

**Climate and Environment Commission  
New Castle, Colorado  
Strategic Plan 2026 – 2028**

## Mission

The CEC advances sustainable practices for our community to live harmoniously with nature and improve environmental resilience for future generations.

## CEC 2026 - 2028 Goals

**GOAL 1: Engage the community in environmental stewardship**

**GOAL 2: Advise and inform local decision-makers**

**GOAL 3: Collaborate for broader impact**

**GOAL 4: Develop New Castle's Environmental Leadership**

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

**GOAL 1: Engage the community in environmental stewardship**

### OBJECTIVES

- Raise public awareness by educating residents and businesses about environmental issues, sustainable practices, and opportunities for involvement.
- Promote environmental stewardship among residents, businesses, and organizations through events, promotional campaigns, social media, online resources, and other initiatives.
- Encourage responsible management and care for the local environment and its resources, such as water, air, land, and biodiversity via grants, recognition, volunteer opportunities, and other methods.
- Work with our community to protect our natural environment and inspire a lifelong commitment to nature from our children.

## **GOAL 2: Advise and inform local entities**

### **OBJECTIVES**

- Provide information, research, and recommendations to the Town Council and other community leaders to inform environmental issues and policies.
- Promote environmentally responsible development and maintenance practices that minimize negative impacts on the local environment, natural resources, and wildlife.

## **GOAL 3: Collaborate for broader impact**

### **OBJECTIVES**

- Work with individuals, community groups, businesses, and other organizations to achieve shared environmental goals.
- Convene and participate in relevant events to promote sustainable environmental practices locally and regionally, collaborating with other Garfield County environmental groups and regional partners to share and leverage resources.
- Support the efforts of Garfield Clean Energy.

## **GOAL 4: Develop New Castle's Environmental Leadership**

### **OBJECTIVES**

- Build the Climate and Environment Commissioner's knowledge and capacity for effectiveness in achieving other goals.
- Attend relevant events to gain knowledge, share expertise, and build partnerships.
- Identify and facilitate local expert engagement to achieve shared environmental goals.
- Establish citizen leadership group, Guardians of Nature, to help further the CEC's mission.
- Locate and acquire additional funding sources to achieve CEC goals and objectives.

# Commission Activities

## **GOAL 1: Engage the community in environmental stewardship**

- Host an annual environmental film and/or educational panel of experts.
- Focus the community on sustainable use of natural resources (water, air, native plants, wildlife, etc.) through a “Guardians of Nature” campaign and community network, sustainable business recognition, and other public awareness initiatives.
- Host annual Earth Day events with partner participation. (Also goal 3)
- Raise public awareness through social media.

## **GOAL 2: Advise and inform local decision-makers**

- Use bag fee funding to support initiatives to reduce plastic use, encourage reuse, recycling, composting, upcycling, and other waste reduction strategies.
- Provide town council with recommendations when relevant.
- Support town departments with their sustainability efforts.

## **GOAL 3: Collaborate for broader impact**

- Engage with town and civic events, such as Chamber events, Burning Mountain Parade, Chili Cook-Off clean up, etc.
- Conduct town, trail, and stream bank cleanups and partner with others on these events.
- Collaborate with other municipal and/or regional environmental commissions.
- Host community awareness event with local partners.

## **GOAL 4: Develop New Castle’s Environmental Leadership**

- Develop an annual calendar plan with educational and outreach activities.
- Gain public input on commission initiatives.
- Manage funding for environmental initiatives.
- Maintain public transparency with meetings, regular online updates (town newsletter, website, social media), reports, and well-promoted activities.
- Stay current with environmental issues through speakers at meetings, attendance at conferences, and other educational development.

# 2026 Calendar of Events & Projects

- Monthly meetings on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday at 4:00 pm
- Ongoing updates to website & social media with events & news
- Host a joint meeting of climate and environmental groups from the region to share ideas, coordinate, and collaborate for regional impact.

## January

Submit 2025 CEC Annual Report to Town Council  
2nd Round Business Grants Launched  
Attend Chamber Business After Hours – January 28  
Promote grants at Chamber event, flyers to businesses  
Begin Earth Day planning

## February

2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Film – Water Conservation Theme – **Weds, Feb 11<sup>th</sup>, 6pm** (partner with library)  
Prepare for Earth Day event

## March

March 19 Meeting - Select Business Grants  
March 19 Meeting - Identify Nature & Environment Champion - Business of the Year

## April

Attend Energy Conference (regional, per Dave Reynolds)  
New Castle Earth Day in Burning Mountain Park – **April 25 11 – 2** Plastic reduction theme; ceremony to award Business Nature & Environment Champion for 2025; 12+ exhibitors, swag, etc.

## April or May

Town Garage Sale – support reuse, repurpose, recycle  
Trail project – remove invasive plants, seed native plants with partners  
Elect Officers (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary)

## June

Chamber event in the park – Promote Waterwise, Firewise

## July – August

Campaign for nature guardians with partners (bingo, Down Valley event, etc.)

## September

Burning Mountain Days – Parade, etc. (Theme, logistics, give aways TBD)  
Half day planning for 2027, submit budget request for 2027 town budget

## October

Oct 9 or 10? Clean Up New Castle – Trash & Recycling Pick Up (joint with town)

## November & December

Review 2026 initiatives, prepare 2026 report for town council, solidify 2027 plan