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ILLINOIS WATERFOWL HARVEST, HUNTER ACTIVITY, AND ATTITUDES TOWARD SEPTEMBER CANADA GOOSE SEASON, CANADA GOOSE HARVEST MONITORING SYSTEM, AND DATES FOR HUNTING SEASONS, 1997-98

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Abstract: The questionnaire for the 1997-98 Illinois Waterfowl Hunter Survey was sent to 3,856 randomly selected individuals who had registered with the National Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program in Illinois in 1997. When registering, all of these people indicated they had hunted waterfowl (ducks, geese, and/or coots) during the previous (1996-97) season. A total of 2,708 usable questionnaires was returned for a response rate of 70%. The respondents included 1,633 individuals who had purchased an Illinois Migratory Waterfowl Stamp in 1997, of which 1,451 (89%) hunted waterfowl in Illinois during the 1997-98 season. An estimated 54,715 hunters (4% less than in 1996) expended 881,030 days afield (5% more than in 1996) and harvested 401,236 waterfowl (7% more than in 1996). The ratio of duck hunters to goose hunters was 1.27:1 in 1997-98. During the September teal season, 12,819 hunters spent 32,179 days afield and harvested 22,005 teal (90% more than in 1996). On Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day, 3,163 adults took 4,322 youths afield, and 3,451 ducks and 387 coots were harvested. During the regular duck season (60 days), 42,587 hunters expended 514,934 days afield and harvested 291,161 ducks (2% more than in 1996) and 3,935 coots. During the early September Canada goose season--held in the Northeast, North, and Central Zones--11,765 hunters spent 34,988 days afield and harvested 11,443 Canada geese. During the regular goose season, 33,498 hunters devoted 295,107 days afield to harvest 61,282 Canada geese (7% less than in 1996), 5,941 snow/blue geese, and 1,631 other geese. The Canada goose harvest included 22,010 taken in the Southern Illinois Quota Zone, 2,118 taken in the Rend Lake Quota Zone, 6,720 taken in North Quota Zone Counties, and 11,443 taken in Central Quota Zone Counties, which collectively accounted for 69% of the statewide harvest. The estimated Canada goose harvest in the North and Central Quota Zone Counties was 15% less than the harvest recorded for these counties via the phone-in monitoring system. Among goose hunters, 5,628 (16.8%) hunted (or planned to

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hunt) snow/blue geese during the late (to March 10) season in Illinois. The harvests of Canada geese and snow/blue geese are presented by county/zone/administrative region in Appendix A.

Among duck hunters who expressed opinions, majorities (>50%) thought the dates for the Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day and the regular duck season were about right; a plurality favored a Thursday opening/Sunday closing for the regular duck season. Majorities of waterfowl hunters liked the early September Canada goose season in northern and central Illinois, and they prefer overlapping this season with the September teal season as much as possible. Majorities of goose hunters supported the Canada goose harvest monitoring system (with permit and call-in requirements) for quota zone counties in northern and central Illinois, disliked the split Canada goose season in the North and Central Zones, and preferred a 40-day season with 2 Canada geese daily bag over a 60-day season with 1 Canada goose daily bag.

The purpose of this study was to collect information via mail questionnaire from a random sample of waterfowl hunters in Illinois following the 1997-98 hunting season. Data were obtained for waterfowl harvest, hunter activity, and attitudes of hunters toward selected hunting regulations and other subjects. The questionnaire used for the 1997-98 season (Fig. 1) was similar to those employed in previous years (Anderson 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, and 1989; Anderson and Williamson 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994; Anderson et al. 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998). Information obtained with these surveys is used by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in establishing biologically responsible and sociologically acceptable waterfowl hunting regulations, and in making other management decisions.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

The mailing list for the 1997-98 survey was compiled by randomly selecting the names and addresses of 4,000 individuals

who registered with the National Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program in Illinois in 1997 (D. Newton, pers. commun.). When registering, all of these people indicated they had hunted waterfowl (ducks, geese, and/or coots) during the previous (1996-97) season. The initial mailing (bulk rate--address service requested) of the questionnaire, along with a letter of explanation (Fig. 2), took place on 16 January 1998. Non-respondents were sent 2nd and 3rd copies of the questionnaire, and accompanying letters (Figs. 3 and 4), on 27 February and 3 April, respectively. The U.S. Postal Service successfully reached 3,856 (3,634 residents and 222 non-residents) of the individuals on the mailing list. As of 1 May 1998, 2,708 usable questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 70%. Response rates for the waterfowl hunter surveys conducted for the 1986 through 1995 seasons varied from 68% to 75%.

Data on returned questionnaires were transferred to a computer file using a data management program (Ashton-Tate dBASE IV). The data were analyzed with a statistical program (SPSS Inc. SPSS/PC+V2.0). Results were tabulated relative to species and/or species group, administrative region, waterfowl zone, and (for geese) county.

Procedures used to estimate numbers of hunters, days afield, waterfowl harvested, cripples lost, and confidence intervals were as described in the final report for the 1984 survey (Anderson 1986), with the following exceptions. The adjustment factors for stamp-exempt hunters were changed from 1.182 to 1.085 for duck

hunters, from 1.218 to 1.087 for goose hunters, and from 1.200 to 1.086 for all waterfowl hunters (Anderson 1986:7). These changes were necessary because, beginning in 1994, senior (≥ 65 years) hunters were no longer exempt from purchasing the Illinois Migratory Waterfowl Stamp. The adjustment factors accounted for the number of stamp-exempt hunters relative to the number of stamp-purchasing hunters. Thus, the latter covered hunters 16-64 years of age in 1981-1993 and hunters ≥ 16 years (i.e., included seniors) in 1994-1997. The 1997-98 estimates of waterfowl harvest and hunter activity were based on a sales of 59,961 of the 1997 Illinois Migratory Waterfowl Stamps.

SEASON LENGTHS AND BAG LIMITS

Illinois' early teal season took place on 6-14 September 1997, and the daily bag limit was any aggregate of 4 blue-winged or green-winged teal. Legal shooting hours were from sunrise to sunset.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) allowed the states to have a special "Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day" for the first time in 1996. This action was repeated in 1997. The day selected had to occur on a weekend or holiday, and it had to be outside the regular duck season. Youths ≤ 15 years of age could participate, provided they were accompanied by an adult at least 18 years old. The bag limits (ducks, mergansers, and coots) were the same as those in effect during the regular duck season. Goose hunting was not allowed. Illinois' 1997 youth hunt occurred 7 days prior to the opening of the regular duck season:

September 27 in the North Zone, October 11 in the Central Zone, and November 1 in the South Zone.

The regular duck season was 60 days in length in 1997, and the bag limit was 6 ducks (4 mallards) per day using the Conventional System (Fig. 5). Legal shooting time was 1/2 hour before sunrise to sunset. In 1996, the duck season extended for 50 days, and the daily bag limit was 5 ducks (4 mallards).

The early September Canada goose season was offered in the Northeast Zone (Cook, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kendall, Kankakee, Lake, McHenry, and Will), plus all of the remaining counties in the North and Central Zones, in 1997. The dates for this season were 1-14 September in the Northeast Zone and 6-14 September (same as teal season) in the North and Central Zones. Bag limits were 5 Canada geese per day in the Northeast Zone and 2 Canada geese per day in the other 2 zones. Legal shooting hours were 1/2 hour before sunrise to sunset.

For Canada geese, the 1997 regular season was scheduled to extend for 78 days in the North and Central Zones (note exceptions below). These seasons were split into 2 segments. The Canada goose harvest monitoring system that was implemented in 18 counties in the North and Central Zones in 1994-95 was continued in 1997-98 (Fig. 5). Canada goose hunters in these counties had to obtain a special permit (Fig. 6), which was issued free with purchase of the Illinois Migratory Waterfowl Stamp. These hunters were required to report Canada geese harvested on a daily basis via a toll-free phone number (1-800-WETLAND). The quotas were 8,400 Canada geese for the North Quota

Zone Counties and 12,500 for the Central Quota Zone Counties. Procedures for calculating the quotas are described in a document prepared by the DNR's Waterfowl Program (Anonymous 1994). Based on harvest estimated obtained with this monitoring system, the Canada goose season was discontinued in the North Zone after 40 days, and in the Central Zone after 68 days, in 1997.

The Canada goose season extended for 78 days in the South Waterfowl Zone in 1997-98. In the Southern Illinois and Rend Lake Quota Zones, the seasons were 78 days or when 26,400 and 5,700 Canada geese were harvested, respectively. The statewide quota was 74,600 Canada geese (compared to 94,900 in 1996). The bag limit was 2 Canada geese per day (same as in 1996) statewide.

The FWS permitted the states to have a late snow/blue goose hunting season again in 1997-98. In Illinois, this late season took place 1 February-1 March in the South Waterfowl Zone, 21 February-10 March in the Central Zone, and 28 February to 10 March in the North Zone. The bag limit was 10 geese per day and 30 in possession.

FINDINGS

Of the 2,708 respondents who returned usable questionnaires, 1,633 (60%) purchased a 1997 Illinois Migratory Waterfowl Stamp. Among these stamp purchasers were 1,451 (89%) individuals who reported hunting waterfowl in Illinois during the 1997-98 season.

Waterfowl Harvest and Hunter Activity

An estimated 54,715 waterfowl hunters (4% less than in 1996)

were active in Illinois during the 1997 season (Table 1). They spent 881,030 days afield (5% more than in 1996) and harvested 401,236 waterfowl (7% more than in 1996).

Of the 54,715 hunters who were active in 1997, 39% hunted ducks only, 22% hunted geese only, and 39% hunted both ducks and geese (Table 2). It is noteworthy that the percentage of waterfowl hunters who pursued ducks decreased from an average of 88% in 1981-1987 to an average of 77% in 1988-1997. Conversely, the percentage of waterfowl hunters who pursued geese increased from an average of 42% in 1981-1987 to an average of 68% in 1988-1997 (Table 2). This increase occurred in spite of the fact that the percentage of waterfowl hunters who pursued geese decreased from 1994 to 1997.

September Teal Season. An estimated 11,819 hunters spent 32,179 days afield, and harvested 22,005 teal during Illinois' 9-day September teal season in 1997 (Table 3). There were more teal hunters (3,317), more days spent afield (8,693), and more teal harvested (7,144) in Administrative Region 1B than in any other region. Region 3A was a close 2nd in all 3 categories.

The 1997 estimates for teal hunters, days afield, and teal harvested were 32%, 41%, and 90% more, respectively, than comparable estimates for 1996 (Table 4). However, the 1997 estimates were less than the estimates prior to 1988--i.e., before the FWS's 4-year suspension of the September season.

Hunter success rates during the September season in 1997 were 0.68 teal per hunter per day afield and 1.86 teal per hunter per season. Success rates in previous years ranged from 0.51 to

0.83 teal per hunter per day afield and from 1.32 to 2.31 teal per hunter per season (Table 5). Based on these data, September teal hunting was "about average" in Illinois in 1997.

The FWS estimated that Illinois' September teal harvest increased from 10,170 birds in 1996 to 21,370 birds in 1997 (Martin and Padding 1998 and 1999).

Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day. An estimated 3,163 Illinois Migratory Waterfowl Stamp purchasers, or 7.4% of the state's duck hunters, took 4,322 youths afield on this special day in Illinois in 1997 (Table 6). The hunting parties averaged 1.37 youths each, and two-thirds (65%) of the parties harvested ≥ 1 ducks. Overall, hunting success was 0.80 duck per youth. In 1996, 2,749 adults took 4,353 youths afield, and they harvested an average of 0.73 duck per youth.

Regular Duck Season. An estimated 42,587 individuals hunted ducks during the regular duck season in Illinois in 1997 (Table 7). These hunters harvested 291,161 ducks in 514,934 days afield. There were more duck hunters (10,332), more days spent afield (136,225), and more ducks harvested (81,677) in Administration Region 1B than in any other region. Region 3A was a close 2nd in all 3 categories. Compared to the previous year, the number of duck hunters decreased 4%, days afield increased 12%, and duck harvest increased 2%, in 1997 (Table 8).

The 291,161 ducks harvested in Illinois in 1997 included an estimated 145,533 mallards, 44,678 wood ducks, and 100,950 other ducks (including 5,749 canvasback). The FWS estimated that 372,100 total ducks were harvested in the state during the

regular duck season in 1997, which included 185,700 mallards, 47,100 wood ducks, and 139,300 other ducks (including 6,300 canvasback) (Peterson 2000). The FWS estimates indicated that duck harvest increased 17% in Illinois, 17% in the Mississippi Flyway, and 16% in the United States, from 1996 to 1997 (Peterson 2000).

Statewide, hunting success rates were 0.57 duck per hunter per day afield and 6.84 ducks per hunter per season in 1997 (Table 9). From 1981 to 1996, success rates ranged from 0.48 to 0.74 duck per hunter per day afield and from 4.30 to 8.40 ducks per hunter per season. Based on these comparisons, duck hunters had "about average" success in Illinois in 1997.

Two-thirds (66%) of the duck hunters were active in a single county, 25% were active in 2 counties, and 9% were active in ≥ 3 counties. Similarly, 54% of the duck hunters were active in their county of residence and 32% were active only in their county of residence.

Coot Hunting. The coot harvest was estimated at 3,935 birds in Illinois in 1997, 20% more than the estimated harvest for 1996 (Tables 7 and 8). The FWS estimated the Illinois coot harvest at 4,382 birds for the 1997 season, up 47% from that agency's estimate for 1996 (Martin and Padding 1998 and 1999).

September Canada Goose Season. This early Canada goose hunting season took place in the Northeast Zone, plus all of the remaining counties in the North and Central Zones, in 1997. Thus, this season occurred in all or parts of 72 counties. An estimated 11,765 hunters spent 34,988 days afield,

and harvested 11,443 Canada geese during this early season (Table 10). The counties in the Central Zone accounted for 49% of the hunters and 45% of the days afield. However, 47% of the Canada goose harvest occurred in the Northeast Zone. In 1996, when the experimental September season was limited to the 22 in the Northeast and North Zones, an estimated 3,902 hunters spent 10,185 days afield and harvested 2,934 Canada geese (Anderson et al. 1998).

Regular Goose Season. An estimated 33,498 goose hunters were active during the regular goose season in Illinois in 1997-98, and they spent 295,107 days afield (Table 11). The Southern Illinois Quota Zone (Alexander, Jackson, Union, and Williamson counties), located in Administrative Region 5, accounted for 38% of the goose hunters and 29% of the days afield. The Rend Lake Quota Zone (Franklin and Jefferson counties), also in Region 5, accommodated 6% of the hunters and 4% of the days afield. The remainder of the state was associated with 67% of the hunters and 67% of the days afield. Statewide, the number of goose hunters and their days afield decreased 8% and 13%, respectively, from 1996 to 1997 (Table 12).

There were an estimated 61,282 Canada geese and 68,854 total geese harvested during the regular goose season in Illinois in 1997-98 (Table 11). The Canada goose harvest decreased 7% between 1996-97 and 1997-98 (Table 12). The FWS estimated that 87,800 Canada geese and 101,000 total geese were taken in the state in 1997-98 (Peterson 2000).

Canada goose harvest in the Southern Illinois Quota Zone was

tabulated (via daily registration forms) at 22,010 birds during the 1997-98 season (Marshalla and Thornburg 1998). This represents 36% of the statewide harvest of Canada geese during the regular goose season. In the Rend Lake Quota Zone, an estimated 2,118 Canada geese (3% of state's total harvest) were taken. This estimate was 36% less than the projected harvest (i.e., projected from the reported harvest on public hunting areas) of 3,304 Canada geese for the entire Rend Lake Quota Zone (K.A. Thornburg, pers. commun.).

The Canada goose harvest in the 18 North and Central Quota Zone Counties was estimated at 18,163 birds (Table 13). Quota counties credited with harvests >1,000 Canada geese included DuPage, Kane, Lake, and McHenry (in North Zone); Fulton, Knox, Mason, and Tazewell (in Central Zone); and Will (in both zones).

In comparison, the phone-in monitoring system recorded a harvest of 21,324 Canada geese in the 18 North and Central Quota Zone Counties in 1997-98 (Table 14). Thus, the 2 procedures--mail-questionnaire survey and phone-in monitoring system--produced Canada goose harvest estimates for the 18 quota counties that differed by 15% in 1997-98.

It is noteworthy that 24 of Illinois' 102 counties were covered by a Canada goose harvest monitoring system during the 1997-98 season. These included 18 counties in the North and Central Zones, the 2 counties comprising the Rend Lake Quota Zone, and the 4 counties comprising the Southern Illinois Quota Zone. Collectively, these 24 counties accounted for 69% of the Canada goose harvest in Illinois in 1997-98 (Table 15).

The harvests of Canada geese are presented by county, zone, and administrative region for the 1995-96 through 1997-98 seasons in Appendix A (Tables A1 and A2). Non-quota counties with harvests >1,000 Canada geese in 1997-98 included Cook (in North Zone), and Fayette and Perry (in South Zone).

Statewide, hunters experienced an overall success rate of 0.22 goose per hunter per day afield and 1.90 geese per hunter per season in 1997-98 (Table 11). In the Southern Illinois Quota Zone, success was 0.27 and 1.83 geese, respectively. Similarly, hunter success was 0.16 and 0.90 geese at Rend Lake, and 0.20 and 1.73 geese in the remainder of the state. In comparison, statewide success rates ranged from 0.15 to 0.32 goose per hunter per day afield and from 0.95 to 2.63 geese per hunter per season in 1981 through 1996 (Table 16).

Snow/Blue Goose Hunting. An estimated 16.8% of the state's 33,498 goose hunters either hunted or anticipated going hunting during the late snow/blue goose season in 1997-98. Thus, this season, which ended 1 March in the South Zone and 10 March in the Central and North Zones, could have attracted as many as 5,628 active hunters.

The statewide snow/blue goose harvest was estimated to be 5,941 birds during the 1997-98 season (Table 11). This estimate is conservative because the present waterfowl hunter survey was initiated before the late snow/blue goose season began. The Southern Illinois Quota Zone accounted for 34% of the snow/blue goose harvest, the Rend Lake Quota Zone accounted for 4%, and the remainder of the South Zone accounted for 30% (Table 11). Thus,

two-thirds of the snow/blue goose harvest was associated with the South Waterfowl Zone. Snow/blue goose harvests are presented by county and zone for the 1996-97 and 1997-98 seasons in Appendix A (Table A3).

Crippling Losses. Crippling losses (birds knocked down but not retrieved) were estimated at 67,979 ducks, 12,490 geese, and 1,373 coots in Illinois during the 1997-98 hunting season (Table 17). These estimates, which are considered to be indices and not actual numbers, equate to 23.3 ducks, 18.1 geese, and 34.9 coots lost per 100 harvested. The 1997 crippling rates for ducks and geese were among the lowest observed since the Illinois Waterfowl Hunter Survey was initiated in 1981.

Nationwide crippling rates for ducks and geese during the 1997 season, as measured via hunter questionnaire surveys conducted by the FWS since 1952, were among the lowest ever recorded (Table 18).

Attitudes and Opinions of Hunters

Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day. A plurality (38%) of the state's duck hunters thought the 6-day no hunting period between the Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day (YWHD) and opening day of the regular duck season in 1997 was about the right length (Table 19). Interestingly, the same percentage of hunters (38%) had no opinion about this matter. These attitudes prevailed in all waterfowl zones and administrative regions in the state.

A plurality (44%) of the duck hunters also felt that the YWHD should be scheduled before the regular duck season began

(Table 19). However, one-third (32%) of the hunters did not express an opinion. These attitudes were prevalent throughout the state.

Dates for Regular Duck Season. According to responses to question #20, a plurality of the duck hunters in the North Zone (46%) thought the dates used for the regular duck season in 1997 would be "about right" for the 1998 season (Table 20). However, one-half of the hunters in the Central (50%) and South (50%) Zones believed the dates are "too early". Although the 1997 duck season set a record for lateness in Illinois (to 6 January in the South Zone), unseasonably mild temperatures in November and December apparently influenced attitudes of many hunters.

If the length of the regular duck season remains at 60 days in 1998, a plurality (42%) of the hunters would prefer that the season open on a Thursday and close on a Sunday (Table 20). This sentiment was strongest in Administrative Region 3A (Fig. 7). Slightly fewer hunters (39%) opted for a Saturday opening/Tuesday closing, a sentiment that was strongest in Regions 1B and 3B.

Early September Canada Goose Season. Majorities of waterfowl hunters in the North Zone liked the early September Canada goose season in their county of residence (60%), in the county where they goose hunt most (80%), and in the county where they duck hunt most (55%) (Table 21). Although less persuasive, hunters in the Central Zone expressed similar sentiments. For both zones, the hunters expressed their most support in the county where they goose hunt most (61%) and the least support in the county where they duck hunt most (45%).

Majorities of both goose hunters (57%) and teal hunters (71%) would like to see the September Canada goose season and the September teal season overlap as much as possible (Table 22). These feelings prevailed in the Northeast, North, and Central Zones, all of which had a September Canada goose season that totally overlapped the September teal season in 1997.

Goose Harvest Monitoring System in North and Central Zones.

The Canada goose harvest monitoring system that was implemented in the North and Central zones in 1994-95 was continued through the 1997-98 season. With this system, goose hunters in selected counties in each zone must report on a daily basis (via toll-free telephone number) their harvest of Canada geese. The hunting season is closed in the entire zone when the harvest quota is reached in the monitored counties. This system provides the potential for longer goose seasons and, at the same time, prevents over harvest of the goose population. As an alternative, the permit and call-in reporting requirements could be eliminated and the Canada goose harvest controlled with shorter seasons. When presented with these facts, the vast majorities (75-84%) of the goose hunters in the North and Central Zones voted for retaining the goose harvest monitoring system (Table 23).

