

Teleconference/Virtual

AGENDA

Board of Wildlife Resources
Wildlife and Boat Committee
7870 Villa Park Drive
Henrico, Virginia 23228

January 20, 2021
10:00 am

Committee Members: Ms. Catherine Claiborne, Chair, Mr. Leon Boyd, Mr. Frank Adams, Ms. Karen Terwilliger, Alternate and Mr. Tom Sadler, Alternate

DWR Staff Liaisons: Dr. Gray Anderson and Dr. Mike Bednarski

1. Call to Order and Welcome
Ms. Catherine Claiborne

This meeting is proceeding under Item 4-0.01, subsection G of the Appropriation Act and section 2.2-3708.2 of the Code of Virginia. It is being held by electronic communication, as the COVID-19 virus has made a physical meeting of the Committee impracticable. This emergency imposed by COVID-19 is observed by Executive Orders 51, 53, and 55 issued by the Governor of Virginia. The Committee's actions today shall be solely limited to those matters included on the agenda; there is no public comment on non-agenda items. All of these proposed actions are statutorily required or necessary to continue operations and discharge lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities of the Board.

(Call on Frances Boswell for a Roll Call Vote of board members present)

2. Approval of October 7, 2020 Committee Meeting Minutes ***Final Action***
Ms. Catherine Claiborne
(Call on Frances Boswell for a Roll Call Vote for approval of minutes)

3. Public Comment – Non Agenda Item
Ms. Catherine Claiborne
4. 2021-22 Wildlife Regulations Public Scoping Process
Dr. Gray Anderson
5. 2021-2022 Proposed Migratory Bird Harvest Regulations ***Action***
Dr. Gary Constanzo
(Call on Frances Boswell for a Roll Call Vote for Migratory Birds)
6. Hatchery System Update
Mr. Brendan Delbos
7. Wildlife Division Update
Dr. Gray Anderson
8. Fish Division Update
Dr. Mike Bednarski
9. Director’s Report
Mr. Ryan Brown
10. Chairman’s Report
Ms. Catherine Claiborne
11. Next Meeting Date: TBD
Ms. Catherine Claiborne
11. Additional Business/Comments
Ms. Catherine Claiborne
12. Adjournment
Ms. Catherine Claiborne

DRAFT Meeting Minutes
Wildlife and Boat Committee
Board of Wildlife Resources
7870 Villa Park Drive – Board Room
Henrico, VA 23228

October 7, 2020
10:00 am

Present: Ms. Catherine Claiborne, **Chair**; Mr. Leon Boyd, Mr. Frank Adams, Ms. Karen Terwilliger, Alternate, Mr. Tom Sadler, Alternate. **Board Members** in attendance: Mr. Brian Vincent, Mr. G. W. Washington; **Executive Director:** Mr. Ryan J. Brown; **Director's Working Group:** Mr. Gary Martel, Mr. Lee Walker, Mr. Darin Moore, Dr. Gray Anderson, Dr. Mike Bednarski, Mr. Tom Guess, Ms. Paige Pearson, Major Scott Naff.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:00 am and noted for the record that a Quorum was present for today's meeting.

The Chair read the meeting procedure, This meeting is proceeding under Item 4-0.01, subsection G of the Appropriation Act and section 2.2-3708.2 of the Code of Virginia. It is being held by electronic communication, as the COVID-19 virus has made a physical meeting of the Committee impracticable. This emergency imposed by COVID-19 is observed by Executive Orders 51, 53, and 55 issued by the Governor of Virginia. The Committee's actions today shall be solely limited to those matters included on the agenda; there is no public comment on non-agenda items. All of these proposed actions are statutorily required or necessary to continue operations and discharge lawful purposes, duties and responsibilities of the Board.

The Chair called on the Board secretary for a Roll Call vote of Board members present: Ms. Catherine Claiborne, Mr. Leon Boyd, Mr. Frank Adams, Ms. Karen Terwilliger, Mr. Tom Sadler, Mr. Brian Vincent, and Mr. G. K. Washington.

Approval of the January 22, 2020 Committee Meeting Minutes:

The Chair called for a motion to approve the January 22, 2020 Wildlife and Boat Committee meeting minutes. Mr. Boyd made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 22, 2020 Committee meeting. Mr. Adams seconded the motion.

The Board secretary called a Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Claiborne, Adams, Boyd

The Chair called on Mr. Gray Anderson for an Update.

Dr. Anderson presented the 2021-22 Wildlife Regulations Suggested Schedule

After comments and questions, the Chair thanked Dr. Anderson for his update.

Boat Ramp Fee Update: The Chair called on Dr. Gray Anderson for an Update

Dr. Anderson gave an update on the Boat Ramp Fee.

After comments and questions, the Chair thanked Dr. Anderson for his update.

The Chair called for a motion. Mr. Boyd made a motion, Ms. Chair, I move that the Board of Wildlife Resources approve for advertisement to the public the amendments to 4VAC15-20-66 regarding the expansion of facilities types where the department may charge a fee as presented by staff. It was seconded by Mr. Adams.

The Board secretary called a roll call vote. Ayes: Claiborne, Boyd, Adams

Camping on WMA Regulation Update: The Chair called on Dr. Gray Anderson for an Update.

Dr. Anderson gave an update on Camping on the Departments WMA's.

After comments and questions, the Chair thanked Dr. Anderson for his update.

The Chair called for a motion. Mr. Boyd made a motion, Ms. Chair, I move that the Board of Wildlife Resources approve for advertisement to the public the new regulation proposed as 4VAC15-20-155 Camping on Wildlife Management Areas (WMA's) and other DWR-owned or managed lands as presented by staff. It was seconded by Mr. Adams.

The Board secretary called a roll call vote. Ayes: Claiborne, Adams, Boyd

Alabama Bass: The Chair called on Dr. Mike Bednarski for a presentation.

Dr. Bednarski gave a presentation on Virginia's Alabama Bass Strategy.

After comments and questions, the Chair thanked Dr. Bednarski for his presentation.

Wildlife Division Update: The Chair called on Dr. Gray Anderson for an update.

Dr. Anderson reported:

- Becky Gwynn gave an update on Wildlife's Role in "Restore the Wild"
- Cale Godfrey reported on Wildlife's Role on the Elk Program

Fish Division Update: The Chair called on Dr. Mike Bednarski for an update.

Dr. Bednarski reported:

- Comment period due to close in time for the 10/22/20 board meeting on Wildlife Aquatics
- Trout stocking began on 10/1/20 and Urban Trout Stocking will begin in November
- Excellent participation in the Governor Fishing Challenge that included 300 participants
- AWCC Update on the Monkey Face Mussel

Director's Report: The Chair called on Executive Director Ryan Brown for a report.

- HRBT Project Planning for the next Nesting season
- Migratory Bird Regulation Stakeholder process
- Reported the Successful Opening Seasons Numbers:

Youth/Apprentice Deer Hunter Weekend (September 26-27, 2020)

Weather was favorable

In the past, favorable weather resulted in a harvest of 2,300-2,400 deer

Electronic harvest this year was 2,733 (Saturday -1,739; Sunday – 994)

Early 3-Day Bear Firearms Season (September 28-30, 2020)

Weather was a touch warm and humid, but favorable for hunting

Electronic harvest was 293 bears (146 males, 147 females)

Last year, electronic harvest was 218 bears, which represented 51% of the harvest over these 3 days

We anticipate the % of bears checked in over the electronic systems increased from last year, but we can't provide an estimate of that increase until final harvest figures have been tabulated at the end of the hunting seasons.

Opening Weekend Statewide Archery Season (October 3-4, 2020)

Electronic Deer Harvest – 4,142 deer

Electronic Bear Harvest – 145

Chair's Report: The Chair thanked everyone for attending the Wildlife and Boat Committee meeting and thanked staff for their presentations. The Chair asked if anyone had any further comments or questions, hearing none, she announced that next meeting will be determined and adjourned the meeting at 11:52 pm

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Frances Boswell

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Boswell

/s/

2021-22 WILDLIFE REGULATION REVIEW AND AMENDMENT PROCESS

Public Scoping Period Comment Summary



CONSERVE. CONNECT. PROTECT.

2021-22 Wildlife Regulation Process

Oct 12 – Dec 11, 2020 -- Public Scoping Period: public comments solicited via web-based input forms, staffs contact constituent groups and/or individuals to assess regulatory concerns

January 20 & 21, 2021 – Wildlife & Boat Committee/DWR Board Meetings: preliminary review of issues, solicit Board regulatory concepts

Dec 14, 2020 – February 2021: Staff committees review input, analyze data, and consult with constituent groups and individual stakeholders to develop proposal-stage regulation amendment recommendations

March 18, 2021 – DWR Board Meeting: Staffs present proposal-stage recommendations to the Board, public comments accepted on staff recommendations and additional recommendations, Board deliberates and proposes regulation amendments (*Wildlife & Boat Committee meeting date – TBD*)

March 26 – May 10, 2021: Regulation Proposal Comment Period: public input is solicited on the Board's proposed regulation amendments

May 27, 2021 – DWR Board Meeting: Staffs present final recommendations to the Board, public comments accepted on proposed amendments, Board deliberates and votes on proposed regulation amendments (*Wildlife & Boat Committee meeting date – TBD*)

August 1, 2021: Effective date for regulations amendments adopted by the Board



Outreach

DWR Homepage: featured in *Notes from the Field* section

***Notes from the Field* Newsletter:** distributed to >225,000 individuals

Email: distributed to 793 individuals interested in providing input to DWR



Public Comments

Comment Forms

Categorized by species – included “Other” category for non-species issues

Requested specific information on desired regulatory change

Individual Comment Forms Received – 1,722

Online submissions: 1,562

Email/hand-written submissions: 160

Number of Comments Contained Within Comment Forms – 2,038



PUBLIC COMMENTS

GENERAL SUMMARY BY INDIVIDUAL SPECIES CATEGORIES

DEER

Topics pro/con on hunting with dogs, increase antlerless harvest, expanding firearms season, timing of archery and muzzleloading seasons, reducing the buck bag limit, and desire for antler point restrictions were most common themes

BEAR

Expansion of the harvest seasons, increasing the bag limit/allowing take of a 2nd bear, increasing training season, combining the bear and deer/turkey licenses, increased opportunities for youth to harvest a bear were popular topics

TURKEY/GROUSE

Increasing seasons and more overlap with deer seasons suggested for fall hunting; Spring season comments focused on an earlier season and allowing all-day hunting; balanced feedback on increasing vs. reducing the bag limit

ELK

Establishing an elk hunt in the Elk Management Zone, providing transfer options for the Special Elk License, and restoring elk in other areas of Virginia were suggested by the public



PUBLIC COMMENTS

GENERAL SUMMARY BY INDIVIDUAL SPECIES CATEGORIES

SMALL GAME

Reducing the harvest of quail, shifting the quail season to start/end 1-2 weeks later, closing rabbit season at the end of January, and additional special seasons to promote squirrel hunting were the most common suggestions

FURBEARERS

Issues varied widely, increased raccoon hunting WBR and regulation of predator killing contests were most common suggestions. Trapping items focused on specific types of traps or techniques.

