



Meeting Summary

The committee held a joint meeting with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee to learn about the Coyote Research Project and meet the research consultants. The consultants discussed Broomfield's coyote conflicts and participated in a discussion with the committees and the public.

OSTAC also was introduced to new City Council representatives Bob Gaiser and Mike Shelton and discussed the Broomfield Trail Adventure and a potential joint meeting with the Superior Open Space Board in April.

Roll Call

OSTAC

Present:

William Olney

Dennis Thompson

Annette Cislo

Rob Bodine

Patrick Tennyson

George Zack

James Haedrich

Bob Gaiser

Mike Shelton

Absent: No OSTAC Members

PRAC:

Doug Malcolm

Dick Miller

Sarah Davenport

Larry Crawford

Martha Derda

Greg Stokes

Others in attendance:

Kristan Pritz, Director of Open Space and Trails

Pete Dunlaevy, Open Space and Trails Coordinator

Kevin Standbridge, Assistant City and County Manager

Kevin Jacobs, City Councilmember

Nancy Harold, Director Parks and Recreation

Ellen Cancino, Public Works Administration

Kris Middeldorf, Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Mary McCormac, Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Jennifer Churchill, Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Rick Sedbrook, Park Operations Foreman

Julie Young, Research Consultant

Stanley Gehrt, Research Consultant

Seth Riley, Research Consultant

Agenda Minutes

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1. Call to Order, OSTAC-PRAC Joint meeting, 6:10 p.m.

2. Introduction of Interested Citizens:

Wendy Keefover-Ring, Mary-Ann Bonnell, Gary Julesgard, Paula Lewis, Dan Wilkie, Sherry Hoffman, Chris Petrizzo, Jaan Raamot, Dan Wilkie, Susan Meyer, Doug Craig (and wife), Carrie Turneo, Joe Rubino.

3. Presentation on Broomfield's Coyote Research Project and Discussion with Research Consultants.

Kristan provided an introduction to the coyote research study, the goal of the study, summary of current management practices, efforts to protect public safety and provide education on coyotes to the community. Kristan provided a brief background on each of the consultants and their professional experience.

Julie Young works in Logan, UT at a predator research facility with 100 coyotes. She is also a Utah State University professor. Young studies coyote behavior, urban coyote interactions, and ways to avoid human-coyote conflicts.

Stanley Gehrt is an Ohio State University professor and works on a major coyote research project in Cook County, Illinois (Chicago). Gehrt has studied coyotes for 12 years in Chicago, tracking approximately 2,000 coyotes in very urban environments. He is also working on new coyote studies in Cleveland and Nova Scotia.

Seth Riley works for the National Parks Service as a wildlife ecologist at the Santa Monica Mountains Park. Riley works on coyote-human conflicts and preservation, and has participated in a long-term study of coyotes in the Los Angeles area from 1996 to 2003 and a coyote study for the City of Calabasas, California. He is also an assistant professor at UCLA.

Questions from audience:

>Rob-is there a preliminary outline of the study?

>Stanley-Kristan has put together schedule for our visit, but that is all we have now; we will be working to prepare something in the coming weeks;

>Larry Crawford-regarding hazing techniques and ways to avoid lethal control, are there any new hazing techniques or something that we may be able to do better?

>Stanley-we are still in learning phase of what is already being done in Broomfield, but this is something we are taking a hard look at;

>Julie, most research on hazing is from rural habitats, not urban; we are looking at whether these techniques can be transferred to the urban interface; in rural habitats, the shooting of coyotes is more common to protect property and livestock;

>Seth-hazing in general is evolving and being reviewed;

>George-is there something that has been apparent in visiting Anthem that stands out as a reason for the conflicts?

>Stanley-There is a lot of open space, and lots of rabbits, water, etc:

>Sarah D.-why is there more concern about rural areas compared to an urban area?

>Julie-there are a lot of different factors, tools, and laws, but both areas have concerns;

>Stanley-urban coyotes are around humans almost continuously, whereas rural coyotes are rarely around humans or have any human interaction; the circumstances are very different;

>Sarah-the population is not struggling for coyotes, in terms of extinction?

>Stanley-No, definitely not.

>Kevin J.-do the consultants foresee any particular changes to policies/ordinances for the City?

