Process for Selecting the 2021-2022 Migratory Game Bird Hunting Seasons

- Atlantic Flyway Council Meeting, Sept. 21-25, 2020. *(complete)*
- Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee reviews proposed seasons in early January. *(complete)*
- Wildlife Advisory Commission reviews proposed seasons in late January. *(complete)*
- Proposed seasons placed on MD DNR website and public comment period opens early in February. *(current step)*
- Wildlife Advisory Commission vote on season proposals in late March with final season selection due to USFWS, April 2021.
Adjustments to 2021-22 Regulatory Process

- Due to COVID, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and partners were unable to conduct normal survey and banding operations.

- As a result, direct observations of most waterfowl populations and/or habitat conditions were not available.

- Regulatory decisions were based upon modeled population estimates using the most recent biologic information.

- Please click HERE for more information on canceled surveys, resultant management strategies and the USFWS 2020 Status Report.
Duck Season Recommendation

• The optimal choice for the 2021-22 Atlantic Flyway duck season is the liberal regulatory alternative (60 days/6 bird daily bag with species restrictions).

• Please click HERE for the 2020 USFWS Migratory Game Bird Adaptive Harvest management report that provides more information on this specific process.
Duck Zones and Segments

- Maryland will have 2 duck zones (East and West) for 2021-22 hunting season. This is the first year states have had a 2 duck zones/three season segment option.

- This concept received positive review's during our last public comment period (February-March, 2020).

- Past USFWS options did not allow for 2 duck zones and 3 season segments.

- USFWS allows zones and segment options to be changed every 5 years.
Western Duck Zone

Eastern Duck Zone

Orange Line = Duck Zone Boundary
Status of Atlantic Population (AP) Canada Geese
• Breeding Pair Survey (mid-June)  
  - Not conducted due to COVID.

• Pre-season Banding  
  - Not conducted due to COVID.

• A model that is based on spring weather predicted a below average reproduction.
Satellite Views of Snow and Ice Cover on the Ungava Peninsula, Province of Quebec, Canada

May 30, 2020

May 31, 2019
AP Breeding Pairs

- = integrated population model prediction
Atlantic Population (AP) Canada Goose Management Decisions

- Atlantic Flyway Council (AFC) recommended remaining in the restrictive package (30 day season/1 bird per day) for the 2021-22 hunting season.

- The AFC further recommended a 30 day season and 1 bird bag limit for all states that have AP Canada Goose Hunt Zones.

- Other significant changes have been made to reduce AP Canada goose harvest in the Atlantic Flyway including a reduction in the daily bag limit for Canada’s AP hunt zones.
Proposed 2021-22 Migratory Game Bird Hunting Seasons

Next Steps

• DNR will collect public comment (from the online forum, email, mail, telephone, etc.) for review by the Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee and Wildlife Advisory Commission.

• Adjustments to seasons and bag limits will be considered at this time.

• Final season selections will be forwarded to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service by April 15.
Thank you for taking the time to review this presentation and we hope you use our online forum to provide comment on these hunting seasons proposals.