



City of Rosemead
Coyote Management Plan
2019

City of Rosemead
8838 East Valley Boulevard
Rosemead, CA 91770

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The goal of the Rosemead Coyote Management Plan 2019 (RCMP 2019) is to discourage the habituation of coyotes in an urban environment by using education, behavior modification, and a robust human/coyote reporting and responding system. The actions in this RCMP 2019 are designed to increase communities' knowledge and understanding of how coyotes behave and to make clear how such behavior can be managed or reduced to eliminate human conflicts with coyotes. The ultimate goal of coyote behavior modification is to encourage the natural relocation of coyotes to their native environment.

The RCMP 2019 is modeled after the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments' (SGVCOG) Regional Coyote Management Framework (RCMF) approved by the SGV Governing Board in July 2019. The SGV formed a Coyote Management Task Force to address the existing and rising coyote issues in the regional San Gabriel Valley area. The SGVCOG collaborated with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the County of Los Angeles, the University of California, and other external stakeholders to develop a regional approach in addressing the rising coyote issues. As a result of regional collaboration, SGVCOG prepared and released the RCMF as a framework for individual cities to use as a model in preparing its coyote management plan.

The RCMF serves as a "best practices" document that cities can utilize as a resource that includes coyote management strategies, reporting tools, public education recommendations, and other resources to reduce human-coyote conflicts. The RCMF was developed using the following principles:

- Human safety is a priority in managing human-coyote interactions.
- Coyotes serve an important role in San Gabriel Valley's ecosystems by helping to control rodent populations.
- Preventive practices are crucial to minimizing potential interactions and encounters with coyotes.
- Solutions for coyote conflicts must address both problematic coyote behaviors and the human behaviors that invite them.
- Non-selective coyote removal programs are ineffective for reducing coyote population sizes or preventing human-coyote conflicts in the long run.
- Regionwide programs that involve residents can improve coexistence among humans, coyotes, and pets.

SECTION 1: COYOTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The strategy for managing coyotes is based on balancing respect and protection of wildlife without compromising public safety. The main strategy is a multi-focused approach consisting of public education, enforcement, and reporting.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Coyote awareness education is critical for residents to make informed decisions regarding their safety, properties, and pets by decreasing attractants, reshaping coyote behavior, and creating reasonable expectations of normal coyote behavior. Dissemination of information to residents, businesses, and schools will be accomplished through the use of the cities' websites, newsletters, social media, press releases, town halls, community meetings, coyote management workshops, and other direct and indirect public outreach campaigns.

Learning how to properly and effectively respond to a coyote encounter empowers residents and supports reshaping undesired coyote behavior. The public should understand what normal coyote behavior is when living in close proximity with coyotes. For example, vocalization (coyote calls) is a normal and acceptable behavior that does not indicate aggression.

The City will host community educational meetings and provide youth education workshops in areas with high human-coyote interactions. The City would distribute through various outlets information regarding coyotes to educate the residents and households residing in areas with high coyote sightings. Mailers and social media postings would be offered in English and other languages that are widely spoken in the community.

ENFORCEMENT

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 leading to an increased likelihood of creating habituated coyotes and resulting in increases in coyote-human interactions. California law prohibits feeding wildlife, including coyotes. The City will strictly enforce the State law pertaining to this activity. As needed, Ordinance that discourage the intentional or unintentional feeding of wildlife would be adopted.

REPORTING

A five-tier safety response plan has been developed by the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments (SGVCOG) and is incorporated into this Rosemead Coyote Management Plan 2019 (RCMP 2019) as a regional mechanism for identifying and classifying different levels of human-coyote interactions. This response plan serves as a regional approach to identify different types of coyote behaviors.

SECTION 2: COYOTE ATTRACTANTS

While attacks on humans are extremely rare, urban landscape development, intentional and unintentional feeding, pet-related incidents, and media attention have led some residents to fear coyotes. It is important to note that attacks on free-roaming and unattended small pets are normal coyote behavior and do not necessarily indicate a danger for humans. Coyotes usually become habituated when they learn and associate people and/or neighborhoods with sources of food.

Residents may reinforce this behavior by acting inappropriately when they see a coyote. Steps must be taken to address safety concerns and misconceptions and to ensure appropriate responses to potential threats to human safety. It is important to keep in mind that coyotes have been in and around the San Gabriel Valley and other parts of Southern California since thousands of years ago.

