



COLORADO

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Director's Office
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MEMORANDUM

Date: September 28, 2022
To: Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commissioners
From: Heather Dugan, Acting Director

RE: 2022-2023 Animal Capture and Movement - Summary of proposals and completed translocations

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) captures and moves animals for a variety of reasons to fulfill the agency's mission. Many different programs and branches of the agency work together on an annual basis to implement this extensive and fundamental aspect of wildlife management. The information presented in this memo and the provided spreadsheets informs the Commission of proposed 2022-2023 translocations, progress made on the 2021-2022 translocation proposals, and other ongoing capture operations.

CPW has been granted the legal authority to capture and move animals through the Management of Wildlife Populations Policy, Administrative Directive W-23, and statute. Administrative Directive W-23 maintains approval for capture and transplant of animals at operational levels within the agency while ensuring Director's staff and Commission involvement where required. The directive establishes a three-tiered approval process with varying levels of approval authority required at each tier. Director and Commission approval is required only for Tier 3 animal capture and movement operations that involve introductions, reintroductions, or movements of state and federal endangered and threatened species, federal candidate species or exotic species. However, augmentation of state- and federally-listed species in accordance with approved recovery or conservation plans are treated as Tier 1 projects and do not require Commission approval. Commission approval is also required for interstate movement of big game (Tier 3). Administrative Directive W-23 specifically details the roles, responsibilities, capture guidelines, and the approval process the agency uses to ensure the welfare of individual animals, animal populations, and human safety.

None of the 2022-2023 Animal Capture and Movement Proposals require Commission approval. The release of federal and state endangered black-footed ferrets is proposed; however, this activity partly fulfills a multi-year restoration effort previously approved by the



Commission. No other Tier 3 species is being proposed for capture and movement. Several of this year's Tier 1 and Tier 2 proposed projects augment or extend the distribution of existing populations; others are designed to collect data for research and/or management purposes.

I am pleased to provide this information to update the Commission on the significant amount of animal capture and movement this agency conducts. This trap and transplant work provides scientific information and data that support CPW's programs to perpetuate the wildlife resources of this state. I am very proud of this work and want to acknowledge the dedication and effort our biologists provide every year to conduct these operations, ensuring animal welfare and human safety. I will be pleased to address any questions or concerns you have, or to provide additional information for any of these capture operations.

Thank You.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Reid Dewalt", written over the CC list.

CC: Reid Dewalt
Jeff Ver_Steeg
Brian Dreher
Matt Eckert

2022-2023 ANIMAL CAPTURE AND MOVEMENT PROPOSALS - ALL SPECIES							
SPECIES	PROJECT TIER	FUNDING SOURCE	PROPOSED RELEASE SITE	AREA	REGION	PROPOSED SOURCE/NUMBER	COMMENTS
BLACK-FOOTED FERRET (BFF)							
BFF	3	GOCO, SCTF, Section 6	Walker Ranch, Pueblo County	11	SE	National Black-footed Ferret Conservation Center/ up to 30 ferrets	Black-footed ferrets will be released in accordance with the Recovery Plan and the Programmatic Safe Harbor Agreement. The proposed allocation for Fall 2022: 10 kits.
BFF	3	GOCO, SCTF, Section 6	Southern Plains Land Trust, Bent County	12	SE	National Black-footed Ferret Conservation Center/ up to 30 ferrets	Black-footed ferrets will be released in accordance with the Recovery Plan and the Programmatic Safe Harbor Agreement. The proposed allocation for Fall 2022: 25 kits.
BFF	3	GOCO, SCTF, Section 6	May Ranch, Prowers County	12	SE	National Black-footed Ferret Conservation Center/ up to 30 ferrets	Black-footed ferrets will be released in accordance with the Recovery Plan and the Programmatic Safe Harbor Agreement. The proposed allocation for Fall 2022: 15 kits.
MERRIAMS WILD TURKEY (MWT)							
MWT	1	wildlife cash, Federal Aid	Near Nathrop, Colorado in GMU 56	13	SE	Canon City South District / #TBD	Intra-area transplant of nuisance turkeys. Release location offers over-the-counter turkey hunting on BLM land.
MWT	1	wildlife cash, Federal Aid	Within current population or establish new population in GMU 201	6	NW	Meeker / 50-75 turkeys	The town of Meeker has experienced a large turkey population increase over the last 5 years. Conflict birds will be moved into areas with greater hunter accessibility within the existing population. Also there is potential to start a new population in GMU 201 along Beaver Creek on SWA within area 6.
MWT	1	wildlife cash, Federal Aid	GMU 34, 43, 44, and 444	8	NW	Area 8 / 40+ turkeys	This transplant moves nuisance birds within Area 8. Birds have tested positive in some GMUs for <i>Mycoplasma</i> so we would only be moving birds within same population. Additional birds could be disease tested to determine suitability for transplanting to other populations or new habitat.
RIO GRANDE WILD TURKEY (RGWT)							
RGWT	1	wildlife cash, Federal Aid	Timpas Creek, Rocky Ford, McClelland, and Melon Valley SWAs	12	SE	Various sites along or near the Big Sandy drainage including the towns of Limon, Hugo, Seibert, and Ramah / #TBD	Conflict turkey release site, priority 1 for Area 12. Includes GMUs 124, 125, and 129. Limited spring and fall hunting.
RGWT	1		Purgatoire SWA	12	SE		Conflict turkey release site, priority 2 for Area 12. GMU 130. Limited hunting spring and fall.
RGWT	1		Queens, Granada and Holly SWAs; Nee Noshe reservoir	12	SE		Conflict turkey release site, priority 3 for Area 12. GMUs 126, 127 and 139. Limited hunting spring and fall.
RGWT	1		John Martin and Ft. Lyon SWAs	12	SE		Conflict turkey release site, priority 4 for Area 12. GMUs 126 and 146. OTC hunting spring and limited fall.
RGWT	1		Two Buttes SWA	12	SE		Conflict turkey release site, priority 5 for Area 12. GMU 139, Limited hunting spring and fall.
RGWT	1		South Republican SWA	14	SE		Conflict turkey release site, priority 1 for Area 14. GMUs 103 and 109. Limited hunting spring and fall.
COLUMBIAN SHARP-TAILED GROUSE (CSTG)							

