

**2014-15 MIGRATORY WATERFOWL SEASONS AND
REGULATIONS**

WAC 232-28-436

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SUMMARY SHEET

Meeting: August 8-9, 2014

Agenda Item: 2014-15 Migratory waterfowl seasons and regulations – **Rule Briefing, Public Hearing, and Rule Action**

Presented by: Don Kraege, Waterfowl Section Manager, Wildlife Program

Background:

Department staff will brief the Commission and request action on the proposed amendment of WAC 232-28-436 2014-15 Migratory waterfowl seasons and regulations.

Migratory waterfowl season frameworks are established through ongoing interagency management programs involving U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and flyway organizations, including input from Canada, Russia, and Mexico. Federal frameworks for fall and winter waterfowl seasons are established in late July each year, and include maximum bag limits, season lengths, season timing, and other regulations. Pacific Flyway season frameworks follow harvest strategies and management plans that have been developed cooperatively by USFWS and the Pacific Flyway Council. All states adopt waterfowl seasons within federal frameworks, and in many cases are more restrictive to address regional conservation needs.

Management agencies utilize Adaptive Harvest Management (AHM) to establish duck season frameworks. AHM relies on annual survey information and population models to prescribe optimal regulation packages each year. The population of ducks in the western part of North America is managed separately from the eastern flyways, as part of the models developed for western mallard AHM. Western mallard AHM uses results from breeding surveys and other information from western areas rather than from the Canadian prairies, recognizing differences in Pacific Flyway breeding areas. The season packages proposed for western mallard AHM are the same as developed under mid-continent mallard AHM (liberal, moderate, and restrictive), although different models are used to prescribe annual packages.

Throughout north American survey areas, 2014 duck breeding populations are still benefitting from good wetland conditions during the past several years. Pacific Flyway survey areas affecting Washington's fall and winter waterfowl populations can often show different trends from eastern survey areas that contribute more to north American breeding indices. Certain species of ducks, including pintail, canvasback, and scaup, have received additional nationwide management emphasis due to their population status and trends. These species have independent population models and harvest strategies, developed cooperatively with USFWS, and rely on population trend analyses available in late July. Most goose populations at or above Pacific Flyway objective levels.

Policy Issue(s) you are bringing to the Commission for consideration:

Establishing waterfowl hunting seasons within frameworks established by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, including continuation of a 107-day season for ducks.

Public involvement process used and what you learned:

These proposed recommendations were sent to approximately 9000 organizations and individuals for their review and consideration. In addition, proposed recommendations were presented to the Waterfowl Advisory Group on June 28 at North Bend. These organizations and individuals were also informed of the opportunity to provide public testimony at the August Commission meeting in Olympia.

Action requested (identify the specific Commission decisions you are seeking):

Take public comment; amend WAC 232-28-436 2014-15 Migratory waterfowl seasons and regulations as presented.

Draft motion language:

I move to amend WAC 232-28-436 2014-15 Migratory waterfowl seasons and regulations as proposed.

Justification for Commission action:

Provide hunting recreation and agricultural damage control consistent with the status of waterfowl species.

Communications plan:

- News Release
 - Website
 - Hunting Pamphlet
 - Washington State Register
-

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 13-17-083, filed 8/19/13, effective 9/19/13)

WAC 232-28-436 ((2013-))2014-2015 Migratory waterfowl seasons and regulations.

DUCKS

Statewide: ((~~Oct. 12-16, 2013 and Oct. 19, 2013 - Jan. 26, 2014; except scaup season closed Oct. 12 - Nov. 1, 2013.~~)) Oct. 11-15, 2014 and Oct. 18, 2014 - Jan. 25, 2015; except scaup season closed Oct. 11-31, 2014.

Special youth hunting weekend open only to hunters 15 years of age or under (must be accompanied by an adult at least 18 years old who is not hunting): ((~~Sept. 21-22, 2013~~)) Sept. 20-21, 2014.

Daily Bag Limit: 7 ducks, to include not more than 2 hen mallard, 2 pintail, ((~~3 scaup, 1~~)) 3 scaup, 21 canvasback, and 2 redhead statewide; and to include not more than 1 harlequin, 2 scoter, 2 long-tailed duck, and 2 goldeneye in Western Washington.

Possession Limit for Regular Season: 21 ducks, to include not more than 6 hen mallard, 6 pintail, ((~~9 scaup, 3~~)) 9 scaup, 63 canvasback, and 6 redhead statewide; and to include not more than 1 harlequin, 6 scoter, 6 long-tailed duck, and 6 goldeneye in Western Washington.

