

REVISED DRAFT

Colorado Wolf Restoration and Management Plan



Photo of 1084F taken in North Park, Colorado, July 2019
Submitted anonymously to CPW



2023



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Parks and Wildlife Commission
6 April 2023

Executive Summary

- Updated to reflect changes made in the body of the plan



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Chapter 1 - Introduction and Background

- Removed reference to “~~citizen~~” and replaced with “*voter*”.



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Chapter 2 - Key Elements for Conservation and Management

- For accuracy, removed reference to impacts in North Park occurring to a single landowner.



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Chapter 3 - Reintroduction Implementation

- Made specific reference to Appendix B (TWG Report) for more detailed discussion and rationale for various considerations that will be taken into account when implementing wolf restoration.
- Incorporated language about utilizing a facility if animals are injured and deemed to not require humane euthanasia.
- Specified a survival rate of <70% for reintroduced wolves would initiate protocol review.



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Chapter 4 - Recovery of Wolves in Colorado

- For Phase 2 (State Threatened) included the criteria “...and are not so extremely restricted throughout all or a significant portion of their range that it may become endangered” for delisting.
- Removed Phase 4 from Table 2.
- Added language about Population Viability Analysis.
- Changed language for Long Term Management.



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Table 2. Start and end points of Phases describing wolf recovery *and management* in Colorado.

	Phase 1^a (denotes State Endangered status)	Phase 2 (denotes State Threatened status)	Phase 3 (denotes State delisted, nongame status)	Phase 4 (denotes State delisted, game status)
Start	Current	Minimum count of 50 wolves anywhere in Colorado for four successive years.	Phase 1 and Phase 2 conclusion requirements are both met. Phase 2 requirements may be met concurrently with Phase 1 requirements. ^d	Not required under CRS 33-2-105.8.
Conclude	Minimum count ^b of 50 wolves anywhere in Colorado for four successive years. ^c	Minimum count of 150 wolves anywhere in Colorado for two successive years ^c -OR- Minimum count of 200 wolves anywhere in Colorado with no temporal requirement <u>and are not so extremely restricted throughout all or a significant portion of their range that it may become endangered.</u>	No prescribed conclusion	Not required under CRS 33-2-105.8.
Action upon conclusion	Downlist to State Threatened.	Delist from Colorado State list of threatened and endangered species	Consider reclassifying to game species.	N/A
Criteria to move <u>back</u> into this phase	After downlisting, a minimum count of less than 50 wolves anywhere in Colorado for two <u>consecutive successive</u> years initiates review of relisting to State Endangered status.	After delisting, a population estimate with a lower 80% confidence limit of less than 150 wolves anywhere in Colorado for two <u>consecutive successive</u> years initiates review of relisting to State threatened status.	To be determined dependent on overall health and stability of the population	N/A



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Population Viability Analysis Language

At the time that the Parks and Wildlife Commission is considering delisting the species, CPW will conduct a Population Viability Analysis, or similar population modeling effort. This would be done to assess the extinction probability of the wolf population in Colorado, using Colorado-specific demographic parameters gained from research and monitoring the population in the state in the years between reintroduction and recovery. An effort similar to ODFW (2015) is suggested as a model for comparison.



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Long Term Management Language

~~Long Term Wolf Management: Phase 4 (Game species status):~~

~~“Phase 4” refers to when the wolf may potentially be classified as a game species in the future. Phase 4 is not required under CRS 33-2-105.8. There is no population objective for wolves in this Plan.~~

~~Long-term wolf management may include reclassification as a big game or furbearer species.~~

~~At some point in the future, the long term management of wolves in Colorado may need to be considered further than what is outlined in this plan. These discussions would only occur after wolves have successfully been recovered and removed from the State Threatened and Endangered list. The long-term management of wolves should be impact- and science-based, with consideration of biological and social science as well as economic and legal considerations.~~

~~Regulated public harvest of wolves by hunting during designated seasons is one tool that may help CPW manage wolf numbers and social acceptance of wolves upon delisting and reclassification as a game species. Necessarily, this phase can only be framed in general terms at this time because forecasting the details of this future is impossible using currently available information.~~ CPW will defer consideration of and development of specifics for long-term management until the beginning of Phase 3 at the earliest, when better information about wolves and their distribution in Colorado is available. Future management will be guided by the best available biological and social science data provided by CPW.