2022-2023 ANIMAL CAPTURE AND MOVEMENT PROPOSALS - ALL SPECIES							
SPECIES	PROJECT TIER	FUNDING SOURCE	PROPOSED RELEASE SITE	AREA	REGION	PROPOSED SOURCE/NUMBER	COMMENTS
CSTG	1	wildlife cash, Federal Aid, GOCO	To be determined by the CSTG Transplant Committee	TBD	NW, SW	Areas 6 and 10 / 40 males	Placeholder - In previous years, proposals for potential release sites have been submitted at various sites within the NW and SW Regions. A new round of site assessments would need to be completed and ranked by the CSTG Transplant Committee before any transplant moves forward. The site for a new release has not been finalized, but will likely be selected from existing proposed sites (submitted as part of the previous CSTG transplant review effort that culminated in selection of the Wolcott/State Bridge site in 2016) or potential new sites. The Wolcott/State Bridge CSTG transplant was completed in the spring of 2018 and no other transplant work has been conducted since then. Pending release site selection, a new CSTG transplant is tentatively planned for fall of 2023. CSTG lek counts in the core source population (in Areas 6 and 10) have been trending upward since 2018 and lek counts in spring 2021 were the second highest on record. Any transplant will follow the process established in the Colorado and rangewide transplant guidelines, with an initial fall release of males, followed by three consecutive spring releases of females and a few additional males. Alternatively, staff will consider an augmentation effort of a previously transplanted population to give a population a boost similar to the effort being planned for Nevada.
CSTG	1	wildlife cash, Federal Aid, GOCO	Bull Run Basin, Elko County, Nevada			Areas 6 and 10 / 20 females, preferably yearlings	Nevada Department of Wildlife has requested 20 female CSTG (ideally yearling females based on documented increased survival rates from previous transplants), for transplant into their Bull Run Basin population in northeastern Nevada. This population was re-established in NV with 215 CSTG (134 females, 41 males) from 2013 to 2017. The population has held steady, but not grown. NDOW staff are hopeful this augmentation will improve growth rates and genetic variation to expand the population size and distribution.
ROCKY MOUNTAIN BIGHORN SHEEP (RMBS)							
RMBS	1	Auction & Raffle, wildlife cash, Federal Aid	Smokey Rim Ranch S-61	12	SE	BHS in Purgatoire & Chacuaco Canyons (GMU S-61) - 20 total BHS	Option C of the bighorn sheep access program (BSAP) allows for the transplant of RMBS onto private property to establish herds for future hunting opportunities. In 2021, the owners of Smokey Rim Ranch approached CPW with interest in enrolling their ranch into Option C of the program. CPW staff conducted site visits, and we determined that the ranch has suitable RMBS habitat within the property boundaries. CPW staff will be translocating RMBS from the Purgatoire and Chacuaco Canyons to Smokey Rim Ranch.
RMBS	1	Auction & Raffle, wildlife cash, Federal Aid	South Hardscrabble S-35 (Proposed for 2023-2024)	11	SE	S-34 Rampart / 20-25 BHS	Proposed transplant in 2023-2024. The Junkins Park fire (19,000 acres burned in 2016) opened up RMBS habitat in the South Hardscrabble area. Funding for the transplant has been secured through Auction & Raffle Funds. CPW is proposing a transplant of 20-25 RMBS to establish a herd in the burn area. This is the first level priority for a Rampart RMBS source transplant. The transplant area currently includes RMBS GMU S-35, but may also include the southern GMU boundary of S-49.
MOOSE							
M	1	wildlife cash, Federal Aid	GMUs 4,5	6,10	NW	Any Area / #TBD	Areas 6 and 10 would like to supplement the existing moose population within GMUs 4 and 5. Nuisance moose could be accepted from any Area.
SWIFT FOX							
Swift Fox	2	Ft. Belknap	Ft. Belknap Indian Community, MT	TBD	NE, SE	up to 40 animals, Sept & Oct 2023	Ft. Belknap is requesting foxes from Colorado for their swift fox reintroduction program in 2023. They are also requesting foxes from Wyoming and Kansas. Colorado supplied fox in 2021 from the SE Region.
Tier 1 = Senior Biologist and AWM approval Tier 2 = Regional Manager and Terrestrial Section Manager approval Tier 3 = Director and Commission approval							

