

**Conservation Federation of Missouri
2014 Resolutions**

Committee: Small Game & Furbearers
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Position Statement on Lead (Pb) Ammunition and Fishing Tackle

WHEREAS, Lead (Pb) has been used in ammunition and fishing tackle for centuries. Although it is a naturally occurring element, Pb has no functional or beneficial role in biological systems, and at very low or chronic levels of exposure it is toxic with negative effects depending on the species, and the health and age of the exposed individual; and

WHEREAS, recognized hazards of Pb ammunition to waterfowl and upland game birds date back to the late 1870s, with Pb ammunition for waterfowl hunting phased out during 1987-1992; and

WHEREAS, Pb exposure occurs in humans and wildlife when meat is embedded with small Pb bullet fragments in animal carcasses, or when Pb pellets are deposited on managed hunting fields and ingested directly (most commonly by surface feeding wildlife and song birds). Ingestion by reptiles, birds, and mammals of Pb-based traditional spent ammunition and lost fishing tackle has been documented and can cause a range of negative effects, potentially leading to population-level consequences in several species (e.g., waterfowl, eagles, condors, mourning doves, and loons); and

WHEREAS, ammunition manufacturers have developed nontoxic alternatives that can be used safely in all gauges of modern shotguns, as well as non-Pb rifle bullets for hunting big game. However, the widespread manufacture and availability of non-Pb ammunition depends on assured markets supported by a variety of policy options (e.g., information/communication efforts, incentive programs, training demonstrations), and regulation and enforcement; and

WHEREAS, Pb poisoning has been long recognized as a critically important conservation issue, but little progress has been made because of polarized discussion and ineffective communication among stake holders; and

WHEREAS, moving this issue forward in a rational manner requires agreement that Pb poisoning is a serious problem, and that it would be irresponsible for the conservation community not to address the issue; and

WHEREAS, a coordinated voluntary effort implemented at the state level is reasonable, sensible, and responsible; and options considered in some other states (e.g., regulatory ban on the use of lead) are far more damaging to stakeholder interests: now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Conservation Federation of Missouri assembled at the Capitol Plaza Hotel, Jefferson City, MO, this 23rd day of March 2014 explicitly recognize Pb has been known for centuries to be a broad-spectrum toxin to humans and wildlife, work toward a voluntary long-term reduction in the use of traditional Pb based ammunition and fishing tackle, and promote nontoxic or non-Pb alternatives, while recognizing complete replacement may not be possible. Recognize reduction of Pb for hunting, fishing, and shooting will require collaboration,

cooperation, and coordination among many different stakeholders, including wildlife professionals, hunters, anglers, policymakers, ammunition and tackle manufacturers, retailers, and the general public. Advocate for communication and information strategies that build partnerships, and acknowledge the crucial role hunters and anglers play in conservation. Support coordinated communication/information efforts to promote greater public awareness and understanding of the consequences of Pb exposure to wildlife populations, and emphasize the benefits to wildlife and the environment from using nontoxic and non-Pb ammunition and tackle alternatives. Request the Missouri Department of Conservation develop and implement strategies to increase understanding and awareness regarding the consequences of Pb exposure to wildlife and emphasizing the benefits of using nontoxic and non-Pb. Suggested outreach efforts include regulation brochures, conservation area signs or kiosks, hunter education materials, incentive programs to convert to non-Pb ammunition and tackle, live shooting demonstrations with nontoxic-shot and non-Pb ammunition, websites, and the Missouri Conservationist magazine.