



COLORADO WOLF & WILDLIFE CENTER

SEPTEMBER 2026 • CONSERVATION • EDUCATION • PRESERVATION



ACCREDITED BY THE
**ASSOCIATION
OF ZOOS &
AQUARIUMS**

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



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| SOCIAL MEDIA HAPPENINGS |

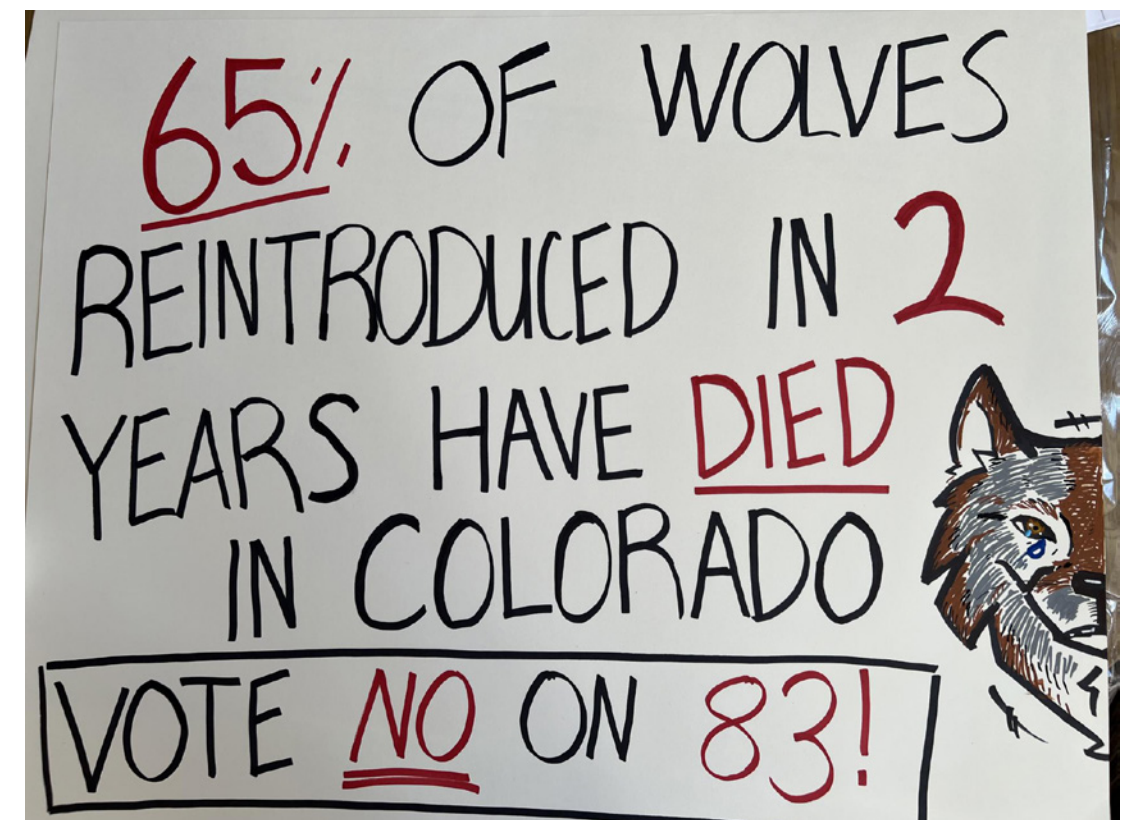
Stay up to date with the animals at CWWC, wolves and wildlife in the news, and advocacy opportunities.

-  **Subscribe to our YouTube Channel: ColoradoWolf&WildlifeCenter** We post videos of the training and enrichment we are providing for our animals, and educational vlogs about wolves.
-  **Follow us on Facebook: Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center** to get updates on new YouTube video postings, read feel good stories from other wolf/wildlife organizations, and learn about new wildlife findings in the research field.
-  **Follow us on Instagram: @cowolfcenter** to see pictures of our beautiful animals, stories of what we are doing around the center, and ways you can help wild wolf populations. Keep your eye on our story for fun videos of the day to day lives of our wolves and keepers.
-  **CWWC is on Bluesky! Follow us: @cowolfcenter.bsky.social**
-  **Follow us on Twitter: @Wolves_at_CWWC** to see photos of our animals, read fun facts, and hear about events happening at CWWC.
-  **Follow us on TikTok: @cowolfcenter** for the videos you won't see on our other social media pages.

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



- ▲ Remember to **VOTE NO on 83!!!**
- ◀ Chili Festival in Pueblo
- ▼ CWWC fighting for wolves and wildlife



Hello Wild Supporters, please join us for a Rally for the Wild!

Amendment 83, the so-called “Right to Hunt and Fish” with traditional methods threatens to send Colorado back to the days of steel-jawed leghold traps, strangulating neck snares, wildlife killing contests and using dogs and bait to hunt bears. Please join the Rally to oppose 83 and support Colorado’s Wildlife.

When: Saturday October 3rd, 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm.

Where: West Steps of the Capitol, Denver

What: Rally for the Wild with featured speakers First Gentleman Marlon Reis, and environmental leaders from the Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center, Colorado Bear Coalition, Project Coyote and ColoradoWild

Question: What would a YES vote do?

