

Editorial

Big Bad Wolf Scarier When It's Right Outside

Two schoolchildren in Reserve say they were followed by a wolf while walking from their bus stop to their home about a half-mile away. Because of that and incidents of attacks on pets and killing of livestock by the reintroduced wolves, Reserve Independent Schools Superintendent Loren Cushman decided to wolf-proof school bus stops.

Some proponents of the Mexican gray wolf reintroduction deride the shelters as a public relations ploy. Others merely dismiss it as overreaction or hysteria.

There's little evidence that the wolves pose any real threat, they argue, and there has been only one recorded case of a human being killed by wolves in North America in the last 100 years.

A century of experience with wild wolves, however, may not be the most accurate predictor of the behavior of these wolves.

Raised in captivity in closer contact with humans than their ancestors would ever choose to be, they were fed instead of having to hunt down lunch, then set loose to figure out how to live in a different kind of world. These wolves come with no guarantees.

Following children could be a behavior rooted in curiosity, not hunger. But it is easy to predict that most human mothers aren't going to ponder the behavior of wolves if it involves their own pups.

Superintendent Cushman said building the wolf-proof shelters, regardless of "whether a person is pro or con wolf," is the right thing to do.

Reserve parents and school officials say they feel better having a safe place for kids. It's their decision to make, and it's not costing taxpayers anywhere else in the state anything.

It's easy for city dwellers to mock or discount rural residents anxieties— too easy.