**Wolf Reintroduction Talking Points** Northern San Juan Broads August 2021

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

NOTE: The Broads national office also has an Action Alert to send emails urging the restoration of gray wolves to the Endangered Species List to Department of Interior Secretary Haaland and two key Department of Interior officials. The background information provided can help inform your comments about the Colorado wolf reintroduction process. <https://myemail.constantcontact.com/Action-Alert--Gray-Wolves-Need-Emergency-Protection-NOW-.html?soid=1115027920967&aid=ghDMjMXKm64>

In no particular order: Choose topics about which you are passionate! Your personalized comments are always best.

1. Elevate the science and ecological benefits of wolves on the landscape. These include how wolves strengthen ungulate populations, provide feeding sources for other animals, improve riparian areas, discourage coyote populations, boost ecotourism, and restore biodiversity and healthy ecosystems. Humans have eliminated wolves from Colorado and it is our obligation to return them back to Colorado ecosystems. (NOTE: background information is available at <livingwithwolves.org> and CSU Center for Human-Carnivore Coexistence at <https://sites.warnercnr.colostate.edu/centerforhumancarnivorecoexistence> and other sites.) No information on ecological benefits of wolves was presented at the open houses and these facts are missing from CPW’s website <https://cpw.state.co.us/learn/Pages/SOC-Wolves.aspx> There are many good scientific papers, many of them authored by members of the Technical Working Group.(NOTE: you might want to be specific on what information you would like to find on the CPW website and/or how difficult it is to navigate the website to find scientific information, list of references, and links to other sites.)
2. Outreach and education to any audience must be rooted in science, research and experience. Outreach to livestock producers is essential, must be ongoing and generational (not just one time or one family) and must include resources regarding co-existence. (NOTE: whether you say this or not…working landscapes have always overlapped with carnivore habitat.) Two examples of organizations doing excellent work are Working Circle <workingcircle.org> based in Colorado (focus on cattle) and Wood River Project <woodriverwolfproject.org> in Idaho (focus on sheep) These projects to date have actually encouraged greater resiliency and sustainability of livestock production as well as ecosystem health. Outreach to recreation users must include users’ impacts on wolf habitat and working landscapes. Also important to educate elected officials, community leaders and the public. CPW must be involved in this work and it must be part of the Wolf Reintroduction Plan.
3. Ranchers must consider current/traditional practices such as bone yards/open pit of dead livestock that attract predators. Retraining of livestock to act like Bison that congregate rather than like elk that scatter is essential as are a review of current practices related to “supervision of cattle.” (NOTE: Some feel there must be a shared cost model for additional expenses to train people and livestock in order to encourage buy-in from livestock producers, (ie rancher pays some of cost and government pays some). Others feel that CPW should cover all costs associated with improved management practices and herd behavior modification provided that the ranchers take on the tasks with commitment. Please express your personal opinions.) $1.1M was appropriated from the General Fund to support gray wolf reintroduction for FY 21-22. Some (most, a significant amount, adequate amount - choose your own wording) of these funds should be used for education and training for livestock producers. Additional funding from private and state sources is also available for co-existence strategies.
4. Any compensation plan for loss of livestock must require that ranchers are taking/have taken measures to address need for co-existence of wildlife and livestock on working landscapes. The burden of proof must be on the livestock producer to prove any wolf kill as there are so many other factors involved in the death of livestock (including illness, consumption of poisonous plants, other predators, etc) We are not supportive of compensation when there is little to no proof. Assumptions are not sufficient.
5. We oppose putting in the plan a specified number of wolves that would indicate a “sustainable” population because wolves are proven to self-regulate their population. We oppose a “cap” or number of individuals specified as such metrics typically leads to harm of the species when that number is reached – ie trapping, hunting, illegal elimination. We don’t want Colorado to duplicate what is happening in other states such as Idaho, Wyoming, Montana and Wisconsin.
6. Given the science that demonstrates wolves self-regulate their population, we [unconditionally] oppose hunting of wolves. (NOTE: you may wish to express your opinion of “No hunting season ever.”) While we support hunting as a way to provide food for people, we do not support trophy hunting of wolves or promoting wolf killing as a sport. Hunting and trapping of wolves is inhumane and unnecessary. Other states have demonstrated that unregulated “taking” of wolves is not what we want to see in Colorado.
7. We oppose lethal control of wolves. recognizing that often the elimination of one “problem” wolf exacerbates the problem if a pack is disrupted. A proper livestock compensation program, and livestock management should be employed instead. (NOTE: you may feel that lethal control should only be used as a last resort for a repeat offender “problem” wolf, and only if a livestock producer is employing strategies for co-existence. Any kind of lethal control as a last resort should be carried out under the direction of CPW officers – not by livestock producers.)
8. CPW needs to be clear and transparent about strategy, plan, compensation, etc. CPW needs to rebuild their trust with Colorado residents, and prove that the agency is truly on-board with implementing wolf reintroduction. Discussing the ecological benefits of wolves would be a good place to start.
9. The public should have the opportunity to review the wolf reintroduction plan and provide a chance for public feedback prior to implementation. The focus groups and the public forums are/were welcome opportunities; however, the public deserves the opportunity to comment on the reintroduction draft plan.
10. Broads does not support consensus decision-making for the Stakeholder Advisory Group. Diverse voices should be recognized AND SAG members should outreach to and represent their demographic group as a SAG participant.