



# COLORADO WOLF & WILDLIFE CENTER

FEBRUARY 2022 · CONSERVATION · EDUCATION · PRESERVATION







*Rest in Peace,  
Sweet Kekoa*





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

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



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

CONTACT US  
[tours@wolfeducation.org](mailto:tours@wolfeducation.org)  
PO Box 713 Divide, CO  
80814 719.687.9742



## | SOCIAL MEDIA HAPPENINGS |

While we are all coping with our new way of life, you can still stay up to date with the animals here at CWWC. We are working to keep you involved in the work we are doing here, knowing how our animals are doing, and staying educated about wildlife news.


 **Subscribe to our YouTube Channel:**  
**ColoradoWolf&WildlifeCenter**

We post bi-weekly videos of the training and enrichment we are providing for our animals. Our bi-weekly educational vlog about wolves—*Wolf Wisdom with Erika*—talks about the wolf reintroduction of wolves in Colorado, and other hot topics.

 **Follow us on Facebook:**  
**Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center**

Thursdays between 3-4pm we have a Ask a Keeper livestream where you can ask us all those questions you've been dying to know. Every Friday at 8pm we post a video of one of

our keepers howling with the wolves for the Go Outside and Howl at 8 movement. We also share current wildlife events and stories that are happening around the world to keep you informed.

 **Follow us on Instagram:**  
**cowolfcenter**

We post pictures of our beautiful animals, share stories of what we are doing around the center, and keep you up to date on everything wolf and wildlife related. Keep your eye on our story for fun videos of the day to day lives of our wolves and keepers.

We will also be doing monthly and possibly weekly giveaways and sales. These will only be announced on our social media so make sure you follow us on every platform and turn on your notifications.

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



## *ISHA & ORENDA PRACTICING FOR THE PAIRS OLYMPIC SYNCHRONIZED DANCE*

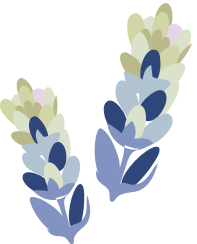


## *Requiem for a gentle spirit: Kekoa*



Photos by: Darlene Kokobel (October 2007)

Here I am in Colorado again.  
Doesn't matter which part or when,  
it's always the same.  
The town called to me... Divide.  
It's almost silly that a town with that name  
is where I feel the most together.  
The mountains. The trees. The wolves.  
My spirit animal is here.  
It was special this year.  
A renewed realization of the passage of time.  
There he was, Kekoa,  
a ruggedly handsome timber wolf...  
My friend.  
Thirteen years had passed since my first moments with him.  
A six-month old who allowed me to touch him,  
and I to let him kiss my face.  
Now a father of his own pups.  
Me about to become a great-grand father of one.  
What a moment we shared, thirteen years on.  
Our bond will forever live there.



Charlie Alfortish  
origin: February 15, 2022



# WOLVES HAVE WALKED WITH US FOR CENTURIES. STATES ARE WEAKENING THEIR PROTECTIONS.

*Gray wolves are being killed outside Yellowstone again. Some new state laws jeopardize decades of federal and state partnerships that had saved them.*

Deb Haaland | USA Today | February 7, 2022

Since time immemorial, wolves have lived alongside Indigenous peoples and have represented the virtues of healing, strength and familial protection. In many tribes, they are honored in traditional ceremonies and revered in storytelling.

Even today, I feel the embrace of my ancestors reminding me why our nonhuman relatives deserve respect – because the creator put them here to live.

For centuries, wolves have been exploited for their furs, killed in the name of protecting people, livestock and game species and nearly eliminated through government-sponsored actions. Decades of hard work by states, tribes and stakeholders on the ground, along with federal protections, successfully recovered gray wolves after two centuries of decline to the brink of extinction.

As secretary of the Interior, I am committed to ensuring that wolves have the conservation they need to survive and thrive in the wild based on science and law. I am also committed to keeping communities safe and reducing wolf conflicts with ranchers. It is critical that we all recognize that our nation's wolf populations are integral to the health of fragile ecosystems and hold significant cultural importance in our shared heritage.

## **Jeopardizing gray wolves recovery**

We are alarmed by recent reports from Montana, where so far this season nearly 20 gray wolves that set foot outside of Yellowstone National Park have been killed. This happened because the state recently removed longstanding rules in areas adjacent to the park, which were effective in protecting Yellowstone wolves that do not recognize boundary lines on a map.

We have communicated to state officials that these kinds of actions jeopardize the decades of federal and state partnerships that successfully recovered gray wolves in the northern Rockies.

The law requires that states uphold reserved tribal treaty rights. Therefore, in the case of the Ojibwe Tribes in Wisconsin, the Interior Department formally requested that the state consult

and coordinate with the tribes when making wolf management decisions and respect the tribes' right to conserve rather than kill wolves. We will take similar actions on behalf of other tribes where necessary.

