

Bonnie (Heather) Hardy  
Round Pond  
LD 716

Dear Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee:  
March 2, 2025

I am writing in favor of LD 716.

As a nature educator for elementary children I have become more and more aware of the importance of coyotes. Every year 4th grade classes come to the nature center where I work and in March the kids learn about coyotes. The students learn about the close-knit family lives that coyotes lead and the kids act out being coyote families.

They especially love howling together. The students also learn that:

Coyotes play a critical role in the health of ecosystems all over Maine.

Coyotes help keep the rodent population down, thus helping to decrease the number of ticks.

Coyotes are keystone species.

Coyotes hardly ever injure or kill humans. But the number of injuries each year from domesticated dogs is 4.5 million people. And 30-50 people are killed by dogs each year.

Coyotes help to move deer along which gives saplings a better chance of growing.

Deer can wipe out plant life if they don't need to keep moving. This is all part of the balance of an ecosystem. Many farmers count on having coyotes near their farm because deer can decimate crops quickly. But with coyotes nearby, deer can't stay too long in one area. And if crops fail, humans suffer. We all need one another to play our roles and have healthy relationships.

This is not about what some hunters want, this is about what humans and other animals need to have healthy lives. And this is about respect for our fellow earth dwelling beings. Please, please consider this.

Coyotes are majestic, smart, family-oriented animals. They deserve the right to be protected.

Thank you,

Bonnie (Heather) Hardy