

THE MARYLAND WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION
MINUTES – JANUARY 18, 2017

Chair Gregor called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Approval for the January 18, 2017 Meeting Agenda

- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Weinberg moved to approve the November 16th Wildlife Advisory Commission Meeting Agenda.
 2. Commissioner Schroyer seconded.
 3. All in favor. Motion passed.

Approval for Minutes from November 16, 2016 Meeting

- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Weinberg moved to approve the November 16th meeting minutes as presented.
 2. Commissioner Schroyer seconded.
 3. All in favor. Motion passed.

Natural Heritage Program Update/Wildlife Diversity Advisory Committee Update – Presentation given by Jonathan McKnight.

- Associate Director Jonathan McKnight provided an update on the Natural Heritage Program and Wildlife Diversity Advisory Committee in a Power Point Presentation. [ATTACHMENT A]
- Maryland Natural Heritage Program was established in 1979.
- There are four programs under the Natural Heritage Program:
 1. Science Program includes coordinators for specific scientific efforts along with a State botanist.
 2. Habitat Conservation Program includes staff members that are the “boots on the ground” and are comprised of regional ecologists.
 3. Conservation Technology Program involves the technical heart of the Natural Heritage Program. The program manages a database that includes global, national, and state related non-game species information.
 4. Farm Resources Conservation Program uses the Farm Bill to help with conservation efforts on private land across Maryland.
- The State Wildlife Action Plan is available online. The Plan outlines significant habitat areas that support non-game species.
- Funding sources continue to decline from FY10 to present. Congress would need to take action to fund the State Wildlife Grants program. There is a national effort to fund non-game species.
- Associate Director McKnight handed out an executive summary “Sustaining and Connecting People to Fish and Wildlife – A Looming Crisis Can be Avoided”. [ATTACHMENT B]
- Associate Director McKnight summarized H.R. 5650. A proposed bill that was introduced to Congress in Fall of 2016. [ATTACHMENT C]
 1. The Bill proposes 1.3 billion in current federal revenue derived from oil, coal, gas leases on federal land and offshore waters to fund the conservation of non-game species. The funds would be made available through State Wildlife Grants program.
 2. The fund source would be administered similar to the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act.
 3. There was no Senate Bill but there are plans from the sponsors to reintroduce the bill in the new Congress.

- The Wildlife Diversity Advisory Committee is requesting formal support of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources and the H.R. 5650 Recovering America Wildlife Act.
- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Weinberg moved to have WHS staff draft a letter of support on the concept of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources and the H.R. 5650 Recovering America Wildlife Act.
 2. Commissioner Michael seconded.
 3. Discussion:
 - a. Commissioner Michael asked if there are any federal leases among Maryland geography. There is a deep storage facility that maybe a federal nexus – DNR is not aware of any oil, coal or federal gas leases in Maryland. This concept is a 'no brainer' for Maryland because Maryland has nothing to lose.
 4. Motion passed.
- Associate Director McKnight will draft a letter on behalf of the Commission.

2017 Legislative Session Update – Presentation given by Associate Director Glenn Therres and Director Paul Peditto.

- Associate Director Glenn Therres handed out the Summary of 2017 Proposed Legislation - Wildlife and Heritage Service (as of January 17, 2017) [**ATTACHMENT D**]
- Five bills have been introduced since January 17th – two House bills and three Senate bills.
- Associate Director Therres provided a summary of the bills.
- HB0068 would impact our state-side funding and reduce our federal match because it reduces the number of paid hunting licenses.
- Discussion ensued about federal funding and the status of hunting licenses in Maryland.
- Commissioner Michael commented again for the record that the game laws should be the same in every county subject to the department's scientific needs.
- There is a departmental bill to be re-introduced that will clean-up several outdated provisions in law and federal audit requirements

Proposed Migratory Game Bird Seasons and Bag Limits – Presentation given by Waterfowl Project Leader Josh Homyack.

- Waterfowl Project Leader Josh Homyack handed out the Proposed Maryland Migratory Game Bird Seasons and Bag Limits for the 2017-2018 Hunting Year. [**ATTACHMENT E**]
- Mr. Homyack provided a summary of the Proposed Migratory Game Bird Seasons and Bag Limits in a Power Point Presentation. [**ATTACHMENT F**]
- Staff will be releasing the proposals in February for public comment. Staff will also provide a summary of the public comments to the Commission. At that time, the Commission will vote on the proposals.
- Commissioner Michael requested that staff maximize the overlap with the middle split of the Mourning Dove Season with small game species.

Natural Resource Police Update – Presentation given by Sgt. Bill Davis

- There were a few cases of hunting without a license, failing to check in a deer, and having a loaded weapon in a vehicle.
- There is another case related to spotlighting in a field with a sawed off shotgun without the serial numbers.

- There was a Montgomery County case where it was reported that a man was shot in the head by a hunter. But knowing what we know now there was no hunter involved. The individual was hit in the head by most likely a tree branch.
- The Kent County case involving the 200-inch buck went to bench trial. The judge heard 6 to 7 hours of testimony and decided to hear the trial on another day. In fact, the court has actually scheduled two additional days to hear from potential witnesses and evidence. Staff wrote a letter asking that restitution to be added to this case.
 1. Director Peditto has been working on a letter to the prosecutors to seek restitution.
 2. Commissioner Michael pointed out it could be considered as a sentence enhancement and must be given notification ahead of time.
 3. WHS staff will be providing in-service training to NRP officers including restitution as one of the training topics.
- Bear Attack
 1. There is a Black Bear Response Plan that has been in existence for more than a decade that guides staff in managing nuisance bears. It spells out several of steps for staff to triage a situation with the facts that we know.
 2. The Black Bear Response Plan outlines that euthanizing is the only option in a human attack.
 3. The sow was still nearby after the attack and one of the cubs were still in the driveway.
 4. Director Peditto stated that he rather be second-guess about euthanizing a sow than explaining to the next victim why we did not euthanize the sow the first time. The cubs are old enough to survive.
- The feral cat email will be discussed at the February 15, 2017 meeting of the WAC.

Old Business

- Commissioner Michael spoke about the Deer Management Permits (DMP) Subcommittee. Director Peditto agreed to be the DNR representative and Colby Ferguson will be the representative from the Maryland Farm Bureau. Commissioner Gulbrandsen received a copy of the DMP general conditions.
- Discussion ensued among the Commissioners about the Maryland Farm Bureau.
 1. Commissioner Weinberg stated that the tone in the email was inappropriate. Commissioner Weinberg mentioned that there are two statutory purposes for the WAC: to promote hunting in the State and to preserve wildlife. Commissioner Weinberg pointed out that he understands there is a conflict between the two statutory purposes and the agricultural community's interest in eliminating deer. Commissioner Weinberg added that this conflict in regards to wildlife and agricultural is discussed at almost every Commission meeting...to some extent it is necessary, valuable, and appropriate but Mr. Ferguson's tone was unwarranted. Commissioner Weinberg requested that Commissioner Michael and Commissioner Gulbrandsen relay that communication to Mr. Ferguson.
 2. Commissioner Weinberg asked about a bill rumored to be coming about sharpshooters and taking deer at night under the DMP.
 3. Commissioner Michael explained that there is a Sunday hunting bill for Montgomery County...the compromise time will be 10:30 AM for Montgomery County. Commissioner Schroyer indicated that he is concerned that this will become a statewide bill and some counties will lose 'full day' Sunday hunting opportunities.
 4. Commissioner Michael outlined that the DMP subcommittee will report back solutions to the Commission.
 5. The Department does not charge a fee to process DMPs. These agents/farmers do not contribute to the funding of the agency that is issuing these DMPs.

6. Commissioner Gulbrandsen stressed that the solutions that the subcommittee comes up with will have to go through the stakeholders' process.

New Business

- Long Range Weapons Discussion
 1. Commissioner Schroyer expressed his concern about long range weapons for hunting. These agents are shooting up to 1800 yards. These are very accurate weapons but these agents are setting up on hilltop/mountain tops shooting into these fields. These agents are using a heavy bullet and shooting over a mile away to take out the deer on these fields. A lot can go wrong with using these weapons in Maryland.
 2. Commissioner Gulbrandsen pointed out that most DMP areas would not be able to use these long range weapons.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 12:11 P.M.

The next meeting will be held at 9:30 A.M. on Wednesday, February 15, 2017 in the Tawes State Office Building, C-1 Conference Room; Annapolis, Maryland.

Attendance

Members:	T. Gregor, E. Gulbrandsen, J. Michael, J. Schroyer, and R. Weinberg
Absent:	L. Compton, M. Goetze, S. Boyles Griffin
Guest:	E. Hovermale
Staff:	B. Davis, B. Harvey, J. Homyack, E. Muriel, P. Jayne, J. McKnight, P. Peditto, T. Spencer, and G. Therres

DNR Wildlife and Heritage Service

Maryland Natural Heritage Program

Four Programs:

Science Program

Habitat Conservation Program

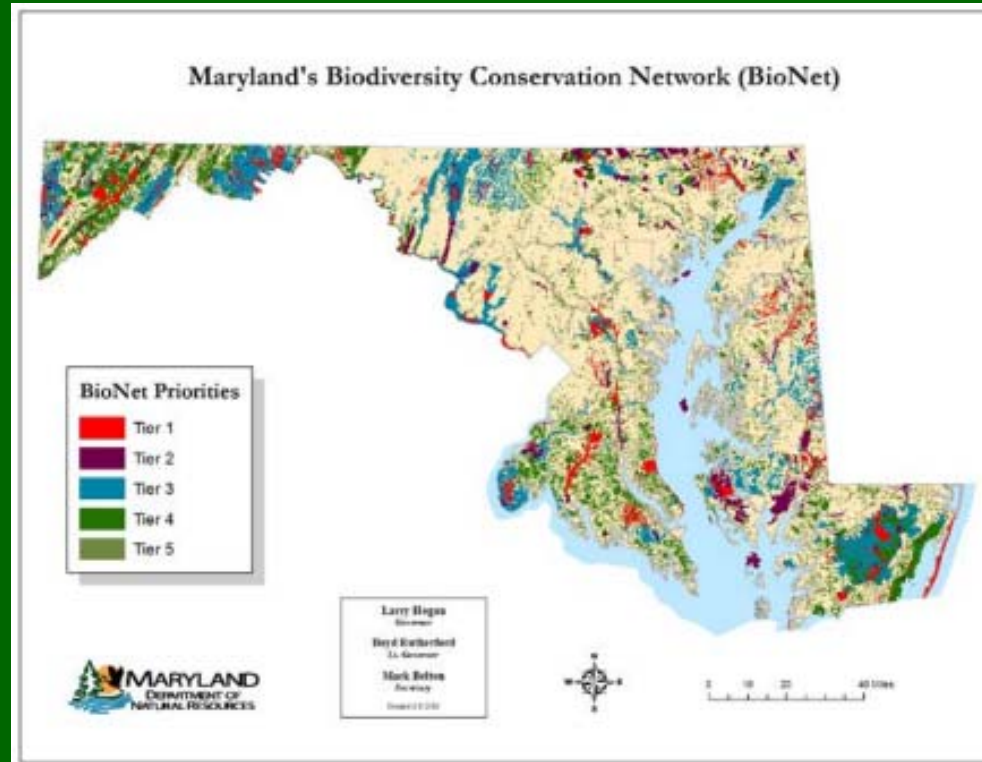
Conservation Technology Program

Farm Resources Conservation Program

Maryland State Wildlife Action Plan 2016



Maryland Natural Areas Inventory



State Wildlife Grants

Tax Checkoff

Other Federal Funds

Wildlife Management and
Protection Funds

State Wildlife Grants Funding

FY 10: 994 K

FY 11: 608 K

FY 12: 632 K

FY 13: 631 K

FY 14: 625 K

FY 15: 631 K

FY 16: 631 K

Maryland Chesapeake Bay and Endangered Species Fund

40% decline in Calendar 2015



Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining
America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife
Resources



