



## Colorado Sportsmen's Roundtable

August 16th, 2014 Meeting

Buena Vista, Colorado

### MEETING SUMMARY

A meeting of the Colorado Sportsmen's Roundtable took place on August 16<sup>th</sup> 2014 in Buena Vista. Fifteen Roundtable members were in attendance. Several Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) staff also attended the meeting (see Attachment 1 for details). This document summarizes the group's discussion and outlines next steps.

Director Bob Broscheid welcomed members of the Sportsmen's Roundtable. He emphasized how important it is to the agency to hear from sportsmen and he thanked everyone for taking the time to participate in this meeting.

**Revenue Concepts** – CPW Jeff Ver Steeg, Assistant Director for Research, Policy, and Planning, gave an overview of eight ideas for raising revenue that have been constructed by CPW from research and previous discussions with sportsmen. These are not the only ideas under consideration as CPW continues to research the subject. The eight ideas discussed were:

#### Revenue ideas

1. Reinstate senior fishing license fee (discounted or otherwise)
2. Increase resident license fees
3. Increase limited license application fee to recover cost
4. Require base license for hunting
5. Adjust resident license fees annually according to Consumer Price Index
6. Family fishing license
7. Seek authority for the Parks and Wildlife Commission to set hunting and fishing license fees
8. Increase Colorado Waterfowl Stamp fee

Jody Kennedy, CPW Public Involvement Specialist, conducted an electronic polling exercise to gauge the level of support among the meeting participants for each of the revenue ideas. The goal of the exercise was to identify ideas that Roundtable members generally supported, would like to see more information on or had reservations about. The results of the polling were informational only. CPW will not advance or reject revenue ideas based solely on these polling outcomes.

## Discussion:

Ideas that demonstrated *some to strong support* in the polling exercise included # 1 (reinstate the senior fishing license fee, #2 (increase the resident license fees), #3 (increase the limited license application fee), #5 (adjust resident license fees annually according to the Consumer Price Index), #7 (seek authority for the Commission to set hunting & fishing license fees), and # 8 (increase the Colorado Waterfowl Stamp fee).

Discussion focused on concepts identified by the electronic polling as *requiring more information*, which were revenue idea #s 5 (resident license CPI), 6 (family fishing license), and 7 (Commission authority to set fees) and on the ideas where members felt *other sportsmen may have reservations*, which included idea #s 2 (increase resident fees), 4 (base license), and 6 (family fishing license).

## Ideas where members requested more information:

5. Adjusting resident license fees annually to the Consumer Price Index (CPI). A CPI adjustment is currently applied by statute to nonresident big game license fees. Annual changes are usually on the order of a few percent. Slightly more than half the group indicated some degree of support for the concept. Comments were made about increasing license fee complexity. A question was asked about what happens when the CPI goes down. The answer is that license fees would be adjusted downward. This has happened in the past with nonresident big game license fees. One suggestion was to apply this only to limited big game hunts.

6. Family fishing license. Kids are already free until age 16. This discount on household license purchases would benefit couples and older teenagers or college-age kids and other family members who live at the same residence. This proposal has not been fleshed out yet and many details have yet to be decided. A member asked if this tool was more about recruitment or revenue generation. If there was a combined benefit of both, then this is a worthwhile idea. CPW should look at a sliding scale approach, like the parks pass, where adding additional family members results in a lower cost.

7. Seek authority for the Parks and Wildlife Commission to set hunting and fishing license fees. The Commission currently has the authority to set park fees. It was suggested that this was a good idea, but that it could be hard to accomplish legislatively. Under this structure, Commission accountability and careful regard to the different interests involved would be important.

### Discussion about license fee increase and creating a base license:

Members discussed the impact of raising fees on hunters through the fee increase (idea #2) or creating a base license (idea #4). Key points raised were a) this could negatively impact college-age hunters, which could impact recruitment; b) hunters and anglers already carry much of the financial responsibility to support the agency and other sectors of the public that benefit from agency efforts and programs should also provide financial support; c) whatever the approach is, it needs to be simple; d) increasing hunting fees is not a long-term solution (with static or declining participation); and e) either the base license or the residence license fee approach would require a lot of education and outreach to inform hunters about why it is needed and how they will benefit.

