



Migratory Birds/Waterfowl Committee Summary

August 26, 2015

Migratory Birds/Waterfowl Committee Chair John Coley called the meeting to order at 8:35 am.

Attendees

Committee Members

John Coley, Chair
Tommy Fonville
Brian White

Joe Barker
Mark Craig

Commissioners

John Litton Clark
David Hoyle, Jr.

Wes Seegars
Tom Berry

Staff

Mallory Martin
Betsy Haywood
Thomas Harvey
Wes Barger
Gordon Myers

Ashton Godwin
Lisa Hocutt
Carolina Medina
Joe Fuller

Review Proposed Late Hunting Seasons for Waterfowl and Falconry

Dr. David Cobb reviewed **Exhibit F-1**, proposed regulations frameworks for the 2015-2016 late hunting seasons for certain migratory game birds. The frameworks are approved by the Department of the Interior for prescribed season lengths, shooting hours, bag and possession limits, and outside dates within which States may select seasons for hunting waterfowl and coots between the dates of September 1, 2015 and March 10, 2016.

Cobb presented **Exhibit F-2**, a summary of public comments concerning the proposed late waterfowl seasons.

Cobb then reviewed **Exhibit F-3** which will require action by the Commission at the meeting on August 27, 2015. **Exhibit F-3** is the staff recommendations for bag limits, shooting hours and season dates for waterfowl during the 2015-2016 seasons occurring after September 30, as well as the 2015-2016 extended falconry seasons for migratory game birds

2015 Recommendations to Allow Take of Migrant Peregrine Falcons from the Wild for Use in Falconry

Dr. Cobb reviewed **Exhibit G**, which will require action by the Commission at the August 27, 2015 meeting. **Exhibit G** is the staff recommendation to allow the take of one juvenile falcon from the wild from September 20, 2015 through October 20, 2015 for use in falconry. Take is allowed by permit only from the WRC and only east of US Highway 17. No banded birds may be taken. Permits will be issued through the special hunts random permitting system. The individual issued a permit must have the proper state and federal falconry licenses/permits and must complete a post-season survey and submit the survey no later than December 15, 2015.

Discussion of Proposed Changes in the Federal Regulatory Cycle for Migratory Birds

Joe Fuller provided an overview of US Fish and Wildlife Service plans for a new schedule for setting migratory bird seasons beginning in 2016. Under the current schedule the early season is determined in July and the late season in August. All decisions by the USFWS will be made once a year beginning in 2016. In late February the final season frameworks will be published. In April the season selection dates will be due from the States. In June final selections will be made. There is very little impact expected on seasons with the exception of brant seasons, which likely will be more conservative.

Impacts for the Wildlife Commission are that the WRC will make season selections in late March or early April. The timeline for special hunts may be altered. Hunters will be able to plan much further in advance under the new schedule.

Gordon Myers told the Committee that the WRC will choose the 2016 Commission meetings schedule at the October 22, 2015 meeting. Staff will meet to discuss the migratory bird season changes and required meeting date changes.

ACTION: Myers asked Joe Fuller to email his presentation to him, Mallory Martin, and to the Commissioners.

Adjourn

Chairman Coley adjourned the meeting at 9:05 am.