



## MAINE CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

*The Maine Chapter of The Wildlife Society (MeTWS), established in 1976, is a non-profit scientific and educational association dedicated to excellence in wildlife stewardship through science and education. The mission of The Wildlife Society is to enhance the ability of wildlife professionals to conserve diversity, sustain productivity, and ensure responsible use of wildlife resources for the benefit of society. The Maine Chapter's membership includes approximately 120 wildlife professionals and other concerned individuals employed by government agencies, academic institutions, private firms, and non-governmental organizations, working to promote sound stewardship of wildlife resources throughout Maine.*

### **Maine Chapter of The Wildlife Society Statement on Coyote Control by Snaring to Enhance Deer Populations in Maine**

(approved by MeTWS membership on February 24, 2003)

Given:

1. That Maine's coyote snaring program was originally created to remove specific problem coyotes from a selected few Deer Wintering Areas (DWA); and
2. That neither specific, measurable objectives nor evaluation procedures have been established to ascertain numerical response of deer populations in specific DWAs; and
3. That the program, as mandated by the legislature, has expanded to include much of northern, western and eastern Maine; and
4. That wide-spread, long-term attempts to control coyotes throughout the United States have consistently been documented to be ineffective and costly; and
5. That social behavior, dispersal patterns, and compensatory responses by coyote populations make it extremely difficult and costly to achieve even short-term effectiveness at increasing survival of adult deer over significant areas, and that dispersal of deer from wintering areas likely exposes spring-born fawns to unaltered levels of coyote predation; and

6. That existing information on the take of non-target species by snares, although sparse and insufficient, suggests that incidental take of wildlife, including threatened and endangered species, does occur; and
7. That the use of snares that kill more efficiently, although more humane in killing coyotes, preempts the opportunity to release surviving non-target species, as does the authorized extended time to tend traps; and
8. That the overarching issue for increasing survival of deer in northern, western and eastern Maine Wildlife Management Districts (WMD) is related more to improving the extent and quality of DWAs.

The Maine Chapter of The Wildlife Society resolves:

- A. That all predator control should be focused at problem sites, where clear objectives are established, monitoring is an integrated component, and proper evaluation procedures are in place;
- B. That the Chapter does not support as sound wildlife management the state's coyote control program, as now operated, because the program has not demonstrated effectiveness in attaining deer population objectives at the WMD scale, and because evaluation procedures have not been designed and implemented to ascertain the effects of coyote removal on deer depredation and over-winter survival of deer in and around DWAs where coyote removal occurs;
- C. That the Chapter does not support as sound wildlife management DIFW's program to use snares to remove coyotes from DWAs, as operated through 2002, because the risk of taking non-target wildlife, especially lynx and bald eagles, has not been adequately evaluated;
- D. That state expenditures associated with Maine's coyote control program, as stated above, have not been demonstrated to be cost effective and thus are inappropriate for the DIFW to continue;
- E. That the most effective way to increase deer survival in areas where deer populations are below objective levels may be to increase quantity, extent, and quality of DWAs.