



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Washington D.C. 20240



Mr. John Devney, Chair
Hunting and Wildlife Conservation Council
c/o Doug Hobbs, Designated Federal Officer
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
5275 Leesburg Pike, MS: OC
Falls Church, Virginia 22041

Dear Mr. Devney:

Thank you for the July 23, 2024, Hunting and Wildlife Conservation Council (Council) letter transmitting the Council's endorsement of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) efforts to implement the Council recommendations pertaining to the future use and management of lead and lead-free ammunition on federal lands and providing some additional feedback on our implementation efforts.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Council for its diligent work over the last two years in support of the Service's efforts to increase angling, hunting and shooting opportunities on Service lands while at the same time minimizing or eliminating the threat that lead poisoning poses to wildlife species, particularly raptors. Based on the thoughtful feedback and recommendations from the Council, the Service is implementing, a durable and collaborative approach that should address the issue of lead poisoning into the future.

Since your July meeting, the Service has undertaken significant actions related to the Council's recommendations. We launched an economic incentive-based, lead-free hunting ammunition, pilot program on seven national wildlife refuges located in seven different states across the country. Our goal is to encourage and increase the use of lead-free ammunitions use on Service lands and waters. We undertook these efforts in partnership, and close cooperation, with the Council and its Wildlife Health Subcommittee, as well as states through the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, and directly with state fish and wildlife agency directors.

After the hunting season, the Service will evaluate the pilot program to determine its efficacy in increasing awareness and use of lead-free ammunition and its potential for reducing lead poisoning in wildlife.

Thank you again for the Council's continued efforts to collaborate with the Service regarding implementation of its thoughtful recommendations and to help shape America's conservation

future. If you have questions or need more information regarding this matter please contact Cynthia Martinez, Chief, National Wildlife Refuge System, at Cynthia_Martinez@fws.gov.

Sincerely,

Stephen Guertin
Acting Director