

Department of Natural Resources**Adopted Expedited Emergency Game and Fish Rules: 2025 Waterfowl and Sandhill Crane Hunting, Light Goose Population Control, Game Refuges, Controlled Hunting Zones, and Feeding and Resting Areas****6230.0100 DEFINITIONS.**

[For text of subpart 1, see Minnesota Rules]

Subp. 1a. **Early goose season.** "Early goose season" has the meaning given in part 6240.0100, subpart 1a.

[For text of subparts 2 and 3, see Minnesota Rules]

6230.0400 SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR STATE GAME REFUGES.

[For text of subpart 1, see Minnesota Rules]

Subp. 2. **Bemidji Game Refuge, Beltrami County.** The Bemidji Game Refuge in Beltrami County is open to:

[For text of item A, see State Register, volume 49, page 150]

B. ~~Canada~~ goose hunting during the early goose season, except on Lake Bemidji, the Mississippi River, ~~and~~ Stump Lake, and Lake Irving;

[For text of items C and D, see Minnesota Rules]

[For text of subparts 3 and 4, see Minnesota Rules]

Subp. 5. **Clay County Game Refuge, Clay County.** The Clay County Game Refuge in Clay County is open to:

[For text of item A, see State Register, volume 49, page 150]

[For text of items B and C, see Minnesota Rules]

D. ~~Canada~~ goose hunting during the early goose season.

[For text of subpart 6, see Minnesota Rules]

[For text of subpart 7, see State Register, volume 49, page 899]

[For text of subparts 8 to 10, see Minnesota Rules]

Subp. 11. **Evansville Game Refuge, Douglas County.** The Evansville Game Refuge in Douglas County is open to:

- A. trapping;
- B. ~~Canada~~ goose hunting during the early goose season; and
- C. deer and bear hunting by firearms.

[For text of subpart 12, see State Register, volume 49, page 150]

Subp. 13. **Fox Lake Game Refuge, Martin County.** The Fox Lake Game Refuge in Martin County is open to:

[For text of items A and B, see Minnesota Rules]

- C. ~~special goose hunts~~ goose hunting during the September goose season;

[For text of items D and E, see Minnesota Rules]

[For text of subparts 14 to 20, see Minnesota Rules]

Subp. 21. **Lac qui Parle Game Refuge, Chippewa and Lac qui Parle Counties.** The following special provisions apply to the Lac qui Parle Game Refuge, Chippewa and Lac qui Parle Counties:

- A. Those portions within the Lac qui Parle Mission Site are closed to hunting.
- The remainder of the refuge is open to:

(1) waterfowl hunting only from the third Thursday in October through the open ~~Canada~~ goose season, only at designated hunting stations as provided by ~~parts~~ part 6230.0500 to ~~6230.0700~~;

(2) deer hunting; and

(3) small game hunting other than waterfowl, except from the second Saturday in October through November 30, when small game hunting is allowed only at designated hunting stations as provided by ~~parts~~ part 6230.0500 to ~~6230.0700~~. Small game hunting is not allowed on closed ~~Canada~~ goose hunting days during a split goose season.

B. No unauthorized person may trespass during the dates posted on any part of the refuge posted with "State Wildlife Sanctuary - Do Not Trespass" signs, except for:

(1) ice fishing; and

(2) open water fishing in the posted closed area from the close of the ~~Canada~~ goose season until ~~the second Saturday in October~~ November 1.

[For text of items C and D, see Minnesota Rules]

[For text of subparts 22 to 32, see Minnesota Rules]

Subp. 33. **Ocheda Lake Game Refuge, Nobles County.** The Ocheda Lake Game Refuge in Nobles County is open to:

[For text of items A to C, see Minnesota Rules]

D. ~~Canada~~ goose hunting during the early season and from the first Saturday in December through the end of the statewide goose season, ~~except that hunting is prohibited within 100 yards of surface water during the early goose season~~; and

[For text of item E, see Minnesota Rules]

[For text of subparts 34 to 40, see Minnesota Rules]

