



# COLORADO WOLF & WILDLIFE CENTER

JUNE 2026 · CONSERVATION · EDUCATION · PRESERVATION



*Rest Easy, Amarok*

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



We are heartbroken to share that our beloved Amarak crossed the rainbow bridge this month. After being diagnosed with an aggressive, inoperable cancer, our team kept him comfortable and surrounded with love until he let us know it was time. Amarak's life was extraordinary, he was rescued in Colombia, welcomed into our family, and cherished by thousands. When Darlene and Rick traveled to Colombia to meet him, they formed lifelong bonds with the people who cared for him and helped bring him safely home to us.

He became a powerful ambassador for the Illegal Wildlife Trade and touched hearts across continents. He was deeply loved and it was a joy to see him with his companion and soulmate Koda. We take comfort knowing that both are now running free together again.

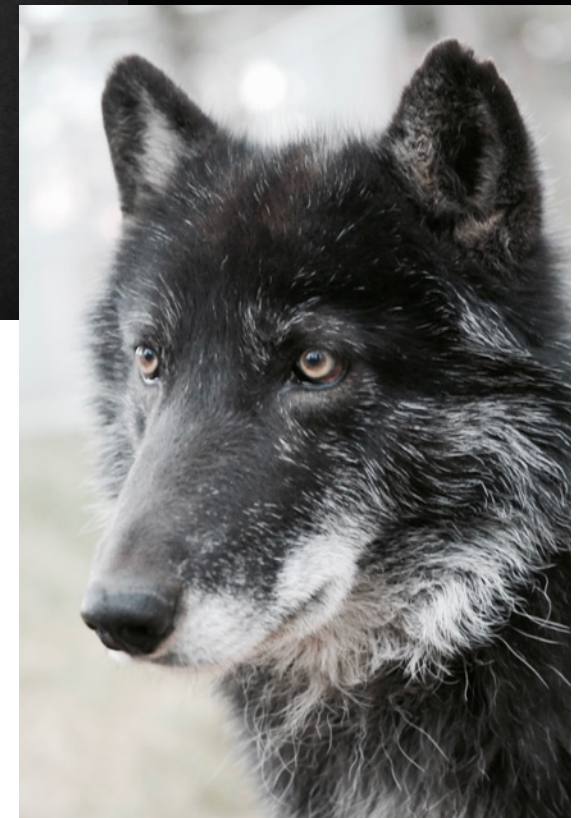
To everyone who visited him, cared for him, or received one of his famous three-minute kisses, thank you. His legacy will live on forever.

From the pack at CWWC



# Remembering Amarak

– A true beloved hero of wolves.



# ATTENTION: Federal cyanide traps return to BLM lands, including Pitkin County

Jonathan Bowers | The Aspen Times | June 13, 2026



This is a photograph Brooks Fahy took of an illegally set M-44 cyanide bomb. Most of the photographs out there are of devices that have been discharged already; the M-44 in the photo is intact. The center is where the sodium cyanide capsule is placed. It is protected by a thin layer of beeswax to protect it from degrading under different types of weather conditions. Photo: Brooks Fahy/Predator Defense

Within Pitkin County, there are 27,490 acres of Bureau of Land Management land, according to the BLM's Colorado River Valley Field Office.

These are acres used for recreation and ranching purposes.

Quietly, back on April 14-15, 2026, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the U.S. Department of the Interior/BLM and the U.S. Department of Agriculture/Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service — Wildlife Services (not to be confused with U.S. Fish and Wildlife).

In the MOU, the national ban on M-44s — otherwise known as cyanide bombs — was lifted on BLM land.

"I have been watching the BLM website for the last year. We've heard rumors, whispers that this was going to happen," said Brooks Fahy, executive director of Predator Defense, a non-profit based in Oregon that was largely responsible for

the national M-44 ban on BLM lands in 2023. He was the first to obtain a copy of the April memo.

M-44s are spring-activated devices that eject deadly, oftentimes fatal, doses of sodium cyanide and are primarily used to kill coyotes but have also killed other non-target species, like wolves, bears, and foxes, among many others, including pet dogs. This chemical, according to the Environmental Protection Agency, is highly toxic and placed in Toxicity Category I, which indicates the greatest degree of acute toxicity for oral, dermal, and inhalation effects.

The MOU's existence has not appeared on either the BLM's or Wildlife Services' websites, contrary to the usual protocol to update the public on changes in policy.

"This MOU is ominous," Brooks said, who has worked closely with M-44 victims for over 30 years. "The release of this information should have been made available. You wouldn't

have had to dig for it."

Seeking comment from the BLM regarding the lifting of the ban, a spokesperson replied with the following:

"An April 15, 2026, MOU between BLM and APHIS identifies restricted-use pesticides — including M-44 devices — as tools that may be considered under existing

law and environmental review. The MOU does not itself authorize or expand use of M-44s; any proposed application requires advance notification to BLM, compliance with NEPA and other statutes, and must conform to all laws and regulations. BLM will continue to evaluate proposals case-by-case and may prohibit or restrict such tools where warranted to protect public safety, pets, wildlife, and designated lands."

When asked about how the public would be notified of any M-44 deployments, the spokesperson said, "Per BLM policy (6830 Animal Damage Control Manual), signs would be posted to provide adequate warning to the public of all areas where control devices are in use. Further, relevant NEPA documents and the animal damage control plan map would be made available by the appropriate BLM office so that this information is accessible to the public and BLM staff at all times."

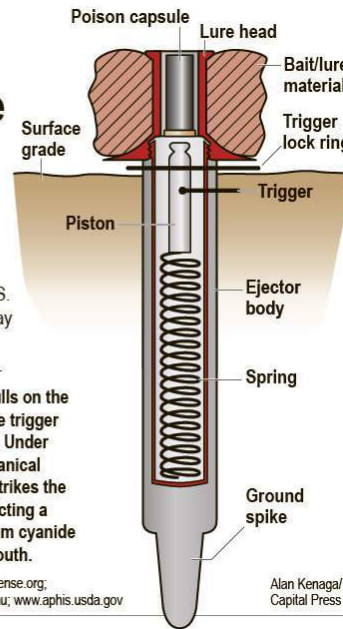
"(If) I had a dime for every time I heard that explanation, I'd be a rich man," Brooks said. "They've been saying the same thing for over 30 years. ... I have never heard of a case where the BLM discloses to the

## M-44 Cyanide Traps

M-44-style traps, also known as Canid pest ejectors, or CPEs, were first developed in the U.S. in the 1930s as a way to autonomously control pest species.

When the animal pulls on the baited lure head, the trigger releases the piston. Under pressure of a mechanical spring, the piston strikes the poison capsule, ejecting a lethal dose of sodium cyanide into the animal's mouth.

Sources: [www.predatordefense.org](http://www.predatordefense.org); [www.smithandgeorg.com.au](http://www.smithandgeorg.com.au); [www.aphis.usda.gov](http://www.aphis.usda.gov)



An M-44 "cyanide bomb" diagram. Predator Defense/Courtesy image

public where M-44s are placed."

Most of the time, he said, BLM offices are clueless about the exact location. They might know about a general area but not the exact location. That information is only shared with the state Wildlife Services supervisor.

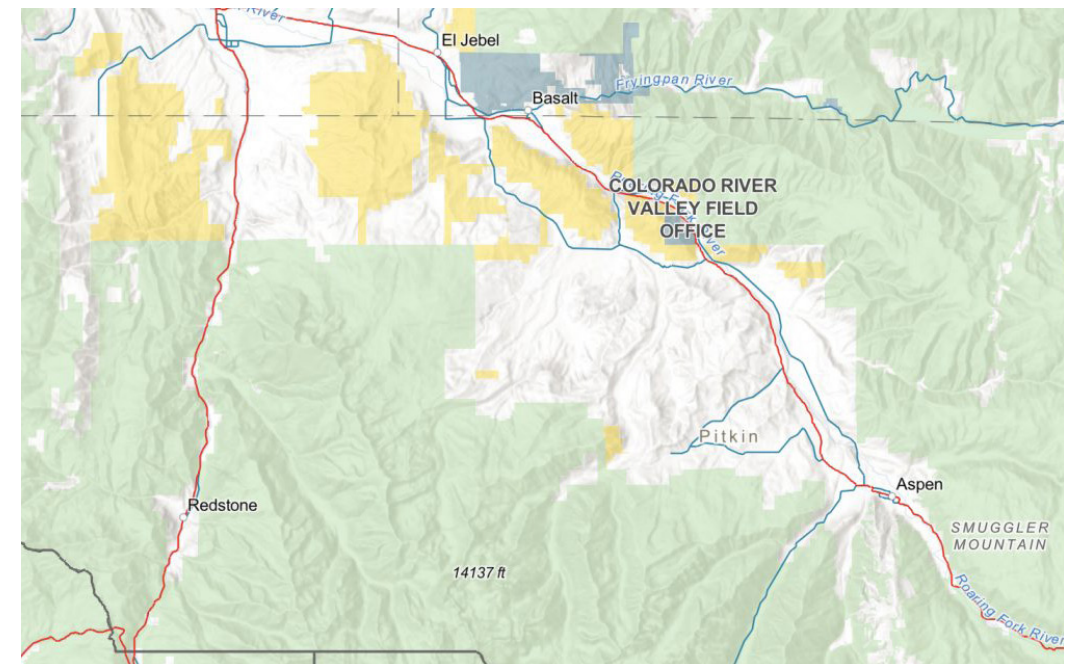
Multiple inquiry attempts were sent to Wildlife Services; the federal agency did not reply.

When The Aspen Times reached out to Pitkin County Open Space and Trails, it stated it does not have any comment at this time.

