

**FWP proposal to be amended:** 2024 Migratory Bird Seasons

**Commissioner:** Brian Cebull

**Date Received by Commission:** April 10, 2024

**Proposed Amendment:** I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission adopt the following amendment to the proposed 2024 Migratory Bird Regulations:

Change the proposed season dates in Zone 2 of the Central Flyway for 2024 to:

- Ducks: Sep 28, 2024 – Oct 6, 2024, Oct 26, 2024 – Jan 21, 2025
- Dark Geese: Sep 28, 2024 – Oct 6, 2024, Oct 26, 2024 – Jan 31, 2025
- Youth Ducks/Geese: Sep 21 – 22, 2024
- Falconry Ducks: Sep 18, 2024 – Oct 6, 2024, Oct 26, 2024 – Jan 21, 2025

**Requested by FWP:** No

**Rationale and Background:** The proposed amendment moves the split season date 1 week later in Zone 2 of the Central Flyway for both ducks and dark geese. This proposal would increase waterfowl hunting opportunities in Zone 2 by adjusting the season dates to account for the later waterfowl migration that has been observed in recent seasons but also minimizes impacts on those who already have plans to waterfowl hunt during October. The proposed dates fall within the framework set by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

**Department response:**

The department anticipates no adverse biological effects on waterfowl populations in Central Flyway Zone 2 as a result of the intended change in this amendment.

However, a couple of clarifications and minor changes are necessary to ensure the amendment aligns with federal frameworks.

The amendment proposes a season for geese that is two days longer than that which could be adopted within the federal frameworks. The department would suggest that the amended dates for the Central Flyway Zone 2 geese season end on January 29, 2025. Other dates could be adjusted (early split could end on October 4, late split could begin on October 28), but other options would result in the loss of a hunting weekend and create a situation in which a duck season would be open when a goose season would not be. Without an amendment to season dates, the proposed season would not be consistent with the federal frameworks for goose seasons.

For clarity, the season date change would apply to all geese seasons within Central Flyway Zone 2, not only the dark geese seasons.

The falconry geese season within Central Flyway Zone 2 would need to be amended to mirror changes in the geese season or otherwise shortened to avoid overcommitting days in the federal season setting frameworks. The falconry geese season could read: Falconry Geese: Sep 28, 2024 – Oct 6, 2024, Oct 26, 2024 – Jan 29, 2025.