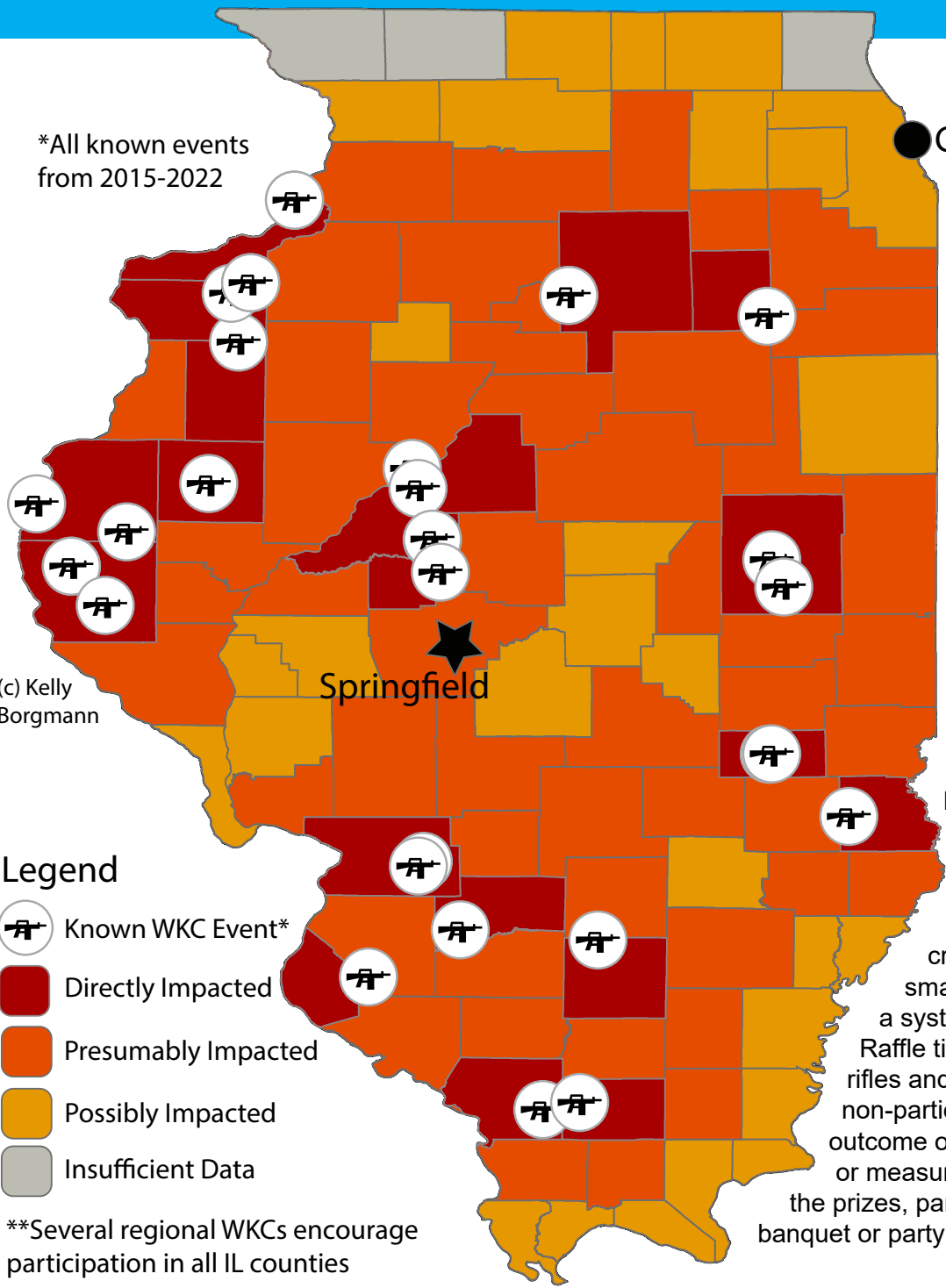




IMPACT OF WILDLIFE KILLING CONTESTS IN ILLINOIS

*All known events from 2015-2022



(c) Kelly Borgmann

Legend

- Known WKC Event*
- Directly Impacted
- Presumably Impacted
- Possibly Impacted
- Insufficient Data

**Several regional WKC's encourage participation in all IL counties



In wildlife killing contests, participants vie for cash and prizes for killing a variety of species including coyotes, bobcats, foxes, squirrels, and even crows and other birds. Judging criteria may be based on the largest, smallest, or heaviest animals killed, or on a system of points assigned to each species. Raffle tickets may be sold for drawings to win rifles and other hunting equipment, and non-participants may even be able to bet on the outcome of the contest. Following the weighing or measuring of the animals and the awarding of the prizes, participants may celebrate with a banquet or party at a local bar or restaurant.

