

**IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME**

**Steven M. Huffaker, Director**

**Project W-170-R-27**

**Progress Report**



**WATERFOWL FALL AND WINTER SURVEYS, BANDING, AND HARVEST**

Study II, Job 3

October 1, 2002 to March 31, 2003

Prepared by: Tom Hemker, Wildlife Program Coordinator

September 2003

Boise, Idaho



Findings in this report are preliminary in nature and not for publication without permission of the Director of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game.

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game adheres to all applicable state and federal laws and regulations related to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, gender, or handicap. If you feel you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, or if you desire further information, please write to: Idaho Department of Fish and Game, PO Box 25, Boise, ID 83707; or the Office of Human Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20240.

This publication will be made available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact the Idaho Department of Fish and Game for assistance.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

STUDY OBJECTIVES.....1

PROCEDURES.....1

ABSTRACT.....1

RESULTS .....2

    DUCKS (ALL SPECIES).....2

        1991-1995 WATERFOWL MANAGEMENT PLAN GOALS .....2

        MANAGEMENT AREAS .....2

            Management Area One .....2

            Management Area Two.....4

            Management Area Three.....6

        POPULATION SURVEYS .....8

        HARVEST CHARACTERISTICS.....8

        CLIMATIC CONDITIONS.....8

        YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNT .....9

        MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS .....9

    GEESE (ALL SPECIES).....10

        1991-1995 WATERFOWL MANAGEMENT PLAN GOALS .....10

        MANAGEMENT AREAS .....10

            Management Area One .....10

            Management Area Two.....11

            Management Area Three.....12

            Management Area Four .....13

            Management Area Five.....13

        POPULATION SURVEYS .....14

        HARVEST CHARACTERISTICS.....14

        CLIMATIC CONDITIONS.....15

        MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS .....15

    TRUMPETER SWAN .....15

    TUNDRA SWAN .....15

    AMERICAN COOT .....16

    COMMON SNIPE .....16

    SANDHILL CRANE .....16

**TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)**

LITERATURE CITED .....16  
APPENDIX I .....25

**LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1. Birds counted during the mid-winter waterfowl survey, 1993-2003.....17  
Table 2. Estimated statewide harvest of ducks obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2002.....18  
Table 3. Results of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s waterfowl hunter survey for Idaho, 1988-2002. ....19  
Table 4. Canada geese counted in Idaho during the mid-winter survey, by Survey Area, 1993 to 2003. ....20  
Table 5. Estimated harvest of Canada geese from the Pacific Population obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2002. ....21  
Table 6. Estimated harvest of Canada geese from the Rocky Mountain Population obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2002.....22  
Table 7. Estimated statewide harvest of Canada geese obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2002. ....23

**LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1. Federal regulations for Canada goose seasons and bag and possession limits for Idaho, 2002-2003 season. ....24

**PROGRESS REPORT  
SURVEYS AND INVENTORIES**

<b>STATE:</b>	<u>Idaho</u>	<b>JOB TITLE:</b>	<u>Upland Game and Waterfowl</u>
<b>PROJECT:</b>	<u>W-170-R-27</u>		<u>Population Status and Trends</u>
<b>SUBPROJECT:</b>	<u>1-7</u>	<b>STUDY NAME:</b>	<u>Waterfowl Fall and Winter</u>
<b>STUDY:</b>	<u>II</u>		<u>Surveys, Banding, and Harvest</u>
<b>JOB:</b>	<u>3</u>		
<b>PERIOD COVERED:</b>	<u>October 1, 2002 to March 31, 2003</u>		

**STUDY OBJECTIVES**

1. Determine production and trends of resident waterfowl.
2. Estimate waterfowl harvest, hunter participation, and hunter opinions.
3. Determine waterfowl movements, distribution, and survival rates.

**PROCEDURES**

1. Conduct fall and winter aerial counts of waterfowl.
2. Evaluate the usefulness of fall surveys and consider new techniques to assess waterfowl numbers.
3. Conduct a telephone survey of hunting license buyers.
4. Operate check stations or field checks.
5. Band waterfowl and monitor movements and survival rates.

Harvest data were collected and analyzed by the Bureau of Wildlife. All other data were collected by personnel stationed in the state's seven regions and one sub-region.

**ABSTRACT**

Results of the mid-winter waterfowl population surveys conducted by regional personnel and results of harvest surveys are summarized and discussed. The 2003 count for total ducks and total waterfowl were both over 30% below the 2002 counts and the ten-year (1993-2002) average. Mallard numbers were down 43%, redheads up 24%, scaup up 210%, and ringnecks up 107%. Canada goose numbers were very similar to the ten-year average. Harvest data from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) showed duck harvest up 16% but goose only 57% of 2001. The Department conducted a waterfowl harvest survey for the 2002 season, the first state

survey since 1995. These harvest data were about 14% more than the USFWS goose harvest estimate and 45% higher than the USFWS duck harvest estimate. A total of 78 trumpeter swan cygnets were trapped and 39 were translocated to the lower Bear River near Preston in late 2002. A summary of the 2002-2003 waterfowl hunting seasons is provided.

## **RESULTS**

### **DUCKS (ALL SPECIES)**

#### **1991-1995 WATERFOWL MANAGEMENT PLAN GOALS**

1. Reverse the decline in number of duck hunters.
2. Reverse the decline in duck harvest.
3. Determine duck nesting success at least twice (every other year) on all WMAs where waterfowl production is a priority.
4. Maintain a 30% nest success for upland nesting ducks on WMAs where waterfowl production is a priority.
5. Develop and implement a predator management strategy for priority WMAs where nest success is less than 30%.
6. Establish duck production surveys in at least one region in cooperation with the USFWS.

#### **MANAGEMENT AREAS**

##### Management Area One

Description: See Appendix I.

Season: See Appendix I.

Daily Bag Limit: See Appendix I.

Possession Limit After First Day of Season: See Appendix I.

Background and Management Philosophy: Management Area One was established in 1985 by emergency order of the Fish and Game Commission. This order came as a result of a 1985 USFWS regulation which allowed Indian tribes to have hunting seasons for non-tribal members which differ from the remainder of the state. The first boundaries of Area One included only part of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation and were arrived at after negotiations between the Department, USFWS, and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. The Department did not object to the Tribes' request for a special hunt area because impacts to resident and migrant ducks and law enforcement problems were expected to be minimal.

Area One was enlarged after the 1985-1986 hunting season to include the entire Fort Hall Indian Reservation and portions of adjacent counties. The purpose was to place the entire reservation under one set of rules to avoid disputes between the Tribes and the State over Reservation boundaries.

Several times during the late 1980s and early 1990s, the USFWS denied the Department's request to rezone the state. This rezoning would have placed all of northern, central, and southeastern Idaho in one area and southwestern Idaho in another. The USFWS's reasons for denial were low duck numbers continent-wide, a fear of increased harvest, and a strict moratorium on rezoning until duck populations rebounded.

Prior to the 1985-1986 hunting season, the state was divided into two areas: those counties and parts of counties within the Columbia Basin Mallard Wintering Area (northern and southwestern Idaho), and the remainder of the state (central and southeastern Idaho). Bag and possession limits prior to the 1985-1986 season were seven and 14, respectively. Beginning in 1985-1986, season length and bag and possession limits were reduced as mandated by the USFWS because of poor duck production and recruitment continent-wide resulting from drought and habitat degradation.

Early in 1991, the USFWS and Pacific Flyway evaluated the effects of zones on duck harvests. They concluded that zones do not influence harvest and, consequently, the moratorium was lifted on changing zones beginning with the 1991-1992 season. As a result, the Department rezoned the state. It retained Area One with its previous boundaries and divided the remainder of the state into two zones or hunt areas.

Duck seasons in Area One from 1991-1992 through 1994-1995 opened on the fourth Saturday of October and ran continuously for 59 days. For the 1994-1995 season, the USFWS offered the State and Shoshone-Bannock Tribes two duck season options: a 59-day season with a five-bird daily bag limit (four mallards, only one female; one pintail; one canvasback; and two redheads) or a 69-day season with a four-bird daily bag limit (three mallards, only one female; one pintail; one canvasback; and two redheads). The Tribes selected the 59-day/five bird option; the Department did not object. The 1994-1995 season opened two weeks later than the goose season.

For 1995-1996, the USFWS offered the State and Shoshone-Bannock Tribes a 93-day season with a six-bird daily bag limit (only one female mallard, two pintails, two redheads, one canvasback). The Tribes chose a 93-day, 7 October through 7 January season and maximum limits; the Department did not object. The duck and goose seasons opened on the same day.

For 1996-1997, the USFWS offered the State and Shoshone-Bannock Tribes a 93-day season with a seven-bird daily bag limit (only one female mallard, two pintails, two redheads, one canvasback) and a one-day special youth hunt. The Tribes chose a 93-day, 5 October through 5 January season, maximum limits, and a special one-day youth hunt on 28 September; the Department did not object. The duck season opened one week after the goose season.

For 1997-1998, the USFWS offered the State and Shoshone-Bannock Tribes a 107-day season with a seven-bird bag limit (only two female mallards, three pintails, two redheads, one canvasback) and the option for a one-day special youth hunt. The Tribes chose a 106-day, 4 October through 17 January season, maximum limits, and a special one-day youth hunt on 27 September; the Department did not object. The duck season opened the same day as the goose season.

For 1998-1999, the USFWS offered the State the same season frameworks as in 1997-1998, except the pintail bag and possession limits were reduced from three and six, respectively, to two and four, respectively, and a full goose limit was added to the youth hunt. The Department selected a statewide, 106-day, 3 October through 16 January season, and a 26 September youth hunt with full duck, coot, and goose limits. Duck and goose seasons opened the same day.

