

**Waterfowl Advisory Group
July 23, 2005 Meeting
Moses Lake Fire Hall**

Members and Guests Present: Mike Meseberg, Larry Boose, Chris Hyland, Fred Slyfield, Scott Fink, Chuck Bratton, Dick Price, Pat Shearer, Doug Hargin, Fred LeVaring, Chris Dorow, Michael Crowder, Dave Sievers, Mark Burlington, Dan Howell, Ben Welton.

Agency Staff present: Jim Tabor, Dave Ware, Rich Finger, Don Kraege, Dennis Beich, and Ron Friesz

Meeting called to order by chairman Dave Sievers at 9:30 a.m.

Introductions and Welcome

Conservation Service Award presented to Don Kraege from Ducks Unlimited.

April 2, 2005 Minutes: Don Kraege provided an explanation regarding how new members were appointed; duck stamp expenditure plan explained – approval of new capital projects were limited to provide some reserve for FY 2006. **Minutes approved.**

Review of 2005-06 Hunting Season Proposals

Update provided by Don Kraege: duck seasons similar to last year with essentially calendar date adjustments; full pintail season this year; canvasbacks restricted again to 60 days; likely to be scaup restrictions; seaduck authorization requirement continued, harvest was higher than anticipated but existing seasons will be retained and analyzed after 2006-07 season, new proposal for authorization application deadline; intend to look at making authorizations available from the license vendors as well as combining the authorizations for seaducks, snow geese, brant, etc. when new license contractor begins in 2006.

Discussion on scaup restrictions: options discussed to include shorter seasons versus reduced bag limit; straw poll greatly favored a full season and reduced bag limit vs. full bag limit with reduced season.

Discussion about requiring identification courses for seaducks in order to hunt and/or putting a course on the web?

Brant season restrictions from 10 to 5 days are recommended due to continued declines in the populations; cackling goose restrictions are recommended from 4/8 to 2/4; adding a few days onto the southwest Wash. goose season; adding one more snow goose to the bag limit statewide.

Snake River closure discussion: need to make sure we monitor the situation so we know what the effects were; that way it can be evaluated after three years; the data should include hunter use as well as changes in waterfowl distribution.

Motion to approve WDFW's recommendation for 2005 seasons; amendment to have a straight 60 day canvasback season as late as possible rather than a split season (passed); another amendment to recommend a reduction of scaup bag limit to 2/4 with a 107 day season; original motion as amended passed unanimously.

Motion to close the Snake River after evaluation in 2006-07 if the data are not conclusive and/or do not support continuing with the river section open for hunting; motion passed with two opposed.

Public Outreach for WAG/Duck Stamp

Suggestion from Chris Hyland to increase the profile of the WAG by expanding the use of the web and perhaps more emphasis in the waterfowl hunting pamphlet;

Discussion: perhaps form a subcommittee (Pat and Chris) to develop a mission statement and make a recommendation to WAG on implementation; perhaps develop a postcard to mail to all purchasers of a duck stamp to let them know about the group; would like to get something out this fall; place names and area on the web and phone numbers for those who want them publicized. A sign-up sheet was passed around for those who wanted their name and phone number listed on the web.

Licensing of Waterfowl Guides

Mike Meseberg presented rationale for developing a license for guides and require insurance policy and annual harvest reports.

Discussion: guides must already have a business license and meet the requirements of the Coast Guard; would likely need to run background checks and licensed organization; may save the guides money on insurance; guide fees should be nominal so small operators are not forced out; public safety issues are important as well as the liability considerations; WDFW-managed public land permits are required for licensed guides, but currently only done in Region 2; already plenty of rules and requirements that just need to be enforced; should not allow guides on public hunting areas; should get the information out to the public that consideration is being given to the requirement for a license;

Motion to table the issue failed 9 to 7. Motion to ask the state look at the licensing or permitting of waterfowl guides. Amendment to develop a small group to work with the state to look at licensing or permitting waterfowl guides passed (9 to 4); Mike Meseberg and those chosen by him.

Overview of the Columbia Basin Plan

Don Kraege provided an update of a review to look at developing or modifying existing waterfowl closure areas and the distribution of waterfowl in the Basin.

Discussion about timeline for completion; carp control and degradation of habitat; impact of mosquito control on waterfowl production.

Quality Hunting Areas and Reservation Systems for Waterfowl Hunting

Don Kraege talked about the Frenchman Hills project that is likely to become the next quality area; Dave Ware updated group on direction of reservation systems.

Discussion: a major problem from the public seems to be overcrowding; need to develop opportunities to reduce conflicts among hunters; Winchester is high quality, but there seems to be a problem with competition for parking space and/or guides who seem to dominate the parking spaces; USFWS charges a fee for reservations; should also consider rules to limit how many times a reservation can be made or how long before the hunt that a reservation can be made; should also look at simple ways to restrict participation on existing public hunting areas that are too crowded (e.g. shell limits, or even/odd systems for weekends).

Election of Vice-Chair for 2006

Nomination of Ralph Engle for Vice-Chair; nominations closed; Ralph wins.

Tour of Winchester Quality Hunt Area

The group recessed for lunch and reconvened for a tour of the Winchester Quality Hunt Area from 1:30 – 4 p.m.

Agenda
Waterfowl Advisory Group
April 2, 2005
Si View Community Center, North Bend

9:30 am Introductions

Minutes from July 10, 2004 Moses Lake meeting

Housekeeping items

- Terms of appointment
- Reappointment

- Term limits
- Staggered terms

Review of highest priority 2005-07 Migratory Bird Stamp proposals (enclosed)

Lunch (provided)

1:00 pm Review of highest priority 2005-07 Migratory Bird Stamp proposals (continued)

Cost of Migratory Bird Stamp

2005 Legislative issues

- ✓ Access program
- ✓ SW Goose funding
- ✓ Lead shot

Updates on current waterfowl topics

- Columbia Basin plan
- USFWS / Pacific Flyway

Open discussion and issues for next meeting

Date and location for next meeting

4:00 pm Adjourn

- need to get word out - w/ waterfowl
- Agenda item - Post
how to advertise group

Ralph motiv increase ~~taxes~~ \$5

- try res. system on a couple areas

→ need more education - P.S.

where do we need more closed areas
where do we need less? to affect w/ dist.
~~what~~

- moist soil report
- Regulatory
- Col Basin 13/31 (16)

7/23/2005