

## **Dr. Rich Reading, VP of Science and Conservation at Butterfly Pavilion, Elected as Chair of Colorado Parks and Wildlife**

**Denver, Colorado – July 1, 2025** – Butterfly Pavilion is proud to announce that Dr. Richard Reading, Vice President of Science and Conservation, has been elected Chair of the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission (CPW). Formerly serving as Vice Chair, Dr. Reading's long-standing dedication and invaluable contributions to the Commission have helped shape forward-thinking conservation policy across the state.

Appointed as a public-at-large representative in 2022, Dr. Reading brings deep expertise and decades of experience in global wildlife conservation to his role. As Chair, he will continue to guide the Commission in balancing the needs of Colorado's growing population with the protection and stewardship of the state's treasured natural resources.

"Rich's leadership in conservation, both in Colorado and around the world, is unmatched," said Ryan Welch, President and CEO of Butterfly Pavilion. "His election as CPW Chair is not only a recognition of his incredible knowledge and passion, but also a win for Colorado's wildlife and wild places. We are proud to have him on our team and look forward to the impact he'll continue to make."

At Butterfly Pavilion, Dr. Reading leads local and global invertebrate research and conservation initiatives. His team works with communities and governments to create sustainable solutions that benefit people, animals, and ecosystems. Current efforts include pollinator habitat restoration and pioneering firefly, tarantula, and dragonfly conservation in Colorado; butterfly farming and forest protection in Indonesia; safeguarding monarch migration across the U.S. and Mexico; and using bee fencing to reduce human-elephant conflict in Tanzania.

Dr. Reading's academic credentials include a Ph.D. and three master's degrees from Yale University in Wildlife Ecology and Human Dimensions of Wildlife, along with an Honorary Doctorate from the National Education University of Mongolia. In 2020, he was awarded the Order of the Polar Star—Mongolia's highest honor for foreign nationals—for his extraordinary contributions to conservation. He currently holds an academic appointment at Colorado State University and serves as a Fellow at the University of Nebraska's Center for Great Plains Studies.

With a global impact that spans six continents—from the grasslands of North America to the steppes of Mongolia and the deserts of Botswana—Dr. Reading has led conservation efforts in some of the most threatened ecosystems in the world. He has authored or edited nine books and published widely in both scientific and popular media. In addition, he serves on the boards of several national and international nonprofit organizations focused on wildlife and habitat protection.

CPW consists of 11 governor-appointed members who set regulations and policies for Colorado's state parks and wildlife programs. Their work plays a vital role in preserving Colorado's outdoor heritage, biodiversity, and access to nature for generations to come.

For more information about the CPW Commission and its members, please visit [cpw.state.co.us](http://cpw.state.co.us).

### **About Butterfly Pavilion**

Founded in 1995 and celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, Butterfly Pavilion is the first Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA)-accredited, standalone, non-profit invertebrate zoo in the world. Located in Westminster, Colorado, Butterfly Pavilion is a global leader in invertebrate research, conservation, and education. From restoring pollinator habitats and conducting tarantula research to inspiring over 60,000 students each year, Butterfly Pavilion works locally and globally to protect the small but mighty animals that keep our planet thriving. Learn more at [www.Butterflies.org](http://www.Butterflies.org).