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JOB COMPLETION REPORT

SURVEYS AND INVESTIGATIONS PROJECTS

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FEDERAL AID IN WILDLIFE RESTORATION ACT

Federal Aid Project No. W-112-R-4

Study I: Surveys of Hunters/Trappers Via Mail-Letter Questionnaire

Job No. 2: Illinois Furbearer Trapping Survey, 1994-95

Brent Manning, Director

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

February 1996

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JOB COMPLETION REPORT

WILDLIFE HARVEST AND HUNTER OPINION SURVEYS

STATE OF ILLINOIS

PROJECT NO.: W-112-R-4

STUDY 1: Surveys of Hunters/Trappers Via Mail-Letter Questionnaire

JOB NO. 2: Illinois Furbearer Trapping Survey, 1994-95

ABSTRACT: A systematic sample of 854 persons who purchased a 1994 Illinois resident trapping license was surveyed after the furbearer trapping season. The licensees were contacted by first class mail in three mailings. Questionnaires were delivered to 845 (99.0%) recipients, from which 664 useable replies were received (78.6% return). Of these, 577 (86.9%) were active trappers--i.e., set ≥1 traps during the season. Only 4 (0.7%) of the active trappers were ineffective--i.e., caught nothing.

The 1994-95 survey covered 10 furbearer species. Findings are presented: (1) on a statewide basis, (2) for each of the 10 wildlife management units in the state, and (3) for the two furbearer management zones currently in use. Data include estimated number and density of effective trappers, estimated number and density of trapper harvest, and average season catch. Statewide estimates for the number of effective trappers and their catch were: muskrat (Ondatra zibethicus) 2,165 (92,047), mink (Mustela vison) 1,432 (5,860), raccoon 2,573 (79,126), opossum 1,673 (17,604), red fox 556 (1,796), gray fox 143 (290), beaver (Castor canadensis) 1,097 (8,620), striped skunk 571 (2,647), weasel (Mustela frenata, M. nivalis) 34 (39), coyote 674 (4,566), and all species combined 2,819 (212,595). There were an estimated 2,839 active trappers in 1994-95. An estimated 90.7% of the trapper harvest was sold.

Active trappers had traps set for an average of 28.4 days (or nights) and used an average of 30.8 traps during the 1994-95 season. One-half (52.7%) of the effective muskrat trappers caught ≤20 muskrats. An estimated 50.7% of the effective raccoon trappers caught 1-15 raccoons and 67.3% caught ≤25. Furbearers, primarily raccoons, were hunted by 27.6% of the licensed trappers. The harvest of furbearers by hunting trappers was equivalent to 8.7% of the trapped catch. Seventeen trappers in 13 counties reported accidently catching ≥1 badgers, 43 trappers in 29 counties reported seeing river otter or sign, and 65 trappers in 39 counties reported seeing bobcat or sign, during the past 3 years. A majority (51.5%) of the active trappers thought the raccoon population had increased from 1993-94 to 1994-95. Most raccoon trappers used foothold/leghold traps (84.5%) and/or body-gripping (Conibear) traps (57.1%). Most foothold/leghold sets for raccoons were in water, either with drowning slide wire or pole/tangle stake (43.3%) or without these devices (34.1%).

JOB COMPLETION REPORT

SURVEYS AND INVESTIGATIONS PROJECTS

STATE OF ILLINOIS

PROJECT NO.: W-112-R-4

STUDY 101: Wildlife Harvest and Hunter Opinion Surveys

JOB NO. 101.2: Illinois Furbearer Trapping Survey, 1994-95

OBJECTIVE: To survey furbearer (10 species of mammals) trappers to determine their activities, harvests, characteristics, attitudes, and opinions in Illinois.

PROCEDURES: A stratified random sample of individuals who purchased 1994 trapping licenses was surveyed via mail-letter questionnaire. Name/address cards of license purchasers were filled out by vendors for the first license sold in each book of five resident trapping licenses in the 1994 series (total sales estimated at 3,267 - 1 October 1995) (Fig. 1). At the same time, the person purchasing the license was provided with an information card which requested him to keep a record of his trapping activities (Fig. 2). The name/address cards were returned to the Division of Wildlife Resources via business reply mail and were filed according to the licensee's county of residence. The sample was drawn from these cards. For some strata, it was necessary to supplement the mailing list with names/addresses from the stubs of trapping licenses sold during the current year.

The stratified random sample was based on the distribution of the 1986-1990 trapping license sales. The size of the sample was set at 854 because this quantity would result in 600 to 700 useable replies (about 20% of all licensed trappers) and insure statistically adequate results at the statewide level.

The questionnaire (Fig. 3), a letter of explanation (Fig. 4), and a return envelope (pre-addressed and postage-paid) were mailed to the individuals on the mailing list. Non-respondents were sent 2nd and 3rd copies of the questionnaire, and accompanying letters (Figs. 5 and 6) at approximately monthly intervals. First class postage was used for all mailings.

Data from returned questionnaires were transferred to a computer file (Ashton-Tate dBASE III+) and analyzed using a computer program designed for the survey. Respondents were placed into one of two categories: inactive - those who did not set traps for furbearers, or active - those who did set one or more traps for furbearers. Active trappers were further classified as: effective - those who caught one or more furbearers of the species in question, or ineffective - those who did not catch any furbearers.

Data for each species surveyed were compiled for the 10 wildlife management units in Illinois (Fig. 7). In addition, confidence limits at the 95% level were calculated by species for the number of effective trappers, average season catch, and total trapper harvest on a statewide basis. The formulas used were described by Cochran (1953) and Snedecor and Cochran (1967). These are as follows:

a. Number of effective trappers for species:

$$\pm 2N\sqrt{\frac{pq}{n}}$$

where N = total license sales

n = number of licensees in sample

p = portion of licensees in sample who effectively trapped species in question

q = $1-p$

b. Average season catch per effective trapper for species in question:

$$\pm\ 1.96\ \frac{s}{\sqrt{n_1}}$$

where s = standard deviation of average catch per effective trapper

n_1 = number of licensees in sample who effectively trapped species in question

c. Total trapper harvest:

$$\pm 2N\ x\ \frac{s}{\sqrt{n}}$$

All calculations assumed there were no differences between the activities of the licensees who returned the questionnaire and those who did not.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS:

1994-95 Trapping Seasons

The 1994-95 fur-bearing mammal trapping seasons varied from 60 to 147 days in length (Table 1). The seasons for all species except beaver lasted 60 days in both the northern and southern management zones (Fig. 7). In the northern zone, opening dates were 5 November for muskrat, mink, raccoon, opossum, beaver, striped skunk, and weasel, and 15 November for red fox, gray fox, and coyote. In the southern zone, opening dates were 15 November for all 10 species. Beaver trapping season was 137 or 147 days in length, depending on zone. Special regulations reduced the length of the beaver season to 60 days along the Mississippi River from Interstate 80 north to the JoDaviess County line as a protective measure for river otter (Lutra canadensis). No bag limits were in effect for any furbearer.

1994-95 Trapper Mail Survey

The initial mailing of 854 questionnaires was made on 7 March 1995. The two follow-up mailings to non-respondents were made on 13 April and 19 May, respectively, and the mailings were closed out on 6 July 1995.

A total of 845 (98.95%) licensees in the 1994-95 survey sample was reached by the Postal Service. The 9 remaining questionnaires were returned as undeliverable. There were 664 useable replies received from the licensees contacted, representing an 78.58% response for the number delivered. Of these respondents, 577 (86.90%) reported that they set $\geq$1 traps for furbearers during the season and were classified as active. A total of 573 (99.31%) active trappers were effective--i.e. caught $\geq$1 furbearers, and the remaining 4 (0.69%) were ineffective--i.e. caught nothing. Based on these data, there were an estimated 2,839 active trappers and 2,819 effective trappers in Illinois in 1994-95.

A. Number of Days of Trapping

Active trappers had traps set for an average of 28.4 days (or nights) during the 1994-95 season (Fig. 8). The maximum number of days a trapper could have legally trapped was 147. However, only 17.6% of the respondents stated they had traps set for >45 days, and 33.3% trapped >30 days. The vast majority of trapping activity is concentrated during the initial 15 to 30 days of the muskrat, mink, and raccoon seasons. In comparison,

Illinois trappers had traps set for an average of 23.0 days in 1985-86 (108-day season), 20.9 days in 1990-91 (139-day season), and 30.4 days in 1993-94 (147 days) (Hubert 1986, Anderson and Campbell 1992, Anderson et al. 1995).

B. Number of Traps Set

The average active trapper used 30.8 traps during the 1994-95 season (Fig. 9). In spite of the fact that there were no restrictions on the number of traps that could be set, 87.0% of all active trappers employed $\leq$50 traps. Only 3.3% used >100 traps. In comparison, the average Illinois trapper used 31.2 traps in 1987-88, 31.6 traps in 1990-91, and 30.9 traps in 1993-94 (Hubert 1988, Anderson and Campbell 1992, Anderson et al. 1995). The average Missouri trapper used 32.9 traps in 1972-73 (Sampson 1973).

C. Fur Harvest Summary

A statewide summary for the 10 species of furbearers surveyed in 1994-95 is presented in Table 2. The data for each species include the estimated number of effective trappers and their representation (percentage) among all licensed trappers, average season catch per effective trapper, estimated total trapper harvest, and estimated percent and total sold. Similar information for each of the 10 species, plus estimated density of effective trappers and furbearer harvest in each of the 10 wildlife management units, is provided in Tables 3 through 12. The original sample sizes from which these data were derived are presented in Table 13, which also provides the percent of effective trappers for each species.

Confidence intervals at the 95% level for number of effective trappers, average season catch per effective trapper, and total harvest for each furbearer statewide are given in Table 14. In most instances, those species with the greater number of effective trappers in the sample have smaller limits of variability which result in greater confidence in the projections. For example, effective raccoon trappers were the most numerous in 1994-95 and their projected number varied by only $\pm$4.04%. The 95% confidence interval projections for less numerous red fox trappers varied by $\pm$17.09% and for uncommon weasel trappers by $\pm$76.47%.

D. Distribution of Harvest Among Effective Trappers

The muskrat and raccoon were the two most important furbearers trapped during the 1994-95 season in terms of number of effective trappers, average season catch, and total harvest (Table 2). The reported number of muskrats harvested by 440

effective muskrat trappers ranged from 1 to 844 and averaged 42.52 (Fig. 10). During the season, 52.7% of these trappers harvested ≤20 muskrats and 89.3% caught ≤100. The average number of muskrats taken by effective trappers was 6-88% higher in 1993-94 than during the 1980s (Anderson et al. 1990). Of the effective trappers who responded, 86 (19.5%) stated that their catch averaged ≥1 muskrats per day for the entire season.

