

1 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
2 FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICES
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In re:

6 The Proposed Rule, "Removing the Gray Wolf (*Canis lupus*) from
7 the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Maintaining
8 Protections for the Mexican Wolf (*Canis lupus baileyi*) by
9 Listing it as Endangered."

10 Tuesday, November 19, 2013
11
12

HEARING OFFICER: Lesley Travers

13 PRESENTERS: Michael Jimenez
14 Gary Frazer

15 Location: Paramount Theater
16 1621 Glenarm Place
17 Denver, Colorado

18 Time: 6:05 PM
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22 Veritext National Court Reporting Company
23 Mid-Atlantic Region
24 1250 Eye Street NW - Suite 1201
25 Washington, D.C. 20005

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. TRAVERS: We are now on the record.

Good afternoon. Good evening. On behalf of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service I welcome you to this public hearing regarding the proposal to list the Mexican wolf as an endangered subspecies in the southwest, and to delist the gray wolf elsewhere

My name is Lesley Travers. I will be your hearing officer today. My company is Travers Consulting. I am not affiliated with the US Fish and Wildlife Services, and I don't represent them. I represent no point of view with respect to the proposal that is the subject of this hearing. My role is to conduct this hearing in an orderly manner such that we receive your comments accurately on to the record.

I would also like to recognize the following representatives from the US Fish and Wildlife Service who are also in attendance today: Mr. Gary Frazer, Assistant Director for Ecological Services in the Washington DC Headquarters Office, and Mike Jimenez, Northern Rocky Mountains Wolf Management and Science Coordinator from Jackson, Wyoming, and the many Fish and Wildlife Service officials from the Mountain-Prairie Regional Office and DC Headquarters Office that are staffing the hearing today.

Also assisting with this hearing are Martha Loomis, our court reporter from Veritext, and Natalie Nessing and

1 Kelly Turner, our sign language interpreters from Professional
2 Sign Language Interpreting, Inc.

3 At this point I'll turn the floor over to Gary and
4 to Mike. They will give us a power point presentation that
5 explains the subject matter of this hearing, the proposal to
6 list the Mexican wolf as an endangered subspecies in the
7 southwest, and to delist the gray wolf elsewhere.

8 Gary and Mike?

9 MR. JIMENEZ: See if we can make this work.

10 I'd like to kind of describe where we come from and
11 how we got to where we are today. And it's important to
12 remember the goal of the Endangered Species Act is to prevent
13 extinction.

14 And we use the term "recovery." Recovery is
15 securing a species from the threat of extinction now or in the
16 foreseeable future. And there's really no set formula how
17 species are recovered. The goal is to bring the species back
18 to the point where it no longer needs the protection of the
19 ESA.

20 So for some species that might require expanding its
21 range or its distribution. For other species it might be
22 dealing with or addressing specific threats. And for other
23 species it might be a combination of both.

24 But for any of this, recovery is based on the
25 biological needs of the species, and not necessarily some

1 specific percentage of historic range or current suitable
2 habitat.

3 So if we go back to the history of the ESA, in order
4 to protect the wolves in the 1960s and '70s we listed several
5 subspecies of wolves. In 1978 we consolidated these
6 subspecies and listed *Canis lupus* as a species in the lower
7 48 and Mexico, and listed them as endangered. The exception
8 was Minnesota where we listed them as threatened.

9 In 1978 there was only a few hundred wolves in
10 northeast Minnesota and on the Isle of Royale. If you look at
11 this map, this is the range of wolves in the blue. No wolves
12 existed in the lower 48 except in the small yellow
13 crosshatched section in northeastern Minnesota, and like I
14 say, the Isle Royale, and Michigan. That was the starting
15 point.

16 So our approach to wolf recovery was to establish
17 gray wolf recovery programs in three regions of the country:
18 in the western Great Lakes, the northern Rocky Mountains, and
19 the southwest. And those recovery programs, those recovery
20 programs worked very well, exceptionally well. Wolves
21 rebounded. Their populations grew. They came back on the
22 landscape.

23 In the western Great Lakes we hit recovery rolls by
24 the mid to late 1990s, and we had a recovered population of
25 over 3,600 wolves that were delisted in Minnesota and Michigan

1 in 2011.

2 In the orange, you can see the occupied range of
3 where the wolves are. In the yellow it's the delisted area,
4 the DPS population settling in the western Great Lakes.

5 In the northern Rocky Mountains we had wolves
6 recolonizing coming down from Canada and northwest Montana.
7 In '95 and '96 we were reintroducing wolves into central Idaho
8 and into Yellowstone. And that population grew. The
9 population, we hit those recovery goals in 2002. With a
10 population of over 1,600 wolves, which is five times the
11 recovery goals they were delisted in Montana and Idaho and
12 Wyoming by 2012. Those wolves are continuing to expand, as
13 you can see, into Washington and Oregon.

14 In the southwest in the Mexican wolf program, that's
15 still a work in progress. You can see from the growth curve
16 there in the last few years the population is trending upward.
17 But that's still a work in progress. We have not achieved
18 recovery. Presently there's about 75 wolves in the wild, and
19 another 300 wolves in the captive breeding program.

20 So if you look at this current range you can see
21 from this map our recovery programs, they've worked
22 exceptionally well. We've dramatically expanded the range of
23 wolves with over 5,000 wolves between the northern Rocky
24 Mountains and the western Great Lakes region in the lower 48.

25 And if you look at kind of the results of this, we

1 worked with our partners to successfully re-establish wolves
2 in the western Great Lakes, the northern Rockies, and these
3 populations have been delisted due to recovery.

4 Again, in the southwest, that's still a work in
5 progress, and that's still where we're focusing our energy.

6 So if you look at it side by side and remember back
7 from where we started, we went from a small remnant population
8 in 1978 to a secure recovered population in the western Great
9 Lakes and northern Rocky Mountains. And that effort is
10 continuing in the southwest. So we believe that this recovery
11 ensures that wolves will no longer be endangered in the lower
12 48, and it's time to move forward.

13 I'll hand it off to Gary to describe where we go
14 from here.

15 MR. FRAZER: Thanks, Mike.

16 So having recovered the gray wolves into the western
17 Great Lakes and northern Rockies the next question really was,
18 What now? How should the Endangered Species Act apply to
19 conservation of gray wolves looking forward? And under the
20 act, another way of stating that is, are there valid listable
21 entities of wolves remaining that warrant the protection of
22 the agency?

23 The criteria for listing any species under the
24 Endangered Species Act, a listable entity, a listed entity
25 must be a valid species or subspecies or a distinct population

1 segment. It needs to be in danger of extinction throughout
2 all or a significant portion of its range now, or likely to
3 become endangered in the foreseeable future throughout all or
4 a significant portion of its range.

5 So those are the criteria, those are the standards
6 for an entity or species to be a subject of the Endangered
7 Species Act.

8 So our approach in addressing this question was to
9 consider whether and to what extent gray wolves should still
10 be listed in the contiguous US and Mexico. And we evaluated
11 the current gray wolf listed entity, that geographic area, the
12 lower 48 states and Mexico, except for the recovered
13 populations in the western Great Lakes and northern Rockies.

14 We looked at the gray wolf rangewide, and by
15 rangewide not just Canada and Alaska and across this area
16 here. We looked at the three subspecies of gray wolf with
17 historical ranges that included the contiguous US and Mexico.
18 And we also looked at a potential Distinct Population Segment
19 of gray wolf in the Pacific Northwest.

20 We looked first to determine whether that
21 constituted a valid listable entity. Our review resulted in
22 this proposal under consideration right now. We determined
23 that the current listing for the gray wolf incorrectly
24 included large areas outside of the historical range of the
25 gray wolf; essentially most of the eastern US, and did not

1 reasonably represent the range.

2 The only remaining population of wolves within the
3 contiguous US and Mexico that requires protection from the ESA
4 is the Mexican gray wolf population in the southwest. So our
5 proposal was to remove this current entity from the list of
6 threatened or endangered species.

7 We also looked at the gray wolf species rangewide or
8 globally. And we found no evidence that gray wolves may be at
9 risk of extinction throughout their entire range now or in the
10 future in a significant portion of ranges. So listing of that
11 entity is, we conclude is not warranted.

12 Step 3, we looked at subspecies. We found that two
13 of the subspecies, *nubilus* and *occidentalis*, don't warrant
14 listing. They were secure. We did find that one, *Canis lupus*
15 *baileyi*, the Mexican wolf in the southwest, is currently at
16 risk of extinction throughout its range.

17 And the fourth step we looked at wolves in the
18 Pacific Northwest outside of the area that was delisted, the
19 northern Rocky Mountain population, and wolves in western
20 Washington and western Oregon we found do not constitute a
21 population, our standards for population, two breeding pairs
22 of wolves producing two pups for two consecutive years.

23 So the wolves in that area don't currently
24 constitute a population. We expect they will at some point.
25 We also found they were not discrete; they were not separate

1 and distinguishable from the adjacent wolves in the northern
2 Rocky Mountains. So we did not conclude that was a valid
3 Distinct Population Segment.

4 Sorry. So in summary, again, we walked through the
5 current listable entity, found that it's not a valid listable
6 entity, and we are proposing to delist that. The proposal
7 concludes that the gray wolves are not at risk of extinction;
8 listing is not warranted.

9 We looked at subspecies No. 2. It was secure, one
10 that's not at risk. We proposed to delist that as an
11 endangered subspecies. And we concluded that the wolves
12 remaining in the Pacific Northwest are not an endangered
13 species.

14 So our proposal is to focus our attentions on the
15 Mexican wolf by listing it as a subspecies, endangered
16 subspecies wherever they are found; to remove that current
17 listing of gray wolves in the geographic area outside of the
18 western Great Lakes and Northern Rockies, to remove that from
19 the list of endangered species.

20 And we also have an associated rule that serves to
21 improve the experimental population rule, the standards by
22 which we manage Mexican wolves in the southwest.

23 As Mike said in the beginning, our goal in the
24 Endangered Species Act is to protect and secure species so
25 that they are no longer at risk of extinction. We think we

1 have done that for gray wolves in the western Great Lakes and
2 the northern Rockies.

3 The work that remains is the Mexican wolf in the
4 southwest, and so our proposal here is to focus the protection
5 on that endangered subspecies.

6 That is the basis for our proposal. We look forward
7 to hearing your comments.

8 MS. TRAVERS: All right. Thank you, Gary and Mike.

9 This is a public hearing under Section 4 of the
10 Endangered Species Act. Notice of this public hearing was
11 published in the Federal Register on October 28, 2013,
12 starting on page 64192.

13 The US Fish and Wildlife Service will accept
14 comments and information on this proposal postmarked on or
15 before December 17, 2013. After review and consideration of
16 your comments and all other information gathered during this
17 and other previous comment periods, the Service will make the
18 final determination.

19 The purpose of this hearing is to receive your
20 comments on this proposal, both oral and written. Comments on
21 all aspects of the proposal are very important and will be
22 carefully considered.

23 Because of the importance of your comments, it is
24 necessary we follow certain procedures during this public
25 hearing. If you want to present oral comments at the hearing,

1 go to the registration table outside of this auditorium and
2 sign up. When you register, indicate any organization you are
3 representing in your comments today.

4 The following process is designed to maximize
5 efficiency and provide speaking opportunity to as many
6 participants as possible.

7 Periodically throughout the hearing I will call
8 groups of names from those registered to provide oral
9 comments. When your name is called, please come forward, take
10 a seat in the reserved rows at the front of the auditorium. A
11 Fish and Wildlife Service staff member, who is stationed at
12 the microphone, will direct you and will tell you when you can
13 go ahead and present.

14 When it is your turn, please begin your presentation
15 by stating your full name, spell it for the record, and
16 indicate if you represent an organization.

17 If you are reading your comments, please take care
18 to read them slowly enough for the court reporter to
19 understand. Also, if possible, the reporter would appreciate
20 a copy of the comments you read. And you can deposit them in
21 the box near the microphone; in this case, they're up on the
22 edge of the stage. Please return to your seats in the
23 auditorium after you speak.

24 This is an informal hearing; therefore, you will not
25 be questioned in connection with your comments. Your comments

1 and questions are being recorded by the reporter to preserve
2 them for the record.

3 If you're called to speak and choose not to speak or
4 provide short remarks, you may not yield your time to another
5 speaker. Because the purpose of this hearing is to receive
6 your comments, the Service will presume any questions are for
7 the record.

8 The Service's formal response to questions and
9 issues raised during the comment period, including those of
10 this hearing, will be published in the final rule. The
11 Service will not respond to questions at this hearing.

12 Please keep in mind that the reporter will not
13 record any statements from the audience or any statements
14 which are made to the audience. Comments must be made
15 directly into the microphone facing the front of the room.

16 I ask that you treat each speaker with respect, and
17 refrain from making comments from the audience. Questions,
18 comments, applause, jeers, or demonstrations will not be
19 allowed. I appreciate everyone's cooperation in minimizing
20 distractions.

21 And I want to say there are enough of you that would
22 like to be heard to testify today, so I would really like to
23 keep those distractions to a bare minimum.

24 Out of respect for the speakers I ask that you
25 please refrain from photographing individuals as they present

1 their comments. In the interest of all those who chose to
2 provide verbal testimony and to prevent unreasonable
3 disruption during this public hearing, we would like to inform
4 you Jay Rohrs, an independent videographer, and Ryan Benson
5 representing BGF will be video recording today's proceedings
6 from the designated area. If you wish to obtain contact
7 information from Jay or Ryan, please visit the registration
8 desk.

9 Members of the public will be given two minutes for
10 the remainder of the hour. Because of the number of people
11 expected to speak, strict adherence to the time limit must be
12 necessary. The timekeeper will hold up cards to indicate when
13 60 and 30 seconds remain. And I will let you know when time
14 is up.

15 I will now call the first group of names to allow
16 those called to move to the front reserved seats while I
17 finish my statement: Gail Bell, Charles Olmith, Betty
18 Neunschuander, Anyll Markevich, Michael Hensch, Michael
19 Costello-Lettal, Makenna Miels, Christel Markevich, Barbara
20 Burton, Darlene Kobobel.

21 Will those first ten please come up.

22 If you choose not to present oral comments today, or
23 in addition to your oral comments, you may submit comments in
24 writing. Written comments may be submitted to the staff at
25 the registration table, or they may be given on electronic

1 media such as CDs.

2 Information on how to submit comments outside of
3 this hearing is available on the hearing agenda you were given
4 as you entered. Additional agenda copies are available on
5 the registration tables. Additionally, at the back of the
6 auditorium, there are tables with blank comment forms and
7 chairs to sit and write comments.

8 Comment forms may be deposited in the collection
9 boxes or left at the registration tables, or mailed to the
10 address on the form before the deadline of December 17.
11 Written comments will be given the same consideration as oral
12 comments presented here.

13 At this point we are ready for our first speaker,
14 Gail Bell.

15 MS. BELL: My name Gail Bell, G-a-i-l, B-e-l-l. I
16 am here for my grandchildren.

17 I am opposed to the removal of the gray wolf from
18 the Federal Protection under the Endangered Species Act. As
19 we approach the 40th anniversary of this legislation on
20 December 28, there is reason for celebration but also for
21 concern.

22 Since 2011 political pressure has critically
23 influenced decisions that were once only subject to the best
24 scientific information available as stated on the Fish and
25 Wildlife website.

1 Wolves were one of the first species to be protected
2 under the Endangered Species Act, and now they may be the
3 first to fall victim to politics rather than science.

4 It is time to turn the page on the big bad wolf
5 tale, and to recognize that wolves are magnificent animals
6 that deserve our protection. Every species matters. We are
7 poorer as a people, as a nation, as a planet when any species
8 is lost forever.

9 Wolves are a keystone species in America. They are
10 being killed in record numbers once again. Yet a solution to
11 ensure their long-term survival is easily within our grasp as
12 a nation.

13 Will we make the correct decision? Will America's
14 children one day ask, Grandma, what did wolves look like? We
15 have a responsibility to future generations to get this right.

16 In the Lamar Valley in Yellowstone National Park a
17 pack of wolves emerge on a distant hill. They howl in
18 unison --

19 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you. Thank you.

20 Charles Olmsted?

21 MR. OLMSTED: : My name is Charles Olmsted,
22 C-h-a-r-l-e-s, O-l-m-s-t-e-d.

23 I'm here to testify in strong opposition to
24 delisting of the gray wolf under the Endangered Species Act.
25 I am an emeritus professor of environmental studies from the

1 University of Northern Colorado. And have spent the last
2 several decades on ecological research and the analysis of
3 environmental and conservation issues.

4 Some of that research has emphasized the challenges
5 of biological management of constrained ecosystems like
6 national parks and of the impact of trophic-level cascades on
7 community structure.

8 Collaborative research along the Rocky Mountain
9 chain from the Canadian to the Southern Rockies has reinforced
10 our understanding of the importance of top predators in
11 maintaining the composition and healthy functioning of natural
12 ecosystems.

13 Most portions of the western United States
14 demonstrate degradation of natural habitats as a result of
15 less than wisely informed management decisions carried out
16 over the last 150 years. We have less than optimally
17 functional ecosystems because they are missing pieces.

18 Colorado has an abundance of suitable habitat but no
19 evidence of sustained wolf population. The gray wolf should
20 not be considered recovered until it does.

21 A long term goal of the Endangered Species Act
22 should not be to preserve species as rarely glimpsed
23 individual reminders of what an ecosystem once contained, but
24 as ecologically functional members of the biotic community
25 that shapes and maintains that ecosystem. We are not there

1 yet.

2 Given the antipathy towards healthy conservation of
3 all ecosystem components and the animosity towards wolves that
4 pervades the current wildlife management decisions of several
5 western states, delisting the wolf at present would fall
6 woefully short of satisfying that goal.

7 Thank you for your attention.

8 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

9 Betty Neuenschwander?

10 MS. NEUENSCHWANDER: Hello. I'm Betty
11 Neuenschwander, B-e-t-t-y, N-e-u-e-n-s-c-h-w-a-n-d-e-r.

12 I live in -- I'm a rancher, a small rancher in
13 southern Colorado between Pueblo and Walsenburg. And I'm here
14 tonight to speak for the wolves.

15 I am a rancher, but I also know the importance of
16 the biodiversity in the natural balance of things. My
17 husband, Dr. Leon F. Neuenschwander, professor emeritus,
18 University of Idaho, was one of the few, one of the many
19 people that had their help, help with the wolf recovery act,
20 the interstate, state interagency wolf program. Good minds,
21 good men and women with great passion putting this together to
22 bring back the wolves.

23 Every scientist that I have the honor to know said
24 that, What a success. Finally we're doing something right.
25 And we did it. It was a successful program.

1 And now you have turned -- I don't know about
2 Minnesota, but I do know about the Rockies. The wolf recovery
3 has been successful. But now we're letting the states run
4 amok. You know that. The statistics show they're not doing a
5 good job managing the wolf. It's open slaughter.

6 We got to -- you guys, you, we entrusted you to take
7 care of our beloved wildlife, lands, waters, to take care of
8 this land. And you need to be the watchdog so the states
9 don't open it up to an open slaughter for these wolves.

10 They, they make a precedence, an insidious
11 precedence to take the wolves out --

12 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you. Please don't applaud. I
13 really want to get through as many people as I can this
14 evening.

15 MR. MARKEVICH: Okay. Hi, my name is Anyll
16 Markevich, A-n-y-l-l, M-a-r-k-e-v-i-c-h.

17 I'm here for the people on the planet.

18 MS. TRAVERS: We can't hear you.

19 MR. MARKEVICH: By the way, please note I've written
20 this myself. And I'll make it more in detail from this point
21 forward.

22 I'm here for the well-being of life on Earth. Now I
23 should get to the point. The wolf.

24 I want my kids and their kids and their kids and so
25 on to have the beautiful presence of the wolf. In other

1 words, when my great-grandchildren don't think about them --
2 myself -- like the condor, the passenger pigeon, the gray ox,
3 the Dodo -- extinction were natural but not all.

4 Two times I've seen wolves out in Yellowstone
5 National Park. I think that's not right. We should all see
6 the wolf in Colorado. Look at the Rocky Mountain National
7 Park that I love. We need to put fences to keep elk from
8 eating all the vegetation. Why? For the simple reason the
9 wolves are gone.

10 So I'm not only for the wolf; I'm here as well for
11 the tiger, the kiwi, the elephant, the venus flytrap and
12 the --

13 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

14 Michael Helsli. Michael?

15 MR. HELSLI: Thank you. My name is Michael Helsli.
16 I am senior staff at Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center here in
17 Colorado.

18 And I'm here in support of the gray wolf. I don't
19 think they should be removed from the Environmental Protection
20 Act.

21 The current policies of management of the wolves
22 seems to be a more emotional response, based more on economic
23 benefit for a few people rather than being based on science.

24 More attention should be focused on nonlethal
25 methods of minimizing conflict with humans. Many of the

1 methods currently being used are well beyond any conception of
2 humane treatment.

3 We are all charged as stewards of our environment
4 but our voices are being drowned out basically by political
5 action groups and money and politics and lobbyists.

6 We need to rise above all these influences and be
7 the proper stewards that we are charged to be for our
8 environment.

9 Thank you.

10 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

11 Michele Costello-Lettan?

12 MS. COSTELLO-LETTAN: My name is Michele Costello
13 Lettan, M-i-c-h-e-l-e, C-o-s-t-e-l-l-o, L-e-t-t-a-n.

14 As a public education teacher in the United States
15 I'm making a plea. My students are taught to question
16 research and consider all avenues of any situation in order to
17 become well rounded citizens as well as class learners.

18 I ask you, have you done this as a government
19 agency? Recently there been an onslaught of bills passed to
20 eradicate wolves in several states. Most recent were the
21 approving of killing by any means necessary, the approval of
22 gunning, the approval of baiting wolves out of protected
23 areas. This should be stopped.

24 Wolves need federal protection, as do all predatory
25 animals or else there'll be a free-for-all slaughter. Even

1 game hunters are distancing themselves from the wolf hunting
2 because of their practices. Doesn't that say something?

3 In what country do we live where it's approved to
4 kill an endangered species? How do I explain to my young
5 students that the blatant eradication of an animal is
6 considered acceptable to a government dedicated to protecting
7 an endangered species in our country?

8 We set the bar for other countries. We ask South
9 American to protect the rainforest. We rally behind animals
10 like the African elephant to prevent poaching.

11 America has lost face on so many issues. This is
12 one where we can set the bar. Advocates who have no agenda
13 other than stopping the unnecessary torture and murder of
14 wolves work together.

15 This is my plea as someone responsible for not only
16 student upbringing but also their education. After all, they
17 may be making the laws that dictate your world someday.

18 Thank you.

19 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

20 Makenna Miers?

21 MS. MIERS: My name is Makenna Miers. I am seven
22 years old and I live in Colorado. I'm the voice of my
23 generation. Please listen to me.

24 MS. TRAVERS: We can't hear you.

25 MS. MIERS: My name is Makenna Miers. I am seven

1 years old and I live in Colorado. I am the voice of my
2 generation. Please listen to me.

3 I first saw a wolf in the national park. I've loved
4 wolves ever since. I returned there and sadly some of my
5 favorites have already been killed. I don't feel good about
6 wolves being killed because I'm afraid they'll become extinct
7 at Rocky Mountain National Park.

8 Will I ever see a wolf in Colorado? We need federal
9 protection for wolves because they will be extinct. Will I
10 ever see one in Colorado? Wolves need protection.

11 Thank you.

12 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you, Makenna.

13 I'll call the next ten names. Steve Thomas, Alicia
14 Miers, Lianna Ferguson, Maria Arefiena, Beth Shemo, Catherine
15 Crothers, Michelle Smith, Phillip Teller, John Stansfield, and
16 Mary Godbee.

17 Next speaker, please? Anyone called. Thank you.

18 MS. MARKEVICH: Hi. My name is Christel Markevich,
19 C-h-r-i-s-t-e-l, M-a-r-k-e-v-i-c-h.

20 Fish and Wildlife service wants to delist the gray
21 wolf assuming wolves are the problem. But the wolves, any
22 kind of wolves, are not recovered.

23 The US Fish and Wildlife Service is for the hunting
24 lobby, the politicians. They should compromise. I think if
25 the numbers are bigger and should be hunted, yet the wolf

1 would be way to balance the population of predators.

2 And I understand all the wolves good rhythm to get
3 for the whole purpose. But US Fish, but has the US Fish and
4 Wildlife Service ever asked the kids, the future generation,
5 what is their concern about the wolf? What are their
6 interests in protecting the wolf? It has not.

7 I strongly invite you to ask the kids to express
8 their position. It is their right. They have even more
9 interest than you and I in the planet. We are less than civil
10 for the heritage we are passing down to the future generation.
11 How many species are already missing on this planet since most
12 of us have been here?

13 Do we really want to have the hunt the wolf? No.
14 Every species on this planet is part of the big puzzle. We
15 are part of the puzzle. We are part of life. We want to keep
16 all these species together and care for them.

17 We are tired of playing by --

18 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

19 Please leave your written comments for the reporter.

20 MS. BURTON: My name is Barbara Burton. I'm a
21 senior volunteer at Colorado Wolves and Wildlife Center.

22 I frankly am very ashamed of what we are doing to
23 the wolf. I do not understand a nation that would bring back
24 the wolf just to go out and hunt it to extinction again. And
25 how do we know at what point to stop the hunting and the

1 slaughter?

2 To prevent that we can say, We have plenty of
3 wolves. It's okay to go out and kill them by any means
4 possible, which are cruel and unjust, but then when do we know
5 to stop? How do you answer that?

6 We have thousands of visitors that come to our
7 center from all over the world to see wolves, and that love
8 wolves. And they are part of our ecosystem. It's been proven
9 in Yellowstone to have brought back the ecosystem to a great
10 degree that we are now going to be destroying again. Did we
11 not learn anything from destroying them the first time?

12 I want to see wolves in my own state someday. I
13 hope to see that. I moved here 40 years ago for the beauty of
14 the mountains and the trees and the forest, all the forests
15 and the streams.

16 But the wildlife is huge. And I believe that the
17 wolf strengthens our herds of elk and deer rather than
18 diminishing them because they feed on the weak.

19 Thank you for your time.

20 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

21 Next speaker?

22 MS. KOBABEL: My name is Darlene Kobobel,
23 K-o-b-o-b-e-l, president of Colorado Wildlife Center.

24 Good evening. I'm here tonight as an American who
25 is not proud but ashamed of what's happening to our wildlife.

1 I'm not alone.

2 Here I have over 2,000 signatures that have been
3 collected in the past few months of people all over the United
4 States and the world who are watching what is happening to the
5 slaughter of the wolves.

6 As the president of the wildlife sanctuary located
7 in the mountains of Colorado what's interesting is when the
8 economy hit hard and businesses closed and was suffering we
9 thrived. Why? Because of the wolves.

10 Tourists from all over the world make this a
11 destination. We attract more than 40,000 people annually.
12 Look at Yellowstone. Yellowstone makes up a significant
13 portion of revenue; however, if the majority of Americans knew
14 what was happening to their Yellowstone wolves and others,
15 such as baiting them out of the park and shooting them,
16 setting leg traps, poisoning them, gut shots to make them
17 suffer so they can use their wolf tags another day, there
18 would be no question what the American people would want as
19 this practice is disgraceful, mean, and is nothing more than a
20 thrill kill.

21 I only hope that our voices will be heard, and that
22 money, power, and politics will not be the only determining
23 factors.

24 Thank you.

25 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

1 Next speaker? Please hold the applause. Thank you

2 MR. TRELLA: My name Phillip Trella, T-r-e-l-l-a.

3 I'm a volunteer at the Colorado Wildlife Center at Divide.

4 First I'd like to start off saying the wolves
5 are truly one of the world's most beautiful and most majestic
6 animals. But because of man's greed and ignorance they have
7 been almost wiped off the planet.

8 Most recently these majestic animals have been
9 hunted and massacred in very cruel and inhumane ways that
10 other mammals are not allowed to be hunted.

11 I beg all of you, you up there sitting on your
12 stools accepting the titles you all have been given as the US
13 Fish and Wildlife, it's your guys' duty and responsibility to
14 rebuild the population and keep it protected, not let it fall
15 back to the way it was.

16 Sorry. One second.

17 Also, also, please, again, do not delist these
18 animals. Do not look back a couple of years from now if you
19 delist the animals and potentially have them become extinct
20 almost again.

21 Don't be blinded by politics of those who wish to
22 hunt and massacre these beautiful creatures. To exterminate
23 the wolves is downright wrong. Wolves do not vote but those
24 who embrace the wolves can. Please protect the wolves and
25 protect the balance of nature.

1 That's all.

2 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

3 Next speaker.

4 MS. GODBEE: My name is Mary Godbee, M-a-r-y,
5 G-o-d-b-e-e. I'm a member of the Colorado Wolf and Wildlife
6 Center. I'm also a tax paying citizen. I'm going to
7 represent myself today.

8 I'm really ashamed of what we're doing. I was very
9 elated when we started to bring the wolves back because they
10 are a very important species. And I thought that was a good
11 way for us to spend our tax money.

12 But I do not believe to allow them to now be hunted
13 the way they are being hunted indiscriminately in the way they
14 are, to bait them to get them out of the parks to shoot them,
15 to kill the babies in the den by poisoning them, by burning
16 them alive, by setting them on fire, as a nation is this how
17 we treat our native wildlife here?

18 And I'm not just for the wolves. Everybody, all
19 over the country, they say, You wolf advocates, all you care
20 about is the wolves. You don't care about the rest of the
21 wildlife.

22 I care about all of the wildlife, not just the elk
23 and the deer and the moose and the things that they hunt. I
24 care about the cows. I care about all of them, not just
25 wolves being treated this way like the bison, and the other

1 things that endangered the cattle industry.

2 I would ask you please think about what you're
3 doing. Think about what the states are now doing. They're
4 trying to go way back 100 years, exactly what we did to the
5 wolves at this time, to wipe them off the face of the Earth.
6 Please do not let them do this.

