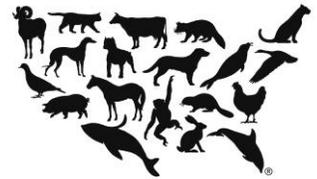


The HSUS Lead-Free Campaign

A Strategic Offensive to End Suffering and Destruction
Caused by Lead Ammunition



THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES



The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) has a long history of successful campaigns to protect wild animals. We have campaigned vigorously to stop abusive hunting and trapping practices, taking on seasoned and well-financed opponents like the National Rifle Association (NRA), the U.S. Sportsmen’s Alliance, and other factions of the trophy hunting lobby. We have won 10 statewide ballot measures to restrict the use of steel-jawed leghold traps and other body-gripping traps, and to restrict the use of dogs in hunting certain predators—principally bears, mountain lions, and bobcats.

With our given track record of success, the time has never been better for a lead-free campaign, which will help save the millions of animals that languish and die from a completely avoidable cause year after year. The impacts of lead ammunition on wildlife have never been so well documented and well understood as they are now. Yet despite the facts, nearly a half century has passed since the first attempt to regulate lead ammunition in the U.S. and little progress has been made.

While a handful of environmental and conservation groups have put forth numerous efforts over the past four decades, most have been focused on education and regulatory reform on the federal level and have, for the most part, been unsuccessful. It is now time for a more comprehensive approach to getting the lead out of ammunition for hunting.

Unlike previous efforts, The HSUS will be tackling this effort at the federal and state levels and incorporating animal suffering as a primary concern against lead ammunition, along with the environmental, conservation, and health arguments. Lead poisoning translates into a painful, prolonged death for an animal, and we intend to elevate the cruelty associated with its continued dispersal in the environment. No other organization has a comprehensive campaign on the issue, and no other group has the wide range of experience and tools that The HSUS brings to the fray.

We have intentionally chosen to concentrate first on banning the use of all lead ammunition for hunting in California and pursuing a ban on federal lands owned by the Department of Interior in order to build momentum for the campaign and to spur change within the various ammunition manufacturers and state wildlife agencies.

Approaches By Other Groups

In order to appreciate how our approach differs, it is helpful to highlight what the approach, as we know it, has been for several other environmental and conservation organizations that have been working to reduce, regulate or prohibit the use of lead ammunition over the years.

Peregrine Fund

- Conducting research on birds of prey and testing blood lead levels of California Condors in the wild. It is a wonderful depository of previously published scientific papers on the topic.
- Furthering the [California Condor Restoration](#) project—a program to establish self-sustaining wild populations of California Condors. Its World Center for Birds of Prey cares for the world's largest flock of California Condors and raises them to be released in Arizona.
- On occasion, [advocates against legislation](#) that weakens restrictions on lead ammunition, but has no record of advocating for policy that strengthens restrictions on the federal or state levels.
- Partnered with Arizona Game and Fish Department on an awareness program to urge hunters to voluntarily switch to non-lead ammunition in condor country; working on a similar effort in Utah.

Center for Biological Diversity (CBD)

- Furthering the '[Get the Lead Out](#)' campaign to end the use of lead ammunition. The main focus of the campaign initially was filing a petition with the EPA to ban lead ammunition (2010). CBD later sued when the petition was denied and lost (2012/2013).
- History of filing various petitions to ban the use of lead ammunition in condor habitat and following up with lawsuits once its petitions have been denied. These have not been successful efforts to date.
- While this organization is aggressive in its litigation work, it does not have the legislative and public relations capabilities of The HSUS.

American Bird Conservancy

- Working to educate the hunting community as to the negative effects of lead bullets and availability of non-toxic alternatives.
- Working with sporting goods retailers to encourage them to expand the availability of non-toxic alternatives.
- Signed on to the 2010 petition to the Environmental Protection Agency to eliminate lead bullets and shotgun pellets in sport hunting (a primary focus of its advocacy at the time).
- No evidence of any proactive policy campaigns at the federal or state levels; it advocates an educational approach rather than a regulation approach (“educate, not regulate”).

National Audubon Society

- Does not appear to have an active national campaign on banning lead ammunition. The California Chapter of Audubon is currently a coalition member of The HSUS-backed California bill, AB 711, to require the use of non-toxic ammunition for all hunting in the state.

Defenders of Wildlife

- Does not appear to have an active national campaign on banning lead ammunition, but rather its focus is on protecting the California condor in general.
- Currently a coalition member of The HSUS-backed California bill, AB 711. It previously supported the 2008 California legislation to ban the use of lead ammunition in condor habitat. Its leaders have indicated that they are working to ensure protections for condors in neighboring states to California; however, it is not clear which states, if any, it is actively working in.

