



**STATE OF NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE
Game Division**

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MEMORANDUM

FEBRUARY 14, 2023

To: Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners, County Advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife and Interested Publics

From: Russell Woolstenhulme, Staff Specialist, Game Division

Title: **Commission Regulation 23-13, Migratory Game Bird Seasons, Bag Limits, and Special Regulations for Waterfowl and Webless Migratory Game Birds; Public hunting limited on Wildlife Management Areas and Designated State Lands – 2023–2024 Season**

Purpose: The Commission will consider recommendations for seasons, bag limits, and special regulations for migratory game birds for the 2023–2024 season and adopt regulations consistent with the proposed regulations framework for the 2023–2024 hunting seasons on certain migratory game birds established by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Commission Regulation will become final pending adoption of federal frameworks. The Commission will also consider rules regulating public hunting on Wildlife Management Areas and designated state lands.

Summary

Season regulations for hunting migratory waterfowl, doves, and crows differ from some other common species, like mule deer, that are not governed by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works with the states within designated flyways, and Nevada resides within the Pacific Flyway. Collectively, the Pacific Flyway develops regulatory sideboards known as the Federal Frameworks within which each state may promulgate seasons for hunting. Although the Federal Frameworks are generally established by the time the Commission acts on the Migratory Game Bird Commission Regulation, the federal government suffered delays this year and the proposed frameworks are still draft. Should the final approved frameworks require amendment to this CR, the Department will bring this CR back to the Commission before seasons are published. The Department is recommending no Changes to last season.

Brief Description of Proposed Regulation

Migratory Bird Season Recommendations:

Continental and Flyway Conditions

Continent-wide, waterfowl abundance is similar to last year. The total 2022 duck population estimate (excluding scoters, eiders, long-tailed ducks, mergansers, and wood ducks) was 34.2 million birds. This population estimate is 132 lower than the 2019 estimate of 38.9 million, which was the last year the survey was conducted, and was 4% lower than the long-term average. Mallard, gadwall, and widgeon were below long-term average. Canvasback and green-winged teal were near long-term averages while redhead was above the long-term average. Most duck species remain in the liberal season package. Greater and lesser scaup were below their long-term average abundance and remain in a standard season package (86 days).

Western Canada Geese numbers continue to increase and are currently over population objectives as are Pacific Greater White-fronted Geese and Western Canadian Arctic Snow Geese.

Most waterfowl from the Pacific Flyway nest north of Nevada. Nearly all U.S. prairies experienced average precipitation during the 2021-2022 winter. Pond estimates throughout the prairie pothole region were 9% higher than the last survey in 2019.

The predicted abundance of mourning doves for September 2022 in the Western Management Unit were 45.8 million, which results in a standard regulatory alternative as prescribed by the harvest strategy.

Nevada

2022 breeding waterfowl surveys in Nevada were suspended due to contract plane issues. No data are available.

Habitat

In Nevada, 2021-2022 winter precipitation and run-off was nearly normal. Most wetlands in northern Nevada including the Carson Sink area (Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge, Carson Lake Wildlife Management Area) entered the breeding season with residual waters., and over summer water allocation within the Lahontan Valley was 80% of normal.

As of February 2023, year-to-date precipitation (Oct 1 – Feb 15) is slightly above average for Nevada. Lake Tahoe Basin precipitation was reported at 161% of normal, Walker River and Carson River Basins (including Lahontan Basin) were reported at 189% and 190% of normal respectively, and Eastern Nevada (Ruby Marshes) was reported at 157% of normal. Many Nevada marshes have residual water. Reservoir storage at Lahontan Reservoir is at 33% of capacity. Rye Patch is currently only at 5 percent.

Recommendation

The Department recommends that the Commission review and adopt the proposed regulation as presented.

STATE OF NEVADA

BOARD OF WILDLIFE COMMISSIONERS

The Board of Wildlife Commissioners under the authority of Section 501.181, 503.090, 503.140 and 503.245 of the Nevada Revised Statutes, does hereby adopt the following regulations for the management of migratory game birds.