The
FUTURE

of America's Fish and Wildlife

A 21st Century Vision for Investing in and Connecting People to Nature

Recovering America's Wildlife Act

This bill amends the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act to direct the Department of the Treasury to transfer, beginning in FY2016, revenues from energy and mineral development on federal lands totaling \$1.3 billion to the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Subaccount of the Federal Aid to Wildlife Restoration Fund, to be available without further appropriation. The purpose of the subaccount is to fund state wildlife conservation and restoration programs for managing fish and wildlife species of the greatest conservation need as determined by a state fish and wildlife agency.

Currently 14 members of Congress have signed on as co-sponsors to HR5650 which was introduced by Cong. Don Young (R-AK) in July.

Rep. Dingell, Debbie [D-MI-12], Rep. Fortenberry, Jeff [R-NE-1], Rep. Thompson, Mike [D-CA-5], Rep. DelBene, Suzan K. [D-WA-1], Rep. Schiff, Adam B. [D-CA-28], Rep. Stefanik, Elise M. [R-NY-21], Rep. DeFazio, Peter A. [D-OR-4], Rep. Gibson, Christopher P. [R-NY-19], Rep. Lowenthal, Alan S. [D-CA-47], Rep. Bordallo, Madeleine Z. [D-GU], Rep. Green, Gene [D-TX-29], Rep. Miller, Jeff [R-FL-1], Rep. Meehan, Patrick [R-PA-7], Rep. Kind, Ron [D-WI-3].

Recommendation of the Maryland
Wildlife Diversity Advisory
Committee:

Please formally support the findings
of the Blue Ribbon Panel on
America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife
Resources and HB 5650



Next Time: Feral Cats





Sustaining and Connecting People to **FISH AND WILDLIFE**

A Looming Crisis Can be Avoided

A Recommendation of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources

Our nation is facing a conservation crisis. Despite successes like the recovery of bald eagles and arctic graylings, thousands of species of birds, mammals, fish, frogs, turtles and insects have been slipping through the cracks for decades. Unless we start investing in proactive conservation measures, our nation's rich natural heritage and vital natural resource-based economy will face an uncertain future. New dedicated funding is needed now to ensure the long-term health of all fish and wildlife.

In 1937, Congress passed the Pittman-Robertson Act that established a conservation fund financed by hunters and recreational shooters to conserve game species. This funding model was later expanded to include sport fish with passage of the Dingell-Johnson Act. These two Acts enabled states to make long-term investments

in science-based management, resulting in the restoration of once depleted white-tailed deer, elk, wood ducks, striped bass and many other game species. This remarkably successful funding mechanism can be replicated to address the urgent conservation needs of all fish and wildlife and expand the number of citizens who invest in nature.

This conservation crisis also extends to people. More Americans than ever before are becoming disconnected from nature and the outdoors. This change is having profound implications on our citizens' health and well-being and the relevancy of fish and wildlife conservation. **To safeguard the future of our country's fish and wildlife, we must expand access and opportunities to bring the benefits of nature to all Americans.**



WHAT IS AT STAKE?

Our system of fish and wildlife funding is incomplete. State fish and wildlife agencies have identified thousands of species that are in immediate need of conservation, but only a small fraction are being addressed because of limited financial resources. As species decline and habitats deteriorate, benefits provided by nature such as water purification, pollination, recreation and food and fiber production that are essential to human health and economic prosperity are being compromised.

Without a change in the way we finance fish and wildlife conservation, we can expect the list of federally threatened and endangered species to grow from nearly 1,600 species today to perhaps thousands more in the future. In addition to the tragedy of placing our country's natural heritage at risk, such increases will impact business by raising costs for regulatory compliance, delaying deployment of capital and creating less regulatory certainty.

At the same time as people have become more urban, plugged-in, and over-scheduled, time spent in nature and the outdoors has significantly declined. Today, children spend over 50 hours a week using electronic media, leaving little time to participate in nature-based activities. This lost connection to nature denies significant physical and mental benefits to many Americans and threatens the relevance of state fish and wildlife agencies.

The nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources as assets, which it must turn over to the next generation increased, and not impaired in value.

- Theodore Roosevelt

THE BENEFITS TO PEOPLE AND SOCIETY

Increased investment in fish and wildlife conservation is vital to sustaining our natural infrastructure. Nature provides a host of indispensable benefits such as pollination, water purification, erosion control, flood control, recreation, food production and cultural amenities. Globally, these ecosystem services are minimally valued at \$18 trillion dollars per year.

Increased investment in fish and wildlife conservation makes fiscal sense. Proactive conservation saves tax payer dollars by addressing species' needs early so that costly "emergency room" interventions are avoided. Preventing threatened and endangered species listings helps business by averting project delays and losses from forfeited opportunities due to land use regulations.

Increased investment in fish and wildlife conservation is important to the nation's economy. Healthy fish and wildlife populations are critical to supporting the \$646 billion outdoor recreation economy and its 6.1 million jobs. The 90 million people who participate in wildlife-related recreation alone spend \$145 billion per year.

Increased investment in fish and wildlife conservation is needed to keep people of all ages and walks of life connected with nature. A growing body of evidence demonstrates that regular contact with nature adds quality to our lives and improves our physical and emotional health. State fish and wildlife agencies are well positioned to be leaders in delivering services that provide quality experiences in nature to people in both rural and urban environments.





THE SOLUTION

The Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources, comprised of national business and conservation leaders, was convened to evaluate and recommend a more sustainable funding approach to avert a fish and wildlife conservation crisis. The Panel completed its work in December 2015 and recommends:

Congress dedicate up to \$1.3 billion annually in existing revenue from the development of energy and mineral resources on federal lands and waters to the Wildlife Conservation Restoration Program (16 U.S.C. 669b(a)).

This funding would provide the states, territories and the District of Columbia with new critically needed financial resources to effectively implement State Wildlife Action Plans to conserve 12,000 species in greatest need of conservation. Additionally, this funding would allow states to provide the public with more access to open spaces; giving people more opportunities to have meaningful contact with nature.

Historically, when fish and wildlife have faced a crisis, the nation has responded. We can create a more optimistic future for our nation's rich natural heritage through dedicated and sustained investment. State fish and wildlife agencies have a proven track record of success when given adequate financial resources. We need to act now to build a safety net for all fish and wildlife, create regulatory certainty for business and address the growing disconnect between people and nature. Failure to do so will mean that our generation will leave the nation's rich natural assets impaired, rather than increased in worth.

BLUE RIBBON PANEL

ON SUSTAINING AMERICA'S
DIVERSE FISH AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES

ABOUT THE BLUE RIBBON PANEL

The Blue Ribbon Panel includes 26 business and conservation leaders and two ex officio members. The Panel was charged with recommending a new funding mechanism to support state fish and wildlife conservation to ensure the sustainability of all fish and wildlife for current and future generations.

MEMBERS AND THEIR AFFILIATIONS

NATIONAL CO-CHAIRS

John Morris, Noted Conservationist and Founder, of Bass Pro Shops
David Freudenthal, Former Governor, State of Wyoming; Senior Counsel, Crowell & Moring

MEMBERS

Kevin Butt, Regional Environmental Director, Toyota Motor Engineering & Manufacturing, NA, Inc.
Richard Childress, CEO & Chairman, Richard Childress Racing Enterprises; Board Member NRA
Jeff Crane, President, Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
Bruce Culpepper, Executive Vice President, Shell Americas
John Doerr, President & CEO, Pure Fishing, Inc.
Jim Faulstich, Vice Chair, Partners for Conservation; Owner Daybreak Ranch
John Fitzpatrick, Director, Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Greg Hill, President & COO, Hess Corporation
Becky Humphries, Executive Vice President, National Wild Turkey Federation
Stephen Kellert, Professor Emeritus, Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies
Jennifer Mull, CEO, Backwoods Equipment, Inc.; President Outdoor Industry Association
John Newman, Board Member, Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
Mike Nussman, President & CEO, American Sportfishing Association
Margaret O'Gorman, President, Wildlife Habitat Council
Glenn Olson, Donal O'Brien Chair in Bird Conservation and Public Policy, National Audubon Society
Collin O'Mara, President and CEO, National Wildlife Federation
Connie Parker, CEO, 12 North Capital LLC; Board Member Teddy Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Charlie Potter, CEO, Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation
Steve Sanetti, President & CEO, National Shooting Sports Foundation
John Tomke, Chair, Wildlife & Hunting Heritage Conservation Council
Jeff Trandahl, Executive Director & CEO, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation
James Walker, Board Vice Chairman, EDF Renewable Energy; Board Member American Wind Wildlife Institute
Steve Williams, President, Wildlife Management Institute
Bob Ziehmer, Director, Missouri Department of Conservation

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS

Michael Bean, Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks, US Department Interior
Ronald Regan, Executive Director, Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies



Publication Designed by:
the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Division.
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funds from the WSFR program of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



H. R. 5650

To amend the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act to make funds available for management of fish and wildlife species of greatest conservation need as determined by State fish and wildlife agencies.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 6, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska (for himself and Mrs. DINGELL) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To amend the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act to make funds available for management of fish and wildlife species of greatest conservation need as determined by State fish and wildlife agencies.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Recovering America’s Wildlife Act of 2016”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) a diverse array of species of fish and wildlife is of significant value to the United States for many reasons, including aesthetic, ecological, educational, cultural, recreational, economic, and scientific reasons;

(2) more than 90 million citizens of the United States participate in outdoor recreation through hunting, fishing, birding, and other wildlife-dependent recreation,

all of which have significant value to the citizens who engage in those activities and provide economic benefits to local communities;

