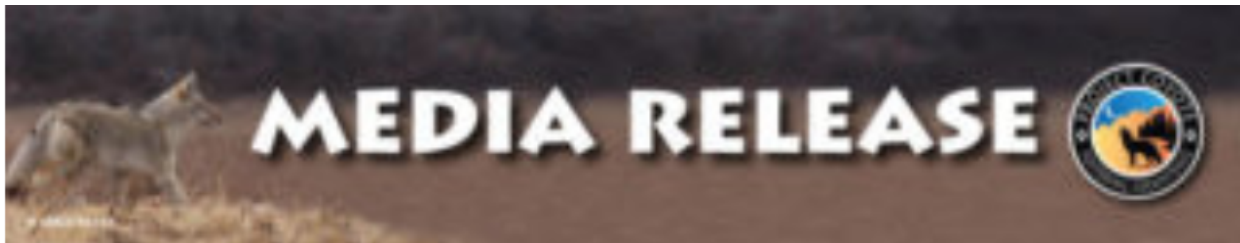


MEDIA RELEASE: Yavapai County, AZ, Board of Supervisors Condemns Wildlife Killing Contests

by [Project Coyote](#) | Dec 20, 2018 | [Media Release](#)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – December 20, 2018

Yavapai County Board of Supervisors (AZ) Passes Proclamation Condemning Wildlife Killing Contests

Unanimous vote follows [Dewey-Humboldt Town Council resolution](#)

YAVAPAI COUNTY, Ariz. — The Yavapai County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously yesterday in favor of a proclamation that opposes wildlife killing contests. Arizona citizens belonging to a coalition known as [I AM WOLF NATION](#) in partnership with [Project Coyote](#) and other wildlife and animal protection organizations have been working to end wildlife killing contests in Yavapai County and other Arizona localities. Yavapai County’s proclamation follows on the heels of a similar [Dewey-Humboldt Town Council resolution](#) that passed in November.

Wildlife killing contests are cruel events in which participants compete for fun and prizes by killing the greatest number or the heaviest of the target species. Last week, dozens of coyotes were slaughtered in the Santa Slay Coyote Tournament in Yavapai County and on public lands throughout Arizona. Manufacturers and sellers of firearms, predator-calling devices, and hunting gear were among its sponsors. Though the public at large remains largely unaware of these contests, killing contest social media posts often show photos of participants piling up and posing with the corpses of wildlife they have killed.

Increasing public outrage has led to several national newspapers editorializing against wildlife killing contests. Last week, on December 14, Pulitzer Prize-nominated columnist Linda Valdez [wrote in *The Arizona Republic*](#): “The wildlife in Arizona belongs to all the people of Arizona. Did anyone ask you how you feel about contests [that] put a dollar value on killing as many wild animals as possible? Is that how you want your wildlife treated?”

Yavapai County’s proclamation recognizes that coyotes and other native carnivores play a key role in maintaining healthy ecosystems—which includes controlling rabbit and rodent populations. Just as importantly, the County proclaims that wildlife killing contests serve no genuine ecological or wildlife management purpose. The County proclamation further acknowledges that wildlife killing contests threaten the safety and well-being of hikers, dog walkers, bird watchers, hunters, horseback riders, and other outdoor enthusiasts who use public lands where killing contests take place.

“We applaud the Yavapai County Board of Supervisors for taking a strong stance against wildlife killing contests in Arizona,” said [Matt Francis](#), Prescott, Arizona resident and a Project Coyote Program Associate. “The Arizona State Legislature should recognize that Arizona citizens will no longer tolerate these barbaric contests and should ban wildlife killing contests statewide.”

“Our team recognizes and appreciates Yavapai County making a statement against killing contests, which are blood sports and should never be compared to hunting as contest proponents try to do,” said Betsy Klein, Sedona, Arizona, resident and co-founder of I AM WOLF NATION™. “As an organization, we recognize the long-standing tradition of hunters and hunting in Arizona. In fact, hunters who practice fair chase principles have called these contests ‘inhumane’ and have openly opposed them, knowing there is a distinct difference between hunting and senseless slaughter.”

Currently, there is a contest slated to take place in Flagstaff in March of 2019 that will target bobcats, coyotes, and foxes.

Coyote killing contest organizers often justify the slaughter by claiming that by reducing the coyote population they are helping to reduce conflicts with coyotes. “There is no documented scientific evidence that coyote killing contests permanently reduce coyote abundance, increase populations of deer or other game species, or prevent conflicts between predators, humans and livestock,” said [Dave Parsons, MS](#), retired career wildlife biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, former hunter, and Project Coyote Science Advisory Board Member. “Wildlife killing contests are symptomatic of a broader problem of misguided wildlife governance by state wildlife agencies that fail to recognize and value the crucial ecological roles of native predators.”

The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) itself recognizes that killing coyotes doesn’t reduce their numbers, [stating on their website](#): “Removing coyotes from one area generally results in other coyotes moving in from surrounding areas and breeding faster.” There is no way to know the effect that wildlife killing contests have on coyote populations in Arizona because AZGFD does not monitor the contests or track the number of coyotes killed in these events.

U.S. Congressman Raúl Grijalva of the 3rd Congressional District of Arizona, who serves on the House Committee on Natural Resources, recently [weighed in on the issue](#): “Do you want a coyote-killing contest on your public lands this Saturday? Neither do we. Neither do Arizona locals in the threatened area. Let people know this is happening.”

Earlier this year, the city council of [Albuquerque, New Mexico, unanimously passed a resolution](#) calling for a state legislative ban on killing contests. Tucson and Pima County have passed similar resolutions in recent years. [Vermont](#) and [California](#) outlawed killing contests in 2018 and 2014, respectively. The [National Coalition to End Wildlife Killing Contests](#), a growing alliance of more than 30 state and national wildlife and animal protection groups, along with local citizens, will pursue similar policy changes at the state and local levels across the nation in 2019.

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[I AM WOLF NATION](#) — *The power of the collective, working to protect the wolf and other persecuted wildlife in Arizona. For more information about joining the local effort to end wildlife killing contests, please visit our [website](#).*

[Project Coyote](#), a national non-profit organization, is a North American coalition of scientists, educators, ranchers, and citizen leaders promoting compassionate conservation and coexistence between people and wildlife through education, science and advocacy. Visit [ProjectCoyote.org](#) for more information.

To learn more about wildlife killing contests, visit the National Coalition to End Wildlife Killing Contests' website [h](#)

<http://www.projectcoyote.org/media-release-yavapai-county-az-board-of-supervisors-condemns-wildlife-killing-contests/>