

2011 HOUSE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

HB 1454

2011 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

House Energy and Natural Resources Committee Pioneer Room, State Capitol

HB 1454
2/4/2011
14061

☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



Minutes:

Rep. Porter: We will open the hearing on HB 1454

Rep. Damschen: This bill is not something that I threw out there. The Wildlife Service is under the United States Department of Agriculture and in North Dakota I think it is funded about 2-1 by the Feds. I heard that this program is running out of money. There seems to be some disagreements on that. Some people out there have a big problem with the beavers and the beaver dams. The only way to get rid of beaver dams is to get rid of the beavers.

The other issue is coyotes. The funding seems to run out during calving season. This is an issue. The Wildlife Service is an excellent service and we do need them but I thought we could do this ourselves.

Rep. Porter: Are there any questions for Rep. Damschen? What is response from the Wildlife Service when they get phone calls stating those problems that could end up costing lots of money if they aren't dealt with?

Rep. Damschen: Our water resource district has had good luck. Timeliness of the service has been good.

Rep. Porter: The other side of the bill is the coyote side. There are many concerns across the state on the increased numbers of the coyotes. How effective are they in dealing with phone calls regarding the coyotes?

Rep. Damschen: I have not had any experience with the Wildlife Service in dealing with coyotes.

Rep. Porter: Is there any other support for HB 1454? Is there any opposition for HB 1454?

Roger Rostvet Deputy Director the North Dakota Game and Fish Department. The North Dakota Game and Fish Department stands in opposition of the bill 1454. (see attachment 1) I also handed out a booklet of the History of Bounties in North Dakota. (see attachment 2)

Rep. Porter: Are there any questions for Mr. Rostvet?

Rep. Kelsch: What would you say contributes to the increase of coyotes?

Roger Rostvet: There a number of reasons, coyotes right now are at a all time high, things that contribute are there is lots of prairie population out there. Mange is on the downswing, poisons that

were allowed in the 50's and 60's are no longer allowed. Fur prices are low. The number of hunters is at a all time low because of the snow.

Rep. DeKrey: What about the beaver part of the bill?

Roger Rostvet: This part of the law addresses using spotlights but there is another section in the law that deal with fur bearing animals which beavers are, so we have looked at allowing this already. I asked one of our enforcement officers if somebody called up with a beaver problem could they use the light on them. They said they would not be convicted for doing that.

Rep.Porter: By leaving that portion of the bill in would we be cleaning up the current policies of the Game and Fish?

Roger Rostvet: Yes that would clear up any of those questions.

Rep. Porter: Mr. Rostvet and Mr. McEnroe testimony go a little bit further, they say a land owner, agent, or person from the Wildlife Service can shot beaver at night and are not restricted to the cavalier of weapon can shot them in the water.

Roger Rostvet: That is basically our interpretation with the other section of the law. When you look at the 2 laws combined. This would allow anybody anywhere to do it. It would go beyond depredation.

Rep. Anderson: Are you going to age those coyotes hanging on my shed?

Roger Rostvet: We are already getting calls on how to store the coyotes so that they can turn them in.

Rep. Damschen: What would be an effective way to control the coyotes? What is the solution for the financial problem?

Roger Rostvet: The bounties are an effective way. The problems of the coyotes are selective because we have more coyotes in your area doesn't mean that world is going to heck. The Wildlife Service does a good job of selectively taking out animals from areas where the problems are at. Sloving the finical problems is something that we are struggling with. Our Department makes a contribution to the program. The state through general funds contributes through the Agriculture Department by over \$200,000 to this program. Those contributions are made to the U.S.D.A. Wildlife Services Program.

Rep.Hunskor: Chasing the wildlife with a vehicle is wrong, but the snow is deep the coyotes are out there prevention is better than cure. Is there any thought that use of snowmobile could be helpful?

Roger Rostvet: Is this body willing to up it up to snowmobiles? I don't know what the public think on that. I know that the folks that we deal with give us lots of complaints from landowners saying fences are being cut things like that. We can trace those that do damage from the landowners because the damage is to the landowner and some just don't agree with it.

Rep.Keiser: You made the statement that the U.S. Wildlife Service does a good job. We have funding in that program which may not be available which adds to the problem. If Game and Fish is managing the program in the state and don't like bounty hunting and we meet every two years. Are we going to come back in two years and say we have a major problem? What should we do?

Roger Rostvet: I think the short falls have been ongoing in this program. We put money into a program that is worthwhile if managed properly it does get the job done. The shortfalls are our control. Legislatively there has been an emergency commissioned into this program for a number of bienniums

Rep. Keiser: It is not a secret that the Federal Government is close to bankruptcy they are going to cut programs. The dollars that were available through U.S. Wildlife may very well not be there. What is the plan?

Roger Rostvet: I don't think there is a plan.

Rep. Porter: At this point when we are a million dollars into the program. If the Feds are cutting back or if the program can't meet the needs, at what point do we say "that is enough?"

Roger Rostvet: when it becomes cheaper for the state to run it. Other states have done that but I think it comes back to Rep. Keiser's suggestion what if the state would take it over? South Dakota did take it over every year for a lot of money. That has dried up so right now the state of South Dakota other than the aerial hunting part of it is funding the program themselves. They have done that through county assessments on livestock and sheep. That covers part of the shortfall and Game and Fish money also some general taxpayer money has been used.

Rep. Anderson: What is the fee for a nonresident hunting coyotes? How many residents hunt in the state? If you would get rid of the license fee for those guys it may be easier for them to come to our state.

Roger Rostvet: From the residents standpoint the furbearer license is free. The reduction which comes from the combination license would be the same for a hunting license without the furbearer license so it is basically free.

Rep. Hunsakor: There is a real program if the Wildlife Service doesn't have any money to work with it, it will be left to the public to do whatever they can do to take care of it.

Roger Rostvet: There are several different things going on in appropriations right now to address the shortfall, we are also looking at taking more money from our general fund for the next biennium and putting it into the Wildlife Service Program along with taking funds from the State Water Commission and a few other ones.

Rep Porter: Is there any further opposition to HB 1454?

Glenn Baltrusch: I was born and raised in North Dakota. I stand before you today in opposition of HB 1454 as written as well as supported if properly amended. (see attachment 3)

Rep. Porter: Is there further testimony in opposition?

Tom Wheeler: I am from Ray North Dakota. I am opposed to the coyote bounty portion of the bill. The bounty is not the way to go. If you offer a bounty you will have lots of teenagers out there on snowmobiles even if it is against the law to chase them down. I do think something needs to be done.

Rep. Porter: If we were to restrict it so it would be by special permit and written permission by the landowner would that be enough of a restriction so that it would be confined to those areas where the landowner knows they are out there?

Tom Wheeler: I think that would help the situation. There are some hunters that are opposed to any hunting, but when the coyotes start taking their livestock then they call the in Federal people to come and help them to get rid of them.

Rep. Porter: Are there any questions? Is there further opposition?

Leroy Volk: I have a son that does a lot of hunting. The problem is that many times he can't hunt because he has have trouble getting in to hunt. The Federal Land is also a problem there are packs of coyotes and we can't hunt them because it is against the law. If we are going to do it with the private owners we have to do something with the Federal land along the river that is owned by the Corp.

Rep. Porter: Are there any questions? Is there any opposition?

Foster Ray Hager: I represent Cass County Wildlife and we are opposed to section 4, 5, 6. we feel that research has proven that the bounty system doesn't work.

Rep. Porter: Is there further testimony? Is there any other opposition?

Mike McEnroe: I represent the North Dakota Wildlife Society. You have my handout so I would answer any questions you may have. (see attachment 4.)

Rep. Porter: Are there any Questions? Is there any further opposition?

Rep. Keiser: What is the solution to this problem?

Mike McEnroe: I think we have 2 problems. We have about 2,300 coyotes a year that the Wildlife Service takes. The Wildlife Service without discussing their budget is very effective in what they do. I don't have a solution but I think we are dealing with 2 problems.

Rep. DeKrey: You used to be a Fed. How do we get to hunt in that land?

