

Los Angeles County Department of

Agricultural **C**ommissioner/ **W**eights and **M**easures

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Practicing the Biological Arts



Photo credit Johanna Turner

Living with Coyotes

Liz Bondy
Field Biologist

Coyote Facts

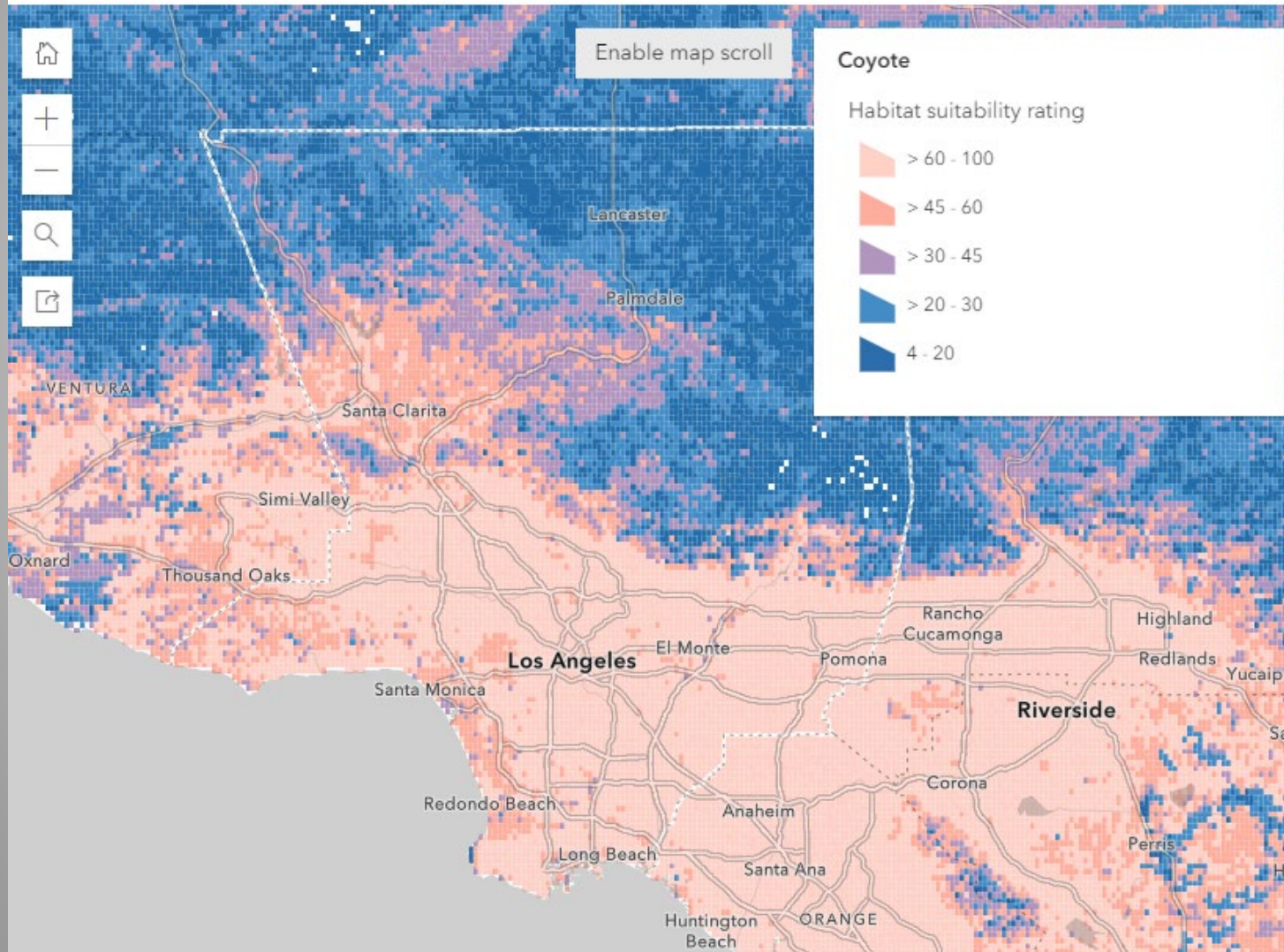
Coyotes are native mammals known to exist in L.A. County for at least the last 46,000 years

