

Colorado Wolf Restoration and Management Plan Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) to Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW)

Report on Funding Recommendations June 2022

The following funding recommendations reflect the consensus of the Wolf Restoration and Management Plan Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG).

The SAG recognizes that wolf restoration and management will be accompanied by both positive economic benefits and localized personal negative economic impacts, especially to our more rural neighbors. To the extent possible we all should try to equitably distribute those positive economic benefits and mitigate the negative impacts.

Short-term and long-term funding will be necessary for a variety of needs related to wolf restoration and management, including but not limited to: staff capacity, reintroduction logistics, management and conflict minimization materials and activities, depredation compensation, monitoring and research, and education and outreach. We urge all to remember that conservation and equity take time and consistent energy and funding.

Proposition 114 asks the General Assembly to ‘make such appropriations as are necessary to fund the programs authorized and obligations... and... may adopt such other legislation as will facilitate the implementation of the restoration of gray wolves to Colorado.’

The SAG is concerned that the ongoing costs of the wolf restoration and management program have not been fully anticipated by the [fiscal note](#) supporting CRS 33-2-105.8 in SB21-105, and that funding to address these costs has not been fully identified. Growth in future annual funding needs should be anticipated due to growth in the wolf management program.

The SAG recommends that opportunities for private donations be actively marketed through a communications campaign; that a full list of potential public and private funding sources that can be used for wolf restoration and management, along with their restrictions, be documented and maintained; and that funding sources that cannot be used for wolf restoration and management also be clearly communicated.

To support and sustain a successful wolf restoration and management plan that maximizes positive benefits and minimizes and mitigates negative impacts, the SAG urges full funding for the program.

Specifically, the SAG recommends:

1. **Annual Appropriations.** Until such time as a sustainable funding model is established, the SAG suggests that full funding be provided by the Colorado State Legislature; this number would be estimated annually by CPW based on wolf-related needs. A preliminary estimate would be an amount of up to \$3 million annually for funding of directly related expenses. This number could

potentially be more when considering adjacent expenses that are indirectly or partially related to wolf restoration and management, for example research and communications.

2. **Wolf Cash Fund or Wolf-Specific Account.** To provide long-term, sustainable funding, the SAG suggests exploration of the use of an existing cash fund, the creation of a new wolf restoration and management cash fund, or the creation of a wolf-specific account. Annual appropriations do not guarantee multi-year, long-term funding; establishment or leveraging of an existing cash fund or other wolf-specific account early in and/or prior to wolf reintroduction can help to secure public and private funding while interest is high, so that it can be available when needed in both the short- and long-term. The SAG suggests that this fund or account be provided initial seed funding by the Colorado State Legislature, and then be supported by a variety of public and private funding sources. Marketing of opportunities for private donations should be conducted through a communications campaign. CPW may consider opportunities for the fund or account to support both holistic, unrestricted funding needs as well as separate, program-specific needs for compensation and nonlethal conflict minimization. Any cash fund or account should not compromise CPW's enterprise status.

3. **External Endowment Fund.** To enhance opportunities to identify and fundraise from external sources, the SAG encourages support for the development of an external endowment that is managed and administered separately, but with input and partnership from Colorado Parks and Wildlife. The endowment fund would specifically support nonlethal aspects of wolf management, as well as other programs to explore and develop the projected positive economic benefits that can come with the restoration of a keystone wildlife species. The specific terms and governance of the endowment will need to be determined, including whether and how the fund provides supplemental funding to CPW and/or external entities for nonlethal wolf management and conflict minimization activities. Full funding for the agency's annual budget and programs should be provided directly to the agency through public funding and should not be reliant on the external endowment. Opportunities for private donations would be actively marketed through a communications campaign. SAG members are interested to support next steps for continued exploration and creation of an endowment.

About the Stakeholder Advisory Group

The Colorado Wolf Restoration and Management Plan Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) offers a broad range of perspectives and experience to inform the social implications of wolf restoration and management strategies for the Colorado Wolf Restoration and Management Plan. SAG members were selected by Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) for diversity in demographics, backgrounds, geographic regions, perspectives, and knowledge in order to constitute a vibrant, diverse and inclusive stakeholder voice in the planning process. The SAG is comprised of 17 voting members and 3 non-voting members. CPW is responsible for writing the Wolf Restoration and Management Plan. The Parks and Wildlife Commission (PWC) serves as the decision-making body responsible for approving the Wolf Restoration and Management Plan. The SAG serves in an advisory capacity to Colorado Parks and Wildlife, offering non-binding input into the development of plan content. The SAG is not a decision-making body and has no authority on wolf management policy, research or operations.

The SAG strives to make decisions based on the consensus of all voting members, where possible. Where the SAG is able to achieve consensus, its input will receive priority consideration by CPW. Per the SAG charter, consensus is defined as general agreement that is shared by all the people in a group; it reflects a recommendation, option or idea that all participants can support or abide by, or, at a minimum, to which they do not object. In other words, consensus is a recommendation, option or idea that all can live with. Where consensus does not exist, a vote will be taken and the votes of individual members will be recorded along with a summary of the rationale for supportive and dissenting views.

Stakeholder Advisory Group Members:

Voting Members:

- Matt Barnes
- Donald Broom
- Jenny Burbey
- Bob Chastain
- Renee Deal
- Adam Gall
- Dan Gates
- John Howard
- Francie Jacober
- Lenny Klinglesmith
- Darlene Kobobel
- Tom Kourlis
- Brian Kurzel
- Hallie Mahowald
- Jonathan Proctor
- Gary Skiba
- Steve Whiteman

Ex Officio Members:

- Dan Gibbs, Executive Director, Colorado Department of Natural Resources
- Les Owen, Division Director, Colorado Department of Agriculture (*designee of Kate Greenberg, Commissioner, Colorado Department of Agriculture*)
- Heather Dugan, Acting Director, Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Stakeholder Advisory Group report developed with third party facilitation from Keystone Policy Center.