

STAFF SUMMARY FOR APRIL 14, 2021

11. WATERFOWL HUNTING (ANNUAL)**Today's Item****Information** ☐**Action** ☒

Consider adopting proposed changes to waterfowl hunting regulations and consider taking final action under the California Environmental Quality Act.

Summary of Previous/Future Actions

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|-----------------------------------|---|
| • WRC vetting | Sep 17, 2020; WRC, Webinar/Teleconference |
| • Notice hearing | Dec 9-10, 2020; Webinar/Teleconference |
| • Discussion hearing | Feb 10, 2021; Webinar/Teleconference |
| • Today's adoption hearing | Apr 14, 2021; Webinar/Teleconference |

Background

Waterfowl regulations are reviewed annually by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to make adjustments to federal regulations based on waterfowl surveys, population trends, and other information. The result is a federal framework within which states may adjust their regulations.

In Dec 2020, FGC authorized notice of a rulemaking to set the bag and possession limits and seasons for migratory waterfowl for the 2021-22 hunting seasons to comply with the federal framework. The framework was approved by the Pacific Flyway Council and is expected to be adopted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Federal Register Volume 85, No. 197, dated Oct 9, 2020). The initial statement of reasons (ISOR; Exhibit 1) includes ranges for bag and possession limits and seasons; today, DFW will present its final, specific recommendations (Exhibit 2), all of which are within the original ranges described in the ISOR.

The only DFW-recommended changes from previous years are to increase the duck and goose seasons to 101 days in specified zones and to allow up to two falconry-only days in specified zones (Section 502).

1. Increase the duck season length to 101 days for the Southern San Joaquin Valley Zone, Southern California Zone, and Balance of State Zone.

The existing duck season length for the referenced zones is 100 days. Closing the season on Jan 31 and maintaining a traditional opening Saturday in late Oct results in an annual adjustment to the season length, from 100 to 101 days for the upcoming season. In 2019 and 2020, FGC adopted the latest possible closing date of Jan 31 rather than the historical closing day of the last Sunday in Jan; the annual adjustment also results in modifications to falconry seasons (see recommendation 3).

2. Increase the goose season length to 101 days for the Southern San Joaquin Valley Zone and Southern California Zone.

The existing goose season length for the referenced zones is 100 days. See recommendation 1 for the justification. This annual adjustment also results in modifications to falconry seasons (see recommendation 3).

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3. Allow up to two days of falconry-only season for the Balance of State Zone, Southern San Joaquin Valley Zone, and Southern California Zone.

The existing regulation allows up to five days of falconry-only season. The recommended season length of 101 days does not use all allotted days for ducks or geese. The length of the falconry-only season is contingent upon the amount of days used for the general duck and goose seasons in addition to the Youth and Veteran hunt days, as seasons cannot exceed 107 days in total.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

DFW prepared a draft environmental document consistent with FGC's CEQA certified regulatory program. FGC staff evaluated the draft document and determined that the document reflects the independent judgment of FGC. FGC staff submitted the environmental document for public comment (State Clearinghouse Number #2020110079, available at <https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/2020110079/5>); no public comments were received. The final environmental document will be provided in the supplemental meeting materials.

Significant Public Comments

1. Humboldt County Farm Bureau suggests changes to the North Coast Special Management Area goose season to reduce the impact on agricultural operations and to increase hunting opportunities in Humboldt and Del Norte counties. Specifically, it requests that the season open concurrently with the Balance of State duck season (Exhibit 3).

Recommendation

FGC staff: Certify the final environmental document, adopt the proposed project, and adopt the proposed changes as presented by DFW today regarding waterfowl hunting.

DFW: Adopt the regulations as presented today

Exhibits

1. [Migratory waterfowl hunting ISOR](#)
2. [DFW presentation](#)
3. [Letter from Johanna Rodoni, President, Humboldt County Farm Bureau, received Mar 26, 2021](#)

Motion

Moved by _____ and seconded by _____ that the Commission finds the environmental document reflects the independent judgment of the Commission, certifies the final environmental document, adopts the proposed project, and adopts the staff recommendations to amend Section 502, regarding migratory waterfowl hunting regulations for the 2021-2022 seasons.

OR

Moved by _____ and seconded by _____ that the Commission finds the environmental document reflects the independent judgment of the Commission, certifies the

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final environmental document, adopts the proposed project, and adopts the staff recommendations except _____ to amend Section 502, regarding migratory waterfowl hunting regulations for the 2021-2022 seasons.

State of California
Fish and Game Commission
Initial Statement of Reasons for Regulatory Action

Amend Section 502
Title 14, California Code of Regulations

Re: Waterfowl, Migratory; American Coot and Common Moorhen (Common Gallinule)

I. Date of Initial Statement of Reasons: November 1, 2020

II. Dates and Locations of Scheduled Hearings

(a) Notice Hearing

Date: December 10, 2020

Location: Teleconference

(b) Discussion Hearing

Date: February 10, 2021

Location: Teleconference

(c) Adoption Hearing

Date: April 14, 2021

Location: Teleconference

III. Description of Regulatory Action

(a) Statement of Specific Purpose of Regulatory Change and Factual Basis for Determining that Regulation Change is Reasonably Necessary

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) annually establishes federal regulation frameworks (Frameworks) for migratory bird hunting. California must set its waterfowl hunting regulations within the Frameworks. The Frameworks describe the earliest dates that waterfowl hunting seasons may open, the maximum number of days hunting can occur, the latest dates that hunting seasons must close, and the maximum daily bag limit. The proposed hunting season Frameworks for a given year are developed in the fall of the prior year for a majority of species and populations. For example, the breeding populations (including the California Breeding Population Survey) and habitat conditions observed in 2020 and the regulatory alternatives selected for the 2020 hunting season will be used to develop the Frameworks for the 2021-22 season.

