

Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission
1313 Sherman St.
Denver, CO 80202

September 7, 2022

Dear Chair Hauser and Colorado Parks & Wildlife Commissioners,

We, the undersigned organizations comprise the Colorado Wildlife Conservation Project and collectively represent tens-of-thousands of Colorado hunters, anglers, conservationists, and outdoor enthusiasts. We submit this letter to express our opinions regarding Colorado Parks & Wildlife Commission's ongoing consideration of amending the current practices and regulations regarding license allocations for big game species, as well as the subsequent application of preference points for draw opportunities.

As some of CPW's most ardent customers we understand that the tasks you have before you are significant and complicated with a myriad of opinions and approaches. We know that neither the preference point scheme nor license allocation formulas exist in a vacuum and changes to one will result in changes to many other factors and programs. The option for monolithic modifications absent impacts in other areas does not appear to exist without significant and potentially catastrophic repercussions. As such, we encourage you and your colleagues to approach discussions regarding changes to license allocation formulas as well as preference points through a holistic perspective and address all factors necessary to achieve an ecologically balanced and financially sustainable program with increased hunter satisfaction moving forward.

As you know, concerns and sentiments relating to the policies of the administration of preference points as well as license allocation decisions (i.e. Resident vs. Non-Resident ratios, 65/35 units vs. 80/20 units, preference point banking, etc.) are primarily social considerations rather than biological determinations. While these opinions are necessary to guide policies for each program, we ask that these social be balanced with biological considerations regarding the long-term sustainability of the resource and herd health. As the agency strives balance the interest of various stakeholder groups it is important that those solutions do not come at the expense of big game resources.

Further, the underlying attitudes driving renewed discussion for amending the current allocation formulas for big game licenses from residents and non-residents alike, is fundamentally the consequence of an insufficient supply of licenses to meet the growing hunter demand for both opportunity and quality of opportunity. A record-high, 685,000 applications for Colorado big game hunting were submitted in 2021, just a year after the state had set a new record-high number in 2020 at 650,000 big game applications. As such, we encourage the Commission to consider addressing the supply side of the equation. The statewide herd objectives for many DAU's are under objective for a variety of reasons, including habitat quality, competition with other land uses, etc. We understand that Colorado's herd objectives are formulated based on a

host of diverse factors, however, any opportunity to increase herd objectives where appropriate, and subsequently increasing hunting license supply, should be considered.

Lastly, we were under the impression that there would be a series of CPW-administered public meetings and opportunities for both education from CPW and feedback from the public. We would appreciate seeing those meetings come to fruition in various locations across the state prior to any determination of either the scope of consideration and/or any formal CPW Commission regulatory action regarding these matters.

The Colorado Wildlife Conservation Project is steadfast in our commitment to ensuring that the management and administration of fish and wildlife policies, and hunting and angling opportunities in the state continues to be conducted by CPW. We also believe that reactive changes at the legislature to address single components of this complex larger issue are prone to misguided approaches and unintended consequences. The primary purpose of this letter is to ensure that the Commission retains decision making authority and CPW has a publically supported strategy for moving forward. We stand ready to provide any assistance the Commission may desire in developing a plan, polices, and actions that may stave off legislative efforts and keep these decisions within the purview of CPW and the Commission.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests and please do not hesitate to reach out to members of the Colorado Wildlife Conservation Project with any additional questions.

Sincerely,

Members of the Colorado Wildlife Conservation Project



For more information please visit: www.COwildlifeConservationProject.org