



Mr. Clayton Melinkovich  
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Sheriff K.C. Lehr  
Sublette County  
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**Via email: [clayton.melinkovich@sublettecountywy.gov](mailto:clayton.melinkovich@sublettecountywy.gov) ; [kclehr@sublettecountywy.gov](mailto:kclehr@sublettecountywy.gov)**

Dear County Attorney Melinkovich and Sheriff Lehr,

We write this letter on behalf of Animal Wellness Action, the Center for a Humane Economy and our many thousands of supporters across the country, including in Wyoming, in response to the abhorrent actions of Daniel resident Cody Roberts. According to verified reports, Roberts ran down a wolf with a snowmobile, subdued the living animal by taping its mouth shut, and then tormented and tortured it in a local bar before taking it out back and killing it. No one with even a shred of human decency could possibly condone such behavior.

Roberts' actions clearly warrant a punishment more severe than the \$250 ticket he received for possession of live wildlife – such an anemic response on the part of law enforcement will be seen by some as tacit approval of his crime and can only motivate other like-minded individuals driven by hatred of wolves to engage in similar, repugnant behavior.

We believe that Roberts clearly violated the state's animal abuse laws contained in Title 6 of the state statutes. Specifically, Article 10, section 6-3-1005(a)(ii) makes it a felony to "knowingly, and with intent to cause death or undue suffering, beats with cruelty, tortures, torments or mutilates an animal." WY Stat § 6-3-1005 (2022). While the term "torment" is not defined in the statute, dragging a wild animal into a bar with its mouth taped shut and subjecting it to the severe distress and anguish it must have suffered before being brought outside to be killed is a textbook example of torment. Violations of § 6-3-1005 are a felony offence subject to up to two years in prison and a fine of up to \$5,000. Roberts deserves the maximum prison term and fine given the sheer depravity and wanton disregard for common decency displayed by his actions.

While section 6-3-1008(a)(vii) provides an exception to the animal cruelty laws with the “hunting, capture, killing or destruction of any predatory animal or other wildlife in any manner not otherwise prohibited by law,” here the tormenting of an animal is otherwise prohibited by law, as noted above, making the exemption inapplicable. Any broader reading of that carve out from the state animal cruelty laws would mean that those humane provisions would be completely inoperative for any wildlife; such a reading would allow wildlife in the state to be subject to any amount of depraved torment and torture, which is obviously not the intent of the law.

And let’s be clear that while using a snowmobile to run over an animal may not be illegal in Wyoming, it is not an acceptable hunting method and is a clear violation of the fair chase principles outlined in the North American model for Wildlife Conservation. Nor is it a method of taking of an animal that would be tolerable to any rational person, further underscoring the need to take enforcement actions to keep wildlife, and even other people, safe from someone like Roberts.

We know from published articles that you, Sheriff Lehr, share our deep repulsion with what has happened in your jurisdiction. You have stated that you “find [Roberts’] actions very disturbing and unethical.” We also know that responsible hunters in Wyoming and across the country, along with wildlife conservationists and others, denounce what Roberts did to that helpless and tormented wolf. But without further punishment under the law, mere vocal condemnation and a \$250 slap on the wrist is not enough; there needs to be a clear message that Roberts actions are unquestionably unacceptable in a civilized society.

Wyoming has an anti-cruelty law for a good reason, and it must be put to use in this case. Please bring the charges warranted and let a jury of citizens decide his fate. We are confident the people of Wyoming will find Cody Roberts guilty of animal cruelty and apply a felony level penalty for this malice. This is not a man who should be freely roaming the state of Wyoming or any other jurisdiction in the nation with the ability to engage in this kind of cruel behavior again.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Edwards". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Scott" and last name "Edwards" clearly distinguishable.

Scott Edwards  
General Counsel  
Animal Wellness Action/Center for a Humane Economy