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PROPOSALS TO AMEND THE CANADIAN MIGRATORY BIRDS REGULATIONS

December 2017
CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

Canadian Wildlife Service
Waterfowl Committee

CWS Migratory Birds Regulatory Report
Number 50

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www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/birds-canada.html

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The Canadian Wildlife Habitat Conservation Stamp, entitled Tranquil Water — Canada Geese, features the Canada Goose. It is a creation of the Canadian wildlife artist Angela Lorenzen of Ontario.

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Proposals to Amend the Canadian Migratory Birds Regulations (Including Regulation Proposals for Overabundant Species) December 2017

Canadian Wildlife Service Waterfowl Committee CWS Migratory Birds Regulatory Report - Number 50

Authors

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Consultation

The public consultation period is from January 29 to February 28, 2018. During this period, public comments are solicited on the proposed amendments to Schedule 1 to the *Migratory Birds Regulations* for the establishment of the 2018–2019 and 2019–2020 migratory game birds hunting regulations.

Comments regarding the regulation-setting process or other concerns relating to national migratory birds should be sent to the Director of Wildlife Management and Regulatory Affairs Division at the National Office of the Canadian Wildlife Service of Environment and Climate Change Canada at the following postal address:

351 St. Joseph Boulevard, Gatineau QC K1A 0H3 or by email:
ec.scf-oismiggieters-cws-migggamebirds.ec@canada.ca

Comments regarding the 2018–2019 and 2019–2020 proposed hunting regulations specific to a region should be sent to the appropriate Regional Director, Canadian Wildlife Service, Environmental Stewardship Branch, at the following postal addresses:

Atlantic Region: 17 Waterfowl Lane, P.O. Box 6227, Sackville NB E4L 1G6
Quebec Region: 801–1550 d'Estimauville Avenue, Québec QC G1J 0C3
Ontario Region: 4905 Dufferin Street, Toronto ON M3H 5T4
Prairie Region: 9250 - 49th Street NW, 2nd Floor, Edmonton AB T6B 1K5
Northern Region: 5019 - 52nd Street, P.O. Box 2310, Yellowknife NT X1A 2P7
Pacific Region: RR1, 5421 Robertson Road, Delta BC V4K 3N2

This report may be downloaded from the following website:

www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/migratory-game-bird-hunting/consultation-process-regulations/report-series.html

Table of Contents

BACKGROUND.....	1
SCHEDULE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUNTING REGULATIONS.....	1
AMERICAN BLACK DUCK INTERNATIONAL HARVEST STRATEGY	2
MANAGEMENT OF OVERABUNDANT GEESE	2
<i>Regulatory Proposals for 2018–2019 and 2019–2020</i>	<i>2</i>
PROPOSED CHANGES TO HUNTING REGULATIONS FOR THE 2018–2019 AND THE 2019–2020 SEASONS.....	3
<i>Newfoundland and Labrador</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Prince Edward Island.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Nova Scotia.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>New Brunswick</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Quebec.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Ontario</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Manitoba</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Saskatchewan</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Alberta</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>British Columbia</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Yukon Territory</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Northwest Territories.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Nunavut</i>	<i>10</i>
STATUS UPDATE ON MODERNIZATION OF MIGRATORY BIRDS REGULATIONS.....	10
THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA IS ALLOWING THE TEMPORARY POSSESSION OF DEAD MIGRATORY BIRDS.....	11
ONLINE E-PERMITTING SYSTEM – AN EASY WAY TO PURCHASE THE MIGRATORY GAME BIRD HUNTING PERMIT	11
APPENDICES.....	12
<i>Appendix A. Special Conservation Measures for Fall 2017 and Spring 2018.....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Appendix B. Objectives and Guidelines for the Establishment of National Regulations for Migratory Game Bird Hunting</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Appendix C. Migratory Birds Hunting Regulations Summaries by Province and Territory, 2017–2018 Hunting Season.....</i>	<i>19</i>

Background

Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) is responsible for the conservation of migratory birds in Canada and the management of the sustainable hunting of these birds. The hunting regulations for migratory game birds are reviewed and amended biennially by ECCC, with input from provinces and territories, as well as from various other stakeholders. The population status of migratory game birds is assessed on an annual basis to ensure that the regulations are appropriate, and amendments can be made between review periods, if necessary, for conservation reasons.

As part of the regulatory process to amend the hunting regulations, the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) produces a series of regulatory reports:

The first report, *Population Status of Migratory Game Birds in Canada* (the “November Report”), contains population and other biological information on migratory game birds and thus provides the scientific basis for informing management decisions that ensure the long-term sustainability of their population. Every two years, ECCC reviews hunting regulations and publishes the November Report. However, CWS analyzes population trends on a yearly basis to evaluate the status of migratory game bird populations.

The second report, *Proposals to Amend the Canadian Migratory Birds Regulations* (the “December Report”), outlines the proposed changes to the hunting regulations for the next two hunting seasons, as well as proposals to amend the overabundant species regulations and other proposed amendments to the *Migratory Birds Regulations*. Proposals for hunting regulations are developed in accordance with the Objectives and Guidelines for the Establishment of National Regulations for Migratory Game Bird Hunting (see Appendix B to this report or visit www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/migratory-game-bird-hunting/consultation-process-regulations/establishing-national-objectives-guidelines.html). The December Report is published every second year, concurrently with the revision of hunting regulations.

The third report, *Migratory Birds Regulations in Canada* (the “July Report”), summarizes the hunting regulations that were approved for the next two hunting seasons. The July Report is published every second year, concurrently with

the revision of hunting regulations.

The three reports are distributed to organizations and individuals with an interest in migratory bird conservation, to provide an opportunity for input on the development of hunting regulations in Canada. They are also available on the ECCC website: www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/migratory-game-bird-hunting/consultation-process-regulations/report-series.html.

Regulatory proposals described in the current document, if approved, would be in place starting in September 2018 and remain in effect through winter/spring 2020 inclusively. It is also proposed to establish special conservation measures for overabundant geese in spring 2019 and spring 2020. (Note that the regulations for spring 2018 were made into law as part of the fall 2015 process; see Appendix A).

Schedule for the Development of Hunting Regulations

The schedule for the development of hunting regulations is based on the requirement to have the hunting regulations made into law by mid-June:

- September through November – The *Population Status of Migratory Game Birds in Canada* report, containing biological information on migratory game birds, is developed. In January, it is distributed and posted on the Government of Canada's website.
- October and November – CWS regional offices develop proposals for hunting regulations in consultation with the provinces and territories and interested stakeholders.
- Late January – The *Proposals to Amend the Canadian Migratory Birds Regulations* report containing the regulation proposals is posted on the Government of Canada's website and distributed to allow for public, inter-regional and international consultation.
- Early June – Hunting regulations become law.
- Early July – The *Migratory Birds Regulations in Canada* report, containing the approved hunting regulations, is distributed and posted on the Government of Canada's website.

- Early August – Hunting regulation summaries are available with the Migratory Game Bird Hunting Permits at Canada Post outlets and on the Government of Canada's website.