A spokesperson for Colorado Parks and Wildlife stated that "CRS 33-6-201 outlines the restrictions on the use of traps, poisons, and snares in the state of Colorado. This section of the state constitution establishes that it is 'unlawful to take wildlife with any leghold trap, any instant kill body-gripping design trap, or by poison or snare in the state of Colorado' and lays out exemptions to this."

As far as safe recreation, the spokesperson stated that "CPW always suggests that recreators stay on established trails, keep animals leashed, and pay close attention to children that are with them. These suggestions are relevant whether on state-owned lands (such as state parks) or on federally owned public lands (such as BLM parcels, USFS units, and National Park sites)."

"We're entering a time that's even more dangerous than prior to the ban," Brooks said. "People had been reassured that they



This map shows the 27,490 acres of Bureau of Land Management land (marked yellow) within Pitkin County. Bureau of Land Management/Courtesy image

were banned. It's a very dangerous situation."

M-44s have been banned once before. Former President Richard Nixon, under the first EPA director, William Ruckelshaus, signed an executive order to ban M-44s, as well as Compound 1080 (sodium fluoroacetate, which has no antidote), and strychnine. However, the ban was lifted during the Reagan administration.

"Within a few years in Oregon," Brooks said, "I was seeing them all over the place. Literally."

Legally, he said, Wildlife Services is required to put up signs on lands where M-44s are deployed.

But in his experience over the decades, in the vast majority of times, there has virtually never been signage.

"A lot of these BLM allotments, there may be half a dozen entries to one area," he said. "Theoretically, every one of those gates is supposed to be posted. They never are. They might have the main gate posted. But even then, the postings have been known to blow away. Or animals or a cow will grab them and chew on them."

Sam Sanders, a former Wildlife Services trapper, and Carter Niemeyer, a former Montana district supervisor for Wildlife Services, corroborated this signage policy, according to interviews in National Geographic and the documentary "Lethal Control," respectively.

One former Wildlife Services trapper, Rex Shaddox, went further in the documentary "Exposed: USDA's Secret War on Wildlife," which was produced by Predator Defense in 2014.

He stated that a gate sign was to be placed on the entrances to lands, so anyone entering the area would know that M-44s were deployed there. But his supervisors told him to do otherwise.

"We were told that if we put that, then all we're doing is advertising for the environmentalists and tree huggers and people like that to come in and mess with our units and to take pictures and to get us in trouble," Shaddox stated. "So we were instructed to not put those signs on the gates, and we were told not to put the unit signs on the stake signs, so that way, they felt there's a better chance of them missing the unit by not having the legal signage up than by having it up."

Another directive Wildlife Services is required to follow is notifying local medical facilities. Out of the hundreds of calls Brooks has made over the decades, he has never found a single case where any medical facility, fire department, or EMS unit was notified of M-44s used in the area.

"For me, this is a very important issue. I've dedicated my life to banning these devices," he said. "There are going to be other human poisonings — I have no doubt about this whatsoever. Lots and lots of dogs will be killed."

Brooks has personally documented situations where M-44s were 2-3 feet off trails.

"Set, live, ready to kill anything," he said. "If you're out on BLM land mountain biking with your dog or even walking your dogs, once your dog pulls up on it, that's it — your dog is going to be dying."

M-44s are regulated through the EPA, he said, because sodium cyanide is a chemical under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act. Wildlife Services is supposed to, by law, follow the use restrictions.

"They don't," he said. "This is an agency I've seen break the law literally hundreds and hundreds of times and seem to get away with it."

Wildlife Services, he added, has been considered by the environmental conservation community for many years to be one of the most lawless federal agencies in existence.

Former U.S. Rep Peter DeFazio (D-OR) stated in "Exposed" that "Wildlife Services is one of the most opaque and least accountable agencies that I know of in the federal government outside of highly classified programs. ... They're very good at stonewalling, ignoring congressional inquiries. They are a world unto themselves — and that's a world we're not allowed to see."

In 2017, DeFazio introduced legislation to ban M-44s on public land. The bill, colloquially known as "Canyon's Law," is based on a 14-year-old boy, Canyon Mansfield, and his dog Kasey, who together discovered an M-44 a few hundred feet behind his house on BLM land; there was no signage. His dog was killed by the sodium cyanide; Canyon survived but with lingering physical and mental issues.

The legislation has been reintroduced in Congress every other year since.

Sens. Michael Bennet and John Hickenlooper, as well as U.S. Rep. Jeff Hurd, were asked to comment on how they would each vote on this current legislation, which was reintroduced last year in June (S. 2179, H.R. 4180).

None replied.

For people who have children and dogs, Brooks recommends not going on BLM land anymore.

"Just to reiterate: This is a device that must be banned. There is no middle ground here. There is no compromise. We will continue to fight for a complete public lands ban," he said.

"Is it going to take the death of a child to finally come to consciousness here? I'm afraid that answer might be 'yes,' but I hope not."



## Fathers Day event with Darlene & Valkyrie.



## For The First Time, One Of Earth's Rarest Canids Has Been Photographed. Meet The Cozumel Dwarf Fox

Tom Hale | IFL Science | June 8, 2026



Full-body photograph of adult male Cozumel fox following release in Laguna Colombia State Reserve. Image credit: Rafael Chacón

In the ruins of Mayan temples on the island of Cozumel, archaeologists once came across the remains of mysteriously small foxes. For years, many feared the creature must have vanished into extinction. It turns out these strange little beasts are still among us — and scientists now have the pictures to prove it. For the first time ever, scientists have photographed the Cozumel dwarf fox, one of the world's rarest canids (that's the family of animals including dogs, wolves, coyotes, foxes, and other hound-like species).

However, despite this long-awaited evidence, its history and future remain shrouded in mystery.

### Photographing a legend

Images of the elusive fox came around through a streak of luck and a ton of determination. In the early hours of September 14, 2023, reports began circulating via social media and the phone lines of a disoriented fox wandering through Cozumel, an island in the Caribbean Sea off the coast of Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula. Rafael Chacón, director of the Fundación de Parques y Museos de Cozumel, grabbed his camera and went on a search. Eventually, by around 6 am in the morning, an adult male fox was located near the coastal highway on the eastern side of the island.

They managed to photograph and even capture the tiny fox. After several days under observation, it was safely released at a carefully chosen site away from roads in habitat matching its

suspected preferences.

### What is the Cozumel dwarf fox?

The Cozumel dwarf fox (*Urocyon* sp.) is found only on the island of Cozumel. Little else is certain about the species, not least because it is so extraordinarily rare.

The last secondhand sighting had been reported in 2001 and, prior to this recent rediscovery, the main physical evidence of the fox's existence was its semi-fossilized remains found at Mayan archaeological sites.

Its closest relative is the gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*), found throughout mainland North and Central America. In a textbook example of island dwarfism (AKA insular dwarfism), the forces of natural selection have whittled the Cozumel population down to just 60-80 percent the size of its mainland cousin.

This significant size reduction suggests the fox has been evolving in isolation for at least 5,000

to 13,000 years, perhaps long enough to warrant classification as its own species. It has never been formally described, but scientists consider it critically endangered and likely on the brink of extinction.

Oddly enough, Cozumel has a few animals that are exclusively found on the island and nowhere else. Stranger still, three of them are dwarfed mammalian carnivores: the pygmy raccoon (*Procyon pygmaeus*), the dwarf coati (*Nasua nelsoni*), and the Cozumel fox (*Urocyon* sp.).

Why this island harbors such exceptional wildlife remains unclear, though researchers say the fox's rediscovery underscores the urgent need to protect these imperiled species before it is too late.

"The rediscovery of the fox is not a conservation success story yet, but it represents a second chance," Travis Bayer, the founder of Pathos Wildlife and author of the new study, said in a statement.

"Ultimately, we hope this work helps move the Cozumel fox from a little-known, uncertain presence on the island to a better-understood key part of Cozumel's ecosystems. We also hope it demonstrates that conservation is often most urgent when certainty is lowest and that uncertainty itself can be a call to action," added Bayer.

## Keepers 'excited' to care for trio of maned wolves

BBC | June 7, 2026



The maned wolves are the first of their kind to live at Longleat. Photo: Longleat

Keepers at a safari park say they are excited to care for a trio of maned wolves.

The new additions at Longleat Estate, Wiltshire, are the first of their species to live at the park.

Maned wolves, despite their name, are not wolves and are similar to foxes in appearance and are omnivores - primarily eating fallen fruit, insects, and fish.

New additions Fleur, Luna and Arabella will live in a mixed South American habitat with capybaras and tapirs.

"We're excited for guests to see the three new girls," said keeper Eloïse Kilbane.

The maned wolves have been living at the park for six months to acclimatise, and will now be living in areas open to visitors.

They have unusual proportions, with long legs that allow them to see over the long grasses of their natural habitat.

The species has been in decline in its native South

America in recent decades.

"There are fewer than 17,000 maned wolves left in the wild and the species has seen a 20% reduction in just 15 years," Kilbane said.

"This makes the three sisters incredibly important, even though we don't plan to breed them currently."



The species, native to South America, is in decline in the wild

## In January 1995, fourteen wolves were brought from Canada in wooden crates and released into Yellowstone National Park to replace the population killed off by 1926, and the question of whether they have changed the course of the park's rivers, as popular science videos viewed by tens of millions claim, has now become one of the most contested debates in ecology.

*The first eight wolves arrived through the Roosevelt Arch on the morning of 12 January 1995, in a horse trailer escorted by two park service patrol cars.*



Space Daily Editorial Team | Space Daily | June 9, 2026

The first eight wolves arrived through the Roosevelt Arch on the morning of 12 January 1995, in a horse trailer escorted by two park service patrol cars.

