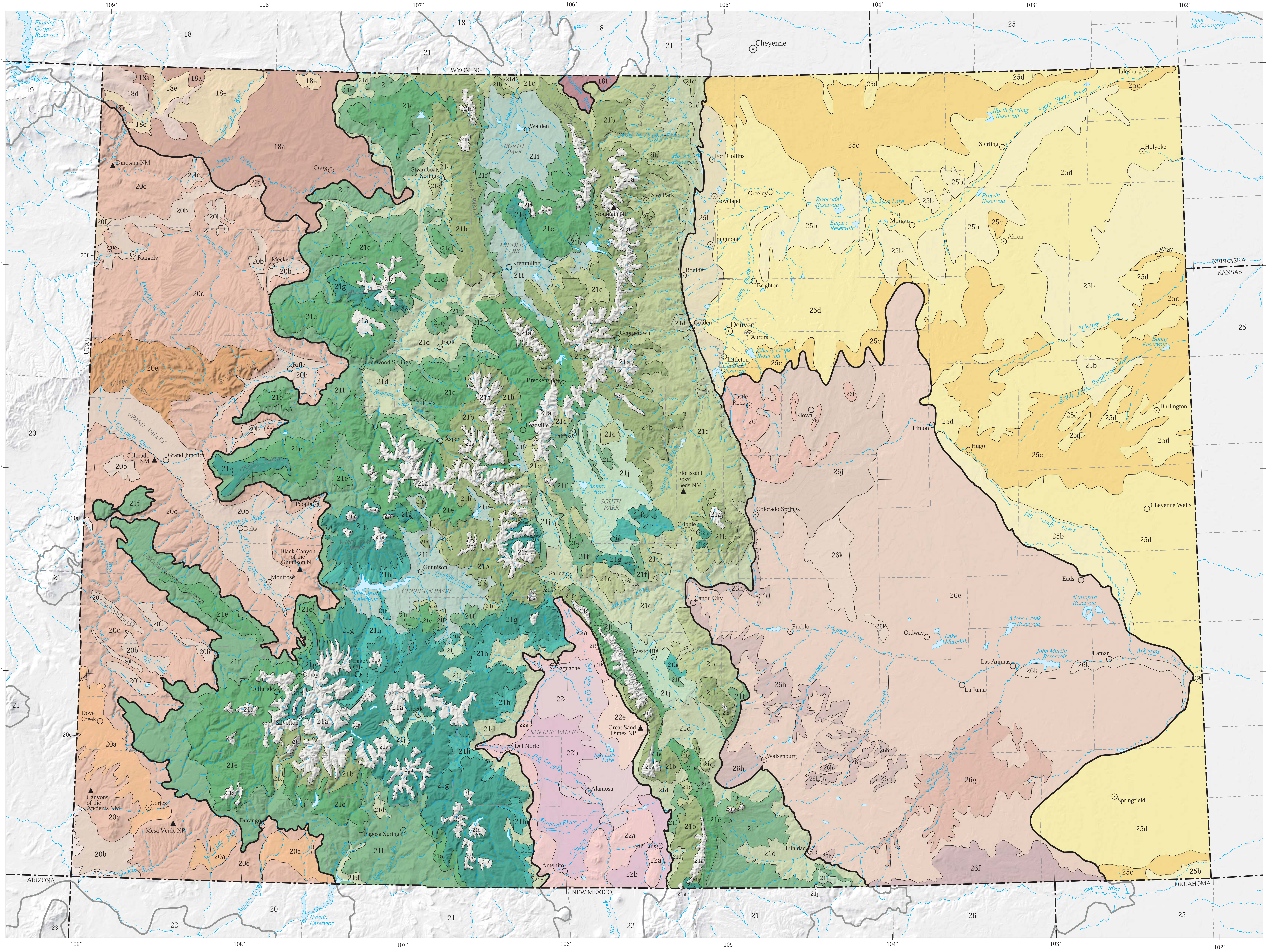
Ecoregions of Colorado



18 Wyoming Basin
- 🟫 18a Rolling Sagebrush Steppe
- 🟫 18d Foothill Shrublands and Low Mountains
- 🟨 18e Salt Desert Shrub Basins
- 🟪 18f Laramie Basin

