

ROUTT COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Timothy V. Corrigan
District I

Douglas B. Monger
District II

M. Elizabeth Melton
District III

REGULAR MEETING

September 29, 2020

Times listed on the agenda are approximations and may be longer or shorter, or begin earlier than scheduled, with no notice. Agendas are subject to change 24 hours before the meeting start time. To ensure you have the most up-to-date information, please check the agenda after 24 hours of its start time.

If you are joining the meeting for a specific item, please join 10 minutes before the item to ensure you are present for the beginning of them.

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85106670945?pwd=UXZZSGx1Q01Mc0s2cklGVk13Qld5UT09>

Password: 522

Or Telephone:

Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 669 900 6833 or +1 301 715 8592
or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 929 205 6099
Webinar ID: 851 0667 0945

Password: 522

The Routt County Board of Health or Board of Commissioners may enter executive session pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(b) to receive legal advice related to specific legal questions concerning Routt County's COVID-19 response.

1. **9:30 A.M. CALL TO ORDER**
2. **APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS PAYABLE, MANUAL WARRANTS, AND PAYROLL**
3. **9:40 A.M. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Public Comment will be heard on any item except quasi-judicial land use items. County Commissioners will take public comment under consideration but will not make any decision or take action at this time.

1. DUE TO THE CURRENT PANDEMIC, THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS REQUEST CITIZENS ATTEND THE MEETINGS VIA PHONE. To make a public comment raise your hand on the zoom platform if online; if calling in press *9. Another option is to download the Zoom app that allows you to raise your hand as well. The moderator will then select you when it is your turn. Written public comment can also be submitted to bcc@co.routt.co.us. Please make sure to indicate in the subject line of your email that it is public comment and reference the

agenda item to which it relates. Public comments will be entered into the record.

4. 9:40 A.M. INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Robert Felinczak, Director

A. NORTHWEST COLORADO BROADBAND UPDATE

Update and discussion on Northwest Colorado Broad Band(NCB) activities.

Documents:

[BCC AGENDA COMMUNICATION NCB.PDF](#)

5. 10:10 A.M. PLANNING

Kristy Winser, Planning Director

A. PL-20-117 REPLAT LOTS 60 & 61 STEAMBOAT LAKE, FILING 2

Documents:

[PL-20-117 BCC AGENDA COMMUNICATION FORM 8-29-20.PDF](#)

6. 10:40 A.M. GRAY WOLVES INITIATIVE PRESENTATIONS

Keep Routt Wild, Eric Washburn, and Routt County Cattlemen and Women will present their views on the initiative.

Documents:

[BCC AGENDA COMMUNICATIONS WOLF.PDF](#)
[ROUTT COUNTY CATTLE WOMEN REQUEST AUGUST 2020.PDF](#)
[WOLVES BY THE NUMBERS.PDF](#)
[WOLVES - ROUTT COUNTY PROP 114 POWERPOINT - FINAL II.PDF](#)
[WOLF REINTRODUCTION RCCW_RCCA.PDF](#)

7. 11:40 A.M. PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (PDR) ADVISORY BOARD

Claire Sollars, Chair

A. PDR INTERVIEW - TIM WOHLGENANT

Documents:

[AGENDA COMMUNICATION FORM FOR 9.29.20 -PDR INTERVIEW TIM WOHLGENANT.PDF](#)

8. 12:10 P.M. CLERK AND RECORDER

Kim Bonner, County Clerk

A. SPECIAL EVENTS LIQUOR LICENSE FOR STEAMBOAT ADAPTIVE RECREATIONAL SPORTS (STARS)

Consideration for approval of and authorization for the board to sign a special events liquor license for The Steamboat Adaptive Recreational Sports (STARS) hosting an event at the STARS Ranch at 35465 US 40 in Steamboat on October 2, 2020 5:00pm to 11:30pm.

Documents:

9. 12:15 P.M. **ROUTT COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH**

A. SAFER-AT-HOME LEVEL 1 LETTER

In order for Routt County to progress to Safer at Home Level 1, approval from Local Public Health Authority, Local Hospitals and Local Elected officials will need to be submitted to CDPHE through a survey.

Documents:

BCC AGENDA COMMUNICATIONS FORM PUBLIC HEALTH
09252020.PDF
LEVEL 1 DRAFT LETTER .PDF

10. 1:15 P.M. **MEETING ADJOURNED**

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85106670945?
pwd=UXZZSGx1Q01Mc0s2cklGVk13Qld5UT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85106670945?pwd=UXZZSGx1Q01Mc0s2cklGVk13Qld5UT09)

Password: 522

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8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 929 205 6099

Webinar ID: 851 0667 0945

Password: 522

All programs, services and activities of Routt County are operated in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need a special accommodation as a result of a disability, please call the Commissioners Office at (970) 879-0108 to assure that we can meet your needs. Please notify us of your request as soon as possible prior to the scheduled event. Routt County uses the Relay Colorado service. Dial 711 or TDD (970) 870-5444.



ROUTT COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA COMMUNICATION FORM

ITEM DATE: Friday August 28, 2020	ITEM TIME: 10:00am
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FROM:	Robert Felinczak
TODAY'S DATE:	Sept 24th 2020
AGENDA TITLE:	Northwest Colorado Broadband Update
CHECK ONE THAT APPLIES TO YOUR ITEM:	
<input type="checkbox"/> ACTION ITEM	
<input type="checkbox"/> DIRECTION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION	
I. DESCRIBE THE REQUEST OR ISSUE:	
	Update and discussion on Northwest Colorado Broad Band(NCB) activities.
II. RECOMMENDED ACTION (<i>motion</i>):	
	None
III. DESCRIBE FISCAL IMPACTS (VARIATION TO BUDGET):	
PROPOSED REVENUE (<i>if applicable</i>):	
CURRENT BUDGETED AMOUNT:	
PROPOSED EXPENDITURE: N/A	
FUNDING SOURCE:	
SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET NEEDED: YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
IV. IMPACTS OF A REGIONAL NATURE OR ON OTHER JURISDICTIONS (IDENTIFY ANY COMMUNICATIONS ON THIS ITEM):	
	None
V. BACKGROUND INFORMATION:	
VI. LEGAL ISSUES:	
	None
VII. CONFLICTS OR ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES:	
	None
VIII. SUMMARY AND OTHER OPTIONS:	
IX. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS:	



ROUTT COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA COMMUNICATION FORM

ITEM DATE: September 29, 2020	ITEM TIME: 10:10 a.m.

FROM:	Chris Brookshire, Staff Planner
TODAY'S DATE:	10.24.20
AGENDA TITLE:	PL-20-117 – Replat Lot 60 & 61 Steamboat Lake, Filing 2 Lot Line Adjust between Lots 60 & 61 and Vacation of Utility Easements Attachments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Commission minutes 8.20.20 • Amended Plat

CHECK ONE THAT APPLIES TO YOUR ITEM:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACTION ITEM
<input type="checkbox"/> DIRECTION
<input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION

I. DESCRIBE THE REQUEST OR ISSUE:
<p>The previous owners of Lot 61 constructed a detached garage over the lot line. The current owners want to bring the existing garage into conformance. The line between Lots 60 and 61 has been adjusted so that the garage meets current setbacks and utility easements of 10 feet from the property line.</p>
II. RECOMMENDED ACTION (<i>motion</i>):

PLANNING Commission and Board of Commissioners Options:

1. **Approve the Lot Line Adjustment request without conditions** if it is determined that the petition will not adversely affect the public health, safety, and welfare and the proposed use is compatible with the immediately adjacent and nearby neighborhood properties and uses and the proposal is in compliance with the Routt County Zoning and Subdivision Regulations and complies with the guidelines of the Routt County Master Plan.
2. **Deny the Lot Line Adjustment request** if it is determined that the petition will adversely affect the public health, safety, and welfare and/or the proposed use is not compatible with the immediately adjacent and nearby neighborhood properties and uses and/or the proposed use is not in compliance with the Routt County Zoning and Subdivision Regulations and/or the Routt County Master Plan, Make specific findings of fact; cite specific regulations or policies by number from the Routt County Master Plan, and the Routt County Zoning Regulations.
3. **Table the Lot Line Adjustment request** if additional information is required to fully evaluate the petition. Give specific direction to the petitioner and staff.
4. **Approve the Lot Line Adjustment request with conditions and/or performance standards** if it is determined that certain conditions and/or performance standards are necessary to ensure public, health, safety, and welfare and/or make the use compatible with immediately adjacent and



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neighborhood properties and uses and/or bring the proposal into compliance with the Routt County Zoning and Subdivision Regulations and the Routt County Master Plan.

FINDINGS OF FACT that may be appropriate if the Special Use Permit is approved:

1. The proposal with the following conditions meets with Sections 2, 3, and 6 of the applicable guidelines of the Routt County Zoning Regulations and Section 2 and 3 of the Subdivision Regulations.

This approval is subject to the following conditions:

General Conditions:

1. The plat shall be finalized and recorded within one (1) year unless an extension is granted pursuant to Section 2.1.6, Routt County Subdivision Regulations. Extensions to up to one (1) year may be approved administratively.
2. Prior to recordation, the applicant shall submit an electronic copy of the approved plat to the County Planning Department in a .DWG format or other format acceptable to the GIS Department.
3. All fees must be paid in full prior to the recording of the plat.
4. All property taxes must be paid prior to the recording of the plat.
5. A 'no build' zone shall be indicated on the plat to avoid construction of structures, septic fields and roads in areas including, but not limited to 30% or greater slopes. The "no build" zones shall be approved by the Planning Director before the plat is recorded.
6. The shed located on Lot 61 along the boundary line between Lots 60 and 61, must be brought into conformance to meet current regulations under the definition of small structure prior to the plat being recorded.
7. The notes on the plat shall include, but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Routt County is not responsible for maintaining or improving subdivision roads. The roads shown hereon have not been dedicated nor accepted by the County.
 - b. Existing and new accesses shall meet access standards set forth by the Routt County Road and Bridge Department and Fire Prevention Services.
 - c. Revegetation of disturbed areas shall occur within one growing season with a seed mix that avoids the use of aggressive grasses. See the Colorado State University Extension Office for appropriate grass mixes.
 - d. Routt County (County) and the North Routt Fire District (District) shall be held harmless from any injury, damage, or claim that may be made against the County or the District by reason of the County's or the District's failure to provide ambulance, fire, rescue or police protection to the property described on this plat, provided that the failure to provide such services is due to inaccessibility of the



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property by reason of internal roads being impassable. This conditions shall not relieve the County or the District of their responsibility to make a bona fide effort to provide emergency services should the need arise.

- e. Address signage in conformance with Routt County Road Addressing, Naming, and Signing Policy shall be located at the entrance to the driveway.
- f. A current soils test showing that the soil is of a sufficient stable nature to support development will be required before obtaining a building permit.
- g. The Declaration of Covenants and Conditions and Restrictions, Unit Nos. One, Three and Four, Steamboat Lake Subdivision, Recorded March 6, 1972 at Reception No. 231399 in Book 356 at Page 164 in the Official records of Routt County, Colorado, and first amended and restated declaration of covenants, conditions, easements and restriction Unit Nos., One, Two Three and Four, Steamboat Lake Subdivision subdivision.

PLANNING COMMISSION/BOARD OF COMMISSIONER OPTIONS:

- 2. **Approve the Easement Vacation request without conditions** if it is determined that the petition will not adversely affect the public health, safety, and welfare and the proposed use is compatible with the immediately adjacent and nearby neighborhood properties and uses and the proposal is in compliance with the Routt County Zoning and Subdivision Regulations and complies with the guidelines of the Routt County Master Plan.
- 3. **Deny the Easement Vacation request** if it is determined that the petition will adversely affect the public health, safety, and welfare and/or the proposed use is not compatible with the immediately adjacent and nearby neighborhood properties and uses and/or the proposed use is not in compliance with the Routt County Zoning and Subdivision Regulations and/or the Routt County Master Plan, Make specific findings of fact: cite specific regulations or policies by number from the Routt County Master Plan, and the Routt County Zoning Regulations.
- 4. **Table the Easement Vacation request** if additional information is required to fully evaluate the petition. Give specific direction to the petitioner and staff.
- 5. **Approve the Easement Vacation request** with conditions and/or performance standards if it is determined that certain conditions and/or performance standards are necessary to ensure public, health, safety, and welfare and/or make the use compatible with immediately adjacent and neighborhood properties and uses and/or bring the proposal into compliance with the Routt County Zoning and Subdivision Regulations and the Routt County Master Plan.

UTILITY EASEMENT VACATION

FINDINGS OF FACT that may be appropriate if the Utility Easement and Vacation is approved:



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1. The proposal with the following conditions complies with the applicable guidelines of the Routt County Master Plan and is in compliance with Sections 4, 5, and 6 of the Routt County Zoning Regulations, Sections 2, 3 and 4 of the Routt County Subdivision Regulations.

This approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. Utility and drainage easements shall be shown and dedicated on the final plat. The plat shall show all required drainage and utility easements on the vacated portion of roadways.
2. The resolution for the vacation for the utility and drainage easement shall be recorded concurrently with the final plat.

III. DESCRIBE FISCAL IMPACTS (VARIATION TO BUDGET):
PROPOSED REVENUE <i>(if applicable)</i> : \$
CURRENT BUDGETED AMOUNT : \$
PROPOSED EXPENDITURE : \$
FUNDING SOURCE :
SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET NEEDED : YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Explanation:</i>



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**IV. IMPACTS OF A REGIONAL NATURE OR ON OTHER JURISDICTIONS
(IDENTIFY ANY COMMUNICATIONS ON THIS ITEM):**

V. BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

VI. LEGAL ISSUES: N/A

VII. CONFLICTS OR ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES: N/A

VIII. SUMMARY AND OTHER OPTIONS:

There is a small shed (100 sq.ft.) on Lot 61 that with the change of the property line located the structure closer than the require 4' setback for small structures. The moving of the line placed it 2.5 feet from the line. The surveyor has adjusted the line to both properties after the Planning Commission meeting so that the shed is now located 5.5 feet from the property line. This revision did not result in any change to the acreages of either parcel.

The Planning Commission recommended approval of the Replat and the Vacation of Utility Easements with the stipulation that the shed be brought into conformance (COA #6). This condition has been satisfied with the new survey.

The French's representative has been trying to contact the owners of Lot 60 about the change to the lot line in the shed area. They are co-applicants in the original applications, but at this time we do not have confirmation that they are in agreement with the change around the shed. The adjustment has not changed the acreage of either lot.

It is hoped that they can be contacted prior to the Board of Commissioners meeting and agree to the change, if not the French's may have to move the shed to meet setbacks. The plat will have to meet requirements of approval prior to recording.



ROUTT COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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ROUTT COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

August 20, 2020

The regular meeting of the Routt County Planning Commission was called to order at 6:00 p.m. with the following members present: Chairman Steve Warnke, Bill Norris, Greg Jaeger, Troy Brookshire, Brian Kelly, Roberta Marshall, Billy Mitzelfeld and Andrew Benjamin. Peter Flint, and Rohail Abid were absent. Interim Planning Director Kristy Winser and staff planners Chris Brookshire and Alan Goldich also attended. Sarah Katherman prepared the minutes. This meeting was conducted via Zoom.

ACTIVITY: PL-20-117
PETITIONER: Nicholas and Alison French
PETITION: Lot Line Adjustment and Vacation of Utility Easements
LOCATION: Lots 60 & 61 Steamboat Lake, Filing 2; located at the corner of Longfellow and Jupiter Place

Chairman Warnke disclosed that he serves as Secretary/Treasurer for the Willow Creek Pass Village Association and chairs the Environmental Control Committee. There were no objections to his participation in the hearing.

