



Coyotes

Issue

Reports of damage by coyotes have increased across the state. Coyotes can cost livestock producers thousands of dollars each year. Hunting and trapping of coyotes are allowed year-round in Tennessee. There is no limit to the number of takes for coyotes in Tennessee. There are restrictions placed on coyote hunting by the Tennessee Fish and Wildlife Commission (TFWC). Some farmers would like more freedom to take coyotes on their property.

Background

Coyotes have been in Tennessee since as early as the 1960's. The typically nocturnal coyotes are very adaptable to their surroundings. Coyote numbers have increased across the state with the ample food, habitat, and a lack of a natural predator other than humans. Coyotes can cost farmers thousands of dollars each year in lost livestock.

There is no limit on the number of coyotes farmers can take to protect their livestock but often the efforts can be in vain to lower the total number of coyotes in an area. Female coyotes can breed at a year old and have litters of up to nine pups but typically five to seven. It has been estimated that seventy-five percent of the coyotes need to be taken from an area to see an overall decrease in the population for over a year.

Coyotes can be hunted and trapped all year in Tennessee with no limit. Legal hunting of coyotes and other game species can occur during daylight hours, which is defined as one-half hour before legal sunrise to one-half hour after legal sunset. The exception being that fox and rabbit chasing, furbearing trapping, raccoon, opossum and bullfrog hunting may be done day or night.

It is prohibited by the TFWC to use any predator calls while hunting at night. It is also prohibited to use electronic light amplifying night vision scopes, thermal imaging devices, or similar devices while in the possession of a firearm or archery tackle between sunset and sunrise.

Questions

- 1) Should Farm Bureau work to include coyotes in the list of species that may be hunted both day and night?
- 2) If it were to be allowed for coyotes to be hunted at night, should hunters be allowed to use calls and night sight devices while hunting coyotes?
- 3) Effectively hunting coyotes involves the use of rifles. How should the issue of firing a rifle at night without a line of sight be addressed?

Farm Bureau Policy

WILDLIFE PESTS AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS (partial)

Increasing deer, coyote, wild dog, turkey, beaver, geese, raccoons, wild hogs, sandhill cranes, and river otter populations are resulting in damages and are a costly problem for Tennessee farmers and need to be addressed.

Improve landowner options for problem wildlife

TWRA and federal authorities should expand current acceptable procedures available to individual property owners to control or eliminate wildlife that is causing damage to crops or property and injury or death to livestock.