7 They were saying we have a population in Canada.
8 Canada is doing the same thing. Eventually between us and
9 them there will be none. So we need to stop it.

10 Thank you.

11 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

12 Next speaker?

13 MR. STANSFIELD: My name is John Stansfield,
14 J-o-h-n, S-t-a-n-s-f-i-e-l-d. I'm the director of the Central
15 Colorado Wildlife Coalition. Thank you for the opportunity to
16 speak.

17 I oppose the delisting of gray wolves, and support
18 major revisions in the Mexican wolf recovery plan.

19 In early 1950 Sig Olson went snowshoeing one cold
20 winter night, 20 degrees below zero. He was going up the
21 river heading to a cabin in the interior back country.

22 That night Sig Olson had an experience he had never
23 experienced. Even with all of his years in experiencing in
24 wolf country as a wildlife advocate studying wolves, he had
25 never experienced what he saw that night when he knew that he

1 was surrounded by a pack of wolves on both sides, hearing
2 their howls.

3 When he came to -- he came to a place in the river
4 where two wolves came trotting down the river toward him only
5 about 50 feet away they stopped, and he and the wolves had a
6 silent interview with each other.

7 Now, from that experience Sig Olson knew that he was
8 experiencing in Minnesota what the boy surely experienced
9 200 years before. And he was glad, thrilled even, that the
10 wolves were still there, that the, that the environment was
11 still wild, and that they could roam free.

12 The extreme irony of the gray wolf delisting
13 proposal is that as protected wolf habitat has increased
14 dramatically, wolf population and distribution have only
15 slowly increased, and now appear to be dropping dramatically
16 due to state by state by state delisting.

17 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you, sir.

18 Next speaker?

19 MS. SHEMO: Good evening. My name is Beth Shemo,
20 B-e-t-h, S-h-e-m-o. I am new to Colorado this year. And I
21 am, it's an honor and privilege for me to be a volunteer at
22 the Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center.

23 I would like to invite each of you, and I wish you
24 could come to the center and interact with these wolves and
25 get firsthand experience with them. I think you would change

1 your mind. And you would see them for who they really are,
2 and not just a statistic.

3 You're looking at numbers but you're not looking
4 at families who are being slaughtered. Leaders of these
5 families are being slaughtered in very inhumane ways.

6 I would like to remind you from your website your
7 mission, working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance
8 fish, and wildlife and plants in their habitat for the
9 continuing benefit of the American people.

10 The Service helps protect a healthy environment for
11 people, fish and wildlife, and helps Americans conserve and to
12 enjoy the outdoors and our living treasures.

13 You are not fulfilling this mission if you do this.
14 You are not fulfilling your mission if you ignore the science,
15 the biologists, the wealth of proof we have of
16 Yellowstone research that shows that wolves are vital and
17 essential to a healthy ecosystem, and are not recovered enough
18 to warrant removal from the Endangered Species List.

19 You are not fulfilling your mission if you ignore
20 the majority of Americans who want both the wild -- and base
21 your decisions on greed, hatred, ego, and politics of the
22 minority. Your mission is for all Americans, not just
23 ranchers, hunters, and other politicians.

24 Several states have already proven that they have no
25 clue how to manage a wolf population, nor do they have any

1 interest in doing so.

2 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

3 Next speaker?

4 MS. CROTHERS: Hi. My name is Catherine Crothers,
5 C-a-t-h-e-r-i-n-e, C-r-o-t-h-e-r-s.

6 Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. I know you are
7 hearing a lot of people speaking, but I would like for you to
8 hear but to please please please listen to these few words
9 that I have to say.

10 I have something to show you. As an American and a
11 very proud daughter of 31-year retired lieutenant colonel I'm
12 disgusted by the KKK mindedness of this picture. The American
13 flag represents America. This does not represent my America
14 or my father's.

15 These men are cowards hiding behind masks for fear
16 of persecution by the government, the same government that is
17 permitting the unnecessary slaughter of the majestic wolves.

18 You have, you have the power to stop this. I'm
19 begging you to please use your power and stop the senseless
20 massacre. Do not pass this proposal.

21 In closing, the purpose of life is to not to be
22 happy but to matter, to be productive, to be useful, to have
23 it make some difference that you have lived at all.

24 Thank you.

25 MS. TRAVERS: Next speaker, please.

1 MS. MIERS: Alicia Miers, A-l-i-c-i-a, M-i-e-r-s,
2 from Louisville, Colorado. I have two young daughters, one
3 who spoke tonight.

4 I want to say on your presentation you said that the
5 northern Rockies wolves were delisted because their population
6 warranted it. That's not true.

7 The 2000 -- the wolves were delisted from the
8 northern Rockies by an act of congress, a must-pass budget
9 bill. The 2011 congress delisting of the gray wolves in the
10 northern Rockies was not only an assault on the Endangered
11 Species Act but an assault on democracy itself.

12 Science and politics should not mix. Your proposal
13 to delist wolves is based on bad politics, not on the best
14 available science.

15 You state on the website the Service's comprehensive
16 review determined that the current listing for gray wolves,
17 which was about 35 years ago, erroneously included large
18 geographical areas outside the species' historical range. If
19 anything is erroneous about the old plan it's the arbitrary
20 minimum population numbers which the states are managing down
21 to.

22 Also erroneous is the premise that the delisting
23 proposal is based on the best science available. If it were
24 based on best sciences, then you would not have excluded the
25 top wolf biologists from your peer review.

1 We know for certain that Colorado is
2 historical wolf territory, and in their absence our ecosystems
3 are atrophying. In honor of the famous Yellowstone wolves
4 that were known as 832 F and 174 N who were shot outside the
5 national park boundary, in honor of wolves --

6 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you. Thank you.

7 Next speaker, please.

8 MS. AREFIENA: Hello. My name is Maria Arefiena,
9 M-a-r-i-a, A-r-e-f-i-e-n-a. And I'm here representing Project
10 Wolf and over 1,000 of our supporters.

11 I understand about the numbers; however, we are very
12 strongly opposing the proposal to remove wolves' federal
13 protection. And the reason for that is if the protection is
14 removed, wolf management will be handed over to individual
15 states.

16 Current experience shows the cities where wolves are
17 already delisted have been practicing very aggressive and,
18 let's be honest, plainly sadistic practices --

19 (Applause.)

20 MS. TRAVERS: Please let her speak.

21 MS. AREFIENA: -- in the name of so-called wolf
22 management.

23 Not only wolves get trapped and slaughtered by the
24 hundreds, but they are also clubbed to death, mutilated, or
25 used as shooting targets while still alive.

1 The states have demonstrated clearly that they
2 cannot and should not be trusted with wolf management, as to
3 this day they operate on the mentality of the past where
4 cruelty and slaughter were the answer to wildlife-human
5 interaction.

6 For the federal government, bringing wolves back
7 from near extinction to then pass them into the hands of the
8 same governments and people that slaughtered them and tortured
9 them for generations without any concern is not only
10 irresponsible, it's inhumane.

11 Whether you love animals or not, no living creature
12 should be subjected to torture and cruelty, and no decent
13 civilized society should permit that. These are living and
14 sentient beings that feel physical pain just as anyone in this
15 room does.

16 We require the federal government to maintain the
17 protection of the wolf and restore its protection in all the
18 states. That the efforts and funding of our tax money is
19 channeled towards working with the state government and --

20 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

21 The next ten speakers will be Diane Vanderpool,
22 Colleen Parith, Gwen Dooley, Katie Geist, Cheyne Cumming, Erik
23 Molra, Ann Tagawa, Rebecca Richman, Cynthia Marshall, Evelyn
24 Guinn.

25 Next speaker, please.

1 MR. THOMAS: My name is Steve Thomas, S-t-e-v-e,
2 T-h-o-m-a-s. And I am a concerned citizen who lives in what
3 should be wolf country.

4 But the surrounding landscape is still void of this
5 keystone species. For the first time of the history on this
6 planet an animal is responsible for mass extinction, and
7 unfortunately everywhere man has gone, many species become
8 extinct.

9 For many centuries the wolf has been No. 1 on
10 mankind's hit list. The wolf has been placed there out of a
11 lack of understanding, knowledge, and fear. This fear has
12 lead to anger, hate, and an unnatural need to eliminate them.

13 Through the actions we have found ourselves standing
14 in a conflict between love and hate, which has turned into us
15 versus them. This time it is life, an entire species, that
16 hangs in the balance.

17 Through proper action, based on sound science, this
18 vital species, the wolf, will play a key role in maintaining
19 healthy ecosystems across the country which will directly and
20 positively impact every single person in this room.

21 The wolf issue will help define whether or not the
22 United States is intelligent enough to implement responsible
23 conservation planning. This species is still on the brink,
24 barely starting to recover in some states, and still absent in
25 many others including Colorado.

1 Through education, tolerance, and compromise, we can
2 work together to design management plans that benefit the
3 wolf, the ecosystem, and future generations.

4 Please, until the species is truly recovered and
5 states are willing --

6 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you, sir.

7 Next speaker, please.

8 MS. FERGUSON: Hi. My name is Lianna Ferguson,
9 L-i-a-n-n-a, F-e-r-g-u-s-o-n. I'm speaking today in support
10 of full wolf recovery. I am from upstate New York. I grew up
11 at the base of the Adirondack Mountains. I grew up hiking,
12 camping, and enjoying the Adirondack Park.

13 After high school I chose to pursue a teaching
14 degree. I was in my first year of college when I began to
15 realize the terrible political battle that we are facing with
16 our wolves today.

17 I thought, How could something this horrific be
18 going on and getting no national attention? I totally
19 redirected my attention, and changed my major from teaching to
20 wildlife management.

21 When I started my program at SUNY Cobleskill, I
22 realized very quickly nothing was known about predators, and
23 what we did know through research and studies was not being
24 applied. The amount of time we even briefly mentioned
25 predator conservation -- oh, it was how we could control them

1 and improve white tailed deer numbers or waterfowl nest
2 success rates.

3 I got through the program more hungry than ever. I
4 am now getting my masters. I'm now getting my master's at CU
5 Denver in environmental science.

6 I'm not going to stand here and rattle off numbers
7 and datasets that support wolf recovery. This is known, and
8 the science. And sooner or later we're going to have to look
9 them in the eye as a nation and come to terms with what we've
10 done and move ahead.

11 We need to accept the responsibilities of our
12 wrongdoing. We all know the wolf is a critical part of the
13 ecosystem. And the benefits economically, culturally, and
14 biologically are significant.

15 Last year I attended the Wildlife Society annual
16 meeting in Portland, Oregon. While we were there I got
17 told about six times to get out of predator conservation; that
18 I'll never make a difference, and it's a never-ending
19 political battle. I was only 22 years old at the time and
20 told I'll never achieve what I want to do.

21 Well, let me tell you something. I'm standing here
22 now speaking up for the wolf and I'll never stop speaking up
23 for wolves. What we are doing on federal and state levels is
24 not at all reflecting that --

25 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

1 Next speaker, please.

2 MS. SMITH: My name is Michelle Smith,
3 M-i-c-h-e-l-l-e, S-m-i-t-h. I am here tonight to speak
4 against the proposal to remove the gray wolves from the list
5 of threatened and endangered species.

6 Our state of Colorado has not had a resident wolf
7 since 1945. Unfortunately, in 2011 partial delisting doomed
8 their recovery in this state as well as the rest of the United
9 States.

10 Since that partial delisting we have seen the
11 complete and utter disaster that's happened to our gray wolf
12 population. And unfortunately, if our wolves are stripped of
13 their protection it not only fails the American people, the
14 Endangered Species Act, but also the very values our nation is
15 built upon.

16 Members of the opposition will claim that wolves
17 have reduced elk populations, but even according to Rocky
18 Mountain Elk Foundation's own numbers, elk populations in
19 Rocky Mountain National Park, Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming have
20 swelled. Wolves increase the population by controlling the
21 population, and allowing for better habitat.

22 Unfortunately the same things goes for livestock.
23 According to the USDA, we lose about four million cattle a
24 year, but only 8,000 of those are lost to wolves. Last month
25 we lost 30,000 cows to one single storm, but I don't see

1 anyone waging a war on the weather, but we are slaughtering
2 our wildlife when they are not the problem.

3 I'm telling you do not let fairy tales, lies, and
4 fear lead you. Do not pass this proposal.

5 Thank you.

6 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

7 Next speaker.

8 MS. TAGAWA: My name is Ann Tagawa, A-n-n
9 T-a-g-a-w-a. And I oppose the Fish and Wildlife proposal to
10 delist the gray wolf.

11 In January of this year, my family and I joined a
12 group of people for four days in Yellowstone hoping for a look
13 at the wolves. We were lucky enough to have a sighting. For
14 me, it was one of the best wildlife experiences I have ever
15 had. To be able to observe, even briefly, these magnificent
16 animals was a thrilling experience.

17 People in our group had come from as far away as New
18 Zealand to have the same experience.

19 Equally valuable has been learning of the importance
20 of wolves to the ecosystem, the plants and animals that depend
21 on them, and how they transform landscape in a positive way.

22 I've been very disheartened at the decision to allow
23 states like Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Minnesota, and Wisconsin
24 to hunt, trap, and kill these beautiful beautiful animals. I
25 view the persecution as unethical and cruel. And national

1 polls show that the majority of Americans agree with me.

2 And now this proposed rule to delist the wolves in
3 the state -- here in Colorado with hundreds of thousands of
4 elk and a great deal of suitable wolf habitat we don't have a
5 single wolf.

6 It would be very beneficial to have wolves here
7 again after 70 years of them being extirpated. My greatest
8 fear is the current proposal is based on politics, special
9 interests of ranchers and hunters as well as the 2011 decision
10 and not on scientific findings and public opinion.

11 On the 40th anniversary of ESA I am grateful to
12 those farsighted legislatures who took action to pass laws to
13 protect our amazing wildlife, and I hope you will adhere to
14 the original intent and abandon this rule, proposed rule.

15 Thank you.

16 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

17 Next speaker?

18 MS. GEIST: My name is Katie Geist, K-a-t-i-e,
19 G-e-i-s-t. I am a very proud volunteer at the Colorado Wolf
20 and Wildlife Center.

21 I've been volunteering there for over three years.
22 I get to take care of 17 wonderful, intelligent animals,
23 wolves, timber wolves, Arctic wolves, and Mexican gray. We
24 also have coyotes and we have foxes.

25 During the three years that I have been there I have

1 learned so much about these animals, and the way these animals
2 have been treated in the history of the United States, which I
3 tell you is horrific, the fact that we exterminated them in
4 the first place and that we are close to doing it again.

5 I am very proud to lead educational tours for our
6 guests. And unfortunately I have to tell our guests about
7 what we're doing to wolves in the wild today.

8 Most of our guests are not aware because nobody is
9 telling them about the wolves being delisted in the states
10 that they live in, and the way they are being hunted and
11 killed.

12 This wolf on my picture is one of the big reasons I
13 wanted to speak to you. He is a magnificent wolf. He is six
14 years old.

15 This was the other reason I wanted to talk to you
16 today because I am appalled at what we have done in this
17 country with our wolves. Two hundred -- excuse me, two
18 thousand, five hundred seventy-two wolves as of today per the
19 Division of Wildlife in each of the states that they're being
20 hunted have been killed, shot, aerial hunted, trapped, snared,
21 and poisoned.

22 Postings have been put in Facebook like the one you
23 saw with the American flag --

24 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

25 Next speaker. Thank you.

1 MR. MOLRA: My name is Eric Molra, M-o-l-r-a. I am
2 representing myself. I'm an American and a lifelong hunter
3 from Wyoming.

4 For many years I lived in Alaska and hunted in
5 Alaska for caribou and moose. And it's interesting to note
6 that Alaska is the only state in the United States where the
7 wolf can be possibly considered recovered.

8 It's also the state in the United States that has
9 the best hunting. That means that wolves and big game hunting
10 are very compatible with each other.

11 I've hunted in Wyoming. I've hunted where wolf
12 packs are actively operating. I have seen a wolf while
13 hunting Bighorn. I got a Bighorn that day.

14 If you are a, if you are an ethical hunter, then it
15 is not ethical to hunt wolves because you do not shoot
16 something you do not intend to eat. I am embarrassed by
17 hunters everywhere --

18 (Applause.)

19 MS. TRAVERS: Please, we can't hear him.

20 MR. MOLRA: I am embarrassed by the fact there are
21 hunters that will hunt these magnificent animals with no
22 license, which is a probable violation of state laws.

23 The greatest experience that I've ever had as a
24 hunter is being surrounded by a wolf pack while hunting moose
25 in Alaska and having the young pups howling to me from below

1 and the adults howling to me from above each other 35 yards on
2 either side. This is my greatest experience as a hunter.

3 My young son Blake is just about ready -- he's 11
4 years old -- to start hunting himself. I want to take him out
5 to the desert and have him experience these wolves while
6 hunting. The US Fish and Wildlife could mess that up. The
7 wolf's delisted there. Now they'll probably never see that.

8 Keep the wolf on the list throughout their ranges.
9 It's a little too early to hang that mission accomplished
10 banner on your aircraft carrier.

11 MS. TRAVERS: Next speaker, please.

12 MS. DOOLEY: My name is Gwen Dooley, G-w-e-n,
13 D-o-o-l-e-y.

14 I urge you to not remove the gray wolf from our
15 national list of endangered and threatened species. Without
16 this protection their management will be a moot, indeed
17 irrelevant, endeavor in the near future.

18 Because we have built upon or paved over many of
19 much of their and other wildlife's former habitat, the climate
20 change is and increasingly will be another huge threat to
21 their survival and that of other interdependent wildlife
22 species.

23 Please let fact and science be your primary
24 guidelines for your decisions on the gray wolf. Because the
25 US Fish and Wildlife Service is a national entity with

1 far-reaching interests and powers rather than one created to
2 only function on a state or local basis, I think your charge
3 is to protect and preserve the living natural resources for
4 all Americans and future generations of Americans rather than
5 responding to local or state politicians who are responding to
6 special, short-term interests in their community or in their
7 states.

8 This nation is truly at a political environmental
9 crossroads. Twenty-four hour newscasters divide our country
10 into red and blue states, and our citizens into those who
11 accept science and those who deny it and want to move
12 backwards in time.

13 Now when we have the 40th anniversary of the
14 Endangered Species Act and the 150th anniversary of the
15 Gettysburg Address, now is not the time to move backward in
16 our history and deny our scientific progress.

17 Now is the time to move forward with the gray wolf
18 and other endangered species out of the darkness, fear,
19 falsehood, into the appreciation of all --

20 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

21 Next speaker, please.

22 MS. RICHMAN: My name is Rebecca Richman,
23 R-e-b-e-c-c-a, R-i-c-h-m-a-n. I lost my voice a few years
24 ago. Thank you for being patient.

25 I was born in Wyoming and raised in Colorado, grew

1 up, I grew up camping with my grandparents in Yellowstone and
2 the Teton region, which developed my respect for nature. I'm
3 a wildlife artist and a conservationist who paints the
4 relationships in nature.

5 Biodiversity is key. And each species is entangled
6 to the vital ecosystem. Wolves are critical to the health of
7 the other species and the environment in which they live.

8 I saw my first wolf in the wild in September 2010 in
9 the Hayden valley of northern Wyoming. It was a thrill of a
10 lifetime.

11 I'm sorry, I'm very emotional about this.

12 Man can't live without the natural balance with the
13 natural wolf, and in this case in balance with the healthy
14 wolf population.

15 I want to see wolves recovered, and I do not believe
16 wolves can fully recover if they're delisted from the ESA. I
17 strongly oppose the delisting of wolves.

18 Thank you for listening.

19 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

20 Next speaker?

21 MS. GUINN: My name is Evelyn Guinn.

22 MS. TRAVERS: I cannot hear you at all. I'm sorry.

23 MS. GUINN: E-v-e-l-y-n, G-u-i-n-n.

24 I'm opposed to the delisting of the gray wolf. We
25 all know that in the 1800s thousands of buffalo and gray

1 wolves roamed the west. These beautiful animals symbolized
2 everything the west means to me and so many other Americans.

3 By the end of the 1800s, the buffalo were extinct
4 almost. Hunters enjoyed the sport of shooting out of train
5 windows as these large majestic animals ran and slumped onto
6 the prairie in the sun.

7 My children's history books depict the slaughter as
8 an ignorant and heartbreaking part of American history. We
9 now know better; we've learned.

10 The gray wolves were also almost wiped out. But
11 Americans learned from this. In 1973 they were put on the
12 Endangered Species Act.

13 If Americans are wiser about the world, our
14 ecosystem, smart about wildlife management, then we need to
15 learn from these wolves -- excuse me, from the buffalo. And
16 we need to take care of them with smart wildlife management.

17 I'm appalled at the states, at the killing of the
18 numbers of wolves instead of sustainable hunting. What will
19 my grandchildren's history books have to say about the
20 continuing of the deadly part of the gray wolf history that's
21 happening right now?

22 Please do not delist these gray wolves, and keep
23 them on the Endangered Species Act.

24 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

25 Next speaker?

1 MS. CUMMING: My name is Cheyn Cumming, C-h-e-y-n,
2 C-u-m-m-i-n-g. I divide my time between Oregon and Denver.
3 And I'm the daughter of a man that raised Angus cattle for the
4 past 50 years, so I don't just have an urban perspective on
5 this issue.

6 I am here today to testify against the proposal to
7 delist the gray wolf and remove their protection authorized by
8 the Endangered Species Act. It is my strong belief that the
9 gray wolf population is not fully recovered and needs
10 continued protection.

11 I am a grandmother. I've taken three of my four
12 grandchildren to Yellowstone. They were not lucky enough to
13 see the Alpha female called 832F or 06 of the Lamar canyon
14 pack before she was shot and killed as she left the protection
15 of the park.

16 I want to take them to Yellowstone again and give
17 them the opportunity to watch a pack of wolves in the wild,
18 and experience the joy that comes from play and interaction in
19 their natural environment, not in an enclosure in the zoo.

20 My grandchildren deserve this opportunity themselves
21 and for their future children. They deserve to live in a
22 country that protects wolves in their natural habitat for
23 future generations, and does not relegate the sighting of
24 wolves to cages.

25 I am here today because I am one of the lucky few

1 who have been blessed to witness a pack of wolves that live in
2 the wild. While on a trip to the Arctic National Wildlife
3 Refuge in the summer of 2011 I sat on a ridge and watched with
4 binoculars as a pack of wolves ran and leaped and hunted on
5 the tundra.

6 They were too far away from the camera to record
7 the event, but those images will ever hold a place in my
8 heart.

9 I want the chance to have the experience in the
10 Rocky Mountains in Colorado before I die. I want to share the
11 howl of a wolf with my grandchildren, and see their eyes light
12 up and their hearts open as they feel the spirit of this wild
13 and wonderful creature.

14 Thank you.

15 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

16 Next speaker, please.

17 MS. VANDERPOOL: Hi. My name is Diane Vanderpool,
18 D-i-a-n-e, V-a-n-d-e-r-p-o-o-l. And on a personal note, aside
19 from what I've written on this paper, I've been lucky enough
20 to be a volunteer at the Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center for
21 the last six years.

22 My favorite thing about volunteering is interacting
23 with wolves, which you've heard here before. But I can
24 imagine none of you on the stage probably ever walked a wolf
25 in your life. That's an experience that is incredible,

1 especially when you form a bond with them.

2 I encourage any of you in the area to come by and
3 let us take you out with the wolves.

4 The wolf is the only big game species that hunters
5 can kill with their pups. How shameful is that? It is truly
6 a war on wolves we've got going on.

7 Hunters can even bait wolves out of the boundary of
8 Yellowstone Park with dead carcasses. This is a blood sport,
9 and it's the ugly truth of the so-called ethical hunter in
10 this country.

11 We all know that wolves are not eating all the elk
12 and killing all the cattle. Everyone in the room knows that.
13 That has been proven on the USFG, USDA, and Rocky Mountain Elk
14 Foundation's own website. We know that if you kill the wolves
15 you will artificially boost the deer and elk population and
16 sell more tags, but at what price?

17 Anyone that has taken basic biology knows we need
18 wolves as a keystone predator to make a balance, and yet over
19 the mighty dollar we will destroy anything that gets in our
20 way in this country.

21 I hope that our Colorado decision-makers will hear
22 these people, and not follow the bad examples that have been
23 exemplified so far. Colorado wants and needs wolves.

24 Thank you.

25 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

1 Next speaker, please.

2 MS. PARITH: Hello. My name is Colleen --

3 MS. TRAVERS: I'm sorry. I can't hear your name
4 when somebody back there is talking. Pardon?

5 MS. PARITH: My name is Colleen Parith,
6 C-o-l-l-e-e-n, P-a-r-i-t-h.

7 I don't come here today to talk to you about
8 biology. If you wanted to hear that stuff you would talk to
9 biologists and environmental specialists. What I'm here to
10 talk to you today is what apparently the only thing that
11 matters, and that's the dollar figures that go into wolves.

12 Last year in 2012 with the wolf hunts that were
13 allowed in the south United States there were \$3- to
14 \$5 million in hunting tags sold. That's a pretty substantial
15 amount.

16 However, when you take the facts from the Sierra
17 Club from 2005, 44 percent of all visitors to Yellowstone went
18 strictly to see the wolves. That's in the summertime.
19 Fifty-nine percent went in the winter when there is not as
20 much access to the park and it takes a lot more to actually
21 get around with all the snow. That resulted in \$35.5 million
22 just for Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho.

23 So let's talk about the figures. Let's talk about
24 the money that can be brought to Colorado, North Dakota, South
25 Dakota, and several other states. Every state has a national

1 park in it and every state should have wolves within that
2 park.

3 I'm not here today to tell you about the wolves I
4 have worked with at the Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center.
5 I'm not here to tell you about the way that they touched my
6 life.

7 How would you feel if in a few years there's your
8 predecessors up there saying, You know, we've recovered wolves
9 in Rocky Mountain National Park. People should be able to say
10 they've seen wolves in places other than Yellowstone.

11 Thank you for your time.

12 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

13 We are going to take a two-minute break. I'm going
14 to read the next ten names so they will be ready to present
15 their testimony for the record.

16 Deborah Evel, Isabel Arana, Christianna McLean,
17 Pauline Reetz, Aaron Ralston, Alex Maris, Patricia Smith,
18 Wally Montgomery, Chuck Hunt, and Lisa Doucet.

19 Two-minute break. We are off the record. Thank
20 you.

21 (Brief recess.)

22 MS. TRAVERS: We have this building until
23 9 o'clock so we have a bit of a problem.

24 I would like to ask your opinion, and to kind of let
25 me know by maybe applause. This is the one time you can

1 applaud.

2 If we give everyone one minute we can get through
3 125 people. If we give everyone two minutes we will only get
4 through 80, and that means the rest of you will need to submit
5 your written comments to US Fish and Wildlife Services.

6 So that said, could you now say yay for 80 in the
7 time that we have left with no breaks? Eighty?

8 (Applause.)

9 MS. TRAVERS: Two minutes?

10 Okay, how about 125 at one minute?

11 (Applause.)

12 MS. TRAVERS: So two minutes. And the latecomers
13 will present their written comments the the Fish and Wildlife
14 Service.

15 The other thing that I would ask is again please
16 hold your applause so that we can get through as many as we
17 possibly can.

18 So let's begin with our next ten speakers. Thank
19 you.

20 MS. EVEL: Hello.

21 MS. TRAVERS: Two minutes.

22 MS. EVEL: My name is Deborah Evel, D-e-b-o-r-a-h,
23 E-v-e-l. I am opposed to the delisting of the gray wolf and I
24 am for the listing of the Mexican wolf.

25 I'm a 46 year native of Colorado. I've been to

1 Yellowstone. Not in Colorado or Yellowstone have I ever seen
2 a wolf in the wild.

3 I fear if we do not keep these magnificent creatures
4 protected not only will I never see one in the wild, but
5 neither will my daughter or any future generations.

6 I've heard so much about how important they are to
7 the ecosystem, how much it's made a difference in Yellowstone
8 in their ecosystem.

9 We could, rather than selling more tags for elk we
10 could bring in the wolves to Rocky Mountain National Park. We
11 can see nature take care of the ecosystem on its own, the way
12 it was meant to be.

13 It's also important to me keeping these animals
14 alive, free, and protected so they can protect the ecosystem.
15 They go hand in hand.

16 We see other states that are delisting the wolves.
17 Even before they were delisted they were being slaughtered
18 behind the government's back. Now that they're delisted
19 they're getting slaughtered in inhumane ways and nothing's
20 being done about it.

21 I'm also for bringing them back to Colorado and
22 protecting them, protecting the ecosystem, helping the
23 ecosystem. It's also going to increase visitors as they were
24 speaking about, people going to all the centers hoping to see
25 wolves in their natural habitat, so it's drawing so many

1 visitors from all over the world.

2 What could that do for the economy --

3 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

4 Next speaker?

5 MS. MC LEAN: Hello. I'm Christianna McLean,
6 C-h-r-i-s-t-i-a-n-n-a, M-c-L-e-a-n.

7 I would like to start by stating that the Rocky
8 Mountains are my home, north to Canada where my father is
9 from, all the way south.

10 I feel my right to enjoy these mountains is being
11 hindered with the possibility that a key part of the
12 ecosystem, the wolf, may continue its absence in my home.

13 It is fact, as shown in Yellowstone, that the
14 reintroduction of the wolf not only rejuvenated the land
15 itself by giving something other than elk a chance but wolves,
16 and the chance of seeing them, increased admission to the
17 park, thus helping the economy.

18 Colorado is a state that treasures and profits from
19 its beautiful land, land that needs wolves to help control an
20 out-of-control elk population. Wolves not only help the
21 ecosystem but have a great chance of bringing in tourism.

22 I spent time in Montana. I was there when they
23 delisted the wolves. I was taught about the 3 S's: shoot,
24 shovel, and shut up. That was when wolves were still listed
25 and endangered in Montana. If you see a wolf you shoot it,

1 you dig a hole, you don't say anything.

