

Attachment C

Senate Agriculture & Natural Resources

SB21-105 Implement & Finance Gray Wolf Reintroduction

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Linda Ingo For Self	Reintroduction of the grey wolf will impact both our cattle operation and big game hunting enterprise. We support this bill so that others with concerns about their similar business can voice their experiences managing vulnerable calves in our high country pastures. We also believe the elk calves and deer fawns are susceptible to predation. Introducing wolves on public lands brings their impact to all the surrounding areas, private and public. It is not only the kills that they make but the stress on the animals they chase to exhaustion or near exhaustion. There can be economic impacts without their death. We will be living with the real consequences of having wolves on the Fisher Ranch which is located in Ouray, San Miguel and Montrose counties.

Coloradans for Responsible Wildlife Management

Position Statement in Support of SB21-105 by Senator Coram and Rep. Will Concerning Implementation of Proposition 114

Contact: Kathleen Curry, 970-209-5537 or kathleencurry@montrose.net

At the November 2020 general election, the voters approved the reintroduction of gray wolves on designated lands in Colorado west of the continental divide beginning no later than December 31, 2023. Coloradans for Responsible Wildlife Management (CRWM) supports the process identified in SB21-105 for implementation of the reintroduction effort.

SB21-105 outlines a process for conducting public outreach, identifying funding sources, and reporting to the General Assembly. The bill also includes requirements for environmental review and the removal of wolves from the State's endangered species list. CRWM specifically supports the public outreach, funding and reporting requirements of this proposed legislation.

CRWM's members would like to see a thorough and thoughtful reintroduction process that actively engages all the citizens of Colorado. Thousands of sportsmen and women in Colorado care deeply about how Proposition 114 is actually implemented. Habitat stamp purchase data is a good way to quantify the number of hunters and anglers in Colorado, many of whom are following this process closely. (The purchase of habitat stamps is required in order to purchase a hunting or fishing license). Here are the statistics for the number of habitat stamps that were purchased in 2020 in each of your home districts:

SD5	25,318	Habitat Stamps Sold 2020
SD6	24,728	Habitat Stamps Sold 2020
SD20	31,609	Habitat Stamps Sold 2020
SD1	30,563	Habitat Stamps Sold 2020
SD29	15,665	Habitat Stamps Sold 2020
Total	129,903	

Notably, the total number of habitat stamps sold in the five districts covered by the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee represents only 23% of the total number sold statewide last year. (554,901). SB21-105 outlines a process that would incorporate the interests and views of the many citizens of Colorado that have shown their support for sound wildlife management.

Stanko Ranch

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4 Generations and a Century of Ranching

Honorable members of the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee

RE: Written Testimony for SB21-105 Implement and Finance Gray Wolf Reintroduction

Who are we? My name is Jo Stanko and I will be speaking on behalf of the Stanko Ranch. We, like 97% of the farms and ranches in Colorado, are a family ranch. Jim and I are the third generation to hold and protect this land since it started as a subsistence farm in 1907. We and our son and daughter-in-law, Pat and Jan, have been working to transition responsibility for this land to them. We have high hopes but worry due to the current political trends that our grandson, a junior in high school currently considering the best way to go forward to prepare to take over responsibility for managing the land, will have the opportunity to do so. The ranch which is located west of Steamboat Springs has a perpetual conservation easement is recognized as a Colorado Centennial Ranch and for conservation practices, having been presented with an Aldo Leopold Conservation Easement Award. Incidentally, this ranch also has provided habitat for a pair of wolves for a little over 12 months until due to the impacts of recreation activities on the elk herd, they decided to move on.

We at the Stanko Ranch look forward to the process being complete, tweaks made, and systems set up so we can focus on other important issues such as drought, water, development pressure, rural/ urban divide as well as our daily work of seeing to the welfare of our animals and land. HOWEVER, no matter where you stand, rural/urban or east/west of the Continental divide, I believe we can all agree that not getting it right the first-time which costs energy, momentum, time and money, is the most important objective. This is a much more complicated issue than, as some would have you believe, just a matter of following the playbook written by Dr. Doug Smith, head of the reintroduction of wolves to Yellowstone and then the senior research biologist on wolves for the past 25 years. Especially when Dr. Smith has been consistent on two extremely important points. First, introducing and managing wolves in an area where there is no humans are basically not present is much much different than introducing and managing wolves in a shared habitat with humans. Secondly, for the reintroduction of wolves to be successful in a shared habitat, a tolerance must be developed. According

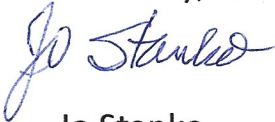
to Dr. Smith that tolerance is more likely to be developed when over population can be managed with hunting and problem wolves can be dealt with immediately. In January of 2021, Dr. Smith was asked what advice he would give Colorado, he described the characteristics of the locations for wolf packs as area where there is no or low conflict with humans, a constellation of locations which where packs can support and connect with other states which means that while the public lands are at a top and the human activity is in the valleys and at lower altitudes, the prey is migrating from public lands to private lands and wolves will follow.

