HumanDimensions
Research Program

Illinois Natural History Survey
Prairie Research Institute
University of Illinois at
Urbana-Champaign

2020-2021 Illinois Waterfowl Hunter Report: Harvest, Youth Hunts, and Season Preferences

Craig A. Miller, Ph.D.
Program Leader and Principal Investigator
Human Dimensions Research Program
Illinois Natural History Survey

Prepared by
Eric M. Walberg, Craig A. Miller,
Lauren J. Stephens, and Brent D.
Williams

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Colleen Callahan, Director
Illinois Department of Natural
Resources

Jennifer Wellman,
Federal Aid Coordinator

Mike Wefer,
Chief, Division of Wildlife
Resources

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2020-21 ILLINOIS WATERFOWL HUNTER REPORT: Harvest, Youth Hunts, and Season Preferences

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HUMAN DIMENSIONS RESEARCH PROGRAM

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STUDY 101
JOB NO. 101.3

Craig A. Miller, Ph.D.
Program Leader and Principal Investigator
Human Dimensions Research Program
Illinois Natural History Survey
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Eric M Walberg, Craig A. Miller,
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November 10, 2021

Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration
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OBJECTIVE

To survey waterfowl (duck, goose, and coot) hunters annually to determine their activities, harvest, characteristics, attitudes, and opinions.

ABSTRACT

A total of 1,805 (37% response rate) Illinois waterfowl hunters returned usable questionnaires to the 2020-21 Illinois Waterfowl Hunter Survey. An estimated 39,525 adult waterfowl hunters spent 1 day or more afield during 2020-21, an increase of 12.3% from 35,185 hunters during the 2019-20 seasons. Waterfowl hunters spent 837,609 days afield, a decrease of 0.1% from the 841,828 days devoted during the 2019-20 license year. Total estimated waterfowl harvest decreased 13.9%, from 471,872 during 2019-20 seasons to 406,259 during 2020-21. Duck harvest estimates for the regular duck season were as follows: 127,525 mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*), 35,335 wood ducks (*Aix sponsa*), and 88,081 other ducks. A total of 18,967 teal (*Anas spp.*) were harvested during the September teal season. Goose hunters harvested 94,510 Canada geese (*Branta canadensis*) during the regular Canada goose season, a 10.9% increase from the 85,188 Canada geese harvested during the 2019-20 regular goose season. Hunters harvested 16,811 Canada geese during the September Canada goose season, a 9.0% increase from the previous year. During the Youth Waterfowl Hunting Season, 5,029 adults took 6,950 youths waterfowl hunting, a 24.5% increase in adult participation and a 53.5% increase in youth participation from the2019-20 Youth Waterfowl Hunting Season. Hunter preferences for seasons and satisfaction with the waterfowl seasons are also discussed.

METHODS

Mailings

A random sample of 5,000 waterfowl hunters was drawn from the population of Illinois State Waterfowl Stamp purchasers from the 2020-21 license year. On 14 May 2021, hunters were mailed an 8-page questionnaire (Appendix A), cover letter (Appendix B), and a postage-paid return envelope. The effective sample was reduced from 5,000 questionnaires to 4,891 due to 109 being returned as undeliverable. A thank you/reminder postcard

(Appendix C) was sent to hunters on 8 June 2021. Non-respondents were mailed a second questionnaire and cover letter (Appendix D) on 28 June 2021, followed by a second postcard mailing on 14 July 2021. A third and final questionnaire and cover letter (Appendix E) were mailed to non-respondents on 28 July 2021. Coded data were entered and analyzed using SPSS 28.0 (SPSS Inc. 2021). Confidence intervals are presented where appropriate.

Statewide Estimates

Estimates of number of hunters, days afield, and waterfowl harvested were based on confirmed sales of 52,849 adult resident Illinois Migratory Waterfowl stamps (2019-20 series) and were computed following the procedures outlined below (Anderson et al. 1998), with slight modification. The correction factors for multiple stamp buyers (A_1) and stamp exempt hunters (A_2) were removed beginning with the estimates of 2016-17 (Williams et al. 2018). The original formulas are presented for understanding how previous year's estimates were created.

The total number of active waterfowl hunters was estimated using the number of Illinois Migratory Waterfowl Stamps sold. The number of teal, duck, and goose hunters ($Hunt_{sp}$), days afield ($Days_{sp}$), birds crippled but not retrieved ($Crip_{sp}$) and harvest ($Harv_{sp}$) were calculated as follows:

$$Hunt_{sp} = Hunt_r \frac{L_t}{n}$$

$$Days_{sp} = Days_r \frac{L_t}{n}$$

$$Crip_{sp} = Crip_r \frac{L_t}{n}$$

$$Harv_{sp} = Harv_r \frac{L_t A}{n}$$

Where:

$Hunt_r$ = number of respondents to the 2020-21 Illinois Waterfowl Hunter Survey who reported hunting for each species (adjustment for non-hunters is inherent),

L_t = total number of Illinois migratory Waterfowl Stamps sold in 2020-21,

n = number of respondents to 2020-21 Illinois Waterfowl Hunter Survey who purchased a stamp,

$Days_r$ = total number of days spent hunting reported by respondents,

$Crip_r$ = total number of birds crippled but not retrieved reported by respondents,

$Harv_r$ = total harvest of each species reported by respondents,

A_3 = fixed reduction factor for reporting bias (0.501 for teal, ducks, and coots; Anderson 1985; 0.478 for geese; Anderson et al. 1996, Miller et al. 2018).

Confidence intervals for the estimated numbers of ducks, coots, and geese harvested were calculated by:

$$95\%\ CI\left[Harv_{sp}\right] = \pm 2L_t\left(\frac{s}{\sqrt{n}}\right)\left(\frac{L_t - n}{L_t}\right)$$

Where s = standard deviation of total species harvest reported by respondents.

SEASON LENGTHS AND BAG LIMITS

Illinois incorporated a fourth waterfowl zone in 2011-12 for the regular waterfowl seasons and 2012-13 for the September goose season. The four zones are the North, Central, South Central, and South zones (Appendix G). The early (September) teal (*Spatula discors*) season length was 16 days with a daily bag of 6 teal. Early (September) Canada goose (*Branta canadensis*) season length and start date (1 September) were the same for all four zones. Hunters could hunt for 15 days statewide and could harvest 5 geese a day in the North and Central zones and 2 birds per day in the South Central and South zones. Length and daily bag limit of the regular duck season did not change (60-day season/6-bird daily bag limit) during 2020-21. Basic daily bag limits were 6 ducks, 5 mergansers, and 15 coots; individual species limits are in Appendix H. Regular Canada goose season length in the South Central and South zone was 79 days and 67 days, respectively. Daily bag limit was 3 for Canada geese, 2 for White-fronted geese (*Anser albifrons*), and 1 for Brant geese (*Branta bernicla*).

All species listed above had a possession limit of 3 times the daily bag limit. Light geese (*Anser caerulescens* and *Anser rossii)* had a daily limit of 20 and no possession limit.

RESULTS

Waterfowl Harvest and Days Afield

We received 1,805 questionnaires that were considered usable (i.e., respondent completed at least a portion of the questionnaire), for an overall response rate of 37%.Ninety-one percent of respondents indicated they had purchased an Illinois State Waterfowl Stamp for the 2020-21 season (Figure 1) and 1,234 (74.8%) of license purchasers reported hunting 1 day or more for waterfowl(Figure 2).

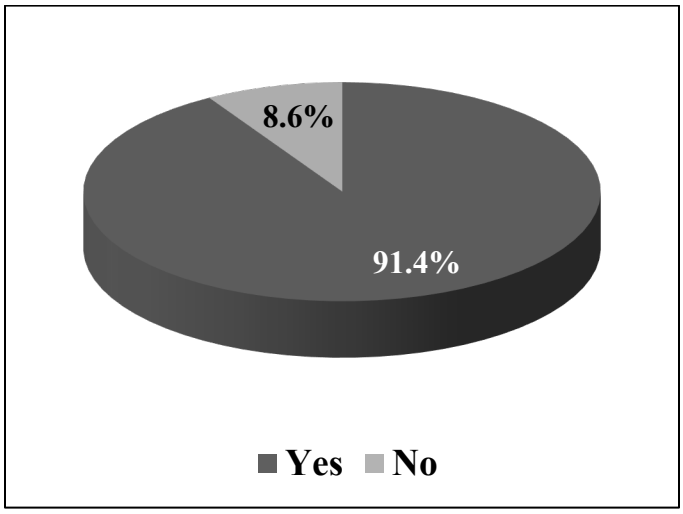

Figure 1. Percentage of hunters who purchased an Illinois State Waterfowl Stamp for the 2020-21 seasons (*n* = 1,805).

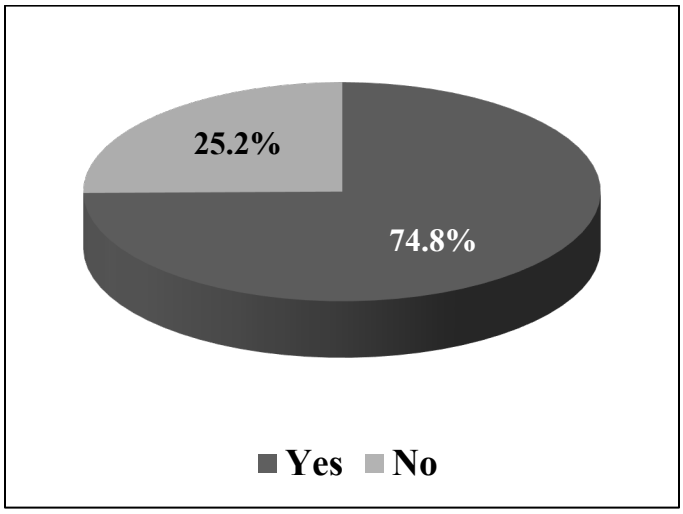

Figure 2. Percentage of license purchasers who hunted waterfowl (ducks, geese, or coots) in Illinois during the 2020-21 waterfowl hunting season (*n* = 1,650).

The number of active waterfowl hunters (hunted ≥1 day(s) during waterfowl season) increased from 35,185 during the 2019-20 season to 39,525 during the 2020- 21 season, a 12.3% increase in the number of hunters (Figure 3 and Table 1). Hunters reported spending 837,609days afield, a decrease of 0.1% from the 841,828 days devoted during the 2019-20 license year. Total waterfowlharvest decreased 13.9%, from 471,872 during 2019-20 to 406,259 during the 2020-21 season (Table 1). Almost thirty-three percent of hunters targeted ducks only, 10.7% targeted geese only, and 56.7% targeted both ducks and geese (Figure 4 and Table 2).

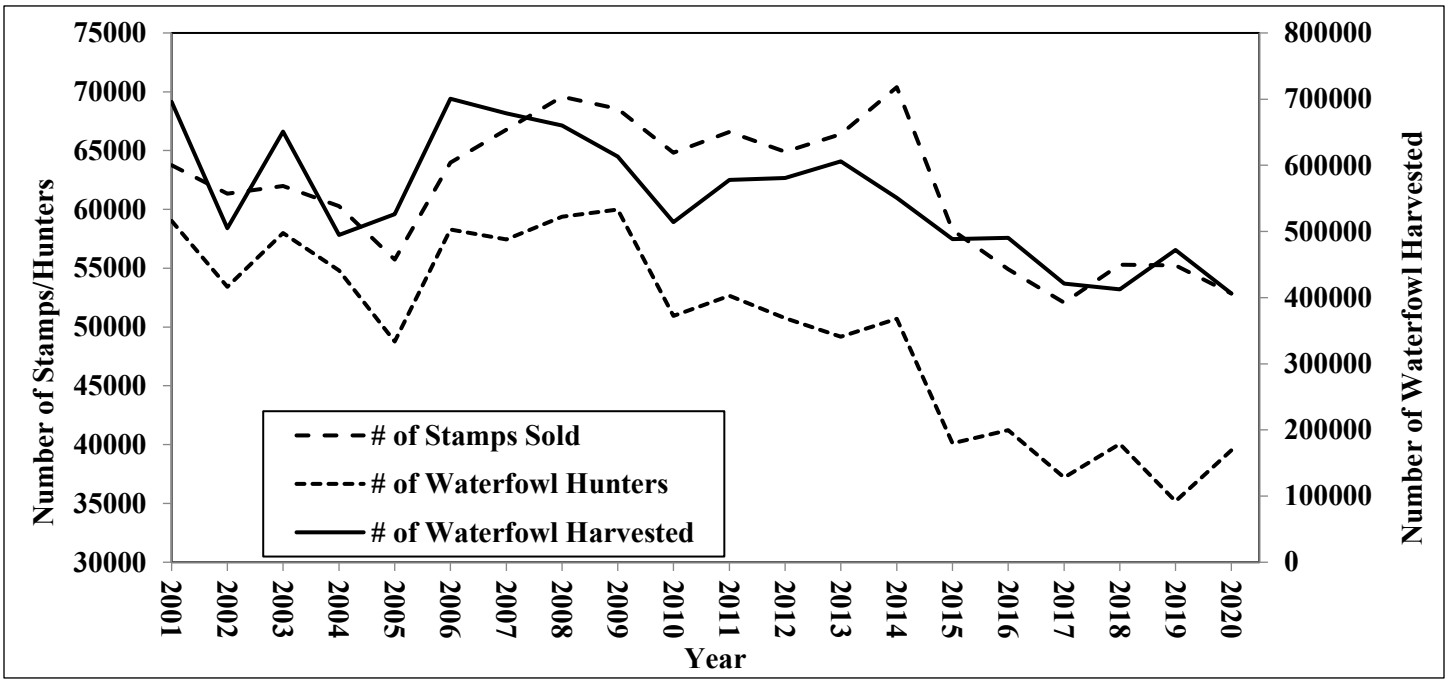

Figure 3. Number of stamps sold, waterfowl hunters, and waterfowl harvested in Illinois, 2001-2020.

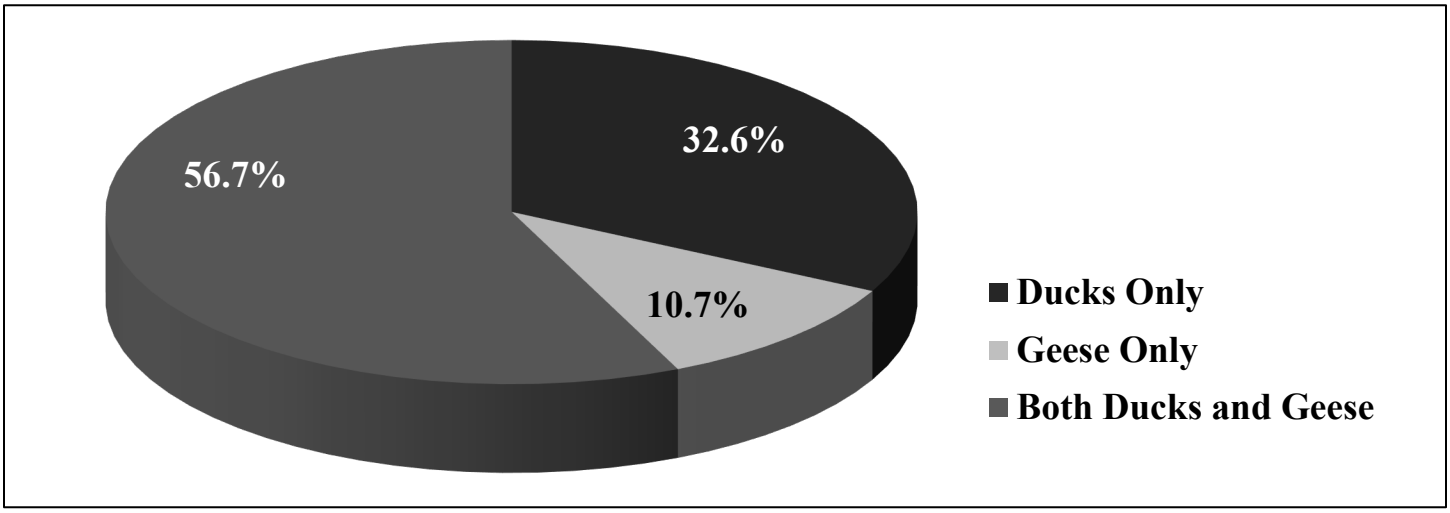

Figure 4. Percentage of hunters who hunted ducks, geese, or both during the 2020-21 Illinois waterfowl season.

September Teal Season

The number of early (September) teal season hunters increased slightly from 7,955 during 2019 to 7,975 during 2020 (Figure 5 and Table 3). Days afield decreased 14.5% from 32,706 during 2019 to 27,962 during 2020. Decreased days afield coincided with a decreased teal harvest of 18,967 ± 8,767 during the 2020 September teal season, a 1.6% decrease from the 2019 harvest (19,268). The Central zone accounted for over one-half of teal hunters (53.4%), teal harvested (55.8%), and teal hunter days afield (55.3%). The North zone recorded the second-most days afield, hunters, and total teal harvested (Table 4). September season teal hunters averaged 3.51 days afield statewide, and harvested an average of 0.68 teal per hunter per day and 2.38 teal per hunter for the season (Figure 6 and Table 5).

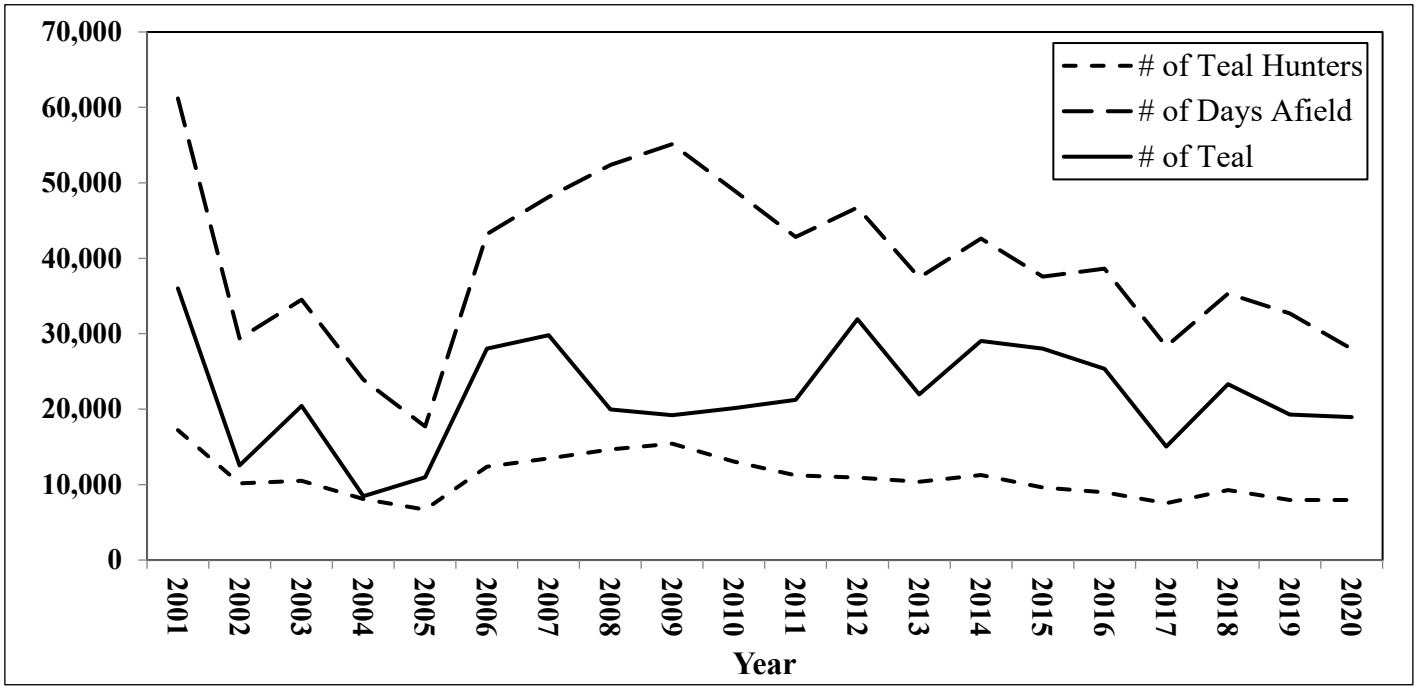

Figure 5. Number of teal harvested and hunter activity during the Illinois September teal season, 2001-2020.

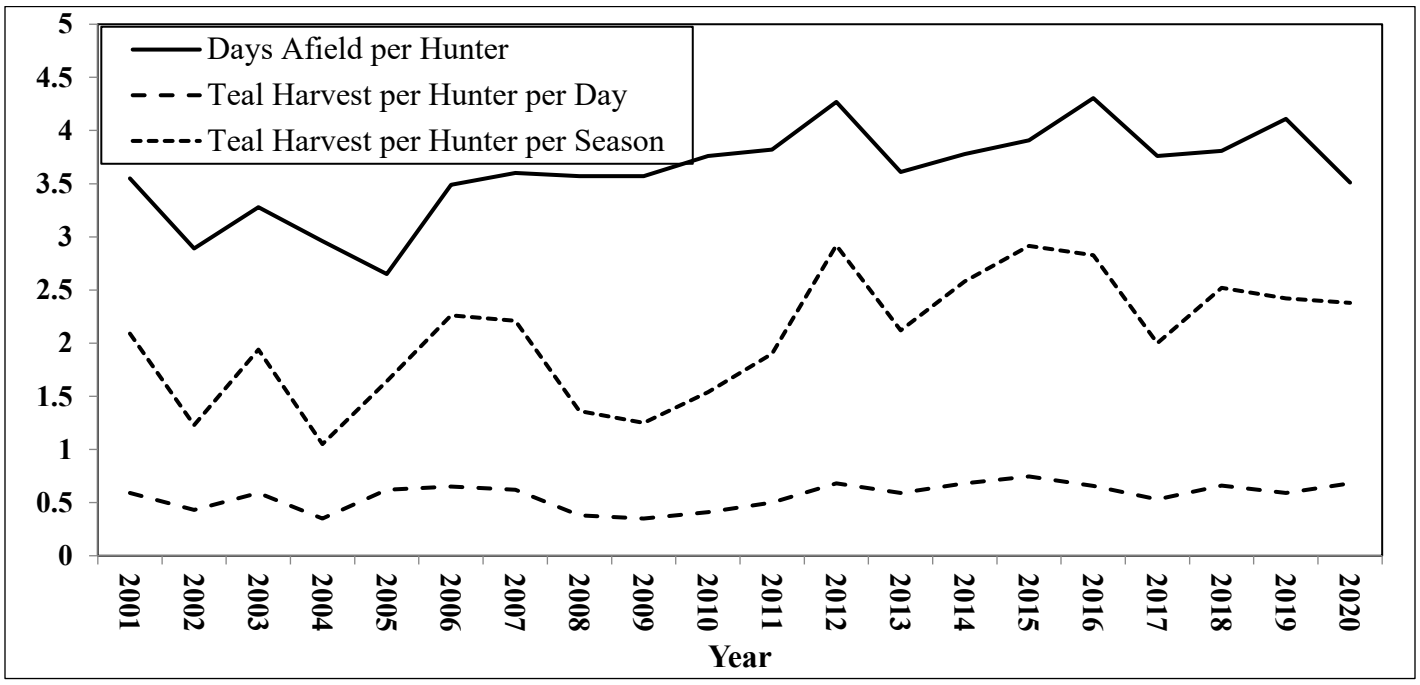

Figure 6. Rates of teal harvest and hunter activity during the Illinois September teal season, 2001-2020.

Youth Waterfowl Hunting

The Youth Waterfowl Season dates changed in all 4 zones; number of days to hunt remained unchanged between the 2019 and 2020 seasons. Youth age 17 and under were able to hunt ducks, geese, and coots for two days one week prior to opening of the regular duck season in the North, Central, and South Central zones, but 12 days earlier in the South zone. Eleven percent of those who purchased an Illinois waterfowl stamp took a youth hunting during the Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days (Figure 7). The number of adults who participated in the 2020 youth hunt increased 24.5% from 4,039 to 5,029 participants and the number of youth participants increased 53.5% from 4,528 during 2019 to 6,950 youths during the 2020 youth hunt (Table 6). Forty-three percent (42.5%) of hunting groups that participated in the 2020 youth waterfowl season had at least one youth who had never hunted ducks or geese before (Figure 8), and 15.4% of hunters indicated this was their first time accompanying a youth during the hunt (Figure 9). Over half of respondents (52.7%) take a youth hunting each year during the youth waterfowl season, 23.6% taking a youth hunting most but not every year, and 23.6% occasionally take a youth hunting. The most common relationship of youths to respondents during the youth waterfowl season were: (1) son (46.4%), (2) son of a family friend (24.0%), (3) son of a relative (19.6%), and (4) daughter (10.1%).