Response: *A “yes” vote would tie the hands of wildlife biologists and elected officials who may need other tools to manage populations responsibly—which is the opposite of science-based management. A “yes” vote could also impact Coloradans' ability to shape wildlife policy through the normal democratic process by potentially restricting citizens from using the statutory ballot initiative process for measures related to wildlife protection, management and hunting.*

Question: Why is this a constitutional amendment?

Response: *This is exactly the question voters should be asking—because there's no good answer. Hunting and fishing are already legal in Colorado and fully protected under existing state statute. By choosing a constitutional amendment, they’re using the least flexible tool available—to enshrine a right that isn't under any threat. And this is because Amendment 83 isn't about protecting hunting and fishing. It's about placing this specific policy—including undefined terms like "traditional methods" of wildlife management and vague standards for when the state can regulate—permanently out of reach of future legislatures, wildlife biologists, and voters themselves.*

Question: Is there actually a threat to Coloradans' right to hunt and fish?

Response: *Absolutely not. Hunting and fishing are already legal in Colorado and fully protected under existing state statute. In fact, current law explicitly says that “The state shall utilize hunting, trapping, and fishing as the primary methods of effecting necessary wildlife harvests” (C.R.S. § 33-1-101(4)). There is no need for a constitutional amendment on this.*

Question: Would Amendment 83 bring back trapping in Colorado?

Response: *Yes. In 1996, Colorado voters passed Amendment 14, which banned the use of cruel leghold traps, body crushing traps, poisons, and snares on public lands. Amendment 83's undefined "traditional methods" language creates a potentially serious risk of conflict with that existing constitutional ban. Powerful and wealthy trapping interests could go to court arguing that a newly created constitutional "right" to hunt and fish "by traditional methods" overrides or narrows the voter-approved trapping ban, opening the door to reintroducing leghold traps and other practices Coloradans already voted to prohibit nearly 30 years ago.*

Question: Could 83 affect future wildlife protections?

Response: *Yes, and this may be one of Amendment 83’s most far-reaching consequences. By enshrining hunting and fishing as the constitutional "preferred means" of wildlife management and requiring any regulation to clear an undefined "reasonable and necessary" hurdle, Amendment 83 raises the legal bar for any future wildlife protection that isn't hunting-related, whether that's a ban on a cruel practice, a new species protection, or a citizen-led ballot measure like the one Coloradans used to outlaw leghold traps in 1996. Coloradans seeking similar protections would now have to overcome a competing constitutional right rather than working with elected officials to pass a statute or with agency biologists and the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission to pass a regulation. And because this would be locked into the Constitution rather than left as statute, if 83 turns out to conflict with a wildlife protection Coloradans want, there isn't a simple legislative fix. It would require another statewide vote and another 55% supermajority, making it far more difficult for future generations of voters, wildlife experts, and lawmakers to adapt protections as science, values, and circumstances change.*

Question: Could 83 affect citizen-led ballot initiatives?

Response: *Yes, it could affect the ability of citizens to use the ballot initiative process on wildlife protection issues. First, by guaranteeing in Colorado’s constitution the ability of hunters to use vague “traditional methods,” and that hunting is the “preferred means of responsibly managing” wildlife, Amendment 83 would effectively prevent citizens from advancing a ballot measure that seeks to prevent widely opposed, cruel and outdated practices like trapping, baiting and the use of hounds to pursue wildlife. The use of direct democracy and the right to appeal to fellow voters on any matter of their own choosing is a long-held and valued part of Colorado’s history. It should be protected, not deliberately obstructed by special interests.*

Question: What is the meaning of 'traditional methods' in Amendment 83?

Response: *The term “traditional methods” is not defined anywhere in the initiative and is intentionally vague—the proponents of this amendment use it as code for unpopular and controversial practices, like luring wildlife with food baits, using packs of dogs to chase wildlife, and catching and killing wildlife with cruel and painful traps. Once locked into the constitution, Colorado voters, lawmakers,*

and wildlife experts would be helpless to stop these cruel practices, which can cause extreme suffering, orphan young animals, and go against values of fair-chase hunting.

Question: "Doesn't this just protect hunting and fishing?"

Response: *Hunting is already legal in Colorado. Initiative 302 goes beyond that by changing the Colorado Constitution, creating new legal standards for wildlife management, and establishing hunting and fishing as the preferred management tools.*

Question: "What do you mean? It won't change anything."

Response: *If nothing changed, there would be no reason to amend the Constitution. Constitutional language becomes the legal standard courts use to review future laws and wildlife regulations.*

Question: "Don't you think this just protects science?"

Response: *Initiative 302 refers to "sound scientific wildlife conservation and management," but never defines it. We’ve seen similarly vague language get used to cherry-pick which science gets considered, biasing the process and eroding best practices, adaptive management and conservation outcomes. Wildlife science includes much more than managing game populations, it also includes ecosystem health, biodiversity, habitat conservation, and nongame species.*

Question: "Why are you so upset? This is just about protecting tradition."

Response: *The amendment protects undefined "traditional methods," which typically means unpopular practices like trapping, hounding (chasing wildlife with packs of dogs), and baiting, without explaining what that includes. Voters deserve to know exactly what constitutional protections they're being asked to approve. Hunting is a privilege under the public trust doctrine. Constitutions are meant to protect rights like freedom of speech and voting.*

CPW reportedly hunting another wolf after killing 4 in 3 months

Miles Blumhardt | Coloradoan | Septemeber 9, 2026



Colorado ranchers have joined forces with a nonprofit and innovator to use trained dogs to map wolf movements.

