



Wolf Restoration & Management Plan Public Outreach & Advisory Group Facilitation

Keystone Policy Center

Update to Parks and Wildlife Commission

January 2022


Advisory Groups

- Joint December 14-15 SAG & TWG meeting focused on livestock interactions and management in other states
- Meeting summaries & information about members and charter are available at <https://www.wolfengagementtco.org/>

COLORADO PARKS & WILDLIFE

Livestock Interactions

WOLF RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT PLAN; SUMMER 2021 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



CPW Livestock Damage Information:
The Game Damage Program is a Colorado Parks & Wildlife (CPW) prevention and reimbursement program that compensates ranchers, farmers and landowners for damage caused by big game animals.

CPW Game Damage Program History: Since the inception of the Game Damage Program in 1931, the original broad legal language has evolved to specify what game damage laws cover. Twenty years ago, the program was expanded to include damage prevention.

Game Damage Program Funding: The program is funded by the appropriation of sportspeople's dollars from the Game Cash Fund. This funds the two key components of CPW's Game Damage Program, damage compensation and damage prevention.

What is considered damage? Damage is any change in the quality or quantity of any property which reduces its value. Damage shall include all costs necessary to restore property to its condition immediately prior to damage, to replace it with property of equal value or to compensate for restoration or replacement.

The state is liable for damages to livestock caused by big game wildlife and wolves: Up to \$5,000 per head of livestock injured or killed, and damages to livestock are limited to physical trauma resulting in injury or death.

The State is not liable for: Livestock damages caused by coyote, bobcats or domestic dogs; damage to motor vehicles caused by wildlife; injury or death of any person caused by wildlife.

Value of Livestock: Payment for all livestock claims are based on sales receipts/contracts. This excludes transportation, yardage, feed, and sales costs. If sales receipts/contracts are not furnished with claims, payment of calf, lamb and adult range sheep claims are based on prices from USDA-AMS reports. Payment for all other livestock claims are based on the fair market value at the time of loss.

Damage Claim Process


- Contact your local CPW office and ask to speak to a District Wildlife Manager (DWM).
- DWM will conduct an on-site inspection, provide the claim forms and answer claim procedure questions.
- Claim forms must be fully completed and submitted to CPW.
- The claim is recommended for either approval or denial.
- All denied claims are reviewed by the Parks and Wildlife Commission.

Issues to be addressed through the gray wolf restoration & management planning process

- Development of a depredation compensation program.
- Roles and responsibilities for investigation.
- Compensation rates and format.
- Development of conflict minimization Best Management Practices.
- Consideration for development of cost share programs to encourage conflict minimization practices.
- Development of prescriptive management of conflict wolves (also in Wolf Management) - for example, non-lethal and lethal control methods. Generally, a conflict wolf is any wolf that has been confirmed to have been involved with a human or livestock conflict.
- Funding Sources.

What we want to know from you

- What suggestions do you have for conflict minimization best practices?
- What suggestions do you have for compensation programs?
- What suggestions do you have for management of conflict wolves?
- What concerns or questions do you have?



SAG Hazing Regulation Feedback

- Support for hazing of wolves as tool to reduce the potential for livestock depredation by wolves.
- Support the prohibition on causing injury to wolves.
- Feedback and suggestions on various related topics.




SAG Restoration Logistics Feedback

- Consensus in support of/without objection to TWG recommendations on capture and animal handling, reintroduction technique, and reintroduction time of year.
- Also provided feedback on considerations for where wolves could be released, number of release sites/areas, and pace of reintroduction.

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Wolf Restoration

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Status of gray wolves in Colorado

- Native to Colorado and once lived in every county of the state.
- Were eliminated from the state in the 1940s.
- Have been documented to move from populations in northern states into Colorado.
- In June 2021, CPW documented the first confirmed litter of pups in the state since the 1940s.
- Wolves were listed as Federally Endangered in the U.S until January 2021 when they were delisted nationally.
- Gray wolves in Colorado remain a State Endangered species; killing a wolf in Colorado is a crime punishable with jail time, fines and/or the loss of hunting/fishing license privileges.

Other gray wolf reintroductions

- Conducted in Yellowstone National Park and Central Idaho in 1995-1996.
- Hard-released in Idaho (open cages and release animals immediately) and soft-released in Yellowstone (conditioned in pens and released after several weeks of adjustment to surroundings).
- Mexican wolves (a separate subspecies) have been reintroduced into Arizona, New Mexico, and Mexico.
- Other wolf reintroduction programs have occurred in areas of the Great Lakes.

Gray wolf biology and habitat needs


- Habitat generalists; do not have specific habitat requirements.
- Live and hunt in packs, made of a breeding pair and their offspring.
- Define their territories from other wolf packs.
- Breed in mid-February; give birth in a den in mid-late April to litters ranging from 4 to 10 pups.
- Pups move with the pack by late summer to early fall.
- Consume an average of ~10 pounds of meat per day per wolf, which equates to one elk per month.

Restoration logistics to be determined in the restoration and management plan

- Number of wolves and timeframe for reintroduction.
- Identification of characteristics of areas in Colorado where wolves could be released.
- Age and gender ratios of wolves to be reintroduced.
- Genetic considerations for reintroduced wolves.
- Veterinary care and travel logistics.
- Reintroduction techniques (hard versus soft releases).

What we want to know from you

- What specific suggestions do you have for restoration logistics to make gray wolf restoration in Colorado as successful as possible?
- What concerns or questions about wolf restoration logistics do you have?



Public Engagement

Summer 2021: 47 meetings plus online comment

- 16 in-person regional open houses (8 on the Western Slope)
- 17 in-person Western Colorado geographic focus groups
- 2 in-person Tribal consultations
- 10 virtual interest-based focus groups
- 2 virtual statewide town halls
- Online comment form and online open house materials
- Summarized in November 2021 report

Ongoing:

- Public comments at PWC & SAG meetings
- Online comment at www.wolfengagementco.org

Upcoming:

- Keystone and CPW staff are working on specifics for 2022 (public updates, Tribal consultations, other TBD) and 2023 (feedback on draft plan)



Stay Informed

<https://www.wolfengagementco.org/>

- Sign up for the Gray Wolf Reintroduction eNewsletter
- Information about public involvement opportunities and advisory groups
- Provide a written comment
- Link to additional information & educational resources on the CPW website
 - Including CPW education sessions on wolf planning topics available on CPW YouTube channel
- Updated regularly

