

Alaska

On January 28, Governor Mike Dunleavy (R-AK) delivered his seventh State of the State address focusing his remarks on the development of Alaska's natural resources. He said that his administration would be introducing legislation to ensure a competitive permitting process that attracts professional talent and allows them to work quickly. Dunleavy highlighted several energy projects including the Dixon Diversion project, a \$342M expansion of Bradley Lake, which is the largest hydroelectric facility in the State. He said the project would benefit 75% of the State's population, create 3,250 jobs during construction, and have a total economic output of \$584M. In his budget, Dunleavy requested \$6.5M for the completion of engineering, design, permitting, and geological studies for the project.

Arizona

On January 13, Governor Katie Hobbs (D-AZ) delivered her third State of the State address, emphasizing her commitment to continuing strong economic growth, lowering costs, keeping communities safe, securing the border, healthcare, and access to water. She highlighted the urgent need for action due to over-pumping and dwindling groundwater supplies. She highlighted historic water rights settlements with Tribal Nations, the creation of the Water Policy Council and the Assured Water Supply Program, and the recent designation of the Willcox Groundwater Basin and Management Area. She said: "I will never stop fighting for our water rights, because access to water is fundamental to preserving the Arizona Promise. Whether that means combating federal overreach, out-of-state interests, or exploitation from big corporations that hurt local farmers, securing our water future is essential to preserving our way of life. Whether it's our use of canals and dams to provide water to millions of people... or the passage of the visionary Groundwater Management Act... or the hard work of farmers, ranchers, Tribal nations and the men and women of the Arizona Department of Water Resources, we have always led the nation in water innovation and conservation."

Hobbs affirmed her commitment to "defending Arizona's rightful share of the Colorado River." She said: "I'm proud to have secured a deal that protects Arizonans from forced cuts to our water use through 2026, but the deadline is close and we have more to do. The solutions to our water challenges won't come from Washington, D.C. They will come from Western states working together, not against each other." On the same day, Hobbs released her budget request for FY2026, which included \$3M for a newly created Colorado River Litigation Fund to defend Arizona's interests and water users who depend on the state's precious Colorado River water, and \$30M to the General Fund for wildfire suppression.

California

On January 10, Governor Gavin Newsom (D-CA) released his budget proposal for FY2026. The budget proposes \$2.7B for the first year of a multi-year expenditure plan to implement the \$10B Climate Bond (Proposition 4) authorized by voters in November. The budget proposes bond funds be allocated in 2025-2026 as follows: (1) \$1.07B for Safe Drinking Water, Drought, Flood & Water Resilience; (2) \$325M for Wildfire & Forest Resilience; (3) \$286M for Biodiversity & Nature-Based Solutions; and (4) \$134M for Climate Smart Agriculture. Water-related infrastructure investments include \$231.5M to the Dam Safety and Climate Resilience Local Assistance Program; \$183.2M for grants and loans for water quality, safe drinking water, and tribal water infrastructure; \$173.1M for flood management projects; \$153.4M for water reuse and recycling projects; and \$148.2M to implement the Salton Sea Management Program 10-year Plan. The budget also proposes \$173.5M to improve water storage, replenish groundwater, improve conditions in streams and rivers, and complete various water resilience projects and programs.

Newsom said: "With foresight and fortitude, California has weathered extraordinary global and domestic turmoil over the past six years to produce balanced budgets that protect our most vulnerable citizens, strengthen opportunities for working people, and expand the state's ecosystem of innovation and creativity.... The budget I present to you today builds on a framework that balanced the books over two years instead of just one – an unprecedented effort to address the budget shortfall we faced."

Colorado

On January 9, Governor Jared Polis (D-CO) delivered his seventh State of the State address. Polis discussed government efficiency, immigration, housing, transportation, clean energy, public safety, healthcare, education, and environmental protection. Polis highlighted a bipartisan bill from the last state legislative session, which created a tax credit for farmers and ranchers using sustainable practices. He also mentioned SB230, which will provide \$50M more to preserve public lands and wildlife. Polis focused on Colorado's future and independent capacity to thrive: "Much like our iconic aspen groves – among the largest living organisms in the world – we know that sometimes what appears on the surface to stand alone is often interconnected by roots that run deep. And that also holds true for our vision of Colorado's future. It's a vision

in which Coloradans can live safe in our vibrant communities, in homes that we can afford, near convenient transit, near job centers, with clean air to breathe, fresh water to drink, high-quality and affordable health care.... While we welcome help from Washington, D.C., to accelerate our transition to better transit and to a clean energy future, Colorado will continue to lead the way to tackle climate change and pollution – with or without federal help. We are truly masters of our own destiny. And our bold climate action protects what helps make Colorado special: our incredible quality of life, our air, our water, our land, our iconic wild spaces.”