Colorado wildlife officials have killed four wolves in the past three months, including two Sept. 7, and wildlife officers are reported to be attempting to kill another wolf after a rash of livestock depredations spread over multiple counties.

The latest two lethal removals were of two uncollared wolves, one from the Copper Creek pack in Pitkin County and one from the Three Rivers pack in Rio Blanco County, according to a state wildlife agency news release Sept. 8.

Colorado has seen depredations spike, with 21 confirmed depredations in August, 13 in July and 51 this year as of Sept. 6., according to the agency's depredation page. The previous depredation high was 37 in 2025. Colorado Parks and Wildlife estimates the state has a population of around 30 adult wolves plus pups.

Ranchers and ranching organizations have been calling for more lethal removals by Colorado Parks and Wildlife, with ranching representatives predicting the depredation situation was "about to blow wide open" in an Aug. 5 Coloradoan story.

But some wolf experts question the effectiveness of the agency's practice of incrementally killing male yearling

wolves in an attempt to curb the predator from killing livestock.

Among those experts are two with decades of investigating wolf depredations for the government. They say lethal take of yearlings is generally not effective in reducing depredations and that better alternatives are available to keep wolves and livestock alive.

Carter Niemeyer is a retired wolf biologist who spent decades killing and capturing wolves, including for the federal government in its reintroduction of wolves to Yellowstone National Park and central Idaho in the mid-1990s. He told the Coloradoan incrementally killing yearlings gives the appearance the agency is addressing the depredation issue but in reality is doing little to solve the problem.

"The yearlings aren't the problem; the breeding pairs are mostly the hunters and leaders of the pack doing the killing, but when you're trying to recover wolves like Colorado that makes it difficult to remove them," Niemeyer said. "If you aren't preemptive and don't kill or haze wolves from the beginning, you are playing catch up and have lost the opportunities."

The Coloradoan asked the state wildlife agency in

an email Sept. 8 why it targets yearlings for lethal removal instead of breeding adults?

"The choice to remove yearlings instead of breeding adults was made to potentially influence pack behavior while keeping the pack together, minimizing impact on pup survival, and not displacing pack members into new areas that may increase conflict risk," agency spokesperson Luke Perkins responded.

The Sept. 8 news release stated ranchers pursued nonlethal conflict minimization strategies and that the agency was justified in lethally removing members of both packs under its chronic depredation definition of three depredations in 30 days by the same wolf or wolves.

The Copper Creek pack had three confirmed depredations of cattle between Aug. 14 and Sept. 4 in Pitkin County. The Three Rivers pack had four depredations totaling 15 sheep from Aug. 21 to Sept. 6 in Rio Blanco County.

Shawn Foster, manager of the Arapaho Ranch that sits on the Jackson and Grand county line, told the Coloradoan he had three recent confirmed kills in five days by the One Ear pack. He said Colorado Parks and Wildlife officials told him the agency has been trying to kill one of the pack's yearling males after he refused to allow the agency to use diversionary feeding of the pack because he had concerns it would attract wolves to his cattle.

Asked to confirm or deny if the agency was currently carrying out a lethal removal of another One Ear pack member, Perkins stated that "due to the sensitive nature of wildlife management operations, CPW does not confirm or comment on them until they are completed."

The agency previously lethally removed a One Ear pack male yearling Aug. 4, a Copper Creek male yearling June 2 and in a Copper Creek male yearling in May 2025.

Questions about over effectiveness of incrementally killing wolves depredating on livestock

Incremental killing of wolves is a practice used by some Western states, including Oregon and Washington, two states after which Colorado has modeled its wolf recovery program.

The idea behind incremental lethal removal is to kill a member of an active depredating pack then evaluate if killing the wolf changed the pack's behavior. If it doesn't, wildlife officials remove another pack member and evaluate, removing another member if necessary.

Niemeyer and Jeff Flood, a wildlife specialist for Stevens and Ferry county sheriff's departments in Washington who serves as a third-party investigator involving livestock depredations by wolves, agree that in their experience incremental killing of yearling wolves may be more socially and politically palatable but biologically solves very little.

Studies generally show incremental removal of wolves provides minimal to negligible relief from depredations on livestock. An often-cited peer-reviewed study led by Liz Bradley, a biologist with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, analyzed reports of wolf attacks on livestock in Idaho, Wyoming and Montana from 1989 to 2008.

The study, which was published in 2015, showed removing an entire pack resulted in an average of 730 days between livestock depredations, partial pack removal resulted in an average of 64 days between attacks on livestock, while when no removal was done the result was an average of 19 days between attacks.

Partial pack removal was most effective if conducted within the first seven days following a depredation, after which there was only a marginally significant difference between partial pack removal and no difference after 14 days, the study showed.

The study also showed pack size was the best predictor of a recurrent depredation event. The One Ear pack was the state's largest pack as of March 31 with nine, including four adults and five known pups, according to the agency's annual report.

Flood told the Coloradoan incremental removal can be effective if lethal removal is done at the very beginning of a pack depredating but added state wildlife agencies often wait too long after initial depredations to take lethal action. He said removing depredating wolves at the start can help save the lives of wolves overall by reducing the chances of younger wolves learning to kill livestock from their parents.