CR 23-13 2023-2024

SEASONS, BAG LIMITS, AND SPECIAL REGULATIONS FOR MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS

MOURNING & WHITE-WINGED DOVE	
OPEN AREAS:	Statewide
2023 SEASON:	September 1 – October 30, 2023
LIMITS:	Daily bag limit 15 Possession 45
SHOOTING HOURS:	½ hour before sunrise to sunset.
SPECIAL REGULATIONS:	Limits for mourning dove and white-winged dove are singly or in the aggregate.

AMERICAN CROW	
OPEN AREAS:	Statewide
2023 FALL SEASON:	September 1 – November 17, 2023
2024 SPRING SEASON	March 1 – April 15, 2024
LIMITS:	Daily bag limit 10
SHOOTING HOURS:	Sunrise to sunset.
SPECIAL REGULATIONS:	May be hunted by archery, shotguns and falconry. All crows must be retrieved and removed from the field. Season closed on ravens

Note regarding Waterfowl Zone designations:

NORTHEAST ZONE: Elko, Eureka, Lander & White Pine Counties

NORTHWEST ZONE: Carson City, Churchill, Douglas, Humboldt, Lyon, Mineral, Pershing, Storey & Washoe Counties

SOUTH ZONE: Esmeralda, Lincoln, Nye & Clark Counties

DUCKS AND MERGANSERS	
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHEAST ZONE
2023-24 SEASON:	September 23, 2023 – November 28, 2023 December 9, 2023 – January 15, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHWEST ZONE
2023-24 SEASON:	October 14, 2023 – January 7, 2024 January 10, 2024 – January 28, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – (except the Moapa Valley)
2023-24 SEASON:	October 14, 2023 – October 22, 2023 October 25, 2023 – January 28, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – Moapa Valley to the confluence of the Muddy and Virgin Rivers
2023-24 SEASON:	October 28, 2023 – January 28, 2024
LIMITS (daily / possession)	
General Duck Limits:	7 / 21
Included within the general duck limit, but not to include more than:	
Pintail:	1 / 3
Hen Mallard/ Mexican duck	2 hen mallards or Mexican ducks.
Redhead:	2 / 6
Canvasback:	2 / 6
Shooting hours:	½ hour before sunrise to sunset
Special Regulations:	Open to Nonresidents

SCAUP (Lesser and Greater)	
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHEAST ZONE
2023-24 SEASON:	September 23, 2023 – November 28, 2023 December 9, 2023 – December 27, 2023
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHWEST ZONE
2023-24 SEASON:	November 2, 2023 – January 7, 2024 January 10, 2024 – January 28, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – (except the Moapa Valley)
2023-24 SEASON:	November 4, 2023 – January 28, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – Moapa Valley to the confluence of the Muddy and Virgin Rivers
2023-24 SEASON:	November 4, 2023 – January 28, 2024
LIMITS (daily/possession):	2 / 6 (Included within general duck limit, not in addition to)
Shooting hours:	½ hour before sunrise to sunset
Special Regulations:	Open to Nonresidents

SPECIAL YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNT	
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHEAST ZONE
2023-24 SEASON:	September 16 & 17, 2023
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHWEST ZONE
2023-24 SEASON:	September 30, 2023 & February 10, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE (including the Moapa Valley portion of the Overton Wildlife Management Area)
2023-24 SEASON:	February 10 & 11, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	Moapa Valley portion of the Overton Wildlife Management Area.
2023-24 SEASON:	October 21, 2023
LIMITS:	<p>Daily bag limit is the same as that for the general season for ducks, mergansers, scaup, snipe, geese, coots and moorhens.</p> <p>Youth hunters possessing a valid Nevada Swan Permit may hunt swans in open swan areas (see swan regulation), provided the trumpeter swan quota has not been reached.</p> <p>Limits singly or in the aggregate for Canada geese and Brant.</p> <p>Limits singly or in the aggregate for Snow and Ross' geese.</p> <p>Snow and Ross' geese are closed in Ruby Valley within Elko and White Pine Counties.</p>
SHOOTING HOURS:	½ hour before sunrise to sunset
SPECIAL REGULATIONS:	<p>Open to hunters 17 years of age or younger.</p> <p>Youth hunters 16 years of age and older must possess a federal duck stamp.</p> <p>Youth must be accompanied by an adult who is at least 18 years old.</p> <p>Adults are not allowed to hunt during this season.</p> <p>Open to Nonresidents.</p>

