



COLORADO WOLF & WILDLIFE CENTER

DECEMBER 2025 • CONSERVATION • EDUCATION • PRESERVATION



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**ASSOCIATION
OF ZOOS &
AQUARIUMS**

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and Wildlife Center**

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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.



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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.



CWWC is on Bluesky! Follow us: @cowolfcenter.bsky.social



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!



This photo and the cover photo are of a beautiful fire sunset in early December.

**MANNY'S FIRST
VISIT WITH RINGO**



**CWWC
CHRISTMAS PARTY**



Christmas at the Center



CHINOOK AND NIKITA

This is a love story about two wolves who found each other and together helped to create one of the finest wolf and wildlife sanctuaries in the world.

Chinook was a beautiful wolf dog rescued from a kill shelter. Nikita was an Arctic wolf rescued from a 5' x 8' crate that he had lived in for 3 years.

A beautiful enclosure was built for Nikita, but when the door was opened for him to run free he instead started to stake with uncertainty. Chinook, with her confident and sweet personality, was led over to Nikita to see if she could charm him out. Immediately their tails began to wag with approval, followed by a nose to nose encounter. It was love.

Chinook backed out of the crate and Nikita followed. From that moment they started to play and were inseparable.

The picture on this stone was taken soon after that meeting and is appropriately titled, "THE LOVERS." They lived together for many years. Soon after Chinook's death at the age of 14, Nikita was placed with another wolf for companionship; however, he missed his true love. Nikita left this world at the age of 17. In memory of the two, you may see and hear a pair of wind chimes on the tour trail. There Chinook and Nikita are together with a voice in the wind and a spirit that will never be forgotten at this center.

Because of the amazing wolf Chinook, this sanctuary was created and thousands of people have been made aware of the power and majesty of the wolf.

Because of the amazing wolf Nikita, the romance of hope and love is written in stone.



Largest Wildlife Crossing In U.S. Opens In Colorado, But Animals Aren't Using It Yet

Work is finished on what’s being touted as North America’s largest wildlife crossing bridge south of Denver — but it’s been so warm, animals haven’t started using it yet. The 200-foot-wide, 209-foot-long Greenland overpass spans six lanes of I-25.

Mark Heinz | Cowboy State Daily | December 17, 2025



Colorado is touting the Greenland overpass along Interstate 25 south of Denver as one of the largest wildlife crossings in the world. Photo Courtesy: Colorado Department of Transportation

Work is finished on what’s being touted as North America’s largest wildlife crossing bridge south of Denver — but it’s been so warm, animals haven’t started using it yet.

The 200-foot-wide, 209-foot-long Greenland overpass spans six lanes of Interstate 25. It sits along a key migration route between winter and summer range for antelope, deer and elk.

But without snow piling up and temperatures plunging in the high country, the mass migrations haven’t started yet. So, the overpass, completed early this month, has mostly sat empty.

Temperatures in the Denver area have been scraping 70 degrees, Kara Van Hoose, the Northeast Region spokeswoman for Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), told Cowboy State Daily.

“It’s a late-starting winter,” she said, so wildlife migrations are, likewise, running late. But once severe weather finally hits, the overpass should be well used.

There were already four wildlife underpasses in the area. But elk, deer and antelope prefer bridges, whenever possible, she said.

Going into a dim tunnel is naturally spooky for prey animals, Van Hoose said.

The project was completed “on time and under-budget,” with a final cost of roughly \$15 million, she said.

Nine Years in the Making

The planning process for the Greenland wildlife overpass went back about nine years, Van Hoose said.



Pictured here is a view from the Greenland wildlife overpass along Interstate 25 south of Denver. Photo Courtesy: Colorado Department of Transportation

Construction began in January, near the Greenland Interchange between the towns of Larkspur and Monument. The wildlife overpass will connect 39,000 acres of wildlife habitat on both sides of I-25, according to CPW and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT).



Closing the Gap

The overpass seals a roughly 4-mile gap in wildlife crossings along I-25 between the Colorado towns of Castle Rock and Monument.

In that area, the highway cuts through a vital migration corridor for big game animals between summer and winter range.

Before the overpass was built, there was at least one wildlife collision per day there during the winter and spring migrations, according to CDOT.

Roughly 100,000 vehicles per day pass through the area, according to CDOT.

'A New Structure on the Landscape'

The overpass is “the single largest bridge structure for wildlife in North America and one of the largest in the world,” according to a statement from CDOT.

