First Wild Wolf Pups in CO in 80 Years An Interview with Rick McIntyre In Loving Memory of Sasha





Summer 2021

W.O.L.F.

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Credit card:		#2: Vegan Option (GF)
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Facts & Tracks are back! In this issue we are thrilled to intoduce you to Wayaho and Yuki.



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<u>Mission</u>: To improve the quality of life for wolves and wolf dogs through:

Rescue - Save captive-born wolves and wolf dogs in need and find them appropriate placement at a sanctuary or other qualified site;

Sanctuary - Provide a lifelong home at W.O.L.F. in a natural habitat that takes into account each individual's physical, medical & emotional needs;

Education - Provide the public with education about the plight of wolves and wolf dogs (both captive-born and wild) to help foster a greater understanding of them and their value.

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Letter from the Director

Dear W.O.L.F. Friends and Supporters:

Happy Summer of 2021. As we enter the warm weather season which is certainly the least favorite for a wolf dog, we have multiple ways to help our animals beat the heat. When the temperatures soar into the 90s, the wolves play in troughs of water, dig cool dens into the moutnainside and sleep in the shade provided by the forest trees.

Summer means it is Gala time, so save the date of August 21, 2021. We are delighted to welcome our special guest, legendary wolf expert Rick McIntyre. He is a mesmerizing storyteller, and he brings his listeners into the amazing world of the Yellowstone wolf packs. Rick will be signing copies of his book *The Reign of Wolf 21*. You can read W.O.L.F.'s interview with Rick in this issue and learn more about the famous Druid Peak Pack! You do not want to miss this exciting event, so check out how to reserve your tickets now.

Colorado made national headlines with some exciting news. This spring, for the first time in over 80 years, wolf pups were born in the wild in Colorado! Our guest writer will give you the inside story on this extraordinary happening and what it may mean for the future of wild wolves in Colorado.

We are also celebrating the success of our Evacuation Fundraiser for our new emergency site. Because of the horrific wildfires last year, W.O.L.F. purchased over 300 acres of land in Weld County to serve as an emergency center. We concluded our fundraiser at the beginning of the summer and raised over \$28,000, inclusive of winning a \$2,000 grant. The funds enabled us to buy 3 Conex Containers for the site that will house our emergency supplies, provide areas for food preparation, water storage and tools and equipment needed to keep the enclosures clean and comfortable for the animals. The additional funds have allowed us to start planning for an internal road system and where to place the emergency enclosures.

We also have great news for our Red Feather property. We anticipate we will begin construction on the habitats in August. It is anticipated it will take four months to complete installing posts and fencing, after which there will be additional work for completing the habitats. We still have much to do, but we will be planning to move sometime in 2022.

I want to conclude this letter on a very personal note. We lost our beloved wolf dog Sasha on May 12, 2021. She was 15 years old. I had a special connection with this beautiful and strong wolf dog. She was self-possessed and dominant. When she tore a ligament in her leg, I spent many hours caring for her at our off-site infirmary building on my property where she lived for many weeks. She needed constant bandage changes and trips to W.O.L.F.'s veterinarian so I spent my days with her, and often cooked special meals for her to coax her to eat. Sasha was always a social animal with humans, but only on her terms. As the days and weeks passed, she grew to trust me to take care of her and even



to allow me to change her bandages. I often stayed overnight in the infirmary and watched over her as she slept. She was an incredible being who allowed me into her life and to handle her in ways I never thought possible. I will always love her and cherish our friendship. And so, I bid a final farewell to my beautiful friend until we meet again across that special bridge where our beloved companions wait for us. I hope you will read Sasha's memorial tribute in this issue and learn just how extraordinary she was.

As always, gratefully and humbly yours, Shelley

First Wolf Pups in 80 Years

By Gary Skiba

We have a special treat for our supporters! Gary Skiba, Wildlife Program Manager of San Juan's Citizen's Alliance shares exciting news on the recent sighting of six wolf pups located in the state of Colorado for the first time in 80 years.



The Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife (CPW) has confirmed the first known litter of wolf pups born in Colorado since paid "wolfers" eradicated wolves from the state in the mid-1940's. CPW biologists observed 3 pups in mid-June, and while wolf litters commonly have 4-6 pups, it's not yet known if there are over three pups in this litter.

The adult wolves migrated to northern Colorado, north of the town of Walden, relatively recently. The female wolf, designated F1084, has been in the area since July 2019. The non-biologist trapping crew that collared her in Wyoming originally mis-identified her as male.



Wolf F1084 photographed stalking prey in Colorado. Photo credit: Colorado Parks and Wildlife

In early 2021, a second wolf, now known as M2101, joined 1084. A CPW crew captured M2101 and fitted him with a GPS collar, allowing nearly continuous monitoring via satellite uplink. As you can imagine, the original misidentification of F1084 caused CPW staff to think these were two male wolves traveling together.

When the GPS enabled collar on M2101 showed his movements had become very restricted, CPW staff anticipated a litter of pups, and contacted the National Park Service, who had overseen the collaring of 1084. Luckily, the original crew had got a blood sample from 1084, and later analysis proved 1084 to be female—notably, no gender reveal party ensued.



Wolf M2101 recovering from being tranquilized and GPS collared. Photo credit: Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Now waiting to find evidence of a litter, agency personnel carefully visited the area and observed three pups from a distance. The pups were likely born in April or May, given the usual breeding period of wild wolves.

It's good news that wolves can successfully reproduce in Colorado. But what does it mean for the wolf reintroduction program required by Proposition 114? Not much really.

While a few wolves have made their way to Colorado from the north, it's not nearly enough to establish a genetically diverse and robust population. A similar situation existed in northwest

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Montana, where a few wolves reproduced, but eventually disappeared, which could happen to the Colorado pair.

Biologists know that active relocation of wolves is safe, humane, and effective—look no further than Yellowstone National Park and central Idaho. Moving wolves from the northern Rockies, where active hunting and trapping are removing them anyway, is likely the best path forward for establishing a wolf population in Colorado, and is also a way of rescuing some wolves from their an unfortunate end in those states.

Some opponents of wolf restoration claim that the wolves in the northern Rockies are "Canadian" wolves, and that they differ from the wolves that were native to Colorado. But gray wolves (Canis lupus) across the northern hemisphere, from Spain to Russia to North America, are the same species. There is some local variation, and while taxonomists have described subspecies, the differences are essentially meaningless in an ecological sense. Wolves act like wolves no matter where they're from, and because wolves regularly disperse from the area where they were born, there was always a lot of exchange of individuals from the Arctic to central Mexico. Bringing wolves back to Colorado will help reestablish that exchange, strengthening the genetic health of wolves across their range.

State law protects Colorado's wolves as an endangered species, despite the loss of Federal protections under the Trump Administration. The state law prohibits harassment, taking or possession of endangered species and violators can face between \$2,000 and \$100,000, or by imprisonment for up to a year in the county jail, and an assessment of twenty points (points affect hunting privileges, if someone accumulates too many they can completely lose those privileges).

So, while there is much to celebrate in the discovery of a few wolf pups in Colorado, scientists agree that the only defensible path forward is reintroduction. Translocating more wolves that are genetically diverse will ensure that Colorado's wild forests are once again home to wolves for many generations to come.

Gary Skiba is a wildlife biologist who worked for the Colorado Division of Wildlife for 25 years before retiring in 2010. He currently is the Wildlife Program Manager for the San Juan Citizens Alliance in Durango, Colorado.

Professional editing services have been conducted by Rob Edward, Strategic Advisor to the Rocky Mountain Wolf Project. Photo credit by Sarah Boyum.



Gary Skiba



Rob Edward

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An Interview with Rick McIntyre

By Jessica Kole Maney



Director of Development Jessica Kole Maney connects with esteemed author and world-renowned wolf researcher Rick McIntyre to discuss his latest book release, The Reign of Wolf 21: The Saga of Yellowstone's Legendary Druid Pack.

