



MEETING DATE: 1/18/05  
ITEM NO. 10

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

DATE: January 14, 2005  
TO: MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL  
FROM: ORRY P. KORB, TOWN ATTORNEY *ok*  
SUBJECT: INTRODUCE ORDINANCE AMENDING TOWN CODE, CHAPTER 4, ARTICLE I, REPEALING SECTION 4.10.085 CONCERNING STEEL ANIMAL TRAPS

RECOMMENDATION:

- a. Direct the Clerk Administrator to read the title.
- b. Waive the reading
- c. Introduce the ordinance and instruct the Clerk Administrator to publish a summary no more than five days prior to adoption.

BACKGROUND:

On November 3, 1998, Proposition 4 was approved adding section 3003.1 to the Fish and Game Code prohibiting all forms of body-gripping traps except where authorized federal, state, county or municipal government employees determine that the use of a padded-jaw leghold trap was necessary to protect human health or safety. However, pre-existing language in Town Code section 4.10.085, adopted in 1994, caused County Vector Control to erroneously conclude that it was prohibited from exercising its statutory authority under section 3003.1 in the Town.

This error was corrected on September 7, 2004, when Council directed the Town Attorney to notify Vector Control that the Town Code did not prohibit the use of padded-jaw leghold traps by authorized government employees to protect public health and safety. This was possible because Fish and Game Code section 3003.1 effectively preempted Town Code section 4.10.085, which should now be repealed in order to avoid further confusion. The proposed ordinance (Attachment 1) would repeal Town Code section 4.10.085.

Coincidental with the preparation of this report was the receipt of a letter with attachments from the County Animal Advisory Commission dated January 6, 2005. A copy is provided solely for

PREPARED BY: ORRY P. KORB, TOWN ATTORNEY

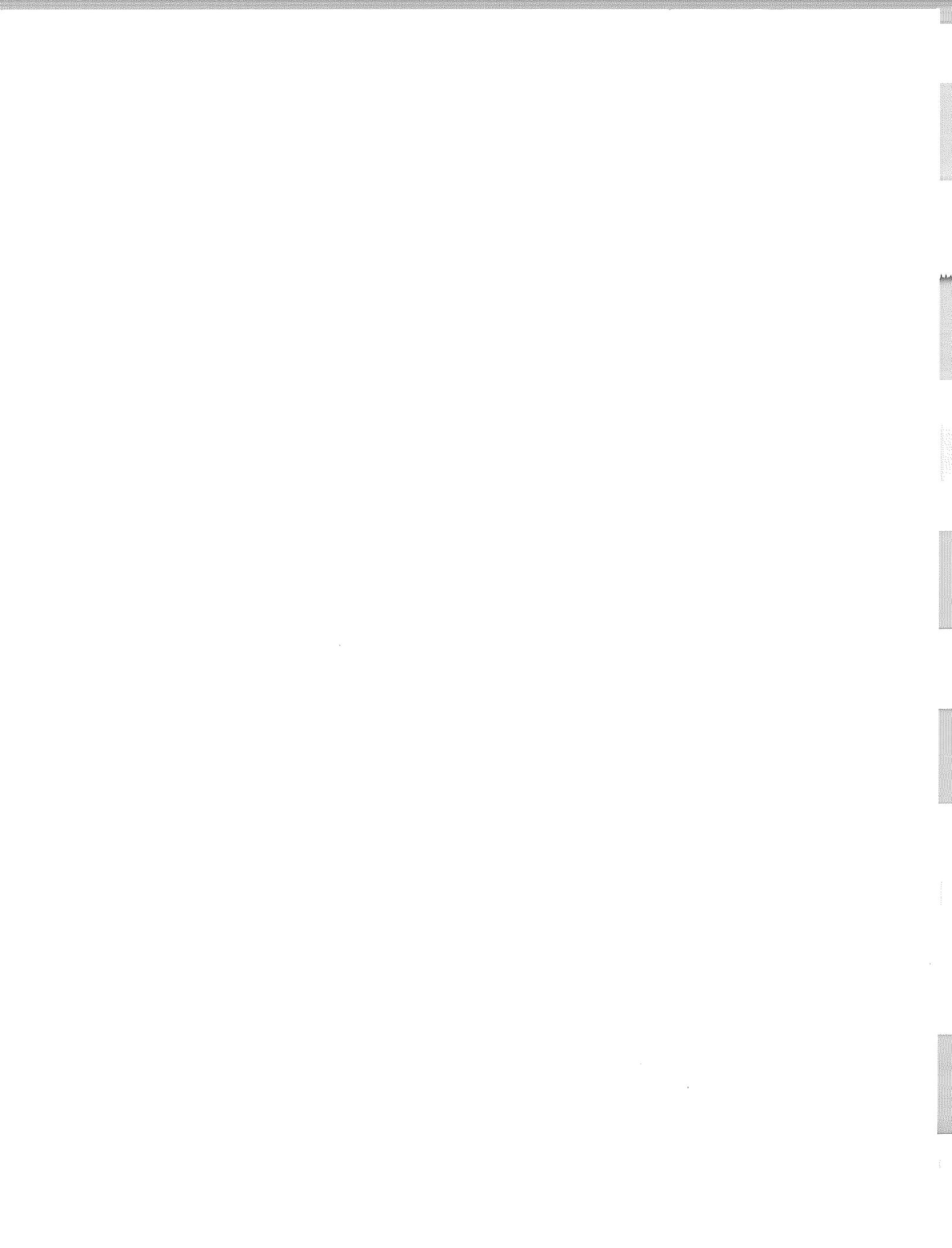
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Reviewed by: *[Signature]* Manager *OS* Assistant Town Manager \_\_\_\_\_ Clerk Administrator  
Finance \_\_\_\_\_ Community Development

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PAGE 2

MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL

SUBJECT: INTRODUCE ORDINANCE AMENDING TOWN CODE, CHAPTER 4,  
ARTICLE I, REPEALING SECTION 4.10.085 CONCERNING STEEL  
ANIMAL TRAPS

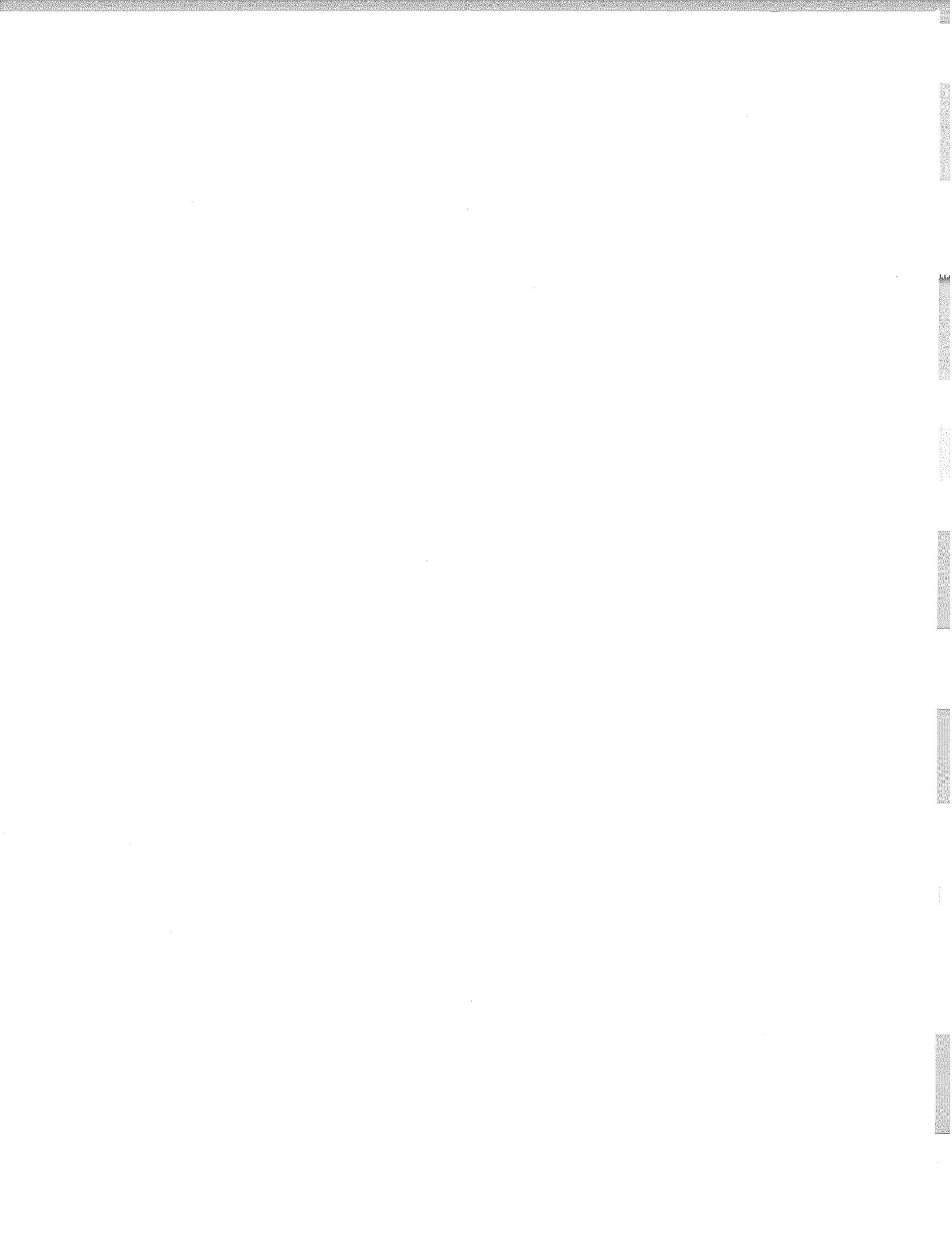
January 14, 2005

Council's information (Attachment 2). The Commission argues against trapping and killing coyotes as a means of controlling their populations in urban areas. The Commission recommends alternative methods including educational outreach, enforcement of city/county codes and the aggressive implementation of integrated methods of coexistence with wildlife. The details are discussed in the letter.

