



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LANSING



DANIEL EICHINGER
DIRECTOR

SUBMITTED: February 18, 2020
RESUBMITTED: March 24, 2020

APPROVED
_____, 20____
MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

(ASSISTANT TO THE COMMISSION)

MEMORANDUM TO THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

Subject: Migratory Game Bird Hunting Seasons
Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 4 of 2020

Authority:

The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, authorizes the Director and the Commission to issue orders to manage wild animals in this state.

Discussion and Background:

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) annually prescribes migratory bird hunting season frameworks, or outer limits, for dates and times when hunting may occur and the maximum number of birds that may be taken and possessed. Federal frameworks are negotiated with states via the Flyway Councils. The approach to set annual migratory bird hunting seasons and bag limits relies on biological data from the previous year to set hunting season dates and project appropriate harvest limits for each game species. This is possible because the USFWS and the Department have decades of data from population surveys, banding, and harvest surveys for many migratory game bird species that is used to develop models and harvest strategies to predict population change and inform harvest management decisions. These frameworks are adjusted to influence harvest regulations based on the previous year's monitoring information and regulatory decisions. This process gives biologists time to analyze survey data from the USFWS's regulatory decisions and allows time for public comment.

The Department's recommendations for the 2020-21 migratory bird seasons are based on the 2019 State and Federal assessments of waterfowl population status and habitat conditions, and public input including discussion with the Citizens Waterfowl Advisory Committee (CWAC) at their February 1, 2020 meeting.

Biological

Since 1991, Michigan has collaborated with other states, the USFWS, and Canadian agencies in conducting aerial surveys of breeding ducks and geese. Spring mallard population estimates from Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin are included in estimates of mid-continent mallard abundance. These population estimates are needed for establishing annual waterfowl hunting

season frameworks for the Mississippi, Central, and Pacific Flyways. The spring 2019 breeding waterfowl survey was conducted late April to mid-May. The 2019 estimate of total ducks was 333,910, which was not statistically different from the 2018 estimate. The 2019 estimate for mallards was 179,170 mallards, which was also not statistically different from the 2018 estimate. The 2019 statewide wetland count was 20 percent above the 2018 count. The 2019 estimate for Canada geese was 244,208, which was statistically similar to the 2018 estimate.

Flyway Councils are advised by flyway technical committees consisting of state and provincial biologists. These technical committees evaluate species and population status, harvest, and hunter-participation data during the development of the Flyway Council recommendations. The USFWS then evaluates the Flyway Councils' recommendations, considering species status and biology, cumulative effects of regulations, and existing regulatory policy. Likewise, the Department's Waterfowl Workgroup and the CWAC review information on species status and habitat conditions when developing recommendations for waterfowl hunting seasons.

Social

The Department develops recommendations based on Waterfowl Workgroup discussions with the CWAC. The CWAC met on February 1 to make recommendations for the 2020-21 waterfowl seasons. The Department's recommendations are the same as those made by the CWAC with one exception (see Duck Bag Limits below).

The Department's Waterfowl Workgroup established goals for duck hunting seasons that include maintaining Michigan's waterfowl hunting heritage by increasing hunter recruitment and retention, simplifying regulations with maximum hunting opportunity, and ensuring that seasons encompass maximum duck numbers and abundant species.

Biannually, the Department mails Waterfowl Harvest Surveys to a sample of waterfowl hunters to estimate hunting activity and determine opinions and satisfaction with hunting regulations. The Department last conducted the Waterfowl Harvest Survey after the 2018 waterfowl hunting season.

Economic

Businesses located in communities near well-known waterfowl hunting areas receive economic benefits from waterfowl hunting trips.

Youth Waterfowl Season

The Department recommends that the Federal youth waterfowl hunting season remain the third weekend in September (September 19 and 20, 2020). These dates are consistent with 2019, avoid overlap with the Liberty Hunt, and ensures duck abundance during the youth hunting days.

