



STATE OF NEVADA

DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE

Game Division

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MEMORANDUM

February 7, 2025

To: Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners, County Advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife, and Interested Publics

From: Russell Woolstenhulme, Staff Specialist, Game Division

Title: **Commission Regulation 25-11, Migratory Game Bird Seasons, Bag Limits, and Special Regulations for Waterfowl and Webless Migratory Game Birds; Public hunting limited on Wildlife Management Areas and Designated State Lands – 2025–2026 Season – For Possible Action**

Description: The Commission will consider recommendations for seasons, bag limits, and special regulations for migratory game birds for the 2025–2026 season and adopt regulations consistent with the proposed regulations framework for the 2025–2026 hunting seasons on certain migratory game birds established by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Commission Regulation will become final pending adoption of federal frameworks. The Commission will also consider rules regulating public hunting on Wildlife Management Areas and designated state lands.

Presenter: Wildlife Staff Specialist Russell Woolstenhulme

Season regulations for hunting migratory waterfowl, doves, and crows differ from some other common species, like mule deer, that are not governed by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works with the states within designated flyways, and Nevada resides within the Pacific Flyway. Collectively, the Pacific Flyway develops regulatory sideboards known as the Federal Frameworks within which each state may promulgate seasons for hunting. Although the Federal Frameworks are generally established by the time the Commission acts on the Migratory Game Bird Commission Regulation, the federal government suffered delays this year and the proposed frameworks are still draft. Should the final approved frameworks require amendment to this CR, the Department will bring this CR back to the Commission before seasons are published.

The Department is recommending changes to waterfowl and migratory bird seasons from those adopted by the Commission last year in March. The Department recommends the Commission adopt an increase in pintail limits from 1 daily/ 3 in possession to 3 daily/ 9 in possession for the 2025-2026 season. Changes to regulations to public hunting on wildlife management areas have been made for clarification.

Continental and Flyway Conditions

Continent-wide, waterfowl abundance is similar to last year. The total 2024 duck population estimate (excluding scoters, eiders, long-tailed ducks, mergansers, and wood ducks) was 34.0 million birds. This population estimate is 5% higher than the 2023 estimate of 32.3 million and was 4% lower than the long-term average of 35.4 million ducks. Mallard estimates were below long-term average. Canvasback and green-winged teal were near long-term averages while redhead was above the long-term average. Most duck species remain in the liberal season package. Greater and lesser scaup were below their long-term average abundance and remain in a standard season package (86 days).

A new integrated Population Model (IPM) for Pintails was approved by all four flyways and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The new IPM indicates the continental pintail population is robust enough for the federal framework to allow a 3 bird bag limit.

Western Canada Geese numbers continue to increase and are currently over population objectives. Pacific Greater White-fronted Geese and Western Canadian Arctic Snow Geese are above, but near long-term averages.

Most waterfowl from the Pacific Flyway nest north of Nevada. Nearly all U.S. prairies experienced good precipitation during the 2023-2024 winter. Pond estimates throughout the prairie pothole region were 49% higher than the previous year.

The predicted abundance of mourning doves for September 2023 in the Western Management Unit were 55.1 million, which results in a standard regulatory alternative as prescribed by the harvest strategy.

Nevada Habitat

In Nevada, 2023-2024 winter precipitation and run-off was slightly above 100% of normal across most of the northern part of the state. Most wetlands in northern Nevada including the Carson Sink area (Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge, Carson Lake Wildlife Management Area) entered the breeding season with residual waters.

As of February 6, 2024, year-to-date precipitation (Oct 1 – Feb 2) is slightly below average for Nevada. Lake Tahoe Basin precipitation stations were reported at 80 - 100% of normal. Walker River Basin stations ranged from 75 to 85% of Normal. Carson River Basin stations (including Lahontan Basin) were also reported at 70 to 80% of normal. Eastern Nevada (Ruby Marshes) stations were reported at 100% of normal. Many Nevada marshes have residual water. AS of February 1, reservoir storage at Lahontan Reservoir is at 112% of normal February storage volume.

