



COLORADO WOLF & WILDLIFE CENTER

JULY 2023 • 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.



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



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



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



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



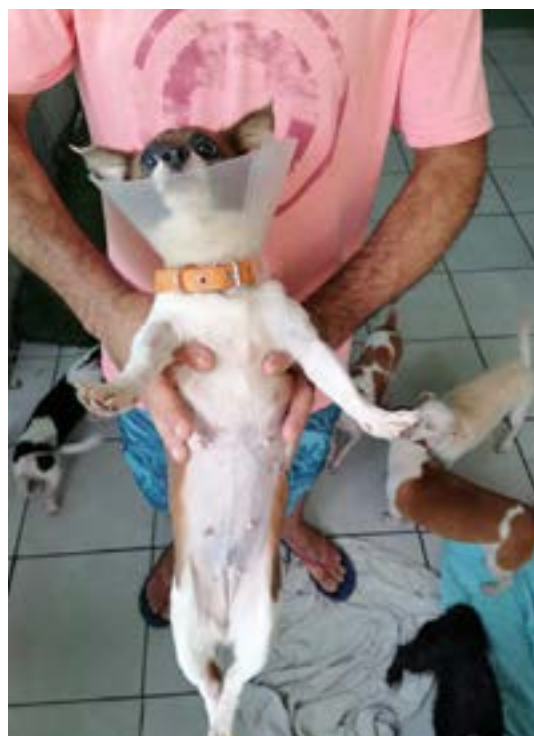
Follow us on TikTok: @cowolfcenter for the videos you won't see on our other social media pages.

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

Costa Rica Update

This year we have spayed and neutered 40 dogs and 4 cats for one rescue and another 4 dogs for another rescue.

Our next mission is to get a paralyzed dog by the name of Africa fitted with a cart so she can walk.



Off-Site Programs

This summer has been packed full of off site programs! Michelle along with her mom, Jutta, have been visiting various locations with wolfdogs Shaya and Fox, who serve as our off site ambassadors, along with her dog Grizzly to teach children and adults alike all about wolves. Summer programs kicked off with a visit to Colorado College's Children's Orchestra Concert of Peter and the Wolf where close to 200 people attended at least one of four quick presentations. The children from the Creative Play Centers & Adventure Clubs made a beautiful sign to welcome Shaya, Fox, and Grizzly to their school. We also do programs each month at the Garden of the Gods visitor center (must reserve ahead of time on the Garden of the Gods website). Michelle, Shaya and Grizzly have been doing off site programs for several years and have attended programs as far away as Crested Butte. Fox, a low content wolfdog, started joining off site programs last year and loves to pick out a kid or two to roll on and get belly rubs. Shaya, Fox, and Grizzly all live with Michelle so you'll only get to meet these three on special occasions!

We hope to see you at the Center or at an off-site program soon!



CWWC Staff,

I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to my incredible staff for their immense effort in making our Center beautiful for the AZA inspectors. Every single person worked diligently, coming together like a united "wolf pack," displaying professionalism in their attire and the execution of their duties throughout the day. AZA, the highest accreditation award for zoos and aquariums, is an achievement that cannot be adequately described. The countless hours of hard work and dedication that each staff member contributed to ensuring our facility cannot be overlooked. Despite facing a challenging summer with limited personnel, it was truly incredible how we all collaborated, and can proudly say that the inspectors were immensely satisfied with our accomplishments.

Darlene Kobobel
Founder/CEO



Kirk



Lindsay



Trisha



Lynn



Anna



Cassidy



Ethan



Ryan



Kelly



Kate



Fish



Darlene & Rick



PUERTO RICO ZOO RESCUE UPDATES

by The Wild Animal Sanctuary | Updated June 25, 2023



THE CHALLENGE...

With more than four decades of hands-on experience working tirelessly within the trenches of the Captive Wildlife Crisis, our Sanctuary is definitely the leading large carnivore and wild animal rescue entity within the United States - and as best we can tell - quite possibly the largest in the world. As such, we have become extremely well known amongst law enforcement agencies as the go-to organization whenever there is a significant number of Lions, Tigers and other animals that need to be confiscated as part of a criminal case - or due to civil proceedings that have been brought forth by animal welfare agencies.

As many people may remember, it wasn't long ago when we were called upon to be the lead organization working on the numerous "Tiger King" raids that were carried out when both the United States Department Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of Justice (DOJ) sought to end the terrible trade involving Tiger Cubs and many other species of big cats. There were a number of unsavory characters running questionable operations in different states across the U.S., and we were challenged with managing the removal of the animals

found at each facility.

Each raid was a success and ended up freeing the animals from their reproductive confines, as well as getting them to various accredited sanctuaries where they would no longer be exploited. The majority came to our two facilities within Colorado, while the remaining animals went to a half-dozen facilities in other states.

Even though there were hundreds of animals involved with the Tiger King rescues, the removal and transportation efforts were spread out over a two-year period and were based within the continental United States. *However, this rescue in Puerto Rico would involve over 700 animals that would need to be relocated within a three-month period and also require the vast majority of them to leave the island!*

The first phase of this operation involved us sending a team of Veterinarians, other medical staff, and our operations and logistical personnel to go to Puerto Rico for a visual assessment of the situation. We needed to see the facilities in question, as well as assess the animals located within to see if they were healthy enough to be relocated.

