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Report to the Madison Parks Commission

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Thank you very much for your continued support of my urban wildlife research projects on Madison Park's properties.

We have completed the first phase of research for our UW urban canid project where we were able to document spatial and temporal use and overlap of red fox and coyotes in southern and western Madison. The fact that coyotes and red foxes are able to co-exist/interact in the urban environment is very unusual and the next phase of our research is going to investigate what allows this co-existence. To understand the mechanism driving co-existence, we are continuing to live trap and radio collar red foxes and coyotes in Madison, including on Madison Park's properties, and adding a diet component to the study to understand the types of food available to these wild canids compared to what they're actually eating. We're also using satellite collars on all coyotes and red foxes to understand which species is initiating the interactions (e.g., are coyotes moving toward red foxes, or are red foxes moving toward coyotes), where are the interactions occurring most commonly (e.g., inside or outside of territories), and are the interactions consistent throughout the year or do coyotes and red foxes become more territorial during the breeding season? Please see slides accompanying this report.

The second project I have involves placing 24 wildlife cameras along bike paths throughout Madison to understand how wildlife patterns change, if they do, with zoning and land use/cover changes along an urban to less urban gradient. One of these cameras is placed in Reindahl Park. Madison is one of 14 cities throughout North America that is part of the Urban Wildlife Information Network. This research project is ongoing and we continue to develop results. Please see accompanying slides of coyotes, a squirrel, and an opossum as an example of wildlife captured on the camera at Reindahl Park.

David Drake
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