



# COLORADO WOLF & WILDLIFE CENTER

JANUARY 2025 · CONSERVATION · EDUCATION · PRESERVATION



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*We hope to give you something to look forward to every day!*



**JANUARY 8<sup>TH</sup> CPW COMMISSION MEETING**

I have lost count of how many CPW meetings I, and many of my staff, have attended. If they did not attend, they were here at the Center collecting signatures for a petition to protect wolves and giving out information to every visitor who comes to see our beautiful wolves, and in turn, hoping that the wolves they learn about will be an inspiration for them to want to know that they can help to bring home and protect the wild wolves our landscape now and for the future.

In this last meeting, we collected 1,050 signatures in just 8 days to present to the CPW Commissioners. This meeting was about the Colorado Cattlemen's Association and agriculture organizations wanting to delay or pause the release of the wolves from British Columbia. Their complaints were that CPW should have more time to prepare with range riders on the ground and to delay further wolf reintroductions until specific wolf-livestock conflict mitigation strategies are fully funded, developed, and implemented. In the press release, the Colorado Cattlemen's Association stated this would "ensure that CPW is equipped to manage wolf depredation and provide livestock producers with the necessary tools and resources before any wolves are put on the ground." However, CPW addressed all seven issues listed below.

The Cattleman's Association submitted a petition to delay the 2024/2025 release of the additional Gray wolves. CPW states that this case is unnecessary because the seven conditions included have already been addressed. These topics were covered in detail during the wolf update at the **CPW meeting on January 8.**

- Development of a state range rider program
- Development of rapid response team to address conflicts
- Non-lethal conflict techniques
- Site assessment program
- A definition of chronic depredation
- Collaboration with ranchers on carcass removal
- Development of a communication plan and consultation with local officials, communities and producers

The meetings are long most times. The last one, we were there for 12 hours, plus travel time. Many times you walk away feeling that there is no hope, however, we did celebrate a victory at this one and the petition was denied. The wolves will be coming!

After 5 years of meetings, I have heard a list of reoccurring concerns. Most, however, are either not true, not proven, ridiculous, and with some ranchers I feel that it is about entitlement. I am all about what is "fair is fair", but the Cattleman's Association is powerful both financially and politically. With that power, some like to intimidate, and the media plays into it. This in turn helps the opposition to try and twist the narrative. Because of this, we become even more divided. Listed below are 13 of the most common complaints from every meeting that CPW has held. I have put this list together so that the reader may now have information to help understand some of the issues at hand.

**DEBUNKING THE CONCERNS**

*- Being a producer is a stressful existence.*

I must combat that with; life is full of challenges, and it is stressful for all of us. The wolves were here first, and they do belong in the landscape. They were eradicated due to hatred and greed for 80 years! The myth that wolves are villains and monsters are still alive today and still believed. To me, the word that we should

  
**CLICK HERE**  
to view meeting & public testimony

*Click on: Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission Meeting-Day 1*  
*Public comment for wolves starts at the 6:27 time.*

all be practicing is co-existence. It truly can be done for the producers who feel that they are a victim, they need to understand that predators serve a purpose and are native to our landscape. Cattle and sheep are non-native, and domesticated, and when they live among predators in an unnatural environment, depredations will happen. Lifestyles need to change. It is never easy but change never is. It still simply wolves belong. My question to any reader is no matter what profession that you are in, can you think of how your lifestyle had to change permanently due to a death, job loss, injury, divorce, tragedy, COVID, or something else? I know that there have been things that have changed my way of life. My point is that no one is targeting the AG community. We all are equal when it comes to life changes no matter how small or large, semi-permanent or permanent.

***- Preventative measures aren't much use.***

They DO work if you choose to implement them and CPW is available to help set up various non-lethal tools such as turbo fladry and fox lights, which are free. There is support with things like carcass removal, providing lots of information about guardian animals, site assessments to identify potential areas of vulnerability, and now CPW has rolled out the Range Rider program for producers. As time goes on, drones will be another tool. So, CPW and NGOs are doing everything possible for conflict management including the biggest compensation plan in the world. Unfortunately, producers are not required to use non-lethal tools or clean up carcass pits which is a big problem because wolf packs can be conditioned to keep returning to that area that is occupied by livestock. Understandably, some producers do not have access to a landfill for dead carcasses; however, a pit dug in the summer for burial or burning would be a solution. The pit can have barriers around it, such as cattle panels, electric wire, or various metal materials, to protect livestock and predators from entering. Unfortunately, producers may not be incentivized to use non-lethal tools because they receive compensation regardless.

***- Hunters have taken the place of wolves.***

This statement is wrong in so many ways. Hunters do not eat animals that are infected with chronic waste disease, and they cannot provide the landscape with healthier plant populations, balancing the ecosystem by keeping other predators such as coyotes in check while also keeping ungulates from overgrazing grasslands and forests. They also provide economic benefits and so much more. Hunters hunt the healthiest animals, and some trophy hunt the biggest bull elk. This in turn impacts the elk herd. Some kill female mountain lions that still have kittens, and others still trap animals. This is inhumane as they suffer for hours and sometimes days. Wolves hunt instinctively, not for sport or a trophy. Even with ethical hunting for food, wolves can never be replaced for what they do naturally as an apex predator.

***- My property rights have been taken away.***

Fact: Most ranchers lease the land from the state and pay a "grazing allotment". To date, ranchers only pay \$1.35 a head per cow and calf for a month. Cat food costs a lot more than that. Not only that, unless it is private land, the land belongs to the public and the wildlife.

