

## Requiring non-toxic shot on farmland wildlife management areas

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Fish and Wildlife



The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources will take public comment on rules that would require hunters to use non-toxic shot on wildlife management areas in the farmland zone (see map).

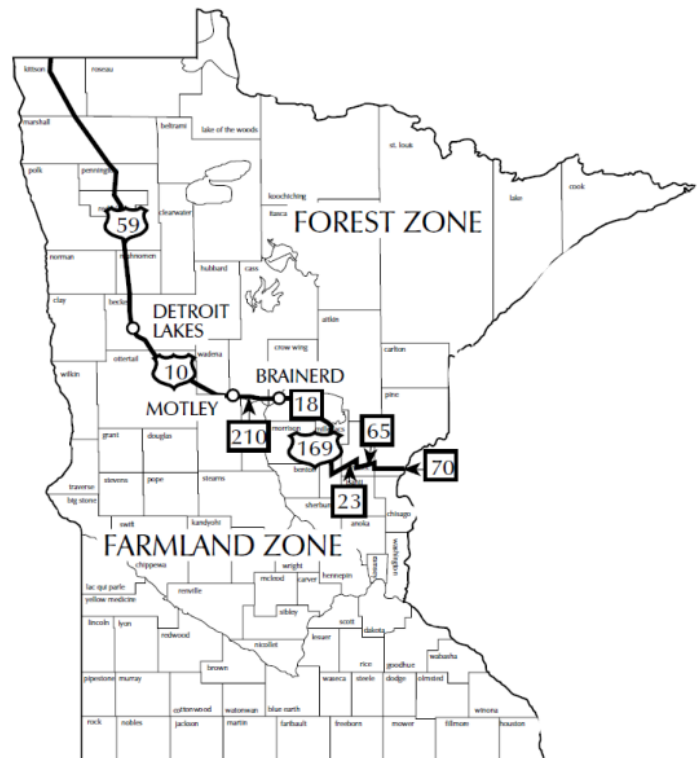
The requirement is part of an ongoing effort to reduce the amount of lead deposited on public hunting land, particularly on parcels that contain wetlands. Discussions of a non-toxic requirement began in 2008, with the formation of the Non-toxic Shot Advisory Committee and subsequent report.

### Who will be affected by the proposal?

The new rules would affect those who use shotguns to hunt for all small game on wildlife management areas in the farmland zone.

This would include:

- Wild turkey
- Ruffed grouse
- Ring-necked pheasant
- Eastern cottontail rabbit, white-tailed jackrabbit, Hungarian partridge and woodcock.



### Would the proposed rules affect all wildlife management areas?

No. The proposed rules would affect only wildlife management areas in the farmland zone, which is indicated on the map.

### Does this proposal affect any other types of land?

The proposed rules affect only wildlife management areas in the farmland zone which are well marked with square, metal yellow signs. The rules would not affect private land, state forest land or walk-in access areas.

### Will this affect deer hunters?

No. The new rules would not apply to deer hunters or any other hunters using single-projectile ammunition, such as rifles or shotguns with slugs. Deer hunters are encouraged to consider using non-toxic alternatives. Using non-toxic loads eliminates the potential risk of ingesting lead in game consumed by hunters and their families and protects scavengers like eagles from ingesting lead.

### **I hunt squirrels with a .22 rifle. Do I need non-toxic bullets?**

No. the new rules would apply only to shotgun shot. Non-toxic ammunition is not required for single-projectile ammunition.

### **When would this take effect?**

If adopted, the proposed rules would take effect in September of 2018, allowing adequate time for hunters and manufacturers to adjust their lead shot inventory.

### **Why is this being proposed?**

Because of its toxicity, the use of lead shot for waterfowl hunting has been illegal in Minnesota since 1987 and nationally since 1991. State wildlife management areas contain abundant wetlands and lead shot continues to be deposited in these wetlands as a result of upland game bird hunting.

### **What's so bad about lead shot?**

Lead is toxic, and when ingested it can affect wildlife and human health and reproduction and at higher levels, is fatal.

### **Isn't non-toxic shot more expensive and less effective than lead?**

Effective non-toxic loads are now widely available and cost about as much as a box of premium lead.

### **Do any other states have similar rules?**

Yes. The United States banned lead shot for hunting waterfowl in 1991 and at least 26 states have instituted lead shot restrictions beyond those mandated for waterfowl hunting. Non-toxic ammunition is required on most state land in South Dakota for small game as well as sandhill crane, snipe and tundra swan.

### **Is non-toxic shot required on any type of land in Minnesota right now?**

Yes. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has required non-toxic shot on waterfowl production areas and refuges since 1999. Because there are numerous waterfowl production areas in the farmland zone, many hunters already carry and use non-toxic shot when hunting small game on public lands.

### **Why should hunters support this regulation?**

Lead is a toxin that can kill humans and wildlife when it is eaten. Recent news reports have described concerns related to lead in children's toys and discussed how doves, loons, eagles, ravens and trumpeter swans have died from lead poisoning. Many hunters are still using lead shot even though sportsmen's groups like Ducks Unlimited support the use of non-toxic shot.

A regulation banning lead shot will protect wildlife and support a healthy environment. Banning lead shot will improve the image of hunters, safeguard hunting opportunities, and preserve our hunting heritage Support a ban on toxic lead shot in Minnesota's farmland zone.

### **What happens next?**

The DNR will take public comments on the proposed rules for at least 60 days, beginning Oct. 13, 2015. Comments may be directed to Jason Abraham, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155, by telephone at (651) 259-5197 or e-mail at [jason.abraham@statemn.us](mailto:jason.abraham@statemn.us)

