

# AGENDA

Board of Game and Inland Fisheries  
7870 Villa Park Drive  
Henrico, Virginia 23228

January 11, 2017  
9:00 am

Call to Order and Welcome, reading of the Mission Statement and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

1. Recognition of Employees and Others
2. Approval of the October 20, 2016 Board Meeting Minutes **Action**
3. Public Comments – Non Agenda Items
4. Committee Meeting Reports:

## **Wildlife, Boat, and Law Enforcement:**

- Overview of public scoping for the 2017-2018 Terrestrial Wildlife Regulation Review and Amendment Process - Dr. Gray Anderson
  - Staff Recommendations for 2017-2018 Migratory Waterfowl Regulations  
Dr. Gary Costanzo - **Action**
  - The Aquatic Wildlife Conservation Center and its role in restoring mussels within The Clinch and Powell Rivers – Dr. Mike Bednarski
5. Closed Session
  6. Director's Report
  7. Chairman's Report
  8. Additional Business/Comments
  9. Next meeting Date: Wednesday, February 22, 2017 @ 9:00 am
  10. Adjournment

Draft Board Meeting Minutes  
Board of Game and Inland Fisheries  
7870 Villa Park Drive  
Henrico, Virginia 23228

October 20, 2016  
9:00 am

**Present:** Mr. Bill Bolling, **Chairman**, Ms. Catherine Claiborne, **Vice Chairman**, Mr. Leon Boyd, Mr. Leon Turner, Mr. H. S. Caudill, Ms. Nicole Butterworth, Mr. Chuck Cunningham, Mr. Clayton Spruill, Ms. Esther Nizer; **Absent:** Mr. Watkins Abbitt, Mr. Douglas Dear; **Executive Director:** Mr. Robert W. "Bob" Duncan; **Senior Leadership Team:** Mr. Lee Walker, Mr. Gary Martel, Mr. Darin Moore, Mr. Tom Guess, Captain Clark Greene, Mr. Ryan Brown, Mr. David Whitehurst.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 9:00 am and welcomed everyone and noted for the record that a quorum was present for the meeting. Chairman Bill Bolling led the Pledge of Allegiance and Vice Chairwoman Ms. Catherine Claiborne read the mission statement. The Chairman announced there would be a closed session during the Board meeting.

**Recognition of Employees and Others:** Chairman Bill Bolling recognized and welcomed Ms. Esther Nizer as a new Board member and Mr. Douglas Dear, who was unable to attend the meeting and the re-appointment of Mr. Leon Boyd to the Board.

The Chairman called on the Director for recognitions.

The Director recognized Captain Clark Greene who presented the new 9<sup>th</sup> Basic Law Enforcement Academy to the Board.

The Director recognized Mr. Marty Farber from Legislative Services with a plaque for his retirement.

The Director called on Mr. David Whitehurst for recognitions. Mr. Whitehurst recognized:

- Aquatics Biologist of the Year – Brian Watson, Statewide Malacologist
- Terrestrial Biologist of the Year – Matt Knox, Deer Project Co-Leader
- West Point Boat Ramp Recognition – Ed Carr, Project Engineer
- New Employee in Bureau - Director of Aquatic Science & Policy – Dr. Michael Bednarski

**Approval of the August 18, 2016 Board Meeting Minutes:**

The minutes of the August 18, 2016 Board meeting have been distributed and posted to the website for review. The Chairman called for a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Cunningham made a motion to approve the August 18, 2016 Board minutes as submitted. It was seconded by Mr. Caudill. Ayes: Bolling, Claiborne, Turner, Boyd, Caudill, Butterworth, Cunningham, Spruill, Nizer.

**Public Comments – Non Agenda Items:** The Chairman called for Public comments for Non-Agenda items.

- Mr. Braxton G. Bell of Midlothian, VA spoke regarding Big Woods WMA
- Mr. Wilmer Stoneman of Richmond, VA spoke regarding Bear
- Delegate Scott Lingamfelter of Prince William, VA spoke regarding:
  - Duck Season
  - Tree Stand Harness
  - Feeding Deer in urban areas
  - Better management of Deer in National Forest
  - Hunter Safety Classes for Hunters who never had to take the course
  - Chamber Guard
  - Natural Resources Caucus

**Committee Meeting Reports:**

**Wildlife, Boat, and Law Enforcement Committee:**

The Chairman called on Ms. Butterworth for a report of the Wildlife, Boat, and Law Enforcement Committee meeting on October 19, 2016. Ms. Butterworth referred to Mr. David Whitehurst for a report of the Wildlife, Boat, and Law Enforcement Committee meeting on October 19, 2016.

Mr. Whitehurst reported that speakers attended the Wildlife, Boat and Law Enforcement Committee Meeting and spoke regarding the Spotsylvania County Lake Anna Boating Resolution.

Mr. Whitehurst reported that Mr. Matt Knox and Dr. Megan Kirchgessner gave a presentation on Historical perspectives and Emerging Issues on Deer Management and Mr. Ryan Brown had given an update on the Wildlife, Boat, and Law Enforcement Charter.

Captain Clark Greene gave a Law Update about the Compensation Plan, reported that Law Enforcement was given accreditation by NASBLA, that the 9<sup>th</sup> Law Enforcement Academy was in full swing, and the Major promotions interviews were coming up next week.

Mr. Whitehurst reported from the Bureau about the scoping period for Wildlife Regulation Review Period, Staff Hirings, Purchase of Westavelt Tract, Fish Hatchery Update, re-entry of the Mad Tom Fish, Timber sales, Trout Stocking, Statewide Boating Access, Fox Hound Training Season.

**Charter Update:** Mr. Ryan Brown gave a presentation to the Board on updating the Wildlife, Boat, and Law Enforcement Charter.

Ms. Butterworth made a motion, Mr. Chairman, I move that the Board endorse the Wildlife, Boat, & Law Enforcement Charter change. It was seconded by Mr. Boyd. Ayes: Bolling, Claiborne, Boyd, Turner, Caudill, Butterworth, Cunningham, Spruill, Nizer.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Whitehurst and Mr. Brown for their presentations and updates.

The Chairman called on the speakers who had attended the Board meeting on behalf of the Spotsylvania County, Lake Anna Boating Resolution.

- Mr. Andy Latham of Mechanicsville, VA spoke regarding the Spotsylvania County Resolution
- Mr. Jon Shields of Manassas, VA spoke regarding the Spotsylvania County Resolution
- Mr. Doug Smith of Louisa, VA spoke regarding the Spotsylvania County Resolution
- Mr. Brad Kirby of Orange, VA spoke regarding the Spotsylvania County Resolution
- Mr. Greg Cebula of Spotsylvania, VA spoke regarding the Spotsylvania County Resolution
- Ms. Ann Heidig of Bumpass, VA spoke regarding the Spotsylvania County Resolution
- Mr. John Liebsch of Mineral, VA spoke regarding the Spotsylvania County Resolution
- Mr. Allan Lassiter of Mineral, VA spoke regarding the Spotsylvania County Resolution

The Chairman thanked the group who had come to speak and explained the process would need to go through the Administrative Process Act before the Board could take any action.

**Finance, Planning, and Outreach Committee:**

The Chairman called on Ms. Catherine Claiborne to report on the September 27, 2016 Finance, Planning, and Outreach Committee. Ms. Claiborne reported that Mr. Darin Moore gave the FY 16 Year End Report, (July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016) and the FY 17 Budget to Actual (July 1, 2016 to Present). Ms. Claiborne reported they had Updates on the State and Federal Audits and that Mr. Moore had updated the committee on system changes and policy updates pertaining to Budgeting, Purchasing, Accounting, Grant Management and Time accounting with new systems, Cardinal, eVA, Bank of America/Works, and TAL.

