

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

news release

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FRAMEWORKS FOR EARLY MIGRATORY BIRD HUNTING SEASONS PROPOSED

Regulations setting the hunting frameworks for certain migratory birds for the 1978-79 hunting seasons have been proposed by the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Lynn A. Greenwalt, Director, announced today.

Generally the frameworks are the same as last year except for a few minor changes which affect local areas or regions.

The proposal, published in the June 28, 1978, Federal Register, sets forth the species to be hunted, the daily bag and possession limits, the shooting hours, the season lengths, the earliest opening and latest closing season dates, and special closures, from which State conservation agency officials may select open season dates.

Interested persons have until July 13, 1978, to comment on the proposal. This is the third rulemaking notice dealing with the 1978-79 migratory bird hunting season issued by the Service. The short comment period for this proposed rulemaking is necessary in order to permit publication of final rulemaking on July 21, allow the States to develop their regulations within this framework, and publish final regulations for these categories by August 11, 1978. Comments should be addressed to the Director (FWS/MBMO), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

Species included in this proposal are mourning doves, white-winged doves, band-tailed pigeons, rails, woodcock, snipe, and gallinules; teal in the Mississippi and Central Flyways during September; sea ducks in the Atlantic Flyway; and sandhill cranes in portions of North and South Dakota.

The proposal includes a maximum 107-day falconry season in certain States. This option would be offered to those States meeting Federal falconry standards. It would afford falconers additional opportunity to participate in the sport but would not result in any substantial increase in overall migratory game bird harvest.

As in the past, hunting regulations this year are designed to remove or alleviate chances of conflict between seasons for migratory game birds and the protection of endangered species.

Additional details regarding the proposals are available from the Service's Washington or Regional Offices.