Idaho

On January 6, Governor Brad Little (R-ID) delivered his seventh State of the State and Budget address, outlining his Keeping Promises plan which is focused on education, tax relief, career support, government efficiency, safe communities, fiscal responsibility, water and other public infrastructure, and wildfire suppression. He said his Keeping Promises plan aims to tackle the backlog of unfunded water projects and deploy additional bonuses for hiring and retaining wildland firefighters. He said: “Reflecting on the past year, two natural elements consumed Idahoans’ attention – water and fire. Our farmers confronted a real problem head on – the long-term decline of water in the aquifer that sustains Idaho agriculture. Our farmers worked hard to secure a new water deal that safeguards Idaho’s water sovereignty.... Our firefighters battle dangerous conditions to protect lives, property, and our natural resources. I am also asking the Legislature to properly fund the fire suppression account so these firefighters know we’ve got their back.” He criticized federal management of wildfire and said: “I look forward to working with the Trump administration to boldly transform how wildfire and our western lands are managed.” Governor Little’s budget proposal suggests \$30M for water infrastructure projects “proven to increase water levels in the aquifer.” It proposes over \$100M for fire management.

Kansas

On January 12, Governor Laura Kelly (D-KS) delivered her seventh State of the State address. She listed key achievements for economic development, budget, and education. She also discussed what she hopes to accomplish for water supply: “Forget making it 75 years down the road – some parts of western Kansas don’t have the groundwater to last another 25 years. And without that water, the agricultural industry that fuels our economy and sustains our rural way of life cannot survive.” She explained that the Kansas Water Authority had gone all over the State to engage with stakeholders. She said the result was a goal that each generation will work to protect our water supply for the next two generations that follow, calling it the “multigenerational promise.” She said: “It may look different in different areas of the state, but the fundamentals are the same: stabilize the Ogallala Aquifer, maximize the capacity of our reservoirs, and ensure all Kansans have access to clean, sustainable water.” She said the effort would require developing a better management system, and investment of more resources. She noted that Kansas water is managed by 14 different agencies, “making it very difficult, if not impossible, to align efforts around policy, planning, and investment.” She proposed the creation of an Office of Natural Resources to “streamline our systems to make our work so much more efficient and effective.” She noted the \$35M of additional funding to safeguard water supply approved by the legislature last year. She said her budget would propose an additional \$30M, bringing the overall annual investment to \$90M a year. She said: “In addition to enhanced resources, it is imperative that we develop a comprehensive, long-term, and sustainable strategy to ensure that Kansans have the water supply they need to exist, much less to thrive, for generations to come.”

Montana

On January 13, Governor Greg Gianforte (R-MT) delivered his third State of the State address, highlighting his priorities to cut income and property taxes, make housing more affordable, unleash American energy, and boost teacher pay. He announced the launch of an Unleashing Energy Task Force to find long-term solutions for affordable, reliable energy. He highlighted budget allocations for infrastructure: “To protect our communities from potential natural disasters, we also invest \$100 million in one-time-only funding in a local disaster resiliency fund. This fund will support state and local projects that reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from future disasters, like aging levees and canals that could fail.” He pointed to an aging levee in a small town along the Yellowstone River and said: “With the resources from our disaster resiliency fund, we can reinforce that levee, protecting homes and businesses from potential flooding. This isn’t just about preventing disaster. It’s about giving our communities and our people the peace of mind they deserve.”

