

THE MARYLAND WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION
MINUTES – MARCH 28, 2018

Chairman Compton called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m.

Approval for the March 18, 2018 Meeting Agenda

- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Gulbrandsen moved to approve the March 18, 2018 Wildlife Advisory Commission Meeting Agenda.
 2. Commissioner Gregor seconded.
 3. All in favor. Motion passed.

Approval for Minutes from January 17, 2018 Meeting

- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Schroyer moved to approve the January 17th meeting minutes as presented.
 2. Commissioner Weinberg seconded.
 3. All in favor. Motion passed.

Finalize Selection of 2018-2019 Waterfowl Hunting Seasons – Presentation given by Waterfowl Project Leader Josh Homyack.

- Waterfowl Project Leader Josh Homyack provided a summary of the Migratory Game Bird Population Status Update in a Power Point Presentation. [ATTACHMENT A]
- Josh reminded the members of the Commission that they received a copy of the proposals of the 2018-2019 waterfowl hunting seasons via email. Also, the Commission received a copy of the agenda from the public meeting that was held on March 6th along with the finalize selection of the 2018-2019 Waterfowl Hunting Seasons. [ATTACHMENT B]
- There is a decline in the mallard population in the Atlantic Flyway. For the 2019-2020 waterfowl season, there will likely be a reduction in bag limit and/or season length for mallards.
- Staff received a fair amount of public comment via the DNR website. The public meeting held at Chesapeake College had six individuals from the public attend. Most individuals are commenting on the website instead of attending a public meeting.
- Most of the comments received were outside of the federal frameworks. Namely, hunters want to hunt through February and harvest more birds, which cannot be done.
- Questions and Answers Section:
 1. Commissioner Michael asked is the long term average based on the average since we have been collecting the average or is it based on the number of years of collecting the long term average.
 - a. It is the long term average since staff have been taking the data for that survey.
 2. Commissioner Michael asked what determines the boundary for the September Teal Season.
 - a. Staff did not want to put the teal boundary where there is little teal.
 - b. The other reason has to do with the special methods for the Resident Canada Goose Season, and staff cannot allow the September Teal Season to be opened during the time period that the special methods are used for the Resident Canada Goose Season.
 - c. On the west side of the boundary, there are a lot of Resident Canada Goose and very little Teal so by not having the Teal Season statewide, Maryland is able to manage Resident Canada Geese with the special methods.
 - d. USFWS determines the federal frameworks, and there are no plans to stagger the frameworks in the Atlantic Flyway which covers from Maine to Puerto Rico. USFWS has no plans to create duck zones.

- e. USFWS allows Resident Canada Geese zoning because of the problems that resident Canada geese cause.
 - f. The Atlantic Flyway Council submitted a recommendation last year to extend the duck season to January 31st to the USFWS.
 - g. The Maryland Duck Season ends on January 26th because Maryland prohibits migratory game bird hunting on Sundays.
- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Michael moved to accept the Finalized Selections of the 2018-2019 Waterfowl Hunting Seasons.
 2. Commissioner Gulbrandsen seconded.
 3. Motion passed with one abstention.

Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee Report – Presentation given by Game Bird Section Leader Bill Harvey.

- As a reminder, the Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee is an appointed body by the Governor like the Wildlife Advisory Commission.
- It is a nine member body and there are no vacancies at the current time.
- Ladd Johnson is the Chair of the Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee.
- Staff members have a really great relationship with the members of the Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee (MGBAC).
- The members of the MGBAC meet face to face once a year at a minimum. There is a least one conference call in preparation of the proposed migratory game bird hunting seasons.

Finalize Selections of 2018-2020 Hunting Regulations – Presentation given by Associate Director Karina Stonesifer.

- The Commission received a copy of the 2018-2020 Game Species Proposed Changes document. **[ATTACHMENT C]**
- There was a public comment period online with over 200 comments received. Staff held two public meetings, one held in Frostburg and the other one in Annapolis. Staff also received comments from email, telephone calls, and letters.
- Associate Director Stonesifer presented the Finalized Selections of 2018-2020 Hunting Seasons in a Power Point for the Commission's approval. **[ATTACHMENT D]**
- The Commission members decided to vote on each proposal separately.
- Proposal: Black Bear – Increase the length of the bear hunting season by one day at the end of the season (Monday – Friday after the early muzzleloader deer hunting season).
 1. Motion:
 - a. Commissioner Michael moved to support the proposal to increase the length of the bear hunting season by one day at the end of the season.
 - b. Commissioner Gregor seconded.
 - c. Commissioner Boyles Griffin commented that the constituency that she represents would be opposed to adding a day to the black bear hunt because the additional day could potentially allow more black bears to be taken.
 - d. Motion passed with one opposed.
- Proposal: Webless Migratory Game Birds – Add additional hunting days to webless migratory game bird seasons in response to a recent change by USFWS granting compensatory days to states where Sunday hunting for all migratory game birds is prohibited by state law.
 1. Motion:
 - a. Commissioner Michael moved to support the proposal to add additional hunting days to the

webless migratory game birds season in response to a recent change by USFWS granting compensatory days to states where Sunday hunting for all migratory game birds is prohibited by state law.

- b. Commissioner Gregor seconded.
 - c. Motion passed with one abstention.
- Proposal: Pheasant – Increase the pheasant daily bag limit from one male to two either sex.
 1. Commissioner Michael suggested that the pheasant season extend through the end of small game season because there is active upland hunting during that time period.
 2. Motion:
 - a. Commissioner Michael moved to accept the increase in the pheasant daily bag limit from one male to two either sex.
 - b. Discussion ensued about extending the pheasant season through the end of February.
 - c. Commissioner Gulbrandsen called the question to approve the current considered action and then have a motion to extend the pheasant season.
 - d. Commissioner Schroyer seconded.
 - e. Motion passed as presented with 1-abstain.
 - Introduced Proposal from the floor: Pheasant – Extend the pheasant season to the end of February.
 1. Motion:
 - a. Commissioner Michael moved to extend the pheasant season to the end of February.
 - b. Commissioner Gulbrandsen seconded.
 - c. Motion passed with one abstention.
 - Proposal: Wild Turkey – Extend the length of the fall turkey season by one day. The season would begin on the last Saturday in October and last 9 days, ending on the 1st Sunday in November. This proposal will impact Allegany, Garrett, and Washington Counties.
 1. Motion:
 - a. Commissioner Michael moved to accept the extended length of the fall turkey season by one day.
 - b. Commissioner Gregor seconded.
 - c. Motion passed with one abstention.
 - Proposal 1: White-tailed Deer – Change the statewide antlered deer bag limit to two antlered deer. A third antlered deer will be available as a bonus in Region B only. The daily bag limit will be one antlered deer.
 1. Motion:
 - a. Commissioner Gulbrandsen moved to change the statewide antlered deer bag limit to two antlered deer and a third antlered deer will be available as a bonus in Region B only.
 - b. Commissioner Schroyer seconded
 - c. Motion passed with one abstention.
 - Proposal 2: White-tailed Deer – Remove the requirement to harvest two antlerless deer in Region B before using a Bonus Antlered Deer Stamp.
 1. Motion:
 - a. Commissioner Michael moved to remove the requirement to harvest two antlerless deer in Region B before using a Bonus Antlered Deer Stamp.
 - b. Commissioner Gulbrandsen seconded.
 - c. Motion passed with one abstention.
 - Proposal 3: White-tailed Deer – Increase hunting opportunity on Public Land in Region A by allowing either sex deer harvest during the early muzzleloader season.
 1. Motion:
 - a. Commissioner Michael moved to increase hunting opportunity on Public Land in Region A

- by allowing either sex deer harvest during the early muzzleloader season.
- b. Commissioner Weinberg seconded.
 - c. Motion passed with one abstention.
- Proposal 4: White-tailed Deer – Change the region B archery antlerless bag limit from unlimited to 15.
 1. Motion:
 - a. Commissioner Gulbrandsen moved to accept the change to the Region B archery antlerless bag limit from unlimited to 15.
 - b. Commissioner Michael seconded.
 - c. All in favor. Motion passed.
 2. Discussion ensued in developing hunting zones to allow more antlerless deer taken in the urban areas.
 3. Motion:
 - a. Chairman Compton asked for resolution to support the Wildlife and Heritage Service in establishing some method to identify these areas and to address this problem more thoroughly.
 - b. Commissioner Michael expressed support in respect to Chairman Compton's position. Commissioner Michael moved to have the Wildlife and Heritage Service to look into deer control through recreational hunting in those areas with high deer populations in the suburbs.
 - c. Commissioner Boyles Griffin recommended that the Wildlife and Heritage Service add the use of non-lethal methods along with already lethal methods to reduce the deer population statewide.
 - d. Commissioner Weinberg suggested that Deer Project Leader Brian Eyler and his team along with Director Peditto should decide the best way to manage the deer population.
 - e. Commissioner Weinberg noted that Maryland is not a big state but it is a long state. In Region B, Maryland has the Eastern Shore, Southern Maryland along with Central Maryland...the marshlands are different than the inside of the beltway.
 - f. Deer Project Leader Eyler reminded the Commission about the November presentation that provided the average deer harvested is 1.9 deer per hunter that allows the Wildlife and Heritage Service to be broad in reference to season and bag limits in Region B. Basically from the stand point of the Wildlife and Heritage Service, yes staff could have additional zones but it is not going to change the harvest because again the average hunter still only takes 1.9 deer a year. The Game Mammal Section is fully aware of the situation.
 - g. Commissioner Weinberg understood Deer Project Leader Eyler's comments.
 - h. The members of the Commission decided to table the decision to the Deer Management Plan Stakeholders meeting that will be held on April 11th from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm.
 - i. Commissioner Michael withdrew his motion.
 - Proposal 5: Deer – Add additional archery hunting opportunities on Sundays in Allegany, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, Kent, Montgomery, and Washington Counties.
 1. Chairman Compton explained that this proposal received the same public exposure as the other proposals.
 2. Deer Project Leader Eyler explained the current law on Sunday hunting and how this proposal fits into that.
 3. Commissioner Boyles Griffin stated that her constituency is against Sunday hunting.
 4. Commissioner Schroyer commented that in 2014 the legislature approved the three counties: Allegany, Garrett, and Washington to have the ability to hunt all game species on all Sundays.
 5. Commissioner Goetze commented for the record that he would like to see Baltimore County added to the list of counties that allow Sunday hunting. Commissioner Goetze mentioned that

there is a serious deer population problem in Baltimore County. The farmers are screaming about the deer population and Commissioner Goetze indicated that he thinks it is due to the lack of time that farmers and hunters have in the woods to manage the herd and having Sunday hunting will address that issue.