Finally, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has authority under the Endangered Species Act to protect threatened and endangered species. Thanks in large part to this bedrock environmental law, gray wolves recovered from near extinction to current numbers that exceeded expectations. Because of the gray wolf's recovery, individual states are responsible for its welfare and sustaining that recovery. Nevertheless, we will reinstate federal protections under the ESA for the northern Rocky Mountains' gray wolf, if necessary.

## **Next steps for the gray wolf**

The Fish and Wildlife Service is evaluating whether a re-listing of the northern Rocky Mountains' gray wolf population under the Endangered Species Act is necessary.

Recent laws passed in some Western states undermine state wildlife managers by promoting precipitous reductions in wolf populations, such as removing bag limits, baiting, snaring, night hunting and pursuit by dogs – the same kind of practices that nearly wiped out wolves during the last century. In response, last September the Fish and Wildlife Service began a 12-month analysis to determine, guided by science and the law, whether reinstating ESA protections is warranted.

We also have the ability to act swiftly to protect gray wolves if science indicates that there is an emergency posing a significant risk to the well-being of the species. In such an emergency, the Fish and Wildlife Service can immediately list the species for 240 days. We are closely monitoring data on wolf populations and will make those determinations if merited using the best available science.

Gray wolf recovery has been an American conservation success story. The continued recovery of gray wolves depends on the cooperation of wildlife managers at the state, tribal and federal levels, and a reliance on the best available science to

guide management decisions. The clock is ticking. We must find solutions that allow wolves to flourish, even while we balance the needs of hunters and ranchers and others who live and work along with wolves on the landscape.

My Pueblo ancestors taught me to live with courage, respect our ecosystems and protect our families – the very same virtues that wolves embody. From our public lands to our vast oceans, and all the creatures that live within them, I will continue to work hard for our nation's wildlife and its habitats, because we were meant to all coexist on this earth – the only place we all call home.



PHOTO: istock



# Cute Animal Couples Contest





# HELP US TO BUILD OUR NEW RED WOLF ENCLOSURE



We are in the process of building our new American Red Wolf enclosure! It is quite the process as it starts with completely demolishing the old enclosure, cutting down and removing dead trees, and then rebuilding it. The main difference on this one is that the new enclosure will need to meet SSP/ AZA/CPW standards because the Red wolf is a federally endangered wolf. That means 8' high chain link, 3' cantilever tops and two catch pens. This enclosure will cost in the upper \$30,000 range. If you are interested in donating to help us financially with the costs, please send to the address to the left. Any donation of \$250.00 or more, your name will be added to our Red Wolf monument.



## WAYS TO CO-EXIST WITH WOLVES

[www.woodriverwolfproject.org/tools](http://www.woodriverwolfproject.org/tools)



<https://tinyurl.com/RestoreWolfProtection>

## HOW TO BE A VOICE RIGHT NOW

Written comments are encouraged to be provided through the online comment form available at

**Wolf Engagement CO Comment Form** | [tinyurl.com/weo-comment](https://tinyurl.com/weo-comment)

Verbal comment opportunities are available in person at the **SAG meetings** as well as in person and/or virtually on Parks and Wildlife Commission meeting agendas

**Wolf Engagement CO** | [tinyurl.com/weo-advgrps](https://tinyurl.com/weo-advgrps)

**CPW Meetings** | [tinyurl.com/cpw-meet](https://tinyurl.com/cpw-meet)

I will also keep you updated on the progress that is being made (good or not so good) from every SAG meeting I attend for the next 14 months. I can tell you that now is the time to speak up and become part of this process as it is being formed and it will become the way Colorado manages our wolves.

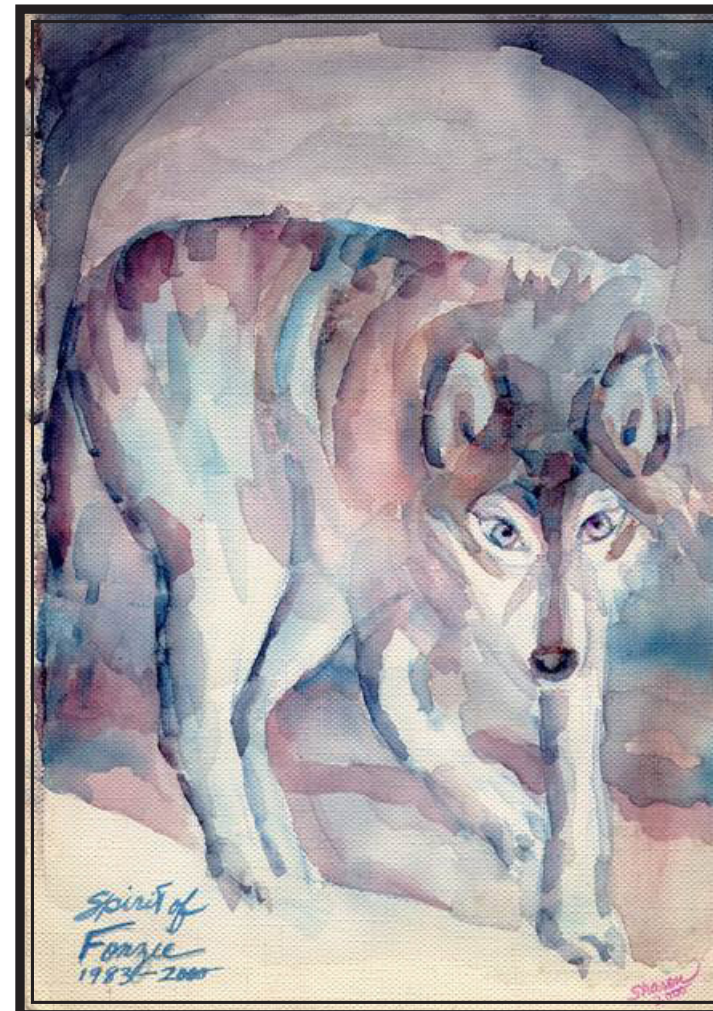
**YOU** can help prevent our wolves from being like what has happened in Idaho and Montana. Be their voice now.

## ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

### ABOUT THE ARTIST |

Dear Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center,  
Attached is a painting I did of my wolf/dog Franzie (affectionately called 'Fonzie'!!) the day after he passed away. I wanted to thank you for the good work you do to raise consciousness about wolves. I rescued Franzie thinking he was a particularly difficult, wild husky dog but upon meeting a woman at a national park where we were camping with our dogs, she told me that she was very familiar with wolves and was certain that Franzie was part wolf, which I felt, explained why he was so difficult (impossible) for me to work with. Nevertheless I stuck with him though he got me into so much trouble!! He lived until the age of 17!

Much Peace,  
Sharon Azar





# Fort Collins man is first volunteer range rider on Colorado ranch where wolves killed cattle

By Miles Blumhardt | Fort Collins Coloradoan | February 5, 2022

Dale Baker would want to see wolves while huddled in his Sprinter van most any other time.

But on this frigid night in rancher Don Gittleson's pasture, they are the last thing he wants to see.

Baker is a wolf lover who has made multiple trips with wife, Fay, to Yellowstone National Park to see the predator.

Baker, who retired and moved in June to Fort Collins from Steamboat Springs, is Gittleson's first and so far only volunteer range rider whose job is to keep wolves from the Jackson County rancher's herd of registered angus cattle.

"I would rather see them through my spotting scope in the daytime rather than my headlights at night," said Baker, 63, while keeping watch over Gittleson's herd this week.

The goal in Yellowstone is to stay quiet and watch the meadows to increase his chances of seeing wolves.

Baker's goal in Gittleson's pasture is to drive around, occasionally flashing the Sprinter's lights on and off in hopes of keeping the wolves from returning and killing more cattle.

Baker said he didn't know Gittleson until reading

newspaper stories about wolves killing three of his cattle in December and January. Given that he loves wolves and had spare time, Baker found Gittleson's phone number online and decided to give the rancher a call.

"I thought maybe the right thing to do as someone who really likes wolves is to try and help him and the wolves out," Baker said. "We talked for about an hour. From the wolves' standpoint, they couldn't have picked a better rancher to go after. He hates to see them kill or injure his cattle, but at the same time he kind of sees what wolf people like me see in wolves and understands their role in nature."

Colorado Parks and Wildlife officers initially helped Gittleson watch over the herd at night after wolves killed a calf Dec. 18. After that, the added chore mostly turned over to Gittleson because his wife, two sons and their wives work in Steamboat Springs and are at the 11,000-acre ranch northeast of Walden only on weekends.

A month after the calf was killed, the nearby wolfpack killed a pregnant heifer and injured another pregnant heifer badly enough that Gittleson had to shoot her. All three cattle were killed late at night.

After the Jan. 18-19 killings of the heifers and an adjacent rancher's working cattle dog, neighbors and U.S. Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services employees to help string up about 3 miles of fladry around part of a pasture. Fladry is a thin electric wire fence with flags attached to scare wolves away from livestock.

Gittleson said the wolves have been back since the fladry went up, which he has repeatedly had to restring after it was blown down by wind, but they haven't gotten into his herd of about 180.

Gittleson said Wildlife Services tried to hire a range rider to help him but it couldn't find anyone who had received their COVID-19 vaccination to do it.

"Not really sure why you would need to be vaccinated because it's mostly just me out here and all this land," Gittleson said.

This past week, Baker has taken the early night shift, midnight to 4 a.m., and Gittleson the later shift.



Dale Baker (left) and Don Gittleson, along with dogs Jake and Moose stand in a pasture where Baker is helping Gittleson protect his cattles from wolves. *Courtesy of Dale Baker*



(Top of Page & Above Photos) Volunteers from nearby ranches trudge through deep snow to string electric fencing with flags meant to deter wolves from cattle along a small pasture on the Gittleson Angus ranch northeast of Walden, Co.

Baker said Gittleson doesn't expect him to keep guard in the pasture until midnight but that he goes out much earlier because his experience watching wolves in Yellowstone has shown they start hunting in the evening.

