

My husband and I live outside of Corvallis adjacent to farmland and Oregon State University forestlands. We appreciate the diversity of wildlife that inhabits this continuum of multiuse land around us. It is used both as farmland, growing annual rye grass this year, and the OSU forest as research grounds for the departments of agriculture and forestry. There are deer, fox, bobcat, all manner of smaller animals and coyotes. It is known that coyotes play an important ecological role in healthy ecosystems. They reduce rabbit and rodent populations, clean up animal carcasses and increase biodiversity. We therefore are in support of the ban on coyote killing contests in HB 2728.

We also still own my house in Alsea, in the middle of forestland. It is rented now but we have occasion to stay connected with the Alsea and Lobster Valley communities as well. With regard to more rural agricultural and forest land, we support the ban on coyote killing. We agree with Mike Finley, the former chairman of the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission, and a former hunter, when he called wildlife killing contests "slaughter fests" and "stomach turning examples of wanton waste." Killing contests are a blood sport like dogfighting and cockfighting. Killing coyotes for thrills and prizes, with no respect for their intrinsic or ecological value, is senseless violence and waste." Furthermore, killing contests damage the reputation of responsible hunters by violating fundamental hunting ethics.

Please pass HB 2728. Our respect and care for animals, wild and domestic, is a sign of humanity at its best. I believe that we who do so will prove to be on the right side of history.