In regard to idea #4 requiring a base license, members stated that it would be viewed like a tax unless it's combined with a benefit. If the base license could be combined with a decrease in other costs, then this idea would carry more support. A concern was raised with fairness and it was stated that a base license would need to be equitable across all license holders. In addition, it was suggested that CPW show where the new revenue would be spent and how it benefits fish and wildlife – similar to fishing is fun and the habitat stamp. Nonresidents are likely to favor an increase in the resident fee over a base license.

With any of the proposed revenue concepts, building awareness and support with sportsmen would be fundamental.

### Other ideas:

Other ideas, such as a motor vehicle registration fee with an opt-out option received support and an interest in learning more about how this might work (there were approximately 5 million vehicles registered in Colorado in 2009 and slightly more than 4 million of those were automobiles and trucks).

Allocation of big game licenses between residents and nonresidents was brought up by some members and discussed by the group. It was suggested that increasing the number of nonresident hunters would help raise revenue. Several members communicated concern about potential for an increase in nonresident allocation at the expense of resident big game hunters. They stressed the importance of getting involved in the Commission process and ensuring that the historical perspective on this issue is presented.

**2015 – 2019 Big Game Season Structure** – CPW Terrestrial Manager Craig McLaughlin gave an update on the process and shared a presentation with the revised draft changes to BGSS that will be voted on by the Commission at their September meeting. Go to:

<http://cpw.state.co.us/Documents/Commission/2014/Aug/ITEM21-ChW-2-BigGame.pdf> for a copy of the memo submitted to the Commission for their August meeting that outlines these proposed changes.

In regard to preference points, Craig presented that until the Commission considers resident/nonresident license allocation, the list of hunts participating in the hybrid draw will remain as those eligible for the 2014 seasons and the list of 80/20 resident/nonresident allocation split will remain the same as those eligible for the 2014 seasons. This led to further discussion about allocation and raised a concern that the Commission process needs to be more inclusive than a commission subcommittee and should allow for sportsmen input/participation.

A suggestion was made to enable youth to have one open season during the whole big game hunting season rather than separate like other license holders.

**West Slope Mule Deer Strategy** – CPW Assistant Director of Wildlife and Natural Resources Chad Bishop and NW Regional Manager Ron Velarde spoke to the proposed Draft West Slope Mule Deer Strategy. The strategy was developed with extensive public input and then was presented to the public for further comment at a statewide summit in Glenwood Springs. A copy of the draft strategy can be found at <http://cpw.state.co.us/Documents/MuleDeer/DraftMuleDeerStrategy.pdf>. The Commission will make a final decision on the strategy at the end of this year. Implementation will come following approval of the strategy and will involve a more detailed internal plan. Partnerships will be essential for implementing this plan. Members suggested that greater detail is needed for habitat and for presenting further loss. In addition, there was strong interest in adding a strategic priority focused on outreach and education.

**Roundtable Charter & Procedures** – A revised Sportsmen’s Roundtable Charter was presented to the membership. The revised version is similar to the previous version. A few areas have come up for discussion during Roundtable conference calls that staff clarified in the revised charter, including term-limits and whether the Roundtable should advocate on legislative issues.

Position on legislation: Director Broscheid addressed this issue saying that for the Roundtable, it is appropriate to share information on legislation; however, this group was not created by CPW for the purpose of advocacy (as a Roundtable). Advocacy by individual members remains a member right, but not under the banner of the Roundtable. He added that taking firm positions on federal or state legislation is not something that CPW wants to be involved with and that it can be divisive, causing fractures within the group. Discussion concluded that information sharing is the primary priority, agenda’s will include a place holder for legislative issues, and outcomes from meetings will

be communicated to the Commission. A question was asked whether members could sign their name to a document and list their affiliation with the Sportsmen's Roundtable (as long as they did not purport to speak for the Roundtable). *The Director considered this after the meeting and decided this is okay.*

Term-limits: Jody proposed term-limit expiration dates for all Roundtable members. The first terms are divided into two and three years. Jody randomly selected members that will have two-year terms based on alphabetical order and a coin toss. The terms are assigned to ensure that members with two- and three-year terms are split for each region. It was brought to Jody's attention that NW member Kristin Nestor was appointed at the end of 2013 and her term should be extended. Some members may be interested in resigning earlier due to other obligations. Members should inform Jody when this is the case. The selection process for new members will start at the end of 2014 and new members will be selected by the August 2015 meeting.