2021-2022 TRANSLOCATION PROGRESS - ALL SPECIES

SPECIES	PROJECT TIER	FUNDING SOURCE	RELEASE SITE	AREA	REGION	SOURCE/NUMBER PROPOSED	PROGRESS
BLACK-FOOTED FERRET (BFF)							
BFF	3	GOCO, SCTF, Section 6	Walker Ranch, Pueblo County	11	SE	National Black-footed Ferret Conservation Center/ up to 30 ferrets	Black-footed ferrets will be released in accordance with the Recovery Plan and the Programmatic Safe Harbor Agreement. The proposed allocation for Fall 2021: 15 kits.
BFF	3	GOCO, SCTF, Section 6	May Ranch, Prowers County	12	SE	National Black-footed Ferret Conservation Center/ up to 30 ferrets	Black-footed ferrets will be released in accordance with the Recovery Plan and the Programmatic Safe Harbor Agreement. The proposed allocation for Fall 2021: 20 kits.
BFF	3	GOCO, SCTF, Section 6	Rocky Mountain Arsenal	5	NE	National Black-footed Ferret Conservation Center/ up to 30 ferrets	Black-footed ferrets will be released in accordance with the Recovery Plan and the Programmatic Safe Harbor Agreement. The proposed allocation for Fall 2021: 24 kits.
BFF	3	GOCO, SCTF, Section 6	Soapstone Prairie Natural Area, CO	4	NE	National Black-footed Ferret Conservation Center/ up to 30 ferrets	Black-footed ferrets will be released in accordance with the Recovery Plan and the Programmatic Safe Harbor Agreement. The proposed allocation for Fall 2021: 18 kits.
WHITE-TAILED PTARMIGAN (WTPT)							
WTPT	2	New Mexico	New Mexico	TBD	All	To be determined / Up to 40 ptarmigan	Twenty-four birds (15 females and 9 males) were transplanted to the Pecos Wilderness in Sept. 2021. As of August 2022, 6 males and 6 females were still alive. No reproduction was documented at the site.
MERRIAMS WILD TURKEY (MWT)							
MWT	1	wildlife cash, Federal Aid	Within current population or establish new population in GMU 12	6	NW	Meeker / 40 turkeys	The town of Meeker has experienced a large turkey population increase over the last 5 years. Conflict birds will be moved into areas were moved to an area with greater hunter accessability within the exisiting population.
MWT	1	wildlife cash, Federal Aid	GMU 34, 43, 44, and 444	8	NW	Area 8 / 40+ turkeys	No birds were moved last year.
MWT	1	wildlife cash, Federal Aid	Near Nathrop, Colorado in GMU 56	13	SE	Canon City South District / 58 total	Intra-area transplant of nuisance turkeys. 32 were moved to 38.69437 -106.06650; 26 were moved to 38.74323 -106.08999.
RIO GRANDE WILD TURKEY (RGWT)							
RGWT	1	wildlife cash, Federal Aid	South Republican SWA	14	SE	Town of Hugo/45 turkeys	Conflict turkey release site, priority 1 for Area 14. GMUs 103 and 109. Limited hunting spring and fall. Birds were moved to the South Republican State Wildlife Area.
COLUMBIAN SHARP-TAILED GROUSE (CSTG)							
CSTG	1	wildlife cash, Federal Aid, GOCO	To be determined by the CSTG Transplant Committee	TBD	NW, SW	Areas 6 and 10 / None	No birds were moved due to low population numbers in the source population.
ROCKY MOUNTAIN BIGHORN SHEEP (RMBS)							
RMBS	1	Auction & Raffle, wildlife cash, Federal Aid	S-5 Beaver Creek SWA	13	SE	S-34 Rampart / 21 BHS	In February 2022, BHS were trapped with a drop-net at the Rampart site. CPW veterinarian staff were present to assist with any injuries and collect nasal swabs and blood samples for disease and pregnancy testing. In total 26 sheep were sampled. Of those sampled, 21 were selected for translocation to Beaver Creek. This included 3 rams, 13 ewes and 5 lambs. All 13 ewes were pregnant. GPS/VHF tracking collars were fitted to 7 of the adult ewes for monitoring purposes.
RMBS	1	wildlife cash, Federal Aid	South Hardscrabble S-35	11	SE	S-34 Rampart / 20-25 BHS	Funding for post-transplant monitoring has been secured through an Auction & Raffle grant. Transplant is scheduled for winter 2023-2024.
MOOSE							
M	1	wildlife cash, Federal Aid	GMUs 4,5	6,10	NW	Any Area / #TBD	No conflict moose were moved into these areas last year.

