

# COLORADO WOLF & WILDLIFE CENTER

MAY 2023 • CONSERVATION • EDUCATION • PRESERVATION

**RIP**  
to our sweet  
*Micah*







# In Memory of Our Dear *Micah* April 2009 – April 28, 2023



"I had the pleasure of knowing Micah for 11 years. I remember him as a rambunctious linebacker and one that loved to sneakily steal prescription glasses as he gave kisses. One of my favorite moments with Micah was during an interactive tour many years ago. He was getting butt scratches from the guest and I took this photo of him enjoying the moment in pure bliss. He is a familiar face that I will certainly miss seeing at the Center."

*Michelle Smith*



"To my Micah boy,

You will forever be in my heart. You were a best friend to me and I will always cherish your spirit. I'll miss your sweet wet kisses and your big head taking naps in my lap, your deep howl and your goofy smiley face. I wish we had more time with you, but I'm so glad you are running free with your girl. We love you so so much, sweetest boy, my big love bug. I fell in love with Micah when I was an intern. He would whine at the fence for scratches when I was anywhere near his enclosure. I was so excited to give him all my love the first time I went in his enclosure and felt like we had a special bond as long as I knew him. He was known to prefer love and attention to treats. He would come running down to say hello when I came to spend time with him and would lay in my lap and fall asleep getting his favorite neck scratches. I'll cherish every second I got with this very special guy."

*Lindsey Grigg*



"Some of the best memories I have of him are the times when he caught a raccoon and a raven. He looked so proud of himself when he was carrying around the raccoon he caught and I will never forget the time he caught a raven in front of all of my guests on a 12:00 PM tour. He was so loving towards everyone; staff and guests alike. The one thing I will always remember him by though are his smiles. He was such a smiley guy and he would almost always come up to say 'hi' when I would walk by his enclosure. He loved neck scratches and it was always so adorable when he would kick his leg because of how good the scratches felt.

While I love all of the animals, Micah truly was my favorite. That sweet boy will forever be in my heart and I will miss him greatly."

*Alexis Kissinger*



"I only knew Micah for 5 years, but it didn't make saying goodbye any easier. I met him when he was the most caring and protective partner to his mate, watched him mourn her passing, then transition into a social bachelor. He always put a smile on everyone's faces, and I tried to do the same by giving the best foot-thumping scratches. The best part of this job is always forming bonds with the

amazing animals, but the hardest part is saying goodbye. You will be missed big man."

*Erika Moore*



CERTIFIED BY



## The Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center

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

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



TO SUBSCRIBE to our monthly newsletter, go to [wolfeducation.org](http://wolfeducation.org) and sign up on the newsletter page.

### CONTACT US

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80814 719.687.9742

## | SOCIAL MEDIA HAPPENINGS |

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



**Subscribe to our YouTube Channel: ColoradoWolf&WildlifeCenter** We post videos of the training and enrichment we are providing for our animals, and educational vlogs about wolves.



**Follow us on Facebook: Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center** to get updates on new YouTube video postings, read feel good stories from other wolf/wildlife organizations, and learn about new wildlife findings in the research field.



**Follow us on Instagram: @cowolfcenter** to see pictures of our beautiful animals, stories of what we are doing around the center, and ways you can help wild wolf populations.. Keep your eye on our story for fun videos of the day to day lives of our wolves and keepers.



**Follow us on Twitter: @Wolves\_at\_CWWC** to see photos of our animals, read fun facts, and hear about events happening at CWWC.



