

Support H.60 to Reform Coyote Hunting

Introduced by Rep. David Deen

This bill would require a needed review of current coyote policies and suggestions for reforms

What are the current coyote hunting rules?

- In Vermont, it is legal to hunt coyotes 365 days per year, night and day, with virtually no regulations.
- This policy results in the commonly-held view of coyotes as vermin, killing contests or derbies that award cash prizes, widespread wanton waste, unethical hunter behavior, and a diminished public understanding and respect for this important species.

Importance of Coyotes

- Coyotes are an integral part of healthy ecosystems, providing a number of free, natural ecological services.
- They help to control disease transmission, keep rodent populations in check, clean up carrion (animal carcasses), increase biodiversity, remove sick animals from the gene pool, and protect crops.

Killing Coyotes is Ineffective as Population Control

- According to the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, “Coyotes are density dependent breeders. As the number of coyotes in an area decreases, their reproductive rates increase. Coyote control efforts are therefore often unsuccessful because they tend to stimulate reproduction.”
- In fact, the indiscriminate killing of coyotes can increase populations by disrupting their social structure, which, ironically, encourages more breeding and migration, and ultimately results in more coyotes.

Coyotes Have Little Impact on Livestock and Game Animals

- Proponents of the indiscriminate killing of coyotes often rely on exaggerated claims that coyotes attack livestock and diminish game populations. In reality:
 - According to USDA data, livestock losses to native carnivores are minuscule, just 0.5 percent of the total number of livestock animals. The largest source of mortality to livestock, by far, is from disease, illness, birthing problems, and weather.
 - Coyotes, which have a diverse diet and favor rabbits and rodents, also have minimal impact on game animals. A study by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation found “only when other factors, such as poor habitat, harsh winters, and other forms of predation are severe and chronic that coyote predation limits the growth of a deer population.”
- Open hunts do not target specific, problem-causing coyotes. Disrupting the coyote family structure may actually increase conflicts by creating pack led by younger, less experienced coyotes.



*For additional questions, please contact Barry Londeree,
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