Recommendation:

The Department recommends that the Commission **VOTE TO APPROVE CR 25-11 MIGRATORY GAME BIRD SEASONS, BAG LIMITS, AND SPECIAL REGULATIONS FOR WATERFOWL AND WEBLESS MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS; PUBLIC HUNTING LIMITED ON WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS AND DESIGNATED STATE LANDS - 2025–2026 SEASON AS PRESENTED.**

**STATE OF NEVADA
BOARD OF WILDLIFE COMMISSIONERS**

The Board of Wildlife Commissioners under the authority of Section 501.181, 503.090, 503.140 and 503.245 of the Nevada Revised Statutes, does hereby adopt the following regulations for the management of migratory game birds.

**DRAFT CR 25-11
2025-2026
SEASONS, BAG LIMITS, AND SPECIAL REGULATIONS FOR
MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS**

MOURNING & WHITE-WINGED DOVE	
OPEN AREAS:	Statewide
2025 SEASON:	September 1 – October 30, 2025
LIMITS:	Daily bag limit 15 Possession 45
SHOOTING HOURS:	½ hour before sunrise to sunset.
SPECIAL REGULATIONS:	Limits for mourning dove and white-winged dove are singly or in the aggregate.

AMERICAN CROW	
OPEN AREAS:	Statewide
2025 FALL SEASON:	September 1 – November 17, 2025
2026 SPRING SEASON	March 1 – April 15, 2026
LIMITS:	Daily bag limit 10
SHOOTING HOURS:	Sunrise to sunset.
SPECIAL REGULATIONS:	May be hunted by archery, shotguns and falconry. All crows must be retrieved and removed from the field. Season closed on ravens

Note regarding Waterfowl Zone designations:

NORTHEAST ZONE: Elko, Eureka, Lander & White Pine Counties

NORTHWEST ZONE: Carson City, Churchill, Douglas, Humboldt, Lyon, Mineral, Pershing, Storey & Washoe Counties

SOUTH ZONE: Esmeralda, Lincoln, Nye & Clark Counties

DUCKS AND MERGANSERS	
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHEAST ZONE
2025-26 SEASON:	September 27, 2025 – December 2, 2025 December 13, 2025 – January 19, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHWEST ZONE
2025-26 SEASON:	October 11, 2025 – January 4, 2026 January 7, 2026– January 25, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – (except the Moapa Valley)
2025-26 SEASON:	October 11, 2025 – October 19, 2025 October 22, 2025– January 25, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – Moapa Valley to the confluence of the Muddy and Virgin Rivers
2025-26 SEASON:	October 25, 2025 – January 25, 2026
LIMITS (daily / possession)	
General Duck Limits:	7 / 21
Included within the general duck limit, but not to include more than:	
Pintail:	3 / 9
Hen Mallard/ Mexican duck	2 hen mallard or Mexican ducks/ 6 in possession
Redhead:	2 / 6
Canvasback:	2 / 6
Shooting hours:	½ hour before sunrise to sunset
Special Regulations:	Open to Nonresidents

SCAUP (Lesser and Greater)	
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHEAST ZONE
2025-26 SEASON:	September 27, 2025 – December 2, 2025 December 13, 2025 – December 31, 2025
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHWEST ZONE
2025-26 SEASON:	October 30, 2025 – January 4, 2026 January 7, 2026– January 25, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – (except the Moapa Valley)
2025-26 SEASON::	November 1, 2025 – January 25, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – Moapa Valley to the confluence of the Muddy and Virgin Rivers
2025-26 SEASON:	November 1, 2025 – January 25, 2026
LIMITS (daily/possession):	2 / 6 (Included within general duck limit, not in addition to)
Shooting hours:	½ hour before sunrise to sunset
Special Regulations:	Open to Nonresidents

