

THE MARYLAND WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION MINUTES  
OCTOBER 19, 2022

Chairman Carl Wagner called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. This meeting was held via teleconference. Chairman Wagner asked for a roll call of individuals on the “call.” Because of the anonymity of Google Meet callers, it was impossible to determine the identity of every participant.

**Approval for October 19, 2022, Meeting Agenda**

- Motion to Approve the Agenda:
  1. Vice Chair Schroyer moved to accept the October 19, 2022, Wildlife Advisory Commission Meeting Agenda.
  2. Commissioner Keithley seconded.
  3. All in favor. Motion passed.

**Approval for Minutes from September 21, 2022, Meeting**

- Motion:
  1. Commissioner Keithley moved to accept the September 21, 2022, Meeting Minutes.
  2. Commissioner Showalter seconded.
  3. All in favor. Motion passed.

**Migratory Bird Game Bird Status Update** – Josh Homyack, Waterfowl Project Leader, and Bill Harvey, Game Bird Section Leader

- Waterfowl Project Leader Homyack gave an update on the Migratory Game Bird Species via a PowerPoint Presentation. [ATTACHMENT A]
- There were no breeding waterfowl surveys conducted during 2020 and 2021 due to COVID travel restrictions imposed by the USFWS. Therefore, there are some surveys that leveraged computer modeling and compared data from 2019 against data from 2022. Surveys were conducted this past summer per usual protocols. Staff demonstrated satellite imagery from 2021 to 2022 of the Ungava Peninsula, where the Atlantic Population of Canada Geese nest.
- The Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee was given a similar presentation.
- US Fish and Wildlife Service, Atlantic Flyway Council, Canada Wildlife Service, and various states collected data this past spring and summer.
- The Atlantic Flyway Council met in August. The proposals were established based on various harvest strategies and the biological information collected through the summer. The proposals progress to the US Fish and Wildlife Service Regulations Committee. The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Regulations Committee reviews the recommendations from all four flyway councils, then USFWS Regulations Committee decides on the federal frameworks for the states.
- The acronyms in the presentations are as follows:
  1. AFBWS – Atlantic Flyway Breeding Waterfowl Survey
  2. BBS – Breeding Bird Survey
  3. PHAB – Population and Habitat
  4. AHM – Adaptive Harvest Management
  5. LTA – Long-Term Average
- The eastern mallard population has been declining for the last 15 years. The USFWS instituted a new harvest strategy called the Integrated Population Model (IPM). The IPM incorporates all data collected on eastern mallards.
- The eastern mallard IPM is independent of the Multi-Stock Adaptive Harvest Management Study.
- The telemetry GPS/GSM units collect an amazing amount of data; not only location data but behavioral data is also collected. A sensor on the unit records the duck’s movements, such as flying, swimming, feeding, and nesting. The data is downloaded via satellite and displayed on the computer.

- Q&A Section
  1. Chair Wagner asked if the Atlantic Flyway uses ring-neck duck, goldeneye, wood ducks, and mallards to regulate the health of the duck population on the East Coast.
    - a. Mallards are omitted. The species that determine the health of the duck population are wood duck, green-winged teal, ring-necked duck, and goldeneye. These birds are included in the Atlantic Flyway Multi-Stock (AHM) that determines the duck season.
  2. Chair Wagner asked if the ring-necked duck was really a meter for the health of the diving duck population. Chair Wagner added that it seemed to him that the ring-necked ducks, along with goldeneye, are less popular and fewer than the canvasbacks and blue bills (greater and lesser scaup) in Maryland.
    - a. Ring-neck ducks are an excellent source for the health of the duck population. A fair amount of the birds harvested are in the Atlantic Flyway. Ring-neck ducks are one of the three top-harvested ducks in the Flyway. Most of the ring-neck duck harvest is from South Carolina to the South.
    - b. Maryland does not see many ring-neck ducks; however, it is a very important duck in the Atlantic Flyway.
    - c. The other species have their independent harvest strategies, specific to canvasbacks, redheads, and the combined scaup species that are managed separately.