Mike McEnroe: There is some Federal land that is closed to access and hunting but a lot of that is open to wildlife hunting but if the roads aren't plowed it is tuff to get into there you can't take a snowmobile on it.

Rep. Porter: Is there any other opposition?

Rich Tischeaefer: I farm near Butte. Trapping and fur hunting is a very important part of my life and my family. I am here before you to ask that you do a do not pass on HB 1454. (see attachment 5) North American Fur Action had a fur auction is January the top price for the coyotes was \$76.00 and that is just a feeler. The big sales come up in February and then again in May. The Game and Fish Department has enough to do without supervising this program.

Rep. Porter: Are there any questions? Is there any other opposition? We will close the hearing.

Rep. Keiser: I make a motion to strike sections 4,5,6 so we can delete the appropriation and then have time to deliberate the rest of the bill.

Rep. DeKrey: Second

Rep. Porter: Is there any discussion? Voice vote taken motion carried.

2011 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

House Energy and Natural Resources Committee
Pioneer Room, State Capitol

HB 1454
02/10/2011
14374

☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature

Emineth

Minutes:

Rep. Porter: We will open HB 1454

Rep. DeKrey: I move a Do Pass as previously amended

Rep. Keiser: Second.

Rep. Porter: Is there any discussion? Motion Carried

YES 14 NO 0 Absent 1 Carrier: Rep. Clark

Date: 2-4-11
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2011 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 1454

House House Energy and Natural Resources Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken: ☐ Do Pass ☐ Do Not Pass ☐ Amended ☒ Adopt Amendment
☐ Rerefer to Appropriations ☐ Reconsider

Motion Made By Rep Hofstad Seconded By Rep. Kreun

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Porter			Rep. Hanson		
Vice Chairman Damschen			Rep. Hunsakor		
Rep. Brabandt			Rep. Kelsh		
Rep. Clark			Rep. Nelson		
Rep. DeKrey					
Rep. Hofstad					
Rep. Kasper					
Rep. Keiser					
Rep. Kreun					
Rep. Nathe					
Rep. Anderson					

Total (Yes) _____ No _____

Absent _____

Floor Assignment _____

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

*voice vote taken motion carried
to strike sections 4, 5, 6,*

February 11, 2011

Y/K
2/11/11

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL NO. 1454

Page 1, line 1, remove "to provide for a coyote bounty;"

Page 1, line 1, replace the comma with "and"

Page 1, line 2, remove the first comma

Page 1, line 3, remove "; to provide an appropriation; and to provide an effective date"

Page 2, remove lines 10 through 22

Renumber accordingly

Date: 2-10-11
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2011 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 1454

House House Energy and Natural Resources Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number 11.0732-01001 02000

Action Taken: ☒ Do Pass ☐ Do Not Pass ☒ Amended ☐ Adopt Amendment
☐ Rerefer to Appropriations ☐ Reconsider

Motion Made By Rep DeKrey Seconded By Rep Keiser

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Porter	✓		Rep. Hanson	✓	
Vice Chairman Damschen	✓		Rep. Hunsakor	✓	
Rep. Brabandt	✓		Rep. Kelsh	✓	
Rep. Clark	✓		Rep. Nelson	✓	
Rep. DeKrey	✓				
Rep. Hofstad	✓				
Rep. Kasper	✓				
Rep. Keiser	✓				
Rep. Kreun	✓				
Rep. Nathe	✓				
Rep. Anderson	✓				

Total (Yes) 14 No 0

Absent 1

Floor Assignment Rep. Clark

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1454: Energy and Natural Resources Committee (Rep. Porter, Chairman)
recommends **AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS** and when so amended, recommends
DO PASS (14 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1454 was placed
on the Sixth order on the calendar.

Page 1, line 1, remove "to provide for a coyote bounty;"

Page 1, line 1, replace the comma with "and"

Page 1, line 2, remove the first comma

Page 1, line 3, remove "; to provide an appropriation; and to provide an effective date"

Page 2, remove lines 10 through 22

Renumber accordingly

2011 SENATE NATURAL RESOURCES

HB 1454

2011 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Senate Natural Resources Committee
Fort Lincoln Room, State Capitol

HB 1454
March 17, 2011
Job #15622

☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature

Monica Spaulding

Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

Relating to the taking of beaver

Minutes:

Testimony Attached

Chairman Lyson opened the hearing on HB 1454.

Representative Chuck Damschen, District 10, introduced the bill. We have three different groups, The Wildlife Management Services, ND Game and Fish Dept, and The US Fish and Wildlife Service. The US Fish and Wildlife Service eradicates problem beaver and coyote. Their funding runs out about time of the calving season. I was interested in the problem with funding, and I found there is a rift between the Wildlife Services and the Game and Fish Dept. and the ND Ag Dept. over the funding and the management of the funds. ND Game and Fish puts in 1/3 and the federal government puts in roughly 2/3. There is a rift. Instead of putting in a bill to fund the shortfalls, if it's not getting done allow us to do it ourselves. Instead of depending on the Wildlife Services for it and taxpayer money maybe we could just take care of the problem ourselves. As it appears today the coyote bounty was stripped from the bill. The bill now addresses the use of a spotlight to hunt beaver.

Glen Baltrusch, from Harvey, ND proposed amendments that would add beaver back in and add coyote and fox to the bill. See **Attachment #1**.

Rick Tischafer, President of the ND Fur Hunters and Trappers Association, stood in support of HB 1454. See **Attachment #2**. Beaver is now hunted in ND, usually when they become active in the spring. The brain of a beaver is very small; the only target on a beaver is the brain. 1/3 of their small head is the above water. A hunter needs to get the right spot to get the shudder effect so they can harvest the animal. There has to be enough velocity. He explained what type of gun would be needed to humanely and effectively shoot a beaver. Lines 1-12 on the engrossed bill deal with people taking care of their own problems; that is a good thing. If a beaver is doing damage on a person's property, he should be able to take care of it because it is his property that is being harmed. It deals with using artificial light to go out and do that without having consequences. Where the bill specifies the type of firearm, those firearms are is not appropriate for beaver hunting. For

beaver hunting leave off the rest of the bill. The solution is the amendments that have been spelled out. See page 2 and page 3 of Attachment #2.

Senator Uglem: "Any legal firearm" does that mean it would allow using any high powered rifle at night, in the dark? I find that a little concerning.

Rick Tischaef: Yes, my guess on that would be the choice of that rifle would be too much. If I would go out beaver hunting, I would use that smaller 22, 24 caliber type of a firearm because that is all I would really need. A larger firearm is a little overkill but it allows for the person to use that if they so choose.

Senator Uglem: I would assume that would be for coyote hunting also.

Rick Tischaef: That is correct.

Opposition: None

Chairman Lyson closed the hearing on 1454.

2011 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Senate Natural Resources Committee Fort Lincoln Room, State Capitol

HB 1454
March 24, 2011
Job #15932

☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature

Veronica Spaulding

Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

Relating to the taking of beaver

Minutes:

No Attachments

Chairman Lyson opened the discussion on HB 1454.

Senator Triplett: motion for a Do Not Pass

Senator Schneider: Second

Senator Triplett: I can't imagine that the beaver problem is so bad we need to hunt them 24/7.

Randy Kreil, Chief of the Wildlife Division for the Game and Fish Department: Beavers are nocturnal.

Senator Uglem: We have an amendment from Glen Baltrusch which was asking for any legal firearm as well as adding fox and coyotes.

Motion and second were **withdrawn**.

Randy: We haven't seen those amendments. We would have trouble with the "any firearm" language. The bullets can carry very far. The caliber restriction of 22 or less should stay in there.

Senator Uglem: We shouldn't bother with the amendments, just work with the bill as it is.

Senator Triplett: I will renew my motion for a Do Not Pass

Senator Schneider: Second

Senator Hogue: I would speak against the motion. I would still like to pass the bill. Beaver are very destructive. They are nocturnal. We should allow night hunting. The damage they do can even cause lawsuits. This is a reasonable way to eradicate the problem beavers.

