

Dear Board of County Commissioners and Mr. Rob Helmick,

In consideration of the WOLF II Special Review Application #16-Z2038, the danger that will be forced upon our neighborhood and families, should this application be approved, is unacceptable! WOLF has minimized the threat that wolf hybrids inherently present to our community, in order to pursue their agenda.

In WOLF's Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's), WOLF states that, "you and your children are much more likely to be bitten by someone's pet dog than another animal." The **TRUTH** is that the estimated 300,000 hybrids and captive wolves in the USA killed 10 people between 1986 and 1994 (about 1.25 deaths/year/300,000 hybrids) and injured many more. In contrast, the 50 million dogs in the USA killed an average of 20 people/year (about 0.11 deaths/year/300,000 dogs). Put another way, captive wolves and hybrids are 11 times more likely to fatally maul a human than a dog is. Additionally, bear in mind that many of those 300,000 hybrids actually have little, if any wolf in them, due to misrepresentation by breeders. If the statistics were only for wolves and genetically high-percentage wolf hybrids, the rate of fatal attacks would be much higher. While many dogs stalk and chase animals, including people, few of them follow through with an actual bite especially in the case of humans. The statistics bear this out!¹

The estimated 300,000 wolf hybrids in the United States do not even make up a thousandth of the U.S. dog population.² Yet, they are considered among the top ten most dangerous dogs!

In an analysis of data compiled from press accounts of dog attack deaths and maimings in the United States and Canada since 1982, "Wolf hybrids are usually kept well apart from children and from any people other than their owners. Yet, they have still found more opportunity to kill and maim than members of any other [kind of dog] except pit bull terriers and Rottweilers, each of whom may outnumber wolf hybrids by about 10 to 1."³ However, pit bulls account for 5% and Rottweilers account for 2% of the dog population causing that ratio to be significantly more pronounced.⁴

The Humane Society can **NOT** adopt wolf hybrids out and must euthanize them because of the danger they present to the public. The animals which WOLF houses have already been

¹ Tucker, P. & Weide, B. *Can You Turn A Wolf Into A Dog*. Hamilton, Montana: Wild Sentry, pp.3

<http://www.wildsentry.org/Hybrids.htm>

² Clifton, M. 2017 *Child gives an arm to pet a wolf hybrid*. *Animals 24-7*, pp. 2

<http://www.animals24-7.org/2017/04/14/child-gives-an-arm-to-pet-a-wolf-hybrid/>

³ Sikora Siino, B. *The Case Against Hybrids*. Petfinder, pp. 1

<http://www.petfinder.com/pet-adoption/exotic-pets/case-against-hybrids/>

⁴ Clifton, M. 2017 *Child gives an arm to pet a wolf hybrid*. *Animals 24-7*, pp. 2

<http://www.animals24-7.org/2017/04/14/child-gives-an-arm-to-pet-a-wolf-hybrid/>

determined to be unsuitable for human cohabitation and therefore, are “**dangerous dogs**” as defined by state statute.

C.R.S. 18-9-204.5. Unlawful ownership of dangerous dog – legislative declaration – definitions

(1) The general assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that:

(a) Dangerous dogs are a serious and widespread threat to the safety and welfare of citizens throughout the state because of the number and serious nature of attacks by such dogs; and

(b) The regulation and control of dangerous dogs is a matter of statewide concern.

(2) As used in this section, unless the context otherwise requires;

(b) “**Dangerous dog**” means any dog that:

(I) Inflicts bodily or serious bodily injury upon or causes the death of a person or domestic animal; or

(II) Demonstrates tendencies that would cause a reasonable person to believe that the dog may inflict bodily or serious bodily injury upon or cause the death of any person or domestic animal.

(3)(a) A person commits ownership of a dangerous dog if such person owns, possesses, harbors, keeps, has a financial or property interest in, or has custody or control over a dangerous dog.

C.R.S. 35-81-101. Legislative declaration

(1) The general assembly hereby determines and declares that:

(a) Hybrid canids and felines may pose a significant threat to other animals and humans because of their unpredictable nature;

(b) Wolf hybrids in particular may pose a threat to humans and have been declared responsible for killing two children each year in the United States.