Ms. Penny Fletcher, representing the petitioners, reviewed the petition, noting that the house and garage were incorrectly placed when they were built, but that neither of the previous owners had attempted to rectify the situation. She said it was supposed to have been addressed prior to the Frenches closing on the property, but the application was not submitted in time. Ms. Fletcher said that the Frenches are seeking to correct the situation through a lot line adjustment and a vacation of the utility easements. Ms. Fletcher noted that the property had been surveyed, and that the improvements location certificate indicates that the garage encroaches 6.5 ft. over the lot line. She said that there is also a small shed that is located too close to the lot line. Ms. French said that the petitioners had worked with surveyor Tom Effinger, who had come up with a way to adjust the lot line separating Lots 60 and 61 such that the garage would be in conformance with the required setbacks, and the two lots would retain their existing acreages. She added that the adjusted lot line allows for a sufficient buildable area on Lot 60. Ms. Fletcher said that there are no utilities located within the easement, and the utility companies have all signed off on the proposal.

In response to a question from Commissioner Kelly, Ms. Fletcher confirmed that with the adjustment, the shed would still be located within the utility easement. She said that the shed is attached to timbers that are resting on the ground; there is no permanent foundation. She added, however, that moving it would require cutting down several large trees and would be very difficult. The shed has been in this location since the home was constructed.



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She said that in order to comply with the County's regulations, the shed would need to be moved 2.5 ft. Ms. Fletcher said that the petitioners would like to address this shed issue through an agreement with the neighbors or through some allowance on the part of the County. The shed is approximately 100 sq. ft. in size.

Ms. Brookshire stated that a shed of this size without a permanent foundation is allowed to be located within the utility easement, provided it is no less than 4 ft. from the property line. With the lot line adjustment proposed, the shed is located too close to the property line to be in conformance. Ms. Brookshire stated that there is no variance process for this, but offered that the lot line might be adjusted somewhat more in that area to accommodate the shed. Ms. Fletcher said that she had discussed this idea with Mr. Effinger, who expressed concern with the re-submittal requirements. Ms. Winser stated that a minor adjustment of this nature would not require re-advertising or re-submittal. She suggested that it could be addressed through the Conditions of Approval (COAs) and the additional adjustment could be made prior to the Board of County Commissioners' hearing. Ms. Brookshire read suggested COA #6 and proposed substituting "relocated" with "brought into conformance."

Ms. Brookshire stated that Ms. Fletcher had thoroughly described the petition. She said that no one knows why the house and garage were located over the property line, but she noted that the property behind the house and garage is very steep and the location was probably shifted for that reason. Ms. Brookshire confirmed that with the lot line adjustment there would still be plenty of buildable area on Lot 60.

Chairman Warnke asked if there was any evidence of agreement to the proposal from the owners of Lot 60. Ms. Brookshire said that they were co-petitioners and had signed the application.

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Mitzefeld asked about the no-build zones. Ms. Brookshire said that they would be shown on the final plat.

MOTION – Lot Line Adjustment

Commissioner Norris moved to recommend approval of the lot line adjustment with the findings of fact that the proposal with the following conditions meets with Sections 2, 3, and 6 of the applicable guidelines of the Routt County Zoning Regulations and Section 2 and 3 of the Subdivision Regulations.

This approval is subject to the following conditions:

General Conditions:

8. The plat shall be finalized and recorded within one (1) year unless an extension is granted pursuant to Section 2.1.6, Routt County Subdivision Regulations. Extensions to up to one (1) year may be approved administratively.
9. Prior to recordation, the applicant shall submit an electronic copy of the approved plat to the County Planning Department in a .DWG format or other format acceptable to the GIS Department.
10. All fees must be paid in full prior to the recording of the plat.
11. All property taxes must be paid prior to the recording of the plat.



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12. A 'no build' zone shall be indicated on the plat to avoid construction of structures, septic fields and roads in areas including, but not limited to 30% or greater slopes. The "no build" zones shall be approved by the Planning Director before the plat is recorded.
13. The shed located on Lot 61 along the boundary line between Lots 60 and 61, must be brought into conformance to meet current regulations under the definition of small structure prior to the plat being recorded.
14. The notes on the plat shall include, but are not limited to the following:
 - h. Routt County is not responsible for maintaining or improving subdivision roads. The roads shown hereon have not been dedicated nor accepted by the County.
 - i. Existing and new accesses shall meet access standards set forth by the Routt County Road and Bridge Department and Fire Prevention Services.
 - j. Revegetation of disturbed areas shall occur within one growing season with a seed mix that avoids the use of aggressive grasses. See the Colorado State University Extension Office for appropriate grass mixes.
 - k. Routt County (County) and the North Routt Fire District (District) shall be held harmless from any injury, damage, or claim that may be made against the County or the District by reason of the County's or the District's failure to provide ambulance, fire, rescue or police protection to the property described on this plat, provided that the failure to provide such services is due to inaccessibility of the property by reason of internal roads being impassable. This conditions shall not relieve the County or the District of their responsibility to make a bona fide effort to provide emergency services should the need arise.
 - l. Address signage in conformance with Routt County Road Addressing, Naming, and Signing Policy shall be located at the entrance to the driveway.
 - m. A current soils test showing that the soil is of a sufficient stable nature to support development will be required before obtaining a building permit.
 - n. The Declaration of Covenants and Conditions and Restrictions, Unit Nos. One, Three and Four, Steamboat Lake Subdivision, Recorded March 6, 1972 at Reception No. 231399 in Book 356 at Page 164 in the Official records of Routt County, Colorado, and first amended and restated declaration of covenants, conditions, easements and restriction Unit Nos., One, Two Three and Four, Steamboat Lake Subdivision subdivision.

Commissioner Kelly seconded the motion.

The motion carried 8 – 0, with the Chair voting yes.

MOTION – Vacation of Utility Easements



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Commissioner Norris moved to recommend approval of the vacation of utility easements with the findings of fact that the proposal, with the following conditions, complies with the applicable guidelines of the Routt County Master Plan and is in compliance with Sections 4, 5, and 6 of the Routt County Zoning Regulations, Sections 2, 3 and 4 of the Routt County Subdivision Regulations.

This approval is subject to the following conditions:

3. Utility and drainage easements shall be shown and dedicated on the final plat. The plat shall show all required drainage and utility easements on the vacated portion of roadways.
4. The resolution for the vacation for the utility and drainage easement shall be recorded concurrently with the final plat.

Commissioner Kelly seconded the motion.

The motion carried 8 – 0, with the Chair voting yes.



ROUTT COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA COMMUNICATION FORM

ITEM DATE: 9/29/2020	ITEM TIME: 10:40 am

FROM:	
TODAY'S DATE:	
AGENDA TITLE:	Ballot Initiative 107 Reintroduction of Gray Wolves Presentations
CHECK ONE THAT APPLIES TO YOUR ITEM:	
<input type="checkbox"/> ACTION ITEM	
<input type="checkbox"/> DIRECTION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X INFORMATION	
I. DESCRIBE THE REQUEST OR ISSUE:	
Keep Routt Wild, Routt County Cattlemen and Women, and Eric Washburn will present their views on the initiative.	
II. RECOMMENDED ACTION (<i>motion</i>):	
III. DESCRIBE FISCAL IMPACTS (VARIATION TO BUDGET):	
PROPOSED REVENUE (<i>if applicable</i>):	
CURRENT BUDGETED AMOUNT: \$0.00	
PROPOSED EXPENDITURE:	
FUNDING SOURCE:	
SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET NEEDED: YES NO	
IV. IMPACTS OF A REGIONAL NATURE OR ON OTHER JURISDICTIONS (IDENTIFY ANY COMMUNICATIONS ON THIS ITEM):	



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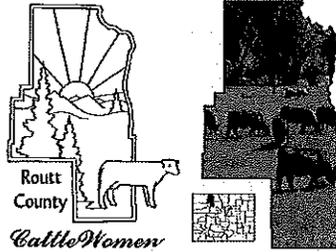
V. BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

VI. LEGAL ISSUES:

VII. CONFLICTS OR ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES:

VIII. SUMMARY AND OTHER OPTIONS:

IX. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS: Supplemental Budget Request



August 20, 2020

Routt County Board of County Commissioners
522 Lincoln Avenue, Suite 30
Steamboat Springs CO 80487

RE: Colorado Ballot Initiative 107 Restoration of Gray Wolves

To: Commissioner Corrigan, District 1, Chair
Commissioner Monger, District 2
Commissioner Melton, District 3

Ballot Initiative 107 Restoration of Gray Wolves will directly impact Routt County and its citizens. As members of Routt County CattleWomen and Routt County Cattlemen's Association we are deeply concerned about the initiative, and we respectfully request that your board discuss it and take a position prior to November's election.

We look forward to learning when you've placed the item on your agenda for discussion and want to be in attendance. Thank you for your consideration.

Routt County CattleWomen

Whitney Neelis, President
wmneelis@hotmail.com
970-871-4529

Routt County Cattlemen's Association

Justin Warren, President
jwgator74@gmail.com
970-367-0035

Wolves, by the Numbers

Larry Desjardin

In November 2020, Colorado citizens will vote on Proposition 114, the Gray Wolf Reintroduction Initiative. It would mandate Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) to develop a plan to reintroduce gray wolves onto lands west of the Continental Divide by 2023. There has been much debate on what impact wolves would have on Colorado ungulate herds, ranching, and hunting. Much of the debate has been qualitative in nature- citing advantages and disadvantages of wolves on the landscape. This paper describes a wolf/prey simulator that quantitatively models the impacts of wolves on Colorado ungulates (specifically elk, deer, and moose) and the associated changes in hunting to maintain stable herd sizes. The results are compared to documented observations and studies of wolves reintroduced into Yellowstone National Park. This paper also looks at livestock depredation impacts, modeled by the historical record in Montana. The conclusion of the analysis is that the impact from wolves is highly correlated to their total population.

Wolf/Prey Simulator

A wolf/prey simulator was developed combining a yield analysis of each ungulate species together with a biomass consumption model for wolves. The simulator has two distinct pieces to it: The simulation engine itself, and the biological and herd parameters that it simulates. For any one scenario (the set of biological parameters) the number of wolves may be varied to model the impact. The simulator comes with default parameters that describe the standard model. Any of these parameters may be modified by a user. To test the credibility of the simulator, the results of the standard model are compared to observed elk consumption by wolves from numerous studies.

Theory of operation

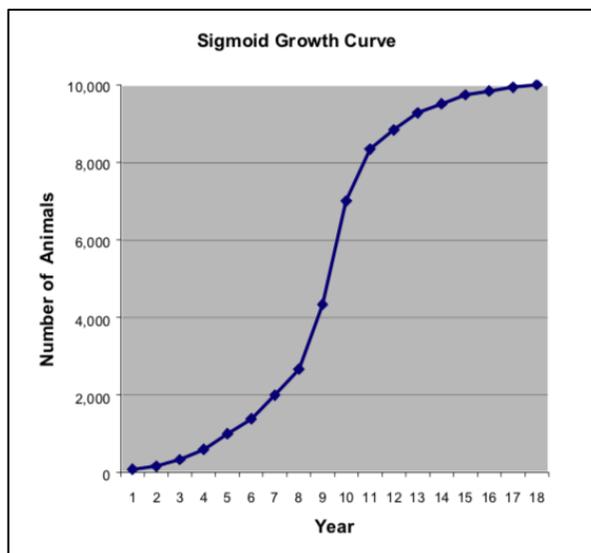
Colorado manages ungulate herds consistent with the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. A number of factors are considered to determine a population objective for a specific herd. The *yield* of a herd is the amount the population would increase any given year without hunting. Hunting is the primary tool used by CPW (Colorado Parks and Wildlife) to achieve a particular herd population objective. By setting the harvest objective equal to the yield, a stable herd population is achieved. A lower hunter harvest creates a growing herd size, and a higher harvest creates a decreasing herd size. To maintain the same policy once wolves are introduced, the hunting objective is lowered by the amount of incremental wolf consumption. This does not need to be a conscious decision. CPW manages the annual hunting harvest objective by observing the population and population trend of the ungulate in question. If predation increases, thus lowering the yield, the harvest objective will also be lowered through this process. The wolf/prey simulator estimates the incremental predation due to wolves and lowers the hunter harvest accordingly. In essence, wolves and hunters are sharing a finite yield.

Population Dynamics

Any herd management plan in Colorado will include the explanatory diagram below.

“Numerous studies of animal populations, including such species as mice, rabbits and white-tailed deer, have shown that the populations grow in a mathematical relationship referred to as the "sigmoid growth curve" or "S" curve (right).”

-CPW, from [E2 Bear’s Ear elk herd management plan](#).

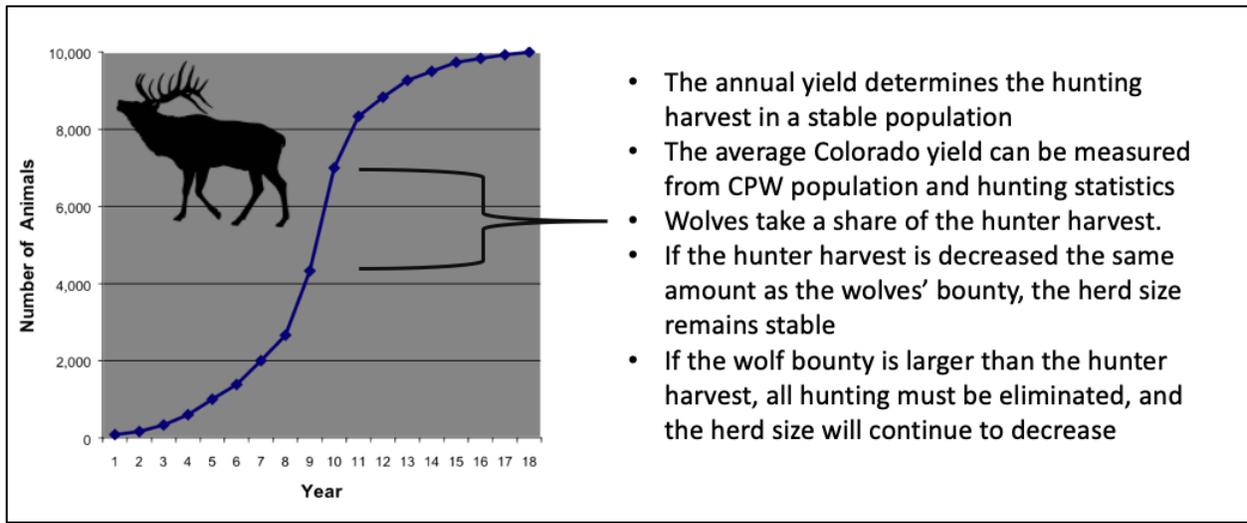


As can be seen, when the species is small in number, the population grows at an exponential rate. The larger the population, the larger is the increase in population each year. The increase in population is known as the yield. The yield may be expressed as an absolute number, or a percentage. The yield is a function of habitat, environmental conditions, and predation.

As the population nears the middle part of the curve, yield is at a maximum. This phase is defined by a very high reproductive and survival rate. Habitat is not a limiting factor. Most wildlife agencies manage population levels to be in this region.

If the population continues to rise, or if habitat is reduced, a third phase is reached. This phase is characterized by a decrease yield, driven by lower survival and reproduction rates. At the very top of the curve, yield becomes effectively zero. Starvation, disease, and lack of reproduction combine to keep the population limited. As stated by CPW in the E2 herd management plan, “At this point, the population reaches an "equilibrium" with the habitat. The number of births each year equal the number of deaths, therefore, to maintain the population at this level would not allow for any "hunnable surplus." The animals in the population would be in relatively poor condition and when a severe winter or other catastrophic event occurs, a large die-off is inevitable. A recent example of such a population die-off occurred in the relatively unhunted Northern Yellowstone elk herd during the severe winter of 1988-89. This winter followed the forest fires of the summer of 1988 that raged in the National Park.”

