



# COLORADO WOLF & WILDLIFE CENTER

DECEMBER 2024 · CONSERVATION · EDUCATION · PRESERVATION



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**ASSOCIATION  
OF ZOOS &  
AQUARIUMS**

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and Wildlife Center**

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| SOCIAL MEDIA HAPPENINGS |

Stay up to date with the animals at CWWC, wolves and wildlife in the news, and advocacy opportunities.

- Subscribe to our YouTube Channel: ColoradoWolf&WildlifeCenter** We post videos of the training and enrichment we are providing for our animals, and educational vlogs about wolves.
- Follow us on Facebook: Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center** to get updates on new YouTube video postings, read feel good stories from other wolf/wildlife organizations, and learn about new wildlife findings in the research field.
- Follow us on Instagram: @cowolfcenter** to see pictures of our beautiful animals, stories of what we are doing around the center, and ways you can help wild wolf populations.. Keep your eye on our story for fun videos of the day to day lives of our wolves and keepers.
- Follow us on Twitter: @Wolves\_at\_CWWC** to see photos of our animals, read fun facts, and hear about events happening at CWWC.
- Follow us on TikTok: @cowolfcenter** for the videos you won't see on our other social media pages.

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

*Thank you so much for this amazing encounter  
We all loved it so much. I have always  
loved wolfs they are my favorite  
animal and also my school mascot  
So I was super excited to come  
visit the wolfs and the wolfs  
are so pretty the beauty of  
nature is just so beautiful  
Anyways we all loved the visit*



*Jophie Munoz  
10 years old*



# Christmas Party

— 2024 —



## Do you believe that wolves belong in Colorado?

If you voted for wolves to be reintroduced into our state because you believe they belong back on their native land, then you did something historical and honorable for such an amazing and beautiful animal. However, the war on wolves is still very real, and they need your help. **On January 8th, there will be a commission meeting in Denver at the CPW building.** A time has not been set yet; however, you can go to the link listed or call the office for more information. This is a very important meeting, and the wolves need your voice. There are powerful stakeholders from the Cattlemens Association who don't want wolves and are trying to block the new wolves slated to arrive next month.

Additionally, there will be a decision on lethal management. If you have been following the events leading up to this meeting, you probably have read how the wolves are destroying livelihoods, killing all the deer and elk, and wreaking havoc on ranching communities. The media unfortunately refuses to write anything positive about the reintroduced wolves, and those against the wolves are trying to change the narrative, making the decision by the people of Colorado seem a mistake and portraying the wolves as a monster. The media neglects to tell the truth about how CPW has tried to accommodate the ranchers who have wolves on the landscape. They don't mention the generous compensation plan for losses, the tools provided by CPW for conflict mitigation, the range rider program, the money that goes to the wolf program from the sale of the wolf plate, and more.

The land that the wolves have returned to is their native land, and the cattle have been placed in high elevations not intended for domestic animals. They lack defenses because they have been bred not to have horns like bison, making them vulnerable to various threats and predators, such as bears, mountain lions, coyotes, bobcats, vultures, and even dogs. Wolves play an important role in maintaining the natural balance, and we should treat them and all wildlife with respect and learn to coexist. We can, if we truly want to.

If you can, please show up to the meeting to be a voice. I understand that standing in front of a podium can be scary and stressful, but think about what this means to you and know that by speaking up, you will walk away knowing you are fighting for something you believe in. You will have up to 2 minutes—2 minutes or less—to tell the commissioners that you voted for the successful reintroduction of wolves and that they deserve protections as an endangered species. 2 minutes to tell the commissioners that wolves belong to the people and the land, and it isn't fair to be swayed by money and politics.