Harvest of ducks during the youth season increased 35.7%, from 5,748 during 2019 to 7,799 during 2020, and geese increased from 790 to 1,118 from the 2019 to 2020 seasons. Thirty-three percent of respondents took a youth hunting during the regular duck or goose season; an additional 2.2% had a youth accompany them but did not hunt (Figure 10). Hunters were more likely to take youths hunting during the regular duck season than goose season (Figure 11).

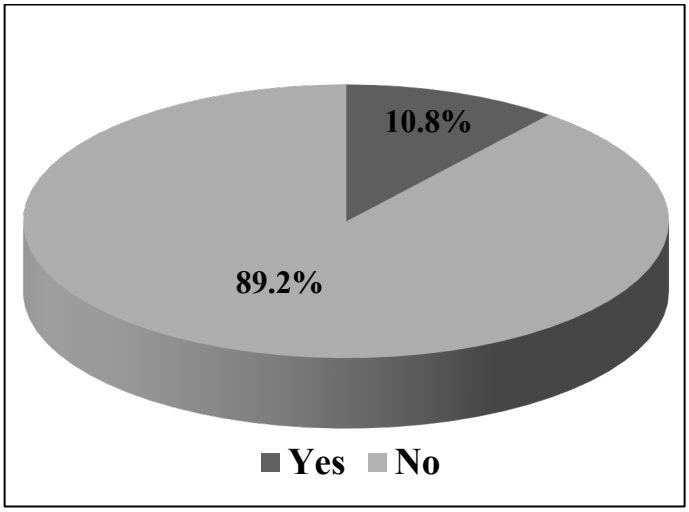

Figure 7. Percentage of hunters* who took a youth (17 years old or younger) hunting during the 2020 Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days (n = 1,650).
*Cases selected for those who indicated they purchased a stamp for the 2020-21 Waterfowl seasons.

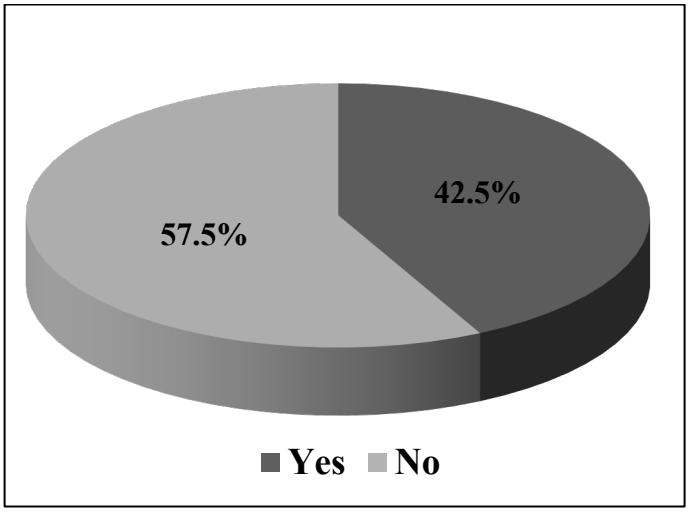

Figure 8. Percentage of hunters* who took at least one youth (17 years old or younger) hunting for the first time (n = 174).
*Cases selected for those who indicated they took a youth hunting during the 2020 Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days.

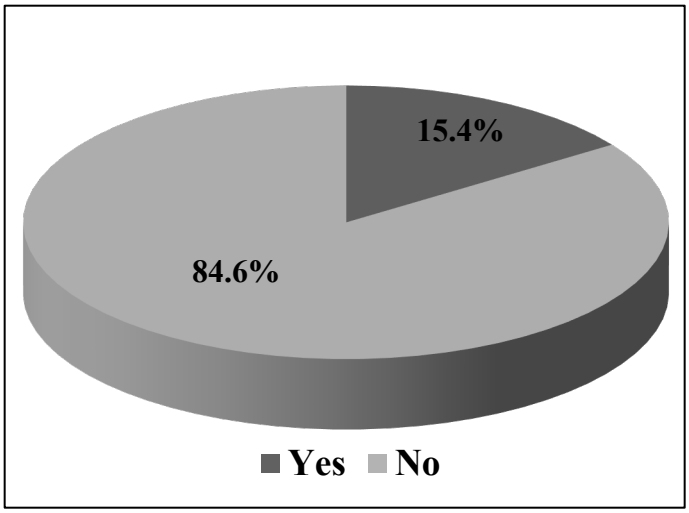

Figure 9. Percentage of hunters* for whom it was their first time taking a youth (17 years old or younger) hunting. (n = 169).
*Cases selected for those who indicated they took a youth hunting during the 2020 Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days.

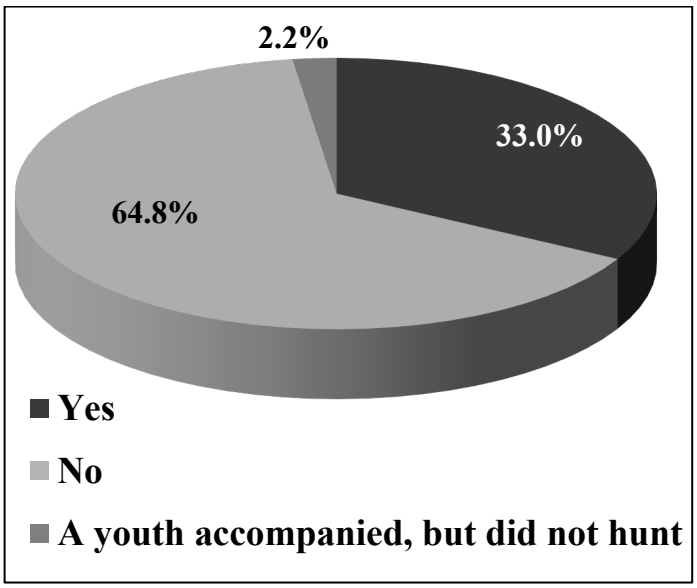

Figure 10. Percentage of hunters* who took a youth (17 years old or younger) hunting during the 2020-21 regular duck or goose season in Illinois (n = 603).
*Cases selected for those who hunted for at least one day during the 2020-21 regular duck or goose season.

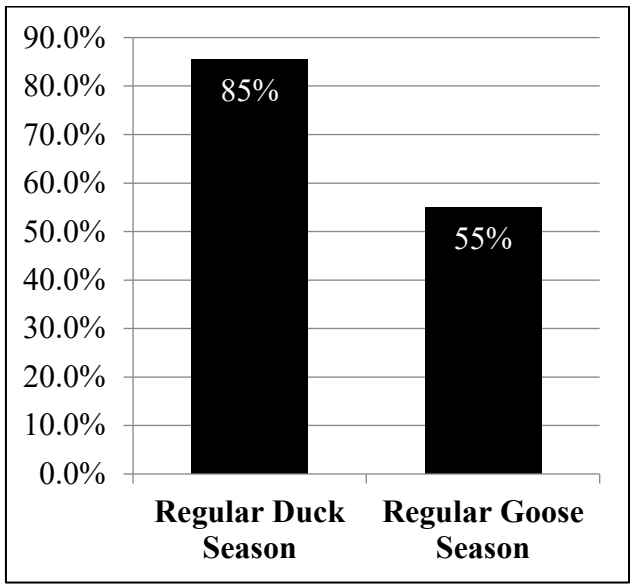

Figure 11. Seasons hunters* took a youth (17 years old or younger) hunting during 2020-21 (n = 220).
*Cases selected for those who took youth hunting or had youth accompany them while hunting.

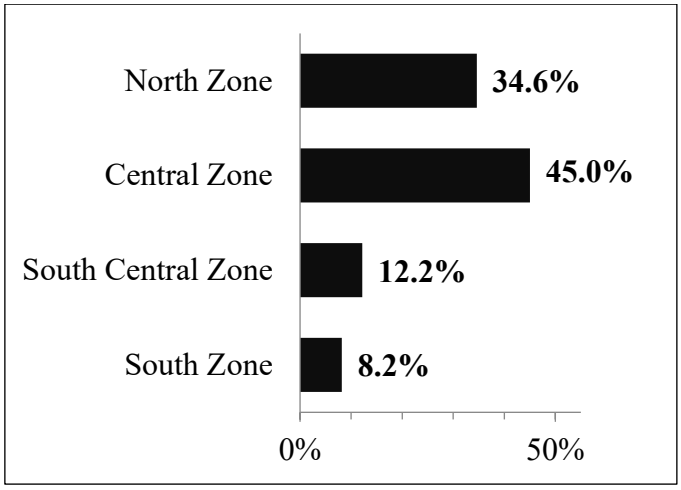

Figure 12. Zones hunters* hunted in most often during the 2020-21 waterfowl seasons (n = 1,256).
*Cases selected for those who indicated they hunted for at least one day during the 2020-21 waterfowl seasons.

Regular Duck Season

Number of duck hunters increased by 2,582 (8.1%) from 31,850 during the 2019-20 season to 34,432 in the 2020-21 season (Table 7). Duck hunters spent 462,541 days afield ($\overline{X}$= 13.43) during the 2020-21 season, a decrease of 4.2% from the 482,946 days reported during the 2019-20 season. Almost half of respondents (45.0%) hunted waterfowl in the Central zone most often, followed by the North, South Central, and South zones (Figure 12).

Total duck harvest during 2020-21 was 254,680, a decrease of 21.4% from the 323,946 duck harvest reported for 2019-20 (Table 7). Mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*) comprised 50.1% of the total regular season duck harvest, whereas wood ducks (*Aix sponsa*) and other ducks accounted for 13.9% and 36.1%, respectively (Figure 13). Statewide mallard harvest in Illinois decreased by 36,518 birds (22.3%) from 164,043 during the 2019-20 season to 127,525 during the 2020-21 season (Figure 14 and Table 7). Wood duck harvest decreased 16,229 (31.5%) from 51,564 ducks during 2019-20 to 35,335 during 2020-21. The harvest of other ducks decreased 20,259 (18.7%) from 108,340 during 2019-20 to 88,081 during 2020-21, and statewide coot (*Fulica americana*) harvest decreased from 2,238 during 2019-20 to 1,701 coots during 2020-21.

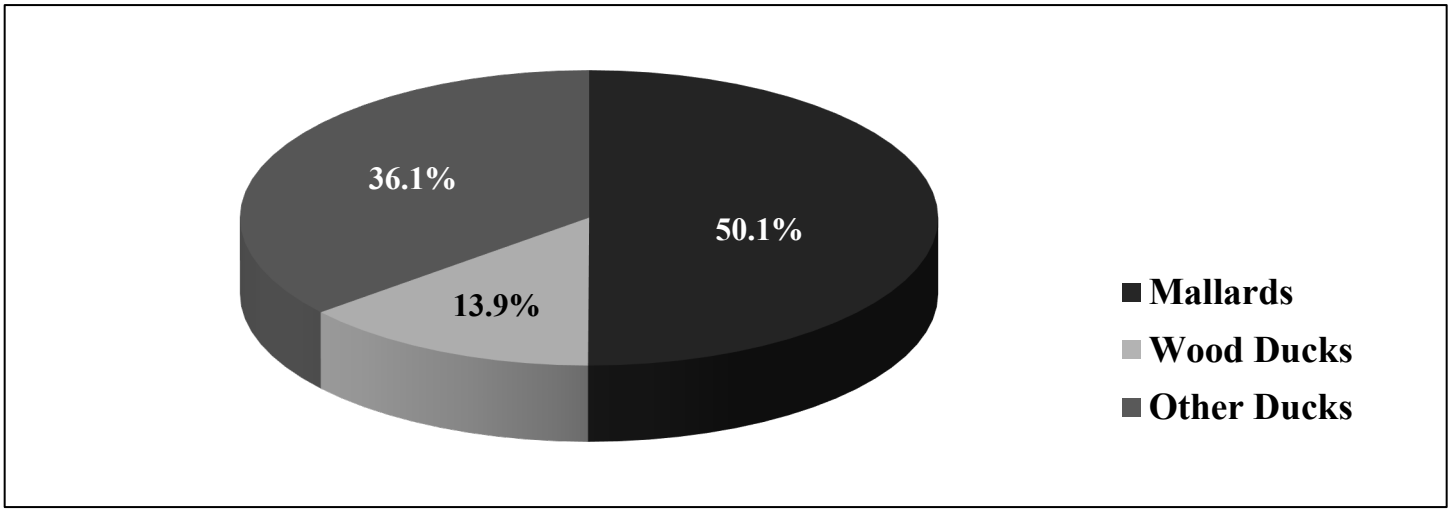

Figure 13. Proportion of mallards, wood, & other ducks harvested during the 2020-21 regular duck season.[a]

[a]Proportions are by mallard, wood duck, and other ducks due to how hunters are asked to report their harvest. This order (mallard, wood duck, and other ducks) is not necessarily the order of the most-often harvested ducks in Illinois.

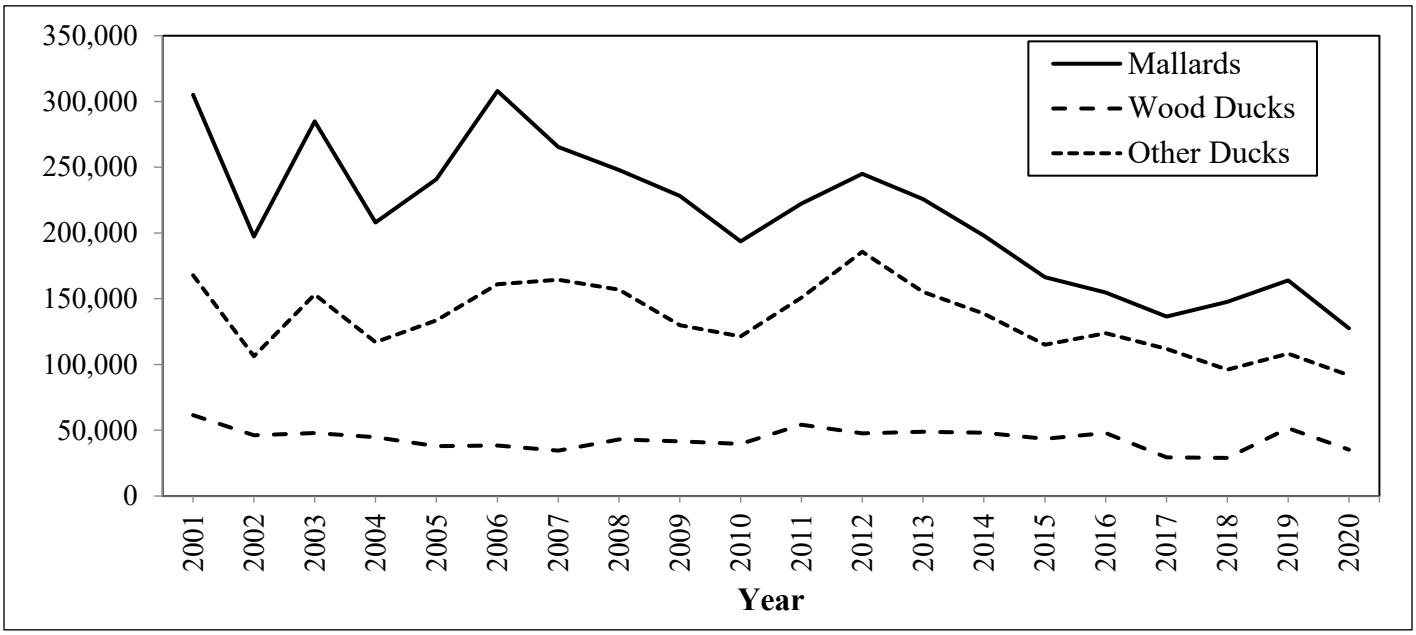

Figure 14. Illinois regular duck season harvest, 2001 – 2020.

The 2020-21 duck harvest is presented by waterfowl zones in Table 8. Across the four waterfowl zones, the greatest number of hunters, days afield, and ducks harvested occurred in the Central zone. The South Central zone had the highest daily success rate (harvest/hunter/day) at 0.69 ducks per day and the highest season success rate (harvest/hunter/season) at 8.77 ducks per season. Duck hunter daily success statewide decreased to 0.55 ducks/day and hunter season success decreased from 10.17 ducks/hunter/season for the 2019-20 season to 7.40 during 2020-21 (Table 9). Of duck hunters who reported hunting ≥ 1 day (n = 1,075), 36.8% hunted 5 days or less (Figure 15 and Table 10); 14.8% of duck hunters reported not harvesting any ducks, whereas 14.9% harvested more than 30 ducks.

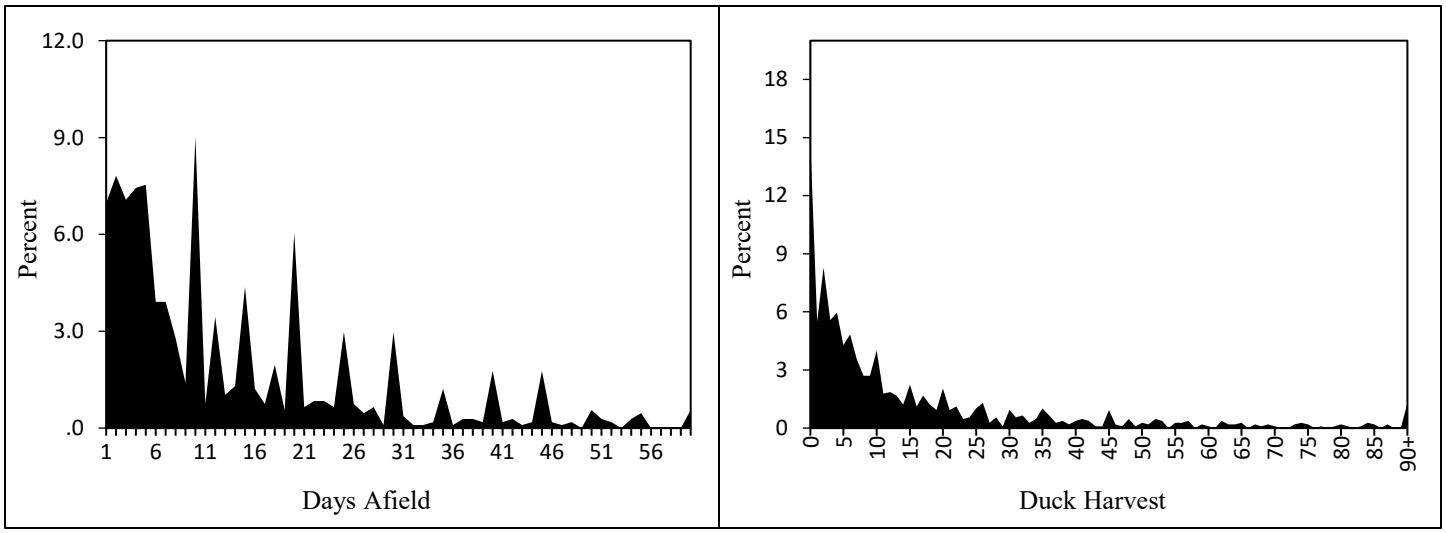

Figure 15. Distribution of days afield per hunter and ducks harvested per hunter for Illinois' during the 2020-21 regular duck season.

Early September Goose Season

An estimated 9,064 hunters participated in the early (September) Canada goose season in Illinois during the 2020 season, an increase of 4.7% from the 8,658 who participated during 2019 (Figure 16 and Table 11). Statewide, early goose season hunters spent 34,272 days afield in 2020, 2.6% more than 2019 (33,410), and harvested approximately 16,811 Canada geese, an increase from the 2019 (15,429) harvest by 9.0%. The Central zone accounted for the most hunters (44.1%), though the North zone accounted for the most days afield (43.9%) and harvested Canada geese (50.1%; Figure 17, Table 11).

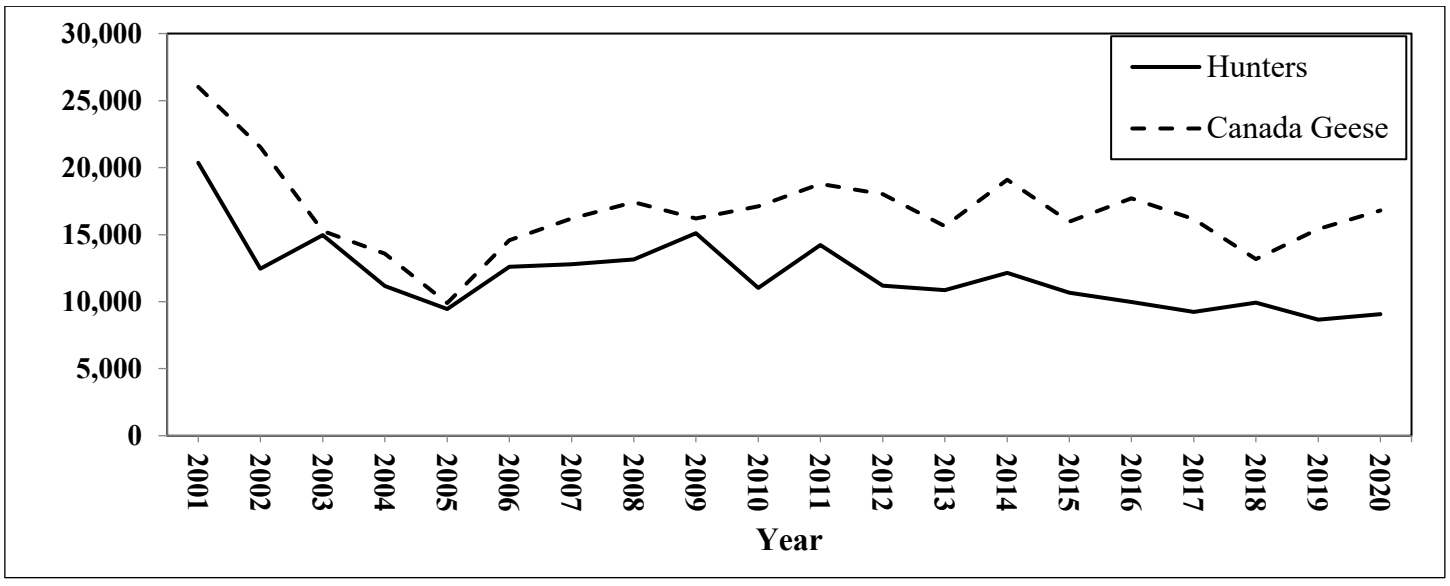

Figure 16. Early September Canada goose harvest and hunter activity, 2001-2020.

