

PROJECT COYOTE

F O S T E R I N G C O E X I S T E N C E



Talking Points for Vermont S.258

- Currently, the Board of Fish and Wildlife in Vermont consists of 14 unelected individuals from each county of Vermont, personally appointed by Governor Scott. Each member serves a 6 year term. This Board makes public policy on a shared public “resource”—wildlife—without representation from broad public interests and values. The Board, as it exists now, consists of members entirely from the hunting and trapping community, and current Board members approach wildlife policy through a consumptive lens.
- The Board lacks a diversity of values and stakeholders and therefore does not represent the broad and varied interests and values Vermonters hold toward wildlife. The Board also lacks a requirement of background education and/or training in disciplines needed to make wildlife policy decisions such as wildlife biology, ecology, conservation science, and animal ethics.
- Coyote hounding endangers public safety and lacks broad public support. This practice allows packs of hounds to chase coyotes for miles across large tracts of land. Hunters track the hounds' movement, oftentimes miles away in their vehicles. This activity has led to conflicts with landowners and other Vermonters who share wild spaces.
- Hounds at large chase non-targeted animals, including deer, moose, and protected species, as well as domestic animals, placing them in danger. Landowners have reported violations of private property rights from coyote hounds running at large.
- In Vermont coyotes and other wildlife can be hunted over bait. Baiting of wildlife endangers public safety because bait can lead to the habituation of wildlife to human spaces, and can attract domestic animals who may be mistaken for coyotes. In November 2023, a family’s dog was shot and killed by a trapper who mistook the dog for a coyote as it approached a bait pile in Dummerston, VT. Read the article [HERE](#). This followed 2 other incidents in 2022 of dogs being shot over bait piles, in Barre and Tunbridge.