**Follow us on TikTok: @cowolfcenter** for the videos you won't see on our other social media pages.

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



The Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center has been actively involved in assisting with the issue of pet overpopulation in Costa Rica, as well as conducting beach cleanups to collect plastic and toxic materials that have washed ashore for several years. Stray and abandoned dogs that are not spayed or neutered endure a difficult life of survival, and their puppies face an uncertain future, often dying from starvation or disease without a proper home. Dogs without homes also pose a threat to the local wildlife in Costa Rica, with dog attacks now being the second leading cause of sloth deaths. According to the Sloth Foundation, they receive 2-3 injured wild animals each week due to dog attacks. This has resulted in dogs threatening over 180 different species of wild animals, with at least 11 becoming extinct. CWWC has organized numerous clinics to help with this issue and has successfully brought dogs back to the United States for adoption. CWWC continues to offer this service to individuals who have gone through the screening process and are committed to providing a forever home to their new family member. For more information on adopting a dog from Costa Rica, please email [tours@wolfeducation.org](mailto:tours@wolfeducation.org) and include "CR dog/Darlene" in the subject line.

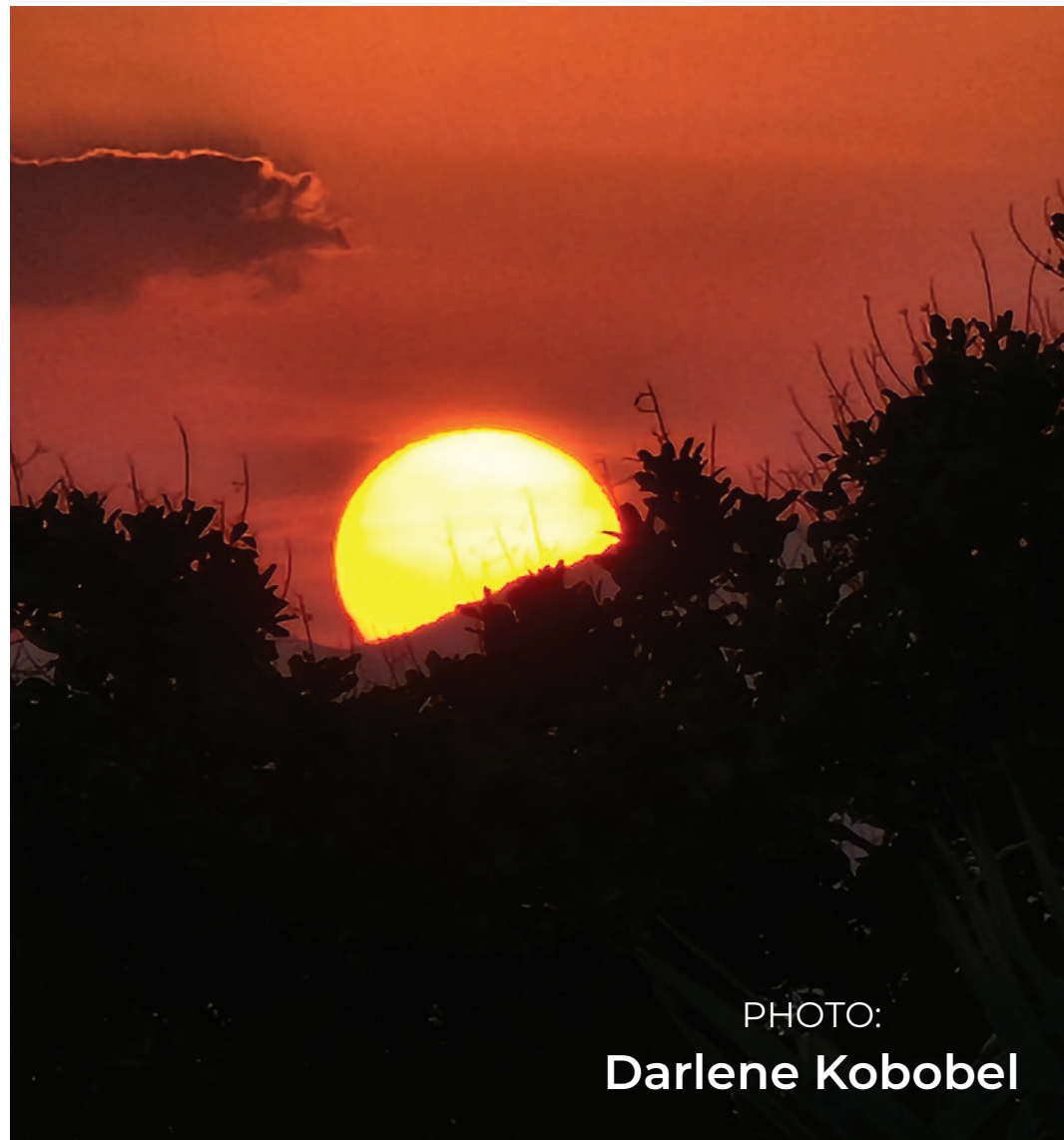
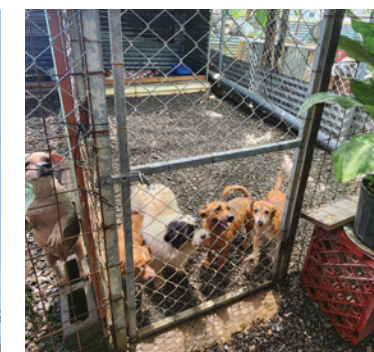
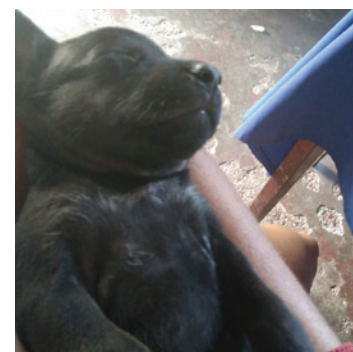
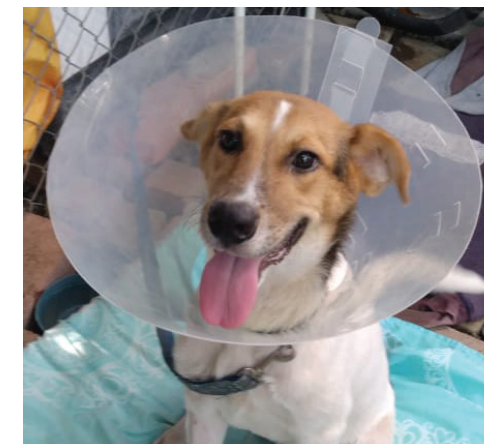


