

Duane L. Shroufe
Director
Arizona Game & Fish Department
2221 W. Greenway Rd.
Phoenix, AZ 85023

Re: Aerial gunning

Dear Director Shroufe:

I was shocked to learn that the Arizona Game and Fish Department is engaged in aerial gunning of coyotes in several areas of Arizona. I find this practice to be an unethical and unacceptable tool for wildlife management. As a citizen of Arizona, I believe it is inconsistent with the department and commission's duties to manage wildlife in public trust for the benefit of all citizens.

I am especially troubled that the commission and department do not understand that predators are part of a healthy ecosystem. The department and commission seem to look first to lethal control of predators, rather than following accepted ecosystem-wide wildlife management practices.

I understand that the department is attempting to justify its actions, saying that aerial gunning is being implemented to protect antelope fawn recruitment. The truth is, coyote populations will not be affected by this gunning for more than a period of weeks or months. I urge the department to stop using this band-aid approach. Instead, look at the big picture. Antelope numbers are down because of loss of habitat, drought and overgrazing. The department and commission have failed to be advocates for habitat protection, and failed to use resources they have to help set aside critical habitat.

I, and other members of the public, are outraged by aerial gunning. It is just one more example of the department and commission's continued mismanagement of our wildlife. Please stop the gunning now, and develop predator management policies that look at the entire ecosystem and are consistent with current science.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,