COLORADO WOLF & WILDLIFE CENTER

NOVEMBER 2026 · CONSERVATION · EDUCATION · PRESERVATION



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| SOCIAL MEDIA HAPPENINGS |

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

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

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

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

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

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

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









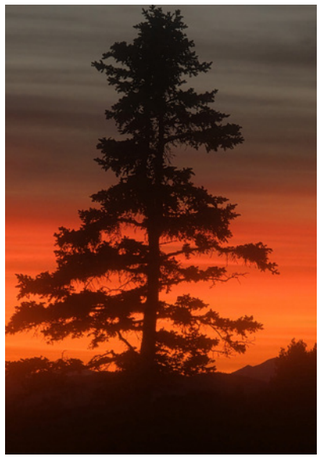
▼ Fire in the Sky: Photos by Darlene Kobobel | ▲ Snow day with with the pack

Turkey Toss 2026





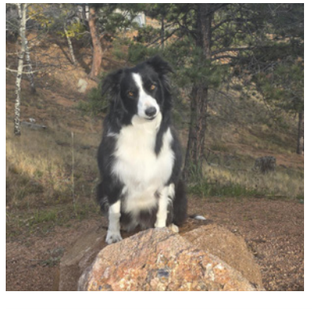
Kelly and Darlene getting ready to feed the Diego and Dakota our Mexican Grays a brisket because they said they don't care for turkey.





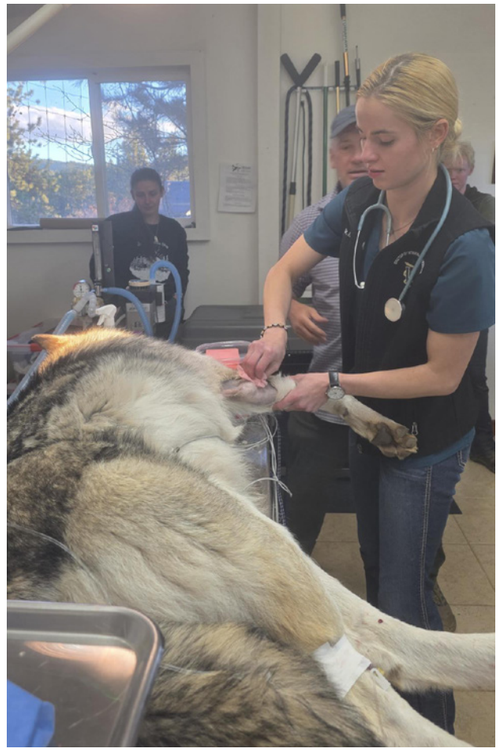


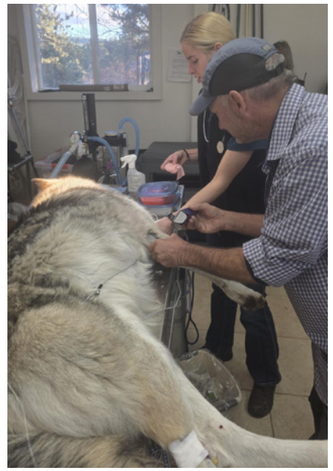






Arrow & Darlene's newest releases







Orenda recently underwent surgery to remove a mass from her ankle, along with a comprehensive physical exam and senior wellness panel. We are happy to report that her blood work came back perfect. We are still awaiting the results of her biopsy and will keep everyone updated as soon as we know more.

A heartfelt thank you to Dr. Volz and Dr. Analiese for their exceptional care, expertise, and surgical skill. We are grateful to have Orenda in such capable hands.

A Victory for Colorado's Wildlife

Today, we celebrate an important victory for Colorado's wildlife and the wild places we all cherish. The defeat of Proposition 83 is a testament to what can happen when passionate, dedicated people come together and make their voices heard.

To every supporter, volunteer, advocate, donor, educator, and wildlife enthusiast who stood with us throughout this campaign, thank you. Your commitment, conversations, letters, calls, attendance at meetings, and unwavering support made a difference. You spoke up not only for wolves, but for all wildlife that depend on healthy, balanced ecosystems across our state.

The failure of Proposition 83 was important because it would have undermined science-based wildlife management and threatened the progress Colorado has made toward restoring ecological balance. Wildlife decisions should be guided by sound science, not fear or misinformation. By rejecting this measure, Colorado voters demonstrated that they value responsible stewardship, healthy ecosystems, and a future where wildlife has a place on the landscape.

This victory belongs to every person who chose to stand up, speak out, and advocate for the animals that cannot advocate for themselves. Together, we showed that Coloradans care deeply about conservation, biodiversity, and preserving our natural heritage for future generations.

While we take a moment to celebrate this success, our work is not over. Protecting wildlife requires continued vigilance, education, and engagement. But today, we can be proud of what we accomplished together.

Thank you for being a voice for wildlife. Thank you for standing with us. And thank you for helping ensure a brighter future for Colorado's wild lands and wild creatures.

Together, we made a difference.

NEWS FROM COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE

Laura Clellan | Colorado Parks and Wildlife Headquarters | November 23, 2026

Colorado Parks and Wildlife recently announced a temporary suspension of its Chronic Depredation Directive, effectively placing a hold on most lethal removals of wolves while the agency evaluates wolf survival rates, population growth, translocation challenges, and other biological concerns. CPW stated that future removal requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis using a very conservative approach through the end of the current wolf biological year, which concludes on March 31.



This decision recognizes an important reality: Colorado's wolf population remains small and vulnerable. CPW reported approximately 45 wolves in the state as of late September 2026, including about 20 pups born this year. The agency also noted that adult wolf survival during the previous biological year was below what is typically expected for an unharvested (their language) wolf population.

As wolf advocates we are concerned about what may happen when the suspension expires on April 1. Spring is one of the most sensitive times of the year for wolf families. Pregnant females are preparing to give birth, young pups are dependent on their packs for survival, and disruptions to breeding adults can have impacts that extend far beyond a single animal. At the same time, calving season begins for many livestock producers, increasing the potential for wolf-livestock conflicts.

Rather than returning to lethal control as a primary response, many conservationists believe Colorado should continue investing in proactive, nonlethal tools such as range riders, carcass removal, fladry, hazing, and improved husbandry practices. These methods help reduce conflicts while allowing Colorado's newly restored wolf population the opportunity to establish itself and grow.

The temporary hold provides an important window for coexistence, but the long-term success of wolf restoration will depend on maintaining science-based management that values both livestock producers and the recovery of this keystone predator. As Colorado enters another denning, pupping, and calving season, many believe that continued emphasis on nonlethal solutions will offer the best path forward for wildlife, ranching communities, and healthy ecosystems.

Now is the time to speak up for Colorado's wolves. Please contact Director McClellan by letter or email and respectfully ask her to reconsider the return of lethal control when the temporary suspension ends. As wolves enter denning season and pups are born, every voice matters in promoting coexistence and science-based wildlife management.













Howl-o-Ween at CWWC!















Prairie Dogs to the Rescue: A Surprising Remedy for CPW Mayhem?

Marc Bekoff, Ph. D. | November 10, 2026

Colorado's magnificent wildlife deserve more than intimidation, insults, pseudoscience, or no science at all.

We all should and must work to keep Colorado's wildlife alive and thriving.

The culture of today's CPW hasn't changed in 27 years: What goes around comes around.

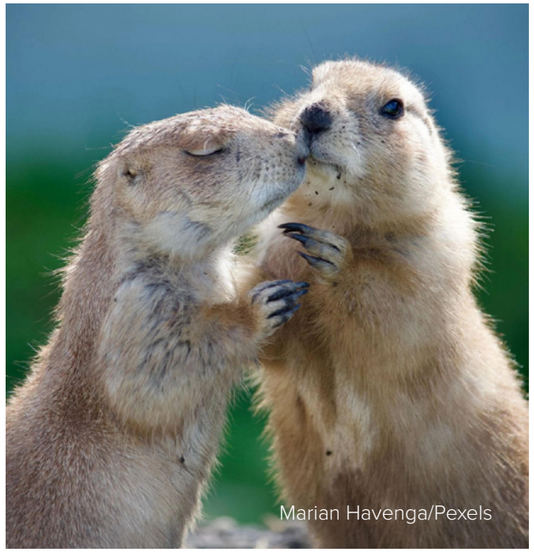
Why prairie dogs?