Dates for Regular Canada Goose Season. In the North Zone, the 1997-98 regular Canada goose season was scheduled to be open 4-12 October (9 days), closed 13-30 October (18 days), and open again 31 October-7 January (69 days). When asked to give their opinion, a majority (56%) of the northern goose hunters expressed

dislike for this split season (Table 24). Pluralities (39-46%) of the hunters thought the 4-12 October open period was "too short", the 13-30 October closed period was "too long", and the 31 October-7 January open period was "about right". A plurality (41%) of the hunters would prefer that the 1998-99 Canada goose season in the North Zone begin with the duck season and run continuously (Table 25). Only 24% of the hunters opted for a split season.

In the Central Zone, the 1997-98 Canada goose season was scheduled to be open 18-19 October (2 days), closed 20 October-12 November (26 days), and open again 15 November-29 January (76 days). One-half (50%) of the central Illinois goose hunters disliked having the season split into 2 time periods (Table 26). A majority (53%) of the hunters felt the 18-19 October open period was "too short", a plurality (37%) believed the 20 October-14 November closed period was "too long", and a majority (53%) thought the 15 November-29 January open period was "about right". A plurality (38%) of the hunters would prefer that the 1998-99 Canada goose season in the Central Zone begin several weeks after the opening of the duck season and run continuously (Table 25). However, nearly as many hunters (35%) would like a Canada goose season that begins with the duck season and runs continuously. Only 19% of the hunters opted for a split season.

In the South Zone, the Canada goose season opened on 15 November, which was 1 week after opening of the duck season. A majority (65%) of the hunters in this zone felt that using a similar date (14 November) for opening the 1998-99 season would

be "too early" (Table 27). A majority (73%) of the hunters also felt that the Canada goose season should open later than the duck season.

Tradeoffs Between Length of the Canada Goose Season and Daily Bag Limit. In the event of more restrictive regulations in 1998-99, majorities (58-66%) of the goose hunters in southern Illinois would prefer to have a 40-day season with 2 Canada geese per day to a 60-day season with 1 Canada goose per day (Table 28). A plurality (48%) of the goose hunters in the North Zone conveyed the same attitude about season length and bag limit. However, a plurality (48%) of the hunters in the Central Zone felt differently--they preferred a 60-day season and a daily bag of 1 Canada goose.

DISCUSSION

Because of improving water and vegetative conditions in prairie Canada and the northern U.S., the fall flight of ducks increased from 59 million in 1993 to 71 million in 1994 to 77 million in 1995 to 90 million in 1996 and in 1997 (Canadian Wildlife Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1994, 1995, 1996; U.S. Fish and wildlife Service 1997). As a result, the duck seasons in Illinois and other Mississippi Flyway states were extended from 30 days in 1988-1993 to 40 days in 1994 to 50 days in 1995 and 1996 to 60 days in 1997. The daily bag limit was increased from 3 ducks (2 mallards) in 1988-1994 to 5 ducks (4 mallards) in 1995 and 1996 to 6 ducks (4 mallards) in 1997.

In response to the longer duck season, the number of duck

hunters increased 9%, and their days afield increased 30%, from 1993 to 1994 (Table 8). The number of duck hunters and their days afield remained relatively steady in 1994 through 1997, despite the fact that hunting regulations became progressively more liberal during this period. The duck harvest increased 13% from 1993 to 1994 and 53% from 1994 to 1995, but decreased 25% from 1995 to 1996. There was a slight (2%) increase in duck harvest from 1996 to 1997.

Although the goose harvests during the regular seasons in 1996-97 and 1997-98 may be classified as "average", they pale in comparison to the record number of geese taken in 1995-96 (Table 12). Hunter success was also lower in 1996-97 and 1997-98 than in 1995-96 (Table 18). Thus, it comes as no surprise that many waterfowlers viewed 1996-97 and 1997-98 as "off years" for goose hunting. However, the 73,737 geese taken in 1996-97 and the 80,297 geese taken in 1997-98 (regular season plus early September season) represent respectable harvests of geese for Illinois.

When waterfowl hunters were asked to express their opinions about the early September Canada goose hunting season, majorities in the North Zone said they liked this season (Table 21). Hunters in the Central Zone conveyed similar, albeit less persuasive, sentiments. The hunters in both zones collectively expressed the most support for the early September Canada goose season in the county where they goose hunt most (61%), somewhat less support in the county where they reside (48%), and the least support in the county where they duck hunt most (45%). It

appears that goose hunters are more supportive of the early September Canada goose season than duck hunters.

Based on the information at hand, we recommend continuing with the early September Canada goose season in both the North and Central Zones. Serious consideration should also be given to expanding this season to the South Zone. And, because of sentiments expressed by both September goose hunters and September teal hunters, the September Canada goose season and the September teal season should overlap as much as possible.

Goose hunters in the North and Central Zones expressed strong support for the Canada goose harvest monitoring system (with permit and phone-in requirements) that was implemented in selected counties in northern and central Illinois in 1994-95 (Table 23). In view of this support (essentially a mandate), and recognizing the advantages afforded by the monitoring system, we recommend continuing with this system into the foreseeable future. However, we point out that the monitoring system and the waterfowl hunter surveys produced estimates of Canada goose harvests for the quota counties that differed appreciably in 3 of 4 years. The differences (monitoring system relative to waterfowl hunter surveys) were -1% in 1994-95, +25% in 1995-96, +32% in 1996-97, and +15% in 1997-98. Thus, we recommend conducting an evaluation designed to determine why the Canada goose harvest estimates produced by the 2 methods differed in most years. At the present time, we do not know whether the monitoring system estimates are biased high or the survey estimates are biased low.

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Table 1. Summary of Illinois Migratory Waterfowl Stamps purchased, hunter activity, and waterfowl harvest in Illinois from 1981 through 1997 hunting seasons.

Season (Year)	Stamps Purchased	Hunters	Days Afield	Waterfowl Harvested ^a
1981	61,929	63,652	874,730	413,264
1982	57,691	58,766	795,807	392,897
1983	56,162	58,240	815,523	475,601
1984	55,250	56,533	748,390	420,357
1985	55,670	56,899	699,113	392,253
1986	59,734	61,876	887,446	467,164
1987	58,803 (5,550) ^b	60,371	814,918	354,194
1988 ^c	53,498 (4,350)	53,450	644,056	264,316
1989 ^c	55,693 (3,570)	55,709	749,033	322,359
1990 ^c	55,009 (2,390)	55,152	708,391	270,796
1991 ^c	58,421 (2,130)	59,038	855,279	406,854
1992	51,261 (1,395)	51,274	714,550	292,535
1993	50,976 (995)	51,340	682,498	326,446
1994	57,543 (955)	53,226	816,185	332,803
1995	60,564 (665)	55,454	884,328	498,854
1996	62,417 (545)	56,956	836,793	376,248
1997	59,961 (480)	54,715	881,030	401,236

^aTeal, ducks, coots, and geese combined. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service suspended the September teal season in 1988 through 1991.

^bStamps purchased for commercial art purposes. These stamps were not included in the numbers to the left.

^cThe estimates of waterfowl hunters and days afield for these years have been reduced to 92.48% - 96.48% of the original estimates. The estimates of waterfowl (teal, ducks, coots, and geese combined) harvested have been reduced to 94.54% - 97.74% of the original estimates. See last paragraph of the METHODS section, in Anderson and Williamson (1994) for explanation.

Table 2. The percentage of waterfowl hunters who hunted ducks, and the percentage who hunted geese, in Illinois from 1981 through 1997 seasons.

Season (Year)	Percentage Who Hunted:			Percentage Who Were:	
	Ducks Only	Geese Only	Both Ducks and Geese	Duck Hunters	Goose Hunters
1981	63	14	23	86	37
1982	59	11	30	89	31
1983	55	13	32	87	45
1984	60	12	28	88	40
1985	61	10	29	90	39
1986	51	13	36	87	49
1987	47	14	39	86	53
1988	36	19	45	81	64
1989	29	21	50	79	71
1990	27	30	43	70	73
1991	26	27	47	73	74
1992	31	24	45	76	69
1993	30	20	50	80	69
1994	30	17	53	83	70
1995	33	23	44	77	67
1996	36	23	41	77	64
1997	39	22	39	78	61

Table 3. Teal harvest and hunter activity, by administrative region, during the September teal season in Illinois in 1997 (n=1,633).

Administrative Region ^a	Number of Hunters	Days Afield		Teal Harvest		
		Number	Per Hunter	Total	Per Day Afield	Per Hunter
1A	1,106	2,745	2.48	2,139	0.78	1.93
1B	3,317	8,693	2.62	7,144	0.82	2.15
2	1,449	3,813	2.63	1,471	0.39	1.02
3A	2,783	8,045	2.89	6,475	0.80	2.33
3B	534	1,716	3.21	745	0.43	1.40
4	1,106	2,821	2.55	1,471	0.52	1.33
5	1,144	3,126	2.73	1,948	0.62	1.70
Unknown	380	1,220		612		
Entire state	11,819	32,179	2.72	22,005 ^b	0.68	1.86

^aSee Figure 7.

^bThe 95% confidence interval is $\pm 6,985$.

Table 4. Summary of teal harvest and hunter activity during the September teal season in Illinois from 1981 through 1997.

Year	Hunters	Days Afield	Number of Teal
1981	14,802	38,586	22,946
1982	14,863	41,856	28,785
1983	13,295	39,475	29,355
1984	14,158	39,481	32,730
1985	13,852	36,521	29,260
1986	15,449	40,241	30,375
1987	12,297	32,582	23,193
1988 ^a			
1989 ^a			
1990 ^a			
1991 ^a			
1992	7,696	18,265	12,069
1993	6,474	16,722	8,562
1994	8,062	20,341	12,436
1995	9,123	24,865	19,731
1996	8,964	22,825	11,565
1997	11,819	32,179	22,005

^aThe September teal season was suspended by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service during these years.

Table 5. Rates of teal harvest and hunter activity during the September teal season in Illinois in 1981 through 1997.

Year	Season Length/ Bag Limit	Days Afield Per Hunter	Teal Harvest Per Hunter	
			Per Day	Per Season
1981	9/4	2.61	0.59	1.55
1982	9/4	2.82	0.69	1.94
1983	9/4	2.97	0.74	2.21
1984	9/4	2.79	0.83	2.31
1985	9/4	2.64	0.80	2.11
1986	9/4	2.60	0.75	1.97
1987	9/4	2.65	0.71	1.89
1988 ^a				
1989 ^a				
1990 ^a				
1991 ^a				
1992	9/4	2.37	0.66	1.57
1993	9/4	2.58	0.51	1.32
1994	9/4	2.52	0.61	1.54
1995	9/4	2.73	0.79	2.16
1996	9/4	2.55	0.51	1.29
1997	9/4	2.72	0.68	1.86

^aThe September teal season was suspended by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service during these years.

Table 6. Waterfowl harvest and hunter activity during the Youth Waterfowl Hunting day in Illinois in 1996 and 1997.

Characteristic	1996	1997
Adult hunters who took ≥ 1 youths afield	2,749	3,163 ^a
Youth hunters who participated	4,353	4,322
Mean youths per hunting party	1.58	1.37 ^b
Waterfowl Harvest		
Total ducks	3,171	3,451
Ducks per youth hunter	0.73	0.80 ^c
Total coots	230	387
Coots per youth hunter	0.05	0.09

^a7% of adult duck hunters.

