

## DNR Migratory Gamebird Committee Meeting March 9, 2016

### Attendance:

Kent Van Horn (WDNR), Pete Engman (WDNR - NOD), Jim Holzwart (WDNR- NED), Bill Hirt (WDNR- WCD), Tyler Strelow (WDNR - LE), Paul Samerdyke (WDNR - SOD), Brenda Kelly (WDNR), Peter David (GLIFWC), Chip Lovell (USDA-APHIS), Don Kirby (WI Waterfowl Association), John Wetzel (WI Wildlife Federation), Jeff Nass (Hunters Rights Coalition), Brian Glenzinski (Ducks Unlimited), Al Shook (WI Conservation Congress), Taylor Finger (WDNR)

### Not in Attendance:

Jason Fleener (WDNR), Linda Olver (WDNR – Customer Service), Ron Gatti (WDNR- Science Services), Sumner Matteson (WDNR – Natural Heritage Conservation), Kurt Waterstradt (USFWS), Joel Brice (Delta Waterfowl)

### **Update on Waterfowl Season and Season Proposals**

- **Kent Van Horn** – Provided presentation on updates regarding 2015 hunting season and spring outlook. Also provided background on new federal regulatory cycle as well as results from Waterfowl Hunter Survey. Lastly, Kent provided information on Duck Zone process and survey results.

### **Comments:**

- **John Wetzel** – Has there been any anti-hunter comments sent to the USFWS regarding the federal proposed seasons that were out for public comments.
- **Kent Van Horn** – We have not been made aware of any comments from groups opposing the proposed migratory bird seasons.
- **John Wetzel** – Asked what the tribal season proposals were?
- **Kent Van Horn** – Provided information on the tribal proposal including night hunting, hunting with electronic callers, baiting and trapping. He also informed the committee that the department had worked on a letter sent to the USFWS on behalf of the Mississippi Flyway Council regarding our opposition to several aspects of the tribal proposal.
- **Peter David** – Representing GLIFWC provided input on the tribal proposal and commented on the Mississippi Flyway Council's letter.

## Update on Duck Zone Change and Process

- Kent summarized review and public input regarding duck zones over the last year, and provided information on how the zones could be structured under federal options
  - o Four zones with no season split options, 3 zones with one season split option, 2 zones with option of one season split, and no zone with option of 2 splits.
- Duck zone public input process and timing for when the final recommendation would need to be submitted.
- Purpose of the Duck Zone Ad Hoc Committee and the committee recommended
  - o Update the Hwy 10 zone line with the new highway construction if Hwy 10 remains as the North/South Zone line.
  - o Present 3 zone options that will go into the random waterfowl hunter mail survey.
    - Maintain current 3 zone structure with update to match the new Hwy 10.
    - Move the North/South Zone line to Hwy 64.
    - Add Lake Michigan as a fourth zone with the understanding that there would be no splits allowed under federal guidelines.
- Kent provided information on results from the waterfowl hunter survey showing that the majority of those that participated in the survey supported the current structure when provided with the other options.

## Comments:

- **Bill Hirt** – Specific to the Mead Wildlife Area, he would like to see the north/south zone line moved to Hwy 64. He hears from his constituents and the feeling that the move would distribute hunting pressure away from Mead. He had contacted staff regarding the Stevens Point change and found no opposition from wildlife staff but LE expressed some concern.
- **Tyler Strelow (LE)** – Feels that adjusting line with highway meets rule simplification goals asked by the department.

## Update on Waterfowl Regulation Schedule Changing According to USFWS Changes

- o Kent provided an updated timeline in regards to the waterfowl season setting process and also provided what the USFWS proposed 2016 season structure was.

## 2016 Waterfowl Season Proposal and votes

- o Kent asked for committee to vote on Duck Zone Configuration for 2017 and 2016 migratory bird season proposal and the results were as follows

- **Duck Zone Structure** – Maintain current 3 zone structure with slight update to current Hwy 10.
  - Unanimous support; Peter David - Abstain
  
- **Early Goose Season:** Sept. 1 – Sept. 15 (5 bird/day)
  - Unanimous support; Peter David - Abstain
  
- **Mourning Dove Season:** Sept. 1 – Nov. 29 (15 bird/day)
  - Unanimous support; Peter David - Abstain
  
- **Woodcock Season:** Sept. 24 – Nov. 7 (3 bird/day)
  - Unanimous support; Peter David – Abstain

**Comments:** Kent and Taylor informed the committee that we will be rolling the early regulations into the Migratory Bird Regulations but plan to maintain an early vs regular season section structure.

