



MENV 2025 CAPSTONE IMPACT REPORT



Masters of the Environment
University of Colorado **Boulder**



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LETTER FROM OUR CAPSTONE LEAD



Welcome to our first-ever Masters of the Environment (MENV) Capstone Impact Report!

This year, MENV Capstone Teams completed 26 projects with external organizations to advance sustainability and climate action in Colorado and beyond. I am excited to share the results of our collective work with you!

This year had many highlights: we hosted our first outdoor Poster Session in September (with torrential rains holding off until the afternoon!) and welcomed U.S. Representative Joe Neguse as the keynote speaker at our Capstone Symposium. And through our partnership with CU Boulder's Center for Leadership, two students, Angie Bailish and Erin Bucchin, developed the MENV Capstone Sustainability Leadership Program, with a kickoff planned for the 2027 Capstone cohort.

This year also represents a major milestone: for the first time, we measured our impact. The results speak volumes. All Capstone Partner organizations reported satisfaction with their experience working with MENV students, noting that the Capstone program effectively supported their organizations through generating new ideas and innovations, conducting data collection and analysis, and informing key decisions. Students grew significantly as well. In addition to deepening their understanding of sustainability and broadening their networks, Capstone teams developed and strengthened essential skills such as project management, communication, critical thinking, and stakeholder engagement.

We are already seeing tangible outcomes from these collaborations. For example, our Town of Erie Capstone Team developed Erie's first Resilience Action Plan, which was formally adopted by the Erie Town Council in March 2026. This is just one of many impactful stories highlighted in this report.

The impact reflected in this report is the result of thousands of hours of collective effort. It would not be possible without the contributions of hundreds of individuals, including our students (and Capstone Graduate Student Assistants), Capstone Advisors, Partners, Department of Environmental Studies faculty and staff (as well as our colleagues across CU Boulder), and our broader community of sustainability professionals. I hope this report inspires you to continue working together, aligning efforts across communities, and amplifying the impact needed to create lasting, meaningful change.

Alice Reznickova

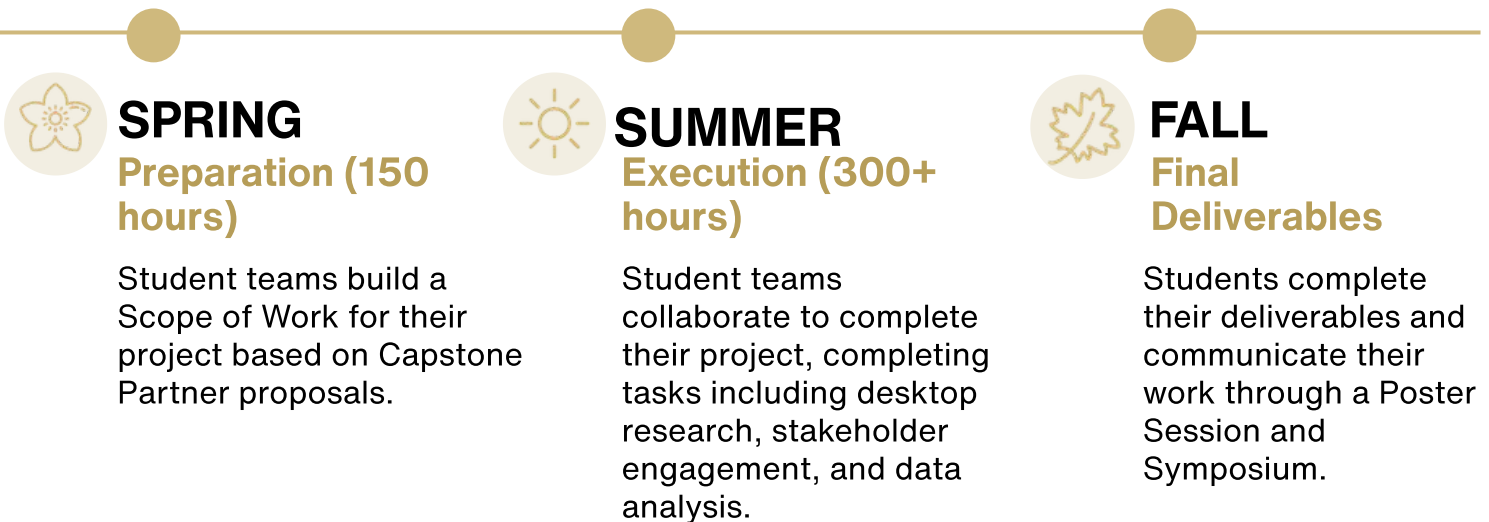
Capstone Lead, Teaching Associate Professor, & Associate Director
of the Masters of the Environment Program
Department of Environmental Studies at CU Boulder

WHAT IS A CAPSTONE PROJECT?

The **Capstone Project** is an impact-focused, team-based collaborative project that **Master's of the Environment (MENV)** students complete in partnership with an external partner organization to advance sustainability and climate action. Each capstone team is made up of **2-4 students**, Capstone Partner mentor, and a faculty Capstone Advisor.

During the Capstone, MENV students practice their skills, grow their networks, and expand capacity of Capstone Partners - while having an impact on organizations and communities.

The Capstone Process



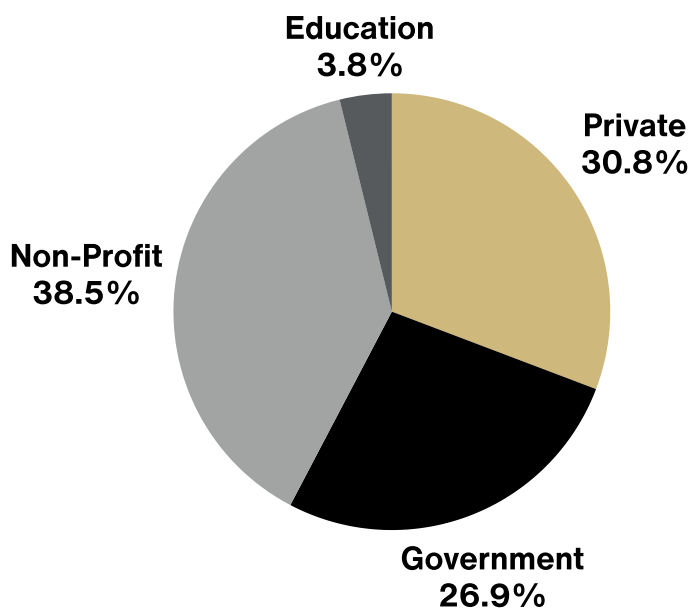
MORE THAN AN INTERNSHIP

Capstone students are not traditional interns, they are **graduate-level consultants**. They bring prior professional experience and sustainability expertise, and deliver **innovative solutions** and **high-value outputs** that **directly support the goals** of their partner organizations. ,

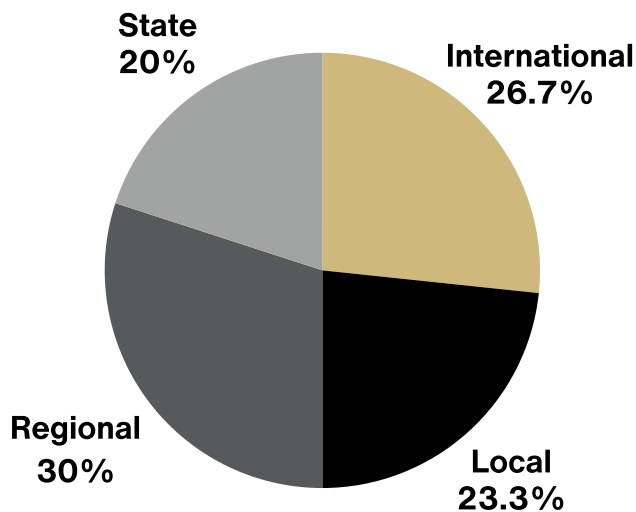
CAPSTONE PARTNER OVERVIEW

In 2025, our Capstone program hosted **26 partner organizations** from Colorado and beyond. These partners brought projects at the cutting edge of sustainability and the environment to the program, while dedicating time and guidance to support students' professional growth. In return, our students deliver **high-quality, applied deliverables** that advance the mission and vision of each partner organization.

Entity Types



Geographic Scope



MENV capstone partners span **nonprofit, government, private, and education sectors** giving students the opportunity to real-world environmental challenges through interdisciplinary, impact-driven projects.