Its total surface area is 41,800 square feet, nearly an acre. The structure was designed to have a “line of sight” for animals as they move between the summer range in the high country and winter range in the flatlands, Van Hoose said.

“It’s a new structure on the landscape,” so whenever winter hits and forces the herds to get moving, it will take some getting used to for the critters, she said.

The approaches to the overpass were also designed as a straight shot, because deer and elk “don’t like making turns or corners when they don’t know what’s on the other side,” she said.

The underpasses and overpass will save bears and mountain lions, as well as countless smaller animals, such as badgers and raccoons, according to CPW.



Workers toss seeds to complete the natural look of the Greenland wildlife overpass along Interstate 25 south of Denver. Photo Courtesy: Colorado Department of Transportation

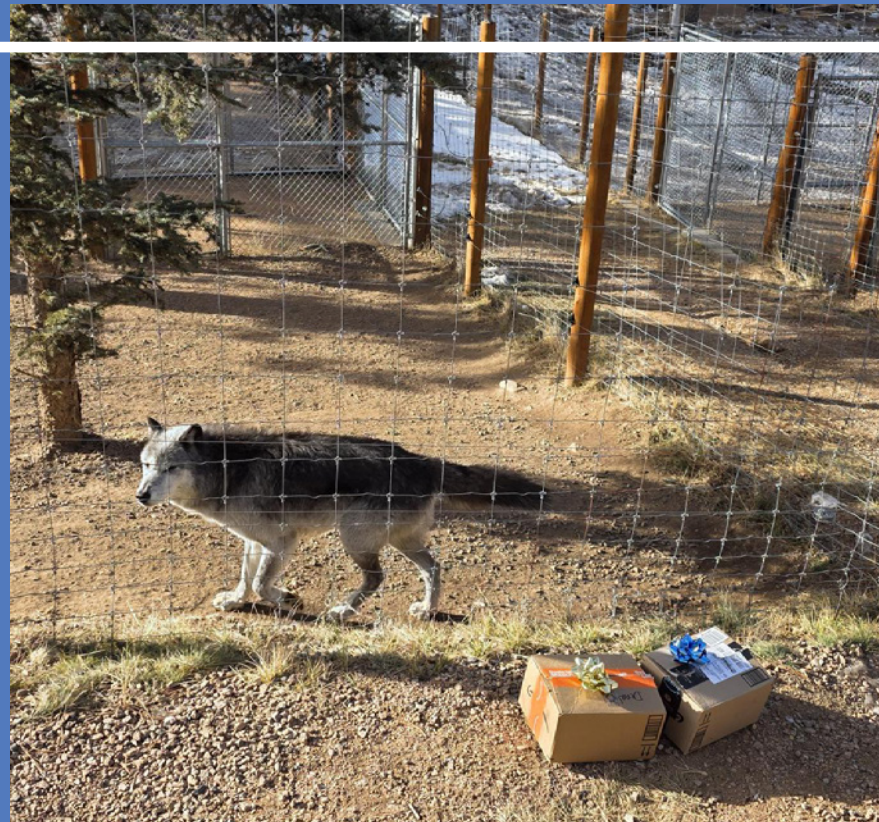
Hope Remains For Dubois Project

Wyoming’s most pressing wildlife crossing project involves plans for three wildlife underpasses and an overpass along a 25-mile stretch of Highway 26/287 near Dubois, with an estimated price of \$28 million.

It’s along a vital migration route for mule deer and other wildlife, and hundreds of animals are hit every year along that stretch of highway.

Many hoped that construction on the Dubois crossing project would be finished in 2027. Hopes dimmed earlier this year, when vital federal highway funding was stalled, putting the project in limbo.

Private donors pitched in \$2.7 million. There’s renewed hope that federal grant money can be cleared in time to break ground on the project in 2027.



Winter Wonderland AT CWWC



French first as black wolf pack confirmed as living in Var

Zane Lilley | The Connexion | December 10, 2025



Photo: ilmi_ezel/Shutterstock

It is the first confirmed sighting of a black wolf in modern France. This photo shows a black wolf juxtaposed with grey-fur variants.

A pack of black wolves has been confirmed to be roaming in France after researchers studied the animals for several years in the Var department.

The distinctly-coloured group is the first of its kind in modern France.

A female 'alpha' wolf with a black coat was first seen in the Sainte-Baume massif in 2021 and subsequently mated with a more common-looking grey wolf. Out of six pups born to the couple, four also developed a black coat.

After four years of research, the Var hunting federation co-authored a study on the pack that has been released in Zoodiversity, an international scientific journal.

