

Originating Committee: Upland Wildlife Committee

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Intended Recipient: Missouri Department Conservation

Require Non-Toxic Shot for Small Game on All Missouri Department of Conservation Areas

WHEREAS, lead shot from shotgun pellets is toxic and poisons humans and wildlife through direct consumption or food web interactions, exposing over 130 species, including mammals, upland game birds, scavengers, raptors, waterfowl, amphibians, and humans; and

WHEREAS, lead ammunition is toxic to wildlife in two ways: primary poisoning (an animal ingests spent ammunition directly from the environment when searching for food) and secondary poisoning (an animal consumes lead poisoned or contaminated prey while hunting or scavenging); and

WHEREAS, lead is banned from gasoline, paint, and other household items in most developed countries, but is still used as our primary shot source; and

WHEREAS, wildlife are not likely to encounter lead from natural sources in the wild and primarily gain exposure from humans; and

WHEREAS, lead exposure can affect both the peripheral and central nervous system in wildlife and humans; and

WHEREAS, animals that survive lead poisoning often experience long-term negative effects that make them more susceptible to dangers such as predation and car collisions; and

WHEREAS, lead shot deposited on the land will not decompose and may contaminate soils and water or be consumed by wildlife; and

WHEREAS, mitigation or removal of lead contamination is possible, but is prohibitively expensive; and

WHEREAS, since 1991 waterfowl hunters in Missouri have been required to use non-toxic shot which has reduced incidences of lead poisoning from lead-shot ingestion by birds – including waterfowl and eagles – and other wildlife; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that lead-poisoning deaths of mallards in the Mississippi Flyway have fallen by 64 percent, and overall ingestion of toxic pellets declined by 78 percent over previous levels; and

WHEREAS, 37 conservation areas in Missouri have lead shot bans for all hunting with shotguns along with 20 other conservation areas that have lead shot bans for dove hunting; and

WHEREAS, expanded restrictions would increase efficacy of human health and wildlife protections from lead poisoning; and

WHEREAS, there are currently 13 types of non-toxic shot that are approved by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service; and

WHEREAS, while prices and availability fluctuate, non-toxic shot has been available for small game loads at prices that are comparable to lead shot; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the Conservation Federation of Missouri assembled this 6th day of March, 2021, recommends that the Missouri Department of Conservation expand the requirement for the use of non-toxic shot to all small-game species when hunting with shotshells on all property it owns or manages.

Searchable keywords: human health, hunting regulations, state public lands, small game, toxic shot, lead shot, non-toxic shot, lead poisoning

Expires: March 6, 2026