



NEWS RELEASE

from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Fish and Wildlife Service

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SERVICE PROPOSES TO STREAMLINE NON-TOXIC SHOT APPROVAL PROCESS

The Fish and Wildlife Service today proposed to streamline its procedures for approving non-toxic shot for waterfowl hunting, potentially reducing the amount of testing needed in many cases and making it quicker and easier to gain approval.

The proposed regulations would establish a three-tiered testing process for shot material and coatings.

All applicants would be required to complete the first tier, providing detailed information about shot material and coatings including chemical characteristics and an analysis of environmental toxicity.

If found non-toxic at the first tier, no further testing of the shot would be required. If there were an indication of a potential problem, more detailed testing would be required in a second tier. Again, only if the second tier testing pointed to potential toxicity would the applicant have to conduct the third tier of testing.

"For new types of shot in which there is no indication of a toxicity problem, the new procedures will allow applicants to gain quick approval and move their product out onto the market," said Acting Service Director John Rogers. "We are hopeful hunters will soon be able to choose from more types of non-toxic shot."

Currently, steel shot is the only shot unconditionally approved for use in waterfowl hunting. Bismuth-tin shot was approved on a conditional basis for the past two waterfowl hunting seasons while the Bismuth Cartridge Company completed testing. The Service believes bismuth-tin could be permanently approved in the near future.

The new regulations update procedures that initially went into effect in 1986 when the Service began a phase-out of the use of lead shot in waterfowl hunting. Those procedures have proved too cumbersome during the application process for bismuth-tin, the first shot material tested under existing standards.

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In addition, there have been important advances in the field of ecological risk assessment that can now be applied in the procedures.

The public may submit written comments on the proposed regulations until Tuesday, March 26, 1996. Comments should be sent to: Chief, Office of Migratory Bird Management, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203.