2 That was with the protection in Montana. Without
3 that protection everything has just gotten out of control.
4 And they need, they need to stay on the Endangered Species Act
5 because they are so misunderstood.

6 It would be completely irrational and illogical to
7 take off an animal that obviously is the source of so much
8 controversy. I beg you to reconsider delisting them.

9 Thank you.

10 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

11 Next speaker.

12 MS. REETZ: Good evening. My name is Pauline Reetz,
13 P-a-u-l-i-n-e, R-e-e-t-z. Thank you for this opportunity to
14 speak.

15 I live in Colorado, and I very much want to have
16 wolves restored to our state to become once again a valuable
17 member of our wildlife community.

18 I want our active eco complexes to be reborn just as
19 the ones in Yellowstone were when the wolves were listed. To
20 that end I support the Mexican wolf as an endangered
21 subspecies pushing ahead full bore on recovery with an updated
22 recovery plan with enforcement of the prohibition on take, and
23 elimination of trapping in areas occupied by Mexican wolves.

24 And secondly, I support keeping the gray wolf on the
25 endangered list until it's recovered in a larger range

1 including Colorado and until states, state agencies
2 de-emphasize killing and emphasis more maintenance of wolves
3 as a valuable predator.

4 If they're only in two national parks it's like
5 combining happiness and Heaven. We may never get there. We
6 can really make amazing success if we don't give up now.

7 I do have one question. When the peregrine falcons
8 were endangered on the whole continent because of DDT they
9 were not delisted, which protected the core population. Just
10 how is wolf recovery any different than that?

11 Thank you very much.

12 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

13 Next speaker, please.

14 MS. ARANA: Good evening. My name is Isabel Arana.
15 I oppose the delisting of the gray wolf.

16 The gray wolf is not everywhere it can be and may be
17 some day. The ESA has done its job. Question: Can a species
18 be considered recovered if it exists in only a portion of its
19 former range or its significant habitat is yet to be occupied?

20 Our answer is yes today, but how sound is that
21 statement if by its own admission the wolf is not fully
22 recovered to where it should be? It still only has potential.

23 And now once again wolves are being hunted. You
24 know the science. So instead, I'd like to implore you to
25 think about how history will judge us as a people or as a

1 nation, a generation that allowed the demise of the wolf by
2 removing the protection, committing the senseless
3 environmental mistake.

4 More importantly I'm asking you, I'm asking how
5 would you judge yourself should you choose to delist the wolf
6 and find that they are no more.

7 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

8 Next speaker?

9 MR. HUNT: Hi. My name is Chuck Hunt, C-h-u-c-k,
10 H-u-n-t. I'm a lifetime member of the National Rifle
11 Association. I would like to see wolves protected. I want to
12 see wolves in Colorado.

13 As a student of history I feel a long-term view is
14 needed in the situation. How will history look at your
15 decision in 105 years?

16 One hundred five years ago, Teddy Roosevelt was
17 president. Would we need these hearings if he was president
18 now and how he felt conservation was needed?

19 As a dog owner I feel that the canine cousins need a
20 special effort for their wide ranging habitat. As a
21 backpacker of many states I have seen the destruction cattle
22 do to the environment from stampeded meadows in the
23 mountains to depleted grasslands. Wolves do not do that kind
24 of damage.

25 On backpacking trips I have seen and heard wolves

1 howl, and watched my dogs stare and try to decide whose side
2 they wanted to be on. This checkerboard protection method is
3 unacceptable.

4 Thank you.

5 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

6 Next speaker, please.

7 MS. DOUCET: Hi. I'm Lisha Doucet, D-o-u-c-e-t.

8 I want to start by saying that I do not support the
9 US Fish and Wildlife's proposal to delist the gray wolf.

10 In May 2010 I was privileged to see the Lamar Canyon
11 06 female was nursing her first litter of pups. I was hooked.
12 And we have been going to Yellowstone each year to watch these
13 magnificent animals.

14 I have read your delisting proposal. I have a
15 number of comments. I'll try to keep them brief.

16 You are trying to make the case it is okay to hunt a
17 certain amount of animals each year and maintain the
18 population and use Canada's policies as your basis for this
19 comment. From your report, Canada wolf killing is
20 approximately seven to ten percent of the wolf population.

21 Compare that with the more than 31 percent that were
22 killed in the northern Rocky Mountain in last year's hunting-
23 trapping season that is on a much smaller population.

24 Even more important than overall number of wolves is
25 the pack health. We all know that wolves are the most social

1 of animals. The pack health is extremely important to wolf
2 survival. Nowhere in your delisting proposal do you talk
3 about the impact of extreme wolf killing on the pack health
4 and hence on the overall population health of wolves.

5 Also I did not see a discussion of any proposal on
6 post delisting wolf protection. You only state the current
7 protection laws, but there is nothing in the proposal to
8 ensure even those very very weak laws continue and are
9 enforced. I foresee without federal protection these already
10 weak laws continue to be weakened.

11 Compare it with the eagle delisting in 2007.
12 Although they are delisted, bald eagles are still protected by
13 a number of laws.

14 I have to ask what's the rush to delist. The
15 proposal is not complete and the job of recovery is not done.

16 Thank you.

17 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

18 I'm going to read several names. Mike Nault, Bryant
19 Pierpont, Karen Burkhart, Cindy Ward, Skye Taylor, Christina
20 Gayler. I wonder if they're together. Laura Cowen, Ellis
21 Blevins, and David Beard.

22 Next speaker, please.

23 MR. MONTGOMERY: My name is Wally Montgomery,
24 W-a-l-l-y, M-o-n-t-g-o-m-e-r-y. I'm from Belton, Texas. And
25 I'm speaking for myself and on behalf of the national

1 nonprofit, Living with Wolves.

2 Mollie Beattie and Bruce Babbitt made the decision
3 to recover wolves and help restore balance to the North
4 American landscape because they knew that wolves are essential
5 to a healthy ecosystem.

6 Why walk away now? Wolves have yet to return to
7 much of the available habitat they historically occupied,
8 places where the land continues to feel their absence, places
9 like Colorado.

10 Furthermore, nearly every wolf in the lower 48 lives
11 and dies in states where ESA protections have already been
12 removed and where they are aggressively hunted and trapped.

13 Wolves are again in decline right now even without
14 this proposal. The proposal would in essence declare a wolf
15 recovered in all of their former range including Colorado,
16 Utah, California, and Nevada. Think about that. We'll be
17 declaring wolves recovered in places where there are no
18 wolves.

19 In more than 83 percent of Wyoming wolves are
20 treated as vermin, where they can be shot or killed in any
21 number of ways on sight any time of year, and without a
22 license.

23 For wolves to reach Colorado they will need to
24 traverse deadly Wyoming. The few that may make it here
25 require protection if ever again the voice of the wolves are

1 to carry through the forests and skies of Colorado.

2 The Endangered Species Act was designed specifically
3 to ensure that our national heritage of wild places and wild
4 creatures would not be subverted by economic decisions or
5 local politics.

6 Please uphold the Endangered Species Act. Allow --

7 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you, sir.

8 Next speaker, please.

9 MS. SMITH: My name is Patricia Smith,
10 P-a-t-r-i-c-i-a, S-m-i-t-h. I am opposed to the Fish and
11 Wildlife Service's proposal to remove the gray wolf from the
12 Endangered Species List.

13 I firmly believe that this delisting would be
14 seriously premature as well as the wolves recovered are a
15 small percentage of their former numbers.

16 A few years ago my husband, son, and I were hiking
17 in Glacier National Park. As we were returning to our camp
18 darkness fell. And wolves howled across the lake. It was a
19 magical moment, one that will stay with me until I draw my
20 last breath. That wolf's howl was the spirit of the
21 wilderness. It represents the intact ecosystem of true
22 wilderness.

23 As a resident of Colorado I anxiously anticipate a
24 time when those of us who live here and millions who visit our
25 state will thrill to the howl of the wolf.

1 We have excellent habitat here in Colorado, and a
2 very large elk population to sustain recovery of the wolf.

3 But I read with dismay the disheartening statistics coming
4 out of the states of Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho. I believe
5 the policies of those states are based on politics, not
6 science, as recovery is far from complete.

7 Such anti wolf policies will hinder wolves'
8 disbursement in Colorado, and will deny Coloradans the thrill
9 of seeing and hearing wolves in the wild. And those policies
10 should serve as a warning of what will happen if wolves are
11 not fully protected.

12 I do not want my grandchildren to ask me someday why
13 we have no wolves in Colorado and why we allowed that to
14 happen. And that is why I'm here this evening to ask you to
15 protect wolves so we may someday hear the wolves' voice in
16 wilderness areas here in Colorado.

17 Thank you.

18 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

19 Next speaker?

20 MR. MARKS: You said my name was Alex Maris. My
21 name is Alex Marks, A-l-e-x, M-a-r-k-s. I'm here as a
22 defender of wildlife, and I'm opposed, against the delisting
23 proposal.

24 If you could describe the very spirit of Endangered
25 Species Act in one word it would be protect. The delisting

1 proposal not only undermines but would more than likely bring
2 a tragic end to the great recovery story that can happen when
3 people appreciate what the word protect means.

4 I consider myself a story teller. I believe stories
5 bring value and education as creatures of this Earth so let me
6 tell you a story about the wolf that teaches us a lesson about
7 the meaning of the word protect.

8 There is an old and ancient Kiowa story where a very
9 young boy is lost from his tribe and is found by a wolf pack.
10 The wolf pack takes the boy into their family, nurtures him,
11 feeds him, gives him strength and knowledge to teach him the
12 ways of the wild.

13 He learns what he needs to know to be one of them
14 but also to be responsible and caring towards all walks of
15 life. Most importantly though he learns that the wolf is not
16 a symbol of evil nor a vicious savage, but instead is the
17 symbol of intelligence, strength, courage, and a protector of
18 life. A wolf acts as a guardian of our Earth, and will always
19 bring balance to our ecosystem.

20 Your delisting proposal will deeply break this bond,
21 as it leaves the North American gray wolf and Mexican gray
22 wolf vulnerable. They can't defend itself against those who
23 do not appreciate their value to the world.

24 Please don't allow this proposal to bring down one
25 of Earth's most beautiful and symbolic creatures. We owe it

1 to them. We owe it to protect them.

2 Thank you.

3 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

4 Next speaker please.

5 MR. RALSTON: Good evening. My name is Aron
6 Ralston, A-r-o-n, R-a-l-s-t-o-n. I am from Boulder, Colorado.
7 Father, environmental advocate, as well as a wilderness
8 adventurer.

9 In fact, you probably know me as one of my
10 wilderness adventures, or I should say misadventure became the
11 subject of the movie 127 Hours. I'm the guy that cut his arm
12 off.

13 I'm here to speak for the wolves. I'm here in honor
14 of the wolves tonight. I'm opposed to your proposal to delist
15 the wolves in the Rockies, and I am in support of your
16 proposal to list the wolves as endangered in the Mexican gray
17 wolf habitat Arizona and New Mexico.

18 I would encourage you to expand those protections as
19 well as some of the other speakers have gone into some detail
20 about those expansions, which I also support.

21 I want to tell you a story I haven't yet heard in
22 the other stories yet tonight of an encounter with wolves
23 actually here in Colorado. In 2002 I was climbing the
24 14,000 footer, the highest mountains in the wintertime solo.

25 I was out on the back side of Mt. Massive at

1 11,000 feet. I came into a willow thicket out of the dark
2 timber and saw not one or two, but actually three 125, maybe
3 150 pound creatures coming down the hillside romping.

4 I noticed them. I was astonished. What are you
5 doing here? They were astonished when they noticed me. What
6 are you doing here? Then they bolted. And the power, the raw
7 power of watching those three wolves across half mile terrain
8 gain 500 feet in less than a minute in deep snow, bounding.

9 Perhaps if it was Wyoming. I was hoping that the
10 wilderness would be truly wild like that; that we were taking
11 steps to make it wild like that.

12 I feel that this is proposal is going the wrong way.

13 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you, sir.

14 Next speaker please.

15 MR. NAULT: Hi. Thank you for your time tonight.
16 My name is Mike Nault, M-i-k-e N-a-u-l-t. I live in Woodland
17 Park, Colorado. And I enjoy hiking and cycling.

18 I'm here today to voice my opposition to delisting
19 gray wolves from the Endangered Species Act. As a Colorado
20 resident, delisting carries with it two issues for me. First,
21 Colorado is known as historical and suitable wolf habitat.
22 And I would like to see the species repopulate Colorado's
23 Rockies.

24 Second, delisting will doom the wolves to another
25 round of extirpation such as currently happening in Idaho,

1 Montana, and Wyoming with haphazard management policies that
2 reverse the benefits wolves bring to ecosystems where they
3 reside.

4 As this panel knows, wolf introduction in the
5 northern Rockies brought remarkable benefits to the local
6 environment. Additionally, the presence of wolves further
7 increased the popularity of already popular Yellowstone Park,
8 bringing economic and infrastructure benefits to a rural
9 community.

10 If gray wolves are delisted from the Endangered
11 Species Act, I believe there'll be no way this magnificent
12 animal will ever repopulate Colorado. The killing that has
13 been occurring in states such as Idaho and Montana and Wyoming
14 has been shocking as the objective has been to kill for the
15 sake of killing.

16 Coloradans will not enjoy the many ecological
17 benefits of diversity provided by thriving wolf packs, nor
18 will there be any economic benefits derived from tourists
19 visiting and viewing a healthy wolf population.

20 Every year thousands of tourists flock to Rocky
21 Mountain National Park to watch and photograph their wolves.
22 Thriving wolf packs would increase those numbers of tourists
23 while simultaneously bringing substantial economic benefits to
24 the region.

25 It is a positive feedback that brings positive

1 results, and I encourage you to retain the ESA protection for
2 the wolves.

3 Thanks again for your time. Good night.

4 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

5 Next speaker, please.

6 MS. GAYLER: Hi. My name is Kristina Gayler,
7 K-r-i-s-t-i-n-a, G-a-y-l-e-r. I came here tonight in the name
8 of many ranchers.

9 I moved to Colorado from (a) rancher family and I
10 lived with ranchers and worked with ranchers for years, and
11 also a hunter and hunter family.

12 My problem is the whole issue there's no balance
13 between people and nature anymore. I'm tired of listening to
14 complaining, listening to ranchers' and hunters' problems
15 about them losing their livestock.

16 We are all losing livestock. It is always our
17 problem and it is always our fault because we are the ones
18 that moved mother nature in the wilderness.

19 I am tired of listening to the old ways of losing
20 livestock. They don't do anything about it. We need more
21 laws about how to protect our livestock. And if we lose some
22 it's not just getting reimbursement when we don't do nothing
23 to protect it.

24 Also the hunters just are hunting wolves. The
25 wolves are not, they are not protected. And then they are

1 cruel. It's unacceptable that they trap them and it's
2 unacceptable to bait them out of national parks and all over
3 because it's not for food.

4 Hunters who are hunting for food hunt, hunters have
5 to be fair, not like baiting and trapping. National parks can
6 have a buffer zone where animals, wild animals have boundaries
7 lines.

8 They leave the boundary lines and the hunters are
9 waiting to shoot. That's unacceptable I think, and also
10 unacceptable to kill animals when the government spends
11 millions of dollars --

12 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

13 Next speaker, please.

14 MS. COWEN: Hello. My name is Laura Cowen,
15 L-a-u-r-a, C-o-w-e-n. I come from a ranching family as well
16 as a family of hunters. But most importantly I've also had
17 many experiences with wolves in the wild.

18 Right now the hunting of wolves is being gone about
19 the wrong way. By the end of the season it feels like the
20 expected population will be cut in half. Even more concerning
21 is the level of hatred and acts of what seems like revenge
22 against them.

23 As much as it pains me to say this, I've got to give
24 California credit for the way they welcomed OR-7. As soon as
25 they received word he had crossed the state line they had a

1 meeting with the families in and near the area and educated
2 them about wolves. Within a week several top biologists were
3 brought in to speak with the public and address the concerns.

4 The people actually welcomed him and wished him no
5 harm. Both state agencies worked together to be aware of his
6 location, put people that needed to know on alert, and
7 protected him during his stay there. Not like Wyoming and
8 Colorado ranching communities.

9 And even though OR 7 remained in California for
10 nearly a year, she was very rarely seen, and no livestock were
11 lost. A lone wolf with no pack and no mate that could help
12 could easily have become an opportunist -- opportunistic.
13 This wolf stayed hidden and fended for himself.

14 Colorado is the only state standing between the gray
15 wolf and Mexican wolf. We could be the state that helps the
16 wolf, what the wolf recovery program set out to do from the
17 beginning.

18 Wolves have come here, but sadly each one that
19 wandered through were killed. They were let down for whatever
20 reason, not talked about, written down on a piece of paper and
21 put away.

22 We have a very high population of elk. Elk are
23 slowly altering the ecosystem in the national parks and a lot
24 of people are against elk hunting and will not agree to a
25 proper wildlife management program.

1 We also have a healthy moose population, and where
2 there are moose there are wolves.

3 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

4 Next speaker, please.

5 MS. TAYLOR: Good evening. I'm Skye Taylor,
6 S-k-y-e, T-a-y-l-o-r. I live in Longmont, Colorado.

7 I'm strongly opposed to removal of the gray wolves
8 from the Endangered Species Act.

9 I volunteer at a raptor rehab, and support staff in
10 the rehabilitation of our eagles, hawks, and owls. I cannot
11 begin to tell you, express the joy I feel when these birds are
12 given back their freedom, to live, to breed, and to be a part
13 of a vital ecosystem.

14 This was made possible due to raptors being added to
15 the Endangered Species List as well as other acts. If not for
16 that, certain hawks may be extinct today due to the misguided
17 thinking they were nothing more than chicken hawks, all of
18 which should be shot, killed, and destroyed. The Endangered
19 Species Act gave them protection they needed to recover and
20 thrive.

21 Now, even before the wolves can start to make a
22 recovery, Fish and Wildlife wants to delist them. Why? The
23 intent of the Endangered Species Act was to restore species
24 and plants throughout their entire historic regions. Gray
25 wolves are not restored, as evidenced in a letter written to

1 Fish and Wildlife by 16 leading scientists.

2 As you know, they said this proposal to delist the
3 wolves is misguided, and does not reflect their conclusions.
4 Per the letter, The gray wolf has barely begun to recover
5 whereas or is absent from significant portions of its range
6 where substantial suitable habitat remains.

7 Wolves are only in a third of suitable habitat in
8 the US, and there are no current documented populations of
9 wolves in Colorado. So how can they be considered as having
10 recovered? I don't understand that.

11 These wolves must remain protected and allowed to
12 thrive in their historic habitat. They are as vital to the
13 ecosystem of our wilderness as are the eagles and all raptors.
14 Seventy percent of polled Coloradans support the continued
15 protection of wolves as well as their migration from other
16 states.

17 Please do not allow the unrelenting pressure from
18 various commercial industries and ultra-conservative political
19 interests to threaten this vital piece of environmental
20 legislation, whereby --

21 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

22 Next speaker, please.

23 MS. BURKHART: Hi. My name is Karen Burkhart,
24 K-a-r-e-n, B-u-r-k-h-a-r-t. I oppose the proposal to delist
25 the gray wolf.

1 I live in Denver, Colorado. I'm speaking for the
2 gray wolf. I've never personally seen a wolf in a park, but
3 I've seen them at the zoo. And one time I saw a beautiful
4 wolf pack at an event they had.

5 So I really want to see wolves in Colorado. I don't
6 want to go to Yellowstone; I want to go to Rocky Mountain
7 National Park and see them here.

8 I really think they should be protected and brought
9 back and restored now. The job isn't finished. We need, we
10 miss the wolves in Colorado. We miss having them.

11 That's all, thank you.

12 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

13 Next speaker?

14 MS. WARD: My name is Cindy Ward, C-i-n-d-y,
15 W-a-r-d.

16 I do not support the United States Fish and Wildlife
17 Service's proposal to delist the gray wolf because, as a
18 Colorado resident, I firmly believe it would be beneficial to
19 reintroduce the gray wolf back to the state for not only
20 several ecological reason, but also because I know that
21 Colorado residents would fully encourage it.

22 Colorado has the perfect habitat for wolves. And
23 the revenue that it would generate in viewing wolves in the
24 wild for this state would be very beneficial.

25 Unfortunately, our government has given several

1 states their own authority on the extermination of wolves
2 leading to the horrific slaughter of this majestic animal.

3 There are several other humane measures ranchers may
4 take to protect their livestock from all predators. I have
5 had the opportunity to interact with wolves several times
6 myself, and know that gray wolves are very family oriented
7 animals, protective of their pack, and certainly pose no
8 threat to humans at all.

9 More people need education about the gray wolf. And
10 I have no doubts that we can live together with wolves in
11 harmony. Let us fully restore the gray wolf back to the wild,
12 bring them to a perfect habitat in Colorado before we
13 eliminate it completely.

14 Thank you very much.

15 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

16 I'll read ten more names. Charlotte Sines, Tom
17 Stark, Joseph Herbert, Chad Dickerson, Chris Mars, Nicole
18 Rosmarino, Karen Vardaman, Wendy Keefover, Michael Herrera,
19 and Jeanine McColgan.

20 Next speaker, please.

21 MR. PIERPONT: My name is Bryant Pierpont,
22 B-r-y-a-n-t, P-i-e-r-p-o-n-t. I oppose the delisting of the
23 gray wolf.

24 I live in the west because I love the experience. I
25 love the prairies, the streams, and the mountains. Most of

1 all, I love being where the wild things are.

2 There's nothing wrong with living in New York or
3 Houston or Chicago; they're all great places. But at an early
4 age I fell in love with things that are wild.

5 I know that by living here I don't have sole
6 possession of the landscape or the marvelous creatures that
7 inhabit it. I know that I share them with my fellow
8 westerners and yes, my fellow Americans. I share these things
9 with all Americans. Even people from Texas, my home state.

10 I share these things with all Americans, and that
11 instills in me a sense of wonder and a sense of
12 responsibility. You see, I'm responsible for ensuring that
13 those things are still here for my children and grandchildren
14 and so on. I'm responsible for ensuring that these things are
15 here for children who visit from Duluth, Detroit, or even
16 Tokyo. I'm responsible for ensuring that all these folks
17 today and tomorrow can see what America really is.

18 In the west, all of us can live the American dream.
19 In Denver you can walk up and down the 16th Street mall, and
20 besides seeing some really odd things, you'll see the tourist
21 shops. In every one of them you'll see T-shirts of the
22 wolves, statues of wolves, all sorts of things.

23 This is our experience, the American wolf. It's our
24 job, one we can't fail to make sure we succeed at.

25 Thank you.

1 MS. TRAVERS: Next speaker?

2 MS. BLEVINS: My name is Ellis Blevins, E-l-l-i-s,
3 B-l-e-v-i-n-s. And I currently live in Broomfield, Colorado.

4 I made my way here from Alabama and California and
5 quite a few other places. I really appreciate you taking the
6 time to hear my thoughts. And I am opposed to the delisting
7 of wolves. I'm here to speak for those without a voice, and
8 also a couple of little kids whose bedtime is just about now.

9 I moved here to the Rocky Mountains for the beauty
10 and to be closer to nature, including wildlife. I chose to
11 raise my family here in Colorado. And I personally use part
12 of my free time in Husky rescue. It's the closest thing I
13 have to having a wolf in my house.

14 As a mother of young children, I don't want my kids
15 to see these animals only in the zoo. My children's rooms are
16 full of stuffed wolves, paintings, and homemade drawings of
17 wildlife. And my son, who is four and quite precocious, wants
18 to be a wildlife veterinarian. And I want that to include
19 wolves.

20 My brother-in-law hunts to supplement his family's
21 food. And sadly, he actually goes out of state now to avoid
22 dealing with the illness in the herds here in Colorado.
23 That's elk and deer. And I just heard a rumor that the
24 wasting disease may have transferred over to moose.

25 I was raised that a job worth doing is worth doing

1 right. And please finish the job and do not delist our
2 wolves. In my opinion, I fear the end of protection of
3 predators will increase the need for so many other programs to
4 try and fix the numerous ecosystem imbalances.

5 Looking at this particular animal as separate from
6 the whole I feel is short-sighted. Please remember, my
7 four-year-old wants to have these animals around when he grows
8 up. And I think about how many years it took to grow the
9 population to the small numbers that we have right now, and
10 how quickly they are disappearing.

11 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

12 Next speaker, please.

13 MR. BEDARD: Good evening. My name is Dave Bedard,
14 B-e-d-a-r-d. I live here in Colorado. I want to begin by
15 thanking the members of the US Fish and Wildlife Service for
16 their time and for allowing me to testify this evening.

17 I'll begin my testimony by stating that I am against
18 the Fish and Wildlife Service's proposal to delist the gray
19 wolf in this country. I think it is a disgrace that the Obama
20 administration is giving in to the desire of special interest
21 groups such as hunters.

22 By doing this you're not managing the wolf
23 population using science and proven biological facts; instead,
24 you are managing under the influence of politics, which is a
25 sin.

1 Up until two years ago the reintroduction of wolves
2 in certain areas of the lower 48 states was one of the
3 greatest wildlife success stories since the bald eagle and
4 wild turkey triumphs. Since the US Fish and Wildlife Service
5 has let Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho manage their wolves, these
6 states have driven the wolf population down to the bare
7 minimum required by law. This is a travesty.

8 I lived in Connecticut most of my life. I moved to
9 Colorado with my girl friend. Colorado has some great areas
10 in which to re-establish the wolf population.

11 I would like to see wolves resettle into Rocky
12 Mountain National Park. If the Fish and Wildlife Service
13 delists wolves, this is unlikely to ever happen.

14 It is so sad that on the 40th anniversary of the
15 Endangered Species Act, the Fish and Wildlife Service is
16 abandoning the original intent of the act, to save the diverse
17 species of wildlife in our country.

18 I am going to close by stating that I have one
19 grandchild, Dominic, who will be two next month. I hope and
20 pray the Wildlife Service will stand up to the special
21 interest group and --

22 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you, sir.

23 Next speaker, please.

24 MR. STARK: Hello. I'm Tom Stark, S-t-a-r-k, from
25 Colorado Springs. I am opposed to the delisting of the gray

1 wolf. I believe that all predators are necessary for a
2 healthy ecosystem.

3 I'd also like to add the Mexican wolf needs to be
4 listed and designated as essential.

5 The slaughter taking place in Michigan, Idaho,
6 Montana, and Wyoming should give pause to any plan to turn
7 over the care and responsibility of these animals to
8 individual states.

9 The gray wolves still fit the criteria for listing
10 because it's nowhere near out of the woods where recovery is
11 concerned. I believe you guys said 3,600 was the, in the
12 designated area. That lady said 2,200 had been killed. I'd
13 say those numbers kind of indicate what's going on without any
14 equivocation.

15 It's far past time to move from the superstitious
16 and backward thinking that's already come close to completely
17 eradicating the species. We have not what -- we have not
18 recovered.

19 Thank you.

20 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

21 Next speaker, please.

22 MR. DICKERSON: Hello. My name is Chad Dickerson,
23 C-h-a-d, D-i-c-k-e-r-s-o-n. I am the president of the
24 Colorado Wildlife Center at Metropolitan State University. I
25 am here representing wildlife.

1 At this moment I stand before all great spirits of
2 the Earth, universe, and cosmic heavens with my testimony. In
3 my dreams I hear the howling calls of my brothers; the wolf
4 people are my family.

5 Long ago, before human people or wolf people
6 existed, we shared a common ancestor. My ancestor is your
7 ancestor, and she is also the wolves' ancestor. We are not
8 that different, wolf people and human people.

9 In their eyes and hearts are stories from long ago.
10 They know grandmother nature and father god more than you or I
11 ever will. Their stories echo in my heart, and they also echo
12 in yours.

13 When we harm a wolf we are harming ourselves. Do we
14 or they truly deserve to be treated as things? My spirit and
15 the wolf spirit are no strangers to one another. I have been
16 wolf, and wolf has been man.

17 The story of the wolf is as fragile as our own;
18 their lives as sacred as our own. They are guardians of the
19 land, they are the champions of the plant kingdom, and without
20 wolf people, many plant tribes would fade into oblivion as
21 well.

22 We are all connected. We are each other, we are all
23 brothers and sisters. We must support one another, understand
24 one another, protect one another. We are all family, both
25 human people and nonhuman people. We all feel, we all want to

1 live the life walks we are given.

2 Look deep into your hearts, my brothers and sisters,
3 for your hearts know compassion for the wolves that your minds
4 may not. We all come from one soul family, connected through
5 ages, atoms, and stars. I am a star seed, and I speak for my
6 brother and sisters for they and I are one. Long live the
7 wolves, long live us all.

8 I also wanted to mention that if you took the
9 circumference of the globe and laid all wolves lengthwise and
10 humans lengthwise, humans would go 288 times around the globe,
11 and wolves would go one --

12 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

13 Next presenter, please.

14 MR. HERRERA: Hello. My name is Michael Herrera,
15 H-e-r-r-e-r-a. I am from Bailey, Colorado. I am a native of
16 this state from Durango, Colorado. My grandfather was raised
17 here for 27 years. And I have done my own running around in
18 the forest to see what's going on.

19 My job as a kid was to go to campgrounds and kick
20 over trash cans that had skunks in them. And I'd run as fast
21 as I could to keep from getting sprayed. A little funny
22 story.

23 But if you look at what's going on, hunting is a
24 \$120 billion industry every year. We all know this. They
25 make a lot of money. 200 billion -- 200 million animals

1 killed each year for sport, okay? You know, they got plenty
2 to sustain them. We do not need wolves. They call them a
3 nuisance.

4 They're not a nuisance. They eat berries, rodents,
5 anything they can. But they do not really attack animals
6 unless they're sick. We know this. It's been proven over and
7 over again.

8 I don't understand how you can take an animal and
9 put it up on your wall and call it anything other than a
10 mediocre attempt at superiority over another life form. I
11 don't see it in any way.