For 1999-2000, the USFWS offered the State and Shoshone-Bannock Tribes the same season frameworks as in 1998-1999, except the scaup bag and possession limits were reduced to four and eight, respectively. The State and the Tribes chose a 106-day, 2 October through 15 January season, maximum limits, and a special one-day youth hunt on 25 September with full duck, coot, and goose limits. Duck and goose seasons opened the same day.

For 2000-2001, the USFWS offered the State and Shoshone-Bannock Tribes the same season frameworks as in 1999-2000. The State and the Tribes chose a 105-day, 7 October through 19 January season, maximum limits, and a special two-day youth hunt on 23-24 September with full duck, coot, and goose limits in Area One. Duck and goose seasons opened the same day.

For 2001-2002, the USFWS offered the State and Shoshone-Bannock Tribes the same 107-day season framework as in 2000-2001 with the exception of a “season within a season” of only 38 days for canvasbacks. The State and Tribes chose the same season frameworks as in 2000-2001 with Area One being 105 days with no split. There was a two-day youth waterfowl season on 22-23 September. The canvasback season was closed in Idaho, the only state to not allow some canvasback harvest.

For 2002-2003, the USFWS offered the same 107-day season as in 2001-2002 with the exception of a closed canvasback season and a 60-day “season within a season” for pintails. The Tribes chose to start their season one week earlier than the rest of the state, but both seasons were 105 days with no split. The two-day youth waterfowl season was 28-29 September.

## Management Area Two

Description: See Appendix I.

Season: See Appendix I.

Daily Bag Limit: See Appendix I.

Possession Limit After First Day of Season: See Appendix I.

Background and Management Philosophy: Management Area Two was established in 1991 as a result of the USFWS lifting its moratorium on zone changes. This area includes those counties which generally freeze up early. From 1985-1986 through 1990-1991, this portion of the state was included with south-central and southwestern Idaho because the USFWS prohibited more than two zones (the Fort Hall area and the remainder of the state). Prior to 1985-1986, much of Area Two was included in the Columbia Basin Mallard Wintering Area which had a 100-day season and bag and possession limits of seven and 14, respectively.

Prior to the 1988-1989 season, bag and possession limits for wood ducks in the northern five counties (Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai, and Shoshone Counties) were restricted to two. In 1988-1989, this restriction was lifted to take advantage of increasing local populations of wood ducks.

The 1991-1992 duck season in Area Two opened two weeks earlier than in 1990-1991 and ran continuously for 59 days. It also opened on the same day as goose season. In 1992-1993, the 59-day duck season was split at the request of some southeast Idaho hunters who requested some late season hunting; the season dates were 10 October through 29 November and 26 December through 2 January; the season opened one week later than the goose season. The 1993-1994 season was identical to the 1992-1993 season except for the one-day calendar shift.

For the 1994-1995 season, the USFWS offered the State two options: a 59-day season with a five-bird daily bag limit (four mallards, only one female; one pintail; one canvasback; two redheads) or a 69-day season with a four-bird daily bag limit (three mallards, only one female; one pintail; one canvasback; two redheads). The Department selected the 69-day/four-bird option. The Area Two season was split into two segments and opened one week after the goose season.

For 1995-1996, the USFWS offered the State a 93-day season with a six-bird daily bag limit (only one female mallard, two pintails, two redheads, one canvasback). The Department selected a 93-day, 7 October through 7 January season; the goose season opened one week before the duck season.

For 1996-1997, the USFWS offered the State a 93-day season with a seven-bird daily bag limit (only one female mallard, two pintails, two redheads, one canvasback) and a special one-day youth hunt. The Department selected a 93-day, 5 October through 5 January season and a 28 September youth hunt; the goose season opened one week before the duck season.

For 1997-1998, the USFWS offered the State a 107-day season with a seven-bird daily bag limit (only two female mallards, three pintails, two redheads, one canvasback) and the option for a one-day youth hunt. The Department selected a statewide, 106-day, 4 October through 17 January season and a 27 September youth hunt; the duck and goose seasons opened on the same day.

For 1998-1999, the USFWS offered the State the same season frameworks as in 1997-1998, except the pintail bag and possession limits were reduced from three and six, respectively, to two

and four, respectively, and a full goose limit was added to the youth hunt. The Department selected a statewide, 106-day, 3 October through 16 January season and a 26 September youth hunt with full duck, coot, and goose limits. Duck and goose seasons opened the same day.

For 1999-2000, the USFWS offered the State the same season frameworks as in 1998-1999, except the scaup bag and possession limits were reduced to four and eight, respectively. The Department selected a statewide, 106-day, 2 October through 15 January season, and a 25 September youth hunt with full duck, coot, and goose limits. Duck and goose seasons opened the same day.

For 2000-2001, the USFWS offered the State the same season frameworks as in 1999-2000. For Area Two, the Department selected a 105-day, 7-18 October and 21 October through 21 January season, and a 23-24 September youth hunt with full duck, coot, and goose limits. Duck and goose seasons opened the same day.

For 2001-2002, the USFWS offered the State the same season 107-day framework as in 2000-2001 with the exception of a “season within a season” of only 38 days for canvasbacks. The State chose the same season frameworks as in 2000-2001 with Area Two having a 105-day season with a two-day split which was on 18-19 October 2001. There was a two-day youth waterfowl season on 22-23 September. The canvasback season was closed in Idaho, the only state to not allow some canvasback harvest.

For 2002-2003, the USFWS offered the same 107-day season as in 2001-2002 with the exception of a closed canvasback season and a 60-day “season within a season” for pintails. The Tribes chose to start their season one week earlier than the rest of the state, but both seasons were 105 days with no split. The two-day youth waterfowl season was 28-29 September.

### Management Area Three

Description: See Appendix I.

Season: See Appendix I.

Daily Bag Limit: See Appendix I.

Possession Limit After First Day of Season: See Appendix I.

Background and Management Philosophy: Management Area Three was established in 1991-1992 as a result of the USFWS lifting its moratorium on zone changes. This area includes those counties which normally freeze up later than those in Area Two. From 1985-1986 through 1990-1991, this portion of the state was included with north and eastern Idaho because the USFWS prohibited more than two zones (the Fort Hall area and the remainder of the state). Prior to 1985-1986, Area Three was included in the Columbia Basin Mallard Wintering Area which had a 100-day season and bag and possession limits of seven and 14, respectively.

Seasons in 1991-1992 through 1993-1994 were 59 days in length and split into two segments. The first season of eight days opened on the second Saturday of October; the second season opened on the third Saturday of November in 1991 and on the second Saturday of November in 1992 and 1993. In 1993-1994, the first portion of the season opened one week later than the goose season.

For the 1994-1995 season, the USFWS offered the State two options: a 59-day season with a five-bird daily bag limit (four mallards, only one female; one pintail; one canvasback; two redheads) or a 69-day season with a four-bird daily bag limit (three mallards, only one female; one pintail; one canvasback; two redheads). The Department selected the 69-day/four-bird option. The Area Three season was split into two segments and opened one week after the goose season.

For 1995-1996, the USFWS offered the State a 93-day season with a six-bird daily bag limit (only one female mallard, two pintails, two redheads, one canvasback). The Department selected a split, 93-day (7-15 October and 26 October through 19 January) season. The goose season opened one week before the duck season.

For 1996-1997, the USFWS offered the State a 93-day season with a seven-bird daily bag limit (only one female mallard, two pintails, two redheads, one canvasback) and the option for a one-day youth hunt. The Department chose a split 93-day season (5-13 October and 26 October through 17 January) and a 28 September youth hunt. The goose season opened one week before the duck season.

For 1997-1998, the USFWS offered the State a 107-day season with a seven-bird daily bag limit (only two female mallards, three pintails, two redheads, one canvasback) and the option for a one-day youth hunt. The Department selected a statewide, 106-day, 4 October through 17 January season and a 27 September youth hunt; the duck and goose seasons opened on the same day.

For 1998-1999, the USFWS offered the State the same season frameworks as in 1997-1998, except the pintail bag and possession limits were reduced from three and six, respectively, to two and four, respectively, and a full goose limit was added to the youth hunt. The Department selected a statewide, 106-day, 3 October through 16 January season, and a 26 September youth hunt with full duck, coot, and goose limits. Duck and goose seasons opened the same day.

For 1999-2000, the USFWS offered the State the same season frameworks as in 1998-1999, except the scaup bag and possession limits were reduced to four and eight, respectively. The Department selected a statewide, 106-day, 2 October through 15 January season and a 25 September youth hunt with full duck, coot, and goose limits. Duck and goose seasons opened the same day.

For 2000-2001, the USFWS offered the State the same season frameworks as in 1999-2000. For Area Three, the Department selected a 105-day, 7-18 October and 21 October through

21 January season and a 23-24 September youth hunt with full duck, coot, and goose limits. Duck and goose seasons opened the same day.

For 2001-2002, the USFWS offered the State the same season 107-day framework as in 2000-2001 with the exception of a “season within a season” of only 38 days for canvasbacks. The State chose the same season frameworks as in 2000-2001 with Area Three having a 105-day season with a two-day split which was on 18-19 October 2001. There was a two-day youth waterfowl season on 22-23 September. The canvasback season was closed in Idaho, the only state to not allow some canvasback harvest.

For 2002-2003, the USFWS offered the same 107-day season as in 2001-2002 with the exception of a closed canvasback season and a 60-day “season within a season” for pintails. The Tribes chose to start their season one week earlier than the rest of the state, but both seasons were 105 days with no split. The two-day youth waterfowl season was 28-29 September.