States may make recommendations to change the Frameworks. These recommendations are made to flyway councils in July, August or September. The councils may elect to forward recommendations to the Service. The Service may elect to incorporate proposed changes in the Frameworks. The Service considers these and other recommendations at the Service's Regulation Committee public meeting held in October. Proposed season Frameworks are typically published in the Federal Register by mid-December and final Frameworks published by late February.

Section 355 of the Fish and Game Code authorizes the Fish and Game Commission (Commission) to adopt annual regulations pertaining to the hunting of migratory birds that conform with, or further restrict, the regulations prescribed by the Service pursuant to its

authority under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The Commission selects and establishes in State regulations the specific hunting season dates and daily bag limits within the Frameworks.

Current regulations in Section 502, Title 14, California Code of Regulations (CCR), provide definitions, hunting zone descriptions, season opening and closing dates, and daily bag and possession limits. The proposed Frameworks for the 2021-22 season were approved by the flyway councils in August and at the Service's Regulations Committee meeting in October. The Frameworks allow for a liberal duck season which includes: a 107-day season; a 7 daily duck limit including 7 mallards but only 2 hen mallards, 1 pintail, 2 canvasback, 2 redheads, and 2 scaup (during an 86 day season); and closing no later than January 31. The duck daily bag limits and season length, as well as the season lengths for geese, are provided as ranges below, to allow the Commission flexibility in determining the final regulations.

A range of season length and bag limit (zero bag limit represents a closed season) are also provided for black brant. The range is necessary, as the black brant Framework cannot be determined until the Pacific Flyway Winter Brant Survey is conducted in January 2021 because the regulatory package is determined by the most current Winter Brant Survey, rather than the prior year survey. The regulatory package will be prescribed per the Black Brant Harvest Strategy pending results of the survey, well before the Commission's adoption meeting. See the table in the Informative Digest/Policy Statement Overview section below for the range of season and bag limits. Lastly, Federal regulations require that California's hunting regulations conform to those of Arizona in the Colorado River Zone and those of Oregon in the North Coast Special Management Area.

The Department recommended changes to Section 502 are:

- 1) Increase the duck season length to 101 days in subsection 502(d)(2)(B) for the Southern San Joaquin Valley Zone, in subsection 502(d)(3)(B) for the Southern California Zone, and in subsection 502(d)(5)(B) for the Balance of State Zone.

The existing duck season length for the referenced zones is 100 days. Closing on January 31 and maintaining a traditional opening Saturday in late October results in an annual adjustment to the season length; from 100 to 101 days for the upcoming season. In prior rulemakings, the Commission adopted the latest possible closing date of January 31 rather than the historical closing day of the last Sunday in January. This annual adjustment also results in modifications to falconry seasons, see below.

- 2) Increase the goose season length to 101 days in subsection 502(d)(2)(B) for the Southern San Joaquin Valley Zone and in subsection 502(d)(3)(B) for the Southern California Zone.

The existing goose season length for the referenced zones is 100 days. See item 1 above for the justification. This annual adjustment also results in modifications to falconry seasons, see below.

- 3) Allow up to two days of falconry-only season in subsection 502(g)(1)(B)2 for the Balance of State Zone, in subsection 502(g)(1)(B)3 for the Southern San Joaquin Valley Zone and in subsection 502(g)(1)(B)4 for the Southern California Zone.

The existing regulation allows up to five days of falconry-only season. The

recommended season length (Items 1-2) do not use all allotted days for ducks or geese. The length of the falconry-only season is contingent upon the amount of days used for the general duck and goose seasons, in addition to the Youth and Veteran Hunt Days as seasons cannot exceed 107 days.

(b) Goals and Benefits of the Regulation

The goals and benefits of the regulations are to provide for the conservation and maintenance of sufficient waterfowl populations to ensure their continued existence.

The Commission does not anticipate non-monetary benefits to the protection of public health and safety, worker safety, the prevention of discrimination, the promotion of fairness or social equity and the increase in openness and transparency in business and government.

(c) Authority and Reference Sections from Fish and Game Code for Regulation

Authority: Section(s) 265 and 355, Fish and Game Code

Reference: Section(s) 265, 355, and 356, Fish and Game Code

(d) Specific Technology or Equipment Required by Regulatory Change

None.

(e) Identification of Reports or Documents Supporting Regulation Change

None.

(f) Public Discussions of Proposed Regulations Prior to Notice Publication

This proposal was discussed at the Commission's Wildlife Resources Committee meeting held on September 17, 2020 and a public scoping session will be held in late November 2020.

IV. Description of Reasonable Alternatives to Regulatory Action

(a) Alternatives to Regulation Change

No other alternatives were identified.

(b) No Change Alternative

- 1) The No Change Alternative would not increase the duck season length to 101 days in the Southern San Joaquin Valley, Southern California, and Balance of State zones.
- 2) The No Change Alternative would not increase the regular goose season length to 101 days in the Southern San Joaquin Valley and Southern California zones.
- 3) The No Change Alternative would not allow up to two days of falconry-only season in the Balance of State, Southern San Joaquin Valley and the Southern California zones.

(c) Description of Reasonable Alternatives that Would Lessen Adverse Impact on Small Business

None identified.

V. Mitigation Measures Required by Regulatory Action

The proposed regulatory action will have no negative impact on the environment; therefore, no mitigation measures are needed.

VI. Impact of Regulatory Action

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.

The proposed regulations would provide additional recreational opportunity to the public and could result in minor increases in hunting days and hunter spending on equipment, fuel, food and accommodations.

(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, the creation of new business, the elimination of existing businesses, or the expansion of businesses in California. The proposed waterfowl regulations will set the 2021-22 waterfowl hunting season dates and bag limits within the federal Frameworks. Little to minor positive impacts to jobs and/or businesses that provide services to waterfowl hunters may result from the proposed regulations for the 2021-22 waterfowl hunting season.

