

Colorado Sportsperson's Roundtable

Saturday, March 4th, 2023

10am - 4:15pm

Salida

Meeting Summary

The Colorado Sportsperson's Roundtable met in Salida on March 4th, 2023. Twenty three Roundtable members, nineteen CPW staff, three Parks & Wildlife Commissioners, and the Acting Director for Colorado Parks and Wildlife participated in this meeting. This document summarizes the group's discussion.

Acting Director's Welcome

Acting Director Heather Disney Dugan welcomed Roundtable members to the meeting and thanked everyone for their time and commitment. The Acting Director gave an overview of the agenda for the meeting, which included updates on State Wildlife Areas, the 2025-2029 Big Game Season Structure, wolf reintroduction, big game reporting, lead ammunition, and a presentation from the CPW aquatic biology team.

Changes to State Wildlife Areas

CPW Wildlife Officer Mark Lamb summarized the proposed regulation changes to state wildlife areas (SWAs). In recent years, SWAs have been seeing increasing amounts of non-consumptive recreational use, and in 2019, the CPW leadership team created a working group to discuss how to shift the usage of SWAs back to wildlife, wildlife-related recreation, and conservation.

To achieve this, CPW has implemented a series of changes. First, the Parks and Wildlife Commission (PWC) unanimously approved a measure requiring non-consumptive recreational visitors to purchase a SWA access pass. CPW has also been examining the state wildlife area regulations laid out in Chapter W-9, and staff have been cleaning the language and standardizing the regulations for clarity.

Lastly, staff has created a categorization method for Colorado SWAs. There are four categories which SWAs may be placed into, ranging from "places important to wildlife" (e.g. wildlife corridors), to properties which have little importance to wildlife and could support a number of different types of recreation. Categorizing state SWAs will improve CPW's ability to plan for their future management and this process will be presented to the PWC at the March 15th meeting. CPW expects this to be a 3-step regulatory process. More information will be available at [EngageCPW.com](https://engagecpw.com).

Updates to the Golden Gate Canyon State Park Management Plan

Golden Gate Canyon State Park will be releasing an updated management plan for public comment. The draft management plan is a 10-year plan that sets goals for the park and provides direction on preserving high quality visitor experiences into the future while conserving the park's natural and cultural resources. Golden Gate Canyon is one of the largest state parks near Denver that allows big game hunting, as well as angling and other recreational activities, making it an important site for sportspeople. The plan will be presented to the PWC on March 15th, and the public comment period will be open from March 15th to April 15th. More information is available on the [Golden Gate Canyon State Park webpage](#).

Colorado Outdoor Partnership Open Positions

Acting Director Dugan announced that the [Colorado Outdoor Partnership](#) has two open sportspeople positions and is accepting [applications](#). The deadline to apply for the CO-OP is Monday, March 13th. CO-OP members must attend at least four meetings a year, although they are encouraged to engage in other ways and with other organizations throughout the year.

The group discussed the recent resignations of three CO-OP members. The three former members provided important feedback on the CO-OP's operations, which will be helpful for the CO-OP moving forward.

Open Roundtable Discussion

Improving Sportsperson's Engagement

The Roundtable discussed the current state of wildlife management in Colorado and perceived challenges within the current political climate. Some Roundtable members expressed that sportspeople's voices are not being heard clearly by members of the Colorado legislature and that politics is intruding too far into wildlife management.

On the whole, Roundtable members expressed support for CPW staff. However, some members expressed doubts that CPW could operate at full capacity, considering the current policy-making process and the influence of out-of-state money in Colorado conservation. One member expressed dissatisfaction with the level of representation from sportspeople on the PWC and the CO-OP. Some members questioned whether Roundtable meetings and discussions have an impact on decision making. Acting Director Disney Dugan and other CPW leadership responded and assured members that the Roundtable is a valuable forum for CPW and that input received from the Roundtable is being heard.

Another member introduced the idea of inviting national hunting advocacy groups to observe Roundtable meetings in order to help advance sportspeople interests in Colorado. Members suggested that national groups have funding and influence that could advance Colorado hunting interests, and more support could help counteract the “coalition fatigue” that some members have been experiencing. National groups may be able to reduce the burden on unpaid volunteers by sending paid staff. However, another member argued that there are no obstacles to national organizations participating currently.

Potential Roundtable Improvements

One member suggested that the group elect a chair to speak for the Roundtable at PWC meetings or begin submitting materials to the PWC, to ensure that their viewpoints are being considered. Roundtable members agreed that Colorado sportspeople need to become more involved in hunting advocacy.

However, CPW staff reminded the group that the Roundtable charter stipulates that the Roundtable is not intended to advocate for specific positions on issues. Rather, the Roundtable serves as a forum for discussion.

One member suggested that a QR Code for EngageCPW be added to the CPW brochures during the next printing.

Wolf Restoration and Management

February 22nd marked the end of the public comment period for CPW’s draft wolf restoration and management plan. CPW received about 4,000 written comments and heard from over 200 in-person commenters during the course of the public comment period. Organizations such as counties, nonprofit groups, and tribal governments have also submitted feedback.

One member asked about the public input received related to wolf reintroduction. 49% of comments were from non-residents, and members of the Roundtable questioned how these comments are weighed by the PWC. Members emphasized that Colorado taxpayers are funding the wolf reintroduction, and therefore should have more weight in the decision making process. Staff informed the group that the PWC decides how comments are considered in their decision making.

The PWC has deliberated on the submitted public comments and given CPW staff direction on changes that should be made to the plan before the final version is approved. Potential changes to the plan include landowner permits for lethal take, compensation for lost animals, and reimbursement for veterinary bills. Final approval for the plan will be voted on at the May 3-4 meeting in Glenwood Springs.

Additionally, the [federal 10\(j\) rule](#) public comment process is underway. The draft 10(j) rule was released on February 17th, and is currently undergoing a 60-day public comment period. The draft plan provides a federal framework for Colorado to implement its own management plan, and provides flexibility for lethal take.