Migratory game bird hunters are made aware of the migratory game bird hunting regulations at the same time as they receive information on season dates and bag and possession limits, when they purchase their hunting permits.

American Black Duck International Harvest Strategy

The American Black Duck International Harvest Strategy was adopted in 2012 by the CWS and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The objectives of the Strategy, based on the principles of adaptive harvest management, are to:

- maintain a Black Duck population that provides consumptive and non-consumptive use commensurate with habitat carrying capacity;
- maintain societal values associated with the hunting tradition; and
- maintain equitable access to the Black Duck resource.

As such, the Strategy is designed to identify appropriate Black Duck harvest levels in Canada and the U.S. based on the size of the breeding population of Black Ducks and sympatric Mallards while maintaining equity in Black Duck harvests between the two countries. However, recognizing incomplete control of harvest through regulations, it allows the realized harvest in either country to vary between 40% and 60% of the annual continental harvest.

The Strategy, used to determine the appropriate Black Duck harvest regulations, was first implemented in 2013–2014. It consists of four pre-defined regulatory packages in Canada and three in the United States. Country-specific harvest opportunities are determined from a set of expected harvest rate distributions defined as regulatory alternatives. Canada developed four regulatory packages (liberal, moderate, restrictive and closed) with the Canadian moderate alternative defined as the 1997 to 2010 mean harvest rate (the reference package). The Canadian packages are as follows:

- Liberal: 30% increase in harvest rate over the 1997–2010 mean harvest rate;

- Moderate: 1997–2010 mean harvest rate (3.5% per year [mean harvest rate for adult males]);
- Restrictive: 30% decrease in harvest rate below the 1997–2010 mean harvest rate; and
- Closed: no Black Duck harvest allowed.

The optimal Canadian policy recommendation for the 2018–2019 hunting season is the liberal regulatory package. This recommendation is based on long-term trends in Black Duck and Mallard breeding populations in eastern Canada as well as the estimated effects of hunting on Black Duck populations. Mallards are included in the Strategy because this species hybridizes and competes with Black Ducks on the breeding grounds and may therefore negatively affect the Black Duck population. According to data collected by the CWS and USFWS, the current level of harvest has only a low effect on population levels. The liberal package is therefore the optimal alternative.

Each regulatory package, however, must be implemented for at least two years before changes to the regulatory package will be considered, due to variability in annual harvest rates. In the interim, CWS will continue to monitor harvest rate in addition to the breeding population to ensure that the Strategy continues to meet the objectives stated above.

Management of Overabundant Geese

Regulatory Proposals for 2018–2019 and 2019–2020

The special conservation measures for Snow Geese and Ross's Geese to be implemented in spring 2018 were proposed in the fall of 2015 and made into law in June 2016. They are posted on the Government of Canada's website, at:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/migratory-game-bird-hunting/overabundant-species-special-conservation-measures.html>, and are shown in Appendix A to this report.

The regulations proposed for Snow Geese and Ross's Geese to be implemented in the 2018–2019 and 2019–2020 hunting seasons as well as the 2019 and 2020 spring conservation seasons are as follows:

- Add a new sector for harvesting Snow Geese in Quebec during the special conservation season in spring;

- Increase the daily bag limit for Snow Geese throughout the province of British Columbia; and
- Increase the daily bag limit of Snow Geese and Ross' Geese in Nunavut in the portion of the islands and waters of James Bay.

See the section below for more details about these proposals.

Proposed Changes to Hunting Regulations for the 2018–2019 and the 2019–2020 Seasons

The Canadian Wildlife Service and the provinces and territories have jointly developed the regulatory proposals presented here. Other proposals consistent with these may be sent to the appropriate CWS Regional Director by any interested organization or individual (additional information can be found on the title page). To facilitate the comparison of changes proposed in this text with current regulations, the summaries of the 2017–2018 Migratory Birds Hunting Regulations are included in Appendix C.

Newfoundland and Labrador

ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW HUNTING ZONE FOR SEA DUCKS IN NEWFOUNDLAND

It is proposed to create a new sea duck hunting zone on the northern tip and western side of the Northern Peninsula of Newfoundland. The season would open on November 1 and close on February 14. A corresponding change to the opening and closing season dates is also proposed for the Southern Labrador Zone.

This would accommodate long standing requests from hunters for more hunting opportunities of migrant American Common Eider breeding in northern Newfoundland and the southern coastal areas of Labrador, which population appears to be increasing. This measure would also allow hunters to hunt prior to the formation of ice in the Strait of Belle Isle.

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK INTERNATIONAL HARVEST STRATEGY'S RECOMMENDATION

It is proposed to continue to implement the American Black Duck International Harvest Strategy in Newfoundland. A liberal regime would be in effect for the 2018–2019 hunting

season: 6 American Black Ducks in the daily bag (an increase from 4 to 6) for the first part of the hunting season. Due to an increase in harvest susceptibility later in the season, the existing restriction of 4 Black Ducks allowed in the daily bag would be maintained for the last 30 days of the season. There would be no change to Black Duck bag limits or season dates in Labrador. By default, the liberal regulatory package would also be implemented for the 2019–2020 Black Duck hunting season in Newfoundland.

Measures similar to those being proposed in Newfoundland are also being proposed for New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

Prince Edward Island

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK INTERNATIONAL HARVEST STRATEGY'S RECOMMENDATION

It is proposed to continue to implement the American Black Duck International Harvest Strategy in Prince Edward Island. A liberal regime would be in effect for the 2018–2019 hunting season: 6 American Black Ducks in the daily bag (an increase from 4 to 6) for the first part of the hunting season. Due to an increase in harvest susceptibility later in the season, the existing restriction of 4 American Black Duck / Mallard hybrids or 4 American Black Ducks in the daily bag would be maintained for the last 31 days of the season. The liberal regulatory package would also be implemented for the 2019–2020 Black Duck hunting season in Prince Edward Island.

Similar measures are also being proposed for Newfoundland, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

Nova Scotia

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK INTERNATIONAL HARVEST STRATEGY'S RECOMMENDATION

It is proposed to continue to implement the American Black Duck International Harvest Strategy in Nova Scotia. A liberal regime would be in effect for the 2018–2019 hunting season. The hunting season for Black ducks will be extended by 7 days in Zone No. 1 and will open 14 days earlier in Zone No. 2 and Zone No. 3. In addition: 6 American Black Ducks in the daily bag (an increase from 4 to 6) for the first part of the hunting season. Due to an increase in harvest susceptibility later in the season, the

existing restriction of 4 American Black Ducks allowed in the daily bag would be maintained for the last 38 days of the season in Zone No. 1, and the last 39 days of the season in Zone No. 2 and Zone No. 3. The liberal regulatory package would also be implemented for the 2019–2020 Black Duck hunting season in Nova Scotia.

