

THE MARYLAND WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION
MINUTES – AUGUST 19, 2015

Chairman Gregor called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

Approval for the August 19, 2015 Meeting Agenda

- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Boyles Griffin moved to accept the August 19th Wildlife Advisory Commission Meeting Agenda.
 2. Commissioner Schroyer seconded.
 3. All in favor. Motion passed.

Approval for Minutes from July 29, 2015 Meeting

- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Weinberg moved to approve the July 29th meeting minutes as presented.
 2. Commissioner Schroyer seconded.
 3. All in favor. Motion passed.

Final Selections of 2015-2016 Late Waterfowl Seasons – Presentation given by Larry Hindman, Waterfowl Project Leader.

- Waterfowl Project Leader Larry Hindman provided a summary of the public comments related to the 2015-2016 Late Waterfowl Seasons and Bag Limits. **[ATTACHMENT A]**
- A document: “Final Selections of the Late Waterfowl Seasons and Bag Limits for 2015-2016” was handed out to the Commission. **[ATTACHMENT B]**
- There was general support for the 2015-2016 Late Waterfowl Seasons and Bag Limits, except for the individuals that wanted more restricted seasons due to the removal of strict liability for baiting cases.
- The Commission agreed to listen to all the waterfowl seasons and bag limits before voting.
- Waterfowl Project Leader Larry Hindman received information that there was no Atlantic brant production – no young brant were produced due to a late spring. Snow geese had good production; a large fall flight with abundant young is anticipated.
- Former Wildlife Advisory Commission member, Joe Lamp, addressed the Commission before the voting on the 2015-2016 Late Waterfowl Seasons.
 1. Dr. Lamp notified the Commission that he had received the Freedom of Information Act documents related to the strict liability issue. One of the documents came from NRP in opposition of SB 0088 and HB 0170 along with an explanation. This document never made it to the legislature. Dr. Lamp feels there are several changes that should be made to account for the loss of the strict liability provision: 1. Reduce the overall number of waterfowl hunting days by 20%; 2. Cut the daily bag limits for canvasbacks and scaup by half; 3. Request that Secretary Belton ask Governor Hogan for additional funding from General Funds to be allocated to NRP. This will allow NRP to have one helicopter and the personnel that were lost during a previous Administration.
 2. Commissioner Stephanie Boyles Griffin stated for the record that she is in opposition to the bag limits that were presented based on principle and not science because NRP did not have a voice on strict liability during the General Assembly.
 3. Commissioner Weinberg responded that he did not particularly like the fact DNR staff were not part of the process related to the strict liability discussion. DNR should have been part of

the process and DNR should have been heard by legislators. However, to respond to what occurred by disregarding the science and take our frustration out on law abiding hunters is not the right thing to do. DNR staff and USFWS have worked hard to match up the science and to interfere with process is equally wrong.

4. Commissioner Boyles Griffin added that she does not think NRP is trying to punish waterfowl hunters but is making these recommendations to try to minimize the impact that NRP thinks is going to happen. Commissioner Boyles Griffin explained again that she is simply supporting NRP's concerns.
 5. Commissioner Michael pointed out that this discussion will be reflected in the meeting minutes. Commissioner Michael added that he agreed with Commissioner Boyles Griffin sentiments, but adjusting bag limits may not be the correct approach. Commissioner Michael outlined that he would support a resolution that the Commission recognize that the Department did not communicate its concerns to the General Assembly members.
 6. Commissioner Michael suggested that the Commission should add this discussion under New Business.
 7. Commissioner Weinberg replied to Commissioner Michael that there is not enough evidence that a gag order was put in place related to SB 88 and HB 0170.
 8. Commissioner Michael pointed out that he understands that but the bottom line is that this discussion about NRP not being allowed to testify should be a separate discussion from the seasons and bag limits.
- Question and Answer Section:
 1. Commissioner Weinberg asked about Sunday hunting for waterfowl and if Sunday hunting for waterfowl was something that comes up every year.
 - a. Yes, comments about Sunday hunting for waterfowl are expressed every year. Maryland's law prohibits Sunday hunting for waterfowl. When the USFWS approved Sunday hunting for waterfowl, Sundays were included in the total length of the season, whether the state permitted Sunday hunting or not. Now, the USFWS allows for compensatory days for states without Sunday hunting so the total number of hunting days is not impacted. It is all Sundays or nothing with the USFWS. Since Maryland has no Sunday hunting for waterfowl, Maryland gets the compensatory days. If Maryland were to select one or two Sundays Maryland would lose the compensatory days, resulting in fewer hunting days overall.
 2. Commissioner Michael and Commissioner Boyles Griffin requested a copy of the document that Dr. Lamp discussed during his update to the Commission.
 - a. Dr. Lamp agreed to provide a copy of this document to the Commission.
 - Voting on waterfowl seasons and bag limits:
 1. Chairman Compton and Commissioner Gulbrandsen sent their proxy votes via emails in support of the 2015-2016 waterfowl seasons.
 2. Commissioner Michael moved to approve the Ducks, Coots, and Mergansers season and bag limits as recommended.
 - a. Commissioner Weinberg seconded.
 - b. Motion passed. Results: 5-yea and 1-no
 3. Commissioner Michael moved to accept the Sea Ducks seasons and bag limits as recommended.
 - a. Commissioner Weinberg seconded.
 - b. Motion passed. Results: 5-yea and 1-no
 4. Commissioner Michael moved to approve the Atlantic Population Canada Goose season and bag limits as recommended.
 - a. Commissioner Weinberg seconded.

