



# WILDLIFE TRACKS

*The Quarterly Newsletter of the  
Colorado Chapter of The Wildlife Society*

Fall, 2020



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### President Elect:

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## President's Column

Well, we have passed through the summer of 2020. This year has felt different from past years in so many ways, but the old feelings of Fall are pretty nice. I've seen changing leaves and mule deer sparring, felt the crisp fall mornings, and heard elk bugling - I love this time of year and some things should never change.

Some things deserve to change, however. One of those is professional inequity resulting from social prejudice. You may have seen the email announcement regarding our newly formed Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Internationalization Committee (DEII). I am happy to see this group come together to better allow our chapter to confront discrimination directly. I encourage members interested in forwarding this cause with the newly formed DEII committee to reach out to me at [<nathanlgalloway@gmail.com>](mailto:nathanlgalloway@gmail.com) or Pat Magee at [<pmagee@western.edu>](mailto:pmagee@western.edu). We value your voices and input!

One other change that I regret to announce - we will not be holding an in-person annual meeting this coming winter. I repeat: There will be no in-person meeting this year. I apologize to our members about this because the meeting is one of the highlights of our chapter's year. With my support, the board has decided that we cannot in good conscience attempt to get our members together for a large gathering during the ongoing COVID pandemic. We will hold some virtual alternative, but precisely what that will look like is still up for discussion. If you have ideas around a virtual meeting, please reach out to me. We still plan to provide opportunities for Colorado wildlifera to communicate about their work, but again, details are still be determined. I am sorry about all of this uncertainty - please watch your inboxes and choose to be involved when the time comes!

Stay safe and be good to each other. Get out and don't miss that beautiful Colorado Fall.

Best,  
Nathan L Galloway

# DEII Inclusion Statement

To all CCTWS members,

Our organization wishes to confront discrimination in all forms by being proactive, developing a clear Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Internationalization (DEII) statement that demonstrates our values as an anti-discrimination professional society as well as operational measures to hold our organization accountable to these values. As such, we are calling for members interested in serving on a newly formed DEII committee.

This committee will lead the path forward for CCTWS anti-discrimination practices, focusing on operational measures including a fair and accessible board member recruiting process, designing DEII trainings at our annual conference and/or webpage, and recruiting speakers at our annual meetings who represent a diversity of perspectives, races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, ages, socio-economic classes, genders, and abilities. Other tasks in which this committee could work with the CCTWS Board to accomplish include amending bylaws to operationalize DEII efforts, developing scholarships and other means to assist and recruit members from underrepresented groups, and celebrating diversity through a variety of mediums. Our aim is to develop a committee that fosters partnership between CCTWS and other TWS State, Section, and Student chapters as well as other organizations and individuals that similarly celebrate diversity, inclusivity, equity and internationalization.

CCTWS hopes to foster understanding among our members of the implicit biases that create discrimination, and to rectify any policies and practices currently present in our organization that preclude equitable opportunity. Our profession lacks diversity in several metrics, and we wish to recruit and retain members and colleagues who add unique perspectives, life experiences, ideas and other wealth to our organization through their unique backgrounds.

Courtney L. King  
Membership Chair, The Colorado Chapter of the Wildlife Society  
M.S. in Ecology Student, Western Colorado University  
B.S. in Biology and Minor in Environmental Studies, SUNY Geneseo

# Colorado Chapter of The Wildlife Society Annual Meeting



## Virtual Conference Announcement

**The Colorado Chapter of The Wildlife Society**

**Annual Meeting: We are going virtual!**

Dear CCTWS Members,

In light of the current situation and uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19, we have chosen to move our annual meeting to a virtual format. This decision was made considering the likely travel restrictions for both federal and state agencies that would make the conference inaccessible to a large proportion of our members, as well as in our efforts to keep our members healthy and safe.

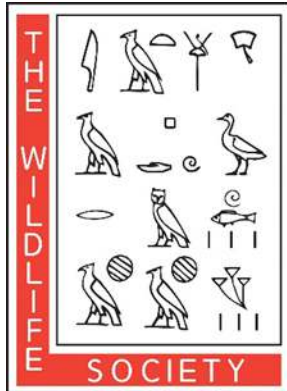
Although the conference is often the highlight of the year for TWS members, we are currently exploring options to create an engaging, interesting, and educational virtual meeting that will still provide members with some engagement throughout the year. Our goal is to identify and plan a conference that meets the needs of our members, by providing educational programs and an opportunity for members (especially students) to present their research. The conference schedule and format are yet to be decided, but may include workshops, seminars (frequency to be determined), or a more traditional conference schedule moved to a virtual format.

It is our goal to ensure that members have access to programming that meets their needs and is accessible, both from a technology standpoint as well as time commitment and scheduling. If you have any ideas or feedback on how to best achieve these goals, please feel free to reach out to the board and suggest a format that might work best for you and other members you know!

We will release a call for abstracts after we have decided upon a format that seems best for our membership. At that point, we encourage you to share your research with the rest of CCTWS!

Sincerely,  
The CCTWS Board

# Colorado Chapter of The Wildlife Society Annual Meeting



## Photography Contest

The Colorado Chapter of The Wildlife Society

Annual Meeting: Virtual Event

We invite you to submit a photograph at the 2021 annual meeting of the Colorado Chapter of The Wildlife Society, to be judged by popular vote. Photographs can be from work or recreation, and categories include Amphibians, Reptiles, and Fish; Birds; Invertebrates; Mammals; Game Camera; Human Dimensions; Landscapes and Still Life (including flora); and Creative/Comedic. Each conference attendee may submit up to three photographs and there is no fee to submit a photograph. Winners will receive a prize.

Please send a digital copy to Marcella Tarantino at [Marcella.Tarantino@usda.gov](mailto:Marcella.Tarantino@usda.gov) and provide the following information with your submission.