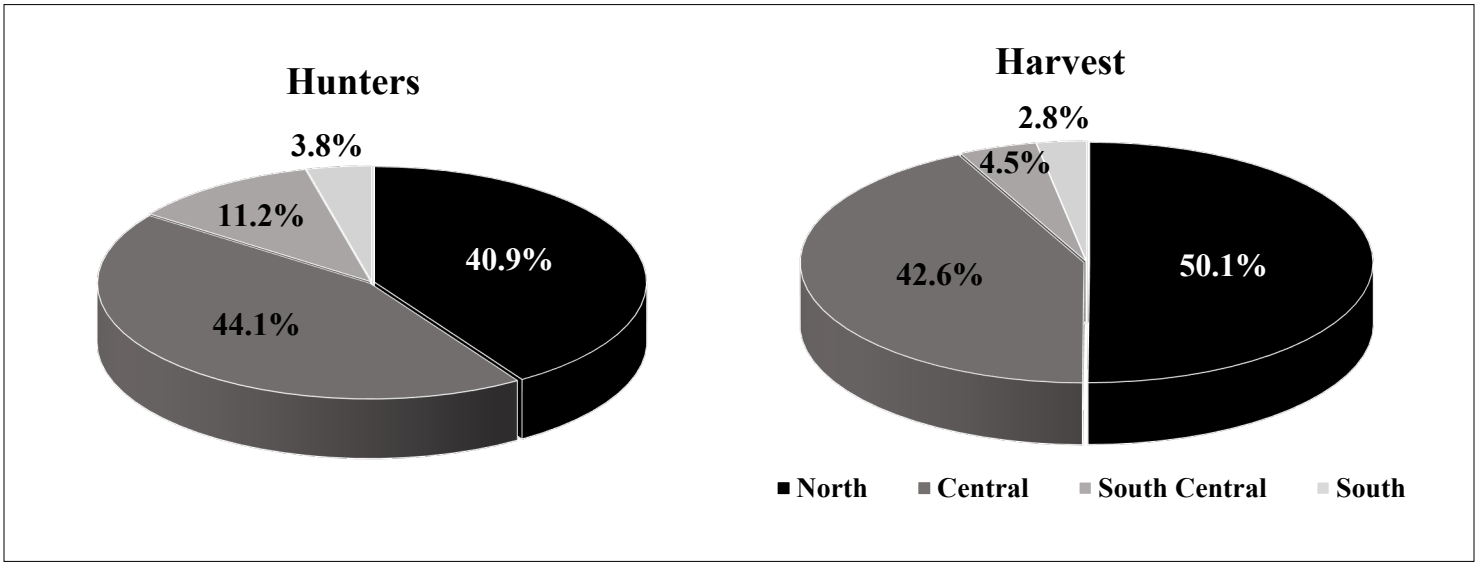

Figure 17. Early September Canada goose harvest and hunter activity by zone in Illinois during 2020.

Regular Goose Season

Canada goose harvest during the 2020-21 regular goose season increased 10.9% from 2019-20 (Table 12, Figure 18). An estimated 26,008 hunters spent 312,834 days afield and harvested 94,510 Canada geese during 2020-21. Number of goose hunters in Illinois increased 12.0% during 2020-21 compared to 2019-20, and number of days afield increased 6.9%. Hunters also harvested 10,625 other geese, of which 5,833 were light geese (snow, blue or Ross' geese) (*Anser caerulescens* and *Anser rossii*) and 4,792 were White-fronted (speckle-bellied) geese (*Anser albifrons*), for a total combined harvest of 105,135 geese (Table 12, Figure 19).

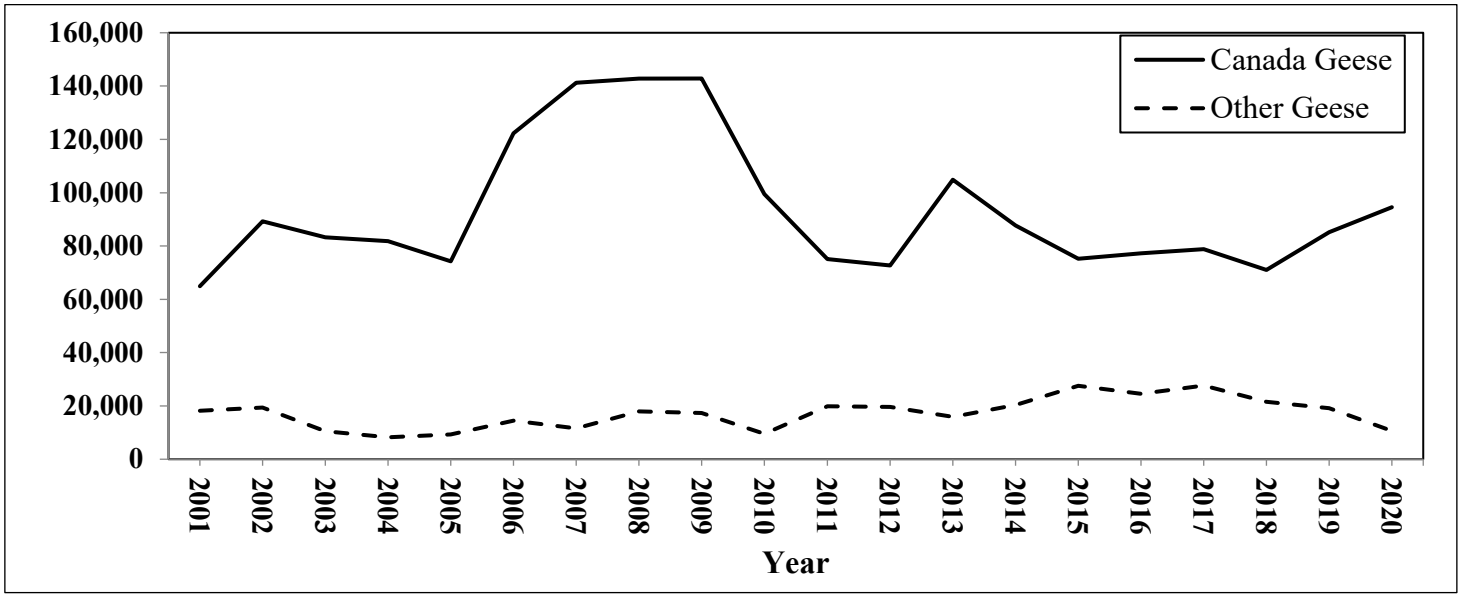

Figure 18. Goose harvest during Illinois' regular goose season from 2001-2020.

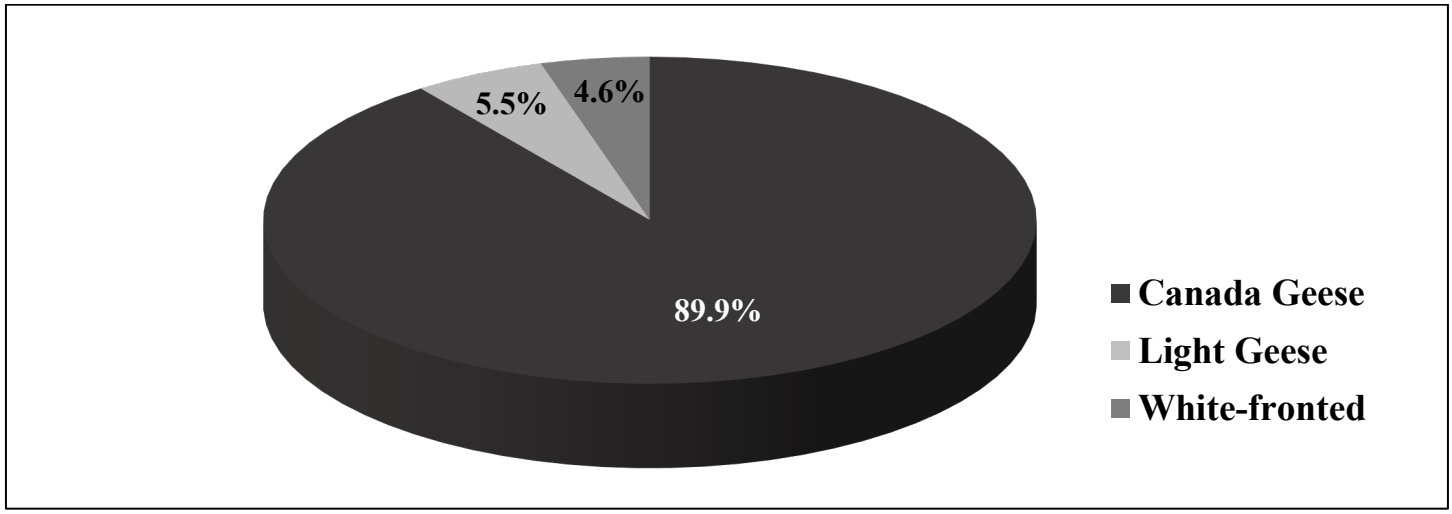

Figure 19. 2020-21 Illinois' regular goose season harvest.

Goose hunters reported a mean of 12.03 days afield and mean harvest of 4.04 geese per season and 0.34 geese per hunter per day; 67.0% of goose hunters harvested ≥ 5 geese (Figure 20 and Tables 13 and 14). The Central Zone led the state in the number of goose hunters (47.9%) and days afield (47.0%; Table 14). The North zone harvested the most Canada geese (52.5%) with the Central zone harvesting the most White-fronted (52.7%) and light geese(60.1%) (Table 14). Harvest of Canada geese is summarized by zone and year (2018-19 through 2020-21) in Table 15.

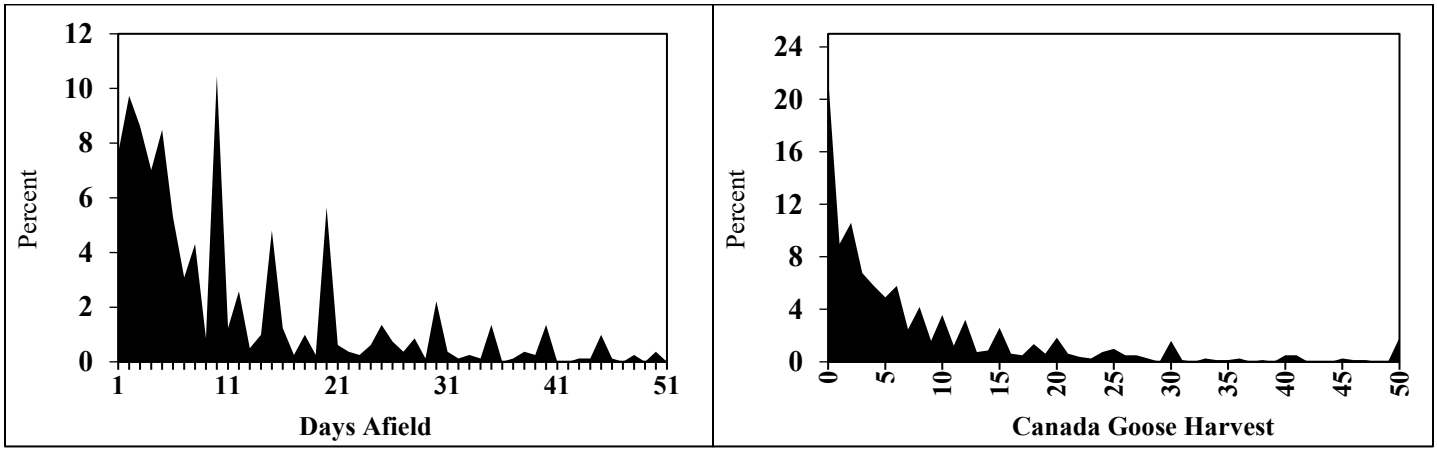

Figure 20. Distribution of days afield per hunter and geese harvested per hunter for Illinois' 2020-21 regular goose season.

Crippling Losses

Crippling losses (birds downed but not retrieved) during the 2020-21 regular season were estimated at 33,984 ducks and 7,495 geese (Table 16). These estimates, considered to be indices because they contain information about the relative number and are not actual number or abundance estimates, equate to 13.3 ducks and 7.1 geese lost per 100 harvested.

White-fronted/Specklebelly Goose Harvest

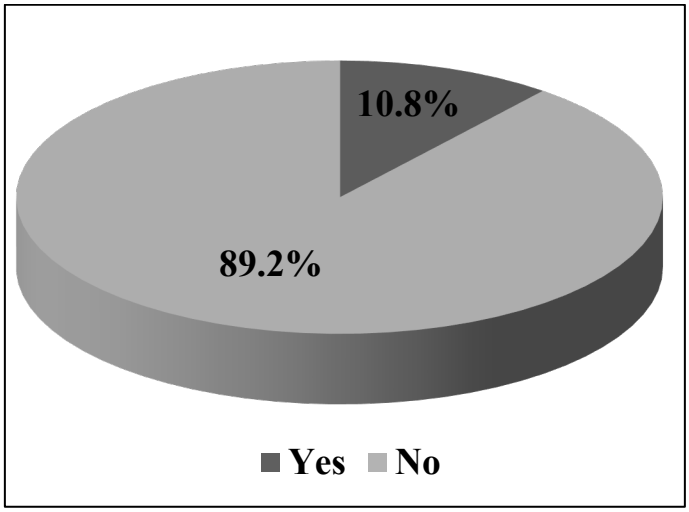

Figure 21. Proportion of hunters* who reported harvest of White-fronted (specklebelly) geese during the 2020-21 waterfowl hunting seasons (n = 812).
*Cases selected for those who indicated they hunted for at least one day during the 2020-21 goose seasons.

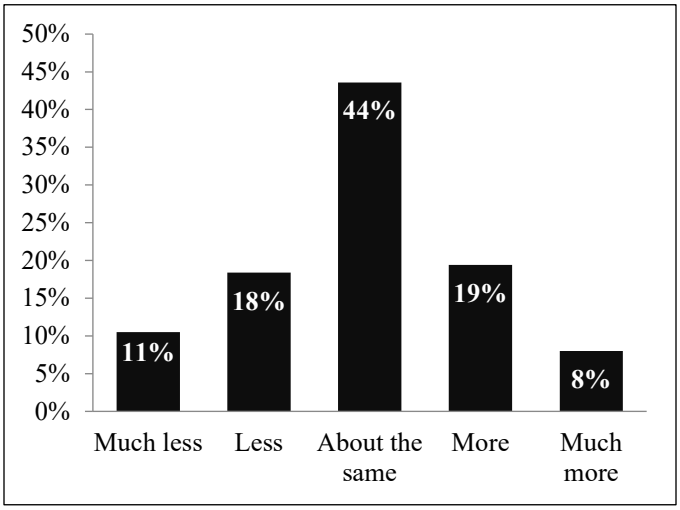

Figure 22. Comparison between the number of White-fronted geese hunters* seen in 2020-21 compared to the last 5 years (n = 721).
*Cases selected for those who hunted for at least one day during the 2020-21 regular goose season.

Eleven percent of those who hunted one day or more for geese during 2020-21 harvested White-fronted (specklebelly) geese (Figure 21). Twenty-seven percent of regular goose hunters saw more or much more White-fronted geese as compared to five years ago (Figure 22). Fifty-five percent of regular goose hunters did not target or shoot at them and 20.9% did not target them but shot if they had the opportunity. Twelve percent of goose hunters (12.4%) used specklebelly calls and 15.3% used specklebelly decoys (Figure 23). Goose hunters main reason for not targeting White-fronted geese during the regular goose season were: (1) lack of White-fronted geese in area(s) hunted (58.8%), (2) lack White-fronted goose hunting equipment (e.g., decoys) (14.9%), (3) lack of success calling/decoy White-fronted geese (11.0%), (4) lack interest in hunting White-fronted geese (10.1%), and (5) don't know how to call for White-fronted geese (5.2%).

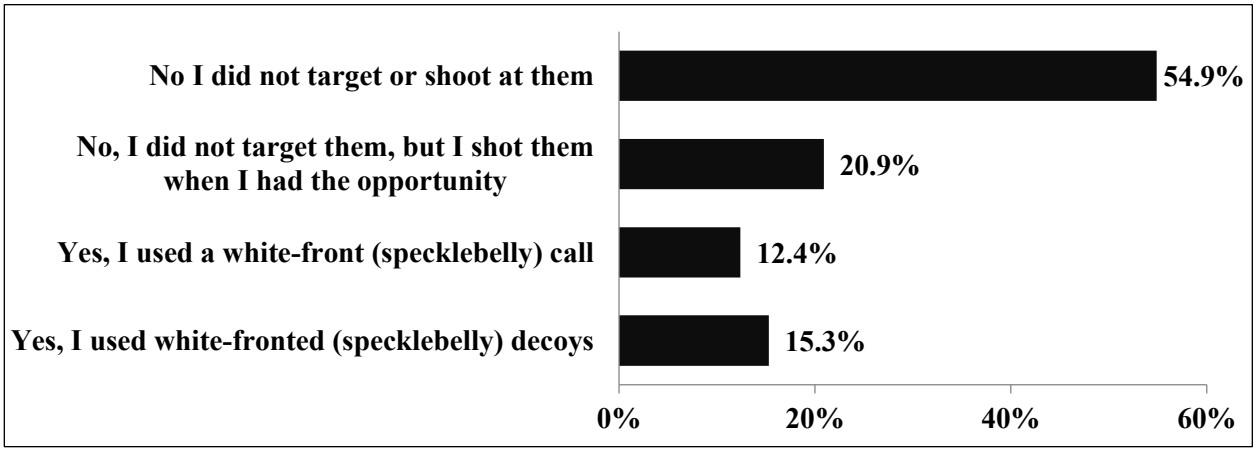

Figure 23. Proportion of hunters* who targeted White-fronted (specklebelly) geese during the regular goose Season (n = 812).
*Cases selected for those who hunted for at least one day during regular goose season.

Public and Private Land Use

Over forty percent (42.6%) of hunters hunted on Illinois public lands during 2020-21 (Figure 24). Among those who used public lands, sites in the Central zone were most popular (Figure 25). Over half (51.0%) of hunters who used public lands had ≥1 hunt in a blind awarded through a lottery (Figure 26).

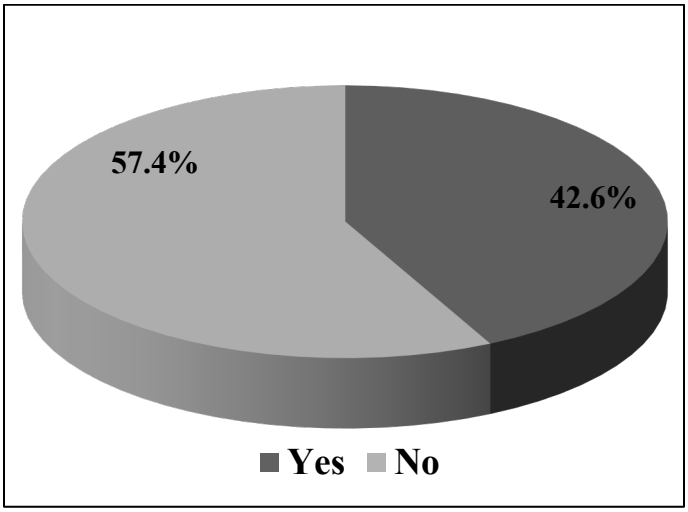

Figure 24. Percentage of hunters* who hunted on Illinois state public lands during 2020-21 (n = 1,229)
*Cases selected for those who indicated they hunted for at least 1 day during 2020-21.

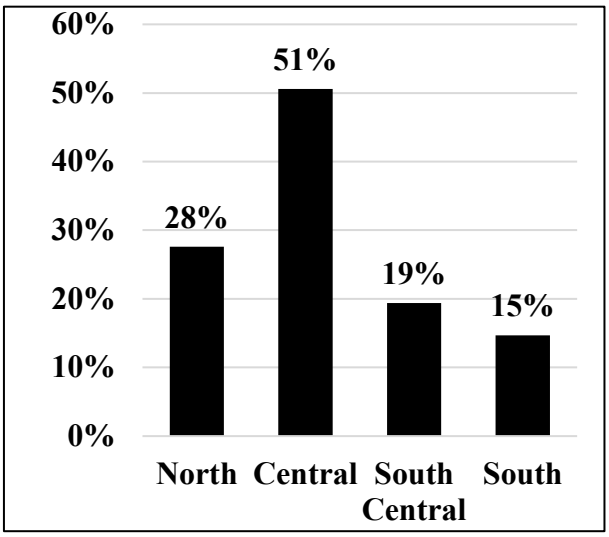

Figure 25. Zone in which public land hunted was located (n = 536).

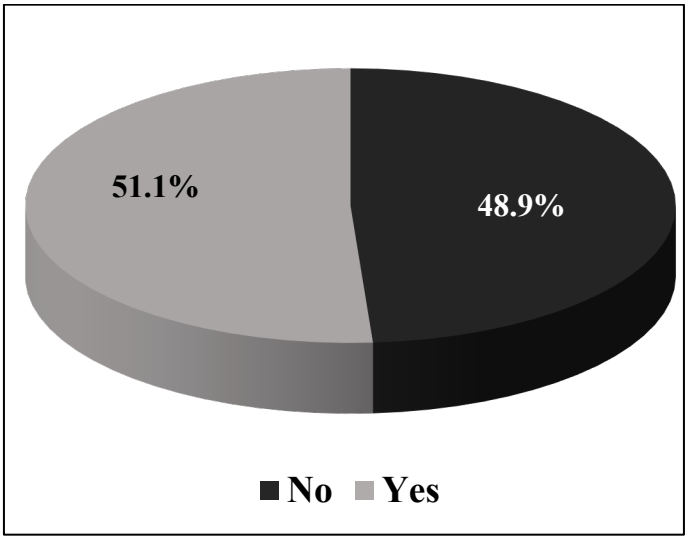

Figure 26. Percentage of waterfowl hunters whose public land use was in a blind awarded by lottery (n = 476).

Satisfaction with Season Timing and Zone Configuration

As a condition of implementing a four-zone structure, Illinois was required to collect information on hunter satisfaction in areas of the state impacted by waterfowl zone changes. The former South zone was divided into two zones with a goal of providing preferred season dates to most hunters in the South Central and South zones. South Central zone duck hunters harvested the highest average number of ducks per hunter per season ($\overline{X}$ = 8.77), an average of 1.73 more than Central zone hunters and 1.82 ducks per hunter per season more than hunters in the South zone, and 3.55 ducks per hunter per season more than hunters in the North zone. North zone duck hunters had the highest level of satisfaction for all aspects of the most recent duck season(s) in Illinois (Table 17). Central zone hunters were the least satisfied zone with "number of ducks migrating through areas you hunted," "number of ducks you harvested," "season start date allowed the season to match migration," and "weather during duck season." South Central zone hunters were the least satisfied with "number of ducks you saw," "mid-season matched peak of duck migration," and "amount of shooting you got in."

The most important factors contributing to respondents' waterfowl hunting experience in Illinois were: (1) seeing ducks in the field, (2) bagging ≥1 duck during a day in the field, (3) bagging mallards, and (4) bagging drakes (Table 18). The least important factors were: (1) bagging diving ducks, (2) bagging my daily

limit, and (3) bagging a lot of ducks over the season. Satisfaction was low for each aspect of respondents' most recent waterfowl hunting season in Illinois, though respondents were most satisfied with: (1) bagging drakes, (2) bagging ≥1 duck during a day in the field, (3) bagging mallards, and (4) seeing ducks in the field (Table 19). Respondents were least satisfied with: (1) bagging their daily limit, (2) bagging a lot of ducks over the season, (3) bagging diving ducks, and (4) bagging a variety of different duck species.

When asked about season timing, around half of duck hunters in the Central (52.4%), South Central (50.8%), and South zones (50.0%) and 40.9% in the North zone reported that the 2020-21 regular duck season was timed "too early" (Figure 27 and Table 20). A majority of teal hunters and September goose hunters in each zone reported those seasons were timed "about right." At least 50% of goose hunters in the North, Central, and South Central zones reported timing for the 2020-21 regular goose season was "about right." The most important considerations to respondents when deciding on their preferred 2021-22 duck season dates for the zone that they intend to hunt most often during the 2021-22 duck season were: (1) peak of duck migration (35.3%), (2) timing of mallard migration (28.5%), and (3) maximize number of January hunting days (8.2%).

Respondents' most preferred zone options for the duck season in Illinois for 2026 through 2030 were: (1) no preference (36.7%), (2) three ducks zones with 2 season segments (2-way split) in one, two, or all zones (22.0%), and (3) two zones with one or two splits and up to 3 season segments in each zone (9.6%; Figure 28). Respondents in the South Central zone most preferred having three duck zones with 2 season segments (2-way split) in one, two, or all zones (42.0%), though respondents in the North, Central, and South zones most frequently had no preference (42.1%, 30.3%, and 27.4%, respectively) and their second preferred zone option was three duck zones with 2 season segments (17.8%, 25.8%, and 28.4%, respectively; Table 21). If a single split season were used for the duck season in Illinois for 2026 through 2030, then respondents' preferred splits were: (1) open and close later using a split to extend season (Option F; 29.9%), (2) open earlier and close later using a large split to extend season (Option A; 21.9%), and (3) open at the current time but close later using a split to give ducks a rest and provide a "second opening day" (Option B; 20.9%) (Figure 29). If a single split season were used, then respondents in the Central, South Central, and South zones most frequently preferred to open and close later using a split to extend the season (32.5%, 36.0%, and 42.9%, respectively), though

respondents in the North zone preferred opening earlier and closing later using a large split to extend the season (24.1%) and their second preferred option was to open and close later using a split to extend the season (23.1%; Table 22). If a three duck zones configuration were used for 2026 through 2030, then respondents would prefer to combine the South Central and South zones, and no changes to North and Central zones (33.0%; Figure 30). Respondents in the Central, South Central, and South zones most frequently preferred to combine the South Central and South zones, and no changes to North and Central zones (31.2%, 57.4%, and 59.6%, respectively), though respondents in the North zone would prefer to combine the North and Central zones, and no changes to South Central and South zones (38.6%; Table 23).