The USFWS will be holding a series of public meetings concerning the 10(j) rule, as listed below:

- Grand Junction Convention Center (Grand Junction, CO) on March 14th, at 5:30pm
- Moffat County Pavilion (Craig, CO) on March 15th, at 5:30pm
- Wattenberg Center (Walden, CO) on March 16th, at 5:30pm
- Virtual public meeting on March 22nd, at 5:30pm (registration link to be posted to the FWS website in early March)

The floor was opened for Roundtable members to pose questions concerning the wolf reintroduction plan. One member asked whether there had been validated depredation on the moose population from wolves in North Park. No moose depredation has been recorded, but depredation of deer, pronghorn, and elk have been recorded. However, CPW has launched a research project to actively monitor these populations, particularly their calf survival rates, and has had great success in collaring elk in North Park herds.

One member asked where the Southern Ute tribes stand on wolf reintroduction. CPW has met several times with tribal leadership to discuss the reintroduction plan. However, tribal leadership has changed during this time and CPW is in the process of updating the new leadership. The Southern Ute Indian Tribe (SUIT) and the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe (UMUT) submitted comments on wolf restoration to the Commission in February. The SUIT provided input on release areas (favoring the northern release site only), shared concerns about wolf impacts on hunting resources, requested regular updates on the status of wolves in Colorado, encouraged a more robust compensation and conflict minimization program supported by long term and consistent funding, and broader recognition of tribal sovereignty by developing a Tribal Management Plan or MOU for wolf management on the Southern Ute Indian reservation and within the Brunot area. The UMUT doesn't oppose wolf restoration in Colorado but wants to protect its sovereign immunity and capacity to manage its lands and natural resources. UMUT expressed concerns about wolf impacts to herds and livestock on its Tribal ranches, encouraged compensation for actual depredation costs and echoed the SUIT comments about needed funding, recognition of Tribal sovereignty and the need for regular updates on the status of wolves.

CPW has also reached out to other states in regards to sourcing wolves for the reintroduction.

Big Game License Distribution

In November 2022, the PWC approved an update to the limited license application and drawing allocation processes for deer, elk, pronghorn, and bear. The three-year preference point average used to determine the high-demand hunt codes that fall into the 80/20 allocation split will now be based on a rolling three-year average (with a one-year lag). This change will apply to the 2023 big game hunting season and adds about 1,200 deer and elk licenses to the 80/20 resident/nonresident high-demand hunt-codes and the hybrid draw, resulting in about \$86,000 in lost revenue.

Additionally, CPW staff proposed that the Division continue outreach related to allocation alternatives in early 2023, including an across-the-board split of 75/25 or updating the high-demand hunt code split from 80/20 to 90/10. The PWC also asked CPW staff to continue reviewing possible preference point changes including preference point banking and averaging group preference points. Members of the public were asked to provide input, either through a comment form or through an open-ended comment, regarding license distribution alternatives. During the 6-week comment period, CPW received a total of 2,819 completed comment forms and 214 short-form responses from members of the public.

In regards to support for preference points and group point averaging, respondents to the comment form were split, with about half supporting point banking and half opposed. Given that there was not strong support for changes and such changes may not address concerns like point creep, CPW staff do not recommend any preference point changes at this time.

In regards to license allocation, CPW is recommending a single 75% resident/25% nonresident across-the-board split. This would be a soft cap allocation; if resident demand did not meet the 75% license amount, the remaining licenses would become available for nonresidents.

Roundtable members indicated that residents would be willing to pay higher prices for tags, but were looking for a 90/10 or 80/20 across the board alternative to select on the comment form. CPW staff clarified that the PWC cannot change license prices, they are set through legislation.

One member of the Roundtable requested that future comment forms and surveys include data such as the projected lost revenue in the question to give respondents a better understanding of financial implications. In March, CPW will present the results of the comment form to the PWC, and if passed, the 75/25 allocation is projected to result in about \$1.4 million lost revenue annually.

Some Roundtable members had questions concerning CPW's budget, particularly considering the expected losses due to allocation change and wolf reintroduction. The legislature indicated that CPW will receive \$2.1 million for the reintroduction, some of which will go towards new positions involved in the reintroduction.

Big Game Season Structure

In January 2023, the PWC considered potential BGSS topics to discuss for the upcoming 2025-2029 cycle. The topics identified include OTC Rifle licenses, early season and rifle season dates, and weighted-point draw process modification. Extending the BGSS cycle to seven or ten years is also under consideration. Limitation of OTC archery licenses were discussed, but the PWC decided that OTC archery changes will be considered for 2024 hunting season.

There will be several ways to provide input for the 2025-2029 BGSS process. CPW has published a survey on EngageCPW, and there will be several in-person and virtual meetings, most likely in May and June of 2023. After the public engagement period has closed, CPW will share the results with the PWC in August, 2023.

Some members expressed unease with the accelerated timeline that the PWC proposed for OTC archery licenses. Members suggested that it could diminish the planning process to bring topics out of the BGSS process, and archery licenses are connected to many other aspects of season structure. However, some members of the Roundtable expressed support for limiting OTC archery licenses. Such a change would reduce crowding, according to some members, particularly since certain DAUs have already moved to limited licenses, which has increased pressure on other DAUs. There was some discussion on how OTC licenses affect landowners and landowner preference. Some members expressed their preference that landowner tags be drawn from nonresident allocated pools, rather than resident licenses.

Regional Caucus Updates

Roundtable members gave updates on each of their regional meetings. The NE region, NW region, and SW region submitted summaries of their meetings (see Appendices 2, 3, and 4).

In the Southeast region, the members discussed a number of topics during their annual meeting, including pronghorn herd management, aquatics, wolf reintroduction, the new Keep Colorado Wild pass, and the avian influenza that has been found in Colorado. They also discussed the recent license allocation updates and ramifications for OTC archery limitation.

