



MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

Headquarters

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SARA PARKER PAULEY, Director

May 22, 2017

Mr. Brandon Butler, Executive Director
Conservation Federation of Missouri
728 W. Main Street
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Dear Mr. Butler:

The resolution that pertains to the Missouri Department of Conservation (Department), adopted at the 2017 annual meeting of the Conservation Federation of Missouri (CFM), has been considered by staff. In response, we submit the following comments:

RESOLUTION NO. 11 – Investigate Potential for Lead Poisoning as a Result of Lost Lead Fishing Tackle in Missouri Department of Conservation Waterfowl Refuge Lakes, Marshes and Tributaries.

CFM recommends that the Missouri Department of Conservation develop a white paper related to the investigations necessary to determine the potential of lead poisoning as a result of lost lead fishing tackle on water birds, swans, ducks and other wildlife within Missouri's waterfowl refuges and tributaries where fishing is allowed.

RESPONSE: The Missouri Department of Conservation (Department) recognizes that the potential for lead poisoning of wildlife exists from the ingestion of lead fishing tackle, especially small lead weights and jigs. The American Fisheries Society and The Wildlife Society (Rattner et al. 2008) conducted a technical review and concluded that while the ingestion of lead from fishing tackle was lethal to individuals of certain species of waterfowl and waterbirds, the population-level effects on fish and wildlife species are not well-documented. A study conducted in the Mississippi Flyway, which includes Missouri, only found 1 duck out of 16,651 that had ingested lead fishing tackle (Anderson et al. 2000). However, the discovery that species such as loons and swans were ingesting lead fishing tackle prompted some jurisdictions in the U.S., Canada, and Europe to restrict the use of some types of lead fishing tackle. These and other species of waterbirds migrate through and winter in Missouri; however, it is uncertain if they are susceptible to lead while frequenting Missouri's wetlands, rivers, lakes, and reservoirs. The Department conducts annual mortality/morbidity surveys and will request lead toxicosis screening when submitting carcasses for diagnoses.

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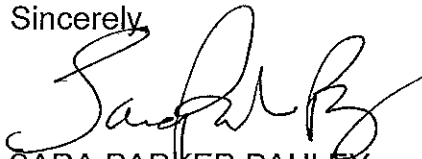
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The Department agrees with CFM regarding the importance of outreach and education efforts. It should be noted this position is consistent with both the American Fisheries Society and The Wildlife Society (TWS 2009 and AFS 2012). The Department currently has information about lead poisoning on its public website (<https://huntfish.mdc.mo.gov/hunting-trapping/hunting-diseases/lead-toxicosis-lead-poisoning>) and cooperates with the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services to provide outreach efforts about potential lead poisoning due to lead fishing tackle. The Department will review current outreach and education efforts focused on educating the public about the consequences of lead exposure to wildlife populations, creating awareness of alternatives to lead fishing tackle and ammunition, and encourage the use of nontoxic alternatives.

Sincerely,



SARA PARKER PAULEY
DIRECTOR

c: Conservation Commission
Deputy Director Draper
Deputy Director Battson Warren
Deputy Director Jeffries
Commission Secretary