Photographer	
Photographer's contact information	E-mail address: Phone number: Physical address:
Photograph Information	Title: Genus/Species: Description:  Is photo edited?:
Category	<input type="checkbox"/> Amphibians, Reptiles, and Fish <input type="checkbox"/> Birds <input type="checkbox"/> Invertebrates <input type="checkbox"/> Mammals <input type="checkbox"/> Game Camera <input type="checkbox"/> Human Dimensions <input type="checkbox"/> Landscapes and Still Life (including flora) <input type="checkbox"/> Creative/Comedic
Other information	Is subject a captive animal or cultivated plant? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Does photograph adhere to ethical field practices?* <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

See ethical field practices of photography from the North American Nature Photography Association (NANPA) standards (<http://www.nanpa.org/advocacy/ethics/>).

# Call for Small Grants

## CCTWS Small Grant Program Announcement

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The Colorado Chapter of the Wildlife Society is now accepting applications for its Spring Small Grants Program. The purpose of the CCTWS Small Grants Program is to encourage projects that promote the wise management and conservation of wildlife in Colorado.

One grant will be awarded to a research and management project (\$750) and one grant will be awarded to an education project (\$750). However, the chapter may decide to only award only one category if the application pool is not sufficient to warrant awarding a grant to both categories. The chapter is accepting applications from both members and student members of the chapter. Student applications must have a letter from their sponsor or faculty advisor authorizing the work. The faculty letter must be included in the application.

A written proposal should not exceed 2 single-spaced typewritten pages. Text must include contact information, title, a statement of purpose, project objectives, methods, location, target audience, project duration, and benefits to wildlife in Colorado.

The grant may be used for travel (within Colorado), expendable equipment, and supplies. Salaries and administrative overhead expenses are ineligible, as are those for durable equipment such as cameras or computers.

Proposals must be received by **November 4, 2020**. All proposals are reviewed by a CCTWS advisory committee of natural resource professionals

Grants will be awarded by **December 2, 2020** and winners are encouraged to present their projects at winter CCTWS meetings.

Please visit <https://wildlife.org/colorado/small-grants/> for full details of application requirements  
Please email applications to Awards Coordinator Emily Latta as a Word or PDF document to: [elatta@blm.gov](mailto:elatta@blm.gov)  
or by mail to: BLM-Uncompahgre Field Office, 2465 South Townsend Ave, Montrose, CO 81401



# Student Chapter Updates

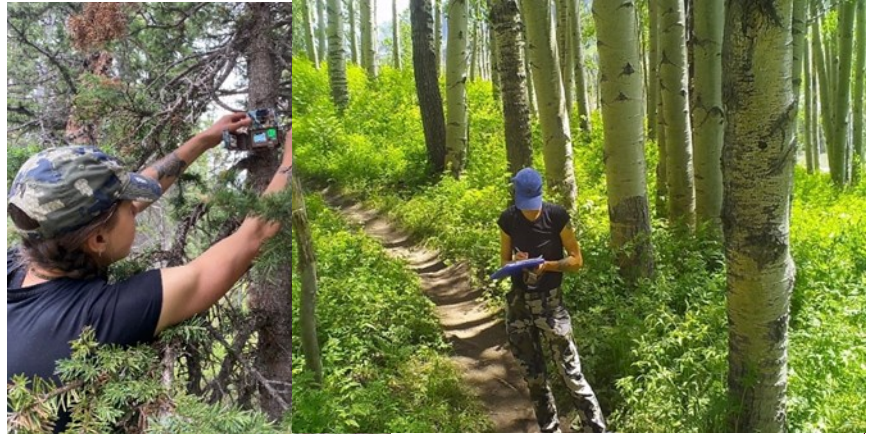
## Western Colorado University

WCU's student chapter participated in the National TWS Bioblitz Competition and placed 18<sup>th</sup> out of 49 competing chapters. Students identified and documented 413 species and making 660 observations of plants, animals, insects, and fungi. Students also conducted their own research projects and led outdoor activities (below).



Left: Kristin Ross, a graduate student in the M.S. in Ecology program at Western Colorado University, surveying for sagebrush obligate birds in the Gunnison Basin. Photo: Pat Magee

Below: Chloe Beaupre collecting research on Summer Recreational Influence on Ungulates in the Gunnison Basin. This project uses camera traps and ungulate GPS collar data to determine animal usage and occupancy responses with regards to trail density and Euclidean distance to trail.



Below: Alyssa Rawinski helping lead kids ranging from 9-17 years old on nature hikes and outdoor adventures through National Forest in South Fork, Colorado.





# Student Chapter Updates

## Colorado State University – Pueblo

Members of the CSU Pueblo Chapter have enjoyed several outdoor activities this year, including a camping trip with graduate and undergraduate students to Camp Purgatoire in La Veta, Colorado. Organized by officer Alex Sinker, the trip included two nights of hiking, relaxing and enjoying good company (photo below). Alex also enjoyed a fishing trip to Purgatoire Reservoir!



Students also got hands-on experience this year.  
Below (left): Chapter President, Angeline Canney, helped band birds for a research project which was presented at the North American Ornithological Conference (virtually due to COVID).  
Below (right): Undergraduates learning how to trap and collar cottontails to help with graduate research projects. Pictured: Christina Gonzalez & Alex Sinker



# Student Chapter Updates

## Colorado State University – Fort Collins

The CSU chapter's officers stayed productive during the end of this summer despite COVID shutdowns. Our treasurer Ryan continued his hard work as a ranger of Boyd Lake State Park. Our education coordinator Isabel volunteered for the Urban Wildlife Information Network doing photo tagging for their Lincoln Park Zoo and Bradywine Zoo locations. Our president Rémi spent some time recording wildlife observations for iNaturalist as a part of a documentation trip for herpetofauna with COPARC (Colorado Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation). And our other officers have been staying busy with other summer jobs and internships!

We are all excited and determined to navigate this unique semester as TWS officers!

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We are so glad that the closure of college campuses and the pandemic haven't stopped the members of our 3 student chapters from working hard for wildlife conservation! It is encouraging to see students continue to work despite these challenges and we look forward to seeing what they accomplish this coming semester.

