

FOUNTAIN GROVE CA
2009 Waterfowl Hunting Outlook
September 14, 2009

The wetland renovation project has progressed this past summer with most of the work completed in Pools 1, 2, and 3. Stop-log structures still need to be installed in 3 structures located in the walk-in portion of Pools 2 and 3. Hopefully, this will be completed before the seasons open in October but it will affect our ability to provide water for teal season. Construction activities are currently on-going in H and J pools and the upper end of Pool 1.

Teal Season (September 12-27, 2009)

Teal hunting will be allowed on a self-check basis this year. All hunters must check in and out through the hunter checkin room located on the west end of the area shop building. Designated pools available for teal hunting include West Emerson, East Emerson, North Parsons, West Parsons, Pool 1 south, Northwest Pool, Pool 2, GRWI 2, Pool 3, and GRWI 3. We have not pumped water yet this year so all water is trapped from a previous flood event. Water level in Pool 1 is declining as we release water so construction activities can continue in H and J pools; this water will be retained in Pool 2. Information regarding pools and water levels is posted in the Hunter Checkin room.

Youth Waterfowl Hunting Season (October 24-25, 2009)

Hopefully, we will have opportunity to pump water and provide habitat for migrating waterfowl prior to the Youth Hunt. If so, a morning drawing will be conducted both days to allocate hunting opportunity. Draw time will be 5:15 am. If we are unable to pump water and opportunity is limited, we will allow hunting through a self-check system. It is unlikely any waterfowl blinds will be available for the Youth Hunt this year so all hunting opportunity will be walk-in style only. West and East side refuges will be closed to hunting. The entire area closes at 1:00 pm during the Youth Hunt at Fountain Grove.

North Zone Duck Season (October 31, 2009 – December 29, 2009)

Construction activities associated with the H-J pool complex should progress if conditions remain sufficiently dry to allow equipment access. If construction activities are still ongoing during the North Zone Duck Season, this part of the area may be closed to hunting. If construction activities have ceased and we are able to pump or capture water in these pools, we will offer hunting opportunity in these pools. The style of hunting (blind or walk-in) will be dependent on conditions and amount of available water.

Waterfowl hunters are required to attend a morning drawing conducted daily at the area headquarters building. Draw time is generally 2 hours before shooting time; however, hunters should double check draw times posted on the Department's internet site or on the area's answering machine (660/938-4124 ext 30). Due to the uncertainty as to when we will be able to begin pumping water, the style of hunting we offer in Pools 2 and 3 may change during the season. As of today, we anticipate fairly shallow water in Pools 2 and 3 during the first half of the duck season, which makes hunting the waterfowl blinds difficult to impossible. Therefore, we will begin the season hunting Pools 2 and 3 as walk-in style hunting and, as the season progresses and water levels increase, switch over to blind hunting Thanksgiving week. All walk-in style hunting closes at 1:00 pm and all waterfowl blind hunting is open during legal shooting hours. These plans may change if a flood event occurs or if we are unable to pump water as we expect. Any changes will be posted in the Hunter Checkin Room, at the area Headquarters, and on the area's phone system.

Walk-in hunting opportunities are available in the East Side units (Macs 1-5 and Stinson) and, dependent upon water availability and repairs to flood-damaged levees, in the Parsons Creek units (East Emerson and West Emerson; hunting opportunity in West Parsons and North Parsons is dependent on repairs to flood damage). We anticipate beginning the season with 4-6 positions on the East side and ending the season with 6-8 positions. Hunting opportunity in the Parsons Creek units is opportunistic and dependent on a rise in Parsons Creek. All waterfowl hunting opportunity is allocated through the morning draw.

Please feel free to contact local area staff at 660/938-4124 or call the Chillicothe office at 660/646-6122 for further updates.

Refuges take effect on October 15 with no hunting or admittance permitted in the West Side Refuge (Pool 1) and the East Side Refuge (Prairie Slough, Prairie Pond, S Hole, Robbins 80, Lower Mac, Che Ru Lake, and area north of CheRu). Also beginning October 15, the area closes to all uses except waterfowl hunting, archery deer and turkey hunting, and fishing at Jo Shelby Lake (all other area ponds and lakes are closed to fishing). Portions of the area designated as Upland Hunting zones will open to small game hunting and fishing on January 1, 2010.

North Zone Canada Goose Season

Fountain Grove **will not** be open during the early phase of the Canada goose season (September 26-October 7). This early season is designed to reduce resident Canada goose numbers, particularly at locations where these resident birds are over populating an area or causing a problem. This is not the case at Fountain Grove where the resident birds are kept in check by the later segment of the Canada goose season. A daily drawing is conducted during the 2nd phase of the Canada goose season (November 26-January 31) to allocate goose hunting opportunities. If we freeze up or there are not sufficient numbers of Canada geese on the area to warrant a drawing, we will go to a self-check system. This information will be posted in the Hunter Checkin room, located on the west end of the area shop, and on the area's telephone system.