The reason I titled this piece "Prairie Dogs To the Rescue" is because at the CPW meetings held on November 3rd and 4th, enough CPW commissioners voted to ban the shooting of highly social, family-living, extremely emotional, sentient language-bearing prairie dogs on public lands. Prairie dogs do not suffer any less than your companion dogs. They enjoy playing and hanging out with family and friends and grieve their loss.

Prairie dogs are also called a "prairie keystone species" because they support the existence of numerous other animals in nature, so in this vein we could say they also could be a keystone species for vicariously setting an example of why other animals shouldn't be killed for fun.

Part 1: A recent article by Rachel Gabel in the Fence Post: Your Trusted Source for Ag News & Information titled "CPW Commission plagued with confusion over prairie dog petition" got me thinking a lot the current state of affairs at Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) and animal well-being in my magnificent home state of Colorado. Anyone who was there in person or had the patience to listen to recent CPW meetings remotely knows firsthand that there are a lot of problems stemming from utter disorganization, a total lack of decorum with misplaced insults being tossed around from one side to the other, and never-ending and highly predictable attempts to obstruct—perhaps stall forever—making progress on the issues at hand. Let's call them group A.

Some of these people go off on tangential verbal forays that often are far too lengthy, illogical, incoherent, highly repetitive, and downright insulting. If you do a content analysis of what they have said over the course of a number of meetings, you'll learn that little to nothing "new" has been expressed. (See "Chaos and contention dominate CPW Commission meeting.") These individuals also say they truly care about animals—some say they love animals—yet are willing to have them harvested or culled for fun. I'm glad they don't love me!



Marian Havenga/Pexels

Some of those who engage in excessive verbosity also repeatedly claim they need more time to consult with their stakeholders—called stakeholder engagement—to see where they fall on the issues at hand. It's incredibly tiresome to hear this over and over again and many people wonder why they just don't find out. They also seem to ignore (and hope no one notices) that they repeatedly say this at every meeting, on almost every issue on which they disagree with those holding opposite views. So let's just call them what they are: obstructionists who know all they have to do to stop progress is waste precious time. If some of the discussions at CPW meetings seem confused and rushed—they are.

On the other side of the coin there are people who also care about animals. They are working hard to keep animals alive and are deeply concerned with their well-being. Let's call them Group B. Often written off as being "radicals," it is not "radical" to care about animal well-being. It's simply a matter of treating animals with decency, respect, and compassion as you hopefully do your companion dog, cat, or other animal with whom you share your home.

Amendment 83 to the rescue

At the latest CPW Commission meeting, people in Group A also seemed to ignore—or preferred to selectively forget--the glaring fact that a week ago, Amendment 83, that would have resulted in a Constitutional Right to Hunt and Fish in Colorado and turn back the clock to the use of horrific, ethically indefensible "traditional" methods" of hunting for fun, suffered a resounding defeat. It's a big deal that this initiative failed, and it deserves to be talked about in forums like the CPW Commission meetings because it shows that a large percentage of Coloradans don't approve and proactively turned out to stop what Amendment 83 would have legalized: the wanton and brutal killing of animals using so-called "traditional methods" that had been previously banned as long as 30 years ago because they cause incredible amounts of pain and suffering before animals succumb to the torture. These include using steel-jaw traps, snaring, poisoning, dogs to chase targeted animals, and baiting animals to make them easy to kill. It would also allow bears to be killed in and around their dens, including pregnant females. There's nothing fair about these abhorrent practices, and the phrase "fair chase," when applied to so-called ethical hunting, is an obvious oxymoron.

For those who don't know, spring bear hunting was banned in 1992—a generation ago—because it invariably resulted in killing lactating females with dependent cubs. Inarguably. these cubs need their mother to survive. And in 1996, voters restricted the use of steel-jawed traps, snares, and poisons.



Ben Owen, Pexels

Playing the "busy card:" Something else we're also told far too often is how people who work for CPW are too busy to do this and that. We hear this at just about every meeting. While I don't doubt that they're very busy, I can guarantee you they're no busier than any of the commissioners who—in addition to their day jobs—have to read thousands of pages of assigned reading from CPW, meet with and respond to concerned citizens, and try to make sense of politics when the only reason they signed up to serve is because they care about wildlife and want to make a difference. Nor is CPW any busier than the people who come to comment or take the time to work on the different issues with which CPW is concerned.

Part 2: The culture of today's CPW hasn't changed in 27 years: A brief exposé

All in all, intimidation, insults, anti-science, and playing the "busy card" do not work. When compared with how the Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) was run before it was renamed CPW, what goes around comes around.

Let's dive more deeply into how CPW is every bit as guilty as CDOW of using the same tiresome tactics of intimidation, insults, and playing the "busy card". On July 1, 2011, the Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) became Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW). Here and below, I want to show how little to nothing has changed in the past 27 years, even after the parks division and the wildlife division merged, the name changed, and a revolving door of new directors have come and gone.

The culture at CPW: Because CPW meetings are aired publicly, it's plain for all to see just how poorly organized they are, with major disagreements erupting regularly between employees and the CPW commission, and among commission members themselves. These differences aren't all that surprising, but it's appalling to witness the arrogant and personally insulting tone with which those who follow the scientifically unsound (and morally defunct) North American Model of Wildlife Conservation address Commissioners and members of the public who know the science, who have earned doctorates in their respective fields, and who keep abreast of significant changes in conservation protocols based on actual scientific research.

For example, CPW commissioner Rebecca Niemiec, a highly regarded social scientist, was criticized because she "talked too fast" and because she questioned some of the research reported by CPW employees. Someone who wrote about the meeting ignorantly suggested that this award-winning social scientist got their PhD in First Gentleman Marlon Reis' kitchen. What meaningless garbage.

One also has to wonder if some of the commissioners have ever listened to themselves ramble on and on, often incoherently, about things they know little to nothing about. Once again, playing the 'busy card" also comes up as if being busy is a valid excuse for allowing animals to be killed while it is clear that there are no solid reasons for doing so and non-lethal alternatives for dealing with the situations at hand.

If talking too fast is the best they can do to insult this esteemed professor, they ought to be honest with themselves about the real reasons they don't like her. Dr. Niemiec also has been the recipient of at least one extremely vulgar email. For more discussion on this topic see Ali Lowell's Allegations swirl around Colorado Parks and Wildlife election influence, 'cowboy culture'. In this article we read: "The letter [from the Center for Biological Diversity] asks for the governor and director to look into what it says are 'reports of a 'cowboy culture' at CPW that may have created an unhealthy workplace for women, as well as reports of retaliation and

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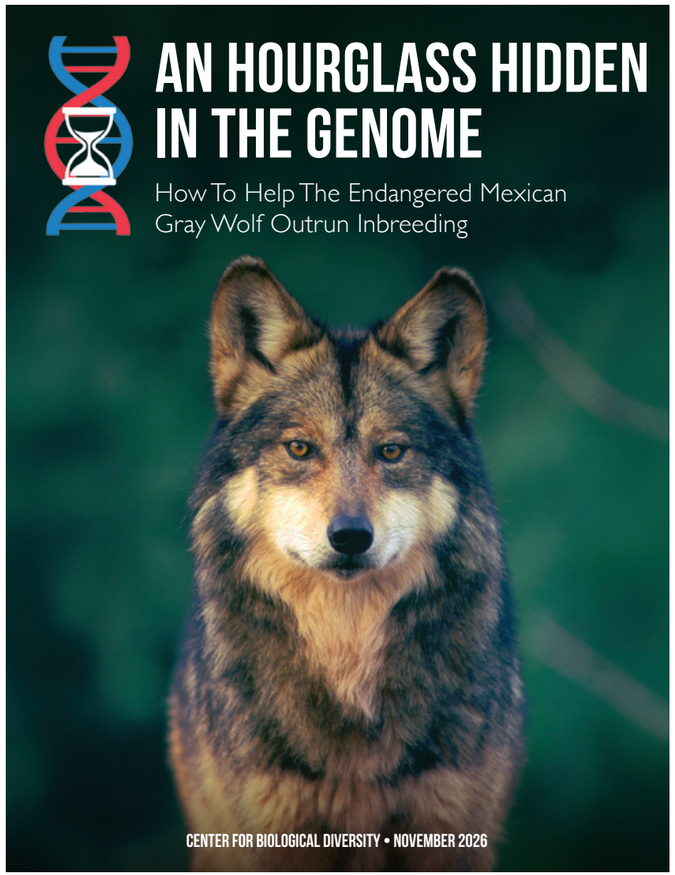
bias against those who have advocated for changes to CPW's wildlife policy' and more."