The wolves had been live-trapped in three different packs in Jasper National Park and the surrounding wilderness of Alberta, Canada, weighed, fitted with radio collars, and flown south. Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation lawyers had obtained a stay from a federal appeals court before the plane landed, and the wolves spent the next several hours confined in their transport crates while the legal status of the project was resolved. The stay was lifted just after midnight.

The wolves were transferred, still in their crates, to three acclimation pens at Crystal Creek, Rose Creek, and Soda Butte Creek in the Lamar Valley. Six more wolves arrived later in the same month, bringing the first year's total to fourteen. A second cohort of seventeen wolves arrived in 1996. By the end of that

year, thirty-one wolves had been released into the park.

The last verified wolf killing in Yellowstone before the reintroduction had occurred in 1926, as part of a federal predator-control programme that had operated continuously across the park for the previous fifty years. The Greater Yellowstone Coalition's published timeline of the reintroduction records the seventy-year gap as one of the longest deliberate ecological absences of an apex predator in American conservation history.

What happened in the thirty years after 1995 has become one of the most-cited and most-contested case studies in contemporary ecology.

### What Yellowstone looked like without wolves

During the seven decades of wolf absence, the

elk population in the park's northern range grew approximately tenfold, reaching peaks of around 19,000 animals by the early 1990s. The elk browsed continuously on the woody plants of the riverine valleys, particularly willows, aspens, and cottonwoods. Streams in the Lamar Valley and elsewhere that had supported beaver colonies in the 1920s had, by the 1950s, lost most of their beavers entirely. The beavers depended on willows and aspens for both food and dam construction; the elk had eaten the willows faster than the willows could grow back. Without beaver dams to slow the water, the streams ran faster, cut deeper channels, and lowered the local water table further. The drier banks, in turn, made it harder for the surviving willows to recover.

By 1995, large stretches of the park's northern range had been transformed from willow-dominated wetland-and-stream complexes into shorter grass-and-sage steppe. The elk grazed it. The few beavers that remained survived in marginal habitats. The cottonwood and aspen stands were ageing without new recruitment, because every young shoot that emerged was eaten by elk before it could grow above browse height.

This was the baseline against which the wolves' return would be measured.

To understand better what happened, check out this short video on how the wolves changed everything.

### The Ripple and Beschta thesis

The hypothesis that wolves had triggered a continent-scale ecological recovery was developed primarily by William Ripple and Robert Beschta at Oregon State University, in a series of papers published between 2004 and 2012. Their 2012 paper in *Biological Conservation*, titled "Trophic cascades in Yellowstone: The first 15 years after wolf reintroduction", set out the most complete synthesis of their argument. The wolves, they wrote, had directly reduced the elk population through predation and indirectly reduced the elk's browsing pressure on willows and aspens by altering elk behaviour, driving the surviving animals out of riverine corridors where they were most vulnerable to ambush. The released browsing pressure had allowed young willows and aspens to grow back. The recovering vegetation had stabilised stream banks, allowed beavers to return, and through their dam-building had begun to restore the hydrology of the northern range. The cascade flowed downward through the food web from the apex predator to the very water flow of the rivers.

The argument was published, widely cited, and ultimately translated for general audiences in a 2014 video produced by Sustainable Human, narrated by the British

journalist George Monbiot. "How Wolves Change Rivers" has now been viewed more than 45 million times across YouTube and other platforms and remains one of the most-shared ecology videos in the history of the internet. The video's claim is unambiguous. The wolves changed the elk. The elk left the rivers. The willows came back. The beavers returned. The rivers themselves, by the video's closing claim, narrowed, meandered less, and ran clearer.

The video did not present the claim as contested. Almost none of the popular coverage of the Yellowstone reintroduction has.

### The challenge from Colorado State

The published peer-reviewed challenge to the Ripple and Beschta thesis has come most consistently from a research team at Colorado State University led by Thomas Hobbs and David Cooper. Their work, beginning with a 2013 paper in *Proceedings of the Royal Society B* and culminating in a major 2024 paper in *Ecological Monographs*, has argued that the recovery story is substantially more complicated than the popular trophic-cascade account suggests.

The Hobbs and Cooper team conducted a 20-year experimental study on the northern range, beginning in 2001, that involved building artificial beaver dams on selected streams and fencing off some willow stands to exclude elk while leaving others open. The experiment was designed to test whether the absence of browsing alone could restore willow growth, or whether other factors, particularly stream hydrology and the height of the local water table, were the limiting variables.

The results, set out in their 2024 paper, were unambiguous in the opposite direction from the popular account. Willows grew taller where elk were excluded, but only modestly. They grew dramatically taller where beaver dams raised the local water table, regardless of whether elk were excluded. The willows that recovered most fully were those growing in stream sections where dams had restored the wetland conditions that had existed before the wolves were removed. Stream hydrology, in the Hobbs and Cooper interpretation, was the dominant variable. The reduction in elk browsing was real but secondary. The conclusion of the 2024 paper, in plain language, was that the restoration of apex predators to Yellowstone "failed to restore riparian plant communities on Yellowstone's northern range," and that the system had moved into what the authors call an "alternative stable state" caused by the original loss of beaver-driven hydrology, which the return of wolves had not been sufficient to reverse.

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Ripple, Beschta, and several colleagues published a formal comment in *Ecological Monographs* in early 2026, responding to the Hobbs paper. They argued that the Colorado State experimental design had underestimated wolf effects by focusing only on a subset of the northern range, that the willow-recovery measurements Hobbs and Cooper had used were too narrow to capture the broader cascade, and that the comparison between their sampled streams and the wider park was not representative. The exchange has continued through 2026.

### What both sides agree on

Within the active debate, several findings are no longer disputed.

The wolves did come back. By 2024, the park population had stabilised at approximately 100 wolves in ten to twelve packs, depending on the year. The elk population on the northern range has fallen from its 1995 peak of approximately 19,000 to current figures of approximately 4,000 to 6,000, a decline of roughly 70 to 80 per cent. The decline was driven by multiple factors including hunting outside park boundaries, drought, the return of cougars and grizzly bears alongside the wolves, and disease, but the wolves were a substantial contributor. Some willow and aspen stands have grown taller. Beaver numbers on some streams have recovered. As *Live Science* set out in its December 2025 summary of the current state of the debate, the question is not whether changes occurred but how much of the change is attributable specifically to wolves rather than to the broader recovery of multiple predators and to hydrological factors that had nothing directly to do with predation.

The debate is, in this sense, narrower than the popular framing suggests. It is not about whether the trophic cascade exists in some form. It is about whether wolves are the dominant driver of it, or whether their role has been overstated in a way that obscures the contribution of beavers, of bison, of cougars, of bears, and of the simple hydrology of the streams themselves.

### The wolf called 21

The human interest of the reintroduction has, over the past three decades, attached itself most consistently to a single animal. Wolf 21 was a black male born in the spring of 1995 in the Rose Creek pen, the offspring of two of the original Canadian wolves. He left the natal pen with his mother and siblings in March of that year, was recaptured for radio-collaring as a yearling, and joined the Druid Peak Pack in 1997 as the new alpha male after the previous alpha was killed. He led the Druid Peak Pack for the next seven years, fathered approximately twenty pups across multiple litters, never killed another wolf in any of the dozens of inter-pack confrontations he was observed

in, and died in his sleep on a mountainside in June 2004 at the age of nine.

The naturalist Rick McIntyre, who arrived at Yellowstone in 1995 as a seasonal Park Service employee and stayed for the next twenty-five years, watched 21 for almost every day of his life. McIntyre's 2020 book on the wolf, *The Reign of Wolf 21*, sets out a 250-page biography assembled from field notebooks accumulated over McIntyre's continuous daily observation. By the measure of recorded observation, 21 is the most documented non-domesticated wolf in history.

### What the next decade may show

The Yellowstone wolves are now in their fourth generation since the 1995 reintroduction. The popular story has run substantially ahead of the science it depended on. The peer-reviewed science is, in the form of the Hobbs and Beschta exchanges, openly working through the implications of a model that may have been simpler than the system it described.

What has emerged, on the available evidence, is something other than what the 45-million-view video promised. The ecosystem has not been straightforwardly restored to its pre-1920s condition. Streams that had been deeply incised during the elk-dominated decades have, in many cases, not returned to their previous channel forms. Willow stands recover in some places and not in others. Beaver populations are higher than they were in 1995 but lower than they were in 1925. The wolves are part of the system. So is everything else.

The reintroduction did not, on the strongest current reading of the evidence, change the course of the rivers in the way the popular account suggests.

What it did do, on the same evidence, was something more incremental, more complicated, and more honest. The wolves came back. The system began to move. The direction of the movement is still being measured.

#### NOTE FROM KELLY MURPHY, CWWC:

For those of you who weren't here for this, Darlene named this wolf Freedom. It caught wind in the media and he became an icon for survival and resilience. He was abandoned during capture and relocation efforts when his father was labeled a "chronic depredator", and was left to fend for himself. He was successfully shot during previous efforts to lethally control him, yet he survived all alone. When Polis is quoted saying "he had a number of chances but sadly chose to continue to depredate," I want you to think about this and why this makes no sense to a wild animal. Survival is not a choice that wolves make. Survival is an instinct. If they need to eat what is easier to catch in order survive, they will. Especially when you are hunting solo with a gunshot wound and injuries associated.

## CPW concludes lethal removal efforts for uncollared gray wolf in Routt County

Luke Perkins | CPW | June 13, 2026

DENVER – On June 12, 2026, CPW and its agents lethally removed an uncollared wolf in Routt County. Visual evidence obtained at the scene confirmed the removed wolf is the same one that was depredating in Rio Blanco County in 2025 and early 2026. This wolf was originally a member of Copper Creek Pack but has not been a part of that pack since Sept. 2024.