The most recent U.S. Fish and Wildlife national survey of fishing, hunting, and wildlife-associated recreation for California, estimated that migratory bird hunters contributed about \$169 million to the state economy during the 2011 migratory bird hunting season. The impacted businesses are generally small businesses employing a few individuals and, like all small businesses, are subject to failure for a variety of causes. Additionally, the long-term intent of the proposed regulations is to sustainably manage waterfowl populations, and consequently, the long-term viability of the same small businesses.

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

The agency 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.

VII. Economic Impact Assessment

(a) Effects of the Regulation on the Creation or Elimination of Jobs Within the State

Little to minor positive impacts on the creation of jobs within businesses that provide services to waterfowl hunters may result from the adoption of the proposed waterfowl hunting regulations for the 2021-22 season. The most recent U.S. Fish and Wildlife national survey of fishing, hunting, and wildlife-associated recreation for California, estimated that waterfowl hunters contributed about \$169,115,000 to small businesses in California during the 2011 waterfowl hunting season. The impacted businesses are generally small businesses employing few individuals and, like all small businesses, are subject to failure for a variety of causes. Additionally, the long-term intent of the proposed regulations is to sustainably manage waterfowl populations, and consequently, the long-term viability of the same small businesses. The 2011 National Survey is posted on the U.S. Department of Commerce website https://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/NationalSurvey/2011_Survey.htm and the 2011 National Survey of Fishing and Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation Report for California can be found at <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/fhwar/publications/2011/fhw11-ca.pdf>.

(b) Effects of the Regulation on the Creation of New Businesses or the Elimination of Existing Businesses Within the State

The proposed regulation is not anticipated to prompt the creation of new businesses or the elimination of existing businesses within the state. Minor variations in regulations pertaining to hunting are, by themselves, unlikely to stimulate the creation of new businesses or cause the elimination of existing businesses. The number of hunting trips and the economic contributions from the trips are not expected to change substantially.

(c) Effects of the Regulation on the Expansion of Businesses Currently Doing Business Within the State

The proposed minor variations in waterfowl bag limits are, by themselves, unlikely to stimulate substantial expansion of businesses currently doing business in the state. The long-term intent

of the proposed regulations is to sustainably manage waterfowl populations, and consequently, the long-term viability of various businesses that serve recreational waterfowl hunters.

(d) Benefits of the Regulation to the Health and Welfare of California Residents

Hunting is an outdoor activity that can provide several health and welfare benefits to California residents. Hunters and their families benefit from fresh game to eat, and from the benefits of outdoor recreation, including exercise. People who hunt have a special connection with the outdoors and an awareness of the relationships between wildlife, habitat and humans. With that awareness comes an understanding of the role humans play in being caretakers of the environment. Hunting is a tradition that is often passed from one generation to the next, creating a special bond between family members and friends.

(e) Benefits of the Regulation to Worker Safety

The regulations will not affect worker safety because they do not address working conditions.

(f) Benefits of the Regulation to the State's Environment

As set forth in Fish and Game Code section 1801, it is the policy of the state to encourage the preservation, conservation, and maintenance of waterfowl resources for all citizens of the state. The objectives of this policy include, but are not limited to, maintenance of sufficient populations and their habitats, provide for beneficial use and enjoyment, to perpetuate the waterfowl resource for their intrinsic and ecological values, and to maintain diversified recreation use including sport hunting consistent with the status of this resource. Adoption of scientifically based waterfowl hunting regulations provides for the maintenance of sufficient waterfowl populations to ensure these objectives are met. Further, the fees that hunters pay for licenses and stamps fund wildlife conservation.

(g) Other Benefits of the Regulation

Hunting seasons provide an incentive for private landowners to maintain waterfowl habitat, mainly wetlands, that benefit waterfowl and other wetland dependent wildlife.

Informative Digest/Policy Statement Overview

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- 2) Increase the goose season length to 101 days in subsection 502(d)(2)(B) for the Southern San Joaquin Valley Zone and in subsection 502(d)(3)(B) for the Southern California Zone.
- 3) Allow up to two days of falconry-only season in subsection 502(g)(1)(B)2 for the Balance of State Zone, in subsection 502(g)(1)(B)3 for the Southern San Joaquin Valley Zone and in subsection 502(g)(1)(B)4 for the Southern California Zone.

Minor editorial changes are also proposed to clarify and simplify the regulations and to comply with existing federal Frameworks.

Benefits of the regulations

The benefits of the proposed regulations are consistency with federal law and the sustainable management of the State's waterfowl resources. Positive impacts to jobs and/or businesses that provide services to waterfowl hunters will be realized with the continued adoption of waterfowl hunting seasons in 2021-22.

Non-monetary benefits to the public

The Commission does not anticipate non-monetary benefits to the protection of public health and safety, worker safety, the prevention of discrimination, the promotion of fairness or social equity, and the increase in openness and transparency in business and government.

Evaluation of incompatibility 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 502 are neither inconsistent nor incompatible with existing State regulations. No other State agency has the authority to promulgate waterfowl hunting regulations.

Summary of Proposed Waterfowl Hunting Regulations for 2021-22

AREA	SPECIES	SEASONS	DAILY BAG & POSSESSION LIMITS
Statewide	Coots & Moorhens	Concurrent w/duck season	25/day. 75 in possession
Northeastern Zone	Ducks	No longer than 103 days	[4-7]/day, which may include: [3-7] mallards no more than [1-2] females. 1 pintail, 2 canvasback, 2 redheads. Possession limit triple the daily bag.
Northeastern Zone <i>Season may be split for Scaup</i>	Scaup	No longer than 86 days	2 scaup. Possession limit triple the daily bag.
Northeastern Zone <i>Season may be split for Dark and White geese</i>	Geese	No longer than 105 days except for Canada geese which cannot exceed 100 days or beyond Jan 9	30/day, which may include: 20 white geese, 10 dark geese, no more than 2 Large Canada geese. Possession limit triple the daily bag.
Southern San Joaquin Valley Zone	Ducks	No longer than 101 days	[4-7]/day, which may include: [3-7] mallards no more than [1-2] females. 1 pintail, 2 canvasback, 2 redheads. Possession limit triple the daily bag.
Southern San Joaquin Valley Zone <i>Season may be split for Scaup</i>	Scaup	No longer than 86 days	2 scaup. Possession limit triple the daily bag.