As Boston, MA – based Tufts University geneticist and certified applied animal behaviorist Alice Moon-Fanelli, Ph.D., explains, “The unpredictability and the fact that you cannot generalize their behavior are what make wolf dogs so dangerous.” Combining hybrid vigor, or increased size and strength, results in a potentially overwhelming – and dangerous – animal. While domestic dogs have been selectively bred for centuries to submit to the bidding of humans, including attacking and releasing on cue, a wolf’s survival revolves around dominance, independent thinking, and pack structure.⁵

⁵ Sikora Siino, B. *The Case Against Hybrids*. Petfinder, pp. 2
<http://www.petfinder.com/pet-adoption/exotic-pets/case-against-hybrids/>

Chapter 6, Larimer County Code, Article 1

Section 6 – 1. Definitions

Dangerous animal means any animal that:

- (1) Has inflicted bodily or serious bodily injury upon or has caused the death of a person or domestic animal; or
- (2) Has demonstrated tendencies that would cause a reasonable person to believe that the animal may inflict injury upon or cause the death of any person or domestic animal.

Section 6-79. Dangerous pet animals prohibited.

(a) **It shall be unlawful to own or keep any dangerous pet animal.** A “dangerous pet animal” is one that bites or attempts to bite any person; bites another animal; or in a vicious or terrorizing manner approaches any person in an apparent attitude of attack, whether or not the attack is consummated.

Laws are written for the average situation; in this case, wolf hybrids are NOT your average dog. Hybrids don't act like other aggressive dogs. These animals have already demonstrated tendencies that have caused reasonable people to believe that the animals may inflict injury upon or cause the death of a person or domestic animal, or they would not be required to be in a sanctuary; unable to be adopted out by the Humane Society. **We as a community of reasonable people fear for our children's lives and those of our pets and livestock, due to the demonstrated tendencies inherent in these animals.** The TRUTH is that no apology will suffice at the graveside of a child, when this is foreseeable and avoidable by the relocation of WOLF to an appropriate location.

Wolves and wolf hybrids are capable of chewing through heavy gauge chain-link fencing, hybrids have jaws powerful enough to crush the femur bone of an adult bison, jump 8 feet high from a standstill, capable of running 35 mph, climb trees, and can move immense amounts of dirt in a short amount of time.⁶⁷⁸ They are not dogs, they are exceptionally equipped predators!

WOLF has already experienced one tragic event, costing a nine year-old girl a part of her finger. This occurrence was denied by a vocal, WOLF volunteer and spokesman, on a Nextdoor thread,

⁶ *Before You Decide...A Wolf-Dog Questionnaire*. Mission: Wolf pp.2
<http://www.missionwolf.org/page/wolf-dog-questionnaire/>

⁷ White, A. *Happiness in a Cage?*. Gray Wolf Conservation pp. 2
http://www.graywolfconservation.com/Wolf_Dogs/07_Recommendations.htm

⁸ Tucker, P. & Weide, B. *Can You Turn A Wolf Into A Dog*. Hamilton, Montana: Wild Sentry, pp.4
<http://www.wildsentry.org/Hybrids.htm>

dated August 16, 2016, “9. There have not been any safety issues at the Rist site.” Contrary to his statement, in May 2017, he had full knowledge of the attack and attempted to squash all discussion of the incident. During the Larimer County Planning Commission held on October 17, 2007, Mark Gilpin, Clear Creek County Animal Control, clarifying that he had been an animal control officer with the department for 14 years, avows that, “there had been no issues with the facility in terms of safety.” It is noteworthy that this falsehood is not corrected by any WOLF staff member.

In February 2001, WOLF requested a variance from the requirements for an eight-foot perimeter fence for the wolf enclosures from the USDA; citing (as one of the conditions) that WOLF is located in a remote rural location, without public access. This request came after a nine year-old girl was able to, “access the enclosure without supervision or permission,” according to the Nextdoor, WOLF spokesperson. Although new management was in place mid-2012, five years later, a perimeter fence has not been erected at the current site, as the reality of the situation and past events would lead a responsible person to have proceeded. WOLF’s continued lack of concern for the safety of others is apparent and demonstrated by their decision to ignore proven standards for containment of wolf hybrids; disregarding studies done at Mission: Wolf in 1999.⁹

Flagstaff, Arizona - Four wolf-dog hybrids chewed through an electrified fence to escape from their pen and killed a neighborhood dog and 17 turkey, chickens, and ducks.

Wolf Education and Research Center – Idaho – Wolf escaped her enclosure climbing a 13 foot, 5000 v., section of electrified fence which was reinforced at the top with a lean-in of taut wires no more than three inches apart, resisting a caretaker’s efforts to pull her off. She leaped to freedom.

