

Colorado Sportsperson's Roundtable
August 27, 2022, 10am - 3pm
Cameo Shooting and Education Complex
Meeting Summary

Introduction

Colorado Parks and Wildlife's (CPW) Public Involvement Planning Specialist, Jonathan Boydston, provided an overview of the meeting, followed by brief introductions of members around the room. He then gave a special welcome to the new Roundtable members.

Acting Directors' Welcome

Heather Dugan, CPW's Acting Director, recognized the CPW Cameo Shooting and Education Complex for its world-class facilities and opportunities, thanking CPW's Northwest region and Cameo staff for hosting the Sportspersons' Roundtable. Acting Director Dugan also welcomed all of the new members and highlighted some of the topics on the meeting agenda, including:

- CPW's review of big game license distribution including allocation of licenses between residents and nonresidents, the preference point system, and over-the-counter (OTC) licenses.
- An update on wolf reintroduction and management, including the final meetings of the Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) and Technical Working Group (TWG) in August and collaboration with the US Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) on a 10(j) rule.
- Discussion of addressing equity, diversity and inclusion in the Roundtable charter.

Acting Director Dugan also mentioned the Keep Colorado Wild (KCW) pass goes into effect in January, with the first \$32.5 million in revenue going toward state parks, the next \$3.5 million allocated to Backcountry Safety programs and any money raised beyond that will be split between wildlife and parks. This prompted multiple questions from the group.

Big Game License Distribution

Jonathan Boydston provided an update on CPW's review of the big game license distribution process, including allocation between residents and nonresidents, the preference point system, and OTC licenses. CPW will make recommendations to the Commission for potential changes based on focus groups with hunters, meetings with stakeholder groups, and a Big Game Attitude Survey sent out to thousands of resident and nonresident hunters. Staff also conducted a financial analysis on a host of changes CPW could make and how those changes might impact CPW finances. CPW staff held a workshop for Commissioners; the recording and slides are posted on the Commission's [webpage](#).

A Roundtable member asked about where CPW stands financially. Overall, CPW is doing well financially, and will soon undertake very big projects such as hatchery modernization. Merging Parks and Wildlife ultimately helped with some financial savings though the parks and wildlife sides of the budget are kept separate. This prompted a larger discussion on the financial analysis conducted and effects on different groups. There was some agreement that crowding occurs throughout OTC seasons, though hunters may have varying perceptions of

crowding. Members pointed out that limiting OTC licenses would not necessarily mean reducing available licenses, only changing the way those licenses are obtained.

When discussing preference points, members felt there is a supply and demand issue. There was general agreement that CPW should try implementing point banking again, and for more than just one year. Members were somewhat concerned about averaging group points as that could create a situation where hunters can pay to hunt with people who have many points.

Gray Wolf Restoration and Management Update

CPW Assistant Director of Aquatics and Terrestrial Natural Resources, Reid DeWalt, provided an update on gray wolf reintroduction. After wrapping up the last of the SAG and TWG meetings, CPW will draft a gray wolf reintroduction plan and provide the first draft to the Commission in December. CPW will then open up a public comment forum for this plan, and hold public meetings. CPW will present the final draft in April 2023 with final approval pending in May 2023. Mr. DeWalt also addressed plans created by external parties, noting those plans are being shared with the Commission as a public comment. As a part of the USFWS 10(j) process, USFWS will also conduct an environmental impact statement.

A Roundtable member asked about consultation with the Ute Mountain Ute and Southern Ute tribes. Communication between the tribes and CPW is ongoing, including discussions of possible buffer zones from tribal lands for release areas.

Other members had questions on the number of wolves to be released and financial impacts of wolves. Many members are concerned with the impacts of wolves on the ungulate populations such as elk and deer, as well as potential impacts to outfitters.

Additionally, the resident wolves in North Park have been regularly observed. The radio collars affixed to some of those wolves are not currently working so CPW is planning for collaring wolves again this winter. CPW will also deploy collars and monitor three elk herds as part of a study monitoring the impacts of wolves on ungulate species.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Statement

Katie Lanter, CPW Policy and Planning Supervisor, along with Willie Kalaskie, a Sportspeople's Roundtable member, led a discussion on including a statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Sportspeople's Roundtable charter. The roundtable members agreed this statement would be beneficial to have in the charter and would help the roundtable be more representative of sportspeople in Colorado. Members suggested that by being a more representative group, they could add more merit to ideas they bring forward.

Another member agreed, suggesting such a statement also be included on the Roundtable website.

Regional Caucus Updates

The northeast region had a well-attended, hybrid caucus meeting, which was the first in-person meeting in 18 months. They discussed big game license distribution, waterfowl hunting seasons in the northeast, and the small game access program. They also held raffles to encourage attendance.

The southwest region held a caucus meeting over Facebook live. CPW provided an aquatics and terrestrial update, and an update on staff changes. Fair chase concerns, such as the remote use of game cameras on public land, were also discussed at length at the southwest caucus meeting. The roundtable agreed that fair chase will be an important topic to discuss in the future.

The southeast region caucus meeting was well attended with 35 people in person and another 3,500 views on Facebook Live. They discussed big game license distribution topics, wolves, the lesser prairie chicken and the Recovering America's Wildlife Act. Many members were impressed by the number of attendees, which prompted a discussion on how to reach out to people and get them to attend meetings. A member also asked about Fishers Peak State Park hunting opportunities and the involvement of sportspeople in the Fishers Peak planning process.

The northwest region also held a hybrid meeting on the topics of license distribution and wolves. CPW aquatics staff also provided an update. The topic of backcountry angling and increasing pressure on remote fisheries was discussed. Roundtable members were interested in discussion similar angling topics at future meetings.

Open Roundtable

Members discussed having CPW commissioners at the Sportsperson's Roundtable meetings, and many agreed having at least one commissioner present would be beneficial.

A member shared research that Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership is conducting looking at the impacts of recreation on elk herds. That will be available soon.

The Roundtable then discussed the Outdoor Regional Partnerships and their approach to conserving wildlife and habitat. Roundtable members agreed that those groups should maintain a focus on wildlife and habitat.

Members brought up the minimum hunting age of 12 years and instances when a child may take hunter education before they turn 12. Some members felt that children younger than 12 may not be physically capable of safely hunting big game.

There was also discussion on publishing big game hunting statistics, license number changes, and communication from CPW about potential changes. Roundtable members also requested CPW staff communicate information about voluntary fishing closures as soon as information is available.

Additionally, the roundtable discussed the search and rescue program and the need for county search and rescue teams to be compensated for the volunteer work they are doing.

Members also discussed examples of confusing language used in big game regulations and the possibility of revising certain regulations, such as rules concerning bear inspection requirements.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00pm

Attachment 1: Sportsperson's Roundtable Meeting Attendee List

Roundtable Members:

Brian Braaten
Loren Williams
Mark Scofield
Aaron Jones
Erik Myhre
Kim Kokesh
Ryan Britten
Trent Peterson
Willie Kalaskie
Shannon Roy
David Dillon
Jeanne Horne
Andrew Smith
Liz Rose
Kayla Benjamin
Brian "Sol" Soliday
Lester Smith
Robert Terwilliger
Paul Navarre
Larry McCormack
Mia Anstine
Roger Cesario
Ron Goodrich

CPW Staff:

Heather Dugan
Lauren Truitt
Cory Chick
Mitch Martin
Garett Watson
Reid DeWalt
Mark Leslie
Rachael Gonzales
Vallerie Kunz
Jonathan Boydston
Katie Lanter
Molly Vornholt