WATERFOWL/BLINDS

Extending the general waterfowl season and September resident goose, reducing complexity of waterfowl regulations, changes to quota hunts, blind issues on Back Bay, and timing of the dove and woodcock seasons were suggested

OTHER/GENERAL

Allowing Sunday hunting on public lands, reducing license fees, offering different license options, gate opening on public lands, changes to the hunting digest, and changes to the Code of Virginia or local firearms ordinances were most common issues



Conclusions

Growing/Emerging issues

Sunday hunting on public land

Impact of lead on wildlife species

Predator killing contests

Species Committees are:

Continuing to review public comment and sociological data

Assessing biological data on wildlife populations

Discussing issues identified through the scoping period

Seeking any additional issues the Board may wish to be considered



Questions



DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE RESOURCES

2021-2022 WILDLIFE REGULATION REVIEW AND AMENDMENT PROCESS

Public Scoping Period – Summarization of Public Feedback

January 2021

Introduction

The Department’s 2021-2022 Wildlife Regulation Review and Amendment Process began with a 60-day public scoping period from October 12 – December 11, 2020. During that time, the Department received 1,722 comment forms (1,562 online submissions, 160 email/handwritten submissions) containing 2,038 individual comments from the public regarding desired regulation amendments. The number of comment forms received during the public scoping period phase of the current wildlife regulation review and amendment process increased by more than 50% from the previous wildlife regulation review and amendment process.

Regulation Review & Amendment Process	<u>2013-2014</u>	<u>2015-2016</u>	<u>2017-2018</u>	<u>2019-2020</u>	<u>2021-2022</u>
# Comment Forms	510	487	424	1,099	1,722

Online comment forms were compiled in a single database that was shared with Wildlife Division managers and regulation committee chairs. Emails received via the Department’s regcomments@dwr.virginia.gov inbox were forwarded to the appropriate wildlife regulation committee chair, and handwritten submissions were electronically scanned and forwarded to the appropriate staff member(s). Wildlife regulation committee chairs compiled all comments received regarding their committee’s regulatory issues. These public comments, along with the Department’s biological and sociological data and administrative capabilities, are being evaluated and considered by the committees in preparation for the Department to bring forward staff recommendations for regulation amendments during the Board’s March 18, 2021 meeting.

Outreach efforts to encourage public input

1. Throughout the 60-day comment period, a link to the online scoping period comment form was featured in the “Notes from the Field” section of the Department’s homepage.
2. An article on the regulation scoping period and a link to the online comment form were included in the “Hunting” version of the Department’s *Notes from the Field* newsletter. This version of *Notes from the Field* was distributed to 226,519 individuals.
3. Constituents who previously indicated they wanted to receive notification when the Department was seeking public input received an email regarding the public scoping period. This email was sent to 793 individuals.
4. These outreach efforts generated 7,645 visits to the online comment form for the scoping period.

Deer (1,286 comments)

Deer project staffs reviewed 1,064 individual comment submissions which included 1,286 separate comments. Seven hundred and sixty three of the comments were identified as being statewide in nature and 446 referenced a specific county or group of counties. These comments addressed issues within 94 of the 97 (97%) major deer management units (counties/cities) in Virginia. Public comments were assigned

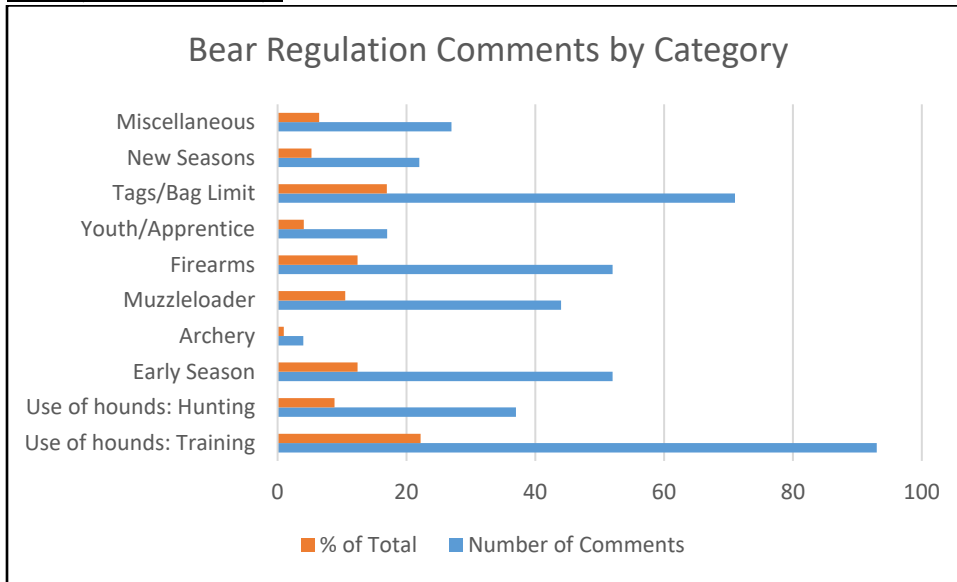
to 32 categories by deer management staff. The ten most frequent categories of comments appear in the table below and accounted for 85% of the total number of deer comments received.

Top 10 Categories	Count	%
Dogs (deer hunting with)	350	0.27
Either-sex deer hunting days	163	0.13
Firearms deer season	151	0.12
Muzzleloader deer season	88	0.07
Antler point restrictions	82	0.06
Sunday hunting	68	0.05
Bag limit (bucks)	64	0.05
Archery deer season	56	0.04
Earn a buck	42	0.03
Bait (hunting over)	23	0.02
	1,087	0.85

The majority of public comments related to deer hunting with dogs were requests to discontinue or more closely regulate this hunting method. Issues identified included dog trespass, right to retrieve, road hunting, etc. Comments by those in favor of the use of hounds for deer hunting primarily focused on the desire for a deer hound training season and/or allowing the use of hounds on the Saturday of the deer youth/apprentice hunting weekend. *Note: deer hunting with dogs is allowed in 59 counties (or portions thereof) in eastern Virginia.*

Among the public comments related to either-sex deer hunting days, most were suggestions for increasing the number of either-sex days in many areas of the state. Requests to expand the deer firearms season within a specific county by adding days/weeks to the season made up the majority of comments related to the category. Comments related to the muzzleloader and archery seasons were less about expanding the season and more frequently centered around changes in season timing (when a season starts, season length, which season comes in “first”, and various weapon requests for those individual seasons). Bag limit comments were diverse, but a theme to reduce the antlered buck bag limit was evident and public requests for antler point restrictions were common. Although not a regulatory issue, the request to allow hunting on Sundays on public lands was a frequent comment.

Bear (419 comments):



The majority of comments (42%) related to increasing opportunities for bear hunting across the various bear hunting seasons (early season, archery, muzzleloader, firearms, and potential new seasons). Comments related to the early season were primarily in reference to expansion to new areas (not currently included in the early season) or lengthening the early season (from 3 days to 5 days). The overwhelming majority of the muzzleloader comments were to allow bears to be taken during both weeks of the current deer early muzzleloader season.

Use of hounds (either during training/chase seasons or during hunting seasons) was the second highest percentage of total comments (31%). The majority of the training/chase comments related to increasing chase/training opportunities statewide or in a specific geographic area. The use of hounds during hunting seasons included a wide range of comments dealing with proposed restrictions for hound hunting (restricted timeframes, permit system, disallow in certain areas) to increased opportunities for hound use during firearms seasons (allow where currently disallowed).

Nearly 17% of the comments dealt with licenses and tags/bag limits. The highest percentage of comments in this category were requesting an additional bear tag in some capacity (statewide 2nd bear tag, allowance of 2nd tag only in certain areas, bonus tag for certain areas, increase bag limits statewide or in a limited area). Another very common request was to combine the bear license and deer/turkey license into one license, once again.

Comments on the youth/apprentice bear hunting weekend involved moving the season from its current timeframe during the general archery season to another time period (before 3 day early season, within chase season, in November). Other comments related to youth/apprentice hunting included combining all youth days (deer, bear, and turkey), adding bear to the deer youth/apprentice weekend, and allowing youth to harvest a bear any time during the hunting season.

The miscellaneous comments referenced allowing the use of bait (during chase, during hunting seasons), using bait to treat mange infested bears, allowing feeding as a means to prevent conflict, reducing kill permits, banning bear hunting, increasing the weight minimum, decreasing the weight minimum, increasing regulations pertaining to hunting from roadways, and allowing hunting on Sundays on public land.

Wild Turkey (107)/Grouse (6)

Regulation comments pertaining to wild turkeys were primarily in reference to either fall (34) or spring (24) seasons. Fall season comments were mostly for individual counties or groupings of counties, with the majority requesting increased fall season lengths for these areas. Additional fall season comments were to simplify the fall season structure and/or make it align with deer seasons statewide. Spring season comments applied statewide and primarily pertained to opening the season earlier or extending hunting hours to all day. Comments on bag limits or tags were fairly evenly split between requests to increase the season bag and/or daily bag limit versus comments to decrease the season bag limit. Of the comments related to weapons used for turkey hunting, most pertained to disallowing the use of rifles during the spring gobbler season. Several comments involved youth/apprentice hunting opportunities with a few individuals suggesting that turkey harvest be allowed during the fall youth/apprentice deer hunting weekend. Miscellaneous comments were related to allowance of Sunday hunting on public lands, restricting the use of decoys in the spring season, and prohibiting the harvest of jakes (immature gobblers) during the spring season.

Grouse comments were evenly split between those requesting a shorter season length, closing the season, and those requesting an increased season length to match adjoining states. One miscellaneous comment praised ongoing habitat efforts on DWR lands and asked that these efforts continue and expand.

Elk (7 comments)

The elk specific comments included establishing a lottery elk hunt in Dickenson and Buchanan Counties, allowing an elk tag/license to be transferrable, and expanding the elk re-introduction to the Blue Ridge Mountains and Shenandoah National Park. Additional elk comments also referenced either deer and/or bears and were focused on changing the regulation defining a muzzleloader, expanding the prohibition on the feeding of wildlife to year-round, and pursuing options of non-lethal (e.g. contraceptive programs) management of wildlife populations.

Small Game (29 comments)

Small game comments involved a wide range of suggested changes. There were thirteen comments pertaining specifically to quail. These comments included requests to (1) have a “no harvest” training only quail season due to low quail numbers, (2) reduce the bag limit to three per day, and (3) extend the season into February to provide more quail hunting opportunity after the end of the firearms deer season. There were seven comments specific to the issue of extending the quail season at least one week into February. Four comments pertained to rabbits (1) shortening rabbit season by closing it at the end of January to reduce the harvest of female rabbits carrying young, (2) changing the rabbit season opening date to avoid opening it on the same Saturday as the early muzzle-loader deer season, (3) extending the hours for training rabbit dogs on private lands by ending it at 2:00 a.m. rather than midnight, and (4) allowing rabbit beagle training on public lands year round. There were nine comments on squirrels. Among those were requests to (1) open fox squirrel season in Pittsylvania County with a bag limit of one per day, (2) close the June squirrel season, (3) open the squirrel season through March and/or allow year around, and (4) opening a youth squirrel season in August. The majority of the remaining comments for small game either did not address small game specifically such as requesting Sunday hunting be allowed on all state and federal lands or included requests to address issues which would require Virginia Code changes such as allowing the use of blow guns for small game harvest.