12 You know, you know, I do like to eat deer meat, elk
13 meat, anything that's good to eat like that I will eat it in a
14 moment. But I will not hunt for the mere pleasure of it or
15 historic stupidity.

16 You know, these animals were eradicated a while back
17 ago. You know this; all of us do. You claim there's 5,000 of
18 them alive today. There are 12.5 million hunters in this
19 country. That is a small number of wolves compared to what's
20 coming after them.

21 So to say that they are sustainable now, I don't see
22 that, especially when there's so few in the area and the
23 hunting methods are truly barbaric, disgusting as far as I'm
24 concerned.

25 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you, sir.

1 Next speaker, please.

2 MS. ROSMARINO: Good evening. My name is Nicole
3 Rosmarino, N-i-c-o-l-e, R-o-s-m-a-r-i-n-o.

4 I want to thank the US Fish and Wildlife Service for
5 reintroducing wolves to the northern Rockies. They are truly
6 wonderful animals. And I believe that there is cause to
7 celebrate the reintroduction programs.

8 But I think that we can all agree that the gray wolf
9 reintroduction and Mexican wolf reintroduction, there's been
10 steps forward and steps back.

11 With the Mexican wolf, I think it's an easy
12 solution. We need to list the Mexican wolf subspecies as
13 endangered, and to designate the reintroduced population as
14 essential.

15 With the gray wolf it's harder. Your hands have
16 been tied over the last several years by politics. We know
17 about the budget politics; we know about the senatorial
18 politics.

19 But as far as I can tell, the next steps are up to
20 you. And you're being put in a position it would seem of
21 arguing the unarguable. You cannot argue that this species is
22 fully recovered when it is missing in the majority of its
23 native range.

24 And so I would say one small step towards addressing
25 this issue would be to reintroduce wolves into Rocky Mountain

1 National Park. You've heard Denver tonight. We love wolves;
2 we want wolves.

3 So reintroduce them into our park, and then come
4 back in ten years and we'll revisit this conversation.

5 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

6 Next speaker, please.

7 MS. VARDAMAN: Good evening. My name is Karin
8 Vardaman, K-a-r-i-n, V-a-r-d-a-m-a-n. And I speak on behalf
9 of the California Wolf Center's over 12,000 supporters across
10 the country.

11 The California Wolf Center was founded in 1977. It
12 is dedicated to wolf recovery in the wild. We appreciate this
13 opportunity to be here in Colorado.

14 We oppose removing federal protection for gray
15 wolves. This keystone predator occupies a mere fraction of
16 its historic range, while vast areas of suitable habitat
17 remain unoccupied, including in Colorado but also in other
18 states such as Utah and California.

19 Wolves are at the infancy of the recovery in these
20 states, and now is not the time to delist. Scientists agree,
21 as made evident by the letter signed by 16 top wolf experts
22 earlier this year expressing concern with the delisting
23 proposal.

24 A poll conducted earlier this year found that the
25 vast majority of Coloradans support the return of wolves.

1 Seventy-two percent support protecting wolves that cross into
2 Colorado from other states. Without maintaining federal
3 protection for wolves, this majority will probably never have
4 their hopes for wolf recovery seen.

5 The thousands of visitors every year who visit our
6 facility in Julian, California, persistently express the
7 support for continued wolf recovery in remaining suitable
8 habitat, and maintaining federal protections.

9 Every day, education programs and tours are sold
10 out. And every day visitors implore us to please continue
11 with wolf recovery. They tell us wolves have an inherent
12 right to exist where they once roamed as nature intended.

13 They tell us, express their feelings of a sense of
14 responsibility to help right the wrong of decades of
15 exterminating wolves. These sentiments come directly from the
16 public eager to help wolves, and are a testament to the desire
17 the public has for the continued --

18 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

19 Next speaker, please.

20 MS. MARS: I'm Chris Mars, C-h-r-i-s, M-a-r-s. I
21 flew in this morning from New York to be here tonight and urge
22 you to continue ESA protection of the gray wolf.

23 And I'm here to ask you that you define the wild
24 population of the Mexican gray wolves as essential to the
25 survival of that subspecies.

1 With up to four generations of experience living in
2 and adapting to wild environment, these 70 to 75 wolves
3 possess genetic profiles vital to the survival of their kind.

4 FWS must, without delay, develop a long overdue
5 recovery plan for these wolves immediately releasing more
6 captive wolves to the wild and allow them to expand their
7 range in Colorado.

8 I volunteer at the wolf center in south New York. I
9 help teach visitors about the ecology and endangered wolves.
10 I'm here because it's my opinion that wolves must remain
11 protected.

12 I'm also here on behalf of the 50 to 60 other
13 volunteers, and I'm here on behalf of the 10,000 plus people
14 who visited the center in 2012. And more than 28,000 people
15 came to off site events with our ambassador wolf.

16 I've stood on the edge of the northeast entrance of
17 Yellowstone on a summer night just about dusk. Excuse me.
18 When I heard a sound behind me and turned to look I was
19 astonished by a pair of wolves running flat-out along the
20 opposite edge of the road only a few feet from me intent on
21 the scent or sound they were following. I'm here because
22 generations of people must be able to feel that thrill
23 hundreds of years to our future.

24 Withdraw the proposal to remove the gray wolf from
25 the ESL, and allow them to establish populations in more of

1 the habitats identified by biologists as excellent and
2 available in California, Utah, Colorado, Washington.

3 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

4 Next speaker, please. Thank you.

5 MR. HERBERT: My name is John Herbert, J-o-h-n,
6 H-e-r-b-e-r-t. I do not support the proposal to delist the
7 gray wolf.

8 It defies common sense for society to put so much
9 effort toward reaching a goal only to turn around and
10 intentionally unravel what has been gained before the job is
11 even done. But common sense rarely prevails where politics
12 are concerned.

13 All I can say is thank goodness there wasn't a large
14 voting bloc that hated bald eagles back when they needed
15 protection, and thank goodness your predecessors at Fish and
16 Wildlife had the wisdom and fortitude to stand up to the
17 pesticide industry and do what they knew was right for the
18 bald eagle.

19 I was looking at the FWS website and on the page
20 where it rightly touts the amazingly successful recovery of
21 bald eagles from extinction under the heading, What we did to
22 bring the bald eagle back it states, We restored bald eagles
23 back to areas where they had been eliminated. I'll repeat
24 that. We restored bald eagles back to areas where they had
25 been eliminated.

1 With that as the measure of success, then clearly we
2 have fallen short on the gray wolf recovery, as delisting
3 would be premature at this time.

4 Now, I remember the first time I saw those miles of
5 ugly fences that now block the flowers at Rocky Mountain
6 National Park. They were put up at the cost of nearly
7 \$1 million to prevent habitat destruction from the elk
8 overpopulation.

9 But at the very same time it was happening at
10 Yellowstone, the solution there wasn't million dollar fences;
11 it was wolves.

12 I also understand the argument that there are wolves
13 in Canada and perhaps they are not in imminent danger of
14 global extinction, but this is about America. And the ESA was
15 enacted to preserve American wildlife for Americans --

16 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

17 Next ten speakers. Terri Wilson, David Ruane, Nan
18 Dudek, Bethany Cotton, Jonathan Proctor, Taylor Jones, Jeff
19 Terrill, Deb Jones, Deborah Foote, and Karen Anderson.

20 Next speaker, please.

21 MS. SINES: My name is Charlotte Sines,
22 C-h-a-r-l-o-t-t-e, S-i-n-e-s.

23 I just recently moved to Colorado from California.
24 I am against the delisting of the gray wolves.

25 I worked in Yosemite National Park for 13 years. I

1 meet a lot of people from other countries who come here hoping
2 to see wolves.

3 When they come into the park they are very excited.
4 They come to me and they say, I've seen a wolf. He was over
5 there. I have to tell them, You're not seeing a wolf, you're
6 seeing a coyote.

7 These people are very disappointed about this. They
8 want to see wolves, and they expect to see them in Yosemite;
9 however, they're not there yet. We have one wolf in
10 California, but we do need considerably more.

11 If you delist these wolves, these visitors from
12 Europe, Japan, Australia, and from all over our world who come
13 to our country hoping to see wolves in the wild will continue
14 to be disappointed and unbelieving that any government agency
15 would ignore science, and give in to a small group of special
16 interests.

17 Please do not delist the wolves.

18 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

19 Next speaker.

20 MS. KEEFOVER: Good evening. My name is Wendy
21 Keefovor. I'm representing Wild Earth Guardians.

22 We are opposed to the wolf delisting of course, and
23 we would like to see substantive changes for the Mexican gray
24 wolves. We'd like to see them listed as an essential. They
25 need far more protection.

1 Biologists have said there needs to be a keystone
2 population of at least 750 Mexican wolves for recovery. And
3 that would include southern Colorado all the way up to I-70.
4 That would help stem the problem of the genetic inbreeding
5 they are facing.

6 There are only 75 Mexican wolves in the wild in
7 Anguilla and Apache National Forest. And much more needs to
8 be done to protect them.

9 We will be submitting comments in writing, much more
10 detailed comments. But I think you have heard Colorado
11 tonight. And you've heard people from other places come here.
12 I have not heard one person say, Let's delist wolves. Let's
13 kill them. I think the Fish and Wildlife Service needs to
14 listen to those people.

15 Thank you.

16 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you very much.

17 Next speaker.

18 MS. MC COLGAN: My name is Jeanine McColgan,
19 J-e-a-n-i-n-e, M-c-C-o-l-g-a-n. And I'm representing the
20 wildlife.

21 I do not support the Fish and Wildlife Service's
22 proposal to delist the gray wolf, and hope that wolf will be
23 able to retain the protections under the Endangered Species
24 Act.

25 I am a comptroller by profession, and recently moved

1 to Divide, Colorado, from North Carolina so I could be more
2 actively involved in the issues that mean the most to me.

3 One of them is keeping the balance and health of the
4 gray wolf population. Having lived and worked in Yellowstone
5 National Park for five months in 2011, I experienced firsthand
6 the thrill and privilege of seeing the native wolf packs in
7 the Lamar Valley.

8 Living in Colorado -- we have excellent wolf
9 habitat, but we don't have any wolves. Colorado hosts an
10 estimated 300,000 elk, the largest elk herd in the nation.
11 The presence of wolves would create a healthy ecosystem and
12 like Yellowstone, it could open an untapped arena of wildlife
13 tourism.

14 But it won't happen. They won't make it here if
15 they lose their protection. Please don't give up on the wolf
16 recovery before the job is done. It is far from over.

17 Without the protection from the Endangered Species
18 Act we will never see a wolf in Colorado. Seventy-two percent
19 of Coloradans support protecting wolves that cross into
20 Colorado from other states. I greatly fear that the
21 management of wolves will mimic that of the northern Rockies.

22 I want to see wolves protected and restored to
23 suitable, unoccupied habitat and where predator-prey
24 relationships are restored, where elk behave like elk instead
25 of cattle.

1 I would like to acknowledge the importance and
2 concerns of rancher whose livelihoods can be impacted by the
3 presence of wolves. Let's work together to develop programs
4 where wildlife and livestock can coexist.

5 The original intent of the Endangered Species Act is
6 being undermined by lowering the bar for endangered species
7 recovery --

8 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

9 Next speaker, please.

10 MS. WILSON: My name is Terri Wilson, T-e-r-r-i,
11 W-i-l-s-o-n. And I oppose this proposal to delist the wolves,
12 and I agree with the proposal to move the Mexican gray wolf to
13 an endangered species status.

14 I have a lot written down here, but I'll keep it
15 very short. I raise sheep and goats in the mountains of
16 Colorado. There are many very successful methods that I can
17 use to protect my livestock from predators.

18 You have heard over and over and over tonight the
19 fact that wolves are an essential part of a healthy ecosystem.
20 I live in an area with many bears and many mountain lions.
21 And we coexist quite successfully. I welcome wolves to
22 Colorado.

23 If you delist these wolves we will never have them
24 here. Wolves belong here.

25 Thank you.

1 MS. TRAVERS: Next speaker?

2 MR. PROCTOR: I'm Jonathan Proctor, J-o-n-a-t-h-a-n,
3 P-r-o-c-t-o-r, Rocky Mountains and Great Plains program
4 director for Defenders of Wildlife.

5 I'm submitting a letter written and signed by
6 4,747 Colorado citizens asking that you abandon and withdraw
7 this proposal.

8 Wolves have made an amazing comeback over the past
9 few decades from near extirpation in the lower 48 states.
10 Some 5- to 6,000 wolves currently inhabit the northern Rockies
11 and Great Lakes regions. This is a great improvement over the
12 late '80s when there were only a few hundred left in
13 Minnesota.

14 Yet the reality is that the recovery of the species
15 throughout the west remains as uncertain as ever. Gray wolves
16 currently occupy only about eight percent of their historic
17 range, and just a third of the remaining suitable wolf
18 habitat.

19 They are still missing from places like western
20 Colorado, northern California, and the Olympic peninsula,
21 places where wolves can still play an important role in
22 maintaining nature's healthy balance. Without continued
23 federal ESA wolf protection, wolves may never recover in these
24 areas.

25 Further, by proposing to delist wolves prematurely,

1 the Service has signaled a disappointing shift in the
2 conservation philosophy on recovery. Biological optimism has
3 been replaced by an almost defeatist attitude of recovery,
4 where good enough replaces yes we can.

5 This delisting proposal is a far cry from the bold
6 conservation vision that used to characterize our nation's
7 endangered species stewardship goals.

8 We didn't take the easy way out of recovering the
9 bald eagle, the peregrine falcon, the brown pelican, or the
10 American alligator, and we shouldn't do it now for wolves.

11 I urge you to abandon this short-sighted proposal
12 and maintain federal Endangered Species Act protections until
13 wolves are truly and fully recovered.

14 Thank you.

15 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

16 Next speaker?

17 MS. JONES: Hello. My name is Taylor Jones,
18 T-a-y-l-o-r, J-o-n-e-s. I live here in Colorado.

19 ESA listing is the emergency room care for species.
20 And when you're a patient in the ER you know there's a
21 difference between clinging to life and recovering.

22 Right now wolves are clinging to life in the lower
23 48, in particular the Mexican wolf, which has one remaining
24 population, 75 animals. That population is going to be
25 designated as experimental and non essential. My question:

1 How can a population be non essential if it is the only one?

2 There's a difference between thriving and simply
3 surviving. And wolves will never thrive if they keep losing
4 their pack mates and leaders, leaving families and social
5 systems in disarray, if they're lured from their last refuges
6 and killed, and if they're circumscribed by
7 political boundaries they have no way of knowing about and
8 understanding.

9 There's a difference between living freely, and
10 existing at the whim and control of others. If we force
11 wolves into small protected areas, leave them only five
12 percent of their history range and then intensively manage
13 them, which is usually code for kill them, then an integral
14 part of the ecosystem, the symbol of wildness, will be reduced
15 to a glorified zoo animal.

16 Do we want wolves to simply survive, or do we want
17 them to thrive? Do we want to live alongside them as equals,
18 or do we want to be their jailers?

19 I know what I would choose. I hope we can make that
20 choice as a nation and society to value our wildlife and make
21 the greatest effort to undo the damage that we've done.

22 Thank you.

23 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

24 Next speaker, please.

25 MS. DUDEK: My name is Nan Dudek, N-a-n, D-u-d-e-k.

1 I was going to get up here -- I put my written
2 testimony in the box. So I will simply say that I oppose the
3 delisting of wolves. And I support listing of the Mexican
4 gray wolf. And looking at that amazing photograph that you
5 brought us --

6 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

7 Next speaker?

8 MS. FOOTE: Good evening. I'm Deborah Foote,
9 D-e-b-o-r-a-h, F-o-o-t-e. And I'm here representing the
10 American Society of Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and more
11 importantly, the 250,000 members in the states of Arizona,
12 Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, Utah, and Wyoming.

13 The ASPCA and members urge the Fish and Wildlife
14 Service to cancel the national wolf delisting proposal until
15 the wolves have recovered.

16 Since the 1980s, wolf recovery in America has had
17 great successes from the reintroduction of wolves to
18 Yellowstone to the revitalization of populations in western
19 and Great Lake states.

20 But there are still few, if any, wolves in the vast
21 majority of their former range where many scientists have
22 determined that there's excellent and suitable habitat,
23 including the states of Colorado and Utah.

24 The bald eagle is a living symbol of our national
25 landscape. Its presence is critical to maintaining the

1 structure and integrity of native ecosystems.

2 Federal protection for wolves is essential to help
3 those animals recover and expand still suitable parts of its
4 former range, just as the bald eagle was allowed to do
5 before having its federal protection removed.

6 Unfortunately, the centuries old war on wolves is
7 far from over. The war on wolves has commenced in the
8 states including Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho, after the wolves
9 lost federal protection, highlighting the increasing anti wolf
10 policy in states that should be ensuring the survival of the
11 gray wolf population.

12 The wolf has long been in the crosshairs of the
13 powerful hunting and livestock interests despite programs that
14 help ranchers coexist with wolves.

15 Now is not the time for the federal government to
16 give in to those powerful interests when the job is not yet
17 done.

18 Thank you.

19 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

20 Next speaker?

21 MR. TERRILL: My name is Jeff Terrill,
22 T-e-r-r-i-l-l, Lakewood.

23 I wanted to remember to thank you, the Service, for
24 restoring wolves to the northern Rockies, particularly in
25 Idaho and Yellowstone. I've benefitted much from many trips

1 to there.

2 I think the task is far from over. And to
3 illustrate that if I had half a chance of succeeding I would
4 pick all you guys up tomorrow morning and we'd get in the car
5 and we'd go up to Rocky Mountain National Park, which is only
6 two hours away, and we would see perhaps some of the most
7 majestic scenery in the United States.

8 However, there's one thing there that shouldn't be.
9 It's those fences. The fences are there to protect
10 the willows that the elk have overbrowsed. The songbirds have
11 left and the beaver have left all because there's one thing
12 that should be there, and that's the wolves.

13 Please give them a chance. Postpone or delay any
14 thoughts of delisting for ten more years. There would be
15 absolutely no harm in taking that much time.

16 Thank you.

17 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

18 Next speaker, please.

19 MS. ANDERSON: My name is Karen Anderson, K-a-r-e-n,
20 A-n-d-e-r-s-o-n. I'm from Rollinsville, Colorado. And I
21 oppose the Fish and Wildlife Service's proposal to
22 remove federal protection from nearly all the wolves in the
23 lower 48. I do approve of working with the Mexican wolves.

24 The Endangered Species Act is a political entity,
25 one that establishes politically we are going to say, rather

1 than politics, we are going to say that the web of life is
2 significant and important and a political entity saying this,
3 saying that all beings and species in the world are
4 interconnected.

5 It's a nexus for incorporating biological scientific
6 understanding and spiritual and religious understanding that
7 the importance of interconnection of all species come
8 together.

9 You have this precious gift, when you have this
10 precious something that's incredible in the face of the world
11 today, you have the ability to say it's incredibly important
12 protecting all animals in the ecosystem.

13 Now, the wolves are incredible. I love the one I'm
14 looking at up there. That's the guiding spirit from the web
15 of life that's leading us here tonight.

16 We are asking you please continue this work, and do
17 not allow the travesty of what's going on in these states
18 where the wolves are disappearing.

19 Perhaps the Endangered Species Act needs to have a
20 sub provision that says when we release the species to the
21 state they have to play by the rules as well.

22 Thank you.

23 MS. TRAVERS: Next speaker, please.

24 MR. RUANE: My name is David Ruane, R-u-a-n-e. I'm
25 from Colorado. I'm speaking to you on behalf of ethical

1 hunters and outdoorsmen.

2 With the problems we face in this country I'm pretty
3 much in favor of keeping them listed on the ESA. It's way too
4 early to delist the species for the following reasons.

5 The states have proven themselves incapable of an
6 unbiased approach to wolf management, or they're trying to
7 figure it out. It's way too early. States like Wyoming --
8 some examples of that, Wyoming's predatory animal status, not
9 a wild game and fish issue but a state statute allows
10 85 percent of the state of Wyoming to shoot on sight in the
11 wild when wolf is found. No reason required, no license
12 required.

13 It's unsafe, it's unethical, and foremost, it's
14 irresponsible. Other states will follow that, mimic that
15 policy, set up a predatory animal status for wolves. Utah
16 probably will be next.

17 Another reason, state lawmakers in those states are
18 rewriting game and fish laws. These are politicians, not
19 wildlife experts. They're rewriting laws on how to kill a
20 wolf. Luring, using other wolves as bait. It's ridiculous.

21 Wolves are not -- minimum numbers? I mean, come on.
22 These numbers were evolved so long ago. That's what the
23 states are using, that's what all the anti wolf groups are
24 using, We've already achieved those numbers.

25 Those numbers are lousy. They don't make sense

1 anymore. Suitable habitat, probably been mentioned quite a
2 bit here. They're not fully recovered. There's millions of
3 acres in other states like Colorado.

4 They belong here. They need to make their way here.
5 They need to disperse. We can't just let Yellowstone become
6 a zoo surrounded by greedy ranchers and unethical hunters.

7 You all know how crowded it is up in Jackson. Why
8 make it worse? There's 2,000 -

9 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you, sir.

10 Next speaker?

11 MS. JONES: My name's Deborah Jones, D-e-b-o-r-a-h,
12 J-o-n-e-s. And I'm president of the prairie dog action
13 actually, which is a whole different ball of wax here.

14 I'm here tonight speaking on behalf of wolves. I
15 grew up in Texas on a cattle ranch. We had red wolves in the
16 area when I was a child -- giving my age away -- but I wanted
17 to bring up that they were extirpated in my lifetime when I
18 was a child. I saw my last red wolf in the wild when I was a
19 teenager.

20 They were hanging on the fences with the coyotes.
21 They were killed by every means out there. I watched this
22 happen.

23 And so watching this and listening to this gray wolf
24 now, and looking at the real small portions that we have out
25 of this historical range that are occupied today, and the

1 methods used in these areas to manage these animals is
2 atrocious.

3 We need to work as a nation to continue this work
4 under the ESA and honor the people that came before us that
5 put this in place. There is a definite need for this. We've
6 seen that in Idaho, Montana, Wyoming in the methods that
7 they're using right now to kill these animals.

8 Mexican gray wolf, the Mexican wolf is also another
9 one that needs to be essential. We cannot have a small number
10 of animals in one little place and not say that they're
11 essential. They're not non essential and experimental; they
12 are essential to the survival of the species.

13 So those are the things I'm asking you for. I don't
14 want to see another extirpation in my lifetime. I want to see
15 these magnificent animals, I want to still be able to listen
16 to their howls, and I don't want to have to go to Yellowstone
17 to do it. I'd like to see it in my own back yard.

18 Thank you very much.

19 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

20 Two more speakers, Melissa Chiarello, and Alan
21 Kerby.

22 MS. COTTON: Hi. I'm Bethany Cotton, B-e-t-h-a-n-y,
23 C-o-t-t-o-n, wildlife program director for WildEarth
24 Guardians.

25 Guardians strenuously oppose the Service's proposal

1 to remove the gray wolf from the Endangered Species Act list,
2 and the continued designation of Mexican wolves as non
3 essential.

4 The Service's own science shows that Colorado has
5 plenty of suitable habitat for wolves, enough to support more
6 than 1,000 wolves. Yet no wolves call Colorado home. How can
7 the Service claim wolves are recovered when this absence is
8 the reality in whole swaths of the US, in 95 percent of the
9 range of the gray wolf?

10 Wyoming's shoot on sight policy all but guarantees
11 the wolves will not successfully disperse to Colorado or other
12 surrounding states naturally.

13 Cruel hunting policies have resulted in the death of
14 over 2,000 wolves in just the last few years in states where
15 ESA protections were lifted. The writing's on the wall. If
16 wolves are removed from the list their numbers will be
17 drastically reduced. Hopes that they will naturally
18 recolonize will dim to black.

19 Forty years of dedicated wolf recovery is being
20 jeopardized by this deeply flawed, cynical, and politically
21 motivated proposal. It is shameful.

22 The story of wolf reintroduction into Yellowstone is
23 one of unparalleled success. The benefits have proven greater
24 than anyone anticipated, what scientists call the trophic
25 cascade and whereby the presence of an apex carnivore brings

1 benefits that cascade through the ecosystem is nowhere more
2 apparent.

3 The return of wolves brought elk and deer
4 populations back into balance and relieved pressure on willow
5 and aspen. The vegetation regrew, returning shade to streams,
6 beavers and fish and songbird populations rebounded as well as
7 rodents, providing more food for raptors.

8 Even the imperiled grizzly bear --

9 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

10 Next speaker, please.

11 MS. CHIARIELLO: Hi. My name is Melissa Chiariello.
12 I oppose the US Fish and Wildlife Service's proposal to delist
13 the gray wolf because studies have shown wolves play by the
14 rules in maintaining healthy ecosystems.

15 Because the wolves have endured such a long history
16 of persecution, the campaign to reverse the government's
17 policies towards wolves makes that cause into a symbol of the
18 larger problem that pervades our society's wildlife
19 conservation values.

20 If our society can alter its attitude and policies
21 towards the wolf then why think the concept of more beneficial
22 conservation ethic might not be far behind.

23 We should only return protection under the ESA
24 because it helps establish a conservation ethic that can serve
25 other imperiled species.

1 We are all interconnected. The wolf is --

2 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

3 Next speaker.

4 MR. KERBY: I'm Allen Kerby, A-l-l-e-n, K-e-r-b-y.

5 I'm am senior regional director here in eastern Colorado for
6 the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

7 The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation supports removing
8 the gray wolf from the list of endangered and threatened
9 wildlife as proposed by the US Fish and wildlife Service.

10 The recovery of the gray wolf in northern Rocky
11 Mountains and the western Great Lakes has exceeded all goals
12 and expectations. Wolves are no longer in danger of
13 extinction. And it is time for wolf management to be turned
14 over to the states and their respective wildlife management
15 agencies.

16 State wildlife agencies have a strong history of
17 wildlife restoration dating back to the early 1900s, and will
18 do an excellent job of managing this species going forward.

19 No state wildlife agency has ever managed a big game
20 species into extinction in the history of American wildlife.

21 It should be up to each individual state agency, not
22 the federal government, to determine whether to allow wolves
23 within their borders.

24 Some believe that wolves should be returned to their
25 entire native range, yet many other species, such as elk, do

1 not occupy their native range today.

2 In regard to Mexican wolves, future management
3 should be turned over to state wildlife agencies.

4 Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment.

5 MS. TRAVERS: Thank you.

6 For those who weren't able to speak tonight, please
7 submit written comments via the options on the agenda. And
8 please remember that written comments will be given the same
9 consideration as oral comments.

10 On behalf of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, we
11 appreciate the time and effort this evening to present the
12 comments. They have been very informative, and will be fully
13 considered in coming to a final decision.

14 Again, as a reminder, written comments may be
15 submitted at the registration table or to the US Fish and
16 Wildlife Service by December 17, 2013.

17 This hearing is closed. I show the time to be
18 8:45. We are off the record.

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20 (Whereupon the within proceedings adjourned at
21 8:45 PM.)
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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, Martha Loomis, Certified Shorthand Reporter,
appointed to take the within proceedings hereby
certify that the proceedings was taken by me, then reduced to
typewritten form by means of computer-aided transcription;
that the foregoing is a true transcript of the proceedings had
subject to my ability to hear and understand, and that I have
no interest in the proceedings.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand on
this 6th day of December, 2013.