Since summer of 2025, this uncollared wolf had been involved in ten different confirmed depredation events involving 22 sheep. The latest of these were two confirmed depredation events in Routt County on June 10 and 11. Each of these events involved one sheep that were confirmed with clear and convincing evidence to have been depredated by a wolf. These events occurred despite the producer pursuing substantial non-lethal conflict minimization efforts.

"The decision to pursue lethal actions is never an easy one but the circumstances around this wolf's repeated depredation history made this a difficult but necessary decision," said CPW Director Laura Clellan. "The producers impacted by these depredations have worked diligently with CPW to identify and deploy all viable and reasonable non-lethal tools and techniques identified through their site assessment and consultation with our field staff."

"While the unanimously adopted Colorado Wolf Restoration and Management Plan calls for 10-15 more wolves to be translocated to Colorado, it also calls for lethal control of chronically depredating wolves," said Governor Jared Polis. "This elusive wolf had a number of chances but sadly chose to continue to depredate which necessitated this challenging management decision. Colorado remains committed to recovering and maintaining a viable, self-sustaining wolf population in Colorado, while concurrently working to minimize wolf-related conflicts with domestic animals, with non-lethal means as our priority."

Conflict minimization efforts pursued by producers impacted by the uncollared wolf included:

- Conducting of a site assessment to identify viable, reasonable, and effective tools and techniques for their operations
- Deployment of range riders
- Use of livestock guardian dogs and scare devices
- Active human presence from herders
- Applying for injurious non-lethal hazing permits

A final report on the lethal removal efforts will be posted to the CPW website when complete.

CPW's decision to lethally remove the uncollared wolf was made in consultation with USFWS and in accordance with applicable legal requirements, including the USFWS 10(j) rule.



# If You Hear Coyotes Howling at Night Near Your Home, This Is What It Actually Means

*Find out why this behavior happens, what it reveals about your environment and if seeing a coyote is a good sign.*

Kathleen Joyce | Pet Helpful | June 13, 2026



Getty Images Carolyn Cole

Hearing coyotes howling at night near your home can be unsettling the first time you experience it. In the quiet of the evening, those calls can carry farther than expected, sometimes making it feel like the animals are much closer than they actually are. For many homeowners, it's a sound that immediately draws attention—familiar enough to recognize, but eerie enough to make you pause and wonder what's going on outside.

There's something about nighttime wildlife sounds that naturally sparks curiosity. Coyotes, in particular, have a way of turning an ordinary evening into something that feels a little more mysterious. Whether you're hearing brief bursts of howls or longer, echoing calls through the darkness, it's easy to start questioning what those sounds might mean and why they seem to happen right around residential areas.

So what's really happening when coyotes become vocal near neighborhoods at night? To understand why you're hearing them (and why it often sounds like they're so close) keep reading to learn how coyotes live, communicate, and

navigate areas where human development meets their natural habitat.

## **Why Coyotes Are Heard More Often at Night Near Homes**

If you've ever wondered what it means when coyotes howl near urban areas, you're not alone.

Many people report hearing coyotes at night, especially in quiet residential areas where sound travels farther after dark.

While coyotes are often difficult to spot during the day, their vocalizations tend to feel more noticeable at night. That's because coyotes are crepuscular



Coyotes are more active at dawn and dusk.

animals, meaning they are most active around dawn and dusk. During the daytime, they typically rest in secluded areas and avoid human activity. As evening approaches, however, coyotes become more active, moving through neighborhoods to hunt, communicate, and stay connected with their pack.

This increase in nighttime activity is why people often hear coyotes howling, yipping, or barking near their backyards and residential areas. In addition, the fact that sound carries farther in cooler nighttime air can also make these calls seem closer and more intense than they actually are.

## **Why Coyotes Howl in the First Place**

What does it mean when coyotes howl?

Coyotes vocalize for all sorts of reasons, and those vocalizations aren't limited to just howls. Much like domesticated dogs, coyotes can bark, chuff, growl, yelp, and make all kinds of other noises. Each of these sounds has different meanings and uses—for instance, coyotes often yelp during playtime or bark at intruders when defending their territory, food, or den.

Howling is one of their most common vocalizations, and it's usually used to communicate with other coyotes and help establish territory. It can carry over long distances, making it an effective way for them to stay connected without needing to meet face to face.

Contrary to popular belief, coyotes do not howl to celebrate a kill—that would only serve to draw in other coyotes (aka potential competition) to their food source, which is the last thing a hungry coyote wants.

## **The Times Of Year You'll Hear Coyotes Most**

Coyotes can be heard throughout the year, but increased vocal activity is often reported from late winter into early spring during mating season. Coyote mating season typically runs from January to early March, although timing can vary by region. During this period, coyotes are more vocal as they communicate with potential mates and reinforce territorial boundaries.

That said, coyotes are not limited to seasonal vocalizations. They can be heard year-round depending on factors such as food availability, territory movement, weather conditions, and local population density. In many regions, residents may hear coyotes during summer, fall, and winter as well, though the frequency and purpose of vocalizations may vary.



Mark Rightmire/MediaNews Group/Orange County Register

## **Most Common Reasons Coyotes Come Close to Neighborhoods**

If you hear coyotes near your home, it helps to understand why they're there in the first place. One of the biggest reasons coyotes are often heard—or even seen—in suburban neighborhoods is habitat loss. Coyotes are naturally shy, cautious animals that tend to avoid humans whenever possible. But as more of their natural environments are developed into housing and infrastructure, their territory increasingly overlaps with ours.

At the same time, suburban and urban areas can offer unexpected advantages as residential neighborhoods typically have fewer large predators like wolves and cougars, which makes them safer in that regard. On top of that, these areas often provide a steady food supply, including rodents, reptiles, and other small animals that thrive around human development. With shrinking wild spaces on one side and accessible food sources on the other, coyotes have adapted surprisingly well to living near people and that's why coyote encounters in residential areas have become more common.

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### When Howling is a Warning

For most people, it can be difficult to tell whether a coyote howl is meant as a warning or simply part of normal communication. In reality, coyote howling is primarily used to communicate with other coyotes—not with humans.

Coyotes use vocalizations to coordinate with their pack, establish territory, and maintain spacing within their environment. While it may sound intense or directed outward, a howl is not typically intended as a threat toward people.

### Should You Be Concerned If You Hear Coyotes At Night?

You may be curious if coyotes are dangerous? The truth is, when you hear coyotes at night, there's usually no need for concern. Coyotes are generally cautious animals and tend to avoid people whenever possible. That said, hearing coyotes in your area can still be an important reminder for pet owners. While attacks are uncommon, small pets, especially those left unattended outdoors can be vulnerable in areas where coyotes are active.

### What to Do If You Hear Coyotes Near Your Home

If you're out walking and suddenly hear a howl, it could be a sign coyotes are nearby and the best response is to remain calm and be aware of your surroundings.

If you have a pet with you, take simple precautions to keep them safe, by getting them indoors during and keeping them inside at nighttime and early morning hours when coyotes are most active. When they are outside, stay close to them and avoid leaving them unattended.

It's also a good idea to remove potential attractants around your property, such as unsecured trash or pet food left outdoors, which can encourage wildlife activity in residential areas.

### What Coyotes Symbolize in Spiritual Beliefs and Folklore

Coyotes are found throughout North and Central



Getty Images Carol Hamilton



Image via Getty Images/Gleb Tarro

America, and they appear in many Indigenous cultural traditions, particularly among tribes in the western and southwestern regions of the United States.

In many of these traditions, the coyote is portrayed as a trickster figure. This role can vary widely depending on the specific culture—sometimes the coyote is seen as a humorous, clever, and mischievous character, while in other stories it may represent chaos, unpredictability, or cautionary behavior. In some narratives, it can even embody a combination of these traits.

The coyote also appears in stories as a cultural teacher or hero. In certain traditions, including Navajo storytelling, Coyote plays a role in creation stories and moral lessons. In other Indigenous mythologies, such as those of some Northwestern tribes, the coyote is credited with helping bring important elements like fire to humanity.

Across these varied traditions, a common theme emerges: the coyote is often used as a storytelling figure to convey lessons about behavior, decision-making, and the consequences of actions. Whether portrayed as wise, foolish, or unpredictable, the coyote consistently serves as a symbolic character used to reflect human behavior and teach broader life lessons.

### Is Seeing or Hearing Coyotes in Your Neighborhood a Good Sign?

So, can seeing or hearing a coyote be a good sign? In a symbolic sense, it's actually not typically a "good" or "bad" sign. Instead, it is simply an indicator that you live in a healthy environment where wildlife can thrive.

Coyotes are highly adaptable and often do well in areas where there is access to food sources, water, and enough space for them to move through their territory, including suburban and semi-urban landscapes.

## A single plastic water bottle takes about 450 years to decompose — meaning every bottle produced since the 1970s is still essentially intact somewhere on Earth, slowly breaking down into particles now found in Arctic ice, Pyrenees rainfall, and the sediments of the Mariana Trench



Space Daily Editorial Team | Space Daily | June 11, 2026

The plastic water bottle is one of the more recent inventions in the history of human packaging. The polyethylene terephthalate (PET) bottle, the standard clear plastic container that holds bottled water, soft drinks, and a wide range of other liquids, was first patented in 1973 by Nathaniel Wyeth, a mechanical engineer at DuPont. The product moved from laboratory curiosity to mass commercial use over the following decade, and by the mid-1980s PET bottles had largely displaced glass for single-use beverage containers across most of the developed world. The convenience was obvious. The bottle was light, unbreakable, transparent, and could be manufactured in any size from a few millilitres to several litres. The cost per bottle, at industrial scale, was a few cents. By 2024, global production of PET bottles had reached approximately 480 billion per year, or roughly one million bottles produced every minute somewhere in the world.