The distribution of harvest among effective raccoon trappers was similar to that for muskrat. The number of raccoons caught by the 523 effective raccoon trappers for whom data were available averaged 30.75 and ranged from 1 to 573 (Fig. 11). Less than the average season catch was taken by 71.3% of these trappers. For the entire season, 50.7% of the trappers harvested ≤15 raccoons and 67.3% trapped ≤25. Only 63 (12.0%) of the effective raccoon trappers reported making an average daily catch of ≥1 raccoons throughout the season.

The harvest of the other eight open-season furbearers was distributed among effective trappers much like the muskrat and raccoon harvests (Table 15). For three of these species (red fox, gray fox, and weasel), ≤15% of the effective trappers made season catches of >5 pelts. For the other species, the following percentages of effective trappers took >5 pelts: mink 21.9%, opossum 50.6%, beaver 41.0%, striped skunk 27.7%, and coyote 30.3%.

The above data emphasize the inapplicability of bag limits (both daily and seasonal) to furbearer trapping in Illinois. Few trappers are successful in making large seasonal catches. The ones who do are active throughout the season over extensive areas. Reductions in season length offer the most potential for reducing the furbearer harvest by highly successful trappers. Bag limits could potentially increase harvest because of their goal-setting implications.

E. Management Zone Data Summary

Management zone and statewide data summaries for each of the 10 species of furbearers surveyed in 1994-95 are presented in Tables 16 through 25. The data for each species include estimated number and density of effective trappers, average season catch, estimated total trapper harvest, and trapper harvest per unit area. The northern and southern zones listed are nearly identical to the zones employed for regulatory management from 1979-80 through 1993-94 (Fig. 7).

F. Pelt Sales

Trappers sold an estimated 90.67% of their catch during 1994-95. The proportion of each species sold ranged from a low of 28.07% for striped skunk to a high of 95.60% for raccoon

(Table 2). The fraction of pelts sold in Illinois and out-of-state also varied among species (Table 26). Overall, 82.25% of the marketed portion of the trapped catch was sold in Illinois and 17.75% out-of-state. In comparison, 95.33% of the trapped catch was sold (93.86% in Illinois and 6.14% out-of-state) in 1983-84 (Hubert 1984).

G. Fur Hunting by Trappers

A total of 183 trappers (27.56% of licensees) reported hunting furbearers with gun and/or dogs in 1994-95 (Table 27). Their total hunting harvest was 18,520 pelts or an average of 27.57 per hunting trapper. This is equivalent to 8.71% of the total trapped catch estimated by this survey. The raccoon was hunted by more trappers than any other species. Next in popularity was the coyote. From 1986-87 through 1990-91, 25.91% to 29.47% of the trappers in Illinois also hunted furbearers (Hubert 1987, 1988, 1989; Anderson et al. 1990, 1991). In 1993-94, 28.30% of Illinois' trappers also hunted furbearers (Anderson et al. 1995). Sampson (1973) reported 33.6% of the trappers in Missouri were fur hunters. Obviously, there is much overlap between the user groups designated as fur trappers and fur hunters.

H. Observations of Badgers, River Otters, and Bobcats

Trappers participating in the survey were asked whether they accidently trapped any badgers, saw river otter or sign, and/or saw bobcat or sign, during the past 3 years. Seventeen trappers in 13 counties reported catching $\geq$1 badgers. The reports came from counties in the west-central and northwestern portions of Illinois (Fig. 12).

Forty-three trappers in 29 counties reported seeing river otter or sign. The reports came from counties throughout the state (Fig. 13). Most all of these counties were associated with riverine habitat.

Sixty-five trappers in 39 counties reported seeing bobcat or sign. The reports came from throughout the state (Fig. 14).

I. Changes in Furbearer Populations

When asked to express their opinions of changes in furbearer populations from 1993-94 to 1994-95, a majority (51.5%) of the active trappers thought that raccoon numbers had increased (Table 28). For the other four species considered, majorities or pluralities of the trappers who expressed opinions felt that beaver and coyote populations were up, and muskrat and red fox populations were down.

J. Types Traps and Sets Used for Catching Raccoons

Based on responses to question #10, there were 511 trappers in the sample who trapped for raccoons during the 1994-95 season. Among these raccoon trappers, 84.5% used foothold/leghold traps, 57.1% used body-gripping (Conibear) traps, and 22.5% used cage/box traps (Table 29). It was rare for raccoon trappers to use egg traps (0.6%) or snares (0.2%). The foothold/leghold and body-gripping (Conibear) devices comprised 96.2% of all traps used for catching raccoons. However, foothold/leghold traps were more than twice as common as body-gripping (Conibear) traps.

One-third (34.1%) of the raccoon catch with foothold/leghold traps was taken in water sets without drowning slide wire or special drowning pole/tangle stake (Table 30). Another 25.7% of the raccoon catch was in water sets with trap attached to drowning slide wire. The remainder of the raccoon catch with foothold/leghold traps was about equally divided between dry land sets (20.7%) and water sets with special drowning pole/tangle stake and trap attached to long chain (17.6%).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The present Illinois Furbearer Trapping Survey probably realizes its best use and reliability for furbearer management as an indicator of trends in trapping pressure, success, harvest, and recreation. Until 1990, this survey (formerly called "Trapper Harvest Survey") provided the only regional harvest data available for the trapped portion of the annual furbearer catch. Beginning with the 1990-91 season, another survey, entitled "Illinois Fur Hunter/Trapper Survey", was created. Because the mailing list for this survey was derived from purchasers of the Illinois Furbearer Stamp, it provided data for both fur hunter and fur trapper activities.

Both the Fur Hunter/Trapper Survey and the Furbearer Trapping Survey were conducted during the 1990-91 season in order to have a year of overlap in the two data sets for trapping activities. Because there was a high level of agreement between the two surveys (Anderson and Campbell 1992), the Furbearer Trapping Survey was discontinued. The Fur Hunter/Trapper Survey was continued through the 1991-92 and 1992-93 seasons.

The creation of the Illinois Habitat Stamp in 1993 was accompanied by a decision to discontinue the Illinois Furbearer Stamp after the 1992 season. The Habitat Stamp is required for most people who take or attempt to take any game species in Illinois except waterfowl. Because of these changes, the Fur Hunter/Trapper Survey was replaced with two separate surveys: (1) the present Furbearer Trapping survey, which will be conducted annually and will sample purchasers of the resident trapping license, and (2) a Furbearer Hunter Survey, which will

be conducted every 3-5 years and will sample purchasers of the Habitat Stamp who indicate on the stamp stub that they hunted furbearers during the previous year.

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DATA AND REPORTS:

Original data and reports in this investigation are on file in the Investigations and Surveys Program offices, Natural Resources Studies Annex, Champaign, Illinois 61820.

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DATE: 1 February 1996

APPROVED BY:_____
Jeffrey M. Ver Steeg, Chief
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DATE:_____

Table 1. Furbearer trapping seasons in Illinois, 1994-95.

Species	Trapping Seasons	
	Northern Zone	Southern Zone
Muskrat, mink, raccoon, opossum, striped skunk, weasel	5 Nov - 5 Jan (62)[a]	15 Nov - 15 Jan (62)
Beaver	5 Nov - 31 Mar (147)[b]	15 Nov - 31 Mar (137)
Red fox, gray fox, coyote	15 Nov - 15 Jan (62)	15 Nov - 15 Jan (62)

[a]Numbers in parentheses are season lengths in days.

[b]Those portions of Carroll, Whiteside, and Rock Island counties lying west of Illinois Rt. 84 from Interstate 80 north to the JoDaviess county line were open to beaver trapping from 5 Nov. 1994 - 5 Jan. 1995 only.

Table 2. Summary of statewide data from post-season mail survey of resident trappers in Illinois, 1994-95 season (n=664).

Species	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers	Percent of Licensed Trappers	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Percent Sold	Estimated Total Sold
Muskrat	2165	66.27	42.52	92047	93.08	85680
Mink	1432	43.83	4.09	5860	95.05	5570
Raccoon	2573	78.77	30.75	79126	95.60	75643
Opossum	1673	51.20	10.52	17604	69.09	12163
Red fox	556	17.02	3.23	1796	89.04	1599
Gray fox	143	4.37	2.03	290	83.05	241
Beaver	1097	33.58	7.86	8620	86.24	7434
Skunk	571	17.47	4.64	2647	28.07	743
Weasel	34	1.05	1.14	39	50.00	20
Coyote	674	20.63	6.77	4566	80.39	3670

Table 3. Summary of muskrat trapper and harvest data by wildlife management units in Illinois, 1994-95 season (n=440).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers/100km2	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km2
Northwest Hills	212 (9.8)	2.25	87.40	18490	196.72
Northeast Moraine	89 (4.1)	1.07	32.44	2873	34.74
Mississippi Border-North	162 (7.5)	2.07	27.30	4433	56.49
Mississippi Border-South	202 (9.3)	1.48	21.39	4315	31.55
Western Prairie/Forest	226 (10.5)	1.57	18.00	4074	28.25
Central Sand Prairie	79 (3.6)	1.90	40.63	11070	266.95
Grand Prairie	709 (32.7)	1.35	45.08	31937	60.68
Southern Plain	364 (16.8)	1.53	33.70	12271	51.72
Wabash Border	93 (4.3)	1.39	21.74	2032	30.14
Shawnee Hills	30 (1.4)	0.57	18.67	551	10.56
Unknown	0 (0.0)	..	0.00	0	..
Statewide	2165 (100.0)	1.48	42.52	92047	63.01

Table 4. Summary of mink trapper and harvest data by wildlife management units in Illinois, 1994-95 season (n=291).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers/100km2	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km2
Northwest Hills	133 (9.3)	1.41	3.59	477	5.08
Northeast Moraine	69 (4.8)	0.83	4.21	290	3.51
Mississippi Border-North	69 (4.8)	0.88	3.57	246	3.13
Mississippi Border-South	118 (8.2)	0.86	3.71	438	3.20
Western Prairie/Forest	143 (10.0)	0.99	2.10	300	2.08
Central Sand Prairie	74 (5.2)	1.78	3.47	256	6.17
Grand Prairie	492 (34.4)	0.93	5.10	2509	4.77
Southern Plain	266 (18.6)	1.12	4.19	1112	4.69
Wabash Border	44 (3.1)	0.66	3.00	133	1.97
Shawnee Hills	25 (1.7)	0.47	4.00	98	1.89
Unknown	0 (0.0)	..	0.00	0	..
Statewide	1432 (100.0)	0.98	4.09	5860	4.01

