

City of Costa Mesa

Coyote Management Plan

City of Costa Mesa
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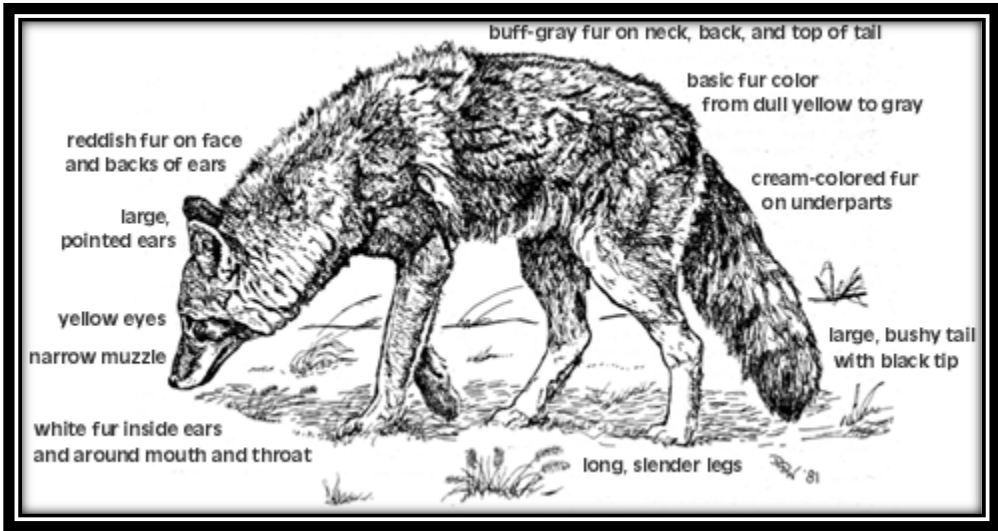


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Overview

The intent of this plan is to provide guidance for City of Costa Mesa staff and the community in dealing with coyotes within Costa Mesa, and it has been modeled on plans successfully utilized by other cities. Guidelines and provisions do not supersede federal, state and county laws, regulations or policies. Furthermore, the provisions of this plan do not apply to Costa Mesa residents, businesses or homeowner associations in pursuit of their legal rights in dealing with coyotes.

This plan is based on education and hazing protocols, ways to remove coyote attractants, and includes more aggressive hazing tactics utilized by Animal Control Officers and trained volunteers should the situation warrant. Success in properly managing the existence of coyotes in our community rests on the collective and cooperative effort between the City of Costa Mesa and members of the Costa Mesa community.

Management Strategy

The strategy for managing coyotes is based on a multi-pronged approach to respect and protect wildlife, their habitats, and public safety. The main effort in this response is broken into three components:

1. Public education designed to teach co-existence with coyotes.
2. Laws and regulations prohibiting the feeding of wildlife and enforcement of these laws.
3. An appropriate and balanced response to coyote and human interactions, which requires buy-in from stakeholders within the community, i.e. residents, business, and government.

Education

The key is to educate residents to make appropriate decisions regarding their safety and management of property and pets. This will involve handouts available at City facilities, PSA videos linked to the City's website, door hangers when required, and other measures. When there is an issue in an area, signage may be available to the public to warn pet owners of a potential threat to their animals. Our goal through education is to decrease attractants, increase pet safety, adapt coyote behavior through approved hazing, and to teach citizens what normal coyote behavior looks like.

Scientists are discovering that urban coyotes may always be living within urban settings and adjust their behavior around urban activities. This is a change from coyotes avoiding urban settings and seeking rural environments.

Enforcement

Feeding can attract coyotes and their prey to an area, leading to an increased likelihood of creating habituated coyotes, which results in increased coyote and human interactions. California law prohibits feeding wildlife. Costa Mesa Animal Control Officers will strictly enforce state laws pertaining to this activity.

Response Plan

A tiered threat level response has been developed to provide a means for identifying and classifying different levels of human and coyote interactions. Appendix A at the end of this

document provides definitions for coyote encounters. Appendix B provides a chart detailing coyote behavior, behavior classification and recommended responses.

Coyote Management Plan

Background

Costa Mesa Animal Control Officers do not respond to calls for service for normal coyote behavior, such as sightings. However, they will respond to calls which involve sick or injured coyote(s) or if there is a public safety issue, such as the coyote(s) posing a threat to people or resting in an area frequented by people, such as a yard, park, playground, school, etc.