Veterans and Active-Duty U.S. Military Personnel Waterfowl Hunting Days

A new opportunity is available this year for veterans and active-duty U.S. military personnel. States may designate two days as “Veterans and Active Military Personnel Waterfowl Hunting Days” in addition to regular duck seasons. The Department and the CWAC recommend holding this hunt concurrently with the Youth Waterfowl Season (September 19-20). Waterfowl regulations and bag limits set for the Youth Waterfowl Season will apply to the Veterans and Active-Duty U.S. Military Personnel Waterfowl Hunting Days. Participating veterans and active-duty U.S. military personnel are required to possess documentation of verification afield and must present upon request of a Michigan conservation officer, tribal conservation officer, or any law enforcement officer.

Holding this hunt concurrently with the Youth Waterfowl Season will provide simplified regulations and better enforcement.

Issues Pros and Cons

Providing this opportunity during the Youth Waterfowl Season will allow for our veterans and active-duty U.S. military personnel to hunt with their kids. It will provide these hunters the opportunity to hunt waterfowl without competition from other hunters and allow Michigan’s waterfowl resources to be more accessible.

Biological

The Department does not expect a biological impact.

Social

According to the 2016 Michigan Waterfowl Harvest Report, approximately 2,291 youth hunters participated in the two-day Youth Waterfowl Season.

Over the last five years, an average of approximately 3,000 active-duty U.S. military personnel or veterans with a disability purchased a waterfowl license.

Allowing a relatively small number of hunters to participate during this hunt is unlikely to create any issues with current youth hunters. In addition, it provides another weekend of public and private land hunting for these individuals.

Economic

The Department does not expect an economic impact.

Early Teal Season

The Department completed three years of evaluation of an experimental early teal season in 2014-2016 and as a result, the USFWS determined that Michigan can sustain an early teal season. An early teal season is now operationalized for teal production states including Michigan and the Department is recommending:

- September 1-16 statewide

- Daily bag limit of six teal and a possession limit of 18, which is three times the daily limit
- Hunting hours begin at sunrise

The Department and the CWAC recommend opening the early teal season as early as possible due to the greatest abundance of teal in Michigan during that time. Blue-winged teal are some of the earliest duck species to migrate each fall. Available information on teal migration in Michigan indicates that the peak of fall blue-winged teal migration is late August – early September. The Department and CWAC recommend utilizing the entire 16 days allowed under Federal Frameworks.

To improve waterfowl identification, the Department recommends no change to hunting hours (i.e., early teal season begin at sunrise rather than the usual half hour before sunrise for migratory bird hunting hours). Identifying duck species is difficult under low light conditions. The Canada goose season dates overlap the proposed teal season and goose hunting hours begin one half hour before sunrise. Very few (if any) enforcement issues have occurred related to these different opening hours, yet the Wildlife Division and Law Enforcement Division will continue to work together to mitigate hunter confusion through public education and communication with hunters while in the field, while providing maximum recreational opportunity.

The Department will continue to educate hunters on the identification of teal and provide information to help guide them to hunting locations where they are likely to encounter teal to ensure a successful teal season.

Duck Seasons

The USFWS offered a 60-day season and six-duck daily limit based on an adaptive harvest management strategy using 2019 prairie pond numbers and mid-continent mallard abundance as a guide to season length and daily duck limit. The Department developed the following duck season dates for 2020 based on feedback from CWAC, analysis of data on hunter opinions, migration timing, and hunter success.

The recommended dates for the 2020 duck season are:

- North Zone: September 26 to November 22 and November 28 to November 29
- Middle Zone: October 3 to November 29 and December 12 to December 13
- South Zone: October 10 to December 6 and December 26 to December 27

Duck Bag Limits

The daily bag limit for ducks will be six ducks with the following species-specific restrictions: four mallards (no more than two hens), three wood ducks, two black ducks, two redheads, two canvasbacks, two scaup for 45-days and one scaup for 15-days, and one northern pintail. In addition to the duck limit, hunters may take five mergansers, only two of which may be a hooded merganser. The possession limit is three times the daily limit for ducks, coots, and mergansers. The only change in duck bag limits from 2019 is that scaup have decreased from three to a hybrid bag limit of two for 45 days and one for 15 days.