Rick McIntyre has spent more than

40 years watching wolves in America's national parks, 25 of those years in Yellowstone, where he has accumulated over 100,000 wolf sightings and educated the public about the park's most famous wolves. He has spoken about the Yellowstone wolves with 60 Minutes, NPR, and CBC, and he is profiled extensively in Nate Blakeslee's American Wolf and in international publications. He lives in Silver Gate, Montana.

Rick will be joining W.O.L.F. Sanctuary's Northern Lights & Lobos Gala on Saturday, August 21st, where he will be sharing personal stories from his book, available for purchase the evening of the event.

You can also purchase Rick's book online at Amazon — https://www.amazon.com/ Reign-Wolf-Yellowstones-Legendary-Yellowstone/dp/1771645245 or through Old Firehouse Books at https://www.oldfirehousebooks.com/ book/9781771645249.

Jessica: Greetings Rick. Thank you for taking the time to connect with W.O.L.F. Sanctuary today. We are huge admirers of your passion for wildlife, specifically wolves! Our supporters are very excited to hear from you. I'd love to ask a few questions from the public regarding your latest book release, *The Reign of Wolf 21*. Your recent book highlights the Druid Peak Pack. In your opinion, what makes this specific pack of wolves so special?

Rick: The Druid Peak pack was special for several reasons. They were one of the original seven packs brought down from Canada in the 1990s for Yellowstone's wolf reintroduction project. The long time Druid alpha pair (male 21 and female 42) became famous worldwide. The family got up to 38 members, making it the largest wolf pack ever known. The era of 21 and 42 now seems like a Camelot Golden Age for wolves in Yellowstone.

The story discusses in depth the incredible triumphs of Wolf 21 and highlights his special relationship with his mate, Wolf 42. Can you please share with our supporters what makes the couple 21 and 42 stand out in comparison to other wolf packs, and is there one memorable moment that will stay with you always?

Rick: Those two wolves stood out for many reasons. 21 never lost a fight but never killed a defeated opponent. He was a big, strong wolf but like to interact with his young pups and pretend to lose when he played wrestling and (continues page 9)



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chasing games with them. For many years 42 had to deal with an abusive and bullying sister, wolf 40. 42 built up an alliance with several younger females and they eventually overthrew 40. Under her cooperative leadership style the pack thrived. She and 21 had an especially close relationship. The older they got the more they looked like each other. Both were born with black coats, and they turned gray at about the same rate. When the two wolves were nearly nine years old 42 went missing and 21 was never the same after he lost her. What he did at the very end of his life showed how devoted he was to 42.

Interestingly, you share with your audience that Wolf 21 had bred with other females in addition to his mate Wolf 42. Is it unique to have multiple breeding females in one pack, especially at the Alpha status?

Rick: It is true that 21 bred other females in the pack in the early years. But later he only mated with 42. We find in Yellowstone that alpha males often breed with several females if they are unrelated to him.

Without giving away too many details for our supporters who have not had the opportunity to read your book, across your numerous years watching the daily lives of wolves, have you come across another dominant female, similar to Wolf 40 (Wolf 42's sister), which was not liked by the pack? Or do you feel Wolf 40's personality was rare for a pack leader?

Rick: What was so unusual about alpha female 40 was the aggression she directed at females in her own family. She drove out her own mother and a sister, wolf 41, then went after 42. She killed two litters of pups born to 42. All that was extremely destructive to her own pack. 42 had a personality that was the total opposite of her littermate and raised 40's pups after their mother died. Years later there was another alpha female, wolf 686, in the Mollie's pack who was also extremely aggressive, but she directed her violence against wolves in other packs, not against females in her pack.



We know of at least nine wolves in nearby territories that 686 and her pack killed. But during that time the other wolves in her group never turned against her. Eventually 686 attacked a family led by 42's grandniece, the famous wolf known as the 06 Female. That story will be told in a future book.

Our readers would like to know do you gradually form an emotional attachment to particular animals after watching them for so many years and knowing them so intimately?

Rick: Yes, you do get attached to wolves that you study for years, especially the ones that you greatly admire, like 21 and 42. But I find I can accept the deaths of wolves like them for they both lived long lives, raised many generations of pups, and had several sons and daughters that started their own packs. In 21's case, it looked like he chose the time and place of his final hours.