Tier 1 = Senior Biologist and AWM approval

Tier 2 = Regional Manager and Terrestrial Section Manager approval

Tier 3 = Director and Commission approval



ANIMAL CAPTURE ONLY PROJECTS - BIG GAME

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ANIMAL CAPTURE ONLY PROJECTS - BIG GAME

SPECIES	PROJECT TIER	FUNDING SOURCE	YEAR START & END	AREA(s)	REGION	NUMBER	LOCATION/SOURCE	COMMENTS
MG	1	wildlife cash, Federal Aid	2014-ongoing	1	NE	up to 10	Mt Evans GMU G4	This goals of this project are to 1) determine movements and seasonal use patterns of mountain goats; 2) compare current seasonal use and movements to those documented in the 1980s; and 3) monitor mountain goats for a disease similar to clinical symptoms observed in fall 2013. Collars have been deployed, but up to 5 more may be deployed to maintain sample size if needed.
MOUNTAIN LION								
ML	3	wildlife cash, Federal Aid	2017-2026	11, 13	SE	up to 25	Salida to Walsenburg L11 and L16	This study is part of the SE deer predation study. Lion populations will be manipulated to determine the effect of predation on deer demographics. As part of this we will monitor the lion population to determine the effects of lion hunting on lion demographic parameters and nuisance incident levels.
ML	3	wildlife cash, Federal Aid	2020-2030	9	NW	10	Middle Park	This is a on-going project in response to the approval of the West Slope Lion Plan to estimate winter lion density within representative habitats on the West Slope and validate the RSF values used in the plan. The winter of 2020-21 winter was the first year where staff captured, collared, and marked 27 lions. Last winter staff captured and collared 10 lions to replace collars that had failed or collars that had been recovered from mortalities or left the study areas. This winter staff will capture lions to maintain sample size and deploy cameras in a grid net work to collect "resight" data.
ML	3	wildlife cash, Federal Aid	2021-2031	16	SW	20-25	Gunnison Basin	This is a new project in response to the approval of the West Slope Lion Plan to estimate winter lion density within representative habitats on the West Slope and validate the RSF values used in the plan. This first winter will be capture and collaring of lions and then next winter will capture lions to maintain sample size and deploy cameras in a grid net work to collect "resight" data.
PRONGHORN								
PH		Auction and Raffle	2020-2023	9	NW	11	Middle Park	In the winter of 2020-21, 40 pronghorn were collared in Middle Park to better understand habitat utilization, distribution and migration patterns. Eleven pronghorn were captured last winter to redeploy collars recovered from mortalities. This winter staff may be deploying 10 collars that have been recovered from mortalities again.