***- We cannot live in harmony with them.***

A selfish statement. Change is hard for humans to adapt to and many feel that if it doesn't fit their lifestyle, then they will refuse to accept it. The history of Native Americans is a stark reminder of the consequences of intolerance and the refusal to coexist. It's a sobering example of how fear and selfishness can lead to devastating outcomes. The ability to live in harmony and respect nature requires empathy, understanding, and a willingness to compromise—qualities that are essential for a peaceful coexistence.

***- CPW has shoved this down our throat.***

Wolves belong. They were here way before the ranchers established their territories. They are essential to our ecosystem. It was time for them to be back on the landscape where they belong. Most wolf advocates are

not the type to be resentful, disrespectful, or have the feeling that it is our way only. I have worked with many people and basically, we just want wolves on the ground, we want them to survive and thrive and be wolves. We also know that ranchers do have a livelihood, and we understand that. We just ask that ranchers respect wildlife whether they are predator or prey and co-exist together. Advocates do want to "reach across the aisle", but it can't be a one-way street. We also feel that everyone has choices in life and with your choice comes risks, profits and losses, and the ability to change. Also, if you are a rancher, you should take responsibility of your own profits like range riding,(that is what the cowboys use to do), bring in cows when ready to calf, clean up carcass piles, and if there is a problem wolf, do all that you can first with the tools made available before you call CPW to lethally kill the wolf. We do know that there are a few ranchers who are willing to work together at arm's length, but that is a good start. There are truly ways that both sides can co-exist and be at peace with the natural world.

***- Wolf reintroduction is expensive and should be terminated.***

The people of Colorado made the decision to vote for Prop.#114 to bring wolves back to Colorado and despite what the opposition says, 12 counties voted "yes" to pass the vote and out of that, 6 were on the Western Slope and without those votes, the measure would not have passed.

Colorado State University found that nearly 85% of Coloradans, 80% of western slope residents, and 70% of ranchers support wolf restoration.

As of December 2024, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) has spent nearly \$600,000 of its \$2.1 million annual budget for the wolf program that was appropriated through the plan.

Monies appropriated by Colorado voters have been used to fund the program including:

- 18 months of Stakeholders Advisory Group
- 18 months of a Technical Advisory Group
- Implementation of the conflict management plan
- Staff salaries and benefits
- Contract personal services
- Wolf Monitoring and Tracking: Funds were used to purchase and deploy GPS collars.
- Wolf capture and relocation
- Public outreach and education
- Compensation for livestock losses

**Other sources that are available for the reintroduction and support of the wolf program and ways to donate to help continue our mission for the long-term success of the Gray wolf.**

**GOVERNMENT / NGO's / CPW / FEDERAL FUNDS / GRANTS & GIFTS**

- Species Conservation Trust Fund: Dedicated to conservation efforts. <https://cwcb.colorado.gov>
- Colorado Nongame Conservation and Wildlife Restoration Cash Fund: Focuses on wildlife conservation. <https://cpw.state.co.us>
- Wildlife Cash Fund: Excludes funds from hunting and fishing licenses. <https://cpw.state.co.us>
- Grants, Gifts, Sponsorships, Contributions, Donations, and Bequests: Including federal funds
- Born to be Wild license plate: Rocky Mountain Wolf Project. <https://rockymountainwolfproject.org>

- Wolf Conflict Reduction Fund (CSU) <https://give.colostate.edu/campaigns/45082/donations/new>
- Colorado Co-Existence Fund (CWWC) <https://wolfeducation.org/donations>
- Defenders of Wildlife: <https://defenders.org>
- Western Environmental Law Center: They provide legal representation. <https://westernlaw.org>
- Colorado Sierra Club: Part of the larger Sierra Club organization, this chapter focuses specifically on conservation efforts within Colorado. <http://act.sierraclub.org>
- Earth Justice: <https://earthjustice.org>

***- Not the right kind of wolves/not native/Super wolves***

A Gray wolf or a Timber wolf ( Canis Lupis) is the exact same species in both the United States and Canada. These majestic creatures, known for their distinctive howl and incredible adaptability, roam across various landscapes in North America, from the forests of Canada to the mountains and plains of the United States.

Gray wolves can vary in size, color, and behavior depending on their specific habitat and available prey. Gray wolves in North America, including Canada, tend to have similar weight ranges. Adult male gray wolves typically weigh between 70 to 115 pounds (32 to 52 kg), while adult females generally weigh between 60 to 100 pounds (27 to 45 kg). However, there can be some variation based on their environment and diet, but not the size of a Dire wolf!

***- Wolves will be a threat to my kids, my family and pets.***

There's a lot of misunderstanding about wolves. Although they are wild animals and should be respected as such, the fear of wolves attacking humans is generally overblown. Wolves are usually very shy and tend to avoid humans whenever possible. There are very few documented cases of healthy wild wolves attacking people.

To protect pets and livestock, it's best to take preventative measures such as secure fencing, keeping pets indoors at night, and not leaving food outside that might attract wildlife.

If you're living in an area with a wolf population, there are many strategies and resources available to help you coexist with these remarkable animals safely.

***- Hiking and recreating/now at risk/wolves will stalk and kill you.***

They typically avoid human encounters and would rather flee than confront a person.

While it's always smart to be cautious and prepared when hiking or recreating in areas where wildlife is present, the idea that wolves will actively stalk and kill humans is largely unfounded. Most conflicts with wolves arise from protecting livestock or food sources not from targeting people.

***- Wolves kill more than they need because it is "fun" for them.***

(Wolves kill 18-22 deer or elk per year - Yellowstone data, and evidence documents them returning to the same kills repeatedly. Let alone the effort it takes to successfully take down a deer or elk and how unsuccessful they are 85% of the time) Each successful hunt involves coordination, strategy, and often a high degree of risk. It's fascinating to see how these apex predators contribute to the health of their environment by controlling herbivore populations, which in turn affects vegetation and other wildlife.

