

# It's Time!

## TWO TARGETED WAYS TO END M-44 CYANIDE BOMB USE ON PUBLIC LANDS



These lands are OUR lands.

TOGETHER WE CAN  
STOP DECADES-LONG  
POISONING OF



PEOPLE & PETS



WILDLIFE &



ENDANGERED SPECIES

See how you can  
help on pg. 2

### Summer 2023

Dear Friends Old and New,

We hope this message finds you beating the summer heat as you read about the latest positive developments in our work to ban the deadly, indiscriminate M-44 devices commonly known as “cyanide bombs.” As you likely know, M-44s are spring-loaded capsules armed with cyanide powder that are still used for predator control by government agents in 10 states—despite the fact that they have injured people and inhumanely kill thousands of animals every year, including domestic dogs. We are thrilled to share that two bills to ban M-44s on public lands were introduced in both houses of Congress in June, and our official petition to ban M-44s on BLM lands—created jointly with the Center for Biological Diversity—has been submitted to the Department of the Interior (DOI), with over 70 conservation groups joining in.

While making progress in the current Congress may seem nearly impossible, these House and Senate bills could actually stand a chance, as many legislators are looking to do something (anything) that is good. It also merits mentioning that DOI testified in 2022 that they are open to banning M-44s on BLM lands. So now it’s time for a full-court press to move these strategic initiatives over the finish line. We hope you will join us.

### CANYON’S LAW INTRODUCED IN U.S. HOUSE AND SENATE

Bills introduced June 13, 2023 by Rep. Jared Huffman (D-Calif), Rep. Steve Cohen (D-Tenn) and Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-Oreg) would ban the use of M-44 devices on America’s public lands. Known as “Canyon’s Law,” this version of the legislation to ban M-44s was first introduced in 2017 after a string of incidents culminated in the Canyon Mansfield tragedy. Canyon, a 14-year old from Pocatello, Idaho, inadvertently triggered an M-44 device while taking a customary walk on a hill behind his home on public land. The poison killed his dog and injured him. Canyon was believed to have been spared from death due to wind direction.

The Mansfield case received worldwide media attention and the public clamored for a nationwide ban, which has always been our goal. It looked possible for a while, but we’ve had to adapt to political realities and scale back to a public lands ban, which represents 245 million acres, a tenth of America’s landmass.

Currently M-44 devices are being used by federal agents of Wildlife Services—the animal-killing program of the USDA—in Colorado, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Texas, West Virginia and Wyoming. M-44s are also used by state agencies in South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, New Mexico and Texas. According to Wildlife Services’ own data, the program poisoned approximately 6,000 animals in 2022 using M-44s. More than 150 of these animals were

“Families should be able to enjoy the outdoors without the fear of accidentally detonating [M-44] devices. They have no business being on our public lands, especially when there are far safer, proven methods to protect livestock. Our bill will bring an end to their use.”

- Rep. Jared Huffman (D-Calif),  
Original sponsor of H.B. 4068

— cont. on page 2

PREDATOR DEFENSE



Championing our essential native predators with science, sanity & heart since 1990



## HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP

One of the best ways you can help ban M-44 "cyanide bombs" on public lands is to send a short message urging your U.S. Senator and Representative to support Canyon's Law, so nicknamed in honor of 2017 Pocatello victim, Canyon Mansfield. You could say something like the following:

*"Please support Canyon's Law,\* \_\_\_\_\_, the bill to ban M-44 "cyanide bombs" on public lands. M-44 devices are used by wildlife agents for predator control, but they are scientifically shown to be counter-productive. They can also never be used safely, as they are indiscriminate killers whose victims include endangered species, wildlife, and pets--none of which can read warning signs. People have been severely injured by M-44s and it is only a matter of time before a child is killed. Canyon's Law is common-sense, tax-saving, nonpartisan legislation deserving support as an essential public safety measure by all elected officials."*

\* Insert bill #—H.B. 4068 or S. 1940—as applicable. Congressional contact details and the statement above are available online at [www.predatordefense.org/m44s.htm](http://www.predatordefense.org/m44s.htm). We also encourage you to share this newsletter and the enclosed M-44 Fact Sheet to spread the word to everyone you know who cares about pets, kids, wildlife, and safety in the great outdoors.

Support our work to ban M-44s.  
Donate today at  
[predatordefense.org](http://predatordefense.org)

### PREDATOR DEFENSE



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*Predator Defense is a 501(c)(3) organization.  
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## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR, *cont. from page 1*

killed unintentionally, including dogs. The program's use of M-44s has declined slightly since 2021, when it used M-44s to kill approximately 7,500 animals. None of this killing is acceptable. Canyon's Law would put and end to these atrocities on our public lands. Please help us get it passed! (Details in sidebar.)

## 70+ GROUPS JOIN OUR PETITION URGING BLM BAN

Knowing the fate of federal legislation is uncertain, we encouraged The Center for Biological Diversity to join with us in petitioning the Department of the Interior (DOI) to ban the use of M-44 devices on lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), which span 245 million acres, roughly 1/10 of the nation's landmass. More than 70 other conservation groups co-signed the petition, which falls under the Administrative Procedures Act. It was officially submitted to DOI on June 29, 2023.

BLM is the only DOI agency that permits use of these dangerous devices to target predators like coyotes and foxes. M-44s are not used on lands administered by the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or the Bureau of Reclamation. The petition urging a BLM ban is a 24-page, fully referenced, science- and evidence-based evaluation of how they use M-44s. It addresses the devastating impacts on people and animals (including endangered wildlife), alternatives to M-44 use, and how BLM's stewardship of their lands is guided by laws like the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and the Endangered Species Act, which give them ample authority and direction to ban M-44s to protect wildlife, outdoor recreation, and American values.

We encourage you to amplify our voice by telling DOI and BLM leaders you support this ban. Contact information and a link to the petition are available at [www.predatordefense.org/m44s.htm](http://www.predatordefense.org/m44s.htm).

It is incomprehensible that our government is still using M-44s after so many horrific tragedies. The Interior Dept. has an opportunity to stop this insanity on 245 million acres of public land, 1/10 of America's landmass. They indicated they were open to a ban. We hold out hope they will make it so.

## TAKE A STAND WITH US

As you know, we've worked closely with M-44 cyanide bomb victims for 30 years, witnessing first-hand what these barbaric devices have done to families, pets, and wildlife. The emotional scars are permanent, and we'd like to see everyone's pain contribute to a better future on the lands we share. Please join us in supporting the legislation and the petition (as detailed above) and make any donation you can to our ongoing work on this vital, nonpartisan, public safety issue. Thank you!

For all that is wild and free,

Brooks Fahy, Executive Director

Should our great outdoors really be laced with land mines?



OF COURSE NOT!

Help us protect wildlife & reclaim our public lands at [predatordefense.org/m44s.htm](http://predatordefense.org/m44s.htm)