Big Game Harvest Reporting

Brian Dreher, Terrestrial Section Manager, gave a presentation on the process for CPW's [Big Game Harvest Survey](#). Colorado's process involves a long-standing, voluntary, randomized participation survey that is regarded as one of the strongest state hunting surveys. CPW sends the survey to about 190,000 hunters each year, selecting respondents based in part on hunt codes and license numbers per hunt code. Sportspeople who hunt in smaller hunt codes are generally more likely to be polled to reduce bias. There are about 90,000 survey responses per year.

The BGHS informs CPW's decisions on population management and staff is very confident in the estimates that are received. The survey is not a mandatory report; mandatory reporting asks all hunters to report a successful or unsuccessful harvest, with regulatory ramifications for noncompliance. There is a general assumption that mandatory reporting results in better compliance, but this is not necessarily accurate. A mandatory check involves a physical examination of the harvested animal and while CPW does require mandatory reporting on certain species, there is only about a 40% compliance rate in Colorado for these species. Mandatory reportings require that a follow-up be performed for the non-compliant percentage of hunters.

Colorado does not feel that a mandatory reporting requirement would be beneficial since we already have a solid and cost-effective methodology. Some states have made the switch to mandatory reporting but have experienced growing pains. CPW will continue to monitor reporting methods in other states and consider changes as warranted.

Roundtable members asked clarifying questions about CPW survey methods. Some members indicated that they do not feel that CPW's current modeling estimates are adequate. However, CPW staff emphasized the strong scientific and statistical base for CPW's survey structure.

Discussion on Lead Ammunition in Hunting

Jonathan Boydston, CPW Public Involvement Specialist, led a discussion on lead ammunition in hunting. In Colorado, a bill has recently been introduced to the state legislature that would create a program allowing hunters to trade in their lead ammunition for non-lead ammunition. As written in the introduced bill, CPW would be responsible for administering such a program.

A different CPW roundtable group of mostly non-consumptive users called the Wildlife and Habitat Roundtable has expressed interest in this topic and inquired about the opinions of the Sportsperson's Roundtable.

Members stated that hunters are free to purchase non-lead ammunition currently, but the increased price will be a barrier to certain people. For there to be greater urgency to adopt non-lead ammunition in Colorado, there would need to be studies performed specifically on Colorado wildlife concerning the impacts of lead. Some Roundtable members suggested that the push for non-lead ammunition is an anti-hunting movement, rather than a wildlife advocacy push.

Another member added that many hunters are acknowledging that monometal ammunition (non-lead) offers some benefits over lead ammunition. Monometals do require different gear, but the market is moving towards monometals regardless. With the progression of steel shot

in waterfowl hunting over the years - since a Federal ruling that bans the use of lead in waterfowl hunting - manufacturers have produced new, improved options for non-toxic shot. Some Roundtable members agreed that the market is moving towards monometals naturally, and non-lead advocacy is a low priority.

The discussion was cut short for time, but Roundtable members were encouraged to email Jonathan Boydston if they had further thoughts to share.

Presentation on CPW Aquatic Management

Alex Townsend, Aquatic Biologist, gave a presentation on CPW's aquatic management in the Upper Arkansas River Basin (Appendix 5). CPW has aquatic biologists for both species conservation and sportfish, along with hatchery systems, an aquatic animal health lab, and an aquatic nuisance species team.

The Arkansas River now contains 100 miles of continuous Gold Medal water, which is the largest stretch of Gold Medal water in Colorado. Gold Medal water depends on the quality and quantity of fish per acre in a body of water, and CPW monitors our aquatic biomass measurements to record catastrophic and stochastic events. Gold Medal water also depends on population health. CPW uses fish stocking and breeding programs to ensure population health, and has recently begun stocking fish that are resistant to whirling disease.

In the Arkansas River, CPW provides trophy fishing opportunities in conjunction with nuisance species management. For example, tiger muskie (a trophy fish) was introduced in some bodies of water as a control predator to white suckers. CPW also performs cutthroat trout recovery and has launched explorations of backcountry waterways to improve available habitats and fishing opportunities. CPW has also launched a cutthroat trout genetics mapping project, which involves exploring waters and drainages with little to no stocking history.

The floor was then opened to questions from Roundtable members. One member asked whether whirling disease is still an issue in Colorado. CPW has been breeding resistances from Gunnison River rainbow trout into hatchery fish, and outcomes are looking positive. Another member asked about the prevalence of zebra mussels. CPW does have methods for counteracting zebra mussels, such as water treatments ("musselcides") and lowering reservoir levels during cold seasons to expose mussels to freezing temperatures.

ADJOURN for hatchery tour at 2:45pm

Appendix 1: Sportsperson's Roundtable Meeting Attendee List

Roundtable Members:

- Steve Schake
- Bob Terwilliger
- Brian "Sol" Soliday
- Paul Navarre
- Ron Goodrich
- Andy Smith
- Brian Braaten
- Lester Smith
- Ryan Britten
- Jeanne Horne
- Liz Rose
- Erik Myhre
- Mia Anstine
- Dave Dillon
- Kim Kokesh
- Roger Cesario
- Aaron Jones
- Kayla Benjamin
- Willie Kalaskie
- Mark Scofield
- Loren Williams
- Trent Peterson
- Shannon Roy

CPW Staff:

- April Estep
- Jonathan Boydston
- Shana Waldman
- Emma Hay
- Bill Vogrin
- Jeff Ver Steeg
- Katie Lanter
- Mark Lamb
- Brian Dreher
- Heather Dugan
- Reid DeWalt
- Mitch Martin
- Matt Eckert
- Kristin Cannon

- Rebecca Ferrell
- Sean Shepherd
- Travis Black
- Mark Leslie
- Alex Townsend
- Paul Fouts

Parks and Wildlife Commissioners:

- Gabriel Otero
- Marie Haskett
- Betsy Blecha

Appendix 2: Southwest Region Sportsperson's Caucus Meeting Summary

Southwest Region Sportsperson's Caucus

Monday, February 13, 2023, 6:00 pm to 7:50 pm

In-person at the Durango Recreation Center and online via Zoom, Facebook and YouTube

Introductions In Person and Online

Aquatics

CPW Aquatic Biologist Dan Brauch update on gold medal waters: History of Gold Medal Waters, qualifications and goals. Gunnison and Taylor rivers are the most recent additions to Gold Medal Waters.

