

Submit complaint by mail or email:

Colorado Secretary of State
Lobbyist Enforcement
1700 Broadway, Suite 550
Denver, CO 80290
LobbyistComplaints@ColoradoSOS.gov



RECEIVED
03/06/2024
ELECTIONS DIVISION

LOBBYIST COMPLAINT FORM

Any person that believes a professional lobbyist, redistricting commission lobbyist, or lobbying firm has violated the Colorado lobbyist laws or the Secretary of State’s Rules Concerning Lobbyist Regulation, may file a lobbyist complaint. A complainant must specifically identify one or more respondents, a violation of Colorado lobbyist laws or rules, and allege sufficient facts to support a basis for the violations of law alleged in the complaint. (See 8 CCR 1505-8, Rule 5.1 & 5.3) Please be advised, complaints are public information and the Respondent will be provided a copy of this complaint.

Your Information (Complainant)- Information about the person or entity filing the complaint:

Full Name: John Williams

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Email Address: johnmwmd@msn.com

Respondent's Information - Information about the lobbyist or lobbying firm alleged to have committed the violation:

Lobbyist Name, Firm Name, or Organization: Rhonda Dern; Bold Visions Conservation

Mailing Address: 91 Campus Drive, PMB #1004 Missoula, MT 59801

Telephone Number: (406) 370-3028 Email Address: https://www.bvconservation.org/about

Date of Violation: Feb 14, 2024 Location of Violation: Colorado state capitol building

Briefly summarize the allegations of your complaint and attach any supporting documents and materials.

On February 14th, 2024, Rhonda Dern appears along with Stephen Capra in a widely circulated Facebook video inside the Colorado state capitol in Denver, speaking about lobbying members of the legislature regarding wolf management. I cannot find Rhonda Dern as a registered lobbyist in the State of Colorado's database. How do ordinary citizens get access to our legislators' official offices without registering as lobbyists? It would seem that there would be opportunities to "buy influence", if these private citizens were not bound to the same ethical requirements that registered lobbyists in the State of Colorado must abide by. Per 8 CCR 1505-8, what is being done does not appear to be just "grassroots" lobbying. Link to the video in question on Facebook:

<https://fb.watch/qEIV5qX37Z/>

Here is a transcript of the video:

Capra -- "Hi. Steve Capra at the Capitol with Rhonda Dern, one of our members who is a rockstar

I hereby submit this complaint signed and in writing under section 24-6-308(2), C.R.S. and Rule 5 of the Secretary of State’s Rules Concerning Lobbyist Regulation (Electronic signature is permitted.)

Complainant's Signature: John Williams Date: March 6, 2024

On February 14th, 2024, Rhonda Dern appears along with Stephen Capra in a widely circulated Facebook video inside the Colorado state capitol in Denver, speaking about lobbying members of the legislature regarding wolf management. I cannot find Rhonda Dern as a registered lobbyist in the State of Colorado's database. How do ordinary citizens get access to our legislators' official offices without registering as lobbyists? It would seem that there would be opportunities to "buy influence", if these private citizens were not bound to the same ethical requirements that registered lobbyists in the State of Colorado must abide by. Per 8 CCR 1505-8, what is being done does not appear to be just "grassroots" lobbying. Link to the video in question on Facebook: <https://fb.watch/qElV5qX37Z/>

Here is a transcript of the video:

Capra -- "Hi. Steve Capra at the Capitol with Rhonda Dern, one of our members who is a rockstar lobbying and here we are. We've been making the rounds today. Rhonda, your thoughts?"

