December 28, 2017

Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission
c/o Policy and Planning Unit
Colorado Parks and Wildlife
1313 Sherman Street
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission:

The Gunnison Basin Sage Grouse Strategic Committee (Strategic Committee) would like to take this opportunity to comment on the upcoming agenda items dealing with antler/horn collection regulations to be discussed at the January 10-11, 2018 meeting. The Strategic Committee is made up of diverse interests including recreational, environmental, agricultural, public at large, county governments, CPW, and federal agencies. Thus, these comments make every effort to represent the concerns of the Gunnison Basin to the largest degree possible.

At the last meeting of the Strategic Committee, held on December 20, 2017, the Committee was informed of possible action by the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission concerning antler/horn collection regulations at the January 10-11, 2018 meeting. This was the first time the Strategic Committee had heard of this possible action and thus felt it necessary to comment so the group's input could be considered. The regulation currently in place (implemented in 2007 and modified to its current structure in 2009 with input from the Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee) to limit antler collection in the Gunnison Basin was fostered with numerous opportunities for public comment provided by the Strategic Committee. Input was needed to understand how antler shed collection was impacting Gunnison Sage-grouse either directly or indirectly, and also impacts to other wildlife species including mule deer. This public process went on for several months before consensus was reached among interested parties and unified support for the Gunnison Basin's proposed regulation came to fruition.

It is our understanding that an alternative being considered by the Commission would be to eliminate all shed antler regulations in western Colorado or replace existing regulations with a new and possibly different set of regulations. The Strategic Committee urges the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission to delay any action on changes to current antler shed regulations until more community input can be sought in our local area and in other local communities potentially affected by these possible regulation changes. At the least, we would ask that no action be taken to eliminate the current regulation in the Gunnison Basin as it is working well in our estimation and is still supported by the local community. To be clear, we support the concept of western slope-wide shed antler collection regulations but do not want

to see any loss of protection for wildlife in the Gunnison Basin if the regulation changes from our status quo.

The Strategic Committee would support a concerted effort to gather public input during 2018 so that action could be taken by the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission to put in effect whatever community supported alternatives came forward, and still be timely for 2019 implementation. We look forward to working with Colorado Parks and Wildlife through the Gunnison Area Office to solicit that input from our local community and provide meaningful comments on any changes, or additions, to the current regulations.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Houck
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