

COLORADO WOLF & WILDLIFE CENTER

JUNE 2023 • CONSERVATION • EDUCATION • PRESERVATION



The Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center

is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization certified by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA). Look for this logo whenever you visit a zoo or aquarium as your assurance that you are supporting a facility dedicated to providing excellent care for animals, a great experience for you, and a better future for all living things.

The contents of the material we include in our newsletter does not necessarily reflect the views of CWWC. We collect information from other organizations, the web, news feeds, and/or other sources. We choose articles that are in the related field of education and conservation.



TO SUBSCRIBE to our monthly newsletter, go to wolfeducation.org and sign up on the newsletter page.

CONTACT US
tours@wolfeducation.org
PO Box 713 Divide, CO
80814 719.687.9742

| 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!

RIP **Kyro** THE DOG

Kyro came to CWWC in November of 2018; living on site with his mom and working part time to help watch over the center. It wasn't until February of 2020 that Kyro began his full-time job as Door Greeter. He took his job very seriously and excelled in this role. He could often be found lying underneath the check-in window of the Visitor Center. He would take leisurely strolls through guest areas, ensuring that no one had extra treats they were trying to sneak in. But his favorite place to be was at the tour gate entrance, lying conveniently in the center of the path. Entrance fee was to be paid in pets, in his eyes.

Kyro may have been mistaken as part wolf a few times, but he was 100% a good dog. He would accept all the attention from CWWC's younger guests who were looking to be able to pet anything! At home, Kyro enjoyed hikes, playing in rivers, and squeaky tennis balls. He celebrated his 13th birthday in February.

Kyro met his wolf ancestors across the rainbow bridge on May 22nd, 2023.

Thank you for being an ambassador for our visitors who were not quite ready to meet a wolf.



Trail Cam Captures the Candid Moment When a Wolf Family Strikes a Majestic Pose

Sara Barnes | My Modern Met | April 27, 2022



It's hard enough for a skilled photographer to convince an animal to strike a pose, so it doing so on its own is incredible luck. And if it weren't for a trail cam at the non-profit Wolf Conservation Center (WCC) in South Salem, New York, we might have never seen this striking image. In fall 2019, a Mexican gray wolf family gathered for a storybook photo as a group of six lined up on large logs in a majestic "V" formation. Most of the creatures are looking at the camera as if they are following the directions of a photographer. But amazingly, this shot is completely candid with no human intervention.

Wolves are incredible creatures. They are social animals who live in family units that are referred to as packs. This particular group comprises 11 members with parents Rosa and Alléno at the head of the family. Their nine pups were born in spring 2018, and as the WCC observed the family, they named the little ones in honor of female conservationists who work to protect and preserve wildlife. (One is named Mittermeier after National Geographic photographer and Sea Legacy co-founder Cristina Mittermeier, whom we talked to on My Modern Met's Top Artist podcast.)

When Maggie Howell, executive director of the WCC, looks at the family photo, she sees it as a symbol of the species clawing its way back from extinction. "The Mexican gray wolf or 'lobo' is the most genetically distinct lineage of wolves in the Western Hemisphere, and one of the most endangered mammals in North America," Howell explains to My Modern Met. "By the mid-1980s, hunting, trapping, and poisoning caused the extinction

of lobos in the wild, with only a handful remaining in captivity." Today, 196 Mexican gray wolves remain in the wild in the U.S. The WCC is part of the active effort to save the Mexican gray wolf. "[We] are one of a network of facilities participating in the Mexican Wolf Species Survival Plan—a bi-national initiative whose primary purpose is to support the reestablishment of Mexican gray wolves in the wild through captive breeding, public education, and research."

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW ROSA'S LIVE STREAM](#)



In 2018, Mexican gray wolves Rosa and Alléno had a litter of nine pups. Here are a few of them when they were young...



Hi CWWC,

I just finished reading your monthly newsletter and am deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Koda. Words can't express how sorry I am for your loss.

