

THE MARYLAND WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION
MINUTES – JULY 24, 2013

Chairman Jeffrey Plummer called the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m.

Approval for the July 24, 2013 Meeting Agenda

- The July 24, 2013 Wildlife Advisory Commission Meeting Agenda was presented to the Commission.
- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Boyles Griffin moved to accept the July 24, 2013 Meeting Agenda as presented.
 2. Commissioner Bonomo seconded.
 3. All in favor. Motion passed.

Approval for Minutes from June 19, 2013 Meeting

- The June 19th meeting minutes were distributed to the Commission prior to the meeting.
- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Bonomo moved to approve the June 19th meeting minutes as presented.
 2. Commissioner Gregor seconded.
 3. All in favor. Motion passed.

2013 – 2014 Waterfowl Season Proposals – Presentation given by Larry Hindman, Waterfowl Project Leader.

- Mr. Hindman highlighted the waterfowl season proposals process and the 2013-2014 Waterfowl Season Proposals in a Power Point Presentation. **[ATTACHMENT A]**
 1. The public meeting is scheduled for August 19th from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm at Chesapeake College, 1000 College Cr., Wye Mills. There is also an online forum for public comments on the waterfowl season proposals.
 2. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) purchased six new aircraft for surveying. There were equipment problems with these aircraft this year; as a result, those planes were grounded. This had a big impact on the USFWS' ability to conduct surveys in the east for Canada geese, mallards, and black ducks. They were able to use another aircraft to survey the more traditional areas across the country and north to Alaska.
 3. As a result there was no breeding population estimate (BPOP) for eastern mallards for this year; biologists had to use last year's information to predict population estimates for the 2013-2014 hunting season.
- Chairman Plummer mentioned that the USFWS set the frameworks and Maryland has to be within the frameworks. Maryland can be more restrictive but not less restrictive.
- The Maryland Preliminary Late Waterfowl Seasons and Bag Limits 2013-2014 Hunting Year Report was distributed to the Commission. **[ATTACHMENT B]**
 1. This year all migratory game bird possession limits have been increased to three times the daily bag limit.
 2. The duck daily bag limit is now a federal maximum of 6 per day with three times the possession so that means eighteen is the maximum possession limit.
 3. One of the things that biologists considered when setting up hunting regulations was that the species must meet the biological requirements for the waterfowl resources to sustain the population.
 4. Staff strive to overlap duck and goose seasons to the extent possible.
 5. The proposed seasons and bag limits are very similar to last year except for the reduction in the brant season, reduction in scaup bag limit to 2, and the increase in the canvasback bag limit to 2 birds per day.

- Director Peditto added a procedural comment that Maryland does not have formal adaptation of these proposals by the Flyway. Procedurally, the federal frameworks that staff are working with do not exist as of yet but timing requires we put the proposals forward to the WAC with the seasons and bag limits.
 1. Director Peditto recommended that the Commission provide the Department comments and thoughts on the proposals.
 2. Chairman Plummer reminded the Commission the importance on hearing the public viewpoint before formulating comments.
 3. Chairman Plummer noted that the Commission members shall submit their final votes via email.
- Questions and Answers Section
 1. Chairman Boyles Griffin asked if there has been any effort made in Canada to suppress the breeding population and growth rate of snow geese.
 - a. Suppressing the breeding population is being discussed among the Flyway Council and the Arctic Goose Joint Venture. The Arctic Goose Joint Venture is doing some research on the Arctic nesting geese.
 - b. There are some people who think the biologists should move forward with direct control measures and others like the Canadian Wildlife Service think that it could be a difficult issue to promote to the public at this time.
 - c. WHS allocated funds for new research to measure the grazing of snow geese on the Arctic. The impacts of colonies and grazing on other wildlife, specifically shorebirds, and other ground nesting birds will be included in the research over the next three through five years. In the meantime, there is a meeting this fall to discuss this concept of moving forward with direct control.
 - d. Remember these birds are colonial nesters – if staff decide to do something, it would have to impact the breeding colonies; it is tough logistically to get to these locations. These birds are not scattered as individual pairs across the Arctic. If anything was to be implemented, it would have to take place on the breeding grounds because biologists have exhausted all methods in the United States.
 2. A member of the public asked about the period during the Conservation Order and what the goal is for the Department since hunters took 20,000 birds last year.
 - a. At this time, the Department does not have a goal but hunters are not harvesting enough of this species.
 - b. Staff members do not have the Flyway numbers from last year but the population data so far shows that this species could handle more harvesting by hunters.
 3. Mr. Tyler Johnson, public guest, asked what the dates are for the early teal season.
 - a. The early teal season opens September 16th through September 30th.
 - b. The early teal season bag limit is 6. This is an increase – teal population is doing quite well.
 - c. The early teal season hunting hours are ½ hour before sunrise.
 - d. This information has been published online.

Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee Update - Presentation given by Larry Hindman, Waterfowl Project Leader.

- Chairman Ladd Johnson from the Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee was unable to attend the July 24th WAC meeting. Chairman Johnson requested that Mr. Hindman provide a brief summary of the business of the Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee (MGBAC).
 1. The MGBAC members met on April 9, 2013 at Kent Narrows.
 - a. A presentation on land acquisitions along the Potomac River along with public waterfowl

hunting opportunities was given by Jim Bennett, Southern Region Habitat Manager. Southern Region staff members are doing a great job in locating and implementing public waterfowl hunting opportunities in the Southern Region.

- b. Jake McPherson from Ducks Unlimited provided an overview on Ducks Unlimited State grants program. This program allows Ducks Unlimited to obtain money from state wildlife agencies and Ducks Unlimited funnels the funds to Canada; these funds can triple the dollars through matching funds to do work in Canada as it relates to data collection on ducks populations. Maryland is no longer participating in this program. Ducks Unlimited informed the MGBAC that Maryland no longer participates in this program. MGBAC sent a letter to Secretary Gill for the Department to reconsider that decision.
- c. Bill Harvey, Game Bird Section Leader and Hutch Walbridge, Game Bird Biologist provided an update on Deal Island Impoundment. Staff are trying to get the water levels down to encourage SAV growth and the return of marsh vegetation. Staff members have seen some progress.
- d. Bill Harvey, Game Bird Section Leader also discussed the potential changes in duck hunting regulations in the future. Staff may also see a change in the dove hunting regulations in the future. The Dove Harvest Strategy has been adopted by USFWS at a recent meeting in June. Hunters may see increase in dove season length.
- e. There was a report out on Released of Captive Mallards on licensed shooting areas.
- f. There was a decision on the September Teal Season dates and bag limits along with the changes in shooting hours.
- g. The ducks limits in the Flyway - Currently, the regulations are driven by eastern mallards. There is an exercise going on to perhaps move to multiple stock management strategies. Staff may select more species that collectively might drive hunting regulations in the future. As of now, states will continue to have duck season set by the adopted harvest management process derived from the eastern mallards.
- h. The MGBAC discussed the potential hunting regulations for 2013-2014 seasons.
- i. Mute Swan control was discussed with the members of the MGBAC.
- Mr. Hindman shared the potential waterfowl seasons with the members of MGBAC via email and Mr. Hindman received supportive comments from the members.
- Director Peditto added that in regards to the transferring money to Ducks Unlimited for work being done in Canada, the federal government, which is where Maryland would obtain money for this project, would require Maryland to demonstrate strong argument if Maryland is going to do habitat work outside of United States with United States' dollars – staff will have to explain the impacts on Maryland habitat and species.
- Questions and Answers Section:
 - 1. Commissioner Bonomo asked for more details on the land acquisitions along the Potomac River.
 - a. Those land acquisitions mentioned were fairly recent and were made available for public hunting opportunities.
 - b. There are three parcels: St. Inigoes State Forest, Point Lookout State Park (Jacobs Tract Only), and Cedar Point.
 - c. Southern Region was also working on opening of the Crownsville Cooperative Wildlife Management Area during this time period – it is a great crew; although, a limited staff.
 - 2. Chairman Plummer asked for a quick update on the Deal Island Impoundment from Bill Harvey.
 - a. The Deal Island Impoundment is in Somerset County. It is around 2,800 acre of brackish impoundment that was built in the mid 1960's. It was a fabulous waterfowl and bird place for decades. It is still a great place but it is not what it used to be.

- b. It has suffered from man's inability to manage the water levels to a point where it has impacted aquatic vegetation.
- c. Staff members have amped up efforts in monitoring to have a better idea what the water levels do and vegetation response.
- d. Staff altered the water control structure because the structures that were there did not allow much control. The new structure would regulate how much salt water comes into the impoundment down to a very fine level.
- e. Deal Island Impoundment received a \$60,000 grant to purchase some new control structures that will be put in place.
- f. Deal Island Impoundment is really flat – these new structures will help staff keep the water levels plus or minus an inch or two, which is really critical.
- g. Staff members are monitoring the Deal Island Impoundment since they have seen some good results from the things that have been implemented.
- h. Chairman Plummer mentioned that it was a hard decision to support not allowing motorized vessels in the impoundment because of the potential impacts. The goal is to build this back up to the once stellar habitat that it was; in doing so, we will bring the birds back.

Nutria Program Update – Presentation given by Jonathan McKnight, Associate Director.

- Mr. McKnight provided an update on the Chesapeake Bay Nutria Eradication Project in a Power Point Presentation. [ATTACHMENT C]
 - 1. Nutria is a large aquatic rodent that was introduced as a fur-farming animal in the 1930's to Maryland and various other places.
 - 2. Nutria are aggressive feeders on the entire plant instead of grazing on the leaves. The impact of that is very dramatic, when a habitat has a high amount of nutria – it loses its vegetation.
 - a. Apparently, there is a degree of hyper salinity that occurs when inter-tidal marsh in a brackish water habitat loses its vegetation.
 - b. The tendency is for water to roll upon it and as the tide rolls out, the vaporizing water remains as opposed to transferring through the plants. The water tends to evaporate from the mud, which causes an increase in salinity because evaporation suppresses the re-growth of the plants. There are some chemical factors contributing to the massive herbivory, which actually suppresses recovery of the marsh, in addition, to the damage caused by nutria.
 - c. WHS staff really appreciates the assistance from US Department of Agricultural partnership in managing this project day-to-day with the aid of trappers and planters and for providing most of the materials in the Chesapeake Bay Nutria Eradication Project.
 - d. Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge habitat has been declining due to combination of factors including rising sea levels, sinking and subsiding land base, increasing erosion, and nutria.
 - 3. Staff work with a lot of experts including the Invasive Species International, which is based in New Zealand. A team from New Zealand came to Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge to evaluate what staff were doing and spent time with them in the field. The New Zealand team helped staff develop a report and criteria for success. The New Zealand team believed that the techniques and technology that field staff were using meets the needs to be successful in eradicating the last nutria in the marsh. At the beginning of this project, staff caught some non-targeted animals; however, with usage of new technology staff are able to minimize non-targeted animals.
 - 4. In the areas where nutria have been eradicated, staff members have seen dramatic recovery of marsh grass. The marsh that recovered on those sites were not only recovering vegetation but

in a diverse matrix of vegetation.

