

Agenda Item Summary

BACKGROUND

The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) has authority and responsibility for upland game bird management within the state. Upland game bird seasons are based on a framework approved by the Commission in 2009 and in effect from September 1, 2010 through August 31, 2015. Public comments were used in setting the final framework. The framework is renewed every 5 years based on internal recommendations and public comments.

In the U.S., preeminent authority and responsibility for migratory game bird management lies with the Secretary of the Interior and is derived from international treaties to which the U.S. Constitution specifies that only the Federal government can be signatory. Federal authority is legislated by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 and its amendments. Countries involved in bilateral migratory bird treaties with the U.S. include Canada, Mexico, Japan, and the Russian Commonwealth. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is the lead federal agency for migratory game bird management.

The USFWS actively cooperates with other countries and states in the management of migratory game birds. Management in the U.S. and Canada is coordinated through a Flyway concept. Flyways are administrative units that describe migration routes and distribution of migratory birds. Oregon is part of the Pacific Flyway.

Through various Flyway committees and Councils, states provide season recommendations to the USFWS annually. Federal frameworks (allowed days, bag limits, shooting time, etc.) are then proposed by a USFWS Regulations Committee, and then approved by the Secretary of the Interior; these frameworks provide guidance to states in selection of seasons. States cannot legally be more liberal than established frameworks but can be more conservative.

Federal frameworks for most migratory game bird species for the 2014-15 seasons were not available at the time this packet was prepared. A supplemental packet containing staff proposals for most migratory game bird seasons will be forthcoming during the last week of July.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

- Questions from interested persons, including the news media, were answered.
- Public meetings (23) to review staff preliminary proposals were held throughout the state during May 2014.
- Migratory game bird season proposals are sent to interested parties on an established email list.
- Selected local businesses were queried about their preference for opening season dates.
- Businesses in Lake, Klamath and Union Counties were queried about their preference for opening duck season dates.

ISSUE 1 **Recommendations for 2014-15 hunting regulations and seasons for game birds and crows.**

ANALYSIS As mentioned above, federal frameworks and recommendations for most migratory game bird species (ducks, geese, snipe, and coot) were not available when this packet was prepared. Overall, most seasons, limits and hunting regulations for other game birds and crows are unchanged from last year.

Also, staff will provide recommendations for regulation changes to allow additional game bird hunting opportunity within the Columbia River State Wildlife Refuge, to modify the hunter check-in system for waterfowl hunters with eastside waterfowl hunting reservations at Sauvie Island Wildlife Area, and to modify the area within the city limits of the City of Warrenton that is open for game bird hunting.

- OPTIONS** 1. Adopt staff recommendations
2. Amend staff recommendations

STAFF RECOMMENDATION Option 1.

ISSUE 2 **Recommendations for 2015-2020 Upland Game Bird Frameworks.**

ANALYSIS Staff will provide recommendations for the 2015-2020 Upland Game Bird Framework. The current Upland Game Bird Framework expires after the 2014-2015 season.

- OPTIONS** 1. Approve staff recommendations
2. Amend staff recommendations

STAFF RECOMMENDATION Option 1.

DRAFT MOTION Issue 1:
I move to amend OAR Chapter 635, Divisions 045, 051, 052, 053, 054, and 060 as proposed by staff to set regulations for 2014-2015 game bird seasons.
Issue 2:
I move to adopt as department policy the 2015-2020 Upland Game Bird Framework.

EFFECTIVE DATE Upon Filing