

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8169

To require the Secretary of Agriculture to prohibit the use of lead ammunition on all lands and waters under the jurisdiction and control of the Forest Service, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 30, 2024

Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania (for herself and Mr. LIEU) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Agriculture to prohibit the use of lead ammunition on all lands and waters under the jurisdiction and control of the Forest Service, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Lead Free Forests Act
5 of 2024”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) There are no defined safe levels of lead in-
2 take in humans, and the toxic effects of lead are nu-
3 merous and largely irreversible. Lead has been
4 banned from gasoline, paints, and various household
5 items in most developed countries, while lead ammu-
6 nition is still widely used for hunting and shooting
7 in the United States.

8 (2) Poisoning from spent lead ammunition puts
9 the health of raptors, scavengers, and other animals
10 at risk. Lead contamination of carcasses remains a
11 particularly serious threat to the health and sustain-
12 ability of scavenging birds, many of whom are killed
13 each year after ingesting lead from spent ammun-
14 ition.

15 (3) People who frequently consume hunted ani-
16 mals shot with lead ammunition are at risk of high
17 dietary lead exposure.

18 (4) The adverse effects of lead on children's in-
19 tellectual capacity are well established, especially the
20 decline in IQ and loss of cognitive skills.

21 (5) Used lead ammunition can take over 100
22 years to disappear from the environment, allowing
23 for large concentrations of lead in areas where hunt-
24 ing is common.

1 (6) Discarded lead shot pellets left to accumu-
2 late in the environment will ultimately be deposited
3 as particles in soil and water, where uptake of this
4 lead by plants and animals can occur.

5 (7) United States National Forests provide im-
6 portant habitats to countless species. People from
7 across the country and the world come to National
8 Forests to appreciate wildlife, through hunting and
9 watching wildlife.

10 **SEC. 3. NONTOXIC AMMUNITION.**

11 (a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection
12 (c), and not later than 1 year after enactment, the Sec-
13 retary, acting through the Chief, shall issue final regula-
14 tions prohibiting the discharge of any firearm using am-
15 munition other than nonlead ammunition certified under
16 subsection (b) on all lands and waters under the jurisdic-
17 tion and control of the Forest Service.

18 (b) CERTIFICATION.—

19 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Chief shall, for the pur-
20 poses of enforcing this section and in consultation
21 with State and Tribal governments, establish and
22 annually update a list of nonlead ammunition.

23 (2) PUBLICATION.—The Chief shall make the
24 list established and updated under paragraph (1)

1 publicly available on the website of the Forest Serv-
2 ice.

3 (c) EXCEPTIONS.—The prohibition under subsection
4 (a) shall not apply to—

5 (1) a Government official or agent carrying out
6 a statutory duty unrelated to the management of
7 wildlife;

8 (2) a State, local, Tribal, or Federal law en-
9 forcement officer or the agent of such officer when
10 carrying out a statutory duty unrelated to the man-
11 agement of wildlife; or

12 (3) an active member of the United States mili-
13 tary when carrying out official duties.

14 (d) PENALTIES.—A person that knowingly violates
15 subsection (a)—

16 (1) for the first violation, may be assessed a
17 fine by the Secretary of not more than \$500; and

18 (2) for a second or subsequent violation, shall
19 be assessed a fine by the Secretary of not less than
20 \$1,000 and not more than \$5,000.

21 (e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

22 (1) AMMUNITION.—The term “ammunition”
23 means any bullet, ball, sabot, slug, buckshot, shot,
24 pellet, or other projectile that is expelled from a fire-
25 arm through a barrel by force.

1 (2) CHIEF.—The term “Chief” means the Chief
2 of the Forest Service.

3 (3) EXPLOSIVE.—The term “explosive” has the
4 meaning given such term in section 844 of title 18,
5 United States Code.

6 (4) FIREARM.—The term “firearm” means any
7 weapon which expels ammunition by the action of an
8 explosive or compressed air.

9 (5) NONLEAD AMMUNITION.—The term
10 “nonlead ammunition” means ammunition in which
11 there is no lead content, excluding the presence of
12 trace amounts of lead.

13 (6) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
14 the Secretary of Agriculture.

15 (7) TRACE AMOUNTS.—The term “trace
16 amounts” means one percent or less by weight of the
17 total weight of the ammunition.

○