

Sportsperson's Roundtable Meeting
December 14, 2023
Virtual Meeting
Meeting Summary

The Colorado Sportsperson's Roundtable met virtually on December 14, 2023. Thirteen Roundtable members, fifteen Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) staff, two Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff, four Parks and Wildlife Commissioners, and the Director of Colorado Parks and Wildlife participated in this meeting. Four members of the public observed the meeting. This document summarizes the group's discussion.

Introductions / Welcoming New Members

- Jonathan Boydston introduced new members to the roundtable: Larry McCormack (Southeast Representative), Glenn Carlson (Southeast Representative), and Britt Parker (Northwest Representative).

Director's Update - Jeff Davis, CPW Director

- Director Davis highlighted two success stories, one terrestrial and one aquatic. He shared that Colorado received 22 million dollars in federal funding for construction of the I-25 Greenland overpass, which CPW anticipates will be the largest wildlife crossing in the world. This project is supported by a long list of partners including Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and Mule Deer Foundation, who helped with acquisition of funding. Director Davis also shared the success of the Colorado River Connectivity Channel at Windy Gap, the largest aquatic restoration project built in the state. The channel reconnected miles of aquatic habitat in the Fraser and upper Colorado River basins that had been cut off for 40 years. Trout Unlimited was a key partner for this project's success.
- Director Davis also shared CPW's ongoing work creating and disseminating FAQ documents concerning mountain lions, bobcats, and lynx, as well as developing an East Slope Mountain Lion Plan and updating pertinent website information. A mountain lion update and annual regulatory changes will be presented at the January commission meeting.

Wolf Restoration and Management - Reid DeWalt, Assistant Director, Aquatic, Terrestrial, and Natural Resources

- Reid DeWalt shared that, as of December 8, the 10(j) rule is effective, granting CPW flexibility for wolf management. He noted that CPW continues to receive questions concerning when and where wolves will be released. The plans will be kept vague for the safety of staff, but CPW will capture (in Oregon) and release up to 15 wolves this release season (December 2023 until middle of March). The statutory deadline does not specify how many wolves must be released, so the process will likely continue into 2024.

- Reid DeWalt stated that he cannot comment on the recent federal court lawsuit, though a hearing is being held today. CPW continues to meet with cattlemen's associations, livestock producers, and counties to prepare on the ground.
- A roundtable member asked for clarification of whether the release of 15 wolves will occur across 2024. Reid DeWalt clarified that up to 15 wolves will be released per season; with up to 45 animals released across three consecutive release seasons.
- A roundtable member asked if all released wolves will be collared. Reid DeWalt confirmed that all will be collared so that CPW can monitor where they disperse.
- A roundtable member asked how 10(j) will help outfitters who run livestock, and where he can find more information. Reid DeWalt responded that the [Colorado Wolf Restoration and Management Plan](#) and the 10(j) both outline CPW's authority to prevent or compensate for damage.

Big Game Season Structure and Draw Working Group - Jonathan Boydston, Public Involvement Specialist; Amanda Biedermann, Policy & Planning Project Manager

- Jonathan Boydston shared that CPW is currently working on two separate efforts related to big game; Big Game Season Structure and the Draw Working Group.
- CPW staff have been identifying Big Game Season Structure alternatives to bring to the commission in 2024. Discussions during the July Roundtable meeting have helped inform development of the alternatives.
- Following requests to gather additional public feedback on possible limitation of archery and rifle elk OTC licenses, CPW implemented a random sample survey on top of other public input opportunities that present OTC alternatives. The specific details of the OTC alternatives under consideration are listed on the BGSS [EngageCPW page](#).
 - The random sample pool consisted of 6,000 hunters—75% residents and 25% nonresidents—who received licenses in 2018 and 2022. If you were not selected to participate in the random sample survey, other opportunities for input (e.g. a Guestbook tool for leaving input) are available on the [EngageCPW page](#). You can also directly email the commission with comments (dnr_cpwcommission@state.co.us), or sign up for [CPW email updates](#) to stay informed on next steps for the process.
 - The meetings to remember in 2024 are the March, May, and June commission meetings where CPW will present to the Commission on the alternatives and potentially provide staff recommendations.
- A Roundtable member asked when the survey is expected to be completed, compiled, and available. The survey will be closed on January 10th. Data will then be analyzed and presented to the Commission when BGSS is on the agenda in 2024.
- CPW received over 175 applications to join the [Draw Working Group](#). Detailed criteria were used to score each application, and member information can be found [here](#). CPW contracted Government Performance Solutions to help facilitate the Draw Working Group process.
 - The first meeting kicked off in late October to select topics that will be addressed by the group. Several work sessions and Commission workshops will be spread throughout 2024, with one meeting roughly each month.

