

Agenda Item 12

Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations

Briefing and Public Hearing



Washington Department of
FISH and WILDLIFE

Kyle Spragens

**Waterfowl Section Manager
Game Division, Wildlife Program**

Migratory Bird Hunting Seasons Authorities

- **USFWS Authority: Federal Framework**
 - Earliest opening date
 - Latest closing date
 - Limits
 - Season length
- **State Discretion: WAC within Federal Framework**
 - Can be more restrictive but not more liberal
 - Season timing within outside dates



New Schedule for Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations

Framework Changes

Pacific Flyway Meetings
August - September



USFWS
Service Regulations
Committee
October



State Season Selections
Due in Late April

Non-framework Changes

Commission - March



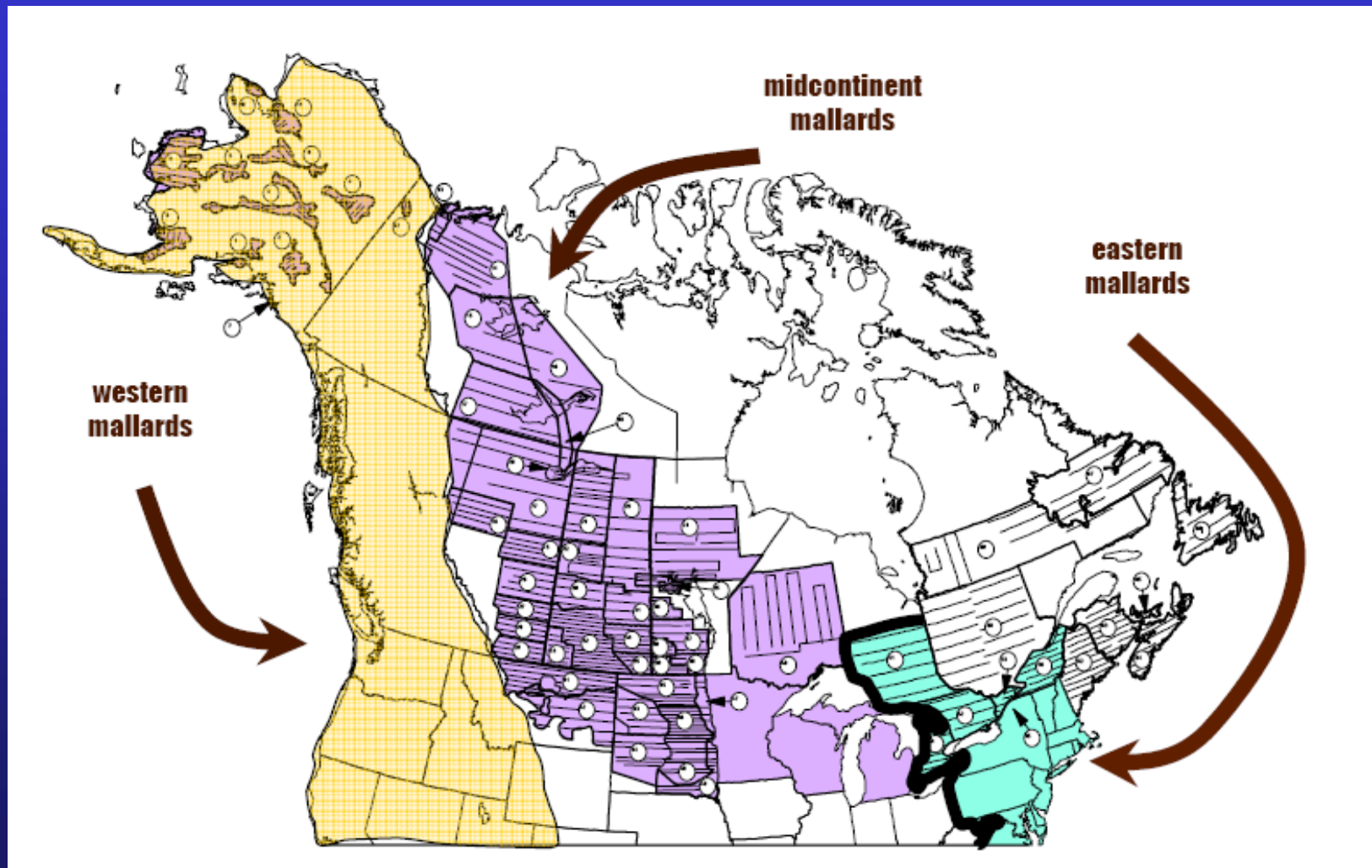
Commission - April



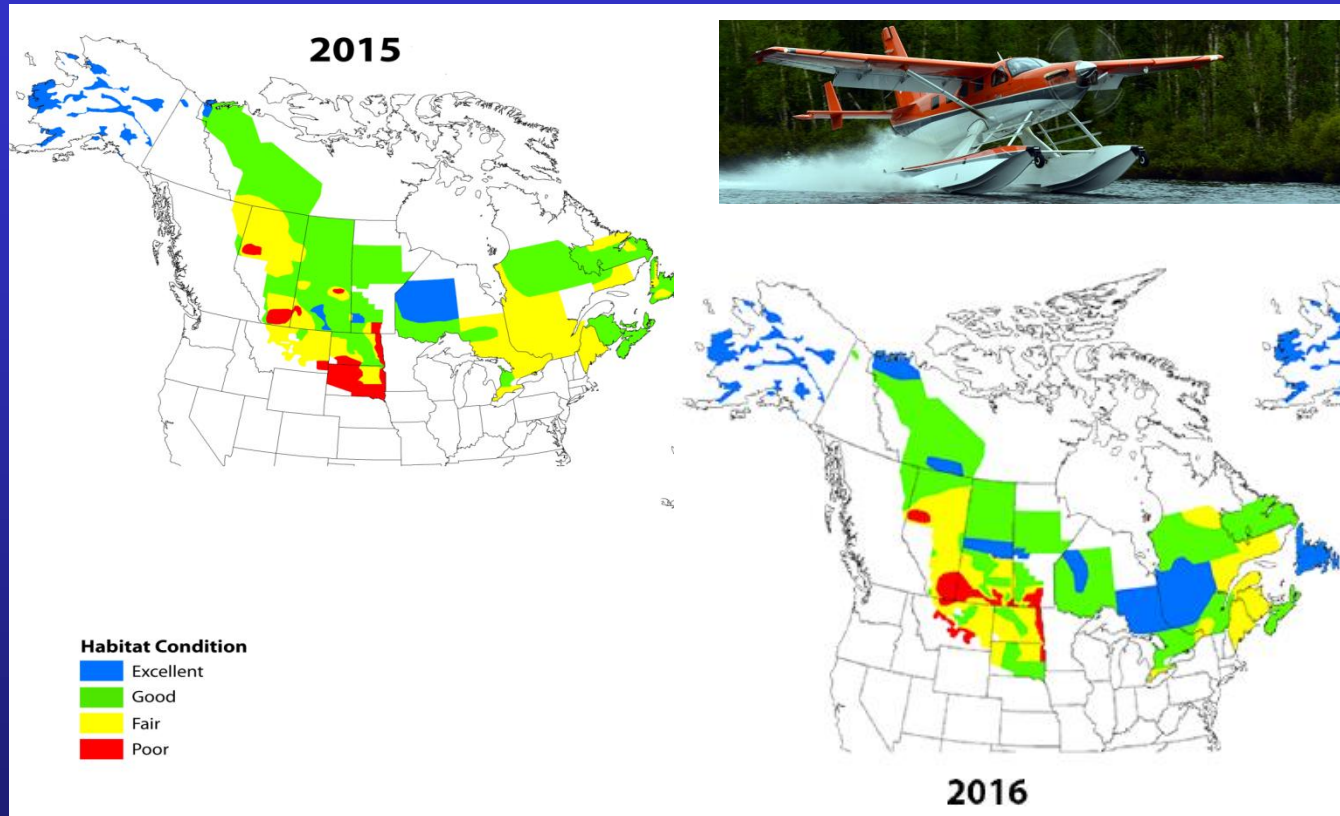
Duck Population Status and Season Proposals



