Legislative Council Staff

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Final Fiscal Note

Drafting Number:	LLS 21-0571	**Date:**	July 29, 2021
Prime Sponsors:	Rep. Soper	**Bill Status:**	Postponed Indefinitely
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Bill Topic:	**LIMIT DESIGNATED LANDS GRAY WOLF REINTRODUCTION**

Summary of Fiscal Impact:	☐ State Revenue	☐ TABOR Refund
	☒ State Expenditure	☐ Local Government
	☐ State Transfer	☐ Statutory Public Entity
	The bill would have restricted the lands upon which gray wolves can be reintroduced into Colorado. It would have decreased state expenditures on an ongoing basis.	
Appropriation Summary:	No change in appropriations was required; see State Expenditures section.	
Fiscal Note Status:	The fiscal note reflects the introduced bill. The bill was not enacted into law; therefore, the impacts identified in this analysis do not take effect.	

Table 1
State Fiscal Impacts Under HB 21-1037

		Budget Year FY 2021-22	Out Year FY 2022-23
Revenue		-	-
Expenditures	Cash Funds	($311,768)	($398,751)
	Centrally Appropriated	($32,555)	($68,636)
	Total Expenditures	**(at least $344,323)**	**(at least $467,387)**
	Total FTE	**(1.0 FTE)**	**(3.0 FTE)**
Transfers		-	-
TABOR Refund		-	-

Summary of Legislation

Proposition 114, which was approved by Colorado voters at the 2020 General Election, directs the Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) Commission to develop a plan to restore and manage gray wolves in Colorado on designated lands west of the Continental Divide.

This bill establishes that the land designated by the CPW Commission for gray wolf reintroduction cannot include either of the following:

- land in a county in which the majority of voters did not support Proposition 114, unless a separate election is held and voters approve gray wolf reintroduction on land within the county; or
- land in a county which is home to animals that are prey of the gray wolf that either the state has spent money to restore, or is either a candidate for or listed as threatened or endangered at the federal or state level.

Background

Five counties west of the Continental Divide voted with majority support for Proposition 114: La Plata, Pitkin, San Juan, San Miguel, and Summit counties. Gray wolves are carnivores with many prey animals, including large and small game, birds, and fish. CPW has spent money to reintroduce or restore prey of the gray wolf in all counties in the state, including moose beginning in 2005.

Assumptions

The fiscal note assumes that upon passage of this bill, reintroduction planning would stop, as there will be no lands immediately eligible for gray wolf reintroduction.

State Expenditures

Under current law, reintroduction planning costs in the Department of Natural Resources are estimated to be at least 344,323 and 1.0 FTE in FY 2021-22 and $467,387 and 3.0 FTE in FY 2022-23. The bill is assumed to eliminate these expenditures. Expenditures are further reduced in future years for what would have been the reintroduction and management work required under current law, though these amounts are not estimated. These figures reflect the cost estimate for reintroduction planning published in the fiscal impact statement accompanying the 2020 Blue Book. The fund source has not been determined; the fiscal note assumes that the Wildlife Cash Fund would be used.

No appropriations have yet been made to finance wolf reintroduction planning, so no reduction in appropriations is necessary.

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Local Government

By restricting eligible lands for gray wolf reintroduction, the bill reduces costs and workload counties would otherwise incur to plan for reintroduction. Any county that opts to hold an election concerning the reintroduction of gray wolves will incur associated costs, in addition to possible future reintroduction costs pending the outcome of the election.

Effective Date

The bill was postponed indefinitely by the House Energy and Environment Committee on February 25, 2021.

State and Local Government Contacts

Natural Resources