

NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION[571]

Adopted and Filed

Rulemaking related to waterfowl and coot hunting seasons

The Natural Resource Commission (Commission) hereby rescinds Chapter 91, “Waterfowl and Coot Hunting Seasons,” Iowa Administrative Code, and adopts a new chapter with the same title.

Legal Authority for Rulemaking

This rulemaking is adopted under the authority provided in Iowa Code sections 456A.24(14), 481A.134, 481A.135, 483A.1, 483A.9A and 483A.10.

State or Federal Law Implemented

This rulemaking implements, in whole or in part, Iowa Code sections 456A.24(14), 481A.134, 481A.135, 483A.1, 483A.9A and 483A.10.

Purpose and Summary

Chapter 91 establishes and organizes waterfowl and coot hunting seasons as required by law. Waterfowl and coot hunting are exciting recreational opportunities for licensed hunters. More importantly, Iowa relies upon hunters to help manage the state’s wildlife, including migratory waterfowl, which are held in trust for the people and required by law to be managed for posterity.

Consistent with Executive Order 10 (January 10, 2023) and the five-year review of rules in Iowa Code section 17A.7(2), this chapter was edited for length and clarity. Several long provisions identifying in narrative form areas that are either open or closed to hunting have been removed and replaced with a more user-friendly visual map available on the Department of Natural Resources’ website.

Public Comment and Changes to Rulemaking

Notice of Intended Action for this rulemaking was published in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin on December 27, 2023, as **ARC 7238C**. Public hearings were held on January 16 and 18, 2024, at 1 p.m. at Wallace State Office Building, Conference Room 4E, 502 East 9th Street, Des Moines, Iowa. No one attended the public hearings. No public comments were received. No changes from the Notice have been made.

Adoption of Rulemaking

This rulemaking was adopted by the Commission on April 11, 2024.

Fiscal Impact

This rulemaking has no fiscal impact to the State of Iowa.

Jobs Impact

After analysis and review of this rulemaking, no impact on jobs has been found.

Waivers

This rulemaking is subject to the waiver provisions of 571—Chapter 11. Any person who believes that the application of the discretionary provisions of this rulemaking would result in hardship or injustice to that person may petition the Commission for a waiver of the discretionary provisions, if any.

Review by Administrative Rules Review Committee

The Administrative Rules Review Committee, a bipartisan legislative committee which oversees rulemaking by executive branch agencies, may, on its own motion or on written request by any individual or group, review this rulemaking at its [regular monthly meeting](#) or at a special meeting. The Committee's meetings are open to the public, and interested persons may be heard as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.8(6).

Effective Date

This rulemaking will become effective on June 5, 2024.

The following rulemaking action is adopted:

ITEM 1. Rescind 571—Chapter 91 and adopt the following **new** chapter in lieu thereof:

CHAPTER 91
WATERFOWL AND COOT HUNTING SEASONS

571—91.1(481A) Duck hunting.

91.1(1) Zone boundaries. Zone boundaries are as specified in the November 2023 Waterfowl Hunting Map Book published on the department of natural resources' (department's) website (www.iowadnr.gov/Hunting/Migratory-Game-Birds), chapter 1 "Waterfowl Hunting Zones."

91.1(2) Season dates - north zone. Special September teal season: September 1 through September 16. For all ducks: The first segment of the season will begin on the Saturday nearest September 30 and run for seven days. The second segment of the season will open on the Saturday nearest October 13 and continue for 53 consecutive days.

91.1(3) Season dates - central zone. Special September teal season: September 1 through September 16. For all ducks: The first segment of the season will begin on the Saturday nearest October 6 and run for seven days. The second segment of the season will open on the Saturday nearest October 20 and continue for 53 consecutive days.

91.1(4) Season dates - south zone. Special September teal season: September 1 through September 16. For all ducks: The first segment of the season will begin on the Saturday nearest October 13 and run for seven days. The second segment of the season will open on the Saturday nearest October 27 and continue for 53 consecutive days.

91.1(5) Bag limit. Bag limits for all species are as adopted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The daily bag limit for scaup will be one for the first 15 days of the duck hunting season and two for the remaining 45 days.

91.1(6) Possession limit. For the special September teal season and for all ducks: Possession limit is three times the daily bag limit.