The same chemical properties that make PET so useful as a packaging material also make it extraordinarily resistant to natural decomposition. According to HowStuffWorks'

reference on the decomposition timelines of common plastics, the standard estimate for a PET water bottle is approximately 450 years to fully decompose under normal environmental conditions. The figure is itself an estimate, since PET has only existed for about 50 years and no bottle has yet been observed to fully decompose in nature. The 450-year estimate is derived from laboratory-controlled studies of degradation rates, extrapolated forward. Other sources put the upper bound at 1,000 years for full breakdown into the smallest measurable particles. Either way, the basic finding is unambiguous: essentially every PET bottle ever manufactured is still present on Earth in some form, somewhere, in some state of partial degradation.

### Why plastic lasts so long

The reason plastics resist decomposition is that they are chemically unlike most other materials in the natural environment. Living organic matter — wood, leaves, animal tissue, cotton fabric — is built from molecules that microorganisms have evolved over billions of years to

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break down. Bacteria, fungi, and other decomposers possess enzymes that can attack the chemical bonds in cellulose, lignin, proteins, and other natural polymers, releasing the constituent atoms back into the broader biological cycle. Plastics are made of synthetic polymers whose chemical bonds did not exist on Earth before the early 20th century. No microorganism has yet evolved efficient enzymes capable of breaking these bonds, and the result is that plastic in the natural environment is essentially immune to biological decay.

What plastic does instead is fragment. Sunlight, mechanical stress, temperature cycling, and oxidation slowly break down the long polymer chains in plastic into shorter chains, and the bulk material slowly breaks into smaller and smaller physical pieces. A PET bottle exposed to sunlight on a beach will, over years and decades, become increasingly brittle, then shatter into smaller fragments under wave action, then weather into still smaller pieces, and eventually break down into microplastics — fragments smaller than five millimetres — and ultimately nanoplastics — fragments smaller than one micrometre. The bottle has not actually disappeared. It has merely been dispersed into a vast number of smaller pieces, each of which retains the basic chemical structure of the original plastic. The dispersion is one-way. The microplastics will not naturally reassemble into the original bottle.

### Where the fragments end up

The dispersion of microplastics through the global environment is now sufficiently complete that fragments have been found in every major ecological compartment scientists have examined. According to National Geographic's coverage of a 2019 Science Advances paper by Melanie Bergmann and colleagues at the Alfred Wegener Institute, snow samples collected from ice floes in the Fram Strait — the unpopulated expanse of ocean between Greenland and Norway's Svalbard archipelago — contained approximately 14,000 microplastic particles per litre. The location was thousands of kilometres from any major source of plastic pollution. The particles had been carried there in the atmosphere, riding wind currents from cities much further south, and had fallen out of the air with precipitation.

According to a 2019 Nature Geoscience paper by Steve Allen and colleagues, summarised in Science, microplastic deposits were similarly found at a meteorological station in the French Pyrenees, 100 kilometres from the nearest city. The collection device at Bernadouze meteorological station recorded an average

of approximately 365 microplastic particles per square metre per day falling from the sky during the five-month sampling period. The particles were dominated by fragments of single-use packaging — the same material as PET water bottles. Computer modelling of wind patterns suggested the fragments had been transported through the atmosphere for at least 95 kilometres before landing at the remote mountain site. Subsequent work has found similar microplastic precipitation in the Rocky Mountains, in Alpine glaciers, on Mount Everest, and on Arctic ice — meaning that essentially nowhere on the surface of the Earth is now free from plastic fallout from the atmosphere.

### The Mariana Trench evidence

The dispersion extends in the other direction as well. According to a Science News review of microplastic distribution across the planet, bottom-water samples from the Mariana Trench, the deepest known location on the planet at nearly 11,000 metres below sea level, have contained up to 13.5 microplastic particles per litre, with sediment concentrations 15 to 160 times higher than the overlying water. The Mariana Trench is approximately 200 kilometres from the nearest land. Its sediments accumulate organic matter and minerals falling from the surface waters above, over thousands to millions of years. The presence of microplastics in those sediments indicates that the modern era of plastic production — only about 75 years long, in cumulative terms — has already deposited measurable amounts of synthetic polymer into one of the most remote sedimentary environments on Earth.

A 2019 study of amphipods (small shrimp-like crustaceans) collected from six deep-ocean trenches in the Pacific Rim found microplastic fragments in 72 percent of all specimens, including 100 percent of those collected from the Mariana Trench. The deepest collection point, in the Mariana Trench, was at 10,890 metres depth. Even there, in the dark, cold, high-pressure environment of the bottom of the ocean, the food web is now contaminated with the same synthetic polymers that humans use to package single-use beverages. The chain of transmission is straightforward in principle — plastic enters the ocean, fragments under UV and mechanical stress, sinks slowly through the water column, settles into deep-sea sediments, is consumed by deep-sea invertebrates, accumulates in their tissues, is passed up the food chain — but the geographic completeness of the dispersion was not anticipated by the scientists who first began studying ocean plastic pollution in the 1970s and 1980s.

### What 450 years actually means

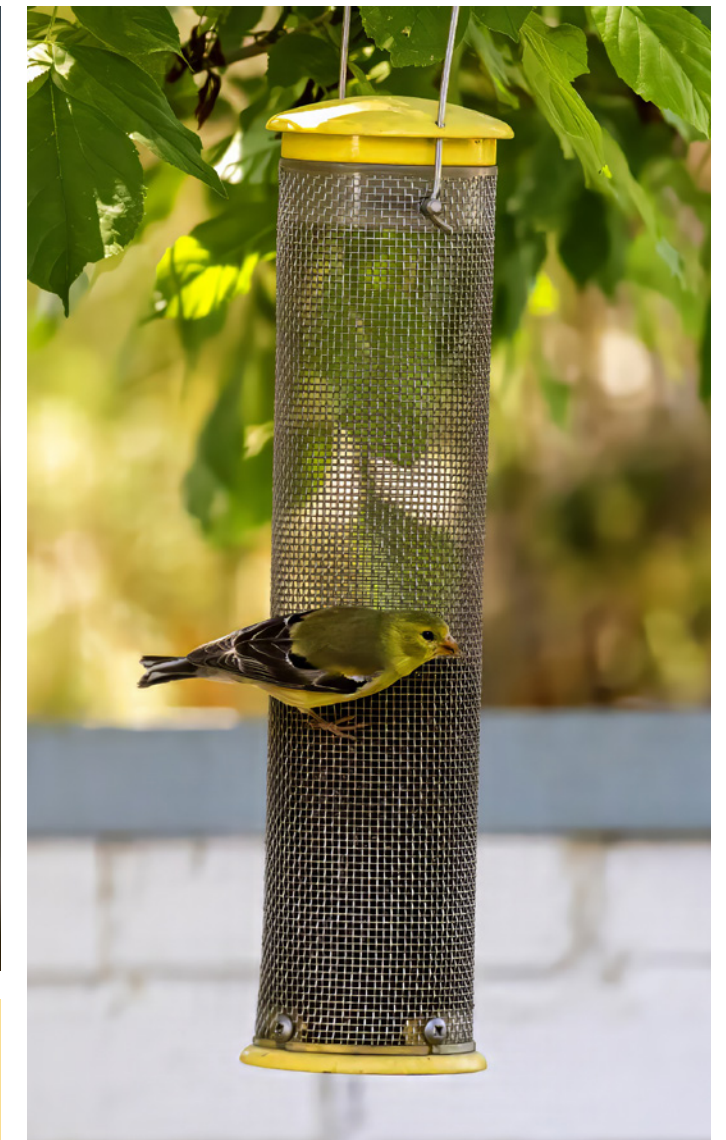
The 450-year decomposition estimate, taken at face value, has implications that are difficult to fully absorb. The first PET water bottle was patented 53 years ago, in 1973. If the estimate is correct, the bottles produced during the first decade of mass PET use — the late 1970s through the late 1980s — have, in 2026, completed approximately 10 to 12 percent of their full decomposition cycle. The bottles produced during the early 2000s have completed approximately 5 percent. The bottles produced last year have not yet meaningfully begun to decompose at all. Most of the cumulative mass of PET that has ever been manufactured is still present somewhere on Earth, mostly intact, partly fragmented, slowly working its way through the global environmental system.

Global plastic production, according to a 2017 paper by Roland Geyer and colleagues in Science Advances, has totalled approximately 8.3 billion tonnes since the start

of mass plastic production in 1950 — equivalent to about one tonne of plastic for every human being currently alive. Approximately 6.3 billion tonnes of that total had become waste by 2015. Of that waste, 9 percent had been recycled, 12 percent had been incinerated, and the remaining roughly 79 percent — about 5 billion tonnes — had been discarded into landfills or directly into the natural environment, where it is now slowly breaking down on a timescale of centuries. The estimate of 450 years per water bottle, applied to the broader category of all plastic ever produced, means that essentially all of the 8.3 billion tonnes is still here, somewhere, in some state of partial decomposition. The next several centuries of human civilisation will be conducted in a global environment whose oceans, soils, atmosphere, and food webs contain rising background concentrations of synthetic polymer fragments that the species has not yet figured out how to remove and that nature has not yet evolved a way to consume.



The American Goldfinch is a brighter yellow with distinct black wings.



# How Texas 'Ghost Wolves' Could Shape the Future of Red Wolf Recovery

Jack Healy | The New York Times | May 4, 2026



Feature image of red wolf in Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge via USFWS.

Along the upper Texas coast, about 50 miles southeast of Houston, sits Galveston Island, a barrier island better known for its beaches, marshes, and migratory birds than large predators. Yet for years, residents reported sightings of unusual wild canids roaming the island.