We also look forward to the establishment of a fourth student chapter at Colorado Mesa University.



# Call for Allen Anderson Award

## 2021 Allen Anderson Outstanding Wildlife Student Award Request For Nominations

The Colorado Chapter of the Wildlife Society (CCTWS) is seeking nominations for the Allen Anderson Outstanding Wildlife Student of the Year award, which recognizes an outstanding undergraduate student at a Colorado college or university. Any undergraduate student is eligible to receive the award; preference will be given to students in wildlife and wildlife related programs. Any professional may nominate students. The student's transcripts and resume are required as part of the submission materials, which may necessitate involvement of the student in the nomination process. Nominations will be evaluated with respect to academic excellence, applied wildlife-related experience, and extracurricular activities.

The award will consist of a personalized award plaque, inclusion of the student's name and year of award on a traveling perpetual plaque (which will be displayed at the student's educational institution for one year), and a wildlife-related book that CCTWS will select. The awardee will be recognized at the 2021 CCTWS Annual meeting.

Please help us to encourage and celebrate the Outstanding Wildlife Students in our state! Applications are not due until January 4, 2021, but we strongly encourage you to begin thinking of a student you'd like to nominate.

Please email Nick Kaczor for more information: [nick\\_kaczor@fws.gov](mailto:nick_kaczor@fws.gov)



*(Above: students from Fort Collins, Pueblo, Gunnison, and Grand Junction met to discuss student chapter policies, fund-raising opportunities, and their connection to CCTWS)*

# Stories From the Field

## **Colorado Springs man pleads guilty to misdemeanor poaching charges in three counties after tip from public prompts CPW investigation**

Feb. 13, 2020

A Colorado Springs man has pleaded guilty to misdemeanor poaching charges in three counties after he was accused by Colorado Parks and Wildlife of illegally killing 12 deer, 2 turkeys and a bighorn sheep ram across the region. Iniki Vike Kapu, 27, entered one plea on Monday, Dec. 16, 2019, in 4th Judicial District Court in Teller County. On Monday, Feb. 3, Kapu appeared in the 11th Judicial District Court in Fremont County and pleaded guilty to illegal possession of a bighorn sheep. He also pleaded guilty to illegal possession of three or more big game animals.

His final sentencing was Tuesday, Feb. 11, in Fremont County when, as part of the plea agreement combining the two cases, Kapu was fined \$4,600, sentenced to six months in jail and three years supervised probation. He received credit for the 111 days he spent in jail awaiting trial and immediately began serving the remainder of his sentence. Kapu forfeited all the weapons he used in the poaching incidents. And he faces the possible loss of hunting privileges in Colorado when the case is reviewed by the CPW Commission.



CPW had accused Kapu of illegally killing big game animals in Teller, Fremont and Chaffee counties. The Chaffee County case, also in the 11th Judicial District, wrapped up May 22, 2019, when Kapu pleaded guilty to illegal possession of wildlife and was fined \$900.

Kapu's plea agreements cap an investigation by CPW officers started by a citizen tip about illegal killing of wildlife in October 2018 linked to a red truck found stuck and abandoned on a remote road in the Pike National Forest. It had a dead deer in the back and the meat was spoiled.

CPW officers Tim Kroening and Philip Gurule, plus a U.S. Forest Service officer, investigated and discovered a dead doe in the truck bed. It had not been properly processed after it was killed with a bow and arrow, causing its meat to spoil. They also discovered the license plates on the red truck were stolen and there was no carcass tag on the deer, which is required on a legally harvested animal.

The officers searched the red truck and found a Colorado fishing license inside belonging to Kapu, linking him to the truck. When they checked the CPW database, they learned Kapu did not have a valid hunting license, indicating the deer was poached.

A canvas of area landowners led Kroening and Gurule to a rancher who recognized the truck and directed them to a site in the forest where Kapu and a woman were camping in a trailer. At the campsite, officers found evidence of poaching including deer hair, a turkey head, burned arrows, knives with blood and deer hair on them and rubber gloves with trace evidence.

# Stories From the Field

In December 2018, as the Teller County investigation continued, Kapu was stopped in Chaffee County by a Forest Service officer who noticed a loaded firearm in his vehicle. Kapu fled, triggering a chase. He was captured when he wrecked his truck – the same red truck that had been stuck on the remote Teller County road. Animal quarters were found when the truck wrecked. CPW Officer Kim Woodruff interviewed Kapu in jail and he claimed the quarters were from a roadkill deer he picked up in Teller County. CPW Officer Kroening later determined Kapu had no roadkill permit for the deer from Teller County, making it an illegal possession of wildlife. Kapu later pleaded guilty to illegal possession of wildlife and reckless driving for that incident.

On Feb. 4, 2019, a Fremont County resident reported a suspicious trailer and camp on BLM land. Officers arrived to find six deer heads, a  $\frac{3}{4}$ -curl bighorn sheep head and several quarters of meat outside the trailer, which turned out to be Kapu's trailer from Teller County. Ultimately, CPW officers executed search warrants and found ammunition, weapons including a rifle, bow, knives and other evidence linking Kapu to the poaching.

On Feb. 15, 2019, CPW executed a search warrant and two arrest warrants at a Colorado Springs house where surveillance had revealed Kapu was staying. Working with Colorado Springs Police, CPW officers arrested Kapu. A search produced spoiled game meat and other evidence that DNA analysis linked to the poached bighorn sheep ram. Officers later obtained photos from social media of Kapu posing with poached deer, poached turkeys and a bow.

CPW's Frank McGee, Area Wildlife Manager for the Pikes Peak region, praised the public for calling CPW when they suspected poaching. And he credited Kapu's plea agreement to relentless investigative work by CPW officers who amassed overwhelming evidence.

"As the agency responsible for perpetuating the wildlife resources of the state, Colorado Parks and Wildlife will not tolerate poaching," McGee said. "Our officers are determined to stop people like Mr. Kapu who think they can simply go kill any animal they like. Mr. Kapu is not a hunter. He is a poacher."