- a. Chairman Compton reminded Commissioner Goetze that Sunday hunting is decided by the legislature and not the Department of Natural Resources.
 - b. Baltimore, Howard, and Prince George's Counties do not allow Sunday hunting. If the Commission had watched/listened to the Sunday hunting bill hearings, the Commission would have heard that the Sunday hunting bill would have allowed some Sunday hunting in Baltimore, Howard, and Prince George's Counties. However, the local delegations for Baltimore, Howard, and Prince George's Counties pointed out that they were fine as long as their counties were not listed as allowing Sunday hunting.
6. Commissioner Michael expressed that he was not going to repeat his written comments but mentioned that there was no hue and cry for Proposal 5.
 7. Commissioner Schroyer responded with that said, anyone who is opposed to a proposal has the same opportunity to comment on the public forum.
 8. Commissioner Weinberg commented that each Commission member has his or her constituency that he or she speaks to. Commissioner Weinberg reminded the Commission that this Commission is not a decision making body, but we do have a role to play. Commissioner Weinberg expressed his concerns once the process gets past the point of external stakeholders, it would seem to him that if the Wildlife and Heritage Service is going to add something it should be something really compelling and a strong reason to do it as opposed to waiting until the following year to run it through the whole process.
 9. Chairman Compton pointed out that the hunting and trapping proposals come up every two years.
 10. Commissioner Weinberg indicated that this Commission tries to incorporate and communicate the best way as possible with the Wildlife and Heritage Service. It is a matter of courtesy if nothing else; if something is going to be suggested that is going to be controversial, the Commission should have the ability to run it through the process first.
 11. Commissioner Schroyer commented that each member of this Commission is here to do a job for his or her constituency. This Commission is a small group and a lot of times the public does not get to us. In this situation with Proposal 5, it did make it to the public comment period.
 12. Commissioner Gregor informed the Commission that she was not able to make the stakeholders meeting but Commissioner Gregor emailed and talked to people. Commissioner Gregor added that her constituency is in support of the extra opportunity for Sunday hunting.
 13. Commissioner Gulbrandsen commented that this issue speaks not to the failure of the process but an issue with the timing of the process. This process requires things to move fairly quickly and at a time when traveling may be impacted or Commission is unable to have a quorum and meet. These things compound the frustration of individuals. Commissioner Gulbrandsen suggested to the Wildlife and Heritage Service to spread out the process more for the next time the two-year cycle for hunting and trapping seasons and bag limits.
 - a. Associate Director Stonesifer supported the idea of starting the concepts and proposals earlier.
 14. Director Peditto added that he is glad that this process that the Wildlife and Heritage Service has implemented is so well accepted and important.
 15. Commissioner Boyles Griffin mentioned that the Wildlife and Heritage Service is acting like this proposal was housekeeping and it was not. Sunday hunting is a very controversial issue in the State of Maryland.

16. Commissioner Gulbrandsen reminded the Commission that earlier this morning the Commission approved the expansion of pheasant hunt. This change occurred with no other public input and no one else is going to have a chance to comment on this change unless they read the Maryland Register.
17. Commissioner Michael expressed that he appreciates the explanation as to how this situation could have happened. Commissioner Michael added this was an additional concept after the external stakeholders meeting and was introduced after the public meetings. Commissioner Michael also mentioned that the Commission meeting is a public meeting subject to record and meeting minutes.
18. Commissioner Schroyer commented that the public had opportunity to comment so that process was not flawed. If the Wildlife and Heritage Service does not have the flexibility to make a change like this at a later time, it forces individuals to go through the legislative process, which is not always a good thing. The flexibility for the Wildlife and Heritage Service to make a change and there was opportunity for public comment...it should be okay.
19. Commissioner Boyles Griffin pointed out that her suggestion is in line with Commissioner Weinberg. Commissioner Boyles Griffin added when the Commission deemed something significant enough and it comes up at a later part of the process for the Commission to decide whether or not to wait another two-year cycle to have it go through the full process. Commissioner Boyles Griffin expressed that she would be in favor of that.
20. Commissioner Weinberg commented that he agreed with Director Peditto that the process has to be the same regardless of what someone might think to be important.
 - a. Staff could send to the Commission a proposal that comes in after the stakeholders meeting.
21. Deer Project Leader Eyler clarified the potential Sunday hunting dates that this proposal would provide. Deer Project Leader Eyler announced to the Commission that Proposal 5 additional deer hunting opportunities on Sunday in Allegany, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, Kent, Montgomery, and Washington Counties was presented at both public meetings.
22. Chairman Compton expressed as the senior member of this Commission along with that has attended every stakeholders meeting process since 1999. It is not uncommon to see a proposal introduced at this junction. This process is a work in progress from the beginning stages until it is released to the public for public input. The process has worked for many years and it has been fine tuned and improved to the process that the Wildlife and Heritage Service has today. It is a process that is respected by many people including the hunting community. The members of the hunting community feel that with this process, they are being heard unlike what they felt prior to this process. Chairman Compton added also people believe it is a bona fide process that he applauds the Department for doing it the way the Department does, and he has full faith and confidence that the Department will fine tune it with our recommendations. Chairman Compton thanked the Commission members for their comments and the discussion is closed.
23. Motion:
 - a. Commissioner Gulbrandsen moved to accept additional archery deer hunting opportunities on Sundays in Allegany, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, Kent, Montgomery, and Washington Counties.
 - b. Commissioner Gregor seconded.
 - c. Discussion:
 - i. Commissioner Michael commented that it is important that the Wildlife and Heritage Service take the lead to have more regularity. For the record Commissioner Michael stated that "I am not against Sunday hunting." Commissioner Michael indicated his concerns are related to the extent of Sunday hunting and limitations that it gives on

- other opportunities and marginal aspects on seasons. Commissioner Michael is not in favor of the expansion of Sunday hunting...the hunters have enough. Commissioner Michael informed the Commission that he is a hunter. There is a need to put our thinking caps on and make the seasons less confusing instead of going to the maximum allowed by the legislature. The seasons should be applied as uniformly as possible.
- ii. Commissioner Boyles Griffin expressed that she is against Sunday hunting. There should be a day of peace and rest for the animals. Commissioner Boyles Griffin realized that in these modern times there are restrictions on how much time people can spend hunting. We are not living in Agrarian society anymore where a person can hunt the other days of the week and does something different on Sundays due to lifestyle changes.
 - iii. Commissioner Boyles Griffin also added in respect that the impact of this particular proposal is going to have on Montgomery County which includes a lot of the constituencies that she hears and normally contacts her on wildlife related issues especially deer; this proposal is going to have a substantial impact on them.
 - iv. Director Peditto is committed to improve the concepts and proposals process.
- d. Motion Results: 5-support, 2-oppose, and 1-abstain. Motion passed.
24. Chairman Compton thanked staff for the presentations and the work that staff did on the proposals and the process. Chairman Compton congratulated staff on another outstanding regulatory process.

Break - 11:50 am to 12:05 pm

2018 Legislative Session Update – Presentation given by Associate Director Glenn Therres.

- Associate Director Therres provided a summary of the 27 bills that the Wildlife and Heritage Service was tracking to the Commission. [ATTACHMENT E]
- The Commission can review natural resources related bills by going to <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/webmga/frm1st.aspx?tab=home>, then click on By Broad Subject, where you can select Natural Resources (M1) or Hunting and Fishing (M2); this will provide the list of all bills under the Department's jurisdiction or hunting and fishing section.
- The results of the 27 bills are: 1 bill passed both House and the Senate; 7 bills failed or withdrawn; 11 bills have passed one chamber and now is in the crossover chamber; 8 bills are still in the original chamber.
- Commissioner Michael commented that whatever passes the Wildlife and Heritage Service should wait until the bi-annual regulatory process to adopt policy unless it is an emergency. In the past, such changes would go through the Maryland Register as emergency regulation and it disvalues our regulatory process.

Natural Resources Police Update – Presentation given by Lieutenant Jeffrey Sweitzer.

