

August 11, 2010

Mayor Peter Amundson
Council Member Chandler, Council Member Harbicht
Council Member Kovacic, Council Member Segal
Arcadia City Hall

Re: Coyotes in Arcadia

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

The subject of coyotes can be highly emotional with officials and the public often lacking information that could help.

Back in October 1982 our City Council was asked to "do something" about coyotes. The Mayor appointed a five person citizens' committee to study the issue. The committee was balanced with people pro and con. They visited the area where complaints originated and found many open trash cans. They held a series of meetings with a county trapper, a health department official, a wildlife biologist, and our animal control officer. What they learned convinced them that killing the coyotes was not the answer. The Council agreed. I am enclosing a copy of their committee letter accompanying their final report. I can provide copies of their report. The facts remain the same: people's behavior causes conflict.

Because of the committee's work, the Council appointed an Animal Commission as an advisory body to the Council. The Commission still exists since 1983 and helps with many animal issues and receives any coyote complaints. They have an ongoing education effort including letters to the local paper and inserts in the water bills reminding people about leaving food outside, watching their pets and never feeding coyotes or other wildlife except birds.

Since the establishment of this Commission two coyotes were killed in 1989 when someone ordered same without any public information being given and no written records were kept as to why.

In 2004 residents complained about coyotes and someone said a coyote walked up on her porch. Based on the description, many thought this was not a coyote. Our Police Chief said since this had become a public safety issue, he would arrange for a trapper. After three weeks and no animal caught, he had the trap removed.

This record of no trapping in all these years indicates something is working in our city. I have watched this issue surface in other communities and frequently someone is feeding coyotes. This can be by feral cat people - the food and the cats attract coyotes. There are also uninformed people who think feeding coyotes will protect cats or dogs. I have heard someone in Arcadia was feeding feral cats and intentionally feeding coyotes, and the woman moved two months ago! This information is extremely important to consider. Our city has an ordinance against feeding coyotes. I am attaching a copy herewith. Other cities have similar ordinances.

Also to consider are the fires last fall which devastated wildlife habitat and affected behavior. It is important for officials and the public to learn the difference in coyote behavior; terms like "aggression" are highly charged and usually inaccurate.

I have not gone into the inhumane method of snaring and killing coyotes which is currently being used. I can provide documentation on this. Most people choose to change their behavior when they learn no animals are released and how they are killed. They should know this.

I am including a brochure from Project Coyote along with their Coyote News. I am also enclosing article on Denver's handling of coyote issues and article by Professor Marc Bekoff.

I strongly urge that you reconsider killing more coyotes. That so many have been killed in the three years of control indicates something is very wrong. While removing animals leaves a vacuum soon filled, the numbers taken in Arcadia are very high.

It is most troubling to learn that the Pasadena Humane Society has not provided you and your citizens a presentation on wildlife focusing on coyote "Do's and Don'ts". I have helped arranged a number of programs with Prof. William Wirtz, retired biologist from Pomona College. I have seen the reaction by the public and how attitudes change. Prof. Wirtz is willing to provide a program for you.

Please postpone the trapping. I will help in anyway to arrange a program which will help solve the problem. Killing the coyotes is inhumane, ineffective and expensive. Please consider other options.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Bee Simpson
[\(626\) 799-5622](tel:(626)799-5622) edsimpson@dslextreme.com

cc: Mr. Don Penman, City Manager
Mr. Jim Barrows, City Clerk