Ms. Claiborne called on Mr. Darin Moore for a Go Outdoor Virginia Update and a Financial Status Update to the Board.

The Chairman thanked Ms. Claiborne and Mr. Moore for their updates.

**Education, Planning, and Outreach Committee:**

The Chairman called on Mr. Chuck Cunningham to report on the September 27, 2016 Education, Planning, and Outreach Committee. Mr. Cunningham reported that the Education, Planning, and Outreach Committee had met and Mr. Walker discussed the RBFF/DGIF Boat Registration Renewal Marketing Campaign and gave a Media Services Report. Mr. Chris Dunnivant presented the DGIF Vision, Mission and Goal Statement.

Mr. Cunningham called on Mr. Chris Dunnivant to give presentation on the DGIF Vision, Mission and Goal Statement to the Board and asked for a vote of Approval.

Mr. Cunningham made a motion, Mr. Chairman, I move that the board adopt the DGIF Vision, Mission and Goal Statement. Ms. Claiborne seconded the motion. Ayes: Bolling, Claiborne, Boyd, Turner, Caudill, Butterworth, Cunningham, Spruill, Nizer.

**Closed Session:** The Chairman called for a motion to move into Closed Session.

Ms. Nizer read the Closed Session Motion.

Closed Meeting Motion  
October 20, 2016

Mr. Chairman,

I move that the Board go into a closed meeting pursuant to Section 2.2-3711.A.3 of the Code of Virginia for discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publicly held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the Board, with respect to:

- (i) Real property located in Appomattox, Buchanan, Rockbridge, Spotsylvania, Roanoke, New Kent, Bath, James City, Carroll, Pittsylvania, Fluvanna, Accomack, Buckingham, King and Queen, Caroline, Culpeper, Wythe, and Sussex counties.

Secondly, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711.A.1 of the Code of Virginia for discussion or consideration of employment, assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries specifically regarding:

- (i) The performance of the Director.

This closed meeting will be attended only by members of the Board. However, pursuant to Section 2.2-3712(F), the Board requests counsel, the Department Director, the Deputy Director, the Legislative and Policy Manager, the Bureau Director, the Real Property Manager, and the Assistant Real Property Manager to also attend this meeting, as it believes their presence will reasonably aid the Board in its consideration of topics that are the subject of the meeting.

It was seconded by Ms. Claiborne. Ayes: Bolling, Claiborne, Boyd, Turner, Caudill, Butterworth, Cunningham, Spruill, Nizer

The Board went into Closed Session at 12:00 noon.

The Board reconvened at 2:00 pm.

The Chairman, Bill Bolling read the Certification of Closed Meeting

*Certification of Closed Meeting  
October 20, 2016*

*WHEREAS, the Board of Game and Inland Fisheries conducted a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and*

*WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712.D of the Code requires a certification by this Board that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law;*

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Game and Inland Fisheries hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the Board.*

It was seconded by Ms. Claiborne. Ayes: Bolling, Claiborne, Boyd, Turner, Caudill, Butterworth, Cunningham, Spruill, Nizer

The Board Secretary conducted the following voice roll call vote:

Ms. Claiborne	Mr. Boyd
Mr. Spruill	Mr. Caudill
Mr. Bolling	Mr. Cunningham
Ms. Butterworth	Ms. Nizer
Mr. Turner	

**Motions from the Closed Sessions:** The Chairman called on Ms. Claiborne to make three land motions from the Closed Session.

Mr. Chairman, I move that the Board authorize the Director to accept the gift of approximately 82.5 acres of land in Rockbridge County, Virginia and such acquisition by gift shall be according to applicable state procedures. It was seconded by Mr. Cunningham. Ayes: Bolling, Claiborne, Boyd , Turner, Caudill, Butterworth, Cunningham, Spruill, Nizer

Mr. Chairman, I move that the Board authorize the Director to proceed to acquire approximately 107 acres of land in Appomattox County, Virginia and such authorization shall be

according to applicable state procedures. It was seconded by Mr. Cunningham. Ayes: Bolling, Claiborne, Boyd, Turner, Caudill, Butterworth, Cunningham, Spruill, Nizer

Mr. Chairman, I move that the Board authorize the Director to proceed to acquire approximately 755.38 acres of land in Buchanan County, Virginia, and such authorization shall be according to state procedures. It was seconded by Mr. Cunningham. Ayes: Bolling, Claiborne, Boyd, Turner, Caudill, Butterworth, Cunningham, Spruill, Nizer

**Director's Report:** The Director reported on the following items:

- Monumental Mills Dam
- High Hazard Dams Update (Remote monitoring)
- Thanked staff for efforts in preparation of Hurricane Matthew
- Fitness Room update
- One Way Viewing Glass for protection of employees

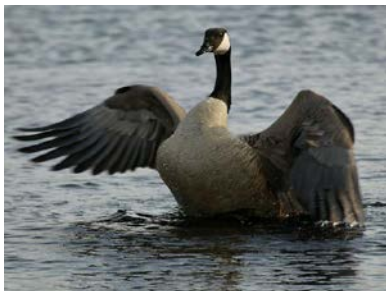
**Chairman's Report:** The Chairman asked for an additional Business or comments and announced the next Board meeting will be Wednesday, January 11, 2017 at 9:00 am and adjourned the meeting at 2:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Boswell  
/s/

# VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND INLAND FISHERIES

## 2017-2018 MIGRATORY GAME BIRD HUNTING SEASONS – FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS AND STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS



Prepared by Bureau of Wildlife Resources  
January 2017



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND INLAND FISHERIES

PRELIMINARY FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS, AND STAFF PROPOSALS FOR 2017-18  
MIGRATORY GAMEBIRD HUNTING SEASONS

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# Doves

## Mourning Dove Background Information and Population Status

There are three dove management units (or flyways) across the country, including the Eastern (EMU), Central (CMU) and Western (WMU) Management Units. Virginia is in the EMU.

- Population trends in the EMU based on the Breeding Bird Survey (BBS):  
10-yr (2006-2015): stable population trend.  
Long term (1966-2015): increasing trend.
- Dove Banding Study – Annual program (since 2003) to leg-band over 500 doves annually in VA, and nearly 33,000 nationwide. Data provides estimates of movements, survival and harvest rates that are used to develop hunting regulations.
- Harvest Strategy: A new Harvest Strategy adopted in 2014 allowed an increase from 70 to 90 days of hunting for doves in the Standard Regulatory Package. Daily bag limit remains at 15 birds (increased from 12 in 2009).
- Data from HIP (past 3-yr avg.): Hunters = 16,600 Harvest = 213,900

