3 October 2025

Members of the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission
Colorado Parks and Wildlife
6060 Broadway
Denver, CO 80216

Dear Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commissioners:

On behalf of the undersigned hunting, fishing, and wildlife conservation organizations that comprise the Colorado Wildlife Conservation Project (CWCP), we respectfully submit the following comments regarding three topics on the agenda for your October 9, 2025 meeting: **public comment deadlines, renewable energy projects, and wild bison management.**

The CWCP is Colorado's largest alliance of hunting, angling, and wildlife conservation organizations, representing tens of thousands of outdoor enthusiasts across the state. We are united by a shared commitment to conserving wildlife and habitats, and to preserving Colorado's rich heritage of hunting, angling, and conservation. More information about our coalition is available at cowildlifeconservationproject.org.

Public Comment Deadlines

We appreciate the Commission's ongoing efforts to encourage public participation and ensure a fair and efficient process. CWCP members strive to provide thoughtful, well-informed comments that contribute meaningfully to your deliberations. To support this goal, we respectfully request that detailed agendas be made available with sufficient lead time to allow for coordination and research.

For example, the agenda for the October 9 meeting was released on September 29, while the deadline for inclusion in the Commission mailing was September 25. We are grateful that comments submitted by noon on October 3 will still be shared with Commissioners two business days prior to the meeting. We believe that aligning comment deadlines with agenda availability would enhance the quality and usefulness of public input.

Senate Bill 24-212 and Renewable Energy Development

We encourage the Commission to review the final report from the Colorado Energy Office titled *Evaluation and Assessment of Local Government Processes for the Siting of Commercial Clean Energy and Energy Transmission Projects*, published on September 30. This report will likely inform future legislation and highlights the critical role of local governments in renewable energy siting—many of which do not currently require consultation with CPW.

According to the 2024 *Conservation in the West* poll, 78% of Coloradans believe we can expand renewable energy while protecting wildlife habitat and community character. We agree. Achieving this balance requires that CPW consultation be a standard part of local permitting processes, and that wildlife habitat avoidance, minimization, and mitigation be central to energy planning and siting.

Currently and in contrast to oil and gas permitting, under the authority of the Colorado Energy and Carbon Management Commission, local governments site and permit renewable energy, with only *some* requiring consultation with CPW staff. Consultation with CPW is critical for avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating adverse impacts to important wildlife habitat.

Renewable energy development and durable habitat conservation are not mutually exclusive. With the right policies, incentives, and planning tools, Colorado can build the best projects in the most suitable locations—benefiting communities, wildlife, and the state's energy future. We believe the Commission has a vital role in helping state leadership and the public understand and support this vision.

Senate Bill 25-053 and Wild Bison Management

We commend CPW staff and the Commission for your proactive approach to implementing SB 25-053, which designates wild bison as a big game species and honors their deep cultural significance to Tribal Nations. Wild bison occasionally migrate into Colorado from the Book Cliffs herd, which originated with the Ute Indian Tribe in Utah and has been supported by a broad coalition of partners.

Managing these animals as part of a cross-boundary herd with Utah recognizes the natural history and biology of these migratory herd animals and aligns with the legislative intent of SB 25-053 and respects Tribal sovereignty. We support the development of a regulatory framework that anticipates potential conflicts and ensures thoughtful, science-based management. This includes planning for herd objectives, geographic boundaries, contact with captive bison, conflict with recreation and other uses and game damage prevention and compensation, and—if appropriate in the future —regulated hunting.

We also encourage CPW to collaborate with the Colorado Department of Agriculture to address issues related to privately owned bison, escaped animals, and bison owned by Tribal Nations that are not classified as wildlife.

Thank you for your service to Colorado's people and wildlife. Your leadership is essential to securing sustainable funding for CPW, maintaining healthy wildlife populations and habitats, and ensuring that future generations can enjoy Colorado's hunting and angling traditions.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments in advance of the October 9 meeting and look forward to participating in public testimony. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have questions or would like additional information.

Sincerely,

Member Organizations of the Colorado Wildlife Conservation Project:

Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
Coloradans for Responsible Wildlife Management
Colorado State Chapter – National Wild Turkey Federation
Colorado Trappers and Predator Hunters Association
Delta Waterfowl
Gunnison Wildlife Association
Keep Routt Wild
Mule Deer Federation
Muley Fanatics Foundation
National Wildlife Federation
Rocky Mountain Big Game Recovery
Rocky Mountain Bighorn Society
Safari Club International
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Project
United Houndsmen of Colorado

Professional Members of the Colorado Wildlife Conservation Project:

John Howard, Former Colorado Wildlife Commission Chair
Dean Riggs, Retired CPW Northwest Deputy Region Manager
Ron Velarde, Retired CPW Northwest Region Manager