Table 5. Summary of raccoon trapper and harvest data by wildlife management units in Illinois, 1994-95 season (n=523).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers/100km2	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km2
Northwest Hills	236 (9.2)	2.51	42.29	9988	106.27
Northeast Moraine	89 (3.4)	1.07	20.44	1811	21.89
Mississippi Border-North	226 (8.8)	2.88	44.09	9978	127.14
Mississippi Border-South	276 (10.7)	2.01	25.73	7090	51.85
Western Prairie/Forest	310 (12.0)	2.15	23.92	7415	51.42
Central Sand Prairie	98 (3.8)	2.37	31.75	3124	75.34
Grand Prairie	792 (30.8)	1.51	31.38	24857	47.23
Southern Plain	384 (14.9)	1.62	31.55	12109	51.03
Wabash Border	123 (4.8)	1.82	17.48	2150	31.89
Shawnee Hills	39 (1.5)	0.75	15.38	605	11.60
Unknown	0 (0.0)	..	0.00	0	..
Statewide	2573 (100.0)	1.76	30.75	79126	54.17

Table 6. Summary of opossum trapper and harvest data by wildlife management units in Illinois, 1994-95 season (n=340).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers/100km2	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km2
Northwest Hills	153 (9.1)	1.62	12.42	1894	20.15
Northeast Moraine	59 (3.5)	0.71	6.17	364	4.40
Mississippi Border-North	128 (7.6)	1.63	24.38	3119	39.75
Mississippi Border-South	187 (11.2)	1.37	10.03	1875	13.71
Western Prairie/Forest	182 (10.9)	1.26	6.05	1102	7.64
Central Sand Prairie	59 (3.5)	1.42	8.58	507	12.22
Grand Prairie	531 (31.8)	1.01	9.02	4792	9.11
Southern Plain	285 (17.1)	1.20	12.34	3523	14.85
Wabash Border	64 (3.8)	0.95	4.46	285	4.23
Shawnee Hills	25 (1.5)	0.47	5.80	143	2.74
Unknown	0 (0.0)	..	0.00	0	..
Statewide	1673 (100.0)	1.15	10.52	17604	12.05

Table 7. Summary of red fox trapper and harvest data by wildlife management units in Illinois, 1994-95 season (n=113).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers/100km2	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km2
Northwest Hills	64 (11.5)	0.68	4.77	305	3.25
Northeast Moraine	25 (4.4)	0.30	2.60	64	0.77
Mississippi Border-North	44 (8.0)	0.56	3.33	148	1.88
Mississippi Border-South	54 (9.7)	0.40	2.18	118	0.86
Western Prairie/Forest	34 (6.2)	0.24	3.43	118	0.82
Central Sand Prairie	15 (2.7)	0.36	1.33	20	0.47
Grand Prairie	167 (30.1)	0.32	3.97	664	1.26
Southern Plain	118 (21.2)	0.50	2.54	300	1.26
Wabash Border	25 (4.4)	0.36	1.80	44	0.66
Shawnee Hills	10 (1.8)	0.19	1.50	15	0.28
Unknown	0 (0.0)	..	0.00	0	..
Statewide	556 (100.0)	0.38	3.23	1796	1.23

Table 8. Summary of gray fox trapper and harvest data by wildlife management units in Illinois, 1994-95 season (n=29).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers/100km2	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km2
Northwest Hills	0 (0.0)	0.00	0.00	0	0.00
Northeast Moraine	15 (10.3)	0.18	6.33	93	1.13
Mississippi Border-North	0 (0.0)	0.00	0.00	0	0.00
Mississippi Border-South	30 (20.7)	0.22	2.00	59	0.43
Western Prairie/Forest	0 (0.0)	0.00	0.00	0	0.00
Central Sand Prairie	0 (0.0)	0.00	0.00	0	0.00
Grand Prairie	34 (24.1)	0.07	1.43	49	0.09
Southern Plain	44 (31.0)	0.19	1.56	69	0.29
Wabash Border	10 (6.9)	0.15	1.00	10	0.15
Shawnee Hills	10 (6.9)	0.19	1.00	10	0.19
Unknown	0 (0.0)	..	0.00	0	..
Statewide	143 (100.0)	0.10	2.03	290	0.20

Table 9. Summary of beaver trapper and harvest data by wildlife management units in Illinois, 1994-95 season (n=223).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers/100km2	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km2
Northwest Hills	108 (9.9)	1.15	7.86	851	9.06
Northeast Moraine	54 (4.9)	0.65	6.55	354	4.28
Mississippi Border-North	84 (7.6)	1.07	9.35	782	9.97
Mississippi Border-South	74 (6.7)	0.54	9.67	713	5.22
Western Prairie/Forest	93 (8.5)	0.65	5.37	502	3.48
Central Sand Prairie	64 (5.8)	1.54	12.38	792	19.10
Grand Prairie	403 (36.8)	0.77	7.72	3114	5.92
Southern Plain	162 (14.8)	0.68	7.45	1210	5.10
Wabash Border	30 (2.7)	0.44	4.50	133	1.97
Shawnee Hills	25 (2.2)	0.47	6.80	167	3.21
Unknown	0 (0.0)	..	0.00	0	..
Statewide	1097 (100.0)	0.75	7.86	8620	5.90

Table 10. Summary of skunk trapper and harvest data by wildlife management units in Illinois, 1994-95 season (n=116).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers/100km2	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km2
Northwest Hills	113 (19.8)	1.20	6.13	694	7.38
Northeast Moraine	30 (5.2)	0.36	8.83	261	3.15
Mississippi Border-North	44 (7.8)	0.56	5.89	261	3.32
Mississippi Border-South	44 (7.8)	0.32	1.56	69	0.50
Western Prairie/Forest	39 (6.9)	0.27	3.63	143	0.99
Central Sand Prairie	20 (3.4)	0.47	2.75	54	1.31
Grand Prairie	202 (35.3)	0.38	4.71	950	1.80
Southern Plain	69 (12.1)	0.29	2.36	162	0.68
Wabash Border	5 (0.9)	0.07	1.00	5	0.07
Shawnee Hills	5 (0.9)	0.09	10.00	49	0.94
Unknown	0 (0.0)	..	0.00	0	..
Statewide	571 (100.0)	0.39	4.64	2647	1.81

Table 11. Summary of weasel trapper and harvest data by wildlife management units in Illinois, 1994-95 season (n=7).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers/100km2	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km2
Northwest Hills	5 (14.3)	0.05	1.00	5	0.05
Northeast Moraine	0 (0.0)	0.00	0.00	0	0.00
Mississippi Border-North	0 (0.0)	0.00	0.00	0	0.00
Mississippi Border-South	0 (0.0)	0.00	0.00	0	0.00
Western Prairie/Forest	5 (14.3)	0.03	1.00	5	0.03
Central Sand Prairie	0 (0.0)	0.00	0.00	0	0.00
Grand Prairie	15 (42.9)	0.03	1.33	20	0.04
Southern Plain	10 (28.6)	0.04	1.00	10	0.04
Wabash Border	0 (0.0)	0.00	0.00	0	0.00
Shawnee Hills	0 (0.0)	0.00	0.00	0	0.00
Unknown	0 (0.0)	..	0.00	0	..
Statewide	34 (100.0)	0.02	1.14	39	0.03

Table 12. Summary of coyote trapper and harvest data by wildlife management units in Illinois, 1994-95 season (n=137).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers/100km2	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km2
Northwest Hills	54 (8.0)	0.58	4.73	256	2.72
Northeast Moraine	44 (6.6)	0.54	6.67	295	3.57
Mississippi Border-North	64 (9.5)	0.82	14.92	955	12.16
Mississippi Border-South	74 (10.9)	0.54	5.40	399	2.91
Western Prairie/Forest	49 (7.3)	0.34	13.10	645	4.47
Central Sand Prairie	30 (4.4)	0.71	3.33	98	2.37
Grand Prairie	212 (31.4)	0.40	5.60	1186	2.25
Southern Plain	113 (16.8)	0.48	4.61	522	2.20
Wabash Border	25 (3.6)	0.36	7.00	172	2.55
Shawnee Hills	10 (1.5)	0.19	4.00	39	0.75
Unknown	0 (0.0)	..	0.00	0	..
Statewide	674 (100.0)	0.46	6.77	4566	3.13

Table 13. Statewide sample sizes for post-season mail survey of resident fur trappers in Illinois, 1994-95 season (n=664).

Species	Number of Effective Trappers In Sample	Percent Effective Trappers	Season Harvest by Effective Trappers in Sample
Muskrat	440	66.27	18708
Mink	291	43.83	1191
Raccoon	523	78.77	16082
Opossum	340	51.20	3578
Red fox	113	17.02	365
Gray fox	29	4.37	59
Beaver	223	33.58	1752
Skunk	116	17.47	538
Weasel	7	1.05	8
Coyote	137	20.63	928

Table 14. Confidence intervals (95%) for estimated number of effective trappers, average season harvest, and total trapper harvest by species in Illinois, 1994-95 season (n=664).

Species	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers	Estimated Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Harvest
Muskrat	2165 +/- 120	42.52 +/- 6.65	92047 +/- 15351
Mink	1432 +/- 126	4.09 +/- 0.61	5860 +/- 1082
Raccoon	2573 +/- 104	30.75 +/- 4.28	79126 +/- 11490
Opossum	1673 +/- 127	10.52 +/- 1.98	17604 +/- 3634
Red fox	556 +/- 95	3.23 +/- 0.88	1796 +/- 638
Gray fox	143 +/- 52	2.03 +/- 0.97	290 +/- 209
Beaver	1097 +/- 120	7.86 +/- 1.27	8620 +/- 1752
Skunk	571 +/- 96	4.64 +/- 1.02	2647 +/- 797
Weasel	34 +/- 26	1.14 +/- 0.28	39 +/- 56
Coyote	674 +/- 103	6.77 +/- 1.89	4566 +/- 1515

Table 15. Distribution of furbearer harvest among effective trappers in Illinois, 1994-95 season. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Total Season Catch	Percentage of Effective Trappers									
	Muskrat (440)	Mink (291)	Raccoon (523)	Opossum (340)	Red fox (113)	Gray fox (29)	Beaver (223)	Striped skunk (116)	Weasel (7)	Coyote (137)
1	5.5	35.4	3.6	10.3	48.7	58.6	19.3	37.1	85.7	25.5
2	5.0	21.3	5.7	12.6	22.1	27.6	13.9	14.7	14.3	21.2
3	4.5	7.6	5.2	11.8	5.3	6.9	9.0	12.1	0.0	8.8
4	4.5	8.2	4.0	7.6	8.0	0.0	9.0	3.4	0.0	5.8
5	3.0	5.5	2.7	7.1	2.7	3.4	7.6	5.2	0.0	8.0
6	3.4	5.8	2.7	7.4	0.0	0.0	5.8	6.9	0.0	3.6
7	2.3	4.1	2.5	4.7	1.8	0.0	4.0	4.3	0.0	2.9
8	4.1	1.4	4.0	4.4	3.5	0.0	3.6	2.6	0.0	3.6
9	1.1	1.4	1.3	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0	2.9
10	5.7	1.7	5.9	7.9	2.7	0.0	4.5	2.6	0.0	2.2
11	1.1	1.4	1.7	1.5	0.0	0.0	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.7
12	1.6	0.3	4.8	2.1	0.9	0.0	2.7	0.9	0.0	2.9
13	0.9	0.7	1.5	0.3	0.9	0.0	0.9	0.9	0.0	0.0
14	1.6	0.7	1.5	0.9	0.0	0.0	2.2	0.9	0.0	0.7
15	2.5	0.3	3.4	4.1	0.0	3.4	2.2	4.3	0.0	0.7
16-20	5.9	1.7	9.8	5.3	2.7	0.0	4.0	0.0	0.0	3.6
20-25	5.5	0.3	6.9	2.9	0.0	0.0	2.2	3.4	0.0	0.7
>25	41.8	2.1	32.7	7.6	0.9	0.0	6.3	0.9	0.0	5.8

Table 16. Summary of Muskrat trapper and harvest data by furbearer management zones in Illinois, 1995 season (n=440).

