

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

RIN 1018-AT53

**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 2004–05 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.

**DATES:** The Service Migratory Bird Regulations Committee will meet to consider and develop proposed regulations for late-season migratory bird hunting and the 2005 spring/summer migratory bird subsistence seasons in Alaska on July 28 and 29, 2004. All meetings will commence at approximately 8:30 a.m. You must submit comments on the proposed migratory bird hunting-season frameworks for Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and other early seasons by August 2, 2004, and for the forthcoming proposed late-season frameworks by August 30, 2004.

**ADDRESSES:** The Service Migratory Bird Regulations Committee will meet in room 200 of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Arlington Square Building, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Arlington, Virginia. Send your comments on the proposals to the Chief, Division of Migratory Bird Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, MS MBSP-4107-ARLSQ, 1849 C Street, NW., Washington, DC 20240. All comments received, including names and addresses, will become part of the public record. You may inspect comments during normal business hours at the Service's office in room

4107, 4501 N. Fairfax Drive, Arlington, Virginia.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Brian Millsap, Chief, or Ron W. Kokel, Division of Migratory Bird Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, (703) 358-1714.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:****Regulations Schedule for 2004**

On March 22, 2004, we published in the *Federal Register* (69 FR 13440) a proposal to amend 50 CFR part 20. The proposal provided a background and overview of the migratory bird hunting regulations process, and dealt with the establishment of seasons, limits, the proposed regulatory alternatives for the 2004–05 duck hunting season, and other regulations for migratory game birds under §§ 20.101 through 20.107, 20.109, and 20.110 of subpart K. On June 9, 2004, we published in the *Federal Register* (69 FR 32418) a second document providing supplemental proposals for early- and late-season migratory bird hunting regulations frameworks and the regulatory alternatives for the 2004–05 duck hunting season. The June 9 supplement also provided detailed information on the 2004–05 regulatory schedule and announced the Service Migratory Bird Regulations Committee (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. It will lead to final frameworks from which States may select season dates, shooting hours, and daily bag and possession limits for the 2004–05 season. We have considered all pertinent comments received through June 25, 2004, on the March 22 and June 9, 2004, 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 20, 2004.

**Service Migratory Bird Regulations Committee Meetings**

Participants at the June 23–24, 2004, meetings reviewed information on the current status of migratory shore and upland game birds and developed 2004–05 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 28–29, 2004, meetings will review information on the current status of waterfowl and develop recommendations for the 2004–05 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 written comments to the Director of the Service 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.

*May Breeding Waterfowl and Habitat Survey*

Most of the U.S. and Canadian prairies were much drier in May of 2004 than they were in May of 2003. The return of water to short-grass prairies of southern Alberta and Saskatchewan we saw last year did not continue, and habitat in these areas went from good last year to fair or poor this year. The Manitoba survey area ranges from poor in the east to good in the west, similar to conditions observed last year. The Dakotas have continued the slow drying trend that we have seen over the past few years, and much of eastern South Dakota is in poor condition. Conditions in the Dakotas improve to the north. Eastern Montana is a mosaic of habitat conditions ranging from poor to good, and production potential is thought to be only fair in this region. Although many areas received considerable moisture in the form of over-winter snow, with even a late snowstorm in the southern portions in middle May, the snow melted and went right into the parched ground. Snow and cold during the May storm probably adversely impacted early nesters and young broods. Water received after the May surveys likely did not alleviate dry conditions, because much of it soaked into the grounds. Therefore, waterfowl production in the prairies is only poor to fair this year.

When there are dry conditions in the prairies, many prairie nesting ducks will typically over-fly these areas into the bush. This year, the Canadian Bush (Northwest Territories, Northern

Alberta, Northern Saskatchewan and Northern Manitoba) was exceptionally late in thawing so the birds that did over-fly the dry prairies encountered winter-like conditions and will be even less successful than in a normal over-flight year. This is especially true for mallard and pintails; late nesters will have better success. Overall, the bush, including the parklands and boreal forest, will be only fair to marginally good for production because of the latest spring thaw in at least 20 years. However, Alaska birds should produce well because of excellent habitat conditions. Areas south of Alaska's Brooks Range experienced a widespread, record-setting early spring breakup, and flooding due to rapid thaw was minor.

Breeding habitat conditions were generally good to excellent in the eastern U.S. and Canada. Although spring was late in most areas, it is thought that nesting was not significantly affected because of abundant spring rain and mild temperatures. Production in the East is expected to be better this year than last year.

Unfortunately, we will have no traditional July Production Survey this year to verify the early predictions of our biologists in the field, due to a severe budget situation within the migratory bird program. However, the pilot-biologists responsible for several survey areas (Southern Alberta, Southern Saskatchewan, the Dakotas, and Montana) will return in early July for a brief over-flight of a representative portion of their areas to assess significant habitat changes since May and provide a brief snapshot of production. This information and reports from local biologists in the field will help us with our overall perspective on duck production this year.

#### *Status of Teal*

The estimate of blue-winged teal numbers from the Traditional Survey Area is 4.07 million. This represents a 26.2 percent decline from 2003 and 9.6 percent below the long-term average. The estimate suggests that a 9-day September teal season is appropriate in 2004.

#### *Sandhill Cranes*

The Mid-Continent Population of Sandhill Cranes has generally stabilized at comparatively high levels, following increases in the 1970s. The Central Platte River Valley, Nebraska, spring index for 2004, uncorrected for visibility, was 356,850 cranes. The most recent photo-corrected 3-year average

(for 2001–2003) was 370,300, which is within the established population-objective range of 343,000–465,000 cranes. All Central Flyway States, except Nebraska, allowed crane hunting in portions of their respective States in 2003–04. About 7,700 hunters participated in these seasons, which is similar to the number that participated during the previous year. An estimated 18,527 cranes were harvested in the Central Flyway during 2003–04 seasons, which was 42% higher than the previous year's estimate. Retrieved harvests in the Pacific Flyway, Canada, and Mexico were estimated to be about 13,109 cranes for the 2003–04 period. The total North American sport harvest, including crippling losses, was estimated at 35,706, which is similar to the previous year's estimate. The long-term trend analysis for the Mid-Continent Population during 1982–2000 indicates that harvests have been increasing at a higher rate than the trend in population growth over the same period.

The fall 2003 pre-migration survey estimate for the Rocky Mountain Population of sandhill cranes was 19,523, which was similar to the previous year's estimate of 18,803. Limited special seasons were held during 2003 in portions of Arizona, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming, resulting in a harvest of 528 cranes, which was 17% below the previous year's harvest of 639 cranes.