Participants in wildlife killing contests flout the ethics of sportsmanship, fair chase, and respect for wildlife.











ECOLOGICAL IMPACT OF WILDLIFE KILLING CONTESTS IN ILLINOIS

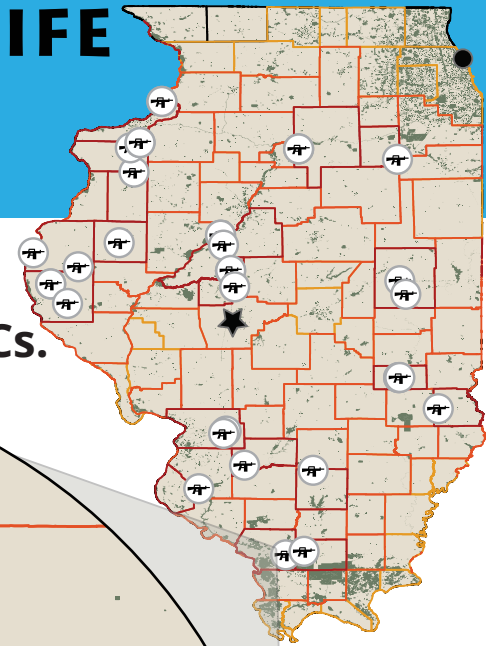
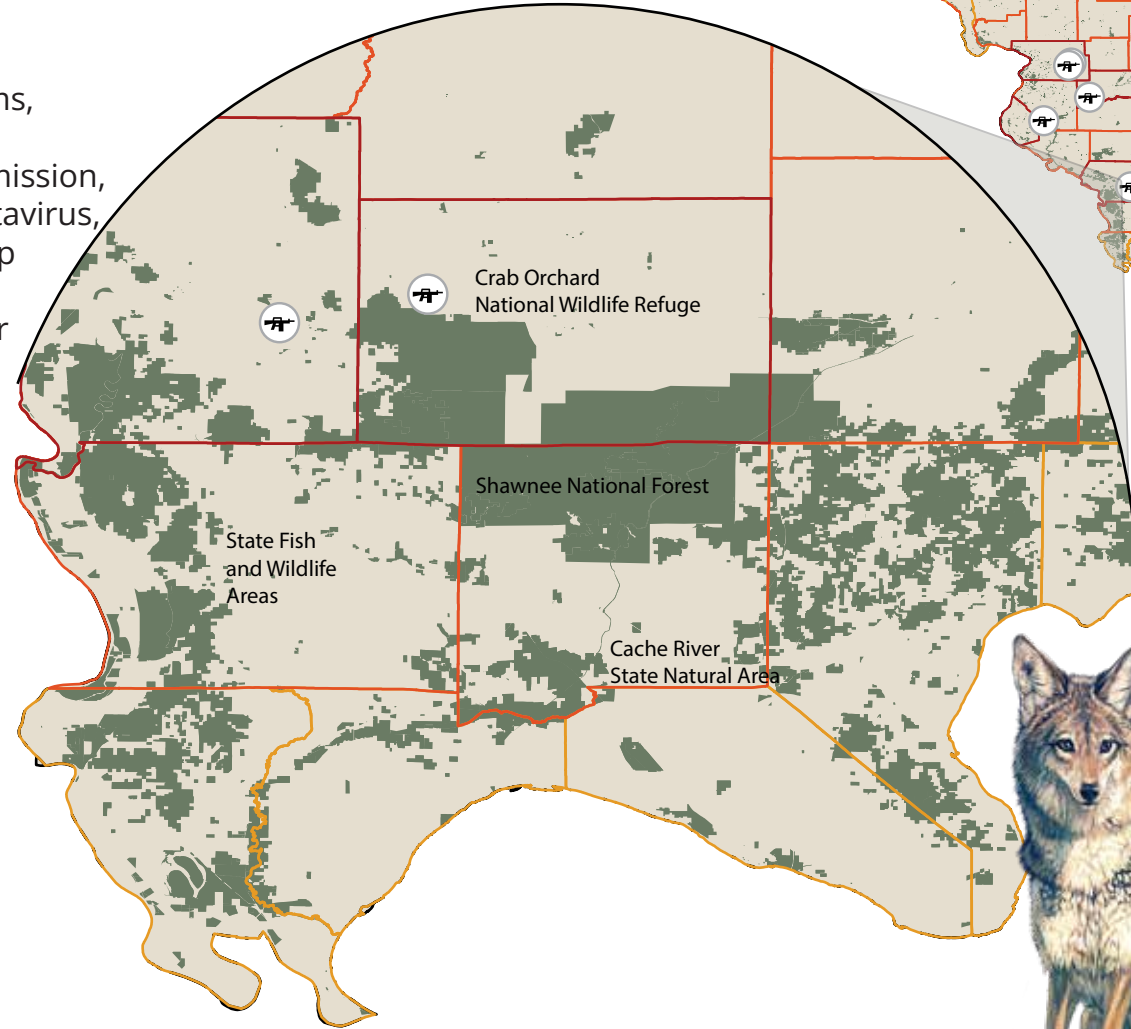
Over 90% of protected lands in Illinois are or may be impacted by WKCs.