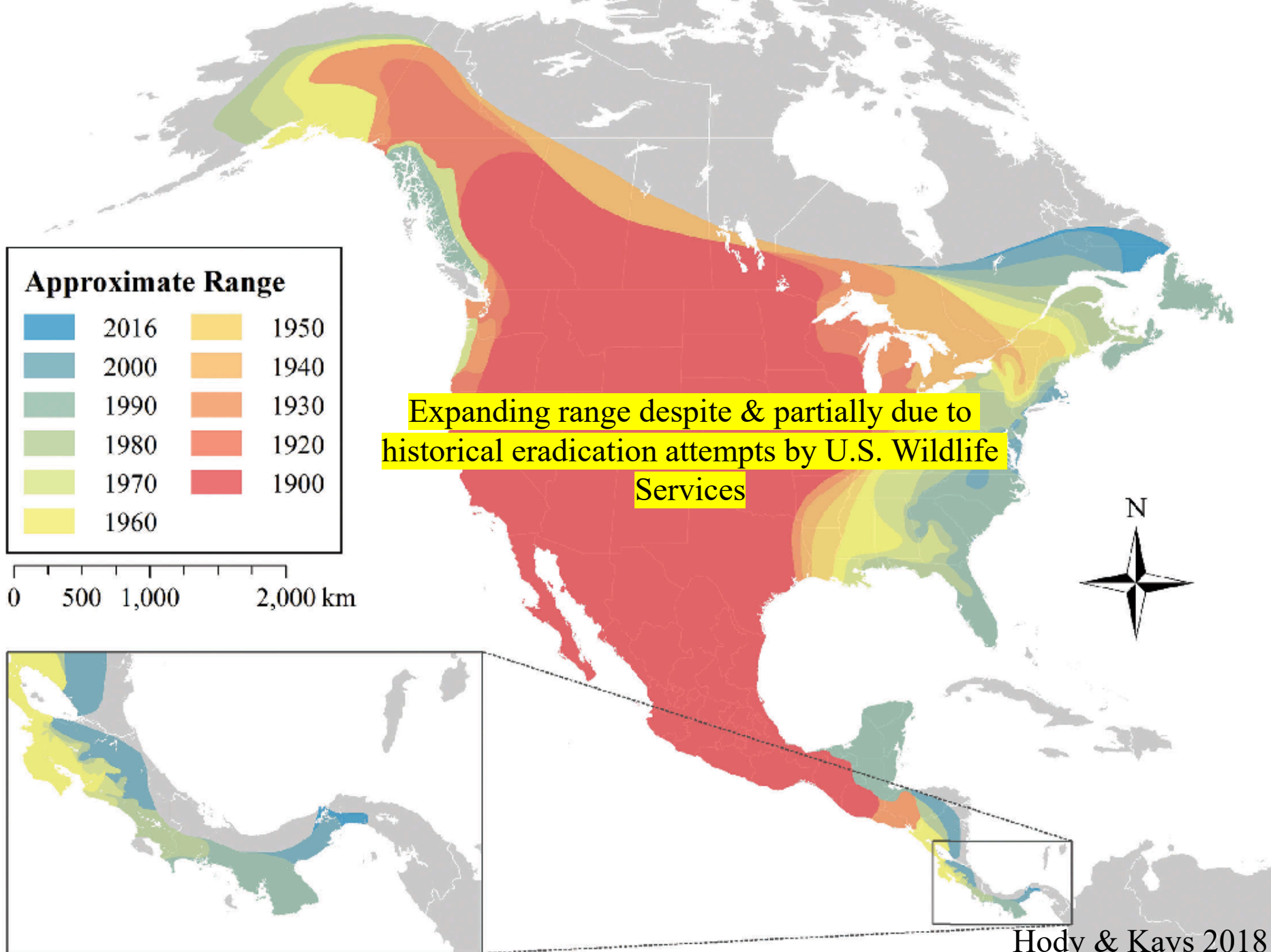


Coyote skeleton as displayed in La Brea Tar Pits and Museum. No longer on display.

