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California Department of Natural Resources
Director Wade Crowfoot
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California Department of Fish and Wildlife
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Subject: Concerns Regarding Potential CEQA Violation

Dear California Department of Fish and Wildlife,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding an activity under your control that may potentially be in violation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The specific activity in question is Wildlife Care of Southern California, a wildlife rehabilitation group located in Simi Valley, California is performing activities that are likely detrimental to California's natural resources and is likely a violation of CEQA, the California Environmental Quality Act.

There is a strong likelihood the treatment of over 250 coyotes in the field for mange using Bravecto (Fluralaner), without the ability to retrieve scat from treated coyotes (*Canis latrans*) between 2017 and 2022 likely has a significant effect on the environment. According to the Safety Data Sheet drafted by Cayman Chemical, the manufacturer of Bravecto, Fluralaner has been found to be acutely toxic to aquatic life with long lasting effects. The manufacturer recommends to "avoid release into the environment," "inform respective authorities in case of seepage into water course or sewage system," and to "not allow to enter sewers/surface or ground water." (Cayman 2022) Lacking the ability to maintain control over coyote scat after coyotes have been treated outside of a care facility poses a significant threat to wildlife and their habitats.

Bravecto is an isoxazoline ectoparasiticide, a chemical used to kill ticks, mites, mosquitos and likely poses significant risks to unknown arthropods. According to the European Medicines Agency (EMA), approximately 90% of fluralaner remains in scat unchanged. (EMA 2022) This is especially problematic as noted above the compound is acutely toxic to aquatic life with long lasting effects and is "poisonous for fish and plankton" in water bodies and is "suspected of damaging fertility or the unborn child."

CEQA applies to all discretionary projects proposed to be conducted or approved by a California public agency, including private projects requiring discretionary government approval. Per CEQA, a project is an activity which may cause either a direct physical change in the environment and requires the issuance to a person of a lease, permit, license, certificate, or other entitlement for use by one or more public agency that are not ministerial in nature. California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), the public agency has issued a Wildlife Rehabilitation permit to Anna Reams of Wildlife Care of Southern California. Neither the Wildlife Rehabilitation permit or the Scientific Collection Permit S-212440008-21265-001 (pending status) issued by CDFW to Wildlife Care of Southern California are ministerial in nature as both the Wildlife Rehabilitation permit and Scientific Collection Permit require an evaluation process.

The Wildlife Rehabilitation permit issued to Anna Reams of Wildlife Care of Southern California is discretionary, not ministerial. According to California Code of Regulations Title 14 § 679 (e)(2)(B) in part “Within 30 days of receiving the letters, the department will provide a written determination stating whether such a facility is needed. If the department determines that there is not a need for a new facility the applicant may request a hearing before the commission to show cause why their permit request should not be denied.” The department exercising judgment and discretion in determining the need of a wildlife rehabilitation facility even when objective criteria are met by the applicant rises to the level of discretionary.

If the Department considers the current Wildlife Rehabilitation permit issued to Wildlife Care of Southern California to be ministerial, California Code Regs. tit. 14 § 15268 (d) states: where a project involves an approval that contains elements of both a ministerial action and a discretionary action, the project will be deemed to be discretionary and will be subject to the requirements of CEQA.

CEQA is a vital piece of legislation designed to ensure that projects and activities are thoroughly assessed for their environmental impacts before they are approved. It is crucial for preserving our natural resources and protecting the health and well-being of our communities. I believe that this activity requires a thorough and transparent environmental review to determine its compliance with CEQA.

I kindly request that the California Department of Fish and Wildlife initiate the appropriate CEQA review process to assess the potential environmental impacts of the aforementioned activity. This review should include a comprehensive environmental impact assessment, public participation opportunities, and a thorough examination of alternatives that may mitigate or avoid adverse impacts.

I believe that a transparent CEQA review process will help ensure that this activity aligns with the goals of protecting our environment and promoting sustainable practices. I look forward to a prompt and diligent evaluation of these concerns and hope that the agency will take all necessary steps to address any potential CEQA violations.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I appreciate your commitment to safeguarding our environment and community.

Sincerely,

Steven Childs



Literature Cited

Cayman Chemical. 2022. Safety Data Sheet - Fluralaner.
<<https://cdn.caymanchem.com/cdn/msds/22061m.pdf>>

European Medicines Agency. 2022. Annex I summary of Product Characteristics.
<https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/documents/product-information/bravecto-epar-product-information_en.pdf>