Furbearers/Trapping (43 comments)

Several hunters requested increased raccoon chase opportunities on public lands west of the Blue Ridge (WBR). Other raccoon hunting comments included raising the bag limit WBR and increasing the season length. One hunter suggested banning the use of hounds for coyote hunting outside of the deer season because he felt the continuous open season for chasing coyotes with dogs was enabling deer hunters to illegally chase deer outside of the season. Another person wanted to eliminate all hunting of furbearers with dogs. We also received a request to eliminate the requirement for written permission when using an electronic call for predator hunting and to ban the use of rifles when hunting foxes at night. Another hunter requested additional coyote hunting opportunities on public lands. We also received a comment to allow hunting of otters and muskrats on private ponds.

Suggested modifications to trapping regulations included opening several North Piedmont counties to fox trapping that currently have closed seasons. Another person requested closing red fox hunting and trapping seasons statewide. One trapper asked to extend the trapping season for all furbearer species until March 15. Another person suggested increasing the number of trappers authorized to trap foxes for foxhound training preserves. We also received a request from the Virginia Wildlife Damage Management Association to allow 72-hour trap checks for certain types of kill traps used by Commercial Nuisance Animal Permittees. We had 5 individuals request a ban of predator killing contests and several who expressed opposition to hunting and trapping of furbearers in general. Non-regulatory comments included requests to allow Sunday hunting on public lands, establish a statewide coyote bounty, and support of proposed legislation related to killing furbearers causing damage and the possession of road-killed furbearers.

Migratory Game Bird/Waterfowl Blinds (25 comments)

Public feedback on migratory game bird topics ranged from comments on waterfowl season dates to waterfowl blinds. Several comments were submitted requesting a later extension of the general duck season and resident goose hunting opportunities in October. Comments were submitted regarding the complexity of waterfowl hunting regulations, several addressed changes to quota hunts and waterfowl hunting on WMA's and other public areas. Comments on waterfowl blinds mentioned the transfer of blind licenses on Back Bay in the name of hunt clubs and increased enforcement of non-compliant stationary blinds in public waters. For webless species, comments were submitted requesting modifications to the timing of the dove and woodcock seasons.

Other/General (116 comments)

While most comments submitted by constituents focus on species-specific issues, the scoping period comment form enables constituents to offer feedback on items, which are not species-specific, by offering a category for "Other" regulation issues. Comments submitted by constituents selecting "Other" cover a variety of topics; however, common themes include Sunday hunting, license structure and fees, public lands issues, hunting digest and website information, and animal welfare issues. The most common request in this category was allowing Sunday hunting on public lands, but some comments favored elimination of Sunday hunting in general. Numerous constituents requested reduced license fees for certain resident and nonresident licenses with some submissions seeking an across the board reduction, while other requests were specific to certain licenses (e.g., nonresident bear license). Suggested changes in license structure included creating an all-inclusive Lifetime Sportsman License, separate Eastern Virginia and Western Virginia Sportsman Licenses, and splitting the current deer/turkey license into a separate deer license and turkey license. Most comments related to public lands involved the

opening/closing of gates for public access; however, increased habitat diversity and timber harvesting on National Forest lands was noted by a handful of constituents. Several individuals suggested improvements to the content of the annual hunting digest and/or website which have been shared with staffs responsible for those items. An emerging topic for constituent submissions involves animal welfare issues. Several constituents requested increased levels of education regarding the impacts of lead ammunition on wildlife, especially raptors, while others suggested prohibiting lead ammunition for hunting. Additionally, several constituents submitted general comments that all hunting and trapping laws should be as humane as possible. A number of submissions suggested changes to the Code of Virginia or local firearms ordinances. Most comments on these issues were a single comment about a specific local ordinance or Code section; however, multiple comments suggested legalizing the use of blaze colored camouflage as well as legalizing the use of blowguns for hunting. Finally, five comments related to fishing issues were shared with the Aquatics Resource Division, while three comments on the wildlife rehabilitation permit were shared with the Permits staffs.

Conclusion

Because some individual comment forms included multiple, suggested changes, the total number of individual comments (2,038) reviewed by staffs exceeded the total number of comment forms (1,722) submitted to the Department. As with past regulation review and amendment processes, subjects such as deer hunting, bear hunting, and hunting with dogs compose the vast majority of constituent's comments, and we continue to see increased comments on the desire for Sunday hunting on public lands. One emerging area of public feedback involves animal welfare issues, especially as it relates to use of lead ammunition and ingestion of lead by raptor species. Overall, the types of regulatory suggestions offered by constituents remains relatively unchanged from previous public scoping periods: increase hunting and harvest opportunities for abundant game species, reduce hunting and harvest opportunities on species where populations may be declining, increased opportunities for youth, expressions or support/concern for certain hunting or trapping techniques. The consistency displayed in the public's feedback to the Department enables staffs to monitor issues continuously and collect/evaluate biological and sociological data trends to develop regulation amendments to best ensure appropriate management of our wildlife resources to meet the needs of Virginia's diverse citizenry.

2021-2022 Migratory Gamebird Seasons and Bag Limits

Preliminary Federal Frameworks & Staff Recommendations



**Wildlife Resources Division
Department of Game and Inland Fisheries Board Meeting
January 2021**



Timeline for 2021-22 Migratory Game Bird Season and Bag Limit Recommendations

January 20 & 21: Staff presents preliminary recommendations to Board.

February 1 – March 5: Public comment period on Agency website.

February: Federal Frameworks finalized.

March 18: Staff presents final proposals to Board.

Prior to April 30: Staff submits State selections to USFWS.



DOVE



DOVE

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

SEASON

DATES:

September 4 – October 27	(54 days)
November 20 – November 28	(9 days)
December 22 - January 17	(27 days)

BAG LIMIT: 15 daily and 45 in possession.

SHOOTING

HOURS:

Sept. 4:	Noon until sunset
Sept. 5 – Oct. 27:	1/2 hour before sunrise until sunset.
Nov. 20 – Nov. 28:	1/2 hour before sunrise until sunset.
Dec. 22 – Jan. 17:	1/2 hour before sunrise until sunset.



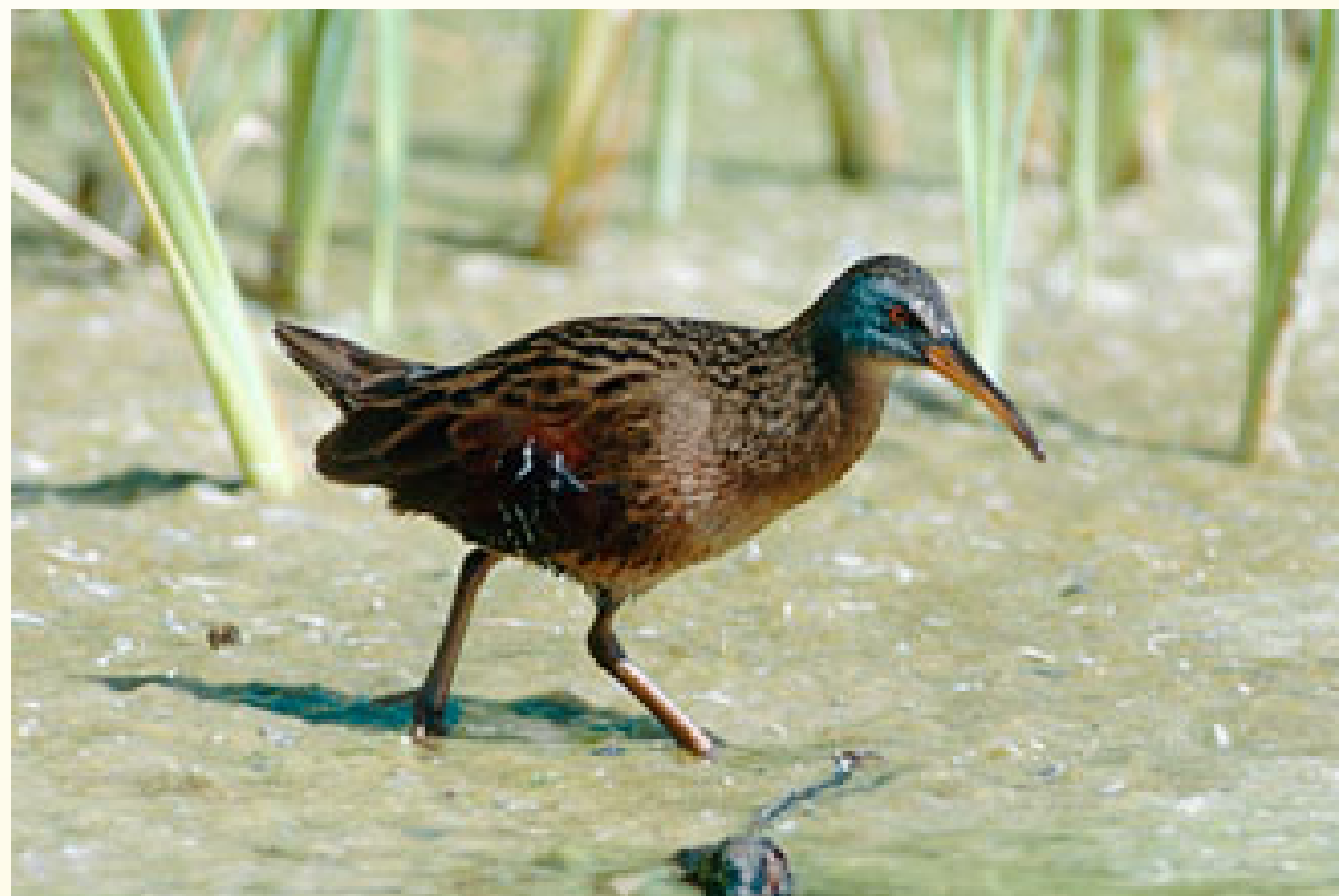
RAILS



CLAPPER RAIL



KING RAIL



VIRGINIA RAIL



SORA RAIL

GALLINULE AND MOORHEN



PURPLE GALLINULE



COMMON GALLINULE



RAILS, GALLINULES AND MOORHEN

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

SEASON DATES: September 7 - November 15 (70 days)

BAG LIMIT:

King Rail -	1 daily, 3 possession
Clapper Rail -	15 daily, 45 in possession
Sora/Virginia -	25 daily, 75 in possession
Gallinule/Moorhen -	15 daily, 45 in possession