AREA	SPECIES	SEASONS	DAILY BAG & POSSESSION LIMITS
Southern San Joaquin Valley Zone	Geese	No longer than 101 days	30/day, which may include: 20 white geese, 10 dark geese. Possession limit triple the daily bag.
Southern California Zone	Ducks	No longer than 101 days	[4-7]/day, which may include: [3-7] mallards no more than [1-2] females. 1 pintail, 2 canvasback, 2 redheads. Possession limit triple the daily bag.
Southern California Zone <i>Season may be split for Scaup</i>	Scaup	No longer than 86 days	2 scaup. Possession limit triple the daily bag.
Southern California Zone	Geese	No longer than 101 days	23/day, which may include: 20 white geese, 3 dark geese. Possession limit triple the daily bag.
Colorado River Zone	Ducks	No longer than 101 days	7/day, which may include: 7 mallards no more than 2 females or Mexican-like ducks. 1 pintail, 2 canvasback, 2 redheads. Possession limit triple the daily bag.
Colorado River Zone <i>Season may be split for Scaup</i>	Scaup	No longer than 86 days	2 scaup. Possession limit triple the daily bag.
Colorado River Zone	Geese	No longer than 101 days	24/day, up to 20 white geese, up to 4 dark geese. Possession limit triple the daily bag.
Balance of State Zone	Ducks	No longer than 101 days	[4-7]/day, which may include: [3-7] mallards no more than [1-2] females. 1 pintail, 2 canvasback, 2 redheads. Possession limit triple the daily bag.

AREA	SPECIES	SEASONS	DAILY BAG & POSSESSION LIMITS
Balance of State Zone <i>Season may be split for Scaup</i>	Scaup	No longer than 86 days	2 scaup. Possession limit triple the daily bag.
Balance of State Zone <i>Season may be split for Dark and White Geese.</i>	Geese	Early Season: 5 days (Canada goose only) Regular Season: no longer than 100 days Late Season: 5 days (whitefronts and white geese)	30/day, which may include: 20 white geese, 10 dark geese. Possession limit triple the daily bag.

SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREAS

AREA	SPECIES	SEASON	DAILY BAG & POSSESSION LIMITS
North Coast <i>Season may be split</i>	All Canada Geese	No longer than 105 days except for Large Canada geese which cannot exceed 100 days or extend beyond the last Sunday in Jan	10/day, only 1 may be a Large Canada goose. Possession limit triple the daily bag. Large Canada geese are closed during the Late Season.
Humboldt Bay South Spit (West Side)	All species	Closed during brant season	
Klamath Basin	Dark and white geese	105 days except for Canada geese which cannot exceed 100 days or extend beyond Jan 9	30/day, which may include: 20 white geese, 10 dark geese only 2 may be a Large Canada goose. Possession limit triple the daily bag.
Sacramento Valley	White-fronted geese	Open concurrently with general goose season through Dec 21	3/day. Possession limit triple the daily bag.
Morro Bay	All species	Open in designated areas only	Waterfowl season opens concurrently with brant season.
Martis Creek Lake	All species	Closed until Nov 16	
Northern Brant	Black Brant	No longer than 37 days and closing no later than Dec 14.	[0-2]/day. Possession limit triple the daily bag.
Balance of State Brant	Black Brant	No longer than 37 days and closing no later than Dec 15.	[0-2]/day. Possession limit triple the daily bag.

AREA	SPECIES	SEASON	DAILY BAG & POSSESSION LIMITS
Imperial County <i>Season may be split</i>	White Geese	No longer than 105 days	20/day. Possession limit triple the daily bag.

YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNTING DAYS (NOTE: To participate in these Youth Waterfowl Hunts, youth must be accompanied by a non-hunting adult 18 years of age or older. Federal regulations require that hunters must be 17 years of age or younger.)

AREA	SPECIES	SEASON	DAILY BAG & POSSESSION LIMITS
Northeastern Zone	Same as regular season	The Saturday fourteen days before the opening of waterfowl season extending for 2 days.	Same as regular season
Southern San Joaquin Valley Zone	Same as regular season	The first Saturday in February extending for 2 days.	Same as regular season
Southern California Zone	Same as regular season	The first Saturday in February extending for 2 days.	Same as regular season
Colorado River Zone	Same as regular season	The first Saturday in February extending for 2 days.	Same as regular season
Balance of State Zone	Same as regular season	The first Saturday in February extending for 2 days.	Same as regular season

Veterans and Active Military Personnel Waterfowl Hunting Days (NOTE: Veterans (as defined in Section 101 of Title 38, United States Code) and members of the Armed Forces on active duty, including members of the National Guard and Reserves on active duty (other than training), may participate.)

AREA	SPECIES	SEASON	DAILY BAG & POSSESSION LIMITS
Northeastern Zone	Ducks, Coots, and Moorhens	No longer than 2 days.	Same as regular season
Balance of State Zone	Ducks, Coots, and Moorhens	No longer than 2 days.	Same as regular season
Southern San Joaquin Valley Zone	Same as regular season	No longer than 2 days.	Same as regular season
Southern California Zone	Same as regular season	No longer than 2 days.	Same as regular season

FALCONRY

AREA	SPECIES	SEASON	DAILY BAG & POSSESSION LIMITS
Northeastern Zone	Ducks, Coots, and Moorhens	No longer than 107 days.	3/day. Possession limit 9
Balance of State Zone	Same as regular season	No longer than 107 days.	3/day. Possession limit 9
Southern San Joaquin Valley Zone	Ducks, Coots, and Moorhens	No longer than 107 days.	3/day. Possession limit 9
Southern California Zone	Same as regular season	No longer than 107 days.	3/day. Possession limit 9
Colorado River Zone	Ducks, Coots, and Moorhens	No longer than 107 days.	3/day. Possession limit 9

Proposed Regulatory Language

Section 502, Title 14 CCR, is amended to read:

§502. Waterfowl, Migratory; American Coot and Common Moorhen (Common Gallinule).