^b64% of the parties included 1 youth hunter, 31% included 2 youth hunters, and 5% included ≥ 3 youth hunters.

^c35% of the parties harvested 0 ducks, 52% harvested 1-2 ducks, and 13% harvested ≥ 3 ducks.

Table 7. Duck and coot harvest and hunter activity, by administrative region, during the regular duck season in Illinois in 1997 (n=1,633).

Administrative Region ^a	Number of Hunters	Days Afield		Duck Harvest			
		Number	Per Hunter	Total	Per Day Afield ^b	Per Hunter ^b	Coot Harvest
1A	3,203	32,293	10.08	15,702 (1,967) ^c	0.43	4.29	19
1B	10,332	136,225	13.18	81,677 (5,234)	0.56	7.41	764
2	7,130	70,839	9.94	32,377 (4,584)	0.39	3.90	630
3A	9,341	135,158	14.47	70,656 (840)	0.52	7.47	1,318
3B	1,563	17,881	11.44	6,762 (649)	0.34	3.91	0
4	3,355	43,731	13.03	28,690 (1,127)	0.63	8.22	669
5	6,901	73,508	10.65	51,898 (6,361)	0.62	6.60	516
Unknown	762	5,299		3,399 (631)			19
Entire state	42,587	514,934	12.09	291,161 ^{d,e} (21,393)	0.57	6.84	3,935 ^f

^aSee Figure 7.

^bExcludes ducks harvested coincidentally to goose hunting.

^cNumber of ducks harvested coincidentally to goose hunting.

^dThe 95% confidence interval is $\pm 47,700$.

^eIncludes 145,533 mallards, 44,678 wood ducks, and 100,950 other ducks (including 5,749 canvasback).

^fThe 95% confidence interval is $\pm 3,115$.

Table 8. Summary of duck and coot harvests and hunter activity during the regular duck season in Illinois from 1981 through 1997.

Season (Year)	Hunters	Days Afield	Number of Ducks			Total	Number of Coots
			Mallards	Wood Ducks	Other Ducks		
1981	54,744	703,534	170,972	72,065	94,947	337,984	4,950
1982	52,220	646,394	163,439	61,706	101,989	327,134	5,905
1983	50,440	651,409	220,317	72,237	110,862	403,416	10,472
1984	49,715	606,325	182,132	52,955	120,016	355,103	7,702
1985	51,362	556,800	168,549	51,216	97,155	316,920	5,773
1986	53,588	638,090	201,676	65,414	112,490	379,580	7,372
1987	51,704	558,172	155,783	58,488	74,748	289,019	2,694
1988 ^a	43,233	381,985	119,149	23,743	42,836	185,728	1,936
1989 ^a	43,841	407,478	133,128	28,065	63,073	224,266	2,049
1990 ^a	38,759	350,119	112,370	33,253	51,562	197,185	2,287
1991 ^a	42,911	393,247	177,221	49,556	80,793	307,570	1,101
1992	39,272	362,275	124,112	34,280	58,035	216,427	3,275
1993	40,941	366,656	134,334	39,906	43,360	217,600	1,445
1994	44,447	475,264	137,263	44,683	64,998 ^b	246,944	3,880
1995	42,499	482,620	230,505	47,155	99,632 ^b	377,292	3,386
1996	44,219	460,517	163,311	38,783	82,431 ^b	284,525	3,286
1997	42,587	514,934	145,533	44,678	100,950 ^b	291,161	3,935

^aThe estimates of duck hunters, days afield, ducks and coots harvested for these years have been reduced to 92.48% - 96.48% of the original estimates. See last paragraph of the METHODS section in Anderson and Williamson (1994) for explanation.

^bIncludes 3,760 canvasback in 1994, 5,393 canvasback in 1995, 4,348 canvasback in 1996, and 5,749 in 1997.

Table 9. Rates of duck harvest and hunter activity during the regular duck season in Illinois from 1981 through 1997.

Year	Season Length/ Bag Limit ^b	Days Afield Per Hunter	Duck Harvest Per Hunter ^a	
			Per Day	Per Season
1981	50/10 (4)	12.85	0.48	6.17
1982	50/10 (4)	12.38	0.51	6.26
1983	50/10 (4)	12.91	0.62	8.00
1984	50/10 (4)	12.20	0.59	7.14
1985	40/5 (3)	10.84	0.57	6.17
1986	40/5 (3)	11.91	0.59	7.08
1987	40/5 (3)	10.80	0.52	5.59
1988	30/3 (2)	8.84	0.49	4.30
1989	30/3 (2)	9.29	0.55	5.12
1990	30/3 (2)	9.03	0.54	4.90
1991	30/3 (2)	9.16	0.72	6.57
1992	30/3 (2)	9.22	0.57	5.22
1993	30/3 (2)	8.96	0.58	5.21
1994	40/3 (2)	10.69	0.51	5.47
1995	50/5 (4)	11.36	0.74	8.40
1996	50/5 (4)	10.41	0.58	6.03
1997	60/6 (4)	12.09	0.57	6.84

^aExcludes ducks harvested coincidentally to goose hunting.

^bThe Point System was used in 1981-1987. A maximum of 10 ducks (4 mallards) was allowed in 1981-1984, and a maximum of 5 ducks (3 mallards) was allowed in 1985-1987. The Conventional (Straight) System was used in 1988-1997.

Table 10. Canada goose harvest and hunter activity, during the early September Canada goose season in north and central Illinois in 1997.

Waterfowl Zone	Hunters	Days Afield	Canada Geese
Northeast ^a	3,438	11,039	5,405
North ^b	2,139	6,952	2,216
Central ^b	5,768	15,890	3,774
Unknown	420	1,107	48
Total	11,765	34,988	11,443 ^c

^aCook, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will counties.

^bExcluding those counties in the Northeast Zone.

^cThe harvest was ≥ 500 Canada geese in the following counties: Cook (609), Kane (1,120), Lake (1,388), McHenry (1,315), Will (536), Ogle (584), and Fulton (925).

Table 11. Goose harvest and hunter activity, by zone and administrative region, during the regular goose season in Illinois in 1997-98 (n=1,633).

Zone or Administrative Region ^a	Days Afield			Goose Harvest						
	Hunters	Number	Per Hunter	Canada Geese	Snow/Blue Geese	Other Geese	Total Geese	Per Day Afield ^b	Per Hunter ^b	
Southern IL Quota Zone	12,567	86,324	6.87	22,010	2,021	365	24,396 (1,388) ^c	0.27	1.83	
Rend Lake Quota Zone	2,024	11,230	5.55	2,118	219	73	2,410 (584)	0.16	0.90	
Remainder of State										
1A	1,910	11,841	6.20	1,290	0	0	1,290 (122)	0.10	0.61	
1B	8,250	69,059	8.37	9,374	49	24	9,447 (901)	0.12	1.04	
2	7,181	40,566	5.65	10,007	49	0	10,056 (682)	0.23	1.31	
3A	3,361	28,342	8.43	4,772	633	49	5,454 (828)	0.16	1.38	
3B	1,986	13,980	7.04	2,264	268	97	2,629 (341)	0.16	1.15	
4	1,948	15,355	7.88	3,165	925	122	4,212 (317)	0.25	2.00	
5 ^d	1,986	16,692	8.40	6,087	1,777	901	8,765 (0)	0.53	4.41	
Unknown	191	1,718		195	0	0	195 (47)			
Total	22,460 ^e	197,553	8.80	37,154	3,701	1,193	42,048 (3,238)	0.20	1.73	
Entire State	33,498 ^e	295,107	8.81	61,282	5,941	1,631	68,854 ^f (5,210)	0.22	1.90	

^aSee Figure 7.

^bExcludes geese harvested coincidentally to duck hunting.

^cNumber of geese harvested coincidentally to duck hunting.

^dExcludes Southern IL Quota Zone and Rend Lake Quota Zone.

^eThe totals are less than the sum of the above values because some hunters were active in >1 zone and/or region.

^fThe 95% confidence interval is ± 10,445.

Table 12. Summary of goose harvest and hunter activity during the regular goose season in Illinois from 1981-82 through 1997-98.

Season (Year)	Hunters	Days Afield	Number of Geese		
			Canada Geese	Other Geese	Total
1981	23,610	132,610	44,302 (6,312) ^a	3,082 (1,719)	47,384 (8,031)
1982	24,058	107,557	29,574 (4,968)	1,499 (710)	31,073 (5,678)
1983	26,199	124,639	31,395 (4,325)	962 (577)	32,357 (4,902)
1984	22,426	102,583	23,147 (2,859)	1,675 (593)	24,822 (3,452)
1985	22,160	105,792	37,976 (5,248)	2,324 (753)	40,300 (6,001)
1986	30,327	200,291	45,535 (11,348)	2,625 (832)	48,160 (12,180)
1987	32,246	224,164	36,103 (3,563)	1,525 (499)	37,628 (4,062)
1988 ^b	34,456	251,176	72,550 (3,871)	1,832 (350)	74,382 (4,221)
1989 ^b	39,459	329,369	91,379 (2,988)	1,715 (182)	93,094 (3,170)
1990 ^b	40,459	346,036	67,127 (1,515)	1,319 (97)	68,446 (1,612)
1991 ^b	43,692	450,807	92,239 (1,245)	2,434 (70)	94,673 (1,315)
1992	35,253	334,010	59,352 (2,679)	1,412 (170)	60,764 (2,849)
1993	35,489	299,120	93,361 (1,260)	1,314 (82)	94,675 (1,342)
1994	37,090	320,580	67,790 (1,895)	1,753 (77)	69,543 (1,972)
1995	37,060	367,341	92,478 (4,034)	3,183 (245)	95,661 (4,279)
1996	36,582	339,253	65,864 (2,527)	4,939 ^c (114)	70,803 (2,641)
1997	33,498	295,107	61,282 (4,772)	7,572 ^d (438)	68,854 (5,210)

^aNumber of geese harvested coincidentally to duck hunting.

^bThe estimates of goose hunters and days afield for these years have been reduced to 92.48% - 96.48% of the original estimates. The estimates for geese harvested have not been reduced. See last paragraph of the METHODS section in Anderson and Williamson (1994) for explanation.

^cIncludes 4,063 snow/blue geese.

^dIncludes 5,941 snow/blue geese.

Table 13. Canada goose harvest and hunter activity in the North and Central Quota Zone counties in Illinois during the 1997-98 season.

Zones and Quota Counties	Hunters		Days Afield	Canada Geese
	Successful ^a	Total		
North Zone				
DuPage	382	420	2,215	1,217
Kane	497	917	4,698	1,144
Lake	726	1,222	5,309	2,533
McHenry	726	1,528	6,111	1,242
LaSalle ^b	76	191	802	146
Will ^b	191	458	2,521	438
Total	2,598	4,736	21,656	6,720
Central Zone				
Calhoun	191	306	3,018	755
Cass	0	76	458	0
Fulton	1,604	3,629	36,249	3,992
Grundy	458	955	5,462	609
Jersey	0	115	382	0
Knox	764	1,184	7,945	1,289
Mason	420	573	4,202	1,120
Morgan	267	382	3,399	609
Peoria	191	764	4,431	195
Pike	267	458	4,469	463
Tazewell	115	649	6,035	1,217
Woodford	76	153	649	49
LaSalle ^c	191	344	1,681	268
Will ^c	420	879	5,157	877
Total	4,964	10,467	83,537	11,443

^aHarvested ≥ 1 Canada geese.

