



# **COLORADO GRAY WOLF 10(J) RULEMAKING EIS**

Public Scoping Open House

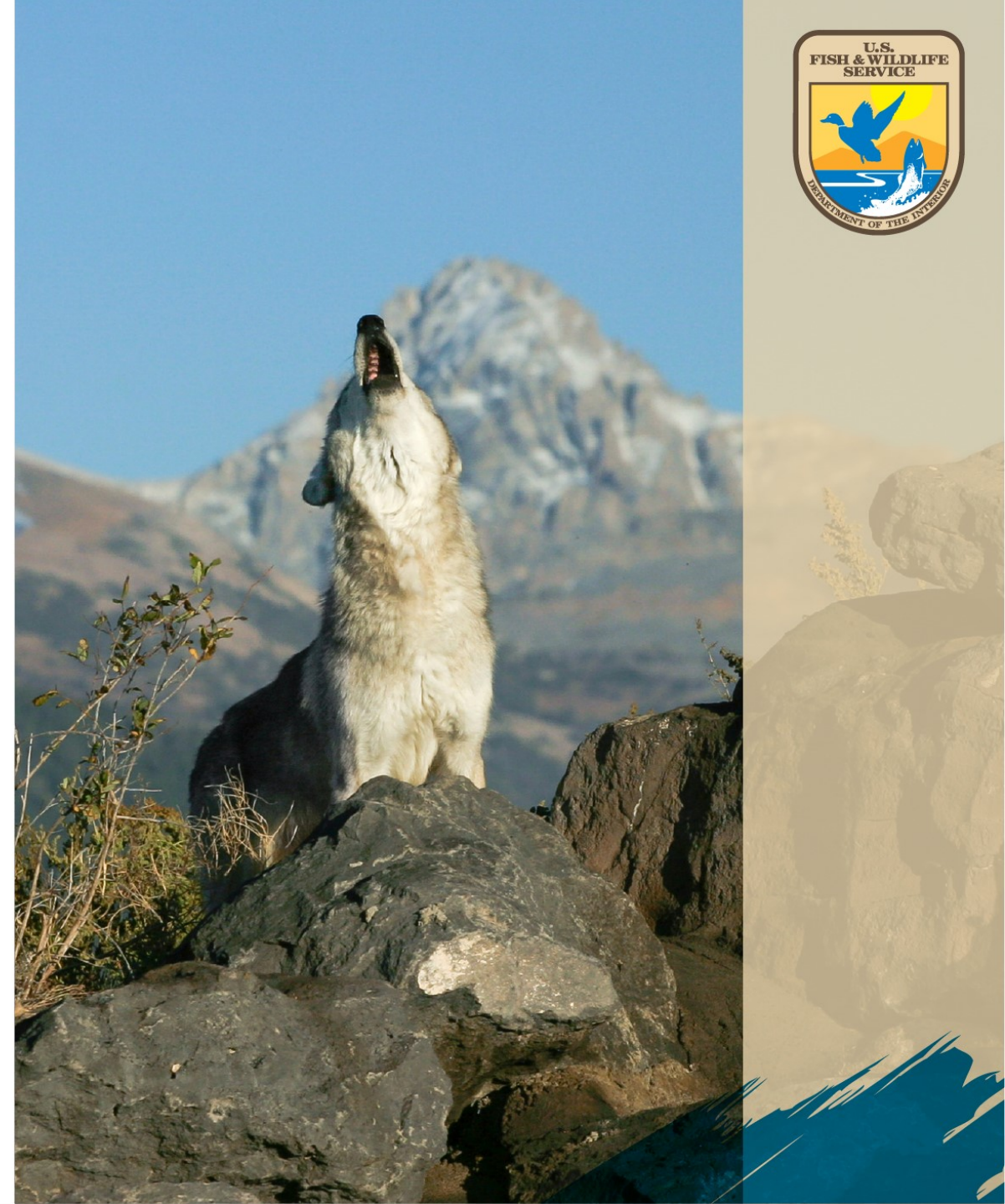


# WELCOME!

## Agenda:

- Proposed Action, Purpose and Need
- Project Background
- Alternatives
- Project Schedule
- Ways to Comment

*We encourage you to provide your input on the proposed action, alternatives, and issues that should be analyzed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) during this public open house.*