#### **Atlantic Population (AP) Canada Geese Update – Game Bird Section Leader Bill Harvey**

- Game Bird Section Leader Bill Harvey gave an update on the Atlantic Population (AP) Canada Geese. [ATTACHMENT A]
- Since the banding in the early 90s, there have been about 125,000 banded geese. The recovery of those birds is the primary way the zones are established in the Flyway.
- The staff received data from the GPS/GSM as the birds moved to the Flyway.
- Staff observed the winter conditions on the Ungava, which predicted an average nesting.
- From the banding, staff can obtain survival and harvest rates.
- The value of these IPMs is that they fill in the gaps when staff could not survey due to COVID restrictions.
- Next year, AP breeding pair prediction is around 180,000, which puts Atlantic Flyway in a liberal status, but the new model really sets this as ‘standard’ status given the goals for the AP population.
- AP geese don’t nest until they are three years old or older. The IPM keeps track of how many birds are estimated in each age class because that determines how many birds breed.
- The light gray line in slide 19 is the IPM, and the larger gray areas on the chart are the variant. There were no observed breeding pairs in 2020 and 2021; however, in 2022, about 164,000 breeding pairs were observed. IPM predicted only around a 5% difference from the actual estimate.
- In 2022, staff put 105 GPS/GSM units on AP Canada geese.
- Q&A Section
  1. Chair Wagner asked about the restricted AP package and if it was the same for New England and the Chesapeake Bay Region.
    - a. The number of days will remain the same, which is the most important to most hunters. They have always had one more bird in the bag limit than Maryland, which reflects that Maryland kills more AP geese in the AP areas in the Flyway. In New England and the Mid-Atlantic Areas, their highest are resident geese and not AP.

#### **Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) Update – Game Mammal Section Leader Brian Eyler**

- Game Mammal Section Leader Brian Eyler gave an update on EHD in Maryland. [ATTACHMENT B]
- Maryland has had reports across the eastern portion of the State of Hemorrhagic disease. In some localized areas, they have experienced large die-offs. Maryland does not experience large outbreaks every year.

- The virus caused the deer to have a high fever that drives them near water. The virus is fast acting; it could kill a deer in less than 48 hours.
- New Hampshire had its first case of EHD, so it is moving northward due to climate change.
- Once an area has a heavy outbreak; usually, that area won't have another severe outbreak for the next three to five years.
- Staff took samples to the Maryland Agriculture Health Lab. The team does not test every sick deer.
- The acronym SCWDS represents Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study.
- Staff members do not see the Bluetongue (BT) strains often. Most of the time, Maryland has the EHD strains.
- Unfortunately, there is nothing staff can do about EHD outbreaks except monitor the situation and keep people educated.
- The deer harvest through October 17, 2021, vs. 2022 slide, with the counties highlighted in pink or orange color, were areas that had the outbreak in 2021. The harvest percentages demonstrate the harvest bouncing back. The counties highlighted in blue display the outbreak for 2022 and its impact on the harvest percentage. Staff are confident that the counties highlighted in blue will bounce back in a few years.
- Q&A Section
  1. Commissioner Rossignuolo asked if EHD impacts Sika deer.
    - a. EHD does not appear to impact Sika deer.
    - b. Staff have never had Sika test positive for EHD.

#### **2023 WAC Annual Schedule and Monthly Draft Agenda – WAC Review**

- The Commission received a proposed 2023 Annual Schedule for meetings via email.  
[ATTACHMENT C]
- Staff have not decided on a field day if the Commission members elect to do so on September 20, 2023.
- Director Peditto explained that the Commission could approve the 2023 Annual Schedule and still opt to change it during the year.
- Chair Wagner asked for any feedback on virtual meetings.
  1. Vice Chair Schroyer supported the virtual meetings because of the distance required to make in-person meetings. Vice Chair Schroyer emphasized that the Commission is very productive using Google Meets, but he recognized the importance of meeting together.
  2. Commissioner Keithley endorsed Vice Chair Schroyer's comments.
- Motion
  1. Commissioner Parks moved to accept the 2023 WAC Annual Schedule and Monthly Draft Agenda.
  2. Commissioner Schroyer seconded.
  3. All in favor. Motion carried.

#### **Maryland Farm Bureau Update** – Director of Government Relations Colby Ferguson, gave a presentation.

- Director Ferguson informed the Commission that the Maryland Farm Bureau is in the final stages of the county's policy development process. Therefore, every county reviews the Maryland Farm Bureau policies and farmers' concerns to see if there are current policies to address the problems. If not, the counties will make recommendations to create guidelines for the concerns. These recommendations are vetted at the Maryland Farm Bureau Convention in the first week of December.
- Director Ferguson mentioned that there is a top three priority list, and crop damage from deer is included in the top three. Wildlife damage is consistently listed as one of the priorities to address at the Convention.
- Director Ferguson reported it had been a devastating year for crop damage, with the cost of production being high.