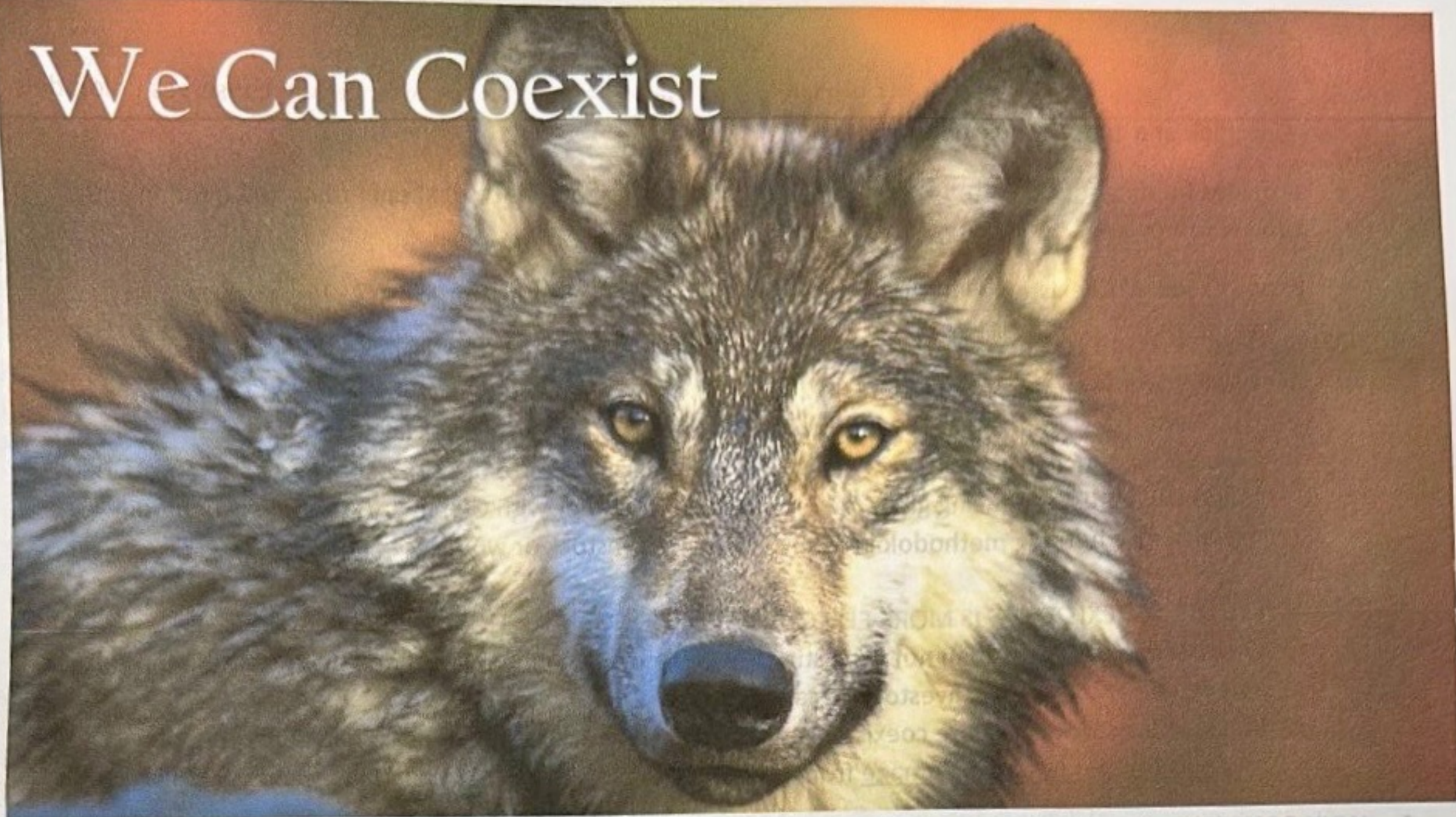
Dern -- "We have had a great day, every representative's office that we've been into, talking about Tammy Story's wildlife coexistence bill. They've listened deeply. They've were very positive, and it's just been a great day at the capitol."

Capra -- "Yes, we've had a great time, too. It's always fun to lobby when you have a great partner, so thank you very much for your support of Bold Visions Conservation. We'll talk to you soon."