Similar measures are also being proposed for Newfoundland, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

New Brunswick

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK INTERNATIONAL HARVEST STRATEGY'S RECOMMENDATION

It is proposed to continue to implement the American Black Duck International Harvest Strategy in New Brunswick. A liberal regime would be in effect for the 2018–2019 hunting season. The hunting season for black ducks will be extended by 10 days in Zone No. 1 and 13 days in Zone No. 2. In addition, 6 American Black Ducks will be allowed in the daily bag (an increase from 3 to 6) for the first part of the hunting season. Due to an increase in harvest susceptibility later in the season, a restriction of 4 American Black Ducks allowed in the daily bag would be in place for the last 31 days of the season. The liberal regulatory package would also be implemented for the 2019–2020 Black Duck hunting season in New Brunswick.

Similar measures are also being proposed for Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

Quebec

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK INTERNATIONAL HARVEST STRATEGY'S RECOMMENDATION

It is proposed to continue to implement the American Black Duck International Harvest Strategy in Quebec. A liberal regime would be in effect for the 2018–2019 hunting season: 6 American Black Ducks in the daily bag for all hunting districts in Quebec except a zone in District F south of Route 148 and west of Highway 15 where the daily bag would be 2 American Black Ducks. The liberal regulatory package would also be implemented for the 2019–2020 Black Duck hunting season in Quebec.

INCREASE OPPORTUNITY TO HARVEST SNOW GEESE DURING THE SPECIAL CONSERVATION SEASON IN

SPRING IN A PORTION OF THE MONTMAGNY–CAP SAINT-IGNACE AREA

It is proposed to allow the harvest of Snow Geese during the special conservation season in spring in a portion of the Montmagny–Cap Saint-Ignace spring harvest exclusion area in District F. Therefore, hunting would be allowed in lot number 2 611 982 of the cadastre of Quebec.

This measure would provide additional opportunity to manage this overabundant species and contribute, through hunting, to reducing the size of the population.

INCREASE THE EIDER AND LONG-TAILED DUCK SEASON LENGTH IN A PORTION OF DISTRICT B

It is proposed to increase the season length for eiders and Long-tailed Ducks in District B along the North Shore west of the Natashquan River. In this part of District B, the current season for eiders opens on October 1 and closes on October 24, and the current season for Long-tailed Ducks opens on November 15 and ends on February 5. It is proposed that the hunting season for both species go from October 1 to October 24 and from November 15 to February 5.

There is no conservation concern, and this measure would provide additional opportunity for hunters.

CLARIFY THE REGULATIONS AND CORRECT ERRORS

– Addition of “cadastre of Quebec”

It is proposed to clarify the Regulations by adding “*cadastre of Quebec*” after the lot number, in footnote b of Table I.2 (Schedule I, Part V).

– Coordinate changes

It is proposed to correct battery #5's coordinates in the technical description of the Lac Saint-Pierre (Nicolet) no-hunting zone in Schedule I, Part V, subsection 3(e). The coordinates should read “46°13'31”N and 72°40'16”W” instead of the current “46°13'30”N and 72°40'5”W”.

– Merger of technical descriptions for two adjacent “no-hunting zones”

It is proposed to merge the technical descriptions of Schedule I Part V subsections

3(a) “*Cap-Tourmente (Water)*” and section 3(d) “*Cap-Tourmente (Ground)*” no-hunting zones into a single one called “*Cap-Tourmente*”. Both technical descriptions already showed some degree of overlap and there is no point in keeping them separated. This merger is intended to clarify the Regulations.

Ontario

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK INTERNATIONAL HARVEST STRATEGY’S RECOMMENDATION

It is proposed to continue to implement the American Black Duck International Harvest Strategy in Ontario. A liberal regime would be in effect for the 2018–2019 hunting season: 4 American Black Ducks in the daily bag in the Hudson-James Bay District (an increase from 2 birds per day), Northern District (an increase from 2 birds per day) and Central District (an increase from 1 bird per day) and 2 American Black Ducks in the daily bag for the Southern District (an increase from 1 bird per day). In addition, the number of hunting days for the Southern District would be extended to 107 days (from the current 90 days). The liberal regulatory package would also be implemented for the 2019–2020 hunting season in Ontario.

INCREASE THE SEASON LENGTH FOR MOURNING DOVE IN THE CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN DISTRICTS

It is proposed to increase the season length for Mourning Dove in the Central and Southern Districts (only districts where hunting of doves is allowed) to 91 days. The current season in the Central District opens on September 5 and closes on November 13, and September 7 to November 15 in the Southern District (70 days).

It is also proposed to implement a fixed opening date of September 1 and a fixed closing date of November 30 in both districts. This change is similar to the prescribed standard regulatory package for the Eastern Management Unit from the Mourning Dove Harvest Strategy.

INCREASE HARVEST OF TEMPERATE-BREEDING POPULATION CANADA GEESE

— *Shift season dates for Canada Goose hunting in the Central District*

It is proposed to shift the season dates in the Central District from the current opening date of the first Tuesday after Labour Day to

September 1; closing date would also be fixed to December 16 (maintaining 107 day season). This proposal aims to increase the harvest of temperate breeding Canada Geese in this area to address the increase in human-goose conflicts. In addition, this proposal would standardize Canada Goose hunting season dates among the Hudson-James Bay, Northern and Central Districts thereby simplifying the regulations for hunters and enforcement.

— *Increase the daily bag limit for Canada Geese and Cackling Geese during the early goose season in select Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) in the Northern District.*

It is proposed to increase the daily bag limit for Canada Geese and Cackling Geese from 5 to 10 geese during the early Canada Goose season (September 1 to 9) in WMUs 8, 10, 13, 37, 39 and 41 in the Northern District. Local temperate breeding Canada Goose populations are growing in these areas and resulting in local human-goose conflicts. This proposal aims to mitigate these issues.

SYNCHRONIZE AMERICAN WOODCOCK AND RUFFED GROUSE OPEN SEASON DATES IN ALL HUNTING DISTRICTS

It is proposed to align the opening season dates for American Woodcock with Ruffed Grouse in all hunting districts in the province. For the Hudson-James Bay, Northern and Central Districts, this date will be fixed to September 15th while the opening date for the Southern District will be either September 15th or September 25th depending on the Wildlife Management Unit. This proposal was adopted to simplify the hunting regulations for both of these species, which are often hunted at the same time, across the province for hunters and enforcement.

CLARIFY AGGREGATE DAILY BAG LIMITS AND POSSESSION LIMITS FOR WOODCOCK, COOT, SNIPE, ROSS’S GOOSE, AND OTHER GEESE

It is proposed to clarify the bag and possession limits for aggregated marsh game birds and “other geese”. Currently, the daily bag and possession limits for coot are aggregated with woodcock. This proposal clarifies that coot should be aggregated with other marsh game birds, including gallinule, and snipe should be removed from this grouping. Furthermore,

Ross's Goose should be aggregated with the Snow Goose daily bag and possession limits as well as Table 1.2 – *Measures in Ontario Concerning Overabundant Species*. Lastly, White-fronted Goose and Brant would be changed to “other Geese” to be consistent with bag and possession limits in other provinces (e.g., Quebec, New Brunswick).

