

# Thomas C. Gifford

📍 Fort Collins, CO 📩 thomas.gifford@colostate.edu 📞 +1 (720)746-8982 💬 Personal Website  
LinkedIn

## Education

<b>Colorado State University</b> <i>Ph.D. in Economics</i>	<i>Aug 2021 – May 2026 (expected)</i>
<b>University of Denver</b> <i>M.A. in Economics</i>	<i>Aug 2019 – May 2021</i>
<b>Colorado College</b> <i>B.A. in Economics</i>	<i>Aug 2014 – May 2018</i>

## Research Areas

- Primary: Applied Microeconomics, Environmental Economics, Behavioral Economics
- Secondary: Clean Energy Policy, Public Policy, Regional Economic Development

## Dissertation

**Title:** *Essays on Wildfires, Electric Vehicles, and Regional Economic Impacts*

**Chapters:**

- *Long-Term Effects of Large Wildfires on Tourism Spending in Colorado*
- *The Role of Charging Infrastructure and Income on Electric Vehicle Adoption*
- *Wildfire and Water Quality Violations in Colorado*

**Committee:** Edward B. Barbier (Chair), Jude Bayham, Anders Fremstad, Anita Pena

**Expected Completion:** May 2026

## Professional Experience

**2023–Present:** Center for the New Energy Economy (CNEE) — *Graduate Research Intern*

- Assist in preparing, organizing, and running the Clean Energy Legislators Academy, an annual bipartisan forum for state legislators to share best practices on clean energy policy.
- Research state-level energy legislation and co-author policy briefs on topics including public safety power shutoffs, regional energy markets, and clean energy portfolios.
- Help maintain the SPOT and Tracker databases, public tools that monitor clean energy legislation across states.

**2019–2021:** Mindfish Test Prep, Denver, CO — *SAT/ACT Tutor (Part-Time)*

- Provided individualized instruction to high school students preparing for standardized tests, helping dozens achieve significant score improvements.
- Led small-group sessions and one-on-one tutoring in math, reading, and writing; also provided AP exam support in economics, literature, and chemistry.

**2018–2019:** OnDeck Capital, Denver, CO — *Loan Operations Analyst*

- Verified bank information, confirmed payoffs with other lenders, and managed administrative tasks.

## Honors and Awards

**2025:** Recipient of the Stephan Weiler Award for Research Excellence in Regional and Rural Development, North American Regional Science Council

**2025:** Diana Wall Sustainability Leadership Fellowship, School of Global Environmental Sustainability, Colorado State University.

**2024:** Ozawa Graduate Scholarship - Department of Economics, Colorado State University

**2021-2024:** Graduate Teaching Assistant - Department of Economics, Colorado State University

**2024-2026:** Graduate Teaching Instructor - Department of Economics, Colorado State University

**2019-2021:** College of Liberal Arts Graduate Scholarship, University of Denver

## Published Works

---

### Refereed Journal Articles

Gifford, T.C. and Barbier, E.B. *Commuting time, charging infrastructure, and electric vehicle adoption for sustainable transportation: A case study of Washington State.* *Sustainability*, Accepted October 24, 2025.

### Refereed Reports

Gifford, T.C. and Barbier, E.B. "Battle Scars: Trends in Wildfire Size and Impact across Colorado." *REDI Report*, Regional Economic Development Institute (REDI), Colorado State University, March 2025.  
[https://csuredi.org/redi\\_reports/battle-scars-trends-in-wildfire-size-and-impact-across-colorado/](https://csuredi.org/redi_reports/battle-scars-trends-in-wildfire-size-and-impact-across-colorado/) ↗

### Submitted Journal Articles

---

Gifford, T.C. and Barbier, E.B. *The Role of Charging Infrastructure and Income on Electric Vehicle Adoption.* *Energy Policy*, R&R.

### Working Papers

---

*Long-Term Effects of Large Wildfires on Tourism Spending in Colorado* (with Edward Barbier and Jude Bayham)  
*Fire and Water: Long-Term Economic Impacts of Wildfire on Local Drinking Water Quality*  
*Effectiveness of State Incentive Programs at Increasing Electric Vehicle Adoption: A Behavioral Perspective*  
*Understanding the Effects of Legalized Mobile Sports Betting on Mental Health* (with Luke Maddock)

### Invited Talks and Conference Presentations

---

#### 2025

- *Long Term Effects of Large Wildfires on Tourism Spending in Colorado* (Winner, Stephan Weiler Award for Research Excellence in Regional and Rural Development) — 72nd Annual North American Meetings of the Regional Science Association International, Denver, CO, [November 13, 2025].
- *Long Term Effects of Large Wildfires on Tourism Spending in Colorado* — Department of Economics Seminar Series, Colorado State University, [October 24, 2025].
- *Long Term Effects of Large Wildfires on Tourism Spending in Colorado* — Western States Graduate Workshop, Fort Collins, CO, [October 4, 2025].
- *Electric Relaxation: Range Anxiety and EV Charging Infrastructure* — Front Range Energy Camp, Boulder, CO, [April 16, 2025].
- *Fire on the Mountain: Estimating the Impact of Wildfires on Tourism Spending in Colorado* — University of Wyoming and Colorado State University Joint PhD Research Seminar, Fort Collins, CO, [February 28, 2025].