Scaup harvest restrictions are implemented under a Scaup Harvest Strategy which is based on the current scaup population model and an objective to achieve 95 percent of the maximum, long-term cumulative harvest. Based on a moderate regulatory alternative selected for the 2019 hunting season and the 2019 survey results of 3.59 million scaup, the optimal regulatory choice for the 2020 hunting season for all four Flyways is the restrictive regulatory alternative. This restrictive framework allows for a 60-day season with a limit of two birds for 45 days and one bird for 15 days. The 45 and 15-day segments must be consecutive hunting days.

Based on fall diving duck abundance measures from Lake St. Clair and western Lake Erie as well as an analysis of scaup harvest in Michigan, the Department recommends the following dates for the hybrid scaup bag limits which reflect a two-bird limit for the first 45 days of the season in the North and Middle Zones and a one-bird limit for the first 16 days of the season in the South Zone (an additional day of a one-bird limit is included in the South Zone so that a bag limit change doesn't occur during a weekend). We believe that this will maximize scaup harvest opportunity in each zone:

- North Zone: September 26 to November 9 (two bird limit), November 10 to November 22 (one-bird limit), and November 28 to November 29 (one bird limit)
- Middle Zone: October 3 to November 16 (two bird limit), November 17 to November 29 (one bird limit) and December 12 to December 13 (one bird limit)
- South Zone: October 10 to October 25 (one bird limit), October 26 to December 6 (two bird limit), and December 26 to December 27 (two bird limit)

At their February 1 meeting, the CWAC recommended the following dates for the hybrid scaup bag limits which reflects a two-bird limit for the first 45 days of the season and a one-bird limit for the remaining 15 days for all zones:

- North Zone: September 26 to November 9 (two bird limit), November 10 to November 22 (one bird limit), and November 28 to November 29 (one bird limit)
- Middle Zone: October 3 to November 16 (two bird limit), November 17 to November 29 (one bird limit) and December 12 to December 13 (one bird limit)
- South Zone: October 10 to November 23 (two bird limit), November 24 to December 6 (one bird limit), and December 26 to December 27 (one bird limit)

Goose Seasons

The Department recommends goose season dates based on Canada goose population goals, feedback from the CWAC, and surveys of waterfowl hunters. Waterfowl hunters expressed their desire for additional opportunities to hunt ducks and geese on the same days. The recommended season dates provide for overlap of goose and duck seasons.

Federal frameworks for the Mississippi Flyway allow for a 107-day Canada goose season with a daily bag limit of five from September 1-30 and three from October 1-February 15, 2021. The possession limit is three times the daily limit for geese.

While few other goose species are harvested in Michigan, the Department makes recommendations that allow goose hunters to take these species if they have the opportunity. The recommended dates for the season for white, blue, and Ross' geese, white-fronted geese, and

brant are the same as the Canada goose seasons in each respective zone and Goose Management Unit (GMU). The daily bag limits for white, blue, and Ross' geese is 20. To maximize opportunity, the Department is again recommending a dark goose aggregate daily bag limit for Canada geese, white-fronted geese, and brant of five, only one of which can be a brant from September 1-30, only three of which can be Canada geese, and one can be a brant beginning October 1.

The 2019 Michigan Canada goose population estimate was 244,208, which was not statistically different from 2018. The last several years' estimates have been near the upper goal range of 175,000-225,000. Federal frameworks for Canada geese in the Mississippi Flyway are liberal and allow for 107 days of hunting, the maximum allowed under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The recommended season dates and bag limits take advantage of the most days and highest bag limits possible. September dates of the Canada goose season are timed so that resident geese are most susceptible to harvest. This is a good tool to maintain Michigan's Canada goose population at or near the goal range, which will help address human-goose conflicts.

