



*Lower Sherman Island
Duck Hunters Association*

September 7, 2016

Mr. Jeff Gould, Pacific Flyway Council Chair
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
PO Box 25, Boise, ID 83707

RE: Duck Season Framework Closing Date Modification Recommendation

Dear Mr. Gould:

It has come to our attention that there is a recommendation that was recently adopted by the Mississippi Flyway Council that would allow states to keep their regular duck seasons open through January 31st. This represents a very minor change as the current Federal framework allows for closing dates to be the Sunday closest to January 31st.

Our organizations, which collectively represent tens of thousands of duck hunters throughout California, support this regulatory proposal and request that the Pacific Flyway Council endorse it for the following reasons:

- It provides for greater flexibility for states to tailor their waterfowl hunting seasons according to local hunters' needs. Most importantly, the proposal is voluntary. States could elect to hunt ducks all the way to January 31st, but would not be required to do so

and could still end their duck hunting season on the last Sunday in January (as provided in current regulations).

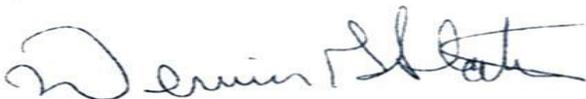
- In California, waterfowl hunting averages in most zones are generally better late in the season, so the proposal could enhance hunter opportunity here. For example, in the last few years during the last week of the season (particularly 2014/15) many California waterfowl refuges saw the number of waterfowl taken per hunter exceed 3-4 birds, which was considerably higher than the season-long average.
- It does not increase the total number of hunting days allowed, and should not adversely affect duck populations.
- It would still allow the post-season youth hunts to occur in February, and states would maintain considerable ability to schedule those hunts according to their needs.
- It could incentivize private duck clubs, including those operated as managed wetlands and post-harvest flooded agricultural fields (e.g. rice, corn), to maintain flooded habitat on their property for a longer duration of time.
- It would arguably help simplify regulations by creating a date certain ending to the regular duck season. While in many years this would require ending the season on a non-Sunday, please note that in California this already occurs in one of our zones (e.g. NE Zone) and that it still allows states to start duck season on a Saturday.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



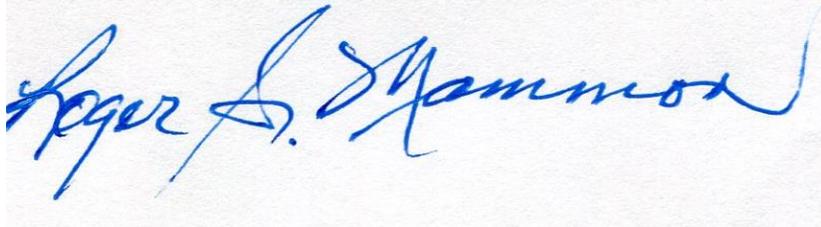
Mark Hennelly, California Waterfowl Association



Dennis Slater, Tulare Basin Wetlands Association

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Devney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

John Devney, Delta Waterfowl

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Roger S. Mammon". The signature is cursive and written on a light-colored, textured background.

Roger Mammon, Lower Sherman Island Duck Hunters Association

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ric Ortega". The signature is cursive and features a large, stylized "R" and "O".

Ric Ortega, Grassland Water District

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maddy Folk". The signature is cursive and written on a light-colored background.

Maddy Folk, The Black Brant Group

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Don Kirby". The signature is cursive and written on a light-colored background.

Don Kirby, Cal-Ore Wetlands/Waterfowl Council

cc: Mr. Todd Sanders, Pacific Flyway Council Representative
Ms. Melanie Weaver, California Department of Fish and Wildlife