Once we could establish whether the animals could make the

trip, we needed to spend the next few weeks seeking placement for each species involved. This was a major challenge, as some of the species were the type that are extremely hard to find homes for.

For example, many monkeys would need to go to species-specific sanctuaries, but nearly every facility we contacted was full and had no room for additional rescues. Others dealt with incredibly unique animals such as Rhinos, Hippos and Elephants, so finding the right facility that also had space would be nearly impossible.

Adding to the challenge, most of the facilities who agreed to accept animals had restrictions pertaining to medical testing for certain diseases and other stringent requirements. This meant we would have to send a team of doctors to Puerto Rico for an extended period of time in order to carry out all of the testing and associated procedures.

Needless to say, this rescue was going to represent a massive logistical challenge, as well as require highly coordinated shifts of manpower to come and go from the island in a manner that would prevent individuals or groups from becoming over worked or completely burnt out. Yet, we knew with the help of numerous entities and both government and private industry partners that we could successfully carry out the mission.

THE ZOO...



Like most anyone familiar with zoos might imagine, at one point the Juan A. Rivero Zoo had an extensive collection of animals. Yet, starting as far back as 2012, the zoo had

experienced financial challenges.

As funding for the zoo declined, so too did the quality of animal care. Less money meant less paid employees... as well as less pay for the employees that were already working there. Additionally, accusations of corruption and the misappropriation of funds were a constant topic among those who monitored the zoo's situation.

Year after year USDA inspectors would charge the zoo for serious failures in animal care procedures and facility operations. However, the problems only worsened as time went by... and the future of the zoo looked bleak. Fate stepped in and halted the zoo's ability to improve when in September 2017 Puerto Rico was hit by two hurricanes within a 9-day period.

Like the rest of the island, the zoo was heavily damaged by fierce winds and heavy rain. The island's power grid was destroyed, leaving most animals and people without power for more than 11 months. Some, like the zoo, were never reconnected to the restored system due to the prohibitive cost of running new lines to remote areas.

So, in February of 2018, the USDA and Zoo Officials came to an agreement which involved the surrender (cancelation) of the zoo's exhibition license. This meant the zoo would no longer be able to host guests or visitors to the facility, which meant the zoo would be losing additional income.

The Puerto Rican Government had actually decided to begin closing the zoo prior to the hurricanes, but that gesture never had a chance to come to fruition when the entire island suddenly found itself suffering from the aftermath of hurricanes Irma and Maria. One would think the government would try to complete that thought once things began to return to normal, yet they did not.

In the months and years that followed hurricane Maria, there was a promise of FEMA money to not only help with the island's overall repairs, but also for the zoo itself. 6.2-million Dollars was pledged by FEMA to go towards revitalizing the zoo, but the funding was never really employed for that purpose.

As had happened so many times before, government officials and other parties with a stake in the zoo began to disagree over where and how the money would be spent. They initially spent \$700,000+ dollars to hire an architectural firm to reimagine the zoo so it could transform into something more modern and akin to current-day zoos... but after the plans were unveiled, nothing ever happened to make it a reality.

Of course, the zoo was in bad shape due to the hurricanes, but it also continued to decline year after year since there were no visitors – which would normally spur ground maintenance and the overall upkeep of the facility. By the time we went to see the facility for the first time earlier this year, it looked eerily similar to scenes from the movie Jurassic Park.

The overgrowth of plants, as well as the deterioration of man-made buildings and basic infrastructure, dominated the landscape, and there were numerous issues related to the daily operation of the facility. With no grid-supplied power, the zoo had tried to survive by operating numerous generators that had been requisitioned years earlier as everyone on the island tried to get by after the hurricanes knocked out the main power supply.

Yet, one by one the generators began to fail and eventually be abandoned. There were a few key units the zoo tried desperately to keep operating, such as the one running the commissary where all the animals' food was stored. Another happened to be the largest generator on the property, which supplied the office and guard shack with power for a few hours per day.

However, most buildings and key areas remained without power, which of course left many animals having to pay a heavy price. The African Lions were a good example, since their indoor housing was more or less a concrete sweat box where the lack of power meant the numerous fans which had been installed years earlier to help circulate the oppressively hot, humid and stale air sat rusted and idle.

The most obvious issue revolved around an established protocol where only one set of keys was available for the caretakers to use.

Not only was there only one set for more than a dozen people to share... but in addition, only one caretaker at a time could take the set and go about doing their work.

This evolved into one caretaker using them for an hour or so, then being forced to hand them over to the next person in line. As such, very little was done for each set of animals since each keeper had to get in and out of their assigned area very quickly.

We were told by the Zoo’s management this practice was put in place because the keepers could not be trusted to have their own set of keys. This seemed odd at first, but the longer we were there, the more obvious the reasoning became.

Simply put, the reason for so many animals dying on a regular basis seemed to be very evident and hinged on two things. One was a lack of funding to operate the zoo in a manner that would fully protect the animals... and two, was the general disconnect that seemed to be extremely pervasive.

