

Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission

Resolution – 20-01

Regarding Support for Secure, Long-term and Dedicated Funding for Land and Water Conservation, Wildlife Management, Parks, and Outdoor Recreation

WHEREAS, pursuant to C.R.S. 33-1-101 Legislative Declaration. It is the policy of the state of Colorado that the wildlife and their environment are to be protected, preserved, enhanced, and managed for the use, benefit, and enjoyment of the people of this state and its visitors. It is further declared to be the policy of this state that there shall be provided a comprehensive program designed to offer the greatest possible variety of wildlife-related recreational opportunity to the people of this state and its visitors and that, to carry out such program and policy, there shall be a continuous operation of planning, acquisition, and development of wildlife habitats and facilities for wildlife-related opportunities, and

WHEREAS, Colorado Parks and Wildlife 2015 Strategic Plan Goal 1 is to conserve wildlife and habitat to ensure healthy sustainable populations and ecosystems, and

WHEREAS, the state is home to significant populations of iconic big game species like mule deer, bighorn sheep, pronghorn, moose, and other endemic wildlife species, and

WHEREAS, the conservation of big game winter ranges and migration corridors has been a priority of the Governor of Colorado, the Department of Natural Resources, and the Parks and Wildlife Commission, and

WHEREAS, intact seasonal habitats, and the migratory routes that connect those habitats, are vital to ensuring that Colorado's wildlife populations continue to thrive, and

WHEREAS, habitat loss and fragmentation affect wildlife populations in general, and particularly species that migrate annually between seasonal habitats, and

WHEREAS, funding from hunters, anglers and state park visitors supports fish and wildlife management and state park management in Colorado, but additional funding is needed to optimize management of these resources, and

WHEREAS, the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission has the power to receive and expend federal money made available for the purposes for which the commission is authorized, and

WHEREAS, Colorado receives funding from the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to increase recreational opportunities for citizens and visitors to Colorado, and

WHEREAS, since 1965 Colorado Parks and Wildlife has provided over 1,025 LWCF state

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matching grants totaling more than \$61 million to fund local government and state park outdoors investments statewide, and

WHEREAS, achieving and maintaining financial sustainability is a goal identified in the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Strategic Plan, and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 18-143 - the “Hunting, Fishing, and Parks for Future Generations Act” - calls for developing strategies to engage all outdoor recreationists in funding the division and commission, maintenance of state lands and facilities, and management of wildlife, and

WHEREAS, Colorado Parks and Wildlife is committed to reducing by 50% its dam maintenance and repair backlog of \$45 million or more and its large capital construction maintenance and repair backlog of at least \$26 million, and

WHEREAS, outdoor recreation significantly impacts Colorado’s economy, contributing \$62 billion annually including \$0.8 billion from hunting, \$2.4 billion from fishing, \$2.4 billion from wildlife viewing and \$1.2 billion from state park visitors, and

WHEREAS, this resolution builds on Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission Resolution #19-02, adopted in November 2019, which supports the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America’s Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources in recommending Congress dedicate up to \$1.3 billion annually to the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program to diversify funding and management of all wildlife,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission supports permanent authorization to fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission supports federal funding to reduce the maintenance backlog on public lands, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission respectfully requests the Colorado Congressional Delegation support federal legislation that achieves these aims.

Adopted _____, 2020

Michelle Zimmerman, Chair