

Form Name:
Submission Time:

May 2021 RAC Feedback
May 5, 2021 8:34 am

Which best describes your position Somewhat agree
regarding the 2021 Waterfowl
Management Area and crane
recommendations?

Do you have any additional comments about these recommendations?

Utah Waterfowl Association
To Preserve Utah's Waterfowl, Waterfowl Habitat and Waterfowling Heritage

May 3, 2021

?The Utah Waterfowl Association submits the following comments regarding the regulation of commercial guiding on Utah's waterfowl management areas. Regulation is needed as there has been a recent proliferation of commercial guiding, mostly on the Great Salt Lake, that is damaging the public hunting opportunity for which the WMAs were created. While some guides operate very professional businesses, we are concerned that the lack of regulation fosters (a) a profusion of guides that place excessive pressure on the resource, (b) the practical exclusion of the average hunter, and (c) unfortunately, room for unscrupulous operators. While we recognize that any regulatory framework will require future modification based on experience and data, action is necessary now.

?With the foregoing in mind, we propose that the following be included in the regulations: (We use the word "guide" as a catch-all to include any person or company that transports hunters to or through WMAs for commercial gain regardless whether the guide remains physically with the hunter during the hunt.)

1. Guided hunters may not hunt within the boundaries of WMAs. Guides may only transport hunters from WMA launches or through WMAs.
2. The number of guides, boat trips, and hunters utilizing WMAs should be limited.
3. The guide must keep a record of the number of boat trips, hunters, and birds harvested and report this information to the DWR.
4. Boats utilized by guides and the clubs referred to in #7 below must have a prominent registration number.
5. Restrictions on use of parking lots to avoid overcrowding.
6. Safety and insurance requirements.
7. Entities that act like guides, such as commercial clubs that primarily provide transportation services to and through WMAs, should be subject to the same boat trip and use/harvest reporting requirements and restrictions as guides. As an exception, a club that has been in existence continuously for more than 40 years can transport its members and non-paying guests within or through the Willard Spur WMA but is otherwise subject to all registration and reporting requirements.
8. These rules and a complaint process should be publicized so that all hunters are aware of the DWR's efforts.
9. These rules should be issued by the DWR rather than asking each manager to create his or her own set of rules.

In addition, we are concerned that the rapid increase in guiding has placed excessive pressure on certain populations of waterfowl such as greenwing teal. We encourage the DWR to utilize the data obtained from the foregoing regulations to assess whether this is the case. Such a study could play a role in managing this resource that is enjoyed and valued by so many of the state's waterfowlers.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Which best describes your position regarding the 2021 Waterfowl Management Area and crane recommendations?

Strongly agree

Do you have any additional comments about these recommendations?

First I would like to thank Blair and all the WMA managers for a great job of taking care of our Public marshes with the minimum man power and equipment that they have to work with. The special use permit that was talked about in the proposed changes to cross the WMA's Doesn't go far enough. All persons who are guiding waterfowl in Utah regardless of where they are guiding should have to have a permit to do so. There needs to a way hold a guide accountable for his actions where he could loose his permit for game violations or just flat ripping off a trusting sportsman that may have traveled miles just to have a bad experience. I have hired outfitters all over the world I have seen the good ones and i have seen the bad ones. Nothing leaves a bad taste in your mouth than a bad Guide. Thanks for taking my comments
Dan Spencer
Woundedgoose@aol.com
801-244-4887

Form Name:
Submission Time:

May 2021 RAC Feedback
May 5, 2021 5:11 pm

Which best describes your position regarding the 2021 Waterfowl Management Area and crane recommendations? Strongly agree

Do you have any additional comments about these recommendations? Please accept DWR recommendations on state WMA's. Also, please exclude waterfowl guiding on all state lands.

Form Name:
Submission Time:

May 2021 RAC Feedback
May 5, 2021 9:46 pm

Which best describes your position regarding the 2021 Waterfowl Management Area and crane recommendations?

Strongly disagree

Do you have any additional comments about these recommendations?

I support the guides in our state. The guides I have been with have been very professional. It's the general public that is very rude people. Waterfowlers think they own the world. They don't want to share wi try even there own family.

