



## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

OCT 11 2013

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am signing Assembly Bill 711.

This bill would prohibit the use of lead ammunition when taking wildlife with a firearm. It would also require the Fish and Game Commission to promulgate regulations by July 1, 2015 that phase in these requirements no later than July 1, 2019.

Lead poses a danger to wildlife. This danger has been known for a long time – in 1894 one of the founders of the wildlife conservation movement in America, George Bird Grinnell, wrote about lead poisoning in *Forest and Stream*, a precursor to today's *Field and Stream* magazine, and there is much published scientific literature from the 1950s on regarding this danger. In 1991, the US Fish and Wildlife Service banned lead in waterfowl hunting across the nation. Since 2007, California has prohibited it in the eight counties within the condor range. In fact, at least thirty other states regulate lead ammunition in some manner.

I am concerned, however, the impression left from this bill is that hunters and sportsmen and women in California are not conservationists. I know that is not the case. Hunters and anglers are the original conservationists. Since the 1930s, hunters have done more than any other community to conserve species and their habitats, and that is a lasting conservation legacy.

I am able to sign this bill because of amendments made to it that better protect the hunting community. The bill in its original form did not contain any such protections. Even though alternatives to lead ammunition exist today, it is notable that the bill took the extra precaution to authorize the Director of Fish and Wildlife to suspend the statewide ban on lead ammunition in the event that the federal government prohibits nonlead ammunition because it is considered armor piercing.

In addition, the bill: (a) allows an additional year for the California Fish and Game Commission to promulgate an implementing rule; (b) pushes back the date for full ban

almost five years to July 2019 so that hunters have more time to transition; (c) requires adoption of already approved nontoxic shotgun ammunition; and, (d) permits trace amounts of lead in certified nonlead ammunition to avoid enforcement and compliance concerns.

I am directing the Department to work tirelessly with the Commission and its constituents to consider and act on any and all options for facilitating the least disruptive phase-in, including incentives for hunters to make this transition.

The risks to California's incredibly diverse wildlife are many. We must manage our state's wildlife for the use and enjoyment of all Californians. It is time to begin this transition and provide hunters with ammunition that will allow them to continue the conservation heritage of California.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edmund G. Brown Jr.', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Edmund G. Brown Jr.