- Director Ferguson raised that MFB has been getting calls about needing the services of deer cooperators or ‘sharpshooters’. It may be something that the WHS and Commission may want to address.
- Director Ferguson pointed out that some counties are looking to submit Sunday hunting bills.

#### **Natural Resources Police Update** – District Supervisor Robert Karge gave a presentation.

- District Supervisor Karge reported that on conviction rates, NRP does not have anything specific that talks about the different data from the courts that NRP can reference.
- District Supervisor Karge outlined 2022 numbers: 14,741 warnings and 5,850 citations.
- There were 5% wildlife violations, 36% boating, 15% public lands, 30% fisheries, and 14% traffic violations.
- There were 12 cases of spotlighting and jacklighting. Also, there were 33 baiting cases.
- NRP is in the process of acquiring approval for a new aircraft that will seat five. District Supervisor Karge outlined the features of the new aircraft. Currently, NRP has one pilot; however, paperwork was submitted to the Department of Budget and Management for another pilot.

#### **Old Business**

- WHS Regulations Status
  1. The Chair asked for the status of the regulations approved by the WAC earlier this year. The various regulations have been approved except for the Deer Cooperator Permit (DCP) Regulations. DCP regulations are still in the review process for official submission by DNR.
  2. DCP regulations are not at the point for submittal. Staff are working with the chain of command and are hopeful it will be done soon.
- Questions and Answers Section on Pending WHS Regulations:
  1. Chair Wagner asked, because it has been taking so long, do we need to have more public input or start the process over again?
    - a. If anything, significant changes in what the WHS proposed, WHS would need to start over in part or whole.
    - b. The public will have an opportunity to review the regulations.
    - c. Staff will continue to keep the Commission informed of the status.
    - d. Chair Wagner requested that the WHS Regulations Update remains on the monthly agenda.
- Hunter Education Programming
  1. Lt. Forrest is the Assistant Commander for the Maryland Natural Resources Police - Safety Education Program.
  2. Lt. Forrest reported that for FY22, 107 traditional hunting classes and 154 field day workshops were conducted. There were a little over 5000 students certified. NRP is caught up on field days due to COVID. NRP added two Hunter Safety Coordinators on staff; each region has a coordinator. Mr. Bill Dixon was hired to supervise the hunter safety coordinators, which brings the staffing to five who deal with the Hunter Safety Program.
  3. Mr. Dixon mentioned that he is available for questions from the Commission.
  4. Commissioner Keithley asked if there are plans to jump-start the Hunter Safety Program with the new hunter safety coordinators by reaching out to the old instructors that have lapsed due to COVID.
    - a. Lt. Forrest recognized a lack of instructors in the Southern and Western Regions. NRP may get a few people to desire to become instructors. For two years, NRP did not have a Southern Region Coordinator. Retired NRP officer Bob Ford is now the Southern Region Coordinator. Mr. Ford is recruiting hunter safety instructors. The fact is that most of our instructors are older, and they are often no longer available to assist. NRP is attending events to recruit hunter safety instructors.
  5. Chair Wagner replied that the numbers outlined are great. Chair Wagner encouraged the NRP to release the information more widely when these field days are available. Chair Wagner added that he would like fewer complaints regarding unavailable field days.