I had the honor of meeting Koda and Amarok last year during a VIP encounter. I remember both wolves greeted me as soon as I entered their enclosure. Amarok was exuberant and full of wolf kisses, while Koda was a little more reserved. She politely welcomed me into her home and then walked away to find a place to lay down in the sun.

After some 1:1 time with Amarok, filled with wolf kisses, pets and armpit scratches, Ethan and Ciera guided me over to where Koda was lying down. They informed me that she was more timid and older than Amarok and that she may not want to take pictures. Honestly, I was fine with that. I wanted to respect whatever Koda wanted in that moment. I was just soaking in the experience.

I gently sat down next to Koda and started to slowly pet her back. At first, her body tensed up, but she allowed me to keep petting and I finally felt her relax. Eventually, she closed her eyes and fell asleep. It was so incredibly sweet and magical.

I consider my entire visit at CWWC to be a highlight in my life, and I did **a lot** during my visit (vip tour with wolves, regular tour and a fox encounter). But my moment with Koda ranks the highest. Earning her trust was a very surreal and validating experience that I will never forget. I am so honored to have had that little bit of time with her and I am incredibly grateful to CWWC for the experience.

I read what Erika wrote, and saw the photo she took in the newsletter - Koda's Spirit. What a beautiful piece, and a remarkable moment captured. Thank you so much for sharing with your followers.

Thank you for all that you do for wolves and other animals. I hope to visit again soon.

Sincerely,
Grace Troup (California)

P.S. I hope Amarok is doing okay.
Rest in peace, beautiful soul.

Tributes TO Koda



Hi Darlene. Just read the May Newsletter and just wanted to pass along my sympathies of the passing of both Micah

and Koda, both of whom I did get pictures with. Your and the staffs' tributes to these wonderful spirits are so heartwarming, yet breaks my heart to hear of the losses of those I knew. There can't be many left that I had the pleasure of interacting with.

My heart goes out to you and your staff. OH, and that photo of the sky after Koda passed! Unbelievable! Was that truly an actual picture of the wolf figure? It's brilliant. Keep doin' what you're doin'. I'm following along every month.

My heartfelt sympathies and hugs,

Jewels
(Madison, WI)

MIDWEST DAIRY PRODUCERS FORCED TO DUMP MILK

Karen Bohnert | AG Web | June 6, 2023



Farms in the Upper Midwest are having to dump milk on open fields due to the current surplus of milk on the market. *(Photo: Mitch Thompson)*

With much of the Upper Midwest processing capacity maxed out in terms of milk production, finding a new home for milk is not an easy task. Lucas Sjostrom, the executive director of Minnesota Milk shared that Hastings Creamery ability to discharge is shut down for 30 days, as they need to take their waste elsewhere. Sjostrom shares they are continuing operations and are accepting and diverting milk from the same farmers as needed.

“We’ve been working over the past few weeks with the farmers to find alternative markets while government officials have been looking to find a solution to keep the plant open,” he says. “We believe every milk buyer across the Upper Midwest is aware of the situation. Plants are already voluntarily dumping milk on-farm on certain days and even though we have transportation available, most plants cannot currently take the milk even for free.”

Hastings Creamery processes 150,000 lbs. of raw milk each day and purchases it from dairy farmers located in both Minnesota and Wisconsin. A variety of dairy products are under Hastings

Creamery label, as well as some private labels for other companies and grocery store chains. Justin Malone, one of the creamery’s owners, shared that it is a tough time in the dairy industry and some farmers are forced to dump milk because they can’t find any processing plants with the capacity to accept additional milk.

OTHER FARMS FORCED TO DUMP MILK, TOO

The reality is that not only Hastings Creamery is impacted by an oversupply of milk on the market. Mitch Thompson owns and operates Thompson Family Dairy in Lewiston, Minn., and is a member-owner of Associated Milk Producers Inc. (AMPI). He shared that he had to dump milk from his herd on June 2.