### POPULATION SURVEYS

The mid-winter survey was the only population survey made during the reporting period. This survey is done annually in cooperation with the USFWS. The 2002 survey covered about 85% of the historical survey area. The USFWS predicted a 2002 mid-continent mallard fall flight of 8.9 million birds which is statistically similar to the estimate for 2001, (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2002).

### HARVEST CHARACTERISTICS

Telephone Survey: The Department estimated the Idaho waterfowl harvest for the 2002-2003 hunting season for the first time since 1995-1996 (Table 2). The 2002 duck harvest estimate was 233,500 or 45% above the USFWS estimate.

Federal Migratory Game Bird Harvest Information Program (FMGBHIP): The Department entered the FMGBHIP in early 1996. The goal of the program is to obtain improved harvest estimates for all species; by federal mandate, states provide the USFWS with names and addresses of all migratory game bird hunters from which the USFWS draws samples of hunters to survey. Due to computer problems, the Department was not able to comply for the 1996-1997 season and the USFWS was unable to estimate harvests using the FMGBHIP. The Department complied fully with the USFWSs request for information for the 1997-1998 through 2002-2003 seasons.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Hunter and Harvest Survey: The USFWSs preliminary estimate for the 2001-2002 duck harvest was 160,600, up 16% from the 2001 harvest.

### CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

The winter of 2002-2003 was cold and wet in November but dry in Southern Idaho with near normal temperatures the rest of the winter. The winter was better than normal in Northern Idaho. As a result, the timing of freeze-up was early in Idaho. The distribution of ducks during the fall

migration was somewhat atypical and duck hunting was generally only fair throughout much of the season.

### YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNT

For the third year, the USFWS offered all states the option of holding a two-day youth waterfowl hunt during the 2002-2003 season. Pacific Flyway states choosing the option were required to reduce their regular seasons by two days so as not to exceed the 107-day maximum length for migratory bird seasons. States were permitted to hold the hunt outside the regular season framework and regular-season limits applied. The Fish and Game Commission chose to take the option and selected 28-29 September for the hunt which was open to youth 12 through 15 years-of-age; it also chose full duck (including merganser), coot, and goose limits. The Department did not conduct surveys to estimate the number of participating youth; however, field personnel reported that participation was small.

### MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The Department continued to meet its 1991-1995 Waterfowl Management Plan goals of reversing the decline in number of duck hunters and ducks harvested since duck numbers remained good, hunter waterfowl validations (stamps) sold remained nearly stable, and the HIP harvest estimates continued to be strong.

The 1987 Legislature approved a \$5.00 (\$6.50 with the vendor fee) migratory waterfowl stamp which hunters 17 years-of-age and older were required to buy beginning with the 1987-1988 hunting season. In October 1987, the Department initiated the Habitat Improvement Program (HIP) funded by the revenue generated by this stamp, the upland game habitat stamp which was also authorized in 1987, and the sale of associated artwork. The migratory waterfowl stamp was reauthorized by the 1995 Legislature with no change in fee. Waterfowl stamp and artwork monies were used to purchase wetlands and develop and improve wetlands on private and government property through the use of cooperative agreements. Over the long term, these projects will help to increase numbers of ducks passing through and wintering in Idaho; they will also increase Idaho's duck production and help to offset any reduced flights of ducks out of Canada. It must be noted, however, that improved habitat and increased duck production in Idaho can only help to "buffer" the effect of fewer Canadian ducks; Idaho will never be able to fully compensate for reduced flights of ducks out of Canada.

Between 1988 and 1998, \$244,511.25 from the sale of state waterfowl stamp prints was paid to Ducks Unlimited to sponsor wetland development in Canada. The development of wetlands outside Idaho was mandated by state law. This money was used to sponsor the Keho Lake Project (\$340,700) and Kanegawa Project (\$74,200) in southern Alberta. Both projects have already been completed. The Kanegawa project has been paid in full. The balance due on the Keho Lake Project was \$52,987.03 at the beginning of this reporting period, and a final payment is planned for June 2003.

During the 2000 legislative session, the Department sponsored legislation that ended the habitat stamp program. The cost of these programs was integrated into the general hunting license.

Further funding of the HIP-programmed Canadian projects will be with license funding at a level that will be determined annually. In FY 2003, the funding was \$180,000.

Future management of ducks in Idaho will focus on improving habitat to attract more migrating and wintering birds; increasing local duck production; monitoring local production, especially on wildlife management areas; and adopting federal harvest regulations designed to take advantage of increasing duck populations.

## **GEESE (ALL SPECIES)**

### 1991-1995 WATERFOWL MANAGEMENT PLAN GOALS

1. Increase Idaho's breeding Canada goose populations and wintering populations.
2. Increase the annual goose harvest to 50,000 birds.
3. Maintain the average number of geese harvested per hunter per season above 3.0.
4. Increase hunter days to 130,000 annually.

### MANAGEMENT AREAS

#### Management Area One

Description: See Appendix I.

Season: See Appendix I.

Daily Bag Limit: See Appendix I.

Possession Limit After First Day of Season: See Appendix I.

Background and Management Philosophy: Management Area One (north Idaho) includes geese from the Pacific Population. Area One was created in 1990 to implement changes in seasons, limits, and hunt area boundaries identified in the 1991-1995 Waterfowl Management Plan. Federal regulations for Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai, and Shoshone Counties have, for many years, allowed for a 93-day season normally ending the third Sunday in January and bag and possession limits of three and six geese, respectively, in the aggregate (Figure 1). During the hunting seasons of 1986-1987 through 1989-1990, the Department established generally 86-day goose seasons and bag and possession limits of three and six geese, respectively, of which no more than two and four, respectively, could be dark geese. The purpose for the shorter season and reduced limits was to reduce the harvest of locally-produced birds and encourage population growth. The season was lengthened and limits increased to the maximum allowed (93 days, bag and possession limits of three and six, respectively) beginning with the 1990-1991 season to provide increased hunting opportunity because an analysis of banding data indicated harvest was not limiting the local population. Beginning with the 1993-1994 season, federal regulations

allowed for a 100-day season and bag and possession limits of four and eight, respectively, which is what the Department selected (Figure 1). The counties of Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis, and Nez Perce were added to Area One in 1993-1994 to take advantage of an increasing resident Canada goose flock. For 1998-1999, Area Two and Area Four were combined (they have the same season and limits) to simplify the hunting brochure.

The 1990-1991 goose season opened two weeks prior to the duck season. The 1991-1992 goose season opened the same weekend as the duck season. The 1992-1993, 1993-1994, 1994-1995, 1995-1996, and 1996-1997 goose seasons opened one week before the duck season. The 1997-1998 through 2001-2002 goose seasons opened the same weekend as the duck season. The 2002-2003 goose season opened one week after the duck season.

### Management Area Two

Description: See Appendix I.

Season: See Appendix I.

Daily Bag Limit: See Appendix I.

Possession Limit After the First Day of Season: See Appendix I.

Background and Management Philosophy: Management Area Two (southwestern and central Idaho) includes Canada geese from the Pacific Population. The area was created for the 1991-1992 hunting season to take advantage of increasing numbers of geese in southwestern Idaho. Prior to the 1991-1992 season, southwestern Idaho (part of the Southwest Region) was in Area Three and had restricted limits for part of the season to protect local breeding flocks. For the 1991-1992 season, southwestern Idaho was combined with the rest of central Idaho (the Clearwater Region; the remainder of the Southwest Region; and parts of the Magic Valley, Southeast, Upper Snake, and Salmon Regions) to create the new Area Two. This was possible because southwestern Idaho flocks had exceeded breeding pair objectives and it was determined they could sustain the additional harvest resulting from a 93-day season and bag and possession limits of two and four, respectively, season-long. The season and limits were the maximum allowed by federal regulations for southwestern Idaho but not for the Clearwater Region. In 1992-1993, Area Two was reduced slightly in size to simplify the boundary between Area Two and Area Four. This was accomplished by placing all of Custer and Lemhi Counties in Area Four, rather than splitting the counties on Highways 75 and 93. For the 1993-1994 season, Area Two was reduced further by placing five northern counties (Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis, and Nez Perce) in the more liberal Area One to take advantage of an increasing local flock of Canada geese.

For the 1994-1995 season, federal regulations allowed for a 100-day season and bag and possession limits of four and eight, respectively (Figure 1). The Department selected the 100-day season to take advantage of the healthy local population and strong migrant population but chose bag and possession limits of three and six dark geese, respectively, instead of the maximum allowed over concerns that a daily bag of four would result in an over-harvest of local

geese. The boundaries for Area Two for the 1994-1995 season were not changed from the preceding year.

For the seasons from 1995-1996 to 2000-2001, federal regulations remained unchanged; the Department retained its 100-day seasons and bag and possession limits of three and six dark geese, respectively. However, for the 1998-1999 season, the Department combined Area Two and Area Three (south-central Idaho) to simplify the hunting rules and hunting brochure.

In 1990-1991, the goose season in Area Two opened two weeks prior to the duck season. The 1991-1992 goose season opened the same weekend as the duck season in the northern portion and one week earlier than the duck season in the southern portion. In 1992-1993, 1993-1994, 1994-1995, 1995-1996, and 1996-1997, the goose seasons opened one week prior to the duck season. The 1997-1998 through 2001-2002 goose and duck seasons opened on the same day. The 2002-2003 goose season opened one week after the duck season.

### Management Area Three

Description: See Appendix I.

Season: See Appendix I.

Daily Bag Limit: See Appendix I.

