

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

## Fish and Wildlife Service

## 50 CFR Part 20

RIN 1018-AE14

## Migratory Bird Hunting; Final Frameworks for Early-Season Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Final rule.

**SUMMARY:** This rule prescribes final early-season frameworks which States, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands may select season dates, limits, and other options for the 1997–98 migratory bird hunting seasons. Early seasons are those which generally open prior to October 1. The effect of this final rule is to facilitate the selection of hunting seasons by the States and Territories to further the annual establishment of the early-season migratory bird hunting regulations. These selections will be published in the **Federal Register** as amendments to §§ 20.101 through 20.107, and § 20.109 of title 50 CFR part 20.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** This rule takes effect on August 20, 1997.

**ADDRESSES:** States and Territories should send their season selections to: Chief, Office of Migratory Bird Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, ms 634—ARLSQ, 1849 C Street, NW., Washington, DC 20240. The public may inspect comments during normal business hours in room 634, Arlington Square, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Arlington, Virginia.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Paul R. Schmidt, Chief, Office of Migratory Bird Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, (703) 358–1714

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:****Regulations Schedule for 1997**

On March 13, 1997, the Service published in the **Federal Register** (62 FR 12054) a proposal to amend 50 CFR part 20. The proposal dealt with the establishment of seasons, limits, and other regulations for migratory game birds under §§ 20.101 through 20.107, 20.109, and 20.110 of subpart K. On June 6, 1997, the Service published in the **Federal Register** (62 FR 31298) a second document providing supplemental proposals for migratory bird hunting regulations frameworks and detailed information on the 1997–98 regulatory schedule and announced the Service Migratory Bird Regulations

Committee and Flyway Council meetings. In the same document, the Service described the proposed 1997–98 regulatory alternatives for duck hunting.

On June 27, 1997, the Service held a public hearing in Washington, DC, as announced in the March 13 and June 6 **Federal Registers** to review the status of migratory shore and upland game birds. The Service discussed hunting regulations for these species and for other early seasons. On July 23, 1997, the Service published in the **Federal Register** (62 FR 39712) a third document specifically dealing with proposed early-season frameworks for the 1997–98 season. That document also extended the public comment period to August 5, 1997, for early-season proposals. This rulemaking establishes final frameworks for early-season migratory bird hunting regulations for the 1997–98 season.

**Review of Flyway Council Recommendations, Public Comments and the Service's Responses**

The public comment period for early-season issues ended on August 5, 1997. The Service received recommendations from all four Flyway Councils. Early-season comments are summarized and discussed in the order used in the March 13 **Federal Register**. Only the numbered items pertaining to early seasons for which comments were received are included. Flyway Council recommendations shown below include only those involving changes from the 1996–97 early-season frameworks. For those topics where a Council recommendation is not shown, the Council supported continuing the same frameworks as in 1996–97.

**General**

**Written Comments:** The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) recommended all seasons open at noon, mid-week, to reduce the large kills associated with the traditional Saturday openings. They also recommend that hunting during the one-half hour before sunrise be eliminated.

**1. Ducks**

The categories used to discuss issues related to duck harvest management are as follows: (A) General Harvest Strategy, (B) Framework Dates, (C) Season Length, (D) Closed Seasons, (E) Bag Limits, (F) Zones and Split Seasons, and (G) Special Seasons/Species Management. Only those categories containing substantial early-season recommendations are included below.

**G. Special Seasons/Species Management***iii. September Teal Seasons*

**Council Recommendations:** The Lower-Region Regulations Committee of the Mississippi Flyway Council recommended the continuance of the experimental September teal/wood duck seasons in Kentucky and Tennessee for the 1997–98 season with no change from the 1996–97 season frameworks.

The Central Flyway Council recommended a 3-year experimental teal harvest strategy in the Central Flyway based on the breeding population of blue-winged teal. When the 3-year running average breeding population of blue-winged teal is 4.7 million or greater, the Council's recommended harvest strategy would consist of two changes to the current September teal season frameworks. First, in those Central Flyway States currently allowed a September teal season, an additional 7 days of hunting (for a total of 16 days) and 1 additional teal (for a total of 5 teal) would be allowed. Second, for Central Flyway production States, the recommended harvest strategy would provide for a season of up to 7 days, beginning no earlier than September 20, and a daily bag limit of 4 ducks, 3 of which must be teal. The Council further recommended that the Service work with the States to cooperatively develop an experimental design and criteria to adequately evaluate the proposed expansion of teal harvest.

**Written Comments:** The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (Kansas), Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (Nebraska), North Dakota Game and Fish Department (North Dakota), Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation (Oklahoma), South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks (South Dakota), and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (Texas) supported the Central Flyway proposal for September teal seasons. Kansas and Texas commented that additional harvest provided by the proposed season expansion will not be excessive or negatively impact future teal populations. Kansas and Texas indicated that ongoing work associated with implementation of the Adaptive Harvest Management Program should not preclude completion of this management initiative. Kansas said they are willing to satisfy requirements associated with evaluation and monitoring associated with implementation of this proposed strategy. Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas indicated that this strategy will encourage the development and maintenance of wetland habitat and promote hunting by youth hunters. Nebraska pointed out that their duck breeding population was 17 percent

above the most recent 5-year average and would appreciate the additional opportunity that would be provided by the Central Flyway proposal. North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming indicated that approval of the Central Flyway proposal would provide additional opportunity for northern States at a time when teal populations are at an all-time high. North Dakota commented that implementation of this proposal is currently appropriate because the Central Flyway preseason duck banding program will provide information for evaluations. North Dakota pointed out that their blue-winged teal population estimate for this year is 115 percent above the long-term average.

Several individuals recommended higher daily bag limits for teal given the current population level. Two individuals from Texas recommended a 5-teal daily bag limit while an individual from Missouri recommended a 6-teal limit. Another individual from Texas questioned why the Service was reluctant to increase the teal season length and bag limit. Nine individuals from Mississippi expressed preference for a 5-day teal and wood duck season rather than the present 9-day teal only season.

*Service Response:* It is important that any proposal for expanding the current teal season include a comprehensive evaluation plan and be coordinated within and among the Flyways. Identifying the full scope of any expansion is important, because it will dictate how extensive the evaluation plan must be.

The Central Flyway proposal does not include an evaluation plan. As previously stated, the evaluation plan must include study objectives, experimental design, decision criteria, and identification of data needs. The evaluation plan should address not only potential impacts to teal populations, but also impacts to nontarget species and the ability of hunters to comply with special-season regulations. Further, the September teal season bag limit should be limited to teal and not expanded to include other species, as was contained in the Central Flyway's proposal.

In an effort to further define what would comprise an acceptable evaluation plan, the Service suggests that any plan should consider the following: (1) description of the population dynamics of teal (e.g., how the populations respond to changes in the environment, harvest pressure, etc.), (2) current and predicted harvest pressure on teal, (3) the levels of regulations to be considered, (4) the

harvest allocation among and within (i.e., production vs. nonproduction states) Flyways, (5) the acceptable attempt rate at nontarget species (i.e., the rate at which hunters attempt to shoot ducks other than teal), and (6) staff and financial resources to conduct the evaluation.

*iv. September Duck Seasons*

*Council Recommendations:* The Upper-Region Regulations Committee of the Mississippi Flyway Council recommended that Iowa be allowed to open the second segment of their split duck season no earlier than October 10, instead of October 15.

*Service Response:* Although this is primarily a late-season issue, the Service understands Iowa's concern for reaching a decision on the issue at this time. The Service concurs with this minor change in Iowa's framework.

*vi. Youth Hunt*

*Council Recommendations:* The Atlantic Flyway Council recommended the continuance of the youth waterfowl hunt day and requested the Service announce their intent in June. The Council further recommended that ducks, coots, mergansers, moorhens, brant and snow geese be open to harvest on the special day and requested clarification of whether youth may participate in other open migratory bird hunting seasons on that day.

The Upper-Region Regulations Committee of the Mississippi Flyway Council recommended that youth waterfowl hunt day bag limits be the same as the regular-season bag limits and include ducks, geese, and coots, with framework dates 14 days outside the regular duck-season framework dates instead of 10.

The Lower-Region Regulations Committee of the Mississippi Flyway Council recommended the inclusion of geese and coots in a 2-day youth waterfowl hunting season, with framework dates 14 days outside of the regular duck-season framework dates instead of 10.

The Pacific Flyway Council recommended continuation of the youth hunt that allows States to select outside the general season and frameworks.

*Public-Hearing Comments:* Mr. Robert McDowell, representing the Atlantic Flyway Council, encouraged the Service to make an early announcement regarding the Youth Waterfowl Hunt Day and asked to include Atlantic brant, snow geese, and moorhens along with ducks as legal game.

*Written Comments:* The New Jersey Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife encouraged the Service to make an early announcement of their intention to hold

another youth hunting day. They also recommended that ducks, moorhens, brant and snow geese be open to harvest on the special day.

An individual from Wisconsin supported the establishment of a special youth hunt for the 1997-98 hunting season. Another commenter from Nebraska thanked the Service for the establishment of the youth hunt last year.

*Service Response:* The Service appreciates the recommendations from the Flyway Councils regarding the continuation of a youth waterfowl hunting day for this hunting season. While the Service recognizes that there will be those organizations and individuals opposed to the establishment of this day on the basis of general opposition to hunting as a desirable outdoor recreational activity, the Service reiterates its belief that recreational sport hunting is a proper and compatible use of a renewable natural resource. The Service is further directed by various legislation to regulate the hunting of migratory waterfowl and views its role as one of permitting recreational harvest opportunities consistent with long-term resource conservation for all Americans. As part of this objective, the Service believes a well-educated and properly trained hunting constituency is in the best interest of the resource and views a youth hunting day as an educational opportunity to help ensure safe, high-quality hunting for future generations of Americans. The Service believes that the special 1-day hunt is consistent with its responsibility to provide general education and training in the wise recreational uses of our nation's valuable wildlife resources and provides the best and safest learning environment for our youth who are interested in hunting.

Regarding the Councils' recommendation on the framework dates, the Service agrees that the period 14 days prior to and after the outside framework dates for the regular duck season provides sufficient flexibility for States to provide this opportunity to their constituents.