Senator Uglem: Beavers are even causing the flooding of our township roads. Usually they are having to bring in a federal trapper to take care of them because they are so hard to get. If someone can do it with a 22 at night they can be taken out. It can help a few people and it is not going to do serious damage to the beaver population.

Roll Call Vote: 2-5-0

The Do Not Pass motion **Failed.**

Senator Uglem: Do Pass motion

Senator Burckhard: Second

Roll Call Vote: 5-2-0

Carrier: Senator Uglem

Date: 3-24-11
Roll Call Vote # 1

2011 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 1454

Senate Natural Resources Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken: ☐ Do Pass ☒ Do Not Pass ☐ Amended ☐ Adopt Amendment
☐ Rerefer to Appropriations ☐ Reconsider

Motion Made By Triplett Seconded By Schneider

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
Chairman Lyson		✓	Senator Schneider	✓	
Vice-Chair Hogue		✓	Senator Triplett	✓	
Senator Burckhard		✓			
Senator Freborg		✓			
Senator Uglem		✓			

Total (Yes) 2 No 5

Absent 0

Floor Assignment _____

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

Renewed motion
motion failed

Date: 3-24-11
Roll Call Vote # 2

2011 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 1454

Senate Natural Resources Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken: ☒ Do Pass ☐ Do Not Pass ☐ Amended ☐ Adopt Amendment
☐ Rerefer to Appropriations ☐ Reconsider

Motion Made By Uglen Seconded By Burckhard

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
Chairman Lyson	✓		Senator Schneider		✓
Vice-Chair Hogue	✓		Senator Triplett		✓
Senator Burckhard	✓				
Senator Freborg	✓				
Senator Uglen	✓				

Total (Yes) 5 No 2

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Uglen

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1454, as engrossed: Natural Resources Committee (Sen. Lyson, Chairman)
recommends **DO PASS** (5 YEAS, 2 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING).
Engrossed HB 1454 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar.

2011 TESTIMONY

HB 1454

Attachment 1

HB 1454
House Energy and Natural Resources Committee
February 4, 2011

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department stands in opposition to HB 1454. This bill was presumably submitted due to the belief that the coyote population in the state is the cause of recent declines in deer numbers. In addition, the fact that USDA Wildlife Services may be unable to provide services for coyote depredation on livestock beginning March, 2011 due to a funding shortfall may also be a factor. However, I will confine my remarks to the effectiveness of coyote bounties.

The discussion of bounties typically arises when discussing livestock depredation or lower numbers of game animals, in this instance deer. There's no doubt that some deer are taken by coyotes, but it's not the primary causative factor of lower deer numbers in North Dakota. The facts are that over the past five years the Department has actively managed for a lower number of deer in many parts of the state. The public felt that there were too many deer in areas and that the number of deer needed to be reduced. An illustration of this is that over the past five years, deer hunters in North Dakota have harvested approximately 300,000 antlerless deer. Conservatively speaking, if half of those had a single fawn over that same time frame, approximately 450,000 deer have been taken off the landscape. In addition we're in the third consecutive hard winter in the state, which undoubtedly causes lower reproduction and winter mortality.

Now, back to the discussion of bounties. It's been shown time and time again that bounties don't reduce predator populations. In order to be effective, the annual surplus of the targeted predator must be harvested over a large geographic area and for an extended period of time. Experts have stated that between 50% and 75% of the population must be removed every year for a long period of time before any effect would be realized.

Over the last 20 years, an average of 7,000 coyote's pelts are sold each year to North Dakota fur buyers. We know that an additional 2,000 coyotes harvested in North Dakota each year are sold at international auctions. So we know at least 9,000 coyotes are harvested and sold in North Dakota each year on average. In addition, USDA Wildlife Services removes on average an additional 2,300 coyotes when working on livestock complaint areas. Our data from fur harvester questionnaires indicates that the total number of coyotes harvested annually ranges from 25,000 to 40,000. Coyotes that would have been killed anyway would likely be those paid for by the bounty in this bill.

In summary, any bounty on coyotes would be ineffective in controlling coyote populations. This bill will not solve the ongoing financial problems within USDA Wildlife Services program which provides coyote control to individual livestock producers. As such, we are opposed to HB 1454.



History of Bounties in North Dakota

NDWF Meeting, March 2010
Stephanie Tucker, NDGFD

Bounties are typically brought up in conversation when discussing wildlife depredation or lower numbers of game animals, such as deer and pheasants. The later reason is the case recently here in North Dakota. So, do coyotes kill deer and pheasants? Absolutely, but (and I can't stress this point enough) just because deer and pheasant numbers are down, and coyote numbers are up, doesn't mean you've gotten the whole story. Therefore, I'd like to take a few minutes to talk about bounties, and what history has taught us about why they are NOT an effective wildlife management tool.

History of bounties

- Nearly every state and province has had a bounty system at one time or another, all eventually discontinued
 - 1896 - Bounty program began (wolves, coyotes, fox, bobcat, magpies, rattlesnakes, etc.)
 - 1943 - \$1.1 million paid, mostly wolves and coyotes
 - 1961 - \$2.2 million paid, mostly coyotes and fox, discontinued the program

As this slide here says, nearly every state and province has had a bounty payment system for predators in place at one time or another. It should also be noted that every state/province eventually discontinued these programs because they were not achieving the goals they were set out to do.

North Dakota was no exception, and a state-sponsored bounty program was enacted in 1896. Over the course of the program, bounties were paid for all kinds of critters, ranging from wolves to magpies. By 1943, \$1.1 million worth of bounty payments had already been made, mostly for wolves and coyotes. That number doubled to \$2.2 million worth of payments by 1961, mostly due to an explosion in the fox population. By then, although wolves were extirpated from the state, it was apparent the bounty system was having no real affect on coyote and fox numbers, so the program was discontinued.

What has >60 years of paying bounties taught us?



- The facts:
 - Bounties do not reduce predator populations
 - Bounties do not increase prey populations
 - Bounties are expensive
 - Reasons why bounties are not an effective wildlife management tool are many and varied

In ND we had a bounty system in place for approximately 65 years, and here are the hard lessons learned. Because bounty systems are affected by so many different factors, ranging from economics to biology, I'm going to start by giving the take-home messages and then I'll dive into these bullet points each a little more.

Reducing predator numbers

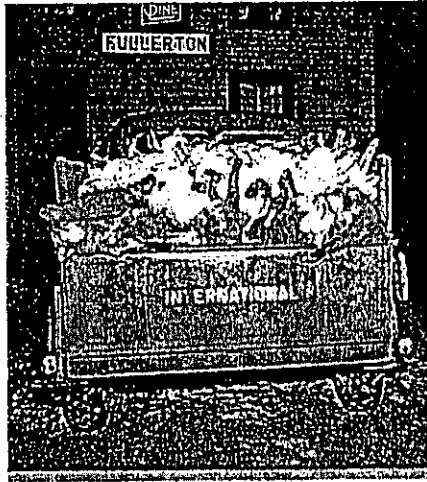
- Must harvest more than the annual surplus over a large geographic area, for an extended period of time
 - Coyotes alter their reproductive strategies
 - Coyotes make behavioral changes, hardest to trap or call are the ones surviving to reproduce
 - Harvesters lose interest before having a substantial effect on population
 - Need to maintain high harvest over extended period of time

What would it cost to get the job done?

