



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE ANNOUNCES NONTOXIC SHOT REQUIREMENTS FOR 1987-88 WATERFOWL SEASON

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has published final regulations establishing zones where nontoxic (steel) shot will be required for waterfowl and coot hunting during the 1987-88 hunting season.

The nontoxic shot zones cover 44 States and include counties having an average annual waterfowl harvest of 20 or more per square mile, areas where nontoxic shot was required last year, and additional areas identified by States. More than 70 percent of the nation's waterfowl harvest is expected to occur in nontoxic shot zones this fall. Five States--Iowa, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, and Wisconsin--will require nontoxic shot for waterfowl hunting Statewide this fall.

Illinois and Washington have not yet approved nontoxic shot regulations proposed by the Fish and Wildlife Service in January, so no regulations for those States are included in this rulemaking. Final regulations for them will be published later if they approve the proposals. State approval is required before nontoxic shot regulations may be enforced. The Fish and Wildlife Service has previously notified States that the Service will not open waterfowl hunting seasons in areas proposed as nontoxic shot zones unless States approve the nontoxic shot requirements.

Muzzleloaders will not be required to use nontoxic shot for waterfowling this year, as the Service proposed in January. The Service has decided to delay implementation of nontoxic shot requirements for muzzleloaders until the 1988-89 hunting season in order to give States time to bring their laws and regulations into compliance with Federal requirements.

The Service is requiring for the first time this year that nontoxic shot be used when hunters are taking nonwaterfowl species, such as moorhens, in an "aggregate" or combined bag limit along with waterfowl or coots. Thus, if nontoxic shot is required for one or more species of an aggregate bag limit, it must be used for taking all species in the same aggregate.

The nontoxic shot regulations for this year implement the Interior Department's 1986 decision to phase in nontoxic shot requirements for waterfowl hunting throughout the United States by 1991. This decision established a schedule for implementing nontoxic shot requirements according to the size of the waterfowl harvest in any given county as follows:

(over)

Number of Waterfowl Harvested Per Square Mile	Year Nontoxic Shot Required
20 or more	1987-88
15 or more	1988-89
10 or more	1989-90
5 or more	1990-91
Fewer than 5	1991-92

Details of the nontoxic shot requirements for this year were published in the July 21, 1987, Federal Register. Waterfowlers are urged to consult State hunting regulations closely before going afield this fall to be sure they know where nontoxic shot is required.