

MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR REGULATED SHOOTING AREA (R.S.A.) RELEASING FREE-FLYING MALLARD DUCKS

Note: this plan is only required for RSAs that release free-flying mallard ducks

If you have questions concerning the habitat management plan, please contact Donald Webster, Waterfowl Habitat Specialist at 410-221-8838 ex. 103.

Applicant Information

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

R.S.A. PERMIT NUMBER(if renewal) _____

R.S.A. NAME and LOCATION:(describe proximity to nearest city)

HABITAT MANAGEMENT (refer to attached guidelines, attach additional sheets if needed):

NUMBER OF MALLARDS RELEASED OR TO BE RELEASED IN 2015: _____

BROODING HABITAT:(describe areas for mallard ducklings prior to time they are capable of flight and steps taken to minimize disease).

Habitat Management for Free-Flying Mallards:

Adequate food in the form of unharvested grain crops must be available to feed free-flying mallards from Oct.15th-January31st. Grain crops should be planted to allow adequate access by feeding mallards. Crops planted in 30" rows are recommended. Guidelines are based on an average daily consumption of 4 oz. per duck.

1. Grain Sorghum--- 1 acre (avg. yield 50bu.) per 100 Mallards
2. Grain Corn--- .75 acres (avg. yield 80bu.) per 100 Mallards
3. Japanese Millet--- 1.75 acres (avg. yield 30bu.) per 100 Mallards
4. Rice--- .5 acre (avg. yield 5250lbs.) per 100 ducks
***Soybeans** are known to cause impaction and eventual death in waterfowl when consumed while dry. Also, submerged soybeans will lose 86% of their energy content after 90 days.

Freshwater Supply and Diseases:

The holding ponds for free-flying mallards must have ample freshwater to minimize risk of disease outbreaks to captive-reared mallards and wild waterfowl. A constant supply of freshwater and full pools are necessary to minimize the risk of disease outbreaks during the summer and fall months.

Water control structures should be installed in all ponds or impoundments supporting captive- reared waterfowl. Disease outbreaks may require complete removal of surface water to deter waterfowl use.

Avian Botulism is a common disease that affects waterfowl when water levels drop during summer months, whether induced by man or persistent drought conditions that expose mudflats, dying fish and other animal matter.

Any waterfowl and other wetland birds found sick or dead on the RSA must be recovered. All birds must be handled with gloves. Sick birds must be euthanized as humanely as possible. All euthanized birds or fresh carcasses should be placed in doubled plastic bags and kept on ice to be transported to a Maryland Department of Agriculture Animal Health Laboratory for determining cause of death. In the event the disease outbreak occurs during a holiday or weekend, birds should be kept on ice or refrigerated until they are transported to the laboratory.

All birds found should be tagged with the location, date and time collected, as well as the behavior associated with its death.

The RSA licensee or his agent should report the mortality as soon as possible to the Maryland DNR- Wildlife and Heritage Service at 410-221-8838. The DNR will provide additional instructions to minimize further mortality.

Following the submittal of fresh carcasses for diagnosis, the importance of prompt removal and disposal of carcasses as outbreaks occur cannot be overemphasized. Burning or burial of carcasses is an effective mechanism for removing the major sources of toxins and decreasing mortality.