Form Name:
Submission Time:

May 2021 RAC Feedback
May 6, 2021 8:32 am

Which best describes your position regarding the 2021 Waterfowl Management Area and crane recommendations?

Strongly disagree

Do you have any additional comments about these recommendations?

I do not support banning guides from WMAs. This would make it very difficult for non-locals, who depend on a guide's knowledge of the area, to hunt the WMAs. This is not a ban on guides it is a ban on non-residents, new hunters and non locals.

Form Name:
Submission Time:

May 2021 RAC Feedback
May 6, 2021 10:57 am

Which best describes your position regarding the 2021 Waterfowl Management Area and crane recommendations?

Strongly disagree

Do you have any additional comments about these recommendations?

This isn't going to be a nice letter. I've never seen a guide on ANY WMA I've been hunting self guided in the past 30 years. The only time I've seen a guide is when I've hired one. For example Ogden Bay is over 17,000 acres, you really have to try hard to get crowded on that place. I think you had the majority of people who responded to your poll who are little twerps who want to outlaw people to protect their own selfish interests in the vain hope that if guides are eliminated, their own poor hunting skills will somehow be enough to secure a bag limit. I've hunted twice with a guide, Once for a swan permit and he was invaluable since I have never hunted swan before. Second, I took my son on a guided hunt and he was able to bag his first goose and make outstanding memories. If you outlaw guided hunting, you are shooting yourself in the foot. The number of waterfowl hunters has plummeted in the the last few decades. You'll lose me and my son and any children my son will have.

Which best describes your position regarding the 2021 Waterfowl Management Area and crane recommendations?

Strongly disagree

Do you have any additional comments about these recommendations?

I am an avid hunter here in Utah and over the years have spent thousands and thousands of dollars on hunting permits, gear, firearms, archery equipment, ammunition, fishing gear, and other items that have directly benefited wildlife conservation through taxes, fees, etc. I have participated in the dedicated hunter program, which requires 32 hours of community service that directly benefits the wildlife habitats here in Utah. All this to say that I am dedicated to our lands, our animals, and the sustainability and perpetual success of hunters and anglers and I am proud to do my part.

I recently got into waterfowl hunting. And quite honestly, it would have been impossible without the assistance of a guide. Hunting in some of our WMAs requires a significant amount of equipment which is simply an impossible barrier to entry for most people. With the help of a guide, people without the financial resources can still enjoy our wilderness resources. Limiting guiding, even if requiring permits, will significantly reduce the availability to these resources and that's not good for Utah.

Utah has world class duck hunting. People literally fly in from all over the world to hunt in Utah. Ramsey Russell, one of the most world-renown duck hunters, came to Utah 2 years ago and hunted multiple WMAs with the use of a guide and then raved about it on social media and podcasts. He would have been completely unable to hunt this area without one. Last year, my father flew out from Illinois to come hunt on a guided WMA hunt. The following day, our guide had hunters come in from Georgia.

Simply put: If you limit guiding, specifically on WMAs, you severely hurt Utah business, tourism, hunting license sales, etc. It is a domino affect. This is not what Utah needs.

Please do not implement restrictions or permit requirements for Utah's WMAs.

Form Name:
Submission Time:

May 2021 RAC Feedback
May 6, 2021 5:03 pm

Which best describes your position regarding the 2021 Waterfowl Management Area and crane recommendations? Strongly disagree

Do you have any additional comments about these recommendations? PLEASE CONTINUE TO ALLOW THE PUBLIC THE OPPORTUNITY TO USE THESE RESOURCES

Form Name:
Submission Time:

May 2021 RAC Feedback
May 6, 2021 5:48 pm

Which best describes your position regarding the 2021 Waterfowl Management Area and crane recommendations?

Strongly disagree

Do you have any additional comments about these recommendations?

WOW, what a huge disappointment this board is... There are several people that do not have boats, or the means for a great experience to waterfowl hunt in Utah unless they do a guided hunt. We have taken several veterans that cannot walk a dyke a long ways or young adults we want to see get hooked on the sport without them. The are respectful of public hunting and go places no one else really wants to go anyway. I strongly disagree and think this should NOT pass!

