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The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law has pumped over \$4 billion into the Mountain West in just two years



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☰ Issue: Conservation Funding, Tribal Engagement, Wildlife

📌 Subject: Interactive Reports, Interior

| By Kate Groetzinger

Investments have gone toward wildfire preparedness and prevention, sagebrush-steppe recovery and conservation, abandoned oil and gas well plugging and remediation, wildlife habitat and fish passage improvements, climate change adaptation, and more.

Today marks the two-year anniversary of the passage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), a historic and ongoing investment in America's natural and built environment. The BIL authorized an estimated \$1.2 trillion in funding to be spent over ten years, including \$550 billion to be spent by 2026, [according to McKinsey](#). **So far, over \$4 billion of that funding has gone toward natural resource and Tribal projects in the Mountain Weststates** (Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming).

The Department of the Interior has so far allocated over \$8 billion of BIL funding nationwide, according to [interactive data published by the department](#). That funding has gone to over 1,450 projects across seven categories: Addressing Drought, Ecosystem Restoration, Indian Water Rights Settlements, Legacy Pollution, Scientific Innovation, Tribal Investments, and Wildland Fire.

In the Mountain West, Interior has invested over \$4 billion of BIL funding in 501 projects. These include 149 projects to address drought, 195 ecosystem restoration projects, 21 Indian water rights settlements, 23 projects cleaning up legacy pollution, 24 scientific innovation projects, 26 Tribal investment projects, and 63 wildland fire projects.

Around half of the \$4 billion allocated by Interior in the Mountain West so far has gone to Indian water rights settlements, which help Tribes and individual Indian water rights holders access clean, reliable water supplies. To learn more about Indian water rights settlements, [visit the Bureau of Indian Affairs](#).

"The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is providing a much-needed shot into the arm of the Mountain West, which faces unprecedented challenges due to drought, climate change, and development pressure," **said Center for Western Priorities Communications Manager Kate Groetzinger**. "Thanks to this funding, the Interior Department is tackling complex challenges in the West like sagebrush-steppe preservation, wildfire management, and water conservation."

By program name in the Mountain West, the Interior Department has received \$44 million for abandoned mine reclamation; \$9 million for revegetating mined lands; \$20.7 million for Colorado River endangered species recovery; \$3.9 million for improving recreation sites; \$19.6 million for improving fish passage; \$20.1 million for improving the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem; over \$133 million for plugging, remediating, and restoring orphaned wells; \$118 million for wildfire mitigation (fuels

management); and \$15 million for rehabilitating areas burned by wildfire, among other program areas. [\[data\]](#)

By bureau in the Mountain West, the Bureau of Land Management has received \$30.1 million for 119 projects, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has received \$62.6 million for 109 projects, the National Park Service has received just over \$1 million for nine projects, the Orphaned Wells Program Office has received \$132 million for 15 projects, and the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement has received \$44 million for six projects, among other bureaus. [\[data\]](#)

Over \$651 million of BIL investments announced so far are not tied to a specific state but rather fall into the categories of nationwide or multi-state

investments. Some highlights include a \$362 million investment in wildfire preparedness, fuels reduction, and burned area rehabilitation; a \$22.5 million investment in the U.S. Geological Survey's Earth Mapping Resources Initiative; a \$10.8 million investment in revegetation of mined lands; a \$6.8 million investment in Colorado River endangered species recovery; and a \$8.8 million investment in recreation site resiliency. [\[data\]](#)

Tribes have received over \$1.6 billion in BIL funding from the Interior department so far. The Navajo Nation has received around \$682 million, the Blackfoot Tribe of the Blackfoot Indian Reservation of Montana has received over \$212 million, Gila River Indian Community of the Gila River Indian Reservation has received around \$155 million, the Chippewa Cree Indians of the Rocky Boy's Reservation has received \$136 million, and the White Mountain Apache Tribe of the Fort Apache Reservation has received over \$116 million. Almost 40 Tribes have received over \$1 million. [\[data\]](#)

The Bureau of Reclamation and the Bureau of Indian Affairs received the vast majority of BIL funding allocated to Tribes by Interior. [\[data\]](#) Around \$1.3 billion of the total funding allocated to Tribes went to water rights settlements, while \$190 million went to Tribal investments. [\[data\]](#) These investments include \$1.7 million for a climate adaptation plan for the Tulalip Tribes of Washington, \$1.8 million for an irrigation project on the Fort Peck reservation, and \$8.7 million for the Hopi Arsenic Management Project. [\[data\]](#)

State-by-state conservation and restoration highlights

Arizona

So far, Interior has invested \$473 million of BIL funding into projects in

Arizona. This includes a \$124,000 investment in abandoned mine hazard mitigation at Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, a \$300,000 investment in Sonoran Desert restoration at Saguaro National Park, a \$2.2 million investment in mitigating hazards at the Kofa National Wildlife Refuge, and a \$350,000 investment in native fish restoration in the West Fork of the Black River. [[data](#)]