Yield plays a major role in the wolf/prey simulator, as shown in the graphic below.



In the example above, the population of 4300 elk would grow to 7000 elk without hunting, producing a yield of 2700 elk, a yield of 63%. This is well above observed yields for elk in the field and is solely used for explanatory purposes of the concept of yield. Harvesting 2700 elk per year would keep the population stable at 4300 elk post-hunt.

Colorado elk herds are relatively stable at approximately 280K population. Annual hunting harvest is approximately 40K elk/year. A five-year average of CPW reported population and hunting statistics show hunter harvest at 14.4%. Since Colorado elk population is stable, this is approximately the yield of the Colorado elk herd.

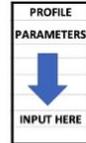
If wolves are added, they will take a share of the hunter harvest. If the hunter harvest is decreased by the same amount as the wolves' bounty, the herd size will remain stable. If the wolf bounty is larger than the hunter harvest, all hunting must be eliminated, and the herd size will continue to decrease.

The wolf/prey simulator calculates the incremental number of each ungulate culled by wolves, and then calculates the decrease in hunting to compensate for it, both as a total number and a percentage.

To perform this calculation, the simulator is loaded with model parameters that describe herd dynamics and wolf consumption, as shown in the figure below.

Wolf-Prey Simulator – What are the inputs?

- A profile is defined as a complete set of biological parameters, including:



Wolves



Elk



Deer



Moose

- Daily Consumption (lbs.)
 - Carcass Efficiency
 - Consumed Biomass – Moose (%)
 - Consumed Biomass Elk (%)
 - Total Population
 - Current Hunting Harvest
 - Change in Total Population (default = 0)
 - Average Weight of Cull (lbs.)
- ← • Compensation Parameters (Hunters and Wolves, per species) →

“Number of Wolves” is entered after the profile is created, a complete scenario is simulated.

For wolves, biological consumption parameters are entered, including average daily meat consumption, carcass efficiency, and the consumed biomass percentage of each of the ungulate species.

For each of the prey species, the following parameters are entered: The total population, the current annual hunting harvest, change in total population, and the average meat weight of a cull. The change in total population is a strategic parameter for wildlife management planning, and is set to zero in the default model parameters. The yield of each species can be calculated by dividing the hunting harvest by the population of the species. The simulator assumes each species is being managed at a stable population. To the extent that a population may be managed for a growth or a contraction rate, the simulator results indicate the change in hunting harvest to stay aligned with that strategy.

For advanced simulations, compensatory mortality parameters may also be entered. Compensatory parameters model the observed effects of wolves (and hunters to a lesser degree) culling sicker animals. This paper will look at this subject in more detail later.

Example Simulator Output

Once the parameters are entered, the number of wolves may be entered and the results are immediately calculated. Below is an example output.

Simulation Results						
Number of Wolves		100				
	ELK	DEER	MOOSE			
Annual Wolf Culls	2,203	1,927	22			
Culls/Wolf	22.0	19.3	0.2			
Hunter Harvest (%)	-5.4%	-5.3%	-7.5%			
Hunter Harvest (#)	-2,203	-1,927	-22			
Wolf Predation Rate	0.8%	0.5%	0.7%			
Profile Parameters						
Species:	ELK	DEER	MOOSE			
Population	282,954	424,894	2,958			
Annual Harvest	40,620	36,656	289			
Change in Polulation	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%			
Average Weight of Cull (lbs.)	175	50	225			
Compensation Parameters	Hunting	Wolves	Hunting	Wolves	Hunting	Wolves
	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Wolf Consumption Parameters						
Wolf Consumption per Day (lbs.)	10.0					
Carcass Efficiency	75%					
Consumed Biomass - Moose (%)	1.0%					
Consumbed Biomass - Elk (%)	80%					
	Ratio of elk vs. deer biomass after moose					

The figure above shows the results of a simulation of 100 wolves in Colorado. The upper portion "Simulation Results" shows the number of wolves chosen, and calculates the number of each species culled by wolves annually, the cull-per-wolf metric, the decrease in hunter harvest required to maintain a stable population both as a percentage and as an absolute amount, and the total wolf predation rate. The wolf predation rate can be used for other simulations, such as modeling impacts to chronic wasting disease or other epidemiological simulations.

The profile parameters are entered elsewhere but are displayed below the simulation results. This allows a screen snapshot to capture all the parameters that make up a specific result. The

figure above shows the default parameters that come with the simulator. Here is a brief description of how the parameters of the default model were chosen:

Population: These values chosen were five-year averages of CPW population statistics

Annual Harvest: These are hunter harvest averages over the same five years

Change in population: Strategic planning parameter set to zero.

Average weight of cull: These figures were representative from discussions from hunters and wildlife managers.

Compensation Parameters: Set to zero. See later discussion

Wolf consumption: 10 pounds was chosen as the average daily consumption of *Canis lupus occidentalis*, a.k.a. the Northwestern Wolf. This is the subspecies of wolf reintroduced into Yellowstone and that has migrated to northwest Colorado. This aligns with data from the International Wolf Center: “Wolves require at least 3.7 pounds of meat per day for minimum maintenance. Reproducing and growing wolves may need 2-3 times this much. It has been estimated that wolves consume around 10 pounds of meat per day, on average. However, wolves don’t actually eat every day. Instead, they live a feast or famine lifestyle; they may go several days without a meal and then gorge on over 20 pounds of meat when a kill is made.” If other subspecies are to be modeled, such as *C.l. nubilus* (Great Plains Wolf) or *C.l. baileyi* (Mexican Wolf), this parameter should be adjusted accordingly.

Carcass Efficiency: This parameter is the percentage of each carcass consumed by wolves. Observations indicate that other species consume a significant portion of wolf kills. This parameter has a default value of 75%.

Consumed Biomass – Moose: This parameter sets the percentage of biomass consumed that is moose. The default is 1%. The moose population in Colorado is approximately 1% of the elk population. This value assumes wolves show no selectivity between moose and elk. To ignore moose effects, this parameter may be set to zero.

Consumed Biomass – Elk: This parameter sets the percentage of biomass consumed that comes from elk versus deer, after the impact of moose have been calculated. This parameter is set at 80%, indicating a diet dominated by elk.

Testing the default model simulation against observed results

In the Rocky Mountains, wolf consumption is dominated by elk. Below are five studies performed in the Yellowstone area that observed the number of elk culled by wolves. Since the simulator calculates a per-wolf metric, that value is compared against the Yellowstone studies:

Location	Year	Months	Researcher	Elk Predation rate		Olympic Avg.
				per wolf/day	Elk per year	
Gallation Canyon	2000-2001	Winter	J. Winnie	0.085	31.0	
Madison Valley,	2001-2003	Winter	Gude, Garrot	0.125	45.6	
Northern Yellowstone Range	2004	Winter	Smith	0.061	22.3	
-same-	2005-2008	Winter	Smith	0.0373	13.6	
Central Yellowstone	2008	Winter	Becker, Garrott	0.06	21.9	
AVERAGE				0.07366	26.9	25.1

The five studies above average 26.9 elk culled per wolf-year. The Olympic average of 25.1 is the average of the three studies once the highest and lowest studies are removed. These studies align well with the default output of the wolf-prey simulator at 22 elk consumed per wolf per year.

Rocky Mountain National Park has an elk herd that is over-populated, as the herd has few predators and no hunting is allowed inside the park. In 2006, [a study was done](#) simulating the impact of wolf introduction, and potential impacts on reducing CWD (chronic wasting disease). That study used a value of 25 elk culled per wolf-year.

Overall, the simulation result of 22 elk/wolf-year appears to reasonably match the observed data. Since elk are the major prey of wolves, this alignment is the most critical. The results for deer and moose are harder to evaluate due to the lack of equivalent multi-species studies. Here the default simulator output is 19 deer/wolf-year and 0.2 moose/ wolf-year (one moose every 5 years). These values may depend on the specific introduction locations of wolves. The simulator may be used to perform sensitivity analysis by varying the consumption parameters.

Sensitivity to Number of Wolves

Besides the simulator output for a specific number of wolves, the simulator also displays hunting harvest reduction and wolf predation rates for 0 to 1000 wolves for integer multiples of 100 wolves.

Sensitivity to Number of Wolves						
WOLVES	ELK		DEER		MOOSE	
Number	Hunting Harvest	Wolf Predation	Hunting Harvest	Wolf Predation	Hunting Harvest	Wolf Predation
0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
100	-5.4%	0.8%	-5.3%	0.5%	-7.5%	0.7%
200	-10.8%	1.6%	-10.5%	0.9%	-15.0%	1.5%
300	-16.3%	2.3%	-15.8%	1.4%	-22.5%	2.2%
400	-21.7%	3.1%	-21.0%	1.8%	-29.9%	2.9%
500	-27.1%	3.9%	-26.3%	2.3%	-37.4%	3.7%
600	-32.5%	4.7%	-31.5%	2.7%	-44.9%	4.4%
700	-38.0%	5.4%	-36.8%	3.2%	-52.4%	5.1%
800	-43.4%	6.2%	-42.1%	3.6%	-59.9%	5.8%
900	-48.8%	7.0%	-47.3%	4.1%	-67.4%	6.6%
1000	-54.2%	7.8%	-52.6%	4.5%	-74.8%	7.3%

Observations from the simulation of the default model

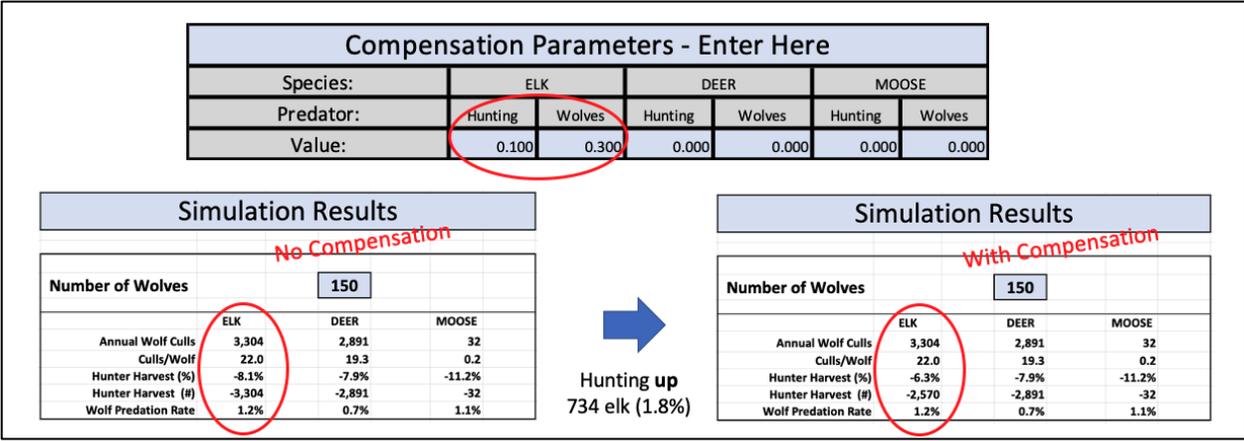
From the sensitivity analysis of 0 to 1000 wolves, there are several observations we can make:

1. There is no number of wolves up to 1000 that will decrease the size of ungulate herds, *as long as hunting is decreased proportionally.*
2. The decrease of hunting needed for each ungulate species is *directly proportional* to the number of wolves. That is, statewide elk hunting needs to be decreased 5.4% for 100 wolves, but will need to decrease by $N \times 5.4\%$ for N hundred wolves.
3. There is a significant reduction of hunting needed to maintain stable herd size compared to the experience of the three states to our north (Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho)

The last point highlights a key difference between Colorado elk herds and those from states to our north. The yield of the states to our north, particularly Montana where we have the most data, is much larger than that of Colorado. Montana appears to have an elk yield in excess of 30%, compared to Colorado's 14.4%. This is evidenced by a pre-wolf 1995 harvest rate of 25%, yet growing the elk population by 50% over 10 years. A simulation of Montana using the wolf/prey simulator combined with Montana observed yields has led to the same results seen in Montana: An larger elk herd with increased hunter harvest. The most likely reason for the larger observed yields is that superior habitat with less human disturbance has allowed these states to have healthy ungulate herds. The higher yield percentages and the increase in herd size in Montana allowed the yield to be shared between hunters and wolves. It is very unlikely that Colorado could follow Montana's example and grow the statewide elk population by 50% to compensate for wolf predation. Colorado herds on the western slope are suffering due to habitat reduction and fragmentation and are experiencing declining calf/cow ratios. A recent presentation at Bud Werner Memorial by Rocky Mountain Wild's Paul Millhouser entitled "[Disappearing Elk, Loving Our Wild Places to Death](#)" documented the decline of elk herds in the Vail and Aspen valleys. His studies show a major challenge is keeping herd sizes at their current levels, much less growing them substantially in size.

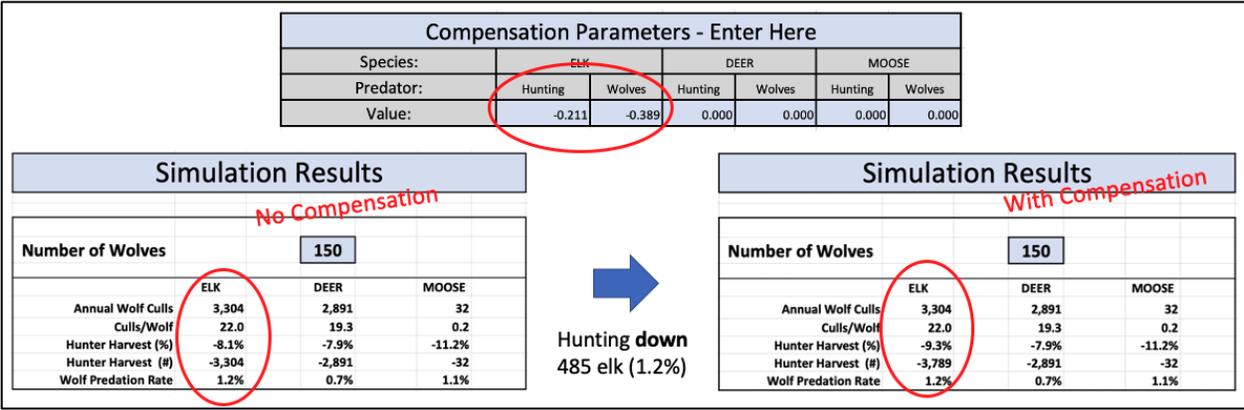
Compensatory and Supplemental Mortality

The compensation parameters of the default model are all set to zero. This is equivalent to wolves and hunters having the same compensatory mortality rate. This can be argued to be incorrect as wolves are likely to cull the sick in a herd at a greater degree than hunters. Indeed, modeling 150 wolves with a compensation rate of .3 (30%) for wolves and .1 (10%) for hunters (these are the rates that mortality would have occurred anyway) shows that hunting reduction would decrease from 8.1% to 6.3%, a difference of 734 elk. See below.



However, there is supplemental mortality effect in the opposite direction. Each time a wolf or a hunter culls a male, one animal is eliminated. But when they cull a female, they eliminate not only that individual animal, but its offspring as well. When looking at the herd impact, this is a supplemental mortality which can be modeled as a negative value of compensatory mortality.

Hunters are given tags specifying which gender they may harvest. Wolves are not given gender-specific hunting tags. They are likely to cull males and females in the proportion they exist in the herd. Hunted herds are generally female rich to maintain the population. Colorado hunters harvest 23K bull elk and 18K cows each year- i.e. 44% of hunter harvest is cows. The existing bull:cow ratio in Colorado is 23:100, or 81% cows. If wolves are non-selective for gender, 81% of their prey will be cows. Assume an average calf/cow ratio of 48%, approximately the ratio needed to have a growing population. Each cow culled has a herd impact of 1.48 and each bull culled has a herd impact of 1. Therefore, hunter compensation = $-(0.44 \times 0.48) = -0.211$. Wolf compensation is $-(0.81 \times 0.48) = -0.389$. Once these values are entered into the simulator, we get the following result.

