



# United States Department of the Interior



## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Division of Migratory Bird Management  
Population and Habitat Assessment Branch  
12100 Beech Forest Road  
Laurel, Maryland, 20708-4016

To: Pat Devers, Acting Chief, Branch of Assessment and Decision Support

From: Pam Garrettson, Wildlife Biologist, Branch of Assessment and Decision Support

Date: 12 August 2026

Re: Canvasback Harvest Regulations 2027

Following the adoption of SEIS 2013 (Department of the Interior 2013), a decision support tool for canvasback harvest management was developed (Balkcom et al, 2016, F. A. Johnson (unpublished data)). The decision rules under this prescriptive strategy dictate that if the canvasback breeding population (BPOP) in year  $t$  is 480,000 or above, the year  $t+1$  regulations will be a Liberal 2 (a daily canvasback limit of 2). If the canvasback BPOP is 460,000 to 479,999, a Liberal 1 (a daily canvasback limit of 1) season is called for, and the season is closed when the BPOP is less than 460,000. The prescription is based on point estimates and does not account for the variance in the BPOP estimates (Balkcom et al. 2016). The canvasback breeding population estimate for 2026 (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2025) is 782,000 (standard error = 70,000), which corresponds to a Liberal 2 season for 2027.

### Literature Cited:

Balkcom, G., S. Cordts, P. Garrettson, J. Knetter, E. Osnas, M. Szymanski. 2016. Canvasback Harvest Potential Assessment and Decision Tool. Unpublished report.

U.S. Department of the Interior. 2013. Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement: Issuance of Annual Regulations Permitting the Hunting of Migratory Birds (EIS 20130139).

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C., USA. 418pp.

<https://www.fws.gov/rivers/sites/default/files/documents/final-supplemental-environmental-impact-statement-issuance-of-annual-regulations-permitting-the-hunting-of-migratory-birds.pdf>

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2026. Waterfowl population status, 2026. U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. USA.

