

### **2014-03 EARLY TEAL HUNTING SEASON**

An early hunting season on Teal in Minnesota has been a recent topic of discussion by various factions including the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, waterfowl hunting organizations as well as at a federal level by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

It has been clearly demonstrated in the past that the inability to properly identify early season waterfowl has resulted in significant mortality to various other species. In 1965, during Minnesota's only other early teal season, observation by enforcement demonstrated very poor identification capabilities by hunters.

Moreover, in early September many broods are still flightless or just on the wing, increasing susceptibility of breeding age hens and young birds of the year to high levels of mortality.

Minnesota has but a vestige of its original wetlands and grasslands. In times of continued wetland loss and ever increasing upland drainage, our remaining wetlands have been highly degraded by excessive water volumes, silt, pesticides and rough fish. In recent years, increasing commodity prices, high agricultural land values and misguided farm policy that places no value on conservation practice, have simply added to the problem by encouraging further drainage, grassland destruction and road ditch to road ditch commodity cropping.

Now is not the time to further exploit resident nesting waterfowl. Now is the time for conservation services and departments to focus on their fundamental missions of leadership in habitat protection and restoration. Now is not the time to add new waterfowl hunting seasons or support every whim for more liberal regulations of existing seasons. Duck hunting for most Minnesota hunters is not satisfactory. This is a time to conserve, not burden our resident waterfowl resources.

Therefore be it resolved that the Minnesota Division, Izaak Walton League of America, in convention April 26, 2014, does not support the establishment of an early Teal hunting season in the State of Minnesota and instead implores those that regulate waterfowl seasons err on the side of the resource.

*Submitted by:*

*Resolutions Committee, Co chairs Bill Henke and Dave Zentner*