Possession Limit After First Day of Season: See Appendix I.

Background and Management Philosophy: Management Area Three (south-central Idaho) has been under restrictive harvest management (more conservative than allowed by federal regulations) for many years to minimize the harvest of local geese. Seasons have had delayed opening dates and/or reduced bag and possession limits for all or part of the season. Management Area Three was Management Area Four prior to the 1991-1992 season. It includes both Pacific Population and Rocky Mountain Population geese. The boundary between the two populations is U.S. Highway 93 from the Idaho-Nevada border to Shoshone, State Highway 75 from Shoshone to Challis, and U.S. Highway 93 from Challis to the Montana-Idaho border. The Pacific Population occurs west of this boundary; the Rocky Mountain Population occurs to the east. The area was enlarged slightly for the 1991-1992 season to include parts of Camas and Elmore Counties and an additional portion of Blaine County because of low goose production. The area was enlarged again in 1992-1993 to include all of Blaine and Camas Counties because of low goose production.

The 1990-1991 season was the first season for many years that ran the maximum of 93 days allowed by federal regulations. From 1994-1995 through 1997-1998, seasons were extended to 100 days, the maximum allowed, but restrictive limits (two dark geese) were retained to protect local flocks (Figure 1). For 1998-1999, the dark goose daily limit was increased to three and Area Three was combined with Area Two to simplify hunting rules and the hunting brochure; the number designation for the Area was changed to Area Two.

The 1990-1991 goose season opened two weeks prior to the duck season. Beginning in 1991-1992, goose seasons in Area Three have opened one week prior to the duck season. The 1997-1998 through 2001-2002 goose and duck seasons opened on the same day. The 2002-2003 goose season opened one week after the duck season.

#### Management Area Four

Description: See Appendix I.

Season: See Appendix I.

Daily Bag Limit: See Appendix I.

Possession Limit After First Day of Season: See Appendix I.

Background and Management Philosophy: Management Area Four (eastern Idaho) was created in 1991-1992 to take advantage of increased limits and a 93-day season allowed by federal regulations. Bag and possession limits were increased from two and four, respectively, to three and six, respectively, for 1991-1992 due to increasing numbers of geese throughout the population. Beginning in 1993-1994, the season was increased to 100 days, the maximum allowed by federal regulations (Figure 1). Beginning in 1995-1996, daily bag and possession limits were increased to four and eight, respectively.

Prior to 1991-1992, eastern Idaho was combined with central Idaho to form Area Two. Goose seasons for Area Four have always been set to take full advantage of all days and maximum limits allowed by federal regulations. The 1990-1991 goose season in eastern Idaho opened two weeks prior to the duck season. In 1991-1992, the Area Four goose season opened the same weekend as the duck season. In 1992-1993, 1993-1994, 1994-1995, 1995-1996, and 1996-1997, the goose season opened one week prior to the duck season. The 1997-1998 goose and duck seasons opened on the same day.

For 1998-1999, Area One and Area Two (they have the same season and limits) were combined to simplify the hunting brochure; the number designation for the area was changed to Area One. The west half of Power County was placed in the new Area Two (southwest and south-central Idaho) to simplify boundaries and the hunting brochure. The duck and goose seasons opened the same day in 1999-2000 through 2001-2002. The 2002-2003 goose season opened one week after the duck season.

White goose hunting has been closed in Fremont and Teton Counties for a number of years to reduce the accidental shooting of trumpeter swans.

#### Management Area Five

Description: See Appendix I.

Season: See Appendix I.

Daily Bag Limit: See Appendix I.

Possession Limit After First Day of Season: See Appendix I.

Background and Management Philosophy: Management Area Five was created in 1987 to conform with Area One for ducks. This was made necessary because the Shoshone-Bannock Indian Tribes requested a goose hunting season for non-tribal members which differed from the rest of the state. See “Ducks, Management Area One” for additional information. The Department has not objected to the Tribes’ request for a special goose season because their impacts on local and migrant geese and law enforcement problems have been minimal.

Management Area Five includes Rocky Mountain Population Canada geese. Federal regulations allowed for a 93-day season from 1990-1991 through 1992-1993; prior to that time, 86 days were permitted. Beginning in 1993-1994, federal regulations permitted a 100-day season, but the Tribes chose not to take the additional seven days available in 1993-1994 and 1994-1995; they did take all 100 days beginning in 1995-1996. Bag and possession limits were increased from two and four, respectively, to three and six, respectively, beginning with the 1991-1992 season to take advantage of increasing numbers of geese throughout the population (Figure 1). Beginning in 1995-1996, bag and possession limits were increased to four and eight, respectively. For 1998-1999, the Tribes selected opening and closing dates the same as the rest of the state. Because Areas One and Four and Areas Two and Three were combined, the number designation for Area Five was changed to Area Three.

The 1990-1991 goose season in Area Five opened one week prior to the duck season. From 1991-1992 through 1994-1995, the goose season opened two weeks prior to the duck season. In 1995-1996 and 1996-1997, the duck and goose seasons opened at the same time. In 1997-1998, the goose season opened six days after the duck season. In 1998-1999 through 2002-2003, the duck and goose seasons again opened at the same time.

## POPULATION SURVEYS

Mid-winter Survey: The mid-winter survey was the only population survey made during the reporting period. This survey is done annually in cooperation with the USFWS. The 2001 survey was limited due to flying restrictions because of a fatal aircraft crash. The 2003 survey covered 85% of historical survey areas.

## HARVEST CHARACTERISTICS

Telephone Survey: The Department used a telephone survey to estimate harvest for the first time since 1995. The estimate for 2002-2003 was 41,800 (Table 7).

Federal Migratory Game Bird Harvest Information Program (FMGBHIP): The Department entered the FMGBHIP in early 1996. The goal of the program is to obtain improved harvest estimates for all species; by federal mandate, states provide the USFWS with names and addresses of all migratory game bird hunters from which the USFWS draws samples of hunters to survey. Due to computer problems, the Department was not able to comply for the 1996-1997

season and the USFWS was unable to estimate harvests using the FMGBHIP. The Department complied fully with the USFWSs request for information for the 1997-1998 through 2002-2003 seasons.

The USFWSs estimate for the 2002-2003 goose harvest was 36,700 or 43% below the estimate for 2001-2002. The USFWSs harvest estimates for previous years also appear in Table 3.

### **CLIMATIC CONDITIONS**

The winter of 2002-2003 was cold and wet in November but dry with near normal temperatures the rest of the winter. As a result, the timing of freeze-up was early in eastern and northern Idaho and normal to more-open than normal in the rest of the state.

### **MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The Department continued to meet its 1991-1995 Waterfowl Management Plan goals for the total harvest, harvest per hunter per season, and total days hunted statewide since goose numbers remained good in 2002-2003, and hunter validations (stamps) sold remained up substantially from 1990.

The Department's ongoing HIP Program (discussed previously in the duck section) will continue to improve wetland habitat for Canada geese. Future management will be directed toward improving habitat through HIP to attract greater numbers of geese to migrate through and winter in Idaho, increasing local production, and providing maximum hunting opportunity within the framework authorized by the USFWS and within the amount allowable while still meeting local population objectives. Goose depredation problems are becoming significant in some urban areas and will require new strategies to manage these nuisance birds.

### **TRUMPETER SWAN**

A total of 39 trumpeter swan cygnets were translocated from Harriman State Park to the lower Bear River near Preston during the reporting period. Another 39 cygnets were captured and left at the park. In 2003, the Department wrote a study plan for a three-year project to evaluate the effectiveness of this management technique to increase winter distribution of trumpeter swans. The project will include a graduate student project at the University of Idaho.

The Department also continued assisting in monitoring swan movements and distribution across Idaho. An implementation plan for the 1998 Pacific Flyway Trumpeter Swan Management Plan was completed in July 2002.

### **TUNDRA SWAN**

The Department's 1991-1995 Waterfowl Management Plan goals for the tundra swan are to (1) maintain current migrations through Idaho and (2) meet the demand for non-consumptive use. However, during the reporting period, this species received little management emphasis in Idaho. This is because the tundra swan is not classified by the state as a game bird and the

species benefits indirectly from other wildlife management programs. Only 178 tundra swans were counted in Idaho during the 2003 mid-winter waterfowl survey (Table 1).

### **AMERICAN COOT**

The Department's 1991-1995 Waterfowl Management Plan goals for the American coot are to (1) maintain Idaho's population, (2) increase the harvest, and (3) provide maximum recreational opportunity. However, during the reporting period, this species received little management emphasis. This is because the American coot is not an important game bird in Idaho and because it benefits indirectly from other wildlife management programs. The 2002-2003 coot harvest estimate was not available when this report was written.

### **COMMON SNIPE**

The Department's 1991-1995 Waterfowl Management Plan goals for the common snipe are to (1) maintain Idaho's common snipe population and (2) maintain the harvest. However, during the reporting period, this species received little management attention. This is because the common snipe is not an important game bird in Idaho and because it benefits indirectly from other wildlife management programs. The snipe harvest was not estimated for the 2002-2003 season.

### **SANDHILL CRANE**

The Department's 1991-1995 Waterfowl Management Plan goals for the Sandhill crane are to (1) maintain current breeding populations and their distribution, (2) maintain current migrations through Idaho, and (3) meet the demand for non-consumptive use. In 1997, the Fish and Game Commission reaffirmed its earlier decision to reclassify the Sandhill crane from a non-game bird to a migratory game bird. This decision came as a result of increased crop damage complaints. Also in 1997, the Bureau of Wildlife prepared and submitted to the Commission a plan titled "Management Plan for Reducing Sandhill Crane Crop Damage in Eastern Idaho"; the plan was subsequently approved by the Commission on 17 April 1997. Activities during this reporting period were limited to developing recommendations for 2003 hunts.