Not being inspected by the USDA on a regular basis for more than 5+ years, combined with not being open to the public and being held to a certain level of transparency relating to the care of the animals, definitely seemed to not only create, but also maintain a false sense of adequacy.

Nearly every single employee that we spoke to at the zoo was thoroughly convinced they were doing a stellar job of caring for the animals. The numerous ones we talked with during our 6+ weeks of being there working 12-14 hours a day - 7 days a week - in many areas of the zoo were at a loss to understand why we or anyone else thought there were any issues at all – especially with the overall care of the animals and the implementation of adequate veterinary care.

Although the odds were stacked against him, there was one caretaker that actually stood up to the others and openly acknowledged there were serious issues and he agreed with the accusations of inadequate care. Sadly, he was shunned and verbally accosted by his fellow employees. We admired his courage to hold strong against the overwhelming pressure and his choice to stand in defense of the animals.

THE ANIMALS...

From as far back as 2012 there has been significant public and private controversy surrounding the zoo and its overall care of the animals. From social and enrichment issues related to highly social and intelligent creatures such as the Chimpanzees and lone Elephant, to the uncontrolled births and deaths which included African Lion cubs that were born and then died under highly suspect circumstances.

Death became a regular occurrence at the zoo over the years and continued to remain a pervasive issue even when we were called in to remove the animals. Poor diets, restricted caretaker access and many other internal operational issues contributed to the deaths that we were exposed to.

Even a lone male Mountain Lion was allowed to suffer from a cancerous growth on his elbow to the point where he needed

to be humanely euthanized after our veterinary team was able to visually assess his vastly deteriorated condition. Others, like Mikey the male Black Bear whose female partner had just recently died prior to our arrival, was found suffering in a small cage buried behind a wall of thick overgrowth.

Laying in a bed of concrete road base material used for his cage flooring, Mikey was suffering from numerous conditions, the worst of which included severe arthritis and an ulcerated eye that needed medical attention. Barely able to wake and rise to the occasion of our first visit, it was incredibly evident that he needed pain management on a full-time basis.

Yet, he and so many other animals were left to deal with



blatantly painful issues, while many more eventually died from undetected illnesses due to a lack of regular medical checkups. There was no doubt that the entire population was

in danger and needed to be removed as quickly as possible.

The zoo had a set of iconic animals that the public were focused on, which included a female chimpanzee named Mara, and a female elephant named Mundi. Others, such as the Rhinoceros named Felipe, and the Hippopotamuses named Pipo and Cindy were also celebrities, but admittedly, to a lesser degree.

Regardless, upon our arrival to begin the removal process, it quickly became evident how the entire island was split between those who believed the zoo should be renovated and reopened... and those who realized there were countless facility issues and blatant problems with animal care, which meant the only humane option would be to have the animals removed and rehomed elsewhere.

Yet, the animal that held the leading role in nearly every bit of controversy on and off the island was Mundi the elephant. She was by far the most iconic animal at the zoo and every discussion relating to the zoo and its future revolved around her.

It seemed nearly everyone who was in favor of keeping the zoo open believed as long as Mundi remained on the island the zoo would



eventually be brought back to life. On the flipside, there were just as many people who believed Mundi’s departure would help to seal the zoo’s fate.

As weeks passed leading up to Mundi’s departure, these two factions began to battle, both virtually on the internet, as well as physically in real life. Both Pat Craig and Carol Buckley were damned to hell via countless protestor billboards and picket signs... as were their associated organizations.

When the days remaining before her scheduled flight to freedom grew short, terrorist-like tactics began to be employed. From masked intruders sneaking into the zoo through thick underbrush... to numerous drones coming down from the sky to harass Mundi, there seemed to be no end to what the “keep Mundi on the island” faction was willing to do.

One of the social media attempts to thwart Mundi’s daily conditioning to load in and out of her travel crate involved an island-wide call for people to come in droves to the zoo’s perimeter fence in order to clank, bang and beat metal pots and pans together in an attempt to scare Mundi. Thankfully, the Puerto Rico government, USDA-OIG and US Fish and Wildlife Service responded overnight and installed enough law enforcement personnel to keep any willing participants from getting near the zoo.

However, just two days before the scheduled airlift, one or more of the opposing factions was able to hit Mundi in the rear end with a projectile while she was standing in her crate peacefully eating carrots and hay. In response, Mundi immediately flew backwards out of her crate and ran around her enclosure trumpeting and waiving her tail in the air.



She subsequently spent the next two days avoiding the crate since she believed it had something to do with the assault. Thankfully, Carol Buckley was able to calm her substantially during the same timeframe. Yet, on the day of the move, although many hours were spent trying to get Mundi to enter the crate willingly, she repeatedly abandoned every effort she made to enter the space.

Thankfully, we were able to get Mundi loaded with the help of a world-renowned elephant veterinarian who had been brought in to help calm Mundi’s nerves if a situation like this presented itself. With the help of an exceptionally light

sedative, Mundi’s fear of the crate quickly subsided. This change in attitude allowed the expert team of elephant transporters to gently guide her into the crate where she remained comfortable in the belief whatever had struck her in the rear just days earlier, was now gone.