***- Wolves are prolific breeders so they will overpopulate.***

The idea that wolves are prolific breeders and will overpopulate is indeed a myth. Wolves have natural

population controls in place. Factors like available prey, territory, social structure, and health all play significant roles in regulating their numbers.

Wolves typically produce one litter of pups per year, and only the alpha pair in a pack will breed. Moreover, many pups don't survive to adulthood due to various natural challenges. Therefore, wolves have a balanced and self-regulating reproductive system that prevents overpopulation.

***- Wolves are going to wipe out all our deer and elk, and there will be nothing left for hunters.***

When looking into the basic biology of wolves when hunting, there is great risk of injury and death. Hunting is a coordinated and strategic effort that takes the strength of the pack. Regardless of pack size, they are only successful hunters 10-15% of the time. We can infer based on statistics that a wolf pack will take our 1 deer or elk per week. Let's take Idaho for example.

Idaho has a large deer and elk population and in recent years have claimed they are in the "golden age of elk hunting." In the year 2022, Idaho reported 932,000 deer and elk in the state. Hunters harvested 63,722 which equates to 6.8% of the population. If there were roughly 90 wolf packs consisting of about 2-6 in a pack, taking 52 deer/elk each would result in only 4,680 deer and elk. That only amounts to 0.005% of the population. Even if they hunted two deer/elk per week, that would only amount to 0.01% of deer and elk estimates. Hunters take far more deer and elk than their natural prey. Wolves are not behind the pointed finger of blame; they hunt what they need to survive.

Colorado has 430,000 mule deer and 280,000 elk; Colorado has the largest elk population of any state. Wolves simply cannot reduce elk and deer populations the way humans are capable of.

Hopefully, this information and data will help readers to understand what the human, "conflict" is, and the challenging problems and issues are. We feel that Colorado's reintroduction of wolves marks a significant step in wildlife conservation and ecosystem restoration. You can expect to see positive changes, like a more balanced ecosystem as wolves play a crucial role in controlling the populations of other species. Plus, it's a testament to dedicated conservation efforts throughout the years.

Change is hard, however I believe that every living person has had to adapt to some type of change in their life. Major changes to temporary, it is how we survive and even accept as a new way of life. Having wolves in our landscape should be something to be proud of and Colorado is proving to be a role model state. Let's work together to be at peace and a willingness to compromise for the betterment of all.

*- Darlene Kababel*



## CPW begins gray wolf capture and transport operations to reintroduce up to 15 gray wolves from British Columbia

Rachel Gonzales | January 11, 2025

DENVER – Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) experts kicked off capture operations of gray wolves in British Columbia on Friday as part of its 2025 capture season in support of the Colorado Wolf Restoration and Management Plan. The agreement with the B.C. Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship allows up to 15 wolves to be translocated and released in Colorado this year. The commencement of capture operations follows work to adopt a number of wolf-livestock conflict minimization measures, including a range rider program, a definition of chronic depredation, the development of a depredation response operations team, effective non-lethal tools, a site assessment program, a carcass removal program, and a communications plan. Additionally, at the January Parks and Wildlife Commission meeting the Commission adopted the staff recommendation regarding the citizen petition to delay gray wolf restoration. The operation is expected to last up to two weeks.

Ultimately, and in alignment with voter intent with Proposition 114, CPW will recover and maintain a viable, self-sustaining wolf population in Colorado while balancing the need to manage interactions between wolves, people and livestock.

Adding wolves from British Columbia to the existing population in Colorado will increase the likelihood of pairing, breeding and pack formation. Established wolf packs defend territories, which will allow CPW to monitor patterns within a territory and will improve the agency's ability to collaborate with producers on active behavior and coexistence strategies to best protect livestock.

CPW is responsibly managing the funding associated with the capture and transport of the wolves.

- CPW staff will work with biologists from the B.C. Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship to capture wolves. British Columbia has an abundant gray wolf population, estimated to be in the range of 5,300 to 11,600 animals. They are widely distributed throughout the province and their status is not currently considered to be a conservation concern.
- Wolves will be examined and provided treatment for possible diseases and infections at the source sites.
- Collars will be placed on wolves, which will inform CPW about the behaviors and survival of reintroduced animals.
- Wolves will be transported in crates to Colorado via aircraft.
- Wolves will be released at select sites in Colorado as soon as possible once they arrive in the state to minimize stress on the animals.
- Gray wolves from this area of B.C. do not overlap with areas where livestock are present, so there are no concerns about reintroducing wolves that are from packs that are involved in situations of repeated livestock depredations.

Press releases will be available on [cpw.state.co.us/news](http://cpw.state.co.us/news). Subscribe to receive CPW press releases using the

online form or follow CPW's Facebook page. To find the latest information on wolves in Colorado and movement activity maps, visit CPW's Wolves in Colorado web page and sign up for the monthly Gray Wolf Reintroduction eNews.

Wolf selection will follow the guidance of the Colorado Wolf Restoration and Management Plan. Animals with major injuries—such as several broken canines, missing eyes, fractured or missing limbs, or mange or lice infection—will not be chosen for reintroduction. This selection process is crucial to ensure the health and adaptability of the reintroduced wolves to their new environment. CPW will not translocate wolves from B.C. that are from packs currently involved in situations of repeated livestock depredations.