Area	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers/100km2	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km2
North Zone	1348 (62.3)	1.65	52.28 +/- 10.00	70477 (76.6)	86.12
South Zone	817 (37.7)	1.27	26.41 +/- 5.33	21570 (23.4)	33.58
Unknown	0 (0.0)	..	..	0	..
Statewide	2165 (100.0)	1.48	42.52 +/- 6.81	92047	63.01

Table 17. Summary of Mink trapper and harvest data by furbearer management zones in Illinois, 1995 season (n=291).

Area	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers/100km2	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km2
North Zone	915 (63.9)	1.12	4.06 +/- 0.85	3720 (63.5)	4.55
South Zone	517 (36.1)	0.80	4.14 +/- 0.81	2140 (36.5)	3.33
Unknown	0 (0.0)	..	..	0	..
Statewide	1432 (100.0)	0.98	4.09 +/- 0.61	5860	4.01

Table 18. Summary of Raccoon trapper and harvest data by furbearer management zones in Illinois, 1995 season (n=523).

Area	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers/100km2	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km2
North Zone	1599 (62.1)	1.95	32.10 +/- 5.45	51332 (64.9)	62.72
South Zone	974 (37.9)	1.52	28.53 +/- 6.94	27794 (35.1)	43.27
Unknown	0 (0.0)	..	..	0	..
Statewide	2573 (100.0)	1.76	30.75 +/- 4.29	79126	54.17

Table 19. Summary of Opossum trapper and harvest data by furbearer management zones in Illinois, 1995 season (n=340).

Area	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers/100km2	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km2
North Zone	1014 (60.6)	1.24	10.62 +/- 2.93	10760 (61.1)	13.15
South Zone	659 (39.4)	1.03	10.38 +/- 2.23	6844 (38.9)	10.65
Unknown	0 (0.0)	..	..	0	..
Statewide	1673 (100.0)	1.15	10.52 +/- 1.98	17604	12.05

Table 20. Summary of Red fox trapper and harvest data by furbearer management zones in Illinois, 1995 season (n=113).

Area	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers/100km2	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km2
North Zone	335 (60.2)	0.41	3.66 +/- 1.31	1225 (68.2)	1.50
South Zone	221 (39.8)	0.34	2.58 +/- 0.99	571 (31.8)	0.89
Unknown	0 (0.0)	..	..	0	..
Statewide	556 (100.0)	0.38	3.23 +/- 0.89	1796	1.23

Table 21. Summary of Gray fox trapper and harvest data by furbearer management zones in Illinois, 1995 season (n=29).

Area	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers/100km2	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km2
North Zone	49 (34.5)	0.06	2.90 +/- 2.67	143 (49.2)	0.17
South Zone	93 (65.5)	0.15	1.58 +/- 0.46	148 (50.8)	0.23
Unknown	0 (0.0)	..	..	0	..
Statewide	143 (100.0)	0.10	2.03 +/- 0.98	290	0.20

Table 22. Summary of Beaver trapper and harvest data by furbearer management zones in Illinois, 1994-95 season (n=223).

Area	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers/100km2	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km2
North Zone	787 (71.7)	0.96	8.07 +/- 1.53	6357 (73.7)	7.77
South Zone	310 (28.3)	0.48	7.30 +/- 2.26	2263 (26.3)	3.52
Unknown	0 (0.0)	..	..	0	..
Statewide	1097 (100.0)	0.75	7.86 +/- 1.27	8620	5.90

Table 23. Summary of Skunk trapper and harvest data by furbearer management zones in Illinois, 1994-95 season (n=116).

Area	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers/100km2	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km2
North Zone	443 (77.6)	0.54	5.30 +/- 1.26	2347 (88.7)	2.87
South Zone	128 (22.4)	0.20	2.35 +/- 0.74	300 (11.3)	0.47
Unknown	0 (0.0)	..	..	0	..
Statewide	571 (100.0)	0.39	4.64 +/- 1.10	2647	1.81

Table 24. Summary of Weasel trapper and harvest data by furbearer management zones in Illinois, 1995 season (n=7).

Area	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers/100km2	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km2
North Zone	25 (71.4)	0.03	1.20 +/- 0.39	30 (75.0)	0.04
South Zone	10 (28.6)	0.02	1.00 +/- 0.00	10 (25.0)	0.02
Unknown	0 (0.0)	..	..	0	..
Statewide	34 (100.0)	0.02	1.14 +/- 0.30	39	0.03

Table 25. Summary of Coyote trapper and harvest data by furbearer management zones in Illinois, 1995 season (n=137).

Area	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers	Estimated Number of Effective Trappers/100km2	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km2
North Zone	423 (62.8)	0.52	7.71 +/- 2.87	3262 (71.4)	3.99
South Zone	251 (37.2)	0.39	5.20 +/- 1.47	1304 (28.6)	2.03
Unknown	0 (0.0)	..	..	0	..
Statewide	674 (100.0)	0.46	6.77 +/- 1.91	4566	3.13

Table 26. The number of pelts sold by trappers for 10 species of furbearers in Illinois, 1994-95 season (n=573).

Species	Total Number of Pelts Sold	Pelts Sold in Illinois		Pelts Sold Outside Illinois	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Muskrat	85,680	76,658	89.47	9,022	10.53
Mink	5,570	4,779	85.80	791	14.20
Raccoon	75,643	57,163	75.57	18,480	24.43
Opossum	12,163	10,104	83.07	2,059	16.93
Red fox	1,599	1,181	73.85	418	26.15
Gray fox	241	143	59.18	98	40.82
Beaver	7,434	5,863	78.87	1,571	21.13
Striped skunk	743	512	68.87	231	31.13
Weasel	20	20	100	0	0.00
Coyote	3,670	2,129	58.02	1,541	41.98
Total	192,763	158,552	82.25	34,211	17.75

Table 27. Summary of fur hunting activities by trappers[a] in Illinois, 1994-95 season (n=664).

Species	Number of trappers in sample hunting species	Number of furbearers harvested by hunting	Average number harvested by hunting	Estimated percent of all trappers effectively hunting species	Estimated total harvest by all trappers effectively hunting species
Raccoon	128	2,813	21.98	19.28	13,840
Opossum	34	219	6.44	5.12	1,078
Red fox	26	141	5.42	3.92	694
Gray fox	3	14	4.67	0.45	69
Striped skunk	14	56	4.00	2.11	276
Coyote	75	521	6.95	11.30	2,563
All species	183[b]	3,764	20.57	27.56	18,520

[a]Active and inactive trappers.

[b]Total for all species is less than the sum of the above values because many trappers hunted >1 species.

Table 28. Assessments by fur trappers[a] as to changes in furbearer populations from 1993-94 to 1994-95. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Species		Percentage of Active Trappers			
		Up	Unchanged	Down	Don't Know
Muskrat	(530)	24.2	26.4	25.1	24.3
Raccoon	(543)	51.5	26.0	6.1	16.4
Red fox	(468)	14.5	23.9	22.2	39.4
Beaver	(486)	34.4	23.7	7.8	34.1
Coyote	(481)	38.4	17.5	9.4	34.7

[a]Active trappers.

Table 29. Types and numbers of traps set for raccoons in Illinois in 1994-95 (n=511).

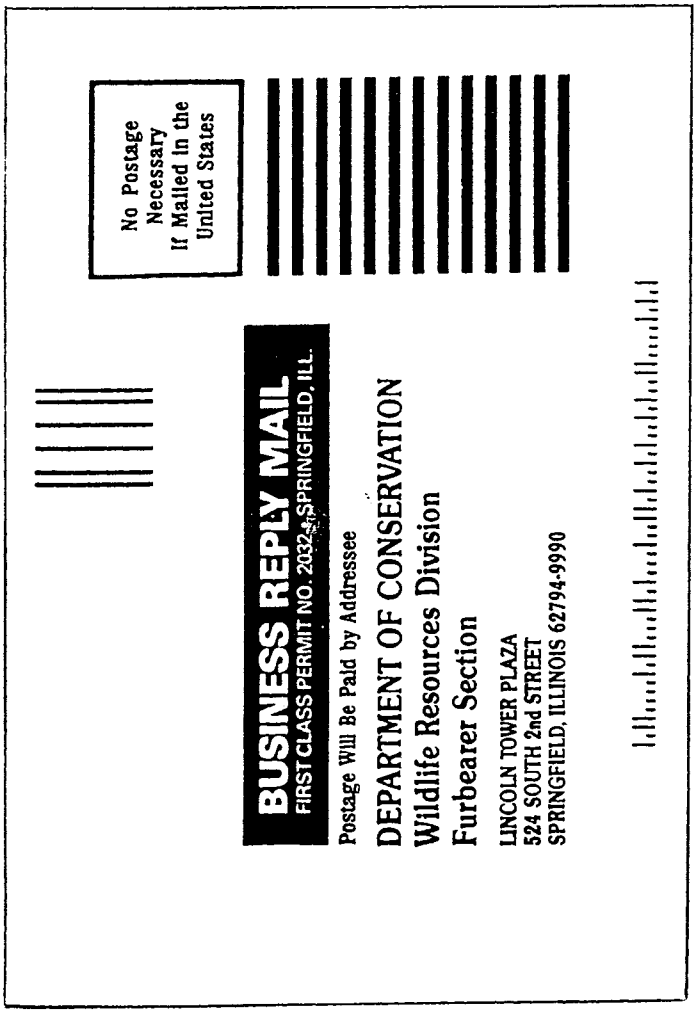
Type of Trap	Trappers[a]		Traps	
	Number	Percentage	Mean Per Owner	Percentage of Total
Foothold/leghold	432	84.5	21.0	69.3
Body-gripping (Conibear)	292	57.1	12.1	26.9
Cage/box	115	22.5	3.5	3.1
Egg	3	0.6	2.3	0.1
Snare	1	0.2	---[b]	0.6

[a]Those who trapped for raccoons.