(3) it is in the interest of the United States—

(A) to retain for present and future generations the opportunity to hunt, fish, observe, understand, and appreciate a wide variety of fish and wildlife;

(B) to recover species of fish and wildlife listed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) requiring Federal protection, and to prevent fish and wildlife species from declining to the point of requiring Federal protection under that Act, by conserving species in greatest conservation need; and

(C) to support collaborative and proactive conservation that will sustain America's diverse fish and wildlife populations;

(4) hunters and anglers, including future President Theodore Roosevelt and naturalist George Bird Grinnell, were alarmed in the 1880–90s that game and sportfish could not sustain unregulated harvest, and that avifauna needed protection from commercial take, and thus founded the first nongovernmental conservation organizations to instill fish and wildlife conservation values in hunters, anglers, bird watchers, and all citizens;

(5) at the turn of the 20th century, the States realized the need to regulate harvest of game and sportfish for sustainable use, and required hunting and angling licenses of users, and established seasons, bag and creel limits, and legal means of take for game and sportfish, using license dollars largely for enforcement of those regulations;

(6) in 1937, an alliance between hunters and conservation organizations, the State governments, the Federal Government, and the shooting sports industry convinced Congress to transfer receipts from an existing Federal excise tax on sporting arms and ammunition to the States, matched by State hunting license dollars, for the management of wildlife and conservation of habitat under the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669 et seq.), which greatly enhanced the States ability to move from largely the enforcement of game seasons and bag limits into science-based research and management of all wildlife;

(7) similarly, in 1951, an alliance between anglers and conservation organizations, the State governments, the Federal Government, and the sport-fishing industry, convinced Congress to impose a Federal excise tax on fishing equipment under the Dingell-Johnson Sportfish Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 777 et seq.), and to transfer receipts to the States, matched by State fishing license revenues, to manage

sport fish and conserve aquatic habitats, further enhancing the maturation of the State fish and wildlife agencies into science-based management of all fish species;

(8) this user-pay, public-benefits means of funding fish and wildlife conservation is unique in the world, having been brought to the Federal Government by sportsmen and sportswomen who were willing to pay these fees to ensure dedicated funds to fish and wildlife conservation delivered by the States;

(9) these user-pay funds (licenses and excise taxes)—

(A) have benefited not just hunters and anglers but all Americans in providing abundant fish and wildlife (game and nongame species both), clean water, outdoor recreation, healthy activities, and quality of life; and

(B) provide, and will continue to provide, a majority of the funds that are available to State fish and wildlife agencies for science-based management of fish and wildlife for their citizens;

(10) State fish and wildlife agencies are responsible for all fish and wildlife, but are grossly underfunded to fulfill these responsibilities because there are few funds available at the State level for fish and wildlife conservation except those driven by hunting and fishing license revenues, and Federal excise tax revenues;

(11) Congress enacted the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Account under section 3(a)(2) of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669b(a)(2)) to extend support for the full array of fish and wildlife conservation needs, including species that are not hunted or fished, but only authorized appropriations for the Account for one year;

(12) while appropriated funds have been made available through the State Wildlife Grants program of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the lack of assured and sufficient dedicated funds for the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Account has left unrealized the goals of the Account, thereby allowing fish and wildlife to continue to decline across the United States and resulting in hundreds of species being listed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973;

(13) partly as a requirement of the unfunded Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Account, each State and territory is required to seek public input and produce a comprehensive fish and wildlife conservation strategy, called a State Wildlife Action Plan, to guide the conservation of the full array of fish, wildlife and their habitats in each State and territory;

(14) providing assured and sufficient dedicated funding to the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Account will advance the national interest in assuring

sustainable populations of all fish and wildlife species for the use and enjoyment of our citizens, through implementing the comprehensive fish and wildlife conservation strategies of the States;

(15) as funds become available through enactment of this Act, States should secure the needed non-Federal match from sources other than revenue generated by sportsmen and sportswomen through the sale of State hunting and fishing licenses, which is the historic, and sometimes only, source of matching funds for the excise tax revenue generated through the Federal wildlife and sport fish restoration accounts; and

(16) Federal wildlife and sport fish restoration accounts support activities that include, but are not limited to, fish and wildlife restoration projects for game species that also benefit an array of other game and nongame species, hunter education, and range development efforts.

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are—

(1) to provide dedicated and assured funding to advance the national interest in keeping fish and wildlife from becoming threatened or endangered with extinction, by supporting programs in each State and territory to address the conservation needs of the full diverse array of declining fish and wildlife species, including both game and nongame species;

(2) to provide from the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Account the Federal share of the support needed to implement the comprehensive fish and wildlife conservation strategies developed by each State and territory in order to address the needs of those species identified by each State and territory as species of greatest conservation need; and

(3) to carry out collaborative and proactive conservation actions with the goal of precluding the need for listing of species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531), as well as enhancing the ability of the States to recover species listed under that Act and remove them from the protection of the Act.

SEC. 3. WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION SUBACCOUNT.

Section 3(a) of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669b(a)) is amended by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION SUBACCOUNT.—

“(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Federal Aid to Wildlife Restoration Fund a subaccount to be known as the ‘Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Subaccount’ (referred to in this paragraph as the ‘Subaccount’).

“(B) USE.—Amounts in the Subaccount shall be available without further appropriation, for each fiscal year, for apportionment in accordance with this Act to carry out State Wildlife Conservation and Restoration programs in order to manage fish and wildlife species of greatest conservation need as determined by a State fish and wildlife agency.

“(C) DEPOSITS.—Starting in fiscal year 2016, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer to the fund for deposit in the Subaccount the following:

“(i) OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF REVENUES.—From amounts deposited in the Treasury under section 9 of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1338), \$650,000,000.

“(ii) MINING REVENUES.—From amounts deposited in the Treasury under section 35 of the Mineral Leasing Act (30 U.S.C. 191), after the withdrawal of funds to the States under subsection (a) of that section, \$650,000,000.”.

**Summary of 2017 Proposed Legislation
Wildlife and Heritage Service
(as of January 17, 2017)**

HB0004 (SB0046)	Hunting and Fishing Licenses - Active Military, Former Prisoners of War, Recipients of the Purple Heart Award, and Disabled Veterans	Delegate Simonaire	In the House - Hearing 1/25 at 1:00 p.m.	Environment and Transportation 1/25/2017 - 1:00 p.m.
HB0068	Hunting and Fishing - Complimentary Licenses - Purple Heart Recipients	Delegate Carey	In the House - Hearing 1/25 at 1:00 p.m.	Environment and Transportation 1/25/2017 - 1:00 p.m.
SB0046 (HB0004)	Hunting and Fishing Licenses - Active Military, Former Prisoners of War, Recipients of the Purple Heart Award, and Disabled Veterans	Senator Simonaire	In the Senate - Hearing 1/24 at 1:00 p.m.	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs 1/24/2017 - 1:00 p.m.
SB0066	Hunter Safety Courses - Incentives Program - Establishment	Senator Simonaire	In the Senate - Hearing 1/24 at 1:00 p.m.	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs 1/24/2017 - 1:00 p.m.
SB0103	St. Mary's County - Foxes and Hounds – Repeal of Provisions	Senator Waugh		

2017/2018 Proposed Waterfowl Seasons and Bag Limits



Migratory Bird Regulations

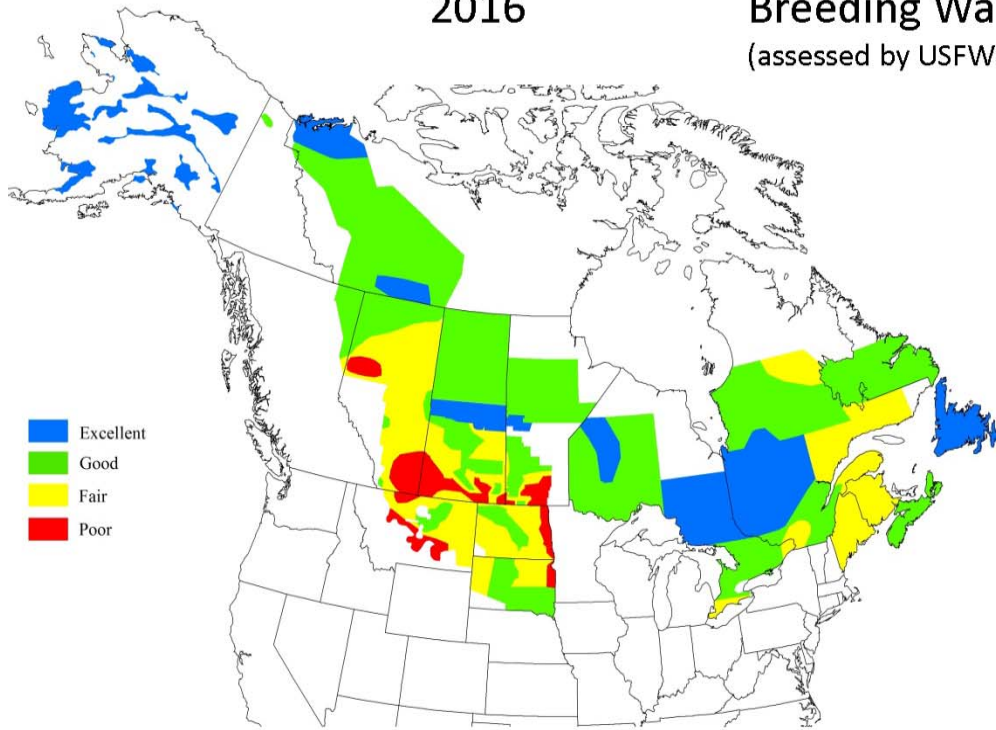
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act 1918 established Federal authority for management of migratory birds.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service promulgates hunting season frameworks provided to States.
- Frameworks include:
 - maximum season length
 - earliest and latest dates
 - maximum daily bag limit