"Incremental removal seldom works if you let it get as bad as Colorado has done; it just removes one belly from the dinner table but doesn't change pack behavior," Flood said. "In Washington, we tried incremental and all it did was cost the state a lot of money while the adults kept teaching their pups to kill livestock. Colorado is finding that out. Like I tell people, 'you don't have a wolf problem; you've got a government management problem.'"

On a small scale, incremental killing of yearling wolves in Colorado has not shown to be effective in reducing livestock depredations.

Wildlife officials killed a male yearling from the Copper Creek pack in May of 2025 after a series of livestock depredations. But the pack continued killing, prompting the agency to attempt to kill another yearling a couple months later, which it failed to do.

And despite removing a One Ear pack male yearling Aug. 4, depredations by the pack have continued, resulting in the agency looking for another yearling to kill, according to Foster.

Foster said the current situation has gotten "ridiculous" and

that different measures need to be taken. He said he has applied for a lethal take permit, which if approved by the state wildlife agency would allow him to kill a wolf in the act of attacking his livestock. The agency had not granted a lethal take as of Sept. 8.

"I'm starting to agree that shooting the young ones only upsets the wolf advocates and isn't solving any of our problems," Foster said. "I feel sorry for the innocent wolves they are shooting. I think they should kill the old male and female, because they are the ones teaching the pups."

Tim Ritschard, a Grand County rancher and president of the Middle Park Stockgrowers Association, told the Coloradoan he knows of 10 confirmed depredations by the One Ear pack in the last several months, some of which are not yet posted on the wildlife agency's depredation page.

Agency spokesperson Luke Perkins previously told the Coloradoan depredation postings can be delayed for reasons

that include "ongoing investigations and management actions and decisions related to those events." Rob Edward, president of the pro-wolf group Rocky Mountain Wolf Project, told the Coloradoan that his group has provided "millions of dollars per year" in funding through sales of the Born to be Wild specialty license plates for nonlethal conflict prevention tools. He said the state wildlife agency needs to make changes or risk violating its legal duty to establish a self-sustaining population of wolves, as mandated by voter-approved Proposition 114 in 2020 to reintroduce wolves.

"Despite a growing body of evidence suggesting that lethally removing wolves due to livestock depredations is likely ineffective at resolving the conflicts long term, and that such lethal actions may actually make the situation worse, Colorado Parks and Wildlife seems unwilling to embrace the hard truth; there are better ways," Edward said.

Should Colorado look at 'spank and release' as a nonlethal wolf deterrent?

Niemeyer, who now promotes nonlethal strategies to deter wolves, said killing or hazing wolves away from sites where they kill livestock fails to deter wolves from depredating.

"After four decades of doing this, the only way you might change behavior is by hazing or killing the pack in the act or at a kill site," Niemeyer said. "There is no connection to the pack members if a pack makes a kill and days later you kill a member somewhere else."

Niemeyer said a nonlethal hazing strategy that has worked in his experience is what he calls "spank and release." That is where a leghold trap is set at a kill site in hopes that wolves return to the site to feed and a pack member is caught. The wolf is released alive with the trapping serving as a warning to the wolves, which are extremely wary of their surroundings.

"It's a way to show that you are trying something that doesn't involve killing the wolf," Niemeyer said. "I believe more things can be done to reduce conflicts. Watching from the outside the games being played (in Colorado), I'm not sure the agency is channeling its resources the best they can to prevent killing wolves and livestock being killed."

LETS FIGHT THIS IN COURT!
PLEASE DONATE TO THIS ORGANIZATION.

Trump is coming for America's wolves again. His new executive order, issued just before the long weekend, could lead to Endangered Species Act protections being stripped away from Mexican gray wolves and gray wolves across the country.

This would put wolves at risk of trophy hunts, trapping, aerial gunning, and other cruel tactics — threatening decades of hard-won progress toward bringing these animals back from the brink.

We've beaten back attempts to strip wolves of protection before, and we're prepared to do it again.

[Please make an urgent gift to the Wolf Defense Fund today to help us save wolves from this latest attack.](#)

Trump's executive order calls for more support for the beef industry and singles out wolves as a threat to livestock operators.

Killing wolves — and taking away their Endangered Species Act protection — isn't the answer. There are proven ways to reduce conflicts, and for decades the Center has promoted coexistence measures that help prevent livestock deaths while allowing wolves to survive and recover.

Yet Trump's order calls for changes that could make killing them easier.

For Mexican gray wolves, who number just 317 in the wild in the United States, this could mean extinction. These endangered animals still face severe genetic challenges after being rescued from extinction by a captive-breeding program that began with just seven individuals.

They need more protection, not less. And we're fighting for it.

This assault on wolves comes as the Center is facing pressure from every direction for standing up to this administration and defending wildlife, public lands, and our environmental laws.

We won't be intimidated. We've fought for these intelligent, social animals for decades, and we're prepared to go to court again if their safeguards are illegally stripped away.

[Please rush a gift to the Wolf Defense Fund to help us defend wolves in court and keep fighting for their right to survive and thrive in the wild.](#)

For the wild,



Kieran Suckling
Executive Director
Center for Biological Diversity



GIVE NOW »



I am standing
with Colorado
ranchers.

For too long, rural Colorado has been forced to bear the cost of a wolf reintroduction program driven by Front Range politics.

I've fought to delist the gray wolf, give management back to the states, and make sure ranchers can protect their livestock.

Today, President Trump listened.