He said he has seen moose, deer and elk during his shifts but has yet to see wolves while range riding or while off-duty scoping the nearby hillsides for a glimpse of the pack of two adults and six grown pups. He said Gittleson has seen tracks around the perimeter of the pasture.

"I do 30-minute cycles of driving around pointing my headlights on the cattle," Baker said. "The biggest obstacles are the frozen cow pies. It's like driving up a river bed."

Gittleson said he appreciates the help, especially on nights like Wednesday, when the temperature dipped to 32 degrees below zero.

"Now I only have to be out there half the night, so that helps," he said. "But he's going to wear out at some point."

Baker said wolves kill a low number of livestock, which studies have proved, but he understands ranchers' concerns regarding wolves killing their livestock.

"You really start to think about it," Baker said. "The sad thing up here is we are playing catch-up. There was no hazing allowed until it was too late and now we are trying to get the wolves to unlearn this behavior. It will become a big babysitting job."

Until the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission passed an emergency regulation allowing the nonlethal hazing of wolves Jan. 12, there was no way for ranchers to legally protect their livestock from wolves.

Gittleson said area ranchers have voiced their concerns to CPW officials of wolves ever since last spring. That's when it was confirmed by CPW officials that two adult wolves that naturally migrated into Colorado from Wyoming had birthed the state's first pups in 80 years last spring.

Once the six pups got big enough, the pack started preying on Gittleson's cattle and the issue quickly flared.

Wolves are set to be reintroduced into the state no later than the end of 2023 after voters narrowly passed a reintroduction measure in 2020.

Defenders of Wildlife has donated fladry to Gittleson, and Working Circle, a nonprofit group whose mission is to help ranchers and wolves coexist, visited Gittleson this week to offer suggestions.

Baker isn't sure how long he will be able to volunteer, saying he has a trip planned to Michigan in the near future. He said he's way behind on his sleep and the hours are challenging, but there seems to be plenty of helping hands willing to aid Gittleson and other ranchers working with issues that wolves present.

"People get emotional about wolves," Baker said. "My experience is you either like wolves or you don't. I like wolves and I want to keep them alive."





# WORKING CIRCLE

Colorado Wolf and Wildlife has partnered with Working Circle. Working Circle is an organization who is dedicated to ensuring wolves, livestock, and people can successfully coexist and thrive on shared lands long-term.

Karin Vardman, is coordinating volunteers to do a night watch at the Gittleson's ranch in Waldon to make sure that the new wolf pack does not approach the area of the cows.

We are happy to say that with the combined help of Working Circle and CWWC staff and volunteers, starting from February 19th to the end of March, we have found people to be guardians. Our hope is that if we can get through winter, then the young

wolf pack will have lots of deer, elk and pronghorn as natural prey.

Fact: Only .02% of cattle are depredated by wolves. This new pack has no other adults to help hunt large game and mom has 6 pups that are now 10 months old and growing appetites. Normally, packs have other members who help and since somehow the parents got very lucky and made it through Wyoming where they kill wolves in almost 90% of the state for no reason, this couple has to fend on their own. This is why CWWC believes that there was the depredations.

So until those pups get old enough to hunt with the parents, we need to help them.

## PROTOCOLS & INFORMATION FOR CATTLE NIGHT WATCH Gittleson Family Cattle Company

**We are still in need of volunteers for March 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 and also in need of a volunteer to partner up with a gal on March 25 and 26.**

If you are interested in being a wolf guardian, you will first go through a screening process with Karin Vardaman from Working Circle, which is an organization who focuses on reducing wolf-livestock conflicts.

Here are some guidelines/protocols for your time in the cow pasture.

### First time Volunteers:

- Please review carefully the cattle watch protocols and be sure you are prepared for this experience
- All prospective volunteers must have a phone call with Don to get his final OK
- Please be sure you arrange a time during daylight hours to meet with Don Gittleson prior to your first shift. This will allow him to show you the lay of the land and review needs. This is also a great opportunity to learn from him and for mutual sharing
- Be sure you sign the Liability form and return to Karin at: [karin@workingcircle.org](mailto:karin@workingcircle.org) prior to first shift

### Shift Times:

- 11:00pm to 7:00am
  - » If you have two people, one person can doze while the other keeps watch

- 10:00pm to 4:00am is second option if one person or simply can't take a full shift
- For those who want to help but unable to spend as long of hours, we understand – please discuss with Don on potential options.
- Please inform Don ahead of time of your preferred shift times
- Please try to give 48 hours notice if you are unable to keep a shift; of course, we understand that emergencies do arise

### Recommendations:

- An all-wheel or 4x4 vehicle with good tires is recommended. The pasture is bumpy, can be muddy and/or icy, and snow depth may be several inches. Also, Hwy 8 can be icy with snow and slush.
- Dress warmly; layers recommended. Wear sturdy, waterproof hiking boots, cold weather gloves, and hat o You will mostly be in your vehicle during watch (hopefully with a good car heater).
- Warm beverage, water, and snacks for inside your vehicle is recommended
- If you have quality binoculars you may choose to bring them to scan the

surroundings in the early morning light

### Lodging/Meals:

- If you have two or more back-to-back shifts and have a camper or camper van, you may, with Don Gittleson's permission, park on the property to sleep during the day
- We recommend Antler's Inn for Lodging or North Park Inn and Suites if you are staying in town
  - » River Rock Café (inside Antler's Inn is excellent for meals)
- There are two good coffee houses:
  - » Holy Grounds
  - » Rise and Grind
- RV parks and campgrounds are closed during winter in North Park. There is no winter maintenance on Forest Service roads, thus off road/public land camping is virtually non-existent due to lack of access.