Manitoba

EXTEND HUNTING SEASON LENGTH IN GAME BIRD HUNTING ZONES 3 AND 4

It is proposed to increase the hunting season length for ducks, geese, the Sandhill Cranes, woodcock, snipe, and coot in Game Bird Hunting Zones 3 and 4. Under this proposal, the hunting season for residents and non-residents would close December 6. In recent years, late freeze-ups and increasing artificial water sources have held large numbers of ducks and geese in parts of southern Manitoba into December, prompting requests from hunters to extend the season. The increase in harvest of migratory birds is expected to be negligible, but would be monitored using existing harvest survey programs and banding data for some species of ducks and geese.

ESTABLISH A SPRING SEASON (EARLY MARCH) FOR TEMPERATE-BREEDING CANADA GEESE AND CACKLING GEESE

It is proposed to establish a hunting season for Canada and Cackling Geese for residents of Canada, from March 1-10 in Game Bird Hunting Zones 3 and 4. Other jurisdictions (e.g., Ontario) have introduced March seasons to increase harvest pressure on temperate-breeding Canada Geese, while providing additional hunting opportunity. Recently, Manitoba has experienced early spring melts and geese (thought to be mainly temperate-breeding Canada Geese) have arrived in southern Manitoba in late February and early March. All populations of Canada and Cackling Geese that migrate through Manitoba are banded annually for harvest management purposes, and while harvest during this period is anticipated to be small in most years, any contributions to annual harvest rates during this season will be monitored using band recovery data.

DESIGNATION OF TEMPERATE-BREEDING CANADA GEESE AS OVERABUNDANT

A notice of intent is hereby given that designating Manitoba's temperate-breeding Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*) as overabundant is under consideration. An overabundant population is one for which the rate of population growth has resulted in, or will result in, a population whose abundance directly threatens the conservation of migratory birds (themselves or others) or their habitats, or is injurious to or threatens agricultural, environmental or other similar interests.

Canada Goose populations in Manitoba

Two populations of Canada Geese nest in distinct parts of Manitoba. The Southern Hudson Bay population nests in the Hudson Bay Lowlands and boreal habitats north of 57° latitude, and has been relatively stable since breeding ground surveys began in the early 1970s (Baldwin et al. 2015). The temperate-breeding population nests throughout southern Manitoba, and occurs in relatively low densities as far north as 55° latitude.

Increase of Temperate-breeding Canada Goose population

Following near-extirpation by early settlers between 1850 and 1900, the temperate-breeding population of Canada Geese was the focus of extensive population management efforts and protection. Restoration efforts included release of captive-raised Canada Geese at a variety of locations beginning in the 1950s (Cooper 1978), establishment of dozens of refuges and managed staging habitats (e.g., Oak Hammock Marsh and Grant Lake Wildlife Management Area), and other regulatory measures that protected geese from harvest (e.g., delayed hunting season opening dates). Creation of nesting habitat has occurred incidentally to North American Waterfowl Management Plan objectives in western Manitoba, but also unintentionally throughout southern Manitoba, as a result of urbanization and industrial development (e.g., manicured green spaces and ornamental ponds). Like other species of geese, Canada Geese have also benefitted greatly from the widespread availability of superabundant food from agricultural waste grains (e.g., Ankney 1996, Abraham and Jefferies 1997). In the early 1970s, the population was confined to several specific staging wetlands, with only one wetland reportedly supporting a sufficient number of birds to enable capture of flightless adults and their young for banding (Raveling 1976). By the 1990s, Canada Geese had colonized the entire southern portion of the province, and areas with

no recent record of breeding Canada Geese now supported thousands (CWS, unpublished survey data). Other jurisdictions in southern Canada (e.g., QC, ON, SK, AB, BC) have experienced similar patterns in population growth and distribution, and harvest of temperate-breeding populations has increased concomitantly in these areas. This population now represents the dominant population harvested by most jurisdictions in the Mississippi Flyway, although it accounts for only about 30% of the Canada and Cackling Goose harvest in Manitoba due to significant mixing of populations during fall migration (Luukkonen and Leafloor 2017; Appendix C).

Temperate-breeding Canada Goose populations in Manitoba are indexed using estimates from the May Waterfowl Breeding Population and Habitat Survey (strata 36–40), which covers a portion of the range of this population in southern Manitoba. The population index has increased at an average annual rate of 11% since 1990, and the 2017 estimate (188,000) is more than double the population objective set by Manitoba in 2000 (70,000; Zenner 1996). Recent population increases have prompted a variety of regulatory liberalizations in Manitoba, including larger daily bag limits (e.g., up to 12 per day), earlier opening dates (e.g., September 1), and other measures (e.g., hunting mentorship programs, increased possession limits, shrinking of provincial refuge boundaries, decreased hunter age requirements). Despite these changes, the mean harvest rate on adult birds (2009–2016) has remained unchanged at 10%. Population modelling suggests temperate-breeding populations require adult harvest rates of 14–15% in order to stabilize the population (Brook and Luukkonen 2008). If annual growth rates of 11% continue, the population is expected to double every 6 years, and is likely nearing the threshold where even the most liberal of regulatory changes will not invoke the increases in harvest required to control a large population, especially considering declining hunter participation.

Damage to lands and risk to human safety

Temperate-breeding Canada Geese are causing significant and increasing agricultural and private property damage in Manitoba. In 2016, crop damage by Canada Geese resulted in compensation claims in excess of \$455,000 between June and August, a period when individuals from other goose populations are absent because they are nesting in sub-Arctic or Arctic regions (Manitoba Agricultural Services

Corporation, unpublished data). Importantly, not all producers file claims for agricultural losses, and fall crop damage caused by temperate-breeding Canada is inseparable from other goose populations, so the true cost of agricultural damage by this population is likely significantly higher.

High populations of temperate-breeding Canada Geese result in a variety of aesthetic concerns (e.g., noise, droppings, water quality), and considerable but unquantified amounts of damage to private property (e.g., golf courses, public recreation grounds). Most importantly, present population levels pose significant risks to human safety related to the risk of aircraft and vehicular collisions. In 2016, 182 vehicle collisions attributed to Canada Geese occurred in Manitoba, with less than half occurring in Winnipeg (Manitoba Public Insurance, unpublished data). In 2017 (as of October 24), goose-vehicle collisions resulted in injury claims and physical vehicle damage totaling \$437,937. Between 2015–2016 and 2016–2017 (as of October 24, 2017) costs related to goose-vehicle collisions increased 34% and 14%, respectively (Manitoba Public Insurance unpublished data).

Management measures to reduce conflicts with Canada Geese

In response to aesthetic and human safety concerns, Environment and Climate Change Canada issues Damage or Danger permits to qualifying property owners or managers. In 2016, 8,492 eggs were removed from nests and destroyed in Manitoba. Although the number of eggs managed varies annually, the number removed in Manitoba in 2016 was the highest since record keeping began (2012). Similar to other goose populations, hunting is considered the most palatable and efficient means to reduce population size, by decreasing survival rates of adult geese. The effectiveness of recent liberalizations to hunting regulations has likely been limited by the mixing of temperate-breeding and southern Hudson Bay Canada Geese and mid-continent Cackling Geese during fall migration. Based on band recovery data, these 3 populations and moult migrant temperate-breeding Canada Geese from the United States converge in mid-late September, which likely has a “swamping” effect on the harvest of local temperate-breeding geese. In order to focus the harvest on Manitoba’s temperate nesting population, special conservation measures such as a spring harvest are required. Thus, designation of temperate breeding Canada Geese as overabundant is being considered by

the Canadian Wildlife Service.

