



Bridging the Divide:

Building
community
through
collaborative,
surprising, and
(un)likely alliances

Courtney Vail
CSU Extension Training
October 9-10, 2023



Rocky Mountain Wolf Project 2.0

RMWP 1.0

Responsible for the first ever successful ballot initiative to return an endangered species to its natural environment—by the people.

RMWP 2.0

CONFLICT REDUCTION

5 Board of Directors/Advisors who have transformed and rebranded the mission of RMWP into fostering collaborations to promote conflict prevention initiatives and tools to support people and wolves.

Courtney Vail

Gary Skiba

Rob Edwards

Matt Barnes

Joanna Lambert



The Science of Community

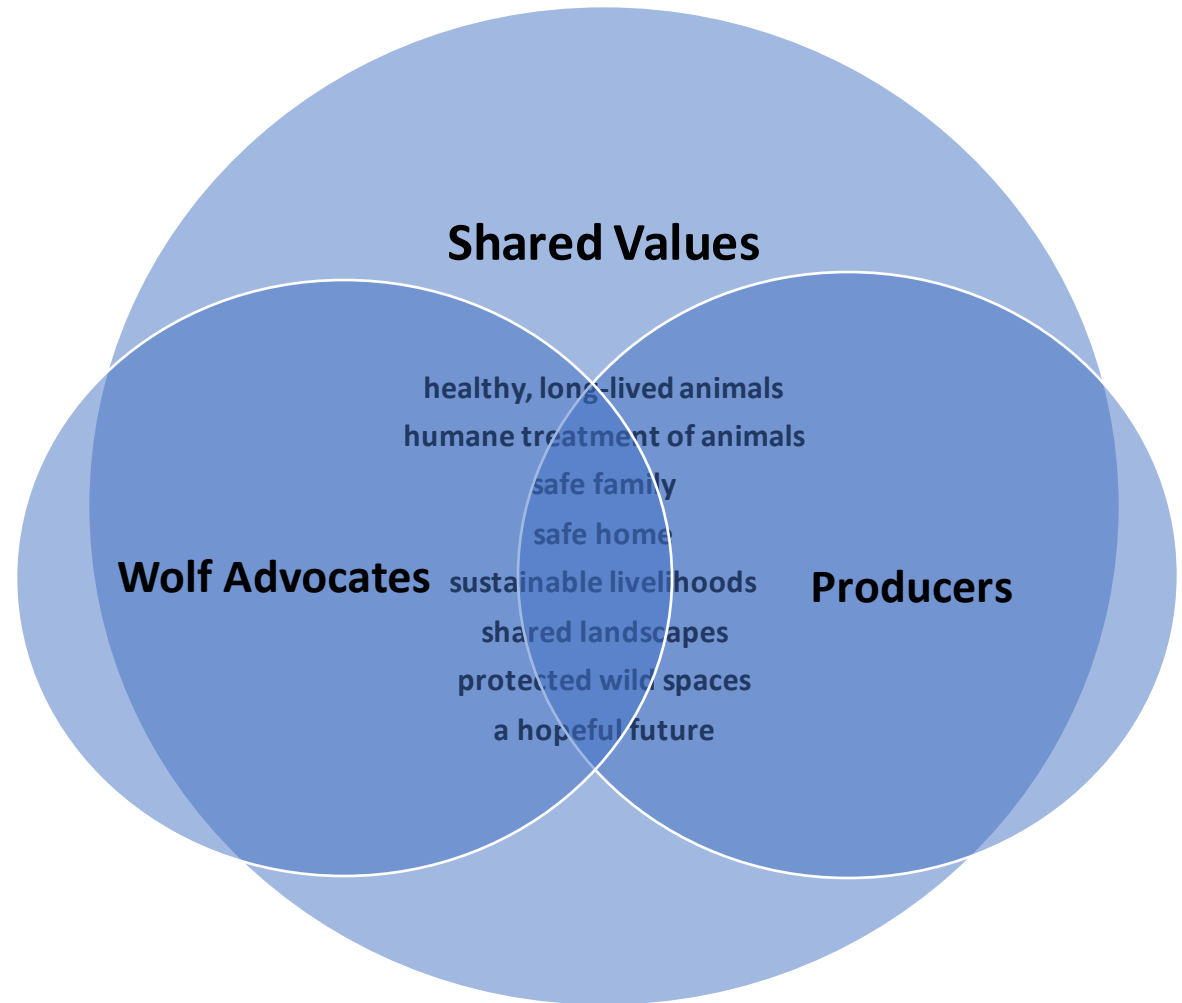
Hint 1: Shared values

Hint 2: Respect

Hint 3: Acknowledge the person on the other side of you

Hint 4: Get to know the 'other'