~~This plan takes no position as to whether the Parks and Wildlife Commission has the statutory authority to reclassify wolves as a game species or take other appropriate management actions.~~



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Chapter 5 - Wolf Management

- Minor edits to align with draft regulations (next agenda item)
- IMPACT: Agency wolf management. Take (non-lethal and lethal) by state and federal agents is allowed for efforts related to the release, tracking, monitoring, recapture, and management of wolves in Colorado; to aid or euthanize sick, injured, or orphaned wolves or to transfer to a licensed veterinarian for care; to dispose of a dead specimen; to salvage a dead specimen that may be used for scientific study; to aid in law enforcement investigations involving wolves; or to remove wolves with abnormal physical or behavioral characteristics from passing on or teaching those traits to other wolves. ~~scientific purposes (incidental or accidental take); to avoid conflict with human activities; to relocate a wolf to enhance survival and recovery prospects; to aid or euthanize sick, injured wolves; to salvage dead specimens; to aid in law enforcement investigations involving wolves; and to manage wolves with abnormal physical or behavioral characteristics.~~



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Chapter 6 - Wolf-Livestock Interactions

Base Compensation:

- The maximum compensatory limit per animal was raised from \$8,000 to **\$15,000**.
- Veterinarian costs were excluded from the \$15,000 per animal limit and will be reimbursed up to the FMV of animal, not to exceed **\$15,000**.



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Chapter 6 - Wolf-Livestock Interactions

Basic Compensation Ratio:

- Added a **two-tiered compensation ratio for yearling cattle**:
 - **1.25:1 ratio** if conflict minimization techniques are implemented.
 - **1:1 ratio** if conflict minimization are not implemented.

Itemized Production Losses:

- Added **“yearlings”** to livestock that may be claimed as missing.
- Added language **“self-certification or documentation demonstrating vaccination status”** for claiming missing animals.
- Removed **“veterinarian report/statement”** requirement for decreased conception rates and replaced with **“self-certification or ranch records”**.



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Revised Compensation Flowchart

Base Compensation

100% Fair Market Value for the type, age and weight of the animal for each confirmed wolf-livestock depredation.

*Additionally, cattle and sheep owners may seek additional compensation for missing calves, **yearlings** and sheep and/or production losses*

Option 1: Basic Compensation Ratio

What does this option compensate for?

- Missing calves/**yearlings**/sheep
- Does NOT apply to other livestock

OR

Option 2: Itemized Production Losses

What does this option compensate for?

- Missing calves/**yearlings**/sheep
- Decreased sheep/cattle weight gains
- Decreased sheep/cattle conception rates
- Does NOT apply to other livestock

Implementation of conflict minimization techniques?

Yes

No

Up to 7 missing calves/sheep can be claimed for each confirmed depredation, not to exceed the actual number of documented calves/sheep missing.

Up to 5 missing calves/sheep can be claimed for each confirmed depredation, not to exceed the actual number of documented calves/sheep missing.

Up to 1.25 missing yearlings can be claimed for each confirmed depredation, not to exceed the actual number of documented yearlings missing.

Up to 1 missing yearling can be claimed for each confirmed depredation, not to exceed the actual number of documented yearlings missing.

Livestock owner must provide specific baseline documentation to prove losses for all of the above.



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Chapter 7 - Monitoring, Ungulate Management, Research and Reporting

Added language about reporting and formal review of the plan:

Following the conclusion of the initial release, CPW staff will provide updates on the plan at least annually to the Commission on the plan's progress, but staff can be asked to provide an update at any time interval as there are new developments. A formal review of the progress of the plan will be scheduled five years after the completion of the reintroduction efforts.



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Chapter 8 - Education, Outreach and Agency Coordination

- Minor clean-up was done in this chapter.



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Chapter 9 - Funding

- No changes were made to this chapter.



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Glossary

- Nearly 4 pages and over 60 terms are defined in a newly added Glossary.



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Appendices

- No changes were made to any of the referenced appendices.



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CPW Photo by
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