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

FOOD – Urban areas provide a bounty of natural food choices for coyotes that primarily eat rodents. 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 parks and yards. Intentional and unintentional feeding can lead coyotes to associate humans with sources of food, which can result in negative and aggressive interactions among coyotes, people, and pets.

To reduce food attractants in urban and suburban area, residents should be educated to:

- Never hand-feed or otherwise deliberately feed a coyote.
- Avoid feeding pets outside and remove sources of pet food and water in outdoor settings. If feeding pets outside is necessary, remove the feeding bowl and any leftover food promptly.
- Never compost any meat or dairy products unless the compost is fully secured.
- Maintain good housekeeping, such as regularly raking areas around bird feeders, to help discourage coyote activity near residences.
- Remove fallen fruit from the ground.
- Keep trash in high-quality containers with tight-fitting lids.
- Only place trash bins curbside during the morning of trash collection. If left out overnight, trash bins are more likely to be tipped over and broken into by coyotes. If necessary, purchase secured trash containers.
- Seal food waste, such as meat scraps or leftover pet food, before discarding the waste into trash bins.

WATER – Urban areas provide a year-round supply of water in the form of stormwater impoundments and channels, artificial lakes, irrigation, swimming pools, and pet water dishes, which support both coyotes and their prey. In dry conditions, water can be as alluring as food. Residents should remove outdoor water bowls/cans and secure fountains, pools, and jacuzzis.

SHELTER – Parks, greenbelts, open spaces, sumps, golf courses, buildings, sheds, decks, and crawl spaces increase the amount and variability of cover for coyotes. They allow coyotes to safely and easily remain close to residents, pets, homes, and businesses without detection. Coyotes may take advantage of available

spaces under sheds or decks for use as a den, thereby bringing them into close contact with residents and pets.

UNATTENDED PETS – Coyotes primarily eat small mammals, such as mice and rats; however, they will also prey on slightly larger mammals such as rabbits and groundhogs. Animals that are approximately the same size as a groundhog or rabbit, especially unattended outdoor cats and small dogs, may attract coyotes into neighborhoods.

- The best way to minimize risk to pets from coyotes (and the other dangers of outdoor life such as cars, disease, and other wildlife) is to keep small pets indoors, only let them outside in a secured enclosure, or when they are accompanied by a person and under the control of a leash and harness that is less than six feet long.
- It is important to either keep dogs on a leash that is six feet long or shorter when outdoors or to stay within six feet of them when outside. Coyotes may view a dog on a leash longer than six feet as an unattended pet. Attacks on free-roaming small cats or dogs are normal coyote behavior and do not indicate a danger for humans. A free-roaming pet is considered as an unattended domestic pet outside of its enclosed yard or area.
- Although attacks on larger dogs are rare, coyotes may often attack 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 to not leave dogs outside unattended and to keep them on leashes (six feet long or less) when in public areas.

FERAL CATS – While residents who feed feral cats are often concerned that coyotes might prey on the cats, the act of feeding feral cats may cause more harm than good, as coyotes often frequent these locations. Resident should not feed feral cats to avoid attracting coyotes into their neighborhoods. Although it can be difficult for residents to protect feral cats from coyotes, the following tips can be helpful:

- Do not feed feral cats.
- If feral cats frequent your neighborhood, please contact the animal service agency.
- Haze coyotes seen near feral cat locations. Making coyotes feel uncomfortable will encourage them to stay out of the area. See Appendix A for a list of effective hazing strategies.

Other domestic animals kept outside, such as rabbits and chickens, may also be viewed as prey by coyotes. Protect outdoor animals from coyotes and other predators with protective fencing and sturdy cages.

Residents are encouraged to use the Yard Audit Checklist (Appendix B) as a tool to help recognize and remove attractants in their yards and neighborhoods

SECTION 3: HAZING AND BEHAVIOR CHANGE

Some coyotes have become too comfortable in the close proximity of residents. To safely coexist, residents must modify their behavior to shape coyote behavior. Habituated coyote behavior needs to be reshaped to encourage coyotes to avoid contact with residents and pets.

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

Hazing employs immediate use of deterrents to move an animal out of an area or discourage an undesirable behavior or activity. Deterrents include loud noises, spraying water, bright lights, throwing objects, waving arms, and shouting. Hazing can help maintain a coyote’s fear of humans and discourage them from neighborhoods, such as backyards and play areas.