Some of the heads of the deer Iniki Vike Kapu poached in a three-county spree.



On social media, Iniki Vike Kapu posed with the heads of deer he poached in Teller County.

# Call For Elections

## You Can Make a Difference – Join the CCTWS Executive Board

I am proud to be part of CCTWS Executive Board. This group of people dedicated to Colorado's wildlife. I would like to invite you to share your passion for wildlife with all of us. Consider joining the CCTWS Executive Board. We are especially seeking candidates for President-elect and an at-large board member. The time commitment is minimal but the impact you have on the profession is significant. Whether you have recently graduated from college or have been a wildlifer for years, your insight, ideas and leadership are valuable to all of us.

For more information or to nominate yourself or a colleague, please contact me at [nate.bickford@csupueblo.edu](mailto:nate.bickford@csupueblo.edu) or call me at 208-301-8120. Also, feel free to reach out to any board member. Our contact information is found at the end of the newsletter.



# Grey Wolf Ballot Opinion Pieces

We have several opinion pieces for you to consider about the gray wolf reintroduction initiative that will be on the Colorado ballot on Tuesday, November 3, 2020. I hope these present a diverse set of views on this important conservation issue - Consider not only the biological implications of wolf reintroduction, but the social and legal outcomes. This is certainly one of those sticky issues that deserves careful consideration from all voters, but perhaps even more from wildlife professionals such as yourselves.

Beyond that specific initiative, I encourage our chapter members to vote in November. This is your democracy in action - Get informed and vote.

Check out a 5-part webinar series on the topic put together by Colorado State University:

[https://dmns.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_jH3Pj0WtTT2ygqKipUTJww](https://dmns.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_jH3Pj0WtTT2ygqKipUTJww)"

Best,

Nathan L Galloway

Full text of Colorado Proposition 114, Gray Wolf Reintroduction Initiative (2020)

Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes concerning the restoration of gray wolves through their reintroduction on designated lands in Colorado located west of the continental divide, and, in connection therewith, requiring the Colorado parks and wildlife commission, after holding statewide hearings and using scientific data, to implement a plan to restore and manage gray wolves; prohibiting the commission from imposing any land, water, or resource use restrictions on private landowners to further the plan; and requiring the commission to fairly compensate owners for losses of livestock caused by gray wolves?

# Grey Wolf Ballot Opinion Pieces

## Who Will Manage the Wolves?

By Rick Kahn

For the third time in almost 30 years Colorado voters are being asked to make a wildlife management decision via the ballot box. Previously, voters in Colorado amended state statutes to include specific restrictions on black bear hunting and amended the state constitution to prohibit certain types of animal traps used for recreational trapping. Now Colorado voters are being asked for their opinion on reintroducing wolves to the western slope of Colorado via Proposition 114.

Wildlife management in Colorado is statutorily mandated by the legislature to be carried out by Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) staff under the direction of a Parks and Wildlife Commission nominated by the Governor and approved by the State legislature. This structure of a citizen Parks and Wildlife Commission providing oversight and approval via policy and regulations is common throughout the United States. Thus, the professional wildlife managers and scientists and the Director at Colorado Parks and Wildlife are answerable to the Governor via the Department of Natural Resources, the state legislature and the citizen Parks and Wildlife Commission. This is a significant level of oversight.

The ballot initiative, if passed, directs CPW and the Commission to create and carry out a plan to reintroduce and manage grey wolves by the end of 2023. There have been lots of opinions expressed recently about the various potential impacts of this effort on wildlife, people, livestock, disease and rural economics. I will not delve into those arenas except to say that the environmental and economic impacts are hard to assess unless we have some understanding of the specific areas where wolves might be present and more importantly the number of wolves that will be “managed” for. Environmental impacts are vastly different if there are 50 wolves in Colorado versus 500. The reality for wildlife managers is that either figure is attainable; wolves are relatively easy to manage on the landscape. Managing people and their disparate views towards wolves is a much more daunting task.

My goal is to discuss another issue that I believe is being overlooked and yet should be of paramount importance to Colorado voters; who will really get to manage wolves in Colorado and how will that decision impact key issues such as wolf distribution and numbers? Even though Colorado voters will decide via the ballot box on whether to introduce wolves, neither they nor the wildlife managers within this state (CPW and the Commission) are the final decision makers on this potential reintroduction effort. Wolves are listed under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the legal authority to manage wolves in Colorado rests with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) within the Department of Interior. Further, when listed species are found on federal land such as those managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Forest Service (FS) or National Park Service (NPS), there are further potential regulations and authorities that could impact how and if wolves are managed in Colorado. If history is to guide us, then we must recognize that Colorado wildlife managers and federal wildlife managers are not always in agreement on the proper way to manage species, and in particular publicly controversial species such as wolves. Federal agencies have differing cultures and guidance than do state wildlife agencies. Even among federal agencies their cultures, values and legal guidance are dramatically different. For example, NPS often is the least supportive of sport hunting and has policies that can be very limiting if applied, compared to BLM and FS which tend to adopt state wildlife hunting regulations and policies in full. In addition, unlike CPW which is answerable to a Commission and an active legislative and executive branch the federal agencies tend to act more autonomously and are not nearly as reactive to public concern. This can be a good thing, but it can also lead to significant issues related to state wildlife management and how states respond to their constituencies. Finally, federal wildlife policy can change dramatically with each new administration and new Cabinet level leadership. These changes often have significant impacts on some wildlife issues such as wolf management.

# Grey Wolf Ballot Opinion Pieces

As an example, if CPW and the Commission decided on a plan that called for 10 packs with a population of less than 100 wolves in one National Forest on the West Slope and FWS and other federal agencies felt that was not a sustainable population, they would have the authority to override that decision as long as wolves in Colorado were listed under ESA.