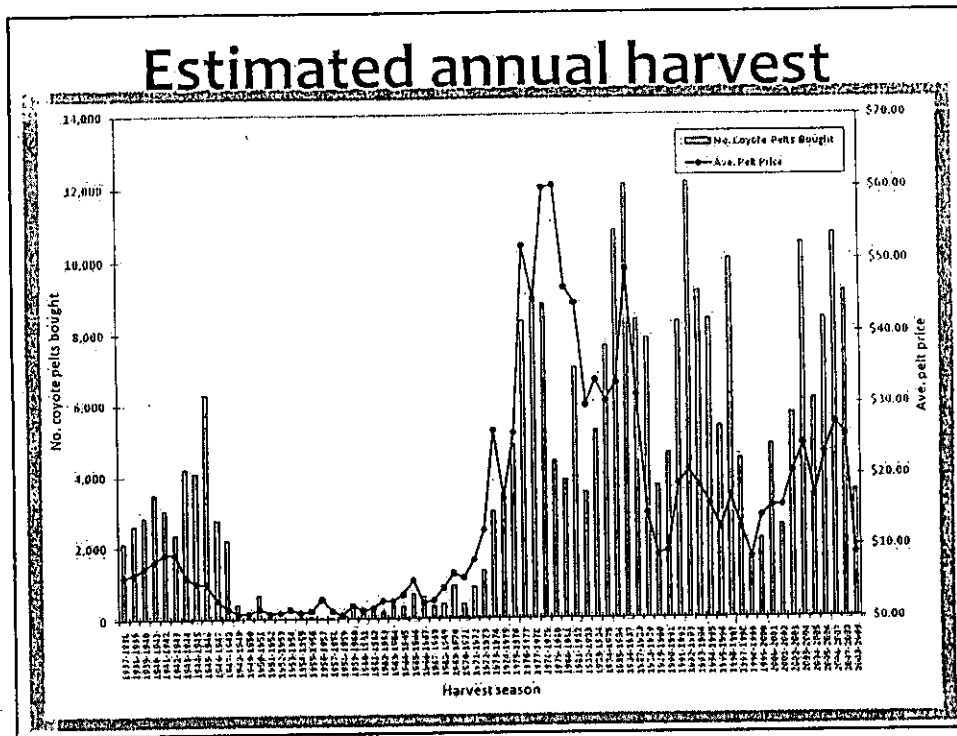
- Must pay for animals that would have been killed anyway AND additional individuals
 - "...majority of predatory species that are bountied annually would have been taken even if no bounty were paid." (Adams, A. 1961)
- Must pay enough to make it worth while to bounty the animal
- Must keep harvesting coyotes even as it gets harder to do
 - Law of diminishing returns

Road kills

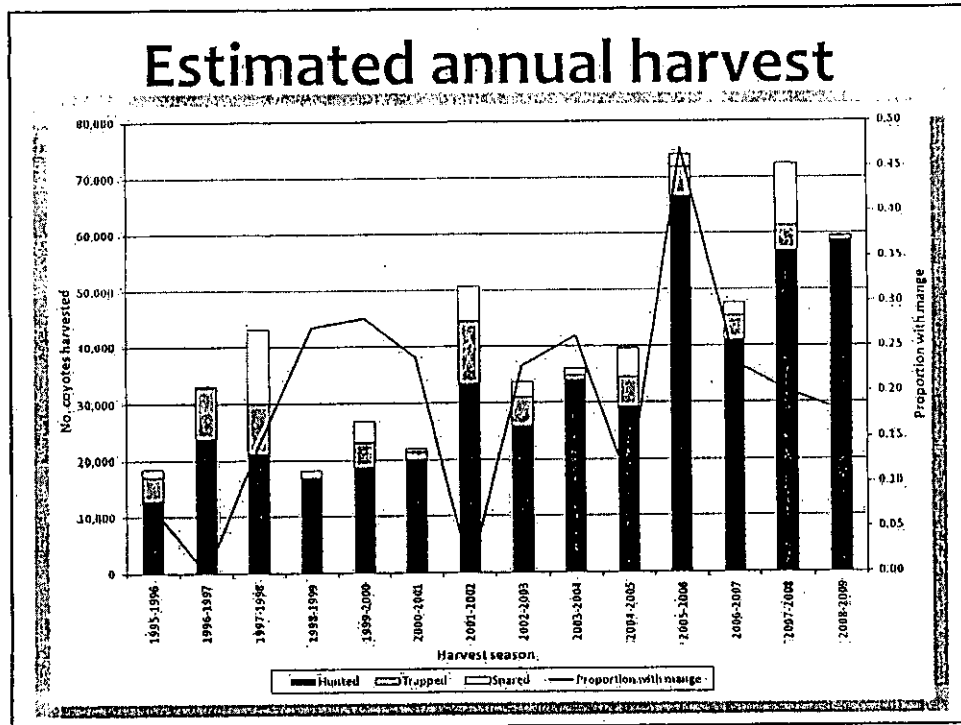
How many coyotes would need to be harvested?



- Allen, S.
 - At least 50% annual take
- Connolly and Longhurst (1975)
 - 75% removal each year, for 50 years



This graph shows the number of coyotes sold to ND fur buyers each year since 1937. In the last 20 years, on average about 7,000 are sold each year. Additionally, we know that about 2,000 coyotes harvested in ND each year are sold directly to the international fur auctions. So, now we can confidently say at least 9,000 coyotes are harvested in ND each year. Keep in mind this doesn't include coyotes that are shot and left lay or kept for personal keepsakes.



In fact, data from our fur harvester questionnaire indicates that the number of coyotes harvested annually averages closer to 40,000 individuals.

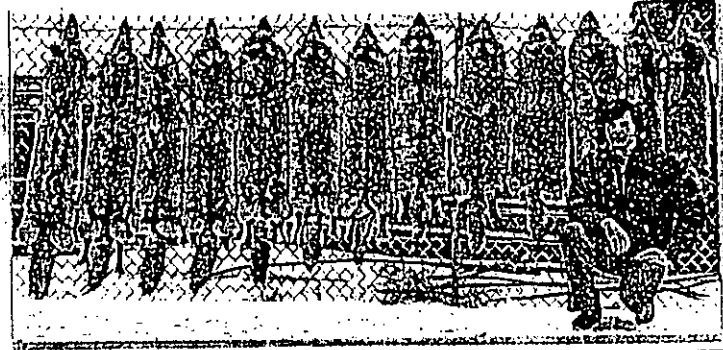
Theoretical cost

$(10,000) + 4(10,000) = 50,000$ coyotes

50% of 50,000 = 25,000 coyotes

$25,000 \times \$25.00 = \$625,000$ —————→

Repeat for 20-30 years



I'm going to run through a quick theoretic estimate of what an effect bounty program would cost. If we use our conservative harvest estimate of around 10,000 coyotes annually, and conservatively assume for every we harvest, we see another 4 coyotes that get away...we end up with a conservative population estimate of 50,000 coyotes in the state (remember, our annual harvest is estimated to be this high, so we likely have many more coyotes than this number suggests). Then, if we need to harvest a minimum of 50% of the population to have an effect...we end up needing to harvest 25,000 coyotes each year. If we pay \$25 per coyote, which is the price one might get for a good coyote in a year, we're looking at the bounty program costing over half a million dollars annually. And keep in mind, this needs to be repeated over the long term...

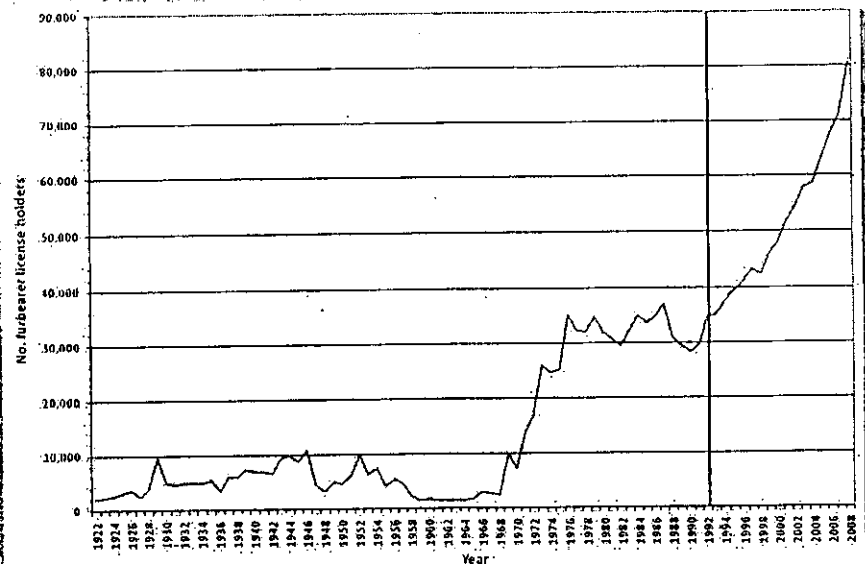
To kill more coyotes, need more people

- Bartel & Brunson (2003)
 - Utah reinstated a bounty program in a few select counties
 - Did not recruit new hunters/trappers
 - Did not increase participation from current hunters/trappers



In early 2000s, Utah reinstated a bounty program in a few select counties which gave researchers another opportunity to look at the effects bounty programs had on harvester recruitment.

