

the Upper-Region Regulations Committee recommended the following experimental special seasons:

In Indiana, a Statewide season during September 1 to 15.

In Illinois, a season in the nine northeast counties of the State during September 9 to 18.

In Wisconsin, expand the size of the Southeastern Zone for a September 1 to 13 season.

The Lower-Region Regulations Committee of the Mississippi Flyway Council recommended that the flyway-wide framework for special resident giant Canada goose seasons be September 1 to 15 where areas of concern do not exist.

In Tennessee, the Lower-Region Regulations Committee of the Mississippi Flyway Council recommended that the zone for the special resident Canada goose season in east Tennessee be expanded from 11 to 28 counties, east of and including Anderson, Campbell, Hamilton, Rhea, and Roane Counties. The Committee also recommended that Tennessee be permitted to hold a special September Canada goose season in the Kentucky/Barkley Lakes Zone in west Tennessee.

The Pacific Flyway Council requested modification of the early Canada goose seasons criteria to allow any State to conduct a season between the dates of September 1 and 15 for a 3-year experimental period. The Council recommended that States continue monitoring hunter activity and success until they begin participation in the Harvest Information Program and close areas where evidence from band recoveries or other sources indicated unacceptable (greater than 10 percent) harvest of non-target populations of concern. Special seasons occurring after September 15 would be required to meet all existing Service criteria for special Canada goose seasons and would not be altered in any way during the 3-year experimental period.

The Pacific Flyway Council recommended continuation of the early September Canada goose season in southwestern Wyoming and that an experimental hunt be allowed in Teton County, Wyoming, where it would be by State permit (no more than 40 permits may be issued) with framework dates of September 1 to 15 and a maximum limit of 2 Canada geese permitted per season.

B. Regular Seasons

The Upper-Region Regulations Committee of the Mississippi Flyway Council recommended a September 23 framework opening date for regular goose seasons in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and Statewide in Wisconsin.

The Lower-Region Regulations Committee of the Mississippi Flyway Council recommended that the Canada goose hunting season in Louisiana be expanded from the Southwest Louisiana Zone to Statewide, using the same guidelines followed during the past 5 years.

The Pacific Flyway Council recommended a daily bag limit of 1 cackling Canada goose in northwestern Oregon and southwestern Washington. The Council recommends allowing one additional cackling Canada goose in the bag if additional Canada goose hunting season closures are required to further protect dusky Canada geese, however, and provided that the 1995 breeding pair index indicates a continued increase in the cackling Canada goose population and the strategy for harvesting not more than 1,500 in northwestern Oregon and 1,000 in southwestern Washington remains unchanged.

7. Snow and Ross's (Light) Geese

The Central Flyway Council recommended that framework dates for hunting light geese in the Central Flyway be extended to March 10.

8. Tundra Swans

The Pacific Flyway Council recommended a 5-year experimental swan season that would allow a restricted take of trumpeter swans in otherwise tundra swan hunting seasons, with the previous tundra swan seasons and areas open to hunting being modified to minimize the take of trumpeter swans. The Council seeks a responsible balance between its efforts to enhance expansion of the Rocky Mountain Population (RMP) of trumpeter swans and accommodate opportunities to hunt tundra swans.

The Pacific Flyway Council recommended changing the closing date for swan hunting seasons from the Sunday closest to January 20 to December 1 for Montana, the Sunday closest to December 15 for Utah, and the Sunday following January 1 for Nevada.

The Pacific Flyway Council also recommended changes to the swan hunt areas in Montana and Utah. In Montana, those portions of Pondera and Teton Counties west of U.S. Highways 287-89 would be deleted from the open area, while Choteau County would be added. Utah would be reduced from the Statewide hunt area that existed prior to 1994 to just the Great Salt Lake Basin, i.e., those portions of Box Elder, Weber, Davis, Salt Lake, and Tooele Counties bounded by Utah State Highway 30, Interstate 80/84, Interstate 15, and Interstate 80.

The Pacific Flyway Council also recommended that the number of swan permits remain unchanged at 500 for Montana and 650 for Nevada but increased from 2,500 to 2,750 for Utah. The Council deemed the increase in Utah permits as appropriate to partially offset anticipated reduction in swan hunting opportunities resulting from the recommended changes.

In addition to the foregoing changes, the Pacific Flyway Council proposed limiting the potential take of trumpeter swans by establishing a quota of 20 trumpeter swans which would be divided between Utah and Nevada prior to the season. A State season would be allowed, within the frameworks, so long as that quota had not been attained; however, the season would be closed through emergency action by the affected State upon attainment of that quota. To measure the take of trumpeters with respect to the quota, the Council recommended hunters in Utah and Nevada be required to participate in a mandatory parts check at designated sites within 72 hours of harvesting any swan. In Montana, where there would be no recommended quota, species composition of the harvest would be determined through the voluntary bill-measurement card program currently operated by the State.

Mr. Laurence N. Gillette, representing The Trumpeter Swan Society (TTSS), submitted an integrated package of recommendations for enhancing efforts to expand both the winter and summer range of RMP of trumpeter swans while allowing continuation of significantly modified tundra swan seasons in Montana, Utah, and Nevada. Dispersal of trumpeter swans from winter concentration areas in less-than-optimum, high-mountain habitats in the Tri-state Area of Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho is deemed of primary importance and, if accomplished, would likely result in trumpeter swans following tundra swan migration corridors through hunt areas in Utah and Nevada enroute to California.

Aside from recommendations regarding management actions directed only at RMP trumpeter swans, TTSS recommended that the Service minimize the mortality of trumpeters during tundra swan seasons by: (1) authorizing seasons only during times of peak tundra swan abundance when the generally later-arriving RMP trumpeter swans are less likely to be present and the ratio of tundra to trumpeters is highest, i.e., Montana and Utah - open early to mid-October and close by December 1, Nevada - open early to mid-October and close by January 1; (2) authorizing tundra swan hunting only