Southwestern Native Aquatic Resources and Recovery Center
Waterfowl and Upland Game Bird Hunting Plan

February 4, 2019

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Southwest Native Aquatic Resources and Recovery Center
7116 Hatchery Road
Dexter, New Mexico  88230

Submitted By:
Project Leader

Signature ____________________________ Date ____________

Concurrence:
Deputy ARD

Signature ____________________________ Date ____________

Approved:
ARD
Fish and Aquatic Conservation

Signature ____________________________ Date ____________

Attachment 3
# Table of Contents

I. Introduction........................................................................................................... 4

II. Statement of Objectives........................................................................................ 5

III. Description of Hunting Program........................................................................... 5

   A. Areas to be Opened to Hunting....................................................................... 5
   B. Species to be Taken, Hunting Periods, Hunting Access................................. 6
   C. Hunting Permit Requirements (if applicable).................................................. 7
   D. Consultation and Coordination with the State............................................... 7
   E. Law Enforcement............................................................................................... 7
   F. Funding and Staffing Requirements ................................................................. 8

IV. Conduct of the Hunting Program......................................................................... 8

   A. Hunting Permit Application, Selection, and/or Registration
      Procedures (if applicable)............................................................................... 8
   B. Hatchery-Specific Regulations..................................................................... 8
   C. Relevant State Regulations ........................................................................... 8
   D. Other Rules and Regulations ....................................................................... 8

V. Public Engagement

   A. Outreach Plan for Announcing and Publicizing Hunting......................... 8
   B. Anticipated Public Reaction to the Hunting Program ............................... 8
   C. How the Public Will be Informed of Relevant Rules Regulations... 9
VI. Compatibility Determination

List of Figures

Figure 1. Aerial map of Southwest Native Aquatic Resource and Recovery Center; Dexter, NM. The yellow border outlines the Dexter Game Management area. Public access is granted at periodic intervals along the eastern most portion of the property. The area enclosed in blue is designated for hatchery operations, is fenced, and closed to the public.
I. Introduction

National Fish Hatcheries are guided by the mission and goals of the Fish and Aquatic Conservation program (FAC), the purposes of an individual hatchery, Service policy, and laws. Relevant guidance includes the Strategic Plan for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Fish and Aquatic Conservation Program: FY2016-2020 and selected portions of the Code of Federal Regulations and Fish and Wildlife Service Manual.

The hatchery was originally authorized as a National Fish Hatchery under the White Act of 1930 pursuant to the authority provided in the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1934.

Originally the primary purpose of the hatchery was to meet the demands for warmwater sport fish in the American Southwest. This purpose changed after the Endangered Species Act of 1973 with the current purpose being the conduct of an aquatic conservation program that assists in the restoration and recovery of federally listed threatened and endangered species.

The mission and work of the National Fish Hatchery System (NFHS):

“... improves recreational and public use of aquatic resources, recovery of federally listed threatened or endangered species, restoration of imperiled species...and fulfillment of tribal partnerships and trust responsibilities.”

National Fish Hatchery System propagation addresses top priorities such as:

- Enhancement of recreational fishing
- Enhancement of public use of aquatic resources
- Recovery of federal protected species
- Restoration of imperiled species
- Fulfillment of tribal partnerships and trust responsibilities

Therefore, it is a priority of the Service to provide for wildlife-dependent recreation opportunities, including hunting and fishing, when those opportunities are compatible with the purposes for which the hatchery was established and the mission of the National Fish Hatchery System.

Through a cooperative agreement (Agreement) between the Department of Interior (DOI) and New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF), established in 1957 (amended in 1981), Southwestern Native Aquatic Resources and Recovery Center (SNARRC) continues to provide public easement to approximately 461 acres of the Dexter Game Hunting Management Area (GHMA) for the purpose of waterfowl and upland game bird hunting. NMDGF manages for all
species of waterfowl and upland game birds. The provision of access to facility property provides quality hunting opportunities for the public. In doing so, the hatchery is supporting a new generation of outdoors enthusiasts and continuing to ensure the importance and relevance of our mission to the American public. Additionally, the continuation of this activity addresses Secretarial Orders (S.O.) 3347 Conservation Stewardship and Outdoor Recreation, and S.O. 3356 Hunting, Fishing, Recreational Shooting, and Wildlife Conservation Opportunities and Coordination with States, Tribes, and Territories.

II. Statement of Objectives

The objectives of a waterfowl and upland game bird hunting program at GHMA are to provide:

- The public with an opportunity to experience wildlife on hatchery lands and increase opportunities for hunters.
- Wildlife-dependent public recreation as mandated by and according to Service law and policy.
- Adherence to the Agreement with NMDGF, established in 1957 and reauthorized in 1981, in which the Service granted to the State of New Mexico the use and control of designated lands to be opened to the public for hunting opportunities.

III. Description of Hunting Program

A. Areas to be Opened to Fishing

Waterfowl and upland game hunting occurs on approximately 460 acres of facility lands. As described within the Cooperative Agreement the State was granted the use and control of the following described lands:

New Mexico Principal Meridian
T. 13 S., R. 26 E.

