2016-17 Proposed Upland Game Bird Regulations

Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting
April 22, 2016, Bandon, Oregon
Dave Budeau
Upland Game Bird Coordinator
Upland Game Bird Regulations

- Brief Overview: Population Status, Harvest Surveys
- Regulation Framework
- Controlled Fall Turkey Seasons
- Special Hunting Opportunities: Youth Hunts, Hunting Workshops, Fee Pheasant Hunt
- Controlled Sage-Grouse Hunt
- Recommend Private Hunting Preserve Rule Change
Upland Game Bird Hunters and Harvest
Population Status

- Too early for fall population forecasts
- Populations have been increasing
- Significant precipitation and snow pack will help
- No significant overwinter mortality
- Habitat conditions should be good this spring
- Even average conditions will mean an increase
Upland Game Bird Framework

- In second year of upland game bird framework
- Established through public process
- Basis for Regulation Framework
  - Annual variation in populations is normal
  - Hunting effort is largely self-regulating
  - Hunting mortality small part of annual mortality
## 2016-17 Season Proposals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UPLAND GAME BIRDS</th>
<th>OPEN AREA</th>
<th>OPEN SEASON</th>
<th>DAILY BAG LIMIT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Blue&quot; and Ruffed Grouse</td>
<td>Statewide</td>
<td>Sep. 1 – Jan. 31</td>
<td>3 each species</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chukar and Hungarian (Gray) Partridge</td>
<td>Eastern Oregon cos</td>
<td>Oct. 8 – Jan. 31</td>
<td>8 (Except Lower Klamath Hills)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rooster Pheasant</td>
<td>Statewide</td>
<td>Oct. 8 – Dec. 31</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California Quail</td>
<td>Western Oregon</td>
<td>Sep. 1 – Jan. 31</td>
<td>10 in aggregate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eastern Oregon cos</td>
<td>Oct. 8 – Jan. 31</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Quail</td>
<td>Western Oregon, Hood Rvr and Wasco cos</td>
<td>Sep. 1 – Jan. 31</td>
<td>10 in aggregate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Crook, Gilliam, Grant, Klamath, Morrow, Umatilla, Wallowa, and Wheeler cos</td>
<td>Oct. 8 – Jan. 31</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Remaining Eastern Oregon cos</td>
<td>NO OPEN SEASON</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Turkey</td>
<td>Statewide</td>
<td>Apr. 15 - May 31</td>
<td>1 (season limit 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall Turkey - General</td>
<td>Western Oregon</td>
<td>Oct. 15 - Dec. 31</td>
<td>1 (season limit 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17 W. Oregon WMUs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Eastern Oregon Fall Turkey Hunts

- Proposing changes to 4 of 5 controlled hunts

- Combine Baker, Grande Ronde, Wallowa Hunts
  - 62% subscribed over past 3 years
  - Limit to 450 tags OTC, first-come, first-served

- Change Blue Mountain Hunt to OTC
  - 92% subscribed over past 3 years
  - Limit to 500 tags, first-come, first-served

- Season length would remain the same but last month of season (Dec.) limited to private land

- Changes should increase opportunity and utilization of available tags
Eastern Oregon Fall Turkey Hunt

- Keep White River as Controlled Fall Hunt
  - Maintains equitable chance for tag
  - Currently 3 applicants for every tag
- Expand open area in Wasco County (“West Biggs”)
- No Changes to tag #’s, season length, or bag limits

- Hunters allowed two Fall turkey tags but only one for eastern Oregon
  - i.e., Two western fall tags, or one eastern and one western Oregon fall turkey tag
Special Hunting Opportunities

- Require special seasons
- Opportunities change annually
- Not covered by Framework
Special Hunting Opportunities

2016 Proposed Pheasant Hunting Workshops

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HUNT AREA</th>
<th>DATES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sauvie Island Wildlife Area</td>
<td>September 10 &amp; 11 (Family Workshops)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. E. Wilson Wildlife Area</td>
<td>September 17 (Family)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Special Hunting Opportunities**

- Require special reasons
- Opportunities change annually
- Not covered by Framework

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### 2016 Western Oregon Fee Pheasant Hunts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HUNT AREA</th>
<th>DATES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fern Ridge Wildlife Area</td>
<td>September 12 – October 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sauvie Island Wildlife Area</td>
<td>September 19 – October 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denman Wildlife Area</td>
<td>September 19 – October 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. E. Wilson Wildlife Area</td>
<td>October 1 – October 31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Special Hunting Opportunities

