

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

Steven M. Huffaker, Director

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Progress Report



WATERFOWL FALL AND WINTER SURVEYS, BANDING, AND HARVEST

Study II, Job 3

October 1, 2004 to March 31, 2005

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT..... 1
 YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNT..... 1
STUDY OBJECTIVES..... 1
PROCEDURES..... 2
RESULTS 2
 DUCKS (ALL SPECIES)..... 2
 CURRENT MANAGEMENT PLAN GOALS 2
 MANAGEMENT AREAS 2
 Management Area 1 2
 Management Area 2..... 4
 Management Area 3..... 4
 POPULATION SURVEYS 5
 HARVEST CHARACTERISTICS..... 5
 CLIMATIC CONDITIONS..... 5
 MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS 5
 GEESE (ALL SPECIES) 6
 CURRENT MANAGEMENT PLAN GOALS 6
 MANAGEMENT AREAS 7
 Management Area 1 7
 Management Area 2..... 7
 Management Area 3..... 8
 Management Area 4..... 9
 Management Area 5..... 10
 POPULATION SURVEYS 10
 HARVEST CHARACTERISTICS..... 10
 CLIMATIC CONDITIONS..... 10
 MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS 10
SANDHILL CRANE..... 11
 CURRENT GOALS..... 11
TRUMPETER SWAN..... 13
TUNDRA SWAN 13

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

AMERICAN COOT13
COMMON SNIFE13
LITERATURE CITED14
APPENDIX A23

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Birds counted during the mid-winter waterfowl survey, 1994-2005. No count in 2004.....16
Table 2. Estimated statewide harvest of ducks obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2004.....17
Table 3. Canada geese counted in Idaho during the mid-winter survey by survey area, 1994-2005. No count in 2004.18
Table 4. Estimated harvest of Canada geese from the Pacific Population (west of U.S. Highway 93) obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2004.....19
Table 5. Estimated harvest of Canada geese from the Rocky Mountain Population (east of U.S. Highway 93) obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2004.....20
Table 6. Estimated statewide harvest of Canada geese obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2004.21
Table 7. Estimated waterfowl harvest numbers from USFWS’s waterfowl hunter survey for Idaho, 1988-2004.22

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Boundaries for Pacific and Rocky Mountain populations of Canada geese.15

**PROGRESS REPORT
SURVEYS AND INVENTORIES**

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|------------------------|--|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
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ABSTRACT

Results of the mid-winter waterfowl population surveys conducted by regional personnel and results of harvest surveys are summarized and discussed. The 2005 mid-winter count for total ducks and total waterfowl was conducted. The 2005 count for total ducks and total waterfowl was up 34% and 24% from the 2003 count, respectively, but 10% below the 10-year average (1994-2003) for both. Harvest data from USFWS showed 2004 duck harvest down 28% and goose harvest down 26% from the 2003 estimate. The Department conducted a separate waterfowl harvest survey for the 2004 season. These harvest data were about 7% more than the USFWS goose harvest estimate and 41% higher than the USFWS duck harvest estimate. The Department conducted a survey to estimate the number of participants in the special youth hunt and estimated that 1,440 adults mentored 850 youth hunters during this 2-day hunt. A total of 100 trumpeter swan cygnets were trapped and 50 were translocated to the lower Bear River near Preston in late 2004. A summary of the 2004-2005 waterfowl hunting regulations is provided in Appendix A.

YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNT

For the fifth year, USFWS offered all states the option of holding a 2-day youth waterfowl hunt during the 2004-2005 season. Pacific Flyway states choosing the option were required to reduce their regular seasons by 2 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 Commission chose to take the option and selected 25-26 September for the hunt that was open to youth 12-15 years of age; it also chose full duck (including merganser), coot, and goose limits. The Department estimated that 1,440 adults mentored 850 youth hunters during this 2-day hunt.

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. Personnel stationed in the state's 7 regions and 1 sub-region collected all other data.

RESULTS

DUCKS (ALL SPECIES)

Current 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 Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) 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 1 region in cooperation with USFWS.

Management Areas

Management Area 1

The description, season framework, and bag and possession limits of Management Area 1 can be found in Appendix A.

Background and Management Philosophy: Management Area 1 was established in 1985 by emergency order of the Idaho Fish and Game Commission (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 1 included only part of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation and were arrived at after negotiations between the Department, USFWS, and 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 1 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 1 set of rules to avoid disputes between the Tribes and the state over Reservation boundaries.

Several times during the late 1980s and early 1990s, USFWS denied the Department's request to rezone the state. This rezoning would have placed all of northern, central, and southeastern Idaho in 1 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 2 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 7 and 14, respectively. Beginning in 1985-1986, season length and bag and possession limits were reduced as mandated by USFWS because of poor duck production and recruitment continent-wide resulting from drought and habitat degradation.

Early in 1991, USFWS and Pacific Flyway evaluated the effects of zones on duck harvest. 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 1 with its previous boundaries and divided the remainder of the state into 2 zones or management areas (Areas 2 and 3).

In 1997-1998, Areas 2 and 3 were combined and renamed Area 2 through the 2002-2003 season. For historical season framework information, refer to the 2003 version of this report.

For the 2003-2004 season, the Department changed the boundaries for Area 1 to include all of northern, central, and southeastern Idaho. The USFWS offered the same 107-day season as in 2002-2003 with the exception of a 60-day "season within a season" for both pintails and canvasbacks. The Tribes chose to start their season the same day as the rest of Area 1, and the season was 105 days with no split. The 2-day youth waterfowl season was 27-28 September.

For the 2004-2005 season, the Department rezoned the state into 3 Areas. Area 1 included all of northern and central Idaho, and all of southeastern Idaho except for the Fort Hall Reservation. The previous boundaries for Area 1 (Fort Hall Reservation) were renamed Area 3. The USFWS offered the same 107-day season as in 2003-2004 and the same 60-day "season within a season" for both pintails and canvasbacks. The season was 105 days with no split, and the 2-day youth waterfowl season was 25-26 September (Appendix A).

Management Area 2

The description, season framework, and bag and possession limits of Management Area 2 can be found in Appendix A.

Background and Management Philosophy: Management Area 2 was established in 1991 as a result of USFWS lifting its moratorium on zone changes. This area included those counties that generally freeze up early. From 1985-1986 through 1990-1991, this portion of the state was included with south-central and southwestern Idaho because USFWS prohibited more than 2 zones (the Fort Hall area and the remainder of the state). Prior to 1985-1986, much of Area 2 was included in the Columbia Basin Mallard Wintering Area that had a 100-day season and bag and possession limits of 7 and 14, respectively.

Beginning with the 1997-1998 season, Area 2 and Area 3 were combined and renamed Area 2 to simplify the hunting brochure. For historical season framework information, refer to the 2003 version of this report.

