

TITLE 14. Fish and Game Commission Notice of Proposed Changes in Regulations

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Fish and Game Commission (Commission), pursuant to the authority vested by Sections 200, 203, 265 and 355 of the Fish and Game Code and to implement, interpret or make specific sections 200, 203, 203.1, 265, 270, 355 and 356 of said Code, proposes to amend subsection (a)(1)(D)4. of Section 300, Title 14, California Code of Regulations, relating to Resident Upland Game Bird Hunting Regulations.

Informative Digest/Policy Statement Overview

Current regulations in Section 300, Title 14, California Code of Regulations (CCR), provide general hunting seasons for taking resident and migratory upland game birds, including sage grouse. A limited number of hunting permits are issued for greater sage grouse, and that number is based on annual population surveys. For the 2018-2019 season, the Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) will present the Commission a final recommendation for permits based on the spring 2018 lek counts, which means the Commission will notice a possible range, and adopt final permit numbers based on the final lek counts.

The Department is recommending the following regulation changes:

Amend subsection 300(a)(1)(D)4. to adjust the annual number of General Season greater sage grouse hunting permits by zone for the 2018-2019 season.

Non-monetary Benefits to the Public

The Commission anticipates benefits to the health and welfare of California residents through the sustainable management of sage grouse populations. The Commission does not anticipate non-monetary benefits to worker safety, the prevention of discrimination, the promotion of fairness or social equity and the increase in openness and transparency in business and government.

Consistency and Compatibility with Existing Regulations

The Commission has reviewed its regulations in Title 14, CCR, and conducted a search of other regulations on this topic and has concluded that the proposed amendments to Section 300 are neither inconsistent nor incompatible with existing State regulations. No other State agency has the authority to promulgate hunting regulations.

Benefits of the regulations

Adoption of sustainable upland game seasons, bag and possession limits, and authorized methods of take provides for the maintenance of sufficient populations of upland game birds to ensure their continued existence.

Consistency and Compatibility with State Regulations

The Fish and Game Commission, pursuant to Fish and Game Code Sections 200, 203 and 265 has the sole authority to regulate hunting in California. Commission staff has searched the California Code of Regulations and has found no other agency with the authority to regulate resident and upland game bird hunting in California. Therefore the Commission has determined that the proposed amendments are neither inconsistent nor incompatible with existing State regulations.

NOTICE IS GIVEN that any person interested may present statements, orally or in writing, relevant to this action at a hearing to be held in the, Four Points by Sheraton Ventura Harbor Resort, 1050 Schooner Drive, Ventura, California, on Thursday, April 19, 2018 at 8:00 a.m., or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard.

NOTICE IS ALSO GIVEN that any person interested may present statements, orally or in writing, relevant to this action at a hearing to be held in Resources Building, Auditorium, First Floor, 1416 Ninth Street Sacramento California, on Thursday, June 21, 2018, at 8:00 a.m., or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard. It is requested, but not required, that written comments be submitted on or before 5 p.m. on June 7, 2018 at the address given below, or by email to FGC@fgc.ca.gov. Written comments mailed, or emailed to the Commission office, must be received before 12:00 noon on June 15, 2018. All comments must be received no later than June 21, 2018, at the hearing in Sacramento, California. Mailed comments should be addressed to Fish and Game Commission, PO Box 944209, Sacramento, CA 94244-2090. If you would like copies of any modifications to this proposal, please include your name and mailing address.

Availability of Documents

The Initial Statement of Reasons, text of the regulations, as well as all related documents upon which the proposal is based (rulemaking file), are on file and available for public review from the agency representative, Valerie Termini, Executive Director, Fish and Game Commission, 1416 Ninth Street, Box 944209, Sacramento, California 94244-2090, phone (916) 653-4899. Please direct requests for the above mentioned documents and inquiries concerning the regulatory process to Valerie Termini or Jon Snellstrom at the preceding address or phone number. **Scott Gardner, Senior Environmental Scientist, (916) 801-6257**, has been designated to respond to questions on the substance of the proposed Waterfowl hunting regulations. Copies of the Notice of Proposed Action, the Initial Statement of Reasons, and the text of the regulation in underline and strikeout can be accessed through our website at <http://www.fgc.ca.gov>.