- b. Motion passed. Results: 5-yea and 1-no
5. Commissioner Michael moved to approve the AF Resident Population Canada Goose season and bag limits as recommended.
 - a. Commissioner Weinberg seconded.
 - b. Motion passed. Results: 5-yea and 1-no
6. Commissioner Michael moved to approve Atlantic Brant season and bag limits as recommended, subject to further federal regulations.
 - a. Commissioner Weinberg seconded.
 - b. Motion passed. Results: 5-yea and 1-no
7. Commissioner Michael moved to approve the Light Goose season and bag limits as recommended.
 - a. Commissioner Weinberg seconded.
 - b. Motion passed. Results 5-yea and 1-no
8. Commissioner Michael moved to approve the Light Goose Conservation Order season and bag limits as recommended.
 - a. Commissioner Weinberg seconded.
 - b. Motion passed. Results: 5-yea and 1-no
9. Commissioner Michael moved to approve the Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days as recommended.
 - a. Commissioner Weinberg seconded.
 - b. Motion passed. Results: 5-yea and 1-no
- Associate Director Pete Jayne announced that Larry Hindman will be retiring so this is Mr. Hindman's last presentation to the Wildlife Advisory Commission. Waterfowl Project Leader Larry Hindman has presented this update to the Commission for 34 years. Mr. Hindman has set the bar high for WHS biologists and for the Atlantic Flyway. Mr. Hindman is known around the country for his expertise in managing waterfowl through science.
 1. The Commission thanked Larry Hindman for his service with DNR.

Maryland Farm Bureau (MFB) Update – Presented by Matt Tefteau, Government Relations Assistant Director of the Maryland Farm Bureau.

- Matthew Tefteau asked for the data on crop damage due to Canada geese for the last three years.
 1. Waterfowl Project Leader Larry Hindman agreed to gather the information and send it directly to Mr. Tefteau.
- Commissioner Michael requested farm bureau provide crop damage data for all species along with information about programs that are available for assistance. Commissioner Michael requested that this should be an agenda item for the Commission.
- Mr. Tefteau is starting deer management permit workshops for the agricultural community. Mr. Tefteau scheduled one of the workshops for November 2nd in Baltimore County. MFB will schedule more of these workshops in February and March when farmers have some down time. MFB noticed that there are many farmers in the agricultural community who are not using deer management permits.
- Mr. Tefteau asked if the Frederick County Shotgun/Rifle Zone regulation change has been sent to the Maryland Register.
 1. Yes, this regulation change was submitted to the Maryland Register.
- Commissioner Michael requested that deer management permit information be added to the Maryland Guide to Hunting and Trapping. Commissioner Michael expressed that he thinks the deer population is ecologically out of balance. The farmers and MFB recognized that. Commissioner Michael also indicated that he thinks there is tension between the farmers and the

recreational hunters in reference to deer management permit use. Therefore, there should be information in the hunting guide about deer management permits.

1. Maryland has a space limitation for the Maryland Guide to Hunting and Trapping.
2. Commissioner Schroyer outlined that most farmers do not purchase a hunting license; therefore; most farmers will not pick up a hunting guide.
3. Some of the shooters listed on crop damage permit are hunters. There is a huge overlap related to hunters and farmers in regards to the hunting program. Associate Director Jayne mentioned that he met with the Caroline County Farm Bureau and he provided the members some data about deer management. In fact, in Caroline County, 70% of the crop damage deer were taken during the deer hunting season, which is from September to the end of January.

Natural Resources Police (NRP) Update – No Report.

Old Business

- No old business.