Managing Wildlife Challenges

Costa Mesa places a high value on its wildlife; however, some animals that have adapted to urban environments have the potential to cause problems and/or conflicts in specific situations. In addressing problems, the City promotes policies supporting the implementation of remedial measures that do not harm the wildlife or their habitats.

A wildlife problem is defined as any wildlife situation that causes a health or safety issue to its residents. In cases where problems with wildlife are associated with human behavior (e.g. leaving garbage exposed or intentional wildlife feeding), ordinances and enforcement may be enacted to minimize conflict.

In some cases, traditional management tools are ineffective. For example, *relocation of animals* is not ecologically sound and is not allowed in California without permission from the California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW).

Attempts to eradicate coyotes made by local, state and federal agencies, as well as private organizations, over the past century have proven to be ineffective. Moreover, during the past century coyotes have expanded their territories to include every state except Hawaii.

As a last resort, lethal control measures, when employed, may be controversial and may not always capture the intended alpha coyote or problem coyote. If lethal control measures are used, they must be humane and in compliance with federal and state laws. The decision to use lethal control measures by the City should generally be reserved for specific situations where circumstances deem it prudent and reasonable to do so.

Role of Coyotes within our Environment

Coyotes play an important role in the urban ecosystem, particularly as a top predator. They eat a broad range of small animals, including squirrels, mice, rabbits, rats and gophers. Rodents make up a majority of their diet. In the process, they control the population sizes of these animals, many of which are considered pests to humans. The coyotes also prey on “mesopredators,” such as raccoons and opossums. Without a top predator like the coyote to keep them in check, mesopredators can dramatically reduce bird populations by eating their eggs. Coyotes also disperse seeds of native plant species and recycle nutrients.

How Humans May Perceive Coyotes

People respond to coyotes in various ways. Some observe them with enjoyment, others with indifference, and some with fear or concern. Personal experiences with coyotes may influence their perceptions of them. Experiences range from animal sightings without incident to stalking, killing of pets, or at the extreme, an attack on a person. Coyote attacks on humans are very infrequent. Although such incidents generate significant media coverage, they remain a very rare event. Because wild animals conjure up fear in some people, actual sightings and perceptions may be exaggerated (see Appendix A for descriptions of coyote encounters). The wide range of perceptions of urban coyotes from Costa Mesa residents supports the need for strong and consistent educational messages to clarify management techniques.

Have Coyote Numbers Increased in Costa Mesa?

Without tracking and updated data, it is difficult to know if the number of coyotes has increased in an area. What is known is that coyotes can become habituated, or familiar, to humans if they are intentionally or unintentionally fed, which can lead to loss of fear of people and bolder behavior. In general, coyotes regularly roam an area of about two to five square miles to obtain enough food for the pack members. Normally, each pack is a territorial family group made up of three to ten coyotes. A portion of the area the pack inhabits is the pack's territory, which they will defend from other coyotes. The number of mature coyotes in the pack are often related to the amount of food resources in that territory.

A coyote pack usually has only one breeding (or alpha) female. This female often produces more pups than can be supported by the pack. Young coyotes may leave the pack at about nine to eleven months of age, but dispersal patterns are highly variable. These juvenile coyotes become transients. Other types of transient coyotes include older individuals that can no longer defend their role as upper level pack members and are pushed out of the pack.

Transients move all over in narrow undefended zones that exist between pack territories, searching for an open habitat to occupy or group to join. They often die before they succeed. *Due to a constant influx of transient coyotes, eradication programs often fail.*

Removing a group of territorial coyotes will create an undefended area into which the transient coyotes will flow. At all times of the year, numbers of transients are immediately available to replenish any voids created by killing the resident coyotes. Furthermore, if either the alpha male or alpha female in a pack is killed, ovulation in other breeding-age females is often triggered and a corresponding increase in the number of litters and/or number of pups per litter is observed.