^bNorth of I-80 (33%).

^cSouth of I-80 (67%).

Table 14. Canada goose harvest in the North and Central Quota Zone counties in Illinois in 1997-98 as determined by phone-in monitoring system and by mail questionnaire survey.

Quota Zone Counties	Phone-in Monitoring System	Mail Questionnaire Survey	Percentage Difference
North Quota Zone counties	8,386	6,720	-20
Central Quota Zone counties	12,938	11,443	-12
Total	21,324	18,163	-15

Table 15. Canada goose harvest by zones in Illinois during the 1997-98 season.

Geographical Zones and Quota Zones	Canada Geese	
	Number	Percentage
North Waterfowl Zone		
Quota counties	6,720	68
Other counties	3,164	32
Total	9,884	100
Central Waterfowl Zone		
Quota counties	11,443	59
Other counties	7,815	41
Total	19,258	100
South Waterfowl Zone		
Rend Lake Quota Zone	2,118	7
Southern Quota Zone	22,010	69
Other counties	7,817	24
Total	31,945	100
Entire state		
Quota zones	42,291	69
Other counties	18,796	31
Unknown	195	<1
Total	61,282	100

Table 16. Rates of goose harvest and hunter activity during the regular goose season in Illinois in 1981-82 through 1997-98.

Year	Season Length/ Bag Limit ^a	Days Afield Per Hunter	Goose Harvest Per Hunter	
			Per Day	Per Season
1981	50/2	5.62	0.30	1.67
1982	40/1-2	4.47	0.24	1.06
1983	35-40/1-2	4.76	0.22	1.05
1984	20-25/1-2	4.57	0.21	0.95
1985	20-31/1-2	4.77	0.32	1.55
1986	40-50/1-2	6.60	0.18	1.19
1987	40-50/2	6.95	0.15	1.04
1988	50/2	7.29	0.28	2.04
1989	56-60/2	8.35	0.27	2.28
1990	70/3	8.55	0.19	1.65
1991	84-90/3	10.32	0.21	2.14
1992	79/2	9.47	0.17	1.64
1993	46/2	8.43	0.31	2.63
1994	51/2	8.64	0.21	1.82
1995	89-93/3	9.91	0.25	2.47
1996	84-93/2	9.27	0.20	1.86
1997	78/2	8.81	0.22	1.90

^aFor Canada geese. The bag limit does not take into consideration restrictive regulations that were in effect in the Tri-County Zone (in Fulton, Knox, and Henry counties), or the Fulton-Knox County Zone, in some years.

Table 17. Summary of the number of ducks, geese, and coots that were crippled (knocked down but not retrieved) in Illinois from 1981 through 1997 seasons.

Year	Ducks		Geese		Coots	
	Total	Per 100 Bagged	Total	Per 100 Bagged	Total	Per 100 Bagged
1981	104,216	30.8	12,573	26.5	1,717	34.7
1982	82,287	25.2	5,868	18.9	1,595	27.0
1983	96,907	24.0	7,627	23.6	2,947	28.1
1984	84,665	23.8	5,711	23.0	3,236	42.0
1985	100,191	31.6	15,918	39.5	2,357	40.8
1986	145,283	38.3	20,699	41.5	2,770	37.6
1987	98,155	34.0	18,375	48.8	2,013	74.7
1988 ^a	65,856	35.5	22,730	30.6	1,020	52.7
1989 ^a	66,150	29.5	21,696	23.3	1,083	52.9
1990 ^a	59,007	29.9	23,895	34.9	868	38.0
1991 ^a	74,932	24.4	27,164	28.7	301	27.3
1992	68,027	31.4	18,631	32.1	1,450	45.7
1993	62,250	28.6	21,067	22.3	813	40.0
1994	65,266	26.4	16,234	23.3	1,167	30.1
1995	86,834	23.0	18,391	19.2	1,085	32.0
1996	64,324 ^b	22.6	16,641 ^b	23.5	430 ^b	13.1
1997	67,979	23.3	12,490	18.1	1,373	34.9

^aThe estimates of ducks, geese, and coots crippled for these years have been reduced to 92.48% - 96.48% of the original estimates. The estimates for number of geese crippled per 100 bagged have been similarly reduced. See last paragraph of the METHODS section in Anderson and Williamson (1994) for explanation.

^bThe 95% confidence intervals were $\pm 10,983$ for ducks, $\pm 2,203$ for geese, and ± 759 for coots.

Table 18. Summary of the number of waterfowl that were crippled (knocked down but not retrieved) per 100 birds retrieved in the United States from 1952 through 1997 seasons. Data from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Migratory Bird Management, Hunter Questionnaire Surveys.

Year	Ducks	Geese	Coots
1952	27.9	22.9	--- ^a
1953	22.5	16.1	---
1954	23.0	17.1	---
1955	23.6	19.9	---
1956	23.3	16.8	---
1957	21.8	17.6	---
1958	23.3	19.6	---
1959	20.2	19.9	---
1960	23.0	17.9	---
1961	22.1	17.9	---
1962	22.6	17.5	---
1963	23.8	18.6	---
1964	23.8	17.9	---
1965	23.5	18.6	---
1966	22.4	16.1	---
1967	22.0	15.9	---
1968	23.2	16.1	---
1969	22.5	14.4	---
1970	21.1	15.3	---
1971	22.1	15.4	28.2
1972	22.4	15.5	29.6
1973	21.9	14.8	29.2
1974	21.5	14.3	29.1
1975	20.3	13.0	28.9
1976	19.4	14.2	26.8
1977	20.5	14.9	28.9
1978	20.2	15.7	29.0
1979	20.3	14.3	27.1
1980	19.2	12.9	30.9
1981	19.4	13.2	22.7
1982	19.2	15.2	27.7
1983	19.4	14.4	23.7
1984	19.5	14.2	30.4
1985	19.7	14.0	24.3
1986	20.1	15.7	32.5
1987	24.5	20.5	27.5
1988	23.9	16.3	31.0
1989	22.5	15.9	32.1
1990	23.4	16.4	30.4
1991	24.3	17.1	28.1
1992	24.1	17.1	30.6
1993	22.7	14.9	27.6
1994	20.7	14.4	20.7
1995	17.9	15.0	20.8
1996	17.8	13.2	24.2
1997	18.1	13.7	23.0

^aNo data for 1952-1970.

Table 19. Attitudes of duck hunters toward the dates for the Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day (Illinois 1997). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Responses to the questions:

"Illinois' 1997 Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day took place 7 days before the opening of the regular duck season in each zone. Thus, there were 6 days of no hunting between the Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day and the opening of the regular duck season. In your opinion, was this 6-day no hunting period about right, or should it have been longer than 6 days or shorter than 6 days?"

Responses by Waterfowl Zones

	<u>North</u> (219)	<u>Central</u> (622)	<u>South</u> (223)	<u>Entire State</u> (1,084)
Six days about right	37%	37%	43%	38%
Should have been >6 days	15	17	16	17
Should have been <6 days	3	5	3	4
Other	2	4	2	3 ^a
No opinion	43	37	36	38

Responses by Administrative Regions

	<u>1A</u> (81)	<u>1B</u> (264)	<u>2</u> (179)	<u>3A</u> (241)	<u>3B</u> (39)	<u>4</u> (86)	<u>5</u> (174)
Six days about right	33%	42%	37%	33%	36%	43%	41%
Should have been >6 days	15	15	15	22	10	17	16
Should have been <6 days	1	2	6	7	8	4	3
Other	1	4	2	4	3	2	2
No opinion	50	37	40	34	43	34	38

Table 19 - continued.

Table 19. Continued - page 2.

"In retrospect, do you think the Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day should have been scheduled before, at the mid-point of, or after the regular duck season?"

<u>Responses by Waterfowl Zones</u>				
	<u>North</u>	<u>Central</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>Entire State</u>
	(220)	(623)	(221)	(1,083)
Before	44%	43%	48%	44%
At mid-point	13	17	9	14
After	6	10	13	10
No opinion	37	30	30	32

<u>Responses by Administrative Regions</u>							
	<u>1A</u>	<u>1B</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3A</u>	<u>3B</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
	(82)	(265)	(181)	(239)	(39)	(86)	(172)
Before	40%	45%	39%	46%	46%	55%	44%
At mid-point	16	18	15	14	15	12	8
After	6	7	11	11	8	9	14
No opinion	38	30	35	29	31	24	34

^aIncludes: discontinue YWHD (1.3%), make YWHD part of the regular duck season (0.6%), have YWHD later in season (0.8%), and have YWHD during September teal season (0.2%).

Table 20. Attitudes of duck hunters toward the dates for the regular duck season (Illinois 1997-98). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Responses to the questions,

"The dates for Illinois' 1997-98 regular duck season were October 4-December 2 in the North Zone, October 18-December 16 in the Central Zone, and November 8-January 6 in the South Zone. If Illinois is offered another 60-day season, what do you think about using similar dates for the 1998-99 duck season?"

<u>Responses by Waterfowl Zones</u>				
	<u>North</u>	<u>Central</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>Entire State</u>
	(220)	(625)	(226)	(1,090)
Too early	45%	50%	50%	48%
About right	46	43	40	43
Too late	3	4	4	4
No opinion	6	3	6	5

"If 60 days are allowed for the regular duck season again in 1998-99, on which of the following days would you prefer that the season begin and end."

<u>Responses by Waterfowl Zones</u>				
	<u>North</u>	<u>Central</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>Entire State</u>
	(221)	(631)	(224)	(1,096)
Thursday/Sunday	42%	41%	45%	42%
Saturday/Tuesday	40	42	33	39
Other	5	3	3	4 ^a
No opinion	13	14	19	15

<u>Responses by Administrative Regions</u>							
	<u>1A</u>	<u>1B</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3A</u>	<u>3B</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
	(83)	(267)	(181)	(242)	(39)	(87)	(175)
Thursday/Sunday	48%	38%	43%	55%	46%	46%	46%
Saturday/Tuesday	38	44	38	40	44	36	31
Other	4	3	4	1	5	2	3
No opinion	10	15	15	4	5	16	20

^aIncludes: Saturday/Sunday (2.5%), plus 6 miscellaneous combinations (1.0%).

Table 21. Attitudes of waterfowl hunters toward the early September Canada goose season in north and central Illinois in 1997. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Responses to the question:

"With approval from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Illinois had an early Canada goose hunting season in 9 northeastern counties (September 1-14) and the remainder of the North and Central Zones (September 6-14) in 1997. The purpose of this experimental season was to provide sportsmen with additional opportunities to hunt local Canada geese and, in some areas, to increase the harvest of geese that have become nuisances. Did you like or dislike this early Canada goose season with respect to the counties listed below?"