North American Mallard Stocks



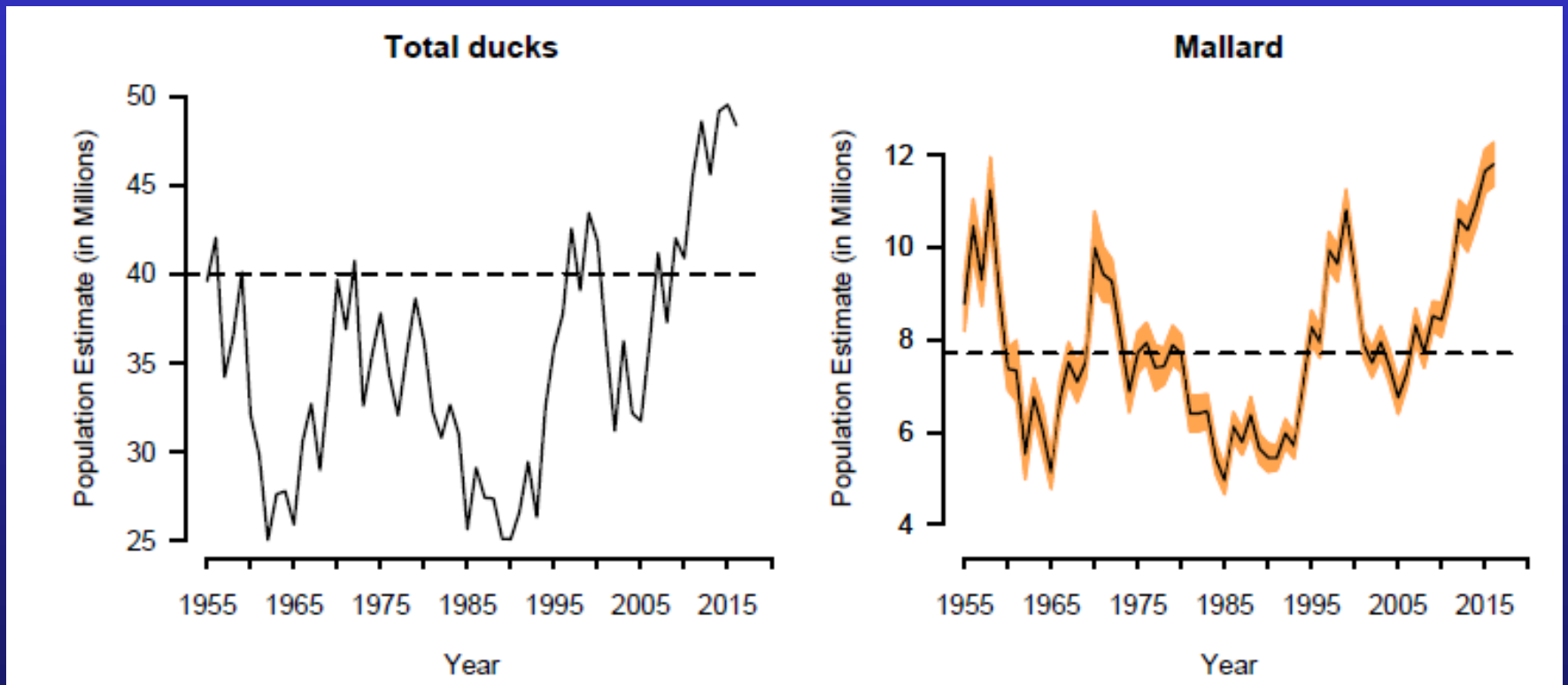
N. American Habitat Conditions



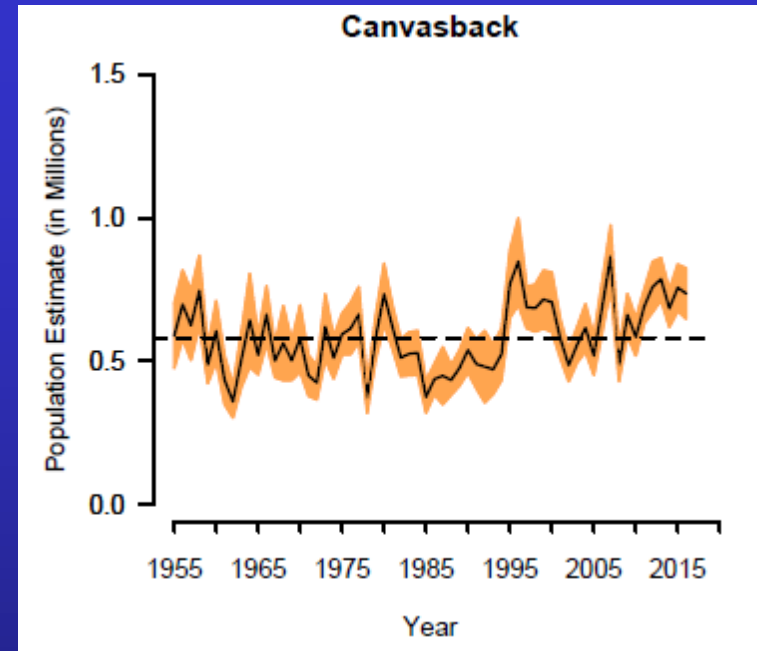
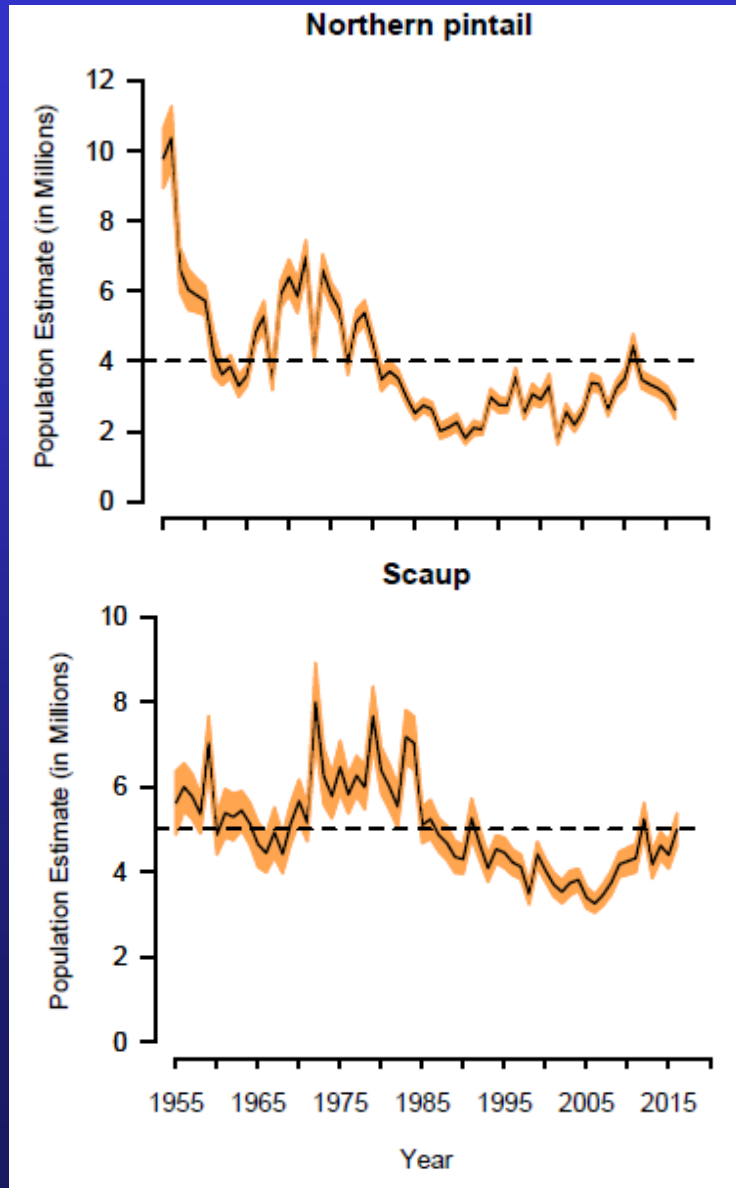
Habitat conditions in 2016 were similar to 2015 (fair-good), except poorer in prairie states and provinces with below-average winter and spring precipitation.

