

**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR****Fish and Wildlife Service****50 CFR Part 20**

[Docket No. FWS-R9-MB-2011-0014;  
91200-1231-9BPP-L2]

RIN 1018-AX34

**Migratory Bird Hunting; Proposed Frameworks for Early-Season Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations; Notice of Meetings**

**AGENCY:** Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

**ACTION:** Proposed rule; supplemental.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (hereinafter Service or we) is proposing to establish the 2011–12 early-season hunting regulations for certain migratory game birds. We annually prescribe frameworks, or outer limits, for dates and times when hunting may occur and the maximum number of birds that may be taken and possessed in early seasons. Early seasons may open as early as September 1, and include seasons in Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. These frameworks are necessary to allow State selections of specific final seasons and limits and to allow recreational harvest at levels compatible with population status and habitat conditions. This proposed rule also provides the final regulatory alternatives for the 2011–12 duck hunting seasons.

**DATES:** *Comments:* You must submit comments on the proposed early-season frameworks by August 5, 2011.

*Meetings:* The Service Migratory Bird Regulations Committee (SRC) will meet to consider and develop proposed regulations for late-season migratory bird hunting and the 2012 spring/summer migratory bird subsistence seasons in Alaska on July 27 and 28, 2011. All meetings will commence at approximately 8:30 a.m.

**ADDRESSES:** *Comments:* You may submit comments on the proposals by one of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments on Docket No. FWS-R9-MB-2011-0014.

- *U.S. mail or hand-delivery:* Public Comments Processing, Attn: FWS-R9-MB-2011-0014; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS 2042-PDM; Arlington, VA 22203.

We will not accept e-mailed or faxed comments. We will post all comments on <http://www.regulations.gov>. This

generally means that we will post any personal information you provide us (see the Public Comments section below for more information).

*Meetings:* The SRC will meet in room 200 of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Arlington Square Building, 4401 N. Fairfax Dr., Arlington, VA.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ron W. Kokel, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, MS MBSP-4107-ARLSQ, 1849 C Street, NW., Washington, DC 20240; (703) 358-1714.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:****Regulations Schedule for 2011**

On April 8, 2011, we published in the **Federal Register** (76 FR 19876) a proposal to amend 50 CFR part 20. The proposal provided a background and overview of the migratory bird hunting regulations process, and addressed the establishment of seasons, limits, and other regulations for hunting migratory game birds under §§ 20.101 through 20.107, 20.109, and 20.110 of subpart K. Major steps in the 2011–12 regulatory cycle relating to open public meetings and **Federal Register** notifications were also identified in the April 8 proposed rule.

Further, we explained that all sections of subsequent documents outlining hunting frameworks and guidelines were organized under numbered headings. Those headings are:

1. Ducks
  - A. General Harvest Strategy
  - B. Regulatory Alternatives
  - C. Zones and Split Seasons
  - D. Special Seasons/Species Management
    - i. September Teal Seasons
    - ii. September Teal/Wood Duck Seasons
    - iii. Black Ducks
    - iv. Canvasbacks
    - v. Pintails
    - vi. Scaup
    - vii. Mottled Ducks
    - viii. Wood Ducks
    - ix. Youth Hunt
    - x. Mallard Management Units
2. Sea Ducks
3. Mergansers
4. Canada Geese
  - A. Special Seasons
  - B. Regular Seasons
  - C. Special Late Seasons
5. White-fronted Geese
6. Brant
7. Snow and Ross's (Light) Geese
8. Swans
9. Sandhill Cranes
10. Coots
11. Moorhens and Gallinules
12. Rails
13. Snipe
14. Woodcock
15. Band-Tailed Pigeons
16. Doves
17. Alaska

18. Hawaii
19. Puerto Rico
20. Virgin Islands
21. Falconry
22. Other

Subsequent documents will refer only to numbered items requiring attention. Therefore, it is important to note that we will omit those items requiring no attention, and remaining numbered items will be discontinuous and appear incomplete.

On June 22, 2011, we published in the **Federal Register** (76 FR 36508) a second document providing supplemental proposals for early- and late-season migratory bird hunting regulations. The June 22 supplement also provided detailed information on the 2011–12 regulatory schedule and announced the SRC and Flyway Council meetings.

This document, the third in a series of proposed, supplemental, and final rulemaking documents for migratory bird hunting regulations, deals specifically with proposed frameworks for early-season regulations and the regulatory alternatives for the 2011–12 duck hunting seasons. It will lead to final frameworks from which States may select season dates, shooting hours, and daily bag and possession limits for the 2011–12 season.

We have considered all pertinent comments received through June 30, 2011, on the April 8 and June 22, 2011, rulemaking documents in developing this document. In addition, new proposals for certain early-season regulations are provided for public comment. Comment periods are specified above under **DATES**. We will publish final regulatory frameworks for early seasons in the **Federal Register** on or about August 16, 2011.

**Service Migratory Bird Regulations Committee Meetings**

Participants at the June 22–23, 2011, meetings reviewed information on the current status of migratory shore and upland game birds and developed 2011–12 migratory game bird regulations recommendations for these species plus regulations for migratory game birds in Alaska, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands; special September waterfowl seasons in designated States; special sea duck seasons in the Atlantic Flyway; and extended falconry seasons. In addition, we reviewed and discussed preliminary information on the status of waterfowl.

Participants at the previously announced July 27–28, 2011, meetings will review information on the current status of waterfowl and develop recommendations for the 2011–12 regulations pertaining to regular

waterfowl seasons and other species and seasons not previously discussed at the early-season meetings. In accordance with Department of the Interior policy, these meetings are open to public observation and you may submit comments on the matters discussed.

### Population Status and Harvest

The following paragraphs provide preliminary information on the status of waterfowl and information on the status and harvest of migratory shore and upland game birds excerpted from various reports. For more detailed information on methodologies and results, you may obtain complete copies of the various reports at the address indicated under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** or from our Web site at <http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/NewsPublicationsReports.html>.

#### Waterfowl Breeding and Habitat Survey

Federal, provincial, and State agencies conduct surveys each spring to estimate the size of breeding populations and to evaluate the conditions of the habitats. These surveys are conducted using fixed-wing aircraft, helicopters, and ground crews and encompass principal breeding areas of North America, covering an area over 2.0 million square miles. The traditional survey area comprises Alaska, Canada, and the northcentral United States, and includes approximately 1.3 million square miles. The eastern survey area includes parts of Ontario, Quebec, Labrador, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, New York, and Maine, an area of approximately 0.7 million square miles.

Overall, habitat conditions during the 2011 Waterfowl Breeding Population and Habitat Survey were characterized by average to above-average moisture and a normal winter and spring across the entire traditional and eastern survey areas. The exception was a portion of the west-central traditional survey area that had received below-average moisture. The total pond estimate (Prairie Canada and United States combined) was  $8.1 \pm 0.2$  million. This was 22 percent above the 2010 estimate of  $6.7 \pm 0.2$  million ponds, and 62 percent above the long-term average of  $5.0 \pm 0.03$  million ponds.

#### Traditional Survey Area (U.S. and Canadian Prairies and Parklands)

Conditions across the Canadian Prairies were greatly improved relative to last year. Building on excellent conditions from 2010 in portions of southern Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, the area of excellent

conditions in the prairies expanded in 2011, including a region along the Alberta and Saskatchewan border that had been poor for the last 2 years. The 2011 estimate of ponds in Prairie Canada was  $4.9 \pm 0.2$  million. This was 31 percent above last year's estimate ( $3.7 \pm 0.2$  million) and 43 percent above the 1955–2010 average ( $3.4 \pm 0.03$  million). As expected, residual water from summer 2010 precipitation remained in the Parklands and the majority of the area was classified as good. Fair to poor conditions, however, were observed in the Parklands of Alberta.

Wetland numbers and conditions were excellent in the U.S. prairies. The 2011 pond estimate for the north-central U.S. was  $3.2 \pm 0.1$  million, which was similar to last year's estimate ( $2.9 \pm 0.1$  million) and 102 percent above the 1974–2010 average ( $1.6 \pm 0.02$  million). The eastern U.S. prairies benefitted from abundant moisture in 2010 and the entire U.S. prairies experienced above-average winter and spring precipitation in 2010 and 2011, resulting in good to excellent conditions across nearly the entire region. The western Dakotas and eastern Montana, which were extremely dry in 2010, improved from fair to poor in 2010 to good to excellent in 2011. Further, the abundant moisture and delayed farming operations in the north-central U.S. and southern Canadian prairies likely benefitted early-nesting waterfowl species.

Bush (Alaska, Northern Manitoba, Northern Saskatchewan, Northwest Territories, Yukon Territory, Western Ontario)

In the bush regions of the traditional survey area (Northwest Territories, northern Manitoba, northern Saskatchewan, and western Ontario), spring breakup was late in 2011. However, a period of warm, fair weather just prior to the survey, greatly accelerated ice-out. Habitats improved from 2010 across most of northern Saskatchewan and Manitoba as a result of average to above-average summer and fall precipitation in 2010. Habitat conditions in the Northwest Territories and Alaska were classified as good in 2011. Dry conditions in the boreal forest of Alberta in 2010 persisted into 2011 as habitat conditions were again rated as fair to poor. The dry conditions in this region contributed to numerous forest fires during the 2011 survey.

#### Eastern Survey Area

In the eastern survey area, winter temperatures were above average and precipitation was below average over most of the region, with the exception

of the Maritimes and Maine, which had colder than normal temperatures and above-average precipitation. Despite regional differences in winter conditions, above-average spring precipitation recharged deficient good to excellent production habitat across the region. The boreal forest and Canadian Maritimes of the eastern survey area continued to have good to excellent habitat conditions in 2011. Habitat conditions in Ontario and southern Quebec improved from poor to fair in 2010 to good to excellent. Northern sections of the eastern survey area continued to remain in good to excellent conditions in 2011.

#### Status of Teal

The estimate of blue-winged teal from the traditional survey area is 8.9 million. This record-high count represents a 41.0 percent increase from 2010, and is 91 percent above the 1955–2010 average.

#### Sandhill Cranes

Compared to increases recorded in the 1970s, annual indices to abundance of the Mid-Continent Population (MCP) of sandhill cranes have been relatively stable since the early 1980s. The spring 2011 index for sandhill cranes in the Central Platte River Valley, Nebraska, uncorrected for visibility bias, was 363,356 birds. The photo-corrected, 3-year average for 2008–10 was 600,892 cranes, which is above the established population-objective range of 349,000–472,000 cranes.

All Central Flyway States, except Nebraska, allowed crane hunting in portions of their States during 2010–11. An estimated 8,738 hunters participated in these seasons, which was 10 percent higher than the number that participated in the previous season. Hunters harvested 18,727 MCP cranes in the U.S. portion of the Central Flyway during the 2010–11 seasons, which was 23 percent higher than the estimated harvest for the previous year and 29 percent higher than the long-term average. The retrieved harvest of MCP cranes in hunt areas outside of the Central Flyway (Arizona, Pacific Flyway portion of New Mexico, Minnesota, Alaska, Canada, and Mexico combined) was 15,025 birds during 2010–11. The preliminary estimate for the North American MCP sport harvest, including crippling losses, was 38,561 birds, which was a 51 percent increase from the previous year's estimate. The long-term (1982–2008) trends for the MCP indicate that harvest has been increasing at a higher rate than population growth.

The fall 2010 pre-migration survey for the Rocky Mountain Population (RMP) resulted in a count of 21,064 cranes. The 3-year average was 20,847 sandhill cranes, which is within the established population objective of 17,000–21,000 for the RMP. Hunting seasons during 2010–11 in portions of Arizona, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming resulted in a harvest of 1,336 RMP cranes, a 4 percent decrease from the record-high harvest of 1,392 in 2009–10.