Which best describes your position regarding the 2021 Waterfowl Management Area and crane recommendations?

Strongly disagree

Do you have any additional comments about these recommendations?

I think that guides should be allowed to use WMA property. They are taking public hunters out so banning them from using WMA land is in a way banning public hunters. My daughter and I hunted Swans with a guide on WMA property. It was a fantastic trip and such a great experience to set over a big decoy spread. There is no way that a guy like me could justify the expense of such a setup when we only hunt swans every few years. reputable guides provide a great service for those people that are not full time waterfowlers.

Please do not vote for HB295

Form Name:
Submission Time:

May 2021 RAC Feedback
May 6, 2021 6:20 pm

Which best describes your position regarding the 2021 Waterfowl Management Area and crane recommendations?

Strongly disagree

Do you have any additional comments about these recommendations?

I believe I should be able to hire a commercial guide to hunt on wma's. To have an opportunity to hunt with my family is too expensive to own the equipment to access these areas. I am able to hire a guide for all other hunts why are you excluding waterfowl.

Which best describes your position regarding the 2021 Waterfowl Management Area and crane recommendations?

Strongly disagree

Do you have any additional comments about these recommendations?

Guided hunting is a staple here. A lot of the WMA's have plenty of room for public and guided hunters. The public hunters that complain about areas to hunt are the ones who don't put time in to finding other areas. I feel that the guides with some stipulations should be allowed to continue doing what they do best. I personally would have never been able to harvest my first swan, as well as my husband. The guide we used is amazing and beyond respectful to the land and rules and responsible. I also feel that our guides are a huge asset to migration knowledge in our state.

Which best describes your position regarding the proposed changes to the wildlife public meeting process?

Neither agree nor disagree

Which best describes your position regarding the 2021 Waterfowl Management Area and crane recommendations?

Strongly disagree

Do you have any additional comments about these recommendations?

It sounds to me that there are too many "guides" using the waterfowl WMAs, yet it is my understanding that there are very, very few waterfowl outfitters in the state that are actually licensed and insured. I would think it makes sense to shut down all but those licensed outfitters. A quality outfitter is an asset to the state, providing opportunities for people that would not otherwise be able to hunt waterfowl in Utah as well as economic contributions (i.e. non-resident hunters buying licenses, lodging, fuel, etc.).

Form Name:
Submission Time:

May 2021 RAC Feedback
May 7, 2021 10:53 pm

Which best describes your position Strongly disagree
regarding the 2021 Waterfowl
Management Area and crane
recommendations?

Do you have any additional comments about these recommendations?

Dear Wildlife Board and/or RAC member,

As an avid waterfowl hunter I am deeply concerned about the proposal from the DWR regarding the use of Waterfowl Management Areas (WMA's). Please bear with me I have many thoughts on the subject and will try to express them all.

Let me start with my background so that you know where I am coming from. I am not a commercial hunting guide (I don't take folks out waterfowl hunting for a living), but because I do take friends and acquaintances out and by legal definition as written in Utah Code 58-79-102 there are times that I could be considered a hunting guide or outfitter, because someone that I took hunting paid for fuel for the truck or boat and it exceeded the \$100 dollar amount. On one occasion I have even been given cheese and maple syrup from Wisconsin by a hunter from Wisconsin that I met through social media. I didn't take him out for compensation but at the end of the day he offered and it would have been impolite not to accept his gift. I have hunted the marshes of Utah for over 40 years almost exclusively on our public WMA's. I have introduced countless people to the sport, some of which I still hunt with to this day. I am not a casual hunter that might get out once or twice, or even a handful of times. Depending on the year I may be in the marsh 30-50 days a season. Last season was 40+ days. I have walked, biked, used a canoe, a kayak, a mud boat, an airboat (not my own, I wish). I share this information to help you get a sense how many potential encounters I have in regards to the concern with guides and guiding on our WMA's. I have never had a negative encounter with someone guiding. I am not naïve enough to think that just because I haven't had a bad encounter doesn't mean they don't happen but rather they might not be as prevalent as they are being made out to be. The reality is that we don't actually have any hard data.