Big Game

Jamin Grigg update on major projects in our region including a summary of recent helicopter surveys, the Gunnison basin lion study, 521 elk study.

Wolf Plan

Matt Thorpe provided a wolf plan update including updates on the timeline and where to provide public comment.

Keep Colorado Wild Pass

Heath Kehm provided an explanation and update on the Keep Colorado Wild pass.

Big Game Season Structure and Allocation

Jamin Grigg and Brandon Diamond provided an update on the big game season structure and license allocation update.

Online and In-Person Q&A

- Muzzleloader archery overlap concerns
- Over 65 age preference for special draw licenses
- Concerns about the changes in allocation and big game season structure process and how they *must* be discussed together due to overlap in issues.
- Discussion in regard to the preference points, point banking, and group applications with points.
- Questions as to whether CPW is making comments in regard to the county prohibition of firearms discharge bill. Concerns about how it will affect hunting and hunter education.
- Resident/non-resident license allocation discussions.
- Requests for updates on how the mountain lion quota fared after the region/unit merger.
- Mention of the corner crossing bill.

Discussion regarding renewal of Roger Cessario and Mia Anstine's appointments to as Caucus Delegates and invitations to the public to apply to be members of the Sportsperson's Roundtable.

Discussion about the Summer S.W. Region Caucus and encouraging additional in-person participation and sponsorship from sportsmen's groups.

Appendix 3: Northeast Region Sportsperson's Caucus Meeting Summary

CPW Statewide Roundtable Meeting, Salida, Colorado

March 4th, 2023

NE CPW Region Spokesperson Caucus Report

Submitted by, Brian "Sol" Soliday and Paul Navarre, Regional Delegates

CPW NE Sportsperson Caucus Meeting was held on February 15 at the CPW Headquarters Education Bldg. in Denver, Colorado. NE CPW Regional Manager, Mark Leslie and regional staff, as well as Brian Soliday and Paul Navarre, Caucus Delegates attended. Because of inclement weather, only 9 sportspersons were in attendance. Facebook Live had nearly 60 sportspersons watching on-line.

Topics covered:

- *Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza update (HPAI)
- *Pronghorn Herd Management Plan update
- *Big Game Season Structure (BGSS)
- *License Allocation Changes
- *Aquatics overview
- *Wolf Plan Update
- *Terrestrial update including classification and early harvest projections.
- *NE Region Waterfowl season dates/splits (potential changes)

Brian Soliday and Mark Leslie opened the meeting emphasizing the need for sportspersons to become engaged in the activities and actions of the CPW Regions and of the CPW Commission. Activities and actions that will surely affect all sportspersons who hunt, fish, trap and enjoy the many activities which are available in Colorado, but under the control of the CPW. Regional Manager Leslie concluded with information concerning NE water projects, winter conditions, Director search, SWA access pass, access to School Board properties that are now available for hunting.

Topics relevant to the NE Region.

1. Waterfowl Management: Regional Manager, Mark Leslie and Waterfowl Biologist, Jim Gammonley with the help of the NE Caucus delegates, conducted a public outreach/scoping meeting December 12, 2022 after receiving several comments concerning the 21-day split that many duck hunters indicated was too long, (Nov. 28-Dec.17), when many thought the major migration of mallards were arriving in NE Colorado. The results of the public meeting, which included personal comments and meeting survey results, allowed CPW NE Region staff to review and then to offer a Preferred Alternative to Status Quo. The proposed alternative is to shorten the length of the split in December by 7 days which would be made possible by delaying the opening of the duck season in October by 7 days. The 2023-2024 duck season will be Oct.14-Nov 26 and then Dec. 11 to January 31, a total of 96 days. The 9-day Teal

season will remain the same, Sept. 9-17. The date for the NE Youth/Military weekend was moved one week later to Oct 7-8. The CPW Commission will address this subject at their March 15-16 meeting for approval. Paul Navarre will testify in favor of the Preferred Alternative.

2. NE Pronghorn Herd Management Plans: NE staff Senior Wildlife Manager, Lance Carpenter, indicated that there are 7 pronghorn herds in NE Colorado comprising up to 30,000 animals. Population objectives, Pronghorn sex ratios, buck to doe ratio, will determine the number of Limited draw and OTC licenses that will be available. The drought of the past few years has been the cause of fair fawn recruitment. Staff indicated the management plans will cover the 2023-2033 years, a 10-year time span. When available, public input will be accepted concerning all of the proposed plans.
3. Aquatics update: Jeff Spohn, Senior Aquatic Chief, reported that NE fish biologists will be conducting the annual walleye spawn collection for the next few weeks once the ice melts. Greenback trout recovery is underway on a variety of streams. Halligan Water Project is being planned by creating a new dam downstream 200 yards from the existing dam to increase water storage and the amount of water available for downstream use. The City of Fort Collins is the funding source. Glade Reservoir is still in the planning stage and is not expected to be started for at least a few years the future.
4. HPAJ, Avian Influenza. Shannon Schaller, Deputy Regional Manager updated the meeting concerning the Avian Influenza which has affected hundreds if not a few thousand migratory birds, mostly snow geese, in Eastern Colorado. Other geese and songbirds including some raptors have been affected. Also reported that a Colorado bear, mountain lion and a skunk died from the possibility of ingesting affected birds. Also from Montana, two Grizzly Bears died from the possibility of ingesting of deceased birds, such as geese. This information was also reported on CPW E-News.
5. Wolf Management Plan: Kristin Cannon gave an over-view of the current draft wolf plan and the public input process. It was highly suggested that those in attendance/watching read the Draft Wolf Plan on the CPW Website and to also read the Q & A section concerning the draft plan and wolf reintroduction as many of the questions one might have are being addressed there. Paul Navarre will be attending the last of five public input meetings in the Denver area on Feb. 22, and will be testifying on the 4 Phases of Wolf classification. His personal testimony will support Phase 4, the future possibility of controlled, scientific based, wolf population management, by the hunting public, if allowed, in the far future, if the gray wolf is classified as a game animal. Currently the Gray Wolf, per Initiative 114, is classified as Non-Game Wildlife. It is very important to note that the forced Reintroduction of the Gray Wolf into Colorado was not supported by the CPW Commission, but because of the State Ballot Initiative 114 passage, the CPW is obligated to develop a wolf plan and abide by its language to have a self-sustaining wolf population in Colorado.