Nebraska

On January 15, Governor Jim Pillen (R-NE) focused his address on the State’s tax system, education, protecting children and the State’s water quality and quantity. He highlighted proposed legislation to combine the Department of Environment and Energy and the Department of Natural Resources, establishing the new Department of Water, Energy, and Environment. He said: “We have an opportunity to consolidate and streamline two of our major code agencies, as well. Water is the lifeblood of Nebraska, and what we do to protect our QUANTITY and improve our QUALITY of water will be our legacy. Through both our vast system of surface waterways and our treasured Ogallala Aquifer—we have a natural hedge against drought and therefore a God-given foundation for our agricultural and industrial economy in the toughest of

times.... It will save costs, eliminate duplicative overhead, and streamline the mission of stewarding and protecting our natural resources and environment, and enhance collaboration, as well. We have begun the work of consolidating all of the important work of these two agencies under unified leadership, and I look forward to working with you to carry that work to its completion.”

Nevada

On January 15, Governor Joe Lombardo (R-NV) focused his remarks on fiscal policy, housing, education, healthcare, and public safety. He highlighted the Nevada Attainable Housing Act, which would dedicate \$1B toward building attainable housing units across the State. He said: “This investment empowers Nevada builders to create homes for the people who live and work here, helping families secure stable housing, creating pathways to homeownership for essential workers like teachers, nurses, and first responders, and supporting transitional housing for those starting over.... We also need to continue the great work our fire agencies and stakeholders are doing to protect us from the growing risk of wildfires. If fires do occur, despite our best efforts, we need to ensure that our homeowners and residents can have adequate insurance in place to help recover from loss and to stay in their homes. We know a house isn’t just four walls and a roof: it’s the foundation for a better life. Whether you’re renting, saving for your first home, or starting over, know this: we see you, we hear you, and we’re in this together.”

New Mexico

On January 18, Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham (D-NM) delivered her seventh State of the State address, focusing on public safety, affordable housing, child welfare, healthcare, economic development and climate and energy. She proposed a state-sponsored fire insurance program outside the private market and a new state water supply initiative. She said: “I think we have an opportunity, and a responsibility, to look ahead and do more. That’s why I’m proposing – again – a Strategic Water Supply. Our state, like so many others, is facing a severe water shortage, and climate change is only making the problem worse. Yet we have enormous reserves of brackish water lying beneath our feet. And we have massive amounts of industrial water that is being injected right back into the ground. Let’s build the technology to clean up that industrial water rather than pollute our aquifers. This recycled resource can be used for clean energy projects, advanced manufacturing, data centers and even putting out wildfires. And let me be clear – and I suggest state lawmakers spell it out in statute – recycled industrial water will not be used for human or animal consumption, or to irrigate our crops. Period. We can spur innovation, create good jobs, eliminate pollution from forever chemicals and uranium and protect our communities from natural disaster – all while preserving our essential freshwater supplies for growing our crops and servicing the taps in our homes. In New Mexico, we’ve shown how we can combine sustainability with innovation and economic growth.”

North Dakota

On January 7, Governor Kelly Armstrong (R-ND) delivered his first State of the State address. He discussed North Dakota’s growing population, the need for mental health services, public safety, housing, and tax relief. He highlighted agriculture and energy as the “bedrock of [the] economy in North Dakota.” He said: “We will continue to promote pro-agriculture policies, creating opportunities for value-added ag across the state.... Working together, we will promote more value-added products in agriculture. We will protect the backbone of our state against outside agitators who have no idea what it takes to feed an ever-hungrier world. Nobody cares more about the future of North Dakota, our country and our land than our farmers and ranchers, and we will never stop fighting for them.”

Oklahoma

On February 3, Governor Kevin Stitt delivered his seventh State of the State address, focusing on cutting income taxes, promoting energy abundance, education, and public safety. He said: “Here is Oklahoma, we have business friendly policies and the most affordable, reliable energy anywhere thanks to limited government, common sense, and clean burning natural gas.... Our energy industry is a driving force in our economy, and when they are free from politically motivated barriers and overregulation, they can power our nation and the world. That means more businesses can come online and more electricity can be generated in our state.... I want Oklahoma to be known around the world as the state where businesses come because they know that they can operate freely without fear of gotcha bureaucrats or burdensome regulations.... Oklahoma is a haven. A shining city on a hill. And the American Dream is alive and well in Oklahoma.”