Thank you,

*Darlene Kobobel*

**TO SPEAK VIRTUALLY OR IN PERSON, PLEASE GO TO THE CPW WEBSITE  
BETWEEN DECEMBER 31ST AND JANUARY 3RD  
TO SIGN UP FOR THE WOLF COMMISSIONERS MEETING**



## CPW's comprehensive efforts throughout the first year of wolf restoration provide a solid foundation for future

Travis Duncan | December 21, 2024

DENVER — CPW has been focused on creating a significantly expanded management program throughout the first year of voter-approved wolf restoration in Colorado. The efforts support the implementation of the Colorado Gray Wolf Restoration and Management Plan as the agency prepares for the second capture and release season.

"We've been listening to and working with all stakeholders in this historic restoration effort all year," said CPW Director Jeff Davis. "The results are evident in our improved Conflict Minimization Program, the addition of new staff to work alongside producers, strengthened partnerships such as the Ad Hoc Working Group and Colorado Department of Agriculture, and now clear guidelines for producers as it relates to chronic depredation and lethal management considerations."

At the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission (PWC) meeting on Jan. 8, the PWC will discuss the final materials and documentation detailing how the agency is addressing the requests in the petition for rulemaking submitted to the PWC on September 27 by 26 ranching and farming organizations and how the agency has satisfied the requests for tools and resources from the first year of gray wolf restoration. These actions are responsive to the requests and recommendations of impacted people and industries throughout the year and demonstrate important collaboration with landowners and producers.

The staff recommendation regarding the petition was included as a formal letter from the CPW Director to Parks and Wildlife (PWC) Commissioners in today's mailing ahead of the January 8 meeting. A notification of the recommendation was also distributed to petitioners. The recommendation is to deny the petition requesting rulemaking. Rulemaking in this case is unnecessary because the seven conditions included have already been addressed. These topics will be covered in detail during the wolf update at the PWC meeting on January 8 and include:

- 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 reference materials on the definition of chronic depredation and associated lethal management considerations will be available to the public on Monday, December 23 in the meeting materials for the January 8 meeting on the commission webpage. A copy of the letter and the meeting agenda will also be available in that location.

In the formal letter submitted to the PWC today, CPW Director Jeff Davis reiterates the biological importance of reintroducing additional wolves to the state and provides further details related to how the agency and its partners have already been addressing the conditions in the petition. The results of these efforts were shared in a CPW press release on December 9.

# Time for truth-telling about Colorado's collaborative wolf reintroduction | PODIUM

James Pribyl | Colorado Politics | December 25, 2024

"Collaboration, not catastrophe" was the plea from Tim Ritschard, president of the Middle Park Stockgrowers Association, to the Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) Commission at its meeting last month in Lamar, as he sought to move consideration of the stockgrowers' petition for various livestock-predator co-existence tools to be in place before the next introduction of wolves in January 2025, to the head of the line.

"Collaboration" is exactly what Jeff Davis, executive director of Colorado Parks and Wildlife, offered the stockgrowers and all Coloradans interested in restoration of this historic keystone species, when he established the Ad Hoc Wolf-Livestock Coexistence Working Group and announced on Dec. 9, the launch of CPW's robust Conflict Minimization Program.

Working with the Colorado Department of Agriculture, CPW is offering stockgrowers conflict mitigation tools including ranch site vulnerability assessments; doubling the number of conflict-reduction experts; creating a Range Rider program; instituting carcass management best practices; and, defining Chronic Depredation, a stockgrower priority. Dozens of vulnerability assessments have already been conducted at the request of Colorado ranchers.

Just this week, CPW, in conjunction with the Colorado Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and CSU Extension, conducted the last of seven clinics across western Colorado to inform ranchers of the variety of state- and NGO-paid assistance to ranchers who may encounter predators.

Thus, Davis fulfilled the commitment he made at the November Commission meeting to deploy conflict minimization tools before the 2025 wolf releases.

Since the initial wolf introductions last winter, CPW and NGOs have provided conflict mitigation tools — including fladry, noise, fox-lights, cameras, electric fencing, drone and guard-dog deployment. The "Born to Be Wild" license plate, initiated by the Rocky Mountain Wolf Project, will raise more than \$600,000 this year to help fund CPW programs.