Literature cited

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Saskatchewan

FALCONRY SEASON

It is proposed to extend the falconry season throughout the province. Currently, the season is only opened in the southern part of Saskatchewan.

Alberta

No regulatory changes are proposed for the 2018–2019 and 2019–2020 hunting seasons.

British Columbia

INCREASE THE DAILY BAG LIMIT FOR SNOW GEES

It is proposed to increase the daily bag and possession limits for Snow Geese throughout the province; with daily bags from 10 to 15 and possession limits from 30 to 45 within Migratory Bird Hunting Zone 2 (Provincial Management Unit 2-4 and 2-5 only), and daily bags from 5 to 10 and possession limits from 15 to 30 in all other Migratory Bird Hunting Zones and Provincial Management Units in Bird Hunting Zone 2.

Lesser Snow Geese wintering in B.C. breed on Wrangel Island, Russia. Approximately half of the Wrangel Island Snow Geese winter in the Central Valley of California and the remainder winter on the Fraser River and Skagit River deltas in British Columbia and Washington State. The Fraser-Skagit sub-population has increased in abundance from the late 1990s to the late 2000s. Mid-winter aerial surveys show a historic high population of approximately 108,000 birds in 2016–2017 from fewer than 50,000 birds in the late 1990's. There is limited habitat to support Snow Geese in the Fraser River delta and the recent population increase has economic and safety implications. Snow Geese use both farmland and the Fraser River estuary foreshore to forage. This leads to potential conflicts with aviation operations at Vancouver International Airport (YVR), perennial crop (hay and pasture) damage, nuisance issues in nearby urban areas and ecological damage to the bulrush marshes on the Fraser River delta. The population goal for the Fraser-Skagit Snow Goose population of 50,000 to 70,000 birds was set to maintain a sustainable population of Snow Geese while minimizing economic, nuisance and safety concerns. The Fraser-Skagit harvest strategy calls for an increase in harvest in response to the last population estimate of 108,000 birds to bring the population back to the established sustainable population goal and address nuisance and safety issues.

INCREASE THE DAILY BAG LIMIT FOR BRANT

It is proposed to increase the daily bag and possession limits for Brant in Migratory Bird Hunting Zone 2 from 2 to 3 birds daily, with a

corresponding possession limit change from 6 to 9 (Provincial Management Unit 2-4).

In British Columbia, hunting of Brant is not allowed except for a restrictive late hunting season set from March 1 to 10 in Provincial Management Unit 2-4 in the Fraser River delta. The March season was established in 1977 to switch harvest from the local wintering population to the much larger Brant population wintering south of British Columbia. The goal of the March season was to help re-build the Fraser River Delta population to its historic levels of 3,500 wintering birds by reducing harvest on wintering birds. The 2016–2017 mid-winter index or the Fraser River delta was 3,166 birds, below the regional wintering population goal of 3,500.

The 2016–2017 Pacific Flyway mid-winter index for Black Brant was 155,720, and the U.S. sports harvest for Pacific Brant in 2016–2017 was 8,097 birds in CA, OR, WA and AK (USFWS HIP estimate). The 2016–2017 sports harvest for the Fraser River delta was estimated at roughly 200 birds and has ranged from 50 to 250 birds between 1990 and 2017. The BC harvest represents 0.1% of the Mid-winter Population Index and 2.5% of the Pacific Flyway sports harvest.

Over the last several years, the Canadian Wildlife Service has received requests from BC Brant hunters to increase the bag limit of Brant in the Fraser River delta in response to overall high populations of Brant in the Pacific Flyway. The current BC harvest is low compared to the rest of the Pacific Flyway states and low compared to recent wintering population estimates.

The proposed change would increase hunting opportunity while having negligible effects at the population level. There are no anticipated conservation concerns associated with this proposed change.

ESTABLISH A HUNTING SEASON FOR EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVES

It is proposed to open a hunting season for Eurasian Collared-Doves (*Streptopelia decaocto*) in the Migratory Bird Hunting Zones currently allowing the take of Mourning Doves (Hunting Zones 3, 4, and 8). The daily bag and possession limits would be aggregated with the limits for Mourning Doves. Bag and possession limits for Mourning and Eurasian Collared-Doves would remain at 5 and 15 birds, respectively.

Eurasian Collared-Doves (ECDOs) were introduced to North America in the 1970s and have rapidly colonized urban and rural areas

across British Columbia. ECDOs have undergone a major range expansion in BC and the invasive species is now found across the southern half of the province and as far north as Dease Lake (BC Breeding Bird Atlas; E-Bird). In Canada, ECDOs are listed in the 1991 CWS Occasional Paper #1, "*Birds Protected in Canada under the Migratory birds Convention Act*". At that time, they were footnoted as a species not known to occur in Canada. In BC, open seasons are available for two native Columbiformes – Band-tailed Pigeons and Mourning Doves. However, Rock Doves, another invasive species, are not protected under the MBCA. The province of British Columbia lists Rock Doves in Schedule C to the *British Columbia Wildlife Act*, which removes protection for species considered a nuisance and enables year-round public control. The province of British Columbia has repeatedly asked for tools to allow similar management programs for ECDOs.

Federal regulations treat species of columbiformes differently. Native migratory doves and pigeons fall under the scope of the MBCA, but the invasive Rock Dove does not. The invasive ECDO is identified in the list of birds protected in Canada under the MBCA, which precludes its listing in BC's Schedule C and the use of control measures aimed at invasive species. The MBCA allows for the setting of hunting seasons, which is the only management tool currently available to help manage ECDOs. Eurasian Collared-Doves are fairly similar to Mourning Doves and the two species can easily be confused. Under the current regulations, Mourning Doves can be harvested but ECDOs cannot. Anyone harvesting an ECDO during a Mourning Dove season is committing an offence under the *Migratory Birds Regulations* and that person is subject to charges. The proposed change would decriminalize the take of the invasive species in areas where a Mourning Dove season is currently available and would assist provincial programs aimed at controlling invasive species. The proposed change would clarify the provincial dove hunting regulations by having the same regulations and bag/possession limits for the two lookalike species. Because of the aggregate bag limit with Mourning Doves, this proposal would not result in additional Mourning Dove harvest.

Yukon Territory

No regulatory changes are proposed for the 2018–2019 and 2019–2020 hunting seasons.

