

The Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor
Minister of Health
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

An open letter to the Minister of Health and Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency regarding the use of strychnine, sodium monofluoroacetate (Compound 1080), and sodium cyanide to kill wildlife in Canada

September 27, 2018

Dear Minister Petitpas Taylor and Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency,

We, the undersigned scientists and organizations, oppose the use of strychnine, sodium monofluoroacetate (referred to henceforth in this document by its common name Compound 1080), and sodium cyanide to kill wildlife in Canada and request that the registration of these compounds and products containing them be cancelled under the *Pest Control Products Act* (2002; hereafter PCPA).

These 3 chemicals are the most toxic poisons currently in use to kill wildlife in Canada. Under the PCPA, the Minister's primary statutory objective is to prevent unacceptable risks to individuals and the environment, including harm to living organisms and biodiversity. Federal regulations and policy controlling the evaluation, distribution, use, handling, and record-keeping of these pesticides are unable to mitigate public and environmental safety hazards associated with their use.

Evidence suggests that:

- I. Strychnine, Compound 1080 and sodium cyanide are inhumane wildlife killing methods, causing undue pain and distress;
- II. The environmental risks posed by these products are unacceptable because they pose a threat to non-target species, including species at risk of extinction, and biodiversity;
- III. Current conditions for use are not adequately enforced and sometimes impossible to adhere to;
- IV. The health risks of these products are unacceptable because they pose a threat to the health and safety of Canadians, as well as pets and livestock;
- V. The effectiveness of these products is questionable because indiscriminate killing of wildlife does not often solve the conflicts the poisons are intended to address, results are not scientifically evaluated assessed and/or are poorly documented, and better alternatives exist; and
- VI. Wolves, coyotes, and black bears are not "pests" for the purposes of the Pest Control Products Act (2002), as they do not pose risks to human health or the environment, and in fact provide important ecosystem functions.

These arguments are presented in greater detail in the addendum and supplementary material of this letter.

We urge you to cancel the use of strychnine for ground squirrel control, as proposed in PRVD2018-13 and without delay. Furthermore, we hereby request, under PCPA s. 17(4), that you initiate special reviews of all pest control products containing strychnine, Compound 1080, and sodium cyanide. In light of the evidence presented here, we believe that Health Canada should cancel the registration of these active ingredients and end-use products containing them, and ban their use. These pest control products endanger human health, safety and the environment and pose threats that are both serious and irreversible.

Sincerely,

Shelley M. Alexander, PhD
Canid Conservation Science Lab, University of Calgary, AB

Hannah Barron, BSc
Director, Wildlife Conservation Campaigns, Earthroots, ON

Marc Bekoff, PhD
Professor emeritus, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
University of Colorado, Boulder, USA

Rebecca Aldworth
Executive Director, Humane Society International – Canada

Michael Bloomfield, BSc wildlife biologist, educator
Founder and Executive Director Harmony Foundation of Canada

Heather Bryan, PhD, Postdoctoral Fellow,
Applied Conservation Science Lab, University of Victoria, BC

G.A. Bradshaw, PhD
Director and Founder, The Kerulos Center, Jacksonville Oregon, USA

Shelley and Casey Black
Founders and Directors, Northern Lights Wildlife Wolf Education Centre, BC

Jodey Castricano, PhD, FOCAE
Associate Professor, Department of Critical Studies, CCS377
University of British Columbia, Okanagan, BC

Marc Cattet, DVM, PhD
RGL Recovery Wildlife Health & Veterinary Services, Saskatoon, SK

Nigel Caulkett PhD, DVM, MVetSc
Department head of Veterinary Clinical and Diagnostic Science, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine,
University of Calgary, AB

Chris Darimont, PhD
Scientist Raincoast Conservation Foundation &
Applied Conservation Science Lab, University of Victoria, BC

Rachel Darvill, MSc
Program Biologist - Columbia Wetlands Waterbird Survey & Marsh Bird Monitoring Project
Goldeneye Ecological Services, BC

Charlotte Dawe
Conservation and Policy Campaigner, Wilderness Committee, BC

Moira Drosdovech, DVM
Member College Veterinary Medicine of BC, Co-Founder Kelowna Animal Action

Sara Dubois, PhD, RPBio
BC SPCA Chief Scientific Officer, BC

Brooks Fahy
Executive Director, Predator Defence Org., Eugene Oregon, USA

Lesley Fox
Executive Director, The Fur-Bearers – Canada

Rich Hagensen
Chapter Contact for Council of Canadians, Campbell River BC chapter

Maureen Harper, DVM, MSc
(retired) Canadian Food Inspection Agency - BSE program officer, Ontario

Stephen Herrero, Phd
Professor Emeritus, Environmental Science, University of Calgary, Alberta

Rick A. Hopkins, PhD
Senior Conservation Biologist, Live Oak Associates, Inc., San Jose California, USA

Maggie Howell
Executive Director, Wolf Conservation Center, New York, USA

Tommy Knowles
Executive Director, Wildlife Defence League, BC

Susan Kutz, DVM, PhD
Professor, Ecosystem and Public Health, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Calgary, Alberta

Rob Laidlaw, CBiol, MIBiol
Executive Director, Zoocheck

John W. Laundré, PhD

Large Predator Ecologist, Corvallis Oregon, USA

Misty MacDuffee, BSc
Biologist, Raincoast Conservation Foundation, BC

Barry Kent MacKay
Canadian Representative, Born Free USA

Ken Macquisten, DVM
Wildlife Veterinarian, Abbotsford, BC

Wayne McCrory, BSc, RPBio
McCrory Wildlife Services Ltd., BC

Mike J. McIntosh
Executive Director, Bear With Us Sanctuary and Rehabilitation Centre for Bears, Ontario

Marco Musiani, PhD
Wildlife Ecologist, University of Calgary, Alberta

Peter Neuhaus, PhD
Adjunct Professor, Biological Sciences, University of Calgary, Alberta

Sadie Parr, BSc
Executive Director, Wolf Awareness Inc, Canada

Paul C. Paquet, PhD
Senior Scientist Raincoast Conservation Foundation &
Professor, Department of Geography, University of Victoria BC

Rolf O. Peterson, PhD
Research Professor, Forest Resources & Environmental Science, Michigan Technological University, USA

Craig Pettitt
Director, Valhalla Wilderness Society, BC

Rachel Plotkin, MES
The David Suzuki Foundation

Gilbert Proulx, PhD, CWB
Director of Science, Alpha Wildlife Research & Management Ltd., Alberta

Lesley Sampson
Executive Director, Coyote Watch Canada

Judith Samson-French, DVM, MSc
Banded Peak Veterinary Hospital, Bragg Creek, Alberta

Jill Seaton

Chair, Jasper Environmental Association, Alberta

Clio Smeeton

Executive Director, Cochrane Ecological Institute, Alberta

Judit Smits, DVM, PhD

Wildlife Toxicology & Ecotoxicology, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Calgary, Alberta

Arian Wallach, PhD

Centre for Compassionate Conservation, School of Life Sciences, University of Technology, Sydney
Australia

Jonathan Way, PhD

Founder, Eastern Coyote/Coywolf Research, Maine, USA

Liz White

Executive Director, Animal Protection Party of Canada

Robert Wielgus, PhD

Former director of the large carnivore conservation lab at Washington state university (retired)
Pullman, Washington, USA, 99163 - Canadian citizen

Pat Zaat

Country Director, International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) - Canada