Colorado

So far, Interior has invested \$493 million of BIL funding into projects in

Colorado. This includes a \$160,000 investment in watershed restoration of the Upper Animas River, a \$85 investment in Dolores River restoration, a \$435,000 investment in mitigating hazards at Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge, a \$262,000 investment in an investigation of critical minerals in mine waste in Colorado, and a \$261,000 investment in wet meadow restoration in the San Miguel Basin. [[data](#)]

Idaho

So far, Interior has invested \$90.8 million of BIL funding into projects in Idaho. This includes a \$2 million investment in Battle Creek Ecological Restoration at Sowo Gahni, a \$2 million investment in the Lake Cascade State Park Crown Point Trail Rehabilitation, a \$4.2 million investment in the Minidoka National Historic Site, and a \$340,000 investment in the Upper Snake Sagebrush Steppe. [[data](#)]

Montana

So far, Interior has invested \$1.77 billion of BIL funding into projects in

Montana. This includes a \$908,000 investment in the Blackfeet Ecological and Cultural Stewardship in the Ninnaastakoo (Chief Mountain) Area, a \$4.8 million investment in the Intertribal Approach to Restoring Plains Bison and Landscape Connectivity on Tribal Lands, a \$900,000 investment in fish passage improvements for Arctic Grayling, Bull Trout and Westslope Cutthroat in Western Montana, and a \$574,000 investment in the Zortman and Landusky Mine Site Restoration. [[data](#)]

Nevada

So far, Interior has invested \$91.8 million of BIL funding into projects in

Nevada. This includes a \$1.7 million investment in Caselton Mine & Mill Watershed Restoration, an \$860,000 investment in habitat improvement and connectivity for Lahontan Cutthroat Trout, a \$1.3 million investment in Goshute Cave, and an \$8.3 million investment in the Numana Dam Fish Passage Project. [[data](#)]

New Mexico

So far, Interior has invested \$602 million of BIL funding into projects in New Mexico. This includes a \$200,000 investment in Cooke’s Peak watershed restoration and recreational access, a \$1 million investment in preparing the Pueblo de San Ildefonso for wildfire, a \$1.5 million investment in tools to adapt to water scarcity and increase acequia resilience, and a \$4.1 million investment in riparian wildlife corridor restoration and wildfire recovery at Santa Clara Pueblo. [data]

Utah

So far, Interior has invested \$465 million of BIL funding into projects in Utah. This includes a \$495,000 investment in plugging orphaned oil and gas wells in Canyonlands National Park, a \$580,000 investment in Colorado Plateau Native Seed Collection, a \$10 million investment in Provo River Delta Restoration, and a \$3.5 million investment in Virgin River fish passage in Zion National Park. [data]

Wyoming

So far, Interior has invested \$62.4 million of BIL funding into projects in Wyoming. This includes a \$1.6 million investment in the BLM Wyoming State Office Orphaned Wells Project, a \$1 million investment in wildlife-friendly fences, a \$300,000 investment in Wind River Reservation riparian fencing, and a \$500,000 investment in sage-steppe mesic habitat restoration. [data]

To dig deeper into the BIL investments announced so far by the Interior Department, visit the department’s [interactive map](#) or use our spreadsheets ([full dataset](#), [state-level dataset](#), [Tribal dataset](#)).

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The Biden administration on Monday unveiled a \$7.3 trillion Fiscal Year 2025 budget proposal to fund the federal government. While the proposal is not expected to be enacted as written, it highlights the Biden administration’s policy priorities for the final year of his first term. In particular, the spending proposal requests a boost in funding for the [...]

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Community to rally against Grand Teton land auction

Hunters, wildlife advocates, and other concerned citizens will gather today to urge the Wyoming Board of Land Commissioners not to hold an auction for a parcel of state-owned land located within Grand Teton National Park. Led by the Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance, rally-goers will advocate that the parcel should be sold directly to the National Park Service rather than be sold to the [...]

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Why is the Rock Springs RMP generating so much interest?

The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) recently released draft Resource Management Plan (RMP) for millions of acres in southwest Wyoming is generating an unusual amount of attention for a public lands agency planning document, including a recent write-up in the New York Times. The bureau is recommending a more conservation-focused approach for 3.6 million acres that will update the plan currently in [...]

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Opening the conservation toolbox for a critically endangered toad


The Interior Department is expanding its efforts to save one of North America's most critically endangered amphibians—the Wyoming toad. This month, the Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) announced the creation of the Wyoming Toad Conservation Area, which was made possible through a sale from private landowner to a conservation nonprofit, and ultimately the federal government, [...]

 October 23, 2023



The Center for Western Priorities is a nonpartisan conservation and advocacy organization that serves as a source of accurate information, promotes responsible policies and practices, and ensures accountability at all levels to protect land, water, and communities in the American West.

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