SPECIAL YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNT	
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHEAST ZONE
2025-26 SEASON:	September 20 & 21, 2025
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHWEST ZONE
2025-26 SEASON:	September 27, 2025 & February 7, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE (including the Moapa Valley portion of the Overton Wildlife Management Area)
2025-26 SEASON:	February 7 & 8, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	Moapa Valley portion of the Overton Wildlife Management Area.
2025-26 SEASON:	October 18, 2025
LIMITS:	<p>Daily bag limit is the same as that for the general season for ducks, mergansers, scaup, snipe, geese, coots and moorhens.</p> <p>Limits singly or in the aggregate for Canada geese and Brant.</p> <p>Limits singly or in the aggregate for Snow and Ross' geese.</p> <p>Snow and Ross' geese are closed in Ruby Valley within Elko and White Pine Counties.</p>
SHOOTING HOURS:	½ hour before sunrise to sunset
SPECIAL REGULATIONS:	<p>Open to hunters 17 years of age or younger.</p> <p>Youth hunters 16 years of age and older must possess a federal duck stamp.</p> <p>Youth must be accompanied by an adult who is at least 18 years old.</p> <p>During the youth hunt in the Northwest Zone, youth hunters possessing a valid Nevada Swan Permit may hunt swans in open swan hunt areas (Churchill, Lyon and Pershing Counties), provided the trumpeter swan quota has not been reached.</p> <p>Adults are not allowed to hunt during this season.</p> <p>Open to Nonresidents.</p>

COOTS AND GALLINULES	
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHEAST ZONE
2025-26 SEASON:	September 27, 2025 – December 2, 2025 December 13, 2025 – January 19, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHWEST ZONE
2025-26 SEASON:	October 11, 2025 – January 4, 2026 January 7, 2026– January 25, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – (except the Moapa Valley)
2025-26 SEASON:	October 11, 2025 – October 19, 2025 October 22, 2025– January 25, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – Moapa Valley to the confluence of the Muddy and Virgin Rivers
2025-26 SEASON:	October 25, 2025 – January 25, 2026
LIMITS (daily/possession):	25 / 75
Shooting hours:	½ hour before sunrise to sunset
Special Regulations:	Open to Nonresidents

SNIFE	
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHEAST ZONE
2025-26 SEASON:	September 27, 2025 – December 2, 2025 December 13, 2025 – January 19, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHWEST ZONE
2025-26 SEASON:	October 11, 2025 – January 4, 2026 January 7, 2026– January 25, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – (except the Moapa Valley)
2025-26 SEASON:	October 11, 2025 – October 19, 2025 October 22, 2025– January 25, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – Moapa Valley to the confluence of the Muddy and Virgin Rivers
2025-26 SEASON:	October 25, 2025 – January 25, 2026
LIMITS (daily/possession):	8 / 24
Shooting hours:	½ hour before sunrise to sunset
Special Regulations:	Open to Nonresidents

CANADA AND CACKLING GEESE AND BRANT	
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHEAST ZONE
2025-26 SEASON:	September 27, 2025 – December 2, 2025 December 13, 2025 – January 19, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHWEST ZONE
2025-26 SEASON:	October 11, 2025 – January 4, 2026 January 7, 2026– January 25, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – (except the Moapa Valley)
2025-26 SEASON:	October 11, 2025 – October 19, 2025 October 22, 2025– January 25, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – Moapa Valley to the confluence of the Muddy and Virgin Rivers
2025-26 SEASON:	October 25, 2025 – January 25, 2026
Limits (daily/possession)	5 / 15
Shooting hours:	½ hour before sunrise to sunset
Special Regulations:	Open to Nonresidents