2016 Results

All North American Survey Areas

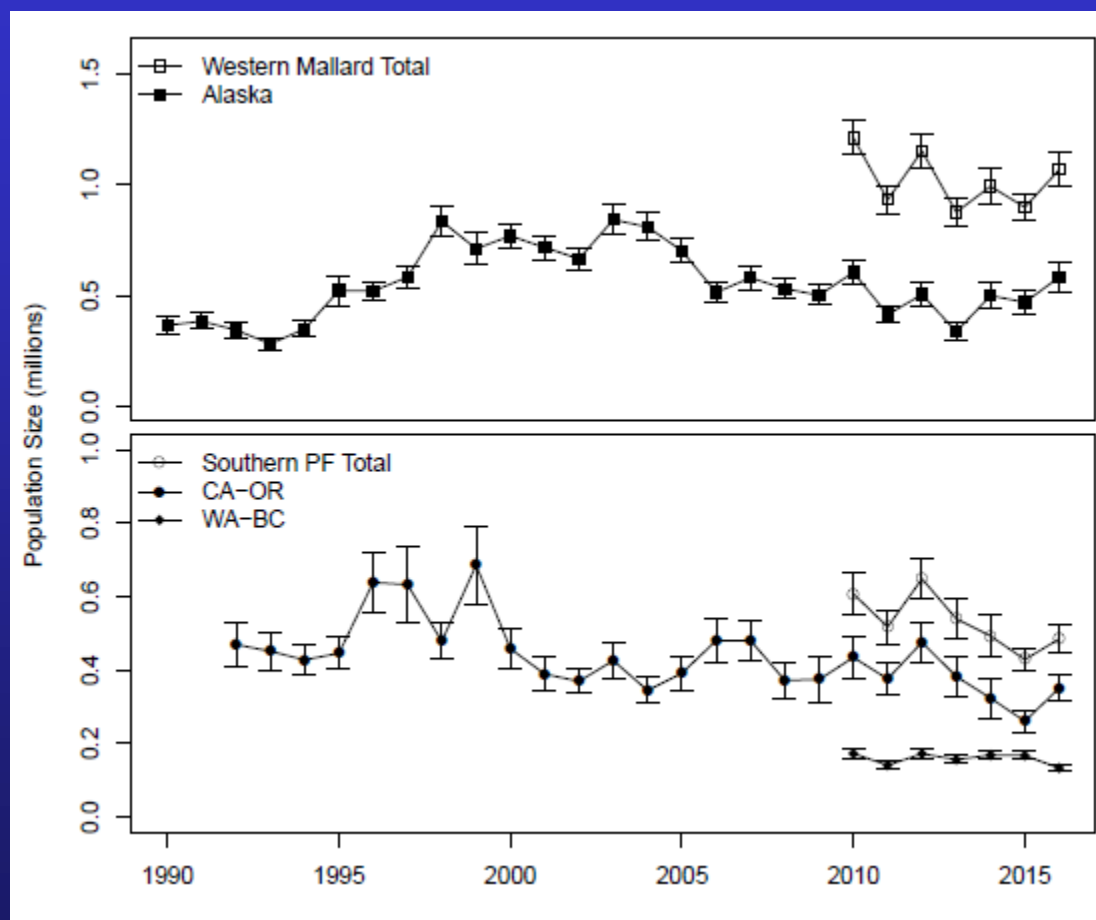


Pintail, Canvasback, Scaup



Independent harvest strategies based on models

2016 Western Mallard Trends



2017-18 Western Mallard Regulatory Prescription

Southern Pacific Flyway BPOP ^b	Alaska BPOP ^c														
	0.05	0.1	0.15	0.2	0.25	0.3	0.35	0.4	0.45	0.5	0.55	0.6	0.65	0.7	≥0.75
0.05	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	R	R	L
0.1	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	R	R	L	L	L
0.15	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	R	R	L	L	L	L	L
0.2	C	C	C	C	C	C	R	R	M	L	L	L	L	L	L
0.25	C	C	C	C	C	R	M	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
0.3	C	C	C	R	R	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
0.35	C	C	C	R	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
0.4	C	C	R	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
0.45	C	R	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
0.5	R	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
0.55	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
0.6	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
0.65	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
0.7	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
≥0.75	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L

^a C = closed season, R = restrictive, M = moderate, L = liberal.

^b Estimated number of mallards (in millions) observed in Alaska (WBPMS strata 1-12).

^c Estimated number of mallards (in millions) observed in the southern Pacific Flyway (California, Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia).

2017-18: Liberal Season

AHM / Washington Season Timing (From Game Mgmt Plan)

Table 2. AHM Regulation Packages and Washington Season Timing.

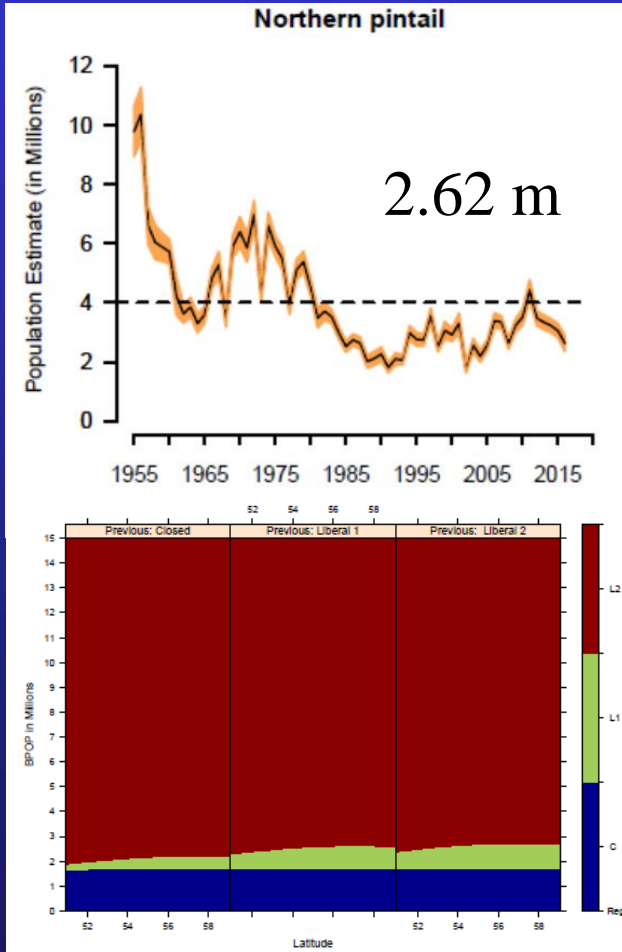
Regulation package	EASTERN WASHINGTON			WESTERN WASHINGTON		
	Days	Limit total/mall/♀mall	Season Timing*	Days	Limit total/mall/♀mall	Season Timing*
Liberal	107	7/7/2	mid-Oct. thru late Jan.	107	7/7/2	mid-Oct. thru late Jan.
Moderate	93	7/5/2	mid-late Oct. – 9 days; remainder early-Nov. thru late-Jan.	86	7/5/2	mid-late Oct. – 9 days; remainder mid-Nov. thru late-Jan.
Restrictive	67	4/3/1	mid-late Oct. – 9 days; remainder mid-Nov. thru mid-Jan.	60	4/3/1	mid-late Oct. – 9 days; remainder mid-Nov. thru early-Jan.
Very Restrictive	45	4/3/1	mid-Nov. thru early Dec.; late Dec. thru mid-Jan.	38	4/3/1	mid-Nov. thru early Dec.; late Dec. thru early-Jan.

* USFWS rules on duck season timing:

1. Washington zones (2) – E. Washington and W. Washington
2. Season dates must be the same within each zone
3. Seasons may only be split into 2 segments
4. Youth days in addition to above days, except for liberal package

Pintail Optimal Regulatory Strategy

Northern Pintail



BPOP ^a	Mean latitude ^c																				
	55	55.2	55.4	55.6	55.8	56	56.2	56.4	56.6	56.8	57	57.2	57.4	57.6	57.8	58	58.2	58.4	58.6	58.8	59
≤1.7	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
1.75-2.5	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1
2.55	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1
2.6	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1
2.65	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1
2.7	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2
≥2.75	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2	L2

^a C = closed season, L1 = liberal season with 1-bird daily bag limit, L2 = liberal season with 2-bird daily bag limit.
^b Observed northern pintail breeding population size (in millions) from the WBPBS (strata 1-18, 20-50, 75-77).
^c Mean latitude (in degrees) is the average latitude of the WBPBS strata weighted by population size.

