



Ideas Wanted on Potential Waterfowl Hunting Changes

The Minnesota DNR is seeking public input as it updates the State's waterfowl hunting regulations. As a first step, the DNR is asking people to comment on potential changes that could alter seasons and create additional opportunities to hunt waterfowl.

A summary of these potential changes and a questionnaire that seeks input is available on the DNR's [website](#) through Monday, Jan. 31. The DNR will consider this initial public input in developing its proposed changes to the waterfowl regulations. These proposed regulations will then be presented for public comment in March.

"We are asking people to engage with us early so we can use their input to help us narrow the list of potential changes," said Steve Cordts, DNR waterfowl specialist. "Getting some feedback up front allows us to be responsive and fully consider the preferences expressed."



Among the potential changes on which the DNR is currently seeking input are the early teal

season, allowing motorized decoys, eliminating the 4 p.m. early season closure, expanding trolling motor use, and increasing the Canada goose bag limit.

The second step in the process will come in March, when the DNR releases its proposed regulation changes. As part of this phase, the DNR will hold a virtual town hall meeting to discuss the proposed regulations and will take additional public comment.

Final regulation changes will factor in those public comments and could become effective as early as this fall's waterfowl season.

For more information about this engagement effort and waterfowl management in Minnesota, visit mndnr.gov/waterfowl.

2020 Hunting Recap

Grouse hunting success was similar to years' past in the Red Lake WMA area. The biggest changes for hunters relative to 2019 was that forest conditions were much drier. Frequent visitors to the area likely also noticed a significant "Covid Effect" during the 2020 season. Outdoor recreation was popular during 2020 and autumn in the Red Lake WMA area was no exception.

In the area around Norris Camp, deer harvest declined slightly during the 2020 season in Deer Permit Area (DPA) 111. Changes were made to DPA 111 before the 2020 season and the Permit Area was slightly smaller compared to 2019, which may account for the slight drop in buck harvest. Antlerless harvest also declined about

25%, but this was likely attributable to a decreased number of lottery permits available. Hunters can expect conservative regulations again for the 2021 season.

	Bucks	Antlerless	Total	Antlerless Permits Available
2020	272	28	300	25
2019	297	110	40	500

Winter Bird Watching

Winter birding is in full swing in northwestern Minnesota. The Christmas Bird Counts have been completed and a lot of great species have been observed.

Included in that list are birds that can be seen in open areas like a snowy owl perched on an electrical pole or several sharp-tailed grouse eating willow brush buds in a scrubby wetland. If you venture into the forest, you might find some red crossbills feeding on cones at the tops of pine or spruce trees or perhaps some pine grosbeaks feeding on the ground along the road. You might even spot a spruce grouse or a couple of gray jays if you are lucky.

Common redpolls are also back in good numbers this year as are evening grosbeaks, especially at bird feeders throughout the area. Some birds would take a little more work to find however, such as needing to venture by or into some lowland conifers like spruce, tamarack, or cedar forests to find some boreal chickadees. They are there, you just have to put a little legwork in to find them (or get to a place where they will fly up to you to check you out!). Good luck birding and enjoy being out in the cold out-of-doors!

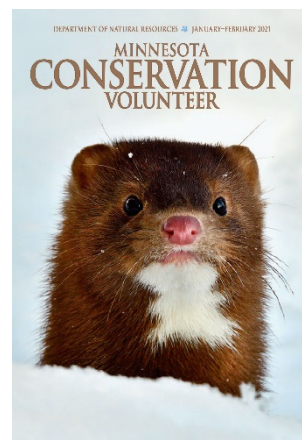
Birds and Ice-Melter

Last winter at Norris Camp, staff noticed a small die-off of white winged crossbills at the office. It seemed likely attributable to an ice-melt product that was being used at the time. Bird die-offs associated with road salt are well documented and typically associated with products that contain chloride.

In order to avoid this at your home or office, try switching to a safer product to melt ice. “Pet Friendly” ice melt is available at some home supply stores. Otherwise, try using less product, using a product that is not brightly colored and may attract birds, or use sand as a substitute.

Trapping Update and Registration Sites

Fur registration will continue until two days after the otter and bobcat season ends on January 24. Fur registration for the fisher and marten season has concluded. Norris Camp staff registered 36 marten and 11 fisher this year. This continues the recent trend of high marten/fisher harvest ratios. Staff will be available at the Warroad DNR office on January 26 from 3-6 PM to registers otter and bobcat. Otherwise, trappers can make an appointment with DNR staff beforehand. Contact Norris Camp staff if you would like to make an appointment.



Friends of Norris Camp
Treasurer's Report
By June Foss

Account Balance = \$7,901.42

Thanks so much to the following people
for donations they have made since
November 2020:

**Dan Moss, Jeff Moss, Gavin Bettcher &
Tim Bettcher**

and

Wendy Carlberg and Sandy Tigie

Address Updates Needed!

We've had to delete several names from our mailing list as we no longer have a working emails for some people. If you know of anyone who would like to be added to our mailing list – just let us know.

We can be reached at:
redlake.wildlife@state.mn.us or at
(218) 783-6861

Thanks!



COMMON REDPOLLS

Photo by Beth Siverhus