- Work sessions will focus on one topic each: primary draw, preference points, and the reissue process. A memo on the topics and the overall process can be found [here](#).
- All draw process meetings will be livestreamed on YouTube. The EngageCPW page hosts a schedule of all work sessions and Commission workshops, as well as working group charters, FAQs, and a Guestbook tool where input can be provided.
- Input will be collected and shared with the working groups prior to each meeting. While the public cannot share comments during work sessions, CPW encourages any input to be left on the Engage CPW Guestbook tool prior to each meeting. CPW will regularly update the Draw Working Group page with information on upcoming meetings.

Upcoming Legislative Session - Sarah Hamming, Legislative Analyst

- Sarah Hamming invited roundtable members to reach out to her with any questions about ongoing work at the State Capitol. Sarah also took a moment to introduce attendees Daphne Gervais, the Director of Legislative Affairs at DNR, and Tim Brass, the Assistant Director of Parks, Wildlife, and Lands at DNR.
- Sarah Hamming highlighted three bills being introduced in the upcoming legislative session.
 - The Title 33 Technical Cleanup Bill promotes accessibility and consistency across CPW products. For instance, the age of eligibility varies across senior passes, and now will be set at 64. The bill will also make Keep Colorado Wild revenue available to use for capital construction at parks. Additionally, it will give CPW authority to implement a small game harvest permit, which would help improve management of Greater Sage Grouse, Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse, and White-tailed Ptarmigan.
 - A Roundtable member asked whether the permit would need to be purchased in addition to the normal small game license. CPW staff clarified that CPW historically struggled to obtain population estimates for the aforementioned species through harvest surveys, so the permit would be required in addition to a small game license, as it functions to help identify who partakes in harvest. The price for the permit would be set at a low rate to avoid creating a barrier to participation.
 - It was suggested that any revision to statute allowing the proposed small game permit should not be limited to the three species currently at issue but should instead allow the flexibility to add additional species if needed. CPW staff clarified that the authority to create a permit would be more general and could be applied to other species as needed.
 - The second bill would provide CPW statutory authority over invertebrates and rare native plants. Sarah Hamming clarified that CPW is not seeking regulatory authority, only statutory, but this would allow the agency to better track population trends and conduct research. This bill would position Colorado as a leader in biodiversity conservation and comprehensive wildlife management.

- The third bill concerns the reintroduction of wolverines. CPW is reviving efforts to plan for possible reintroduction after previous stakeholder engagement in the early 2000s. The Fish and Wildlife Service released a [threatened listing decision](#) and interim 4(d) rule for wolverines at the end of November.

Non-Lead Ammunition Legislation Implementation - Amanda Biedermann, Policy & Planning Project Manager

- [House Bill 23-1036](#), the nontoxic bullet replacement hunting program bill, was passed in May 2023 and requires CPW to work with NGO programs to incentivize use of non-lead ammunition while hunting. It is not a mandate to require the use of non-lead ammunition, but is meant to establish a pilot program, hold range demonstrations, and distribute information programs promoting the benefits of using non-lead ammunition. The bill is focused on areas where lead ammunition may have the greatest impact on non-target wildlife, especially scavenger species. This will not be a statewide program, but rather a smaller scale, more focused pilot program.
 - CPW has met with the National Wildlife Federation, Sporting Lead Free, North American Non-Lead Partnership, and American Bird Conservancy.
 - Task 1 of the Bill is information sharing. CPW is reviewing its small game and big game brochures to incorporate language changes on use of non-lead ammunition. There will also be updates to the website, including videos of range demonstrations, which will be live later in summer 2024. Lastly, staff will coordinate to schedule a workshop for hunter education instructors and volunteers to learn about the benefits of non-lead ammunition.
 - Task 2 involves planning range demonstrations. CPW is working on reserving space at Colorado Clays and Cameo Shooting and Education Complex to promote the efficacy and ballistics of non-lead ammunition in partnership with the aforementioned NGOs. CPW is hoping for the demonstrations to occur on a Friday and Saturday in late May/early June with partners and members of the public in attendance.
 - Task 3 develops a pilot non-lead ammunition program, but is currently limited by a lack of funding from the NGOs. The bill states that CPW cannot spend its own funding but has to coordinate with NGOs to carry out the program. CPW has reached out to Utah and Arizona to learn more about their programs. Additionally, CPW is coordinating with vendors who may be able to support subsidies for hunters' purchase of non-lead ammunition through vouchers. CPW hopes to implement a small-scale program if funding from NGOs does become available.
 - A roundtable member asked whether, from an educational and public information standpoint, this is something the Colorado Wildlife Council can incorporate into their messaging? Amanda responded that the website page compiling information from NGOs will be distributed for promotion by partners including the Wildlife Council.

Next Meeting Date / Future Agenda Items

- The next meeting will be held in-person on Saturday, March 2, 2024, likely in the Buena Vista area.
- Roundtable members are invited to submit agenda item requests and suggestions via email, or through a Google Form that will be shared with confirmation of the March meeting details. Agenda item requests can also be sent via email to Jonathan Boydston and/or Emma Hay.
- A member expressed interest in receiving an update on the continued impact of severe winter kills in the Northwest.