

Opening Remarks
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2021-23 Chair, Colorado Parks & Wildlife Commission
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Today is a big day for Colorado Parks and Wildlife and our state

- Proposition 114 narrowly passed in November 2020 and is now state law. Since that time, the CPW – working in conjunction with the volunteer Stakeholders Advisory Group, the scientifically-focused Technical Working Group, and myriad other stakeholders – has worked hard to prepare this DRAFT wolf plan.
- This draft plan represents the Division’s best effort to develop a blueprint and common sense approach to implement Proposition 114, now codified at Colorado Revised Statutes Title 33, Article 2, Section 105.8.
- The goal was to develop a plan that the majority of the public will support and one that represents reasonable compromise, viability, and has room to evolve over time with lessons learned and wisdom gained.
- Preparing the draft plan was no easy task, and the State of Colorado is privileged to have some of the best scientists in the country working hard for CPW. The staff deserves a great deal of credit for managing a difficult task over the past two years.
- While there are too many to name, I would call out Reid DeWalt and Eric Odell in particular. Their work has embodied skill, professionalism, patience and diplomacy. Our sincere thanks goes to both of them and everyone else who contributed to this monumental effort. And, to the Keystone Policy Center for facilitating the process.
- The Commission’s job today is to listen. The goal is to get a better understanding of a lengthy and complex plan. While none of what we will hear should be a surprise, as we’ve been briefed at nearly every commission meeting over the past year as components of the plan were taking shape, division employees will provide a chapter-by-chapter overview of the draft plan and Commissioners will have an opportunity after each presentation to ask clarifying questions.
- The Commission’s job today isn’t to offer proposed amendments to the draft plan; those discussions are for another day. The focus today should be on understanding the draft plan as currently proposed. Today is a starting point.

A few reminders to all of us and to the public of the Commission’s role in developing Colorado’s wolf restoration plan:

- First, it is the Commission’s responsibility to develop and adopt the plan. In doing so, the Commission must necessarily rely heavily on the resources and deep expertise of the Division. But at the end of day, the Commission is responsible for making the difficult decisions embodied in the plan, and we will do so via a final vote this May in Glenwood Springs.

- Second, the law requires the plan to be based on “the best scientific data available.” The plan will adhere to this standard.
- Third, the law requires the Commission to “hold statewide hearings to acquire information to be considered in developing the wolf plan, including scientific, economic, and social considerations pertaining to wolf restoration.”
 - The draft plan was released to the public today. To receive additional and direct input the commission will hold in person and virtual hearings over the next two months. We look forward to thoughtful engagement from as many stakeholders and varying viewpoints as possible during those meetings.
 - We are thankful for the input we have received on the plan to date, particularly at our recent meetings in Craig and Gateway. At the outset of this process, I emphasized that it was critical for CPW and the Commission, “Do this with the western slope, and not to the western slope.” This body has aligned with this sentiment and approach.
 - This Commission’s ground rules and best practices for governance apply to this process as well. Importantly, we do not speak publicly, opine on social media, or interview with the media as individuals. Rather, this commission deliberates and acts as one body, so it is requested that members of the press and public respect this distinction.
 - State law also requires that CPW develop the wolf restoration plan. As such, there is no other plan that this commission will consider. On this note, massive automated email campaigns to members of this body are not helpful when they advocate and perpetuate false premises or processes.

Finally, a note about upcoming dates:

- Please remind yourselves of the upcoming dates concerning the development of the plan. They were provided to you in the November meeting materials and I will ask that Laura send them to you again. As a reminder, “Please clear your calendars and make every attempt to attend these meetings in person.”
- Notably, there are five meetings following this one focused on this plan, public input and deliberation. And, we must provide clear direction and input by the February 22, 2023 meeting so that staff has time to incorporate it and deliver a final plan to us by May.
- Yes, it will be considerable time and attention. So, lastly, I will simply say thank you. To this group of volunteer commissioners. Your commitment to the process thus far, and the one that lies ahead is to be commended. Your time, patience and respectful discourse are valued and appreciated. Thank you.
- Before turning things over to Reid to dive into our day, I’ll turn it to Executive Director Gibbs for a few words.

Date	Location	Purpose
12/9/2022	Virtual only	Special Meeting; Division provides overview of draft Wolf Plan to PWC. No public comment.
1/17/2023 – 1/19/2023	Colorado Springs	Standard PWC meeting +1 day for PWC to receive public comment on the Wolf Plan
1/25/2023	Gunnison	Wolf Plan public comment session
2/7/2023	Rifle	Wolf Plan public comment session
2/16/2022 - evening	Virtual only	Wolf Plan public comment session
2/22/2023	6060 Broadway, Denver	Special Meeting; critical opportunity for PWC to establish consensus and provide timely guidance on Wolf Plan to Division
3/15/2023 – 3/16/2023	Aurora	Standard PWC meeting
4/6/2023	TBD (tentatively Walden)	Step 1 of 2 of Wolf Plan approval Step 1 of 2 of wolf regulations approval
5/3/2023 – 5/4/2023	Glenwood Springs	Standard PWC meeting including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step 2 of 2 of Wolf Plan approval • Step 2 of 2 of wolf regulations approval