Possession Limit for Youth Hunting Weekend: 14 ducks, to include not more than 4 hen mallard, 4 pintail, (~~6 scaup, 2~~) 6 scaup, 42 canvas-back, and 4 redhead statewide; and to include not more than 1 harlequin, 4 scoter, 4 long-tailed duck, and 4 goldeneye in Western Washington.

Season Limit: 1 harlequin in Western Washington.

AUTHORIZATION AND HARVEST RECORD CARD REQUIRED TO HUNT SEA DUCKS

Hunters must possess a special (~~(2013-2014)~~) 2014-15 hunting authorization and harvest record card for sea ducks when hunting harlequin, scoter, long-tailed duck, and goldeneye in Western Washington. (~~(Hunters who did not possess a 2012-13 sea duck harvest record)~~) A hunter who has not previously possessed a sea duck harvest report card must submit an application form to Washington state department of fish and wildlife (WDFW). Immediately after taking a sea duck into possession, hunters must record in ink the information required on the harvest record card.

COOT (**Mudhen**)

Same areas, dates (including youth hunting weekend), and shooting hours as the general duck season.

Daily Bag Limit: 25 coots.

Possession Limit: 75 coots.

SNIPE

Same areas, dates (except youth hunting weekend), and shooting hours as the general duck season.

Daily Bag Limit: 8 snipe.

Possession Limit: 24 snipe.

GEESE (except Brant)

Special youth hunting weekend open only to hunters 15 years of age or under (must be accompanied by an adult at least 18 years old who is not hunting): (~~Sept. 21-22, 2013~~) Sept. 20-21, 2014, statewide except Western Washington Goose Management Areas 2A and 2B.

Daily Bag Limit: 4 Canada geese.

Possession Limit: 8 Canada geese.

Western Washington Goose Seasons

Goose Management Area 1: Island, Skagit, Snohomish counties. (~~Oct. 12, 2013 - Jan. 26, 2014~~) Oct. 11, 2014 - Jan. 25, 2015 for snow, Ross', and blue geese. (~~Oct. 12-24, 2013 and Nov. 2, 2013 - Jan. 26, 2014~~) Oct. 11-23, 2014 and Nov. 1, 2014 - Jan. 25, 2015 for other geese (except brant).

Daily Bag Limit: 4 geese.

Possession Limit: 12 geese.

AUTHORIZATION AND HARVEST RECORD CARD REQUIRED TO HUNT SNOW GEESE

Hunters must possess a special ((2013-14)) 2014-15 migratory bird hunting authorization and harvest record card for snow geese when hunting snow, Ross', and blue geese in Goose Management Area 1.

~~((Hunters who did not possess a 2012-13 snow goose harvest record card must submit an application form to WDFW.))~~ A hunter who has not previously possessed a snow goose harvest report card must submit an application form to Washington state department of fish and wildlife (WDFW). Immediately after taking a snow, Ross', or blue goose into possession, hunters must record in ink the information required on the harvest record card.

~~((SNOW GOOSE QUALITY HUNTING PROGRAM IN GOOSE MANAGEMENT AREA 1~~

~~All hunters must obey posted signs regarding access restrictions. Quality hunt units are not available for commercial uses.))~~

SKAGIT COUNTY SPECIAL RESTRICTIONS

It is unlawful to discharge a firearm for the purpose of hunting waterfowl within 100 feet of any paved public road on Fir Island in Skagit County or to discharge a firearm for the purpose of hunting snow geese within 100 feet of any paved public road in other areas of Skagit County.

While hunting snow geese, if a hunter is convicted of (a) trespass; (b) shooting from, across, or along the maintained part of any public

highway; (c) discharging a firearm for the purpose of hunting waterfowl within 100 feet of any paved public road on Fir Island in Skagit County or discharging a firearm within 100 feet of any paved public road for the purpose of hunting snow geese in other areas of Skagit County; or (d) exceeding the daily bag limit for geese, authorization will be invalidated for the remainder of the current snow goose season and an authorization will not be issued for the subsequent snow goose season.

