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**Southwest Environmental Center • Animal Protection Voters NM
Sierra Club: Rio Grande Chapter • Project Coyote
Wildlife Conservation Advocacy Southwest**

New Mexico Senate Passes Bill to Ban Coyote Killing Contests

Wildlife advocates are celebrating the passage today by the New Mexico Senate of a bill to ban coyote killing contests. The measure, sponsored by Senator Mark Moores (R-Albuquerque) and Representative Jeff Steinborn (D-Las Cruces) was approved on a bipartisan 27-13 vote.

“I am tremendously proud of my colleagues for passing this bill,” said Senator Moores. “SB 253 is carefully focused on ending coyote killing contests without restricting the ability of farmers and ranchers to protect their livestock.”

“New Mexico has laws against cockfighting, dog fighting and other cruel practices,” said Representative Steinborn. “I hope my colleagues in the House will support this effort to add coyote killing contests to that list.”

“With the Senate vote today, New Mexico has taken a giant step towards becoming the first state to pass a law banning these barbaric events,” said Kevin Bixby, executive director of the Southwest Environmental Center. “We urge the House and Governor Martinez to pass and sign SB253 and finish the job.”

“We applaud the Senate’s action today,” said Phil Carter, wildlife campaign manager at Animal Protection Voters. “It is recognition that wildlife killing contests serve no legitimate management purpose and are a violation of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation, which holds that wildlife should not be killed frivolously.”

“The dead coyotes piled up and thrown away by killing contest participants don't contribute to any wildlife management purpose,” said Mary Katherine Ray, wildlife chair for the Rio Grande Chapter Sierra Club. “To the contrary, coyotes provide a valuable service in limiting the populations of rodents and rabbits which unchecked can be very destructive.”

“Wildlife killing contests are out of synch with the attitudes of most New Mexicans, and undermine the economic contribution of non-consumptive users of wildlife who account for \$328 million in annual expenditures,” said Judy Paulsen, NM Representative of Project Coyote.

“Our group applauds the passage of SB 253 by the Senate,” said Elisabeth Dicharry of Wildlife Conservation Advocacy Southwest. “The co-founders of our group hunt and

fish. The practice of killing native wildlife solely for prizes, money, and commercial gain has served only to perpetuate inaccurate and negative stereotypes of the entire hunting community. Hunters and anglers have always been a big part of modern wildlife conservation, beginning with Theodore Roosevelt and Aldo Leopold. This legislation helps to maintain that tradition."

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