## Recent Seasons

<u>Year</u>	<u>Season Dates (all 70 days until extended to 90 days in 2014-15)</u>		
2016-2017	Sept. 3 – Oct. 30	Nov. 19 – Nov. 27	Dec. 24 – Jan. 15
2015-2016	Sept. 5 – Nov. 1	Nov. 21 – Nov. 29	Dec. 24 – Jan. 15
2014-2015	Sept. 1 – Oct. 31	Nov. 22 – Nov. 30	Dec. 27 – Jan. 15
2013-2014	Sept. 2 – Oct. 14	Oct. 19 – Nov. 2	Dec. 31 – Jan. 11
2012-2013	Sept. 1 – Oct. 13	Oct. 17 – Oct. 27	Dec. 28 – Jan. 12
2011-2012	Sept. 3 – Oct. 10	Oct. 25 – Nov. 5	Dec. 26 - Jan. 14
2010-2011	Sept. 4 – Oct. 11	Oct. 20 – Nov. 6	Dec. 27 – Jan. 8
2009-2010	Sept. 5 - 26	Oct. 7 – Nov. 7	Dec. 25 – Jan. 9
2008-2009	Sept. 1 - 27	Oct. 4 – Oct. 31	Dec. 27 – Jan. 10
2007-2008	Sept. 1 – 29	Oct. 5 – Oct 27	Dec. 26 – Jan. 12
2006-2007	Sept. 2 – 23	Oct. 7 – Nov. 4	Dec. 28 – Jan. 15
2005-2006	Sept. 3 – 24	Oct. 8 – Nov. 5	Dec. 27 – Jan. 14
2004-2005	Sept. 4 – 25	Oct. 9 – Nov. 6	Dec. 28 – Jan. 15
2003-2004	Sept. 1 – 27	Oct. 8 – Nov. 8	Dec. 31 – Jan. 10
2002-2003	Sept. 2- 28	Oct. 9 – Nov. 9	Jan. 1 – Jan. 11
2001-2002	Sept. 1 - 29	Oct 13 – Nov. 10	Dec. 29 – Jan. 9
2000-2001	Sept. 2 – 30	Oct 7 – Nov. 4	Dec. 30 – Jan. 10
1999-2000	Sept. 4 – 25	Oct. 2 – Nov. 6	Dec. 25 – Jan. 5
1998-1999	Sept. 5 - 26	Oct. 3 – Nov. 3	Dec. 25 – Jan. 9
1997-1998	Sept. 1 – 27	Oct. 4 – Nov. 1	Dec. 24 – Jan. 6
1996-1997	Sept. 2 - 28	Oct. 4 - Nov. 2	Dec. 23 - Jan. 4
1995-1996	Sept. 2 - 30	Oct. 2 - Oct. 31	Dec. 23 - Jan. 2
1994-1995	Sept. 3 - 30	Oct. 1 - Oct. 29	Dec. 26 - Jan. 7

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## DOVE

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### **FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS**

**OUTSIDE DATES:** September 1, 2017 - January 15, 2018  
Hunting dates may run consecutively or be split into no more than three (3) segments.

**SEASON LENGTH:** Not more than 90 days.

**BAG LIMIT:** 15 daily and 45 in possession. Daily bag limit can be composed of mourning doves and white-winged doves, singly or in combination

**SHOOTING HOURS:** Between ½ hour before sunrise and sunset daily (State may select ½ day shooting in any segment).

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**SEASON DATES:** September 2 - October 29 (58 days)  
November 22 - November 30 ( 9 days)  
December 23 - January 14 (23 days)

**SHOOTING HOURS:** September 2 – September 8 Noon until sunset  
September 9 – October 29 ½ hr before sunrise to sunset.  
November 22 - November 30 ½ hr before sunrise to sunset.  
December 23 - January 14 ½ hr before sunrise to sunset.

**BAG LIMIT:** 15 daily and 45 in possession. Composed of mourning doves and white-winged doves, singly or in combination

# Rails

## Background Information and Population Status

- **Harvest** – Comprised predominantly of clapper rails (85%), some sora (14%), and small number of Virginia rails taken. Clappers are mostly local VA birds, some are migrants from NJ, NY, and other salt marsh areas.
- **Nesting** - Clapper rails nest from May through June, with re-nesting in July/August. Late nesting rails have broods that do not reach flight stage until August or September. This occurs in years when 1<sup>st</sup> nests are flooded by spring storms/tides and re-nests contribute significantly to production. Therefore, we generally wait until the second week of September to open the rail hunting season. The key to setting the season is to bracket the greatest number of high tides possible.
- **Harvest Data** - Avg. No. hunters = 490, Avg. Harvest = 4,300 (HIP, past 10-yr avg.)

## Past Seasons

<u>Year</u>	<u>Season Dates (all 70 days)</u>	
2016	Sept. 10 - Nov. 18	
2015	Sept. 8 - Nov. 16	
2014	Sept. 8 – Nov. 16	
2013	Sept. 7 - 28	Sept. 30 – Nov. 16
2012	Sept. 8 – 29	Oct. 1 – Nov. 17
2011	Sept. 10 – Oct. 1	Oct. 3 – Nov. 19
2010	Sept. 8 – Oct. 2	Oct. 4 – Nov. 17
2009	Sept. 8 – Oct. 3	Oct. 5 – Nov. 17
2008	Sept. 10 – Nov. 18	
2007	Sept. 10 – Nov. 17	
2006	Sept. 8 – Nov. 16	
2005	Sept. 12 – Nov. 19	
2004	Sept. 13 – Nov. 20	
2003	Sept. 10 – Nov. 18	
2002	Sept. 9 - Nov. 16	
2001	Sept. 11 – Nov. 19	
2000	Sept. 13 – Oct. 2	Oct. 11 – Nov. 29
1999	Sept. 10 – Oct. 12	Oct. 22 – Nov. 27
1998	Sept. 9 – Oct. 24	Nov. 2 – Nov. 25
1997	Sept. 15 - 27	Oct. 8 - Dec. 3
1996	Sept. 16 – Oct. 17	Oct. 24 - Nov. 30
1995	Sept. 11 – Oct. 14	Oct. 21 – Nov.25

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## **RAILS (Clapper, King, Sora, Virginia)**

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### **FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS**

**OUTSIDE DATES:** September 1, 2017 - January 31, 2018

**SEASON LENGTH:** 70 days, straight or 2 segments.

**BAG LIMIT:** Clapper/King 15 daily, 45 possession  
Sora/Virginia 25 daily, 75 possession

**SHOOTING HOURS:** ½ hour before sunrise until sunset daily

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**SEASON DATES:** September 9 - November 17 (70 days)

**BAG LIMIT:** Clapper/King: 15 - counted together daily, 45 poss.  
Sora/Virginia: 25 - counted together daily, 75 poss.

**SHOOTING HOURS:** ½ hour before sunrise until sunset

**NOTES:** - This recommendation provides 30 days of 3-ft or greater lunar tides.  
- Non-Toxic shot is required for Rail and Snipe hunting in Virginia.

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# GALLINULE AND MOORHEN

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## **FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS**

**OUTSIDE DATES:** September 1, 2017 - January 31, 2018

**SEASON LENGTH:** 70 days, straight or 2 segments.

**BAG LIMIT:** 15 daily, 45 in possession (singly or in the aggregate)

**SHOOTING HOURS:** ½ hour before sunrise until sunset daily

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**SEASON DATES:** September 9 – November 17 (70 days).

**BAG LIMIT:** 15 daily, 45 in possession (singly or in the aggregate)

**SHOOTING HOURS:** ½ hour before sunrise until sunset

# Woodcock

## Background Information and Population Status

- Harvest Strategy revised in 2011, established 3 regulatory options (Liberal, Moderate and Restrictive). Annual regulation based on the 3-year mean of the singing ground survey index. For 2017-18, Harvest Strategy calls for Moderate Regulation (45 days/3 birds).
- Singing-ground survey (SGS) in Eastern Management Region:
  - 1 year trend (2015-2016): no change.
  - 10 year trend (2007-2016): no significant trend.
  - Long-term (1966-2016): 0.93 % decline per year.
- The 2015 recruitment index for the U.S. portion of the Eastern Region (1.38 jv/ad female) was 7.3% below the 2014 index and 15.4% below than the long-term index.
- Research suggests that hunting has little effect on population trend, but habitat is limiting.
- In Virginia, season split into two segments to provide some opportunity for early hunting in western areas, and later hunting in central and eastern areas.  
Avg. No. hunters = 1,430 Avg. Harvest = 2,337 (HIP, past 10-year avg.)