The failure of CPW to follow easily available scientific data also is addressed in this article by a reference to a CITIZEN PETITION FOR RULEMAKING COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION from Eric Washburn "to require that all Colorado Parks and Wildlife ('CPW') regulations, rules, management plans, and policies be grounded in the best available scientific evidence; that the precautionary principle be applied where scientific evidence is incomplete; that the agency seek input from independent scientists when necessary to evaluate major decisions; and that CPW provide transparent, written scientific justification for all rulemaking proposals."

I thought I was alone in finding myself at a total loss for the reasoning behind these endless and aimless discussions and debates. Alas, I learned that many people agree with me: the total lack of decorum in these one-sided, unprofessional, and personally demeaning meetings is unacceptable and must change. And on occasion, attempts to intimidate some people continued when the meetings weren't in session.

Colorado's magnificent animals need more than just words and continued killing, Let's hope that prairie dogs can help put an end to 27 years of the wanton and heartless killing of Colorado's wildlife. Everyone should be proud to be a Coloradan who values the animals with whom we are fortunate enough to share time and space. Let's all work together to keep them alive and thriving and to live the lives they are meant to live.



CLICK TO READ

Colorado wolf found dead in Utah, the 20th to die since 2023 reintroduction

Tracy Ross | The Colorado Sun | November 13, 2026



A gray wolf travels into the brush at the release site on Jan. 14, 2025. (Colorado Parks and Wildlife)

A female gray wolf brought to Colorado from British Columbia in January 2025 has died in Utah, according to Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

CPW confirmed a mortality alert from wolf 2516's collar Nov. 7.

Multiple agencies are looking into the circumstances of the wolf's death, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, CPW, the Utah Department of Natural Resources and local law enforcement across the Utah border. None of the agencies would describe the cause of death or give other details.

This marks the 20th wolf to die under CPW's watch since reintroduction started in December 2023. Twenty five wolves were transplanted in two rounds. By mid-2026, 14 of the original wolves had died after being struck by vehicles, through capture-related complications, in legal traps, by other predators and in shooting deaths.

CPW and state agents killed six wolves, some of them the offspring of the introduced animals, after they preyed on livestock multiple times. They include three shot in three days in early September.

On Sept. 30, CPW announced it would temporarily suspend its directive that allows the killing of gray wolves that harass or kill livestock, over fears that population growth may not occur this biological year and possible evidence of an infectious parasite that could impact wolf survival in the future.

Wildlife workers said the state's population of gray wolves as of Sept. 24 totaled 45, including breeding adults, yearlings and 20 pups — a new state record.

The new death drops that number to 44.

Pup survival in Colorado in 2025-2026 was high, with 82% of detected pups surviving their first year.

But the agency says typical survival rates of pups range between 50% to 60% in Western wolf populations, "so this number will likely fall by the end of the biological year in March 2027."

At Cadillac Mountain, a missing Wabanaki marker and the fight over what national parks should tell

Jessie Wardarski | AP News | October 22, 2026



A walkway winds through the Great Meadow Wetland at Acadia National Park on Mount Desert Island in Maine. (AP Photo/Jessie Wardarski)

BAR HARBOR, Maine (AP) — In the soft light of dawn, an Ohio tourist studied the interpretive sign at the summit of Cadillac Mountain in Acadia National Park, reading about how magma formed the ground under her feet.

There is one sign she and the other 4 million-plus tourists who visit Acadia annually can no longer see at the summit: a marker explaining the mountain's sacred significance to the Wabanaki people in the region. "Today, visitors from everywhere find meaning on the mountain," it said.

It was among 30 markers removed from Acadia under a Trump administration campaign to strip national parks of materials deemed disparaging to American history, according to the National Parks Conservation Association.

But when park staff took down the summit sign at the orders of Interior Secretary Doug Burgum, they also unraveled some of the trust that took decades to build between Acadia National Park and the Wabanaki people. The Wabanaki Confederacy, also known as "the people of the dawnland," has inhabited the northern seaboard for over 10,000 years and was the first known stewards of land that includes much of the national park. It was a gathering place to trade, hunt, fish and pick sweetgrass.

Some of the signs removed from Acadia were developed over years of partnerships with organizations including Friends of Acadia, the Schoodic Institute and the Native Plant Trust — with consultation from citizens of the Wabanaki Nations. They know the mountain in Maine as Wapuwoc — "white mountain of the first light." From October to March, it's the first place to see the sunrise in the continental United States.

"Getting to a place where our language is in these parks and it is educational ... erasing that or setting that back has big implications for how far we've come," said Maulian Bryant, the Wabanaki Alliance's executive director.

Bryant says the removed signs reflected "the good stuff."

"These signs don't say 96% of Wabanaki people died from smallpox, or there were 26 nations and now there's four," she said. "If we really want to get into the real history, that's a whole other slice of cake."

Other signs removed from Cadillac's summit addressed issues of climate change, informing visitors that "Acadia's future will be warmer and wetter" and that "In the last century, average annual precipitation has increased by six inches."



Visitors at the summit of Cadillac Mountain in Acadia National Park in Maine. (AP Photo/Jessie Wardarski)

During their tenure under the Biden administration, former National Park Service director Chuck Sams and former Interior Secretary Deb Haaland — the first Native Americans to hold these positions — aimed to reflect the experiences of all Americans throughout the national parks. Before leaving his post in February 2025, Sams saw parts of his work unraveled by the current administration.

This "attempt to rewrite history into a single narrative ... is also counter to our democracy. And counter to the idea that we are a plural nation," said Sams.

Lawsuit against national park removals advances

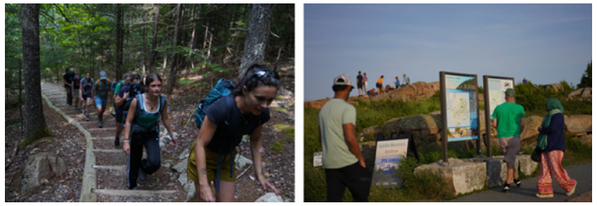
Now, a coalition of conservation, history and science organizations are fighting in court to get the Acadia signs and hundreds of other items put back. Under Burgum's 2025 campaign, signs, books, films and exhibits covering topics such as slavery, climate change and the massacre of Native Americans were flagged and removed from national parks and monuments nationwide.

"Some of it's been put back, and then some of it has been removed again," said the Center for American Progress' Angelo Villagomez. He was part of the progressive policy group's team that examined a database leaked earlier this year and found that a third of national parks had flagged exhibits featuring history or science. Of those, Black and Indigenous history were most targeted.

Portions of all flagged material have since been reviewed and cataloged by a committee led by Joy Beasley, a National Park Service associate director. However, in a June affidavit, she writes that the spreadsheet is "unlikely to capture every removal, revision, or replacement."

The Interior Department did not respond to The Associated Press' questions about the current status of sign and exhibit removal or the ongoing lawsuit filed by the nonprofit coalition in February against the federal government.

The parks "are America's storytellers," said Todd Martin of the National Parks Conservation Association, a plaintiff in the lawsuit. "It's their duty to preserve and interpret American history, the good, the bad, and the ugly."



Left: Volunteers carry soil to the summit of Sargent Mountain while participating in a restoration program through Friends of Acadia. Right: Visitors read signs at the summit of Cadillac Mountain. (Photo/Jessie Wardarski)

Jenny McBurney, a government publications librarian at the University of Minnesota who co-founded the project Save Our Signs, feels it's more important than ever for park visitors to document revised signs.

"People are going to go to the parks and think that they will get to learn history there when in fact they will be learning an incomplete history," said McBurney.

Wabanaki culture — past and present — shared in Acadia



Members of a Penobscot drum group perform at the Abbe Museum's Dawnland Festival held at the College of the Atlantic in Bar Harbor, Maine.(AP Photo/Jessie Wardarski)

Despite the job cuts, threats of land reduction, talks of privatization and even demolition within some parks, Indigenous groups and park partners have persevered.

