

# CHERRY HILLS VILLAGE

## COLORADO

2450 E. Quincy Avenue  
Cherry Hills Village, CO 80113  
www.cherryhillsvillage.com

Village Center  
Telephone 303-789-2541  
FAX 303-761-9386

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### 2011 AMENDED COYOTE MANAGEMENT PLAN

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#### Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to provide guidelines for responses to conflicts with coyotes, particularly to resolve and reduce human-coyote conflicts in a consistent and expedient manner. Public safety is the primary concern of the City, and coyotes and other wildlife will be managed with human safety as a priority. The plan also seeks to identify and achieve a balance between the importance of human safety and the native ecology of the region. There is an environmental benefit to maintaining and encouraging natural wildlife populations that are self regulating and that are beneficial to maintaining and/or developing natural ecosystems.

Specifically, the purpose of this plan is to:

- Provide essential standardized definitions and vocabulary related to coyote management.
- Outline a consistent, organized and detailed reporting and tracking process for human-coyote interactions.
- Outline a consistent, organized and detailed response process for human-coyote and coyote management related reports.

#### Strategic Plan

This plan includes four key strategies:

- Create and implement a plan to educate the community about coyotes including methods to safely co-exist through informational handout materials, media outreach, HOA meetings, and a coyote telephone hotline.
- Implement a coyote hazing education program for residents, to try and change the behaviors of habituated coyotes or to instill a healthy fear of people back into the local coyote populations. This component of the plan includes only those techniques that can safely be implemented by residents, CDOW volunteers and City staff.
- Implement a program of lethal control, **only** when the interactions between humans and coyotes change from *encounters* and *incidents* to *attacks* or the coyote behavior changes from *nuisance* to *dangerous*.

#### Definitions

The following definitions will be used in obtaining information from the public, to identify specific coyote behaviors. Using these definitions will help to standardize the record keeping and will assist in communicating coyote behaviors, both internally as well as with external agencies such as Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) and Tri-County Health Department:

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### Definitions listed in order of interactions between humans and coyotes:

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

**Sighting** – A visual observation of one or more coyotes.

**Encounter** - An unexpected direct meeting between a human and one or more coyotes with no physical contact and no aggressive behavior from the coyote

**Incident** – A conflict between a human and a coyote where a coyote exhibited behavior creating an unsafe situation, but the human was uninjured. This includes the following types of behavior: growling, baring teeth, lunging toward a human.

*An example of this would be: A coyote attacks a dog that was on a leash, the human was uninjured, but was in an unsafe situation.*

**Attack** – An aggressive action by a coyote where a human is injured or killed.

**Unattended Pet Attack** – An unattended pet is physically contacted, bitten, or killed by coyotes. This includes pets on leashes that extend longer than six feet from the owner.

**Attended Pet Attack** – Attended pets that are leashed or unleashed within six feet of owners and are contacted, bitten, or killed by a coyote.

### Descriptions of coyote behavior:

#### Nuisance

**Habituated** – A coyote that appears to frequently associate with humans or human related food sources, and exhibits little wariness of the presence of people.

**Depredating** – A coyote that is preying on pets or livestock.

**Menacing** – A coyote that exhibits aggravated abnormal behavior; however such coyote does not display the characteristics of a “dangerous coyote”. This may include coyote incidents and/or encounters where a coyote or group of coyotes could potentially endanger public safety.

**Dangerous** – a coyote that has attacked a person, exhibits aggressive behavior towards a human(s) and/or poses a significant threat to human safety.

*Aggressive behavior is defined as a coyote that bares its teeth, growls, lunges or charges at a human(s).*

### General Definitions

**Coexistence** – To exist together at the same time. Coexistence is not passive, but active on the human’s part, including actions such as removing specific coyote habitats and employing hazing methods. Coexistence provides a mechanism by which humans obtain and maintain a high level of knowledge and understanding of coyote ecology, behaviors and appropriate responses.

