

# MEMORANDUM



**To:** Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commissioners

**From:** George Warthen, Director, Division of Hunting and Game Management

**Date:** May 14, 2020

**Subject:** Consent Item – Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations, 2020-2021

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**Purpose:**

Obtain approval for draft rule amendments to 68A-13.003 and 68A-13.008, Florida Administrative Code (FAC), that will modify existing migratory bird hunting regulations.

**Why:**

This action will codify in state rule changes to the federal frameworks for the 2020-2021 migratory bird hunting seasons.

**Top Points:**

- Migratory bird hunting regulation frameworks are established annually by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), incorporating input from the States through the Flyway Council system.
- These frameworks provide the foundation of Florida’s migratory bird hunting rules and changes in the federal frameworks generally necessitate conforming action by the Commission
- Changes for this year include a reduction in the daily bag limit for scaup during portions of the waterfowl season, the establishment of two Veterans and Active Military waterfowl hunt days, and a one-day reduction of the falconry waterfowl and common moorhen seasons.

**Affected Parties:**

Migratory game bird hunters

**Summary:**

The daily bag limit for scaup will change from the “liberal” two-bird bag limit to a “restricted” hybrid bag limit that allows one bird for 40 days and 2 birds for 20 days. The bag limit change will have little impact on the majority of Florida’s duck hunters. Further, duck hunters are familiar with annual changes in species-specific harvest regulations. Feedback received stakeholders informed the decision regarding the placement of the Veterans and Active Military waterfowl hunt days on the weekend following the close of the regular duck season. The decision on which days to remove from the falconry waterfowl and common moorhen seasons was the result of discussing the issue with numerous licensed Florida falconers. These changes, along with season date selections are reflected in the supporting document titled 2020-21 Migratory Bird Hunting Seasons Report.

If approved, staff proposes to both advertise the proposed rule change and file for adoption as soon as possible as allowed by s. 120.54(3) Florida Statutes, without further public hearing.

**Staff Recommendation:** Approval of the proposed rule amendment with permission to publish and file the rule for adoption without further public hearing unless requested.

**Staff Contact and/or Presenter:**

Andrew Fanning, Waterfowl and Small Game Management Program Coordinator, Division of Hunting and Game Management