WHITE-FRONTED GEESE	
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHEAST ZONE
2025-26 SEASON:	September 27, 2025 – December 2, 2025 December 13, 2025 – January 19, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHWEST ZONE
2025-26 SEASON:	October 11, 2025 – January 4, 2026 January 7, 2026– January 25, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – (except the Moapa Valley)
2025-26 SEASON:	October 11, 2025 – October 19, 2025 October 22, 2025– January 25, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – Moapa Valley to the confluence of the Muddy and Virgin Rivers
2025-26 SEASON:	October 25, 2025 – January 25, 2026
Limits (daily/possession)	10 /30
Shooting hours:	½ hour before sunrise to sunset
Special Regulations:	Open to Nonresidents

SNOW AND ROSS' GEESE	
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHEAST ZONE
2025-26 SEASON:	September 27, 2025 – December 2, 2025 December 13, 2025 – January 19, 2026 February 23, 2026 – March 8, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHWEST ZONE
2025-26 SEASON:	October 25, 2025 – January 4, 2026 January 7, 2026– January 25, 2026 February 21, 2026 – March 8, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – (except the Moapa Valley)
2025-26 SEASON:	October 11, 2025 – October 19, 2025 October 22, 2025– January 25, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – Moapa Valley to the confluence of the Muddy and Virgin Rivers
2025-26 SEASON:	October 25, 2025 – January 25, 2026
Limits (daily/possession)	20 / 60
Shooting hours:	½ hour before sunrise to sunset
Special Regulations:	Open to Nonresidents CLOSED: Ruby Valley within Elko and White Pine Counties CLOSED: The following WMAs are closed during the February 23, 2026 – March 8, 2026 season: Mason Valley and Scripps/ Washoe State Park.
Special Regulations:	Restrictions on three shotshell capacity and recorded or amplified bird calls do not apply during the light goose season from February 23, 2026 until March 8, 2026.

FALCONRY SEASONS FOR MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS	
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHEAST ZONE
2025-26 SEASON:	September 27, 2025 – December 2, 2025 December 13, 2025 – January 19, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	NORTHWEST ZONE
2025-26 SEASON:	October 11, 2025 – January 4, 2026 January 7, 2026– January 25, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – (except the Moapa Valley)
2025-26 SEASON:	October 11, 2025 – October 19, 2025 October 22, 2025– January 25, 2026
OPEN AREAS:	SOUTH ZONE – Moapa Valley to the confluence of the Muddy and Virgin Rivers
2025-26 SEASON:	October 25, 2025 – January 25, 2026
Limits (daily/possession)	3 / 9
Hunting hours:	½ hour before sunrise to sunset
Special Regulations:	Migratory birds allowed for take include: geese, ducks, mergansers, coots, gallinules, and snipe. Limits for all permitted migratory birds are singly or in the aggregate. Open to Nonresidents.

SWAN	
OPEN AREAS:	Churchill, Lyon and Pershing Counties
2025-26 SEASON:	October 11, 2025 – January 4, 2026 January 7, 2026– January 25, 2026
PERMIT QUOTA:	750 total permits
LIMITS:	One swan per swan hunt permit, Maximum two swan hunt permits per season One swan per day
SHOOTING HOURS:	½ hour before sunrise to sunset
Special Regulations:	<p>Successful swan hunters are required to validate their permit pursuant to NAC 502.380, and then present at least the head and neck of their swan to an NDOW agent at selected sites for species verification within three (3) days of harvest. Mandatory inspection sites and requirements will be provided with the swan hunt permits.</p> <p>If a total harvest of ten (10) trumpeter swans is reached, the swan season is closed for the remainder of the season.</p> <p>During youth hunts in the Northwest Zone, youth hunters possessing a valid Nevada Swan Permit may hunt swans in open swan areas, provided the trumpeter swan quota has not been reached.</p> <p>Open to Non-residents.</p> <p>Residents must possess a valid Nevada hunting or combination license, a Nevada HIP number and a current Federal Migratory Game Bird Hunting Stamp, when required, to hunt swan in Nevada.</p> <p>Nonresidents must possess a valid Nevada Combination license or a Nonresident 1-day Combination license, a Nevada HIP number and a Federal Migratory Waterfowl Stamp, when required, to hunt swan in Nevada.</p>