PHOTO:  
**Darlene Kobobel**





# Jared Polis vetoes wolf reintroduction bill in Colorado

*Gov. Jared Polis called the bill unnecessary, that it undermined voters' intent, as well as the commission's work, and suggested it could interfere with the state "successfully receiving experimental population designation"*

Marianne Goodland | Colorado Politics | May 16, 2023

Gov. Jared Polis on Tuesday followed through after hinting a veto is coming on the proposal that would have required the state to have a federal ruling in place before reintroducing wolves on the Western Slope, which is slated for the end of the year.

It's among three vetoes Polis issued Tuesday, the first for legislation from the 2023 session.

In his veto letter, Polis said Senate Bill 256 would prevent Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission from authorizing the release of gray wolves until after the effective date of the 10(j) rule. He called the bill unnecessary, that it undermined voters' intent, as well as the commission's work, and suggested it could interfere with the state "successfully receiving experimental population designation."

Polis spokesman Conor Cahill added: "The governor shares the desire for Colorado wolves to receive a 10-J designation to allow for maximum state management flexibility. Unfortunately, the legal analysis of this bill is that it would likely delay or even prevent successful 10-J designation, which is why he is vetoing it."

Polis also sent a letter Tuesday to Department of Natural Resources Executive Director Dan Gibbs, instructing him to continue working with U.S. Fish & Wildlife, the commission and CPW to obtain the 10(j) ruling.

Polis informed sponsors of Senate Bill 256 of the pending veto via a Zoom call on Tuesday morning.

Polis, in a post-session news conference, hinted his veto pen was at the ready for the proposal, telling reporters a week ago, "There shouldn't be a lot of suspense on that one."

