



Public Input Meeting 2017-2019 Regulations Cycle



Thank You for Your Contribution & Support



Cycle of Success

Hunting, Fishing &
Shooting opportunities
improved

Fish & Wildlife
Programs funded

State Wildlife Agencies
receive grants

Purchase of hunting &
angling gear

Manufacturers pay
remit excise taxes to
USFWS

USFWS apportions
WSFR funds to State
Wildlife Agencies

Since the inception of the Wildlife Restoration Program (Pittman-Robertson) Program, more than \$221 million has been apportioned to Georgia!

Purpose

- Encourage public participation
- Obtain input for consideration
- Exchange of information



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Process

- Jan - Public Input
- Feb - Develop Proposals
- Mar - Review by DNR Board
- Apr - Public Hearings
- May - DNR Board Action
- Jun - Develop Popular Guide
- Jul - Distribution to Public

Regulatory Objectives

- Biologically appropriate & scientifically sound
- Responsive to public desires
- Minimize negative impacts on R³ (Recruitment, Retention & Reactivation of hunters)
- Strive for simplicity

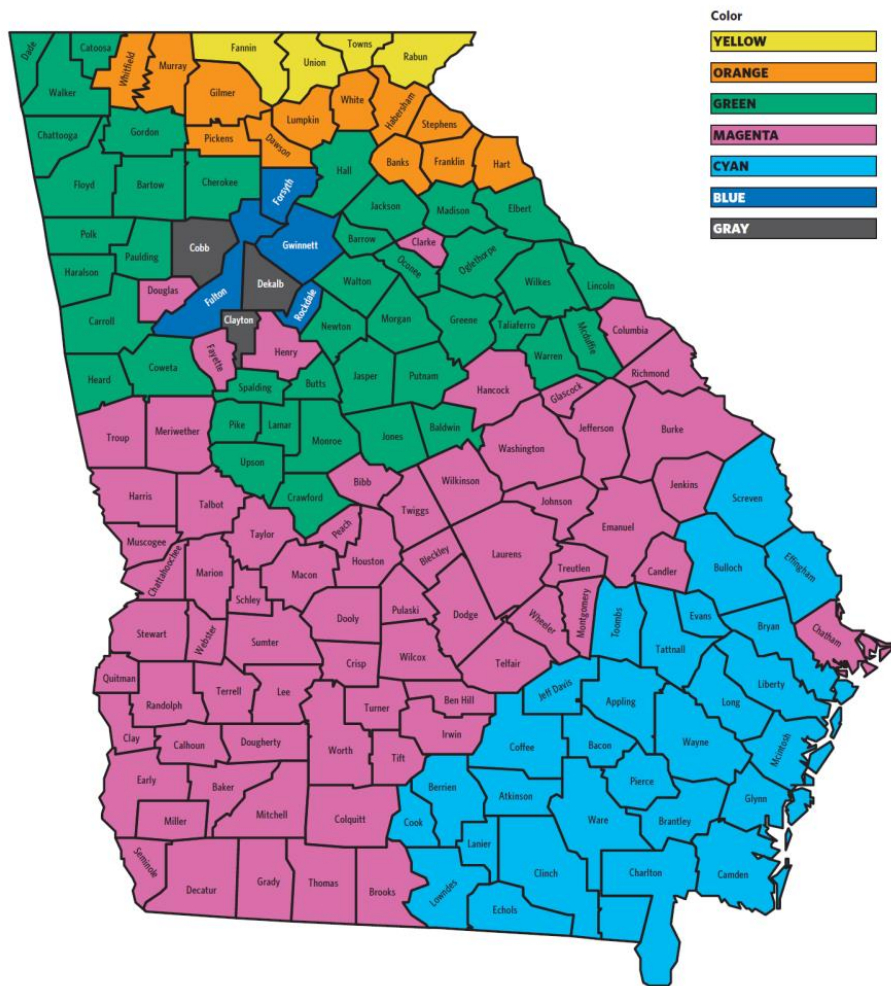


Current Considerations

- Timing of Either-sex Days for Deer
- Legal Hours – Opening Day of Dove Season
- Central GA Bear Season – Timing of One-Day Season
- WMA Changes