	<u>Responses by Waterfowl Zones</u>		
	<u>North</u>	<u>Central</u>	<u>Both Zones</u>
In county of residence	(362)	(688)	(1,050)
Liked	60%	42%	48%
Disliked	14	18	16
No opinion	26	40	36
In county where goose hunt most	(134)	(326)	(460)
Liked	80%	54%	61%
Disliked	8	23	19
No opinion	12	23	20
In county where duck hunt most	(180)	(524)	(708)
Liked	55%	42%	45%
Disliked	16	17	17
No opinion	29	41	38

Table 22. Attitudes of waterfowl hunters toward overlap of the September teal season and the early September Canada goose season (Illinois 1997). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Responses to the question:

"Would you prefer that the September teal season and the September Canada goose season overlap as much as possible or should they occur primarily on different dates?"

	<u>Responses by Zones (Sept. Teal Hunters)</u>			
	<u>Northeast</u> (31)	<u>North</u> (23)	<u>Central</u> (94)	<u>All 3 Zones</u> (148)
Overlap as much as possible	77%	74%	68%	71%
Occur primarily on different dates	10	13	17	15
No opinion	13	13	15	14

	<u>Responses by Zones (Sept. Goose Hunters)</u>			
	<u>Northeast</u> (90)	<u>North</u> (56)	<u>Central</u> (149)	<u>All 3 Zones</u> (295)
Overlap as much as possible	59%	59%	54%	57%
Occur primarily on different dates	12	12	22	17
No opinion	29	29	24	26

Table 23. Attitudes of goose hunters toward the type of Canada goose harvest monitoring system preferred in the North and Central Zones (Illinois 1997-98). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Responses to the question:

"The Department of Natural Resources has operated a Canada goose harvest monitoring system in 6 counties in the North Zone and 14 counties in the Central Zone since 1994-95. Goose hunters in these counties must have a special permit (issued free), and they must report the Canada geese they harvest via a toll-free phone number. The hunting season is closed in the North Zone if (and when) the quota is reached in the monitored counties. The same rule applies to the Central Zone. This system provides the potential for longer goose seasons, and at the same time, prevents over harvest of the goose population. As an alternative, the permit and call-in reporting requirements could be eliminated and the Canada goose harvest controlled with shorter seasons. With these facts in mind, which of the following do you prefer for the 1998-99 season?"

	<u>North Zone</u>		<u>Central Zone</u>	
	<u>Quota</u> <u>Counties</u> (79)	<u>All</u> <u>Counties</u> (147)	<u>Quota</u> <u>Counties</u> (235)	<u>All</u> <u>Counties</u> (361)
Continue with a long (60-90 days) Canada goose hunting season and maintain the permit and call-in requirements	81%	75%	84%	83%
Revert to a short (30-50 days) Canada goose hunting season and eliminate the permit and call-in reporting requirements	16	19	13	12
No opinion	3	6	3	5

Table 24. Attitudes of goose hunters toward the dates for the regular Canada goose season in the North Zone (Illinois 1997-98). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Responses to the questions:

"In the North Zone, the 1997-98 Canada goose season was scheduled to be open October 4-12, closed October 13-30, and open again October 31-January 7."

"Did you like or dislike having the Canada goose season split into 2 time periods in the North Zone in 1997-98?"

	(141)
Liked	32%
Disliked	56
No opinion	12

"In your opinion, were the scheduled open and closed periods too short, about right, or too long for Canada goose hunting in the North Zone in 1997-98?"

	<u>Oct. 4-12</u> <u>Open Period</u> (138)	<u>Oct. 13-30</u> <u>Closed Period</u> (137)	<u>Oct. 31-Jan.7</u> <u>Open Period</u> (139)
Too short	39%	9%	37%
About right	37	26	46
Too long	7	46	6
No opinion	17	19	11

Table 25. Attitudes of goose hunters toward having the Canada goose season overlap the duck season in the North and Central Zones (Illinois 1997-98). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Responses to the question:

"Assuming that Illinois' duck season runs for 60 days again in 1998, and the Canada goose season is the same length or shorter than in 1997, which of the following options would you prefer for Canada goose hunting in the North and Central Zones?"

	<u>North Zone</u> (135)	<u>Central Zone</u> (345)
Split season that begins with the duck season	24%	19%
Continuous season that begins with the duck season	41	35
Continuous season that begins several weeks after the opening of the duck season	26	38
No opinion	9	8

Table 26. Attitudes of goose hunters toward the dates for the regular Canada goose season in the Central Zone (Illinois 1997-98). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Responses to the questions:

"In the Central Zone, the 1997-98 Canada goose season was scheduled to be open October 18-19, closed October 20-November 14, and open again November 15-January 29."

"Did you like or dislike having the Canada goose season split into 2 time periods in the Central Zone in 1997-98?"

	(354)
Liked	34%
Disliked	50
No opinion	16

"In your opinion, were the scheduled open and closed periods too short, about right, or too long for Canada goose hunting in the Central Zone in 1997-98?"

	Oct. 18-19 <u>Open Period</u> (340)	Oct. 20-Nov.14 <u>Closed Period</u> (331)	Nov. 15-Jan.29 <u>Open Period</u> (342)
Too short	53%	13%	30%
About right	24	31	53
Too long	5	37	3
No opinion	18	19	14

Table 27. Attitudes of goose hunters toward the dates for the regular goose season in the South Zone (Illinois 1997-98). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Responses to the questions:

"In the South Zone, the 1997-98 Canada goose season opened on November 15, which was 1 week after the opening of the duck season."

"What do you think about using a similar date (November 14) for opening the Canada goose hunting season in the South Zone in 1998-99?"

	<u>RLOZ^a</u>	<u>SIOZ^b</u>	<u>Remainder</u>	<u>Entire South Zone</u>
	(46)	(310)	(58)	(414)
Too early	78%	63%	59%	65%
About right	13	25	32	25
Too late	5	10	4	9
No opinion	4	2	5	2

"In your opinion, should the Canada goose hunting season in the South Zone open with the duck season or should it open later than the duck season?"

	<u>RLOZ^a</u>	<u>SIOZ^b</u>	<u>Remainder</u>	<u>Entire South Zone</u>
	(46)	(307)	(58)	(411)
With duck season	15%	20%	19%	19%
Later than duck season	81	72	76	73
No opinion	4	8	5	8

^aRend Lake Quota Zone.

^bSouthern Illinois Quota Zone.

Table 28. Attitudes of goose hunters toward a 60-day season and 1 Canada goose per day versus a 40-day season and 2 Canada geese per day (Illinois 1997-98). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Responses to the question:

"If Canada goose hunting regulations have to be more restrictive during the 1998-99 season, would you prefer a 60-day season with a daily bag of 1 Canada goose or a 40-day season with a daily bag of 2 Canada geese?"

Responses by Waterfowl Zones

	<u>North</u> (148)	<u>Central</u> (342)	<u>South</u> (58)	<u>RLOZ^a</u> (48)	<u>SIOZ^b</u> (318)	<u>Entire State</u> (835)
60 days & 1 goose	43%	48%	29%	40%	28%	39%
40 days & 2 geese	48	44	66	58	66	54
No opinion	9	8	5	2	6	7

Responses by Administrative Regions

	<u>1A</u> (40)	<u>1B</u> (165)	<u>2</u> (153)	<u>3A</u> (71)	<u>3B</u> (37)	<u>4</u> (39)	<u>5</u> (37)
60 days & 1 goose	53%	45%	38%	56%	59%	38%	33%
40 days & 2 geese	35	48	53	35	22	59	62
No opinion	12	7	9	9	19	3	5

^aRend Lake Quota Zone.

^bSouthern Illinois Quota Zone.

1997-98 ILLINOIS WATERFOWL HUNTER SURVEY
(see instructions on first page)

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. What is your county of residence?.....
(If you reside outside of Illinois, write in the state)

2. Which of the following waterfowl stamps did you purchase for your personal use during the 1997-98 season? (circle numbers for all that apply)

*Federal Migratory Bird and Conservation Stamp.....1
*Illinois Migratory Waterfowl Stamp.....2
*Others (write in).....3
.....4
*None (purchased no stamps).....5

3. Did you hunt waterfowl (ducks, geese, and/or coots) in Illinois during the 1997-98 season? (circle number for appropriate answer)

Yes.....1 No.....2

SEPTEMBER TEAL SEASON

4. How many different days did you hunt teal during the September teal season in Illinois in 1997?.....

5. How many teal did you personally harvest (kill and retrieve) during the September teal season in Illinois in 1997?.....

YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNTING DAY

6. Did you take 1 or more youths waterfowl hunting on the special Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day in Illinois in 1997? (circle number for appropriate answer)

Yes.....1 No.....2

7. If "Yes", a. How many youth waterfowl hunters did you take?.....

b. How many ducks and coots did the youth(s) harvest (kill and retrieve)?.....Total ducks _____
Total coots _____

REGULAR DUCK SEASON

8. How many different days did you hunt ducks during the regular duck season in Illinois in 1997-98. (NOTE: If you killed all your ducks coincidental to goose hunting, leave this space blank).....

9. In which county or counties did you hunt ducks during the regular duck season in Illinois in 1997-98?...County hunted most _____
Second most.....
Third most.....

10. List the number of ducks and coots you personally harvested during the regular duck season in Illinois in 1997-98. DO NOT include birds killed in other states or countries.

I personally killed and retrieved:	I knocked down in sight but could not retrieve:
Mallards _____	Ducks _____
Wood Ducks _____	Coots _____
Other Ducks _____	
Coots _____	

11. Did the "other ducks" you harvested include any canvasbacks? (circle number for appropriate answer)

Yes.....1 No.....2 If "Yes", how many?...._____

EARLY CANADA GOOSE SEASON IN CENTRAL, NORTH, AND NORTHEAST ILLINOIS

NOTE: This special experimental season took place on September 1-14 in 9 counties in northeastern Illinois and on September 6-14 in the remainder of the North and Central Zones (see map on first page).

12. Did you hunt Canada geese during the early (September) Canada goose season in Illinois in 1997?

Yes.....1 No.....2

13. If "Yes", a. How many different days did you hunt geese in September?.._____

b. How many Canada geese did you personally harvest in Sept?.._____

c. In which county did you hunt most in September?....._____

REGULAR GOOSE SEASON

14. List the number of days you hunted geese and the number of geese you personally harvested during the regular goose season in Illinois in 1997-98. DO NOT include geese listed in question #13b above. (NOTE: If you killed all your geese coincidental to duck hunting, leave the number of days blank)

	Days	Canada Geese	Snow/Blue Geese	Other Geese
*In Southern IL Quota Zone (see map) ..	_____	_____	_____	_____
*In Rend Lake Quota Zone (see map)	_____	_____	_____	_____
*Other areas (write in name of each county): a. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____

15. How many geese did you knock down in sight but neither you nor anyone else could retrieve in Illinois in 1997-98?....._____

16. Did you (or do you plan to) hunt snow/blue geese in Illinois after the Canada goose season has closed in 1997-98--i.e., February 1-March 1 in South Zone, February 21-March 10 in Central Zone, February 28-March 10 in North Zone?