To the credit of those who loved Mundi, the road leading to the airport was lined with thousands of people (at 1:00 in the morning) who came to say goodbye and wish her well. After such a terrible battle leading up to the day of her transport, it was nice to witness an end to the island-based battle through such a universal display of love.

THE PLAYERS...

There is no doubt that our Wild Animal Sanctuary bore the brunt of the work and expense related to this rescue. There was no funding or financial assistance provided, as we paid for the transport costs associated with every animal that left the Zoo and Detention Center.

Numerous staff took turns going to Puerto Rico in shifts to both enable and participate in the massive rescue effort. There were no days off or personal recreation time as there were far too many animals’ lives hanging in the balance.

Hundreds of transport crates needed to be shipped to the island, or built on site, and dozens of people had to work tirelessly preparing them for each unique species that would soon utilize them for transport to their new homes. From the 19,000-pound elephant crate that was provided by Stephen Fritz and his team of professional elephant movers... to the tiniest container that was obtained to hold a single goldfish who had been long forgotten inside a dark and dingy abandoned aquarium room... every crate needed to be exactly the right fit and finish for the animal that would soon occupy it for a predetermined amount of time.



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CONTINUE READING**



Denali wolf sightings hit record low

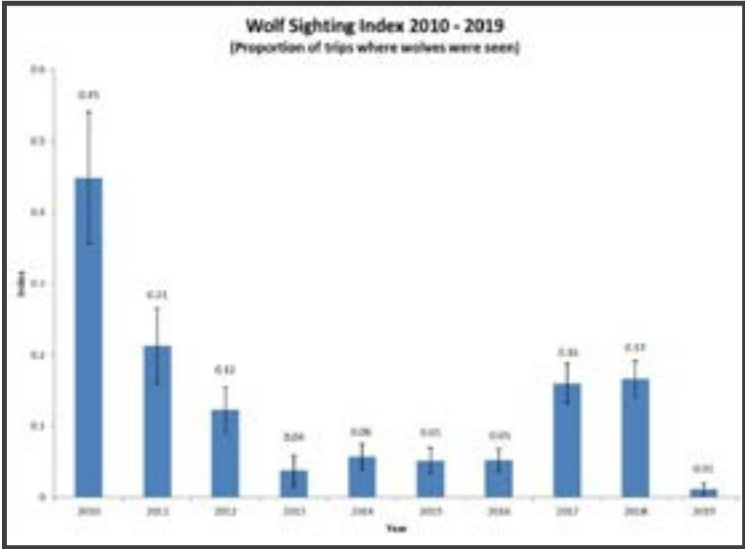
Dan Bross | KUAC - Fairbanks | Oct. 30, 2019

A wolf in Denali National Park and Preserve in June 2010. (Public domain photo by Ken Conger/National Park Service)

Wolf sightings hit a record low along the road into Denali National Park and Preserve this summer, and that’s driving wildlife advocates to push for a halt of wolf hunting and trapping on state lands along Denali’s northeastern boundary, where park road area wolves often roam, and are sometimes killed.

A report recently issued by the National Park Service shows only 1% of agency wildlife survey trips along the road into Denali National Park this summer recorded wolf sightings.

NPS biologist Bridget Borg said that’s the worst number



(Graphic by National Park Service)

since trained park observers began officially tracking wildlife sightings along the road into Denali in the mid-1990s. Viewing percentages previously ranged from as low as 3% and as high as 45%.

Borg said the currently poor wolf sighting percentage is likely primarily representative of natural factors.

“Just there being a lot of variability in where wolves den, and the size of packs over the years,” she said. “Not to say there aren’t the potential for other things to influence that outside of the park.”

Biologist and wildlife advocate Rick Steiner has been trying unsuccessfully for years to get the state to close wolf hunting and trapping on state lands along Denali’s northeastern boundary. Steiner points to the damaging impact that the loss of an alpha wolf can have on a pack, and he makes an economic argument for why the state should care, correlating recent poor wolf viewing opportunity with dips in Denali visitor numbers and spending.

“This is kind of the goose that laid the golden egg for Alaska — if we protect it and help restore it,” he said.

More than 600,000 people visit Denali annually, but there’s state resistance to curtailing boundary area wolf harvest by a few hunters and trappers. Closure requests from Steiner and other Alaskans have been regularly turned down.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game Commissioner Doug Vincent-Lang recently rejected the second of two such petitions submitted since July. The commissioner’s spokesperson Rick Green explained why.

“Data from the Park Service isn’t a very specified area, and when we manage more of a habitat area — much larger scale — and haven’t seen the evidence to constitute an emergency on the wolf population,” he said.

Green said that means it’s an allocation issue and up to the state’s Board of Game, which consistently hasn’t granted requests to re-establish a no-wolf-kill area, scrapped by the board in 2010. In a July interview, game board chair Ted Spraker pointed to wolves’ resilience and the potential for wolf viewing to rebound.

“It could all change next year if one of these eastern packs dens close to the road,” he said.

But halting wolf hunting and trapping in the nearby northeast boundary area could also help, according to the Park Service’s Borg. She points to better wolf viewing during a decade-long span when boundary area wolf harvest was closed.

