

ENDANGERED SPECIES:

Condor reintroduction hampered by lead ammo -- report

Published: Wednesday, August 29, 2012

Lead poisonings, shootings and predators are encumbering efforts to restore endangered California condors to their historical Southwest range, though wildlife officials said they have seen some improvements.

There has been an increase in free-ranging condors and breeding pairs, according to a five-year review of the recovery program released this week. But condor restoration continues to be threatened by lead ammunition. The birds often feed on deer and coyote carcasses discarded by hunters (*E&ENews PM*, June 25).

"We didn't know lead poisoning was going to be our leading cause of death," said Chris Parish, head of the Peregrine Fund's condor reintroduction program in Arizona. "We really strongly believe that if we can reduce the threat of lead poisoning, the chances of recovery are very high."

The coalition of groups working toward the condor's recovery said they might need to take another look at the program if extreme exposure to lead doesn't drop by the end of 2016 (*AP/San Francisco Chronicle*, Aug. 28). -- WW