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In Maine, members of the Wabanaki Confederacy — comprised of the Maliseet, Mi'kmaq, Passamaquoddy, Penobscot and Abenaki principal nations — carry on the cultural traditions and spiritual practices that helped them maintain sovereignty and connection to their ancestral land after settlers arrived. That includes sharing their culture with tourists.

Penobscot Nation citizen Jennifer Neptune had mixed emotions about the attempted erasure of her people from Acadia and their ancestral homeland.

"It's hard to get good signage in national monuments, in national parks," said Neptune. "It's a real gut punch when it (removal) happens, not just for Indigenous people, but for Black people, for the people whose stories don't get shared."

Over the past decade, she's seen real change from the National Park Service, playing an integral part in bringing Wabanaki voices to the table to create Indigenous-designed spaces.

In partnership with Acadia, the privately owned Abbe Museum, which is largely overseen by Wabanaki people, hosts a program that brings Native voices into the park through music, arts and culture.





Left: Park visitors watch Lydia Soctomah weave an ash and sweetgrass basket at the Sieur de Monts Nature Center. Right: Lydia Soctomah sits for a portrait with a handcrafted basket. (Photo/Jessie Wardarski)

Nick Bear and members of a Wabanaki drum circle perform on Cadillac Mountain annually as part of this collaboration. "That's just like bringing those ceremonies right back to the original sites," he said.

In July, Passamaquoddy basket maker Lydia Soctomah demonstrated traditional Wabanaki basketry using pounded ash bark and sweetgrass outside the Sieur de Monts Nature Center. Both the ash tree and sweetgrass are part of the Wabanaki creation story, she said.

"Making a basket is worth 1,000 memories for me," said Soctomah, whose grandmother was a well-known basket maker. "I was always told it holds a part of your spirit."

Sweetgrass access an example of shared stewardship

Access to sweetgrass has long been difficult for Wabanaki people as they were pushed from coastal lands onto reservations. In Acadia, it's been nearly nonexistent since the park's creation in 1916. But over the past decade, park staff and Wabanaki members have collaborated to change that.



Jennifer Neptune holds a bundle of sweetgrass at the Dawnland Festival in Bar Harbor, Maine. (AP Photo/Jessie Wardarski)

In 2017, scientist Suzanne Greenlaw, a citizen of the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, partnered with the U.S. Forest Service, Acadia's Schoodic Institute and 14 traditional gatherers to conduct a Wabanaki-led sweetgrass study in hopes of allowing tribal access.

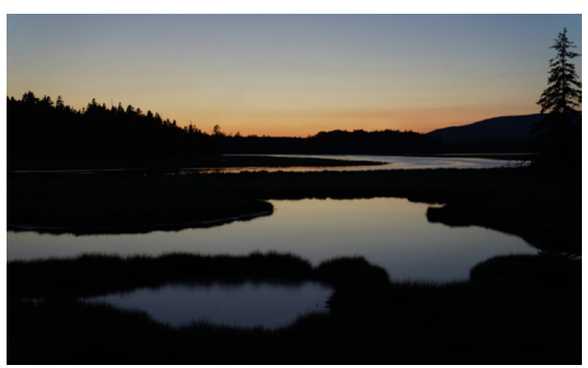
"It was really impactful because we had never had those kinds of co-stewardship relationships," said Greenlaw, adding that those relationships, built over time, have not changed.

By the end of the Biden administration, there were over 400 co-stewardship or co-management agreements with tribes, 159 within the National Park Service alone, says Sams. Programs in Acadia were among them.

These programs, he says, allow tribes to fulfill their obligation to protect, preserve and enhance natural resources, and the federal government to fulfill its obligation to allow tribal access for hunting, fishing, and gathering foods and medicines.

Sams cautiously hopes there will be a rebuilding period for the park service under the next administration.

"There are always ebbs and flows with every administration," he said. "Nobody has seen that more than American Indian tribes."



Sweetgrass grows among a variety of grasses in Bass Harbor Marsh. (AP Photo/Jessie Wardarski)

Denmark to ban mink farming in government U-turn

James Whitehead | BBC.com | October 23, 2015



Photo: Getty Images

Mink farming will end in Denmark by August 2029 after the government decided to drop plans to pursue an exemption to an EU-wide ban on the practice.

Denmark was once the largest producer of mink fur in the world, but the industry has declined due to global bans on fur farming, a decline in the fur trade and an earlier outbreak of a Covid strain in the nation's mink population.

The ban is due to come into effect on 7 August next year, and is followed by a two-year transition period to phase out the practice.

Danish Nature Minister Christian Rabjerg Madsen said the government had chosen animal welfare.

"A business should not continue just because it has existed for a long time. It should also make sense for society, for the economy and for the animals," he said.

The Danish government had initially sought an exemption for its mink industry when the EU added the mammal to its list of invasive species in 2025, prohibiting people from keeping them.

However, the current coalition government, elected in June, reversed this decision and decided not to proceed with the application on Friday.

Social Democrat MP Brigitte Vind said it was "a good day for animal welfare".

"It is absolutely the right decision not to apply for a special scheme for mink breeding in Denmark," she said.

The Danish Mink Association, which represents breeders, has been approached for comment.

Denmark is one of the few European countries to still produce mink fur, one of the more common pelts used in making fur garments.

However, its production has slipped behind that of other countries, such as Poland and China, in recent years.

The industry faced a crisis during the coronavirus pandemic, when the government ordered a mass cull of mink after a mutated strain of Covid-19 was found in the animals. Approximately 15 million were killed.

At the time, the country had huge export markets to China and Hong Kong. The government later admitted it had no legal basis for the culling.

There are now approximately 15,000 mink left in Denmark.

No costs have yet been determined for closing Denmark's seven remaining mink farms, but an animal welfare spokesperson for one of the governing coalition parties previously estimated it would be around 14m Danish krone (£1.56m), local media report, but the final amount could be higher.

Wyoming Prairie Dogs Have Their Own Towns, Family Feuds — And Angry Neighbors

Kate Meadows | Cowboy State Daily | November 7, 2026



Prairie dogs build elaborate underground communities, protect their families and sometimes kill their neighbors' babies. Scientists call them vital to the ecosystem. Wyoming ranchers call them a nuisance. (Getty Images)

If prairie dogs had a department of transportation, Wyoming's grasslands might be littered with orange construction cones, detour signs and warnings about delays at major underground intersections.

There'd be rush-hour traffic, infrastructure projects that never seem to get finished and, inevitably, a few inconsiderate drivers barreling through the work zones.

"Despite the network's sophistication, enforcement remains inconsistent," reads a recent satirical article about the rodents in the Black Hills Gazette, a regional humor and deadpan parody website that publishes fictional, tongue-in-cheek news stories about everyday life, quirks, and local culture across the Black Hills region of South Dakota and Wyoming.

"One male has repeatedly been seen merging into busy tunnels without looking, then standing upright at the entrance as though everyone else is the problem," it continues.

It's a funny image, particularly for anyone who has watched prairie dogs scurry between burrows, pop their heads above ground and chatter incessantly at their neighbors.

But how much of the fictional prairie dog highway system resembles the real thing?

Not much, according to John Hoogland, a biologist who has devoted more than four decades to studying the furry little rodents.

There are no underground highways, no freight corridors and certainly no traffic enforcement.



John Hoogland raises a cage to carefully inspect a prairie dog. (Photo by Elaine Miller Bond University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science)

A Lifetime Of Prairie Dogs

When it comes to the complicated social lives of prairie dogs, Hoogland said the animals have a surprising amount in common with humans.

They're cooperative, family-oriented and protective of their homes.

They're also territorial, quarrelsome and sometimes downright murderous.

"Anything we do, they do as well — and usually more often," Hoogland said.

And in Wyoming, where prairie dog towns occupy land that ranchers depend on to graze their cattle, the relationship between the rodents and their human neighbors can be just as contentious.

Hoogland never set out to spend his career studying prairie dogs.

In 1974, he was a graduate student looking for an affordable research subject.

"I wanted to study a mammal that lived in colonies, that you could easily watch and mark," he said. "Prairie dogs came to the top pretty quickly."

He had no idea the decision would turn into a lifelong pursuit.

For the past 45 years, Hoogland has studied the animals' behavior, including 16 years observing prairie dogs at Wind Cave National Park in South Dakota's Black Hills.