- There are 36 individuals in the Academy. There were a couple drop outs that were replaced by alternates.
- Chairman Compton reiterated a comment that he made before related to NRP making traffic stops. The Commission enjoyed seeing the NRP officers focusing on protecting our natural resources including wildlife species. Please drive home the point that the primary function of NRP is not traffic enforcement. Lt. Schweitzer agreed and hoped that they would be focused on natural resources enforcement and not traffic or other crimes.

- NRP is now using e-tickets. The requirement for an officer to be certified for using the e-ticket process is that they have to make 50 stops. That is probably the reason why Chairman Compton saw more NRP officers conducting traffic stops.
- Lt. Sweitzer will gather information as to how many NRP officers are on duty along with provide a statistical report of vacancies, etc. to the Commission on April 18th.

Old Business:

- Associate Director Jonathan McKnight reminded the Commission that staff brought the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act to the Commission’s attention at the January 18, 2017 WAC meeting. The Commission was kind enough to agree to write a letter of support on behalf of the Commission to the Congressional members.
 1. Associate Director McKnight sent the Commission a summary of the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act via email. [ATTACHMENT F]
 2. There were 38 Congressional sponsors.
 3. It is an addendum to the Pittman-Robertson Act that would take money that comes from offshore and onshore drilling leases on federal lands, and put the money into the 50 states for conservation wildlife in general, specifically, non-game species. Currently, this money now goes into general funds.
 4. The Commission also received a copy of the language via an email that would go into the letter of support to the Congressional members. [ATTACHMENT G]
 5. The funding would support projects that are linked to the State Wildlife Action Plan. The Commission gave an overview of the State Wildlife Action Plan in 2015 by Science Program Manager Gwenda Brewer. In every state, the State Wildlife Action Plan is the blue print for spending the funds.
 6. In Maryland, the money will be used to support habitat that will help non-game and game species.
 7. Commissioner Gulbrandsen moved to accept the resolution as drafted by Associate Director McKnight.
 8. Commissioner Weinberg seconded.
 9. Motion passed with one abstention.
 10. Associate Director McKnight will bring a letter of support to the April 18th WAC meeting for the Commission’s signature.

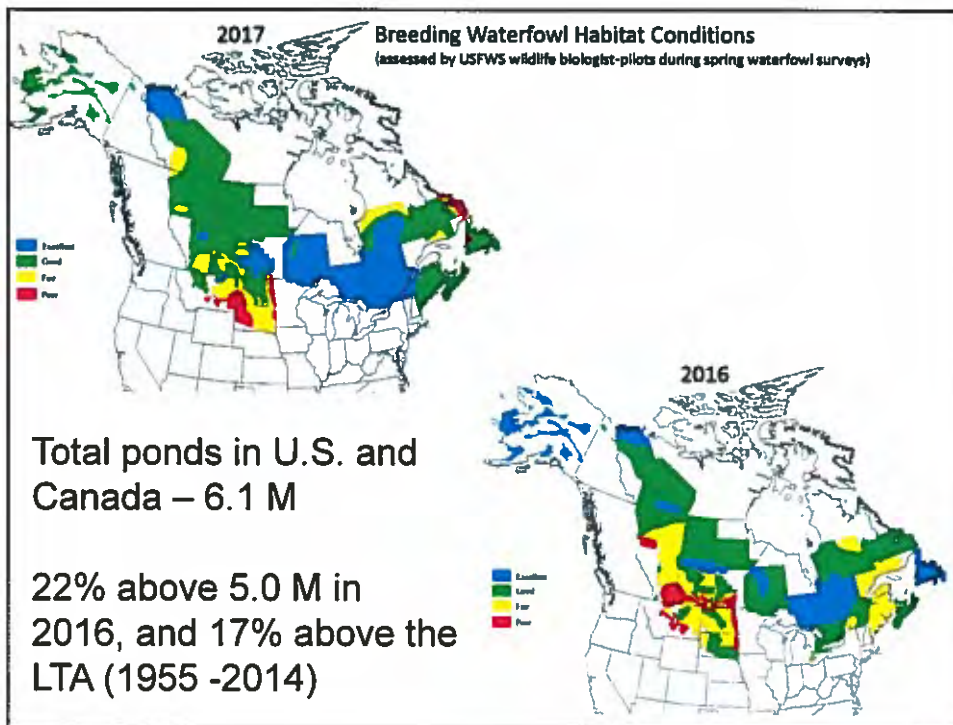
New Business – No New Business

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 12:38 P.M.
 The next meeting will be held at 9:30 A.M. on Wednesday, April 18, 2018 in the Tawes State Office Building, C-1 Conference Room; Annapolis, Maryland.

Attendance

Members:	L. Compton, M. Goetze, T. Gregor, E. Gulbrandsen, S. Boyles Griffin ,J. Michael, J. Schroyer, and R. Weinberg
Absent:	
Guest:	C. Ferguson
Staff:	B. Eyler, B. Harvey, J. Homyack, T. Larney, P. Peditto, T. Spencer, K. Stonesifer, J. Sweitzer, and G. Therres



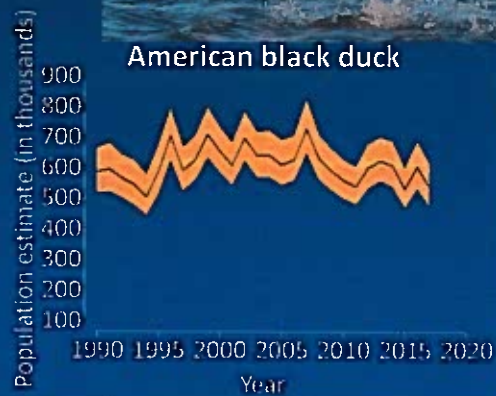
Eastern Mallard

- Eastern Mallard breeding population (BPOP) currently used to set AF duck hunting regulations.
- Eastern mallard AHM Recommends a liberal regulation (60-day season and 6-duck bag limit) for AF in 2018/19.

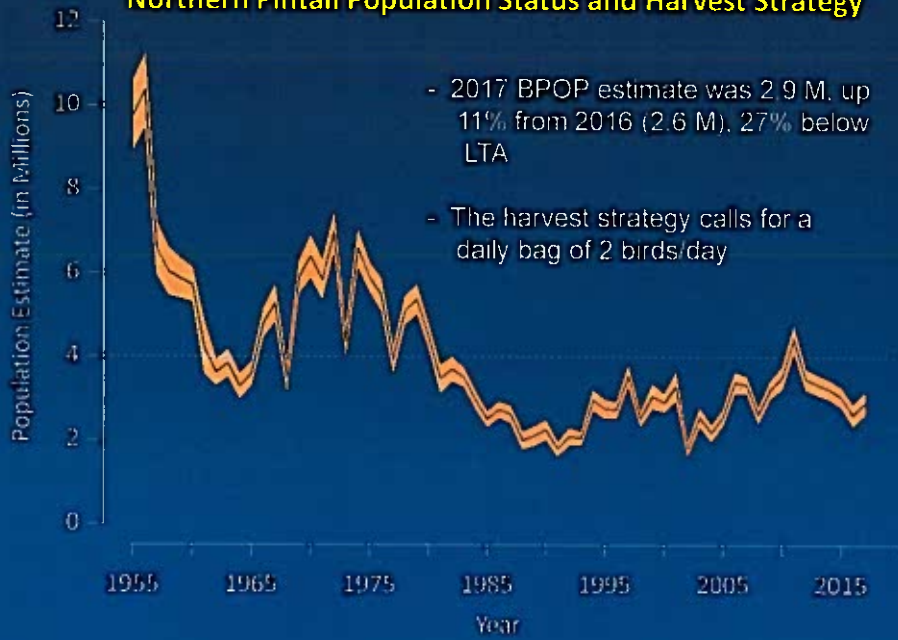


American Black Duck Population Status

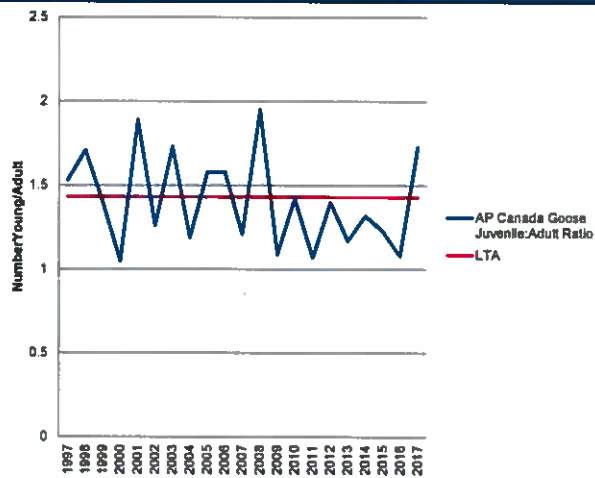
- Estimated Black Duck breeding population in 2017 was 500,000 and has been relatively stable over the last 30 years.
- Prescribed Black Duck hunting regulations in the U S to remain in the moderate package.
- Daily bag 2/day