Last question, what is one of the greatest takeaways from the book you'd like for your readers to carry with them?

Rick: What I would most like my readers to take away from my books is a feeling of admiration for what wild wolves have to go through to survive, find mates, start raising a family, then devoting themselves to that family for the rest of their lives. They work so hard to support and protect their packs but also take time to play with their pups. My favorite memories of 21 are the many times I saw him doing that.

All Paws on Deck: Evacuation Fundraiser for Emergency Site

By Jessica Kole Maney

As many of you may know, the historical weather in Colorado has had its unfortunate share of wildfires. As Mother Nature is unpredictable, W.O.L.F. has prioritized a location to safely relocate our wolves and wolf dogs in need of an emergency.

Over the past eight weeks, W.O.L.F. has launched an Evacuation Fundraiser to raise money to purchase three Conex containers for our new emergency site located in Weld County, Colorado.

The Conex containers will be used for storing supplies that would be needed in the event of an emergency situation, including food, tools, potentially a generator, etc. The Conex containers will be placed so that they provide shelter from the wind for the enclosures that the wolf dogs would be housed in. Additionally, the Conex containers are leakproof so that we keep everything safe and dry, and rodent-proof too!

Our original fundraising goal was \$12,000 for purchasing three Conex containers. With the help of YOU, our supporters, we are pleased to share that W.O.L.F. raised a total of over \$26,000, AND an additional \$2,000 through your votes on the My Giving Circle platform for securing third place in the USA Environmental and Animal charity sector! This translates to a total of \$28,000+ raised, which is over DOUBLE our initial goal! Funds raised will also assist with prepping the area for the Conex containers and help construct the entry to the road.

We can't wait to share future pictures with you! From the bottom of our hearts, THANK YOU and a loud awooohoooo from our four-legged companions at the Sanctuary!



Red Feather Update

By LAURA J DAVIS

The Red Feather Lakes project continues to move forward! W.O.L.F. is in the process of getting the habitat enclosures and perimeter fencing constructed. The necessary building permit was obtained from Larimer County and W.O.L.F. signed a contract with Black Eagle Fence to complete the installation. Steil Surveying has completed the staking necessary to mark where the enclosures will be located. The fencing materials have started to be delivered with the first shipment of posts arriving on July 15th. It is anticipated that the installation process will begin in early August and take approximately 4 months to complete.

Construction on the main road is nearing completion. W.O.L.F. is in the process of identifying a contractor to complete the right of way access construction. Larimer County anticipates doing a site visit in late July. These tasks prepare the road for the completion of as-built (continued on page 14)

In Loving Memory of Sasha

By Michelle Proulx

Sasha's life began as a pet, rescued as a companion for another wolf dog by a family in Oklahoma. At first things seemed to be fine, but as Sasha grew, the family started to receive regular complaints about the wolf dog's howling. Instead of giving up the animals, the family talked to a friend who had some property outside of town and the friend agreed to allow them to build an enclosure for the wolf dogs, so long as the family continued to provide the day-to-day care.

Being separated from her humans, Sasha became increasingly more clingy when they showed up to care for the wolf dogs and more aggressive with her companion when he would try to get some attention. As a result the family began punishing her "bad behaviors" and eventually separated her from her companion. As time went on, they visited the wolf dogs less and less, until it got to the point where they would only come out to feed them once or twice a week. A friend of the family finally convinced them to find a Sanctuary to take Sasha to.

Knowing Sasha had issues with sharing attention when she arrived in the summer of 2010, she was tried with an older male who was unsocial with humans. Unfortunately Sasha still remained possessive over her caretakers, and after a number of aggressive interactions, it was decided that they would not work as a pair. Since most wolf dogs instinctively take care of pups, W.O.L.F. began searching for a young wolf dog to rescue as a companion for Sasha. Luckily one came onto the rescue network soon after she arrived and Sasha was paired with Pax.

