

# Federal Lawmakers Introduce Snowmobiles Aren't Weapons Act, Addressing 'Whacking' of Wolves, Coyotes on Federal Lands

*Bipartisan group of lawmakers address a sadistic form of cruelty to wildlife thrust into the spotlight by Wyoming rancher and trophy hunter Cody Roberts*

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, September 12, 2024 / EINPresswire.com/ -- Animal Wellness Action and the Center for a Humane Economy applauded the introduction of new legislation to ban the use of motorized vehicles—mainly by use of snowmobiles—to kill wolves or coyotes on federal lands.



Wolves on the open range

The new bill, the Snowmobiles Aren't Weapons Act, is being introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by U.S. Representatives Nancy Mace, R-Texas, Don Davis, D-N.C., Matt Gaetz, R-Fla., and Troy Carter, D-La. Other lawmakers from both parties are also signing on to the legislation.

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*Wayne Pacelle, President of Animal Wellness Action*

Animal Wellness Action, the Center for a Humane Economy, the Animal Wellness Foundation, and the Association of Zoos and Aquariums are non-government organizations backing the measure.

“Running over a wolf or a coyote with a snowmobile is an

act of sadism, and anyone who commits this kind of malice is a threat to the well-being of other animals and even people,” said Wayne Pacelle, president of Animal Wellness Action and the Center for a Humane Economy. “Running over a wolf with a snowmobile is an indicator of a mental pathology. I am grateful to a bipartisan group of lawmakers who want to make sure that what Cody Roberts did in Wyoming is not legal on even a single acre of federal lands.”

Awareness of the barbaric and cruel practices of “whacking” or “thumping” came to light after

revelations about a wolf torture incident committed by Roberts. The Wyoming mountain lion trophy hunter and cattle rancher used a snowmobile to run over and capture an adolescent female wolf. Roberts publicly tormented the wolf before patrons at a bar, celebrated the abuse on social media, and shot the animal to death behind a bar in Daniel, Wyo.

Since then, other footage of snowmobile-related torment of animals has surfaced—including this video (graphic) of a snowmobiler repeatedly running over a coyote.

“Facilities accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums place the wellbeing of animals in their care at the center of their missions,” said Dan Ashe, president and CEO of the AZA and a former director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services. “It is who we are and what we do. The depraved treatment of a young female wolf in Wyoming has highlighted a disturbing subculture that uses vehicles to harass and kill iconic wildlife for sport. As a society, we should be better, and we can be better.”

“I am sickened that any state or any other jurisdiction would allow a person to run over a wild animal with a snowmobile or other motorized vehicle for sheer thrill of it,” added Elaine Leslie, Ph.D., former chief of biological services for the National Park Service. “Wyoming’s panel looking into this issue has been too timid, and I urge state lawmakers to take decisive action to eliminate this unthinkable cruel conduct everywhere in the state.”

## BACKGROUND

Most states do not have laws forbidding the running over of animals with snowmobiles. One exception is Minnesota, which has prohibited chasing, striking, and killing animals with motorized vehicles since 1986. That bill, in these last 38 years, has met with no objections from ranchers, farmers, sportsmen, or other stakeholders in wolf and coyote policies. “Minnesota has more wolves than any other state in the lower 48 and is a snowmobiling mecca, so the application of the law is an important practical example of its universal social acceptance,” added Mr. Pacelle.

While several states have enacted laws prohibiting hunting of wildlife “from motor vehicles,” it is unclear and untested whether such laws would apply to cases of “whacking,” where hunters actually use the motor vehicle itself as a weapon to injure, incapacitate and kill animals. Given the recent occurrences in Wyoming and the use of [snowmobiles to chase, hunt and kill](#) predators in neighboring Montana and Idaho, the SAW Act will make it clear that these actions will not be tolerated in a civilized society.

## ABOUT

Animal Wellness Action is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(4) whose mission is to help animals by promoting laws and regulations at federal, state and local levels that forbid cruelty to all animals. The group also works to enforce existing anti-cruelty and wildlife protection laws. Animal Wellness Action believes helping animals helps us all. Twitter: @AWAction\_News

The Center for a Humane Economy is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(3) whose mission is to help animals by helping forge a more humane economic order. The first organization of its kind in the animal protection movement, the Center encourages businesses to honor their social responsibilities in a culture where consumers, investors, and other key stakeholders abhor cruelty and the degradation of the environment and embrace innovation as a means of eliminating both. The Center believes helping animals helps us all. X: @TheHumaneCenter

WAYNE PACELLE

ANIMAL WELLNESS ACTION

+1 2024200446

[email us here](#)

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