

## Agenda Item Summary

### BACKGROUND

The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission has authority and responsibility for upland game bird management within the state. Upland game bird seasons are based on a framework approved by the Commission in 2014 and in effect from September 1, 2015 through August 31, 2020. Public comments were used in setting the final framework. The framework is renewed every 5 years based on internal recommendations and public comments.

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

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

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

### PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

- Questions from interested persons, including the news media, were answered.
- Comments about game bird regulations were welcomed at 20 public meetings across the state in July 2018.
- Migratory Game Bird Season proposals were sent in March 2019 to interested parties and an established email list for comment.
- Proposed changes to sage-grouse, youth pheasant hunts, and wild turkey regulations were presented to the National Wild Turkey Federation and Oregon Hunters Association state boards.

**ISSUE 1**

Provide recommendations for 2019-20 Game Bird seasons and hunting regulations.

**ANALYSIS**

A summary of population status, past hunter effort and harvest, proposed season dates, bag and possession limits, and other regulations related to the 2019-20 game bird hunting seasons is included in Attachment 3. An overview of the proposed recommendations includes:

**Sage-grouse Seasons**

Season length and bag limit are proposed as adopted in framework. Permit numbers for each Wildlife Management Unit (WMU) will be determined in early August and adopted by Temporary Rule after collection of summer brood route/chick production information. Permit numbers are anticipated to be similar to recent years except for the reopening of the Trout Creek Mountains to sage-grouse hunting as a subunit of the Whitehorse WMU.

**Eastern Oregon Fall Turkey Seasons**

Staff recommends the inclusion of Maupin, Biggs, Columbia Basin, and Owyhee WMUs into the existing Blue Mountain fall turkey hunt, and renaming the hunt “Central”. The White River controlled hunt boundary would be modified to only include the White River WMU, excluding that part of the Biggs WMU west of the Deschutes River. Eastern Oregon fall turkey tag numbers are proposed to increase by 400, including 300 additional tags for the new Central fall hunt, and 100 additional tags to the existing Northeast hunt.

**Special and Youth Upland Game Hunting Opportunities**

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

**Falconry Seasons**

Recommendations for falconry seasons are unchanged from last year.

**Dove and Pigeon Seasons**

Recommendations for mourning dove and band-tailed pigeons are unchanged from last year.

**Youth Waterfowl Season**

Recommendations for ducks are unchanged from last year.

**Duck Seasons**

Staff recommendation will propose that the daily bag limit for pintails be decreased to one bird per day.

**Goose Seasons**

Staff will recommend that the Canada goose bag limit increase to 6 per day in the Northwest Permit Zone if results of aerial surveys conducted by the USFWS in Alaska in June 2019 show the cackling Canada goose population increased relative to 2017.

**Snipe and Coot Seasons**

Recommendations for snipe and coots are unchanged from last year.

**ISSUE 2**

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

**ANALYSIS**

OAR, Chapter 635, Division 008 cover the rules for Department owned, managed, or controlled areas. Changes being proposed to address new issues/conflicts and to make language more consistent. These include:

- Prohibiting **leaving personal or commercial property overnight on Department owned, managed or controlled areas except at camping sites during authorized camping periods.**
- Removing references to access permits issued by ODFW. These references are not necessary for each area because OAR **635-008-0050 (16)** provides the authority for issuing permits for exceptions to the OARs for all areas.
- Standardizing the language for areas that are closed to the public during a period of each day: **The area is closed to the public between 10 pm and 4 am.**
- Clarifying rules for some areas with consistent language on appropriate uses for the area.

**OPTIONS**

1. Adopt staff recommendations.
2. Modify staff recommendations.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Option 1

<b>DRAFT MOTION</b>	I move to amend OAR Chapter 635, Divisions 008, 045, 051, 052, 053, 054, and 060 as proposed by staff to set regulations for 2019-20 game bird seasons and regulations for the use of Department lands.
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b>	Upon Filing