Also, Colorado offers the most generous wolf predation compensation to livestock producers in the United States, granting taxpayer payments of up to \$15,000 per animal. The Commission chose the lowest standard of proof— "the preponderance of evidence" to determine liability, essentially 51%.

As Davis pointed out, more wolves on the landscape will encourage mature pack formation and, therefore pack hunting of natural prey — elk and deer. Packs, in turn, establish and protect their

territories, rather than wandering great distances in search of fellow wolves.

It's time for truth-telling about Colorado's first-state-in-the-nation, publicly mandated wolf restoration program.

Stockgrowers, following the playbook they established during federal wolf restoration 35 years ago in the northern Rockies, are promoting the false narrative our wolf recovery is a "catastrophe." That fiction, promoted by the anti-wolf coalition of big game outfitters, hunting advocates and some politicians, ignores well-proven facts: Wolves are the least threat to Colorado's livestock industry.

Consider two facts:

Colorado has been home to about 2.6 million cattle and sheep for decades. Exactly 25 head of livestock have been lost to wolves since last winter's introduction, mostly in a limited area, attracted, in part, by a carcass pit, and a few ranchers reluctant to employ conflict minimization tools offered by CPW. Though any loss is regrettable, two dozen animals out of 2.6 million is hardly a "catastrophe".

Moreover, last week, nearly 200 head of cattle were reported "rustled," that is stolen, near Meeker. That's 10 times the loss to wolves.

CPW leadership deserves credit for resolving the Middle Park depredations by relocating the Copper Creek Pack. Yet, despite humanely solving this problem, the agency was criticized, presumably because CPW chose not to kill wolves.

In contrast to the "catastrophe" narrative, CPW has been recognized by the national Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) with its prestigious 2024 Ernest Thompson Seton Award for its wolf restoration program.

As the Stockgrowers' ask: wolf advocates, ranchers, hunters and Coloradans should "collaborate" to ensure our historic initiative in endangered species conservation is a success.

Coloradans should be proud of the work of the CPW Commission, Director Jeff Davis, his leadership team and the dedicated public servants at the agency, working to restore this native species and protect the livestock industry.

*James Pribyl is chair of Colorado Nature Action, dedicated to the protection of threatened wildlife species. He is a former chair of the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission and has served on the Colorado State Parks and GOCO boards. He splits his outdoor time between Frisco and Louisville.*

# CN, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service premiere red wolf documentary

Tahlequah Daily Press | December 6, 2024



Cherokee Nation recently partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to premiere “Waya, Saving Our Red Grandfather,” a documentary exploring the historical and cultural significance of the red wolf, the world’s most endangered wolf. From left are: Emily Weller, Red Wolf Recovery Program coordinator for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Matthew J Strickler, deputy assistant secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks for the Department of Interior; Cherokee Nation Deputy Secretary of State Canaan Duncan; Jennifer Loren, senior director of Cherokee Film; Martha Williams, director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Cherokee Nation Secretary of Natural Resources Christina Justice; Cherokee Nation Special Envoy for International Affairs and Language Preservation Joe Byrd; Maggie Cunningham, senior manager of Cultural Production for Cherokee Film Productions and Pat Gwin, Cherokee Nation environmental resources senior director.

WASHINGTON – Cherokee Nation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recently premiered “Waya, Saving Our Red Grandfather,” a documentary exploring the historical and cultural significance of the red wolf and the efforts made by conservationists, governments and other partners to save the world’s most endangered wolf from extinction.