**Hazing** – An activity, or series of activities, that is conducted in an attempt to change the behaviors of habituated coyotes or to instill healthy fear of people back into the local coyote populations. Hazing is not intended to physically damage the coyote, property or humans.

**High Intensity Hazing** – High intensity hazing techniques involves using non-lethal projectiles. Example: Paintball or pepper ball guns.

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## Reporting and Tracking

### **Reporting**

It is imperative that the City has efficient and consistent reporting of human-coyote interactions. In all cases, the City staff should use a Coyote Report Form to document and record all reports. Completed coyote report forms will be forwarded to Animal Control immediately.

Reports regarding dangerous coyote behavior will be reported to the Colorado Division of Wildlife immediately.

### **Tracking**

The City will track all observations, sightings, encounters, incidents, and attacks that are reported. In addition, the City will also track attended and unattended pet-attacks, pet-loss, intentional feeding, unsecured trash, and active den sites that are reported.

Tracking reports will allow City staff to identify “hot spots” where additional signs, education or habitat investigations might be needed.

## Responding to Coyote Conflicts

### **Observations, Sightings and Encounters**

City staff will complete a coyote report form and forward to animal control and information will be added to the tracking map. City staff will also provide educational materials emphasizing pet safety, hazing techniques, and habitat modification for the resident or HOA.

### **Pet Injuries or Loss Resulting from Coyotes**

City staff will complete a coyote report form and forward to animal control and information will be added to the tracking map. City staff will provide the pet owner with educational materials emphasizing pet safety, hazing techniques, and habitat modification suggestions. In the event that a coyote continues to return to the same property, a uniformed officer, or the property owner or resident, may implement high intensity hazing techniques (see below).

### **Incidents and Attacks to Humans**

*Notify Colorado Division of Wildlife District Manager (DWM) immediately.* CDOW staff will respond to incidents involving dangerous coyotes and make a management decision based on the interest of public safety. The Chief of Police and/or the Lieutenant will be notified immediately and a decision will be made regarding the use of high intensity hazing or lethal control. City staff will work with CDOW staff to notify residents in the area of the incident. City staff will log information on a coyote report form and forward to Animal Control immediately. City staff will provide educational materials including information regarding hazing techniques, reporting intentional feeding, and habitat modification to area residents, homeowners associations’ and schools (if in the area).

CDOW during regular business hours: (303) 291-7227

Colorado State Patrol after regular business hours: (303) 239-4501. Colorado State Patrol will contact the on-call Wildlife Officer.

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## Coyote Hazing Effort

### **Hazing**

The City staff will continually educate residents on hazing coyotes, including the benefits of hazing and suggested techniques. The following are examples of hazing/adverse conditioning methods that have been found to be effective:

- **Human behavior:** Yelling, waving arms, and acting threatening towards coyotes. However, it is imperative to keep safety in mind and never corner a coyote or approach one with young nearby.
- **Sound devices:** Using a device that makes a loud popping sound, air horns, banging pans, whistles, or any other noise maker.
- **Motion activated devices:** Spotlights, strobe lights, motion activated water sprinklers. These devices tend to be most effective when sound is also incorporated.
- **Projectiles:** Throwing or using a slingshot to lob rocks, golf balls or marbles at coyotes.

### **High Intensity Hazing**

This technique may be carried out by a trained uniformed officer of the Cherry Hills Village Police Department, any State agency, volunteer or resident. This method will be used for a coyote, or group of coyotes, that have been determined by City officials to be menacing or dangerous. If an officer uses hazing tools which launch any type of projectile, such as pepper balls, paint balls or bear spray, such tool and its projectile may only be used on public property unless a private property owner has given permission to use these tools on their property. Residents may employ high intensity hazing techniques on their own property provided that the use of such methods does not pose a threat to public health or safety.

### **Lethal Control**

The City may implement a program of lethal control when the interactions between humans and coyotes change from encounters and/or incidents to attacks, or if the coyote behavior changes from nuisance to dangerous. Information on the behavior of the coyotes will be obtained through the reports received by the City and in conjunction with CDOW. Lethal control may be utilized when education and hazing techniques have been employed and are not effective in changing the behavior of a habituated coyote and that coyote has become dangerous, or if the City determines that a coyote poses an immediate danger to humans.

