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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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FWS ANNOUNCES LIBERALIZED OPENING DATES FOR WATERFOWL SHOOTING SEASON

Secretary of the Interior Oscar L. Chapman announced today that a liberalized framework of opening dates for the 1952-53 migratory waterfowl hunting season will place the earliest opening date at October 1 and the latest closing date on January 10, within the pattern of shooting days to be allocated to the States by virtue of the particular flyway in which they are located.

This means that this year the States can have their first day of gunning on any date or day of the week on or after October 1. This departure from the former pattern of Fish and Wildlife Service regulations, which specified that the season should open on a Friday, is intended to establish more satisfactory regulations, both from the standpoint of the States and the hunters.

The noon opening on the first day of shooting will continue in effect, said Fish and Wildlife Service Director Albert M. Day, "in the interests of conserving waterfowl and distributing hunter-take."

Director Day pointed out that this broader framework of regulations will have particular value from the standpoint of law enforcement because it will permit the States to co-ordinate their opening dates for waterfowl shooting with those for resident game. In addition, it will be easier to accomplish the co-ordination of waterfowl opening dates between States joining controversial boundary waters.

"The Service hopes that this liberalization in these basic provisions will prove advantageous to the States in many ways and that they may be continued in future years," declared Director Day.

The length of the shooting season and the daily bag limits for the coming season will not be publicly announced until the recommended regulations are approved and signed by Secretary Chapman, probably about August 29 or 30. These provisions in the hunting regulations can be determined only after detailed surveys in northern United States, Canada, and Alaska give adequate information concerning the production and survival of young birds.

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