What he discovered was a society far more complicated than the seemingly carefree creatures that stand upright on dirt mounds and whistle at passing motorists.

Prairie dogs are highly social animals that live in sprawling communities called towns.

Of the five prairie dog species native to North America, two live in Wyoming: black-tailed and white-tailed prairie dogs.

Black-tailed prairie dogs, found primarily in the state's central and eastern grasslands, are responsible for many of the conflicts with agriculture, according to Sublette County Weed and Pest.

Some of Wyoming's best-known prairie dog habitat is found in the Thunder Basin National Grassland in northeastern Wyoming, where colonies occupy portions of the open prairie.

And while their underground communities may not have designated lanes or traffic signals, they are impressive feats of excavation.



Photo: Getty Images

The Underground Neighborhood

A prairie dog town is much more than a collection of holes in the ground.

Beneath the surface is a network of burrows that provide shelter from predators, protection from extreme weather and places to raise young.

Sublette County Weed and Pest reports that individual burrow systems can include multiple entrances, branching tunnels and chambers used for different purposes.

Some are used for sleeping, others serve as nurseries, and older burrows may be reused or refurbished.

Prairie dogs also pile excavated soil around entrances, creating the familiar dirt mounds that dot their colonies. The mounds serve as lookout posts, giving the animals a better vantage point to watch for predators.

Anyone who has spent time watching a prairie dog town knows there's plenty of activity.

Above ground, the animals scurry between burrows along paths worn through the vegetation.

They're almost always busy, Hoogland said.

And just like human neighborhoods, some residents get along better than others.



Prairie dogs build elaborate underground communities, protect their families and sometimes kill their neighbors' babies. Scientists call them vital to the ecosystem. Wyoming ranchers call them a nuisance. (Getty Images)

Family Feuds And Deadbeat Dads

Black-tailed prairie dogs live in family groups called coteries, typically consisting of a breeding male and several females, often related to one another.

Prairie dogs recognize members of their own social groups, cooperate in watching for predators and use alarm calls to warn others of danger. Living together offers protection from

continues on next page...

predators such as coyotes, badgers and hawks.

But don't mistake their social nature for universal goodwill.

Prairie dogs fight over territory, compete for mates and sometimes kill one another's young.

Hoogland's research has documented remarkably high rates of infanticide in some prairie dog populations, with prairie dogs themselves responsible for killing a substantial share of pups.

According to Hoogland's research, 39% of prairie dog babies are killed by other prairie dogs — a grim reminder that life in Prairie Dog Town isn't always as charming as it looks from the highway.

And then there are the males.

Hoogland doesn't have much praise for their parenting skills.

Male prairie dogs generally do little to groom or care for their offspring, he said. They may occasionally play with young prairie dogs, but much of their contribution to reproduction ends after mating.

They do, however, help defend their territories.

"They're pretty much stud machines," Hoogland said.

In a 2018 interview with The Nature Conservancy, Hoogland offered an even less-flattering description.

"Males are sort of like beer-drinking, couch-sitting, lazy studs," he said at the time.

For all their complicated social behavior, prairie dogs also have a serious purpose.

Their colonies, warning calls and constant vigilance help them survive in an environment where an assortment of predators would gladly make a meal of them.

And their presence shapes the grassland around them.

That's where things get complicated for Wyoming ranchers.

Not Everyone Loves The Neighbors

Cheyenne-area rancher Mark Eisele doesn't mince words when it comes to prairie dogs.

"They are a nuisance. They are a real problem," he told Cowboy State Daily.

For ranchers, the trouble isn't the prairie dogs' social behavior or their underground engineering skills.

It's what happens to the land above those tunnels.

Eisele said prairie dogs strip grazing areas of vegetation, leaving less forage for cattle and horses.

"They completely denude grazing areas," he said.

According to Sublette County Weed and Pest, an individual prairie dog may consume up to 2 pounds of forage per month.

That might not sound like much until a colony grows to hundreds or thousands of animals.

The burrows themselves create another problem, Eisele said.

"We've had livestock that have broken their legs in burrows," he said about cattle stepping into the holes.

He also described four-wheeler accidents caused by wheels catching on prairie dog mounds.

Eisele said he avoids riding horses through pastures riddled with burrows because of the danger to both the horse and rider.

Prairie dog towns also can attract other unwelcome residents.

He said rattlesnakes may use the burrows for shelter or to hunt in and around the colonies, adding another concern for people working on the land.

For Eisele, prairie dogs aren't harmless little creatures providing entertainment along the highway. They're animals that can make ranching more difficult, more expensive and sometimes more dangerous.

A Different View From The Burrow

Hoogland has heard those complaints before.

He told Cowboy State Daily he's interviewed scores of ranchers over the years, and he doesn't dispute that prairie dogs compete with livestock for some of the same food.

But he questions how frequently cattle and horses actually suffer serious injuries from stepping into prairie dog holes.

"Theoretically, it can happen, but it is exceedingly rare," he said.

Prairie dog burrow entrances are surrounded by mounds of dirt, making them easier for livestock to see and avoid, he said.

Of course, animals don't always move slowly and carefully, Hoogland acknowledged.

Hoogland also conceded that prairie dogs eat the same plants that cattle eat. But he said their effect on vegetation is more complicated than simply consuming grass.

By clipping vegetation, digging and depositing waste, prairie dogs alter the composition and structure of plant communities. He said their waste fertilizes the soil, creating richer vegetation for livestock.

But for a rancher trying to make a living on land occupied by hundreds of hungry rodents, the ecological benefits may be difficult to appreciate.

The Keystone Of The Prairie

Wildlife biologists like Hoogland often describe prairie dogs as a keystone species, meaning their influence on the surrounding ecosystem is disproportionately large compared with their size.

Prairie dogs are both food and landlords for an assortment of other animals.

Coyotes, badgers, hawks and other predators hunt them.

Burrowing owls take advantage of abandoned burrows, while other creatures — including insects, spiders and some amphibians and reptiles — also use prairie dog habitat for shelter.

Take prairie dogs away, Hoogland said, and the ecosystem changes.

Hoogland said prairie dogs once occupied enormous stretches of the American West, with populations numbering in the billions.

Today, he estimates they occupy less than 2% of their former range.

It's a dramatic decline for an animal that was once among the most abundant mammals on the Great Plains.

But the prairie dog's ecological importance doesn't erase the challenges it creates for people trying to raise livestock.

An Old Wyoming Dispute

Hoogland has heard those complaints before.

Wyoming's disagreement with prairie dogs is nearly as old as the state's ranching industry.

According to Sublette County Weed and Pest, the Wyoming Territorial Legislature first recognized prairie dogs as nuisance rodents in 1886.

In 1973, prairie dogs were designated as pests under Wyoming's weed and pest laws.

That designation reflects the longstanding economic concerns of landowners who have watched colonies expand across grazing areas.

Eisele said some ranchers in the northeastern United States have turned prairie dog shooting into a source of income.

Sports shooters travel to ranches for two or three days at a time, paying for access to land where they can shoot prairie dogs, he said.

"Ranchers come to rely on it for income they've lost on grazing," Eisele said.

Other control methods have included specialized equipment designed to remove prairie dogs from their burrows, like giant vacuums that literally suck the rodents out of their burrows.

For those who want them off the land, the solid "thunk" prairie dogs make when sucked up is satisfying.

Others take the "Caddyshack" approach, pumping propane into the burrows and detonating it.

But despite decades of efforts to reduce their numbers, prairie dogs have continued to survive on the plains.

For ranchers, the issue is often about protecting their livelihoods and the land they depend on. For wildlife biologists, it's about maintaining a grassland ecosystem in which prairie dogs play an important role.

Both are looking at the same landscape, but they aren't necessarily seeing the same thing.



Prairie dogs build elaborate underground communities, protect their families and sometimes kill their neighbors' babies. Scientists call them vital to the ecosystem. Wyoming ranchers call them a nuisance. (Getty Images)

Wildlife commission pushes toward protecting prairie dogs on public land

The 11-member Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission voted 6-5 to advance a petition banning the recreational shooting of the controversial keystone species

Tracy Ross | The Colorado Sun | November 13, 2026



Prairie dogs at Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge (CC license via USFWS Mountain-Prairie on Flickr)

FORT MORGAN — New rules to protect prairie dogs on public land are moving toward finalization after the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission voted to advance a petition seeking to ban recreational shooting of the controversial species.