The Department and the CWAC recommend the following dates and daily bag limits for Canada goose seasons:

- North Zone regular season: September 1 to September 30 (five bird daily bag limit) and October 1 to December 16 (three bird daily bag limit)
- Middle Zone: September 1 to September 30 (five bird daily bag limit) and October 1 to December 16 (three bird daily bag limit)
- South Zone: September 1 to September 30 (five bird daily bag limit), October 10 to December 6 (three bird daily bag limit), December 26 to December 27 (three bird daily bag limit), and January 23 to February 8, 2021 (three bird daily bag limit)
- Allegan Goose Management Unit: September 1 to September 30 (five bird daily bag limit), November 7 to November 14 (three bird daily bag limit), November 26 to December 6 (three bird daily bag limit), and December 19 to February 14, 2021 (three bird daily bag limit)
- Muskegon County Wastewater Goose Management Unit: October 17 to December 22 (three bird daily bag limit)

Waterfowl Hunting Zones

States are allowed to make changes to duck season zones and season splits every five years and these changes conform to one of several options offered by USFWS. There is currently an open season for changes for the 2021-2025 hunting seasons. Throughout 2019, the Department worked with the CWAC to identify proposals for zone changes. In addition to discussions with the CWAC, the Department solicited waterfowl hunter input including an internet survey to assess waterfowl hunters' preferences for zones and zone boundaries. Based on this information, the Department and the CWAC are recommending a zone boundary change between the Middle and South Zones that would move Saginaw Bay into the Middle Zone. The Saginaw Bay region can ice up earlier than other areas in the current South Zone, and managed waterfowl hunting areas on Saginaw Bay have lost up to 14 days of hunting opportunity due to freeze up in recent years. Moving Saginaw Bay to the Middle Zone would potentially provide some earlier hunting

opportunity for earlier migrating ducks and potentially more ice-free days for hunting. Following is the recommended Middle Zone description:

- Middle Zone: “Waterfowl hunting middle zone” or “middle zone” means that area of the Lower Peninsula located north of a line beginning at the Michigan- Wisconsin boundary line in Lake Michigan, directly due west of the mouth of Stoney creek in section 31, T14N R18W, Oceana county, then proceed easterly and southerly along the centerline of Stoney creek to its intersection with Scenic drive, southerly on Scenic drive to Stoney lake road in section 5, T13N R18W, Oceana county, easterly on Stoney lake road then both west and east Garfield roads (name change only; not an intersection) then crossing highway US-31 to state highway M-20 (north of the town of New Era; also locally named Hayes road) in section 33, T14N R17W, Oceana county, easterly on M-20 through Oceana, Newaygo, Mecosta, Isabella, and Midland counties to highway US-10 business route in the city of Midland, easterly on US-10-BR to highway US-10 at the Bay county line, easterly on US-10 then crossing US-75 to state highway M-25 (west of the town of Bay City), easterly along M-25 into Tuscola county then northeasterly and easterly on M-25 through Tuscola county into Huron county, turning southeasterly on M-25 (near the town of Huron city; also locally named north Shore road) to the centerline of Willow creek in section 4, T18N R14E, Huron county, then northerly along the centerline of Willow creek to the mouth of Willow creek into Lake Huron, then directly due east along a line from the mouth of Willow Creek heading east into Lake Huron to a point due east and on the Michigan/USA-Canadian border.

Falconry

For the falconry season, the recommended dates for the additional days outside the gun hunting seasons for ducks, mergansers, coots, and moorhens are December 28, 2020 to January 10, 2021 and February 24 to March 10, 2021. The daily and possession limits remain unchanged. The Department continues to discuss falconry dates with the Michigan Hawking Club.

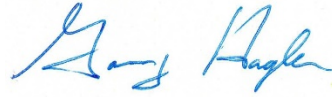
Relevant Divisions have contributed to the preparation of this order. This order was submitted for information on March 19, 2020, at the Natural Resources Commission meeting. This item

DE___ NRC Chair___

appeared on the Department's February calendar and may be eligible for approval on April 16, 2020.



