

HB892_Jacobs_Proposed Amendment&Info

Uploaded by: Jay Jacobs

Position: FAV



HB0892/623326/1

AMENDMENTS
PREPARED
BY THE
DEPT. OF LEGISLATIVE
SERVICES

13 FEB 25
10:46:19

BY: Delegate Jacobs

(To be offered in the Environment and Transportation Committee)

AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL 892
(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, in line 4, after "in" insert "certain areas of".

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 2, in line 1, after "(C)" insert "(1) THIS SUBSECTION DOES NOT APPLY IN:

(I) ALLEGANY COUNTY;

(II) FREDERICK COUNTY;

(III) GARRETT COUNTY;

(IV) WASHINGTON COUNTY; AND

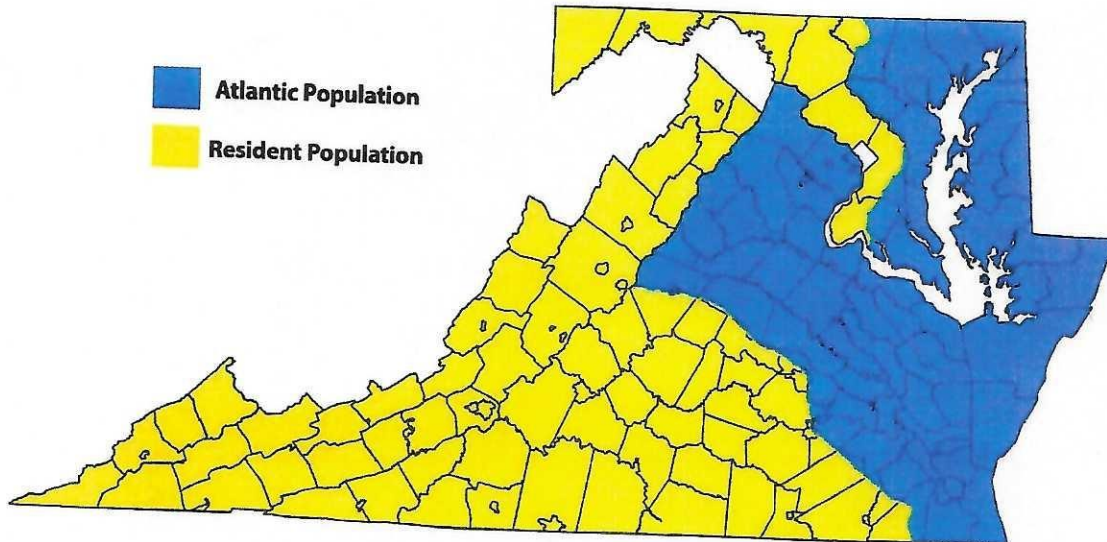
(V) THE PORTION OF CARROLL COUNTY GEOGRAPHICALLY WEST OF ROUTE 31 AND ROUTE 97.

(2)";

and in line 8, after "2025." insert "It shall remain effective for a period of 5 years and, at the end of June 30, 2030, this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.".

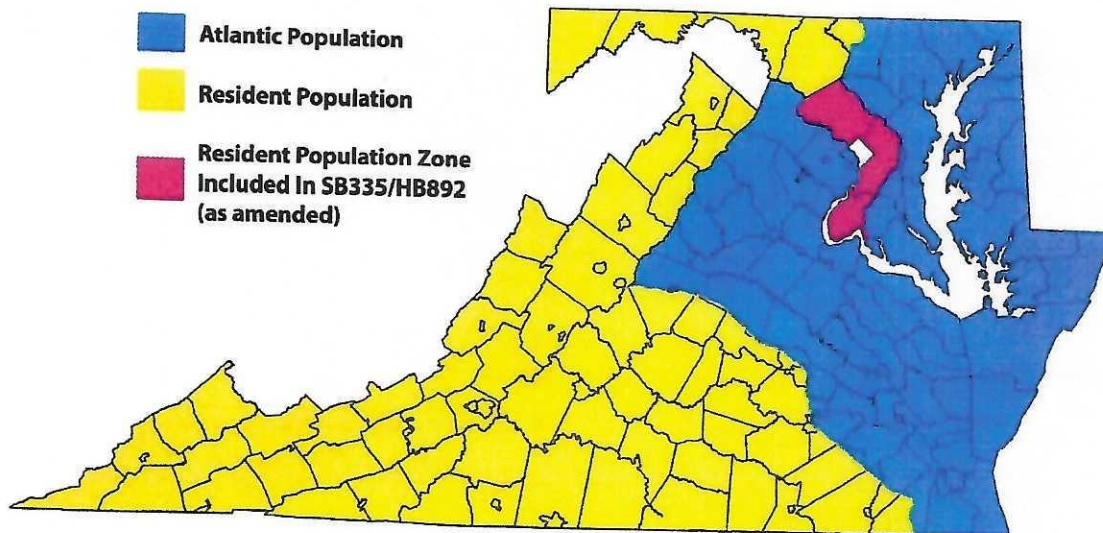
Current:

