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## Nature Saskatchewan feels bounty on coyotes not correct solution

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Nature Saskatchewan believes that the recently-announced bounty on coyotes in Saskatchewan is not the right way to help livestock producers deal with depredation.

Countless studies have proven bounties to be ineffective in stopping problem coyotes from taking livestock according to Lorne Scott, President of Nature Saskatchewan. The focus should be on ridding areas of problem coyotes not a wide-scale program.

“What our producers need is an adequately-funded, aggressive control program in areas where depredation is a problem. The focus should be on eliminating problem animals and not a province-wide bounty.”

Nature Saskatchewan says that many farmers and ranchers view the coyote as an ally, helping to control rodent populations, including gophers (ground squirrels). They also say the coyote is a native species and a key predator in prairie ecosystems and it makes little sense to promote poison campaigns to reduce ground squirrel numbers and at the same time, launch a province-wide bounty program to eliminate a main predator of ground squirrels.

Research has proven repeatedly that coyote bounties simply weed out the weak and less wary individuals, leaving the survivors to increase the size of their litters and thereby make up for any short-term or local dip in their numbers. As well, if coyotes are hunted out of a local area, their counterparts from adjacent regions rapidly move in to fill the void as outlined by Nature Saskatchewan.

“Tax dollars would be far better spent by providing resources directly to assist producers where coyote depredation on domestic livestock is a problem,” Scott concluded.