Hazing is not intended to harm or damage animals, humans or property, but to change the coyote’s behavior. A coyote, similar to a dog, will not know that the behavior it is engaging in is unwanted unless some type of message is sent and reinforced repeatedly. Behavioral change also involves human activities such as identifying and removing attractants and protecting pets responsibly. If a human sees a coyote in an urban area and does not respond in any way, a message opposite of hazing is conveyed to the coyote. Please see Appendix A for a list of effective hazing strategies.

GOALS OF HAZING

It is not economically and ecologically efficient to eradicate coyotes from the urban ecosystem. Hazing is part of a long-term plan to create safe and acceptable living situations, increase understanding of coyote behavior and reduce conflict between coyotes and people. Goals of hazing include:

1. To reshape coyote behavior to avoid human contact in an urban setting. Human behavior can shape animal behavior, in either a negative or positive manner. People living in close proximity to coyotes can remove coyote attractants, identify potentially dangerous situations for their pets and themselves, and respond in a manner designed to change coyote behavior.
2. To provide residents information and tools to actively engage in reshaping coyote behavior and to support feeling safe in their parks and neighborhoods. This can be accomplished by teaching residents effective and appropriate hazing techniques.
3. To model hazing behavior and share accurate information about coyotes among other residents, friends, and family.
4. Monitor hazing to assess its effectiveness and determine if further action or more aggressive hazing is needed.
5. Develop long-term community-based hazing programs.

TRAINING PROGRAM

The City would as permissible partner with experts from CDFW, local Humane Society and/or Animal Services organizations, the County of Los Angeles, and/or other relevant external stakeholders to empower residents with methods to safely co-exist with wildlife. Specific to human-coyote conflicts, the workshops should include basic training on species-specific ecology and behavior, strategies to reduce/eliminate potential human-coyote conflicts, and appropriate conflict and management techniques (e.g. hazing).

Topics may include:

- Basic coyote information;
- Normal/healthy vs. abnormal/unhealthy coyote behavior;
- Seasonal behavior changes;
- Appropriate responses when encountering wildlife, especially coyotes;
- Human health, public, and pet safety tips and concerns;
- Coyote attractants;
- Methods to reduce/eliminate access to attractants (e.g. exclusion, deterrence); or,
- Effective coyote hazing methods.

Additionally, the City would promote CDFW's Wildlife Watch Program. This program is a multi-agency partnership initiative that provides support and training to local governments and community groups to help them design and implement their own nuisance wildlife action plans. More information regarding the Wildlife Watch Program can be found on <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/wildlife-watch>.

SECTION 4: ENFORCEMENT

The act of feeding wildlife can attract coyotes and their prey to an area, leading to an increased likelihood of creating habituated coyotes and increased coyote-human interactions. California law prohibits feeding wildlife and the Sheriff's Department will strictly enforce applicable state statutes pertaining to this activity.

The following are some of the applicable regulations that may be utilized as enforcement tools to discourage coyotes from proliferating in urbanized San Gabriel Valley:

CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS TITLE 14. SECTION 251.1. HARASSMENT OF ANIMALS

Except as otherwise authorized in these regulations or in the Fish and Game Code, no person shall harass, herd, or drive any game 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.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY CODE TITLE 10. SECTION 10.84.010. PROVIDING FOOD FOR CERTAIN RODENTS OR PREDATOR ANIMALS PROHIBITED

It is unlawful to feed a nondomesticated rodent or nondomesticated mammalian predator as defined in this section, unless:

- The person is the owner of the animal and the animal is kept in accordance with the requirements of the State Department of Fish and Wildlife; or
- After notifying the responsible agency to pick up the animal, the person provides food to a trapped or injured animal.

For purposes of this chapter:

1. "Rodent" includes ground squirrels;
2. "Mammalian predators" include coyotes, raccoons, foxes, and opossums.

A violation of this section is a misdemeanor.

SECTION 5: SAFETY RESPONSE PLAN

A tiered response plan identifies and classifies levels of human and coyote interactions. The City's implementation system is a 5-tier coyote response plan (consistent with SGVCOG recommendation) that is showcased below.