Yes.....1 No.....2 Undecided.....3

YOUR OPINIONS

17. Would you prefer that the September teal season and the September Canada goose season overlap as much as possible or should they occur primarily on different dates? (circle number for appropriate answer)

- *Overlap as much as possible.....1
- *Occur primarily on different dates.....2
- *No opinion.....3

18. Illinois' 1997 Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day took place 7 days before the opening of the regular duck season in each zone. Thus, there were 6 days of no hunting between the Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day and the opening of the regular duck season. In your opinion, was this 6-day no hunting period about right, or should it have been longer than 6 days or shorter than 6 days? (circle number for appropriate answer)

- *Six days was about right.....1
- *Should have been longer than 6 days.....2
- *Should have been shorter than 6 days.....3
- *Other (write in) _____.....4
- *No opinion.....5

19. In retrospect, do you think the Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day should have been scheduled before, at the mid-point of, or after the regular duck season? (circle number for appropriate answer)

Before.....1 At mid-point.....2 After.....3 No opinion.....4

20. The dates for Illinois' 1997-98 regular duck season were October 4-December 2 in the North Zone, October 18-December 16 in the Central Zone, and November 8-January 6 in the South Zone. If Illinois is offered another 60-day season, what do you think about using similar dates for the 1998-99 duck season? (circle number for appropriate answer in the zone where you duck hunt most)

Too Early...1 About Right...2 Too Late...3 No opinion...4

21. If 60 days are allowed for the regular duck season again in 1998-99, on which of the following days would you prefer that the season begin and end? (circle number for appropriate answer)

- *Begin on Thursday and end on Sunday.....1
- *Begin on Saturday and end on Tuesday.....2
- *Other (write in)^a _____...3
- *No opinion.....4

^aFederal rules prohibit split duck seasons in Illinois.

22. With approval from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Illinois had an early Canada goose hunting season in 9 northeastern counties (September 1-14) and the remainder of the North and Central Zones (September 6-14) in 1997. The purpose of this experimental season was to provide sportsmen with additional opportunities to hunt local Canada geese and, in some areas, to increase the harvest of geese that have become nuisances. Did you like or dislike this early Canada goose season with respect to the counties listed below? (circle appropriate answer for each county listed)

	<u>Liked</u>	<u>Disliked</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
*In your county of residence.....	1.....	2.....	3.....
*In the county where you goose hunt most.....	1.....	2.....	3.....
*In the county where you duck hunt most.....	1.....	2.....	3.....

23. The Department of Natural Resources has operated a Canada goose harvest monitoring system in 6 counties in the North Zone and 14 counties in the Central Zone since 1994-95. Goose hunters in these counties must have a special permit (issued free), and they must report the Canada geese they harvest via a toll-free phone number. The hunting season is closed in the North Zone if (and when) the quota is reached in the monitored counties. The same rule applies to the Central Zone. This system provides the potential for longer goose seasons, and at the same time, prevents over harvest of the goose population. As an alternative, the permit and call-in reporting requirements could be eliminated and the Canada goose harvest controlled with shorter seasons. With these facts in mind, which of the following do you prefer for the 1998-99 season? (circle number for appropriate answer)

- *Continue with a long (60-90 days) Canada goose hunting season and maintain the permit and call-in requirements.....1
- *Revert to a short (30-50 days) Canada goose hunting season and eliminate the permit and call-in reporting requirements.....2
- *No opinion.....3

NOTE: The next 4 questions (#24, #25, #26, and #27) deal with the dates for the Canada goose season in the North, Central, and South Zones. Please read these questions carefully and answer the ones that apply to the zone or zones in which you Canada goose hunted during the 1997-98 season.

24. In the North Zone, the 1997-98 Canada goose season was scheduled to be open October 4-12, closed October 13-30, and open again October 31-January 7.

24a. Did you like or dislike having the Canada goose season split into 2 time periods in the North Zone in 1997-98? (circle number for appropriate answer)

Liked.....1 Disliked.....2 No opinion.....3

24b. In your opinion, were the scheduled open and closed periods too short, about right, or too long for Canada goose hunting in the North Zone in 1997-98? (circle appropriate answer for each time period)

	<u>Too Short</u>	<u>About Right</u>	<u>Too Long</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
Oct 4-12 open period.....	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....
Oct 13-30 closed period.....	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....
Oct 31-Jan 7 open period.....	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....

25. In the Central Zone, the 1997-98 Canada goose season was scheduled to be open October 18-19, closed October 20-November 14, and open again November 15-January 29.

25a. Did you like or dislike having the Canada goose season split into 2 time periods in the Central Zone in 1997-98? (circle number for appropriate answer)

Liked.....1 Disliked.....2 No opinion.....3

25b. In your opinion, were the scheduled open and closed periods too short, about right, or too long for Canada goose hunting in the Central Zone in 1997-98? (circle appropriate answer for each time period)

	<u>Too Short</u>	<u>About Right</u>	<u>Too Long</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
Oct 18-19 open period.....	1.....	2.....	3.....	4
Oct 20-Nov 14 closed period..	1.....	2.....	3.....	4
Nov 15-Jan 29 open period....	1.....	2.....	3.....	4

26. Assuming that Illinois' duck season runs for 60 days again in 1998, and the Canada goose season is the same length or shorter than in 1997, which of the following options would you prefer for Canada goose hunting in the North and Central Zones? (circle number for appropriate answer for the zone or zones in which you hunted in 1997-98)

	<u>North Zone</u>	<u>Central Zone</u>
*Split season that begins with the duck season.....	1.....	1
*Continuous season that begins with the duck season.....	2.....	2
*Continuous season that begins several weeks after the opening of the duck season.....	3.....	3
*No opinion.....	4.....	4

27. In the South Zone, the 1997-98 Canada goose season opened on November 15, which was 1 week after the opening of the duck season.

27a. What do you think about using a similar date (November 14) for opening the Canada goose hunting season in the South Zone in 1998-99? (circle number for appropriate answer)

Too early...1 About right...2 Too late...2 No opinion...3

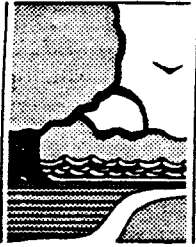
27b. In your opinion, should the Canada goose hunting season in the South Zone open with the duck season or should it open later than the duck season? (circle number for appropriate answer)

With duck season..1 Later than duck season..2 No opinion..3

28. If Canada goose hunting regulations have to be more restrictive during the 1998-99 season, would you prefer a 60-day season with a daily bag of 1 Canada goose or a 40-day season with a daily bag of 2 Canada geese? (circle number for appropriate answer)

60 days and 1 goose...1 40 days and 2 geese...2 No opinion...3

Thank you for your cooperation
POSTAGE IS PREPAID



ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

524 South Second Street, Springfield 62701-1787

Jim Edgar, Governor ● Brent Manning, Director

Dear Fellow Sportsman:

You are one of a select group of Illinoisans asked to furnish information on your waterfowl hunting activities during the past hunting season.

The information supplied by you and other selected hunters is vital to the management of our waterfowl resources: (1) to safeguard waterfowl populations, (2) to grant maximum waterfowl hunting opportunity to license holders, and (3) to maintain an attractive level of hunter success.

The information you provide is used to better understand the welfare of the various waterfowl populations. These statistics include distribution of total harvest, number of hunters, and hunting success.

Your reply is very important, even if you did not hunt waterfowl or were not successful. Only a limited number of waterfowl hunters can be contacted, therefore, your response is urgently needed.

Please take a few minutes and fill out the parts of the questionnaire that apply to you. If you do not remember exact figures, please give your best estimate.

Drop the completed questionnaire in the mail. Postage is prepaid.

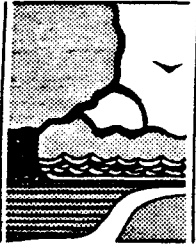
Yours for better waterfowling.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey M. Ver Steeg
Chief

Division of Wildlife Resources

JMV:WLA:lc
Enclosure
W1



ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

524 South Second Street, Springfield 62701-1787

Jim Edgar, Governor ● Brent Manning, Director

Dear Fellow Sportsman:

Recently we mailed you a Waterfowl Hunting Questionnaire, and requested that you fill out and return it as soon as possible. We have not received your form at this time -- perhaps because you have misplaced the questionnaire or haven't found time to complete it and return it to us.

We are enclosing another questionnaire which we hope you will complete and return to us. If you have already returned a questionnaire, please discard this one. The information supplied by you and other waterfowl hunters being sampled will be of great value to the Department of Natural Resources in better directing the management of Illinois' waterfowl resources.

Please fill out the questionnaire completely and return it even if you did not hunt waterfowl, or were not successful.

Postage is prepaid for returning the completed questionnaire. Your prompt attention will be sincerely appreciated.

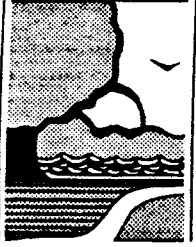
Thank You.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey M. Ver Steeg
Chief

Division of Wildlife Resources

JMV:WLA:lc
Enclosure
W2



ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

524 South Second Street, Springfield 62701-1787

Jim Edgar, Governor ● Brent Manning, Director

Dear Fellow Sportsman:

This letter is to remind you that we still would like to receive a report of your waterfowl hunting activities for the past season. We don't like to keep bothering you, but this information is very important which only you can supply.

Another copy of the questionnaire is enclosed. We hope you will complete it and return it as soon as possible. If you have already returned a questionnaire, please discard this one. Your response is needed--even though you did not hunt waterfowl or had an unsuccessful season.

Postage is prepaid for returning the questionnaire. Just fill it out and drop in the mail. Please help us complete this survey by sending your questionnaire now. Your prompt attention will be greatly appreciated.

Thank You.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey M. Ver Steeg
Chief

Division of Wildlife Resources

JMV:WLA:lc
Enclosure
W3

Appendix A

Harvests of Canada geese and snow geese by county, zone, and administrative region in Illinois during the 1995-96 through 1997-98 seasons.

Table A1. Harvest of Canada geese by waterfowl zone and county during the regular goose season in Illinois in 1995-96 through 1997-98. Due to rounding to whole numbers, some small discrepancies may occur in these data.

County	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	Mean
North Waterfowl Zone				
Boone	0	140	146	95
Bureau ^a	425	127	171	241
Carroll	451	0	146	199
Cook	1,070	1,003	1,193	1,089
DeKalb	116	38	122	92
DuPage	1,018	800	1,217	1,012
JoDaviess	39	13	49	34
Kane	1,108	1,067	1,144	1,106
Kendall	387	127	146	220
LaSalle ^b	150	160	146	152
Lake	1,791	1,397	2,532	1,907
Lee	296	140	97	178
McHenry	1,418	2,057	1,242	1,572
Ogle	129	0	195	108
Rock Island ^a	206	127	365	233
Stephenson	52	279	0	110
Whiteside	348	102	146	199
Will ^b	417	721	438	525
Winnebago	2,113	876	389	1,126
North Zone Total	11,534	9,174	9,884	10,197
Central Waterfowl Zone				
Adams	528	559	341	476
Brown	0	0	0	0
Bureau ^a	425	127	170	241
Calhoun	309	686	755	583
Cass	309	216	0	175
Champaign	0	317	195	171
Christian	64	330	390	261
Clark ^c	20	70	24	38
Coles	13	51	0	21
Cumberland	0	0	0	0
DeWitt	193	292	341	275
Douglas	39	51	0	30
Edgar	0	0	146	49
Ford	116	0	0	39
Fulton	8,802	5,079	3,994	5,958
Greene	245	0	195	147
Grundy	335	1,130	609	691
Hancock	0	38	0	13
Henderson	296	470	146	304
Henry	464	1,244	317	675

Table A1 - continued.

