

**HUNTING WITH NON-LEAD AMMUNITION:** For the health and safety of our community, the Nez Perce Tribe Fish & Wildlife Commission and Wildlife Division recommends hunters switch to non-lead ammunition to harvest food.

There are multiple benefits to hunting with non-lead ammo.

*(Fin and Field: April 28, 2016).* Like lead-core bullets, non-lead bullets (copper) expand rapidly upon impact, but stay in one piece and leave no contamination behind. Copper bullets have comparable accuracy and impact on game and superior penetration compared to lead due to higher weight retention. Centerfire non-lead bullets have been improved since they first came out in the mid-1980s and are designed as premium ammunition for big game. Studies show that copper bullets have higher velocity than lead. This means they fly straighter and set the standard for penetration and energy transfer. With copper, you can use a 15-20% lighter grain bullet and get performance increases with no compromise (if you are a long-distance shooter look into Cutting Edge copper bullets designed for this). When switching from lead ammunition, site non-lead rounds in to your scope and expect a flatter trajectory. Premium lead ammo and non-lead ammo are very similarly price and there are often online deals (see below).



**Bottom Line: Copper based non-lead ammo is deadly accurate, reduces meat wastage, provides a healthy meal for your family and helps save eagles and other wildlife.**

Lead from spent ammo impacts non-game wildlife: The average jacketed lead-core bullet loses 30%-40% of its weight upon impact as the bullet mushrooms. Research using x-rays shows this weight loss translates into *hundreds of tiny small fragments* that spread into meat and discarded gut piles. Whether a lead-core bullet hits bone or not, lead dust and tiny particles can move 18 inches or more away from the wound channel and can be easily absorbed into the blood stream if ingested (by people, or wildlife). These fragments are often swallowed by scavengers such as, eagles, hawks, ravens, vultures, bears, wolves, etc. that routinely search out hunted left-overs as a food source.

Lead is a toxic metal with no “safe” level of exposure. Ingesting lead fragments can cripple, or kill our wildlife. Raptor rehabilitation centers have shown that this is a widespread problem in all types of birds of prey. *Consider the sacred trust responsibilities we have with those we share our homeland with as stewards: choosing to hunt (and fish) lead free is a way to give back after harvesting food.* Doing so not only provides a clean food source for eagles and other wildlife, it also ensures you are taking home healthy meat. Lead has been removed from many products including, paint, gasoline, toys, and plumbing. It is a known neuro-toxin and it is wise to keep it out of our food and off our land.

Even though the impacts of sub-lethal exposures are difficult to detect, *the effects of lead poisoning are permanent and untreatable.* Even small amounts of ingested lead can impact the human nervous system, suppress immunity, increase blood pressure, decrease sex drive, cause anemia and memory loss and contribute to a poor appetite. Pregnant women and growing children are especially vulnerable. Lead exposure contributes to miscarriages and can permanently lower a child’s IQ, cause learning disabilities, increase aggressive behavior and lower impulse control (studies show a direct correlation with particle lead exposure and increased crime rates, *U.S. National Library of Medicine and National Institutes of Health: June, 2004*). Lead ammunition is still a good choice for the shooting range, just remember to sight your scope in with copper rounds to harvest food. **One shot, one kill: shoot clean!**

**Barnes, Nosler E-Tip, Hornady GMX, Federal Trophy Copper, Winchester Deer Season XP Copper Impact, Browning BXS and Remington HTP Copper** are some of the popular non-lead ammo brands available. For online deals on lead free ammo check out: [www.ammoseek.com](http://www.ammoseek.com), or [www.gunbot.net](http://www.gunbot.net), enter “lead-free” in the search box and prioritize by price. For videos, research, and tips on lead-free hunting visit: [www.huntingwithnonlead.org](http://www.huntingwithnonlead.org), or [www.nonleadpartnership.org](http://www.nonleadpartnership.org)