Quick Facts

70%

of projects had impact in Colorado

24%

of 2025 partners were returning partners

28%

of 2025 partners returned in 2026

CAPSTONE PROGRAM SCALE

Before diving into the outcomes, we want to recognize the **effort** behind them. Across this year's **26 capstone projects**, students invested **substantial time and energy** into delivering meaningful, high-impact work. With guidance from Capstone Advisors, MENV students provided **professional consulting services** to partner organizations, resulting in **high-quality deliverables** with **strong potential for broad and lasting impact**.

Student Hours



78

**Participating
Students**



600

**Minimum Hours
Per Student**



46,800+

**Cumulative
Hours Delivered**



2500+ Faculty Hours

The faculty within the MENV program collectively contributed over **2500 hours** of time into capstone projects this year. They brought **mentorship, expertise, and real-world insight** to ensure academic rigor and quality in students' work. MENV does not charge Capstone Partners for this program because we believe in the importance of service to our communities.



CAPSTONE PROGRAM QUALITY

We surveyed Capstone Partner Organizations and found:

 **100%**

reported satisfaction with their partnership with MENV students

 **100%**

reported that the Capstone Program met their expectations

Partners were then asked to state their agreement with the following statements:

Students were willing to learn new knowledge and skills to meet the demand of the project

100%

Students demonstrated appropriate professional knowledge and applied their technical skills

100%

Students adapted well to challenges and changing project needs

96%

Students problem-solved effectively

96%

Students consistently submitted or presented high-quality deliverables

96%

Students communicated clearly, consistently, and professionally with our organization

92%

Students effectively managed timelines and met milestones

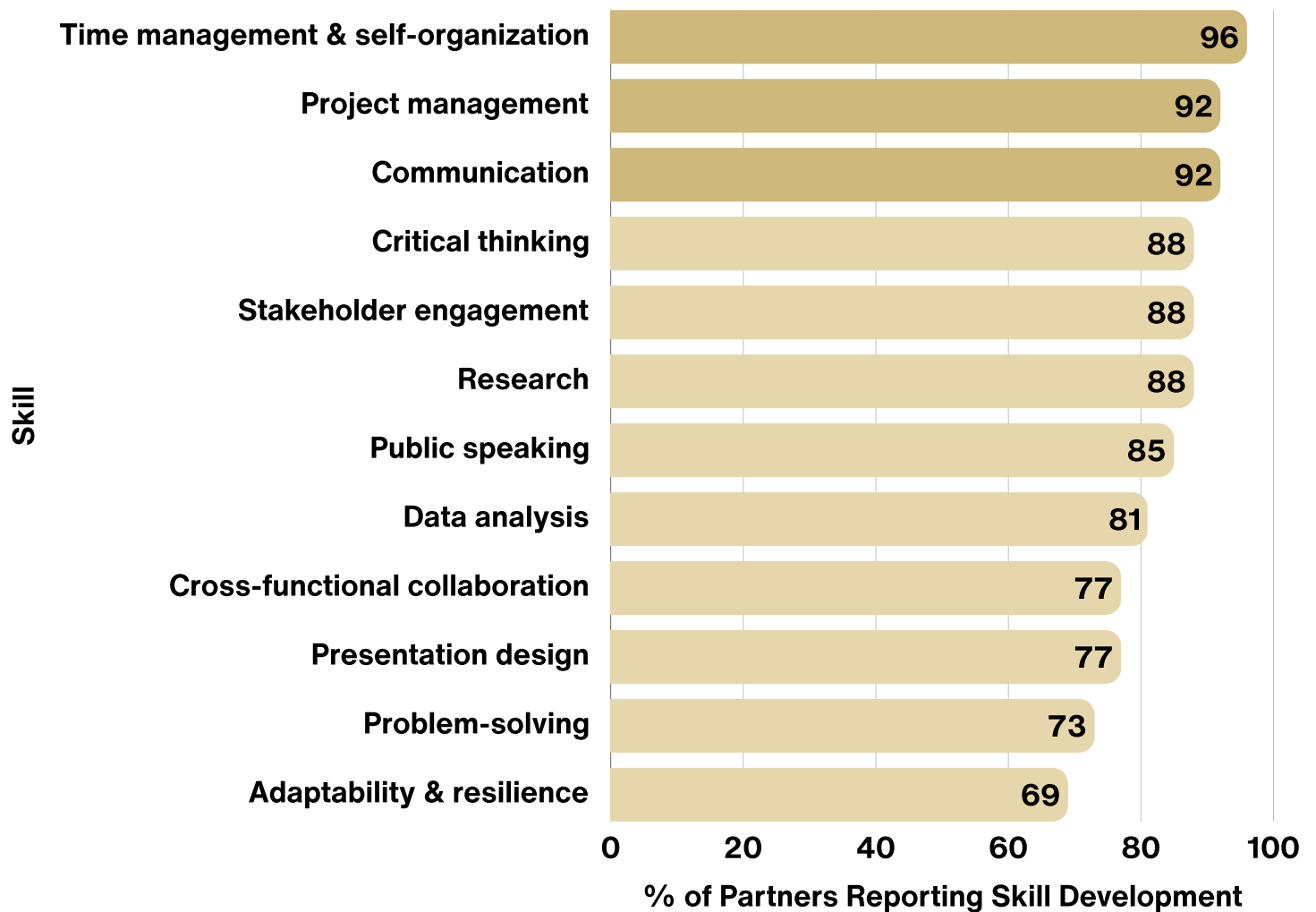
92%

24 out of 26 capstone partners completed this survey and are included in these stats

IMPACT ON STUDENTS

Beyond organizational and environmental impacts, Capstone Partners also reflected on the **skills students gained or strengthened** through their Capstone projects. These skills prepare students to be the next generation of leaders and **continue driving impact**. Key skills are highlighted below.

Top Skills Developed



Additional Skills Partners Reported

Strategic Planning • Leadership • Grant Writing • Industry Expertise • Data Visualization • GIS • Finance • Consulting • Financial Modeling • Technical Writing



IMPACT ON ORGANIZATIONS

100%

of capstone partners reported that the MENV capstone program effectively supported their organization's goals

Partners were asked how capstone projects supported their organization:



80%

Generated new ideas or innovations



73%

Supported data collection & analysis



73%

Informed organizational decisions

Partners reported projects had impact across multiple areas:

External Impact

19% Improved **community well being**

19% **Environmental/sustainability** benefits

19% Advanced **equity & inclusion** goals

23% Improved **resource efficiency** (e.g. reduced water, energy, material use)

Strategic Impact

43% Development of **sustainability policy or strategy**

54% Supported **new or strengthened partnerships**

Operational Impact

38% Increased **staff capacity**

42% Enhanced **communication materials**



IMPACT CATEGORIES

Impact Categories

To better capture the breadth of student work, this report organizes projects into **key impact categories** that reflect how capstone teams contribute to climate and sustainability outcomes. These categories provide a **consistent framework** for understanding how each capstone project drives measurable change. Definitions of impact categories are found below:



Resiliency

The ability of an ecosystem, society or business to anticipate, prepare for and respond to the impacts of climate change.



Decarbonization

The reduction and/or removal of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases from the atmosphere.



Conservation

Supporting the protection, restoration, and management of natural environments and the ecosystems they support.



Strategy

Supporting organizational strategy including planning and partnership development to advance and adapt to sustainability and climate priorities.



Community

Partnering or engaging with communities to develop inclusive and locally driven sustainability solutions.



Policy

Supporting development of regulations aimed at addressing the impacts of climate change and mitigating its effects.

*These categories are **not exhaustive**, but reflect the **core areas** of student impact*



CAPSTONE PARTNER HIGHLIGHTS

Each year, our Capstone program is made possible by an **incredible network of partners** whose **collaboration and mentorship** create meaningful learning opportunities for our students. **While every partner plays a vital role**, here are a few highlights from standout collaborations that reflect both the impact of this work and the lasting contributions students have made for these organizations.

Tanner Starbard

Chief Financial Officer, Mad Agriculture
Five-year Capstone Partner, MENV Alum



In 2025, MENV awarded the **Capstone Partner Recognition Award** to Tanner Starbard at Mad Agriculture. Mad Agriculture is a longtime partner supporting **regenerative and organic farming** through financial support, community-building, and hands-on work. Over multiple years, Capstone teams have contributed to projects like Haystack Farms, helping transition land from a former golf course into a regenerative agricultural system through stakeholder engagement, stewardship planning, and design strategies.

