

Leda Beth Gray
Blue Hill
LD 958

Dear Senator David LaFountain, Representative Scott Landry, and Members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee,

I'm writing to express strong support for LD 958, to close the loophole in the law that allows painted lead sinkers to be used in fishing. The death of loons by lead poisoning, is gruesome, tragic, and unnecessary. By the time the bird becomes sick enough that it can be caught, it is usually too late. Whether or not the lead sinkers it ingests when it eats fish that have the sinkers in them are painted or not doesn't make a whole lot of difference. Painted sinkers cause lead poisoning just as surely as unpainted ones.

I think pretty much all Mainers love the loons in our state and don't want them to suffer. I don't really understand why people even want to fish with lead. Yes, it is very dense and so can be a smaller sinker for the same weight but when I used to fish, I mostly used old hardware like washers and nuts as weights, and was able to catch fish okay.

Avian Haven is a good place to go to get information about lead poisoning because they rescue and rehab birds including lead poisoned loons. I follow them on facebook and read story after story of them not being able to save lead-poisoned birds, which can also include eagles who have ingested lead shot from carcasses left out by hunters. Here is just one example of a loon that died from lead poisoning-- one that had two chicks dependent on her.

<https://www.facebook.com/AvianHaven.org/posts/2366408406768460>

Please do the humane thing and ban painted and unpainted fishing tackle by voting for LD 958. Thank you for your service to the people of Maine.