Table A1. Continued - page 2.

County	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	Mean
Central Waterfowl Zone (continued)				
Iroquois	26	89	365	160
Jersey	219	609	0	276
Kankakee	464	368	609	480
Knox	670	1,130	1,290	1,030
LaSalle ^b	300	324	268	297
Livingston	1,031	89	365	495
Logan	26	63	122	70
Macon	39	305	170	133
Macoupin	284	241	97	207
Madison	619	990	657	755
Marshall	1,005	419	146	384
Mason	1,058	622	1,118	933
McDonough	541	0	0	320
McLean	309	190	487	367
Menard	39	0	0	13
Mercer	77	38	97	71
Monroe	348	190	146	228
Montgomery	77	38	49	55
Morgan	657	241	609	502
Moultrie	206	127	0	111
Peoria	889	533	195	539
Piatt	0	13	0	4
Pike	567	622	463	551
Putnam	52	63	73	63
Rock Island ^a	206	127	390	241
Sangamon	219	89	511	273
Schuyler	283	178	49	170
Scott	90	0	73	54
Shelby	451	13	0	155
St. Clair ^c	1,218	610	657	828
Stark	168	114	170	151
Tazewell	503	254	1,217	658
Vermilion	747	63	146	319
Warren	77	0	170	82
Will ^b	834	1,463	877	1,058
Woodford	232	190	49	157
Central Zone Total	26,689	21,065	19,258	22,337

Table A1 - continued.

Table A1. Continued - page 3.

County	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	Mean
South Waterfowl Zone				
Bond	0	102	97	66
Clark ^c	20	70	25	38
Clay	103	0	0	34
Clinton	335	165	0	167
Crawford	0	0	97	32
Edwards	39	0	0	13
Effingham	0	0	0	0
Fayette	1,418	609	3,774	1,934
Gallatin	0	51	0	17
Hamilton	0	0	0	0
Hardin	0	0	0	0
Jasper	644	51	0	232
Johnson	580	229	49	286
Lawrence	0	25	0	8
Marion	206	0	24	77
Massac	387	51	0	146
Perry	3,183	1,498	1,948	2,210
Pope	77	0	0	26
Pulaski	451	381	49	294
Randolph	1,508	495	609	871
Richland	64	38	146	83
Saline	361	470	0	277
St. Clair ^c	1,218	610	658	829
Wabash	155	0	0	52
Washington	619	25	341	328
Wayne	1,070	292	0	454
White	13	267	0	93
Subtotal	12,451	5,429	7,817	8,566
Rend Lake Quota Zone	5,877	5,028	2,118	4,341
Southern IL Quota Zone	35,414	25,091	22,010	27,505
South Zone Total	53,742	35,548	31,945	40,412
Unknown	513	76	195	261
Statewide Total	92,478	65,864	61,282	73,208

^a50% in North Zone and 50% in Central Zone.

^b33% in North Zone and 67% in Central Zone.

^c50% in Central Zone and 50% in South Zone.

Table A2. Harvest of Canada geese by administrative region and county during the regular goose season in Illinois in 1995-96 through 1997-98. Due to rounding to whole numbers, some small discrepancies may occur in these data.

County	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	Mean
Administrative Region 1A				
Boone	0	140	146	95
Carroll	451	0	146	199
DeKalb	116	38	122	92
Jo Daviess	39	13	49	34
Lee	296	140	97	178
Ogle	129	0	195	108
Stephenson	52	279	0	110
Whiteside	348	102	146	199
Winnebago	2,113	876	389	1,126
Region 1A Total	3,544	1,587	1,290	2,140
Administrative Region 1B				
Bureau	850	254	341	482
Fulton	8,802	5,079	3,994	5,958
Henderson	296	470	146	304
Henry	464	1,244	317	675
Knox	670	1,130	1,290	1,030
LaSalle	450	483	414	449
Marshall	1,005	0	146	384
McDonough	541	419	0	320
Mercer	77	38	97	71
Peoria	889	533	195	539
Putnam	52	63	73	63
Rock Island	412	254	755	474
Stark	168	114	170	151
Tazewell	503	254	1,217	658
Warren	77	0	170	82
Woodford	232	190	49	157
Region 1B Total	15,488	10,527	9,374	11,796
Administrative Region 2				
Cook	1,070	1,003	1,193	1,089
DuPage	1,018	800	1,217	1,012
Grundy	335	1,130	609	691
Kane	1,108	1,067	1,144	1,106
Kankakee	464	368	609	480
Kendall	387	127	146	220
Lake	1,791	1,397	2,532	1,907
McHenry	1,418	2,057	1,242	1,572
Will	1,251	2,184	1,315	1,583
Region 2 Total	8,842	10,133	10,007	9,661

Table A2 - continued.

Table A2. Continued - page 2.

County	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	Mean
Administrative Region 3A				
Adams	528	559	341	476
Brown	0	0	0	0
Calhoun	309	686	755	583
Cass	309	216	0	175
Christian	64	330	390	261
Greene	245	0	195	147
Hancock	0	38	0	13
Jersey	219	609	0	276
Logan	26	63	122	70
Macoupin	284	241	97	207
Mason	1,058	622	1,118	933
Menard	39	0	0	13
Montgomery	77	38	49	55
Morgan	657	241	609	502
Pike	567	622	463	551
Sangamon	219	89	511	273
Schuyler	283	178	49	170
Scott	90	0	73	54
Region 3A Total	4,974	4,533	4,772	4,760
Administrative Region 3B				
Champaign	0	317	195	171
Clark	40	140	49	76
Coles	13	51	0	21
Cumberland	0	0	0	0
DeWitt	193	292	341	275
Douglas	39	51	0	30
Edgar	0	0	146	49
Ford	116	0	0	39
Iroquois	26	89	365	160
Livingston	1,031	89	365	495
Macon	39	190	170	133
McLean	309	305	487	367
Moultrie	206	127	0	111
Piatt	0	13	0	4
Shelby	451	13	0	155
Vermilion	747	63	146	319
Region 3B Total	3,210	1,740	2,264	2,405

Table A2 - continued.

Table A2. Continued - page 3.

County	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	Mean
Administrative Region 4				
Bond	0	102	97	66
Clinton	335	165	0	167
Madison	619	990	657	755
Monroe	348	190	146	228
Randolph	1,508	495	609	871
St. Clair	2,436	1,219	1,315	1,657
Washington	619	25	341	328
Region 4 Total	5,865	3,187	3,165	4,072
Administrative Region 5				
Clay	103	0	0	34
Crawford	0	0	97	32
Edwards	39	0	0	13
Effingham	0	0	0	0
Fayette	1,418	609	3,774	1,934
Gallatin	0	51	0	17
Hamilton	0	0	0	0
Hardin	0	0	0	0
Jasper	644	51	0	232
Johnson	580	229	49	286
Lawrence	0	25	0	8
Marion	206	0	24	77
Massac	387	51	0	146
Perry	3,183	1,498	1,948	2,210
Pope	77	0	0	26
Pulaski	451	381	49	294
Richland	64	38	146	83
Saline	361	470	0	277
Wabash	155	0	0	52
Wayne	1,070	292	0	454
White	13	267	0	93
Subtotal	8,751	3,962	6,087	6,267
Rend Lake Quota Zone	5,877	5,028	2,118	4,341
Southern IL Quota Zone	35,414	25,091	22,010	27,505
Region 5 Total	50,041	34,081	30,215	38,112
Unknown	513	76	195	261
Statewide Total	92,478	65,864	61,282	73,208

Table A3. Harvest of snow geese by waterfowl zone and county during the regular goose season in Illinois in 1996-97 and 1997-98. Due to rounding to whole numbers, some small discrepancies may occur in these data.

County	1996-97	1997-98
North Waterfowl Zone		
Boone	0	0
Bureau ^a	0	0
Carroll	0	0
Cook	0	0
DeKalb	0	0
DuPage	0	0
JoDaviess	0	0
Kane	0	0
Kendall	0	0
LaSalle ^b	0	0
Lake	0	0
Lee	0	0
McHenry	0	0
Ogle	0	0
Rock Island ^a	0	0
Stephenson	0	0
Whiteside	0	0
Will ^b	0	0
Winnebago	0	0
North Zone Total	0	0
Central Waterfowl Zone		
Adams	0	0
Brown	0	0
Bureau ^a	0	0
Calhoun	38	122
Cass	0	0
Champaign	0	267
Christian	0	195
Clark ^c	25	0
Coles	0	0
Cumberland	0	0
DeWitt	0	0
Douglas	0	0
Edgar	0	0
Ford	0	0
Fulton	13	49
Greene	0	0
Grundy	0	49
Hancock	0	0

Table A3 - continued.

Table A3. Continued - page 2.

County	1996-97	1997-98
Central Waterfowl Zone (continued)		
Henderson	0	0
Henry	0	0
Iroquois	0	0
Jersey	0	0
Kankakee	0	0
Knox	0	0
LaSalle ^b	0	0
Livingston	13	0
Logan	0	0
Macon	0	0
Macoupin	0	0
Madison	25	0
Marshall	0	0
Mason	0	0
McDonough	0	0
McLean	0	0
Menard	0	0
Mercer	0	0
Monroe	13	0
Montgomery	0	24
Morgan	0	49
Moultrie	0	0
Peoria	0	0
Piatt	0	0
Pike	76	219
Putnam	13	0
Rock Island ^a	0	0
Sangamon	0	24
Schuyler	0	0
Scott	0	0
Shelby	0	0
St. Clair ^c	38	122
Stark	0	0
Tazewell	13	0
Vermilion	0	0
Warren	0	0
Will ^b	0	0
Woodford	0	0
Central Zone Total	267	1,120

Table A3 - continued.

Table A3. Continued - page 3.

County	1996-97	1997-98
South Waterfowl Zone		
Bond	25	97
Clark ^c	25	0
Clay	0	0
Clinton	0	24
Crawford	0	0
Edwards	0	0
Effingham	0	0
Fayette	432	1,242
Gallatin	0	0
Hamilton	0	0
Hardin	0	0
Jasper	0	0
Johnson	25	0
Lawrence	0	0
Marion	0	0
Massac	0	0
Perry	216	536
Pope	0	0
Pulaski	762	0
Randolph	51	0
Richland	0	0
Saline	25	0
St. Clair ^c	38	122
Wabash	0	0
Washington	25	560
Wayne	102	0
White	13	0
Subtotal	1,739	2,581
Rend Lake Quota Zone	559	219
Southern IL Quota Zone	1,498	2,021
South Zone Total	3,796	4,821
Unknown	0	0
Statewide Total	4,063	5,941

^a50% in North Zone and 50% in Central Zone.

^b33% in North Zone and 67% in Central Zone.

^c50% in Central Zone and 50% in South Zone.