Either-Sex Days



- Yellow, orange, blue, gray and magenta: considering no change
- Green, considering reducing buck-only days to first 2 weeks
- Cyan considering reducing to buck-only opening weekend

Legal Hours – Opening Day Dove Season



- USFWS is primary authority for regulating migratory birds. USFWS establishes regulatory frameworks. State wildlife agencies must set regulations within this framework.
- Legal hours framework – 1/2 hour before sunrise until sunset.
- Opening day regulation – 12:00 noon until sunset.
- Not a biological issue; this is entirely a social issue.
- If public desire substantially supports changing legal hours then the department will consider proposing a regulation change.

Central GA Bear Season Season Timing

- One-day season started in 2011; scheduled in November. Females comprised average of 52% of harvest.
- In 2013, season timing adjusted to December to reduce % females in harvest. Percent females in harvest continued to exceed management goals.
- From 2011-2016, females have comprised an average of 57% of harvest and is inconsistent with management goals in the bear management plan (not to exceed 50%).
- Additionally, 86% of all females harvested are from Twiggs County.
- Average age of female bears in harvest is 5.7, is consistent with management plan goals and trend is stable.
- This a biological issue that we intend to address in manner that maintains hunting opportunity while ensuring we meet conservation management goals consistent with the plan.

Central GA Bear Season Season Timing



We are considering several regulatory options for addressing this biological issue:

- 1) Move the timing of the one-day hunt to 2nd Saturday in January
- 2) Maintain timing on 2nd Saturday in December but hold hunt every other year.
- 3) Maintain timing on 2nd Saturday in December but close Twiggs County and open Bleckley County
- 4) Move the timing of the one-day hunt to 2nd Saturday in January and add Bleckley County.

WMA regulations typically change in response to biological parameters specific to each area and with annual calendar date shifts. However, at times, we also look at broader issues. These are under consideration:

- 1) Allowing the use of suppressed firearms for hunting on WMAs
- 2) Allowing the use of buckshot as provided in state law (i.e., deer, bear & feral hog)
- 3) Timing & structure of WMA managed hunts
- 4) Expanding small game hunting opportunity
- 5) We are always open to other suggestions, input?

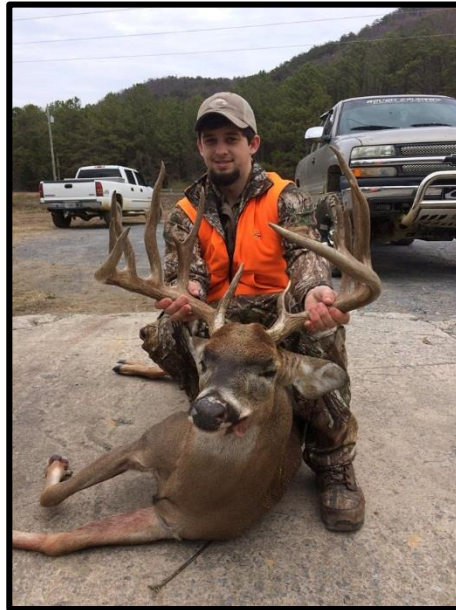
Official Comment Period



1. This begins the official portion of the meeting – comment period.
2. Please hold any questions until the end of the meeting.
3. Please keep comments to 3 minutes. We will be recording your summarized input.
4. First, we will call from list of those who indicated they would like to make a comment.
5. Next, we will ask if there is anyone else who would like to make a comment.
6. Afterwards, the comment period is closed and the official meeting is over.
7. We will remain to entertain any questions.



Thank You for Your Participation



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