Removal of coyotes harms ecosystems.

Coyotes are an integral part of healthy ecosystems, providing a number of free ecological services. For example, coyotes help control disease transmission, keep rodent populations in check (curtailing hantavirus, a rodent-borne illness that kills humans), clean up carcasses, increase biodiversity, remove sick animals, and protect crops. Coyotes balance their ecosystems and have trophic cascade effects such as indirectly protecting ground-nesting birds from smaller carnivores and increasing the biological diversity of plant and wildlife communities.

Legend

-  County Directly Impacted
-  County Presumably Impacted
-  County Possibly Impacted
-  Insufficient Data
-  Protected Land
-  Known WKC Event*



*All known events from 2015-2022
(c) Kelly Borgmann



**“Coyotes are valuable members of the wildlife community and do more good than harm where humans are concerned.”
— Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources**



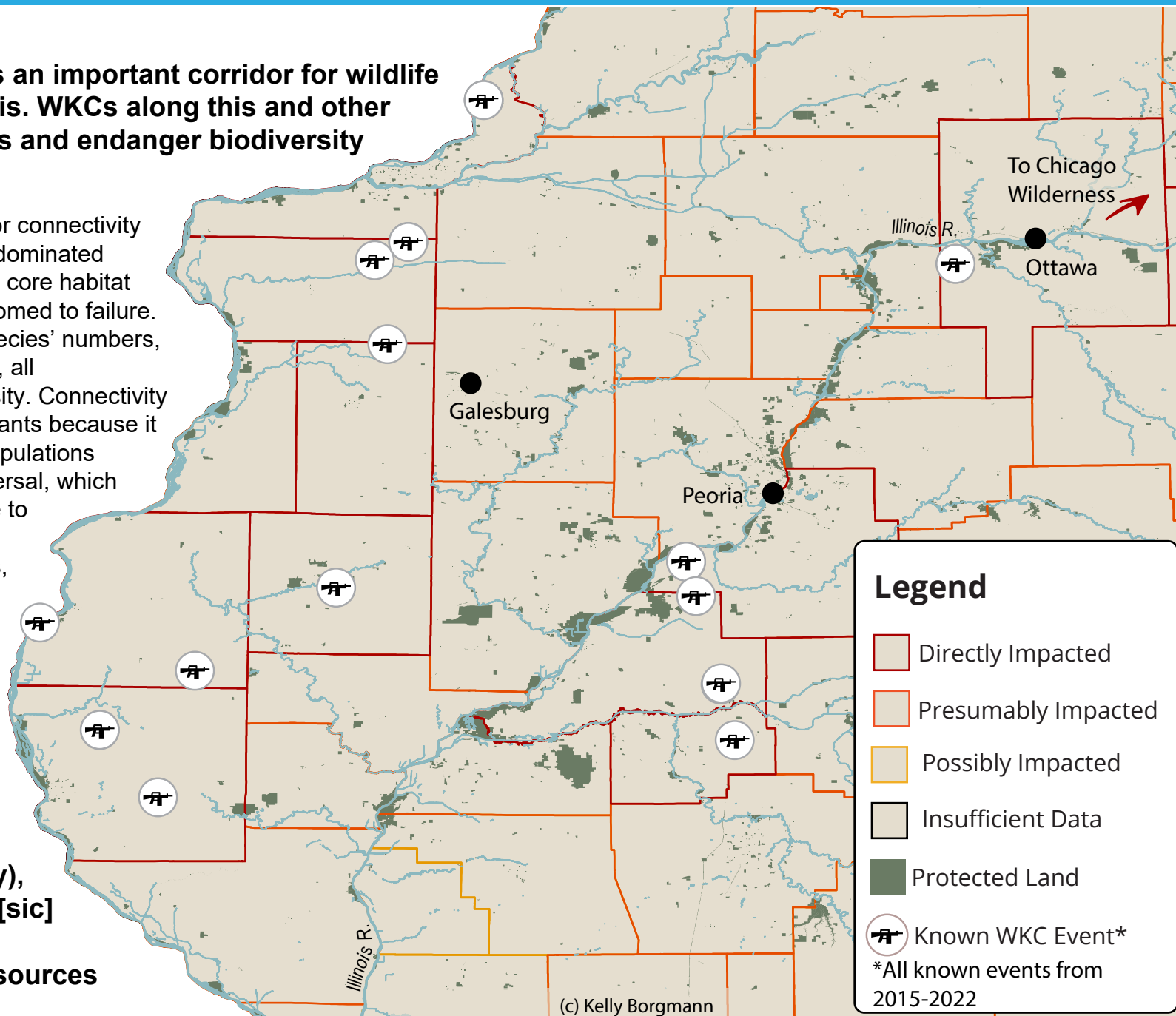
IMPACT OF WILDLIFE KILLING CONTESTS ON CONNECTIVITY IN ILLINOIS

The Illinois River serves as an important corridor for wildlife and nature in Central Illinois. WKC's along this and other corridors harm ecosystems and endanger biodiversity in the state.