“The milk hauler picked our milk up and said, ‘Well, I’m taking it to another farm’s field that just chopped rye to dump the milk in the field,’” he says, noting that he still will get paid for that dump milk, but shares the whole cooperative suffers when milk isn’t sold.

Thompson is uncertain on how long dumping milk will

continue but shares that he is concerned about the current state of the dairy industry.

“We’re shipping around 70,000 lbs. of milk a day, so I worry where’s all that milk going to go,” he questions. “If they keep dumping the milk, how bad is our [milk] price going to get?”

At the time of the interview, Thompson shared that his farm’s milk was picked up and taken to the plant on June 5.

“It sounded like they were going to get a couple of other different farms and dump their milk like everybody’s taking their turn,” he shared.

Meanwhile, it’s normal business at Thompson Dairy, as cows must be milked every day. Even when the milk is then dumped into a nearby field.

“This is a real kick in the shorts. How long can you keep doing this when the milk price is so low already,” Thompson notes, sharing that he is concerned about the current situation of milk being dumped, as well as low milk prices.

“I just wonder when will things turn around,” he asks.

FLOODED MILK MARKET

Sarah Schmidt, vice president of marketing with AMPI, says the reason producers are having to dump milk is simply because there is currently a flooded milk market.

“There is more milk on the market and fluid milk sales have declined dramatically, especially with schools closing for the summer,” she says. “Those fluid milk sales were there for the past several months and simply are not there now.”

Schmidt comments that milk from outside the Upper Midwest is pushing into the region and displacing typical, seasonal sales. She also notes all AMPI milk receiving plants are running at full capacity.

“The milk produced on member farms is exceeding our processing and marketing capacity,” she says. “The team is working hard to keep milk moving into processing facilities.”

Schmidt says unfortunately they do not see any specific signs as to when the tides are going to turn.

“What we do know is that dairy farmers produce a fantastic product and there is good demand for cheese and butter. I’m hopeful low cheese market prices make their way into the grocery stores, spurring increased sales,” she says.

Luna and I became friends today.





Zaz Hollander | Anchorage Daily News | June 11, 2023

Mulchatna caribou (Photo: Alaska Department of Fish and Game)

Department of Fish and Game employees killed nearly 100 brown bears in less than a month in a first-ever predator control hunt aimed at restoring a renowned Southwest Alaska caribou herd by increasing calf survival.

The Alaska Board of Game in March approved an aerial predator control hunt on bears in a game unit north of Dillingham to shore up the flagging Mulchatna caribou herd, once one of the state’s largest.

A total of 94 brown bears, five black bears, and five wolves were killed in the program that began May 10 and ended June 4, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game said this week. That’s more than four times the number biologists predicted would be taken.

The hunt was planned to coincide with the spring calving season. It took place over 1,200 square miles of sprawling tundra that includes Wood-Tikchik State Park, at 1.6 million acres the largest state park in the country.

Fish and Game staffers targeted the predators from a helicopter over the calving grounds as they spotted them, according to Tim Peltier, the agency’s Palmer-based regional supervisor. The total killed included a small number of bear cubs, Peltier said last week.

The hunt marked the state’s first predator control on bears in the Mulchatna caribou range, a pilot program to gauge whether saving calves boosts overall herd survival. But private hunters have been allowed to target wolves since 2012, with little increase seen in herd strength.

Wildlife advocates called the number of brown bears killed alarming, especially given findings last year by state biologists showing limited food supply and disease play a larger role in overall Mulchatna herd declines than predators.

State officials say there’s no question other factors are influencing caribou survival. But, short of vaccinating for brucellosis or dropping caribou feed, predators are the only problem that can be addressed immediately.

[Killing wolves and bears over nearly 4 decades did not improve moose hunting, study says]

Research presented to the Board of Game in January 2022 indicated that predators, mostly brown bears, were responsible for nearly 90% of newborn calf deaths between 2011 and 2021.

