

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

Cal Groen, Director

Project W-170-R-31

Progress Report



WATERFOWL FALL AND WINTER SURVEYS, BANDING, AND HARVEST

Study II, Job 3

October 1, 2006 to March 31, 2007

Prepared by: Tom Hemker, Wildlife Program Coordinator

September 2007
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Findings in this report are preliminary in nature and not for publication without permission of the Director of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game.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

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

 Population Surveys.....5

 Harvest Characteristics.....5

 Climatic Conditions.....6

 Management Implications.....6

 GEESE (ALL SPECIES).....7

 Current Management Plan Goals.....7

 Management Areas.....7

 Population Surveys.....10

 Harvest Characteristics.....10

 Climatic Conditions.....11

 Management Implications.....11

 SANDHILL CRANE.....11

 Current Goals.....11

 TRUMPETER SWAN.....13

 TUNDRA SWAN.....13

 AMERICAN COOT.....13

 COMMON SNIPE.....14

LITERATURE CITED.....14

APPENDIX A.....23

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Birds counted during the mid-winter waterfowl survey, 1995-2006. No count in 2004.....16

Table 2. Estimated statewide harvest of ducks obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2005.....17

Table 3. Canada geese counted in Idaho during the mid-winter survey by survey area, 1995-2006. No count in 2004.18

Table 4. Estimated harvest of Canada geese from the Pacific Population (west of U.S. Hwy 93) obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2005.....19

Table 5. Estimated harvest of Canada geese from the Rocky Mountain Population (east of U.S. Hwy 93) obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2005.20

Table 6. Estimated statewide harvest of Canada geese obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2005.....21

Table 7. Estimated waterfowl harvest numbers from USFWS’s waterfowl hunter survey for Idaho, 1988-2005.22

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Distribution of Pacific and Rocky Mountain Canada geese populations within Idaho.15

**PROGRESS REPORT
SURVEYS AND INVENTORIES**

STATE:	<u>Idaho</u>	JOB TITLE:	<u>Upland Game and Waterfowl</u>
PROJECT:	<u>W-170-R-31</u>		<u>Population Status and Trends</u>
SUBPROJECT:	<u>1-7</u>	STUDY NAME:	<u>Waterfowl Fall and Winter</u>
STUDY:	<u>II</u>		<u>Surveys, Banding, and Harvest</u>
JOB:	<u>3</u>		
PERIOD COVERED:	<u>October 1, 2006 to March 31, 2007</u>		

ABSTRACT

Results of the mid-winter waterfowl population surveys conducted by regional personnel and results of harvest surveys are summarized and discussed. The 2007 mid-winter count for total ducks and total waterfowl was conducted. The 2007 count for total ducks and total waterfowl was up 63% and 50% from the 2006 count, respectively, but 10% below the 10-year average (1996-2006) for both. Harvest data from USFWS showed 2006 duck harvest up 8% and 2006 goose harvest up 5%. The Department conducted a separate waterfowl harvest survey for the 2006 season. These harvest data were similar to the USFWS goose harvest estimate but 13% 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 897 youth hunters participated in this 2-day hunt. A summary of the 2006-2007 waterfowl hunting regulations is provided in Appendix A.

YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNT

For the seventh year, USFWS offered all states the option of holding a 2-day youth waterfowl hunt during the 2006-2007 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 30 September-1 October 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 897 youth hunters participated in this 2-day hunt or about 25% of the total number of youth hunters.

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). 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.

Beginning with the 2005-2006 season, Areas 1 and 3 were combined and renamed Area 1. The USFWS again offered a 107-day season and a 60-day “season within a season” for canvasbacks. The season was 105 days with no split, and the 2-day youth waterfowl season was 24-25 September (Appendix A).

For the 2006-2007 season, the USFWS offered a 107-day season for ducks, snipe, and coot statewide. The season was 105 days with no split, and the 2-day youth waterfowl season was 30 September-1 October (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.

For the 1997-1998 through 2002-2003 seasons, 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, 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.

For the 2005-2006 season, the USFWS again offered a 107-day season and a 60-day “season within a season” for canvasbacks. The season was 105 days with no split, and the 2-day youth waterfowl season was 24-25 September (Appendix A).

For the 2006-2007 season, the USFWS offered a 107-day season for ducks, snipe, and coot statewide. The season was 105 days with no split, and the 2-day youth waterfowl season was 30 September-1 October (Appendix A).