For the 2003-2004 season, the Department changed the boundaries for Area 2 to include only southwestern and south-central Idaho. The USFWS offered the same 107-day season as in 2002-2003 with the exception of a 60-day “season within a season” for both pintails and canvasbacks. The season started 1 week later than the rest of the state and was 105 days with no split. The 2-day youth waterfowl season was 27-28 September.

For the 2004-2005 season, the Department rezoned the state into 3 Areas. Area 2 retained the same boundaries as in 2003-2004. The USFWS offered the same 107-day season as in 2003-2004 and the same 60-day “season within a season” for both pintails and canvasbacks. The season was 105 days with no split, and the 2-day youth waterfowl season was 25-26 September (Appendix A).

Management Area 3

The description, season framework, and bag and possession limits of Management Area 3 can be found in Appendix A.

Background and Management Philosophy: Management Area 3 was established in 1991-1992 as a result of USFWS lifting its moratorium on zone changes. This area included those counties that normally freeze up later than those in Area 2. From 1985-1986 through 1990-1991, this portion of the state was included with north and eastern Idaho because USFWS prohibited more than 2 zones (the Fort Hall area and the remainder of the state). Prior to 1985-1986, Area 3 was included in the Columbia Basin Mallard Wintering Area which had a 100-day season and bag and possession limits of 7 and 14, respectively.

Beginning with the 1997-1998 season, Area 3 was combined with Area 2 and renamed Area 2 to simplify the hunting brochure and the state was left with only 2 duck management areas.

For the 2004-2005 season, the Department rezoned the state into 3 Areas. The Shoshone-Bannock Tribe's Fort Hall Reservation (historically Area 1) was renamed Area 3. The USFWS offered a 107-day season including a 60-day "season within a season" for both pintails and canvasbacks. The Tribes chose to start their season the same day as newly rezoned Area 1, and the season was 105 days with no split. The 2-day youth waterfowl season was 25-26 September (Appendix A).

Population Surveys

The mid-winter survey was conducted in 2005 (Table 1). The USFWS predicted a 2005 mid-continent mallard breeding population of 8.4 million birds, which is statistically similar to the 8.8 million bird estimate for 2003 (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2004).

Harvest Characteristics

Telephone Survey: The Department estimated the Idaho waterfowl harvest for the 2004-2005 hunting season for the third time since 1995-1996 (Table 2). The 2004 duck harvest estimate was 264,900, which is 17% below 2003 and 41% above the 2004 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 USFWS with names and addresses of all migratory game bird hunters from which USFWS draws samples of hunters to survey. Due to computer problems, the Department was not able to comply for the 1996-1997 season, and USFWS was unable to estimate harvest using the FMGBHIP. The Department complied fully with USFWS's request for information for the 1997-1998 through 2004-2005 seasons.

USFWS's Hunter and Harvest Survey: The USFWS's preliminary estimate for the 2004-2005 duck harvest was 188,500, down 28% from the 2003 estimate.

Climatic Conditions

Winter 2004-2005 was cold and wet in November and December but dry in southern Idaho with near or above normal temperatures the rest of winter. Winter was wetter than normal in northern Idaho. As a result, timing of freeze-up was early in Idaho. Distribution of ducks during fall migration was somewhat atypical and duck hunting was generally only fair throughout much of the season.

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 FMGBHIP 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 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. A payment of \$32,000 was made in June 2003 on the Keho Lake project.

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 Canadian waterfowl projects will be with license funding at a level that will be determined annually.

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 WMAs; and adopting federal harvest regulations designed to take advantage of increasing duck populations.

GEESE (ALL SPECIES)

Current 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 1

The description, season framework, and bag and possession limits of Management Area 1 can be found in Appendix A.

Background and Management Philosophy: Management Area 1 includes both Pacific Population (PP) and Rocky Mountain Population (RMP) Canada geese (Figure 1). The boundary between the 2 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.

Area 1 was created in 1990 to implement changes in seasons, limits, and hunt area boundaries identified in the 1991-1995 Waterfowl Management Plan. Area 1 originally included only Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai, and Shoshone counties. In 1993, the counties of Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis, and Nez Perce were added to Area 1 to take advantage of an increasing resident Canada goose flock.

In 1998, Bear Lake, Bonneville, Butte, Caribou, Clark, Custer, Franklin, Fremont, Jefferson, Lemhi, Madison, Oneida, and Teton counties were included in Area 1 to simplify the hunting brochure.

In 2003, Area 1 was expanded to include Adams and Valley counties and all of Area 3 (the Fort Hall Indian Reservation).

The 1990-1991 goose season opened 2 weeks prior to duck season. The 1991-1992 goose season opened the same day as duck season. The 1992-1993 through 1996-1997 goose seasons opened 1 week before duck season. The 1997-1998 through 2001-2002 goose seasons opened the same day as duck season. The 2002-2003 goose season opened 1 week after duck season, while in 2003-2004 and 2004-2005, the seasons opened on the same day (Appendix A).

Management Area 2

The description, season framework, and bag and possession limits of Management Area 2 can be found in Appendix A.

Background and Management Philosophy: Management Area 2 (southwestern Idaho) contains PP Canada geese (Figure 1). Prior to the 1991-1992 season, southwestern Idaho (part of the Southwest Region) was in Area 3 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 (Clearwater Region; the remainder of Southwest Region; and parts of Magic Valley, Southeast, Upper Snake, and Salmon regions) to create the new Area 2. 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 2 and 4, respectively, season-long. The season and limits were the maximum allowed by federal regulations for southwestern Idaho but not for Clearwater Region.

In 1992-1993, Area 2 was reduced slightly in size to simplify the boundary between Area 2 and Area 4. This was accomplished by placing all of Custer and Lemhi counties in Area 4, rather than splitting the counties on Highways 75 and 93. For the 1993-1994 season, Area 2 was reduced further by placing 5 northern counties (Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis, and Nez Perce) in the more liberal Area 1 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 4 and 8, respectively. 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 3 and 6 geese, respectively, instead of the maximum allowed over concerns that a daily bag of 4 would result in an over-harvest of local geese. In 1998-1999, the Department added south-central Idaho (Area 3 from 1991-1992 through 1997-1998) to Area 2 to simplify the hunting rules and hunting brochure.

Beginning in 2002-2003, the Department split Area 2 back into 2 separate areas (Area 2 and Area 4) and raised the bag and possession limits for Area 2 to 4 and 8 geese, respectively. In 2003-2004, Area 2 was reduced and Adams and Valley counties were added to Area 1. Area 2 currently includes all of Washington, Payette, Gem, Boise, Canyon, and Ada counties, plus portions of Owyhee and Elmore counties.

In 1990-1991, the goose season in Area 2 opened 2 weeks prior to duck season. The 1991-1992 goose season opened the same day as duck season in the northern portion and 1 week earlier than duck season in the southern portion. For the 1992-1993 through 1996-1997 seasons, goose season opened 1 week prior to duck season. The 1997-1998 through 2001-2002 goose and duck seasons opened on the same day. For 2002-2003, the goose season opened 1 week after duck season, while in 2003-2004 and 2004-2005, the seasons opened on the same day (Appendix A).