Martha Loomis
Certified Shorthand Reporter

Proofread by E. Williams

0	2,200 78:12	5	absent 35:24 71:5
06 47:13 58:11	20 28:20	5 50:14 92:10	absolutely 97:15
1	200 29:9 80:25,25	5,000 5:23 81:17	abundance 16:18
1 35:9 87:7	2000 32:7	50 29:5 47:4 85:12	accept 10:13 37:11 44:11
1,000 33:10 102:6	2005 1:23	500 65:8	acceptable 21:6
1,600 5:10	2002 5:9 64:23	6	accepting 26:12
10,000 85:13	2005 50:17	6,000 92:10	access 50:20
100 28:4	2007 59:11	60 13:13 85:12	accomplished 43:9
105 57:15	2010 45:8 58:10	64192 10:12	accurately 2:14
11 43:3	2011 5:1 14:22 32:9 38:7 40:9 48:3 90:5	6:05 1:16	achieve 37:20
11,000 65:1	2012 5:12 50:12	6th 106:14	achieved 5:17 99:24
12,000 83:9	85:14	7	acknowledge 91:1
12.5 81:18	2013 1:10 10:11,15 105:16 106:14	7 68:24 69:9	acres 100:3
120 80:24	22 37:19	70 40:7 85:2 89:3	act 3:12 6:18,20,24 7:7 9:24 10:10
1201 1:23	250,000 95:11	70s 4:4	14:18 15:2,24 16:21
125 52:3,10 65:2	27 80:17	75 5:18 85:2 89:6 93:24	17:19 19:20 32:8,11
1250 1:23	28 10:11 14:20	750 89:2	38:14 44:14 46:12
127 64:11	28,000 85:14	8	46:23 47:8 55:4
13 87:25	288 80:10	8,000 38:24	61:2,6 62:25 65:19
14,000 64:24	3	80 52:4,6	66:11 70:8,19,23
150 16:16 65:3	3 8:12 50:13 54:23	80s 92:12	77:15,16 89:24
150th 44:14	3,600 4:25 78:11	83 60:19	90:18 91:5 93:12
16 71:1 83:21	30 13:13	832 33:4	97:24 98:19 102:1
1621 1:15	30,000 38:25	832f 47:13	action 20:5 35:17 40:12 100:12
16th 74:19	300 5:19	85 99:10	actions 35:13
17 10:15 14:10 40:22 105:16	300,000 90:10	8:45 105:18,21	active 55:18
174 33:4	31 31:11 58:21	9	actively 42:12 90:2
1800s 45:25 46:3	35 32:17 43:1	9 51:23	acts 63:18 68:21 70:15
19 1:10	35.5 50:21	95 5:7 102:8	adapting 85:2
1900s 104:17	4	96 5:7	add 78:3
1945 38:7	4 10:9	a	added 70:14
1950 28:19	4,747 92:6	aaron 51:17	addition 13:23
1960s 4:4	40 24:13	abandon 40:14 92:6 93:11	additional 14:4
1973 46:11	40,000 25:11	abandoning 77:16	additionally 14:5 66:6
1977 83:11	40th 14:19 40:11 44:13 77:14	ability 98:11 106:10	address 14:10 44:15 69:3
1978 4:5,9 6:8	44 50:17	able 39:15 51:9 85:22 89:23 101:15 105:6	addressing 3:22 7:8 82:24
1980s 95:16	46 52:25	absence 33:2 54:12 60:8 102:7	adhere 40:13
1990s 4:24	48 4:7,12 5:24 6:12 7:12 60:10 77:2 92:9 93:23 97:23		
2			
2 9:9			
2,000 25:2 100:8 102:14			

adherence 13:11 adirondack 36:11 36:12 adjacent 9:1 adjourned 105:20 administration 76:20 admission 54:16 56:21 adults 43:1 adventurer 64:8 adventures 64:10 advocate 28:24 64:7 advocates 21:12 27:19 aerial 41:20 affiliated 2:10 afraid 22:6 african 21:10 afternoon 2:3 age 74:4 100:16 agencies 56:1 69:5 104:15,16 105:3 agency 6:22 20:19 88:14 104:19,21 agenda 14:3,4 21:12 105:7 ages 80:5 aggressive 33:17 aggressively 60:12 ago 24:13 32:17 44:24 57:16 61:16 77:1 79:5,9 81:17 99:22 agree 40:1 69:24 82:8 83:20 91:12 ahead 11:13 37:10 55:21 aided 106:8 aircraft 43:10 alabama 75:4 alan 101:20 alaska 7:15 42:4,5,6 42:25	alert 69:6 alex 51:17 62:20,21 alicia 22:13 32:1 alive 27:16 33:25 53:14 81:18 allen 104:4 alligator 93:10 allow 13:15 27:12 39:22 61:6 63:24 71:17 85:6,25 98:17 104:22 allowed 12:19 26:10 50:13 57:1 62:13 71:11 96:4 allowing 38:21 76:16 allows 99:9 alongside 94:17 alpha 47:13 alter 103:20 altering 69:23 amazing 40:13 56:6 92:8 95:4 amazingly 86:20 ambassador 85:15 america 15:9 21:11 31:13,13 74:17 87:14 95:16 america's 15:13 american 21:9 24:24 25:18 30:9 31:10,12 38:13 41:23 42:2 46:8 60:4 63:21 74:18,23 87:15 93:10 95:10 104:20 americans 25:13 30:11,20,22 40:1 44:4,4 46:2,11,13 74:8,9,10 87:15 amok 18:4 amount 36:24 50:15 58:17 analysis 16:2	ancestor 79:6,6,7,7 ancient 63:8 anderson 87:19 97:19,19 anger 35:12 anguilla 89:7 angus 47:3 animal 21:5 35:6 55:7 66:12 73:2 76:5 81:8 94:15 99:8,15 animals 15:5 20:25 21:9 26:6,8,18,19 34:11 39:16,20,24 40:22 41:1,1 42:21 46:1,5 53:13 58:13 58:17 59:1 68:6,6 68:10 73:7 75:15 76:7 78:7 80:25 81:5,16 82:6 93:24 95:10 96:3 98:12 101:1,7,10,15 animosity 17:3 ann 34:23 39:8 anniversary 14:19 40:11 44:13,14 77:14 annual 37:15 annually 25:11 answer 24:5 34:4 56:20 anti 62:7 96:9 99:23 anticipate 61:23 anticipated 102:24 antipathy 17:2 anxiously 61:23 anyll 13:18 18:15 anymore 67:13 100:1 apache 89:7 apex 102:25 appalled 41:16 46:17 apparent 103:2	apparently 50:10 appear 29:15 applaud 18:12 52:1 applause 12:18 26:1 33:19 42:18 51:25 52:8,11,16 applied 36:24 apply 6:18 appointed 106:6 appreciate 11:19 12:19 63:3,23 75:5 83:12 105:11 appreciation 44:19 approach 4:16 7:8 14:19 99:6 approval 20:21,22 approve 97:23 approved 21:3 approving 20:21 approximately 58:20 arana 51:16 56:14 56:14 arbitrary 32:19 arctic 40:23 48:2 area 5:3 7:11,15 8:18,23 9:17 13:6 49:2 69:1 78:12 81:22 91:20 100:16 areas 7:24 20:23 32:18 55:23 62:16 77:2,9 83:16 86:23 86:24 92:24 94:11 101:1 arefienna 22:14 33:8 33:8,21 arena 90:12 argue 82:21 arguing 82:21 argument 87:12 arizona 64:17 95:11 arm 64:11 aron 64:5 artificially 49:15
---	---	--	--

<p>artist 45:3 ashamed 23:22 24:25 27:8 aside 48:18 asked 23:4 asking 57:4,4 92:6 98:16 101:13 aspca 95:13 aspects 10:21 aspen 103:5 assault 32:10,11 assistant 2:17 assisting 2:24 associated 9:20 association 57:11 assuming 22:21 astonished 65:4,5 85:19 atlantic 1:22 atoms 80:5 atrocious 101:2 atrophying 33:3 attack 81:5 attempt 81:10 attendance 2:17 attended 37:15 attention 17:7 19:24 36:18,19 attentions 9:14 attitude 93:3 103:20 attract 25:11 audience 12:13,14 12:17 auditorium 11:1,10 11:23 14:6 australia 88:12 authority 73:1 authorized 47:7 available 14:3,4,24 32:14,23 60:7 86:2 avenues 20:16 avoid 75:21 aware 41:8 69:5</p>	<p>b</p>	<p>bar 21:8,12 91:6 barbara 13:19 23:20 barbaric 81:23 bare 12:23 77:6 barely 35:24 71:4 base 30:20 36:11 based 3:24 19:22,23 32:13,23,24 35:17 40:8 62:5 basic 49:17 basically 20:4 basis 10:6 44:2 58:18 battle 36:15 37:19 bear 103:8 beard 59:21 bears 91:20 beattie 60:2 beautiful 18:25 26:5 26:22 39:24,24 46:1 54:19 63:25 72:3 beauty 24:13 75:9 beaver 97:11 beavers 103:6 bedard 76:13,13 bedtime 75:8 beg 26:11 55:8 began 36:14 begging 31:19 beginning 9:23 69:17 begun 71:4 behalf 2:3 59:25 83:8 85:12,13 98:25 100:14 105:10 behave 90:24 beings 34:14 98:3 belief 47:8 believe 6:10 24:16 27:12 45:15 61:13 62:4 63:4 66:11 72:18 78:1,11 82:6 104:24</p>	<p>bell 13:17 14:14,15 14:15 belong 91:24 100:4 beloved 18:7 belton 59:24 beneficial 40:6 72:18,24 103:21 benefit 19:23 30:9 36:2 benefits 37:13 66:2 66:5,8,17,18,23 102:23 103:1 benefitted 96:25 benson 13:4 berries 81:4 best 14:23 32:13,23 32:24 39:14 42:9 beth 22:14 29:19 bethany 87:18 101:22 better 38:21 46:9 betty 13:17 17:9,10 beyond 20:1 bgf 13:5 big 15:4 23:14 41:12 42:9 49:4 104:19 bigger 22:25 bighorn 42:13,13 bill 32:9 billion 80:24,25 bills 20:19 binoculars 48:4 biodiversity 17:16 45:5 biological 3:25 16:5 76:23 93:2 98:5 biologically 37:14 biologists 30:15 32:25 50:9 69:2 86:1 89:1 biology 49:17 50:8 biotic 16:24 birds 70:11 bison 27:25</p>
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bit 51:23 100:2 black 102:18 blake 43:3 blank 14:6 blatant 21:5 blessed 48:1 blevins 59:21 75:2,2 blinded 26:21 bloc 86:14 block 87:5 blood 49:8 blue 4:11 44:10 bold 93:5 bolted 65:6 bond 49:1 63:20 books 46:7,19 boost 49:15 borders 104:23 bore 55:21 born 44:25 boulder 64:6 boundaries 68:6 94:7 boundary 33:5 49:7 68:8 bounding 65:8 box 11:21 95:2 boxes 14:9 boy 29:8 63:9,10 break 51:13,19 63:20 breaks 52:7 breath 61:20 breed 70:12 breeding 5:19 8:21 brief 51:21 58:15 briefly 36:24 39:15 bring 3:17 17:22 23:23 27:9 53:10 63:1,5,19,24 66:2 73:12 86:22 100:17 bringing 34:6 53:21 54:21 66:8,23 brings 66:25 102:25	brink 35:23 broomfield 75:3 brother 75:20 80:6 brothers 79:3,23 80:2 brought 24:9 50:24 66:5 69:3 72:8 95:5 103:3 brown 93:9 bruce 60:2 bryant 59:18 73:21 budget 32:8 82:17 buffalo 45:25 46:3 46:15 buffer 68:6 building 51:22 built 38:15 43:18 burkhart 59:19 71:23,23 burning 27:15 burton 13:20 23:20 23:20 businesses 25:8	called 11:9 12:3 13:16 22:17 33:21 47:13 49:9 calls 79:3 camera 48:6 camp 61:17 campaign 103:16 campgrounds 80:19 camping 36:12 45:1 canada 5:6 7:15 28:7,8 54:8 58:19 87:13 canada's 58:18 canadian 16:9 cancel 95:14 canine 57:19 canis 1:6,7 4:6 8:14 cans 80:20 canyon 47:13 58:10 captive 5:19 85:6 car 97:4 carcasses 49:8 cards 13:12 care 11:17 18:7,7 23:16 27:19,20,22 27:24,24 40:22 46:16 53:11 78:7 93:19 carefully 10:22 caribou 42:5 caring 63:14 carnivore 102:25 carolina 90:1 carried 16:15 carrier 43:10 carries 65:20 carry 61:1 cascade 102:25 103:1 cascades 16:6 case 11:21 45:13 58:16 catherine 22:14 31:4	cattle 28:1 38:23 47:3 49:12 57:21 90:25 100:15 cause 82:6 103:17 cds 14:1 celebrate 82:7 celebration 14:20 center 19:16 23:21 24:7,23 26:3 27:6 29:22,24 40:20 48:20 51:4 78:24 83:11 85:8,14 center's 83:9 centers 53:24 central 5:7 28:14 centuries 35:9 96:6 certain 10:24 33:1 58:17 70:16 77:2 certainly 73:7 certified 106:5,18 certify 106:7 chad 73:17 78:22 chain 16:9 chairs 14:7 challenges 16:4 champions 79:19 chance 48:9 54:15 54:16,21 97:3,13 change 29:25 43:20 changed 36:19 changes 88:23 channeled 34:19 characterize 93:6 charge 44:2 charged 20:3,7 charles 13:17 15:20 15:21 charlotte 73:16 87:21 checkerboard 58:2 cheyn 47:1 cheyne 34:22 chiarello 101:20 chiariello 103:11,11
	c		
	c 2:1 15:22 17:11 18:16 20:13,13 22:19,19 31:5,5 32:1 38:3 44:23,23 44:23 47:1,2 50:6 54:6,6 57:9,9 58:7 61:10 68:15 72:14 78:23,23 82:3 84:20 87:22 89:19,19 92:3 101:23 106:2,2 cabin 28:21 cages 47:24 california 60:16 68:24 69:9 75:4 83:9,11,18 84:6 86:2 87:23 88:10 92:20 call 11:7 13:15 22:13 81:2,9 102:6 102:24		

chicago 74:3 chicken 70:17 child 100:16,18 children 15:14 47:21 74:13,15 75:14 children's 46:7 75:15 choice 94:20 choose 12:3 13:22 57:5 94:19 chose 13:1 36:13 75:10 chris 73:17 84:20 christel 13:19 22:18 christianna 51:16 54:5 christina 59:19 chuck 51:18 57:9 cindy 59:19 72:14 circumference 80:9 circumscribed 94:6 cities 33:16 citizen 27:6 35:2 citizens 20:17 44:10 92:6 civil 23:9 civilized 34:13 claim 38:16 81:17 102:7 class 20:17 clearly 34:1 87:1 climate 43:19 climbing 64:23 clinging 93:21,22 close 41:4 77:18 78:16 closed 25:8 105:17 closer 75:10 closest 75:12 closing 31:21 club 50:17 clubbed 33:24 clue 30:25	coalition 28:15 cobleskill 36:21 code 94:13 coexist 91:4,21 96:14 cold 28:19 colgan 89:18 collaborative 16:8 collected 25:3 collection 14:8 colleen 34:22 50:2,5 college 36:14 colonel 31:11 coloradans 62:8 66:16 71:14 83:25 90:19 colorado 1:15 16:1 16:18 17:13 19:6,16 19:17 21:22 22:1,8 22:10 23:21 24:23 25:7 26:3 27:5 28:15 29:20,22 32:2 33:1 35:25 38:6 40:3,19 44:25 48:10 48:20 49:21,23 50:24 51:4 52:25 53:1,21 54:18 55:15 56:1 57:12 60:9,15 60:23 61:1,23 62:1 62:8,13,16 64:6,23 65:17,19,21 66:12 67:9 69:8,14 70:6 71:9 72:1,5,10,18 72:21,22 73:12 75:3 75:11,22 76:14 77:9 77:9,25 78:24 80:15 80:16 83:13,17 84:2 85:7 86:2 87:23 89:3,10 90:1,8,9,18 90:20 91:16,22 92:6 92:20 93:18 95:12 95:23 97:20 98:25 100:3 102:4,6,11 104:5	colorado's 65:22 combination 3:23 combining 56:5 come 3:10 11:9 13:21 24:6 29:24 37:9 39:17 49:2 50:7 68:15 69:18 78:16 80:4 83:3 84:15 88:1,3,4,12 89:11 98:7 99:21 comeback 92:8 comes 47:18 coming 5:6 62:3 65:3 81:20 105:13 commenced 96:7 comment 10:17 12:9 14:6,8 58:19 105:4 comments 2:14 10:7 10:14,16,20,20,23 10:25 11:3,9,17,20 11:25,25 12:6,14,17 12:18 13:1,22,23,23 13:24 14:2,7,11,12 23:19 52:5,13 58:15 89:9,10 105:7,8,9 105:12,14 commercial 71:18 committing 57:2 common 79:6 86:8 86:11 communities 69:8 community 16:7,24 44:6 55:17 66:9 company 1:22 2:9 compare 58:21 59:11 compared 81:19 compassion 80:3 compatible 42:10 complaining 67:14 complete 38:11 59:15 62:6 completely 55:6 73:13 78:16	complexes 55:18 components 17:3 composition 16:11 comprehensive 32:15 compromise 22:24 36:1 comptroller 89:25 computer 106:8 concept 103:21 conception 20:1 concern 14:21 23:5 34:9 83:22 concerned 35:2 78:11 81:24 86:12 concerning 68:20 concerns 69:3 91:2 conclude 8:11 9:2 concluded 9:11 concludes 9:7 conclusions 71:3 condor 19:2 conduct 2:13 conducted 83:24 conflict 19:25 35:14 congress 32:8,9 connected 79:22 80:4 connecticut 77:8 connection 11:25 consecutive 8:22 conservation 6:19 16:3 17:2 35:23 36:25 37:17 57:18 93:2,6 103:19,22,24 conservationist 45:3 conservative 71:18 conserve 30:7,11 consider 7:9 20:16 63:4 considerably 88:10 consideration 7:22 10:15 14:11 105:9 considered 10:22 16:20 21:6 42:7
--	--	--	--

<p>56:18 71:9 105:13 consolidated 4:5 constitute 8:20,24 constituted 7:21 constrained 16:5 consulting 2:9 contact 13:6 contained 16:23 contiguous 7:10,17 8:3 continent 56:8 continue 54:12 59:8 59:10 84:10,22 88:13 98:16 101:3 continued 47:10 71:14 84:7,17 92:22 102:2 continues 60:8 continuing 5:12 6:10 30:9 46:20 control 36:25 54:19 54:20 55:3 94:10 controlling 38:20 controversy 55:8 conversation 83:4 cooperation 12:19 coordinator 2:20 copies 14:4 copy 11:20 core 56:9 correct 15:13 cosmic 79:2 cost 87:6 costello 13:19 20:11 20:12,12 cotton 87:18 101:22 101:22 countries 21:8 88:1 country 4:17 21:3,7 27:19 28:21,24 35:3 35:19 41:17 44:9 47:22 49:10,20 76:19 77:17 81:19 83:10 88:13 99:2</p>	<p>couple 26:18 75:8 courage 63:17 course 88:22 court 1:22 2:25 11:18 cousins 57:19 cowards 31:15 cowen 59:20 68:14 68:14 cows 27:24 38:25 coyote 88:6 coyotes 40:24 100:20 create 90:11 created 44:1 creature 34:11 48:13 creatures 26:22 53:3 61:4 63:5,25 65:3 74:6 credit 68:24 criteria 6:23 7:5 78:9 critical 37:12 45:6 95:25 critically 14:22 cross 84:1 90:19 crossed 68:25 crosshairs 96:12 crosshatched 4:13 crossroads 44:9 crothers 22:15 31:4 31:4 crowded 100:7 cruel 24:4 26:9 39:25 68:1 102:13 cruelty 34:4,12 95:10 cry 93:5 cu 37:4 culturally 37:13 cumming 34:22 47:1,1 current 4:1 5:20 7:11,23 8:5 9:5,16</p>	<p>17:4 19:21 32:16 33:16 40:8 59:6 71:8 currently 8:15,23 20:1 65:25 75:3 92:10,16 curve 5:15 cut 64:11 68:20 cycling 65:17 cynical 102:20 cynthia 34:23</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">d</p> <hr/> <p>d 2:1 15:22 17:11 27:5 28:14 43:13 48:18,18 52:22 58:7 72:14,15 76:14,14 78:23,23 83:8 94:25 94:25 95:9 97:20 100:11 d.c. 1:23 dakota 50:24,25 damage 57:24 94:21 danger 7:1 87:13 104:12 dark 65:1 darkness 44:18 61:18 darlene 13:20 24:22 datasets 37:7 dating 104:17 daughter 31:11 47:3 53:5 daughters 32:2 dave 76:13 david 59:21 87:17 98:24 day 15:14 25:17 34:3 42:13 56:17 84:9,10 106:14 days 39:12 dc 2:18,22 ddt 56:8 de 56:2</p>	<p>dead 49:8 deadline 14:10 deadly 46:20 60:24 deal 40:4 dealing 3:22 75:22 death 33:24 102:13 deb 87:19 deborah 51:16 52:22 87:19 95:8 100:11 decades 16:2 84:14 92:9 december 10:15 14:10,20 105:16 106:14 decent 34:12 decide 58:1 decision 15:13 39:22 40:9 49:21 57:15 60:2 105:13 decisions 14:23 16:15 17:4 30:21 43:24 61:4 declare 60:14 declaring 60:17 decline 60:13 dedicated 21:6 83:12 102:19 deep 65:8 80:2 deeply 63:20 102:20 deer 24:17 27:23 37:1 49:15 75:23 81:12 103:3 defeatist 93:3 defend 63:22 defender 62:22 defenders 92:4 defies 86:8 define 35:21 84:23 definite 101:5 degradation 16:14 degree 24:10 36:14 degrees 28:20 delay 85:4 97:13</p>
--	---	--	---

<p>delist 2:6 3:7 9:6,10 22:20 26:17,19 32:13 39:10 40:2 46:22 47:7 57:5 58:9 59:14 64:14 70:22 71:2,24 72:17 76:1,18 83:20 86:6 88:11,17 89:12,22 91:11,23 92:25 99:4 103:12</p> <p>delisted 4:25 5:3,11 6:3 8:18 32:5,7 33:17 41:9 43:7 45:16 53:17,18 54:23 56:9 59:12 66:10</p> <p>delisting 15:24 17:5 28:17 29:12,16 32:9 32:22 38:7,10 45:17 45:24 52:23 53:16 55:8 56:15 58:14 59:2,6,11 61:13 62:22,25 63:20 65:18,20,24 73:22 75:6 77:25 83:22 87:2,24 88:22 93:5 95:3,14 97:14</p> <p>delists 77:13</p> <p>demise 57:1</p> <p>democracy 32:11</p> <p>demonstrate 16:14</p> <p>demonstrated 34:1</p> <p>demonstrations 12:18</p> <p>den 27:15</p> <p>denver 1:15 37:5 47:2 72:1 74:19 83:1</p> <p>deny 44:11,16 62:8</p> <p>department 1:1</p> <p>depend 39:20</p> <p>depict 46:7</p> <p>depleted 57:23</p> <p>deposit 11:20</p>	<p>deposited 14:8</p> <p>derived 66:18</p> <p>describe 3:10 6:13 62:24</p> <p>desert 43:5</p> <p>deserve 15:6 47:20 47:21 79:14</p> <p>design 36:2</p> <p>designate 82:13</p> <p>designated 13:6 78:4,12 93:25</p> <p>designation 102:2</p> <p>designed 11:4 61:2</p> <p>desire 76:20 84:16</p> <p>desk 13:8</p> <p>despite 96:13</p> <p>destination 25:11</p> <p>destroy 49:19</p> <p>destroyed 70:18</p> <p>destroying 24:10,11</p> <p>destruction 57:21 87:7</p> <p>detail 18:20 64:19</p> <p>detailed 89:10</p> <p>determination 10:18</p> <p>determine 7:20 104:22</p> <p>determined 7:22 32:16 95:22</p> <p>determining 25:22</p> <p>detroit 74:15</p> <p>develop 85:4 91:3</p> <p>developed 45:2</p> <p>diane 34:21 48:17</p> <p>dickerson 73:17 78:22,22</p> <p>dictate 21:17</p> <p>die 48:10</p> <p>dies 60:11</p> <p>difference 31:23 37:18 53:7 93:21 94:2,9</p> <p>different 56:10 79:8 100:13</p>	<p>dig 55:1</p> <p>dim 102:18</p> <p>diminishing 24:18</p> <p>direct 11:12</p> <p>directly 12:15 35:19 84:15</p> <p>director 2:17 28:14 92:4 101:23 104:5</p> <p>disappearing 76:10 98:18</p> <p>disappointed 88:7 88:14</p> <p>disappointing 93:1</p> <p>disarray 94:5</p> <p>disaster 38:11</p> <p>disbursement 62:8</p> <p>discrete 8:25</p> <p>discussion 59:5</p> <p>disease 75:24</p> <p>disgrace 76:19</p> <p>disgraceful 25:19</p> <p>disgusted 31:12</p> <p>disgusting 81:23</p> <p>disheartened 39:22</p> <p>disheartening 62:3</p> <p>dismay 62:3</p> <p>disperse 100:5 102:11</p> <p>disruption 13:3</p> <p>distancing 21:1</p> <p>distant 15:17</p> <p>distinct 6:25 7:18 9:3</p> <p>distinguishable 9:1</p> <p>distractions 12:20 12:23</p> <p>distribution 3:21 29:14</p> <p>diverse 77:16</p> <p>diversity 66:17</p> <p>divide 26:3 44:9 47:2 90:1</p> <p>division 41:19</p> <p>documented 71:8</p>	<p>dodo 19:3</p> <p>dog 57:19 100:12</p> <p>dogs 58:1</p> <p>doing 17:24 18:4 23:22 27:8 28:3,3,8 31:1 37:23 41:4,7 65:5,6 75:25,25 76:22</p> <p>dollar 49:19 50:11 87:10</p> <p>dollars 68:11</p> <p>dominic 77:19</p> <p>dooley 34:22 43:12 43:12</p> <p>doom 65:24</p> <p>doomed 38:7</p> <p>doubts 73:10</p> <p>doucet 51:18 58:7,7</p> <p>downright 26:23</p> <p>dps 5:4</p> <p>dr 17:17</p> <p>dramatically 5:22 29:14,15</p> <p>drastically 102:17</p> <p>draw 61:19</p> <p>drawing 53:25</p> <p>drawings 75:16</p> <p>dream 74:18</p> <p>dreams 79:3</p> <p>driven 77:6</p> <p>dropping 29:15</p> <p>drowned 20:4</p> <p>dudek 87:18 94:25 94:25</p> <p>due 6:3 29:16 70:14 70:16</p> <p>duluth 74:15</p> <p>durango 80:16</p> <p>dusk 85:17</p> <p>duty 26:13</p>
			e
			<p>e 2:1,1 14:15 15:22 15:22 17:11,11,11 17:11 18:16 20:13</p>

<p>20:13,13,13 22:19 22:19 24:23 26:2 27:5,5 28:14 29:20 29:20 31:5,5,5 32:1 33:9,9 35:1,1 36:9 38:3,3 40:18,19 43:12,13 44:23,23 45:23,23 47:1 48:18 48:18 50:6,6 52:22 52:23,23 54:6 55:13 55:13,13 58:7 59:24 62:21 65:16 67:7 68:15 70:6 71:24 73:22 75:2,3 76:14 78:23 80:15,15 82:3 86:6,6 87:22,22 89:19,19 91:10 93:18 94:25 95:9,9 96:22 97:19,20 98:24 100:11,12 101:22 104:4,4 106:2,21</p> <p>eager 84:16 eagle 59:11 77:3 86:18,22 93:9 95:24 96:4 eagles 59:12 70:10 71:13 86:14,21,22 86:24 earlier 83:22,24 early 28:19 43:9 74:3 99:4,7 104:17 earth 18:22 28:5 63:5,18 79:2 88:21 earth's 63:25 easily 15:11 69:12 eastern 7:25 104:5 easy 82:11 93:8 eat 42:16 81:4,12,13 81:13 eating 19:8 49:11 echo 79:11,11 eco 55:18 ecological 2:18 16:2 66:16 72:20</p>	<p>ecologically 16:24 ecology 85:9 economic 19:22 61:4 66:8,18,23 economically 37:13 economy 25:8 54:2 54:17 ecosystem 16:23,25 17:3 24:8,9 30:17 36:3 37:13 39:20 45:6 46:14 53:7,8 53:11,14,22,23 54:12,21 60:5 61:21 63:19 69:23 70:13 71:13 76:4 78:2 90:11 91:19 94:14 98:12 103:1 ecosystems 16:5,12 16:17 33:2 35:19 66:2 96:1 103:14 edge 11:22 85:16,20 educated 69:1 education 20:14 21:16 36:1 63:5 73:9 84:9 educational 41:5 efficiency 11:5 effort 6:9 57:20 86:9 94:21 105:11 efforts 34:18 ego 30:21 eight 92:16 eighty 52:7 either 43:2 elated 27:9 electronic 13:25 elephant 19:11 21:10 eliminate 35:12 73:13 eliminated 86:23,25 elimination 55:23 elk 19:7 24:17 27:22 38:17,18,18 40:4 49:11,13,15 53:9</p>	<p>54:15,20 62:2 69:22 69:22,24 75:23 81:12 87:7 90:10,10 90:24,24 97:10 103:3 104:6,7,25 ellis 59:20 75:2 embarrassed 42:16 42:20 embrace 26:24 emerge 15:17 emergency 93:19 emeritus 15:25 17:17 emotional 19:22 45:11 emphasis 56:2 emphasize 56:2 emphasized 16:4 enacted 87:15 enclosure 47:19 encounter 64:22 encourage 49:2 64:18 67:1 72:21 endangered 1:6,7 2:6 3:6,12 4:7 6:11 6:18,24 7:3,6 8:6 9:11,12,15,19,24 10:5,10 14:18 15:2 15:24 16:21 21:4,7 28:1 30:18 32:10 38:5,14 43:15 44:14 44:18 46:12,23 47:8 54:25 55:4,20,25 56:8 61:2,6,12 62:24 64:16 65:19 66:10 70:8,15,18,23 77:15 82:13 85:9 89:23 90:17 91:5,6 91:13 93:7,12 97:24 98:19 102:1 104:8 endeavor 43:17 endured 103:15 energy 6:5 enforced 59:9</p>	<p>enforcement 55:22 enhance 30:7 enjoy 30:12 54:10 65:17 66:16 enjoyed 46:4 enjoying 36:12 ensure 15:11 59:8 61:3 ensures 6:11 ensuring 74:12,14 74:16 96:10 entangled 45:5 entered 14:4 entire 8:9 35:15 70:24 104:25 entities 6:21 entity 6:24,24 7:6,11 7:21 8:5,11 9:5,6 43:25 97:24 98:2 entrance 85:16 entrusted 18:6 environment 20:3,8 29:10 30:10 45:7 47:19 57:22 66:6 85:2 environmental 15:25 16:3 19:19 37:5 44:8 50:9 57:3 64:7 71:19 equally 39:19 equals 94:17 equivocation 78:14 er 93:20 eradicate 20:20 eradicated 81:16 eradicating 78:17 eradication 21:5 eric 42:1 erik 34:22 erroneous 32:19,22 erroneously 32:17 esa 3:19 4:3 8:3 40:11 45:16 56:17 60:11 67:1 84:22 87:14 92:23 93:19</p>
--	--	--	---