Riparian corridors are essential for connectivity of wildlife populations. In human-dominated systems, such as much of Illinois, core habitat areas without connectivity are doomed to failure. Restrictions in movement limit species' numbers, distribution and genetic variability, all leading to a decrease in biodiversity. Connectivity is critical for many animals and plants because it allows them to achieve natural populations through unrestricted genetic dispersal, which also increases habitats' resilience to climate change. By repeatedly depleting areas of most predators, WKC's disrupt essential natural processes that harm our entire ecological community.

“While predators do eat some game [sic] birds and rabbits, this is not what is causing our long-term decline. If we had adequate habitat (quantity and quality), there would be more game [sic] on the landscape.”

-Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources



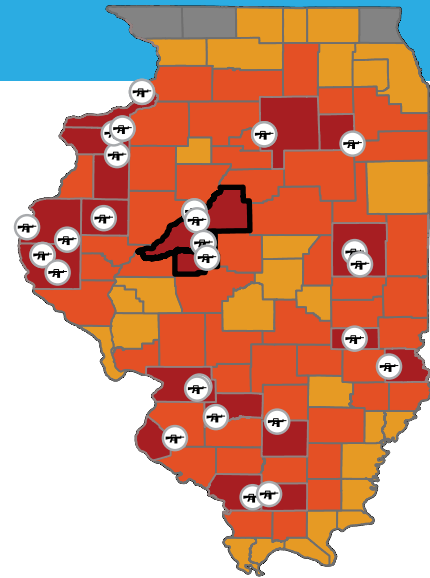
Legend

- Directly Impacted
- Presumably Impacted
- Possibly Impacted
- Insufficient Data
- Protected Land
- Known WKC Event*
*All known events from 2015-2022

