

# Woodmoor Improvement Association

## Coyote/Wildlife Management Plan

### Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to provide guidelines for responses to conflicts with coyotes, bears, and Mountain Lions particularly to resolve and reduce human or pet conflicts in a consistent and expedient manner. Public safety is the primary concern of the Community and wildlife will be managed with human safety as a priority. The plan also seeks to identify and achieve a balance between the importance of human and pet safety and the native ecology of the region. There is an environmental benefit to maintaining and encouraging natural wildlife populations that are self regulating and that are beneficial to maintaining and/or developing natural ecosystems. Although the plan is more detailed toward coyote management, bears and mountain lions are also addressed.

### Specifically, the purpose of this plan is to:

- Provide essential standardized definitions and vocabulary related to coyote management
- Outline a consistent, organized and detailed reporting and tracking process for human or pet/wildlife interactions
- Outline a consistent, organized and detailed response process for human or pet/wildlife and coyote management related reports

### Strategic Plan

### This plan includes three key strategies:

- Create and implement a plan to educate the community about wildlife including methods to safely co-exist through informational handout materials, media outreach, HOA meetings, and a telephone reporting system to Woodmoor Public Safety (WPS)
- Implement a coyote/bear hazing education program for residents, to try and change the behaviors of habituated coyotes/bears, or to instill a healthy fear of people back into the local coyote/bear populations. This component of the plan includes only those techniques that can be safely implemented by residents, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) volunteers and staff, and WPS
- Implement a program of lethal control for coyotes when the interactions between humans, pets and coyotes change from encounters and incidents to attacks or the coyote behavior changes from nuisance to dangerous

## **Coyote Definitions**

The following definitions will be used in obtaining information from the public, to identify specific coyote behaviors. Using these definitions will help to standardize the record keeping and will assist in communicating coyote behaviors, internally as well as with external agencies such as CPW, WPS, and El Paso County.

- Observation – The act of noticing or taking note of tracks, scat or vocalizations
- Sighting – A visual observation of one or more coyotes
- Encounter - An unexpected direct meeting between a human and one or more coyotes with no physical contact and no aggressive behavior from the coyote
- Incident – A conflict between a human and a coyote where a coyote exhibited behavior creating an unsafe situation, but the human was uninjured. This includes the following types of behavior: growling, baring teeth, lunging toward a human. An example of this would be; a coyote attacks a dog that was on a leash, the human was uninjured, but was in an unsafe situation
- Unattended Pet Attack – An unattended pet is physically contacted, bitten, or killed by coyotes. This includes pets on leashes that extend longer than six feet from the owner
- Attended Pet Attack – Attended pets that are leashed or unleashed within six feet of owners and are contacted, bitten, or killed by a coyote
- Attack – An aggressive action by a coyote where a human is injured

### **Descriptions of coyote behavior:**

- Nuisance Habituated – A coyote that appears to frequently associate with humans or human related food sources, and exhibits little wariness of the presence of people
- Depredating – A coyote that is preying on pets or livestock
- Menacing – A coyote that exhibits aggravated abnormal behavior; however such coyote does not display the characteristics of a “dangerous coyote”. This may include coyote incidents and/or encounters where a coyote or group of coyotes could potentially endanger public safety
- Aggressive behavior is defined as a coyote that bares its teeth, growls, lunges or charges at a human(s)
- Dangerous – a coyote that has attacked a person, exhibits aggressive behavior towards a human(s) and/or poses a significant threat to human safety

### **General Definitions:**

- Coexistence – To exist together at the same time. Coexistence is not passive, but active on the human’s part, including actions such as removing specific coyote habitats, removing attractants for wildlife, and employing hazing methods. Coexistence provides a mechanism by which humans obtain and maintain a high level of knowledge and understanding of coyote/bear ecology, behaviors and appropriate responses
- Hazing – An activity or series of activities, that is conducted in an attempt to change the behaviors of habituated coyotes/bears or to instill healthy fear of people back into the

local coyote/bear populations. Hazing is not intended to physically damage the coyote/bear, property or humans

- High Intensity Hazing – High intensity hazing techniques involves using non-lethal projectiles. Example: Paintball gun

#### **Reporting and Tracking:**

- It is imperative that the community has efficient and consistent reporting of human or pet/wildlife interactions. The WPS staff will use the WPS reporting database to document and record all wildlife reports. In the case of Coyotes, if they show menacing, dangerous, or aggressive behavior, completed wildlife reports must be tabulated and forwarded to CPW. All bear and mountain lion sightings will also be forwarded or reported to CPW. Observation and sightings of coyotes do not need to be reported to CPW however these incidents should be recorded on a tracking map
- WPS will track all observations, sightings, encounters, incidents, and attacks that are reported. In addition concerning coyotes, the WPS will track attended and unattended pet-attacks, pet-loss, intentional feeding, and active den sites that are reported. Tracking reports will allow WPS staff to identify “hot spots” where additional signs, education or habitat investigations might be needed