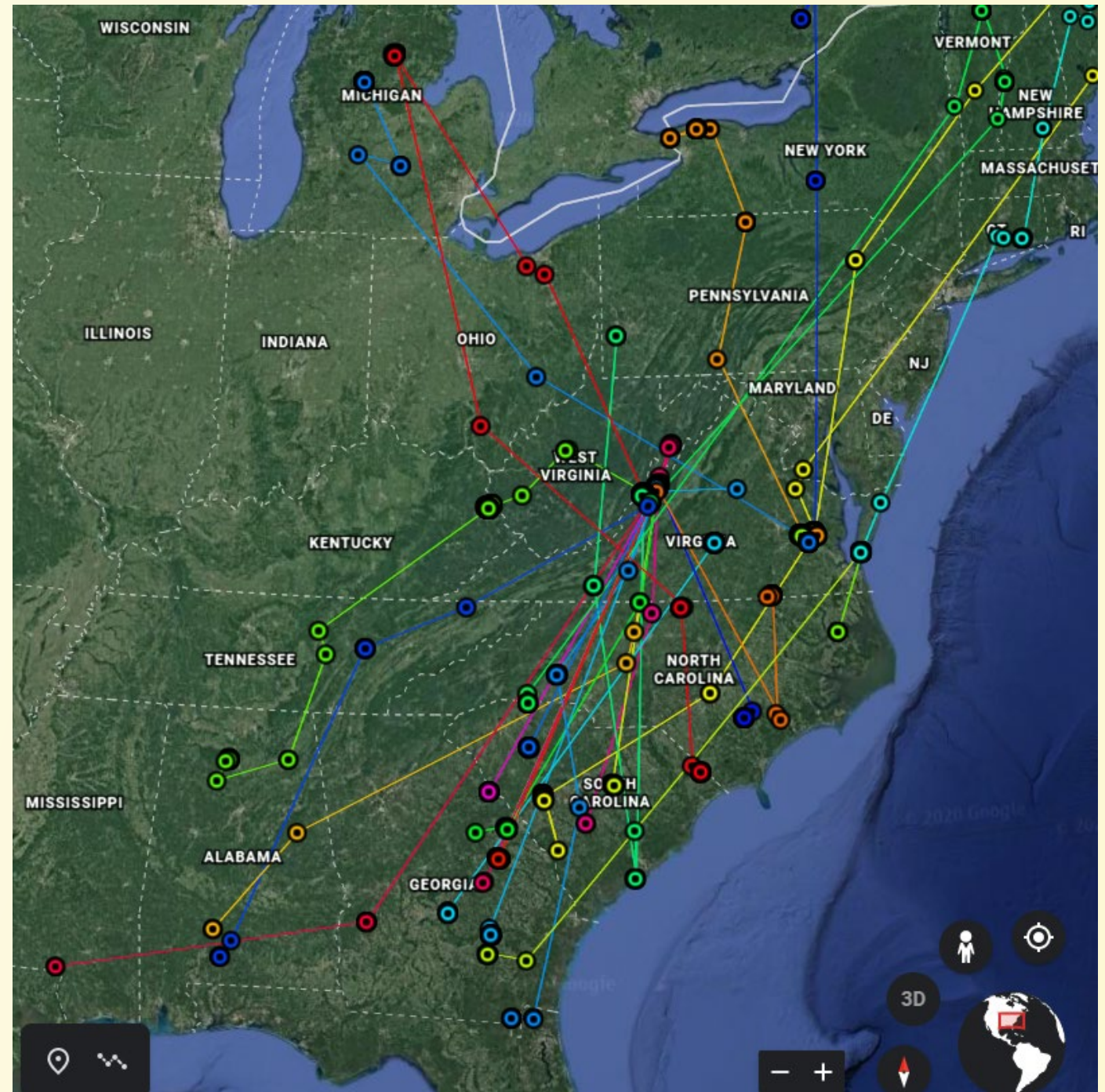
(bag limits are singly or aggregate)

SHOOTING HOURS: 1/2 hour before sunrise until sunset.

- Notes:
- Recommendation provides 30 days of 3-ft or greater tides.
 - Non-toxic shot required for Rail & Snipe hunting in Virginia.



WOODCOCK



WOODCOCK

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

**SEASON DATES: November 6 – December 4 (29 days)
December 28 – January 13 (16 days)**

BAG LIMIT: 3 daily, 9 in possession

SHOOTING HOURS: 1/2 hour before sunrise until sunset



SNIPE



Simon Stirrup © 2007



SNIPE

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

SEASON DATES: **October 8 - October 11 (4 days)**
October 21 - January 31 (103 days)

BAG LIMIT: **8 daily, 24 in possession**

SHOOTING HOURS: **1/2 hour before sunrise until sunset**

Note: **Non-toxic shot required for Rail & Snipe hunting in Virginia**



DUCKS



SEPTEMBER TEAL



Blue-Winged Teal

Green-Winged Teal



SEPTEMBER TEAL

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

SEASON DATES: September 17 - September 30 (14 days)

HUNT AREA: East of I-95

September 21 – September 30 (10 days)

HUNT AREA: West of I-95

SHOOTING HOURS: 1/2 hour before sunrise to sunset

BAG LIMIT: 6 daily, 18 in possession (any combination of Blue-Winged and Green-Winged Teal)



DUCK SEASONS



DUCKS

FEDERAL FRAMEWORK

Outside Dates: September 25, 2021 - January 31, 2022

Season Length: 60 days; plus 2 Youth/Veterans Waterfowl Days.

Bag Limit: Daily limit of 6 ducks of any species except for the following restrictions:
can include no more than 2 mallards (only 1 hen), 4 scoters, 4 eiders,
4 long-tailed ducks, 3 wood ducks, 2 redheads, 2 canvasback, 2 black ducks,
scaup: 1/day for 40 days and 2/day for 20 days, 1 pintail, 1 mottled duck,
1 fulvous whistling duck.
Closed Season on Harlequin duck.
The possession limit is three times the daily bag limit.

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

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



DUCKS

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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

Season Dates: October 8 – 11 (Black Duck closed) (4 days)
 November 17 – November 28 (12 days)
 December 18 – January 30 (44 days)

October 23, February 5 Youth/Veterans Waterfowl Hunting Days

Bag Limit: Daily limit of 6 ducks of any species except for the following restrictions:
 can include no more than 2 mallards (only 1 hen), 4 scoters, 4 eiders,
 4 long-tailed ducks, 3 wood ducks, 2 redheads, 2 canvasback,
 2 black ducks (except closed October 8-11), 1 pintail, 1 mottled duck,
 scaup: 1/day except 2/day from Jan. 11-30, and 1 fulvous whistling
 duck. Closed Season on Harlequin duck.
 The possession limit is three times the daily bag limit.



Other Waterfowl Seasons

Mergansers



Sea Ducks



Coot



MERGANSERS

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

OPTION A

Season Dates: To coincide with duck season
Bag Limit: 5 birds daily, only 2 hooded merganser
(15 in possession, only 6 hooded mergansers)

AMERICAN COOT

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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



SPECIAL SEA DUCK SEASON

IN THE SPECIAL SEA DUCK ZONE

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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

Season Dates: November 11 – January 9 (60 days)

Bag Limit: 5 birds daily (15 in possession), but may include no more than 4 of any one species.

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.



GEESE, BRANT and SWANS



SEPTEMBER CANADA GOOSE

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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

BAG LIMIT: 10 daily, 30 in possession

HUNT AREA: Statewide

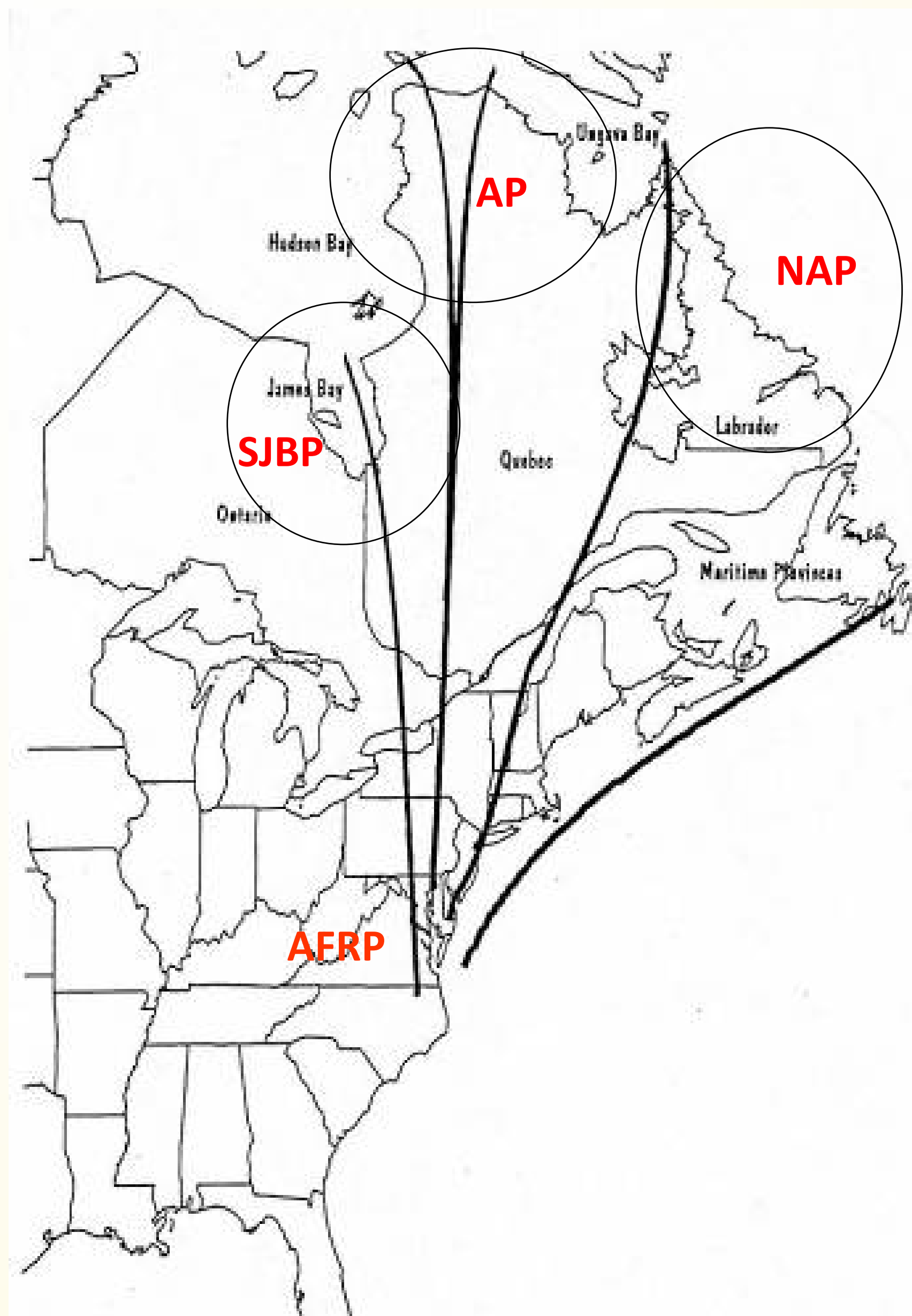
SHOOTING HOURS:

East of I-95: September 1-16: ½ hr before sunrise to 1/2 hr after sunset
September 17- 25: ½ hr before sunrise to sunset

West of I-95: September 1 - 20: ½ hr before sunrise to 1/2 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 during the September season.





Canada Goose Populations

Atlantic Population (AP) – Majority, ~82%, of our migrant geese. More east, but fair number west of I-95.

North Atlantic population (NAP) – Very few In Virginia. Coastal population

Southern James Bay Population (SJB) – Comprise ~18% of migrant geese in VA. Central portion of the state, but found east and west also.