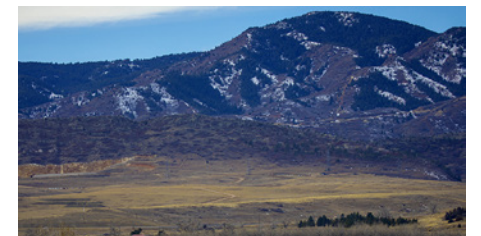
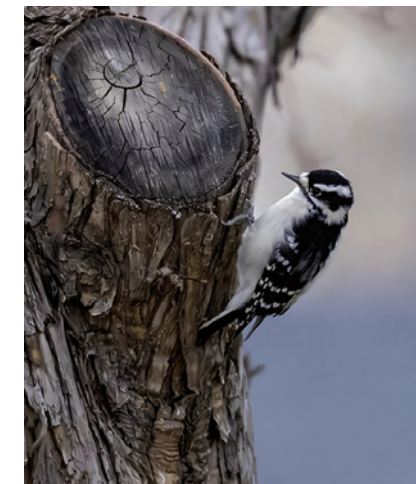
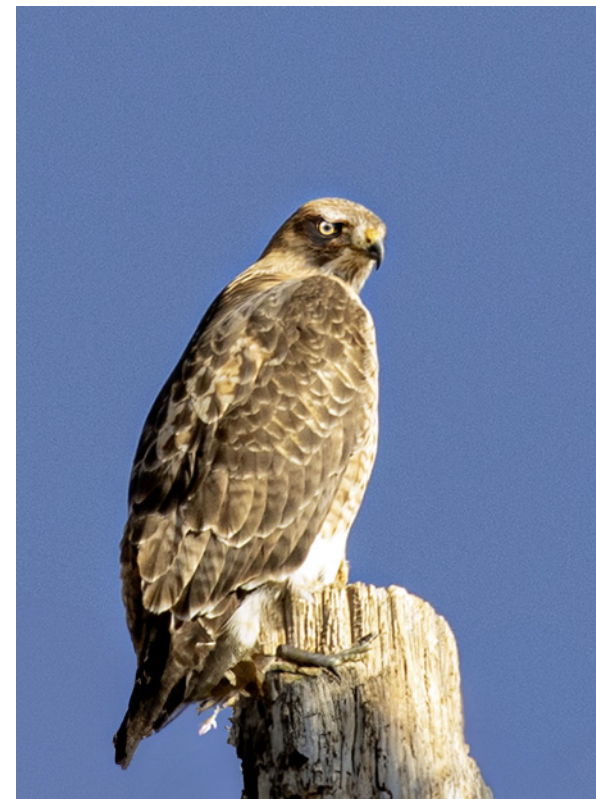
Considerations for this year's releases:

- CPW will share the sex, weight and approximate age of gray wolves translocated from B.C. this year on the Western Slope of Colorado in Garfield, Eagle and/or Pitkin counties. Note, the weight of gray wolves can be misleading as to their size. Factors such as if the wolf has recently eaten, or if it has been a while since it has eaten, can affect the animal's weight by 10 to 15 pounds.

"We remain committed to working with all parties as we continue to implement the law as passed by the voters," said CPW Director Jeff Davis. "We have been working all year in preparation to have more wolves on the landscape with an improved Conflict Minimization Program, the addition of new staff to work alongside producers, strengthened partnerships, and guidelines for producers as it relates to chronic depredation and lethal management considerations."

"We are excited to be working with B.C. to bring together our combined experience and expertise while ensuring the safety of animals and staff," said CPW Wolf Conservation Program Manager Eric Odell. "This new source population of gray wolves will provide additional genetic diversity to Colorado's wolf population."

CPW plans to release 10-15 gray wolves on the West Slope per year, for a total of 3 – 5 years, as outlined in the Colorado Wolf Restoration and Management Plan.



# The otter nonsense of Wyoming's House Bill 45

Donal O'Toole | WyoFile | December 30, 2024



An American river otter, *Lontra canadensis*, on a river bank. (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)

House Bill 45 – Removing otters as protected animals is fewer than 100 words, yet still manages to speak volumes about what Wyoming values and what it doesn't.

The measure, to be considered in the upcoming 2025 general legislative session, proposes striking otters from the list of "protected animals" in Wyoming statute 23-1-101, a list that also currently includes black-footed ferrets, fisher, lynx, pikas and wolverines.

By removing North American river otters from the protected species list, the bill's 11 sponsors seek to legalize the killing of *Lontra canadensis*, a practice prohibited in Wyoming since 1953. It is an extraordinary move, given that we lack robust estimates of their abundance in Wyoming. They are most common in the Yellowstone, Green and Snake River drainages, and

are rare or absent from all others. Their spread along waterways in Wyoming is painstakingly slow, especially compared to the recovery of otters in surrounding states. Why? This is unclear, although oil and natural gas development is likely affecting the species along the Green River. Declines in native fishes may also be responsible for the limited recovery of Wyoming's otter populations.

The sponsors offer two reasons publicly in support of the bill.

One is that otters are making a tentative recovery in Wyoming. Having been extirpated over much of the state, their numbers have slowly increased, particularly in western Wyoming. Unlike the neighboring states of Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska and Utah, where otters were