6. License Allocations and Big Game Season Structure: Public input -- It is noted that while the current 5 year Big Game Season Structure is a viable tool to predict and plan future types of hunting opportunities and how opportunities will be divided amongst methods of take, there is a concern from resident and nonresident big game archery hunters that one of the issues being examined may take effect within the current 2019-2024 BGSS timeline and a year before the next 2025-29 BGSS. Specifically, that issue is to change all Archery elk licenses to all limited draw and to eliminate all OTC licenses statewide or to allow Resident hunter OTC licenses and to cap nonresidents OTC licenses. If approved by the CPW Commission, that ruling could go into effect in the 2024 Big Game Season, one year prior to the 2025 BGSS, thus circumventing the predictability of the BGSS process. It has been noted that there is some support of this by a few CPW Commissioners who have stated publicly, in favor of limiting all archery elk licenses.

Public input recommendations would be that CPW staff and CPW Commission, examine, receive public input, make a decision, but postpone any action to take place until the next BGSS. Later vs Sooner. This will help resident and nonresident hunters, outfitters and communities to have the ability to predict and to plan as is the intent of the 5-year BGSS process.

Other topics and additional information provided at the closing of the meeting was information on the NE 15 State Parks, State Wildlife Areas access plan, 10 active water projects, State trails program, Statewide waterfowl survey, Engage CPW.org, CWD and deer management and the Keep Colorado Wild Pass. Topics addressed from meeting attendees were Corner Crossing, land locked public land, mandatory big game check in or on- line check in and GMU 10 bull elk management. All questions were answered with the best possible information from staff.

The challenge for us all is to reach out more than ever to other sportspeople to become engaged concerning those subjects of hunting, fishing, trapping, and other out of door's activities, in all Caucus Regions. I have spoken with some who do not care or still do not know of any process. Others have stated, "my concerns have not been addressed in the past," or "they will do what they want." Others have stated, "I belong to this organization or that, and it speaks for me." Studies have shown that many like the social media sites, like Facebook live or Zoom, as a method of attending meetings. Maybe the CPW public meeting topics are not "emotional" enough when compared to the non-consumptive/sometimes anti-hunting public meetings and social media meetings, when discussing items like Wolf Reintroduction, prairie dog management, or support for the elimination of bear, Mountain lion and bobcat hunting. Groups like The Center for Biodiversity, Defenders of Wildlife, Sierra Club, USHS, PETA, and many others have figured the "emotional" aspect out and gain monetary support and members who are well informed to take action on a moment's notice.

I would expect that if the Courts and the Legislative body of Colorado decided to ban all public hunting, the streets and meeting halls would be filled to capacity opposing

that action by sportspersons. Emotional? You bet! This subject, how to attract more sportspersons to engage in the CPW system, would be a good topic for discussion.

The next NE Sportsperson Caucus meeting is planned for mid-August in the Loveland, CO area, most likely at Scheels store.

Thank you Mark and staff for your support and contributions.

Brian Soliday and Paul Navarre NE Region Caucus Delegates

Appendix 4: Northwest Region Sportsperson's Caucus Meeting Summary

Big Game Hunting

1. Continued concerns on crowding within OTC archery units
2. Concerns about muzzleloader season within the archery season (i.e. safety issues, disrupts archery hunting with additional hunters and shooting)
3. Preference points - keep current system vs recently shared new alternatives
4. License allocation - 75% Res, 25% Non-Res seems like a good compromise
5. Concerns about "current season structure" puts mature bucks and overall herd at risk!
6. Consideration should be given to break up 1st Rifle Hunt Code 011-01R to alleviate crowding in some areas. Hunting pressure is not well balanced currently across the 12 GMUs. In particular, 12, 24, 25, and 26 are getting hit hard!

Wolf Plan

1. Overwhelming concern with pulling Phase 4 from the wolf plan. General feeling is it should remain as a "potential management tool" if needed by CPW consistent with the North American of Wildlife Conservation.
2. Deep concerns that "Top Down" direction on the wolf plan is NOT taking into account Sportsmen's view but we currently pay most of the bill within Wildlife Management.
3. Deep concerns with understanding "49% of the wolf plan feedback which was non-resident based" especially if this is from non-hunters / pro-wolf individuals. After all, they don't contribute financially to wildlife management today in our state and don't pay taxes here either! **Recommendation is any non-resident / non hunting / pro wolf feedback should be discounted by the CPW Commissioners!**

Fishing

1. Some discussion on reducing native cutthroat take within Wilderness Boundaries Only in the interest of providing high quality fishing and more big fish! Since covid, outdoor recreation has skyrocketed so the fish are receiving more pressure. CPW pointed out that many of these fisheries can winter kill so keeping some fish is not all bad. Perhaps this can be examined on a "by-water basis" where only certain fisheries where winter kill is not a major concern and / or fisheries closer to the trailheads which receive the most pressure are protected (could even drop the bag limit from 4 to 2 for cutts only).

General Comments

1. We need to look for ways and encourage MORE participation from Sportsmen in these meetings including "in-person" participation! We discussed using social media a means to help across Facebook (including Colorado Hunting and Fishing Groups) and Instagram.
2. As part of the above, we also need to be encouraging Sportsmen to voice their concerns, feedback and views within the structure CPW provides including surveys and comments.

