

**INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE**

**FAQ's ON COYOTE/FOX ENCLOSURES**

A rule proposal that would allow the chasing of foxes and coyotes in an enclosure in Indiana is in response to two petitions submitted to the Natural Resources Commission that requested the chasing of coyotes and foxes in an enclosure (also known as coyote penning) be prohibited.

**How many of these enclosures (pens) are in Indiana?**

- There is only one training enclosure currently operating in Indiana.

**What is the purpose of these enclosures?**

- An enclosure allows individuals to train dogs to chase coyotes, as well as to keep dogs in shape during the off-season. Training dogs in an enclosure provides a controlled situation that protects the dogs from being hit by a vehicle and keeps them from trespassing onto other property. State law allows coyotes to be taken (chased and killed) anytime of year on private property by the landowner or with written permission from the landowner. Farmers and other landowners often need assistance in removing nuisance coyotes from their property, and dogs are often used by coyote hunters to help find the coyotes in the wild.
- The enclosure in Indiana is not a “kill pen.” In fact, dogs trained to kill coyotes are not allowed in the enclosure. There is no evidence to indicate that coyotes are being purposely killed by dogs in this pen.

**Is this enclosure regulated right now?**

- Currently, Indiana does not regulate any enclosures for coyotes and foxes possessed during the open hunting and trapping season, so this activity is currently legal in Indiana during the open season. Coyotes and foxes can also be chased under a field trial permit outside the season. Therefore, the proposed rules regulate the chasing of foxes and coyotes in an enclosure year-round.

**What regulations are proposed to provide for the coyotes and foxes inside the enclosure?**

- The proposed rule language would require an enclosure to consist of at least 300 acres; have appropriate fencing to keep the coyotes and foxes inside the enclosure; provide

food, water, and appropriate escape areas for all coyotes and foxes within the enclosure; and provide other habitat such as shade, cover, and windbreaks.

- There is a limit to the number of coyotes and foxes that can be released inside the enclosure, a limit to the number of dogs that can be released per coyote or fox, and a limit to the number of hours that dogs can chase coyotes and foxes within the enclosure.
- The DNR has included provisions for mandatory escape areas for the coyotes and foxes at all times while dogs are in the enclosure that dogs are not able to access.
- The DNR also has included a requirement that all coyotes and foxes released inside this enclosure come from coyotes and foxes that were trapped in the wild in Indiana. None of the coyotes or foxes can come from licensed game breeders or from coyotes or foxes trapped outside Indiana.
- The proposed rule language can be found on-line at: [www.in.gov/nrc/2377.htm](http://www.in.gov/nrc/2377.htm) under Coyote/Fox Dog Training Grounds.

#### **What is the difference between what other states allow and Indiana's proposal?**

- Indiana's requirements differ from other states in many ways. Here are a few examples:
  - The minimum size Indiana has proposed is 300 acres; Florida and Virginia required only 100 acres, Wisconsin only 75, Missouri only 40, Ohio only 80, and Kentucky only 200 acres.
  - The number of escape areas proposed by Indiana is one every 20 acres or one for every coyote or fox released into the enclosure, whichever is greater. For example, if an enclosure operator released the maximum allowable 60 coyotes or foxes, the number of required escape areas would increase to 60, or one for every 5 acres. Wisconsin requires one every 15 acres and one for every fox or coyote within the enclosure; Missouri requires one for every 25 acres; Virginia requires one for every 20 acres; Kentucky one for every 50 acres (foxes); Florida one for every 50 acres.
  - The proposal would allow only coyotes and foxes that are wild-trapped in Indiana to be released inside the enclosure. They cannot be imported into the state or obtained from game breeders. Some other states, including Florida, allowed some animals to be imported into their state to be released on the training ground.

- The number of coyotes or foxes proposed by Indiana is a maximum of 60 for the 300 acres, which is a maximum of 1 per 5 acres; Florida allowed only 1 per 5 acres in an enclosure with heavy cover, 1 per 10 acres if it had moderately heavy ground cover, and 1 per 15 acres with light ground cover. Virginia does not have an upper limit on the number of coyotes or foxes held within the enclosure; Wisconsin has an upper limit of 2 foxes or coyotes present per 15 acres.
- Indiana’s proposal sets a limit of 175 dogs per enclosure, which amounts to no more than 3 dogs per coyote or fox (if 60 coyotes or foxes are held within the enclosure). Virginia and Missouri do not have an upper limit on the number of dogs that can be in an enclosure at one time. Wisconsin allows no more than 3 dogs per coyote or fox.
- Indiana’s proposal requires the coyotes or foxes released into the enclosure be at least 7 months of age; Wisconsin requires them to be at least 9 months old. There is no age requirement in Florida, Virginia and Kentucky. Coyotes are weaned at about 6 weeks of age, and the young are able to hunt on their own in late summer/early fall. Therefore, coyote pups born in February or March are typically fending for themselves by October. Red foxes are born in March or April and typically can fend for themselves by October. The trapping season for coyotes and foxes starts Oct. 15, and the coyotes and foxes released inside an enclosure must be trapped from the wild in Indiana.
- Indiana’s proposal limits the number of consecutive hours to no more than 8 hours a day during a field trial, when it is more likely that a larger number of dogs would be present within the enclosure, and no more than 16 hours a day for dog training purposes. There must be at least 8 consecutive hours of rest in a 24-hour period of time. Wisconsin allows training exercises of 16 hours in a 24 hour period of time, but there is no limit to the number of hours that coyotes or foxes can be chased in Missouri’s or Virginia’s regulations.
- Indiana’s proposal requires 7 days for the coyotes and foxes to be released into the enclosure prior to dogs being allowed to chase them. Missouri also requires 7 days; Kentucky, Wisconsin and Florida have no acclimation period.

### **How can I comment on this rule proposal?**

- The proposed rule language can be found on-line at: [www.in.gov/nrc/2377.htm](http://www.in.gov/nrc/2377.htm) under Coyote/Fox Dog Training Grounds. Click on “comment on this rule” next to the link for the rule language.