The Town neither approves nor promotes any specific method of controlling coyotes. Its past actions and the action now proposed only serve to confirm the authority granted County Vector Control pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 3003.1. Thus, the concerns raised by the Animal Advisory Commission are not relevant to the recommended action.

Attachments:

1. Proposed Ordinance
2. Letter dated January 6, 2005 from County Animal Advisory Commission



## ORDINANCE

### AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF LOS GATOS AMENDING TOWN CODE CHAPTER 4, ARTICLE I, BY REPEALING SECTION 4.10.085 CONCERNING STEEL ANIMAL TRAPS

**WHEREAS**, Town Code section 4.10.085 was adopted in 1994 in order to prohibit the use of steel jawed traps as defined in Fish and Game Code section 4004;

**WHEREAS**, an initiative entitled Proposition 4 was approved on November 3, 1998, adding section 3003.1 to the Fish and Game Code to prohibit all forms of body-gripping traps, except where authorized federal, state, county, or municipal government employees determine that the use of a padded-jaw leghold trap is necessary to protect human health or safety;

**WHEREAS**, Town Code section 4.10.085 has caused confusion regarding the authority of authorized county employees to use padded-jaw leghold traps to protect human health or safety in Los Gatos; and

**WHEREAS**, in light of the prohibition contained in Fish and Town Code section 3003.1, Town Code section 4.10.085 is no longer necessary and should be repealed in order to avoid further confusion regarding the authority of authorized county employees to use padded-jaw leghold traps to protect human health or safety in Los Gatos.

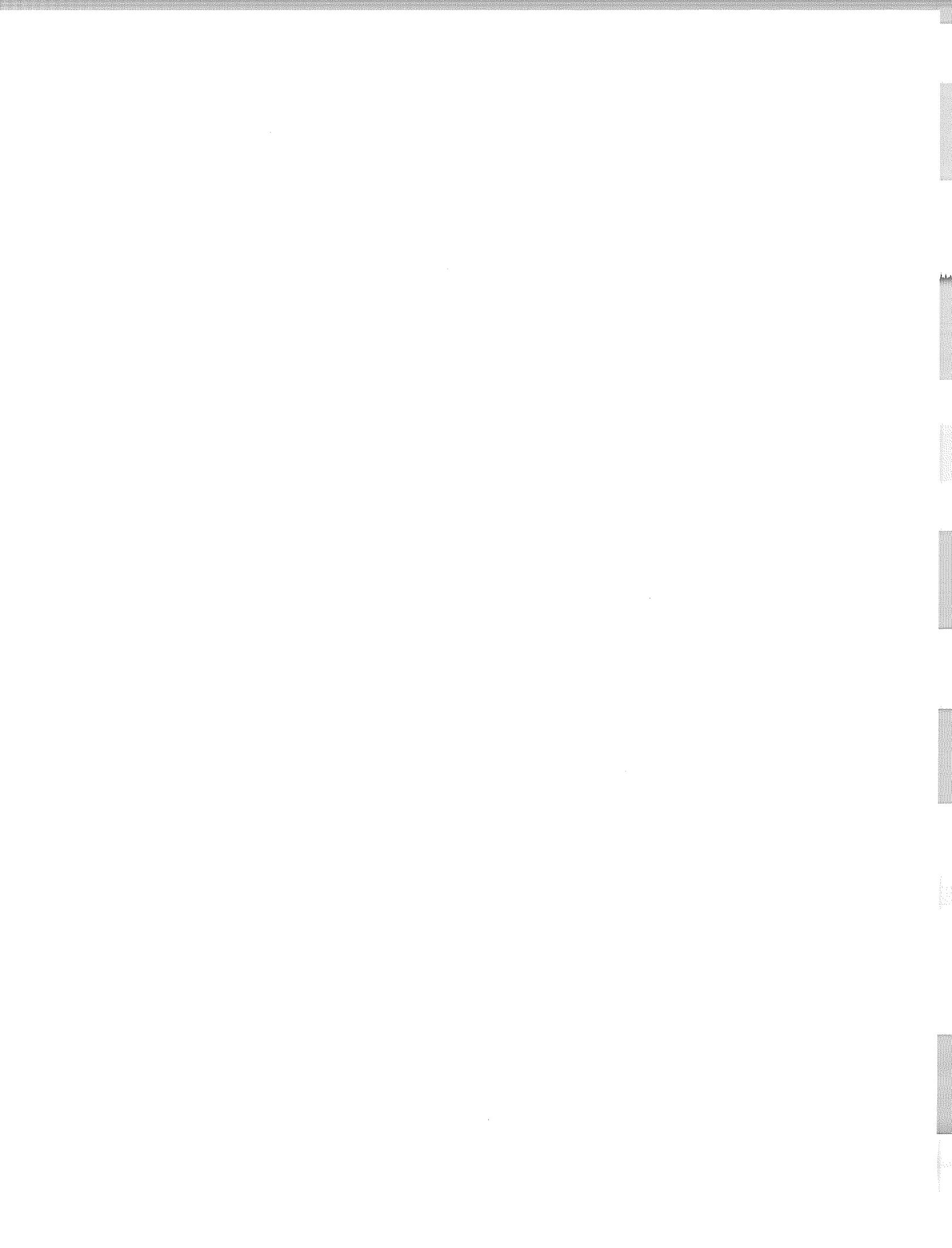
THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF LOS GATOS ORDAINS:

#### SECTION I

Chapter 4, Article I, is amended by repealing section 4.10.085.

#### SECTION II

In the event that any part of this ordinance is held to be invalid, the invalid part or parts shall be severed from the remaining portions which shall remain in full force and effect.



**SECTION III**

This Ordinance was introduced at a regular meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Los Gatos on \_\_\_\_\_, 2005, and adopted by the following vote as an Ordinance of the Town of Los Gatos at a meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Los Gatos on \_\_\_\_\_, 2005. This Ordinance takes effect 30 days after it is adopted.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS:**