New Business

- Removal of Strict Liability
 1. Commissioner Michael suggested that the Commission ensure that legislators have access to factual information and the Department's opinion on wildlife related bills. The Commission should want all facts put forward freely without suppression. The Department can only release information that is authorized by the Executive Branch, but the Commission is an independent body; therefore, can voice an opinion. Commissioner Michael indicated that he wanted his thoughts reflected in the meeting minutes. Commissioner Michael pointed out the Commission needs more information to form an opinion as to what happened during the passing of the strict liability bills. Again Commissioner Michael stated to Dr. Lamp that he wants to see the public information act documents on this issue.
 2. Commissioner Michael indicated separately that he does not think a reduction in the bag limits is the answer to the removal of strict liability.
 3. Associate Director Jayne pointed out that everything that Dr. Lamp outlined had to do with NRP and not the Wildlife and Heritage Service (WHS) so WHS is not in a position to comment on the issue. Every bill proposal goes up the chain of command; the Department may or may not take a position on a bill. If the Commission so desires and wants this to be an agenda item at a future meeting; it can be added as an agenda topic.
 4. Commissioner Weinberg recalled that Director Peditto explained that the WHS was not going to look into this any further and that the legislative process was completed. The Executive Branch decides who testifies and who does not testify for the Department.
 5. Commissioner Michael suggested a direction the Commission should go at this point. The Commission is now meeting in January during the Legislative Session. The Commission can inquire about the science on a hot issue, have a discussion and make a recommendation to the State House, if desired.
 6. Commissioner Weinberg supported Commissioner Michael's input. Commissioner Weinberg pointed out that the Commission has to select its battles carefully; it is too late to go to battle on something that has already passed. Commissioner Weinberg indicated that he preferred to go to battle about the allocation of funding resources for NRP and where NRP spends its time in the field.
 7. Commissioner Michael responded that he is not asking to revisit the removal of strict liability.
 8. Commissioner Weinberg emphasized that he has not seen enough information to support adding strict liability on the agenda for another meeting.

9. Commissioner Boyles Griffin commented that once Dr. Lamp has investigated whether he can release the information that he received through the Public Information Act, it may provide additional information for the Commission.
10. Commissioner Schroyer asked the Commission how we can prove that this is the consensus of NRP and not of just one or two officer's personal agenda. No response from the Commission.
11. Associate Director Pete Jayne explained WHS internal process for typical, hunting-related Bills: the biologists provide estimated harvest data and provide that information to Associate Director Glenn Therres. Associate Director Therres and Director Peditto work on the Agency Bill Report. The Agency Bill Report goes to the Department's Legislative staff and the Department's Legislative staff seeks input from other units within DNR. The Agency Bill Report is reviewed and approved by the Secretary of DNR and then it goes to the Governor's Office.
12. WHS will continue to bring Legislative Session Updates during the General Assembly to the Commission at the WAC meetings from January through April. Generally, WHS may track 30 or more bills that are wildlife related during the General Assembly.
13. There is a well-organized General Assembly website for researching bills, which is <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/webmga/frmlst.aspx?tab=home>. The January meeting is very close to the onset of the 2016 General Assembly. Associate Director Glenn Therres will be able to discuss bills that have been submitted by the January 20th WAC meeting. Unfortunately, the Department will not have all the bills that will be submitted to the General Assembly that are DNR related by the January 20th meeting.
14. Vice-Chair Gregor informed the Commission that Dr. Lamp reminded Vice-Chair Gregor that members of the Commission are able to testify on bills with DNR. Dr. Lamp added that they may also testify as a member of the Commission.

Public Comment Period

- No further public comment.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 A.M.

The next meeting will be held at 9:30 A.M. on Wednesday, October 21, 2015 in the Tawes State Office Building, C-1 Conference Room; Annapolis, Maryland.

Attendance

Members:	T. Gregor, S. Boyles Griffin, J. Michael, J. Schroyer, and R. Weinberg
Absent:	G. Fratz, E. Gulbrandsen, and L. Compton
Guest:	J. Lamp, and M. Tefteau
Staff:	L. Hindman, P. Jayne, and T. Spencer

Public Comment Record on Maryland's Proposed 2015-2016 Late Waterfowl Seasons

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) accepted public comment on these proposals through noon on August 17. They will be finalized in early September after DNR reviews citizen input and obtains approval from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

8/17/2015

Excellent job by DNR in listening to the majority of waterfowl hunters when setting the season dates and limits. I have always been in favor of less days in November with more days at the end of the seasons. - S. M.