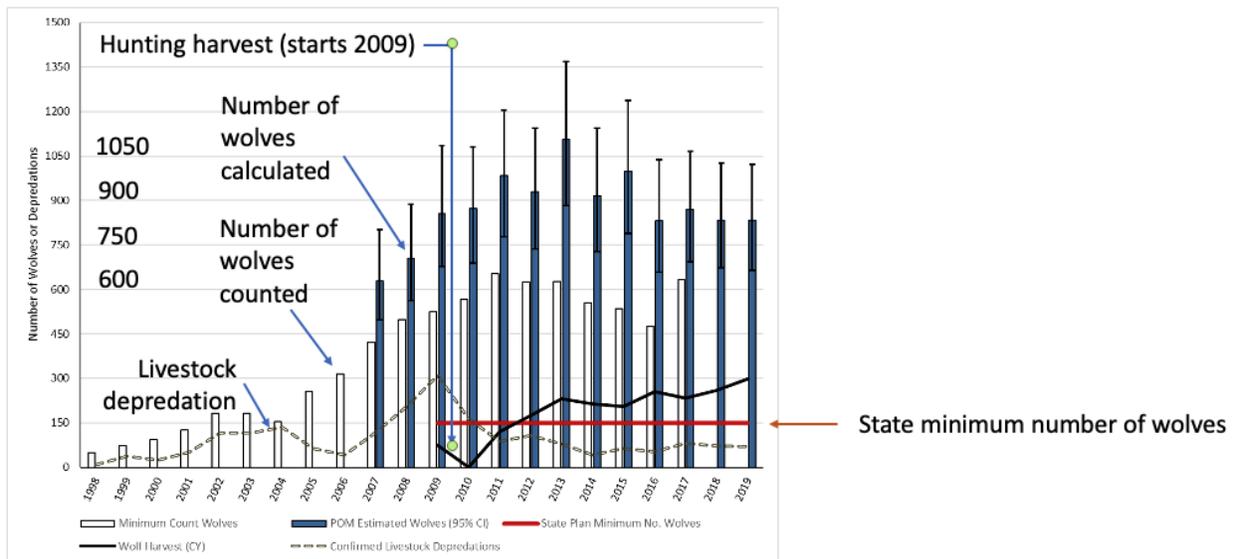


This simulation of 150 wolves shows that wolves have an additional herd impact of 495 elk due to gender of the prey, reducing hunting by an additional 1.2%. This value is in the same range as the compensatory mortality effect of wolves (734 elk in the earlier example), but in the

opposite direction. For these reasons, the default compensation values are all set to zero. This is something that should be further explored and modeled.

Managing wolves

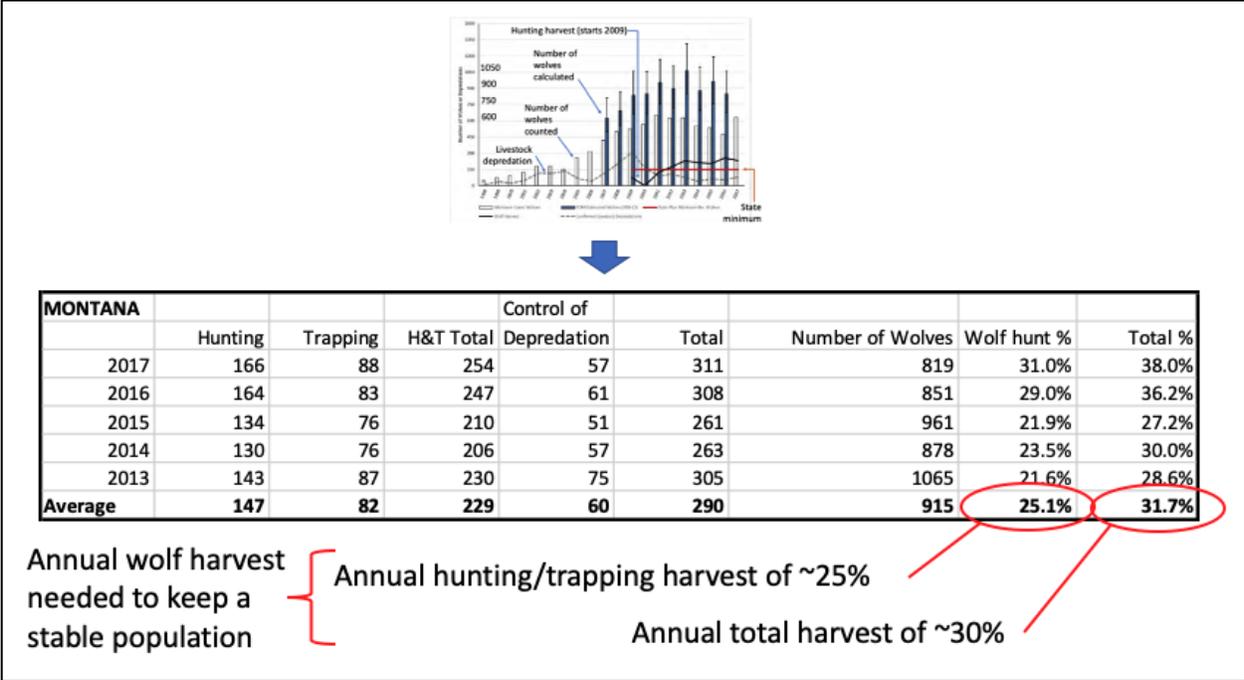
Once a population objective is chosen, the question becomes, “how can the wolf population be managed to a number?” Montana data gives us critical insight. Below is a chart from Montana Fish and Game showing number of wolves (counted by two methods), number of wolves culled by hunting (starting in 2009), and total livestock depredation. It also shows the specified minimum number of wolves for the state of Montana mandated by the federal government.



This chart reveals many dynamics of wolves and wolf management. One issue is simply counting the number of wolves in the state. Montana counts wolves each year and increases that estimate using POM (Patch Occupancy Modeling), essentially increasing the count due to similar habitat elsewhere. They have done this since 2007, and estimate approximately 833 wolves in the state in 2019.

Starting in 2005, the wolf population rose dramatically. We will see later that 30%/year is a reasonable estimate of the wolf population growth rate. Hunting of wolves started in 2009, slowing the population gain, and eventually reaching an equilibrium.

Montana keeps records of wolves harvested by hunting, trapping, and depredation control. See the figure below.

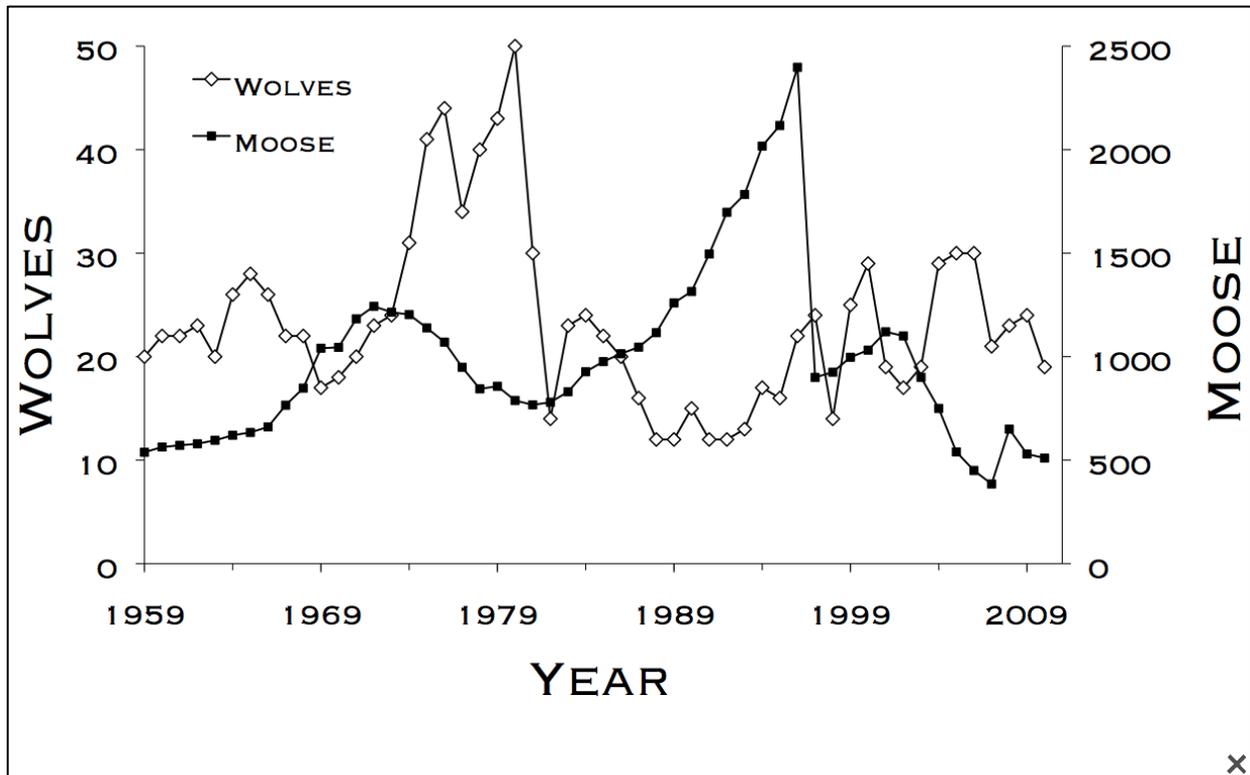


The table above shows five years of Montana wolf management during a relatively stable wolf population. Approximately 30% of the wolf population was harvested in this period, suggesting that 30% is also the annual yield of the wolf population. In order to maintain a stable population, whatever the target, it is likely that the annual wolf harvest will be in the range of 30%. This is likely to come with some controversy.

Alternatives to wolf management

Are there alternatives to wolf population management? There are two issues with an unmanaged wolf population – the dynamic equilibrium of predator/prey populations, and the nature of the developed landscape favoring predators.

In an unmanaged population, the wolf population will continue to increase until the prey species declines substantially enough to impact the wolves’ reproduction and survival. This can be seen in [Isle Royale National Park](#), where there are wolves and moose, and hunting is not allowed. The figure below shows 50 years of wolf and moose population. The wild swings in moose and wolf population are indicative of a dynamic equilibrium. With low wolf numbers, moose population increases. Some time later, this increase in prey is reflected in rising wolf numbers. Eventually, the wolf population consumes beyond the annual yield of moose, and the moose population declines. Some time later the moose population has declined sufficiently to impact wolf reproduction and survival, and the wolf population drops. This allows the moose population to grow again and the cycle is repeated.



The image above shows the dynamic equilibrium of wolves and moose at Isle Royale National Park.

The Isle Royale data show population swings of five to one of both, wolves and prey. This is also the result of environmental conditions. It is unlikely that these population dynamics would be socially acceptable in Colorado.

A second issue is the impact of human disturbance altering the predator/prey balance. This is seen in British Columbia and Alberta where wolves have threatened the remaining endangered caribou population.



Since wolves and caribou have coexisted for centuries, biologists ask themselves what has changed to alter the predator-prey dynamic. There is considerable evidence that human disturbance, specifically roads and trails on forested land, have altered the natural balance, creating "[wolf superhighways](#)."

Two approaches have emerged to deal with this imbalance, one lethal, and one non-lethal.

A caribou with calf.

The lethal approach has been large-scale aerial wolf reduction, essentially shooting wolves from aircraft. This is documented in this [2019 report](#) from the British Columbia Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations.

A non-lethal alternative was documented in the [Journal of Animal Ecology](#). It consisted of blocking linear developments (roads and trails) by spreading logs every 200 meters on the path.

While Colorado wilderness areas prohibit mechanized travel and have a low density of trails, US Forests Service and BLM lands are characterized by a large number of roads and trails. It is unlikely to be socially acceptable to eliminate all roads and paths throughout wolf habitat on these lands. The conclusion of the above is that lethal wolf management will be necessary to manage the wolf population to a specific population goal, as is done in the states to our north.

Hunting and Depredation Economics

In order to reduce the hunter harvest, the number of hunting tags needs to be lowered. The wolf/prey simulator has a tab that calculates the reduction in hunting tags, and the associated impact on Colorado revenue.

Colorado Revenue Changes				
Number of Wolves		100		
	ELK	DEER	MOOSE	
Annual Wolf Culls	2,203	1,927	22	
Culls/Wolf	22.0	19.3	0.2	
Hunter Harvest	-5.4%	-5.3%	-7.5%	
Wolf Predation Rate	0.8%	0.5%	0.7%	
Change in annual license revenue (\$)	-\$2,790,900	-\$575,793	-\$18,124	
Total Change in Revenue	-\$3,384,817			
Revenue Impact / Wolf	-\$33,848			
Changes in Number of Hunters/Tags				
Species:	ELK	DEER	MOOSE	TOTAL
CO Residents	-7,051	-3,960	-34	-11,045
Non- Resident	-3,637	-1,118	-4	-4,758
Total Changes	-10,688	-5078	-38	-15,804

The simulator uses 2019 CPW hunting statistics and revenue to estimate the reduction in tags and revenue. It is based on a simplified assumption that the reduction in hunting tags matches the required reduction in hunter harvest. Since herd populations are modeled to remain at

their pre-wolf levels, hunter success rates are likely not significantly impacted by wolves, leaving reduction of tags as the key management tool. It should be noted that if tags are reduced in specialty draw areas that have a higher hunter success rate, it is possible to reduce hunting tags by less than the required reduction in hunting harvest. However, that carries with it reducing the more desirable tags.

The figure above shows that 100 wolves would require the reduction of 15,000 tags, with a Colorado revenue loss of \$3.3M. This equates to approximately 150 hunting tags per wolf, and \$33,000 per wolf per year. This is due to each wolf culling the equivalent number of prey animals as 150 hunters (technically, 150 hunting tags). This value can also be calculated simply by dividing the prey culled by a single wolf by the hunter success rate. This loss of state revenue may be compensated by raising hunting tag fees or funding a greater share of conservation from the general fund.

How sensitive is this calculation to the ratio of elk vs. deer consumed by wolves? By changing the parameter that determines the biomass percentage of the two species, we can see that the revenue loss per wolf is relatively stable over a wide range of values. Lowering the elk biomass parameter to 60% leads to a cost of \$32K/wolf and 182 fewer hunting tags, while increasing it to 100% raises the cost to \$35K/wolf and 134 fewer hunting tags. This sensitivity analysis is a good example of the usefulness of the simulator.

Hunting tag revenue reduction of \$33K/wolf-year is not the complete calculation of economic impact. Hunters spend considerably more on hunting than just the license. Below is Table 6 from a study performed by [Southwick Associates](#), calculating the economic impact of big game hunting in Colorado.