### **LITERATURE CITED**

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2002. Waterfowl population status, 2002. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Migratory Bird Management, Laurel, Maryland, USA.

Table 1. Birds counted during the mid-winter waterfowl survey, 1993-2003.

Species	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	<sup>a</sup> 2001	2002	1993-2002 10-yr. avg.	<sup>b</sup> 2003	% Change from	
													Previous Year	10-yr. avg.
Mallard	152,968	171,300	149,479	159,160	140,230	304,126	284,670	261,425	106,516	168,844	189,872	108,034	-36	-43
Gadwall	60	1,505	973	1,482	191	279	186	1,058	45	261	604	602	131	0
Widgeon	7,444	10,624	10,763	9,884	3,463	2,130	3,686	4,164	1,189	1,412	5,476	6,900	389	26
Green-winged Teal	748	705	673	1,702	126	55	118	202	142	249	472	363	46	-23
Blue-winged/ Cinnamon Teal	20	48	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	-	0	-	-
Shoveler	233	376	23	368	151	31	271	88	1	17	156	25	47	-84
Pintail	112	8,792	432	6,671	2,150	362	1,649	405	1,696	179	2,245	49	-73	-98
Wood duck	147	35	147	334	157	314	277	290	38	503	224	55	-89	-75
Redhead	4,249	8,293	32,829	11,431	16,731	8,209	23,589	17,643	12,750	35,993	17,172	21,324	-41	24
Canvasback	309	161	215	107	168	19	323	165	0	333	180	20	-94	-89
Scaup	2,919	1,713	877	5,177	3,498	2,342	5,275	3,398	7,436	12,313	4,495	9,900	-20	120
Ringneck	965	1,782	4,657	1,404	566	353	734	1,232	282	4,445	1,642	3,411	-23	108
Goldeneye	15,873	13,774	13,775	14,842	10,822	14,090	21,731	19,674	11,921	15,219	15,172	12,018	-21	-21
Bufflehead	431	507	675	1,829	935	1,197	3,141	654	752	1,193	1,131	763	-36	-33
Ruddy duck	57	118	84	79	50	52	225	13	0	7	69	12	71	-83
Merganser	1,380	2,849	3,460	5,111	2,760	3,835	3,418	3,952	1,732	2,792	3,129	1,571	-44	-50
Unidentified ducks	4,529	3,928	20,037	7,841	23,154	3,894	13,667	752	324	835	7,896	225	-73	-97
Total ducks	192,444	226,510	239,099	227,422	205,152	341,288	362,960	315,115	144,824	244,607	249,942	168,014	-31	-33
Snow goose	1	3	0	10	1	18	4	0	0	1	-	0	-	-
Ross'	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	-	0	-	-
Canada goose	27,681	33,755	43,855	70,254	41,433	58,430	66,384	37,961	39,474	29,374	44,860	43,489	48	-3
Lesser Canada	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-	-
Cackling goose	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-	-
White-front	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	-	0	-	-
Total geese	27,682	33,758	43,856	70,267	41,435	58,448	66,389	37,962	39,474	29,375	44,865	43,489	48	-3
Tundra swan	5	56	167	148	154	85	110	220	174	205	132	178	-13	35
Trumpeter swan	1,052	275	0	0	0	0	0	139	0	1,783	325	1,730	-3	432
Unidentified swan	<sup>c</sup> 1,109	244	<sup>c</sup> 1,193	<sup>c</sup> 1,263	<sup>c</sup> 1,411	<sup>c</sup> 1,283	<sup>c</sup> 1,474	<sup>c</sup> 1,940	201	5	1,012	150	2,900	-85
Coot	3,054	9,164	13,958	26,109	14,665	15,324	20,712	38,253	25,763	33,285	20,029	16,042	-52	-20
Total waterfowl	225,346	270,007	298,273	325,209	262,817	416,428	451,645	393,629	210,436	309,260	316,305	229,603	-26	-27

<sup>a</sup> Approximately 1/3 of the state's winter habitat was not counted in 2001 because of a fatal aircraft crash and subsequent flying moratorium.

<sup>b</sup> Approximately 15% of the state's winter habitat was not counted in 2003 because inclement weather limited aerial surveys in the Magic Valley.

<sup>c</sup> Primarily trumpeter swans.

Table 2. Estimated statewide harvest of ducks obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2002.

Year	% of License Buyers Sampled	Harvest	Average Birds per Hunter per Year	Hunters	Days Hunted	Days Hunted per Hunter per Year
1988	4.6	154,400 ± 21,700	9.1	17,000 ± 1,100	111,100 ± 9,300	6.5
1989	3.0	147,000 ± 24,300	8.9	16,500 ± 1,400	116,700 ± 11,500	7.1
1990	3.0	157,800 ± 22,600	9.6	16,400 ± 1,300	120,800 ± 9,800	7.4
1991	4.0	181,500 ± 25,400	10.5	17,300 ± 1,200	156,000 ± 13,000	9.0
1992	2.5	210,700 ± 36,300	11.7	18,000 ± 1,700	145,100 ± 14,300	8.1
1993 <sup>a,b</sup>	2.5 <sup>c</sup>	252,100 ± <sup>a</sup>	13.4	18,800 ± <sup>a</sup>	217,400 ± <sup>a</sup>	11.6
1994 <sup>a,b</sup>	5.3	300,300 ± 23,400	15.6	19,400 ± 4,000	243,900 ± 16,200	12.6
1995 <sup>b</sup>	3.9 <sup>c</sup>	416,300 ± 33,300	17.9 ± 1.4 <sup>d</sup>	23,300 ± 4,000	309,400 ± 33,500	13.3 ± .7 <sup>d</sup>
1996 <sup>e</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-
1997 <sup>e</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-
1998 <sup>e</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-
1999 <sup>e</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-
2000 <sup>e</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-
2001 <sup>e</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-
2002	4.4 <sup>f</sup>	233,500	12.3	19,000	170,000	9.0

<sup>a</sup> Confidence intervals not available.

<sup>b</sup> Survey was conducted by a private contractor using some procedures which differed from those used by the Department in preceding years. Consequently, estimates are not comparable to those for preceding years.

<sup>c</sup> Approximate.

<sup>d</sup> 95% confidence interval.

<sup>e</sup> No harvest estimate; survey not conducted.

<sup>f</sup> A total of 839 duck hunters were contacted or about 4.4% of the estimated 19,000 duck hunters.

Table 3. Results of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's waterfowl hunter survey for Idaho, 1988-2002<sup>a</sup>.

Year	Number Duck Stamps Sold	Estimated Active Adult Hunters	Total Geese Harvested	Total Ducks Harvested
1988	16,597	14,271	26,600	112,900
1989	16,894	14,073	30,500	119,600
1990	17,036	13,443	36,800	96,700
1991	17,151	14,144	39,500	117,880
1992	17,717	14,132	31,700	126,700
1993	21,761	17,972	45,600	153,200
1994	21,229	17,418	61,100	141,300
1995	21,097	18,395	46,900	203,400
1996	22,382	19,751	61,100	245,800
1997	23,697	22,241	40,700	248,600
1998	23,515	21,006	56,700	254,700
1999	24,033	20,795	28,500	228,300
2000	27,134	23,306	86,200	173,200
2001	24,278	-	64,400	138,600
2002 <sup>b</sup>	21,949	-	36,700	160,600

<sup>a</sup> Adjusted for exaggeration memory bias and juvenile hunter density.

<sup>b</sup> Preliminary estimate July 2003.

Table 4. Canada geese counted in Idaho during the mid-winter survey by Survey Area<sup>a</sup>, 1993 to 2003.

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	<sup>b</sup> 2001	2002	2003
Survey Area #1	709	1,418	1,845	1,448	1,386	817	843	1,331	NS	839	1,730
Survey Area #2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	NS	0	0
Survey Area #3	0	0	0	0	0	28	37	0	NS	0	0
Survey Area #4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	NS	0	0
Survey Area #5	6,179	2,262	6,517	38,968	17,318	14,891	29,310	5,720	18,172	9,233	15,662
Survey Area #6	656	7	225	2,158	974	2,425	314	25	NS	153	NS
Survey Area #7	298	1,685	2,794	98	4,014	3,861	4,453	604	NS	2,273	493
Survey Area #7A	1,666	7,512	2,349	4,496	4,438	4,717	3,280	702	NS	2,144	NS
Survey Area #7B	3,595	5,436	2,514	2,322	2,652	2,953	1,261	278	NS	1,413	NS
Survey Area #8A	6,349	2,384	9,381	4,891	3,362	2,610	14,075	5,080	12,710	2,190	5,423
Survey Area #8B	6,488	3,001	2,968	2,736	2,479	4,575	4,730	1,029	4,129	551	4,479
Survey Area #9	550	3,460	7,218	3,893	2,314	5,639	3,366	7,498	1,838	3,499	1,850
Survey Area #10	976	6,549	7,286	6,814	1,189	14,519	4,309	14,130	1,212	6,029	13,540
Survey Area #11	215	41	758	2,433	1,307	1,395	406	1,560	1,413	1,050	312
Total	27,681	33,755	43,855	70,257	41,433	58,430	66,384	37,957	39,474	29,374	43,489
Rocky Mountain Population <sup>c</sup>	9,210	11,199	10,936	47,070	24,116	22,878	33,784	7,778	18,172	12,369	17,392
Percent	33	33	25	67	58	39	51	21	46	42	40
Pacific Population <sup>c</sup>	18,471	22,556	32,919	23,187	17,317	35,552	32,600	30,184	21,302	17,005	26,097
Percent	67	67	75	33	42	61	49	79	54	58	60
Pacific Population Plan Unit 2 <sup>d</sup>	17,280	15,966	24,875	13,940	14,821	19,638	27,885	14,494	18,677	9,926	12,245
Pacific Population Plan Unit 4 <sup>d</sup>	1,191	6,590	8,044	9,247	2,496	15,914	4,715	15,690	2,625	7,079	13,852

