



PRESS RELEASE  
June 22, 2023

## Legislature Passes Bill to Ban Wildlife Killing Contests

*New York State becomes the 9<sup>th</sup> state to ban wildlife killing contests*

**For more information:**

Peter Bauer, Executive Director: Cell 518.796.0112  
Claudia Braymer, Deputy Director: Cell 703.937.7163

On June 21, 2023, the NYS Assembly passed legislation carried by Deborah Glick, Chair of the Committee on Environmental Conservation to ban wildlife killing contests in New York State. This bill was passed by the State Senate in early June, carried by Senator Timothy Kennedy. When the legislation is signed into law by Governor Kathy Hochul New York State will become the ninth state to ban wildlife killing contests.

This bill amends the Environmental Conservation Law to make it unlawful for any person to organize, sponsor, conduct, promote or participate in any contest, competition, tournament or derby with the objective of taking or hunting wildlife for prizes or other inducement, or for entertainment. Contests for taking or hunting white-tailed deer, turkey and bear are exempted, which are already regulated by season and bag limits, as are special dog training areas or field trials or similar canine performance events.

According to the NYS Humane Society, there are currently at least 29 annual wildlife killing contests in New York State, of which 17 are coyote killing contests and the remainder are contests to kill foxes, squirrels, woodchucks, raccoons, and crows. "Wildlife killing contests are contrary to sound principles of wildlife management and to fundamental principles of hunting ethics for a 'fair chase' because they promote killing the largest number of target animals in the shortest amount time. They also promote indiscriminate killing of wildlife, where many animals are killed for a prize. To do this, participants often use unethical means such as fake distress calls, lures, and baits. In addition, the carcasses of the killed animals are often treated as trash and disposed of in dumpsters," said Peter Bauer, Executive Director of Protect the Adirondacks.

Protect the Adirondacks!  
PO Box 48, North Creek, NY 12853 (518) 251-2700  
[info@protectadks.org](mailto:info@protectadks.org) [www.protectadks.org](http://www.protectadks.org)  
Like Us on Facebook Follow Us on Twitter @ProtectAdkPark

Eight other states have successfully moved to ban wildlife or coyote hunting contests, including Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, Washington, Vermont, Massachusetts, and Maryland. The common thread through all these state laws is prohibiting contests that encourage killing of fur bearers or specific animals in organized contests for prizes or entertainment. Legislation is also pending in other states. This legislation was supported by Protect the Adirondacks, the Adirondack Council, The Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter, Project Coyote, the Rewilding Network, and the Humane Society of New York State.

“We congratulate and thank Chairwoman Deborah Glick and Senator Timothy Kennedy, who carried this bill for years, fighting an uphill battle to protect New York’s wildlife. This bill is not anti-hunting, but it is anti-wanton killing of wildlife,” said Claudia Braymer, Deputy Director of Protect the Adirondacks.

Coyote killing contests are particularly destructive because of the similarities between large Eastern coyotes and wolves, both of which are present in New York State. Wolves are listed as an endangered species under both federal and New York State law and the killing of wolves is prohibited under both federal and State law. There have been several documented instances in New York of hunters killing what they thought was a large coyote, but which DNA analysis proved to be a gray wolf. The most recent incident involved a large canid that was shot near Cooperstown in December 2021. The hunter believed it was a large coyote, but subsequent DNA analysis proved it to be 98% gray wolf. The Department of Environmental Conservation website states that “[a]ny canid 50 pounds or greater may be a wolf” and that “wolves are present in Algonquin Provincial Park in Ontario and it is possible for these animals to travel into New York.” Coyote killing contests award prizes for the largest “coyote” killed, thereby increasing the chances that endangered wolves may be killed.

### **Protect the Adirondacks**

Protect the Adirondacks is an IRS-approved non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and stewardship of the 6-million-acre Adirondack Park. Our mission is to protect the Adirondack Park’s wild character for current and future generations. PROTECT pursues this mission through a combination of advocacy, grassroots organizing, independent public oversight, research, water quality monitoring, education, and legal action. Protect the Adirondacks was formed in 2009 as the result of a merger between two long-standing environmental conservation groups in the Adirondack Park, the Resident’s Committee to Protect the Adirondacks (est. 1991) and the Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks (est. 1901).

Protect the Adirondacks is managed by a 21-member Board of Directors of Adirondack leaders with expertise in environmental law, local government, Adirondack environmental and cultural history, state agency management, and small business. Protect the Adirondacks maintains an office in a 100% energy efficient, solar-and wind-powered office in Johnsburg in the central Adirondacks. For more information see [www.protectadks.org](http://www.protectadks.org) and @ProtectAdkPark.

##