#### *Woodcock*

Singing-ground and Wing-collection Surveys were conducted to assess the population status of the American woodcock (*Scolopax minor*). Singing-ground Survey data for 2004 indicate that the numbers of displaying woodcock in the Eastern and Central Regions were unchanged from 2003 ( $P > 0.10$ ). There was no significant trend in woodcock heard on the Singing-ground Survey in either the Eastern or Central Regions during the 10 years between 1995 and 2004 ( $P > 0.10$ ). This represents the first time since 1992 that the 10-year trend estimate for either region was not a significant decline. There were long-term (1968–2004) declines ( $P < 0.01$ ) of 2.1 percent per year in the Eastern Region and 1.8 percent per year in the Central Region. Wing-collection survey data indicate that the 2003 recruitment index for the U.S. portion of the Eastern Region (1.5 immatures per adult female) was slightly higher than the 2002 index, but was 12 percent below the long-term average. The recruitment index for the U.S. portion of the Central Region (1.4 immatures per adult female) was 19

percent below the 2002 index and 16 percent below the long-term average.

#### *Band-Tailed Pigeons and Doves*

A significant decline in the Coastal population of band-tailed pigeons occurred during 1968–2003, as indicated by the Breeding Bird Survey (BBS); however, no trend was noted over the most recent 10 years. Additionally, mineral-site counts at 10 selected sites in Oregon indicate a general increase since the late 1980s. Numbers have declined the past 4 years, but the count of 3,195 in 2003 is still well above the total of 1,462 in 1986. Call-count surveys conducted in Washington showed no significant trends during 1975–2003 or between 1999–2003. A rangewide (British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, and California) mineral-site survey for the Coastal Population was established in 2003, but it will be several years before trend information will be available. The Interior band-tailed pigeon population is stable, with no trend indicated by the BBS over the short- or long-term periods.

Analyses of Mourning Dove Call-count Survey data indicated no significant trend in doves heard in any management unit over the most recent 10 years. Between 1966 and 2004, all three units exhibited significant declines ( $P < 0.05$ ). In contrast, for doves seen over the 10-year period, a significant increase was found in the Eastern Unit ( $P < 0.05$ ), while no trends were found in the Central and Western Units. Over 39 years, no trend was found for doves seen in the Eastern and Central Units, while a decline was indicated in the Western Unit ( $P < 0.05$ ). A project is under way to develop mourning dove population models for each unit to provide guidance for improving our decision-making process with respect to harvest management. Additionally, a small-scale banding study was initiated in 2003 to obtain additional information.

In Arizona, the white-winged dove population has shown a significant decline between 1962 and 2004. However, the number of whitewings has been fairly stable since the 1970s. Estimated harvests in recent years (145,000 in 2003) are low compared to those occurring several decades ago. In Texas, white-winged doves are now found throughout most of the state. In 2004, the whitewing population in Texas was estimated to be 2,387,000 birds, a decrease of 5.5 percent from 2003. A more inclusive count in San Antonio documented more than 1.3 million birds. An estimated 130,900 whitewings were taken during the

special whitewing season in south Texas, with an additional 1,224,000 birds taken statewide during the regular mourning dove season. The expansion of whitewings northward and eastward from Texas has led to whitewings being sighted in most of the Great Plains and Midwestern states and as far north as Ontario. Nesting has been reported in Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Missouri. They have been sighted in Colorado, Montana, Nebraska, Iowa, and Minnesota. Additionally, whitewings are believed to be expanding northward from Florida and have been seen along the eastern seaboard as far north as Newfoundland.

White-tipped doves are maintaining a relatively stable population in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas. They are most abundant in cities and, for the most part, are not available to hunting because of their urban location. The count in 2004 averaged 0.84 birds per stop, an 11.6 percent decrease over the count in 2003. The estimated harvest during the special 4-day whitewing season is less than 3,000 birds.

#### Review of Public Comments

The preliminary proposed rulemaking (March 22 **Federal Register**) opened the public comment period for migratory game bird hunting regulations and announced the proposed regulatory alternatives for the 2004–05 duck hunting season. Comments concerning early-season issues and the proposed alternatives are summarized below and numbered in the order used in the March 22 **Federal Register** document. Only the numbered items pertaining to early-seasons issues and the proposed regulatory alternatives for which written comments were received 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 March 22, 2004, **Federal Register** document.

#### 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 length, 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.

#### D. Special Seasons/Species Management

##### i. September Teal Seasons

*Council Recommendations:* The Central Flyway Council recommended that the Service change the status of the Nebraska September teal season from experimental to operational beginning with the 2004–05 hunting season. Criteria for Nebraska's September teal season would be the same as for other non-production Central Flyway states and confined to that area opened to teal hunting during the experimental phase. The Council believes that pre-sunrise shooting hours are justified given results from evaluation of non-target attempt rates.

*Service Response:* We concur.

##### iv. Canvasbacks

*Council Recommendations:* The Atlantic Flyway Council and the Upper- and Lower-Region Regulations Committees of the Mississippi Flyway Council recommended modifying the current Canvasback Harvest Strategy to allow partial seasons within the regular duck season. The harvest management strategy would include 3 levels: closed, "restrictive" season length, and full season.

The Central Flyway Council recommended managing canvasbacks with the 'Hunters Choice Bag Limit' (aggregate daily bag limit of 1 hen mallard, mottled duck, pintail, or canvasback). The Council further recommends that until the 'Hunter Choice Bag Limit' becomes available the current strategy should be modified to include three levels of harvest opportunity: full, closed, and partial seasons. The partial season would consist of the "restrictive" season length (39 days in the Central Flyway).

The Pacific Flyway Council recommended modifying the current canvasback harvest management strategy to allow partial canvasback seasons within regular duck season

frameworks. The harvest management strategy would include four levels for the Pacific Flyway: "liberal"—107 days, "moderate"—86 days, "restrictive"—60 days, and closed seasons. The Council also recommended that the strategy include a statement specifying that Alaska's season will maintain a fixed restriction of 1 canvasback daily in lieu of the annual prescriptions from the strategy.