Management Area 3

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).

Beginning with the 2005-2006 season, Areas 1 and 3 were combined and renamed Area 1, and the state was again left with only 2 duck management areas.

Population Surveys

The mid-winter survey was conducted in 2007 (Table 1). The USFWS predicted a 2006 traditional area mallard breeding population of 7.3 million birds, which is up 9% from the 6.8 million bird estimate for 2005 (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2006).

Harvest Characteristics

Telephone Survey: The Department estimated the Idaho duck harvest for the 2006-2007 hunting season at 317,800 (Table 2), which is 22% above 2005 and 25% above the 2006 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 has complied fully with USFWS's request for information every year since.

USFWS Hunter and Harvest Survey: The USFWS's preliminary estimate for the 2006-2007 duck harvest was 278,000, up 38% from the 2005 estimate.

Climatic Conditions

Winter 2006-2007 was warmer and drier than normal. As a result, wintering conditions for waterfowl were better than normal.

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. As of 2006, the Department has contributed a total of over \$500,000 to Ducks Unlimited projects in Alberta, Canada.

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

In 2003, Area 1 was expanded again 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. Beginning in 2003-2004, goose and duck seasons have 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.

In 2002-2003, the Department split Area 2 back into 2 separate areas (Areas 2 and 4 for 2002-2003; Areas 2 and 3 for 2003-2004 and 2004-2005) and raised the bag and possession limits for Area 2 to 4 and 8 geese, respectively. In 2003, Area 2 was reduced and Adams and Valley counties were added to Area 1.

Beginning in 2005, Areas 2 and 3 were combined and the state was left with only 2 goose management areas. Area 2 currently includes all of Washington, Payette, Gem, Boise, Canyon, Ada, Owyhee, Elmore, Camas, Gooding, Twin Falls, Blaine, Lincoln, Jerome, Cassia, and Minidoka counties and a portion of Power County.

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. Beginning in 2003-2004, the seasons have opened on the same day (Appendix A).

Management Area 3

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. Beginning in 2005, Areas 2 and 3 were combined and the state was left with only 2 goose management areas.

The 1990-1991 goose season opened 2 weeks prior to duck season. From 1991-1992 through 1996-1997, 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. The seasons have opened on the same day since 2003-2004.

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 were 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.

In 2003, the Department combined Areas 1 and 3 (now called Area 1) and Area 4 was renamed Area 3. The state hasn't had an Area 4 since 2003.

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 (the Fort Hall Indian Reservation) 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 the Fort Hall Indian Reservation with Area 1. The state has not had an Area 5 since 1998.

Population Surveys

The mid-winter survey was conducted in 2007 and 100% of the survey area covered (Table 3).

Harvest Characteristics

Telephone Survey: The Department used a mail-out/telephone survey to estimate goose harvest (Tables 4-6) in 2006-2007. The estimate for 2006-2007 was 75,500 (Table 6) or 9% below the estimate of 82,600 for 2005-2006.

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 has complied fully with the USFWS request for information every year since. The USFWS estimate for the 2006-2007 goose harvest was 77,800 or similar to the estimate of 74,300 for 2005-2006 (Table 7).

Climatic Conditions

Winter 2006-2007 was warmer and drier than normal. As a result, wintering conditions for waterfowl were better than normal.

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, 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 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 nongame 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.

In 2005, the Commission authorized 1 hunt in Hunt Area 1 with 300 permits, 2 hunts in Area 2 with 35 permits each, and 2 hunts in Area 3 with 35 permits each. Of the 440 available permits, 369 were issued. The limit remained 2 cranes per day per hunter with a season limit of 9 cranes.

In 2006, the Commission authorized 1 hunt in Hunt Area 1 with 300 permits, 2 hunts in Area 2 with 50 permits each, and 2 hunts in Area 3 with 50 permits each. The limit remained 2 cranes per day per hunter with a season limit of 9 cranes.

TRUMPETER SWAN

In 2003, the Department wrote a study plan for a 3-year project to evaluate the effectiveness of cygnet translocation to increase winter distribution of trumpeter swans. The project included a graduate student project at the University of Idaho. The birds will be monitored until at least 2008 to determine success of this effort.

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.

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.