#### **Responding to Coyote Conflicts**

##### **Observations, Sightings and Encounters:**

- WPS staff will complete a coyote report and information will be added to the tracking map. WPS staff will also provide educational materials emphasizing pet safety, hazing techniques, and habitat modification for the residents of the HOA

##### **Pet Injuries or loss resulting from Coyotes:**

- WPS staff will complete a coyote report and information will be added to the tracking map. WPS staff will provide the pet owner with educational materials emphasizing pet safety, hazing techniques, and habitat modification suggestions. In the event that a coyote continues to return to the same property, a WPS officer, property owner, or resident, *may* implement high intensity hazing techniques

##### **Incidents and Attacks to Humans**

- The WPS staff will respond to reported incidents involving dangerous coyotes. Based on public safety, the WPS officer will make a decision regarding the use of aggressive hazing or if more of a response is warranted. WPS staff will notify residents in the area of the incident via email blast, local newspapers, posting information on WIA website and work with the CPW staff for an official press release. In the case of an incident or attack to a human, WPS will log all information on a coyote report and forward to CPW immediately. WPS staff will provide educational materials, hazing techniques, reporting intentional feeding, and habitat modification to area residents and schools in the area

## Coyote Hazing Effort

### Hazing

The WPS staff will continually educate residents on hazing coyotes, including the benefits of hazing and suggested techniques. The following are examples of hazing/adverse conditioning methods that have been found to be effective:

- Human behavior: Yelling, waving arms, and act threatening towards coyotes. However, it is imperative to keep safety in mind and never corner a coyote or approach one with young nearby
- Sound devices: Using a device that makes a loud popping sound, air horns, banging pans, whistles, or any other noise maker
- Motion activated devices: Spotlights, strobe lights, motion activated water sprinklers. These devices tend to be most effective when sound is also incorporated
- Projectiles: Throwing or using a slingshot to lob rocks, golf balls or marbles at coyotes
- High Intensity: This technique may be carried out by *trained* WPS officers, any State or County agency, volunteer or resident. This method will be used for a coyote or group of coyotes that have been determined by WPS or CPW officials to be menacing or dangerous. If an officer uses hazing tools which launch any type of projectile, such as paint balls or bear spray, such tool and its projectile may only be used on WIA common area unless a private property owner has given permission to use these tools on their property. Residents may employ high intensity hazing techniques on their own property provided that the use of such methods does not pose a threat to public health or safety

### Lethal Control on coyotes

The WIA *may* implement a program of lethal control when the interactions between humans, pets, and coyotes change from encounters and/or incidents to attacks, or the coyote behavior changes from nuisance to dangerous. Information on the behavior of the coyotes will be obtained through the reports received by the WPS and in conjunction with CPW. Lethal control *may* be utilized when education and hazing techniques have been employed and are not effective in changing the behavior of a habituated coyote and that coyote has become dangerous, or if the WIA/WPS determines that a coyote poses an immediate danger to humans. WIA will be responsible for these coyotes on Woodmoor Common Area only while other private property owners will be responsible for their property. Lethal control measures employed will not be used indiscriminately against the coyote population and will be done by a trained, insured, and licensed wildlife mitigation specialist.

### Laws Associated with Coyote Management

- Wildlife Commission Regulation 303(A) Prohibits the relocation of coyotes without a permit. The Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) generally will not authorize the relocation of coyotes due to risks associated with handling of predators and disease concerns. In addition, studies have shown that relocation is not effective

