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**Date:** October 10, 2005  
**To:** Gerald R. Miller, City Manager  
**From:** Ronald R. Arias, Director, Department of Health and Human Services /s/  
**For:** Mayor and Members of the City Council  
**Subject:** **Presentation on Coyote Problem - City Council Meeting of October 11, 2005**

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Attached is a copy of the presentation, along with other informational documents, the Department of Health and Human Services will be making at the City Council meeting of October 11, 2005 on the coyote problem in the city of Long Beach.

If you have any questions, please contact me at extension 84016.

RA:sg  
Attachments

# Living with Wildlife and Coyotes in Long Beach



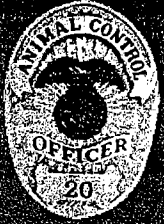
Department of Health and Human Services  
Animal Control Division





# Living with Wildlife and Coyotes in Long Beach

- ⇒ Wildlife
- ⇒ Coyotes and their Habitat
- ⇒ History of Incidents with Coyotes
- ⇒ Current Coyote Activity
- ⇒ Who is Responsible for Coyotes
- ⇒ The Solution is Education
- ⇒ The Community Must Help



# Wildlife

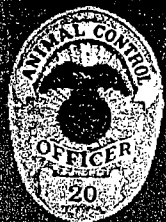


- Opossums, Raccoons, Skunks, Squirrels and other wildlife are a part of Long Beach
- Keep them wild
- If they are causing problems we need to remove the attractants:

- Food
- Water
- Shelter



- Just removing the animal does not solve the problem

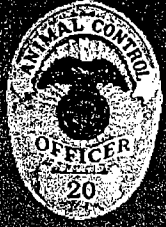


# Wildlife

## Animal Control Response

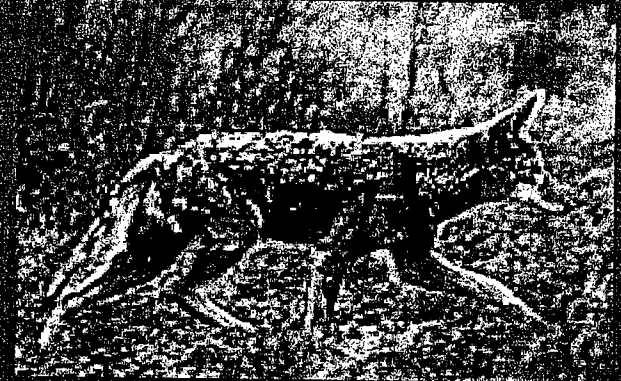
- ➔ Educate the community
- ➔ Provide traps for rent
- ➔ Impound trapped nuisance wildlife
  - Opossums must be brought to Animal Control
  - Wildlife can only be relocated within the same area it was trapped in
  - Most trapped nuisance wildlife must be euthanized

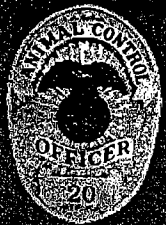




# Coyotes and their Habitat

- ➔ Coyote – Canis Latrans,
  - Member of the dog family
  - 20- 40 pounds
  - Looks similar to a small German Shepard
- ➔ Extremely adaptable to a variety of habitats
- ➔ Omnivores – will eat almost anything
- ➔ Has coexisted in Long Beach habitats for many years