Black wolves are extremely rare in Europe (slightly more common in North America) and out of 700 wolves studied across eastern Europe, only one other animal was found to have black fur.

The animals are the same species as grey wolves, just with a different shade of fur.

Previously, scientists believed the animals were different species, and folk traditions claim black wolves are larger and stronger, but less aggressive than grey counterparts, and more readily hybridise with dogs.

The highest concentration of black wolves in Europe is found in Italy's Apennine and Friulian mountains where up to a quarter of wolves have black coats, so it is possible the

French animal is related to a pack from across the border.

Dog-wolf hybrid theory ruled out

As part of the study, hunters kept close watch over the pack and took DNA samples from the animals.

"We had to move very quickly," said hunter Jean-Noël Philibert, co-author of the study, to media outlet Ici Provence.

"We collected fresh droppings very quickly, because wolves are a species that disperses over a vast territory."

Tests on the samples ruled out a hypothesis that the

original black wolf was a hybrid animal with part-dog DNA – responsible for the rare coat – and that the animal was a full wolf.

The original mutation in European wolf DNA for black coats is theorised to come from hybridisation with dogs.

Incredibly difficult to see

Hikers setting off to the Var for a sighting of the pack should not hold their breath, however, as the chance of spotting them is extremely low.

Indeed, the knowledge of the black wolf pack remained unknown to the wider public despite them living in the Saint-Baume area for many years, until the study was published.

"I'm not saying it's impossible. But don't go hiking in the Sainte-Baume mountains with that aim," said Mr Philibert.

"The chance of encountering them is 0.0001%. Even encountering a wolf is difficult. So encountering a black wolf is even more so."

The pack is no longer being tracked so closely, and may have left the Var department altogether to reside in another area.

Wolves have been spotted as far north as Normandy.

Help Stop the Congressional Assault on Wolves



project coyote

Some members of Congress want to turn back the clock to a century ago, when wolves were nearly eradicated because of limitless killing.

Today, they are willing to go against public opinion, science, and ethics to get their way. Last winter, they failed to strip wolves of vital federal protections under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and unfortunately, they're trying again.

The war on wolves is escalating, and wolves urgently need your voice!

U.S. House Representatives Lauren Boebert (R-CO) and Tom Tiffany (R-WI) are behind H.R. 845, which is scheduled for a full vote in the House of Representatives this week. In addition to leaving wolves nationwide vulnerable to escalated killing, the bill would block judicial review, preventing any legal challenges to this harmful and destructive legislation.

Tell your Representative to vote NO on H.R. 845! The intent is clear: weaken federal oversight so more wolves can be killed.

The last time wolves lost ESA protections, Wisconsin hunters slaughtered nearly 220 wolves in less than three days. A judge recognized the chaos that followed, delisting and later restored protections for most wolves in the U.S. (except in the Northern Rockies). Yet in Montana, where

wolves don't have ESA protections, the state recently greenlit the killing of over 550 wolves this hunting season, a level that could lead to complete loss of the population in a few years.

With the deceitful name "Pet and Livestock Protection Act," H.R. 845 perpetuates the myth that wolves are a major cause of farm animal deaths. In reality, years of state and federal data show that wolves are responsible for less than 1% of farmed animal deaths—far behind disease, weather, and natural causes.

As history has shown, taking wolves off the ESA list guarantees rampant killing and persecution. Please join us in advocating for proper protection for wolves—one of the nation's most ecologically critical and iconic species.

TAKE ACTION



For the wild wolves,
Nadia
Nadia Steinzor
Carnivore Conservation Director

Debunk Boebert: Stop the Wolf Slaughter Bill HR 845



Here in wolf country, the debate in Washington doesn't feel abstract. It feels like a scoreboard—one measured not in science or ecological balance, but in political wins, dead wolves, and the steady normalization of eradication as “management.”

On January 31, Reps. **Tom Tiffany (R-WI)** and **Lauren Boebert (R-CO)** reintroduced the Pet and Livestock Protection Act, legislation that would remove gray wolves from the Endangered Species Act, require the Department of the Interior to reissue the Trump administration's 2020 wolf delisting rule, and—most critically—**bar any judicial review of that action.**

The bill is expected to be voted on by the full U.S. House this week.

If enacted, the legislation would shift authority over gray wolf management away from federal scientists and courts and place it entirely in the hands of state wildlife agencies—some of which have already demonstrated a willingness to pursue population eradication rather than conservation.