### Recent Seasons (bag limit has been 3 birds)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Season Dates</u>		<u>Days</u>
2016-2017	Oct. 29 – Nov. 4	Dec. 9 – Jan. 15	45
2015-2016	Nov. 23 – Dec. 5	Dec. 15 – Jan. 15	45
2014-2015	Nov. 24 – Dec. 6	Dec. 15 – Jan. 15	45
2013-2014	Oct. 26 – Nov. 1	Dec. 5 – Jan. 11	45
2012-2013	Oct. 27 – Nov. 2	Dec. 6 – Jan. 12	45
2011-2012	Oct. 29 – Nov. 12	Dec. 16 – Jan. 14	45
2010-2011	Oct. 30 - Nov. 13	Dec. 27 – Jan. 10	30
2009-2010	Nov. 7 – 21	Dec. 26 – Jan. 9	30
2008-2009	Nov. 8 – 22	Dec. 20 – Jan 3	30
2007-2008	Oct. 27 – Nov. 10	Dec. 22 – Jan. 5	30
2006-2007	Nov. 4 – 18	Dec. 23 – Jan. 6	30
2005-2006	Nov. 12 – 26	Dec.17 – Dec 31	30
2004-2005	Oct. 30 – Nov. 13	Dec.18 – Jan. 1	30
2003-2004	Nov. 1 – 15	Dec. 20 – Jan. 3	30
2002-2003	Nov. 2 – 16	Dec. 21 - Jan. 4	30
2001-2002	Nov. 3 - 17	Dec. 22 - Jan. 5	30
2000-2001	Nov. 4 - 18	Dec. 23 - Jan. 6	30
1999-2000	Oct. 30 - Nov. 13	Dec. 18 - Jan. 1	30
1998-1999	Oct. 31 - Nov. 14	Dec. 19 - Jan. 2	30
1997-1998	Nov. 1 - Nov. 15	Dec. 20 - Jan. 3	30
1996-1997	Oct. 28 - Nov. 23	Dec. 18 - Jan. 4	45
1995-1996	Oct. 30 - Nov. 25	Dec. 20 - Jan. 6	45

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# WOODCOCK

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## FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

OUTSIDE DATES: October 1, 2017 - January 31, 2018

SEASON LENGTH: 45 days, straight or 2 segments.

BAG LIMIT: 3 daily, 9 in possession.

SHOOTING HOURS: ½ hour before sunrise until sunset daily.

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

SEASON DATES: November 20 – December 8 (19 days)  
December 20 – January 14 (26 days)

BAG LIMIT: 3 daily, 9 in possession

SHOOTING HOURS: ½ hour before sunrise until sunset



# **Snipe**

## **Background Information**

- Season generally set to overlap duck season. There are relatively few snipe hunters in VA and most snipe are taken opportunistically by other migratory bird hunters.
- Harvest Data (HIP, past 10-yr avg.): No. hunters = 470, Harvest = 810

## **Recent Seasons**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Season Dates (all 107 days)</u>	
2016-2017	Oct. 7 – Oct. 10	Oct. 21 – Jan. 31
2015-2016	Oct. 9 – Oct. 12	Oct. 21 – Jan. 31
2014-2015	Oct. 10 – Oct. 13	Oct. 21 – Jan. 31
2013-2014	Oct. 10 – Oct. 14	Oct. 22 – Jan. 31
2012-2013	Oct. 4 – Oct. 8	Oct. 22 - Jan. 31
2011-2012	Oct. 6 – Oct. 10	Oct. 22 – Jan. 31
2010-2011	Oct. 7 – Oct. 11	Oct. 22 – Jan. 31
2009-2010	Oct. 8 – Oct. 12	Oct. 21 – Jan. 30
2008-2009	Oct. 9 – Oct. 13	Oct. 22 – Jan.31
2007-2008	Oct 4 – Oct. 8	Oct. 22 – Jan. 31
2006-2007	Oct 4 – Oct. 9	Oct. 23 – Jan. 31
2005-2006	Oct 5 – Oct.10	Oct. 24 – Jan. 31
2004-2005	Oct 7 – Oct 11	Oct. 22 – Jan. 31
2003-2004	Oct. 8 – Oct 11	Oct. 21 – Jan. 31
2002-2003	Oct 9 – Oct 12	Oct. 21 – Jan. 31
2001-2002	Oct. 10 - Oct. 13	Oct. 22 - Jan. 31
2000-2001	Oct. 11 - Oct. 14	Oct. 21 - Jan. 31
1999-2000	Oct. 6 - Oct. 9	Oct. 21 - Jan. 31
1998-1999	Oct. 7 - Oct. 10	Oct. 20 - Jan. 30
1997-1998	Oct. 8 - Oct. 11	Oct. 21 - Jan. 31
1996-1997	Oct. 9 - Oct. 12	Oct. 21 - Jan. 31
1995-1996	Oct. 11 - Oct. 14	Oct. 21 - Jan. 31

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# SNIPE

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## **FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS**

OUTSIDE DATES: September 1, 2017 - January 31, 2018

SEASON LENGTH: 107 days, straight or 2 segments

BAG LIMIT: 8 daily, 24 possession

SHOOTING HOURS: ½ hour before sunrise until sunset

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

SEASON DATES: October 6 - October 9 (4 days)  
October 21 - January 31 (103 days)

BAG LIMIT: 8 daily, 24 in possession

SHOOTING HOURS: ½ hour before sunrise until sunset

## SEPTEMBER TEAL SEASON FACT SHEET

- Special teal seasons were initiated in late 1960's to provide harvest opportunities on blue-winged and green-winged teal. These seasons were discontinued in the 1980's due to drought and a decline in teal numbers.
- Habitat conditions and teal populations improved in the late 1990's and special teal seasons were reinstated in 1999. When the blue-winged teal breeding population (BPOP) is above 3.3 million, a 9-day season can be offered. If the BPOP exceeds 4.7 million, a 16-day season can be offered.
- Blue-winged teal are one of the earliest migrants. Many pass through Virginia from late August through October, prior to the opening of the late duck season.
- Green-winged teal are also early migrants and arrive in September and October. Some Green-wings remain through the winter depending on weather conditions.
- Virginia has held a special September teal season since 1999 (see dates listed below). The season was initially held only in the area east of I-95 because there are greater numbers of teal in the coastal plain. Even in the coastal plain, there are not large numbers of teal, and the harvest has been relatively small. The season was expanded in 2011 to provide some teal hunting opportunity in the area west of I-95.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Season Dates</u> <u>East of I-95</u>	<u>Season Dates</u> <u>West of I-95</u>
2016	Sept. 17 – 30	Sept. 21 - 30
2015	Sept. 17 – 30	Sept. 21 - 30
2014	Sept. 17 – 30	Sept. 22 - 30
2013	Sept. 16 – 30	Sept. 23 - 30
2012	Sept. 17 – 29	Sept. 24 - 29
2011	Sept. 19 – 30	Sept. 26 - 30
2010	Sept. 20 – 30	na
2009	Sept. 21 – 30	na
2008	Sept. 20 – 30	na
2007	Sept. 17 – 26	na
2006	Sept. 15 – 25	na
2005	Sept. 16 – 24	na
2004	Sept. 16 – 25	na
2003	Sept. 13 – 23	na
2002	Sept. 14 – 24	na
2001	Sept. 15 – 25	na
2000	Sept. 14 – 23	na
1999	Sept. 16 – 25	na

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Average Annual Harvest: 867 teal

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# SEPTEMBER TEAL SEASON

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## **FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS**

