

Citizens Waterfowl Advisory Committee

March 8, 2014 meeting

Meeting called to order @ 9:01 AM by Chairman Terry Laymon

Members: Bruce Bahr, Bud Dankers, Leonard Kaanta, Terry Laymon, John McNamara, Paul Conners, Steve Wyckoff, Ed Retherford, Stathi Kristells, Dan Cleary, Mike Dabrowski, Matt Lacombe, Mike Zoll, Dan Villwock, Max Lehman, Steve Allaire. **Absent:** Erv DeWeerd, Jeff Godi, Brandon Yuchasz, Mark Curtis

DNR Waterfowl Workgroup: Barbara Avers, David Luukkonen, Terry McFadden, Nik Kalejs, Joe Robison, Don Avers, Brian Piccolo, Jerimiah Heise, Mark Mills, Bill Scullon

DNR staff & guests: Russ Mason, Lt Dave Shaw, Mike Richardson, Bruce Barlow, Glen Lampela, MSU graduate student, Howie Singer

Citizens Waterfowl Advisory Committee mission: *To provide feedback to the DNR-Wildlife Division on existing and proposed waterfowl regulations and wetland management issues. CWAC members must present views and concerns which represent stakeholders from their areas of the state and disseminate information learned at CWAC meetings back to those stakeholders.*

Russ Mason: Thanked group for support on new license package. Talked about early teal season. Discussion on two hen mallards. No managed area fees in license package. Michigan Waterfowl Legacy, push the message. Need more waterfowl hunters – lost 50% of small game hunters, 90% only hunt deer. Diversifying existing hunter base a priority. Possible sale of electronic Federal Duck Stamp. Continued interest in standardization of rules across managed waterfowl areas.

Lt. Dave Shaw: New funding for CO's. Passed out arrest records for year. Discussed results of violation reports 96 priority violations, 59 warnings. Looking at Flyway comments on early teal season law enforcement. Discussed strategic plan being developed for LED.

M/S Wyckoff/Kaanta: To approve August meeting minutes. Passed

Howie Singer (MSU graduate student) w/ Dave Luukkonen: Two hen mallards in bag limit presentation. Presented info on % of mallards produced in MI (8-15) in mid-continental population. 75% of mallards harvested in MI are Great Lakes mallards (68% MI). MN study would predict less than 20% of the hunts would result in 2 hens rather than 1. Went over data used to determine predicted kill rates projecting potential increase in kill rates of hen mallards. Highest impact would be on hatch year hens (less than 1 year old).

Group discussion about duck banding efforts and numbers. Also discussed implications of making the change to 2 hens in the bag.

Dave Luukkonen: Mississippi Flyway update. No changes recommended for Canada goose frameworks. Looking at potential liberalized regs for 2015-16. Experimental early teal season. Flyway will be working with USFWS to evaluate details working towards approval. Would be for MN, WI, IA, and MI. MN may delay implementation if offered. No changes for webless migratory birds. Continuation of sandhill crane seasons in MN, KY, and TN. Asking Flyway Council to send support letters on Fed stamp increase (\$10). No recommended changes for other migratory bird regulations.

Barb Avers: Mississippi Flyway update continued. Mute swan update. Looking at mute swan control as a regional issue. Sea duck joint venture harvest management subcommittee. Looking at harvest and season dates of sea ducks. Information may be inadequate at this time. Special season for long-tails not likely due to lack of data on populations at this time.

Barb and Dave: Early waterfowl hunting seasons. Michigan Canada goose population stable and above upper goal for population.

Considerations for seasons:

Anything before Saturday before September 24th is considered the early season. Early seasons: Early Goose, Regular Goose, Youth Waterfowl Season, Experimental Early Teal Seasons

M/S Dabrowski/Villwock: To have early Canada goose Sept 1-15 except north zone and Saginaw, Tuscola and Huron Co. Sept 1-10 5 bird limit. Passed

M/S Conner/Wyckoff: To open North zone regular goose season Sept 11 thru ???, 2 bird limit. Passed

M/S Villwock /Wyckoff: To hold youth waterfowl season Sept 13-14. Passed

M/S Dankers/Retherford: To run 1st segment of Saginaw GMU goose season Sept 20-22. Passed

M/S Dabrowski/Lacombe: To run Huron/Tuscola GMU goose Sept 22-28, Oct 11-Dec 7 and Dec 27 Jan 26: 10 in favor, 5 opposed, 1 abstain Failed

Discussion pointed out that only the first segment could be decided at this meeting.

M/S Dabrowski/Retherford: To run 1st segment of Huron/Tuscola GMU goose Sept 20-28, 2 bird limit. Passed

Break for lunch. Thank you MUCC for lunch!