Meeting location: Jody asked members what they thought about the meeting locations. Buena Vista is central to most members and Jody asked if central was most important or if members would prefer that meetings moved around. Members said that central was good, but would also support moving around. A recommendation was made for the winter meeting to be more central than Denver so that no one had to travel over more than one mountain pass (Silverthorne was specifically mentioned, but no consensus was sought).

### **Federal and State Legislative Updates**

Member Ty Churchwell gave an update on Browns Canyon and Hermosa Creek federal wilderness bills as well as the Renewable Energy and Development Act. If any member is interested in supporting these bills, please contact Ty. Ty stressed that it is important to act on these bills soon before session ends. Mike Rivera made a plug for the Western Governors Assoc as a resource for gaining support in habitat conservation efforts. Mikk Anderson gave an update on the Duck Stamp Reauthorization Act. Tim Brass discussed state OHV legislation that COHVCO and CCI are working on. Anyone interested in this legislation should contact Tim.

CPW Jeff Ver Steeg spoke about the pending statutory sunset related to the Habitat Partnership Program (HPP) and noted that CPW should know about any other legislative initiatives for the 2015 session by the end of September/early October. Additional federal bills that CPW is watching are the ESA reform bill and the Federal Hatchery Protection Act.

## CPW UPDATES

**Chapter 1 Fishing Regulations** – CPW Aquatic Manager Greg Gerlich gave an overview of proposed changes to the annual fishing regulations. These included proposed changes to 1) clarify transport of live fish (live well and bait), 2) adjust closures on Chatfield and Cherry Creek for walleye spawning, 3) put a minimum size limit on arctic char at Dillon Reservoir, 4) lift the seasonal size limit restriction on Lake Trout at Grand Lake, 5) put a 15 inch minimum size limit on bass at Poudre Pond #1 in Greeley, 6) change yellow perch limit to mimic east slope limit (20 fish limit) at Rifle Gap Reservoir, 7) make it illegal to have public access within 150 feet of the trap nets during Kokanee spawn at Wolford Reservoir, and 8) remove the bag and possession limits for smallmouth bass at Ridgeway Reservoir.

**Hunter Education** – CPW Assistant Director of Information and Education Gary Thorson gave an overview of proposed options for hunter education. CPW has reached out to hunter ed instructors around the state. Options being considered include 1) a test-out option for hunters 50 and older, allowing them to opt-out with a high score on the current HE test; 2) apprentice licenses for anyone 10 and older allowing a 1 year waver if they hunt with someone 18 and older who has had hunter ed; 3) live fire to remain part of hunter ed, considering a 5 round minimum; and 4) updates to the curriculum/ SOPs based on input from instructors. At the September meeting, the Commission will consider and plan to make a decision on proposed changes. Director Broscheid added that he wanted 100% instructor support on any proposed changes that need legislative action. Member Kristin Nestor mentioned that hunter ed is bigger than just hunters and that nonhunting youth are interested in the program to learn firearm safety.

**Shooting Range Projects for 2014** – CPW SW Regional Manager Patty Dorsey gave an overview of funding opportunities to support shooting ranges and passed out a list of shooting range projects for 2014. She spoke to several projects in the southwest aimed at improving facilities and opportunities for sportsmen as well as mitigating conflicts between users, residents and facilities. NW Regional Manager Ron Velarde touched on efforts in the northwest to address community concerns with shooting ranges. He highlighted a new project at Rifle Creek, efforts to purchase property and create a range at the Cameo site near Grand Junction. SE Regional Manager Dan Prenzlow discussed the Cheyenne Mountain shooting range improvements and an initiative to relocate a section of 3D target archery to address community concerns. NE Deputy Regional Manager Margaret Taylor spoke about new ranges offering opportunities to high population areas on the Front Range. She discussed that these projects help to minimize the dispersed shooting that can raise concerns with some communities.

## ROUNDTABLE UPDATES

Member Tim Brass addressed access to State Trust lands. He referenced two memos from the State Land Board (passed out at meeting) discussing access in Colorado and in other states. CPW pays for access to 20% of trust lands. Other states have access to a higher percentage. Dan Prenzlou added that CPW carefully selected the 500,000 which CPW has access to looking at the quality of the parcel and the opportunity for public access. He said that accessing more lands needs to be balanced with the quality of the parcels and might not always be the best option. Funding additional acres is also a challenge, especially given the recent \$9.9 million cut to the wildlife portion of CPW's budget.