LITERATURE CITED

Subcommittee on Rocky Mountain Greater Sandhill Cranes. 1997. Management plan of the Pacific and Central Flyways for the Rocky Mountain population of greater sandhill cranes. [Joint] Subcommittee, Rocky Mountain Population Greater Sandhill Cranes, Pacific Flyway Study Committee, and Central Flyway Tech. Committee, [c/o USFWS/DMBM], Portland, Oregon, USA.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2006. Waterfowl population status, 2006. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Migratory Bird Management, Laurel, Maryland, USA.

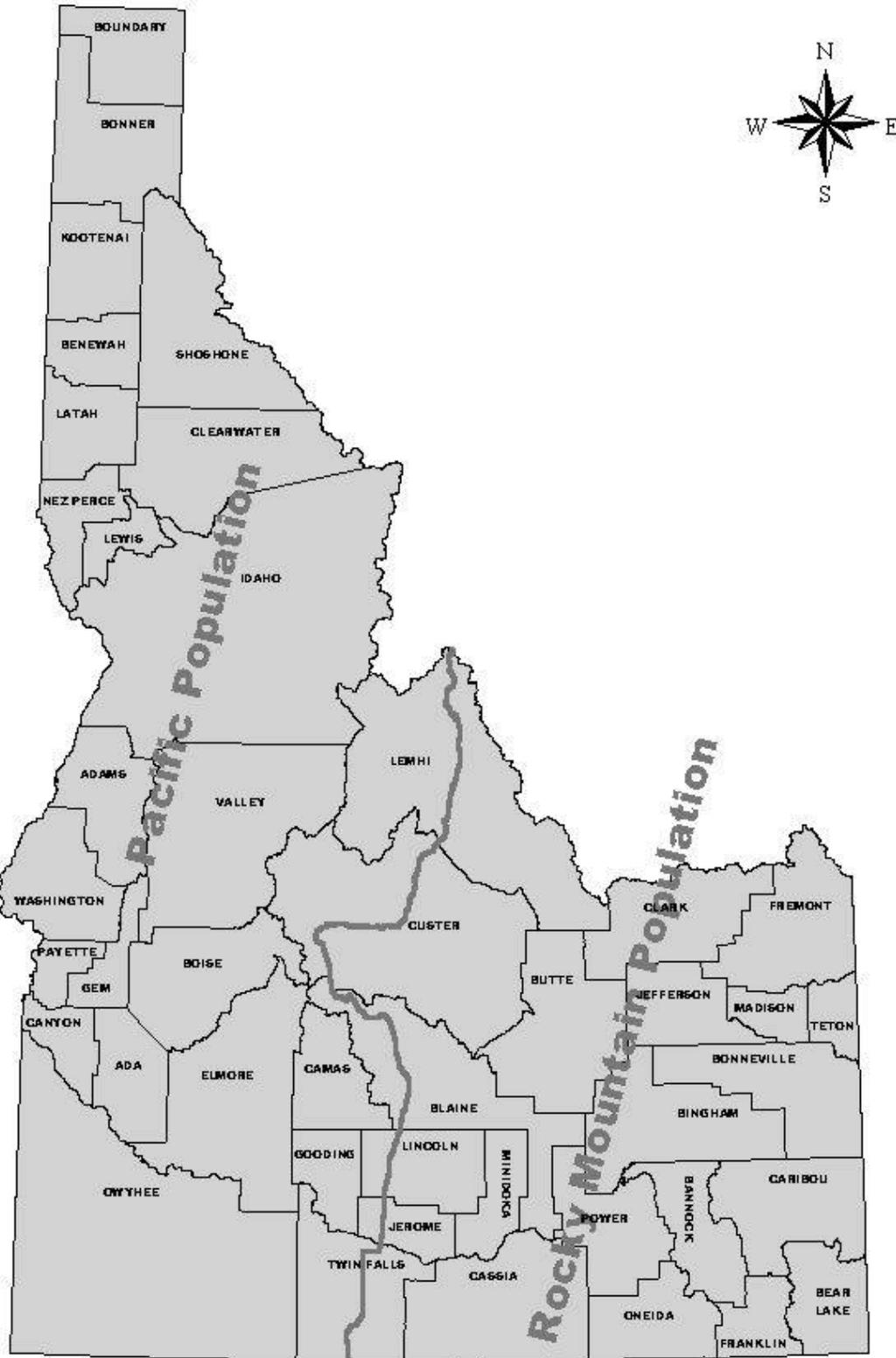


Figure 1. Distribution of Pacific and Rocky Mountain Canada geese populations within Idaho.