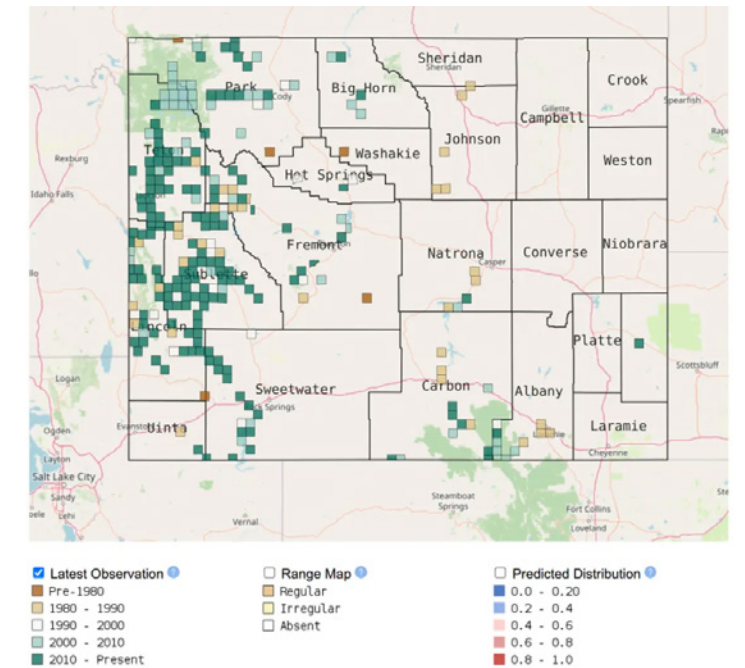
extirpated, Wyoming never wiped them out completely. We can thank that stroke of luck to the creation of Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks, which served as de facto wildlife refuges. In the last 70 years, the species recolonized some of its old haunts, in parts of Lincoln, Sublette and Sweetwater counties.

Another stated reason for the bill is the supposed "nasty disposition" of otters. They may bite trespassers in their habitat, regardless of whether they are the two-legged or four-legged variant. Rep.-elect Mike Schmid (R-Pinedale), one sponsor of the bill, likes to mention an incident in which several youngsters took a float trip near La Barge some years ago. They got bit. Such attacks on people are extremely rare. Only 44 cases of otter attacks have been published worldwide since 1875, compared with over 4.5 million dog bites annually in the U.S. A bite from an otter, which weighs as much as a cocker spaniel, may land you in the emergency room, but it's unlikely to put you between two planks. The risk of such bites can be minimized by exercising common sense around their habitat, particularly when they have kits. Otters, like other wild mammals, may run and hide, or defend themselves. As Wyomingites, isn't that their right under the state's stand-your-ground law?

But sticking up for themselves isn't otters' only offensive quality. Schmid also seems troubled that otters eat fish and might discover his brother's artificially stocked pond.

There is a third reason for this bill. It is one to whisper quietly, as it is the most important. Otters are a resource, like land, minerals, timber, water or grass. Trappers want access to what they believe is a recovering species. Otter pelts retail for \$90 – \$150. Trapping native furbearers is considered a healthy recreational pursuit – for the trapper, if not the animal. Trappers are a small, influential constituency for the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. Bowing to their wishes was a recurring theme of Brian Nesvik's tenure, the recently retired director of WGFD. It has been a long, slow road to get WGFD, and its commissioners, to agree to minimal reforms to the state's trapping regulations, such as setbacks of traps from public trails.

Trapping was one of the main methods of otter extirpation across North America in the last 100 years. The species recovered in neighboring states through expensive reintroduction efforts that lasted decades. So, as soon as the species shows signs of recovery in Wyoming, our first official response is to resume



Current distribution of American river otters in Wyoming. Dark green squares designate sightings since 2010. (Downloaded from Wyoming Natural Diversity Database, Dec. 24, 2024)

harvesting pelts? There is something amiss with this kind of stewardship. It is more akin to ecological vandalism.

Thanks to research biologists like Merav Ben-David and her students at the University of Wyoming, there is a growing understanding of otters' critical role in maintaining ecological integrity and supporting the biological diversity of our landscapes by moving nutrients from aquatic environments to riparian riverbanks. The presence of otters and beavers is a sign to land managers that riparian areas are in good shape. They are likely to remain so, provided keystone species like these are allowed to flourish.

Bob Budd, a Wyoming writer, the chairman of Wyoming's Sage Grouse Implementation Team, executive director of the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust, as well as a former rancher. He has a strong and practical interest in ecology. In an eloquent set of essays about land management called "Otters Dance: A Rancher's Journey to Enlightenment and Stewardship," Budd asked: what are river otters worth in a landscape?

My best guess as a retired veterinarian: River otters alive are worth considerably more than a bunch of trophy pelts.

# ADMINISTRATION WITHDRAWS OLD-GROWTH FOREST PLAN

Matthew Brown | January 11, 2025

*Billings, Montana* - The Biden administration on Tuesday abruptly dropped its nascent plan to protect old-growth forests after getting pushback from Republicans and the timber industry.

The move was announced by U.S. Forest Service Chief Randy Moore in a letter to forest supervisors.

It brings a sudden end to a years-long process to craft a nationwide plan that would better protect old trees that are increasingly threatened by climate change. The effort had been supported by some conservationists as one of the most significant forest preservation efforts in decades.

Biden launched the initiative with an executive order on Earth Day in April 2022. The proposal went through extensive public comment periods and internal analyses by government officials and was due to be finalized any day.

The plan would have limited logging in old-growth forests, with exceptions to allow logging in some old-growth areas to protect against wildfires, but those exceptions were not enough for the timber industry and Republicans in Congress who bitterly opposed the administration's proposal. They said it wasn't needed because many forested areas are protected. And they warned it could be devastating to logging companies that rely on access to cheap timber on public lands.

GOP lawmakers introduced legislation while the administration's plans were still in the works to block them from going into effect.

Moore said in his letter that much was learned from the first-of-its-kind effort to identify old-growth trees on public lands across the nation. He also acknowledged criticism from those who said the administration's approach to old-growth forests was flawed because they can vary greatly between different types of ecosystems.

"There is strong support for, and an expectation of us, to continue to conserve these forests based on the best available scientific information," Moore wrote. "There was also feedback that there are important place-based differences that we will need to understand in order to conserve old-growth forests."

