Depredation Orders for Double-crested Cormorants

Last Modified:

What is a double-crested cormorant?

The double-crested cormorant is a long-lived, colonial-nesting waterbird native to North America. It is one of 38 species of cormorants worldwide and one of six species in North America. The double-crested cormorant is usually found in flocks throughout North America, including along the coast and inland on lakes, rivers, and other water bodies. The largest concentrations of double-crested cormorants in the United States are found on the Great Lakes.

Aquaculture Depredation Order

The Fish and Wildlife Service published the Aquaculture Depredation Order on March 4, 1998 and amended it on October 8, 2003. The amended depredation order is designed to provide aquaculturists the opportunity to take depredating cormorants from aquaculture facilities without obtaining a migratory bird take permit. It also includes a provision that allows WS personnel to take cormorants at roost sites in the vicinity of aquaculture facilities. On April 6, 2009, the expiration date for this depredation order was extended. As defined by 50 CFR 21.47, the geographical scope of this depredation order is limited to the following States: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, North Carolina,

Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas.

Public Resource Depredation Order

The Public Resource Depredation Order (50 CFR 21.48) is provided by Federal regulation to State fish and wildlife agencies, Federally-recognized tribes, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Wildlife Services or their designated agents, allowing the control, without a Federal permit, of double-crested cormorants committing or about to commit depredations on the public resources of fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats on public and private lands and freshwater. This Order applies in the following States: Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Vermont.

The Order is intended to reduce the actual occurrence and/or minimize the risk of negative impacts to public resources from double-crested cormorants by providing the authority to control cormorants to agencies best suited to address local cormorant predation issues.

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