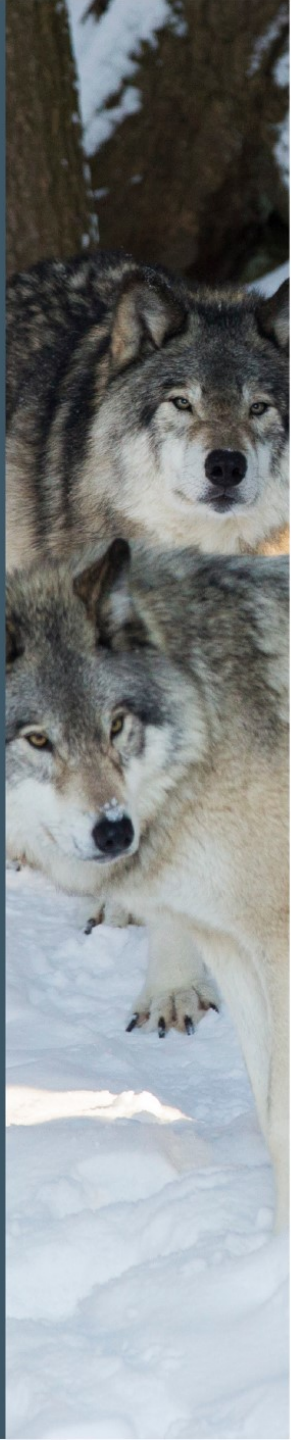




# **PROPOSED ACTION, PURPOSE AND NEED**



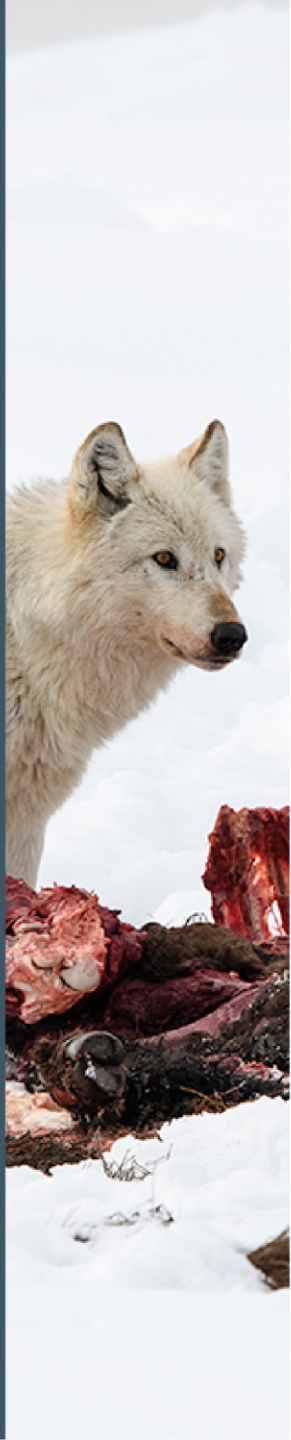
# WHAT IS THE PROPOSED ACTION?



In response to a request from Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) for increased management flexibility, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (the Service) has published a Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Colorado Gray Wolf 10(j) rulemaking. The Service is proposing this rulemaking to develop a 10(j) rule under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), that would provide the state its requested management flexibility for reintroduced wolves, while reducing potential conflicts between wolves, livestock producers, and other stakeholders, and increasing the likelihood that the reintroduction will be successful.



# PURPOSE AND NEED



## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE?

Provide management flexibility for the State of Colorado's efforts to reestablish a population of gray wolves within the species' historical range in Colorado

## WHAT IS THE NEED?

The State of Colorado has requested the Service designate the reintroduced population as an experimental population under section 10(j) of the ESA. This would:

- Reduce the regulatory impact of reintroducing a Federally listed species in a specific geographic area (proposed 10(j) boundary)
- Contribute to the species' conservation





# PROJECT BACKGROUND







# REGULATORY BACKGROUND



1945

Wolves eradicated in Colorado and most of the lower 48 states

1966,  
1969

Subspecies or regional populations of the gray wolf first listed under predecessors of the ESA

1978

Gray wolf listed as endangered under the ESA (threatened in Minnesota)

2011

Northern Rocky Mountain gray wolf population, except WY, delisted

2017

Wyoming population of gray wolves delisted

2020

Service finalized rule to delist the gray wolf

2022

Final delisting rule vacated by court order



# WOLVES IN COLORADO

With biological recovery of the Northern Rocky Mountains population, gray wolves have begun to disperse to Colorado.

As of the end of 2021, the north-central Colorado pack includes the only known wolves in Colorado (eight individuals).