- This project is funded mostly by federal funds; however, DNR staff time is funded by Maryland.
- The Judas Nutria method is to radio collar nutria that finds other nutria. A nutria is captured, which is spayed or neutered and it is released back in the environment with the radio collar so staff can track what it is doing.
- Questions and Answers Section:
 1. Commissioner Boyles Griffin asked for a cost comparison of years 2003 through 2010.
 - a. The cost has remained fairly consistent about 1 million dollars per year for the effort.
 2. Commissioner Boyles Griffin indicated that staff are spending as much effort in 2013, as staff were spending in 2003. Commissioner Boyles Griffin asked for explanation as to why that is the case with the majority of the animals caught was in 2003.
 - a. The reason for the allocation being the same is because the cost for the traps and the level of surveillance has remained constant. The team size has remained constant. The change is the catch per unit effort – the number of animals that have come into these traps. Staff have almost the same amount of traps in Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge as staff did during the time when staff were catching a lot of nutria. The reason being, staff must continue to have broad trap sets to catch a few nutria in that area as you do to catch a lot of nutria in that area. The issue is not the quantity of nutria caught but it is the area that is being covered. Since staff are not using baiting, staff must have that broad network of traps. The traps are basically being used as monitoring devices.
 - b. The by-catch species is an insignificant number. When staff started this project, staff were experimenting with different techniques (included baiting) and different locations. Staff no longer uses bait because that is how you get non-targeted species.
 - c. Chairman Plummer stated that the Commission still wants to know what that insignificant number is.
 - d. Mr. McKnight agreed to email that number to the Commission based on data that staff have at this point.
 3. Chairman Plummer asked if the people in the field are contractors.
 - a. The people in the field are direct employees of the US Department of Agriculture, which is funded through the USFWS. The Department of Natural Resources is a junior partner in this project.
 4. Chairman Plummer asked if the traps are monitored and who will clean up these traps when this project is finished.
 - a. Yes, the traps are monitored by Nutria Eradication Partnership team members. Every trap that is set has a GPS point that is attached to it so at any given day, the team members know where every nutria trap in the Chesapeake Bay region is set. The Nutria Eradication Project team will complete the clean-up.
 5. Mr. Tyler Johnson asked whether staff have received confirmation of nutria being on the Western shore.
 - a. During the highest population period in Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, there was a population that managed to move to Calvert County and established a small population in Calvert County.
 - b. The incident occurred between 1999 and 2000; staff set traps in that marsh and eradicated that population. Mr. McKnight monitors that area regularly – there has not been a reoccurrence.
 - c. At this time, there is no known location of nutria on the Western Shore.
 6. Chairman Plummer asked if USDA or DNR has considered using contractors that currently trap for a living as part of the contractors for this project.
 - a. There were a fair amount of people that were hired to work for USDA as experienced

trappers; many are local people. Local people are what the Partnership wanted – they wanted those that knew the marsh and those that understand the harsh conditions that are present.

- b. In Maryland, it is illegal to have a bounty on a wildlife species. The Partnership does not want nutria as another fur resource. It is very difficult for trappers that are getting a certain amount of money for nutria tail or hide to trap and assist in eradicating nutria. There is a strong financial motivation for a contract trapper or someone on the bounty system to not get that last nutria in order to maintain the nutria population. This is a direction that the Partnership does not want.
7. Director Peditto clarified the financial side for the Wildlife and Heritage Service (WHS). WHS dedicated time to this project, which is a federal eligible project for WHS purposes that the federal government underwrites to USDA part of the budget and WHS is eligible for reimbursement through Pitman and Robertson Fund, so WHS is not using state-side dollars for this project.

Maryland Farm Bureau Update (MFB) – Presentation given by Matt Tefteau, Assistant Director of Government Relations

- Mr. Tefteau mentioned the MASS – 2012 wildlife crop damage report letter that was sent to Deputy Director Doug Boline, USDA. [ATTACHMENT D]
- USDA decided not to produce the MASS – 2012 Wildlife Crop Damage Report.
- MFB used this report during the General Assembly in regards to the hunting regulations. This report provided necessary information related to crop damage due to wildlife.
- Mr. Tefteau highlighted arguments from the letter as to why this report is important to MFB.
- Pete Jayne, Associate Director of the Game Program indicated that staff surveyed individuals that received crop damage permits a couple years ago. Staff received 85 percent satisfaction rate on the surveys that were returned.
- Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry (FHFH) sent a letter of support for the MASS – Wildlife Crop Damage Report to continue.
- Mr. Tefteau agreed to keep the Commission informed on this issue.
- Mr. Jayne pointed out that the Game Management Program has used the MASS report for a different reason. This report provides the Game Management Program numbers that staff can reference from an outside agency.
- Questions and Answers Section
 1. Chairman Plummer asked if this is a budget situation.
 - a. Mr. Tefteau has been told that this is not a budget situation but USDA decided internally that staff will no longer produce this report.
 - b. Mr. Tefteau added that USDA wanted to know if MFB would contribute in producing the report. Mr. Tefteau responded by explaining the USDA has always been able to produce this report so it should already be in the USDA's budget.
 2. Chairman Plummer reported that he saw on a hunting forum a discussion about crop damage permits. Chairman Plummer asked if there are any restrictions on what needs to be done with the animal and is there any wanton waste that applies to these animals.
 - a. Each permit has on it that the deer taken under a crop damage permit must be used by the permittee or shooter or donated to a charitable organization.
 - b. There is no formal wanton waste provision in Maryland for anything except migratory game birds and that is federal law.
 - c. Staff enforces the policy on the permit. Generally, the penalty is to revoke the use of the crop damage permit. It is the same standards as if a person was hunting and letting an

animal just lay – it would be the penalty and ramification.

Natural Resources Police (NRP) Update – Presentation given by Captain Lloyd Ingerson.

- Captain Ingerson provided a brief NRP report of the Spring Turkey Season. In regards to baiting for turkey, there were 14 bait cases statewide: Kent County – 2 cases with 1 involved with electronic caller, Somerset County – 1 case, Dorchester County – 2 cases, Queen Anne's County – 1 case, Worcester County – 1 case, Washington County – 2 cases, Garrett County – 1 case, and Allegany County – 4 cases with 1 involved the use of a rifle.
- There are 19 individuals in the new NRP academy class.
- NRP has had a few retirements since the last update. There are additional retirements coming up at end of this year. Also, there are more scheduled retirements near the beginning of 2014. Captain Ingerson is scheduled to retired in around 22 months, which is the beginning of a lot of retirements.
- Colonel Johnson has decided since Captain Ingerson's retirement is drawing near; therefore, it is time for a new representative for NRP on the Wildlife Advisory Commission. Captain Edward W. Johnson will be Captain Ingerson replacement for WAC. For the next year or so, Captain Ingerson will be attending as a 2nd to Captain Johnson.
- Captain Ingerson indicated that interaction with the Commission has been an enjoyable experience.
- Captain Johnson is the Central Region Commander and has been around almost as long as Captain Ingerson. Captain Johnson expressed that he is happy to take on this role for the Commission.
- Cadet Program is in the final stages with doing background investigations and going through the hiring process. NRP will be hiring 13 cadets. The Cadet Program is for individuals between the ages of 18 and 20. These are individuals that have an interest in conservation law enforcement. The individuals in the Cadet Program are not sworn officers but they will be working in the field with the officers along with working with the different units within the Department.
- Chairman Plummer thanked Captain Ingerson for his service and attentiveness as a representative of NRP to the Wildlife Advisory Commission.

Old Business

- The bobwhite quail letter has been revised to include the comments from the June 19, 2013 WAC meeting. [ATTACHMENT E]
 1. Motion
 - a. Commissioner Bonomo moved to approve the revised bobwhite quail letter.
 - b. Commissioner Gregor seconded.
 - c. All in favor. Motion passed.
- WAC Members' Personal Email Addresses on the DNR website – Discussion
 1. Chairman Plummer summarized the discussion from June 19th WAC meeting regarding WAC email addresses.
 - a. Chairman Plummer emphasized the position of the Commission on this issue either the Department provide a workaround or the members of WAC will not have their information made public. Specifically, the WAC members have concluded that they do not want their personal email addresses published.
 - b. We will continue to have the press and public email the Commission through the email portal: wac@dnr.state.md.us.
- Director Peditto drew attention to the hunting near school regulations. [ATTACHMENT F]
 1. This is the regulation that clarified the impact of the amendment in the Firearm Safety Act of 2013. Originally, there were two stand alone pieces of legislation that would require

additional safety zone around schools specific and universities specific. Both either failed or withdrawn.

2. The Firearm Safety Act amendment added that, “A person, while hunting for any wild bird or mammal may not shoot or discharge any firearm within 300 yards of a public or nonpublic school during school hours or at a time when a school-approved activity is taking place.”
3. The safety zone applies to firearms only and not archery.
4. The regulations that were handed out to the Commission clarify what is a school and the definition of “during school hours”. The regulations state: “school means an accredited public, parochial, or private learning institution for one or more grades, kindergarten through 12th grade.” It specifically excludes “home school or an institute of higher education such as college or university.”
5. Questions and Answers Section:
 - a. Commissioner Boyles Griffin asked why the regulation excludes higher education such as college or university.
 - i. Existing Maryland law defines institute of higher as a college or university, that language was not included in the bill as-amended.
 - b. Commissioner Boyles Griffin asked what about the distinction between the actual structure and property line.
 - i. On page two of [ATTACHMENT F], it simple outlines that “A person...may not shoot or discharge any firearm within 300 yards of a school building containing one or more classrooms while the building is occupied.” For example, if there is a building on the school property that does not have one or more classrooms, the 300 yards safety zone does not apply – although the 150 yard zone remains in place.
- The reintroduction of Elk is no longer being considered.
 1. Commissioner Fratz asked if there was habitat to support reintroduction of elk into Maryland.
 - a. Biologists would have applied the same criteria that other nearby jurisdictions have used, such as distance from four-lane highways, distance from agricultural lands, and minimum contiguous blocks.
 - b. If the support came from Allegany and Garrett Counties commissioners to implement this, staff would have looked at lands such as Dan’s Mountain, Green Ridge State Forest, etc.
- Relocating some of the Commission Meetings to different areas of the State.
 1. Director Peditto indicated that the Commission could try it and schedule meetings in line with conducting visits in the field. Director Peditto suggested the October meeting for a Western Region (WR) site visit, which will be during the black bear hunt. If the Commission decides to visit WR, the meeting will have to be moved to October 23rd. Chairman Plummer and Director Peditto will work out the logistics.

New Business

- Director Peditto announced that the Wildlife and Heritage Service is now active on social media with Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Director Peditto applauded Information and Education Manager Patricia Handy, Education Specialist Kerry Wixted, and Volunteer Coordinator and Information Specialist Paula Becker -- the individuals who are managing the social media portals.

Public Comment

- Mr. Johnson asked what would happen if an elk from a neighboring state move to Maryland.
 1. West Virginia just went through this with Kentucky; West Virginia’s policy was if a hunter had a deer tag a hunter could harvest the elk. Since then the West Virginia Commission, which has the authority to hire, fire, set regulations and budgets has decided that West Virginia

wants to manage elk differently.

2. Maryland would probably adopt a model like fallow deer; it would be another deer that a hunter could take with his or her bag limit.
- Mr. Johnson asked for clarification on the safety zone on schools because this impacts his family a lot i.e. when there are activities such as soccer practice.
 1. The key component is the distance from occupied building with classrooms.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 P.M.

The next meeting will be held at 9:30 A.M. on Wednesday, August 21, 2013 in the Tawes State Office Building, C-1 Conference Room; Annapolis, Maryland.