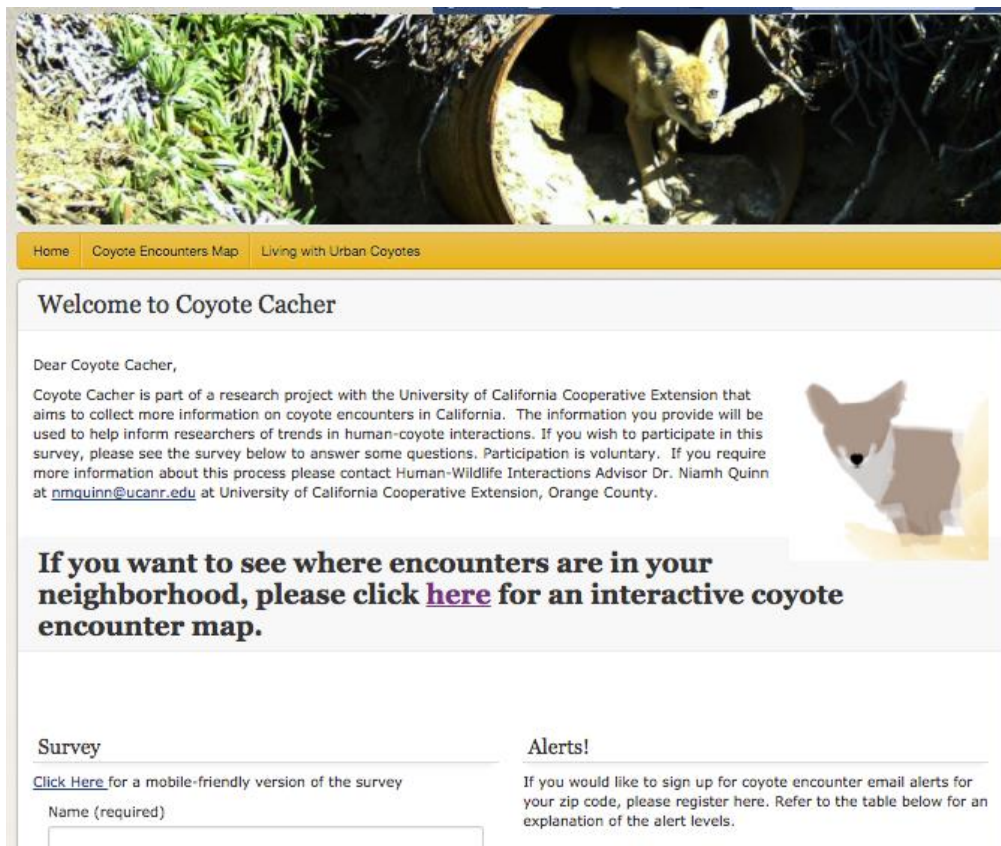
Reporting, Collecting and Monitoring Coyote Activity Data

Collecting data is a critical component of an effective coyote management plan. This is best accomplished through input from both residents and City officials. The purpose of monitoring human and coyote interactions is to document "hot spot" areas where coyotes frequent. This data allows for specific targeting and use of education and mitigation efforts.

There are a number of reporting mechanisms Costa Mesa residents may use to report coyote activity, from more routine sightings to the infrequent aggressive activity:

1. **Coyote Cacher website**, © 2017, University of CA. This site is also [linked](#) to the City of Costa Mesa website. The *Coyote Cacher* website is accessible by members of the public from a computer or mobile device and provides a repository for reported coyote activity, real-time alerts to stay abreast of reported activity, and GIS mapping by zip code. The data collected by this website can be used by the City and the California Department of Fish & Wildlife to assess reported activities, trends, and strategies.
2. **Costa Mesa Animal Control Coyote Hotline, (714) 754-4899**. Alternately, reports of coyote sightings can be made by calling the Costa Mesa Coyote Hotline. This is a voicemail-based hotline that will prompt callers to provide specific coyote activity information.
3. **Costa Mesa PD emergency “911” or non-emergency number (714) 754-5255**. Coyote bites, injured or ill coyotes, or coyotes that pose a threat to the public should be reported to the emergency “911” for an Animal Control Officer or Police Officer response.

Non-emergency coyote calls for service, e.g. routine sightings, will not prompt an Animal Control response. Callers may be referred to either the *Coyote Cacher* website or the Coyote Hotline to report the coyote activity.



Public Education and Outreach

Education is the key to making appropriate decisions regarding personal safety and/or managing private property and pets. This involves reducing attractants, increasing pet safety, and teaching reasonable expectations of normal coyote behavior.