91.1(7) Shooting hours. For the special September teal season: Shooting hours are sunrise to sunset each day. For all ducks: Shooting hours are one-half hour before sunrise to sunset each day.

571—91.2(481A) Coots (split season).

91.2(1) Same as duck season dates and shooting hours.

91.2(2) Bag and possession limits. Daily bag limit is 15 and possession limit is three times the daily bag limit.

571—91.3(481A) Goose hunting.

91.3(1) Zone boundaries. Zone boundaries are as specified in the November 2023 Waterfowl Hunting Map Book published on the department's website (www.iowadnr.gov/Hunting/Migratory-Game-Birds), chapter 1 "Waterfowl Hunting Zones."

91.3(2) Season dates - north zone. For all geese: The first segment of the regular goose season will begin on the Saturday nearest September 23 and run for a 16-day period. The second segment of the goose season will open on the Saturday nearest October 13 and continue for 53 consecutive days. The

goose season will reopen on the Saturday nearest December 13 and remain continuously open until the total number of days used for goose hunting reaches 107.

91.3(3) *Season dates - central zone.* For all geese: The first segment of the regular goose season will begin on the Saturday nearest September 30 and run for a 16-day period. The second segment of the goose season will open on the Saturday nearest October 20 and continue for 53 consecutive days. The goose season will reopen on the Saturday nearest December 20 and remain continuously open until the total number of days used for goose hunting reaches 107.

91.3(4) *Season dates - south zone.* For all geese: The first segment of the regular goose season will begin on the Saturday nearest October 6 and run for a 16-day period. The second segment of the goose season will open on the Saturday nearest October 27 and continue for 53 consecutive days. The goose season will reopen on the Saturday nearest December 27 and remain continuously open until the total number of days used for goose hunting reaches 107.

91.3(5) *Bag limit.* The daily bag limit for dark geese (Canada geese, white-fronted geese, brant and any other geese that are not light geese) is five and may include no more than two Canada geese during the first segment of the statewide season and no more than three Canada geese during the remainder of the statewide season. The daily bag limit for light geese (white and blue-phase snow geese and Ross' geese) is 20.

91.3(6) *Possession limit.* The possession limit is three times the daily bag limit for Canada geese, brant and white-fronted geese. There is no possession limit for light geese.

91.3(7) *Shooting hours.* Shooting hours are one-half hour before sunrise until sunset each day.

91.3(8) *Light goose conservation order season.* Only light geese (white and blue-phase snow geese and Ross' geese) may be taken under a conservation order from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service beginning the day after the regular goose season closes and continuing until May 1.

- a. *Zone boundaries.* Statewide.
- b. *Shooting hours.* One-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.
- c. *Bag limit.* No bag limit.
- d. *Possession limit.* No possession limit.
- e. *Other regulations.* Methods of take approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for hunting light geese during the conservation order season shall be permitted.

91.3(9) *Metropolitan goose hunting seasons and specified areas.*

- a. *Season dates.* The second Saturday in September for nine consecutive days.
- b. *Bag limit.* Daily bag limit is five Canada geese.
- c. *Possession limit.* Three times the daily bag limit.
- d. *Specified areas.*
 - (1) Cedar Rapids/Iowa City. Areas are as specified in the November 2023 Waterfowl Hunting Map Book published on the department's website (www.iowadnr.gov/Hunting/Migratory-Game-Birds), chapter 2 "Metropolitan Goose Hunting Areas."
 - (2) Des Moines. Areas are as specified in the November 2023 Waterfowl Hunting Map Book published on the department's website (www.iowadnr.gov/Hunting/Migratory-Game-Birds), chapter 2 "Metropolitan Goose Hunting Areas."
 - (3) Cedar Falls/Waterloo. Areas are as specified in the November 2023 Waterfowl Hunting Map Book published on the department's website (www.iowadnr.gov/Hunting/Migratory-Game-Birds), chapter 2 "Metropolitan Goose Hunting Areas."

571—91.4(481A) Closed areas. Waterfowl and coots may be hunted statewide except in specific areas.

91.4(1) *Waterfowl and coots.* There shall be no open season for ducks, coots and geese as specified in the November 2023 Waterfowl Hunting Map Book published on the department's website (www.iowadnr.gov/Hunting/Migratory-Game-Birds), chapter 3 "Areas Closed to Waterfowl Hunting."