# Coyotes and their Habitat

Los Cerritos  
Area

El Dorado  
Park Area

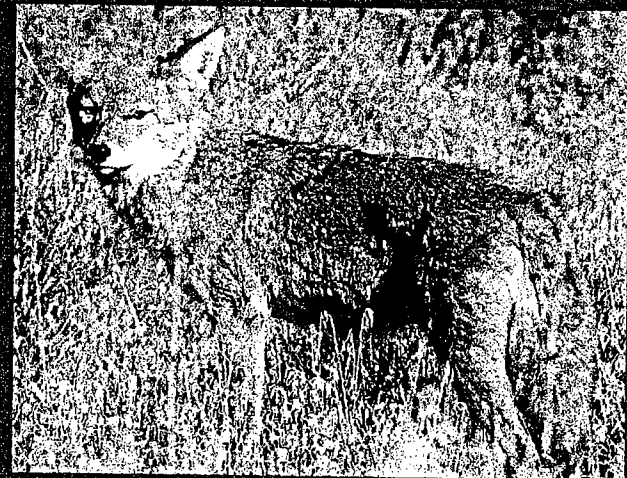
Los Cerritos  
Wetland Area



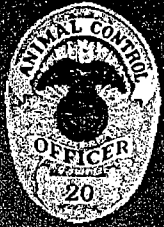


# History of Incidents with Coyotes

- There are encounters with coyotes every year
- Most encounters are sightings
- 2001 Bixby Village Area
  - 8-10 pets reported attacked
  - Several reported missing
- 2002 Los Cerritos Area
  - 1 pet reported attacked,
  - Several reported missing
- There is no record of any person being attacked or bitten by a coyote in Long Beach



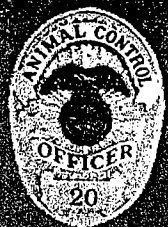




# History of Incidents with Coyotes

## Our Response

- ⇒ Used education to reduce coyote encounters
  - Media release
  - Public meetings
  - Pamphlets
  - Individual contacts
- ⇒ Responded to threats
- ⇒ The end result – coyotes went back to their natural habitats



# Current Coyote Activity

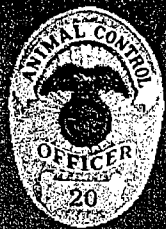
- ⇒ Level of activity is slightly elevated, however, is not at the levels of 2001 and 2002
- ⇒ 4 known attacks on pets
- ⇒ Pets missing – assumed to be from coyotes
- ⇒ Mostly in El Dorado Park and Los Cerritos Areas



# Who is Responsible for Coyotes

- ⇒ U.S. Department of Agriculture
- ⇒ State Department of Fish and Game
- ⇒ Animal Control Division (DHHS)
- ⇒ Park Rangers (DPR&M)





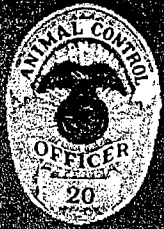
# U.S. Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services

- ⇒ Public education
- ⇒ Assists local governments with the capture and/or elimination of wildlife
- ⇒ Must be requested by State Department of Fish and Game



## State Department of Fish and Game

- ➔ Monitor and evaluate general status of public safety regarding wildlife
- ➔ Advise Communities on protocols and public safety issues
- ➔ Respond to reports of coyote attacks that create a public safety threat
  - A public safety threat is when there is a danger to people
- ➔ Public education
- ➔ Coordinate coyote control and/or mitigation with USDA if necessary



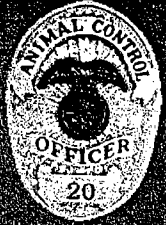
## Department of Health and Human Services Animal Control Division

- ⇒ Receives reports of coyote encounters
- ⇒ Reports any encounter involving threats or attack to Fish And Game
- ⇒ Responds to all encounters where there is an immediate risk to public safety
- ⇒ Educates the public
- ⇒ Coordinates coyote control and/or mitigation with Fish and Game



## Department of Parks Recreation and Marine

- ➔ Recommends entering the park only during posted hours
- ➔ Distributes educational material to patrons
  - Pamphlets as customers enter the park
  - Signage has been increased in the park warning of coyotes



## Department of Parks Recreation and Marine Park Ranger activities

- ➔ Documents encounters with coyotes and reports to Animal Control and Fish and Game.
- ➔ Convey negative reinforcement to coyotes in the parks
- ➔ Statutory enforcement regarding adverse human behavior within park properties





