

TPWD seeking public input on hunting regulation proposals

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) is now accepting public comment on proposed changes to hunting regulations for 2019-2020. The proposed changes include implementation and expansion of white-tailed deer “doe days,”an experimental mule deer antler restriction in Lynn County, a clarification on turkey harvest requirements, and season dates and bag limits for migratory game birds.

TPWD will be taking public comment on the following proposed changes to the 2019-2020 Statewide Recreational Hunting Proclamation, with input to be considered before any action by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission at its March 20 public hearing:

- Refusal of program participation in Managed Lands Deer Programs (MLDP) for non-compliant properties in areas where chronic wasting disease (CWD) testing is required for all harvested deer.
- A four-day antlerless deer season in 21 counties in south central Texas. Counties being considered include: Austin, Bastrop, Caldwell, Colorado, Dewitt, Fayette, Gonzales, Guadalupe, Karnes, Lavaca, Lee, Waller, Washington, and Wilson. In addition to these counties, Goliad, Jackson, Victoria, and Wharton counties north of U.S. Highway 59 and Comal, Hays, and Travis east of IH-35 would also be included.
- Expansion of “doe days” in 20 counties from four to 16 days. Counties being considered include: Bell (east of IH 35), Burleson, Delta, Ellis, Falls, Fannin, Franklin, Freestone, Hopkins, Hunt, Kaufman, Limestone, Milam, Navarro, Rains, Smith, Titus, Van Zandt,

Williamson (east of IH 35), and Wood.

- An experimental 20-inch minimum antler spread restriction regulation in Lynn County.
- A new season for javelina in six counties in the South Plains, to include: Borden, Dawson, Gaines, Hardeman, Scurry, and Terry counties.
- Clarification that proof of sex is required for turkeys taken during seasons when the bag limit is gobblers only or gobblers and bearded hens (i.e., not either sex), and that it can remain attached to the harvested bird or accompany the harvested bird.
- Establish seasons and bag limits for migratory game birds for 2019-2020.

The public is encouraged to provide comment on the proposed regulation changes. Opportunities to provide comments for or against these proposals include:

- Facebook Live Webinar: TPWD staff will present proposed hunting regulation changes and answer questions in a Facebook Live webinar at noon Feb. 28 on the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Facebook page.
- Public hearings: TPWD staff will host several public hearings to receive input from stakeholders and constituents concerning the proposed regulation changes.

Brenham - Tuesday, March 5, 1305 Blue Bell Rd., Brenham;

LaGrange - Wednesday, March 6, TAMU AgriLife Extension Service, 255 Svoboda Ln., LaGrange;

Victoria - Thursday, March 7, Pattie Dodson Health Center, 2805 Navarro, Victoria;

Seguin - Wednesday, March 13, Texas AgriLife Extension

Office, 210 East Live Oak, Seguin.

- Online: Once the proposed regulations are published in the Texas Register, comments on the changes can be provided on the TPWD public comment page

until March 19.

- In writing: To TPWD, attn. Hunting Regulations Public Comment, 4200 Smith School Rd., Austin, TX 78744.
- In person: The TPW Commission will take public

comment on the proposed changes at their meeting on Wednesday, March 20 in Austin. Public testimony will normally be limited to three minutes per person.

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