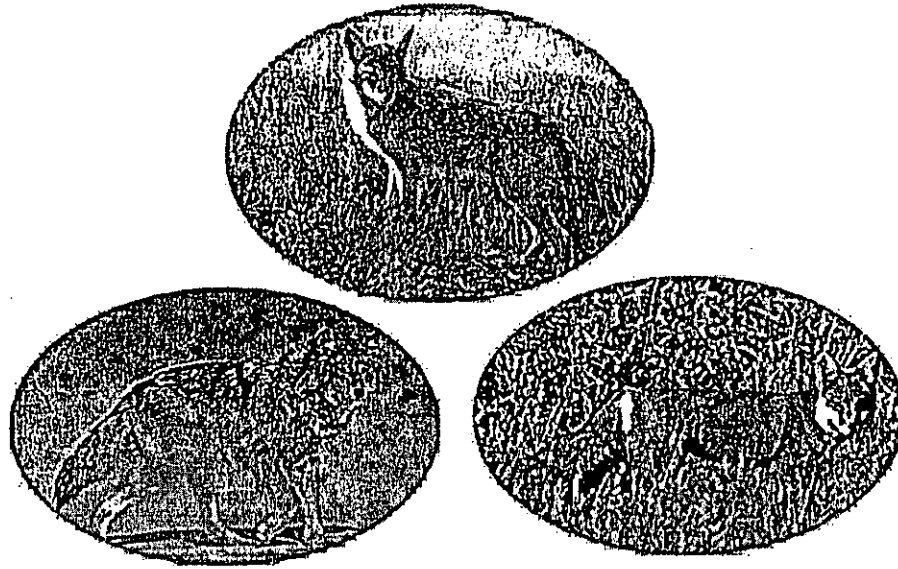
Recruitment of more hunters/trappers



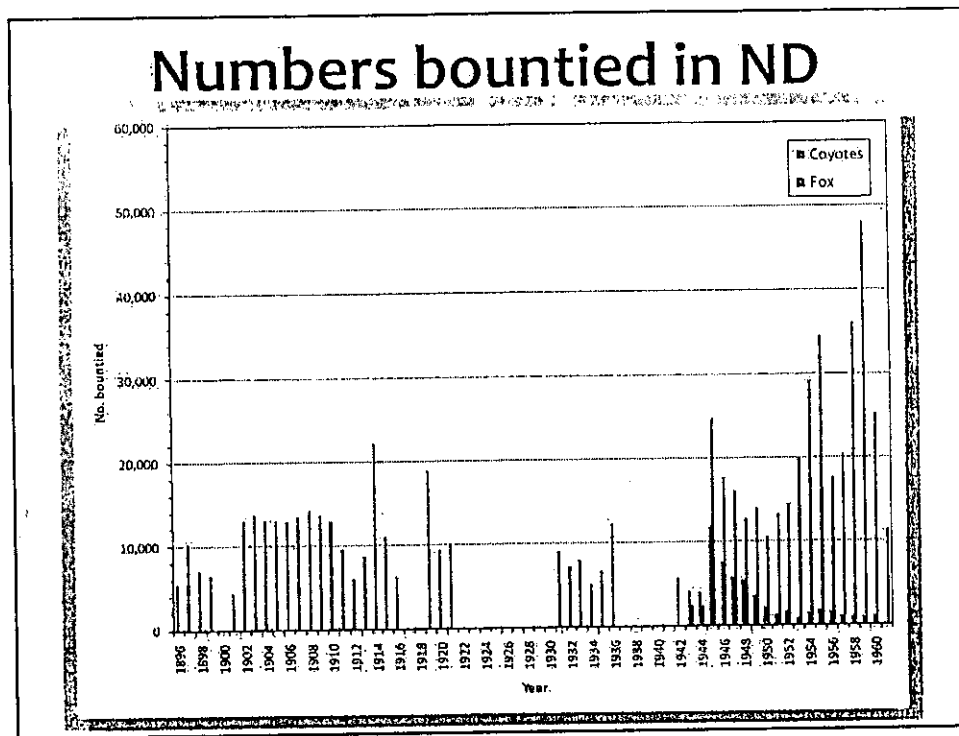
Harvest of coyotes is as liberal as it gets: year-round season, unlimited license sales, cheap license prices, hunting at night, etc.

Currently, there are over 80,000 people legally licensed to take coyotes in the state. Of course, not all of those people pursue coyotes, but could legally shoot one if they saw one. The red line indicates when the NDGFD began selling combination licenses, which includes a furbearer license.

Effects on other canid populations



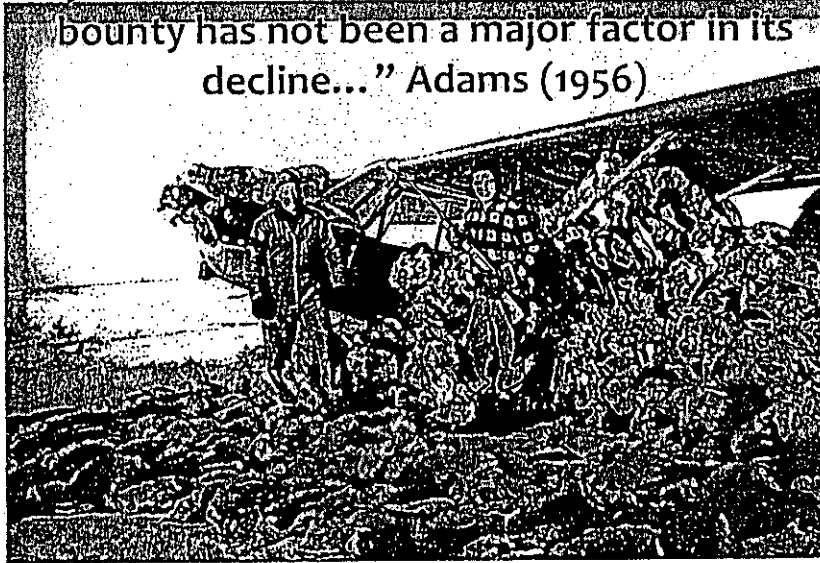
Yet another reason bounty systems have been shown ineffective is related to the interaction between coyotes and other canid species. When wolves were on the landscape, they helped control coyote numbers. When coyotes are on the landscape, they help control fox numbers.



And the effect of this interaction between canid species became obvious in ND during the last couple decades the bounty system was in place. Reduced coyote numbers (which I'll explain in just a minute why they were likely reduced) alleviated pressures on fox, and the fox population exploded. And fox are twice the nest predators that coyotes are, so now people were really getting concerned so they added fox to the bounty list. And each year it seemed the number of fox bountied increased, but still fox thrived.

Please note, that between 1890 and 1960, the number of people living in ND increased 231%! Yet still, we couldn't wipe coyotes from the state.

"Over much of its range in North Dakota the coyote is a rather rare animal... certainly the bounty has not been a major factor in its decline..." Adams (1956)



The previous slide illustrated that coyote numbers appeared to be going down after 40 years of bounty payments, but as you can see here from this picture and the quote from Art Adams in 1956, there were some other factors besides bounties playing a significant role. Aerial hunting was popular during this time. Bounty records from 1952-1961 documented that about 33% of bounty payments went to aerial hunters. Additionally, predator poisons were legal and widely available. And we know that these 2 methods of taking coyotes were major factors in reduced coyote numbers during the 50s.