“When the area adjacent to the park was closed to hunting and trapping, it was correlated with higher sightings. So we think that bears replication to see if there’s a similar effect,” she said.

NPS and wildlife advocates have submitted separate northeast park boundary no-wolf-kill buffer proposals to the state’s game board for consideration at a March 2020 meeting. But any change would take place after the wolf trapping season.

Steiner is pushing for an emergency game board meeting prior to the Nov. 1 start of trapping season.

Wolves and the Environment

By Franchesha Wolfe Kirkpatrick

Wolves, one of our most precious animals, were once in danger of going extinct. We all heard stories growing up about the Big Bad Wolf in Little Red Riding Hood and the Three Little Pigs. All these narratives pointed to something bad about wolves. What does the environment say about wolves? In Yellowstone, for example, the elk population grew too great without wolves. Elk ate all the willow trees in the park. Since the reintroduction of wolves in the park, wolves now eat the elk and this creates a healthier ecosystem. Balance is needed to protect nature. No matter where in the world wolves are reintroduced they seem to help. Beavers and other animals have made a comeback due to the wolves. Ranchers and hunters were under the wrong beliefs, killing beautiful wolves that only were helping to control the environment. Wolf packs have integral roles in nature. Despite their comeback, wolves need our support more than ever to tell a better story that will keep wolves a part of the environment.



Every day we add 227,000 more people to the planet — and the UN predicts human population will surpass 11 billion by the end of the century. As the world's population grows, so do its demands for water, land, trees and fossil fuels — all of which come at a steep price for already endangered plants and animals.

Global population growth and the destructive consumption habits of high-wealth countries put pressure on biodiversity and human communities, exacerbating food and water shortages, reducing resilience in the face of climate change, and making it harder for vulnerable groups to rise out of intergenerational poverty.

Reproductive health, rights and justice are threatened by the same systems of oppression that overexploit the environment and drive the extinction crisis. But through solutions like gender equity and a just transition to sustainable consumption and production, we can promote human rights; decrease poverty and overcrowding; raise standards of living; and allow people and nature to thrive.

The Center has been working to address the connection between human population pressure and the extinction crisis since 2009. Our innovative campaigns focus on commonsense solutions such as gender empowerment, the education of all people, universal access to all forms of sexual and reproductive healthcare, sustainable and equitable lifestyle choices, an economy that doesn't rely on endless growth, and a societal commitment to

improve living conditions for all species.

BRINGING POPULATION BACK INTO THE CONVERSATION

Human population growth and consumption are at the root of our most pressing environmental crises, but they're often left out of the conversation. We can fight to curb climate change, stop habitat loss, and clean up pollution, but if we don't also fight for reproductive justice for those most severely harmed by these environmental crises — including young people, immigrants, Black, Indigenous and people of color, minoritized ethnic and religious groups, LGBTQIA+ communities and rural communities — it'll remain an uphill battle we can't win. The first step to solving a problem is getting people to talk about it.

The Center is working to put the spotlight back on human population growth and the need to fight for reproductive and environmental justice. We're using creative media like our award-winning Endangered Species Condoms to start conversations on a person-to-person basis nationwide; we're circulating videos to explain the connections between population growth and other environmental problems and highlight the importance of healthcare for all. We're also bringing the message to museums, science centers and classrooms through fun and interactive Pillow Talk events, via virtual and in-person film series, and through social media campaigns.

Photo credit: Flickr/Lucas Vermeer

SUPPORTING REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

Everyone plays a role in human population growth, but when it comes to reproductive decisions, women and gender-diverse people are disproportionately affected by a lack of empowerment and access to healthcare, which not only affects their reproductive futures but also income and wealth equity, education, and leadership opportunities. Many people worldwide and in the United States are unable to get the sexual and reproductive healthcare they want or need. Unfortunately U.S. lawmakers and courts are currently doing everything they can to restrict reproductive freedom, including bans on comprehensive sex education and abortion.

Reproductive justice is environmental justice. In order to make sure we leave room for wildlife, it's critical that every pregnancy is planned and that people have the ability to decide when — or if — they want their family to grow. When people have access to voluntary contraception and equal education, they tend to choose to delay childbearing and have smaller families, leading to lower fertility rates.

The Center supports unfettered access to education, reproductive healthcare and gender equity for all. Every person should have the tools, information and autonomy to make the best reproductive choice for themselves and the planet.



"Let's raise it as one of our pack. That way we can be sure it grows up to be a fierce environmentalist."

« Tom Toro, tomtoro.com, @tbtoro on Instagram, created for the Center for Biological Diversity, December 2015.



**New York’s ‘imaginary divide’
exposed by proposed ban on
cash-prize hunting contests:
‘These are people that are upstate’**

Michael Hill and The Associated Press | Fortune | July 20, 2023

The contests have names such as Predator Slam, Squirrel Scramble and Final Fling for Fox, sometimes challenging hunters to bag the heaviest coyote or the heftiest bunch of squirrels to win a cash prize.