Atlantic Flyway Resident Population (AFRP) – Generally non-migratory, but can move long distances.



CANADA GOOSE HUNT ZONES

Atlantic Population (AP) Zone (including Back Bay) – 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) Zone – The area to the west of the AP 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.

Atlantic Flyway Resident Population (AFRP) Zone – The remaining portion of the state west of the SJB Zone.



CANADA GEESE

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

ATLANTIC POPULATION ZONE:

Season Dates:	December 18 – 31	(14 days)
	January 15 – 30	(16 days)
Bag Limit:	1 bird daily	

SOUTHERN JAMES BAY POPULATION ZONE:

	<u>Season Dates</u>	<u>Bag Limit</u>
Regular Season:	Nov. 17 – Nov. 28	3/day
	Dec. 18 - Jan. 14	3/day
Extended Season:	Jan. 15 - Feb. 15	3/day

RESIDENT POPULATION ZONE:

Season Dates:	Nov. 17 – Nov. 28
	Dec. 18 – Feb. 23
Bag Limit:	5 birds daily

**Notes: Shooting hours are ½ hour before sunrise until sunset, in all zones.
All seasons include White-Fronted Geese.**



LIGHT GEESE (Greater and Lesser Snow Geese & Ross' Goose)



LIGHT GEESE (Greater and Lesser Snow Geese & Ross' Goose)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

LIGHT GOOSE SEASON

Season Dates: October 17 – January 31
Bag Limit: 25 birds daily (no possession limit)

CONSERVATION ORDER

Zone: The same as the AP Canada Goose Zone
Season Dates: February 1 – April 5, 2022
Bag Limit: No daily or possession limit
Special Methods: Electronic calls, unplugged shotguns and extended shooting hours to one-half hour after sunset.
Special Requirements: Hunters participating in the Conservation Order Season must register on line or by phone, obtain a harvest report form, and return the report form back to the department within two weeks following the close of the season.



ATLANTIC BRANT



ATLANTIC BRANT

FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

Season Length: 50 hunting days
Outside Dates: September 25 - January 31
Split Season Option: 2-way split season
Bag Limit: 2 birds daily (6 in possession)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Season Dates: November 23 - November 28
December 18 - January 30
Bag Limit: 2 birds daily (6 in possession)



TUNDRA SWAN



TUNDRA SWAN

FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

Season Length: 90 Days

Outside Dates: October 1 - January 31; State agency may issue up to 638 permits in Virginia and must obtain harvest and hunter participation data. Each permittee is authorized to take only one (1) tundra swan per season.

Bag Limit: One per permittee per season.



TUNDRA SWAN

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Season Dates: November 17 - January 31

Bag Limit: One per permittee per season (638 permits).

Hunt Area: All counties and portions of counties lying east of U.S. Route I- 95 and south of the Prince William/Stafford County line in Chopawamsic Creek at Quantico Marine Corps Base.



FALCONRY



FALCONRY

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Dove:	September 4 – October 27 November 20 – November 28 December 22 – January 31
Rail, Gallinule & Moorhen:	September 7 – December 22
Woodcock:	October 17 – January 31
Snipe:	October 8 - October 11 October 21 - January 31
Goose:	September 1 – 25 November 17 – November 28 December 18 – February 23
Teal (Statewide):	September 17 - September 30
Ducks, Mergansers, Coot	October 8 – 11 November 17 – February 11
Brant and Light Geese:	October 17 – January 31



THANK YOU



COMMENTS / QUESTIONS



2021-2022 Migratory Game Bird Seasons and Bag Limits

Motion

Mr. Chairman:

I move that the Committee approve the 2021-2022 Migratory Game Bird Season and Bag Limit recommendations as presented by staff, for consideration by the Board. These recommendations will be advertised for public comments and will be reconsidered at the Board meeting on March 18.



2021-2022 Migratory Game Bird Seasons and Bag Limits

Motion

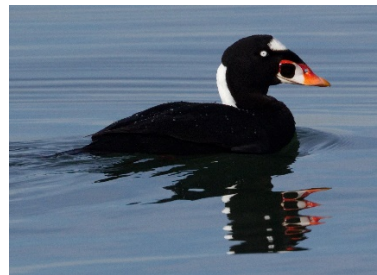
Mr. Chairman:

I move that the Board approve the 2021-2022 Migratory Game Bird Season and Bag Limit recommendations as presented by staff. These recommendations will be advertised for public comments and will be reconsidered at the Board meeting on March 18.



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE RESOURCES

2021-2022 MIGRATORY GAME BIRD HUNTING SEASONS – FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS AND STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS



Prepared by Wildlife Division
January 2021

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND INLAND FISHERIES

PRELIMINARY FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS AND STAFF PROPOSALS FOR 2021-22
MIGRATORY GAMEBIRD SEASON DATES AND BAG LIMITS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	Page
Dove Background Information.....	3
Dove Federal Framework and Staff Recommendation.....	4
Rail Background Information.....	5
Rail Federal Framework and Staff Recommendation	6
Gallinule and Moorhen Framework and Staff Recommendation	7
Woodcock Background Information.....	8
Woodcock Federal Framework and Staff Recommendation	9
Snipe Background Information.....	10
Snipe Federal Framework and Staff Recommendation	11
September Teal Facts	12
September Teal Federal Framework and Staff Recommendation.....	13
Fact Sheet – Waterfowl Hunters and Harvest.....	14
Fact Sheet – Status of Ducks	15
Changes in Mallard Bag limits in the Atlantic Flyway.....	16
Youth and Veterans Waterfowl Hunting Days.....	17
Duck Season	18
Merganser and Coot	19
Special Sea Duck Season.....	20
Fact Sheet – Status of Resident Canada Geese	21
September Canada Goose Season	22
Fact Sheet – Status of Migrant Canada Geese	23
Canada Goose Populations and Hunt Zones	24
Canada Goose Seasons	25
Fact Sheet – Status of Light Geese	26
Light Goose Season.....	27
Light Goose Conservation Order Season	28
Fact Sheet – Status of Atlantic Brant &Tundra Swan	29
Atlantic Brant Season.....	30
Tundra Swan Season	31
Falconry	32

Note: Many of the annual migratory bird surveys were not conducted during the past 10 months due to concerns about Coronavirus. In most cases, data from the previous year was used to model and predict current population sizes, and develop appropriate harvest regulations.

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 (2011-2020): declining population trend.
Long term (1966-2020): declining population trend.
- Dove Banding Study – Annual program (since 2003) to leg-band over 500 doves annually in VA, and 33,000 nationwide. Data provides estimates of movements, survival and harvest rates that are used to develop hunting regulations. Over 500 doves were banded in Virginia this year.
- Harvest Strategy: New Harvest Strategy adopted in 2014 allows for a standard dove hunting season of 90 days when the population can support it. Daily bag limit remains at 15 birds (up from 12 in 2009).
- Data from HIP (past 3-yr avg.): Hunters = 16,400 Harvest = 225,467

Recent Seasons

<u>Year</u>	<u>Season Dates (all 70 days until extended to 90 days in 2014-15)</u>		
2020-2021	Sept. 5 – Oct. 28	Nov. 21 – Nov. 29	Dec. 24 – Jan. 19
2019-2020	Sept. 2 – Oct. 27	Nov. 27 – Dec. 4	Dec. 24 – Jan. 18
2018-2019	Sept. 1 – Oct. 28	Nov. 21 – Nov. 28	Dec. 22 – Jan. 14
2017-2018	Sept. 2 – Oct. 29	Nov. 22 – Nov. 29	Dec. 23 – Jan. 15
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

DOVE

FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

OUTSIDE DATES: September 1, 2021 - January 31, 2022
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 4 - October 27 (54 days)
November 20 - November 28 (9 days)
December 22 - January 17 (27 days)

SHOOTING HOURS: September 4 Noon until sunset
September 5 – October 27 ½ hr before sunrise to sunset.
November 20 – November 28 ½ hr before sunrise to sunset.
December 22 - January 17 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 1st 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 hunting season. The key to setting the season is to bracket the greatest number of high tides possible.
- **Harvest Data** - Avg. No. hunters = 280, Avg. Harvest = 3,100 (HIP, past 5-yr avg.)

Past Seasons

<u>Year</u>	<u>Season Dates (all 70 days)</u>	
2020	Sept. 9 – Nov. 17	
2019	Sept. 7 – Nov. 15	
2018	Sept. 8 - Nov. 16	
2017	Sept. 9 – Nov. 17	
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

RAILS (Clapper, King, Sora, Virginia)

FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

OUTSIDE DATES: September 1, 2021 - January 31, 2022

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 7 - November 15 (70 days)

BAG LIMIT: King rail: 1 daily, 3 possession.
Clapper rail: 15 daily, 45 possession.
Sora/Virginia: 25 - counted together daily, 75 possession.

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.

GALLINULE AND MOORHEN

FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

OUTSIDE DATES: September 1, 2021 - January 31, 2022

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 7 - November 15 (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 includes 3 regulatory options (Liberal, Moderate and Restrictive). Annual regulation based on the 3-year mean of the call count survey. For 2021-22, Harvest Strategy calls for Moderate Regulation (45 days/3 birds).
- Singing-ground survey (SGS) in Eastern Management Region from most recent survey:
 - 1 year trend (2018-2019): stable
 - 10 year trend (2010-2019): 0.90% decline per year.
 - Long-term (1966-2019): 1.08 % decline per year.
- The 2019 recruitment index for the U.S. portion of the Eastern Region (1.51 jv/ad female) was 12% below the 2018 index and 7% below the long-term index.
- Research suggests that hunting has little effect on population trend, but habitat is limiting.
- Virginia is cooperating in a Flyway-wide study of woodcock movements and habitat use. From 2018-2021, GPS transmitters attached to woodcock are providing updated information on migration routes and timing that is being used to establish current hunting seasons.
- Federal regulations prohibit zones for woodcock hunting, however, we split the season into two segments to provide opportunity for early hunting in western areas, and later hunting in central and eastern areas.

Avg. No. hunters = 1,500 Avg. Harvest = 2,220 (HIP, past 5-year avg.)