*Service Response:* The Service concurs with the Atlantic, Mississippi, and Central Flyway Council recommendations for modification of the canvasback harvest strategy to allow for two potential levels of canvasback seasons:

(1) An open season with daily bag and possession limits of 1 and 2, respectively, for the entire regular duck season whenever the allowable harvest projects a breeding population in the subsequent year of more than 500,000 canvasbacks;

(2) A partial season at the "restrictive" package level (30 days in the Atlantic and Mississippi Flyways, 39 days in the Central Flyway, and 60 in the Pacific Flyway) within the regular duck season whenever a full season projects a breeding population in the subsequent year of less than 500,000 but a partial season projects a breeding population over 500,000 birds; and

Whenever the allowable harvest under both the full and partial seasons project a breeding population in the subsequent year of less than 500,000, the season will be closed season in all Flyways. Season splits must conform to each State's zone/split configuration for duck hunting. If a State is authorized to split its regular duck season and chooses not to do so, the partial season may still be split into two segments. In Alaska, a 1-bird daily bag limit for the entire regular duck season length will be used in all years unless we determine that a complete season closure is in the best interest of the canvasback resource and believe it necessary to close the season in Alaska as well as in the lower 48 states.

##### v. Pintails

*Council Recommendations:* The Atlantic Flyway Council recommended modifying the Interim Strategy for Northern Pintail Harvest Management to allow partial seasons within the regular duck season. The Council recommended using partial seasons to allow hunting opportunity for this species when (1) a full season is predicted to return a breeding population below 1.5 million (the threshold for season closure) and (2) when a partial season is expected to

return a breeding population at or above 1.5 million.

The Upper- and Lower-Region Regulations Committees of the Mississippi Flyway Council recommended that the current interim pintail harvest management strategy be modified to allow partial seasons within the regular duck hunting season. The harvest management strategy would include 3 levels: closed, "restrictive" season length, and full season.

The Central Flyway Council recommended that the interim pintail harvest strategy be revised as follows:

In the Central Flyway, pintails will be included in a 'Hunters Choice' daily bag limit (hen mallard, or mottled duck, or pintail, or canvasback—daily bag of 1). When the interim pintail harvest strategy model projections allow for a daily bag of =2, pintails will be removed from the 1-bird aggregate bag and the prescribed daily bag limit will be selected.

If this recommendation is not approved, the Council recommended the following modification to the existing harvest strategy:

When the May Breeding Population Survey in the traditional survey areas is below 1.5 million or the projected fall flight is predicted to be below 2 million (as calculated by the models in the interim strategy), adopt the "restrictive" AHM package season length (39 days in the Central Flyway) with a daily bag limit of 1, if these regulations are projected to produce harvest at levels that would provide for the 6% annual growth identified as an objective in the strategy. If the Restrictive package regulations are expected to provide for <6% population growth, the season on pintails will be closed.

The Pacific Flyway Council recommended maintaining the Interim Northern Pintail Harvest Strategy as originally adopted by the Service.

*Service Response:* In 1997, the Service formally adopted the use of the interim pintail harvest strategy (62 FR 39712). The interim harvest strategy is based on a mathematical model of the continental pintail population and predicts allowable harvest of pintails in the lower 48 States based on the current size of the pintail breeding population, anticipated recruitment, anticipated natural mortality, anticipated mortality due to hunting, and the desired size of the population in the following spring. In 2002, we updated the harvest prediction equations with the concurrence of all four Flyway Councils (67 FR 40128).

In the March 12 **Federal Register**, we requested that the Flyway Councils consider a modification to the interim harvest strategy because for the 2002–03 and 2003–04 hunting seasons we had departed from the interim strategy by

implementing partial seasons (67 FR 59110 and 68 FR 55784). We concur with the recommendations of the Atlantic, Mississippi, and Central Flyway Councils to include the use of partial seasons when circumstances warrant, and propose to modify the interim harvest strategy to provide for partial seasons under the following conditions:

When the current-year breeding population estimate for northern pintails is lower than 2.5 million and the population projection of the model in the harvest strategy predicts that the breeding population will decline in the following year.

The partial season will consist of the number of days currently allowed in all Flyways under the "restrictive" packages with a 1-bird daily bag limit. Under all other circumstances, all existing provisions and conditions of the current harvest strategy will continue to apply. Season splits must conform to each State's zone/split configuration for duck hunting. If a State is authorized to split its regular duck season and chooses not to do so, the partial season may still be split into two segments.

#### 4. Canada Geese

##### A. Special Seasons

*Council Recommendations:* The Atlantic Flyway Council recommended that Connecticut's September goose season framework dates of September 1 to September 25 become operational.

The Upper- and Lower-Region Regulations Committees of the Mississippi Flyway Council recommended that Michigan be granted operational status for the September 1–10 early Canada goose season with a 5-bird daily limit within Huron, Tuscola, and Saginaw Counties.

The Central Flyway Council recommended allowing a 3-year experimental late September Canada goose season in eastern Nebraska. The Council also recommended that South Dakota's 2000–02 3-year Experimental Late-September Canada Goose Hunting Season (September 16–30) become operational in 20 eastern South Dakota counties beginning with the September 2004 hunting season.

The Pacific Flyway Council recommended expanding the September season in Wyoming to include the entire Pacific Flyway portion of Wyoming, reducing the daily bag limit from 3 to 2, and eliminating the quota on the number of geese harvested.

*Service Response:* We concur with the recommendations regarding Connecticut, Michigan, Nebraska, South

Dakota, and Wyoming's September goose seasons.

##### B. Regular Seasons

*Council Recommendations:* The Upper- and Lower-Region Regulations Committees of the Mississippi Flyway Council recommended that the framework opening date for all species of geese for the regular goose seasons be September 16 in 2004 and future years. If this recommendation is not approved, the Council recommended that the framework opening date for all species of geese for the regular goose seasons in Michigan and Wisconsin be September 16, 2004.

*Service Response:* We concur with the objective to increase harvest pressure on resident Canada geese in the Mississippi Flyway, and a Michigan evaluation of an earlier framework opening indicates that a September 16 opening date would accomplish that objective. However, a September 16 opening date Flyway-wide would require that the regular season be established during the early-season regulations process, which presents a number of administrative problems. In addition, a September 16 opening date has implications beyond the Mississippi Flyway, and the other Flyway Councils have not had a chance to consider the advisability of such an early opening in their respective Flyways. Therefore, we propose that a decision on a September 16 opening be deferred until next year so that we and the Mississippi Flyway Council can consider the administrative ramifications of establishing regular goose season frameworks during the early-season process and to provide an opportunity for the other Flyway Councils to consider such a change.