Table 1. Birds counted during the mid-winter waterfowl survey, 1995-2006. No count in 2004.

Species	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001 ^a	2002	2003 ^b	2005 ^c	2006 ^d	1996-2006		% Change from	
											10-yr. avg.	2007	2006	10-yr. avg.
Mallard	159,160	140,230	304,126	284,670	261,425	106,516	168,844	108,034	164,425	103,467	180,090	207,741	101	15
Gadwall	1,482	191	279	186	1,058	45	261	602	599	894	560	552	-38	-1
Widgeon	9,884	3,463	2,130	3,686	4,164	1,189	1,412	6,900	9,665	5,067	4,756	3,416	-33	-28
Green-winged Teal	1,702	126	55	118	202	142	249	363	402	301	366	134	-55	-63
Blue-winged/ Cinnamon Teal	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	0	0	50	6	0	-100	-100
Shoveler	368	151	31	271	88	1	17	25	183	7	114	44	529	-61
Pintail	6,671	2,150	362	1,649	405	1,696	179	49	121	252	1,353	124	-51	-91
Wood duck	334	157	314	277	290	38	503	55	213	336	252	580	73	130
Redhead	11,431	16,731	8,209	23,589	17,643	12,750	35,993	21,324	22,463	15,909	18,604	13,111	-18	-30
Canvasback	107	168	19	323	165	0	333	20	57	312	150	1,029	230	584
Scaup	5,177	3,498	2,342	5,275	3,398	7,436	12,313	9,900	5,556	4,114	5,901	10,185	148	73
Ringneck	1,404	566	353	734	1,232	282	4,445	3,411	1,060	4,281	1,777	3,816	-11	115
Goldeneye	14,842	10,822	14,090	21,731	19,674	11,921	15,219	12,018	18,214	21,473	16,000	22,035	3	38
Bufflehead	1,829	935	1,197	3,141	654	752	1,193	763	1,080	1,045	1,259	949	-9	-25
Ruddy duck	79	50	52	225	13	0	7	12	6	2	45	7	250	-84
Merganser	5,111	2,760	3,835	3,418	3,952	1,732	2,792	1,571	1,103	1,196	2,747	413	-65	-85
Unidentified ducks	7,841	23,154	3,894	13,667	752	324	835	225	260	14,922	6,587	17,831	19	171
Total ducks	229,418	207,149	343,286	364,959	317,115	144,824	246,609	165,272	225,407	173,628	240,567	281,967	62	17
Snow goose	10	1	18	4	0	0	1	0	1	0	4	3		-14
Ross'	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	-100
Canada goose	70,254	41,433	58,430	66,384	37,961	39,474	29,374	43,489	53,506	39,078	47,938	44,912	15	-6
Lesser Canada	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cackling goose	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-100
White-front	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-100
Total geese	70,267	41,435	58,448	66,389	37,962	39,474	29,375	43,489	53,509	39,078	47,942	44,915	15	-6
Tundra swan	148	154	85	110	220	174	205	178	384	243	190	615	153	224
Trumpeter swan	0	0	0	0	139	0	1,783	1,730	0	2,016	567	2,922	45	416
Unidentified swan ^e	1,263	1,411	1,283	1,474	1,940	201	5	150	454	333	851	0	-100	-100
Coot	26,109	14,665	15,324	20,712	38,253	25,763	33,285	16,042	5,325	21,473	21,695	24,639	15	14
Total waterfowl	327,205	264,814	418,426	453,644	395,629	210,436	311,262	226,861	285,079	236,771	311,812	355,058	50	14

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

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

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

^d About 10% of the state's winter habitat was not counted in 2006 because of inclement weather in Panhandle Region.

^e Primarily trumpeter swans 1995-2000.

Table 2. Estimated statewide harvest of ducks obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2006.

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 ^h	264,900	12.5	21,100	178,500	8.4
2005	5.3 ⁱ	322,100	16.2	19,900	184,000	9.2
2006	5.0 ^j	317,800	15.2	20,925	171,700	8.2

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

^g 887 duck hunters were contacted or about 4.0% of the estimated 22,200 duck hunters.

^h 1,042 duck hunters were contacted or about 4.9% of the estimated 21,100 duck hunters.