2004

- First confirmed wolf in Colorado in modern times

2019,  
2020

- Lone wolf from Wyoming documented in Colorado
- Paired with another wolf in north-central Colorado

2020

- Wolves documented in extreme northwest Colorado (These wolves are no longer present in Colorado)

2021

- North-central Colorado pack produces offspring





# ALTERNATIVES



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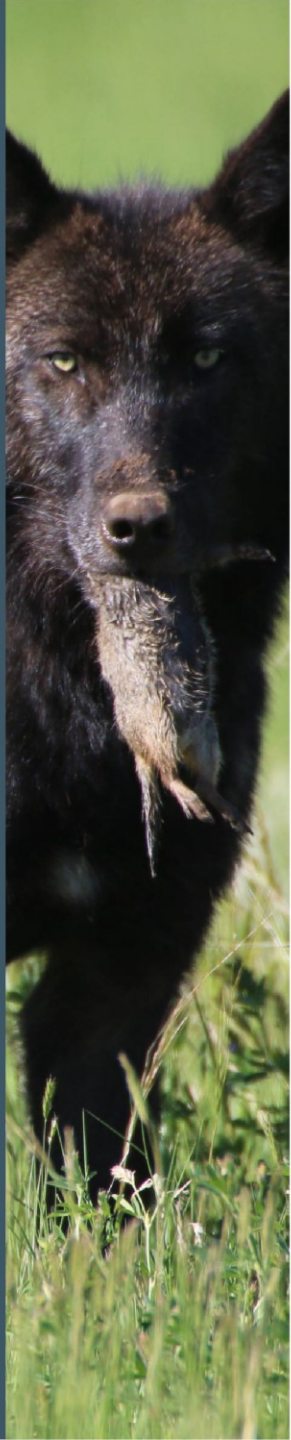
- The identification, consideration, and analysis of alternatives are key to the NEPA process.
- For this project we have preliminarily identified a no-action alternative and 2 action alternatives.
- We are seeking your input on the range of alternatives that should be considered in the EIS.





# ALTERNATIVE 1

Apply Section 10(j) Rule to  
the Gray Wolf in Colorado

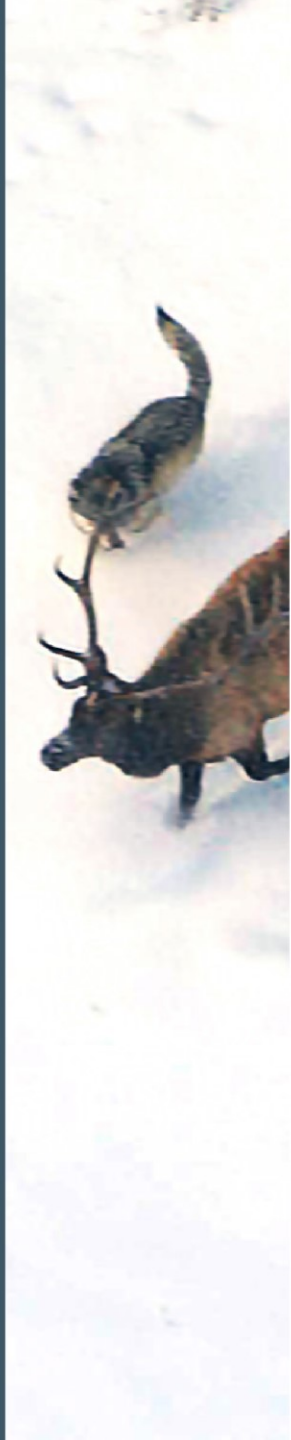


- Reintroduced wolves would be designated an “experimental population” by the Service.
- The Service would determine if the population is essential or nonessential to the continued existence of an endangered or threatened species.
- The Service would establish a section 10(j) boundary to include the entire state of Colorado, in which the section 10(j) rule would apply.
- The final rule would provide management restrictions, protective measures or other special management concerns for the experimental population.