Daniel Kennedy, Acting Chief
Wildlife Division



Gary Hagler, Chief
Law Enforcement Division



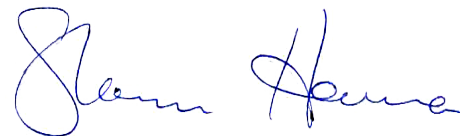
Deb Begalle, Chief
Forest Resources Division



Ronald A. Olson, Chief
Parks and Recreation Division



James Dexter, Chief
Fisheries Division



Shannon Hanna
Natural Resources Deputy

I have analyzed and discussed these recommendations with staff and concur as to matters over which the Director has authority.

Daniel Eichinger, Director

Date

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ORDER

Amendment No. 4 of 2020

By authority conferred on the Natural Resources Commission and the Director of the Department of Natural Resources by sections 40107 and 40113a of 1994 PA 451, MCL 324.40107 and 324.40113a, it is ordered that effective April 17, 2020, the following section(s) of the Wildlife Conservation Order shall read as follows:

1.2 Definitions.

Sec. 1.2 (1) Definitions in part 3 of 1994 PA 451, as amended, MCL 324.301; part 401, wildlife conservation, 1994 PA 451, as amended, MCL 324.40101 to 324.40119; and part 435, hunting and fishing licenses, 1994 PA 451, as amended, MCL 324.43501 to 324.43561, and in this order shall have the same meanings in this order. Additional definitions for terms used in this order are as defined in this section.

(2) “Advanced illness” means a medical or surgical condition with significant functional impairment that is not reversible by curative therapies and that is anticipated to progress toward death despite attempts at curative therapies or modulation, the time course of which may or may not be determinable through medical prognostication.

(3) “Antlered deer” means a deer having at least 1 antler that extends 3 inches or more above the skull. For the purposes of determining if an antler extends 3 or more inches above the skull, the measurement shall be taken on the longest antler beginning at the line where the antler and pedicel join, along the back of the antler, following the curve, if any, to the tip of the longest antler point. For the purposes of this section, “pedicel” means the bone of the skull to which the antler is attached.

(4) “Antlerless deer” means a deer without antlers or a deer with antlers where the longest antler extends less than 3 inches above the skull.

(5) “CWD management zone” means an area defined in chapter XII of this order subject to Michigan’s surveillance and response plan for chronic wasting disease.

(6) “Core CWD area” means an area defined in chapter XII for the control and surveillance of chronic wasting disease.

(7) “Deer and elk feeding” shall have the same meaning as defined by section 40102 of 1994 PA 451, MCL 324.40102.

(8) “Feed” shall have the same meaning as defined by section 40102 of 1994 PA 451, MCL 324.40102.

(9) “Game” means any animal designated as game under the authority of section 40110 of 1994 PA 451, as amended, MCL 324.40110, and any of the following animals: badger, bear, beaver, bobcat, brant, coot, coyote, crow, deer, duck, elk, fisher, Florida gallinule, fox, geese, hare, Hungarian partridge, marten, mink, moose, muskrat, opossum, otter, pheasant, quail, rabbit, raccoon, ruffed grouse, sharptailed grouse, skunk, snipe, sora rail, squirrel, Virginia rail, weasel, wild turkey, wolf, woodchuck, and woodcock. “Game” does not include privately owned cervidae species located on a cervidae livestock facility registered under 2000 PA 190, MCL 287.951 to 287.969.

(10) “Migratory game bird” means a bird as defined by 50 C.F.R. §20.11 (1988).

(11) “Modified bow” means a bow, other than a crossbow, that has been physically altered so that the bow may be held, aimed, and shot with one arm.

(12) “New world camelids” means animals belonging to the genus llama and vicuna of the family camelidae of the order artiodactyla including, but not limited to, the llama, alpaca, vicuna, and guanaco.

