

WOLF HAVEN'S Heroes

by Kim Young, Director of Communications and Diane Gallegos, Executive Director

Wolf Haven International has provided a lifetime home for 300 displaced and captive-born canids since 1982. This nationally-recognized wolf sanctuary has the mission to "conserve and protect wolves and their habitat" and 2019 was one of our best years yet.

Each one of us has a favorite memory of wolves rolling, playing, eating, interacting, and howling, but when reflecting on 2019, we think about the remodels and physical improvements we made at both of our sanctuaries. Every modification was done with the goal of improving the quality of life for our resident wolves. At the McCleery Ranch in Montana, we had two portable above-ground corridors made that connect enclosures, giving the wolves more space. New above-ground shelters were also installed, so wolves have additional options for getting out of severe Montana weather. At the Tenino, Washington sanctuary, a brand-new enclosure was constructed, wooden shelter boxes added, chain link fencing replaced, and wooden structures rebuilt.

Kurtis Rattay, Wolf Haven facilities and animal care staff person in Tenino, built several new climbing structures to give the wolves mental stimulation and physical enrichment.

Wolf Haven had to overcome significant obstacles in 2019.

Looking for meaningful ways for humans and wild wolves to coexist remains an ongoing challenge. Wolf Haven has been involved with wolf conservation for decades (long before wolves reestablished themselves in Washington), and has been an active member of the state Wolf Advisory Group (WAG) since 2013. The WAG consists of diverse stakeholders: ranchers, conservation groups, hunters, animal rights organization, and many others. The group meets several times a year to discuss human-wolf conflict and advise Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife officials on wolf conservation and management. With so many different voices at the table—and in the general public—there are strong and diverse opinions, but the WAG con-



tinues its work toward fair and durable solutions with respect for all parties. It is slow progress at times, but the commitment to coexistence is evident in each person.

Wolf Haven is proud of what we accomplished in 2019, including successfully feeding and providing quality care for almost 90 wolves! There are 56 wolves who currently call our Tenino sanctuary home, while 33 wolves live at our McCleery Ranch in Montana. It's a huge responsibility to care for so many lives.

We also marked our one-year anniversary managing McCleery Ranch. The transfer of 33 wolves, outbuildings, equipment, and property took place one year ago, and with it, the permanent move of Wendy Spencer, longtime sanctuary director, to Montana.

Wolf Haven looks forward to 2020 and beyond.

We want to continue making progress in all three of our core areas: sanctuary, education and conservation. We will continue offering education outreach to Spanish-speaking and underserved communities, make quality of life improvements for wolves in our care, and keep working toward the recovery of endangered Mexican wolves and red wolves.

Wolf Haven also plans to offer a Wildlife Handling and Chemical Immobilization course at our sanctuary in Montana (this same three-day course has been held annually for the past 15 years in Tenino, WA).

We expect there will be legislation in 2020 addressing gaps in funding WA Department of Fish and Wildlife. There may also be efforts to provide support and oversight for preventing conflict with wolves and livestock.

Wolf Haven, its staff, and volunteers, continue to be heroes.

Wolf Haven receives a lot of positive reviews and online feedback from visitors, and this all makes us very proud of our volunteers. They are selfless, highly trained, passionate, and unpaid individuals and Wolf Haven couldn't have survived 38 years without them. Being held in high regard as a sanctuary also tells us that more and more people (like you, reader) believe in the value and sanctity of each individual animal, regardless of economic value. There has been, and continues to be, a huge shift in how humankind regard other species; we like to think Wolf Haven has played a small part in showing the unique individuality and intrinsic worth of each animal.

There are several ways that you can support Wolf Haven in 2020 and beyond.

One of the best ways to support Wolf Haven is by becoming a member of our organization. Wolf Haven members receive quarterly issues of our magazine *Wolf Tracks*, which includes sanctuary updates, tributes to deceased wolves, welcomes new residents, reveals what life is like here behind the scenes, and highlights volunteers, lifetime members, and educational programs. You can also sign up on our website for our free monthly e-newsletters, *World of Wolves*, and stay current with our in-house residents and wolves in the wild.



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Kitten Rescue has housed upwards of 170 kittens and young cats at one time during the last year, ensuring that they are all healthy, have received all their shots and have been spayed or neutered. Much of the money comes from our garage sales and personal donations, as well as grants.



We also help people in the community see that feral populations near their homes have food to eat. This is an additional expense which is becoming increasingly hard to manage. If you are interested in helping, a commitment of a donation of one bag of dry cat food a month would go far in helping out.



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To learn more about
Wolf Haven International, visit
wolfhaven.org