

# Livestock associations sue Colorado, U.S. Fish and Wildlife to delay gray wolf reintroduction

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The Colorado Cattlemen's Association and Gunnison County Stockgrowers' Association sued Colorado Parks and Wildlife and the

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service this week to delay the reintroduction of gray wolves into Colorado.

Through a [lawsuit](#) filed in federal district court Monday, the industry organizations are seeking a [court order](#) to delay the release of gray wolves into Colorado by Dec. 31, a deadline required by the state's Gray Wolf Introduction Initiative narrowly approved by voters in 2020.

The complaint alleges the two agencies violated the National Environmental Policy Act by not conducting an [environmental assessment](#) or environmental impact statement on the "[environmental consequences](#) of reintroducing gray wolves to Colorado."

Previous environmental impact studies released this fall did not address those issues, the lawsuit states.

The Colorado Cattlemen's Association, which represents 6,000 members, has long opposed the ballot measure to reintroduce gray wolves, with officials describing it as a threat to humans, domestic pets, livestock and wildlife.

Under the state's reintroduction plan, up to 10 wolves will be brought to Colorado from Oregon by plane or truck and released in Summit, Eagle or Grand counties by the end of the year, where they will likely disperse by up to 70 miles.

The agency plans to bring up to 50 more wolves to Colorado over the next five years.

But despite years of planning and development, state and [federal wildlife officials](#) did not take the required steps to analyze the impact of gray wolf reintroduction as required under the National Environmental Policy Act, the lawsuit alleges.

In a statement, Gunnison County Stockgrowers' Association President Andy Spann said concerns raised by the group during the reintroduction plan's development were not sufficiently resolved.

"We believe that much of our input, and that of many others across Western Colorado, was diminished by the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission," Spann said. "We regret that a course of litigation on this and other issues seems to be the only recourse left to have these concerns legitimately addressed."

The lawsuit seeks a declaratory judgment that the federal and state wildlife agencies violated the law by renewing an Endangered Species Act agreement without preparing an environmental impact statement on the reintroduction of [gray wolves](#) and a court order to delay reintroduction until it is complete.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife and U.S. Fish and Wildlife officials could not be reached for comment.

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