(13) “Physical therapist” means the same as defined in article 15 of the public health code, 1978 PA 368, MCL 333.17801.

(14) “Physician” the same as defined in article 15 of the public health code, 1978 PA 368, MCL 333.17001.

(15) “Raptor” means any bird species of the orders strigiformes, accipitriformes, and falconiformes.

(16) “Residence” shall have the same meaning as defined by section 40103 of 1994 PA 451, MCL 324.40103.

(17) “Limited firearms deer zone” means that area south of a line beginning at a point on the Wisconsin-Michigan boundaryline directly west of the west end of highway M-46; then east to M-46 and east along M-46 to its junction with freeway US-131; then south along freeway US-131 to M-57; then east along M-57 to its intersection with Montcalm road on the Kent-Montcalm county line; then south along that county line and the Ionia-Kent county line to its intersection with M-44; then east along M-44 to its intersection with M-66; then north along M-66 to its intersection with M-57; then east along M-57 to its intersection with M-52; then north along M-52 to its intersection with M-46; then east along M-46 to its intersection with M-47; then north along M-47 to its junction with US-10; then east along US-10 to its junction with I-75; then north along I-75 and US-23 to its junction with beaver road, Kawkawlin township, Bay county; then east along beaver road to Saginaw bay; then north 50 degrees east to the international boundary with Canada.

(18) “Waterfowl hunting north zone” or “north zone” means all of the Upper Peninsula.

(19) “Waterfowl hunting middle zone” or “middle zone” means that area of the Lower Peninsula north of a line beginning at the Michigan-Wisconsin boundary line in Lake Michigan, due west of the mouth of Stoney creek in section 31, T14N R18W, Oceana county, then easterly and southerly along the south shore of Stoney creek to Scenic drive, easterly and southerly on Scenic drive to Stoney lake road in section 5, T13N R18W, Oceana county, easterly on Stoney lake and Garfield roads to highway M-20 (Hayes road) in section 33, T14N R17W, Oceana county, easterly on highway M-20 through Oceana, Newaygo, Mecosta, Isabella, and Midland counties to highway US-10 business route in the city of Midland, easterly on highway US-10 business route to highway US-10 at the Bay county line, easterly on highway US-10 to highway I-75/US-23, northerly on highway I-75/US-23 to the highway US-23 exit at Standish, easterly on highway US-23 to the center line of the Au Gres river, southerly along the center line of the Au Gres river to Saginaw bay of Lake Huron, and from that point on a line directly east 10 miles into Saginaw bay, and from that point on a line directly northeast to the international boundary with Canada in Lake Huron.

(a) Effective for the start of the 2021 waterfowl hunting season, “Waterfowl hunting middle zone” or “middle zone” means that area of the Lower Peninsula located north of a line beginning at the Michigan-Wisconsin boundary line in Lake Michigan, directly due west of the mouth of Stoney creek in section 31, T14N R18W, Oceana county, then proceed easterly and southerly along the centerline of Stoney creek to its intersection with Scenic drive, southerly on Scenic drive to Stoney lake road in section 5, T13N R18W, Oceana county, easterly on Stoney lake road then both west and east Garfield roads (name change only; not an intersection) then crossing highway US-31 to state highway M-20 (north of the town of New Era; also locally named Hayes road) in section 33, T14N R17W, Oceana county, easterly on M-20 through Oceana, Newaygo, Mecosta, Isabella, and Midland counties to highway US-10 business route in the city of Midland, easterly on US-10-BR to highway US-10 at the Bay county line, easterly on US-10 then crossing US-75 to state highway M-25 (west of the town of Bay City), easterly along M-25 into Tuscola county then northeasterly and easterly on M-25 through Tuscola county into Huron county, turning southeasterly on M-25 (near the town of Huron city; also locally named north Shore road) to the centerline of Willow creek in section 4, T18N R14E, Huron county, then northerly along the centerline of Willow creek to the mouth of Willow creek into Lake Huron, then directly due east along a line from the mouth of Willow Creek heading east into Lake Huron to a point due east and on the Michigan/USA-Canadian border.