2017-18 Duck Season Proposals

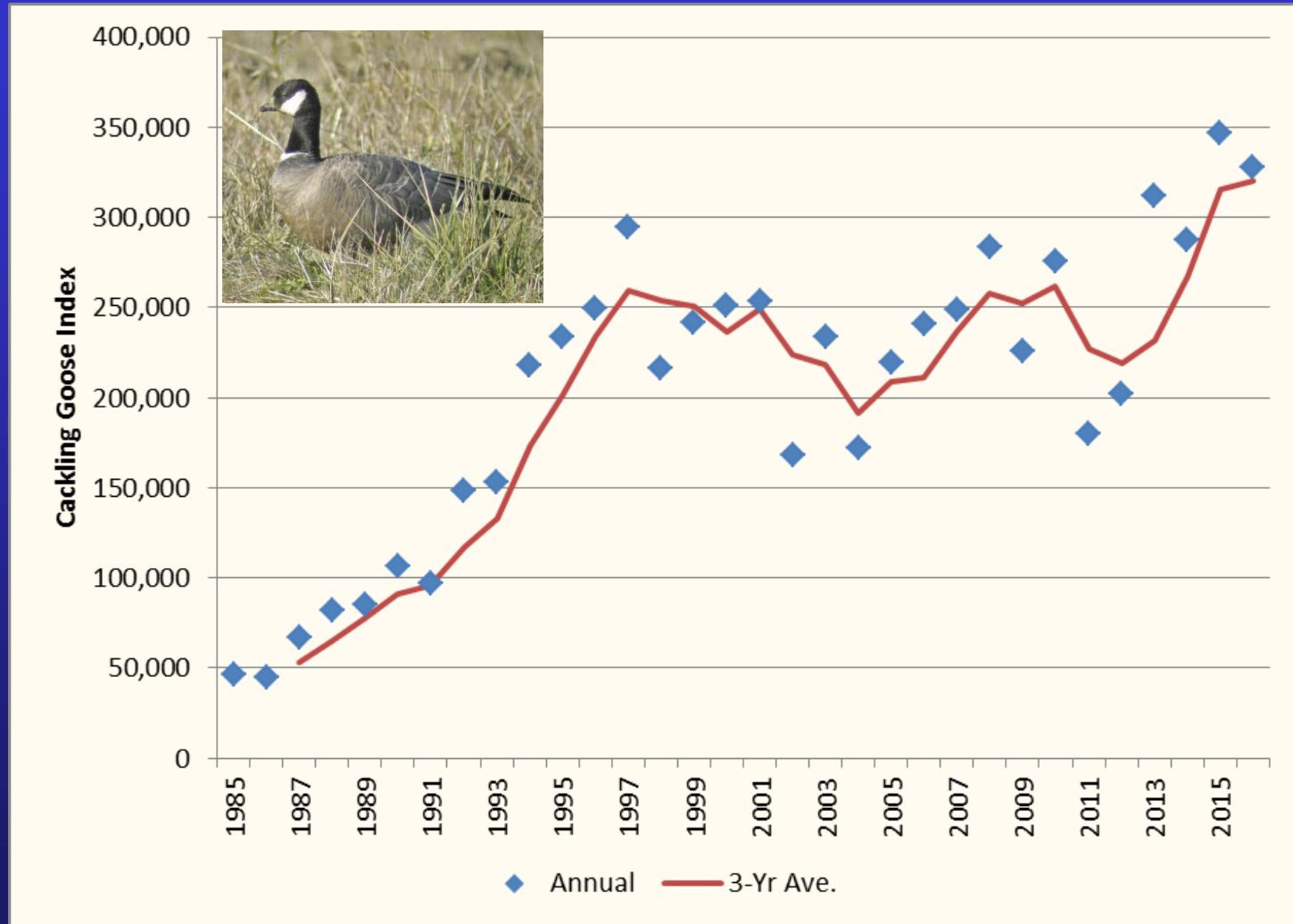
WAC 232-28-436

- Proposed general duck season dates and limits similar to 2016-17, except pintail bag limit
 - 107 days
 - 2 day youth hunt
 - 105 day general season
 - 7 ducks, to include not more than:
 - 2 hen mallard, 1 pintail (p. 3-4 changes)
 - 2 redhead, 2 canvasback, 3 scaup
 - W. WA: 2 scoter, 2 long-tail, 2 goldeneye, 1 harlequin (season limit)
- Proposed Change: p. 3 (2017-18)

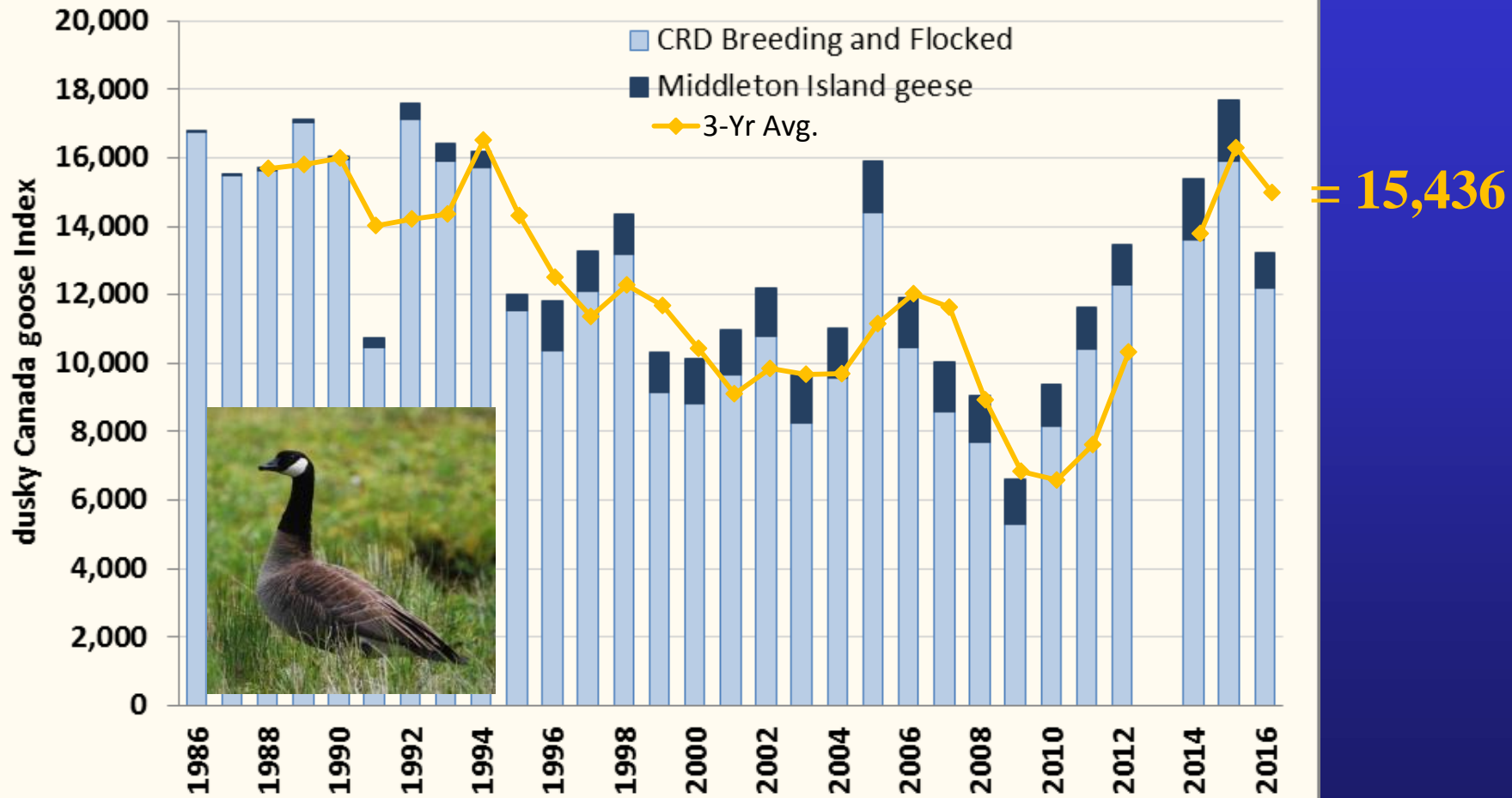
Goose Population Status and Season Proposals