Management Area 3

The description, season framework, and bag and possession limits of Management Area 3 can be found in Appendix A.

Background and Management Philosophy: Management Area 3 (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 3 was Management Area 4 prior to the 1991-1992 season. It includes both PP and RMP geese (Figure 1). 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 (2 dark geese) were retained to protect local flocks.

For 1998-1999 through 2001-2002, the goose daily limit was increased to 3 of any kind and Area 3 was combined with Area 2 and renamed Area 2 to simplify hunting rules and the hunting brochure.

For the 2002-2003 season, zones were changed again and former Area 3 (prior to 1998-1999) became Area 4 with bag and possession limits of 3 and 6, respectively. For the 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 seasons, the Area was renamed Area 3.

The 1990-1991 goose season opened 2 weeks prior to duck season. Beginning in 1991-1992, goose seasons in Area 3 opened 1 week prior to duck season. The 1997-1998 through 2001-2002 goose and duck seasons opened on the same day. The 2002-2003 goose season opened 1 week after duck season, while in 2003-2004 and 2004-2005, the seasons opened on the same day.

Management Area 4

Background and Management Philosophy: Management Area 4 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 2 and 4, respectively, to 3 and 6, 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. Beginning in 1995-1996, daily bag and possession limits were increased to 4 and 8, respectively.

Prior to 1991-1992, Area 4 was combined with central Idaho to form Area 2. Goose seasons for Area 4 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 2 weeks prior to duck season. In 1991-1992, the Area 4 goose season opened the same day as duck season. For 1992-1993 through 1996-1997, the goose season opened 1 week prior to duck season. The 1997-1998 goose and duck seasons opened on the same day.

In 1998-1999, Area 1 (north Idaho) and Area 4 (central and eastern Idaho) were combined to simplify the hunting brochure. The number designation for the area was changed to Area 1 and the state was left with only 3 goose management areas through the 2001-2002 season. For the 2002-2003 season, the Department split Area 2 into 2 separate areas and designated south-central Idaho as Area 4. Bag and possession limits were 3 and 6, respectively.

For the 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 seasons, the Department combined Areas 1 and 3 (now called Area 1) and Area 4 was renamed Area 3, leaving the state with only 3 goose management areas.

Management Area 5

Background and Management Philosophy: Management Area 5 was created in 1987 to conform with Area 1 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 1” 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.

Area 5 remained in place through the 1997-1998 season. In 1998, the Department combined areas and Area 5 was renamed Area 3 through the 2002-2003 season. In 2003, the Department combined Area 3 (the Fort Hall Indian Reservation) with Area 1. The state hasn’t had an Area 5 since 1998.

Population Surveys

The mid-winter survey was conducted in 2005 except for some units in the Upper Snake Region because of inclement weather (Table 3).

Harvest Characteristics

Telephone Survey: The Department used a telephone survey to estimate goose harvest (Tables 4-6) in 2004-2005. The estimate for 2004-2005 was 67,100 (Table 6) or 28% below the estimate of 93,500 for 2003-2004.

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 USFWS with names and addresses of all migratory game bird hunters from which USFWS draws samples of hunters to survey. Due to computer problems, the Department was not able to comply for the 1996-1997 season and USFWS was unable to estimate harvest using the FMGBHIP. The Department complied fully with USFWS’s request for information for the 1997-1998 through 2004-2005 seasons. The USFWS estimate for the 2004-2005 goose harvest was 62,300 or 26% below the estimate of 84,200 for 2003-2004 (Table 7).

Climatic Conditions

Winter 2004-2005 was cold and wet in November and December but dry with normal or above temperatures the rest of winter. As a result, 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 total harvest, harvest per hunter per season, and total days hunted statewide since goose numbers remained good in 2004-2005, 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 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.

SANDHILL CRANE

The Department's goals and objectives for the sandhill crane are the same as those for the Pacific Flyway (Subcommittee on Rocky Mountain Greater Sandhill Cranes 1997).

Current Goals

1. Maintain current sandhill crane breeding populations and their distribution.
2. Maintain current sandhill crane migrations through Idaho.
3. Meet the demand for non-consumptive uses.

The RMP sandhill crane populations continued to receive increased management emphasis during the reporting period in the Magic Valley, Southeast, and Upper Snake regions because of continuing landowner concerns over crop damage. Surveys of RMP greater sandhill cranes in these 3 regions were initiated in 1995 to document total sandhill crane numbers, arrival dates, distribution, and age ratios. The description, season framework, and bag and possession limits can be found in Appendix A.

Background and Management Philosophy: RMP greater sandhill cranes have been damaging crops in eastern Idaho for decades. Early season crop damage occurs primarily in spring and summer, but the most significant sandhill crane crop damage occurs during the late summer and early fall when the sandhill cranes begin staging for fall migration. Fields damaged are those generally closest to night roosts and they are damaged repeatedly year after year.

In 1996, the Commission adopted rules that changed the classification of sandhill cranes from migratory non-game birds to migratory game birds and directed the Department to obtain Pacific Flyway Council and USFWS approval for an experimental controlled hunt in 3 areas. The Council approved a 20-bird harvest allocation for Idaho and controlled hunts by "sportsmen only" using a random method of issuing permits. The Commission subsequently adopted rules establishing controlled hunts in 3 areas (Grays Lake Outlet area in Bonneville County, Blackfoot Reservoir area in Caribou County, and the Teton River area in Teton County) with a total of 30 permits.

In 1997, the Commission adopted rules establishing 7 controlled hunts in the same hunt areas created in 1996 (Grays Lake Outlet, 3 hunts, 15 permits in each; Blackfoot Reservoir area, 3 hunts, 40 permits in each; Teton River, 1 hunt, 50 permits). The 215 permits were expected to

harvest 148 sandhill cranes, the entire Idaho harvest allocation authorized by the Pacific Flyway and USFWS.

In 1998, the Commission adopted rules that abolished the hunt in the Grays Lake Outlet area, created 7 hunts with 30 permits each in the Blackfoot Reservoir area and enlarged the area to include new damage complaints, and reauthorized the Teton County hunt with 50 permits. The 260 permits were expected to harvest 170 sandhill cranes, the entire allocation for Idaho.

In 1999, the Commission authorized 7 hunts with 47 permits each in the Blackfoot Reservoir area and enlarged it again to include a portion of Bear Lake County (Hunt Area 1). They also reauthorized the Teton County hunt with 75 permits (Hunt Area 2), and created 1 new hunt with 50 permits in a portion of Fremont County (Hunt Area 3). Of the 454 permits available to hunters in 1999, 121 permits were left after the drawing, and an unknown number of permits were purchased as leftovers.