The Service recognizes the potential opportunity that inclusion of geese in the youth waterfowl hunt might provide. However, due to season closures and restrictions in place to protect certain populations of Canada geese in various parts of the country, the Service believes this complication is not appropriate at this point but is certainly a matter for consideration in future regulatory cycles. Further, these guidelines do not preclude the inclusion of geese in the daily bag if the goose

season is open at the time of the special youth hunt. Therefore, the Service believes this opportunity should be offered during the 1997-98 hunting season and will utilize the following guidelines:

(1) States may select 1 day per duck-hunting zone, designated as "Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day", in addition to their regular duck seasons.

(2) The day must be held outside any regular duck season on either a weekend, holiday, or other non-school day when youth hunters would have the maximum opportunity to participate.

(3) The day could be held up to 14 days before or after any regular duck-season frameworks or within any split of a regular duck season.

(4) The daily bag limit may include ducks, mergansers, coots, moorhens, and gallinules and would be the same as that allowed in the regular season. Flyway species restrictions would remain in effect.

(5) Youth hunters must be 15 years of age or younger.

(6) An adult at least 18 years of age must accompany the youth hunter into the field. This adult could not duck hunt but may participate in other seasons that are open on the special youth day.

### 3. Sea Ducks

*Written Comments:* The HSUS recommended the sea duck season either be closed or severely restricted until more complete information on biology and population status is available.

*Service Response:* The Service continues to be concerned about the status of sea ducks and the potential impact that increased hunting activity could have on these species. While there are ongoing cooperative efforts to summarize additional information on sea ducks, the Service continues to emphasize the importance of completing the sea duck management plan. The Service also believes that improvements in survey capabilities for these species are extremely important for future management actions. The Service will continue to closely monitor these species.

### 4. Canada Geese

#### A. Special Seasons

*Council Recommendations:* The Atlantic Flyway Council recommended a 3-year experimental September Canada goose season in New Jersey with a framework closing date of the first Saturday in October. The Council also recommended an experimental framework closing date of October 5 for the Long Island, New York, 1997 September Canada Goose Season.

The Pacific Flyway Council recommended several modifications to

the existing special September goose seasons. The Council recommended expansion of the Washington September Canada goose hunt zone to include all of Washington for 7 consecutive days. In California, the Council recommended the establishment of a new 9-day season, with a 2-bird daily bag and possession limit, in Humboldt County, California. Harvest of up to 200 birds would be controlled through a regulated permit system. In Oregon, the Council recommended that the framework in Clatsop, Columbia, Multnomah, Washington, Clackamas, Marion, Yamhill, Polk, Linn, Benton, Lane, Lincoln, and Tillamook Counties be 14 consecutive days between September 1 and 20 with a daily bag and possession limit of 5 and 10 birds, respectively.

*Public-Hearing Comments:* Mr. Robert McDowell, representing the Atlantic Flyway Council, reiterated support for New Jersey's request for extension of the special September Canada goose season to the first Saturday in October and New York's request to extend to October 5 and cited that all criteria have been met. These additional days would increase the harvests of resident geese and help to reduce complaints.

*Written Comments:* The Maryland Department of Natural Resources opposed the extension of the framework closing date in New Jersey's September Canada goose season. They believed that there will be an insufficient number of migrant neck-banded geese in the migrant population to evaluate the impacts of this proposed change. They further believed that due to potential differences in vulnerability to harvest between resident and migrant geese, the addition of hunting days in early October could lead to even higher than expected migrant goose harvest.

The New Jersey Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife supported the modification of the framework closing date in New Jersey to the first Saturday in October. They estimated that the additional days would allow hunters to harvest an additional average of 1,600 resident Canada geese which would help slow population growth and reduce the number and severity of nuisance goose complaints. In response to Maryland's comments, they pointed out several other techniques for assessing migrant harvest during special seasons, such as the continuing telemetry studies and the initiation of Atlantic Population (AP) pre-season breeding ground banding in 1997. New Jersey contends that use of these data sets will greatly enhance the understanding of arrival dates of AP geese and will replace the dependence

on the disappearing migrant neck bands. New Jersey further pointed out that their proposal meets the criteria established by the Atlantic Flyway Council and the Service for special Canada goose seasons targeting resident Canada geese.

*Service Response:* At the request of the Atlantic Flyway Council, the Service temporarily extended framework closing dates in the Atlantic Flyway on resident geese in 1996 to September 25, without evaluation in most areas, and on an experimental basis to September 30 in New Jersey and North Carolina. Presently, New Jersey has completed only one year of its agreed upon 3-year evaluation.

Although extending the framework closing dates into early October in New Jersey and New York would increase harvests of resident geese and help to alleviate injurious problems, the Service believes that further evaluation is needed before all parties are comfortable that the harvest of migrant geese will not exceed 10 percent of the special season harvest. Also, the Service is concerned that sample sizes of neck-banded migrant geese are no longer sufficient to estimate the percentage of migrant geese in the early seasons with any degree of reliability. Both New Jersey's and New York's proposals indicate that the harvests of migrant geese increases rather dramatically after October 1 and there is little capability to measure precisely the percentage of migrant harvest. Thus, the Service does not support New Jersey's request until it completes its 3-year evaluation. However, based on the observations presented, the Service would support New York extending its season on Long Island from September 25 until September 30 on a 3-year experimental basis.

With respect to the Pacific Flyway Council's recommendations, the Service supports the change to a 7-day Statewide season in Washington and the new season proposal for California, as both of these recommendations conform to the existing Service criteria for special Canada goose seasons. The Service also endorses the proposal for a 14-day experimental season in Oregon between September 1 and 20. The Service notes that a 3-year evaluation of that portion of the season occurring after September 15 is required. The Service is particularly concerned about possible impacts on dusky Canada geese. The Service specifically requires monitoring be conducted for the presence of neck-banded dusky Canada geese throughout the hunt area during this period as a part of the experimental evaluation. Additionally, the Service requires Oregon to submit an annual report of

their evaluation by July 15 each year describing the results of this monitoring program. These results will be reviewed prior to continuation of the experiment during the 3-year experimental period and modifications of the area open to hunting during this period will be required if dusky Canada geese are found to be present during the season.

#### B. Regular Seasons

*Council Recommendations:* The Upper-Region Regulations Committee of the Mississippi Flyway Council recommended Michigan and Wisconsin be allowed to open their regular Canada goose season as early as September 27, 1997, in Michigan's Upper Peninsula and September 20, 1997, in Wisconsin.

*Service Response:* The Service concurs.

#### 9. Sandhill Cranes

*Council Recommendations:* The Central Flyway and Pacific Flyway Councils recommended that in Montana, sandhill cranes in Wheatland County and that portion of Sweet Grass County north of I-90 be delineated as Rocky Mountain Population sandhill cranes. Thus, management of these cranes, including harvest, would be guided by the Rocky Mountain Population Sandhill Crane Management Plan, rather than the Mid-Continent Population Sandhill Crane Management Plan.

*Service Response:* The Service agrees with this minor change.

#### 14. Woodcock

*Council Recommendations:* The Atlantic Flyway Council recommended framework dates of October 6 to January 31, a 30-day season and 3-bird daily bag limit and urged the Service to make assessment of the relative effects of harvest and habitat on woodcock populations a high priority.

The Mississippi Flyway Council recommended an interim woodcock harvest strategy for the Central region until such time as Regional Woodcock Management Plans and a long-term harvest strategy are completed. The interim harvest strategy would consist of the following:

The following harvest restrictions would be implemented when the cumulative change since 1968 in the number of woodcock heard in the Singing-ground Survey exceeds 51 percent for the Central Management Region:

(1) Season framework dates would be the Saturday nearest September 22 through January.

(2) The daily bag limit would be reduced from 5 to 3 birds.

*Public-Hearing Comments:* Mr. Robert McDowell, representing the Atlantic Flyway Council, expressed reluctant support for the recommendation for more restrictive framework dates and season lengths for woodcock. However, he indicated that given the proposed September 20 opening framework in the Mississippi and Central Flyway States, perhaps October 1, rather than October 6, would be a more appropriate opening date for the Atlantic Flyway. He encouraged the Service to assess the relative roles of harvest and habitat changes in woodcock population declines.

Mr. Charles D. Kelley, representing the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, acknowledged the problem with declining woodcock populations and encouraged the Service to work with the States to address the problem of diminishing woodcock habitat.

Mr. William H. Goudy, representing the Ruffed Grouse Society, expressed concern about the lost recreational opportunity that will result from reduced season lengths and bag limits, particularly in the Mississippi Flyway. Although the change in bag limits would be acceptable, he regretted the loss in days. He indicated that the population data on which the Service bases its decisions is flawed and subject to criticism and that there is no information on what effects the changes in regulations will have. He expressed support for the expanded use of zones for woodcock hunting.

*Written Comments:* The New Jersey Division of Fish, Game, and Wildlife supported the Atlantic Flyway Council's recommended framework dates of October 6 to January 31, a 30-day season and 3-bird daily bag limit. Although they believed that the population declines were the result of habitat changes and harvest played little or no role in the declines, they realized that the data bases regarding woodcock populations are not adequate to assess the role of harvest in woodcock population dynamics. They further urged the Service to make assessment of the relative effects of harvest and habitat on woodcock populations a high priority.

The Ohio Division of Wildlife (Ohio) believed that the population declines were habitat related. Based on this belief, Ohio recommended the Service adopt the Mississippi Flyway Council's recommendation regarding woodcock harvest regulations. They did not support changing harvest regulations when evidence of hunting as the cause of the decline is not conclusive and believed that these actions could

significantly affect recreational opportunity.

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (Louisiana) and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (Tennessee) expressed disappointment in the Service's proposed woodcock frameworks and the failure to adopt the Mississippi Flyway Council's recommendation. Louisiana encouraged the Service to reconsider its proposed actions and urged the Service to attack the real problem affecting woodcock populations' habitat. Tennessee further requested the Service provide the States the option to have two zones with no more than a 5- and 10-day penalty for a 45- and 65-day framework, respectively.