ⁱ 1,050 duck hunters were contacted or about 5.3% of the estimated 19,900 duck hunters.

^j 1,050 duck hunters were contacted or about 5.0% of the estimated 20,925 duck hunters.

Table 3. Canada geese counted in Idaho during the mid-winter survey by survey area, 1995-2006. No count in 2004.

Area ^a	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001 ^b	2002	2003 ^b	2005 ^b	2006 ^b	2007
Survey area #1	1,448	1,386	817	843	1,331		839	1,730		1,021	182
Survey area #2	0	0	0	0	0		0	0		0	0
Survey area #3	0	0	28	37	0		0	0		0	1,588
Survey area #4	0	0	0	0	0		0	0		0	0
Survey area #5	38,968	17,318	14,891	29,310	5,720	18,172	9,233	15,662	15,709	16,617	15,300
Survey area #6	2,158	974	2,425	314	25		153		47	507	52
Survey area #7	98	4,014	3,861	4,453	604		2,273	493	666	2,983	3,724
Survey area #7A	4,496	4,438	4,717	3,280	702		2,144		1,678	2,259	1,747
Survey area #7B	2,322	2,652	2,953	1,261	278		1,413		1,522	775	318
Survey area #8A	4,891	3,362	2,610	14,075	5,080	12,710	2,190	5,423	7,856	4,397	3,215
Survey area #8B	2,736	2,479	4,575	4,730	1,029	4,129	551	4,479	3,817	2,906	2,482
Survey area #9	3,893	2,314	5,639	3,366	7,498	1,838	3,499	1,850	4,287	6,516	12,453
Survey area #10	6,814	1,189	14,519	4,309	14,130	1,212	6,029	13,540	16,893	512	5,060
Survey area #11	2,433	1,307	1,395	406	1,560	1,413	1,050	312	1,034	585	561
<i>Total</i>	<i>70,257</i>	<i>41,433</i>	<i>58,430</i>	<i>66,384</i>	<i>37,957</i>	<i>39,474</i>	<i>29,374</i>	<i>43,489</i>	<i>53,509</i>	<i>39,078</i>	<i>44,912</i>
Rocky Mountain Population ^c	47,070	24,116	22,878	33,784	7,778	18,172	12,369	17,392	17,434	20,404	18,869
Percent	67	58	39	51	21	46	42	40	33	52	42
Pacific Population ^c	23,187	17,317	35,552	32,600	30,184	21,302	17,005	26,097	36,075	^b 18,674	27,813
Percent	33	42	61	49	79	54	58	60	67	48	58
Pacific Population Plan Unit 2 ^d (south)	13,940	14,821	19,638	27,885	14,494	18,677	9,926	12,245	18,128	17,577	22,192
Pacific Population Plan Unit 4 ^d (north)	9,247	2,496	15,914	4,715	15,690	2,625	7,079	13,852	17,927	^b 1,097	5,621

^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. See USFWS "Idaho midwinter waterfowl count report" for details.

^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. Hwy 93) obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2006.

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
2005	5.3 ⁱ	39,700	8,800	72,900
2006	5.0 ^j	48,555	9,600	71,000

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

Beginning in 2003, hunters were specifically asked whether they were hunting in the Pacific or RMP population zones.

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

ⁱ 742 hunters were contacted or about 5.3% of the estimated 14,100 goose hunters.

^j 727 hunters were contacted or about 5.0% of the estimated 14,500 goose hunters.

Table 5. Estimated harvest of Canada geese from the Rocky Mountain Population (east of U.S. Hwy 93) obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2006.

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
2005	5.3 ⁱ	42,900	5,900	49,800
2006	5.0 ^j	26,900	5,400	38,700

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

ⁱ 742 hunters were contacted or about 5.3% of the estimated 14,100 goose hunters.

^j 727 hunters were contacted or about 5.0% of the estimated 14,500 goose hunters.

Table 6. Estimated statewide harvest of Canada geese obtained from the Department telephone survey, 1988-2006.

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 ^e	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
2005	5.3 ^h	82,600	5.9	14,100	122,600	8.7
2006	5.0 ⁱ	75,500	5.2	14,500	109,700	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 553 hunters were contacted or about 4.4% of the 12,500 estimated goose hunters.

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

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

^h 742 hunters were contacted or about 5.3% of the estimated 14,100 goose hunters.

