

Interviewee:

[inaudible] the kill chickens, um, are you looking for something specific for one coyote?

Interviewer:

Sure! Whatever you would like to share.

Interviewee:

Um, I shot one the other morning that was walking up the lane way, like, way too close to the cattle that didn't look sick or anything but it was just, like, way too brave. Um, yeah, I guess that was...they don't really harass the cows, but if there's a calf that gets born out in the pasture, I don't know if it's killed a calf before.

Interviewer:

Can you explain to me why that story you just shared, um, is meaningful to you?

Interviewee:

Um, I'm trying, I guess, to protect my herd of animals. We have, you know, all sorts of different livestock: cows, pigs, ducks. And I know the coyotes have to feed themselves, but I kinda, I don't know, I'd just rather they don't do it on my animals.

Interviewer:

I'm hoping to pivot a little bit and talk about coyotes more generally. And I'm wondering if you can rank your experience of coyotes in Vermont on a scale of 1 to 9, with 1 being really negative and 9 being positive.

Interviewee:

Um, probably like a 5.

Interviewer:

And can you explain why you ranked your experience that way?

Interviewee:

Um, I don't see--when I see coyotes, I don't see them, I guess, as being vicious animals, like directly to me, um, sometimes you'll see them out in the field, or whatever, and they're wildlife in Vermont. But, yeah, that's why I kinda view them like right in the middle there.

Interviewer:

I'm really interested in how farmers think about the land that they're farming on and the animals that live on it, and I'm wondering if you could tell me a story where land, livestock, and coyotes all interacted. Um, and you can think really broadly about interaction here, it doesn't have to be really one moment or one story necessarily, I'm just really interested in hearing a story about your experience with those three things---land, livestock and coyotes---all interact. And feel free to take all the time you need.

Interviewee:

Um, I think it's hard for livestock and coyotes to interact. I don't--I'm not saying it's impossible but they kinda have to be kept wild, I guess, they can't be too comfortable with the animals because we start having problems. But I think there is room for everything there. And on our farm specifically we try to control the coyotes by, you know, people hunt coyotes with dogs on our farm in the winter time, people hunt them, they call and stuff, so the coyotes...we try to keep their numbers down. Um, they...they...I think as long as they're not over-abundant, then there's room for the coyotes and the livestock to all be together.

Interviewer:

And can you explain to me why that interaction or that story is meaningful to you?

Interviewee:

Um, I would say it's meaningful to me because if we're not overrun with coyotes and our animals aren't being harassed, then everything just goes better, so that'd be why it's meaningful to me. I don't like seeing animals stressed out over, you know, predators.

Interviewer:

And narrowing in a little bit onto the different components of that story, um, how does land, and how you think about land, impact how or why that interaction was meaningful to you?

Interviewee:

Could you repeat that?

Interviewer:

Sure! How does land, and how you think about land, impact how or why that interaction is meaningful to you?

Interviewee:

I guess...I don't know, that's tough. I'm trying to think...maybe it's because we're using the land as productive ag land and seeing the coyotes there, I know they're just out doing their thing, but sometimes—say it's in the pasture that we're using or something—they, you know, bother the animals. I don't know.

Interviewer:

And moving to another component, how does livestock impact what's meaningful to you in that interaction?

Interviewee:

Well livestock is our livelihood and, you know, if we didn't have livestock we wouldn't be in business so when coyotes interact with livestock, we see them as a problem so that's why, you know, we shoot coyotes.

Interviewer:

And narrowing a little bit, again, onto coyotes, do coyotes impact what was meaningful in that interaction? Can you explain to me why or why not?

Interviewee:

With livestock?

Interviewer:

However you want to talk about coyotes.

Interviewee:

Um, yeah, I mean they're just, I don't know, I view coyotes as a nuisance. They wouldn't hurt my feelings if they weren't here. Um, yeah, like I said we just, we harvest them...pretty much year round when we see them and just don't like seeing the animals harassed, seeing them close to the building and stuff. You know that they're trying to get a calf or chicken or something.

Interviewer:

Awesome, well we are almost done. I have a few background questions about where the stories took place. And thinking back to that first story that you shared, can you tell me where it took place?

Interviewee:

Um, in East Hardwick.

Interviewer:

Awesome, and can you tell me what year the interaction or story took place?

Interviewee:

2020.

Interviewer:

Awesome. What kind of things do you do outside, whether it be for work or for recreation?

Interviewee:

I'm a dairy farmer, and recreation: I love mountain biking, hiking, I'm an avid deer hunter so I spend the fall in the woods.

Interviewer:

How long have you lived in Vermont?

Interviewee:

25 years.

Interviewer:

What town do you live in?

Interviewee:

East Hardwick.

Interviewer:

What year were you born?

Interviewee:

1995.

Interviewer:

What's your gender?

Interviewee:

Male.

Interviewer:

And finally, what's your race or ethnicity?

Interviewee:

I'm white.