- Wildlife Commission Regulation 021(C) No person shall place, deposit, distribute or scatter any food or other substance so as to intentionally constitute a lure, attraction or enticement for coyotes or fox in an area where the discharge of firearms is precluded by law. This regulation shall not apply to any person using any bait or other attractants for the purpose of luring coyotes or fox for take as otherwise authorized by law
- Wildlife Commission Regulation 021(D) It is unlawful for any person to fail to take remedial action to avoid contact or conflict with black bears, coyotes or fox, which may include the securing or removal of outdoor trash, cooking grills, pet food, bird feeders or any other similar food source or attractant.
- Amendment 14 (passed by voters in 1996) prohibits the use of leg hold and conibear type traps, snares and poisons for the killing or removal of wildlife. Two of the exemptions to this amendment are agricultural damage by wildlife and issues concerning human health and safety
- Colorado Revised Statutes Sec. 33-1-105(1)(h) gives the Wildlife Commission the authority to provide for destruction of any wildlife that poses a threat to public health, safety or welfare
- Colorado Revised Statutes Sec. 33-1-106 gives the Wildlife Commission the authority to regulate the circumstances under which wildlife may be taken, and to determine the disposition of usable portions of wildlife
- Colorado Revised Statutes Sec. 33-1-107(9) permits any landowner, any member of such landowner's family, or any employee of the landowner to hunt, trap, or take coyotes on land owned or leased by the landowner without the securing licenses to do so, but only when such wildlife is causing damage to crops, real or personal property, or livestock
- Colorado Revised Statutes Sec. 33-6-205 gives federal, state, county or municipal departments of health the ability to grant an exemption to Amendment 14 to take (by use of leg hold traps, snares, instant kill body gripping design traps, or poisons) wildlife for purpose of protecting human health and safety
- Colorado Revised Statutes Sec. 18-3-208. (Reckless Endangerment): A person who recklessly engages in conduct which creates a substantial risk of serious bodily injury to another person commits reckless endangerment, which is a class 3 misdemeanor. It has been determined that it would be unlawful for any person to discharge any firearms, including but not limited to any gun, (pistol or rifle) of any size or description, within the boundaries of the WIA

### **Responding to Bear Observations/Sightings**

#### **Observations, Sightings:**

- WPS staff will complete a bear report and information will be added to the tracking map. Minimum information to be obtained would include approximate size, color, or any other distinguishing identifiers. WPS staff will also provide educational materials emphasizing safety and habitat modification for the residents of the HOA

### **Incidents and Attacks to Humans**

- The WPS staff will respond to incidents involving dangerous/aggressive bears. In the case of an aggressive bear or an attack, CPW will be contacted immediately. WPS staff will provide educational materials, report intentional feeding, and habitat modification to area residents and schools in the area

### **Bear Hazing Effort**

#### **Hazing of bears**

Hazing techniques approved by CPW include a soda can with stones (shaken to create noise), air horn, banging of pots or pans, whistle, or any noise producing items can be used. WPS will continually educate residents on bears.

#### **Bear Encounters**

Black bears are highly intelligent, with individual responses to people and situations. Wild black bears seldom attack unless they feel threatened, cornered, or are provoked. When bears lose the fear of humans from intentional or unintentional feeding, this can increase the likelihood of an attack.

#### **If You Surprise a Bear**

- Stand still, stay calm and let the bear identify you and leave. Talk in a normal tone of voice and be sure the bear has an escape route
- Never run or climb a tree
- If you see cubs, their mother is usually close by. Leave the area immediately

#### **If the Bear Doesn't Leave**

- A bear standing up is just trying to identify what you are by getting a better look and smell
- Wave your arms slowly overhead and talk calmly. If the bear huffs, pops its jaws or stomps a paw, it wants you to give it space
- If the bear shows any of the signs listed above, keep looking at the bear and slowly back away until the bear is out of sight

#### **If the Bear Approaches**

- A bear knowingly approaching a person could be a food-conditioned bear looking for a handout or, very rarely, an aggressive bear. Slowly back away and never turn your back to the bear. Yell or throw small rocks in the direction of the bear
- If you're attacked, don't play dead. Fight back with anything available. People have successfully defended themselves with pens, knives, sticks, poles, and even bare hands

## Responding to Mountain Lion sightings

### Hazing of Mountain Lions

Hazing techniques approved by CPW include a soda can with stones (shaken to create noise), air horn, banging of pots or pans, whistle, or any noise producing items can be used. WPS will continually educate residents on mountain lions.

### Observations, Sightings

- WPS staff will complete a mountain lion report and information will be added to the tracking map. WPS staff will also provide educational materials emphasizing safety and habitat modification for the resident of the HOA
- People rarely get more than a brief glimpse of a mountain lion in the wild. Lion attacks on people are very rare
- Remember every situation is different with respect to the lion, people, and their activity
- Do not approach a lion, especially one that is feeding or with kittens. Most mountain lions will try to avoid a confrontation. Give them an escape route
- Stay calm, talk calmly yet firmly
- Stop or back away slowly and never run. Face the lion and stand upright. Make yourself appear larger by raising your arms, opening your jacket if wearing one, pick up children so they don't panic and run
- If the lion behaves aggressively, throw stones, branches, or anything you can pick up without crouching down or turning your back to the lion. Wave your arms and speak firmly. Convince the lion you are not prey and may in fact be a danger to the lion
- If attacked, **fight back with whatever means available to you**

Approved by the Woodmoor Improvement Association: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

