



Coyote Management - Lessons from the City of Arcadia

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Coyotes in Arcadia

- Arcadia is a foothill community; i.e. coyotes live here
- Previous attempts at abatement yielded little results
 - In 2011 the City embarked on a trapping program
 - PETA and local Native American tribes protested
 - Chanting and sage burning
 - After killing several coyotes and due to public pressure, the City Council backed off
- Since 2011, the City has provided coyote safety tips through our traditional public outreach efforts.



Coyotes in Arcadia

- In FY 2016/17 the City Council approved \$15,000 for enhanced community outreach



DISCOURAGING Coyotes in Arcadia

Living as close to the foothills as we do, it is not unusual to see coyotes walking through neighborhoods or even on busy streets. Coyotes prefer to live in more natural surroundings and instinctively have a fear of humans, but with the arrival of warmer weather and the significant lack of rain, our local coyotes are more likely to enter residential areas in search of food and water. To ensure your safety, here are **5 cautionary reminders** on how to best safeguard your family and pets.

- 🐾 If a coyote approaches you, do not run—retain eye contact and be as big, mean and loud as you can. Make loud noises and throw objects in the animal's direction.
- 🐾 If you see a coyote while walking with your pet or small children, pick them up and calmly leave the area.
- 🐾 Do not leave cats and small dogs outside unattended; do not leave small children outside unsupervised.
- 🐾 Do not leave trash, pet food, water, or food waste in accessible areas. Dispose of garbage in secure containers and wait to place your trashcans at the curb until the day of pick-up.
- 🐾 If there is an immediate threat to a pet or person, please call 911.



AS A SAFETY PRECAUTION, the City is offering safety whistles at Arcadia City Hall. Stop by the cashier's desk to pick up your free whistle that can be attached to any keychain or leash.

▶ For more precautionary tips and information about deterring coyotes from your neighborhood, please visit:

ArcadiaCA.gov/coyotes



Coyotes in Arcadia

- <https://vimeo.com/184749082>



Discouraging Coyotes in Arcadia

 City of Arcadia | 540 plays



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Coyotes in Arcadia

- Council requests a report on December 6, 2016
- Staff provides an overview on February 7, 2017
 - Option 1: Trap and euthanize coyotes
 - Option 2: Learn to coexist and continue public outreach
- Council authorizes \$20,000 for coyote trapping program



Coyote Trapping

- A professional services agreement is brought forward for Council approval on February 21, 2017 for \$15,000 with Animal Pest Management, Inc. for coyote trapping services
- The staff report does not contain language related to CEQA
- Council unanimously approves the coyote trapping contract



Arcadia Coyote Litigation

- On March 2, 2017, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and an Arcadia resident filed a Petition for Writ of Mandate against the City of Arcadia in Los Angeles Superior Court.
- The lawsuit challenged the City's February 21, 2017 approval of a professional services agreement with Animal Pest Management Services, Inc. for coyote trapping services.



Arcadia Coyote Litigation

- **Issues alleged in PETA's Petition:**
 - The City did not comply with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
 - PETA claimed the City's decision to implement a project to trap and kill coyotes with snare traps was a discretionary decision subject to mandatory CEQA review under Public Resources Code § 21080(a) and State CEQA Guidelines §§ 15002(d) and (i).



Arcadia Coyote Litigation

- **Issues alleged in PETA's Petition:**
 - The City's actions constituted approval of "projects" under CEQA that would have significant adverse environmental impacts on wildlife in the City and surrounding areas.



Arcadia Coyote Litigation

- **PETA requested that the Court:**
 - Require the City to set aside its decisions to appropriate funds for a coyote trapping program and approve the related professional services agreement.
 - Require the City to comply with the requirements of CEQA prior to any future approval of the program/ contract/funding.
 - Prohibit the City and consultant from installing, utilizing, or maintaining any coyote traps pursuant to the professional services agreement.



Arcadia Coyote Litigation

- **Resolution of Litigation:**
 - City Council voted to rescind the appropriation for a professional services contract related to coyote trapping and as well as its direction to City staff to enter into a professional services agreement with Animal Pest Management Services for coyote trapping services.



Arcadia Coyote Litigation

- **Resolution of Litigation:**
 - Because the City's action rescinded the approvals at issue in the litigation, the parties agreed that the litigation was rendered moot.
 - City paid PETA \$15,000 in attorneys fees and costs.



Coyote Management Plan

- On April 4, 2017, the City Council rescinds the actions of February 7, 2017 and February 27, 2017 to “cure” the coyote issue
- The City Council directs the City Manager to develop a Coyote Management Plan within 90 days
- Staff returns to City Council on June 20, 2017 with a draft Plan



Coyote Management Plan

- Education
 - Coyote hazing
 - Community outreach
 - Yard audits (Pasadena Humane Society)
- Enforcement
 - Existing laws and ordinances
 - Unoccupied home registry
- Safety Response Plan
 - Tiered response to coyote/human interactions
 - Communicate expectations
 - City will resort to lethal removal if a human is bitten



Safety Response Plan – Level 1

COYOTE BEHAVIOR	RESPONSE LEVEL	RECOMMENDED ACTION
Coyote heard	1	Provide educational materials and info on normal coyote behavior.
Coyote seen moving in public area	1	Provide education materials and info on normal coyote behavior.
Coyote seen resting in public area	1	Educate on hazing techniques, what to do tips.