Maryland and Virginia Goose Hunting Zones



Proposed Under SB335/HB892 As Amended:

Maryland and Virginia Goose Hunting Zones



HB892.pdf

Uploaded by: Jay Jacobs

Position: FAV

JAY A. JACOBS
Legislative District 36
Caroline, Cecil, Kent, and
Queen Anne's Counties

Environment and Transportation
Committee

Subcommittees

Motor Vehicle and Transportation

Natural Resources, Agriculture,
and Open Space

Local Government and Bicounty Agencies



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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Joint Committee on Administrative,
Executive, and Legislative Review

HB892-Natural Resources-Canada Geese-Bag Limits

Chairman, Korman, Vice Chair Boyce and members of the
Environment and Transportation Committee:

Today I am here to present HB 892 which is requiring during the
migratory Canada goose hunting season, the bag limit for all
Canada geese in the State to conform to the bag limit for migratory
Canada geese adopted annually by the Department of the Interior's
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Please look at the maps that are included in this testimony which
indicate the areas of the Atlantic population and the resident
population for clarity of the issue.

I ask for a favorable vote on HB892

HOM Testimony Supporting HB 892.pdf

Uploaded by: william miles

Position: FAV



P.O. Box 501
Huntingtown, Maryland 20639

HOUSE ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
February 19, 2025

House Bill 892: Natural Resources – Canada Geese – Bag Limits
SUPPORT

HUNTERS OF MARYLAND, LLC represent the interests of Maryland's hunting community at both the State and local level. Few realize that hunters underwrite 100% of all wildlife management/research costs through their purchase of hunting license fees/equipment. For the record, hunters do so willingly b/c of American System of Conservation Funding, a user-pay model celebrating its 86th Anniversary which also underscores the noble story of hunters as America's original conservationists.

Bill Miles, Advocate

THE HONORABLE MARC KORMAN, CHAIR
HONORABLE MEMBERS OF HOUSE ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Hunters of Maryland, LLC commend Delegate Jacobs and co-sponsors for their conservation-minded foresight in proposing to mitigate the unintended consequences of harvesting migratory Canada geese ("AP" Atlantic Population) during Maryland's current resident Canada goose hunting seasons. For the 2024/2025 season, Maryland – with approval from the US Fish & Wildlife Service – authorized a 3-way split season for hunting resident Canada geese: (1) an early resident Canada goose season with a daily bag limit of 8 birds in both the Eastern Zone (September 2-14) and Western Zone (September 2-25); (2) a late resident Canada goose season with a daily bag limit of 5 birds statewide from November 23-29; and (3) a late resident Canada goose season with a daily bag limit of 5 birds statewide from December 16-March 10.



Comparatively speaking, the 2024/2025 season for AP geese – a 30 day, 2 bird daily bag limit – was 2-fold: (1) December 20 through January 4; and (2) January 15 through February 1.