Regarding the recommendations for a September 16 framework opening date in Wisconsin and Michigan in 2004, we concur. However, we propose that the opening dates in both States continue to be considered exceptions to the general Flyway opening date, to be reconsidered annually, until the issue of an earlier Flyway-wide opening date is addressed.

#### 9. Sandhill Cranes

*Council Recommendations:* The Central Flyway Council recommended using the 2004 Rocky Mountain Population sandhill crane harvest allocation of 656 birds as proposed in the allocation formula using the 2001–2003 3-year running average.

*Service Response:* We concur.

#### 16. Mourning Doves

*Council Recommendations:* The Pacific Flyway Council recommended that the daily bag limit in Utah be

changed from 10 mourning doves to 10 mourning and white-winged doves in the aggregate.

*Written Comments:* The Alabama Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division requested moving Conecuh County from the South zone to the North Zone for the 2004 season.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department requested that a portion of the South Zone be moved to the Central Zone to allow greater hunter utilization of the white-winged dove population around San Antonio. Texas also requested clarification regarding the framework opening date in its southern zone.

An individual from Louisiana requested a split dove season in the South Zone with the opening split earlier than September 20.

*Service Response:* We concur with the Pacific Flyway Council's recommendation concerning Utah's daily bag limit.

Regarding the requests by Texas and Alabama, the nature of the requests made us realize that we need to work with the States to review our current policy regarding zoning for dove hunting. In particular, we ask the Flyway Councils and Mourning Dove Management Unit Technical Committees to review the current policies regarding the use of zones and split seasons for dove hunting, with a view toward establishing guidelines for the use of these harvest-management tools, as has been done for waterfowl. Items to be considered should include the number of zone/split-season configurations that could be used, the frequency with which those configurations could be changed, and the need for a restricted framework opening date in south zones.

Regarding the specific zoning requests this year, we concur with the requests by Alabama and Texas to modify their existing zone boundaries. Our approval is based largely on our past history of approving these types of requests and the fact that we anticipate no adverse biological impact by these proposed changes. In the future, however, we will be very reluctant to approve any request for zone boundary changes until the development and approval of a new policy on zoning. Additionally, we ask that all future zoning requests come through the appropriate Technical Committees and Flyway Councils.

Regarding the issue of framework opening dates in south zones prior to September 20, there is no precedent for the requested change and we desire to wait for Flyway Council and Dove Technical Committee review of the current zoning policies and the

cooperative development of guidelines for the use of zones and split seasons before departing from the current policy.

#### 18. Alaska

*Council Recommendations:* The Pacific Flyway Council recommends that the tundra swan season in Unit 17 become operational.

*Service Response:* We concur.

#### Public Comment Invited

The Department of the Interior's policy is, whenever practicable, to afford the public an opportunity to participate in the rulemaking process. We intend that adopted final rules be as responsive as possible to all concerned interests and, therefore, seek the comments and suggestions of the public, other concerned governmental agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and other private interests on these proposals. Accordingly, we invite interested persons to submit written comments, suggestions, or recommendations regarding the proposed regulations to the address indicated under the caption **ADDRESSES**.

Special circumstances involved in the establishment of these regulations limit the amount of time that we can allow for public comment. Specifically, two considerations compress the time in which the rulemaking process must operate: (1) The need to establish final rules at a point early enough in the summer to allow affected State agencies to adjust their licensing and regulatory mechanisms; and (2) the unavailability, before mid-June, of specific, reliable data on this year's status of some waterfowl and migratory shore and upland game bird populations. Therefore, we believe that to allow comment periods past the dates specified in **DATES** is contrary to the public interest.

Before promulgation of final migratory game bird hunting regulations, we will take into consideration all comments received. Such comments, and any additional information received, may lead to final regulations that differ from these proposals. You may inspect comments received on the proposed annual regulations during normal business hours at the Service's office in room 4107, 4501 North Fairfax Drive, Arlington, Virginia. 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. However, as in the past, we will summarize all comments received during the comment

period and respond to them in the final rule.

#### NEPA Consideration

NEPA considerations are covered by the programmatic document, "Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement: Issuance of Annual Regulations Permitting the Sport Hunting of Migratory Birds (FSES 88-14)," filed with the Environmental Protection Agency on June 9, 1988. We published Notice of Availability in the **Federal Register** on June 16, 1988 (53 FR 22582). We published our Record of Decision on August 18, 1988 (53 FR 31341). In addition, an August 1985 environmental assessment entitled "Guidelines for Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations on Federal Indian Reservations and Ceded Lands" is available from the address indicated under the caption **ADDRESSES**.

In a proposed rule published in the April 30, 2001, **Federal Register** (66 FR 21298), we expressed our intent to begin the process of developing a new Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the migratory bird hunting program. We plan to begin the public scoping process in 2005.

#### Endangered Species Act Consideration

Prior to issuance of the 2004-05 migratory game bird hunting regulations, we will consider provisions of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531-1543; hereinafter the Act) to ensure that hunting is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any species designated as endangered or threatened, or modify or destroy its critical habitat, and is consistent with conservation programs for those species. Consultations under Section 7 of this Act may cause us to change proposals in this and future supplemental proposed rulemaking documents.

#### Executive Order 12866

The migratory bird hunting regulations are economically significant and were reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under Executive Order 12866. As such, a cost/benefit analysis was initially prepared in 1981. This analysis was subsequently revised annually from 1990-1996, and then updated in 1998. We have updated again this year. It is further discussed below under the heading Regulatory Flexibility Act. Results from the 2004 analysis indicate that the expected welfare benefit of the annual migratory bird hunting frameworks is on the order of \$734 million to \$1.064 billion, with a midpoint estimate of \$899 million. Copies of the cost/benefit analysis are

available upon request from the address indicated under **ADDRESSES** or from our Web site at <http://www.migratorybirds.gov>.

Executive Order 12866 requires each agency to write regulations that are easy to understand. We invite comments on how to make this rule easier to understand, including answers to questions such as the following:

(1) Are the requirements in the rule clearly stated?

(2) Does the rule contain technical language or jargon that interferes with its clarity?

(3) Does the format of the rule (grouping and order of sections, use of headings, paragraphing, etc.) aid or reduce its clarity?

(4) Would the rule be easier to understand if it were divided into more (but shorter) sections?

(5) Is the description of the rule in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of the preamble helpful in understanding the rule?

(6) What else could we do to make the rule easier to understand?

Send a copy of any comments that concern how we could make this rule easier to understand to: Office of the Executive Secretariat and Regulatory Affairs, Department of the Interior, Room 7229, 1849 C Street, NW., Washington, DC 20240. You may also e-mail comments to this address: [Exsec@ios.doi.gov](mailto:Exsec@ios.doi.gov).