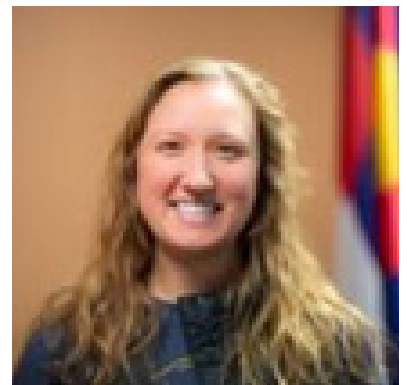
“It's amazing to see how this program is equipping students with skills to make **actionable change**.” -Tanner Starbard

Impact: Conservation, community

Tegan Ebbert

Deputy Town Manager, Town of Hayden
First time Capstone Partner

“Our Capstone team members were **exceptional**. They really dove into the project and showed ownership over their scope of work. I was able to assign a task to them and they consistently demonstrated that they could ask the critical questions to understand the request, complete the task, and **provide a quality deliverable without delay**. They really did help **lighten the load on staff and expand our capacity** which is not always easy to do in a temporary assignment situation.”



Impact: Policy, resiliency

CAPSTONE PARTNER HIGHLIGHTS



Samuel Masters

Coordinator, Campaigns, Protect Our Winters
First Time Capstone Partner, MENV Alum

“ Working with Lexi Sheehan, Sydney, and Angie on the ‘**Cost of Inaction**’ report was an **exceptional experience**. Their **ability to translate complex climate data into clear, compelling economic impacts** for communities, public lands, and the \$1.2 trillion Outdoor State was incredibly valuable. Their research was incredibly thorough, **engaging 80+ stakeholders** across sectors and producing a

*first-of-its-kind report that had **never been done before at this scale or depth**. This report will live on as an **enduring resource**, setting a precedent for the kind of rigorous economic arguments we can bring to the Hill and serving anyone working to advance smart, data-driven climate policy. **They didn’t just produce a report...they built a tool we actively use in our federal advocacy, strengthening our ability to engage policymakers with credible insights and making the case for action impossible to ignore.**”*



Impact: Policy, community

Mikkela Blanton

Associate Director, Development, OneEnergy Renewables
Returning Capstone Partner, MENV Alum

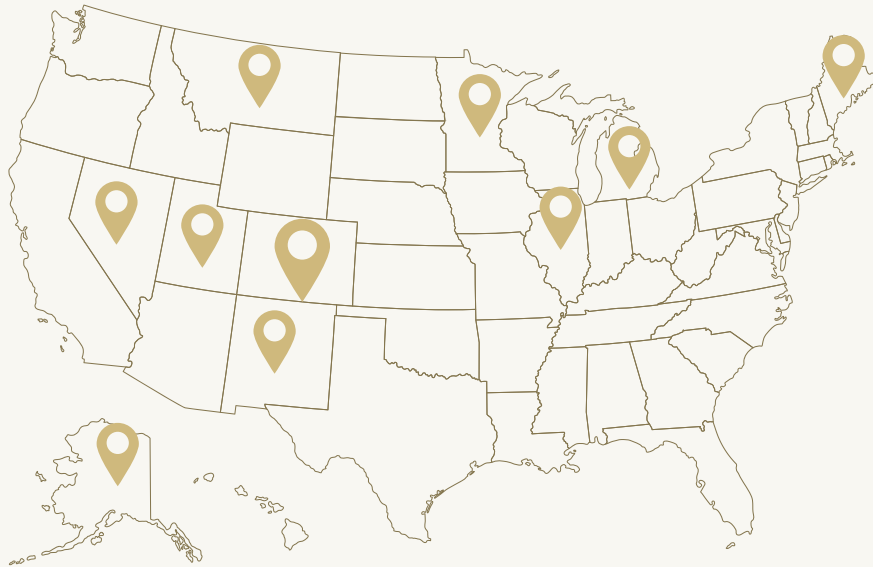
“ The Capstone team exceeded my expectations, delivering **innovative, data-driven work** on interconnection pathways that will **help our company explore new opportunities to accelerate decarbonization**. Mentoring the students while gaining such high-quality results was **incredibly rewarding**.



Impact: Decarbonization, resiliency

GEOGRAPHICAL IMPACT

National Impact



Projects with Impact Across 10+ States

Global Impact

This year, Capstone projects extended their impact **globally**. Global projects included:



Riverside Natural Foods

Environmental risk analysis

Impacts in Peru, Canada, United States, Pakistan, France, Cote d'Ivoire, Laos, and more



Frutura Produce

Evaluating social and environmental risks in Frutura's supply chain

Impacts in the United States and Latin America

Project Highlight: Riverside Natural Foods Ltd. (Home of MadeGood®)

Students:

Leah Glidden, Megan Chan, & Jonny Maier

Capstone partners:

Taylor Stanley and Shenali Madhanaroopan



This team assessed the environmental risk of Riverside's global organic value chain; evaluating **climate change, water scarcity, and biodiversity-related risks** across the top 90% of Riverside's strategic organic ingredients by volume. They then presented their findings in **Toronto, Canada**, touring the manufacturing facility and seeing firsthand how MadeGood® products are produced, packaged, and distributed, making their research more tangible.

"We had the opportunity to present our environmental risk assessment work directly to Riverside's teams; including **impact, packaging, and supply chain teams, as well as company leadership**. We pitched the 'why' or importance of this kind of work. One of the most meaningful outcomes of the project was seeing how the work could be used across multiple teams, from supply chain teams navigating upstream environmental risks, to finance teams understanding crop price volatility, to supporting Riverside's alignment with frameworks like CSRD and reinforcing their credibility as a B Corp and purpose-driven company. Our risk analysis also helps open conversations with suppliers about climate and environmental risks, creating opportunities for **education, collaboration, and on-the-ground mitigation strategies** to help build a **more resilient supply chain** over time."

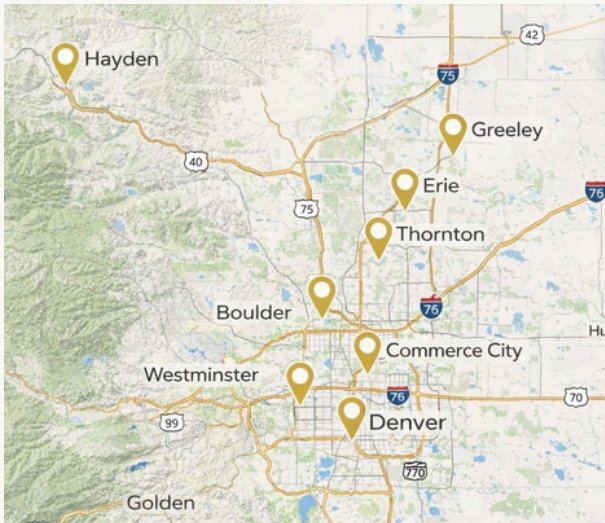


Impact: Resiliency, Strategy

GEOGRAPHICAL IMPACT

Impact in Colorado

This zoomed-in view of Colorado highlights cities **most significantly impacted** by the work of MENV Capstone teams. While **not limited to these areas**, these regions reflect where outcomes are **most concentrated or easily measured**.



Project Highlight: CU Boulder & NLR



This CU Boulder Team was advised by The **National Lab of the Rockies (NLR)**. Their project was centered on **community education** to promote **acceptance and understanding of hydrogen infrastructure**. In this photo the team can be seen doing a site visit at an electrolyzer at the NLR Flatirons campus.

Impact: Community, Decarbonization

Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) & CO Governor's Office of Climate Preparedness

Students:

Matt Carson, Ash Lehto, & Olivia Quagliani

This team combined **data analysis, community engagement, and field assessments** to advance equitable, climate-resilient urban forestry strategies. In **Commerce City**, capstone team member **Olivia Quagliani** is now helping translate this work directly into action. Her team at Commerce City is combining a recently completed tree inventory and assessment, as well as the work of this capstone team, to guide **future work around canopy expansion**. They will also have a dedicated **Sustainability Intern** focused on developing programs and policies to increase citywide tree coverage.

Fellow team member Ash Lehto will also continue the impact of this project, working as a Programs Assistant with the Urban and Community Forestry program within CSFS. In her role she will deliver **training, outreach, and technical assistance** to Colorado communities across Colorado.

Impact: Resiliency, Conservation

Capstone partners:

Carrie Tomlinson & Carolina Van Horn



Matt, Ash, and Olivia tabling at **Music in the Park** event in Commerce City to ask community members about their experiences and perspectives on trees in their neighborhoods.