The other consideration is that even if CPW and FWS agree on a plan, if that plan does not meet the needs of either wolf advocates or opponents then that plan would probably be litigated and then subject to judicial oversight. This specific scenario has occurred in the Northern Rockies and other areas where wolves have been reintroduced or re-colonized and rather than the state or federal wildlife professionals making critical decisions about wolf populations and distribution they will be made by judges and the lawyers and staff of the entities involved in the lawsuit.

Colorado's voters will probably not consider this aspect as they contemplate Proposition 114, but if they support the concept of local control, specifically over controversial wildlife issues they should be aware that recent history strongly suggests that state control over wolves will not occur if the ballot initiative passes. Decisions will likely be made at the state/federal level, or even more likely by a judge.



Photo courtesy of Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Rick Kahn is semi-retired wildlife biologist who worked for 40 years, 32 with the Colorado Division of Wildlife and 8 years for the National Park Service. He was involved in numerous wolf conversations and Commission discussions during his time with DOW and worked directly on wolves in Alaska, the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem, and Isle Royale during his time with NPS.

# Grey Wolf Ballot Opinion Pieces



## Opposition of Proposition 114

By Ron Velarde

I was approached by the Colorado Chapter of the Wildlife Society to consider writing a narrative in opposition to proposition 114, the wolf initiative, on the introduction of wolves to Colorado that will be on the November ballot. As I understand the Wildlife Society wanted to have a balanced approach, so its members have something to think about before marking their ballot. Here is my take on the possibilities that could exist if wolves were introduced into Colorado. Obviously,

this only covers some of the risks however these are the bigger ones in my mind. I do understand that not everyone agrees with my position on the introduction of wolves in Colorado, but it is not necessarily because I don't like or respect wolves. It just should not be Colorado with what is predicted from a human population standpoint and the loss of habitat throughout the state, not just on the west-slope.

My first and one of the biggest reasons for opposing this wolf reintroduction measure is that as a biologist I resent managing wildlife by ballot, for wolves or any other species. Taking the responsibility of managing wildlife from a wildlife agency and putting it in the hands of the public that make their decisions with emotion rather than fact is a tragic mistake and will lead to unintended consequences. This has proven true with Colorado bear management when we cannot have any hunt seasons prior to September 2nd, regardless if bears are causing major damage or worse, human/bear conflicts.

Looking at the long-term problems of adding one more apex predator are the impacts to our big-game populations across Colorado, not just on the west slope. Yes, we do have a large population of elk and deer in Colorado. However, this must be qualified by what has happened to these populations in the last 20 years. Our deer and elk populations have been reduced significantly either by purposeful management action, or disease, loss of winter range, interstate highways, disrupted migration routes, energy development, predators and the bigger loss due to increased recreation that has occurred in the last 5-10 years and will be significantly more as the human population grows in Colorado. A perfect example is the Roaring Fork and Eagle Valleys. Due to destruction of winter range and transition range due to ski areas, sub-divisions, and more highways, the elk herds in these areas have gone from 40 calves per 100 cows to less than 20. As biologists, we understand that to even maintain stable elk populations it takes a minimum of 35 calves per 100 cows. Even the public in these areas are concerned about the loss of hunting opportunity and wildlife viewing, but this loss is permanent and cannot be corrected, no matter how much we wish to get back to the "good ol' days".

Recently I have read about how much public land we have on the west slope and how it can provide cover and a food source for the survival of wolves. We are told that although the population of Colorado is supposed to increase to over 8 million people in the not too distant future, the majority of this growth will occur on the front range, not where the wolves will be introduced. A reality check will tell you that although the majority of Colorado citizens live on the front range their playground is the west slope. This means less room for wildlife to roam and less habitat for them to utilize. This also means that more wildlife, especially big game, will be pushed onto private land and along with them, the wolves. Presently, Colorado Parks and Wildlife has a relatively good relationship with ranchers and farmers in Colorado. This could change rapidly if more big game starts eating forage on private lands that was meant for their domestic livestock. In addition, this makes these livestock more susceptible to wolf predation, which will mean more game damage costs and less funds for the agency to use on managing other wildlife. It also means that private landowners will have less tolerance for not only big game but protecting species such as sage grouse, Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse and other declining species .



# Grey Wolf Ballot Opinion Pieces

We must also consider what having wolves will mean to livestock producers if they cannot use public land for grazing purposes. This will mean a reduction in profit and then eventually the risk of having to sell their land, which in Colorado means more sub-divisions and less open space for all wildlife.

As it is now, Colorado has one of the most liberal game damage laws in the United States. Between actual livestock damage, supplying materials to prevent game damage and the Habitat Partnership Program CPW spends millions of sportsman dollars. As we are a cash funded agency (wildlife) it does not receive any tax dollars. If wolves are determined to be under the authority of the state of Colorado, I can assure you from past experience that CPW will end up paying for all livestock damages caused by wolves.

Although wolves may be biologically suited for the west slope, Colorado is becoming more developed, more populous and with more potential for human/wolf conflicts than anywhere else that wolves are present such as Wyoming, Montana or Idaho. Is this really the environment where we want to put wolves?



Photo courtesy of  
Colorado Parks and  
Wildlife and David  
Hannigan

Ron Velarde worked for the state of Colorado for 47 years, first 44 years with the Colorado Division of Wildlife, and three more for Colorado Parks and Wildlife. He served for the last 17 years as the Northwest Regional Manager. and retired in 2017. He graduated with a degree in Wildlife Biology from Colorado State University in 1969.

# Grey Wolf Ballot Opinion Pieces

## Why Restore Wolves to Colorado?

By Gary Skiba

Over the past year, I've been working with the Rocky Mountain Wolf Project (<https://www.rockymountainwolfproject.org/>) to help bring the issue of wolf reintroduction to Colorado voters for approval via Proposition 114. Proponents of wolf restoration have long encouraged the Colorado Wildlife (and now Parks and Wildlife) Commission and the state legislature to implement the clear public preference for wolf restoration. Having been rebuffed by both the Commission and the Legislature, activists used the citizen initiative process to bring the issue to the voters, the ultimate policy makers.