The Louisiana Wildlife Federation (LWF) urged the Service to reconsider and allow for a 65-day season and a 5-bird daily bag limit in the Central Region. The LWF was concerned that the proposed reductions would reduce participation and needed support for woodcock conservation.

The Wildlife Management Institute (WMI) did not agree with the Service's proposal to reduce woodcock seasons and bag limits. WMI believed this action would have major negative effects on hunters, public perceptions of hunters, and State/Federal relations and would not have a significant effect on woodcock population trends. WMI suggested the Service could better respond to woodcock declines by emphasizing management programs that create early successional forest habitats.

The Service also received many comments from individuals with many noting the importance of habitat management. Several individuals from Michigan, Ohio, Maine, and North Carolina supported more restrictive woodcock hunting regulations indicating that restrictions were overdue. Four individuals from Wisconsin and one from Michigan supported reducing the bag limit from 5 to 3 birds but expressed concerns about other possible regulatory changes. They indicated a shorter season would be acceptable but felt that the framework opening date should remain September 15, noting that hunting opportunity in northern areas would be affected disproportionately by a later framework opening date. Another individual from Wisconsin felt that changes in regulations should only be made when it is certain that they will help the population. He indicated the season should begin before October 1 and that it should not be shorter than 45 days. An individual from Michigan indicated that based on his personal observations, woodcock populations have not

declined. He felt that an opening date later than September 15 would take away the best time to hunt and suggested different opening and closing dates based on latitude. Another individual from Michigan implied that regulations should not be changed unless hunting mortality is causing the population declines. An individual from Kentucky thought that reducing the woodcock harvest would help a little but would not solve the overall problem. An individual from Tennessee supported the Service's proposed changes except for reductions in season length. An individual from New Hampshire suggested a special 20-day blackpowder season.

Individuals from Louisiana (18), Pennsylvania, Michigan, Maryland, and Vermont opposed any changes in regulations, generally citing habitat changes and/or weather as the causes of the woodcock population decline. Many of these individuals were concerned that more restrictive regulations would reduce the number of woodcock hunters and thus, support for woodcock conservation. Four of these individuals indicated that the Service should improve its ability to monitor woodcock populations before restricting hunting regulations while another believed that the Service's delay in implementing the American Woodcock Management Plan was inexcusable and negligent. Another individual from Louisiana was not opposed to restrictions provided that accurate data indicate that hunting pressure is the major cause of the population declines. Three individuals from Texas opposed more restrictive hunting regulations based on the presumption that the Singing-Ground Survey is statistically flawed and potentially biased.

The HSUS commended the Service for its proposal to reduce woodcock hunting seasons given the long-term population declines that have occurred throughout its range.

*Service Response:* Woodcock populations have declined significantly since the 1960s, and in recent years reproductive success has been poor. The Service is very concerned about the ongoing declines in woodcock populations. Although hunting mortality is not believed to be the major force driving the declines, the Service believes some restrictions to woodcock harvest opportunity are appropriate given the current status and trends of woodcock populations and the limited information on the role of hunting mortality and other factors in woodcock population dynamics. While habitat changes appear to be the primary cause of the woodcock population declines,

other factors, including hunting mortality, may be contributing to the declines, and the importance of these factors may increase as populations, reproductive success, and the habitat base decline. Thus, the Service believes that hunting regulations should be commensurate with woodcock population status and rates of decline. A combination of changes in framework dates, bag limits, and season length are necessary in order to achieve a significant reduction in harvest that is shared throughout the range of the woodcock.

Therefore, in response to continuing long-term declines in the woodcock population, the Service is implementing several framework changes. In the Eastern Region, the Service concurs with the recommendation from the Atlantic Flyway Council for framework dates of October 6 through January 31, season length of 30 days, and a daily bag limit of 3 birds. New Jersey may continue to select 2 zones with a reduced season length of 24 days in each zone. In the Central Region, the Service will utilize framework dates of the Saturday nearest September 22 (September 20 this year) through January 31, a reduced season length of 45 days (from 65 days), and a bag-limit reduction from 5 to 3 birds. The Service believes that these restrictions represent a compromise to achieve a reduction in harvest while still allowing reasonable recreational opportunity.

The Service also acknowledges that existing woodcock surveys are somewhat limited compared to surveys for some other migratory bird species, and believes this is one of the reasons a cautious approach to harvest management is appropriate. Although the Service always seeks to improve its monitoring programs whenever practical, woodcock populations are inherently difficult to monitor because of the bird's inconspicuous nature and preference for areas with dense vegetation. Although some aspects of the Singing-ground Survey may warrant scrutiny and/or improvement, the current survey provides the only index to changes in abundance of breeding populations of woodcock and the results are used with confidence to guide the decision-making process. Improved information on total woodcock harvest and hunter success will be available when the Harvest Information Program, currently being implemented by the Service and State wildlife agencies, is fully implemented. Unfortunately, this information is not likely to clarify the relationship between hunting mortality and population status.

The Service notes that a 30-day season with an October 1 framework opening date would result in little or no reduction in harvest in the northern states in the Atlantic Flyway, where much of the harvest in the Flyway occurs. Thus, the Service concurs with the original October 6 recommendation by the Atlantic Flyway Council, which was not predicated on the establishment of specific regulations in the Mississippi and Central flyways.

The Service believes zoning has the potential to increase the harvest of woodcock, and therefore does not support the expanded use of zoning at a time when more restrictive woodcock hunting regulations are being established to bring harvest opportunities to a level more commensurate with current woodcock population status.

The Service seeks active participation by the Flyway Councils to address the major factors behind long-term population declines, and to develop a long-term harvest strategy for woodcock.

#### **17. White-winged and White-tipped Doves**

*Council Recommendations:* The Central Flyway Council recommended removing the restriction of no more than 6 white-winged doves in the aggregate daily bag limit during the regular mourning dove season in Texas.

*Service Response:* The Service supports removing the restriction on the number of white-winged doves allowed within the aggregate daily bag limit during the regular dove season in Texas. The distribution and density of white-winged doves have expanded northward in Texas. Populations have doubled since 1989, with an estimated 702,000 whitewings nesting in a 17-county area north of the Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV), which historically was the only area occupied by the birds. No increase in harvest is expected for whitewings in the LRGV. In the remainder of the State, a harvest increase of 15 percent is projected.

#### **18. Alaska**

*Council Recommendations:* The Pacific Flyway Council recommended an experimental tundra swan season in the Kotzebue Sound region of Alaska's Game Management Unit (GMU 23), which would be consistent with the Pacific Flyway Management Plan's harvest and permit guidelines for the Western Population of [Tundra] swans, and current guidelines for conducting experimental seasons (3-year evaluation). The recommended season framework would be September 1 - October 31 with a 3-swan per season

limit (by sequential permit) and a maximum of 300 permits in the GMU.

The Pacific Flyway Council recommended an increase in Alaska's dark goose daily bag and possession limits from 4 and 8 to 6 and 12, respectively in GMU 9(D) and the Unimak Island portion of Unit 10.

The Pacific Flyway Council recommended an increase in Alaska's falconry bag limits to 6 daily and 12 in possession for migratory birds in the aggregate. Restrictive species limits would not be applied.

*Written Comments:* The HSUS recommended that the opening date for all seasons in Alaska be delayed by 2 weeks so that young birds are able to leave natal marshes before being subjected to hunting pressure.

*Service Response:* The Service concurs with the proposal to offer an experimental tundra swan season in GMU 23 consistent with the Flyway Management Plan and hunt guidelines in the Hunt Plan for the Western Population of Tundra Swans. The Service also supports the change in the dark goose bag and possession limits in Unit 9(D) and the Unimak Island portion of Unit 10. The Service finds no compelling rationale for the request to alter the falconry bag and possession limits in Alaska and will maintain the existing national falconry bag and possession limits in all States.

Regarding the opening date for seasons in Alaska, the Service reiterates previous responses that hunting pressure on migratory birds is comparatively light. Many northern species migrate from the State before seasons open there in September and there is no evidence to indicate regulated hunting has adversely impacted local populations.

## 23. Other

### A. Compensatory Days

*Council Recommendations:* The Atlantic Flyway Council requested the Service grant compensatory days for States in their Flyway that are closed to waterfowl hunting statewide on Sunday by State law. The Council's requested compensatory days would apply to waterfowl seasons only and not to other migratory game birds. The compensatory request includes the States of Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia. The Council believes that granting this request at this time will allow integration of these changes into AHM evaluations of harvest rates in the Flyway and selection of appropriate regulatory alternatives.

*Public-Hearing Comments:* Mr. Robert McDowell, representing the Atlantic Flyway Council, offered to modify the Flyway's original request for compensatory days to states closed to Sunday hunting by restricting it to only those states with existing statewide prohibitions in place prior to its implementation. This action prevents any states from enacting new laws to close Sunday hunting in order to be eligible for compensatory days.

*Written Comments:* The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources asserted that Sunday closures of waterfowl hunting are State issues and should not be addressed by the Service. South Carolina further asserted that if the Service grants compensatory days to States that are currently closed on Sundays by State law, then compensatory days should also be granted to States that enact Sunday closures in the future.

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources objected to the Service offering compensatory days to States in the Atlantic Flyway with Sunday closures. They believed that this was a State issue and, as such, the Federal government should not be involved. They further believed that each State should change any applicable self-imposed restrictions relating to Sunday hunting closures and that involving Federal procedures to circumvent State laws sets a bad precedent that could open the door for further involvement in future unresolved issues.

The Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife recommended the Service grant compensatory days in lieu of Sunday hunting on a 1 for 1 basis to restricted States with no penalty to unrestricted States.

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (Maryland) requested that the Service grant compensatory days to the 10 Atlantic Flyway States that are closed to waterfowl hunting on Sunday by State law. They believe that compensatory days would enable these States to equally share in the recreational benefits derived from the Flyway's waterfowl resource. Maryland supported the Federal closure of Sunday for the taking of wild waterfowl if the Service deemed this approach necessary to provide compensatory days. However, Maryland requested the Service give consideration to the current Sunday hunting exception Maryland grants falconers.