ANIMAL CAPTURE ONLY PROJECTS - CONSERVATION SPECIES

SPECIES	PROJECT TIER	FUNDING SOURCE	YEAR START & END	AREA	REGION	NUMBER	LOCATION/SOURCE	COMMENTS
BATS								
Bats	1	SCTF, wildlife cash	2011-ongoing	various	All	TBD	Statewide	Capture and release adhering to standard inventory protocols including mist netting and harp trapping may be conducted. Most efforts would be related to the Bats in Inactive Mines Project (BIMP), white-nosed syndrome detection, and baseline data collection on selected State Wildlife Areas, State Parks and CPW conservation easements.
Bats	1	NPS grant	2020-2023	Monument	NW	40 marks	Colorado National Monument and surrounding area	Project was supposed to take start in summer 2020, but due to COVID the project was delayed till last year. Placed 20 transmitters on <i>Myotis yumanensis</i> and <i>Myotis volans</i> to locate autumn and winter roosts to determine transmission risk of white-nosed syndrome in the summer of 2020-21 and currently trapping and deploying another 20 transmitters by the end of August 2022.
SMALL MAMMALS								
various	1	wildlife cash	2013-ongoing	TBD	NE, NW & SE	TBD	SWA, State Parks, and conservation easements	Small mammals will be captured and released as part of standard survey protocols on selected State Wildlife Areas, State Parks, and conservation easements to establish baseline species occurrence and relative abundance.
Prairie Dogs	1	SCTF, wildlife cash	2011-ongoing	various	Statewide	500 Blacktailed 300 Gunnison's 300-500 White-tailed	Statewide	Plague vaccine evaluation: involves approximately 500 black-tailed prairie dogs, 300 Gunnison's prairie dogs, 300-500 white-tailed prairie dogs, and potentially 1,000 other small rodents associated with study sites.
BIRDS								
BE - Bald Eagle	1	GOCO, wildlife cash, Audubon grant	2020-2024	2, 3, 4, 5	NE	25-35	Public and private lands along the northern Front Range urban/suburban corridor	Avian Research project to measure demography and space use of bald eagles in relation to land use changes and disturbance sources. Cooperators include Bird Conservancy of the Rockies, county and local governments, and landowners.
Eastern Black Rail	1	SCTF, HB-1326	2022-2023	12	SE	5-20	SWA's and State Parks in Area 12	Potential capture and banding of eastern black rails in order to identify territorial individuals/pairs in camera studies and/or apply radio transmitters to inform habitat use within SE Colorado marshes. This project capture be part of potential graduate research project and would require permit from FWS.
Gray Wolf								
Wolf	1	wildlife cash, Activity 1815	2022 - ongoing	10	NW	2-5	North Park wolf pack	Wolf monitoring will aid North Park research addressing wolf-prey relationships. Given the nature of trapping wolves, a specific numerical goal cannot be provided, but trapping will cease once the needs of the research project are met; helicopter captures are preferred over trapping when possible.

ANIMAL CAPTURE ONLY PROJECTS - SMALL GAME AND WATERFOWL

SPECIES	PROJECT	FUNDING SOURCE	YEAR	AREA	REGION	NUMBER	LOCATION/SOURCE	COMMENTS
	TIER		START & END					
MOURNING DOVE								
MDOV	1	wildlife cash, Federal Aid	2007-ongoing	various	All	1,000	Statewide	Capture and banding of approximately 1,000 mourning doves in collaboration with the USFWS adaptive management program.
BOBWHITE QUAIL								
BWQL	1	wildlife cash, Federal Aid	2016-2023	3	NE	100	Tamarack SWA	Band and radio-mark 100 bobwhite quail as part of an ongoing Avian Research project to measure non-breeding demographic rates and response to habitat management.
WATERFOWL								
WFWL	1	wildlife cash, Federal Aid	2018-2023	10	NW	1,000	North Park	Long-term annual late summer duck banding to inform and evaluate wetland habitat conservation actions in North Park.
BOBCAT								
Bobcat	1	wildlife cash, Federal Aid	2022-2028	6	NW	30 each in GMUs 10 and 22	Piceance Basin and north of Rangely	Beginning bobcat capture for a 5-year study to address factors associated with density and fur harvest, and address improved population monitoring approaches.
Tier 1 = Senior Biologist and AWM approval Tier 2 = Regional Manager and Terrestrial Section Manager approval Tier 3 = Director and Commission approval								