**AYES:**

**NAYS:**

**ABSENT:**

**ABSTAIN:**

**SIGNED:**

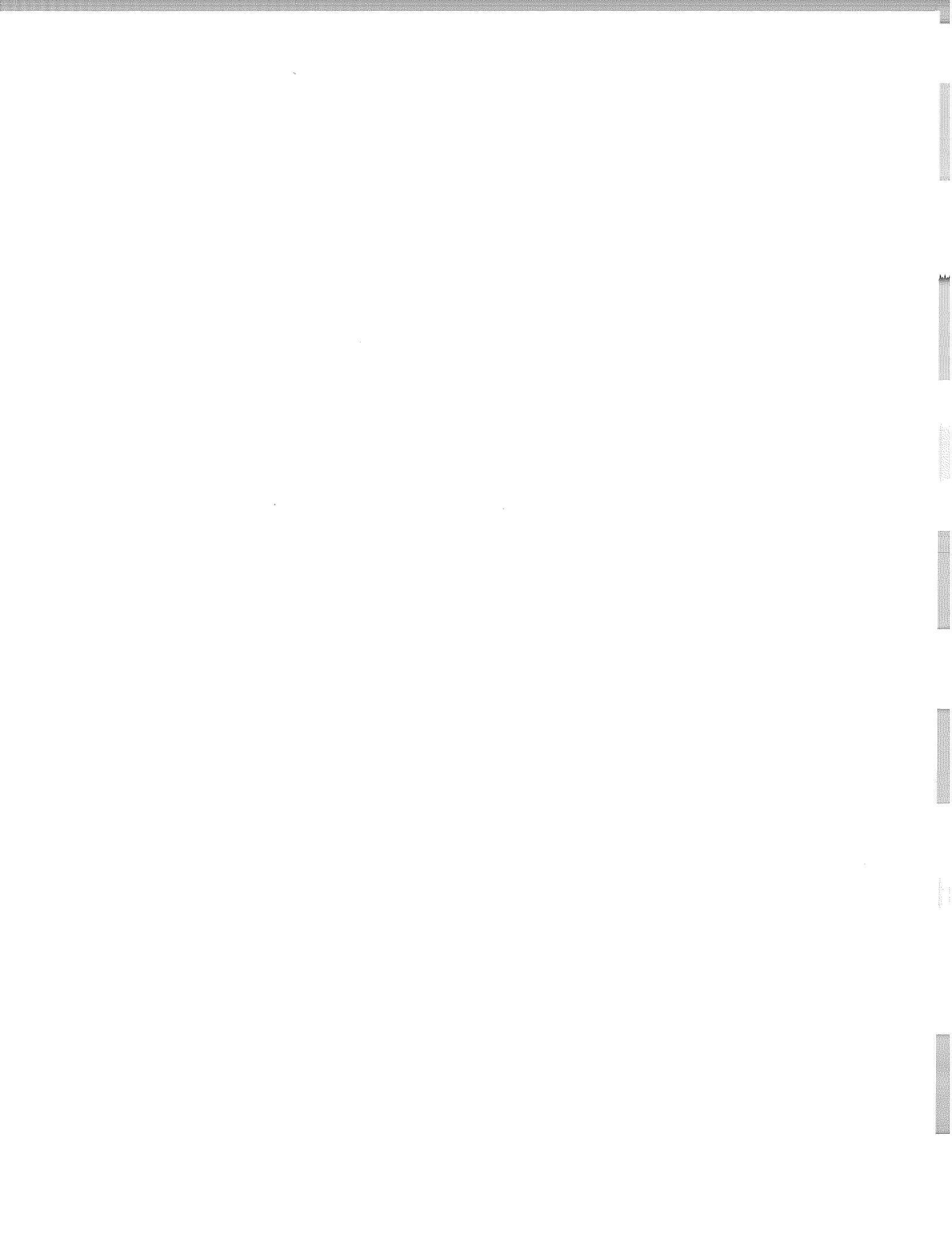
**MAYOR OF THE TOWN OF LOS GATOS  
LOS GATOS, CALIFORNIA**

**ATTEST:**

**CLERK OF THE TOWN OF LOS GATOS  
LOS GATOS, CALIFORNIA**

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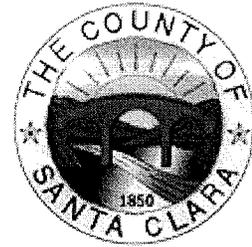
# County of Santa Clara

Animal Advisory Commission  
County Government Center, East Wing  
70 West Hedding Street  
San Jose, California 95110-1768  
(408) 299-4321 FAX 298-8460 TDD 993-8272

RECEIVED

JAN 11 2005

MAYOR & TOWN COUNCIL



January 6, 2005

Mayor Steve Glickman  
Town of Los Gatos  
110 East Main Street  
Los Gatos, CA 95030

Dear Mayor Glickman:

The Santa Clara County Animal Advisory Commission would like to bring to your attention that at the request of the Town of Los Gatos, Vector Control has recently trapped and killed four coyotes in Los Gatos. Other areas in the county, specifically Monte Sereno and "Villas of Almaden" in the City of San Jose are considering changing local ordinances to allow for the use of leghold traps in lethally controlling coyote populations.

Experiences in surrounding communities such as Portola Valley, San Ramon, and Scotts Valley have shown that the most effective way to address urban/suburban wildlife conflicts is through proactive public education at the community level. Assistance is available to any community by collaborating with agencies that resolve human animal conflicts by taking a more integrated approach. We want to work toward developing an effective, long-term program to coexist with coyotes and other urban wildlife species.

Scientific studies have shown that trapping and killing coyotes is a short-sighted response and *does not work*— *it only serves to exacerbate the problem*. Studies have also demonstrated that lethal coyote control is most often ineffective and counterproductive because of a coyote population's ability to rebound after lethal removal efforts. Killing coyotes is also a waste of money and resources. Instead, the Commission advocates educational outreach, enforcement of city/county codes and the aggressive implementation of integrated methods of coexistence with wildlife. The Santa Clara County Animal Advisory Commission recommends the following:

1. A highly publicized information campaign divulging the consequences of intentional or unintentional feeding of coyotes.
2. Active and persistent enforcement of existing ordinances that prohibit the feeding of wildlife, containment of pets within residences and mandate the proper disposal of garbage.
3. Close supervision of children and pets in areas frequented by coyotes, including backyards.
4. Prompt and direct investigation of any reports of coyote encounters; immediate follow-up and verification of actual coyote involvement and of the conditions under which it occurred; identification of problems that might attract coyotes. (Vector Control does report incidents to Department of Fish and Game; perhaps a more localized reporting system would be advisable.)



Letter to: Mayor Steve Glickman  
Town of Los Gatos

Subject: Coyotes

5. The formation of a committee or organization of citizens to deal with coyotes and other animals in the city on a long-term basis by providing and receiving information, and by being an avenue for residents to handle concerns about animals before they become problems. It should be open to all interested residents, meeting regularly, either as a private group or with city affiliation.
6. Cooperation should be implemented with neighboring cities to encourage area-wide responsible management of the environment so that possible coyote encounters can be minimized.
7. In the event that there is one problematic animal, and *all* other measures have been unsuccessful, euthanasia will be the last resort. We recommend that any euthanasia be performed by lethal injection at an authorized facility, i.e. a local animal control agency or wildlife rehabilitation center.

The coyote is an integral part of our environment and it plays an important role in our ecology. The degree of success achieved by these recommendations depends largely on how actively communities employ such measures. This Commission strongly urges the immediate implementation of its recommendations to this end.

In addition, the Commission strongly advises against trapping because of the inherent indiscriminate nature of traps that pose a hazard to non-target animals, including companion animals and children – especially in urbanized areas. Prior to being killed the animal can experience a long period of pain, stress and trauma before being removed from the trap. It will lead to temporary reduction in the local population; however that will cause other problems, such as rodent explosion or the arrival of other wild animals, creating an imbalance in the community. Instead, we would like to see a more permanent and humane approach to sharing our living space with native and endemic wild animals.

Enclosed is a copy of the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley's "Coyote Solutions," as well as Little Blue Society's "Coexisting with Coyotes" packet with further information on avoiding conflicts with coyotes. A number of other communities, animal control facilities and humane societies use these packets with excellent success. Also enclosed are "Tips for Living with Coyotes."

Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this matter.