3. Lester and Bob own the above to keep pushing!

Aquatic Biology in the Upper Arkansas River Basin

Sportsperson's Roundtable - March 4th 2023



Alex Townsend - Aquatic Biologist - Upper Arkansas River Basin
Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Colorado Parks and Wildlife Aquatic Management

- Aquatics Section
 - Aquatic Biologists (species conservation and sportfish)
 - Hatcheries
 - Cold, warm and native species
 - Aquatic Animal Health Lab
 - Aquatic Nuisance Species Team
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife Aquatic Biologists
 - 18 Area Aquatic Biologists
 - 4 Aquatic Species Conservation Biologists
 - 4 Senior Aquatic Biologists

The Upper Arkansas River Basin



Sampling Aquatic Species



Gill Nets/Trap Nets

Raft
Electrofishing



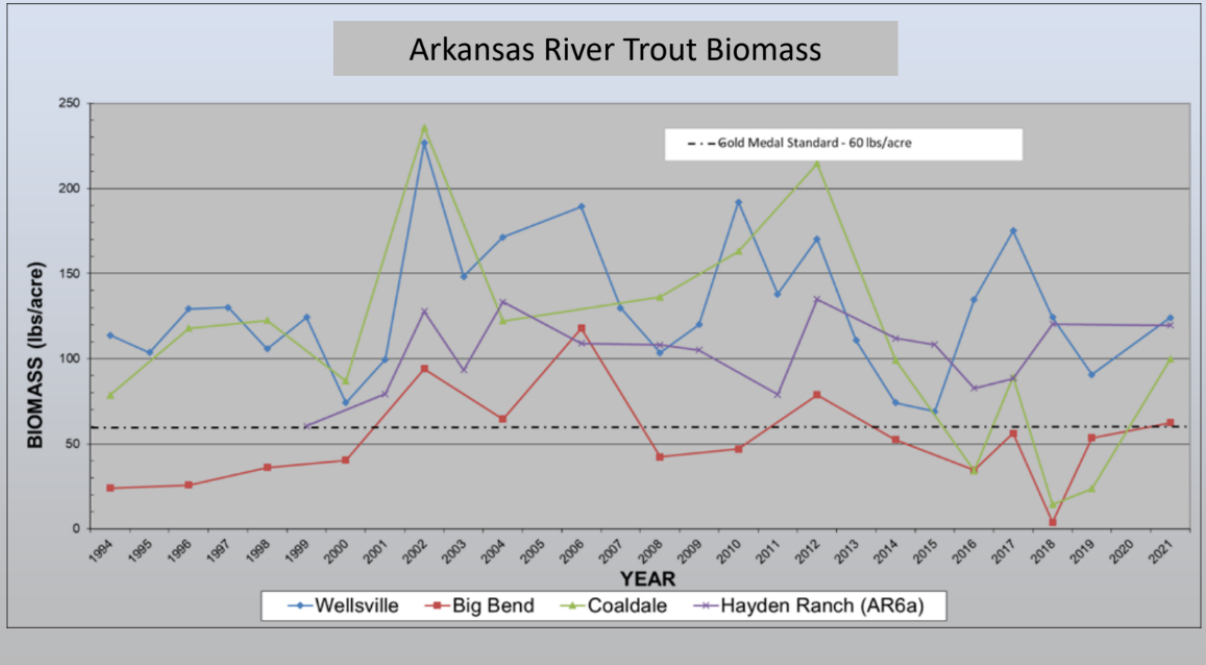
Backpack Electrofishing

Gold Medal Water of the Arkansas River

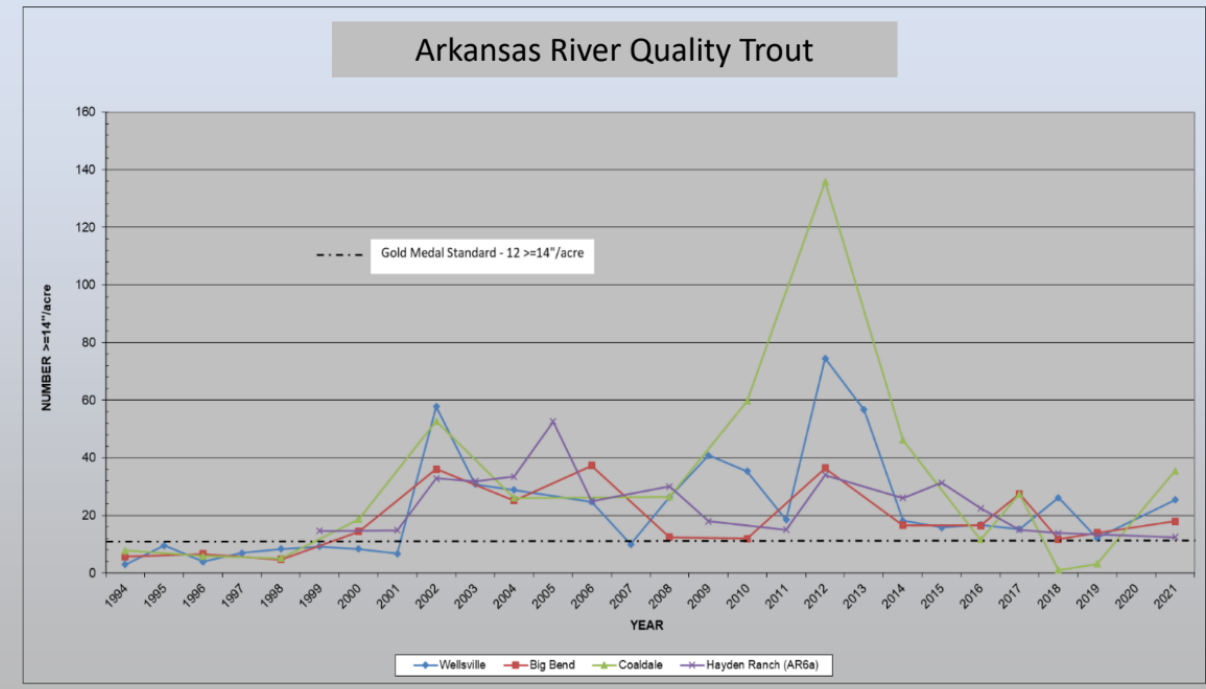
- 100 miles of continuous Gold Medal water!
- Biomass:
 - 60lb/acre
- Quality:
 - 12 fish over 14" per acre