Subp. 41. **St. James Game Refuge, Watonwan County.** The St. James Game Refuge in Watonwan County is open to:

A. trapping; and

B. ~~special goose hunts~~ goose hunting during the early goose season.

[For text of subpart 42, see Minnesota Rules]

Subp. 43. **Schoolcraft Game Refuge, Hubbard County.** The Schoolcraft Game Refuge in Hubbard County is open to:

A. small game hunting, except waterfowl, through the Thursday nearest November 4 and after the close of the 100 series firearms deer season;

[For text of items B and C, see Minnesota Rules]

[For text of subparts 44 to 47, see Minnesota Rules]

Subp. 48. **Talcot Lake Waterfowl Refuge, Cottonwood County.**

[For text of item A, see Minnesota Rules]

B. The Talcot Lake State Waterfowl Refuge is open to goose hunting by persons with disabilities at designated hunting stations. Hunters with disabilities may reserve designated stations according to regulations available at the Talcot Lake Wildlife Management Area Headquarters. All other applicable controlled hunt regulations in ~~parts~~ part 6230.0500 and 6230.1100 apply to persons hunting at these stations.

[For text of subpart 49, see State Register, volume 49, page 150]

[For text of subparts 50 to 53, see Minnesota Rules]

Subp. 54. [See repealer.]

[For text of subpart 55, see State Register, volume 49, page 150]

[For text of subparts 56 to 60, see Minnesota Rules]

[For text of subparts 61 to 63, see State Register, volume 49, page 150]

[For text of subpart 64, see State Register, volume 49, page 899]

6230.0500 GENERAL REGULATIONS FOR CONTROLLED HUNTING ZONES AND DESIGNATED HUNTING STATIONS IN STATE GAME REFUGES.

The following regulations apply to all persons within a controlled hunting zone or in designated hunting stations during ~~the an open Canada goose seasons~~ waterfowl season or as otherwise specified in parts 6230.0600 to 6230.1100:

[For text of item A, see Minnesota Rules]

~~B. Only one hunting group, consisting of no more than three hunters, may occupy a designated hunting station at a time.~~ Except for stations reserved for hunters with disabilities, use of designated hunting stations is first-come, first-serve. A person may not occupy a station that is posted closed.

~~C. Persons occupying a hunting station must fulfill all license requirements to hunt waterfowl.~~

C. No trailers of any kind are allowed in designated parking lots. Hunters using designated hunting stations must park their vehicles in provided parking areas or numbered stalls. Designated parking areas may not be occupied between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m.

D. All persons hunting in controlled hunting zones or in designated hunting stations must adhere to any additional regulations that apply.

~~D.~~ E. A person may not leave any refuse, offal, or feathers on public lands in the controlled hunting zone or in any parking lot.

~~E.~~ F. Alcoholic beverages may not be consumed or possessed at any of the hunting stations on public lands.

~~F. A person may not loiter in areas between the designated hunting stations on public lands.~~

~~G. On public lands, dogs must be on a leash except within ten feet of stations or while retrieving, and must be under control at all times.~~

~~H. On public lands, after each party member has bagged a limit of Canada geese, or expended a limit of shells, the party must promptly leave the station.~~

~~I. No trailers of any kind are allowed in designated parking lots.~~

6230.0600 DESCRIPTIONS OF CONTROLLED HUNTING ZONES.

[For text of subpart 1, see Minnesota Rules]

Subp. 2. **Thief Lake Zone, Marshall County.** On the Thief Lake Wildlife Management Area in Marshall County, the controlled hunting zone includes the following:

The Southwest Quarter of Section 8, the Northwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter (NW 1/4 SW 1/4) of Section 9, ~~the Northwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter (NW 1/4 SW 1/4) of Section 11~~, the West Half (W 1/2) of Section 17, and the Northwest Quarter (NW 1/4) of Section 20; as well as portions of the South Half of the Southeast Quarter (S 1/2 SE 1/4) of Section 8, the South Half of the South Half (S 1/2 S 1/2) of Section 9, ~~the South Half (S 1/2) of Section 10, the South Half of the South Half (S 1/2 S 1/2) of Section 11~~, the Northwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter (NW 1/4 SE 1/4) of Section 20, Township 158 North, Range 41 West.