He pointed out that DNR's Gibbs testified against the bill.

"It's certainty very clear where our agencies were," Polis said. "I don't think people will be surprised."

Polis claims to support the state's efforts to obtain what's known as a 10(j) ruling from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, but he doesn't support mandating the ruling be in place before reintroduction, which SB 256 sought to do.

The federal agency has been working for nearly a year on the process for granting Colorado the 10(j) ruling, which is a waiver tied to the Endangered Species Act, and has indicated it should be issued no later than mid-December, although that's cutting it pretty close for those who will see wolves reintroduced in their counties.

SB 256 follows what every other state that has reintroduced



Male wolf 2101, right, with a gray coat and male wolf 2301, left, with a black coat are pictured. Courtesy of Colorado Parks and Wildlife

wolves has done, which is to ensure they had a 10(j) ruling in place before paws went on the ground, according to Sen. Byron Pelton, R-Sterling, and co-sponsor Rep. Matt Soper, R-Delta.

The difference matters.

Under the 10(j) ruling, wolves would be classified as an nonessential experimental population. That would allow them to be managed by Colorado Parks and Wildlife, which worked for two years on the wolf restoration plan.

That plan was approved unanimously by the Parks and Wildlife Commission two weeks ago.

The plan was a collaboration between CPW and several groups, which included ranchers, local government and wildlife experts.

Soper told Colorado Politics that plan was also dictated by Proposition 114, which required the state to take the necessary steps to ensure wolves are reintroduced by December 31. The 10(j) ruling is one of those necessary steps, Soper said.

"It gets you landowner buy-in, and makes sure farmers and ranchers can protect their livestock and pets" and not wind up as felons, he said.

Part of the CPW plan allows for "lethal takes," which would grant a rancher limited permission to kill wolves that are preying on livestock. Without 10(j) rule — and with wolves remaining on the endangered species list in Colorado — killing a wolf, even if it is attacking livestock or pets, is a felony, punishable by up to a year in jail and up to a \$50,000 fine.

And the potential for killing wolves, which is opposed by environmental groups that could sue to prevent 10(j) from being put in place, is also raising questions about whether Polis really supports the 10(j) ruling — or whether he'd rather see wolves

released into the five central Western Slope counties under the protections of the Endangered Species Act.

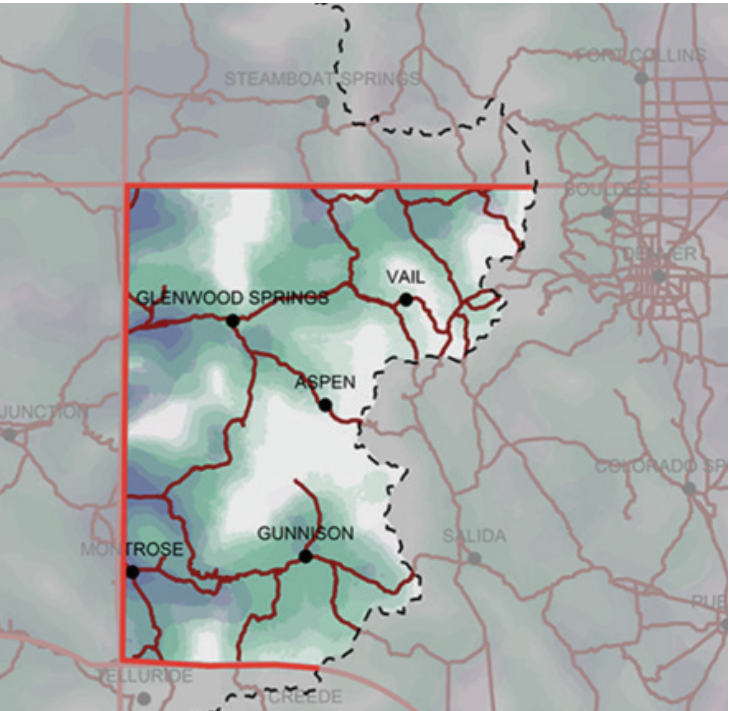
Sen. Dylan Roberts, D-Avon, a Senate co-sponsor of SB 256, said he is "incredibly disappointed" with the news of the governor's veto.