Safety Response Plan – Level 2

COYOTE BEHAVIOR	RESPONSE LEVEL	RECOMMENDED ACTION
Coyote seen resting in public area with humans present	2	If area frequented by people, educate on normal behavior and haze to encourage coyote to leave. Look for and eliminate attractants.
Coyote entering a yard to a home without pets	2	Educate on coyote attractants, yard audit, provide hazing info.
Coyote entering a yard to a home with pets	2	Educate on coyote attractants, yard audit, hazing info, pet safety.



Safety Response Plan – Level 3

COYOTE BEHAVIOR	RESPONSE LEVEL	RECOMMENDED ACTION
Coyote entering a yard and injuring or killing attended or unattended pet	3	Develop hazing team in area, gather info on specific animals involved, report on circumstances, educate on coyote attractants, yard and neighborhood audits, and pet safety.
Coyote biting or injuring a unattended pet/pet on a leash longer than 6 feet	3	Gather info on specific animals involved, report circumstances, educate on coyote attractants, yard/neighborhood audits, hazing, and pet safety.
Coyote following or approaching a person and pet (Stalking)	3	Educate on hazing techniques and what to do tips and pet safety.



Safety Response Plan – Level 4

COYOTE BEHAVIOR	RESPONSE LEVEL	RECOMMENDED ACTION
Coyote following or approaching a person without a pet (Stalking)	4	Educate on hazing techniques and what to do tips. Use of force may be considered.
Coyote biting or injuring attended pet/pet on a leash 6 feet or less	4	Gather info on specific animals involved, document circumstances, educate on coyote attractants, yard/neighborhood audits, hazing, pet safety. Use of force may be considered.
Coyote behaving aggressively; showing teeth, back fur raised, lunging, nipping without contact and/or with or without pet present	4	Gather info on specific animals involved, report circumstances, educate on coyote attractants, yard/neighborhood audits, aggressive hazing, pet safety. Use of force will be recommended.
Coyote entering a home; biting or injuring a human	4	Identify and gather information on specific animal involved, report circumstances, educate on coyote attractants, yard/neighborhood audits, hazing, and pet safety. City staff will inform the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Use of force will be recommended.



Coyote Reporting Tools

- City of Arcadia MyPD Mobile App
- Coyote Hotline - (626) 574-5463
- Twitter - @DiscoverArcadia #coyotes
- Coyote Cacher Website - UC Extension

- Data is used to track “hot spots” in the City and resources will be directed towards neighborhoods most effected.
- Analyzed quarterly



Other Coyote Litigation

- **Monterey County**

- In June 2016, a coalition of environmental groups sued Monterey County for contracting with the United States Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services to trap and kill coyotes.
- The lawsuit alleged that the County should have prepared an EIR prior to approving the contract.



Other Coyote Litigation

- **Monterey County (continued)**
 - In August 2017, the Monterey County Superior Court ruled that County's contract violated CEQA by failing to analyze the environmental impacts of the contract before renewing the program.
 - The Court found no evidence to support the County's claim that its contract could not result in a significant environmental change.



Other Coyote Litigation

- **Mendocino County**

- In November 2014, the Center for Biological Diversity and others sued Mendocino County for contracting with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services for coyote trapping on grounds the County failed to comply with CEQA.
- The lawsuit settled in April 2015, with the County agreeing to comply with CEQA prior to renewing the contract.



Other Coyote Litigation

- **Mendocino County (continued)**

- The County renewed the contract with Wildlife Services in June 2015 after determining the contract was exempt from CEQA pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines section 15307 (action by regulatory agency for protection of natural resources), section 15308 (action by regulatory agency for protection of the environment), and the “catch-all” exemption (where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility of an environmental impact).



Other Coyote Litigation

- **Mendocino County (continued)**

- In July 2015, the petitioners sued the County a second time, for both breaching its agreement and violating CEQA by not preparing an EIR. Petitioners alleged the trapping was not exempt from CEQA.
- In 2016, the County again settled, this time agreeing to suspend its contract for coyote killing, and prepare a full EIR to analyze the impacts of trapping before renewing the contract.



Learning Lessons

- Expect to get sued by PETA if you decide to trap coyotes
 - Be sure to do some CEQA review before you adopt a trapping program
- Arcadia is now putting CEQA reviews on **EVERY** City staff report
- A broad management plan with multiple options gave the public a sense of doing more than “just” education and hazing
 - Also was (more) acceptable to PETA



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