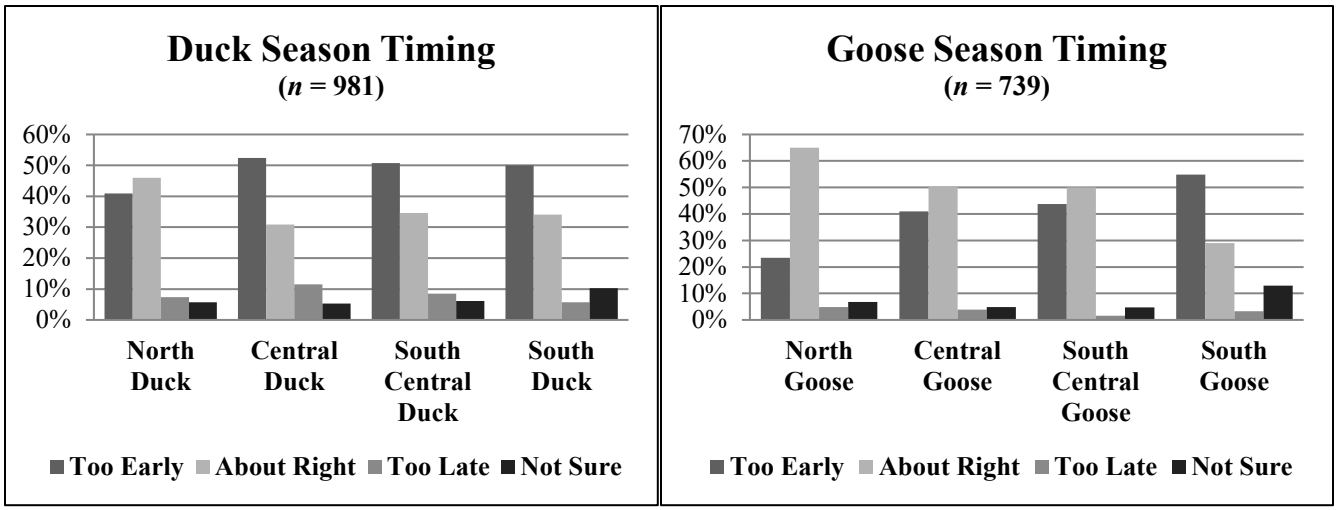

Figure 27. Duck and goose hunter* opinions about the timing of the 2020-21 waterfowl seasons.
*Cases selected for those who hunted for at least one day in the corresponding season and zone.

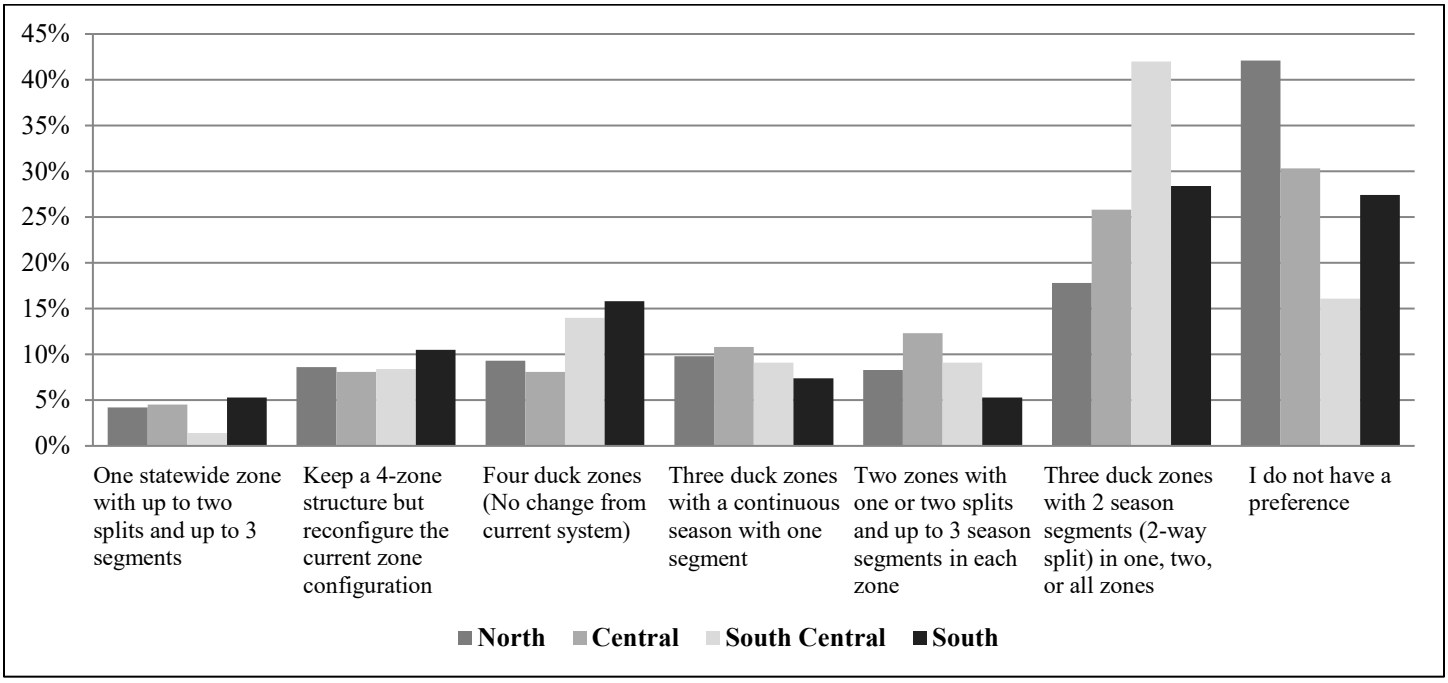

Figure 28. Respondents' preferred zoning option for Illinois for the period of 2026 through 2030 (n = 1,550).

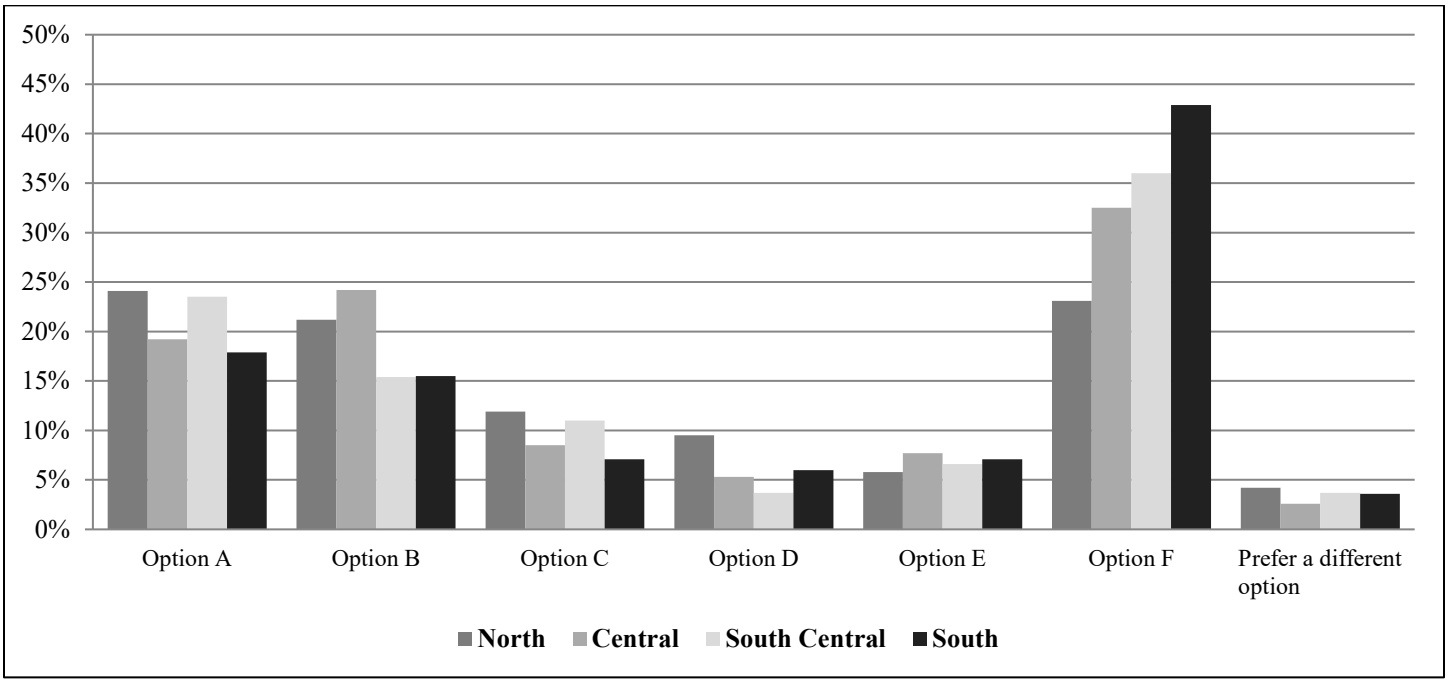

Figure 29. Preferred splits* for the duck hunting season in Illinois for zone hunted most often by respondent (n = 1,442).

*Option A – Open earlier and close later using a large split to extend season. Option B – Open at the current time but close later using a split to give ducks a rest and provide a "second opening day." Option C – Open earlier and close at the current time using a small split to give ducks a rest and provide a "second opening day." Option D – Use a split to create a short segment well before the current opening day to target early migrants. Option E – Use a split to create short segment well after the current closing date to target late migrants. Option F – Open and close later using a split to extend season.

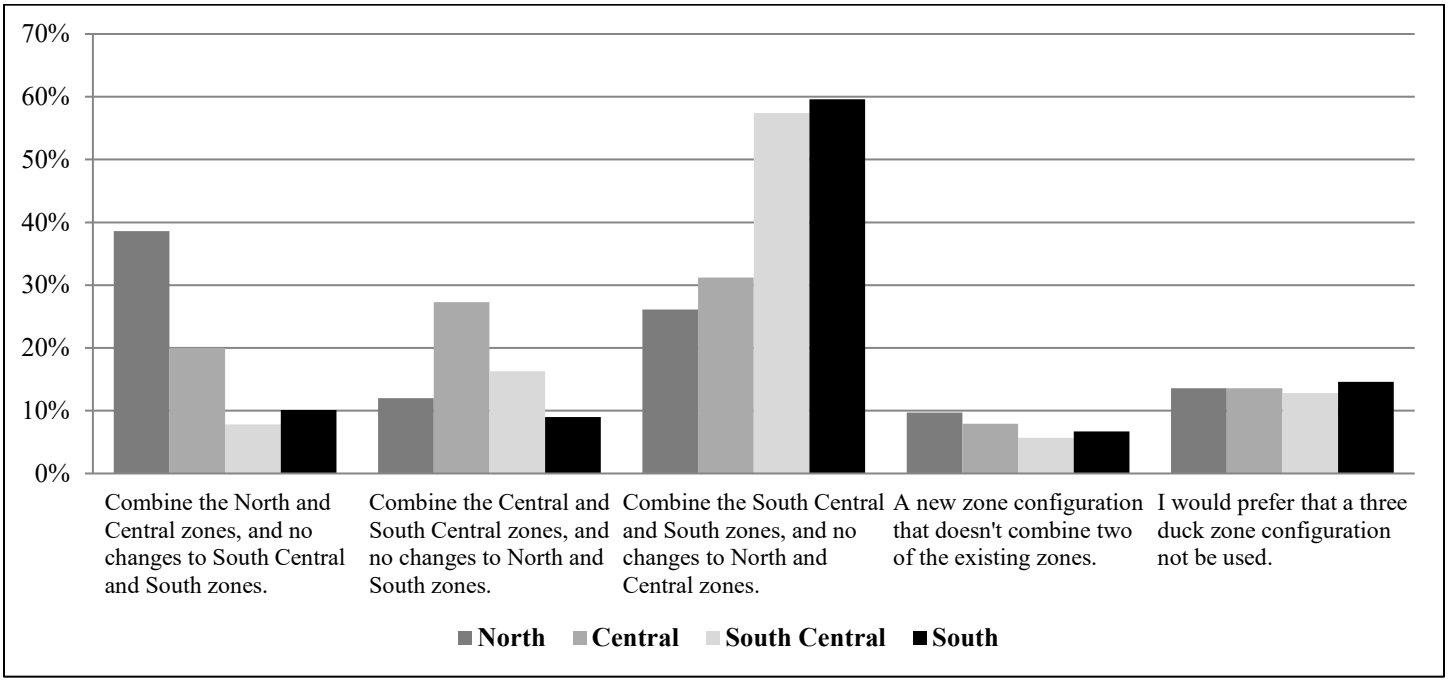

Figure 30. Respondents' preference for zones to combine if a three duck zone configuration was used in Illinois for the period of 2026 through 2030 (n = 1,479).

Hunter Characteristics

Respondents who hunted waterfowl during the 2020-21 waterfowl season have hunted waterfowl in Illinois for a mean of 24.4 years. These hunters averaged 49.2 years of age and started at the age of 20.9. The counties with most respondents were Cook (5.5%), Will (4.5%), McHenry (4.3%), Madison (3.9%), and Lake (3.3%). Females comprised 2.8% of survey respondents and 2.4% of those who hunted during the 2020-21 waterfowl hunting seasons (Figure 31). Most respondents (98.4%) hunted waterfowl in Illinois before this season (Figure 32). Over half (53.4%) of respondents reported they hunt waterfowl every year in Illinois, whereas 4.7% reported they never hunted waterfowl in Illinois (Figure 33). Forty-five percent of respondents intend to hunt ducks in the Central zone most often during the 2021-22 duck hunting season in Illinois, followed by the North (33.2%), South Central (13.5%), and South zones (8.0%). Nearly half of respondents (46.5%) hunted fewer days during the 2020-21 waterfowl seasons compared to the 5 years prior to the 2020-21 seasons. (Figure 34). The main reasons for hunting fewer days were: (1) lack of waterfowl in areas(s) hunted (60.7%), (2) lack of access to hunting land (22.5%), (3) change in work schedule/location (17.8%), and (4) restrictions due to COVID-19 (17.5%). The main reasons for hunting more days were: (1) more hunting partners available

(37.8%), (2) more time to hunt due to COVID-19 (32.7%), (3) change in work schedule/location (31.3%), and (4) increased access to hunting land (30.4%).

Over half of respondents (51.2%) would support a county-wide or zone-wide daily end of shooting hours earlier than sunset if it would allow more ducks to be available for harvest with the most support among respondents in the north zone (56.2%; Figure 35). Most respondents (65.6%) would use a free mobile-phone application provided by the IDNR to store an electronic copy of permits and licenses instead of being required to have a paper copy. Over forty percent of respondents (43.8%) believed that waterfowl hunting is one of the most important recreational activities to them, 23.3% believed waterfowl hunting is no more important than their other recreational activities, 14.3% believed waterfowl hunting was their most important recreational activity, 12.2% believe waterfowl hunting is less important than their other recreational activities, and 6.3% believe waterfowl hunting is one of their least important recreational activities. Respondents indicated if they only had one day to hunt, then they would hunt: (1) ducks (38.5%), (2) deer (30.9%), (3) geese (10.6%), and pheasants (6.3%).

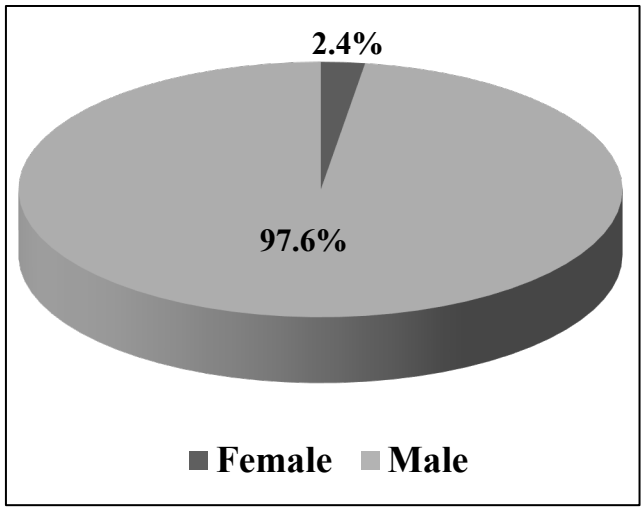

Figure 31. Gender distribution of respondents who hunted* waterfowl during one of the 2020-21 waterfowl seasons (n = 1,234).
*Cases selected for those who indicated they hunted for at least one day or more during the 2020-21 waterfowl seasons.

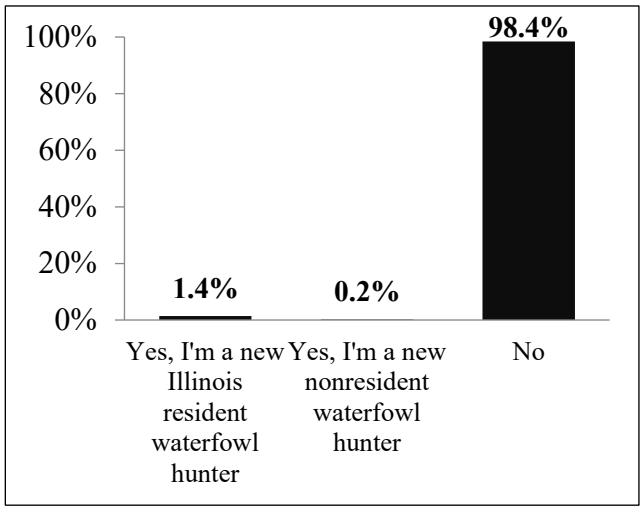

Figure 32. Number of hunters* whose first time hunting waterfowl in Illinois was during one of the 2020-21 waterfowl seasons (n = 1,287).
*Cases selected for those who indicated they hunted at least one day during the 2020-21 waterfowl seasons.

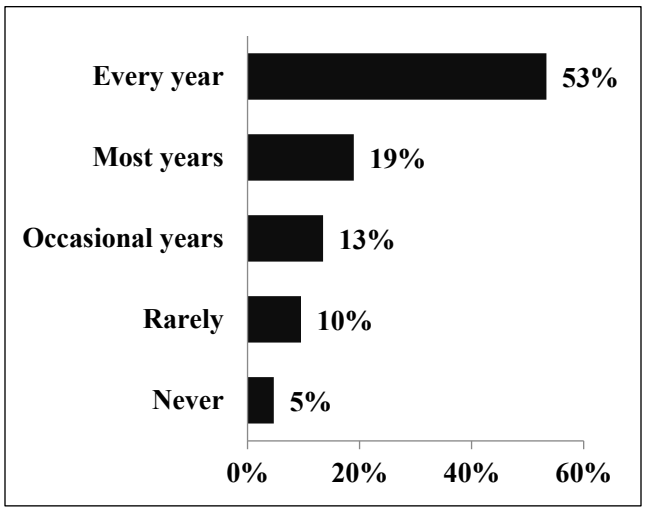

Figure 33. How often respondents hunt waterfowl in Illinois (*n* = 1,805).

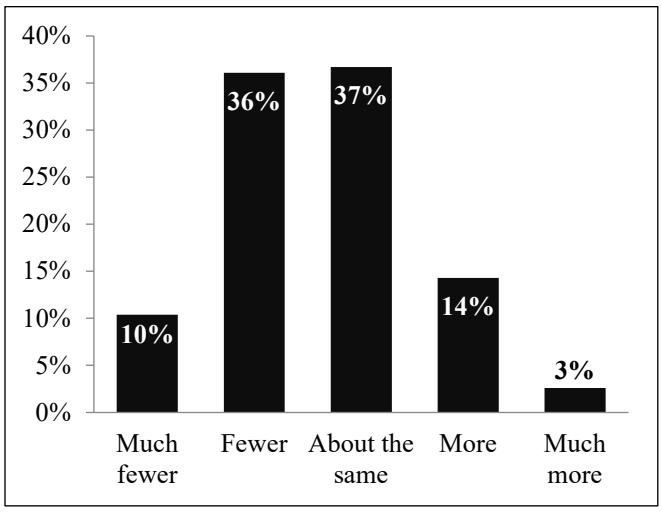

Figure 34. Comparison between the number of days hunted during the 2020-21 waterfowl season compared to the last 5 years (*n* = 1,290).

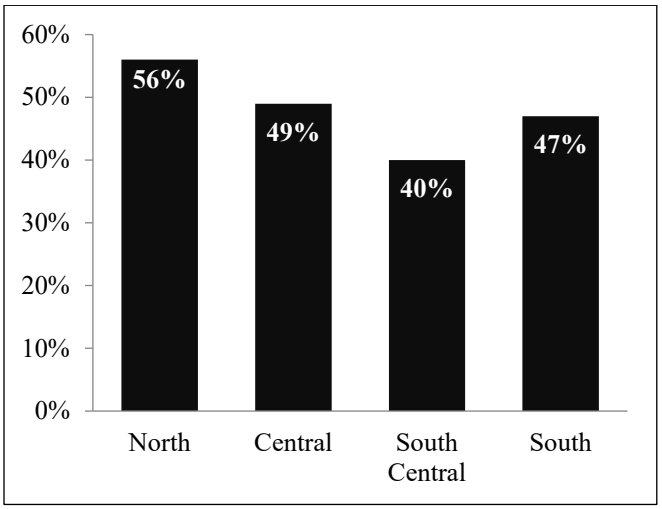

Figure 35. Support by zone for a county-wide or zone-wide daily end of shooting hours earlier than sunset if it would allow more ducks to be available for harvest (*n* = 1,711).

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Table 1. Summary of Illinois Migratory Waterfowl Stamps purchased, hunter activity, and waterfowl harvest in Illinois from 2008 through 2020 hunting seasons.

Season[a] (Year)	Stamps Purchased	Estimated Hunters	Estimated Days Hunted	Estimated Harvest[b]
2008	69,590	59,379	1,175,243	660,306
2009	68,549	59,987	1,222,980	613,335
2010	64,828	50,936	985,075	513,882
2011	66,581	52,660	1,147,037	577,654
2012	64,896	50,740	1,155,346	580,557
2013	66,394	49,170	1,052,728	605,720
2014	70,391	50,698	982,193	550,946
2015	58,247	40,104	795,289	488,321
2016	54,920	41,242	870,721	490,463
2017	52,069	37,215	732,166	421,384
2018	55,303	40,047	831,043	412,402
2019	55,255	35,185	841,828	471,872
2020	52,849	39,525	837,609	406,259

[a] Full listing for harvest 1981-Present can be found in Appendix F.
[b]Teal, ducks, coots, and geese combined, and including September teal and Canada goose seasons and youth hunt.

Table 2. Percentage of waterfowl hunters who hunted exclusively ducks, exclusively geese, or both ducks and geese in Illinois from 2008 through 2020 seasons.

Season[a] (Year)	Hunted Ducks Only	Hunted Geese Only	Hunted Both Ducks and Geese	Duck Hunters	Goose Hunters
2008	25.9%	10.6%	63.5%	89.4%[b]	74.1%[b]
2009	27.5%	8.4%	64.1%	91.6%[b]	72.5%[b]
2010	25.0%	13.1%	61.9%	86.9%[b]	75.0%[b]
2011	20.7%	18.3%	61.0%	81.7%	79.3%
2012	29.4%	9.8%	60.8%	90.2%	70.6%
2013	30.2%	9.8%	60.0%	90.2%	69.8%
2014	30.8%	10.9%	58.3%	89.1%	69.2%
2015	28.3%	8.6%	63.0%	91.3%	71.6%
2016	29.3%	8.2%	62.5%	91.8%	70.7%
2017	29.8%	12.3%	57.8%	87.6%	70.1%
2018	31.9%	9.2%	58.9%	90.8%	68.1%
2019	32.8%	7.9%	59.3%	92.1%	67.2%
2020	32.6%	10.7%	56.7%	87.1%	65.8%

[a]1981-2020 information can be located in Appendix F.
[b]2008-2010 numbers changed to reflect responses in the sample.