- **60 Day Season** – 6 ducks, no more than 4 mallards (only 1 may be a hen), 3 wood ducks, 1 black duck, 2 redheads, 3 scaup, 2 pintail and 2 canvasback. 5 mergansers, not more than 2 hooded. Coot daily bag of 15.
  - Unanimous support; Peter David – Abstain
- **Opening Day shooting hours** - begin at ½ hour before sunrise.
  - Unanimous support; Peter David – Abstain

### **Duck Season Dates**

**Youth Hunt:** Sept. 17 and 18

- Unanimous support; Peter David – Abstain

### **Comments:**

- **John Wetzel** – Wanted to bring up to the committee that there were several people at the La Crosse County Conservation Alliance meeting that suggested a 2 hen mallard bag limit during the youth hunt.

**North Zone:** Sept. 24 – Nov. 22

- Unanimous support; Peter David – Abstain

**South Zone:** Oct. 1 – Oct. 9 & Oct. 15 – Dec. 4 (5 day split)

- Unanimous support; Peter David – Abstain

**Mississippi Zone:** Oct. 1 – Oct. 7 & Oct. 15 – Dec. 6 (7 day split)

- Unanimous support; Peter David – Abstain

**Comments:**

- **Brenda Kelly** – Has heard from constituents on the Miss River still thinking that a 9 day split is the way to go, push that season as late as possible. Could have still been hunting on the river until January.
- **Tyler Strelow** – Thought the season framework for the Miss River was great last year and thinks that the 2<sup>nd</sup> opening day coinciding with the South Zone post-split “opening day” is a good idea.

**Goose Season Dates**

**Exterior Zone:** 92 days total. Daily Bag of 2

- **North** – Sept. 16 – Dec. 16
  - Unanimous support; Peter David – Abstain
- **South** – Sept. 16 – Oct. 9 & Oct. 15 – Dec. 21
  - Unanimous support; Peter David – Abstain
- **Miss.** – Oct. 1 – Oct. 7 & Oct. 15 – Jan. 5
  - Unanimous support; Peter David – Abstain

**Comments:**

- **Don Kirby** - Has heard and seen on social media a push for increasing the daily bag limit for Canada Geese
- **Peter David** - Has a real concern about the MVP goose population and thinks we need to remain restrictive
- **Al Shook** – Thinks we need to get out in front of this and start talking about decreasing the goose bag limit if we continue seeing the same trend.

**Horicon Zone: \*\*1 period\*\*.** Daily Bag of 2. 12 tags per hunter

- Sept. 16 – Dec. 16
  - Unanimous support; Peter David – Abstain

**Snow/Blue Geese, Ross’ Geese, Brant, White-fronted Geese and other geese**

- Unanimous support; Peter David – Abstain

**Daily Bag Limits:**

White Geese (Snow/Blue Geese and Ross’ Geese) – 20

Brant – 1

Greater White-Fronted Geese - 1

- Unanimous support; Peter David – Abstain

**Exterior Zone:** 92 days total.

- **North** – Sept. 16 – Dec. 16
- **South** – Sept. 16 – Oct. 9 & Oct. 15 – Dec. 21
- **Miss.** – Oct. 1 – Oct. 7 & Oct. 15 – Jan. 5
  - Unanimous support; Peter David – Abstain

**Horicon Zone:** Sept. 16 – Dec. 16

- Unanimous support; Peter David – Abstain

### **Other Migratory Bird Seasons**

**Coot, Moorhen, Rails and Snipe:** Same as wild ducks in the zone in which you are hunting.

- Unanimous support; Peter David – Abstain

### **Daily Bag Limit:**

Coot and Moorhen – 15

Sora & Virginia Rails – 25

Snipe – 8

- Unanimous support; Peter David – Abstain

### **General Comments:**

- **Brian Glenzinski** – Asked where the department was at regarding consolidating all of the wildlife stamps into one stamp.
- **Kent Van Horn** – Currently the department isn't doing anything regarding wildlife stamps.
- **Al Shook** – Wisconsin Conservation Congress Executive Committee didn't support it and there was no formal question provided in time for the 2016 spring hearings.
- **Don Kirby** – Somewhat frustrated because conservation groups gathered a lot of people together and spent a bunch of time to come up with an idea for the stamps and thought it would be moving ahead rather than stalled.

- **Brian Glenzinski** – Brought to the committee’s attention that the spring hearings will be asking about a voluntary conservation stamp and that this is not the same thing as had been previously discussed.
- **Don Kirby** – Asked when the next meeting will be and what the new cycle for the committee will be.