Goose Management Area 2A

Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties, and that part of Clark County north of the Washougal River: Open in all areas except Ridgefield NWR from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Saturdays, Sundays, and Wednesdays only, (~~Nov. 9 - Dec. 1, 2013 and Dec. 11, 2013 - Jan. 26, 2014, except closed Dec. 25, 2013 and Jan. 1, 2014.~~) Nov. 8-30, 2014 and Dec. 10, 2014 - Jan. 25, 2015. Ridgefield NWR open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays only, (~~Nov. 9-30, 2013 and Dec. 12, 2013 - Jan. 25, 2014, except closed Nov. 28, 2013~~) Nov. 8-29, 2014 and Dec. 11, 2014 - Jan. 24, 2015; except closed Nov. 11, Nov. 27, and Dec. 25, 2014; and Jan. 1, 2015.

Bag Limits for Goose Management Area 2A:

Daily Bag Limit: 4 geese, to include not more than 1 dusky Canada goose ((and ~~3 cackling geese~~)).

Possession Limit: 12 geese, to include not more than 1 dusky Canada goose ((and ~~9 cackling geese~~)).

Season Limit: 1 dusky Canada goose.

Goose Management Area 2B

Pacific County: Open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Saturdays and Wednesdays only, ((~~Oct. 12-23, 2013 and Nov. 2, 2013 - Jan. 18, 2014~~))
Oct. 11-25, 2014 and Nov. 1, 2014 - Jan. 17, 2015.

Bag Limits for Goose Management Area 2B:

Daily Bag Limit: 4 geese, to include not more than 1 dusky Canada goose, ((~~3 cackling geese~~)) and 1 Aleutian goose.

Possession Limit: 12 geese, to include not more than 1 dusky Canada goose, ((~~9 cackling geese~~)) and 3 Aleutian geese.

Season Limit: 1 dusky Canada goose.

Special Provisions for Goose Management Areas 2A and 2B:

A dusky Canada goose is defined as a dark-breasted (as shown in the Munsell color chart 10 YR, 5 or less) Canada goose with a culmen (bill) length of 40-50 mm. A cackling goose is defined as a goose with a culmen (bill) length of 32 mm or less.

The goose season for Goose Management Areas 2A and 2B will be closed early if dusky Canada goose harvests exceed area quotas which collectively total ~~((40))~~ 80 geese. The fish and wildlife commission has authorized the director to implement emergency area closures in accordance with the following quotas: A total of ~~((40))~~ 80 duskys, to be distributed ~~((5))~~ 15 for Zone 1 (Ridgefield NWR); ~~((5))~~ 25 for Zone 2 (Cowlitz County south of the Kalama River); ~~((15))~~ 20 for Zone 3 (Clark County except Ridgefield NWR); ~~((7))~~ 10 for Zone 4 (Cowlitz County north of the Kalama River and Wahkiakum County); and ~~((8))~~ 10 for Zone 5 (Pacific County). Quotas may be shifted to other zones during the season to optimize use of the statewide quota and minimize depredation.

Hunters must possess a valid special ~~((2013-14))~~ 2014-15 migratory bird hunting authorization and harvest record card for Goose Management Area 2A/2B ~~((and daily goose harvest record card))~~ when hunting geese in Goose Management Areas 2A and 2B. New hunters and those who did not maintain a valid ~~((2012-13))~~ 2013-14 authorization must review goose identification training materials and score a minimum of 80% on a goose identification test to receive authorization. Hunters who fail a test must wait 28 days before retesting, and will not be issued a reciprocal authorization until that time.

Immediately after taking any goose into possession, hunters must record in ink the information required on the harvest record card. Hunters must go directly to the nearest check station and have geese tagged when leaving a hunt site, before 6:00 p.m. All geese shall be presented intact and fully feathered at the check station. If a hunter takes the season bag limit of 1 dusky Canada goose or does not comply with requirements listed above regarding checking of birds and recording harvest on the harvest record card, authorization will be invalidated and the hunter will not be able to hunt geese in Goose Management Areas 2A and 2B for the remainder of the season and the special late goose season. It is unlawful to fail to comply with all provisions listed above for Goose Management Areas 2A and 2B.

Special Late Goose Season for Goose Management Area 2A:

Open to WDFW master hunter program graduates and youth hunters (15 years of age or under, who are accompanied by a master hunter) possessing a valid special ((~~2013-14~~) 2014-15 migratory bird hunting authorization for Goose Management Area 2A/2B and daily goose harvest record card, in areas with goose damage in Goose Management Area 2A on the following days, from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.: Saturdays and Wednesdays only, ((~~Feb. 1 - Mar. 5, 2014~~) Feb. 4 - Mar. 8, 2015).

Daily Bag Limit: 4 geese, to include not more than 1 dusky Canada goose ((and ~~3 cackling geese~~)).