# The Solution is Education

## ⇒ Education works

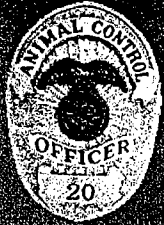
- Coyote attacks stopped after education in 2001 and 2002
- Education has worked in other communities that have larger coyote habitats





# Educational Activities

- ➔ Press releases – Twice a year
- ➔ Pamphlets available
  - Parks
  - Animal Control
  - Council Offices
  - Other locations as need is determined
- ➔ Park signage
- ➔ Education at community meetings
- ➔ Individual education



# The Community Must Help

- ➔ Never feed coyotes
- ➔ Protect Children
- ➔ Protect pets
- ➔ Clear brush and weeds
- ➔ Let coyotes know they are not welcome
- ➔ Report threats and attacks immediately to:
  - State Department of Fish and Game (562) 342-7100
  - Animal Control (562) 570-7387
  - Park Rangers (when in parks) (562) 570-1765

## Protect Children

Although rare, coyote attacks have seriously injured young children. Never leave small children unattended in areas known to be frequented by coyotes, even in your yard.

## Protect Pets and Livestock

Keep small pets, such as cats, rabbits and small dogs, indoors. Don't allow them to run free at any time. They are easy, favored prey. Some coyotes seek cats in residential areas.

Large dogs should be brought inside after dark, and never be allowed to run loose.

Rabbit hutches should have a solid bottom. A hutch standing above ground, with only a wire bottom, makes your rabbit an easy mark.

When building a chicken coop, dig a one-foot trench around its perimeter. Extend the chicken wire fence well into the trench, then bury it.

## Use Negative Reinforcement

If coyotes begin frequenting your neighborhood, let them know they're not welcome. Make loud noises, throw rocks, or spray them with a garden hose. For everyone's safety, it is essential that coyotes retain their natural wariness of humans.

If coyote problems persist, contact your local city government or county agricultural commissioner for assistance.

## Report Threats and Attacks Immediately

If you see a coyote behaving aggressively or attacking people, contact the nearest office of the California Department of Fish and Game during regular business hours: Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. If an encounter or attack occurs after business hours, call the Department of Fish and Game's 24-hour dispatch center at (916) 445-0045. The Department will take appropriate action.

## California Department of Fish & Game Offices

Northern California  
(530) 225-2300

Sacramento Valley/Central Sierra Nevada  
(916) 358-2900

Central Coast  
(707) 944-5500

San Joaquin Valley/Southern Sierra Nevada  
(209) 222-3761

Southern California  
(310) 590-5132

Eastern Sierra  
(619) 872-1171

# Living With California Coyotes



California Department of  
Fish & Game  
1416 Ninth Street  
Sacramento, California 95814



## Coyotes in California

Observing wild animals is one of the many benefits of living in or near wildlife habitat. The experience can turn unpleasant or even dangerous, however, when well-meaning people feed wildlife. When fed by people, coyotes become unnaturally bold and the result is conflict between coyotes and people, which too often ends in serious harm, or even death, to people or the coyotes.

The coyote (*Canis latrans*), a member of the dog family, is native to California. It closely resembles a small German shepherd dog, with the exception of the long snout and bushy, black-tipped tail. The coyote's high-pitched, yodel-like yapping can frequently be heard at night.

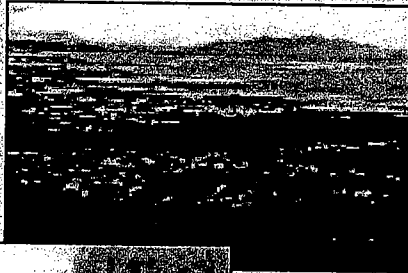
Coyotes are extremely adaptable and can survive on whatever food is available. They hunt rabbits, mice, birds and other



*The coyote is classified by the California Fish and Game Commission as a "nongame mammal." It is not necessary to obtain a permit to kill a problem coyote, but a hunting license and legal hunting methods must be used. Check the current California mammal hunting regulations for complete rules. The Department considers it irresponsible to trap and relocate nuisance animals, because the practice merely relocates the problem.*

small animals, as well as young deer and sheep. They will also feed on the carcasses of dead animals and will accept "hand-outs" from people in the form of table scraps, pet food and garbage.