### General Considerations:

- Any hiking or exploring on Gittleson's ranch is by permission of Don
- Please note that property on both sides of County Hwy 8 is private land, thus please no trespassing (hiking)
- Be respectful of the family's privacy and remember that this is their private home and ranch
- Photos are by permission of Don Gittleson only
- Safety protocols must be followed
- No open fires allowed on property
- No illegal drugs or smoking on property
- No firearms allowed during watch

### Confidentiality and Intent

Your volunteer service is part of a comprehensive and collaborative effort to help wolves, livestock and people. And in order to promote meaningful collaboration among diverse communities and forward greater understanding around wolf conservation and sustainable ranching, it is critical that trust and confidentiality be kept and the pure intent of this volunteer opportunity be ensured. Per the request of the Gittleson family, we ask the following:

- Please do not reach out to media or

comment to media regarding your experiences as a volunteer without permission by Don Gittleson

- Your volunteer experience is not to be used for personal gain or for any organizational gain, including using this experience to promote your organization and/or business
  - » Adding this experience to your professional resume/vitae is fine. For students, we are happy to provide a letter documenting your service
- You may post about your experience on your personal social media, but ask that you do not disclose any personal information about the Gittleson family or their operation
  - » Please be mindful of your messaging and the sensitive topic nature of wolves and ranching; remember that whatever you post, as with any social media, your messaging can either help or harm the efforts on the ground, and others outside your direct community may read or become aware of its contents

### Volunteer Stipend

- An expense stipend is available to volunteers who need financial support with travel or lodging costs; this is a reimbursement for expenses incurred. If you need financial assistance please contact Karin Vardaman (contact info below); up to \$150 for first night and up to \$75 for each night beyond night one. The stipend will be sent after completion of your shifts.

### Cattle Watch Protocols:

- Make sure you have Don's phone number in your cell phone for easy and quick access
- You will be provided with a powerful night light to scan the cattle and surroundings during your shift; light is to be returned to Don in the morning
  - » Use this light to scan cattle at distance as not to disturb them
  - » Shine from your vehicle window and/or **stand just outside your vehicle** to get a better/full view
  - » **DO NOT wander around the pasture alone at night and/or get too close to** *continues on next page...*



## cattle

- If you have an air horn or can obtain one, please bring with you
- Park in pasture (you will be shown location)
- Be sure to secure fladry after you enter or exit (and remember the wire is HOT, so use handle)
- Keep engine on and lights on (brights preferred); you will be shown general direction to face; sound of engine and lights may act as a deterrent to wolves.
- If you are able to stay warm enough with your car heater running with the windows cracked, this will help you hear any bawling from the cattle; ideally radio is playing quietly or off
- The cattle will bed down in groups in various locations – generally 3-4 groups. When you first arrive, if your vehicle is capable, you may wish to drive up and down the pasture to get an idea of where the cattle bunches are located – keep a close eye on where you are driving, there are generally a few single cows laying down and the individuals could be harder to see. Or, IF you are on watch with another individual, TOGETHER you can walk around the pasture with the light to get a good feel for where the cattle are bedded down – DO NOT do this alone. If you can't drive around the pasture or walk around the pasture – it is OK.
  - » Please avoid getting too close to cattle or shining light too closely to cattle as this will disturb them and may cause them to move.
  - » On occasion during the night, one or more cows may get up and wonder around alone or move to another group.
- Your role is to keep an eye on the cattle, not look for wolves. However, scanning the surroundings with the night light is a good deterrent and may also alert you to their presence
- Approximately every 15 minutes (or less), check on the cattle with the night light and do a scan of surroundings. **You are looking to see if the cattle are settled and calm – if**

## so, you are good.

- If your vehicle is capable, you can drive up and down the pasture (slowly please) 2-3 times during your shift to check on cattle that may be difficult to see. **Keep a safe and respectful distance from the cows to minimize disturbance.**
  - » The vehicle movement may also provide a deterrent if wolves are nearby
  - » You may need to step out of your vehicle to get a full and clear 360 degree view. For the most part, this is enough to ensure cattle are safe.
  - » DO NOT walk around pasture alone for any reason. If you have a partner on watch and feel that you need to walk around the pasture to get a better look at cows out of view, do so only with someone else
- Keep a respectful distance of the cows and avoid shining the light at close range on the cows – this may disturb them
- For the most part it will not be necessary and drive or walk around the pasture. The watch can be done from the confines of your vehicle; you will be able to notice if the cattle are agitated, disturbed or running around from your parked vehicle
- Other deterrent tricks include; flashing your lights on-and-off on occasion, changing the location of your vehicle (slightly east or west); getting out of your vehicle with a flashlight (do not wonder from your vehicle)
- Please be sure you keep all trash inside your vehicle including TP (used or not); do not leave trash (even buried) on the premises
- No alcoholic beverages, smoking, or drugs allowed during watch. We need you alert, focused, and safe

