

MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS
PUBLIC COMMENTS
2021 SPRING LIGHT GOOSE CONSERVATION ORDER

1. The Montana Sportsmen Alliance, representing resident hunters, anglers and conservationists, appreciates the opportunity to provide public comment on the proposed adoption of the Light Goose Conservation Order for the Central Flyway portion of MT. The C.O. is a well-intended management action to reduce over-abundant Snow and Ross geese on their arctic breeding habitats. Given the lack of native settlements in many of these Central Arctic areas, another tool was needed to try and reduce populations elsewhere. While harvest has increased under the C.O., it has not been enough to reverse the trend in population growth. Furthermore, there is no corresponding option in the Pacific Flyway for Western Arctic light goose populations. We offer support for the C.O. but note that little to no real harvest opportunity exists in eastern MT because of spring migration patterns that take these geese primarily through North Dakota. It will be important to temper hunter expectations given that situation and to speak clearly to frustration that may be expressed for not being able to adopt this option in the Pacific Flyway portion of the State, especially along the East Front in the Freezout Lake area. We urge the Department to track participation and any harvest that occurs, including any commercial outfitting activity. Finally, it will be imperative to include communication to the public that describes why the C.O. regulations are far more liberal than what is legal during the general fall waterfowl hunting season. Thank you, Montana Sportsmen Alliance Leadership Group

Jeff Herbert Helena, MT

2. I think it will be nice to have another hunting opportunity available to those who might be able to take advantage of the Light goose conservation order. I am an avid waterfowler myself, but do not see myself utilizing this hunting opportunity. I am not sure how many light geese we will see in this part of the state, but like I said, this will be great for those who can take advantage of this hunt. Thank You!

Ken Jansa Glasgow, MT

3. I do not approve of the new light goose conservation law as it is not included in the migration law. I am against it

Salvatore Vaspol Bozeman, MT

4. If biologists have made the determination that this control measure is necessary, I support it. I do wonder about how the general public will feel about no bag limits, but then again this is a control measure not a hunt.

Bradshaw Sumners Livingston, MT

5. Sounds great to me. Would freezeout be open to the conservation order?

Robert Plakke Corvallis, MT

6. Great idea, long over due, limits should be very liberal and electronic calling should be a option, snow geese are devastating to spring crops.

Steve wilson Victor, MT

7. I fully support a light goose conservation order. I would suggest allowing electronic calls which would help hunter success. The birds are hunted for 8 month each year and the order s to reduce the population.

Don Toby Thompson Bigfork, MT

8. I am in favor of this order. The population is only going up and this would allow Montanan's to enjoy a different type of hunting in the spring. Thank you.

Ryan Nelson Bozeman, MT

9. Yes please!

Artem Pechishev Bozeman, MT

10. I am in favor of the spring light goose. Including Canadian could provide farmers additional help. As precipitation becomes less consistent, winter wheat and other crops are under exceeding pressure from all species of geese pecking away the young crop which is unable to recover due to climate conditions. Increasing Fall season daily limits might be a good start too.

James Gamble Bozeman, MT

11. To be honest, I have not read the proposal. I don't need to because I'm all for it. From too many reliable sources I've learned over the years that the snow goose population is out of control which will eventually lead to mass die-off. Get a spring season going around Freezeout and any other migratory routes you have records of showing them going north. Use the states that have a season for a template so that you won't have to reinvent the wheel. A small economic boost for rural communities; something to hunt in the spring besides turkeys (which, BTW, you guys/gals have done a remarkable job of management on these birds!) and possibly put a dent in the population of the geese

Pelham Monte Turner Superior, MT

12. I've hunted snow geese in Saskatchewan several times, both with hired outfitters and with a small group of friends without outfitters. Hunting these large spring flocks without electronic calls is a waste of time as small groups of humans can't replicate the cacophony of noise these flocks make. Recorded Animal Sounds (MCA 87-6-401) would need to be amended to allow such use. If it were, I would be very likely to hire MT outfitters instead of taking my money out of state. As large spreads of decoys are also needed, outfitting makes sense, would provide revenue for agricultural communities, and opportunity for solo and small group hunters instead of the purchase of large numbers of decoys. Without the use of recorded call for this specie, both methods of hunt are bound to fail. Texas, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Iowa, and maybe more states have adapted their laws to allow for the use of electronic calls, some exclusive to the spring season. If Montana is going to do this, learn from other states and do it right!

Gary Moses Kalispell, MT

13. Great idea!! But needs to include the whole state. Or at least freezout out lake areas. That is where the majority of the snows come through in the fall and spring. Why limit it to only half the

state. No other states do that. I have guided snowgoose hunters and it's a lot of work and just limiting it to a single portion just makes it harder to get enough birds harvested to make a difference..

Tryg Koch Kalispell, MT

14. I support a spring snow goose season

Fred Upchurch Stevensville , MT

15. I am opposed to the proposed killing of geese in their flyway. Geese and all wildlife are under so much pressure now, with the expanded hunts, climate changes, habitat losses and human encroachment. I feel that they deserve the opportunity to be unmolested as they strive to carry out their migration, without human interference. I am wary of the cry of "overpopulation" that is often used to justify slaughter. Thank you.

Peg Brownlee Florence, MT

16. This would be a great opportunity and help reduce spring snow goose numbers. Would add allow of electronic calls. Most states with this conservation hunt allow electronic calls. Makes it very difficult to hunt these geese without

Cody Ristau Belgrade , MT

17. I fully support a spring hunt on light goose.

Garett Bacon East Helena , MT

18. I am adamantly opposed to a spring hunt. This will interrupt their migration patterns, deprive geese of their lifelong mates right at breeding time and scatter them. It will also add stress to the birds, who already face an arduous journey. We have friends and family who travel from out of state to see this wondrous site of the migration. This brings in tourism dollars. It truly is a special event. Please don't ruin it and disturb the birds. Surely, there must be a better time to do this. Maybe extend the general season. I urge you not to proceed with this plan to disturb the snow geese migration.

Kathryn kotynski Great falls, MT

19. Yes ..I am in favor of offering a spring white goose conservation season in Central Flyway of eastern Montana in spring of 2022...lets help slow their population growth at their breeding grounds. john

John A Farley Hamilton, MT

20. Anything positive to help our wildlife

Manny Zanger Roscoe, NY

21. I support the creation of the Spring Light Goose Conservation Order establishing a 2022 Spring Season.

Stephen Christian Colstrip, MT

22. Go for it.

Bob Seidel Eureka, MT

23. From: Randall Knowles <knowlesmontana@juno.com>

Sent: Monday, November 15, 2021 5:13 PM

To: FWP Wildlife <fwpwld@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Light Goose Changes

I recommended this change two years ago and was told it could not be done.

If our sister states are doing it then Montana Should be doing it. Randy

"Give light and people will find the way." Ella J. Baker (1903–1986) was an African-American civil rights and human rights activist.

– Randall Gene Knowles, 3017 Ninth Avenue South, Great Falls, MT 59405-3421 voice, cell, & text **406-799-1547** KnowlesMontana@Juno.com