Table 6. Total Economic Contributions of Big Game Hunting in Colorado

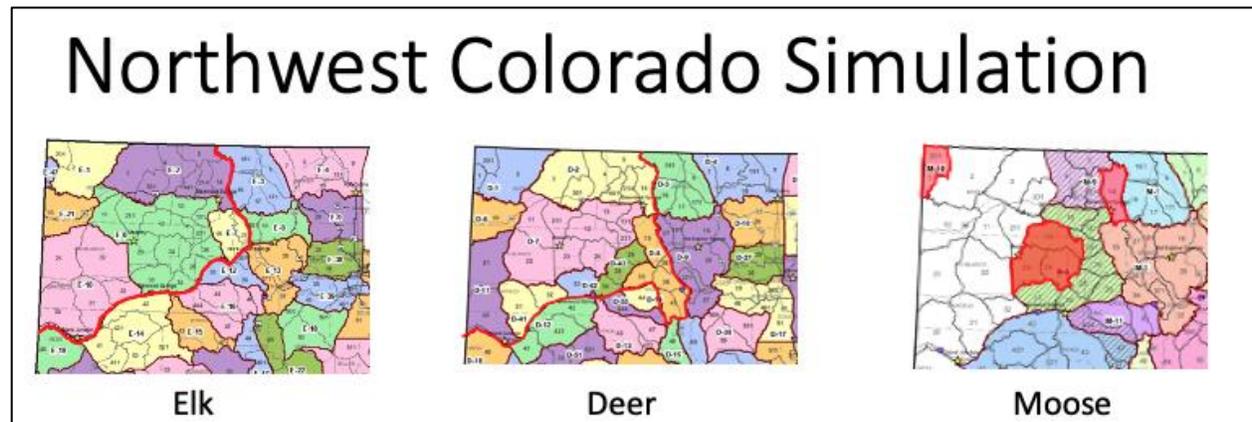
	Output (\$millions)	Labor Income (\$millions)	GDP Contribution (\$millions)	State/Local Taxes (\$millions)	Federal Taxes (\$millions)	Jobs
Resident	\$374.3	\$124.5	\$197.4	\$21.3	\$29.1	2,999
Non-resident	\$228.2	\$95.1	\$138.6	\$13.0	\$21.3	3,305
Total	\$602.4	\$219.6	\$336.0	\$34.4	\$50.4	6,304

From the data above, we can make an estimate of the economic impact. Approximately \$600M of economic output is generated by big game hunting annually in Colorado. 100 wolves reduce hunting by approximately 5.4% total (5.4% for elk, 5.3% for deer, and 7.5% for moose). 5% of \$600M is \$30M, divided by 100 wolves = \$300K of loss economic output per wolf. This is approximately nine times the loss of hunting license revenue. Big game also includes bear licenses, and some economic activity may not decrease merely because the number of tags has decreased. Some derating of this calculated value is justified. A ~20% derating gives us a \$240K loss of economic output per wolf-year, approximately eight times that of license revenue.

Local Impacts – Northwest Colorado Simulation

The wolf/prey simulator calculates the statewide impacts of wolf reintroduction. The tradeoff between hunting and wolf numbers is a social tradeoff, and this paper takes no position on the tradeoff. It should be noted that wolves will not be evenly distributed throughout Colorado. Areas with larger wolf populations will see a larger impact, while other areas may see no impact at all.

At the request of the Associated Governments of Northwest Colorado, a simulation was performed for northwest Colorado. This required using northwest Colorado herd statistics and lowering the moose biomass parameter to match the lower moose population in this area.



The image above shows the areas considered for each species. In order to use accurate herd and hunting statistics, the boundaries must use intact DAUs (Data Analysis Units). Since DAUs are not the same between species, the boundaries are different for each species. Since moose prevalence is lower in northwest Colorado, the moose biomass parameter was reduced from 1% to 0.3%, reflecting their prevalence in the region. The simulation results are below.

NW CO Simulation Results				
Number of Wolves	100			
	ELK	DEER	MOOSE	
Annual Wolf Culls	2,218	1,941	6	
Culls/Wolf	22.2	19.4	0.1	
Hunter Harvest	-14.0%	-19.3%	-28.2%	
Wolf Predation Rate	2.5%	1.7%	2.5%	TOTAL
Change in total hunters	-10,149	-4,503	-9	-14,661

The absolute numbers in this simulation are close to the statewide simulation but, due to the concentrated impact, the hunting decrease percentage is significantly larger. For example, the simulation estimates a 14% decline in northwest Colorado elk hunting for 100 wolves, while the statewide simulation showed just 5.4%. This is simply the math of wolves culling 2200 elk in a smaller area. The total impact on hunting tags is close to the statewide estimate, in this case 146 tags/wolf.

This shows the flexibility of a spreadsheet-based simulator, as it is straightforward to modify the simulator for northwest Colorado. Nonetheless, there are several caveats to a regional simulation. In this case, 2019 data was used, while data averaged over several years may be more accurate. Also, like the statewide simulation, this assumes a decrease in hunting tags proportional to the required reduction in hunting harvest. It may be possible to reduce the decline in hunting tags by eliminating some specialty draw tags.

HUNTING JOBS BY COUNTY IN NORTHWEST COLORADO	
• Eagle:	203
• Garfield:	322
• Grand:	237
• Moffat:	248
• Mesa:	484
• Pitkin:	70
• Rio Blanco:	191
• Routt:	292
• Summit:	103

As a final data point, the table to the left was published in the [Aspen Times](#), as an output from the Southwick Associates study.

Further economic analysis of wolves and the associated regional impacts to hunting are warranted.

Livestock Depredation

Montana reports statistics on wolf depredation during each annual wolf report. Below are the statistics for the most recent three years.

Montana Depredation	2017	2018	2019	Average
Dep. Incidents	80	71	84	78
Depredation Costs*	\$64,133	\$82,959	\$82,450	\$76,514
Avg. Cost/Depredation	\$802	\$1,168	\$982	\$984
Wolf Population	871	833	833	846
Average Depredation/wolf				\$90

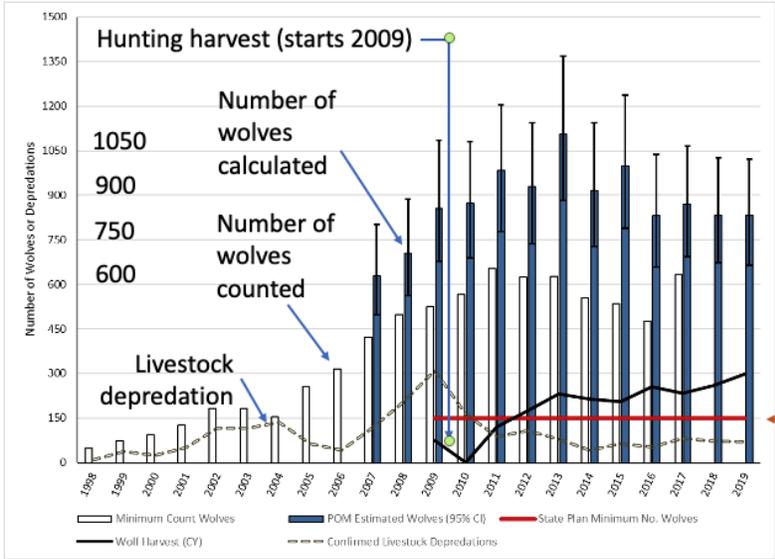
The above shows Montana pays out approximately \$90 per wolf annually in depredation costs.

However, there is considerable controversy on whether this reimbursement is equitable. A [study by the University of Montana](#) concluded that “ranches that experienced a confirmed cattle depredation by wolves had a negative and statistically significant impact of approximately 22 pounds on the average calf weight across their herd, possibly due to inefficient foraging behavior or stress to mother cows. For ranches experiencing confirmed depredation, the costs of these indirect weight losses are shown to potentially be greater than the costs of direct depredation losses that have, in the past, been the only form of compensation for ranchers who have suffered wolf depredations.”

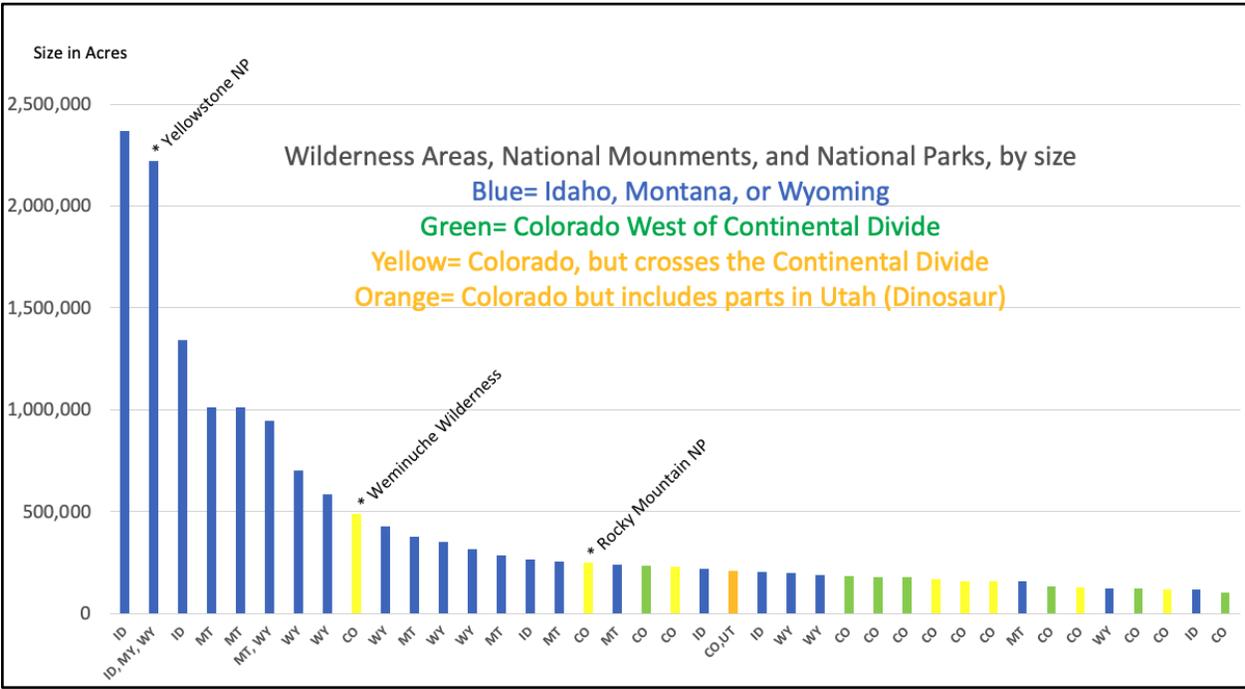
This led to an average herd depredation impact of \$6,679 after an incident, compared to the \$846 average payout. This would add \$710 to the \$90 per-wolf depredation cost, for a total of \$800 per wolf-year.

Ranchers have also pointed out that the reimbursement costs don't take into consideration their investments into generations of breeding. This cost is not estimated in this paper.

A look at the wolf population versus depredation incidents in the graph below shows that depredations peaked in 2009 and dropped significantly, though the number of wolves remained relatively stable. This is likely due to wolf hunting beginning in 2009. Depredations are only one third of their 2009 peak. It is possible that Colorado ranchers will see higher depredation totals until hunting of wolves is allowed.



A final observation on depredation is that Colorado has more boundaries per unit area of wild areas than the three states to our north, as shown in the graphic below.



The graphic above plots all wild areas in the three northern states, along with those in Colorado, color-coded to indicate the size of each land. A wild area is defined as wilderness areas, national monuments, and national parks. Colorado wild areas are significantly smaller than those to our north. Geometry dictates that the ratio of the area of a shape to its boundary length increases as the square root of its area. For example, Yellowstone NP has an area of 2.22M acres. Rocky Mountain NP has an area of 249K acres, approximately one-ninth that of

Yellowstone. Rocky Mountain NP will have approximately three times the boundary length per unit area compared to Yellowstone. Since depredation will largely occur when wolves leave wild areas, this could increase the depredation rate in Colorado.

The graphic also brings up an interesting issue regarding wolf reintroduction. Prop 114 only authorizes reintroduction west of the Continental Divide. This fragments half of Colorado's wild areas, including the two largest wild areas- Weminuche Wilderness area and Rocky Mountain National Park. Intact Colorado wild areas are shown in green, wild areas that are traversed by the Continental Divide are shown in yellow. It is not clear, as a legal question, that wolves would be allowed to be released in wild areas that cross the divide if the intent is to repopulate the entire wild area. This may depend on a court's interpretation of "release" versus "reintroduce." This is beyond the scope of this paper. Nevertheless, this can be solved by the legislature modifying the legislation to change designated lands to include any national park or wilderness area traversed by the Continental Divide or, preferably, by eliminating the restriction completely. Since CPW will be chartered to use the best available science, eliminating this restriction should not have a detrimental effect.

Summary

The simulator gives key insights into how wolves may impact ungulate herds, hunting, and depredation in Colorado. The calculated values should be considered approximate and directional in nature. More advanced simulations, including updated compensatory mortality parameters, may make the forecasts more accurate. Sensitivity analysis could show the range of outcomes Colorado is likely to experience. The following are key points derived from the simulation and other data to date:

- The wolf/prey simulator produces results that align with wolf consumption observations of studies performed in Yellowstone National Park.

- A yield analysis of Montana shows that the simulator predicts historical results in Montana. Colorado elk impacts from wolves will be different from that in Montana due to the difference in yields.

- The number of wolves matters greatly for both, hunting and depredation.

- Colorado herds could support up to 1000 wolves if hunting is reduced significantly to compensate, approximately cut to half of the current level.

- Hunting is impacted linearly with the number of wolves, with a reduction of tags approximately 150 hunting tags per wolf. This aligns with a 5.4% reduction in statewide elk hunter harvest per 100 wolves.

- The impact may not be uniform across the state. Some localities will be impacted to a greater degree, while others may see no impact.

- Colorado revenue impact is approximately \$33,000 per wolf-year, using the standard model.

- Colorado economic impact, based solely on hunting, is approximately \$240,000 per wolf-year. This is a figure that could use further analysis to separate fixed hunting spending from variable hunting spending.

- Livestock depredation payouts in Montana is approximately \$90 per wolf-year. Actual depredation costs may be higher, with one study suggesting \$800 per wolf-year. Colorado ranchers may see higher values until hunting of wolves is allowed.

- Wolf management will be necessary to maintain the targeted population. Montana data shows a 30% annual wolf harvest rate necessary to maintain a stable population.

- Colorado wild lands are significantly smaller than those of the states to our north. This creates more boundaries per unit area and may lead to higher depredation impact.



Gray Wolves

Restoring Colorado's Natural Balance

Volodymyr Burdiak/Shutterstock



My Interest in Wolves

- In 2016, hunted elk in the Zirkels
- Packed out quarters; saw gray wolf
- Why don't we have more wolves in Colorado
- In 2018, shot a CWD-positive mule deer buck; trashed the venison
- Research: Hunting won't stop CWD; Colorado needs wolves



gettyimages®
Steven Rossi

25 YEAR

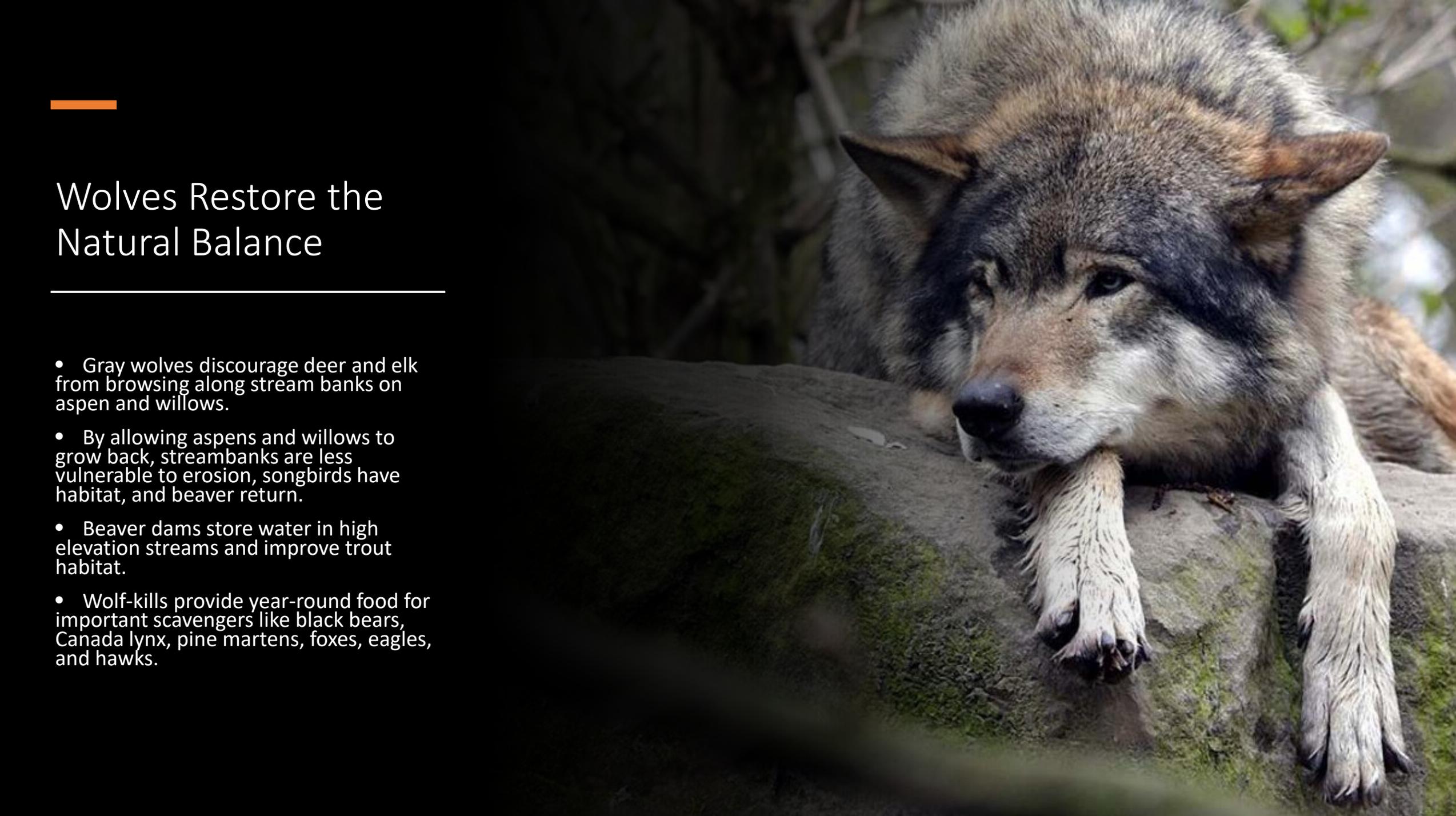
The absence of wolves for more than 75 years has upset Colorado's natural balance, harming wildlife health and diversity, damaging habitat, and even reducing alpine water storage.