Coyotes are found throughout California, from desert and mountain habitats to urban areas. Problems occur when people begin feeding coyotes, either deliberately or inadvertently. Coyotes will quickly lose their natural fear of people and become bold, even aggressive. Pets are often attacked, injured or killed by coyotes. In a few tragic cases, coyotes have attacked small children, causing serious injuries and death.



*Rural homesites, such as those pictured above, provide "fast food" for the coyote. Garbage, pet food, and even pets are a quick, easy meal.*



## Help Keep Coyotes Wild

We can reduce conflicts with coyotes by ensuring that they remain cautious of humans. Practice these safety guidelines and encourage your neighbors to do the same.

### Never Feed a Coyote

Deliberately feeding coyotes puts you, your pets and your neighbors at risk. Some communities have ordinances that ban feeding of coyotes or other wildlife.

You may be inadvertently feeding coyotes by leaving pet food or garbage where they can get to it. Feed pets indoors or promptly remove outdoor dishes when pets finish their meals. Store bags of pet food indoors.

Use trash cans with lids that clamp shut, which will prevent spilling if the cans are tipped over. If you leave garbage outside, don't use trash bags as garbage containers; coyotes can easily rip them open and scatter the contents. Put trash containers out the morning of the scheduled pick-up, rather than the night before. This will give the coyote less time to scavenge.

Clear brush and dense weeds from around dwellings to reduce protective cover for coyotes and make the area less attractive to rodents. Coyotes and other predators may be attracted to areas where rodents are concentrated, such as wood and brush piles and seed storage areas.

# Living with Coyotes



Recently, several coyote sightings have been reported in El Dorado East Regional Park. The following information is being provided to help keep you, your pets and the coyotes safe.

The coyote is a member of the dog family and closely resembles a small German Shepherd. It has upright pointed ears and a bushy tail. Most are brownish gray but color can vary. Adults weigh between 20 and 45 pounds.

Found throughout most of California, coyotes are very adaptable and can live almost anywhere from desert and mountain habitats to urban areas. True scavengers, they will eat just about anything. Coyotes hunt rabbits, mice, birds and other small animals, feed on the carcasses of dead animals and look for "hand-outs" from people including pet food and garbage.

In urban areas, coyotes learn to associate people with an easy and dependable source of food. When this happens, they lose their natural fear of

people and can become bold or even aggressive. Many have learned that small dogs and cats are easy prey and have been known to harass leashed dogs in and near parks and golf courses within city limits.

You can reduce your risk of a negative encounter with a coyote, by noting the following:

- Coyotes are most active during early morning and late evening. Use the park only during posted hours of operation.
- ALWAYS keep your dog on leash.
- Should you encounter a coyote, stand your ground, and scare it away by making loud noises and waving your arms.
- Never feed a coyote. At home, feed pets indoors and keep lids on trash cans.
- Report any encounters to Park Rangers at (562) 570-1765

# Viviendo con Coyotes



Recientemente, se han reportado muchas veces la presencia de coyotes en El Dorado East Regional Park. Se esta enviado esta informacion para ayudarle a usted, a sus mascotas y a los coyotes a mantenerse seguros.

El coyote es un miembro de la familia de perros y se parece mucho a un pequeno pastor Aleman. Este tiene orejas puntiagudas y una cola tupida. La mayoria son de color cafe grisaceo pero el color puede variar. Los adultos pesan entre las 20 y 45 libras.