2016

Breeding Waterfowl Habitat Conditions

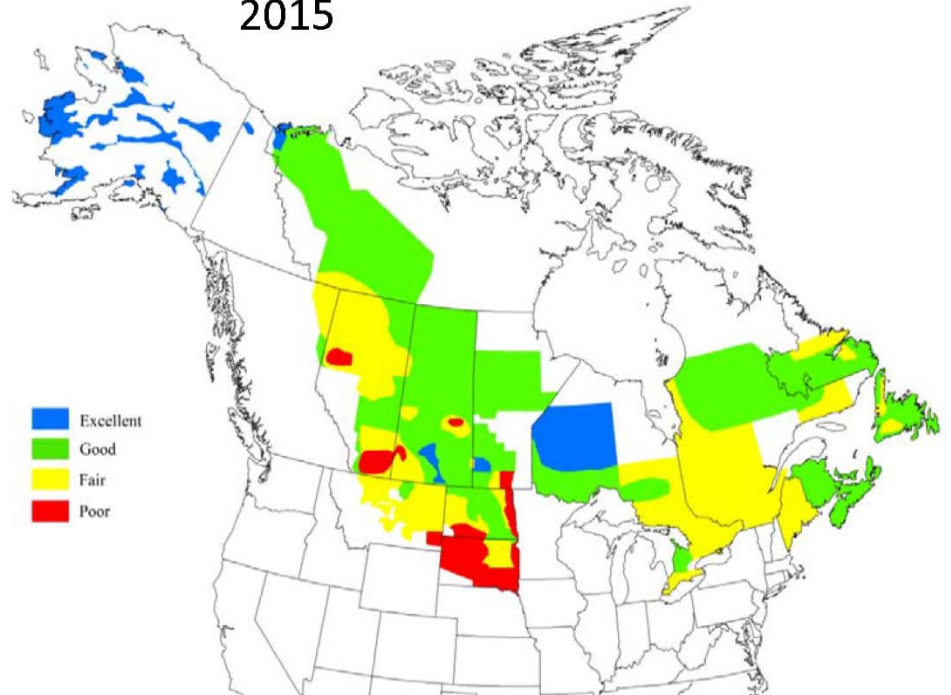
(assessed by USFWS wildlife biologist-pilots during spring waterfowl surveys)



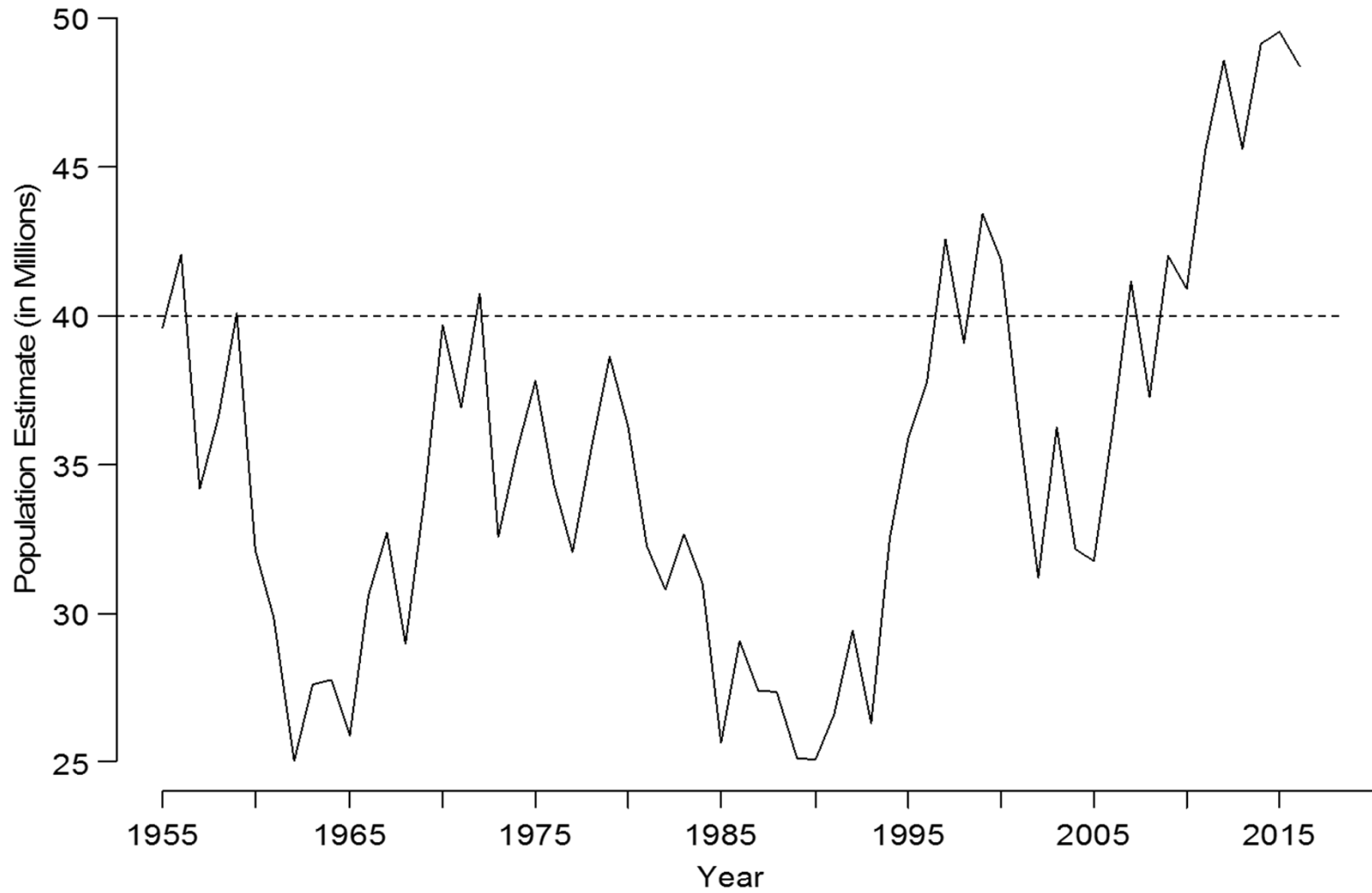
Total ponds in U.S. and
Canada – 5.0 M, 20% below
6.3 M in 2015

above the LTA (1955 -2014)

2015



Total ducks



2016 Breeding Ducks By Species (in millions)

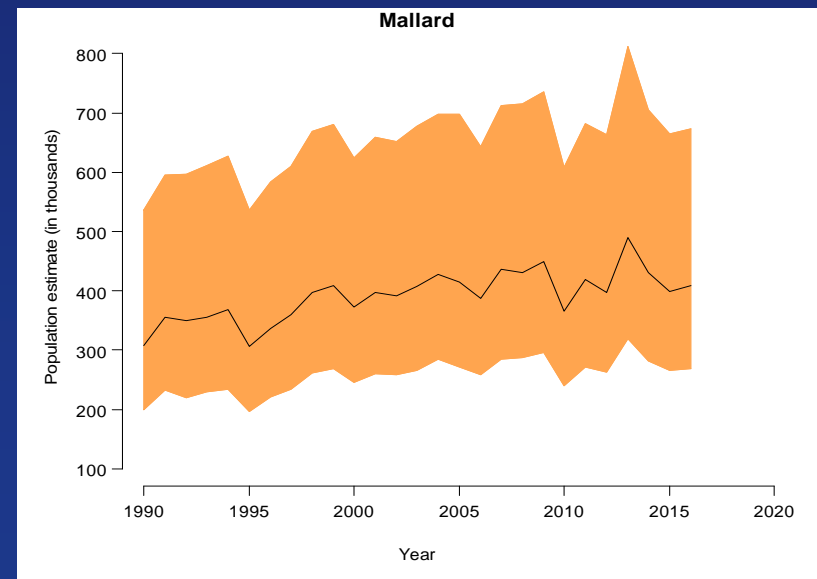
Species	2016	2015	% Change from 2015	% Change from LTA
Mallard	11.8	11.6	+1	+51, 7.7 M
Gadwall	3.7	3.8	-3	+90, 1.9 M
American wigeon	3.4	3.0	+12	+31, 2.6 M
Green-winged teal	4.2	4.1	+5	+104, 2.1 M
Blue-winged teal	6.7	8.5	-22	+35, 4.9 M
Northern shoveler	3.9	4.4	-10	+56, 2.5 M
Northern pintail	2.6	3.0	-14	-34, 3.9 M
Redhead	1.3	1.2	+8	+82, 0.7 M
Canvasback	.74	.757	-3	+26, 0.6 M
Scaup	5.0	4.4	+14	-14, 5.0 M

Eastern Mallard Population Status

Eastern Mallard breeding population (BPOP) index used to set AF duck hunting regulations.

In 2016, the estimated abundance of mallards was 0.4 ± 0.1 million, which was similar to the 2015 estimate and the 1990 – 2016 average

A liberal regulation (60-day season and 6-duck bag limit) is prescribed for AF in 2017/18.

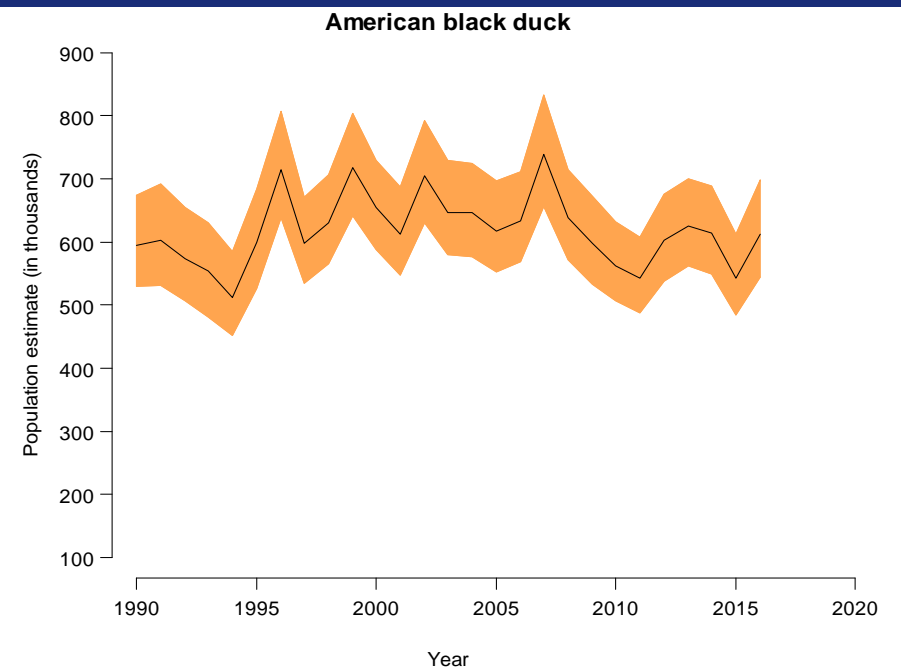


American Black Duck Population Status

Estimated Black Duck breeding population index in 2016 was 600,000, relatively stable over the Last 30 years.

Prescribed Black Duck hunting regulations in the U.S have changed from restrictive to moderate.