It seems that we are reacting to an issue that is isolated to a few specific locations with a few guides at a few times during the season. Rather than propose regulation that addresses those specific issues we get a proposal to ban guiding on all WMA's. Why not regulations specific to those problem areas. HB 295 states that guiding is not allowed without a permit and then we turn around and say "sorry no permits". Seems rather underhanded. Let's not forget that the hunters being taken into the marshes by the guides are "public hunters" with as much right to use the marsh as any other hunter. They have just chosen to pay someone to take them out. Blair states in his presentation that only 13% support guiding, but what you don't was the reaction to the survey on social media. Many of those that expressed opposition to guiding did not realize that guiding is currently allowed. They feared that we would get an influx of new users on the WMA's (any duck hunters nightmare). Because so many didn't realize we already have guides using the areas it signals to me that they are not as big of an impact as we are being lead to believe. What happened to the other data. Blair also states that roughly 1% of the land area in the state is wetland and that opportunities for the public to use it is why the WMA's were created. If we exclude the hunters that guides are taking out from using the WMA's where are they supposed to go. The assumption here is that guiding is forcing the public hunter from being able to use the areas

and that is not true. More hunters is actually making it more crowded, not the fact that some of the hunters have hired a guide. Even a guided hunter is still a "public hunter" on public land.

In regards to the use of the WMA for swan hunting guides. We are being told that the guides are using an area day after day after day and that it is impacting the habitat, the wildlife and the infrastructure. What doesn't get said is that if the guides were not there other hunters would still be there having the same affect, because that is where the swans want to be. Let's put the swan hunt into perspective, 2750 permits, with very small percentage of those utilizing a guide to fill the permit. If the regulation goes into effect it will essentially mean "no swan guiding in Utah" because most of the swans are harvested on our WMA's or Bear River Bird refuge that doesn't allow commercial guides. The loss of public hunting opportunity that keeps getting brought up is no different than any other spot. If I want it I need to get there before someone else, guide or not. Many times I have had to set up in a different spot than I intended because someone else got there first. That is the nature of hunting public land.

Blair also mentions liability for unlicensed and uninsured guides. My response is then we need to enforce the law that we already have that requires them to get licensed and insured rather than prohibit guiding. What would I propose? Start by continuing to allow guiding with the intent to gather actual data. Require them to register and report information such as dates, numbers of people, harvest data, place used, etc. Then we will know how much use we are getting on the WMA, where the use is, the extent, and then we can make better recommendations based on that data. If we start by excluding guides then we will not be able to gather that data. We may find that in the future we need to exclude guiding in some or all of these areas but it will then be based on real data not just based on what someone thinks is going on. Another suggestion that I heard was to make sure those that are guiding are clearly identified. Not sure how we would do that but it could be a good idea.

All this from someone that doesn't guide commercially and had one of the best seasons of my life last year. We saw more waterfowl more consistently and in more areas then we ever have. Our waterfowl managers are doing such an awesome job with the WMA's, let's keep them open to all "public hunters", even those that need to pay someone to help them get into the birds.

Thanks you for your time. Feel free to contact me if you need any clarification on any of the ideas or thoughts.

Ja Eggett

Which best describes your position regarding the 2021 Waterfowl Management Area and crane recommendations?

Strongly disagree

Do you have any additional comments about these recommendations?

Guiding should be allowed on WMA's. If certain guides are not operating completely legally, please open up dialogue on how to better verify "good" guides. We should not make guiding prohibited or too cost-effective as they provide a service for many hunters, albeit a much smaller percentage than the hunting public. There should be a way to balance maintaining guide licenses for "good" guiding services and keeping guides from over-hunting/over-harvesting WMA's. Whether this means ensuring the number of guiding licenses, quality of guides, insurance requirements, or limiting the # of allowable hunting days within each WMA.

Form Name:
Submission Time:

May 2021 RAC Feedback
May 10, 2021 3:56 pm

Form Name:
Submission Time:

May 2021 RAC Feedback
May 11, 2021 1:58 pm

Which best describes your position regarding the 2021 Waterfowl Management Area and crane recommendations?

