

Baker County

Duck and goose hunting is expected to be similar to past years with a few resident birds available early in the season. More migrant birds will arrive later in the season and hunting should improve, especially in the Baker and Keating valleys. Almost all hunting is on private property, so be sure to ask permission before hunting. The Powder River from Baker City to Brownlee Reservoir offers the best waterfowl hunting.

Grant County

Grant County offers very limited waterfowl hunting opportunities due to lack of habitat -- it's mostly jump shooting on private land along the John Day River. There is some goose hunting along the John Day River on private lands. Be sure to seek permission before hunting.

Union County

Duck and goose hunting is expected to be similar to last year. Dry conditions have left fewer broods overall. Early water could make exceptional waterfowl hunting at the start of the season. Limited public lands make Union County difficult to find waterfowl hunting opportunities. Ladd Marsh can be great waterfowl hunting at certain times throughout the season.

Ladd Marsh Wildlife Area

A long dry spell means few ponds are left and without significant rain soon, we will lose some of the remaining ponds. Most of the water can be found between Union Hwy and Peach Rd.

Overall duck production in our area seems to be down. Goose production seems to be average to slightly above. Mallards are the most common duck seen but some other random birds are also being seen around the area.

Cross your fingers for precipitation and check back or call the office at (541) 963-4954 for water updates as the season gets closer! Waterfowl hunters are encouraged to scout the area on an open day before the season opener to avoid finding a dry pond.

All visitors, including hunters, must have in their possession a free daily permit to access the wildlife area. Permits are available at several self-check-in stations at entry points and parking lots. The Wildlife Area is closed from 10 p.m. - 4 a.m. daily. There is no camping on the wildlife area. Both rules include area parking lots. Violators will be asked to leave and may be cited.

Umatilla and Morrow counties

Hunting prospects depend on weather conditions. If the region does not experience a real winter, many of the northern migrants will stay in Washington. The best hunting is usually later in the season (late November) after some weather pushes birds down from northern areas. The Columbia River is usually the best opportunity for hunters on public land, but those who can access irrigated circles in northern Morrow County usually get good goose hunting.

Habitat in the Columbia Basin still supports large numbers of wintering Canada geese and the number of snow geese wintering in this area has greatly increased in recent years. Waterfowl hunters should not forget about the Columbia Basin Wildlife Areas (Power City, Irrigon, Coyote Springs, Willow Creek). Food crops were planted, and ponds have been enhanced, all of which will make conditions better for waterfowl hunting.

The Columbia basin wildlife areas typically start seeing ducks arrive in waves. The first wave will include teal headed south, some years the teal have come and gone before the hunting season starts. In mild years the migration may be a little late allowing some teal hunting opportunity. Shortly after that other puddle ducks will start showing up in greater numbers. With the removal of cattails and planting food plots, the wildlife areas are receiving more attention from mallards, gadwall, pintail and small numbers of wood ducks. The largest numbers of mallards seen in the wildlife areas typically occur during the last few weeks of the season. Waterfowl hunting on the wildlife areas is best during very windy conditions when ducks get blown off the Columbia River.

Wallowa County

Waterfowl hunting should be similar to the previous few years. Expect good hunting opportunities later in the fall and early winter when migrating birds arrive. The few resident Canada geese in the district have fared well, too. Most hunting is decoy hunting in agricultural fields and jump shooting irrigation ditches so be sure to get landowner permission before hunting.