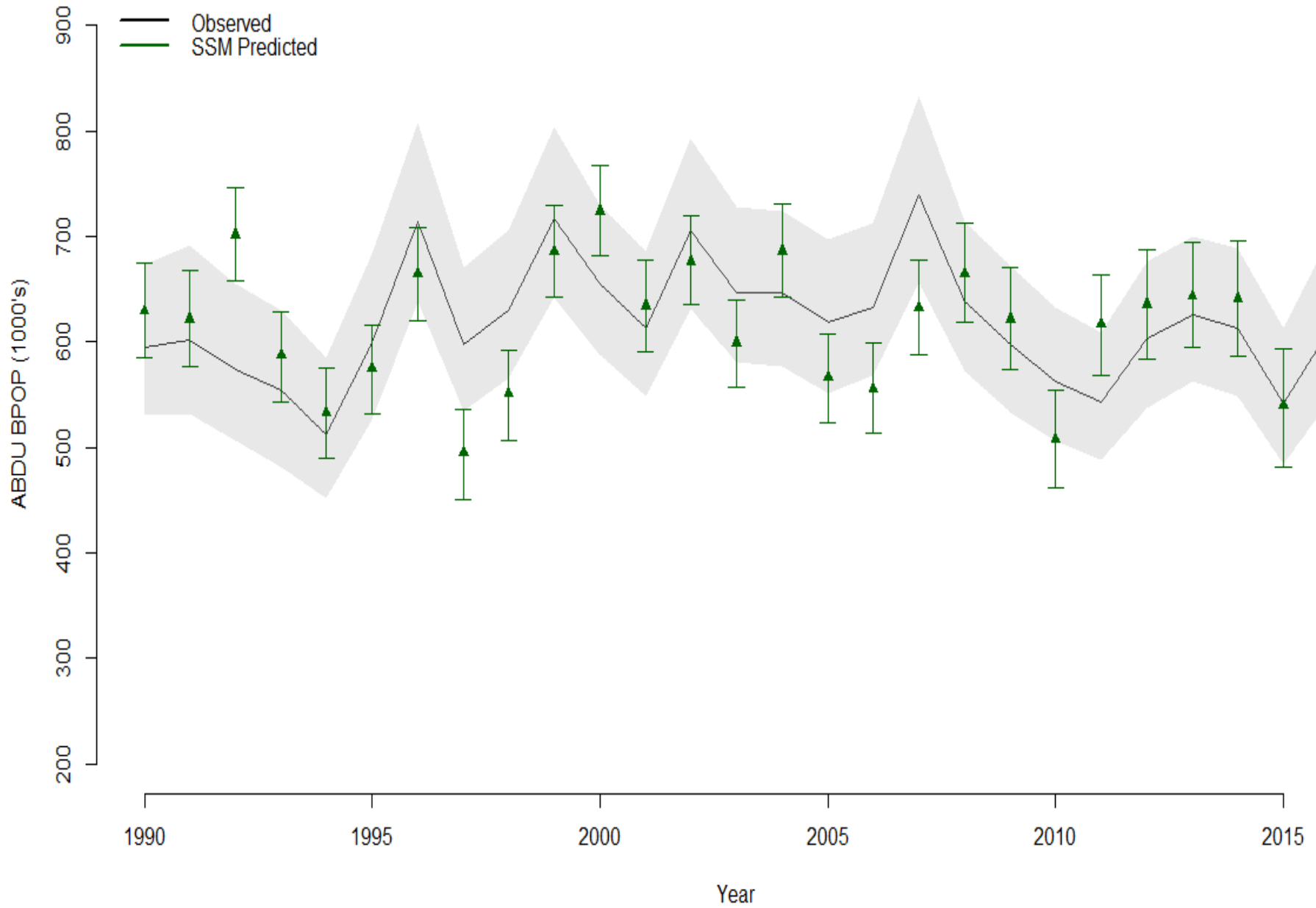
Daily bag liberalized to 2/day



Change in Black Duck Bag Limit

- Influenced by: 1) competition with mallards
2) black duck numbers
3) harvest
- Mallard numbers are down
- Black duck numbers relatively stable
- Additional data shows hunting mortality has little influence on black duck annual survival

1990-2016 Time Series

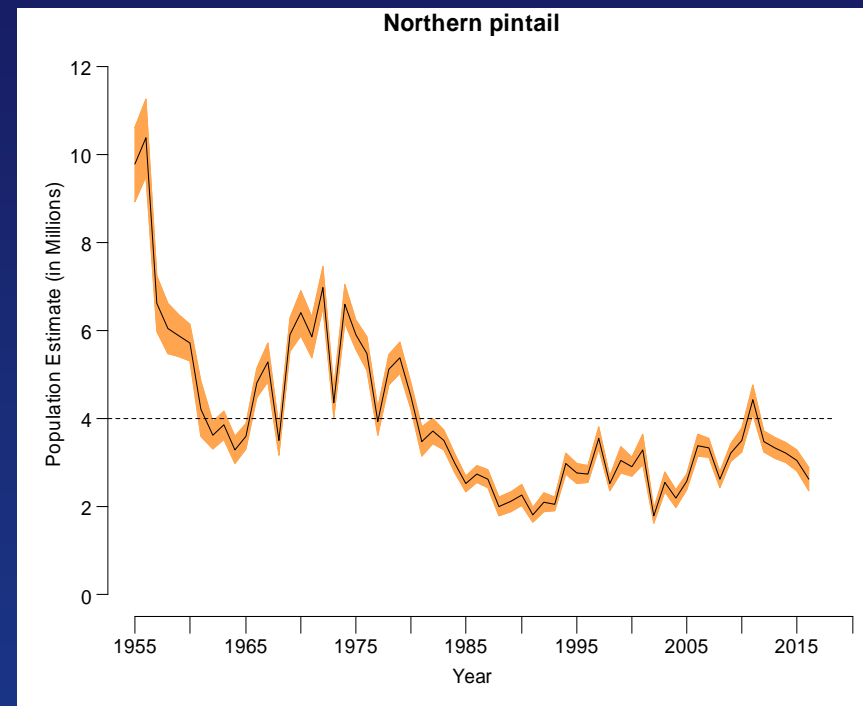


Northern Pintail Population Status

2016 BPOP estimate was 2.6 M, down 14% from 2015 (3.0 M), 34% below LTA

The harvest strategy calls for a reduction in the daily bag to 1 bird/day

Surveys showed Pintails nested further north due poor habitat south. More northerly nesting generally = lower productivity



Canvasback Population Status

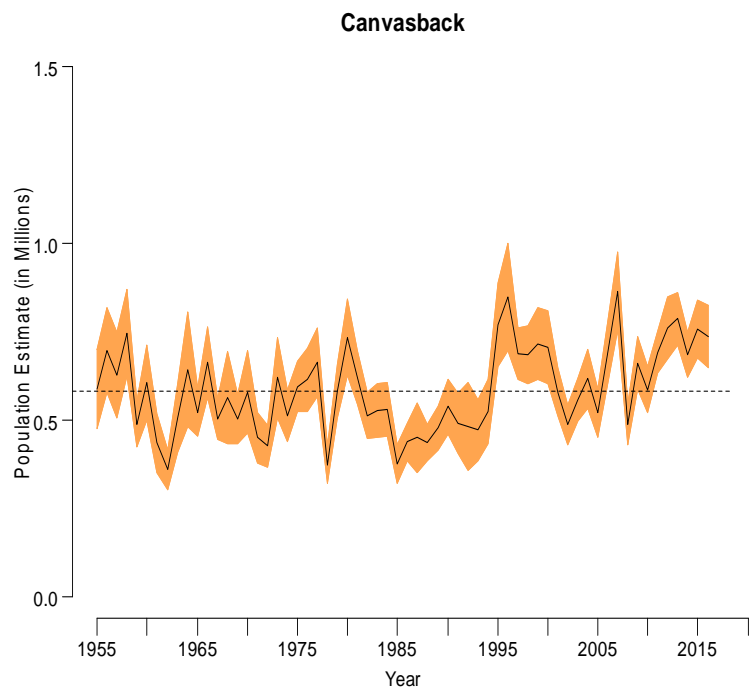


The 2016 BPOP was 736,000, 3% below 2015, 26% above the LTA

Ponds in Prairie Canada were 4.2 M, 30% above the LTA.

Harvest strategy calls for a full season with a 2-bird daily bag limit.

Predicted BPOP for 2016 following a 2 bird bag in 2015 was 727,600 (>725,000 threshold).



Atlantic Population Canada Goose Harvest Strategy

AP Population Objective - 225,000 breeding pairs in the Ungava region of Quebec.

3-year average (2014-2016) = 181,354 pairs.

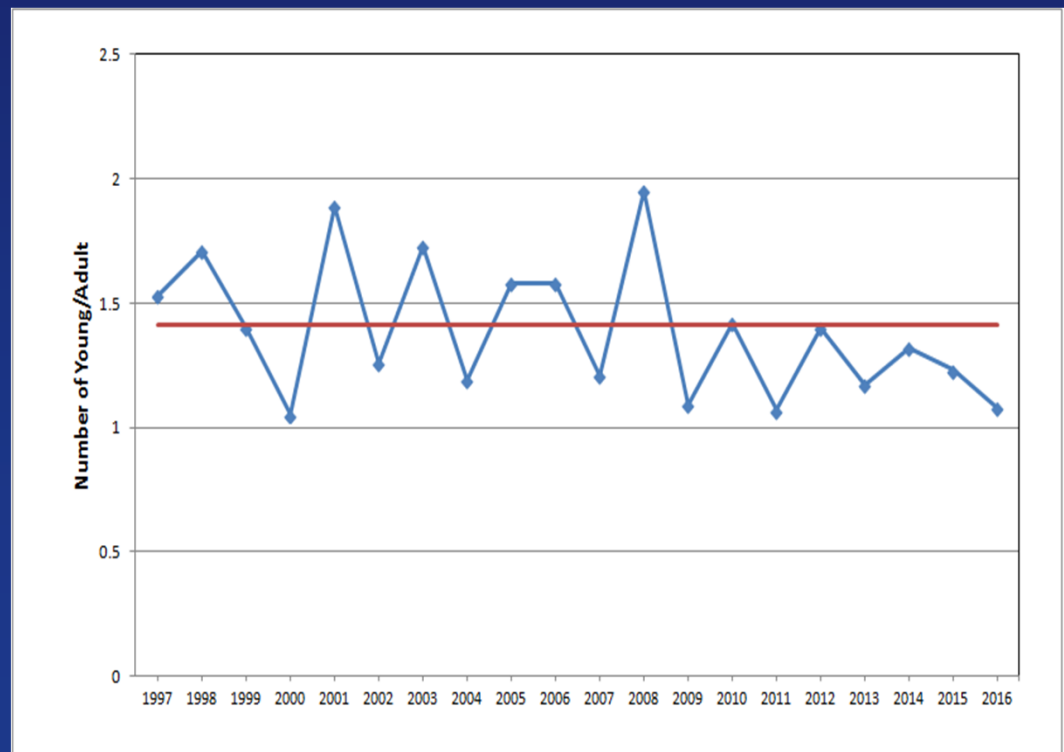
When the breeding pair index (3 yr. average) is at or above 150,000, A moderate regulation (50-day season) is prescribed.