Learning how to respond to a coyote encounter empowers residents and can mitigate unwanted coyote behaviors. The public should understand what normal coyote behavior is when living in close proximity with coyotes. Education and outreach efforts by the City will focus on:

1. Understanding human and pet safety, coyote attractants and deterrents on private property, and information on appropriate hazing techniques.
2. Developing a common understanding of normal versus abnormal coyote behavior. Refer to definitions in Appendix A.
3. Providing information to residents, businesses and schools through the City's website, PSA videos, social media, news outlets, fliers/handouts, mailers, etc.
4. Coordinating efforts with the California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW) to provide public education materials, programs and expertise. CDFW will collaborate with the City of Costa Mesa to implement a community education program, as needed.

The Costa Mesa Police Department has developed an [educational video](#) that can be found on the City of Costa Mesa's website. This PSA provides an overview of coyote education and deterrence methods.

Coyote Attractants in Urban Areas

Coyotes are drawn to urban and suburban areas for the following reasons:

1. **Food:** Urban areas often support large numbers of rodents, including mice and rats. However, coyotes can be further attracted into suburban neighborhoods by human-associated food such as pet food, unsecured compost or trash, and fallen fruit in yards. Intentional and unintentional feeding can lead coyotes to associate humans with sources of food, which can result in negative interactions among coyotes, people and pets. To reduce food attractants in urban and suburban areas:
 - Never hand-feed or otherwise deliberately feed a coyote.
 - Avoid feeding pets outside. Remove sources of pet food and water that a coyote could easily obtain. If feeding pets outside is necessary, remove the bowl and any leftover food promptly.
 - Never include meat or dairy in compost.
 - Maintain good housekeeping, such as regularly raking areas around bird feeders.
 - Remove fallen fruit from the ground.
 - Keep trash in high-quality containers with tight-fitting lids. Only place the cans curbside the morning of collection. If you leave them out overnight, trashcans are more likely to be tipped over and explored. Bag especially attractive food wastes, such as meat scraps or leftover pet food, before discarding.

2. **Water:** Urban areas provide a year-round supply of water in the form of storm water impoundments and channels, artificial lakes, irrigation, pet water dishes, etc., which support both coyotes and their prey.
 - During drought or otherwise dry conditions, water can be as alluring as food, so remove water bowls set outside for pets and make watering cans unavailable.
3. **Access to shelter:** Parks, greenbelts, open spaces, golf courses, buildings, sheds, decks and crawl spaces, etc., increase the amount and variability of cover for coyotes. They allow coyotes to safely and easily remain close to people, pets, homes and businesses without detection.
 - In the spring, when coyotes give birth and begin to raise young, they concentrate their activities around dens or burrows in which their young are sheltered. Coyotes may take advantage of available spaces under sheds or decks for use as a den, bringing them into close contact with people and pets.
4. **Unattended Pets:** Pets are a normal part of an urban landscape. Within their territory, coyotes may consider pets as potential prey or potential competitors.
 - Free-roaming pets, especially cats and sometimes small dogs, may attract coyotes into neighborhoods. The best way to minimize risk to pets is to not leave them outside unattended.
 - Coyotes primarily eat small mammals such as mice and rats, but will also prey on slightly larger mammals such as rabbits and groundhogs. Approximately the same size as a groundhog or rabbit, free-roaming outdoor cats may also be seen as eligible prey items by coyotes. It is important to note that attacks on cats are normal coyote behavior and do not indicate a danger for people. The best way to protect cats from coyotes (and the other dangers of outside life, such as cars, disease, dogs and other wildlife) is to keep cats primarily indoors and only let them outside in a secure enclosure or when accompanied by a person and under the control of a leash and harness.
 - People who feed feral cats are often concerned that coyotes might prey on the cats. These concerns are well founded, as coyotes are attracted to the outdoor pet food. Although there is no sure way to protect feral cats from coyotes, the following tips can be helpful:
 - Do not feed feral cats. Doing so can have other unintentional consequences, including ecological damage.
 - Haze coyotes seen on the property (see Appendix C). Making them feel uncomfortable will encourage them to stay out of the area.
 - Dogs are also vulnerable to coyote confrontations. These incidents generally involve coyotes who are accustomed or habituated to people (usually from feeding), or coyotes who are protecting their territory and pups (usually during breeding season).
 - Coyotes may see small, unattended dogs as potential prey. It is important, therefore, to either keep dogs on a six-foot long or shorter, solid, not retractable, leash when outdoors or to stay within six feet of them when on your property. (Coyotes may view a dog on a leash longer than six feet as an unattended pet and such a leash is also against Costa Mesa Municipal Code). This is especially important if you are in or near nature preserves or open-space areas. Attacks on unattended, small dogs are normal coyote behavior and do not indicate a danger to people.

