

Citizens Waterfowl Advisory Committee Meeting

1/7/2017

Jay's Sporting Goods, Gaylord, MI

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.

Roll call: 9:00am

CWAC members (20):

Present: Steve Pascoe, Max Lehman, Jeff Godi, Steve Allaire, David Roberts, Ed Retherford, Trent Bellinger, Terry Laymon, Eric McGhee, Paul Conners, Dan Villwock, Dan King, Mike Zoli, Mike Dabrowski, Stathi Kristells, Dan Cleary, Matt Lacombe

Absent (no Proxies): Ron Sefcik, Brandon Yuchasz, Michigan Duck Hunters Association representative

DNR Waterfowl Workgroup members (10):

Present: Barbara Avers, Don Avers, Dave Luukkonen, Terry McFadden, Nik Kalejs, Bruce Barlow, Jeremiah Heise, Brad Johnson, Joe Robison.

Absent: Mark Mills

DNR Staff: Russ Mason, Shannon Hanna, Lt. Dave Shaw, Ben Luukkonen, Officer Eric Bottorff, and Officer Nick Torsky.

Housekeeping: 17 CWAC members present, 14 needed to pass motions.

Approval of Jan. 8th, 2016 CWAC meeting minutes: Motion to accept minutes (Laymon), 2nd (Lehman). **Vote:** 17 for, motion passed.

Selection of new CWAC Chair: Motion to elect Vice-Chair Paul Conners as Chair (King), 2nd (McGhee). **Vote:** 17 for, motion passed.

Selection of new CWAC Vice-Chair to replace Paul Conners: Motion to elect Stathi Kristells as Vice-Chair (Godi), 2nd (King). **Vote:** 17 for, motion passed.

DNR Law Enforcement Div. updates: (N. Torsky, D. Shaw) Large issue in 2016 were hunters taking more divers (redheads and scaup) than permitted on Saginaw Bay. Two large waterfowl baiting cases – one in Ottawa County and one in Oakland County. Discussion on teal season – no issues.

Mississippi Flyway update:

General updates (D. Luukkonen):

- USFWS somewhat behind on providing information and framework dates by their target dates likely due to the new regulations process
- 2016 summer Flyway meeting featured a day-long workshop on hunter Recruitment, Reactivation, and Retention (R3)

- Currently reconsideration of duck harvest management for the Mississippi and Central Flyways which could result in changes to the regulations packages in the future
 - Includes framework dates, bag limits, season lengths
 - Mississippi Flyway has been in the liberal package for many years
 - Potential for altering packages: for example, the liberal package could potentially provide a 76 day duck season based on Adaptive Harvest Management (AHM) model output
 - Hunter surveys being used to assess human dimensions and hunter opinion
 - Discussion of both extending seasons earlier and/or later
 - Process of changing the zoning options has not come up in Flyway discussion yet
 - Flyway representatives will inquire if changing zones and splits will be discussed
 - Interest in changing the way zones and splits are allocated to various states based on geography
 - Process is scheduled to be completed in time for implementation in the 2019 season, but could be later depending on state and province limitations
- 2nd year of 2 hen bag limit, still too early to conduct survival analysis
 - Managed waterfowl hunting areas are monitoring hen take locally with permit cards
- 2017 summer flyway meeting will be held in Michigan: August 21st – 25th, 2017
 - Open to the public, and there's a time period for public comment, likely on the 24th
 - Will be held at the Park Place Hotel in Traverse City
 - DNR to provide Flyway meeting agenda to CWAC when available

Experimental Early Teal Season Evaluation (D. Luukkonen):

- Three year experiment data collection is complete, now working on producing the final report required by USFWS
- Teal migration timing can be reassessed, and the dates of the early teal season are open for change
- Overall state numbers are safely below the USFWS criteria that would not allow teal seasons on an operational basis, it is likely that the teal season will be allowed to continue on an operational basis
 - DNR will ask USFWS that teal season be made operational
 - Due to a high non target kill in 2015 in MI, USFWS may require an additional year of data collection in MI, still providing for an experimental teal season in 2017

Goose population status and 2017-18 season frameworks (D. Luukkonen):

- Dark geese (Canada geese, White-fronted geese, and Brant) and light geese (Snow geese, Blue geese, Ross' geese): 107 days between Sept. 1 and Feb. 15th

Duck population status and 2017-18 season frameworks (B. Avers):

Adaptive Harvest Management (AHM)

- February and March NRC meetings will be at the MSU disease lab
- USFWS duck season frameworks have not changed from last year's frameworks
- Liberal season framework for 2017
- Duck bag limit did not change with the exception of the ability to harvest 2 black ducks