When the breeding pair index (3-yr. average) is above 225,000, a liberal regulation (60-day season) may be considered that would target a projected harvest rate of breeding adults not to exceed 15%.

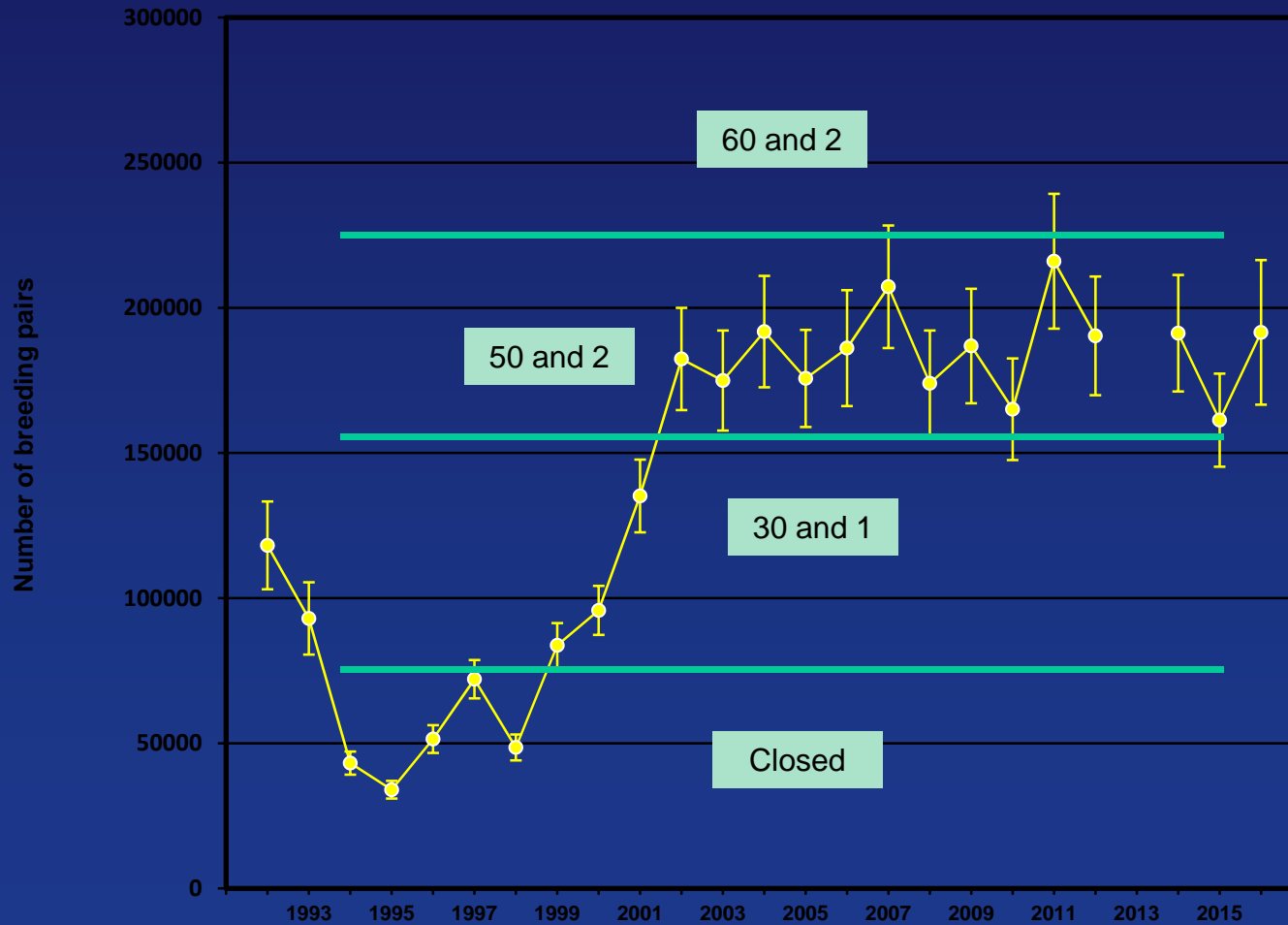
AP Goose Production



- In 2016 the 191,526 (SE = 24,898) breeding pairs were estimated on the Ungava Peninsula....similar to 2015 (161,302).
- % of indicated pairs observed as singles was 57%, above LTA of 51%



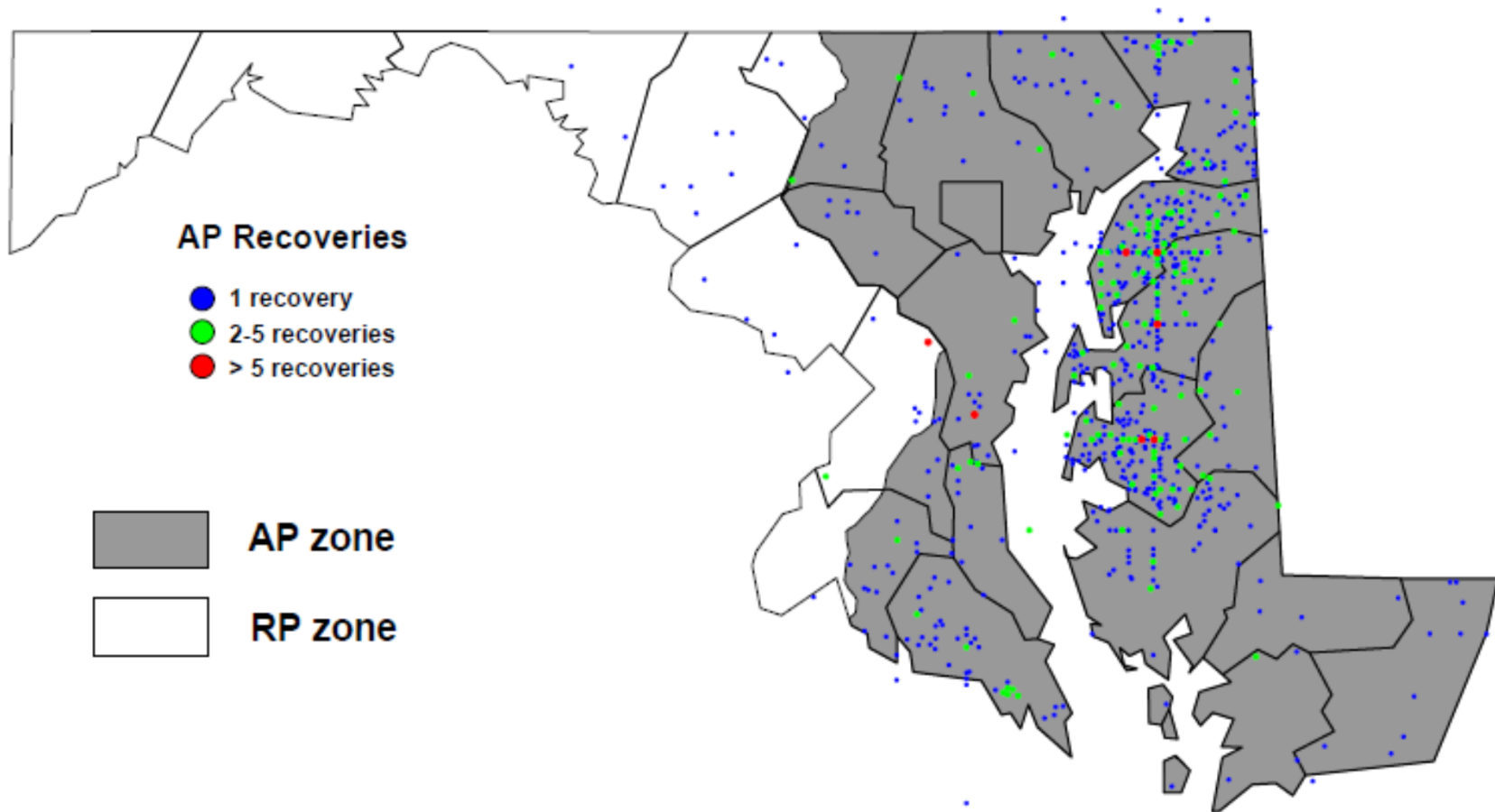
AP Breeding Pair Survey And AP Harvest Strategy



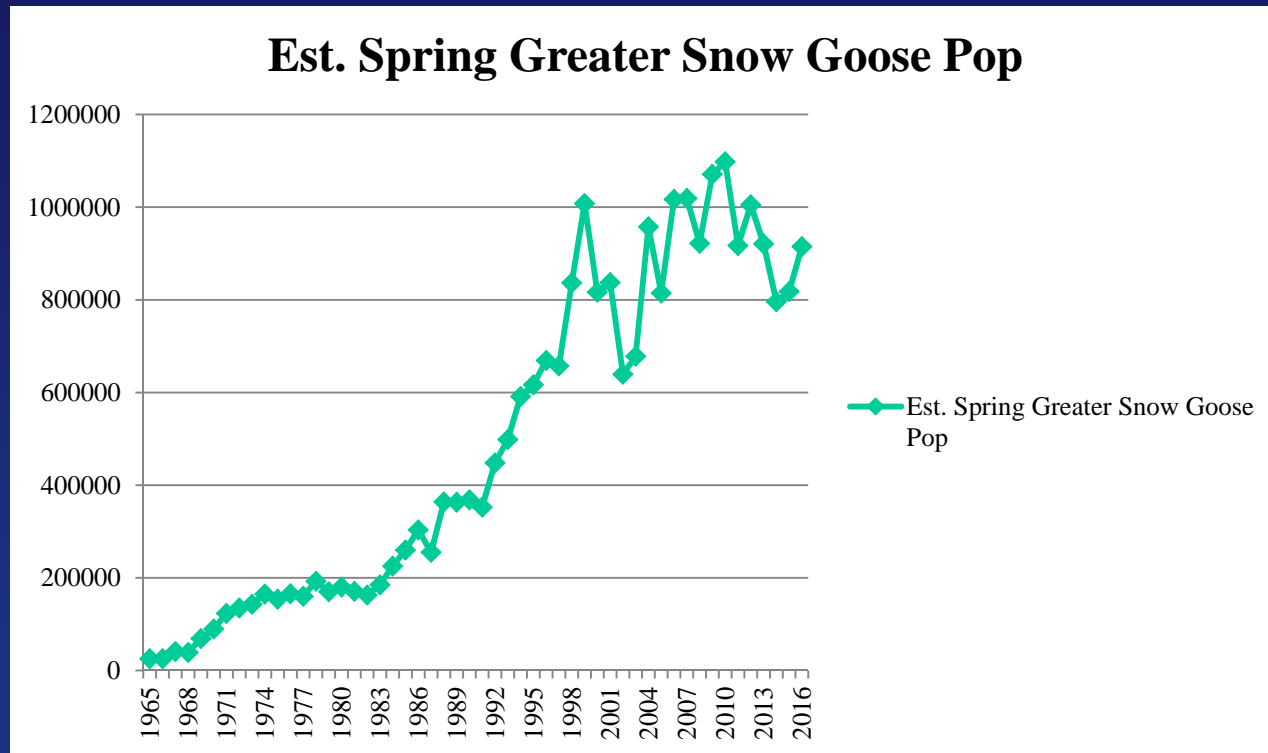
AP Canada Goose Band Recoveries

2012 - 2014

Maryland



Greater Snow Goose Photo Count 1965 - 2016



- Population appears to be stabilizing

MD DNR Priorities Considered when Formulating Hunting Season Proposals

- Must meet the biological requirements of the waterfowl resource to sustain populations.
- Meet strong hunter desire for late duck and goose seasons that overlap to the extent possible.
- Maximizing opportunity for waterfowl hunters, particularly youth.
- Maximizing open hunting days statewide, especially Saturdays and holidays.
- Regulation simplicity.