[b]The single trapper reported that he set 75 snares.

Table 30. Percentages of raccoon catch taken with foothold/ leghold traps that were caught in different types of sets in Illinois in 1994-95 (n=379).

Type of Set	Percentage of Raccoon Catch
Dry land	20.7
Water set with trap attached to drowning slide wire (raccoon is almost always dead)	25.7
Water set with special drowning pole/tangle stake and trap attached to long chain (raccoon is usually dead)	17.6
Water set without drowning slide wire or special drowning pole/tangle stake (raccoon is sometimes dead)	34.1
Don't know	1.9
Total	100



TO ISSUING CLERK:

COMPLETE THIS FORM AND MAIL IMMEDIATELY UPON SALE OF FIRST LICENSE IN BOOK

The Department of Conservation is conducting a survey to estimate the fur harvest in Illinois. To effect this, we need the names and addresses of part of our licensed trappers. Please print at the bottom of this page, in the space provided, name, mailing address including zip code, and county of residence of the person who purchases the first license in this book. Please detach the next page and give to license purchaser.

Thank you for your cooperation. **Please note** reverse side is Business Reply postal card, perforated at binding for removing.

MAIL IMMEDIATELY UPON SALE OF LICENSE
TRAPPING (1994 SERIES)
Please Print Plainly

Name TRAPPER JOHN
Street Address, R.R. and Box Number RR 1, BOX 23
City and State HOMETOWN
Zip Code 61234
County of Residence SANGAMON

Figure 1. The name/address card that was issued to license vendors for conducting the 1994-95 post-season Furbearer Trapping Survey.

DETACH THIS PAGE AND GIVE TO PERSON WHO PURCHASES FIRST LICENSE IN BOOK

Dear Trapper:

Please keep an accurate record of the number of days you had traps set, the average number and kinds of traps you used during the season, the number of furbearers you caught in traps, what county you trapped in most, and the number and kinds of pelts you sold in Illinois and Out of State.

You may be one of the selected trappers contacted at the close of the trapping season and provided a form to return to the Illinois Department of Conservation.

Thanks for your cooperation.

THE BACK SIDE OF THIS CARD MAY BE USED FOR RECORD KEEPING.

Number of TRAPS I had set: _____

Number of DAYS I had traps set: _____

FURBEARERS CAUGHT IN TRAPS: _____

Species	Total Number Caught	Number Sold	
		In Illinois	Out-of-State
Muskrat			
Mink			
Raccoon			
Opossum			
Beaver			
Red Fox			
Gray Fox			
Coyote			
Striped Skunk			
Weasel			

Other Animals Caught: _____

_____

Figure 2. Information/activity record card that was issued to trappers for conducting the 1994-95 post-season Furbearer Trapping Survey.

FURBEARER TRAPPING SURVEY

1994-95 SEASON

PART 1 - TRAPPING ACTIVITY

1. Did you SET ANY TRAPS for furbearers in Illinois during the 1994-95 season? (*Circle number for appropriate answer*)

Yes . . . 1 No . . . 2

If YES, continue with Question #2. If NO, go to Question #6.

2. In which COUNTY did you do MOST of your trapping? _____ County, Illinois

3. How many days (or nights) did you have traps set? _____ days (or nights)

4. What was the AVERAGE number of traps you had set on your trapline during the 1994-95 season?

_____ traps

PART 2 - HARVEST (TRAPPING ONLY)

5. Fill in ALL FOUR BLANKS for each kind of furbearer you TRAPPED in Illinois during the 1994-95 season. REPORT ONLY YOUR PERSONAL CATCH. If you trapped in partnership with another person, list only <u>your half</u> of the catch.

Species	*Number CAUGHT in traps*	*Number SOLD in Illinois*	*Number SOLD or SHIPPED Out of State*	*Number NOT SOLD*
Muskrat				
Mink				
Raccoon				
Opossum				
Red fox				
Gray fox				
Beaver				
Skunk				
Weasel				
Coyote				

(Over)

Figure 3. The questionnaire used to conduct the 1994-95 post-season Furbearer Trapping Survey.

Figure 3 - continued.

PART 3 - FURBEARER POPULATIONS

6. Compared to 1993-94 (last season), were the populations of the following furbearers up, unchanged, or down during 1994-95 (this season)? (*Express your opinion by circling the appropriate number for each species*)

Species	Up	Unchanged	Down	Don't Know
Muskrat	1	2	3	4
Raccoon	1	2	3	4
Red fox	1	2	3	4
Beaver	1	2	3	4
Coyote	1	2	3	4

7. Did you accidentally trap any badgers <u>in Illinois</u> during the past three years (1992-1994)?

Yes . . . 1 No . . . 2 If yes, list county: _____

8. Have you seen a river otter or observed river otter sign <u>in Illinois</u> during the past three years?

Yes . . . 1 No . . . 2 If yes, list county: _____

9. Have you seen a bobcat or observed bobcat sign <u>in Illinois</u> during the past three years?

Yes . . . 1 No . . . 2 If yes, list county: _____

PART 4 - FURBEARER HUNTING

9. Did you also HUNT furbearers with a gun and/or dogs during the 1994-95 season?

Yes . . . 1 No . . . 2

If yes, please give the number of each kind taken:

_____ Raccoon _____ Red Fox _____ Skunk

_____ Opossum _____ Gray Fox _____ Coyote

Figure 3. Continued - page 2.

PART 5 - OTHER TOPICS

10. Did you trap for RACCOONS during the 1994-95 season?

Yes . . . 1 No . . . 2

If yes, continue with question #11. If no, return completed questionnaire.

11. Please indicate the types and numbers of traps you actually set for RACCOONS during the 1994-95 season. Fill in all blanks that apply.

Trap type	Maximum number set at any time
Foothold (leghold) Traps	_____ traps
Body-gripping (Conibear) Traps	_____ traps
Cage or Box Traps	_____ traps
Other (list) _____	_____ traps
_____	_____ traps

If you used foothold (leghold) traps for raccoons during the 1994-95 season, continue with question # 12. If you did not use foothold (leghold) traps for raccoons, return the completed questionnaire.

12. Please indicate the PERCENTAGE of your 1994-95 RACCOON catch taken with FOOTHOLD/LEGHOLD traps that was caught in each type of set listed below. Fill in all blanks that apply.

Set type	Percentage of Raccoons caught in FOOTHOLD traps in this type of set
Dry land set	_____ %
Water set with trap attached to drowning slide wire (raccoon is almost always dead)	_____ %
Water set with special drowning pole/tangle stake and trap attached to long chain (raccoon is usually dead)	_____ %
Water set without drowning slide wire or special drowning pole/tangle stake (raccoon is sometimes dead) .	_____ %
Don't know	_____ %
Total	100 %

THANKS FOR YOUR COOPERATION!!!
NO POSTAGE REQUIRED

Figure 3. Continued - page 3.

Illinois Department of Conservation
LINCOLN TOWER PLAZA • 524 SOUTH SECOND STREET • SPRINGFIELD 62701-1787 CHICAGO OFFICE • ROOM 4-300 • 100 WEST RANDOLPH • CHICAGO 60601
Brent Manning, Director John W. Comerio, Deputy Director Bruce F. Clay, Assistant Director

March 1995

Dear Illinois Trapper:

The Department of Conservation conducts an annual survey of trappers to collect information about harvests, trapping success, and trapping pressure. We also ask for your opinions about furbearer populations in your area.

Results of the survey allow us to estimate the number of pelts taken by trappers, value of pelts taken by trappers, and distribution of harvest pressure. Estimates of trapping success, your opinions about furbearer populations, and observations of closed-season furbearers are used with other sources of information to track changes in furbearer numbers.

You can make an important contribution to management of Illinois' fur resources by completing the enclosed questionnaire. The questionnaire is short and self-explanatory. Your participation is important because you are part of a small, random sample of people who purchased a 1994-95 trapping license. Please reply even if you did not trap this season or were not successful.

If you do not remember exact figures, please give your best estimate. Also, if you trapped in partnership with another person, list only your half of the catch. Drop the completed questionnaire in the mail; no postage is required.

Thank you for participating in Illinois' furbearer management program. If you have comments on topics that are not addressed by this questionnaire, please write them on a separate sheet of paper to receive proper attention.

Sincerely,

Bob Bluett
Furbearer Program Manager

BB:bb

Figure 4. The letter that accompanied the first mailing of the questionnaire.

Illinois Department of Conservation
LINCOLN TOWER PLAZA • 524 SOUTH SECOND STREET • SPRINGFIELD 62701-1787 CHICAGO OFFICE • ROOM 4-300 • 100 WEST RANDOLPH • CHICAGO 60601
Brent Manning, Director John W. Comerio, Deputy Director Bruce F. Clay, Assistant Director

April 1995

Dear Illinois Trapper:

We recently mailed you a Trapper Harvest Survey questionnaire and requested that you fill out and return the completed form. We have not received your form at this time - perhaps because you have misplaced the questionnaire or haven't found the time to complete it and return it to us.

We are enclosing another questionnaire which we hope you will complete and return to us as soon as possible. If you have already returned the questionnaire, please destroy this one. The information supplied by you and other trappers being sampled will be of great value to the Department of Conservation in better directing the management of Illinois' fur resources.

Please fill out the questionnaire and return it **even if you did not trap or were not successful.** If you trapped in partnership with another person, please list only your half of the catch. No postage is required to return the completed questionnaire. Simply fill it out and drop it in the mail.

Your prompt attention will be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Bob Bluett

Bob Bluett
Furbearer Program Manager

BB:bb

Figure 5. The letter that accompanied the second mailing of the questionnaire.

Illinois Department of Conservation
LINCOLN TOWER PLAZA • 524 SOUTH SECOND STREET • SPRINGFIELD 62701-1787 CHICAGO OFFICE • ROOM 4-300 • 100 WEST RANDOLPH • CHICAGO 60601
Brent Manning, Director John W. Comerio, Deputy Director Bruce F. Clay, Assistant Director

May 1995

Dear Illinois Trapper:

This is to remind you that we would still like to receive your completed questionnaire regarding your trapping activities this past season. We don't like to keep bothering you, but this is very important information which only you can supply.

Another copy of the questionnaire is enclosed. We hope that you will complete and return it as soon as possible. If you have already returned a questionnaire, simply destroy this one.

