

STATEMENT OF REASONS

CHAPTER 11

UPLAND GAME BIRD AND SMALL GAME HUNTING SEASONS

W. S. § 23-1-302 directs and empowers the Commission to fix seasons and bag limits, open, shorten or close seasons on any species or sex of wildlife except predatory animals, predacious birds, protected animals and protected birds.

The Department proposes to amend Wyoming Game and Fish Commission Regulation Chapter 11, Upland Game Bird and Small Game Hunting Seasons to establish annual hunting seasons, limitations and bag limits for the 2024 upland game bird and small game hunting seasons. The Department sets hunting seasons annually based on public input, annual harvest data, population monitoring data and ongoing habitat evaluations.

At the time of this filing, the 2023 upland game bird and small game harvest information is not yet available to the Department. Hunting season dates, bag limits and hunt area limitations may be modified after harvest data has been evaluated. Any additional proposed changes to other hunting provisions shall be made available for public comment on the Department website. An updated draft of the 2024 upland game bird and small game hunting season proposals will be discussed at all public meetings and will also be posted on the Department website in March for additional public comment.

In Section 3, Upland Game Bird Hunting Seasons, the opening date for the sage grouse hunting season has been modified to allow for a Saturday opening date. The Department is also adding a new requirement for sage grouse hunters to obtain a free sage grouse hunting permit prior to hunting sage grouse. This new permit will provide the Department with necessary information to obtain harvest reporting specific to sage grouse as opposed to including sage grouse with all other upland game bird species.

Minor grammatical and formatting edits have also been incorporated in the above regulation that do not change the intent of the regulations.