ⁱ 727 hunters were contacted or about 5.0% of the estimated 14,500 goose hunters.

Table 7. Estimated waterfowl harvest numbers from USFWS's waterfowl hunter survey for Idaho, 1988-2006.

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	26,709	20,795	28,500	228,300
2000	28,206	23,306	86,200	173,200
2001	26,173	12,000/14,900 ^b	64,400	138,600
2002	24,937	14,500 / 9,900 ^b	36,700	160,600
2003	24,878	18,200/15,400 ^b	84,200	262,900
2004	24,320	17,100/13,300 ^b	62,700	188,500
2005	23,724	18,500/16,000 ^b	74,300	258,300
2006 ^c	25,726	18,400/14,500 ^b	77,800	278,000

^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 2007.

APPENDIX A
IDAHO
2006 SEASON
WATERFOWL RULES

2006 Waterfowl Seasons and Rules



Photo courtesy of Joshua Noble



Photo courtesy of Logan Mitchell

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)



RULES

September 2006
through
January 2007

Goose Seasons

General Season

Area 1

Oct. 7, 2006 — Jan. 19, 2007

Area 2

Oct. 14, 2006 — Jan. 26, 2007

Statewide Duck

Area 1

Oct. 7, 2006 — Jan. 19, 2007

Area 2

Oct. 14, 2006 — Jan. 26, 2007

SPECIAL YOUTH HUNT

Sept. 30 — Oct. 1, 2006

**DON'T SHOOT!
Swans are Protected!**

Two species of swans are found in Idaho: tundra swans, the smaller and far more numerous; and trumpeter swans, the largest and one of the rarest waterfowl species in the world. Both species are protected and cannot be hunted in Idaho.

Both of these slow, low-flying birds are vulnerable to accidental and illegal shooting. But, since they are much larger and have longer necks and adult birds are completely white, swans do not closely resemble any legal game bird. Trumpeters have a seven-foot wingspan and weigh 25-30 pounds. Snow geese and Ross' geese are also white but are much smaller and have black wing tips.

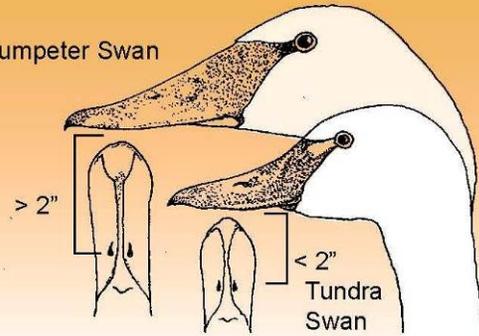
Young of the year swans (cygnets), are a medium gray color with paler belly and wing linings, weigh 15-20 pounds, have wingspans of almost seven feet and fly with a slow, distinct wing beat.

**Hunters Must Be Sure
of Their Targets!**



**Report all sightings
of swans with
neck collars to the
nearest IDFG office.
(See page 3)**

Trumpeter Swan



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 Area 2. Fremont and Teton counties are CLOSED to the taking of light geese.

Open Season:

October 7, 2006 through January 19, 2007

AREA 2

Area 2 includes the following counties or portions of counties: Ada; Blaine; Boise; Camas; Cassia; Canyon; Elmore; Gem; Gooding; Jerome; Lincoln; Minidoka; Owyhee; Payette; Power west of State Highway 37 and State Highway 39; Twin Falls; and Washington counties.

Open Season:

October 14, 2006 through January 26, 2007

Goose Bag Limit and Hunt Areas

STATEWIDE

Daily Bag Limit: 4 of any kind.
Possession Limit After First Day of Season: 8 of any kind.

SPECIAL YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNTING DAYS

- Duck (including merganser and canvasback), goose, snipe, and coot hunting open for two days only, on September 30 and October 1, 2006, 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, snipe, 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!

