



THE PEREGRINE FUND  
WORLD CENTER FOR BIRDS OF PREY

CONSERVING  
BIRDS OF PREY  
WORLDWIDE  
SINCE 1970

## Commentary on “smear and fear” tactics by special interest groups representing the arms and ammunition industry

Special interest groups have characterized The Peregrine Fund, which has brought to light the possibility of lead in game meat, as being among “anti-hunting extremists dedicated to banning lead ammunition as a way to dismantle the heritage of hunting one step at a time.” This characterization is baseless and false.

Special interest groups have called The Peregrine Fund “an animal rights group whose political agenda includes banning lead ammunition.” They have said that “the Peregrine Fund and anti-hunting groups are continuing to press state legislatures around the country to support a ban on this common, safe and effective ammunition.”

**The truth is that The Peregrine Fund is a conservation organization focused on birds of prey.** Many of our staff are hunters, and the organization recognizes and appreciates the valuable role of hunters in wildlife conservation. In fact, carcasses and offal from carcasses remaining in the field as a result of hunting are important sources of food for scavengers provided they are not killed with lead bullets or shotgun pellets.

The organization’s conservative and collaborative approach to wildlife conservation is clearly evident in its actions, on its website, and in its leadership. See the article written by Chris Parish, a biologist working in our California Condor recovery program and an avid hunter, on Page 6 of the Fall/Winter Newsletter #39:

[http://www.peregrinefund.org/annual\\_reports.asp](http://www.peregrinefund.org/annual_reports.asp)

The Peregrine Fund’s position on lead ammunition has been posted on our website since 2007. It states clearly a preference for a voluntary switch to non-lead, as the organization has been promoting in northern Arizona since 2005. The Peregrine Fund has not and is not pressing any state legislatures for a ban on lead ammunition. Read our position statement at:

<http://www.peregrinefund.org/pdfs/Commentaries/PositionLeadAmmunition2007.pdf>

Special interest groups have written that “anti-hunting groups and radical environmentalists waged a strong lobbying campaign to ban lead ammunition” in California and that The Peregrine Fund “led the campaign.”

**The truth is that The Peregrine Fund did not participate in the campaign in California.** The Peregrine Fund did provide its research results on mortality in condors caused by lead from spent ammunition for consideration by the California Game Commission only to ensure that the facts were accurately represented.

The groups that campaigned to ban lead ammunition in California were: Wishtoyo Foundation; Anthony Prieto; Leif Bierer; Physicians for Social Responsibility; Center for Biological Diversity; and Natural Resources Defense Council, Inc.

Special interest groups have written: Dr. William Cornatzer, a falconer and hunter who serves on The Peregrine Fund board of directors, is ða dermatologist who claimed to have collected packages of venison from food banks that contained lead fragmentsí It has since come to light that the dermatologist's efforts were not the independent actions of a concerned hunter, as he claimed. It was an orchestrated strategy by the Peregrine Fundí ö

**The truth is that Dr. Cornatzer's study was motivated by a presentation by Peregrine Fund staff to the Board in May 2007 showing that lead fragments in the remains of hunter-killed animals are responsible for the death of condors, and are the most important obstacle impeding recovery of condors in northern Arizona.**

The Peregrine Fund's research also raised the question of whether lead from spent ammunition may contaminate game meat eaten by humans. This connection is far from ðan orchestrated strategy,ö and Dr. Cornatzer's results, as well as the results of several independent studies since then and actions taken by the Health Departments of North Dakota, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, speak for themselves. They were not influenced by The Peregrine Fund.

Special interest groups have written: ðAt present, non-lead big game hunting ammunition is a very limited source technologyí ö

**The truth is that lead-free alternatives are available.** Here's a list of non-lead ammunition available on the web:

[http://www.azgfd.com/pdfs/w\\_c/condors/Non-LeadAmmo.pdf](http://www.azgfd.com/pdfs/w_c/condors/Non-LeadAmmo.pdf)

And a list of suppliers:

[http://www.azgfd.gov/pdfs/w\\_c/condors/Non-lead%20ammo%20retailers.pdf](http://www.azgfd.gov/pdfs/w_c/condors/Non-lead%20ammo%20retailers.pdf)

To build support for their own agenda, special interest groups have deliberately tried to smear the integrity of thoughtful, dedicated health and wildlife professionals and create fear of losing hunting and gun rights among their constituents. ðSmear and fearö is a well-known technique for manipulating public opinion when facts are absent. Their action is disingenuous and not in the interests of wildlife or human health, including the health of their own constituents.