Somewhat disagree

Do you have any additional comments about these recommendations?

On the Utah Lake Wetland Preserve there is more than just waterfowl hunting that needs to be taken into account, there is trapping, hounding for raccoons, fox and coyote hunting and dove hunting all of which takes place at different times of the year. We need to keep these other activities in mind as we go forward with any additional changes. It isn't clear in the information I read that these other items are being taken into account.

Form Name:
Submission Time:

May 2021 RAC Feedback
May 12, 2021 2:35 pm

Which best describes your position regarding the 2021 Waterfowl Management Area and crane recommendations?

Strongly disagree

Do you have any additional comments about these recommendations?

I am a duck hunter who has already booked with a guide for the 2021 season on Great Salt Lake. The change related to no guided hunts on WMAs likely impacts my plans and the type of hunt I originally booked. It may result in the trip being cancelled. I have already taken off work including for my sons and we have booked flights, paid a deposit, booked a hotel and car, etc. and now I could be faced with cancelling the trip. I strongly suggest this plan if it is inevitable to transition with time either with 1 of the 3 WMAs to be off limits in the first years and so on over 3 years for the 3 WMAs. Making these changes all at once, so close to the start of the 2022 season, will definitely impact folks who have already made plans. I appreciate the opportunity to express my views.

Which best describes your position regarding the 2021 Waterfowl Management Area and crane recommendations?

Strongly disagree

Do you have any additional comments about these recommendations?

These changes will definately impact hunting tourism to the area and the local economy. Seems like some alternate resolution could be reach such as with less restrictions on WMAs or certain days of the week or make it species specific to swans. I have hunted previously in Utah but this change would impact my decision to return..Perhaps more deliberations on the impacts should be evaluated.

Form Name:
Submission Time:

May 2021 RAC Feedback
May 19, 2021 2:23 pm

Which best describes your position regarding the 2021 Waterfowl Management Area and crane recommendations? Somewhat agree

Which best describes your position regarding the proposed changes to the wildlife public meeting process? Somewhat agree

Form Name:
Submission Time:

May 2021 RAC Feedback
May 21, 2021 7:16 am

Which best describes your position Strongly agree
regarding the 2021 Waterfowl
Management Area and crane
recommendations?

Form Name:
Submission Time:

May 2021 RAC Feedback
May 25, 2021 5:13 pm

Form Name:
Submission Time:

May 2021 RAC Feedback
May 25, 2021 6:21 pm

Which best describes your position Strongly agree
regarding the 2021 Waterfowl
Management Area and crane
recommendations?

Do you have any additional comments about these recommendations?

Utah Waterfowl Association
To Preserve Utah's Waterfowl, Waterfowl Habitat and Waterfowling Heritage

May 3, 2021

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?With the foregoing in mind, we propose that the following be included in the regulations: (We use the word "guide" as a catch-all to include any person or company that transports hunters to or through WMAs for commercial gain regardless whether the guide remains physically with the hunter during the hunt.)

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In addition, we are concerned that the rapid increase in guiding has placed excessive pressure on certain populations of waterfowl such as greenwing teal. We encourage the DWR to utilize the data obtained from the foregoing regulations to assess whether this is the case. Such a study could play a role in managing this resource that is enjoyed and valued by so many of the state's waterfowlers.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Form Name:
Submission Time:

May 2021 RAC Feedback
May 26, 2021 9:32 am

Which best describes your position regarding the 2021 Waterfowl Management Area and crane recommendations?

Strongly disagree

Do you have any additional comments about these recommendations?

As an Idahoan who hunted swans in Utah in 2019, I encourage you to continue allowing professional guides to operate their business. Fried Feathers guide service was the SOUL REASON I GOT A TROPHY OF A LIFETIME. Man, this is a valuable service.

Form Name:
Submission Time:

May 2021 RAC Feedback
May 27, 2021 12:00 pm

Which best describes your position regarding the 2021 Waterfowl Management Area and crane recommendations?

Strongly agree

Do you have any additional comments about these recommendations?

I strongly agree with the suggestions made by Blair. His concerns regarding guides on how it impacts our environment and wildlife were spot on.