The Lower Colorado River Valley Population (LCRVP) survey results indicate a slight increase from 2,264 birds in 2010 to 2,415 birds in 2011. However, despite this slight increase, the 3-year average fell to 2,360 LCRVP cranes, which is below the population objective of 2,500.

The Eastern Population (EP) rebounded from near extirpation in the late 1800s to almost 30,000 cranes by 1996. In the fall of 2010, the estimate of EP cranes was approximately 50,000 birds. As a result of this increase and their range expansion, the Atlantic and Mississippi Flyway Councils developed a cooperative management plan for this population and criteria have been developed describing when hunting seasons can be opened. Kentucky has proposed to initiate the first hunting season on this population in the 2011–12 season (see 9. Sandhill Cranes section for further discussion).

#### *Woodcock*

Singing-ground and Wing-collection surveys were conducted to assess the population status of the American woodcock (*Scolopax minor*). The Singing-ground Survey is intended to measure long-term changes in woodcock population levels. Singing-ground Survey data for 2011 indicate that the number of singing male woodcock in the Eastern and Central Management Regions were unchanged from 2010. There were no significant 10-year trends in woodcock heard in the Eastern or Central Management Regions during 2001–2011, which marks the eighth consecutive year that the 10-year trend estimate for the Eastern Region was stable, while the trend in the Central Region returned to being not statistically significant after being negative last year. There were long-term (1968–2011) declines of 1.0 percent per year in both management regions.

The Wing-collection Survey provides an index to recruitment. Wing-collection Survey data indicate that the 2010 recruitment index for the U.S. portion of the Eastern Region (1.5 immatures per adult female) was 1.2 percent lower than the 2009 index, and

10.2 percent lower than the long-term (1963–2009) average. The recruitment index for the U.S. portion of the Central Region (1.6 immatures per adult female) was 30.2 percent above the 2009 index and 2.1 percent below the long-term (1963–2009) average.

#### *Band-tailed Pigeons*

Two subspecies of band-tailed pigeon occur north of Mexico, and they are managed as two separate populations in the United States: the Interior Population and the Pacific Coast Population. Information on the abundance and harvest of band-tailed pigeons is collected annually in the United States and British Columbia. Abundance information comes from the Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) and, for the Pacific Coast Population, the BBS and the Mineral Site Survey (MSS). Annual counts of Interior band-tailed pigeons seen and heard per route have declined since implementation of the BBS in 1968. No statistically significant trends in abundance are evident during the recent 5- and 10-year periods. The 2010 harvest of Interior band-tailed pigeons was estimated to be 5,000 birds.

BBS counts of Pacific Coast band-tailed pigeons seen and heard per route also have declined since 1968, but trends in abundance during the recent 5- and 10-year periods were not significant. The MSS, however, provided evidence that abundance decreased during the recent 5- and 7-year (since survey implementation) periods. The 2010 estimate of harvest for Pacific Coast band-tailed pigeons was 18,400 birds.

#### *Mourning Doves*

The Mourning Dove Call-count Survey (CCS) data is analyzed within a Bayesian hierarchical modeling framework, consistent with analysis methods for other long-term point count surveys such as the American Woodcock Singing-ground Survey and the North American Breeding Bird Survey. According to the analysis of the CCS, there was no trend in counts of mourning doves heard over the most recent 10 years (2002–11) in the Eastern Management Unit. There was a negative trend in mourning doves heard for the Central and Western Management Units. Over the 46-year period, 1966–2011, the number of mourning doves heard per route decreased in all three dove management units. The number of doves seen per route was also collected during the CCS. For the past 10 years, there was no trend in doves seen for the Central and Western Management Units; however, there was evidence of an increasing trend in the Eastern

Management Unit. Over 46 years, there was of a positive trend in doves seen in the Eastern Management Unit, and declining trends were indicated for the Central and Western Management Units. The preliminary 2010 harvest estimate for the United States was 17,230,400 mourning doves.

#### *White-Winged Doves*

Two states harbor substantial populations of white-winged dove population: Arizona and Texas. California and New Mexico have much smaller populations. The Arizona Game and Fish Department monitors white-winged dove populations by means of a CCS to provide an annual index to population size. It runs concurrently with the Service's Mourning Dove CCS. The index of mean number of white-winged doves heard per route from this survey peaked at 52.3 in 1968, but then declined until about 2000. The index has stabilized at around 25 doves per route in the last few years; in 2011, the mean number of doves heard per route was 24.4. Arizona Game and Fish also historically monitored white-winged dove harvest. Harvest of white-winged doves in Arizona peaked in the late 1960s at approximately 740,000 birds, and has since declined and stabilized at around 100,000 birds; the preliminary 2010 Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program (HIP) estimate of harvest was 84,900 birds.

In Texas, white-winged doves continue to expand their breeding range. Nesting by white-winged doves has been recorded in most counties, with new colonies recently found in east Texas. Nesting is essentially confined to urban areas, but appears to be expanding to exurban areas. Concomitant with this range expansion has been a continuing increase in white-winged dove abundance. A new distance-based sampling protocol was implemented for Central and South Texas in 2007, and has been expanded each year. In 2010, 4,650 points were surveyed statewide and the urban population of breeding white-winged doves was estimated at 4.6 million. Current year's survey data are being analyzed and abundance estimates will be available later this summer. Additionally, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department has an operational white-winged dove banding program and has banded 52,001 white-winged doves from 2006 to 2010. The estimated harvest of white-wings in Texas in the 2010 season was 1,436,800 birds. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department continues to work to improve the scientific basis for management of white-winged doves.

In California, Florida, Louisiana, and New Mexico available BBS data indicate an increasing trend in the population indices between 1966 and 2010.

According to HIP surveys, the preliminary harvest estimates were 78,200 white-winged doves in California, 6,200 in Florida, 4,600 in Louisiana, and 29,500 in New Mexico.

#### *White-Tipped Doves*

White-tipped doves occur primarily south of the United States–Mexico border; however, the species does occur in Texas. Monitoring information is presently limited. White-tipped doves are believed to be maintaining a relatively stable population in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas. Distance-based sampling procedures implemented in Texas are also providing limited information on white-tipped dove abundance. Texas is working to improve the sampling frame to include the rural Rio Grande corridor in order to improve the utility of population indices. Annual estimates for white-tipped dove harvest in Texas average between 3,000 and 4,000 birds.

#### **Review of Public Comments**

The preliminary proposed rulemaking (April 8 **Federal Register**) opened the public comment period for migratory game bird hunting regulations and announced the proposed regulatory alternatives for the 2011–12 duck hunting season. Comments concerning early-season issues and the proposed alternatives are summarized below and numbered in the order used in the April 8 **Federal Register** document. Only the numbered items pertaining to early-season issues and the proposed regulatory alternatives for which we received written comments are included. Consequently, the issues do not follow in consecutive numerical or alphabetical order.

We received recommendations from all four Flyway Councils. Some recommendations supported continuation of last year's frameworks. Due to the comprehensive nature of the annual review of the frameworks performed by the Councils, support for continuation of last year's frameworks is assumed for items for which no recommendations were received. Council recommendations for changes in the frameworks are summarized below.

We seek additional information and comments on the recommendations in this supplemental proposed rule. New proposals and modifications to previously described proposals are discussed below. Wherever possible, they are discussed under headings

corresponding to the numbered items in the April 8 **Federal Register** document.

#### **General**

*Written Comments:* An individual commenter protested the entire migratory bird hunting regulations process, the killing of all migratory birds, and the lack of accepting electronic public comments.

*Service Response:* Our long-term objectives continue to include providing opportunities to harvest portions of certain migratory game bird populations and to limit harvests to levels compatible with each population's ability to maintain healthy, viable numbers. Having taken into account the zones of temperature and the distribution, abundance, economic value, breeding habits, and times and lines of flight of migratory birds, we believe that the hunting seasons provided herein are compatible with the current status of migratory bird populations and long-term population goals. Additionally, we are obligated to, and do, give serious consideration to all information received as public comment. While there are problems inherent with any type of representative management of public-trust resources, we believe that the Flyway-Council system of migratory bird management has been a longstanding example of State-Federal cooperative management since its establishment in 1952. However, as always, we continue to seek new ways to streamline and improve the process.

Regarding the comment concerning our acceptance, or lack thereof, of electronic public comments, we do accept electronic comments filed through the official Federal eRulemaking portal (<http://www.regulations.gov>). Public comment methods are identified and listed above under **ADDRESSES**.

#### **1. Ducks**

Categories used to discuss issues related to duck harvest management are: (A) General Harvest Strategy; (B) Regulatory Alternatives, including specification of framework dates, season lengths, and bag limits; (C) Zones and Split Seasons; and (D) Special Seasons/Species Management. The categories correspond to previously published issues/discussions, and only those containing substantial recommendations are discussed below.

##### *A. General Harvest Strategy*

*Council Recommendations:* The Mississippi Flyway Council recommended that regulations changes be restricted to one step per year, both

when restricting as well as liberalizing hunting regulations.

*Service Response:* As we stated in the April 8 **Federal Register**, we intend to continue use of Adaptive Harvest Management (AHM) to help determine appropriate duck-hunting regulations for the 2011–12 season. AHM is a tool that permits sound resource decisions in the face of uncertain regulatory impacts, as well as providing a mechanism for reducing that uncertainty over time. The current AHM protocol is used to evaluate four alternative regulatory levels based on the population status of mallards and their breeding habitat (*i.e.*, abundance of ponds) (special hunting restrictions are enacted for certain species, such as canvasbacks, black ducks, scaup, and pintails).

As we previously stated regarding incorporation of a one-step constraint into the AHM process (73 FR 50678, August 27, 2008), this proposal was addressed by the AHM Task Force of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) in its report and recommendations. Because there is no consensus on behalf of the Flyway Councils on how to modify the regulatory alternatives, we believe that the new Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the migratory bird hunting program (see NEPA Consideration section in the April 8 **Federal Register**) is an appropriate venue for considering such changes in a more comprehensive manner that involves input from all Flyways.

We will propose a specific regulatory alternative for each of the Flyways during the 2011–12 season after survey information becomes available later this summer. More information on AHM is located at <http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/CurrentBirdIssues/Management/AHM/AHM-intro.htm>.

##### *B. Regulatory Alternatives*

*Council Recommendations:* The Mississippi and Central Flyway Councils recommended that regulatory alternatives for duck hunting seasons remain the same as those used in 2010.

*Service Response:* The regulatory alternatives proposed in the April 8 **Federal Register** will be used for the 2011–12 hunting season (see accompanying table at the end of this proposed rule for specifics). In 2005, the AHM regulatory alternatives were modified to consist only of the maximum season lengths, framework dates, and bag limits for total ducks and mallards. Restrictions for certain species within these frameworks that are not covered by existing harvest strategies will be addressed during the late-season regulations process. For those species

with specific harvest strategies (canvasbacks, pintails, black ducks, and scaup), those strategies will again be used for the 2011–12 hunting season.

#### C. Zones and Split Seasons

*Council Recommendations:* The Atlantic Flyway Council recommended allowing States two periods for selecting their zone and split options: spring 2011 for currently offered options, and spring 2012 for possible additional available options.

The Mississippi Flyway Council urged us to provide new options for zones/split-season criteria (*i.e.*, three zones with two splits or four zones) for use during the 2011–12 regulations cycle season (see the April 8 **Federal Register** for a full discussion). They note, however, that some States may not be able to use these new criteria even if they are approved this spring because of their internal regulations-setting process. Thus, they request extending the open season for States to select zone/split-season configurations through the 2012 regulations cycle.

The Central and Pacific Flyway Councils recommended extending the current open season for States to select regular season zone/split configurations for 2011–15 through June 2012.