Se los encuentra por toda California, los coyotes son muy adaptables y pueden vivir en cualquier lugar ya sea en el desierto, en las montañas o en áreas urbanas. Son verdaderos basureros, ellos comen casi todo lo que encuentran. Los coyotes cazan conejos, ratones, pajaros y otros animales pequenos, se alimentan de los restos de animales muertos y buscan comestibles de la gente incluyendo comida de mascota y basura.

En áreas urbanas, los coyotes han aprendido a asociar a la gente con una

fuelle de alimento que pueden facilmente depender. Cuando esto sucede, ellos pierden su miedo natural de la gente y pueden llegar a ser agresivos y atrevidos. Muchos han aprendido que a los perros y gatos pequenos se les puede cazar facilmente y se ha visto que molestan a perros con correa en parques o campos de golf dentro de los limites de la ciudad.

Usted puede reducir el riesgo de un encuentro negativo con un coyote, teniendo esto en cuenta:

- Los coyotes son mas activos durante la mañana temprano y en la noche. Use el parque solamente durante las horas de operacion.
- SIEMPRE mantenga a su perro con su correa.
- Si usted se encuentra con un coyote, mantengase firme, y asústelo haciendo ruidos y batiendo sus brazos.
- Nunca alimente a un coyote. En su casa, alimente a sus animales dentro de casa y mantenga los botes de basura tapados.
- Reporte cualquier encuentro con coyotes al Guarda Parques al (562) 570-1765.

# **PUBLIC NOTICE**

## **YOU MAY ENCOUNTER A COYOTE HERE**

**To reduce the risk of a negative encounter with a coyote:**

- **USE THE PARK ONLY DURING POSTED HOURS OF OPERATION**
- **DOGS MUST ALWAYS BE KEPT ON A LEASH**

### **WHAT TO DO IF YOU ENCOUNTER A COYOTE:**

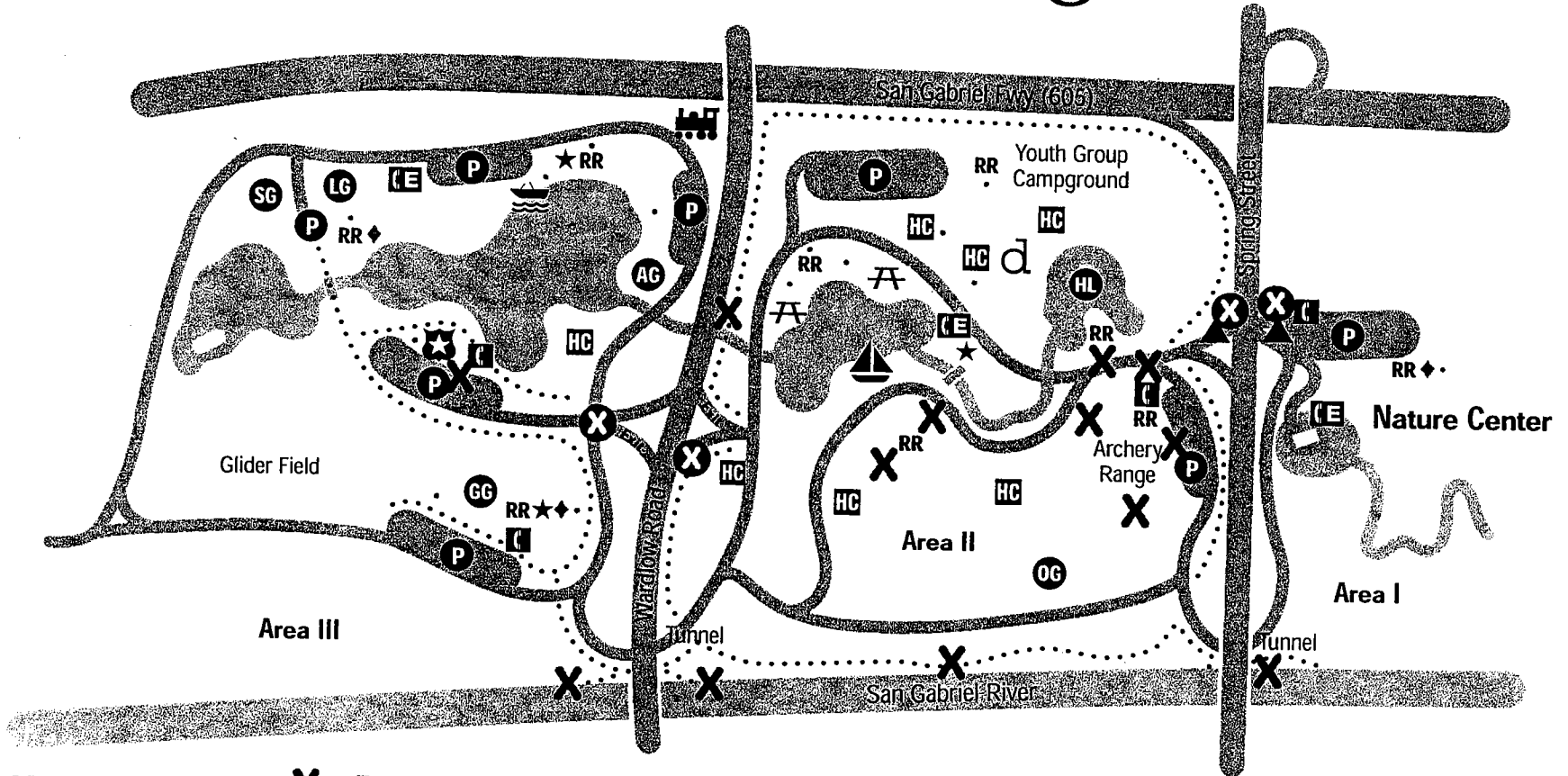
- **Stand your ground and scare it away by making loud noises**
- **Report any encounter to the Park Rangers immediately**