Subp. 3. [See repealer.]

[For text of subparts 4 and 5, see Minnesota Rules]

Subp. 6. [See repealer.]

Subp. 7. [See repealer.]

[For text of subpart 8, see Minnesota Rules]

6230.0900 ORWELL SPECIAL PROVISIONS.

[For text of subpart 1, see Minnesota Rules]

Subp. 2. [See repealer.]

Subp. 3. **Restrictions on entry to zone.** ~~Persons may not enter the controlled hunting zone except when their vehicles are occupying numbered parking stalls in the designated parking lot in the controlled hunting zone.~~ Persons other than those hunting at a designated station in the controlled hunting zone may not occupy a numbered stall in a designated parking lot.

Subp. 4. [See repealer.]

Subp. 5. [See repealer.]

Subp. 6. [See repealer.]

Subp. 7. **Hunting restrictions.** Hunting other than waterfowl is prohibited.

6234.0800 HUNTING BY FALCONRY.

[For text of subparts 1 to 3, see Minnesota Rules]

Subp. 4. **Open season and hours for migratory game birds.** Woodcock, sora and Virginia rails, mourning dove, and common snipe may be taken by falconry from September 1 to December 16. Ducks, coots, and moorhens (Gallinules) may be taken by falconry ~~from the Saturday nearest October 1 to the Saturday nearest January 14~~ during the open seasons prescribed in part 6240.0640, subpart 1, and from December 13, 2025, through January 21, 2026. Geese may be taken by falconry during any open goose season. Crows may be taken by falconry during the open season. Falconry hours are from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset, ~~except during the regular waterfowl season when falconry hours are the same as waterfowl shooting hours.~~

6240.0100 DEFINITIONS.

[For text of subpart 1, see Minnesota Rules]

Subp. 1a. **Early goose season.** "Early goose season" means goose seasons ~~beginning before~~ open September ~~16~~ 6 through September 21.

[For text of subparts 2 to 4, see Minnesota Rules]

6240.0200 GENERAL RESTRICTIONS FOR TAKING AND POSSESSION OF MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS.

Subpart 1. **Shooting hours.** Shooting hours for migratory waterfowl, coots, gallinules, rails, and snipe are one-half hour before sunrise to sunset, except ~~as follows:~~ during the early teal season from September 6 through September 10, when shooting hours are sunrise to sunset for teal.

~~A. on the opening day of the duck season, shooting hours begin at 9:00 a.m.; and~~

~~B. from the opening day of the duck season to the Saturday nearest October 8, shooting hours end at 4:00 p.m.~~

Subp. 2. **Possession limits.** The possession limit is ~~twice~~ three times the daily limit, except for rails where the daily and possession limits are the same. All restrictions specific to a species or gender apply.

[For text of subpart 3, see Minnesota Rules]

Subp. 4. **Use of motorized watercraft.** A person may use motorized watercraft in the waterfowl feeding and resting area established on South Heron Lake during the early goose season ~~established in part 6240.1200.~~

[For text of subparts 5 and 6, see Minnesota Rules]

Subp. 7. **Taking in open water.** A person may take migratory waterfowl, coots, gallinules, rails, and snipe in open water on the following waters of Minnesota with the restrictions given:

A. the area of the Mississippi River and backwaters within the boundary beginning at the intersection of U.S. Highway 61 and the Minnesota border in Dakota County; thence along U.S. Highway 61 to U.S. Highway 63; thence along U.S. Highway 61/63 to U.S. Highway 61; thence along U.S. Highway 61 to U.S. Highway 14; thence along U.S. Highway 61/14 to Interstate 90; thence along Interstate 90/U.S. Highway 61/14 to State Trunk Highway (STH) 16; thence along STH 16 to STH 26; thence along STH 26 to the state's southern boundary; thence along the southern boundary to the eastern boundary; thence along the eastern boundary to the point of the beginning: hunting is allowed not more than 100 feet from any shoreline, including islands, from boats that must be at anchor;

