

House Committee on Natural Resources and Energy

Testimony for H.132- An act relating to the taking of furbearers

Dear Members of the Committee

My name is Rod Coronado and I am a resident of the Town of Orange where I have lived and worked for the past five years as the wildlife programs director for the 600-acre Sage Mountain Botanical Sanctuary which has provided environmental education programs to youth and adults since 1987. I am also the state director of the registered non-profit, Vermont Wildlife Patrol and have also been an elected member of our town's cemetery commission for the past 4 years.

I am writing today in support of H.132 An act relating to the taking of furbearers, which I believe would not unfairly infringe upon constitutionally protected hunting rights, but only restrict the intentional feeding of wildlife as a legal method of harvest. I've spent eight years in the state of Wisconsin investigating and monitoring the conflicts with wildlife caused by the intentional feeding of bears. While not a problem in Vermont, I have witnessed the use of bait piles to hunt coyotes in Addison and Caledonia Counties. Last February, while visiting the Calendar Brook Wildlife Management Area outside of Sutton, Vermont I came across a fresh pile of beef carcass remains that had been recently dumped in the WMA. That same morning there was a group of hound hunters in the same location, whose dogs tracks could be seen in and around the bait pile. While I am not opposed to the hunting of coyotes, I do contribute to the Vermont Habitat Stamp program whose focus is conserving healthy wildlife habitat at the state's many WMA's. I do not believe the intentional feeding of wildlife is aligned with these goals.

The intentional feeding of furbearers, namely for coyotes, has been implicated recently in the shooting death of domestic pets in Vermont. This is another negative consequence of creating a food source for predators. Attracting coyotes and other predators to human dwellings contributes towards these animals recognizing humans as a source for food. Such habituation will always lead to conflicts not only for resident's pets but for wildlife that becomes less fearful of humans.

Let me speak from a local example. In our rural town there is a resident who maintains a bait pile for coyotes and bobcats from the beginning of trapping season (third Saturday in October) until the end of bobcat hunting season (February 7th this year). Last year he posted on our town's Facebook page that someone's dog almost stepped in one of the traps he set at his bait pile. This is an area with many homes and where most dogs are not leashed.

I've also read Vermont warden reports related to the accidental killing of other dogs and learned that it's not uncommon for the users of bait piles to shoot animals from within their home. While possibly legal, it is certainly not a good image for hunters in Vermont to be shooting possibly a neighbor's pets from their decks or windows. That is exactly the kind of hunting that gives all hunting a bad name.

H.132 will also help build social tolerance for coyote hunting by eliminating a source of conflict with the non-hunting public. A role of hunting in modern society is to help ensure animals like coyotes continue to maintain a healthy level of fear for humans. Our peaceful coexistence with the wildlife right outside our door in Vermont demands that we be good neighbors. Keeping wildlife, especially predators in their place, away from human habitation will continue to be a challenge in Vermont but it's one made much easier without the intentional feeding of wildlife being allowed as a tool for hunting.



Above: Bait pile in Calendar Brook Wildlife Management Area, February 12, 2024.



Dave L Gomo

December 14, 2024 · 🌐



Does anyone know whose dog this is? It's running deer and eating my coyote bait and is being a pain in my ass.



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Dave's Post



1

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Austin Jacobs

Yeah that's my dog he's usually hooked but sometimes rolls around and gets off his run. Sorry about that

9w Like Reply



Dave L Gomo [Author](#)

Austin Jacobs just a heads up I have a trapper that is on my land from beginning of trapping season to the end of it and I hunt coyotes and when the season starts for bobcat to the end. last year he came within inches of getting caught in a trap on my bait pile. just want to make sure he doesn't get hurt.

9w Like Reply



Chip Morrison

Yeah Dave this is definitely a dog sort of resembles a coyote. I'm assuming this is right in Orange Center?

9w Like Reply



Dave L Gomo [Author](#)

Chip Morrison yes and he has a collar on but I can't see if he has dog tags

9w Like Reply



Chip Morrison

Dave L Gomo hi Dave swap on George Street not far up on the left just before Ann Chandler's house does that mobile home and I've seen that dog around that area I don't know if it's their dog though. Another time I was on Bennett's Mill on this side of orange Center and saw a similar dog also. Didn't look like it was thin or anything tongue hanging out from running around LOL

9w Like Reply



Dave L Gomo [Author](#)

Chip Morrison ok thanks 👍

9w Like Reply