SB 256, he said, was "very narrowly tailored to both ensure ranchers and farmers," as well those who live around wolves, have the tools to manage livestock, and so that wolf reintroduction can be done well over the coming year.

"I don't understand the reasoning behind the veto, and I'm disappointed for my constituents who asked for this flexibility. The process of reintroduction depends on 10(j) being in place," Roberts said.

Roberts added that he believes the governor understands the importance of the 10(j) rule, and noted that testimony from Department of Natural Resources officials said as much.

"The trouble with not signing this bill implies that they will put wolves on the ground with or without a 10(j). If 10(j) was a priority, then signing SB256 would have been an easy call," Roberts said.



Wolf reintroduction locations, courtesy Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

"It's a slap in the face to agriculture and ranchers," Pelton said.

SB 256 was a good compromise, he said, adding, "They'll introduce the wolves with or without 10(j), but livestock producers need to protect their livestock."

SB 256 "was insurance," Soper added.

He called vetoing the bill akin to not having auto insurance because motorists don't think they're getting into a wreck on their way home.

Soper was part of the Tuesday Zoom call and learned the veto was coming.

"We are in agreement: CPW, legislators and the people wanted 10(j) in place. To say it usurps the will of the people is wrong," he said.

As to whether Polis really supports the rule, Soper said the governor reiterated his support for 10(j) on the Tuesday morning call.

"And I can only take him at his word. But he could have, at a minimum, allowed the bill to become law without his signature," Soper said.

Rep. Megan Lukens, D-Steamboat Springs, was the other House sponsor on SB 256. She said in a statement Tuesday she was also disappointed by the veto. "I have heard from ranchers and farmers consistently that it is absolutely imperative we have the 10(j) rule in place prior to state-orchestrated wolf reintroduction, and this bill was a direct request from Western Slope constituents who will be impacted most by wolf reintroduction."

Four Western Slope lawmakers — two Republicans and two Democrats — sponsored SB 256, which also received support from every rural lawmaker in either caucus and in both chambers.

Colorado Farm Bureau, in a statement Tuesday, expressed its disappointment at the veto.

"This bipartisan piece of legislation was a great example of legislators responding to their constituents and working together to do what's right for Colorado's Western Slope ranchers and communities," said Carlyle Currier, Farm Bureau president.

