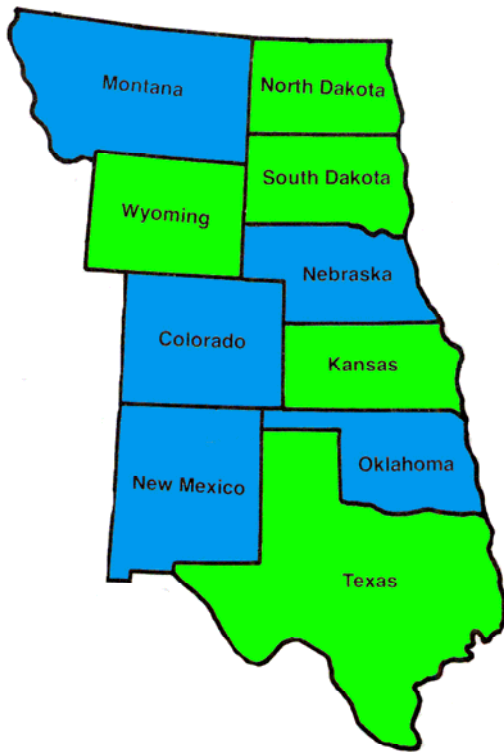


U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Approves Hunter's Choice Bag Limit Trial



- Hunter's Choice States
- Non-Hunter's Choice States

In 2006, the Central Flyway began a three-year trial to evaluate the effectiveness of a new daily limit for ducks designed to maintain maximum hunting opportunities in the future. These new regulations are being called the Hunter's Choice Bag Limit. For the duration of the trial, half of the 10 states in the Central Flyway, including Wyoming, will use the Hunter's Choice Bag Limit, while the other five states will maintain similar seasons as previous years (see graphic).

Wyoming was selected as one of the states to try the new Hunter's Choice Regulations

The Problem: A long-term decline in pintail populations and a small population of canvasbacks have led biologists to try and come up with ways to limit the harvest of these ducks while allowing harvest of more abundant species. In recent years, there have been "seasons within seasons" where the take of pintails and canvasbacks was only allowed for 39 days of the overall 74-day duck season. The **Hunter's Choice Bag Limit** has the potential to limit harvest on pintails and canvasbacks, like "seasons within seasons", and may be more acceptable to hunters than having partially closed seasons on several ducks.

Hunter's Choice uses an aggregate or combined bag limit category to restrict the harvest of duck species needing special harvest management consideration, while maintaining full hunting opportunity on abundant species or stocks of ducks such as drake mallards. The Hunter's Choice aggregate bag limit category includes the hen mallard, pintail, canvasback, and in Texas, a mottled duck, where only one of the duck species in the aggregate category can be taken in the daily limit. For those species in the aggregate bag category, the harvest of one will buffer the harvest of the others, thus reducing the harvest of all. At the end of the trial the two different types of regulations will be evaluated for their effectiveness in limiting pintail and canvasback harvest and hunters will be surveyed to see what set of regulations they prefer.

Duck Regulation Differences for 2007

Non-Hunter's Choice States

No Change for 2007 (Same as Recent Past)

- Six bird daily limit with select duck species allowed in combination.
- Seasons within seasons where pintail and canvasback harvest are not allowed during periods of the overall duck season.

Hunter's Choice States

New Hunter's Choice Regulations in Effect

- Five bird daily limit with select duck species allowed in combination.
- Pintail and canvasback harvest is allowed during the entire duck season (one pintail or canvasback or one hen mallard allowed per day).