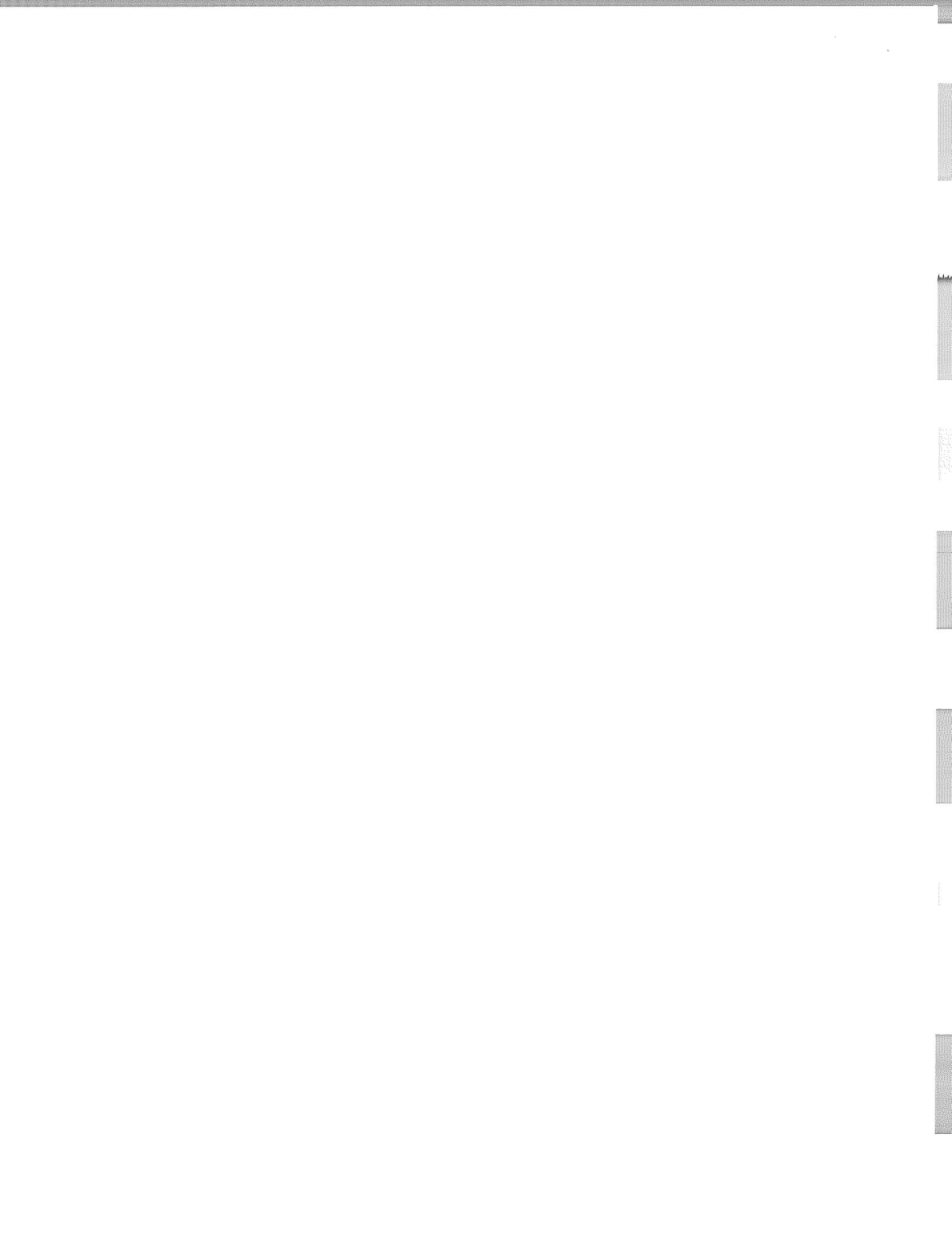
Sincerely,

**SANTA CLARA COUNTY ANIMAL ADVISORY COMMISSION**



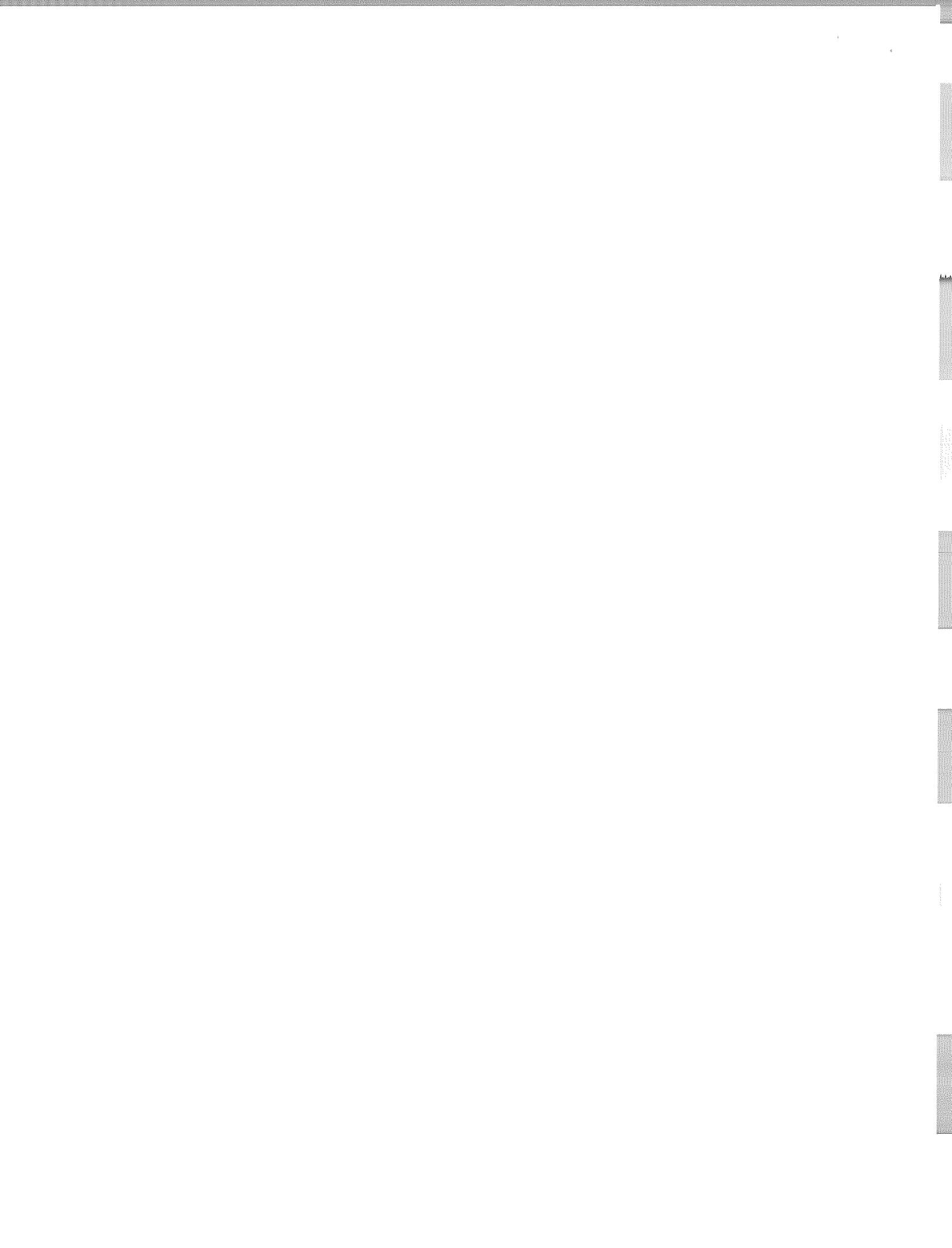
Carole Miller, Chairperson

Enclosures

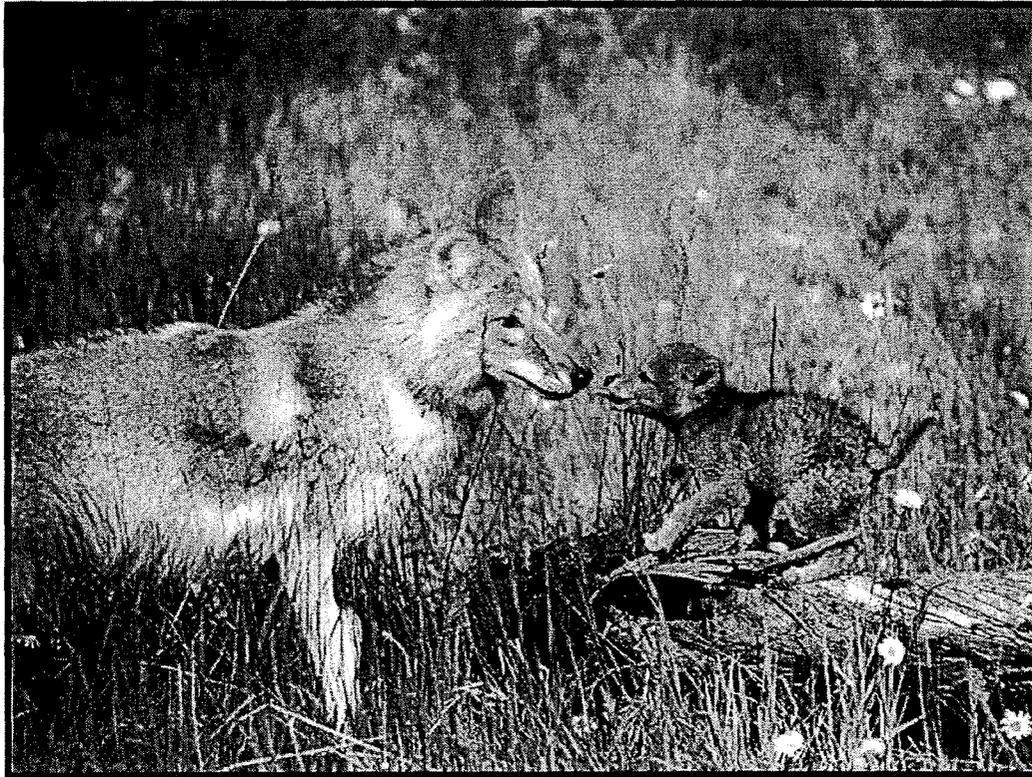


## ***Tips for Living with Coyotes***

- Never feed or attempt to "tame" a coyote.
- Store trash in tightly-lidded containers, prevented from tipping over by a rope or chain.
- Do not leave pet food outside and bring pets in at night.
- Pick up fallen fruit and cover compost piles.
- Fence yards and/or animal enclosures with wire mesh at least six feet tall and extending six inches below the ground.
- Install an automatic lighting system around the house.
- If followed by a coyote, make loud noises. If this fails, throw rocks in the animal's direction.



