

2016 Public Input

The process for receiving public input on proposed waterfowl seasons is very condensed because of the timing of the Federal regulation schedule; however, our most active waterfowl groups and individuals are aware of the time frame. A total of 182 individuals offered comments on the waterfowl hunting seasons in addition to the Wisconsin Conservation Congress Migratory Committee and several waterfowl groups. The following tools were used to involve interested parties in the rule making process.

- **Mail survey – winter 2015-16.** Following the 2015 waterfowl season a scientifically designed survey was mailed out to a random selection of 3000 Wisconsin waterfowl hunters as we have done every other year for the last several years. This survey provided us information on waterfowl hunter experiences, input on hunting seasons and the 2017 duck zone configuration
- **Rule process information** - Beginning in February, 2016 we issued preliminary information and instructions on how the public could provide input to the regulation setting process through press releases, the Department website and direct mailings to waterfowl groups. Over 19,000 people are now on GovDelivery email notices regarding topics related to waterfowl management and hunting. This list was provided regular updates during the process.
- **Telephone, email and written comment.** Public comments and questions began coming in during February through telephone calls and emails. These were accepted through March 18.
- **February 11, Staff attended the LaCrosse County Conservation Alliance** annual waterfowl meeting to present information and received input primarily on the Mississippi River Zone season. About 25 waterfowl hunters were in attendance.
- **February 13, Wisconsin Wildlife Federation. Stevens Point.** Meeting was held to present the population status and season structure options with the waterfowl committee of the federation. Several conservation organizations or individuals were present, the groups represented were: Wisconsin Wildlife Federation (WWF), Wisconsin Waterfowl Association (WWA), La Crosse County Conservation Alliance (LCCA), Challenge the Outdoors, Green Bay Duck Hunters (GBDH), Burlington Conservation Club, and Black Slough Conservation Club (BSCC).
- **March 5 – Migratory Committee of the Conservation Congress. Stevens Point.** Staff presented information on the status of waterfowl and potential season structures. The committee made suggestions for the hunting season proposal and voted on all aspects. The committee had about 20 members present.
- **March 11&12 – Wisconsin Waterfowl Hunters Conference Special Sessions. Wausau.** Presentations and special breakout sessions were held to present the population status and proposed season structure with conference attendees. The conference had about 100 in attendance while about 45 people participated in the breakout discussions.
- **March 14-17, Public Hearings.** Four public hearings were held around the state and 73 people attended overall. Attendees were presented with population status information and the proposed waterfowl rules. Following a period for clarifying questions, individuals could make oral testimony or provide written comments.
 - **LaCrosse** - 18 people attended, 8 gave oral testimony
 - **Rice Lake** - 10 people attended, 4 gave oral testimony
 - **Appleton** – 24 people attended, 7 gave oral testimony
 - **Pewaukee** – 21 people attended, 7 gave oral testimony

Public input Summary:

Hearing attendance and public input volume was above 2015 but similar to prior years with a total of 173 individual comments and several statewide or local conservation groups representing thousands of members submitting comment. The input was in favor of most aspects of the waterfowl season proposals (Appendix 2).

Appendix 2. Migratory Game Bird Public Comment Summary 2016

Bold/Italics = Department proposal

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Email/ Hearing/other</u>	<u>Groups at Meetings</u>	<u>Cons. Congress</u>	<u>% of comments in favor</u>
<i>Duck Zone Options, retain current 3 zone format (South, North, Mississippi River; 2017-2020)</i>	<i>106</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>71%</i>
Duck Zone Options, Move North/South Zone Line north to Hwy 64	28	1		
Duck Zone Options, Eliminate Miss River Zone and Create Lake Michigan Zone	9			
Duck Zone Options, Move North/South Zone Line further south or different (unspecified)	7			
<i>Mississippi River Duck Zone, Oct 1-Oct 7 & Oct 15-Dec 6</i>	<i>107</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>91%</i>
Mississippi River Duck Zone, Oct 1-7, Oct 22-Dec 13	4			
Mississippi River Duck Zone, Sept 24-Oct 2, Oct 15-Dec 4	3			
Mississippi River Duck Zone, Statewide Opener	3			
Mississippi River Duck Zone, Oct. 8-Oct 14 & Oct 22-Dec 13	1			
<i>North Duck Zone, Sept 24-Nov 22</i>	<i>105</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>77%</i>
North Duck Zone, Oct 1 - Oct 9, Oct 15 - Dec 4	16			
North Duck Zone, Oct 1-Nov 29	6	1		
North Duck Zone open Sept 24 with 5-7 day split some time during the season	10			
<i>South Duck Zone, Oct 1 - Oct 9, Oct 15 - Dec 4</i>	<i>116</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>91%</i>
South Duck Zone Oct 8 - Oct 16, Oct 22 - Dec 11	7			
South Duck Zone open Sept 24-Nov 22	1			
South Duck Zone open later or longer split (unspecified)	4			
<i>South Duck Zone split, 5-day, Oct 10-14</i>	<i>112</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>93%</i>
South Duck Zone, no split	2			
South Duck Zone, 7 days or longer	6			
<i>Duck Shooting Hours on Opening Day, 1/2 hr before sunrise</i>	<i>113</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>87%</i>
Duck Shooting Hours on Opening Day, 9am	9	1		
Duck Shooting Hours on Opening Day, noon	4			
Duck Shooting Hours on Opening Day, different (unspecified)	4			
<i>Early Goose Season, Sept 1- 15 with 5 geese/day daily bag limit</i>	<i>124</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>96%</i>
Early Goose Season, Sept 1-5 with 3 geese/day daily bag limit	3			
Early Goose Season, Sept 1-30 with 5 geese/day daily bag limit	1			
Early Goose Season, shorter (unspecified)	1			
<i>Exterior Goose Zone, Sept 16 in North and South Zone and open concurrent with duck in Mississippi Zone</i>	<i>121</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>92%</i>
Exterior Goose Zone, start and run concurrent with duck seasons	5			
Exterior Goose open later or different (unspecified)	5			
<i>Exterior Goose Zone Split, South and Mississippi Zone concurrent with duck season, No split in North Zone</i>	<i>113</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>89%</i>
Exterior Goose Zone Split, Split in the North Zone	4			
Exterior Goose Zone Split, Add second split later in the season in South and Mississippi Zones	6			
Exterior Goose Zone Split, No split in any zones	4			
<i>Exterior Goose Bag Limit, 2 geese/day daily bag limit</i>	<i>114</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>84%</i>
Exterior Goose Bag Limit, 3 or more geese per day daily bag limit	21	1		
<i>Hen Mallard Bag Limit, 1/day</i>	<i>122</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>95%</i>
2 hen mallard daily bag limit	6			
<i>Horicon Canada Goose Zone, 1 Period with Season Harvest Limit of 12</i>	<i>122</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>98%</i>
Horicon Canada Goose Zone, 1 Period Season Harvest Limit of 6	2			
Horicon Canada Goose Zone, 1 Period Season Harvest Limit of more than 12	1			
<i>Youth Hunt Sept 17+18</i>	<i>118</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>90%</i>
Youth Hunt Sept 17+18; 2 hen mallard bag limit	5	1		
Youth Hunt, 1 day or something different (unspecified)	4			
No Youth Hunt	4			
Total comments	173			
Attendance at Public Hearings	73			