B. Lake Pepin, Lake of the Woods, and Lake Mille Lacs: hunting is allowed from boats that must be at anchor; and

C. Lake Superior north and east of Minnesota/Park Point peninsula: hunting is allowed from boats that must be at anchor.

Subp. 8. **Early teal season restrictions.** Within the boundaries of the Leech Lake Reservation, taking teal during the early teal season is prohibited within one-half mile of wild rice beds that are posted as open to wild rice harvest by Tribal authorities.

Subp. 9. **Early teal season restrictions.** Within the boundaries of the White Earth Reservation, taking teal during the early teal season is prohibited on wild rice waters identified by Tribal authorities.

Subp. 10. **Early teal season restrictions.** Within the boundaries of the Mille Lacs Indian Reservation, taking teal during the early teal season is prohibited on wild rice beds that are posted open to rice harvest by Tribal authorities.

6240.0250 TAKING MOURNING DOVES.

Subpart 1. **Open season.** Mourning doves may be taken during the ~~60-day~~ 90-day period ~~beginning from~~ September 1 through November 29.

[For text of subpart 2, see Minnesota Rules]

6240.0400 TAKING RAILS.

Subpart 1. **Open season.** Sora and Virginia rails may be taken during the 70-day period from September 1 to the end of woodcock season as prescribed under part 6240.0300 through November 9. King rails may not be taken or possessed.

[For text of subpart 2, see Minnesota Rules]

6240.0500 TAKING ~~COMMON~~ WILSON'S SNIPE.

Subpart 1. **Open season.** ~~Common~~ Wilson's snipe may be taken during the 107-day period from September 1 to the end of woodcock season as prescribed under part 6240.0300 through December 16.

Subp. 2. **Daily limit.** A person may not take more than eight ~~common~~ Wilson's snipe per day during the open season.

6240.0600 SPECIAL LICENSES FOR LIGHT GOOSE POPULATION CONTROL.

Subpart 1. **Definition.** For purposes of this part, "light goose" means a lesser snow goose including a blue phase lesser snow goose (*Anser c. caerulescens*) or a Ross' goose (*Anser rossii*).

Subp. 2. **License required.** A person may not take a light goose during the period prescribed in subpart 3 except under a valid license and in full compliance with this part and the conditions in the license. Residents and nonresidents may apply for licenses. No other hunting license or stamps are required. A license holder must have a license in possession at all times when taking or transporting light geese taken under this part and

must retain the license for as long as the license holder possesses light geese taken under this part.

Subp. 3. **Open harvest period.** Light geese may be taken from February 18 through April 30 with licenses issued under this part. Shooting hours are one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

Subp. 4. **Bag limits.** No daily or bag limits apply to taking light geese under this part.

Subp. 5. **Game refuges and waterfowl refuges.** All state refuges closed to migratory waterfowl hunting are closed to taking light geese under this part. All waterfowl refuges closed by posting to taking ducks or geese during any portion of the fall waterfowl seasons are closed to taking light geese under this part. All controlled hunting stations in the Lac qui Parle Game Refuge in Chippewa and Lac qui Parle Counties are closed to taking light geese under this part.

Subp. 6. **License conditions; applicability of other laws and rules.**

A. A license issued under this part is effective on the date issued or on February 18, whichever is later. A license expires on April 30 the year issued.

B. Except as provided in subparts 2 to 5, all applicable provisions of state statutes and federal law for taking migratory waterfowl apply to taking light geese under this part. All applicable rules for taking migratory waterfowl apply to taking light geese under this part, unless inconsistent with or otherwise provided in this part.

C. By July 1, licensees must submit records of their light goose harvest to the Department of Natural Resources on forms provided by the commissioner.

Subp. 7. **License application.** Application for a license under this part must be made using the application processes established by the commissioner under Minnesota Statutes, section 84.027, subdivision 15.