**OUTSIDE DATES:** September 1 – September 30, 2017

**SEASON LENGTH:** Up to 16 days

**BAG LIMIT:** 6 daily, 18 in possession (Blue-winged and Green-winged teal only)

**SHOOTING HOURS:** ½ hour before sunrise to sunset

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**SEASON DATES:** September 16 – September 30 (15 days)  
**HUNT AREA:** East of I – 95

September 21 – September 30 (10 days)  
**HUNT AREA:** West of I – 95

**BAG LIMIT:** 6 daily, 18 in possession (Blue-winged and Green-winged teal only).

**SHOOTING HOURS:** ½ hour before sunrise to sunset

## **FACT SHEET - Waterfowl Hunters and Harvests - 2017**

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- Liberal duck seasons (60 days, 6 bird bag limit) and resident goose seasons have resulted in high waterfowl harvests in Virginia during the past ten years. Harvest has averaged ~136,600 ducks and ~51,100 geese from 2011 - 2015, compared to 114,770 ducks and 25,000 geese during the 1990's. The long season length and liberal bags offer greater opportunity and a greater cumulative harvest over the course of the season.
- Waterfowl hunter numbers in Virginia have been generally stable since the late 1990's. Since 1999, the Harvest Information Program (HIP) has been used to estimate hunter effort and harvest. The average number of duck and goose hunters over the past 3 years, as measured by HIP, was 16,100 and 12,700 respectively.
- Milder conditions during the majority of the 2015-2016 season were not conducive to extensive waterfowl migration and subsequently waterfowl harvest. These conditions kept waterfowl dispersed and often hard to hunt.
- The total estimated duck harvest in 2015-2016 in Virginia (119,300) was 16% below the previous year (141,300) and 13% below the past 5-year average (136,600).
- The Canada goose harvest in Virginia in 2015-16 (40,000) decreased 12% from last year and was 22% below the past 5-year average (51,100).
- During the 2015-2016 season, mallards were the most commonly harvested duck in Virginia. Mallard, bufflehead, gadwall, wood duck and American black duck compromise the top 5 harvested species. The mallard harvest in Virginia in 2015-16 (37,200) decreased by 10% from 2014-2015, but was 8% higher than the past 5-year average (34,400).

## FACT SHEET - The Status of Ducks - 2017

**Mid-Continent Areas:** Annual precipitation is the most important factor influencing the quantity and quality of nesting and brood rearing habitat for prairie-nesting birds. The number of ponds counted during the USFWS May breeding waterfowl survey is an index used for assessing waterfowl nesting conditions. Habitat conditions were not as good as last year due to below-average winter and spring precipitation across most of the prairie pothole region. The 2016 May pond count (5.0 million) was 21% below last year's count (6.3 million), but similar to the long-term average (5.2 million).

The total duck breeding population (BPOP) estimate for the mid-continent area this year is 48.4 million ducks, similar to last year's estimate of 49.5 million ducks and 38% higher than the long-term average (1955-2015). The Breeding population estimates (BPOP), along with the percent change from last year and the long-term average, are presented below for the 10 most common species.

Species	2016 BPOP	% Change from 2015	% Change from Long-Term Avg.
<b>Mallard</b>	11.8 million	+1%	+51%
<b>Blue-winged Teal</b>	6.7 million	-22%	+34%
<b>Green-winged Teal</b>	4.3 million	+5%	+104%
<b>Gadwall</b>	3.7 million	-3%	+90%
<b>Northern Shoveler</b>	3.9 million	-10%	+56%
<b>Northern Pintail</b>	2.6 million	-14%	-34%
<b>American Wigeon</b>	3.4 million	+12%	+31%
<b>Redhead</b>	1.3 million	+8%	+82%
<b>Scaup</b>	5.0 million	+14%	0%
<b>Canvasback</b>	736,000	-3%	+26%
<b>Total Ducks</b>	48.4 million	-2%	+38%

**Eastern Breeding Areas:** Habitat conditions throughout the eastern breeding area were generally improved compared to 2015, with most areas experiencing sufficient rainfall but minimal flooding. Spring phenology was early in the southern regions of the eastern breeding area, but delayed in northern regions. Habitat conditions ranged from excellent to fair.

- Breeding population estimates for the 6 most common species surveyed were almost the same or greater than last year and all except Green-winged teal and Goldeneye rose to meet or exceed their past ten-year averages. Black ducks (612,000) were 13% higher than last year's estimate and similar to the long-term average (618,000). Other abundant species counted in the eastern survey area were Mallards (409,000), Ring-necked ducks (578,000), and Goldeneyes (363,000).

**Virginia:** Habitat conditions in Virginia during the spring of 2016 were good. Significant spring precipitation filled many wetlands and provided good nesting habitat. Cooler spring temperatures may have delayed some nest initiation and may have inhibited some re-nesting efforts. Local duck and goose production is expected to be average to above average.

- The breeding pair estimate for Mallards (21,140) increased to 14% above the previous year's estimate. Wood duck breeding pair estimates (18,399) decreased from 2015 and were 24% below the previous year's estimate. Canada goose breeding pair estimates (41,871) remained very similar to the previous year's estimate.

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## YOUTH WATERFOWL DAY

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### **Guidelines for the proposed Youth Days include:**

1. States may select 2 days per duck-hunting zone, designated as "Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days," in addition to their regular duck seasons.
2. The 2 days (no longer required to be consecutive) must be held outside of any regular duck season on a weekend, holidays, or other non-school days when youth hunters would have the maximum opportunity to participate.
3. The days could be held up to 14 days before or after any regular duck season frameworks or within any split of a regular duck season.
4. The daily bag limit is the same as that allowed in the regular season and includes ducks, mergansers, coots, moorhens, gallinules, 2 Canada geese (except in Canada Goose Zones where the bag limit is higher), and 1 tundra swan (if the youth possesses a tundra swan permit). Flyway species restrictions remain in effect.
5. Youth hunters must be 15 years of age or younger. Youth 12 years of age and older will need a valid Virginia state hunting license.
6. A licensed adult at least 18 years of age or older must accompany the youth hunter into the field. This adult may not duck hunt, but may participate in other open seasons

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## DUCKS

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### **FEDERAL FRAMEWORK**

**Outside Dates:** September 23, 2017 - January 28, 2018

**Season Length:** 60 hunting days; plus 2 Youth Waterfowl Hunt Days, can be non-consecutive.

**Bag Limit:** Daily Bag limit of 6 ducks of any species except for the following restrictions: can include no more than 4 mallards (only 2 hens), 4 scoters, 4 long-tailed ducks and 4 eiders, 3 wood ducks, 2 scaup, 2 redheads, 2 canvasback, **2 black ducks, 1 pintail**, 1 mottled duck, 1 fulvous whistling duck,.  
Closed season on harlequin duck.  
The possession limit is three times the daily bag limit.

NOTE: There is an option to include mergansers in the general duck bag or leave them as a separate bag (see Merganser framework page 10). If included in the general duck bag, the restriction on 2 hooded mergansers would apply.

**Split Season Options:** 3-way split season, no zones

**Shooting Hours:** 1/2-hour before sunrise until sunset daily

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Season Length:** 60 hunting days; plus 2 Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day

**Season Dates:** October 6 - 9 (Black Duck closed) (4 days)  
November 15 – November 26 (12 days)  
December 16 – January 28 (44 days)  
(60 days)

October 21, February 3 - Youth Waterfowl Days

**Bag Limit:** Daily Bag limit: 6 ducks of any species except for the following restrictions: can include no more than 4 mallards (only 2 hens), 4 scoters, 4 long-tailed ducks and 4 eiders, 3 wood ducks, 2 scaup, 2 redheads, 2 canvasback, **2 black ducks, 1 pintail**, 1 mottled duck, 1 fulvous whistling duck,.  
Closed season on harlequin duck.  
The possession limit is three times the daily bag limit.

