

## ISSUES SUBMITTAL FORM

Date: 01/06/2023

<b>ISSUE:</b>	Should migratory game bird hunting seasons and bag limits be modified for the 2023-2024 seasons?
<b>DISCUSSION (FACTS AND FIGURES, EXPLANATION OF ISSUE):</b>	
<p>The attached table and calendars contain CPW staff recommendations for proposed 2023-2024 season dates and bag limits for migratory bird hunting seasons in Colorado. These proposed regulations are consistent with the preliminary proposed federal regulation frameworks published by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on November 3, 2022; final federal frameworks are expected to be published in January 2023. The proposed Colorado season dates include adjustments for the 2023-2024 calendar. The proposed dates for the Northeast Duck Zone have also been changed from 2022—2023, to shorten the length of the split (closed portion) of the season in December by a week, which is made possible by delaying the opening of the season in October by a week. The dates for the Northeast Youth/Military weekend have also been moved one week later than in 2022-2023.</p>	
<p><b>STATE LAW REQUIRES CPW TO SOLICIT INPUT FROM STAKEHOLDERS THAT MAY BE AFFECTED POSITIVELY OR NEGATIVELY BY THE PROPOSED RULES. THE FOLLOWING STAKEHOLDERS HAVE BEEN ADVISED OF AND INVITED TO PROVIDE INPUT ON THE REGULATORY CHANGES PROPOSED IN THIS ISSUE PAPER:</b></p>	
<p><b>*IT IS ASSUMED THAT ALL NECESSARY INTERNAL PARTIES HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED*.</b></p>	
<p><b>[List stakeholder groups and briefly summarize comments received]</b></p>	
<p>The proposed regulations represent no change from the 2022-2023 seasons, except for adjustments for the 2023-2024 calendar, and the season dates in the Northeast Duck Zone (duck season dates and Youth/Military weekend). The Northeast Region hosted a public meeting to gather input on the timing of the split in the duck season in the Northeast Zone on December 12, 2022.</p>	
<b>ALTERNATIVES: (POSSIBLE OUTCOMES or POSSIBLE REGULATIONS):</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>*Preferred Alternative*:</b> See attached table and calendars.</li> <li>2. Adjustments to season dates may be made that are within the outside season dates and total season length established by federal frameworks. State regulations can be more conservative, but not more liberal, than federal frameworks.</li> </ol>	
<b>Issue Raised by:</b>	<b>Jim Gammonley, RPP Branch</b>
<b>Author of the issue paper (if different than person raising the issue):</b>	
<b>CC:</b>	<b>Regulations Managers</b>
<b>APPROVED FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION BY:</b>	<b>Jeff Ver Steeg</b>
<b>REQUIRES NEW SPACE IN THE BROCHURE?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
<b>ARE ADEQUATE STAFF AND FUNDING RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO IMPLEMENT?</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
<b>REGION, BRANCH, OR SECTION LEADING IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<b>All Regions</b>
<b>RECOMMENDED FOR CONSENT AGENDA?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO

## Regulation Change Notification: Proposed Migratory Game Bird Seasons for Colorado 2023-2024

Prepared by: Jim Gammonley, Draft 19 December 2022

Mailing 01/06/2023

These CPW staff proposals for regulations for migratory game bird hunting seasons (Chapter W-5) in Colorado are preliminary and contingent upon final federal regulation frameworks. Federal frameworks for 2023-2024 are expected to be published in the federal register in January 2023, and the proposed season dates and bag/possession limits presented below assume no changes to 2022-2023 federal frameworks, except as noted. The proposed season dates include adjustments for the 2023-2024 calendar, and adjustments for waterfowl and crane seasons to provide an open season during the Thanksgiving holiday weekend. The proposed dates for the Northeast Duck Zone have also been changed from 2022-2023, to shorten the length of the split (closed portion) of the season in December by a week, which is made possible by delaying the opening of the season in October by a week. The dates for the Northeast Youth/Military weekend have also been moved one week later than in 2022-23. These changes are noted with asterisks.

