Interview Guardrails

To maintain our non-partisan status and comply with state law, when representing the Colorado Wildlife Council, we must strictly avoid the following topics during interviews:

1. Political Policy & Ballot Initiatives

- **The Rule:** Do not express an opinion on specific legislation, ballot initiatives (e.g., predator bans or reintroduction programs), or political candidates.
- **The Reason:** As a DNR-associated body, we cannot use state resources or work time for personal political activities. If you speak on these on your own time, you must explicitly state you are speaking in a personal capacity and not on behalf of the Council or the DNR.

2. Promoting License Sales

- **The Rule:** Do not "sell" the audience on buying a license or promote the purchase of hunting/fishing permits as a call to action.
- **The Reason:** The CWC's mandate is education, not marketing for license revenue. Any discussion of licenses should be kept strictly to the usage of fees (the $1.50) and how those fees fund conservation science.

3. CPW Operational Issues

- **The Rule:** Avoid answering questions about CPW law enforcement, park fees, or specific land management decisions.
- **The Reason: Distinct Mission.** While the CWC is housed within CPW, we have different goals. CPW handles the "how" of wildlife management; the Council handles the "why" via public education. Redirect these questions back to CPW's main communications office.

The "Golden Rule" Response

If an interviewer asks a political or tricky question, use this bridge:

> *"The Council is a non-partisan educational body. My role is to talk about how the license fees from our sportspeople fund the science that keeps Colorado wild for everyone. For questions on specific legislation, I'd refer you to the CPW communications office."*

Talking Points: The Colorado Wildlife Council

1. The $1.50 Investment: Small Fee, Big Impact

- **Direct Funding:** Every time you buy a hunting or fishing license, $1.50 goes into the Wildlife Management Public Education Fund.
- **A "By Sportsmen" Fund:** This money is legally protected and cannot be used for general government spending. It is managed by a council of your peers to ensure your voice is heard.
- **Educating the Public:** Most Coloradans don't hunt or fish. This $1.50 allows the Council to run media campaigns that show the general public how your license fees protect 960+ species and keep Colorado wild.

2. Why We Exist & What We Do

- **Established in 1998:** Created by the legislature at the request of hunters and anglers to bridge the gap between rural traditions and a growing urban population.
- **Public Awareness:** We act as the marketing arm for the sporting community. We use TV, social media, and billboards to explain that wildlife requires science-based management, not just "leaving it alone."
- **Protecting Your Heritage:** By building public support for wildlife management, we ensure that hunting and fishing remain protected activities for future generations.

3. The Impact on Colorado

- **Economic Engine:** Hunting and fishing contribute over $3.25 billion to Colorado's economy every year and support over 25,000 jobs.
- **Tax-Free Conservation:** Because you pay for management through licenses, the general taxpayer doesn't have to. We make sure the public knows that sportsmen and women are the primary funders of conservation.

4. Call to Action: Be an Ambassador

- **Share the Story:** Don't let your $1.50 do all the work. When you're at the trailhead or talking to non-sporting friends, mention that your license fees fund the science that keeps Colorado's ecosystems healthy.
- **Amplify the Message:** Follow the Colorado Wildlife Council on social media and share our "Science in the Wild" posts. Your share helps our message reach people who might never visit a bait shop or an archery range.
- **Stay Informed:** Visit COWildlifeCouncil.org to see the latest campaigns your money is funding.
- **Speak Up:** Be an educated voter and participant in public meetings. When wildlife management is discussed, remind your community that hunters and anglers have been the stewards of this land since 1897.

The Bottom Line: Your $1.50 isn't just a fee, it's a seat at the table. It ensures that while you're in the field, we are in the public eye, protecting the future of the sports we love.

Quick-Reference Fact Sheet

Catagory	Key Point
The Fee	$1.50 surcharge on every hunting/fishing license.
Legal Basis	Created by the CO Legislature in 1998 (State Statute).
The Funding	Zero tax dollars. Funding comes from hunters & anglers.
Economic Impact	$3.25 billion annually to the Colorado economy.
Biodiversity	Fees help manage 960+ species (not just game animals).
Key Audience	The "Adventurous Environmentalist" (non-hunters who love the outdoors).
Primary Theme	"Supporting Science in the Wild" – conservation is funded by sportspeople.