(20) “Waterfowl hunting south zone” or “south zone” means all of that area of the Lower Peninsula south of the line described in middle zone.

(21) “Zone 1” means all of the Upper Peninsula.

(22) “Zone 2” means all of that part of the Lower Peninsula north of a line beginning at the Michigan-Wisconsin boundary line due west of the Lake Michigan shoreline which is north of Muskegon lake and due west of the western terminus of memorial drive at Scenic drive in Muskegon county, then easterly to said western terminus of memorial drive at Scenic drive, easterly on memorial drive to Ruddiman drive, northeasterly on Ruddiman drive to lake avenue, northeasterly on lake avenue to highway M-120 (also known as Holton road) in North Muskegon,

northeasterly and then northerly on highway M-120 to highway M-20, easterly on highway M-20 to highway business route US-10 in the city of Midland, easterly on combined highway M-20 and highway business route US-10 to highway US-10 at the Midland-Bay county line, easterly on highway US-10 to Garfield road in Bay county, northerly on Garfield road to Pinconning road, easterly on Pinconning road to seven mile road, northerly on seven mile road to the Bay-Arenac county line (where seven mile road changes name to Lincoln school road), northerly on Lincoln school road (also known as county road 25) in Arenac county to highway M-61, easterly on highway M-61 to highway US-23, northeasterly then easterly on highway US-23 to the center line of the Au Gres river, southernly along the center line of the Au Gres river to Saginaw bay of Lake Huron, easterly 90° east for 7 miles into Saginaw bay, then northerly 78° east (dividing Arenac county islands from Huron county islands) to the international boundary line between the United States and the dominion of Canada.

(23) “Zone 3” means all that part of the Lower Peninsula south of the line described in zone 2.

(24) “Skull cap” means any part of the skull that includes the pedicel and the antlers originating from the frontal bones, that has been removed from the rest of the skull of the animal.

(25) “Core CWD surveillance area” means an area defined in chapter XII for the surveillance of chronic wasting disease.

3.415 Migratory birds open seasons, possession limit defined, exceptions.

Sec. 3.415. The migratory bird possession limit shall be three times the daily limit. The migratory bird hunting open seasons and exceptions are as shown in table 10:

**TABLE 10
MIGRATORY BIRD OPEN SEASONS**

Season and Species	Zone or Management Unit	Open Season
Ducks (regular season)	North Zone	September 26 to November 22 and November 28 to November 29
	Middle Zone	October 3 to November 29 and December 12 to December 13
	South Zone	October 10 to December 6 and December 26 to December 27
Merganser		Same dates as ducks in the respective zones
Coots		Same dates as ducks in the respective zones
Common Moorhens (Gallinules)	Statewide	September 1 to November 9
Canada Goose, White-fronted Goose, Brant, Snow Goose, and Ross’ Goose	North Zone	September 1 to December 16
	Middle Zone	September 1 to December 16
	South Zone, excluding GMUs listed below in the table	September 1 to September 30, October 10 to December 6, December 26 to December 27, and January 23 to February 8, 2021
	Allegan County GMU	September 1 to September 30, November 7 to November 14, November 26 to December 6, and December 19, 2020 to February 14, 2021
	Muskegon County W.W. GMU	October 17 to December 22

3.415c Veterans and active-duty U.S. military personnel waterfowl hunting days, season established, limits defined, requirements, hunting hours, exceptions.

Sec. 3.415c The veterans and active-duty U.S. military personnel waterfowl hunting days shall be 2 consecutive days starting the third Saturday in September and within the guidelines approved by the United States fish and

wildlife service. Except for persons taking Canada goose during the September segment of the Canada goose season in each zone, the following rules shall apply to a person taking ducks, mergansers, Canada goose, coot, or common moorhen (gallinule) on the veterans and active-duty U.S. military personnel waterfowl hunting days:

(1) Participating veterans and active-duty U.S. military personnel shall possess afield documentation verifying that they are an active-duty member of the military or documentation from the US Department of Veterans Affairs verifying that they are a veteran. The documentation must be presented upon request of a Michigan conservation officer, tribal conservation officer, or any law enforcement officer.

