



At the Young Farmers and Ranchers First Annual Coyote Hunting Tournament check-in in Hines, Oregon

## Gruesome Oregon wildlife killing contest exposed

*Undercover investigation reveals need for state legislation to end these cruel, unsporting and wasteful events.*

**IN LATE 2018**, investigators with the Humane Society of the United States attended the Young Farmers and Ranchers First Annual Coyote Hunting Tournament check-in in Hines, Oregon. This cruel killing event was sponsored by the Oregon Farm Bureau. The check in was held in the parking lot of a store with signs for HC Sporting Goods (also known as B and B Sporting Goods).

### Findings:

- About 60 participants were vying for cash and prizes for killing the most coyotes by weight, with no limit on the number of coyotes killed.
- The contest took place over three days, during and after a snow storm. A participant stated that snow on the ground made it easier to spot coyotes.
- Approximately 35 to 50 coyote bodies were brought into the check-in.
- Many participants used off-road vehicles to hunt down and kill coyotes, and they arrived at the contest check-in with these vehicles still perched on the backs of their pickup trucks.
- As participants came in, coyotes were pulled off vehicles and dragged or carried to a scale for weighing before being tossed into the back of an old utility truck.
- Our Investigator was told that dead coyotes were going to a fur buyer, but this could not be confirmed.
- As the contest participants moved the dead coyotes around from truck to scale to utility truck, they were laughing and made comments about the animals, including “*this one here got gut shot.*”
- The winning team killed approximately 10 coyotes.

Wildlife killing contests are held in almost all U.S. states. Sponsors are often sportsmen’s clubs and manufacturers of hunting rifles and predator calling equipment, but can also include local bars and restaurants, municipal service organizations and agencies, VFW posts, and even city or county chambers of commerce.



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A bill has been introduced in the Oregon legislature to prohibit wildlife killing contests in the state.

State and local governments are speaking out against these gruesome events. In January 2019, the New Mexico State Land Commissioner enacted a ban on killing contests for coyotes and other wildlife species on state trust lands, about 9 million acres. Last year, Vermont banned coyote killing contests for prizes. Several cities and counties, including Albuquerque, New Mexico, Pima and Yavapai counties in Arizona, and Tucson and Dewey-Humboldt, Arizona have passed resolutions condemning wildlife killing contests and calling for a statewide ban. In 2017, Maryland enacted a two-year moratorium on cownose ray killing contests.

California has banned wildlife killing contests for coyotes and other furbearer species. Colorado prohibits advertising, conducting, promoting or participating in contests that award prizes when the object of the contest involves killing big game, and prohibits competitive events involving the killing of small game or furbearer species (such as coyotes or prairie dogs) unless no more than five of each species are killed by each participant during the entire event.



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#### Additional information:

- Thousands of animals—including coyotes, foxes, bobcats, mountain lions, prairie dogs, rabbits, crows and squirrels—are killed in these events every year across the United States.
- Participants in wildlife killing contests use cruel and unsporting methods such as electronic calling devices to attract coyotes into rifle range with sounds that imitate the cry of a coyote or prey in distress. Dependent young may also be orphaned during these events and left to die from starvation, predation or exposure.
- Competitive killing events are a bloodbath for entertainment purposes, with participants glorifying kill numbers and showing no respect for wild animals and their habitat. Participants often dump the bodies after the prizes are awarded.
- Misunderstood species, deemed by some to be “pests” or “varmints,” are the animals most frequently killed during these events because there are almost no laws protecting them. They often can be killed in unlimited numbers, all year long, and using almost any method.
- Wildlife killing contests are counter-productive to sound wildlife management. All species—especially native carnivores—play a vital role in healthy ecosystems. Coyotes, for example, provide a number of free, natural ecological services: helping to control disease transmission, cleaning

up carrion (animal carcasses), keeping rodent populations in check (curtailing hantavirus, a rodent-borne illness that kills humans), increasing biodiversity, removing sick animals from the gene pool and protecting crops.



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For more information, please contact Jill Fritz of the Humane Society of the United States at [jfritz@humanesociety.org](mailto:jfritz@humanesociety.org).

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