*Written Comments:* The Mississippi and Central Flyway Councils and the States of Colorado, Illinois, Kansas, Nebraska, New York, Wisconsin and Wyoming expressed their support for our April 8 proposal to modify the zones and split season guidelines to allow up to four zones (no splits) and up to three zones with two splits, including all grandfathered arrangements. Both the Councils and States supported the extension of the open season for State selections of zone and split season configurations into the 2012–13 regulatory cycle. There was also widespread support for the creation of a Human Dimensions Working Group that is capable of advancing informed decision-making frameworks for explicitly considering human dimensions aspects of waterfowl management issues. The States appreciated our efforts to assess the potential impacts of changes in the criteria on duck harvest, and believed that such impacts would be minimal.

Six non-governmental organizations from Illinois and 106 individuals from Illinois, Ohio, and Wisconsin expressed support for the Flyway Councils' recommended changes to the guidelines. Twenty individuals did not support changing the guidelines, while four individuals supported the abolishment of zone and split season criteria altogether.

*Service Response:* As we discussed in the April 8 **Federal Register**, we proposed new guidelines for duck zones and split seasons for use by States in setting their seasons for the 2011–15 hunting seasons. We also prepared a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) on the proposed zone and split season guidelines and provided a brief summary of the anticipated impacts of the preferred alternative with regard to the guidelines. Specifics of each of the four alternatives we analyzed can be found on our Web site at <http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds>, or at <http://www.regulations.gov>. The comment period on the EA closed on May 15, 2011.

We remain supportive of the Flyway Councils' desire to expand the existing zone and split season criteria, but note that the adequacy of the National Flyway Council's human dimensions study design that we required last year (75 FR 58250, September 23, 2010) as part of our initial intent and proposal still does not meet our expectations. Thus, the Councils and the Service have committed to form a smaller working group to help resolve these differences, and we will consider a revised study proposal as soon as it is available. Assuming an acceptable study plan can be agreed upon, we will consider offering the expanded zone/split criteria to States in both the current year's regulation cycle and again in the 2012–13 regulations cycle.

#### D. Special Seasons/Species Management

##### i. Special Teal Seasons

Regarding the regulations for this year, utilizing the criteria developed for the teal season harvest strategy, this year's estimate of 8.9 million blue-winged teal from the traditional survey area indicates that a 16-day September teal season in the Atlantic, Central, and Mississippi Flyways is appropriate for 2011.

##### ix. Youth Hunt

*Council Recommendations:* The Atlantic Flyway Council recommended that we remove the criteria for youth hunting days to be 2 consecutive hunting days and allow the 2 days to be taken singularly or consecutively outside any regular duck season on a weekend, holidays, or other non-school days when youth hunters would have the maximum opportunity to participate.

*Service Response:* We concur with the Atlantic Flyway Council's recommendation to allow States to offer 2 youth hunt days in addition to their

regular seasons, with no requirement that the youth hunts be held on consecutive hunting days. Our intent in first establishing this special day of opportunity in 1996 (61 FR 49232, September 18, 1996) was to introduce youth to the concepts of ethical utilization and stewardship of waterfowl and other natural resources, encourage youngsters and adults to experience the outdoors together, and to contribute to the long-term conservation of the migratory bird resource. We stated then that we viewed the special youth hunting day as a unique educational opportunity, above and beyond the regular season, which helps ensure high-quality learning experiences for those youth indicating an interest in hunting. We further believed that the youth hunting day would help develop a conservation ethic in our youth and was consistent with the Service's responsibility to foster an appreciation for our nation's valuable wildlife resources. However, there have been few attempts to determine whether youth hunts have achieved their intended purpose. Thus, we request that when the Human Dimensions Working Group is formed, that it be charged with assessing the effectiveness of youth waterfowl hunts as a hunter recruitment tool. Until such an assessment has been conducted, we will not consider any further changes to the criteria for youth hunts.

##### x. Mallard Management Units

*Council Recommendations:* The Central Flyway Council recommended changes to the High Plains Mallard Management Unit boundary in Nebraska and Kansas for simplification and clarification of regulations enforcement.

*Service Response:* We do not support the modification of the boundary of the High Plains Mallard Management Unit in Kansas and Nebraska. While we appreciate the Council's desire for ways to improve enforcement, we note that the boundaries in those two States have been in place since the 1970s and are sufficiently clear for enforcement of waterfowl hunting regulations. Further, we do not believe sufficient biological information is available to warrant changes to the boundary at the scales proposed. However, if the Flyway Council believes the demographics of ducks have changed and may warrant a change in the boundary, we suggest that an assessment of data should be conducted that could inform a change at the Management Unit level.

#### 4. Canada Geese

##### A. Special Seasons

*Council Recommendations:* The Atlantic Flyway Council recommended that the 10-day experimental season extension (September 16–25) of the special September Canada goose hunting season in Delaware become operational.

The Central Flyway Council recommended that we increase the daily bag limit framework from five to eight for North Dakota during the special early Canada goose hunting season in September.

The Pacific Flyway Council recommended increasing the daily bag limit in the Pacific Flyway portion of Colorado from three geese to four geese, and increasing the possession limit from six to eight birds during the special September season.

*Service Response:* We agree with the Atlantic Flyway Council's recommendation that Delaware's September Canada goose season become operational. As the Council notes in their recommendation, resident Canada geese remain overabundant in many areas of the Flyway. The current population exceeds approximately 1 million while the goal in the Atlantic Flyway Resident Canada Goose Management Plan is 650,000 geese. Approval of this season would be consistent with the current management plan. Specifically in Delaware, the resident Canada goose population has continued to increase with a 2010 population index of 10,880 birds, well above the breeding population goal of 1,000 birds. Further, results of the 3-year experimental extension (2008–10) demonstrated that the harvest during this season is comprised of predominately resident geese and meets the current criteria established for Special Canada Goose Seasons. Band recovery data also indicated that no direct recovery of Atlantic Population (AP)-banded geese occurred during the entire 3-year experimental timeframe. We concur that making the season operational would help maximize harvest of resident Canada geese within Delaware, with minimal to no additional impact to migrant geese, while also increasing hunting opportunities.

We also agree with the Central Flyway Council's request to increase the Canada goose daily bag limit in North Dakota. Last year, we increased the daily bag limit in South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, and Oklahoma during their special early Canada goose seasons (75 FR 52873, August 30, 2010). The Special Early Canada Goose hunting season is

generally designed to reduce or control overabundant resident Canada geese populations. Increasing the daily bag limit from 5 to 8 geese may help North Dakota reduce or control existing high populations of resident Canada geese; currently in excess of 325,000 geese (May 2010 estimate) with a population objective of 60,000–100,000.

Regarding the increase in the daily bag limit in Colorado, we agree. As the Pacific Flyway Council notes in their recommendation, the 2010 Rocky Mountain Population (RMP) breeding population index (BPI) was 143,842, a 15 percent increase from the 2009 index of 124,684, but 10 percent below the 3-year average BPI of 160,434. Further, while the 2011 RMP Midwinter Index (MWI) of 124,427 showed a 17 percent decrease from the previous year's index of 149,831, and the 2011 RMP MWI was 7 percent below its running 3-year average of 133,312 geese, this total is still well above the level in the management plan which allows for harvest liberalization (80,000). Further, population index data and estimated harvest effects support increasing the bag and possession limits in Colorado. In the past 3 years, while counts from the spring breeding survey have stayed relatively stable, post-hunting indices collected as part of the mid-winter survey have increased. An increase in the daily bag limit is expected to result in minimal increases in Canada goose harvest rates.

##### B. Regular Seasons

*Council Recommendations:* The Mississippi Flyway Council recommended that the framework opening date for all species of geese for the regular goose seasons in Michigan and Wisconsin be September 16, 2011.

*Service Response:* We concur. Michigan, beginning in 1998, and Wisconsin, beginning in 1989, have opened their regular Canada goose seasons prior to the Flyway-wide framework opening date to address resident goose management concerns in these States. As we have previously stated (73 FR 50678, August 27, 2008), we agree with the objective to increase harvest pressure on resident Canada geese in the Mississippi Flyway and will continue to consider the opening dates in both States as exceptions to the general Flyway opening date, to be reconsidered annually. We note that the most recent resident Canada goose estimate for the Mississippi Flyway was 1.61 million birds in 2010, which was 10 percent higher than the 2009 estimate, and well above the Flyway's population goal of 1.18 to 1.40 million birds.

#### 9. Sandhill Cranes

*Council Recommendations:* The Mississippi Flyway Council recommended a 3-year experimental 30-day sandhill crane season for the Eastern Population (EP) of sandhill cranes in Kentucky beginning in the 2011–12 season.

The Central and Pacific Flyway Councils recommend using the 2011 Rocky Mountain Population (RMP) sandhill crane harvest allocation of 1,771 birds as proposed in the allocation formula described in the management plan for this population. The Councils also recommended the establishment of two new hunting areas for RMP greater sandhill crane hunting in Montana; the addition of Golden Valley County to an existing RMP sandhill crane hunting unit, and the establishment of a new RMP sandhill crane hunting unit in Broadwater County.

The Pacific Flyway Council recommended not allowing a limited hunt for Lower Colorado River Valley Population (LCRVP) Sandhill Cranes in Arizona during the 2011–12 hunting season. Survey results indicate the 3-year average population estimate is below the 2,500 birds required by the EA and management plan to hunt this population.

*Written Comments:* The International Crane Foundation (ICF) and an individual commented that no population modeling had been done for EP sandhill cranes and that the proposed harvest in Kentucky could consume a substantial portion of the productivity of the EP breeding crane population in the Upper Midwest. The ICF also believed that data on the origin of birds that would be harvested in Kentucky were incomplete. Finally, the ICF provided several comments regarding the development of the EP crane management plan.

The ICF and the Kentucky Resources Council (KRC) commented that the Kentucky proposal did not include details about the degree of public participation that would be sought in the decision regarding whether and how to hunt cranes; that sufficient public input had not be solicited to date; and that the Service should defer on the decision to hunt cranes.

Lastly, the KRC noted that the new Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the migratory bird hunting program has not been finalized, and that given the significant scientific uncertainties associated with Kentucky's proposal, and the fact that there is a distinct possibility the sandhill crane hunt might result in the taking of endangered whooping cranes,

an EIS should be developed to evaluate a full range of reasonable management alternatives for EP sandhill cranes.

The Buckley Hills Audubon Society also expressed concern about the scientific uncertainty of the Kentucky proposal and for the potential taking of whooping cranes.

*Service Response:* Last year, the Atlantic and Mississippi Flyway Councils adopted a management plan for EP cranes. This year, Kentucky has submitted a crane hunt proposal to both Flyways that follows the hunt plan guidelines and calls for a 30-day season with a maximum harvest of 400 cranes. We support the Kentucky crane hunt proposal. Total anticipated harvest and crippling loss would be less than 1 percent of the current 3-year average population index for EP cranes (51,217 cranes), well below the level of harvest of other crane populations (e.g., MCP harvest is 6.7 percent of the population size, while RMP is 4.9 percent).

Additionally, we prepared a draft EA on the hunting of EP sandhill cranes as allowed under the management plan. Specifics of the two alternatives we analyzed can be found on our Web site at <http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds>, or at <http://www.regulations.gov>. Our EA outlines two different approaches for assessing the ability of the EP crane population to withstand the level of harvest contained in EP management plan: (1) The potential biological removal allowance method; and (2) a simple population model using fall survey data and annual survival rates. The EA concluded that the anticipated combined level of harvest and crippling loss in Kentucky could be sustained by the proposed hunt. Furthermore, population modeling indicated that any harvest below 2,000 birds would still result in a growing population of EP cranes.

With regard to the origin of cranes harvested in Kentucky, we note that EP cranes are managed as one population and that no monitoring at the sub-population level is required, or necessary, by the EP management plan. We believe that we have fulfilled our NEPA obligation with the preparation of an EA, and therefore an EIS is not required.

