**2014 TAKE OF PASSAGE PEREGRINE FALCONS FOR FALCONRY**

**General Information**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) completed a Final Environmental Assessment for the take of passage Peregrine Falcons (*Falco peregrinus*) during 2008. The USFWS determined that 36 passage birds could be taken east of 100 degrees longitude without having any negative impacts on Peregrine Falcon populations. This year the USFWS and the Flyway Councils, which have members from each state, developed and approved a plan for take during the fall of 2014. The Atlantic, Mississippi, and Central flyways determined the number of birds allocated among each flyway. The Atlantic Flyway was awarded 12 passage Peregrine Falcons for the 2014 season. During the summer of 2014 the Atlantic Flyway Council allocated the number of falcons to be taken among the Atlantic coastal states. This was accomplished by evaluation of two factors. These included: (1) the desire of each state to participate; and (2) the geographical distribution of passage falcons along the Atlantic Coast. Through this process, Virginia was allotted **one** passage Peregrine Falcons for the September 20 – October 20, 2014 trapping season.

**Falconer Eligibility**

1. Virginia residents and non-residents who are classified as Master or General class falconers are eligible to apply. At the sole discretion of VDGIF, however, falconers with limited experience handling and hunting with falcons may be excluded from authorization to take a Peregrine Falcon.
2. Virginia residents and non-residents that took a passage Peregrine Falcon during the 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, or 2013 season will not be eligible to apply for a permit during the 2014 trapping season.

**Program Requirements**

1. The season for take will be from September 20 – October 20, 2014, but will close when one passage birds has been taken and reported to VDGIF per condition #6 below.
2. A random draw will be conducted of four qualified applicants who will be eligible to take a passage peregrine. Only one non-resident applicant will be randomly selected from the pool of applicants.
3. Only one passage Peregrine Falcon may be captured and possessed by a falconer.
4. No banded Peregrine Falcons may be taken. If a banded raptor is accidentally captured, band numbers and colors must be recorded, photographs taken if possible, and the bird must be immediately released. Band numbers and photographs of such incidentally-captured birds must be submitted to VDGIF no later than 31 October 2014, to the attention of: Ms. Shirl Dressler, VDGIF, P.O. Box 11104, Richmond, VA 23230-1104.
5. A Peregrine Falcon that is captured must be released no later than one hour before sunset on the day of its capture if it is deemed unsuitable for falconry purposes. Birds that falconers take and intend to possess for falconry must be immediately banded with a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service black falconry band. If you do not have a USFWS falconry band, contact the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) at (804) 367-6913.
6. Report of your take of a Peregrine Falcon is mandatory by calling (540)538-1021, no later than 10:00 pm on the day of capture. Your message must report your name, authorization number, time of capture, location of capture, and USFWS falconry band number.
7. Two breast feathers must be collected from your falcon (see below) and placed in a zip-lock bag. Your name and USFWS falconry band number must be clearly written on the bag with an indelible marker.
8. Captured falcons must be taken to a VDGIF Regional office within 48 hours of capture to confirm the band number and collect feather specimens. Locations of Regional Offices can be found at: <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/about/offices.asp>. If you need assistance locating an office or do not have internet access please call the VDGIF headquarters at (804) 367-1000.
9. Upon reporting of the capture and possession (as required in #6 above) of the single passage peregrine, all falconers authorized to take a falcon will be contacted by telephone to inform them of the season closure, and the Department’s web site will be updated to report the season closure. All permittees must be accessible by telephone from September 20 until the season closes, or they must check the Department’s web site each day to determine whether the season is open or closed. No attempts to take a peregrine falcon are authorized after notification of season closure. If an unreported or unconfirmed passage peregrine is in an authorized permittee’s possession at the time of season closure, it must be reported immediately by calling (540) 538-1021 as described in #6 above. The bird may then be retained in possession, but may not be removed from Virginia, until VDGIF confirms the single authorized peregrine take at our Regional Offices as described in #8 above. Upon confirmation of take of the sole peregrine falcon, any additional birds held in possession by any authorized permittee must be immediately released.