Recent Seasons (bag limit has been 3 birds)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Season Dates</u>		<u>Days</u>
2020-2021	Nov. 7 – Nov. 30	Dec. 24 – Jan. 13	45
2019-2020	Nov. 20 – Dec. 8	Dec. 21 – Jan. 15	45
2018-2019	Oct. 27 – Nov. 2	Dec. 8 – Jan. 14	45
2017-2018	Nov. 20 – Dec. 8	Dec. 21 – Jan. 15	45
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

WOODCOCK

FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

OUTSIDE DATES: October 1, 2021 - January 31, 2022

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 6 – December 4 (29 days)
December 28 – January 12 (16 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 5-yr avg.): No. hunters = 260, Harvest = 750

Recent Seasons

<u>Year</u>	<u>Season Dates (all 107 days)</u>	
2020-2021	Oct. 9 – Oct. 12	Oct. 21 – Jan. 31
2019-2020	Oct. 11 – Oct. 14	Oct. 21 – Jan. 31
2018-2019	Oct. 5 – Oct. 8	Oct. 21 – Jan. 31
2017-2018	Oct. 6 – Oct. 9	Oct. 21 – Jan. 31
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. 11 – 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

SNIFE

FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

OUTSIDE DATES: September 1, 2021 - January 31, 2022

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 8 - October 11 (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 - 2021

- Special teal seasons were initiated in late 1960's to provide harvest opportunities on blue-winged and green-winged teal. 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. However, 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 and teal hunters in the coastal plain. Even in the coastal plain, teal are not widespread, 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>Season Dates</u>
	<u>East of I-95</u>	<u>West of I-95</u>
2020	Sept. 17 – 30	Sept. 21 - 30
2019	Sept. 17 – 30	Sept. 21 - 30
2018	Sept. 17 – 30	Sept. 21 - 30
2017	Sept. 16 – 30	Sept. 21 - 30
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

Average Annual Harvest: 670 teal

SEPTEMBER TEAL SEASON

FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

OUTSIDE DATES: September 1 – September 30, 2021

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 17 – September 30 (14 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 - 2021

- 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 ~133,300 ducks and ~51,700 Canada geese from 2016-2019, 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 16,700 and 13,900 respectively.
- Conditions during the 2019-2020 season were mild and warm resulting in poor waterfowl hunting conditions and a delayed migration. This resulted in a lower duck harvest than previous seasons and below the 5-year average. Estimated Canada goose harvest was also lower than previous years mainly due to the decrease in the AP Canada goose bag limit.
- The total estimated duck harvest during the 2019-2020 season in Virginia (124,500) was 15% lower than the previous year (143,700) and 5% below the past 5-year average (130,520).
- During the 2019-2020 season, mallards were the most commonly harvested duck in Virginia, followed by wood ducks, gadwall, bufflehead and scoters, which compromised the top 5 harvested species. The mallard harvest in Virginia in 2019-2020 (29,032) decreased by 24% from 2018-2019 (37,881), and was 22% lower than the past 5-year average (37,320). This is partially a result of a reduction in the mallard bag limit from 4 to 2 during the 2019-2020 season.
- The Canada goose harvest in Virginia in 2019-2020 (30,819) was slightly lower than the previous season (31,427) and 38% lower than the past 5-year average (49,320).

FACT SHEET - The Status of Ducks - 2021

Due to Covid-19 most waterfowl breeding surveys were cancelled during 2020. The numbers below for the total duck breeding population and from the Eastern survey area are from 2019. Based on weather and habitat conditions, average to above average production is expected for most waterfowl species in 2020.

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 used as an index for assessing waterfowl nesting habitat. In 2019, the May pond count (4.9 million) was 5% below last year's count (5.2 million), and below the long-term average (5.2 million).

The total duck breeding population (BPOP) estimate for the mid-continent area in 2019 was 38.9 million ducks. This estimate is 6% lower than the previous year's estimate of 41.2 million ducks, but still 10% higher than the long-term average (1955-2018). 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	2019 BPOP	% Change from 2018	% Change from Long-Term Avg.
Mallard	9.4 million	+2%	+19%
Blue-winged Teal	5.4 million	-16%	+6%
Green-winged Teal	3.2 million	4%	+47%
Gadwall	3.3 million	+13%	+61%
Northern Shoveler	3.6 million	-13%	+39%
Northern Pintail	2.3 million	-4%	-42%
American Wigeon	2.8 million	0%	+8%
Redhead	732,000	-27%	0%
Scaup	3.6 million	-10%	-28%
Canvasback	652,000	-5%	+10%
Total Ducks	38.9 million	-6%	+10%

Eastern Breeding Areas: More pertinent to waterfowl harvests in Virginia are the number of ducks counted in the eastern survey area. Breeding population estimates for the 6 most common species surveyed in the eastern survey area in 2019 were very similar to the 2018 estimates. The estimated abundance of mallards was 1 million, which was similar to 2018, but 16% below the long-term average. Black ducks (729,000) were similar to the previous year's estimate but also 16% lower than the long-term average. Other abundant species counted in the eastern survey area were, Ring-necked ducks (700,000), Goldeneyes (500,000) and Green-winged teal (300,000).

Virginia: Habitat conditions in Virginia during the spring of 2020 started off rather poor with dry conditions, but significant precipitation later in the spring filled many wetlands and provided good nesting habitat. Local duck and goose production is expected to be slightly below average.

- The **2020** breeding pair estimate for mallards (36,430) was 23% higher than last year (28,198). Estimated black duck pairs (1,545) increased from last year (750). The number of Wood duck pairs (13,559) increased 38% from last year (8,308). The breeding pair estimate for Canada geese (46,563) was similar to the 2019 estimate (46,254).

Mallard Bag Limit in the Atlantic Flyway

The mallard has been one of the most abundant duck species in eastern North America. However, in the past 20 years, “eastern” mallards have been on the decline. Surveys conducted since 1988 throughout eastern Canada and the northeastern U.S. have provided reliable annual estimates of the breeding population size of eastern mallards. These surveys indicate that mallard numbers have decreased steadily in the northeastern U.S., declining by about 38% since 1998. Mallard numbers in Eastern Canada have been relatively stable, but overall, the breeding mallard population in eastern North America is declining (Figure 1). About 60% of the mallards harvested in Atlantic Flyway states, and around 80% of those harvested in Virginia, are derived from the northeastern US. There has also been a significant decline in the mallard harvest in the Atlantic Flyway (around 40%, Figure 2), a direct result of this population decline.

Figure 1. Mallard breeding population in eastern North America

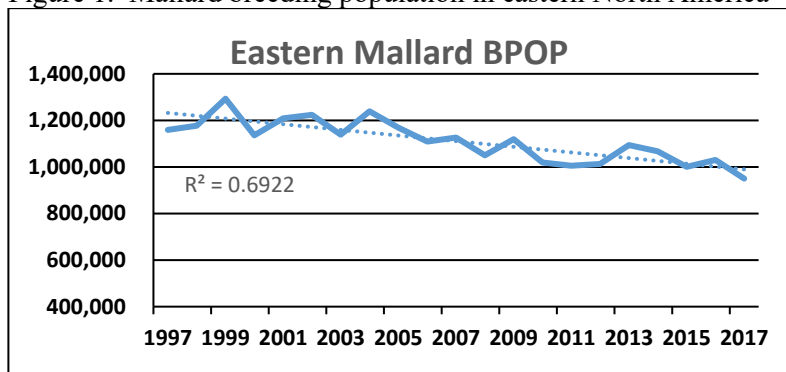
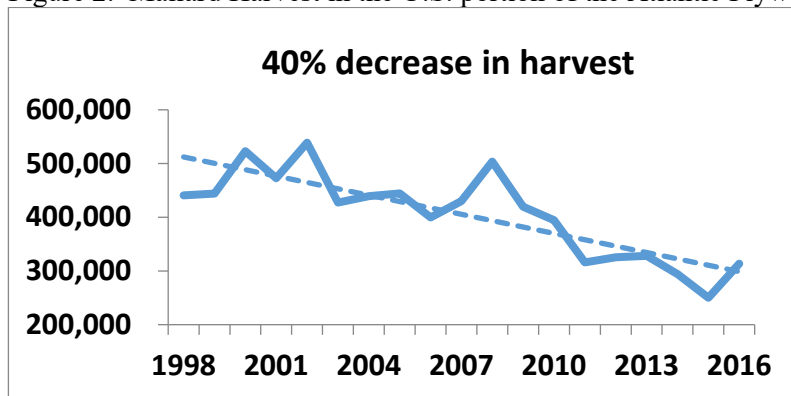


Figure 2. Mallard Harvest in the U.S. portion of the Atlantic Flyway



Population models suggested that cutting the daily bag limit in half would reduce the harvest by 25%, and would achieve a sustainable harvest level based on the current population. Therefore, beginning in the 2019-20 season the Atlantic Flyway and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reduced the bag limit from 4 to 2 mallards (only 1 hen) in the Atlantic Flyway. This reduction remained in effect for the 2020-21 season, and will also be maintained for the 2021-2022 season. In addition, a new harvest strategy is being developed that will help guide future hunting season regulations based on current mallard population dynamics.

YOUTH and VETERANS WATERFOWL DAYS

Guidelines for the Youth Days and Veterans 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. States may also select 2 days per duck-hunting zone designated as "Veterans Waterfowl Hunting Days" in addition to their regular duck seasons. The Youth and Veterans days could be combined and held on the same day or could be held separately.
2. Youth Days 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. Youth and Veterans 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, 1 Canada geese (except in Canada Goose Zones where the bag limit is higher), and 1 tundra swan (if the hunter 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. A licensed adult at least 18 years of age or older must accompany youth hunters into the field. This adult may not duck hunt, but may participate in other open seasons.
6. Those allowed to participate in the special **Veterans Days** include Veterans (as defined in section 101 of title 38, United States Code) and members of the Armed Forces on active duty, including members of the National Guard and Reserves on active duty (other than for training).

DUCKS

FEDERAL FRAMEWORK

Outside Dates: September 25, 2021 - January 31, 2022

Season Length: 60 hunting days; plus 2 Youth/Veterans Waterfowl Hunt Days.

Bag Limit: Daily Bag limit of 6 ducks of any species except for the following restrictions: can include no more than 2 mallards (only 1 hen), 4 scoters, 4 long-tailed ducks, 4 eiders, 3 wood ducks, 2 black ducks, 2 canvasback, scaup: 1/day for 40 days and 2/day for 20 days, 2 redheads, 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/Veterans Waterfowl Hunting Day

Season Dates: October 8 - 11 (Black Duck closed) (4 days)
November 17 – November 28 (12 days)
December 18 – January 30 (44 days)
(60 days)

October 23, February 5 – Youth/Veterans Waterfowl Days

Bag Limit: Daily Bag limit of 6 ducks of any species except for the following restrictions: can include no more than 2 mallards (only 1 hen), 4 scoters, 4 long-tailed ducks, 4 eiders, 3 wood ducks, 2 black ducks (except closed Oct. 8 – 11), scaup: 1/day for 40 days (October 8-11, November 17-28, December 18 - January 10), and 2/day for 20 days (January 11-30), 2 redheads, 2 canvasback, 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

MERGANSER AND COOT

MERGANSER

FEDERAL FRAMEWORK

Option A

Season Length: 60 hunting days
Outside Date: September 25, 2021 - January 31, 2022
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 25, 2021 - January 31, 2022
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)

SPECIAL SEA DUCK SEASON IN SEA DUCK ZONE*

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, 2021 - January 31, 2022
<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 11 – January 9 (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 cannot be taken in the Sea Duck Zone after January 9. Sea ducks can, however, be taken during the regular duck season (Oct. 8-11, Nov. 17-28, and Dec. 18 - Jan. 30) in all other areas outside of the sea duck zone (areas within 800 yards of any shore, island or emergent vegetation...), since they are included in the regular season duck bag. No more than 4 scoters, 4 eiders or 4 long-tails can be included in the regular season daily limit of 6 ducks.