The decision sends the proposal to final rulemaking and a last vote in January.

The 11-member commission voted 6 to 5 at its Nov. 5 meeting in Fort Morgan, split along ideological lines that have been solidifying since three commissioners appointed by Gov. Jared Polis were seated in June.

Supporters on the commission rallied around the idea that shooting prairie dogs for fun is barbaric and serves no known conservation purpose. The opponents objected largely on the premise that Commission Chair Jay Tutchton and others were pushing the petition through the rulemaking process without enough input from groups impacted by prairie dogs and those who support shooting them for fun.

In the rulemaking process, interested persons or agencies write proposed rules, then submit them to the commission for approval before they can take effect. Commissioners initiated rulemaking on the prairie dog petition in September with a vote to accept the petition and give it to CPW staff for review and recommendations.

The Prairie Dog Coalition, which advocates for the protection of the breadloaf-size animals, submitted its petition in April, citing concerns over the mass shooting of the animals.

Defenders of Wildlife, an animal welfare group based in Washington, D.C. that supported the petition says it was concerned about scavengers getting lead poisoning from feeding on their bullet-ridden carcasses and pointed out that Colorado Parks and Wildlife has designated prairie dogs a species of greatest conservation need in its latest State Wildlife Action Plan, approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in January.

Chamois Anderson, senior representative of the Rockies and Plains program for Defenders of Wildlife, said the petition seeks to stop the shooting of prairie dogs on public lands including the 200,000-acre Pawnee National Grassland, northeast of Greeley, and the 500,000-acre Cimarron and Comanche National Grassland, which straddles the Colorado-Kansas state line.

CPW currently enforces a season on public-land prairie dog hunting from June 15 through February. The new petition asks for a year-round ban. CPW's written response to the commissioners after reviewing it said the petitioners' intention was to ban all killing of prairie dogs on public lands, not just by shooting.

The ban would not affect shooting on private land or a county's authority to kill prairie dogs to address agricultural damage under state law. Tutchton has said it won't affect land ranchers lease for grazing, either. And he said a naturally occurring plague that regularly wipes out prairie dog colonies keeps the animals' populations in check.

The stout-bodied rodents are deemed a keystone species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, because dozens of other wildlife depend on them — most notably the endangered black-footed ferret, in Colorado.

But during the meeting in Fort Morgan, commissioners Dallas May, Tai Jacober and Frances Silva Blayney said the commission was eroding the public trust by rushing the petition through the rulemaking process.



Captive-bred black-footed ferrets are released into prairie dog burrows on Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021, at May Ranch in Lamar. Black-footed ferrets were assumed to be extinct until 1981 when a dog discovered one in Wyoming. They are primarily carnivorous, feed on prairie dogs and are the only ferret subspecies native to North America. (Olivia Sun, The Colorado Sun)

A rushed public process

During the rulemaking process, CPW staff gives the commission alternatives to what is requested in a petition, based on stakeholder engagement and best available science.

But in September, several commissioners pushed to move up the review phase from the meeting date CPW staff recommended — Jan. 14 and 15 in Denver — to Nov. 4 and 5 in Fort Morgan.

Silva Blayney, a commissioner representing outfitters, wanted to know if staff had had adequate time to engage with enough stakeholders to consider all of the possible alternatives.

A CPW representative said due to the shortened window, staff was only able to present two alternatives: either the "status quo" — keep allowing unlimited recreational shooting — or the ban requested in the petition.

During public comments on the second day of the meeting, much of the criticism leveled at the commission was over the truncating of that window.

Callie Scritchfield, a Rio Blanco County commissioner, criticized the commission for not following the guidance of CPW staff, "whose science and procedures are critical for the commission to follow."

She also told the story of a farming couple in their 80s who over a decade watched prairie dogs eat 300 acres of their dry land alfalfa and who saw no point in replanting it because it would be destroyed again.

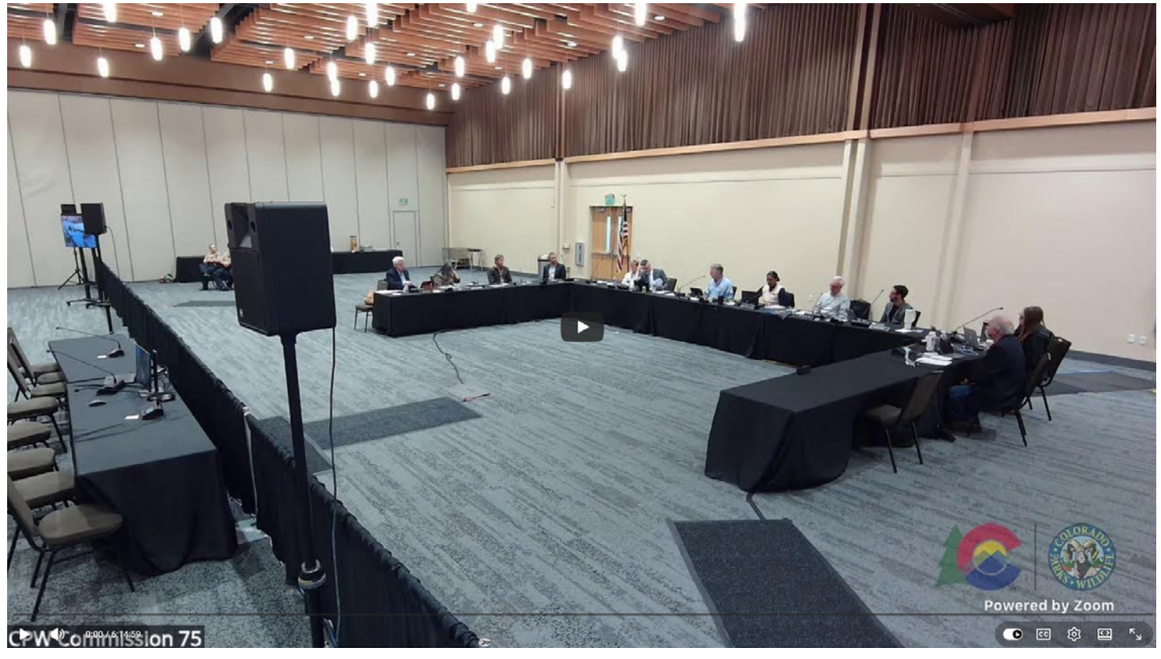
But a neighbor hired shooters to try to control the rodent population, she said, and after 6,000 confirmed kills on 40 acres, no one could notice the difference (in the population) the next year. "So while this shows (shooting) doesn't eradicate the prairie dogs, it proves…shooting is a necessary ongoing management tool when others fail."

During the commissioners' opening remarks, Rebecca Niemiec, who fills the commission's at-large seat, showed a video of a man in camo lying on the ground picking off prairie dogs with a long range rifle.

When it ended, Silva Blayney said "this video is not reflective of who I am as a commissioner. That is not what we stand for. That is what the young people today like to call a shock videos. And it's the lowest form of debate. We are better than that."

Tutchton said "stakeholder processes are kicking the can down the road when the commission is the responsible entity to make the decision." And he has said shooting prairie dogs with "high-powered, high-velocity ammunition so they explode in a 'red mist' of entrails and organs," is not something the commission should support.

May 2026 Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission Meeting - Day 2 Grand Junction



Colorado Wild



ACTION ALERTS

1. Today contact your legislators and Governor elect Weiser to ask them to support additional wolf reintroductions and oppose any attempt to stop additional wolf reintroductions to Colorado.



Contact your legislators here:
Find My Legislator | Colorado General Assembly
Contact Governor elect Weiser:
teamphil@philforcolorado.com

Colorado's wolf population is fragile. We need more wolves to bolster the struggling population. Without an infusion of wolves from outside Colorado, the genetic health and long-term viability of Colorado's wolf population is at risk. Wolf population' success depends on gene flow to avoid inbreeding, and on population growth to offset mortality. Without new wolves, Colorado risks genetic decline, reduced resilience, and possible local extinction if mortality stays high and pup recruitment falters.

