

NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION[571]

Adopted and Filed Emergency After Notice

Pursuant to the authority of Iowa Code sections 455A.5(6), 481A.38, 481A.39, and 481A.48, the Natural Resource Commission hereby amends Chapter 91, "Waterfowl and Coot Hunting Seasons," Iowa Administrative Code.

Chapter 91 contains the regulations for hunting waterfowl and coot and includes season dates, bag limits, possession limits, shooting hours, and areas open to hunting.

These amendments ensure that the seasons open on weekends. The zones and season dates provide different opening and closing dates for the duck season in each zone and are designed to fit within the federal framework as well as provide waterfowl hunting opportunity during the times of peak waterfowl numbers as well as during hunters' preferred days to be in the field.

Notice of Intended Action was published in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin on June 10, 2015, as **ARC 2033C**. A public hearing was held on June 30, 2015. Two comments were received at the hearing, and seven comments were received from the public during the comment period. All comments supported the general season framework, but five of the commenters stated that they would like to see three days of hunting moved from the early season to the late segment of the duck season. Four commenters would like to see the first season opening dates staggered between the zones, and one stated a preference that the youth season be held before the regular season.

There are two changes from the Notice of Intended Action. The bag limit for canvasbacks was increased from one to two, and the bag limit and season length for white-fronted geese and brant were increased due to changes in the federal regulations, which allow a more liberal season and bag limit.

The Commission finds, pursuant to Iowa Code section 17A.5(2)"b"(2) as amended by 2015 Iowa Acts, House File 536, section 27, that the normal effective date of these amendments should be waived and that these amendments should be made effective upon filing as they confer a benefit on the public by establishing a September 5 start date for the waterfowl hunting season.

After analysis and review of this rule making, there will not be an impact on jobs in the state since the changes only adjust for calendar date changes.

These amendments are intended to implement Iowa Code sections 481A.38, 481A.39, and 481A.48. These amendments became effective August 13, 2015.

The following amendments are adopted.

ITEM 1. Amend subrules 91.1(2) to 91.1(5) as follows:

91.1(2) Season dates - north zone. Special September teal season: September 6 5 through September 24 20. For all ducks: October 4 3 through October 19 18 and October 25 24 through December 7 6.

91.1(3) Season dates - south zone. Special September teal season: September 6 5 through September 24 20. For all ducks: October 4 3 through October 8 7 and October 18 17 through December 11 10.

91.1(4) Season dates - Missouri River zone. Special September teal season: September 6 5 through September 24 20. For all ducks: October 4 3 through October 8 7 and October 25 24 through December 18 17.

91.1(5) Bag limit. Special September teal season: The daily bag limit is 6 teal of any species. For all ducks: The daily bag limit of ducks is 6, and may include no more than 4 mallards (no more than 2 of which may be females), 1 black duck, 3 wood ducks, 2 pintails, 1 mottled duck, 4 2 canvasback, 2 redheads, and 3 scaup. The daily bag limit of mergansers is 5, only 2 of which may be hooded mergansers.

ITEM 2. Amend subrules 91.3(2) to 91.3(5) and 91.3(8) to 91.3(11) as follows:

91.3(2) Season dates - north zone. Dark geese (Canada geese, white-fronted geese, and brant and any other geese that are not light geese): September 27 26 through January 2, 2015 1, 2016. White-fronted geese: September 27 through December 9. Light geese (white and blue-phase snow geese and Ross' geese): September 27 26 through January 11, 2015 10, 2016.

91.3(3) Season dates - south zone. Dark geese (Canada geese, white-fronted geese, and brant and any other geese that are not light geese): October 4 3 through January 9, ~~2015~~ 8, 2016. White-fronted geese: October 4 through December 16. Light geese (white and blue-phase snow geese and Ross' geese): October 4 3 through January 16, ~~2015~~ 15, 2016.

91.3(4) Season dates - Missouri River zone. Dark geese (Canada geese, white-fronted geese, and brant and any other geese that are not light geese): October 11 10 through January 16, ~~2015~~ 15, 2016. White-fronted geese: October 11 through December 23. Light geese (white and blue-phase snow geese and Ross' geese): October 11 10 through January 16, ~~2015~~ 15, 2016.

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 5 and may include no more than 2 Canada geese is 2 from September 25 26 through October 31 and no more than 3 Canada geese from November 1 through the end of the season. The daily bag limits for white-fronted geese, brant, and light geese are 2 white-fronted geese, 1 brant, and 20 limit for light geese (white and blue-phase snow geese and Ross' geese) is 20.

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 from January 17, ~~2015~~ 16, 2016, through April 15, ~~2015~~ 2016.

a. to e. No change.

91.3(9) Cedar Rapids/Iowa City goose hunting zone.

a. Season dates. September 6 5 through September 14 13.

b. to d. No change.

91.3(10) Des Moines goose hunting zone.

a. Season dates. September 6 5 through September 14 13.

b. to d. No change.

91.3(11) Cedar Falls/Waterloo goose hunting zone.

a. Season dates. September 6 5 through September 14 13.

b. to d. No change.

ITEM 3. Amend rule 571—91.6(481A) as follows:

571—91.6(481A) Youth waterfowl hunt. A special youth waterfowl hunt will be held on September 26 and 27 ~~and 28~~ in the north duck hunting zone, October 10 and 11 ~~and 12~~ in the south duck hunting zone, and October 17 and 18 ~~and 19~~ in the Missouri River 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 other 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.

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