The facts...and still bounties are popular

- Missouri had their highest level of coyote harvest occur 31 years after began paying bounties, Sampson (1967)
- Coyotes were bountied for 68 years in Nebraska and their numbers continued to go up and down anyway, Hellyer (1949)
- Why do people want bounties?
 - Belief that wildlife needs protection from predators
 - The money goes to people who need it
 - Appears as logical
 - Like to get something for nothing

So nationwide we have documented that bounty systems do not have significant effects on coyote populations...and I've listed 2 examples here...

Problems with bounties



- People find ways to “cheat” the system
 - Crossing state or county lines
 - Misidentification
- Bounty systems kept because of social reasons, not biological
 - Feel like we’re doing something
 - Helping out people in need

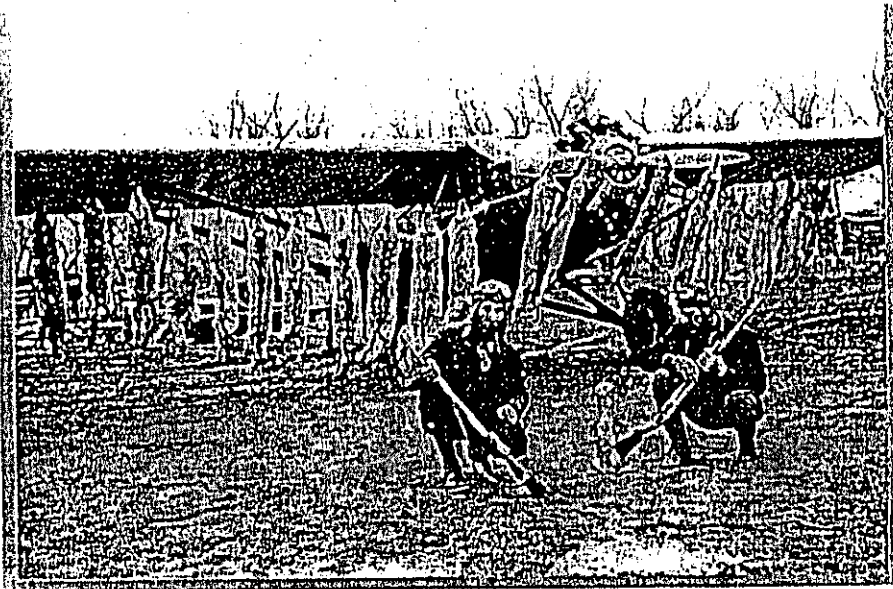
Limited “success”

- Bounties have only ever been successful with predators that are sparse and have low reproductive rates (e.g. wolves and mountain lions)



Most biologist would agree that bounties contributed to the extirpation of wolves and mountain lions over much of the Midwest and eastern United States. And they also would agree that this is probably due to the fact that these 2 species have a couple things in common: low densities and low reproductive rates. Both species maintain large territories within which they exclude other members of the species, which results in low densities. Wolves are pack animals in which only the dominant pair breeds. This results in only 1 litter of pups being born for anywhere from 2-5 adults females in the population. Compare this to coyotes, where pretty much every adult female breeds every year. And mountain also have low reproductive rates, but for different reasons. Adult females typically don't breed until they're at least 2 years of age, and then once they do the only produce a litter 2-4 kittens every 2 years.

Questions



Attachment 3

HOUSE BILL 1454

Before the Energy and Natural Resources Committee

February 4, 2011 at 9:00 A.M.

Submitted by Glen E. Baltrusch

Good morning Chairman Porter and committee members,

My name is Glen Baltrusch. I was born and raised in the great state of North Dakota, and I reside in Harvey, North Dakota, which is in District 14. I stand before you today in opposition of **House Bill 1454** as written; as well as in support of **House Bill 1454** if properly amended. I respectfully request that this committee give serious consideration to amending **House Bill 1454**.

Basically, I support the amendments to **HB 1454** in relation to Section 1., Section 2., and Section 3. as written; but I strongly oppose Section 4., Section 5, and Section 6 of **HB 1454**.

The amendments to Sections 1; 2; and 3; are beneficial to those landowners, townships, and counties where beaver are causing damage to farmland, trees and shelterbelts, and roadways within North Dakota. **HB 1454** aids the trapper and hunter working damage and nuisance control involving beaver as well as to trapping and hunting beaver as a natural resource.

Mr. Chairman, committee members, I believe the sponsors of **HB 1454** have good intentions with this piece of legislation. Unfortunately, I firmly believe **HB 1454** will have unintended consequences and problems relative to landowner's, hunter's, trapper's and the North Dakota Game and Fish Department as written; if not amended. Several of the problems I foresee, in particular to Section 4. and Section 5. are as follows:

- 1.) South Dakota and Montana coyotes will have suddenly assumed residency status in North Dakota, thus fraud becomes an issue;
- 2.) Residents and non-residents willfully violating "NO HUNTING" and / or "NO TRESPASSING" signs causing an undue burden upon ND G&F personnel; and creating bad relations with landowners, thus causing difficulty in gaining access for those hunters and trappers who abide by current law; and

3.) It is an unnecessary waste of a natural resource... all because of the one hundred dollar (\$100) bounty.

Now, would I like to receive \$100 or more bounty for each coyote taken? "Yes", as I would not have to skin, flesh, stretch, and dry the fur when out of season. When coyotes become a threat to, or cause depredation of livestock, or people, then the animal(s) should be dispersed. Otherwise coyotes should be managed in order to help prevent disease among the species and to provide a resource for mankind, such as furbearers and big game as currently provided for by law.

The problem with this bill, in my humble opinion, is the fact that while beaver and coyotes are both beneficial in nature and an occasional nuisance to land and property owners, farmers and / or ranchers; to township and county roadways; Section 4. and Section 5. of **HB 1454** provides for the wanton waste of a natural resource and is very unethical. Therefore, I wish to offer the following amendment(s) to **House Bill 1454** for consideration and adoption:

Page 2, remove lines 10 through 22

Renumber accordingly

Section 6. of **HB 1454** would not be required with adoption of the amendments. Therefore, I request that this committee report a unanimous "**DO PASS**" recommendation on **HB 1454** when adopted with the aforementioned amendments to the full House.

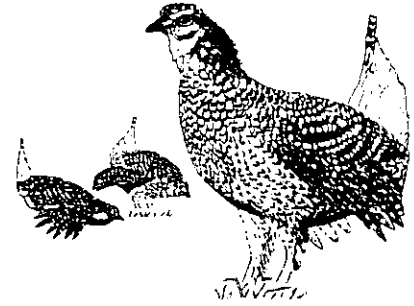
Chairman Porter, committee members, thank-you for your time and consideration in this pertinent matter. If you have any questions, I will try to answer them for you.



North Dakota Chapter

THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 1442 • BISMARCK, ND 58502



**TESTIMONY OF MIKE McENROE
NORTH DAKOTA CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY
ON HB 1454
HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 27, 2011**

Chairman Porter and members of the House Natural Resources Committee:

My name is Mike McEnroe and I represent the North Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society. The Chapter is a professional organization made up of over 320 biologists, land managers, university educators, and law enforcement officers in the wildlife and natural resource field.

The Chapter opposes HB 1454 setting up a limited bounty system for coyotes and allowing the taking of beaver with the use of a red light. Sections 1-3 of the bill relating to the taking of beaver are not needed. Landowners, their agents, or personnel from Wildlife Services already can shoot beaver at night without any restrictions on light size or color.

Sections 4-6 dealing with a limited bounty system are more serious. In literally decades of wildlife management, bounties have been shown to be ineffective. Bounties do not target the problem animals. They will waste money, and will wind up paying bounty on road kills, coyotes from other states, and animals taken during times of the year when they are not causing problems. The bounty system in Section 5 will be waste of sportsmen's dollars in the game and fish fund, and we do not support that expenditure.

Sections 5 and 6 seem to be in contradiction. Section 5 provides for the \$200,000 to be available for the 2011-13 biennium. Section 6 calls for the funds to be available when the Director and Ag Commissioner certify a short fall in Wildlife Services funding. According to reports that could happen in March or sometime this fiscal year. In any case, pouring \$ 200,000 of game and fish fund monies into an ineffective bounty program will not solve the budget problems, real or imagined, at Wildlife Services.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 1454. I will answer any questions the committee may have.