Coyote, *Canis latrans*

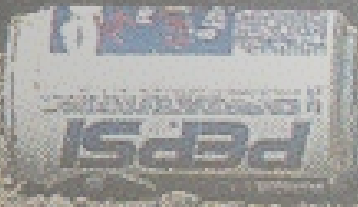
ABOUT THIS SPECIES





Success due to removal of predators, & flexibility

- Varied diet: Rats, Mice, Birds, Rabbits, Squirrels, Deer, Carrion (dead animals), Lizards, Fruit, Chickens, Goats, Sheep, Ducks, Geese, Cats, Dogs, Trash, Compost...
- Can forage singly and in packs
- Can adjust litter size with amount of resources



Identification

- Upright ears
- Long snout
- Long, bushy tail
- Mean weight
 - Southern California Urban Coyote Study
 - Adults 16-37 lbs.
 - Average weight ~25 lbs.



Identification



- Coyotes typically carry their tail downwards
- Dogs typically carry their tail up in the air
- Often, a dog's chest appears deeper than a coyote's, giving the impression that a coyote has longer legs than a dog



Coyote Behavior

Although generally most active between dusk and dawn, they can be seen at any time during the day.



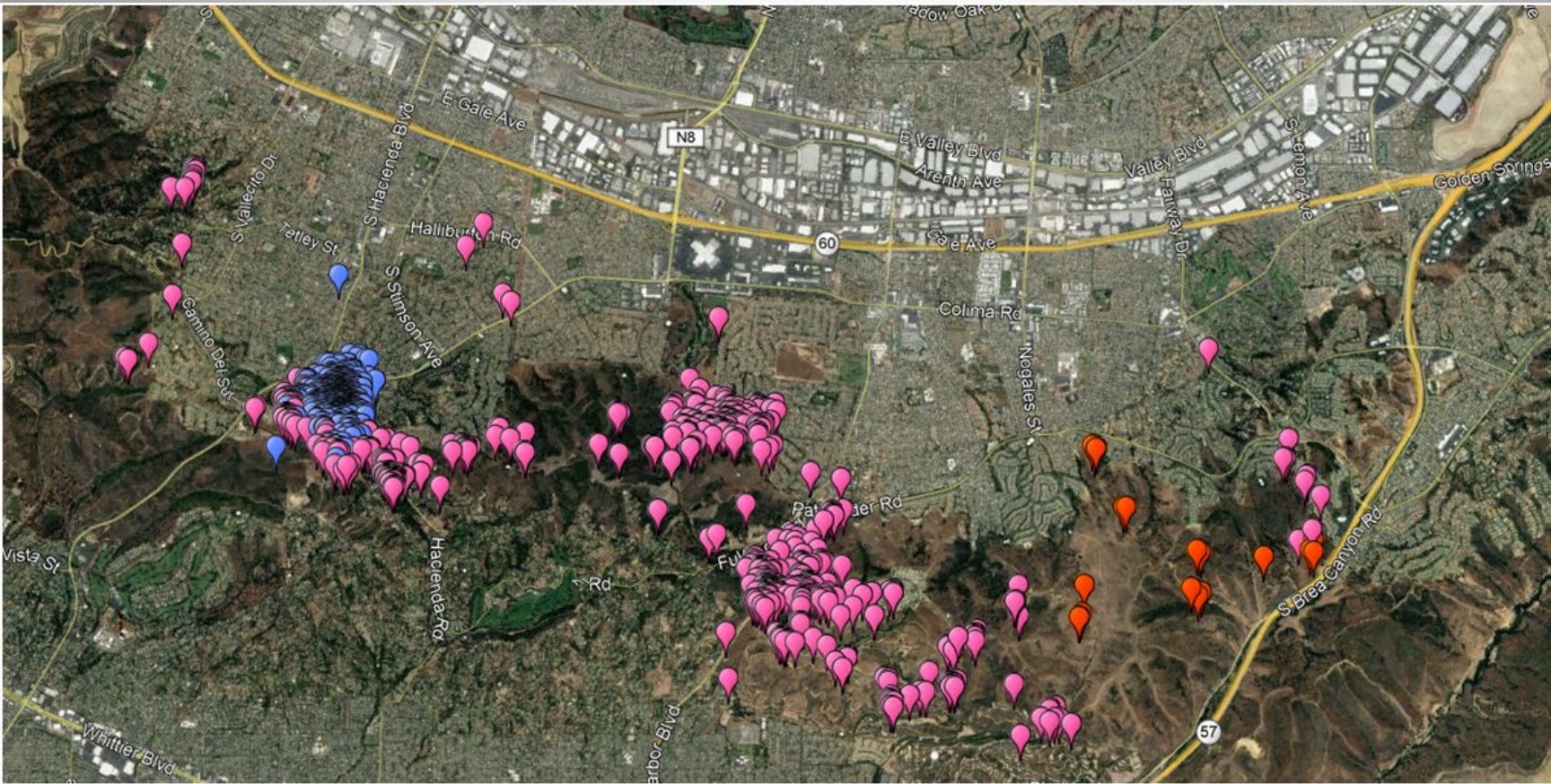
Coyote Behavior

Although they are shy animals by nature, they are also extremely curious and will often be seen observing human behavior from what they consider a safe distance



Coyote Behavior

Coyotes are territorial with variable range size



Coyote in 1 Year

- Young are born in March-May in dens
 - Generally, litters are from 4 to 7 pups
- Pups will emerge from den in ~3 weeks
- Juveniles stay with parents ~6 months, and may disperse in late fall
- Mating season in winter and early spring, mating pairs form



Legal Status

- They are considered “nongame” animals, and therefore have no protections outside of general animal abuse protections
- There are no registered pesticides for them- it is illegal to poison them & can also cause secondary poisoning
- It is illegal to feed them
- It is illegal to relocate them. If trapped, coyotes must either be euthanized or released on site

-CDFW video that explains trapping rules:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OdOewqXCS-I>

Legal Status

- It is illegal to feed them!

L.A. County Code of Ordinances, Title 10 ANIMALS

Chapter 10.84 FEEDING OF CERTAIN PREDATOR ANIMALS