Last week, the tribe hosted a special screening of the project as well as a question and answer panel with producers and conservationists for

tribal, federal, state, local and industry guests at the Landmark E Street Cinema in Washington, D.C. “As a tribe, we take the protection of our lands and wildlife very seriously and are proud to partner with the Department of Interior in its mission to protect and manage America’s natural resources and cultural heritage,” said Cherokee Nation Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr. “It is a great day when our agencies find even more ways to work together to address our shared concerns and to solve important

problems, such as the looming threat against an animal we hold with great reverence.” The documentary was produced for the purpose of raising awareness of the plight of red wolves while highlighting the animal’s cultural significance to Cherokee people who regarded the red wolf as a relative. It also features Cherokee National Treasure and spiritual leader, Crosslin Smith, and includes a special dedication to his life and legacy of service. The 30-minute film, which explores the differing world views that contributed to the animals’ decline, was created through a partnership with Cherokee Nation’s Natural Resources Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Cherokee Film Productions. The documentary will also be screened at Circle Cinema in Tulsa, Oklahoma, on Dec. 12. “The red wolf is an iconic species on the American landscape and holds deep significance to the Cherokee Nation,” said Martha Williams, director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The project is already receiving industry recognition, including being named Best Indigenous Short Film at the Montana International Film Festival and Best Indigenous Film at Outer Banks Environmental Film Festival. It is estimated that less than 20 red wolves are currently living in the wild and approximately 267 are captive in breeding facilities throughout the U.S. Historically, red wolves lived in the southeastern U.S., in and around the homelands of the Cherokee people. The world’s only remaining wild population is now in coastal North Carolina. “The Fish and Wildlife Service is fighting an uphill battle in conserving the red wolf, and we are proud to lend our capabilities to helping this effort,” said Jennifer Loren, senior director of Cherokee Film. “Through this film, we hope to share the importance of the Red Wolf while providing a new perspective that



Cherokee Nation recently partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to premiere “Waya, Saving Our Red Grandfather,” a documentary exploring the historical and cultural significance of the red wolf, the world’s most endangered wolf. From left are: Cherokee Nation Deputy Secretary of State Canaan Duncan; Jennifer Loren, senior director of Cherokee Film; Martha Williams, director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Cherokee Nation Secretary of Natural Resources Christina Justice and Cherokee Nation Special Envoy for International Affairs and Language Preservation Joe Byrd.

encourages further conservation of this culturally significant animal.”

Cherokee Film is owned by Cherokee Nation Businesses and based in the Cherokee Nation Reservation in Oklahoma. The tribe’s film ecosystem includes four distinct branches – Cherokee Film Productions, Cherokee Film Studios, Cherokee Film Commission and Cherokee Film Institute – all working toward a shared goal of innovating narrative sovereignty while creating economic development within the tribe’s reservation.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the only agency in the federal government whose primary responsibility is the conservation and management of fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the American people. Through the agency’s work to conserve natural resources, it provides communities with healthier environments, clean water, flood control and a strong economy.



## INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT **COLORADO**



Photo by Bailey Alexander



Photo by Alec Krum



Photo by Lisha Riabinina

- **Centennial State:** Colorado became a state on August 1, 1876, 100 years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence.
- **Cheeseburger:** Louis E. Ballast invented the cheeseburger in 1935 at his restaurant, the Humpty Dumpty Barrel Drive In.
- **Name:** The name Colorado comes from the Spanish word for "colored red".
- **Mountain Peaks:** Colorado has more mountain peaks over 14,000 feet than any other state.
- **Leadville:** Leadville is the highest incorporated city in the United States at 10,152 feet.
- **Rocky Mountain National Park:** The fifth-most visited national park in the country, attracting over 4 million visitors annually.
- **Marijuana Legalization:** Colorado was the first state to legalize recreational marijuana in 2012.
- **Mesa Verde:** Mesa Verde features a four-story city carved into the cliffs by the Ancestral Pueblo people between 600 and 1300 A.D.
- **Royal Gorge Bridge:** The highest suspension bridge in the United States is located near Canon City.
- **Sand Dune:** Colorado is home to the largest sand dune in the United States.
- **Hot Water Swimming Pool:** Colorado is home to the world's largest hot water swimming pool.
- **Hot Springs:** The Mother Spring in Pagosa, CO is the world's deepest hot springs.