**Coyote Solutions  
Villas of Almaden  
San José**



Prepared by the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley  
3027 Penitencia Creek Road  
San José, California 95132  
(408)929-WILD

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## **Villas of Almaden Challenges**

The Villas of Almaden housing complex in San José has reported increased coyote activity for the past 18 months. The community reports that local coyote have killed several domestic cats and a small dog has been attacked as well. Many neighbors fear they are being stalked and that the coyote presents a danger to human safety.

The Villas Home Owners Association raised this issue with Vector Control, local media and San José City Council. In October of 2004, San José City Council voted against a change in city ordinance to allow leg hold trapping in lieu of an aggressive education program.

**The Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley is responding with the attached plan of action to reduce coyote populations and secure safe co-existence with this important species.**

## **Natural History of Coyotes**

Coyotes typically weigh 20-50 pounds and are similar to a tan-colored Shepherd-type dog. Native to the western two-thirds of North America, the coyote has expanded its range throughout the entire continent, largely due to the eradication of larger predators including wolves, cougars, and grizzly bears by humans.

Coyotes live in pairs or larger family units, or in small packs, and a strong social hierarchy generally limits reproduction to the group's leaders: the "alpha" mated pair. While loners exist, they are most often found in heavily hunted populations or when young males leave their pack.

Coyotes are predators, occupying the biological niche between foxes and wolves and as such play an integral role in their environment by helping to maintain natural ecosystems. Omnivorous by nature, coyotes feed on a wide variety of mammals, insects and fruit, though rodents, vegetation, and insects are generally their main food source.

Their intelligence and opportunistic feeding habits allow coyotes to survive, but it also puts them in conflict with humans, especially in agricultural regions, as well as in urban and suburban areas.

Historically, society has attempted to solve human/coyote conflicts, whether in agricultural regions and more recently in suburban areas, by killing them. Despite years of poisoning, trapping, neck snaring, and shooting coyotes, there are more of them in North America today than ever before.

Biologists have long recognized the role of coyotes in controlling rodent populations. A significant and growing body of research asserts that the presence of large carnivore species, such as coyote also preserves species diversity. One study in suburban San Diego found that by controlling the numbers of smaller carnivores, including grey fox, raccoon, striped skunk, opossum, and domestic cats in highly fragmented ecosystems, coyotes actually help preserve populations of native birds that would have otherwise been eaten by the smaller carnivores.

## **Why the Villas?**

Urban sprawl and habitat encroachment are the main reasons behind increased wild animal sightings and challenges. The loss of open space and natural habitat has decreased territories and disrupted predator-prey cycles. A reduction in natural food sources along with plentiful human provided alternatives have given deer, raccoons, opossums, squirrels, birds and coyote ample opportunity to flourish on unfamiliar diets.

The proximity of the Villas development borders on natural habitat and ancient corridors. Wild animals don't differentiate between undeveloped land and developed land. Coyotes will migrate to areas that support them by offering food and shelter.

Coyotes are opportunistic feeders and have thrived on the ready source of food the Villas offer in forms of unsecured food, bird feeders and the rodents they attract, healthy deer populations as well as unattended domestic pets.

## Problems with Lethal "Control"

The coyote's success appears to be directly related in part to lethal attempts to manipulate its population (also due to eradication of wolves and bears). As with many wild species, coyote populations are naturally regulated by available food and habitat. Lethal control, however, can disrupt the pack hierarchy, causing members to disperse, allows more coyotes to reproduce, and encourages larger litter sizes because of decreased competition for food and habitat. Lethal control also ensures that only the most resilient coyotes survive.

Most wild coyotes fear humans. However, those that learn to associate humans with food may become habituated. Habituated coyotes now frequent suburban areas, taking advantage of abundant food, water, and shelter. Unsecured garbage, unfenced gardens, and unattended domestic animals become easy targets. However, documented cases of coyotes biting humans are *extremely rare* and most often caused by humans feeding coyotes.

**Note:** *Trapping and relocation of coyotes is not recommended. Disruption of family groups can cause orphaned juveniles to seek easy prey such as small dogs and cats. In addition, coyotes will move into the vacated area.*



Coyote in leg-hold trap

## Coyote Behavior—Body Language

### Visual Communication

Several parts of the coyote's body provide important sources of visual signals. Of most importance are the mouth (including teeth, lips, and tongue), eyes, ears, hackles, and tail.

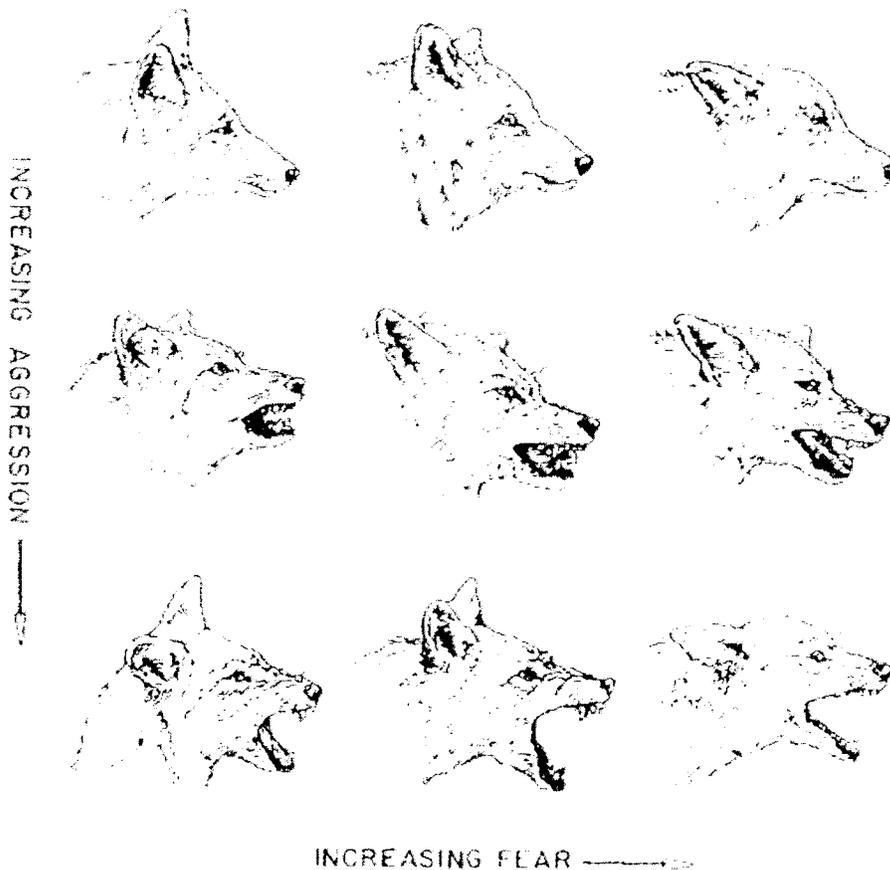
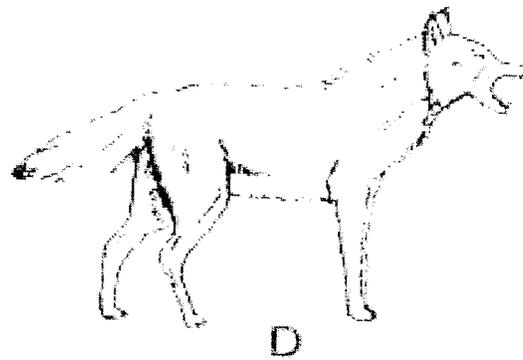
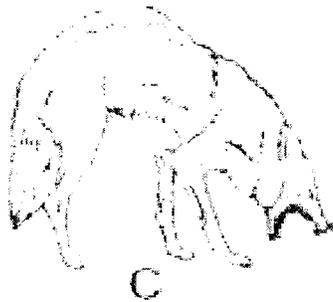
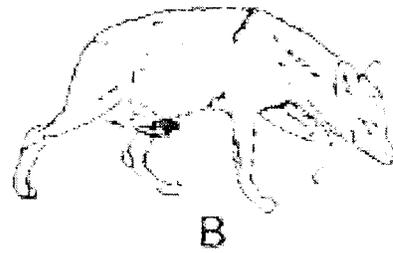


Fig. 7. Gradation and simultaneous combination of visual signals, especially ears and mouth, along an agonistic continuum. (Drawing by F. Jacobs, based on a figure in Fox, 1971a.)



A. Passive-submissive

B. Submission with tail tucked, and defensive threat face.

C. Defensive threat with tail low but not tucked and defensive threat face.

D. Aggressive threat with tail raised. Shoulder and neck hairs piloerected, ears in forward position, legs stiff, and mouth in an aggressive threat gape.