Attendance

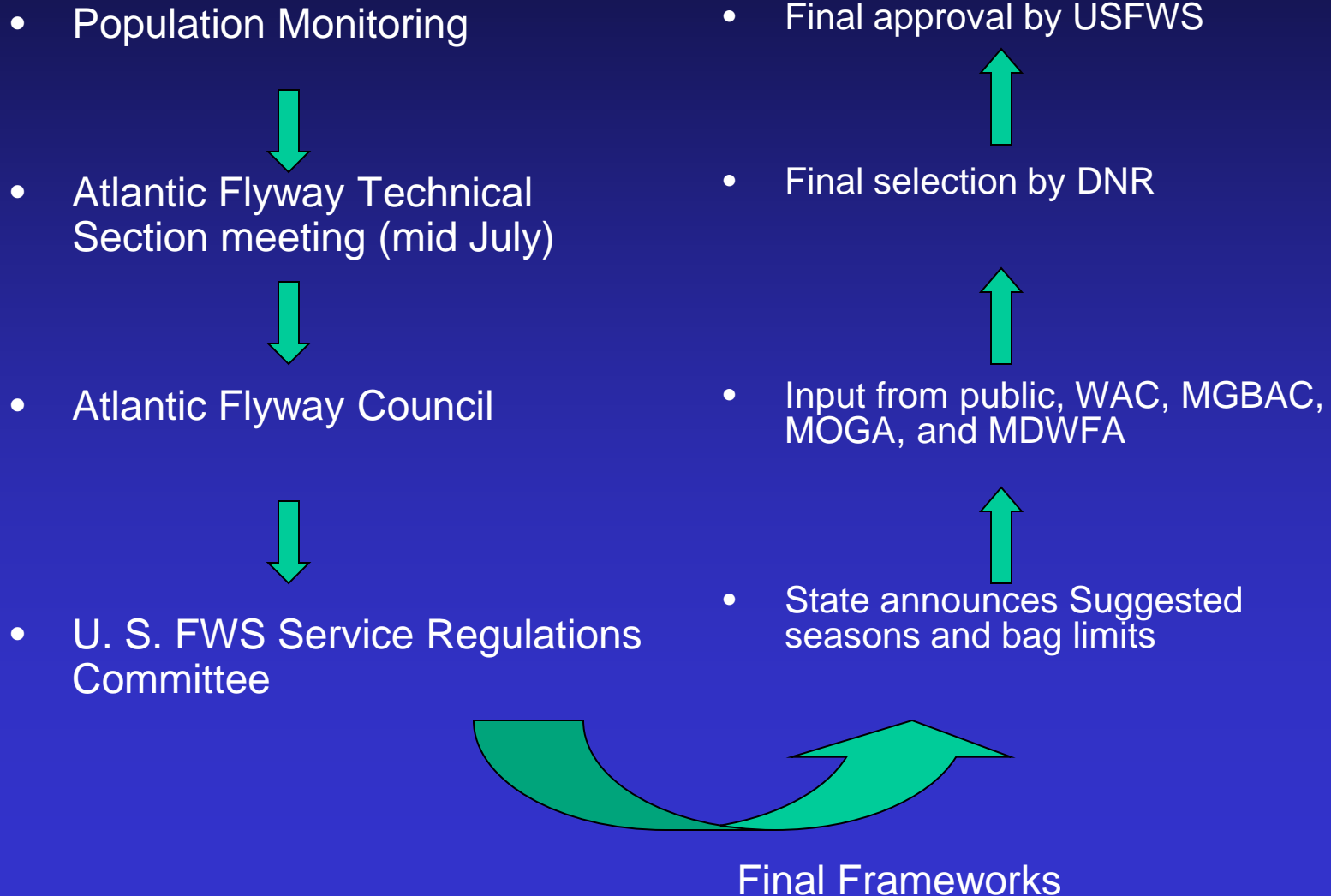
Members:	J. Bonomo, S. Boyles Griffin, T. Gregor, G. Fratz, J. Plummer, C. Rodney, and B. Wojton
Absent:	L. Compton and E. Gulbrandsen,
Guest:	T. Johnson, B. Chambers, I. Duncan, K. Mantay, J. Turner, M. Teffeau
Staff:	B. Harvey, L. Hindman, L. Ingerson, P. Jayne, E. Johnson, J. McKnight, P. Peditto, and T. Spencer

Migratory Bird Regulations

- Migratory Bird Treaty Act 1918 established Federal authority for management of migratory birds.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service promulgates hunting season frameworks.
- Frameworks include:
 - maximum season length
 - earliest and latest dates
 - maximum daily bag limit



Annual Cycle for Migratory Game Bird Hunting Regulations



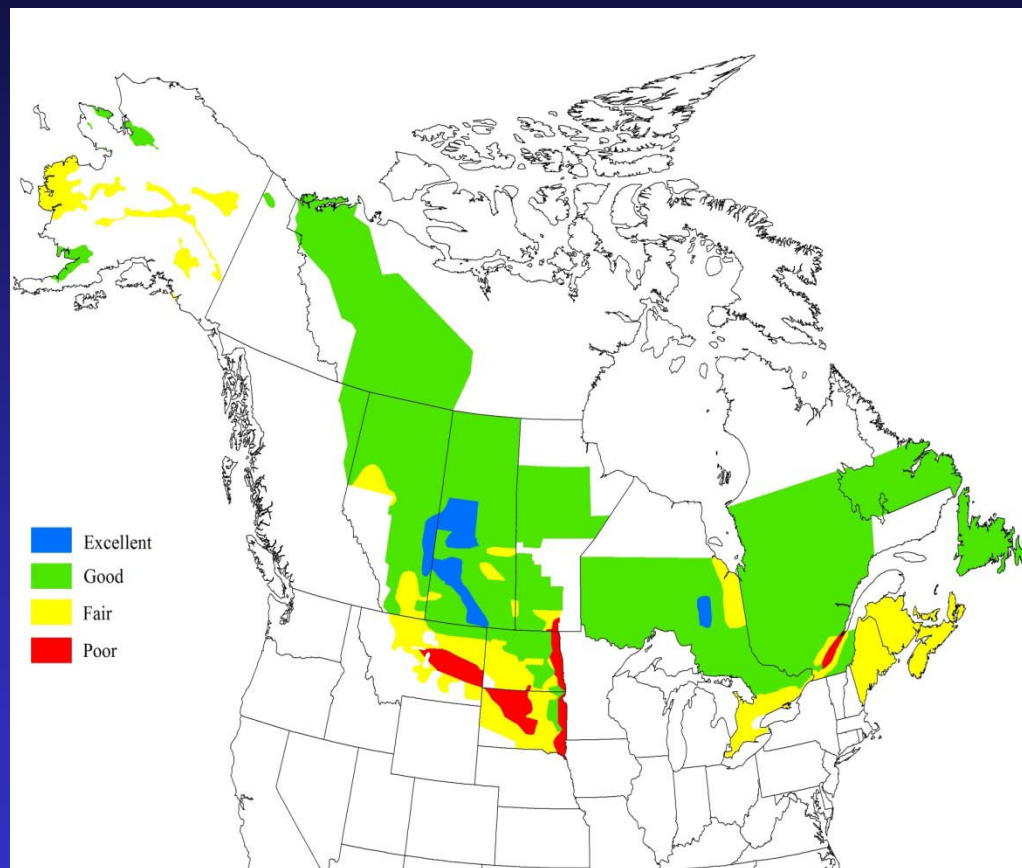
2013 Waterfowl Population Status



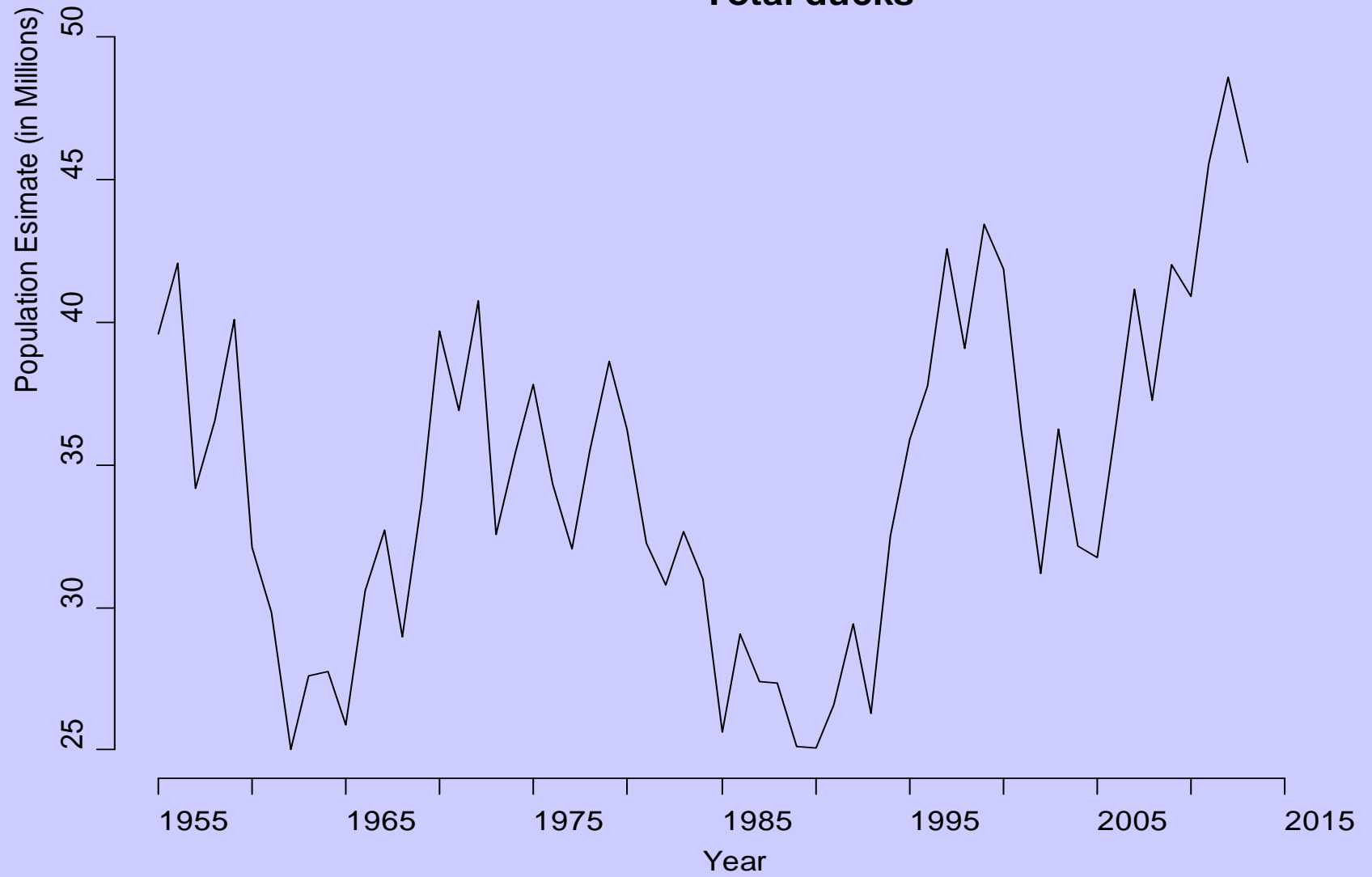
2013 Waterfowl Breeding and Habitat Survey

Total ponds in U.S. and Canada - 6.9 in 2013 vs. 5.5M last year

24% greater than 2012
and 35% above the LTA
(1955-2012) average



Total ducks



2013 Breeding Ducks By Species (in millions)

Species	2013	2012	% Change from 2012	% Change from LTA
Mallard	10.3	10.6	-2	+36
Gadwall	3.4	3.6	-7	+80
American wigeon	2.6	2.1	+23	+2
Green-winged teal	3.1	3.5	-12	+51
Blue-winged teal	7.7	9.2	-16	+60
Northern shoveler	4.6	5.0	-5	+96
Northern pintail	3.3	3.5	-4	-17
Redhead	1.2	1.3	-5	+76
Canvasback	.787	0.76	+4	+37
Scaup	4.4	5.2	-22	-17

Eastern Mallard Population Status

Eastern Mallards breed in southern Ontario, Quebec, and the northeastern U.S.