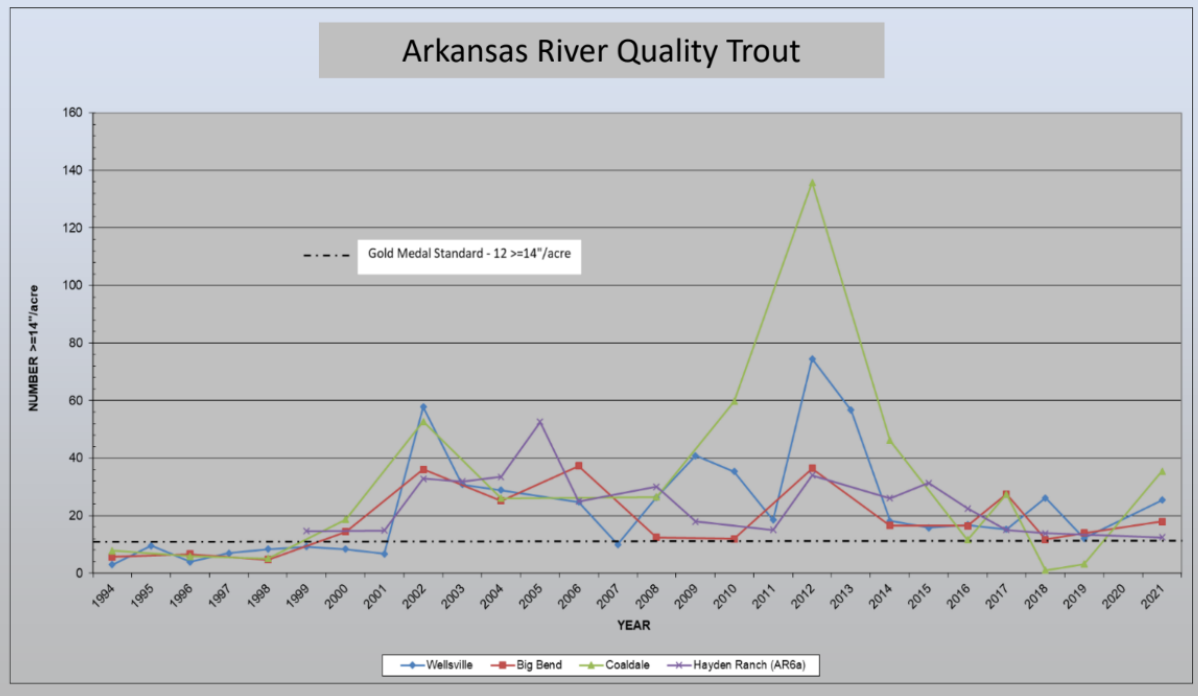
Gold Medal Water of the Arkansas River



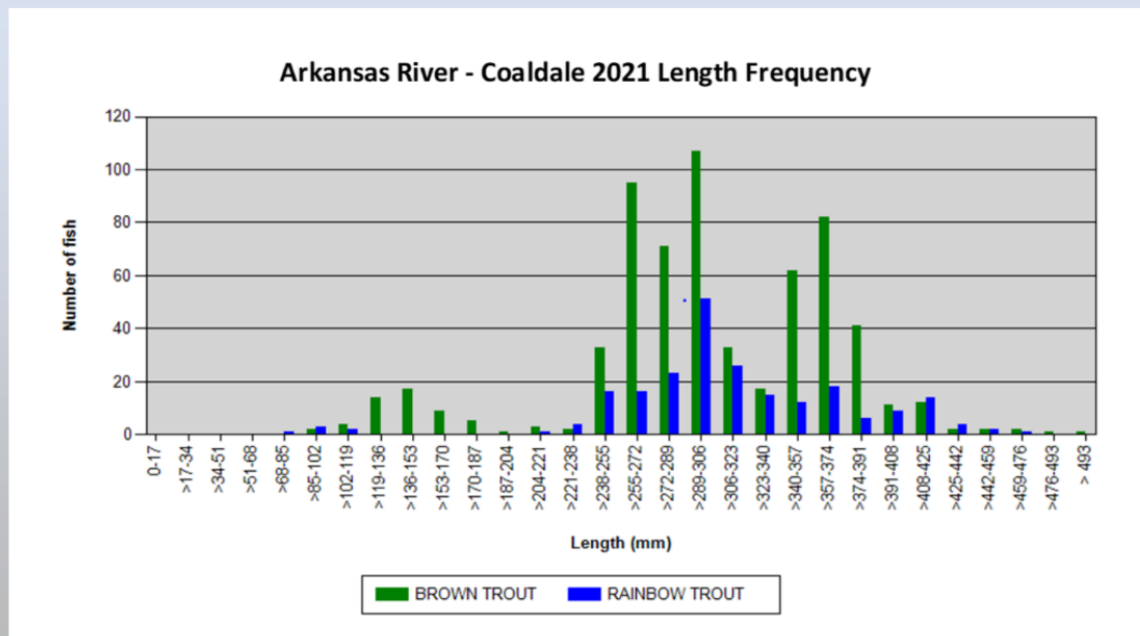
Gold Medal Water of the Arkansas River



Gold Medal Water of the Arkansas River

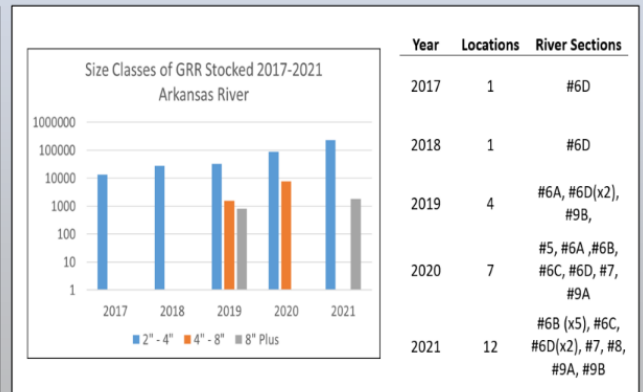


River Population Dynamics



Fish Stocking

- This is a very important management tool for Aquatic Biologists
- We work closely with hatchery managers across the state