While participants seek prey in the name of fundraising, animal rights advocates are training their sights on contests they see as senseless slaughters. With bans in eight states, activists are now looking to New York, where Gov. Kathy Hochul is considering a proposal recently approved by the Legislature.

“It’s wrong that fringe groups in these extreme contests can use our wildlife resources for money,” said Brian Shapiro, New York state director of the Humane Society of the United States. “I can’t think of any other natural resource that is used that way.”

Opponents want to put an end to annual events held around upstate New York that target wildlife like coyotes, rabbits, raccoons and foxes. Campaigns against the competitions often feature pictures of coyote carcasses in a pile or other grisly scenes.

But the proposed ban illustrates the cultural chasm between its supporters and those who see the contests as an unfairly demonized part of rural life.

“When it comes to this stuff, it’s all about emotion. They throw logic out of the window,” said David Leibig, a rural

upstate resident and executive director of the New York State Trappers Association.

Leibig said the events draw families and raise money for fire departments and other community groups. He bristles at the charge that they’re “just a blood fest.”

These types of contests have been held for decades around the nation. Animal advocates were able to track 22 last year in New York, though there may be more. Shapiro believes only a “small minority” of the roughly 580,000 people with New York hunting licenses participate in the contests.

Contests for coyotes or a wider range of wildlife already are prohibited in eight states, including California, Colorado and Arizona, according to the Humane Society. Massachusetts wildlife regulators noted public concerns, such as encouraging indiscriminate killing, when it prohibited hunting contests for certain predators and furbearers in 2019.

Oregon is expected to vote in September on a proposed ban. New York’s proposed law would make it illegal to organize, conduct, promote or participate in competitions involving wildlife being taken for prizes or entertainment. People would still be able to hunt the animals, just not as part of those contests.

The measure would not apply to contests involving white-tailed deer, bear and turkey. Animal advocates say existing

hunting regulations, which include bag limits, tend to protect those creatures.

Assembly sponsor Deborah Glick, a Manhattan Democrat, said her bill targets contests that are “gruesome and wasteful.” Though many of the animals can be eaten and coyotes are valued for their pelts, opponents say animals killed during the contests too often are thrown in the trash.

One annual event that has drawn criticism – and hundreds of participants – is a three-day coyote hunt held in largely rural Sullivan County, northwest of New York City. Organizers offer a top prize of \$2,000 for the hunter who brings in the heaviest coyote.

The competition raises as much as \$12,000 to help fund youth programs and the local fire department, said John Van Etten, president of the Federation of Sportsmen’s Clubs of Sullivan County.

He sees opposition to the competition as misguided.

“I think the people that want to ban these contests don’t really understand them,” Van Etten said.

“They don’t understand hunting and why people would kill coyotes,” he said. “Whether there’s a contest or not, they’re still going to do so.”

The contests also have been defended as a way to keep wildlife populations in check – especially for coyotes, which

are viewed as livestock-killing nuisances in some areas.

Ban supporters say the best available evidence does not support casting the competitions as coyote control. Instead, the ban advocates claim contests can actually spur coyote reproduction by destabilizing packs.

Hochul, a Democrat, is reviewing the legislation, according to her office. The measure is among bills she’s considering whether to sign this year.

The legislation passed the Democrat-controlled Legislature in June, over Republican arguments that it represented an attack by urban interests on a rural practice.

“This anti-hunting bill is yet another example of out-of-touch, big city legislators imposing their will on our constituents,” Republican Assembly Member Steve Hawley said in a press release.

Proponents say the ban takes aim at wasteful contests, not all hunting. Wildlife regulators in other states have said the controversial contests could potentially undermine the public’s support for traditional hunting.

Shapiro disputes the rural vs. urban framing, pointing to supporters in rural areas, including hunters and farmers.

“These are people that are upstate,” Shapiro said. “I live upstate. This is an imaginary divide.”



Photos By: Alexis Kissinger



**Zak & Zoe on
their Trampoline!**

Idahoans react to Fish and Game's new wolf management plan

Commissioners unanimously passed the controversial plan in early May.

Abby Davis | ktvb.com | May 28, 2023



Credit: istock RDeMaste

IDAHO, USA — Idaho's Fish and Game Commission unanimously passed a new wolf management plan in early May, hoping to gradually cut the state's wolf population by about 60%.

Currently, about 1,300 wolves live around the Gem State. Roger Phillips, Fish and Game spokesperson, said they are trying to bring that number down to 500 based on what the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recommended when wolves in Idaho were removed from the Endangered Species list.

"This [plan] really outlines how we manage wolves and how they fit in with other game animals and other species in the state, like livestock," he said.

Phillips said reducing conflict between livestock and wolves was the catalyst for passing a new plan. Since 2014, wolves have killed nearly 1,300 livestock from about 300 producers.

Data also shows wolves killed 289 livestock from July 1, 2021, to June 31, 2022. Cameron Mulroney, Idaho Cattle Association vice president, said he is less concerned about the actual "goal number" Fish and Game has in mind.

He just wants results.

"Reducing conflicts and making sure that [wolves] are part of the environment but not overburdening our industry, that's our main goal," Mulroney said.

Livestock kills take a toll on ranchers, he said. There are financial repercussions as well as emotional.

