

South Central Area -- WATERFOWL

Klamath County

Early season usually is best for local and early migrant ducks. Hunting prospects will depend on Pacific Northwest weather systems moving birds into and around Klamath County before freezing up. Drought conditions have affected water availability in some portions of the county.

Most goose hunting opportunities are for resident Canada geese, however there are some white-fronted, snow and Ross's geese staging in the Klamath Basin prior to continuing south. Goose hunting should improve later into the season with freezing conditions, which tend to concentrate geese near open water areas. Klamath Marsh and Upper & Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) and state managed wildlife areas, in addition to private lands, offer ample hunting opportunities.

From Feb. 1-March 10, 2027, goose hunting will be closed in all units of the Klamath National Wildlife Refuges, Miller Island Unit at Klamath Wildlife Area, Summer Lake Wildlife Area, and Ladd Marsh Wildlife Area, except for hunters participating in the [Veterans and Active Military personnel Waterfowl Hunt on Feb 6, 2027](#). The hunt helps alleviate agricultural damage from large numbers of white-fronted, lesser snow and Ross' geese. Contact ODFW's Klamath Falls office at (541) 883-5732 for more information.

Klamath Wildlife Area – Miller Island Unit

Miller Island Unit is open to hunting and public use daily through the end of September, except on the days reserved for youth upland (Sept. 19-20) and youth waterfowl (Sept. 26-27) hunts. Opening weekend for both general waterfowl and pheasant hunting seasons is Oct. 10. A daily hunting permit is required, and hunters shall be in possession of permit while in the field. Check out is required. Daily hunt permits are available at the check station located on the North side of Miller Island Rd. just west of the railroad tracks.

Early season is usually best for local and early migrant birds, and hunters can expect to find abundant numbers of gadwalls, northern pintail, green-winged teal and mallards on the wildlife area. Goose hunting should improve later in the season with geese using frozen ponds for loafing and the small grain fields for forage.

There is a special youth waterfowl and upland bird hunt on Oct. 24th, the Miller Island Unit is open only to hunters aged 17 and younger. Hunting hours are the same as during the regular season. Hunters must be accompanied by an adult 21 years or older, who may not hunt. Reservations are not required for this hunt. See page 26 of the [Oregon Game Bird Regulations](#).

Wetland conditions for opening weekend and the first part of the Zone 2 seasons are still unknown, but generally, water levels in wetlands should be good. We'll have a better idea of wetland conditions (water levels) by the youth waterfowl hunt weekend. If wetland conditions for opening weekend are good, waterfowl hunting conditions should also be good. Contact ODFW's Klamath Wildlife Area at (541) 883-5732 for more information.

Lake County

[Summer Lake Wildlife Area](#) ([Summer Lake WA Map](#) pdf)

Over 60 percent of this almost 19,000-acre area is open for game bird hunting during authorized seasons. Hunting is permitted 7 days per week, and a free daily hunting permit is required. Hunting permits are available at Headquarters. Hunters should be aware the wildlife area is not open during the September Canada goose season.

In most years, a fair number of mourning doves can be found early in September, but they typically move south once cooler fall weather conditions arrive. The best areas to hunt in the wildlife area are from Thousand Spring Lane (Lake Co. Rd. 4-17) north toward Lake View Lane (4-18) and old homestead sites such as Turner Place.

Waterfowl hunting conditions should be good across most of the wildlife area. Water supplies have been good, but some areas may be slow to flood-up due to growing season management actions. The early portion of the waterfowl season is usually best for local and early migrant birds, and hunters can expect to find abundant dabbling ducks such as green-winged teal, gadwall, shoveler, wigeon, pintail and mallards on the wildlife area.

Waterfowl production was average this year with Mallard numbers being satisfactory, but good numbers of Canada goose, gadwall and cinnamon teal broods were being observed throughout summer. Regular season goose hunting should be fair for locally produced Canada geese. Canada goose hunting should improve later in the season with freezing conditions, which tend to concentrate geese near open water. To reduce harvest pressure on the rarer Tule white-fronted goose, the daily bag limit in Lake County is one. Most snow geese staging at Summer Lake Wildlife Area are from Wrangel Island, Russia. Production this year is not yet known, but the population has been on a recent upward trend. Typically, good production results in favorable hunting success due to the large number of juveniles. When production is low, hunting for the more wary adults is difficult.

A large portion of this population is either wintering in NW Washington/SW British Columbia, along the Columbia River or staying on northern (Alberta) staging grounds until late in the fall when they are pushed south by winter weather. Unfortunately, these geese migrating out of Canada are now bypassing traditional staging areas such as Summer Lake on their way to California.

Closure: Access to hunting areas south of Thousand Springs Lane (Lake Co. Rd 4-17, except Foster Place) will be prohibited from Oct. 4 until 4:00 am on opening day (Oct. 11). This seven-day closure will reduce disturbance to staging waterfowl and improve hunter success. Campgrounds and open roads will remain available for use.