In 2000, the Commission reauthorized 7 hunts with 50 permits each in Hunt Area 1, 2 hunts with 50 permits each in Hunt Area 2, and 2 hunts with 50 permits each in Hunt Area 3. There were 550 permits available in 2000; 299 permits were left after the drawing, and only 95 of those were purchased as leftovers.

In 2001, the Commission authorized 5 hunts in Hunt Area 1 including 2 hunts with 100 permits each and 3 hunts with 50 permits each. They also reauthorized 2 hunts with 50 permits each in Hunt Area 2 and 2 hunts with 50 permits each in Hunt Area 3. Of the 550 permits available in 2001, 255 permits were left over. Due to the decline of hunters in 2000 and 2001, the Commission authorized the sale of leftover permits to include those who had already drawn a permit and raised the season limit per hunter from 1 crane to 9 cranes with a limit of 2 per day. As a result, 215 of the 255 leftover permits were purchased in 2001.

In 2002, the Commission enlarged Hunt Area 1 to include all of Bear Lake County and authorized 2 hunts with 80 permits each, 2 hunts with 35 permits each, and 1 hunt with 33 permits. The Commission enlarged Hunt Area 2 to include all of Teton County and authorized 1 hunt with 40 permits and 1 hunt with 35 permits. They also enlarged Hunt Area 3 to include all of Fremont County and authorized 1 hunt with 40 permits and 1 hunt with 35 permits. Of the 413 permits available in 2002, 381 were purchased. The daily limit per hunter was 2 cranes with a season limit of 9 cranes.

In 2003, the Commission authorized 5 hunts in Hunt Area 1 including 1 hunt with 65 permits, 1 hunt with 60 permits, 1 hunt with 35 permits, and 2 hunts with 25 permits each. They also authorized 2 hunts with 30 permits each in Hunt Area 2 and 2 hunts with 30 permits each in Hunt Area 3. Of the 330 permits available in 2003, 265 were purchased. The limit remained 2 cranes per day per hunter with a season limit of 9 cranes.

In 2004, the Commission authorized 1 hunt in Hunt Area 1 with 165 permits. They also authorized 2 hunts with 24 permits each in Hunt Area 2 and 2 hunts with 24 permits each in Hunt

Area 3. Of the 261 permits available in 2004, 214 were purchased. The limit remained 2 cranes per day per hunter with a season limit of 9 cranes.

TRUMPETER SWAN

A total of 50 trumpeter swan cygnets were translocated from Harriman State Park to the lower Bear River near Preston during the reporting period. Another 50 cygnets were captured and left at the park. In 2003, the Department wrote a study plan for a 3-year project to evaluate the effectiveness of this management technique to increase winter distribution of trumpeter swans. The project includes a graduate student project at the University of Idaho. This completes the translocation effort and the birds will be monitored until at least 2008 to determine success.

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. Annual progress reports on this plan are available at the Pacific flyway website at www.pacificflyway.org.

TUNDRA SWAN

The Department's 1991-1995 Waterfowl Management Plan goals for 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.

AMERICAN COOT

The Department's 1991-1995 Waterfowl Management Plan goals for 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 2004-2005 coot harvest estimate was not available when this report was written.

COMMON SNIPE

The Department's 1991-1995 Waterfowl Management Plan goals for 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 2004-2005 season.

LITERATURE CITED

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE. 2004. Waterfowl population status, 2004. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Migratory Bird Management, Laurel, Maryland, USA.

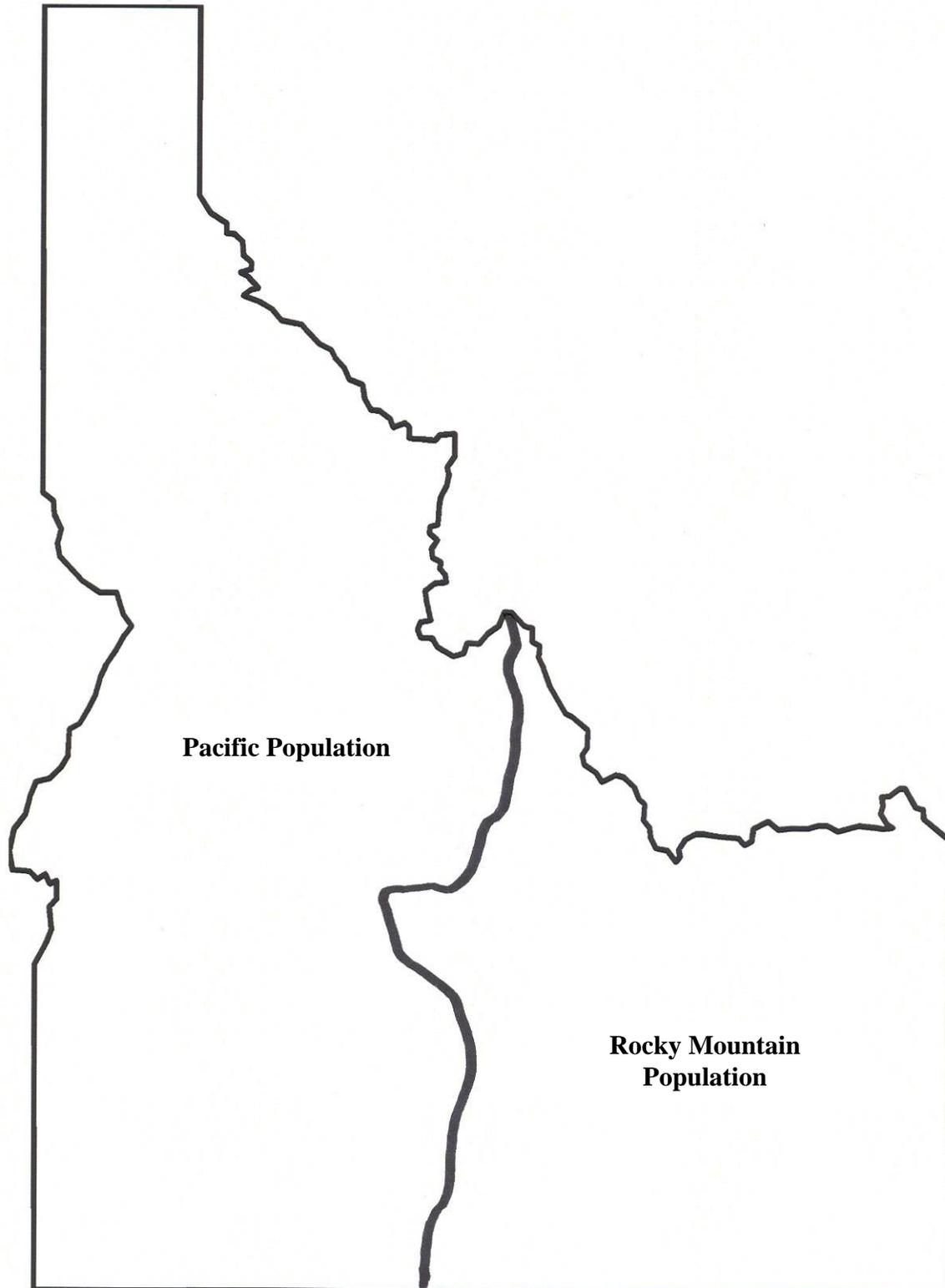


Figure 1. Boundaries for Pacific and Rocky Mountain populations of Canada geese.

