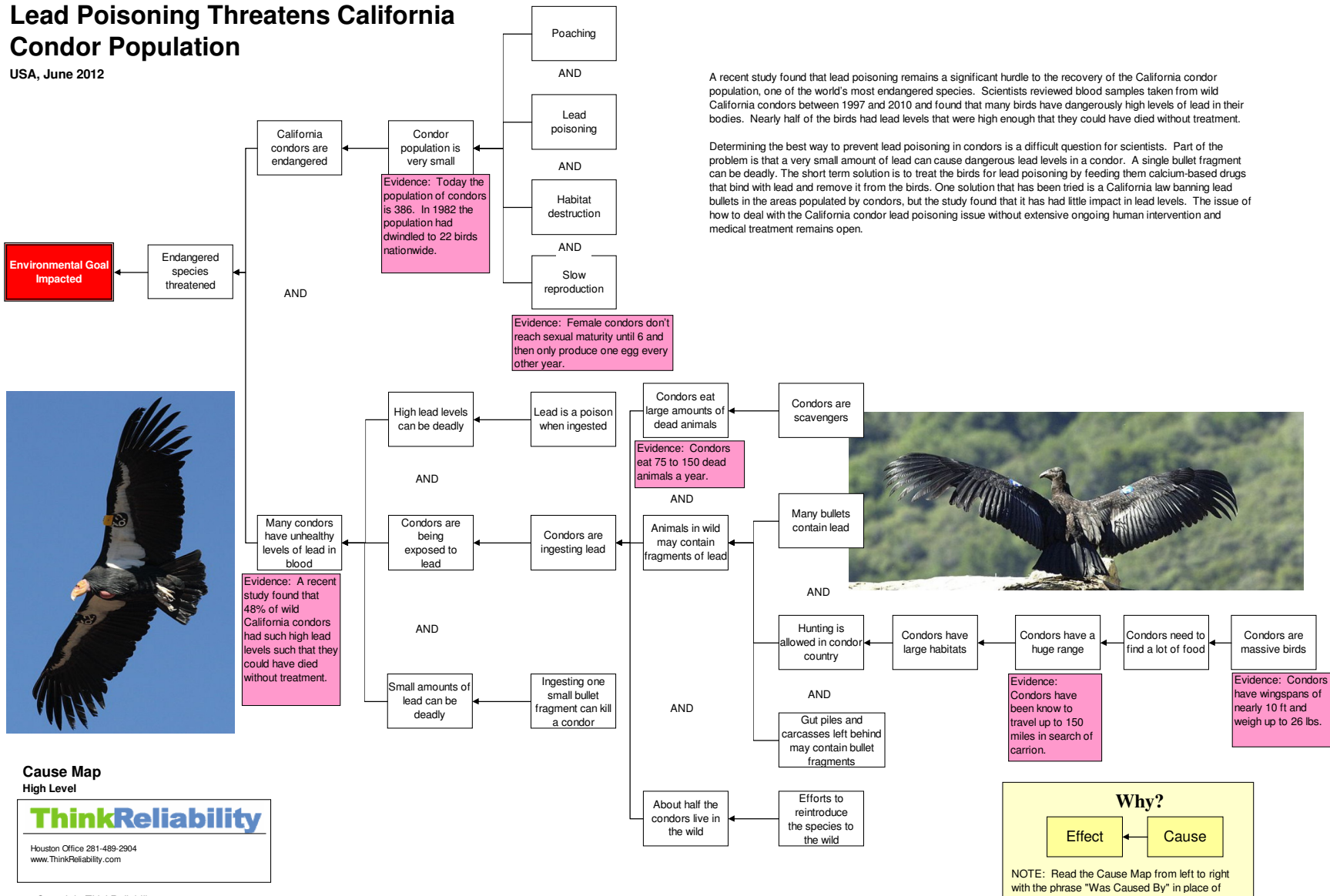


Lead Poisoning Threatens California Condor Population

USA, June 2012



A recent study found that lead poisoning remains a significant hurdle to the recovery of the California condor population, one of the world's most endangered species. Scientists reviewed blood samples taken from wild California condors between 1997 and 2010 and found that many birds have dangerously high levels of lead in their bodies. Nearly half of the birds had lead levels that were high enough that they could have died without treatment.

Determining the best way to prevent lead poisoning in condors is a difficult question for scientists. Part of the problem is that a very small amount of lead can cause dangerous lead levels in a condor. A single bullet fragment can be deadly. The short term solution is to treat the birds for lead poisoning by feeding them calcium-based drugs that bind with lead and remove it from the birds. One solution that has been tried is a California law banning lead bullets in the areas populated by condors, but the study found that it has had little impact in lead levels. The issue of how to deal with the California condor lead poisoning issue without extensive ongoing human intervention and medical treatment remains open.



Cause Map High Level

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Why?

Effect ← Cause

NOTE: Read the Cause Map from left to right with the phrase "Was Caused By" in place of