6. Chair Wagner commented that he recognized that people are taking online courses in other states; these online courses without field days are acceptable in Maryland to purchase a hunting license or hunt in Maryland.
7. Chair Wagner suggested incorporating the mentored hunt, online hunter safety programs, and/or apprentice hunting to give people another option for completing the requirements in MD.
8. Mr. Dixon recalled that when he started with the hunter safety program, Mr. Dixon heard the same complaints about the lack of field day workshops once the online hunter safety course was completed. NRP noticed that a tremendous amount of field days was filled up immediately and unavailable to the general public. NRP observed many no-shows on the field days, which caused a general shortage for the public. NRP decided to change registration for the field days, where a person cannot sign up before 30 days, reducing the number of no-shows. NRP posted the field days on the website, making it more visible to the public.
9. Mr. Dixon met with Information and Education Manager Chris Markin about a transitional R3 information packet for the students who come through the hunter safety courses, which is more about how to hunt than how to be safe. There were discussions about hunter safety instructors being mentors since the hunter safety instructors have been vetted through background checks. NRP sends a newsletter twice a year about the mentored hunting program to the instructors for the hunter safety instructors to consider becoming a mentor.
10. Chair Wagner asked about the discrepancies of Maryland accepting the online hunter safety education course from other states that do not have field days. Also, Chair Wagner wondered if there was a way to modernize the Maryland hunter education course.
  - a. Mr. Dixon replied that NRP's priority is to produce the best and safest hunter in a field, even if the public wants a more accessible venue.
11. Commissioner Keithley expressed that having the different scenarios that hunters face in a traditional setting is very valuable to produce the safest hunter possible.
12. Commissioner Jenkins commented that there is an orientation a weekend before the mentored hunting program starts. Commissioner Jenkins asked, since the orientation allows live fire and other safety things, could the orientation be used as the field day workshop?
  - a. Lt. Forrest responded that he would not be opposed to accepting the mentored orientation as an approved field day workshop.
13. Chair Wagner asked if there is a field day workshop standard that the Maryland hunter education instructors must follow.
  - a. Mr. Dixon indicated there is a field day workshop standard. NRP created it this year as a minimum criteria that must be met for the field day workshop. The information about what to expect at a field day is available on the NRP webpage. There have been some issues related to venues for the live fire portion of the field day workshop. NRP instituted some exceptions to the live fire portion that allowed the use of laser guns and pellet guns; this is for venues that will not support live fire.
14. Commissioner Parks recalled that once the hunting season started, the field days shut down, limiting the youths' ability to stay engaged. Commissioner Parks agreed with having the mentors or apprentice license mentors handle some field days during the hunting season since there are out with the mentees. Commissioner Parks questioned why NRP opposed the online model with the "mentored hunt or apprentice option." Commissioner Parks emphasized that NRP needs to make it more accessible and easier for new hunters to gain access – especially during the fall and winter.
15. Lt. Forrest clarified that he is okay with the field day workshop merged into other options so long as it follows the outline NRP has set.
16. Lt. Forrest acknowledged Chair Wagner's points about the states that have the online hunter education course without a field day. Lt. Forrest recalled that he thinks around 14 states that have that process. Lt. Forrest pointed out that no data demonstrate that these people are at higher risk of accidents.
17. Lt. Forrest added that there is an advantage to a person who goes out and has that field day

experience. Lt. Forrest suggested that there is a way to get that mentor piece permitted. Lt Forrest indicated that if a person took the online course without the field day from one of the 14 states, Maryland would accept it, so he understands the issues raised here.

18. Mr. Dixon expressed that the online hunter safety course is not state specific.
19. Commissioner Rossignuolo said she thought the online courses could be state specific; and also asked if there are any changes on how someone could complete a hunter safety course, including perhaps the option of the HQL attendee.
  - a. NRP could not answer Commissioner Rossignuolo's question regarding HQL qualifying.
20. Director Peditto mentioned that the 2013 Firearms Safety Act authorized hunter education to serve as a person's training for HQL. However, someone with HQL cannot skip the hunter safety education. NRP could allow, as a matter of policy, the HQL to serve as a field day for hunter education.
21. Director Peditto also clarified that you could build online courses with state-selected content and state-specific language as the state wants.
22. Chair Wagner extended an invitation for Lt. Forrest and Mr. Dixon to attend November 16, 2022, meeting. Additionally, Chair Wagner requested that Lt. Forrest and Mr. Dixon research the things that the Commission discussed.
  - a. Lt. Forrest and Mr. Dixon agreed.

