

Eastside September Goose Season Canceled

Local News

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Olympia, WA - The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) reminds hunters that there will not be a two-day September season for Canada geese in eastern Washington this year. Instead, the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission shifted those two days of hunting to the October-January season when migrant geese are present in the state. The commission, which sets policy for WDFW, took that action at its April meeting in response to ongoing declines in resident goose production on the east side of the state.

September goose seasons in western Washington were not affected by that action and will proceed as planned.

The September goose season was initiated in several eastside counties in 1996 and expanded to all of eastern Washington in 1997, said Mikal Moore, a WDFW waterfowl specialist.

Those seasons are based on population objectives set by the Pacific Flyway Council (<http://www.pacificflyway.gov/>), composed of representatives from wildlife agencies in each state and province in the western United States, Canada, and Mexico.

In eastern Washington, the index of nest counts for Canada geese in 2005-2007 was 1,935, below the 2,000 threshold allowing the hunting season to continue without modification. If the nest index increases above 2,000 in the future, WDFW will recommend reinstatement of the two-day September season, Moore said.

Meanwhile, a marking effort for Canada geese in eastern Washington may help explain the seven-year decline in goose-nest counts, he said. Hunters and others can help with that effort by reporting information on bands and collars worn by some Canada geese to the U.S. Geological Survey Bird Banding Laboratory at 1-800-327-BAND or online at <http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/BBL/homepage/call800.htm> .