



February 24, 2021

Representative Perry Will
200 East Colfax, Rm 307
Denver CO 80203

Re: Funding wolf reintroduction in Colorado
HB 21-1040

Dear Representative Will:

Please accept this correspondence as the vigorous support for HB 21-1040 “Concerning the requirement that the costs associated with the reintroduction of gray wolves in the be paid exclusively from the general fund” of the Organizations identified above. Our primary concern is how is this effort going to be funded, as we are opposed to any OHV/OSV program money funding this effort. The Organizations submit that HB21-1040 provides significant clarity around the funding of the wolf reintroduction.

Prior to any discussion around the financial sustainability of the wolf reintroduction, the Organizations would like to clarify our unwavering support for the full compensation of any interest who experiences a loss as a result of the wolf reintroduction. These are valid costs that must be reimbursed fully. The financial sustainability of any species reintroduction is of critical concern to the Organizations and unfortunately, we are already intimately aware that Enterprise funds or other statutorily protected monies within CPW are “State money” for purposes of Prop 114 until the Legislature decides otherwise. This is contrary to Foundational assumptions as many users believe State general fund monies would be available to cover damage claims. HB21-1040 is a significant step in resolving this type of issue.

We have attached the Legislative Services memo that was provided to the Joint Budget Committee regarding the wolf reintroduction effort as Exhibit “A”. This memo specifically identifies management costs borne by States already managing reintroduced wolves. This memo identifies these costs as follows:

STATE	ANNUAL COSTS	YEAR
Wyoming	\$1,918,754	FY 2018-19
Washington	1,518,659	CY 2019
Oregon (biennial)	1,393,344	2019-2021
Montana	788,689	FY 2018-19

In current budgets, Colorado has directed minimal amounts to wolf issues, and costs borne around a wolf reintroduction are entirely new. Colorado is estimating \$340,000 for just creating the wolf reintroduction

plan. Herd damage claims from wolves probably cannot be accurately estimated since we have no idea how many wolves will be reintroduced but we can assume herd damage claims are basically zero from wolves in Colorado, which results in any damage claims being entirely new costs to be borne by a program that is already experiencing tight budget conditions. We are not optimistic that costs such as game damage claims will compete against needs such as COVID response, wildfire response or infrastructure needs for exceptionally limited state budget funds. This type of funding will need to be mandated. This is a major lift in isolation and another reason the detail of HB21-1040 is welcomed by our Organizations.

The long-term social impacts of funding that wolf reintroduction must addressed, given the support from generally non-consumptive users of recreation. The Organizations have partnered with CPW to try and develop alternative sources of funding. Cornerstones of North American management models are the fact that funding from specific user group fees should provide identifiable benefits to the user group. This has been one of the cornerstones of success for the OHV and OSV programs within CPW, which has become eroded already as only 60% of OHV revenues has been requested by DNR to be authorized for spending by the JBC after millions in user paid funding has been swept already. Programmatic support further erodes when possible funding is allocated to other priorities, despite the statutory protections against this usage provided in 33-14-101 et seq and 33-14.5-101 et seq. This is a concern for us and causes a variety of sustainability concerns for the partnership. The longer-range impacts must also be reviewed for sustainability as well as there are no user groups that are going to provide funding to support CPW and expand CPW efforts when only 60% of moneys may be applied to the program. The Organizations are opposed to OHV/OSV programmatic funds being eroded or put at further risk of loss to cover wolf reintroduction costs. HB21-1040 is a significant step towards avoiding this type of risk.

Please feel free to contact Scott Jones, Esq. at 518-281-5810 or via email at scott.jones46@yahoo.com or via USPS mail at 508 Ashford Drive, Longmont, CO 80504 for copies of any documentation that is relied on in this document or if you should wish to discuss any of the concerns raised further.

Respectfully Submitted,



Scott Jones, Esq.
CSA Executive Director
TPA Authorized Representative
COHVCO Vice President



D.E. Riggle
Director of Operations
Trails Preservation Alliance