



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

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March 3, 2020

Melanie Weaver
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Dear Ms. Weaver,

Humboldt County Board of Supervisors would like to suggest a change to the proposed 2020/2021 waterfowl season. Specifically, the Board would like to see a change from the current North Coast Special Management Area goose season (<https://wildlife.ca.gov/Hunting/Waterfowl>) from back-calculating available hunt days from the last day of duck season to the first available hunt day in Oct/Nov to instead, opening the goose season the same day as the balance of the state duck season (3rd Saturday in October) and count the available hunt days forward to end mid-January the following year.

The reasons we suggest this change are twofold: 1) to address comments and concerns the Humboldt County Fish & Game Advisory Commission has heard from hunters and bird enthusiasts who wish to relieve hunting pressure on Large Canada geese in late January when they have begun to pair for breeding and are most-vulnerable to harvest; and 2) to more effectively harvest Aleutian Canada geese on their annual migration to increase hunting opportunities on both public and private lands and to reduce impacts of goose depredation on local agriculture businesses. Aleutian goose population estimates for 2019 were reported in the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's annual population report at 199,000 individuals, approximately 300% of the targeted population size. The last few years Aleutian geese continue to populate both Humboldt and Del Norte Counties mid-October, are in high abundance until mid-December and do not return until after the close of the regular duck and goose season ending in January. So effectively, with this proposed season shift, we would be exchanging approximately two weeks of poor goose hunting in January for two weeks of good goose hunting in the fall. This would increase hunting opportunities in Humboldt and Del Norte, while reducing goose populations and hence reducing depredation occurrences for agriculturists.

The Board of Supervisors greatly appreciate the state and federal partners for all their work returning this population to healthy numbers and encourage your continued support of adaptive management as this species continues to shift its migratory patterns and subsequent depredation impacts and hunting opportunities.

Sincerely,

Estelle Fennel, Chair
Humboldt County Board of Supervisors