



AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission has authority and responsibility for upland game bird management within the state. Upland game bird seasons are based on a framework that is renewed every 5 years based on internal recommendations and public comments. A new Upland Game Bird Hunting Season Framework for September 1, 2020 – August 31, 2025 was approved in April 2020.

In the United States, 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 one of eleven states in 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 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.

OAR Division 008 establishes rules for department owned or managed lands. Proposed changes to Division 008 are intended to make the rules current and more consistent.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

- Questions from interested persons, including the news media, were answered.
- Migratory Game Bird Season proposals were sent in February 2021 to interested parties and an established email list.
- Proposed changes to the 2021-22 Game Bird Regulations were presented to the Oregon Hunters Association and National Wild Turkey Federation.

ISSUE 1

Proposals for 2021-22 hunting regulations and seasons for game birds and crows.

ANALYSIS

A summary of population status, past hunter effort and harvest, proposed season dates, bag and possession limits, and other regulations related to the 2021-22 game bird hunting seasons is included in Attachment 3. An overview of the proposed recommendations includes:

Fall Turkey Seasons

Staff proposes a special early opening of fall turkey season on September 1st in Wildlife Management Units 46 (Murderers Creek), 47 (Northside), 50 (Desolation), and “that area of Unit 48 (Heppner) south and east of the North Fork of the John Day River”. These units all intersect Grant County which has experienced serious and increasing wild turkey depredation issues on private land during the winter. This proposal would make fall wild turkey season concurrent with forest grouse seasons in the specified units and would create opportunity for archery hunters to harvest a fall turkey during their September big game hunts.

Sports Pac Turkey Tag Selection

Staff proposes beginning on December 1, 2021, hunters purchasing their 2022 Sports Pac will be issued a voucher to choose between a spring, western fall, or eastern fall turkey tag. The removal of fall turkey tag caps for the 2020-21 season makes this change possible. The benefits of this change are primarily customer satisfaction.

Sage-grouse Seasons

Season length and bag limit are proposed as defined in framework. Open areas and permit numbers for each Wildlife Management Unit (WMU) will be determined in mid-July and adopted by Temporary Rule after sage-grouse populations by WMU are estimated. Permit numbers are anticipated to be very conservative, similar to 2020.

Special and Youth Upland Game Hunting Opportunities

Staff proposals will outline dates and locations for pheasant hunting workshops and youth hunting opportunities.

Falconry Seasons

Proposals for falconry seasons are unchanged from last year.

Mourning Dove Seasons

Staff proposes establishing mourning dove season by two geographic zones and splitting the season into two periods in one of these zones.

Band-tailed Pigeon Season

Recommendations for band-tailed pigeon seasons are unchanged from last year.

Youth Waterfowl Season

Proposals for this season are unchanged from last year.

Veteran & Active Military Personnel Waterfowl Season

Proposals for this season are unchanged from last year.

Duck Seasons

Proposals for duck seasons are unchanged from last year.

Goose Seasons (including Brant Season)

Staff proposes the white goose bag limit increase to 20 per day, statewide, for all areas and days. Additionally, staff proposes establishing a late-winter hunt period for white and white-fronted geese in the Mid-Columbia Goose Zone.

Snipe and Coot Seasons

Proposals for snipe and coot seasons are unchanged from last year.

Crow Seasons

Proposals for the crow season are unchanged from last year.

Wildlife Area Hunt Programs

Staff proposes reserving the Mudhen Unit at Sauvie Island Wildlife on November 17 for a Department sponsored Learn to Waterfowl Hunt Workshop.

ISSUE 2

Clarify, make consistent, and revise language in OAR, Chapter 635, Division 008 rules covering Department of Fish and Wildlife Lands.

ANALYSIS

Division 008 covers the many large and small department owned or managed properties. For some department properties, proposed changes to Division 008 rule language has been added or revised to address new issues/conflicts or to make language consistent amongst similar properties.

OPTIONS

1. Adopt staff recommendations
2. Modify staff recommendations

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

1. Adopt staff recommendations

DRAFT MOTION

I move to amend OAR Chapter 635, Divisions 008, 045, 051, 052, 053, 054, and 060 as proposed by staff.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon filing