Northern Pintail Population Status and Harvest Strategy

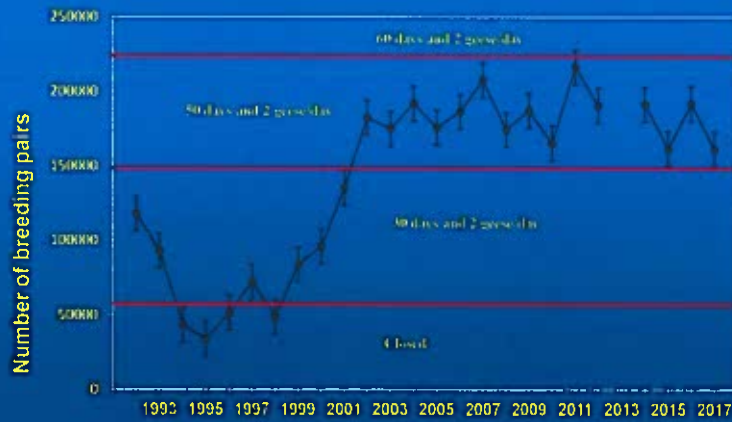


AP Goose Production

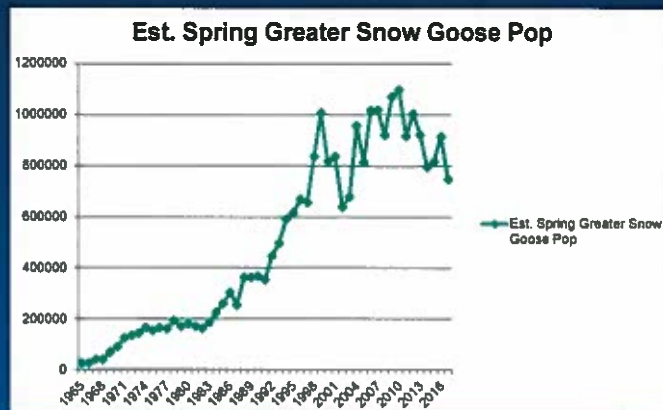


- In 2017, 161,147 (SE = 17,246) breeding pairs were estimated on the Ungava Peninsula....similar to 2016 (191,526).

AP Breeding Pairs and AP Harvest Strategy

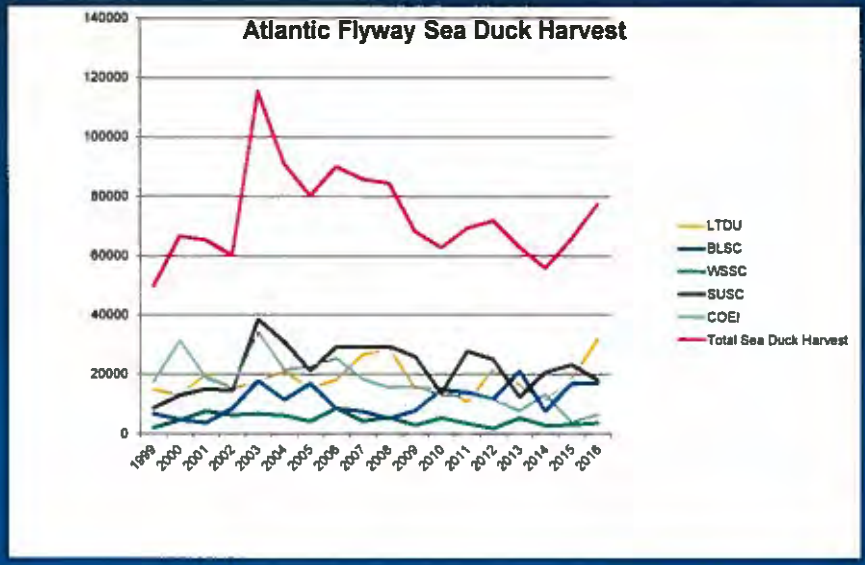


Greater Snow Goose Photo Count 1965 - 2017

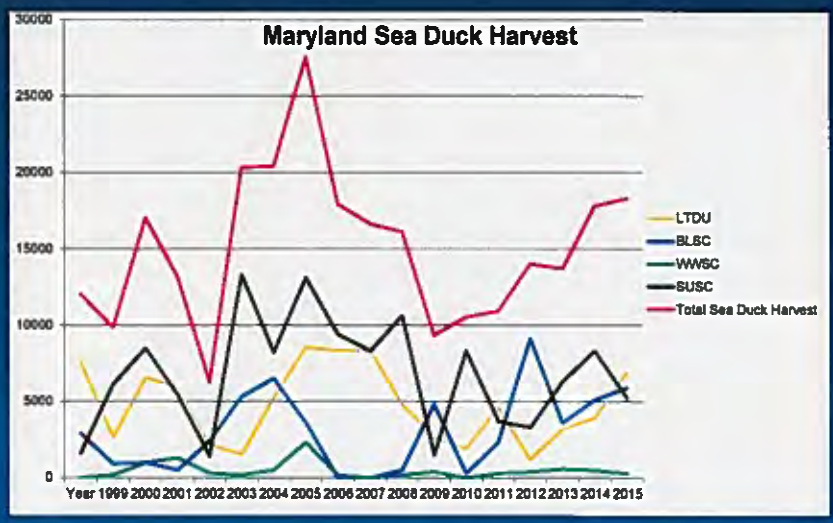


- Population appears to be declining

Sea Duck Harvest



Sea Duck Harvest



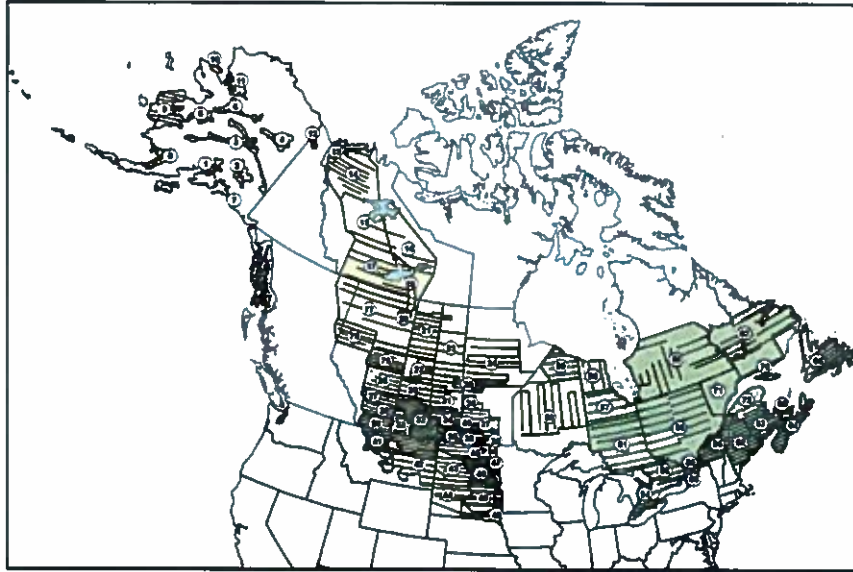
Compensatory Days for Webless Species

- USFWS approved compensatory days for webless migratory game birds in states that do not allow Sunday hunting for these species.
- Beginning in the 2018-19 season, the federal framework will allow a maximum number of hunting days, rather than calendar days
- States were granted compensatory days for waterfowl in 1997.

Multi-stock Management

- In the past, Eastern mallard AHM determined general duck season structure for the Atlantic flyway.
- Starting with the 2019-20, the season structure (days, total bag) will be determined by a matrix of species representative of the Atlantic Flyway harvest (green-winged teal, wood ducks, ring-necked ducks, and common goldeneye) .
- The Eastern mallard population, particularly those nesting in New York-New England, has been in decline and will likely be managed by an individual species harvest plan in a manner similar to black ducks, scaup, northern pintail, etc.
- It is also likely that the mallard bag limit will be 2 birds per day for the 2019-20 season.

B. Waterfowl Breeding Population and Habitat Survey map

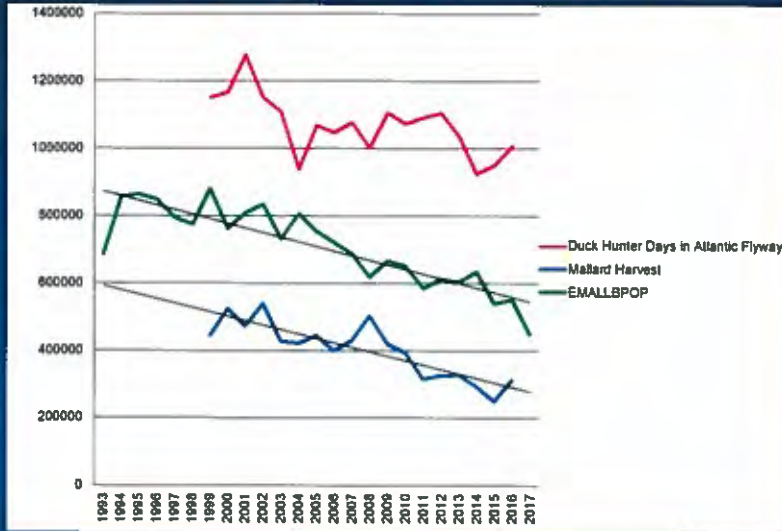


Strata and transects of the Waterfowl Breeding, Population and Habitat Survey (yellow = traditional survey area, green = eastern survey area).