## **Coyote Encounters**

**Since coyotes by nature are wary of humans they will avoid people whenever possible. If you encounter a coyote remember the following:**

- Never feed or attempt to "tame" a coyote.
  - Avoid direct eye contact.
  - Do not turn your back or run from a coyote.
  - Attempt to leave the area calmly.
  - If followed by a coyote, make loud noises and make yourself look big. If this fails, throw rocks. Use super soakers (large-sized squirt guns).
  - Always keep yourself between the coyote and small children.
- Coyotes are not considered a disease threat. Outbreaks of rabies in coyotes are rare and they are not commonly implicated in the transmission of the disease to humans or domestic animals.

## **Deterring Coyote**

A successful program must be enacted from several avenues including city services and the community at hand.

The following outline requires the commitment of all involved.

### **Deterring Coyote—Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley Action**

- Develop and promote an aggressive education campaign.
- Measure and report results via logs and on-site visits.
- Remain available for phone calls of questions and concerns. Quantify and document calls.
- Produce public services announcements and distribute to local radio, television and websites.
- Utilize media resources to expand this education program.

### ***A Public Service Announcement for the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley***

**:30, :60**

**:30** Suburban sprawl increases encounters with wildlife including coyotes. While incidents between coyotes and people are quite rare, care should be taken to protect companion animals like cats and small dogs. Store trash in containers with tight lids. Clear away brush and fallen fruit. Keep pets and their food inside at night, and *never* feed any wild mammal. For more information call the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley at 408-929-9453 or visit [wcsv.org](http://wcsv.org).

**:60** As suburbs grow, so do encounters with coyotes and other wild animals. Coyotes actually help balance the natural environment. Although incidents between coyotes and people are unlikely, the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley offers these tips for coexisting with our coyote neighbors: store trash in containers with tight lids. Clear brush and weeds away from homes and remove fallen fruit. To protect pets, especially cats and small dogs, don't let them roam, and always use a leash when walking your dog. Bring animals and their food inside at night and *never* feed coyotes or other wild mammals. For more information about living with wildlife call the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley at 408-929-9453 or visit [wcsv.org](http://wcsv.org). That number again, 408-929-9453.

## **Deterring Coyote—City Services Action**

- Locate, disturb and close existing dens prior to mating season.
- Uphold state and city ordinances pertaining to wildlife.
- Uphold state and city human health and safety codes in regards to feeding, harboring and supporting vector populations.

CALIFORNIA CODES  
HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE  
SECTION 2060-2067

2061. (a) Whenever a public nuisance exists on any property within a district or on any property that is located outside the district from which vectors may enter the district, the board of trustees may notify the owner of the property of the existence of the public nuisance.

## **Deterring Coyote—Community Action**

**Coyotes are drawn to urban and suburban neighborhoods for two reasons: human encroachment into native habitat and the availability of food.**

- Secure garbage cans by fastening lids with rope, bungee cords, or chains and tying the handle to a stake driven into the ground. Put garbage out the morning of pickup, not the night before.
- Dispose of especially attractive food wastes such as meat, cheese, and eggs by adding a small amount of ammonia to the bag to deter coyotes.
- When composting, use enclosed bins rather than exposed piles. Avoid adding dog or cat waste, meat, milk or eggs, and any food containing these products, to compost.
- If you have fruit trees, pick the ripe fruit and keep fallen fruit off the ground. Coyotes are fond of ripe fruit.
- Outdoor lights triggered by motion sensors can keep coyotes from approaching too close to your house at night.
- Clear away bushes and dense weeds near your home where coyotes find cover and animals to feed on.

## **Keeping Companion Animals Safe**

**Cats and small dogs could be seen as prey to the coyote, while larger dogs could be injured in a confrontation. To avoid these situations consider the following:**

- Fence your property or yard. The fence must be at least six feet tall with the bottom extending at least six inches below the ground. Fences can be made more effective by outwardly inverting the top of the fence or by using electric fencing along the top and bottom.
- Keep animals in at night (coyotes are active both during the day and at night, but under cover of darkness, might be more likely to attack a pet.)
- If you allow your cats to go outside unattended and there is little or no natural tree cover, you can help protect your cat by installing "cat posts." Cat posts can be any type of long climbable wooden post (4x4 or corner posts) that stands out of the ground at least six to eight feet with a platform on top for the cat to rest on. The post will provide the cat with an opportunity to escape from a pursuing coyote.
- Don't leave pet food outside.
- Vaccinate your animals (*transmission of disease from coyotes to domestic animals is extremely rare*).
- Spay or neuter your dogs. Coyotes are attracted to, and can mate with, unspayed or unneutered domestic dogs. Male coyotes will be attracted to unspayed female dogs and unneutered male dogs could be lured away by an ovulating female coyote and be killed by male coyotes.

## **Safeguarding Other Animals**

Coyotes are primarily rodent eaters and scavengers (rodents comprise 90% of coyotes' diets). However, they can harm or kill animals kept outside such as chickens, rabbits, goats and sheep. To reduce the risk to outside animals, take the following precautions:

- Keep animals within a fenced area. The fence must be wire mesh and at least six feet tall with the bottom extending at least six inches below the ground. Electric fencing with five to nine strands is also very effective in deterring coyotes.
- Keep animals closed in a secure shelter at night (coyotes can be active at night).
- Fright devices, such as sirens and sensor lights, may help deter coyotes from closely approaching animal housing areas.
- Use guard animals. Llamas, donkeys, and special guard dogs have proved effective in reducing or eliminating coyote predation of pastured animals.
- Provide rabbits with a wire-covered enclosure with fencing buried below the ground. Provide an escape shelter with an opening just small enough for the rabbit to enter. *(Cages are not recommended because rabbits may be attacked through the cage or die of stress as they frantically try to find cover.)*

## **Wildlife Sighting Logs**

By eliminating food and shelter and by making it undesirable for coyotes to stay within the Villas compounds we should see a measurable reduction in populations. Please use the attached logs to document coyote, deer and rodent sightings.





## **Rodent Sighting Log**

Why rodents? Rodents are a natural diet for coyote. In the ecosystem coyotes are responsible for keeping rodent populations in check by consuming rats, gophers, moles, rabbits, mice and other small species. Within the Villas, bird feeders attract not only birds but rodents that feed on seed as well. A reduced rodent population will assist greatly in reducing coyote challenges.

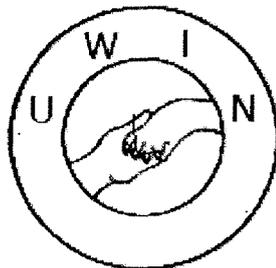
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## **Contact Information:**

Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley  
Janet Alexander  
Director of Operations  
(408) 929-9453 x303  
e-mail: janet\_alexander@msn.com

Trudi Burney  
Director of Education  
City liaison  
(408) 348-2095  
e-mail: wcsvedu@yahoo.com

# URBAN WILDLIFE INFORMATIONAL NETWORK



## CO-EXISTING WITH THE COYOTE

The fact that you have received this package indicates that you and the coyote have “interacted” in some way, that brought you to contact this office. We hope that the materials enclosed will be of some help to you in finding ways to peacefully co-exist with this long-term resident of Northern California.

The coyote issue has been a very emotional and often debated one in California. While there are very articulate and passionate representatives at both ends of the spectrum, the prevalent scientific view prescribes educated co-existence as the only realistic long term solution for coyote-human conflict. That is the hoped for result of your acceptance of the enclosed materials. When our entire community accepts responsibility for those measures which prevent or mitigate coyote-human conflict, we shall see far fewer incidents and losses of pets and property. Your cooperation in that regard is both essential and welcomed.

Please do not hesitate to re-contact this office if you have future needs in this area.

email: [mary@littlebluesociety.org](mailto:mary@littlebluesociety.org) phone: (650) 465-7371

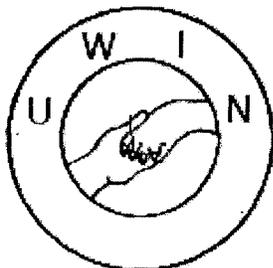
email: [Jon.Cicirelli@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:Jon.Cicirelli@sanjoseca.gov) phone: (408) 578-7297

email: [janet\\_alexander@msn.com](mailto:janet_alexander@msn.com) phone: (408) 929-9453

Little Blue Society • City of San Jose Animal Services • City of San Jose Animal Advisory Committee • Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley • Santa Clara County Animal Advisory Commission • San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Division • San Mateo County Fish and Wildlife Advisory Committee • California Department of Fish and Game • Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District • City of Walnut Creek Open Space • Peninsula Humane Society • USDA Wildlife Services • City of Belmont Police Department • World Ethics Forum Switzerland • City of San Ramon • Town of Portola Valley Conservation Committee • City of San Ramon • City of Scotts Valley • Audubon Society • Humane Society of the United States •

c r e a t e d & s p o n s o r e d b y L i t t l e B l u e S o c i e t y

## URBAN WILDLIFE INFORMATIONAL NETWORK



### A QUICK GUIDE FOR CO-EXISTING WITH THE COYOTE

The coyote weighs 20 to 30 pounds and stands 23 to 25 inches at the shoulder. In appearance, the coyote looks similar to a tan colored shepherd-type dog with long pointed muzzle, large ears, long legs, and a bushy, black-tipped tail.