## Birds OF Winter on the Front Range of Colorado



Top: Young Bald Eagle with a fish | Left: Female house finch eating the tips of the pine tree | Right: Spotted Towhee



## Latest Report on Mexican Gray Wolf Recovery Shows Ongoing Problems

The report does not include the most recent information about lobo recovery in Mexico, failing to include any information from 2024, while population growth rates in the U.S. appear to be declining. Pup mortality in the U.S. is higher than expected and the mortality rate for pups in Mexico couldn't be calculated because too few pups had radio collars.

"This is lipstick on a pig," said Chris Smith, wildlife program director for WildEarth Guardians. "Credit is due for the successes of the recovery program. But this report glosses over significant setbacks and real threats to recovery. There is no functional wolf population in Mexico; there may be no wolves in Mexico at all."

"The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service continues to focus its recovery efforts within the Mexican Wolf Experimental Population Area (MWEPA), ignoring the critical needs of dispersing wolves and failing to acknowledge that suitable habitat exists beyond this artificial boundary," said Claire Musser, executive director of the Grand Canyon Wolf Recovery Project. "Scientific research—and the wolves themselves—make it clear that the current strategy limits recovery rather than facilitates it. True recovery requires a plan that works with the wolves, not against them, ensuring their survival and ecological contributions outside the arbitrary boundary of Interstate 40."

"Despite encouraging growth in the United States, the truth is, Mexico remains a death trap for the Mexican gray wolf," said Bryan Bird, Southwest Director for Defenders of Wildlife. "Relying on our southern neighbor – with far less resources and marginal habitat – is a dangerous gamble. The FWS must direct more resources to Mexico and expand the U.S. population area northward. Otherwise, Mexican gray wolf recovery will remain just an illusion."

"We celebrate the promising growth of the wild population in the US, especially the survival of fostered pups from captive facilities like ours," said Regan Downey, director of education at the Wolf Conservation Center. "We're doing our part to commit to recovery, but what's Fish and Wildlife Service's plan to counter the lack of recovery in Mexico? Wolves are paying with their lives."

Illegal mortality is the highest source of Mexican wolf mortality and efforts to address the problem include hunter education and law enforcement investigations. Of the 61 wolf mortalities suspected to be human caused between 2017 and 2022 in the U.S., just two people have been federally prosecuted and only three people have paid a fine.

### Background:

The lobo, or Mexican gray wolf, is the smallest, most genetically distinct, and one of the rarest subspecies of the gray wolf. These native southwestern wolves were listed under the Endangered Species Act in 1976 after being eradicated in the wild. Reintroduction efforts began in 1998, but conservation efforts have suffered without the implementation of recommended recovery actions.

For years, scientists have recommended to the Service that there be three subpopulations of at least 200 wolves each (with a minimum of 750 total), spread throughout the southwestern United States, including areas like the Grand Canyon Ecoregion and the Southern Rockies (Carroll et al. 2006; Wayne and Hedrick 2011; Carroll et al. 2014; Hendricks et al. 2016). Scientists warn that this metapopulation structure and geographic distribution are imperative to the recovery of Mexican wolves. Unfortunately, we are still far short of this scientific recommendation.

Mexican gray wolves are protected under the Endangered Species Act. Killing a Mexican wolf is a violation of the Federal Endangered Species Act and can result in criminal penalties of up to \$50,000, and/or up to one year in jail, plus a potential civil penalty of up to \$25,000. Individuals with information they believe may be helpful are urged to call one of the following agencies: USFWS special agents in Pinetop, Arizona, at (346) 254-0515; the WMAT at (928) 338-1023 or (928) 338-4385; AZGFD Operation Game Thief at (800) 352-0700; or NMDGF Operation Game Thief at (800) 432-4263. There is a \$105,000 reward fund for information about illegal killings of Mexican gray wolves.