The New Jersey Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife (New Jersey) requested the Service grant compensatory days for States in their Flyway that are closed to waterfowl

hunting statewide on Sunday by State law. New Jersey's requested compensatory days would apply to waterfowl seasons only and not to other migratory game birds. The compensatory request includes the States of Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Several individuals from Maryland questioned the need to close Sundays to the take of all migratory waterfowl, including falconry, in order to provide compensatory hunting days to those States prohibiting Sunday hunting.

*Service Response:* In 1995, the Service committed to working with the Atlantic Flyway Council to review and better clarify the issue of compensatory days for those States prohibiting Sunday hunting in an attempt to resolve this long-standing issue. In the past, the Service has maintained the policy that this problem is an individual State issue, to be resolved by each State removing their self-imposed restrictions. However, recognizing the difficulties involved with changing State law, the Service is sympathetic to the loss of hunting opportunity that results from the existing prohibitions on Sunday hunting. A recent Service assessment suggests that compensatory days for Sunday closures will result in a slight increase in the harvest rates of mallards breeding in eastern Canada and the northeastern U.S., which would be accompanied by a small decrease in average breeding population size. A similar effect is expected on other species. Thus, after examining the various technical and policy concerns, the Service believes that any additional harvest impacts can be adjusted by changing regulatory frameworks where needed and that various administrative and procedural concerns can be managed. Therefore, during the 1997-98 hunting season, the Service will offer compensatory days to States in accordance to the following guidelines:

(1) Only States in the Atlantic Flyway that prohibit Sunday hunting *Statewide* by State law prior to 1997 are eligible (Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia).

(2) All Sundays will be closed to all take (including extended falconry) of migratory waterfowl (including mergansers and coots) by Federal rulemaking. Other migratory game species are not eligible for compensatory days.

(3) Season days must run consecutively within prescribed framework dates and season length, excluding the Sunday closure, and conform to existing split-season criteria. Total season days (including extended falconry) must not exceed 107 days.

**NEPA Consideration**

NEPA considerations are covered by the programmatic document, "Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement: Issuance of Annual Regulations Permitting the Sport Hunting of Migratory Birds (FSES 88-14)," filed with EPA on June 9, 1988. The Service published a Notice of Availability in the June 16, 1988, **Federal Register** (53 FR 22582). The Service published its Record of Decision on August 18, 1988 (53 FR 31341). Copies of these documents are available from the Service at the address indicated under the caption **ADDRESSES**.

**Endangered Species Act Consideration**

As in the past, the Service designs hunting regulations to remove or alleviate chances of conflict between migratory game bird hunting seasons and the protection and conservation of endangered and threatened species. Consultations have been conducted to ensure that actions resulting from these regulatory proposals will not likely jeopardize the continued existence of endangered or threatened species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of their critical habitat. Findings from these consultations are included in a biological opinion and may cause modification of some regulatory measures previously proposed. The final frameworks reflect any modifications. The Service's biological opinions resulting from its Section 7 consultation are public documents available for public inspection in the Service's Division of Endangered Species and MBMO, at the address indicated under the caption **ADDRESSES**.

**Executive Order (E.O.) 12866**

This rule is economically significant and was reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under E.O. 12866.

**Congressional Review**

In accordance with Section 251 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (5 U.S.C. 8), this rule has been submitted to Congress and has been declared major. Because this rule establishes hunting seasons, this rule qualifies for an exemption under 5 U.S.C. 808(1); therefore, the Department determines that this rule shall take effect immediately.

**Regulatory Flexibility Act**

These regulations have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601

*et seq.*). In the March 13, 1997, **Federal Register**, the Service reported measures it took to comply with requirements of the Act. One measure was to prepare a Small Entity Flexibility Analysis (Analysis) in 1996 documenting the significant beneficial economic effect on a substantial number of small entities. The Analysis estimated that migratory bird hunters would spend between \$254 and \$592 million at small businesses in 1996. Copies of the Analysis are available upon request from the MBMO.

**Paperwork Reduction Act**

The Department examined these regulations under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3507(d)). Under the Act, information collections must be approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The Service uses the various information collection requirements contained in this rule to develop future migratory game bird hunting regulations. Specifically, the information collection requirements of the Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program have been approved by OMB and assigned clearance number 1018-0015. This information is used to provide a sampling frame for voluntary national surveys to improve Service harvest estimates for all migratory game birds in order to better manage these populations. OMB approval for the Sandhill Crane Harvest Questionnaire, 1018-0023, has expired and has been submitted to OMB for reinstatement. The information from this survey is used to estimate the magnitude, the geographical and temporal distribution of harvest, and the portion its constitutes of the total population. The Service will not collect this information until OMB approval has been obtained and a **Federal Register** notice published. Additionally, no person may be required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB number.

**Regulations Promulgation**

The rulemaking process for migratory game bird hunting must, by its nature, operate under severe time constraints. However, the Service intends that the public be given the greatest possible opportunity to comment on the regulations. Thus, when the preliminary proposed rulemaking was published, the Service established what it believed were the longest periods possible for public comment. In doing this, the Service recognized that when the comment period closed, time would be of the essence. That is, if there were a delay in the effective date of these regulations after this final rulemaking,

the States would have insufficient time to select season dates and limits; to communicate those selections to the Service; and to establish and publicize the necessary regulations and procedures to implement their decisions.

Therefore, the Service, under authority of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (July 3, 1918), as amended, (16 U.S.C. 703-711), prescribes final frameworks setting forth the species to be hunted, the daily bag and possession limits, the shooting hours, the season lengths, the earliest opening and latest closing season dates, and hunting areas, from which State conservation agency officials may select hunting season dates and other options. Upon receipt of season and option selections from these officials, the Service will publish in the **Federal Register** a final rulemaking amending 50 CFR part 20 to reflect seasons, limits, and shooting hours for the conterminous United States for the 1997-98 season.

The Service therefore finds that "good cause" exists, within the terms of 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3) of the Administrative Procedure Act, and these frameworks will, therefore, take effect immediately upon publication.

**Unfunded Mandates**

The Service has determined and certifies in compliance with the requirements of the Unfunded Mandates Act, 2 U.S.C. 1502 *et seq.*, that this rulemaking will not impose a cost of \$100 million or more in any given year on local or State government or private entities.

**Civil Justice Reform—Executive Order 12988**

The Department, in promulgating this rule, has determined that these regulations meet the applicable standards provided in Sections 3(a) and 3(b)(2) of Executive Order 12988.

**Authorship**

The primary author of this rule is Ronald W. Kokel, Office of Migratory Bird Management.

**List of Subjects in 50 CFR Part 20**

Exports, Hunting, Imports, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Transportation, Wildlife.

The rules that eventually will be promulgated for the 1997-98 hunting season are authorized under 16 U.S.C. 703-711, 16 U.S.C. 712, and 16 U.S.C. 742 a—j.



Dated: August 8, 1997.

**Donald J. Barry,**

*Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks.*

### **Final Regulations Frameworks for 1997-98 Early Hunting Seasons on Certain Migratory Game Birds**

Pursuant to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and delegated authorities, the Department of Interior approved the following frameworks which prescribe season lengths, bag limits, shooting hours, and outside dates within which States may select seasons for certain migratory game birds between September 1, 1997, and March 10, 1998.

#### **General**

*Dates:* All outside dates noted below are inclusive.

*Shooting and Hawking (taking by falconry) Hours:* Unless otherwise specified, from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset daily.

*Possession Limits:* Unless otherwise specified, possession limits are twice the daily bag limit.

*Area, Zone, and Unit Descriptions:* Geographic descriptions are contained in a later portion of this document.

*Compensatory Days in the Atlantic Flyway:* In the Atlantic Flyway States of Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia, where Sunday hunting is prohibited statewide by State law, all Sundays are closed to all take of migratory waterfowl (including mergansers and coots).

#### **Special September Teal Season**

*Outside Dates:* Between September 1 and September 30, an open season on all species of teal may be selected by Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado (Central Flyway portion only), Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, New Mexico (Central Flyway portion only), Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Texas in areas delineated by State regulations.

*Hunting Seasons and Daily Bag Limits:* Not to exceed 9 consecutive days, with a daily bag limit of 4 teal.

*Shooting Hours:* One-half hour before sunrise to sunset, except in Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, and Ohio, where the hours are from sunrise to sunset.

#### **Special September Duck Seasons**

Florida: An experimental 5-consecutive-day season may be selected in September. The daily bag limit may not exceed 4 teal and wood ducks in the aggregate.

Kentucky and Tennessee: In lieu of a special September teal season, an experimental 5-consecutive-day season may be selected in September. The daily bag limit may not exceed 4 teal and wood ducks in the aggregate, of which no more than 2 may be wood ducks.

Iowa: Iowa may hold up to 5 days of its regular duck hunting season in September. All ducks which are legal during the regular duck season may be taken during the September segment of the season. The September season segment may commence no earlier than the Saturday nearest September 20 (September 20). The daily bag and possession limits will be the same as those in effect last year, but are subject to change during the late-season regulations process. The remainder of the regular duck season may not begin before October 10.

#### **Special Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day**

*Outside Dates:* States may select 1 day per duck-hunting zone, designated as "Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day", in addition to their regular duck seasons. The day must be held outside any regular duck season on either a weekend, holiday, or other non-school day when youth hunters would have the maximum opportunity to participate. The day could be held up to 14 days before or after any regular duck-season frameworks or within any split of a regular duck season.

*Daily Bag Limits:* The daily bag limit may include ducks, mergansers, coots, moorhens, and gallinules and would be the same as that allowed in the regular season. Flyway species restrictions would remain in effect.

*Shooting Hours:* One-half hour before sunrise to sunset.

*Participation Restrictions:* Youth hunters must be 15 years of age or younger. In addition, an adult at least 18 years of age must accompany the youth hunter into the field. This adult could not duck hunt but may participate in other seasons that are open on the special youth day.

#### **Scoter, Eider, and Oldsquaw Ducks (Atlantic Flyway)**

*Outside Dates:* Between September 15 and January 20.

*Hunting Seasons and Daily Bag Limits:* Not to exceed 107 days, with a daily bag limit of 7, singly or in the aggregate of the listed sea-duck species, of which no more than 4 may be scoters.