<sup>a</sup> Survey Areas are as follows: #1 = South Fork Snake River to Palisades Reservoir, Teton River, Buffalo River, Island Park Reservoir, North Fork (Henry's Fork) of the Snake River and tributaries; #2 = Market Lake Wildlife Management Area, Roberts Slough; #3 = Mud Lake Wildlife Management Area, Camas Creek, Independent Canal; #4 = Camas National Wildlife Refuge; #5 = American Falls Reservoir, Snake River from Massacre Rocks to Blackfoot, Clear Creek, Spring Creek; #6 = Minidoka National Wildlife Refuge; #7 = Hagerman Wildlife Management Area; #7A = Snake River from Massacre Rocks to U.S. Hwy. 93; #7B = Snake River from U.S. Hwy. 93 to State Hwy. 51; #8A = Snake River from State Hwy. 51 to the Ada-Canyon County line (except the Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge portion), C.J. Strike Wildlife Management Area, Payette River, Boise River; #8B = Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge portion of the Snake River (Ada-Canyon County line to Farewell Bend); #9 = Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge (Lake Lowell only); #10 = Pend Oreille River, Clark Fork River, Pend Oreille Lake, Coeur d'Alene Lake, Coeur d'Alene River ; #11 = Lower Clearwater River, Mann's Lake.

<sup>b</sup> Survey is incomplete because of an aircraft crash and IDFG flight restrictions.

<sup>c</sup> Rocky Mountain Population includes Survey Areas 1 through 6 and 7A; Pacific Population includes Survey Areas 7, 7B, and 8A through 11.

<sup>d</sup> Pacific Population Canada Goose Management Plan Units, Pacific Flyway. Pacific Population Plan Unit 2 includes Survey Areas 7, 7B, 8A, 8B, and 9. Pacific Population Plan Unit 4 includes Survey Areas 10 and 11.

Table 5. Estimated harvest of Canada geese from the Pacific Population<sup>a</sup> obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2002.

Year	% of License Buyers Sampled	Harvest	Hunters	Days Hunted
1988	4.6	19,700 ± 5,300	5,800 ± 700	45,800 ± 5,500
1989	3.0	20,900 ± 5,900	6,600 ± 900	50,100 ± 8,500
1990	3.0	27,300 ± 8,300	5,300 ± 800	43,900 ± 6,800
1991	4.0	42,700 ± 19,300	5,300 ± 700	52,700 ± 7,300
1992	2.5	40,900 ± 14,200	8,100 ± 1,200	67,500 ± 10,500
1993 <sup>b</sup>	2.5	43,000 <sup>c</sup> ± <sup>d</sup>	10,400 ± <sup>d</sup>	88,700 ± <sup>d</sup>
1994 <sup>b</sup>	5.5	73,000 <sup>c</sup> ± <sup>d</sup>	<sup>d</sup>	<sup>d</sup>
1995 <sup>b</sup>	3.9 <sup>c</sup>	64,700 ± 8,500	15,300 ± 3,500	140,000 ± <sup>d</sup>
1996 <sup>e</sup>	-	-	-	-
1997 <sup>e</sup>	-	-	-	-
1998 <sup>e</sup>	-	-	-	-
1999 <sup>e</sup>	-	-	-	-
2000 <sup>e</sup>	-	-	-	-
2001 <sup>e</sup>	-	-	-	-
2002	4.4 <sup>f</sup>	24,500 <sup>g</sup> ± <sup>d</sup>	8,500 ± <sup>d</sup>	75,700 ± <sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Generally west of U.S. Highway 93 (Ada, Adams, Benewah, Boise, Bonner, Boundary, Camas, Canyon, Elmore, Gem, Gooding, Idaho, Jerome, Kootenai, Latah, Lewis, Nez Perce, Owyhee, Payette, Shoshone, Twin Falls, Valley, and Washington Counties).

<sup>b</sup> Survey was conducted by a private contractor using some procedures which differed from those used by the Department in preceding years. Consequently, estimates are not comparable to those for preceding years.

<sup>c</sup> Rough estimate.

<sup>d</sup> Not available. Other years show 95% confidence interval.

<sup>e</sup> No harvest estimate; survey not conducted.

<sup>f</sup> A total of 553 goose hunters were contacted or about 4.4% of the 12,500 estimated goose hunters.

<sup>g</sup> The proportion of PP geese in the Magic Valley was estimated to be 67%.

Table 6. Estimated harvest of Canada geese from the Rocky Mountain Population<sup>a</sup> obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2002.

Year	% of License Buyers Sampled	Harvest	Hunters	Days Hunted
1988	4.6	18,600 ± 6,900	4,300 ± 600	32,300 ± 5,800
1989	3.0	25,600 ± 9,300	5,000 ± 800	45,600 ± 14,100
1990	3.0	31,400 ± 12,700	6,300 ± 800	54,100 ± 14,100
1991	4.0	28,500 ± 8,000	7,700 ± 800	64,400 ± 6,900
1992	2.5	20,100 ± 8,300	4,300 ± 900	31,700 ± 6,900
1993 <sup>b</sup>	2.5	31,100 <sup>c</sup> ± <sup>d</sup>	6,400 ± <sup>d</sup>	56,700 ± <sup>d</sup>
1994 <sup>b</sup>	5.5	29,400 <sup>c</sup> ± <sup>d</sup>	<sup>d</sup>	<sup>d</sup>
1995 <sup>b</sup>	3.9 <sup>c</sup>	33,400 ± 6,600	5,700 ± 2,100	61,600 ± <sup>d</sup>
1996 <sup>e</sup>	-	-	-	-
1997 <sup>e</sup>	-	-	-	-
1998 <sup>e</sup>	-	-	-	-
1999 <sup>e</sup>	-	-	-	-
2000 <sup>e</sup>	-	-	-	-
2001 <sup>e</sup>	-	-	-	-
2002	4.4 <sup>f</sup>	17,400 <sup>g</sup> ± <sup>d</sup>	4,400 ± <sup>d</sup>	35,600 ± <sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Generally east of U.S. Highway 93 (Bannock, Bear Lake, Bingham, Blaine, Bonneville, Caribou, Cassia, Custer, Franklin, Fremont, Jefferson, Lemhi, Lincoln, Madison, Minidoka, Oneida, Power, and Teton Counties).

<sup>b</sup> Survey was conducted by a private contractor using some procedures which differed from those used by the Department in preceding years. Consequently, estimates are not comparable to those for preceding years.

<sup>c</sup> Rough estimate.

<sup>d</sup> Not available. Other years show 95% confidence interval.

<sup>e</sup> No harvest estimate; survey not conducted.

<sup>f</sup> A total of 553 goose hunters were contacted or about 4.4% of the 12,500 estimated goose hunters.

<sup>g</sup> The proportion of RMP geese in the Magic Valley was estimated to be 33%.

Table 7. Estimated statewide harvest of Canada geese obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2002.

Year	% of License Buyers Sampled	Harvest	Average Birds per Hunter per Year	Hunters	Days Hunted	Days Hunted per Hunter per Year
1988	4.6	38,300 ± 7,000	3.8	10,200 ± 900	78,200 ± 8,100	7.7
1989	3.0	46,500 ± 10,400	4.0	11,600 ± 1,200	95,700 ± 14,000	8.3
1990	3.0	58,700 ± 15,100	5.1	11,600 ± 1,100	98,000 ± 9,700	8.4
1991	4.0	71,200 ± 19,800	5.5	13,000 ± 1,100	117,100 ± 10,100	9.0
1992	2.5	61,000 ± 17,000	4.9	12,400 ± 1,500	99,200 ± 12,100	8.0
1993 <sup>a</sup>	2.5 <sup>b</sup>	74,100 ± 11,500	4.4	16,800 ± 400	145,400 ± 12,600	8.7
1994 <sup>a</sup>	5.3	102,500 ± 11,500	5.6	17,800 ± 4,000	178,000 ± 13,400	10.1
1995 <sup>a</sup>	3.9 <sup>b</sup>	98,000 ± 10,800	4.7 ± .5 <sup>c</sup>	21,000 ± 4,100	201,600 ± 13,200	9.6 ± .6 <sup>c</sup>
1996 <sup>d</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-
1997 <sup>d</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-
1998 <sup>d</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-
1999 <sup>d</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-
2000 <sup>d</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-
2001 <sup>d</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-
2002	4.4 <sup>e</sup>	41,800	3.3	12,500	110,200	8.8