Availability of Modified Text

If the regulations adopted by the Commission differ from but are sufficiently related to the action proposed, they will be available to the public for at least 15 days prior to the date of adoption. Circumstances beyond the control of the Commission (e.g., timing of Federal regulation adoption, timing of resource data collection, timelines do not allow, etc.) or changes made to be responsive to public recommendation and comments during the regulatory process may preclude full compliance with the 15-day comment period, and the Commission will exercise its powers under Section 202 of the Fish and Game Code. Regulations adopted pursuant to this section are not subject to the time periods for adoption, amendment or repeal of regulations prescribed in Sections 11343.4, 11346.4 and 11346.8 of the Government Code. Any person interested may obtain a copy of said regulations prior to the date of adoption by contacting the agency representative named herein.

If the regulatory proposal is adopted, the final statement of reasons may be obtained from the address above when it has been received from the agency program staff.

Impact of Regulatory Action/Results of the Economic Impact Assessment

The potential for significant statewide adverse economic impacts that might result from the

proposed regulatory action has been assessed, and the following initial determinations relative to the required statutory categories have been made:

- (a) Significant Statewide Adverse Economic Impact Directly Affecting Businesses, Including the Ability of California Businesses to Compete with Businesses in Other States:

The proposed action will not have a significant statewide adverse economic impact directly affecting business, including the ability of California businesses to compete with businesses in other states, because the regulations propose only minor changes not affecting business.

- (b) Impact on the Creation or Elimination of Jobs Within the State, the Creation of New Businesses or the Elimination of Existing Businesses, or the Expansion of Businesses in California; Benefits of the Regulation to the Health and Welfare of California Residents, Worker Safety, and the State's Environment.

The Commission does not anticipate any impacts on the creation or elimination of jobs or businesses in California or on the expansion of businesses in California; and, does not anticipate benefits to worker safety, because the regulations propose only minor changes not affecting jobs.

The Commission anticipates benefits to the health and welfare of California residents. The proposed regulations are intended to provide continued recreational opportunity to the public. Hunting provides opportunities for multi-generational family activities and promotes respect for California's environment by the future stewards of the State's resources.

The Commission anticipates benefits to the environment by the sustainable management of California's upland game resources. The fees that hunters pay for licenses and stamps are used for conservation.

- (c) Cost Impacts on a Representative Private Person or Business:

The Commission is not aware of any cost impacts that a representative private person or business would necessarily incur in reasonable compliance with the proposed action.

- (d) Costs or Savings to State Agencies or Costs/Savings in Federal Funding to the State: None.

- (e) Nondiscretionary Costs/Savings to Local Agencies: None.

- (f) Programs Mandated on Local Agencies or School Districts: None.

- (g) Costs Imposed on Any Local Agency or School District that is Required to be Reimbursed Under Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4, Government Code: None.

- (h) Effect on Housing Costs: None.

Effect on Small Business

It has been determined that the adoption of these regulations may affect small business. The Commission has drafted the regulations in Plain English pursuant to Government Code Sections 11342.580 and 11346.2(a)(1).

Consideration of Alternatives

The Commission must determine that no reasonable alternative considered by the Commission, or that has otherwise been identified and brought to the attention of the Commission, would be more effective in carrying out the purpose for which the action is proposed, would be as effective and less burdensome to affected private persons than the proposed action, or would be more cost effective to affected private persons and equally effective in implementing the statutory policy or other provision of law.

FISH AND GAME COMMISSION

Dated: February 20, 2018

Valerie Termini
Executive Director