99:3 101:4 102:15 103:23 esl 85:25 especially 49:1 81:22 essence 60:14 essential 30:17 60:4 78:4 82:14 84:24 88:24 91:19 93:25 94:1 96:2 101:9,11 101:11,12 102:3 essentially 7:25 establish 4:16 6:1 77:10 85:25 103:24 establishes 97:25 estimated 90:10 ethic 103:22,24 ethical 42:14,15 49:9 98:25 europe 88:12 evaluated 7:10 evel 51:16 52:20,22 52:22 evelyn 34:23 45:21 evening 2:3 18:14 24:24 29:19 31:6 55:12 56:14 62:14 64:5 70:5 76:13,16 82:2 83:7 88:20 95:8 105:11 event 48:7 72:4 events 85:15 eventually 28:8 everybody 27:18 everyone's 12:19 evidence 8:8 16:19 evidenced 70:25 evident 83:21 evil 63:16 evolved 99:22 exactly 28:4 examples 49:22 99:8 exceeded 104:11 excellent 62:1 86:1 90:8 95:22 104:18	exception 4:7 exceptionally 4:20 5:22 excited 88:3 excluded 32:24 excuse 41:17 46:15 85:17 exemplified 49:23 exist 84:12 existed 4:12 79:6 existing 94:10 exists 56:18 expand 5:12 64:18 85:6 96:3 expanded 5:22 expanding 3:20 expansions 64:20 expect 8:24 88:8 expectations 104:12 expected 13:11 68:20 experience 28:22 29:7,25 33:16 39:16 39:18 42:23 43:2,5 47:18 48:9,25 73:24 74:23 85:1 experienced 28:23 28:25 29:8 90:5 experiences 39:14 68:17 experiencing 28:23 29:8 experimental 9:21 93:25 101:11 experts 83:21 99:19 explain 21:4 explains 3:5 express 23:7 70:11 84:6,13 expressing 83:22 extent 7:9 exterminate 26:22 exterminated 41:3 exterminating 84:15	extermination 73:1 extinct 22:6,9 26:19 35:8 46:3 70:16 extinction 3:13,15 7:1 8:9,16 9:7,25 19:3 23:24 34:7 35:6 86:21 87:14 104:13,20 extirpated 40:7 100:17 extirpation 65:25 92:9 101:14 extreme 29:12 59:3 extremely 59:1 eye 1:23 37:9 eyes 48:11 79:9	73:6 75:11 79:4,24 80:4 family's 75:20 famous 33:3 far 39:17 44:1 48:6 49:23 62:6 78:15 81:23 82:19 88:25 90:16 93:5 96:7 97:2 103:22 farsighted 40:12 fast 80:20 father 54:8 64:7 79:10 father's 31:14 fault 67:17 favor 99:3 favorite 48:22 favorites 22:5 fear 31:15 35:11,11 39:4 40:8 44:18 53:3 76:2 90:20 federal 10:11 14:18 20:24 22:8 33:12 34:6,16 37:23 59:9 83:14 84:2,8 92:23 93:12 96:2,5,9,15 97:22 104:22 feed 24:18 feedback 66:25 feeds 63:11 feel 22:5 34:14 48:12 51:7 54:10 57:13,19 60:8 65:12 70:11 76:6 79:25 85:22 feelings 84:13 feels 68:19 feet 29:5 65:1,8 85:20 fell 61:18 74:4 fellow 74:7,8 felt 57:18 female 47:13 58:11 fences 19:7 87:5,10 97:9,9 100:20
		f	
		f 17:17 28:14 33:4,9 36:9 95:9 106:2 face 21:11 28:5 98:10 99:2 facebook 41:22 facility 84:6 facing 12:15 36:15 89:5 fact 41:3 42:20 43:23 54:13 64:9 91:19 factors 25:23 facts 50:16 76:23 fade 79:20 fail 74:24 fails 38:13 fair 68:5 fairy 39:3 falcon 93:9 falcons 56:7 fall 15:3 17:5 26:14 fallen 87:2 falsehood 44:19 families 30:4,5 69:1 94:4 family 39:11 63:10 67:9,11 68:15,16	

<p>fended 69:13 ferguson 22:14 36:8 36:8 fifty 50:19 figure 99:7 figures 50:11,23 final 10:18 12:10 105:13 finally 17:24 find 8:14 57:6 findings 40:10 finish 13:17 76:1 finished 72:9 fire 27:16 firmly 61:13 72:18 first 7:20 13:15,21 14:13 15:1,3 22:3 24:11 26:4 35:5 36:14 41:4 45:8 58:11 65:20 87:4 firsthand 29:25 90:5 fish 1:1 2:4,10,16,21 10:13 11:11 14:24 22:20,23 23:3,3 26:13 30:8,11 39:9 43:6,25 52:5,13 58:9 61:10 70:22 71:1 72:16 76:15,18 77:4,12,15 82:4 86:15 89:13,21 95:13 97:21 99:9,18 103:6,12 104:9 105:10,15 fit 78:9 five 5:10 41:18 57:16 90:5 94:11 fix 76:4 flag 31:13 41:23 flat 85:19 flawed 102:20 flew 84:21 flock 66:20 floor 3:3 flowers 87:5</p>	<p>flytrap 19:11 focus 9:14 10:4 focused 19:24 focusing 6:5 folks 74:16 follow 10:24 49:22 99:14 following 2:15 11:4 85:21 99:4 food 68:3,4 75:21 103:7 foote 87:19 95:8,8 footer 64:24 force 94:10 foregoing 106:9 foremost 99:13 foresee 59:9 foreseeable 3:16 7:3 forest 24:14 80:18 89:7 forests 24:14 61:1 forever 15:8 form 14:10 49:1 81:10 106:8 formal 12:8 former 43:19 56:19 60:15 61:15 95:21 96:4 forms 14:6,8 formula 3:16 fortitude 86:16 forty 102:19 forward 6:12,19 10:6 11:9 18:21 44:17 82:10 104:18 found 8:8,12,20,25 9:5,16 35:13 63:9 83:24 99:11 foundation 104:6,7 foundation's 38:18 49:14 founded 83:11 four 38:23 39:12 44:9 47:11 75:17 76:7 85:1</p>	<p>fourth 8:17 foxes 40:24 fraction 83:15 fragile 79:17 frankly 23:22 frazier 1:13 2:17 6:15 free 20:25 29:11 53:14 75:12 freedom 70:12 freely 94:9 friend 77:9 front 11:10 12:15 13:16 fulfilling 30:13,14 30:19 full 11:15 36:10 55:21 75:16 fully 45:16 47:9 56:21 62:11 72:21 73:11 82:22 93:13 100:2 105:12 function 44:2 functional 16:17,24 functioning 16:11 funding 34:18 funny 80:21 further 66:6 92:25 furthermore 60:10 future 3:16 7:3 8:10 15:15 23:4,10 36:3 43:17 44:4 47:21,23 53:5 85:23 105:2 fws 85:4 86:19</p>	<p>gary 1:13 2:17 3:3,8 6:13 10:8 gathered 10:16 gayler 59:20 67:6,6 geist 34:22 40:18,18 generate 72:23 generation 21:23 22:2 23:4,10 57:1 generations 15:15 34:9 36:3 44:4 47:23 53:5 85:1,22 genetic 85:3 89:4 gentlemen 31:6 geographic 7:11 9:17 geographical 32:18 getting 36:18 37:4,4 53:19 67:22 80:21 gettysburg 44:15 gift 98:9 girl 77:9 give 3:4 47:16 52:2 52:3 56:6 68:23 78:6 88:15 90:15 96:16 97:13 given 13:9,25 14:3 14:11 17:2 26:12 70:12 72:25 80:1 105:8 gives 63:11 giving 54:15 76:20 100:16 glacier 61:17 glad 29:9 glenarm 1:15 glimpsed 16:22 global 87:14 globally 8:8 globe 80:9,10 glorified 94:15 go 4:3 6:13 11:1,13 23:24 24:3 28:4 50:11 53:15 72:6,6 80:10,11,19 97:5 101:16</p>
g			
<p>g 2:1 14:15 27:5 36:9 39:9 40:19 43:12 45:23 47:2 59:24 67:7 89:19 gail 13:17 14:14,15 gain 65:8 gained 86:10 game 21:1 42:9 49:4 99:9,18 104:19</p>			

<p>goal 3:12,17 9:23 16:21 17:6 86:9 goals 5:9,11 93:7 104:11 goats 91:15 god 79:10 godbee 22:16 27:4,4 goes 38:22 75:21 going 24:10 27:6 28:20 36:18 37:6,8 49:6 51:13,13 53:23 53:24 58:12 59:18 65:12 77:18 78:13 80:18,23 93:24 95:1 97:25 98:1,17 104:18 good 2:3,3 17:20,21 18:5 22:5 23:2 24:24 27:10 29:19 31:6 55:12 56:14 64:5 67:3 70:5 76:13 81:13 82:2 83:7 88:20 93:4 95:8 goodness 86:13,15 gotten 55:3 government 20:18 21:6 31:16,16 34:6 34:16,19 68:10 72:25 88:14 96:15 104:22 government's 53:18 103:16 governments 34:8 grandchild 77:19 grandchildren 14:16 19:1 47:12,20 48:11 62:12 74:13 grandchildren's 46:19 grandfather 80:16 grandma 15:14 grandmother 47:11 79:10</p>	<p>grandparents 45:1 grasp 15:11 grasslands 57:23 grateful 40:11 gray 1:6 2:7 3:7 4:17 6:16,19 7:9,11 7:14,16,19,23,25 8:4,7,8 9:7,17 10:1 14:17 15:24 16:19 19:2,18 22:20 28:17 29:12 32:9,16 38:4 38:11 39:10 40:23 43:14,24 44:17 45:24,25 46:10,20 46:22 47:7,9 52:23 55:24 56:15,16 58:9 61:11 63:21,21 64:16 65:19 66:10 69:14 70:7,24 71:4 71:25 72:2,17,19 73:6,9,11,23 76:18 77:25 78:9 82:8,15 83:14 84:22,24 85:24 86:7 87:2,24 88:23 89:22 90:4 91:12 92:15 95:4 96:11 100:23 101:8 102:1,9 103:13 104:8,10 great 4:18,23 5:4,24 6:2,8,17 7:13 9:18 10:1 17:21 19:1 24:9 40:4 54:21 63:2 74:3 77:9 79:1 92:3,11,11 95:17,19 104:11 greater 102:23 greatest 40:7 42:23 43:2 77:3 94:21 greatly 90:20 greed 26:6 30:21 greedy 100:6 grew 4:21 5:8 36:10 36:11 44:25 45:1 100:15</p>	<p>grizzly 103:8 group 13:15 39:12 39:17 77:21 88:15 groups 11:8 20:5 76:21 99:23 grow 76:8 grows 76:7 growth 5:15 guarantees 102:10 guardian 63:18 guardians 79:18 88:21 101:24,25 guests 41:6,6,8 guidelines 43:24 guiding 98:14 guinn 34:24 45:21 45:21,23 gunning 20:22 gut 25:16 guy 64:11 guys 18:6 26:13 78:11 97:4 gwen 34:22 43:12</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">h</p> <hr/> <p>h 15:22 17:11 18:16 20:13 22:19,19 28:14 29:20,20 31:5 31:5 35:2 38:3,3 44:23 47:1 50:6 52:22 54:6 57:9,10 61:10 71:24 78:23 80:15 84:20 86:5,6 87:22 92:2 95:9 100:11 101:22 habitat 4:2 16:18 29:13 30:8 38:21 40:4 43:19 47:22 53:25 56:19 57:20 60:7 62:1 64:17 65:21 71:6,7,12 72:22 73:12 83:16 84:8 87:7 90:9,23 92:18 95:22 100:1 102:5</p>	<p>habitats 16:14 86:1 half 65:7 68:20 97:3 hand 6:13 53:15,15 106:13 handed 33:14 hands 34:7 82:15 hang 43:9 hanging 100:20 hangs 35:16 haphazard 66:1 happen 62:10,14 63:2 77:13 90:14 100:22 happened 38:11 happening 24:25 25:4,14 46:21 65:25 87:9 happiness 56:5 happy 31:22 hard 25:8 harder 82:15 harm 69:5 79:13 97:15 harming 79:13 harmony 73:11 hate 35:12,14 hated 86:14 hatred 30:21 68:21 hawks 70:10,16,17 hayden 45:9 heading 28:21 86:21 headquarters 2:18 2:22 health 45:6 58:25 59:1,3,4 90:3 healthy 16:11 17:2 30:10,17 35:19 45:13 60:5 66:19 70:1 78:2 90:11 91:19 92:22 103:14 hear 18:18 21:24 31:8 42:19 45:22 49:21 50:3,8 62:15 75:6 79:3 106:10</p>
---	---	--	--

<p>heard 12:22 25:21 48:23 53:6 57:25 64:21 75:23 83:1 85:18 89:10,11,12 91:18</p> <p>hearing 1:12 2:5,8 2:12,13,23,24 3:5 10:7,9,10,19,25,25 11:7,24 12:5,10,11 13:3 14:3,3 29:1 31:7 62:9 105:17</p> <p>hearings 57:17</p> <p>heart 48:8 79:11</p> <p>heartbreaking 46:8</p> <p>hearts 48:12 79:9 80:2,3</p> <p>heaven 56:5</p> <p>heavens 79:2</p> <p>hello 17:10 33:8 50:2 52:20 54:5 68:14 77:24 78:22 80:14 93:17</p> <p>help 17:19,19 35:21 54:19,20 60:3 69:11 84:14,16 85:9 89:4 96:2,14</p> <p>helping 53:22 54:17</p> <p>helps 30:10,11 69:15 103:24</p> <p>helsch 13:18</p> <p>helsli 19:14,15,15</p> <p>herbert 73:17 86:5,5</p> <p>herd 90:10</p> <p>herds 24:17 75:22</p> <p>hereunto 106:13</p> <p>heritage 23:10 61:3</p> <p>herrera 73:18 80:14 80:14</p> <p>hi 18:15 22:18 31:4 36:8 48:17 57:9 58:7 65:15 67:6 71:23 101:22 103:11</p> <p>hidden 69:13</p>	<p>hiding 31:15</p> <p>high 36:13 69:22</p> <p>highest 64:24</p> <p>highlighting 96:9</p> <p>hiking 36:11 61:16 65:17</p> <p>hill 15:17</p> <p>hillside 65:3</p> <p>hinder 62:7</p> <p>hindered 54:11</p> <p>historic 4:1 70:24 71:12 81:15 83:16 92:16</p> <p>historical 7:17,24 32:18 33:2 65:21 100:25</p> <p>historically 60:7</p> <p>history 4:3 35:5 41:2 44:16 46:7,8 46:19,20 56:25 57:13,14 94:12 103:15 104:16,20</p> <p>hit 4:23 5:9 25:8 35:10</p> <p>hold 13:12 26:1 48:7 52:16</p> <p>hole 55:1</p> <p>home 54:8,12 74:9 102:6</p> <p>homemade 75:16</p> <p>honest 33:18</p> <p>honor 17:23 29:21 33:3,5 64:13 101:4</p> <p>hooked 58:11</p> <p>hope 24:13 25:21 40:13 49:21 77:19 89:22 94:19</p> <p>hopes 84:4 102:17</p> <p>hoping 39:12 53:24 65:9 88:1,13</p> <p>horrific 36:17 41:3 73:2</p> <p>hosts 90:9</p> <p>hour 13:10 44:9</p>	<p>hours 64:11 97:6</p> <p>house 75:13</p> <p>houston 74:3</p> <p>howl 15:17 48:11 58:1 61:20,25</p> <p>howled 61:18</p> <p>howling 42:25 43:1 79:3</p> <p>howls 29:2 101:16</p> <p>huge 24:16 43:20</p> <p>human 34:4 79:5,8 79:25</p> <p>humane 20:2 73:3</p> <p>humans 19:25 73:8 80:10,10</p> <p>hundred 4:9 41:17 41:18 57:16 92:12</p> <p>hundreds 33:24 40:3 85:23</p> <p>hungry 37:3</p> <p>hunt 23:13,24 26:22 27:23 39:24 42:15 42:21 51:18 57:9,9 58:16 68:4 81:14</p> <p>hunted 22:25 26:9 26:10 27:12,13 41:10,20,20 42:4,11 42:11 48:4 56:23 60:12</p> <p>hunter 42:2,14,24 43:2 49:9 67:11,11</p> <p>hunters 21:1 30:23 40:9 42:17,21 46:4 49:4,7 67:14,24 68:4,4,8,16 76:21 81:18 99:1 100:6</p> <p>hunting 21:1 22:23 23:25 42:9,9,13,24 43:4,6 46:18 50:14 58:22 67:24 68:4,18 69:24 80:23 81:23 96:13 102:13</p> <p>hunts 50:12 75:20</p> <p>husband 17:17 61:16</p>	<p>husky 75:12</p> <p style="text-align: center;">i</p> <p>idaho 5:7,11 17:18 38:19 39:23 50:22 62:4 65:25 66:13 77:5 78:5 96:8,25 101:6</p> <p>identified 86:1</p> <p>ignorance 26:6</p> <p>ignorant 46:8</p> <p>ignore 30:14,19 88:15</p> <p>illness 75:22</p> <p>illogical 55:6</p> <p>illustrate 97:3</p> <p>images 48:7</p> <p>imagine 48:24</p> <p>imbalances 76:4</p> <p>immediately 85:5</p> <p>imminent 87:13</p> <p>impact 16:6 35:20 59:3</p> <p>impacted 91:2</p> <p>imperiled 103:8,25</p> <p>implement 35:22</p> <p>implore 56:24 84:10</p> <p>importance 10:23 16:10 17:15 39:19 91:1 98:7</p> <p>important 3:11 10:21 27:10 53:6,13 58:24 59:1 92:21 98:2,11</p> <p>importantly 57:4 63:15 68:16 95:11</p> <p>improve 9:21 37:1</p> <p>improvement 92:11</p> <p>inbreeding 89:4</p> <p>incapable 99:5</p> <p>include 75:18 89:3</p> <p>included 7:17,24 32:17</p> <p>including 12:9 35:25 56:1 60:15</p>
--	--	--	--

<p>75:10 83:17 95:23 96:8 incorporating 98:5 incorrectly 7:23 increase 38:20 53:23 66:22 76:3 increased 29:13,15 54:16 66:7 increasing 96:9 increasingly 43:20 incredible 48:25 98:10,13 incredibly 98:11 independent 13:4 indicate 11:2,16 13:12 78:13 indiscriminately 27:13 individual 16:23 33:14 78:8 104:21 individuals 12:25 industries 71:18 industry 28:1 80:24 86:17 infancy 83:19 influence 76:24 influenced 14:23 influences 20:6 inform 13:3 informal 11:24 information 10:14 10:16 13:7 14:2,24 informative 105:12 informed 16:15 infrastructure 66:8 inhabit 74:7 92:10 inherent 84:11 inhumane 26:9 30:5 34:10 53:19 insidious 18:10 instills 74:11 intact 61:21 integral 94:13 integrity 96:1</p>	<p>intelligence 63:17 intelligent 35:22 40:22 intend 42:16 intended 84:12 intensively 94:12 intent 40:14 70:23 77:16 85:20 91:5 intentionally 86:10 interact 29:24 73:5 interacting 48:22 interaction 34:5 47:18 interagency 17:20 interconnected 98:4 104:1 interconnection 98:7 interdependent 43:21 interest 13:1 23:9 31:1 76:20 77:21 106:11 interesting 25:7 42:5 interests 23:6 40:9 44:1,6 71:19 88:16 96:13,16 interior 1:1 28:21 interpreters 3:1 interpreting 3:2 interstate 17:20 interview 29:6 introduction 66:4 invite 23:7 29:23 involved 90:2 irony 29:12 irrational 55:6 irrelevant 43:17 irresponsible 34:10 99:14 isabel 51:16 56:14 isle 4:10,14 issue 35:21 47:5 67:12 82:25 99:9</p>	<p>issues 12:9 16:3 21:11 65:20 90:2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">j</p> <p>j 28:14 86:5 89:19 92:2 93:18 100:12 jackson 2:20 100:7 jailers 94:18 january 39:11 japan 88:12 jay 13:4,7 jeanine 73:19 89:18 jeers 12:18 jeff 87:18 96:21 jeopardized 102:20 jimenez 1:13 2:19 3:9 job 18:5 56:17 59:15 72:9 74:24 75:25 76:1 80:19 86:10 90:16 96:16 104:18 john 22:15 28:13 86:5 joined 39:11 jonathan 87:18 92:2 jones 87:18,19 93:17 93:17 100:11,11 joseph 73:17 joy 47:18 70:11 judge 56:25 57:5 julian 84:6</p> <p style="text-align: center;">k</p> <p>k 18:16 22:19 24:23 40:18 57:9 62:21 65:16 67:7 70:6 71:24,24 77:24 78:23 83:8 94:25 97:19 104:4 karen 59:19 71:23 73:18 87:19 97:19 karin 83:7 katie 34:22 40:18 keefover 73:18 88:20</p>	<p>keefovor 88:21 keep 12:12,23 19:7 23:15 26:14 43:8 46:22 53:3 58:15 80:21 91:14 94:3 keeping 53:13 55:24 90:3 99:3 kelly 3:1 kerby 101:21 104:4 104:4 key 35:18 45:5 54:11 keystone 15:9 35:5 49:18 83:15 89:1 kick 80:19 kid 80:19 kids 18:24,24,24 23:4,7 75:8,14 kill 21:4 24:3 25:20 27:15 39:24 49:5,14 66:14 68:10 89:13 94:13 99:19 101:7 killed 15:10 22:5,6 41:11,20 47:14 58:22 60:20 69:19 70:18 78:12 81:1 94:6 100:21 killing 20:21 46:17 49:12 56:2 58:19 59:3 66:12,15 kind 3:10 5:25 22:22 51:24 57:23 78:13 85:3 kingdom 79:19 kiowa 63:8 kiwi 19:11 kkk 31:12 knew 25:13 28:25 29:7 60:4 86:17 know 13:13 17:15 17:23 18:1,2,4 23:25 24:4 31:6 33:1 36:23 37:12 45:25 46:9 49:11,14 51:8,25 56:24 58:25</p>
---	---	--	--

<p>63:13 64:9 69:6 71:2 72:20 73:6 74:5,7 79:10 80:3 80:24 81:1,6,12,12 81:16,17 82:16,17 93:20 94:19 100:7 knowing 94:7 knowledge 35:11 63:11 known 33:4 36:22 37:7 65:21 knows 49:12,17 66:4 kobobel 13:20 24:22 24:22 kristina 67:6</p>	<p>lands 18:7 landscape 4:22 35:4 39:21 60:4 74:6 95:25 language 3:1,2 large 7:24 32:17 46:5 62:2 86:13 larger 55:25 103:18 largest 90:10 late 4:24 92:12 latecomers 52:12 laura 59:20 68:14 law 75:20 77:7 lawmakers 99:17 laws 21:17 40:12 42:22 59:7,8,10,13 67:21 99:18,19 lead 35:12 39:4 41:5 leaders 30:4 94:4 leading 71:1 73:2 98:15 lean 54:5 leaped 48:4 learn 24:11 46:15 learned 41:1 46:9,11 learners 20:17 learning 39:19 learns 63:13,15 leave 23:19 68:8 94:11 leaves 63:21 leaving 94:4 left 14:9 47:14 52:7 92:12 97:11,11 leg 25:16 legislation 14:19 71:20 legislatures 40:12 lengthwise 80:9,10 leon 17:17 lesley 1:12 2:8 lesson 63:6 lettal 13:19 lettan 20:11,12,13</p>	<p>letter 70:25 71:4 83:21 92:5 letting 18:3 level 16:6 68:21 levels 37:23 lianna 22:14 36:8 license 42:22 60:22 99:11 lies 39:3 lieutenant 31:11 life 18:22 23:15 31:21 35:15 48:25 51:6 63:15,18 77:8 80:1 81:10 93:21,22 98:1,15 lifelong 42:2 lifetime 45:10 57:10 100:17 101:14 lifted 102:15 light 48:11 limit 13:11 line 68:25 lines 68:7,8 lions 91:20 lisa 51:18 lisha 58:7 list 1:6 2:5 3:6 8:5 9:19 30:18 35:10 38:4 43:8,15 55:25 61:12 64:16 70:15 82:12 102:1,16 104:8 listable 6:20,24 7:21 9:5,5 listed 4:4,6,7,8 6:24 7:10,11 54:24 55:19 78:4 88:24 99:3 listen 21:23 22:2 31:8 89:14 101:15 listening 45:18 67:13,14,19 100:23 listing 1:7 6:23 7:23 8:10,14 9:8,15,17 32:16 52:24 78:9 93:19 95:3</p>	<p>litter 58:11 little 43:9 75:8 80:21 101:10 live 17:12 21:3,22 22:1 41:10 45:7,12 47:21 48:1 55:15 61:24 65:16 70:6,12 72:1 73:10,24 74:18 75:3 76:14 80:1,6,7 91:20 93:18 94:17 lived 31:23 42:4 67:10 77:8 90:4 livelihoods 91:2 lives 35:2 60:10 79:18 livestock 38:22 67:15,16,20,21 69:10 73:4 91:4,17 96:13 living 30:12 34:11 34:13 44:3 60:1 74:2,5 85:1 90:8 94:9 95:24 lobby 22:24 lobbyists 20:5 local 44:2,5 61:5 66:5 located 25:6 location 1:14 69:6 lone 69:11 long 15:11 16:21 57:13 79:5,9 80:6,7 85:4 96:12 99:22 103:15 longer 3:18 6:11 9:25 104:12 longmont 70:6 look 4:10 5:20,25 6:6 10:6 15:14 19:6 25:12 26:18 37:8 39:12 57:14 80:2,23 85:18 looked 7:14,16,18 7:20 8:7,12,17 9:9</p>
I			
<p>I 14:15,15,15 15:22 15:22 18:16,16 20:13,13,13,13 22:19 24:23 26:2,2 28:14 32:1 36:9 38:3,3 42:1 43:13 45:23 48:18 50:6,6 52:23 54:6 55:13 59:24,24 62:21 64:6 65:16 67:7 68:15 70:6 75:2,2,3 82:3 87:22 89:19 91:11 93:18 96:22,22 104:4,4 lack 35:11 ladies 31:6 lady 78:12 laid 80:9 lake 61:18 95:19 lakes 4:18,23 5:4,24 6:2,9,17 7:13 9:18 10:1 92:11 104:11 lakewood 96:22 lamar 15:16 47:13 58:10 90:7 land 18:8 54:14,19 54:19 60:8 79:19</p>			

<p>looking 6:19 30:3,3 76:5 86:19 95:4 98:14 100:24 loomis 2:24 106:5 106:17 lose 38:23 67:21 90:15 losing 67:15,16,19 94:3 lost 15:8 21:11 38:24,25 44:23 63:9 69:11 96:9 lot 31:7 50:20 69:23 80:25 88:1 91:14 louisville 32:2 lousy 99:25 love 19:7 24:7 34:11 35:14 73:24,25 74:1 74:4 83:1 98:13 loved 22:3 lower 4:6,12 5:24 6:11 7:12 60:10 77:2 92:9 93:22 97:23 lowering 91:6 lucky 39:13 47:12 47:25 48:19 lupus 1:6,7 4:6 8:14 lured 94:5 luring 99:20</p>	<p>mailed 14:9 maintain 34:16 58:17 93:12 maintaining 1:6 16:11 35:18 84:2,8 92:22 95:25 103:14 maintains 16:25 maintenance 56:2 majestic 26:5,8 31:17 46:5 73:2 97:7 major 28:18 36:19 majority 25:13 30:20 40:1 82:22 83:25 84:3 95:21 makenna 13:19 21:20,21,25 22:12 makers 49:21 making 12:17 20:15 21:17 mall 74:19 mammals 26:10 man 35:7 45:12 47:3 79:16 man's 26:6 manage 9:22 30:25 77:5 94:12 101:1 managed 104:19 management 2:20 16:5,15 17:4 19:21 33:14,22 34:2 36:2 36:20 43:16 46:14 46:16 66:1 69:25 90:21 99:6 104:13 104:14 105:2 managing 18:5 32:20 76:22,24 104:18 mankind's 35:10 manner 2:13 map 4:11 5:21 maria 22:14 33:8 maris 51:17 62:20 markevich 13:18,19 18:15,16,19 22:18</p>	<p>22:18 marks 62:20,21 mars 73:17 84:20,20 marshall 34:23 martha 2:24 106:5 106:17 marvelous 74:6 mary 22:16 27:4 masks 31:15 mass 35:6 massacre 26:22 31:20 massacred 26:9 massive 64:25 master's 37:4 masters 37:4 mate 69:11 mates 94:4 matter 3:5 31:22 matters 15:6 50:11 maximize 11:4 mc 54:5 89:18 mccolgan 73:19 89:18 mclean 51:16 54:5 meadows 57:22 mean 25:19 90:2 99:21 meaning 63:7 means 20:21 24:3 42:9 46:2 52:4 63:3 100:21 106:8 meant 53:12 measure 87:1 measures 73:3 meat 81:12,13 media 14:1 mediocre 81:10 meet 88:1 meeting 37:16 69:1 melissa 101:20 103:11 member 11:11 27:5 55:17 57:10</p>	<p>members 13:9 16:24 38:16 76:15 95:11 95:13 men 17:21 31:15 mentality 34:3 mention 80:8 mentioned 36:24 100:1 mere 81:14 83:15 mess 43:6 method 58:2 methods 19:25 20:1 81:23 91:16 101:1,6 metropolitan 78:24 mexican 1:7 2:5 3:6 5:14 8:4,15 9:15,22 10:3 28:18 40:23 52:24 55:20,23 63:21 64:16 69:15 78:3 82:9,11,12 84:24 88:23 89:2,6 91:12 93:23 95:3 97:23 101:8,8 102:2 105:2 mexico 4:7 7:10,12 7:17 8:3 64:17 95:12 michael 1:13 13:18 13:18 19:14,14,15 73:18 80:14 michele 20:11,12 richelle 22:15 38:2 michigan 4:14,25 78:5 microphone 11:12 11:21 12:15 mid 1:22 4:24 miels 13:19 miers 21:20,21,21 21:25,25 22:14 32:1 32:1 mighty 49:19 migration 71:15 mike 2:19 3:4,8 6:15 9:23 10:8 59:18</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">m</p>			
<p>m 15:22 18:16 20:13 22:19 27:4 29:20 32:1 33:9 35:2 38:3 38:3 42:1 44:23 47:2,2 54:6 59:24 59:24 61:10 62:21 65:16 82:3 83:8 84:20 89:19 magical 61:19 magnificent 15:5 39:15 41:13 42:21 53:3 58:13 66:11 101:15</p>			

