



# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

## news release

**Fish and Wildlife Service**

For Release: June 30, 1993

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### U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE CONSIDERING REGULATIONS ON SHOTGUN SHELLS

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced today it is seeking public comment on a notice of intent to propose limits on the length of shotgun shells, the size of shot, and the coatings on nontoxic shot used in waterfowl hunting. The Service said its notice is based on concerns that existing waterfowl hunting regulations have become outdated in the face of advancing technology.

In a three-part notice published in the June 30, 1993, Federal Register, the Service announced its intent to limit the length of shotgun shells to 3.5 inches, the largest currently available on the market. By limiting the length of shells, the Service expects to discourage long-range shooting that can lead to crippling and, in effect, over harvest of birds.

In addition, the Service proposes to limit the diameter of shot size to no larger than a No. T (0.20 inch). The proposed regulation is intended to reduce crippling losses by limiting shot sizes to those that have been demonstrated to be the most efficient for harvesting large waterfowl.

Under the notice, the hunting community and others would be given time to deplete their supplies of size No. F shot (0.22 inch), which is larger than T shot.

The Service also proposes to require shotgun shell manufacturers to obtain the Service's approval for anti-corrosive coatings on nontoxic shot pellets. Although nontoxic shot is currently required to hunt waterfowl and coots in the United States, there are currently no standards that control the coating applied to the shot pellets, which could be toxic. Waterfowl often swallow spent shot as grit, and this regulation would attempt to ensure that shot coatings would be nontoxic when ingested.

Public comments will be considered for 90 days after publication in the Federal Register. Additional information on this proposal can be obtained by writing: Director/MBMO, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Mail Stop 634, Arlington, Virginia 22203 or by calling 703-358-1714.

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INT REQ 304953  
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