Project title: ‘Bullets and Bald Eagles: Developing a model for dealing with conflicts in ecosystem health’.

Irene Bueno, The Raptor Center, College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Minnesota
January 31st 2014

Summary of the project

1. Preliminary/Pilot Work: Objective of Consortium grant is to implement an ‘event’ envisioned in the planning phase funded by the Institute on the Environment (IonE) Minigrant in 2011.
   - Steering committee members:
     - Dr. Patrick Redig, The Raptor Center
     - Carrol Henderson, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR)
     - Steve Kelley, Center for Science, Technology, and Public Policy
     - Mark Martell, Audubon Minnesota
     - Dr. Michael T. Osterholm, Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy
     - Dr. Steve Polasky, Department of Applied Economics
     - Dr. Dominic Travis, Ecosystem Health Initiative
   - Meetings held by this committee
     - January 12th 2012
     - June 21st 2012
     - July 26th 2012
     - September 11th 2012

Outcomes of this phase (1): the steering committee decided that the ‘event’ (funded by the Consortium Grant) would consist of a two-phase process. The first phase was to have a discussion with a small group of different stakeholders, and the second phase was going to be a series of ‘community conversations’, piloting this latter phase at a retailer’s store. The goal of the second phase was to get input and share information with individuals who are actually making the decision to use lead ammunition (hunters in the field).

2. Two-phase ‘event’

   2.a) The first phase of the ‘event’ took place in August 2012. Several stakeholders attended the meeting that was held at a neutral place. Challenges of moving forward with this issue as well as the priorities for each stakeholder group were identified.
     - Attendees:
       - Dr. Patrick Redig, The Raptor Center
       - Dr. Michelle Willette, The Raptor Center
       - Dr. Irene Bueno, The Raptor Center
       - Carrol Henderson, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR)
Outcomes of this phase (2a): The discussion among the stakeholders was very positive. Even though it did not lead to a specific plan, it helped to build common grounds among the stakeholders.

2.b.) The second phase (series of ‘Community Conversations’) was piloted at a retailer’s store (Cabela’s, Rogers, MN) the 20th of October 2012. The event was scheduled for that day as part of Cabela’s annual ‘Deer Camp’ weekend, when thousands of hunters stop by the store before deer hunting season starts (first week of November). Building on results of this pilot event, future ‘Community Conversations’ were planned throughout the state of Minnesota in 2013.

Outcomes of this phase (2b): The “Community Conversation” at Cabela’s did not go as planned. Pre-event media coverage containing inaccurate information caused concern that the messaging might not be received well by some in the target audience and all educational messaging about lead poisoning in bald eagles and the benefits of using non-lead ammunition was cancelled at the request of Cabela’s management.

One example of the pre-event media coverage can be found here: [http://minnesota.cbslocal.com/2012/10/19/dnr-copper-ammo-safer-more-superior-than-lead/](http://minnesota.cbslocal.com/2012/10/19/dnr-copper-ammo-safer-more-superior-than-lead/).

One of the stories that was published after the ‘event’ can be found here: [http://www.twincities.com/sports/ci_21863589/dave-orrick-minnesota-deer-hunting-copper-bullets-gain](http://www.twincities.com/sports/ci_21863589/dave-orrick-minnesota-deer-hunting-copper-bullets-gain)

Despite the frustration of the above outcomes, the issue of lead poisoning reached a large amount of people through the media, both radio and newspaper. Given the results of this experience, plans for additional Community Conversations were cancelled pending re-evaluation. A revised plan included a proposal to the MN DNR to require use of copper ammunition instead of lead within some state parks for youth hunting camps, which was not accepted.

One positive outcome of the conversations to date is that writers from the DNR Minnesota Conservation Volunteer Magazine are currently working on an article about lead and copper ammunition and its influence in the health of eagles and humans. This article will be published in late August-early September.

3. Steering committee meeting: Meetings have taken place to analyze the results to date and evaluate options for the next steps. The last meeting was held on 6/4/2013.
Outcome of this phase (3): The steering committee emphasized once again the complexity and long-term approach needed to successfully address the risks associated with the use of lead ammunition. A proposal was made to have a wrap-up event within this grant in the form of a roundtable.

4. Roundtable: This ‘event’ took place August 14th, 2013, just prior to the start of the hunting season. 33 out of 57 invitees attended the roundtable. The goal of this roundtable event was to expand the discussion and participation of local stakeholders in building common ground while exploring the experiences and successes that have occurred elsewhere.

Outcome of this phase (4): Participants to the roundtable included most of those that had attended the previous roundtable in 2012, and additional stakeholders representing areas of concern more recently identified around this issue. Those stakeholders and organizations that had concerns about the ‘Community Conversations events’ attended as well. Two invited guest speakers presented and discussed the work they have done with non-lead ammunition in their states; Mr. Gordon Batcheller, from Albany, NY, representing NY State Department of Environmental Conservation; and the other was Mr. Sean Strom, who came from Madison, WI, representing the WI Department of Natural Resources. The rest of the participants came from within the state of Minnesota. The main highlight of this roundtable was the change in attitudes towards the issue of lead and non-lead ammunition in Minnesota. In the first roundtable we had in August 2012, attendees were very skeptical about a possible change, and about communicating that to their respective audiences. In the roundtable held in 2013, the issue had been accepted, and the main goal of the participants was to find a common solution.

The results of the whole process above will be submitted as a manuscript for publication to either the Minnesota Journal of Law, Science & Technology (www.mjlst.umn.edu), Human Wildlife Interactions Journal http://www.berrymaninstitute.org/journal/), or the Journal of Wildlife Diseases.

5. The Wildlife Society Meeting (TWS) (Milwaukee, WI, October 6th 2013) The Raptor Center was invited to present the results of this work to this meeting. Irene Bueno Padilla, Consortium Scholar, attended TWS and presented the work done thanks to the Consortium Grant during the Session entitled ‘Impacts of Lead Ammunition and Fishing Tackle -Current Issues in the Midwest’.

Outcome of this phase (5): The presentation of the work done until date through the Consortium grant was presented by the Consortium Scholar, Irene Bueno Padilla. The information was very well received, and the approach taken in Minnesota seemed a novel one compared to other states that were represented there and deal with the same issue. The Conference also allowed for networking with other people involved in this issue, and to get updated in the data and work that had been done elsewhere.
Ongoing work and next steps

- **Educational Brochure**: An educational brochure on the benefits of using non-lead ammunition has been designed and is being reviewed by partners from the Roundtable that took place in August 2013. The agreement and intent is to have the broad support of the concept demonstrated by the diverse collaboration of organizations reflected on the brochure. This brochure will be distributed among the hunting community at given opportunistic events.

- **Collaborative Grant**: During the Roundtable that took place in August 2013, a verbal agreement was reached to submit a collaborative grant to the Minnesota Natural Resource Trust Fund (LCCMR) to develop a Youth Hunter Training Program on the implications of hunting ammunition choices. The RFP was recently announced for this funding opportunity and the partners are currently drafting a proposal for submission in late March. If funded, this project would represent a significant step forward on the topic of the risks of lead ammunition and would be a direct result of leveraging this grant from the Consortium on Law and Values in Health, Environment & the Life Sciences.
# Financial Summary ($7,602)

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