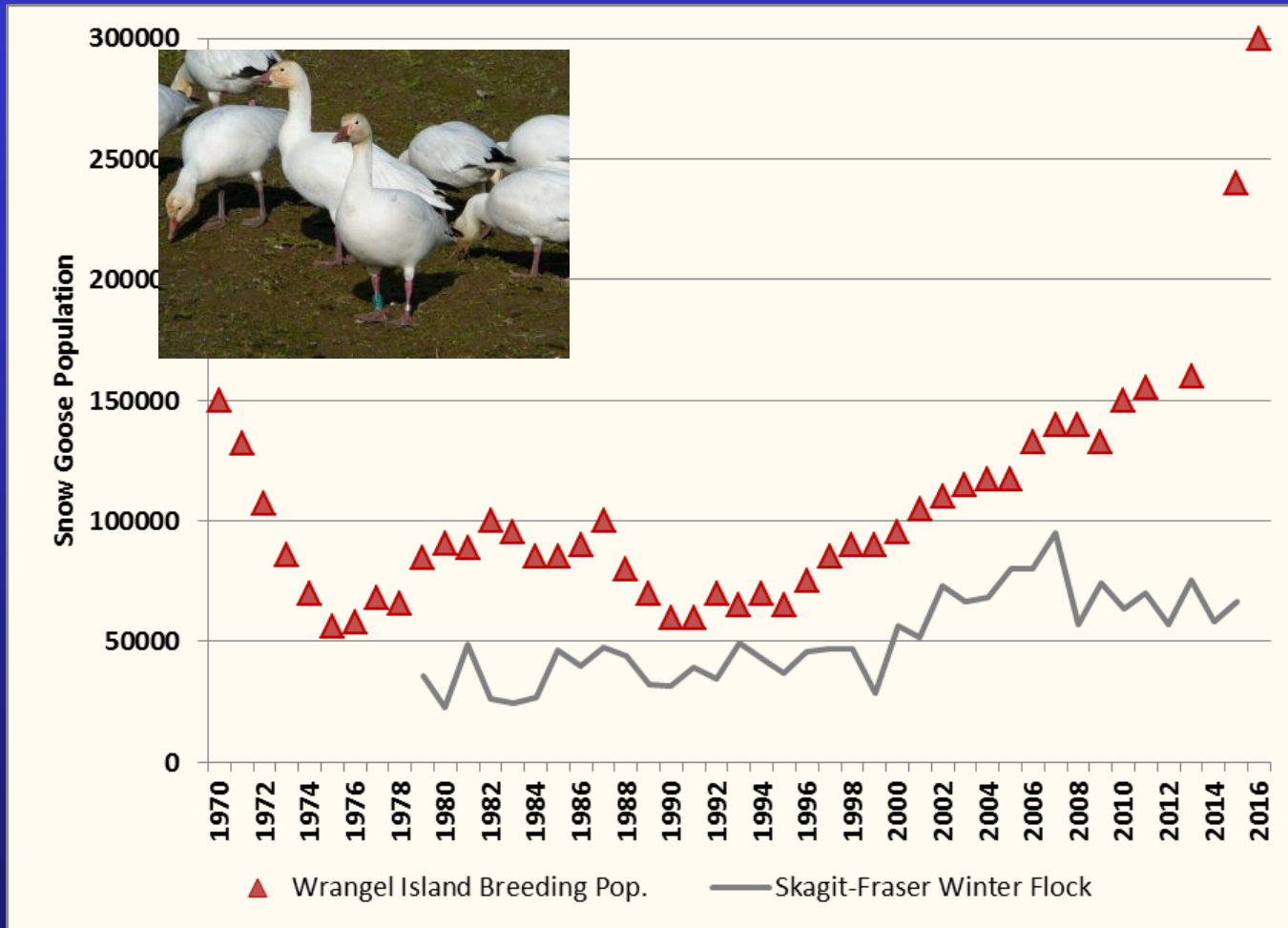
Cackling Canada Goose Trends



Dusky Canada Goose Trends

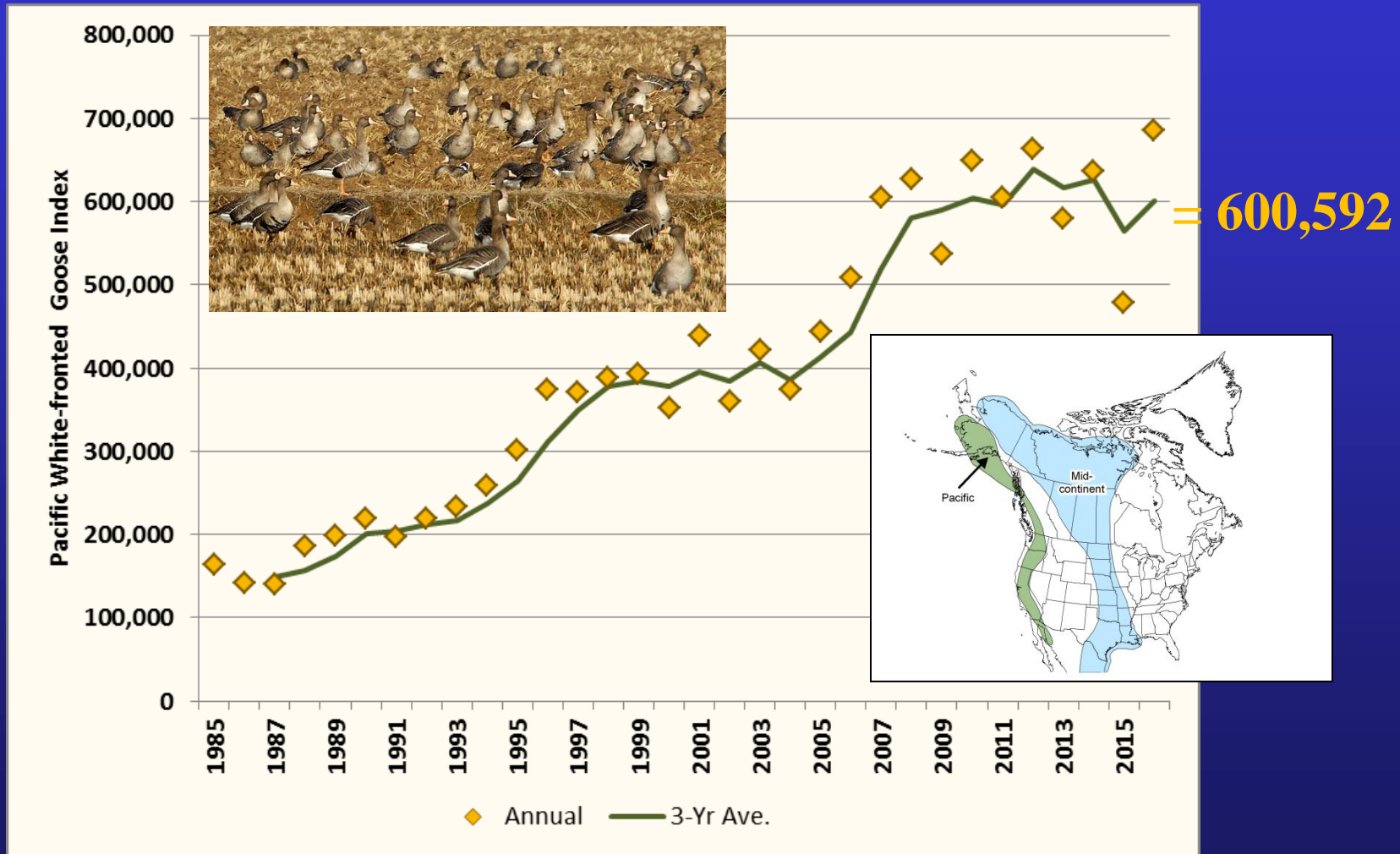


Wrangel Island Snow Goose Trends



- 2016: record count on Wrangel Is. (300,000)
- 108,000 Skagit/Fraser Nov 2016; S-F > 70K winter

White-fronted Goose Trends



2017-18 Goose Season Proposal

WAC 232-28-436

- Allows independent season selection.
- Parallels bag limits in Oregon NW permit zone.
- **Proposed Changes** (p. 6, 8, 10-12):
 - 4 Canada geese (dusky Canada geese closed)
 - 6 white geese
 - 10 white-fronted geese