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

AREA 1

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

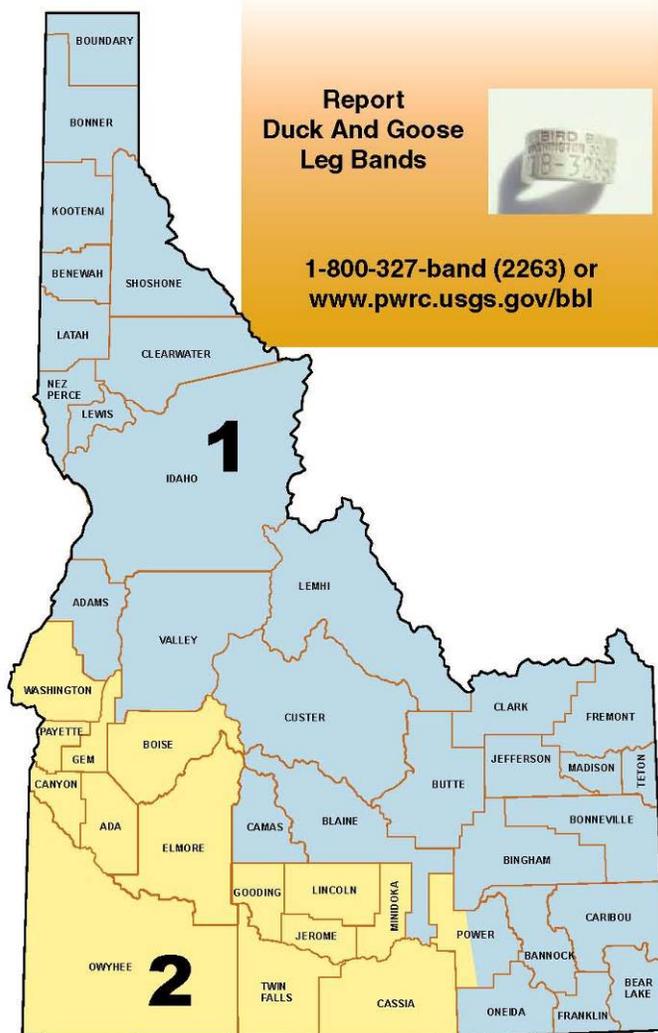
Open Season:
October 7, 2006 through January 19, 2007

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; Jerome; 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 14, 2006 through January 26, 2007



Duck Bag Limit (Including mergansers)

Daily Bag Limit: 7 of any kind except:

Shall not include more than the following:

- 1 canvasback
- 2 female mallards
- 2 redheads
- 1 pintail
- 3 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
- 4 redheads
- 2 pintail
- 6 scaup (lesser or greater in the aggregate)

Bag Limits for Areas 1 and 2 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

DUCK

<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov>

15

SANDHILL CRANE SEASONS, LIMITS AND PERMITS

HUNT AREA	HUNT NO.	SEASON	PERMITS
1	9501	September 1-15	300
2	9502	September 1-7	50
2	9503	September 8-15	50
3	9504	September 1-7	50
3	9505	September 8-15	50

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

On August 30, 2006, any controlled hunt permits that remain unsold after the controlled hunt drawing may be sold on a first-come, first-serve basis. In 2006, hunters may purchase as many as 9 permits and tags to hunt cranes. Each additional permit to harvest a crane will cost \$15.75.

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” (<http://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)

		YES	NO
(Single application for deer, elk, antelope, bear, moose, goat, sheep, Canada goose, sandhill crane or turkey)			
NAME #1	<input type="text"/>		
Date of birth	<input type="text"/>		
LICENSE NUMBER	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(Group application for deer, elk, antelope, bear, moose, goat, sheep, Canada goose, sandhill crane or turkey)			
NAME #2	<input type="text"/>		
Date of birth	<input type="text"/>		
LICENSE NUMBER	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

IDAHO 2006

**SANDHILL CRANE
Controlled Hunt Season and
Application Information**



Crane hunters must have a \$1.75 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	\$6.25 (non refundable)
Controlled Hunt Permit	\$7.75
Sandhill Crane Tag	\$1.75
Federal HIP Validation	\$1.75

Note: Only the Application Fee is required during the application process. Fees are slightly less than stated above if purchased before 7/1/05. 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, 2006 to July 15, 2006. 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" (<http://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 \$6.25 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 \$6.25 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, <http://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 2006 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 2006. 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. 6-06/2500/41918

Sandhill Crane Controlled Hunt Areas include the following:

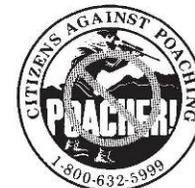
Area 1 — Includes all of Bear Lake County and all of Caribou County EXCEPT that portion downstream from the dam at Alexander Reservoir south of U.S. Highway 30, and that portion lying within the Grays Lake Basin.

Area 2 — Includes all of Teton County.