[No changes to subsections (a) through (b)]

(c) Seasons and Bag and Possession Limits for American Coots, and Common Moorhens.

(1) Statewide Provisions.

<i>(A) Species</i>	<i>(B) Season</i>	<i>(C) Daily Bag and Possession Limits</i>
American Coot and Common Moorhen	Concurrent with duck season(s)	Daily bag limit: 25, either all of one species or a mixture of these species. Possession limit: triple the daily bag limit.

(d) Seasons and Bag and Possession Limits for Ducks and Geese by Zone.

(1) Northeastern California Zone (NOTE: SEE SUBSECTION 502(d)(6) BELOW FOR SPECIAL SEASONS AND CLOSURES.)

<i>(A) Species</i>	<i>(B) Season</i>	<i>(C) Daily Bag and Possession Limits</i>
Ducks (including Mergansers)	From the first Saturday in October extending for 103 days. Scaup: from the first Saturday in October extending for a period of 58 days and from the third Thursday in December extending for a period of 28 days. <u>[Opening no earlier than the first Saturday in October and closing no later than January 31. Season may be split into two segments and no longer than 103 days except for scaup season can be no longer than 86 days.]</u>	Daily bag limit: 7 <u>[4-7]</u> Daily bag limit may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7<u>[3-7]</u> mallards, but not more than 2<u>[1-2]</u> females.• 1 pintail (either sex).• 2 canvasback (either sex).• 2 redheads (either sex).• 2 scaup (either sex). Possession limit: triple the daily bag limit.

(A) Species	(B) Season	(C) Daily Bag and Possession Limits
Geese	<p>Regular Season: Small and Large Canada Geese: from the first Saturday in October extending for 100 days. <u>[Opening no earlier than the first Saturday in October and closing no later than January 9. Season will be no longer than 100 days.]</u> White-fronted and white geese from the first Saturday in October extending for a period of 58 days and from the first Saturday in January extending for a period of 14 days. <u>[opening no earlier than the first Saturday in October and closing no later than January 31. Season may be split into two segments and no longer than 100 days.]</u> Late Season: White-fronted and white geese from February 6 extending for 33 days. <u>[Season will be no longer than 39 days and closing no later than March 10.]</u> During the Late Season, hunting is only permitted on Type C wildlife areas listed in Section 550-552, navigable waters, and private lands with the permission of the landowner under provisions of Section 2016, Fish and Game Code. Hunting is prohibited on Type A and Type B wildlife areas, the Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuge Complex, the Modoc National Wildlife Refuge, and any waters which are on, encompassed by, bounded over, flow over, flow through, or are adjacent to any Type A and Type B wildlife areas, the Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuge Complex, or the Modoc National Wildlife Refuge.</p>	<p>Daily bag limit: 30 Daily bag limit may include: • 20 white geese. • 10 dark geese but not more than 2 Large Canada geese (see definitions: 502(a)). Possession limit: triple the daily bag limit.</p>

(2) Southern San Joaquin Valley Zone (NOTE: SEE SUBSECTION 502(d)(6) BELOW FOR SPECIAL SEASONS AND CLOSURES.)

(A) Species	(B) Season	(C) Daily Bag and Possession Limits
Ducks (including Mergansers)	From the fourth Saturday in October extending for 100 days. Scaup: from November 7 extending for 86 days. <u>[Opening no earlier than the fourth Saturday in October and closing no later than January 31.</u> <u>Season may be split into two segments and no longer than 101 days except for scaup season can be no longer than 86 days.]</u>	Daily bag limit: 7 <u>[4-7]</u> Daily bag limit may include: • 7 <u>[3-7]</u> mallards, but not more than 2 <u>[1-2]</u> females. • 1 pintail (either sex). • 2 canvasback (either sex). • 2 redheads (either sex). • 2 scaup (either sex). Possession limit: triple the daily bag limit.
Geese	From the fourth Saturday in October extending for 100 days. <u>[Opening no earlier than the fourth Saturday in October and closing no later than January 31.</u> <u>Season will be no longer than 101 days.]</u>	Daily bag limit: 30 Daily bag limit may include: • 20 white geese. • 10 dark geese (see definitions: 502(a)). Possession limit: triple the daily bag limit.

(3) Southern California Zone (NOTE: SEE SUBSECTION 502(d)(6) BELOW FOR SPECIAL SEASONS AND CLOSURES.)

(A) Species	(B) Season	(C) Daily Bag and Possession Limits
Ducks (including Mergansers)	From the fourth Saturday in October extending for 100 days. Scaup: from November 7 extending for 86 days. <u>[Opening no earlier than the fourth Saturday in October and closing no later than January 31.</u> <u>Season may be split into two segments and no longer than 101 days except for scaup season can be no longer than 86 days.]</u>	Daily bag limit: 7 <u>[4-7]</u> Daily bag limit may include: • 7 <u>[3-7]</u> mallards, but not more than 2 <u>[1-2]</u> females. • 1 pintail (either sex). • 2 canvasback (either sex). • 2 redheads (either sex). • 2 scaup (either sex). Possession limit: triple the daily bag limit.

<i>(A) Species</i>	<i>(B) Season</i>	<i>(C) Daily Bag and Possession Limits</i>
Geese	From the fourth Saturday in October extending for 100 days. [Opening no earlier than the fourth Saturday in October and closing no later than January 31. Season will be no longer than 101 days.]	Daily bag limit: 23 Daily bag limit may include: • 20 white geese. • 3 dark geese (see definitions: 502(a)). Possession limit: triple the daily bag limit.

(4) Colorado River Zone (NOTE: SEE SUBSECTION 502(d)(6) BELOW FOR SPECIAL SEASONS AND CLOSURES.)

