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S. WARD

Be it Enacted by the People of the State of Colorado:

Colorado Secretary of State

SECTION 1. In Colorado Revised Statutes, add 33-2-105.8 as follows:

33-2-105.8. Reintroduction of gray wolves on designated lands west of the continental divide – public input in commission development of restoration plan - compensation to owners of livestock - definitions.

(1) THE VOTERS OF COLORADO FIND AND DECLARE THAT:

(a) HISTORICALLY, WOLVES WERE AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE WILD HABITAT OF COLORADO BUT WERE EXTERMINATED AND HAVE BEEN FUNCTIONALLY EXTINCT FOR SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS IN THE STATE;

(b) THE GRAY WOLF IS LISTED AS AN ENDANGERED SPECIES ON THE COMMISSION'S LIST OF ENDANGERED OR THREATENED SPECIES;

(c) ONCE RESTORED TO COLORADO, GRAY WOLVES WILL HELP RESTORE A CRITICAL BALANCE IN NATURE; AND

(d) RESTORATION OF THE GRAY WOLF TO THE STATE MUST BE DESIGNED TO RESOLVE CONFLICTS WITH PERSONS ENGAGED IN RANCHING AND FARMING IN THIS STATE.

(2) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY PROVISION OF STATE LAW TO THE CONTRARY, INCLUDING SECTION 33-2-105.5 (2), AND IN ORDER TO RESTORE GRAY WOLVES TO THE STATE, THE COMMISSION SHALL:

(a) DEVELOP A PLAN TO RESTORE AND MANAGE GRAY WOLVES IN COLORADO, USING THE BEST SCIENTIFIC DATA AVAILABLE;

(b) HOLD STATEWIDE HEARINGS TO ACQUIRE INFORMATION TO BE CONSIDERED IN DEVELOPING SUCH PLAN, INCLUDING SCIENTIFIC, ECONOMIC, AND SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS PERTAINING TO SUCH RESTORATION;

(c) PERIODICALLY OBTAIN PUBLIC INPUT TO UPDATE SUCH PLAN;

(d) TAKE THE STEPS NECESSARY TO BEGIN REINTRODUCTIONS OF GRAY WOLVES BY DECEMBER 31, 2023, ONLY ON DESIGNATED LANDS; AND

(e) OVERSEE GRAY WOLF RESTORATION AND MANAGEMENT, INCLUDING THE DISTRIBUTION OF STATE FUNDS THAT ARE MADE AVAILABLE TO:

(I) ASSIST OWNERS OF LIVESTOCK IN PREVENTING AND RESOLVING CONFLICTS BETWEEN GRAY WOLVES AND LIVESTOCK; AND

(II) PAY FAIR COMPENSATION TO OWNERS OF LIVESTOCK FOR ANY LOSSES OF LIVESTOCK CAUSED BY GRAY WOLVES, AS VERIFIED PURSUANT TO THE CLAIM PROCEDURES AUTHORIZED BY SECTIONS 33-3-107 TO 33-3-110 AND, TO THE EXTENT THEY ARE AVAILABLE, FROM MONEYS IN THE WILDLIFE CASH FUND AS PROVIDED IN SECTION 33-3-107 (2.5).

(3) (a) THE COMMISSION'S PLAN MUST COMPLY WITH SECTION 33-2-105.7 (2), (3), AND (4) AND MUST INCLUDE:

(I) THE SELECTION OF DONOR POPULATIONS OF GRAY WOLVES;

(II) THE PLACES, MANNER, AND SCHEDULING OF REINTRODUCTIONS OF GRAY WOLVES BY THE DIVISION, WITH SUCH REINTRODUCTIONS BEING RESTRICTED TO DESIGNATED LANDS;

(III) DETAILS FOR THE RESTORATION AND MANAGEMENT OF GRAY WOLVES, INCLUDING ACTIONS NECESSARY OR BENEFICIAL FOR ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING A SELF-SUSTAINING POPULATION, AS AUTHORIZED BY SECTION 33-2-104; AND

(IV) METHODOLOGIES FOR DETERMINING WHEN THE GRAY WOLF POPULATION IS SUSTAINING ITSELF SUCCESSFULLY AND WHEN TO REMOVE THE GRAY WOLF FROM THE LIST OF ENDANGERED OR THREATENED SPECIES, AS PROVIDED FOR IN SECTION 33-2-105 (2).

(b) THE COMMISSION SHALL NOT IMPOSE ANY LAND, WATER, OR RESOURCE USE RESTRICTIONS ON PRIVATE LANDOWNERS IN FURTHERANCE OF THE PLAN.

(4) IN FURTHERANCE OF THIS SECTION AND THE EXPRESSED INTENT OF VOTERS, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

(a) SHALL MAKE SUCH APPROPRIATIONS AS ARE NECESSARY TO FUND THE PROGRAMS AUTHORIZED AND OBLIGATIONS, INCLUDING FAIR COMPENSATION FOR LIVESTOCK LOSSES THAT ARE AUTHORIZED BY THIS SECTION BUT CANNOT BE PAID FROM MONEYS IN THE WILDLIFE CASH FUND, IMPOSED BY THIS SECTION; AND

(b) MAY ADOPT SUCH OTHER LEGISLATION AS WILL FACILITATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESTORATION OF GRAY WOLVES TO COLORADO.

(5) AS USED IN THIS SECTION, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

(a) "DESIGNATED LANDS" MEANS THOSE LANDS WEST OF THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE IN COLORADO THAT THE COMMISSION DETERMINES ARE CONSISTENT WITH ITS PLAN TO RESTORE AND MANAGE GRAY WOLVES.

(b) "GRAY WOLF" MEANS NONGAME WILDLIFE OF THE SPECIES *CANIS LUPUS*.

(c) "LIVESTOCK" MEANS CATTLE, HORSES, MULES, BURROS, SHEEP, LAMBS, SWINE, LLAMA, ALPACA, AND GOATS.

(d) "RESTORE" OR "RESTORATION" MEANS ANY REINTRODUCTION, AS PROVIDED FOR IN SECTION 33-2-105.7 (1)(a), AS WELL AS POST-RELEASE MANAGEMENT OF THE GRAY WOLF IN A MANNER THAT FOSTERS THE SPECIES' CAPACITY TO SUSTAIN ITSELF SUCCESSFULLY.