Table 3. Summary of Teal harvest and hunter activity during September Teal Season (Illinois, 2008-20).

Season [a] (Year)	Estimated Hunters	Estimated Days Hunted	Estimated Teal Harvest
2008	14,652	52,365	19,981
2009	15,436	55,139	19,222 ± 7,372
2010	13,038	49,038	20,127 ± 9,332
2011	11,221	42,811	21,227 ± 7,993
2012	10,944	46,719	31,942 ± 11,740
2013	10,378	37,431	21,967 ± 7,169
2014	11,282	42,635	29,058 ± 10,909
2015	9,615	37,574	28,031± 9.911
2016	8,969	38,610	25,346 ± 9,296
2017	7,526	28,306	15,062 ± 5,480
2018	9,263	35,334	23,326 ± 8,817
2019	7,955	32,706	19,268 ± 8,795
2020	7,975	27,962	18,967 ± 8,767

[a]1981-2020 information can be located in Appendix F.

Table 4. Teal harvest and hunter activity by zones during September Teal Season (Illinois, 2020).

	n	Estimated Hunters[a]	Estimated Days Hunted	Estimated Teal Harvested
North Zone	63	2,018	5,733	3,659
Central Zone	133	4,260	15,470	10,575
South Central Zone	46	1,473	5,541	3,739
South Zone	12	384	1,217	995
Unknown	0	0	0	0

[a]The number of individual teal hunters in the state is less than the sum of duck hunters from the categories above because some hunted in more than one zone.

Table 5. Rates of teal harvest and hunter activity during September teal season (Illinois, 2008-2020).

Season[a] (Year)	Season Length/ Bag Limit	Days Hunted Per Hunter	Teal Harvest per Hunter	
			Per Day	Per Season
2008	16/4	3.57	0.38	1.36
2009	16/4	3.57	0.35	1.25
2010	16/4	3.76	0.41	1.54
2011	16/4	3.82	0.50	1.90
2012	16/4	4.27	0.68	2.92
2013	16/6	3.61	0.59	2.12
2014	16/6	3.78	0.68	2.58
2015	16/6	3.91	0.75	2.92
2016	16/6	4.31	0.66	2.83
2017	16/6	3.76	0.53	2.00
2018	16/6	3.81	0.66	2.52
2019	16/6	4.11	0.59	2.42
2020	16/6	3.51	0.68	2.38

[a]1981-2020 information can be located in Appendix F.

Table 6. Waterfowl harvest and hunter activity during Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days, 2008-2020.

Season[a] (Year)	Adult Participation	Youth Participation	Days Hunting	Mean Youths/ Hunting Party	Total Ducks	Ducks/ Youth/Day	Total Coots	Coots/ Youth/ Day	Total Geese	Geese/ Youth/ Day
2008	6,402	9,878	14,799	1.50	10,380	0.70	241	0.02	1,466	0.10
2009	7,073	9,772	15,922	1.63	11,229	0.71	599	0.04	2,396	0.15
2010	5,471	7,452	11,828	1.59	9,156	0.77	419	0.04	1,420	0.12
2011	6,325	8,642	14,059	1.63	9,569	0.68	1,333	0.09	1,318	0.09
2012	7,825	10,001	52,448[b]	1.27	8,147[c]	0.41	503[c]	0.03	1,064[c]	0.05
2013	8,438	8,639	19,136	1.02	12,715	1.33	359	0.04	2,065	0.23
2014	6,405	8,572	13,798	1.33	9,004	1.30	192	0.03	929	0.14
2015	4,718	6,291	9,873	1.33	8,171	1.65	117	0.02	571	0.12
2016	4,398	5,921	8,553	1.34	6,731	1.57	139	0.03	927	0.23
2017	4,780	6,459	9,956	1.35	8,283	1.66	89	0.02	1464	0.32
2018	4,822	5,775	8,663	1.20	7,452	1.72	205	0.05	729	0.18
2019	4,039	4,528	10,158	1.31	5,748	1.13	107	0.02	790	0.16
2020	5,029	6,950	14,926	1.38	7,799	1.04	48	0.01	1,118	0.16

[a]1996 - 2020 information can be located in Appendix F.

[b]Results include youth hunts during the regular season and the 2-day Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days.

[c]Results are a 2-day estimate based on the mean number harvested by youth from the entire season

Table 7. Summary of duck and coot harvest and hunter activity during the regular duck season (Illinois 2008-2020).

Season (Year)[a]	Hunters	Days Afield	Number of Ducks					
			Mallards	Wood Ducks	Canvasback	Other Ducks	Total	Coots
2008	50,683	600,574	247,895	43,051	---[b]	156,849	447,795	2,266
2009	49,648	626,832	228,211	41,549	---[b]	129,795	399,555 ± 69,698	3,904 ± 3,342
2010	43,450	499,758	193,758	39,611	---[b]	121,375	354,859 ± 60,571	1,770 ± 2,435
2011	46,619	632,712	222,405	54,294	---[b]	150,786	427,484 ± 66,551	4,327 ± 2,663
2012	43,444	630,233	244,988	47,623	---[b]	185,776	478,387 ± 50,294	4,133 ± 3,536
2013	43,653	563,961	225,873	49,001	---[b]	155,306	430,179 ± 29,431	2,143 ± 4,031
2014	44,019	525,114	197,997	48,216	4,820	133,795	384,828 ± 39,741	4,681 ± 3,311
2015	36,499	496,656	166,506	43,655	4,437	115,182	329,780 ± 34,835	3,185 ± 1,960
2016	34,386	459,029	154,698	47,986	6,794	123,928	333,406 ± 37,408	4,424 ± 1,338
2017	30,025	394,034	136,381	29,372	3,642	108,295	277,689 ± 24,826	1,544 ± 921
2018	33,836	464,327	147,733	29,003	5,200	90,887	272,823 ± 28,512	2,088 ± 1,764
2019	31,850	482,946	164,043	51,564	4,798	103,542	323,946 ± 34,906	2,238 ± 1,799
2020	34,432	462,541	127,525	35,335	3,739	88,081	254,680 ± 26,546	1,701 ± 1,224

[a]1981-2020 information can be located in Appendix F.
[b]Hunters were not asked to distinguish canvasback from other ducks and are included in other ducks for this year.

Table 8. Duck harvest and hunter activity by waterfowl zones and selected areas during the regular duck season (Illinois 2020-21).

Zone	*n*	Hunters[a]	Estimated Days Hunted	Estimated Ducks Harvested	Days Hunted/ Hunter	Ducks/ Hunter/ Day	Ducks/ Hunter/ Season
North	387	12,395	138,721	64,765	11.19	0.47	5.22
Central	509	16,303	210,115	114,783	12.89	0.55	7.04
South Central	166	5,317	68,031	46,632	12.80	0.69	8.77
South	128	4,100	45,674	28,499	11.14	0.62	6.95
Unknown	0	0	0	0	-	-	-
Statewide	1,075	34,432	462,541	254,680	13.43	0.55	7.40

[a]The number of individual duck hunters in the state is less than the sum of duck hunters from the categories above because some hunted in more than one zone.

Table 9. Rates of duck harvest and hunter activity during the regular duck season (Illinois 2008-2020).

Season[a] (Year)	Season Length/ Bag Limit	Days Afield/ Hunter	Duck Harvest/Hunter[b]	
			Per Day	Per Season
2008	60/6(4,2)	11.85	0.75	8.84
2009	60/6(4,2)	12.63	0.64	8.05
2010	60/6(4,2)	11.50	0.71	8.17
2011	60/6(4,2)	13.57	0.68	9.17
2012	60/6(4,2)	14.51	0.76	11.01
2013	60/6(4,2)	12.92	0.76	9.85
2014	60/6(4,2)	11.93	0.73	8.74
2015	60/6(4,2)	13.61	0.66	9.01
2016	60/6(4,2)	13.35	0.73	9.70
2017	60/6(4,2)	13.12	0.70	9.25
2018	60/6(4,2)	13.72	0.59	8.06
2019	60/6(4,2)	15.16	0.67	10.17
2020	60/6(4,2)	13.43	0.55	7.40

[a]1981-2020 information can be located in Appendix F.
[b]Excludes ducks harvested coincidentally while goose hunting.

Table 10. Distribution of the number of days afield and number of ducks harvested in 2020-21.

	Days Hunting Ducks (%)	Number of Ducks Harvested (%)
0	---	14.8%
1-5	36.8%	29.6%
6-10	21.0%	17.8%
11-15	10.9%	8.7%
16-20	10.5%	7.0%
21-25	6.0%	4.1%
26-30	4.9%	3.2%
>30	9.9%	14.9%

*Number of ducks harvested was calculated by taking responses and applying the correction factor (Anderson 1985).

Table 11. Canada goose harvest and hunter activity during the early September Canada goose season (Illinois 2008-2020).

			Waterfowl Zone				
	Year[a]	Statewide	North	Central	South Central	South	Unknown
Hunters[b]	2008	13,157	4,934	6,690		1,533	0
	2009	15,102	5,232	8,089		1,781	0
	2010	11,015	3,918	5,813		1,285	0
	2011	14,214	4,625	7,889		1,700	0
	2012	11,192[b]	4,601	5,928	1,161	249	0
	2013	10,865[b]	3,646	6,076	681	462	0
	2014	12,147	4,153	6,679	934	554	0
	2015	10,659	3,226	6,104	1,075	443	0
	2016	9,973	3,324	5,125	1,316	381	0
	2017	9,225	2,746	5,472	849	296	0
	2018	9,916	3,187	5,503	899	599	0
	2019	8,658	3,855	4,161	490	245	0
	2020	9,064	3,747	4,036	1,025	352	0
Days Afield	2008	45,637	17,305	23,174		5,158	0
	2009	51,318	19,591	26,048		5,678	0
	2010	39,019	15,929	19,236		3,854	0
	2011	49,306	16,832	27,441		5,033	0
	2012	39,589	17,079	18,613	3,524	373	0
	2013	40,955	12,323	24,816	2,042	1,774	0
	2014	44,919	16,300	23,844	3,288	1,488	0
	2015	38,744	13,505	21,191	2,404	1,645	0
	2016	41,935	14,925	20,950	4,883	1,177	0
	2017	33,817	9,442	19,714	3,595	1,067	0
	2018	35,361	12,777	18,035	2,779	1,771	0
	2019	33,410	15,634	15,695	1,316	765	0
	2020	34,272	15,054	14,638	3,491	1,089	0
Canada Geese	2008	17,419	7,343	8,951		1,125	0
	2009	16,212	6,101	8,336		1,774	0
	2010	17,115	7,967	7,859		1,289	0
	2011	18,790	6,339	10,874		1,577	0
	2012	18,028	8,557	7,664	1,599	228	0
	2013	15,644	5,165	9,271	523	685	0
	2014	19,089	7,527	9,015	1,770	777	0
	2015	15,693	4,233	8,587	2,147	726	0
	2016	17,711	7,895	7,780	1,539	497	0
	2017	16,155	4,154	10,282	1,199	510	20
	2018	13,165	4,909	6,928	925	404	0
	2019	15,429	7,912	6,932	249	336	0
	2020	16,811	8,421	7,165	750	475	0

[a]1981-2020 information can be located in Appendix F.

[b]Less than the sum of hunters in individual zones because some hunters hunted more than 1 zone.

Table 12. Summary of goose harvest and hunter activity during the regular goose season (Illinois 2008-2020).

Season[a] (Year)	Hunters	Days Afield	Number of Geese		
			Canada Geese	Other Geese	Total
2008	44,404	461,868	142,806 (590)	17,956 (0)	160,762 (590)
2009	44,601	473,769	142,836 (585)	17,382 (355)	160,218 (940) ± 36,569
2010	36,803	385,432	99,422 (534)	9,594 (46)	109,016 (580) ± 22,523
2011	36,996	411,380	75,061 (618)	19,862 (33)	94,923 (651) ± 22,387
2012	34,034	386,356	72,682 (0)	19,597 (0)	92,280 (0) ± 19,570
2013	33,809	391,246	104,887 (0)	15,859 (0)	120,746 (0) ± 12,775
2014	34,226	369,179	87,672 (50)	20,313 (0)	107,985 (50) ± 15,517
2015	31,280	330,482	75,198 (0)	27,576 (0)	102,774 (0) ± 17,608
2016	26,490	312,725	77,216 (0)	24,563 (0)	101,779 (0) ± 18,215
2017	24,039	276,009	78,850 (0)	27,637 (0)	106,486 (0) ± 14,607
2018	25,363	296,021	71,035 (0)	21,578 (0)	92,613 (0) ± 16,720
2019	23,222	292,766	85,188 (0)	19,158 (0)	104,346 (0) ± 23,241
2020	26,008	312,834	94,510 (0)	10,625 (0)	105,135 (0) ± 18,356

Numbers in parentheses represent the number of geese harvested while duck hunting.
[a]1981-2020 information can be located in Appendix F.

Table 13. Distribution of the number of days afield and number of geese harvested.

	Days Hunting Geese (%)	Number of Geese Harvested (%)
0	---	21.7%
1-5	41.5%	37.1%
6-10	24.0%	17.6%
11-15	10.1%	8.6%
16-20	8.4%	4.9%
21-25	3.2%	3.0%
26-30	4.3%	2.8%
>30	8.5%	4.3%

Table 14. Goose harvest and hunter activity by zones, regular season (Illinois 2020-21).

Zone	Hunters	Days Afield	Estimated Goose Harvest: Canada Geese	White-Fronted Geese	Snow/ Blue Geese[b]	Total Geese	Total Days Hunted/ Hunter	Total Geese/ Hunter/ Day	Total Geese/ Hunter/ Season
North	11,595	132,187	49,620	184	61	49,865	11.40	0.38	4.30
Central	12,460	147,112	40,450	2,526	3,506	46,482	11.81	0.32	3.73
South Central	2,210	21,108	2,985	1,439	1,837	6,262	9.55	0.30	2.83
South	1,345	12,428	1,454	643	429	2,526	9.24	0.20	1.88
Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Statewide	26,008	312,834	94,510	4,792	5,833	105,135	12.03	0.34	4.04

[a]Less than the sum of hunters in individual zones because some hunters hunted more than 1 zone.
[b]Harvest estimates include Ross' geese.

Table 15. Canada goose harvest by zone during the regular goose season, three-year trend (Illinois 2018-19 through 2020-21).

Zone	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	3-Year Mean	S.D.
North	29,352	44,385	49,620	41,119	10,521
Central	35,407	36,868	40,450	37,575	2,595
South Central	3,490	1,887	2,985	2,787	820
South	2,787	2,047	1,454	2,096	668
Unknown	-	-	-	-	-
Statewide	71,035	85,188	94,510	83,578	11,820

Table 16. Summary of the number of ducks and geese crippled (Illinois 2008 - 2020 regular seasons).

Season[a] (Year)	Estimated Ducks		Estimated Geese	
	Total	Per 100 Bagged	Total	Per 100 Bagged
2008	74,044	16.5	14,166	8.8
2009	67,718	16.9	12,245	7.6
2010	57,388	16.2	9,217	8.5
2011	64,268	15.0	6,937	7.3
2012	71,054*	14.9*	10,452*	11.3*
2013	59,064	13.7	8,847	7.3
2014	51,909	13.5	7,856	7.3
2015	47,442	14.4	7,622	7.4
2016	43,666	13.1	6,149	5.6
2017	37,491	13.5	6,657	6.3
2018	36,996	13.6	5,558	6.0
2019	40,630	12.5	5,783	5.5
2020	33,984	13.3	7,495	7.1

[a]1981-2020 information can be located in Appendix F.
*Amended from 2012-13 report.

Table 17. Illinois duck hunters' satisfaction with various aspects of the 2020-21 duck seasons.

	Zone (*n* in parentheses)	Very Dissatisfied (%)	Dissatisfied (%)	Unsure (%)	Satisfied (%)	Very Satisfied (%)	$\bar{x}$ (S.D.) [a]
Number of ducks you saw	North (326)	19.9%	28.2%	27.6%	20.9%	3.4%	2.6 (1.1)
	Central (442)	28.7%	35.5%	18.6%	15.2%	2.0%	2.3 (1.1)
	South Central (134)	35.1%	28.4%	23.9%	11.2%	1.5%	2.2 (1.1)
	South (92)	43.5%	33.7%	9.8%	10.9%	2.2%	1.9 (1.1)
Mid-season matched peak of duck migration	North (32	18.9%	38.7%	32.8%	8.7%	0.9%	2.4 (0.9)
	Central (446)	34.8%	32.5%	25.6%	6.5%	0.7%	2.1 (1.0)
	South Central (135)	39.3%	35.6%	19.3%	5.2%	0.7%	1.9 (0.9)
	South (90)	31.1%	37.8%	24.4%	5.6%	1.1%	2.1 (0.9)
Amount of shooting you got in	North (329)	16.1%	33.4%	30.7%	18.2%	1.5%	2.6 (1.0)
	Central (448)	28.3%	33.5%	24.8%	12.3%	1.1%	2.2 (1.0)
	South Central (137)	31.4%	31.4%	25.5%	9.5%	2.2%	2.2 (1.1)
	South (36)	28.6%	38.5%	20.9%	12.1%	0.0%	2.2 (1.0)
Number of ducks migrating through areas you hunted	North (325)	19.4%	36.0%	28.0%	14.5%	2.2%	2.4 (1.0)
	Central (448)	32.8%	34.8%	22.1%	9.8%	0.4%	2.1 (1.0)
	South Central (136)	36.8%	37.5%	14.0%	11.0%	0.7%	2.0 (1.0)
	South (90)	44.4%	35.6%	8.9%	11.1%	0.0%	1.9 (1.0)
Amount of time you spent duck hunting	North (330)	10.9%	18.5%	32.4%	32.7%	5.5%	3.0 (1.1)
	Central (449)	14.3%	22.9%	30.7%	28.7%	3.3%	2.8 (1.1)
	South Central (137)	18.2%	20.4%	25.5%	32.1%	3.6%	2.8 (1.2)
	South (92)	23.9%	22.8%	26.1%	18.5%	8.7%	2.7 (1.3)
Number of ducks you harvested	North (330)	20.0%	29.1%	31.5%	17.0%	2.4%	2.5 (1.1)
	Central (450)	27.3%	33.6%	24.2%	14.4%	0.4%	2.3 (1.0)
	South Central (136)	32.4%	28.7%	25.7%	11.0%	2.2%	2.2 (1.1)
	South (91)	34.1%	29.7%	23.1%	13.2%	0.0%	2.2 (1.0)
Season start date allowed the season to match migration	North (322)	20.2%	28.3%	37.3%	12.7%	1.6%	2.5 (1.0)
	Central (440)	34.3%	30.0%	26.6%	8.4%	0.7%	2.1 (1.0)
	South Central (135)	36.3%	25.2%	24.4%	10.4%	3.7%	2.2 (1.2)
	South (89)	31.5%	25.8%	28.1%	10.1%	4.5%	2.3 (1.2)
Weather during duck season	North (329)	6.4%	14.6%	49.5%	27.4%	2.1%	3.0 (0.9)
	Central (449)	16.7%	20.0%	42.8%	18.7%	1.8%	2.7 (1.0)
	South Central (136)	17.6%	15.4%	43.4%	22.8%	0.7%	2.7 (1.0)
	South (93)	15.1%	18.3%	45.2%	20.4%	1.1%	2.7 (1.0)

[a]1= Very Dissatisfied, 5= Very Satisfied

*Cases selected for those who hunted at least 1 day during the 2019-20 regular duck season.

Table 18. Importance of factors to respondents' waterfowl hunting experience in Illinois.

	Not At All Important	Slightly Important	Important	Very Important	Extremely Important
Seeing ducks in the field (*n* = 1,582)	2.6%	4.6%	28.1%	32.1%	32.6%
Bagging my daily limit (*n* = 1,568)	30.8%	40.1%	20.3%	4.9%	3.9%
Bagging at least 1 duck during a day in the field (*n* = 1,567)	10.5%	24.4%	33.2%	19.4%	12.6%
Bagging drakes (*n* = 1,557)	21.3%	26.9%	30.2%	13.2%	8.4%
Bagging a lot of ducks over the season (*n* = 1,558)	26.8%	33.4%	25.3%	8.5%	6.0%
Bagging a variety of different duck species (*n* = 1,558)	22.8%	27.7%	31.3%	12.6%	5.6%
Bagging diving ducks (*n* = 1,555)	53.9%	27.4%	12.9%	3.9%	1.9%
Bagging mallards (*n* = 1,570)	13.6%	20.8%	33.8%	19.7%	12.2%
Bagging teal and wood ducks (*n* = 1,558)	20.5%	27.9%	31.6%	13.4%	6.5%

Table 19. Satisfaction with aspects of respondents' most recent waterfowl hunting season in Illinois.

	Not at all Satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied
Seeing ducks in the field (*n* = 1,547)	32.6%	30.1%	25.7%	7.2%	4.5%
Bagging my daily limit (*n* = 1,508)	47.5%	26.6%	21.0%	2.7%	2.3%
Bagging at least 1 duck during a day in the field (*n* = 1,516)	33.1%	27.0%	29.8%	6.1%	4.0%
Bagging drakes (*n* = 1,507)	34.1%	25.4%	31.1%	5.8%	3.6%
Bagging a lot of ducks over the season (*n* = 1,511)	49.0%	22.2%	22.2%	4.2%	2.4%
Bagging a variety of different duck species (*n* = 1,506)	41.6%	24.4%	26.9%	4.6%	2.5%
Bagging diving ducks (*n* = 1,491)	49.4%	19.9%	26.0%	2.5%	2.3%
Bagging mallards (*n* = 1,517)	37.6%	23.2%	28.1%	7.3%	3.8%
Bagging teal and wood ducks (*n* = 1,505)	41.3%	23.7%	27.4%	4.9%	2.6%

Table 20. Hunter* opinions of the timing of 2020-21 waterfowl seasons.**

Season	*n*	Too Early (%)	About Right (%)	Too Late (%)	Not Sure (%)
North September Teal	48	22.9%	68.8%	4.2%	4.2%
Central September Teal	115	16.5%	75.7%	3.5%	4.3%
South Central September Teal	39	15.4%	69.2%	12.8%	2.6%
South September Teal	8	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%
Combined September Teal	218	17.0%	73.4%	6.0%	3.7%
North September Goose	104	12.5%	80.8%	2.9%	3.8%
Central September Goose	96	16.7%	78.1%	0.0%	5.2%
South Central September Goose	32	6.3%	90.6%	0.0%	3.1%
South September Goose	6	16.7%	83.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Combined September Goose	246	13.8%	80.9%	1.2%	4.1%
North Regular Duck	313	40.9%	46.0%	7.3%	5.8%
Central Regular Duck	418	52.4%	30.9%	11.5%	5.3%
South Central Regular Duck	130	50.8%	34.6%	8.5%	6.2%
South Regular Duck	88	50.0%	34.1%	5.7%	10.2%
Combined Regular Duck	981	48.7%	36.3%	9.1%	5.9%
North Regular Goose	311	23.5%	65.0%	4.8%	6.8%
Central Regular Goose	310	41.0%	50.3%	3.9%	4.8%
South Central Regular Goose	64	43.8%	50.0%	1.6%	4.7%
South Regular Goose	31	54.8%	29.0%	3.2%	12.9%
Combined Regular Goose	739	34.5%	55.6%	4.1%	5.8%

*Cases selected for those that indicated they hunted at least 1 day during the corresponding zone/season in 2020-21.
**Zone determined by zone hunted in most often for species in 2020-21 season.

Table 21. Respondents' preferred zoning option for Illinois for the period of 2026 through 2030.

	Zones			
	North (*n* = 409)	Central (*n* = 528)	South Central (*n* = 143)	South (*n* = 95)
I do not have a preference.	42.1%	30.3%	16.1%	27.4%
Three duck zones with 2 season segments (2-way split) in one, two, or all zones.	17.8%	25.8%	42.0%	28.4%
Two zones with one or two splits and up to 3 season segments in each zone.	8.3%	12.3%	9.1%	5.3%
Three duck zones with a continuous season with one segment.	9.8%	10.8%	9.1%	7.4%
Four duck zones (No change from current system).	9.3%	8.1%	14.0%	15.8%
Keep a 4-zone structure but reconfigure the current zone configuration.	8.6%	8.1%	8.4%	10.5%
One statewide zone with up to two splits and up to 3 segments.	4.2%	4.5%	1.4%	5.3%

Table 22. Preferred splits for the duck hunting season in Illinois for zone hunted most often by respondent.