Northeast Atl. Flyway Breeding Plot Survey



Comparing Trends in AF Mallard Population, Harvest, and Duck Hunter Days



MALL Pop Estimates from AFBWS And WBPBS

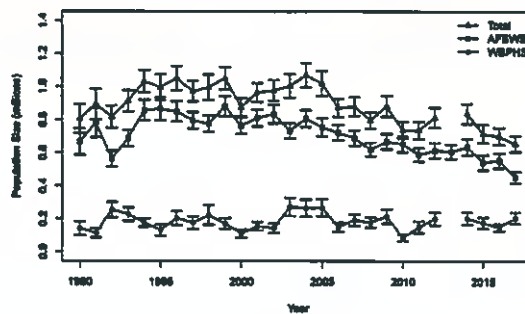
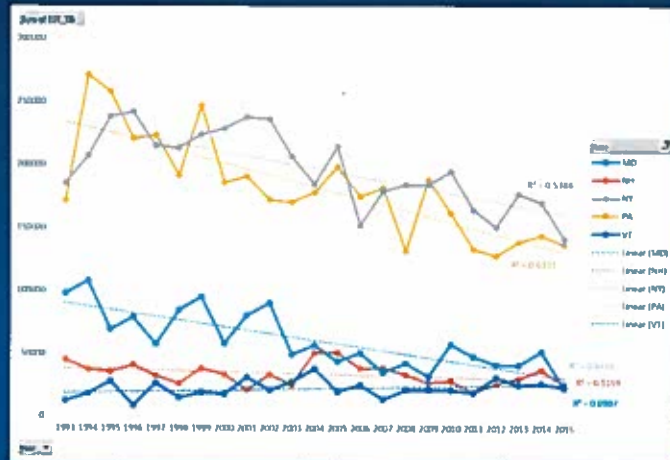


Figure 5 - Population estimates of eastern mallards observed in the northeastern states (AFBWS) and in southern Ontario and Quebec (WBPBS strata 51-53 and 56) from 1990 to 2017. In 2013, population estimates were only available for the northeastern states (AFBWS). Error bars represent one standard error.

AF Mallards in the Breeding Waterfowl Survey by State



So what is going on with mallards?



- Decline in habitat carrying capacity?
 - Not age ratio
 - Mechanism not identified
- Decline in winter "artificial" feeding sites leading to lower winter survival or poor female body condition leading into spring?
- Introgression of game-farm mallard genes resulting in "less-fit" wild ducks?
- Mallards done "riding the wave" of "recent" expansion in the east and declining to lower equilibrium population? (similar to wild turkeys, cattle egrets?)

Questions?



Larry Hogan, Governor
Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor
Mark Belton, Secretary
Joanne Throwe, Deputy Secretary

PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS PROPOSED
MIGRATORY GAME BIRD HUNTING SEASONS FOR 2018-2019

AGENDA

March 6, 2018

- | | | |
|------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| 7:00 | Welcome | Karina Stonesifer, Associate Director for Game Management |
| 7:10 | Regulations Process | Bill Harvey, Game Bird Section Leader |
| 7:20 | Population Status Review
and Proposed Seasons | Josh Homyack, Waterfowl Project Leader |
| 7:50 | Public Comment | Small Groups |

**PROPOSED
MARYLAND MIGRATORY GAME BIRD SEASONS AND BAG LIMITS
FOR THE 2018-19 HUNTING YEAR**

SPECIAL EARLY RESIDENT POPULATION CANADA GEESE

Federal framework: A 15-day special season may be held between September 1 – 15 in the Eastern zone and a 25-day season between September 1 - 25 in the Western zone.

Proposed Season Dates

Eastern Zone Sep. 1 - Sept 15

Western Zone Sep. 1 - Sept 25

Daily Bag Limit: 8 in both zones. Possession limit is 3 times the daily limit.

Eastern Hunt Zone: Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Harford, Kent, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico and Worcester Counties; and that part of Anne Arundel County east of Interstate 895, Interstate 97 and Route 3; that part of Prince George's County east of Route 3 and Route 301; and that part of Charles County east of 301 to the Virginia line.

Western Hunt Zone: Allegany, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, Howard, Montgomery and Washington Counties; and that part of Anne Arundel County west of Interstate 895, Interstate 97 and Route 3; that part of Prince George's County west of Route 3 and Route 301; and that part of Charles County west of 301 to the Virginia line.

Shotguns capable of holding more than 3 shells may be used. Shooting hours in both zones are from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

SEPTEMBER TEAL SEASON

Federal framework: States may select a 16 day season to be held between September 1 and 30. Teal season may not run concurrently with other seasons (resident Canada goose) that allow special considerations such as modified shooting hours or unplugged guns.

Proposed Season Dates Sep. 17– Sep. 29

Daily Bag Limit: 6 blue-winged or green-winged teal, singly or in aggregate. The possession limit is 3 times the daily bag limit.

September Teal Hunt Zone: Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Harford, Kent, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico and Worcester Counties; that part of Anne Arundel County east of Interstate 895, Interstate 97, Route 3; that part of Prince George's County east of Route 3 and Route 301; and that part of Charles County east of 301 to the Virginia line. Shooting hours for teal during this season are from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset.

DUCKS, COOTS and MERGANSERS

Federal Framework: A 60-day season may be held between the Saturday nearest September 24 and the last Sunday in January (January 27).

Proposed Season Dates Oct. 13 - Oct. 20
 Nov. 10 - Nov. 23
 Dec. 11 - Jan. 26

Black Duck Nov. 10 - Nov. 23
 Dec. 11 - Jan. 26

Duck Daily Bag and Possession Limits: The daily bag limit of ducks (including mergansers) is 6. The 6-duck limit shall consist of no more than 5 sea ducks (no more than 4 long-tailed ducks, 4 scoters or 4 eiders), 4 mallards (max. 2 hen mallards), 3 wood ducks, 2 scaup, 2 pintail, 2 redheads, 2 hooded mergansers, 2 canvasbacks, 2 black ducks (during black duck open season), 1 fulvous tree duck and 1 mottled duck. All other species of ducks (except harlequin duck) may be taken up to the 6-duck limit. The possession limit is three times the daily bag limit. In addition to the duck bag limit hunters may take 15 coots per day. No open season for harlequin ducks and swans.

Note: In the designated sea duck zone, sea ducks may only be taken during the special sea duck season dates (Nov. 3 - Jan. 11).

SEA DUCKS (Scoters, Long-tailed Duck and Eiders)

Federal Frameworks: A special 60-day season may be selected between September 15 and January 31 with a 5-bird daily bag limit (no more than 4 long-tailed ducks, 4 scoters or 4 eiders) within established sea duck hunting areas. This bag limit is in addition to the limits applying to other ducks during the regular duck season. In all other areas, sea ducks may be taken only during the regular open season for ducks and are part of the regular duck season daily bag (not to exceed 4 scoters, 4 eiders or 4 long-tailed ducks) and possession limits.

Proposed Season Dates: Nov. 3 - Jan. 11

Daily Bag Limit: 5 (no more than 4 scoters, 4 long-tailed ducks or 4 eiders) per day

YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNTING DAYS

Federal Framework: States may select two days per duck-hunting zone, designated as "Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days," in addition to their regular duck seasons. The days must be held outside any regular duck season on a weekend, holiday or other non-school day when youth hunters would have the maximum opportunity to participate. The days may be held up to 14 days before or after any regular duck season framework, within any split of a regular duck season or within any other open season on migratory birds.

Proposed Season Dates: Nov. 3 and Feb. 9

Daily Bag and Possession Limits: The daily bag limit of ducks (including mergansers) is 6. The 6-duck limit shall consist of no more than 5 sea ducks (no more than 4 long-tailed ducks, 4 scoters or 4 eiders), 4 mallards (max. 2 hen mallards), 3 wood ducks, 2 scaup, 2 pintail, 2 redheads, 2 hooded mergansers, 2 canvasbacks, 2 black ducks, 1 fulvous tree duck and 1 mottled duck. All other species of ducks (except harlequin duck) may be taken up to the 6-duck limit. In addition, youth hunters may take 2 Canada geese in the Atlantic Population Hunt Zone or 5 Canada Geese in the Late Resident Canada Goose Hunt Zone, 2 brant, 25 light geese and 15 coots. No open season for harlequin ducks and swans.

Any licensed hunter 16 years old or younger may participate during these one-day hunts. Youth of this age who are exempt from the Maryland hunting license requirements may also participate. Youth waterfowl hunters must possess a receipt showing they purchased a \$9 Maryland Migratory Game Bird Hunting Stamp. A Federal Migratory Hunting and Conservation Stamp is required of youth hunters who are 16 years old. Youth hunters must be accompanied by an adult at least 21 years old that holds a valid Maryland hunting license or is exempt from the hunting license requirements. The accompanying adult may call waterfowl, assist with decoys, and retrieve downed birds but may not possess a hunting weapon.

ATLANTIC POPULATION CANADA GEESE

Federal Framework: AP Zone: A 50-day season may be held between November 15 and February 5, with a 2-bird daily bag limit. These seasons also include white-fronted geese. Unless specified otherwise, seasons may be split into two segments.

Proposed Season Dates: Nov. 17 - Nov. 23
 Dec. 14 - Feb. 2

Bag Limit: 2 per day*

AP Zone: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Harford, Howard, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, St. Mary's, Talbot, Wicomico and Worcester Counties; and that portion of Carroll County east of Route 31 to the intersection of Route 97 and east of Route 97 to the Pennsylvania line; and that portion of Prince George's County east of Route 3 and Route 301; and that portion of Charles County east of Route 301 to the Virginia line.

AF RESIDENT POPULATION CANADA GEESE

Federal Framework: An 80-day season may be held between November 15 and March 10, with a 5-bird daily bag limit. The season may be split into 3 segments.