With regard to the potential taking of endangered whooping cranes, the season dates contained in the Kentucky proposal were chosen such that they would begin approximately 3 weeks after whooping cranes have normally migrated through the State, reducing the likelihood that sandhill crane hunters would encounter whooping cranes. We further point out that whooping cranes that migrate through Kentucky are part

of the Experimental Nonessential Population of whooping cranes (NEP). In 2001, the Service announced its intent to reintroduce whooping cranes (*Grus americana*) into historic habitat in the eastern United States with the intent to establish a migratory flock that would summer and breed in Wisconsin, and winter in west-central Florida (66 FR 14107, March 9, 2001). We designated this reintroduced population as an NEP according to section 10(j) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (Act), as amended. Mississippi and Atlantic Flyway States within the NEP area maintain their management prerogatives regarding the whooping crane (66 FR 33903, June 26, 2001). They are not directed by the reintroduction program to take any specific actions to provide any special protective measures, nor are they prevented from imposing restrictions under State law, such as protective designations, and area closures.

We further note that the harvest of cranes in Kentucky will be controlled by a mandatory tagging and phone reporting system, which will ensure that the harvest objective of 400 birds is not exceeded. Additionally, the season would be closed early if the harvest objective is met before 30 days.

We also agree with the Central and Pacific Flyway Councils' recommendations on the RMP sandhill crane harvest allocation of 1,771 birds for the 2011–12 season, as outlined in the RMP sandhill crane management plan's harvest allocation formula. The objective for the RMP sandhill crane is to manage for a stable population index of 17,000–21,000 cranes determined by an average of the three most recent, reliable September (fall pre-migration) surveys. Additionally, the RMP sandhill crane management plan allows for the regulated harvest of cranes when the population index exceeds 15,000 cranes. In 2010, 21,064 cranes were counted in the September survey and the most recent 3-year average for the RMP sandhill crane fall index is 20,847 birds. Both of the new hunt areas in Montana are allowed under the management plan.

Regarding the proposal to discontinue the limited hunt for LCRVP cranes in Arizona this year, we agree. In 2007, the Pacific Flyway Council recommended, and we approved, the establishment of a limited hunt for the LCRVP sandhill cranes in Arizona (72 FR 49622, August 28, 2007). However, due to problems that year with the population inventory on which the LCRVP hunt plan is based, the Arizona Game and Fish Department chose to not conduct the hunt in 2007, and sought approval from the Service

again in 2008, to begin conducting the hunt. We subsequently again approved the limited hunt (73 FR 50678, August 27, 2008). Then, due to complications encountered with the proposed initiation of this new season occurring during litigation regarding opening new hunting seasons on Federal National Wildlife Refuges, the experimental limited hunt season was not opened in 2008. Thus, in 2009, the State of Arizona requested that 2009–12 be designated as the new experimental period and designated an area under State control where the experimental hunt would be conducted. Last year, Arizona did implement the planned limited hunt; however, no cranes were harvested.

This year, the LCRVP survey results indicate that the 3-year average of LCRVP cranes is below the population objective of 2,500. Thus, while we continue to support the 3-year experimental framework for this hunt, conditional on successful monitoring being conducted as called for in the Flyway hunt plan for this population, we concur with the Pacific Flyway Council that the hunt should not be held this year.

#### 14. Woodcock

*Council Recommendations:* The Atlantic Flyway Council recommended adoption of the “moderate” season package of 45 days with a 3-bird daily bag limit in the Eastern Management Region for the 2011–12 season as outlined in the Interim American Woodcock Harvest Strategy (available at <http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/NewsPublicationsReports.html>). They also recommended that States previously allowed to zone for woodcock be allowed to continue that arrangement with the associated 20-percent penalty in season length (i.e., 36 days in each of New Jersey's zones).

*Service Response:* Last year, following review and comment by the Flyway Councils and the public, we adopted an interim harvest strategy for woodcock beginning in the 2011–12 hunting season for a period of 5 years (2011–15) (75 FR 52873, August 30, 2010). Specifics of the interim harvest strategy can be found at <http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/NewsPublicationsReports.html>.

As we stated last year, the interim harvest strategy provides a transparent framework for making regulatory decisions for woodcock season length and bag limit while we work to improve monitoring and assessment protocols for this species.

## 16. Mourning Doves

*Council Recommendations:* The Atlantic and Mississippi Flyway Councils recommended use of the “moderate” season framework for States within the Eastern Management Unit population of mourning doves resulting in a 70-day season and 15-bird daily bag limit. The daily bag limit could be composed of mourning doves and white-winged doves, singly or in combination.

The Mississippi and Central Flyway Councils recommend the use of the standard (or “moderate”) season package of a 15-bird daily bag limit and a 70-day season for the 2011–12 mourning dove season in the States within the Central Management Unit. The Central Flyway Council also recommended that the opening date for the South Dove Zone in Texas be the Friday before the third Saturday in September.

The Pacific Flyway Council recommended use of the “moderate” season framework for States in the Western Management Unit (WMU) population of mourning doves, which represents no change from last year’s frameworks. The Council also recommended combining mourning and white-winged dove season frameworks into a single framework, and allowing an aggregate bag in all Pacific Flyway States in the WMU.

*Service Response:* In 2008, we accepted and endorsed the interim harvest strategies for the Central, Eastern, and Western Management Units (73 FR 50678, August 27, 2008). As we stated then, the interim mourning dove harvest strategies are a step towards implementing the Mourning Dove National Strategic Harvest Plan (Plan) that was approved by all four Flyway Councils in 2003. The Plan represents a new, more informed means of decision-making for dove harvest management besides relying solely on traditional roadside counts of mourning doves as indicators of population trend. However, recognizing that a more comprehensive, national approach would take time to develop, we requested the development of interim harvest strategies, by management unit, until the elements of the Plan can be fully implemented. In 2009, the interim harvest strategies were successfully employed and implemented in all three Management Units (74 FR 36870, July 24, 2009).

This year, based on the interim harvest strategies and current population status, we agree with the recommended selection of the “moderate” season frameworks for

doves in the Eastern, Central, and Western Management Units.

Regarding the Central Flyway Council’s recommendation to move the opening date for the South Dove Zone in Texas from the Saturday nearest September 20 (but not earlier than September 17) to the Friday before the third Saturday in September, we do not support the Council’s recommendation. We remain concerned about the potential impact on the recruitment of late-nesting doves of opening of hunting seasons earlier than the State currently does. We believe that additional biological information should be collected to assess potential biological impacts before making additional changes to the opening date.

Lastly, we concur with the Pacific Flyway Council’s recommendation to combine mourning and white-winged dove season frameworks into a single framework, and allow an aggregate bag in all Pacific Flyway States in the WMU. We believe this change will simplify the frameworks for use by the States when selecting seasons. Further, we have applied this change to all dove frameworks in all management units (see the Doves framework section of this proposed rule for further information).

## 18. Alaska

*Council Recommendations:* The Pacific Flyway Council recommended removal of Canada goose daily bag limit restrictions within the overall dark goose daily bag limit in Units 9, 10, 17, and 18. In these Units, the dark goose limits would be 6 geese per day, with 12 geese in possession.

*Service Response:* We concur with the proposed removal of the Canada goose daily bag limit restrictions within the overall dark goose daily bag limit. We agree with the Council that cackling geese restrictions on primary breeding and staging areas are not warranted given recent reassessments of population data and the fact that Alaska’s Units 9, 10, 17, and 18 have very little Canada goose sport harvest. We expect the harvest increase in Alaska will be small.

## 22. Falconry

*Written Comments:* An individual proposed adding a spring hunting season for falconers, primarily in March.

*Service Response:* Currently, we allow falconry as a permitted means of taking migratory game birds in any State meeting Federal falconry standards in 50 CFR 21.29. Such States may select an extended season for taking migratory game birds as long as the combined length of the extended season, regular season, and any special or experimental

seasons does not exceed 107 days for any species or group of species in a geographical area. In addition, all such seasons must fall between September 1 and March 10, as stipulated in the Migratory Bird Treaty (Treaty).

We note that in those States that already experience 107-day seasons (*i.e.*, ducks in the Pacific Flyway), there is no opportunity for extended falconry seasons. Further, given the Treaty limitations, no hunting seasons may extend past March 10.

## Public Comments

The Department of the Interior’s policy is, whenever possible, to afford the public an opportunity to participate in the rulemaking process. Accordingly, we invite interested persons to submit written comments, suggestions, or recommendations regarding the proposed regulations. Before promulgating final migratory game bird hunting regulations, we will consider all comments we receive. These comments, and any additional information we receive, may lead to final regulations that differ from these proposals.

You may submit your comments and materials concerning this proposed rule by one of the methods listed in the **ADDRESSES** section. We will not accept comments sent by e-mail or fax. We will not consider hand-delivered comments that we do not receive, or mailed comments that are not postmarked, by the date specified in the **DATES** section.

We will post all comments in their entirety—including your personal identifying information—on <http://www.regulations.gov>. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Comments and materials we receive, as well as supporting documentation we used in preparing this proposed rule, will be available for public inspection on <http://www.regulations.gov>, or by appointment, during normal business hours, at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Migratory Bird Management, Room 4107, 4501 North Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203.

For each series of proposed rulemakings, we will establish specific comment periods. We will consider, but possibly may not respond in detail to, each comment. As in the past, we will

summarize all comments we receive during the comment period and respond to them after the closing date in the preambles of any final rules.

#### Required Determinations

Based on our most current data, we are affirming our required determinations made in the proposed rule; for descriptions of our actions to ensure compliance with the following statutes and Executive Orders, see our April 8, 2011, proposed rule (76 FR 19876):

- National Environmental Policy Act;
- Endangered Species Act;
- Regulatory Flexibility Act;
- Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act;
- Paperwork Reduction Act;
- Unfunded Mandates Reform Act;
- Executive Orders 12630, 12866, 12988, 13175, 13132, and 13211.

#### 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 2011–12 hunting season are authorized under 16 U.S.C. 703–712 and 16 U.S.C. 742 a–j.

Dated: July 13, 2011.

**Eileen Sobeck,**

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

#### Proposed Regulations Frameworks for 2011–12 Early Hunting Seasons on Certain Migratory Game Birds

Pursuant to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and delegated authorities, the Department of the Interior approved the following proposed frameworks, which prescribe season lengths, bag limits, shooting hours, and outside dates within which States may select hunting seasons for certain migratory game birds between September 1, 2011, and March 10, 2012. These frameworks are summarized below.

#### 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.

*Permits:* For some species of migratory birds, the Service authorizes the use of permits to regulate harvest or monitor their take by sport hunters, or both. In many cases (*e.g.*, tundra swans, some sandhill crane populations), the Service determines the amount of

harvest that may be taken during hunting seasons during its formal regulations-setting process, and the States then issue permits to hunters at levels predicted to result in the amount of take authorized by the Service. Thus, although issued by States, the permits would not be valid unless the Service approved such take in its regulations.

These Federally authorized, State-issued permits are issued to individuals, and only the individual whose name and address appears on the permit at the time of issuance is authorized to take migratory birds at levels specified in the permit, in accordance with provisions of both Federal and State regulations governing the hunting season. The permit must be carried by the permittee when exercising its provisions and must be presented to any law enforcement officer upon request. The permit is not transferrable or assignable to another individual, and may not be sold, bartered, traded, or otherwise provided to another person. If the permit is altered or defaced in any way, the permit becomes invalid.

#### Flyways and Management Units

##### *Waterfowl Flyways*

*Atlantic Flyway*—includes Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia.

*Mississippi Flyway*—includes Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Tennessee, and Wisconsin.

*Central Flyway*—includes Colorado (east of the Continental Divide), Kansas, Montana (Counties of Blaine, Carbon, Fergus, Judith Basin, Stillwater, Sweetgrass, Wheatland, and all counties east thereof), Nebraska, New Mexico (east of the Continental Divide except the Jicarilla Apache Indian Reservation), North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and Wyoming (east of the Continental Divide).

