

06-71-07

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Resolution submitted to the Conservation Congress April 16, 2007

Many farmers are delaying the harvest of their crops until after the close of the dove hunting season. The result of this is that many good dove hunting locations are not available to dove hunters during the current sixty day season, so dove hunters would benefit from a longer, later season.

There is no biological reason not to provide increased hunting opportunities for Wisconsin dove hunters. According to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service "Mourning Dove Population Status, 2006" report, the breeding population of mourning doves in Wisconsin based on mourning doves heard along call-count routes was 20 million in 2003; 20.5 million in 2004; 20.7 million in 2005; and 17.3 million in 2006. The ten year population trend for mourning doves in Wisconsin is a 6% increase. During the 2004-2005 dove hunting season in Wisconsin, it was estimated that 17,700 hunters hunted 77,500 days and bagged 97,300 birds. During the 2005-2006 dove hunting season in Wisconsin, it was estimated that 15,600 hunters hunted 62,500 days and bagged 180,600 birds. Thus, about 1% of the breeding population of mourning doves in Wisconsin was harvested by hunters, while the population trend was a 6% increase, so there is no reason not to provide additional hunting opportunities for Wisconsin dove hunters.

Be it resolved, the Conservation Congress at its annual meeting held in Winnebago County on April 16, 2007, recommends that the Department of Natural Resources take action to correct this situation by introducing a rule change to extend the dove hunting season until two days prior to the November gun deer season.

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