#### 2024

- *Spatial Determinants of EV Adoption in Washington* — 94th Annual Meeting of the Southern Economic Association, Washington, D.C., [November 25, 2024].
- *Economic Impact of Wildfire on Local Communities* — Brown Bag Seminar, Department of Economics, Colorado State University, [October 28, 2024].
- *Determinants of EV Demand in Washington* — Western States Graduate Workshop, Salt Lake City, UT, [September 28, 2024].

- *Determinants of EV Demand in Washington* — Center for the New Energy Economy Research Team Presentation, Denver, CO, [January 17, 2024].

## 2023

- *Cost Effectiveness of State Plug-in Electric Vehicle Incentives* — Western States Graduate Workshop, Fort Collins, CO, [October 4, 2023].
- *Behavior and the Evolution of Economic Thought: Implications for Environmental Sustainability* — Brown Bag Seminar, Department of Economics, Colorado State University, [March 6, 2023].

## 2022

- *An Investigation into the Role of Behavior in the History of Economic Thought and its Repercussions on Environmental Sustainability* — Western States Graduate Workshop, Salt Lake City, UT, [September 30, 2022].

## Teaching Experience

---

### Primary Instructor

- **2024–2026:** ECON 202: Principles of Microeconomics (x6); Colorado State University
  - Designed and delivered lectures, created assignments, and evaluated student performance.
  - Led multiple large sections of Principles courses, overseeing 200–350+ students while ensuring efficient, accessible, and equitable instruction.
  - Taught accelerated online sections of ECON 202 during the summers of 2024 and 2025, adapting course materials and engagement strategies for a condensed virtual format.

### Teaching Assistant

- **2021–2024:** Principles of Microeconomics (x6), Behavioral Economics (x2); Colorado State University
  - Led recitation sessions, provided grading support, and assisted students during office hours.
  - Delivered guest lectures as needed and filled in for the primary instructor during scheduled absences.
  - Designed and facilitated in-class experiments in Behavioral Economics to illustrate key concepts and encourage active learning.

## Guest Lectures

---

- **ECON 316: Behavioral Economics** (Fall 2023), Colorado State University Delivered two lectures covering hyperbolic discounting, the role of salience in decision making, and the endowment effect.
- **ECON 101: Economics of Social Issues** (Fall 2024), Colorado State University Gave a guest lecture on the legalization of sports gambling and its potential effects on young people.

## Professional Memberships and Skills

---

North American Regional Science Council, American Economic Association, Southern Economic Association, American Clean Power Association, Solar Energy Industries Association

- **Coding:** R, Stata, L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X

## Media

---

- *Why wildfires are getting larger, more unpredictable in Colorado*, **CBS4 Denver**, feature interview, September 2025. [Link ↗](#)
- *Report finds Colorado wildfires are larger, more frequent and increasingly unpredictable*, **Denver7**, TV segment, August 2025. [Link ↗](#)
- *Colorado wildfires are bigger, burning faster*, **Colorado Public Radio (CPR News)**, featured as expert, August 29, 2025. [Link ↗](#)
- *Report: Colorado wildfires bigger, more frequent*, **Kiowa County Press**, interview, August 2025. [Link ↗](#)
- *Colorado wildfires have become larger, more unpredictable*, **The Source at CSU**, feature interview, August 2025. [Link ↗](#)

## References

---

**Edward Barbier, Ph.D.**

University Distinguished Professor  
Department of Economics  
Senior Scholar, School of Global Environmental  
Sustainability  
Colorado State University  
[edward.barbier@colostate.edu](mailto:edward.barbier@colostate.edu) ↗

**Anita Pena, Ph.D.**

Professor  
Department of Economics  
Research Associate, Regional Economic Development  
Institute  
Colorado State University  
[anita.pena@colostate.edu](mailto:anita.pena@colostate.edu) ↗

**Anders Fremstad, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor  
Department of Economics  
Colorado State University  
[anders.fremstad@colostate.edu](mailto:anders.fremstad@colostate.edu) ↗

**Katherine Hoffer, Ph.D.**

Research Manager  
Center for the New Energy Economy  
Energy Institute at Colorado State University  
[Katherine.Hoffer@colostate.edu](mailto:Katherine.Hoffer@colostate.edu) ↗