CONSERVATION ALARM BELLS ARE RINGING: The AP breeding pair and total population estimate in 2024 on the Ungava Peninsula (northern Quebec, AP hatching area) was 88,890 pairs – accordingly – which was significantly lower than the estimated number of breeding pairs on the Ungava Peninsula in 2023 of 115,328 pairs. The total population estimate in 2024

of 606,672 individuals was less than the 2023 estimate of 611,590 individuals. Still awaiting future overall population estimates...*despite having an AP breeding pair count (see below).*

Recently, the US Fish & Wildlife Service, Atlantic Flyway Council and Maryland's DNR issued the *Proposed Migratory Game Bird Hunting Seasons for 2025-2026*. Accordingly, among other things, the Atlantic Flyway Council has recommended a 2025/2026 "restrictive" season for hunting AP Canada geese, aka, 30 days and 1 goose/day" – compared to the "moderate" 2024/2025 season for hunting AP geese at 30 days and 2 geese/day – even though officials project 133,500 breeding pairs for June 2025.

The Atlantic Flyway Council is a group of representatives from state and provincial wildlife agencies within the Atlantic Flyway, responsible for coordinating and recommending management strategies for migratory birds in that region, primarily by providing advice to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on hunting regulations and conservation efforts for waterfowl like ducks, geese, and swans within the Atlantic Flyway.

Proposed two-way 2025/2026 split AP Canada goose hunting Season: (1) December 19, 2025, thru January 3, 2026; and (2) January 14, 2026, thru January 31, 2026.

The Council has also proposed an 80-day season in 2025/2026 for hunting resident Canada geese with a daily bag limit of 5 geese/day as follows:

Proposed two-way split: (1) November 22, 2025, through November 28, 2025; and (2) December 15, 2025, through March 7, 2026.

<https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Documents/2025-26MigBird-Regulation-Proposal-Presentation.pdf>

It's perfectly understandable to hunt resident geese in September – migratory geese don't arrive until late November – with an 8-bird daily bag limit. It's not perfectly understandable to hunt resident geese from December 16, 2024, through March 10, 2025, with a daily bag limit of 5 birds. Why risk harvesting 5 resident geese each day during prime waterfowl season when there's a chance some of those resident birds could very well be AP birds? Looking forward per the Council's proposal for 2025/2026 of a two-way split for hunting resident Canada geese, the proposed seasons encompass a period when there's an even greater risk of harvesting AP migratory Canada geese because of the proposed late November 2025 plus mid-December 2025 through early 2026 March when AP migratory Canada geese are prevalent in Maryland.

The last thing we want in Maryland is to see what happened in 1995 when AP Canada geese breeding pairs and overall population number plummeted, resulting in a 6-year moratorium on AP Canada goose hunting. Breeding pair surveys then of key AP nesting areas in northern Quebec documented a more precipitous decline in AP Canada goose numbers from 118,000 nesting pairs recorded in 1988 to 90,000 in 1993, 40,000 in 1994, and 29,000 pairs in 1995. This drastic change in numbers of AP Canada geese prompted State, Federal and Provincial wildlife agencies in 1995 to suspend the recreational hunting season of AP Canada geese in the US and in the Canadian Provinces of Ontario and Quebec. The resultant 6-year closure, caused by a precipitous 75% drop in the AP Canada goose population, figured to have cost the region – primarily Maryland's Eastern Shore – anywhere from \$20 to \$40 million each year.

https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Documents/AP_Survey_report_2024_finalv2.pdf

HB892 testimony , larry sanders.pdf

Uploaded by: LARRY SANDERS

Position: UNF

E. Larry Sanders, III

7661 Brentland Road
Welcome, MD 20693
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February 13, 2025

The Honorable Chair Marc A. Korman
House Environment and Transportation Committee
House Office Building, Room 251
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Letter of Opposition to HB892, Natural Resources - Canada Geese - Bag Limits

Dear Honorable Chair Marc A. Korman and members of the Committee,

As a resident of Charles County, Maryland and longtime waterfowl enthusiast, I am opposed to HB892.

First, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources "Letter of Information", dated February 4, 2025 (copy attached), clearly indicates the validity and rationale for different Canada Goose Zones. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has the final jurisdiction subsequently approving in prior years.

Second, the Proposed 2025- 2026 DNR Canada goose seasons continue with the split zones, as in years prior.