But more generally, predators did not appear to be not a major problem for the adult females that are key to rebuilding the herd by having healthy pregnancies and calves.

The researchers found the main threats were loss of food supply to climate change or overgrazing and brucellosis, a disease that can lead to swollen joints and reproductive issues that can limit calf and adult survival. Some animals were also killed by illegal hunting.

One of the biologists making the presentation described a “mistaken belief” that killing a predator automatically saves a caribou: bears or wolves are more likely to kill injured, diseased or malnourished animals that might not survive anyway.

The surprisingly high number of bears killed in the Mulchatna program is “especially egregious” given those findings, said Carol Damberg, board president of the Alaska Wildlife Alliance.

““They’re ignoring their own biology ... they’re not following the science.” Damberg said Thursday. “If they were, they wouldn’t be doing this.”

PRIORITIZING CALF SURVIVAL

The game board — seven Alaskans appointed by the governor and approved by the Legislature — decides statewide fish and wildlife policies that are applied by the Department of Fish and Game. The board also approves predator control hunts in specific areas with declining moose, caribou, elk, or deer populations.

Game board members are well aware of the larger habitat and disease problems within the Mulchatna herd, board chairman Jerry Burnett said this week. During the March meeting, several members asked about nutritional issues as well as brucellosis.

But in the short term, members felt it was crucial to protect calves from bears given the herd’s continued low numbers, said Burnett, a Juneau fishing and wildlife viewing charter owner and former state deputy revenue commissioner.

“When it’s down to this level, survival of the calves is really important. Because every one you lose is a big deal at this point,” he said. “The people that live out there, that’s food. It’s not like we’re doing this to make sure the sport hunters in Anchorage or Fairbanks or out of state get something. This is for people that live in that area.”

Many people rely on the Mulchatna herd for meat and income, from subsistence hunters and residents to guides and clients. Locals say the caribou have cycled up and down for centuries. Biologists say the herd peaked in the 1990s at about 200,000 animals but has declined to under 13,000. The herd migrates from calving grounds north of Dillingham to winter range southeast of Bethel.

All hunting on the Mulchatna herd closed in the fall of 2021, state officials say. Some animals are still illegally killed. State and federal authorities documented 11 apparent hunter kills this year and 23 two winters ago.

FAR MORE BEARS THAN EXPECTED

At the March Board of Game meeting in Soldotna, a state biologist put the number of bears expected to be killed at anywhere between 15 and “the low 20s” based on information from biologists and pilots in the area. There is no official estimate of bear numbers in the area targeted to help the herd. Hunters had killed just two bears there in the past decade.

This week, Fish and Game officials said it appeared many brown bears traveled to the calving grounds from other areas. They also consider Western Alaska’s bears and wolves to be at healthy levels, allowing local populations to recover within a few years.

Wildlife groups say the addition of bears to the aerial hunt plan also came with little public notice.

The board added bears to the existing intensive management plan for the Mulchatna herd at the January 2022 meeting held in Wasilla, according to Ryan Scott, acting director of the Division of Wildlife Conservation. A wolf control program already in place was up for renewal.

The board had received proposals “to do more to help the herd” and expand predator control efforts, Scott said in an email. Public input came in the years leading up to the board action on the proposal in 2022, he said.

State officials say any salvageable meat went to communities including those willing to take brown bear meat. They are working with Bristol Bay Native Association to distribute the last of it.

The state Division of Wildlife Conservation plans to monitor summer calf survival and whether herd numbers go up in the predator control area compared to recent years and to animals born in an eastern part of the range where predators weren’t targeted.

That information will be evaluated to determine if “further bear and wolf reductions” are warranted in the spring to aid calf survival and herd growth, officials said.





PHOTOS:
Carol Vogel



MEET A WOLF DAY

Meet and greet with Raven.
Wolf tour ending with signature wolf
howl.