TAKING A DEEPER LOOK



Capstone projects are driving measurable **impact across Colorado** by supporting communities, advancing sustainability initiatives, and delivering practical, real-world solutions. Here are just a few highlights:

Boulder County Farmers Market (BCFM)

Students:

Sam Cochran & Alexandra Rodriguez

Capstone partners:

Natalie Condon & Mackenzie Selke

This project supported the Boulder County Farmers' Market Food Hub in **strengthening partnerships** and **improving the producer experience across Colorado**. The team delivered practical tools and insights to enhance operations, support local producers, and **expand access to local food statewide**.



Capstone Advisor Damien Thompson shared: *“The work completed by the Boulder County Farmers Market Food Hub Capstone Team supports the mission of the food hub helping to create institutional partnerships, improve operations, engage with more households, creating greater financial resilience for years to come.”*

Impact: Resiliency, community

Z2 Entertainment, LLC

Students:

Haylee Grace, Nicholas Cordova, Lydia McElderry, & Mikey Jacobs

Capstone partners:

Cheryl Liguori & David Weingarden



Capstone Team presenting their work to the Z2 team at Boulder Theater

This team developed a **5-Year Sustainability Action Plan** for Z2 Entertainment, LLC and their Colorado based concert venues: **Boulder Theater** and **Fox Theater**. The team focused on decarbonization, waste and water audits, GHG emissions, benchmarking, etc. The team hit **major milestones** such as helping their partner secure a substantial grant from **Boulder County Partners for A Clean Environment (PACE)** for installation of a **heat pump** at Boulder Theater!

This is one of the many projects within the capstone program that emphasizes decarbonization. Read more about the program's decarbonization efforts [here!](#)

Impact: Decarbonization, strategy

TAKING A DEEPER LOOK



MENV students partner with Colorado communities to advance local sustainability and resilience initiatives. To read more about these partnerships, click [here!](#)

The Town of Erie

Students:

Stephany Correa-Diaz, Adam Arata, & Sean Lee

Capstone partners:

Eryka Thorley & Emma Marino

A major highlight this year was when the Town of Erie Capstone team partnered with Erie sustainability staff, and created the Town's first Resilience Action Plan (RAP). **The RAP was formally adopted by Erie Town Council in March 2026.**

Capstone partner Eryka Thorley shares; "**This plan will guide Erie in strategic investment in resilience building, identifying areas to research and explore moving forward, supported by a comprehensive vulnerability assessment.**"

Impact: Policy, resiliency



The Town of Hayden

Students:

Sam Krause, Brooke Miller & Demi Zuo

Capstone partner:

Tegan Ebbert

This year, the Town of Hayden Capstone team **directly informed the town's developing resiliency plan** through two major community engagement efforts. The first was **Hayden Daze**, the town's largest annual event, where the team introduced the plan, gathered community input, and led interactive activities to define resiliency.

The team also conducted a structured survey at the **Routt County Fair**, sharing results with the working group to ensure community voices were incorporated into the planning process.

Impact: Policy, resiliency



CAPSTONE EVENTS



Capstone Events highlight the **real-world impact** of our graduate students' work, showcasing **innovative, interdisciplinary** solutions while engaging broad audiences and equipping attendees with insights to **further their own impact**.

Design Workshop



The Capstone Design Workshop initiates the Capstone journey by **preparing projects for impact**. Through peer and faculty collaboration and feedback, teams sharpen their scopes, strengthen project goals, and build the foundation needed to deliver actionable, real-world solutions for their partner organizations.

Poster Session



The Capstone Poster Session amplified the impact of second-year MENV students, bringing together a broad audience to learn about student solutions to environmental and sustainability challenges. The event fostered reflection, sparked new ideas, and inspired continued impact beyond the classroom. The **Frutera Capstone team (Lexi Weintrob, Rajan Patel, & Sophia Angleton)** won the Audience Choice Award this year with multiple other teams receiving awards for excellence.

Symposium



The 2025 Capstone Symposium showcased the impact of all 26 Capstone Teams, highlighting innovative solutions developed throughout the year. With **over 500 attendees** in person and virtually, the event engaged students, partners, and the broader CU Boulder community across six presentation sessions.

The event included a keynote address by **U.S. Representative Joe Neguse**, who emphasized that **sustainability must remain front and center**, reaffirmed his commitment to the cause, and expressed confidence in the promising careers and lasting impact that lie ahead for the next generation of environmental leaders.

SHARING SOLUTIONS, DRIVING IMPACT

MENV Capstone students share their work with their **partners, professionals, and the broader community**, presenting research that informs policy, industry, and community action. Through conferences and events, **their impact extends well beyond the classroom.**

Professional Engagement Facts

100%

of capstone teams shared their work at professional events, and to professionals outside of the MENV program



Team Highlight: Front Range Native Plants



Two members of the Front Range Native Plants Capstone team (full team comprised of Erin Bucchin, Ilana Gipple, Jesse Stahl) presented their capstone project at the **Landscaping with Colorado Native Plants Conference at CSU Spur**, engaging with Native Plant Society members, researchers, and designers.



Their work supports Colorado's transition to native landscaping and sparked conversations around **HB26-1132**; a proposed bill to assess native plant availability statewide.

Impact : Conservation, policy

STUDENT PRESENTATION HIGHLIGHTS

City of Westminster

Student Team: Lindsay Knight, Tara Sullivan & Kate Williams | Partner: Bridger Tomlin



The City of Westminster team presented their work during an information session with **Mayor Claire Carmelia**, **Councilor Obi Ezeadi**, and **Councilor Adam Barajas**, in addition to the Sustainability Office team.

The team described their initiatives for Westminster, including code and licensing updates. **Bridger Tomlin**, (Sustainability Administrator and MENV Alum) discussed what his team has been working on for waste improvements following the MENV capstone project.



Impact: Policy, resiliency

Denver Office of Climate Action, Resiliency and Sustainability (CASR)

Student Team: Erin Spencer, Lisa Shi & Muriah Summer | Partner: Vince Fugetta



Erin from the CASR Capstone Team had the opportunity to present on her capstone work at **Mountain Towns 2030** in Breckenridge, CO as part of the **Building Local Government Capacity: Colorado Graduate Student Partnership Programs session**. The goal of the session was to spark new partnerships between mountain towns and graduate student programs like MENV so that students can contribute to meaningful work and provide added capacity on climate action projects.



Impact: Policy, decarbonization

Denver Department of Transportation and Infrastructure (DOTI)

Student Team: Monroe Roush & Kasha Eslami | Partner: Dana Hoffman



The DOTI team had the opportunity to present at **Switch**, presenting not directly on their Capstone project, but on a topic inspired by it: **embodied carbon in the public sector**. Through this presentation, the team leveraged their Capstone learnings to argue that **embodied carbon should be a greater focus in public sector infrastructure projects**. The Switch format also allowed the team to use their creativity to deliver both an engaging and compelling presentation.



Impact: Policy, decarbonization

FACULTY PRESENTATION HIGHLIGHTS

MENV Capstone was **on the road** in 2025-2026 as we shared insights and outcomes of our program across Colorado and beyond. Through **conference presentations and professional engagement**, faculty inspire other programs and translate insights into impact - informing policy, advancing industry practice, and supporting community-driven solutions.

Second Nature Climate Leadership Summit



Alice Reznickova and Joshua Radoff presented about the MENV program at **Second Nature Climate Leadership Summit** in Chicago. They shared insights on running a leading large- scale professional graduate program in sustainability and climate action that focuses on **industry-relevant skill development and real-world projects**.

Their insights highlighted how MENV's approach workforce-ready skill development is helping shape the next generation of climate leaders and influence how graduate programs prepare students for impact.

Impact: Strategy, community

Mountain Towns 2030

Alice Reznickova and Natalie Ooi presented on the CU Boulder MENV Capstone Program and **Rural Technical Assistance Program (RTAP)** at **Mountain Towns 2030**, highlighting how the programs support mountain communities in advancing sustainability and resilience goals. Their presentation explored how applied, community-based projects enable students to partner directly with municipalities to address real-world climate challenges. The session also featured **ICLEI USA's CORE program** through which graduate students (including three MENV students!) work with local governments in Colorado to advance sustainability.

Their insights demonstrated how MENV's hands-on, partnership-driven approach delivers **tangible outcomes** for communities, and equips students with the **practical skills** to become **leaders in local governments**.