*Daily Bag Limits During the Regular Duck Season:* Within the special sea duck areas, during the regular duck season in the Atlantic Flyway, States may choose to allow the above sea duck limits in addition to the limits applying

to other ducks during the regular duck season. In all other areas, sea ducks may be taken only during the regular open season for ducks and must be included in the regular duck season daily bag and possession limits.

*Areas:* In all coastal waters and all waters of rivers and streams seaward from the first upstream bridge in Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New York; in any waters of the Atlantic Ocean and in any tidal waters of any bay which are separated by at least 1 mile of open water from any shore, island, and emergent vegetation in New Jersey, South Carolina, and Georgia; and in any waters of the Atlantic Ocean and in any tidal waters of any bay which are separated by at least 800 yards of open water from any shore, island, and emergent vegetation in Delaware, Maryland, North Carolina and Virginia; and provided that any such areas have been described, delineated, and designated as special sea-duck hunting areas under the hunting regulations adopted by the respective States.

#### **Special Early Canada Goose Seasons**

##### *Atlantic Flyway*

##### *General Seasons*

Canada goose seasons of up to 15 days during September 1-15 may be selected for the Montezuma Region of New York; the Lake Champlain Region of New York and Vermont; the Counties of Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, and Talbot in Maryland; Delaware; and Crawford County in Pennsylvania. Seasons not to exceed 20 days during September 1-20 may be selected for the Northeast Hunt Unit of North Carolina. Seasons may not exceed 25 days during September 1-25 in the remainder of the Flyway, except Georgia and Florida, where the season is closed. Areas open to the hunting of Canada geese must be described, delineated, and designated as such in each State's hunting regulations.

*Daily Bag Limits:* Not to exceed 5 Canada geese.

##### *Experimental Seasons*

Experimental Canada goose seasons of up to 30 days during September 1-30 may be selected by New Jersey, New York (Long Island Zone), North Carolina (except in the Northeast Hunt Unit), and South Carolina. Experimental Canada goose seasons of up to 25 days during September 1-25 may be selected in Crawford County, Pennsylvania. Areas open to the hunting of Canada geese must be described, delineated, and designated as such in each State's hunting regulations.



*Daily Bag Limits:* Not to exceed 5 Canada geese.

#### *Mississippi Flyway*

##### General Seasons

Canada goose seasons of up to 15 days during September 1-15 may be selected, except in the Upper Peninsula in Michigan, where the season may not extend beyond September 10, and in the Michigan Counties of Huron, Saginaw and Tuscola, where no special season may be held. The daily bag limit may not exceed 5 Canada geese. Areas open to the hunting of Canada geese must be described, delineated, and designated as such in each State's hunting regulations.

#### *Central Flyway*

##### General Seasons

Canada goose seasons of up to 15 days during September 1-15 may be selected. The daily bag limit may not exceed 5 Canada geese. Areas open to the hunting of Canada geese must be described, delineated, and designated as such in each State's hunting regulations.

#### *Pacific Flyway*

##### General Seasons

Wyoming may select an 8-day season on Canada geese between September 1-15. This season is subject to the following conditions:

1. Where applicable, the season must be concurrent with the September portion of the sandhill crane season.
2. All participants must have a valid State permit for the special season.
3. A daily bag limit of 2, with season and possession limits of 4 will apply to the special season.

Oregon may select an experimental special Canada goose season of up to 15 days during the period September 1-20. Daily bag limits may not exceed 5 Canada geese. At a minimum, Oregon must provide an annual evaluation of the number of dusky Canada geese present in the hunt zone during the period September 16-20 and agree to adjust seasons as necessary to avoid any potential harvest of dusky Canada geese.

Washington may select a special Canada goose season of up to 15 days during the period September 1-15. Daily bag limits may not exceed 3 Canada geese.

Idaho may select a 15-day season in the special East Canada Goose Zone, as described in State regulations, during the period September 1-15. All participants must have a valid State permit and the total number of permits issued is not to exceed 110 for this zone. The daily bag limit is 2.

Idaho may select a 7-day Canada Goose Season during the period

September 1-15 in Nez Perce County, with a bag limit of 4.

California may select a 9-day season in Humboldt County during the period September 1-15.

Areas open to hunting of Canada geese in each State must be described, delineated, and designated as such in each State's hunting regulations.

#### **Regular Goose Seasons**

Regular goose seasons may open as early as September 20 in Wisconsin and September 27 in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Season lengths and bag and possession limits will be the same as those in effect last year, but are subject to change during the late-season regulations process.

#### **Sandhill Cranes**

##### *Regular Seasons in the Central Flyway:*

*Outside Dates:* Between September 1 and February 28.

*Hunting Seasons:* Seasons not to exceed 58 consecutive days may be selected in designated portions of the following States: Colorado, Kansas, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming. Seasons not to exceed 93 consecutive days may be selected in designated portions of the following States: New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.

*Daily Bag Limits:* 3 sandhill cranes.

*Permits:* Each person participating in the regular sandhill crane seasons must have a valid Federal sandhill crane hunting permit in their possession while hunting.

##### *Special Seasons in the Central and Pacific Flyways:*

Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming may select seasons for hunting sandhill cranes within the range of the Rocky Mountain Population subject to the following conditions:

*Outside Dates:* Between September 1 and January 31.

*Hunting Seasons:* The season in any State or zone may not exceed 30 days.

*Bag limits:* Not to exceed 3 daily and 9 per season.

*Permits:* Participants must have a valid permit, issued by the appropriate State, in their possession while hunting.

*Other provisions:* Numbers of permits, open areas, season dates, protection plans for other species, and other provisions of seasons must be consistent with the management plan and approved by the Central and Pacific Flyway Councils. Seasons in the Park-Big Horn Unit in Wyoming and Idaho are experimental.

#### **Common Moorhens and Purple Gallinules**

*Outside Dates:* Between September 1 and January 20 in the Atlantic Flyway, and between September 1 and the Sunday nearest January 20 (January 18) in the Mississippi and Central Flyways. States in the Pacific Flyway have been allowed to select their hunting seasons between the outside dates for the season on ducks; therefore, they are late-season frameworks and no frameworks are provided in this document.

*Hunting Seasons and Daily Bag Limits:* Seasons may not exceed 70 days in the Atlantic, Mississippi, and Central Flyways. Seasons may be split into 2 segments. The daily bag limit is 15 common moorhens and purple gallinules, singly or in the aggregate of the two species.

#### **Rails**

*Outside Dates:* States included herein may select seasons between September 1 and January 20 on clapper, king, sora, and Virginia rails.

*Hunting Seasons:* The season may not exceed 70 days, and may be split into 2 segments.

##### *Daily Bag Limits:*

Clapper and King Rails - In Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland, 10, singly or in the aggregate of the two species. In Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia, 15, singly or in the aggregate of the two species.

Sora and Virginia Rails - In the Atlantic, Mississippi, and Central Flyways and the Pacific-Flyway portions of Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, and Wyoming, 25 daily and 25 in possession, singly or in the aggregate of the two species. The season is closed in the remainder of the Pacific Flyway.

#### **Common Snipe**

*Outside Dates:* Between September 1 and February 28, except in Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia, where the season must end no later than January 31.

*Hunting Seasons and Daily Bag Limits:* Seasons may not exceed 107 days and may be split into two segments. The daily bag limit is 8 snipe.

#### **American Woodcock**

*Outside Dates:* States in the Atlantic Flyway may select hunting seasons between October 6 and January 31. States in the Central and Mississippi Flyways may select hunting seasons

between the Saturday nearest September 22 (September 20) and January 31.

*Hunting Seasons and Daily Bag*

*Limits:* Seasons may not exceed 30 days in the Atlantic Flyway and 45 days in the Central and Mississippi Flyways. The daily bag limit is 3. Seasons may be split into two segments.

*Zoning:* New Jersey may select seasons in each of two zones. The season in each zone may not exceed 24 days.

**Band-tailed Pigeons**

*Pacific Coast States (California, Oregon, Washington, and Nevada)*

*Outside Dates:* Between September 15 and January 1.

*Hunting Seasons and Daily Bag*

*Limits:* Not more than 9 consecutive days, with bag and possession limits of 2 and 2 band-tailed pigeons, respectively.

*Permit Requirement:* The appropriate State agency must issue permits or participate in the Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program.

*Zoning:* California may select hunting seasons not to exceed 9 consecutive days in each of two zones. The season in the North Zone must close by October 7.

*Four-Corners States (Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah)*

*Outside Dates:* Between September 1 and November 30.

*Hunting Seasons and Daily Bag*

*Limits:* Not more than 30 consecutive days, with a daily bag limit of 5 band-tailed pigeons.

*Permit Requirement:* The appropriate State agency must issue permits or participate in the Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program.

*Zoning:* New Mexico may select hunting seasons not to exceed 20 consecutive days in each of two zones. The season in the South Zone may not open until October 1.

**Mourning Doves**

*Outside Dates:* Between September 1 and January 15, except as otherwise provided, States may select hunting seasons and daily bag limits as follows:

*Eastern Management Unit (All States east of the Mississippi River, and Louisiana)*

*Hunting Seasons and Daily Bag*

*Limits:* Not more than 70 days with a daily bag limit of 12, or not more than 60 days with a daily bag limit of 15.

*Zoning and Split Seasons:* States may select hunting seasons in each of two zones. The season within each zone may be split into not more than three

periods. The hunting seasons in the South Zones of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi may commence no earlier than September 20. Regulations for bag and possession limits, season length, and shooting hours must be uniform within specific hunting zones.

*Central Management Unit (Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and Wyoming)*

*Hunting Seasons and Daily Bag*

*Limits:* Not more than 70 days with a daily bag limit of 12, or not more than 60 days with a daily bag limit of 15.

*Zoning and Split Seasons:* States may select hunting seasons in each of two zones. The season within each zone may be split into not more than three periods. Texas may select hunting seasons for each of three zones subject to the following conditions:

A. The hunting season may be split into not more than two periods, except in that portion of Texas in which the special white-winged dove season is allowed, where a limited mourning dove season may be held concurrently with that special season (see white-winged dove frameworks).

