



## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR INFORMATION SERVICE

UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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### USE OF ELECTRONIC CALLS BANNED IN TAKING MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS

The use of electrical devices or recordings in taking migratory game birds will be prohibited during the 1957-58 hunting season by an amendment to the migratory waterfowl hunting regulations announced today the Department of the Interior.

The amended section, 6.3(b)(7) of the regulations under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act is broad enough to apply to all migratory game birds and will prohibit the use of recordings and amplifications of imitations of goose or duck calls produced by conventional calling devices.

The standard penalties for the illegal taking of migratory game birds will now apply to the taking of such birds "by the use or aid of recorded bird calls or sounds or recorded or amplified imitations of bird calls or sounds." These penalties are a maximum of six months in jail, a maximum fine of \$500, or both.

The deadly effectiveness of these electronic devices in calling ducks and geese to the hunters' guns and the potential threat of excessive kills which would deplete the resource brought about the Departmental order. A typical method was to record the sounds of contentment of ducks and geese eating and then to amplify the sound to attract the birds in flight or at rest somewhere within the bird's range of the amplified call.

Notice that the pending order was under consideration was given the public in a United States Fish and Wildlife Service press release issued May 17, 1957, and in the Federal Register of June 25, 1957. The proposal to ban these devices was discussed with each of the four Flyway Councils during meetings held in May and June and each Council endorsed the proposal. Similar endorsements were received from members of the Waterfowl Advisory Committee. Many communications received by the Service expressed concern that the continued and expanded use of recorded calls would result in a kill of waterfowl far in excess of the numbers which prudently could be harvested. The Canadian regulations contain a similar prohibition this fall.

Other changes in basic regulations relating to methods of taking involve the use of sink-boxes and live decoys. For the guidance of sportsmen so they will easily know whether floating devices they use in waterfowl hunting can be classified as sink-boxes which have been prohibited for many years, a specific definition of the device is included in the regulations this year. The prohibition against the use of live ducks and geese as decoys has been broadened to include the use of any live birds as decoys in the hunting of migratory birds. With this latter change the United States regulation will be similar to that of Canada which has had a comparable restriction for a number of years.

The new rules for hunting will become effective 30 days after the regulations are published in the Federal Register.

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