## U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Arizona Game and Fish Department paint a rosy picture of wolf recovery despite recovery failures in Mexico

Western Watersheds Project | December 20, 2024

### Media Contacts:

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- Bryan Bird, Defenders of Wildlife, (505) 395-7332, [bbird@defenders.org](mailto:bbird@defenders.org)
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ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. – Mexican gray wolf advocates are raising alarm bells about the most recent report on recovery efforts released by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service today. The 5-year evaluation assessing the progress of the recovery program notes the population of Mexican wolves in the United States is increasing and the Fish and Wildlife Service claims the program has surpassed recovery goals. However, the agency significantly downplayed high mortality rates and lack of releases in Mexico.

**"We are deeply concerned that the Fish and Wildlife Service is ignoring the troubling trend in the Mexican population of lobos and has tried to distract the public's attention with fairly limited successes for the program in the U.S.,"** said Cyndi Tuell, the Arizona and New Mexico director at Western Watersheds Project. **"For lobo recovery to be successful, we need at least three viable subpopulations in suitable habitat in the U.S. as well, but we have only one."**

# Why Colorado's wolf restoration should be viewed as the success it is

Gary Skiba | DH Opinion | December 5, 2024

Voter passage of Proposition 114 in the 2020 election was not a biological decision, as alleged in the opinion essay, "Polis can correct Colorado's bad wolf-reintroduction bet" (Oct. 31, Colorado Politics), which contains a series of false and unproven statements.

It was a policy decision mandating the restoration of a native species, the gray wolf, which was eradicated from the state by human actions more than 75 years ago. Proposition 114 didn't address biological decisions, such as how many wolves would eventually be needed to constitute a "self-sustaining population" as mandated by state law. Those biological decisions are left to the professionals in Colorado Parks and Wildlife, aided by guidance from CPW's Wolf Management Technical Working Group.

It's not clear what the voters were purportedly "sold"; the implication is they were lied to – they weren't.

The Colorado State University study cited in the article is not definitive but has generated lively debate in the wildlife biological community, with scientists reaching very different interpretations about the Yellowstone wolf reintroduction experience. In part, the CSU study notes the removal of wolves from Yellowstone National Park substantially altered the park's ecological processes and restoring wolves would aid nature's balance.

Development of the state's Wolf Restoration and Management Plan was hardly "hasty" as claimed by the essay's authors.

From early 2021 through all of 2022, CPW hosted 47 stakeholder meetings statewide, with more than 3,400 participants. Recommendations came from 18 months of meetings of the 17-member Stakeholder Advisory Group (on which I served) and 18 months of meetings of the Technical Advisory Group.

That input was used to draft the plan, followed by multiple meetings of the CPW commission, to hear public comments about the draft plan and incorporate commission input. The plan was finally approved in May 2023.

The claim "dozens" of cattle and sheep have been killed by wolves is misleading; since the first wolves were released in December 2023, 17 cattle and nine sheep have been confirmed to have been killed by wolves. Proposition 114 mandated a robust compensation program for ranchers who lose livestock to predators modeled after existing compensation programs in place

for bear and mountain lion predation.

Nobody denies the presence of predators can cause stress for cattle, but we also know stress can be substantially reduced when cattle are managed to respond by standing their ground rather than running in panic. And cattle have learned to do exactly that in multiple places across the world and in the western U.S.

It's true Proposition 114 was supported by a minority of rural voters, about 38% in Western Slope counties. But the flip side is also true, it was supported by a strong majority of non-rural voters, and those votes are equally valid. Opinions of rural and urban voters often vary on tax and spending policy, health care and regulatory issues as well.

Lastly, the authors call the restoration "ill-advised," with no evidence other than their personal opinions.

Gray wolf restoration is moving forward in Colorado, thanks to efforts by the Legislature and CPW, including:

- Adequate funding being in place thanks to bipartisan legislation and other funding streams.
- CPW strengthening conflict reduction efforts through outreach, education and mitigation programs to equip ranchers with tools to manage wolf interactions.
- CPW providing tailored tactics and community solutions, including fladry and drones, tailored to Colorado's diverse landscapes.
- An inclusive stakeholder process, defining "chronic depredation."

