

## Citizens Waterfowl Advisory Committee Meeting Roscommon District Library January 9, 2016

*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:** 9:02am

### **CWAC members (20):**

**Present:** Terry Laymon (9-12 only), Paul Conners, Steve Wyckoff, Bruce Bahr, Matt Lacombe, Stathi Kristells, Dan Cleary, Ed Retherford, Jeff Godi, Ron Sefcik, Brandon Yuchasz, Steve Pascoe, Steve Allaire, Dan Villwock, Eric McGhee, and Mike Zoli.

**Proxies:** Kevin Hollingshead (for Mike Dabrowski), Brian Siess (for David Roberts), Andy Ross (for Max Lehman), and Dan Ludic (for Trent Bellingar).

### **DNR Waterfowl Workgroup members (10):**

**Present:** Barbara Avers, Don Avers, David Luukkonen, Terry McFadden, Mark Mills, Nik Kalejs, Brian Piccolo, Jeremiah Heise, Dusty Arsnoe, and Joe Robison.

**DNR Staff:** Steve Chadwick, Shannon Hanna, Lt. Dave Shaw, Dan Nelson

Recognized MUCC representative Steve Wyckoff who is stepping down from CWAC and being replaced by Dan King.

**Approval of Aug. 2015 meeting minutes:** Motion to accept minutes (Villwock), second (Siess). **Vote:** 20 for, motion passed

**DNR Wildlife Div. update:** Wildlife Div. Assistant Chief, Steve Chadwick: new Acting DNR Director Bill Moritz, CWD surveillance efforts, Canada goose relocation program in 2016

**DNR Law Enforcement Div. update:** Lt. Dave Shaw: 24 new recruits in academy, will have 235 officers after – 2 or 3 officers per county, plus increase in other units, much more active waterfowl season with 50+ additional officers in the field, another successful waterfowl enforcement training, 2015 teal season was much worse than in 2014 – many more violations

### **Discussions/Questions:**

- Regulations about large LED light bars on MWHAs: Any laws prohibiting the use of these?
- Michigan has no law prohibiting the use of these light bars. We have received only a handful of complaints. Problem is that they can prohibit the view of the navigational lights on the boats with large lighting structures, and may pose a risk to other boaters.

### **CWAC Zone Change Proposals & Review of 2011 & 2014 Waterfowl Hunter Opinion Surveys:**

- Received 3 proposals from CWAC members
- May 1, 2016 deadline for DNR to submit changes to FWS 2017-18 season
  - Remember changes will not be in effect for 2016-17 season
- Zone changes allowed every 5 years

### **Ron Sefcik Proposal:** (Southwest Rep)

- Worked with Mark Mills and some waterfowlers in SW
- Proposing 4 Zones, no splits
- Proposed SW Zone season dates: Oct.22-Dec.20

### **Workgroup Discussion of Sefcik Proposal:**

- Workgroup split on 4 zones vs. 3 zones
  - 47% hunters like continuous season without splits
  - 2-day split popular in certain areas (SE, SW), but
- <30% of hunters prefer split seasons
- Potential to lose opportunity on wood ducks and local mallards early in season
- Addresses Allegan's data that mallards increasing throughout season at Farm Unit

### **Dan Cleary Proposal:** (Northwest rep)

- Move the line between Middle and South Zones to an East/West division as opposed to a Middle/South.
- The potential line could go along I-75 from Mackinaw City to just south of Grayling to follow 127 south to Lansing and then follow I-69 to the border with Indiana.
- Or start the line at Tawas City, take M-55 to 127 and then follow a similar route south to the Indiana border.
- This would provide a later start and closing date for the west side of the State.
- NW hunters would truly benefit from the proposed changes, due to Lake Michigan's climate and ability attract birds later and to hold birds longer

### **Dan King Proposal:** (incoming MUCC rep)

- Change boundary between Middle and South zones.
- The Northwest corner of Michigan along Lake Michigan would be in the South Zone
  - Boundary would start at the bridge and go south following US 131 to US 10
- NW area has deeper lakes and rivers and tends not freeze up as soon as the NE.
- This change would allow hunting a week longer on the west coast of Michigan.

### **Cleary and King Proposals –Workgroup Discussion**

- Workgroup does not support either proposal
- What level of support is there from waterfowl hunters for this proposal?
- More ducks in October than December in NW
- Waterfowl hunting participation low in late Nov. and Dec., especially in northern areas
- Proposal lumps NE and SE together and exacerbates differences in the two areas (e.g., earlier hunting vs. later hunting opportunities)

**Comments:** These roads work well as geographic boundaries, but not necessarily as well as boundaries concerning the concentrations of birds during the migration.

### **CWAC Recommendations Zone Changes**

**Motion:** 4 zones as proposed (exact boundaries to be determined) (Sefcik), second (Pascoe) **Vote:** 2 for, 18 opposed, motion fails

**Motion:** 1 zone statewide zone (Sefcik), no second

**Motion:** leave zone boundaries unchanged from 2015 (Villwock), second (Zoli) **Vote:** 17 for, 3 opposed, motion passes

### **3-Year Duck Season Opening Dates Discussion and Recommendations:**

**3 year stable opening dates:** Work group discussion- open as early as possible

#### **Comments:**

- UP - Youth season and teal season back into each other.
- 3 consecutive duck season openers - not necessarily required.
- NW wants later season dates to have opportunity to harvest more birds
- Deer is still king in Michigan, waterfowl seasons will always conflict with deer seasons.

