

SUBMISSION TO THE NWMB
FOR

Information:

Decision: X

Issue: Extension of Spring Snow Goose Harvest in Nunavut to June 30

Background:

Numbers of snow geese in Nunavut have increased greatly over the past 30 years. Populations have been designated as overabundant because of damage that feeding geese are causing to the tundra.

Snow goose hunting seasons have been lengthened and bag limits increased in Nunavut (supported by RWOs and the NWMB) and elsewhere in Canada to increase harvest and reduce goose numbers.

Current regulations allow non-aboriginal hunters to harvest snow geese in spring from May 1 – June 7, as well as during the fall hunting season.

The Canadian Wildlife Service received a request to extend the spring hunt of snow geese by a few weeks to allow more hunting opportunities for non-aboriginal people.

Increasing the opportunity for harvest of snow geese aligns with international management strategies to decrease current population levels.

Extending the spring hunt to June 30 would make the dates consistent with the spring hunt in Northern Quebec.

The change would be made in accordance with section 23.1 of the Migratory Bird Regulations which deals with overabundant species.

People with existing aboriginal and treaty rights can still hunt migratory birds at any time of the year.

Recommendation:

The Canadian Wildlife Service is proposing that the hunting regulations be changed to allow Snow Geese to be hunted in spring by non-aboriginal hunters from May 1 to June 30 (rather than May 1 to June 7).

Consultations

In the past, there have been extensive consultations on the snow goose situation in Nunavut, as well as consultations with the three Regional Wildlife Organizations concerning hunting seasons.

CWS is informing the Regional Wildlife Organizations about the proposed change in snow goose hunting regulations.

Next steps

CWS is recommending that the NWMB make a decision to approve the proposed changes.

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