## Wolves in the Pasture

- If you see wolves INSIDE the fladry fence line and/or the cattle are agitated (moving around, running, or bawling), call Don IMMEDIATELY! If you see wolves approaching the cattle inside the pasture, honk your horn and flash your lights (**do not chase the wolves with your vehicle**). You can yell at them and if you have an air horn, you may blow it towards the wolves. **DO**

**NOT chase the wolves on foot.** To minimize further agitation of cattle by your actions – try, if possible to aim your energy and/or noise towards the wolves away from the cattle

- » PLEASE NOTE you may not take any action that may potentially cause harm to the wolves or DO NOT do anything or take any action that may injure cattle
- » DO NOT do anything that puts you at risk or makes you feel uncomfortable. See safety protocols below. **Your safety is more important than that of the cattle**
- Once the wolves have exited the pasture OR are moving away from the cattle – stop putting pressure on them – allow them to move on and out of immediate area

## Wolves Outside of the Pasture

- If you spot the wolves on the other side of the fladry fence line and they are simply passing by – **leave them alone.** If they are on the other side of the fladry fence line, but stopped and eyeing the cattle or bumping the fladry – you may flash your headlights, honk, or shine your night light at them. At this point they should move away. If they don't, use your air horn. CALL DON if you are concerned.
- **If the cattle are not agitated, avoid agitating them by your actions.** Your energy should match the energy of the situation to avoid undue stress on the cattle but prevent a possible incident
- Fox and/or coyote may enter the pasture – they generally don't bother the cattle. Some cows may stand up and stare, but will settle back down. There is no need to panic. Use the cattle's behavior as your clue as to whether there is a need to take action. Also note, that fox may appear bigger in the dim night light, so be sure of what you are looking at before you do anything.
- Thus far, the fladry and human presence is working! The wolves have been seen outside the fladry but have not breached the fence line.

## YOUR SAFETY IS THE #1 PRIORITY!

As much as we appreciate the support and good

will, we do not want to compromise your safety in any manner.

- Please be aware of your surroundings and use common sense
- DO NOT wander around the pasture on foot alone at night
- Keep a safe and respectful distance from the cattle
- DON'T shine the bright light too close to the cattle – this could agitate them
- DON'T BE A HERO! If the cattle are worked up and running around, do not place yourself in danger by approaching cattle or attempting to deter predators. Again, alert Don by phone immediately OR go to the house.
- Stay warm and stay hydrated
- If at ANY time, you feel unsafe or uncomfortable with the job, please do not hesitate to call Don in the night to come cover for you. IF you have any questions before your watch please ask
- If you are planning to go home after a night shift and this requires a longer drive, we ask that you take time to sleep before you drive. If you need financial assistance to book a motel or hotel room so that you may rest prior to driving home – don't hesitate to reach out to: **karin@workingcircle.org**. Again, your safety is #1 priority

## By committing to shift dates, you are agreeing to abide by the above guidelines and protocols

Thank you again for considering volunteering! The night may be long, but the mornings are stunning! Your time and service is invaluable to ensuring that wolves, livestock, and people can successfully share the landscape long term.

## CONTACTS:

Don Gittleson 970-734-7322

Karin Vardaman 949-429-9950; [karin@workingcircle.org](mailto:karin@workingcircle.org)

**Ranch is located at end of HWY 8 in North Park, between Walden and Cowdrey**

- **There is cell service/reception and cell hotspot capability at the ranch**

**[www.workingcircle.org](http://www.workingcircle.org)**



# America's New War on Wolves and Why It Must Be Stopped

*Hunting of wolves is again legal in the Northern Rockies, where running them over with snowmobiles or incinerating them in their dens is now permitted. The Biden administration must stop the slaughter of these wolves and protect their recovery from the brink of extinction.*

By Ted Williams | Yale Environment 360 | February 17, 2022



America's tradition of persecuting wolves has resumed. And although it's mostly happening on federal land, the Biden administration appears singularly unmoved and unconcerned.

In 2021 conservative state lawmakers in Idaho, Montana, and Wisconsin seized wolf management authority from trained wildlife professionals and reembarked on the age-old war on wolves, radically liberalizing wolf trapping and hunting regulations.

In Wyoming, where wolves were delisted from the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 2017, the politicized Department of Game and Fish allows year-round wolf killing across 85 percent of the state at any time and by virtually any means, including running them over with snowmobiles and incinerating pups and nursing mothers in dens.