10.84.010 Providing food for certain rodents or predator animals prohibited

- A. Except as otherwise provided for herein, no person shall feed or in any manner provide food to a nondomesticated rodent or a nondomesticated mammalian predator.
- B. For purposes of this chapter:
 1. “Rodent” includes ground squirrel
 2. “Mammalian predators” includes coyote, raccoon, fox and opossum (Ord. 81-0029U § 1 (part), 1981)



Keeping coyotes out of neighborhoods:

- Exclusion
- Sanitation
- Hazing

Exclusion

- High walls (angled out at top, and also angled out at bottom)
- Coyote rollers



- Dog runs
- Catio or other outdoor enclosures
- Especially exclude crawl spaces from Mar-May



Sanitation

- Maintain fruit trees
- Expose bottom (1-3 ft) of dense vegetation or low hanging trees to prevent hiding places
- Maintain bird feeders
- Make sure trash and compost is inaccessible
- Limit time that pet food and water is outside



Hazing

- Make eye contact
- Making loud noises: Clapping, snapping fingers, yelling, pots & pans, air horns, whistles, cans with rocks or coins, garbage bags
- Making yourself authoritative & big as possible, waving arms, charging toward coyote, chasing coyote out of sight
- Throwing objects toward coyote, using water hose



Extra tips to protect dogs

- When walking dogs, bring a noisemaker
- Use a tight leash, as opposed to a retractable one
- If able to, avoid coyote prime time from dusk to dawn
- If unable to exclude coyote from yards, supervise dog when outside



Extra tips to protect cats

- Outdoor cats are one of the top attractants to coyotes in L.A. County
- If outdoor cat population is unavoidable:
 - Feed cats only during the day and at a set time—and pick up any leftovers immediately
 - Provide escape routes for cats
 - In treeless or open areas, erect “cat posts”—long pieces of wood (four inches by four inches or corner posts) that stand out of the ground at least ten to twelve feet. These can be climbed by cats but not by coyotes
 - Elevate feeding stations beyond coyotes’—but not the cats’—reach