PUBLIC HUNTING LIMITED ON WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS AND DESIGNATED STATE LANDS

ALKALI LAKE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA (WMA), ARGENTA WMA, BRUNEAU RIVER WMA, CARSON LAKE WMA, FERNLEY WMA, FRANKLIN LAKE WMA, HUMBOLDT WMA, SCRIPPS WMA, STEPTOE VALLEY WMA and WAYNE E. KIRCH WMA

1. Hunting is allowed every day for wildlife species upon which there is an established open season

MASON VALLEY WMA

1. Before or after any waterfowl season, hunting is allowed every day for wildlife species upon which there is an established open season.
2. During any waterfowl season open within the hunt zone, hunting is permitted only on:
 - a. Saturdays, Sundays and Wednesdays,
 - b. the following legal State holidays: Nevada Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, Family Day (day after Thanksgiving), Christmas, New Year's Day, and Martin Luther King Day,
 - c. during any youth waterfowl hunt.
 - d. Hunters with a valid turkey tag for the Mason Valley WMA may hunt each day of the established turkey season.

FT. CHURCHILL COOLING POND COOPERATIVE WMA

1. The Ft. Churchill Cooperative Cooling Pond Wildlife Cooperative WMA is closed year-round to all hunting.
2. From October 1, through the Friday preceding the second Saturday of February, the area shall be closed to trespass.

OVERTON WMA

1. Before or after any waterfowl season, hunting is allowed every day for wildlife species upon which there is an established season.
2. Waterfowl hunting is permitted on the Moapa Valley portion of the area on:
 - a. the opening day of the earliest opening waterfowl season,
 - b. even days thereafter through the end of regular duck and goose seasons,
 - c. the final two days of the second duck and goose season, and
 - d. during any youth waterfowl hunt.
3. Upland game bird and rabbit hunting is prohibited during the regular duck and goose seasons, except for persons possessing a valid wild turkey tag to hunt turkeys in the Moapa Valley of Clark County. These persons may hunt turkeys every day for which the tag is valid. These persons are prohibited from pursuing any other upland game birds or rabbits during such time that the fall turkey season is concurrent with the waterfowl season.
4. During the waterfowl season on the Moapa Valley portion of the area, hunters must hunt from assigned hunt locations (blinds) constructed by the Department of Wildlife. A maximum of up to four hunters are permitted at each hunt location. [Only those hunters listed on the application and who received a reservation for the specific day hunting will be allowed to hunt, except, successful reservation holders will be allowed to substitute one person listed from the reservation applicant group for one other person not listed as long as the new individual has not been included in another application or stand-by group for that same day.](#)
5. Assigned hunt locations are marked by numbered stakes. Hunters shall hunt only within their assigned hunt location and moving to vacant locations is prohibited. The only exception involves reasonable accommodation of the disabled.
6. [Morning hunt check-in rules: All hunters must be checked in 30 minutes prior to legal shooting time.](#)

7. Afternoon hunt check-in rules:
 - a. The standby hunters check-in list will be available starting at 11:30 a.m.
 - b. Standby hunters will be considered on a first come, first serve basis.
 - c. Morning hunters can add themselves to the afternoon stand-by list to move to a vacant blind.
 - d. Assignment for vacant blinds for the afternoon hunt will begin at 12:00 p.m.
 - e. All persons on the standby list must be present at the check-in station at 12:00 p.m. or their position will be forfeited.
 - f. Check-in is only available from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
8. During the opening day and the first weekend of the dove season, the maximum capacity for the Moapa Valley portion of the area is 60 hunters by reservation. Vacancies will be filled by stand-by hunters on a first-come, first-served basis.
9. On Overton Hunt days, only persons authorized to hunt waterfowl may use vessels on the portion of the area inundated by Lake Mead.

