

Conservation Leadership Series

Program Overview

2025 Cohort



Thank you for your interest in the Colorado Open Lands Conservation Leadership Series.

As you may know, Colorado Open Lands (COL) is an organization focused on conserving Colorado's most important wild and working lands, forever. While a seemingly simple mission, conserving land in perpetuity takes more than just good conservation work on the ground. For this work to be truly permanent, we also need to be effective in connecting people to the land, educating the community about the importance of private land conservation, and fostering the next generation of land conservation leaders. Hence, the Conservation Leadership Series (CLS) is essential to our mission.

CLS is designed to offer education and insight into land conservation in Colorado and introduce participants to COL's innovative work in this field. The program includes a mix of networking events, land tours, conversations with landowners and stakeholders, and recreational activities. These select experiences are designed to help you develop an understanding of the 'why' and 'how' of land conservation and the impact it has on the people, plants, and wildlife that call Colorado home. It is our hope that participants gain a deep appreciation for land conservation in Colorado and incorporate what they learn into their professional and personal lives as new conservation leaders to help cultivate a strong conservation ethic across Colorado. Throughout the program, our team is also inspired by the unique backgrounds and experiences that participants bring to the group, which helps us see our work in a new way. As such, the program simultaneously educates and inspires a new generation of conservation champions and connects COL to Colorado's emerging leaders.



Questions?

Contact Yvonne Schramm at yschramm@coloradoopenlands.org
or call (303) 988-2373 ext. 223



Who should apply to the Conservation Leadership Series?

Established early to mid-career professionals in any professional sector (e.g., law, real estate, finance, arts and humanities, philanthropy) who are interested in engaging in land and water conservation in Colorado and who desire to integrate this learning into their personal and professional life as conservation leaders. Some guiding questions applicants may consider:

- Do I have a passion for sharing my learning from this program with my sphere of influence (e.g., in my home, at work, in my community)? CLS is an immersive educational opportunity intended to cultivate a strong conservation ethic across Colorado. Participants should be interested in learning about Colorado's water and land conservation and be excited to use that knowledge to encourage positive change in their sphere of influence.
- Am I an early to mid-career professional? This program is designed for professionals in any industry who typically have 3-20 years of experience in their industry. We have found that individuals who find this program most engaging have been in their careers for 5+ years.
- Can I commit to attending 7 of the 10 organized events? We receive a lot of interest in this program and have found that a small cohort keeps the group-based experiences personal and effective. Your commitment will help you feel engaged with the program and your peers and ensure that the cohort experiences a sense of community and collaboration. Please only consider applying if you are able to commit, as we'd like all the 'seats' in the program to be fully used! The first two events serve as the foundation of many conversations throughout the year, so we ask that you please prioritize attending those. Please refer to the calendar of events.

What does the application process look like for the Conservation Leadership Series?

The Conservation Leadership Series has grown immensely since its inception in 2017, and we now use an application process. Each year, we welcome approximately 20 individuals into the cohort.

Program admission will be based on a matrix that maximizes the impact of the program, provides an engaging learning environment for all involved, and encourages program diversity. We look for participants from a variety of geographies, professions, and backgrounds. We desire to reach a wide audience with this program, so we may not accept more than one person from the same employer in a given year or in consecutive years.

Applications are digital and found on our website during the time applications are accepted at coloradoopenlands.org/conservation-leadership-series/.

What is the application timeline for the 2025 program?

Program Information Available | January 13

Applications Accepted | January 15 (8:00 a.m. MST) - February 5 (4:00 p.m. MST)

Cohort Finalized | Mid-February



What does the program cost?

The Conservation Leadership Series is made possible through the support of generous donors and foundations who value the goals of this program. The only cost associated with the program is \$150 per participant, per overnight to help offset the hotel stays in Gunnison and La Junta (total of \$300 if both overnights are attended). Costs are due by the month prior to the event date (i.e. June and September). Scholarships may be available for participants in need of support.

How does transportation work for events?

For some land tours and excursions outside of the Denver Metro Area, we offer limited carpool seats from the COL office in Lakewood. Carpool seats are first come, first served. We highly encourage carpooling and hope you meet peers from your area with whom you feel comfortable carpooling! Note that on certain tours, we also ask participants to consolidate at our first tour stop to ensure adequate parking at subsequent stops. Details will be shared in advance of each event.



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