February 1, 2011

House Natural Resources Committee Member,

I am writing to ask that you recommend a **“do not pass”** for **House Bill 1454**. I expect North Dakota Game and Fish Department will talk to the subject of wildlife management, population dynamics, and associated information related to this bill. I do want to share my personal experiences and some information with you concerning this bill

We have to make a clear distinction between the laws that allow removing animals because of predation or damage and the laws allowing harvest. While some of the techniques and equipment used in both situations may be the same, the laws must be different. Sections 1 through 3 cross back and forth between both reasons - it's either one or the other.

Harvest is associated with seasons, techniques, or methods of take consistent with modern wildlife management practices. Seasons are established to protect young of the year; when animal populations allow for a harvestable surplus; and during a time when pelts may be closest to being prime. Techniques and methods of take consider best management practices for trapping; weapon lethality; and fair chase. Harvested animals are used for food, fur, and a variety of by-products.

If an individual decides to harvest a beaver, whether it is for food or fur, it must be associated with a season, a technique, and a method of take in accordance with current applicable law. Proposals in these sections do not compliment technique or method of take in that:

- When beaver are shot and killed, most sink. Recovery during daylight is always challenging, and allowing shooting after dark will serve to complicate recovery. While hunting “afoot”, recovery over water will be diminished and beaver will be wasted too easily.
- Shooting on the water after dark is an unsafe act, regardless of any lighting.
- The eye of a beaver is approximately the same size as the diameter of a pencil eraser. It is mostly pupil and is black in color. The eye of a beaver is a poor reflective surface, regardless of the color of light (filtered or unfiltered) used to reveal its location. The placement of the eye on the beaver's head will only reveal one side or the other, not both at the same time (like raccoon).
- Beaver spend a majority of their time in or under the water (excluding winter and frozen water). A beaver swimming on the surface of the water is a very poor target. The head of an average beaver is the size of a grapefruit. When swimming in open water, approximately one third of the head is visible above the surface and two thirds below the surface, and it's a moving target.

The laws pertaining to removing animals because of predation or damage need to be liberal, so as to allow a timely and cost effective resolution to the specific problem. The need for removal may occur at anytime during the year. Techniques and methods of take are whatever gets the job done, and the animals are not used. If a beaver needs to be killed at night for causing damage, it doesn't make any difference what color light is used, how many volts the battery has, or what type of firearm is used.

Regarding Section 4 and 5 – Coyotes are a managed resource that is a part of North Dakota's landscape. We cannot be the sole mediators in Nature's way of life just because coyotes may be successful predators, and we cannot indiscriminately go about killing them.

Establishing a bounty system on coyote (or any species) in North Dakota is contrary to the principles of modern wildlife management. Science and research has repeatedly proven that bounties do not influence the overall population of the species. Paying groups or individuals in a program like this disrespects the species, and is contrary to regulated, ethical, and responsible harvest.

Incentive programs such as these encourage illegal and criminal behavior either in the taking of the species or carcass trafficking from surrounding states. North Dakota Game and Fish staff has enough to do without having to manage this (proposed) program and the law enforcement issues that will result. There is no provision for that amount of overhead. A bounty for coyote will only serve to make a mockery of wildlife management in North Dakota and is inappropriate.

I lived in Wisconsin during a time in which the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources managed a "subsidy" (bounty) program for beaver. Fisheries biologists deemed beaver populations to be high in northern Wisconsin and trapping during the regulated harvest season was not achieving their goals. Northern Wisconsin is home to many cold water trout streams, and beaver activity (i.e. dams and ponds) slowed the water, causing it to warm slightly and make poor cold water trout habitat.

From 1984 to 1987, the Department managed the first of two beaver subsidy programs. During this time, trappers were paid \$25 for a beaver's tail that was removed from the northern zone of the state. Beaver tails traveled from all over Wisconsin, Minnesota, and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan to participate in this program. It was a joke, everyone knew it, and it cost the State of Wisconsin a great deal of money. A report written by the Department of Natural Resources in 1987 "concluded that beaver abundance either remained stable or increased in most areas since the subsidy program began, and the subsidy may be slowing the expansion of populations but not reducing them."

While not learning that this program was a waste of money, the Department initiated another subsidy program in 1989 and lasting until 1995. The "eligible" area was restricted to the northeast corner of the state. During this period, \$412,000.00 was paid out for beaver tails (amounts varied from year to year – the minimum was \$7.50 and the maximum was \$10.00 per tail). Information received from John Olson, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Furbearer Biologist: "In 1995, we recommended discontinuing the subsidy program due to poor use of funds. We acknowledge that in combination with other larger factors (pelt price, contract trappers, USDA-Wildlife Services, relaxed rules on landowner control, etc.), subsidies might have helped, but as a stand alone it did little to nothing. We did acknowledge that beaver grew wheels when the subsidy was in place, moving from other parts of the state into subsidy locales." Fortunately, the program was terminated in 1995 – unfortunately, a large amount of taxpayer dollars were spent for nothing.

Regarding coyotes – it is a known management fact that intensive control methods (which include bounty programs for coyotes) in western states have only resulted in the remaining coyotes filling the best habitats. This results in increased reproductive rates and survival of pups, thereby keeping the overall population about the same or slightly higher.

My personal experience with the Wisconsin subsidy program is that money provided in this fashion makes people do bad things. Dead beaver traveled as fast as the vehicle carrying them, and they came out of the woodwork. The program was recognized as a joke in the Great Lakes Region and it did not achieve the goal of reducing beaver populations. House Bill 1454 may "feel good" to some folks, but initiating a bounty program for coyote in North Dakota will have the same results.

The provisions of House Bill 1454 contradict the principles and goals of modern wildlife management; will lead to illegal and criminal behavior; will not reduce the coyote population; and will be a waste of money. I am asking that you recommend a "**do not pass**" for **House Bill 1454**, and encourage your colleagues to do the same. Thank you for your service and the opportunity to share this information.

/S/

Rick Tischaefter

POB 334

Butte, North Dakota 58723 (626-7150)

#1

ENGROSSED HOUSE BILL 1454
Before the Senate Natural Resources Committee
March 17, 2011 at 10:15 A.M.
Submitted by Glen E. Baltrusch

Good morning Chairman Lyson and committee members,

My name is Glen Baltrusch. I was born and raised in the great state of North Dakota, and I reside in Harvey, North Dakota, which is in District 14. While I stand before you in support of **Engrossed House Bill 1454**, I respectfully request that this committee give serious consideration to amending **Engrossed House Bill 1454** as currently written, making substantial improvements in managing the increasing populations of beaver and coyotes within the State of North Dakota.

As you are aware, this is one of two bills that have been introduced within the **Sixty-second Legislative Assembly** for the establishment of a coyote bounty that was to be paid out of the budget of North Dakota Game and Fish Department funds appropriated for Wildlife Services. While the intentions may have been well meant in **Senate Bill 2224** and **House Bill 1454**, the language would have allowed for substantial fraud and was stripped from **House Bill 1454** while **Senate Bill 2224** was defeated. At this time you have the ability to assist this **Legislative Assembly** to amend the current law so as to create a meaningful bill that may fulfill the intent of **Senate Bill 2224** and of **House Bill 1454**. Therefore I request your serious consideration of the following amendments:

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO ENGROSSED HOUSE BILL NO. 1454

Page 1, line 2, after "beaver" immediately insert ". coyote, or fox"

Page 1, line 14, after "raccoon" remove "or" and insert immediately thereafter ". beaver, coyote, or fox"

Page 1, line 15, remove "or beaver"

Page 1, line 16, after the period insert "A licensed hunter may use an artificial light with a power source of not more than six volts while hunting beaver, coyote, or fox during the open season on the animal."

Page 1, line 19, after "raccoon" remove "and", after "beaver" insert immediately thereafter ", coyote, or fox", after "with" insert "artificial light or"

Page 1, line 21, after "raccoon" remove "or beaver"

Page 2, line 1, after the period insert "Any legal firearm may be used in the killing, shooting, pursuing, taking, or in attempting to take beaver, coyote, or fox."