*Pacific Flyway*—includes Alaska, Arizona, California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and those portions of Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, and Wyoming not included in the Central Flyway.

#### Management Units

##### *Mourning Dove Management Units*

*Eastern Management Unit*—All States east of the Mississippi River, and Louisiana.

*Central Management Unit*—Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota,

Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and Wyoming.

*Western Management Unit*—Arizona, California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington.

##### *Woodcock Management Regions*

*Eastern Management Region*—Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia.

*Central Management Region*—Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, and Wisconsin.

Other geographic descriptions are contained in a later portion of this document.

#### Definitions

*Dark geese:* Canada geese, white-fronted geese, brant (except in Alaska, California, Oregon, Washington, and the Atlantic Flyway), and all other goose species, except light geese.

*Light geese:* snow (including blue) geese and Ross's geese.

#### Waterfowl Seasons in the Atlantic Flyway

In the Atlantic Flyway States of Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and 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 the following States in areas delineated by State regulations:

*Atlantic Flyway*—Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia.

*Mississippi Flyway*—Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, and Tennessee.

*Central Flyway*—Colorado (part), Kansas, Nebraska (part), New Mexico (part), Oklahoma, and Texas.

*Hunting Seasons and Daily Bag Limits:* Not to exceed 16 consecutive hunting days in the Atlantic, Mississippi, and Central Flyways. The daily bag limit is 4 teal.

### Shooting Hours

*Atlantic Flyway*—One-half hour before sunrise to sunset, except in Maryland, where the hours are from sunrise to sunset.

*Mississippi and Central Flyways*—One-half hour before sunrise to sunset, except in the States of Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, and Ohio, where the hours are from sunrise to sunset.

### Special September Duck Seasons

*Florida, Kentucky and Tennessee:* In lieu of a special September teal season, a 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 that 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 17). 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 Days

*Outside Dates:* States may select 2 days per duck-hunting zone, designated as "Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days," in addition to their regular duck seasons. The days must be held outside any regular duck season on a weekend, holidays, or other non-school days when youth hunters would have the maximum opportunity to participate. The days may be held up to 14 days before or after any regular duck-season frameworks or within any split of a regular duck season, or within any other open season on migratory birds.

*Daily Bag Limits:* The daily bag limits may include ducks, geese, mergansers, coots, moorhens, and gallinules and would be the same as those allowed in the regular season. Flyway species and area 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 may not duck hunt but may participate in other seasons that are open on the special youth day.

### Scoter, Eider, and Long-Tailed Ducks (Atlantic Flyway)

*Outside Dates:* Between September 15 and January 31.

*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 are part of the regular duck season daily bag (not to exceed 4 scoters) 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 Eastern Unit of Maryland. Seasons not to exceed 30 days during September 1–30 may be selected for Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, New Jersey, New York (Long Island Zone only), North Carolina, Rhode Island, and South Carolina. Seasons may not exceed 25 days during September 1–25 in the remainder of the Flyway. 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 15 Canada geese.

*Shooting Hours:* One-half hour before sunrise to sunset, except that during any general season, shooting hours may extend to one-half hour after sunset if

all other waterfowl seasons are closed in the specific applicable area.

#### *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 Minnesota, where a season of up to 22 days during September 1–22 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.

A Canada goose season of up to 10 consecutive days during September 1–10 may be selected by Michigan for Huron, Saginaw, and Tuscola Counties, except that the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge, Shiawassee River State Game Area Refuge, and the Fish Point Wildlife Area Refuge will remain closed. The daily bag limit may not exceed 5 Canada geese.

*Shooting Hours:* One-half hour before sunrise to sunset, except that during September 1–15 shooting hours may extend to one-half hour after sunset if all other waterfowl seasons are closed in the specific applicable area.

#### *Central Flyway*

#### General Seasons

In Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Texas, Canada goose seasons of up to 30 days during September 1–30 may be selected. In Colorado, New Mexico, North Dakota, Montana, and Wyoming, 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, except in Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, and South Dakota, where the bag limit may not exceed 8 Canada geese. Areas open to the hunting of Canada geese must be described, delineated, and designated as such in each State's hunting regulations.

*Shooting Hours:* One-half hour before sunrise to sunset, except that during September 1–15 shooting hours may extend to one-half hour after sunset if all other waterfowl seasons are closed in the specific applicable area.

#### *Pacific Flyway*

#### General Seasons

California may select a 9-day season in Humboldt County during the period September 1–15. The daily bag limit is 2.

Colorado may select a 9-day season during the period of September 1–15. The daily bag limit is 4.

Oregon may select a special Canada goose season of up to 15 days during the period September 1–15. In addition, in the NW Goose Management Zone in Oregon, a 15-day season may be selected during the period September 1–20. Daily bag limits may not exceed 5 Canada geese.

Idaho may select a 7-day season during the period September 1–15. The daily bag limit is 2, and the possession limit is 4.

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 5 Canada geese.

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

A. Where applicable, the season must be concurrent with the September portion of the sandhill crane season.

B. A daily bag limit of 2, with season and possession limits of 4, will apply to the special season.

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 16 in Wisconsin and Michigan. Season lengths, bag and possession limits, and other provisions will be established during the late-season regulations process.

#### Sandhill Cranes

##### *Regular Seasons in the Mississippi Flyway*

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

*Hunting Seasons:* A season not to exceed 37 consecutive days may be selected in the designated portion of northwestern Minnesota (Northwest Goose Zone).

*Daily Bag Limit:* 2 Sandhill cranes.

*Permits:* Each person participating in the regular sandhill crane season must have a valid Federal or State sandhill crane hunting permit.

##### *Experimental Seasons in the Mississippi Flyway*

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

*Hunting Seasons:* A season not to exceed 30 consecutive days may be selected in Kentucky.

*Daily Bag Limit:* Not to exceed 2 daily and 2 per season.

*Permits:* Each person participating in the regular sandhill crane season must have a valid Federal or State sandhill crane hunting permit.

*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 Mississippi Flyway Council.

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

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

*Hunting Seasons:* Seasons not to exceed 37 consecutive days may be selected in designated portions of North Dakota (Area 2) and Texas (Area 2). 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, except 2 sandhill cranes in designated portions of North Dakota (Area 2) and Texas (Area 2).

*Permits:* Each person participating in the regular sandhill crane season must have a valid Federal or State sandhill crane hunting permit.

##### *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 (RMP) 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 consecutive 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, with the following exceptions:

A. In Utah, 100 percent of the harvest will be assigned to the RMP quota;

B. In Arizona, monitoring the racial composition of the harvest must be conducted at 3-year intervals;

C. In Idaho, 100 percent of the harvest will be assigned to the RMP quota; and

D. In New Mexico, the season in the Estancia Valley is experimental, with a requirement to monitor the level and

racial composition of the harvest; greater sandhill cranes in the harvest will be assigned to the RMP quota.

#### Common Moorhens and Purple Gallinules

*Outside Dates:* Between September 1 and the last Sunday in January (January 29) in the Atlantic, 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.

*Zoning:* Seasons may be selected by zones established for duck hunting.

#### Rails

*Outside Dates:* States included herein may select seasons between September 1 and the last Sunday in January (January 29) on clapper, king, sora, and Virginia rails.

*Hunting Seasons:* Seasons 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 2 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.

*Zoning:* Seasons may be selected by zones established for duck hunting.

#### **American Woodcock**

*Outside Dates:* States in the Eastern Management Region may select hunting seasons between October 1 and January 31. States in the Central Management Region may select hunting seasons between the Saturday nearest September 22 (September 24) and January 31.

*Hunting Seasons and Daily Bag Limits:* Seasons may not exceed 45 days in the Eastern Region and 45 days in the Central Region. 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 36 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 a daily bag limit of 2 band-tailed pigeons.

*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 3.

*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.

*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.

#### **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**

*Hunting Seasons and Daily Bag Limits:* Not more than 70 days, with a daily bag limit of 15 mourning and white-winged doves in the aggregate.

*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. Regulations for bag and possession limits, season length, and shooting hours must be uniform within specific hunting zones.

#### **Central Management Unit**

*For All States Except Texas*

*Hunting Seasons and Daily Bag Limits:* Not more than 70 days, with a daily bag limit of 15 mourning and white-winged doves in the aggregate.

*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*

*Hunting Seasons and Daily Bag Limits:* Not more than 70 days, with a daily bag limit of 15 mourning, white-winged, and white-tipped doves in the aggregate, of which no more than 2 may be white-tipped doves.

*Zoning and Split Seasons:* 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 Special White-Winged Dove Area).

B. A season may be selected for the North and Central Zones between September 1 and January 25; and for the South Zone between the Friday nearest September 20 (September 23), but not earlier than September 17, and January 25.

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

*Special White-Winged Dove Area in Texas*

In addition, Texas may 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 15 white-winged, mourning, and white-tipped doves in the aggregate, of which no more than 4 may be mourning doves and no more than 2 may be white-tipped doves.

#### **Western Management Unit**

*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 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. During the remainder of the season, the daily bag limit is 10 mourning doves. In California, the daily bag limit is 10 mourning and white-winged doves in the aggregate.

#### **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 5 zones. The season may be split without penalty in the Kodiak Zone. The seasons in each zone must be concurrent.

*Closures:* The hunting season is closed on 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. The basic limits may include no more than 1 canvasback daily and 3 in possession and may not include sea ducks.

In addition to the basic duck limits, Alaska may select sea duck limits of 10 daily, 20 in possession, singly or in the aggregate, including no more than 6 each of either harlequin or long-tailed ducks. Sea ducks include scoters, common and king eiders, harlequin ducks, long-tailed ducks, and common and red-breasted mergansers.

Light Geese—A basic daily bag limit of 4 and a possession limit of 8.

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

*Dark-Goose Seasons Are Subject to the Following Exceptions*

A. In Units 5 and 6, the taking of Canada geese is permitted from September 28 through December 16.

B. On Middleton Island in Unit 6, a special, permit-only Canada goose season may be offered. A mandatory goose identification class is required. Hunters must check in and check out. The bag limit is 1 daily and 1 in possession. The season will close if incidental harvest includes 5 dusky Canada geese. A dusky Canada goose is any dark-breasted Canada goose (Munsell 10 YR color value five or less) with a bill length between 40 and 50 millimeters.

C. In Units 6–B, 6–C, and on Hinchinbrook and Hawkins Islands in Unit 6–D, a special, permit-only Canada goose season may be offered. Hunters must have all harvested geese checked

and classified to subspecies. The daily bag limit is 4 daily and 8 in possession. The Canada goose season will close in all of the permit areas if the total dusky goose (as defined above) harvest reaches 40.

D. In Units 9, 10, 17, and 18, dark goose limits are 6 per day, 12 in possession.

Brant—A daily bag limit of 2 and a possession limit of 4.

Common snipe—A daily bag limit of 8.

Sandhill cranes—Bag and possession limits of 2 and 4, respectively, in the Southeast, Gulf Coast, Kodiak, and Aleutian Zones, and Unit 17 in the Northern Zone. In the remainder of the Northern Zone (outside Unit 17), bag and possession limits of 3 and 6, respectively.

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

A. All seasons are by registration permit only.

B. All season framework dates are September 1—October 31.

C. In Game Management Unit (GMU) 17, no more than 200 permits may be issued during this operational season. No more than 3 tundra swans may be authorized per permit, with no more than 1 permit issued per hunter per season.

D. In Game Management Unit (GMU) 18, no more than 500 permits may be issued during the operational season. Up to 3 tundra swans may be authorized per permit. No more than 1 permit may be issued per hunter per season.

E. In GMU 22, no more than 300 permits may be issued during the operational season. Each permittee may be authorized to take up to 3 tundra swans per permit. No more than 1 permit may be issued per hunter per season.

F. In GMU 23, no more than 300 permits may be issued during the operational season. No more than 3 tundra swans may be authorized per permit, with no more than 1 permit issued per hunter per season.