Northwest Territories

INCREASE THE POSSESSION LIMITS FOR DUCKS, GEESE AND SNIPE

It is proposed to increase the possession limit for ducks, Cackling and Canada geese and Brant for non-residents of Canada from twice the daily bag limit to three times the daily bag limits. This would represent an increase from 16 to 24 for ducks, and from 10 to 15 for Canada Geese, Cackling Geese and Brant. **It is also proposed** to increase the possession limit for non-residents of Canada from 4 to 6 for White-Fronted Geese and from 20 to 30 for snipe. This would harmonize the Northwest Territories regulations with adjacent jurisdictions (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba). There are no anticipated conservation concerns or implications associated with the changes in possession limits for these species.

Nunavut

INCREASE IN POSSESSION LIMITS FOR DUCKS, GEESE AND SNIPE

It is proposed to increase the possession limit for non-residents of Canada for ducks, Canada and Cackling Geese and Brant from twice the daily bag limit to three times the daily bag limits. This would represent an increase from 16 to 24 for ducks, and from 10 to 15 for Canada Geese and Cackling Geese. **It is also proposed** to increase the possession limit for non-residents of Canada from 4 to 6 for White-Fronted Geese and from 20 to 30 for snipe. This is to increase limit consistency with surrounding Provinces (Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec). There are no anticipated conservation concerns or implications associated with the changes in possession limits for these species.

Barrow's Goldeneye and Blue-winged Teal are currently considered to be species of conservation concern or which could be negatively affected by increased hunting pressure. As such, no changes to possession limits for those species are proposed.

INCREASE IN DAILY BAG LIMITS FOR SNOW AND ROSS' GEESE IN JAMES BAY

It is proposed to increase the daily bag limit from 20 to 50 for Snow and Ross' Geese across Nunavut. The daily bag limit of Snow Geese and Ross' Geese in the portion of the islands and

waters of James Bay that are south of 55°N latitude is currently restricted to 20 whereas elsewhere in the Territory and adjacent jurisdictions (Ontario and Manitoba) the limit is 50.

Due to habitat damage resulting from foraging activities, Snow Geese and Ross's Geese were designated as overabundant species. Geese using the islands and waters of James Bay are from the midcontinent population of Lesser Snow Geese which has continued to increase despite the implementation of more liberalized bag and possession limits. Therefore, rather than limiting daily harvest in any one portion of the Territory, we believe hunting opportunities should be maximized across the Territory. The James Bay area of Quebec has a daily bag limit of 20 Snow Geese, but the harvest in that area of Quebec is mainly composed of Greater Snow Geese, which are closer to population objectives, as opposed to midcontinent Lesser Snow Geese.

Status update on modernization of Migratory Birds Regulations

Drafted in 1917, the *Migratory Birds Regulations* have never been comprehensively updated or revised. As such, the Department is currently undertaking the process of amending the Regulations to update the language to modern standards, correct errors, restructure the regulations for clarity, address enforcement issues, and clarify the provisions relating to the management of migratory bird hunting. The amendments also include references to Aboriginal Peoples of Canada (implementation of the Parksville Protocol to the Migratory Birds Convention between Canada and the United States).

Consultations on the proposed amendments with respect to references to Aboriginal people and the management of hunting were held in 2013 and 2014 respectively. The comments received during these consultations have been carefully considered, and the Department has been working with the Department of Justice to draft the new Regulations; a first draft has been completed in the fall of 2017. Consultations related to baiting for the purpose of hunting were held in 2017, and feedback is still being considered.

After the draft of the new Regulations has been carefully reviewed within ECCC, the federal regulatory process for amending Canadian

regulations will be initiated. It is anticipated that the proposed new Regulations will be published in the Canada Gazette, Part I in the fall of 2018 for a 60-day public consultation period, after which the Department will carefully consider the comments received. It is anticipated that the final regulations will be published in the Canada Gazette, Part II in the spring of 2019 and come into force in time for the fall hunting season that year.

The Government of Canada Is Allowing the Temporary Possession of Dead Migratory Birds

The Government of Canada wants to inform the public of a variance to paragraph 6(b) of the *Migratory Birds Regulations*, to allow for the temporary possession of found dead migratory birds, which is in effect until August 25, 2018 (www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/migratory-birds-legal-protection/public-notice-allowing-temporary-possession.html).

As public participation in the study of dead migratory birds is necessary to help conduct surveys on avian viruses, it is permitted to temporarily possess dead migratory birds to allow for swift delivery of such birds to provincial or territorial authorities for analysis. The Government of Canada is responsible, under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*, to ensure that migratory birds are protected and conserved, and testing dead birds is believed to be the most effective method available for the detection of avian viruses.

What to do if you find a dead migratory bird:

Contact the Canadian Cooperative Wildlife Health Centre by visiting the website at www.cwhc-rccsf.ca/report_submit.php or by telephoning 1-800-567-2033.

Visit the Public Health Agency of Canada website at www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/influenza/fs-hwb-fr-mos-eng.php for guidance on precautions to take when handling wild birds.

More information on the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994* is available online at www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/migratory-birds-legal-protection/convention-act.html.

[change/services/migratory-birds-legal-protection/convention-act.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/migratory-birds-legal-protection/convention-act.html).

Online e-Permitting System – An Easy Way to Purchase the Migratory Game Bird Hunting Permit

In August 2014, Environment and Climate Change Canada launched a new online e-permitting ordering system to improve hunters' access to Migratory Game Bird Hunting (MGBH) permits. Originally, this system allowed hunters to purchase a permit online, and the permit (along with the Canadian Wildlife Habitat Conservation [CWHC] stamp) would then be mailed to the hunter within 3 to 5 business days. As of August 2015, hunters can purchase their MGBH permit and CWHC stamp online, receive electronic copies of the stamp and permit by email, and print these documents from the comfort of their own home. The e-permitting system is accessible to hunters 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Purchases of permits online have increased since the e-permitting system has been available. In 2014, more than 3,500 hunters purchased their permit online. In 2015 and 2016, it increased to around 15,000 and 28,000 online purchases respectively. Sales in 2017 have already reached 41,000.

It should also be noted that the MGBH e-permitting purchasing system makes it easier for hunters to respond to the questions on the permit, which help inform the National Harvest Survey. Data from this and other CWS surveys are used to assess the status of migratory game bird populations in Canada, their productivity, their survival rates, and the amount of harvest they can sustain. This information also provides data to inform hunting regulations and harvest management plans for future years.

Permits can be purchased online at www.permis-permits.ec.gc.ca/en/.

Appendices

Appendix A. Special Conservation Measures for Fall 2017 and Spring 2018

MEASURES IN QUEBEC CONCERNING OVERABUNDANT SPECIES

Column 1		Column 2	Column 3
Item	Area	Period during which Snow Geese may be killed	Additional hunting method or equipment
1.	District A	September 1 to December 16, 2017 May 1 to June 30, 2018	Recorded bird calls(d)(f) Recorded bird calls(d)
2.	District B	September 16 to December 30, 2017	Recorded bird calls(d)(f)
3.	Districts C and D	September 1 to September 15, 2017 (a), and September 16 to December 30, 2017 March 1 to May 31, 2018(a)	Recorded bird calls(d)(f) Recorded bird calls(d)
4.	District E	September 1 to September 15, 2017 (a), and September 16 to December 30, 2017 March 1 to May 31, 2018(a)	Recorded bird calls(d)(f); bait crop area(e) Recorded bird calls(d); bait(e)
5.	District F	September 6 to September 22, 2017(a), and September 23, 2015, to January 6, 2018 March 1 to May 31, 2018 (a)(b)(c)	Recorded bird calls(d)(f); bait crop area(e) Recorded bird calls(d); bait(e)
6.	District G	September 30 to December 26, 2017	Recorded bird calls(d)(f)

(a) Hunting and hunting equipment are allowed only on farmland.