20 Colorado Plateaus
- 🟧 20a Monticello-Cortez Uplands and Sagebrush Valleys
- 🟫 20b Shale Deserts and Sedimentary Basins
- 🟫 20c Semiarid Benchlands and Canyonlands
- ⬜ 20d Arid Canyonlands
- 🟧 20e Escarpments
- 🟫 20f Uinta Basin Floor

21 Southern Rockies
- ⬜ 21a Alpine Zone
- 🟩 21b Crystalline Subalpine Forests
- 🟩 21c Crystalline Mid-Elevation Forests
- 🟩 21d Foothill Shrublands
- 🟩 21e Sedimentary Subalpine Forests
- 🟩 21f Sedimentary Mid-Elevation Forests
- 🟩 21g Volcanic Subalpine Forests
- 🟦 21h Volcanic Mid-Elevation Forests
- 🟦 21i Sagebrush Parks
- 🟩 21j Grassland Parks

22 Arizona/New Mexico Plateau
- 🟥 22a San Luis Shrublands and Hills
- 🟪 22b San Luis Alluvial Flats and Wetlands
- 🟪 22c Salt Flats
- 🟧 22e Sand Dunes and Sand Sheets

25 High Plains
- 🟨 25b Rolling Sand Plains
- 🟨 25c Moderate Relief Plains
- 🟨 25d Flat to Rolling Plains
- 🟨 25l Front Range Fans

26 Southwestern Tablelands
- 🟫 26e Piedmont Plains and Tablelands
- 🟪 26f Mesa de Maya/Black Mesa
- 🟫 26g Purgatoire Hills and Canyons
- 🟫 26h Pinyon-Juniper Woodlands and Savannas
- 🟥 26i Pine-Oak Woodlands
- 🟫 26j Foothill Grasslands
- 🟫 26k Sand Sheets

Level III ecoregion
Level IV ecoregion
County boundary
State boundary

SCALE 1:1 200 000

15 10 5 0 30 60 mi
30 20 10 0 60 120 km

Albers equal area projection
Standard parallels 38°N and 40°N

Ecoregions denote areas of general similarity in ecosystems and in the type, quality, and quantity of environmental resources; they are designed to serve as a spatial framework for the research, assessment, management, and monitoring of ecosystems and ecosystem components. These general-purpose regions are critical for structuring and implementing ecosystem management strategies across federal agencies, state agencies, and nongovernment organizations that are responsible for different types of resources within the same geographical areas.

The approach used to compile this map is based on the premise that ecological regions can be identified through the analysis of the spatial patterns and the composition of biotic and abiotic phenomena that affect or reflect differences in ecosystem quality and integrity. These phenomena include geology, physiography, vegetation, climate, soils, land use, wildlife, and hydrology. The relative importance of each characteristic varies from one ecological region to another, regardless of the hierarchical level.

The level III and IV ecoregion map was compiled at a scale of 1:250,000 and depicts revisions and subdivisions of earlier level III ecoregions that were originally compiled at a smaller scale. This map is part of a collaborative project primarily between USEPA Region VIII, USEPA National Health and Environmental Effects Research Laboratory (Corvallis, Oregon), Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW), United States Department of Agriculture–Forest Service (USFS), United States Department of Agriculture–Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), United States Department of the Interior–Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and United States Department of the Interior–Geological Survey (USGS)–National Center for Earth Resources Observation and Science (EROS).

The project is associated with an interagency effort to develop a common framework of ecological regions. Reaching that objective requires recognition of the differences in the conceptual approaches and mapping methodologies applied to develop the most common ecoregion-type frameworks, including those developed by the USFS, the USEPA, and the NRCS. As each of these frameworks is further refined, their differences are becoming less discernible. Regional collaborative projects, such as this one in Colorado, where agreement has been reached among multiple resource management agencies, are a step toward attaining consensus and consistency in ecoregion frameworks for the entire nation.

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