All that part of Section 16 lying south and east of a diversion fence
Located south of Southwest Native Aquatic Resources and Recovery Center Headquarters

All hunting will be regulated by NMDGF. Public access will be made available and hunting will be allowed during regular seasons which are determined by the State Game Commission. Management will consist of law enforcement from the regular branch of law enforcement for NMDGF. The area is such that it will not entail any additional management personnel other than patrol by NMDGF Conservation Officers. The Service will only be providing access to hatchery lands, as described in the Agreement and will not provide any direct management or oversight.
Figure 1. Aerial map of Southwest Native Aquatic Resource and Recovery Center; Dexter, NM. The yellow border outlines the Dexter Game Management area. Public access is granted at periodic intervals along the eastern most portion of the property. The area enclosed in blue is designated for hatchery operations, is fenced, and closed to the public.

B. Species to be Taken, Hunting periods, Hunting Access

All hunting rules and regulations are determined the New Mexico Game Commission. Regulations for hunting this portion of Southwest Native ARRC can be found in the annually published Rules and Information Booklets. Rules and Regulations are annually developed by NMDGF and are subject to revision.

- SANDHILL CRANE: Eastern Hunt (Chavez County). Sandhill Crane hunters must possess an appropriate license, plus a federal Regular Season Sandhill Crane Permit. This is no limit of permits issued nor deadlines to apply. Permits are available online and at all license vendors. Eastern hunt dates are October 27-January 27, 2019. Bag limit is
3 per day/ 6 in possession.

- WATERFOWL: South Zone (East of the Continental Divide and south of I-40 and U.S. Hwy. 54 at Tucumcari). Ducks and American Coot season is October 24-January 27, 2019. Bag limit is 6 ducks singly or in aggregate and possession is 3 times the daily bag. Aggregate may consist of no more than: 5 mallards, only 2 of which may be female; 3 scaup; 3 wood ducks; 2 redhead; 2 hooded merganser, 2 pintail; and 2 canvass back
- EURASIAN COLLARED DOVE: Statewide season is April 1-March 31 with an unlimited bag limit/possession.
- DOVE AND BAND-TAILED PIGEON: South Zone (south of I-40 from the New Mexico/Arizona border to U.S. Hwy. 53 at Tucumcari; U.S. Hwy. 54 from Tucumcari to the New Mexico/Texas border). Season is September 1-October 28 and December 1-January 1, 2019. Bag limit is 15 singly or aggregate and possession of 45. Band-tailed pigeon season falls under the Regular Season guidance and is from September 1-4 with a bag limit of 2 per day/6 in possession.
- QUAIL: Statewide regulations applicable. Season is November 15-February 15. Bag limit is 15 per day (no more than 5 Montezuma quail) and 30 in possession (no more than 10 Montezuma quail)
- PHEASANT: Statewide regulations applicable. 2019 season is December 6-9. Bag limit is 3 males per day and 6 in possession.

C. Hunting Permit Requirements

Appropriate permits and licenses as determined by NMDGF will be applicable.

D. Consultation and Coordination with the State

The Service is proposing to provide continued public easement to open hunting opportunities for migratory waterfowl and upland game bird hunting on the SNARRC in Dexter, New Mexico. The GHMA was established in 1957 through a cooperative agreement between DOI and NMDGF pursuant to authority provided in the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1934. As part of this agreement, SNARRC continues to provide public access to approximately 460 acres for the purpose of waterfowl and upland game bird hunting.

E. Law Enforcement

NMDGF manages for all species of waterfowl and upland game birds. This management includes any and all enforcement of State game regulations. The Service will not provide any law enforcement of State regulations.

F. Funding and Staffing Requirements

No cost will be incurred by staff from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
IV.  Conduct of the Hunting Program

A.  Hunting Permit Application, Selection, and/or Registration Procedures (if applicable)

All license requirements will be at the discretion of NMDGF and the State Game Commission.

B.  Hatchery-Specific Hunting Regulations

No specific hunting regulations exist.

C.  Relevant State Regulations

All license requirements will be at the discretion of the NMDGF and the State Game Commission.

D.  Other Hatchery Rules and Regulations for Hunting

Hunting will only be permitted on lands designated specifically for that purpose.  Appropriate fencing and signage will be posted to prevent the public from entering Service lands designated for the propagation of aquatic species.

V.  Public Engagement

A.  Outreach for Announcing and Publicizing the Hunting Program

Hunting has been allowed on this property since the signing the Agreement.  Routine and regular hunting occurs on an annual basis and has since the signing of the agreement.  Based on past pressure it is apparent that the hunting community is aware of this hunting opportunity.

B.  Anticipated Public Reaction to the Hunting Program

It is anticipated that continuing to allow access to this property for the purpose of waterfowl and upland game bird hunting will be well received by the public since this activity has been ongoing since 1957.

C.  How Hunters Will Be Informed of Relevant Rules and Regulations

General information regarding hunting and other wildlife-dependent public uses can be obtained through NMDGF.  Annual rules and regulations are published by the Department and can be found online at http://www.wildlife.state.nm.us/.  Upon request, this information will be made available to the public at the station’s visitor center.
VI. Compatibility Determination

Hunting and all associated activities proposed in this plan are not detrimental to the propagation and distribution of fish or other aquatic wildlife.