Eastern Mallard BPOP Index is used to set AF duck hunting Regulations via AHM.

No observed BPOP estimate for eastern mallards in 2013, so prior year data was used.

Predicted 2013 eastern mallard BPOP was 897K vs. 746K in 2012.

A liberal regulation (60-day season and 6-duck bag limit) is prescribed for AF states in 2013.



American Black Duck Population Status

Eastern Survey Area

Estimated Black Duck BPOP in 2012 was 603K.

Prescribed Black Duck hunting regulations in the U.S. are restrictive, i.e., no change from 2012.

The AHM process allows for a liberal regulation in Canada, i.e., increase in days and bag limit.

Changes in Canada is predicted to increase harvest by no more than 15%.

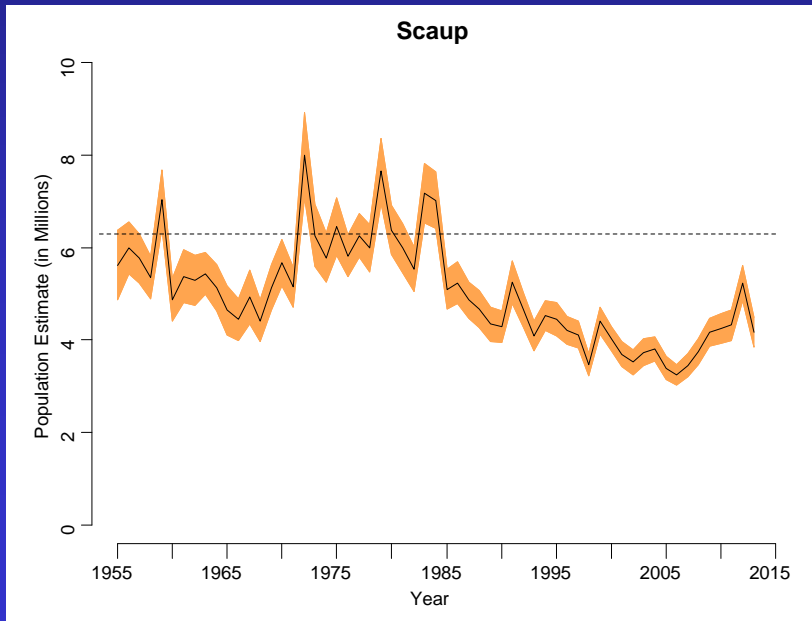


Scaup Population Status



The 2013 combined scaup BPOP estimate was 4.2 M, 20% below 2012 (5.4 M) & 17% below LTA.

2012 scaup harvest in U.S. was 2.5 X higher than 2011.



AF harvest was 172K vs. 52K in 2011. Scaup harvest in NC in 2012 alone was higher than 2011 AF harvest.

Harvest strategy prescribes a moderate regulation, i.e., 60 days and 2-bird daily bag limit for all flyways.

Scaup Harvest Policies: 2008 - 2012

BPOP	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
≤ 3.2	R	R	R	R	R
3.4	R	R	R	R	R
3.6	R	R	M	M	M
3.8	R ^H	M	M	M	M
4.0	M	M	M	M	M
4.2	M	M	M	M	M
4.4	M	M	M	M	M
4.6	M	M	M	M	M
4.8	M	M	M	M	M
5.0	M	M	L	M	M
5.2	M	M	L	L	L
≥ 5.4	L	L	L	L	L

Canvasback Population Status



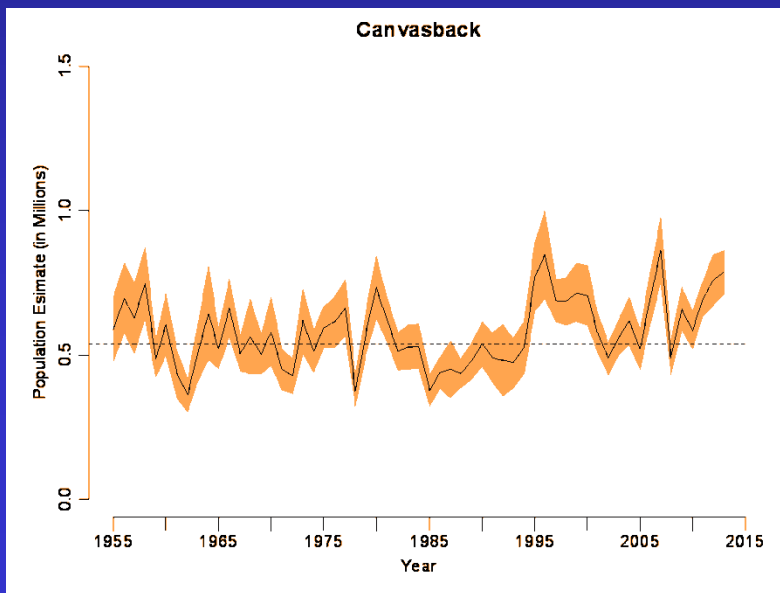
The 2013 BPOP was 787K.

BPOP was 4% higher than 760K in 2012 and 37% above the 1955-2012 average (LTA).

Ponds in Prairie Canada were 4.55 million, 17% above 2012 and 32% above the LTA.

Harvest strategy predicts a 2014 BPOP of 794K under a liberal season with a 2 bird daily bag limit.

The predicted BPOP of 794K is above the required 725K for a 2-bird bag limit.



AP Canada Goose Harvest Strategy

Atlantic Flyway Council

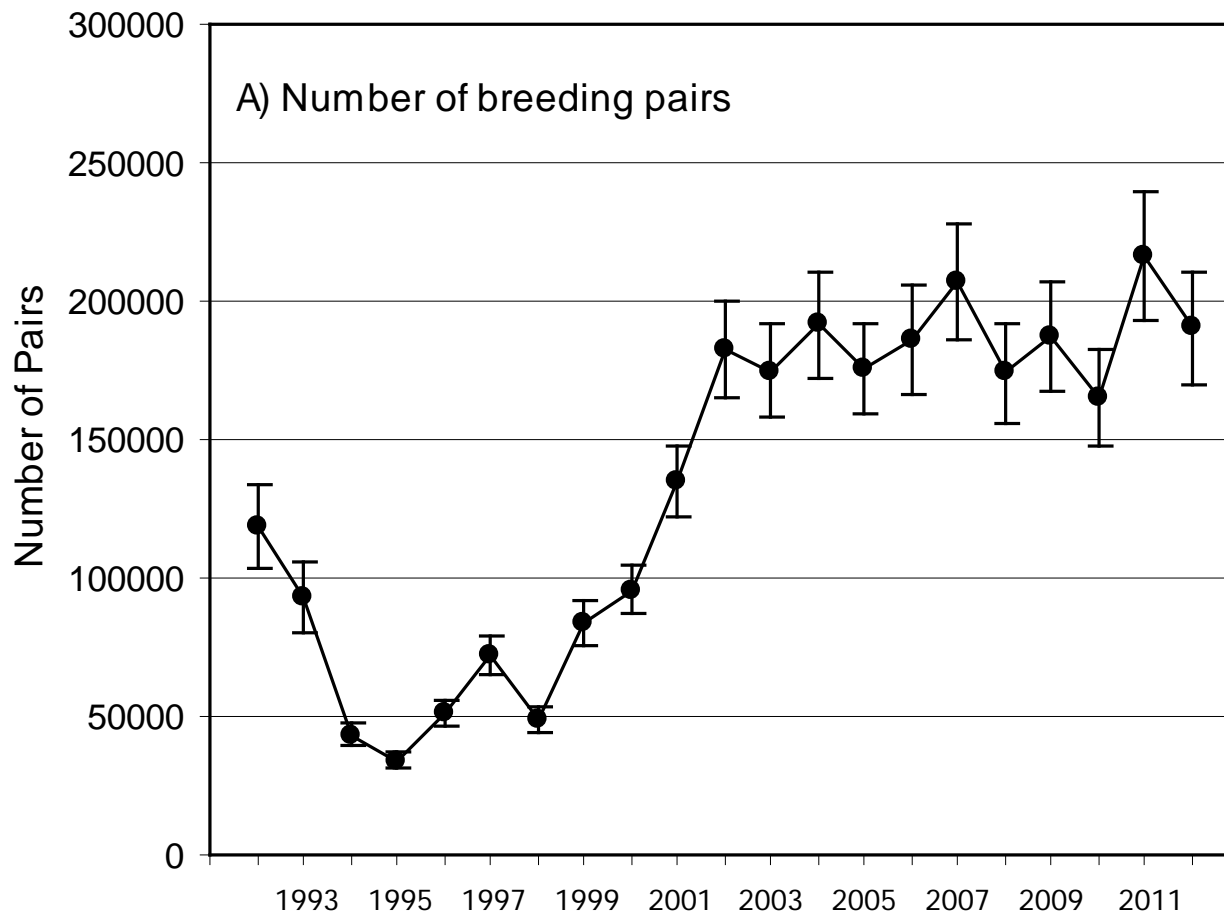
AP Population Objective - 225,000 breeding pairs in the Ungava region of Quebec.

3-year average (2010-2012) = 190,500 pairs; No pair survey conducted in 2013

When the breeding pair index (3 yr. average) is **at or above 150,000**, **moderate harvest regulations (50-day season)** may be considered that would target a projected harvest rate of breeding adults not to exceed 10%.

When the breeding pair index (3-year average) is above 225,000, liberal harvest regulations (60-day season) may be considered that would target a projected harvest rate of breeding adults not to exceed 15%.

Estimates of Breeding Pairs of AP Canada Geese on the Ungava Peninsula



AP Goose Production

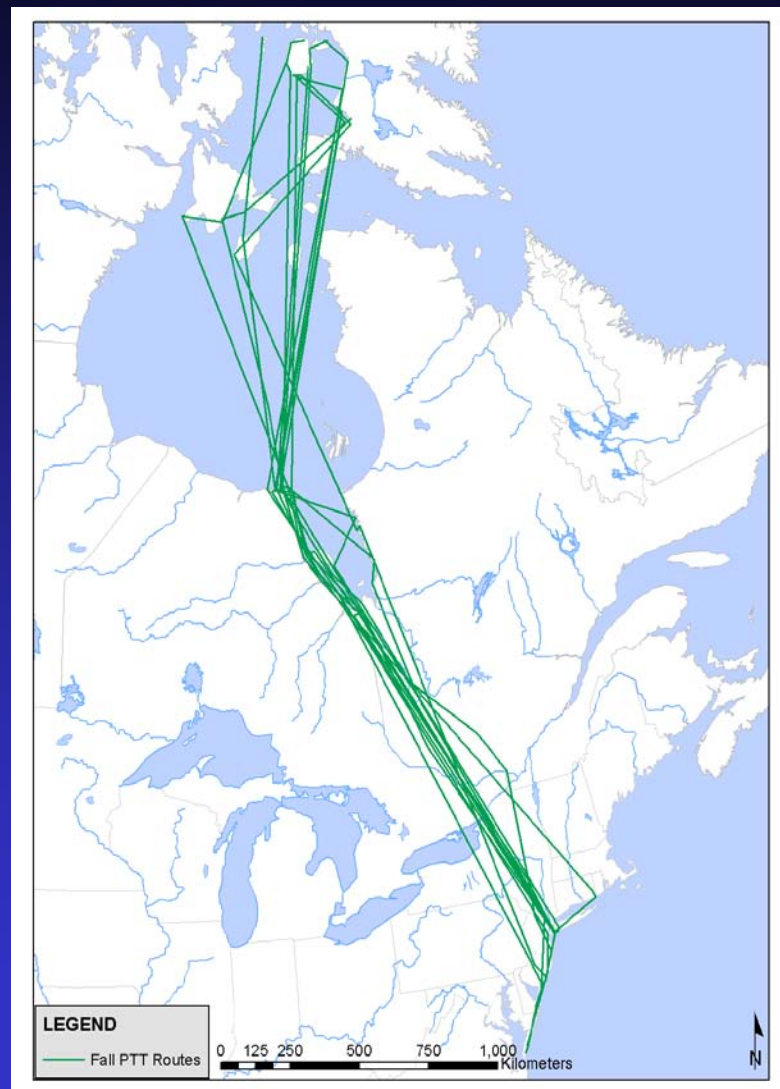
- A model using May temperatures and June snowfall at Kuujuaq (Ungava Bay) predicts gosling production to be slightly below average to average, similar to 2011.
- No nest survey made in 2013. Nest surveys have been reduced as a result of high costs.
- Observed gosling production will be confirmed by banding crews in early August.



