

Submitted Electronically via eRulemaking Portal

The is a Comment on the **Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Proposed Rule: Migratory Bird Permits: Management of Conflicts Associated with Double-Crested Cormorants (Phalacrocorax auritus) Throughout the United States**

For related information, [Open Docket Folder](#)

Comment

The Finger Lakes Conservation Council (FLCC) is encouraged by the USFWS DEIS on cormorant management. A permit for wildlife agencies to control cormorant numbers is long overdue. While FLCC is in favor of the proposed measures, there are some questions on some of the proposals.

The proposed use of non-lethal methods must be determined ineffective before using lethal control. Will this be so complex that it will add unnecessary documentation and time before lethal controls may be used? Cormorant numbers have increased since the depredation order was lifted. Harassment of cormorants, for the most part, moves the issue from one area to another. Proving non-lethal methods ineffective will only prolong the negative effects of cormorant overabundance.

Non-toxic shot, except pellet rifles. Non-toxic alternatives are hard to find. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) has used rimfire rifles in mixed water-bird colonies with no negative effects. 22 caliber rounds seldom fragment, 17 caliber rounds fragment but doesn't leave the bird. Cormorant carcasses will most likely be retrieved for disposal, with little or no effect to scavengers.

Oiling of eggs only with corn oil. There are other alternative cooking grade oils, such as soy or cottonseed, that have very low toxicity.

Action where harm to public fishing is happening. This may need clarification for state controlled or owned properties.

Detailed statement how control will address problem. Requirement of information to evaluate control efforts. Could requirements of these items become so complex and cumbersome that they curtail action? NYSDEC wildlife professionals have collected good information on cormorant problems for considerable time.

The permit process will be more burden than the depredation order in the past. The depredation order worked well.

The DEIS order allows for a liberal take of cormorants. The FLCC urges the USFWS to work with NYSDEC to bring double crested cormorant numbers into balance with the ecosystem.

We, the FLCC, ask the USFWS to look at the NYSDEC's

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outstanding record of wildlife management. We are not asking for the elimination of cormorants, we're asking for sustainable numbers in balance with the environment.