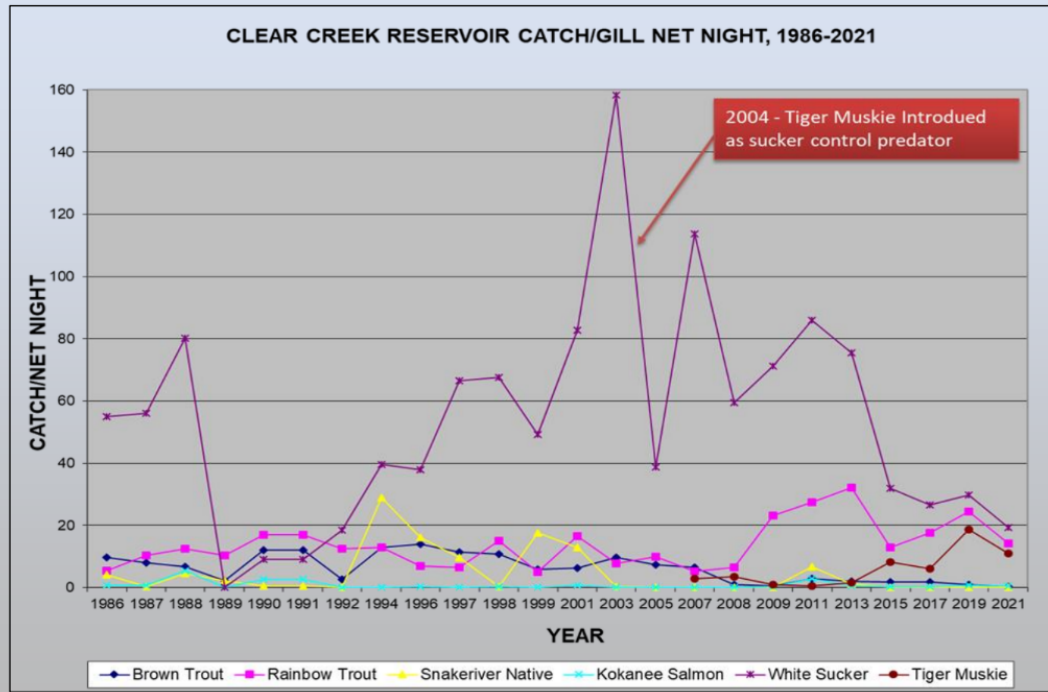


Lake and Reservoir Management

- More than just the Arkansas River!
- Trophy fishing opportunity for Lake Trout and Tiger Muskellunge



Lake and Reservoir Management



Hayden Creek Cutthroat Recovery



- Hayden Creek Cutthroat (HCC) is a unique subspecies worth conserving



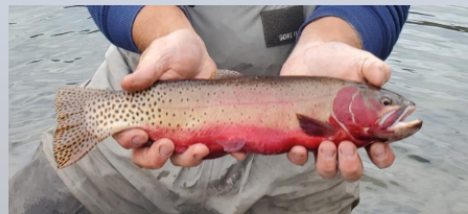
- Efforts began in 2016 to protect this unique fish
 - Hayden Pass Fire - Rescue effort
 - Maintained in CPW and USFWS Hatcheries
- 2018-2022 further recovery
 - Newlin Creek post-reclamation
 - Cottonwood Creek Drainage
 - Iowa Gulch and McNasser Gulch

HCC Recovery Efforts

Water	1 st Year Stocked	Number of Years Stocked	Total Fish	Stream Miles
Newlin Creek	2018	5	7,026	1.5
Cottonwood Creek	2019	3	12,702	4
Iowa Gulch	2020	3	4,761	2
McNasser Gulch	2021	2	3,542	3
South Hardscrabble Creek	2021	2	7,971	4.7
Private Creek near LaVeta	2021	2	6,500	3.1
North French Creek	2021	2	6,000	1.5
South Ruxton Creek	2021	2	2,000	2.5
Virginia Lake	2022	1	3,500	7.3 AC
Wrights Lake	2022	1	9,140	2 AC
O'Haver Lake	2022	1	9,036	14.4 AC
		Totals:	72,178	22.3 mi

High Mountain Lake and Stream Surveys

- Over 120 high mountain lakes dot the landscape of the Upper Arkansas River Basin
 - Miles of streams and drainages
- Many unique species of trout inhabit the drainage



High Mountain Lake and Stream Surveys

- Backcountry fishing opportunities exist in most of the Arkansas River tributaries, offering anglers a remote and scenic fishing experience



Cutthroat Genetics of The Arkansas River Basin

- In 2022, a Cutthroat Trout genetics mapping project was started in the basin
 - Explore waters and drainages with little or no sampling/stocking history
 - Evaluate lakes and streams for habitat potential
 - Examine the genetics of unknown Cutthroat Trout populations
 - Consider all important aquatic associated species of the drainage including reptiles and amphibians.

Cutthroat Genetics of The Arkansas River Basin

- Backpack electrofishing units are used in high mountain drainages to sample fish
- It's important to evaluate the health of the whole aquatic ecosystem
 - Invertebrates
 - Water Quality
 - Refuge



Boreal Toads



- The Upper Arkansas River Basin is home to several Boreal Toad populations
 - Reintroduction efforts are underway!
- Species of interest during high mountain Cutthroat Trout genetics surveys
- Native Aquatic Species Restoration Facility

Questions?

