

COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION POLICY

TITLE: MANAGEMENT OF WILDLIFE POPULATIONS

Effective Date: November 20, 2015

I. PURPOSE

Wildlife management programs will be designed and implemented to enhance and sustain populations of resident and migratory native and desirable non-native wildlife populations for the use, benefit and enjoyment of Colorado residents and visitors.

II. AUTHORITY

C.R.S. § 33-1-101 Legislative Declaration. (1) “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.”

C.R.S. § 33-1-101 (2) “All wildlife within this state not lawfully acquired and held by private ownership is declared to be the property of this state. Right, title, interest, acquisition, transfer, sale, importation, exportation, release, donation, or possession of wildlife shall be permitted only as provided in articles 1 to 6 of this title or in any rule or regulation of the parks and wildlife commission.”

C.R.S. § 33-1-101 (3) “In order to foster the welfare of the inhabitants of the state of Colorado, it is further declared to be the policy of this state to protect and encourage full development of absolute and conditional water rights created under state law and to develop and maximize the beneficial use of the waters to which Colorado and its citizens are entitled under interstate compacts.”

C.R.S. § 33-1-101 (4) “The state shall utilize hunting, trapping, and fishing as the primary methods of effecting necessary wildlife harvests.”

C.R.S. § 33-1-104 (1) “The commission is responsible for all wildlife management, for licensing requirements, and for the promulgation of rules, regulations, and orders concerning wildlife programs.”

C.R.S. § 33-1-104 (2) “The commission shall establish objectives within the state policy, as set forth in section 33-1-101, which will enable the Division to develop, manage, and maintain sound programs of hunting, fishing, trapping, and other wildlife-related outdoor recreational activities. Such objectives shall employ a multiple-use concept of management.”

C.R.S. § 33-1-105 (d) authorizes the Commission to control the capture, propagation or transport of any species of wildlife needed for the purpose of stocking the lands and waters of the state; C.R.S. § 33-1-106 (c) further authorizes the Commission to control export, import, release, possession and transfer of wildlife.

C.R.S. § 33-1-110 (1) The Director is the head of the Division under the direction and supervision of the commission and the Executive Director and has general supervisory control of and authority over all activities, functions, and employees of the Division.

C.R.S. § 33-2-105 (105.5) (105.6) and (105.7) require Commission approval prior to any possession, transport, import or export of a state-listed threatened or endangered species. Further, according to this statutory authority, legislative approval is required prior to reintroduction of any extirpated species and/or any federally-listed candidate, threatened or endangered species.

III. POLICY STATEMENT

Recreational and Other Uses

The Commission recognizes that the Division will strive to provide the public with a wide range of benefits associated with wildlife populations. This will be accomplished through regulations that account for consumptive and non-consumptive use while maintaining, protecting and enhancing wildlife resources and habitats throughout the state.

Species Management

Management, research and propagation programs shall use the most effective scientific principles and techniques and will be conducted to produce and sustain wildlife populations within Colorado in accordance with the Division’s statewide and local planning efforts. These programs will emphasize the preservation of resident and migratory native and desirable non-native species in order to meet management objectives and goals.

The Division will cooperate with land management agencies and private landowners to maintain and enhance habitat, consistent with other uses of the land and water, for the benefit of wildlife. Information pertaining to wildlife management will be made available to the public through regulatory and information/education processes.

The Commission encourages maintenance of adequate water quality through water pollution prevention, aquatic toxicology research, conservation of wetland and riparian habitats and watershed protection in accordance with land management practices to protect terrestrial and aquatic wildlife and their habitat. The Commission recognizes that the Division shall strive to maintain the quality and quantity of Colorado's waters and seek maintenance of optimal in-stream flows and conservation pools in lakes and reservoirs in Colorado.

Non-native species

Non-native species will be introduced into Colorado only when sufficient investigations have been made to ensure that the non-native species will not have an adverse impact on native species or their habitat and in such situations where there is a biological need or social demand for the species in question. Land management agencies will be consulted when the release or introduction occurs on land or within waters they own or manage.

Specific to management of the fishery resource, the use of genetically altered or sterile aquatic species or their hybrids will be used in some waters to enhance fishery resources, protect native species and meet management objectives and goals.

Wildlife Introductions and Import/Export

Commission approval is required for introduction/reintroduction, import or export, of any of the following species:

- Federally listed endangered, threatened and candidate species
- State-listed endangered and threatened species
- Any exotic/non-native species not previously established in Colorado
- Species previously extirpated from Colorado.
- Big game species

These types of movements will be approved by the Commission either on an individual basis or through an approved recovery, conservation or management plan.

All other capture and movement of terrestrial and aquatic species can be approved by the Director or his designee. The Director will update the Commission on all other movements of wildlife through the annual trap and transplant plan, fish stocking schedule or other annual reporting method as requested by the Commission. Activities approved

by the Director may include, but are not limited to, the capture and movement of populations for the purposes of:

- Augmenting existing populations
- Re-establishing populations
- Enhancing genetic diversity
- Establishing new populations or extending distribution of existing populations
- Collecting scientific data for research or management purposes
- Exporting wildlife (other than those noted above) to other states to assist them in their wildlife management programs and to compensate them for providing wildlife to Colorado for purposes listed above