

Jason Anthony
Round Pond
LD 716

Dear Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee Members:

I am writing in favor of LD 716.

This bill is about the state of Maine establishing a basic management plan for coyotes, a species that, like it or not, is now a permanent and essential part of the Maine landscape. Failure to create a basic management plan is a failure to follow the science. It would demonstrate a lack of due diligence by IFW in managing Maine's natural resources.

After a century or more of relentless hunting and trapping pressure on coyotes out West, we know that coyotes regulate their breeding success based on mortality (and food availability). Continuous hunting pressure on coyotes in a food-rich landscape leads simply to more successful breeding. It's an unscientific and ineffective cycle of cruelty. Unlike deer, coyote populations will stabilize if allowed to do so.

Good hunters take pride in ethical behavior. Good management takes pride in acting responsibly toward managed species, whether predator or prey. Maintaining a year-round and relentless free-for-all on coyotes is neither good hunting nor good management.

The answer, again and again, has been to establish scientific regulations based on the needs of all stakeholders and on basic ecological principles.

It may make sense to differentiate management between northern and southern counties, based on deer predation up north or on the need to control tickborne diseases carried by coyotes' typical small prey in the south. It may make sense to assess coyotes' role as a keystone species in the deeply altered Maine landscape.

But none of that can happen unless there is a basic scientific management plan in place.

Please vote to pass LD 716 out of committee.

Thank you,
Jason Anthony