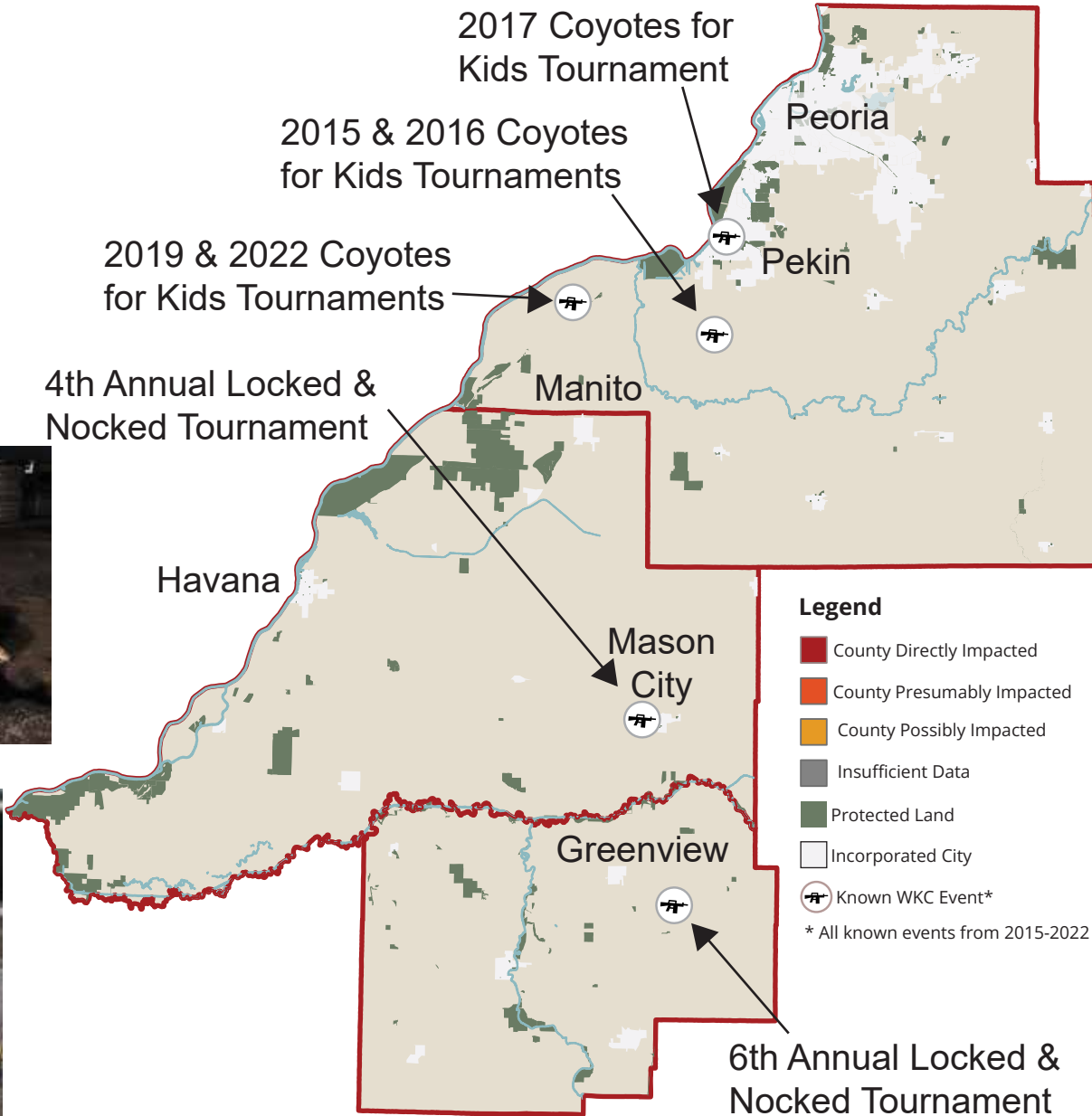


IMPACT OF WILDLIFE KILLING CONTESTS ON SOCIETY IN ILLINOIS

Many people are unaware of the existence of wildlife killing contests (WKC)-including some policy makers. WKCs actively foster cruelty and contempt for wild animals and nature, in addition to wanton waste of the animals killed. Some directly encourage youth participation, promoting harmful views from a young age. These motivations and values are directly opposed to the values of care, respect for, and coexistence with animals and nature shared by the broad public and promoted by public agencies. A recent poll shows that over three-quarters of Illinoisians consider wild animals including coyotes, foxes and bobcats to be important to Illinois ecosystems, and the IDNR has publicly supported such scientifically-based positions.