Proposed Season Dates: Nov. 17 - Nov. 23
Dec. 14 - Mar. 9

Daily Bag Limit: 5 per day*

RP Zone: Allegany, Frederick, Garrett, Montgomery, and Washington Counties; and that portion of Carroll County west of Route 31 to the intersection of Route 97 and west of Route 97 to the Pennsylvania line; and that portion of Prince George's County west of Route 3 and Route 301; and that portion of Charles County west of Route 301 to the Virginia line.

*Includes Canada geese, cackling geese and white-fronted geese singly or in aggregate.

ATLANTIC BRANT

Federal Framework: States may select a 60-day season between the Saturday nearest September 24 (September 27) and January 31, with a 2-bird daily bag limit. States may split their seasons into two segments.

Proposed Season Dates: Nov. 8 - Nov. 23
Dec. 10 - Jan. 31

Daily Bag Limit: 2 per day

LIGHT GEESE

Federal Framework: States may select a 107-day season between October 1 and March 10, with a 25-bird daily bag limit and no possession limit. States may split their seasons into three segments.

Proposed Season Dates: Oct. 1 - Nov. 23
Dec. 10 - Feb. 2
Feb. 9

Daily Bag Limit: 25 per day** No possession limit.

**Includes greater and lesser snow geese and Ross's geese singly or in aggregate.

LIGHT GOOSE CONSERVATION ORDER

Federal Framework: The conservation order allows new methods of taking light geese, allows shooting hours for light geese to end one-half hour after sunset and imposes no daily bag limits for light geese. Control activities may be conducted only when all waterfowl (including light goose) and crane hunting seasons, excluding falconry, are closed.

Proposed Season Dates: Nov. 26 - Dec. 8
Feb. 4 - Feb. 8
Feb. 11 - Apr. 15

Daily Bag Limit: No Limit, no possession limit

Hunt Area: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Harford, Howard, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, St. Mary's, Talbot, Wicomico and Worcester Counties; and that portion of Carroll County east of Route 31 to the intersection of Route 97, and east of Route 97 to the Pennsylvania line; that portion of Prince George's County east of Route 3 and Route 301; and that portion of Charles County east of Route 301 to the Virginia line. The Special Sea Duck Zone is excluded from this hunt area.

Special Regulations during Light Goose Conservation Order Season:

(1) Participating hunters must possess a \$5 Snow Goose Conservation Order Hunting Season Permit while hunting light geese during this season; (2) Hunters may use shotguns capable of holding more than three shotshells; (3) Hunters may use electronic calls with recordings of light geese; and (4) Shooting hours are from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

Note: Shooting hours for regular waterfowl seasons are one-half hour before sunrise to sunset except for (1) Resident Canada geese during September seasons when shooting hours are from one-half hour before sunrise to one half hour after sunset, and (2) for light geese during the Light Goose Conservation Order Season when shooting hours are one-half hour before sunrise to one half hour after sunset. All season dates are inclusive. There is no possession limit for light geese; for all other waterfowl, the possession limit is three times the daily bag limit. In the Atlantic Flyway States of Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, North Carolina and Pennsylvania, where Sunday hunting is prohibited statewide by State law, all Sundays are closed to all take of migratory waterfowl (including mergansers and coots).

WEBLESS MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS (Doves, Rails, Snipe and Woodcock)

Note: The USFWS recently approved compensatory days for webless migratory game birds for states including Maryland, where Sunday hunting for migratory game birds is prohibited by state law. Prior to this change, Sundays counted against the maximum number of days in states where Sunday hunting is prohibited by state law. Beginning with the 2018-19 hunting season, the federal framework will allow a maximum number of hunting days, rather than calendar days for webless migratory game birds. States were granted compensatory days for waterfowl hunting seasons in 1997.

MOURNING DOVE

Federal Framework: States may select a 90-day season between September 1 and January 31 with a 15-bird daily bag limit. States may split their seasons into three segments.

Proposed Season Dates: Sep. 1 - Oct. 20
Oct. 27 - Nov. 23
Dec. 18 - Jan. 12

Daily Bag Limit: 15 per day

KING AND CLAPPER RAIL

Federal Framework: States may select a 70-day season between September 1 and the last Sunday in January with a 10-bird daily bag limit. States may split their seasons into two segments.

Proposed Season Dates: Sep. 1 - Nov. 21

Daily Bag Limit: 10 per day (No more than 1 King Rail)

SORA AND VIRGINIA RAIL

Federal Framework: States may select a 70-day season between September 1 and the last Sunday in January with a 25-bird daily bag limit. States may split their seasons into two segments.

Proposed Season Dates: Sep. 1 - Nov. 21

Daily Bag Limit: 25 per day

COMMON SNIPE

Federal Framework: States may select a 107-day season between September 1 and January 31 with an 8-bird daily bag limit. States may split their seasons into two segments.

Proposed Season Dates: Sep. 29 - Jan 31

Daily Bag Limit: 8 per day

WOODCOCK

Federal Framework: States may select a 45-day season between October 1 and January 31 with a 3-bird daily bag limit. States may split their seasons into two segments.

Proposed Season Dates: Oct. 24 - Nov. 23
Jan. 7 - Jan. 26

Daily Bag Limit: 3 per day

For additional information on population status, regulations, where to hunt, and more go DNR Waterfowl Page at http://www.dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Hunt_Traps/waterfowl/index.asp.

2018-20 Game Species Proposed Changes

Black Bear

Considered Action: Increase the length of the hunting season by one day at the end of the season. Currently, the bear hunting season is four days long (Monday through Thursday) beginning the Monday after the early muzzleloader deer hunting season. This concept would set the hunting season at five days (Monday through Friday).

Recommended Action: Finalize as proposed.

Rationale/Goal: Since switching to a 'set number of days' hunting model in 2014 (vs. the former quota system), hunter success rates dropped from approximately 13% to nearly 8%. The reduced success rate is likely a result of hunters being selective and passing on bears early in the hunting season knowing that they have a fixed number of days to hunt instead of fearing the hunting season will be shut down early as occurred in the quota system.

Adding the additional day will increase opportunity for hunters and likely increase harvest by a modest amount. This is consistent with the goals of the current Bear Management Plan and will in no way jeopardize the sustainability of our bear population. The proposed concept will also provide western Maryland's agricultural producers additional relief from crop depredation caused by black bears.

Comments: By extending opportunity one day during the bear hunting season, DNR anticipates a moderate increase in the overall bear harvest and an increase in hunter success rates. The bear population has continued to grow since reinstating bear hunting in 2004. The growth of Maryland's bear population is particularly noteworthy in the eastern part of Maryland's bear range.

Webless Migratory Game Birds (Doves, Rails and Gallinules)

Considered Action: Add additional hunting days to webless migratory game bird seasons in response to a recent change by USFWS granting compensatory days in states where Sunday hunting for all migratory game birds is prohibited by state law.

Recommended Action: Finalize as proposed.

Rationale/Goal - The USFWS establishes frameworks for migratory game bird hunting, including the maximum daily bag limit, beginning and ending hunt dates and maximum number of days. The USFWS recently approved compensatory days for webless migratory game birds for states where Sunday hunting for migratory game birds is prohibited by state law.

Prior to this change, Sundays counted against the maximum number of days in states where Sunday hunting is prohibited by state law. Beginning with the 2018-19 hunting season, the federal framework will allow a maximum number of hunting days, rather than calendar days. This change will add hunting opportunity for Maryland hunters – especially dove hunters. Harvest rates for these species are low and generally believed to be largely compensatory and of minimal effect on annual populations of these species.

Comments: For example, in 2017-18, there were 12 Sundays included in the season dates for mourning doves and 6 Sundays included in the season dates for woodcock. With compensatory days, we would add hunting days to equal the number of available Sundays.

Pheasant

Considered Action: Increase the pheasant daily bag limit from one male to two either-sex.

Recommended Action: Finalize as proposed.

Rationale/Goal: Sustainable wild-reproducing pheasant populations no longer exist in Maryland. This change will simplify the hunting of released or escaped pheasants and be more consistent with surrounding states' bag limits.

Comments: Despite decades of restrictive bag limits in Maryland and other Mid-Atlantic States, pheasant populations continued to decline precipitously due to changes in habitat, farming practices, and predator numbers. Wild pheasants have not been found in huntable numbers in Maryland for at least 15 years. However a significant number of pheasants are released for hunting and dog training purposes. Allowing the harvest of two pheasants of either-sex will allow greater utilization of released or escaped birds and may encourage participation in small-game hunting.

Wild Turkey

Considered Action: Extend the length of the fall turkey season by one day. The season would begin on the last Saturday in October and last 9 days, ending on the first Sunday in November.

Recommended Action: Finalize as proposed.

Rationale/Goal: This change would increase opportunity for participation in the fall turkey season.

Comments: A long tradition of fall turkey hunting exists in the western 3 counties (Garrett, Allegany, and Washington). However participation has declined significantly in recent decades with only about 1,500 hunters currently hunting in the fall season. An additional weekend day will provide more opportunity in the field and may increase participation in the season. Harvest rates are low and the population can withstand a slight increase in harvest. In the years since Sunday hunting was permitted, an average of 10 turkeys were harvested on the Sunday of the current season. It is expected this change will result in a similar number of additional turkeys harvested.

