



STATE OF VERMONT
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Department of Fish and Wildlife
Commissioner Lewis Porter
Dear Commissioner Porter;

115 STATE STREET
MONTPELIER, VT
05633-5201

March 3, 2017

Re. Coyote management

We find, from the Department's web site:

"The Fish & Wildlife Department ... believe[s], however, that coyotes are important members of the ecosystem and have evolved together with many of nature's existing prey species. Conservation of the coyote is important to maintaining ecosystem integrity because of the vital role they play as predators. In Vermont, coyotes can be hunted at any time during the year. A regulated trapping season begins the fourth Saturday in October and runs through December 31. Coyotes fill the role of a natural predator, a role that is important for maintaining the dynamics and health of our ecosystems."

The House Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife Committee requests that the Department of Fish and Wildlife continue our conversation regarding current coyote management regulations. We also want to discuss the Department's proposed, if any, changes in regulations/recommendations to the Fish and Wildlife Board regarding the management of the coyote population in Vermont. Specific topics of conversation should include:

- 1- the long term deleterious impacts coyotes have on Vermont's game populations, if any
- 2- justification for variance of Vermont's existing coyote management practices from the North American Wildlife Management Model relative to ethical hunting and Vermont's wanton waste law
- 3- an estimate (with methodology) of the population of coyotes in Vermont
- 4- your scientific, biological basis for current open season management practices
- 5- a summary of how other states regulate hunting of coyotes, including whether they implement regulated seasons; regulated night hunting; establish bag limits per day or per season; whether hunting coyotes with dogs is practiced; whether hunting is permitted during the intervening months between birthing and whelping
- 6- any differences in Vermont F&W's management techniques of coyotes and its other fur-bearing species
- 7- the impact an open season is having on Vermonters and whether it is polarizing the hunting community and the majority of Vermont citizens
- 8- is there a need to rebuild bridges between hunting and non-hunting communities; if so, what actions might we take
- 9- any recommendations the Department will be making to the Fish and Wildlife Board regarding hunting of coyotes in Vermont commencing with the 2019 management season.

The committee requests you visit us for this conversation on or before 1/15/2018.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim McCullough". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "M".

Rep. Jim McCullough, on behalf of House Natural, Fish and Wildlife Committee