<i>(A) Species</i>	<i>(B) Season</i>	<i>(C) Daily Bag and Possession Limits</i>
Ducks (including Mergansers).	From the fourth <u>Saturday</u> Friday in October extending for 101 days. Scaup: from the first Saturday in November extending for 86 days.	Daily bag limit: 7 Daily bag limit may include: • 7 mallards, but not more than 2 females or Mexican-like ducks. • 1 pintail (either sex). • 2 canvasback (either sex). • 2 redheads (either sex). • 2 scaup (either sex). Possession limit: triple the daily bag limit.
Geese	From the fourth <u>Saturday</u> Friday in October extending for 101 days.	Daily bag limit: 24 Daily bag limit may include: • 20 white geese. • 4 dark geese (see definitions: 502(a)). Possession limit: triple the daily bag limit.

(5) Balance of State Zone (NOTE: SEE SUBSECTION 502(d)(6) BELOW FOR SPECIAL SEASONS AND CLOSURES.)

<i>(A) Species</i>	<i>(B) Season</i>	<i>(C) Daily Bag and Possession Limits</i>
Ducks (including Mergansers).	<p>From the fourth Saturday in October extending for 100 days.</p> <p>Scaup: from November 7 extending for 86 days.</p> <p><u>[Opening no earlier than the fourth Saturday in October and closing no later than January 31. Season may be split into two segments and no longer than 101 days except for scaup season can be no longer than 86 days.]</u></p>	<p>Daily bag limit: 7 <u>[4-7]</u></p> <p>Daily bag limit may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 <u>[3-7]</u> mallards, but not more than 2 <u>[1-2]</u> females. • 1 pintail (either sex). • 2 canvasback (either sex). • 2 redheads (either sex). • 2 scaup (either sex). <p>Possession limit: triple the daily bag limit.</p>

(A) Species	(B) Season	(C) Daily Bag and Possession Limits
Geese	<p>Early Season: Large Canada geese only from the Saturday closest to October 1 for a period of 5 days EXCEPT in the North Coast Special Management Area where Large Canada geese are closed during the early season.</p> <p>Regular Season: Dark and white geese <u>[opening no earlier than the fourth Saturday in October and closing no later than January 31. Season will be longer than 100 days]</u> from the fourth Saturday in October extending for 100 days EXCEPT in the Sacramento Valley Special Management Area where the white-fronted goose season will close after December 21.</p> <p>Late Season: White-fronted and white geese from <u>[opening after January 31 and closing no later than March 10. Season will be no longer than 5 days]</u> the third Saturday in February extending for a period of 5 days EXCEPT in the Sacramento Valley Special Management Area where the white-fronted goose season is closed. During the Late Season, hunting is not permitted on wildlife areas listed in Sections 550-552 EXCEPT on Type C wildlife areas in the North Central and Central regions.</p>	<p>Daily bag limit: 30</p> <p>Daily bag limit may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 white geese. • 10 dark geese <p>EXCEPT in the Sacramento Valley Special Management Area where only 3 may be white-fronted geese (see definitions: 502(a)).</p> <p>Possession limit: triple the daily bag limit.</p>

(6) Special Management Areas (see descriptions in 502(b)(6))

	(A) Species	(B) Season	(C) Daily Bag and Possession Limits
1. North Coast	All Canada Geese	From November 7 extending for a period of 86 days (Regular Season) and from February 20 extending for a period of 19 days (Late Season). <u>Season may be split and closing no later than March 10. Season will be no longer than 105 days.</u> During the Late Season, hunting is only permitted on private lands with the permission of the landowner under provisions Section 2016, Fish and Game Code.	Daily bag limit: 10 Canada Geese of which only 1 may be a Large Canada goose (see definitions: 502(a)), EXCEPT during the Late Season, the bag limit on Large Canada geese is zero. Possession limit: triple the daily bag limit.
2. Humboldt Bay South Spit (West Side)	All Species	Closed during brant season	
3. Klamath Basin	Geese	Small and Large Canada Geese <u>opening no earlier than the first Saturday in October and closing no later than January 9. Season will be no longer than 100 days</u> from the first Saturday in October extending for 100 days. White-fronted and white geese <u>opening no earlier than the first Saturday in October and closing no later than January 31. Season will be no longer than 105 days</u> from the first Saturday in October extending for 105 days.	Daily bag limit: 30 Daily bag limit may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 white geese. • 10 dark geese but not more than 2 Large Canada geese (see definitions: 502(a)). Possession limit: triple the daily bag limit.

	(A) Species	(B) Season	(C) Daily Bag and Possession Limits
4. Sacramento Valley	White-Fronted Geese	Open concurrently with the goose season through December 21, and during Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days.	Daily bag limit: 3 white-fronted geese. Possession limit: triple the daily bag limit.
5. Morro Bay	All species	Open in designated area only from the opening day of brant season through the remainder of waterfowl season.	
6. Martis Creek Lake	All species	Closed until November 16.	
7. Northern Brant	Black Brant	From November 18 extending for 27 days. <u>Season will be between 0 and 37 days, closing no later than December 14.]</u>	Daily bag limit: 2 Possession limit: triple the daily bag limit.
8. Balance of State Brant	Black Brant	From November 19 extending for 27 days. <u>Season will be between 0 and 37 days, closing no later than December 15.]</u>	Daily bag limit: 2 Possession limit: triple the daily bag limit.
9. Imperial County	White Geese	From November 7 extending for a period of 86 days (Regular Season) and February 1-5, 2021, February 8-12, 2021 and February 15-21, 2021 (Late Season). <u>Season may be split and closing no later than March 10. Season will be no longer than 105 days.]</u> During the Late Season, hunting is only permitted on private lands with the permission of the landowner under provisions of Section 2016, Fish and Game Code.	Daily bag limit: 20 Possession limit: triple the daily bag limit.

(e) Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days Regulations (NOTE: To participate in these Youth Waterfowl Hunts, youth must be accompanied by a non-hunting adult 18 years of age or older. Federal regulations require that hunters must be 17 years of age or younger.