This is a major step toward putting ranchers, rural communities, and common sense back in charge.



Folks should read this.
More scapegoating of the wolf for DJT's failed and depraved policies.

"SUPPORTING AMERICA'S RANCHERS"

EXECUTIVE ORDER 14425 | SEPTEMBER 4, 2026

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, it is hereby ordered:

Section 1. Policy. Ranchers play a vital role in our Nation's food supply chain and cultural heritage. These hardworking Americans ensure that our country has a reliable domestic source of high-quality animal protein products, and a secure, plentiful domestic ranching industry vindicates this country's food security. But the national herd is at a 75-year low, while consumer demand for beef has grown almost 10 percent over the past decade. My Administration has already acted to support ranchers by, for example: enforcing voluntary "Product of USA" labeling to give American ranchers the recognition they deserve for producing in the United States; mapping over 2 million additional acres of grazing land managed by the Department of the Interior and identifying nearly 1.6 million acres of vacant allotments managed by the United States Forest Service and opening them for Federal grazing permit applications across the West; withdrawing burdensome Biden-era regulations that imposed substantial compliance costs in the name of speculative environmental benefits; and implementing a number of financially beneficial tax law changes for ranchers, such as lowering Death Taxes and promoting more rapid expensing and depreciation policies. More can and should be done to support this critical industry, and my Administration will continue to act to protect our domestic producers.

Sec. 2. Comprehensive Policy and Regulatory Review. Within 90 days of the date of this order, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of the Interior, the United States Trade Representative, the Commissioner of Food and Drugs, and the Administrator of the Small Business

Administration shall submit to the President a report that assesses all executive department and agency (agency) regulations, guidance, and other agency policies affecting ranchers and that provides recommendations for action to promote financial viability and enhanced market access for American ranchers consistent with this order.

Sec. 3. Helping Ranchers Combat Predation. Within 90 days of the date of this order:

- (a) The Secretary of the Interior shall make a determination as to whether the gray wolf and the Mexican wolf have met the recovery criteria for delisting or downlisting under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and, if he determines that the recovery criteria has been met, shall begin the process of delisting or downlisting them.
- (b) The Secretary of the Interior, in coordination with the Assistant to the President and Director of Legislative Affairs, shall prepare and submit to the President a legislative recommendation to fully delist or downlist the gray wolf and the Mexican wolf under the ESA.
- (c) Upon a determination by the Secretary of the Interior that the ESA recovery criteria has been met with respect to the gray wolf and the Mexican wolf, the Deputy Assistant to the President and Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, in coordination with the Secretary of Agriculture, shall engage with States to encourage them to delist gray wolves and Mexican wolves from any State-specific lists of protected species and to revise their standards for lethal takings of gray wolves and Mexican wolves to assist ranchers in combating predation.
- (d) The Secretary of the Interior and the

Secretary of Agriculture shall consider developing or amending their respective Departments' producer compensation regulations, evidentiary standards, and program handbooks, consistent with applicable law, to ensure that all depredation claims adjudicated by their respective Departments are consistently, accurately, and expeditiously assessed, including by setting adequate standards to investigate depredations by gray wolves and Mexican wolves and by considering additional factors beyond subcutaneous hemorrhaging when appropriate.

(e) The Secretary of the Interior shall consider amending regulations or providing additional guidance, consistent with applicable law, to revise the Department's criteria for authorizing lethal gray wolf and Mexican wolf removal and to enable greater emergency responsiveness, including precision targeting, for situations involving predator threats to human safety or threats to domestic livestock.

Sec. 4. Country-of-Origin Labeling. Within 90 days of the date of this order, the Secretary of Agriculture, in consultation with the United States Trade Representative, shall review all statutory and regulatory authorities that may permit the establishment of mandatory country-of-origin labeling for beef products and shall provide the Assistant to the President for Economic Policy with a summary of such authorities as well as an economic analysis of the impacts of mandatory country-of-origin labeling that reflects current conditions and modernized practices. Based on these assessments, the Secretary of Agriculture, in consultation with the United States Trade Representative and the Assistant to the President for Economic Policy, may issue or amend regulations, to the extent permitted under applicable law, to require mandatory

country-of-origin labeling for beef products, or may, in further coordination with the White House Office of Legislative Affairs, develop legislative recommendations regarding such labeling.

Sec. 5. Supporting American Consumers. To the extent consistent with applicable law, the head of each agency shall take such steps as may be appropriate to ensure that the measures directed in this order, as well as other measures taken by my Administration with respect to food production and supply, benefit American consumers in the form of lower prices to the maximum extent possible.

Sec. 6. General Provisions. (a) Nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect:

- (i) the authority granted by law to an executive department or agency, or the head thereof; or
 - (ii) the functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relating to budgetary, administrative, or legislative proposals.
- (b) This order shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.
- (c) This order is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.
- (d) The costs for publication of this order shall be borne by the Department of Agriculture.

DONALD J. TRUMP
THE WHITE HOUSE,
September 4, 2026.



A Second Window into BLM Corruption

Work with a Blindfold On and a Moral Lobotomy

Inside Sage Steppe Wild's Work Holding the Agencies Accountable

BLM's Forgotten Cages Tell a Story Its Paperwork Won't

I spend an unreasonable amount of time reading federal grazing files.

Land Health Assessments. Monitoring reports. utilization forms. permit files. ecological-site descriptions. NEPA documents. Remote-sensing analyses. Decades of records obtained under the Freedom of Information Act.