We, at the Stanko Ranch believe that SB 21-105 will go a long way in helping to ensure a successful reintroduction of gray wolves by allowing for necessary time to study, research and select appropriate relocation sites, to build social tolerance during and after reintroduction by making sure those who live with the wolves are heard and delisting wolves in Colorado allowing management of populations by issuing hunting tags and farmers and ranchers to protect their pets, horses, and other livestock at the time of attack. The voting wasn't like setting a special district where the people who would pay the fees would reap the benefits. This election was state wide and is supposed to benefit all the people in the state; therefore, it seem to us that allowing the CWP the opportunity to find a permanent funding source which impacts all taxpayers equitably across the state, urban and rural, is a fair solution.

We urge you to vote in favor of SB 21-105 Implement and Finance Gray Wolf Reintroduction.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss this further, feel free to call or email.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jo Stanko". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Jo Stanko



March 10, 2021

Senate Agriculture Committee
200 Colfax
Denver, CO 80202

RE: SB21-105

Dear Committee Members:

SB21-105 is scheduled for hearing by the Senate Agriculture Committee tomorrow, March 11, 2021, and we send this letter to provide to the unequivocal support for this bill by members of the Associated Governments of Northwest Colorado (AGNC). AGNC represents elected members and associate members from Moffat, Rio Blanco, Garfield, Mesa, Grand, Delta, and Montrose counties. Together, these county governments represent approximately 65% of the population throughout Western Colorado.

AGNC members recognize that the passage of Proposition 114 set into motion a process for the introduction of wolves in counties west of the Continental Divide and that the process is moving forward. In order to ensure a robust, and transparent process, our members support SB21-105 in its entirety. The bill outlines a good, dynamic, transparent, public process which is critical in an undertaking of this type.

Our members ask, emphatically, that you recognize the unique position of local governments in this important planning process and consider the amendment being offered related to meaningful local engagement in the planning process. The amendment adds a new level of magnitude to the bill that we ask you recognize in your deliberations. Specifically, we ask that you consider the following points:

- 1) Local county governments are a subdivision of the State of Colorado with different regulatory powers than those assigned to other state agencies;
- 2) Counties are not like other stakeholders, nobody else represents the PEOPLE on the same level as county governments; many other organizations involved in the process are special interests – they do not have regulatory powers and they do not answer directly to the people;
- 3) County Commissioners have statutory responsibility for land use planning to protect the health, safety, and welfare of their citizens pursuant to Article 28, Title 30 C.R.S., and Article 65 of Title 24 C.R.S.;
- 4) Colorado Wildlife Commission should be directed to convene an advisory group of elected county commissioners from counties in all planning regions west of the Continental Divide to provide meaningful input to the introduction plan;

- 5) Currently the Wildlife Commission has indicated that they will convene a Technical Advisory Group and a Stakeholder Group only – this will drastically limit local government input to the process;
- 6) A county elected officials advisory committee should be provided access to pre-decisional information to fully participate in developing the wolf introduction plan. Such information is necessary and shall be used to assure consistency with county plans, policy and ordinances and offer plausible measures to correct inconsistencies in order to maintain valued customs, varied cultures and community stability;
- 7) The Committee shall transcend the planning process and be a vital tool in continued management across counties where wolves are released; and
- 8) Precedent for this level of interaction with local government, the state wildlife agency, and the state has been well established through the sage grouse habitat mapping project spanning 2015-2018. An MOU can be crafted between the organizations for the mutual benefit of openly sharing data and specifics of related to introduction planning.

Thank you for taking into consideration the very real concerns of elected officials in Western Colorado. We urge your “yes” vote on SB21-105 as well as the proposed amendment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Samson". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Mike Samson
AGNC Chairman
Garfield County Commissioner



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cwgawool@aol.com ° coloradosheep.org

March 11, 2021

To: Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee

Re: Please SUPPORT SB21-105 Regarding the Implementation of Proposition 114 Concerning the Restoration of Gray Wolves in Colorado and SUPPORT Amendment Recognizing the Importance of County Governments in the Planning Process

I am testifying in SUPPORT of Senate Bill 105, which is a comprehensive roadmap to implement Proposition 114.

Prop 114 provides an implementation timeframe through December 31, 2023 in recognition of the complexity of developing a wolf management plan unique to Colorado. Colorado is NOT Wyoming, Idaho, or Montana.

The Northern Rockies gray wolf recovery program encompassed portions of Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana with a total estimated population of 3.5 million people.

Colorado's current population is ~5.7 million people, and is projected to be an estimated 8.1 million by 2050. *[Colorado State Demography Office]*

"Approximately 186,000 private landowners control 30 percent or 7.1 million acres of the state's forested landscapes. Although the majority of these lands are in lower elevations, private landowners are represented in all of Colorado's forest types, including a notable portion of aspen and mixed-conifer forests." *[Colorado State University—Colorado State Forest Service—Colorado Land Ownership website]*

According to the USDA Forest Service "Open space is being lost at an alarming rate – almost 6,000 acres of open space are converted to developed uses every day. Forests are affected by three interrelated patterns that lead to the loss of open space: conversion, fragmentation, and parcelization. When we lose open space, we lose the valuable services landscapes provide including clean air and water, flood control, recreational opportunities, and wildlife habitat, to name a few." *[USDA Forest Service – Open Space Conservation website]*

These numbers help demonstrate just how complex the landscape is here in Western Colorado.

In order to be fair to the rural counties that have to shoulder this unwanted burden, and to be fair to the wolves that are being forced into already populated landscape, we support the thorough planning outline provided by SB105.

Additionally, we support the upcoming amendment that recognizes the crucial role county governments play in the planning process for Prop. 114.

Respectfully,

Bonnie Brown

Executive Director