Hint 5: There are no short cuts



**What does
authentic
collaboration
look like?**

***Showing up is 80%
of life.***

~Woody Allen



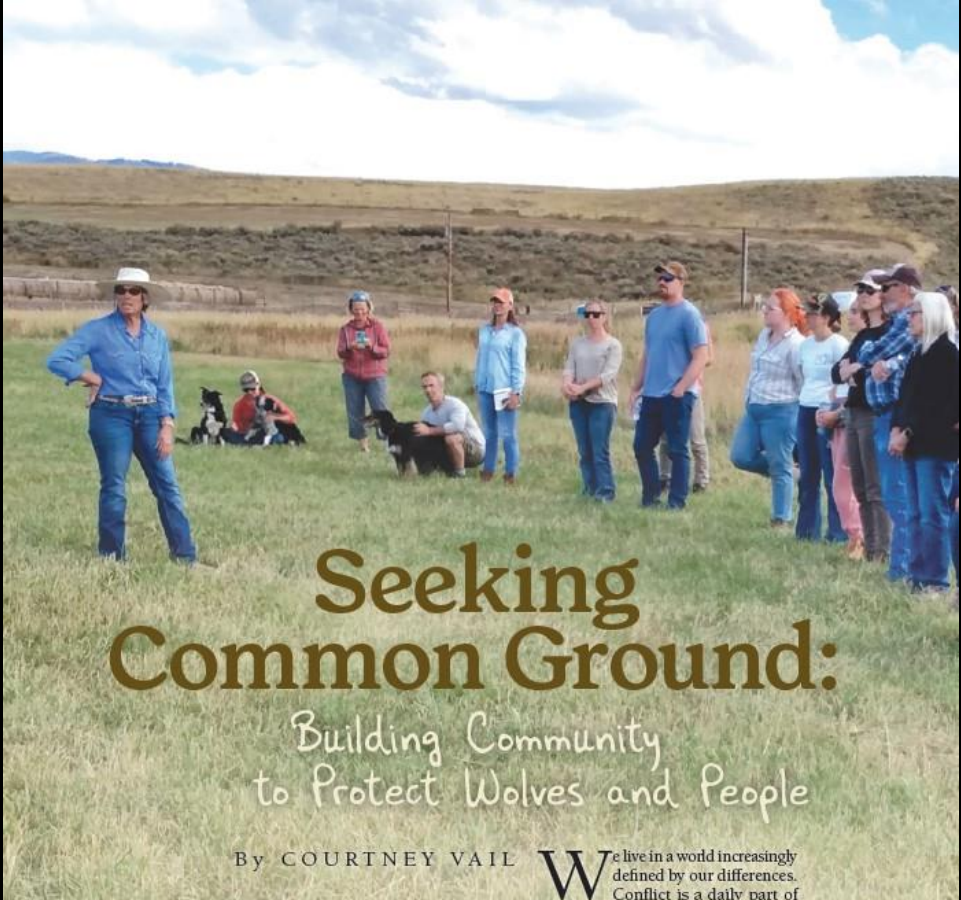
Community Dialogues

INTERNATIONAL WOLF

A PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL WOLF CENTER
SPRING 2023



- 4 Planning a Future for Wolves and People
- 8 Seeking Common Ground: Building Community to Protect Wolves and People
- 12 Ice Age Ancestors: Today's dogs carry genes from two ancient wolf populations



Seeking Common Ground: Building Community to Protect Wolves and People

By COURTNEY VAIL **W**e live in a world increasingly defined by our differences. Conflict is a daily part of

Community Dialogue at Stanko Ranch

Weekend Retreat in Steamboat Springs, Colorado

Come learn about Western Slope perspectives during a dynamic weekend of conversation, field demonstrations, and other engaging programming designed to foster mutual awareness and understanding about sustainable ranching and living with predators.