Every once in a while, buried in all that paper, I am struck by something that cuts through the bureaucratic bullshit.

In this case, it was a cage.

Actually, a bunch of old cages.

But first, some background.

The Dockery grazing decision

The Bureau of Land Management is proposing another ten-year livestock-grazing authorization on two allotments near Lander, Wyoming: the Myers Fenced Pasture and Trent & Home Place allotments.

BLM proposes essentially to continue the existing permit through a categorical exclusion — an exemption from environmental-review mechanism Congress made available for permit renewals where all low-bar land health standards are met.

There is a problem.

BLM's own signed land-health determinations identify public land on both allotments that is not meeting three of Wyoming's Standards for Healthy Rangelands.

Then, a few documents later, the categorical exclusion and Proposed Decision tell us the Standards "are being met."

Apparently, somewhere between the land-health determination and the grazing decision, the documented failures disappeared through the miracle of paperwork.

That is only the beginning.

BLM's tables classify the failed acreage one way and the

accompanying narrative classifies the same acreage another way. Those classifications have very different meanings. One essentially says the significant cause is something other than current BLM-authorized activity. The other presupposes that management or disturbance has changed and that those changes are producing significant progress.

BLM manages to invoke the benefits of both explanations without doing the analysis necessary to establish either.

Then comes the causal story.

The degraded vegetation is near an old homestead. There was heavy grazing historically. There is no evidence of a wildfire that might otherwise explain the vegetation change. Current grazing, BLM tells us, isn't "heavy" and isn't "season-long."

Therefore, the degradation is historical.

BLM then points to broad satellite-derived vegetation trends as evidence that present grazing management is contributing to recovery.

That sounds tidy until you ask the obvious question:

What if present grazing did not originally cause the degraded condition but is helping keep it degraded today?

BLM essentially never asks.

That is not a trivial distinction.

If you cut down a forest 100 years ago and prevent trees from regenerating every year thereafter, the logging that occurred 100 years ago caused the original loss of the forest. But whatever prevents the trees from growing back is a present cause of the continued condition.

Origin and persistence are different causal questions.

The same reasoning applies to rangelands.

Historic livestock grazing can push a plant community into a degraded state while current livestock grazing—lighter, shorter, or differently timed—continues to suppress the plants

needed for recovery.

And that is where the old cages come in.

I had forgotten about the cages

As we worked through the Dockery records, I suddenly remembered a series of old BLM utilization cages scattered across allotments surrounding Myers and Trent.

Range agencies commonly use small wire cages to temporarily protect vegetation from livestock. At the end of the grazing season, vegetation inside the cage can be compared with vegetation outside it to estimate how much forage has been removed.

These particular cages were different.

They had apparently been left there for years and forgotten.

My recollection is roughly fifteen years, based on when a semi-decent range con had left.

What began as livestock-utilization cages had accidentally become long-term exclosures.

And I had photographs.

We went back through them carefully. The result was rather hard to miss.

Look at the other side of the wire

One set was photographed at Granite Mountain Common Allotment.

One photograph shows the cage boundary directly in the frame.

Inside the wire is dense herbaceous vegetation, long grasses, shrub understory and accumulated plant material.



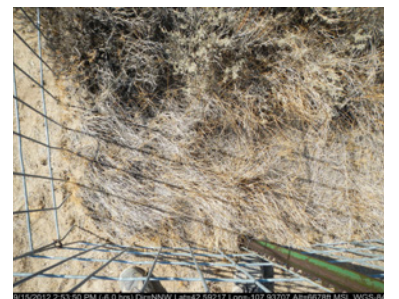
Immediately outside the same piece of wire, the landscape opens dramatically. There is much more exposed soil and a far thinner herbaceous layer.



Then there is a 2011 Granite-Split series.

Inside the cage: tall, dense herbaceous vegetation. Note the cage has been partially crushed to get at the full vigor bluebunch wheatgrass they have strip mined outside.

Immediately outside: sparse, low vegetation separated by conspicuous exposed ground.



Then there is another cage photographed in 2012.

Same basic pattern.

Another Granite Mountain cage.

Now outside...

continues on next page...



Notice any difference? The BLM does not see any with its blindfolds and moral lobotomy.

Same pattern.



I could go on and on but you get the picture.

The world's smallest grazing experiment

These cages are useful for a reason that ought to be obvious to anyone who has ever designed an experiment.

Consider a photograph in which vegetation on both sides of a wire fence is separated by inches.

Did one side receive a different regional climate?

No.

Did it experience a different drought?

No.

Did a thunderstorm rain on one side of a four-foot cage and miss the other?

Probably not.

Did historic homesteading occur under one side of the cage but not the other?

No.

But compared with an agency attempting to explain vegetation differences across thousands of acres by invoking events that occurred generations ago, the little cage holds an enormous number of variables remarkably constant.

The conspicuous treatment difference is livestock.

For years, livestock could reach one side.

They could not reach the other.

And the vegetation responded.

But that isn't the important question yet.

The cages demonstrate something more fundamental:

Release from livestock use can produce a very large vegetation response in this local landscape.

That fact makes BLM's historical-causation story obvious bullshit.

Now imagine removing the cage

This is the part I find hardest to ignore.

Forget for a moment about permits, AUMs, utilization percentages, ecological-site codes and BLM's tortured logic.