On July 1, 2021 Idaho implemented legislation designed to reduce its wolf population by 90 percent. It established bounties as high as \$2,000, authorized

financial compensation for wolf hunters and trappers (amounting to an additional bounty) and, like Wyoming, legalized wolf killing at any time and by virtually any means. Idaho has earmarked just over \$1 million for wolf killing.

Montana passed similar legislation that seeks to eradicate 90 percent of its wolves. It also implemented a de facto bounty system by compensating trappers and hunters for wolf-killing expenses. And it did away with the wolf-protection buffer around Yellowstone National Park. Before their 1995 reintroduction, wolves had been the only missing major element of the park's native ecosystem.

After 2020, when the Trump administration delisted wolves everywhere save the Northern Rockies and Alaska (where they weren't listed anyway), Wisconsin authorized killing during the breeding season. During three days in February 2021, 218 wolves were slaughtered.

After virtually extirpating wolves from the West, America briefly recognized them as critical to healthy ecosystems. In 1995 and 1996, 66 wolves were trapped in Canada for release in Yellowstone National Park and central Idaho.

In arguably the greatest success story in the history of wildlife management, gray wolves reoccupied lost habitat across the Northern Rockies. The recovery goal — 15 breeding pairs each in Idaho, Wyoming, and Montana (or about 450 wolves) — was surpassed before decade's end. By 2020 there were an estimated 1,900 — mostly in Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming, but a few in Oregon, Washington, California, and Colorado. In Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota there were an estimated 4,200.

None of what's happening now is new or surprising. In 1905 the federal government tried biological warfare, infecting wolves with mange. Ten years later Congress passed a law requiring their eradication from federal land. By 1926 all wolves had been poisoned, shot, and trapped out of Yellowstone National Park. And by 1945 wolves had been essentially eliminated from the American West — all because of the fantasy that they were a major menace to livestock and a threat to big game.

The states fought wolf reintroduction from the get-go. For example, the Eastern Timber Wolf Recovery Plan, released “for discussion only” in 1975, contained naught but suggestions for state-sponsored research. Yet the ink was barely dry when state fish and game bureaucrats decried it as federal meddling. Eastern timber wolf recovery never happened.

This from Vic Van Ballenberghe, retired U.S. Forest Service biologist, former member of Alaska's Board of Game and still the strongest voice opposing the state's ineffective, politically motivated war on wolves: “It doesn't matter if hunters live in Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Wisconsin, or Alaska, they have the same theories about wolf predation on big-game animals and the same politically powerful organizations that lobby for broadscale wolf reduction.”

Wolves in Idaho and Montana and parts of Washington, Oregon, and Utah had been delisted from the ESA in 2011 via a congressional rider on a must-pass budget bill. So the states assumed management. Trained wildlife professionals in Idaho and Montana set hunting and trapping regulations. In the face of soaring mortality, wolf populations continued to thrive and even expand. Then, in 2021, newly elected

conservative legislators took over wolf management.

“It's about making ‘snowflakes’ cry,” remarks Ed Bangs who led wolf recovery for the Northern Rockies. “Wild-ass hysteria is driving public policy. Invent a nonissue like too many wolves. Fish and game departments had been doing a good job since delisting. Then the legislatures politicized everything and made wolves a symbol of liberals and outsiders. It's 1850s stuff — let's show how much we hate wolves and the people who like them, and let's stick it to the feds.”

A large element of the hunting community hates wolves, too. In fact, with some notable exceptions, hunters are the main driving force in the new war on wolves. The allegation, echoed by politicians, is that overpopulated wolves are devastating deer and elk.

Yet in Wisconsin, grossly overpopulated white-tailed deer are destroying wildlife habitat, including their own. And Dan Ashe, director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) under Obama, offers this: “Elk numbers across the West are way above management objectives. I used to be proud of being a hunter. Not so proud now. Hunting has become radicalized and imbedded with the gun culture and wolf persecution.”

Hunters can't have it both ways; they can't brag about performing the ecological function of natural predators and simultaneously demand that those predators be eliminated. Hunters are seeing fewer elk and deer not because wolves have reduced populations, but because wolves have made their prey skittish again. Shooting from truck windows doesn't work anymore.

Livestock depredation is another make-believe issue. In 2015, 1,904 wolves shared the Rocky Mountain West with 1.6 million cattle. Wolves killed 148 cows, or 0.01 percent, and the states compensated ranchers.

“This isn't about elk, deer, livestock, or science,” says Ashe. “It's just old-fashioned persecution, hatred, and cruelty.”

At this writing the only action taken by the Biden administration (other than defending the Trump delisting) has been a year-long wolf status review, as if proof is required that wiping out most of the population is bad for a recovering species.

TO CONTINUE READING, VISIT  
[tinyurl.com/waronwolves](https://tinyurl.com/waronwolves)



# COCO FOR MAYOR

**WE ARE PLEASED TO  
ANNOUNCE THAT  
COCO WILL BE A  
CANDIDATE FOR  
MAYOR OF DIVIDE!**

To vote for Coco, you can stop by the Center, write a check (\$2.00 per vote) and send to CWWC PO Box 713 Divide, CO. 80814 Attn: Coco

Or call TCRAS 719- 686- 7707, and you can say that you are voting for Coco. They will take your credit card.