1st & 3rd Thursday of
the Month

4PM-5:30PM

\$40 Adults

\$20 Kids (6-11)

Colorado Wolf & Wildlife
Center

wolfeducation.org



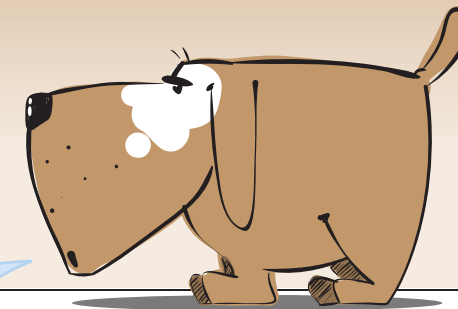
Adoption corner

TCRAS

Teller County Regional Animal Shelter
tcrascolorado.org · 719.686.7707

SLVAWS

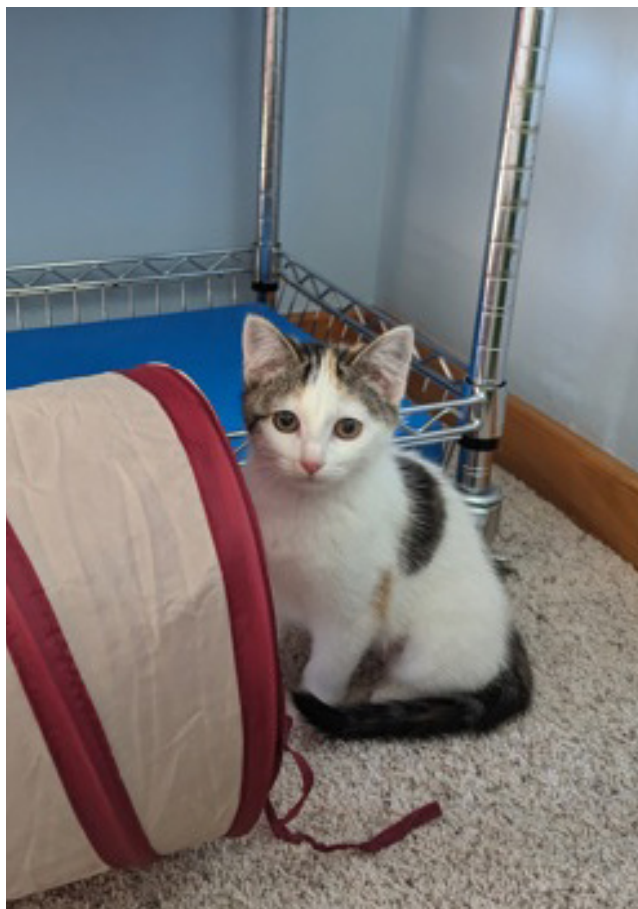
San Luis Valley Animal Welfare Society
slvaws.org · 719.587.woof (9663)



[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.]

GEORGIA »

This sweet face is Georgia, she is a gorgeous kitty with enough personality for 3 kittens! In her current foster home she's a little lonely, so she enjoys sleeping on laps and in arms...but only when she's done playing, and she'd prefer to play with another feline! She'll take a little while to warm up to you but once she does, you are hers!



« INDIANA

I am a fun and loving guy looking for love from...anyone! I am a happy, agreeable fella with the softest coat who loves everyone. My combination of one blue and one brown eye looks intense, but my tail never stops wagging. I am smart and trainable and have a more mature and relaxed demeanor than those young pups.

SLVAWS ADOPTION FAIR

Every Saturday at Petsmart
7680 N. Academy Blvd.
11:00am - 3:00pm

BRANDI »

The San Luis Valley Animal Welfare Society Shelter/Sanctuary has had husky Brandi for 2 1/2 years. She loves to play and horse around with humans, very affectionate. 6 1/2 years old, spayed, all vacc's current. Best in only dog home. No cats please.



« OSITA

Special Needs: Osita ("Little Bear") is a 5 1/2 year old German Shepherd. Very affectionate, gets along with other dogs. She has some hip problems but can walk well. Spayed, all vacc's current.