

ADMINISTRATIVE RULES FISCAL ESTIMATE AND ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

Type of Estimate and Analysis

Original Updated Corrected

Administrative Rule Chapter, Title and Number

Ch. NR 10, Game and Hunting. Board Orders WM-06-15 and WM-05-15(E).

Subject

Establishing migratory game bird hunting seasons and regulations, including an early duck season for teal-only and the hunting regulations for teal and mourning doves.

Fund Sources Affected

Chapter 20, Stats. Appropriations Affected

GPR FED PRO PRS SEG SEG-S

None

Fiscal Effect of Implementing the Rule

No Fiscal Effect
 Indeterminate

Increase Existing Revenues
 Decrease Existing Revenues

Increase Costs
 Could Absorb Within Agency's Budget
 Decrease Costs

The Rule Will Impact the Following (Check All That Apply)

State's Economy

Local Government Units

Specific Businesses/Sectors

Public Utility Rate Payers

Would Implementation and Compliance Costs Be Greater Than \$20 million?

Yes No

Policy Problem Addressed by the Rule

The species of primary interest to duck hunters, blue-winged teal, are an early migrating bird whose numbers may be low or declining in Wisconsin when the normal duck seasons begin at the end of September or early October. Many hunters are likely to appreciate the opportunity to hunt this species earlier during the fall season, possibly prior to migration out-of-the-state, when they may be more abundant.

In the permanent order, the department proposes an early teal season in Wisconsin for 2015 that would begin on September 1 and continue through September 7. Only blue-winged and green-winged teal can be harvested. The daily bag limit would be 6 teal. Shooting hours on opening day begin at 9 am and close at 7 pm. Shooting hours from September 2 through 7 will begin at sunrise and close at 7 pm.

The permanent rule would also extend the mourning dove hunting season. At the February, 2014 meeting of about 20 states that are part of the Eastern Dove Management Unit, a recommendation was approved to increase the dove hunting season from 70 to 90 days across the management unit. The additional 20 days will result in an increase in hunting opportunity that some hunters will appreciate. However, these days will be at a time of the year when many other hunting seasons are also open. As a result, the additional hunting opportunity may not result in a significant amount of hunting effort focused primarily on mourning doves.

Both the emergency and permanent board orders eliminate the 9:00 start of shooting hours for ducks and geese on the first day of the regular duck hunting seasons so that shooting hours will begin 30 minutes before sunrise. These rules also modify the duck and goose hunting season dates in the Mississippi river zone so that they will open on October 3 and continue through October 9. The season will then be closed for seven days, reopening on October 17 and continuing through December 8.

Other regulation modifications are minor and would have minimal to no impact on hunting opportunities and no resulting fiscal or economic impacts.

Summary of Rule's Economic and Fiscal Impact on Specific Businesses, Business Sectors, Public Utility Rate Payers, Local Governmental Units and the State's Economy as a Whole (Include Implementation and Compliance Costs Expected to be Incurred)

The department held a comment period pursuant to Governor's Executive Order 50, Section IV over a 14 day period in July, 2015. No comments were received.

Fiscal impacts on the department are also summarized in this analysis.

Economic Impact

A September season for hunting teal-only will be a new opportunity for Wisconsin hunters and it will result in an increase in the richness and diversity of hunting activities that people enjoy. It is likely to result in an increase in the amount of hunting activity that occurs at this time of year and the resulting incidental expenditures of hunters. However, the amount of increased activity may be limited and cannot accurately be anticipated prior to having experience with this new opportunity. A factor that may result in none or a very limited economic impact is that the hunting season for other migratory birds, Canada geese and mourning doves, are already established and will be open concurrently with the proposed teal season. Early September is considered the best time for hunting mourning doves. A certain amount of hunting during the early teal-only season may be by hunters who would otherwise have been hunting doves or geese and this teal hunting would not be considered new activity or related spending.

The additional 20 days of mourning dove hunting proposed in these rules will result in an increase in hunting opportunity that some hunters will appreciate. However, these days will be at a time of the year when many other highly anticipated hunting seasons are also open. As a result, the additional hunting opportunity may not result in a significant amount of hunting effort focused primarily on mourning doves, nor related expenditures by hunters or resulting economic impacts.

Both dove and teal hunters are likely to be people who already participate in those activities during the existing seasons. Dove and teal hunters are not likely to need to purchase new gear or durable goods such as boats, shotguns, or decoys.

Because the hunting season frameworks proposed in this rule will be comparable to those in place during previous seasons, no economic impacts are anticipated. These rules are applicable to individual hunters and impose no compliance or reporting requirements for small business, nor are any design or operational standards contained in the rule.

Fiscal Impact

The department anticipates no fiscal impact resulting from these rules. The USFWS does require states to observe hunter behavior in the field to observe whether they shoot at non-teal ducks during the teal only season. If the number of attempts to shoot non-teal ducks is too high then we will fail the experiment. The department anticipates that these observation efforts can be absorbed within the department's current budget. Though an undetermined amount of staff time will be needed to meet this federal requirement, this staff time will be accounted for by re-prioritizing work duties. The department will not hire new employees or be requiring additional hours of work.

Other regulations modified by this proposal will not require changes to past practices or procedures and will also have no fiscal impact.

Benefits of Implementing the Rule and Alternative(s) to Implementing the Rule

The species of primary interest to duck hunters, blue-winged teal, are an early migrating bird whose numbers may be low or declining in Wisconsin when the normal duck seasons begin at the end of September or early October. Many hunters are likely to appreciate the opportunity to hunt this species earlier during the fall

season, possibly prior to migration, when they may be more abundant.

The new teal and dove hunting opportunities will both contribute to the presence of excellent hunting opportunities which are enjoyed by outdoor enthusiasts.

Additional alternatives which were evaluated in preparation of these rules were to adopt a full 16 day season, which is an option offered by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and to decline to hold a season. This seven day season represents a compromise between two opinions commonly expressed during public participation in rule development; that Wisconsin should take full advantage of new hunting opportunities, and that Wisconsin should not hold an early teal season because it could result in incidental harvest of other duck species or have an impact on duck hunting which occurs later in the fall season.

Long Range Implications of Implementing the Rule

Implementing these rules will have little impact on the public except that they will continue to have good hunting opportunities into the future.

Compare With Approaches Being Used by Federal Government

Annually the department establishes migratory game bird hunting seasons based on a federal framework that is presented to Wisconsin by the US Fish & Wildlife Service. This proposal takes advantage of the new opportunities offered under the federal framework but the seven day teal-only season does represent a compromise between people who are opposed to a teal season and those who would prefer the full 16 day season.

Compare With Approaches Being Used by Neighboring States (Illinois, Iowa, Michigan and Minnesota)

The department establishes migratory game bird hunting seasons based on a federal framework that is presented to Wisconsin by the US Fish & Wildlife Service. Because of the federal guidelines, Wisconsin's regulations are similar to those in neighboring states.

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