(b) In District F, no person shall hunt south of the St. Lawrence River and north of the road right-of-way of Route 132 between the western limit of the Montmagny municipality and the eastern limit of Cap-Saint-Ignace municipality, other than in lots 4 598 472 and 2 611 981, cadastre of Quebec.

(c) In District F, on the north shore of the St. Lawrence River, no person shall hunt north of the St. Lawrence River and south of a line located at 1,000 m north of Highway 40 between Montée St-Laurent and the Maskinongé River. On the south shore of the St. Lawrence River, no person shall hunt south of the St. Lawrence River and north of the railroad right-of-way located near Route 132 between the Nicolet River in the east and Lacerte Road in the west.

(d) "Recorded bird calls" refers to bird calls of a species referred to in the heading of column 2.

(e) Hunting with bait or in a bait crop area is permitted if the Regional Director has given consent in writing pursuant to section 23.3.

(f) Any species of migratory bird for which it is open season may be taken while hunting Snow Geese with recorded Snow Geese calls.

NOTE: Hunters interested in participating in the spring conservation harvest of Snow Geese should keep their 2017 federal permits.

MEASURES IN ONTARIO CONCERNING OVERABUNDANT SPECIES

	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3
Item	Area	Period during which Snow Geese may be killed	Additional hunting method or equipment
1.	Wildlife Management Unit 65	March 1 to May 31, 2018 (a)	Recorded bird calls(b)

(a) Hunting and hunting equipment are allowed only on farmland.

(b) "Recorded bird calls" refers to bird calls of a species referred to in the heading of column 2.

NOTE: Hunters interested in participating in the spring conservation harvest of Snow Geese should keep their 2017 federal permits.

MEASURES IN MANITOBA CONCERNING OVERABUNDANT SPECIES

	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3
Item	Area	Period during which Snow Geese and Ross's Geese may be killed	Additional hunting method or equipment
1.	Zone 1	August 15 to August 31, 2017, and April 1 to June 15, 2018	Recorded bird calls(a)
2.	Zones 2, 3, 4	March 15 to May 31, 2018	Recorded bird calls(a)

(a) "Recorded bird calls" refers to bird calls of a species referred to in the heading of column 2.

NOTE: Hunters interested in participating in the spring conservation harvest of Snow Geese and Ross's Geese should keep their 2017 federal permits.

MEASURES IN SASKATCHEWAN CONCERNING OVERABUNDANT SPECIES

	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3
Item	Area	Period during which Snow Geese and Ross's Geese may be killed	Additional hunting method or equipment
1.	District No. 1 (North) and District No. 2 (South)	March 15 to June 15, 2018	Recorded bird calls(a)

(a) "Recorded bird calls" refers to bird calls of a species referred to in the heading of column 2.

NOTE: Hunters interested in participating in the spring conservation harvest of Snow Geese and Ross's Geese should keep their 2017 federal permits.

MEASURES IN ALBERTA CONCERNING OVERABUNDANT SPECIES

	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3
Item	Area	Period during which Snow Geese and Ross's Geese may be killed	Additional hunting method or equipment
1.	Throughout Alberta	March 15 to June 15, 2018	Recorded bird calls(a)

(a) "Recorded bird calls" refers to bird calls of a species referred to in the heading of column 2.

NOTE: Hunters interested in participating in the spring conservation harvest of Snow Geese and Ross's Geese should keep their 2017 federal permits.

MEASURES IN NUNAVUT CONCERNING OVERABUNDANT SPECIES

	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3
Item	Area	Period during which Snow Geese and Ross's Geese may be killed	Additional hunting method or equipment
1.	Throughout Nunavut	August 15 to August 31, 2017 May 1 to June 30, 2018	Recorded bird calls(a)

(a) "Recorded bird calls" refers to bird calls of a species referred to in the heading of column 2.

NOTE: Hunters interested in participating in the spring conservation harvest of Snow Geese and Ross's Geese should keep their 2017 federal permits.

MEASURES IN NORTHWEST TERRITORIES CONCERNING OVERABUNDANT SPECIES

	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3
Item	Area	Period during which Snow Geese and Ross's Geese may be killed	Additional hunting method or equipment
1.	Banks Island, Victoria Island and Queen Elizabeth Islands	May 1 to June 30, 2018	Recorded bird calls(a)
2.	Throughout the Northwest Territories except Banks Island, Victoria Island and Queen Elizabeth Islands	May 1 to May 28, 2018	Recorded bird calls(a)

(a) "Recorded bird calls" refers to bird calls of a species referred to in the heading of column 2.

NOTE: Hunters interested in participating in the spring conservation harvest of Snow Geese and Ross's Geese should keep their 2017 federal permits.

No person shall hunt earlier than one hour before sunrise or later than one hour after sunset.

MEASURES IN YUKON TERRITORIES CONCERNING OVERABUNDANT SPECIES

	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3
Item	Area	Period during which Snow Geese and Ross's Geese may be killed	Additional hunting method or equipment
1.	Throughout the Yukon Territory	May 1 to May 28, 2018	Recorded bird calls(a)

(a) "Recorded bird calls" refers to bird calls of a species referred to in the heading of column 2.

NOTE: Hunters interested in participating in the spring conservation harvest of Snow Geese and Ross's Geese should keep their 2017 federal permits.

No person shall hunt earlier than one hour before sunrise or later than one hour after sunset.

Appendix B. Objectives and Guidelines for the Establishment of National Regulations for Migratory Game Bird Hunting

(Revised June 1999 and updated December 2001 by the Canadian Wildlife Service Executive Committee)

A. Description of Regulations

The *Migratory Birds Regulations* are part of the regulations respecting the protection of migratory birds in general, as mandated by the *Migratory Birds Convention*. According to the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*, the Governor in Council may make regulations providing for:

1. The periods during which, or the geographic areas in which, migratory birds may be killed.
2. The species and number of migratory game birds that a person may kill in any period when doing so is permitted by regulation.
3. The manner in which migratory game birds may be killed and the equipment that may be used.
4. The periods in each year during which a person may have in their possession migratory game birds killed during the season when the taking of such birds was legal, and the number of birds that may be possessed.

This document deals with these four aspects of regulation, although the *Migratory Birds Regulations* deal with other areas as well.