COOTS AND GALLINULES	
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHEAST ZONE
2023-24 SEASON:	September 23, 2023 – November 28, 2023 December 9, 2023 – January 15, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHWEST ZONE
2023-24 SEASON:	October 14, 2023 – January 7, 2024 January 10, 2024– January 28, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – (except the Moapa Valley)
2023-24 SEASON:	October 14, 2023 – October 22, 2023 October 25, 2023– January 28, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – Moapa Valley to the confluence of the Muddy and Virgin Rivers
2023-24 SEASON:	October 28, 2023 – January 28, 2024
LIMITS (daily/possession):	25 / 75
Shooting hours:	½ hour before sunrise to sunset
Special Regulations:	Open to Nonresidents

SNIPE	
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHEAST ZONE
2023-24 SEASON:	September 23, 2023 – November 28, 2023 December 9, 2023 – January 15, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHWEST ZONE
2023-24 SEASON:	October 14, 2023 – January 7, 2024 January 10, 2024– January 28, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – (except the Moapa Valley)
2023-24 SEASON:	October 14, 2023 – October 22, 2023 October 25, 2023– January 28, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – Moapa Valley to the confluence of the Muddy and Virgin Rivers
2023-24 SEASON:	October 28, 2023 – January 28, 2024
LIMITS (daily/possession):	8 / 24
Shooting hours:	½ hour before sunrise to sunset
Special Regulations:	Open to Nonresidents

CANADA AND CACKLING GEESE AND BRANT	
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHEAST ZONE
2023-24 SEASON:	September 23, 2023 – November 28, 2023 December 9, 2023 – January 15, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHWEST ZONE
2023-24 SEASON:	October 14, 2023 – January 7, 2024 January 10, 2024– January 28, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – (except the Moapa Valley)
2023-24 SEASON:	October 14, 2023 – October 22, 2023 October 25, 2023– January 28, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – Moapa Valley to the confluence of the Muddy and Virgin Rivers
2023-24 SEASON:	October 28, 2023 – January 28, 2024
Limits (daily/possession)	5 / 15
Shooting hours:	½ hour before sunrise to sunset
Special Regulations:	Open to Nonresidents

WHITE-FRONTED GEESE	
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHEAST ZONE
2023-24 SEASON:	September 23, 2023 – November 28, 2023 December 9, 2023 – January 15, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHWEST ZONE
2023-24 SEASON:	October 14, 2023 – January 7, 2024 January 10, 2024– January 28, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – (except the Moapa Valley)
2023-24 SEASON:	October 14, 2023 – October 22, 2023 October 25, 2023– January 28, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – Moapa Valley to the confluence of the Muddy and Virgin Rivers
2023-24 SEASON:	October 28, 2023 – January 28, 2024
Limits (daily/possession)	10 /30
Shooting hours:	½ hour before sunrise to sunset
Special Regulations:	Open to Nonresidents

SNOW AND ROSS' GEESE	
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHEAST ZONE
2023-24 SEASON:	September 23, 2023 – November 28, 2023 December 9, 2023 – January 15, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHWEST ZONE
2023-24 SEASON:	November 4, 2023 – January 7, 2024 January 10, 2024– January 28, 2024 February 19, 2024 – March 10, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – (except the Moapa Valley)
2023-24 SEASON:	October 14, 2023 – October 22, 2023 October 25, 2023– January 28, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – Moapa Valley to the confluence of the Muddy and Virgin Rivers
2023-24 SEASON:	October 28, 2023 – January 28, 2024
Limits (daily/possession)	20 / 60
Shooting hours:	½ hour before sunrise to sunset
Special Regulations:	Open to Nonresidents CLOSED: Ruby Valley within Elko and White Pine Counties CLOSED: The following WMAs are closed during the February 19, 2024 – March 10, 2024 season: Mason Valley and Scripps/ Washoe State Park.
Special Regulations:	Restrictions on three shotshell capacity and recorded or amplified bird calls do not apply during the light goose season from February 19, 2024 until March 10, 2024 (Three shotshell capacity remains in effect on open Nevada Wildlife Management Areas)