### Regulatory Flexibility Act

These regulations have a significant economic impact on substantial numbers of small entities under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*). We analyzed the economic impacts of the annual hunting regulations on small business entities in detail as part of the 1981 cost-benefit analysis discussed under Executive Order 12866. This analysis was revised annually from 1990 through 1995. In 1995, the Service issued a Small Entity Flexibility Analysis (Analysis), which was subsequently updated in 1996, 1998, and 2004. The primary source of information about hunter expenditures for migratory game bird hunting is the National Hunting and Fishing Survey, which is conducted at 5-year intervals. The 2004 Analysis was based on the 2001 National Hunting and Fishing Survey and the U.S. Department of Commerce's County Business Patterns, from which it was estimated that migratory bird hunters would spend between \$481 million and \$1.2 billion at small businesses in 2004. Copies of the Analysis are available upon request from the address indicated under

**ADDRESSES** or from our Web site at <http://www.migratorybirds.gov>.

### Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act

This rule is a major rule under 5 U.S.C. 804(2), the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act. For the reasons outlined above, this rule has an annual effect on the economy of \$100 million or more. However, because this rule establishes hunting seasons, we do not plan to defer the effective date required by 5 U.S.C. 801 under the exemption contained in 5 U.S.C. 808(1).

### Paperwork Reduction Act

We examined these regulations under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. The various recordkeeping and reporting requirements imposed under regulations established in 50 CFR part 20, subpart K, are utilized in the formulation of migratory game bird hunting regulations. Specifically, OMB has approved the information collection requirements of the Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program and assigned clearance number 1018-0015 (expires 10/31/2004). This information is used to provide a sampling frame for voluntary national surveys to improve our harvest estimates for all migratory game birds in order to better manage these populations. OMB has also approved the information collection requirements of the Sandhill Crane Harvest Questionnaire and assigned clearance number 1018-0023 (expires 10/31/2004). The information from this survey is used to estimate the magnitude and the geographical and temporal distribution of the harvest, and the portion it constitutes of the total population.

A Federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

### Unfunded Mandates Reform Act

We have determined and certify, in compliance with the requirements of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, 2 U.S.C. 1502 *et seq.*, that this rulemaking will not impose a cost of \$100 million or more in any given year on local or State government or private entities. Therefore, this rule is not a "significant regulatory action" under the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

### Civil Justice Reform—Executive Order 12988

The Department, in promulgating this proposed rule, has determined that this rule will not unduly burden the judicial system and that it meets the

requirements of sections 3(a) and 3(b)(2) of Executive Order 12988.

### Takings Implication Assessment

In accordance with Executive Order 12630, this proposed rule, authorized by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, does not have significant takings implications and does not affect any constitutionally protected property rights. This rule will not result in the physical occupancy of property, the physical invasion of property, or the regulatory taking of any property. In fact, these rules allow hunters to exercise otherwise unavailable privileges and, therefore, reduce restrictions on the use of private and public property.

### Energy Effects—Executive Order 13211

On May 18, 2001, the President issued Executive Order 13211 on regulations that significantly affect energy supply, distribution, and use. Executive Order 13211 requires agencies to prepare Statements of Energy Effects when undertaking certain actions. While this proposed rule is a significant regulatory action under Executive Order 12866, it is not expected to adversely affect energy supplies, distribution, or use. Therefore, this action is not a significant energy action and no Statement of Energy Effects is required.

### Federalism Effects

Due to the migratory nature of certain species of birds, the Federal Government has been given responsibility over these species by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. We annually prescribe frameworks from which the States make selections regarding the hunting of migratory birds, and we employ guidelines to establish special regulations on Federal Indian reservations and ceded lands. This process preserves the ability of the States and tribes to determine which seasons meet their individual needs. Any State or tribe may be more restrictive than the Federal frameworks at any time. The frameworks are developed in a cooperative process with the States and the Flyway Councils. This process allows States to participate in the development of frameworks from which they will make selections, thereby having an influence on their own regulations. These rules do not have a substantial direct effect on fiscal capacity, change the roles or responsibilities of Federal or State governments, or intrude on State policy or administration. Therefore, in accordance with Executive Order 13132, these regulations do not have significant federalism effects and do not have sufficient federalism implications to

warrant the preparation of a federalism assessment.

#### 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 2004–05 hunting season are authorized under 16 U.S.C. 703–712 and 16 U.S.C. 742 a–j.

Dated: July 14, 2004.

**Craig Manson,**

*Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks.*

#### Proposed Regulations Frameworks for 2004–05 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, 2004, and March 10, 2005.

#### 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.

#### 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.

*Compensatory Days 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 9 consecutive days. 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 18). 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 two consecutive days (hunting days in Atlantic Flyway States with compensatory 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 Oldsquaw 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 and Delaware. Seasons not to exceed 30 days during September 1–30 may be selected for the Northeast Hunt Unit of North Carolina, New Jersey, and Rhode Island. Except for experimental seasons described below, 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 8 Canada geese.

#### Experimental Seasons

Experimental Canada goose seasons of up to 25 days during September 1–25

may be selected for the Montezuma Region of New York and the Lake Champlain Region of New York and Vermont. Experimental seasons of up to 30 days during September 1–30 may be selected by Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, New York (Long Island Zone), North Carolina (except in the Northeast Hunt Unit), and South Carolina. 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 8 Canada geese.

#### Mississippi Flyway

#### General Seasons

Canada goose seasons of up to 15 days during September 1–15 may be selected, except in the Upper Peninsula in Michigan, where the season may not extend beyond September 10, and in Minnesota (except in the Northwest Goose Zone), 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.

#### Central Flyway

#### General Seasons

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

A Canada goose season of up to 15 consecutive days during September 16–30 may be selected by South Dakota. The daily bag limit may not exceed 5 Canada geese.

#### Experimental Seasons

An experimental Canada goose season of up to 9 consecutive days during September 22–30 may be selected by Oklahoma. The daily bag limit may not exceed 5 Canada geese.

An experimental Canada goose season of up to 15 consecutive days during September 16–30 may be selected by Nebraska. The daily bag limit may not exceed 5 Canada geese.

### 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 3.

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

Idaho may select a 7-day Canada goose season during the period September 1–15 in Nez Perce County, with a bag limit of 4.