Atlantic Brant Status

2013 Midwinter Survey - 111K
below threshold of 125K for
50-day season.

Good production expected from
Southampton Island but below
average from Banks Island due
to heavy snow fall in early July.



Greater Snow Goose Management Plan

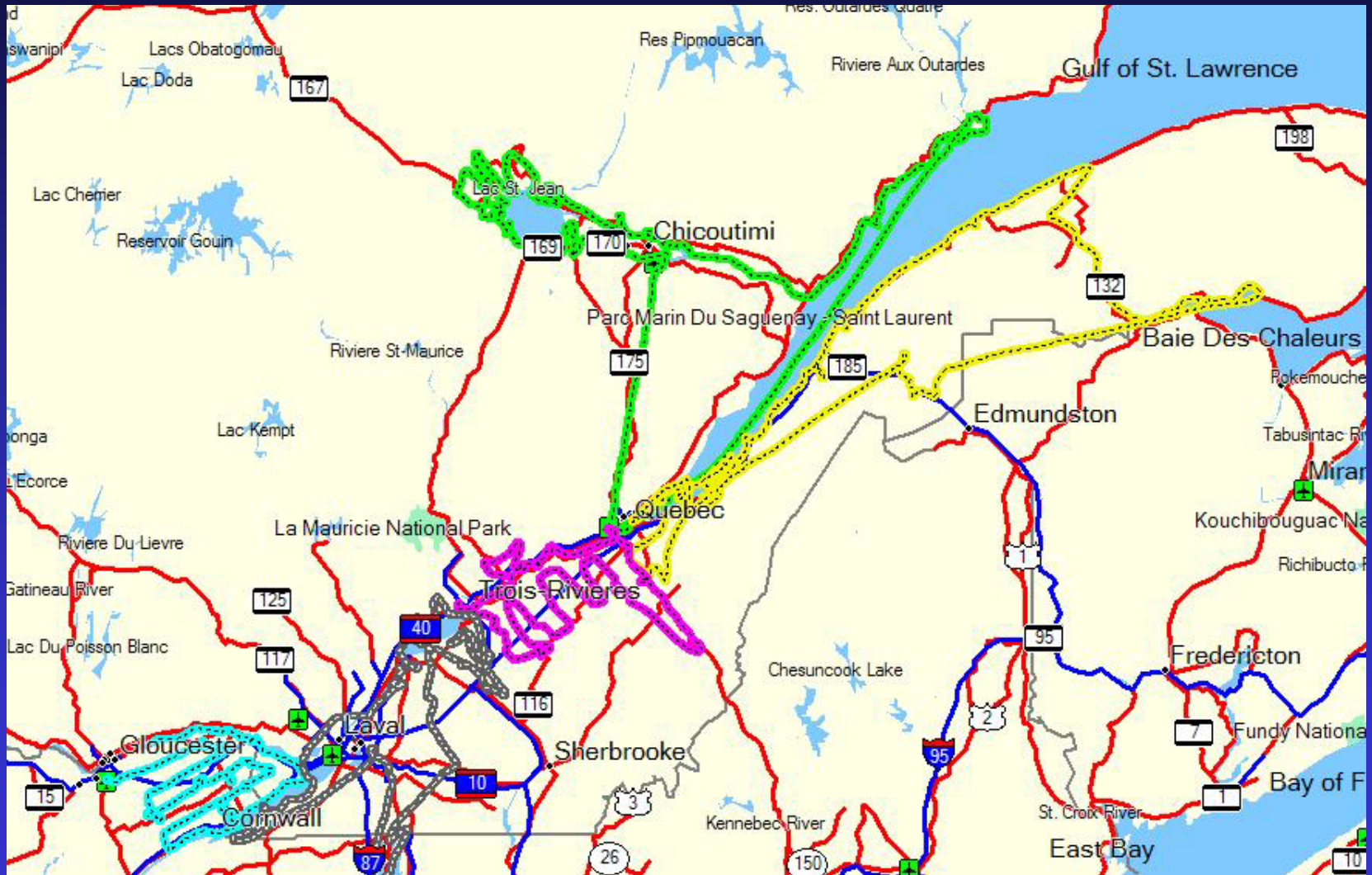
Atlantic Flyway Council

Objective - Reduce and maintain the population in a range between 500,000 and 750,000 as indexed by the spring survey in southern Québec.

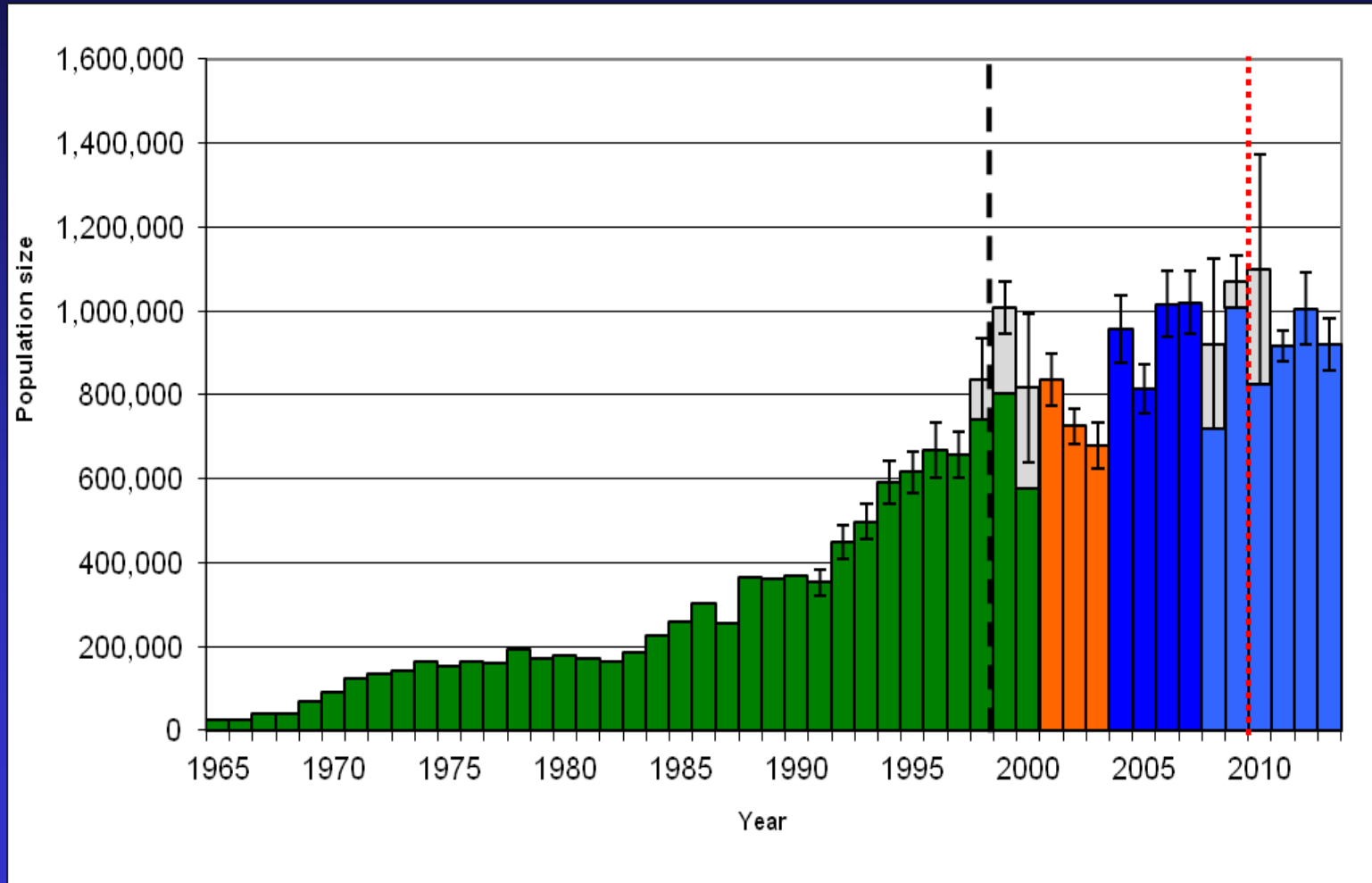


Greater Snow Goose

May Photo Count in St. Lawrence River Valley

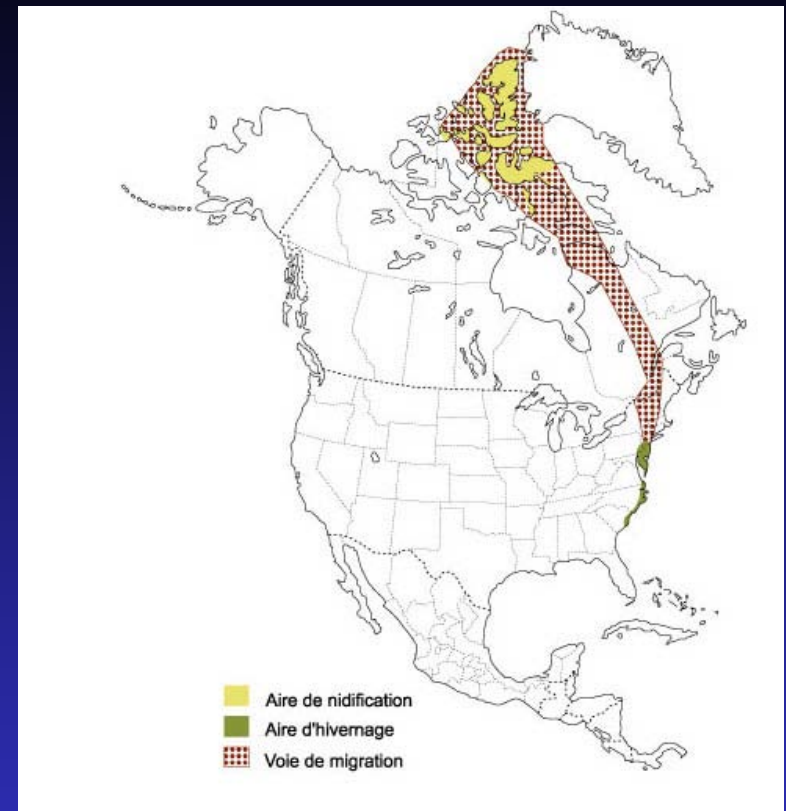


Greater Snow Goose May Photo Count 1965-2013



Greater Snow Goose Nesting

- Nesting conditions on Bylot Island were good; good nest density and breeding effort.
- Clutch size slightly below average (3.58 egg per nest)
- Nest success 80% (66% long-term average. Production should be near average.
- The fall flight should be similar to 2012.



Preliminary 2013-14 Hunting Seasons and Bag Limits under Consideration



MD DNR Priorities Considered when Formulating Hunting Season Proposals



- Must meet the biological requirements of the waterfowl resource to sustain populations.
- Overlapping duck and goose seasons to the extent possible.
- Maximizing opportunity for all hunters, particularly youth.
- Maximizing open hunting days statewide, especially Saturdays and holidays.
- Regulation simplicity.

Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days



Suggested Days

Nov. 2 and Feb. 8

Suggested Bag Limit

6 ducks (certain species bag restrictions), 2 Canada geese, 2 brant, 25 light geese, and 15 coots.

Requirements

Must be accompanied by an unarmed, adult at least 21 years old. Adult may assist in calling, setting decoys, retrieving downed birds.

Duck Hunting Season

Federal Frameworks

Season length: 60 days

Outside Dates: Sept. 22 - Jan. 26 (Sunday)

Bag Limit: 6 per day

Suggested Season

Oct. 12 - Oct. 19

Nov. 9 - Nov. 29

Dec. 17 - Jan. 25

Suggested Bag Limit

6 per day (including mergansers) but no more than 5 Long-tailed Ducks, 4 Scoters, 4 Mallards (2 hens), 2 Scaup, 3 Wood Ducks, 2 Hooded Mergansers, 2 Canvasback, 1 Black Duck (during open Black Duck season), 1 Mottled Duck, and 1 Fulvous Tree Duck.

Federal Framework

Season Length: 60 days

Bag Limit: 1

Suggested Season

Nov. 9 - Nov. 29

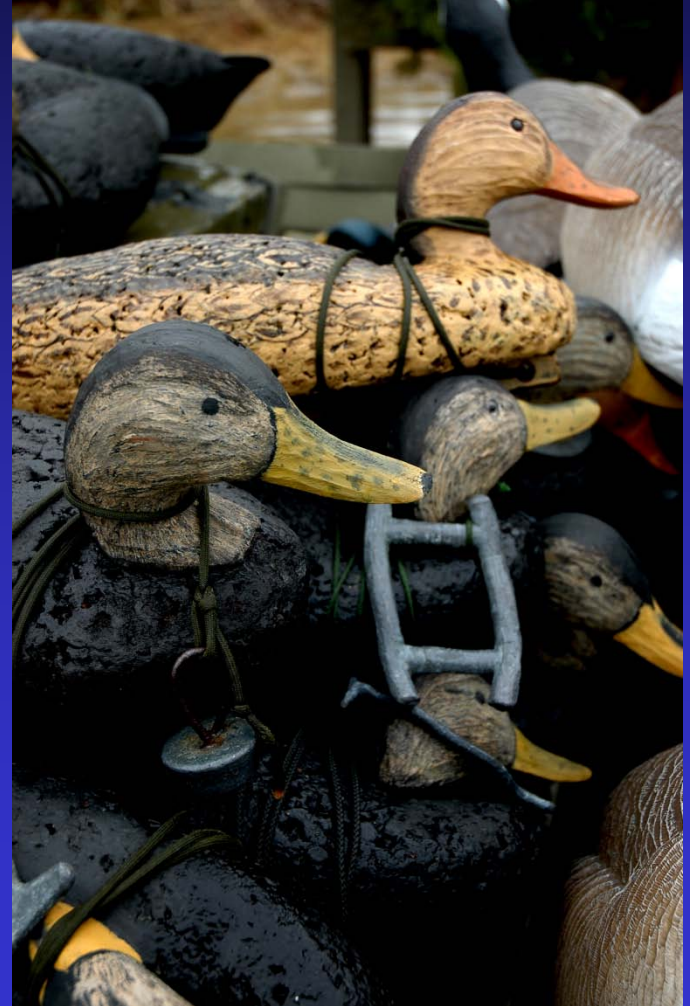
Dec. 17 - Jan. 25

Suggested Bag Limit

1 per day

No open season for Black Ducks in October provides protection to Maryland's breeding population. Migrant stocks begin arriving in early November.

Black Duck Season within Regular Duck Season



Federal Framework

Season Length: 107 days

Outside Dates: Sept. 15 - Jan. 31

Bag Limit: 7 per day, no more than 4 Scoters

Suggested Season
Oct. 1- Jan. 31

Suggested Bag Limit
5 per day, no more than 4
scoters

Special Sea Duck Hunting Season



AP Canada Goose Hunting Season

Federal Framework

Season Length: 50 days

Outside Dates: Nov. 15 - Feb. 5

Bag Limit: 2 per day

Suggested Season

Nov. 16 - Nov. 29

Dec. 17 - Jan. 29

Suggested Bag Limit

2 per day



Atlantic Flyway Resident Population Canada Goose Hunting Season Regular Season



Federal Framework

Season Length: 80 days

Outside Dates: Nov. 15 - Mar. 10

Bag Limit: 5 per day

Suggested Season

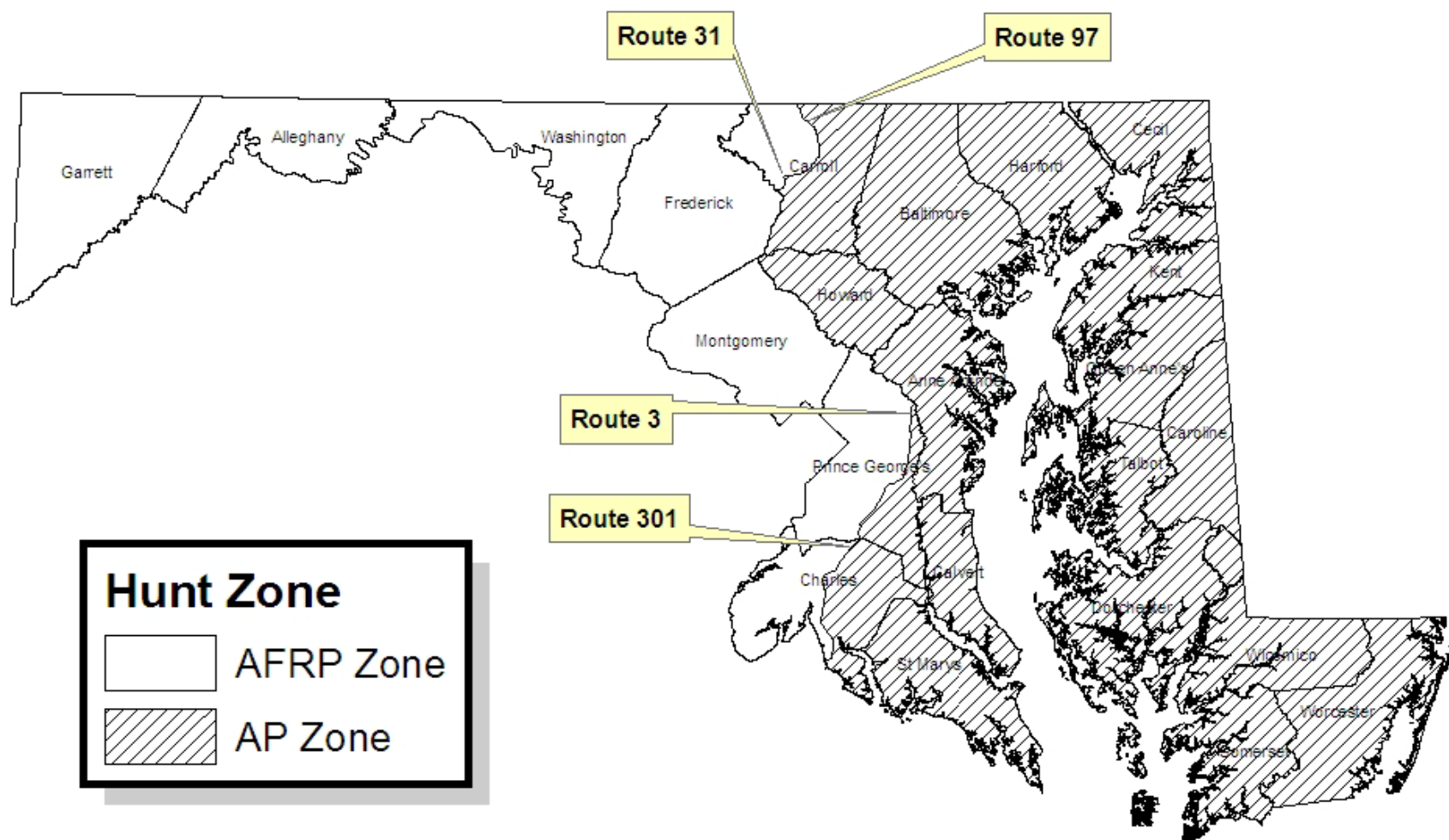
Nov. 16 - Nov. 29

Dec. 17 - Mar. 5

Suggested Bag Limit

5 per day

Regular Canada Goose Hunt Zones in Maryland



Atlantic Brant Hunting Season



Federal Framework

Season Length: 30 days

Bag Limit: 2 per day

Suggested Season

Dec. 23 - Jan. 25

Suggested Bag Limit

2 per day

Light Goose Hunting Season

Federal Framework

Season Length: 107 days

Outside Dates: Oct. 1 - Mar. 10

Bag Limit: 25 per day

Suggested Season

Oct. 5 - Nov. 29

Dec. 16 - Jan. 29

Feb. 8 (2nd youth day)

Suggested Bag Limit *

25 per day

* Includes greater and lesser snow geese and Ross's geese



Light Goose Conservation Order Season

Suggested CO Season

Dec. 2 - Dec. 14

Jan. 30 - Feb. 7

Feb. 10 - April 12

Suggested Bag Limit

No bag limit

Hunters may use unplugged
shotguns and e-calls

Shooting hours extended to
1/2 hour after sunset



Participants must possess a Snow Goose Conservation Order
Hunting Season Permit. Permits available from DNR sport
license agents, online, or by phone (1-800-918-2870) for a \$5 fee.

Questions?



MARYLAND PRELIMINARY LATE WATERFOWL SEASONS AND BAG LIMITS 2013-14 HUNTING YEAR

YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNTING DAYS

Season Dates Nov. 2 & Feb. 8

Daily Bag and Possession Limits: The bag limits for the Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days are the same as the regular season, except (1) One black duck may also be taken and (2) Two Canada geese may be taken when hunting within the AP Canada goose hunt zone, and (3) Five geese may be taken in the Resident (AFRP) Canada goose hunt zone. For a description of each Canada goose hunting zone go to http://www.dnr.maryland.gov/huntersguide/AP_RP_Hunt_Zones.asp. No open season for harlequin ducks and swans.

Any licensed hunter 15 years old or younger may participate during these one-day hunts. Youth of this age who are exempt from Maryland hunting license requirements may also participate. Youth waterfowl hunters must possess a receipt showing they purchased a \$9 Maryland Migratory Game Bird Hunting Stamp. Youth hunters must be accompanied by an adult at least 21 years old that holds a valid Maryland hunting license or is exempt from the hunting license requirements. One adult may take one or more young hunters, and that adult may call waterfowl, assist with decoys and retrieve downed birds but may not possess a hunting weapon and may not participate in other seasons that are open on the youth waterfowl hunting days.

DUCKS, COOTS, and MERGANSERS

Regular Duck Season Oct. 12 - Oct. 19
 Nov. 9 - Nov. 29
 Dec. 17 - Jan. 25

Black Duck Season Nov. 9 - Nov. 29
 Dec. 17 - Jan. 25

Duck Daily Bag and Possession Limits: The daily bag limit of ducks (including mergansers) is 6. The 6-duck limit shall consist of no more than 5 long-tailed ducks, 4 scoters, 4 mallards (max. 2 hen mallards), 2 scaup, 3 wood ducks, 2 pintails, 2 redheads, 2 hooded mergansers, 2 canvasback, 1 black duck (during black duck season), 1 fulvous tree duck, and 1 mottled duck. All other species of ducks (except harlequin duck) may be taken up to the 6-duck limit. The possession limit is three times the daily bag limit. In addition to the duck bag limit hunters may take 15 coots per day. No open season for harlequin ducks and swans.