White-tailed Deer (1)

Considered Action: Reduce the statewide antlered deer bag limit to two antlered deer or “Bucks”. Hunters will be eligible to take a third antlered deer in Region B only with the purchase of a Bonus Antlered Deer Stamp. No more than one antlered deer can be taken in a weapon season (archery, muzzleloader, firearm), unless the Bonus Antlered Deer Stamp is used.

Recommended Action: Finalize as proposed.

Hunters can choose which two of the three weapon seasons (archery, muzzleloader, firearm) to use the two antlered deer bag limit. They can use the Bonus Antlered Deer Stamp in Region B to either take an antlered deer in the remaining weapon season, or to take an additional antlered deer in a weapon season they already harvested an antlered deer.

The Bonus Antlered Deer Stamp cannot be used the same day that a hunter harvests an antlered deer under the regular statewide bag limit (daily antlered bag limit of one).

Deer hunters may harvest one antlered deer during a license year within the established statewide bag limit that does not meet the requirement of having at least 3 points on one antler. Any remaining antlered deer taken within the established bag limit must have at least 3 points on one antler. Antlered deer can be taken in any order. Junior hunters (16 years old or younger) are exempt from the three antler point requirement.

Rationale/Goal: A reduced antlered deer bag limit and antler restrictions are compatible with modern day deer management philosophies and address a common request from hunters.

Comments: In 2017-18, less than 3% of successful buck hunters (659) harvested more than two antlered deer in Maryland, so we do not anticipate a significant loss of hunter opportunity by reducing the antlered deer bag limit. In 2017-18, 77% of all harvested bucks met the 3-point antler restriction. Recent public opinion survey data indicate majority support for antlered deer bag limit reductions and antler point restrictions.

White-tailed Deer (2)

Considered Action: Remove the requirement to harvest two antlerless white-tailed deer in Region B before using a Bonus Antlered Deer Stamp.

Recommended Action: Finalize as proposed.

Rationale/Goal: The Department has seen a dramatic shift in the deer hunting attitude in Maryland. As a result, it is no longer necessary to drive antlerless deer harvest through regulatory and enforcement provisions. Removal of this requirement will also simplify enforcement and hunter understanding of the rules for deer hunting in Maryland.

Comments: Approximately 15,000 Bonus Antlered Deer Stamps are sold each year. We anticipate this number to remain the same and antlerless harvest to continue to dominate the number of deer taken by hunters in Maryland.

White-tailed Deer (3)

Considered Action: Increase antlerless hunting opportunity on Public Land in Region A by allowing either sex deer harvest during the early muzzleloader season.

Recommended Action: Finalize as proposed.

Rational/Goal: Deer populations are healthy in the region, and a common request from hunters is for more antlerless hunting opportunities on public land. The Department continues to expand ownership of public land in Western Maryland and this concept would afford more opportunity for hunters on those lands.

Comments: The bag limit would remain at one deer total for the early muzzleloader season for the region.

White-tailed Deer (4)

Considered Action: Change the Region B archery antlerless bag limit from unlimited to 10.

Recommended Action: Change the Region B archery antlerless bag limit from unlimited to 15.

While the proposed change would typically impact less than 20 hunters in any given year, we received several requests from local government, farm organizations and citizens of Montgomery County to reconsider the proposal to reduce the antlerless bag limit to 10 deer in Region B. Amending the proposed change to 15 antlerless deer in Region B will ensure that all but a very small minority (fewer than 10) of archery hunters are afforded the ability to fill their bag limit.

Rationale/Goal: Changing the bag limit from unlimited to 10 will make the limit consistent with the muzzleloader and firearm bag limits and addresses an increasingly common request from hunters.

Comments: In 2017-18, 0.2% of successful antlerless deer hunters (18) harvested more than ten antlerless deer during the archery season in Maryland, so we do not anticipate a significant loss of hunter opportunity by reducing this bag limit.

White-tailed Deer (5)

Considered Action: Add additional archery hunting opportunities on Sundays in Allegany, Carroll, Frederick, Kent, Montgomery, Garrett, and Washington counties.

Recommended Action: Finalize as proposed.

Rationale/Goal: Sunday hunting serves as an important recreational day for deer hunters in Maryland. Many hunters only have time to hunt on the weekend, and by adding Sundays, their time to hunt is often doubled. Sunday hunting has proven popular and compatible with other recreational activities. Over 7,000 deer are typically harvested on Sundays, aiding the state with deer population management.

Comments: September Sundays after Labor Day, and January Sundays during the regular archery season will be added for archery hunting in Allegany, Garrett, Kent, Montgomery, and Washington counties. The 2nd Sunday in January will be added in Carroll and Frederick counties when that Sunday falls during the regular archery season. September and January Sundays added in Montgomery County will have legal shooting hours of one half hour before sunrise to 10:30am.

No state parks will be open to Sunday hunting under this proposal. The authority to open Sunday hunting in the five western counties has been available to DNR for several years. Public comment to open those Sundays has been one of the most common requests received from the public to the Department.

Considered Actions

2018-19 and 2019-20 Hunting Seasons



Maryland Department of Natural Resources

Wildlife and Heritage Service

Regulation Cycle



- ✓ The Game Program meets and develops Management Concepts.
- ✓ Presents Concepts to Wildlife Advisory Committee.
- ✓ Presents Concepts to a meeting on Internal Stakeholders.
- ✓ Presents Concepts to a meeting of External Stakeholders.
- ✓ Concepts are refined further and developed into Proposals and are placed online for public comment.
- Comment period closes. Proposals are finalized and presented to the Wildlife Advisory Commission for approval.
- Final Proposals are forwarded to the Maryland Register for additional comment and adoption.

REVIEW INPUT AND ADD/DROP/MODIFY AT EVERY STEP

Black Bear



Considered Action: Increase the length of the bear hunting season by one day at the end of the season (Monday – Friday after the early muzzleloader deer hunting season).

- Recommended Action: Finalize as proposed


Webless Migratory Game Birds



Considered Action: Add additional hunting days to webless migratory game bird seasons in response to a recent change by USFWS granting compensatory days in states where Sunday hunting for all migratory game birds is prohibited by state law.

- Recommended Action: Finalize as proposed


Pheasant



Considered Action: Increase the pheasant daily bag limit from one male to two either-sex.

- Recommended Action: Finalize as proposed.

Wild Turkey



Considered Action: Extend the length of the fall turkey season by one day. The season would begin on the last Saturday in October and last 9 days, ending on the 1st Sunday in November.

- Recommended Action: Finalize as proposed.

White-tailed Deer



Considered Action: Change the statewide antlered deer bag limit to two antlered deer. A third antlered deer will be available as a bonus in Region B only. The daily bag limit will be one antlered deer.

- Recommended Action: Finalize as proposed.

White-tailed Deer



Considered Action: Remove the requirement to harvest two antlerless deer in Region B before using a Bonus Antlered Deer Stamp.

- Recommended Action: Finalize as proposed.

White-tailed Deer



Considered Action: Increase hunting opportunity on Public Land in Region A by allowing either-sex deer harvest during the early muzzleloader season.

- Recommended Action: Finalize as proposed.

White-tailed Deer



Considered Action: Change the Region B archery antlerless bag limit from unlimited to 10.

- Recommended Action: Change the Region B archery antlerless bag limit from unlimited to 15.
- Justification: While the proposed change would typically impact less than 20 hunters in any given year, we received several requests from local government, farm organizations and citizens of Montgomery County to reconsider the proposal to reduce the antlerless bag limit to 10 deer in Region B. Amending the proposed change to 15 antlerless deer in Region B will ensure that all but a very small minority (fewer than 10) of archery hunters are afforded the ability to fill their bag limit.

Deer



Considered Action: Add additional archery hunting opportunities on Sundays in Allegany, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, Kent, Montgomery, and Washington counties.

- Recommended Action: Finalize as proposed.

Other Species or Regulations



No proposed changes for:

- Waterfowl
- Squirrels, rabbits, grouse and other small game, or
- Furbearers
- Sika deer.

Considered Actions:
2018-19 and 2019-20 Hunting Seasons



Maryland Department of Natural Resources

Wildlife and Heritage Service

**Summary of 2018 Proposed Legislation
Wildlife and Heritage Service
(as of March 27, 2018)**

<u>Number / Chapter (Cross File / Chapter)</u> ▲	<u>Title</u>	<u>Primary Sponsor</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Original House and Hearing Dates</u>	<u>Opposite House and Hearing Dates</u>
HB0007 (SB0182)	Income Tax Credit – Venison Donation – Feed the Hungry Organizations	Delegate Mautz	In the Senate – Third Reading passed	Ways and Means 1/17/2018 - 1:00 p.m.	Returned passed
HB0091	Natural Resources - Hunting - Outerwear Exception	Delegate Grammer	In the House - Unfavorable Report by Environment and Transportation	Environment and Transportation 1/24/2018 - 1:30 p.m.	
HB0104 (SB0149)	Natural Resources - Electronic Licensing - Voluntary Donations	Delegate Robinson	In the Senate - First Reading Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs	Environment and Transportation 1/24/2018 - 1:30 p.m.	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
HB0119	Calvert County – Hunting – Deer Management Permits	Delegate Clark	In the Senate - Second Reading Passed	Environment and Transportation 2/7/2018 - 1:00 p.m.	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs 3/20/2018 - 1:00 p.m.
HB0172	Montgomery County - Archery Hunting Safety Zone - Position of Archery Hunter MC 24-18	Montgomery County Delegation	In the Senate - Hearing 3/27 at 1:00 p.m.	Environment and Transportation 2/14/2018 - 1:00 p.m.	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs 3/27/2018 - 1:00 p.m.
HB0636	Bow Hunting - Possession of Handguns for Protection	Delegate Vogt	In the House - Hearing 3/06 at 1:00 p.m.	Judiciary 3/6/2018 - 1:00 p.m.	
HB0712	Natural Resources - Wildlife Trafficking Prevention	Delegate Luedtke	In the House - Hearing 2/14 at 1:00 p.m.	Environment and Transportation 2/14/2018 - 1:00 p.m.	
HB1118 (SB0341)	Hunting - Required Outerwear - Daylight Fluorescent Pink	Delegate Adams	In the Senate - First Reading Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs	Environment and Transportation 2/23/2018 - 1:00 p.m.	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
HB1122 (SB0959)	Natural Resources - Hunting - Black Bears	Delegate McKay	In the House - Unfavorable Report by Environment and Transportation; Withdrawn	Environment and Transportation	