- Future Hunting License and Stamp Model Discussion

1. The general hunting license sold around 100,000, non-resident hunting licenses sold around 10,000, three-day waterfowl and the small game license sold about 30,000, duck stamps sold about 50,000, and most of the other licenses are less than the amounts outlined.
2. Chair Wagner assigned homework to the Commission to discuss raising hunting licenses and stamps to the groups in which the members are involved. Keep in mind that the Pittman-Robertson Fund is matching dollars for DNR and is based on the sale of hunting licenses.
3. Chair Wagner mentioned that all the hunting licenses and stamps need an increase. Chair Wagner researched other states, and Maryland is on the cheap side of things. Commissioner Keithley and Commissioner Jenkins talked about creating a Sika deer stamp.
4. Chair Wagner outlined the following options for discussion at the November meeting:
  - a. Is there a need for licenses and stamps to increase?
  - b. If there is a need for the fee increase, how much should it be?
  - c. Are there other places where money could be raised?
5. Vice Chair Schroyer mentioned that he researched in 2018 and discussed Maryland hunting license fees with groups in Western Maryland, with a 22% increase across all hunting products. Vice Chair Schroyer received support from the Western Maryland groups that he discussed it with. With the proposed increase of 22% would have generated around million dollars. Vice Chair Schroyer recommended an increase across the board. Vice Chair Schroyer reminded the Commission that any fee increases would have to go through the legislature, and the Commission would have to locate bill sponsors.
6. Commissioner Showalter asked if Vice Chair Schroyer could share the information he compiled in 2018. The 22% increase is still a bargain for the enjoyment of Maryland's resources. Commissioner Showalter added that having a compelling story about the benefit of generating matching funds would help sell the increase of fees to people who may question the rise, along with outlining how the Department would spend the additional funds.
7. Chair Wagner informed the Commission that he would have more information to share with the Commission next month.
8. Commissioner Keithley concluded that no business could survive by not having an increase in fees since 1989; it is time to do something about this situation. WHS needs this funding, and it is long overdue.
9. Future Hunting License and Stamp Model Discussion was deferred to the November 16, 2022, meeting due to the lack of time.

**No New Business**

**Public Comment –**

- The public may contact the Members of the Commission at [wac.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:wac.dnr@maryland.gov).
- There were no further public comments.

**Adjournment**

- The meeting adjourned at 12:56 p.m.

The next meeting will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, November 16, 2022, using Google Meet.

**Attendance**

Members:	M. Cole, T.J. Jenkins, S. Keithley, J. Parks, K. Rossignuolo, J. Schroyer, R. Showalter, and C. Wagner
Absent:	B. Alder
Guest:	C. Ferguson
Staff:	H. Dixon, B. Eyler, S. Forrest, S. Garren, B. Harvey, J. Homyack, R. Karge, P. Peditto, T. Spencer, and H. Spiker

# 2022 Migratory Game Bird Status Update

ATTACHMENT A



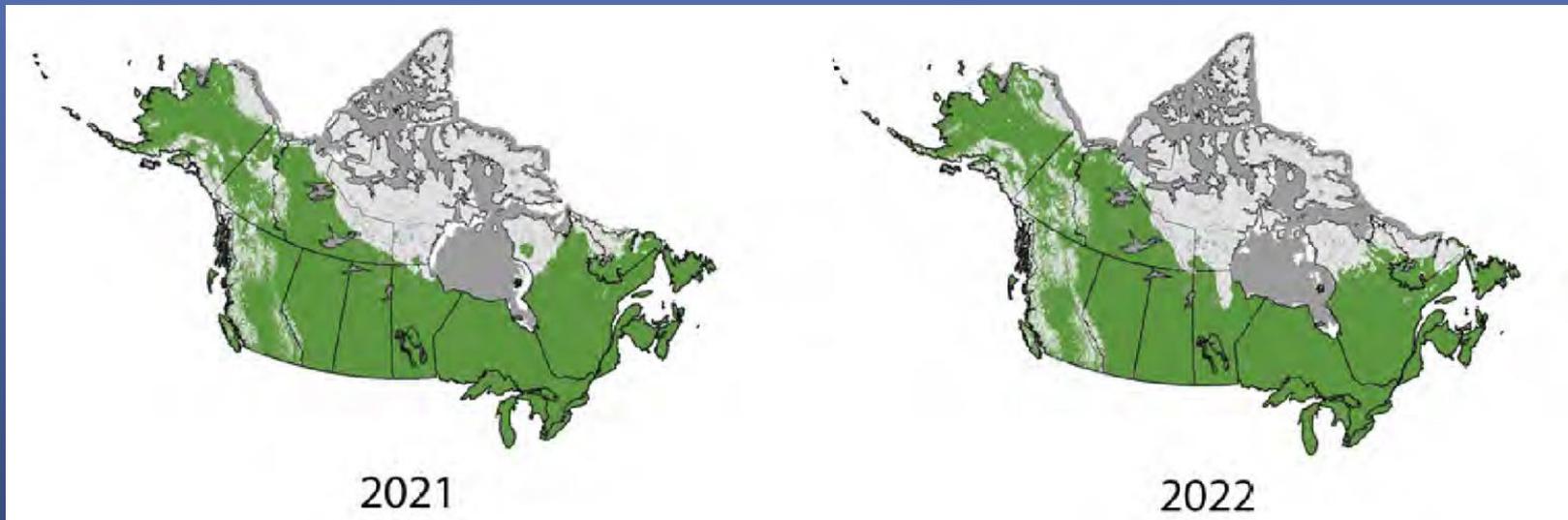
# Annual Regulatory Process for Migratory Game Birds



