

Second year for early dates on pheasant season

By Tom Betz

ntbetz@nwkansas.com
There are few changes in Kansas hunting regulations this year, the second that the pheasant season will open the first weekend in November.

Mike Hopper, wildlife conservation officer for Sherman, Cheyenne and Wallace counties, said the first step for any hunter should be to pick up a copy of the 2007 Kansas Hunting and Furharvesting Regulations Summary.

The 48-page booklet is available at any license vendor or on the Internet at www.kdwp.state.ks.us.

Hopper said the pheasant season start is probably the biggest change in recent years. This is the second year the season will start early, on Saturday, Nov. 3.

He said the opening day last year did not produce the spurt in hunters the state was hoping for, but he thinks it might take time for people to accept the change.

"A lot of pheasant hunters have been coming out to western Kansas for the second weekend in November for years," he said, "and a lot of them have said they will keep coming out at that time because they have scheduled their trip for the same weekend for years."

The state Department of Wildlife and Parks changed the pheasant hunting date last year to try to be more competitive with surrounding states who open their season the first weekend of November.

Ringnecks were first introduced in Kansas with the release of 3,000 birds in 84 counties in the spring of 1906, according to a history from the state Department of Wildlife and Parks. The species adapted well to the state's climate conditions and populations gradually increased.

The first pheasant season in Kansas was opened statewide in 1917 from December 1-15. Pheasant season was closed from 1921 to 1931, but limited seasons on ring-

HUNTING GUIDE 2007-2008 Nor'West Newspapers



Information for those hunting in northwest Kansas are available in the *Nor'West Newspapers* Hunting Guide that can be found at many business, hotel and touris information locations throughout the area.

necks resumed in 1932. Seasons were gradually liberalized over the next five decades until a stabilized season format opening the second Saturday

in November was instituted in 1982. The season runs through Jan. 31, with a bag limit of four cocks per day until last year.

Last year, the pheasant season opened on

the first Saturday in November and ran through the end of January. The daily bag limit did not change.

"I believe the pheasant hunting should be good despite the hard winter," Hopper said.

The bag limit, or the number of birds you can shoot in a day, he said, is four cocks (male roosters). You can't shoot hen (female) pheasants.

He said the possession limit is four cocks at the end of day one, eight at the end of day two, 12 at the end of day three and 16 after the fourth day.

While hunters are transporting the birds, Hopper said, they must make sure they have plumage or a foot attached to identify them as cocks.

Hunting hours for upland birds are one-half hour before sunrise to sunset.

For upland birds, the quail season opens Saturday, Nov. 10, statewide. Quail season ends on Jan. 20 this year.

Sandhill crane hunters must take an online crane identification test before buying a permit. The test is found at <https://secure.ksfishandwildlife.org/crane/>.

In the big game classification, deer hunters will find changes coming next year, and while there will be some extended deer hunting seasons in January, none of northwest Kansas is included in that hunt.

The voluntary program dealing with chronic wasting disease, which affects elk and deer, will continue this year, the department says, but there will not be any mandatory deer check stations.

The firearm deer season runs from Wednesday, Nov. 28, through Sunday, Dec. 9. Hopper said hunters can shoot one deer per tag. Deer can be hunted from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

Turkey hunters have three seasons again

this year, starting Oct. 1 through Tuesday, Nov. 27. The second turkey season is from Monday, Dec. 10, to Monday, Dec. 31, and the third is Monday, Jan. 7 through Thursday, Jan. 31. There is a spring season, but the state has not set the dates.

Turkeys can be hunted from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset.

When you go out into the field this year, Hopper said, hunt only in allowed areas. He said if you don't own the property where you want to hunt, you must get permission. Areas that are marked "No hunting without permission," should not be entered without written permission.

Some places have "walk-in" hunting, Hopper said, and you can find information in the Kansas Hunting Atlas about the walk-in hunting leases in all 105 Kansas counties. He added that walk-in means just that — walk — hunters can't drive into these fields.

He recommends that hunters wear orange to prevent accidents, though it's required only for rifle deer hunters. Especially when bird hunting, he said, it's easy for hunters to become focused on the game and forget about other hunters.

"Most people know they have to have a license," Hopper said.

Anyone 16 to 65 must carry a license at all times, he said, including nonresidents. People born after July 1, 1957, must have a hunter safety card to buy a license.

"Use a lot of common sense," he advised, and think safety.

Questions can be directed to officers across the state. Page 41 of the hunting guide, he said, contains the contact numbers for every officer in the state.

Those numbers, he said, are handy for anyone who sees a hunting violation. He said if you see something happening, call the county sheriff's department or dispatcher, or the nearest wildlife officer.

Walk-In Hunting program adds more acres in northwest Kansas

By Pat Schiefen

pjschiefen@nwkansas.com

Before you oil up that shotgun and head out looking for a place to hunt, you might think about state-leased land in the Kansas Walk-In Access program.

The Kansas Walk-In Hunting Access program allows hunters many more acres to hunt as permission becomes harder to get for private land, becoming one of the most successful programs of its type in the country.

Every hunter with a Kansas license can hunt in these areas, whether or not he knows the landowner. The majority of the land allows upland game bird hunting with some open for deer, waterfowl and squirrel. Other land may be open for spring turkey hunting.

In northwest Kansas, the number of acres varies from county to county: Sheridan County has 8,296, Wallace 31,341, Chey-

enne 23,389, Rawlins 26,048, Decatur 9,540, Norton 24,986, Sherman 18,499, Thomas 10,860, Logan 9,874 and Gove 23,189.