## 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 20 Zenaida, mourning, and white-winged doves in the aggregate, of which not more than 10 may be Zenaida doves and 3 may be mourning doves. Not to exceed 5 scaly-naped pigeons.

*Closed Seasons:* The season is closed on the white-crowned pigeon and the plain pigeon, which are protected by the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

*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.

*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. 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 must 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 must 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. 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

### *Doves*

#### Alabama

South Zone—Baldwin, Barbour, Coffee, 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.

## Louisiana

North Zone—That portion of the State north of a line extending east from the Texas border along State Highway 12 to U.S. Highway 190, east along U.S. 190 to Interstate Highway 12, east along Interstate 12 to Interstate Highway 10, then east along Interstate Highway 10 to the Mississippi border.

South Zone—The remainder of the State.

## Mississippi

North Zone—That portion of the State north and west of a line extending west from the Alabama State line along U.S. Highway 84 to its junction with State Highway 35, then south along State Highway 35 to the Louisiana State line.

South Zone—The remainder of Mississippi.

## 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 State Loop 1604 west of San Antonio; then south, east, and north along Loop 1604 to Interstate Highway 10 east of 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 State Loop 1604 west of San Antonio, southeast on State Loop 1604 to Interstate Highway 35, southwest on Interstate Highway 35 to TX 44; east along TX 44 to TX 16 at Freer; south along TX 16 to FM 649 in Randado; south on FM 649 to FM 2686; east on FM 2686 to FM 1017; southeast on 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—The 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 Canada Goose Seasons***Atlantic Flyway*

## Connecticut

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

South Zone—The remainder of the State.

## Maryland

Eastern Unit—Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Harford, Kent, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties; and that part of Anne Arundel County east of Interstate 895, Interstate 97 and Route 3; that part of Prince George's County east of Route 3 and Route 301; and that part of Charles County east of Route 301 to the Virginia State line.

Western Unit—Allegany, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, Howard, Montgomery, and Washington Counties and that part of Anne Arundel County west of Interstate 895, Interstate 97 and Route 3; that part of Prince George's

County west of Route 3 and Route 301; and that part of Charles County west of Route 301 to the Virginia State line.

## 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 will be in the Coastal Zone.

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

## 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.

Eastern Long Island Goose Area (North Atlantic Population (NAP) High Harvest Area)—That area of Suffolk County lying east of a continuous line extending due south from the New York-Connecticut boundary to the northernmost end of Roanoke Avenue in the Town of Riverhead; then south on Roanoke Avenue (which becomes County Route 73) to State Route 25; then west on Route 25 to Peconic Avenue; then south on Peconic Avenue to County Route (CR) 104 (Riverleigh Avenue); then south on CR 104 to CR 31 (Old Riverhead Road); then south on CR 31 to Oak Street; then south on Oak Street to Potunk Lane; then west on Stevens Lane; then south on Jessup Avenue (in Westhampton Beach) to Dune Road (CR 89); then due south to international waters.

Western Long Island Goose Area (Resident Population (RP) Area)—That area of Westchester County and its tidal waters southeast of Interstate Route 95 and that area of Nassau and Suffolk Counties lying west of a continuous line extending due south from the New

York-Connecticut boundary to the northernmost end of the Sunken Meadow State Parkway; then south on the Sunken Meadow Parkway to the Sagtikos State Parkway; then south on the Sagtikos Parkway to the Robert Moses State Parkway; then south on the Robert Moses Parkway to its southernmost end; then due south to international waters.

Central Long Island Goose Area (NAP Low Harvest Area)—That area of Suffolk County lying between the Western and Eastern Long Island Goose Areas, as defined above.

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.

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—Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Hyde, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell, and Washington Counties; that portion of Bertie County north and east of a line formed by NC 45 at the Washington County line to U.S. 17 in Midway, U.S. 17 in Midway to U.S. 13 in Windsor to the Hertford County line; and that portion of Northampton County that is north of U.S. 158 and east of NC 35.

#### Pennsylvania

Southern James Bay Population (SJBP) Zone—The area north of I-80 and west of I-79, including in the city of Erie west of Bay Front Parkway to and including the Lake Erie Duck Zone (Lake Erie, Presque Isle, and the area within 150 yards of the Lake Erie Shoreline).

#### Vermont

Lake Champlain Zone—The U.S. portion of Lake Champlain and that area north and west of the line extending from the New York border along U.S. 4 to VT 22A at Fair Haven; VT 22A to U.S. 7 at Vergennes; U.S. 7 to the Canadian border.

Interior Zone—That portion of Vermont west of the Lake Champlain Zone and eastward of a line extending

from the Massachusetts border at Interstate 91; north along Interstate 91 to U.S. 2; east along U.S. 2 to VT 102; north along VT 102 to VT 253; north along VT 253 to the Canadian border.

Connecticut River Zone—The remaining portion of Vermont east of the Interior Zone.

#### Mississippi Flyway

#### Arkansas

Early Canada Goose Area—Baxter, Benton, Boone, Carroll, Clark, Conway, Crawford, Faulkner, Franklin, Garland, Hempstead, Hot Springs, Howard, Johnson, Lafayette, Little River, Logan, Madison, Marion, Miller, Montgomery, Newton, Perry, Pike, Polk, Pope, Pulaski, Saline, Searcy, Sebastian, Sevier, Scott, Van Buren, Washington, and Yell Counties.

#### Illinois

Northeast Canada Goose Zone—Cook, Du Page, 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 west from the Indiana border along Peotone-Beecher Road to Illinois Route 50, south along Illinois Route 50 to Wilmington-Peotone Road, west along Wilmington-Peotone Road to Illinois Route 53, north along Illinois Route 53 to New River Road, northwest along New River Road to Interstate Highway 55, south along I-55 to Pine Bluff-Lorenzo Road, west along Pine Bluff-Lorenzo Road to Illinois Route 47, north along Illinois Route 47 to I-80, west along I-80 to I-39, south along I-39 to Illinois Route 18, west along Illinois Route 18 to Illinois Route 29, south along Illinois Route 29 to Illinois Route 17, west along Illinois Route 17 to the Mississippi River, and due south across the Mississippi River to the Iowa border.

Central Zone—That portion of the State outside the Northeast Canada Goose Zone and south of the North Zone to a line extending west from the Indiana border along Interstate Highway 70 to Illinois Route 4, south along Illinois Route 4 to Illinois Route 161, west along Illinois Route 161 to Illinois Route 158, south and west along Illinois Route 158 to Illinois Route 159, south along Illinois Route 159 to Illinois Route 156, west along Illinois Route 156 to A Road, north and west on A Road to Levee Road, north on Levee Road to the south shore of New Fountain Creek, west along the south shore of New Fountain Creek to the Mississippi River, and due west across the Mississippi River to the Missouri border.

South Zone—The remainder of Illinois.

#### Iowa

North Zone—That portion of the State north of U.S. Highway 20.

South Zone—The remainder of Iowa.

Cedar Rapids/Iowa City Goose Zone—Includes portions of Linn and Johnson Counties bounded as follows: Beginning at the intersection of the west border of Linn County and Linn County Road E2W; then south and east along County Road E2W to Highway 920; then north along Highway 920 to County Road E16; then east along County Road E16 to County Road W58; then south along County Road W58 to County Road E34; then east along County Road E34 to Highway 13; then south along Highway 13 to Highway 30; then east along Highway 30 to Highway 1; then south along Highway 1 to Morse Road in Johnson County; then east along Morse Road to Wapsi Avenue; then south along Wapsi Avenue to Lower West Branch Road; then west along Lower West Branch Road to Taft Avenue; then south along Taft Avenue to County Road F62; then west along County Road F62 to Kansas Avenue; then north along Kansas Avenue to Black Diamond Road; then west on Black Diamond Road to Jasper Avenue; then north along Jasper Avenue to Rohert Road; then west along Rohert Road to Ivy Avenue; then north along Ivy Avenue to 340th Street; then west along 340th Street to Half Moon Avenue; then north along Half Moon Avenue to Highway 6; then west along Highway 6 to Echo Avenue; then north along Echo Avenue to 250th Street; then east on 250th Street to Green Castle Avenue; then north along Green Castle Avenue to County Road F12; then west along County Road F12 to County Road W30; then north along County Road W30 to Highway 151; then north along the Linn-Benton County line to the point of beginning.

Des Moines Goose Zone—Includes those portions of Polk, Warren, Madison and Dallas Counties bounded as follows: Beginning at the intersection of Northwest 158th Avenue and County Road R38 in Polk County; then south along R38 to Northwest 142nd Avenue; then east along Northwest 142nd Avenue to Northeast 126th Avenue; then east along Northeast 126th Avenue to Northeast 46th Street; then south along Northeast 46th Street to Highway 931; then east along Highway 931 to Northeast 80th Street; then south along Northeast 80th Street to Southeast 6th Avenue; then west along Southeast 6th Avenue to Highway 65; then south and west along Highway 65 to Highway 69 in Warren County; then south along

Highway 69 to County Road G24; then west along County Road G24 to Highway 28; then southwest along Highway 28 to 43rd Avenue; then north along 43rd Avenue to Ford Street; then west along Ford Street to Filmore Street; then west along Filmore Street to 10th Avenue; then south along 10th Avenue to 155th Street in Madison County; then west along 155th Street to Cumming Road; then north along Cumming Road to Badger Creek Avenue; then north along Badger Creek Avenue to County Road F90 in Dallas County; then east along County Road F90 to County Road R22; then north along County Road R22 to Highway 44; then east along Highway 44 to County Road R30; then north along County Road R30 to County Road F31; then east along County Road F31 to Highway 17; then north along Highway 17 to Highway 415 in Polk County; then east along Highway 415 to Northwest 158th Avenue; then east along Northwest 158th Avenue to the point of beginning.

**Cedar Falls/Waterloo Goose Zone**—Includes those portions of Black Hawk County bounded as follows: Beginning at the intersection of County Roads C66 and V49 in Black Hawk County, then south along County Road V49 to County Road D38, then west along County Road D38 to State Highway 21, then south along State Highway 21 to County Road D35, then west along County Road D35 to Grundy Road, then north along Grundy Road to County Road D19, then west along County Road D19 to Butler Road, then north along Butler Road to County Road C57, then north and east along County Road C57 to U.S. Highway 63, then south along U.S. Highway 63 to County Road C66, then east along County Road C66 to the point of beginning.

#### 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; then west along the north boundary of San Francisco Township to

the east boundary of Dahlgren Township; then north along the east boundary of Dahlgren Township to U.S. Highway 212; then west along U.S. Highway 212 to State Trunk Highway (STH) 284; then north on STH 284 to County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 10; then north and west on CSAH 10 to CSAH 30; then north and west on CSAH 30 to STH 25; then east and north on STH 25 to CSAH 10; then north on CSAH 10 to the Carver County line.

D. In Scott County, all of the cities of 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; then east on CSAH 2 to U.S. Highway 61; then south on U.S. Highway 61 to State Trunk Highway (STH) 97; then east on STH 97 to the intersection of STH 97 and STH 95; then due east to the east boundary of the State.

**Northwest Goose 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.

**Southeast Goose Zone**—That part of the State within the following described boundaries: beginning at the intersection of U.S. Highway 52 and the south boundary of the Twin Cities Metro Canada Goose Zone; then along the U.S. Highway 52 to State Trunk Highway (STH) 57; then along STH 57 to the municipal boundary of Kasson; then along the municipal boundary of Kasson County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 13, Dodge County; then along CSAH 13 to STH 30; then along STH 30 to U.S. Highway 63; then along U.S. Highway 63 to the south boundary of the State; then along the south and east

boundaries of the State to the south boundary of the Twin Cities Metro Canada Goose Zone; then along said boundary to the point of beginning.