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 between September 1–15. This season is subject to the following conditions:

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

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 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 seasons must have a valid Federal sandhill crane hunting permit and/or, in those States where a Federal sandhill crane permit is not issued, a State-issued Harvest Information Survey Program (HIP) certification for game bird hunting in their possession while hunting.

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

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

1. In Utah, the requirement for monitoring the racial composition of the harvest in the experimental season is waived, and 100 percent of the harvest will be assigned to the RMP quota;

2. In Arizona, the annual requirement for monitoring the racial composition of the harvest is changed to once every 3 years;

3. In Idaho, seasons are experimental, and the requirement for monitoring the racial composition of the harvest is waived; 100 percent of the harvest will be assigned to the RMP quota; and

4. 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 January 20 in the Atlantic Flyway, and between September 1 and the Sunday nearest January 20 (January 23) in the Mississippi and Central Flyways. States in the Pacific Flyway have been allowed to select their hunting seasons between the outside dates for the season on ducks; therefore, they are late-season frameworks, and no frameworks are provided in this document.

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

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

### **Rails**

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

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

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

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

### **Common Snipe**

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

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

*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 25) and January 31.

*Hunting Seasons and Daily Bag Limits:* Seasons may not exceed 30 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 24 days.

### **Band-Tailed Pigeons**

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

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

*Hunting Seasons and Daily Bag Limits:* Not more than 9 consecutive days, with 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.

### **Mourning Doves**

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

#### *Eastern Management Unit*

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

*Zoning and Split Seasons:* States may select hunting seasons in each of two zones. The season within each zone may be split into not more than three periods. The hunting seasons in the South Zones of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and Louisiana may commence no earlier than September 20. Regulations for bag and possession limits, season length, and shooting hours must be uniform within specific hunting zones.

*Central Management Unit**Hunting Seasons and Daily Bag*

**Limits:** Not more than 70 days with a daily bag limit of 12, or not more than 60 days with a daily bag limit of 15 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 may select hunting seasons for each of three zones subject to the following conditions:

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

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

C. Daily bag limits are aggregate bag limits with mourning, white-winged, and white-tipped doves (see white-winged dove frameworks for specific daily bag limit restrictions).

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

*Western Management Unit**Hunting Seasons and Daily Bag***Limits:**

Idaho, Oregon, and Washington—Not more than 30 consecutive days with a daily bag limit of 10 mourning doves.

Utah—Not more than 30 consecutive days with a daily bag limit that may not exceed 10 mourning doves and white-winged doves in the aggregate.

Nevada—Not more than 30 consecutive days with a daily bag limit of 10 mourning doves, except in Clark and Nye Counties, where the daily bag limit may not exceed 10 mourning and white-winged doves in the aggregate.

Arizona and California—Not more than 60 days, which may be split between two periods, September 1–15 and November 1–January 15. In Arizona, during the first segment of the season, the daily bag limit is 10 mourning and white-winged doves in the aggregate, of which no more than 6 may be white-winged doves. During the remainder of the season, the daily bag limit is 10 mourning doves. In California, the daily bag limit is 10 mourning doves, except in Imperial, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties,

where the daily bag limit may not exceed 10 mourning and white-winged doves in the aggregate.

**White-Winged and White-Tipped Doves***Hunting Seasons and Daily Bag***Limits:**

Except as shown below, seasons must be concurrent with mourning dove seasons.

*Eastern Management Unit*

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

In the remainder of the Eastern Management Unit, the season is closed.

*Central Management Unit*

In Texas, the daily bag limit may not exceed 12 mourning, white-winged, and white-tipped doves (15 under the alternative) in the aggregate, of which no more than 2 may be white-tipped doves. In addition, Texas also 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 10 white-winged, mourning, and white-tipped doves in the aggregate, of which no more than 5 may be mourning doves and 2 may be white-tipped doves.

In the remainder of the Central Management Unit, the daily bag limit may not exceed 12 (15 under the alternative) mourning and white-winged doves in the aggregate.

*Western Management Unit*

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

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

In the remainder of the Western Management Unit, the season is closed.

**Alaska**

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

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

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

*Daily Bag and Possession Limits:*

**Ducks**—Except as noted, a basic daily bag limit of 7 and a possession limit of 21 ducks. Daily bag and possession limits in the North Zone are 10 and 30, and in the Gulf Coast Zone, they are 8 and 24, respectively. The basic limits may include no more than 1 canvasback daily and 3 in possession 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 3 and a possession limit of 6.

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

Dark-geese seasons are subject to the following exceptions:

1. In Units 5 and 6, the taking of Canada geese is permitted from September 28 through December 16. A special, permit-only Canada goose season may be offered on Middleton Island. No more than 10 permits can be issued. 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.

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

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

**Brant**—A daily bag limit of 2.

**Common snipe**—A daily bag limit of 8.

**Sandhill cranes**—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:

1. All seasons are by registration permit only.

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

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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 swan per permit. No more than 1 permit may be issued per hunter per season.

6. 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 15 Zenaida, mourning, and white-winged doves in the aggregate, of which not more than 3 may be mourning doves. Not to exceed 5 scalynaped pigeons.

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

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

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

*Hunting Seasons:* Not more than 55 days may be selected for hunting ducks, common moorhens, and common snipe.

The season may be split into two segments.

##### *Daily Bag Limits*

Ducks—Not to exceed 6.

Common moorhens—Not to exceed 6.

Common snipe—Not to exceed 8.

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

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

#### Virgin Islands

##### *Doves and Pigeons*

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

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

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

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

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

*Local Names for Certain Birds:* Zenaida dove, also known as mountain dove; bridled quail-dove, also known as Barbary dove or partridge; Common ground-dove, also known as stone dove, tobacco dove, rola, or tortolita; scalynaped pigeon, also known as red-necked or scaled pigeon.

##### *Ducks*

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

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

*Daily Bag Limits:* Not to exceed 6.

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

#### Special Falconry Regulations

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

*Extended Seasons:* For all hunting methods combined, the combined length of the extended season, regular season, and any special or experimental seasons 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(k). Regular-season bag and possession limits do not apply to falconry. The falconry bag limit is not in addition to gun limits.