91.4(2) *Canada geese.* There shall be no open season on Canada geese in certain areas described as specified in the November 2023 Waterfowl Hunting Map Book published on the department's website (www.iowadnr.gov/Hunting/Migratory-Game-Birds), chapter 4 "Areas Closed to Canada Goose Hunting."

571—91.5(481A) Canada goose hunting within closed areas.

91.5(1) Closed areas. All areas are as described in subrule 91.4(2).

a. Purpose. The hunting of Canada geese in closed areas is being undertaken to allow landowners or tenants who farm in these closed areas to hunt Canada geese on land they own or farm in the closed area.

b. Criteria.

(1) Landowners and tenants who own or farm land in the closed areas will be permitted to hunt Canada geese in the closed areas.

(2) Landowners and those individuals named on the permit according to the criteria specified in subparagraph 91.5(1)“b”(9) will be permitted to hunt in the closed area. Tenants may obtain a permit instead of the landowner if the landowner transfers this privilege to the tenant. Landowners may choose, at their discretion, to include the tenant and those individuals of the tenant’s family specified in subparagraph 91.5(1)“b”(9) on their permit. Assigned permits must be signed by both the permittee and the landowner assigning the permit.

(3) Landowners must hold title to, or tenants must farm by a rent/share/lease arrangement, at least eight acres inside the closed area to qualify for a permit.

(4) No more than one permit will be issued to corporations, estates, or other legal associations that jointly own land in the closed area. No individual may obtain more than two permits nor may an individual be named as a participant on more than two permits.

(5) Persons holding a permit can hunt with those individuals named on their permit as specified in subparagraph 91.5(1)“b”(9) on any property they own (or rent/share/lease in the case of tenants) in the closed area provided their activity complies with all other regulations governing hunting. Nothing herein shall permit the hunting of Canada geese on public property within the closed area.

(6) Persons hunting under this permit must adhere to all municipal, county, state and federal regulations that are applicable to hunting and specifically applicable to Canada goose hunting. Hunting as authorized by this rule shall not be used to stir or rally waterfowl.

(7) Hunting within the closed area will be allowed through October 31.

(8) Permit holders will be allowed to take eight Canada geese per year in the closed area.

(9) Permits will be issued only to individual landowners or tenants; however, permit holders must specify, when requesting a permit, the names of all other individuals qualified to hunt on the permit. Individuals qualified to hunt on the permit shall include the landowners or tenants and their spouses, domestic partners, parents, grandparents, children, children’s spouses, grandchildren, siblings and siblings’ spouses only.

c. Procedures.

(1) Permits can be obtained from the local conservation officer or wildlife unit headquarters within the closed area no later than 48 hours before the first Canada goose season opens. The permit will be issued to an individual landowner or tenant and must list the names of all individuals who may hunt with the permittee. The permit will also contain a description of the property covered by the permit. The permit must be carried by a member of the hunting party whose name is listed on the permit. Conservation officers will keep a record of permittees and locations of properties that are covered by permits.

(2) Eight consecutively numbered tags will be issued with each permit. Geese will be tagged around the leg immediately upon being reduced to possession and will remain tagged until delivered to the person’s abode.

(3) No one may attempt to take Canada geese under this permit unless the person possesses an unused tag for the current year.

(4) No landowner or tenant shall be responsible or liable for violations committed by other individuals listed on the permit issued to the landowner or tenant.

571—91.6(481A,483A) Youth waterfowl hunt. A special youth waterfowl hunt will be held the weekend before the first segment of the regular duck season in each duck hunting zone. Youth hunters must be residents of Iowa as defined in Iowa Code section 483A.1A and less than 16 years old. Each youth hunter must be accompanied by an adult 18 years old or older. The youth hunter does not need

to have a hunting license or stamps. The adult must have a valid hunting license and habitat stamp if normally required to have them to hunt and a state waterfowl stamp. Only the youth hunter may shoot ducks and coots. The adult may hunt for any game birds for which the season is open. The daily bag and possession limits are the same as for the regular waterfowl season, as defined in rule 571—91.1(481A). All other hunting regulations in effect for the regular waterfowl season apply to the youth hunt.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code sections 481A.38, 481A.39, 481A.48(2), and 483A.2.

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