Look at those few square yards inside the wire.

Now mentally remove the cage.

Not the protection.

The cage.

Imagine that vegetation extending another ten feet.

Then a hundred feet.

Then across an acre.

Then across a thousand acres.

Then across an entire watershed.

Think about what begins to change.

More standing perennial vegetation means more photosynthetic surface capturing solar energy and turning atmospheric carbon dioxide into plant tissue.

More roots occupy the soil.

More dead leaves and stems become litter and then soil rather than disappearing into a cow.

That litter intercepts raindrops that would otherwise strike bare mineral soil.

It slows overland flow.

It reduces wind exposure at the soil surface.

It shades the ground.

It moderates soil temperature.

It creates microsites in which seeds can germinate and seedlings have some chance of surviving.

Roots and soil organisms build soil structure.

Better structure can increase infiltration and reduce runoff.

Greater soil stability means less soil leaving the site in wind or water.

More water entering the soil means more water available to plants rather than racing downhill carrying sediment with it.

And the process begins reinforcing itself.

More plants produce more roots and litter.

More roots and litter improve the environment in which plants must establish.

A landscape that had been exporting water, soil and biological productivity in the form of dead animal parts in a grocery store can begin retaining more of them.

Ecology is more complicated than a bumper sticker.

But the vegetation inside these cages is carbon that exists there and largely does not exist immediately outside them.

And carbon is only one small piece of the story.

They are BLM utilization cages, forgotten.

The agency put little fences on the landscape specifically because it understood that excluding grazing creates a useful comparison.

Then some of those cages apparently remained long enough to reveal something far more important than annual utilization.

They began showing what sustained release from livestock pressure could look like.

Could these accidental long-term experiments tell BLM

something useful about the recovery potential of the surrounding landscape?

But the BLM is purposefully blind.

Meanwhile the agency produced a new land-health assessment, found degraded land, attributed the problem largely to history, used broad satellite trends to reassure itself that current management was producing progress, and proposed another ten years of essentially unchanged grazing.

That is what makes these little cages so damning.

Not because they provide a perfect controlled experiment.

They don't.

Not because they prove every acre would look exactly like the vegetation inside them if cattle disappeared tomorrow.

They don't.

They are damning because they point directly at a plausible recovery mechanism that BLM's decision-making process failed even to investigate.

BLM looked backward a century for an explanation while its own small fences were demonstrating ecological response in the present.





Our Zoo.
Their Future.



Pueblo
ZOO
Empower. Engage. Conserve.

YES ON 2B



What will in the 2B ballot measure?

Come November, The citizens of the City of Pueblo are being asked to approve a 0.167% retail sales tax to support the zoo starting in 2027. That's one sixth of a cent or less than \$0.17 on every \$100 spent in Pueblo.



Why does the Zoo need a tax?



A significant portion of the Zoo's budget relies on the fluctuating City General Fund. Meaning we compete for the same dollars as police and fire departments.



With city budget cuts and rising costs, the zoo has been left with minimal reserve funds leaving us in need of more stable and secure funding.



Doesn't the City run the Zoo?

NO.

This is a common misconception. The City owns the land and the buildings but the non-profit organization, the Pueblo Zoological Society, runs operations. Since it took over management in 1991, the Society has run the zoo at a significantly lower cost than the City was able to. Staff are employed by the non-profit entity



What would this money be used for?

Feeding animals

Your support funds the food, the medicine, the supplies and the professional, caring staff who deliver it.

Feeding minds.

Our professional educators support teachers and students across the region.

Ensuring safety.

Funding helps pay for security systems, safety training and facility repairs and upgrades.

Facility preservation.

History has a cost...in the form of maintaining and repairing legacy buildings and saving up for their future.



How does the Zoo benefit Pueblo?

\$20 million annual direct and indirect economic impact.

>10,000 students served annually

>90,000 visitors

9 days of free or deeply discounted program days.



Our Zoo.
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What happens if the tax doesn't pass?

If funding trends continue, the Zoo will likely be looking at closure in 2-3 years. It will take considerable effort, time and expense to relocate animals so the zoo would likely close to the public sooner.



How is the zoo currently funded?

The zoo relies on three primary categories of funding Governmental (City/County); Earned revenue (admissions, events, programs); Fundraising (grants & donors)



Why can't the zoo do more to raise their own funds?

The zoo has made significant progress in increasing the funds they raise. However, these efforts are limited by the number of staff they are able to employ within the budget. We do many events, but they are time and effort intensive and we have reached a cap. Also, funding sources are being challenged (grants, education programs) while expense increases are outpacing revenue generating abilities.



Why can't the zoo cut costs?

Many of the increases in the cost of running zoos are due to the improvements zoos have made in the quality of care for animals. As an AZA accredited zoo, we are required to uphold the highest standards in the treatment of animals which include adequate exhibit and housing spaces, enriching environments, nutritious food and adequate medical treatment. The zoo runs on a very lean budget. Some say the zoo has been on a "starvation diet" for years with inadequate funding.



How can the zoo still build exhibits and structures if the zoo doesn't have money?

The few capital projects we are pursuing are required to maintain our accreditation status and are paid for through funds that are restricted by donors for that purpose.



What happens if the tax initiative passes?