- Although attacks on larger dogs are rare, coyotes will sometimes go after a large dog when they feel that their territory is threatened. This generally occurs during the coyote-breeding season, which takes place from January through March. During this time, it is especially important not to let dogs outside unattended and to keep them on leashes (six feet long or less) when in public areas.
- Do not allow dogs off leash off your property. It is against the law and unsafe for your dog.

Other domestic animals kept outside, such as rabbits, may also be viewed as prey by coyotes. Protect outdoor animals from coyotes (and other predators) with protective fencing on all sides, top and bottom, and/or confine them in sturdy cages each evening.

Residents are encouraged to use the *Coyote Residential Yard Checklist* in Appendix D as a tool to help recognize and remove attractants in their yards and neighborhoods.

While human attacks are very rare, urban development, habituation through intentional and unintentional feeding, pet related incidents, and media attention have led some urban residents to fear coyotes. Steps must be taken to address safety concerns, misconceptions and appropriate responses to potential threats to human safety. It is important to keep in mind that coyotes have been in and around Costa Mesa, as well as other parts of Southern California, for a very long time.

Hazing and Behavioral Change

Some coyotes have become too comfortable living in close proximity of humans. For coyotes to safely coexist with people, *they need to fear and avoid contact with humans.*

Hazing—also known as “fear conditioning”—is the process that facilitates this change in coyote behavior *and is by necessity a community response to negative encounters with coyotes.* The more often an individual animal is hazed, the more effective hazing is in changing coyote behavior. Refer to Appendix C for a coyote hazing overview.

The goals of hazing are to:

1. Modify coyote behavior to avoid human contact in an urban setting.
2. Give residents tools to actively engage in reshaping coyote behavior and to support feeling safe in their parks and neighborhoods.
3. Model appropriate and effective hazing behavior and share accurate information about coyotes with other residents, friends and family.

Hazing is a process whereby a person or a number of individuals encountering a coyote respond in like manner to make a coyote afraid and choose to leave a situation where their presence is unwanted.

Basic hazing consists of standing your ground, never ignoring or turning your back to the coyote, and yelling and/or making unpleasant and frightening noises until the coyote chooses to leave. If the coyote does not leave, more aggressive tactics will be used.

More aggressive hazing consists of approaching an animal more quickly and aggressively, throwing projectiles like stones near, but not at, the animal, spraying with a hose or water gun, or creating a more heightened fear of contact so the animal flees. See Appendix C for more hazing options.

Hazing must continue until the animal leaves. Otherwise, the coyote will learn to “wait” until the person gives up. Not following through with hazing will create an animal more resistant to hazing instead of reinforcing the image that “people are scary.”

Hazing never involves injury to the animal, only the threat of injury. An injured animal becomes less predictable than a normal, healthy one.

Enforcement of Illegal Wildlife Feeding

The act of feeding wildlife is known to lead to an increase in wildlife activity. Feeding can attract coyotes and their prey to an area that leads to an increased likelihood of creating habituated coyotes, resulting in more frequent coyote and human interactions. California law prohibits feeding wildlife. Costa Mesa Animal Control Officers and field personnel will strictly enforce state laws.

CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS TITLE 14 – §251.1. Harassment of Animals

*Except as otherwise authorized in these regulations or in the Fish & Game Code, no person shall harass, herd or drive any game or nongame bird or mammal or furbearing mammal. For the purposes of this section, harass is defined as an intentional act which disrupts an animal's normal behavior patterns, which includes, but is not limited to, breeding, **feeding** or sheltering.*

Tiered Threat Level Response by Community and City

A detailed tiered threat level response has been developed to provide a mechanism for identifying and classifying different levels of human and coyote interactions. Definitions of coyote encounters are listed in Appendix A; while, Appendix B provides a chart detailing coyote behavior, behavior classification and recommended responses.

LEVEL GREEN BEHAVIOR – A coyote is seen or heard passing through the area. Missing pet for unknown reasons.