Subp. 8. **Penalties.** Violation of this part or the conditions of any license issued under this part results in revocation of the license in addition to any other penalties provided by state or federal law.

Subp. 9. **License eligibility.** To be eligible for a light goose license, a person must not have any small-game hunting privileges revoked within one year before purchasing a light goose license.

6240.0610 YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNTING DAY.

Subpart 1. **Dates, eligibility, and license requirements.** Ducks, mergansers, coots, moorhens, and ~~Canada~~ dark or light geese, as defined in part 6240.0950, subpart 2, may be taken statewide on Youth Waterfowl Hunting ~~Day~~ Weekend, September 13 and 14, by resident and nonresident hunters ~~15~~ 17 years of age or younger. An adult resident or nonresident mentor 18 years of age or older, who is authorized by the youth's parent or guardian, must accompany the youth hunter at all times during the hunt. The accompanying adult may not hunt. No hunting license or state waterfowl stamps are required, but all youths age 16 and older must have a federal migratory bird stamp.

Subp. 2. **Shooting hours.** Shooting hours are one-half hour before sunrise to ~~4:00 p.m.~~ sunset.

Subp. 3. **Bag limits.** The daily bag limit for ducks, mergansers, coots, and moorhens is as allowed by federal rule. The daily bag limit for geese is five ~~Canada~~ dark geese and 20 light geese, as defined under part 6240.0950, subpart 2.

6240.0630 TAKING SANDHILL CRANE.

Subpart 1. **Open season.** Sandhill cranes may be taken from September 13 through October 19.

Subp. 2. **Shooting hours.** Shooting hours for sandhill cranes are one-half hour before sunrise to sunset.

Subp. 3. Open area; taking restrictions.

A. Sandhill cranes may be taken only in the Northwest Goose Zone described in part 6240.0860, subpart 1.

B. Sandhill cranes may be taken by bow and arrow or shotgun with nontoxic shot approved by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. A person may not take sandhill cranes with a rifle or handgun.

Subp. 4. License and requirements.

A. Sandhill cranes may only be taken under:

(1) a valid permit to take sandhill cranes issued by the commissioner for a fee of \$3; and

(2) a small-game license, unless exempted.

B. A hunter must have a license to take sandhill cranes in possession when taking or possessing sandhill cranes.

C. A hunter must not have had small- or big-game hunting privileges revoked within one year of purchasing a license to take sandhill cranes.

Subp. 5. Bag limits. A person may not take more than two sandhill cranes per day or have more than six sandhill cranes in possession.

Subp. 6. Penalties. Violating this part or the conditions of any permit issued under this part results in revocation of the license and any other penalty provided by state or federal law.

Subp. 7. Game and waterfowl refuges. All state game refuges closed to migratory-waterfowl hunting are closed to taking sandhill cranes under this part. All waterfowl refuges closed by posting to taking ducks or geese during any portion of the fall waterfowl seasons are closed to taking sandhill cranes under this part.

6240.0640 TAKING COOTS, MOORHENS, DUCKS, AND MERGANSERS.**Subpart 1. Open season.**

A. Coots, moorhens, ducks, and mergansers may be taken as follows:

(1) in the North Waterfowl Zone described in part 6240.0620, subpart 2, during the 60-day period from September 27 through November 25;

(2) in the Central Waterfowl Zone described in part 6240.0620, subpart 4, during the 60-day period that includes September 27 through October 5 and October 11 through November 30; and

(3) in the remainder of the state, during the 60-day period that includes September 27 through October 5 and October 18 through December 7.

B. Blue- and green-winged and cinnamon teal may be taken statewide from September 6 through September 10.

Subp. 2. Daily limits.

A. In any one day, a person may not take more than six ducks, five mergansers, and a total of 15 coots and moorhens.

B. The daily limit of ducks, other than mergansers, may not include more than:

(1) four mallards, including two female mallards;

(2) two pintail;

(3) two redheads;

(4) three wood ducks;

(5) two black ducks; and

(6) two canvasbacks.