Sierra Club

- Does not appear to have an active national campaign on banning lead ammunition. It did, however, sign on to the CBD lead petition to the EPA.
- The Iowa chapter is active at the state level fighting for the reinstatement of a non-toxic shot requirement for dove hunting that was passed by the Natural Resources Commission in 2011.

The HSUS Approach

As you can see, the current efforts to ban lead ammunition by environmental and conservation groups primarily focus on California condor recovery, petitioning agencies, and hunter education and outreach. By contrast, The HSUS will take a multi-pronged approach to ban the use of lead ammunition for hunting—highlighting the suffering of a multitude of animal species as the primary rationale. Only by achieving an expanded federal ban on lead ammunition, along with prohibitions on lead ammunition in multiple states, can we hope to catalyze the transition by arms and ammunition makers and the hunting lobby to lead-free ammunition.

1. Federal prohibition on the use of lead ammunition for hunting on designated land areas of the Department of Interior.

We will be filing a petition to ban the use of lead ammunition for hunting purposes on federal lands owned by the Department of Interior (DOI)—which comprises about one-fifth of the total land area

of the United States. We are in a better position than other groups to spearhead this effort given our strong federal congressional and agency relationships, as well as our years of experience working through these types of reforms. We are currently in discussions with the DOI on furthering this goal, and we have great confidence—given our mainstream approach and our knack for strategy—that we will be able to achieve all or part of this goal.

There have been attempts by Congress in recent years to limit the EPA's authority to restrict lead ammunition. We mounted a huge fight against the Sportsmen's Act, amassing a strong, diverse coalition of over 60 national and state organizations, utilizing our expert federal affairs team, and mobilizing our large, active membership to successfully kill this reckless bill. We will continue to be vigilant to ensure existing protections are maintained.

2. State legislative prohibitions on the use of lead ammunition.

After California, we will be launching legislative fights in targeted states to limit the use of lead ammunition. We are the only animal protection group in the U.S. that has state directors in almost every state, and an organized grassroots constituency familiar with driving legislative outcomes. Since 2005, we have worked to pass more than 700 laws in the states.

Our track record on wildlife legislative efforts is strong—in the past 6 years, we have passed over 90 state bills and killed over 175 pieces of state legislation intended to roll back protections for wildlife. In Arizona, The HSUS defeated a referendum, initiated by the NRA, to take away the right of citizens to initiate ballot measures to protect wildlife. We also passed a Florida prohibition on fox and coyote pens, multiple policies to increase penalties for pervasive wildlife poaching, banned the hounding of bears and bobcats in California, and passed a ban on steel-jawed leghold traps in Hawaii, just to name a few.

This will be a tough fight, but we have the staying power to advance legislation and to put enough pressure on the industry that it ultimately makes a voluntary national conversion to nontoxic ammunition.

3. Working with State Agencies to restrict the use of lead ammunition.

The HSUS has close working relationships with state wildlife agencies all across the country. Our wildlife department staff and state directors regularly attend state wildlife agency meetings where they have presented to top level agency officials and developed close working relationships with wildlife law enforcement officers in the majority of states. Our state directors attend department and commission meetings and have developed long lasting relationships. We are regularly contacted to participate in stakeholder meetings and asked about The HSUS position on pending proposals. In fact, many of our staff serves on state wildlife agency appointed boards and commissions.

These existing relationships will go a long way in our campaign to end the use of lead ammunition. We will foster these relationships and partner with the agencies to jointly push for lead ammunition

reform. We have seen this in California and will utilize this approach and our long standing relationships in other states to do the same.

4. Educational outreach to targeted groups.

We will launch a public and hunter education outreach program. Given that The HSUS is backed by 11 million supporters—one in every twenty-eight Americans—we have a ready-built army to educate and activate. We will develop and publish anchor documents on lead ammunition and its impact on wildlife, the environment, and people to disseminate through our various channels: website, webinars, media and the like. We will develop a toolkit for our supporters to be our boots on the ground in urging law makers, state wildlife agencies, hunters, and sporting goods stores to move away from the use or sale of lead ammunition for hunting.

We have also developed over the years an informal coalition of hunters who support our work fighting to end the most egregious wildlife abuses that go against fair hunting practices. We will work with these hunters to get their support for the campaign and outreach to other hunters to do the same. We will also work with lead ammunition manufacturers and sporting goods stores to urge them to sell and/or manufacture non-toxic alternatives. As you know, our team is skilled at working with companies to adopt humane policies, as evidenced by our work to phase out gestation crates and end the sale of animal fur products.

Conclusion

This comprehensive approach to ending the use of lead ammunition for hunting purposes—hitting the issue at every level and utilizing animal welfare concerns as the primary rationale—will achieve lasting results and save millions of animals' lives in the process.