It wasn't until 2008 that local resident and former fisheries biologist Ron Wooten took a closer interest in the island's canids. After one of the animals killed his pet dog, Wooten began documenting sightings and asking neighbors to report encounters. While most people assumed the animals were simply coyotes, Wooten couldn't shake the feeling that something was different about them.

"They just didn't look right," Wooten told the New York Times. "I thought at first that they must have bred with Marmaduke or something because they had super-long legs, super-long noses."

The more animals Wooten observed, the more he began to suspect they were not typical coyotes. Their unusual size and appearance led him to wonder whether they could be red wolf-coyote hybrids, or

perhaps descendants of the red wolves that once roamed the Texas coast.

So what are red wolves? Once found throughout much of the southeastern United States, the red wolf is one of North America's most endangered canids. By the 1970s, habitat loss, predator control programs, and hybridization with coyotes had pushed the species to the brink of extinction.

Between 1973 and 1980, scientists with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service captured what were believed to be the last surviving wild red wolves from coastal areas of southeast Texas and southwest Louisiana in an effort to save the species from extinction. In 1980, the red wolf was officially declared extinct in the wild. Of the 17 animals captured, 14 ultimately became the founders of a captive breeding program that still exists today.

Conservationists achieved a major milestone in 1987 when captive-born red wolves were reintroduced into the wild at Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. While the population eventually grew to more than 100 animals, the species has experienced significant

declines in recent years due to vehicle strikes, illegal shootings, and continued hybridization with coyotes. Today, it's estimated that fewer than 25 red wolves remain in the wild, all within a closely managed population in coastal North Carolina.

Despite his suspicions, Wooten struggled for years to find researchers willing to investigate the island's unusual canids. The idea that red wolf genetics could still persist on the Texas coast decades after the species had been declared extinct in the wild seemed far-fetched to many experts.

Eventually, Wooten connected with Bridgett vonHoldt, then a researcher at Princeton University. Wooten provided tissue samples from two road-killed canids collected on Galveston Island, giving researchers their first opportunity to test whether the animals were truly different from ordinary coyotes.

The results were surprising. After comparing DNA from the Galveston canids to that of coyotes, red wolves, gray wolves, and eastern wolves, vonHoldt and her colleagues found that while the animals were primarily coyotes, they also carried substantial red wolf ancestry. Roughly 30% of their genetic material could be traced back to red wolves, suggesting that genetic remnants of the species had persisted on the Texas coast long after scientists believed they had disappeared from the wild.

Researchers also discovered something unexpected. The Galveston canids carried unique traces of red wolf DNA that were not found in the other wolf and coyote populations included in the study. The finding suggested that genetic material from the original Gulf Coast red wolves may have survived in these animals, despite the species having been declared extinct in the wild decades earlier.

"They harbor ancestral genetic variation, this ghost variation, which we thought was extinct from the

landscape," vonHoldt said. Hence the name "ghost wolves."

The Galveston discovery was not the only evidence suggesting red wolf genetics had survived along the Gulf Coast. In 2018, a separate study examining wild canids in southwest Louisiana found several animals carrying significant red wolf ancestry, including one individual whose genetic makeup was estimated to be between 78 and 100% red wolf. Together, the findings suggested that remnants of the species may have persisted in wild Gulf Coast canid populations long after red wolves were believed to have disappeared from the region.

So what does this mean for red wolf recovery? One of the biggest challenges facing the species today is a lack of genetic diversity. With the entire captive population descending from just 14 founding animals and fewer than 25 red wolves remaining in the wild, maintaining healthy levels of genetic variation has become a major concern for conservationists.

The discovery of red wolf ancestry in the Galveston canids and other Gulf Coast populations could provide a potential solution. Researchers believe these animals may harbor genetic variation that no longer exists within the modern red wolf population. If those genes can be safely incorporated into future recovery efforts, they could help increase genetic diversity and improve the long-term health of the species.

Scientists have proposed several possibilities, including carefully breeding red wolves with canids carrying high levels of red wolf ancestry or using advanced reproductive and genetic technologies to reintroduce lost genetic material into the population. While such efforts remain largely theoretical, the discovery of the Gulf Coast "ghost wolves" has given conservationists something they thought was gone forever: another source of red wolf genetics.

The Gulf Coast Canine Project notes, "Hybridization was once thought to be the greatest conservation threat to the red wolf, but now historic admixture may be key to their recovery."



# Suit Launched to Reduce Cancer-Linked Atrazine Pollution in Thousands of U.S. Waterways, Drinking-Water Supplies

Nathan Donley, Emily Marquez | Center for Biological Diversity | May 28, 2026

WASHINGTON— Conservation and public health groups filed a formal notice with Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lee Zeldin today to force the agency to develop water-quality standards for atrazine, a cancer-linked pesticide that has been found at dangerous levels in thousands of U.S. waterways and in drinking-water supplies.

The notice comes ten days after the Trump U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service released its finalized review of atrazine, concluding that the potent endocrine disruptor does not pose an extinction risk to any threatened or endangered animals or plants. This contrasts sharply with the EPA's 2021 finding that widespread atrazine pollution is harming more than 1,000 threatened and endangered species.

"The Trump administration has failed to do anything to adequately protect our families and most endangered wildlife from the dangers of cancer-linked and hormone-disrupting pesticides, like atrazine," said Nathan Donley, environmental health science director at the Center for Biological Diversity. "It's appalling that the United States is so far behind the rest of the world in banning this inherently dangerous pesticide."

The Clean Water Act requires the EPA to develop water-quality criteria for pollutants, such as atrazine. The agency initiated that step in 1999 but never completed that requirement. The legal notice filed today by the Center for Biological Diversity, Center for Environmental Health and Pesticide Action & Agroecology Network is required before any future lawsuit.

Atrazine pollution is caused by tens of millions of pounds of the pesticide being used each year by industrial agricultural operations in the United States.

The pesticide is banned as too dangerous in more than 60 countries but is the second most widely used pesticide in the United States. It is linked to birth defects, multiple cancers, and fertility problems like low sperm quality and irregular menstrual cycles.

In 2025 the World Health Organization's International

Agency for Research on Cancer found that atrazine is "probably carcinogenic to humans." Unlike the EPA, which relies heavily on confidential research by pesticide companies of their own products, the WHO's scientists only include in their assessments the findings of pesticide safety studies that can be reviewed by independent scientists for validity and bias.

"Atrazine is polluting waterways throughout the United States at unsafe levels leading to health risks like cancer and birth defects," said Tom Fox, senior legislative counsel at the Center for Environmental Health. "Pesticides like atrazine that are clearly linked to reproductive harms and cancer don't belong in our water supplies and the EPA needs to take action now as required by the Clean Water Act."

The troubling health harms of atrazine, as well as glyphosate, were spotlighted in the Trump administration's first Make American Healthy Again report. And atrazine has been a priority pesticide for public health advocates for decades because of the extreme threats it poses to human health and the environment.

"The science is clear that atrazine is a threat to public health in America, especially farmworkers and agricultural communities," said Emily Marquez, a senior scientist at Pesticide Action & Agroecology Network. "The toxic burden of pesticides like atrazine on our communities' water is too high and we should ban its use outright."

The EPA had previously proposed steps to reduce atrazine contamination in the 11,249 U.S. watersheds where atrazine

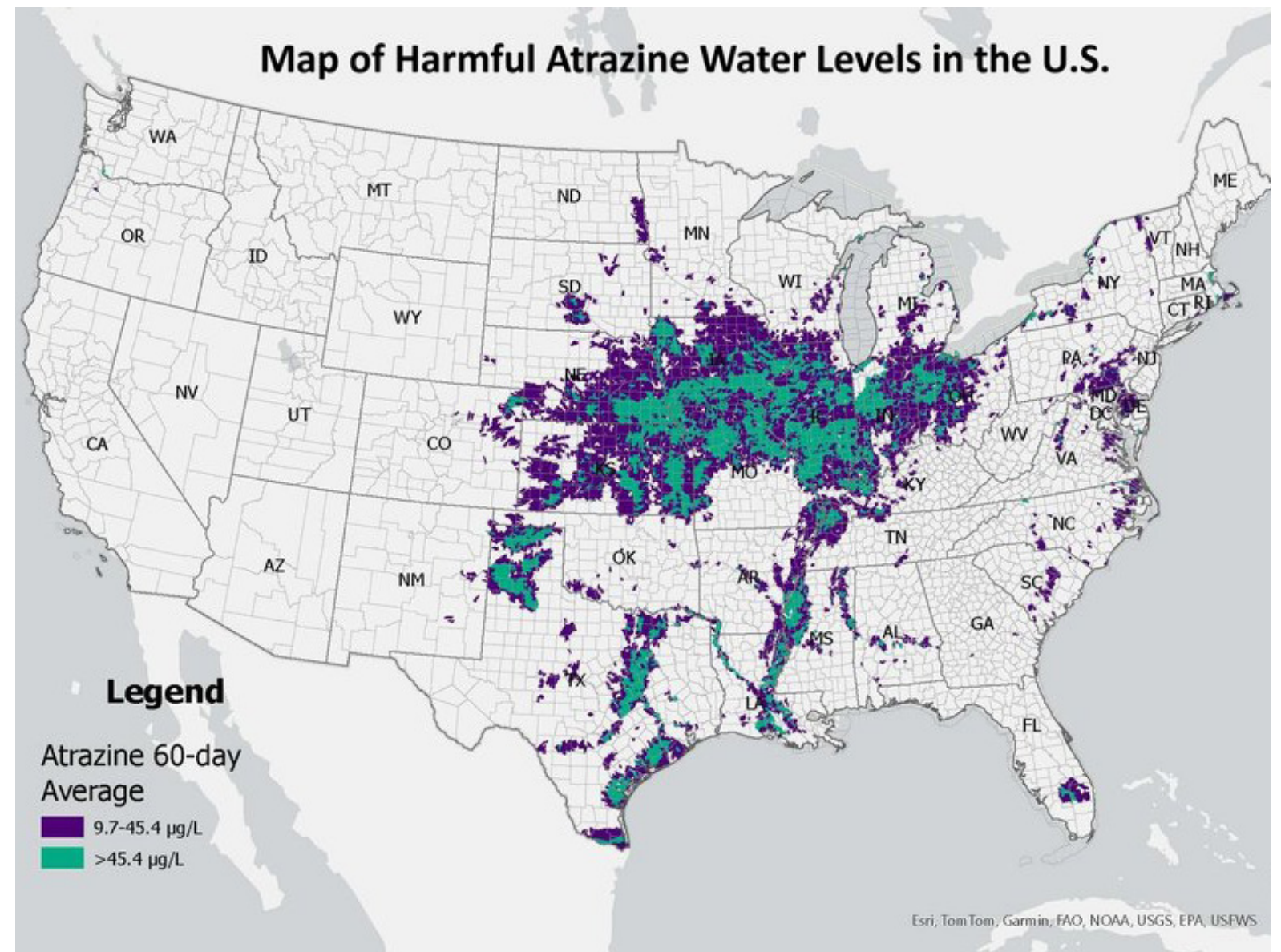
levels exceed the agency's safety threshold. A 2025 Center analysis submitted to the Trump administration found that the EPA's plan would only bring 1% of those watersheds below levels the EPA considers harmful, leaving about one-eighth of the entire landmass of the continental United States polluted with harmful levels of the pesticide.