**Shooting Hours:** 1/2-hour before sunrise until sunset daily



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## **MERGANSER AND COOT**

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### **MERGANSER**

#### **FEDERAL FRAMEWORK**

##### **Option A**

**Season Length:** 60 hunting days  
**Outside Date:** September 23, 2017 - January 28, 2018  
**Bag Limit:** 5 birds daily, of which only 2 birds may be a hooded merganser (15 in possession, only 6 of which may be hooded mergansers)

##### **Option B**

To be included into the general duck bag. If included in the general duck bag, the restriction on 2 hooded mergansers would apply.

#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

##### **Option A**

**Season Dates:** To coincide with general duck season  
**Bag Limit:** 5 birds daily, of which only 2 birds may be a hooded merganser (15 in possession, only 6 of which may be hooded mergansers)

### **AMERICAN COOT**

#### **FEDERAL FRAMEWORK**

**Season Length:** 60 hunting days  
**Outside Date:** September 23, 2017 - January 28, 2018  
**Bag Limit:** 15 birds daily (45 in possession)

#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Season Dates:** To coincide with general duck season.  
**Bag Limit:** 15 daily (45 in possession)

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## **SPECIAL SEA DUCK SEASON IN SEA DUCK ZONE\***

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### **FEDERAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **SEA DUCKS (SCOTER, LONG-TAILED DUCK, AND EIDER)**

<u>Season Length:</u>	60 hunting days, run consecutively
<u>Outside Dates:</u>	September 15, 2017 - January 31, 2018
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	5 birds per day (15 in possession), may include no more than 4 scoters, 4 eiders or 4 long-tailed ducks.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

#### **SEA DUCKS (SCOTER, LONG-TAILED DUCK, AND EIDER)**

<u>Season Dates:</u>	November 10 – January 8 (60 days) In the Sea Duck Zone delineated below
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	5 birds per day (15 in possession), may include no more than 4 scoters, 4 eiders or 4 long-tailed ducks.

\* **Sea Duck Zone:** Those waters at a distance greater than 800 yards from any shore, island or emergent vegetation in the following area: the ocean waters of Virginia, the tidal waters of Northampton and Accomack Counties, and the Chesapeake Bay and each of its tributaries up to the first highway bridge. Back Bay and its tributaries are not included in the Sea Duck Zone.

**Note** - Sea ducks can be taken during the regular duck season (Oct. 6–9, Nov. 15–26 and Dec. 16 – Jan. 28) in areas outside the sea duck zone as specified in the regular duck season bag limits.

## **FACT SHEET - The Status of Resident Canada Geese - 2017**

- The resident Canada goose population increased significantly during the 1980's and 1990's. The population peaked at over 260,000 geese in the mid-late 1990's in Virginia and has been reduced by specific management programs since then. The current population estimate is 158,207 (+/- 30,000) in Virginia and over 1 million in the Atlantic Flyway.
- Special resident goose hunting seasons were initiated in 1993 to help manage this population and to provide opportunities for hunters. These seasons occur prior to the arrival of the first migrant geese (~Sept. 25 in Virginia), or in areas where there are fewer migrant geese. The Federal Framework allows Virginia to conduct a statewide September Resident Goose season from September 1-25.
- There are fewer migrant geese in the western portions of Virginia, and a special Resident Goose Hunt Zone has been established that allows more liberal seasons than in the migrant Canada goose zones.
- Special resident goose seasons have been very popular and are an effective tool for managing resident goose populations. These liberal hunting seasons have increased hunter participation and resident goose harvests. Harvest objectives are to maintain the statewide population at the current level.
- In areas where hunting is not feasible, other options including Airport, Agricultural, and Nest and Egg Depredation Orders have been implemented to help manage resident goose conflicts.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Population Estimate *</b>	<b>September Harvest</b>
2016	158,200 +/- 19%	na
2015	150,651 +/- 22%	6,100
2014	130,503 +/- 26%	7,500
2013	144,910 +/- 26%	10,700
2012	158,267 +/- 28%	9,700
2011	165,022 +/- 28%	14,700
2010	147,313 +/- 29%	15,600
2009	145,019 +/- 29%	16,800
2008	157,560 +/- 29%	17,500
2007	154,030 +/- 27%	13,600
2006	136,700 +/- 27%	11,100
2005	129,486 +/- 26%	10,100
2004	143,741 +/- 25%	17,000
2003	186,753 +/- 23%	14,800
2002	218,719 +/- 24%	14,300
2001	218,384 +/- 27%	11,800
2000	227,164 +/- 32%	10,800
1999	261,554 +/- 34%	11,400
1998	264,867 +/- 35%	12,200
1997	249,612 +/- 34%	10,500
1996	181,813 +/- 36%	10,000
1995	151,043 +/- 39%	5,500

\*3-year running average

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# SEPTEMBER CANADA GOOSE

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## FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

OUTSIDE DATES: September 1 – September 25, 2017

BAG LIMIT: 15 daily, 45 in possession

SHOOTING HOURS: ½ hour before sunrise to sunset (except as provided for in special hunting options \*)

\* SPECIAL HUNTING OPTIONS: Allows the use of electronic calls, unplugged shotguns and extended shooting hours (1/2 hr after sunset) when **no other** waterfowl seasons are open.

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

SEASON DATES: September 1 – September 25 (25 days)

BAG LIMIT: 10 daily, 30 in possession

HUNT AREA: Statewide

SHOOTING HOURS:

East of I-95

September 1 – 15: ½ hr before sunrise to ½ hr **after** sunset.

September 16 – 25: ½ hr before sunrise **to** sunset.

West of I-95

September 1– 20: ½ hr before sunrise to ½ hr **after** sunset.

September 21 - 25: ½ hr before sunrise **to** sunset.

NOTE: Staff is not recommending the options of using electronic calls or unplugged shotguns for hunting geese in the September season.

## FACT SHEET- The Status of Migrant Canada Geese - 2017

- Migrant Canada geese from the Atlantic Population declined significantly from 1985-1995. The hunting season was closed in 1995 to allow the population to recover. The population rebounded quickly and a limited hunting season (6 days with a 1-bird bag) was held in both 1999 and 2000.
- As the population increased, hunting regulations were liberalized. The season was extended to 30 days in 2001, and 45 days in 2002, and 50 days in 2012. The bag limit was increased to 2 per day in 2004 and has remain at 2/day since then.
- The breeding population estimate for 2016 (191,500) was 18% above the 2015 estimate.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NUMBER OF PAIRS</u>	
1988	118,031	
1993	91,307	
1994	40,086	
1995	29,302	(season closed)
1996	46,058	“ “
1997	63,216	“ “
1998	42,166	(season closed, incomplete survey)
1999	77,451	(season reopened, 6 days/1 bird)
2000	93,230	
2001	146,662	
2002	164,840	
2003	156,937	
2004	174,793	
2005	162,395	
2006	160,020	
2007	195,709	
2008	169,699	
2009	176,118	
2010	154,028	
2011	194,900	
2012	190,300	
2013	N/A	(survey not completed)
2014	191,234	
2015	161,302	

- Spring phenology was later than normal in central and northern Quebec resulting in below average habitat conditions. Production for 2016 is expected to be similar to or below that of 2015, and lower than the 10-yr average.