Table 1. Birds counted during the mid-winter waterfowl survey, 1994-2005. No count in 2004.

| Species | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | ^a 2001 | 2002 | ^b 2003 | 1994-2003 10-yr. avg. | % Change from | | |
|--------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------------------|---------|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|------|----------------|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | ^c 2005 | 2003 | 10-yr. avg. |
| Mallard | 171,300 | 149,479 | 159,160 | 140,230 | 304,126 | 284,670 | 261,425 | 106,516 | 168,844 | 108,034 | 185,378 | 164,425 | 52% | -11% |
| Gadwall | 1,505 | 973 | 1,482 | 191 | 279 | 186 | 1,058 | 45 | 261 | 602 | 658 | 599 | 0% | -9% |
| Widgeon | 10,624 | 10,763 | 9,884 | 3,463 | 2,130 | 3,686 | 4,164 | 1,189 | 1,412 | 6,900 | 5,422 | 9,665 | 40% | 78% |
| Green-winged Teal | 705 | 673 | 1,702 | 126 | 55 | 118 | 202 | 142 | 249 | 363 | 434 | 402 | 11% | -7% |
| Blue-winged/ Cinnamon Teal | 48 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 0 | 6 | 0 | | |
| Shoveler | 376 | 23 | 368 | 151 | 31 | 271 | 88 | 1 | 17 | 25 | 135 | 183 | 632% | 35% |
| Pintail | 8,792 | 432 | 6,671 | 2,150 | 362 | 1,649 | 405 | 1,696 | 179 | 49 | 2,239 | 121 | 147% | -95% |
| Wood duck | 35 | 147 | 334 | 157 | 314 | 277 | 290 | 38 | 503 | 55 | 215 | 213 | 287% | -1% |
| Redhead | 8,293 | 32,829 | 11,431 | 16,731 | 8,209 | 23,589 | 17,643 | 12,750 | 35,993 | 21,324 | 18,879 | 22,463 | 5% | 19% |
| Canvasback | 161 | 215 | 107 | 168 | 19 | 323 | 165 | 0 | 333 | 20 | 151 | 57 | 185% | -62% |
| Scaup | 1,713 | 877 | 5,177 | 3,498 | 2,342 | 5,275 | 3,398 | 7,436 | 12,313 | 9,900 | 5,193 | 5,556 | -44% | 7% |
| Ringneck | 1,782 | 4,657 | 1,404 | 566 | 353 | 734 | 1,232 | 282 | 4,445 | 3,411 | 1,887 | 1,060 | -69% | -44% |
| Goldeneye | 13,774 | 13,775 | 14,842 | 10,822 | 14,090 | 21,731 | 19,674 | 11,921 | 15,219 | 12,018 | 14,787 | 18,214 | 52% | 23% |
| Bufflehead | 507 | 675 | 1,829 | 935 | 1,197 | 3,141 | 654 | 752 | 1,193 | 763 | 1,165 | 1,080 | 42% | -7% |
| Ruddy duck | 118 | 84 | 79 | 50 | 52 | 225 | 13 | 0 | 7 | 12 | 64 | 6 | -50% | -91% |
| Merganser | 2,849 | 3,460 | 5,111 | 2,760 | 3,835 | 3,418 | 3,952 | 1,732 | 2,792 | 1,571 | 3,148 | 1,103 | -30% | -65% |
| Unidentified ducks | 3,928 | 20,037 | 7,841 | 23,154 | 3,894 | 13,667 | 752 | 324 | 835 | 225 | 7,466 | 260 | 16% | -97% |
| Total ducks | 226,510 | 239,099 | 227,422 | 205,152 | 341,288 | 362,960 | 315,115 | 144,824 | 244,607 | 165,272 | 247,225 | 225,407 | 36% | -9% |
| Snow goose | 3 | 0 | 10 | 1 | 18 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 1 | | |
| Ross' | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | | |
| Canada goose | 33,755 | 43,855 | 70,254 | 41,433 | 58,430 | 66,384 | 37,961 | 39,474 | 29,374 | 43,489 | 46,441 | 53,506 | 23% | 15% |
| Lesser Canada | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | |
| Cackling goose | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | |
| White-front | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | |
| Total geese | 33,758 | 43,856 | 70,267 | 41,435 | 58,448 | 66,389 | 37,962 | 39,474 | 29,375 | 43,489 | 46,445 | 53,509 | 23% | 15% |
| Tundra swan | 56 | 167 | 148 | 154 | 85 | 110 | 220 | 174 | 205 | 178 | 150 | 384 | 116% | 157% |
| Trumpeter swan | 275 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 139 | 0 | 1,783 | 1,730 | 393 | 0 | | |
| Unidentified swan ^d | 244 | 1,193 | 1,263 | 1,411 | 1,283 | 1,474 | 1,940 | 201 | 5 | 150 | 916 | 454 | 203% | -50% |
| Coot | 9,164 | 13,958 | 26,109 | 14,665 | 15,324 | 20,712 | 38,253 | 25,763 | 33,285 | 16,042 | 21,328 | 5,325 | -67% | -75% |
| Total waterfowl | 270,007 | 298,273 | 325,209 | 262,817 | 416,428 | 451,645 | 393,629 | 210,436 | 309,260 | 226,861 | 316,457 | 285,079 | 26% | -10% |

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

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

^c Approximately 28% of the state's winter habitat was not counted in 2005 because of inclement weather in Upper Snake Region.

^d Primarily trumpeter swans 1995-2000.

Table 2. Estimated statewide harvest of ducks obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2004.

| Year | % 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 ^{a,b} | 2.5 ^c | 252,100 ^a | 13.4 | 18,800 ^a | 217,400 ^a | 11.6 |
| 1994 ^{a,b} | 5.3 | 300,300 ± 23,400 | 15.6 | 19,400 ± 4,000 | 243,900 ± 16,200 | 12.6 |
| 1995 ^b | 3.9 ^c | 416,300 ± 33,300 | 17.9 ± 1.4 ^d | 23,300 ± 4,000 | 309,400 ± 33,500 | 13.3 ± .7 ^d |
| 1996 ^e | | | | | | |
| 1997 ^e | | | | | | |
| 1998 ^e | | | | | | |
| 1999 ^e | | | | | | |
| 2000 ^e | | | | | | |
| 2001 ^e | | | | | | |
| 2002 | 4.4 ^f | 233,500 | 12.3 | 19,000 | 170,000 | 9.0 |
| 2003 | 4.0 ^g | 320,200 | 14.4 | 22,200 | 200,700 | 9.0 |
| 2004 | 4.9 | 264,900 | 12.5 | 21,100 | 178,500 | 8.4 |

^a Confidence intervals not available.