Montana Republican U.S. Sen. Steve Daines in a

statement called the withdrawal of the old-growth plan a "victory for common-sense local management of our forests."

Most old-growth stands fell to logging as the nation developed. Yet pockets of ancient trees remain, scattered across the U.S. including in California, the Pacific Northwest and areas of the Rocky Mountains. Larger expanses of old growth survive in Alaska, such as within the Tongass National Forest.

There's wide consensus on the importance of preserving them, both symbolically as marvels of nature and more practically because their trunks and branches store large amounts of carbon that can be released when forests burn, adding to climate change.

Alex Craven, the forests campaign manager for the Sierra Club conservation group, said there was a "scientific necessity and public expectation" to protect old-growth and mature forests.

"Those two facts make formal old-growth protections a matter of when, not if," Craven wrote in an email. Wildfires in recent years decimated blocks of old-growth forest in states throughout the West and killed thousands of giant sequoias.

Wildfires, insects and disease have been the main killers of old-growth trees since 2000, accounting for almost 1,400 square miles of losses, according to government research. Logging on federal lands cut down about 14 squares miles of old-growth forest, and timber industry representatives have said that figure shows further restrictions aren't needed.

Bill Imbergamo with the Federal Forest Resource Coalition, an industry group, called the administration's proposal "legally dubious and ecologically flawed."

"Old-growth forests are succumbing to fire, insects and disease, and they need management to make them healthier and more resilient," he said. The administration's plan faced a doubtful future if it had been finalized. During the first term of Trump, federal officials sought to open huge areas of West Coast forests to potential logging.



# Responding To Daniel Wolf Torture, Wyoming Hunters Back "Clean Kill Bill"

In response to the notorious case of a wolf being run over with a snowmobile and tortured, a bill before the Wyoming Legislature aims to make wildlife abuse a felony offence. It's backed by a coalition of Wyoming hunters.

Mark Heinz | Cowboy State Daily | January 17, 2025



A snowmobile chases a wolf across a snowy landscape in Canada. (North Ontario via YouTube)

In the wake of the abuse of a Wyoming wolf that sparked worldwide outrage, torturing wildlife should be a felony offense, according to a bill backed by hunters.

The "Clean Kill Bill" initiative calls for "the Wyoming Legislature to establish felony penalties to punish those who would purposely torture Wyoming's wildlife," according to statement from Wyoming Sportsmanship, the group backing the bill.

The effort is in response to the reported capture and hours-long torment of a wolf in Daniel, Wyoming, on Feb. 29, 2024.

According to the account of events, local resident Cody Roberts reportedly ran the wolf down with a snowmobile, disabling it. He then taped its mouth shut and kept it alive for a time, at one point showing it off to bar patrons

in Daniel, a tiny town in Sublette County, before finally taking it out behind the bar and killing it.

Roberts was cited by a Wyoming Game and Fish warden for illegal possession of a live, warm-blooded animal and forfeited a \$250 bond, according to court records. That was the maximum penalty allowed by law, the agency says.

## Make A Clean Kill

Wyoming Sportsmanship is newly formed and spearheaded by noted Wyoming outdoorsman Paul Ulrich; Marilyn Kite, a former state Supreme Court Chief Justice and a founder of the Wyoming Women's Antelope Hunt; and Josh Coursey, president of the Muley Fanatic Foundation.



Cody Roberts of Daniel, Wyoming, poses and teases a young wolf he's accused of running down with a snowmobile and abusing before killing it in early 2024.

The purpose behind the bill isn't to ban predator hunting, Ulrich said. Rather, it calls for hunters to make kills as quickly and humanely as possible.

"This isn't saying you can't hunt a predator — of course you can — but it is saying that when you take that animal, you will dispatch it as a sportsman without torture, abuse and reprehensible actions," Ulrich said. "And if you torture Wyoming's wildlife, it's a felony with penalties consistent with Wyoming Game and Fish statutes."

## 'I Am Embarrassed By What Happened'

The "Clean Kill Bill" is sponsored by Wyoming House Travel, Recreation and Wildlife Committee Chairman Andrew Byron, R-Jackson. It's cosponsored by the Senate chairman of the Travel, Recreation and Wildlife Committee, Bill Landen, R-Casper.

"Wyoming learned there is a deficiency in our statutes, an absence of directly addressing wildlife torture in order to stop it from the start, and we need to address that deficiency with a strong bill that specifically takes on wildlife torture," Byron said in the group's statement.

"As a lifelong sportsman, I am embarrassed by what happened in Sublette County," Landen stated. "The Wyoming Legislature needs to respond and this is the right thing to do."



## Surveys Show Huge Support

The bill has huge support in Wyoming, including among hunters, according to a survey sponsored by Wyoming Sportsmanship.

Of roughly 600 likely general election voters surveyed in Wyoming, 78% support the bill, and 74% of the hunters surveyed support it, according to Wyoming Sportsmanship.

Ulrich told Cowboy State Daily that numerous people have told him they want to see a strong response to the Daniel wolf torture.

"I'm am pleased with the poll results, but not surprised," he said. "Every single person I have talked to in the state over the past six months shares the same values and absolutely wants to see something meaningful get done to prevent this in the future."

He's optimistic about the bill's chances of passing and being signed into law.

"Based on the current sponsors, the poll results and the general sentiment that more needs to be done, I'm very hopeful that we can get this across the finish line," he said.



# COLORADO'S SPIRIT OF COLLABORATION COULD SHINE WITH OUR NEW WOLF PACKS

Jim Martin | January 19, 2025

In my first column of 2025, I questioned whether I ought to keep writing in this climate of extreme political polarization. I wondered if I would be making any difference.