Sasha immediately took Pax under her wing and taught him everything she knew...the good and the bad. For almost four years the two were a happy and rambunctious pair, playing constantly and acting as ambassadors for the Sanctuary at educational programs, but their relationship was not one to last forever. Shortly after turning four years old, Pax began challenging Sasha for dominance and when fights broke out, neither was willing to surrender. The heart-breaking decision was made to separate them and begin looking for new companions for each.

Though Sasha stayed alone for almost a year before the perfect companion for her came along, she was content to be the center of her caretakers attention. In spring, 2015, Jacob came to the Sanctuary. At first Sasha was not interested in sharing her space with another wolf, but Jacob's sweet, submissive and slightly goofy personality quickly won her over. Jacob was infatuated with Sasha and was always flirting with her and trying to engage her in play. Though Sasha tried to keep an air of aloofness with his antics while her caretakers were around, it was obvious she adored the attention she receive from Jacob.

Unfortunately, as Sasha got older she developed epilepsy and inter-vertebral disc degeneration and she started to struggle keeping up with Jacob's energy. The summer of 2020, Sasha's condition had deteriorated to a point where it became necessary to separate the two for her safety, though they continued to share a fence line so they could still interact with each other.

Sasha didn't seem to mind once again living the life of a bachelorette and enjoyed being the center of her caretakers attention. Staff and volunteers kept a close eye on her to monitor her quality of life as her epilepsy and disc disease progressed. In May of 2021, Sasha's condition had dropped to an unacceptable level and the decision was made to help her pass. A day was picked to allow all of Sasha's human friends the opportunity to say goodbye. She was showered with scratches, given dozens of cheeseburgers (her favorite treat from her time as an ambassador), and, in general, spoiled rotten.

On May 12, 2021, Sasha was helped to pass. Her passing was peaceful and as she took her final breath a chorus of howls rose from the wolf dogs at the Sanctuary, acknowledging her passing. Though her commanding presence is greatly missed, we all take comfort knowing that she is free of pain and enjoy the fond memories of her that linger in our hearts.



Wolf Facts & Tracks

By Michelle Proulx



YUKI - Female

Birthday: December 23, 2018 Given Sanctuary: June 23, 2020 Companion: Kieran Guardian Angel: Susan Weidel

Likes: Giving hugs.

Dislikes: Competing with Kieran for attention. **Favorite Food:** Anything without meds. **Fun Fact:** Yuki is confused by her caretakers attempts at howling and will always come investigate to see what is wrong with them if they try.

Personality: Yuki is an energetic, and often overwhelming, young wolf dog who seems to crave attention from most of her caretakers. Though not all of her caretakers are subject to the same level of enthusiasm, Yuki often excitedly weaves in and out of their legs as they try to navigate her habitat or jumps up and wraps her front legs around their waist to give them a tight hug in an effort to be the sole focus of their attention.

WAYAHO - Male

Birthday: December 11, 2011 Given Sanctuary: December 10, 2016 Companion: Nysa Guardian Angel: Kelly Hickey

Likes: Playing with his fence line neighbors. *Dislikes:* Being hungry. *Favorite Food:* Hotdogs.

Fun Fact: Wayaho enjoys getting presents and is quick to tear open packages or de-stuff toys.

Personality: Wayaho is a large wolf dog who desperately tries to make all of his caretakers believe he is tougher than he really is. He will often bark or mock charge his caretakers if they turn their backs, but as soon as they look back at him he will turn and retreat. With a few of his caretakers, Wayaho will drop his "big, bad wolf" act and approach them cautiously for a quick sniff. Occasionally he will even feel safe enough to allow them to give him a scratch on the chin before he walks away.



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drawings that will be submitted to Larimer County for final approval of the road.

In addition to the habitat enclosure and perimeter fencing, W.O.L.F. has obtained the water well permit and expects to install the well later this summer. Design engineering continues on the meat processing building, water delivery system from the well, stormwater management, and the septic system.





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Or if you want to purchase an item that directly benfits the wolves in our care, you can always check out our current wishlist at https://wolfsanctuary.co/wish-list/. What's even better is that these purchases may also qualify with AmazonSmile!

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