- **Response:** *Hazing as needed. Education may be prudent.*

LEVEL YELLOW BEHAVIOR – A coyote appears to frequently associate with humans or human-related food sources and exhibits little wariness of human presence. Coyote is seen during the day resting or continuously moving through an area frequented by people. Coyote advances toward or appears to follow a human or pet.

A coyote is involved in an incident(s) where there is an *unattended* domestic pet attack or loss where a coyote is suspected. Several level yellow incidents in the same general area may indicate the presence of habituated coyote(s).

- **Response:** *Options include education, aggressive hazing needed, residential yard audit, and possible formation of a volunteer hazing team; a public awareness campaign in area may be*

prudent. If level yellow incidents become frequent in the same area, lethal removal may be recommended.

LEVEL RED BEHAVIOR – A coyote that has been involved in an investigated and documented provoked or unprovoked close encounter or attack on a human or *attended* pet on leash. This includes a coyote that chases and/or bites rendering injury.

- **Response:** *A thorough investigation shall be initiated by the Animal Control Unit to gather information. Animal Control Officers and other City staff may work to remove and euthanize the subject coyote. Concurrently, education, residential yard audit, formation of volunteer hazing team, and a public awareness campaign in the area may be prudent.*

See Appendices below

Appendix A - Definitions of Encounters with Coyotes

Active Coexistence: Humans and coyotes exist together. Humans take an active role in keeping coyotes wild by learning about coyote ecology and behavior, removing attractants, taking responsibility for pet safety, and hazing coyotes in neighborhood or community spaces (except for predetermined coyote-appropriate areas). Hazing is not appropriate in a designated nature reserve or similar open space, unless the coyote exhibits threatening behavior to persons or leashed pets.

Attack: A human is injured or killed by a coyote.

Provoked - A human-provoked attack or incident where the human involved encourages the coyote to engage. Examples include dog off-leash in an on-leash area; dog on leash longer than 6' in length, or a human intentionally corners, injures, tries to injure, attempts to capture or feed the coyote.

Unprovoked - An unprovoked attack or incident where the human involved does not encourage the coyote to engage.

Pet Attack: A domestic pet is injured or killed by a coyote.

Attended animal loss or injury - When a person is within 6' of the pet and/or the pet is on a leash and is attacked and injured or killed by a coyote.

Domestic animal loss or injury - A coyote injures or kills a pet. Also includes "depredation"—predation on domestic pets. Unattended animal loss or injury is considered the result of normal coyote behavior.

Suspected Pet Attack: A coyote is an opportunistic feeder and may feed on recently dead or dying animals, especially cats that were hit or killed by cars or other means. The remains may be found and suggest the animal was attacked by a coyote. In cases where Animal Control Officers respond to these calls, without knowledge of an actual attack, the incident will be recorded as a suspected attack.

Encounter: An unexpected, direct meeting between a human and a coyote that is without incident.

Feeding:

Intentional feeding - When a person or number of people actively and intentionally feeds coyotes or provides food for animals in the coyote food chain.

Unintentional feeding - When a person or number of people unintentionally provide access to food. Some examples are accessible compost, fallen fruit from trees, open sheds and doors, and pet food left outdoors.

Unintentional feeding - bird feeders – When a person or number of people with bird feeders provide food for coyotes, e.g. birds, bird food, rodents, and squirrels. Bird feeders must be kept high enough from the ground so a coyote is unable to reach the birds and animals on the feeder. The area under the bird feeder must be kept clean and free of residual bird food.

Hazing: A training method that employs immediate use of deterrents to move an animal out of an area or discourage an undesirable behavior or activity. Hazing techniques include loud noises,

spraying water, bright lights, throwing objects near but not at the animal, and shouting. Hazing can help maintain a coyote's fear of humans and deter them from neighborhood spaces, such as backyards and play spaces. Hazing does not and should not damage animals, humans or property.

Threat Incident: A conflict between a human and a coyote where the coyote approaches a human and growls, bares teeth or lunges; injures or kills an attended domestic animal. A human is not injured.

Stalking Incident: A conflict between a human and a coyote where the coyote follows a person with or without an attended pet on leash. A human is not injured.

Observation: The act of noticing or taking note of tracks, scat or vocalizations.

Sighting: A visual observation of one or more coyotes. A sighting may occur at any time of the day or night.

Unsecured Trash: Trash that is accessible to wildlife, e.g. partially or completely uncovered or open individual garbage cans, dumpsters or bags, or overflowing trash cans where scattered trash is outside the receptacle.