1. **COLORADO WILDLIFE COEXISTENCE BILL (Indigenous-carnivore Nonlethal Coexistence Act)** conserves Colorado's native wildlife and ecosystems and protects livestock.
 - Provides funding for Coexistence tools, training on the art and science of shepherding and herding and carcass removal.
 - Requires use of Coexistence methods to be eligible for compensation for livestock loss to carnivores.
2. **COEXISTENCE WORKS TO PROTECT LIVESTOCK AND WILDLIFE. DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS:**
 - Wood River Wolf Project in Idaho. In 2023 they maintained 24,000 sheep in the 1200 sq km project area the Sawtooth National Forest with zero losses to wolves and no wolves killed.
 - Alderspring ranch in central Idaho. Glenn and Caryl Elzinga graze over 1650 deeded acres and 46,000 rangeland acres, producing grass fed organic beef. Together with Glenn, Caryl designed "inherding" practice as a herding methodology. They've had no livestock or wolf losses in 10 years.
3. **COST EFFECTIVE. COEXISTENCE IS MORE EFFECTIVE AND ECONOMICAL THAN LETHAL MANAGEMENT.**
 - Coexistence costs less than not coexisting. Coexistence strategies are funded by this bill and producers lose fewer, and often no, livestock to carnivores.
 - Because livestock-carnivore coexistence measures were not used in Colorado in 2022, the state spent \$382,128.00 for livestock damage from mountain lions (\$142,619.00) and black bears (\$239,509.00).
4. **WHY CONSERVE CARNIVORES? CARNIVORES ARE KEY TO MAINTAINING HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS.**
 - **ECOLOGICAL BENEFITS.** Through trophic cascades, carnivores influence entire ecosystems, benefitting both humans and the environment — accomplishing everything from increasing ecosystem resilience to climate warming, improving the health of elk and deer herds, and enhancing biodiversity.
 - **CARNIVORES ENHANCE BIODIVERSITY.**
 - Naturally diverse ecosystems are more stable and are more resilient to environmental catastrophes such as fire, flood, and drought. Healthy thriving ecosystems produce clean mountain runoff water, cool water temperatures benefiting many aquatic populations currently in decline.
 - Ecosystem stability and resilience benefits ranchers, farmers, and hunters by improving rangeland, soil, streamflow, and ungulate health.
5. **GOOD FOR SPORTSMEN. CARNIVORES IMPROVE UNGULATE HERD HEALTH:** Carnivores select the old, the young, the sick and the weak which makes prey populations healthier.
6. **CARNIVORES EVEN HELP MITIGATE CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS.**
 - Forests store enormous amounts of carbon. Carnivores like cougars and wolves influence foraging behavior of ungulates, allowing forest regrowth and increased carbon storage.
 - Omnivores such as black bears enable the spread of seeds to help forest regeneration.

Conserving native carnivores plays an important role in achieving broader goals of biodiversity protection, climate resilience, and environmental justice - by honoring the principles of benefitting all people, using science to guide our path forward, honoring Tribal sovereignty, and empowering private landowners.

We Can Coexist



Celebrate! Gray wolves have been reintroduced to Colorado after being gone for 80 years!

- Wolves are essential to maintaining healthy, biologically diverse landscapes that are resilient to stresses such as climate warming, drought, fire and flood.
- Healthy thriving ecosystems produce clean mountain runoff water, cool water temperatures benefiting many aquatic populations currently in decline
- Wolves improve ungulate populations by selectively removing the old, the young, the sick and the weak, which improves herd health.

Coexistence Works to Protect Wolves & Livestock

Gray wolves once ranged across Colorado. But a U.S. government-sponsored eradication campaign essentially eliminated wolves from the vast majority of the American landscape.

The last native wolf in Colorado was killed in 1945. With the loss of wolves Coloradans also lost the West's most important keystone carnivore.

- Wood River Wolf Project in Idaho. In 2023 they maintained 24,000 sheep in the 1200 sq km project area the Sawtooth National Forest with zero losses to wolves and no wolves killed.
- Anderson Ranch., Montana. By keeping cattle together, the Andersons have had no losses to wolves in herded first-calf heifers.
- Alderspring ranch, Idaho. The Elzingers graze over 1650 deeded acres and 46,000 rangeland acres, producing grass fed organic beef. Using a coexistence "inherding" methodology they've had no livestock or wolf losses in 10 years.

Wolves are valuable: Ecologically and & Intrinsically

- Through trophic cascades, wolves influence entire ecosystems, accomplishing everything from increasing ecosystem resilience to climate warming, improving the health of elk and deer herds, and enhancing biodiversity.
- Wolves are good for sportsmen! Wolves select prey that is old, young, or weak, making prey populations healthier and keeping them in balance with their ecosystem.