FACT SHEET - The Status of Resident Canada Geese - 2021

- The resident Canada goose population increased significantly in Virginia during the 1980's and 1990's, and peaked at 260,000 geese in the late 1990's. This population caused significant conflicts with human and wildlife populations, and management actions were taken to reduce their numbers. The population estimate for 2020 was 220,000 (+/- 52,000) 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 recreational opportunities for hunters. These seasons occur prior to the arrival of most 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 special “Goose Hunting Zones” have been established that allow more liberal seasons in areas with more resident Canada goose.
- Special resident goose hunting seasons have been very popular, and have increased hunter participation and resident goose harvests. These seasons have been very effective in managing resident goose populations and helping to meet our statewide population objectives.
- 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.

Year	Population Estimate *	September Harvest
2020	163,198 +/- 24%	xxxx
2019	125,966 +/-20%	6,300
2018	132,633 +/- 24%	5,600
2017	142,167 +/- 21%	5,500
2016	158,200 +/- 19%	900
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

SEPTEMBER CANADA GOOSE

FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

OUTSIDE DATES: September 1 – September 25, 2021

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 – 16: ½ hr before sunrise to ½ hr after sunset.

September 17 – 25: ½ hr before sunrise **to sunset.**

West of I-95

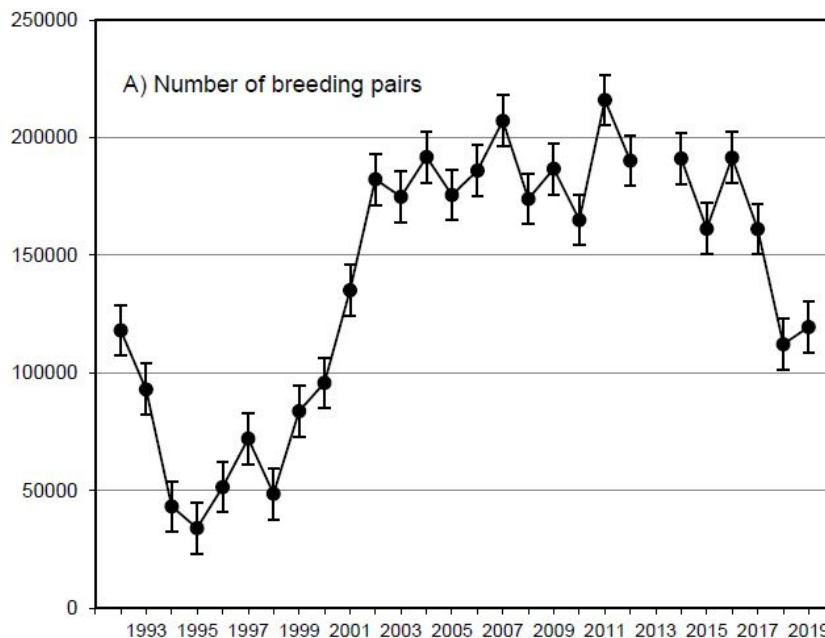
September 1 – 20: ½ hr before sunrise to ½ hr after sunset.

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- History and Status of Migrant Canada Geese - 2021

- Migrant Canada geese from the Atlantic Population (AP) declined significantly from 1985-1995. The hunting season was closed in 1995 to allow the population to recover. Goose numbers rebounded quickly and a limited season (6 days with a 1-bird bag) was held in both 1999 and 2000. As the population increased, the season was extended to 30 days in 2001, then 45 days in 2002, and 50 days from 2012-2018.
- However, annual productivity has been below average for 6 of the past 7 years, leading to a decline in the breeding population over the past 4 years (see graph below). This has been the result of adverse weather conditions on the nesting grounds in northern Canada.
- Because of this declining trend, the Atlantic Flyway Council in cooperation with the USFWS recommended reducing the harvest on AP geese beginning in 2019-20. The season was restricted to 30 days with a 1-goose daily limit in the AP Goose Zone. These restrictive regulations will remain in effect for the 2021-22 season.
- The Canada goose season in the Resident Zone (RP) will be unchanged from last year.
- In the Southern James Bay Zone (SJBZ), the season length will remain the same but the daily bag limit will be reduced from 5 to 3 during the last segment.



Canada Goose Populations and Hunt Zones

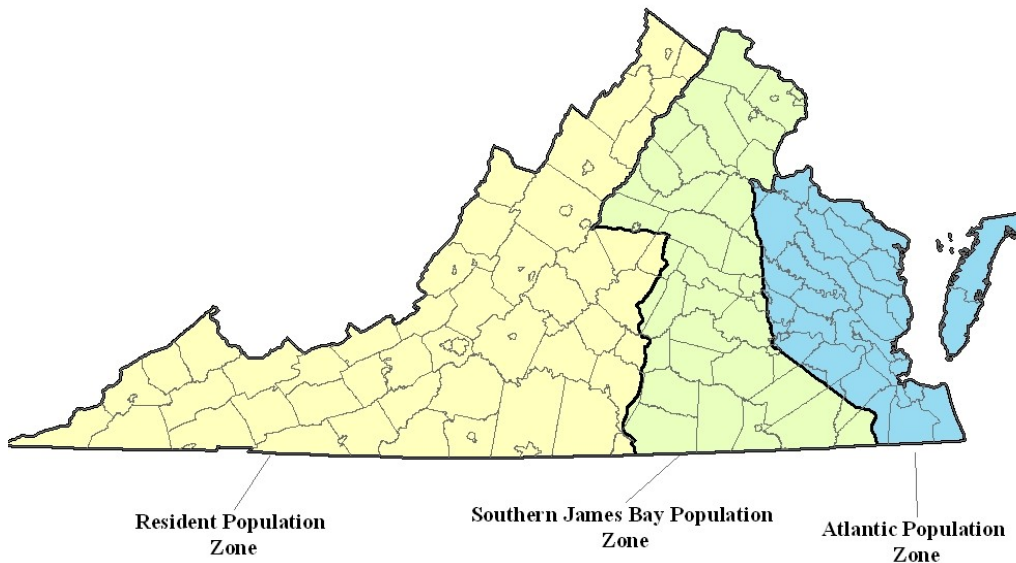
- There are 4 subpopulations of Canada geese in Virginia. These include the Atlantic Flyway Resident Population (RP) along with three migrant goose populations, the North Atlantic Population (NAP), the Southern James Bay Population (SJB), and the Atlantic Population (AP). The majority of our migrant 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



CANADA GOOSE

FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

ATLANTIC POPULATION ZONE (AP):

<u>Season Length:</u>	30 hunting days
<u>Outside Dates:</u>	November 15 – February 5
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	1 bird daily (3 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>	December 18 – December 31	(14 days)
	January 15 – January 30	(16 days)
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	1 goose per day (3 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 17 – November 28 3/day December 18 – January 14 3/day
<u>Extended Season:</u>	January 15 - February 15 3/day
<u>Shooting Hours:</u>	1/2-hour before sunrise until sunset daily

RESIDENT POPULATION ZONE: (RP)

<u>Season Dates:</u>	November 17 – November 28 December 18 - February 23
<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) - 2021

- The majority of the “Light” geese found in the Atlantic Flyway are Greater Snow Geese, while less than 5% are Lesser Snow Geese, with even smaller numbers of Ross’s Geese.
- The principal nesting areas for greater snow geese are on Bylot, Axel Heiberg, Ellesmere, and Baffin Islands, and on Greenland. They winter along the Atlantic Coast from New Jersey to North Carolina.
- The Greater Snow Goose population is monitored on spring staging areas along the St. Lawrence Valley in Quebec. The 2019 population estimate was 714,000 geese, which is 19% lower than 2018 but similar to the long-term average.
- Breeding conditions were average to below average at the main breeding colony on Bylot Island in 2020, and production is expected to be below average this year.
- 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 concerns about habitat degradation on their breeding, migration and wintering areas. Snow geese can cause damage to these habitats by pulling up plant roots and denuding marshes of vegetation. Snow geese can also cause conflicts with agricultural interest by pulling up green grains including wheat and barley.
- 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 could have on breeding and wintering habitats.
- A Conservation Order (CO) 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 snow goose harvest in Virginia has averaged around 300 birds during the regular season and 725 birds during the Conservation Order over the past 3 years.

LIGHT GOOSE SEASONS

REGULAR LIGHT GOOSE SEASON

FEDERAL FRAMEWORK

<u>Season Length:</u>	107 hunting days
<u>Outside Dates:</u>	October 1, 2021 - March 10, 2022
<u>Split Season Option:</u>	3-way split season
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	25 birds daily (no possession limit)

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

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

LIGHT GOOSE CONSERVATION ORDER

FEDERAL FRAMEWORK

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Conservation Order 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.

<u>Season Dates:</u>	February 1 – April 5, 2022	(65 days)
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	No daily or possession limit	
<u>Special Hunting Methods:</u>	Electronic calls, unplugged shotguns and extended shooting hours to one-half hour after sunset.	
<u>Special Requirements:</u>	Hunters participating in the Conservation Order <u>must register with DGIF</u> , 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 - 2021

- **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 MA to NC.
- The 2020 Mid-Winter Survey (MWS) count of brant in the Atlantic Flyway (139,875) was 16% higher than in 2019, and was similar to the past 5-year average (144,170). Fall productivity surveys indicated 10% young, which is similar to last year, but still 41% below the long-term average.
- The Brant Harvest Strategy provides hunting season recommendation based on the population surveys and annual productivity. The strategy recommends a 50-day season with a 2-bird daily bag limit for the 2021-2022 season.
- **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.
- The tundra swan productivity estimate from this fall (11% young) increased slightly from the previous year, but was still 35% below the long-term average.
- The total 2020 Mid-Winter Survey count of EP tundra swans was 78,586, with 61,354 counted in the Atlantic Flyway, 9,241 in the Mississippi Flyway (MF) and 7,991 in Ontario. This total is down from last year's count of 92,817, and drops the 3-year running average (2018-2020) to 94,340.
- Nine 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 Delaware, Virginia and North Carolina in the Atlantic Flyway.
- The allocation of hunt permits in the Atlantic Flyway is split between the 3 states that have tundra swan hunting seasons (DE, VA, NC), in proportion to the number of swans in each state. For the 2021-22 season, North Carolina will be allocated 4,895 permits, Virginia will be allocated 638 permits, and Delaware will be allocated 67 permits. This is no change from last year.
- 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.

ATLANTIC BRANT

FEDERAL FRAMEWORK

<u>Season Length:</u>	50 hunting days
<u>Outside Dates:</u>	September 25, 2021 - January 31, 2022
<u>Split Season Option:</u>	2-way split season
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	2 bird daily (6 in possession)

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

<u>Season Dates:</u>	November 23 – November 28 December 18 – January 30
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	2 birds daily (6 in possession)

TUNDRA SWAN

FEDERAL FRAMEWORK

Season Length: 90 hunting days

Outside Dates: October 1, 2021 - January 31, 2022

Virginia may issue up to 638 permits and must obtain harvest and hunter participation data. Each permittee is authorized to take one (1) tundra swan per season.

Bag Limit: One per permittee per season

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Season Dates: November 17 - January 31

Bag Limit: One per permittee per season

Hunt Area: 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: VDWR will issue no more than 638 swan-hunting permits to holders of a valid Virginia hunting license. Only hunters with a valid 2021-2022 tundra swan-hunting permit issued by VDWR 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 permanently record the month and day of kill on their permit and attach it to their swan. The VDWR is required to obtain hunter participation and harvest information to offer this Tundra Swan hunting season. **Hunters are required to complete the tundra swan hunt questionnaire (survey) and submit their results to the Department by February 15, 2022.** Those who fail to submit their results are ineligible for future drawings.