Kristin Nestor discussed an effort that she made to start a hunting club at Colorado Mesa University. While she had support of students and some teachers, she did not get support from the University and her request was denied. She spoke to how difficult it is for students to make time to hunt because teachers will not give students permission to miss class during hunting season. Member Rob Winn suggested looking at the CSU archery and hunting club for ideas and as a potential model. Ron Velarde offered to help and asked to be brought in early in the process.

Kristin and Member Kenny Marcella discussed the value in creating a Roundtable Facebook page as a means for posting information on sportsmen's efforts and receiving feedback. This could be a productive way to reach younger audiences. It would be important to clearly show that the page belongs to an advisory body, not the agency. CPW staff is looking into this and will get back to the members.

Kent Ingram spoke about a proposed closure to recreational shooting on a large section of USFS land. As his campaign to fight the proposal was ramping up, the USFS pulled back on the proposal. This demonstrates that access to recreational shooting is a growing issue that sportsmen need to follow and address. A key message is that a blanket closure of areas should not be the first action from agencies. Instead, managers need to engage in a collaborative approach to address concerns and look for solutions.

Kristin and Kenny gave an update from the NW Regional Caucus meeting. There was strong attendance at an invite meeting and then a few more participants came to an open public meeting that followed. Numerous issues were brought up by participants in regard to hunting and fishing including, 1) predation -- spring bear hunt, lion season, and coyote control; 2) highway and migration barriers; 3) public access; 4) youth opportunity; 5) early feeding programs to mitigate for bad winters; 6) hunter education/outreach; 7) request for more

information on population estimates and methods; 8) big game license website and pay to play; and 9) the process used for leftover license day sales.

A request was made to move the location of the November Commission meeting since this is an important meeting for sportsmen and the current location in far eastern Colorado is difficult for the public to get to. The Commission typically holds the May meeting at which big game licenses quotas are set in Grand Junction. The November meeting is typically held on the eastern plains to generally coincide with the opening of pheasant hunting season.

**Possible future agenda items:**

Big Game Attitude Survey results

CPW finances

Agricultural interests in regard to wildlife

Resident/ nonresident license allocation

Outreach and education on sportsmen's issues

**Next steps:**

Jody will contact members whose term-limits expire in 2015 and initiate a process for making new nominations. Staff will follow-up on Roundtable questions in regard to creating a Facebook page, moving the November Commission meeting, and communicating Roundtable meeting details to the Commission. Jody will send an email announcing the next Roundtable conference call, which will take place in October 2014. The next in-person meeting will be in February 2015 and Jody will send out a doodle poll to find the best date.

**Attachment 1: Attendees at August 16th, 2014 Sportsmen’s Roundtable Meeting**

<b>Roundtable Member</b>	<b>Residence</b>
Kevin Alexander	Gunnison
Tim Brass	Windsor
Tom Brown	Golden
Ty Churchwell	Durango
Dan Parkinson	Bayfield
Rod Patch	Salida
Kent Ingram	Littleton
Kenny Marsella	Grand Junction
Terry Meyers	Grand Junction
Jim Spehar	Pueblo
Mikk Anderson	Aurora
Mike Rivera	La Jara
Kristin Nestor	Silt
Mick Davis	Alamosa
Rob Winn	Rifle
<b>CPW Staff</b>	
Bob Broscheid	Director
Dan Prenzlou	Regional Manager – SE
Gary Thorson	Assistant Director – Information & Education
Chad Bishop	Assistant Director – Wildlife, Natural Resources
Jeff Ver Steeg	Assistant Director – Research, Policy, and Planning
Margaret Taylor	Deputy Regional Manager - NE
Patt Dorsey	Regional Manager – SW
Ron Velarde	Regional Manager – NW
Greg Gerlich	Manager - Aquatic
Craig McLaughlin	Manager - Terrestrial
Dean Riggs	Deputy Regional Manager – NW
Manda Walters	Communications Specialist
Mike Porras	Public Information Officer – NW
Jody Kennedy	Public Involvement Specialist