Finally, the DNR letter dated February 4, 2025 indicates HB892 could present hunter confusion without significantly improving the Migratory AP Canada Goose population.

In conclusion, HB892 alters the Canada Goose hunting seasons in a manner not supported by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

Therefore, I respectfully request the committee issue an unfavorable report on HB892.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Larry Sanders, III". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping "E" and a long, horizontal stroke extending to the right.

E. Larry Sanders, III
7661 Brentland Road
Welcome, MD 20693
Charles County

HB0892_DNR_LOI_ENT_2-19-25.pdf

Uploaded by: Emily Wilson

Position: INFO



Wes Moore, Governor
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor
Josh Kurtz, Secretary
David Goshorn, Deputy Secretary

February 19, 2025

BILL NUMBER: House Bill 892 - First Reader

SHORT TITLE: Natural Resources – Canada Geese – Bag Limits

DEPARTMENT’S POSITION: LETTER OF INFORMATION

EXPLANATION OF DEPARTMENT’S POSITION

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources provides the following information regarding House Bill 892 related to Canada Geese hunting bag limits.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Maryland Canada goose hunting is regulated by the federal government’s U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under the authority of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. There are two Canada goose hunting seasons in Maryland; one that targets resident geese and another for the migratory Atlantic Population (AP) geese that nest in the subarctic Ungava Peninsula region of Canada and migrate to Maryland for the winter.

Population trends for resident geese and migratory geese are vastly different, with resident geese considered over-populated, while migratory AP goose numbers are more limited and managed much more conservatively. Fortunately, numerous years of scientific studies involving banding of individual geese, as well as large-scale radio-telemetry studies have provided the Department with the information needed to delineate the wintering grounds of migratory geese. As a result, the Department, in conjunction with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and all other Atlantic Flyway states, have established resident and migratory hunt zones to focus appropriate amounts of hunting pressure on the two Canada Goose populations.

The Late Resident Goose Hunt Zone, as designated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, largely avoids the migratory AP goose wintering grounds. The Canada goose population in this zone is comprised primarily of locally produced resident geese, and only 3-4% of the geese harvested within this zone are migratory AP Canada geese. The designated Atlantic Population Hunt Zone encompasses the known wintering grounds for migratory AP Canada geese in Maryland.

Both season length and bag limits are different for the resident and migratory goose hunt zones. Currently, in the Late Resident Goose Hunt Zone, hunters have approximately 80 days to hunt geese and can harvest 5 geese per day. In the Atlantic Population Hunt Zone, hunters have approximately 30 days to hunt and will be able to harvest 1 goose per day starting with the 2025-2026 season. Senate Bill 335, if adopted, will require that approximately 30 of the 80 hunt days in the resident Canada Goose Zone change from a 5 geese daily bag limit to a 1 goose daily bag limit in 2025-2026. The daily bag limit

Contact: Emily Wilson, Director, Legislative and Constituent Services (Acting)
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could change four times during the course of the 80-day season, potentially causing confusion for hunters.

The primary purpose of the Resident Canada Goose Zone is to allow liberal hunting regulations to help address the agricultural, ecological and nuisance problems caused by resident geese. Resident geese are a common problem in many states within the Atlantic Flyway, and in Maryland they can cause an estimated \$500,000 in damage annually. The Department routinely responds to complaints from farmers, golf courses, and HOA's regarding over-abundant resident geese, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and USDA Wildlife Services commonly issues depredation permits to assist with Canada goose population management and site-specific damage and nuisance issues.

Based on a hunter mail survey conducted annually by the Department, from 2013-2022 an average of 1,200 hunters hunted resident geese in the Late Resident Goose Hunt Zone. They spent on average 4,757 days hunting in this zone and harvested 5,145 geese annually. It is expected that these numbers would decline if the bag limit is reduced in this zone during the Atlantic Population migratory goose season.

BILL EXPLANATION

House Bill 892 would require the Department to apply the Canada goose daily bag limit established for the Atlantic Population Goose Hunt Zone to all Canada goose hunting zones when the migratory AP Canada goose season is open. The daily bag limit would follow the current Atlantic Population Hunt Zone bag limit as annually established by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.