KEY PITTMAN WMA

1. Small game hunting on Key Pittman WMA is allowed for species for which there is an established open season only on designated hunt days as described below:
 - a. Upland game bird and rabbit hunting is permitted on:
 - i. every open season day before and after waterfowl season,
 - ii. odd-numbered days throughout any open waterfowl season, except upland game and rabbit hunting is closed the opening weekend of waterfowl season.
 - b. Waterfowl hunting is permitted on:
 - i. the opening weekend of the earliest opening waterfowl season within the hunt zone,
 - ii. odd-numbered days thereafter through the end of regular duck and goose seasons,
 - iii. the final two days of the second duck and goose season, and
 - iv. during any youth waterfowl hunt.
2. The maximum hunter capacity during the opening day of duck season and the opening day of goose season will be 55 at any time.
3. All hunters will check-in and out at [Nesbitt Lake parking lot](#) and will park in designated parking areas only. No vehicles are allowed on the area during the hunting season.
4. The area is closed to fishing during the waterfowl season.
5. No motorized boats are allowed on the area during the waterfowl season.

OVERTON and KEY PITTMAN HUNTER RESERVATION SYSTEM

1. All reservations and permits are nontransferable.
2. **Opening Weekend Waterfowl and Dove Reservation Process:**
 - a. To guarantee an opportunity to hunt, reservations through an application draw process must be made online through ndowlicensing.com.
 - b. Reservations must be made for the following specified days of each hunt listed:
 - i. The Key Pittman WMA:
 1. The earliest opening day of the general duck and goose seasons.
 - ii. The Moapa Valley portion of the Overton WMA
 1. Opening day and the first weekend of the dove season.
 2. The entirety of any open waterfowl season.
 3. Special Regulation for the Moapa Valley Portion of the Overton WMA: A person or their representative applying for reservations for group hunting will be limited to up to four hunters per party.
3. **Waterfowl Remainder of Season Reservation Process:**
 - a. Remainder of season reservation process is defined as that portion of the season following the opening **two days at Overton WMA** and opening **day** at Key-Pittman WMA.
 - b. **The process to apply for remainder of season waterfowl hunting reservations will be made available on ndow.org and in the *Nevada Small Game Hunting Regulations and Season book*.**
 - i. **Overton WMA rules:**
 1. Hunters that are successful during the Overton WMA Opening Day and Weekend application process must use those reservations before making reservations for the remainder of the season.
 2. An individual may reserve no more than one assigned hunt location on the Moapa Valley portion of the area for no more than four individuals to hunt as a party and this reservation must be utilized prior to reserving another hunt day.
 3. The reservations must be in the hunter's possession and be shown to the check station attendant to constitute a valid reservation for the day specified.
 4. Failure to check out at the Overton WMA may result in a citation being issued, and the loss of hunting privileges for the remainder of the season.
 5. No vehicles are allowed on the management area during the hunting season.
 6. During the waterfowl season at the Overton WMA, an assigned hunt location program will be in effect. Hunters will make a reservation for one of three types of hunt locations (field, pond or bulrush plot) and the specific hunt location will be determined by a drawing at the check station prior to each day's hunt. NDOW reserves the right to adjust blind availability and blind assignments based on the conditions present on the day of the hunt.
 7. A hunter with a reservation will be considered as a "no-show" if they do not present themselves at the check station by one full hour before shooting time, except that at the Overton WMA, a hunter with a reservation will be considered a "no-show" if they do not present themselves at the checking station one and one-half hours before shooting time during the waterfowl season.
 8. Standby hunters must register at the check station upon arrival
 - ii. **Key-Pittman WMA rules:**
 1. Reservations for hunting will be required only on the earliest opening day of the regular duck season and goose seasons.
 2. All hunters will check in at the [Nesbitt Lake parking lot](#) on the opening day of waterfowl season.
 3. For the remainder of the waterfowl season, hunters will complete a reservation card obtained from the Frenchy Lake or Nesbitt Lake check station box and deposit the card in an appropriate drop box for each day hunted.
 4. Failure to turn in a completed card may result in a citation being issued, and the loss of hunting privileges for the remainder of the season.