Oregon

On January 13, Governor Tina Kotek (D-OR) focused on homelessness and housing supply, behavioral health, education, and climate resilience. She said: “As stewards of our air, water, and landscapes, we must rise to the challenge of fighting climate change, both by continuing our efforts to reduce carbon emissions and by taking strong action to enhance the resiliency of our natural resources and communities. Our most vulnerable communities, our working and natural lands,

our wildlife, and our rivers, lakes and streams all face an existential threat, as the relentless march of climate change tests our resolve to protect that which sustains us.” She highlighted efforts of her administration to bring in funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) including the submission of 23 applications by state agencies, resulting in more than \$43M for habitat restoration, wildfire mitigation, water management, and species conservation. She highlighted the importance of financing wildfire suppression: “We must continue to fight climate change – and we also need to strengthen our defenses for the changes that are upon us. Last year’s wildfire season was another potent reminder of the threat. The historic 2024 wildfire season burned over 1.9 million acres and cost a record \$350 million, over twice the highest fire costs in our history.” She proposed \$150M from the ending fund balance to go to reserves instead of the normal allocation to the Rainy Day Fund, calling it money for a “Very Very Bad Smoky Day.” She proposed an additional \$130 million every two years for hazard reduction strategies.

South Dakota

On January 14, Governor Kristi Noem (R-SD) focused her remarks on what she hopes to achieve at the federal level, pending her confirmation as Secretary of Homeland Security. She resigned her position as Governor to then Lieutenant Governor Larry Rhoden (R-SD) on January 30. During her final State of the State address, Noem outlined a “Top 10” list of reasons South Dakota’s continue to be an example for the nation, including education, healthcare, agriculture, outdoor opportunities, birthrate, public safety, and others. She highlighted flood management infrastructure and heroic individuals responding to a 1,000-year flood event that hit 25 counties in June and July 2024. She awarded Tim Cowman, a geologist with the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the Governor’s Award for Heroism for his water flow projections: “Without Tim, we would not have had as accurate of projections on the rising rivers. The data that we were getting from the Federal River Forecast Center was too unreliable.” She recounted a rescue by employees of the State Fish and Game and Parks Departments, who she also awarded for heroism: “Our emergency management officials were trying to coordinate a helicopter rescue – but that would have been dangerous because of fast water flows, debris, and other hazards. Suddenly, a local official walked into the Emergency Operations Center and exclaimed, ‘Well scratch that plan, some crazy Game, Fish & Parks guys launched their boat in a highway ditch and were able to figure out a way to get to him.’ They risked their own safety and eliminated the need for a more dangerous aerial rescue. They used a drone to scout the possible route, boated across cornfields with unknown hazards, walked across a narrow berm to the overpass, and rescued that South Dakotan. I appreciate their example, leadership, and heroism.”

Texas

On February 2, Governor Greg Abbott (R-TX) delivered his 2025 State of the State address, identifying priorities such as property tax relief, affordable housing, education reform, public safety, border security and water infrastructure investments. He noted that some water supplies are drying up, many communities have leaking and broken water lines, and agriculture producers in the Rio Grande Valley and West Texas do not have enough water to grow their crops. Referring to the Texas Water Fund, he highlighted the last session’s \$1B investment in water projects and infrastructure and said the State would “Texas-size” that investment. He said: “We will make the largest investment in water in the history of Texas. We will tap into new water supplies and repair pipes to save billions of gallons of water each year. This generational investment in water is so important, I am declaring it an emergency item.” In his proposed budget, Abbott outlined the various funding mechanisms from previous legislatures and said: “I recommend the 89th Legislature continue to invest in the state’s water infrastructure by appropriating the largest one-time investment in state history to programs at the TWDB and creating an ongoing dedicated revenue source for Texas water projects.”