# **Canada Goose Populations and Hunt Zones**

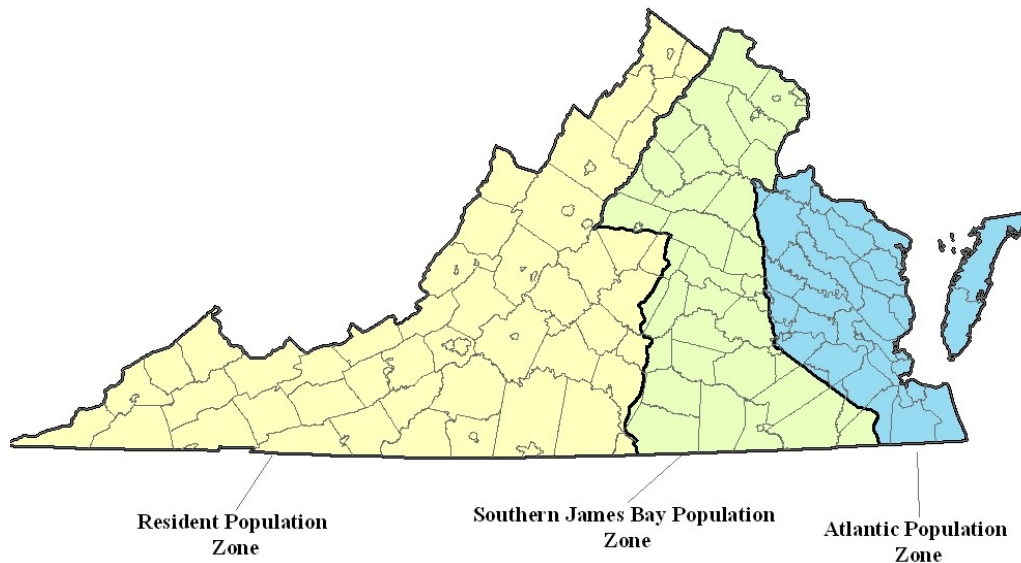
- There are 4 subpopulations of Canada geese in Virginia. These include the Atlantic Flyway Resident Population (RP) along with three migrant goose populations, the North Atlantic Population (NAP), the Southern James Bay Population (SJB), and the Atlantic Population (AP). The majority of our migrant geese (~82%) are from the AP, about 18% are from the SJB, and <1% are from the NAP.
- Recent research and banding analyses have enabled us to better delineate the distribution and migration corridors used by these different subpopulations, and to establish separate hunting zones based on the percentage of migrant geese in each zone. These zones include the:

**Atlantic Population (AP) Hunt Zone** – The area east of the Stafford/King George County line from the Potomac River south to the Rappahannock River, then west along the Stafford County line to Interstate 95, then south along I-95 to Route 460 in Petersburg, then southeast along Route 460 to Route 32 in the City of Suffolk, then south to the North Carolina border.

**Southern James Bay Population (SJB) Hunt Zone** – The area to the west of the AP Hunt Zone boundary and east of the following line: the “Blue Ridge” (Loudoun County-Clarke County line) at the West Virginia-Virginia Border, south to Interstate 64 (the Blue Ridge line follows county borders along the western edge of Loudoun-Fauquier-Rappahannock-Madison-Greene-Albemarle and into Nelson Counties), then east along Interstate Rt. 64 to Route 15, then south along Rt. 15 to the North Carolina line.

**Resident Population (RP) Hunt Zone** – The portion of the state west of the SJB Hunt Zone.

**Virginia's Canada Goose Hunt Zones**



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# CANADA GOOSE

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## FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

### ATLANTIC POPULATION ZONE (AP):

<u>Season Length:</u>	50 hunting days
<u>Outside Dates:</u>	November 15 – February 5
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	2 birds daily (6 in possession)

### SOUTHERN JAMES BAY POPULATION ZONE (SJBP)

<u>Outside Dates and Season Length:</u>	
<u>Regular Season:</u>	November 15 – January 14 (up to 40 hunting days)
<u>Extended Season:</u>	January 15 – February 15
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	3/day (9 in possession) through January 14 5/day (15 in possession), January 15 to February 15

### RESIDENT POPULATION ZONE (RP):

<u>Outside Dates:</u>	November 15 – March 10
<u>Season Length:</u>	80 hunting days
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	5 birds daily (15 in possession)

**NOTE** – All seasons also include White-fronted geese along with Canada geese.

## STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

### ATLANTIC POPULATION ZONE: (AP)

<u>Season Dates:</u>	November 15 – November 26 (12 days) December 25 – January 31 (38 days)
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	2 geese per day (6 in possession)
<u>Shooting Hours:</u>	1/2-hour before sunrise until sunset daily

### SOUTHERN JAMES BAY POPULATION ZONE (SJBP)

<u>Season Dates:</u>	
<u>Regular Season:</u>	November 15 – November 26 3/day (12 days) December 18 – January 14 3/day (28 days)
<u>Extended Season:</u>	January 15 - February 15 5/day (32 days)
<u>Shooting Hours:</u>	1/2-hour before sunrise until sunset daily

### RESIDENT POPULATION ZONE: (RP)

<u>Season Dates:</u>	November 15 – November 26 (12 days) December 16 - February 21 (68 days)
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	5 birds daily (15 in possession)
<u>Shooting Hours:</u>	1/2-hour before sunrise until sunset daily

**NOTE** – All seasons also include White-fronted geese along with Canada geese.

## **FACT SHEET - Status of Light Geese (Greater and Lesser Snow Geese, and Ross's Geese) - 2017**

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- The Greater Snow Goose population is monitored on spring staging areas near the St. Lawrence Valley in Quebec. The 2016 population estimate was 915,000 geese (+/- 11%), which is 12% higher than last year and similar to the long term average.
- The principal nesting areas for greater snow geese are on Bylot, Axel Heiberg, Ellesmere, and Baffin Islands, and on Greenland. These geese winter along the Atlantic Coast from New Jersey to North Carolina.
- Despite heavy snow pack resulting in late snow melt on the nesting areas this year, spring was relatively average overall. Snow geese arrived later on the nesting grounds than in the last few years. Nesting density and number of eggs per nest were both below average in 2016.
- Over the last 30 years, snow goose populations have increased almost ten-fold. A shift from feeding almost exclusively in marshes to feeding more on agricultural grains has allowed them to expand their range and habitat use. This shift has also allowed them to return to their breeding habitats in better physical condition, which has led to increased productivity.
- This population boom has resulted in ecological degradation on their breeding, migration and wintering areas. It has also led to conflicts with agricultural interest. Snow geese can cause damage to these habitats by pulling up plant roots and denuding marshes of vegetation.
- Current hunting regulations for snow geese are as liberal as Federal Frameworks will allow and include a 107-day season that runs from October to January, and a bag limit that was increased from 15 to 25 in 2010. Liberal seasons have helped increase the harvest, however, the population is still quite large and concerns remain about detrimental impacts these birds are having on breeding and wintering habitats.
- A Conservation Order (CO) hunting season was established in 2009, and authorizes the use of alternative management strategies (unplugged shotguns, electronic calls, shooting to ½ hour after sunset, no daily bag limit) to further increase the harvest of snow geese in the Atlantic Flyway. The number of hunters participating in this season in Virginia has averaged 213 per year and the harvest has averaged 557 snow geese per year, however, harvest and participation rates have gone down each year.