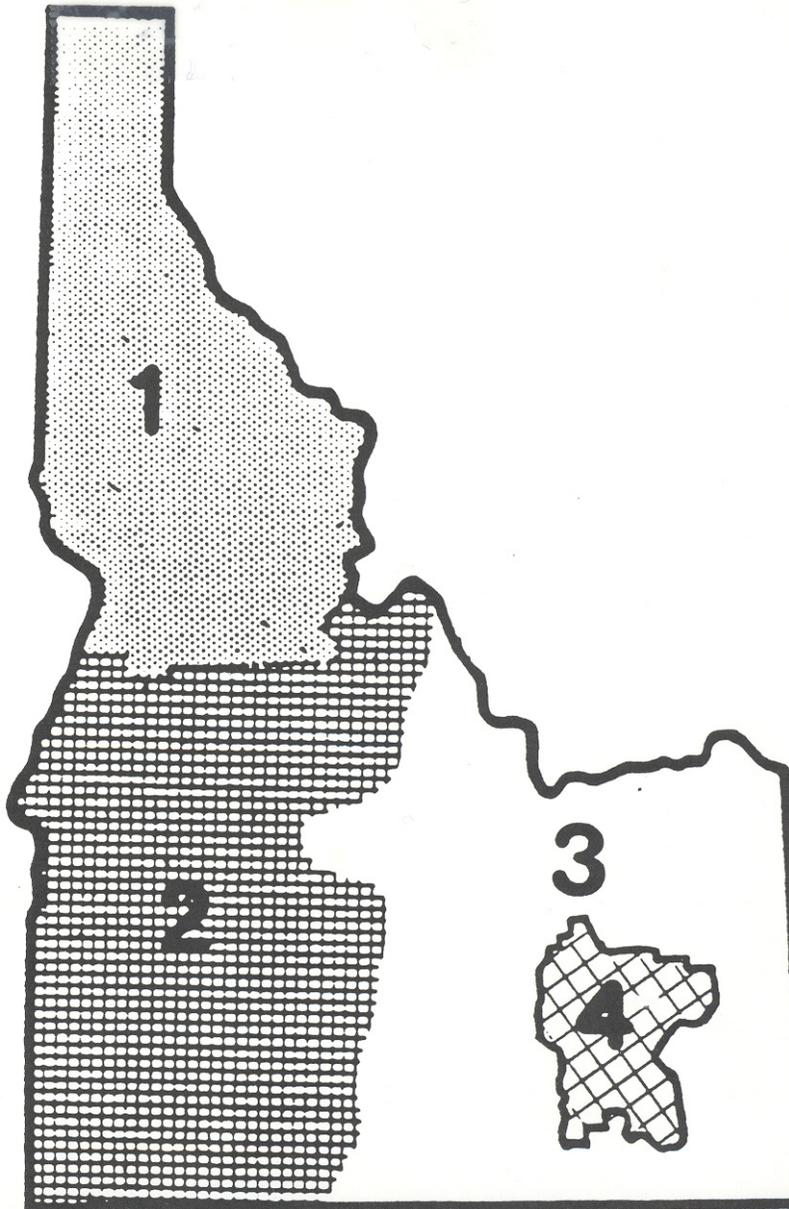
<sup>a</sup> Survey was conducted by a private contractor using some procedures which differed from those used by the Department in preceding years. Consequently, estimates are not comparable to those for preceding years.

<sup>b</sup> Approximate.

<sup>c</sup> 95% confidence interval.

<sup>d</sup> No harvest estimate; survey not conducted.

<sup>e</sup> A total of 553 goose hunters were contacted or about 4.4% of the 12,500 estimated goose hunters.



Zone 1: 107-day season from 21 September 2002 through 26 January 2003. Daily bag limit - 4 geese including not more than 3 light geese and 2 white-fronted geese. Possession limit - twice the daily bag limit. (Pacific Population)

Zone 2: Same as Zone 1. (Pacific Population)

Zone 3: 107-day season from 21 September 2002 through 26 January 2003. Daily bag limit - 4 geese including not more than 2 white-fronted geese. Possession limit - twice the daily bag limit. (Rocky Mountain Population)

Zone 4: Same as Zone 3. This zone includes the Fort Hall Indian Reservation and some adjacent land. This zone does not appear in federal regulations; it is shown here because federal regulations permit the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes to establish seasons on their reservation for non-tribal members.

Figure 1. Federal regulations for Canada goose seasons and bag and possession limits for Idaho, 2002-2003 season.

**APPENDIX I**

IDAHO

2002-2003 SEASON

WATERFOWL RULES

# Waterfowl Seasons & Rules

Idaho  
Department of  
Fish & Game



REGULATIONS  
2002-2003



photo by Sharon Watson

## Waterfowl Seasons

Including: **COMMON  
SNIPE AND  
AMERICAN COOT**

- Federal Migratory Game Bird Harvest Information Program Validation—REQUIRED
- Nontoxic Shot—REQUIRED
- Federal Migratory Bird Stamp—REQUIRED (All hunters 16 or older)

## GOOSE SEASONS AND HUNT AREA DESCRIPTIONS

(Including: DARK GEESE — Canada and White-fronted;  
LIGHT GEESE — Ross' and Snow)

### AREA 1

**Area 1 includes the following counties or portions of counties:**

Bear Lake; Benewah; Bingham within the Blackfoot Reservoir drainage; Bonner; Bonneville; Boundary; Butte; Caribou EXCEPT the Fort Hall Indian Reservation; Clark; Clearwater; Custer; Franklin; Fremont; Idaho; Jefferson; Kootenai; Latah; Lemhi; Lewis; Madison; Nez Perce; Oneida; Shoshone; and Teton counties. EXCEPT, Fremont and Teton counties are CLOSED to the taking of light geese.

**OPEN SEASON: OCTOBER 19, 2002 THROUGH JANUARY 24, 2003**

### AREA 2

**Area 2 includes the following counties or portions of counties:**

Ada; Adams; Boise; Canyon; Elmore west and north of State Highway 20 and west of State Highway 51; Gem; Owyhee west of State Highway 51; Payette; Valley; and Washington counties.

**OPEN SEASON: OCTOBER 19, 2002 THROUGH JANUARY 24, 2003**

### AREA 3

**Area 3 includes the following counties or portions of counties:**

Bannock; Bingham EXCEPT that portion within the Blackfoot Reservoir drainage; Power east of State Highway 37 and State Highway 39; and all lands, including private holdings, within the Fort Hall Indian Reservation.

**OPEN SEASON: OCTOBER 5, 2002 THROUGH JANUARY 10, 2003**

### AREA 4

**Area 4 includes the following counties or portions of counties:**

Blaine; Camas; Cassia; Elmore east and south of State Highway 20 and east of State Highway 51; Gooding; Jerome; Lincoln; Minidoka; Owyhee east of Highway 51; Power west of State Highway 37 and State Highway 39; and Twin Falls counties.

**OPEN SEASON: OCTOBER 19, 2002 THROUGH JANUARY 24, 2003**

### SPECIAL YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNTING DAYS

- Duck (including merganser and pintails), goose, and coot hunting open for two days only, on September 28 and 29, 2002, to youth 12 through 15 years of age.
- Hunting license — **REQUIRED**.
- Federal migratory game bird harvest information program validation — **REQUIRED**.
- Federal migratory bird stamp — **NOT REQUIRED**.
- **Daily duck (including merganser), goose, and coot bag limits:** Same limits statewide that are in effect during regular seasons.
- At least one adult 18 years of age or older having a valid hunting license, must accompany each youth hunting party into the field at all times. **ADULTS ARE NOT AUTHORIZED TO HUNT.**
- All other state rules and federal regulations pertaining to the taking of migratory game birds are in effect for this hunt.

**HELP PRESERVE THE TRADITION —  
TAKE A KID WATERFOWL HUNTING!**

## GOOSE LIMITS AND HUNT AREAS

### AREAS 1, 2, AND 3

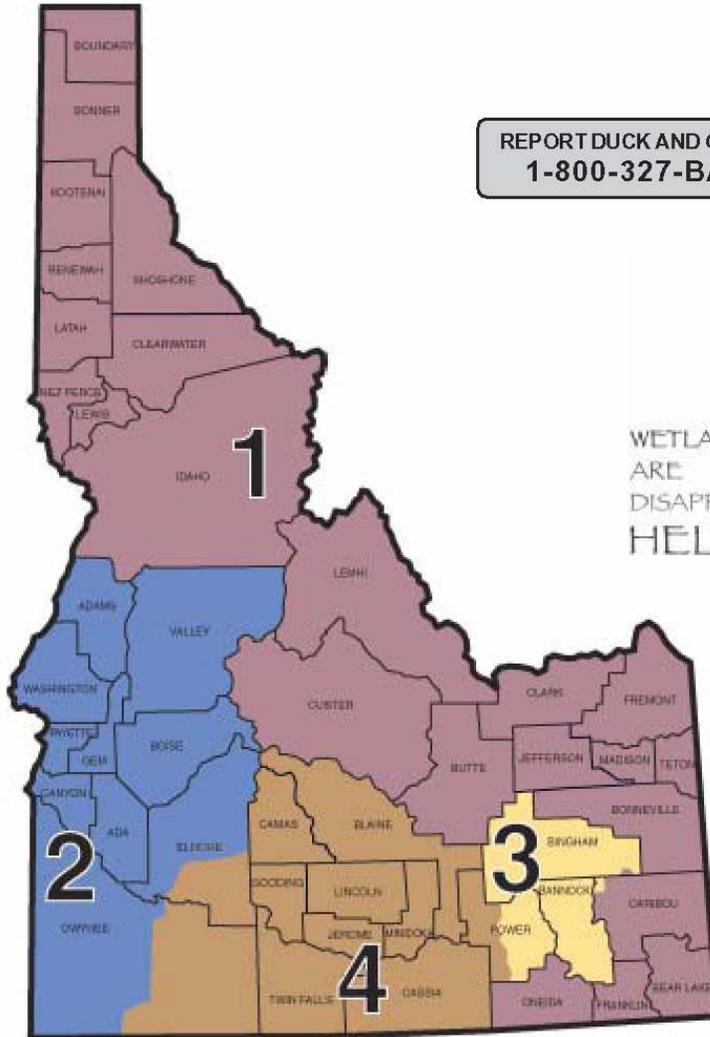
**Daily Bag Limit:** 4 of any kind (only 3 light geese or 2 white-fronted geese).