8/15/2015

We wish to express our grave concerns about Governor Hogan's signing SB88/HB170 designed to remove the "Strict Liability" provision, the lack of transparency and availability of information, bag limits, and absence of a qualified wildlife biologist on the Wildlife Advisory Commission to overview and recommend policy on wildlife related issues for the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). We also urge that finance be restored for monitoring and surveillance equipment so that due diligence may prevail under the law on the matter of hunting waterfowl with bait and bag limits, especially for such species as canvasbacks and scaup with limits increased to two per day.

We respectfully submit the following recommendations for your consideration:

- reduce season days by 20%;
- halve the bag limits on canvasbacks and scaup;
- reduce the daily bag limit on Flyway Geese (not resident) from 2 birds a day to 1 bird a day;
- restore/allocate finance for monitoring to assure due diligence; and,
- appoint a qualified wildlife biologist to the Wildlife Advisory Commission

- Colin Rees, Acting Conservation Chair, Maryland Ornithological Society

8/15/2015

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed framework and bag limits. I only want to comment on the AP Canada goose season. I fully support your framework and bag limit for the AP season. I appreciate the slightly earlier opening in December and continued season into February. I personally believe that the shorter 7 day season in November is appropriate given that many years many, many birds have not even arrived in Maryland yet. Also, for our birds that do migrate here year after year this relieves some of the early pressure on them when they have not been joined by geese being "pushed" down the flyway.

I also want to express my personal appreciation for the goose management program from DNR. I have hunted on the shore since 1978, and when 1995 came along I never dreamed we would return to the quality of hunting Canada geese we have today. - P. G.

8/13/2015

I see you are continuing to have 2 special youth waterfowl hunting days this year, in response to a "national effort by USFWS and state wildlife agencies to increase participation in the rich tradition of waterfowl hunting." Why doesn't the DNR suggest to the legislature that youth be given the opportunity to hunt on Sundays. Allowing youth waterfowl hunting on Sundays would roughly double the number of opportunities they have during the season. During the regular season, youth generally are only permitted to hunt Saturdays as they are required to be in school during the week and they are prohibited from hunting on Sundays. If the Sunday hunting ban is a feature of state law, then you should encourage the legislature change the law so as to allow youth hunting on Sundays. - M. N.

8/13/2015

The comments made re SB88 are interesting, to say the least, and are clearly made by one or more proxies.

The law change simply affords the legal hunter the same privilege as any other law abiding citizen.

It puts Maryland law squarely in step with Federal Law.

It prevents arbitrary citations to law abiding citizens.

We all want the violators out of the field. Violators give all outdoor enthusiasts a bad name.

So let's not confuse the real issue here. - C. D.

8/13/2015

Season should be extended through Feb 13

I rather have a extended season than the early season when the birds have not come south during the early season. Thanks for your time. - B. M.

8/13/2015

I like the proposed season dates. I really enjoyed the few days we had available for geese last year in February. I rarely have good numbers of geese during the first split so I like that split being short.

The later the better for ducks! Take the season to the last available day allowed in the frameworks. - R. G.

8/13/2015

Do what some other states are doing and allow Sunday hunting and not allow hunting one day during the week. I think this will benefit alot of people since not everyone can take off during the week. - W. G.

8/13/2015

I fully support the proposed 2015-2016 Migratory Canada Goose, late resident goose, and light goose seasons. - C. T.

8/13/2015

First of all, the proposed Season Dates are about as good as can be set given all the restrictions under which we all have to live.

Secondly, since success has been achieved in extending the Canada Goose Season beyond the end of January with no deleterious effects, consideration should be given to petitioning for an adjustment to the Duck Season restrictions which would allow duck hunting to continue to the end of January EVERY year. When the calendar and the

restrictions conflict and the Duck Season has to close before the last of January (as in the recent past) it is not an optimal situation. Simple is better.

Third, I read with considerable dismay the comments of others, clearly misinformed or consciously pushing an agenda, who decry the passage of SB88. As a sportsman, I feel more comfortable going afield knowing that I am not considered automatically guilty, that guilt must be proven not assumed. SB 88 certainly did not legalize formerly illegal activity, it merely conformed Maryland Law to Federal Law. We have heard enough hysteria. I am eternally grateful to all those who made this possible.

Fourth, although it is not directly related to the regulations, but was brought up by other comments, the concept of Maryland DNR with its own helicopter is hilarious. One (1) aircraft for the State of Maryland? What for? It certainly can't enhance enforcement activities over a whole state. Just look at the dismal records from past "aerial enforcement efforts".