SEA DUCKS (Soters, Long-tailed Duck, and Eiders)

Season Dates: Oct. 1 - Jan. 31
(Only in Special
Sea Duck Zone)

Daily Bag Limit: 5 (no more than 4 scoters) per day

ATLANTIC POPULATION CANADA GEESE

Season: Nov. 16 - Nov. 29
Dec. 17 - Jan. 29

Daily Bag Limit: 2 per day

Hunt Area: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Harford, Howard, Kent, Queen Annes, Somerset, St. Mary's, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties; and that portion of Carroll County east of Route 31 to the intersection of Route 97, and east of Route 97 to the Pennsylvania line; and that portion of Prince George's County east of Route 3 and Route 301; and that portion of Charles County east of Route 301 to the Virginia line.

RESIDENT POPULATION CANADA GEESE (Regular Season)

Season: Nov. 16 - Nov. 29
Dec. 17 - Mar. 5

Daily Bag Limit: 5 per day

Hunt Area: Allegany, Frederick, Garrett, Montgomery, and Washington Counties; and that portion of Carroll County west of Route 31 to the intersection of Route 97, and west of Route 97 to the Pennsylvania line; and that portion of Prince George's County west of Route 3 and Route 301; and that portion of Charles County west of Route 301 to the Virginia line.

ATLANTIC BRANT

Season Dates: Dec. 23 - Jan. 25

Daily Bag Limit: 2 per day

LIGHT GEESE (Includes Greater and Lesser snow geese and Ross's geese)

Season Dates: Oct. 5 - Nov. 29
Dec. 16 - Jan. 29
Feb. 8

Daily Bag Limit: 25 per day and no possession limit.

LIGHT GOOSE CONSERVATION ORDER

Seasons Dates: Dec. 2 - Dec. 14
Jan. 30 - Feb. 7
Feb. 10 - April 12

Daily Bag Limit: No daily bag or possession limits.

Hunt Area: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Harford, Howard, Kent, Queen Annes, Somerset, St. Mary's, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties; and that portion of Carroll County east of Route 31 to the intersection of Route 97, and east of Route 97 to the Pennsylvania line; that portion of Prince George's County east of Route 3 and Route 301; and that portion of Charles County east of Route 301 to the Virginia line. The Special Sea Duck Zone is excluded from this hunt area.

Special Regulations during Light Goose Conservation Order Season:

(1) Participating hunters must possess a \$5 Snow Goose Conservation Order Hunting Season Permit while hunting light geese during this season; (2) Hunters may use shotguns capable of holding more than three shotshells; (3) Hunters may use electronic calls with recordings of light geese; and (4) Shooting hours are from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

Chesapeake Bay Nutria Eradication Project





Reproductive Characteristics of Nutria

- 
- 🐭 Mature at 6 months
 - 🐭 Breed year round
 - 🐭 3 litters/year
 - 🐭 Breed within 2 days
 - 🐭 Litter size average 4-5
 - 🐭 80% females pregnant

Feeding Habits





CBNEP

IMPACTS AND CONSEQUENCE











Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge

2038
Aerial Photo

Herbivory is a Significant Source of Marsh Loss



Eradication: Criteria for Success

-  **Every individual must be put at risk.**
-  **Mortality must exceed reproduction.**
-  **Re-invasion risk must be near zero.**
-  **Techniques must be acceptable.**
-  **Benefits must outweigh the costs.**
-  **Institutional support must be declared at outset.**

Phases of Eradication

Survey

- Delimits scope of problem

Knockdown

- Targets population

Mop-up

- Targets Individuals

Verification

- Focus on Detection

Surveillance

- Biosecurity



CBNEP

DETECTION



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DETECTION



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DETECTION



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DETECTION



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DETECTION

Shoreline Surveys



Ground Searches



Nutria Platforms





CBNEP

REMOVAL

Integrated Methods









CBNEP

A MARRIAGE OF TRADITION AND TECHNOLOGY

Marsh Surveyed/Trapped



Nutria Captures Mapped



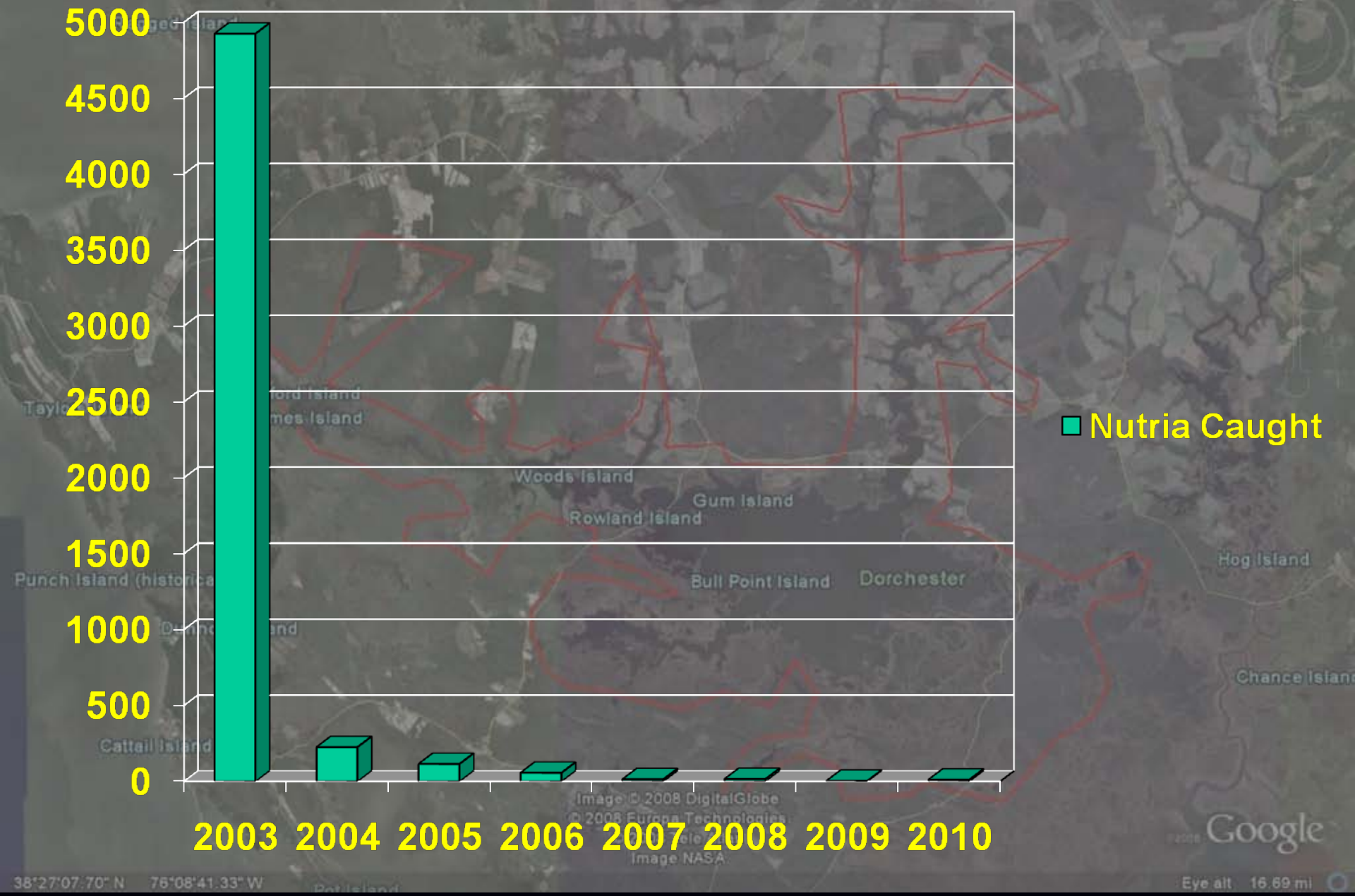
Jun 8, 2005

Eye alt 27310 ft

Area Trapped in 2003



Nutria Removed from Area Trapped in 2003



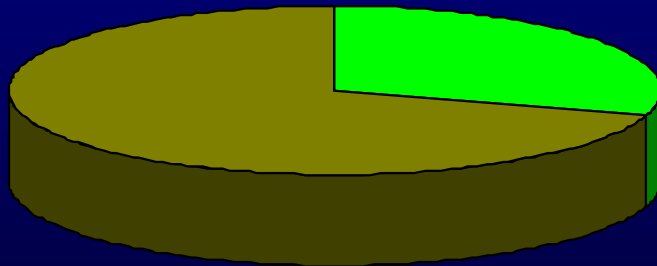


CBNEP

CONSERVATION OUTCOMES

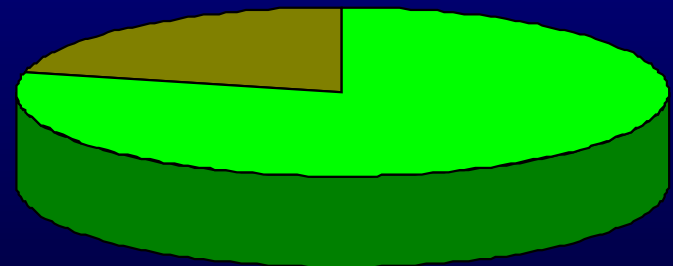
Plant Recovery Following Eradication

**Before
Eradication**



■ **Vegetated**
■ **Bare Ground**

**After
Eradication**



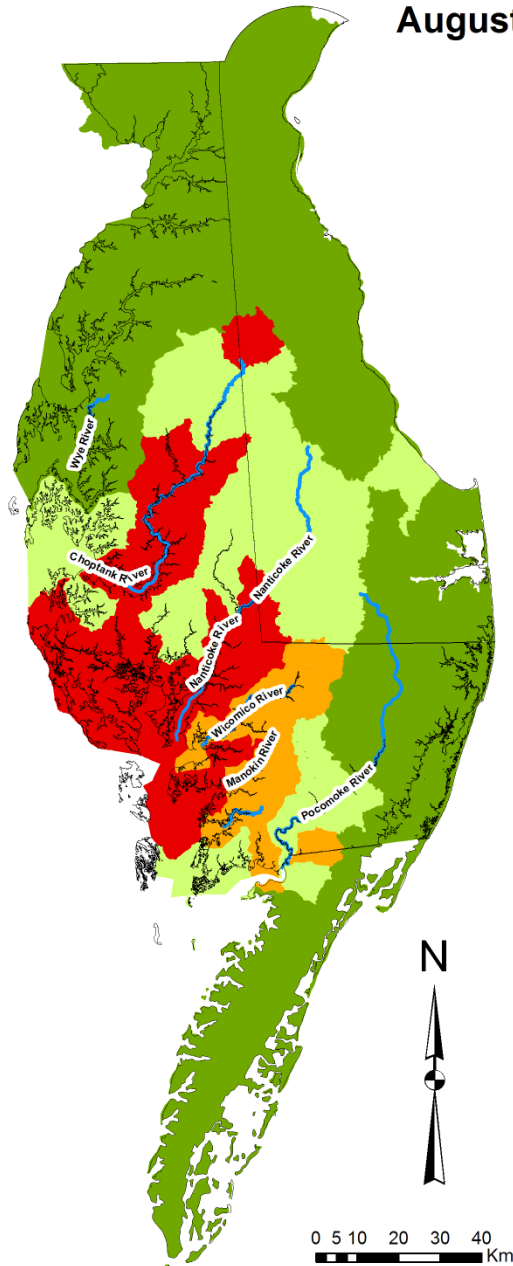
■ **Vegetated**
■ **Bare Ground**

A wide landscape of a marshy field with tall green grass under a cloudy sky. The field is filled with dense, green grass that reaches up to the text. In the background, there is a line of trees on the left and some distant structures. The sky is filled with large, white, fluffy clouds.

