

Sabha, Tamer

Subject: FW: from Cathy MacVaugh: Important- Comment for Pasadena City Council Public Safety Committee hearing 4 pm. March 15 on the subject of Coyotes

From: Claire Spiegel Brian

Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2023 10:12 AM

To: Stevenson, Garrett <gstevenson@cityofpasadena.net>; Sabha, Tamer <tsabha@cityofpasadena.net>

Cc:

Subject: from Cathy MacVaugh: Important- Comment for Pasadena City Council Public Safety Committee hearing 4 pm. March 15 on the subject of Coyotes

Please confirm receipt of this message.

Begin forwarded message:

From: Cathy MacVaugh

Subject: Important- Comment for Pasadena City Council Public Safety Committee hearing 4 pm. March 15 on the subject of Coyotes

Date: March 15, 2023 at 9:30:16 AM PDT

To: "Chapman, Justin" <jchapman@cityofpasadena.net>, "Madison, Steve" <smadison@cityofpasadena.net>

Cc: "Kimiko Bonner, "Nancy & Bill McDonald", Robert Bonner

Steve and Justin,

FYI - please see below email for the public safety meeting.

Nancy McDonald on Bellefontaine street - our next door neighbor has the same issue.

Her children cannot bring their dog when they come to visit due to coyotes entering the yard at all times.

Her grandchildren cannot play in the yard alone.

The coyotes are here all the time - attached is just one recent photo.

Our issue is the front yard & the occasional backyard. We don't have young children but we do have 2 dogs.

The coyotes use the McDonald's front & backyard along with our front yard as their coyote highway.

Best,

Cathy MacVaugh

Sabha, Tamer

From: Robert Bonner

Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2023 10:13 AM

To: Sabha, Tamer <tsabha@cityofpasadena.net>

Cc: Claire Spiegel Brian; Steve Madison; Chapman, Justin <jchapman@cityofpasadena.net>

Subject: Report of South Grand-Covington Place Neighborhood Watch and Coyote Committee

TO: PASADENA PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

RE: HEARING ON MARCH 15, 2023

Our Neighborhood Committee was provided materials to see if there were scientific studies that supported the claim by Pasadena Humane that trapping and euthanizing *increases* the coyote population in a given area.

Based on our review of the scientific materials provided, we conclude that no valid scientific studies cited to us support this counter-intuitive claim. We were provided two links that purport to be such studies. The first is a pamphlet put out by the Humane Society of the United States titled *Why killing coyotes doesn't work*. Needless to say, the Humane Society, as the pamphlet itself states, believes that "killing [of coyote] programs . . . are inhumane." So, there is a built-in bias that is evident in the pamphlet. The pamphlet does assert, without citation, that "aggressively controlling" coyotes can increase their reproductive rate by causing larger litters and breeding at an earlier age. At p. 5. However, the Humane Society pamphlet does not cite to any scientific study, much less a study that supports these claims.

The second link is to a very short, 3-page article titled *Project Coyote: Fostering Co-Existence* put out by an organization called "Project Coyote." Under the first heading, "Why Killing Coyotes Doesn't Work," this paper argues that "indiscriminate killing of coyotes . . . work[s] synergistically to increase coyote populations following exploitation events" at p. 1, followed by footnote 5. Footnote 5 cites one study in support of this statement, to wit: F.F. Knowlton's 1972 study titled: "Preliminary interpretations of coyote population mechanics with some management implications." *J. Wildlife Management*. 36:369-382. I read the abstract of the article, which is the only part of this article available online, and while it discusses litter sizes (4.5 to 7) with a 40% mortality rate in the first year, there is nothing in the abstract that supports the assertion that trapping and euthanizing is not effective in reducing the population of coyotes in a given area, such as the Arroyo south of the Colorado Street Bridge.

The Project Coyote article itself misstates the goal when it states: "It's impossible to completely eradicate coyotes from an area." At p. 2. No one disputes that, and this is not the objective. The objective is to decrease the numbers of coyotes, which appear to be increasing in our neighborhood that abuts the Arroyo, at least in and around our South Grand-Covington Place neighborhood and most probably in the area beginning with narrowing of the Arroyo south of the Colorado Street Bridge to the stables in South Pasadena, about 2.5 miles long by ¼ mil wide.

The Project Coyote article loses some credibility when it states that "[c]laims that coyotes attack . . . pets . . . are greatly exaggerated." To the contrary, available data and actual experience would suggest that this is not an uncommon occurrence. The article does provide data that almost 10 people a year are attacked by non-rabid coyotes a year in the U.S. and Canada. So, attacks on

humans are not that rare. One is left to wonder what the number would be if one added the rabid coyote attacks.

Like the Humane Society pamphlet, the article by Project Coyote, a wildlife activist/advocacy organization, has a bias. Both the Humane Society and Project Coyote make clear that it is us humans that are the problem. The article states that it is up to us to “[e]liminate easy food sources, such as . . . supervising pets while outside and keeping cats indoors” P. 3. If only we would be with our dogs at all times when they are in our fenced backyards and never let our cats out, there wouldn’t be this problem of coyotes attacking and eating our pets. Other than having pets, there is no evidence that anyone in our neighbor feeds or has food sources for coyote, yet they roam our streets and backyards freely and in increased numbers.

There is some scientific research regarding coyotes, mainly coyotes in the wild and coyotes that attack sheep. There is some evidence that if there is an abundant food supply that over time the size of the litters may increase, but it is also important to put this in context. According to the scientific papers cited, a pack typically produces one litter a year and the average is between about 4.5 and 7 pups per litter. A pack typically is between 2 and 7 adults, and they are territorial. The statements that coyotes will “quickly” increase if their population is reduced (and food supply thereby increased), is not supported by the science. Moreover, it seems likely that it would take a few years to re-populate, if at all, in an area where there is a periodic program to trap and euthanize.

A 2017 City of Arcadia staff report recites the questionable proposition that trap and euthanize programs increase the coyote population, but mainly it expresses concern that wildlife activists may initiate legal action to block any effort to reduce coyote population, as they did in Arcadia in 2011. That’s what activist organizations do. That does not mean our elected politicians and city officials should cave in because there is the threat of potential legal action.

We also read through the City of Torrance coyote control plan. Unlike the City of Pasadena, it contains the following provision:

“Active Trapping Season

“Annually, coyote trapping season is usually from October to March. In the City of Torrance, trapping will occur year-round in 2022 by actively placing traps in allowable areas within the City’s boundary and euthanize all coyotes caught as legally mandated.”

We request that consideration be given to adding such a provision to the City of Pasadena plan. At the very least, we suggested that this warrants serious public discussion based on facts and without exaggerating the limited scientific understanding of coyote behavior.

Robert Bonner

South Grand – Covington Place Neighborhood