^b 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.

^c Approximate.

^d 95% confidence interval.

^e No harvest estimate; survey not conducted.

^f A total of 839 duck hunters were contacted or about 4.4% of the estimated 19,000 duck hunters.

^g A total of 887 duck hunters were contacted or about 3.9% of the estimated 22,200 duck hunters.

Table 3. Canada geese counted in Idaho during the mid-winter survey by survey area, 1994-2005. No count in 2004.

| Area ^a | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | ^b 2001 | 2002 | ^b 2003 | ^b 2005 |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------------------|--------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Survey area #1 | 1,418 | 1,845 | 1,448 | 1,386 | 817 | 843 | 1,331 | | 839 | 1,730 | |
| Survey area #2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | 0 | 0 | |
| Survey area #3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 28 | 37 | 0 | | 0 | 0 | |
| Survey area #4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | 0 | 0 | |
| Survey area #5 | 2,262 | 6,517 | 38,968 | 17,318 | 14,891 | 29,310 | 5,720 | 18,172 | 9,233 | 15,662 | 15,709 |
| Survey area #6 | 7 | 225 | 2,158 | 974 | 2,425 | 314 | 25 | | 153 | | 47 |
| Survey area #7 | 1,685 | 2,794 | 98 | 4,014 | 3,861 | 4,453 | 604 | | 2,273 | 493 | 666 |
| Survey area #7A | 7,512 | 2,349 | 4,496 | 4,438 | 4,717 | 3,280 | 702 | | 2,144 | | 1,678 |
| Survey area #7B | 5,436 | 2,514 | 2,322 | 2,652 | 2,953 | 1,261 | 278 | | 1,413 | | 1,522 |
| Survey area #8A | 2,384 | 9,381 | 4,891 | 3,362 | 2,610 | 14,075 | 5,080 | 12,710 | 2,190 | 5,423 | 7,856 |
| Survey area #8B | 3,001 | 2,968 | 2,736 | 2,479 | 4,575 | 4,730 | 1,029 | 4,129 | 551 | 4,479 | 3,817 |
| Survey area #9 | 3,460 | 7,218 | 3,893 | 2,314 | 5,639 | 3,366 | 7,498 | 1,838 | 3,499 | 1,850 | 4,287 |
| Survey area #10 | 6,549 | 7,286 | 6,814 | 1,189 | 14,519 | 4,309 | 14,130 | 1,212 | 6,029 | 13,540 | 16,893 |
| Survey area #11 | 41 | 758 | 2,433 | 1,307 | 1,395 | 406 | 1,560 | 1,413 | 1,050 | 312 | 1,034 |
| Total | 33,755 | 43,855 | 70,257 | 41,433 | 58,430 | 66,384 | 37,957 | 39,474 | 29,374 | 43,489 | 53,509 |
| Rocky Mountain Population ^c | 11,199 | 10,936 | 47,070 | 24,116 | 22,878 | 33,784 | 7,778 | 18,172 | 12,369 | 17,392 | 17,434 |
| Percent | 33 | 25 | 67 | 58 | 39 | 51 | 21 | 46 | 42 | 40 | 33 |
| Pacific Population ^c | 22,556 | 32,919 | 23,187 | 17,317 | 35,552 | 32,600 | 30,184 | 21,302 | 17,005 | 26,097 | 36,075 |
| Percent | 67 | 75 | 33 | 42 | 61 | 49 | 79 | 54 | 58 | 60 | 67 |
| Pacific Population Plan Unit 2 ^d (south) | 15,966 | 24,875 | 13,940 | 14,821 | 19,638 | 27,885 | 14,494 | 18,677 | 9,926 | 12,245 | 18,128 |
| Pacific Population Plan Unit 4 ^d (north) | 6,590 | 8,044 | 9,247 | 2,496 | 15,914 | 4,715 | 15,690 | 2,625 | 7,079 | 13,852 | 17,927 |

^a 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 WMA, Roberts Slough; #3 = Mud Lake WMA, 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 WMA; #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 WMA, 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.

^b Survey incomplete.

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

^d 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 4. Estimated harvest of Canada geese from the Pacific Population (west of U.S. Highway 93) obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2004.

| 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 ^a | 2.5 | 43,000 ^{b,c} | 10,400 ^c | 88,700 ^c |
| 1994 ^a | 5.5 | 73,000 ^c | ^c | ^c |
| 1995 ^a | 3.9 ^c | 64,700 ± 8,500 | 15,300 ± 3,500 | 140,000 ± ^c |
| 1996 ^d | | | | |
| 1997 ^d | | | | |
| 1998 ^d | | | | |
| 1999 ^d | | | | |
| 2000 ^d | | | | |
| 2001 ^d | | | | |
| 2002 | 4.4 ^e | 24,500 ^{c,f} | 8,500 ^c | 75,700 ^c |
| 2003 | 3.3 ^g | 59,600 | 9,800 | 85,100 |
| 2004 | 4.9 ^h | 37,900 | 8,800 | 66,000 |

^a 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.

^b Rough estimate.

^c Data or confidence intervals not available. Other years show 95% confidence interval.

^d No harvest estimate; survey not conducted.

^e A total of 553 goose hunters were contacted or about 4.4% of the 12,500 estimated goose hunters.

^f The proportion of PP geese in the Magic Valley was estimated to be 67%.

^g A total of 515 goose hunters were contacted or about 3.3 % of the estimated 15,400 goose hunters. In 2003 hunters were specifically asked whether they were hunting in the Pacific or RMP population zones.

^h A total of 705 hunters were contacted or about 4.9% of the estimated 14,300 goose hunters.

Table 5. Estimated harvest of Canada geese from the Rocky Mountain Population (east of U.S. Highway 93) obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2004.

| 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 ^a | 2.5 | 31,100 ^{b,c} | 6,400 ^c | 56,700 ^c |
| 1994 ^a | 5.5 | 29,400 ^{b,c} | ^c | ^c |
| 1995 ^a | 3.9 ^b | 33,400 ± 6,600 | 5,700 ± 2,100 | 61,600 ^c |
| 1996 ^d | | | | |
| 1997 ^d | | | | |
| 1998 ^d | | | | |
| 1999 ^d | | | | |
| 2000 ^d | | | | |
| 2001 ^d | | | | |
| 2002 | 4.4 ^e | 17,400 ^{c,f} | 4,400 ^c | 35,600 ^c |
| 2003 | 3.3 ^g | 31,500 | 5,800 | 42,300 |
| 2004 | 4.9 ^h | 29,200 | 5,500 | 42,200 |

^a 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.

