



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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Frank Kenney 202/653-9080

NEWS BRIEFS FROM THE FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Next Fall's Migratory Game Bird Hunting Regulations Proposed. Preliminary hunting regulations for ducks, geese, and other migratory birds for the 1982-83 hunting season have been proposed by the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. No major changes from last year's hunting regulations are proposed at this time.

The proposals, published in the April 19, 1982, Federal Register, describe tentative season frameworks, daily bag and possession limits, and shooting hours for migratory game birds in the contiguous United States, Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Species discussed in the proposals include ducks, geese, brant, and swans; doves and pigeons; cranes; rails, coots, and gallinules; and woodcock and snipe.

Shooting hours will remain from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset. Framework dates for most duck and goose seasons will be from October 1, 1982, to January 20, 1983, for the Atlantic Flyway: from October 2, 1982, through January 20, 1983, for the Mississippi Flyway: and from October 2, 1982, through January 23, 1983, for the Central and Pacific Flyways. The framework proposed for Alaska waterfowl seasons extends from September 1, 1982, through January 26, 1983.

All of the published proposals are subject to changes if the need is indicated by information obtained from surveys, State conservation agencies, and the public. Public comments on the proposals are invited through June 23, 1982, for Alaska, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands; July 16 for other "early" seasons (those opening after October 1); and August 23 for the "late" seasons (those opening after October 1). Comments should be addressed to the Director (FWS/MBMO), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240

To ensure that the public has ample opportunity to comment on the proposals, two public hearings will be held to review the status of migratory game birds and consider proposed hunting regulations. The first hearing will pertain to "early" season regulations and will be held on June 23, 1982, at 9 a.m. in the Department of the Interior Auditorium on C Street between 18th and 19th streets, N.W., in Washington, D.C. A second hearing on regulations for seasons opening on or after October 1 will be held on August 3, 1982, at 9 a.m., also in the Interior Department Auditorium.

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Persons wishing to participate in these hearings should write to the Director (FWS/MBMO), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240, or telephone 202/254-3207. Those wishing to make statements should file copies with the Director before or during each hearing.

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National Waterfowl Management Plan Published. The first national plan ever developed for cooperative management of waterfowl in the United States has been prepared by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in consultation with State fish and wildlife agencies and the public. The document is intended to guide the efforts of Federal, State, and private agencies that cooperate with the Service in migratory bird management activities. It will contribute to the eventual development of a comprehensive North American waterfowl management plan.

The plan is organized around the three major concerns of waterfowl management: habitat, populations, and utilization. It outlines the policies, goals, and objectives for U.S. management, describes the current status and long-term population objectives for various species, and identifies future research and management needs.

Copies of the National Waterfowl Management Plan may be obtained from the Director (MBMO), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C. 20240.

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Procedures Published for Disposing of Forfeited Wildlife Products. The Fish and Wildlife Service has published final regulations on the procedures it will follow in disposing of several million dollars worth of wildlife products and other property that have been forfeited to the agency after violations of Federal wildlife or plant conservation laws.

The disposal procedures enable the Service to ensure that conservation aims are furthered and storage expenses are reduced in disposing of wildlife and plants. Now, the Service can begin disposal procedures 60 days after forfeiture, and may dispose of some items immediately if they are perishable, likely to decrease in value, or if the expense of storing them is too great.

Under the procedures, live wildlife or plants will be returned to the wild in their historic range, whenever possible. Live wildlife and products may also be transferred for official use to other government agencies or loaned or donated to qualified individuals for scientific, educational, or public display purposes. The last means of disposal are sale or destruction.

Field offices are currently completing a final inventory of property stored in their area that can be loaned, donated, or sold. The field offices will maintain individual lists of property until a computerized master list is available. The first sale, which will be announced through the news media, may be held early this summer on the East Coast with proceeds, less expenses, going to the U.S. Treasury.

The regulations, published in the April 23, 1982, Federal Register, prohibit the sale of migratory birds, bald or golden eagles, certain marine mammals parts & products, and species listed on Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. Sale of wildlife or plants listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act will be allowed only for the few species that may be traded lawfully in interstate commerce, such as alligator products and African elephant ivory.

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