	Zones			
	North (n = 377)	Central (n = 495)	South Central (n = 136)	South (n = 84)
Option A Open earlier and close later using a large split to extend season.	24.1%	19.2%	23.5%	17.9%
Option B Open at the current time but close later using a split to give ducks a rest and provide a "second opening day."	21.2%	24.2%	15.4%	15.5%
Option C Open earlier and close at the current time using a small split to give ducks a rest and provide a "second opening day."	11.9%	8.5%	11.0%	7.1%
Option D Use a split to create a short segment well before the current opening day to target early migrants.	9.5%	5.3%	3.7%	6.0%
Option E Use a split to create a short segment well after the current closing date to target late migrants.	5.8%	7.7%	6.6%	7.1%
Option F Open and close later using a split to extend season.	23.1%	32.5%	36.0%	42.9%
If a single split were used, I would prefer one different from these.	4.2%	2.6%	3.7%	3.6%

Table 23. Respondents' preference for zones to combine if a three duck zone configuration was used in Illinois for the period of 2026 through 2030.

	Zones			
	North (n = 383)	Central (n = 506)	South Central (n = 141)	South (n = 89)
Combine the North and Central zones, and no changes to South Central and South zones.	38.6%	20.0%	7.8%	10.1%
Combine the Central and South Central zones, and no changes to North and South zones.	12.0%	27.3%	16.3%	9.0%
Combine the South Central and South zones, and no changes to North and Central zones.	26.1%	31.2%	57.4%	60.0%
A new zone configuration that doesn't combine two of the existing zones.	9.7%	7.9%	5.7%	6.7%
I would prefer that a three duck zone configuration not be used.	13.6%	13.6%	12.8%	14.6%

Illinois Waterfowl Hunter Survey
2020-21 Season

Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Division of Wildlife Resources
&
The Illinois Natural History Survey

The Department of Natural Resources is requesting disclosure of information that is necessary to accomplish the statutory purpose as outlined under the Illinois Compiled Statutes, The Wildlife Code, Chapter 520. Disclosure of information is voluntary. This study is funded by the federal Wildlife Restoration Fund through your purchase of sporting arms and ammunition.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!
All of your responses will be kept confidential.
Please return this survey in the postage-paid return envelope provided.

Section 1. Waterfowl Hunting in Illinois. Please provide the following information so that Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) waterfowl biologists may better understand hunters in Illinois.

1. Did you purchase an Illinois State Waterfowl Stamp for the 2020-21 season? _____Yes _____No

2. Which of the following best describes how often you hunt **waterfowl** (ducks, geese, or coots) in Illinois?

_____Every year _____Most years _____Occassional years _____Rarely _____Never

If you never hunt waterfowl in Illinois, please go to Section 6.

3. Did you hunt waterfowl in Illinois during the 2020-21 waterfowl hunting season?

_____Yes _____No (If "No," please go to **Section 4**)

3a. Was the 2020-21 Illinois waterfowl season your **first** time hunting waterfowl in Illinois?

_____No _____Yes (new Illinois resident hunter) _____Yes (new nonresident hunter)

Please refer to the zone map on the back of the included cover letter to answer question 3b.

3b. In which of the following zones did you hunt **waterfowl MOST often**? (Please check **one** response)

_____North Zone _____Central Zone _____South Central Zone _____South Zone

4. Did you hunt waterfowl on Illinois state public land during the 2020-21 seasons?

_____Yes _____No (If "No," please go to **Question 5**)

4a. In what zone(s) did you hunt waterfowl on public land? (Please check **all** that apply)

_____North Zone _____Central Zone _____South Central Zone _____South Zone

4b. Did any of your hunts on public lands use a blind awarded through a lottery? _____Yes _____No

5. Did you hunt fewer or more days during the 2020-21 waterfowl season compared to the last 5 years?

_____Much fewer _____Fewer _____About the same _____More _____Much more

5a. If you hunted **fewer days**, please indicate the main reason(s) that you hunted fewer days during the 2020-21 waterfowl season than compared to the last 5 years? (Please check **all** that apply)

_____Lack of access to hunting land
_____Lack of waterfowl in area(s) hunted
_____Bad weather (e.g., snow, cold temperatures)
_____Personal health
_____Restrictions due to COVID-19
_____Lack of hunting partners available
_____Change in childcare and/or school obligations
_____Change in work schedule/location
_____Conflict with upland game season
_____Conflict with deer hunting season
_____Other (Please identify): _____

5b. If you hunted **more days**, please indicate the main reason(s) that you hunted more days during the 2020-21 waterfowl season than compared to the last 5 years? (Please check **all** that apply)

_____Increased access to hunting land
_____More waterfowl in the area(s) I hunted
_____Better weather (e.g., snow, cold temperatures)
_____Personal health
_____More time to hunt due to COVID-19
_____More hunting partners available
_____Change in childcare and/or school obligations
_____Change in work schedule/location
_____Other (Please identify): _____

Section 2. Waterfowl Harvest in Illinois. Please provide the following information so that IDNR waterfowl biologists may estimate waterfowl harvest, conserve waterfowl populations, and provide hunting opportunities in Illinois. **If you did not hunt waterfowl in Illinois during the 2020-21 seasons, please go to Section 4.**

1. Please report your hunting effort and harvest in Illinois between September 1st, 2020 and January 31st, 2021 in the following tables.
   - Include only **your personal effort and harvest** (**DO NOT** include harvests for party)
   - Count part of 1 day as 1 whole day.
   - Only report days hunted in the table for the species you targeted that day.

a. **September Teal Season** (**DO NOT** include harvest after September)

Zone hunted	County hunted	Total days hunted	Teal harvested	Teal downed but not retrieved

b. **September Canada Goose Season** (**DO NOT** include harvest after September)

Zone hunted	County hunted	Total days hunted	Geese harvested	Geese downed but not retrieved

c. **Regular Duck Season** (**DO NOT** include harvest from September)

Zone hunted	County hunted	Total days hunted	Mallards harvested	Wood ducks harvested	Canvas-backs harvested	Other ducks harvested	Coots harvested	Ducks downed but not retrieved

d. **Regular Goose Season** (**DO NOT** include harvest from September or Conservation Order Light Goose season that occurs after regular goose season closes)

Zone hunted	County hunted	Total days hunted	Canada geese harvested	White-fronted (Specklebelly) geese harvested	Snow/Blue/ Ross' geese harvested	Geese downed but not retrieved

Section 3. Youth Hunts. Please answer the following questions about mentoring youth hunters in Illinois. Please note: **"Youths"** are defined as hunters **17 years of age or younger**.

1. Did you take a youth **(**17 years old or younger) hunting during the **2020 Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days**?

_____Yes _____No (If "No," please go to **Question 2**)

1a. Was this **at least one youth's first time** duck or goose hunting? _____Yes _____No

1b. Was this **YOUR** first time accompanying a youth during the **Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days**?

_____Yes (If "Yes," please go to **Question 2**) _____No

1c. How often do you accompany a youth during the **Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days**?

_____ Every year _____ Most but not every year _____ Occasionally

2. Please report information for each youth that hunted during the **2020 Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days**. (North Zone: **Oct. 10-11**, Central Zone: **Oct. 17-18**, South Central Zone: **Nov. 7-8**, South Zone: **Nov. 14-15**) Enter **0** if the youth did not harvest any ducks, geese, or coots.

	Age	Number of Days hunted	County hunted	Mallards harvested	Wood ducks harvested	Other ducks harvested	Geese harvested	Coots harvested
Youth 1								
Youth 2								
Youth 3								
Youth 4								

3. Which of the following best describes the youth you accompanied during the **Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days**? (Please check **all** that apply)

_____ Son _____ Daughter

_____ Son of relative _____ Daughter of relative

_____ Son of family friend _____ Daughter of family friend

_____ Youth was in waterfowl club/organization sponsored youth hunt _____ Friend of my son or daughter

4. Did you take a youth hunting during the 2020-21 **regular** duck or goose seasons in Illinois?

_____Yes (If "Yes," please check which season(s)): _____Regular Duck _____Regular Goose

_____No

_____A youth accompanied me hunting, but they did not hunt

Section 4. Satisfaction and zone timing. The following questions will tell us about your satisfaction with the **2020-2021 Illinois waterfowl season(s).**

1. Do you feel the dates of the 2020-21 waterfowl hunting seasons were too early, about right, or too late in the zone where you hunted most often? (Please circle **one** number for each season)

	Too early	About right	Too late	I am not sure	I did not hunt this season
Teal season (*September only*)	1	2	3	4	5
September Canada Goose Season (*September only*)	1	2	3	4	5
Duck Season	1	2	3	4	5
Canada Goose Season	1	2	3	4	5

2. Please rate the importance of each item to **your waterfowl hunting experience in Illinois**. (Please circle **one** number that matches your response)

	Not at all Important	Slightly Important	Important	Very Important	Extremely Important
Seeing ducks in the field	1	2	3	4	5
Bagging my daily limit	1	2	3	4	5
Bagging at least 1 duck during a day in the field	1	2	3	4	5
Bagging drakes	1	2	3	4	5
Bagging a lot of ducks over the season	1	2	3	4	5
Bagging a variety of different duck species	1	2	3	4	5
Bagging diving ducks	1	2	3	4	5
Bagging mallards	1	2	3	4	5
Bagging teal and wood ducks	1	2	3	4	5

3. Please rate your satisfaction with the following aspects of **your most recent waterfowl hunting season in Illinois**. (Please circle **one** number that matches your response)

	Not at all Satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied
Seeing ducks in the field	1	2	3	4	5
Bagging my daily limit	1	2	3	4	5
Bagging at least 1 duck during a day in the field	1	2	3	4	5
Bagging drakes	1	2	3	4	5
Bagging a lot of ducks over the season	1	2	3	4	5
Bagging a variety of different duck species	1	2	3	4	5
Bagging diving ducks	1	2	3	4	5
Bagging mallards	1	2	3	4	5
Bagging teal and wood ducks	1	2	3	4	5

4. Please rate your **SATISFACTION with the most recent duck season(s) you hunted in Illinois** by circling the number that best matches your response. **If you did not hunt ducks during 2020-21, please go to Question 5.**

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Number of ducks you saw	1	2	3	4	5
Mid-season matched peak of duck migration	1	2	3	4	5
Amount of shooting you got in	1	2	3	4	5
Number of ducks migrating through areas you hunted	1	2	3	4	5
Amount of time you spent duck hunting	1	2	3	4	5
Number of ducks you harvested	1	2	3	4	5
Season start date allowed the season to match migration	1	2	3	4	5
Weather during duck season	1	2	3	4	5

5. Please indicate the **most important** consideration when deciding on your preferred 2021-22 **duck season** dates for the zone that you intend to hunt most often during the 2021-22 duck season. (Please check **one** response)

____Timing of wood duck migration
____Timing of mallard migration
____Maximize number of January hunting days
____Ice (I prefer hunting after freeze up)
____Peak of duck migration
____Other (please identify): _____
____Minimize impact on firearm deer hunting season
____Avoid bad weather (e.g., snow, cold temperatures)
____Minimize impact on upland game season
____Ice (I do not hunt once the water freezes)
____Overlap goose season

6. Currently Illinois has a continuous duck season with 4 duck hunting zones. The next opportunity to change zone options will be for the period **2026 through 2030**. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service likely will allow the following duck season zoning options. Which option do you prefer for Illinois for the period **2026 through 2030**?

Note that split seasons open for a segment, close for a period, and then reopen. (**Please check ONE response**)

____One statewide zone with up to two splits and up to 3 season segments.

____Two zones with one or two splits and up to 3 season segments in each zone.

____Three duck zones with a continuous season with one segment.

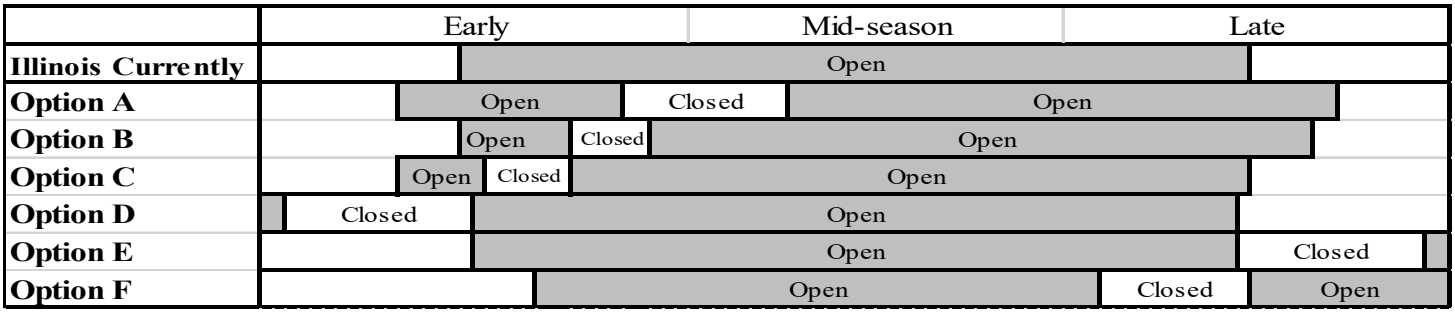
____Three duck zones with 2 season segments (2-way split) in one, two, or all zones.

____Four duck zones (Split season is prohibited by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, no change from current system)

____Keep a 4-zone structure but reconfigure the current zone configuration.

____I do not have a preference.

6a. If a **single split season** were used for the period of **2026 through 2030**, there are several possible options for when the seasons could be closed. Below is a diagram that illustrates how some states currently use splits. Please refer to the diagram and choose how you would prefer splits be used in Illinois for the zone you hunt most often. (**Please check ONE response**)



____**Option A** Open earlier and close later using a large split to extend season.

____**Option B** Open at the current time but close later using a split to give ducks a rest and provide a "second opening day."

____**Option C** Open earlier and close at the current time using a small split to give ducks a rest and provide a "second opening day."

____**Option D** Use a split to create a short segment well before the current opening day to target early migrants.

____**Option E** Use a split to create short segment well after the current closing date to target late migrants.

____**Option F** Open and close later using a split to extend season.

____If a single split were used, I would prefer one different from these.

6b. If a three duck zones configuration were used for the period of **2026 through 2030**, which two zones would you prefer to combine? Refer to the map on the back of the cover letter if necessary. (**Please check ONE response**)

____Combine the North and Central zones, and no changes to South Central and South zones.

____Combine the Central and South Central zones, and no changes to North and South zones.

____Combine the South Central and South zones, and no changes to North and Central zones.

____A new zone configuration that doesn't combine two of the existing zones.

____I would prefer that a three duck zone configuration not be used.

Section 5. White-Fronted (Specklebelly) Goose Hunting in Illinois. The following questions will tell us about your experience hunting white-fronted geese in Illinois.

1. How does the number of white-fronted (specklebelly) geese you saw this year compare to the last 5 years?

_____Much less _____Less _____About the same _____More _____Much more

2. Did you target white-fronted (specklebelly) geese during the Regular Goose Season? (Please check **all** that apply)

_____Yes, I used white-fronted (specklebelly) decoys (If "Yes," please go to **Section 6**)

_____Yes, I used a white-fronted (specklebelly) call (If "Yes," please go to **Section 6**)

_____No, I did not target them, but I shot at them when I had the opportunity

_____No, I did not target or shoot at them

2a. What was your main reason for not targeting white-fronted (specklebelly) geese during the Regular Goose Season? (Please check **one** response)

_____Lack of white-fronted geese in area(s) hunted

_____Don't know how to call for white-fronted geese

_____Lack white-fronted geese hunting equipment (e.g., decoys)

_____Lack interest in hunting white-fronted geese

_____Lack of success calling/decoying white fronted geese

Section 6. Background Information. The following questions allow us to understand more about the people involved in waterfowl hunting in Illinois. All responses are kept confidential.

1. How many years have you hunted waterfowl in Illinois? _____Years

2. At what age did you first hunt waterfowl? _____Years-old

3. What is your county of residence? _____County (If nonresident, please include state)

4. Please give your age. _____Years

5. What is your gender? _____Male _____Female

6. Would you support a county-wide or zone-wide daily end of shooting hours earlier than sunset if it would allow more ducks to be available for harvest.

_____Yes _____No

7. In which zone do you **intend** to hunt **DUCKS** most often during the 2021-22 duck hunting season? (Please refer to the zone map on the back of the included cover letter)

_____North Zone _____Central Zone _____South Central Zone _____South Zone

8. Would you use a free mobile-phone application provided by the IDNR to store an electronic copy of permits and licenses instead of being required to have a paper copy?

____Yes ____No

9. How important is waterfowl hunting to you? (Please check **one** response)

_____It is my most important recreational activity

_____It is one of my most important recreational activities

_____It is no more important than my other recreational activities

_____It is less important than my other recreational activities

_____It is one of my least important recreational activities

10. If you could have only one day to hunt, which of the following would you hunt? (Please check **one** response)

____ Ducks ____ Geese ____ Deer ____ Furbearers ____ Pheasants

____ Quail ____ Squirrels ____ Rabbits ____ Turkeys ____ Doves

____ Other (please identify):_____

Comments

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND ASSISTANCE!

Please return this survey in the postage-paid envelope provided.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources receives federal assistance and therefore must comply with federal anti-discrimination laws. In compliance with the Illinois Human Rights Act, the Illinois Constitution, Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act as amended, and the U.S. Constitution, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, or disability. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility, please contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, Department of Natural Resources, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62701-1787, (217) 782-7616 or the Officer of Human Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C. 20240.

Appendix B

ILLINOIS NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY

Prairie Research Institute
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Dear Waterfowl Hunter,

Your name was randomly selected from a list of 2020 resident/non-resident State Waterfowl stamp purchasers and Illinois Harvest Information Program (HIP) registrants. We are asking you to provide information about your activities during the 2020-21 waterfowl hunting seasons in Illinois. **Even if you did not hunt ducks or geese in Illinois during the 2020-21 seasons, we need to hear from you and we ask that you take a few minutes to complete and return the enclosed questionnaire.**

We have included the Illinois waterfowl zone map on the back of this letter if you need it to determine the zone(s) you hunted.

This study, jointly conducted by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Illinois Natural History Survey, is an effort to learn about waterfowl hunting activities in Illinois. Results of this study will help waterfowl managers make decisions to improve hunting opportunities and to better manage Illinois' duck and goose populations. **Your responses are voluntary and completely confidential**. By responding you will help us more effectively manage waterfowl and hunting in Illinois.

If you do not wish to participate, please return the blank questionnaire so we can remove you from our mailing list.

You may access the results of this and other studies of hunters and hunting in Illinois at https://publish.illinois.edu/human-dimensions/. You may also find information about Illinois Department of Natural Resources wildlife management programs and wildlife in Illinois at https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/conservation/wildlife.

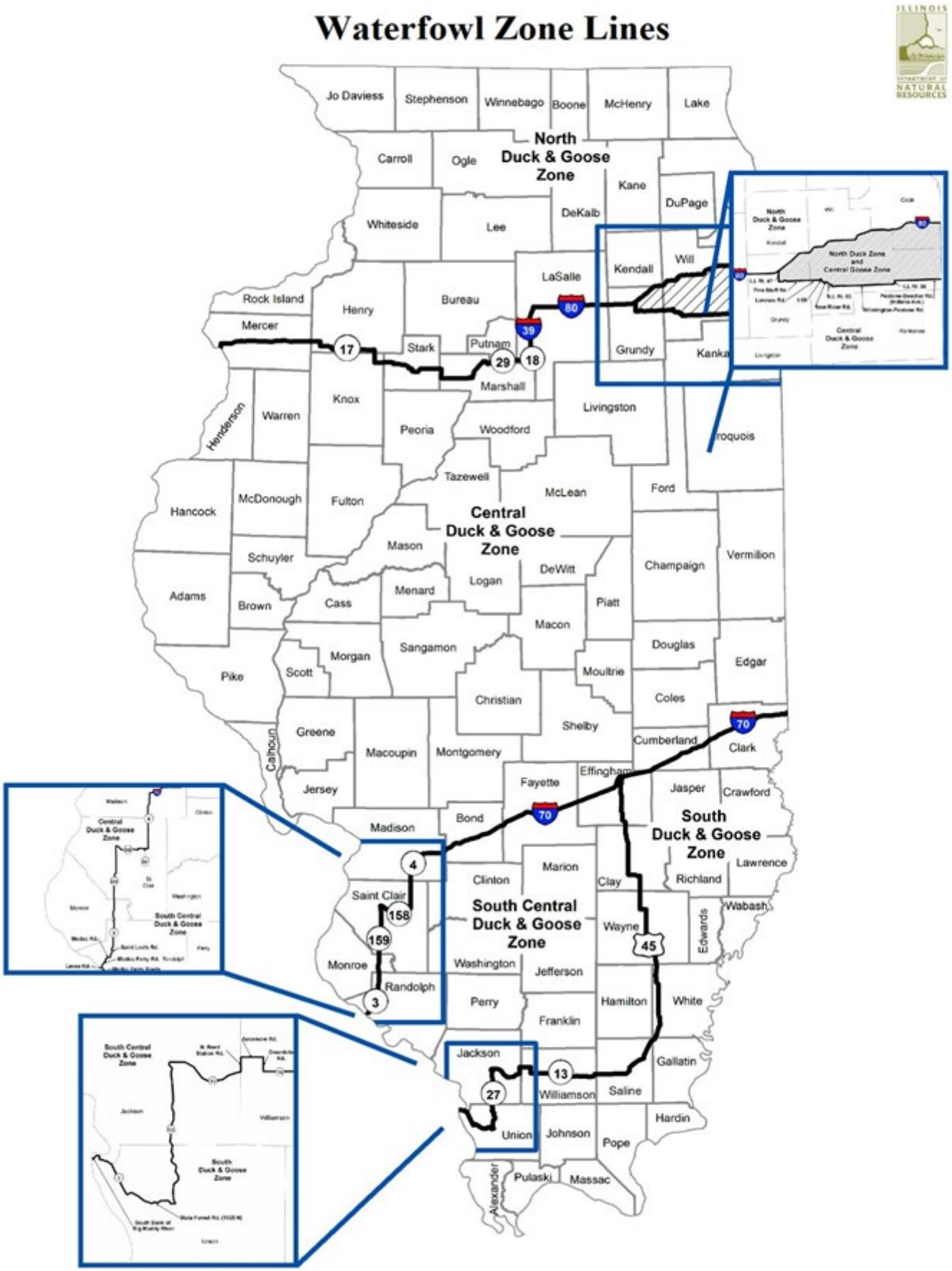
If you have questions regarding this study, please call us at (217) 244-5121.

Sincerely,

Craig A. Miller
Human Dimensions Research Program

Paul B Johnson ©

1816 South Oak Street,
Champaign, Illinois 61820 USA


Waterfowl Zone Lines
ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Jo Daviess
Stephenson
Winnebago
Boone
McHenry
Lake
North Duck & Goose Zone
Carroll
Ogle
Kane
DuPage
DeKalb
Whiteside
Lee
Kendall
Will
LaSalle
Rock Island
Henry
Bureau
Mercer
Stark
Putnam
Grundy
Marshall
Knox
Livingston
Henderson
Warren
Peoria
Woodford
Iroquois
Tazewell
McLean
Ford
Hancock
McDonough
Fulton
Central Duck & Goose Zone
Mason
Champaign
Vermilion
Schuyler
DeWitt
Logan
Adams
Brown
Cass
Menard
Piatt
Macon
Douglas
Morgan
Sangamon
Edgar
Pike
Scott
Moultrie
Christian
Coles
Greene
Shelby
Cumberland
Clark
Calhoun
Macoupin
Montgomery
Effingham
Jersey
Fayette
Jasper
Crawford
Madison
Bond
South Duck & Goose Zone
Marion
Clinton
Clay
Richland
Lawrence
Saint Clair
South Central Duck & Goose Zone
Wayne
Wabash
Edwards
Monroe
Washington
Jefferson
Randolph
Perry
Hamilton
White
Franklin
Jackson
Gallatin
Williamson
Saline
Union
Johnson
Pope
Hardin
Alexander
Pulaski
Massac
4
158
159
3
45
13
27
17
29
18
39
80
70
Central Duck & Goose Zone
South Central Duck & Goose Zone
South Duck & Goose Zone
North Duck Zone and Central Goose Zone

Appendix C

ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL
RESOURCES

Dear Waterfowl Hunter,

Recently you were mailed a questionnaire about your waterfowl hunting activities in Illinois. We have not yet received your response. **If you have already returned the questionnaire, we thank you. If you have not returned the questionnaire, please do so as soon as possible. Your input is very important!**

Your name and address will be deleted from our mailing list when your questionnaire is received. Thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix D

ILLINOIS NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY

Prairie Research Institute
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Dear Waterfowl Hunter,

Your name was randomly selected from the list of 2020 resident/non-resident State Waterfowl stamp purchasers and Illinois Harvest Information Program (HIP) registrants. We recently mailed you a questionnaire regarding your hunting experiences in Illinois during the 2020-21 waterfowl season. If you have already returned the questionnaire, we thank you.

