

**CHERRY HILLS VILLAGE
COLORADO**

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COYOTE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to provide guidelines for responses to conflicts with coyotes, particularly to resolve and reduce human-coyote conflicts in a consistent and expedient manner. Public safety is the primary concern of the City, and coyotes and other 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 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.

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-coyote interactions.
- Outline a consistent, organized and detailed response process for human-coyote and coyote management related reports.

Strategic Plan

This plan includes four key strategies:

- Create and implement a plan to educate the community about coyotes including methods to safely co-exist through informational handout materials, media outreach, HOA meetings, and a coyote telephone hotline.
- Develop an ordinance prohibiting the feeding of wildlife. Such ordinance would make it illegal to “knowingly or willingly leave or store any garbage, food product, pet food or grain in a manner which would constitute an attractant to any wild animal.” This prohibition shall not apply to the feeding of squirrels or birds to the extent that such feeding

CHERRY HILLS VILLAGE
COLORADO

does not create a nuisance. *A coyote that associates humans with food may become demanding and aggressive. The feeding of coyotes puts everyone in the neighborhood at risk.*

- Implement a coyote hazing education program for residents, to try and change the behaviors of habituated coyotes or to instill a healthy fear of people back into the local coyote populations. This component of the plan includes only those techniques that can safely be implemented by residents, CDOW volunteers and staff. The more aggressive techniques will only be implemented by trained personnel and may include paintball guns, fire cracker type guns or other projectile weapons/instruments.
- Implement a program of lethal control, **only** when the interactions between humans and coyotes change from *encounters* and *incidents* to *attacks* or the coyote behavior changes from *nuisance* to *dangerous*.

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, both internally as well as with external agencies such as Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) and Tri-County Health Department:

Definitions listed in order of interactions between humans and coyotes:

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 without incident.

Incident – A conflict between a human and a coyote where a coyote exhibited behavior creating an unsafe situation, but the human was uninjured.

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.

CHERRY HILLS VILLAGE
COLORADO

Attack – An aggressive action by a coyote where a human is injured or killed.

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 were a coyote or group of coyotes could potentially endanger public safety.

Dangerous – a coyote that has attacked a person, exhibits aggressive behavior towards a human(s) and/or poses a significant threat to human safety.

Aggressive behavior is defined as a coyote that bares its teeth, growls, lunges or charges at a human(s).

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 and employing hazing methods. Coexistence provides a mechanism by which humans obtain and maintain a high level of knowledge and understanding of coyote ecology, behaviors and appropriate responses.

**CHERRY HILLS VILLAGE
COLORADO**

Hazing – An activity, or series of activities, that is conducted in an attempt to change the behaviors of habituated coyotes or to instill healthy fear of people back into the local coyote populations. Hazing is not intended to physically damage the coyote, property or humans.

Aggressive Hazing – Aggressive hazing techniques, e.g. paint balls, pepper balls, slingshots, etc., may be employed on a situational basis and with regard to substantiated cases only. The effort may only be carried out by uniformed officers of the Cherry Hills Village Police Department, or other State agencies or individuals approved by the Chief of Police.

Reporting and Tracking

Reporting

It is imperative that the City has efficient and consistent reporting of human-coyote interactions. In all cases, the City staff should use a Coyote Report Form to document and record all reports. Completed coyote report forms must be forwarded to Animal Control immediately.

In addition, reports regarding dangerous coyote behavior must be reported to the Colorado Division of Wildlife immediately.

Tracking

The City will track all observations, sightings, encounters, incidents, and attacks that are reported. In addition, the City will also track pet-attacks, pet-loss, intentional feeding, unsecured trash, and active den sites that are reported.

Tracking reports will allow City staff to identify “hot spots” where additional signs, education or habitat investigations might be needed.

Responding to Coyote Conflicts

Observations, Sightings and Encounters

City staff will complete a coyote report form and forward to animal control to log on the tracking map. City staff will also provide educational materials

CHERRY HILLS VILLAGE
COLORADO

emphasizing pet safety, hazing techniques, and habitat modification for the resident or HOA.

Pet Injuries or loss resulting from Coyotes

City staff will complete a coyote report form and forward to animal control to log on the tracking map. City 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 uniformed officer (or other approved agency or individual) may carry out aggressive hazing techniques (see below).

Incidents and Attacks to Humans

Notify Colorado Division of Wildlife District Manager (DWM) immediately.

CDO staff will respond to incidents involving dangerous coyotes and make a management decision based on the interest of public safety. The Chief of Police and/or the Lieutenant will be notified immediately and a decision will be made regarding the use of aggressive hazing or lethal control. City staff will work with CDO staff to notify residents in the area of the incident. City staff will log information on a coyote report form and forward to Animal Control immediately. City staff will provide educational materials, hazing techniques, reporting intentional feeding, and habitat modification to area residents, homeowners associations' and schools (if in the area).

CDO during regular business hours: (303) 291-7227

Colorado State Patrol after regular business hours: (303) 239-4501. Colorado State Patrol will contact the on-call Wildlife Officer.

Coyote Hazing Effort

Hazing

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

- **Human behavior:** Yelling, waving arms, and act threatening towards coyotes. However, be safe 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.

CHERRY HILLS VILLAGE
COLORADO

- **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.

This will require modification of the City code section 10-5-100, which states: No person shall throw or shoot any stone or other missile at or upon any person, animal, public or private property, building, structure, tree or shrub.

Aggressive Hazing

This technique will be carried out by a trained uniformed officer of the Cherry Hills Village Police Department, or any State agency or individual that has been approved by the Chief of Police. If CDOW volunteers are to be utilized for any aggressive hazing a coyote hazing program agreement is to be signed by the City and the CDOW. This method will be used for a coyote or group of coyotes that have been determined by City officials or CDOW, to be menacing or dangerous. If the officers use hazing tools which launch any type of projectile, such as pepper balls, paint balls or bear spray, such tool and its projectile may only be used on public property unless a private property owner has given permission to use these tools on their property.

Lethal Control

The City may implement a program of lethal control when the interactions between humans and coyotes change from encounters and 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 City and in conjunction with CDOW. 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 City determines that a coyote poses an immediate danger to humans.

When an attack on a human by a coyote has occurred, the City will immediately contact CDOW and they will send a Division of Wildlife District Manager immediately to try and locate and destroy the offending coyote, subject to their policies and procedures. If CDOW is unsuccessful in destroying the offending coyote, the City will need to decide if it is feasible to apply for a trapping exemption, through Tri-County Health Department, and hire a private trapper.

**CHERRY HILLS VILLAGE
COLORADO**

In any event, if a human has been bitten or is otherwise being attacked, or imminent threat of attack on a human by a coyote is occurring, and time will not permit the contact of CDOW, a police officer may act immediately, according to their training, and remove such threat.

Lethal control measures will not be used indiscriminately against the coyote population.

Laws Associated with Coyote Management

Wildlife Commission Regulation 303(A) Prohibits the relocation of coyotes without a permit. The Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) 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) It is unlawful for persons to use food or any other substance to attract or entice coyotes/foxes into an area where the discharge of firearms is precluded by law.

Wildlife Commission Regulation 021(D) It is unlawful for any person to fail to take remedial action to eliminate any attractant (including trash and pet food) once they have been notified that coyotes/foxes are in the area.

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.

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.

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.

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,

**CHERRY HILLS VILLAGE
COLORADO**

instant kill body-gripping design traps, or poisons) wildlife for purpose of protecting human health and safety.