Extra tips to protect people

- Supervise toddlers when outside
- Never run from a coyote
- If a coyote approaches you, treat coyote like a bear (don't approach, don't run, make loud noises, slowly back away)
- Call 9-1-1 if a coyote or other wild animal attacks or threatens to attack a human

A photograph of a city street at night. In the background, there are several tall buildings with lights on, including one with 'UnitedBank' and 'Citi' logos. In the foreground, there are cars parked along the street, some covered with white tarps. Two coyotes are visible on the street in the lower right. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Most coyotes
are not
aggressive, and
we can coexist
with them

- Statistics:
 - 1 U.S. fatality from coyote attack in 1981 (compared to dogs that cause ~30-50 deaths/year)
 - Coyote bites have extremely high correlation with feeding
- But sometimes things get out of hand and coyotes become bolder
 - Many cities have tiered response plans in coyote management plans that are very similar with each other

Ex) West
Hollywood/
Humane
Society

Coyote behavior	Classification	Response
Coyote heard; scat or prints seen	Observation	Distribute educational materials and information on normal coyote behavior.
Coyote seen moving through area (day or night)	Sighting	Distribute educational material and information on normal coyote behavior.
Coyote seen resting in area (day or night)	Sighting	If area frequented by people, educate on normal coyote behavior and how to haze to encourage animal to leave. Look for and eliminate attractants.
Coyote entering a yard (no person present outside)	Sighting	Educate on coyote attractants; provide hazing information and yard audit.*
Coyote following or approaching a person with no incident	Encounter	Educate on hazing techniques. Look for and eliminate attractants.
Coyote following or approaching a person and pet with no incident	Encounter	Educate on hazing techniques and pet management. If in open area, post educational signs to alert other residents to keep dogs on leash and to haze coyotes. If it is pup season and there is a known den nearby, consider blocking off the path or area until pup season is over.
Coyote entering a yard with pets, no incident	Encounter	Educate on coyote attractants and pet management, provide hazing information and yard audit.*
Coyote entering yard with people and pets, no pet attack occurring	Encounter	Gather information on specific animals involved and report circumstances. Educate on coyote attractants and pet management, provide hazing information and yard audit.*
Coyote injures or kills unattended pet in back yard	Unattended Pet Attack	Gather information on specific animals involved and report circumstances. Educate on coyote attractants and pet management, provide hazing information and yard audit.*
Coyote injures or kills pet off-leash in open space area	Unattended Pet Attack	Gather information on specific animals involved and report circumstances. Educate on pet management and hazing. Look for and eliminate food attractants. Post educational signs in open area to alert other residents to keep dogs on leash and to haze coyotes. If it is pup season and there is a known den nearby, consider blocking off the path or area until pup season is over. Develop hazing team in area. Levy fines (for leash law violations) when appropriate.
Coyote injures or kills livestock	Livestock Loss/Depredation	Gather information on specific animals involved and report circumstances. Educate on proper livestock husbandry (including the use of secure enclosures, livestock guarding animals, and/or proper fencing).
Coyote injures or kills pet off-leash with human nearby (within six feet)	Attended Pet Attack	Gather information on specific animals involved and report circumstances. Educate on pet management, coyote attractants and hazing. Perform yard/ neighborhood/public area audit.* Post educational signs and/or send educational materials to residents in the area. Implement high intensity hazing techniques (by ACOs, police, etc. –using

- In the case of more aggressive coyotes, L.A. County Agricultural Commissioner is in charge of unincorporated areas & contracted cities to trap and euthanize coyotes aggressive toward humans
- California Department of Fish & Wildlife will be involved with any attacks on humans
- As most cities in the U.S. have found, onus is really on community to make safe environment that deters coyotes (best defense against coyote conflicts is public education)



Questions?

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COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES



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Department of
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COYOTES
OUR PERMANENT NEIGHBORS



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