Cod's Point

**Choptank River Watershed
Talbot County, Maryland**

August 2012

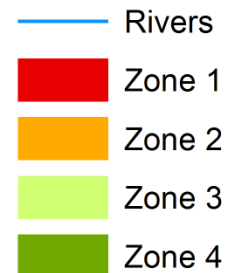


Zone 1 : Denotes areas where eradication strategies have been deployed and nutria densities have been reduced to nearly undetectable levels.

Zone 2 : Denotes areas where nutria are confirmed to exist, but eradication strategies have not been deployed as of 2012.

Zone 3 : Denotes areas where nutria have potential to exist in small isolated populations based on their proximity to former populations in Zones 1 and 2. In 2011, project staff are conducting habitat assessments throughout Zone 3 in order to prioritize areas for intensive ground searches in 2012.

Zone 4 : Denotes areas where there is little evidence that nutria have ever established populations. Although sightings are reported periodically in this area, few have been verified as nutria, and none have led to the confirmation of established populations.



A night photograph of a muskrat swimming in a pond. The muskrat is in the lower right, its head and back visible above water. The background shows tall grass on a bank. Text is overlaid on the left side.

CBNEP

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

27 10:04PM

Monitoring Behavior: Remote Cameras





es (run):

Hair Snare – Video Evaluation

Location: Cherrybridge
Duce Biglow

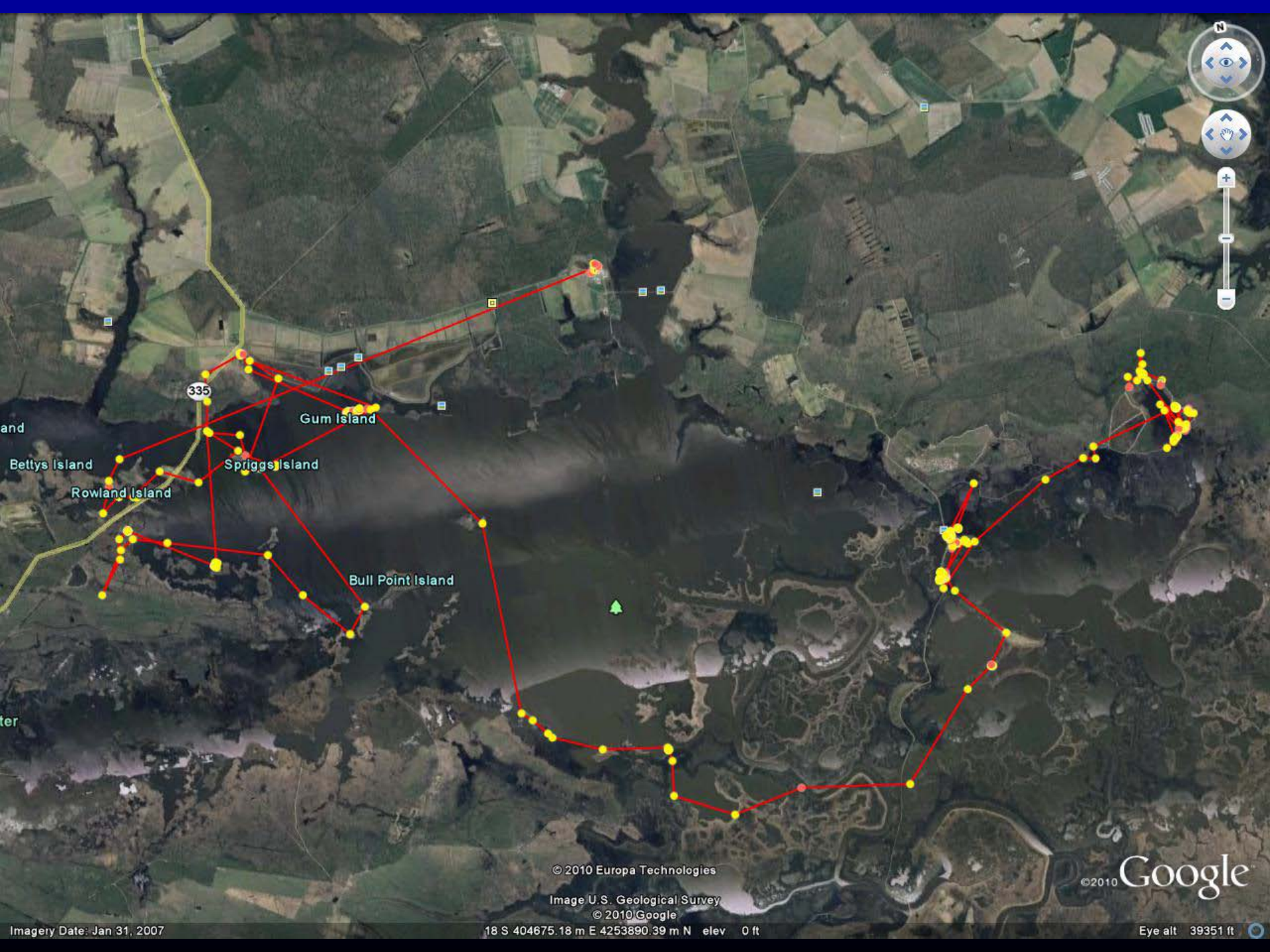
picture ID	Species	RxnPlatform (on, near, touching)	Day Comment (rxn)
	Nutria	on	
	Nutria	on	
	Raccoon	on	

Looking for Needles: Judas Nutria









and

Bettys Island

Rowland Island

Spriggs Island

Gum Island

Bull Point Island

ter

© 2010 Europa Technologies

Image U.S. Geological Survey

© 2010 Google

© 2010 Google

Imagery Date: Jan 31, 2007

18 S 404675.18 m E 4253890.39 m N elev 0 ft

Eye alt 39351 ft

A man in hunting gear, including a cap, orange vest, and waders, stands in a marshy area. He is holding a long, thin object (possibly a reed or stick) in his right hand. A dog is sitting next to him. The background shows a body of water and trees under a cloudy sky.

QUESTIONS?

© Edwin Remsberg Photographs

REC'D JUN 06 2013



Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

8930 Liberty Road • Randallstown, MD 21133 • (410) 922-3426

May 23, 2013

Mr. Doug Boline, Deputy Director,
United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service
Maryland Field Office
50 Harry S. Truman Parkway Suite 202
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: MASS - 2012 wildlife crop damage report

Dear Deputy Director Boline:

On behalf of our over 37,000 member families statewide, I would like to express Maryland Farm Bureau's concerns regarding the Maryland Agricultural Statistics Service (MASS) plan to eliminate the wildlife crop damage report from the 2012 survey of Maryland farmers.

As you know, last year's survey conducted by MASS found that Maryland farmers lost an estimated \$10.0 million in potential crop production due to wildlife damage in 2011. Over the past ten years MASS has conducted 7 annual wildlife crop damage reports. Each report conducted has shown a general increase of crop losses ranging from 9 to 10.5 million. The breakdown of regions in the report gives a detailed look at the estimated economic loss, percent of loss by species, and amount spent on preventative measures.

This comprehensive range of variables helps not only the Maryland Farm Bureau but other state agencies, including the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, as we work to optimize the state's wildlife populations.

Recently, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) released their annual Deer Project Report. In this report they stated the 2011-2012 deer season showed to be the 4th highest harvest on record. Out of the 98,663 deer harvested, 8,840 were harvested by landowners or farmers who applied for a Deer Management Permit (DMP). This clearly shows landowners and farmers need to continue reducing the deer population in Maryland.

By providing farmers, landowners, and other stakeholders with an annual crop damage report, you facilitate better management of local deer herds, resident geese, bear, ground hogs, and migrant geese. This decreases the negative economic impacts resulting from an overabundance of these animals that thrive on corn, soybeans, and other agricultural crops.

On behalf of the farm community in Maryland, I urge you to reconsider your decision on the crop damage issue and find a way to include the wildlife crop damage report in the 2012 survey.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Patricia A. Langenfelder". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

PATRICIA LANGENFELDER
President

CC: United States Department of Agriculture- NASS
Senator Barbra Mikulski
Senator Benjamin L. Cardin
Representative Steny Hoyer
Representative Andy Harris M.D.
Representative Dutch Ruppersberger
Representative John Sarbanes
Representative Donna Edwards
Representative Chris Van Hollen
Representative Elijah Cummings
Representative John K. Delaney
Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Maryland Department of Agriculture
Maryland Wildlife Advisory Commission

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July 24, 2013

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NRP Capt. Lloyd Ingerson

STATE PARK REPRESENTATIVE

Deputy Superintendent
 Chris Bushman

Dear :

Thank you for contacting us about the quail population in Maryland. We share your concerns about the current status and future of this great bird that is enjoyed by Maryland hunters and non-hunters alike. We have previously discussed a possible season closure with the game bird specialists in the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and will try to summarize the key points in this letter.

While it may seem that closing the season would be in the best interest of quail, extensive research across the country does not support this assumption. Biologists agree that hunting is probably not the key factor in causing widespread quail population declines. In fact, quail did not increase when several other states in the Northeast region closed the hunting season as bobwhite numbers dwindled, supporting our belief that hunting is not the issue. While habitat loss, changes in farming practices, and increasing predator numbers have all combined to negatively impact quail populations, it is habitat loss that is our primary concern.

Perhaps most importantly, many of the private landowners willing to create and manage habitat for quail are primarily interested in quail as a game bird. Landowners in Maryland with an interest in quail create a significant amount of vital habitat that otherwise would not exist. For some landowners, the incentive to create and maintain this habitat would be lost if the season was closed. In the opinion of DNR's biologists, the benefits of the habitat these landowners provide clearly outweigh the loss of the few birds they may take while hunting.

Page Two

Although hunting is generally not considered a threat to the quail population on a large scale, intensive hunting has been shown to have impacts on the local population, particularly on public hunting areas. In response to this concern, the DNR reduced the season length and bag limit on all state-owned lands in 2010. Also, the season was closed on Millington Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in 2007 when quail numbers became low there, but unfortunately the population did not rebound.

Based on your comments, we will recommend that DNR assess the population status on E.A. Vaughn WMA and other public hunting areas and consider if future restrictions may be warranted to allow for recovery. We will also ask them to continue their already extensive efforts with private landowners to create and maintain quail habitat to ensure that future Marylanders may continue to hear, see and hunt this great bird.

Thank you again for your comments. We appreciate your concerns and will work with DNR to make sure that hunting does not threaten the remaining quail population in Maryland.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Plummer', with a stylized, flowing script.

Jeffrey Plummer, Chairman
Wildlife Advisory Commission

Title 08 DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Subtitle 03 WILDLIFE

.01 General

Authority: Natural Resources Article, §§10-205 and 10-408, Annotated Code of Maryland

.01 Definitions.

A. (text unchanged)

B. Terms Defined.

(1) - (27) (text unchanged)

(28) *School.*

(a) *“School” means an accredited public, parochial, or private learning institution for one or more grades, kindergarten through 12th grade.*

(b) *“School” does not include a home school or an institute of higher education such as a college or university.*

[(28)](29) – [(38)](39) (text unchanged)

Title 08 DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Subtitle 03 WILDLIFE

.10 General Wildlife Hunting Regulations

Authority: Natural Resources Article, §§10-205 and 10-408, Annotated Code of Maryland

.16 Hunting near a School.

A person, while hunting for any wild bird or mammal, may not shoot or discharge any firearm within 300 yards of a school building containing one or more classrooms while the building is occupied.