If you have not returned your completed questionnaire, please do so as soon as possible. We have enclosed another copy for your use. The information you and other selected hunters provide will help waterfowl managers make decisions to improve hunting opportunities and to better manage Illinois' duck and goose populations. **Your responses are voluntary and completely confidential.** We have included the Illinois waterfowl zone map on the back of this letter if you need it to determine the zone(s) you hunted.

Even if you did not hunt ducks or geese in Illinois during the 2020-21 seasons, we need to hear from you and we ask that you take a few minutes to complete and return the enclosed questionnaire. A postage paid envelope is provided for you to return the questionnaire to us.

If you do not wish to participate, please return the blank questionnaire so we can remove your name from our mailing list.

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If you have questions regarding this study, please call us at (217) 244-5121.

Thank you for helping with this important study.

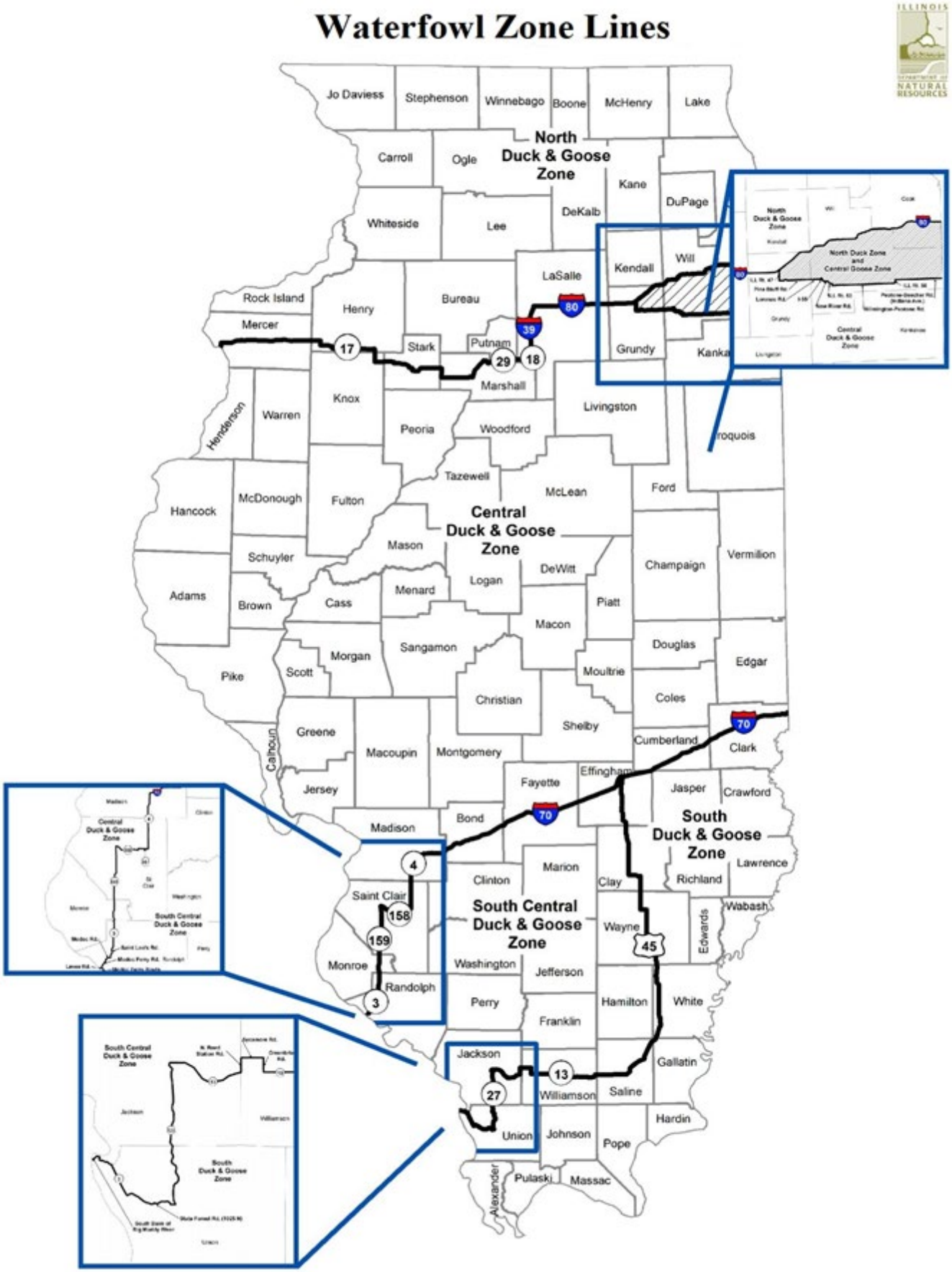
Sincerely,

Craig A. Miller
Human Dimensions Research Program

Paul B Johnson ©

1816 South Oak Street,
Champaign, Illinois 61820 USA

Waterfowl Zone Lines



Appendix E

ILLINOIS NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY
Prairie Research Institute
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

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Thank you for helping with this important study.

Sincerely,

Craig A. Miller
Human Dimensions Research Program

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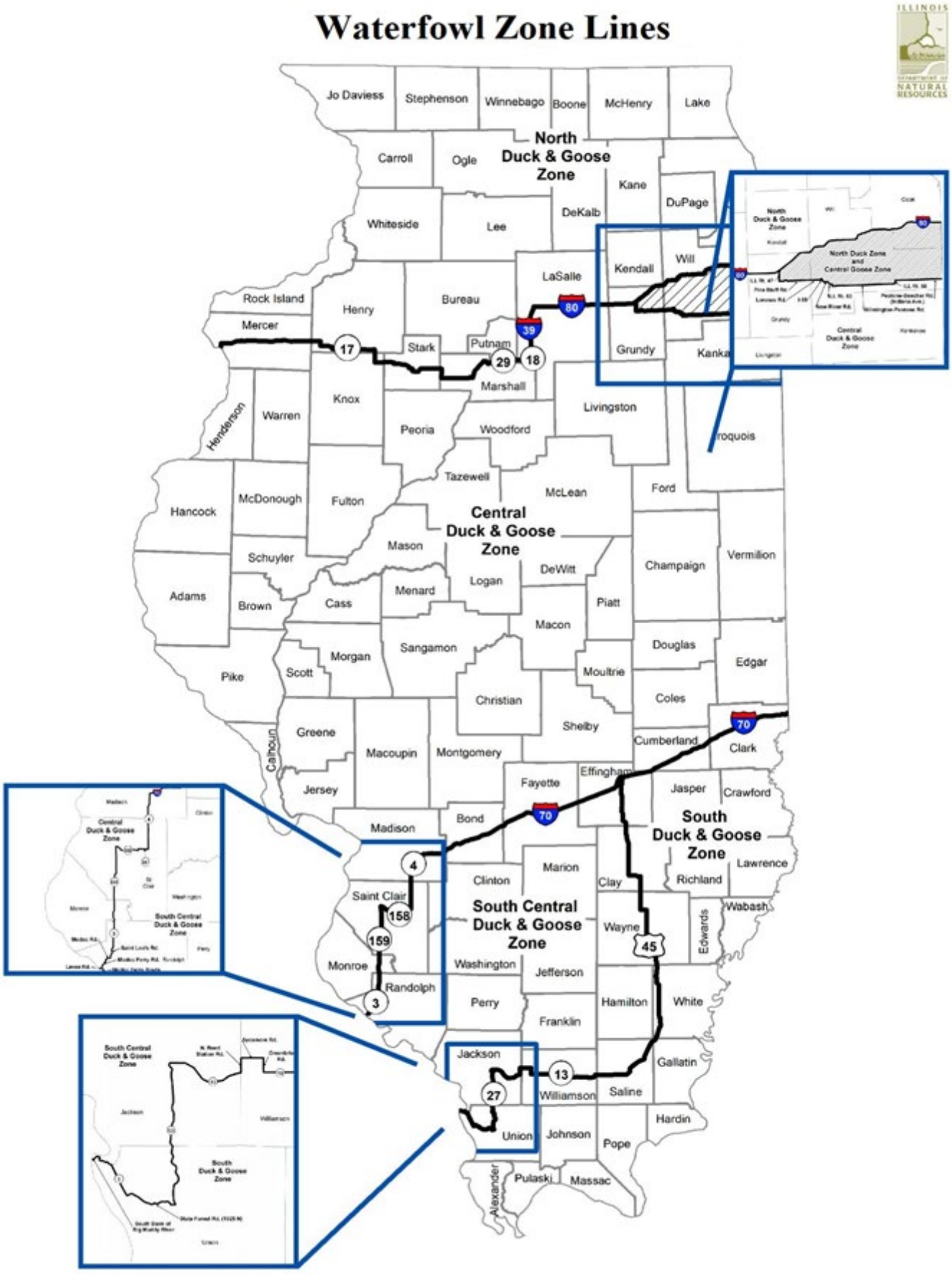
1816 South Oak Street,
Champaign, Illinois 61820 USA


Waterfowl Zone Lines
ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Jo Daviess
Stephenson
Winnebago
Boone
McHenry
Lake
North Duck & Goose Zone
Carroll
Ogle
Kane
DuPage
DeKalb
Whiteside
Lee
LaSalle
Kendall
Will
Rock Island
Henry
Bureau
Mercer
Stark
Putnam
Grundy
Kankakee
Marshall
Livingston
Knox
Warren
Henderson
Peoria
Woodford
Iroquois
Tazewell
McLean
Ford
Hancock
McDonough
Fulton
Central Duck & Goose Zone
Mason
Schuyler
DeWitt
Champaign
Vermilion
Adams
Brown
Cass
Menard
Logan
Piatt
Macon
Douglas
Edgar
Pike
Scott
Morgan
Sangamon
Moultrie
Coles
Christian
Shelby
Cumberland
Clark
Greene
Calhoun
Macoupin
Montgomery
Effingham
Fayette
Jasper
Crawford
Jersey
Madison
Bond
South Duck & Goose Zone
Clinton
Marion
Clay
Lawrence
Saint Clair
South Central Duck & Goose Zone
Richland
Wabash
Monroe
Washington
Jefferson
Wayne
Edwards
Randolph
Perry
Hamilton
White
Franklin
Jackson
Gallatin
Williamson
Saline
Union
Johnson
Pope
Hardin
Alexander
Pulaski
Massac
Central Duck & Goose Zone
South Central Duck & Goose Zone
South Duck & Goose Zone

Appendix F

Table F-1. Summary of Illinois Migratory Waterfowl Stamps purchased, hunter activity, and waterfowl harvest in Illinois from 1981 through 2020 hunting seasons.

Season (Year)	Stamps Purchased	Estimated Hunters	Estimated Days Hunted	Estimated Waterfowl Harvest[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
1998	54,550 (450)	50,288	795,561	471,072
1999	63,782 (350)	58,003	1,472,301	783,195
2000	62,701 (330)	56,954	1,115,076	708,092
2001	63,745 (300)	59,029	1,337,297	695,790
2002	61,345 (1,520)	53,428	1,054,047	504,616
2003	61,991 (260)	57,985	1,251,974	650,906
2004	60,264	54,803	1,083,910	494,775
2005	55,734	48,772	868,299	526,221
2006	63,965	58,302	1,194,801	700,571
2007	66,765	57,454	1,150,304	678,623
2008	69,590	59,379	1,175,243	660,306
2009	68,549	59,987	1,222,980	613,335
2010	64,828	50,936	985,075	513,882
2011	66,581	52,660	1,147,037	577,654
2012	64,896	50,740	1,155,346	580,557
2013	66,394	49,170	1,052,728	605,720
2014	70,391	50,698	982,193	550,946
2015	58,247	40,104	795,289	488,321
2016	54,920	41,242	870,721	490,463
2017	52,069	37,215	732,166	421,384
2018	55,303	40,047	831,043	412,402
2019	55,255	35,185	841,828	471,872
2020	52,849	39,525	837,609	406,259

[a]Teal, ducks, coots, and geese combined, and including September teal and Canada goose seasons and youth hunt. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service suspended the September Teal season in 1988 through 1991.

[b]Stamps purchased for commercial art purposes. These stamps were not included in the numbers to the left.

[c]Estimates of waterfowl hunters and days afield for these years reduced to 92.48% - 96.48% of the original estimates. Estimates of waterfowl (teal, ducks, coots, and geese combined) harvested reduced to 94.54% - 97.74 of original estimates. See Anderson and Williamson (1994) for explanation.

Table F-2. The percentage of regular season waterfowl hunters who hunted exclusively ducks, exclusively geese, or both ducks and geese in Illinois from 1981 through 2020 seasons.

Season (Year)	Hunted Ducks Only	Hunted Geese Only	Hunted Both Ducks and Geese	Duck Hunters	Goose Hunters
1981	63.0%	14.1%	22.9%	85.9%	37.0%
1982	59.1%	11.1%	29.8%	88.9%	40.9%
1983	55.0%	13.4%	31.6%	86.6%	45.0%
1984	60.3%	12.1%	27.6%	87.9%	39.7%
1985	61.1%	9.7%	29.2%	90.3%	38.9%
1986	51.0%	13.4%	35.6%	86.6%	49.0%
1987	46.6%	14.3%	39.1%	85.7%	53.4%
1988	35.5%	19.1%	45.4%	80.9%	64.5%
1989	29.2%	21.3%	49.5%	78.7%	70.8%
1990	26.7%	29.7%	43.6%	70.3%	73.4%
1991	26.0%	27.3%	46.7%	72.7%	74.0%
1992	31.3%	23.4%	45.3%	76.6%	68.7%
1993	30.9%	20.2%	48.9%	79.8%	69.1%
1994	30.3%	16.5%	53.2%	83.5%	69.7%
1995	33.2%	23.4%	43.4%	76.6%	66.8%
1996	35.8%	22.3%	41.9%	77.7%	64.2%
1997	38.8%	22.2%	39.0%	77.8%	61.2%
1998	47.6%	17.0%	35.4%	83.0%	52.4%
1999	27.2%	10.6%	62.2%	89.4%	72.8%
2000	34.0%	23.1%	42.9%	76.9%	66.0%
2001	33.0%	9.9%	57.1%	90.1%	67.0%
2002	33.8%	10.2%	56.0%	89.8%	66.2%
2003	32.3%	12.6%	55.1%	87.4%	67.7%
2004	32.1%	10.5%	57.4%	89.5%	67.9%
2005	37.2%	11.5%	51.3%	88.5%	62.8%
2006	28.8%	13.5%	57.7%	86.5%	71.2%
2007	27.7%	12.2%	60.1%	87.8%	72.3%
2008	25.9%	10.6%	63.5%	89.4%[a]	74.1%[a]
2009	27.5%	8.4%	64.1%	91.6%[a]	72.5%[a]
2010	25.0%	13.1%	61.9%	86.9%[a]	75.0%[a]
2011	20.7%	18.3%	61.0%	81.7%	79.3%
2012	29.4%	9.8%	60.8%	90.2%	70.6%
2013	30.2%	9.8%	60.0%	90.2%	69.8%
2014	30.8%	10.9%	58.3%	89.1%	69.2%
2015	28.3%	8.6%	63.0%	91.3%	71.6%
2016	29.3%	8.2%	62.5%	91.8%	70.7%
2017	29.8%	12.3%	57.8%	85.9%	68.8%
2018	31.9%	9.2%	58.9%	90.8%	68.1%
2019	32.8%	7.9%	59.3%	92.1%	67.2%
2020	32.6%	10.7%	56.7%	87.1%	65.8%

[a]2008-2010 numbers changed to reflect responses in the sample.

Table F-3. Summary of teal harvest and hunter activity during September teal season (Illinois, 1981-2020).

Season (Year)	Estimated Hunters	Estimated Days Hunted	Estimated Teal Harvest
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
1998	10,307	33,049	21,270
1999	20,036	74,170	55,199
2000	14,733	52,229	38,597
2001	17,222	61,199	36,013
2002	10,171	29,381	12,542
2003	10,522	34,505	20,453
2004	8,097	23,928	8,463
2005	6,686	17,708	10,953
2006	12,378	43,223	28,016
2007	13,478	48,115	29,800
2008	14,652	52,365	19,981
2009	15,436	55,139	19,222 ± 7,372
2010	13,038	49,038	20,127 ± 9,322
2011	11,221	42,811	21,227 ± 7,993
2012	10,944	46,719	31,942 ± 11,740
2013	10,378	37,431	21,967 ± 7,169
2014	11,282	42,635	29,058 ± 10,909
2015	9,615	37,574	28,031 ± 9.911
2016	8,969	38,610	25,346 ± 9,296
2017	7,526	28,306	15,062 ± 5,480
2018	9,263	35,334	23,326 ± 8,817
2019	7,955	32,706	19,268 ± 8,795
2020	7,975	27,962	18,967 ± 8,767

[a]September teal season was suspended by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service during these years.

Table F-4. Rates of teal harvest and hunter activity during September teal season (Illinois, 1981-2020).

Season (Year)	Season Length/ Bag Limit	Days Hunted 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
1998	16/4	3.21	0.64	2.06
1999	16/4	3.70	0.74	2.75
2000	16/4	3.55	0.74	2.62
2001	16/4	3.55	0.59	2.09
2002	9/4	2.89	0.43	1.23
2003	16/4	3.28	0.59	1.94
2004	9/4	2.96	0.35	1.05
2005	9/4	2.65	0.62	1.64
2006	16/4	3.49	0.65	2.26
2007	16/4	3.60	0.62	2.21
2008	16/4	3.57	0.38	1.36
2009	16/4	3.57	0.35	1.25
2010	16/4	3.76	0.41	1.54
2011	16/4	3.82	0.50	1.90
2012	16/4	4.27	0.68	2.92
2013	16/6	3.61	0.59	2.12
2014	16/6	3.78	0.68	2.58
2015	16/6	3.91	0.75	2.92
2016	16/6	4.31	0.66	2.83
2017	16/6	3.76	0.53	2.00
2018	16/6	3.81	0.66	2.52
2019	16/6	4.11	0.59	2.42
2020	16/6	3.51	0.68	2.38

[a]September teal season was suspended by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service during these years.

Table F-5. Waterfowl harvest and hunter activity during Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days, 1996-2020.

Season[a] (Year)	Adult Participation	Youth Participation	Days Hunting	Mean Youths/ Hunting Party	Total Ducks	Ducks/ Youth/Day	Total Coots	Coots/ Youth/ Day	Total Geese	Geese/ Youth/ Day
1996	2,749	4,353	4,353	1.58	3,171	0.73	230	0.05	----[a]	---
1997	3,163	4,322	4,322	1.37	3,451	0.80	387	0.09	----[a]	---
1998	3,343	5,142	5,142	1.54	4,159	0.81	208	0.04	289	0.06
1999	5,505	8,113	8,113	1.47	5,835	0.72	629	0.08	571	0.07
2000	6,815	10,107	14,079	1.48	8,388	0.60	38	<0.01	882	0.06
2001	9,140	15,148	22,525	1.67	11,727	0.52	480	0.02	971	0.04
2002	8,498	13,325	19,548	1.57	9,085	0.46	271	0.01	887	0.05
2003	7,415	11,419	17,985	1.54	9,184	0.51	178	0.01	1,116	0.06
2004	5,603	7,891	12,997	1.41	7,477	0.58	48	<0.01	561	0.04
2005	4,540	6,489	10,268	1.58	5,644	0.55	583	0.06	965	0.09
2006	5,447	8,024	11,903	1.48	9,863	0.83	133	0.01	732	0.06
2007	6,259	8,981	14,356	1.60	9,141	0.64	850	0.06	1,701	0.12
2008	6,402	9,878	14,799	1.50	10,380	0.70	241	0.02	1,466	0.10
2009	7,073	9,772	15,922	1.63	11,229	0.71	599	0.04	2,396	0.15
2010	5,471	7,452	11,828	1.59	9,156	0.77	419	0.04	1,420	0.12
2011	6,325	8,642	14,059	1.63	9,569	0.68	1,333	0.09	1,318	0.09
2012	7,825	10,001	52,448[b]	1.27	8,147[c]	0.41	503[c]	0.03	1,064[c]	0.05
2013	8,438	8,639	19,136	1.02	12,715	1.33	359	0.04	2,065	0.23
2014	6,405	8,572	13,798	1.33	9,004	1.30	192	0.03	929	0.14
2015	4,718	6,291	9,873	1.33	8,171	1.65	117	0.02	571	0.12
2016	4,398	5,921	8,553	1.34	6,731	1.57	139	0.03	927	0.23
2017	4,780	6,459	9,956	1.35	8,283	1.66	89	0.02	1,464	0.32
2018	4,822	5,775	8,663	1.20	7,452	1.72	205	0.05	729	0.18
2019	4,039	4,528	10,158	1.31	5,748	1.13	107	0.02	790	0.16
2020	5,029	6,950	14,926	1.38	7,799	1.04	48	0.01	1,118	0.16

1996 – 1999 were one day seasons and 2000 – present were 2-day seasons.

[a]Could not hunt geese during the Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day in 1996 and 1997.

[b]Results include youth hunts during the regular season and the 2-day Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days.

[c]Results are a 2-day estimate based on the mean number harvested by youth from the entire season

Table F-6. Summary of duck and coot harvest and hunter activity during the regular duck season (Illinois 1981-2020).

Season (Year)	Hunters	Days Afield	Number of Ducks				Coots
			Mallards	Wood Ducks	Other Ducks[b]	Total	
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 (3,760)	246,944	3,880
1995	42,499	482,620	230,505	47,155	99,632 (5,393)	377,292	3,386
1996	44,219	460,517	163,311	38,783	82,431 (4,348)	284,525	3,286
1997	42,587	514,934	145,533	44,678	100,950 (5,800)	291,161	3,935
1998	41,755	517,372	200,030	57,393	129,439 (3,948)	386,862	2,920
1999	51,850	860,368	311,325	69,930	181,650 (4,977)	562,905	3,654
2000	43,810	621,542	271,903	58,604	166,834 (4,231)	497,341	2,206
2001	53,194	797,884	305,180	61,515	167,883 (1,968)	534,578	2,904
2002	47,964	642,542	197,392	46,238	106,213 (851)	349,843	1,743
2003	50,658	738,914	285,011	48,023	153,165 (1,789)	486,199	1,693
2004	49,046	652,960	207,982	44,725	116,951 (2,100)	369,658	1,607
2005	43,185	539,672	240,897	37,942	133,509 (3,918)	412,348	2,186
2006	50,437	658,881	308,000	38,366	161,098 (5,927)	507,464	3,065
2007	49,114	600,614	265,369	34,628	164,369 (5,925)	464,366	3,771
2008	50,683	600,574	247,895	43,051	156,849	447,795	2,266
2009	49,648	626,832	228,211	41,549	129,795	399,555 ± 69,698	3,904 ± 3,342
2010	43,450	499,758	193,758	39,611	121,375	354,859 ± 60,571	1,770 ± 2,435
2011	46,619	632,712	222,405	54,294	150,786	427,484 ± 66,551	4,327 ± 2,663
2012	43,444	630,233	244,988	47,623	185,776	478,387 ± 50,294	4,133 ± 3,536
2013	43,653	563,961	225,873	49,001	155,306	430,179 ± 29,431	2,143 ± 4,031
2014	44,019	525,114	197,997	48,216	138,615 (4,820)	384,828 ± 39,741	4,681 ± 3,311
2015	36,499	496,656	166,506	43,655	119,619 (4,437)	329,780 ± 34,835	3,185 ± 1,960
2016	34,386	459,029	154,698	47,986	130,722 (6,794)	333,406 ± 37,408	4,424 ± 1,338
2017	30,025	394,034	136,381	29,372	111,937 (3,624)	277,689 ± 24,826	1,544 ± 921
2018	33,836	464,327	147,733	29,003	96,087 (5,200)	272,823 ± 28,512	2,088 ± 1,764
2019	31,850	482,946	164,043	51,564	103,542 (4,798)	323,946 ± 31,987	2,238 ± 1,799
2020	34,432	462,541	127,525	35,335	88,081 (3,739)	254,680 ± 26,546	1,701 ± 1,224

[a]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 Anderson and Williamson (1994) for explanation.