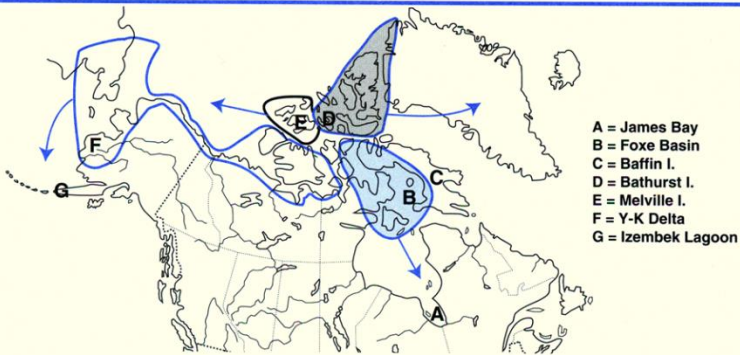


Brant Midwinter Survey Trends

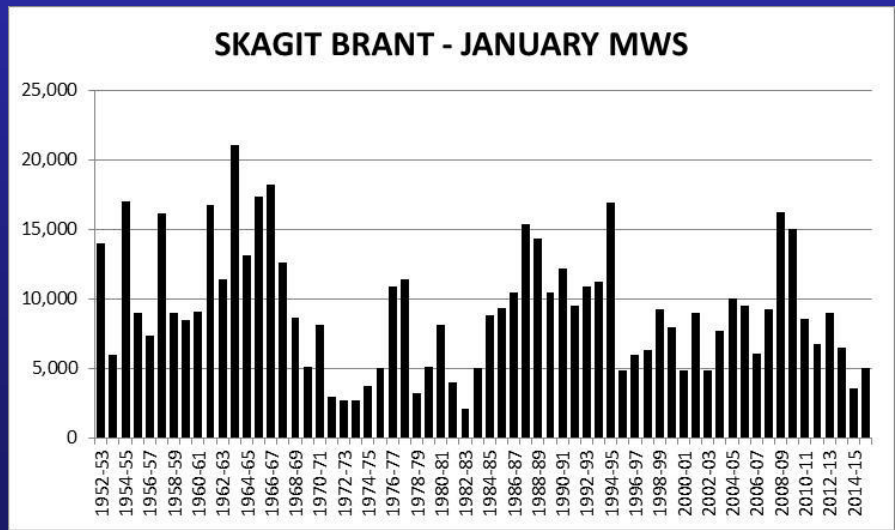
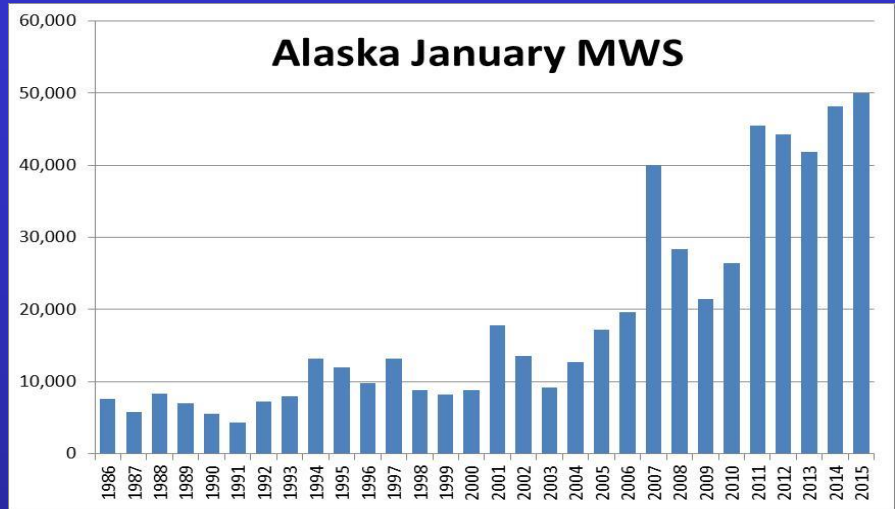


The American Ornithologists' Union

A. REED, D. H. WARD, D. V. DERKSEN,
AND J. S. SEDINGER



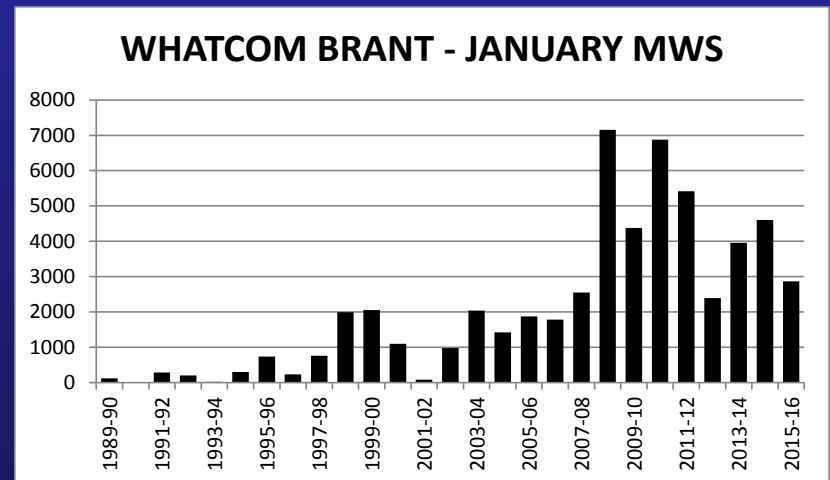
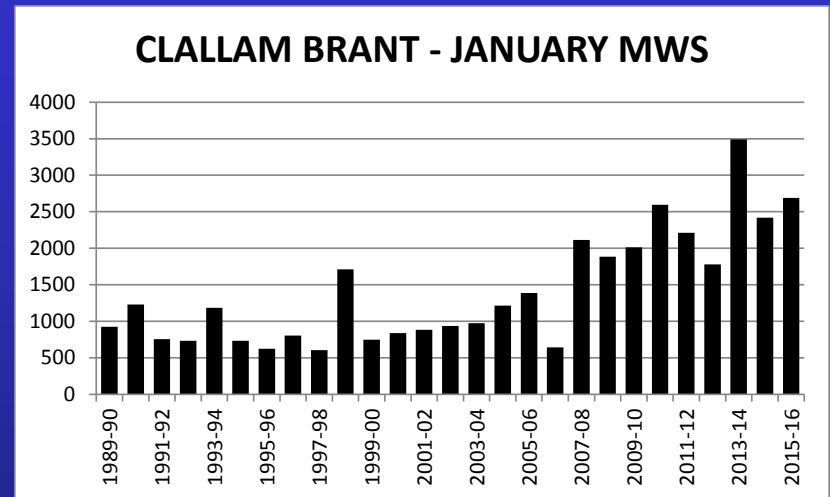
- **Atlantic Brant** (*Branta bernicla hrota*).
Breeds around Foxe Basin in eastern low Arctic; winters on Atlantic coast of U.S.
- **Eastern High-Arctic Brant** (*B. b. hrota*).
Breeds on islands of eastern high Arctic and on Greenland; migrates via Greenland and Iceland to winter mainly in Ireland.
- **Black Brant** (*B. b. nigricans*).
Breeds in central and western low Arctic, in Alaska, and in western Russia; winters along Pacific coast, mainly in Mexico.
- **Western High-Arctic Brant** (intermediate between *hrota* and *nigricans*).
Breeds on islands of western high Arctic and winters in Puget Sound, WA.