Page 2, line 8, after "use" insert "an artificial light or", after "raccoon" remove "or"

Page 2, line 9, after "beaver" insert immediately thereafter ", coyote, or fox"

Renumber accordingly.

Chairman Lyson and committee members, adoption of the aforementioned amendments to **Engrossed House Bill No. 1454** and when enacted by the **Sixty-second Legislative Assembly** retains existing penalties of law, allowing the North Dakota Game and Fish Department to continue their pursuit of those individuals that violate our game and fish laws. I believe this is a solution to the problems that were being addressed originally in **Senate Bill No. 2224** and **House Bill No. 1454**, coyote depredation, which was number one; and beaver damage to property. The aforementioned amendments allow for ethical and humane taking and retrieval of the furbearers and provide for ethical management as well.

As you may have noticed, some of the amendments have separated beaver from raccoon. The target area of a beaver in water is substantially smaller than a raccoon on land or treed; it is a target of approximately four to five inches for the beaver or less, in which one must make a humane kill and still be able to retrieve the animal from the water. This is also the reason a person must be able to use any legal firearm. To strictly mandate the use of a twenty-two caliber rim-fire cartridge or a four-ten gauge shotgun cartridge is a mandate for waste or causing unnecessary injury to the animal.

In addition, the proposed amendments have included fox and coyote as both of these animals are predators and can cause significant damage and depredation of the producers' livestock and wildlife during hard winters. These amendments will allow for the taking of the animals at night with artificial light, which should benefit the livestock producer, as well as manage the population numbers of fox and coyote.

Chairman Lyson and committee members, I respectfully request your serious consideration of adoption of the aforementioned amendments to **Engrossed House Bill No. 1454**. Thank-you for your time and consideration in this pertinent matter. If you have any questions, I will try to answer them for you.

#2 page 1



North Dakota Fur Hunters And Trappers Association

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March 13, 2011

Senator Stanley W. Lyson
Chairman, Senate Natural Resources Committee

I am writing to you about the engrossed version of House Bill 1454. On behalf of the families and members of the North Dakota Fur Hunters and Trappers Association, I am asking that you and the members of the Senate Natural Resources Committee consider amending this legislation and recommend a "do pass" on a second engrossment of HB 1454.

The North Dakota Fur Hunters and Trappers Association is a professional organization comprised of families and individuals from throughout the State of North Dakota. We are an organization devoted to educating the public on the consumptive use of our natural resources as a necessary and proper tool of wildlife management; executing an educational program relative to the regulated harvest of our natural resources; and promote the sensible, sound scientific practices and administrative procedures relating to the management of our furbearing species in North Dakota.

I have included information that will aid you in making an informed decision with House Bill 1454. We have to be careful to distinguish the differences between removing specific animals to eliminate predation or damage and those harvested in the course of modern wildlife management practices. The rules, techniques, and equipment are different for each, and rightly so. What may be useful to resolve damage or predation may not be useful for harvest. As currently written, beaver hunting in this fashion is inhumane, impractical, and unwarranted. We recommend either leaving the "resolving damage" text in the legislation and remove any further reference to beaver (attached as Option A), or let's look at a larger picture and make the legislation practical and meaningful for North Dakota (attached as Option B).

I encourage you to work with your fellow legislators to amend this legislation as requested and recommend a "do pass" for House Bill 1454.

Respectfully,

Rick Tischaefner
President

#2 page 2

**North Dakota Fur Hunters and Trappers Association
Amendments to House Bill 1454 (First Engrossment)**

Information supporting our request to amend –

Option A – Lines 1 through 12 remain in place. Beginning with line 13, remove all references to beaver and the word “beaver” from the remaining text and leave those remaining Century Code sections as written.

The legislative text is addressing two very different reasons for killing beaver at night and how that is to occur. Lines 1 through 12 address beaver causing damage, and allows the property owner to kill beaver doing damage with the aid of an artificial light. There is no requirement to use a filtered light for that reason, and rightly so. Leave this text in the legislation.

All references to beaver after line 12 relate to beaver hunting (for food or fur). There is no reason why this activity should occur under the circumstances provided in this legislation because:

- 1) Hunting “afoot” for beaver is impractical. Beaver spend a majority of their time in the water, and it is over the water that they are hunted. An individual needs to be on the water and near the beaver to recover a harvested animal (line 14);
- 2) Colored or filtered light is short range light – there is very little illumination benefit with beaver in water. A hunter must be relatively close to harvest and recover a beaver under these circumstances (line 14 - 15);
- 3) Neither the bullet nor gauge is appropriate for harvesting beaver (line 21 – 23 on page 1 and line 1 on page 2).

Or,

Option B – underlined words would be additions to the text.

Page #1, Line 2: “of section 20.1-05-04 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the taking of beaver, fox or coyote.”

Page #1, Line 14: “afoot or boat for raccoon, beaver, fox or coyote during the open season on the animal. A red or amber filter must be ...”

Page #1, Line 15: “placed on any artificial light used in the hunting of raccoon, beaver, fox or coyote, except when taking a ...”

Page #1, Line 19: “20.1-01-09. Types of guns lawfully usable in taking raccoon, beaver, fox or coyote with flashlight ...”

Page #1, Line 21 through Line 23: “Any legal firearm may be used in the killing, shooting, pursuing, taking, or attempting to take raccoon, beaver, fox or coyote.”

#2 page 3

Page #2, Line 1 and 2: deleted by the aforementioned text of Lines 21 through 23 on page #1

Page #2, Line 8 and 9: "may be used with a power source of not over six volts to take raccoon, beaver, fox or coyote."

There are two areas that require attention within this legislation – the engrossed bill that allows hunting beaver at night with a filtered light and providing a hunting opportunity for fox or coyote. The sponsors of Senate Bill 2224 and House Bill 1454 raised the issues of beavers and coyotes causing damage or depredation due to increased population levels; and reduced or non-existent funding for USDA-Wildlife Services. The first engrossment of House Bill 1454 provides opportunities for the landowner and the public to become involved with reducing or ultimately resolving conflicts between humans and beavers. Adding fox or coyotes to the legislation can have the same results. North Dakota incurs no additional cost or financial burden by amending this legislation as requested. Allowing a licensed hunter in a regulated manner to assist with these issues makes good common sense, is fiscally responsible, and good for North Dakotans.

As currently written, the engrossed version of HB 1454 provides for night hunting of beaver with a filtered light. This legislation simply adds beaver to the raccoon hunting provisions in the Century Code, but this needs improvement. Beaver hunting at night is unlike hunting raccoon at night, in that: 1) a person may not be productive "afoot", and may require a boat or canoe to not only get within range of a beaver, but to also recover the beaver when taken; and, 2) the choice of firearm should not be restricted to one that fires a .22 caliber long rifle bullet or .410 shotgun shell. While both rounds are suited for humanely killing a raccoon in a tree while using a white light (a well lighted stationary target), they certainly are not suited for humanely and quickly killing a beaver on or near the water with filtered light. This would also apply if an individual was hunting fox or coyote at night. There is no need to restrict the firearm - many more firearm options exist that will quickly and humanely kill the target animal. The species, environment, and circumstances of each hunt are different and the choice of firearm is better left to the hunter.

As mentioned earlier, House Bill 1454 and Senate Bill 2224 raised the subject of coyotes with 3 main points: 1) an overpopulation of coyotes; 2) depredation; and 3) reduced or non-existent funding for USDA-Wildlife Services. Amending the engrossed version of HB 1454, as provided above, includes fox or coyote and allows for a licensed hunter to harvest fox or coyote in a regulated manner.

North Dakota Century Code currently allows harvesting fox or coyote by natural light at night. Good natural light night hunting conditions must include all four of these conditions at the same time: snow on the ground; a full moon period; a clear sky; and temperatures that are humanly tolerable. Having all four at the same time is a rare occasion. This amendment would allow any legal firearm to be used in conjunction with filtered artificial light for hunting fox or coyote at night. Although this hunting technique is currently prohibited in North Dakota, it is common in other parts of the United States.