



Overview

Thousands of animals die every year in wildlife killing contests across the country. During these events, participants compete to kill the greatest number, the largest, the most females, or the youngest of a targeted species for prizes and entertainment. The contests are not monitored by wildlife management agencies, are legal in nearly every state, and often take place on public land.

Legislation

- California ([FGC § 2003](#)) banned the awarding of prizes for killing nongame mammals and furbearers in 2014.
- Vermont ([10 V.S.A. § 4716](#)) and New Mexico ([SB 76](#)) followed with bans on coyote killing contests in 2018 and 2019.
- Colorado ([rule](#)) and Montana have some restrictions on the events.
- Bills and regulations were introduced in Arizona, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, and Wisconsin in 2019.
- Cities and counties in Arizona, New Mexico and Wisconsin passed resolutions condemning killing contests in 2018 and 2019.



KEY POINTS

- Bobcats, cougars, coyotes, foxes, porcupines, prairie dogs, rabbits, raccoons, squirrels, and even wolves [die in killing contests every year](#). Most of the targeted species have few or no protections and can therefore be killed en masse with no agency oversight.
- Carnivores help shape nearly every aspect of an ecosystem from keeping prey populations balanced, to the plants that grow there, to the diseases that break out. ([Smithsonian](#))
- Killing contests [may undermine the public's view of ethical hunting](#). As the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department has stated, the contest events "could possibly jeopardize the future of hunting and affect access to private lands for all hunters."
- There is [no scientific evidence](#) that mass killing of predators serves to protect livestock or serve other wildlife management purposes. Indiscriminate killing may increase animals' populations and create more conflicts by disrupting a species' self-regulating behaviors.

Other Resources

- The [National Coalition to End Wildlife Killing Contests](#)—an alliance of more than 30 state and national wildlife protection organizations—is working state-by-state to prohibit the events.
- More than 70 conservation scientists have signed a statement opposing wildlife killing contests. Read more [here](#).
- For more information, contact Ruth Musgrave at ruth@ncelenviro.org