<p>65:16 mile 65:7 miles 87:4 million 38:23 50:14 50:21 80:25 81:18 87:7,10 millions 61:24 68:11 100:2 mimic 90:21 99:14 mind 12:12 30:1 mindedness 31:12 minds 17:20 80:3 minimizing 12:19 19:25 minimum 12:23 32:20 77:7 99:21 minnesota 4:8,10,13 4:25 18:2 29:8 39:23 92:13 minority 30:22 minute 51:13,19 52:2,10 65:8 minutes 13:9 52:3,9 52:12,21 misadventure 64:10 misguided 70:16 71:3 missing 16:17 23:11 82:22 92:19 mission 30:7,13,14 30:19,22 43:9 mistake 57:3 misunderstood 55:5 mix 32:12 mollie 60:2 molra 34:23 42:1,1 42:20 moment 61:19 79:1 81:14 money 20:5 25:22 27:11 34:18 50:24 80:25 montana 5:6,11 38:19 39:23 50:22 54:22,25 55:2 62:4</p>	<p>66:1,13 77:5 78:6 96:8 101:6 montgomery 51:18 59:23,23 month 38:24 77:19 months 25:3 90:5 moose 27:23 42:5,24 70:1,2 75:24 moot 43:16 morning 84:21 97:4 mother 67:18 75:14 motivated 102:21 mountain 2:22 8:19 16:8 19:6 22:7 38:18,19 49:13 51:9 53:10 58:22 66:21 72:6 77:12 82:25 87:5 91:20 97:5 104:6,7 mountains 2:19 4:18 5:5,24 6:9 9:2 24:14 25:7 36:11 48:10 54:8,10 57:23 64:24 73:25 75:9 91:15 92:3 104:11 move 6:12 13:16 37:10 44:11,15,17 78:15 91:12 moved 24:13 67:9 67:18 75:9 77:8 87:23 89:25 movie 64:11 mt 64:25 murder 21:13 mutilated 33:24</p>	<p>59:24 64:6,6 65:16 67:7 68:15 71:24 72:14 73:22,22 75:3 78:23 82:3,3 83:8,8 86:5 87:22 89:19,19 89:19 91:11 92:2,2 93:18 94:25,25 97:19,20,20 98:24 100:12 101:22,23 104:4 106:2 name 2:8 11:9,15 14:15 15:21 18:15 19:15 20:12 21:21 21:25 22:18 23:20 24:22 26:2 27:4 28:13 29:19 31:4 33:8,21 35:1 36:8 38:2 39:8 40:18 42:1 43:12 44:22 45:21 47:1 48:17 50:2,3,5 52:22 55:12 56:14 57:9 59:23 61:9 62:20,21 64:5 65:16 67:6,7 68:14 71:23 72:14 73:21 75:2 76:13 78:22 80:14 82:2 83:7 86:5 87:21 88:20 89:18 91:10 93:17 94:25 96:21 97:19 98:24 103:11 name's 100:11 names 11:8 13:15 22:13 51:14 59:18 73:16 nan 87:17 94:25 natalie 2:25 nation 15:7,12 23:23 27:16 37:9 38:14 44:8 57:1 90:10 94:20 101:3 nation's 93:6 national 1:22 15:16 16:6 19:5,6 22:3,7 33:5 36:18 38:19</p>	<p>39:25 43:15,25 48:2 50:25 51:9 53:10 56:4 57:10 59:25 61:3,17 66:21 68:2 68:5 69:23 72:7 77:12 83:1 87:6,25 89:7 90:5 95:14,24 97:5 native 27:17 52:25 80:15 82:23 90:6 96:1 104:25 105:1 natural 16:11,14 17:16 19:3 44:3 45:12,13 47:19,22 53:25 naturally 102:12,17 nature 26:25 45:2,4 53:11 67:13,18 75:10 79:10 84:12 nature's 92:22 nault 59:18 65:15 65:16 near 11:21 34:7 43:17 69:1 78:10 92:9 nearly 60:10 69:10 87:6 97:22 necessarily 3:25 necessary 10:24 13:12 20:21 78:1 need 18:8 19:7 20:6 20:24 22:8,10 28:9 35:12 37:11 46:14 46:16 49:17 52:4 55:4,4 57:17,19 60:23 67:20 72:9 73:9 76:3 81:2 82:12 88:10,25 100:4,5 101:3,5 needed 57:14,18 69:6 70:19 86:14 needs 3:18,25 7:1 47:9 49:23 54:19 63:13 78:3 89:1,7 89:13 98:19 101:9</p>
	<p>n</p>		
	<p>n 2:1 17:11,11,11 18:16 20:13 28:14 28:14 31:5 33:4,9 36:9,9,9 39:8,8 43:12 44:23 45:23 45:23,23 47:1,2 48:18,18 50:6 54:6 54:6,6 55:13 57:10</p>		

<p>neither 53:5 nessing 2:25 nest 37:1 neuenschuander 17:11 neuenschwander 17:9,10,17 neunschuander 13:18 nevada 60:16 never 28:22,25 37:18,18,20,22 43:7 53:4 56:5 72:2 84:3 90:18 91:23 92:23 94:3 new 29:20 36:10 39:17 64:17 74:2 84:21 85:8 95:12 newscasters 44:9 nexus 98:5 nicole 73:17 82:2 night 28:20,22,25 67:3 85:17 nine 50:19 non 93:25 94:1 101:11 102:2 nonhuman 79:25 nonlethal 19:24 nonprofit 60:1 north 50:24 54:8 60:3 63:21 90:1 northeast 4:10 85:16 northeastern 4:13 northern 2:19 4:18 5:5,23 6:2,9,17 7:13 8:19 9:1,18 10:2 16:1 32:5,8,10 45:9 58:22 66:5 82:5 90:21 92:10,20 96:24 104:10 northwest 5:6 7:19 8:18 9:12 note 18:19 42:5 48:18</p>	<p>nothing's 53:19 notice 10:10 noticed 65:4,5 november 1:10 nubilus 8:13 nuisance 81:3,4 number 13:10 58:15 58:24 59:13 60:21 81:19 101:9 numbers 15:10 22:25 30:3 32:20 33:11 37:1,6 38:18 46:18 61:15 66:22 76:9 78:13 99:21,22 99:24,25 102:16 numerous 76:4 nursing 58:11 nurtures 63:10 nw 1:23</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">o</p> <hr/> <p>o 2:1 15:22 20:13,13 24:23,23 27:5 28:14 29:20 31:5 35:2 36:9 42:1 43:13,13 48:18,18 50:6 52:22 58:7 59:24,24 64:6 64:6 68:15 70:6 73:22 78:23 82:3,3 82:3 86:5 87:22 89:19 91:11 92:2,3 92:3 93:18,18 95:9 95:9,9 97:20 100:11 100:12 101:23,23 106:2 o'clock 51:23 obama 76:19 objective 66:14 oblivion 79:20 observe 39:15 obtain 13:6 obviously 55:7 occidentalis 8:13 occupied 5:2 55:23 56:19 60:7 100:25</p>	<p>occupies 83:15 occupy 92:16 105:1 occurring 66:13 october 10:11 odd 74:20 office 2:19,22,22 officer 1:12 2:9 officials 2:21 oh 36:25 okay 18:15 24:3 52:10 58:16 81:1 old 21:22 22:1 32:19 37:19 41:14 43:4 63:8 67:19 76:7 96:6 olmith 13:17 olmsted 15:20,21,21 olson 28:19,22 29:7 olympic 92:20 once 14:23 15:10 16:23 55:16 56:23 84:12 ones 55:19 67:17 onslaught 20:19 open 18:5,9,9 48:12 90:12 operate 34:3 operating 42:12 opinion 40:10 51:24 76:2 85:10 opportunist 69:12 opportunistic 69:12 opportunity 11:5 28:15 47:17,20 55:13 73:5 83:13 105:4 oppose 28:17 39:9 45:17 56:15 71:24 73:22 83:14 91:11 95:2 97:21 101:25 103:12 opposed 14:17 45:24 52:23 61:10 62:22 64:14 70:7 75:6 77:25 88:22</p>	<p>opposing 33:12 opposite 85:20 opposition 15:23 38:16 65:18 optimally 16:16 optimism 93:2 options 105:7 oral 10:20,25 11:8 13:22,23 14:11 105:9 orange 5:2 order 4:3 20:16 orderly 2:13 oregon 5:13 8:20 37:16 47:2 organization 11:2 11:16 oriented 73:6 original 40:14 77:16 91:5 outdoors 30:12 outdoorsmen 99:1 outside 7:24 8:18 9:17 11:1 14:2 32:18 33:4 overall 58:24 59:4 overbrowsed 97:10 overdue 85:4 overpopulation 87:8 owe 63:25 64:1 owls 70:10 owner 57:19 ox 19:2</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">p</p> <hr/> <p>p 2:1 48:18 50:6 55:13 61:10 73:22 73:22 92:3 pacific 7:19 8:18 9:12 pack 15:17 29:1 42:24 47:14,17 48:1 48:4 58:25 59:1,3 63:9,10 69:11 72:4</p>
---	--	---	--

<p>73:7 94:4 packs 42:12 66:17 66:22 90:6 page 10:12 15:4 86:19 pain 34:14 pains 68:23 paintings 75:16 paints 45:3 pair 85:19 pairs 8:21 panel 66:4 paper 48:19 69:20 paramount 1:14 pardon 50:4 parith 34:22 50:2,5 50:5 park 15:16 19:5,7 22:3,7 25:15 33:5 36:12 38:19 47:15 49:8 50:20 51:1,2,9 53:10 54:17 61:17 65:17 66:7,21 72:2 72:7 77:12 83:1,3 87:6,25 88:3 90:5 97:5 parks 16:6 27:14 56:4 68:2,5 69:23 part 23:14,15,15 24:8 37:12 46:8,20 54:11 70:12 75:11 91:19 94:14 partial 38:7,10 participants 11:6 particular 76:5 93:23 particularly 96:24 partners 6:1 parts 96:3 pass 31:20 32:8 34:7 39:4 40:12 passed 20:19 passenger 19:2 passing 23:10</p>	<p>passion 17:21 patient 44:24 93:20 patricia 51:17 61:9 pauline 51:17 55:12 pause 78:6 paved 43:18 paying 27:6 peer 32:25 pelican 93:9 peninsula 92:20 people 13:10 15:7 17:19 18:13,17 19:23 25:3,11,18 30:9,11 31:7 34:8 38:13 39:12,17 49:22 51:9 52:3 53:24 56:25 63:3 67:13 69:4,6,24 73:9 74:9 79:4,5,5,8 79:8,20,25,25 85:13 85:14,22 88:1,7 89:11,14 101:4 percent 50:17,19 58:20,21 60:19 71:14 84:1 90:18 92:16 94:12 99:10 102:8 percentage 4:1 61:15 peregrine 56:7 93:9 perfect 72:22 73:12 period 12:9 periodically 11:7 periods 10:17 permit 34:13 permitting 31:17 persecution 31:16 39:25 103:16 persistently 84:6 person 35:20 89:12 personal 48:18 personally 72:2 75:11 perspective 47:4</p>	<p>pervades 17:4 103:18 pesticide 86:17 phillip 22:15 26:2 philosophy 93:2 photograph 66:21 95:4 photographing 12:25 physical 34:14 pick 97:4 picture 31:12 41:12 piece 69:20 71:19 pieces 16:17 pierpont 59:19 73:21,21 pigeon 19:2 place 1:15 29:3 41:4 48:7 78:5 101:5,10 placed 35:10 places 51:10 60:8,8 60:17 61:3 74:3 75:5 89:11 92:19,21 plainly 33:18 plains 92:3 plan 28:18 32:19 55:22 78:6 85:5 planet 15:7 18:17 23:9,11,14 26:7 35:6 planning 35:23 plans 36:2 plant 79:19,20 plants 30:8 39:20 70:24 play 35:18 47:18 92:21 98:21 103:13 playing 23:17 plea 20:15 21:15 please 11:9,14,17,22 12:12,25 13:7,21 18:12,19 21:23 22:2 22:17 23:19 26:1,17 26:24 28:2,6 31:8,8 31:8,19,25 33:7,20</p>	<p>34:25 36:4,7 38:1 42:19 43:11,23 44:21 46:22 48:16 50:1 52:15 56:13 58:6 59:22 61:6,8 63:24 64:4 65:14 67:5 68:13 70:4 71:17,22 73:20 76:1 76:6,12 77:23 78:21 80:13 82:1 83:6 84:10,19 86:4 87:20 88:17 90:15 91:9 94:24 97:13,18 98:16,23 103:10 105:6,8 pleasure 81:14 plenty 24:2 81:1 102:5 plus 85:13 pm 1:16 105:21 poaching 21:10 point 2:11 3:3,4,18 4:15 8:24 14:13 18:20,23 23:25 poisoned 41:21 poisoning 25:16 27:15 policies 19:21 58:18 62:5,7,9 66:1 102:13 103:17,20 policy 96:10 99:15 102:10 political 14:22 20:4 36:15 37:19 44:8 71:18 94:7 97:24 98:2 politically 97:25 102:20 politicians 22:24 30:23 44:5 99:18 politics 15:3 20:5 25:22 26:21 30:21 32:12,13 40:8 61:5 62:5 76:24 82:16,17 82:18 86:11 98:1</p>
--	--	--	---

<p>poll 83:24 polled 71:14 polls 40:1 poorer 15:7 popular 66:7 popularity 66:7 population 4:24 5:4 5:8,9,10,16 6:7,8,25 7:18 8:2,4,19,21,21 8:24 9:3,21 16:19 23:1 26:14 28:7 29:14 30:25 32:5,20 38:12,20,21 45:14 47:9 49:15 54:20 56:9 58:18,20,23 59:4 62:2 66:19 68:20 69:22 70:1 76:9,23 77:6,10 82:13 84:24 89:2 90:4 93:24,24 94:1 96:11 populations 4:21 6:3 7:13 38:17,18 71:8 85:25 95:18 103:4,6 portion 7:2,4 8:10 25:13 56:18 portions 16:13 71:5 100:24 portland 37:16 pose 73:7 position 23:8 82:20 positive 39:21 66:25 66:25 positively 35:20 possess 85:3 possession 74:6 possibility 54:11 possible 11:6,19 24:4 70:14 possibly 42:7 52:17 post 59:6 postings 41:22 postmarked 10:14</p>	<p>postpone 97:13 potential 7:18 56:22 potentially 26:19 pound 65:3 power 3:4 25:22 31:18,19 65:6,7 powerful 96:13,16 powers 44:1 practice 25:19 practices 21:2 33:18 practicing 33:17 prairie 2:22 46:6 100:12 prairies 73:25 pray 77:20 precedence 18:10 18:11 precious 98:9,10 precocious 75:17 predator 36:25 37:17 49:18 56:3 83:15 90:23 predators 16:10 23:1 36:22 73:4 76:3 78:1 91:17 predatory 20:24 99:8,15 predecessors 51:8 86:15 premature 61:14 87:3 prematurely 92:25 premise 32:22 presence 18:25 66:6 90:11 91:3 95:25 102:25 present 10:25 11:13 12:25 13:22 17:5 51:14 52:13 105:11 presentation 3:4 11:14 32:4 presented 14:12 presenter 80:13 presenters 1:13</p>	<p>presently 5:18 preserve 12:1 16:22 44:3 87:15 president 24:23 25:6 57:17,17 78:23 100:12 pressure 14:22 71:17 103:4 presume 12:6 pretty 50:14 99:2 prevails 86:11 prevent 3:12 13:2 21:10 24:2 87:7 prevention 95:10 previous 10:17 prey 90:23 price 49:16 primary 43:23 privilege 29:21 90:6 privileged 58:10 probable 42:22 probably 43:7 48:24 64:9 84:3 99:16 100:1 problem 22:21 39:2 51:23 67:12,17 89:4 103:18 problems 67:14 99:2 procedures 10:24 proceedings 13:5 105:20 106:6,7,9,11 process 11:4 proctor 87:18 92:2,2 producing 8:22 productive 31:22 profession 89:25 professional 3:1 professor 15:25 17:17 profiles 85:3 profits 54:18 program 5:14,19 17:20,25 36:21 37:3 69:16,25 92:3</p>	<p>101:23 programs 4:17,19 4:20 5:21 76:3 82:7 84:9 91:3 96:13 progress 5:15,17 6:5 44:16 prohibition 55:22 project 33:9 proof 30:15 proofread 106:21 proper 20:7 35:17 69:25 proposal 2:5,12 3:5 7:22 8:5 9:6,14 10:4 10:6,14,20,21 29:13 31:20 32:12,23 33:12 38:4 39:4,9 40:8 47:6 58:9,14 59:2,5,7,15 60:14 60:14 61:11 62:23 63:1,20,24 64:14,16 65:12 71:2,24 72:17 76:18 83:23 85:24 86:6 89:22 91:11,12 92:7 93:5,11 95:14 97:21 101:25 102:21 103:12 proposed 1:6 9:10 40:2,14 104:9 proposing 9:6 92:25 protect 4:4 9:24 21:9 26:24,25 30:7 30:10 40:13 44:3 53:14 62:15,25 63:3 63:7 64:1 67:21,23 73:4 79:24 89:8 91:17 97:9 protected 15:1 20:22 26:14 29:13 53:4,14 56:9 57:11 59:12 62:11 67:25 69:7 71:11 72:8 85:11 90:22 94:11 protecting 21:6 23:6 53:22,22 84:1 90:19</p>
--	---	---	--

<p>98:12 protection 3:18 6:21 8:3 10:4 14:18 15:6 19:19 20:24 22:9,10 33:13,13 34:17,17 38:13 43:16 47:7,10 47:14 55:2,3 57:2 58:2 59:6,7,9 60:25 67:1 70:19 71:15 76:2 83:14 84:3,22 86:15 88:25 90:15 90:17 92:23 96:2,5 96:9 97:22 103:23 protections 1:7 60:11 64:18 84:8 89:23 93:12 102:15 protective 73:7 protector 63:17 protects 47:22 proud 24:25 31:11 40:19 41:5 proven 24:8 30:24 49:13 76:23 81:6 99:5 102:23 provide 11:5,8 12:4 13:2 provided 66:17 providing 103:7 provision 98:20 public 2:5 10:9,10 10:24 13:3,9 20:14 40:10 69:3 84:16,17 published 10:11 12:10 pueblo 17:13 pups 8:22 42:25 49:5 58:11 purpose 10:19 12:5 23:3 31:21 pursue 36:13 pushing 55:21 put 19:7 41:22 46:11 69:6,21 81:9 82:20 86:8 87:6 95:1 101:5</p>	<p>putting 17:21 puzzle 23:14,15</p> <p style="text-align: center;">q</p> <p>question 6:17 7:8 20:15 25:18 56:7,17 93:25 questioned 11:25 questions 12:1,6,8 12:11,17 quickly 36:22 76:10 quite 75:5,17 91:21 100:1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">r</p> <p>r 2:1 15:22 17:11 18:16 22:19,19 26:2 27:4 31:5,5,5 32:1 33:9,9 36:9 42:1 44:23,23 48:18 50:6 52:22 54:6 55:13 59:24 61:10 62:21 64:6,6 67:7,7 68:15 70:6 71:24,24,24 72:15 73:22,22 76:14 77:24 78:23 80:15,15,15 82:3,3 83:8,8 84:20,20 86:6,6 87:22 91:10 91:10 92:3,3 93:18 95:9 96:22,22 97:19 97:20 98:24 100:11 104:4 106:2 rainforest 21:9 raise 75:11 91:15 raised 12:9 44:25 47:3 75:25 80:16 rally 21:9 ralston 51:17 64:5,6 ran 46:5 48:4 ranch 100:15 rancher 17:12,12,15 67:9 91:2 ranchers 30:23 40:9 67:8,10,10,14 73:3 96:14 100:6</p>	<p>ranching 68:15 69:8 range 3:21 4:1,11 5:2,20,22 7:2,4,24 8:1,9,16 32:18 55:25 56:19 60:15 71:5 82:23 83:16 85:7 92:17 94:12 95:21 96:4 100:25 102:9 104:25 105:1 ranges 7:17 8:10 43:8 rangewide 7:14,15 8:7 ranging 57:20 raptor 70:9 raptors 70:14 71:13 103:7 rarely 16:22 69:10 86:11 rates 37:2 rattle 37:6 raw 65:6 reach 60:23 reaching 44:1 86:9 read 11:18,20 51:14 58:14 59:18 62:3 73:16 reading 11:17 ready 14:13 43:3 51:14 real 100:24 reality 92:14 102:8 realize 36:15 realized 36:22 really 3:16 6:17 12:22 18:13 23:13 27:8 30:1 56:6 72:5 72:8 74:17,20 75:5 81:5 reason 14:20 19:8 33:13 41:15 69:20 72:20 99:11,17 reasonably 8:1 reasons 41:12 99:4</p>	<p>rebecca 34:23 44:22 reborn 55:18 rebounded 4:21 103:6 rebuild 26:14 receive 2:14 10:19 12:5 received 68:25 recess 51:21 recognize 2:15 15:5 recolonize 102:18 recolonizing 5:6 reconsider 55:8 record 2:2,14 11:15 12:2,7,13 15:10 48:6 51:15,19 105:18 recorded 12:1 recording 13:5 recover 35:24 45:16 60:3 70:19 71:4 92:23 96:3 recovered 3:17 4:24 6:8,16 7:12 16:20 22:22 30:17 36:4 42:7 45:15 47:9 51:8 55:25 56:18,22 60:15,17 61:14 71:10 78:18 82:22 93:13 95:15 100:2 102:7 recovering 93:8,21 recovery 3:14,14,24 4:16,17,19,19,23 5:9,11,18,21 6:3,10 17:19 18:2 28:18 36:10 37:7 38:8 55:21,22 56:10 59:15 62:2,6 63:2 69:16 70:22 78:10 83:12,19 84:4,7,11 85:5 86:20 87:2 89:2 90:16 91:7 92:14 93:2,3 95:16 102:19 104:10</p>
--	---	---	--

red 44:10 100:15,18 redirected 36:19 reduced 38:17 94:14 102:17 106:7 reetz 51:17 55:12,12 reflect 71:3 reflecting 37:24 refrain 12:17,25 refuge 48:3 refuges 94:5 regard 105:2 regarding 2:5 region 1:22 5:24 45:2 66:24 regional 2:22 104:5 regions 4:17 70:24 92:11 register 10:11 11:2 registered 11:8 registration 11:1 13:7,25 14:5,9 105:15 regrew 103:5 rehab 70:9 rehabilitation 70:10 reimbursement 67:22 reinforced 16:9 reintroduce 72:19 82:25 83:3 reintroduced 82:13 reintroducing 5:7 82:5 reintroduction 54:14 77:1 82:7,9,9 95:17 102:22 rejuvenated 54:14 relationships 45:4 90:24 release 98:20 releasing 85:5 relegate 47:23 relieved 103:4 religious 98:6	remain 13:13 71:11 83:17 85:10 remainder 13:10 remained 69:9 remaining 6:21 8:2 9:12 84:7 92:17 93:23 remains 10:3 71:6 92:15 remarkable 66:5 remarks 12:4 remember 3:12 6:6 76:6 87:4 96:23 105:8 remind 30:6 reminder 105:14 reminders 16:23 remnant 6:7 removal 14:17 30:18 70:7 remove 8:5 9:16,18 33:12 38:4 43:14 47:7 61:11 85:24 97:22 102:1 removed 19:19 33:14 60:12 96:5 102:16 removing 1:6 57:2 83:14 104:7 repeat 86:23 replaced 93:3 replaces 93:4 repopulate 65:22 66:12 report 58:19 reporter 2:25 11:18 11:19 12:1,12 23:19 106:5,18 reporting 1:22 represent 2:11,11 8:1 11:16 27:7 31:13 representatives 2:16 representing 11:3 13:5 33:9 42:2	78:25 88:21 89:19 95:9 represents 31:13 61:21 require 3:20 34:16 60:25 required 77:7 99:11 99:12 requires 8:3 rescue 75:12 research 16:2,4,8 20:16 30:16 36:23 reserved 11:10 13:16 resettle 77:11 reside 66:3 resident 38:6 61:23 65:20 72:18 residents 72:21 resources 44:3 respect 2:11 12:16 12:24 45:2 respective 104:14 respond 12:11 responding 44:5,5 response 12:8 19:22 responsibilities 37:11 responsibility 15:15 26:13 74:12 78:7 84:14 responsible 21:15 35:6,22 63:14 74:12 74:14,16 rest 27:20 38:8 52:4 restoration 104:17 restore 34:17 60:3 70:23 73:11 restored 55:16 70:25 72:9 86:22,24 90:22,24 restoring 96:24 result 16:14 resulted 7:21 50:21 102:13	results 5:25 67:1 retain 67:1 89:23 retired 31:11 return 11:22 60:6 83:25 103:3,23 returned 22:4 104:24 returning 61:17 103:5 revenge 68:21 revenue 25:13 72:23 reverse 66:2 103:16 review 7:21 10:15 32:16,25 revisions 28:18 revisit 83:4 revitalization 95:18 rewriting 99:18,19 rhythm 23:2 richman 34:23 44:22,22 ridge 48:3 ridiculous 99:20 rifle 57:10 right 7:22 10:8 15:15 17:24 19:5 23:8 46:21 54:10 60:13 68:18 76:1,9 84:12,14 86:17 93:22 101:7 rightly 86:20 rise 20:6 risk 8:9,16 9:7,10,25 river 28:21 29:3,4 road 85:20 roam 29:11 roamed 46:1 84:12 rockies 6:2,17 7:13 9:18 10:2 16:9 18:2 32:5,8,10 64:15 65:23 66:5 82:5 90:21 92:10 96:24 rocky 2:19 4:18 5:5 5:23 6:9 8:19 9:2 16:8 19:6 22:7
---	--	---	---

<p>38:17,19 48:10 49:13 51:9 53:10 54:7 58:22 66:20 72:6 75:9 77:11 82:25 87:5 92:3 97:5 104:6,7,10 rodents 81:4 103:7 rohrs 13:4 role 2:12 35:18 92:21 rollinsville 97:20 rolls 4:23 romping 65:3 room 12:15 34:15 35:20 49:12 93:19 rooms 75:15 roosevelt 57:16 rosmarino 73:18 82:2,3 round 65:25 rounded 20:17 rows 11:10 royale 4:10,14 ruane 87:17 98:24 98:24 rule 1:6 9:20,21 12:10 40:2,14,14 rules 98:21 103:14 rumor 75:23 run 18:3 80:20 running 80:17 85:19 rural 66:8 rush 59:14 ryan 13:4,7</p>	<p>91:11 93:18 97:20 100:12 s's 54:23 sacred 79:18 sad 77:14 sadistic 33:18 sadly 22:4 69:18 75:21 sake 66:15 sanctuary 25:6 sat 48:3 satisfying 17:6 savage 63:16 save 77:16 saw 22:3 28:25 41:23 45:8 65:2 72:3 87:4 100:18 saying 26:4 28:7 51:8 58:8 98:2,3 says 98:20 scenery 97:7 scent 85:21 school 36:13 science 2:20 15:3 19:23 30:14 32:12 32:14,23 35:17 37:5 37:8 43:23 44:11 56:24 62:6 76:23 88:15 102:4 sciences 32:24 scientific 14:24 40:10 44:16 98:5 scientist 17:23 scientists 71:1 83:20 95:21 102:24 season 58:23 68:19 seat 11:10 seats 11:22 13:16 second 26:16 65:24 secondly 55:24 seconds 13:13 section 4:13 10:9 secure 6:8 8:14 9:9 9:24</p>	<p>securing 3:15 see 3:9 5:2,13,15,20 19:5 22:8,10 24:7 24:12,13 30:1 38:25 43:7 45:15 47:13 48:11 50:18 53:4,11 53:16,24 54:25 57:11,12 58:10 59:5 65:22 72:5,7 74:12 74:17,20,21 75:15 77:11 80:18 81:11 81:21 88:2,8,8,13 88:23,24 90:18,22 97:6 101:14,14,17 seed 80:5 seeing 54:16 62:9 74:20 88:5,6 90:6 seen 19:4 38:10 42:12 51:10 53:1 57:21,25 69:10 72:2 72:3 84:4 88:4 101:6 segment 7:1,18 9:3 sell 49:16 selling 53:9 senatorial 82:17 senior 19:16 23:21 104:5 sense 74:11,11 84:13 86:8,11 99:25 senseless 31:19 57:2 sentient 34:14 sentiments 84:15 separate 8:25 76:5 september 45:8 seriously 61:14 serve 62:10 103:24 serves 9:20 service 2:4,16,21 10:13,17 11:11 12:6 12:11 22:20,23 23:4 30:10 43:25 52:14 76:15 77:4,12,15,20 82:4 89:13 93:1 95:14 96:23 102:7</p>	<p>104:9 105:10,16 service's 12:8 32:15 61:11 72:17 76:18 89:21 97:21 101:25 102:4 103:12 services 1:1 2:10,18 52:5 set 3:16 21:8,12 69:16 99:15 106:13 setting 25:16 27:16 settling 5:4 seven 21:21,25 58:20 seventy 41:18 71:14 84:1 90:18 shade 103:5 shameful 49:5 102:21 shapes 16:25 share 48:10 74:7,8 74:10 shared 79:6 sheep 91:15 shemo 22:14 29:19 29:19 shift 93:1 shirts 74:21 shocking 66:14 shoot 27:14 42:15 54:23,25 68:9 99:10 102:10 shooting 25:15 33:25 46:4 shops 74:21 short 12:4 17:6 44:6 76:6 87:2 91:15 93:11 shorthand 106:5,18 shot 33:4 41:20 47:14 60:20 70:18 shots 25:16 shovel 54:24 show 18:4 31:10 40:1 105:17</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">s</p>			
<p>s 2:1 15:22,22 17:11 20:13 22:19 28:14 28:14 29:20 31:5 32:1 35:1,2 36:9 38:3 40:19 54:6 61:10 62:21 64:6 67:7 70:6 75:2,3 77:24 78:23 82:3 84:20,20 87:22,22</p>			