An outpouring of readers responded, telling me they understand my wanting to leave the proverbial marketplace of ideas that has seemingly run dry of the pursuit of truth, understanding or compromise. And with no back orders to restock the shelves.

But more compelling came the affirmative message to stick around, causing me to reflect on our shared history as Coloradans and Americans.

I took John Stuart Mill as one for inspiration. Back in 1859, he penned "On Liberty" to say a healthy and free society works tirelessly to separate falsehoods from fact, and that no one side of any issue knows the truth, embodies it, or its antithesis, and that truth untested slips into dogma.

I now see what my personal resiliency is better than hopeless lament and that no one, at any point in time, promised any of us this experiment in American democracy would ever be easy. Each of us, then, ought to participate more, and not less in times of great challenges.

I may regret it, but I am diving into the deep end of the statewide controversy over wolves, given the new arrivals this week.

The Denver Post reports that on Sunday, our wildlife agency, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, began trapping wolves in British Columbia, Canada, for transport to Colorado to stay on track with wolf restoration efforts.

As background, in 2020, Colorado voters passed Proposition 114 to restore a wild population of gray wolves, a native endangered species. Environmental champion, former U.S. Senator and Congressman Mark Udall explained well the benefits in his Denver Post opinion column: "Colorado needs a robust, sustainable wolf population to contribute to nature's balance, healthy ecosystems, and reduced prevalence of disease in deer and elk. This is especially true as climate change threatens the existence of many native species, some of which are already in decline."

He emphasized, "we need thoughtful management

that helps prevent conflicts between wolves, people and livestock."

Four years later, it appears to me CPW is doing a highly commendable job of carrying out the will of the people for a worthwhile broader goal. The wildlife agency has moved 10 wolves onto public land, and 2 mated. We have witnessed pups born, and reclaimed some of the wild with 2 local packs to call our own.

Sunday's trapping is phase two, with about 15 wolves anticipated for release. This team of wildlife agency experts using the best science tells us they've established a critical timetable based on breeding season to get us to a "sustainable population" aka healthy and larger wolf packs on the ground that are also easier to track, observe, and manage.

What's truly remarkable is that both the CPW and the Department of Agriculture, which have historically been somewhat at odds, are not partnering in a noble endeavor to create a historic Colorado Range Rider Program made of trained community volunteers on horseback to ride the rural range, and prevent depredations. It's actually kind of funny to think that today we have more range riders signed up than wolves on the ground.

Agencies and advocates have also worked hard together to establish a healthy compensation fund to pay ranchers for any losses from wolf depredation.

The story of wolves is also consistent with our state statute that enshrines into law the need for wildlife to be "protected, preserved, (and) enhances" for the benefit of all Colorado citizens.

At the same time, I applaud our ranching community that has consistently reminded our wildlife agency not to forget that this is all new for multi-generational families, and to hear their concerns and address them. And they have.

Criticisms that come from ranchers as well as wolf advocates are all part of the free speech that only makes our government work better. It should be welcomed, not dismissed.

Wolf advocates are rightly concerned over reports that 2 wolves have died, reportedly from gunshot wounds, which is being investigated. And that no officials said

anything when applause erupted weeks ago in support of the idea of running over wolves with snowmobiles.

This happened, according to local media, at a packed public meeting of about 300 residents in Garfield County weeks ago, where dozens of wildlife agency staff were there to educate the public on this next phase of wolves on the ground. A man in the audience stood up to point out that in Wyoming you can kill wolves with snowmobiles. Common sense tells us this comment was in reference to Cody Roberts, a Wyoming man widely reported for running over a young wolf with a snowmobile, then taping her mouth shut as she suffered before shooting her at a local bar.

It would be very wise for our wildlife agency to issue a public statement that Colorado has zero tolerance for killing endangered species with snowmobiles, or any act of hatred of our wildlife. Harming wolves is a federal crime.

It's also troubling to read this past week, a group filed a ballot measure for 2026 that would repeal the law passed by voters to restore wolves and unravel the agency's momentum to follow the law.

This new repeal effort and the call to kill endangered wolves is not at all reflective of the collaborative spirit we've seen among our wildlife and agricultural agencies, as well as wolf advocates and ranchers acting responsibly.

I think we can and should all work a little harder to come together to show respect for wildlife, for the law and for ranching in Colorado. Because we are all in this together.

What a great coincidence!  
Colorado's wolves from BC arriving on the same day as the wolves from Alberta arrived in Yellowstone thirty years earlier.



# Walk a Wolf / Wolfdog Encounter

*Have you ever wanted to walk a wolf?  
Now's your chance!*

*Meet Bane!*

**BANE IS A HANDSOME, SWEET WOLFDOG.**

**TAKE HIM FOR A SHORT WALK ON THE  
SANCTUARY GROUNDS**

**OR:**

**SPEND TIME WITH HIM IN AN ENCLOSURE.  
YOUR CHOICE!**



- **BANE LOVES ALL GUESTS AND IS TRULY A GENTLE GIANT.**
- **YOU HAVE A GOOD CHANCE TO RECEIVE "WOLF" KISSES DURING YOUR ENCOUNTER.**
- **TAKE AS MANY PICTURES OR VIDEOS YOU WOULD LIKE WITH YOUR OWN DEVICE!**

**FOR REQUIREMENTS, DRESS CODE, PRICING, AND AVAILABILITY,  
VISIT [WOLFEDUCATION.ORG/INTERACTIVE-TOURS](http://WOLFEDUCATION.ORG/INTERACTIVE-TOURS)**

