



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

Fish and Wildlife Service

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Hugh Vickery 202-208-5634

SERVICE PROPOSES GUIDELINES FOR EARLY MIGRATORY BIRD HUNTING SEASONS

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is proposing limited hunting of cackling Canada geese in Alaska this fall, marking a successful recovery after a decade of protection.

In its proposed regulations for the 1994 early migratory bird hunting season, the Service would allow a bag limit of one cackling Canada goose.

The population of the species has increased from 26,000 birds in 1984 to a current level of 164,000 birds, permitting harvest to resume under the management plan for the species. The recovery was the result of the combined conservation efforts of state wildlife agencies and hunters in Alaska, Washington, Oregon, and California, along with the California Waterfowl Association and the Waterfowl Conservation Committee of the Association of Village Council Presidents, representing Native American interests in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta.

The cackling Canada goose, the smallest subspecies of Canada geese, breeds in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta in Western Alaska and winters mainly in the Central Valley of California, migrating through Oregon and northern California. Slightly larger than a

(more)

mallard, it is known for cackling rather than honking. During the last decade, the cackling Canada goose has benefitted from intensive grassroots conservation projects including harvest restrictions and protection of key habitats.

For the most part, the Service's proposed early season regulations are essentially the same as last year, with a few modifications that affect specific states.

The regulations cover doves; woodcock; band-tailed pigeons; rails; snipe; common moorhens and purple gallinules; sandhill cranes; sea ducks; special September wood duck, teal, and Canada goose seasons; and migratory bird hunting seasons in Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

Other proposed changes include:

-- Reinstatement of Iowa's special September duck season in response to improved blue-winged teal populations.

-- New special, early seasons for Canada geese for West Virginia and Tennessee, and expanded or modified special early seasons for Canada geese in several states in the Atlantic and Mississippi Flyways. Many of these states are seeking to control burgeoning populations of resident (non-migratory) Canada geese.

-- Increasing the white-winged dove bag limit from 2 to 6 during the regular mourning dove season in the special white-winged dove zone in Texas. There has been a substantial increase in white-winged dove numbers in the lower Rio Grande Valley.

--- Reduction of the canvasback bag limit from 2 to 1 in Alaska as part of the continental approach to harvest management of this species.

Specifics on these details and on the proposed early migratory bird hunting seasons were published in the Federal Register. Public comments are requested through July 21 and should be sent to the Chief (MBMO), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 634 Arlington Square, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1849 C St. NW, Washington, DC 20240.

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