[b]Numbers in parentheses represent harvest of Canvasback.

Table F-7. Rates of duck harvest and hunter activity during the regular duck season (Illinois 1981-2020).

Season (Year)	Season Length/ Bag Limit[b]	Days Afield Per Hunter	Duck Harvest Per Hunter[a]	
			Per Day	Per Season
1981	50/10(4,2)	12.85	0.48	6.17
1982	50/10(4,2)	12.38	0.51	6.26
1983	50/10(4,2)	12.91	0.62	8.00
1984	50/10(4,2)	12.20	0.59	7.14
1985	40/5(3,1)	10.84	0.57	6.17
1986	40/5(3,1)	11.91	0.59	7.08
1987	40/5(3,1)	10.80	0.52	5.59
1988	30/3(2,1)	8.84	0.49	4.30
1989	30/3(2,1)	9.29	0.55	5.12
1990	30/3(2,1)	9.03	0.54	4.90
1991	30/3(2,1)	9.16	0.72	6.57
1992	30/3(2,1)	9.22	0.57	5.22
1993	30/3(2,1)	8.96	0.58	5.21
1994	40/3(2,1)	10.96	0.51	5.47
1995	50/5(4,1)	11.36	0.74	8.40
1996	50/5(4,1)	10.41	0.58	6.03
1997	60/6(4,2)	12.09	0.57	6.84
1998	60/6(4,2)	12.39	0.75	9.27
1999	60/6(4,2)	16.59	0.65	10.86
2000	60/6(4,2)	14.19	0.80	11.36
2001	60/6(4,2)	15.00	0.67	10.05
2002	60/6(4,1)	13.40	0.54	7.29
2003	60/6(4,1)	14.59	0.66	9.60
2004	60/6(4,2)	13.31	0.57	7.54
2005	60/6(4,2)	12.50	0.76	9.55
2006	60/6(4,2)	13.06	0.77	10.06
2007	60/6(4,2)	12.23	0.77	9.45
2008	60/6(4,2)	11.85	0.75	8.84
2009	60/6(4,2)	12.63	0.64	8.05
2010	60/6(4,2)	11.50	0.71	8.17
2011	60/6(4,2)	13.57	0.68	9.17
2012	60/6(4,2)	14.51	0.76	11.01
2013	60/6(4,2)	12.92	0.76	9.85
2014	60/6(4,2)	11.93	0.73	8.74
2015	60/6(4,2)	13.61	0.66	9.01
2016	60/6(4,2)	13.35	0.73	9.70
2017	60/6(4,2)	13.12	0.70	9.25
2018	60/6(4,2)	13.72	0.59	8.06
2019	60/6(4,2)	15.16	0.67	10.17
2020	60/6(4,2)	13.43	0.55	7.40

[a]Excludes ducks harvested coincidentally while goose hunting.

[b]The Point System was used in 1981-1987 (Havera 1999: 17-18). A maximum of 10 ducks (4 mallards, 2 hens) was allowed in 1981-1984, and a maximum of 5 ducks (3 Mallards, 1 hen) was allowed in 1985-1987.

Table F-8. Number of hunters who participated in the early September Canada goose season (Illinois 1997-2020).

			Waterfowl Zone				
	Year	Statewide	North	Central	South Central	South	Unknown
Hunters[a]	1997	11,765	5,577	5,768	-----	-----	420
	1998	11,981	4,837	5,915	-----	677	552
	1999	16,945	6,005	9,869	-----	693	378
	2000	13,289	5,410	6,908	-----	971	0
	2001	20,359	7,318	10,807	-----	2,085	149
	2002	12,459	4,517	6,665	-----	1,135	142
	2003	14,973	5,532	7,761	-----	1,348	332
	2004	11,170	4,250	6,220	-----	984	0
	2005	9,448	3,949	5,034	-----	1,085	0
	2006	12,609	4,848	6,607	-----	1,154	0
	2007	12,788	4,723	6,413	-----	1,652	0
	2008	13,157	4,934	6,690	-----	1,533	0
	2009	15,102	5,232	8,089	-----	1,781	0
	2010	11,015	3,918	5,813	-----	1,285	0
	2011	14,214	4,625	7,889	-----	1,700	0
	2012	11,192[a]	4,601	5,928	1,161	249	0
	2013	10,865[a]	3,646	6,076	681	462	0
	2014	12,147[a]	4,153	6,679	934	554	0
	2015	10,659[a]	3,226	6,104	1,075	443	0
	2016	9,973[a]	3,324	5,125	1,316	381	0
	2017	9,225	2,746	5,472	849	296	0
	2018	9,916	3,187	5,503	899	599	0
	2019	8,658	3,855	4,161	490	245	0
	2020	9,064	3,747	4,036	1,025	352	0

[a]Less than the sum of hunters in individual zones because some hunters hunted more than 1 zone.

Table F-9. Number of Canada geese harvested during the early September Canada goose season (Illinois 1997-2020).

	Year	Statewide	North	Central	South Central	South	Unknown
Canada Geese	1997	11,443	7,621	3,774	-----	-----	48
	1998	7,852	4,184	3,046	-----	384	238
	1999	20,223	9,124	10,491	-----	491	117
	2000	15,897	6,191	8,774	-----	932	0
	2001	26,021	10,979	13,170	-----	1,580	290
	2002	21,534	8,971	11,130	-----	1,433	0
	2003	15,267	5,907	7,103	-----	2,221	36
	2004	13,587	6,319	5,915	-----	767	0
	2005	9,896	4,862	4,047	-----	987	0
	2006	14,578	6,771	6,717	-----	1,090	0
	2007	16,207	6,057	8,645	-----	1,505	0
	2008	17,419	7,343	8,951	-----	1,125	0
	2009	16,212	6,101	8,336	-----	1,774	0
	2010	17,115	7,967	7,859	-----	1,289	0
	2011	18,790	6,339	10,874	-----	1,577	0
	2012	18,028	8,557	7,664	1,599	228	0
	2013	15,644	5,165	9,271	523	685	0
	2014	19,089	7,527	9,015	1,770	777	0
	2015	15,693	4,233	8,587	2,147	726	0
	2016	17,711	7,895	7,780	1,539	497	0
	2017	16,155	4,154	10,282	1,199	510	20
	2018	13,165	4,909	6,928	925	404	0
	2019	15,429	7,912	6,932	249	336	0
	2020	16,811	8,421	7,165	750	475	0

Table F-10. Number of days afield during the early September Canada goose season (Illinois 1997-2020).

	Year	Statewide	North	Central	South Central	South	Unknown
Days Afield	1997	34,988	17,991	15,890	-----	-----	1,107
	1998	37,322	15,891	18,247	-----	1,880	1,304
	1999	64,881	21,795	39,768	-----	2,625	693
	2000	47,831	17,396	27,078	-----	3,357	0
	2001	73,587	26,359	40,208	-----	6,318	702
	2002	39,485	14,303	21,049	-----	4,092	41
	2003	51,083	18,799	26,532	-----	5,422	330
	2004	37,941	14,279	19,670	-----	2,592	0
	2005	29,143	12,184	14,352	-----	2,607	0
	2006	42,444	16,735	22,621	-----	3,088	0
	2007	41,549	14,169	22,080	-----	5,300	0
	2008	45,637	17,305	23,174	-----	5,158	0
	2009	51,318	19,591	26,048	-----	5,678	0
	2010	39,019	15,929	19,236	-----	3,854	0
	2011	49,306	16,832	27,441	-----	5,033	0
	2012	39,589	17,079	18,613	3,524	373	0
	2013	40,955	12,323	24,816	2,042	1,774	0
	2014	44,919	16,300	23,844	3,288	1,488	0
	2015	38,744	13,505	21,191	2,404	1,645	0
	2016	41,935	14,925	20,950	4,883	1,177	0
	2017	33,817	9,442	19,714	3,595	1,067	0
	2018	35,361	12,777	18,035	2,779	1,771	0
	2019	33,410	15,634	15,695	1,316	765	0
	2020	34,272	15,054	14,638	3,491	1,089	0

Table F-11. Summary of goose harvest and hunter activity during the regular goose season (Illinois 1981-2020).

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[a])	47,384 (8,031[a])
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[a]	34,456	251,176	72,550 (3,871)	1,832 (350)	74,382 (4,221)
1989[a]	39,459	329,369	91,379 (2,988)	1,715 (182)	93,094 (3,170)
1990[a]	40,459	346,036	67,127 (1,515)	1,319 (97)	68,446 (1,612)
1991[a]	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 (114)	70,803 (2,641)
1997	33,498	295,107	61,282 (4,772)	7,572 (438)	68,854 (5,210)
1998	26,343	202,676	43,222 (2,463)	4,290 (305)	47,512 (2,968)
1999	42,246	464,769	119,611 (1,846)	14,568 (152)	134,179 (1,998)
2000	37,593	383,367	128,387 (1,406)	16,356 (0)	144,743 (1,406)
2001	39,570	382,102	64,907 (1,761)	18,189 (263)	83,096 (2,024)
2002	35,352	323,091	89,297 (3,259)	19,414 (1,433)	108,711 (4,692)
2003	39,275	409,487	83,207 (1,526)	10,458[b] (342)	93,665[b] (1,868)
2004	37,189	345,279	81,859 (3,418)	8,231 (349)	90,090 (3,767)
2005	30,614	271,708	74,293 (1,653)	9,353 (62)	83,646 (1,715)
2006	41,521	438,350	122,294 (1,338)	14,426 (869)	136,720 (2,207)
2007	43,046	445,670	141,205 (404)	11,582 (55)	152,787 (459)
2008	44,404	461,868	142,806 (590)	17,956 (0)	160,762 (590)
2009	44,601	473,769	142,836 (585)	17,382 (355)	160,218 ± 36,569 (940)
2010	36,803	385,432	99,422 (534)	9,594 (46)	109,016 ± 22,523 (580)
2011	36,996	411,380	75,061(618)	19,862 (33)	94,923 ± 22,387 (651)
2012	34,034	386,356	72,682 (0)	19,597 (0)	92,280 ± 19,570 (0)
2013	33,809	391,246	104,887 (0)	15,859 (0)	120,746 ± 12,775 (0)
2014	34,226	369,179	87,672 (50)	20,313 (0)	107,985 ± 15,517 (50)
2015	31,280	330,482	75,198	27,576	102,774 ± 17,608 (0)
2016	26,490	312,725	77,216 (0)	24,563 (0)	101,779 (0) ± 18,215
2017	24,039	276,009	78,850 (0)	27,637 (0)	106,486 (0) ± 14,607
2018	25,363	296,021	71,035 (0)	21,578 (0)	92,613 (0) ± 16,720
2019	23,222	292,766	85,188 (0)	19,158 (0)	104,346 (0) ± 23,241
2020	26,008	312,834	94,510 (0)	10,625 (0)	105,135 (0) ± 18,356

[a]The estimates of goose hunters and days hunted for these years have been reduced to 92.48%-96.48% of the original estimates. The estimates for geese harvested have not been reduced (Anderson and Williamson 1994).
[b]Reduced by 23,151 from estimate given in 2002 report to exclude Conservation Order snow goose harvest.

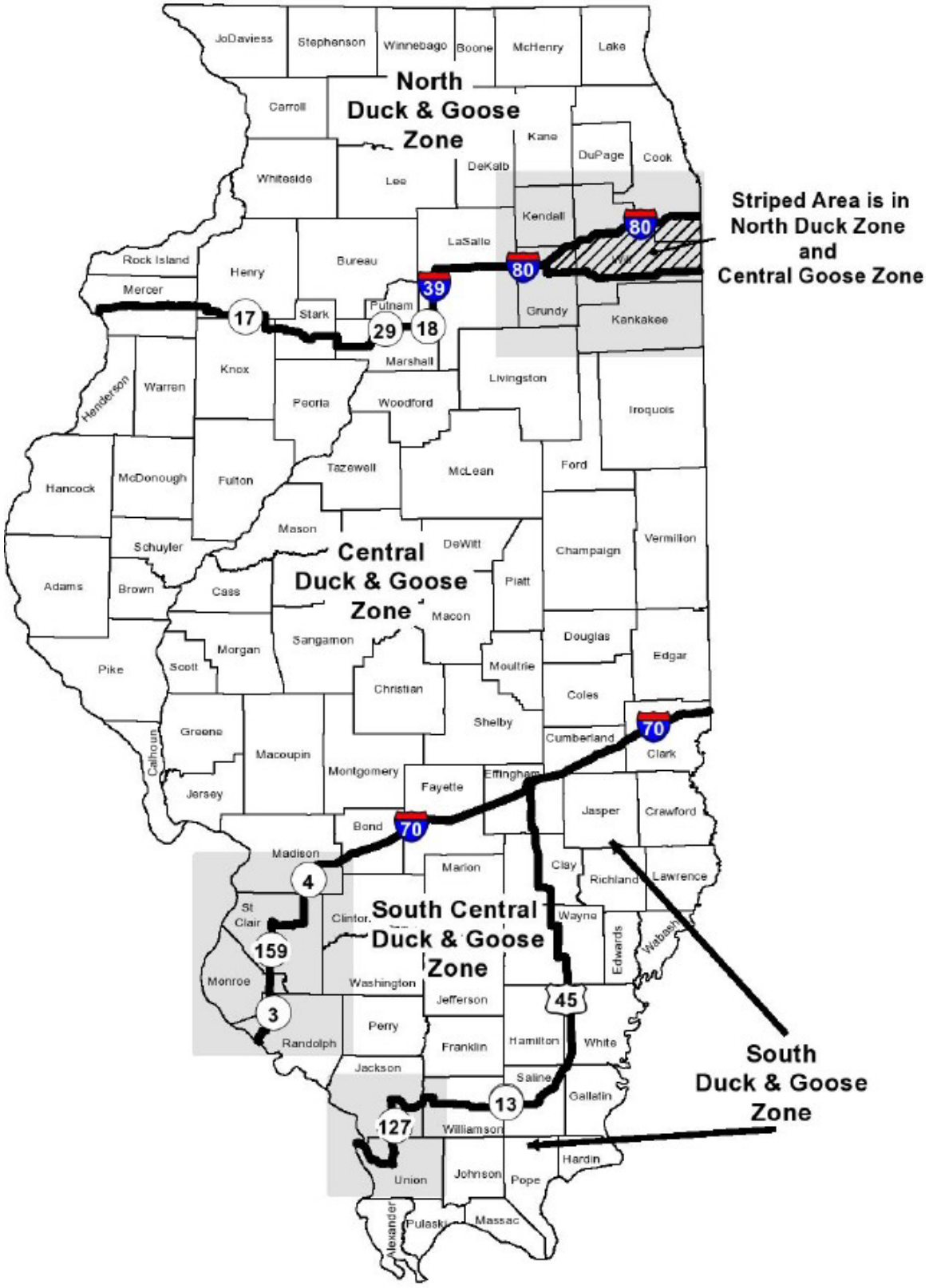
Table F-12. Summary of the number of ducks and geese crippled (Illinois 1981-2020 seasons).

Season (Year)	Estimated Ducks		Estimated Geese	
	Total	Per 100 Bagged	Total	Per 100 Bagged
1981	104,216	30.8	12,573	26.5
1982	82,287	25.2	5,868	18.9
1983	96,907	24.0	7,627	23.6
1984	84,665	23.8	5,711	23.0
1985	100,191	31.6	15,918	39.5
1986	145,283	38.3	20,699	41.5
1987	98,155	34.0	18,375	48.8
1988	65,856	35.5	22,730	30.6
1989	66,150	29.5	21,696	23.3
1990[a]	59,007	29.9	23,895	34.9
1991[a]	74,932	24.4	27,164	28.7
1992	68,027	31.4	18,631	32.1
1993	62,250	28.6	21,067	22.3
1994	65,266	26.4	16,234	23.3
1995	86,834	23.0	18,391	19.2
1996	64,324	22.6	16,641	23.5
1997	67,979	23.3	12,490	18.1
1998	74,679	19.3	5,514	11.6
1999	95,961	17.0	12,934	9.6
2000	70,423	14.2	10,071	7.0
2001	88,019	16.5	7,148	8.6
2002	59,005	16.9	6,382	5.9
2003	77,361	15.9	12,661	10.8
2004	63,765	17.2	9,433	10.5
2005	68,121	16.5	7,666	9.2
2006	83,648	16.5	14,110	10.3
2007	77,914	16.8	16,627	10.9
2008	74,044	16.5	14,166	8.8
2009	67,718	16.9	12,245	7.6
2010	57,388	16.2	9,217	8.5
2011	64,268	15.0	6,937	7.3
2012	71,054*	14.9*	10,452*	11.3*
2013	59,064	13.7	8,847	7.3
2014	51,909	13.5	7,856	7.3
2015	47,442	14.4	7,622	7.4
2016	43,666	13.1	6,149	5.6
2017	37,491	13.5	6,657	6.3
2018	36,996	13.6	5,558	6.0
2019	40,630	12.5	5,783	5.5
2020	33,984	13.3	7,495	7.1

[a]The estimates of ducks and geese crippled for these years have been reduced to 92.48% - 96.48% of the original estimates. The estimates for the number of geese crippled per 100 bagged have been similarly reduced. See Anderson and Williamson (1994) for explanation.

*Amended from 2012-13 report.

Appendix G


North Duck & Goose Zone
Striped Area is in North Duck Zone and Central Goose Zone
Central Duck & Goose Zone
South Central Duck & Goose Zone
South Duck & Goose Zone
JoDaviess
Stephenson
Winnebago
Boone
McHenry
Lake
Carroll
Kane
DuPage
Cook
Whiteside
Lee
DeKalb
Kendall
LaSalle
Rock Island
Henry
Bureau
Mercer
Putnam
Stark
Grundy
Kankakee
Knox
Marshall
Livingston
Iroquois
Henderson
Warren
Peoria
Woodford
Hancock
McDonough
Fulton
Tazewell
McLean
Ford
Mason
DeWitt
Champaign
Vermilion
Schuyler
Adams
Brown
Cass
Macon
Platt
Douglas
Edgar
Pike
Scott
Morgan
Sangamon
Moultrie
Coles
Christian
Shelby
Cumberland
Clark
Greene
Calhoun
Macoupin
Montgomery
Effingham
Fayette
Jasper
Crawford
Jersey
Bond
Madison
Marion
Clay
Richland
Lawrence
St Clair
Clinton
Wayne
Edwards
Wabash
Monroe
Washington
Jefferson
Perry
Franklin
Hamilton
White
Randolph
Jackson
Saline
Gallatin
Williamson
Union
Johnson
Pope
Hardin
Alexander
Pulaski
Massac
17
29
18
39
80
80
70
70
4
159
3
45
13
127

Appendix H

WATERFOWL SEASON DATES AND LIMITS

SPECIES	Zone	DATES *(inclusive)*	HOURS	DAILY LIMIT	POSSESSION LIMIT	ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS
Teal *(early season)*	Statewide	5-20 Sep 2020	**Sunrise to Sunset**	6	18	Blue-winged teal, green-winged teal and cinnamon teal are the only legal duck species during this season. Daily and possession limits are for all teal species combined (in the aggregate).
Rail *(Sora and Virginia only)*	Statewide	5 Sep - 13 Nov 2020		25	75	Daily and possession limits are for both rail species combined (in the aggregate).
Snipe *(Wilson's snipe)*	Statewide	5 Sep - 20 Dec 2020		8	24	
Ducks *(but see Scaup below)*	North Central South Central South	17 Oct - 15 Dec 2020 24 Oct - 22 Dec 2020 14 Nov - 12 Jan 2021 26 Nov - 24 Jan 2021	**1/2 hour before sunrise to sunset**	6	18	Basic daily limit is 6 ducks of any species. However, daily limit can consist of no more than the following: 4 mallards (of which no more than 2 can be hen mallards), 3 wood ducks, **2 Scaup for the first 45 days in each zone, 1 Scaup for the last 15 days in each zone**, 2 redheads, 2 canvasback, 2 black ducks, 1 pintail and 1 mottled duck. Possession limit for ducks is three times the daily limit by species and sex.
Mergansers	Same as ducks	Same as ducks		5	15	Mergansers do not count toward your daily limit of ducks, but only 2 can be hooded mergansers. Merganser possession limit is no more than three times their daily limit, including max of 6 hooded mergansers.
Coots	Same as ducks	Same as ducks		15	45	
Scaup (Bluebills)	North Central South Central South	17 Oct - 30 Nov 2020 1 Dec - 15 Dec 2020 24 Oct - 7 Dec 2020 8 Dec - 22 Dec 2020 14 Nov - 28 Dec 2020 29 Dec - 12 Jan 2021 26 Nov - 9 Jan 2021 10 Jan - 24 Jan 2021		First Season 2/day Second Season 1/day	First Season 6 Second Season 3	FWS regulations require 45 days with 2/day bag limit, 15 days with 1/day bag limit. Will be different in each zone.

WATERFOWL SEASON DATES AND LIMITS

SPECIES	Zone	DATES *(inclusive)*	HOURS	DAILY LIMIT	POSSESSION LIMIT	ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS
Canada Geese *(early season)*	North and Central	1-15 Sep 2020	**1/2 hour before sunrise to sunset**	5	15	
	South Central and South			2	6	
Canada Geese	North	17 Oct 2020 - 14 Jan 2021		3	9	
	Central	24 Oct- 1 Nov 2020 and 12 Nov 2020 - 31 Jan 2021				
	South Central	14 Nov 2020 - 31 Jan 2021				
	South	26 Nov 2020 - 31 Jan 2021				
Light Geese *(Snow/Blue/Ross' Geese)*	North	17 Oct 2020 - 14 Jan 2021		20	Unlimited	Daily bag limit is for both species combined (in the aggregate).
	Central	24 Oct 2020 - 31 Jan 2021				
	South Central	14 Nov 2020 - 31 Jan 2021				
	South	26 Nov 2020 - 31 Jan 2021				
Brant	Same as light geese	Same as light geese		1	3	
White-fronted Geese *(Specklebellies)*	North	19 Oct 2020 - 14 Jan 2021		2	6	
	Central	5 Nov 2020 - 31 Jan 2021				
	South Central	14 Nov 2020 - 31 Jan 2021				
	South	26 Nov 2020 - 31 Jan 2021				
Conservation Order Light Geese *(Snow/Blue/Ross' Geese)*	North	15 Jan - 30 Apr 2021	**1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset**	Unlimited	Unlimited	The following apply to the Conservation Order only: 1) unplugged shotguns may be used and there is no limit to the number of shells that may be placed in a shotgun, 2) electronic calling devices may be used, 3) federal duck stamp not required, 4) Illinois duck stamp and hunting license is required.
	Central, South Central, South	1 Feb - 30 Apr 2021				
Youth waterfowl	North	10-11 Oct 2020	**1/2 hour before sunrise to sunset**	Same as during regular duck, goose, and coot seasons	Same as during regular duck, goose, and coot seasons	The following apply to the Youth season only: 1) youth hunters must be 17 years of age or younger and must have a hunting license and HIP registration/ certification unless hunting on property where they reside; 2) no stamps are required for youths under age 16; 3) federal waterfowl stamps are required for all hunters age 16 and older; 4) hunters aged 18 years and older may not hunt waterfowl and coots during the Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days, even if hunting with a Youth License.
	Central	17-18 Oct 2020				
	South Central	7-8 Nov 2020				
	South	14-15 Nov 2020				