<p>shown 54:13 103:13 shows 30:16 33:16 102:4 shut 54:24 sick 81:6 side 6:6,6 43:2 58:1 64:25 sides 29:1 sierra 50:16 sig 28:19,22 29:7 sight 60:21 99:10 102:10 sighted 76:6 93:11 sighting 39:13 47:23 sign 3:1,2 11:2 signaled 93:1 signatures 25:2 signed 83:21 92:5 significant 7:2,4 8:10 25:12 37:14 56:19 71:5 98:2 silent 29:6 simple 19:8 simply 94:2,16 95:2 simultaneously 66:23 sin 76:25 sines 73:16 87:21,21 single 35:20 38:25 40:5 sir 29:17 36:6 61:7 65:13 77:22 81:25 100:9 sisters 79:23 80:2,6 sit 14:7 site 85:15 sitting 26:11 situation 20:16 57:14 six 37:17 41:13 48:21 skies 61:1 skunks 80:20 skye 59:19 70:5</p>	<p>slaughter 18:5,9 20:25 24:1 25:5 31:17 34:4 46:7 73:2 78:5 slaughtered 30:4,5 33:23 34:8 53:17,19 slaughtering 39:1 slowly 11:18 29:15 69:23 slumped 46:5 small 4:12 6:7 17:12 61:15 76:9 81:19 82:24 88:15 94:11 100:24 101:9 smaller 58:23 smart 46:14,16 smith 22:15 38:2,2 51:17 61:9,9 snared 41:20 snow 50:21 65:8 snowshoeing 28:19 social 58:25 94:4 society 34:13 37:15 86:8 94:20 95:10 103:20 society's 103:18 sold 50:14 84:9 sole 74:5 solo 64:24 solution 15:10 82:12 87:10 somebody 50:4 someday 21:17 24:12 62:12,15 son 43:3 61:16 75:17 songbird 103:6 songbirds 97:10 soon 68:24 sooner 37:8 sorry 9:4 26:16 45:11,22 50:3 sorts 74:22 soul 80:4</p>	<p>sound 35:17 56:20 85:18,21 source 55:7 south 21:8 50:13,24 54:9 85:8 southern 16:9 17:13 89:3 southwest 2:6 3:7 4:19 5:14 6:4,10 8:4 8:15 9:22 10:4 speak 11:23 12:3,3 13:11 17:14 28:16 33:20 38:3 41:13 55:14 64:13 69:3 75:7 80:5 83:8 105:6 speaker 12:5,16 14:13 22:17 24:21 26:1 27:3 28:12 29:18 31:3,25 33:7 34:25 36:7 38:1 39:7 40:17 41:25 43:11 44:21 45:20 46:25 48:16 50:1 54:4 55:11 56:13 57:8 58:6 59:22 61:8 62:19 64:4 65:14 67:5 68:13 70:4 71:22 72:13 73:20 75:1 76:12 77:23 78:21 82:1 83:6 84:19 86:4 87:20 88:19 89:17 91:9 92:1 93:16 94:24 95:7 96:20 97:18 98:23 100:10 103:10 104:3 speakers 12:24 34:21 52:18 64:19 87:17 101:20 speaking 11:5 31:7 36:9 37:22,22 53:24 59:25 72:1 98:25 100:14</p>	<p>special 40:8 44:6 57:20 76:20 77:20 88:15 specialists 50:9 species 3:12,15,17 3:17,20,21,23,25 4:6 6:18,23,24,25 7:6,7 8:6,7 9:13,19 9:24,24 10:10 14:18 15:1,2,6,7,9,24 16:21,22 21:4,7 23:11,14,16 27:10 30:18 32:11,18 35:5 35:7,15,18,23 36:4 38:5,14 43:15,22 44:14,18 45:5,7 46:12,23 47:8 49:4 55:4 56:17 61:2,6 61:12 62:25 65:19 65:22 66:11 70:8,15 70:19,23,23 77:15 77:17 78:17 82:21 89:23 90:17 91:5,6 91:13 92:14 93:7,12 93:19 97:24 98:3,7 98:19,20 99:4 101:12 102:1 103:25 104:18,20 104:25 specific 3:22 4:1 specifically 61:2 spell 11:15 spend 27:11 spends 68:10 spent 16:1 54:22 spirit 48:12 61:20 62:24 79:14,15 98:14 spirits 79:1 spiritual 98:6 spoke 32:3 sport 46:4 49:8 81:1 sprayed 80:21 springs 77:25</p>
--	--	--	--

<p>staff 11:11 13:24 19:16 70:9 staffing 2:23 stage 11:22 48:24 stampeded 57:22 stand 37:6 77:20 79:1 86:16 standards 7:5 8:21 9:21 standing 35:13 37:21 69:14 stansfield 22:15 28:13,13 star 80:5 stare 58:1 stark 73:17 77:24,24 stars 80:5 start 26:4 43:4 54:7 58:8 70:21 started 6:7 27:9 36:21 starting 4:14 10:12 35:24 state 17:20 24:12 29:16,16,16 32:15 34:19 37:23 38:6,8 40:3 42:6,8,22 44:2 44:5 50:25 51:1 54:18 55:16 56:1 59:6 61:25 68:25 69:5,14,15 72:19,24 74:9 75:21 78:24 80:16 98:21 99:9,10 99:17 104:16,19,21 105:3 stated 14:24 statement 13:17 56:21 statements 12:13,13 states 1:1 2:4 7:12 16:13 17:5 18:3,8 20:14,20 25:4 28:3 30:24 32:20 33:15 34:1,18 35:22,24 36:5 38:9 39:23</p>	<p>41:2,9,19 42:6,8 44:7,10 46:17 50:13 50:25 53:16 56:1 57:21 60:11 62:4,5 66:13 71:16 72:16 73:1 77:2,6 78:8 83:18,20 84:2 86:22 90:20 92:9 95:11,19 95:23 96:8,10 97:7 98:17 99:5,7,14,17 99:23 100:3 102:12 102:14 104:14 stating 6:20 11:15 54:7 76:17 77:18 stationed 11:11 statistic 30:2 statistics 18:4 62:3 statues 74:22 status 91:13 99:8,15 statute 99:9 stay 55:4 61:19 69:7 stayed 69:13 stem 89:4 step 8:12,17 82:24 steps 65:11 82:10,10 82:19 steve 22:13 35:1 stewards 20:3,7 stewardship 93:7 stood 85:16 stools 26:12 stop 23:25 24:5 28:9 31:18,19 37:22 stopped 20:23 29:5 stopping 21:13 stories 63:4 64:22 77:3 79:9,11 storm 38:25 story 63:2,4,6,8 64:21 79:17 80:22 102:22 strangers 79:15 streams 24:15 73:25 103:5</p>	<p>street 1:23 74:19 strength 63:11,17 strengthens 24:17 strenuously 101:25 strict 13:11 strictly 50:18 stripped 38:12 strong 15:23 47:8 104:16 strongly 23:7 33:12 45:17 70:7 structure 16:7 96:1 student 21:16 57:13 students 20:15 21:5 studies 15:25 36:23 103:13 studying 28:24 stuff 50:8 stuffed 75:16 stupidity 81:15 sub 98:20 subject 2:12 3:5 7:6 14:23 64:11 106:10 subjected 34:12 submit 13:23 14:2 52:4 105:7 submitted 13:24 105:15 submitting 89:9 subspecies 2:6 3:6 4:5,6 6:25 7:16 8:12 8:13 9:9,11,15,16 10:5 55:21 82:12 84:25 substantial 50:14 66:23 71:6 substantive 88:23 subverted 61:4 succeed 74:24 succeeding 97:3 success 17:24 37:2 56:6 77:3 87:1 102:23</p>	<p>successes 95:17 successful 17:25 18:3 86:20 91:16 successfully 6:1 91:21 102:11 suffer 25:17 suffering 25:8 suitable 4:1 16:18 40:4 65:21 71:6,7 83:16 84:7 90:23 92:17 95:22 96:3 100:1 102:5 suite 1:23 summary 9:4 summer 48:3 85:17 summertime 50:18 sun 46:6 suny 36:21 superiority 81:10 superstitious 78:15 supplement 75:20 support 19:18 28:17 36:9 37:7 55:20,24 58:8 64:15,20 70:9 71:14 72:16 79:23 83:25 84:1,7 86:6 89:21 90:19 95:3 102:5 supporters 33:10 83:9 supports 104:7 sure 74:24 surely 29:8 surrounded 29:1 42:24 100:6 surrounding 35:4 102:12 survival 15:11 43:21 59:2 84:25 85:3 96:10 101:12 survive 94:16 surviving 94:3 sustain 62:2 81:2 sustainable 46:18 81:21</p>
--	---	---	---

<p>sustained 16:19 swaths 102:8 swelled 38:20 symbol 63:16,17 94:14 95:24 103:17 symbolic 63:25 symbolized 46:1 systems 94:5</p>	<p>talked 69:20 talking 50:4 targets 33:25 task 97:2 taught 20:15 54:23 tax 27:6,11 34:18 taylor 59:19 70:5,5 87:18 93:17 teach 63:11 85:9 teacher 20:14 teaches 63:6 teaching 36:13,19 teddy 57:16 teenager 100:19 tell 11:12 37:21 41:3 41:6 51:3,5 63:6 64:21 70:11 82:19 84:11,13 88:5 teller 22:15 63:4 telling 39:3 41:9 ten 13:21 22:13 34:21 51:14 52:18 58:20 73:16 83:4 87:17 97:14 term 3:14 15:11 16:21 44:6 57:13 terms 37:9 terrain 65:7 terri 87:17 91:10 terrible 36:15 terrill 87:19 96:21 96:21 territory 33:2 testament 84:16 testify 12:22 15:23 47:6 76:16 testimony 13:2 51:15 76:17 79:2 95:2 teton 45:2 texas 59:24 74:9 95:12 100:15 thank 10:8 15:19,19 17:7,8 18:12 19:13 19:15 20:9,10 21:18</p>	<p>21:19 22:11,12,17 23:18 24:19,20 25:24,25 26:1 27:2 28:10,11,15 29:17 31:2,24 33:6,6 34:20 36:6 37:25 39:5,6 40:15,16 41:24,25 44:20,24 45:18,19 46:24 48:14,15 49:24,25 51:11,12,19 52:18 54:3 55:9,10,13 56:11,12 57:7 58:4 58:5 59:16,17 61:7 62:17,18 64:2,3 65:13,15 67:4 68:12 70:3 71:21 72:11,12 73:14,15 74:25 76:11 77:22 78:19 78:20 80:12 81:25 82:4 83:5 84:18 86:3,4,13,15 87:16 88:18 89:15,16 91:8 91:25 93:14,15 94:22,23 95:6 96:18 96:19,23 97:16,17 98:22 100:9 101:18 101:19 103:9 104:2 105:4,5 thanking 76:15 thanks 6:15 67:3 theater 1:14 thicket 65:1 thing 28:8 48:22 50:10 52:15 75:12 97:8,11 things 17:16 27:23 28:1 38:22 74:1,4,8 74:10,13,14,20,22 79:14 101:13 think 9:25 19:1,5,19 22:24 28:2,3 29:25 44:2 56:25 60:16 68:9 72:8 76:8,19 82:8,11 89:10,13</p>	<p>97:2 103:21 thinking 70:17 78:16 third 71:7 92:17 thomas 22:13 35:1,1 thought 27:10 36:17 thoughts 75:6 97:14 thousand 41:18 thousands 24:6 40:3 45:25 66:20 84:5 threat 3:15 43:20 73:8 threaten 71:19 threatened 1:6 4:8 8:6 38:5 43:15 104:8 threats 3:22 three 4:17 7:16 40:21,25 47:11 65:2 65:7 thrill 25:20 45:9 61:25 62:8 85:22 90:6 thrilled 29:9 thrilling 39:16 thrive 70:20 71:12 94:3,17 thrived 25:9 thriving 66:17,22 94:2 tied 82:16 tiger 19:11 timber 40:23 65:2 time 1:16 6:12 12:4 13:11,13 15:4 24:11 24:19 28:5 35:5,15 36:24 37:19 44:12 44:15,17 47:2 51:11 51:25 52:7 54:22 60:21 61:24 65:15 67:3 72:3 75:6,12 76:16 78:15 83:20 87:3,4,9 96:15 97:15 104:13 105:11,17</p>
<p>t</p>			
<p>t 15:22 17:11,11 20:13,13,13 22:19 26:2 28:14 29:20 31:5,5 35:1,2 38:3 39:9 40:18,19 50:6 54:6 55:13 57:10 58:7 59:24 61:10,10 64:6 65:16 67:7 70:6 71:24 73:22,22 74:21 77:24 86:6 87:22,22 91:10 92:2 92:3 93:18 95:9 96:22 101:22,23,23 106:2,2 table 11:1 13:25 105:15 tables 14:5,6,9 tagawa 34:23 39:8,8 tags 25:17 49:16 50:14 53:9 tailed 37:1 take 11:9,17 18:6,7 18:11 40:22 43:4 46:16 47:16 49:3 50:16 51:13 53:11 55:7,22 73:4 81:8 93:8 106:6 taken 47:11 49:17 106:7 takes 50:20 63:10 tale 15:5 tales 39:3 talk 41:15 50:7,8,10 50:23,23 59:2</p>			

<p>timekeeper 13:12 times 5:10 19:4 37:17 73:5 80:10 tired 23:17 67:13,19 titles 26:12 today 2:9,17,23 3:11 11:3 12:22 13:22 27:7 36:9,16 41:7 41:16,18 47:6,25 50:7,10 51:3 56:20 65:18 70:16 74:17 81:18 98:11 100:25 105:1 today's 13:5 tokyo 74:16 told 37:17,20 tolerance 36:1 tom 73:16 77:24 tomorrow 74:17 97:4 tonight 17:14 24:24 32:3 38:3 64:14,22 65:15 67:7 83:1 84:21 89:11 91:18 98:15 100:14 105:6 top 16:10 32:25 69:2 83:21 torture 21:13 34:12 tortured 34:8 totally 36:18 touched 51:5 tourism 54:21 90:13 tourist 74:20 tourists 25:10 66:18 66:20,22 tours 41:5 84:9 touts 86:20 tragic 63:2 train 46:4 transcript 106:9 transcription 106:8 transferred 75:24 transform 39:21 trap 39:24 68:1</p>	<p>trapped 33:23 41:20 60:12 trapping 55:23 58:23 68:5 traps 25:16 trash 80:20 travers 1:12 2:2,8,9 10:8 15:19 17:8 18:12,18 19:13 20:10 21:19,24 22:12 23:18 24:20 25:25 27:2 28:11 29:17 31:2,25 33:6 33:20 34:20 36:6 37:25 39:6 40:16 41:24 42:19 43:11 44:20 45:19,22 46:24 48:15 49:25 50:3 51:12,22 52:9 52:12,21 54:3 55:10 56:12 57:7 58:5 59:17 61:7 62:18 64:3 65:13 67:4 68:12 70:3 71:21 72:12 73:15 75:1 76:11 77:22 78:20 80:12 81:25 83:5 84:18 86:3 87:16 88:18 89:16 91:8 92:1 93:15 94:23 95:6 96:19 97:17 98:23 100:9 101:19 103:9 104:2 105:5 traverse 60:24 travesty 77:7 98:17 treasures 30:12 54:18 treat 12:16 27:17 treated 27:25 41:2 60:20 79:14 treatment 20:2 trees 24:14 trella 26:2,2 trending 5:16</p>	<p>tribe 63:9 tribes 79:20 trip 48:2 trips 57:25 96:25 triumphs 77:4 trophic 16:6 102:24 trotting 29:4 true 32:6 61:21 106:9 truly 26:5 36:4 44:8 49:5 65:10 79:14 81:23 82:5 93:13 trusted 34:2 truth 49:9 try 58:1,15 76:4 trying 28:4 58:16 99:6 tuesday 1:10 tundra 48:5 turkey 77:4 turn 3:3 11:14 15:4 78:6 86:9 turned 18:1 35:14 85:18 104:13 105:3 turner 3:1 twenty 44:9 two 8:12,21,22,22 13:9 19:4 29:4 32:2 41:17,17,18 51:13 51:19 52:3,9,12,21 56:4 65:2,20 77:1 77:19 84:1 90:18 97:6 101:20 typewritten 106:8</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">u</p> <hr/> <p>u 17:11 36:9 45:23 47:2 55:13 57:9,10 58:7 65:16 68:15 71:24 94:25 98:24 ugly 49:9 87:5 ultra 71:18 unacceptable 58:3 68:1,2,9,10</p>	<p>unarguable 82:21 unbelieving 88:14 unbiased 99:6 uncertain 92:15 undermined 91:6 undermines 63:1 understand 11:19 23:2,23 33:11 71:10 79:23 81:8 87:12 106:10 understanding 16:10 35:11 94:8 98:6,6 undo 94:21 unethical 39:25 99:13 100:6 unfortunately 35:7 38:7,12,22 41:6 72:25 96:6 unison 15:18 united 1:1 2:4 16:13 20:14 25:3 35:22 38:8 41:2 42:6,8 50:13 72:16 97:7 universe 79:2 university 16:1 17:18 78:24 unjust 24:4 unnatural 35:12 unnecessary 21:13 31:17 unoccupied 83:17 90:23 unparalleled 102:23 unravel 86:10 unreasonable 13:2 unrelenting 71:17 unsafe 99:13 untapped 90:12 upbringing 21:16 updated 55:21 uphold 61:6 upstate 36:10 upward 5:16</p>
---	--	---	---

<p>urban 47:4 urge 43:14 84:21 93:11 95:13 usda 38:23 49:13 use 3:14 25:17 31:19 58:18 75:11 91:17 useful 31:22 usfg 49:13 usually 94:13 utah 60:16 83:18 86:2 95:12,23 99:15 utter 38:11</p>	<p>viewing 66:19 72:23 violation 42:22 vision 93:6 visit 13:7 61:24 74:15 84:5 visited 85:14 visiting 66:19 visitors 24:6 50:17 53:23 54:1 84:5,10 85:9 88:11 vital 30:16 35:18 45:6 70:13 71:12,19 85:3</p>	<p>44:11 45:15 47:16 48:9,10 55:15,18 57:11 58:8 62:12 64:21 72:5,6,6 75:14,18 76:14 79:25 82:4 83:2 88:8 90:22 94:16,16 94:17,18 101:14,14 101:15,16 wanted 41:13,15 50:8 58:2 80:8 96:23 100:16</p>	<p>67:19 we've 5:22 37:9 46:9 49:6 51:8 94:21 99:24 101:5 weak 24:18 59:8,10 weakened 59:10 wealth 30:15 weather 39:1 web 98:1,14 website 14:25 30:6 32:15 49:14 86:19 week 69:2 welcome 2:4 91:21 welcomed 68:24 69:4 wendy 73:18 88:20 went 6:7 28:19 50:17,19 west 46:1,2 73:24 74:18 92:15 western 4:18,23 5:4 5:24 6:2,8,16 7:13 8:19,20 9:18 10:1 16:13 17:5 92:19 95:18 104:11 westerners 74:8 whereof 106:13 whim 94:10 white 37:1 wide 57:20 wild 5:18 29:11 30:20 41:7 45:8 47:17 48:2,12 53:2 53:4 61:3,3 62:9 63:12 65:10,11 68:6 68:17 72:24 73:11 74:1,4 77:4 83:12 84:23 85:2,6 88:13 88:21 89:6 99:9,11 100:18 wildearth 101:23 wilderness 61:21,22 62:16 64:7,10 65:10 67:18 71:13</p>
<p>v</p>	<p>voice 21:22 22:1 44:23 60:25 62:15 65:18 75:7 voices 20:4 25:21 void 35:4 volunteer 23:21 26:3 29:21 40:19 48:20 70:9 85:8 volunteering 40:21 48:22 volunteers 85:13 vote 26:23 voting 86:14 vulnerable 63:22</p>	<p>wants 22:20 49:23 70:22 75:17 76:7 war 39:1 49:6 96:6,7 ward 59:19 72:14 72:14 warning 62:10 warrant 6:21 8:13 30:18 warranted 8:11 9:8 32:6 washington 1:23 2:18 5:13 8:20 86:2 wasting 75:24 watch 47:17 58:12 66:21 watchdog 18:8 watched 48:3 58:1 100:21 watching 25:4 65:7 100:23 waterfowl 37:1 waters 18:7 wax 100:13 way 6:20 18:19 23:1 26:15 27:11,13,13 27:25 28:4 39:21 41:1,10 49:20 51:5 53:11 54:9 65:12 66:11 68:19,24 75:4 81:11 89:3 93:8 94:7 99:3,7 100:4 ways 26:9 30:5 53:19 60:21 63:12</p>	<p>w</p>
<p>v 18:16 22:19 35:1 45:23 48:18 52:23 75:3 83:8 valid 6:20,25 7:21 9:2,5 valley 15:16 45:9 90:7 valuable 39:19 55:16 56:3 value 63:5,23 94:20 values 38:14 103:19 vanderpool 34:21 48:17,17 vardaman 73:18 83:7,8 various 71:18 vast 83:16,25 95:20 vegetation 19:8 103:5 venus 19:11 verbal 13:2 veritext 1:22 2:25 vermin 60:20 versus 35:15 veterinarian 75:18 vicious 63:16 victim 15:3 video 13:5 videographer 13:4 view 2:11 39:25 57:13</p>	<p>w 17:11 39:9 43:12 59:24 68:15 72:15 91:11 waging 39:1 waiting 68:9 walk 60:6 74:19 walked 9:4 48:24 walks 63:14 80:1 wall 81:9 102:15 wally 51:18 59:23 walsenburg 17:13 wandered 69:19 want 10:25 12:21 18:13,24 23:13,15 24:12 25:18 30:20 32:4 37:20 43:4</p>	<p>w</p>	<p>w</p>

<p>wildlife 1:1,6 2:4,10 2:16,21 10:13 11:11 14:25 17:4 18:7 19:16 22:20,23 23:4 23:21 24:16,23,25 25:6 26:3,13 27:5 27:17,21,22 28:15 28:24 29:22 30:8,11 34:4 36:20 37:15 39:2,9,14 40:13,20 41:19 43:6,21,25 45:3 46:14,16 48:2 48:20 51:4 52:5,13 55:17 61:11 62:22 69:25 70:22 71:1 72:16 75:10,17,18 76:15,18 77:3,4,12 77:15,17,20 78:24 78:25 82:4 86:16 87:15 89:13,20,21 90:12 91:4 92:4 94:20 95:13 97:21 99:19 101:23 103:12,18 104:9,9 104:14,16,17,19,20 105:3,10,16</p> <p>wildlife's 43:19 58:9</p> <p>wildness 94:14</p> <p>williams 106:21</p> <p>willing 36:5</p> <p>willow 65:1 103:4</p> <p>willows 97:10</p> <p>wilson 87:17 91:10 91:10</p> <p>windows 46:5</p> <p>winter 28:20 50:19</p> <p>wintertime 64:24</p> <p>wipe 28:5</p> <p>wiped 26:7 46:10</p> <p>wisconsin 39:23</p> <p>wisdom 86:16</p> <p>wisely 16:15</p> <p>wiser 46:13</p> <p>wish 13:6 26:21 29:23</p>	<p>wished 69:4</p> <p>withdraw 85:24 92:6</p> <p>witness 48:1 106:13</p> <p>woefully 17:6</p> <p>wolf 1:6,7 2:5,7,19 3:6,7 4:16,17 5:14 7:11,14,16,19,23,25 8:4,7,15 9:15 10:3 14:17 15:4,24 16:19 16:19 17:5,19,20 18:2,5,23,25 19:6 19:10,16,18 21:1 22:3,8,21,25 23:5,6 23:13,23,24 24:17 25:17 27:5,19 28:18 28:24 29:12,13,14 29:22 30:25 32:25 33:2,10,14,21 34:2 34:17 35:3,9,10,18 35:21 36:3,10 37:7 37:12,22 38:6,11 39:10 40:4,5,19 41:12,13 42:7,11,12 42:24 43:8,14,24 44:17 45:8,13,14,24 46:20 47:7,9 48:11 48:20,24 49:4 50:12 51:4 52:23,24 53:2 54:12,14,25 55:20 55:24 56:10,15,16 56:21 57:1,5 58:9 58:19,20 59:1,3,6 60:10,14 61:11,25 62:2,7 63:6,9,10,15 63:18,21,22 64:17 65:21 66:4,17,19,22 69:11,13,15,15,16 69:16 71:4,25 72:2 72:2,4,17,19 73:9 73:11,23 74:23 75:13 76:19,22 77:6 77:10 78:1,3 79:3,5 79:8,13,15,16,16,17 79:20 82:8,9,11,12</p>	<p>82:15 83:9,11,12,21 84:4,7,11,22 85:8 85:15,24 86:7 87:2 88:4,5,9,22 89:22 89:22 90:4,6,8,15 90:18 91:12 92:17 92:23 93:23 95:4,14 95:16 96:9,11,12 99:6,11,20,23 100:18,23 101:8,8 102:1,9,19,22 103:13,21 104:1,8 104:10,13</p> <p>wolf's 43:7 61:20</p> <p>wolves 4:4,5,9,11,11 4:20,25 5:3,5,7,10 5:12,18,19,23,23 6:1,11,16,19,21 7:9 8:2,8,17,19,22,23 9:1,7,11,17,22 10:1 15:1,5,9,14,17 17:3 17:14,22 18:9,11 19:4,9,21 20:20,22 20:24 21:14 22:4,6 22:9,10,21,21,22 23:2,21 24:3,7,8,12 25:5,9,14 26:4,23 26:23,24,24 27:9,18 27:20,25 28:5,17,24 29:1,4,5,10,24 30:16 31:17 32:5,7 32:9,13,16 33:3,5 33:12,16,23 34:6 36:16 37:23 38:4,12 38:16,20,24 39:13 39:20 40:2,6,23,23 40:23 41:7,9,17,18 42:9,15 43:5 45:6 45:15,16,17 46:1,10 46:15,18,22 47:17 47:22,24 48:1,4,23 49:3,6,7,11,14,18,23 50:11,18 51:1,3,8 51:10 53:10,16,25 54:15,19,20,23,24</p>	<p>55:16,19,23 56:2,23 57:11,12,23,25 58:24,25 59:4 60:1 60:3,4,6,13,17,18,19 60:23,25 61:14,18 62:7,9,10,13,15,15 64:13,14,15,16,22 65:7,19,24 66:2,6 66:10,21 67:2,24,25 68:17,18 69:2,18 70:2,7,21,25 71:3,7 71:9,11,15 72:5,10 72:22,23 73:1,5,6 73:10 74:22,22 75:7 75:16,19 76:2 77:1 77:5,11,13 78:9 79:7 80:3,7,9,11 81:2,19 82:5,25 83:1,2,15,19,25 84:1,3,11,15,16,24 85:2,5,6,9,10,19 87:11,12,24 88:2,8 88:11,13,17,24 89:2 89:6,12 90:9,11,19 90:21,22 91:3,11,19 91:21,23,24 92:8,10 92:15,21,23,25 93:10,13,22 94:3,11 94:16 95:3,15,17,20 96:2,6,7,8,14,24 97:12,22,23 98:13 98:18 99:15,20,21 100:14,15 102:2,5,6 102:6,7,11,14,16 103:3,13,15,17 104:12,22,24 105:2</p> <p>women 17:21</p> <p>wonder 59:20 74:11</p> <p>wonderful 40:22 48:13 82:6</p> <p>woodland 65:16</p> <p>woods 78:10</p> <p>word 62:25 63:3,7 68:25</p>
--	---	--	--

<p>words 19:1 31:8 work 3:9 5:15,17 6:4 10:3 21:14 36:2 91:3 98:16 101:3,3 worked 4:20 5:21 6:1 51:4 67:10 69:5 87:25 90:4 working 30:7 34:19 97:23 world 21:17 24:7 25:4,10 46:13 54:1 63:23 88:12 98:3,10 world's 26:5 worse 100:8 worth 75:25,25 write 14:7 writing 13:24 89:9 writing's 102:15 written 10:20 13:24 14:11 18:19 23:19 48:19 52:5,13 69:20 70:25 91:14 92:5 95:1 105:7,8,14 wrong 26:23 65:12 68:19 74:2 84:14 wrongdoing 37:12 wyoming 2:20 5:12 38:19 39:23 42:3,11 44:25 45:9 50:22 60:19,24 62:4 65:9 66:1,13 69:7 77:5 78:6 95:12 96:8 99:7,10 101:6 wyoming's 99:8 102:10</p>	<p>yard 101:17 yards 43:1 yay 52:6 year 29:20 31:11 36:14 37:15 38:24 39:11 50:12 52:25 58:12,17 60:21 66:20 69:10 76:7 80:24 81:1 83:22,24 84:5 year's 58:22 years 5:16 8:22 16:16 21:22 22:1 24:13 26:18 28:4,23 29:9 32:17 37:19 40:7,21,25 41:14 42:4 43:4 44:23 47:4 48:21 51:7 57:15,16 61:16 67:10 76:8 77:1 80:17 82:16 83:4 85:23 87:25 97:14 102:14,19 yellow 4:12 5:3 yellowstone 5:8 15:16 19:4 24:9 25:12,12,14 30:16 33:3 39:12 45:1 47:12,16 49:8 50:17 51:10 53:1,1,7 54:13 55:19 58:12 66:7 72:6 85:17 87:10 90:4,12 95:18 96:25 100:5 101:16 102:22 yield 12:4 york 36:10 74:2 84:21 85:8 yosemite 87:25 88:8 young 21:4 32:2 42:25 43:3 63:9 75:14</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">z</p> <p>z 55:13 zealand 39:18 zero 28:20 zone 68:6 zoo 47:19 72:3 75:15 94:15 100:6</p>
x		
<p>x 62:21</p>		
y		
<p>y 17:11 18:16 27:4 43:13 45:23 47:1 59:24,24 67:7 70:6 70:6 72:14 73:22 93:18 101:22 104:4</p>		