

Thursday, 11 February 2010

### **RESTRICTED DUCK AND QUAIL HUNTING SEASONS ANNOUNCED**

Environment and Conservation Minister Jay Weatherill has announced the dates of heavily restricted duck and quail hunting seasons for 2010.

“Recent surveys have shown that there are sufficient numbers of duck and quail across southern and eastern Australia for limited hunting seasons in South Australia this year,” Mr Weatherill said.

“South Australian surveys show waterfowl populations are significantly higher than the previous seven years and Eastern Australian surveys also show an increase in waterbird numbers.

“However, heavy restrictions have been placed on the length of the seasons and the number and species of duck and quail able to be taken in recognition that some wetlands are recovering from on-going dry conditions.”

The duck hunting season will be open from 27 March to 27 June 2010. There will be a total bag limit of six ducks per hunter per day, with a maximum of two Pacific Black Duck able to be taken per hunter per day. The limit is well below the historical full bag limit of 12 ducks per hunter per day.

The quail hunting season is open from 3 April to 25 July 2010, with a bag limit of 15 quails per hunter per day. This is well below the historical full bag limit of 25 quails per hunter per day.

Wetlands within the Chowilla Game Reserve that are receiving State and Commonwealth environmental water flows and game reserves in the Coorong and Lower Lakes will be excluded from the open seasons to enable critical habitat to recover. Bool Lagoon Game Reserve and Bucks Lake Game Reserve are also excluded from the open season.

“The decision to permit the season was based on a consultation process which considered evidence of the distribution and abundance of waterfowl in various habitats,” Mr Weatherill said.

“Based on the recommendations of that consultation process, the Government decided that restricted duck and quail hunting seasons this year were sustainable.

“However, we will continue to monitor the situation across SA and should circumstances change, we will revert to a closed season in 2011.”

The State Government allows properly managed and regulated game bird hunting by licensed shooters. In recent years, there have been a number of stringent conditions placed on all duck hunters, including waterfowl identification tests, the compulsory use of non-toxic shot, changes to firearms legislation, and standards for the humane destruction of birds by shooting.

All hunters with a current open season endorsed hunting permit are accredited under this system.