M/S Retherford/ Cleary: Middle zone regular goose 1st segment, Sept 20-28. Passed

M/S Dabrowski/Villwock: South Zone regular goose 1st segment, Sept 20-22. Passed

Group discussion on early teal season. Concern over changing goose opening shooting time of ½ hr before sunrise to match early teal season of at sunrise.

M/S Dankers/Villwock: To hold an early teal season. Passed

M/S Wyckoff/Villwock: To hold an early teal season (if applicable) Sept 1-7 statewide, shooting time sunrise to sunset. Passed

M/S Wyckoff/Lacombe: For maximum bag limit allowed for early teal. Passed

Hunting season observations statewide:

John McNamara (Livingston Co.): Very good early goose, regular goose good. Duck good till freeze up. Late goose poor due to freeze up. Pleased w/ season dates. Would like 3 goose bag limit.

Dan Cleary (NW): Duck OK till freeze in November, early was good. Divers up. Goose field hunting was better than water. Opener worked OK.

Ed Rutherford (NE): Early goose picked 2nd week. Regular goose good. Mallards small flocks, layout hunters down, redhead population down. Freeze up end of Nov ended season. Good season.

Erv DeWeerd's SW report from Mark Mills: Allegan and Van Buren Co's the duck hunting was pretty good, light on wood ducks, constant mallards but not in huge flocks. Field hunting seemed to be the best. Thanksgiving to the end of the season in the fields was the best. Two day split was very good if field hunting.

Dan Villwock (SW): Early season goose down, late season goose poor. Windy conditions on Lake Michigan made hunting tough.

Max Lehman (North Central South Zone): Early OK late season fair. Late season duck spotty. Late season was too late for geese. Mallards trickled instead of big migrating flocks.

Steve Wyckoff: UP opener slow on Drummond, too early. Early goose depended on crop harvest. Mallards & woodies better.

Mike Zolli (SE): Early goose good, regular goose good. Duck started good and slowed until end. Late goose slow. Big water hunters want later season.

Terry Laymon: Hunters want more CO's at managed areas. Up doesn't want a split. Early goose good. Divers late, no big flights. Duck good season varied.

Bud Dankers: Early goose slow at start, picked towards end. Three days in Sept good. Duck started fair to good considering late harvest of crops delayed opening of some zones. Early freeze hurt and late season a bust due to ice-up.

Paul Conner: Early goose poor, Duck season good considering lost 2 weeks to freeze up. Late season poor due to freeze. Spinning wing decoy ban (Harsens Is.) was well accepted.

Matt Lacombe: Early and regular goose good. Good numbers of ducks for regular season. Late season poor due to freeze.

Mike Dabrowski (Fish Point): Early goose OK. Duck started OK, food ran out later on. Late season froze out with 3 weeks to go.

Steve Allaire: Early goose field hunting fair to good. Duck season good. Extend season into December for river hunting. Late season poor to freeze.

Leonard Kaanta: Late crop harvest made poor hunting. Did not get out to hunt.

Stathi Kristells (EUP): Early goose start good then slow. Duck opener OK, huge push last week Oct. Froze out during split. Good but rough after split. Record numbers of birds rounding White Fish Point mid-October.

Mark Mills: Ottawa Marsh slow but consistent migration. Fennville Farm duck harvest good. Goose above average. Late poor, geese but no hunters.

Joe Robison: SE good early goose. Youth hunt OK. November diver survey showed good numbers in Lake Erie. Late season spotty. Late goose poor.

Nik Kalejs: Ducks slower than normal. Goose OK. Outside area early good, regular below normal, late poor.

Terry McFadden: Harsens Island corn average considering bad spring, 9200 ducks harvested. Lost 2 weeks to ice. More pintails and gadwall than normal. Diver hunting down on Lake St. Clair.

Bill Scullon: UP goose OK, liked back to back goose season. Opener duck was slow, mallards showed up late Oct. Diver hunting down. Didn't like longer UP split.

Brian Piccolo: Mixed reports on mallards. Woodies average to below. Rain on opener made for poor day. Goose better closer to big lakes. Shooting scoters and long tails on Higgins Lake.

Dave Luukkonen: Moorhens were good.

Barb Avers: Positive comments on 3 year opener format.

Joe Robison: Looking at managed hunting area regulations with thoughts of standardizing them statewide. Nayanquing Point and Harsens Island are looking at some issues that pertain to each area.

Steve Wyckoff: Talked about PA 21. Protects hunting and fishing. Talked about petition to protect hunting and fishing rights.

M/S Wyckoff/Zolli: To meet August 9, 2014 at the RAM Center at 9:00 AM. 12 in favor 3 opposed 1 abstention. Passed

M/S Wyckoff/ Zolli: To adjourn at 3:08 PM Passed

Respectfully submitted

Bud Dankers, Secretary