Colorado's Wolf Restoration and Management Plan received the benefit of counsel from our nation's leading wolf biologists and a diverse group of citizens through CPW's Stakeholder Advisory Group – on which I served. The plan and restoration process are based on solid biological and constituent input.

The restoration of one of our native species should be viewed as the success it is.

*Gary Skiba is a wildlife biologist retired from Colorado Parks and Wildlife. He led the stakeholder group that developed Colorado's 2004 wolf plan adopted by the CPW commission. He served on the CPW commission, is currently the wildlife program manager with the San Juan Citizens Alliance and is an active hunter. He lives in Durango.*

# New York law banning retail sales of dogs, cats and rabbits goes into effect

Derick Waller | CBS News | December 15, 2024

NEW YORK — Pet stores in New York state are no longer allowed to sell dogs, cats and rabbits.

Home breeders are exempt from the retail sale ban, which went into effect Sunday.

## NYC business closes physical store due to pet sale ban

Emilio Ortiz, longtime manager of the Chelsea pet store Citipups, says because of the ban, they will be closing.

"We have 35 employees. That means 35 families that we're supporting, and all of those people have to lose their livelihood right before the holidays," he said.

Protesters outside the store pointed to conditions at commercial breeding operations. Video shared by the Humane Society showed dogs locked up in outdoor cages at one such operation in Missouri.

"This is exploitation. This is cruelty. This is inhumane," a protester named Marilyn said.

Ortiz says Citipups' dogs come from breeders he knows and trusts.

"They just say the most outrageous things. They've never lived a mile in our shoes, and they honestly, they wouldn't know what a puppy mill was if it slapped them right in the face," he said.

While they're closing their physical location, Citipups will continue selling dogs online, with some puppies costing north of \$3,000.

## Animal shelters overflowing with adoptable pets

Meanwhile, at New York City's largest shelter

system, the adoption fees are just a fraction of that, and shelters nationwide are overflowing.

"We need people to adopt. We need people to foster right now. This is the biggest homeless animal crisis ever nationwide, and in some shelters, they're killing animals as soon as they come in," Marilyn said.



Photo: Irina Zhur

New York is not the first to ban retail pet sales; California did it in 2017 but is now dealing with a puppy mill black market, with the Better Business Bureau reporting a surge in online pet scams.



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# BONFIRE Tour & BBQ

Sunday, January 26th - 4-6pm



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*Colorado Wolf & Wildlife Center*

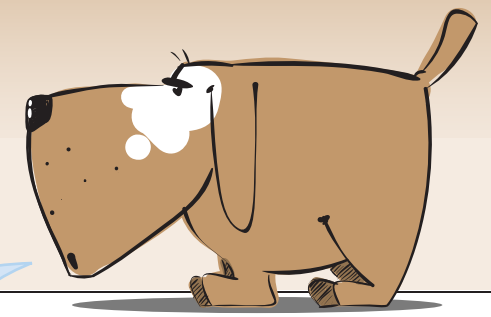
# Adoption corner

## 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. ]**

### **GRYFF >>**

Hello there! My name's Gryff! I'm a big boy, but I'm full of love! I'm super sweet and I love to get lots of attention. I'm also a bit silly and have a really big personality. I love to be outside and go for hikes and be in nature. I would do best with a home that will give me all the attention they can, sometimes I am not good at sharing the spotlight. My big wish is to be in home of my own for Christmas.



### **<< COSMO**

Hello new friend! My name is Cosmo. I'm a rather handsome fella if I do say so myself! I love to be pet and scratched and bask in the warm sunshine. I'll watch the toys you show me with some interest...I might play with them...I might not...I am a cat after all!



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



### **BRECKETT & BRONSON**

12 week old Beckett and Bronson are ready for a home. They will be medium sized adults. Mix unknown. They have had 3 sets of puppy vaccinations, bordetella, dewormings, rabies, microchipped, neutered.