This collection is available at The State Historical Society of Missouri. If you would like more information, please contact us at shresearch@umsystem.edu.

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Vicki O'Toole donated the collection to Western Historical Manuscript Collection on November 14, 1992. O'Toole was the Administrative Director of the Wild Canid Survival & Research Center Wolf Sanctuary from 1986 to 1992.

In April 1971, Carol and Marlin Perkins learned of Tyson Research Center, an ecological reserve in west St. Louis County owned by Washington University, of which ten acres subsequently was offered to the Perkins'. As a result, a much larger mission began to take shape. Plans were made for a wolf sanctuary and that same year, the Perkins', with the financial assistance of the ELSA Wild Animal Appeal, assembled in St. Louis an important group of wolf experts to establish an organization whose purpose was to be threefold: (1) to provide facilities for wolf behavioral studies; (2) to educate the public about the benefits of wolf conservation and assemble a data bank of information about wild canids; (3) to maintain various subspecies gene pools for breeding and future reintroduction into the wild. However, survival was to be the over-arching priority, and this was to be reflected in the organization's name. Thus, the Wild Canid Survival and Research Center, popularly known as the Wolf Sanctuary, was founded.

After receiving two wolf packs—one Mexican from John and Sandra Harris, the other from Iran—in 1973, the WCSRC sought to establish itself as a national leader in wolf and wildlife conservation. Thus the first symposium on endangered and threatened species in North America was planned and held the following year in Washington, D.C., with Mutual of Omaha footing the bill. The symposium did, indeed, signal the beginning of the much larger role the Sanctuary would play on a national and international level in the years to come, especially in the form of legislative activism and legal action.

The Wolf Sanctuary experienced real success in 1979 when it became involved in two national reintroduction programs: the Red Wolf Recovery Project and the Mexican Wolf Recovery Project. In 1980, WCSRC received its first breeding pair of red wolves, a subspecies extinct in the wild. Two years later, four puppies were born. In 1988, two of these wolves were reintroduced successfully into the wild at Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge in North Carolina. The Mexican Wolf Recovery Team had less success. While the breeding of puppies went well (four were born in 1980), no reintroduction site met with local or government approval as of 1991.

SCOPE AND CONTENT
The collection primarily consists of correspondence to and from Vicki O'Toole with others involved in saving the wolves. The correspondence discusses wolves in captivity, blood tests, pest control, breeding, exchange of wolves from place to place, study of dead carcasses, among other topics.

Along with the correspondence are some hand-written notes, newsclippings, and enclosures with the letters including newsclippings and results of medical tests on the wolves. Folder 9 (Correspondence-General, 1991) includes a detailed history of WCSRC. The two videotapes provide information and scenes from WCSRC. Information in the collection ranges from 1986 to 1991.

This collection is related to collections S0535 and S0516.

SERIES DESCRIPTION
This collection is divided into four series: 1. Includes correspondence and memorandums from 1988 to 1992 in Folders 1-9, arranged chronologically; 2. Includes correspondence about the Mexican Wolf from 1986 to 1991 in Folders 10-16, arranged in three different topics and chronologically; 3. Includes correspondence from 1987 to 1990 in Folder 17-18, arranged chronologically; 4. Includes two undated videotapes about the Wild Canid Survival and Research Center.

FOLDER LIST

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3. Correspondence - General, July-December, 1989
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5. Correspondence - General, May-August, 1990
6. Correspondence - General, September-December, 1990
7. Correspondence - General, January-April, 1991
8. Correspondence - General, May-August, 1991
9. Correspondence - General, September 1991-August 1992

Series 2: Correspondence - Mexican Wolf, 1986-1991, folders 10-16
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