FALCONRY SEASONS FOR MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS	
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHEAST ZONE
2023-24 SEASON:	September 23, 2023 – November 28, 2023 December 9, 2023 – January 15, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHWEST ZONE
2023-24 SEASON:	October 14, 2023 – January 7, 2024 January 10, 2024– January 28, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – (except the Moapa Valley)
2023-24 SEASON:	October 14, 2023 – October 22, 2023 October 25, 2023– January 28, 2024
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – Moapa Valley to the confluence of the Muddy and Virgin Rivers
2023-24 SEASON:	October 28, 2023 – January 28, 2024
Limits (daily/possession)	3 / 9
Hunting hours:	½ hour before sunrise to sunset
Special Regulations:	Migratory birds allowed for take include: geese, ducks, mergansers, coots, moorhens and snipe. Limits for all permitted migratory birds are singly or in the aggregate. Open to Nonresidents.

SWAN	
OPEN AREAS:	Churchill, Lyon and Pershing Counties
2023-24 SEASON:	October 14, 2023 – January 7, 2024 January 10, 2024– January 28, 2024
LIMITS:	One swan per swan hunt permit, Maximum two swan hunt permits per season One swan per day
SHOOTING HOURS:	½ hour before sunrise to sunset
Special Regulations:	<p>Successful swan hunters are required to validate their permit pursuant to NAC 502.380, and then present at least the head and neck of their swan to an NDOW agent at selected sites for species verification within three (3) days of harvest. Mandatory inspection sites and requirements will be provided with the swan hunt permits.</p> <p>If a total harvest of ten (10) trumpeter swans is reached, the swan season is closed for the remainder of the season.</p> <p>Open to Non-residents.</p> <p>Residents must possess a valid Nevada hunting or combination license, a Nevada HIP number and a current Federal Migratory Game Bird Hunting Stamp, when required, to hunt swan in Nevada.</p> <p>Nonresidents must possess a valid Nevada Combination license or a Nonresident 1-day Combination license, a Nevada HIP number and a Federal Migratory Waterfowl Stamp, when required, to hunt swan in Nevada.</p>

PUBLIC HUNTING LIMITED ON WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS AND DESIGNATED STATE LANDS

ALKALI LAKE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA (WMA), ARGENTA WMA, BRUNEAU RIVER WMA, CARSON LAKE WMA, FERNLEY WMA, FRANKLIN LAKE WMA, HUMBOLDT WMA, SCRIPPS WMA, STEPTOE VALLEY WMA and WAYNE E. KIRCH WMA

1. Hunting is allowed every day for wildlife species upon which there is an established open season

MASON VALLEY WMA

1. Before or after any waterfowl season, hunting is allowed every day for wildlife species upon which there is an established open season.
2. During any waterfowl season open within the hunt zone, hunting is permitted only on:
 - a) Saturdays, Sundays and Wednesdays,
 - b) the following legal State holidays: Nevada Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, Family Day (day after Thanksgiving), Christmas, New Year's Day, and Martin Luther King Day,
 - c) during any youth waterfowl hunt.
 - d) Hunters with a valid turkey tag for the Mason Valley WMA may hunt each day of the established turkey season.

FT. CHURCHILL COOLING POND COOPERATIVE WMA

1. The Ft. Churchill Cooperative Cooling Pond Wildlife Cooperative WMA is closed year-round to all hunting.
2. From October 1, through the Friday preceding the second Saturday of February, the area shall be closed to trespass.

OVERTON WMA

1. Before or after any waterfowl season, hunting is allowed every day for wildlife species upon which there is an established season.
2. Waterfowl hunting is permitted on the Moapa Valley portion of the area on:
 - a) the opening day of the earliest opening waterfowl season,
 - b) even days thereafter through the end of regular duck and goose seasons,
 - c) the final two days of the second duck and goose season, and
 - d) during any youth waterfowl hunt.
3. Upland game bird and rabbit hunting is prohibited during the regular duck and goose seasons, except for persons possessing a valid wild turkey tag to hunt turkeys in the Moapa Valley of Clark County. These persons may hunt turkeys every day for which the tag is valid. These persons are prohibited from pursuing any other upland game birds or rabbits during such time that the fall turkey season is concurrent with the waterfowl season.
4. During the waterfowl season on the Moapa Valley portion of the area, hunters must hunt from assigned hunt locations (blinds) constructed by the Department of Wildlife. A maximum of up to four hunters are permitted at each hunt location. Assigned hunt locations are marked by numbered stakes. Hunters shall hunt only within their assigned hunt location and moving to vacant locations is prohibited. The only exception involves reasonable accommodation of the disabled.
5. During the opening day and the first weekend of the dove season, the maximum capacity for the Moapa Valley portion of the area is 60 hunters by reservation. Vacancies will be filled by stand-by hunters on a first-come, first-served basis.
6. On Overton Hunt days, only persons authorized to hunt waterfowl may use vessels on the portion of the area inundated by Lake Mead.