(2) Participating veterans and active-duty U.S. military personnel may take duck, merganser, Canada goose, coot, or common moorhen (gallinule) provided the veteran or active military personnel is licensed to take waterfowl as required by part 435, hunting and fishing licensing, of the natural resources and environmental protection act, 1994 PA 451. The daily and possession limit for each species shall be as provided in section 3.416.

(3) The hunting hours shall be one-half hour before sunrise to sunset, local time.

(4) Except as otherwise specifically provided in this section, all regulations of state law and this order regarding the taking, possession, transportation, and storage of waterfowl, shall apply during the veterans and active-duty U.S. military personnel waterfowl hunt.

3.416 Migratory game birds; daily limit.

Sec. 3.416. The daily limit of migratory game birds for the seasons specified in section 3.415 shall be as follows:

(1) Ducks, daily limit. The daily limit shall be 6 ducks of which no more than 4 may be mallards, no more than 2 may be a hen mallard, no more than 2 may be black ducks, no more than 3 may be wood ducks, no more than 1 may be a pintail, no more than 2 may be redheads, and no more than 2 may be canvasbacks.

(a) As part of the total daily limit for ducks as described in section (1), the daily limit for scaup for the zones and dates specified shall be as follows:

Zone or Management Unit	Dates	Daily Limit
North Zone	September 26 to November 9	No more than 2 scaup
	November 10 to November 22 and November 28 to November 29	No more than 1 scaup
Middle Zone	October 3 to November 16	No more than 2 scaup
	November 17 to November 29 and December 12 to December 13	No more than 1 scaup
South Zone	October 10 to October 25	No more than 1 scaup
	October 26 to December 6 and December 26 to December 27	No more than 2 scaup

(2) Merganser, daily limit. The merganser daily limit shall be 5 mergansers of which no more than 2 may be a hooded merganser.

(3) Dark geese (Canada, white-fronted and Brant), north, middle, and south zones, including GMUs, daily limit. During September, in the north, middle, and south zones as described in sections 1.7, 1.8, and 1.9 of this order, respectively, and all GMUs as described in sections 12.702 and 12.703 the daily limit of dark geese shall be 5, only 1 of which can be a Brant. After September 30, the daily limit for dark geese shall be 5, only 3 of which can be Canada geese and 1 of which can be a Brant.

(4) Light geese (snow, blue and Ross), daily limit. The daily limit on light geese (snow, blue, and Ross) shall be 20.

(5) Coot, daily limit. The daily limit of coot shall be 15.

(6) Common moorhen (gallinule), daily limit. The daily limit of moorhen shall be 1.

3.422 Migratory birds, falconry, open seasons; daily limit, possession limit.

Sec. 3.422. (1) The open season for taking common snipe (jacksnipe), woodcock, and Virginia and Sora rails by falconry shall be the same dates as the firearm seasons in the respective zones for these species as described in sections 3.415 and 3.420.

(2) The open season for taking geese shall be the same dates as the firearm seasons in the respective zones and goose management units.

(3) The open season for taking duck, merganser, coot and common moorhen (gallinule) shall be the same dates as the firearm seasons in the respective zones for these species, plus the season shall be open statewide December 28, 2020 to January 10, 2021 and February 24 to March 10, 2021.

(4) The daily limit for migratory game birds taken by falconry shall be 3 birds combined, and the possession limit shall be 9 birds combined.

Issued on this 16th day of April, 2020.

Approved as to matters over which the Natural Resources Commission has authority.

_____, Chair
Natural Resources Commission

Approved as to matters over which the Director has authority.

Daniel Eichinger
Director