>Stanley-we will be looking into this and we have been discussing it, but really do not have our recommendations prepared at this time;

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- >Dick Miller-did the coyote removal at Broomfield County Commons cause them to be more wary of humans; we see them less there now;
- >Julie, it is difficult to say without all of the information, but there are likely to be many more coyotes there than what we are seeing and perhaps the most bold coyotes have been removed;
- >Stanley, in following and tracking coyotes it is difficult to correlate coyote behavior with a specific action like that, coyote groups have different personalities and behavior, some are visible and some are not;
- >George-regarding the 2,000 coyotes estimated to be in Chicago, how do you follow this?
- >Stanley-we have about 400 coyotes collared and we track them and map their territories; many territories are very small and densities are very high, we can estimate territory ranges and then test that against our data from the collars; 2000 is very conservative and we are only counting adult coyotes;
- >Patrick, is there a habitat preference in these urban areas?
- >Stanley, yes, they have very strong habitat selection and they use every bit of open space that they can find; they typically choose spaces that avoid humans and they only move through dense human areas when they must; they become more nocturnal in areas of greater human activity and move (and cross roads) at night while minimizing daytime movement;
- >Patrick, so we have established very good corridors for them (in Broomfield)?
- >Stanley, absolutely, this habitat is very good for them; they are very good at finding tiny little patches of refuge in urban landscapes and using them intensively;
- >Annette, have there been coyote bites of humans there (in Chicago)?
- >Stanley, no, we have not been aware of any bites;
- >Kristan- described the schedule for the consultants during their time in Broomfield;
- >Annette-did anything jump out at you from the conversations or meetings today?
- >Seth-not anything specifically that would speak to the bites; there have been bites in southern California, but it is still a very rare and isolated thing; we tracked 110 coyotes in California for 9 years and never saw any aggressive behavior towards humans; there is no reason to think that Broomfield will continue to have more bites than other areas;
- >Dick Miller, so it is more of an aberration than a trend?
- >Seth, believe that coyote bites are always an aberration, but it is good to have management practices in place; more often than not it is human behavior that contributes to coyotes attacks; so it is helpful to try to educate and shape human behavior with coyotes;
- >Kevin J., does the relocation of coyotes work?
- >Stanley, no, they usually attempt to return and rarely survive trying to make it;
- >Seth, studies have shown that relocation really does not work; very high mortality rates and it typically moves the problem to another area;
- >Stanley, if there is good habitat for coyotes, there are most likely coyotes already living in the relocation area, and they are very territorial;
- >Dennis, is there a new phenomenon here in this area, are we taking historically rural coyotes and putting them in an urban setting;
- >Stanley, coyotes are moving into new territories too, areas we have never seen them before, they are moving into our territories too;
- >Bob, what happens when a coyote is killed, will more aggressive coyotes come in;
- >Julie, that could happen, but it is hard to predict; another coyote will move back in, we know that; we do not know what we will get;
- >Stanley, we do have a good idea in Chicago what will happen when a coyote is removed; if people are a problem and human behavior is leading to problems, it is very likely that the next coyote will go down the same path as a previous problem coyote; when there is an extreme conflict, the animal has to be removed but you must also look at what may have caused that behavior and try to correct that too;
- >Dan, regarding Chicago, do you see a higher level of habituation as you move further into the city, into more urbanized areas?
- >Stanley, surprisingly no, we have seen a number of very urban, downtown coyotes that are not habituated and do not have conflicts with humans at all; we also have seen some of the worst, most

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aggressive behavior in very rural areas of Nova Scotia where there is virtually no human presence at all.

>Julie, coyotes really do have different personality traits that stay with them throughout their lives, coyotes from the same litter have drastically different reactions to the same factors, including boldness around humans;

>Stanley, yes, we also wonder "are shy coyotes actually better suited for urban environments"? This is something we are looking at.

>Sherri-do urban coyotes have different hunting habits?

>Stanley-surprisingly no, the diets of coyotes in Chicago is similar to rural coyotes, instead of having garbage, human foods, etc. as we may have thought; they eat largely rodents, rabbits, some plants, etc. They eat more deer in some cases because so many are hit by cars and left available;

>Seth, same in California, mostly natural diet of rodents, etc. we do see some increase in ornamental fruits in developed areas;

>Sherri-how about hunting in packs?