[Click here to create your letter.](#) (Warning: the graphic is real and disturbing. We apologize but this—and worse—is what wolves are being subjected to in the Northern Rockies).

Fear First, Facts Later

Tiffany has framed the bill as a science-based

correction, arguing that “the gray wolf population has exceeded recovery goals” and blaming “activist judges” for leaving “livestock, pets, wildlife, and communities vulnerable to further harm.”

Boebert has gone further, presenting the legislation as an agriculture-first necessity.

“Gray wolves are threatening the livelihoods of our ranchers and farmers,” she said, calling the bill a “common-sense solution” that “prioritizes the strength of our agriculture community over predators.”

But this framing collapses under even minimal scrutiny.

Pets killed by wolves account for far less than 0.001% of all pets annually. There is no pet safety crisis. Livestock depredation, while real for some producers, is **localized**, and the states with the highest conflict—**Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming—are already federally delisted** and fully empowered to lethally manage wolves. And livestock losses to wolves remain low overall. More livestock are lost to poor livestock husbandry, bad weather, disease, and theft than to wolves.

What this bill does not do is address compensation gaps, invest in coexistence tools, or help resolve problem situations. Instead, it does something far more sweeping and dangerous: it **locks wolf delisting into law and strips the courts of any role in reviewing it.**

That provision is not incidental. It is the point.

A Familiar Blueprint

The Pet and Livestock Protection Act closely mirrors last Congress's Trust the Science Act (H.R. 764), which passed the House in April 2024 by a narrow margin before stalling in the Senate. Both bills order the Interior Department to reinstate the same 2020 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service rule that delisted gray wolves across most of the lower 48.

That rule was vacated by a federal court in 2022 for failing to adequately consider threats to wolf

populations. ESA protections were formally restored in 2023.

This bill is an attempt to override that ruling—not with better science, but by removing the judiciary altogether.

Who's Pushing It—and Why

The coalition backing the Tiffany-Boebert bill is not subtle, and it is not diverse. It is dominated by **agriculture and trophy hunting organizations that have long sought maximum lethal control of wolves.** These are the same type of groups that successfully eradicated wolves from across the country in the last century. And this time they are better funded.

Among them:

- **Hunter Nation**, whose president Keith Mark praised wolf recovery as a success story, then openly celebrated that the bill would prevent judicial review—specifically to stop “anti-hunting groups from interfering” in the killing of wolves.
- **The National Cattlemen's Beef Association and Public Lands Council**, whose representatives claimed wolves are “running rampant” and framed the bill as a fear-mongering way to restore predator control in rural communities.
- **The National Rifle Association**, which argued the legislation would “benefit hunters” by expanding their role in wolf population control.
- **Safari Club International**, which dismissed opposition as “special interest groups that fundraise off wolves,” while asserting—without evidence—that delisting is endorsed by “the best available wildlife science.”
- State-level allies including the Wisconsin Farm Bureau, Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association, and Wisconsin Bear Hunters Association, which argue wolves have exceeded recovery goals and portray conservation groups as “radical” obstructionists.

Taken together, these statements reveal the bill's real purpose: to remove wolves as a legal and ecological constraint on hunting and livestock interests, permanently.

What State Control Really Looks Like

We don't have to speculate about the consequences of this shift. We are already living them.

Since wolves lost federal protections in Idaho, Montana, and

Wyoming, states have authorized **unlimited trapping and snaring, year-round killing, aerial gunning, and lucrative bounty programs.** Wolves have been killed during breeding and denning seasons. Entire packs have been eliminated. **Newborn pups and nursing mothers have not been spared.**

This is not responsible hunting. It is population eradication by design.

The Pet and Livestock Protection Act would export this model nationwide—even to states where wolves are still recovering and conflicts remain low.

Why This Matters Beyond Wolves

At its core, this bill is not just about wolves. It is about **whether science, law, and judicial oversight still matter in wildlife conservation.**

The Endangered Species Act was created precisely to prevent politically motivated eradication campaigns from masquerading as management. H.R. 845 dismantles that safeguard by legislative fiat.

If Congress can delist a species and bar court review today, it can do the same to any protected species tomorrow.

The Choice Before Congress

This is a choice between evidence and fear, between coexistence and eradication, between rule of law and political expediency.

Some wolves survived one extermination campaign in the last century. They may not survive another—especially one wrapped in the language of “common sense” and rushed through Congress with the courts silenced. That should concern anyone who believes wildlife policy should be driven by science, not by who shouts loudest or kills most.

