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DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR
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BUREAU OF SPORT FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE

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INTERIOR DEPARTMENT ADOPTS CHANGES IN BASIC MIGRATORY BIRD HUNTING REGULATIONS

Minor liberalization of regulations for hunting and transporting waterfowl, doves, woodcock, rails, and other migratory birds has been made by the Department of the Interior.

The changes recommended by Interior's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife mainly concern waterfowl hunters in the Great Lakes region and mourning dove hunters.

Regulations formerly required that one fully feathered wing be left on all migratory game birds while being transported from a hunting area, or from the United States to a foreign country. The new regulations excludes mourning doves from this requirement except when transported across national boundaries. Many hunters prefer dressing their birds in the field to prevent spoilage and this new change simplifies such field care.

Previous rules also required that a motor can be attached to the boat while hunting only when the craft is anchored, beached, or tied to a fixed hunting blind. The Great Lakes and their inter-connecting waterways are now excluded from this requirement, provided the motor has been shut off and forward progress has stopped.

Open waters in the Great Lakes require large boats and powerful motors too heavy to be removed from the boat. Also, the new-type inboard-outboard engines were illegal for migratory bird hunting unless the boat was anchored, beached, or otherwise immobile. The regulation changes now permit hunting from such boats while drifting, but only in the Great Lakes and only when forward progress from the motor has ceased.

Outside the Great Lakes area, a moving boat with motor attached but not operating can be legally used only for hunting rails (not including coots and gallinules). Hunting while the boat is being propelled by paddle, oars, or a pole would still be permitted under the regulations.

Under the Migratory Bird Treaty acts with Canada and Mexico, States cannot adopt migratory bird hunting regulations more liberal than the Federal laws, but they can be more restrictive. Consequently, migratory bird hunters are urged by the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife to check State regulations before taking to the field.

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