



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

Fish and Wildlife Service

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FINAL FRAMEWORKS FOR 1988-89 WATERFOWL HUNTING REGULATIONS AIMED AT SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCING DUCK HARVEST

In light of the continuing drought and a poor duck production year, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has issued more restrictive final frameworks governing this fall's late waterfowl hunting seasons. The individual states will select their seasons from within the frameworks.

"We have shortened season lengths and reduced bag limits because this has been a bad year for ducks," says U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Frank Dunkle. "I expect these reductions to result in at least a 25-percent decrease in the harvest as a strong measure to assist breeding stocks of ducks during the prolonged drought."

The final frameworks are largely the same as those proposed and published in the August 12 Federal Register except for changes concerning pintails and the possession limit for hen mallards in the Central Flyway. Rather than having a split season on pintails during the first week and last 7-16 days of the season, hunters will be able to take one pintail daily through the season. Also, the possession limit on hen mallards in the Central Flyway was changed from one to two, as it is in the other flyways. However, the daily bag limit for hen mallards remains at one in all flyways.

A brief recap of the significant changes in this year's frameworks follows:

- o Shooting hours for ducks and geese will begin at sunrise, not one-half hour before sunrise as was previously allowed, and end at sunset.
- o Duck season lengths are reduced by 25 percent in all flyways.
- o Duck season frameworks are October 7 to January 8 in the Atlantic Flyway and October 8 to January 8 in the other three flyways.
- o The point system bag is suspended in all flyways for this year, pending further review.
- o All conventional bag limits are reduced by one duck from last year. This means from four to three in the Atlantic, Mississippi, and Central Flyways, and from five to four in the Pacific Flyway.
- o Mallard daily bag limit in the Pacific Flyway is reduced from four to three (only one hen), and from three to two (one hen) in the Central Flyway.
- o A restricted pintail season of one bird per day through the season.
- o Special scaup seasons, and bonus scaup and bonus teal limits, are suspended.
- o Season on canvasbacks closed in all flyways.

Waterfowlers planning their hunts for this fall are urged to contact the wildlife agency of the states in which they plan to hunt to obtain information on the actual season dates selected.