We are their only voice. Join me in speaking for them today. [Click here to create your letter.](#)

Suzanne Asha Stone, *Executive Director*
International Wildlife Coexistence Network



PROTECT ALL WILDLIFE
@Protect_Wildlife

Animal welfare groups hail reported move by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to phase out all monkey research.

The agency's decision ends studies conducted on nearly 200 Macaques. Animal welfare groups welcomed the CDC decision, calling it a major development in finding ethical alternatives.

Reports say the CDC is moving to end its use of monkeys in laboratory experiments, a shift that has sparked both scientific debate and public reflection. Some experts worry about research slowing, while others believe it is time to explore human relevant methods.

What matters today is that many Macaques may begin a gentler chapter.

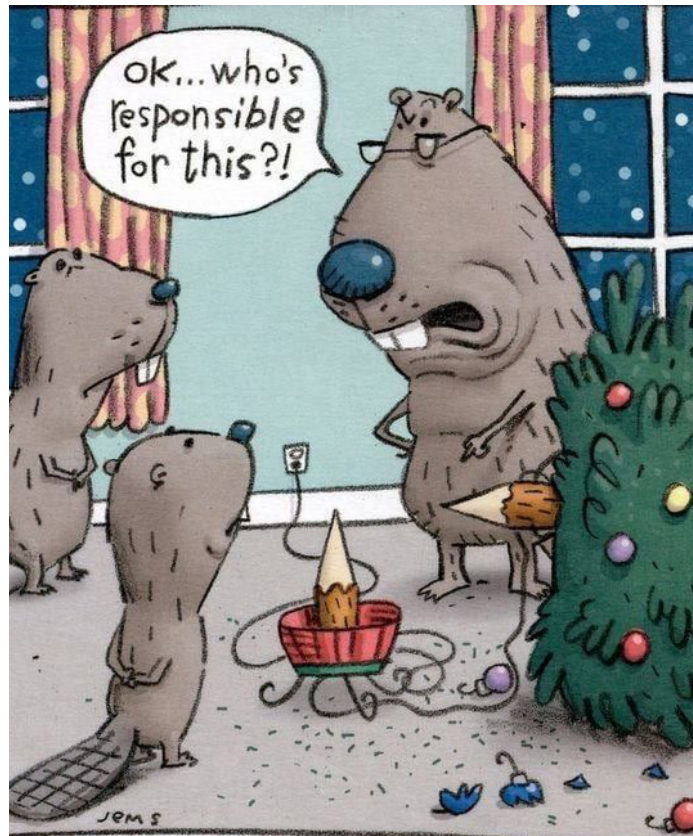
Credit: The Independent.



Protect All Wildlife

**BREAKING: THE CDC HAS FINALLY
DECIDED TO END ALL EXPERIMENTS
ON MONKEYS IN ITS LABS.**

7:56 AM · Nov 29, 2025 · 9,840 Views



Bad beavers at Christmas



BONFIRE Tour & BBQ

Sunday, January 25th - 4-6pm



Join us for a
bonfire, tour and
homemade chili
(meat and vegetarian)
hot drinks and
sweets!

\$40 (12+) - \$20 (8-11) - Reservations Required 719.687.9742

Colorado Wolf & Wildlife Center

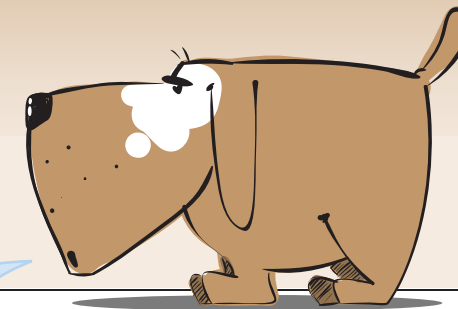
Adoption corner

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.]

LIN »

Meet Lin! Lin is a beautiful girl who loves to talk! If you love to yap, she is the perfect dog for you to yap with! She loves spending time with people and wants to be with you all of the time.



« SASHA

Hello! My name is Sasha. I have a bit of a quiet personality. I'm a super sweet girl and all I want in life is to be loved! Will you be my person?



SLVAWS
Please check our website, www.slvaws.org for our next adoption fair in Colorado Springs, every Saturday 10am-3pm.

RED & OREO

Boys Red and Oreo were abandoned in the mountains near San Luis, CO. They are both sweethearts and very affectionate. Two-year-old Red is appears to be an American bulldog mix. His best friend Oreo is a 6 month old heeler mix. They are neutered, current on all vaccinations, microchipped, about knee high. They would love a home together.