Colorado's adult wolf survival is 61%, well below an average survival rate of 75% that is typical for wolves not subjected to hunting. After three years and two reintroductions of twenty-five wolves (13 of the 25 have been killed) CPW counts only four reproducing wolf families plus a fifth pack of four siblings (the parents were killed) and several wolves that are not in packs for a total of 45 gray wolves in Colorado as of September 24th – this count includes 20 pups that were born this year – but, between 40-60% of wolf pups do not survive their first , Colorado's wolf population number is likely to fall, a lot.

More wolves will REDUCE conflict with livestock. Wolves in packs cover less area which makes wolves more predictable, which benefits both monitoring and conflict minimization.

2. Today call or email Senate offices and tell them to oppose the Bipartisan American Affordability and Jobs Act (BAAJA, S. 5653).

Senator Bennet 202-224-5852

Senator Hickenlooper 202-224-5941

Analysis of this bill from the Western Environmental Law Center indicates that: the bill would dramatically weaken your right to participate in the decisions that affect your community and the public lands and waters you love. It will do so to prioritize massive AI data centers and extractive development, from oil and gas fracking to large-scale logging of ancient forests. This bill is the fossil fuel and extractive industries' dream. Corporate CEOs will reap the benefits, and the rest of us will be forced to clean up the mess. It would also allow the Trump administration to fast-track detention center construction, supercharging its out-of-control immigration agenda. **Alarmingly, it has a strong chance of passing.**

Further, the bill would attack Tribal sovereignty and bedrock environmental laws including the Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, National Historic Preservation Act, and National Environmental Policy Act. It would further endanger many sacred places across the West such as Greater Chaco and Bears Ears, as shown in this great storymap alongside other examples.

WILDLIFE WINS

1. **NO TO 83.** Coloradans and our Constitution won the day when a small but mighty coalition of wildlife advocates defeated the proposed Constitutional amendment 83. Once again Coloradans rejected cruel and extremist wildlife killing methods. The so-called "right to hunt and fish" with traditional methods could have brought back hunting and trapping methods that Colorado voters had previously voted to ban such as steel-jawed leghold traps, wildlife killing contests and hunting black bears with bait and dogs.



A big thank you goes to all Coloradans who saw through the smokescreen and voted to defeat Amendment 83! We knocked on doors, handed out flyers at trailheads, and talked with people on the street about the truth behind the real intent of 83 which was to take us back to the days of unethical hunting.

"Thank you to every Coloradan who stood up for wildlife and made their voices heard – our wildlife belongs to all of us and today they have a reason to celebrate!" said Andree-Marie Koban wildlife advocate.

This is a monumental achievement and an immense success for the future the Wild in Colorado. The Amendment needed a minimum of 55% of Coloradans to vote Yes to pass. But instead, the NO TO CRUELTY VOTE hit 55 %! 83 is defeated!

"The voters of Colorado have once again chosen to stand for ethical treatment of wildlife. I'm so proud to live in a state where wildlife and wild places are valued. It takes a village to achieve success, and I'd like to thank all the dedicated supporters who worked tirelessly to win for the wild" said Jacci McKenna, wildlife advocate.

This is just the beginning of many wins for wildlife – ColoradoWild is proud to be a member of the Keepcoloradosvoice coalition that helped defeat 83.

2. **PRAIRIE DOGS WIN.** This past week in a vote of 6 to 5, CPW Commissioners voted to end the recreational killing of prairie dogs. Please thank those CPW Commissioners who voted for ethical science and an end to the immorality of killing for "fun". Commissioners who voted to end recreational killing: Becky Niemiec, Jessica Beaulieu, Rich Reading, Jay Tutchton, Johnny LeCoq and Jack Murphy.

Prairie dogs play a vital role in creating healthy, diverse, grassland ecosystems. Prairie dogs are **keystone species** supporting over 120 other species, including burrowing owls, swift foxes, and the endangered black-footed ferret. If prairie dogs are removed from their ecosystem, the ecosystem can collapse.

Prairie dogs have been eliminated from over 95% of their historic range; and black-tailed prairie dogs, North America's widest ranging prairie dog species, today only occupy one percent of their original range.

Recreational shooting of prairie dogs both directly and indirectly causes population decline which can ultimately result in the decline of entire prairie ecosystems. Prairie dogs are already under siege from plague and habitat loss. The added assault on prairie dogs from recreational shooting is driving this keystone species toward extermination, ecosystem poisoning, and contributing to ecosystem collapse.

Recreational shooting indirectly effects prairie dog populations by altering their behavior. Because of their coloniality, prairie dogs possess certain life-history traits that predispose them to be particularly susceptible to hunting-associated disturbances, which had cascading effects on population-level processes. Scientific research shows that a single pulse of recreational shooting can cause an 82% drop in prairie dog reproductive output the following year, primarily through hunting-related stress and behavioral changes.

Ending the recreational killing of prairie dogs is a statement that Coloradans care about and value all life and reject the immoral cruelty of killing for "recreation".

She became Uganda's first wildlife veterinarian and dedicated her career to saving mountain gorillas; Dr. Gladys Kalema-Zikusoka built a model that protects wildlife while supporting local communities

TimesOfIndia.com | November 7, 2026

Conservation of nature has become the responsibility of humans. While some are more enthusiastic about it, like Dr. Gladys Kalema-Zikusoka; others are more passive about it. But Dr. Gladys's story becomes an inspiration about how sometimes nature can pull you back to your roots. She studied abroad, experienced the comforts of life and interacted with people from around the world. Yet, when she returned home, mountain gorillas captured her heart and she ended up dedicating her life to save as many of them. Her story is also motivating to study how local communities should be involved in the process rather than isolated from it.

Dr. Kalema-Zikusoka's interest in saving wildlife wasn't something she thought of just for the gorillas, her empathy for animals existed since childhood. Kalema told Unearth Women in an interview about a wildlife camp that she set up in her Kampala high school some 30 years ago. This adventure later turned into her career with her attending the University of London's Royal Veterinary College in the early 1990s. On returning to Uganda at age 25, she was hired as the first female veterinary officer for the country's national parks.

During her time in London, the Uganda wildlife service was exploring the potential of tourism that its large primates including mountain gorillas and chimpanzees could provide. Notably, Uganda, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are the only three countries with wild mountain gorilla populations. An even more interesting fact is that none of them live in captivity. According to the World Wide Fund, only around 1,063 mountain gorillas are left in the world.



The promotion of tourism increased the existing human-animal conflict in the region of Bwindi. While gorillas came out of the forest to feed on human-managed banana plantations, destroying livelihoods of local farmers. Farmers also went into the forest to hunt and gather fuelwood, disturbing the habitat of gorillas.

It was in 1994, when she visited Bwindi to conduct summer research on these gorillas. While she initially planned on treating adorable domestic pets, this camp actually changed her life's road. She felt an instant connection with these primate creatures who were only 600 of them left in Africa then. Around half of them were in Bwindi itself. She observed the threats that these gorillas faced, including hunting, poaching and habitat pressures. There were increasing risks associated with closer contact with humans with the possibility of catching diseases like flu.

Around 1996, Kalema-Zikusoka identified that the gorilla community is getting a fatal risk from human scabies. She observed a troop of gorillas whose skin was turning white and scaly which was also making them scratch compulsively. The disease most likely traveled from clothes full of bacteria on the scarecrows. This made her realise the importance of maintaining human health in order to protect the gorillas, so she started promoting hygienic practices to locals.



This was the beginning of her community engagement for the purpose of conservation of the mountain gorillas. Later, in 2003, Kalema-Zikusoka founded Conservation Through Public Health (CTPH), a nonprofit based on Bwindi's border. The organization aimed to promote the health of both gorillas and people alike. For the gorillas, their health was being monitored and thus, treated when required. This included retrieving scat, examining it for pathogens, and darting sick primates with medicine. Human health was equally being focused upon with installing handwashing stations, deworming livestock, and dissuading locals from eating wild game, for the sake of both conservation and disease prevention.

This approach taken by her is different from most conservation approaches that focus primarily on protected areas, wildlife patrols or anti-poaching measures. It is based on the approach of One health which implies the interconnectedness of the health of people, animals and the environment. This approach emphasises that local residents are partners in conservation, rather than people expected to protect wildlife without support for their own needs.