**RESERVATIONS REQUIRED  
VISIT [WOLFEDUCATION.ORG](http://WOLFEDUCATION.ORG) OR CALL 719-687-9742**

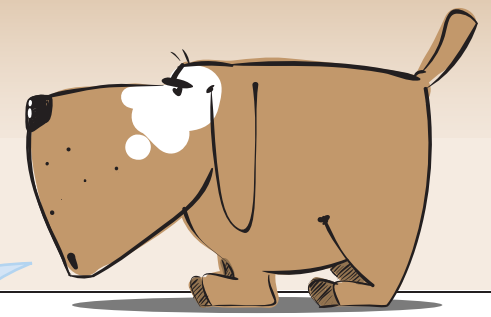
# Adoption corner

## TCRAS

Teller County Regional Animal Shelter  
tcrascolorado.org · 719.686.7707

## SLVAWS

San Luis Valley Animal Welfare Society  
slvaws.org · 719.587.woof (9663)



[ NOTE - Our shelter is still open for adoptions, but we are asking that you call ahead and make an appointment before coming in to the shelter - 719-686-7707. ]

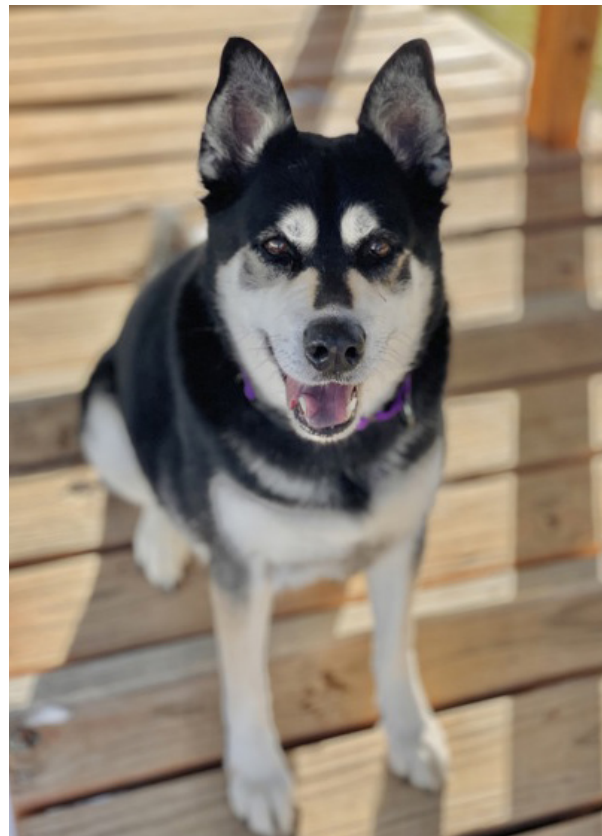
### TIMBER >>

Hello! My name is Timber. I am a sweet lady, but I also like to have my space at times. I would love a quiet, easy-going home. Will you be my new family?



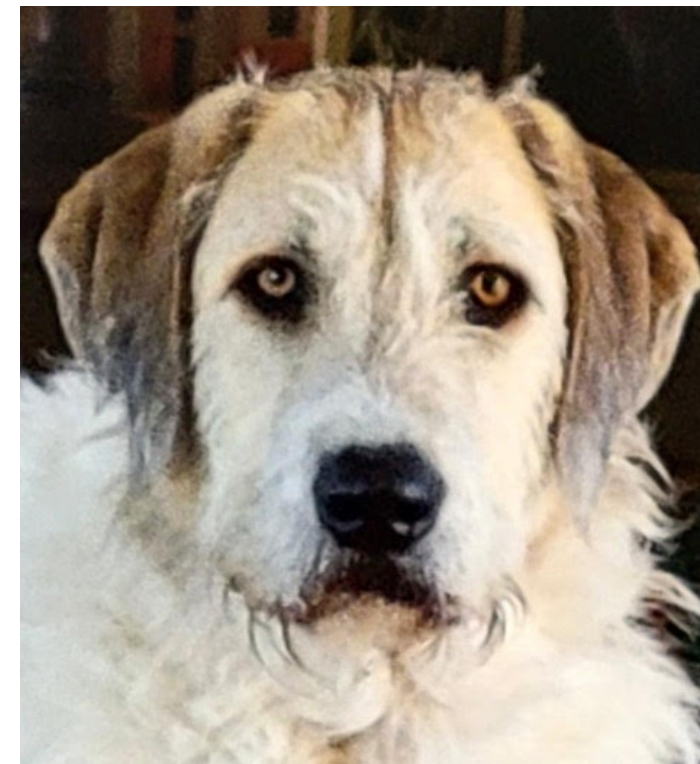
### << LIZZIE

Hello new friend! My name is Lizzie. I'm a big, fluffy, and friendly girl. I just want to be with my people and get loved! I do love food and treats a little too much, as I am a hefty gal. I would love a family who can provide me with regular exercise so I can work my way back to a healthy weight!



### BRINLEY >>

Wiry-furred Fanny is a mix of Anatolian/hound. This 3-year-old, easy going, affectionate sweetheart was surrendered because her owner became disabled. She is good with other dogs, spayed, vaccinated, 75 pounds. Sometimes she howls at night in a lovely contralto voice, especially when the moon is full.



### << FANNY

Wiry-furred Fanny is a mix of Anatolian/hound. This 3-year-old, easy going, affectionate sweetheart was surrendered because her owner became disabled. She is good with other dogs, spayed, vaccinated, 75 pounds. Sometimes she howls at night in a lovely contralto voice, especially when the moon is full.

SLVAWS  
Please check our website, [www.slvaws.org](http://www.slvaws.org) for our next adoption fair in Colorado Springs, every Saturday 10am-3pm.