Impact: Community, resilience

COLORADO CLIMATE WEEK



This year, MENV Capstone students, faculty, and Capstone Partners took the stage at **Colorado Climate Week**, sharing insights from their **applied research and actionable solutions** with leaders across government, industry, and community organizations.

Poster Sessions

CAPSTONE IN ACTION

The following capstone teams showcased their climate work in Colorado through their projects:



Z2 Entertainment, LLC

Sustainable entertainment & venue decarbonization

Student Team: Haylee Grace, Nicholas Cordova, Lydia McElderry, Mikey Jacobs



CASR

Community climate resilience & planning

Student Team: Muriah Summer, Erin Spencer, Lisa Shi



DOTI

Low-carbon infrastructure & materials

Student Team: Monroe Roush, Kasrah Eslami



Impact: Community, strategy

Panels

USING OUR VOICES

We shared climate solutions with industry leaders, highlighting the impact of Capstone work across Colorado. **Panelists included:**



Impact: Community, strategy

Jim Haensly (Student, Capstone with Colorado Electric Transmission Authority).

Ash Lehto (Student, Capstone with Colorado State Forest Service and the Colorado Governor's Office of Climate Preparedness)

Abigaile Purvis (MENV 25 Alum & Capstone Partner - Colorado Governor's Office of Climate Preparedness and Disaster Recovery).

Kami Collins (Capstone Partner, Colorado's Office of Economic Development and International Trade)

Moderator: Alice Reznickova (MENV Capstone Lead)

CU BOULDER SUSTAINABILITY SUMMIT

CU Boulder's Campus Sustainability Summit brought together student work, alumni leadership, campus climate action, and award-winning sustainability innovations from across campus. MENV had a strong presence throughout the event, highlighting the many ways MENV is **advancing sustainability across campus and beyond**. Many MENV students, alumni, and faculty showcased their work at the summit - **here are just a few highlights**.

MikeyJ Wins Sustainability Award

Congratulations to Mikey Jacobs, who received the **2026 Campus Sustainability Award** for Innovation for Sustainability for his work **bridging art, climate advocacy, clothing design, and sustainability within the music industry** - referencing his Capstone with **Z2 Entertainment**.

Through his design and consulting work, he **uses creative platforms to make climate conversations more accessible and engaging, helping connect environmental action with culture, storytelling, and community impact**.



Alumni Sustainability Career Panel

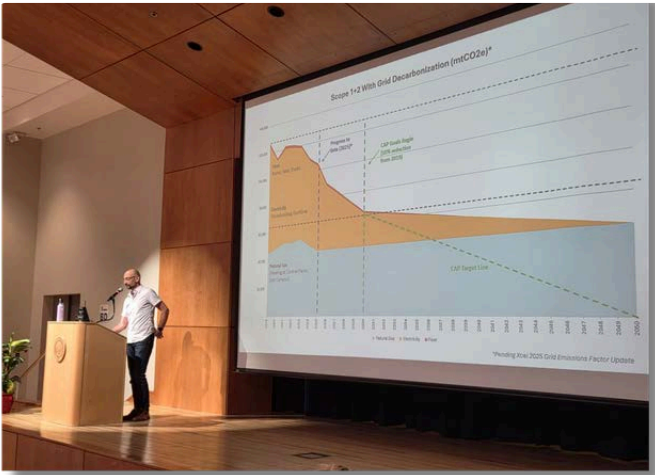


MENV alumni participated in a **panel on sustainability careers**, sharing professional experiences, industry trends, and practical advice for students entering the field.

The discussion **strengthened connections between current students and alumni** while highlighting the diverse career pathways MENV graduates pursue across climate, policy, consulting, and corporate sustainability. The panel also gave students valuable insight into navigating early career decisions and **building long-term impact in the sustainability field**.

CU BOULDER SUSTAINABILITY SUMMIT

Campus Climate Action with Josh Radoff



Joshua Radoff, CU Boulder's **Director of Campus Climate Action, Sustainability and Resilience** as well as the **Renewable and Sustainable energy Specialization Lead** and Capstone Advisor in the MENV program shared insights on CU Boulder's **Scope 1 and 2 emissions**, campus decarbonization strategies, and the university's **long-term path toward net zero**.

His presentation helped attendees better understand how emissions tracking, operational planning, and institutional climate commitments work together to **drive measurable sustainability outcomes**.

Alumni Impact Spotlight

We had the chance to catch up with alumni Josefina Hajek-Herrera at the Campus Sustainability Expo and hear how she's carried her capstone work into her career:

“ My capstone focused on transitioning local government consumption from a linear to a circular economy through the development of a Sustainable and Circular Public Procurement framework, in partnership with **ICLEI USA**. Using the framework, after graduating, I continued working with our partners at ICLEI USA to further advance this work by co-teaching their **2025 Sustainable Public Procurement Cohort** to promote tools, conversations, and develop strategies that drive **social and economic benefits for communities**, including social inclusion, local innovation, decreased life cycle costs, and decreased emissions.

I now transitioned to work with the **SPIKE Center for Sustainability Education** at CU, where I enjoy supporting student-led sustainability initiatives and help expand the reach and impact of projects through engagement and community building! ”



CAREERS THROUGH CAPSTONE

Sarah Nick | Boulder Valley School District



After graduating from MENV in Spring 2025, **Sarah Nick** has been continuing the work of her capstone project as she transitioned into a role with the **Boulder Valley School District**.

As BVSD's Sustainability and Energy Analyst, she presented at the **USGBC Center for Green Schools' Facilities Leadership Summit** in San Diego about the decarbonization goals that she set with Ryan Brown and Andrew Neely during Capstone 2024 and **gave the capstone program a shout out during her talk!**

“ *It's been incredibly rewarding to build upon the work that my capstone team completed in 2024. This plan isn't sitting on a shelf -- I'm actively using it to influence the next five years of sustainability at BVSD, and **that work will impact our entire community.*** ”

Impact: Decarbonization, community

Kaylie Larson Accepts Job with Capstone Partner

Congratulations to Kaylie Larson, who accepted a full-time position as a **Senior Associate in Commercial Strategy** with her Capstone Partner, **OneEnergy Renewables**.



“ *My goal in returning to grad school was to transition into renewable energy development, and MENV's capstone program made that possible. Working with OneEnergy gave me hands-on experience in the technical, financial, and regulatory sides of solar development. When I joined the origination team full-time, I was able to hit the ground running. **I wouldn't be where I am today without the support of my Advisor, my Capstone Partner, and the program itself.*** ”

Impact: Decarbonization, resiliency

CAPSTONE TEAMS 2025

OneEnergy Renewables (OER)

New Strategy Analysis for Utility-Scale Solar Development

Student Team: Annika Cederstrand, Casey Chabot & Kaylie Larson

Advised by: Joshua Radoff | **Capstone Partner:** Mikkela Blanton

About OneEnergy: OER is a Public Benefit Corporation that develops community and utility-scale solar energy projects and aims to fight climate change by making clean energy the primary source of electricity for consumers and utilities.



Capstone Project Brief: This team partnered with OneEnergy Renewables to evaluate two solar development strategies designed to accelerate project deployment by reducing interconnection delays. The team analyzed utility tariffs, conducted site and load modeling, performed financial analysis, and identified high-potential opportunities across the two strategies. Their work provides a strategic roadmap for scaling solar deployment by bypassing interconnection bottlenecks, reducing costs, and enabling faster integration of clean energy into the grid. They also delivered a targeted pipeline of high-potential customers and sites to support near-term project development.

Impact: Decarbonization, strategy

Third Derivative

Accelerating Climate Innovation in the Built Environment

Student Team: David Forest, Nate Reynolds, Owen Wilson & Cole Thompson

Advised by: Joshua Radoff | **Capstone Partner:** Lindsay Rasmussen

About Third Derivative: Third Derivative is an open, collaborative climate tech ecosystem that accelerates startups and moves markets.

Capstone Project Brief: The Third Derivative Capstone Team focused on accelerating climate tech adoption in the building sector, which accounts for nearly 40% of global emissions. The team conducted over 40 stakeholder interviews and combined insights with market research to identify levers for startup success. Deliverables included databases of pilot-ready firms and supportive cities, a summary of sector challenges with actionable strategies, and analysis of how cities help de-risk and scale startups. These findings provide Third Derivative and its portfolio companies with intelligence and opportunities to advance decarbonization solutions.