These all too frequent examples of the true ability of wolves and wolf hybrids to escape their enclosures and the subsequent harm done, are readily available and contrary to WOLF’s image of misunderstood, shy puppy-dogs; the consequences are devastating to those who carry the burden. Recently, in Olympia, Washington, a three year-old boy lost his arm (not his hand, as stated in the WOLF II Special Review Application) trying to pet a wolf hybrid.¹⁰ Since 1982, 80% of people disfigured by wolf hybrids are children under the age of seven.¹¹ The **TRUTH** is that placing ANY number of wolf hybrids in a rural residential community, bordered on three sides by homes and families is foreseeably dangerous, especially to our children!

⁹ White, A. *Happiness in a Cage?*. Gray Wolf Conservation pp. 1-3

http://www.graywolfconservation.com/Wolf_Dogs/07_Recommendations.htm

¹⁰ Clifton, M. 2017 *Child gives an arm to pet a wolf hybrid*. *Animals* 24-7, pp. 1

<http://www.animals24-7.org/2017/04/14/child-gives-an-arm-to-pet-a-wolf-hybrid/>

¹¹ Clifton, M. 2017 *Child gives an arm to pet a wolf hybrid*. *Animals* 24-7, pp. 3

<http://www.animals24-7.org/2017/04/14/child-gives-an-arm-to-pet-a-wolf-hybrid/>

The **TRUTH** is that frightened wolves and hybrids have been known to scale fences that had contained them adequately for years. In fact, things that most dogs take in stride, such as umbrellas, people wearing backpacks, overhead ceiling fans, or who-know-what can panic wolves and hybrids. Extremely shy animals may panic simply at the approach of a stranger.¹² These are not animals suited to a tourist environment.

The Livermore/Red Feather area experiences weather events which accumulate three feet of snow in a 24 hour period. That quickly makes a 10 foot fence, seven feet tall or less with snow drifts accumulating among the edges of rocks, etc. Removing three feet of snow around the circumference of thirty-two enclosures, during times when the main road is impassable to locals and volunteers alike, is an irrational strategy. The likelihood of an escape for an animal that can jump 8 feet high from a standstill is extremely high!

As confirmed by WOLF in their application, the WOLF II property and surrounding area is prone to falling trees. The proposed enclosures are located within the trees; a tree falling on an enclosure will provide an effortless escape route for wolves and wolf hybrids. At their current site, WOLF has had trees fall on enclosures (as noted on Facebook) their luck is not by design and will run out; the only question that remains is, at what cost?

It is exceedingly disconcerting to have discovered an overt lie in the Special Review Application, WOLF FAQs, and apparently, to the Colorado Department of Agriculture during their inspection, dated June 24, 1013. In each instance, WOLF has stated that Cree, being a new arrival to the facility, escaped from an enclosure and was recovered within a week. Each account of this event is referred to as “the escape” (singular), “Cree’s escape” (singular), and “escaped from an enclosure” (singular). The **TRUTH** is that Cree escaped a minimum of two times! As reported by local news, the animal escaped once more by climbing through a spot in a newly installed roof designed to keep her from jumping out of the enclosure. WOLF Sanctuary manager, Steve Shaffer, said he was “cautiously optimistic” that Cree was home to stay. Stating that, “She could get out if she wanted to.”

WOLF has stated in their application and in their FAQs that, “Cree was never a danger to people; she was frightened from being in an unfamiliar place,” in reference to her escape from WOLF. The **TRUTH** is that this animal had just arrived at the facility, had been feral for the majority of her life, was an unpredictable wolf hybrid, and no person could guarantee that she, “was never a danger to people.” The **TRUTH** that was not addressed in WOLF’s statements was

¹² Tucker, P. & Weide, B. *Can You Turn A Wolf Into A Dog*. Hamilton, Montana: Wild Sentry, pp.4
<http://www.wildsentry.org/Hybrids.htm>

the imminent danger to domestic pets and livestock in the area.¹³ An unsuspecting child at play or neighbor's dog/cat could have easily been seen as prey.

During the Larimer County Planning Commission held on October 17, 2007, residents of Rist Canyon were assured by Stewart McNab, Attorney on behalf of W.O.L.F., that WOLF had set a standard for gating and fencing enclosures for animals of that type. This promise of safety standards was reaffirmed by Bonnie Mandel-Rice, the current Secretary/Director of WOLF. In the WOLF II Special Review Application, it is confirmed that there had been at least two prior escapes to this meeting in 2007 that had never been acknowledged by WOLF. The **TRUTH** is that the residents were and have been willfully deceived in Rist Canyon and Livermore/Red Feather area; and the assurances that WOLF takes its responsibility concerning safety seriously, are evidently mere words formed by lying mouths.