Season	2023-2024 Proposed Regulations			2022-2023 Regulations		
	Proposed dates	Days	Daily bag limit	Dates	Days	Daily bag limit
Sora and Virginia Rail	Sep 1-Nov 9	70	25	Sep 1- Nov 9	70	25
Snipe	Sep 1-Dec 16	107	8	Sep 1-Dec 16	107	8
Band-tailed Pigeon	Sep 1-14	14	2	Sep 1-14	14	2
Doves (Mourning, White-winged)	Sep 1-Nov 29	90	15	Sep 1-Nov 29	90	15
Sandhill Crane (regular season)	Sep 30-Nov 26	58	3	Oct 1-Nov 27	58	3
Crow	Nov 1-Feb 29	121	no limit	Nov 1-Feb 28	120	no limit
Falconry	No extended season			No extended season		
<u>Pacific Flyway Waterfowl, Coot</u>						
September Canada Goose Season	Sep 1-9	9	5	Sep 1-9	9	5
Western Duck, Coot Zone	Sep 30-Oct 17	18	7 duck, 25 coot	Oct 1-18	18	7, 25
	Nov 6-Jan 31	87	7, 25	Nov 6-Jan 31	87	7, 25
(scaup)	Sep 30-Oct 17, Nov 6-Jan 12 (86 days)			Oct 1-Oct 18, Nov 6-Jan 12 (86 days)		
Eastern Duck, Coot Zone	Sep 30-Jan 12	105	7, 25	Oct 1-Jan 13	105	7, 25
	(scaup)	Sep 30-Dec 24 (86 days)			Oct 1-Dec 25 (86 days)	
Western Goose Zone	Sep 30-Oct 8	9	5 dark, 10 light	Oct 1-9	9	5 dark, 10 light
	Nov 6-Jan 31	87		Nov 6-Jan 31	87	
Eastern Goose Zone	Sep 30-Jan 3	96	5 dark, 10 light	Oct 1-Jan 4	96	5 dark, 10 light

## Regulation Change Notification: Proposed Migratory Game Bird Seasons for Colorado 2023-2024

Season	2022-2023 Proposed Regulations			2021-2022 Regulations		
	Proposed dates	Days	Daily bag limit	Dates	Days	Daily bag limit
<u>Central Flyway Waterfowl, Coot</u>						
September Teal Season	Sep 9-17	9	6	Sep 10-18	9	6
Mountain/Foothills Duck, Coot Zone	Sep 30-Nov 26	58	6 duck, 15 coot	Oct 1-Nov 27	58	6, 15
	Dec 25-Jan 31	38	6, 15	Dec 25-Jan 31	38	6, 15
*Northeast Duck, Coot Zone	Oct 14-Nov 26	44	6, 15	Oct 8-Nov 27	51	6, 15
	Dec 11-Jan 31	52	6, 15	Dec 18-Jan 31	45	6, 15
Southeast Duck, Coot Zone	Oct 28-Jan 31	96	6, 15	Oct 28-Jan 31	96	6, 15
North Park Dark Goose Zone	Sep 30-Jan 12	105	5	Oct 1-Jan 13	105	5
South Park Dark Goose Zone	Sep 30-Jan 12	105	5	Oct 1-Jan 13	105	5
San Luis Valley Dark Goose Zone	Sep 30-Oct 18	19	5	Oct 1-Oct 19	19	5
	Nov 18-Feb 11	86		Nov 19-Feb 12	86	
Remainder Central Flyway Dark Goose Zone	Oct 30-Feb 11	105	5	Oct 31-Feb 12	105	5
Central Flyway light goose	Oct 28-Feb 11	107	50	Oct 29-Feb 12	107	50
Light goose conservation order	Feb 12-Apr 30	78	no limit	Feb 13-Apr 30	77	no limit
<u>Youth/Military Waterfowl Weekends</u>						
Pacific Flyway Western Zone	Oct 21-22	2	Same as regular season	Oct 22-23	2	Same as regular season
Pacific Flyway Eastern Zone	Sep 23-24	2		Sep 24-25	2	
Central Flyway Mountain/Foothills	Sep 23-24	2	Same as regular season for duck, coot, dark goose	Sep 24-25	2	Same as regular season for duck, coot, dark goose
*Central Flyway Northeast Zone	Oct 7-8	2		Oct 1-2	2	
Central Flyway Southeast Zone	Oct 21-22	2		Oct 22-23	2	

Possession limits for all seasons are three times the daily bag limit, with the exception that there is no possession limit for crow, Central Flyway light goose, and the light goose conservation order. Overall daily bag limits for ducks include the following restrictions: Pacific Flyway – no more than 2 female mallards, 1 pintail, 2 canvasbacks, 2 redheads, 2 scaup; Central Flyway – up to 5 mallards, but no more than 2 can be female mallards, 1 pintail, 2 canvasbacks, 2 redheads, 3 wood ducks, 1 scaup.



# COLORADO

## Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

6060 Broadway  
Denver, CO 80216  
P 303.297.1192

### MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 3, 2023

TO: Parks and Wildlife Commissioners

FROM: Jim Gammonley, Avian Research Leader, Colorado Parks and Wildlife and Brian Dreher, Terrestrial Section Manager, Colorado Parks and Wildlife

SUBJECT: Rail and crow seasons

During the 2022 regulations cycle for Chapter W-5, Commissioners raised concerns about hunting season regulations for rails (sora, Virginia rail) and American crows.

This memo provides some background on the hunting of these species in Colorado, the biological information that we have for these species and the staff recommendation for season dates, season lengths, and bag and possession limits for these migratory bird species in 2023-2024.