I believe if more funds can be secured for the DNR police, it should be devoted to more and better training. Let's get rid of the "old school" instructors and hangers on, and bring in the best investigative training available, the best tools of the trade. The record clearly shows that modern, innovative approaches are necessary to protect our Natural Resources.

Included in that training should be cooperation with Sportsmen not simply condemning Sportsmen. To copy a familiar refrain in this context, Sportsmen's Lives Matter, and that includes their reputations and livelihoods. Thanks for the opportunity. - N. W.

8/13/2015

I see you are continuing to have 2 special youth waterfowl hunting days this year, in response to a "national effort by USFWS and state wildlife agencies to increase participation in the rich tradition of waterfowl hunting." Why doesn't the DNR suggest to the legislature that youth be given the opportunity to hunt on Sundays. Allowing youth waterfowl hunting on Sundays would roughly double the number of opportunities they have during the season. During the regular season, youth generally are only permitted to hunt Saturdays as they are required to be in school during the week and they are prohibited from hunting on Sundays. If the Sunday hunting ban is a feature of state law, then you should encourage the legislature change the law so as to allow youth hunting on Sundays. - M. N.

8/12/2015

Please increase the protection of marylands waterfowl. there are alot of people that enjoy these beautiful animals. why are hunters allowed to decimate them for their bloodlust? there are as many people that want them protected as wanting to kill them. shame on hunters that kill our beautiful animal friends. - J. D.

8/12/2015

In past years, the duck migration hasn't reached Maryland until the end of the season. The last few days of the season finally hear up when hundreds of thousands of migratory ducks arrive in Maryland for the first time. I would make the suggestion to extend duck season a week longer and have both duck and goose close on February 3. - N. S.

8/12/2015

Would prefer to see the 3rd split run longer in Southern Maryland. Our big diver ducks seem to show up later.

Would like to see the Goose bag limit increased to 3.

Add Waterfowl hunting on Sundays. - C. P.

8/12/2015

I believe that Maryland does in fact have a rich waterfowling tradition. I would find it beneficial to upgrade the Canada goose bag limit to 3 within the A.P hunting zone. Also In southern Maryland many of the birds do not show up in large numbers till late January and february, for this reason I would like to see the third split shifted so that it may overlap a full week in february. Lastly I believe the duck bag limits are satisfactory how they are, and should be continued to be adjusted accordingly and proportionally to the annual count of each species within the Atlantic flyaway. - C. P.

8/12/2015

I am happy with this years proposed seasons & bag limits. However I would like to see the daily bag limit on geese raised to 3 per hunter. I would like to see maryland to allow sunday hunting like most other states. I would also like to see the third split extended at least one week into February. Thank you, B.M.P.

8/11/2015

The Current Situation and Professional Recommendations For Regulatory Change in Maryland's 2015-2016 Waterfowl Season E. Joseph Lamp, Ph.D., Commissioner – (1998-2012) - Wildlife Advisory Commission - Maryland Department of Natural Resources

Over the past year our Department of Natural Resources (DNR), our Maryland Natural Resources Police (NRP) and our waterfowl have been tossed directly under the Maryland political bus in what I believe is an unprecedented manner. The results, in my opinion, mandate that the department adjust its waterfowl regulatory recommendations to meet the new political landscape, now directly affecting NRP's severely reduced law enforcement capabilities. More specifically, our Natural Resources police officers' hands are now tied behind their backs, virtually incapable of making cases involving baiting and waterfowl like never before in the agency's contemporary history.

That scenario tosses salt into an already long festering wound, given our NRP have had no dedicated helicopter support for years, and now, no additional money-- \$400K listed -- for electronic surveillance equipment. A monetary amount listed in the "Fiscal Note" accompanying passage of SB88/HB170 to help offset the horrific loss of their much needed "Strict Liability" provision – but then not forthcoming as additional funding. Recall, the "Strict Liability" provision was one the NRP fought for when attacked in 2001, was allowed to keep, and they have continued to use ever since to insure proper management of our waterfowl resources.

The particulars of how and why these events took place within Maryland's political milieu are not pertinent in this "public comment." Only professional recommendations for remedy are critical. Here's the situation and professional recommendations for regulatory change to the 2015-2016 waterfowl season regulations.

Given the situation as it stands to date, I see no attempts by DNR waterfowl experts to address these radical changes in the law by modifying their recommendations for the upcoming waterfowl season. Nothing appears in place to deal with this or even monitor outcomes. Outcomes that may take years to reveal, and by then as it was in the 1990s, too late to fix without drastic measures being taken.