B. A season may be selected for the North and Central Zones between September 1 and January 25; and for the South Zone between September 20 and January 25.

C. Each zone may have a daily bag limit of 12 doves (15 under the alternative) in the aggregate, no more than 2 of which may be white-tipped doves, except that during the special white-winged dove season, the daily bag limit may not exceed 10 white-winged, mourning, and white-tipped doves in the aggregate, of which no more than 5 may be mourning doves and 2 may be white-tipped doves.

D. Except as noted above, regulations for bag and possession limits, season length, and shooting hours must be uniform within each hunting zone.

*Western Management Unit (Arizona, California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington)*

*Hunting Seasons and Daily Bag*

*Limits:* Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington - Not more than 30 consecutive days with a daily bag limit of 10 mourning doves (in Nevada, the daily bag limit may not exceed 10 mourning and white-winged doves in the aggregate).

Arizona and California - Not more than 60 days which may be split between two periods, September 1-15 and November 1-January 15. In Arizona,

during the first segment of the season, the daily bag limit is 10 mourning and white-winged doves in the aggregate, of which no more than 6 may be white-winged doves. During the remainder of the season, the daily bag limit is restricted to 10 mourning doves. In California, the daily bag limit may not exceed 10 mourning and white-winged doves in the aggregate.

**White-winged and White-tipped Doves**

*Hunting Seasons and Daily Bag*

*Limits:*

Except as shown below, seasons in Arizona, California, Florida, Nevada, New Mexico, and Texas must be concurrent with mourning dove seasons.

Arizona may select a hunting season of not more than 30 consecutive days, running concurrently with the first segment of the mourning dove season. The daily bag limit may not exceed 10 mourning and white-winged doves in the aggregate, of which no more than 6 may be white-winged doves.

In Florida, the daily bag limit may not exceed 12 mourning and white-winged doves (15 under the alternative) in the aggregate, of which no more than 4 may be white-winged doves.

In the Nevada Counties of Clark and Nye, and in the California Counties of Imperial, Riverside, and San Bernardino, the daily bag limit may not exceed 10 mourning and white-winged doves in the aggregate.

In New Mexico, the daily bag limit may not exceed 12 mourning and white-winged doves (15 under the alternative) in the aggregate.

In Texas, the daily bag limit may not exceed 12 doves (15 under the alternative) in the aggregate, of which not more than 2 may be white-tipped doves.

In addition, Texas may also select a hunting season of not more than 4 days for the special white-winged dove area of the South Zone between September 1 and September 19. The daily bag limit may not exceed 10 white-winged, mourning, and white-tipped doves in the aggregate, of which no more than 5 may be mourning doves and 2 may be white-tipped doves.

**Alaska**

*Outside Dates:* Between September 1 and January 26.

*Hunting Seasons:* Alaska may select 107 consecutive days for waterfowl, sandhill cranes, and common snipe in each of five zones. The season may be split without penalty in the Kodiak Zone. The seasons in each zone must be concurrent.

**Closures:** The season is closed on Canada geese from Unimak Pass westward in the Aleutian Island chain. The hunting season is closed on Aleutian Canada geese, emperor geese, spectacled eiders, and Steller's eiders.

**Daily Bag and Possession limits:**

Ducks - Except as noted, a basic daily bag limit of 7 and a possession limit of 21 ducks. Daily bag and possession limits in the North Zone are 10 and 30, and in the Gulf Coast Zone they are 8 and 24, respectively. The basic limits may include no more than 1 canvasback daily and 3 in possession.

In addition to the basic limit, there is a daily bag limit of 15 and a possession limit of 30 scoter, common and king eiders, oldsquaw, harlequin, and common and red-breasted mergansers, singly or in the aggregate of these species.

Light Geese - A basic daily bag limit of 3 and a possession limit of 6.

Dark Geese - A basic daily bag limit of 4 and a possession limit of 8.

Dark-goose seasons are subject to the following exceptions:

1. In Units 9(e) and 18, the limits for Canada geese are 1 daily and 2 in possession.

2. In Units 5 and 6, the taking of Canada geese is permitted from September 28 through December 16. Middleton Island is closed to the taking of Canada geese.

3. In Unit 10 (except Unimak Island), the taking of Canada geese is prohibited.

4. In Unit 9(D) and the Unimak Island portion of Unit 10, the limits for dark geese are 6 daily and 12 in possession.

Brant - A daily bag limit of 2.

Common snipe - A daily bag limit of 8.

Sandhill cranes - A daily bag limit of 3.

Tundra Swans - Open seasons for tundra swans may be selected subject to the following conditions:

1. All seasons are by registration permit only.

2. All season Framework dates are September 1 - October 31.

3. In GMU 18, no more than 500 permits may be issued during the operational season. No more than 3 tundra swans permits may be issued per hunter and permits must be issued sequentially one at a time, upon filing a harvest report.

4. In GMU 22, no more than 300 permits may be issued during the operational season authorizing each permittee to take 1 tundra swan per season.

5. In GMU 23, no more than 300 permits may be issued during the experimental season. No more than 3 tundra swans permits may be issued per hunter and permits must be issued sequentially, one at a time, upon filing a harvest report. The experimental season evaluation must adhere to the guidelines for experimental seasons as described in the Pacific Flyway Management Plan for the Western Population of (Tundra) Swans.

## Hawaii

**Outside Dates:** Between October 1 and January 31.

**Hunting Seasons:** Not more than 65 days (75 under the alternative) for mourning doves.

**Bag Limits:** Not to exceed 15 (12 under the alternative) mourning doves.

Note: Mourning doves may be taken in Hawaii in accordance with shooting hours and other regulations set by the State of Hawaii, and subject to the applicable provisions of 50 CFR part 20.

## Puerto Rico

**Doves and Pigeons:**

**Outside Dates:** Between September 1 and January 15.

**Hunting Seasons:** Not more than 60 days.

**Daily Bag and Possession Limits:** Not to exceed 10 Zenaida, mourning, and white-winged doves in the aggregate. Not to exceed 5 scaly-naped pigeons.

**Closed Areas:** There is no open season on doves or pigeons in the following areas: Municipality of Culebra, Desecheo Island, Mona Island, El Verde Closure Area, and Cidra Municipality and adjacent areas.

**Ducks, Coots, Moorhens, Gallinules, and Snipe:**

**Outside Dates:** Between October 1 and January 31.

**Hunting Seasons:** Not more than 55 days may be selected for hunting ducks, common moorhens, and common snipe. The season may be split into two segments.

**Daily Bag Limits:**

Ducks - Not to exceed 6.

Common moorhens - Not to exceed 6.

Common snipe - Not to exceed 8.

**Closed Seasons:** The season is closed on the ruddy duck, white-cheeked pintail, West Indian whistling duck, fulvous whistling duck, and masked duck, which are protected by the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. The season also is closed on the purple gallinule, American coot, and Caribbean coot.

**Closed Areas:** There is no open season on ducks, common moorhens, and common snipe in the Municipality of Culebra and on Desecheo Island.

## Virgin Islands

**Doves and Pigeons:**

**Outside Dates:** Between September 1 and January 15.

**Hunting Seasons:** Not more than 60 days for Zenaida doves.

**Daily Bag and Possession Limits:** Not to exceed 10 Zenaida doves.

**Closed Seasons:** No open season is prescribed for ground or quail doves, or pigeons in the Virgin Islands.

**Closed Areas:** There is no open season for migratory game birds on Ruth Cay (just south of St. Croix).

**Local Names for Certain Birds:**

Zenaida dove, also known as mountain dove; bridled quail-dove, also known as Barbary dove or partridge; Common ground-dove, also known as stone dove, tobacco dove, rola, or tortolita; scaly-naped pigeon, also known as red-necked or scaled pigeon.

**Ducks**

**Outside Dates:** Between December 1 and January 31.

**Hunting Seasons:** Not more than 55 consecutive days.

**Daily Bag Limits:** Not to exceed 6.

**Closed Seasons:** The season is closed on the ruddy duck, white-cheeked pintail, West Indian whistling duck, fulvous whistling duck, and masked duck.

## Special Falconry Regulations

Falconry is a permitted means of taking migratory game birds in any State meeting Federal falconry standards in 50 CFR 21.29(k). These States may select an extended season for taking migratory game birds in accordance with the following:

**Extended Seasons:** For all hunting methods combined, the combined length of the extended season, regular season, and any special or experimental seasons shall not exceed 107 days for any species or group of species in a geographical area. Each extended season may be divided into a maximum of 3 segments.

**Framework Dates:** Seasons must fall between September 1 and March 10.

**Daily Bag and Possession Limits:** Falconry daily bag and possession limits for all permitted migratory game birds shall not exceed 3 and 6 birds, respectively, singly or in the aggregate, during extended falconry seasons, any special or experimental seasons, and regular hunting seasons in all States, including those that do not select an extended falconry season.

**Regular Seasons:** General hunting regulations, including seasons and hunting hours, apply to falconry in each State listed in 50 CFR 21.29(k). Regular-season bag and possession limits do not apply to falconry. The falconry bag limit is not in addition to gun limits.

## Area, Unit, and Zone Descriptions

Central Flyway portion of the following States consists of:

Colorado: That area lying east of the Continental Divide.

Montana: That area lying east of Hill, Chouteau, Cascade, Meagher, and Park Counties.

New Mexico: That area lying east of the Continental Divide but outside the Jicarilla Apache Indian Reservation.

Wyoming: That area lying east of the Continental Divide and excluding the Great Divide Portion.

The remaining portions of these States are in the Pacific Flyway.

#### **Mourning and White-winged Doves**

##### *Alabama*

South Zone - Baldwin, Barbour, Coffee, Conecuh, Covington, Dale, Escambia, Geneva, Henry, Houston, and Mobile Counties.

North Zone - Remainder of the State.

##### *California*

White-winged Dove Open Areas - Imperial, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties.

##### *Florida*

Northwest Zone - The Counties of Bay, Calhoun, Escambia, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Liberty, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Walton, Washington, Leon (except that portion north of U.S. 27 and east of State Road 155), Jefferson (south of U.S. 27, west of State Road 59 and north of U.S. 98), and Wakulla (except that portion south of U.S. 98 and east of the St. Marks River).