The coyote is an extremely intelligent predator that has adapted to living in close proximity to humans. The coyote whose natural habitat has shrunk as the human population has expanded, has adjusted very successfully to living closer to humans, sometimes in parks, open space lands, and along freeways.

Coyotes may use trails, roads, creek beds, flood control channels, and highways as convenient routes for travel. In addition to natural sources of water, they have been known to drink from swimming pools, street gutters, leaking hose faucets, and sprinkler heads, birdbaths and pet dishes.

Although the coyote is an excellent hunter, feeding primarily on rats, mice, ground squirrels, rabbits, insects, carrion and fruit, it will not hesitate to kill cats, small dogs, poultry, sheep, or goats if given the opportunity. They can learn that domestic animals are easier or more available prey than wild animals.

Domestic animals such as chickens, rabbits and other small animals often kept outdoors should be kept in well protected areas and in sturdy cages. Cages constructed of chicken wire may not be strong enough to deter a determined coyote. Stronger gauge wire is recommended. Yard fencing should be at least 5 - 5 1/2 feet high, angled outward, and with the bottom of the fencing buried underground.

Coyotes are wild animals and should be treated as such. No attempt should be made to pet or feed or otherwise make contact with them. The coyote's natural fear of humans should not be compromised. This is the most effective way to prevent confrontations.

Residents, especially those living near open space or wild lands are advised to give special attention to the following **DO'S** and **DON'T'S** to safely and peacefully coexist with the coyote.

## **DO'S**

- Consider making your dog or cat an indoor pet when living in an area that is known to be occupied by coyotes.
- Accompany your dog in well lighted areas at night for comfort walks.
- Keep your dog on a leash whenever you take it off your own property.
- Keep all outdoor trash can lids securely fastened to the trash can receptacle.
- Improve yard fencing to coyote resistant standards.
- Pick fruit when it ripens, and don't leave rotting fruit on the ground.
- Eliminate ivy and other thick ground covers which may attract rats, which can attract coyotes.

## **DONT'S**

- Don't feed wild animals.
- Don't leave pet food and water outdoors, especially at night
- Don't allow pets to roam from home unaccompanied.
- Don't leave garbage containers open
- Don't leave water in birdbaths, or birdseed outdoors for songbirds.
- Don't attempt to contact or "tame" coyotes

## **Other Important Reminders**

As with many wild animals, the coyote, if left alone, will regulate its own numbers. If coyotes in a certain area are removed, the remaining individuals will fill the area, either with larger litters, or by allowing outsider coyotes to move into an area. For this reason, trapping or other forms of abatement normally have no long term impact.

Flashing lights, tape recorded human noises, scattered moth balls, and ammonia soaked rags strategically placed may deter coyotes from entering an area.

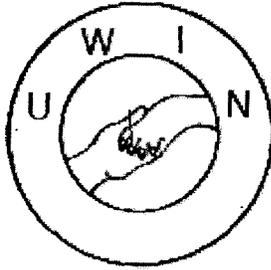
Coyotes and other predatory animals are "opportunistic" hunters. While the coyotes natural diet may be small rodents and fruit, they will not hesitate to prey on small domestic animals, or human refuse, if the opportunity exists. Consequently if you live in an area within the range of coyotes, it is your responsibility to afford protection to your domestic animals and to store your trash in a sound and secure manner.

Although rare, coyote attacks have seriously injured young children. Never leave small children unattended in areas known to be frequented by coyotes, even in your yard.

**Homeowners will also be expected to have made a good faith effort to implement the procedures outlined in "Co-existing With the Coyote" before any consideration for trapping is given. Trapped animals will be destroyed.**

## **URBAN WILDLIFE INFORMATIONAL NETWORK**

Little Blue Society • City of San Jose Animal Services • City of San Jose Animal Advisory Commission • Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley • Santa County of Santa Clara Animal Advisory Commission • San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Division • San Mateo County Fish and Wildlife Advisory Committee • California Department of Fish and Game • Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District • City of Walnut Creek Open Space • Peninsula Humane Society • USDA Wildlife Services • City of Belmont Police Department • World Ethics Forum Switzerland • City of San Ramon • Town of Portola Valley Conservation Committee • City of San Ramon • City of Scotts Valley • Audubon Society • Humane Society of the United States •



## WHAT YOU CAN DO TO SAFELY AND PEACEFULLY CO-EXIST WITH THE COYOTE

“As we all know too well, people are opportunistic. If you own a business, do you leave the doors unlocked when you leave at night? No, because somebody is likely to take advantage of the situation by going in and stealing your money or merchandise.

Animals are opportunistic too. Deer will be drawn to the tastiest plants within easy reach, (usually your prized flowers), dogs will paw through available garbage for a choice morsel. We can't blame them, we'll take the easy way over the hard way any day too.

The problem arises however, when animals see opportunities we don't recognize and then we get angry at them for being so clever in taking advantage of us. What we need to do is heighten our awareness of the situations where this might occur.

Unfortunately animals that have lost their wariness and have more contact with humans also tend to have shorter life spans. That is because these tend to be our problem critters, and are frequently killed.

How can we keep our wild creatures wild? Probably the most effective method is to remove any opportunities around our property that are particularly attractive and easy for them to take advantage of.”

Susan Hossner D.V.M.

**By following these common sense guidelines, you can greatly decrease the chances that the coyote which passes through your neighborhood will consider your place a convenient “fast food joint.”**

**Once the source of attraction is removed or modified, it is likely that the coyote will no longer return to the area, only on passing through while ranging or foraging.**



**A FED COYOTE IS A DEAD COYOTE**

Are you or anyone in your neighborhood feeding coyotes? If you know of someone who is, please share this informational package with them! Or contact our office, and we will forward the information to them.

We understand that sometimes people misguidedly believe they are being kind to the coyote by feeding it. But a coyote that becomes dependent on humans for food may become too bold and lose its natural fear of people. It may even bite someone and have to be destroyed.

Coyotes are quite capable of surviving without our help! Please help them live longer by keeping them wild. **DO NOT FEED** wildlife. You can enjoy them safely from a distance.



### **KEEP PETS UNDER YOUR CONTROL**

When coyotes see a small unattended animal, it is natural for them to regard it as food. It is your responsibility to provide fundamental protection for your pet. Your companion animal depends on you for its quality of life.

It is tragic for any companion animal to be killed. Therefore, we encourage you to prevent the tragedy before it happens by practicing responsible pet guardianship.

**\*\*Consider making your cat or small dog an indoor animal.**

**\*\*Do not leave your pets unattended outdoors unless a safe place for them to exercise can be provided, such as an enclosed cat or dog run.**

**\*\*Pets, even large dogs should be brought indoors at night, and not allowed to roam free.**

**\*\*Always walk your pets on a leash, if in the evening, make sure you stay in well lit areas.**

If cats cannot be contained indoors and predation is viewed as a problem, posts can be installed in your yard which provide escape for the cats. These posts should be at least 7 ft. tall, made of a material the cats can climb, and have enough space on top for the cats to sit.



### **KEEP DOMESTIC ANIMALS IN SAFE ENCLOSURE**

When building a chicken coop or shelter for rabbits, dig a 1ft. trench around its perimeter. Extend the wire fence well into the trench then bury it. Make sure the pen is covered with a roof and constructed with heavy wire mesh. **Coyotes can break through ordinary chicken wire.**

**\*\*Make sure that rabbit hutches that stand above the ground have a solid bottom. Wire bottoms make the rabbit an easy mark.**

**\*\*In certain instances the confinement areas can be lit at night.**

**\*\*\* For commercial ranching operations**

In instances where sheep are present, a lambing shed should be built to shelter new born animals. Nonlethal chemical repellents can be used such as rags soaked with ammonia to keep coyotes away from the area.

The most cost effective method of non-lethal prevention of livestock predation is the use of specially raised and trained guard dogs. They have been used with great success.

For more information on the availability of this program, contact:  
Little Blue Society @ (650)365-8623.



### **MAKE SURE YOUR GARBAGE IS HANDLED PROPERLY**

\*\*Keep garbage inside a building or in heavy duty, non-tippable, tightly covered garbage container that keeps odors locked in.

\*\*Garbage containers can be put out in the morning before pick-up, rather than left sitting outside over-night.

\*\*Leftover table scraps should be buried 6 -12 inches deep in your compost pile, so the odor does not attract coyotes and other wildlife.