Much of my role has been to provide objective biological information on wolves to help the public better understand what wolf reintroduction might mean for Colorado. It's important for Colorado Chapter of the Wildlife Society members to understand Proposition 114 and the sensible reasons for restoring wolves to Colorado.

Proposition 114 will require Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) to reintroduce wolves to western Colorado by the end of 2023. The details of the reintroduction will be up to CPW; between passage of the Proposition and putting paws on the ground, CPW will conduct an extensive public involvement and planning process.

There are compelling biological reasons to restore wolves to Colorado:

- Wolves were an integral part of Colorado's ecosystems and performed important functions. Aldo Leopold said it best, "...to keep every cog and wheel is the first precaution of intelligent tinkering." We don't completely understand all of the functions top predators perform in ecosystems, or how they interact with other predators, weather, and disease, but we do know that they are important actors that we eradicated.
- While hunters can perform some of the functions of wolf predation, they can't perform them all. One example is that elk cows killed by wolves average 13.9 years old; hunter killed cow average 6.5 years of age. And wolves are on the landscape every day.
- Experience in MT, ID and WY demonstrates that robust wolf populations can exist with no reduction in hunter opportunity.
- Wolves change prey behavioral patterns which can lead to improved ecological conditions.
- Wolves and their prey evolved together for tens of thousands of years in Colorado. They were extirpated from the state only 80 years ago, ending long-established ecological processes.

The genetic health of wolf populations from Mexico to northern Canada would be enhanced by a thriving wolf population in Colorado.

While the biological justifications listed above should be enough for biologists to support the restoration of a native species, there are other reasons, including:

It's the right thing to do. Public sentiment in the late 1800's and early 1900's generally supported wolf eradication, but in hindsight we know that it was a mistake, ecologically morally and ethically. Restoration gives us the chance to right a historic wrong.

We owe it to future generations to maintain the health of Colorado by keeping native wildlife populations healthy and thriving.



Photo courtesy of Colorado Parks and Wildlife and David Hannigan

# Grey Wolf Ballot Opinion Pieces

The public wants it, as polling over the years has shown. The most recent poll, conducted by CSU in September of 2019, found that 84.0% of voters statewide intended to vote to restore wolves. Even more compelling is that 79.8% of West Slope residents, and 79.3% of Eastern Plains residents support restoration.

That last reason, public support for restoration, brings up the unfounded argument that the wolf restoration proposition is “ballot box biology”, a cliché that I’ve heard from more than one biologist.

There is a profound difference between policy and implementation. The two wildlife related ballot initiatives that passed in Colorado (Initiative 10 in 1992 regarding bear hunting and Initiative 14 in 1996 prohibiting certain traps and poisoning) are broad policy direction provided by the voters to the State. They are not detailed implementation direction. Rather, in both cases, the public expressed its distaste for wildlife management activities that were felt to be unethical or cruel. The votes clearly communicated that these specific activities were viewed to be unacceptable for management of the wildlife which belongs to all citizens of the state. We’re unlikely to ever see a ballot initiative that would get to the level of detail of something like the number of doe deer licenses that should be issued in a specific game management unit; that’s implementation. In contrast, whether to restore wolves is a policy decision that should be made based on the input of all of the citizens of Colorado.

When Proposition 114 passes, the people will have made their desires clear, and the wildlife professionals in Colorado Parks and Wildlife will then use their well-respected expertise and knowledge to implement that direction and restore a native species. Isn’t that how it’s supposed to work?

There isn’t space here to address all of the misinformation that has been disseminated in opposition to wolf restoration, but if you’d like to review a high quality summary of objective and well-sourced information about wolf biology and other issues related to Proposition 114, take a look at the FAQs and Fact Sheets at CSU’s Center for Human and Carnivore Coexistence at <https://sites.warnercnr.colostate.edu/centerforhumancarnivorecoexistence/people-predators/wolves-faq/>

When you vote this fall, you can vote with your head, your heart, or both. Any of those approaches will lead to a decision to vote “yes” on Proposition 114.



Gary Skiba is a wildlife biologist who worked for the Colorado Division of Wildlife for 25 years before retiring in 2010. He has since worked for Great Old Broads for Wilderness, a private consulting firm, as a dogcatcher (unelected), and for New Mexico State Parks. He currently is the Wildlife Program Manager for the San Juan Citizens Alliance in Durango, Colorado.

# Conservation Affairs Update

The NEPA/Regulatory Committee of CCTWS, which was formed in early 2020, has been active on the national front providing comments on proposed changes to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). The USFWS proposed significant changes to the MBTA that would have permitted the incidental take of protected birds. Such a change would have effectively rendered it useless in protection of bird populations. CCTWS, through the NEPA/Regulatory Committee, joined TWS and other conservation organizations in opposition to the proposal. CCTWS submitted comments on the proposed rule during the public scoping process and also submitted a lengthy letter commenting on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The NEPA process was cut short, however, when a U.S. district court struck down the Solicitor opinion on which the proposed rule was based. At least for now, the MBTA prohibits the incidental take of migratory birds – but future attempts to undermine the law are expected.

The NEPA/Regulatory Committee will continue to track projects and regulatory proposals that affect wildlife and is always looking for opportunities to engage in the decision-making process. CCTWS is asking all members from across the state to keep an eye out for projects and proposals in your local area that might impact wildlife and for which there may be opportunities for CCTWS to comment. If you are aware of any such opportunities or would like to be more involved in the committee's work, please contact the committee chair, Nathan Jones ([nate.f.jones@gmail.com](mailto:nate.f.jones@gmail.com)).