COYOTE BEHAVIOR	RESPONSE LEVEL	RESPONSES
Coyote heard or seen moving in public area	1	Sighting report will be reviewed, and if appropriate, a response will be provided by e-mail or phone. The City would direct residents to available resources on normal coyote behavior.
Coyote seen resting in public area	1	Sighting report will be reviewed, and if appropriate, a response will be provided by e-mail or phone. The City would direct residents to available resources on normal coyote behavior.
Coyote seen resting in public area with humans present	2	The City provides resources for the resident to be educated on hazing techniques and what-to-do tips. Additionally, the City would encourage the respective municipality to work with the local community to eliminate coyote attractants.
Coyote entering a yard to a home with or without pets present	2	The City provides information for the household to be educated on coyote attractants, yard audit implementation, human-coyote conflict mitigation, hazing techniques, and/or pet safety information (if applicable).
Coyote entering a yard and injuring or killing attended or unattended pet	3	The City gathers information on specific animal involved, report on circumstances, and provide information for the household to be educated on coyote attractants, yard and neighborhood audits, and pet safety information.

Coyote biting or injuring an unattended pet/pet on a leash	3	The City gathers information on specific animal involved, report on circumstances, and provide information for the household to be educated on coyote attractants, yard and neighborhood audits, and pet safety information.
Coyote following or approaching a person and pet (stalking)	3	The City provides information for the resident to be educated on hazing techniques, what-to-do tips, yard/neighborhood audits, and pet safety information. Additionally, the City will work with the residents to eliminate coyote attractants in the area.
Coyote following or approaching a person without a pet (stalking)	4	The City provides information for the resident to be educated on hazing techniques, what-to-do tips, yard/neighborhood audits, and pet safety information. Additionally, the City will work with residents and local groups to eliminate coyote attractants in the area.
Coyote biting or injuring a human	5	The City informs the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Residents will receive educational materials on coyote attractants, yard or neighborhood audits, hazing, and pet safety. Additionally, the City would work with the respective Humane Society, the County of Los Angeles, CDFW, elected officials, and its neighboring cities to send out mailers, partner with external stakeholders to host trainings and workshops, conduct a community meeting/town hall, and encourage the cities in the subregion to work with community groups to eliminate coyote attractants.

The above tiered response plan is consistent with SGVCOG’s response plan for regional consistency with other communities in the San Gabriel Valley region.

If a human is attacked and physically injured by a coyote, the City will work with the CDFW, which will be the lead investigating agency to thoroughly investigate the incident, to identify and remove the responsible coyote. As a last resort, lethal removal will also be considered if there is a public safety issue with a coyote threatening residents—only after a thorough investigation and identification of the offending coyote.

If there is an immediate public safety issue, such as a coyote threatening residents in an area frequented by people, the local police department will respond. Since coyotes are considered as “non-game wildlife,” any resident or homeowners’ association can, at their own expense, initiate action to protect themselves and their private property from coyote attacks within the limits of the law regarding trapping and hunting.

SECTION 6: COYOTE REPORTING

The City will and its residents are encouraged to report coyote sightings to the University of California Coyote Cacher® at <https://ucanr.edu/sites/CoyoteCacher/>. This will allow SGVCOG and its member agencies to identify potential trouble areas where coyotes are frequently sighted and allow the member agencies to focus resources where they are needed most. There are several options to choose from and San Gabriel Valley residents are encouraged to use the tool that works best for them. Please keep in mind that these are only coyote reporting tools. Depending on the submission format, residents may receive acknowledgement of their submissions.

University of California Coyote Cacher®

This tool is accessible by members of the public from a computer or mobile device. It provides a repository for reported coyote activity, real-time alerts to stay abreast of reported activities, and GIS mapping by zip code. Residents may view coyote encounters in the San Gabriel Valley region by visiting https://ucanr.edu/sites/CoyoteCacher/Story_Map/. Residents can also report a coyote encounter to the UC Coyote Cacher through the link on the website or by submitting a request at <https://geodata.ucanr.edu/coyoteCacher/form/>.

State and Local Enforcement Agencies

Coyote bites, injured or ill coyotes, or coyotes that pose a threat to the public should be reported to the 9-1-1 emergency line. Coyote bites can be extremely hazardous to human health. If a resident has been bitten by a coyote, please direct the injured resident to seek medical attention immediately. A police report may be taken to document the incident. All animal bites to humans are legally reportable in Los Angeles County except for rodent and rabbit bites. For more information, please visit the County of Los Angeles Public Health Department website at <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/vet/biteintro.htm>.

APPENDIX A: EFFECTIVE COYOTE HAZING STRATEGIES

Human behavior can shape animal behavior, in either a negative or positive manner. Residents living in close proximity to coyotes can remove coyote attractants, identify potentially dangerous situations for their pets and themselves, and respond in a manner designed to change coyote behavior. Successful hazing requires community involvement, understanding, and support. Residents should be equipped with tools and knowledge to respond consistently in their own neighborhoods, parks, and open spaces. Hazing should only take place in open spaces if residents are confirmed with an aggressive coyote.