Mulroney said he understands why managing wolves is controversial but thinks Idahoans should look at it from a rancher's point of view.

"Sometimes people don't fully understand the emotional connection that that producers have with that animal," Mulroney said. "A loss of it when it's unplanned and maybe even as gruesome as sometimes it can be in depredations, it's hard on a producer."

Ranchers are compensated if a wolf kills their livestock. But he said it is harder to confirm a "true kill" than expected. There is a lot of grey area if the livestock is not found almost immediately.

Not everyone is on board with the new plan, including conservationist Dallas Gudgell with the International Wildlife Coexistence Network. Gudgell said killing wolves is never the answer.

While there are non-lethal methods mentioned in the plan, most of it revolves around hunting and trapping. There are no limits on how many wolves people with a license can kill.

"We do not need lethal takes," Gudgell said. "If you're out on the land with flags, fox lights monitoring, heard dogs ... those are the best non-lethal methods, and they're easy."

Gudgell said there are other examples of successful and non-lethal wolf management plans, like the Wood River Wolf Project. He thinks the project is a "perfect" blueprint.

"There's 16 years of data," he said, "20,000 sheep out there on the land with wolves coexisting, and the conflicts are so minimal. Those sheep and the livestock in that area where the wolves live are all non-lethal."

He thinks Fish and Game's new plan should exhaust all non-lethal options before killing a wolf. More than that, Gudgell said wolves are a special part of Idaho's ecosystem.

Taking them away, he believes, takes away part of the state's wow factor.

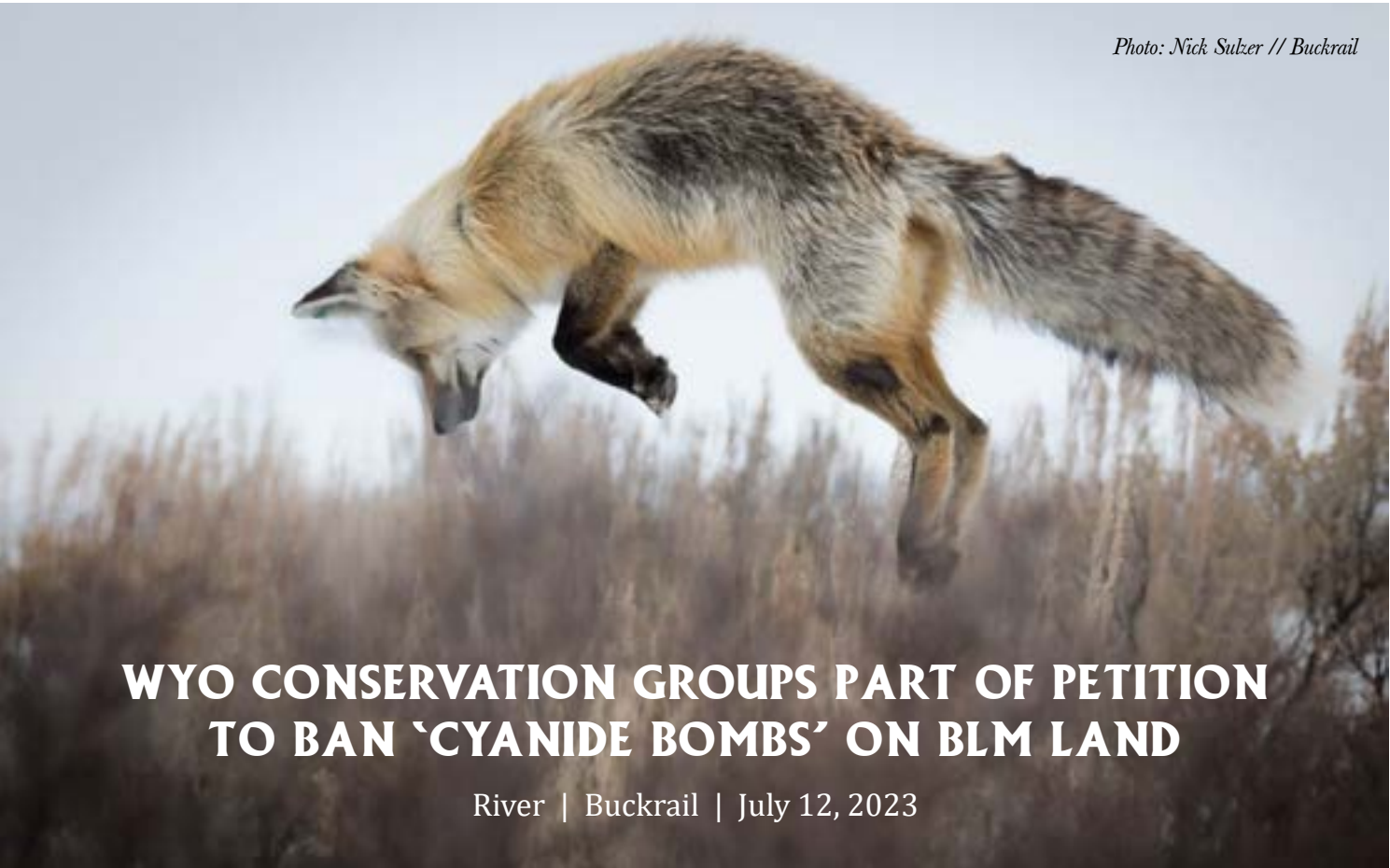
"When people come to visit Idaho, they want to see wolves," Gudgell said. "They want to go into the Frank Church and see wolves."