Possession Limit: 12 geese, to include not more than 1 dusky Canada goose ((and ~~9 cackling geese~~)).

Season Limit: 1 dusky Canada goose.

A dusky Canada goose is defined as a dark-breasted Canada goose (as shown in the Munsell color chart 10 YR, 5 or less) with a culmen (bill) length of 40-50 mm. A cackling goose is defined as a goose with a culmen (bill) length of 32 mm or less.

Hunters qualifying for the season will be placed on a list for participation in this hunt. WDFW will assist landowners with contacting qualified hunters to participate in damage control hunts on specific lands incurring goose damage. Participation in this hunt will depend on the level of damage experienced by landowners. The special late goose season will be closed by emergency action if the harvest of dusky Canada geese exceeds ((~~45~~)) 85 for the regular and late seasons. All provisions listed above for Goose Management Area 2A regarding authorization, harvest reporting, and checking requirements also apply to the special late season; except hunters must confirm their participation at least 24 hours in advance by calling the goose hunting hotline (listed on hunting authorization), and hunters must check out by

5:00 p.m. on each hunt day regardless of success. It is unlawful to fail to comply with all provisions listed above for the special late season in Goose Management Area 2A.

Goose Management Area 3

Includes all parts of Western Washington not included in Goose Management Areas 1, 2A, and 2B: (~~Oct. 12-24, 2013 and Nov. 2, 2013 – Jan. 26, 2014~~) Oct. 11-23, 2014 and Nov. 1, 2014 – Jan. 25, 2015.

Daily Bag Limit: 4 geese.

Possession Limit: 12 geese.

Eastern Washington Goose Seasons

Goose Management Area 4

Adams, Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Franklin, Grant, Kittitas, Lincoln, Okanogan, Spokane, and Walla Walla counties: Saturdays, Sundays, and Wednesdays only during (~~Oct. 12, 2013 – Jan. 19, 2014; Nov. 11, 28 and 29, 2013; Dec. 26, 27, 30, and 31, 2013; and every day Jan. 20-26, 2014~~) Oct. 11, 2014 – Jan. 18, 2015; Nov. 11, 27, and 28, 2014; Dec. 25, 26, 29, and 30, 2014; Jan. 1, 2015; and every day Jan. 19-25, 2015.

Goose Management Area 5

Includes all parts of Eastern Washington not included in Goose Management Area 4: (~~Oct. 12-14, 2013, every day from Oct. 19, 2013 – Jan.~~

~~26, 2014~~) Oct. 11-13, 2014 and every day from Oct. 18, 2014 - Jan. 25, 2015.

Bag Limits for all Eastern Washington Goose Management Areas:

Daily Bag Limit: 4 geese.

Possession Limit: 12 geese.

BRANT

Open in Skagit County only on the following dates: Jan. (~~11, 12, 15, 18, 19, 22, 25, and 26, 2014~~) 10, 11, 14, 17, 18, 21, 24, and 25, 2015.

If the (~~2013-14~~) 2014-15 preseason brant population in Skagit County is below 6,000 (as determined by the midwinter waterfowl survey), the brant season in Skagit County will be canceled.

Open in Pacific County only on the following dates: (~~Jan. 4, 5, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14, 16, 18, and 19, 2014~~) Jan. 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, 13, 15, 17, and 18, 2015.

AUTHORIZATION AND HARVEST RECORD CARD REQUIRED TO HUNT BRANT

Hunters must possess a special (~~2013-14~~) 2014-15 migratory bird hunting authorization and harvest record card for brant when hunting brant. (~~Hunters who did not possess a 2012-13 brant harvest record card must submit an application form to WDFW.~~) A hunter who has not previously possessed a brant harvest report card must submit an appli-

cation form to Washington state department of fish and wildlife
(WDFW). Immediately after taking a brant into possession, hunters must
record in ink the information required on the harvest record card.

Bag Limits for Skagit and Pacific counties:

Daily Bag Limit: 2 brant.

Possession Limit: 6 brant.

SWANS

Season closed statewide.