Impact: Decarbonization, strategy



CAPSTONE TEAMS 2025

Mad Agriculture Haystack Farms

Student Team: Sam Romero, Jamillah Touré, Joe Bousamra & Joe Mitchem
Advised by: Damien Thompson | **Capstone Partners:** Tanner Starbard & Clark Harshbarger

About Mad Agriculture: Mad Agriculture is a nonprofit organization working to transform agriculture by supporting farmers in adopting regenerative practices that improve soil health, biodiversity, and climate resilience through financing, education, and innovative agricultural partnerships.



Capstone Project Brief: This Capstone project supported Haystack Farms and Mad Agriculture in transforming the former Haystack Golf Course into a productive, ecologically sustainable farm. The team designed regenerative pasture, orchard, and pollinator landscapes, developed grant proposals, and hosted community events engaging over 165 participants, delivering practical recommendations to enhance biodiversity, soil health, and long-term community engagement.

Impact: Conservation, community

Frutura

Evaluating Social and Environmental Risks in Frutura's Global Supply Chain

Student Team: Lexi Weintrob, Rajan Patel & Sophia Angleton
Advised by: Meghan McCarroll | **Capstone Partners:** Rachel Bigby & Jesse Last

About Frutura: Frutura is a global fruit sales and marketing platform that connects growers, packers, and marketers to supply premium produce year-round while emphasizing sustainability and resilient supply chains.

Capstone Project Brief: The Frutura Capstone Team assessed key social and environmental risks across Frutura's operations and supply chain, which spans seven business units in Chile, Colombia, Peru, Mexico, Uruguay, and the U.S. The team gathered and organized site data, calculated inherent social, water and biodiversity risk scores, mapped suppliers and operations in ArcGIS, and identified geographic hotspots. Deliverables, including GIS maps, an ArcGIS StoryMap, and recommendations, provide Frutura with a risk analysis framework to guide site-specific assessments, strengthen supply-chain management, and improve long-term resilience.



Impact: Resiliency, strategy

CAPSTONE TEAMS 2025

Riverside Natural Foods

Future-Proofing Organics: A Strategic Environmental Risk and Resilience Framework for Riverside Natural Foods

Student Team: Jonny Maier, Leah Glidden & Megan Chan

Advised by: Joel Hartter | **Capstone Partners:** Taylor Stanley & Shenali Madhanaroopan

About Riverside Natural Foods: Riverside Natural Foods is a Toronto-based organic food company, known for its Made Good snacks, that provides high-quality ingredients globally while integrating environmental, social, and business resilience to support long-term sustainability.



Capstone Project Brief: This team worked with Riverside Natural Foods to strengthen their global organic supply chain and advance sustainable, climate-resilient practices. The project assessed climate, water, and biodiversity risks, identified high-priority hotspots, and delivered actionable insights that improved sourcing decisions, supplier engagement, and long-term environmental impact. Deliverables included an Environmental and Business Risk Matrix, a comprehensive Environmental Risk Report, and interactive Tableau dashboards for informed decision-making.

Impact: Resiliency, strategy

Aspen Global Change Institute (AGCI)

Snow Metrics and Water Management in the Colorado River Basin

Student Team: Andrew Fant, Colin Kinsman & Rachael Stein

Advised by: Gregor MacGregor | **Capstone Partner:** Tanya Petach

About ACGI: ACGI is a nonprofit that brings together researchers and practitioners to develop collaborative solutions helping societies understand, mitigate, and adapt to global change.

Capstone Project Brief: This Capstone team examined how hydrological data inform water management strategies across the Colorado River Headwaters, where variability in snowpack, precipitation, and temperature strongly affects water availability. Using a participatory mixed-methods approach, the team conducted 39 interviews with municipal, conservation, and resource professionals to identify key data sources, metrics, and unmet needs. The project emphasizes translating hydrological data into practical applications to support decision-makers in a changing climate.

Impact: Resiliency, conservation



CAPSTONE TEAMS 2025

Stratifyx, Inc.

Leveraging Software to Support Nature Based Solutions in Land Development

Student Team: Dominic Corradino, Lauren Fellner & Lexy Schmeider

Advised by: Brian Kennedy | **Capstone Partner:** Sara Clow, Chris Melançon & Jason Carlson

About Stratifyx: Stratifyx is an early-stage software company that helps architecture, engineering, and construction clients optimize land use and deliver nature-based solutions using data-driven modeling, scenario planning, and cost-saving algorithms to support environmental protection and revitalization



Capstone Project Brief: The Stratifyx team helped the company reach the right customers and promote its nature-based solutions for land development. They created a customer guide, marketing materials, and a practical toolkit showing how projects can save money and benefit the environment. These resources give Stratifyx a stronger presence in the industry and help clients see both financial and environmental value.

Impact: Strategy, conservation

Colorado Water Trust (CWT)

Restoring Flows in Urban Colorado

Student Team: Caleb Cullen, Chelsea Perts & Gisela Merino-Soler

Advised by: Meghan McCarroll | **Capstone Partner:** Josh Boissevain

About CWT: CWT is a nonprofit that protects and restores Colorado stream flows using market-based approaches, preserving ecological, recreational, and community values by keeping water instream rather than diverting it for consumptive use.

Capstone Project Brief: This team supported the CWT in understanding and protecting urban streamflows across Colorado's growing cities. Using a combination of community engagement, literature review, surveys, watershed events, and GIS analysis, the team identified how urban waterways are used and valued and where low-flow conditions most threaten ecological, recreational, and social benefits. Deliverables provide CWT with insights to inform integrated, multi-benefit urban stream management, strengthen drought-resilience planning, and align community priorities with Colorado's Water Plan to guide collaborative and climate-resilient urban water strategies.

Impact: Resiliency, conservation



CAPSTONE TEAMS 2025

Audubon Rockies

The Landscape of River Restoration in Colorado

Student Team: Leah Bilski, Josie Rivero & Pearl McLeod

Advised by: Karen Bailey | **Capstone Partner:** Nathan Boyer-Rechlin & Abby Burk

About Audubon Rockies: [Audubon Rockies](#), serving Colorado, Wyoming, and Utah, uses science, outreach, and policy to protect birds, connect communities with nature, conserve working lands, and restore rivers and wetlands in the region.



Capstone Project Brief: This team examined the growing use of Low-Tech Process-Based Restoration (LTPBR) to restore degraded streams and riparian ecosystems across Colorado. Through a statewide survey of restoration practitioners, the team assessed restoration activities, stakeholder collaboration, funding sources, and the perceived impacts of Senate Bill 23-270 on project implementation. The findings highlight increasing momentum for LTPBR while identifying opportunities to expand education, funding access, and coordination to support resilient riverscapes across the state.

Impact: Conservation, policy

New Mexico (NM) Acequia Association

Protecting Traditional Acequia Irrigation Rights Through Real Estate Disclosure Requirements

Student Team: Jennie Lynch & Tati Eldridge

Advised by: Gregor MacGregor | **Capstone Partners:** Aaron Villalpando, Paul Garcia & Vidal Gonzales

About NM Acequia Association. [NM Acequia Association](#) is a nonprofit network representing traditional acequia systems across NM, supporting communal water governance, land stewardship, education, and advocacy to preserve acequia culture, water rights, and sustainability.

Capstone Project Brief: This team supported the NM Department of Justice, NM Acequia Association, and Acequia Commission in developing strategies to protect traditional acequia irrigation systems and member rights. The team drafted the Acequia Disclosure Act, recommending property disclosures and pathways for community engagement, outreach, and professional education. Deliverables, including a legislative draft, disclosure framework, and engagement recommendations, provide acequia communities with tools to safeguard communal water governance and ensure new landowners participate in stewarding these historic systems.



Impact: Policy, community

CAPSTONE TEAMS 2025

Z2 Entertainment

Greening the Gig: Building a Sustainability Action Plan

Student Team: Haylee Grace, Lydia McElderry, MikeyJ & Nicholas Cordova

Advised by: Mara Rose | **Capstone Partners:** Cheryl Liguori & David Weingarden

About Z2 Entertainment: Z2 Entertainment is a live music and event company known for producing concerts nationwide, with a reputation for high-quality experiences and a growing focus on sustainability.



Capstone Project Brief: This Capstone team developed a 5-year Sustainability Action Plan for Z2 Entertainment to reduce environmental impact and boost community engagement. The team audited waste, water, and GHG emissions, benchmarked energy use, surveyed patrons, and researched best practices. Key outcomes include electrifying HVAC systems (e.g., heat pump at the Boulder Theater reducing natural gas GHGs ~6%), improved waste diversion, sustainability communications, and financial modeling for rebates. A companion website toolkit helps other venues adopt sustainability practices and prepare for future regulations.

