

Colorado's new wolf pack—including pups—to be captured and relocated after attacks on livestock

August 28 2024, by Elise Schmelzer, The Denver Post



Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

Colorado wildlife officials are relocating two reintroduced wolves and their pups after a series of livestock depredations—a setback for the

historic and controversial reintroduction program launched late last year.

The pack of wolves, called the Copper Creek pack, will be captured from the wild in Grand County, Colorado Parks and Wildlife announced Tuesday night. The agency did not disclose where the pack will be moved to, citing the need to protect the wolves and CPW staff.

"The decision to capture and relocate the Copper Creek pack was made with the careful consideration of multiple factors and feedback from many different stakeholders," CPW Director Jeff Davis said in a statement. "Our options in this unique case were very limited, and this action is by no means a precedent for how CPW will resolve wolf-livestock conflict moving forward.

"The ultimate goal of the operation is to relocate the pack to another location while we assess our best options for them to continue to contribute to the successful restoration of wolves in Colorado."

The announcement comes less than 10 days after the wildlife agency announced proof of at least three pups born this spring and shared a video showing the pups playing in a puddle. The [pups](#) are the first born to wolves released in December as part of a voter-mandated reintroduction of the predator species extirpated from Colorado nearly a century ago.

Since the reintroduction, wolves have killed or injured at least nine sheep and 15 head of cattle, according to Colorado Parks and Wildlife's list of confirmed depredations. Most of those depredations were caused by the paired wolves in Middle Park, which formed the Copper Creek pack, said Reid DeWalt, CPW's assistant director for the agency's Aquatic, Terrestrial and Natural Resources branch, on Friday during a Parks and Wildlife Commission meeting.

"We have had a few other depredations from the other wolves, but nothing to the level we've seen in Middle Park," he said.

DeWalt offered an update on the wolf reintroduction effort during the commission meeting but did not mention the plan to remove the wolves.

The agency still plans to release more wolves this winter, DeWalt said. CPW has not yet found a state or government willing to supply wolves after a Washington tribe reversed its agreement to provide the canines.

But DeWalt said staff members were confident they'd be able to find another source. The agency plans to release the next batch of [wolves](#) in the same northern zone they used late last year so that they'll increase the wolf population in the area, DeWalt said.

The agency has hired five predator damage conflict specialists. Their job is to focus primarily on wolf issues, but they will also work on predations with bears and [mountain lions](#), DeWalt said.

The five specialists and other CPW staff attended a two-week training in Oregon and Idaho to learn about wolf management and how to deter depredations, he said.

2024 MediaNews Group, Inc. Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

Citation: Colorado's new wolf pack—including pups—to be captured and relocated after attacks on livestock (2024, August 28) retrieved 28 August 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2024-08-colorado-wolf-pups-captured-relocated.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--