**Five Goose Zone**—That portion of the State not included in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Canada Goose Zone, the Northwest Goose Zone, or the Southeast Goose Zone.

**West Zone**—That portion of the State encompassed by a line beginning at the junction of State Trunk Highway (STH) 60 and the Iowa border, then north and east along STH 60 to U.S. Highway 71, north along U.S. 71 to I-94, then north and west along I-94 to the North Dakota 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.

**East Tennessee Zone**—Anderson, Bledsoe, Bradley, Blount, Campbell, Carter, Claiborne, Clay, Cocke, Cumberland, DeKalb, Fentress, Grainger, Greene, Grundy, Hamblen, Hamilton, Hancock, Hawkins, Jackson, Jefferson, Johnson, Knox, Loudon, Marion, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Overton, Pickett, Polk, Putnam, Rhea, Roane, Scott, Sequatchie, Sevier, Sullivan, Unicoi, Union, Van Buren, Warren, Washington, and White Counties.

#### Wisconsin

**Early-Season Subzone A**—That portion of the State encompassed by 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.

**Early-Season Subzone B**—The remainder of the State.

#### Central Flyway

#### Nebraska

**September Canada Goose Unit**—That part of Nebraska bounded by a line from

the Nebraska-Iowa State line west on U.S. Highway 30 to U.S. Highway 81, then south on U.S. Highway 81 to NE Highway 64, then east on NE Highway 64 to NE Highway 15, then south on NE Highway 15 to NE Highway 41, then east on NE Highway 41 to NE Highway 50, then north on NE Highway 50 to NE Highway 2, then east on NE Highway 2 to the Nebraska-Iowa State line.

#### North Dakota

**Missouri River Canada Goose Zone**—The area within and bounded by a line starting where ND Hwy 6 crosses the South Dakota border; then north on ND Hwy 6 to I-94; then west on I-94 to ND Hwy 49; then north on ND Hwy 49 to ND Hwy 200; then north on Mercer County Rd. 21 to the section line between sections 8 and 9 (T146N-R87W); then north on that section line to the southern shoreline to Lake Sakakawea; then east along the southern shoreline (including Mallard Island) of Lake Sakakawea to U.S. Hwy 83; then south on U.S. Hwy 83 to ND Hwy 200; then east on ND Hwy 200 to ND Hwy 41; then south on ND Hwy 41 to U.S. Hwy 83; then south on U.S. Hwy 83 to I-94; then east on I-94 to U.S. Hwy 83; then south on U.S. Hwy 83 to the South Dakota border; then west along the South Dakota border to ND Hwy 6.

*Rest of State:* Remainder of North Dakota.

#### South Dakota

**Special Early Canada Goose Unit**—Entire State of South Dakota *except* the Counties of Bennett, Gregory, Hughes, Lyman, Perkins, and Stanley; that portion of Potter County west of U.S. Highway 83; that portion of Bon Homme, Brule, Buffalo, Charles Mix, and Hyde County south and west of a line beginning at the Hughes-Hyde County line of SD Highway 34, east to Lees Boulevard, southeast to SD 34, east 7 miles to 350th Avenue, south to I-90, south and east on SD Highway 50 to Geddes, east on 285th Street to U.S. Highway 281, south on U.S. Highway 281 to SD 50, east and south on SD 50 to the Bon Homme-Yankton County boundary; that portion of Fall River County east of SD Highway 71 and U.S. Highway 385; that portion of Custer County east of SD Highway 79 and south of French Creek; that portion of Dewey County south of BIA Road 8, BIA Road 9, and the section of U.S. 212 east of BIA Road 8 junction.

#### *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

**Area 1**—Skagit, Island, and Snohomish Counties.

**Area 2A (SW Quota Zone)**—Clark County, except portions south of the Washougal River; Cowlitz County; and Wahkiakum County.

**Area 2B (SW Quota Zone)**—Pacific County.

**Area 3**—All areas west of the Pacific Crest Trail and west of the Big White Salmon River that are not included in Areas 1, 2A, and 2B.

**Area 4**—Adams, Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Franklin, Grant, Kittitas, Lincoln, Okanogan, Spokane, and Walla Walla Counties.

**Area 5**—All areas east of the Pacific Crest Trail and east of the Big White Salmon River that are not included in Area 4.

#### Ducks

#### *Atlantic Flyway*

#### 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.

**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.

#### Maryland

**Special Teal Season Area**—Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Harford, Kent, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties; that part of Anne Arundel County east of Interstate 895, Interstate 97, and Route 3; that part of Prince Georges County east of Route 3 and Route 301; and that part of Charles County east of Route 301 to the Virginia State Line.

#### *Mississippi Flyway*

#### Indiana

**North Zone**—That portion of the State north of a line extending east from the Illinois border along State Road 18 to U.S. Highway 31, north along U.S. 31 to U.S. 24, east along U.S. 24 to Huntington, then southeast along U.S. 224 to the Ohio border.

**Ohio River Zone**—That portion of the State south of a line extending east from the Illinois border along Interstate Highway 64 to New Albany, east along State Road 62 to State 56, east along State 56 to Vevay, east and north on State 156 along the Ohio River to North Landing, north along State 56 to U.S. Highway 50, then northeast along U.S. 50 to the Ohio border.

**South Zone**—That portion of the State between the North and Ohio River Zone boundaries.

#### Iowa

**North Zone**—That portion of the State north of a line extending east from the Nebraska border along State Highway 175 to State Highway 37, southeast along State Highway 37 to State Highway 183, northeast along State Highway 183 to State Highway 141, east along State Highway 141 to U.S. Highway 30, then east along U.S. Highway 30 to the Illinois border.

**South Zone**—The remainder of Iowa.

#### *Central Flyway*

#### Colorado

**Special Teal Season Area**—Lake and Chaffee Counties and that portion of the State east of Interstate Highway 25.

#### Kansas

**High Plains Zone**—That portion of the State west of U.S. 283.

**Low Plains Early Zone**—That area of Kansas east of U.S. 283, and generally west of a line beginning at the Junction of the Nebraska State line and KS 28; south on KS 28 to U.S. 36; east on U.S.

36 to KS 199; south on KS 199 to Republic Co. Road 563; south on Republic Co. Road 563 to KS 148; east on KS 148 to Republic Co. Road 138; south on Republic Co. Road 138 to Cloud Co. Road 765; south on Cloud Co. Road 765 to KS 9; west on KS 9 to U.S. 24; west on U.S. 24 to U.S. 281; north on U.S. 281 to U.S. 36; west on U.S. 36 to U.S. 183; south on U.S. 183 to U.S. 24; west on U.S. 24 to KS 18; southeast on KS 18 to U.S. 183; south on U.S. 183 to KS 4; east on KS 4 to I-135; south on I-135 to KS 61; southwest on KS 61 to KS 96; northwest on KS 96 to U.S. 56; west on U.S. 56 to U.S. 281; south on U.S. 281 to U.S. 54; west on U.S. 54 to U.S. 183; north on U.S. 183 to U.S. 56; and southwest on U.S. 56 to U.S. 283.

Low Plains Late Zone—The remainder of Kansas.

#### Nebraska

Special Teal Season Area—That portion of the State south of a line beginning at the Wyoming State line; east along U.S. 26 to Nebraska Highway L62A east to U.S. 385; south to U.S. 26; east to NE 92; east along NE 92 to NE 61; south along NE 61 to U.S. 30; east along U.S. 30 to the Iowa border.

High Plains—That portion of Nebraska lying west of a line beginning at the South Dakota-Nebraska border on U.S. Hwy. 183; south on U.S. Hwy. 183 to U.S. Hwy. 20; west on U.S. Hwy. 20 to NE Hwy. 7; south on NE Hwy. 7 to NE Hwy. 91; southwest on NE Hwy. 91 to NE Hwy. 2; southeast on NE Hwy. 2 to NE Hwy. 92; west on NE Hwy. 92 to NE Hwy. 40; south on NE Hwy. 40 to NE Hwy. 47; south on NE Hwy. 47 to NE Hwy. 23; east on NE Hwy. 23 to U.S. Hwy. 283; and south on U.S. Hwy. 283 to the Kansas-Nebraska border.

Low Plains Zone 1—That portion of Dixon County west of NE Hwy. 26E Spur and north of NE Hwy. 12; those portions of Cedar and Knox Counties north of NE Hwy. 12; that portion of Keya Paha County east of U.S. Hwy. 183; and all of Boyd County. Both banks of the Niobrara River in Keya Paha and Boyd counties east of U.S. 183 shall be included in Zone 1.

Low Plains Zone 2—Area bounded by designated Federal and State highways and political boundaries beginning at the Kansas-Nebraska border on U.S. Hwy. 75 to U.S. Hwy. 136; east to the intersection of U.S. Hwy. 136 and the Steamboat Trace (Trace); north along the Trace to the intersection with Federal Levee R-562; north along Federal Levee R-562 to the intersection with the Trace; north along the Trace/Burlington Northern Railroad right-of-way to NE Hwy. 2; west to U.S. Hwy. 75; north to NE Hwy. 2; west to NE Hwy. 43; north

to U.S. Hwy. 34; east to NE Hwy. 63; north and west to U.S. Hwy. 77; north to NE Hwy. 92; west to County Road X; south to County Road 21 (Seward County Line); west to NE Hwy. 15; north to County Road 34; west to County Road J; south to NE Hwy. 92; west to U.S. 81; south to NE Hwy. 66; west to County Road C; north to NE Hwy. 92; west to U.S. Hwy. 30; west to NE Hwy. 14; south to County Road 22 (Hamilton County); west to County Road M; south to County Road 21; west to County Road K; south U.S. Hwy. 34; west to NE Hwy. 2; south to U.S. Hwy. I-80; west to Gunbarrel Road (Hall/Hamilton county line); south to Giltner Road; west to U.S. Hwy. 281; south to U.S. Hwy. 34; west to NE Hwy. 10; north to County Road "R" (Kearney County) and County Road #742 (Phelps County); west to County Road #438 (Gosper County line); south along County Road #438 (Gosper County line) to County Road #726 (Furnas County line); east to County Road #438 (Harlan County line); south to U.S. Hwy. 34; south and west to U.S. Hwy. 136; east to U.S. Hwy. 183; north to NE Hwy. 4; east to NE Hwy. 10; south to U.S. Hwy. 136; east to NE Hwy. 14; south to the Kansas-Nebraska border; west to U.S. Hwy. 283; north to NE Hwy. 23; west to NE Hwy. 47; north to U.S. Hwy. 30; east to County Road 13; north to County Road O; east to NE Hwy. 14; north to NE Hwy. 52; west and north to NE Hwy. 91; west to U.S. Hwy. 281; south to NE Hwy. 22; west to NE Hwy. 11; northwest to NE Hwy. 91; west to U.S. Hwy. 183; south to Round Valley Road; west to Sargent River Road; west to Sargent Road; west to Milburn Road; north to Blaine County Line; east to Loup County Line; north to NE Hwy. 91; west to North Loup Spur Road; north to North Loup Road; east to Pleasant Valley/Worth Road; east to Loup County Line; north to Loup-Brown county line; east along northern boundaries of Loup, Garfield and Wheeler counties; south on the Wheeler-Antelope county line to NE Hwy. 70; east to NE Hwy. 14; south to NE Hwy. 39; southeast to NE Hwy. 22; east to U.S. Hwy. 81; southeast to U.S. Hwy. 30; east to U.S. Hwy. 75; north to the Washington County line; east to the Iowa-Nebraska border; south along the Iowa-Nebraska border; to the beginning at U.S. Hwy. 75 and the Kansas-Nebraska border.

Low Plains Zone 3—The area east of the High Plains Zone, excluding Low Plains Zone 1, north of Low Plains Zone 2.

Low Plains Zone 4—The area east of the High Plains Zone and south of Zone 2.