- The black duck model has been re-assessed and it is predicted that raising the daily bag to 2 will not significantly impact the population
- Black duck populations are more of a concern for the Atlantic Flyway, the Mississippi Flyway does not harvest as many black ducks
- Black duck wintering distribution has changed, and new surveys were needed to more precisely estimate the population size
 - Since those surveys were initiated the black duck population has been stable
- DNR will provide CWAC with more information on why the decision was made to raise Black duck daily limit
- Teal season framework has not changed, MI is allowed a teal season
 - Teal season still considered experimental at this point
 - Will not know until June whether we are permitted to have an operational teal season
- Michigan license structure, including out-of-state licenses, will be addressed in the future when it is strategic to do so, likely 2018
- DNR to provide progression of freezing temperature map to CWAC
- Wildlife division surveys likely to shift to internet in the future

Wildlife Division Chief update (Russ Mason):

- Shiawassee River SGA siphon tube will be completed
- St. Johns Marsh project moving in the right direction
- Looking to provide quality opportunities over the quantity of opportunities
- New NRC commissioner is Chris Tracy, avid waterfowl hunter

Discussion and Recommendations for 2017-18 Waterfowl Seasons

Teal Season 2017

Motion: Extend teal season to 16 days from Sept. 2nd to 17th (Kristells), 2nd (Lehman). **Vote:** 6 for, 11 against, motion fails.

Motion: Keep teal season the same as 2016, Sept. 1st to 7th (Pasco), 2nd (Allaire). **Vote:** 11 for, 6 against, motion fails.

Motion: Sept. 1st to 10th (Villwock), 2nd (Bellingar). **Vote:** 15 support, 1 against, 1 abstain, motion passes

Youth Waterfowl Season 2017

No motion to change youth weekend dates (Sept. 9-10 statewide), support to keep the youth season the 2nd weekend in Sept.

Duck Season 2017 dates and splits by Zone – 60 days:

Already set North zone waterfowl opening dates are Sept. 30th, 2017 and Sept. 29th, 2018.

Already set Middle zone waterfowl opening dates are Oct. 7th, 2017 and Oct. 6th, 2018

Already set South zone waterfowl opening dates are Oct. 14th, 2017 and Oct. 13th, 2018

North Zone:

Motion: Sept. 30 – Nov. 26, Dec. 2-3 (Bellingar), 2nd (Villwock). **Vote:** 17 for, motion passes

Middle Zone:

Motion: Oct. 7 – Dec. 3 and Dec. 16-17 (Retherford), 2nd (Lehman). **Vote:** 17 for, motion passes

South Zone:

Motion: Oct. 14 – Dec. 10 and Dec. 30-31 (Allaire), 2nd (Pascoe). **Vote:** 17 for, motion passes

Canada Goose 2017-18 season dates – 107 days:

North Zone:

Motion: Sept. 1-30 (5 bird limit) and Oct. 1 – Dec. 16 (3 bird limit) (Bellingar), 2nd (Pascoe).

Vote: 17 for, motion passes

Middle Zone:

Motion: Sept. 1-30 (5 bird limit) and Oct.1 – Dec. 14, and Dec. 16-17 (3 bird limit) (Dabrowski), no 2nd

Motion: Sept. 1-30 (5 bird limit) and Oct. 7 – Dec. 22 (3 bird limit) (King), 2nd (Cleary). **Vote:** 17 for, motion passes

South Zone:

Motion: Sept. 1-24 (5 bird limit) and Oct.14 – Dec. 10 and Dec. 30-31 and Jan. 20 – Feb. 11 (3 bird limit) (McGhee), 2nd (Laymon). **Vote:** 0 for, 17 against, motion fails

Motion: Sept. 1-30 (5 bird limit) and Oct. 14 – Dec. 10 and Dec. 30-31 and Jan. 27- Feb. 12 (3 bird limit) (Zoli), 2nd (Roberts). **Vote:** 17 for, motion passes

Goose Management Units (GMU's)

Allegan GMU: **Motion:** Sept. 1-10 and Nov. 11 – Feb. 15 (Villwock), 2nd (Lehman). **Vote:** 17 for, motion passes

Muskegon GMU: **Motion:** Oct. 17 – Nov. 14 and Dec. 2-19 (Villwock), 2nd (Lehman). 17 for, motion passes

Waterfowl Bag Limits: **Motion:** to accept Waterfowl Workgroup recommendations on bag limits (Villwock), 2nd (Dabrowski). 16 for, 1 against, motion passes

Paul Conners or Steve Allaire will represent CWAC at the March 9th, 2017 NRC meeting at the MSU Disease Lab, 4125 Beaumont Rd., East Lansing, MI

Next Meeting: Jan. 6th, 2018, location to be determined. Lansing area and Jay's in Clare were identified as location options.

Action Items:

- DNR will provide 2017 flyway meeting agenda to CWAC when available
- DNR will provide CWAC with more information on the decision to raise black duck daily limit
- DNR will provide progression of freezing temperature map to CWAC
- DNR will provide update and proposed 2018-19 frameworks to CWAC after the August 2017 flyway council meeting