(c) Kelly Borgmann

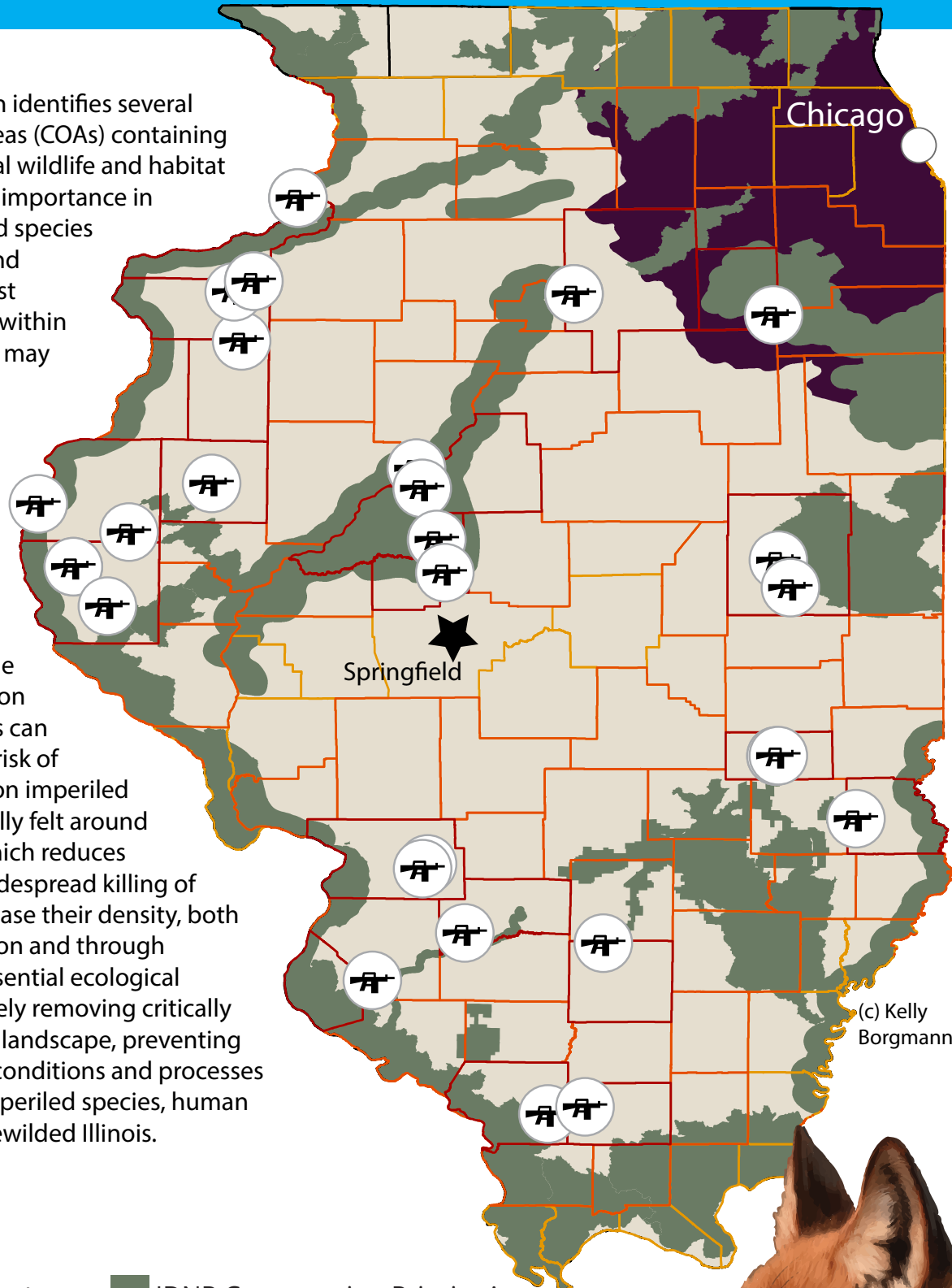


- Legend**
- County Directly Impacted
 - County Presumably Impacted
 - County Possibly Impacted
 - Insufficient Data
 - Protected Land
 - Incorporated City
 - ☉ Known WKC Event*
- * All known events from 2015-2022



IMPACT OF WILDLIFE KILLING CONTESTS ON ILLINOIS DNR CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITY AREAS

The Illinois Wildlife Action Plan identifies several Conservation Opportunity Areas (COAs) containing significant existing or potential wildlife and habitat resources. COAs are of special importance in conserving the most imperiled species in Illinois, given habitat loss and fragmentation are their biggest threats. Most WKC events are found within or adjacent to every COA, and may harm conservation efforts by repeatedly (annually or more frequently) depleting the areas of predators like coyotes, foxes and raccoons that exert critical top-down regulation on other species, such as insects and rodents, and clean the land of carrion that may transmit diseases. The absence of top-down regulation by apex predators like coyotes can also temporarily increase the risk of predation by mesopredators on imperiled species. This impact is especially felt around fragmented habitat edges, which reduces suitable habitat. Moreover, widespread killing of mesopredators may also increase their density, both through increased reproduction and through immigration. WKC events disrupt essential ecological relationships by indiscriminately removing critically important predators from the landscape, preventing COAs from achieving natural conditions and processes vital to the conservation of imperiled species, human health and wellbeing, and a rewilded Illinois.



(c) Kelly Borgmann

Legend

- County Directly Impacted
- County Presumably Impacted
- County Possibly Impacted
- Insufficient Data
- IDNR Conservation Priority Area
- Chicago Wilderness
- A Known WKC Event*

*All known events from 2015-2022