The Problem

Wolves Restored to the Northern Rockies in Mid-1990s

- In 1995, 14 Wolves were Captured in Canada and Released into Yellowstone National Park
- Also in 1995, 15 Wolves were Reintroduced into Idaho
- Today there are around 1900 wolves in 3 Northern Rockies States
- 25 Years of Research on Wolves Has Occurred Since Then
- What Follows is Based on that Research...



A close-up photograph of a gray wolf resting on a mossy rock. The wolf has thick, multi-colored fur in shades of gray, brown, and white. It is looking slightly to the left of the frame. The background is dark and out of focus, showing some green foliage.

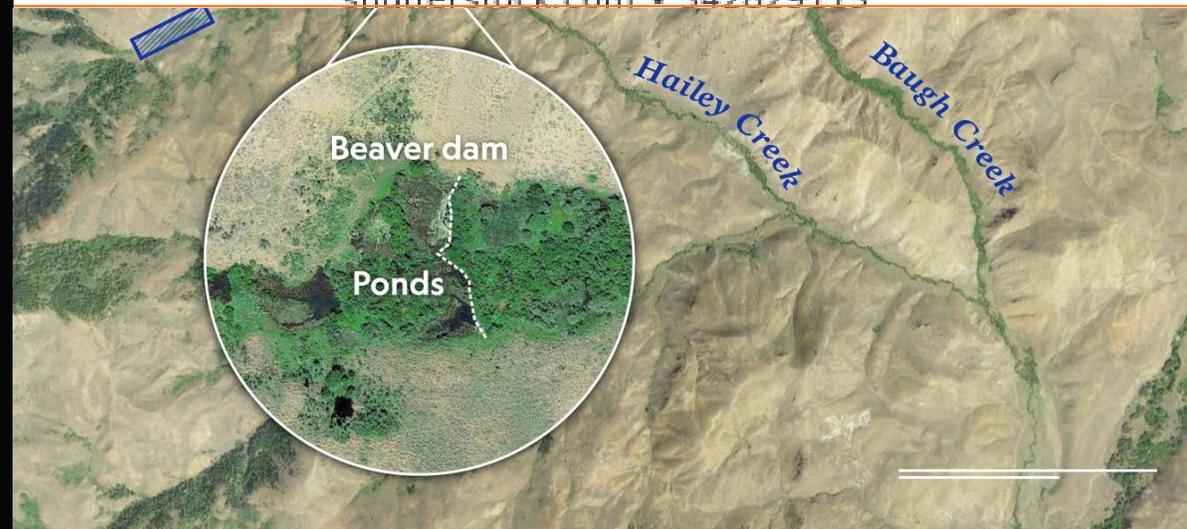
Wolves Restore the Natural Balance

- Gray wolves discourage deer and elk from browsing along stream banks on aspen and willows.
- By allowing aspens and willows to grow back, streambanks are less vulnerable to erosion, songbirds have habitat, and beaver return.
- Beaver dams store water in high elevation streams and improve trout habitat.
- Wolf-kills provide year-round food for important scavengers like black bears, Canada lynx, pine martens, foxes, eagles, and hawks.

Beaver Dams Store Water and Protect Vegetation from Wildfire



shutterstock.com • 542829115



Wolves Improve Health of Elk and Deer Herds

- Colorado's Elk and Deer Have High Prevalence of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD):
 - 33/54 Deer Herds
 - 14/43 Elk Herds
- Widespread Mandatory CWD Testing for CWD in Western Colorado this Year
- Wolves Selectively Target Diseased Prey and Will Reduce Prevalence of CWD-Infected Elk and Deer in Colorado



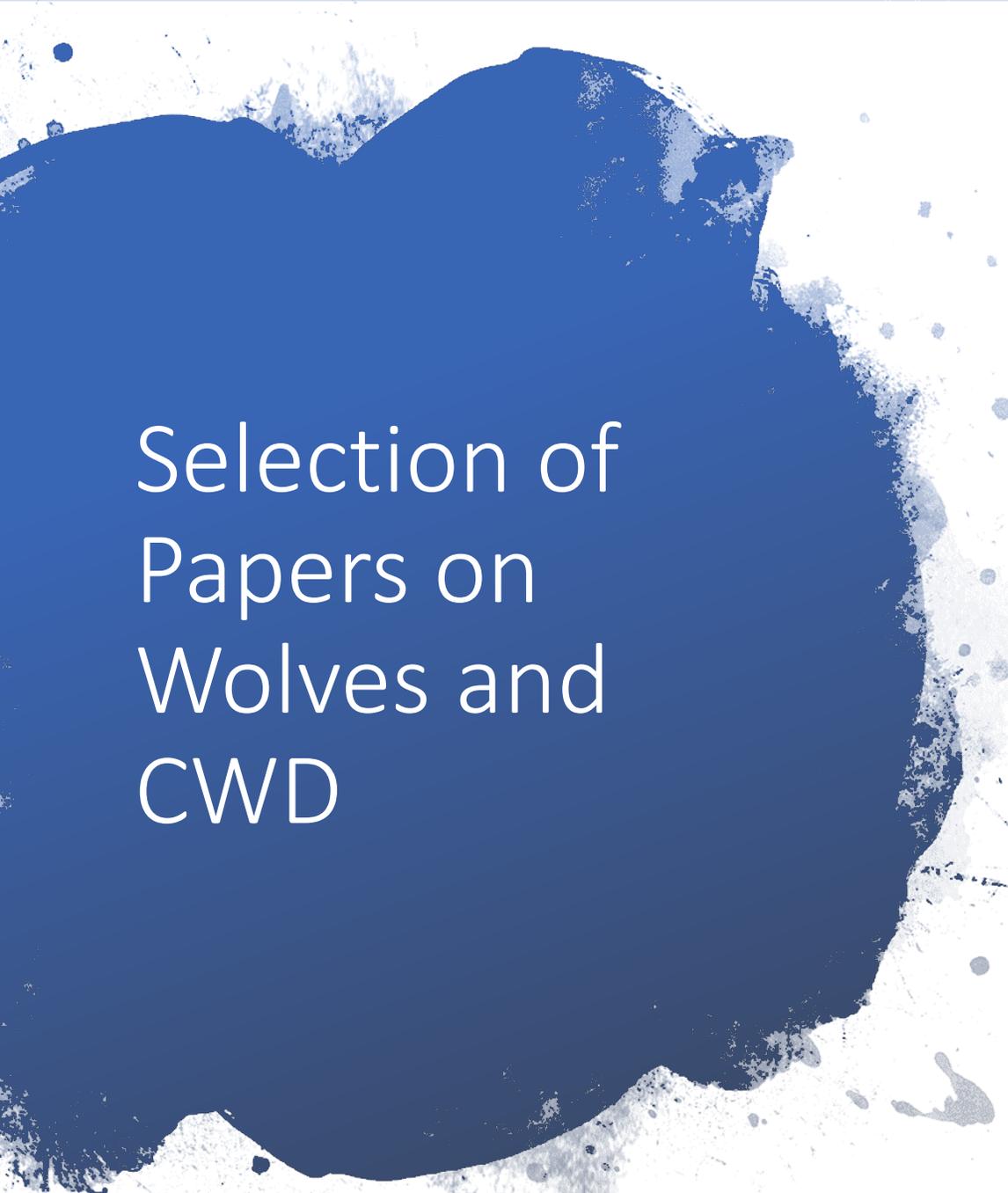


What Leading Wolf Experts Say About CWD

"While predation may not eliminate CWD from an ungulate population, predators like the gray wolf that select for disease-compromised cervids should prove useful to that end."

- Dr. Dave Mech
- Dr. Rolf Peterson
- Dr. Doug Smith
- Dr. Mike Phillips
- Dr. Joanna Lambert
- Dr. Barry Noon





Selection of Papers on Wolves and CWD

- The Undeniable Value of Wolves, Bears, Lions and Coyotes in Battling Disease, 2017: ***“We should consider wolves to be ‘CWD border guards,’” said Gary Wolfe, former CEO of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.***
- The Role of Predation in Disease Control: A Comparison of Selective and Nonselective Removal on Prion Disease Dynamics in Deer, Wild et al. 2011: ***“We suggest that as CWD distribution and wolf range overlap in the future, wolf predation may suppress disease emergence or limit prevalence.”***
- A Model Analysis of Effects of Wolf Predation on Prevalence on Chronic Wasting Disease in Elk Populations in Rocky Mountain National Park, Hobbs. 2006: ***“Results from simulations suggest that predation by wolves has the potential to eliminate CWD from an infected elk population.”***
- Officials Fighting CWD Ponder a Natural Partner: Wolves, 2003. ***“Wolves will certainly bring the disease to a halt. They will remove infected individuals and clean up carcasses that could transmit the disease,” said University of Calgary professor Valerius Geist. “Geist and Princeton University biologist Andrew Dobson theorize that killing off the wolf allowed CWD to take hold in the first place.”***

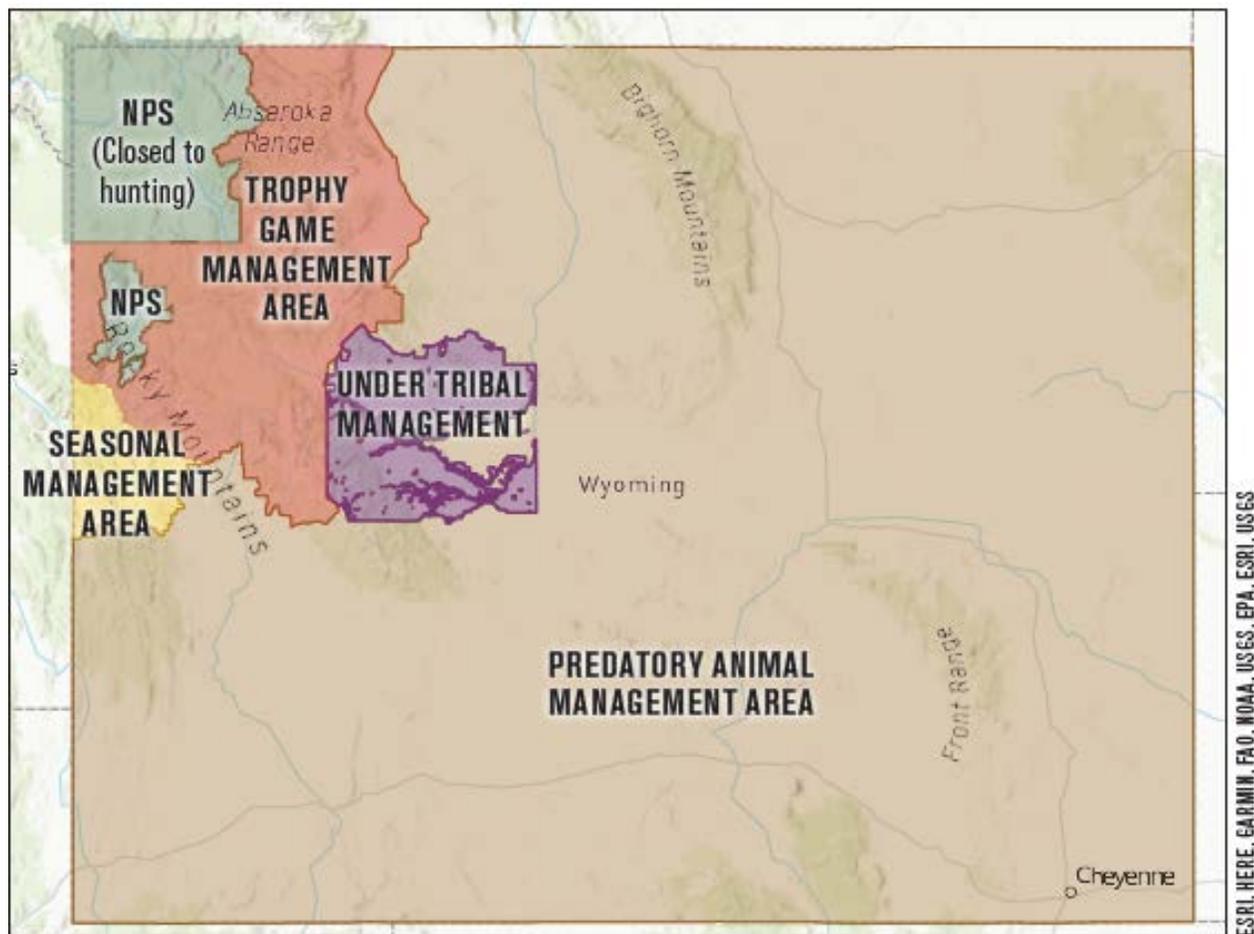


Wolf Tourism

In 2005, research at Yellowstone National Park estimated that 94,000 visitors came to the park specifically to see gray wolves, bringing \$35 million wolf-watcher tourist dollars per year.



Natural Recolonization by Wolves Won't Work



- Wolves struggle to make it to Colorado because they are hunted without restriction throughout the Wyoming Predator Management Zone – about 87% of the state.
- Most of the few wolves that have made it to Colorado have disappeared - shot, hit by cars, or poisoned.

Solution

- Have CPW develop a science-based plan, with public input, to restore wolves to Colorado.



Ballot Proposition 114



Will reintroduce wolves to Colorado on 'designated lands...west of the continental divide' by December 2023



Requires the CPW Commission to implement a recovery plan, following 'statewide hearings and using scientific data'



Prohibits any resource use restriction on private landowners



Requires the creation of a compensation fund to 'fairly compensate owners for losses of livestock caused by gray wolves'

Gray Wolf Range



Canis Lupus The Gray Wolf

Roughly 2 million gray wolves once roamed the US

Why Colorado?