When: September 16-18, 2022

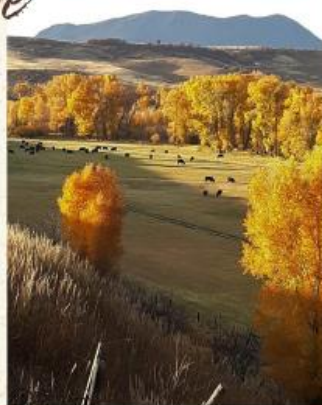
Where: Stanko Ranch, Steamboat Springs, Colorado

Program Overview:

Friday, September 16th:
Afternoon arrival of participants, welcoming comments, social hour and dinner with local families, and topical discussions about Western Slope communities.

Saturday, September 17th:
Small group tours, demonstrations, and engagement with host ranches in the morning; large group presentations at the Stanko Ranch in the afternoon/evening.

Sunday, September 18th:
Wrap-up, questions, evaluations, collaborations, and next steps.



Topics will include:

- Western Slope agricultural economics
- Livestock ranching on public and private land
- Managing lands: wildlife, water, and a changing climate
- Sustainable ranching in landscapes with predators
- Conversations with the next generation of Western Slope ranchers

- **Cost: \$50 per participant***
- **Registration: Register at Routt County's website here: <https://community-dialogue-at-stanko-ranch.eventbrite.com/>**
- **Registration deadline: September 1st**

**Participants are responsible for their own travel to and from Stanko Ranch, and for arranging their own accommodations. A Welcome Packet will be sent detailing travel and accommodation recommendations, retreat itinerary, and other important details upon registration.*



Photo: Sonia Knutson

Was it worthwhile?

“Yes, it brought together a group of people who were very unlikely to spend any time together, to have conversations about things considered to be flashpoints. Everyone was nervous and at the end they were not only comfortable talking about the topic at hand, but also other issues. There was a start in learning to truly listen and how to use language which opened doors rather than build walls.”

“Any efforts to reduce tensions and seek common ground solutions are worth trying, and this one felt like it succeeded in beginning to do so. Leadership from ranchers was critical to its success.”

“I learned more about the ranchers’ perspectives and also about advocates for wolf reintroduction. I think this was a first step for continued dialogue hopefully throughout the state.”

“We need to realize that divergent stakeholders are not necessarily enemies.”



Education and Outreach

- Student dialogues
 - MUN Impact
 - 4H, FFA
 - Special interest clubs
- Public outreach
 - State fairs, farmer markets
 - podcasts
- Community panel discussions
 - Aspen Center for Environmental Studies (ACES) symposium
 - Extension events



COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION



Mark your calendars!

WOLVES ON THE HORIZON: A COMMUNITY DIALOGUE

GUEST SPEAKERS!

Wildlife biologists
Ag economist
Ranchers
Wolf Advocates
Outdoor enthusiasts
and more!

Sponsored by



ROCKY MOUNTAIN WOLF PROJECT

MONDAY
APRIL 24, 2023
6PM-8PM
LAPLATA COUNTY
FAIRGROUNDS IN THE
LAPLATA ROOM

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS WILL
BE SERVED.
QUESTIONS

970-264-5931

WOLF CONFLICT
REDUCTION FUND



DONATE NOW!



Fundraising

- CSU Wolf Conflict Reduction Fund
- Born to Be Wild Specialty License Plate
- Direct donations to CPW and partners to support conflict prevention



Resources

- Educational materials
- Science and data collection
- Equipment and conflict reduction tools
- Expertise in coexistence methods



Field Work
(AKA showing up)

Community must not mean a shedding of our differences, nor the pretense that these differences don't exist. They do, and they will, but we must work to find balance at the speed of trust.