Wildlife Conservation Officer Mike Hopper of Goodland, who covers three counties bordering Colorado, said both landowners and hunters have been pleased with the program.

"There have not been a lot of problems," Hopper said. "It has expanded the areas for hunting and had a positive effect on the wildlife habitat."

Public access to hunting, depending on how many acres they enroll and how long the contract is. Contracts can run from Sept. 1 or Nov. 1 through Jan. 31. Spring turkey areas are leased from April 1 to May 31.

Over 200,000 acres have been leased so hunters can have more open land and to alleviate some of the pressure on public lands across the state.

Here are some of the rules issued by the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks for public access to private ground leased for Walk-In Hunting.

Hunters should respect landowner's property and follow a few rules:

1. Obey the safety-zone concept. Allow a buffer around livestock and buildings. Know your target and what lies beyond it.
2. If the walk-in property is bordered by a hedge row or creek, hunt only on the side which is in the program. Do not walk or hunt on adjacent property. Hunting on the wrong side of the walk-in boundary is trespassing and jeopardizes the future of the program.
3. Do not damage standing crops.
4. Obey all Kansas hunting rules and regulations and respect the rights of the landowners and others using the area. Treat the land as if it were your own and act responsibly. Sportsmen's behavior will decide the future of these areas.

5. Take all your trash with you when you leave. If someone using the area before you left trash, remove it, too.

6. Walk-in leases are for foot traffic only. Do not open gates or enter property with vehicles. Park along the road or in areas designated for parking. Do not block access to fields or county roads. Landowners are working fields with big equipment, especially in September and October, so give them room to pass. Avoid stretching fences when crossing them.

7. Walk-In Hunting Areas are for hunting only. Other activities are prohibited, unless specifically allowed by the property owner. Do not enter abandoned or maintained buildings.

8. Do not attempt to contact landowners for the purpose of hunting on other parts of their land. They may have enrolled in the program to reduce contact with hunters.

9. Walk-In Hunting Areas are open to

hunting Sept. 1-Jan. 31, or Nov. 1-Jan. 31. (A few areas in the east may be open through March 31.) Check the hunting booklet legend or area signs to determine lease length. A separate atlas will be produced for the spring turkey hunt.

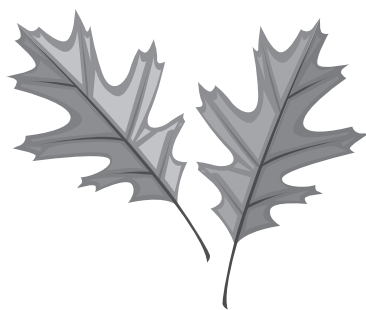
10. The following public land regulations are enforced on walk-in lands: no target practice, no trapping unless specifically allowed by property owner, no dog training, no fully automatic rifles or handguns, no camping, no horseback riding, no stocking or releasing of wildlife, no operation of vehicles, no discharge of fireworks, no fires, no littering, no alcohol, and no destructive acts, including digging, destruction or removal of signs or vegetation.

11. Do not leave game remains in parking areas, roads or roadside ditches.

12. Report violations to a wildlife officer or the county sheriff.

W
e
l
c
o
m
e

Hunters



Welcome All Hunters!



Hunting licenses
Ammunition
Guns and accessories
Bills Shootin' Shop
1907 Cherry
(785) 890-3665
credit cards accepted
Have a safe hunting season

Welcome all pheasant hunters!

Best of luck to you this season!

We carry a wide variety of hunting gear:

- ♦ Clothing
- ♦ Ammunition
- ♦ Ammunition boxes
- ♦ Kansas pheasant license
- ♦ Orange vests, hats, caps

WAL★MART
ALWAYS LOW PRICES. ALWAYS WAL-MART.

Always:

2160 Commerce Road
Goodland, Kan
785-899-2111



Come see how Goodland Pizza Hut stands mightily above the rest!



Enjoy our friendly service and tasty pizza on our lunch buffet
Buffet hours: 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Dine In, Carry Out or Delivery

1803 Cherry, Goodland
785-899-3661

Manager Nick Rohr

A Hunter's Best Friend



Obedience Training
Boarding
Black Gold Dog Food & Tri-Tronics Dealer

Physical Conditioning
Pointing/Flushing Training
Pre-Season Training
Field Trial Training

MJ's Upland Dog Haven
Melvin & Julie Crow
1715 Rd 67
Goodland KS 67735
785-899-2778
<http://mjsdoghaven.netkennel.com>



Howard Johnson Hotel Goodland

Pheasant Season is here!

We are proud to offer these fine services for our hunters:

- ♦ *Harvester's Restaurant*: Open at 5 AM, November 3rd and 4th
- ♦ *Wild Card Lounge*: Open 3 PM to 2 AM, 7 days a week
- ♦ Rocky Mountain Oysters on Saturday, November 3rd: 6-9 PM
- ♦ Outdoor cleaning stations and Dog Kennels available

Come and Join in on the fun!



2218 Commerce Rd · I-70 & K-27,
Exit 17 · Goodland, KS 67735
Phone: (785) 890-3644
Fax: (785) 890-3646
Toll Free: (877) HOJOKansas or
(877) 465-6526

Visit: www.goodlandnet.com/cvb or
www.goodlandnet.com