# ALTERNATIVE 2

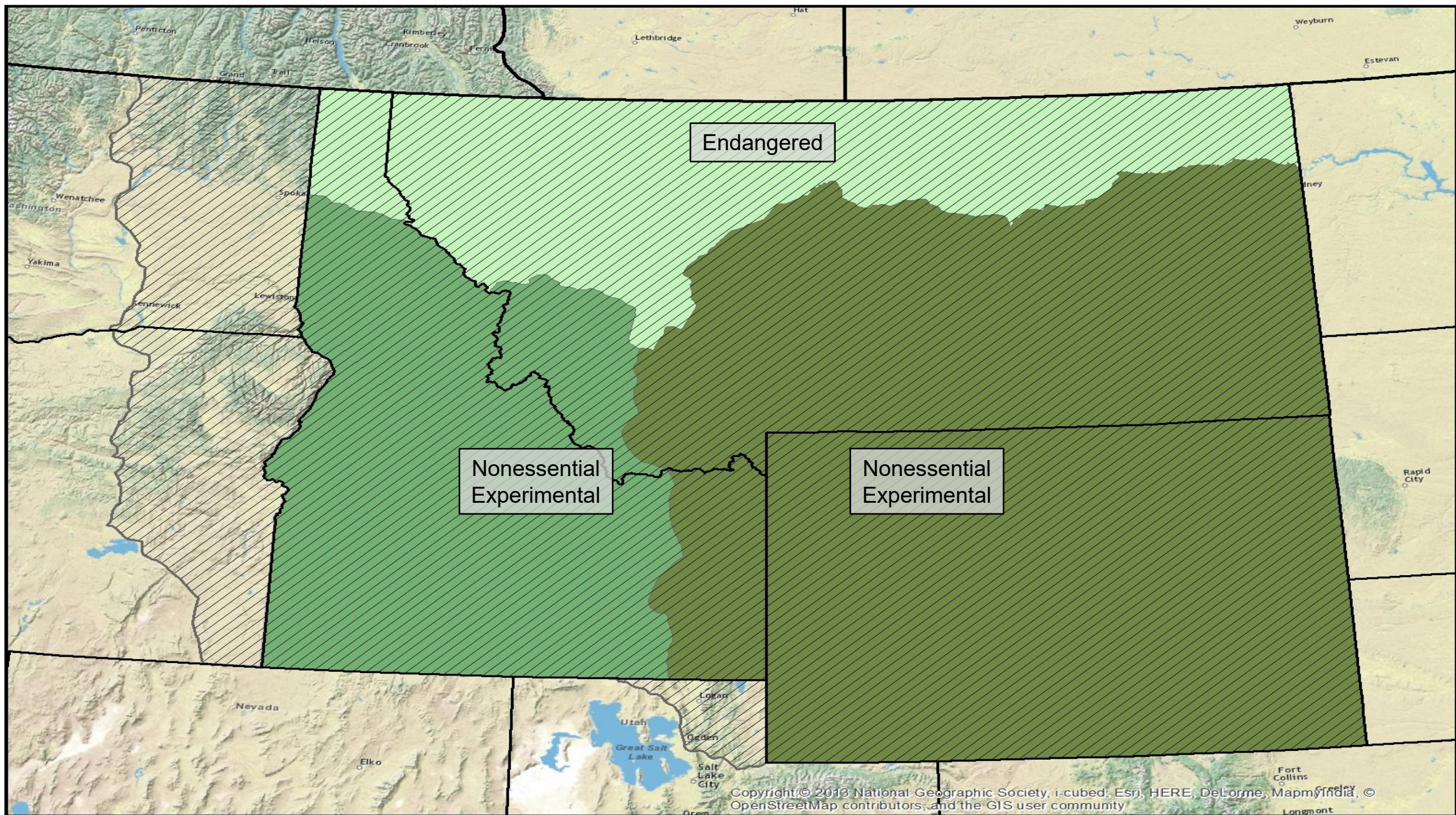
Apply Section 10(j) Rule to the Gray Wolf in a Limited Territory and Issue a Section 10(a)(1)(A) Permit for any existing Gray Wolf Population in the Rest of Colorado



- If an existing population of gray wolves is identified in Colorado, the Service would issue a Safe Harbor Agreement and permit under section 10(a)(1)(A) for management of this population.
- The State of Colorado's gray wolf management plan may be permitted under section 10(a)(1)(A) for any existing populations in Colorado, separate from the area falling within the 10(j) boundary.
- The Service would promulgate a 10(j) rule for any wolves reintroduced apart from an existing population and establish a 10(j) boundary including a smaller geographic area compared to the boundary under alternative 1.
- The final 10(j) rule would provide management restrictions, protective measures, or other special management concerns for the experimental population.









# NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE

State Reintroduction  
Without a Federal  
Regulatory Framework



- Under the No-Action Alternative, the Service would not establish a 10(j) rule in Colorado.
- In compliance with Colorado Revised Statute 33-2-105.8, Colorado Parks and Wildlife would reintroduce gray wolves to Colorado by the end of 2023.
- Reintroduced wolves would be fully protected under the ESA.
- The no-action alternative does not meet the purpose and need for the proposed action but is being analyzed to provide a reference point against which the potential effects of the action alternatives can be compared.





# PROJECT SCHEDULE





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Timeframe	Milestone
July 2022	Notice of Intent to prepare the Colorado Gray Wolf 10(j) Rulemaking EIS; public scoping begins
August 2022	Public scoping meetings
August 22, 2022	Public scoping comment period concludes
Summer 2022	Analyze comments and prepare scoping summary report
Summer – Fall 2022	Gather data, refine alternatives, analyze impacts, and prepare the Draft EIS
Winter/Spring 2023	Draft EIS and proposed rule available for public review
Fall 2023	Final EIS released
Fall 2023	Record of Decision





# **WAYS TO COMMENT**





# PLEASE LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK

- Submit written comments at this meeting
- Submit comments electronically at:  
<https://www.regulations.gov> (Search for  
“Docket No. FWS-R6-ES-2022-0100”.)
- Mail written comments to:

Division of Policy and Directives  
Management

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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Falls Church, VA 22041-3803





**THANK YOU!**

