



# *NEWS*

*from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*

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## **SERVICE EXTENDS PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO BAITING REGULATIONS**

In response to requests from many organizations and individuals, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service extended the public comment period on the proposed changes to waterfowl baiting regulations that appeared in the March 25 Federal Register. The public comment period will now end October 1, 1998, instead of May 26, 1998.

The proposal includes new regulatory language for accidental scattering of seed or grain from natural vegetation or agricultural crops incidental to hunting, normal agricultural and soil stabilization practices, baited areas, baiting, manipulation, natural vegetation, and top-sowing of seeds.

Proposed changes also included new guidance with respect to hunting over natural vegetation that has been manipulated. However, no change was proposed regarding application of the strict liability standard to the enforcement of migratory game bird baiting regulations.

Comments should be sent to Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Post Office Box 3247, Arlington, Virginia 22203-3247. Comments may be hand-delivered to 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Suite 500, Arlington, Virginia 22203. Comments must be received by October 1, 1998.

The Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing fish and wildlife and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service's 94 million acres include 514 national wildlife refuges, 78 ecological services field stations, 65 national fish hatcheries, 50 wildlife coordination areas, and 38 wetland management districts with waterfowl production areas.

The agency enforces Federal wildlife laws, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, administers the

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Endangered Species Act, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Aid program that distributes Federal excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state wildlife agencies. This program is a cornerstone of the Nation's wildlife management efforts, funding fish and wildlife restoration, boating access, hunter education, shooting ranges, and related projects across America.