Phillips said they've tried other options since Fish and Game started managing wolves more than 20 years ago, but they are just simply seeing too much conflict.

"We saw a modest decrease last year of about 13%," he said. "If we can trend that over six years, we'll probably be about where we want to be."

But Gudgell believes the problem is blown out of proportion. He said livestock depredations have remained low, especially when comparing the number of wolves in Idaho to livestock.

"We are less than point 1% of depredations of livestock," he said. "And for this, the sky is falling, and we have to eliminate our wolves down to 500."



WYOMING — On June 29, 76 wildlife conservation groups petitioned the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to ban the use of M-44s, also known as “cyanide bombs,” on lands administered by the BLM.

The letter was submitted by the Director and Senior Attorney for the Center for Biological Diversity and the Executive Director of Predator Defense on behalf of co-petitioners that included Executive Director of Wyoming Untrapped Jenny DeSarro, Chief Scientist for the Yellowstone Ecological Research Center Dr. Robert Crabtree and Executive Director of Wyoming Wildlife Advocates Kristin Combs.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) considers M-44s a tool to remove coyotes, foxes and feral dogs for the protection of agriculture. When an animal tugs on the baited capsule holder, it releases a plunger and ejects poisonous powder. According to the USDA, M-44 devices are accompanied by a posted warning sign and should be checked at least weekly.

However, the letter claims that the risk of injury and death to non-targeted wildlife, even potential endangered species, people and pets when using M-44s warrants a ban. Posted warning signs are not enough, the letter states, since pets, wildlife and young children don’t understand them. A cited incident in Oregon where a cyanide bomb caused a family dog to die shows that M-44s can cause an animal to suffer for up to eight hours.

In 2021, a bill was introduced into the U.S. Congress noting the same concerns.

According to the letter, alternative tools are available to protect livestock from predators including guard animals, range riders, sound and light-emitting frightening devices, fladry fences and different animal husbandry practices.

The letter points to the most recent data compiled by the USDA's Wildlife Services that shows M-44s were used in 10 states in 2022 that include Wyoming. In total, Wildlife Services killed over 1.8 million animals in 2022 using multiple methods; M-44s were responsible for the deaths of 5,514 coyotes, four feral dogs, 364 gray foxes, and 48 red foxes.

Of the total animals killed, there were 2,631 animals killed unintentionally, and M-44s were responsible for 150 of them, mostly foxes.

M-44s are not used on DOI lands administered by the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or the Bureau of Reclamation.

I came to visit a few days ago and I would like to correct one thing that was said by your (overall very nice and knowledgeable) docent. She said it is a myth that wolves howl at the moon.

As a Frontier airlines pilot I can say with proof that I have seen Chinook howling at the moon during day time as the picture below can attest (the moon is a little blurry).

;-)

Thank you for creating the center. I enjoyed it and will pass the word it is worth to see.

Best regards,
Gilles Marty



MEET A WOLF DAY

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

1st & 3rd Thursday of
the Month

4PM-5:30PM

\$40 Adults

\$20 Kids (6-11)

Colorado Wolf & Wildlife
Center

wolfeducation.org



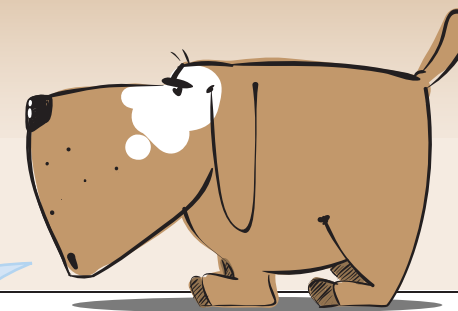
Adoption corner

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.]

EVELYN »

I'm a sweet, easygoing kitty looking for a quiet home and a lap I can take a good long nap on! I love to lounge around and watch the birds outside behind the safety of a window. I love to talk and give soft head butts to those around me.



« KING

I have gone through a lot of great training while I have been at TCRAS, and they had so much confidence in me they sent me to a board a train facility for two weeks, and I did amazing!! I am looking for someone who will continue my education and help me learn new and exciting things. I enjoy playing with dogs when we have proper introductions and a big yard to play in. I will need some time to adjust to a new place, but I promise to be a good boy and give it my all!



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



« STEVIE

Special Needs: Stevie needs a home at <5,000 ft. altitude. 2 year old Stevie was a rescue as a pup. Loves cuddles & fetching balls, toys, walks. House trained. He picks his doggie friends. Loves people; would not do well alone.

Unfortunately in the past 6 weeks he has become totally blind. Our veterinarian says he has pannus. He put him on eye drops and within a month, he could see some of the brown in his eyes. Stevie even got a glimpse of a cat at the veterinarian's office darting across the floor. At less than 5,000 feet and with the eye drops, he will be able to see again.