With these thoughts in mind, I bring forth professional recommendations based on my own consultations with those who are also clearly expert in this field. Unfortunately, for reasons beyond my control and the scope of this document, no names will be revealed. Instead, operating as the messenger, I must stand on my own credibility as a WAC member for 14 years who always told the truth as he understood it and could document it.

I respectfully request that our waterfowl biologists and the Wildlife Advisory Commission please give very serious consideration the following regulatory changes – and one essential additional request to help remedy this problem in the future.

1. Reduce the overall Maryland 2015-2016 waterfowl season days in the field by 20%.

2. Cut in half the daily bag limit for canvasback ducks and scaups.
3. Request that the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources immediately contact and ask Governor Larry Hogan to include additional funding for the Maryland Natural Resources Police from the Maryland General Fund in his next fiscal year's budget for one new helicopter, personnel and support funds to replace the helicopter and funding taken from them by the previous administration.

I thank you for your time and consideration.

8/11/2015

As a concerned Maryland voter, I want at the very least: The daily bag limits cut in half for these two "diving duck" species: canvasbacks, and scaup ducks. The total number of days allowed for hunting Maryland waterfowl cut by 20% for the upcoming season, given we have no idea of what the overall impact of this law may be.

And finally I want Governor Larry Hogan to include additional funding for the Maryland Natural Resources Police from the Maryland General Fund in his next fiscal year's budget for one new helicopter, personnel and support funds to replace the helicopter and funding taken from them by the previous administration. As of now, they have no helicopter dedicated to their agency. - V. P.

8/11/2015

Re: Bill SB88/HB170

I am shocked to hear that the MD Dept. of Natural Resources police were not allowed to testify before legislature or appear in uniform when Bill SB88/HB170: Natural Resources Game Birds - Baiting was being debated before the General Assembly... and has now passed. This is a bill preventing NRP police from citing hunters caught illegally hunting waterfowl with bait (unless hunters acknowledge to police that they knew they were doing so) ... i.e., rendering the police powerless to stop illegal hunting. The DNR and its police can't testify on bills pertaining directly to them? Sounds like another organized effort to strip police of their authority.

I won't go into the topic of how hunters lose everyone's respect when they use bait. I guess hunting is now all about entertainment and not about any authentic need ... sort of like what happened to Cecil the lion. Obviously, to these hunters, the lives of birds and animals simply don't matter. How sad.

Our majestic, intelligent geese ... which keep the same mate for their entire lifetime and are highly devoted to their families ... now subject to being shot by hunters baiting them? With no oversight by or ability to report to the NRP police with hope of any action? Killing geese results in their offspring never learning to migrate and thus becoming year-round resident geese. Geese learn this skill only from their parents. People often complain about resident geese. Resident geese are a direct result of hunting. Otherwise geese would be flying north for the summer. This legislative bill now compounds this problem.

On behalf of all of our waterfowl and animals subject to hunting:

1. Cut daily bag limits by at least half.
2. Cut total number of days for Maryland hunting by at least 25%.
3. Have limits on the number of licensed hunters allowed to hunt during any given season.
4. Provide Maryland Natural Resources Police with additional funding for at least one helicopter and other supportive funding (which had been removed from them by the prior administration).
5. Make baiting of all species of birds and animals illegal.
6. Give the NRP police authority to revoke hunting licenses for hunters caught hunting illegally including baiting.

- K. M.

8/11/2015

Waterfowl belong to ALL citizens, not just hunters. There are those of us who enjoy seeing them in their natural habitat alive. I would respectfully ask that at least:

- a. The "daily bag limits" cut in half for these two "diving duck" species: canvasbacks, and scaup ducks.
- b. The total number of days allowed for hunting Maryland waterfowl cut by 20% for the upcoming season, given we have no idea of what the overall impact of this law may be.
- c. Governor Larry Hogan to include additional funding for the Maryland Natural Resources Police from the Maryland General Fund in his next fiscal year's budget for one new helicopter, personnel and support funds to replace the helicopter and funding taken from them by the previous administration. As of now, they have no helicopter dedicated to their agency.

- V. G.

8/11/2015

I agree with these proposed Late Waterfowl Seasons and Bag Limits. We need to be smart and responsible. I think this will allow all to enjoy the privilege of hunting. Thank you for the opportunity to comment. - D. T.

8/11/2015

I believe the duck and goose season should both go from November 7-28. - T. B.

8/11/2015

Please protect our Waterfowl populations by imposing strict bag limits.- M. W.