Utah

On January 23, Governor Spencer Cox gave his fifth State of the State address, focusing on housing attainability, energy abundance, infrastructure reform, community safety, and family strength. He invoked historical examples of “pessimistic prognostications” for Utah’s growth and the Utahns who challenged them, emphasizing the need for Utah to continue building: “Our ancestors irrigated farms, excavated minerals, built homes and neighborhoods, powered cities, and connected this continent by rail. In the face of adversity, they built. ... Now, I recognize that when I talk about building, some people get nervous. Some might even argue that we’ve blossomed a little too much. I often hear valid concerns about our growth. The warnings are stark. One example: A Deseret News headline warned, ‘Resources Of [The] State Unable to Support More [Growth].’ In that article, experts and civil engineers made it clear that Utah just doesn’t have enough water to sustain more growth and forcefully cautioned of a ‘rebukenature’ and threat of significant loss.... I guess this is the part where I tell you that the Deseret News Headline wasn’t from today but was actually printed in 1942. When our population was 580,000 people.... So, how is it possible that our state added an additional 3 MILLION people, 6 TIMES more than in 1942 while also improving the quality of life? And is it possible to do it again? While the answer is simple, it’s not necessarily easy. We must build.”

Washington

On January 15, outgoing Governor Jay Inslee (D-WA) gave his final State of the State address after 12 years in office. He said: "It was my life's honor to be elected governor three times, to work for the people of Washington these 12 years. This is a place that means everything to me and Trudi. Man, I do love this state." He highlighted successes during his tenure such as funding early childhood education, requiring outdoor heat protection for farmworkers, paid family leave, promoting behavioral health, and reducing youth homelessness. He highlighted Washington's ability to "come together through setback and calamity," citing the Skagit River Bridge collapse, multiple historic wildfire seasons, and a landslide in Oso. He outlined the legislature's mandate to meet the demands of climate change: "This Legislature has a clear mandate to continue its progress in other areas, including climate. Washingtonians have your back in this fight. Sixty-two percent of voters chose to keep slashing pollution and strengthening our communities through cap-and-invest.... Since we passed the Climate Commitment Act, the problem statement has grown, with increasing fires and heat domes; increasing rainstorms and flooding; increasing acidification of Puget Sound; loss of glacial ice on Mt. Rainier. The need for the programs funded by CCA will only continue to increase. It's called the Climate Commitment Act for a reason. We ought to honor that commitment. We shouldn't debilitate or steal from that central premise of why voters supported it."

On January 15, Governor Bob Ferguson (D-WA) gave his inaugural address. He highlighted challenges Washington faces such as cost of living, law enforcement presence, behavioral health, homelessness, and the cost of housing. He said: "Despite these, and other challenges, I'm optimistic. I know that together we can make real progress and increase opportunities for Washingtonians." He quoted former Governor Elisha Ferry, who delivered the very first inaugural address in 1889: "...with resources superior to those of any other equal area, with a population as enterprising as it is courageous... there is no reason why the State of Washington should not in the near future rank amongst the most prominent states in the union, nor why the people should not enjoy the priceless blessings of prosperity, health and happiness." Ferguson highlighted his priority to improve the permitting process: "Our mission must be to speed up government, improve customer service and center the people in every decision we make.... Immediately after this speech, I am signing an Executive Order directing all state agencies to cut down their permit and license processing times. We'll establish quick and transparent deadlines for all agencies to meet – and if an agency doesn't meet its deadline, they'll refund your application fee.... Few things frustrate me more than bureaucracy that creates delays, confusion, or extra hurdles when people and businesses need questions answered and results delivered. Our state employees work hard and we are thankful for their public service. We must do a better job listening to them and to the public to find ways to improve customer service and save money while we are doing it."

Wyoming

On January 15, Governor Mark Gordon (R-WY) delivered his address, highlighting Wyoming's leadership and innovation in energy, natural resource management, education and economic development. He emphasized Wyoming's efforts to promote energy and economic growth: "We are conservative, we work to get out of the way of the private sector, we respect and protect private property rights, and we rely on common sense to meet the needs of the state and her people." He asked the legislature to consider his request for the addition of two attorneys in the Attorney General's office. He also requested they make the coal litigation fund into a natural resources litigation fund supported by a \$3.5M budget allocation. Gordon highlighted the need for resources to fight wildfires and facilitate recovery: "Watersheds, landscapes, range, and habitat were all lost last year and will require our attention to return them to productivity as well as to make them more resistant to the fire hazard that attends invasives like Cheatgrass. I'll remind everyone that when Cheatgrass is dry it's as flammable as gasoline. I recommend these funds to assist our citizens in restoring fire-ravaged lands as soon as possible." In his budget, Gordon requested \$130M to be administered by the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resources Trust Fund (WWNRT) to serve as a backstop to current federal, state, and insurance programs.