado—where they are and how dense their populations are. This information will then be used to make decisions about management that might affect the state's herptiles.

Herptiles are among the first animals to be impacted by environmental damage, yet not a great deal is known about Colorado's reptiles and amphibians. Using a standardized inventory technique, DOW researchers define a geographic area, then observe and/or collect as many species as can be found within that area. The inventory will provide a baseline of information for future research.

Inventory Project Needs Secure Funding Source

It's difficult to inventory herptile populations, such as estimating all the leopard frogs in the Platte River system, explains aquatic nongame specialist Tom Nesler. So instead of estimating population numbers as is done for big game animals, "we're trying to set up a basis to analyze changes over several years," Nesler says. "We do a presence/absence study which we can compare to future data to see if a species' range has expanded, shrunk or disappeared over time." Researchers spent last year searching for boreal toads in montane areas. This year they are focusing on southeastern

Colorado, inventorying three reptile species of special concern—short-horned and Texas horned lizards, and massasaugas (a relative of the rattlesnake).

One of the main roadblocks to the study, explains Nesler, is securing a steady, ongoing source of funding. "We patch together a lot of different funding sources to do this," he says. "It's a continuing exercise asking where will we get the money, how much will we get, so we can decide what we can do." Though the project currently receives money from the Great Outdoors Colorado trust fund, these dollars are awarded only a year at a time, making long-term projects untenable. "This funding initiative would be a steady source of money," says Nesler. "We could do multi-year planning and implement field operations that are much more consistent."

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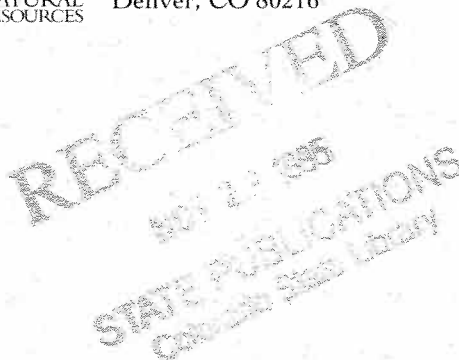
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