2017-18 Brant Season Proposal

WAC 232-28-436

- Numbers of brant have increased over the last 25 years
- <25% WHA brant (3-yr avg) assessed through population surveys or bag checks (PFC Brant Plan harvest strategy)
- **Proposed Changes** (p. 12-13):
 - Open in Clallam and Whatcom Counties 3 set dates
 - Requires authorization and harvest report card

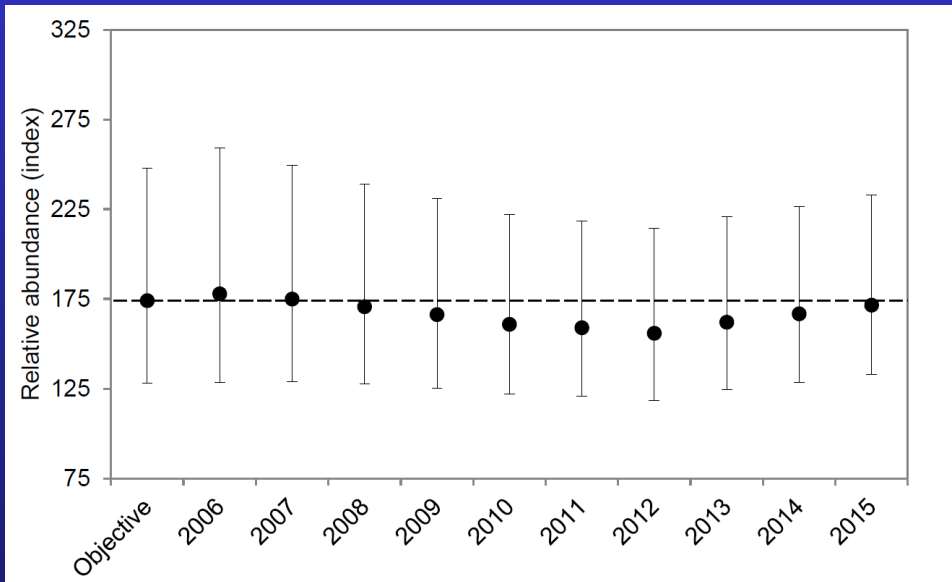


Status of Other Migratory Bird Populations and Season Proposals

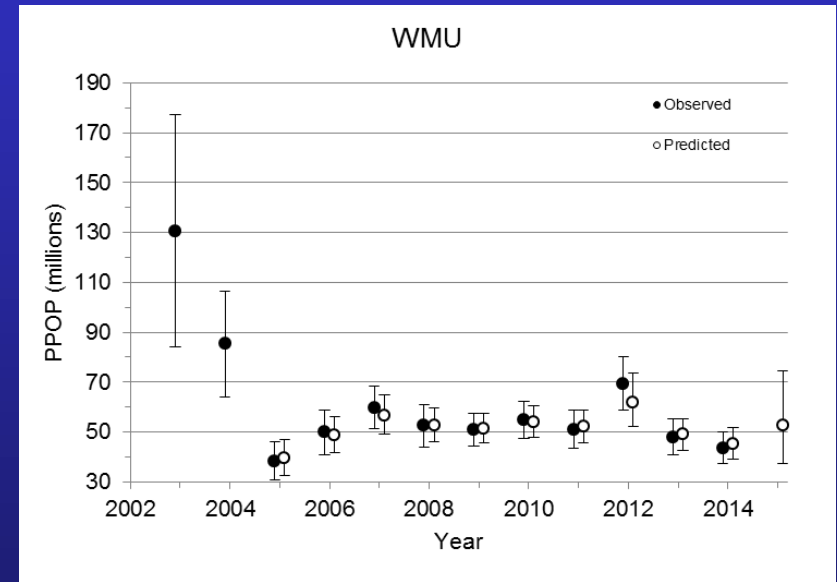


Status of Other Migratory Bird Populations and Season Proposals

WAC 232-28-436



Band-tailed Pigeons



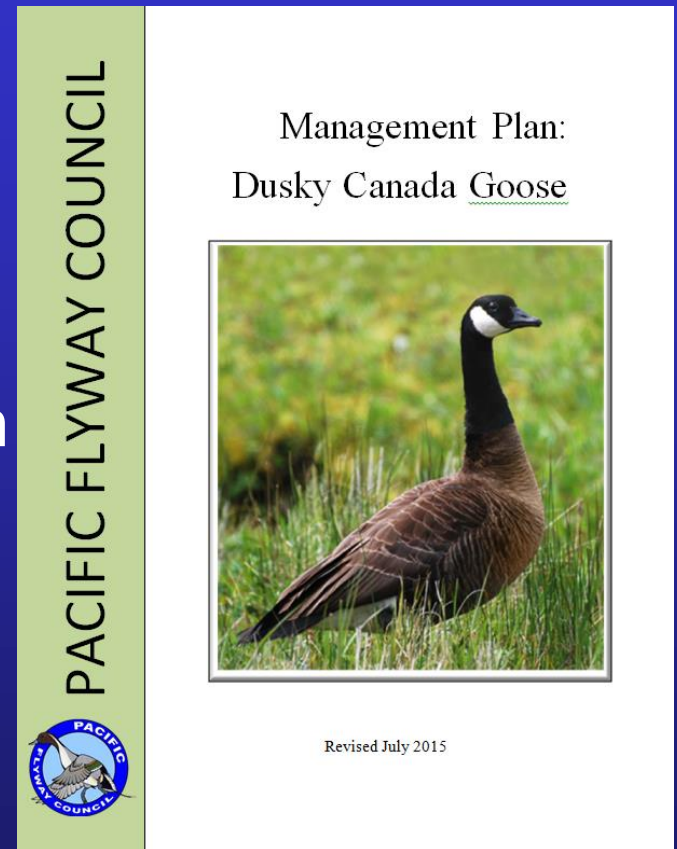
Mourning Doves

Recommend same seasons as last year

SW Goose Public Comments

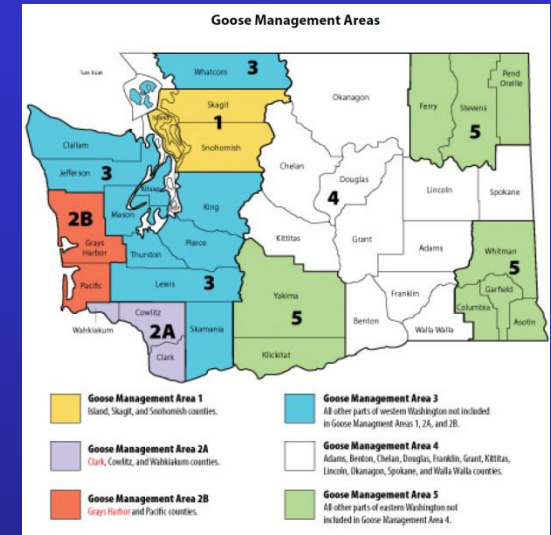
Objectives

- Maintain dusky Canada goose abundance, distribution, and winter survival
- Maximize length and timing of the goose season to address depredation concerns
- Reduce agency costs
- Reduce regulation complexity and hunter reporting requirements



2016-17 SW Goose Season Recent Changes

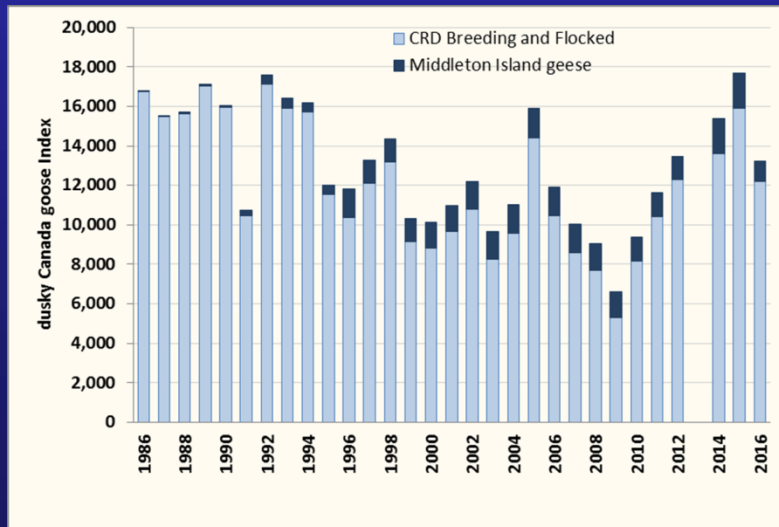
- Combine Areas 2A and 2B into one area: Area 2
- Area 2 proposed season dates:
 - Allow Canada geese in youth hunt bag limit
 - 9 day September season
 - 9 day October season
 - Remainder of days late Nov. – early Mar.
- Recommended adjustment:
 - Changed late season closed area from *public lands* to *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wildlife Refuges (NWRs) and WDFW Wildlife Areas*
- Rationale for changes: Reduce regulation complexity; maximize length and timing of the goose season to address depredation concerns



2016-17 SW Goose Season Recent Changes

Area 2 proposed season dates; why?