South Zone - Remainder of State.

##### *Georgia*

Northern Zone - That portion of the State lying north of a line running west to east along U.S. Highway 280 from Columbus to Wilcox County, thence southward along the western border of Wilcox County; thence east along the southern border of Wilcox County to the Ocmulgee River, thence north along the Ocmulgee River to Highway 280, thence east along Highway 280 to the Little Ocmulgee River; thence southward along the Little Ocmulgee River to the Ocmulgee River; thence southwesterly along the Ocmulgee River to the western border of the Jeff Davis County; thence south along the western border of Jeff Davis County; thence east along the southern border of Jeff Davis and Appling Counties; thence north along the eastern border of Appling County, to the Altamaha River; thence east to the eastern border of Tattnall County; thence north along the eastern border of Tattnall County; thence north along the western border of Evans to Candler County; thence west along the southern border of Candler County to the Ochoopee River; thence north along the western border of Candler County to Bulloch County; thence north along the western border of Bulloch County to U.S. Highway 301; thence northeast

along U.S. Highway 301 to the South Carolina line.

South Zone - Remainder of the State.

##### *Louisiana*

North Zone - That portion of the State north of Interstate Highway 10 from the Texas State line to Baton Rouge, Interstate Highway 12 from Baton Rouge to Slidell and Interstate Highway 10 from Slidell to the Mississippi State line.

South Zone - The remainder of the State.

##### *Mississippi*

South Zone - The Counties of Forrest, George, Greene, Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, Lamar, Marion, Pearl River, Perry, Pike, Stone, and Walthall.

North Zone - The remainder of the State.

##### *Nevada*

White-winged Dove Open Areas - Clark and Nye Counties.

##### *Texas*

North Zone - That portion of the State north of a line beginning at the International Bridge south of Fort Hancock; north along FM 1088 to TX 20; west along TX 20 to TX 148; north along TX 148 to I-10 at Fort Hancock; east along I-10 to I-20; northeast along I-20 to I-30 at Fort Worth; northeast along I-30 to the Texas-Arkansas State line.

South Zone - That portion of the State south and west of a line beginning at the International Bridge south of Del Rio, proceeding east on U.S. 90 to San Antonio; then east on I-10 to Orange, Texas.

Special White-winged Dove Area in the South Zone - That portion of the State south and west of a line beginning at the International Bridge south of Del Rio, proceeding east on U.S. 90 to Uvalde; south on U.S. 83 to TX 44; east along TX 44 to TX 16 at Freer; south along TX 16 to TX 285 at Hebbronville; east along TX 285 to FM 1017; southwest along FM 1017 to TX 186 at Linn; east along TX 186 to the Mansfield Channel at Port Mansfield; east along the Mansfield Channel to the Gulf of Mexico.

Area with additional restrictions - Cameron, Hidalgo, Starr, and Willacy Counties.

Central Zone - That portion of the State lying between the North and South Zones.

#### **Band-tailed Pigeons**

##### *California*

North Zone - Alpine, Butte, Del Norte, Glenn, Humboldt, Lassen, Mendocino, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Tehama, and Trinity Counties.

South Zone - The remainder of the State.

##### *New Mexico*

North Zone - North of a line following U.S. 60 from the Arizona State line east to I-25 at Socorro and then south along I-25 from Socorro to the Texas State line.

South Zone - Remainder of the State.

##### *Washington*

Western Washington - The State of Washington excluding those portions lying east of the Pacific Crest Trail and east of the Big White Salmon River in Klickitat County.

#### **Woodcock**

##### *New Jersey*

North Zone - That portion of the State north of NJ 70.

South Zone - The remainder of the State.

#### **Special September Goose Seasons**

##### *Atlantic Flyway*

##### *Connecticut*

North Zone - That portion of the State north of I-95.

##### *Maryland*

Eastern Unit - Anne Arundel, Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Harford, St. Marys, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties, and those portions of Baltimore, Howard, and Prince Georges Counties east of I-95.

Western Unit - Allegany, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, Montgomery, and Washington Counties, and those portions of Baltimore, Howard, and Prince Georges Counties east of I-95.

##### *Massachusetts*

Western Zone - That portion of the State west of a line extending south from the Vermont border on I-91 to MA 9, west on MA 9 to MA 10, south on MA 10 to U.S. 202, south on U.S. 202 to the Connecticut border.

Central Zone - That portion of the State east of the Berkshire Zone and west of a line extending south from the New Hampshire border on I-95 to U.S. 1, south on U.S. 1 to I-93, south on I-93 to MA 3, south on MA 3 to U.S. 6, west on U.S. 6 to MA 28, west on MA 28 to I-195, west to the Rhode Island border; except the waters, and the lands 150 yards inland from the high-water mark, of the Assonet River upstream to the MA 24 bridge, and the Taunton River upstream to the Center St.-Elm St. bridge shall be in the Coastal Zone.

Coastal Zone - That portion of Massachusetts east and south of the Central Zone.

##### *New Hampshire*

Early-season Hunt Unit - Cheshire, Hillsborough, Rockingham, and Strafford Counties.

##### *New York*

Lake Champlain Zone - The U.S. portion of Lake Champlain and that area

east and north of a line extending along NY 9B from the Canadian border to U.S. 9, south along U.S. 9 to NY 22 south of Keesville; south along NY 22 to the west shore of South Bay, along and around the shoreline of South Bay to NY 22 on the east shore of South Bay; southeast along NY 22 to U.S. 4, northeast along U.S. 4 to the Vermont border.

**Long Island Zone** - That area consisting of Nassau County, Suffolk County, that area of Westchester County southeast of I-95, and their tidal waters.

**Western Zone** - That area west of a line extending from Lake Ontario east along the north shore of the Salmon River to I-81, and south along I-81 to the Pennsylvania border, except for the Montezuma Zone.

**Montezuma Zone** - Those portions of Cayuga, Seneca, Ontario, Wayne, and Oswego Counties north of U.S. Route 20, east of NYS Route 14, south of NYS Route 104, and west of NYS Route 34.

**Northeastern Zone** - That area north of a line extending from Lake Ontario east along the north shore of the Salmon River to I-81, south along I-81 to NY 49, east along NY 49 to NY 365, east along NY 365 to NY 28, east along NY 28 to NY 29, east along NY 29 to I-87, north along I-87 to U.S. 9 (at Exit 20), north along U.S. 9 to NY 149, east along NY 149 to U.S. 4, north along U.S. 4 to the Vermont border, exclusive of the Lake Champlain Zone.

**Southeastern Zone** - The remaining portion of New York.

#### *North Carolina*

**Northeast Hunt Unit** - Counties of Bertie, Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Hyde, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell, and Washington.

#### *South Carolina*

**Early-season Hunt Unit** - Clarendon County and those portions of Orangeburg County north of SC Highway 6 and Berkeley County north of SC Highway 45 from the Orangeburg County line to the junction of SC Highway 45 and State Road S-8-31 and west of the Santee Dam.

#### *Mississippi Flyway*

#### *Illinois*

**Northeast Canada Goose Zone** - Cook, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will Counties.

**North Zone:** That portion of the State outside the Northeast Canada Goose Zone and north of a line extending east from the Iowa border along Illinois Highway 92 to Interstate Highway 280, east along I-280 to I-80, then east along I-80 to the Indiana border.

**Central Zone:** That portion of the State outside the Northeast Canada Goose Zone and south of the North Zone

to a line extending east from the Missouri border along the Modoc Ferry route to Modoc Ferry Road, east along Modoc Ferry Road to Modoc Road, northeasterly along Modoc Road and St. Leo's Road to Illinois Highway 3, north along Illinois 3 to Illinois 159, north along Illinois 159 to Illinois 161, east along Illinois 161 to Illinois 4, north along Illinois 4 to Interstate Highway 70, east along I-70 to the Bond County line, north and east along the Bond County line to Fayette County, north and east along the Fayette County line to Effingham County, east and south along the Effingham County line to I-70, then east along I-70 to the Indiana border.

#### *Iowa*

**North Zone:** That portion of the State north of a line extending east from the Nebraska border along State Highway 175 to State 37, southeast along State 37 to U.S. Highway 59, south along U.S. 59 to Interstate Highway 80, then east along I-80 to the Illinois border.

**South Zone:** The remainder of Iowa.

#### *Minnesota*

**Twin Cities Metropolitan Canada**

**Goose Zone** -

A. All of Hennepin and Ramsey Counties.

B. In Anoka County, all of Columbus Township lying south of County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 18, Anoka County; all of the cities of Ramsey, Andover, Anoka, Coon Rapids, Spring Lake Park, Fridley, Hilltop, Columbia Heights, Blaine, Lexington, Circle Pines, Lino Lakes, and Centerville; and all of the city of Ham Lake except that portion lying north of CSAH 18 and east of U.S. Highway 65.

C. That part of Carver County lying north and east of the following described line: Beginning at the northeast corner of San Francisco Township; thence west along the north boundary of San Francisco Township to the east boundary of Dahlgren Township; thence north along the east boundary of Dahlgren Township to U.S. Highway 212; thence west along U.S. Highway 212 to State Trunk Highway (STH) 284; thence north on STH 284 to County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 10; thence north and west on CSAH 10 to CSAH 30; thence north and west on CSAH 30 to STH 25; thence east and north on STH 25 to CSAH 10; thence north on CSAH 10 to the Carver County line.

D. In Scott County, all of the cities or Shakopee, Savage, Prior Lake, and Jordan, and all of the Townships of Jackson, Louisville, St. Lawrence, Sand Creek, Spring Lake, and Credit River.

E. In Dakota County, all of the cities of Burnsville, Eagan, Mendota Heights, Mendota, Sunfish Lake, Inver Grove

Heights, Apple Valley, Lakeville, Rosemount, Farmington, Hastings, Lilydale, West St. Paul, and South St. Paul, and all of the Township of Nininger.

F. That portion of Washington County lying south of the following described line: Beginning at County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 2 on the west boundary of the county; thence east on CSAH 2 to U.S. Highway 61; thence south on U.S. Highway 61 to State Trunk Highway (STH) 97; thence east on STH 97 to the intersection of STH 97 and STH 95; thence due east to the east boundary of the state.

