

First, in answer to some of folks' concerns that were raised in Harney County, here are a couple links for free resources in Oregon. Travel Oregon offers many free-of-charge economic resources, grants and tourism ideas here: <https://industry.traveloregon.com/opportunities/programs-initiatives/>. I also heard that Harney lost their trapper because of funding. The same federal program that they worked with before, USDA Wildlife Services, now offers free statewide non-lethal technical assistance, which can be found here: https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/wildlifedamage/SA_Program_Overview/SA_Contact/ws-state-info?st=OR:Oregon

Wildlife Killing Contests should not be used as economic drivers for rural communities in shoulder seasons. Having been the Executive Director of a rural Chamber of Commerce for a community of under 500 year-round residents for nearly a decade, I have seen a variety of events proposed as economic drivers in winter months. From skeet shooting to chainsaw contests, there are many events that are less cruel, and more appealing to a broader audiences, that could effectively bring guests to Harney County in post-pandemic times.

However, after reviewing the Harney County Chamber of Commerce website and Travel Oregon, it also becomes quickly apparent that the county's coyote contest is not an event intended to be marketed to the masses, and certainly not an economic driver for chamber affiliated business. In fact, the Chamber's website did not post the event to their January calendar, suggesting that while the group who testified might want the event, to paint the county writ-large in favor seems quite unfair.

One only needs to peruse the pages of <https://harneycounty.com/> to see the pure, authentic country charm that exudes from Harney County. The message is that Harney County is home to seven natural wonders, is a place of refuge for wild animals and birds and home to some pretty epic mountain biking. Please don't let the testimony of few ignite the false narrative of urban rural divide.

This event not only has no place in Harney County, it has no place in Oregon and that is the decision of legislators to make. I certainly hope that coyote killing contests will be banned in our state as they have been in many of our neighboring states and beyond.