AVMA American Veterinary Medical Association

1931 N. Meacham Rd.
Suite 100
Schaumburg, IL
60173-4360

phone 847.925.8070
800.248.2862
fax 847.925.1329
www.avma.org

March 5, 2008

OPP Regulatory Public Docket (7502P)
Environmental Protection Agency, Rm. S–4400
One Potomac Yard (South Bldg.)
2777 S. Crystal Dr.
Arlington, VA 22202-3553

Re: Docket No. EPA–HQ–OPP–2007–0944 – Registration Cancellation of M-44 Sodium Cyanide Capsules and Sodium Fluoroacetate

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing on behalf of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), established in 1863 and the largest veterinary medical association in the world. As a not-for-profit association established to advance the science and art of veterinary medicine, AVMA is the recognized national voice for the veterinary profession. The association's more than 76,000 members comprise approximately 85% of U.S. veterinarians, all of whom are involved in a myriad of areas of veterinary medical practice including private, corporate, academic, industrial, governmental, military, and public health services.

The AVMA understands that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) seeks to address numerous issues posed in the 2007 Sinapu et. al. petitions requesting EPA to cancel the registrations for M-44 sodium cyanide capsules and sodium fluoroacetate. We also understand that EPA seeks substantive comments that address:

- Documented incidents in which non-target animals were killed or injured;
- Advantages and disadvantages, and the efficacy and cost of M-44 and 1080 and alternative products or techniques for controlling predators;
- The annual extent and volume of M-44 sodium cyanide capsules and sodium fluoroacetate use in different states;
- The annual cost to the Government (Federal, State, local), and the regional patterns of use over the last 20 years; and,
- The economic benefit to industries, and their usage patterns of 1080 livestock protection collars and M-44, over the last 20 years.

The AVMA believes strongly that federal and state agencies that deal with wildlife and domestic animal interactions should be required to use science-based evidence and peer-reviewed research to direct their policies and regulations.

The AVMA has sought guidance and assistance from several AVMA committees, namely the Animal Agricultural Liaison Committee, the Committee on Environmental Issues, and the Animal Welfare Committee on these issues. In the process, it was revealed that an enormous amount of published and unpublished data and information concerning 1080 livestock protection collars and M-44 exists. While much of this information is high quality, peer-reviewed research, there is also a great deal of anecdotal, undocumented information or claims about these products that provides little or no supporting data.

Registration decisions concerning the cancellation of any currently approved and registered EPA product should be based on all peer reviewed scientific data.

In light of the fact that there is a large amount of information available on 1080 livestock protection collars and M-44, we recommend that the EPA perform an extensive literature search and review of peer-reviewed scientific publications, or other information that is able to be corroborated, before determining whether the registration of these products should be cancelled or their registration continued.

To determine this, we further recommend that EPA perform an in-depth quantitative or semi-quantitative risk analysis on these products and their alternatives relative to human safety and public health, animal welfare, wildlife populations, livestock production, and economic and environmental consequences. This risk analysis should clearly identify all hazards (a full hazard analysis should be performed), identify and weigh all risks and benefits of potential impacts, effects and consequences, include full details of appropriate risk management strategies (mitigating actions for avoiding potential adverse consequences), identify and evaluate the viability and impacts of any alternatives, and include a plan for communicating the results of this risk analysis to all stakeholders.

We believe that such an approach, using science-based evidence, will allow the EPA to justify whether the registration of M-44 sodium cyanide capsules and sodium fluoroacetate should be cancelled or continued.

Sincerely,

W. Ron DeHaven DVM, MBA
Executive Vice President

AALC/CEI/AWC/GCG/ADS