## **Take Action with the Endangered Species Act**

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) has a new proposal to codify the type of area that can be excluded as critical habitat under the Endangered Species Act. On February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016 the policies of section 4(b)(2) of the Endangered Species Act were published that allows the USFWS to exercise their own discretions to exclude areas from critical habitat designations. Section 4(b)(2) provides the Secretary the authority to exclude any particular area from a critical habitat designation if the benefits of exclusion outweigh the benefits of inclusion, so long as excluding it will not result in an extinction of a species, taking into account economic, security, and other impacts. The USFWS now proposes to amend portions of the regulations and to modify language in hopes of reflecting agency experiences and to provide greater transparency for the public and stakeholders. To learn more about the proposed rule please visit: [https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/09/08/2020-19577/endangered-and-threatened-wildlife-and-plants-regulations-for-designating-critical-habitat?utm\\_campaign=subscription+mailing+list&utm\\_source=federalregister.gov&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/09/08/2020-19577/endangered-and-threatened-wildlife-and-plants-regulations-for-designating-critical-habitat?utm_campaign=subscription+mailing+list&utm_source=federalregister.gov&utm_medium=email)

The National Chapter of TWS is starting to dig into this proposal and would love to hear input from YOU! If you have comments that you would like to share, please send them to Erin Blair ([erin.blair16@gmail.com](mailto:erin.blair16@gmail.com)) and she will compile them and forward them on behalf of the Colorado Chapter.



# Investment Updates

A quick update on the Candace Taylor Fund and the Jim Olterman Scholarship Investment.

On August 1, 2020 the total investment portfolio amount was \$49,334.07. Rose Tocke of Edward Jones in Gunnison, is the investment manager. We have \$2,863 in cash that Rose invested in the first half of August. The fund has performed well and we currently have \$830.48 of earned income off the invested funds (currently available for scholarship).

The portfolio is currently disbursed as follows: 36% fixed income/64% Equity, which is very near the original strategy to have 35% in fixed income and 65% in equity.

In 2019, the average return on our invested funds was 4.89%. So far, in 2020, the average return has been 2.14%. At these rates of return, overall, the account has grown from \$47,170.31 on September 5, 2019 to \$49,431.89 on August 5 (gain is \$2,261.58). Despite the current economic situation in the world, the stock market has stayed fairly stable since last March and we're on track to earn about 2% for rest of the year.

The total cost to CCTWS from Edward Jones has been \$283 which is 0.60% (<1%) of our growth.

If you have questions about our investment strategy or current state of the Candace Taylor Fund and Jim Olterman Scholarship Fund, please feel free to reach out to Patrick Magee! at [pmagee@western.edu](mailto:pmagee@western.edu) or 970-641-3959 (if you call, please leave a message and I will return your call as soon as possible).

Thanks so much and if you would like to make a donation to the CCTWS Jim Olterman Scholarship fund, please contact me or the CCTWS Treasurer, Matt Rustand ([mrustand@blm.gov](mailto:mrustand@blm.gov)). Your support is greatly appreciated and tax-deductible.

~Patrick Magee!, CCTWS Candace Taylor Fund and Jim Olterman Scholarship Investment Fund Representative

# Corporate Partnership

## Sponsorship Opportunities

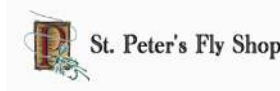
The Colorado Chapter of The Wildlife Society is proud of our mission to promote wise conservation and management of all wildlife resources in Colorado by serving and representing wildlife professionals. We are interested in cultivating partnerships and seeking sponsors to help further the work we are doing to benefit wildlife and wildlife professionals in Colorado. New alliances help connect wildlife professionals with the agencies, institutions, companies and non-profits with the products and services they deliver.

We have opportunities for partners to advertise in our newsletter, on our webpage, on our Facebook page or at our annual meeting. We would appreciate the opportunity to explore a mutually beneficial relationship with your organization to further wildlife conservation in Colorado together.

If you're interested in participating in a new partnership opportunity or if you have ideas about potential partnerships, contact Emily Latta at 970-240-5332 or [elatta@blm.gov](mailto:elatta@blm.gov)

# Thank You To Our Sponsors

*Thank you to the sponsors of The Colorado Chapter of the Wildlife Society!*



# Board Members

## CCTWS Board – September 2020

### Officers

President: Nathan Galloway

Past-President: Jesse McCarty

President-Elect: Nate Bickford

Treasurer: Matt Rustand

Secretary: Mark Fletcher

### E-mail Contact

[nathanlgalloway@gmail.com](mailto:nathanlgalloway@gmail.com)

[jesse.mccarty@usda.gov](mailto:jesse.mccarty@usda.gov)

[Nate.bickford@csupueblo.edu](mailto:Nate.bickford@csupueblo.edu)

[mrustand@blm.gov](mailto:mrustand@blm.gov)

[Fletcher@pinyon-env.com](mailto:Fletcher@pinyon-env.com)

### Executive Board: Regional

NE Representative: John Hughes

[John\\_hughes@fws.gov](mailto:John_hughes@fws.gov)

NW Representative: Kathy Griffin

[kathy.griffin@state.co.us](mailto:kathy.griffin@state.co.us)

SE Representative: Cassidy English

[Cassidy.english@state.co.us](mailto:Cassidy.english@state.co.us)

SW Representative: Marcella Tarantino

[Marcella.tarantino@usda.gov](mailto:Marcella.tarantino@usda.gov)

### Executive Board: At-Large

Andrew Don Carlos

[Andrew.don\\_carlos@colostate.edu](mailto:Andrew.don_carlos@colostate.edu)

Sara Kramer

[Sara.kramer1626@gmail.com](mailto:Sara.kramer1626@gmail.com)

Casey Setash

[csetash@rams.colostate.edu](mailto:csetash@rams.colostate.edu)

Emily Latta

[elatta@blm.gov](mailto:elatta@blm.gov)