Impact: Decarbonization, strategy

Buttnski

Buttnski Upcycle and Recycle Program

Student Team: Ashe Orr, Devon Campbell & Kamea Merkouris

Advised by: Natalie Ooi & William Shutkin | **Capstone Partner:** Kelly Mazanti

About Buttnski: Buttnski is a Summit County, Colorado-based, woman-owned outdoor lifestyle apparel company. Their brand values are rooted in community, making high quality garments, social and environmental responsibility, and FUN.

Capstone Project Brief: A previous Capstone team working with Buttnski was tasked with creating a Sustainability Strategic Plan (SP) that worked to hone the brand's vision, vision, and values. As the second phase of the project, the 2025 Capstone Team was focused on circularity specifically and creating a related SP and Media Engagement Plan (MEP) to effectively communicate findings. The team worked through two main phases including a research and framework development phase, as well as a SP and MEP Recommendation Phase. The project objectives were to understand circularity in the apparel industry, and establish a brand-specific definition of circularity.



Impact: Community, strategy

CAPSTONE TEAMS 2025

Town of Erie

Resilience Action Plan Development

Student Team: Adam Arata, Sean Lee & Stephany Correa-Diaz

Advised by: Leslie Blood | **Capstone Partners:** Emma Marino & Eryka Thorley

About Town of Erie: Town of Erie is a northern Colorado municipality focused on delivering quality public services, promoting community engagement, and supporting sustainable development and local economic growth.



Capstone Project Brief: The Town of Erie capstone team created a Resilience Action Plan for the Town. Students conducted a review of Erie's plans as well as sustainability plans in the United States, then completed a vulnerability assessment to analyze the Town's main climate risks and impacts. Over the course of four months, the team curated interactive activities for Town events, such as Farmers Markets and the Erie Town Fair, to learn about residents' opinions on resilience and inform the plan. They also interviewed community partners about key strategies that would best support Erie. The team also collaborated with the Erie Communications Department to create a final design that complied with digital accessibility guidelines.

Impact: Policy, resiliency

Denver Department of Transportation and Infrastructure (DOTI)

Advancing Denver's Transportation and Infrastructure through Climate-Focused Target Setting and Tracking

Student Team: Kasrah Eslami & Monroe Roush

Advised by: Taber Ward | **Capstone Partner:** Dana Hoffman

About DOTI: Denver's Department of Transportation & Infrastructure (DOTI) is a modern agency focused on increasing mobility and safety while reducing congestion and fighting climate change.

Capstone Project Brief: This team supported DOTI in aligning its capital projects with the city's net-zero greenhouse gas goals. The team inventoried 99 planned projects, analyzed sustainability opportunities using the Envision Framework, and recommended tracking tools to measure emissions from materials like concrete, asphalt, and steel. Deliverables, including an Excel-based tracking tool and an Action Plan, provide DOTI with practical guidance to integrate sustainability into project planning, monitor emissions, and advance climate-focused infrastructure decision-making.

Impact: Decarbonization, resiliency



CAPSTONE TEAMS 2025

Town of Hayden

The Hayden Resiliency Project

Student Team: Brooke Miller, Samuel Krause & Yihui Zuo

Advised by: Gregor MacGregor | **Capstone Partners:** Tegan Ebber & Mathew Mendisco

About Town of Hayden: The Town of Hayden is a small Colorado community focused on sustainable growth, environmental stewardship, and resilient planning to support long-term community well-being.



Capstone Project Brief: This Capstone Team focused on integrating resiliency principles into the Town's planning framework, addressing rapid growth, environmental risks, and community well-being. The project included updating Development Code, reviewing environmental and infrastructure systems, developing a Community Health Assessment and Action Plan, modeling financial growth impacts, and engaging the community through surveys, site visits, and public events. Deliverables provided the Town with actionable strategies, tools, and data to guide sustainable growth, enhance environmental and public health resilience, and support long-term fiscal stability, strengthening the community's ability to manage development while maintaining quality of life.

Impact: Resiliency, policy

Colorado Electric Transmission Authority (CETA)

Long Duration Energy Storage in Colorado

Student Team: Chris Hendrick, Jim Haensley & Rai Sparks

Advised by: Derek Fehrer | **Capstone Partner:** Maury Galbraith

About CETA: CETA is a state-level organization focused on developing and managing electric transmission infrastructure across Colorado, supporting reliable energy delivery, grid resilience, and the integration of renewable energy sources.

Capstone Project Brief: This team presented findings to the Colorado Electric Transmission Authority board on the role of Long Duration Energy Storage (LDES) in enhancing transmission utilization, grid reliability, flexibility, and renewable integration. Their analysis resulted in recommendations to inform CETA's investment and policy decisions to support clean energy deployment across Colorado and the Western grid.



Impact: Decarbonization, strategy

CAPSTONE TEAMS 2025

Boomtown Innovation

Sustainable Cities Innovation Platform

Student Team: Anna Brooks, Danniell Tigeros & Riyansh Jain

Advised by: William Shutkin | **Capstone Partners:** Tripp Baltz & Toby Krout

About Boomtown Innovation: Boomtown Innovation is a Colorado-based nonprofit that supports entrepreneurs and startups by providing mentorship, resources, and programming to accelerate the growth of innovative ventures and foster a vibrant local business ecosystem.



Capstone Project Brief: This Capstone team supported Boomtown Innovation in exploring opportunities for early-stage urban sustainability companies. The team conducted literature reviews, interviews, and surveys to map the “Innovator’s Journey” across buildings, energy, mobility, and water, identifying barriers such as funding gaps, policy uncertainty, high infrastructure costs, and limited public-sector engagement. Deliverables included actionable recommendations for Boomtown to identify adopters and funding, strengthen partnerships, and address staffing gaps to better support startups entering urban sustainability markets.

Impact: Decarbonization, strategy

Front Range Native Plants

Regionally-Native Greenhouse Feasibility Study

Student Team: Erin Bucchin, Ilana Gipple & Jesse Stahl

Advised by: Damien Thompson

About Front Range Native Plants: Front Range Native Plants is a self-organized group of students with a common interest in supporting Colorado’s resilient landscapes.

Capstone Project Brief: The Front Range Native Plants team interviewed and surveyed 190 stakeholders to assess the impacts of new Colorado turf replacement and water conservation policies on the Front Range landscaping industry. To do this, they combined qualitative and quantitative data to conduct a feasibility assessment for the construction of a wholesale regionally native plant nursery in Boulder County, considering ArcGIS Pro suitability indicators, policy implications, proximity to stakeholders, and existing barriers to increasing supply and demand of regionally native plants. Deliverables included a replicable Stakeholder Engagement Plan to assist future researchers in continuing and/or expanding this research, a Feasibility Report which outlines their methods, results, key takeaways for the industry, future recommendations, and a list of planting recommendations of regionally native plants to Colorado’s Front Range region.



Impact: Conservation, policy

CAPSTONE TEAMS 2025

Boulder County Farmer's Market (BCFM) Food Hub Strengthening Boulder County's Local Food Future

Student Team: Alexandra Rodriguez & Sam Cochrane

Advised by: Damien Thompson | **Capstone Partner:** Natalie Condon & Mackenzie Sehlke

About Boulder County Farmers Markets Food Hub: Boulder County Farmers Markets Food Hub is a local food distribution initiative connecting Boulder-area farmers, producers, and consumers through a year-round marketplace, supporting local agriculture, reducing food miles, and expanding access to fresh, nutritious, and ethically produced food.



Capstone Project Brief: This Capstone Project supported the Boulder County Farmers Markets (BCFM) Food Hub in expanding institutional partnerships and enhancing the producer experience. Through stakeholder interviews, field visits, and workflow observations, the team identified communication gaps, operational needs, and opportunities to improve predictability for both producers and buyers. The project delivered practical tools including an Institutional Partner Toolkit, Vendor Resource Guide, Grant Matrix, SWOT Analysis, and GIS StoryMap to strengthen the Hub's operations, support local producers, increase access to local food, and bolster long-term sustainability for Boulder County's food system.