**Northwest Goose Zone** (included for reference only, not a special September Goose Season Zone) - That portion of the State encompassed by a line extending east from the North Dakota border along U.S. Highway 2 to State Trunk Highway (STH) 32, north along STH 32 to STH 92, east along STH 92 to County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 2 in Polk County, north along CSAH 2 to CSAH 27 in Pennington County, north along CSAH 27 to STH 1, east along STH 1 to CSAH 28 in Pennington County, north along CSAH 28 to CSAH 54 in Marshall County, north along CSAH 54 to CSAH 9 in Roseau County, north along CSAH 9 to STH 11, west along STH 11 to STH 310, and north along STH 310 to the Manitoba border.

**Five Goose Zone** - That portion of the state encompassed by a line extending north from the Iowa border along U.S. Interstate Highway 35 to the south boundary of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Canada Goose Zone, then west and north along the boundary of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Canada Goose Zone to U.S. Interstate 94, then west and north on U.S. Interstate 94 to the North Dakota border.

**Two Goose Zone** - That portion of the state to the north of a line extending east from the North Dakota border along U.S. Interstate 94 to the boundary of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Canada Goose Zone, then north and east along the Twin Cities Metropolitan Canada Goose Zone boundary to the Wisconsin border, except the Northwest Goose Zone and that portion of the State encompassed by a line extending north from the Iowa border along U.S. Interstate 35 to the south boundary of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Canada Goose Zone, then east on the Twin Cities Metropolitan Canada Goose Zone boundary to the Wisconsin border.

#### *Tennessee*

**Middle Tennessee Zone** - Those portions of Houston, Humphreys, Montgomery, Perry, and Wayne Counties east of State Highway 13; and Bedford, Cannon, Cheatham, Coffee,

Davidson, Dickson, Franklin, Giles, Hickman, Lawrence, Lewis, Lincoln, Macon, Marshall, Maury, Moore, Robertson, Rutherford, Smith, Sumner, Trousdale, Williamson, and Wilson Counties.

Cumberland Plateau Zone - Bledsoe, Bradley, Clay, Cumberland, Dekalb, Fentress, Grundy, Hamilton, Jackson, Marion, McMinn, Meigs, Morgan, Overton, Pickett, Polk, Putnam, Rhea, Roane, Scott, Sequatchie, Van Buren, Warren, and White Counties.

East Tennessee Zone - Anderson, Blount, Campbell, Carter, Claiborne, Cocke, Grainger, Greene, Hamblen, Hancock, Hawkins, Jefferson, Johnson, Knox, Loudon, Monroe, Sevier, Sullivan, Unicoi, Union, and Washington Counties.

*Wisconsin*

Early-Season Subzone A - That portion of the State encompassed by a line beginning at the Lake Michigan shore in Sheboygan, then west along State Highway 23 to State 67, southerly along State 67 to County Highway E in Sheboygan County, southerly along County E to State 28, south and west along State 28 to U.S. Highway 41, southerly along U.S. 41 to State 33, westerly along State 33 to County Highway U in Washington County, southerly along County U to County N, southeasterly along County N to State 60, westerly along State 60 to County Highway P in Dodge County, southerly along County P to County O, westerly along County O to State 109, south and west along State 109 to State 26, southerly along State 26 to U.S. 12, southerly along U.S. 12 to State 89, southerly along State 89 to U.S. 14, southerly along U.S. 14 to the Illinois border, east along the Illinois border to the Michigan border in Lake Michigan, north along the Michigan border in Lake Michigan to a point directly east of State 23 in Sheboygan, then west along that line to the point of beginning on the Lake Michigan shore in Sheboygan.

Early-Season Subzone B - That portion of the State between Early-Season Subzone A and a line beginning at the intersection of U.S. Highway 141 and the Michigan border near Niagara, then south along U.S. 141 to State Highway 22, west and southwest along State 22 to U.S. 45, south along U.S. 45 to State 22, west and south along State 22 to State 110, south along State 110 to U.S. 10, south along U.S. 10 to State 49, south along State 49 to State 23, west along State 23 to State 73, south along State 73 to State 60, west along State 60 to State 23, south along State 23 to State 11, east along State 11 to State 78, then south along State 78 to the Illinois border.

*Central Flyway*

*South Dakota*

Unit A - Deuel, Hamlin, Codington, and Day Counties.

Unit B - Brookings, Clark, Kingsbury, and Lake Counties and those portions of Moody County west of I-29 and Miner County east of SD Highway 25.

*Pacific Flyway*

*Idaho*

East Zone - Bonneville, Caribou, Fremont and Teton Counties.

*Oregon*

Northwest Zone - Benton, Clackamas, Clatsop, Columbia, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Polk, Multnomah, Tillamook, Washington, and Yamhill Counties.

Southwest Zone - Coos, Curry, Douglas, Jackson, Josephine, and Klamath Counties.

East Zone - Baker, Gilliam, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Union and Wasco Counties.

*Washington*

Southwest Zone - Clark, Cowlitz, Pacific, and Wahkiakum Counties.

East Zone - Asotin, Benton, Columbia, Garfield, Klickitat, and Whitman Counties.

*Wyoming*

Bear River Area - That portion of Lincoln County described in State regulations.

Salt River Area - That portion of Lincoln County described in State regulations.

Farson-Edon Area - Those portions of Sweetwater and Sublette Counties described in State regulations.

Teton Area - Those portions of Teton County described in State regulations.

**Ducks**

*Mississippi Flyway*

*Iowa*

North Zone: That portion of the State north of a line extending east from the Nebraska border along State Highway 175 to State 37, southeast along State 37 to U.S. Highway 59, south along U.S. 59 to Interstate Highway 80, then east along I-80 to the Illinois border.

South Zone: The remainder of Iowa.

**Sandhill Cranes**

*Central Flyway*

*Colorado*

Regular-Season Open Area - The Central Flyway portion of the State except the San Luis Valley (Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Hinsdale, Mineral, Rio Grande and Saguache Counties east of the Continental Divide) and North Park (Jackson County).

*Kansas*

Regular Season Open Area - That portion of the State west of a line

beginning at the Oklahoma border, north on I-35 to Wichita, north on I-135 to Salina, and north on U.S. 81 to the Nebraska border.

*New Mexico*

Regular-Season Open Area - Chaves, Curry, De Baca, Eddy, Lea, Quay, and Roosevelt Counties.

Middle Rio Grande Valley Area - The Central Flyway portion of New Mexico in Socorro and Valencia Counties.

Southwest Zone - Sierra, Luna, and Dona Ana Counties.

*Oklahoma*

Regular-Season Open Area - That portion of the State west of I-35.

*Texas*

Regular-Season Open Area - That portion of the State west of a line from the International Toll Bridge at Brownsville along U.S. 77 to Victoria; U.S. 87 to Placedo; Farm Road 616 to Blessing; State 35 to Alvin; State 6 to U.S. 290; U.S. 290 to Austin; I-35 to the Texas-Oklahoma border.

*North Dakota*

Regular-Season Open Area - That portion of the State west of U.S. 281.

*South Dakota*

Regular-Season Open Area - That portion of the State west of U.S. 281.

*Montana*

Regular-Season Open Area - The Central Flyway portion of the State except that area south of I-90 and west of the Bighorn River.

*Wyoming*

Regular-Season Open Area - Campbell, Converse, Crook, Goshen, Laramie, Niobrara, Platte, and Weston Counties.

Riverton-Boysen Unit - Portions of Fremont County.

Park and Bighorn County Unit - Portions of Park and Bighorn Counties.

*Pacific Flyway*

*Arizona*

Special-Season Area - Game Management Units 30A, 30B, 31, and 32.

*Montana*

Special-Season Area - See State regulations.

*Utah*

Special-Season Area - Rich County.

*Wyoming*

Bear River Area - That portion of Lincoln County described in State regulations.

Salt River Area - That portion of Lincoln County described in State regulations.

Eden-Farson Area - Those portions of Sweetwater and Sublette Counties described in State regulations.

*All Migratory Game Birds in Alaska*

North Zone - State Game Management Units 11-13 and 17-26.

Gulf Coast Zone - State Game Management Units 5-7, 9, 14-16, and 10 - Unimak Island only.

Southeast Zone - State Game Management Units 1-4.

Pribilof and Aleutian Islands Zone - State Game Management Unit 10 - except Unimak Island.

Kodiak Zone - State Game Management Unit 8.

*All Migratory Birds in the Virgin Islands*

Ruth Cay Closure Area - The island of Ruth Cay, just south of St. Croix.

*All Migratory Birds in Puerto Rico*

Municipality of Culebra Closure Area - All of the municipality of Culebra.

Desecheo Island Closure Area - All of Desecheo Island.

Mona Island Closure Area - All of Mona Island.

El Verde Closure Area - Those areas of the municipalities of Rio Grande and Loiza delineated as follows: (1) All lands between Routes 956 on the west and 186 on the east, from Route 3 on the north to the juncture of Routes 956 and 186 (Km 13.2) in the south; (2) all lands between Routes 186 and 966 from the juncture of 186 and 966 on the north, to the Caribbean National Forest Boundary on the south; (3) all lands lying west of Route 186 for one kilometer from the juncture of Routes 186 and 956 south to Km 6 on Route 186; (4) all lands within Km 14 and Km 6 on the west and the Caribbean National Forest Boundary on the east; and (5) all lands within the Caribbean National Forest Boundary whether private or public.

Cidra Municipality and adjacent areas - All of Cidra Municipality and portions of Aguas, Buenas, Caguas, Cayer, and Comerio Municipalities as encompassed within the following boundary: beginning on Highway 172 as it leaves the municipality of Cidra on the west edge, north to Highway 156, east on Highway 156 to Highway 1, south on Highway 1 to Highway 765, south on Highway 765 to Highway 763, south on Highway 763 to the Rio Guavate, west along Rio Guavate to Highway 1, southwest on Highway 1 to Highway 14, west on Highway 14 to Highway 729, north on Highway 729 to Cidra Municipality boundary to the point of beginning.

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