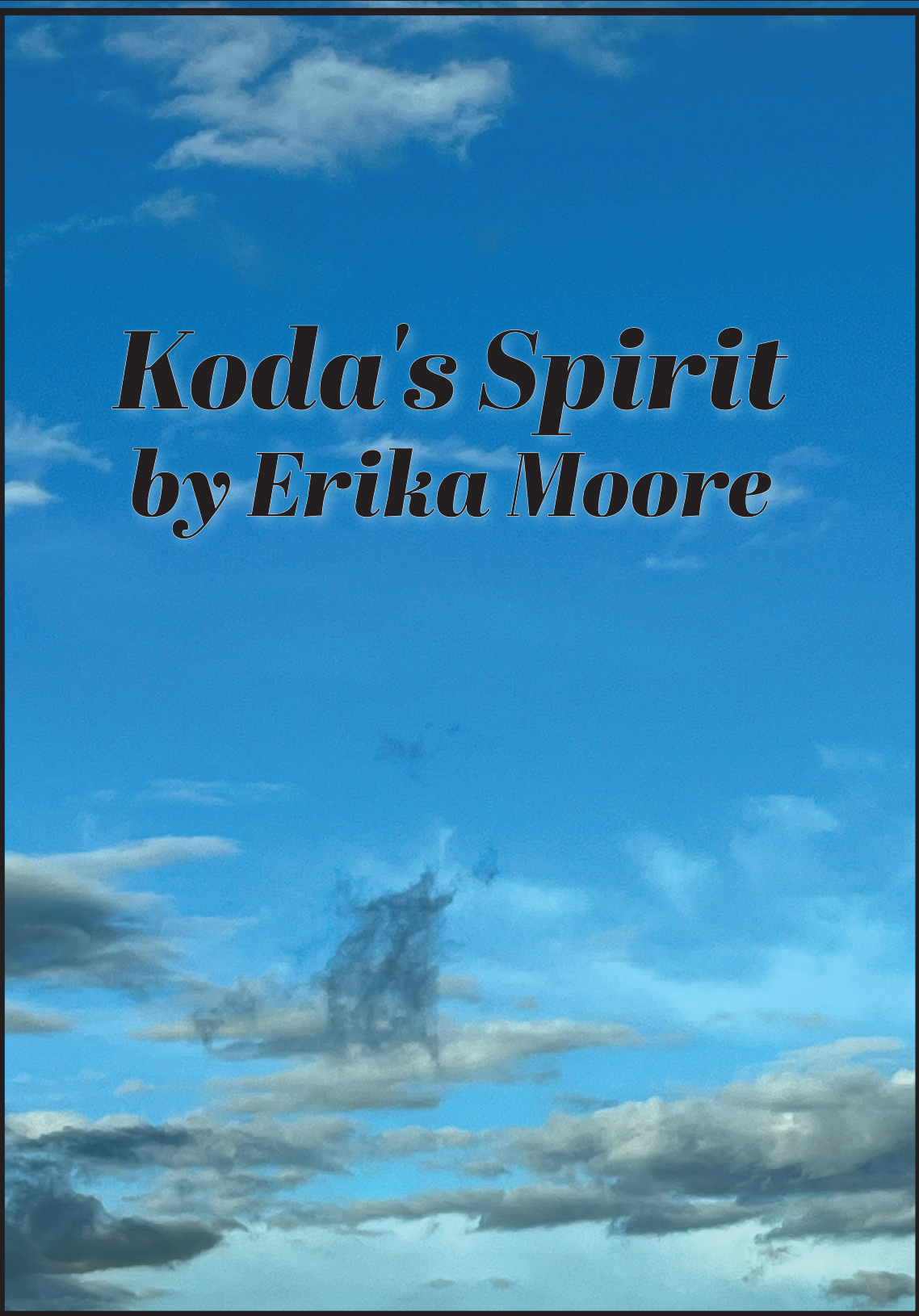
Testimony and input from stakeholder groups overwhelmingly fought for the management tools and support that this bill provided, Currier said, adding, "The governor's disregard for those living in western Colorado and his direct rebuke of the legislature's will is not how we protect ranchers and their livestock nor is it how to ensure successful wolf reintroduction."

The Colorado Cattlemen's Association echoed the sentiment, saying its members are also "extremely disappointed" by the veto. The bill, the group said, would have "provided much-needed flexibility in wolf management practices to protect the livestock industry."

"This bill was carefully crafted with input from various stakeholders, including livestock producers and western slope community members, and had broad bipartisan support," the group said.



# *Koda's Spirit* *by Erika Moore*



This photograph was captured by Erika immediately after Koda passed away. I have a belief that she intended for us to witness this moment as it comes with a profound spiritual significance. This remarkable image ought to inspire hope in all of us that there is indeed a place in the celestial sphere, and eventually, we will be able to comprehend it.