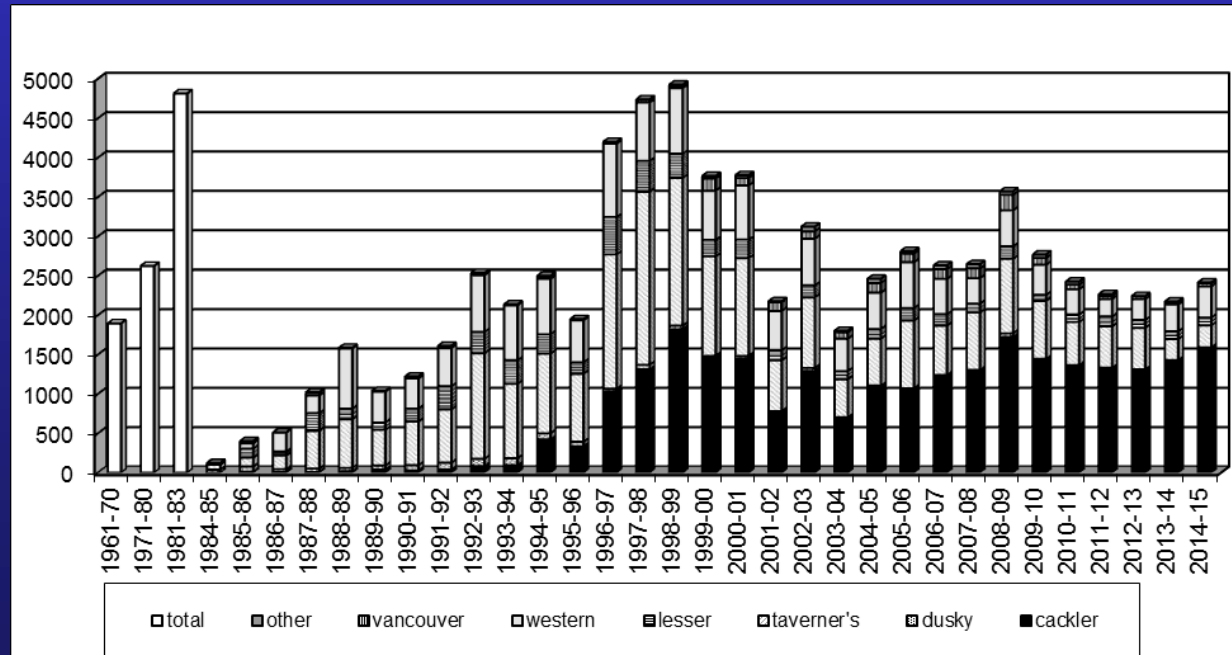
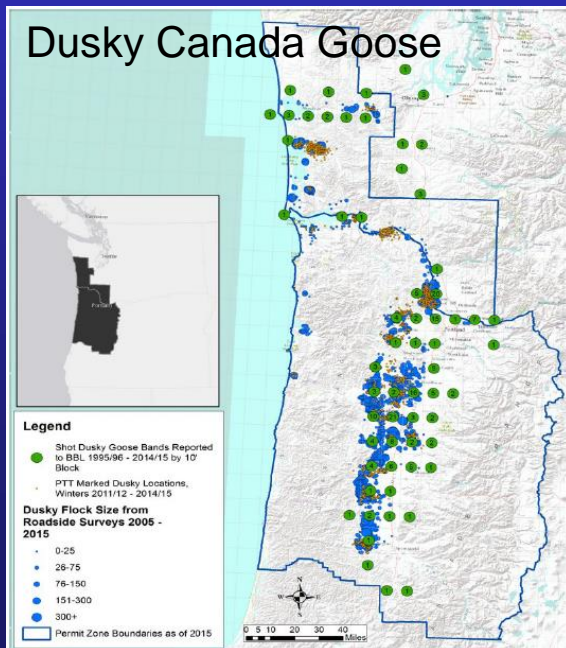
- Arrival to PNW
 - 31 Oct = CRD
 - 5 Nov = MI
 - 14 Nov = PWS



SW Goose Season: what we know

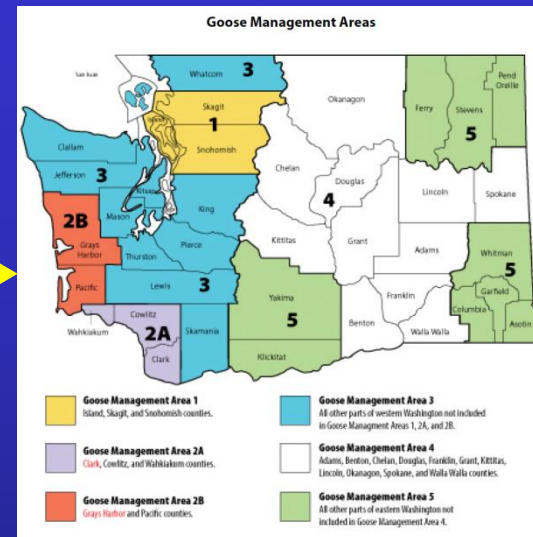
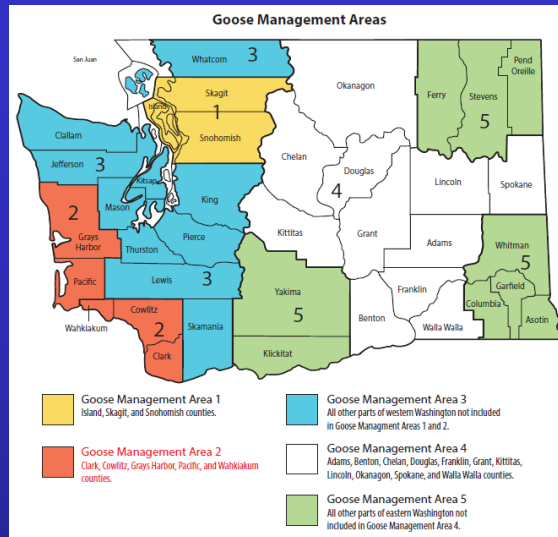


Dusky Encountered Harvest						
	November	December	January	February	March	Total Harvest
2012-2013	2	5	7	0	0	14
2013-2014	4	7	1	0	2	14
2014-2015	1	6	6	2	1	16
2015-2016	5	1	6	0	0	12
2016-2017	0	3	5	2	1	11
Total	12	22	25	4	4	67



SW Goose Zones and Season

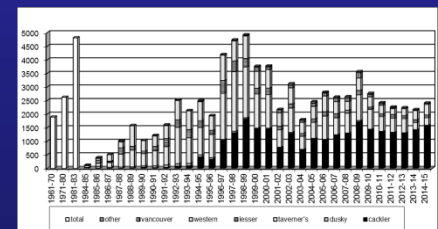
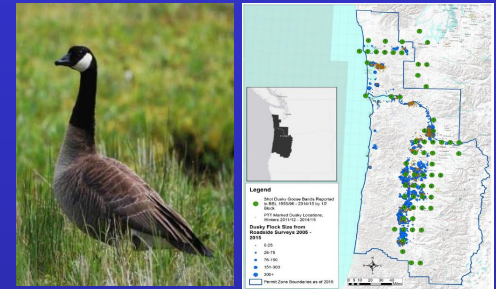
- Appropriate zones and season timing?



Alternative Season Scenarios	September				October				November				December				January				February				March	
	w1	w2	w3	w4	w1	w2	w3	w4	w1	w2	w3	w4	w1	w2	w3	w4	w1	w2	w3	w4	w1	w2	w3	w4	w1	w2
A continuous, no split no late																										
B late split; 3 splits																										
C no change; 3 splits																										
D EVEN SPLIT OPTION																										
E mid split, shorter late																										
F 1 late split; no change late																										
G late split, short late; 3 splits																										
H 3 split; similar to previous?																										
I continuous, no splits																										

SW Goose Zone and Season Needs

- Dusky Canada Goose monitoring
- Appropriate **zones** and **season timing** to balance sport harvest and agricultural depredation with dusky Canada conservation
- Input: public, regional, enforcement
- Stated strategies regarding # days
- Harvest reporting card
- Clarification of public lands intent



Alternative Season Scenarios	September				October				November				December				January				February				March			
	w1	w2	w3	w4	w1	w2	w3	w4	w1	w2	w3	w4	w1	w2	w3	w4	w1	w2	w3	w4	w1	w2	w3	w4	w1	w2	w3	w4
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Questions?