2017-18 Waterfowl Hunting Seasons and Bag Limits under Consideration



A young boy with blonde hair, wearing a camouflage jacket and a purple shirt, is shown from the side, holding a duck. He is in a field of tall, dry grass. The duck is brown and white. The background is a dense field of tall grass.

Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days

**Proposed Dates
Nov. 4 and Feb. 10**

Daily Bag Limit

6 ducks (certain species bag restrictions), 2 Canada geese, 2 brant, 25 light geese, and 15 coots.

Requirements: Youth hunter must be 16 years of age or younger and accompanied by an unarmed, adult at least 21 years old. Adult may assist in calling, setting decoys, retrieving downed birds.

Early Waterfowl Seasons

Special Teal Season

Federal framework: 16 days between Sept. 1-30
Proposed dates: Sept. 16 – Sept 30

Eastern Zone Resident Canada Goose

Federal Framework: 15 days between Sept. 1-15
Proposed dates: Sept. 1 – 15

Western Zone Resident Canada Goose

Federal Framework: 25 days between Sept. 1-25
Proposed Dates: Sept 1 - 25

“Regular” Duck Hunting Season

Federal Framework

60-day season between
Saturday nearest Sept. 24 and
the last Sunday in January with
a daily bag limit of 6 ducks
(species restrictions)

Proposed Season

Oct. 14 - Oct. 21

Nov. 11- Nov. 24

Dec. 12 - Jan. 27

Daily Bag Limit

6 per day (including mergansers) but no more than 5 sea ducks (4 long-tailed ducks, 4 scoters, 4 eiders), 4 mallards (2 hens), 3 wood ducks, 1 pintail, 2 redheads, 2 scaup, 2 canvasbacks, 2 hooded mergansers, 2 black ducks (during black duck season), 1 mottled duck, and 1 fulvous tree duck.



Black Duck Season

(within Regular Duck Season)

Federal Framework

60-day season with a 2-bird daily bag limit.

Proposed Season

Nov. 11 - Nov. 24

Dec. 12 - Jan. 27

Daily Bag Limit: 2

No open season in October provides protection to Maryland's breeding black duck population. Migrant stocks begin arriving in early November.



AP Canada Goose Hunting Season

Federal Framework

A 50-day season between Nov. 15 and Feb. 5

Daily Bag Limit 2 per day

Proposed Season

Nov. 18 - Nov. 24

Dec. 15 - Feb. 3

Daily Bag Limit

2 per day



Atlantic Flyway Resident Population Canada Goose Hunting Season

AFRP Zone

Federal Framework

80-day season between Nov. 15
and Mar. 10

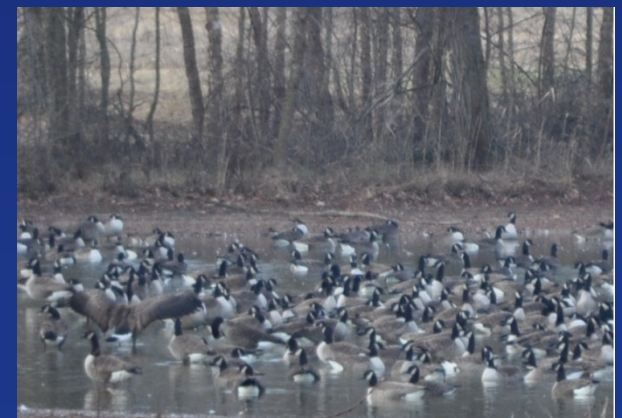
Daily Bag Limit 5 per day

Proposed Season

Nov. 18 - Nov. 24

Dec. 15 - Mar. 10

Daily Bag Limit 5 per day



Atlantic Brant Hunting Season



Federal Framework

60-day season between the Saturday nearest Sept. 24 (Sept. 27) and Jan. 31, with a 2-bird daily bag limit.

Proposed Season

Nov. 8 – Nov. 24

Dec 11 - Jan. 31

Daily Bag Limit 2



Light Goose Hunting Season

Federal Framework

107-day season between
Oct. 1 and Mar. 10 with a
25-bird daily bag limit
and no possession limit

Proposed Season

Oct. 2 - Nov. 24

Dec. 11 - Feb. 3

Feb. 10 (one day only)

Daily Bag Limit 25

No Possession Limit

Light Goose Conservation Order Season

Proposed CO Season

Nov. 27 - Dec. 9

Feb. 5 – Feb. 9

Feb. 12 - Apr. 14

Daily Bag Limit No Limit

Hunters may use unplugged shotguns and e-calls

Shooting hours extended to 1/2 hour after sunset

Participants must possess a Snow Goose Conservation Order Hunting Season Permit. Permits available from DNR sport license agents, online, or by phone for a \$5 fee.



Special Sea Duck Hunting Season

(Sea Duck Zone only)

Federal Framework

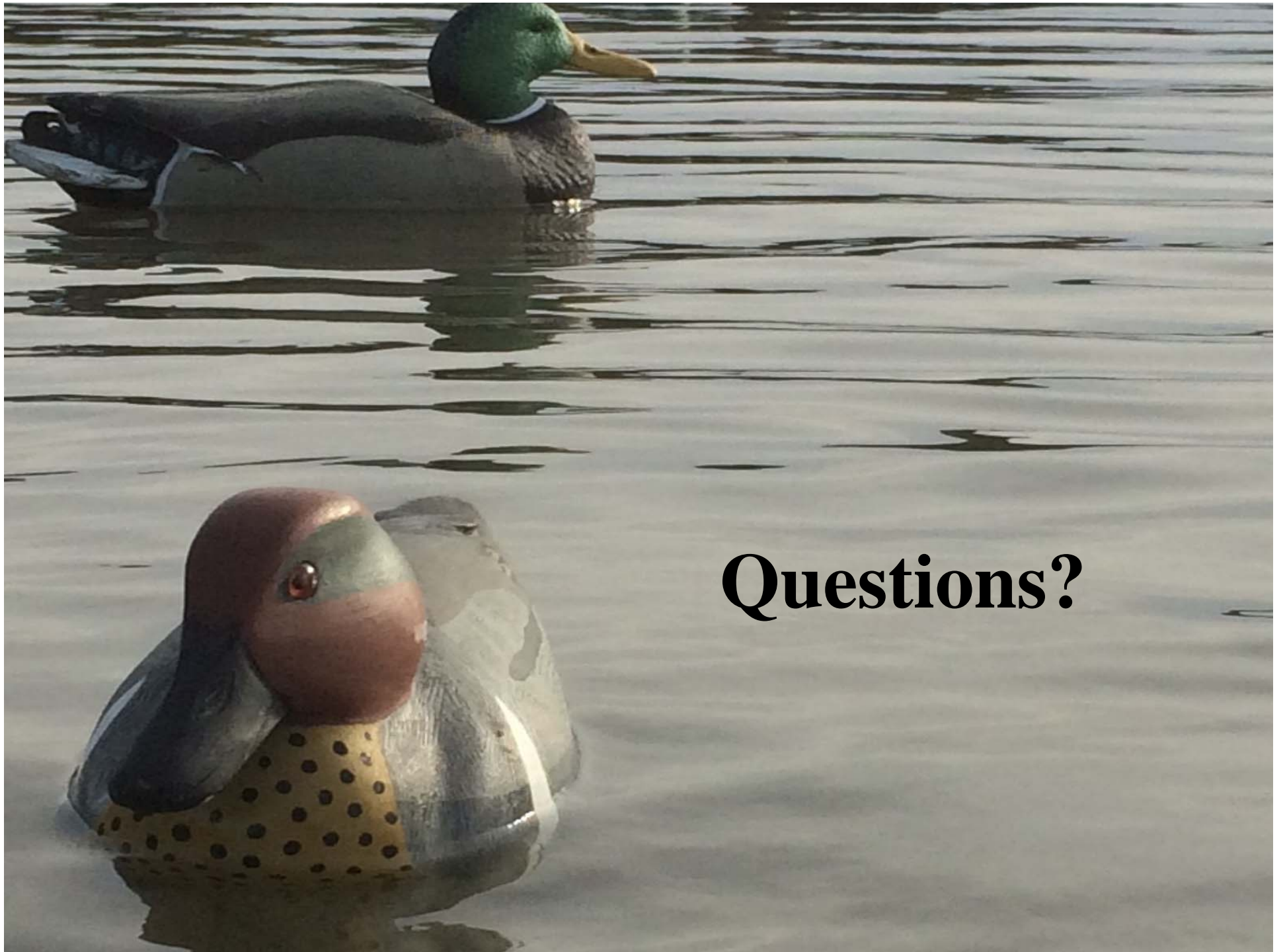
A 60 consecutive day season
between Sept. 15 and Jan. 31.

Daily Bag Limit: 5 but no more than
4 scoters, 4 long-tailed ducks, 4
eiders

Proposed Season
Nov. 4 - Jan. 12

Proposed Daily Bag Limit: 5 but no
more than 4 scoters, 4 long-tailed
ducks, 4 eiders





Questions?



Larry Hogan, Governor
Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor
Mark Belton, Secretary
Joanne Throwe, Deputy Secretary

PROPOSED MARYLAND MIGRATORY GAME BIRD SEASONS AND BAG LIMITS FOR THE 2017-18 HUNTING YEAR

SPECIAL EARLY RESIDENT POPULATION CANADA GEESE

Federal framework: A 15-day special season may be held between September 1 – 15 in the Eastern zone and a 25-day season between September 1 - 25 in the Western zone.

