

April 3, 2023

Dear Members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee,

I am enthusiastically supporting LD 814, a bill to ban the killing of coyotes from April 1 to September 30.

I have had the privilege to work on public lands throughout the last twelve years and have heard the coyote barking at dusk. If you haven't had the opportunity, I encourage everyone in this room to sleep out underneath a summer sky and wait for the coyote call. In these moments, a clarity flashes through mind and body; I am connected to this natural, mysterious universe and I am sharing it with my wilder neighbors.

Our society has reached a pivotal moment in the Holocene/Anthropocene, in which the decisions we make now will have far reaching impacts on the future. We are deciding the fate of carnivores, and indeed, of all species.

Ever since European colonizers and settlers extirpated mountain lions and wolves from the region around one hundred years ago, the Great North Woods has not been a fully functioning ecosystem. Coyotes have since expanded their range and now help fill that massive void and currently are the top predator.

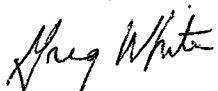
I am in support of this bill because I do not want there to be an open season on coyotes; I adamantly reject year round killing of coyotes, which is, to be clear, pure bloodlust.

These wild canids have intricate social systems and the time from April 1 to September 30 is essential for coyote pups to learn vital skills of survival, such as how to hunt and just as important, what to hunt. Killing them during this time potentially sets up uneducated young coyotes for failure and a premature death. Furthermore, if coyotes do not learn to be coyotes, they may prey on domestic animals or pets. However, these issues are largely prevented with a natural and stable social dynamic.

Coyotes also mitigate deer browsing by influencing their behavior. Deer with predators in their habitat remain alert, aware, and mobile. As coyotes influence prey behavior of herbivores, there is a higher likelihood of a healthy biotic community with increased biodiversity.

There are more examples of how coyotes benefit us, but I want to acknowledge their inherent right to exist and to affirm their intrinsic value as residents of this continent. By supporting LD 814, you will be helping to end exploitation of coyotes and will also be taking a closer step towards justice for carnivores.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg White". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Greg" being more prominent than the last name "White".

Greg White  
Portland, ME