#### Area, Unit, and Zone Descriptions

##### *Mourning and White-Winged 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.

###### Georgia

Northern Zone—That portion of the State lying north of a line running west to east along U.S. Highway 280 from Columbus to Wilcox County, thence southward along the western border of Wilcox County; thence east along the southern border of Wilcox County to the Ocmulgee River, thence north along the Ocmulgee River to Highway 280, thence east along Highway 280 to the Little Ocmulgee River; thence southward along the Little Ocmulgee River to the Ocmulgee River; thence southwesterly along the Ocmulgee River to the western border of Jeff Davis County; thence south along the western border of Jeff

Davis County; thence east along the southern border of Jeff Davis and Appling Counties; thence north along the eastern border of Appling County, to the Altamaha River; thence east to the eastern border of Tattnall County; thence north along the eastern border of Tattnall County; thence north along the western border of Evans to Candler County; thence east along the northern border of Evans County to U.S. Highway 301; thence northeast along U.S. Highway 301 to the South Carolina line.

South Zone—Remainder of the State.

#### Louisiana

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

South Zone—The remainder of the State.

#### Nevada

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

#### Texas

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

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

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

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

#### Band-Tailed Pigeons

##### California

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

South Zone—The remainder of the State.

##### New Mexico

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

South Zone—Remainder of the State.

##### Washington

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

##### Woodcock

##### New Jersey

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

South Zone—The remainder of the State.

#### Special September Canada Goose Seasons

##### Atlantic Flyway

##### Connecticut

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

South Zone—Remainder of the State.

##### Maryland

Eastern Unit—Anne Arundel, Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Harford, Kent, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties, and those portions of Baltimore, Howard, and Prince George's Counties east of I-95.

Western Unit—Allegany, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, Montgomery, and Washington Counties, and those portions of Baltimore, Howard, and Prince George's Counties west of I-95.

##### Massachusetts

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

Central Zone—That portion of the State east of the Berkshire Zone and west of a line extending south from the New Hampshire border on I-95 to U.S. 1, south on U.S. 1 to I-93, south on I-93 to MA 3, south on MA 3 to U.S. 6, west on U.S. 6 to MA 28, west on MA

28 to I-195, west to the Rhode Island border; except the waters, and the lands 150 yards inland from the high-water mark, of the Assonet River upstream to the MA 24 bridge, and the Taunton River upstream to the Center St.-Elm St. bridge 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.

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

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

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

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

Southeastern Zone—The remaining portion of New York.

##### North Carolina

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

##### 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*

#### 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 east from the Iowa border along Illinois Highway 92 to Interstate Highway 280, east along I-280 to I-80, then east along I-80 to the Indiana border.

*Central Zone:* That portion of the State outside the Northeast Canada Goose Zone and south of the North Zone to a line extending east from the Missouri border along the Modoc Ferry route to Modoc Ferry Road, east along Modoc Ferry Road to Modoc Road, northeasterly along Modoc Road and St. Leo's Road to Illinois Highway 3, north along Illinois 3 to Illinois 159, north along Illinois 159 to Illinois 161, east along Illinois 161 to Illinois 4, north along Illinois 4 to Interstate Highway 70, east along I-70 to the Bond County line, north and east along the Bond County line to Fayette County, north and east along the Fayette County line to Effingham County, east and south along the Effingham County line to I-70, then east along I-70 to the Indiana border.

*South Zone:* The remainder of Illinois.

#### Iowa

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

*South Zone:* The remainder of Iowa.

*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; thence south and east along County Road E2W to Highway 920; thence north along Highway 920 to County Road E16; thence east along County Road E16 to County Road W58; thence south along County Road W58 to County Road E34; thence east along County Road E34 to Highway 13; thence south along Highway 13 to Highway 30;

thence east along Highway 30 to Highway 1; thence south along Highway 1 to Morse Road in Johnson County; thence east along Morse Road to Wapsi Avenue; thence south along Wapsi Avenue to Lower West Branch Road; thence west along Lower West Branch Road to Taft Avenue; thence south along Taft Avenue to County Road F62; thence west along County Road F62 to Kansas Avenue; thence north along Kansas Avenue to Black Diamond Road; thence west on Black Diamond Road to Jasper Avenue; thence north along Jasper Avenue to Rohert Road; thence west along Rohert Road to Ivy Avenue; thence north along Ivy Avenue to 340th Street; thence west along 340th Street to Half Moon Avenue; thence north along Half Moon Avenue to Highway 6; thence west along Highway 6 to Echo Avenue; thence north along Echo Avenue to 250th Street; thence east on 250th Street to Green Castle Avenue; thence north along Green Castle Avenue to County Road F12; thence west along County Road F12 to County Road W30; thence north along County Road W30 to Highway 151; thence 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; thence south along R38 to Northwest 142nd Avenue; thence east along Northwest 142nd Avenue to Northeast 126th Avenue; thence east along Northeast 126th Avenue to Northeast 46th Street; thence south along Northeast 46th Street to Highway 931; thence east along Highway 931 to Northeast 80th Street; thence south along Northeast 80th Street to Southeast 6th Avenue; thence west along Southeast 6th Avenue to Highway 65; thence south and west along Highway 65 to Highway 69 in Warren County; thence south along Highway 69 to County Road G24; thence west along County Road G24 to Highway 28; thence southwest along Highway 28 to 43rd Avenue; thence north along 43rd Avenue to Ford Street; thence west along Ford Street to Filmore Street; thence west along Filmore Street to 10th Avenue; thence south along 10th Avenue to 155th Street in Madison County; thence west along 155th Street to Cumming Road; thence north along Cumming Road to Badger Creek Avenue; thence north along Badger Creek Avenue to County Road F90 in Dallas County; thence east along County Road F90 to County Road R22; thence north along County Road R22 to

Highway 44; thence east along Highway 44 to County Road R30; thence north along County Road R30 to County Road F31; thence east along County Road F31 to Highway 17; thence north along Highway 17 to Highway 415 in Polk County; thence east along Highway 415 to Northwest 158th Avenue; thence east along Northwest 158th Avenue to the point of beginning.

#### Michigan

*North Zone:* The Upper Peninsula.

*Middle Zone:* That portion of the Lower Peninsula north of a line beginning at the Wisconsin border in Lake Michigan due west of the mouth of Stony Creek in Oceana County; then due east to, and easterly and southerly along the south shore of, Stony Creek to Scenic Drive, easterly and southerly along Scenic Drive to Stony Lake Road, easterly along Stony Lake and Garfield Roads to Michigan Highway 20, east along Michigan 20 to U.S. Highway 10 Business Route (BR) in the city of Midland, east along U.S. 10 BR to U.S. 10, east along U.S. 10 to Interstate Highway 75/U.S. Highway 23, north along I-75/U.S. 23 to the U.S. 23 exit at Standish, east along U.S. 23 to Shore Road in Arenac County, east along Shore Road to the tip of Point Lookout, then on a line directly east 10 miles into Saginaw Bay, and from that point on a line directly northeast to the Canada border.