FALCONRY

FEDERAL FRAMEWORK

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

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

<u>Dove:</u>	September 4 – October 27 November 20 – November 28 December 22 – January 31
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<u>Rail, Gallinule, Moorhen:</u>	September 7 – December 22
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<u>Woodcock:</u>	October 17 – January 31
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<u>Snipe:</u>	October 8 - 11 October 21 – January 31
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<u>Canada Goose:</u>	September 1 - September 25 November 17 – November 28 December 18 - February 23
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<u>September Teal:</u>	September 17 - September 30
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<u>Ducks, Mergansers, Coot:</u>	October 8 - 11 November 17 – February 11
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<u>Brant and Snow Goose:</u>	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.

VDWR Fish Hatchery System: Current trends, Future direction

Brendan C. Delbos

January 20. 2021



CONSERVE. CONNECT. PROTECT.

VDWR Fish Hatchery System



Facilities

Five Coldwater
Four Warmwater

Team

45 dedicated
professionals

Annual Budget

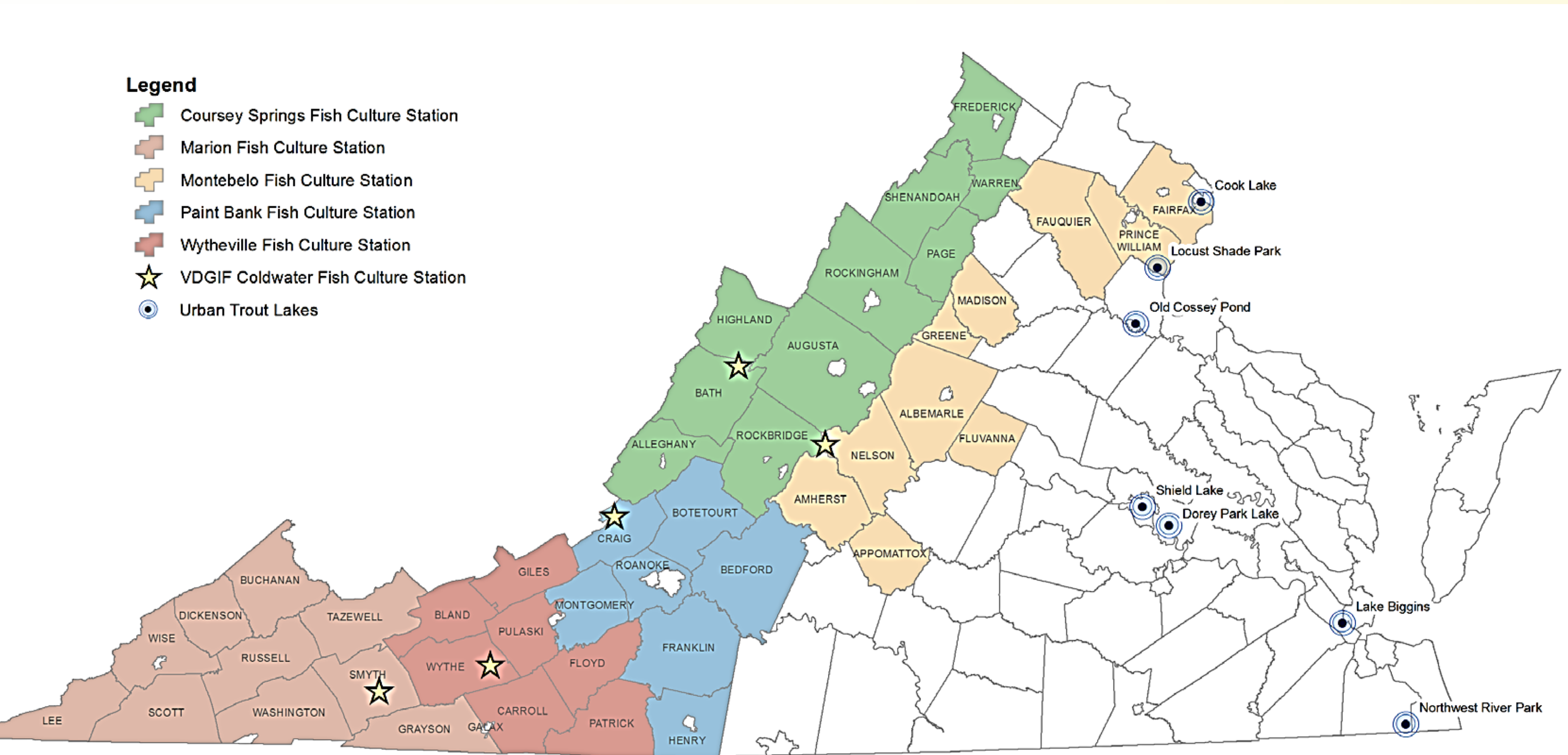
\$4 million

Support

Fishing
opportunities
for 500K anglers



DWR Trout Production and Stocking



Five Coldwater Hatcheries

Stock 1 million: brown, brook and rainbow trout per year

Nearly 200 waters stocked

1,350 stocking trips per year

140,000 miles driven

Provide services for 100K anglers

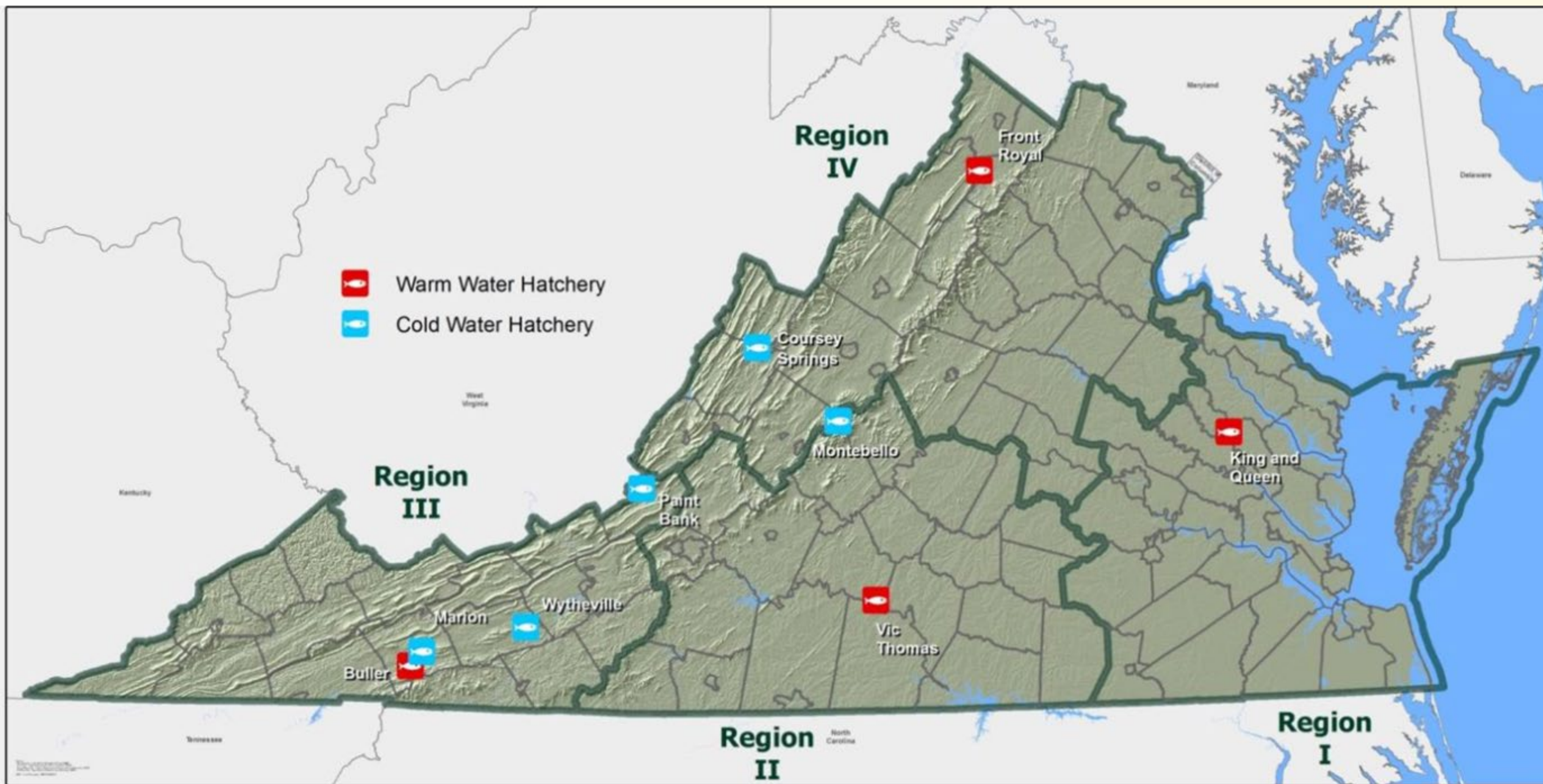
Put and Take fisheries

Fee Areas: 3

Urban Waters: 7



DWR Warmwater Fish Production



Four Warmwater Hatcheries

Produce 3 million juvenile fish:

Striped bass, Walleye, Muskie, Centrarchids

Support fisheries in over 75% of public impoundments

500K freshwater fishing licenses sold annually



Front Royal Hatchery Renovation

Facility

108 acre property in Warrenton County
28 culture ponds
Passage Creek used as water supply

History

Constructed by CCC in earl 1930s
First stocking in 1933

Renovations

Decree consent with DuPont
Up to \$10 million for upgrades
Future production of smallmouth bass



Front Royal Project Details



Renovate ponds

New hatchery buildings

Modify existing water intake and install filtration system



ISSUE	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1	05/15/18	50% SUBMITTAL
2	05/15/18	50% SUBMITTAL
3	05/15/18	50% SUBMITTAL

PROJECT MANAGER	T. WOLFORD
PROJECT BIOLOGIST	M. COCHRAN
CIVIL	R. ORRIS
STRUCTURAL	B. BRADLEY
ELECTRICAL	B. SCHWABE
MECHANICAL	T. TALBIA
ARCHITECTURAL	P. DALSHTON
PROJECT NUMBER	



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND INLAND FISHERIES

FRONT ROYAL FISH HATCHERY RESTORATION
PROPOSED OVERALL SITE PLAN

FILENAME	C1.1.dwg	SHEET	C1.1
SCALE	1"=100'		



Hatchery Outreach

Promoting the Goals of the Agency while increasing the Profile of the Hatcheries



Increase Visibility

**Social Media
Articles
Videos**



Increase Engagement

**Hatchery Open House
Special Stocking Events
Internships**



Improve Awareness

**Develop understanding
and
foster appreciation**



GET IN TOUCH WITH US

Brendan C. Delbos
Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources

State Hatchery Superintendent

Brendan.Delbos@DWR.Virginia.Gov

804-291-8270

<https://dwr.virginia.gov/fishing/fish-stocking/state-hatcheries/>