Approval will allow the the Zoo to:

- Adequately fund operations
- Preserve, maintain and enhance historic WPA structures
- Secure adequate reserves to ensure the safety of animals and guests and maintenance of aging facilities and equipment to ensure the zoo's future.
- Continue offering education and community support and possibly free up public funds for non-profits and schools.
- Modernize animal exhibits and guest features
- Enhance the zoo's collections, features and offerings to increase growth potential

For more campaign information, or to sign up for campaign materials - scan the QR code or visit: ourzootheirfuture.com



\$25 million in national park project funds blocked by Trump administration: Report

Finya Swai | WGN9 | September 12, 2026

The Trump administration has reportedly blocked more than 130 planned projects at national parks across the country, putting more than \$25 million worth of funding on hold.

The Interior Department, which oversees the National Park Service (NPS), “disapproved” of agreements last month for projects at Yellowstone, Yosemite, Zion, Joshua Tree and other parks, The Washington Post reported, citing internal documents.

NPS often works with outside organizations for projects that require additional workers or specialized expertise rather than hiring additional federal employees, the Post added.

The outlet reported that the funding came from sources including congressional appropriations and existing federal programs and was awaiting the Interior’s approval before it could be released.

Interior spokesperson Aubrie Spady confirmed to The Washington Post that the department had rejected agreements with groups she described as “actively working against the best interests of the American people and the priorities of this administration.”

“This decisive action is ensuring that these taxpayer dollars are being used in alignment with the administration’s objectives to make life more affordable for Americans, unleash domestic energy production and expand access to our public lands,” she said.

Joshua Tree National Park in California was reportedly the most impacted, with at least 10 projects blocked, including wildfire preparation, burned area restoration and the removal of rodents that carry hantavirus from historic buildings.

Internal documents warned that losing funding for the projects could make it more difficult and costly to fight fires at the park.

“If this work is not completed, the park will be unable to

fight wildfire. Fires will be larger and fire suppression will be more expensive,” the documents read, according to the Post.

Other projects would have worked to protect prehistoric Native American mounds in Iowa from falling trees, supported efforts to preserve an endangered snake species in California and paid for the care of sled dogs at Denali National Park and Preserve in Alaska.

The Great Basin Institute, a conservation nonprofit that works with federal land agencies, reportedly had more than 70 agreements worth at least \$12 million rejected.

The group’s CEO, Peter Woodruff, told the Post that it was not directly notified by the Interior about the decision and did not know why its agreements had been blocked.

In July, President Trump notably signed orders reducing the size of Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante national monuments in Utah, prompting Patagonia and a coalition of Native American and environmental groups to challenge the reductions in court.

HOWLOWEEN



**SUNDAY
OCTOBER 25TH
4-6pm**

JOIN US AS WE
PASS OUT
MEAT FILLED
PUMPKINS
TO ALL
THE WOLVES!

+ ENJOY A
BON FIRE AND
REFRESHMENTS.

\$40 ages 12+
\$20 ages 6-11

COLORADO WOLF AND WILDLIFE CENTER
Reservations Required · 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

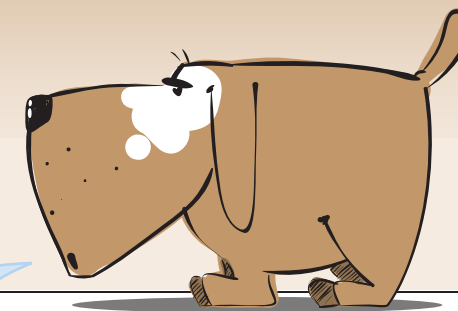
Adoption corner

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.]

FONZIE »

Fonzie is a sweet 4-month-old kitten who is looking for a home to grow up in. He has worked hard to learn to trust people and has come out of his shell. He is a looker and will make someone really happy; they just have to give him the chance.

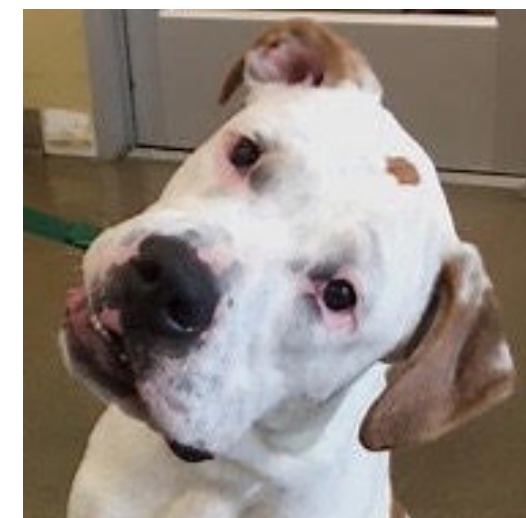


« LOLLY

Lolly is an 11-month-old Doberman mix. She is full of love and energy to share, and has been great with other dogs. She would thrive in an active home that loves hiking and exploring new places. This happy girl has been with us for over two months, and we would love for her to enjoy the fall colors in a home.

DIESEL »

Diesel is a 6 yr old Staffie. He was at our shelter for 4 years, adopted for 1 year, just returned because of unforeseen circumstances. ~70 lbs. Very allergic to sagebrush which abounds at our shelter. His recent allergy shot is good for about a year. Please give him a home away from sagebrush. Neutered, all shots. Best with female dogs.



« HAHA

HaHa is an 8 year old boxer/pit. He has had a hard life of multiple owners. Neutered, all vacc's current. Best with female dogs.

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