\*\*Ideally, your compost pile should be contained in a shed-like enclosure that can be closed off to easy access.

Good housekeeping measures are a good start in keeping the coyotes and other opportunists from visiting your property regularly!



### **DO NOT LEAVE PET FOOD OUTDOORS**

\*\*Feed pets inside or, if you must feed outside, pick up the food bowls when pets are done eating. The acutely sensitive nose of the coyote can pick up the merest hint of food, even in a well licked bowl.

\*\*Do not leave any drinking bowls full of water outside.

\*\*Do not feed the birds, fallen seeds will attract small animals which in turn will attract their predators. Coyotes have also been seen eating bird seed directly out of the feeders!



### **MAINTAIN YOUR YARD IN GOOD CONDITION**

When planning landscape projects, avoid ornamentals such as ivy, grape ivy, other vines, prostrate myoporum, or other such plants that produce fruit, or that attract rabbits or rats. The concentration of small prey could attract coyotes.

\*\*Landscaping should be pruned on a regular basis. Maintain ground covers so that

they are kept low and thin.

\*\*Keep skirts of shrubs and trees near wild land areas and children's play areas pruned up several feet off the ground..

\*\*Harvest fruit from your trees and always clear the ground of any fallen fruit.

These actions also remove hiding cover used by coyotes to stalk domestic pets.



### **EXCLUDE THE COYOTE FROM YOUR YARD**

Fences should be constructed that are at least 5 1/2 feet tall with an overhang. These can be made of solid wood, cement blocks, brick or heavy mesh wire.

\*\*If net wire fencing is used, squares should be smaller than 6 inches.

\*\*All fences should have some sort of galvanized wire apron buried at least 4-6 inches in the ground which extends out from the fence at least 15 to 20 inches. The apron should be securely attached to the fence.

Coyotes are adept diggers, and prefer to dig under fences rather than jump them.



### **KEEP CHILDREN SAFE**

Although rare, coyote attacks have seriously injured young children. Never leave small children unattended in areas known to be frequented by coyotes, even in your yard.

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c r e a t e d & s p o n s o r e d b y L i t t l e B l u e S o c i e t y

This excerpt from a non-lethal coyote management proposal is included for your information. It discusses the efficacy of past and present methods of coyote management. This proposal was presented at the San Mateo County Coyote Forum in 2000, and the National Interpreter's Association Convention sponsored by the CA Fish and Game Department in 2000.

### **Proposal: COYOTE VEXING**

"Coyote Vexing" is a term and technique created by Little Blue Society in 1999. The techniques actively modify humanized behaviour, and instil the fear of humans in (problematic, and potentially problematic) coyotes. The prescribed techniques are intended for use by official parks/wildlife personnel. For more information, please contact : Mary A. Paglieri at (650)465-7371

### **Preventative Non - lethal Method to Stem Potential Conflicts between Coyotes and Humans on the San Francisco Peninsula.**

Mary A. Paglieri, Founder/Director, Little Blue Society. Human-Animal Conflict Consultant. Chairperson, Wildlife Subcommittee, San Mateo County Fish and Wildlife Advisory Committee. Redwood City, California.

Christopher M. Papouchis, Wildlife Biologist/Specialist, Animal Protection Institute. Sacramento, California.

### **DISCUSSION**

Traditionally, coyote damage control programs have relied extensively on lethal methods like shooting and the use of leg hold traps to remove problem animals and reinstate the coyotes natural fear of humans (Baker and Timm 1998). Indeed, at least in urban areas, these methods have been shown to discourage coyotes from frequenting areas where removals have occurred. However, because lethal methods only treat the symptoms and not the underlying cause of human/coyote conflicts, they are impractical as a permanent solution. Moreover, lethal methods can actually exacerbate the situation because coyote numbers have been shown to increase in response to population control and because displaced coyotes may push adjacent populations into human habitat. Another consideration is that the public has expressed a strong distaste for lethal methods, and their continued use will inevitably prove to be a public relations nightmare for communities. For these reasons, we suggest that public education and a program of proactive behavior modification of coyotes will prove to be a more effective, more humane and less costly solution to human coyote interactions.

Studies and observations have shown coyotes to be remarkably adaptable animals that can alter their behavior in response to changes in their environment. One example of this ability is the increase in coyote sightings and attacks on humans in urban areas due to the availability of food and the habituation of some coyotes to humans (Baker and Timm 1998). Shargo (1988:7) in his study of coyotes in the Los Angeles suburbs, concluded that "Human activities, in conjunction with a productive natural habitat, have contributed to a plentiful food supply, which is available year round." Indeed coyote diets in and around urban areas in southern California contain high amounts of garbage and domestic cat remains (Wirtz 1982; MacCracken 1982; Shargo 1988). Because of human modifications, urban areas can contain a richer supply of food than the surrounding natural habitats, allowing carrying capacities from 10 to 20 times that of undeveloped sites (Baker and Timm 1998). Since

coyotes are density dependent and thus will regulate their own numbers based on their habitat, the abundance of food allows urban coyotes to occupy smaller home ranges than those living in the wild. Shargo (1988) found the town of Malibu, California had coyotes occupying home ranges of roughly 0.5 - 1 square mile. Additionally, he observed that the abundant supply of food reduced competition for food, thereby discouraging territoriality and allowing overlap of home ranges that resulted in a high population density.

Human activity has also changed the activity patterns of coyotes, suggested by the increased sightings of coyotes during the daytime hours (Shargo 1988). In the wild, coyotes are primarily active during dawn and dusk or at night. This behavior has traditionally allowed them to avoid human contact. However, as coyotes lose their fear of humans, they may venture out during the daytime as well, increasing the likelihood of conflicts.

Though commonly used, the traditional course of constant population manipulation through lethal controls actually increases coyote numbers because the removal of adult leaves more food available for other coyotes, increasing pup survivor ship and opening habitat for dispersing coyotes from surrounding areas. Studies in Yellowstone National Park by Dr. Bob Crabtree and Jennifer Sheldon have found that in an unexploited population, only one or two pups in a six pup litter will live beyond a few months. However, in exploited populations, most pups will survive to adulthood (see Finkel 1999). For this very reason, trapping or other forms of abatement normally have no long-term benefits.

A second problem with lethal methods is that while they may temporarily cause coyotes to avoid the area and humans for several years (Baker and Timm 1998) the remaining coyotes will disperse, increasing their range into other areas. We hypothesize that these dispersing coyotes may displace other packs living in the adjacent wild lands, forcing them into the urban fringe, thereby spreading the problem to another area. Additionally, other coyotes will inevitably move into the area formerly trapped, continuing the cycle.

The most promising solution for a reduction in conflicts between humans and coyotes appears to be a combination of reducing the attractiveness of urban areas to coyotes and pro actively modifying coyote behavior to re instill their natural fear of humans (Baker and Timm 1998). Without addressing the underlying issue of food availability, and as long as the urban food supply exceeds that of wild lands, coyotes will continue to propagate and migrate into these areas and conflicts will continue. A reduction in the food supply would be accompanied by an increase in coyote home range sizes since individuals will have to travel farther to obtain food, leading to a reduction in overall population density. If a program of active behavioral modification accompanies the reduction in food availability, conflicts between coyotes and humans can be reduced and even eliminated.

By their nature, animals seek to avoid destruction by their natural enemies (Young and Jackson 1951), which in the case of the coyote are mountain lions, wolves and humans. Unfortunately, because of changing human behaviors, the coyotes natural fear of humans has been lost in some areas (Baker and Timm 1998). However, this condition need not be permanent. Coyotes, which have displayed their ability to habituate to humans when not threatened by them, can also be reconditioned to fear humans. However, long term reconditioning can only occur if the public is educated to treat coyotes as wild animals and to remove potential food sources. It is also imperative that reconditioning be implemented before a coyote becomes overly habituated, otherwise conflicts may be unavoidable. Since behavioral traits are influenced by parental training, offspring of a coyote which fears people

YOU ARE ENTERING

COYOTE

COUNTRY



OPEN SPACE AND PARKLANDS

**WHILE VISITING, PLEASE DO THE FOLLOWING:**

**AVOID SUDDEN ENCOUNTERS**

- Stay on Trail
- Be alert while hiking
- Enter during posted hours only

**GIVE COYOTES THEIR SPACE**

- Keep a safe distance
- Coyotes can be unpredictable
- Leash your pet

**NEVER FEED WILDLIFE**

- Feeding is prohibited by most ordinances
- Keep wildlife wild

**IF YOU SEE A COYOTE**

- Do not advance toward it
- Calmly leave the area

**IF APPROACHED**

- Do not turn your back, do not run
- Make loud noises, stand tall
- Toss an object at it
- Keep yourself between the animal and small children
- Contact your local Park Ranger

**CALL 911 IF INJURED**

- Always report attacks