MANDATORY REPORTING FOR MIGRATORY BIRD HARVEST RECORD CARDS

Hunters must report ((~~2013-14~~)) 2014-15 harvest information from band-
tailed pigeon harvest record cards to WDFW by Sept. 30, ((~~2013~~)) 2014,
and harvest information from brant, sea duck, and snow goose harvest
record cards to WDFW by Feb. 15, ((~~2014~~)) 2015. Every person issued a
migratory bird hunting authorization and harvest record card must re-
turn the entire card to WDFW or report the card information at the
designated internet site listed on the harvest record card. Any hunter
failing to report by the deadline will be in noncompliance of report-
ing requirements. Hunters who have not reported hunting activity by
the reporting deadline for any harvest record card acquired in ((~~2013-~~
~~14~~)) 2014-15 will be required to pay a \$10 administrative fee before
any new ((~~2014-15~~)) 2015-16 migratory bird authorization and harvest

record card will be issued. A hunter may only be penalized a maximum of \$10 during a license year.

FALCONRY SEASONS

DUCKS, COOTS, AND SNIPE (Falconry)

(Bag limits include geese and mourning doves.)

~~((Oct. 12-16, 2013 and Oct. 19, 2013 — Jan. 26, 2014))~~ Oct. 11-15, 2014 and Oct. 18, 2014 — Jan. 25, 2015 statewide.

Daily Bag Limit: 3, straight or mixed bag with geese and mourning doves during established seasons.

Possession Limit: 9, straight or mixed bag with geese and mourning doves during established seasons.

GEESE (Falconry)

(Bag limits include ducks, coot, snipe, and mourning doves.)

Goose Management Area 1: ~~((Oct. 12, 2013 — Jan. 26, 2014))~~ Oct. 11, 2014 — Jan. 25, 2015 for snow, Ross', or blue geese. ~~((Oct. 12-24, 2013 and Nov. 2, 2013 — Jan. 26, 2014))~~ Oct. 11-23, 2014 and Nov. 1, 2014 — Jan. 25, 2015 for other geese.

Goose Management Area 2A: Saturdays, Sundays, and Wednesdays only, ~~((Nov. 9-24, 2013 and Dec. 4, 2013 — Jan. 26, 2014))~~ Nov. 8-23, 2014 and Dec. 3, 2014 — Jan. 25, 2015.

Goose Management Area 2B: Saturdays and Wednesdays only, (~~Oct. 12-23, 2013 and Nov. 2, 2013 - Jan. 18, 2014~~) Oct. 11-25, 2014 and Nov. 1, 2014 - Jan. 17, 2015.

Goose Management Areas 3, 4, and 5: (~~Oct. 12-13, 2013 and Nov. 2, 2013 - Jan. 26, 2014~~) Oct. 11-12, 2014 and Nov. 1, 2014 - Jan. 25, 2015.

Daily Bag Limit for All Areas: 3 geese (except brant), straight or mixed bag with ducks, coots, snipe, and mourning doves during established seasons.

Possession Limit for All Areas: 9 geese (except brant), straight or mixed bag with ducks, coots, snipe, and mourning doves during established seasons.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.047, 77.12.240, 77.32.070. WSR 13-17-083 (Order 13-186), § 232-28-436, filed 8/19/13, effective 9/19/13.

Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.32.070, and C.F.R. Title 50, Part 20; Migratory Bird Treaty Act. WSR 12-18-001 (Order 12-191), § 232-28-436, filed 8/22/12, effective 9/22/12.]

WAC 232-28-436 2014-2015 Migratory waterfowl seasons and regulations.

RECOMMENDED ADJUSTMENTS

The following adjustments are proposed since the Code Reviser (CR 102) filing and are already included in your notebook.

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- Duck Season – Scaup
There were no restricted bag limits or restricted season lengths for scaup proposed in the original CR102 filing. The recommended adjustments reduce the scaup limits and season length as follows:
 - daily bag limit reduced from 7 to 3 per day
 - possession limit reduced from 14 to 6 during the youth hunt
 - possession limit reduced from 21 to 9 during the regular season
 - season length reduced by three weeks, from 107 to 86 days.These changes are required by U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) based on the results of recent breeding population survey information and the scaup harvest strategy.

- Duck Season – Canvasback
The canvasback limit was proposed for 2 per day in the original CR102 filing. The recommended adjustments reduce the canvasback limits as follows:
 - daily bag limit reduced from 2 to 1 per day
 - possession limit reduced from 4 to 2 during the youth hunt
 - possession limit reduced from 6 to 3 during the regular seasonThese changes are required by U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) based on the results of recent breeding population survey information and the canvasback harvest strategy.

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- Goose Management Area 4 Season Dates
The New Year's Day holiday (January 1) was inadvertently excluded from the list of season dates for Goose Management Area 4. The holiday was added to the list of season dates because it is a traditional goose hunting day for this management area.