When an attack on a human by a coyote has occurred, the City will immediately contact CDOW and a Division of Wildlife District Manager will respond immediately. The CDOW official will attempt to locate and destroy the offending coyote, subject to their policies and procedures. If CDOW is unsuccessful in destroying the offending coyote, the City may apply for a trapping exemption through Tri-County Health Department and hire a private trapper.

If a human has been bitten or is otherwise being attacked, or an imminent threat of attack on a human by a coyote is occurring and time will not permit the contact of CDOW, a police officer may act immediately, according to their training, and remove such threat.

**Lethal control measures will not be used indiscriminately against the coyote population.**

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**Laws Associated with Coyote Management**

**Wildlife Commission Regulation 303(A)** Prohibits the relocation of coyotes without a permit. The Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) generally will not authorize the relocation of coyotes due to risks associated with handling of predators and disease concerns. In addition, studies have shown that relocation is not effective.

**Wildlife Commission Regulation 021(C)** No person shall place, deposit, distribute or scatter any food or other substance so as to intentionally constitute a lure, attraction or enticement for coyotes or fox in an area where the discharge of firearms is precluded by law. This regulation shall not apply to any person using any bait or other attractants for the purpose of luring coyotes or fox for take as otherwise authorized by law.

**Wildlife Commission Regulation 021(D)** It is unlawful for any person to fail to take remedial action to avoid contact or conflict with black bears, coyotes or fox, which may include the securing or removal of outdoor trash, cooking grills, pet food, bird feeders or any other similar food source or attractant, after being notified by the Division of Wildlife that black bears, coyotes or fox are in the area and advised to undertake such remedial action.

**Amendment 14** (passed by voters in 1996) prohibits the use of leg hold and conibear type traps, snares and poisons for the killing or removal of wildlife. Two of the exemptions to this amendment are agricultural damage by wildlife and issues concerning human health and safety.

**Colorado Revised Statutes Sec. 33-1-105(1)(h)** gives the Wildlife Commission the authority to provide for destruction of any wildlife that poses a threat to public health, safety or welfare.

**Colorado Revised Statutes Sec. 33-1-106** gives the Wildlife Commission the authority to regulate the circumstances under which wildlife may be taken, and to determine the disposition of usable portions of wildlife.

**Colorado Revised Statutes Sec. 33-6-107(9)** permits any landowner, any member of such landowner's family, or any employee of the landowner to hunt, trap, or take coyotes on land owned or leased by the landowner without the securing licenses to do so, but only when such wildlife is causing damage to crops, real or personal property, or livestock.

**Colorado Revised Statutes Sec. 33-6-205** gives federal, state, county or municipal departments of health the ability to grant an exemption to Amendment 14 to take (by use of leg hold traps, snares, instant kill body-gripping design traps, or poisons) wildlife for purpose of protecting human health and safety.

**Municipal Code Sec. 10-8-40. Discharging firearms prohibited.**

It is unlawful for any person to discharge any firearms, including, but not by way of limitation, any cannon, gun, fowling piece, pistol or firearm of any size or description, within the corporate limits of the City, without written permission from the Chief of Police, which permission shall prescribe the time and method of discharge of such firearm and shall be subject to revocation by said Chief of Police at any time after the same has been granted. However, nothing herein shall be construed to restrict the right of the Chief of Police or duly appointed law enforcement officers from such use of firearms as may be proper in carrying out their duties of law enforcement. (Ord. 3, 1964; 1980 Code; prior code 9-2-1-1; Ord. 9 §1, 2003)

**Municipal Code Sec. 10-5-100 Throwing of objects threatening public health and safety prohibited.**

No person shall throw or shoot any object at or upon any person, vehicle, animal or property, if such action causes a threat to public health or safety.