**For more information, or to report a coyote encounter, call the Park Rangers at**

**(562) 570-1765**



# El Dorado East Regional Park



## Map Legend

**X** = Temporary signs installed mid Jan. 2005; replaced with metal signs late Feb. 2005

**X** = Added late Sept. 2005

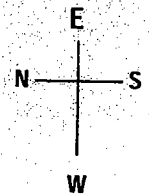
### Reservable Areas

- AG** Arbor Day Grove
- GG** Golden Grove
- HL** Horseshoe Lake
- LG** Lakeview Grove
- OG** Olympic Grove
- SG** Sycamore Grove

- Boat Dock
- Model Boat Launch
- Ranger Station/Reservations Office
- Train Ride
- Youth Campground Pavilion

- Entrance/Exit
- Parking Lot
- Hot Coal Dumpsite
- Phone
- Emergency Call Box
- Drinking Fountain
- Snack Bar
- Restrooms

- Picnic Shelter
- Playground
- Bike Path







# CITY OF LONG BEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

333 West Ocean Boulevard, 13th Floor Long Beach, CA 90802 (562) 570-6379 FAX (562) 570-6583

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
PARKS, RECREATION AND MARINE

October 6, 2005

Larry Allison  
Editorial Page Editor  
Press Telegram  
604 Pine Ave.  
Long Beach, CA

Dear Mr. Allison:

There have been a number of coyote sightings reported in neighborhoods that border the San Gabriel River, a major "wildlife highway," and in El Dorado East Regional Park. However, to put it in perspective, since October 1, 2004, there were more than 400,000 annual patron visits to the El Dorado East Regional Park, with fewer than 10 reported coyote sightings.

Coyotes are native to California, and known Long Beach habitats that support coyotes are the San Gabriel River particularly near El Dorado Park, Los Cerritos Wetlands and Los Angeles River in the Virginia Country Club area.