^b Rough estimate.

^c Data or confidence interval not available. Other years show 95% confidence interval.

^d No harvest estimate; survey not conducted.

^e A total of 553 goose hunters were contacted or about 4.4% of the 12,500 estimated goose hunters.

^f The proportion of RMP geese in the Magic Valley was estimated to be 33%.

^g A total of 515 goose hunters were contacted or about 3.3 % of the estimated 15,400 goose hunters. In 2003 hunters were specifically asked whether they were hunting in the Pacific or RMP population zones.

^h A total of 705 hunters were contacted or about 4.9% of the estimated 14,300 goose hunters.

Table 6. Estimated statewide harvest of Canada geese obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2004.

| Year | % 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 ^a | 2.5 ^b | 74,100 ± 11,500 | 4.4 | 16,800 ± 400 | 145,400 ± 12,600 | 8.7 |
| 1994 ^a | 5.3 | 102,500 ± 11,500 | 5.6 | 17,800 ± 4,000 | 178,000 ± 13,400 | 10.1 |
| 1995 ^a | 3.9 ^b | 98,000 ± 10,800 | 4.7 ± .5 ^c | 21,000 ± 4,100 | 201,600 ± 13,200 | 9.6 ± .6 ^c |
| 1996 ^d | | | | | | |
| 1997 ^d | | | | | | |
| 1998 ^d | | | | | | |
| 1999 ^d | | | | | | |
| 2000 ^d | | | | | | |
| 2001 ^d | | | | | | |
| 2002 | 4.4 ^c | 41,800 | 3.3 | 12,500 | 110,200 | 8.8 |
| 2003 | 3.3 ^f | 93,500 | 6.0 | 15,400 | 132,300 | 8.4 |
| 2004 | 4.9 ^g | 67,100 | 4.7 | 14,300 | 108,300 | 7.6 |

^a 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.

^b Approximate.

^c 95% confidence interval.

^d No harvest estimate; survey not conducted.

^e A total of 553 hunters were contacted or about 4.4% of the 12,500 estimated goose hunters.

^f A total of 515 hunters were contacted or about 3.3 % of the estimated 15,400 goose hunters.

^g A total of 705 hunters were contacted or about 4.9% of the estimated 14,300 goose hunters.

Table 7. Estimated waterfowl harvest numbers from USFWS's waterfowl hunter survey for Idaho, 1988-2004.

| Year | Duck stamps sold | Estimated adult hunters | Total geese harvested ^a | Total ducks harvested ^a |
|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 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 | 12,000/14,900 ^b | 64,400 | 138,600 |
| 2002 | 21,971 | 14,500 / 9,900 ^b | 36,700 | 160,600 |
| 2003 | 21,097 | 18,200/15,400 ^b | 84,200 | 262,900 |
| 2004 ^c | 20,157 | 17,100/13,300 ^b | 62,700 | 188,500 |

^a Adjusted for exaggeration memory bias and juvenile hunter density.

^b The first number is estimated number of duck hunters and the second number is estimated number of goose hunters.

^c Preliminary estimate July 2005.

APPENDIX A
IDAHO
2004 SEASON
WATERFOWL RULES

2004 Waterfowl Seasons & Rules

Idaho
Department of
Fish & Game



REGULATIONS
2004-2005



*Hunter photo courtesy of Janice Engle
Pintail photo courtesy of Clair Koford*

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 all parts of the state NOT included in Areas 2 and 3 EXCEPT Fremont and Teton counties are CLOSED to the taking of light geese.

Open Season: October 2, 2004 through January 14, 2005

— AREA 2 —

Area 2 includes the following counties or portions of counties:

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

Open Season: October 9, 2004 through January 21, 2005

— AREA 3 —

Area 3 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 9, 2004 through January 21, 2005

SPECIAL YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNTING DAYS

- Duck (including merganser, canvasbacks, and pintails), goose, and coot hunting open for two days only, on September 25 and 26, 2004, to hunters 15 and younger.
- 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!**

Information in this brochure summarizes the rules and is the official proclamation of the Idaho Fish and Game Commission for the taking of waterfowl. The official rules are available from the Division of Statewide Administrative Rules, Department of Administration, Statehouse Mail, Boise, ID 83720, and may be reviewed in some libraries. Maps are for general reference only.

**Statewide Duck (Including merganser),
Common Snipe and American Coot
Seasons and Limits**

Canvasback Season is 60 DAYS ONLY—Pintail season is 60 DAYS ONLY

AREA 1

Area 1 includes all parts of the state NOT included in Areas 2 and 3.

Regular Season: October 2, 2004 through January 14, 2005

Pintail and Canvasback Season: October 2, 2004 through November 30, 2004

AREA 2

Area 2 includes the following counties or portions of counties:

Ada; Boise; Canyon; Cassia EXCEPT the Minidoka National Wildlife Refuge; Elmore; Gem; Gooding; Lincoln; Minidoka; Owyhee; Payette; Power west of State Highway 37 and State Highway 39 EXCEPT the Minidoka National Wildlife Refuge; Twin Falls; and Washington Counties.

Open Season: October 9, 2004 through January 21, 2005

Pintail and Canvasback Season: October 9, 2004 through December 7, 2004

AREA 3

Area 3 includes the following counties or portions of counties:

Bannock; Bingham EXCEPT that portion within 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 2, 2004 through January 14, 2005

Pintail and Canvasback Season: October 2, 2004 through November 30, 2004



Limits for Areas 1 and 2

Ducks (Including mergansers)

Daily Bag Limit:

5 of any kind except:
Shall not include more than the following:

- 1 canvasback
- 1 female mallard
- 1 pintail
- 2 redheads
- 4 scaup (*lesser or greater in the aggregate*)

Possession Limit After First Day of Season:

- 10** of any kind except:
- Shall not include more than the following:
- 2 canvasbacks
- 2 female mallards
- 2 pintails
- 4 redheads
- 8 scaup (*lesser or greater in the aggregate*)

Limits for Area 3

Ducks (Including mergansers)

Daily Bag Limit:

7 of any kind except:
Shall not include more than the following:

- 1 canvasback
- 2 female mallards
- 1 pintail
- 2 redheads
- 4 scaup (*lesser or greater in the aggregate*)

Possession Limit After First Day of Season:

- 14** of any kind except:
- Shall not include more than the following:
- 2 canvasbacks
- 4 female mallards
- 2 pintails
- 4 redheads
- 8 scaup (*lesser or greater in the aggregate*)

Limits for coots and commons snipe continued on next page.

Limits for Areas 1, 2 and 3 for Coots and Common Snipe

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



Remember

Canvasback Season is only 60 days

Numbers of this large duck have declined in recent years and the US Fish and Wildlife Service is requiring a restrictive season during the 2004-2005 hunting season. This large duck is uncommon in Idaho and out of 200,000 ducks harvested annually in the state only a few thousand have been canvasbacks. The distinctly flat head profile and the male's white back are good ways to distinguish this duck in the field.