New Mexico (Central Flyway Portion)

North Zone—That portion of the State north of I-40 and U.S. 54.

South Zone—The remainder of New Mexico.

#### *Pacific Flyway*

##### California

Northeastern Zone—In that portion of California lying east and north of a line beginning at the intersection of Interstate 5 with the California-Oregon line; south along Interstate 5 to its junction with Walters Lane south of the town of Yreka; west along Walters Lane to its junction with Easy Street; south along Easy Street to the junction with Old Highway 99; south along Old Highway 99 to the point of intersection with Interstate 5 north of the town of Weed; south along Interstate 5 to its junction with Highway 89; east and south along Highway 89 to Main Street Greenville; north and east to its junction with North Valley Road; south to its junction of Diamond Mountain Road; north and east to its junction with North Arm Road; south and west to the junction of North Valley Road; south to the junction with Arlington Road (A22); west to the junction of Highway 89; south and west to the junction of Highway 70; east on Highway 70 to Highway 395; south and east on Highway 395 to the point of intersection with the California-Nevada State line; north along the California-Nevada State line to the junction of the California-Nevada-Oregon State lines west along the California-Oregon State line to the point of origin.

Colorado River Zone—Those portions of San Bernardino, Riverside, and Imperial Counties east of a line extending from the Nevada border south along U.S. 95 to Vidal Junction; south on a road known as "Aqueduct Road" in San Bernardino County through the town of Rice to the San Bernardino-Riverside County line; south on a road known in Riverside County as the "Desert Center to Rice Road" to the town of Desert Center; east 31 miles on I-10 to the Wiley Well Road; south on this road to Wiley Well; southeast along the Army-Milpitas Road to the Blythe, Brawley, Davis Lake intersections; south on the Blythe-Brawley paved road to the Ogilby and Tumco Mine Road; south on this road to U.S. 80; east 7 miles on U.S. 80 to the Andrade-Algodones Road; south on this paved road to the Mexican border at Algodones, Mexico.

Southern Zone—That portion of southern California (but excluding the Colorado River Zone) south and east of a line extending from the Pacific Ocean east along the Santa Maria River to CA

166 near the City of Santa Maria; east on CA 166 to CA 99; south on CA 99 to the crest of the Tehachapi Mountains at Tejon Pass; east and north along the crest of the Tehachapi Mountains to CA 178 at Walker Pass; east on CA 178 to U.S. 395 at the town of Inyokern; south on U.S. 395 to CA 58; east on CA 58 to I-15; east on I-15 to CA 127; north on CA 127 to the Nevada border.

**Southern San Joaquin Valley Temporary Zone**—All of Kings and Tulare Counties and that portion of Kern County north of the Southern Zone.

**Balance-of-the-State Zone**—The remainder of California not included in the Northeastern, Southern, and Colorado River Zones, and the Southern San Joaquin Valley Temporary Zone.

## Canada Geese

### Michigan

**Mississippi Valley Population (MVP)-Upper Peninsula Zone**—The MVP-Upper Peninsula Zone consists of the entire Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

**MVP-Lower Peninsula Zone**—The MVP-Lower Peninsula Zone consists of the area within the Lower Peninsula of Michigan that is north and west of the point beginning at the southwest corner of Branch County, north continuing along the western border of Branch and Calhoun Counties to the northwest corner of Calhoun County, then east to the southwest corner of Eaton County, then north to the southern border of Ionia County, then east to the southwest corner of Clinton County, then north along the western border of Clinton County continuing north along the county border of Gratiot and Montcalm Counties to the southern border of Isabella county, then east to the southwest corner of Midland County, then north along the west Midland County border to Highway M-20, then easterly to U.S. Highway 10, then easterly to I-75/U.S. 23, then northerly along I-75/U.S. 23 and easterly on U.S. 23 to the centerline of the Au Gres River, then southerly along the centerline of the Au Gres River to Saginaw Bay, then on a line directly east 10 miles into Saginaw Bay, and from that point on a line directly northeast to the Canadian border.

**SJBP Zone**—The rest of the State, that area south and east of the boundary described above.

## Sandhill Cranes

### Mississippi Flyway

#### Minnesota

**Northwest Goose 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.

### Central Flyway

**Colorado**—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**—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.

**Montana**—The Central Flyway portion of the State except for that area south and west of Interstate 90, which is closed to sandhill crane hunting.

#### 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.

**Estancia Valley Area**—Those portions of Santa Fe, Torrance and Bernallilo Counties within an area bounded on the west by New Mexico Highway 55 beginning at Mountainair north to NM 337, north to NM 14, north to I-25; on the north by I-25 east to U.S. 285; on the east by U.S. 285 south to U.S. 60; and on the south by U.S. 60 from U.S. 285 west to NM 55 in Mountainair.

**Southwest Zone**—Sierra, Luna, Dona Ana Counties, and those portions of Grant and Hidalgo Counties south of I-10.

#### North Dakota

**Area 1**—That portion of the State west of U.S. 281.

**Area 2**—That portion of the State east of U.S. 281.

**Oklahoma**—That portion of the State west of I-35.

**South Dakota**—That portion of the State west of U.S. 281.

#### Texas

**Zone A**—That portion of Texas lying west of a line beginning at the

international toll bridge at Laredo, then northeast along U.S. Highway 81 to its junction with Interstate Highway 35 in Laredo, then north along Interstate Highway 35 to its junction with Interstate Highway 10 in San Antonio, then northwest along Interstate Highway 10 to its junction with U.S. Highway 83 at Junction, then north along U.S. Highway 83 to its junction with U.S. Highway 62, 16 miles north of Childress, then east along U.S. Highway 62 to the Texas-Oklahoma State line.

**Zone B**—That portion of Texas lying within boundaries beginning at the junction of U.S. Highway 81 and the Texas-Oklahoma State line, then southeast along U.S. Highway 81 to its junction with U.S. Highway 287 in Montague County, then southeast along U.S. Highway 287 to its junction with Interstate Highway 35W in Fort Worth, then southwest along Interstate Highway 35 to its junction with Interstate Highway 10 in San Antonio, then northwest along Interstate Highway 10 to its junction with U.S. Highway 83 in the town of Junction, then north along U.S. Highway 83 to its junction with U.S. Highway 62, 16 miles north of Childress, then east along U.S. Highway 62 to the Texas-Oklahoma State line, then south along the Texas-Oklahoma State line to the south bank of the Red River, then eastward along the vegetation line on the south bank of the Red River to U.S. Highway 81.

**Zone C**—The remainder of the State, except for the closed areas.

**Closed areas**—(A) That portion of the State lying east and north of a line beginning at the junction of U.S. Highway 81 and the Texas-Oklahoma State line, then southeast along U.S. Highway 81 to its junction with U.S. Highway 287 in Montague County, then southeast along U.S. Highway 287 to its junction with Interstate Highway 35W in Fort Worth, then southwest along Interstate Highway 35 to its junction with U.S. Highway 290 East in Austin, then east along U.S. Highway 290 to its junction with Interstate Loop 610 in Harris County, then south and east along Interstate Loop 610 to its junction with Interstate Highway 45 in Houston, then south on Interstate Highway 45 to State Highway 342, then to the shore of the Gulf of Mexico, and then north and east along the shore of the Gulf of Mexico to the Texas-Louisiana State line.

(B) That portion of the State lying within the boundaries of a line beginning at the Kleberg-Nueces County line and the shore of the Gulf of Mexico, then west along the County line to Park Road 22 in Nueces County, then north and west along Park Road 22 to its

junction with State Highway 358 in Corpus Christi, then west and north along State Highway 358 to its junction with State Highway 286, then north along State Highway 286 to its junction with Interstate Highway 37, then east along Interstate Highway 37 to its junction with U.S. Highway 181, then north and west along U.S. Highway 181 to its junction with U.S. Highway 77 in Sinton, then north and east along U.S. Highway 77 to its junction with U.S. Highway 87 in Victoria, then south and east along U.S. Highway 87 to its junction with State Highway 35 at Port Lavaca, then north and east along State Highway 35 to the south end of the Lavaca Bay Causeway, then south and east along the shore of Lavaca Bay to its junction with the Port Lavaca Ship Channel, then south and east along the Lavaca Bay Ship Channel to the Gulf of Mexico, and then south and west along the shore of the Gulf of Mexico to the Kleberg-Nueces County line.

#### Wyoming

Regular Season Open Area—Campbell, Converse, Crook, Goshen, Laramie, Niobrara, Platte, and Weston Counties, and those portions of Johnson County east of Interstates 25 and 90 and Sheridan County east of Interstate 90.

Riverton-Boysen Unit—Portions of Fremont County.

Park and Big Horn County Unit—Portions of Park and Big Horn 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, Cache, and Uintah Counties and that portion of

Box Elder County beginning on the Utah-Idaho State line at the Box Elder-Cache County line; west on the State line to the Pocatello Valley County Road; south on the Pocatello Valley County Road to I-15; southeast on I-15 to SR-83; south on SR-83 to Lamp Junction; west and south on the Promontory Point County Road to the tip of Promontory Point; south from Promontory Point to the Box Elder-Weber County line; east on the Box Elder-Weber County line to the Box Elder-Cache County line; north on the Box Elder-Cache County line to the Utah-Idaho State line.

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

Uinta County Area—That portion of Uinta County 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 Game Birds in the Virgin Islands

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

#### All Migratory Game 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 1 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, Cayey, 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 the beginning.

BILLING CODE 4310-55-P

**FINAL REGULATORY ALTERNATIVES FOR DUCK HUNTING DURING THE 2011-12 SEASON**

	ATLANTIC FLYWAY			MISSISSIPPI FLYWAY			CENTRAL FLYWAY (a)			PACIFIC FLYWAY (b)(c)		
	RES	MOD	LIB									
Beginning Shooting Time	1/2 hr. before sunrise											
Ending Shooting Time	Sunset											
Opening Date	Oct. 1	Sat. nearest Sept. 24	Sat. nearest Sept. 24	Sat. nearest Oct. 1	Sat. nearest Sept. 24	Sat. nearest Sept. 24	Sat. nearest Oct. 1	Sat. nearest Sept. 24	Sat. nearest Oct. 1	Sat. nearest Sept. 24	Sat. nearest Sept. 24	Sat. nearest Oct. 1
Closing Date	Jan. 20	Last Sunday in Jan.	Last Sunday in Jan.	Sun. nearest Jan. 20	Last Sunday in Jan.	Last Sunday in Jan.	Sun. nearest Jan. 20	Last Sunday in Jan.	Sun. nearest Jan. 20	Last Sunday in Jan.	Last Sunday in Jan.	Last Sunday in Jan.
Season Length (in days)	30	45	60	30	45	60	39	60	60	86	107	107
Daily Bag/Possession Limit	3	6	6	3	6	6	3	6	4	7	7	7
	6	12	12	6	12	12	6	12	8	14	14	14
<b>Species/sex Limits within the Overall Daily Bag Limit</b>												
Mallard (Total/Female)	3/1	4/2	4/2	2/1	4/1	4/2	3/1	5/1	3/1	5/2	7/2	7/2

- (a) In the High Plains Mallard Management Unit, all regulations would be the same as the remainder of the Central Flyway, with the exception of season length. Additional days would be allowed under the various alternatives as follows: restrictive - 12, moderate and liberal - 23. Under all alternatives, additional days must be on or after the Saturday nearest December 10.
- (b) In the Columbia Basin Mallard Management Unit, all regulations would be the same as the remainder of the Pacific Flyway, with the exception of season length. Under all alternatives except the liberal alternative, an additional 7 days would be allowed.
- (c) In Alaska, framework dates, bag limits, and season length would be different from the remainder of the Pacific Flyway. The bag limit would be 5-8 under the restrictive alternative, and 7-10 under the moderate and liberal alternatives. Under all alternatives, season length would be 107 days and framework dates would be Sep. 1 - Jan. 26.