In Long Beach, the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) takes the lead role for monitoring and control of coyotes that have become a threat within a community. The City's Health and Human Services Animal Control Division and Parks, Recreation and Marine Department's Park Rangers work closely with DFG officials.

Because coyotes are part of the habitat in California, contact with them will always be a possibility. The observation of wild animals is one of the benefits of living near open park spaces and wildlife habitats. However, visiting or living near such areas also carries responsibilities for our citizens. An educated and informed community can reduce negative occurrences.

Learning about the coyote can be helpful. The coyote is a member of the dog family, and closely resembles a small German Shepherd. They are adaptable and can survive on whatever food is available. In the wild, they hunt rabbits, mice, birds and other small animals, as well as feed on some seeds, fruits and vegetables. In urban areas, they also feed on pet food and garbage.

Problems can occur when people begin feeding coyotes, either deliberately or inadvertently. The coyotes can quickly lose their natural fear of humans and become bold, and even aggressive. According to the California Department of Fish and Game, pets are often attacked, injured or killed by coyotes, and in a few tragic cases, small children have also been attacked.

"One key to reducing contact with coyotes," said Kent Smirl, Patrol Lieutenant with the State of California Department of Fish and Game, "is to ensure that coyotes remain fearful of humans."

## Reducing the Risks of Coyote Contact

To reduce the risks of contact with coyotes, practice these safety guidelines and encourage your neighbors to do the same:

- **Never Feed a Coyote** – If you live near any of the known coyote habitats, feed your pets indoors, and remove outdoor dishes when pets are finished with their meal. Store bags of pet food indoors. Prevent coyotes from getting into and eating garbage by using trash cans with lids that clamp shut, not plastic bags that can be ripped open. Put trash containers out the morning of a scheduled pick-up. Never deliberately feed a coyote. (California Code of Regulations Title 14-251.1 bans the feeding of coyotes or other wildlife.)
- **Protect Children** – Never leave small children unattended in areas of the known coyote habitats even in your own yard.
- **Clear Brush and Weeds** – Coyotes and other predators may be attracted to areas that provide protective cover. Keeping the brush and weeds from around buildings cleared removes hiding spaces.
- **Protect Pets and Livestock** – If you walk your dog(s) in or near any of the known coyote habitats, keep your dog on a leash at all times as required by municipal code. The Long Beach Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine has a zero tolerance policy for dogs off leashes in the parks. Also, if possible, walk your dogs at times other than early morning or at dusk, which are the prime feeding times for coyotes. If you live near any of the known coyote habitats, keep small pets indoors - they are an easy, favored prey. Feral cats are a major coyote attractant and are an easy target for coyotes - do not feed feral cats in your neighborhood.
- **Use Negative Reinforcement** – If you see coyotes, take the following steps: make loud noises; throw rocks at them; or spray them with water. It is essential that the coyotes retain their natural fear of humans.
- **Report Threats and Attacks Immediately to the Proper Authorities** – if you see a coyote behaving aggressively:

At the El Dorado East Regional Park or Nature Center, contact a Park Ranger immediately at 570-1765. In other areas of the City, contact the Department of Health and Human Services Bureau of Animal Control at 570-7387. Animal Control takes reports of coyote activities and forwards any threats to pets or people to DFG so that they may respond appropriately. In cases of an immediate threat, Animal Control will respond and forwards the information to DFG at 342-7100.

The California Department of Fish & Game can be contacted at 342-7100 or visit the DFG website at <http://www.dfg.ca.gov>. For more information on coyotes, check out *Solving Coyote Problems* by John Trout, Jr. or visit [www.keepmewild.com](http://www.keepmewild.com).

The City of Long Beach is committed to the safety of all residents, while maintaining the commitment to reinvest in returning the City's habitats to their natural state. By educating the community about how to deal with coyotes, we can reduce the danger of living near wildlife.

Sincerely,



Ronald Arias  
Director  
Health and Human Services



Phil Hester  
Director  
Parks, Recreation and Marine