#### Background

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has regulatory authority over hunting seasons for these species and annually sets the regulations frameworks for seasons (i.e., earliest starting date and latest closing date for seasons, maximum season length, and maximum daily bag and possession limits). These regulation frameworks are based on the Service's annual assessment of the population status of migratory game birds. Colorado typically adopts the maximum season lengths and daily bag and possession limits permitted under federal frameworks for migratory game bird hunting seasons.

Population level trend data from the North American Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) and harvest estimates from the Service are available for sora and Virginia rail. The BBS population trend for Virginia rail in Colorado during 1990-2019 was an increase of 0.65/year (confidence interval -1.84 - 3.98); the BBS trend for Sora was 0.68 (-1.78 - 3.03). It should be noted that BBS has limited value for secretive marsh birds like rails. In Colorado, sora and Virginia rail harvest is very limited, despite the relatively liberal season length and daily bag limit. During 2001-2020, the Service estimated that no harvest occurred in Colorado during 12 of 20 years, including 8 years when no hunters actively pursued rails in Colorado. During years when some harvest was estimated, statewide harvest estimates ranged from a high of 1,600 during 2007 to a low of 100 in 2001, 2008, and 2019; estimated annual harvest over the 20-year period averaged 205 sora and Virginia rails (combined) per year. During years when hunters actively pursued rails, hunter numbers ranged from a high of 400 in 2009 to a low of <50 in 2002 and



2012; estimated annual rail hunter numbers over the 20-year period averaged 110 hunters per year. Total hunter-days ranged from 1,100 (2001) to <50 (2002, 2012) and averaged 265 hunter-days per year over the 20-year period. Note that these harvest and participation estimates are based on small samples sizes and are highly variable, and therefore imprecise. Hunting was not considered as a threat in the federal listing of black rails as Threatened, and given their small size and preference to move through vegetation on the ground versus flying, there is low risk of black rails being harvested where they co-occur with soras and Virginia rails.

The BBS population trend for American crow in Colorado during 1990-2019 was 2.36/year (1.34 - 3.41). Information on crow harvest or hunter activity during hunting seasons is lacking, but harvest is likely very limited and localized.

#### Staff Recommendation

The CPW staff recommendation for season dates, season lengths, and bag and possession limits for these migratory bird species in 2023-2024 is to maintain current (2022-2023) regulations (note that the crow season is intended to run from November 1 through the end of February, which is February 29 in 2024), consistent with federal frameworks.

We understand that Commissioners' comments in March 2022 appeared to be based largely on social concerns (hunting ethics, low interest in harvesting and consuming these species, etc.). If the Commission proposes to restrict seasons or bag limits, or eliminate hunting seasons entirely for these species, we encourage the Commission to clearly communicate this at the January 2023 PWC meeting, and to request input from the public prior to finalizing Chapter W-5 regulations in March 2023.

# 2023-2024 Central Flyway Northeast Duck Zone Seasons

## September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

## October

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

## December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

## January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

## February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

Number of days (107 total)	
9	= September Teal
2	= Youth/Military Weekend
73	= Regular duck season
23	= High Plains Unit Days
Holidays marked in red	

# 2023-2024 Central Flyway Southeast Duck Zone Seasons

## September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

## October

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

## December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

## January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

## February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

Number of days (107 total)	
9	= September Teal
2	= Youth/Military Weekend
73	= Regular duck season
23	= High Plains Unit Days
Holidays marked in red	

# 2023-2024 Central Flyway Mountain/Foothills Duck Zone Seasons

## September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

## October

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

## December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

## January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

## February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

Number of days (107 total)	
9	= September Teal
2	= Youth/Military Weekend
73	= Regular duck season
23	= High Plains Unit Days
Holidays marked in red	

# 2023-2024 Central Flyway San Luis Valley Dark Goose Season

## September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

## October

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

## December

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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

## January

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	1	2	3	4	5	6
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

## February

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4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

# 2023-2024 Central Flyway North Park and South Park Dark Goose Seasons

## September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

## October

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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## November

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26	27	28	29	30		

## December

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24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

## January

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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

## February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

# 2023-2024 Remainder Central Flyway Dark Goose Seasons

## September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

## October

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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## November

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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

## December

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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

## January

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	1	2	3	4	5	6
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

## February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

# 2023-2024 Central Flyway Light Goose Season

## September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

## October

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

## December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

## January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

## February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

# 2023-2024 Pacific Flyway Western Waterfowl Zone Seasons

## September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

## October

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

## December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

## January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

## February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

Number of days (107 total each for ducks and geese)

9 = September Canada goose

2 = Youth/Military Weekend

105 = Regular duck season

96 = Regular goose season

Holidays marked in red

# 2023-2024 Pacific Flyway Eastern Waterfowl Zone Seasons

## September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

## October

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

## December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

## January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

## February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

Number of days (107 total each for ducks and geese)

9 = September Canada goose

2 = Youth/Military Weekend

105 = Regular duck season

96 = Regular goose season

Holidays marked in red