### **CWAC Recommendations 3-Year Stable Opening Dates**

#### **North Zone:**

**Motion:** North Zone opens last Saturday in Sept. (Yuchasz), second (Sefcik): **Vote:** 15 for, 5 opposed, motion passes

- 2016= Sept.24, 2017= Sept.30, 2018= Sept.29

**Comments:** Many deer hunters say October is for bow hunting first; November is for gun hunting, duck hunting falls later in that list of priorities.

#### **Middle Zone:**

**Motion:** Middle Zone opens Oct. 8<sup>th</sup> in 2016, Oct. 7<sup>th</sup> in 2017, Oct. 6<sup>th</sup> in 2018 (Cleary), second (Sefcik): **Vote:** 2 for, 18 opposed, motion fails

**Comments:** NW wants later opening date to coincide with bird migration

**Motion:** Middle Zone opens 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday in Oct. (Retherford), second (Villwock): **Vote:** 19 for, 1 opposed, motion passes

- 2016= Oct.1, 2017= Oct.7, 2018=Oct.6

#### **South Zone:**

**Motion:** South Zone opens the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in Oct. (Villwock), second (Allaire): **Vote:** 18 for, 2 opposed, motion passes

- 2016= Oct.8, 2017= Oct.14, 2018= Oct.13

### **Early Teal Season:**

**Comments: Dave Luukkonen (DNR)** Last year was hard year, warm temps and few birds around during this season. In 2015, 31% non-target species harvested during this season. If next year's non-target numbers are similar to the 2015 season, it might be abandoned.

**Comments:** Longer teal season desired, more opportunities to harvest teal.

**Comments:** Consistency should be considered as well.

**Dates:**

**Motion:** Teal season dates, Sept.1 – 7 (Zoli), second (Siess): Vote: 18 for, 2 opposed, motion passes

**Youth hunt weekend:**

**Motion:** Sept. 10-11 (2<sup>nd</sup> weekend in Sept.) (???), second (???): Vote: 19 for, motion passes

**Duck Season 2016 Splits by Zone:**

**North Zone:**

**Motion:** Sept.24-Nov.20 and split Nov.26-27 (Kristells), second (Yuchasz): Vote: 19 for, motion passes

**Middle Zone:**

**Motion:** Oct.1-Nov.27 and split Dec. 24-25 (Cleary), no second

**Discussion (by many):** We cannot have overlap with Christmas Eve or Christmas Day

**Motion:** Oct.1-Nov.27 and split Dec.31-Jan.1 (Cleary), no second

**Discussion (by many):** We cannot have overlap with New Years Eve and New Years Day.

**Motion:** Oct.1-Nov.27 and split Dec.17-18 (Cleary), second (Retherford): Vote: 17 for, 2 opposed, motion passes

**South Zone:**

**Motion:** Oct. 8-Nov.13 (37 days), and Nov.26-Dec.18 (23 days) (Wyckoff), second (Sefcik): Vote: 6 for, 13 against, motion fails

**Discussion (by many):** several not in favor of losing days in November

**Comment:** Motion made on behalf of MUCC constituents, resolution

**Comment:** Negatively changes diving duck harvest due to migration

**Motion:** Oct. 8 – Dec. 4 and split Dec. 31- Jan.1 (Allaire), second (McGhee): Vote: 17 for, 2 opposed, motion passes

**Canada Goose Seasons 2016:**

**North Zone**

**Motion:** Sept. 1-30 (30 days, daily limit 5) and Oct. 1-Dec. 16 (77 days, daily limit 3) (Yuchasz), second (Kristells): Vote: 19 for, motion passes

**Middle Zone**

**Motion:** Sept. 1-30 (30 days, daily limit 5), Oct. 1-Dec. 14 (75 days, daily limit 3), and Dec. 17-18 (2 days, daily limit 3) (Cleary), second (Retherford): Vote: 19 for, motion passes

**South Zone**

**Motion:** Sept. 1-25, (25 days, daily limit 5), Oct. 8-Dec.4 (58 days, daily limit 3), Dec. 31- Jan 1 (2 days, daily limit 3), and Jan. 21-Feb.11 (22 days, daily limit 3) (Siess), second (Wyckoff): Vote: 18 for, 1 opposed, motion passes

**Goose Management Units (GMU's) 2016:**

**Tuscola/Huron: Motion:** To eliminate Tuscola/Huron County GMU (Siess), second (Sefcik). Vote: 18 for, 1 abstain, motion passes

**Allegan: Motion:** Sept. 1-7 (7 days, daily limit 5), Nov. 5 – Feb. 12 (100 days) (daily limit 3) (Sefcik), second (Villwock). Vote: 19 for, motion passes

**Muskegon: Motion:** Oct. 15-Nov. 12, and Dec. 3-20 (47 Days) (Sefcik), second (Wyckoff) Vote: 19 for, passes

**Other Geese:**

**Motion: Light Geese:** Same as Canada goose season dates in each zone and GMU's daily limit 20

**Brant and White-fronted:** include dark goose season dates that include Canada, brant, and white fronted (Wyckoff), second (Zoli). Vote: 19 for, passes

**Duck Bag Limits**

**Motion:** adopt maximum under Federal framework, same as 2015 (Wyckoff), second (Retherford): Vote: 18 for, 1 opposed, motion passes

**Discussion:** Michigan mallards- shooting 70%, 2 years of shooting 2 hens, asked for data about how that is affecting the overall population

**For information, MWAH proposed changes:**

- All seasonal wildlife refuges Sept. 1- ????
- All check stations at MWAHs will be open until 4pm.
- Harsen's Island shot size No. 1 for safety reasons
- 25 shotshell limit across all areas.

**Meeting Adjourned 2:20pm**

**Motion:** to adjourn (Zoli), second (Conners)

Next meeting date set 1/7/2017, Roscommon area (exact location TBD)

Respectfully submitted by Dan Nelson