- Western Colorado has ideal wolf habitat
- Many Colorado deer and elk are infected with CWD
- Areas of Colorado, like Rocky Mountain National Park, suffer from over-browsing of streamside aspens and willows by elk





Concerns Raised Over Wolf Restoration

- Disease Transmission
- Size of Elk Herds
- Human Safety
- Predation on Livestock
- Costs

Disease Transmission



- Wolf restoration opponents claim wolves will transmit coronavirus and hydatid disease to people, but:
 - There is no documented case of wolves ever transmitting coronavirus to people.
 - There is no documented case of wolves ever transmitting hydatid disease to people, despite thousands of hours logged by researchers crawling into wolf dens, collaring wolves, and handling wolves and wolf scat.

Elk Population in MT, WY, and ID has Increased by 40,000 Since Wolves Were Reintroduced

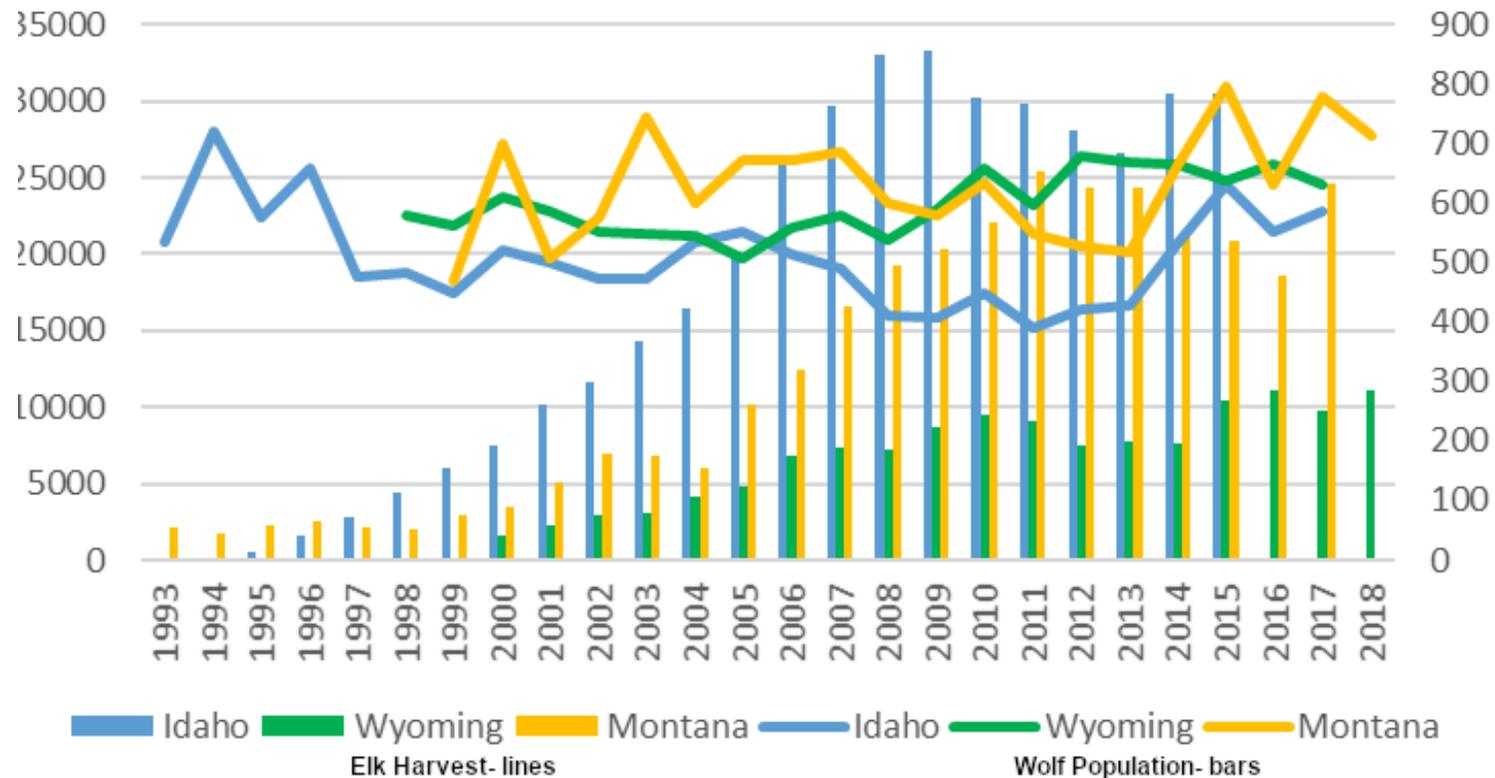
	1995 Elk Populations	2018 Populations
Wyoming	103,448	110,300
Idaho*	112,333	116,800*
Montana	109,500	138,470



Elk Exceed State Targets in ID, WY, MT

- Elk are above management goals in 17/22 zones in Idaho.
- Populations are 29% over objective in Wyoming.
- Populations are 50% over objective in Montana.

Wolf Population/Elk Harvest*



Elk Harvests in MT, WY, ID are at or Near Historic Highs

*Based on best available data. Missing data points represent unavailable data.

Source: Data compiled by Annual Harvest Reports and Annual Wolf Reports by Idaho Fish and Game, Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks, and Wyoming Game and Fish Departments



Elk Hunter Success Rates/2017

With Wolves

- Idaho 24.0%
- Montana 26.3%
- Wyoming 43.8%

Without Wolves

- Colorado 17%



Hunting License Revenue: 1995 vs 2020



With Wolves



Montana

\$19.8 million vs \$38.9 million (**96% growth**)



Idaho

\$15.4 million vs \$29.1 million (**89% growth**)



Wyoming

\$12.7 million vs \$26.0 million (**104% growth**)



Without Wolves



Colorado

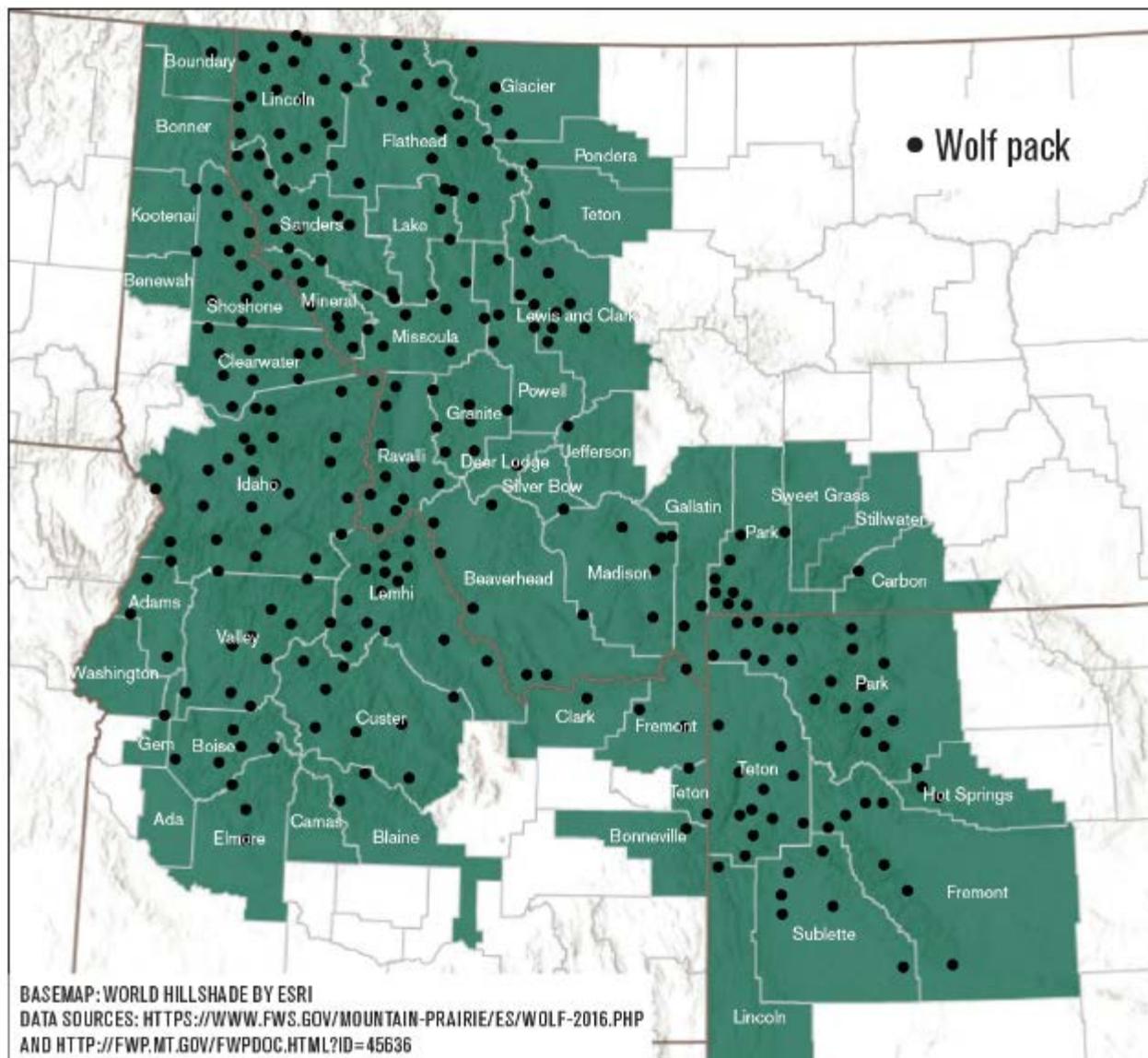
\$42.8 million vs \$59.0 million (**37% growth**)

Human Safety

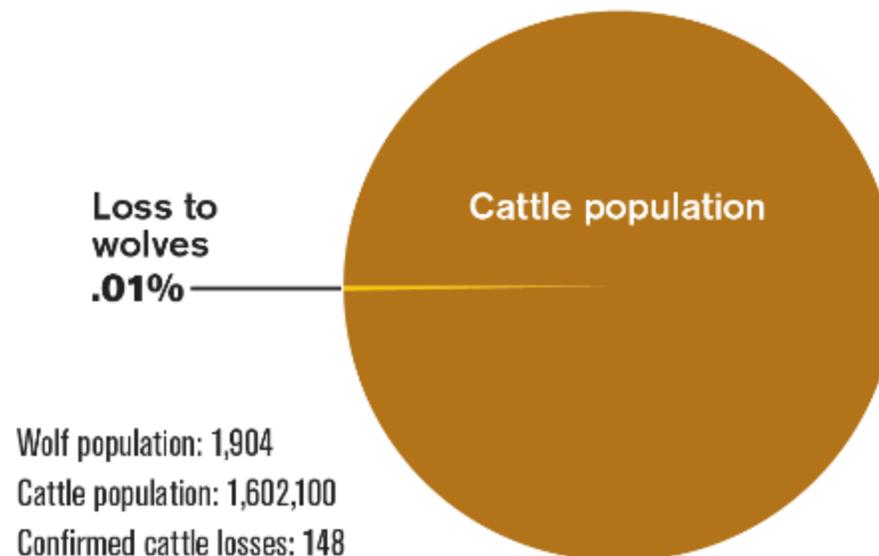
- Only two documented cases of wolves killing people in North America in last century.
- Since wolves were reintroduced into Yellowstone in 1995, there have been over 100 million people hiking, camping and wolf watching in the park, without a single wolf attack.
- In contrast, 20 people are killed each year in North America due to encounters with cattle.



Gray Wolves Cause About 0.01% of Livestock Mortality



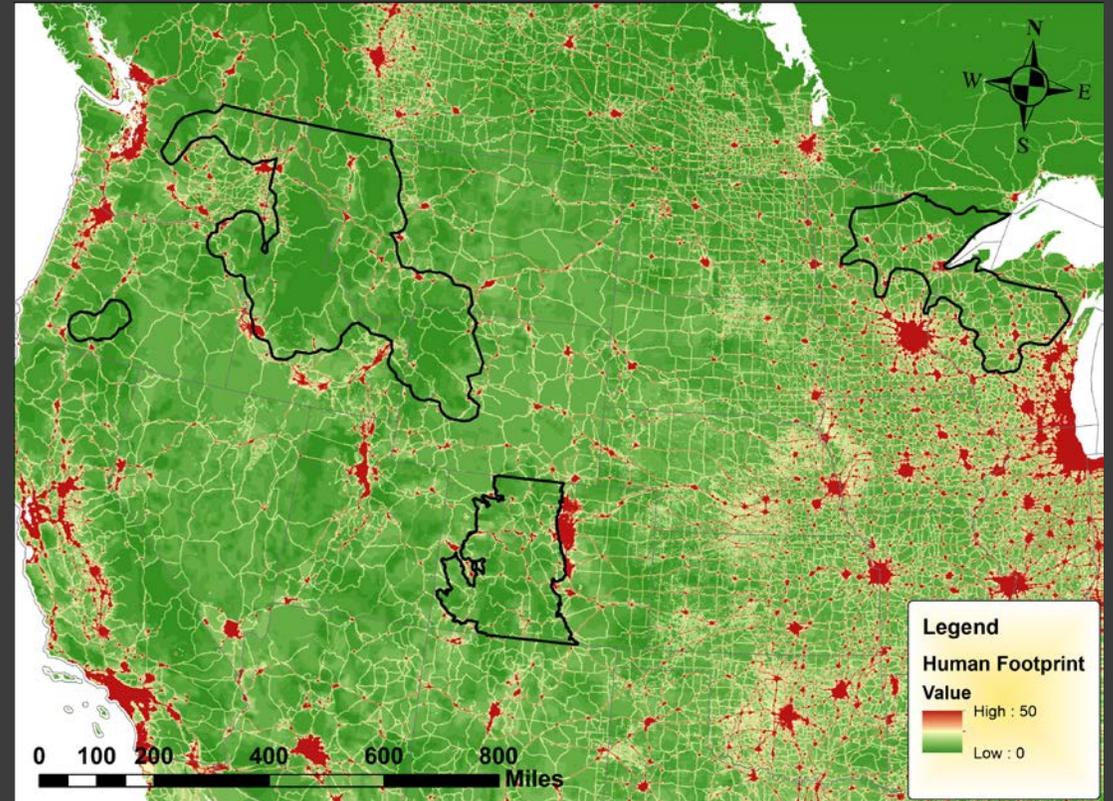
Total Wolf Population 1,904
Total Cattle in Counties w/ Wolves- 1,602,100
Confirmed Wolf Predation in NRM- 148
% of Cattle Predated by Wolves- .01%