(1) Statewide Provisions.

<i>(A) Species</i>	<i>(B) Season</i>	<i>(C) Daily Bag Limit</i>
Ducks (including Mergansers), American Coot, Common Moorhen, Black Brant, Geese	1. Northeastern California Zone: The Saturday fourteen days before the opening of waterfowl season extending for 2 days. 2. Southern San Joaquin Valley Zone: The first Saturday in February extending for 2 days. 3. Southern California Zone: The first Saturday in February extending for 2 days. 4. Colorado River Zone: The Saturday following the closing of waterfowl season extending for 2 days. 5. Balance of State Zone: The first Saturday in February extending for 2 days.	Same as regular season.

(f) Veterans and Active Military Personnel Waterfowl Hunting Days Regulations.

NOTE: Veterans (as defined in Section 101 of Title 38, United States Code) and members of the Armed Forces on active duty, including members of the National Guard and Reserves on active duty (other than training), may participate. Persons participating in this special hunt must possess and present upon demand verification of eligibility to participate in this hunt. Verification includes: Veteran's ID Card, or Military ID Card for active duty, or a State-issued driver's license or Identification Card with Veteran Designation.

(1) *Statewide Provisions.*

(A) Species	(B) Season	(C) Daily Bag Limit
Ducks (including Mergansers), Geese, American Coot, Common Moorhen	<p>1. Northeastern California Zone: The Saturday following the closing of the regular duck season extending for 2 days. <u>[No longer than 2 days and occurring after the duck season.]</u> Goose hunting in this zone is not permitted during these days.</p> <p>2. Southern San Joaquin Valley Zone: The second Saturday in February extending for 2 days. <u>[No longer than 2 days.]</u></p> <p>3. Southern California Zone: The second Saturday in February extending for 2 days. <u>[No longer than 2 days.]</u></p> <p>4. Balance of State Zone: The second Saturday in February extending for 2 days. <u>[No longer than 2 days.]</u></p> <p>Goose hunting in this zone is not permitted during these days.</p>	Same as regular season.

(g) Falconry Take of Ducks (including Mergansers), Geese, American Coots, and Common Moorhens.

(1) Statewide Provisions.

(A) Species	(B) Season	(C) Daily Bag and Possession Limits
Ducks (including Mergansers), Geese, American Coot and Common Moorhen	<p>1. Northeastern California Zone. Open concurrently with duck season through January 13, 2021. [No longer than 107 days.]</p> <p>2. Balance of State Zone. Open concurrently with duck season, February 6-7, 2021 and February 10-14, 2021 [No longer than 107 days] EXCEPT in the North Coast Special Management Area where the falconry season for geese runs concurrently with the season for Small Canada geese (see 502(d)(6)).</p> <p>3. Southern San Joaquin Valley Zone. Open concurrently with duck season, February 6-7, 2021 and February 10-14, 2021. [No longer than 107 days]</p> <p>Goose hunting in this zone by means of falconry is not permitted.</p> <p>4. Southern California Zone. Open concurrently with duck season, February 6-7, 2021 and February 10-14, 2021 [No longer than 107 days] EXCEPT in the Imperial County Special Management Area where the falconry season for geese runs concurrently with the season for white geese.</p> <p>5. Colorado River Zone. Open concurrently with duck season and February 1-4, 2021. [No longer than 107 days] Goose hunting in this zone by means of falconry is not permitted. Federal regulations require that California's hunting regulations conform to those of Arizona, where goose hunting by means of falconry is not permitted.</p>	<p>Daily bag limit: 3</p> <p>Daily bag limit makeup:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Either all of 1 species or a mixture of species allowed for take. <p>Possession limit: 9</p>

Note: Authority cited: Sections 265 and 355, Fish and Game Code. Reference: Sections 265, 355 and 356, Fish and Game Code.



2021-22 Waterfowl Hunting Recommendations Section 502



Fish and Game Commission Meeting

April 14, 2021

Melanie Weaver

Wildlife Branch-Waterfowl

Overview

- Federal Frameworks
- Department Recommendation



Duck Frameworks

Western Mallard

➤ 107 days from Sat nearest Sept 24 to January 31

7 ducks, 7 mallards, 2 hen mallards

Pintail: 1

Canvasback: 2

Scaup: 86 days/2

Redhead: 2



Goose Frameworks

Between 100-107 day season

Generally, 30/day

➤ 20 white geese

➤ 10 dark geese

Brant

➤ 37-day season, 2/day



Summary of Department Recommendation

- Increase in season length in most zones from 100 to 101 days; January 31st falls on Monday
- 2 days for falconry-only in Bal of State, So San Joaquin Valley and So California zones



Duck Season Recommendation

Northeast Zone

- Regular Season: Oct 2 – Jan 12 (103 days)
- Scaup: Oct 2 – Nov 28 (58 days) & Dec 16 – Jan 12 (28 days)

Bal of State, So San Joaquin Valley, So California Zones

- Regular Season: Oct 23 – Jan 31 (101 days)
- Scaup: Nov 7 – Jan 31 (86 days)

Colorado River Zone

- Regular Season: Oct 23 – Jan 31 (101 days)
- Scaup: Nov 7 – Jan 31 (86 days)



Northeast Zone Goose Season Recommendation

Regular Season

- Canada geese: Oct 2 – Jan 9 (100 days)
- White & white-fronted geese:
Oct 2 – Nov 28 (58 days) & Jan 1 – Jan 14 (14 days)

Late Season

- White & white-fronted geese: Feb 6 – Mar 10 (33 days)
- 30/day: 20 white/10 dark geese, no more than 2 Large Canada geese

Balance of State Zone

Goose Season Recommendation

Early Season Canada geese

➤ Oct 2 – Oct 6 (5 days)