Area 3 — Includes all of Fremont County.

No mandatory check required for cranes in 2006.

Take a Kid Hunting!



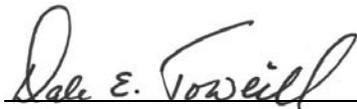
Submitted by:

Tom Hemker

Wildlife Program Coordinator

Approved by:

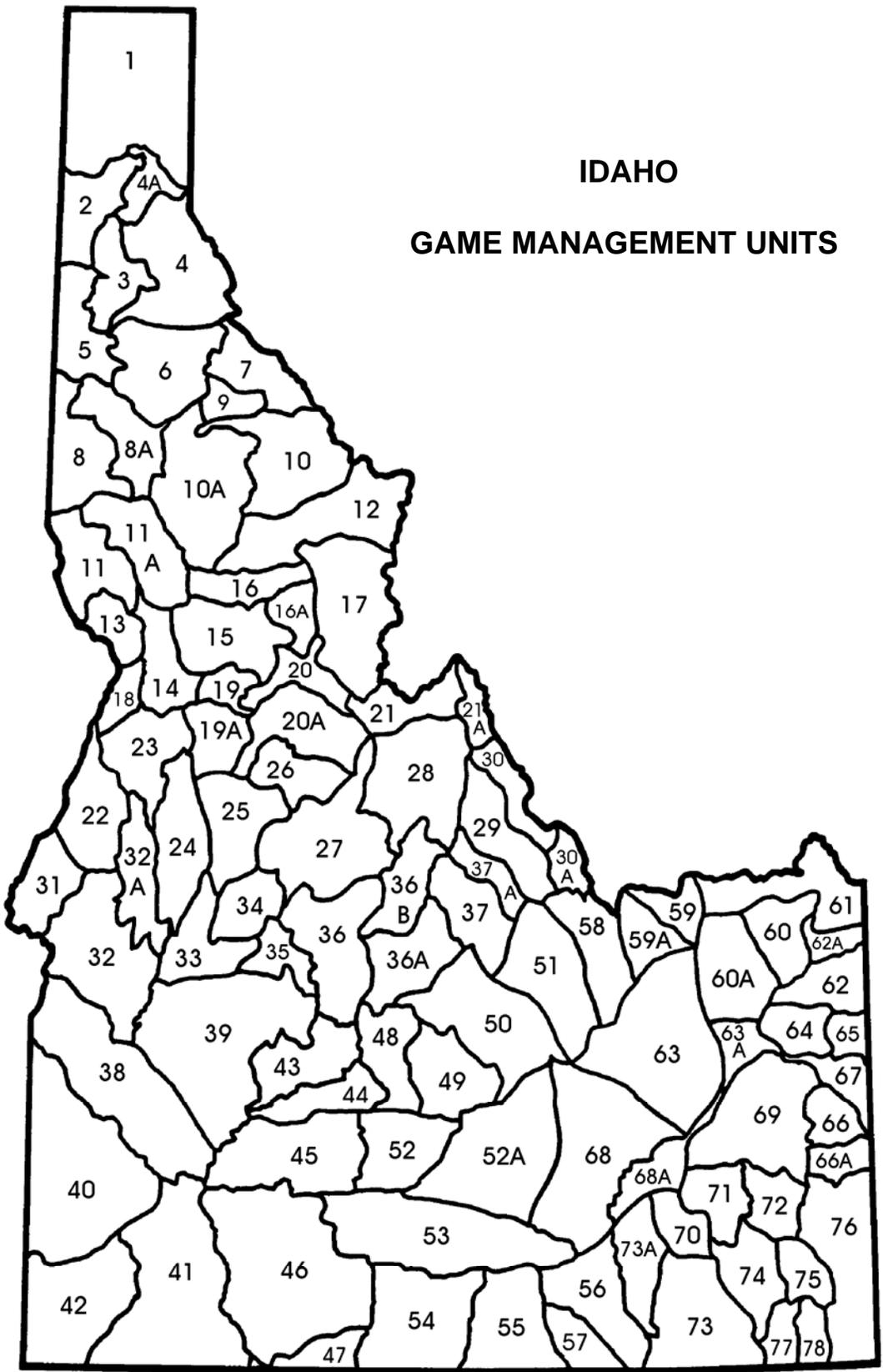
IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME



Dale E. Towell
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.