Turning a cup of coffee into a conservation tool

In 2015, Dr. Gladys Kalema-Zikusoka helped establish another venture. It was the Gorilla Conservation Coffee, a social enterprise designed to give farmers living near Bwindi's mountain gorilla habitat a financial reason to protect the forest. The initiative was clear in its aim with focus on saving livelihoods of local farmers who needed incentives to become part of the conservation story. The initiative works with local coffee growers, paying them a premium for their beans and helping them improve the quality and sustainability of their produce.

This gives farmers an opportunity to earn better incomes without expanding agricultural activity into the gorillas' habitat. The coffee is then marketed to consumers who can support conservation through their purchases, with the initiative also contributing to CTPH's wider work.

It is a thoughtful example of how wildlife protection need not come at the expense of local livelihoods. Instead of simply asking farmers to share their land with gorillas, Gladys created a way for them to benefit from living alongside them.

Stop killing wolf pups and their mothers in Idaho!

Dear friend,

This spring, on a single day in April, hunters in northern Idaho killed 12 wolf pups too young to open their eyes or leave their dens. Each kill qualified for a payment of up to $2,000. The bounty hunter claiming credit for the image shown on social media called them "roaches" in their posts. We have verified it is real.

I don't want to share such a disturbing image here. Instead, here's an image of older pups safely snuggled as they should be.

This was not a one-time event. In 2021, one hunter killed eight pups in a day, and half of each payment came from a grant program run by the Idaho Fish and Game Commission itself.

And this month, a Facebook page with nearly 300,000 followers posted a photo of six frozen pups, eyes still sealed, with pelt tags attached. When a hunter objected, the page replied: "these are roaches." I wrote about it in detail in my Substack article linked below.

I have worked for wolves for nearly 40 years. I helped bring them home to Idaho. I have never seen it this bad.

Here is what makes it so wrong: Idaho promised it would never be this way. In 2002, the state pledged to manage wolves like black bears and mountain lions. Idaho protects bear cubs, mountain lion kittens, and their mothers. There are more than 20,000 black bears and 5,000 mountain lions in Idaho. Wolf pups have no protection at all and there are likely fewer than 1,000 wolves statewide. Worse, Idaho matches bounty payments for dead wolves including newborns. Even Fish and Game's own wolf biologist has said officials would normally prevent pup killing by closing seasons in spring.



That's why we, along with other conservation, tribal, and advocacy groups, have just filed a formal petition asking the Fish and Game Commission to:

- Protect wolf pups and their mothers in spring and summer
- Ban killing wolves at their dens
- End all payments for killing pups and nursing mothers
- Close wolf hunting and trapping from April 1 through July 31 next year, so the 2027 litters are protected

The Commission decides in January. Your name tells them that people across Idaho and beyond are watching, and that we expect the state to keep its word.

Please sign the petition today!

If you live in Idaho, your signature counts twice: the commissioners answer to Idahoans. If you hunt, ranch, or spend time in Idaho's wild country, please say so in the comment box. Those voices carry the most weight at the commission level.

Then please share it with one person who would be shocked to learn Idaho pays for dead wolf pups. Most people have no idea that Old West brutal wolf eradication tactics are underway in Idaho.

The pups killed this spring can't be brought back. But next spring's litters can still be saved, if we act now.

Wolf pups cannot speak for themselves. We can and must act now.

Suzanne Asha Stone
Executive Director, International Wildlife Coexistence Network

Now Available:



2027 CWWC Calendars Are In!

Available in our Gift Store

or order online by clicking here!

Winter Wonderland

WITH THE WOLVES



Colorado Wolf & Wildlife Center

Space is Limited · RSVP 719.687.9742 · wolfeducation.org

Red Wolf
Specialty License Plate Initiative

HELP US SECURE A RED WOLF SPECIALTY PLATE TO FUND RECOVERY IN NORTH CAROLINA

Our Goal & Your Impact

- **300-500 NC residents signed up** with fees paid by February 14, 2027!
- Proceeds will go to **Red Wolf recovery** for front line work such as coexistence efforts, field supplies, acclimation pens, educational outreach, and more!

Show Your Interest

- **Scan** the QR code to fill out our interest form!
- Check "yes" to **sign up** for campaign newsletters!
- **Follow along** for updates on new campaign roll-outs that include how you can get involved, license plate artwork unveiling, outreach efforts, and more!

SHARE SHARE SHARE!

- **Share** with your North Carolina community!
- **Learn more** about Red Wolf recovery by visiting www.fws.gov/project/red-wolf-recovery-program

SCAN THE QR CODE TO LEARN MORE!



SUPPORTING ENDANGERED RED WOLVES AND THEIR FUTURE IN NORTH CAROLINA

WWW.REDWOLVES.COM

Adoption corner

TCRAS

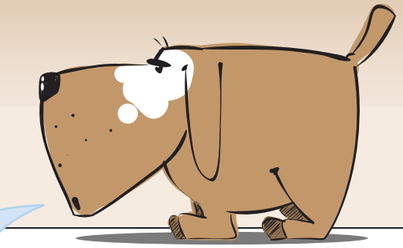
Teller County Regional Animal Shelter

tcrascolorado.org · 719.686.7707

SLVAWS

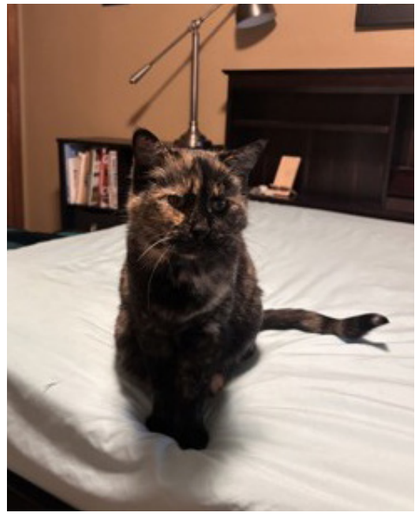
San Luis Valley Animal Welfare Society

slvaws.org · 719.587.woof (9663)



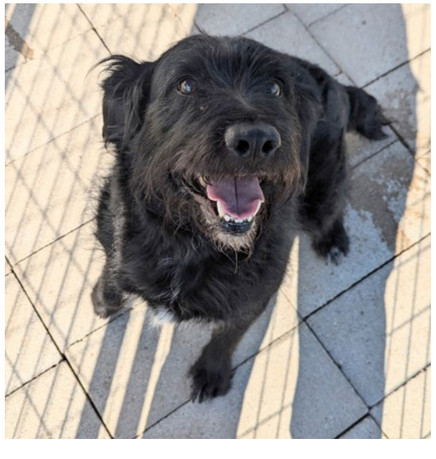
[NOTE - Our shelter is still open for adoptions, but we are asking that you call ahead and make an appointment before coming in to the shelter - 719-686-7707.]

LADY *(10yr 9mo)*



RHAE *(9yr 3mo)*





« BILLIE

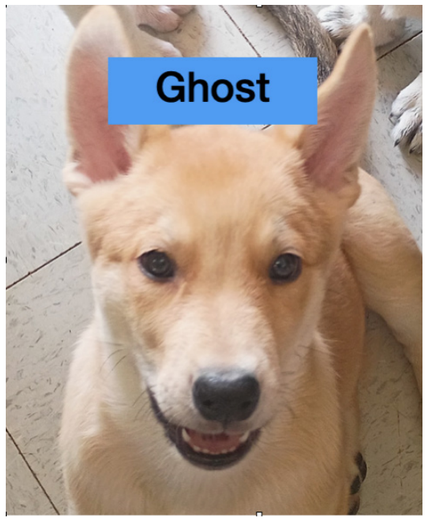
Good day! My name is Billie and I am looking for a forever home with new family that I can love. I am a bit shy at first and need time to adjust to my new family but once we get to know each other, I will be your best friend. I get along with other dogs, I don't know too much about cats but would be willing to try to be friends.

SLVAWS

Every Saturday 10am-4pm adoption fairs in Colorado Springs. Please check our website www.slvaws.org for our next Saturday location.

GHOST »

Ghost, as we named him for Halloween, is 7 months old. Akita/ Malinois. Sweet guy. Neutered, all vacc's, chipped.





« HAHA

HaHa is no laughing matter. In fact he is sad. He is a sweetheart of 8 years old. We have had him for 4 years. He has been abandoned twice. He is ready for a comfy bed like the one he picked out when he visited Petsmart. He loves people but is picky about who his friends are. He would thrive as an only pet. 80 lbs, neutered, chipped, all vacc's.