**Possession Limit After First Day of Season:** 8 of any kind (only 6 light geese or 4 white-fronted geese).

### AREA 4

**Daily Bag Limit:** 3 of any kind (only 2 white-fronted geese).

**Possession Limit After First Day of Season:** 6 of any kind (only 4 white-fronted geese).



**REPORT DUCK AND GOOSE LEG BANDS  
1-800-327-BAND (2263)**



WETLANDS  
ARE  
DISAPPEARING...  
HELP SAVE ONE!

**STATEWIDE DUCK (Including merganser),  
COMMON SNIPE AND AMERICAN COOT  
SEASONS AND LIMITS**

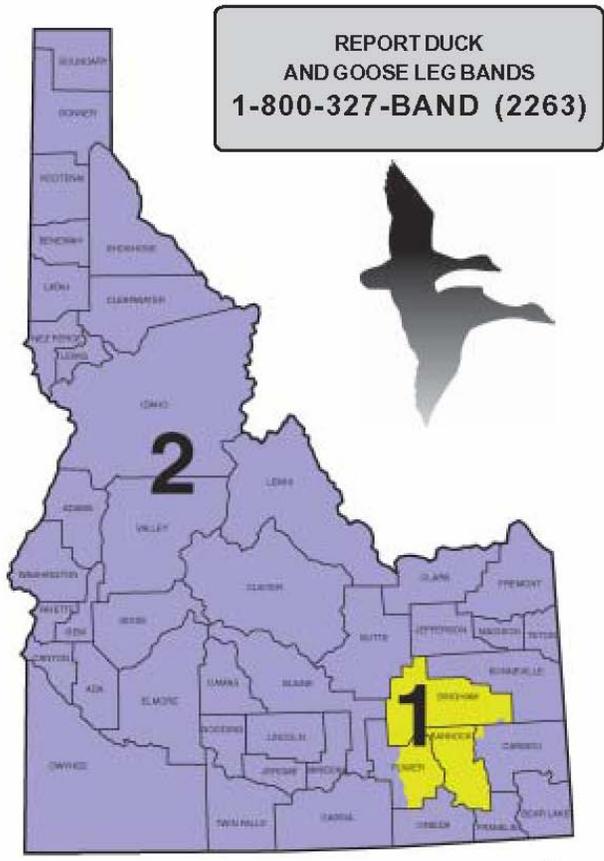
**CANVASBACK SEASON IS CLOSED—PINTAIL SEASON IS 60 DAYS ONLY**

**AREA 1**

**Area 1 includes the following counties or portions of counties:**  
 Bannock; Bingham EXCEPT that portion within the Blackfoot Reservoir drainage; Power east of State Highway 37 and State Highway 39; and all lands, including private holdings, within the Fort Hall Indian Reservation.  
**REGULAR SEASON: OCTOBER 5, 2002 THROUGH JANUARY 17, 2003**  
**PINTAIL SEASON: OCTOBER 5, 2002 THROUGH DECEMBER 3, 2002**

**AREA 2**

Area 2 includes all parts of the state NOT included in Area 1.  
**OPEN SEASON: OCTOBER 12, 2002 THROUGH JANUARY 24, 2003**  
**PINTAIL SEASON: OCTOBER 12, 2002 THROUGH DECEMBER 10, 2002**



**YOUTH WATERFOWL SEASON**  
see page 11.

**DUCKS (INCLUDING MERGANSERS)**

**Daily Bag Limit:**  
7 of any kind.  
**Shall not include more than the following:**  
 2 female mallards  
 1 pintail  
 2 redheads  
 4 scaup (lesser or greater in the aggregate)

**CANVASBACK CLOSED**

**Possession Limit After First Day of Season:**  
14 of any kind.  
**Shall not include more than the following:**  
 4 female mallards  
 2 pintails  
 4 redheads  
 8 scaup (lesser or greater in the aggregate)

**CANVASBACK CLOSED**

**COOTS**

**Daily Bag Limit:** 25  
**Possession Limit After First Day of Season:**  
25

**COMMON SNIPE**

**Daily Bag Limit:** 8  
**Possession Limit After First Day of Season:**  
16

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME  
600 SOUTH WALNUT  
BOISE, IDAHO 83707

EXTENDED FALCONRY SEASONS FOR 2002-2003

APPROVED BY THE FISH AND GAME COMMISSION IN AUGUST

DUCKS: No extended season. All 107 days of the Federal framework are consumed by the firearms seasons.

GEESE: No extended season.

SNIPE: No extended season.

CROW: No extended season.

DOVES: Statewide - November 1 through January 16

Submitted by:

*Tom Hemker*

---

Wildlife Program Coordinator

Approved by:

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

---

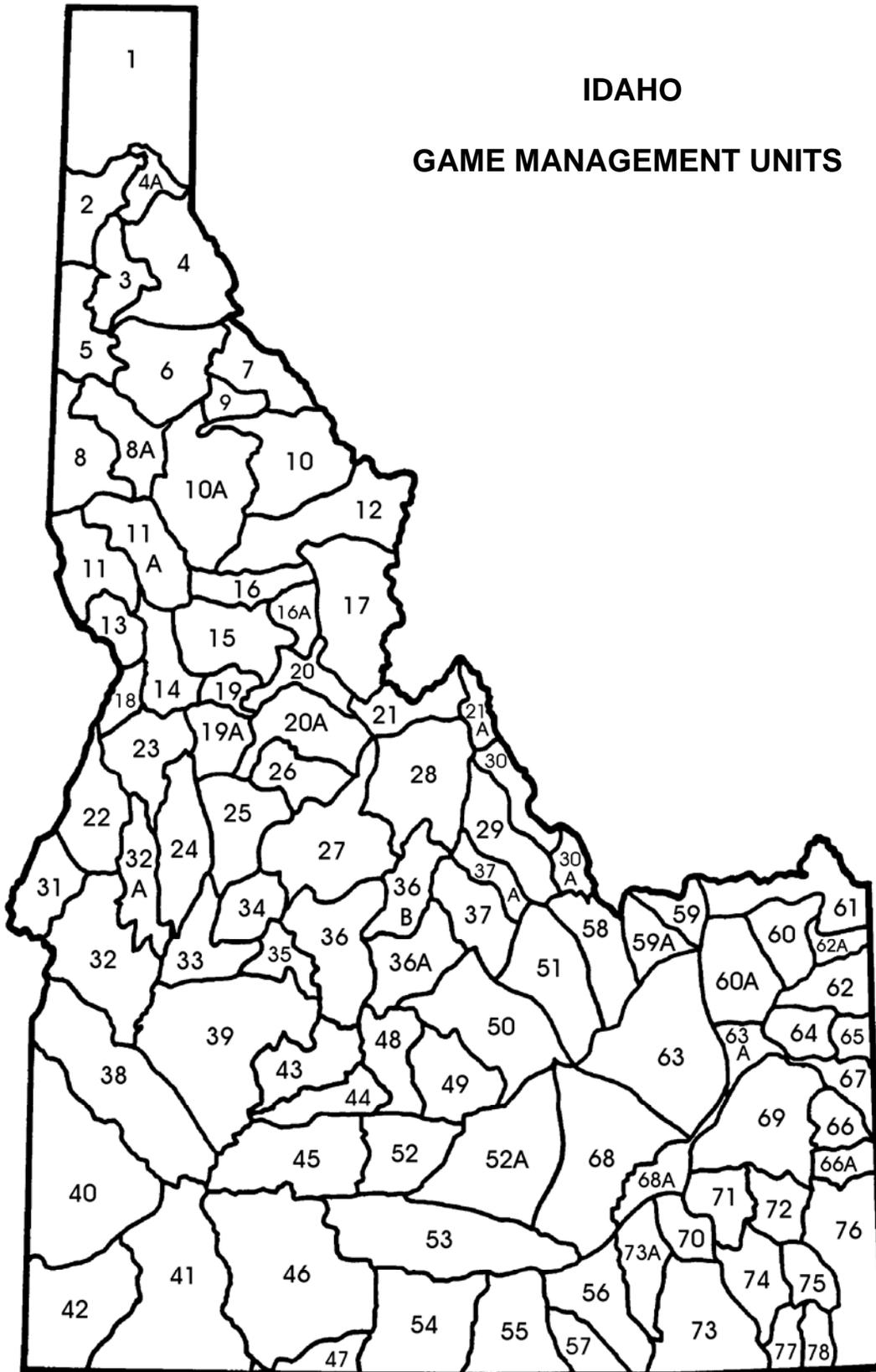
Dale E. Toweill  
Wildlife Program Coordinator  
Federal Aid Coordinator

---

James W. Unsworth, Chief  
Bureau of Wildlife

# IDAHO

## GAME MANAGEMENT UNITS



## FEDERAL AID IN WILDLIFE RESTORATION

The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program consists of funds from a 10% to 11% manufacturer's excise tax collected from the sale of handguns, sporting rifles, shotguns, ammunition, and archery equipment. The Federal Aid program then allots the funds back to states through a formula based on each state's geographic area and the number of paid hunting license holders in the state. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game uses the funds to help restore, conserve, manage, and enhance wild birds and mammals for the public benefit. These funds are also used to educate hunters to develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to be responsible, ethical hunters. Seventy-five percent of the funds for this project are from Federal Aid. The other 25% comes from license-generated funds.