# Committees and Chairs, September 2020

Committee	Chair	Chair Contact
<b>Standing Committees</b>		
Conservation and Land Use Review	Vacant	
Information and Education	Vacant	
Annual Meeting Program	CCTWS Board	
Candace Taylor and Jim Olterman Investment Fund	Patrick Magee!	<a href="mailto:pmagee@western.edu">pmagee@western.edu</a>
Audit	Vacant	
Legislative Review	Katie Bradfish	<a href="mailto:katherineb99@msn.com">katherineb99@msn.com</a>
Wildlife Management	Matthew Hanson	<a href="mailto:mhanson6@gmail.com">mhanson6@gmail.com</a>
Newsletter	Alex Fortney	<a href="mailto:alexandra.fortney@gmail.com">alexandra.fortney@gmail.com</a>
Nomination/elections	Nate Bickford	<a href="mailto:nate.bickford@csupueblo.edu">nate.bickford@csupueblo.edu</a>
Policy/Resolutions	Nate Bickford	<a href="mailto:nate.bickford@csupueblo.edu">nate.bickford@csupueblo.edu</a>
Professional Awards	Michelle Cowardin	<a href="mailto:Michelle.cowardin@state.co.us">Michelle.cowardin@state.co.us</a>
Student Awards	Nick Kaczor	<a href="mailto:nick_kaczor@fws.gov">nick_kaczor@fws.gov</a>
Membership	Courtney King	<a href="mailto:courtney.king@western.edu">courtney.king@western.edu</a>
<b>Ad Hoc Committees</b>		
Certification	Rob Schorr	<a href="mailto:rschorr@lamar.colostate.edu">rschorr@lamar.colostate.edu</a>
Conservation Affairs Network Rep.	Erin Blair	<a href="mailto:erin.blair16@gmail.com">erin.blair16@gmail.com</a>
Historian	Danguole Bockus	<a href="mailto:Danguole_bockus@nps.gov">Danguole_bockus@nps.gov</a>
Photographer	Max Canestorp	<a href="mailto:Kmax1350@mesanetworks.net">Kmax1350@mesanetworks.net</a>
Small Grants and Travel Grants	Emily Latta	<a href="mailto:elatta@blm.gov">elatta@blm.gov</a>
Web Page, Social Media (Marketing)	Aleshia Rummel	<a href="mailto:Aleshia.fremgen@westernalum.org">Aleshia.fremgen@westernalum.org</a>
Professional Development Programs	Liz Peterson	<a href="mailto:Elizabethkpeterson@gmail.com">Elizabethkpeterson@gmail.com</a>
Student Affairs and Mentoring	Katie Gray	<a href="mailto:katiecgray789@gmail.com">katiecgray789@gmail.com</a>
<b>Representatives</b>		
CSU Student Chapter	Remi Pattyn Liaison: Andrew Don Carlos Advisor: Larissa Bailey	<a href="mailto:remipattyn@yahoo.com">remipattyn@yahoo.com</a> <a href="mailto:Andrew.don_carlos@colostate.edu">Andrew.don_carlos@colostate.edu</a> <a href="mailto:Larissa.bailey@colostate.edu">Larissa.bailey@colostate.edu</a>
Western Student Chapter	Alyssa Rawinski Kristin Ross Liaison: Nate Seward Advisor: Pat Magee!	<a href="mailto:Alyssa.rawinski@western.edu">Alyssa.rawinski@western.edu</a> <a href="mailto:Kristin.ross@western.edu">Kristin.ross@western.edu</a> <a href="mailto:Nathan.seward@state.co.us">Nathan.seward@state.co.us</a> <a href="mailto:pmagee@western.edu">pmagee@western.edu</a>
CSU Pueblo Chapter	Angeline Canney Liaison: Cassidy English Advisor: Claire Ramos	<a href="mailto:Angeline.canney@csupueblo.edu">Angeline.canney@csupueblo.edu</a>
CMPS President	Adam Ahlers	<a href="mailto:aahlers2@ksu.edu">aahlers2@ksu.edu</a>
CMPS Representative to TWS	Bob Lanka	<a href="mailto:Bob.lanka@wyo.gov">Bob.lanka@wyo.gov</a>
CCTWS Representative to CMPS	Nathan Galloway	<a href="mailto:nathanlgalloway@gmail.com">nathanlgalloway@gmail.com</a>

# Treasurer's Report

## *CCTWS Treasurer's Report*

### August 2020 Treasurer Report

The chapter is incurring \$50 per month charge from MemberPlanet, a membership management website, that is being withdrawn from the boards operating budget

As of August 27th

Checking account - \$12,093.84

Received \$460.01 on 7/27 from national TWS for membership revenue kickback

Reserve Fund Money Market - \$35,229.06

Savings Account – \$508.83

CCTWS Target Reserve for 2020 - \$36,487.67 (Reserve Fund and Savings account)

# CCTWS Meeting Minutes

## **CTWS Meeting Minutes**

To reduce the overall volume of the newsletter we will not be including minutes from our monthly board meetings. CCTWS members who would like to review board meeting minutes are encouraged to visit our website:

<http://wildlife.org/colorado/meetings/>

# Membership Form

Become a TWS member: <https://wildlife.secure.force.com/memberjoinwizardstep1>

Become a CCTWS member: <https://wildlife.org/colorado/>

1 Year Student Membership: \$10

1 Year Regular Membership: \$20

2 Year Regular Membership: \$35

3 Year Regular Membership: \$45

COLORADO CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY - MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION		
Name: _____		
Address		
City: _____	State: _____	Zip Code: _____
Work Phone: _____	Home Phone: _____	
E-Mail: _____		
Today's Date: _____		
Affiliation: _____		
Interested in Committee Work?	Yes	No
Are You a TWS Certified Biologist?	Yes	No
Areas of Expertise/Interest: _____		
Dues: 1 Year: \$15   2 Years: \$27   3 Years: \$35   Student/Retirees: \$10		
MC/Visa: _____	Expiration Date: _____	
Signature: _____		

Mail to: Nathan Seward, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, 300 West New York Ave., Gunnison, CO 81230

Or scan and email to: [nathan.seward@state.co.us](mailto:nathan.seward@state.co.us)

Please visit the Colorado Chapter of the Wildlife Society web page at [Wildlife.org/Colorado](https://Wildlife.org/Colorado) and the Wildlife Society web page at [Wildlife.org](https://Wildlife.org). Become a member today!