

Doug Vincent-Lang
Commissioner

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Department of
Fish and Game

Anchorage, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Genetic Results Received on Anchorage’s “Wolf-Dog”

November 26, 2024 (Anchorage) – The results are in on “Gary the Wolf-Dog” who gained fame on social media for wide-ranging sightings across Anchorage, covering untold miles of ground seemingly every day.

After several weeks of reports to Alaska Department of Fish & Game and Anchorage Animal Care & Control (AACC), the mottled black and grey animal was found deceased on the side of the road near Minnesota and 26th Avenue sometime after midnight on October 7, likely hit and killed by a vehicle. It was picked up by Anchorage Police Department and dropped off at AACC who contacted ADF&G biologists the next morning. “Gary” was found to be an older adult female canid who weighed approximately 67 lbs. Upon initial examination, the animal did not exhibit the physical characteristics expected with a wolf. ADF&G collected samples and sent them to the Veterinary Genetics Laboratory (VGL) at UC Davis for a wolf-dog hybridization test, recognizing the curiosity of both the public and ADF&G biologists alike. Due to the potential for broad variation in physical and behavioral traits in a hybridized animal, a determination cannot be made by observations alone. It is illegal to possess wolves or wolf hybrids in Alaska; how the animal ended up suddenly appearing on the streets of Anchorage, and where or how she lived her days until then, remains a mystery.

Results from the UC Davis lab returned this week and indicate that “Gary” tested positively as a wolf hybrid. The degree of hybridization, or percentage of wolf DNA, is not determined. The wolf-hybrid test consists of 3-4 types of assays and analyses and can detect hybrids within 3 generations.

Anchorage is home to many species of wildlife, but wolves are rarely seen. The behavior of this animal, including traveling across the city on main streets and sidewalks at all hours of the day and night in close proximity to people, would be extremely unusual for a wolf—most wild animals try to keep their distance. If you see an animal behaving unusually, personal safety is most important. Please report sightings directly to your local ADF&G office or online at www.adfg.alaska.gov using the “Report a Wildlife Encounter” link.

Media Contact: For more information contact Regional Supervisor Cynthia Wardlow at cynthia.wardlow@alaska.gov, or 907-267-2529