8/10/2015

i would like to see the bag limit for black ducks be increased or include black ducks with mallard bag limit .i hunt in cambridge md and all i see are black ducks. the problem with including black ducks with mallards is the problem people have distinguishing between male and female black ducks. also it is difficult to determine between black ducks and mallard hens for a lot of folks. regardless i would like to see the bag limit for black ducks increased to 2 or more black ducks per day. - T. W.

8/10/2015

Increase the bag limit on geese, part of the season, like the last 2 weeks or something of that nature. Also extend the duck and goose season since it seems that more show up in MD. Later after the season is out. - J. C.

8/10/2015

Please give us as much time in January or even some time February as possible. thank you - B. D.

8/9/2015

Please have bag limits For two diving ducks - canvasback and scalp ducks. Please cut the number of hunting days for hunting waterfowl by 20 as we do not know what the impact of the new law will be. Please have Gov. Hogan issue funds for the DNR Police including a new helicopter and support. Thank you! - L. R.

8/9/2015

To counteract the legislation passed by the General Assembly in 2015 regarding the baiting of game birds, DNR must be given the tools to protect waterfowl. The fact that now the Natural Resources police cannot cite hunters caught

illegally baiting waterfowl gives no protection to the thousands of birds that will no doubt be killed over and above the "bag limit".

The only way to protect waterfowl, especially canvasbacks and scaup is to: 1) reduce the allowable hunting days for the season and 2) reduce the daily bag limits of these ducks by at least 50%.

It is my understanding that the NRP does not have the funding and adequate tools to effectively protect these "natural resources". I ask that funding be part of the protocol.

As a lifetime Marylander and an avid birder, I am thrilled to see any type of waterfowl. To have some species tinkering on an irreversible decline would be horrific. These animals are not there just for the pleasure of hunters. They exist in their own right. It is that and the thrill of seeing them that is so often left out of the equation.

We cannot question what we have done after the fact. Please protect rather than exploit! Thank you. - S. Y.

8/8/2015

Open waterfowl hunting on Sundays on all private and public lands. - G. R.

8/8/2015

hello everyone these late waterfowl regulations need to be changed. Let's look at the Canada geese population early bag limits are more then late that should be flipped do to the fact winters are getting colder and for the migration I was given a ballot to filled out for DNR of what birds I harvested I couldn't even fill it out cause I didn't harvest anything winters were so cold freezing up our water ways in all reality Canada geese should have a higher bag limit in late season and keep the season open till the end of February early March to let the water ways some what thaw back out again and one more thing I like to add I have seen more geese getting killed on our road ways then I ever have this year. thank you for your time hope you this comment is useful.

8/7/2015

I am in favor of a later waterfowl season. As a hunter pursuing waterfowl for the last 20 years migratory ducks typically do not show up in our area until historic season dates close. I have thought for a long time now that our season should be open later. I typically do not get excited to hunt around here until the last week of season. Thank you for listening. - C. D.

8/7/2015

Need a 3 goose limit in the AP zone. With the increase in the fee for the federal duck stamp, it is making it hard to justify all the extra cost to hunt waterfowl. - E. B.

8/7/2015

Could we have canada goose season mimic duck season instead of the three extra days in february. I dont know too many people who get ground hog day off to go hunting, but an extra saturday would be nice. - J. S.

8/7/2015

To Whom it May Concern: I believe that a very destructive, SB88/HB17, was erroneously passed this last session. So I am writing to ask that you, at the very least, cut the "daily bag limits" in half! If not for all waterfowl, than at least for these two "diving duck" species: canvasbacks, and scaup ducks.;

Also, that the total number of days allowed for hunting Maryland waterfowl be cut by 20% for the upcoming season. You have no idea of what the overall impact of this bad law may be on our waterfowl.

And lastly, that Governor Larry Hogan include additional funding for the Maryland Natural Resources Police from the Maryland General Fund in his next fiscal year's budget for one new helicopter, personnel and support funds to

replace the helicopter and funding taken from them by the previous administration. As of now, they have no helicopter dedicated to their agency.

I would also like to say that I find the use of the phrase ""rich tradition of waterfowl hunting"" insulting to many Marylanders. Hunting is NOT a rich tradition. Thank you, V. L.

8/7/2015

All of the season dates are perfect especially having the regular duck season end on the 30th of January instead of the week before like the past season. The only thing that needs to be thought over is opening the early teal season to all of Maryland instead of certain counties. If there is a reason to this, I would be happy to be informed by email. Thanks - T. W.