Proposed Season Dates

Eastern Zone Sep. 1 - Sept 15

Western Zone Sep. 1 - Sept 25

Daily Bag Limit: 8 in both zones. Possession limit is 3 times the daily limit.

Eastern Hunt Zone: Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Harford, Kent, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties; and that part of Anne Arundel County east of Interstate 895, Interstate 97, and Route 3; that part of Prince George's County east of Route 3 and Route 301; and that part of Charles County east of 301 to the Virginia line.

Western Hunt Zone: Allegany, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, Howard, Montgomery, and Washington Counties; and that part of Anne Arundel County west of Interstate 895, Interstate 97, and Route 3; that part of Prince George's County west of Route 3 and Route 301; and that part of Charles County west of 301 to the Virginia line.

Shotguns capable of holding more than 3 shells may be used. Shooting hours in both zones are from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

SEPTEMBER TEAL SEASON

Federal framework: States may select a 16 day season to be held between September 1 and 30. Teal season may not run concurrently with other seasons (resident Canada goose) that allow special considerations such as modified shooting hours or unplugged guns.

Proposed Season Dates Sep. 16 – Sep. 30

Daily Bag Limit: 6 blue-winged or green-winged teal, singly or in aggregate. The possession limit is 3 times the daily bag limit.

September Teal Hunt Zone: Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Harford, Kent, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties; that part of Anne Arundel County east of Interstate 895, Interstate 97, Route 3; that part of Prince George's County east of Route 3 and Route 301; and that part of Charles County east of 301 to the Virginia line. Shooting hours for teal during this season are from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset.

DUCKS, COOTS, and MERGANSERS

Federal Framework: A 60-day season may be held between the Saturday nearest September 24 and the last Sunday in January (January 28).

Proposed Season Dates Oct. 14 - Oct. 21
 Nov. 11 - Nov. 24
 Dec. 12 - Jan. 27

Black Duck Nov. 11 - Nov. 24
 Dec. 12 - Jan. 27

Duck Daily Bag and Possession Limits: The daily bag limit of ducks (including mergansers) is 6. The 6-duck limit shall consist of no more than 5 sea ducks (no more than 4 long-tailed ducks, 4 scoters, or 4 eiders), 4 mallards (max. 2 hen mallards), 3 wood ducks, 2 scaup, 1 pintail, 2 redheads, 2 hooded mergansers, 2 canvasbacks, 2 black ducks (during black duck open season), 1 fulvous tree duck, and 1 mottled duck. All other species of ducks (except harlequin duck) may be taken up to the 6-duck limit. The possession limit is three times the daily bag limit. In addition to the duck bag limit hunters may take 15 coots per day. No open season for harlequin ducks and swans.

Note: In the designated sea duck zone, sea ducks may only be taken during the special sea duck season dates (Nov. 4 - Jan. 12).

SEA DUCKS (Scoters, Long-tailed Duck, and Eiders)

Federal Frameworks: A special 60-day season may be selected between September 15 and January 31 with a 5-bird daily bag limit (no more than 4 long-tailed ducks, 4 scoters, or 4 eiders) within established sea duck hunting areas. This bag limit is in addition to the limits applying to other ducks during the regular duck season. In all other areas, sea ducks may be taken only during the regular open season for ducks and are part of the regular duck season daily bag (not to exceed 5 sea ducks (4 long-tailed ducks, 4 scoters, or 4 eiders) and possession limits.

Proposed Season Dates: Nov. 4 - Jan. 12

Daily Bag Limit: 5 (no more than 4 scoters, 4 long-tailed ducks, or 4 eiders) per day

YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNTING DAYS

Federal Framework: States may select two days per duck-hunting zone, designated as "Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days," in addition to their regular duck seasons. The days

must be held outside any regular duck season on a weekend, holiday, or other non-school day when youth hunters would have the maximum opportunity to participate. The days may be held up to 14 days before or after any regular duck season framework, within any split of a regular duck season, or within any other open season on migratory birds.

Proposed Season Dates: Nov. 4 and Feb. 10

Daily Bag and Possession Limits: The daily bag limit of ducks (including mergansers) is 6. The 6-duck limit shall consist of no more than 5 sea ducks (no more than 4 long-tailed ducks, 4 scoters, or 4 eiders), 4 mallards (max. 2 hen mallards), 3 wood ducks, 2 scaup, 1 pintail, 2 redheads, 2 hooded mergansers, 2 canvasbacks, 2 black ducks, 1 fulvous tree duck, and 1 mottled duck. All other species of ducks (except harlequin duck) may be taken up to the 6-duck limit. In addition, youth hunters may take 2 Canada geese, 2 brant, 25 light geese, and 15 coots. No open season for harlequin ducks and swans.

Any licensed hunter 16 years old or younger may participate during these one-day hunts. Youth of this age who are exempt from the Maryland hunting license requirements may also participate. Youth waterfowl hunters must possess a receipt showing they purchased a \$9 Maryland Migratory Game Bird Hunting Stamp. Youth hunters must be accompanied by an adult at least 21 years old that holds a valid Maryland hunting license or is exempt from the hunting license requirements. The accompanying adult may call waterfowl, assist with decoys, and retrieve downed birds but may not possess a hunting weapon.

ATLANTIC POPULATION CANADA GEESE

Federal Framework: AP Zone: A 50-day season may be held between November 15 and February 5, with a 2-bird daily bag limit. These seasons also include white-fronted geese. Unless specified otherwise, seasons may be split into two segments.

Proposed Season Dates: Nov. 18 - Nov. 24
Dec. 15 - Feb. 3

Bag Limit: 2 per day*

AP Zone: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Harford, Howard, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, St. Mary's, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties; and that portion of Carroll County east of Route 31 to the intersection of Route 97, and east of Route 97 to the Pennsylvania line; and that portion of Prince George's County east of Route 3 and Route 301; and that portion of Charles County east of Route 301 to the Virginia line.

AF RESIDENT POPULATION CANADA GEESE

Federal Framework: An 80-day season may be held between November 15 and March 10, with a 5-bird daily bag limit. The season may be split into 3 segments.

Proposed Season Dates: Nov. 18 - Nov. 24
Dec. 15 - Mar. 9

Daily Bag Limit: 5 per day*

RP Zone: Allegany, Frederick, Garrett, Montgomery, and Washington Counties; and that portion of Carroll County west of Route 31 to the intersection of Route 97, and west of Route 97

to the Pennsylvania line; and that portion of Prince George's County west of Route 3 and Route 301; and that portion of Charles County west of Route 301 to the Virginia line.

*Includes Canada geese, cackling geese, and white-fronted geese singly or in aggregate.

ATLANTIC BRANT

Federal Framework: States may select a 60-day season between the Saturday nearest September 24 (September 27) and January 31, with a 2-bird daily bag limit. States may split their seasons into two segments.

Proposed Season Dates: Nov. 8 - Nov. 24
Dec. 11 - Jan. 31

Daily Bag Limit: 2 per day

LIGHT GEESE

Federal Framework: States may select a 107-day season between October 1 and March 10, with a 25-bird daily bag limit and no possession limit. States may split their seasons into three segments.

Proposed Season Dates: Oct. 2 - Nov. 24
Dec. 11 - Feb. 3
Feb. 10

Daily Bag Limit: 25 per day** No possession limit.

**Includes greater and lesser snow geese and Ross's geese singly or in aggregate.

LIGHT GOOSE CONSERVATION ORDER

Federal Framework: The conservation order allows new methods of taking light geese, allows shooting hours for light geese to end one-half hour after sunset, and imposes no daily bag limits for light geese. Control activities may be conducted only when all waterfowl (including light goose) and crane hunting seasons, excluding falconry, are closed.

Proposed Season Dates: Nov. 27 - Dec. 9
Feb. 5 - Feb. 9
Feb. 12 - Apr. 14

Daily Bag Limit: No Limit, no possession limit

Hunt Area: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Harford, Howard, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, St. Mary's, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties; and that portion of Carroll County east of Route 31 to the intersection of Route 97, and east of Route 97 to the Pennsylvania line; that portion of Prince George's County east of Route 3 and Route 301;

and that portion of Charles County east of Route 301 to the Virginia line. The Special Sea Duck Zone is excluded from this hunt area.

Special Regulations during Light Goose Conservation Order Season:

(1) Participating hunters must possess a \$5 Snow Goose Conservation Order Hunting Season Permit while hunting light geese during this season; (2) Hunters may use shotguns capable of holding more than three shotshells; (3) Hunters may use electronic calls with recordings of light geese; and (4) Shooting hours are from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

Note: Shooting hours for regular waterfowl seasons are one-half hour before sunrise to sunset except for (1) Resident Canada geese during September seasons when shooting hours are from one-half hour before sunrise to one half hour after sunset, and (2) for light geese during the Light Goose Conservation Order Season when shooting hours are one-half hour before sunrise to one half hour after sunset. All season dates are inclusive. There is no possession limit for light geese; for all other waterfowl, the possession limit is three times the daily bag limit. In the Atlantic Flyway States of Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania, where Sunday hunting is prohibited statewide by State law, all Sundays are closed to all take of migratory waterfowl (including mergansers and coots).

MOURNING DOVE

Federal Framework: States may select a 90-day season between September 1 and January 15 with a 15-bird daily bag limit. States may split their seasons into three segments.

Proposed Season Dates: Sep. 1 - Oct. 14
 Oct. 26 - Nov. 18
 Dec. 16 - Jan. 6

Daily Bag Limit: 15 per day

KING AND CLAPPER RAIL

Federal Framework: States may select a 70-day season between September 1 and the last Sunday in January with a 10-bird daily bag limit. States may split their seasons into two segments.

Proposed Season Dates: Sep. 1 - Nov. 9

Daily Bag Limit: 10 per day (No more than 1 King Rail)

SORA AND VIRGINIA RAIL

Federal Framework: States may select a 70-day season between September 1 and the last Sunday in January with a 25-bird daily bag limit. States may split their seasons into two segments.

Proposed Season Dates: Sep. 1 - Nov. 9

Daily Bag Limit: 25 per day

COMMON SNIPE

Federal Framework: States may select a 107-day season between September 1 and January 31 with an 8-bird daily bag limit. States may split their seasons into two segments.

Proposed Season Dates: Sep. 26 - Nov. 24
Dec. 12 - Jan. 27

Daily Bag Limit: 8 per day

WOODCOCK

Federal Framework: States may select a 45-day season between October 1 and January 31 with a 3-bird daily bag limit. States may split their seasons into two segments.

Proposed Season Dates: Oct. 27 - Nov. 24
Jan. 12 - Jan. 27

Daily Bag Limit: 3 per day

For additional information on population status, regulations, where to hunt, and more go DNR Waterfowl Page at http://www.dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Hunt_Traps/waterfowl/index.asp.