C. The limit of scaup is one per day through October 11 in the North Waterfowl Zone, one per day through October 16 in the Central Waterfowl Zone, and one per day through October 23 in the South Waterfowl Zone. The limit of scaup is two per day the remainder of the duck season in each zone.

D. The daily limit of mergansers may not include more than two hooded mergansers.

6240.0950 TAKING GEESE.

Subpart 1. **Open season.** Geese may be taken as follows:

A. statewide during the early goose season. The early goose season is a special season for which a special season goose license is required under Minnesota Statutes, section 97B.802;

B. in the North Waterfowl Zone described in part 6240.0620, subpart 2, September 27 through December 26;

C. in the Central Waterfowl Zone described in part 6240.0620, subpart 4, September 27 through October 5 and October 11 through December 31; and

D. in the remainder of the state, during the 60-day period that includes September 27 through October 5 and October 18 through January 7.

Subp. 2. **Daily limit.** The bag limit for dark geese is five combined and the bag limit for light geese is 20 combined during any open season. Dark geese are Canada, cackling, brant, and white-fronted geese. Light geese are snow, blue, and Ross's geese.

6240.1850 REFUGES OPEN TO TAKING GEESE.

[For text of subpart 1, see Minnesota Rules]

Subp. 2. **Game refuges.**

A. ~~The following refuges are open to goose hunting during the first two days of the regular goose season: Fox Lake Game Refuge in Martin County and the Saint James Game Refuge in Watonwan County~~ is open to goose hunting during the first two days of the regular goose season.

B. The Fox Lake Game Refuge is open to goose hunting ~~for~~ from the last ~~seven days~~ day of the statewide duck season through the end of the goose season. ~~There is no goose hunting within 100 yards of Fox and Temperence Lakes.~~

Subp. 3. **Waterfowl refuges.**

[For text of item A, see Minnesota Rules]

B. The Mud-Bardwell Waterfowl Refuge in Martin County is open to ~~Canada~~ goose hunting from the Saturday on or nearest ~~November 1~~ October 9 to the end of the goose season. ~~There is no goose hunting within 100 yards of Mud and Bardwell Lakes.~~

6240.2000 MIGRATORY WATERFOWL FEEDING AND RESTING AREA RESTRICTIONS.

[For text of subparts 1 to 3, see Minnesota Rules]

Subp. 4. **Use of electric motors.** On the lakes listed in items A to ~~J~~ K, a person may use an electric motor with battery power of 12 volts or less within the designated migratory waterfowl feeding and resting area during the open waterfowl season:

[For text of items A to E, see Minnesota Rules]

F. Kandiyohi County: ~~Wagonga~~ Wakanda Lake, Lake Lillian;

[For text of items G and H, see Minnesota Rules]

I. Pope County: Nelson Lake; ~~and~~

J. Traverse County: Mud Lake; and

K. Le Sueur County: Diamond Lake, Dora Lake, and Sanborn Lake.

REPEALER. (a) Minnesota Rules, parts 6230.0400, subpart 54; 6230.0600, subparts 3, 6, and 7; 6230.0700; 6230.0800, subparts 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7; 6230.0900, subparts 2, 4, 5, and 6; 6230.1000; 6230.1100; 6240.1150, subpart 2; 6240.1200, subparts 3, 4, and 5; and 6240.1800, subpart 1, are repealed.

(b) Minnesota Rules, part 6240.0600, published in the State Register, volume 48, page 671, January 22, 2024, is repealed.

EFFECTIVE PERIOD. The emergency amendments to Minnesota Rules, parts 6230.0100, 6230.0400, 6230.0500, 6230.0600, 6230.0900, 6234.0800, 6240.0100, 6240.0200, 6240.0250, 6240.0400, 6240.0500, 6240.0610, 6240.1850, and 6240.2000; and the repealer, paragraph (a), expire January 30, 2026. After the emergency amendments expire, the permanent rules as they read before those amendments again take effect, except as they may be amended by permanent rule. Minnesota Rules, parts 6240.0600, 6240.0630, 6240.0640, and 6240.0950, expire January 30, 2026.