2016 Proposed Youth Hunts for Pheasants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HUNT AREA</th>
<th>DATES</th>
<th>HUNTER LIMITATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baker City (private land)</td>
<td>Sept. 24 &amp; 25</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denman Wildlife Area</td>
<td>Sept. 17 &amp; 18</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. E. Wilson Wildlife Area</td>
<td>Sept. 24 &amp; 25</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fern Ridge Wildlife Area</td>
<td>Sept. 10 &amp; 11</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrigon Wildlife Area</td>
<td>Sept. 24 &amp; 25</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Day (private land)</td>
<td>Sept. 17 &amp; 18</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klamath Wildlife Area</td>
<td>Sept. 17 &amp; 18</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ladd Marsh Wildlife Area</td>
<td>Sept. 17 &amp; 18</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Columbia (near The Dalles)</td>
<td>Sept. 17 &amp; 18</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sauvie Island Wildlife Area</td>
<td>Sept. 17 &amp; 18</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Oregon (Near Prineville)</td>
<td>Sept. 17 &amp; 18</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. E. Wilson W.A. Mentored Youth</td>
<td>Sept. 18</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Current Status of Sage-grouse

- Breeding population increased 11% last year
- Juvenile/hen ratio 2.28, above LTA of 1.5
- 58% Juveniles in harvest, above LTA of 48%
- 2016 Lek surveys wrapping up this month
- Expect population to be stable/increase again this year

- USFWS found sage-grouse not warranted for protection under federal ESA, will review again in 5 years
Controlled Sage-grouse Season

- **Season Dates:** Sep 10 - 18
- **Open Area:** 10 Wildlife Mgmt Units*
- **Daily/Season Bag Limit:** 2 sage-grouse
- **Application Deadline:** Aug 22, 2016

Will adopt permit #’s by temporary rule in early August

*Proposed closure of Whitehorse WMU west of Hwy 95 and south of Whitehorse Rd. No permits offered in 11 other WMUs with sage-grouse.*
Sage-grouse Hunting Mortality: Literature Review

Johnson and Braun (1999) – harvest becomes additive at some level
Connelly et al. (2003) – harvest can slow population growth
Gibson et al. (2011) – harvest can decrease number of spring males

Crawford (1982) – spring population not affected by hunting
Braun and Beck (1985) – 7-11% harvest no measurable impact
Crawford and Lutz (1985) – did not influence population trends
Sedinger et al. (2010) – <11% harvest consistent with compensatory mortality
Dinkins and Beck (in progress) – mixed results on effects of harvest

Best available science: Harvest rates of 10% or less do not have a significant influence on subsequent year’s breeding population
Oregon’s sage-grouse season structure uses the best available science to minimize the potential of reducing subsequent spring breeding populations by:

1) Limiting the number of hunters through a controlled hunt process
2) Offering no season where populations are small or isolated
3) Limiting harvest to no more than two birds per season/hunter
4) Limiting the number of available permits to take no more than 5% of the estimated fall population
5) Holding the season early, but not too early, allowing more time for compensatory effects and to minimize any potential additive effects
6) Concluding the season by Sept. 20 to maximize the biological information available through wings
7) Using adaptive management to modify permit numbers or close areas to hunting
Game Bird Regulations Public Comments

- Concern about turkeys in residential areas
- Asking for pheasant season to open after deer
Private Hunting Preserves

- Private Hunting Preserves are licensed by ODFW and allowed to release specific upland game bird species for hunting
- Private Hunting Preserves are not permitted within 0.5 miles of parks, wildlife areas, refuges, or other hunting preserves
- After initial approval, private hunting preserve licenses are renewed annually
Private Hunting Preserves

- What if a government agency acquires property <0.5 miles of an established hunting preserve? Does this jeopardize their license renewal?

- Staff proposes a rule change which would “grandfather” currently licensed preserves if an acquisition occurred within <0.5 miles
Private Hunting Preserves

635-047-0010(6)
Requirements for Licenses
(6) No license will be granted for any hunting preserve, any portion of which is less than one-half mile distant from any state or federal park, wilderness area, refuge, or wildlife area operated by the state or federal government.
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Rule change would allow currently licensed preserves to renew their license if a wildlife area, state or federal park/refuge was created within 0.5 miles after the hunting preserve was established.
Questions?