This follows a petition to the Trump administration to ban atrazine. Trump has stated that Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. is "looking into [pesticides] very seriously because maybe it's not necessary to use all of that." Kennedy has often pointed to atrazine as among the worst pesticides and called for it to be banned.

Recent data shows that atrazine has saturated

much of the country at levels that the EPA recognizes will harm wildlife.

Atrazine is primarily used on corn grown for animal feed and ethanol. The U.S. Department of Agriculture reports that ethanol production accounts for nearly 45% of total corn use; 40% of domestic corn use is for livestock feed, and some portion of the remainder is processed into ingredients used in ultra-processed foods, like high fructose corn syrup, glucose, dextrose and corn oil.

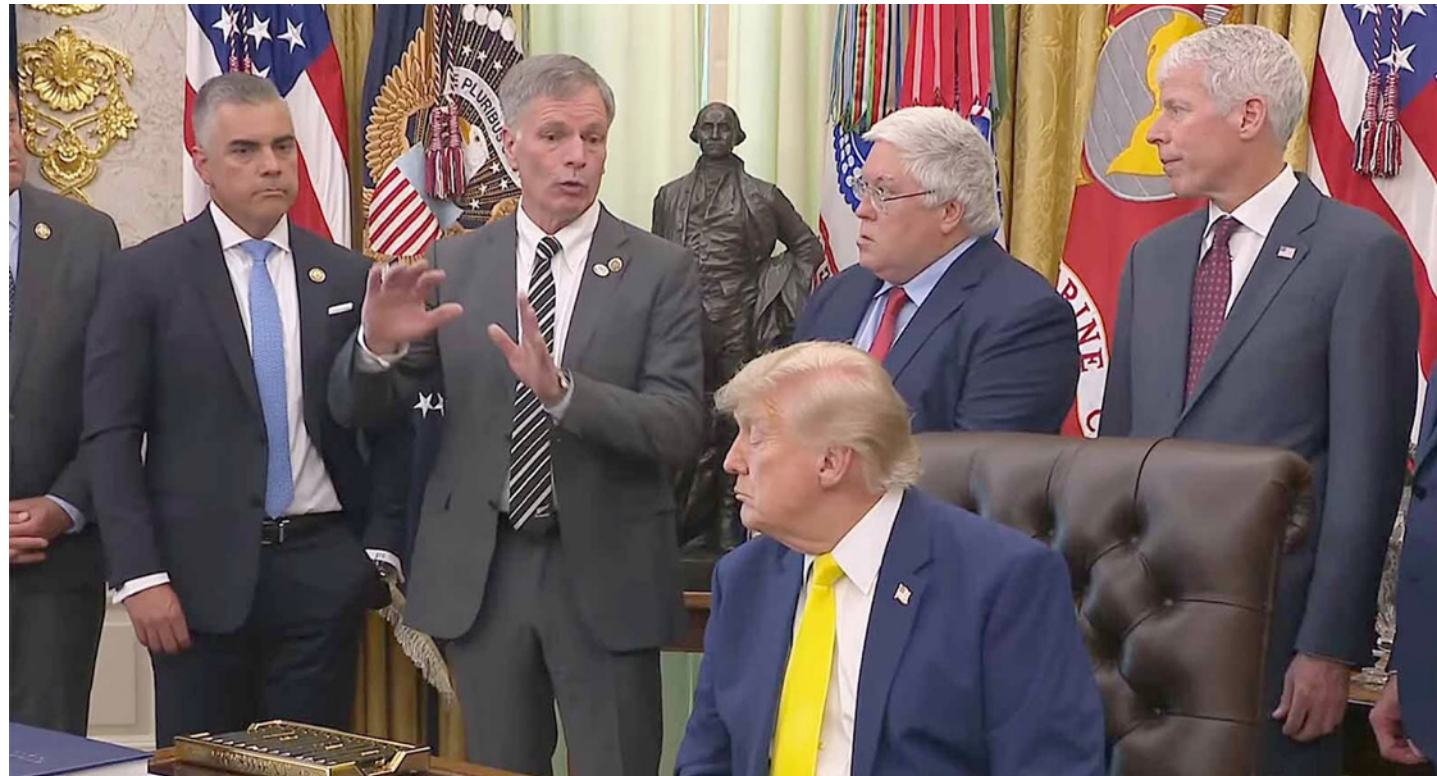


U.S. areas with harmful levels of atrazine in water/Center for Biological Diversity.

Coal is the single largest contributor to global warming. Responsible for over a third of all global carbon dioxide emissions, it is the most carbon-intensive fossil fuel. To meet international climate targets, global coal use must decline by over 90%.

## Trump Sending \$700 Million To Coal Industry, Boosting Wyoming Coal Mines

Wyoming Gov. Mark Gordon joined President Trump in Washington, D.C., on Thursday as the president invoked a national security law to send \$700 million to the coal industry. That includes \$75 million to boost construction of a coal export terminal in Oakland.



Wyoming Republican Gov. Mark Gordon, second from left, joined President Trump in Washington, D.C., on Thursday as the president allocated \$700 million in public money for the coal industry. (Screenshot From White House Livestream)

Clair McFarland | Cowboy State Daily | June 4, 2026

Wyoming Republican Gov. Mark Gordon joined President Trump in Washington, D.C., on Thursday as the president allocated \$700 million in public money for the coal industry.

While calling Gordon a "great guy," the president invoked a Cold War-era law designed to boost energy production in the face of national security threats to allocate \$700 million in public money for the coal industry.

The announcement enters a whirlwind of increasing demand for energy from AI-driven data centers, the legal greenlight for an Oakland, California, coal port; and the global energy and development race with China.

At the White House gathering, Gordon touted the comparative cleanliness of the coal Wyoming produces.

"When a kid grows up in Wyoming their education is paid for, in large part, by coal severance tax," said Gordon, adding that those same kids, when grown, can seek a job in the coal industry.

"It's not just digging coal like we used to," said the governor, "It's high-tech jobs."

The governor also referenced his recent trips to Japan and Taiwan, and said leaders there seek reliable, dispatchable and secure energy sources.

"They can't get it as clean as they can from the Powder River Basin," said Gordon. The building of a coal port in Oakland, California - which part of the \$700 million grant is slated to fast-track - is "absolutely essential for the lifeblood of our state and our coal mines," he added.



The Dave Johnston power plant, owned by PacifiCorp, is near Glenrock, Wyoming. (CSD File)

Gordon thanked the president for his vision.

### About Trump's \$700 Million Grant

Coal leasing on federal land in the Powder River Basin — a coal trove centered mostly in Wyoming — has brought in billions of dollars in revenue to the state and its coal mining industry, as it supplies roughly 40% of the thermal coal needed by power plants owned by electric utilities in the United States.

President Donald Trump's Thursday announcement lists three key objectives:

- Allocate \$425 million to bolster 13 coal plants across the country, helping mines in Wyoming.
- Allocate \$75 million to boost construction of a coal export terminal in Oakland — a project Wyoming's coal industry has long sought to uncork the Asian buyer market;
- Send another \$200 million in U.S. Department of Energy grant money to help build two new coal plants in Alaska and West Virginia — the first new U.S. coal plants since 2013 — and restart a Maryland coal plant.

Companies in each of those states are expected to match that money or exceed it with their own investments, the announcement says.

The first two appropriations hinge on the Defense Production Act of 1950. The act of Congress calls U.S. security dependent on the nation's own ability to supply materials and services for national defense "and to prepare for and respond to military conflicts" as well as disasters and terrorism.

The act authorizes the president to elevate national defense contracts over other government contracts, to interfere with the civilian market only where scarcities impede national defense, and incentivize the production of "critical components," critical technology and other recourse needed "for the execution of the national security strategy of the United States."

### Smells Like Coal

When state Sen. Cale Case, R-Lander, walked into a Riverton elementary school for a tour in 2019, he sniffed aloud and said,

"Smells like coal."

The state has long depended on the commodity for revenue. Coal production in Wyoming peaked in 2008, when the Powder River Basin produced nearly 450 million tons of coal, and has trended unsteadily downward since then.