HB1163	Waterfowl Hunting Guide License - Guide Services for Hunting Snow Geese - Reciprocity	Delegate Adams	In the Senate - Hearing 3/27 at 1:00 p.m.	Environment and Transportation 2/28/2018 - 1:00 p.m.	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs 3/27/2018 - 1:00 p.m.
HB1338 (SB0817)	Natural Resources - Hunting - Sundays	Delegate Anderton	In the House - Hearing 3/07 at 1:00 p.m.	Environment and Transportation 3/7/2018 - 1:00 p.m.	
HB1429	Natural Resources - Archery Hunting - Safety Zone	Delegate Glass	In the House - Unfavorable Report by Environment and Transportation	Environment and Transportation 3/7/2018 - 1:00 p.m.	
HB1440	Natural Resources - Hunter Safety Instructors - State Park Entrance Fee	Delegate Glass	In the House - Unfavorable Report by Environment and Transportation	Environment and Transportation 3/7/2018 - 1:00 p.m.	
HB1503	State Designations - State Waterfowl - Canvasback Duck	Delegate Lisanti	In the House - Hearing 3/14 at 1:00 p.m.	Health and Government Operations 3/14/2018 - 1:00 p.m.	
HB1561	Natural Resources - Hunting - Outerwear Exception	Delegate Glass	In the House - Unfavorable Report by Environment and Transportation	Environment and Transportation 3/7/2018 - 1:00 p.m.	
HB1699 (SB1166)	Baltimore County - Hunting - Nongame Birds and Mammals	Delegate Impallaria	In the House - First Reading House Rules and Executive Nominations	Rules and Executive Nominations	
SB0089	Ches Bay and Coastal Zone Advisory Commission and Captive Wildlife Advisory Committee - Repeal	Chair, Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee	In the Senate - Hearing 1/16 at 1:00 p.m.	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs 1/16/2018 - 1:00 p.m.	Environment and Transportation 3/21/2018 - 1:00 p.m.
SB0094	Natural Resources - Unprotected Birds - Pigeons	Chair, Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee	In the House - Hearing 3/22 at 1:00 p.m.	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs 1/16/2018 - 1:00 p.m.	Environment and Transportation 3/22/2018 - 1:00 p.m.

SB0113	Natural Resources - Recreational License Incentive Discount Program	Chair, Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee	In the House - Hearing 3/22 at 1:00 p.m.	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs 1/16/2018 - 1:00 p.m.	Environment and Transportation 3/22/2018 - 1:00 p.m.
SB0149 (HB0104)	Natural Resources - Electronic Licensing - Voluntary Donations	Senator Astle	In the House - First Reading Environment and Transportation	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs 1/25/2018 - 1:00 p.m.	Environment and Transportation
SB0182 (HB007)	Income Tax Credit - Venison Donation - Feed the Hungry Organizations	Senator Astle	In the House - Second Reading Passed	Budget and Taxation 1/30/2018 - 1:30 p.m.	Environment and Transportation
SB0183	Natural Resources - Electronic Licensing - Recreational License Donation Fund - Donations	Senator Simonaire	In the House - Hearing 3/22 at 1:00 p.m.	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs 1/25/2018 - 1:00 p.m.	Environment and Transportation 3/22/2018 - 1:00 p.m.
SB0341 (HB1118)	Hunting - Required Outerwear - Daylight Fluorescent Pink	Senator Eckardt	In the House - First Reading Environment and Transportation	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs 2/6/2018 - 1:00 p.m.	Environment and Transportation
SB0747	Wildlife Management - Shooting at Nighttime	Senator Astle	In the Senate - Third Reading Failed (14-33)	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs 2/20/2018 - 1:00 p.m.	
SB0817 (HB1338)	Natural Resources - Hunting - Sundays	Senator Salling	In the Senate - Hearing 3/13 at 1:00 p.m.	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs 3/13/2018 - 1:00 p.m.	
SB0959 (HB1122)	Natural Resources - Hunting - Black Bears	Senator Edwards	In the Senate - Unfavorable Report by Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs; Withdrawn	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs	
SB1166 (HB1699)	Baltimore County - Hunting - Nongame Birds and Mammals	Senator Jennings	In the Senate - Hearing 3/13 at 1:00 p.m.	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs 3/13/2018 - 1:00 p.m.	

Recovering America's Wildlife Act

A 21st Century Model of Wildlife Conservation Funding

State agency wildlife professionals and their partners work tirelessly on the conservation and management of wildlife populations within their state boundaries. A bill that would match the hard work of state wildlife employees with adequate financial support is on the horizon for passage this Congress.

The Recovering America's Wildlife Act (H.R. 4647), introduced by Representatives Debbie Dingell (D-Michigan) and Jeff Fortenberry (R-Nebraska) in late 2017, would provide \$1.3 billion in dedicated annual funding to state fish and wildlife agencies. The funding would largely go toward conserving and monitoring state-identified at-risk species, known as Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). The dedicated funds would come from revenue generated by oil, gas and onshore mineral royalties currently collected by the federal government at about \$7 billion to \$12 billion annually.

Since 2000, state fish and wildlife agencies have pulled from a much smaller funding stream known as the State Wildlife Grants program. This program is vulnerable to the whims of Congressional appropriators each year, though, and it is typically only funded at about \$50 million to \$60 million annually. Such limited funding only provides state agencies with the ability to address a few of the SGCN-related projects deemed necessary within their conservation action blueprints, known as State Wildlife Action Plans. For example, in fiscal year 2017, wildlife professionals with the New York Department of Environmental Conservation had just \$2.3 million to work with in order to conserve more than 350 at-risk species.

The Recovering America's Wildlife Act aims to drastically change this dynamic. This legislation would:

Implement the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources to address the financial needs faced by state fish and wildlife agencies and to keep species from facing costlier emergency conservation measures down the road.

Provide the \$1.3 billion in royalty funds for state fish and wildlife agencies' wildlife action plans.

Leverage funds from state agencies and partner organizations to provide 25 percent non-federal matching funds.

Provide greater regulatory certainty for oil and gas companies and other industries by conserving species and avoiding the need to list them under the Endangered Species Act.

Empower wildlife professionals to hold the nation's wildlife in the public trust for generations to come by providing state agencies with the flexibility to conserve populations in an effective and cost-effective manner.

This legislation, which is the application of the Blue Ribbon Panel's recommendations, has a growing number of bipartisan cosponsors in the House of Representatives. You can check to see if your representative is listed as a cosponsor by going to congress.gov.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the states play an essential role in the conservation and management of fish and wildlife and their habitats which contribute to our quality of life and economic well-being; and

WHEREAS, the Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson Acts established a fund to support conservation and science-based management of wild birds, mammals and sport fish species financed by hunters, recreational shooters, fishermen, and boaters; and

WHEREAS, a similar dedicated and sustainable funding mechanism is lacking for the many species of birds, mammals, fish, amphibians, reptiles and invertebrates that are not game species; and

WHEREAS, the states, territories and District of Columbia developed and recently updated historic, comprehensive and scientifically-based State Wildlife Action Plans that identify over 12,000 species of greatest conservation need; and

WHEREAS, there is a recognized need to expand the funding base for wildlife conservation throughout the Nation as effective implementation of State Wildlife Action Plans would require an annual investment of over \$1 billion; and

WHEREAS, the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources, was tasked with recommending a new funding mechanism to support state fish and wildlife conservation to ensure the sustainability of all fish and wildlife for current and future generations; and

WHEREAS, the Blue Ribbon Panel recommends that Congress dedicate up to \$1.3 billion annually in existing revenue from the development of energy and mineral resources on federal lands and water to the existing unfunded Wildlife Conservation Restoration Program; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Maryland Wildlife Advisory Committee recognizes and appreciates the valuable contribution of co-chairs Mr. John Morris and former Governor David Freudenthal and the business and conservation leaders of the Blue Ribbon Panel; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Maryland Wildlife Advisory Committee supports the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Maryland Wildlife Advisory Committee applauds and supports the bi-partisan legislation pending in the US Congress in the form of House Resolution 4647, the Recovering America's Wildlife Act, which would transform the vision of the Blue Ribbon Panel into reality and create an enhanced conservation legacy for the Pittman Robertson Act, our nation's greatest achievement in the funding of the conservation of America's precious wildlife resources.