KEY PITTMAN WMA

1. Before or after any waterfowl season, hunting is allowed every day for wildlife species upon which there is an established season.
2. Waterfowl hunting is permitted on:
 - a) the opening weekend of the earliest opening waterfowl season within the hunt zone,
 - b) odd-numbered days thereafter through the end of regular duck and goose seasons,
 - c) the final two days of the second duck and goose season, and
 - d) during any youth waterfowl hunt.
3. The maximum hunter capacity during the opening day of duck season and the opening day of goose season will be 55 at any time.
4. All hunters will check-in and out at the main entrance and will park in designated parking areas only. No vehicles are allowed on the area during the hunting season.
5. The area is closed to fishing during the waterfowl season.
6. No motorized boats are allowed on the area during the waterfowl season.

OVERTON-KEY PITTMAN HUNTER RESERVATION SYSTEM

1. To guarantee an opportunity to hunt, reservations must be made for the following specified days of each hunt listed:

The Key Pittman WMA

- a) The earliest opening day of the general duck and goose seasons.

The Moapa Valley portion of the Overton WMA

- a) Opening day and the first weekend of the dove season.
- b) The entirety of any open waterfowl season.

Special Regulation for the Moapa Valley Portion of the Overton WMA: A person or their representative applying for reservations for group hunting will be limited to up to four hunters per party.

2. Waterfowl Remainder of Season Reservation Process:

[\(Remainder of season reservation process is defined as that portion of the season following the opening day and weekend applications at Overton WMA and Key-Pittman WMA\)](#)

Reservations for the remainder of the waterfowl hunting season at the Overton WMA will be available the Monday prior to the opening of the waterfowl season and can be made by calling 1-855-542-6369 Monday through Friday 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM pacific time. [Hunters that are successful during the Overton WMA Opening Day and Weekend application process must use those reservations before making reservations for the remainder of the season.](#) An individual may reserve no more than one assigned hunt location on the Moapa Valley portion of the area for no more than four individuals to hunt as a party and this reservation must be utilized prior to reserving another hunt day. The reservations must be in the hunter's possession and be shown to the check station attendant to constitute a valid reservation for the day specified. At the Key Pittman WMA, reservations for hunting will be required only on the earliest opening day of the regular duck season and goose seasons. All hunters will check in at the main entrance on the opening day of waterfowl season. For the remainder of the waterfowl season, hunters will complete a reservation card obtained from the Frenchy Lake or Nesbitt Lake check station box and deposit the card in an appropriate drop box for each day hunted. Failure to turn in a completed card at the Key Pittman WMA or failure to check out at the Overton WMA may result in a citation being issued, and the loss of hunting privileges for the remainder of the season. No vehicles are allowed on the areas during the hunting season.

3. During the waterfowl season at the Overton WMA, an assigned hunt location program will be in effect. Hunters will make a reservation for one of three types of hunt locations (field, pond or bulrush plot) and the specific hunt location will be determined by a drawing at the check station prior to each day's hunt.

NDOW reserves the right to adjust blind availability and blind assignments based on the conditions present on the day of the hunt.

4. A hunter with a reservation will be considered as a "no-show" if they do not present themselves at the check station by one full hour before shooting time, except that at the Overton WMA, a hunter with a reservation will be considered a "no-show" if they do not present themselves at the checking station one and one-half hours before shooting time during the waterfowl season.
5. Standby hunters must register at the check station upon arrival.
6. All reservations, permits and assigned hunting locations are nontransferable.