8/6/2015

I would like to see removing the 11-14/20-15 dates and moving them to 1-16/23-16 when some of the cold season ducks really do get to Maryland. Also move goose opener from 12-15-15 to 19th and let goose hunting on 1-16/23-16 or a week around 2-13/20-16 - C. B.

8/6/2015

I strongly support a longer season! Not only is it a Maryland tradition (we have the best waterfowl hunting in the world), but it would provide much needed revenue for the state from both local and out-of-state hunters. Also, opening up Sunday hunting would benefit the state too. - C. B.

8/6/2015

Same seasons as always will yield the same results for hunters in southern Maryland FRUSTRATION. Frustration as we hunt all season scratch out a few buffle heads, only to watch our blind sites fill with canvas backs and blackheads during the first two weeks of February. Find a way to let us hunt when the birds are here. - C. D.

8/6/2015

Southern Maryland has a great waterfowl tradition that is quickly disappearing due to the inability to hunt when our mass of waterfowl is actually in the location. The alignment to seasons actually being here when birds are here would be great to see.

Thank you, D. W.

8/4/2015

Good Afternoon DNR Staff, The regulations seem fairly constant from year to year, thanks for a few more days of duck season at the very end of the third split.

I do have a suggestion about the two youth waterfowl hunt days proposed. The one date in November seems OK, but the date in February has never really worked out well due to the cold winters we have experienced recently, the last 2 years we had no open water to hunt. I suggest a date in late September or early October be considered as an alternative. There will be geese & wood ducks in abundance, maybe even some teal & other early migrants. At that time of the year, they will be naive and therefore more available for novice hunters to have close encounters with. The safety concerns we have had about children & late season hunts in cold weather with possible cold water immersion just don't appeal to many of your potential hunters OR their parents. Thank you for your time & efforts. - G. A.



Larry Hogan, Governor
Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor
Mark J. Belton, Secretary
Mark L. Hoffman, Acting Deputy Secretary

RECOMMENDED MARYLAND LATE WATERFOWL SEASONS AND BAG LIMITS FOR 2015/16 HUNTING YEAR

YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNTING DAYS

Federal Framework: States may select 2 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, holidays, or other non-school days 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 frameworks or within any split of a regular duck season, or within any other open season on migratory birds.

Season Dates: Nov. 7 and Feb. 6

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 long-tailed ducks, 4 scoters, 4 mallards (max. 2 hen mallards), 3 wood ducks, 2 scaup, 2 pintails, 2 redheads, 2 hooded mergansers, 2 canvasback, 1 black duck, 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 in the Atlantic Population (AP) Zone, 5 Canada geese in the Resident Population (RP) Zone, 1 brant, 25 light geese, and 15 coots. No open season for harlequin ducks and swans.

Any licensed hunter 15 years old or younger may participate during these one-day hunts. Youth of this age who are exempt from 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.

DUCKS, COOTS, and MERGANSERS

Federal Framework: A 60 day season may be held between the Saturday nearest September 24 (September 26) and the last Sunday in January (January 31).

Season Dates Oct. 10 - Oct. 17
 Nov. 14 - Nov. 27
 Dec. 15 - Jan. 30

Black Duck

Nov. 14 - Nov. 27

Dec. 15 - Jan. 30

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 long-tailed ducks, 4 scoters, 4 mallards (max. 2 hen mallards), 3 wood ducks, 2 scaup, 2 pintails, 2 redheads, 2 hooded mergansers, 2 canvasback, 1 black duck (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.

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

Federal Frameworks: A 107-day season may be selected between September 15 and January 31 with a 7-bird daily bag limit (scoter, long-tailed duck, and eider) within established sea duck 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 4 scoters) and possession limits.

Season Dates: Oct. 3 - Jan. 30

Daily Bag Limit: 5 (no more than 4 scoters) per day

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.

Season Dates: Nov. 21- Nov. 27
Dec. 15 - Feb. 3

Bag Limit: 2 per day*

AP Zone: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Harford, Howard, Kent, Queen Annes, 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.

Season Dates: Nov. 21 - Nov. 27
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 30-day season between the Saturday nearest September 24 (September 27) and January 31, with a 1-bird daily bag limit. States may split their seasons into two segments.

Season Dates: Dec. 28 - Jan. 30

Daily Bag Limit: 1 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.

Season Dates: Oct. 3 - Nov. 27
Dec. 14 - Feb 6

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.

Season Dates: Nov 30. - Dec. 12
Feb. 8 - Apr. 16

Daily Bag Limit: No Limit, no possession limit

Hunt Area: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Harford, Howard, Kent, Queen Annes, 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 shot shells; (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 (3) 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).