We are making a final effort to obtain your responses so that we may compile the information received from all cooperating trappers and prepare a report of our findings. Remember, your response is needed, even if you did not trap or had an unsuccessful season. Results of the survey allow us to estimate the number of pelts taken by trappers, value of pelts taken by trappers, and distribution of harvest pressure. Estimates of trapping success, your opinions about furbearer populations, and observations of closed-season furbearers are used with other sources of information to track changes in furbearer numbers.

No postage is required to return the questionnaire. Just fill it out and drop it in the mail. Please help us complete this survey by sending your responses now.

Sincerely,

Bob Bluett
Furbearer Program Manager

BB:bb

Enc.

tsurvey.3

Figure 6. The letter that accompanied the third mailing of the questionnaire.

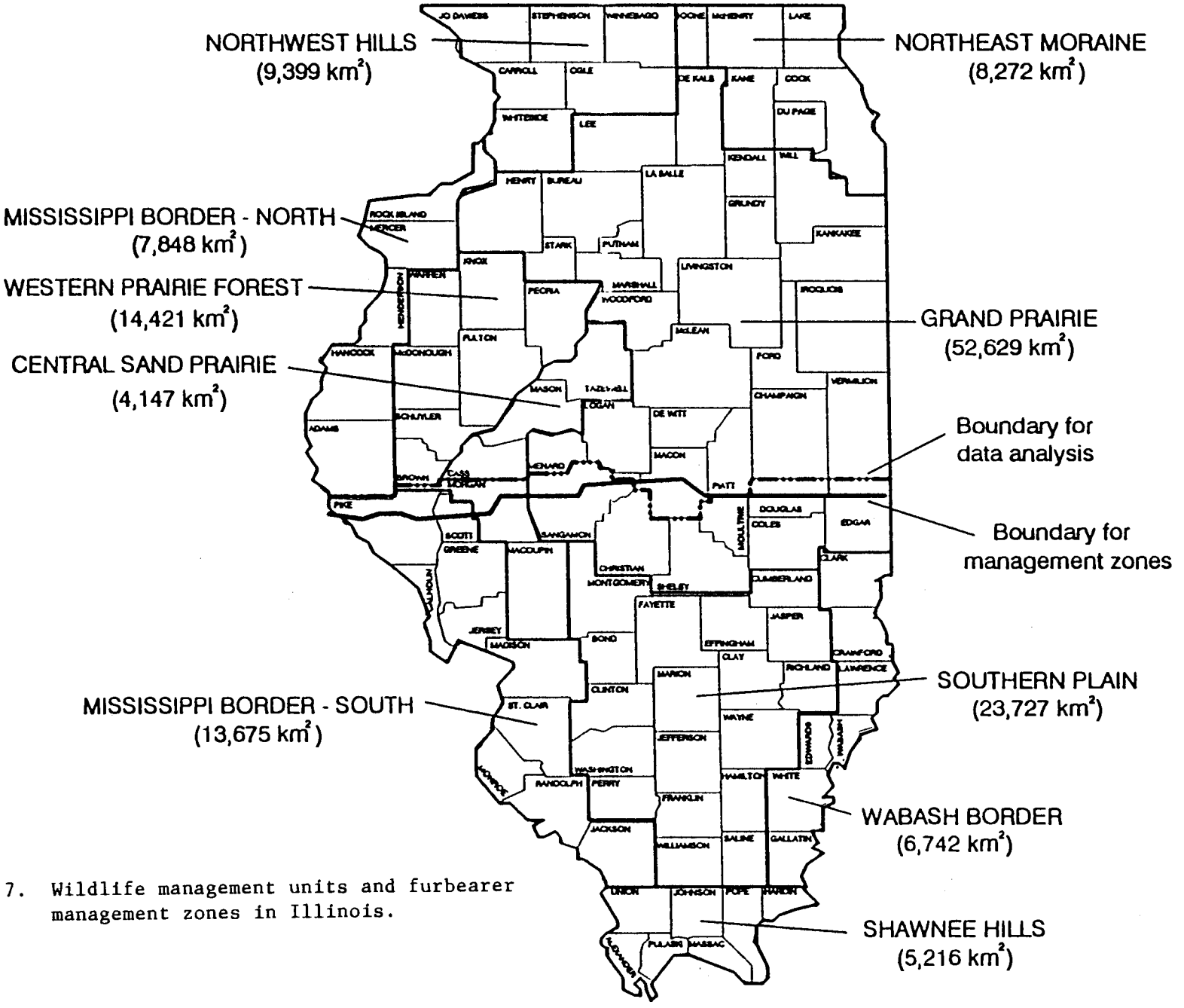


Figure 7. Wildlife management units and furbearer management zones in Illinois.

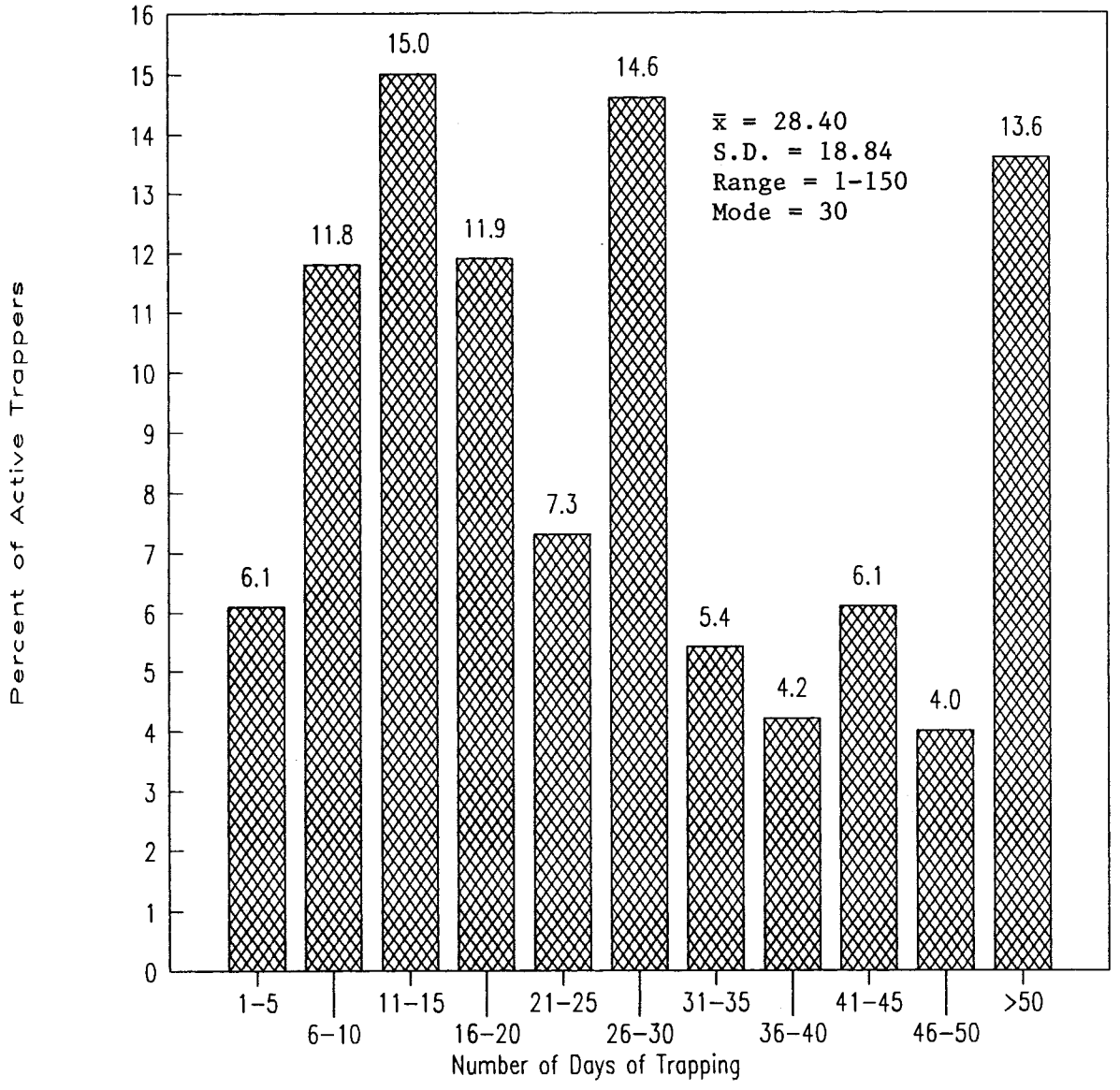


Figure 8. Distribution of days of trapping by active trappers in Illinois, 1994-95 season (n = 574).

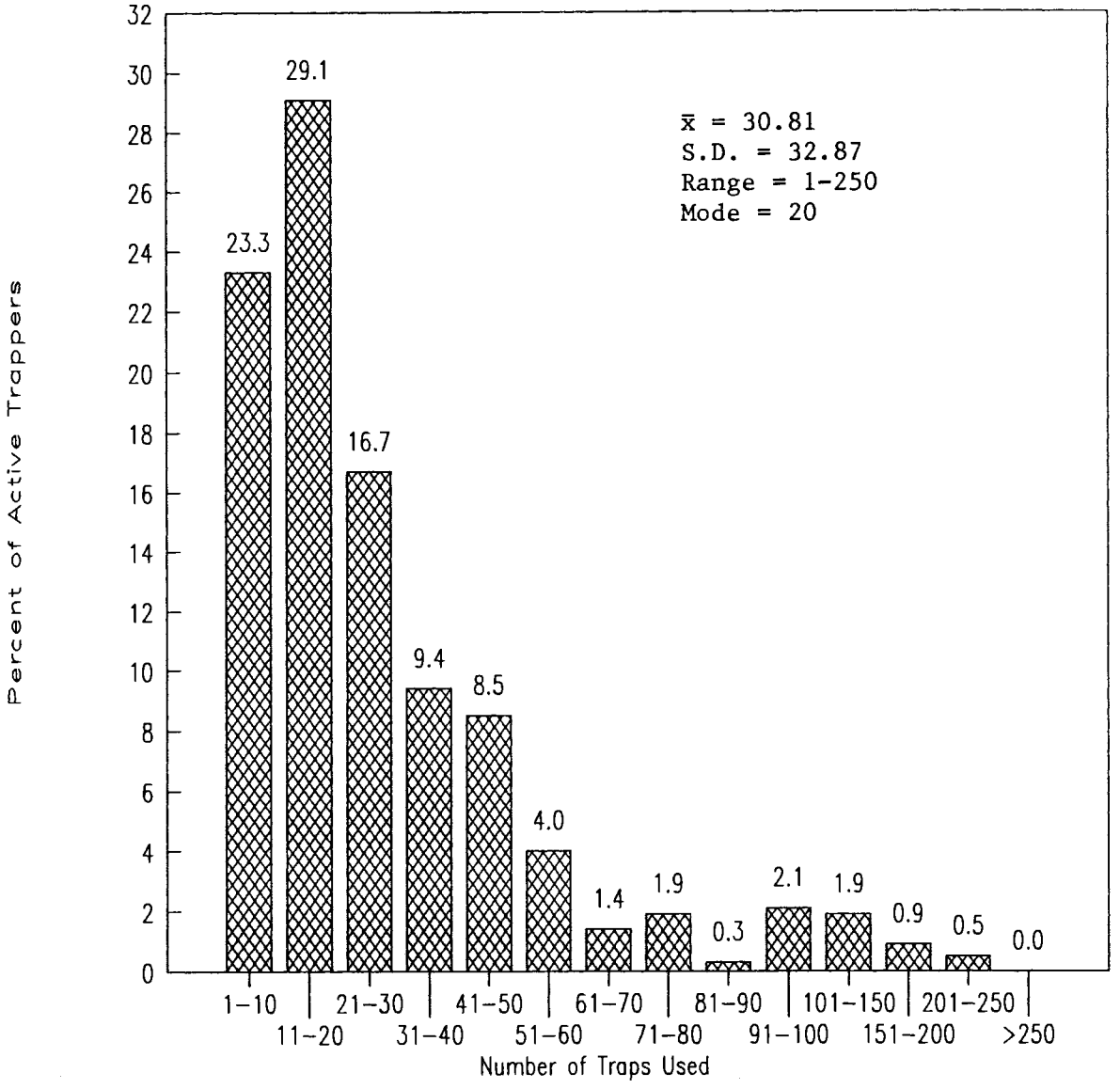


Figure 9. Distribution of the number of traps used by active trappers in Illinois, 1994-95 season (n = 576).

