



**CITIZENS FOR
LOS ANGELES
WILDLIFE**

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October 5, 2018

Councilmember Paul Koretz, Chair
Personnel and Animal Welfare Committee (PAW)
LA City Council c/o City Clerk
200 North Spring St, Room 395
Los Angeles, CA 90012

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BY
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DEPUTY

RE: Opposition to Trap and Release / Coyote Management Plan (CF 16-0585-S2)

Honorable Chairperson Koretz and PAW committee members:

Citizens for Los Angeles Wildlife (CLAW) is a non-profit environmental organization deeply concerned with City policy that promotes the well-being and peaceful coexistence of human and wildlife populations. Los Angeles is a true interface of urbanization and wild lands, where a population of 4 million resides among a unique and diverse array of animals, including the adaptable coyote.

Occasional human-coyote conflicts have led many to look for a solution to minimize such interactions. Unfortunately, the recent Council File 16-0585-S2 and motion (authored by Englander/Koretz), which includes a proposal to trap and release coyotes, is misguided and ill-advised. Such a policy would be in violation of California state law (Title 14, § 465.5). While CLAW encourages efforts to reduce human-coyote conflict, a trap and release program is not only illegal, it is unscientific, ineffective, and inhumane.


This Council File motion cites "anecdotal evidence," and we urge City Council leadership to instead turn towards scientific evidence when creating wildlife policy. Studies have shown that trapping and releasing is neither humane, as the motion claims it to be, nor does it solve the issues presented by the motion. In fact, a trap and release program has the potential to exacerbate such issues.

Coyotes often do not survive relocation. Unfamiliar with their new location, they will attempt to return to their home territory, and along the way are often killed by cars or in fights with coyotes who have already established territories in the release area. While the territory of origin may have a momentary reduction in coyote numbers, the removal of an alpha male creates an instability in the territory. Younger males are drawn into this area, leading to an increase in mating. The removal of the alpha male also leads to an initial reduction in competition, which leads to mating pairs having a larger number of surviving pups in their litters. The end result is that not only has the removal of the coyote not reduced the local coyote population as desired, it has possibly led to an increase in the local population, comprised of younger and less experienced coyotes who

may be more prone to undesirable behaviors, particularly if the fundamental causes of these behaviors are not addressed.

The fundamental causes of human-coyote conflicts are habitat encroachment and fragmentation, and the habituation of coyotes to urban areas as a result of people purposely or accidentally feeding or sheltering them. Addressing these causes would be a much more effective use of time and resources, through programs that promote the best practices for communities, including coyote "hazing", which teaches the coyotes to fear and avoid humans. The Los Angeles Animal Services Department has long been woefully understaffed especially in terms of its wildlife services. A better solution than what is proposed in this motion would be to bolster up L.A. Animal Services' educational programs about coexistence and hazing, so that residents are educated and prepared for wildlife encounters. Coyotes will always be a part of the urban ecology of Los Angeles, and educating residents in best practices is the only way to ensure peaceful coexistence in the years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tony Tucci". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Tony Tucci,
Chair, Citizens for Los Angeles Wildlife