In WOLF's FAQs it is stated, "As with Cree, we will notify neighbors, authorities, and media immediately of an escape." It is disturbing to read "Emails from Current Sanctuary Neighbors to County Planner" letters. The first from Cinthia Johnson Horner states, "5) though W.O.L.F. boasted that there had never been an animal escape, our neighbors knew otherwise." Then, "Fast forward to 2012, ... we no longer have concerns regarding the Refuge." Second from Tracy Zentz, the mother of the nine year-old girl who tragically lost part of her finger, states, "since they have been rescuing the dogs, I have not seen or heard of any of the dogs getting loose." Additionally, she states, "The only problems we were having was with the previous operator of the property, Frank Wendland." Third from Peter Sherman, states, "I am aware that some neighbors are fearful of them; we are not. The enclosures are well-constructed and secure." Apparently, not one of these neighbors were notified of Cree's, at minimum, two escapes. The **TRUTH** is that WOLF's new administration can NOT be trusted to notify neighbors of escapes, as exhibited by their obvious conduct when Cree escaped. It is unknown how many wolf hybrids have actually escaped from WOLF considering their propensity to uninform and minimize the actions of their resident wolf dogs.

In WOLF's Special Review Application it is stated, "These animals have not been taught to hunt." However, on their website, a long standing statement of FAQs has informed the community that Cree, a wolf dog in their possession, had been running loose for much of her 7-8 years of life. In order to survive, it is reasonable to assume that she hunted for food as instinct would dictate. The **TRUTH** is that WOLF is not aware of the detailed history of many of their resident animals. They acknowledge that, "Prior to 2012, W.O.L.F.'s former management kept few records, including those of escapes." Considering the typical lifespans of wolf hybrids, many

¹³ *Before You Decide...A Wolf-Dog Questionnaire*. Mission: Wolf pp.2
<http://www.missionwolf.org/page/wolf-dog-questionnaire/>

these unrecorded animals would continue to reside at WOLF currently, without proper knowledge or documentation of their origins or histories. For WOLF to minimize these animals' instinctive, predatory nature and ability to hunt prey is deceitful with intent to promote their ambitions at the expense of our community and families.

In the few documents available for review, at this time, it is apparent that the current management has been in violation of Recordkeeping Regulations as well. On June 11, 2015, the USDA inspected the WOLF facility and found numerous violations. Included among them:

RECORDS: DEALERS AND EXHIBITORS

(a)(1) Each dealer, other than operators of auction sales and brokers to whom animals are consigned, and each exhibitor shall make, keep, and maintain records or forms which fully and correctly disclose the following information concerning each dog or cat purchased or otherwise acquired, owned, held, or otherwise in his or her possession or under his or her control, or which is transported, euthanized, sold, or otherwise disposed of by that dealer or exhibitor. The records shall include any offspring born of any animal while in his or her possession or under his or her control.

(iii) The vehicle license number and State, and the driver's license number (or photographic identification card for nondrivers issued by a State) and State of the person, if he or she is not licensed or registered under the Act.

The license did not make records of acquisition for at least 3 wolf-hybrid dogs that contain all the required information under this Section.

Complete records are required to ensure the animals are acquired legally for use in regulated activities.

TIME AND METHOD OF IDENTIFICATION

The record books for 4 wolf-hybrid dogs did not contain a clear photograph of each animal.

The record book requirements for exhibitors are necessary to ensure all animals can be properly matched to their official identification, to ensure that they have been acquired legally, and to readily identify each animal when exhibited to the public by photographic identification.

In addition to WOLF's questionable recordkeeping and truthfulness regarding the extent of their knowledge as it pertains to the individual hybrid in their possession, comes the question of oversight by independent agencies. WOLF states in their Special Review Application that,

“The organization operates under USDA and State of Colorado permits.” In their website FAQs, the question is asked, “Is W.O.L.F regulated in any way? W.O.L.F is licensed by Colorado Parks and Wildlife (License #16sanc738) and by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (License 84-C-0071). We are subject to routine unannounced inspections and audits.” The **TRUTH** is that this is a misleading statement, assumingly expressed in this manner to give the illusion that WOLF is inspected by both agencies. CPW does not inspect WOLF because they claim not to have any resident pure wolves’ only wolf hybrids.

The **TRUTH** is that our community, the Planning Board, and the Board of County Commissioners have no reason to trust the judgement or integrity of WOLF, as has been repeatedly demonstrated by their misrepresentations, omissions, and lies. We ask that our elected officials rather than promote the ambitions of an organization to establish dangerous dogs in an environment of families and young children attending the Boy Scout’s Camp, act to protect our families, defend our right to live without fear in our homes, and represent Larimer County citizens’ welfare and safety!