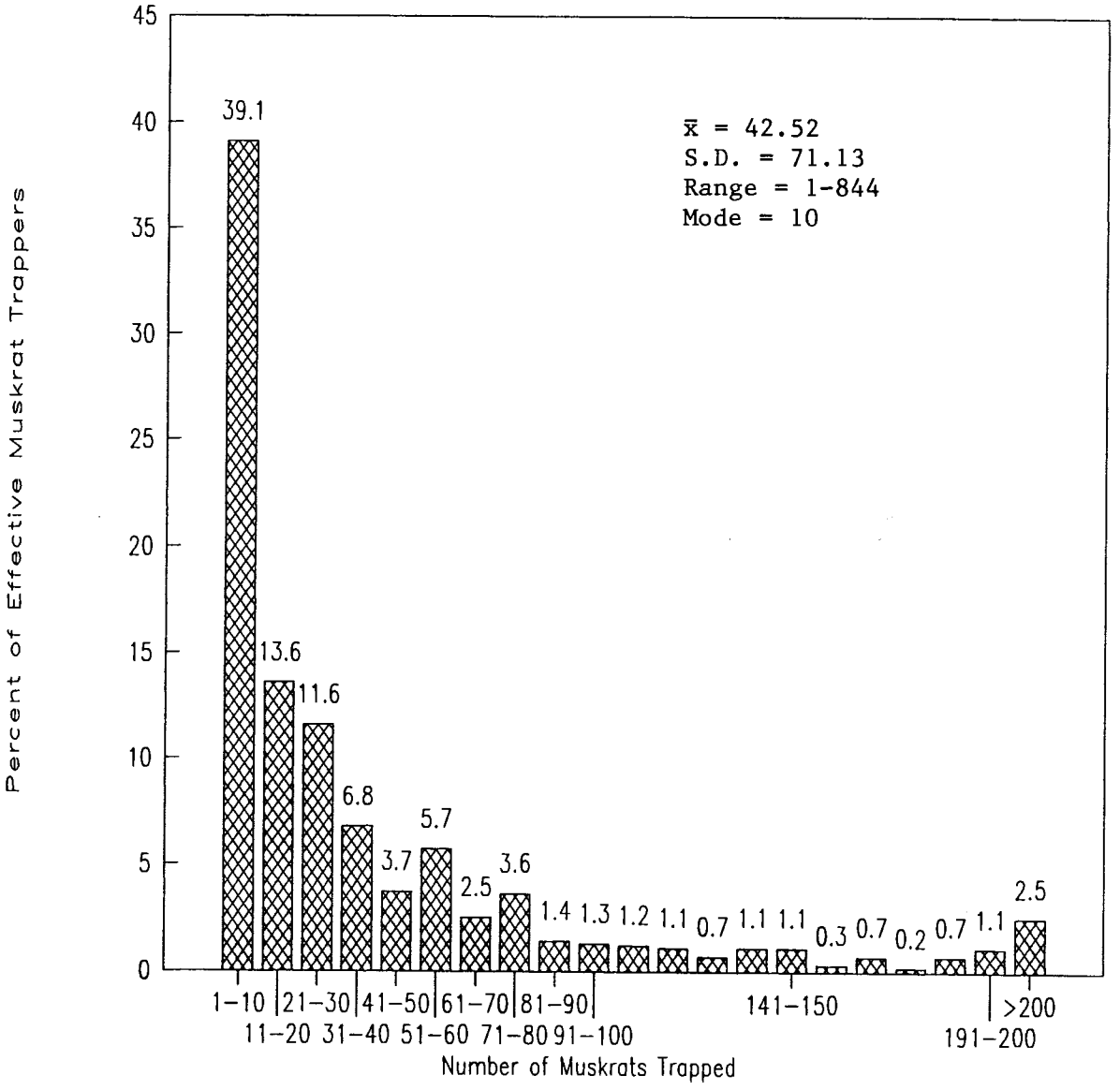


Figure 10. Distribution of the number of muskrats trapped per effective muskrat trapper in Illinois, 1994-95 season (n = 440).

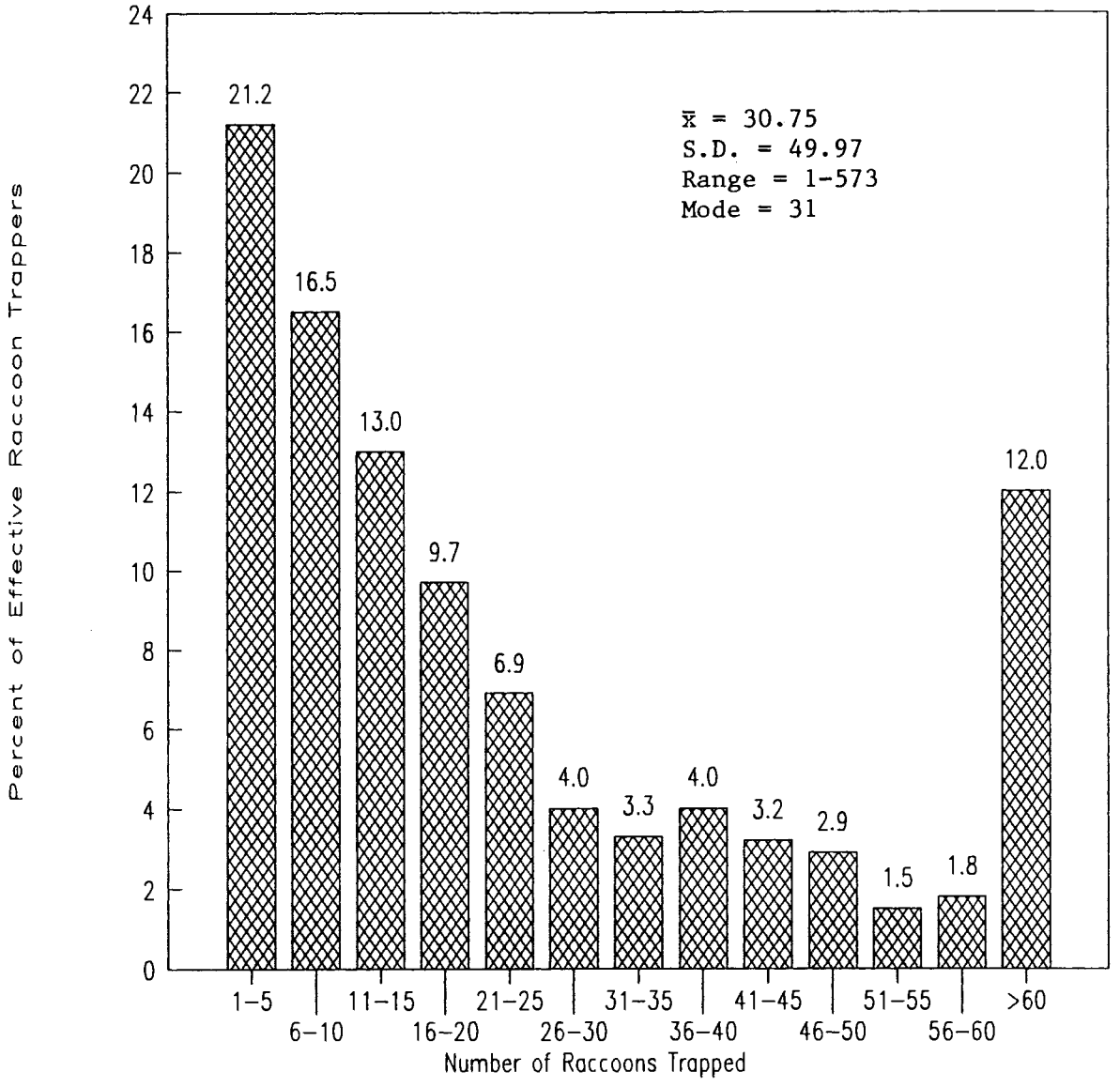


Figure 11. Distribution of the number of raccoons trapped per effective raccoon trapper in Illinois, 1994-95 season (n = 523).

