



Written by [Ty Bodden](#) on June 16, 2026

Colorado Voters May Decide on Right to Hunt and Fish

Colorado voters could decide in November 2026 whether to add a [constitutionally protected right](#) to hunt, fish, and harvest wildlife to the state constitution. [Initiative 302](#), officially titled the “Constitutional Right to Hunt and Fish,” would take a major step toward protecting those outdoor traditions.

The New American has been following this story closely over the past year. More information on the debate over hunting in the Centennial State can be found in the articles “[Colorado Moves Against Fur Sales, Reviving the War on Hunting and Trapping](#)” and “[The God-given Right to Hunt](#).”

Initiative 302 would [add a new section](#) to [Article XVIII of the Colorado Constitution](#), establishing “a right of the people of Colorado to hunt, fish, and harvest fish and wildlife,” including by traditional methods. It would apply to fish and wildlife managed by the state, but exclude nongame species, endangered species, and species illegal to hunt under federal law.

Initiative 302 would also declare hunting and fishing to be the preferred means of responsibly managing fish and wildlife populations. The amendment states it would not authorize trespassing on private property, nor limit the ability of Colorado Parks and Wildlife or the General Assembly to regulate hunting, fishing, and wildlife management when necessary for sound scientific wildlife conservation and management, public safety, or the preservation of future hunting and fishing opportunities.

Defending Tradition

Colorado’s hunting, fishing, and trapping traditions have recently come under repeated attack. In 2024, voters [rejected Proposition 127](#), which would have banned the hunting of mountain lions and bobcats under the emotional banner of ending “trophy hunting.” More recently, Colorado’s wildlife officials advanced a petition seeking to restrict the commercial sale of fur from multiple furbearing species, despite concerns from sportsmen, trappers, and rural Coloradans.

Those fights reveal a deeper problem. Wildlife policy should not be driven by emotion, wealthy outside groups, or [democracy](#) (also labeled “[ballot-box biology](#)” as it pertains to hunting). Hunting and fishing have long been part of Colorado’s Western heritage, rural economy, and conservation model. Sportsmen help fund wildlife management through license fees and excise taxes, while also playing a key role in population control, habitat stewardship, and [food security](#).

Colorado would not be acting alone. [Twenty-four states](#) have already adopted constitutional protections



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for hunting and fishing, the most recent being [Florida's](#) enactment of such an amendment in 2024 with nearly 67 percent of the vote. [Initiative 302](#) would make Colorado the next state to secure these rights before future legislatures, activist campaigns, or ballot measures further erode them.

Addressing the Critics

Critics [argue](#) the amendment is unnecessary, because hunting and fishing are already legal in Colorado. The Colorado Legislative Council [notes](#) that the amendment could potentially invite litigation.

The broader constitutional issue remains: Hunting and fishing are not mere privileges granted by government. They are rooted in the God-given right of mankind to provide food, practice stewardship over creation, and responsibly use the resources entrusted to him. The [Ninth Amendment](#) recognizes that the people retain rights not specifically listed in the U.S. Constitution, while the [10th Amendment](#) reserves undelegated powers to the states and the people.

From a constitutional perspective, states should protect the right to hunt and fish while also safeguarding [private-property rights](#) and public safety. Initiative 302 attempts to strike that balance by not allowing trespassing on private property.

Practical Considerations

According to the Colorado Legislative Council's [fiscal analysis](#), the measure is not expected to affect state revenue or expenditures. Additionally, to [reach the ballot](#), supporters must collect enough valid signatures from registered Colorado voters, including the required two-percent distribution across all 35 state Senate districts. If the measure qualifies, voters will decide its fate in the November 3, 2026 general election. Because Initiative 302 would amend the Colorado Constitution, it would [require](#) approval from at least 55 percent of voters.

The debate over Initiative 302 is ultimately about more than one ballot measure. It is about whether Colorado will protect hunting and fishing as enduring rights tied to self-reliance, conservation, and private property — or continue leaving those traditions vulnerable to shifting political pressure. For sportsmen, landowners, and families who view hunting and fishing as part of Colorado's way of life, the 2026 ballot could become a defining test.



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