Pintail Season is only 60 days

Pintail numbers are down and the US Fish and Wildlife Service is requiring a restrictive hunting season during 2004-2005 hunting season. This duck has a long neck and tail and is present in Idaho throughout the hunting season.

PROXY STATEMENT *(To transport wildlife taken by another person)*

| Waterfowl | Species | Sex | Description and Number Taken | Hunt Area Killed | Date |
|---|----------------|------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"> <i>Please Circle species</i> </div> | Dark Geese | | | | |
| | Light Geese | | | | |
| | Ducks | | | | |
| | Snipe, Coots | | | | |

OTHER FISH/GAME:

Species _____ Number _____ Sex _____
 Species _____ Number _____ Sex _____
 Species _____ Number _____ Sex _____

Hunter/Angler's Name _____ Signature _____

Address _____ Phone _____

License No. _____ Tag No. _____ Permit No. _____

Name of person transporting _____ Phone _____

SANDHILL CRANE SEASONS, LIMITS AND PERMITS

| HUNT AREA | HUNT NO. | SEASON | PERMITS |
|-----------|----------|----------------|---------|
| 1 | 9501 | September 1-15 | 165 |
| 2 | 9502 | September 1-7 | 24 |
| 2 | 9503 | September 8-15 | 24 |
| 3 | 9504 | September 1-7 | 24 |
| 3 | 9505 | September 8-15 | 24 |

Note: Daily limit is 2 for all hunts. The season limit is 9

On August 30, 2004, any controlled hunt permits that remain unsold after the controlled hunt drawing may be sold on a first-come, first-serve basis. In 2004, hunters may purchase as many as 9 permits and tags to hunt cranes. Each additional permit to harvest a crane will cost \$14.50.

The purpose of these hunts is to help reduce crop damage by sandhill cranes. Check with local landowners or Department offices for information on crane use areas and remember: always—
“Ask First to Hunt on Private Property.”

CONTROLLED HUNT WORKSHEET

Applications can be submitted electronically at any IDFG license vendor. Applications can be made using your credit card by calling 1-800-554-8685 or on the Fish and Game website under “What’s New” (www.fishandgame.idaho.gov). Controlled hunt worksheets can be mailed with proper fees to: IDFG License Section, P.O. Box 25, Boise, ID 83707.

Use this worksheet to speed up the application process. Fill in the blanks with your hunting license and controlled hunt numbers before you apply. **Group Applicants:** Two hunters may apply on the same application.

HOW MANY HUNTERS ARE APPLYING?

DESIGNATE \$1 OF FEE TO C.A.P.?
 (CITIZENS AGAINST POACHING)

(Single application for deer, elk, antelope, bear, moose, goat, sheep, Canada goose, sandhill crane or turkey)

NAME #1

Date of birth

LICENSE NUMBER

(Group application for deer, elk, antelope, bear, moose, goat, sheep, Canada goose, sandhill crane or turkey)

NAME #2

Date of birth

LICENSE NUMBER

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| YES | NO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

IDAHO 2004

SANDHILL CRANE
 Controlled Hunt Season and
 Application Information



Crane hunters must have a \$1.50 Federal Migratory Game Bird Harvest Information Program (HIP) validation on their licenses. This validation is available at any license vendor.

CONTROLLED CRANE HUNTS

Permit Requirements: No person shall hunt sandhill cranes without having in possession the appropriate hunting license, controlled hunt permit, sandhill crane tag and federal HIP validation.

FEES

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Application Fee | \$6.50 (non refundable) |
| Controlled Hunt Permit | \$6.50 |
| Sandhill Crane Tag | \$1.50 |
| Federal HIP Validation | \$1.50 |

Note: Only the Application Fee is required during the application process. Successful applicants must then purchase permit, tag and federal HIP validation. The HIP validation is required with the first permit only.



Application Dates: June 15, 2004 to July 15, 2004. Applications may be submitted electronically at any Fish & Game license vendor, by telephone (1-800-554-8685), by mail or on the Fish and Game website under "What's New" (www.fishandgame.idaho.gov). Mail applications must be received at IDFG Headquarters Office and **postmarked no later than the last day of the application period.** Applications will be taken no earlier than the first day of the application period. Applications must comply with the following requirements:

- Only one application form per person or group will be accepted. Additional application forms will result in all applicants being declared ineligible.
- Each applicant for controlled hunts must submit a \$6.50 nonrefundable application fee with their application. One dollar of this fee may be designated for the Citizens Against Poaching program.
- A single payment (either cashier's check, money order, certified check or personal check) may be submitted to cover fees for all applications in the same envelope. If a check or money order is insufficient to cover the fees, all applications will be voided.
- Visa, MasterCard and Discover cards may be used to make telephone or internet applications. Those using the credit card system will pay the \$6.50 fee in addition to a service charge for completing and processing the computerized application and delivering it to Fish and Game. Charges will be explained upon request. To apply by credit card, dial 1-800-554-8685, 24 hours a day. Or look under "What's New" on the IDFG Website.

Group Application is defined as two hunters applying for the same controlled hunt on the same application.

Second Choice Drawing: Single or group applications which are not drawn for the first choice hunt will automatically be entered into a second choice drawing provided the second choice hunt applied for has not been filled.

Notification: It is your responsibility to find out if you were successful in drawing a controlled hunt permit. Applicants can check drawing results under "What's New?" on the Fish and Game website, www.fishandgame.idaho.gov by August 10. Successful applicants will be sent a postcard by August 10 informing them of their success. These applicants may go to any vendor and purchase a controlled hunt permit. Controlled hunt permits may also be purchased on the Internet.

Nonresident Permit Limitations: On 2004 controlled hunts, not more than 10 percent of the permits may be issued to nonresidents.

Information in this brochure summarizes the rules and is the official proclamation of the Idaho Fish and Game Commission for the hunting of sandhill cranes in calendar year 2004. Further explanation is available in the current Upland Game Seasons brochure. The official rules are available from the Division of Statewide Administrative Rules, Department of Administration, Statehouse Mail, Boise, ID 83720.



Ask First—For Permission to Hunt on Private Property

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

Costs associated with this publication are available from IDFG in accordance with section 60-202, Idaho Code. 6-04/2500/41918

Sandhill Crane Controlled Hunt Areas include the following:

Area 1 — Includes all of Bear Lake County and all of Caribou County EXCEPT that portion downstream from the dam at Alexander Reservoir south of U.S. Highway 30, and that portion lying within the Grays Lake Basin.

Area 2 — Includes all of Teton County.

Area 3 — Includes all of Fremont County.

No mandatory check required for cranes in 2004.

Take a Kid Hunting!



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

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.