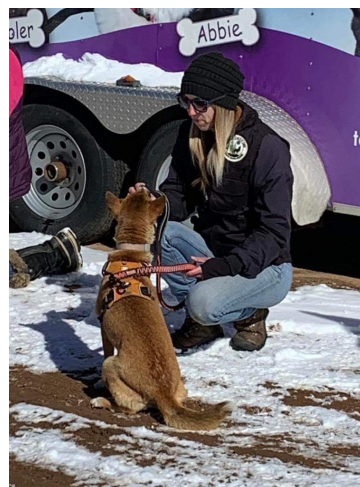
**VOTING STARTS 8AM,  
FEBRUARY 14TH AND  
ENDS AT 9PM TUESDAY  
APRIL 5TH.**



Coco attended the Mayoral Candidate Interviews at TCRAS, the local no-kill animal shelter, where she mingled with her running mates and interviewed with Fox21 news. She was a star and did a great job representing her platform. You can watch the interview on Fox21's website.

**TINYURL.COM/  
COCO4MAYOR**

**EACH VOTE WILL COST  
\$2.00**



On February 9th, Colorado Parks and Wildlife captured, collared, and performed a health exam on one of the wolf pups in Jackson County. Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center held a naming contest on social media to pick a name for this beautiful girl. After 40,000 people weighed in, the name Akawe was chosen. Akawe (aa-kah-way) is the Ojibwe word for "first". The Ojibwe people view wolves as wise mentors and have fought for protection of wolves in parts of the United States; as have many Indigenous American tribes.

Akawe is the first wolf pup from the 2021 litter to be collared, and part of the first litter born in Colorado in over 80 years. She will be the first of many wolves to call Colorado home.

## "Why Wolves" Presentation at Garden of the Gods

In January and February CWWC staff member Michelle gave a presentation at Garden of the Gods called "Why Wolves?" Which gives an in depth look at the history of wolves in Colorado and Proposition 114, the wolf reintroduction initiative which passed on the November 2020 ballot. The hour long program goes over every aspect of what Proposition 114 requires and where the planning process currently stands. It also covers some of the misconceptions about wolves and the commonly asked questions regarding their restoration in Colorado. During the presentation Michelle brought along Grizzly and Shaya to meet the group of attendees. Shaya is a wolfdog that attends our off-site programs. The presentation has been a hit with park visitors who have found it engaging and educational. Another program is scheduled for March 12th at 1:30pm. Space is limited to 15 people and pre registration is required.

To sign up go to GardenOfTheGods.com and find the Calendar of Events. All ages are welcome!





# PARTY FOR THE PLANET

— EARTH DAY —

APRIL 17TH 9-11AM

WOLF TOUR

FACE PAINTING

RAFFLE

GAMES  
& MORE



**COLORADO WOLF & WILDLIFE CENTER**  
\$40 AGES 12+ | \$20 AGES 6-11 | [WOLFEDUCATION.ORG](http://WOLFEDUCATION.ORG)



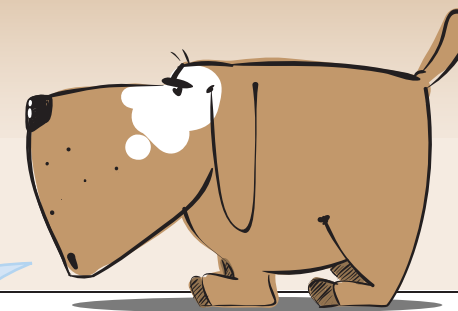
# Adoption corner

## TCRAS

Teller County Regional Animal Shelter  
tcrascolorado.org · 719.686.7707

## SLVAWS

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



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



« AGE: 5 years 2 months  
SEX: Female/Spayed  
Retriever, Labrador/  
Doberman Pinscher

**MISHKA**



« AGE: 10 months  
SEX: Male/Neutered  
Domestic Shorthair/Mix

**CRICKET**



AGE: 2 years »  
SEX: Male/Neutered  
Domestic Longhair/Mix

**BINX**



AGE: 2 years 1 month »  
SEX: Male/Neutered  
Hound/Mix

**WALLY**

**SLVAWS  
ADOPTION FAIR**  
Every Saturday 11:00am-3:00pm  
at the Petco in Colorado Springs  
5020 N. Nevada



« **SMUDGE  
AKA GOOD BOY**

Here is Smudge AKA Good Boy:  
Extremely Intelligent, Fun Loving  
Dog seeks new Best Friends to be a  
member of a Loving Home. Looking  
for a new position that will allow  
me to utilize my Loyalty, Goofyness,  
Companionship, Ability to Zoom  
& Stunning Good Looks. Certified  
Gentle Treat Muncher, Relaxed Bath  
Taker, Carefree Truck Rider, No Pull  
Park Walker. House Trained. Strong  
knowledge of Sit, Stay, Lay, Come &  
Leave it. 2 1/2 years old, neutered,  
chipped, all vacc's.