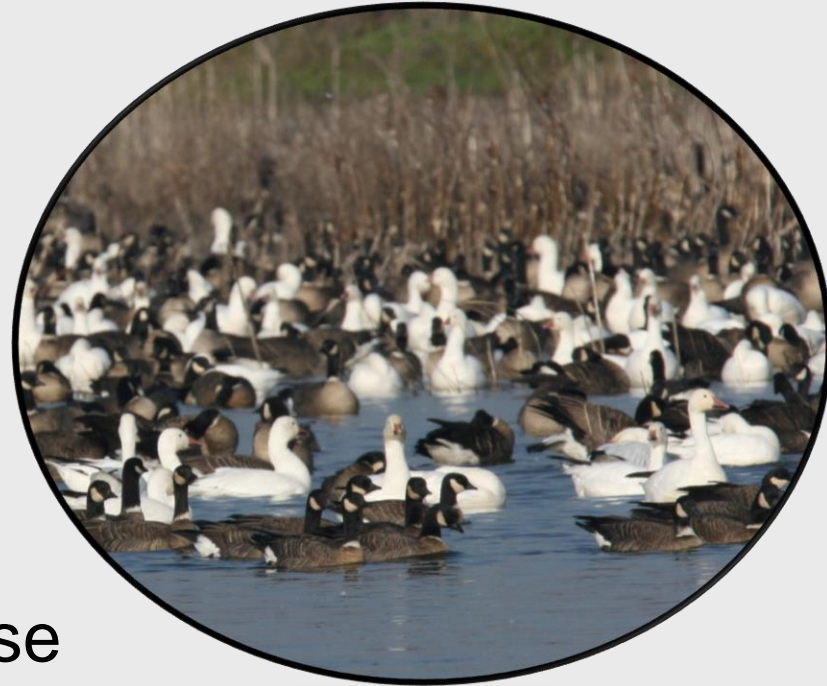
Regular Season

➤ Oct 23 – Jan 30 (100 days)

Late Season

➤ White & and white-fronted geese
Feb 19 – Feb 23 (5 days)

➤ 30/day: 20 white/10 dark geese



Goose Season Recommendation Continued...

So San Joaquin Valley and So California Zones

- Oct 23 – Jan 31 (101 days)
- 30/day: 20 white/10 dark geese in S.S.J. Valley Zone & 3 dark geese in So California Zone

Colorado River Zone

- Oct 23 – Jan 31 (101 days)
- 20/day: up to 20 white/4 dark geese



Brant Season Recommendation

Northern Brant

➤ Nov 8 – Dec 14 (37 days)

Balance of State Brant

➤ Nov 9 – Dec 15 (37 days)



Special Management Area Recommendation

North Coast

- Regular Season: Nov 8 – Jan 31 (85 days)
- Late Season: Feb 19 – Mar 10 (20 days)

Klamath Basin

- White & white-fronted Geese: Oct 2 – Jan 14 (105 days)
- Canada Goose: Oct 2 – Jan 9 (100 days)

Sac Valley

- Oct 23 – Dec 21 (60 days)

Imperial Valley

- Regular Season: Nov 6 – Jan 31 (87 days)
- Late Season: Feb 1 – 4, 7 – 11, 14 – 22 (18 days)



Youth and Veteran Hunt Day Recommendation

Youth Hunt Days

- NE Zone: Sept 18 – 19
- All other zones: Feb 5 – 6

Veteran Hunt Days

- NE Zone: Jan 15 – 16
- All other zones: Feb 12 - 13
- Colorado River Zone: none



Falconry-Only Recommendation

- Northeastern Zone: None
- Bal of State, So San Joaquin Valley,
& So California Zones:
Feb 26 – 27 (2 days)
- Colorado River Zone: Feb 1 – 4 (4 days)



Questions?



Melanie Weaver
Waterfowl Program
Melanie.Weaver@wildlife.ca.gov



Humboldt County Farm Bureau

5601 So. Broadway, Eureka, CA 95503

Serving Agriculture Since 1913

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COMMISSION

2021 MAR 26 AM 8:57

March 10, 2021

President Peter Silva
California Fish and Game Commission
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Subject: Proposed Change to the North Coast Special Management Area

Dear Commission,

The Humboldt County Farm Bureau as well as the Del Norte County Farm Bureau would like to recommend a change to the proposed 2021/2022 waterfowl season. The Farm Bureau's agricultural members are effected by the over population of geese on the north coast and our farms provide much of the habitat for the birds. We believe in a health wildlife population. However, our agricultural operations are providing a large percentage of feed at the expense of our livestock and family's business.

In 2019 the Aleutian goose population estimates were reported in the USFWS annual population report at 200k individuals, approximately 300% of the targeted population size. Recent years, Aleutian geese continue to populate both Humboldt and Del Norte Counties in late-September and are in high abundance until mid-December when the majority has passed to the Central Valley. We typically do not see large numbers of geese until the timely spring goose season.

We would like to see a change in the current North Coast Special Management Area goose season (<https://wildlife.ca.gov/Hunting/Waterfowl>). We suggest that CDFW open the North Coast Special Management Area goose season the same day as the Balance of State duck season (3rd Saturday in October), subsequently having the goose season end earlier in January to account for the spring season hunt days. For example, the 2020/2021 regular season dates were November 8, 2020 – January 31, 2021 and again February 20, 2021 – March 10th, 2021 (103 days). What we suggest is the season run October 24, 2020 – January 17, 2022 and again February 20, 2021 – March 10, 2021.

Effectively, with this proposed season shift, we would be exchanging approximately two weeks of hunting in January for two weeks of hunting in October. The fall is when forage is limited for our livestock and when we experience costly losses to geese. Furthermore, this change would increase hunting opportunities for CDFW sportsmen in Humboldt and Del Norte counties.

We appreciate the work CDFW has done toward managing this species and are grateful for the liberal limits and late goose season. Your continued work to limit wildlife-human conflict is welcomed to our rural businesses. Please consider amending the current goose season to continue these efforts.

Sincerely,

Johanna Rodoni

Johanna Rodoni

President

Humboldt County Farm Bureau