*South Zone:* The remainder of Michigan.

#### Minnesota

Twin Cities Metropolitan Canada Goose Zone—

A. All of Hennepin and Ramsey Counties.

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

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

thence north and west on CSAH 10 to CSAH 30; thence north and west on CSAH 30 to STH 25; thence east and north on STH 25 to CSAH 10; thence north on CSAH 10 to the Carver County line.

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

Northwest Goose Zone—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; thence along the U.S. Highway 52 to State Trunk Highway (STH) 57; thence along STH 57 to the municipal boundary of Kasson; thence along the municipal boundary of Kasson County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 13, Dodge County; thence along CSAH 13 to STH 30; thence along STH 30 to U.S. Highway 63; thence along U.S. Highway 63 to the south boundary of the State; thence along the south and east boundaries of the State to the south boundary of the Twin Cities Metro Canada Goose Zone; thence 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 Interstate Highway 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

##### Kansas

September Canada Goose Kansas City/Topeka Unit—That part of Kansas bounded by a line from the Kansas-Missouri State line west on KS 68 to its junction with KS 33, then north on KS 33 to its junction with U.S. 56, then west on U.S. 56 to its junction with KS

31, then west-northwest on KS 31 to its junction with KS 99, then north on KS 99 to its junction with U.S. 24, then east on U.S. 24 to its junction with KS 63, then north on KS 63 to its junction with KS 16, then east on KS 16 to its junction with KS 116, then east on KS 116 to its junction with U.S. 59, then northeast on U.S. 59 to its junction with the Kansas-Missouri line, then south on the Kansas-Missouri line to its junction with KS 68.

September Canada Goose Wichita Unit—That part of Kansas bounded by a line from I-135 west on U.S. 50 to its junction with Burmac Road, then south on Burmac Road to its junction with 279 Street West (Sedgwick/Harvey County line), then south on 279 Street West to its junction with KS 96, then east on KS 96 to its junction with KS 296, then south on KS 296 to its junction with 247 Street West, then south on 247 Street West to its junction with U.S. 54, then west on U.S. 54 to its junction with 263 Street West, then south on 263 Street West to its junction with KS 49, then south on KS 49 to its junction with 90 Avenue North, then east on 90 Avenue North to its junction with KS 55, then east on KS 55 to its junction with KS 15, then east on KS 15 to its junction with U.S. 77, then north on U.S. 77 to its junction with Ohio Street, then north on Ohio to its junction with KS 254, then east on KS 254 to its junction with KS 196, then northwest on KS 196 to its junction with I-135, then north on I-135 to its junction with U.S. 50.

##### 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 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.

##### South Dakota

September Canada Goose North Unit—Clark, Codington, Day, Deuel, Grant, Hamlin, Marshall, and Roberts County.

September Canada Goose South Unit—Beadle, Brookings, Hanson, Kingsbury, Lake, Lincoln, McCook, Miner, Minnehaha, Moody, Sanborn, and Turner Counties.

#### 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, and Wahkiakum Counties.

Area 2B (SW Quota Zone)—Pacific and Grays Harbor Counties.

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.

## 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.

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

Bridger Valley Area—The area described as the Bridger Valley Hunt Unit in State regulations.

Little Snake River—That portion of the Little Snake River drainage in Carbon County.

## 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.

## 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 37, southeast along State 37 to U.S. Highway 59, south along U.S. 59 to Interstate Highway 80, then east along I-80 to the Illinois border.

*South Zone:* The remainder of Iowa.

## 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 portion of the State east of the High Plains Zone and west of a line extending south from the Nebraska border along KS 28 to U.S.

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

## 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 the Klamath River with the California-Oregon line; south and west along the Klamath River to the mouth of Shovel Creek; along Shovel Creek to its intersection with Forest Service Road 46N05 at Burnt Camp; west to its junction with Forest Service Road 46N10; south and east to its junction with County Road 7K007; south and west to its junction with Forest Service Road 45N22; south and west to its junction with Highway 97 and Grass Lake Summit; south along to its junction with Interstate 5 at the town of Weed; south 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*

**North Zone:** The Upper Peninsula.

**Middle Zone:** That portion of the Lower Peninsula north of a line beginning at the Wisconsin border in Lake Michigan due west of the mouth of Stony Creek in Oceana County; then due east to, and easterly and southerly along the south shore of, Stony Creek to Scenic Drive, easterly and southerly

along Scenic Drive to Stony Lake Road, easterly along Stony Lake and Garfield Roads to Michigan Highway 20, east along Michigan 20 to U.S. Highway 10 Business Route (BR) in the city of Midland, east along U.S. 10 BR to U.S. 10, east along U.S. 10 to Interstate Highway 75/U.S. Highway 23, north along I-75/U.S. 23 to the U.S. 23 exit at Standish, east along U.S. 23 to Shore Road in Arenac County, east along Shore Road to the tip of Point Lookout, then on a line directly east 10 miles into Saginaw Bay, and from that point on a line directly northeast to the Canada border.

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

#### *Sandhill Cranes*

#### *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.

**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, Tarrant and Bernalillo 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.

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

**Texas—**Area 1—That portion of the State west of a line beginning at the International Bridge at Laredo, north along I-35 to the Oklahoma border.

**Area 2—**That portion of the State east and south of a line from the International Bridge at Laredo northerly along I-35 to U.S. 290; southeasterly along U.S. 290 to I-45; south and east on I-45 to State Highway 87, south and east on TX 87 to the channel in the Gulf of Mexico between Galveston and Point Bolivar; except: That portion of the State

lying within the area bounded by the Corpus Christi Bay Causeway on U.S. 181 at Portland; north and west on U.S. 181 to U.S. 77 at Sinton; north and east along U.S. 77 to U.S. 87 at Victoria; east and south along U.S. 87 to Texas Highway 35; north and east on TX 35 to the west end of the Lavaca Bay Bridge; then south and east along the west shoreline of Lavaca Bay and Matagorda Island to the Gulf of Mexico; then south and west along the shoreline of the Gulf of Mexico to the Corpus Christi Bay Causeway.

**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.

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

**Montana—**The Central Flyway portion of the State except that area south of I-90 and west of the Bighorn River.

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

**Riverton-Boysen Unit—**Portions of Fremont County.

**Park and 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.

#### *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.

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