Koda has probably the most drama filled story of our wolves. She came to us at a very young age from another sanctuary. She began having playdates with a brother and sister pair, during which one of those playdates went extra well as Koda became pregnant. Koda became the only wolf to ever give birth at CWWC, mind you this was after our vet assured us she was too young to breed at only 9 months old! Koda did not take to the motherhood lifestyle, but instead was ready to begin a life of her own. Koda was paired with her first mate, Wakanda, for 8 years and they adored each other. Wakanda passed of old age and Koda surprisingly took to his brother shortly after. Koda's second mate passed of old age only 3 months later, sending Koda into a deep mourning state. Staff watched Koda become a timid, shy, and reserved wolf. Little did anyone know, this would soon change. A tall, dark, and handsome wolf arrived from South America; lighting a fire within her. She was paired with her third and final mate, Amarok, and they became inseparable. He returned Koda to her spunky, playful, and confident self. Koda's body aged quicker than her mind, she developed a degenerative neurological condition in her last couple years of life. Koda had a fire in her soul all the way until the end, when our staff and vet team determined it was time for her to cross the rainbow bridge and see her beloved mate, Wakanda, again. Her spirit will live on at CWWC forever, and you just might spot her striking photo on one of our billboards.







PHOTOS:  
Carol Vogel



# MEET A WOLF DAY

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

1st & 3rd Thursday of  
the Month

4PM-5:30PM

\$40 Adults

\$20 Kids (6-11)



Colorado Wolf & Wildlife  
Center

[wolfeducation.org](http://wolfeducation.org)



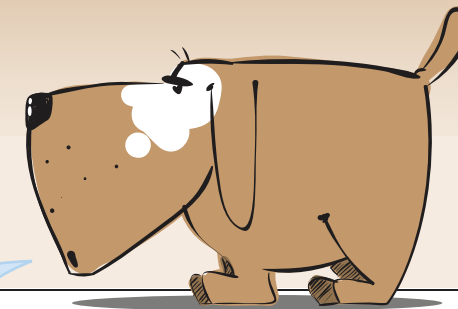
# Adoption corner

## TCRAS

Teller County Regional Animal Shelter  
tcrascolorado.org · 719.686.7707

## SLVAWS

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



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

### **BUDDY »**

Tall lanky handsome guy looking for constant companionship with dedicated, confident human. Loves outdoor adventures, structured activities, car rides, long controlled walks with furry friends, and learning new skills. Gives great hugs and kisses. Prefers having all the human attention in the home to himself. I'm just a year old so staying focused is another thing I have to learn.



### **« GAGE**

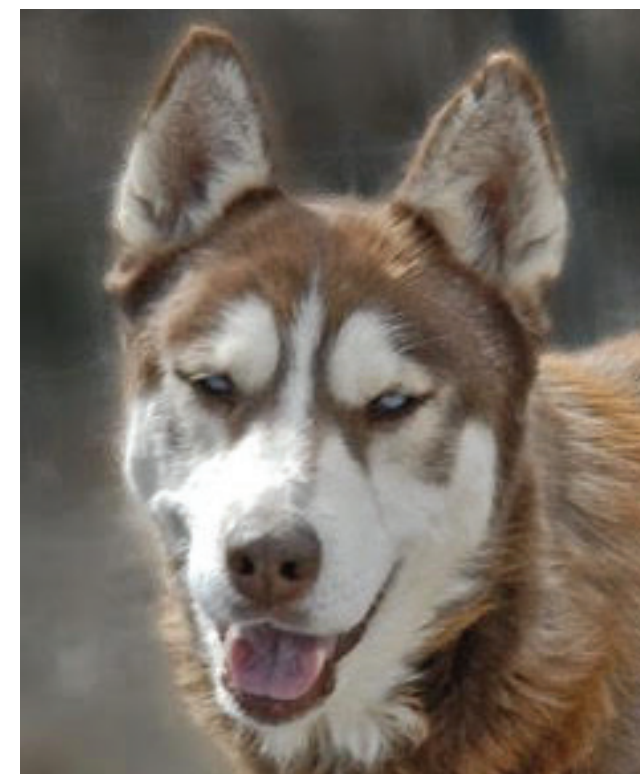
I came from a home with quite a few other kitties and I'm looking for a home of my own! I'm a bit shy and I would love a quiet place I can warm up to! Because I lived with so many other feline friends, I would like to have a buddy that can show me the ropes!



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

### **BRANDI »**

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



### **« OSITA**

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