Appendix B - Coyote Action, Behavior Classification and Recommended Response

Coyote Action	Classification	Response
Coyote heard	Heard - Level Green	Provide educational materials on normal coyote behavior.
Coyote seen passing through area	Sighting - Level Green	Provide education materials on normal coyote behavior.
Coyote seen resting in area	Sighting - Level Green	Provide education materials on normal coyote behavior. Educate on hazing techniques.
Missing pet unknown reason	Sighting - Level Green	Provide education materials on normal coyote behavior. Educate on hazing techniques.
Coyote seen resting in area with people present	Sighting - Level Yellow	If area frequented by people, educate on normal behavior, hazing techniques, and haze to encourage animal to leave. Look for and eliminate attractants aggressive hazing; possible formation of volunteer hazing team.
Coyote entering a yard without pets	Sighting - Level Yellow	Educate on coyote attractants, residential yard audit, provide hazing info; possible formation of volunteer hazing team.
Coyote entering a yard with pets	Encounter - Level Yellow	Educate on coyote attractants, residential yard audit, hazing info, pet safety; possible formation of volunteer hazing team.
Coyote entering yard and injuring or killing unattended pet	Pet Attack - Level Yellow	Gather info on specific animals involved, report on circumstances, educate on coyote attractants, residential yard audit, hazing, pet safety; possible formation of volunteer hazing team in area.
Coyote following or approaching a person and/or pet	Encounter - Level Yellow	Gather info on specific animals involved, report circumstances, educate on coyote attractants, residential yard audit, hazing, pet safety; lethal removal may be considered if there is no response from the coyote to aggressive hazing, and there is evidence of recurrence; possible formation of volunteer hazing team.

<p>Coyote chasing and/or biting <u>attended pet</u> on leash 6' or less</p>	<p>Pet Attack - <u>Level Red</u></p>	<p>Gather info on specific animals involved, report circumstances, educate on coyote attractants, residential yard audit, hazing, pet safety; lethal removal recommended; possible formation of volunteer hazing team.</p>
<p>Coyote aggressive, showing teeth, back fur raised, lunging, nipping w/o contact</p>	<p>Threat - <u>Level Red</u></p>	<p>Gather info on specific animals involved, report circumstances, educate on coyote attractants, residential yard audit, hazing, pet safety; lethal removal recommended; possible formation of volunteer hazing team.</p>
<p>Coyote biting or injuring person</p>	<p>Attack - <u>Level Red</u></p>	<p>Identify and gather information on specific animal involved; gather info on specific animals involved, report circumstances, educate on coyote attractants, residential yard audit, hazing, pet safety; lethal removal recommended; City staff will inform the California Department of Fish and Wildlife; possible formation of volunteer hazing team.</p>

Appendix C – Summary of General Considerations

1. Levels of hazing need to be appropriately relevant to coyote activity.
 - a. Coyotes live in open spaces and the best practice is to leave them alone and educate the public on personal safety.
 - b. Coyotes are often out late at night when few people are present. This is normal, acceptable behavior. Hazing may not be necessary.
 - c. Exceptions: In early stages of hazing, programs should still engage the animal. Coyotes that associate danger in the presence of people under all circumstances will be reinforced to avoid contact.
2. Hazing must be more exaggerated, aggressive and consistent when first beginning a program of hazing. As coyotes “learn” appropriate responses to hazing, it will take less effort from hazers. Early in the process, it is extremely common for coyotes not to respond to hazing techniques. Without a history of hazing, they do not have the relevant context to respond in the desired outcome (to leave).
3. Techniques and tools can be used in the same manner for one or multiple animals. Usually, there is a dominant animal in a group who will respond—others will follow its lead. DO NOT ignore, turn your back or avoid hazing because there are multiple animals instead of a single individual.
4. The more often an individual coyote is hazed by a variety of tools and techniques and a variety of people, the more effective hazing will be in changing that animal’s future behavior.
5. Hazing must be directly associated with the person involved in the hazing actions. The coyote must be aware of where the potential threat is coming from and identify the person.
6. Coyotes can and do recognize individual people and animals in their territories. They can learn to avoid or harass specific individuals in response to behavior of the person and/or pet.
7. Coyotes can be routine in habit. Identifying their normal habits can help target which habits to change. For example, the coyote patrols the same bike path at the same time in the morning three to five days a week. Hazers should concentrate on that time and place to encourage the animal to adapt its routine to decrease contact with people.
8. Certain levels of hazing must always be maintained so that future generations of coyotes do not learn or return to unacceptable habits related to habituation to people.
9. Human behavior must change to support hazing and continued identification and, if necessary, remove possible attractants.
10. Education about exclusion techniques including how to identify and remove attractants, personal responsibility in pet safety and having reasonable expectations are critical parts of a coyote hazing plan.
11. Coyotes are skittish by nature. Habituated behavior is learned and reinforced by human behavior. Coyotes as a rule DO NOT act aggressively toward aggressive people. The one exception is a sick or injured animal. Engaging a sick or injured animal can result in unpredictable behavior. If this is suspected, people should not engage and should remove themselves from the situation, and then immediately contact the Costa Mesa Police Department at (714) 754-5255.
12. Individuals involved in hazing need to be trained in explaining hazing to residents who witness the process. They also need to explain the difference between hazing and harassment of wildlife and goals of appropriate behavior for coexistence.