Impact: Resiliency, community

National Sustainable Agriculture Association Strengthening Conservation Compliance

Student Team: Audrey Reininger, Emery Fontenot & Lauren Connolly

Advised by: Alice Reznickova | **Capstone Partner:** Becky Schewe

About National Sustainable Agriculture Association: National Sustainable Agriculture Association is a U.S.-based nonprofit advocacy group representing farmers, ranchers, and grassroots organizations, promoting federal policies that support sustainable agriculture, conserve soil and water, strengthen rural communities, and advance resilient, equitable, and sustainable food systems.

Capstone Project Brief: This team examined how federal conservation compliance programs from the 1985 Farm Bill could be strengthened by lessons from state-level soil, wetland, and water quality programs and farmer experiences. Deliverables included a state policy database, a farmer interview summary, and an interactive ArcGIS StoryMap. Key findings highlighted gaps in wetlands and highly erodible land programs, inconsistent USDA communication, and opportunities to raise awareness, evaluate state policies for federal use, and expand coverage to all farmland in USDA programs.



Impact: Conservation, policy

CAPSTONE TEAMS 2025

Protect Our Winters (POW) The Cost of Inaction

Student Team: Angie Balish, Lexi Sheehan & Sydney Paschall

Advised by: William Shutkin & Natalie Ooi | **Capstone Partner:** Samuel Masters

About POW: POW is a U.S.-based nonprofit that mobilizes the outdoor sports community to take action on climate change, advocating for policies and initiatives that protect winter ecosystems, reduce carbon emissions, and ensure the long-term health of mountains, snowpack, and outdoor recreation.



Capstone Project Brief: This project examines the rising economic costs of climate-driven natural disasters and their growing strain on federal, state, and local budgets. Through stakeholder interviews and extensive research, the team developed *The Cost of Inaction* to highlight how climate risks threaten the \$1.2 trillion outdoor recreation economy and broader economic stability. The work emphasizes that proactive investment in clean energy and grid resilience can reduce long-term costs, strengthen communities, and create more stable revenue streams. Deliverables include a comprehensive research report and a targeted policy brief designed to support effective climate advocacy and decision-making.

Impact: Policy, community

City of Westminster

Planning Waste Diversion Initiatives for the City of Westminster

Student Team: Kate Williams, Lindsay Knight & Tara Sullivan

Advised by: Leslie Blood | **Capstone Partners:** Bridger Tomlin & Jamie Gott

About City of Westminster: City of Westminster is a Colorado municipality that provides public services, promotes community engagement, and supports sustainable growth, economic development, and quality of life for residents and businesses.

Capstone Project Brief: This Capstone team supported the City of Westminster in exploring strategies to increase residential and construction and demolition waste diversion. Through research, 20 expert interviews, and a survey of over 200 households, the team assessed current practices, benchmarked peer cities, and identified community preferences. Deliverables including a Data Tracking Report, Residential and C&D Reports, and a Producer Responsibility Program memo provide actionable recommendations for waste tracking, community engagement, diversion requirements, and policy implementation, helping Westminster set measurable targets, enhance operations, and prepare for the statewide Producer Responsibility Program.



Impact: Policy, resiliency

CAPSTONE TEAMS 2025

CU Boulder, advised by National Laboratory of the Rockies Enhancing Community Acceptance of Hydrogen Fuel & Infrastructure

Student Team: Cass Mendoza, Peyton Furr & Shefali Chandra

Advised by: Brian Kennedy | **Capstone Partners:** William Buttner, Genevieve Saur, Olivia Robinson & Logan Martens

About the National Laboratory of the Rockies (NLR): NLR is a U.S. Department of Energy national laboratory based in Colorado dedicated to advancing renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies.



Capstone Project Brief: This project explored how to build community acceptance for hydrogen fuel and infrastructure along Colorado's I-25 corridor. Through background research, stakeholder engagement, and on-the-ground outreach across North Denver, the team identified key barriers including safety concerns, low awareness, and trust gaps. Findings highlight the importance of clear, accessible communication and partnerships with trusted local organizations to improve public confidence in hydrogen technologies. Deliverables include an outreach guide, case study report, and engagement materials designed to support future hydrogen deployment efforts and community-informed clean energy transitions.

Impact: Decarbonization, policy

Denver's Climate Action, Sustainability, and Resiliency Office (CASR)

Electrifying Denver's Neighborhoods

Student Team: Lisa Shi, Erin Spencer & Muriah Summer

Advised by: Josh Radoff | **Capstone Partner:** Vince Fuggetta

About CASR: CASR leads Denver's efforts to reduce pollution, invest in clean energy, and build climate resilience. CASR uses the Climate Protection Fund to protect residents from climate impacts and ensure a sustainable future.

Capstone Project Brief: This team partnered with CASR to translate climate goals into actionable strategies for neighborhood-scale electrification. Supporting Colorado House Bill 24-1370, the team analyzed state policies, utility proceedings, and existing programs, developed neighborhood profiles for five potential pilot sites, surveyed over 200 residents on electrification awareness and interest, and produced a comprehensive 70-page report with recommendations and supporting research to guide CASR's decarbonization efforts. Their work provides a clear roadmap for implementing pilot projects that reduce reliance on the natural gas system while engaging communities in the transition to cleaner energy.

Impact: Decarbonization, policy



CAPSTONE TEAMS 2025

Colorado State Forest Service & Governor's Office of Climate Preparedness

Growing Resilience in the Face of Extreme Heat in Colorado Through Community-Informed, Data-Driven Urban Forestry

Student Team: Ash Lehto, Matt Carson & Olivia Quagliani

Advised by: Alice Reznickova | **Capstone Partners:** Carrie Tomlinson, Jonathan Asher & Carolina Van Horn

About CFSF & Governor's Office: CSFS and the Governor's Office of Climate Preparedness work together to manage and protect Colorado's forests, reduce wildfire risk, and build climate resilience. They provide guidance, resources, and programs that support sustainable forest management, disaster preparedness, and statewide strategies to address climate impacts and safeguard communities. engagement, and supporting sustainable development and local economic growth.



Capstone Project Brief: This team focused on identifying communities that would benefit most from an expanded urban tree canopy as a strategy to mitigate the impacts of extreme heat. The project consisted of a statewide analysis of communities, looking at tree canopy coverage and anticipated changes in temperature. The student team also conducted in-depth analyses of multiple communities to better understand the barriers residents face in obtaining and maintaining trees, as well as the motivations and messaging that can effectively encourage long-term tree care.

Impact: Resiliency, conservation

Boulder Watershed Collective (BWC)

The Social and Ecological Consideration for Beaver Coexistence and Relocation Along the Front Range

Student Team: Jack Carter, Colin McDonald & Amanda Opp

Advised by: Meghan McCarroll | **Capstone Partners:** Erin Fried & Preston Brown

About BWC: BWC fills gaps between residents, experts, and agencies to advance climate preparedness and restore watershed health.

Capstone Project Brief: This team partnered with BWC to assess the social and ecological considerations of beaver coexistence and relocation along Colorado's Front Range. Using a mixed-methods approach - including literature review, ecological monitoring design, key informant interviews, and a survey of 40 agency representatives - the team evaluated current management practices, perceptions, and barriers to coexistence. They developed an ecological monitoring framework, actionable recommendations, and a public-facing StoryMap to support data sharing and stakeholder engagement. Their work informs both BWC's program strategy and Colorado Parks & Wildlife's Beaver Management Strategy, advancing nature-based solutions that enhance watershed resilience while addressing human-wildlife conflict.

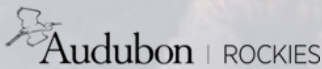


Impact: Resiliency, conservation

A SINCERE THANK YOU

To our 2025 Capstone Partners, **thank you** for your continued **collaboration** and **commitment** to this program. Our program would not be where it is today without your partnership, and the **impact we are able to achieve each year** would not be possible without your ongoing **support, knowledge, and engagement.**

Your willingness to share **real-world challenges**, **provide guidance**, and **invest in student learning** creates meaningful, applied experiences that extend far beyond the classroom. Together, we are driving **tangible outcomes** and advancing **sustainability solutions** that benefit communities, organizations, and the broader environment.



CAPSTONE ADVISORS

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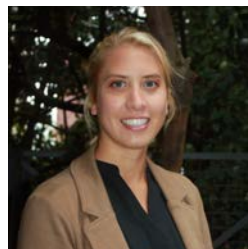
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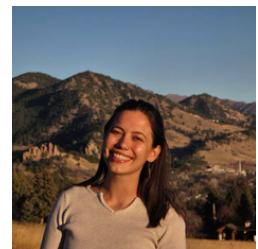
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