Wyoming surface coal production has fallen by 59.1% over the past 16 years. Thermal coal, which Wyoming produces, has seen lower demand in recent years.

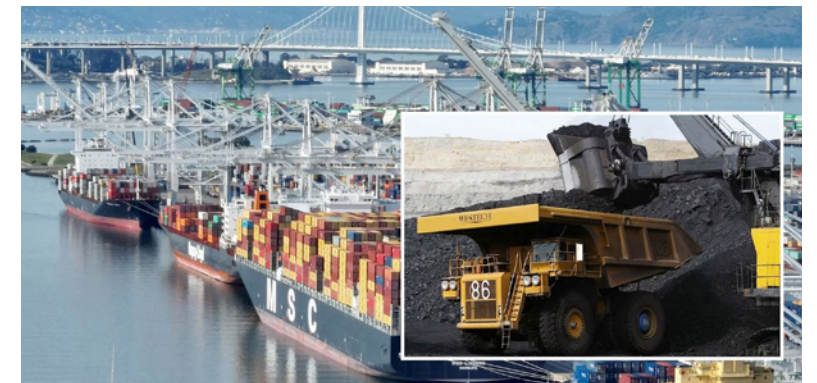
That's from coal-fired power plants either retiring or lowering their demand nationally as the market has shifted to both natural gas and renewable energy.

Calendar year 2024 marked the first time Wyoming coal production had fallen below 200 million tons since 1992.

The industry saw it as a dark year, as President Joe Biden's U.S. Bureau of Land Management issued a rule at that time aimed to end Wyoming coal by 2041.

Coal in 2025 yielded \$134 million in severance taxes for Wyoming — the lowest since 2003.

That's 19.5% of Wyoming's severance tax haul, with oil generating 54.9% and natural gas yielding 21.9%.



Wyoming is hopeful a coal port in Oakland, California, can open Asian markets for Powder River Basin producers. (Getty Images)

### Accolades

"The growing demands of AI and modern industry require more affordable, reliable electricity which coal delivers," said Lummis in a statement. "The West Gateway export terminal alone will open critical new pathways for Wyoming coal to reach global markets. Americans cannot afford an energy policy that leaves them in the dark, and with this investment, President Trump is making sure they never will."

U.S. Sen. John Barrasso praised the move as well, noting customers and Asia and globally would buy Wyoming coal, "if we could actually ship it to them."

"Now is the time to unleash Wyoming's coal industry, and today's announcement is a crucial step down that path," added Barrasso.

# The World Praised This Wolverine Program. Then Everything Changed

Sweden's celebrated wolverine recovery program is losing momentum, raising concerns about the future of one of the world's most famous conservation success stories.

University of York | SciTechDaily | June 5, 2026



A pioneering program that helped endangered wolverines recover in Sweden is now facing growing challenges after years of stagnant funding and changing environmental conditions. Credit: Shutterstock

A conservation program once praised as a global model for helping people and wildlife coexist may be losing its effectiveness because of decades of inadequate government support, according to new research.

In 2015, Sweden received international recognition after a study found that its Conservation Performance Payment (CPP) program, the oldest initiative of its kind, had helped endangered wolverines recover.

More than 10 years later, however, researchers say the program is no longer delivering the same results. The initiative was designed to benefit both wolverines and the Indigenous Sámi reindeer herders who share the landscape with them, but new findings suggest that its early success is fading.

Researchers from the University of York and the Swedish Agricultural University found that documented wolverine numbers have dropped sharply in key northern regions. At the same time, government funding has remained unchanged for two decades, and many local communities report declining confidence in the program.

The findings, published in *Conservation Letters*, suggest that governments can undermine long-term conservation gains when they fail to address the ongoing financial and social impacts of wildlife recovery. In those situations, local communities often end up carrying the costs.

## Sweden's Groundbreaking Wolverine Conservation Program

Dr. Hanna Pettersson of the University of York's Leverhulme Centre for Anthropocene Biodiversity explained that the program was considered innovative when it launched in 1996.

"Implemented in 1996, the scheme was at the time revolutionary. Instead of paying reindeer herders for damages caused by predators, the government paid communities for coexisting with them, whether or not damage actually occurs.

"The idea is to tie an income to the presence of the predator, providing an incentive to find ways to live alongside them, thus decreasing conflicts and improving social justice.

"Initial findings showed encouraging results of the scheme, namely a marked increase of the wolverine population, but after studying 30 years of data from the scheme, we have shown that this success has not been sustained."

To investigate the program's long-term performance, Dr. Pettersson accompanied wildlife rangers working in the Arctic. The research team also combined ecological monitoring records with interviews conducted in Norrbotten, Sweden's northernmost county.

According to the researchers, the results reveal a program under strain and offer a cautionary lesson for conservation efforts around the world.

## Wolverine Numbers Decline in Northern Strongholds

The study found that wolverines are continuing to spread into southern Sweden, but populations are declining in the areas where they have traditionally been strongest.

In the early 2000s, Norrbotten accounted for roughly two-thirds of all documented wolverine reproductions in Sweden. Today, that figure has fallen to less than one-third. The region also consistently fails to meet its minimum conservation targets.

Researchers point to stagnant funding as one factor behind

the decline.

Dr. Pettersson said: "The payments to the reindeer herders from the scheme have remained frozen at 200,000 SEK per predator reproduction since 2002, but due to rising costs and meat prices, the real value of the payment has approximately halved over the last two decades.

"While the Sámi Parliament calculates the legal payout should be at least 480,000 SEK to comply with the law, the government offered only a 25,000 SEK increase in 2024."

## Climate Change Adds New Challenges

The researchers also found that climate change is creating additional difficulties for the program.

Changing Arctic snow conditions have made wolverine tracks harder to detect, complicating efforts to monitor the animals. As a result, documented population numbers may



Dr. Pettersson shadowed wildlife rangers in the Arctic. Credit: University of York

not fully reflect reality. The study notes that many otherwise clear observations of wolverines have been rejected because they did not meet strict documentation requirements.

Dr. Pettersson warned that conservation programs must evolve as conditions change.

"If a government fails to adapt payments to rising costs of coexistence, the burden is shifted onto local, often marginalized, communities, who in this case are already straining under the cumulative impacts of mining, forestry, and climate change.

"It is a warning sign for other global conservation efforts. Governments must plan ahead and adapt interventions to changing conditions and local needs."

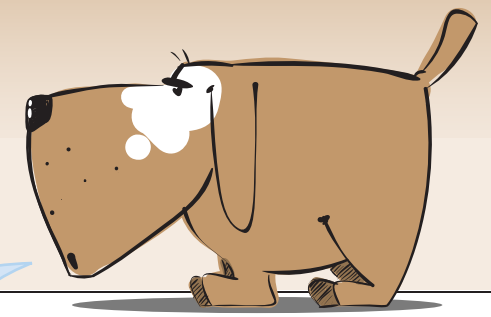
# Adoption corner

## TCRAS

Teller County Regional Animal Shelter  
tcrascolorado.org · 719.686.7707

## SLVAWS

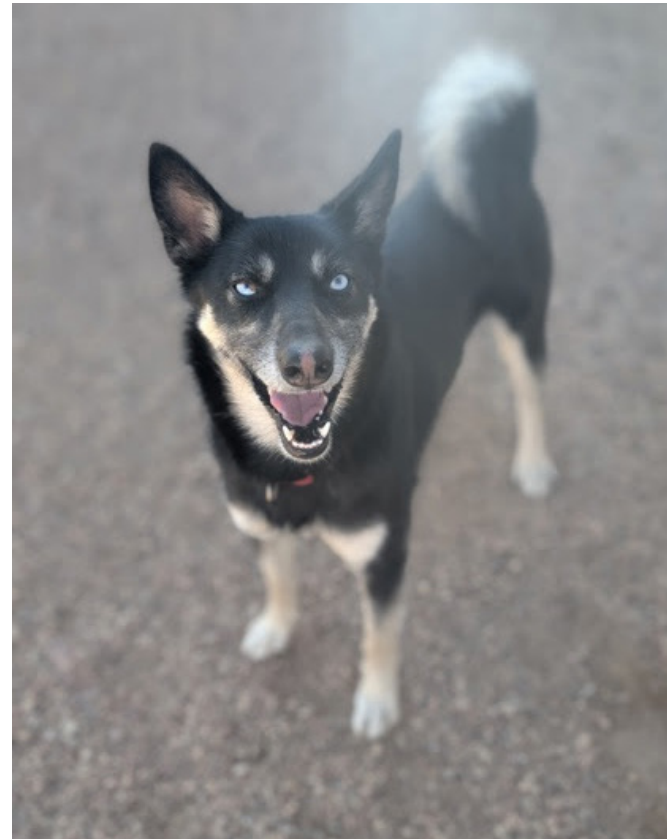
San Luis Valley Animal Welfare Society  
slvaws.org · 719.587.woof (9663)



**[ 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. ]**

### JACK »

Jack is a 2-year-old Klee Kai mix. This good boy has been searching for his new beginning since April after being returned because the home he was in was not the best fit. Jack needs a home with an extremely tall fence, or a place where he can go for walks instead of being in a yard. He is a sweet guy who needs a special home, and we hope that special home is around the corner for him.



### « SABRINA

Casey is a 3-year-old domestic short-haired cat looking for a perfect home. She is still working on trusting people, even though she has been with us since July 25, 2025, so we are coming up on a year.

She is currently in a foster home and is doing well, but there is nothing better than a home of your own.

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



### BRUCE & WILLOW

Here are buddies Bruce and Willow. Bruce about 6 years old; Willow about 4. They came in together and have stayed too long at our shelter/sanctuary. They would like to go home together, but we could separate them. Neutered, spayed, chipped. Good with kids and cats.