

STATE OF COLORADO

Bill Owens, Governor  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
**DIVISION OF WILDLIFE**  
AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Bruce McCloskey, Director  
6060 Broadway  
Denver, Colorado 80216  
Telephone: (303) 297-1192



*For Wildlife-  
For People*

September 29, 2005

Paul Gertler, Assistant Director for Migratory Birds and State Programs  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 6  
PO Box 25486  
Denver Federal Center  
Denver, CO 80225

Dear Mr. Gertler:

The Colorado Division of Wildlife is pleased to submit Colorado's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS), including references to Wildlife Action Plans, in fulfillment of the eight specific elements required by Title IX, Public Law 106-553 and Title 1, Public Law 107-63. In addition to the Executive Summary in the CWCS, I am also attaching a "roadmap" to the CWCS to facilitate the review. On October 1, the CWCS will be accessible *via* the Division of Wildlife's web site, [http://wildlife.state.co.us/species\\_cons/CWCS/index.asp](http://wildlife.state.co.us/species_cons/CWCS/index.asp).

Although the Division of Wildlife, as the state's principal wildlife conservation agency, coordinated the development of this document, it is not simply a strategy for our agency. The task of conserving and managing Colorado's fish and wildlife is too big for any one group or agency to achieve alone. This document identifies potential conservation priorities that can be used by everyone in Colorado as a guide for planning, partnership building, and project design. It reflects the interests, concerns, and ideas of citizens with a stake in Colorado wildlife conservation who also participated in its development. Thus, it is truly a strategy for all of Colorado. Colorado's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy meets the eight elements mandated by federal legislation.

Colorado has long been committed to the conservation of all wildlife species, whether hunted, or fished for or not. One of the nation's great wildlife restoration success stories – the American Peregrine Falcon – had its beginnings here in the early 1970's, with a Colorado biologist rappelling over cliffs 500 feet or more high, dangling from a thin rope and dodging stooping Peregrines to retrieve their DDT- thinned eggs, tucking them into his vest and making all-night drives across the state for artificial incubation and hatching. Other successes, such as breakthroughs in the restoration and recovery of prairie grouse, lynx, and a number of native fishes, also have their roots in the efforts of Colorado's wildlife professionals and citizens.

Those efforts continue today, as evidenced by dozens of operational or "action" plans referenced in the CWCS that are currently being implemented. Division of Wildlife direct expenditures toward species conservation and habitat conservation exceed \$20 million annually, financed in large part by funds from Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), Species Conservation Trust Fund, and the State Wildlife Grants program as alternatives to traditional hunting and fishing license fees. As further evidence of the Division of Wildlife's commitment, we recently created the Wildlife Conservation Section, comprised of over 50 positions, with principal responsibility for the Division of Wildlife's aquatic and terrestrial species conservation programs (threatened, endangered, special concern, nongame) and the integration of those programs with the DOW's sport fish, game, and other programs as well as habitat conservation and management for all species.

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, Russell George, Executive Director  
WILDLIFE COMMISSION, Jeffrey Crawford, Chair • Tom Burke, Vice Chair • Ken Torres, Secretary  
Members, Robert Bray • Rick Enstrom • Philip James • Claire O'Neal • Richard Ray • Robert Shoemaker  
Ex Officio Members, Russell George and Don Ament

Clearly, we and our many partners fully intend that the track record of successfully securing populations of Colorado's at-risk wildlife species and their habitats continue.

Colorado's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS), and the process used in its development, will help continue those successes. The CWCS has assembled for the first time a snapshot of the status of our knowledge about hundreds of wildlife species that are not commonly hunted or fished, an articulation of the broad strategies that can be employed to lessen threats to those species and their habitats and a comprehensive catalog of the species-specific or habitat-specific action plans that are in place to secure those species in the state. Thus Colorado's CWCS is comprehensive in scope, and strategic in nature. It conveys a common point-of-reference regarding the state's wildlife conservation needs and potential solutions to any Colorado enterprise, in order to foster greater consistency in their, and our, current and future planning and project or program implementation.

This Comprehensive Strategy is intended to build upon past successes and to supplement and improve, not to re-invent nor pre-empt, ongoing, successful wildlife management decision processes and policies in Colorado. As an example, the process used to develop the CWCS (outlined in Section B, page 10) strengthened relationships among the state's public and private interests and led to the recommended vision of a system by which all entities can develop common objectives, and comprehensively and consistently track progress toward those objectives. It is doubtful such a recommendation would have evolved in the absence of the CWCS process.

In summary, the state of Colorado has repeatedly proven its ability to secure species at risk, and continues to demonstrate its commitment to the goals of conserving all the state's wildlife species. Additionally, the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, along with the numerous action plans referenced therein, demonstrates that Colorado's wildlife conservation community is poised to take these efforts even further. The CWCS effort has shown that increasing the investment of State Wildlife Grant funds toward the goals of the Strategy is warranted, and carries an extremely high likelihood of positive returns for many years to come.

If you have questions about the Comprehensive Strategy, or require additional information, please feel free to contact Thomas Nesler, Section Manager of the Wildlife Conservation Section.

Sincerely,



Bruce L. McCloskey  
Director

cc: Russell George, Director, Colorado Department of Natural Resources  
Wildlife Commission  
Director's Staff

Attachment

**“Roadmap” to Colorado’s CWCS and the Eight Required Elements**

Required Element	Location in the Colorado CWCS	
	General Location	Specific Sections
<b>Element 1</b> – Distribution and abundance of wildlife species of greatest conservation need	Section E Appendix C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tables 3 - 10 (pp. 16-39) for abundance and trends of 205 species of Greatest Conservation Need</li> <li>• Appendix Tables C1-C8 for distribution</li> </ul>
<b>Element 2</b> – Locations and condition of key habitats	Section F Appendix B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Figure 2 (p. 43) for map</li> <li>• Table 11 (p. 41) for summary of habitat conditions</li> <li>• Appendix Tables B1-B6 for relative habitat conditions</li> </ul>
<b>Element 3</b> – Problems/issues/threats that may adversely affect species and habitats	Sections G, H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Table 12 (pages 44-45) for summary of Problems/ Issues/Threats</li> <li>• Pages 46-54 for taxonomic group/habitat type threats</li> <li>• Table 13 (p. 56) for summary of research/survey needs</li> </ul>
<b>Element 4</b> – Conservation actions that may conserve species and habitats	Sections G, H, I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pages 46-54 for taxonomic group/habitat type potential actions</li> <li>• Table 13 (p. 56) for summary of research/ survey potential actions/needs</li> <li>• Table 14 (pp. 57-59) for summary of potential actions</li> </ul>
<b>Element 5</b> – Proposed plans for monitoring species and habitats	Section J	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pages 61-61 for lists of potential actions by taxonomic groups</li> </ul>
<b>Element 6</b> – Procedures to review the CWCS	Sections K, L, M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Page 63 for process to continue involvement of all parties in reviews</li> <li>• Pages 67-68 for design to incorporate new information</li> <li>• Page 68 for description of process and timing anticipated</li> </ul>
<b>Element 7</b> – Coordinating with other land management agencies	Sections B,K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pages 4-8 for description of coordination with other agencies in this effort</li> <li>• Page 63, first two paragraphs for description of process used and anticipated for reviews/updates</li> <li>• Table 15 (pages 63-67) for current action plans</li> </ul>
<b>Element 8</b> – Public participation	Sections B,M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pages 4-11 for description of public participation in this effort</li> <li>• Page 68 for public participation for future reviews/updates</li> </ul>