B. Guiding Principles

Guiding principles for migratory bird hunting regulations include those laid out in the Guidelines for Wildlife Policy in Canada as approved by the Wildlife Ministers at the Wildlife Ministers Conference, September 30, 1982. In particular, the most relevant principles are:

1. The maintenance of viable natural wildlife stocks always takes precedence over their use.
2. Canadians are temporary custodians, not the owners, of their wildlife heritage.
3. Canadians are free to enjoy and use wildlife in Canada, subject to laws aimed at securing its sustainable enjoyment and use.
4. The cost of management essential to preserving viable populations of wildlife should be borne by all Canadians; special management measures required to permit intensive uses should be supported by the users.
5. Wildlife has intrinsic, social and economic values, but wildlife sometimes causes problems that require management.
6. Conservation of wildlife relies upon a well-informed public.

C. Objectives of the Migratory Game Birds Hunting Regulations

1. To provide an opportunity for Canadians to hunt migratory game birds, by establishing hunting seasons. Guidelines for hunting regulations are described in Section D. Briefly, regulations should be based on a number of features specific to the geographic area under consideration. Factors such as the timing of arrival and departure of migrating birds, the status of local breeding populations, fledging of local broods and completion of the moult of successfully breeding females, and other special issues such as the status of species, should be used to determine the most effective hunting regulations. Sometimes regulations may need to be based on the species of highest conservation concern.
2. To manage the take of migratory game birds at levels compatible with the species' ability to sustain healthy populations consistent with the available habitat throughout their range.

3. To conserve the genetic diversity within migratory game bird populations.
4. To provide hunting opportunity in various parts of Canada within the limits imposed by the abundance, migration and distribution patterns of migratory bird populations, and with due respect for the traditional use of the migratory game bird resource in Canada.
5. To limit the accidental killing of a migratory game bird species requiring protection because of poor population status, where there is a reasonable possibility that a hunter might confuse that species with another for which there is an open season.
6. To assist, at times and in specific locations, in the prevention of damage to natural habitat or depredation of agricultural crops by migratory game birds.

D. Guidelines for the Regulations on Migratory Game Bird Hunting

1. Regulations shall be established according to the requirements of the *Migratory Birds Convention* and the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*.
2. Regulations shall address the principles of Section B and the objectives of Section C.
3. Unless needs dictate otherwise, hunting regulations will be changed as little as possible from year to year.
4. Regulations should be simple and readily enforceable.
5. Where a conflict arises between allocation of harvest among jurisdictions and the conservation of migratory game bird populations, the conservation objective shall take precedence.
6. When uncertainty exists about the status of a migratory game bird population, a precautionary approach will be taken in establishing sustainable hunting regulations.
7. Hunting regulations may not discriminate among Canadian hunters based on their province or territory of residence. This guideline does not preclude recognition of Aboriginal rights.
8. Regulations should be consistent in jurisdictions where important concentration areas for staging waterfowl straddle borders.
9. Where possible, regional, national and international harvest strategies will be developed among management agencies that share populations. Regulations will be designed to meet mutual targets for harvest, harvest rate or population size.
10. Specific regulation changes will be developed through a process of co-management and public consultation with other interested groups and individuals.
11. Hunting regulations should be consistent with terms of agreements in Aboriginal land claim settlements.

E. Biennial Regulatory Process

Regulations may be established in one of two ways: selection of a regulatory package from a pre-established set of possible packages, or through a biannual regulatory consultation process.

Pre-established sets of regulatory alternatives:

Regulatory alternatives may be pre-established according to the guidelines outlined in section D, with the selection made in any year based on a predetermined set of conditions. For example, a set of three regulatory packages with decreasing harvest rates could be described: liberal, moderate and restrictive. The criteria for selection among the alternatives could be based on the results of population surveys. This method would reduce the time required to conduct the usual process, simplify the implementation of multi-jurisdictional harvest strategies, and increase the predictability of regulations.

Regulatory process:

The Minister of the Environment must be in a position to proceed with any changes to the *Migratory Birds*

Regulations for the purpose of managing hunting. As a policy decision, the hunting regulations for migratory game birds are reviewed and amended biennially. To ensure that the regulations are made with the best possible advice, a broad process of consultation must be carried out. Reports produced as part of this process may be obtained from Regional Directors, Canadian Wildlife Service, or the Director of Wildlife Management and Regulatory Affairs Division at the national office of the Canadian Wildlife Service.

1. The Canadian Wildlife Service, national office, prepares a status report on migratory game bird populations in November. This report describes the biological information available to determine the status of each population.
2. Regional officials (biologists and management) of the Canadian Wildlife Service and provincial and territorial wildlife officials consult with non-governmental organizations and interested individuals on issues related to hunting regulations, and every two years the CWS prepares regulatory submissions to amend the regulations. To ensure that all parties have access to the best possible biological information, the *Population Status of Migratory Game Birds in Canada* report may be used as an aid.
3. The initial suggestions for regulation changes will be developed through regional consultation processes. These processes may vary among regions, but should include active participation by provincial and territorial wildlife agencies, wildlife co-management boards and affected stakeholders. The changes, with rationale and predicted effect (Section F), are described in a regulation report issued at the beginning of January from the national office entitled *Proposals to Amend the Canadian Migratory Birds Regulations*. This report allows inter-regional and international consideration of proposed changes.
4. Public and organizational comments on the proposals outlined in the *Proposals to Amend the Canadian Migratory Birds Regulations* report should be sent to the appropriate Regional Director, or the Director of Wildlife Management and Regulatory Affairs Division at the national office of the Canadian Wildlife Service.
5. Final regulation proposals, incorporating input from the consultations, are submitted from the Regional Directors to the Director of Wildlife Program Support Division at the national office of the Canadian Wildlife Service, by the end of February.
6. The regulation proposals are moved, by the national office, through the regulatory process for consideration by the government beginning in June.
7. Population surveys are carried out throughout the year. From time to time, these surveys may show an unexpected change in migratory game bird populations that require a sudden revision to the national regulation proposals.
8. The final regulations, as approved by the Governor-in-Council, are described in a report entitled *Migratory Game Bird Hunting Regulations in Canada*, which is distributed to all involved parties in July. Each purchaser of a migratory game bird hunting permit receives a summary of the regulations for that province.

F. Items to Be Addressed in Regulatory Proposals

Proposals to change migratory game bird hunting regulations should address the following questions:

1. What is the goal of the regulatory change?
2. How does the change address the objectives and guidelines set out in this document?
3. What is the predicted effect of the proposal? An analysis based on existing data sources should be included.
4. How will the actual effect of the regulatory change be measured?

The proposals should be as concise as possible, while still including the required elements. A simplified rationale would apply for regulations that carry out previously negotiated harvest strategies and agreements.

Appendix C. Migratory Birds Hunting Regulations Summaries by Province and Territory, 2017–2018 Hunting Season

See the following pages for the summaries. The summaries are also available on the Government of Canada's website: www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/migratory-game-bird-hunting/regulations-provincial-territorial-summaries.html.

Additional information can be obtained at:

Environment and Climate Change Canada

Public Inquiries Centre

7th Floor, Fontaine Building

200 Sacré-Coeur Boulevard

Gatineau QC K1A 0H3

Telephone: 1-800-668-6767 (in Canada only) or 819-997-2800

Email: ec.enviroinfo.ec@canada.ca