>Stanley, usually they do not hunt in packs in either rural or urban settings, occasionally two coyotes, but very rare to see pack hunting;

>Carrie- are there coyotes at O'Hare airport?

>Stanley- yes, that is very good habitat, but they are shot there and we never see them make it back out of the area;

>Wendy-have you read that the Chicago coyotes are also eating goose eggs?

>Stanley, yes, we found that the coyotes were eating goose eggs and were the biggest factor limiting goose reproduction and were taking over half of the nests, coyotes were the only predator that was successful in taking the nests and eggs; eggs are large and coyotes would actually cache them in holes in the ground and come back for up to a month to find them;

>Wendy, do you think that coyotes are helpful for ground nesting birds, mesopredators?

>Seth, coyotes can impact the ecosystem down the line, assuming that they control other middle predators that take nesting birds; but it is likely that cats are playing the biggest role in that relationship;

>Stanley, they can definitely have an impact in controlling cats and rodents that may otherwise distort the ecosystem; the positive impacts of coyotes are not usually studied or measured;

>Chris P., has there been any study on the impacts of human feeding?

>Julie, there has been some study but the effects are largely variable based on the particular coyote, some become aggressive and bold and some remain fearful of humans nonetheless;

>Seth, there is not a lot of research on this, but most problem coyotes are found to have been fed, intentionally or unintentionally at some point;

>Stanley, without exception in Chicago, we have been able to link problem coyotes to feeding, whether intentional or not;

>Dennis, can they be rabid?

>Julie, yes they can, but it is rare, very rare in the west;

>Stanley, we do not have coyote rabies in this area, but they sometimes get raccoon rabies in the east, which can be a serious problem;

>Julie, there have been some bait drops in different areas to try to inoculate coyotes against rabies;

>Gary J., are geese taken by coyotes often?

>Stanley, yes, in the nesting phase in particular;

>Rob B., any other studies of note?

>Julie, described upcoming Stewart Breck-CSU study;

>Kevin S., described how the consultants were found by staff, they are on the leading edge of coyote research nationally;

>Stanley, Broomfield has lots of company with coyote conflicts across the country

>Kristan- the final report will be prepared this spring and we will be sharing it with both committees and the public. Thank you.

BREAK

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4. Call to Order OSTAC Meeting – 8:00 p.m.
5. Introduction of New City Councilmembers – Bob Gaiser and Mike Shelton

Kristan introduced OSTAC's new City Council representatives and Bob and Mike both provided a brief background about their interests to the committee.

6. Update on the Broomfield Trail Adventure on June 2, 2012

Pete reviewed the plans for the Broomfield Trail Adventure to be held on the Westlake neighborhood and honor former City Council and OSTAC member Ralph Johnson. Staff will be looking for a suitable location to host the event and reviewing the best trail loops in that area. Staff will continue to provide OSTAC's with updates on the event as the planning continues.

7. Discussion of Proposed Joint Meeting with Town of Superior's Open Space and Trails Advisory Committee

The date for this meeting is tentatively set for April 11, and staff will prepare information on this joint meeting for the March OSTAC meeting.

8. Review and Approve Minutes of the December 1, 2011 OSTAC Meeting

George motions for approval; Dennis seconds. Minutes approved.

9. Updates and Reminders

-Egg Farm Property Update, Kristan and Kevin provided a brief update on the possible participation in the Egg Farm purchase. The status of a trail connection to the property is unknown at this time.

-Patrick provided a recap on the Broomfield Open Space Foundation and upcoming events
March 10th Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. at Applebee's
March 31st Backyard Habitat Fair, 9:00 – 12:00
April 14th BCC habitat improvement project
May 12th, BOSF Kids Fishing Derby-Tom Frost Reservoir

-Kevin provided an update of the proposed solar generation facility, near Great Western Reservoir. This would be a large solar panel development on private property near the corner of Route-128 and Indiana Blvd. There would be a 20-year lease of the land for this purpose. The staff is currently considering the proposal and will update OSTAC if this moves forward.
Next OSTAC meeting - February 23rd.

Other as Desired by OSTAC
None.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Minutes Prepared by Pete Dunlaevy

Approved by OSTAC on March 22, 2012.