-Peter Forbes



Partners = Possibilities

Rocky Mountain Wolf Project

<https://www.rockymountainwolfproject.org>

Southwest Colorado Wolf Cooperative

<https://www.swcoloradowolfcoop.org/>

Colorado State University Center for Human Carnivore Coexistence (CHCC)

<https://sites.warnercnr.colostate.edu/centerforhumancarnivorecoexistence>

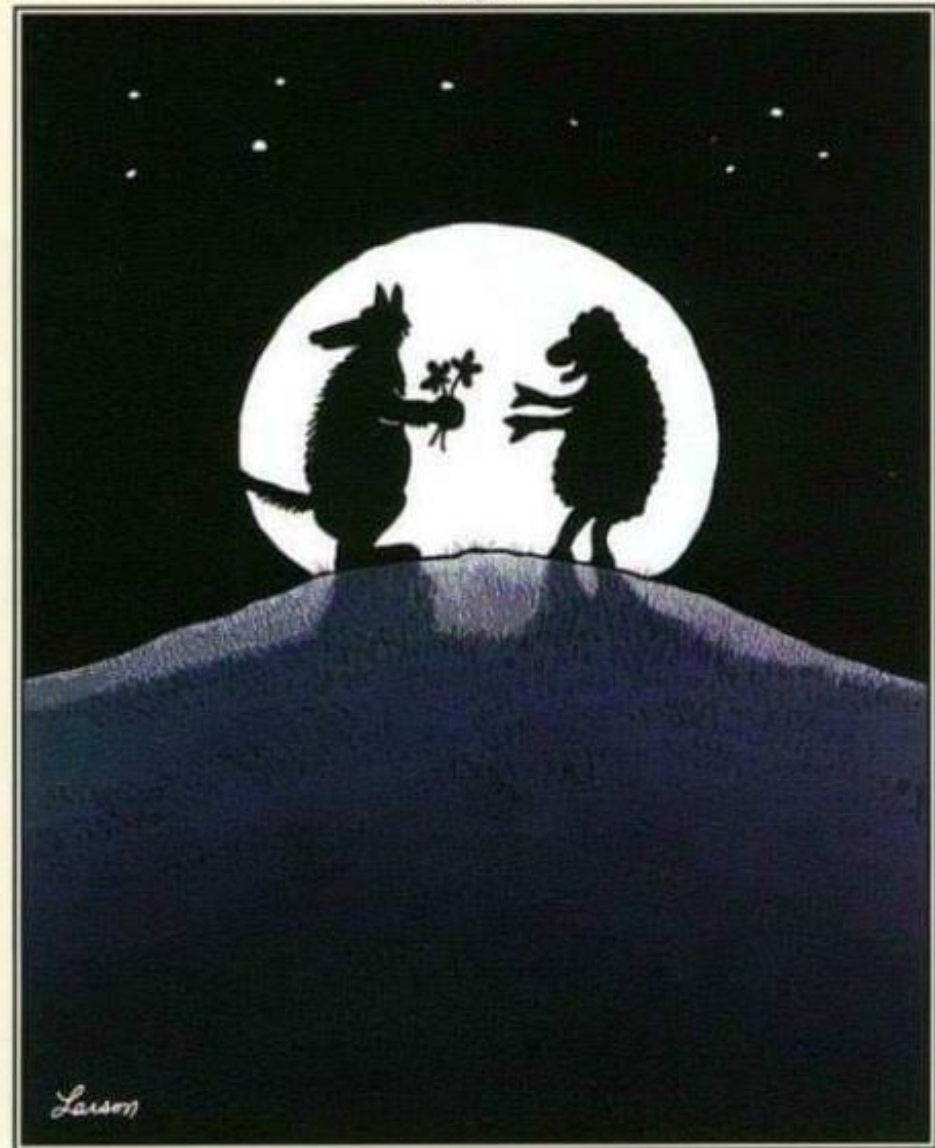
Working Circle

<https://www.workingcircle.org/>

How we view the world depends on where we stand.

Homework:

- ✓ Put yourself in his/her shoes.
- ✓ See the world through someone else's eyes (Try putting on another pair of glasses).
- ✓ Don't ever let your opinion on wolves get in the way of meeting someone new (Don't worry what the pack will think).
- ✓ Don't wait for leaders. Do it alone, person to person.
- ✓ Try collaborating at the speed of trust.



Inevitably, their affair ended: Howard worried excessively about what the pack would think, and Agnes simply ate the flowers.



Thank you!