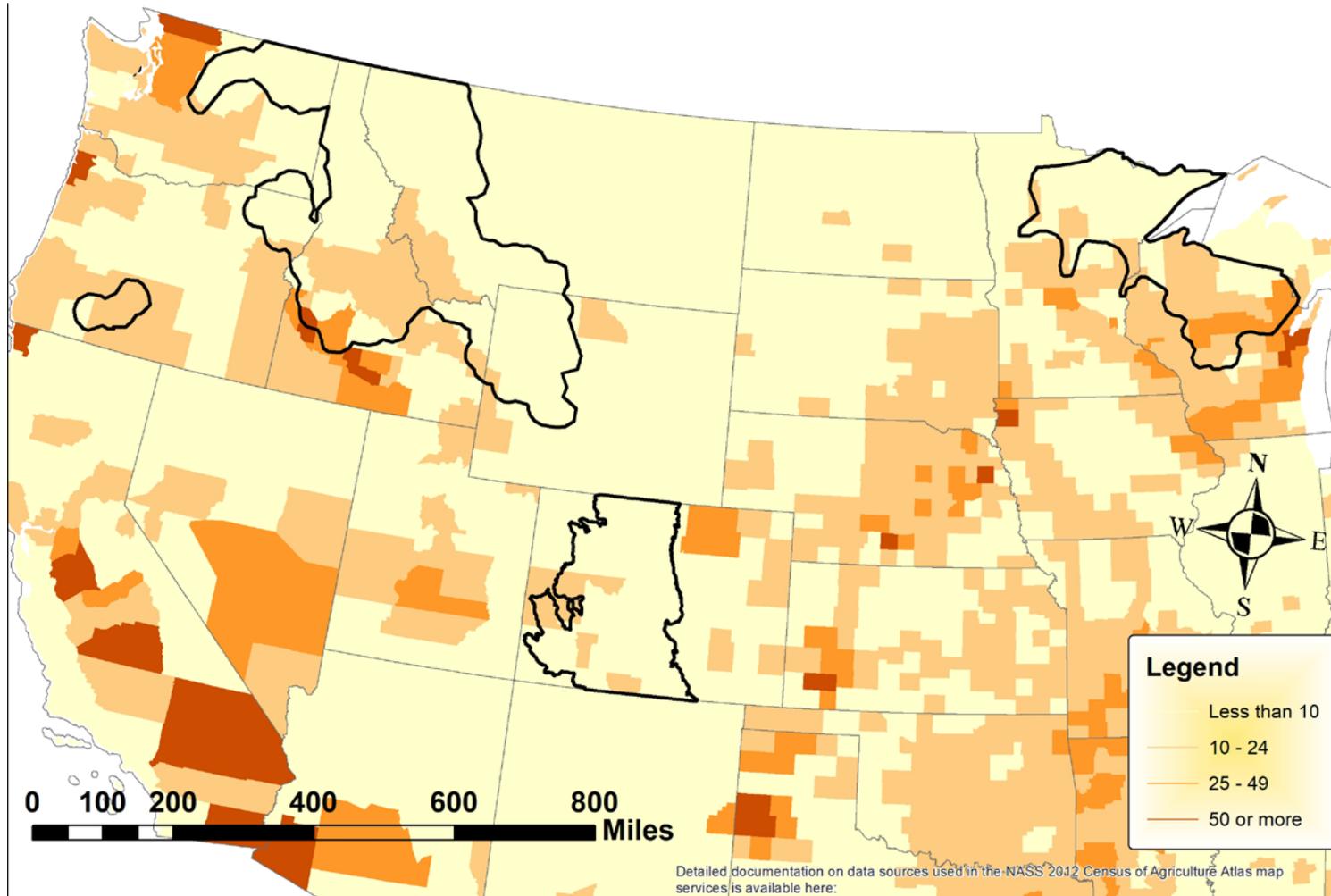
*Cattle population and losses sourced from USDA National Agricultural Statistics Services <https://quickstats.nass.usda.gov/>

*Losses to wolves from each state's game department reports

Northern Rockies and West Slope are Comparable in Density of Human Development

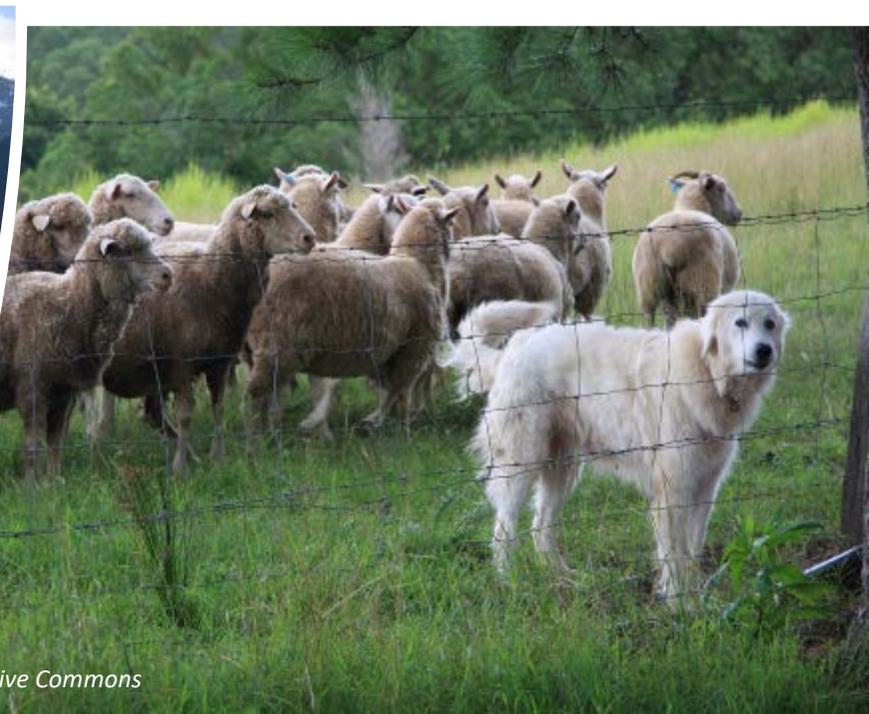


Northern
Rockies and
West Slope
are
Comparable
in Livestock
Occupation
Density



Non-Lethal Techniques Reduce Conflicts

- Herd Instincts
- Range Riding
- Fladry
- Livestock Guardian Dogs
- And More...



Prop 114 Requires Mandatory Compensation for Ranchers

The Northern Rockies States compensate ranchers for livestock losses.

Example: Montana in 2018 paid about \$82,000 for livestock losses to gray wolves.

Proposition #114 will require CPW to compensate Colorado ranchers for livestock losses to gray wolves, just as it does now for losses to bears and mountain lions.



CPW Can Design a Fair Livestock Compensation System

- If Prop 114 Passes, CPW will design the compensation system in consultation with ranchers.
- Compensation can be paid for direct losses and any impacts to calf weight.
- Earlier this year, Senator Kerry Donovan, a rancher, explored innovative ways to compensate ranchers – including paying for wolf presence - as she drafted legislation to restore wolves to Colorado.
- While COVID derailed the Donovan legislative effort, her ideas can be adopted by CPW.

Paying for Wolf Restoration

- Wolf restoration will cost between \$300K and \$800K per year.
- If the wolf is listed under the ESA, then federal grants from the FWS can pay 75% of the costs, and GOCO funds can pay the balance.
- If the wolf is delisted, then GOCO funds – which were used to pay for Canada lynx reintroduction - can pay all the costs.



Restoration Enables CPW to Manage Wolves

- Currently, wolves are listed under the ESA, which means CPW cannot manage wolves that migrate to Colorado.
- The Trump Administration U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) will soon delist wolves.
- But...FWS has a long track record of losing lawsuits over wolves and will likely lose the upcoming delisting lawsuit.
- The only way for CPW to gain long-term management control of wolves will be to deliberately reintroduce them.



Coloradans Want Gray Wolves

Colorado State University Poll 2019

- 734 participants
- 84% support for wolf reintroductions
 - 79.8% support on the Western Slope
 - 79.3% support on the Eastern Plains
 - 84.9% support on the Front Range
 - 69% of hunters; 66% of ranchers

NewBridge Poll 2019

- 900 participants
 - based on voter registration rolls
- 67% support wolf restoration
 - 61% support on the Western Slope
 - 65% support on the Eastern Plains
 - 68% support on the Front Range

Peak Campaigns' Poll 2013

- 66% support for wolf restoration

Colorado State University Poll 1994

- 1452 participants
- 70.8% support for wolf reintroduction
 - 65.1% support on the Western Slope
 - 73.8% support on the Front Range



Victoria Carodine/5280



The Myth of the Wolf is Strong

- Thank you for inviting me to present this information to you today.
- Hopefully, this presentation helped to separate the myth from the more complex reality.
- If you need any further information, please don't hesitate to let me know.

Questions?



Photo courtesy of Grizzly Creek Films.

Proposition 114: Wolf Reintroduction in Western CO

Routt County Commissioner's Meeting

Sep 29, 2020



Wolf Reintroduction In Colorado



Proposition 114 Means Unacceptable Levels of Risk in 3 Key Areas:

1. Livestock Depredation
2. Related Ranch and Farm Risks
3. Funding

Prop 114 Means Risk

1. Livestock Depredation

- Prop 114 Acknowledges That Forced Reintroduction of Wolves Will Result in Livestock Losses
- Can Compensation be Equitable?
 - Wolf Kills Hard to Document/Prove
 - Additional Stress Means Additional Loss
 - Exceptions and Outliers

Experience/History Show that Compensation is Nearly Impossible to Get Right

Prop 114 Means Risk

2. Related Risks for Ranch and Farm

- Costs for Increased Surveillance/Security
- Loss of Working (and Other) Dogs
- Increase in Guard Dogs
- Increase in Firearms
- Reduced Wildlife-Based Revenue
 - Hunting
 - Ecotourism

Prop 114 Means Risk

3. Funding

- Prop 114 Will Cost Millions, Yet Provides for No Funding Source
- Costs for Wolf Management Will Compete with Funds for Education and Roads
- Reduced Hunting License Revenue
- Risks of Future Costs of Wolf Management

In Summary ...

RCCA, RCCW and CCA Oppose Forced Wolf Reintroduction

Proposition 114 Is Risky

1. Livestock Losses
2. Ranch/Farm Increased Cost, Risk and Loss of Revenue
3. Insensible (No) Funding Plan, Reducing Available Support for Critical CO Needs

A Final Thought About the American Democratic Ideal

ROUTT COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA COMMUNICATION FORM

ITEM DATE: 9/29/2020	
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FROM:	PDR Board/Claire Sollars – Kendra Alfieri
TODAY’S DATE:	9/24/2020
AGENDA TITLE:	PDR interview- Tim Wohlgenant

CHECK ONE THAT APPLIES TO YOUR ITEM:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACTION ITEM	
<input type="checkbox"/> DIRECTION	
<input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION	

I. DESCRIBE THE REQUEST OR ISSUE:
PDR interview- Tim Wohlgenant

II. RECOMMENDED ACTION:

III. DESCRIBE FISCAL IMPACTS (VARIATION TO BUDGET):
PROPOSED REVENUE: n/a
PROPOSED EXPENDITURE:
FUNDING SOURCE:

IV. IMPACTS OF A REGIONAL NATURE OR ON OTHER JURISDICTIONS (IDENTIFY ANY COMMUNICATIONS ON THIS ITEM):

V. BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ROUTT COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
AGENDA COMMUNICATION FORM

VI. LEGAL ISSUES:
VII. CONFLICTS OR ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES:
VIII. SUMMARY AND OTHER OPTIONS:



ROUTT COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
AGENDA COMMUNICATION FORM

ITEM DATE: 09/29/2020	ITEM TIME: 12:10 pm

FROM:	Clerk and Recorder
TODAY'S DATE:	9/17/20
AGENDA TITLE:	Special Events Liquor License for Steamboat Adaptive Recreational Sports (STARS)

CHECK ONE THAT APPLIES TO YOUR ITEM:

ACTION ITEM

DIRECTION

INFORMATION

I. DESCRIBE THE REQUEST OR ISSUE:

Consideration for approval of and authorization for the board to sign a special events liquor license for The Steamboat Adaptive Recreational Sports (STARS) hosting an event at the STARS Ranch at 35465 US 40 in Steamboat on October 2, 2020 5:00pm to 11:30pm.

II. RECOMMENDED ACTION (*motion*):

III. DESCRIBE FISCAL IMPACTS (VARIATION TO BUDGET):

PROPOSED REVENUE (*if applicable*): \$

CURRENT BUDGETED AMOUNT: \$0

PROPOSED EXPENDITURE: \$

FUNDING SOURCE:

SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET NEEDED: YES NO

Explanation:

IV. IMPACTS OF A REGIONAL NATURE OR ON OTHER JURISDICTIONS (IDENTIFY ANY COMMUNICATIONS ON THIS ITEM):



ROUTT COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
AGENDA COMMUNICATION FORM

V. BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

I have sent out investigation reports and will contact the event manager to pick the poster to post the property.

VI. LEGAL ISSUES:

VII. CONFLICTS OR ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES:

VIII. SUMMARY AND OTHER OPTIONS:

IX. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS:



ROUTT COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA COMMUNICATION FORM

ITEM DATE: 9/29/2020	ITEM TIME: 1hour

FROM:	Roberta Smith
TODAY'S DATE:	9/23/2020
AGENDA TITLE:	Approval letter to move to Safer at Home Level 1.

CHECK ONE THAT APPLIES TO YOUR ITEM:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X ACTION ITEM	
<input type="checkbox"/> DIRECTION	
<input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION	

I. DESCRIBE THE REQUEST OR ISSUE:

In order for Routt County to progress to Safer at Home Level 1, approval from Local Public Health Authority, Local Hospitals and Local Elected officials will need to be submitted to CDPHE through a survey.

II. RECOMMENDED ACTION (*motion*):

Approval from the Routt County Commissioners and a Letter that can be submitted to CDPHE.

III. DESCRIBE FISCAL IMPACTS (VARIATION TO BUDGET):

PROPOSED REVENUE (*if applicable*): NONE

CURRENT BUDGETED AMOUNT: \$0.00

PROPOSED EXPENDITURE:

FUNDING SOURCE:

SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET NEEDED: YES NO

.

IV. IMPACTS OF A REGIONAL NATURE OR ON OTHER JURISDICTIONS (IDENTIFY ANY COMMUNICATIONS ON THIS ITEM):

NONE



ROUTT COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
AGENDA COMMUNICATION FORM

V. BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Colorado’s dial framework standardizes different levels of “openness” at the county level. It is a tool for counties to use to make life during the pandemic more sustainable, allowing us to balance, to the greatest extent possible, controlling the virus with our social and economic needs.

- Colorado’s dial framework has five levels to guide county response to COVID-19.
- Counties move back and forth between levels, depending on three metrics.
- Levels are based on the number of new cases, the percent positivity of COVID tests, and the impact on hospitals, and local considerations. As the dial moves left, toward Protect Our Neighbors, more people can participate in various activities.
- This framework gives communities a new tool to make life in the pandemic more sustainable.

VI. LEGAL ISSUES:

NONE

VII. CONFLICTS OR ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES:

NONE

VIII. SUMMARY AND OTHER OPTIONS:

NONE

IX. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS: Supplemental Budget Request

September 29, 2020

Jill Ryan, Executive Director

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

4300 Cherry Creek Drive South, Denver, CO 80486

RE: Routt County Request to Move to Level 1 Safer at Home

Dear Director Ryan,

As the Routt County Board of Health, Routt County Department of Public Health and UC Health Yampa Valley Medical Center, we would like to formally request to move from Level 2 Safer at Home to Level 1 Safer at Home.

We appreciate the work that the Governor and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) does to protect the health of our state. We are also pleased with the new dial framework that has been recently added to help counties like ours open up some of our restrictions when our COVID-19 metrics are favorable. Since May, Routt County has been operating under an approved state variance that allows our restaurant capacity to operate at 50% of the posted occupancy code limit not to exceed more than 175 people at a time. This is the current status of Safer at Home Level 1 for this business type.

Currently our metrics for the two week cumulative incidence rate for 9/14/202 and 9/27/2020 fall in the Safer Level 1- Cautious Level. In that time frame Routt County has had a two week cumulative incidence rate of 74.07 cases per 100,000 people or 19 total new cases reported in that time frame based on CDPHE Collection date data. For the same timeframe, our 14 day cumulative incidence rate by date of test collection is 70.2 cases per 100,000 people or 18 new cases collected. In addition the Routt County two week average positivity rate from 9/14/2020- 9/27/2020 of 1.20%. Hospital Admissions in Routt County have been stable at 0 for several weeks.

We have been closely monitoring this data, and have been in close contact with all of medical providers as we plan for the higher level of Protect our Neighbors. With our strong Public Health Department, we believe that we can move to Level 1, Safer at Home and still maintain the health of Routt County.

Therefore, we are respectfully requesting that you move Routt County to the Safer at Home level 1 designation.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Commissioners:

Tim Corrigan

Beth Melton

Doug Monger

Roberta Smith, Director of Public Health

Dr. Brian Harrington, County Medical Director

DRAFT