California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW) Training Program

Because coexisting with wildlife involves the community, hazing training programs and hazing activities by community volunteers must be guided by experts. If needed, CDFW will collaborate with the City of Costa Mesa to implement community education programs to train community volunteers. Information should include basic training on background, coyote ecology information, and an overview of hazing and examples of techniques.

Materials should be provided such as handouts, contact information and resources when questions, comments and concerns come up relating to coyotes. Trained volunteers need to learn about coyote behavior and be aware of realistic expectations, understanding normal versus abnormal coyote behavior and having a consistent response to residents' concerns and comments.

Creating a Volunteer Hazing Team

A group of volunteers trained in coyote hazing techniques can be quite useful to respond to coyote conflicts in public areas. The following guidelines are suggested for managing a volunteer hazing team:

1. Volunteers should be trained in proper coyote hazing techniques.
2. Volunteers should be added to a community volunteer email group, from which they will be notified of "hot spots" and asked to haze in the area.
3. Updates, additional coyote information, electronic flyers and handouts, should be sent to members of the community volunteer email group to disseminate to the public.
4. Volunteers should fill out a hazing interaction report after each hazing activity, which should include details such as:
 - a. Date, location, time of day, number of coyotes.
 - b. Initial coyote behavior, hazing behavior, coyote response.
 - c. Effectiveness of hazing.
 - d. Tools and techniques used.
 - e. Additional details/comments.

Hazing Tools

Hazing uses a variety of different hazing tools. This is critical as coyotes get used to individual items and sounds.

1. Noisemaker: voice, whistles, air horns, bells, "shaker" cans, pots, pie pans
2. Projectiles: sticks, small rocks, cans, tennis balls, rubber balls.
3. Deterrents: hoses, spray bottles with vinegar, pepper spray, walking sticks

Appendix D – Coyote Residential Yard Checklist

	OK	FIX	Ways to Mitigate
Food			NEVER hand-feed or intentionally feed a coyote!
Pet Food			Never feed pets outdoors; store all pet food securely indoors.
Water Sources			Remove water attractants (such as pet water bowls and leaky irrigation) in dry climates.
Bird Feeders			Remove bird feeders or clean fallen seed to reduce the presence of small mammals that coyotes prefer to eat.
Fallen Fruit			Clean up fallen fruit around trees.
Compost			Do not include meat or dairy among compost contents unless fully enclosed.
BBQ Grills			Clean up food around barbeque grills after each use.
Trash			Secure all trash containers with locking lids and place curbside the morning of trash pickup. Periodically clean cans to reduce residual odors.
Landscaping			Trim vegetation to reduce hiding places and potential denning sites.
Structures/Outbuildings			Restrict access under decks and sheds, around woodpiles, or any other structure that can provide cover or denning sites for coyotes or their prey.
Fencing *			Enclose property with an 8-foot fence* (or a 6-foot fence with an additional extension or roller-top) to deter coyotes. Ensure that there are no gaps and that the bottom of the fence extends underground 6 inches or is fitted with a mesh apron to deter coyotes from digging underneath. * See Costa Mesa Building Code
Pets			Never leave pets unattended outside.
			Never allow pets to “play” with coyotes.
			Fully enclose outdoor pet kennels. (See FENCING above.)
			Walk pets on a leash no longer than 6 feet in length.