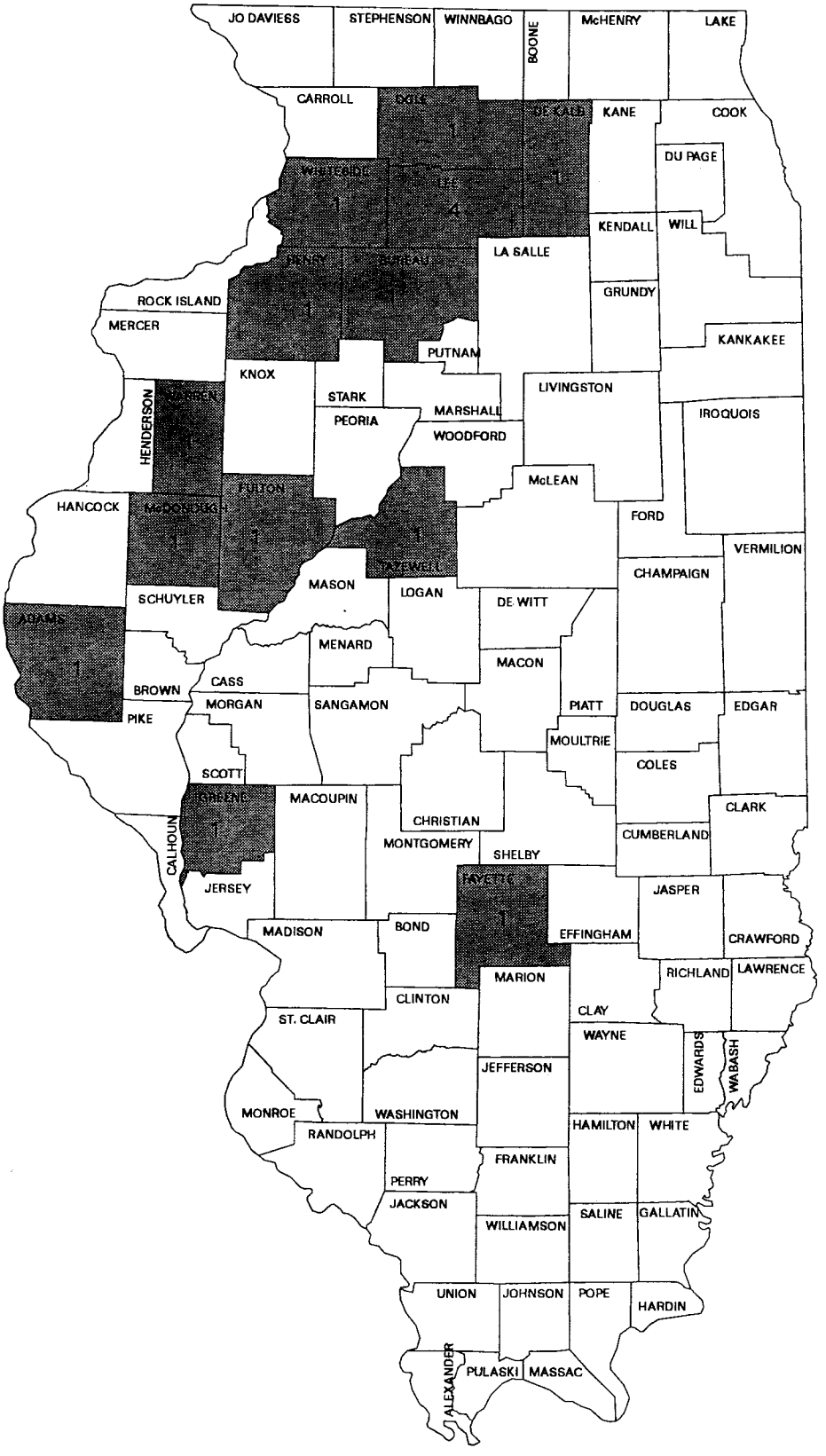


Figure 12. Illinois counties in which trappers reported accidentally catching badgers during the past three years (1992-1994). The number of reports is listed for each county.

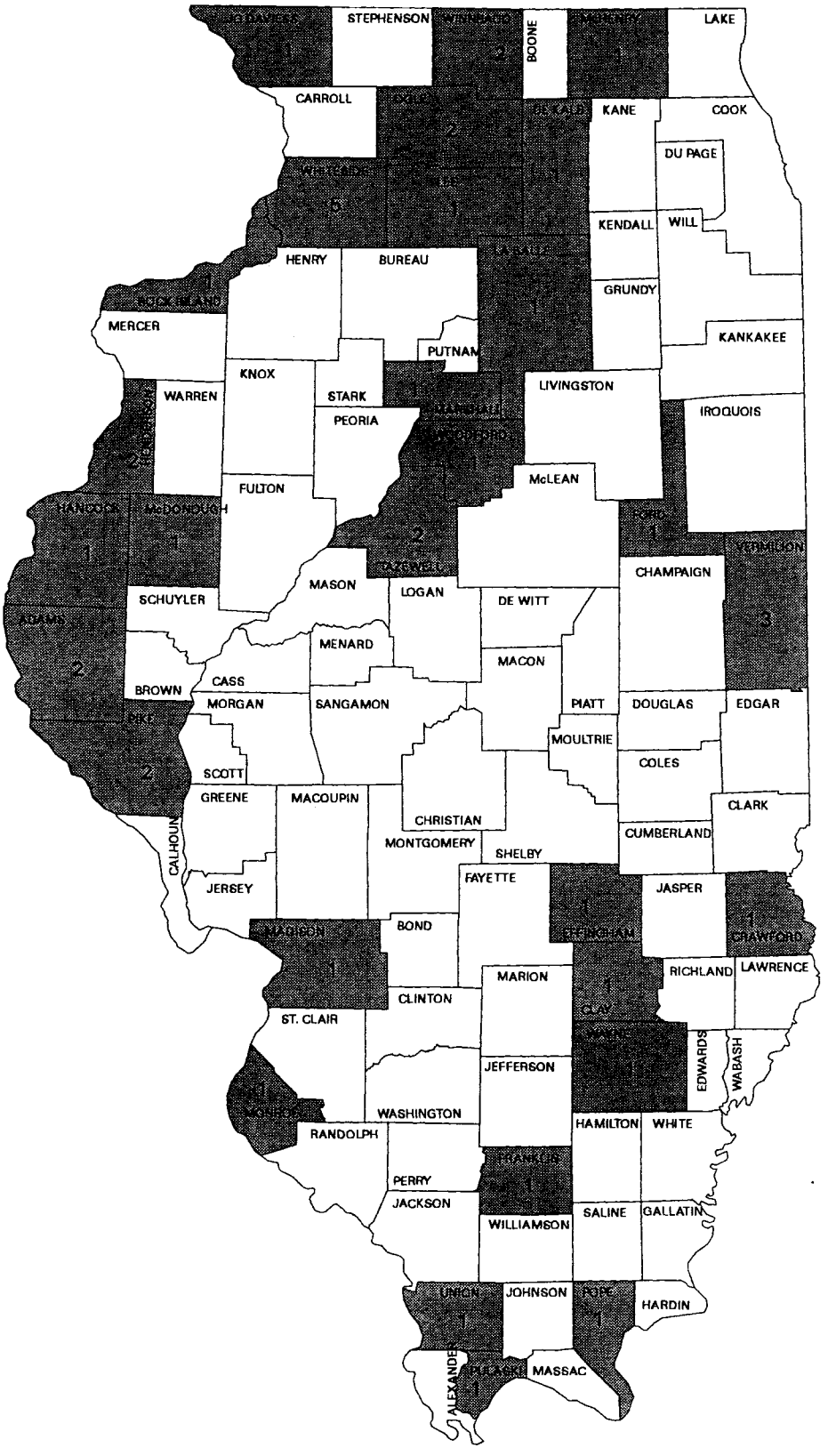


Figure 13. Illinois counties in which trappers reported observing river otters or their sign during the past three years (1992-1994). The number of reports is listed for each county.

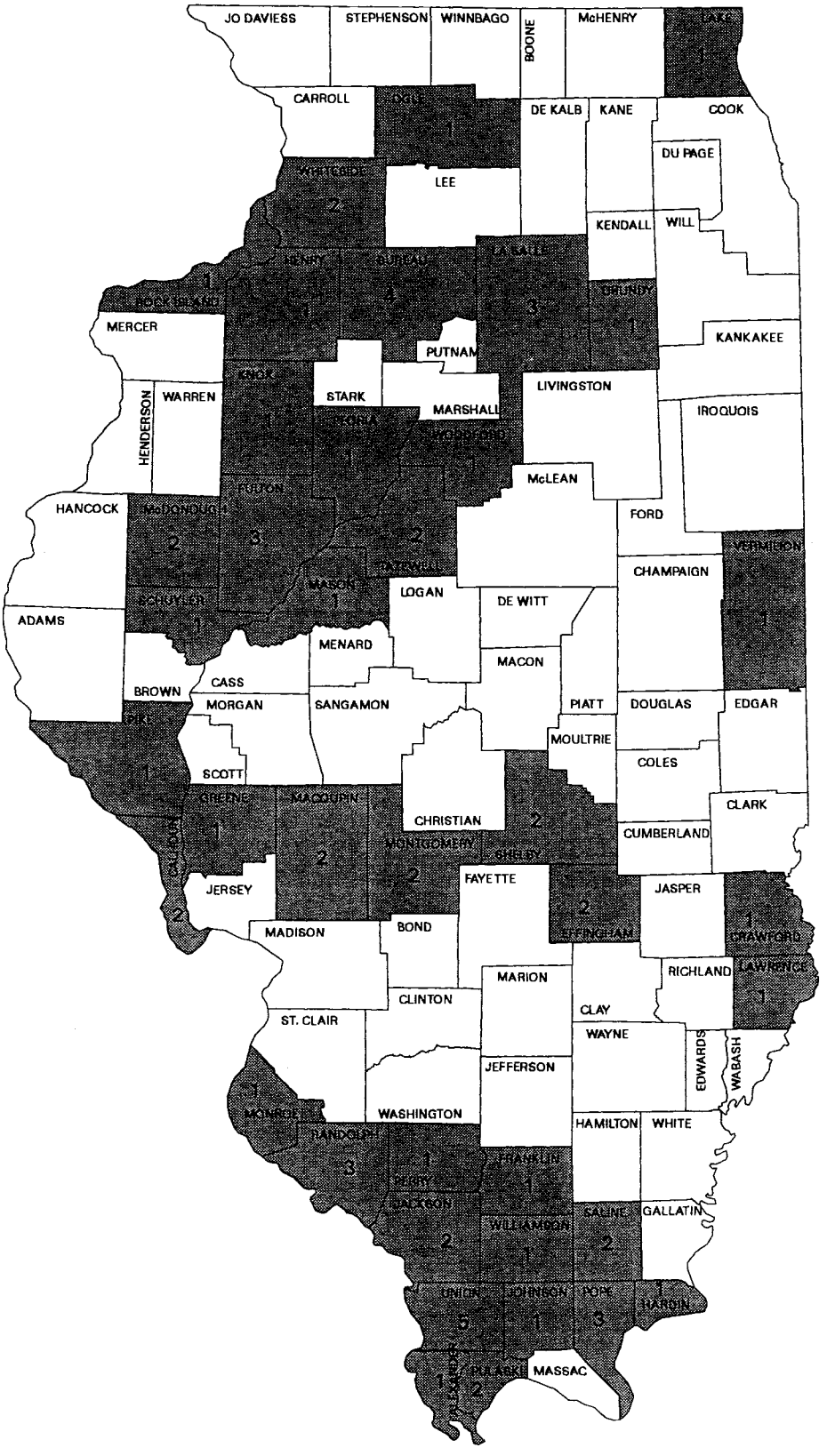


Figure 14. Illinois counties in which trappers reported observing bobcats or their sign during the past three years (1992-1994). The number of reports is listed for each county.