- Hazing is a process whereby individuals make a coyote uncomfortable and choose to leave a situation where their presence is unwanted.
- Basic hazing consists of residents standing their ground, never ignoring or turning their backs to a coyote, and yelling and making unpleasant and frightening noises until the animal chooses to leave.
- More aggressive hazing consists of approaching an animal quickly and aggressively, waving arms, throwing projectiles in the direction of (but not at) the coyote, and spraying with a hose or water gun, all of which are used for creating fear of humans to encourage the animal to leave the vicinity.
- Once the act of hazing began, it must continue until the animal leaves the vicinity. 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 humans should be avoided.
- Hazing should never injure the animal. An injured animal becomes less predictable versus a normal, healthy one who responds in a consistent and predictable manner to hazing.
- Hazing should allow the coyote to return to its normal habitat in a direction that would minimize harm to the animal. Hazing the animal in the direction of other houses and busy streets should be avoided.
- Hazing uses a variety of different hazing tools. This is critical as coyotes can become accustomed to individual items and sounds.
 - Noisemaker: Voice, whistles, air horns, bells, “shaker” cans, pots, pie pans
 - Projectiles: Sticks, small rocks, cans, tennis balls, rubber balls
 - Deterrents: Hoses, spray bottles with vinegar, pepper spray, bear repellent, walking sticks

A common concern with hazing involves potential danger to the hazer. A coyote’s basic nature is very skittish and the nature of the species is what makes this technique successful. A normal, healthy coyote will not escalate a situation with an aggressive person. Hazing is not successful with every species of wild animal because different types of animals have different traits.

It is requested that residents submit a report to the Sheriff’s Department of Public Safety Center each time they haze a coyote. Reports are most helpful when the following information is included:

- Date, location, time of day, number of coyotes
- Initial coyote behavior, hazing behavior, coyote response
- Effectiveness ratings – i.e. was the method used successful or not
- Tools and techniques used
- Additional details/comments

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR HAZING COYOTES:

1. Levels of hazing need to be appropriately relevant to the coyote activity.
 - a. Coyotes are best left alone. Residents are encouraged to ignore coyotes if the coyotes ignore them. As with any wild animal, maintaining personal safety should be the primary goal.
 - b. Coyotes are often out late at night when few humans are present. This is a normal and acceptable coyote behavior. Hazing may not be necessary in this situation.
Exceptions: In early stages of hazing, programs should still engage animals. Coyotes that associate danger in the presence of humans 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, which is for them to leave the vicinity.
3. Techniques and tools can be used in the same manner for one or multiple coyotes. Usually there is a dominant coyote in a group who will respond - others will follow its lead. Residents should not ignore, turn their backs, or avoid hazing because there are multiple coyotes instead of a single individual coyote.
4. The more often an individual coyote is hazed by a variety of tools and techniques and a variety of residents, 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 identifies the person.
6. Coyotes can and do recognize individual residents 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 their habits. 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 residents.
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 residents.
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. As a rule, coyotes do not act aggressively towards 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, residents should not engage and instead remove themselves from the situation, then immediately contact the local police department.
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.

APPENDIX B: YARD AUDIT CHECKLIST

	No Action Required	Adjustments Required	Recommended Action
FOOD			Never 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.
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 fruits around trees.
Compost			Do not include meat or dairy among compost contents unless the area is fully enclosed.
BBQ Grills			Clean up food around BBQ grills after each use.
Trash			Secure trash containers with locking lids and place curbside on pickup day. Periodically clean cans to reduce residual odors.
LANDSCAPING			Trim vegetation to reduce hiding places for rodents and coyotes and potential denning sites.
STRUCTURES			Restrict access under decks and sheds, around wood piles, or any other structure that can provide cover or denning sites for coyotes or their prey.
FENCING*			Enclose property with six-foot fence with additional extension or roller top to deter coyotes. Ensure that there are no gaps and that the bottom of the fence extends underground six inches or is fitted with a mesh apron to deter coyotes from digging underneath. *Must comply with local municipal code
PETS			Never leave pets unattended outside. Never allow pets to “play” with coyotes. Fully enclose outdoor pet kennels. Walk pets on a leash no longer than 6 feet in length.