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# LIGHT GOOSE SEASONS

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## REGULAR LIGHT GOOSE SEASON

### FEDERAL FRAMEWORK

<b><u>Season Length:</u></b>	107 hunting days
<b><u>Outside Dates:</u></b>	October 1, 2017 - March 10, 2018
<b><u>Split Season Option:</u></b>	3-way split season
<b><u>Bag Limit:</u></b>	25 birds daily (no possession limit)

### STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

<b><u>Season Dates:</u></b>	October 17 – January 31	(107 days)
<b><u>Bag Limit:</u></b>	25 birds daily (no possession limit)	

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# LIGHT GOOSE CONSERVATION ORDER SEASON

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## **FEDERAL FRAMEWORK**

<b><u>Outside Dates:</u></b>	When no other waterfowl seasons are open
<b><u>Bag Limit:</u></b>	No daily or possession limit
<b><u>Special Hunting Methods:</u></b>	Electronic calls, unplugged shotguns and extended shooting hours to one-half hour after sunset <b>only in areas and at times when other waterfowl seasons are closed.</b>
<b><u>Special Requirements:</u></b>	States participating in the Conservation Order Season are required to monitor hunter participation, effort, and success.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**Conservation Order Season Zone:** The same as the AP Canada Goose Zone - The area east of the Stafford/King George County line from the Potomac River south to the Rappahannock River, then west along the Stafford County line to Interstate 95, then south along I-95 to Route 460 in Petersburg, then southeast along Route 460 to Route 32 in the City of Suffolk, then south to the North Carolina border.

<b><u>Season Dates:</u></b>	February 1 – April 5, 2018	(65 days)
<b><u>Bag Limit:</u></b>	No daily or possession limit	
<b><u>Special Hunting Methods:</u></b>	Electronic calls, unplugged shotguns and extended shooting hours to one-half hour after sunset.	
<b><u>Special Requirements:</u></b>	Hunters participating in the Conservation Order Season must register, keep a record of their harvest and participation, and return a harvest report form within two weeks following the close of the season.	

## **FACT SHEET - Status of Atlantic Brant and Tundra Swan - 2017**

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- **BRANT.** The main breeding areas for Atlantic Brant are in the Eastern Canadian Arctic on Baffin, Southampton, and Ellesmere Islands. Most brant winter along the Atlantic Coast from Massachusetts to North Carolina.
- Breeding habitat conditions were variable this year with good breeding success in some areas like Southampton Island, but not as good in other areas.
- The Mid-Winter Survey count of brant in the Atlantic Flyway last year (January 2016) (157,899) was 42% higher than the 2015 estimate. The high count was unexpected given that counts from recent years have been low, and production has been well below average the past four years. This high count led to liberalization in the brant hunting regulations in 2016-17.
- The federal brant hunting framework for 2017-18 has not been set yet, but will be based on the 2017 mid-winter count, which should be available near the end of January.
- **TUNDRA SWANS.** The Eastern Population of tundra swans nest in arctic tundra areas from Alaska, east to Hudson Bay and Baffin Island. These birds winter in coastal areas from Maryland to North Carolina. Productivity in 2016 was expected to be similar last year.
- There were 113,600 eastern population tundra swans counted on the 2016 Mid-Winter Survey, which was slightly lower than in 2015 but still above the long term-average. The three-year running average is 111,892 and above the threshold needed (110,000) to liberalize the season.
- Therefore a 25% increase in the number of permits will be allowed for the 2017-18 season. This will be the first change in the total number of hunting permits allowed in over 20 years.
- Eight states in the U.S. hunt tundra swans including Alaska, Utah, Montana and Nevada in the Pacific Flyway, North Dakota and South Dakota in the Central Flyway, and North Carolina and Virginia in the Atlantic Flyway.
- In the Atlantic Flyway, the allocation of hunt permits is split between the 2 states in approximate proportion to the number of swans in each state. Virginia winters ~6,000 swans. North Carolina winters ~70,000 swans (~65% of the population) and therefore is allowed a higher percentage of the swan hunting permits.
- For the 2017-18 hunting season, the number of permits available to hunters will increase 25% from 600 to 725 in Virginia, and from 5,000 to 6,250 in North Carolina.
- The tundra swan hunting season in Virginia is authorized and conducted as specified in the Atlantic Flyway Tundra Swan Management Plan and Hunt Plan, with limits and guidelines as specified under an MOU with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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# ATLANTIC BRANT

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## **FEDERAL FRAMEWORK**

<b><u>Season Length:</u></b>	<b>60 hunting days</b>
<b><u>Outside Dates:</u></b>	September 23, 2017 - January 31, 2018
<b><u>Split Season Option:</u></b>	2-way split season
<b><u>Bag Limit:</u></b>	<b>2 bird daily (6 in possession)</b>

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

<b><u>Season Dates:</u></b>	November 15– November 26	(12 days)
	December 16 - January 28	(44 days)
<b><u>Bag Limit:</u></b>	2 birds daily (6 in possession)	

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# TUNDRA SWAN

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## FEDERAL FRAMEWORK

<b><u>Season Length:</u></b>	90 hunting days
<b><u>Outside Dates:</u></b>	October 1, 2017 - January 31, 2018 State agency may issue up to <b><u>725 permits</u></b> in Virginia and must obtain harvest and hunter participation data. Each permittee is authorized to take one (1) tundra swan per season.
<b><u>Bag Limit:</u></b>	One per permittee per season

## STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

<b><u>Season Dates:</u></b>	November 15 - January 31 (78 days)
<b><u>Bag Limit:</u></b>	One per permittee per season
<b><u>Hunt Area:</u></b>	All counties and portions of counties east of U.S. Route I- 95 and south of the Prince William/Stafford county line in Chopawamsic Creek at Quantico Marine Corps Base.

**NOTE:** VDGIF will issue no more than **725 swan hunting permits** to holders of a valid Virginia hunting license. Only hunters with a valid 2017-2018 tundra swan hunting permit issued by VDGIF shall be authorized to hunt tundra swans. Each permittee will be authorized to take one tundra swan during the season. Swan hunting permits are non-transferable and are valid for use only by the person to whom issued. Permits must be in the immediate possession of the permittee while swan hunting. Immediately at the time and place of kill, successful hunters must cancel their swan-hunting permit by permanently recording the month and day of kill and by attaching it to the swan as instructed on the permit. The VDGIF is required to obtain hunter participation and harvest information to offer this Tundra Swan hunting season. Hunters are required to complete the accompanying tundra swan hunt questionnaire and return it to the address listed on the questionnaire at the end of the hunt. Those who fail to return a completed questionnaire by February 15, 2018 are ineligible for future drawings.

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# FALCONRY

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## FEDERAL FRAMEWORK

<b><u>Season Length:</u></b>	No more than 107 on any species (Gun and Falconry combined)
<b><u>Outside Dates:</u></b>	September 1 - March 10
<b><u>Bag Limit:</u></b>	3 daily (9 in possession)
<b><u>Hawking Hours:</u></b>	½ hour before sunrise until sunset.

## STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

<b><u>Dove:</u></b>	September 2 – October 29 November 22 – November 30 December 23 – January 31
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<b><u>Rail, Gallinule, Moorhen:</u></b>	September 9 – December 24
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<b><u>Woodcock:</u></b>	October 17 – January 31
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<b><u>Snipe:</u></b>	October 6 - 9 October 21 – January 31
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<b><u>Canada Goose:</u></b>	September 1 - September 25 November 15 – November 26 December 16 - February 21
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<b><u>September Teal:</u></b>	September 16 - September 30
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<b><u>Ducks, Mergansers, Coot:</u></b>	October 6- 9 November 15 – February 9
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<b><u>Brant and Snow Goose:</u></b>	October 17 – January 31
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**NOTE:** Recommended dates based on adoption of preceding gun season proposals; if amended, staff requests permission to calculate permissible dates for each species within the allowable federal framework.

## Calendar 2017-2018

### September 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

### December 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

### October 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

### January 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

### November 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

### February 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			