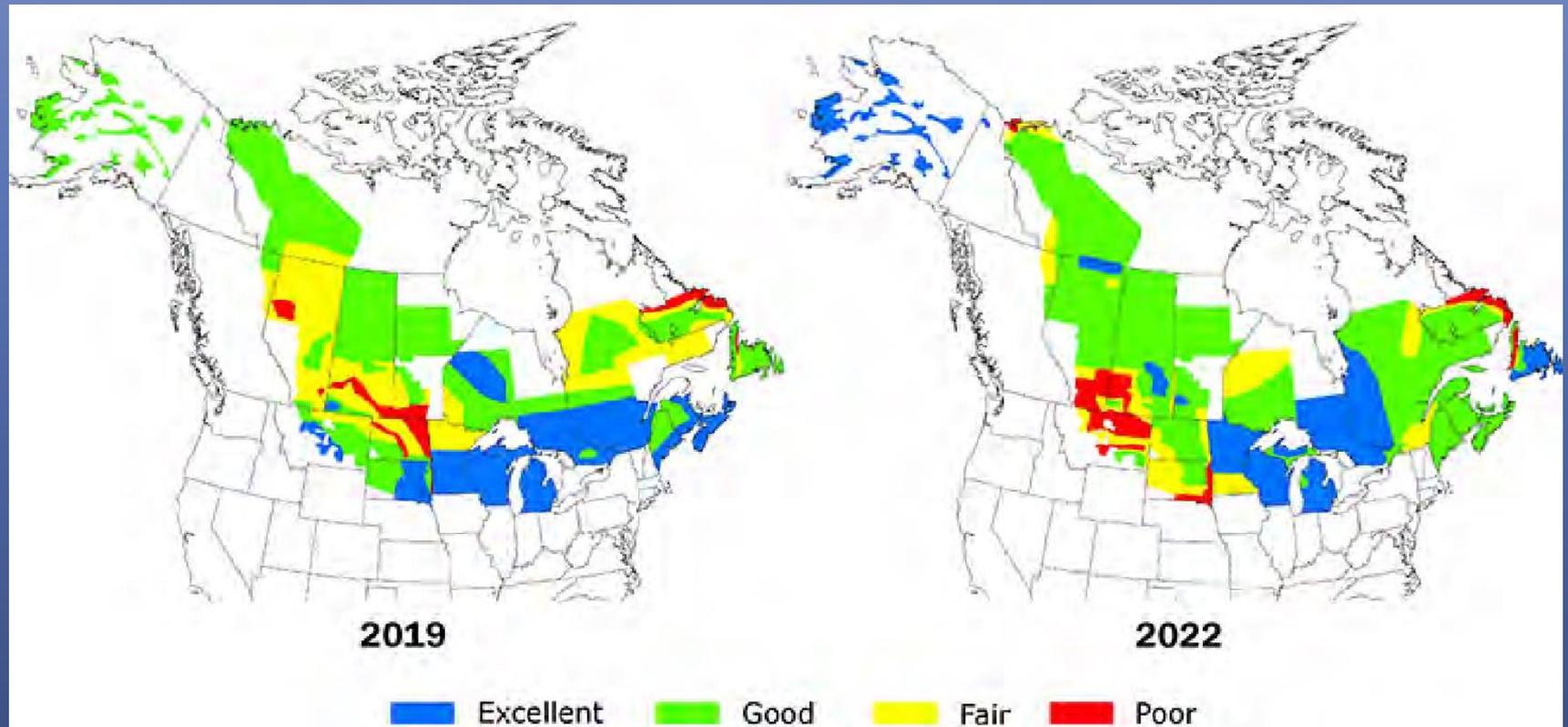
- **2022-2023 seasons were “set” in April, 2022 after extensive public review that began in October 2021.**
- **2023-2024 seasons**
  - **Atlantic Flyway Council, August 21 – 26, 2022.**
  - **FWS Regulations Committee, Oct. 11 – 14, 2022.**
  - **Proposed federal frameworks, early 2023.**
  - **MGBAC early January WAC reviews late January.**
  - **Maryland public meeting and comment period (mid February).**
  - **WAC vote late March with final season selection due to FWS, April 2023.**

# 2022 Habitat Conditions

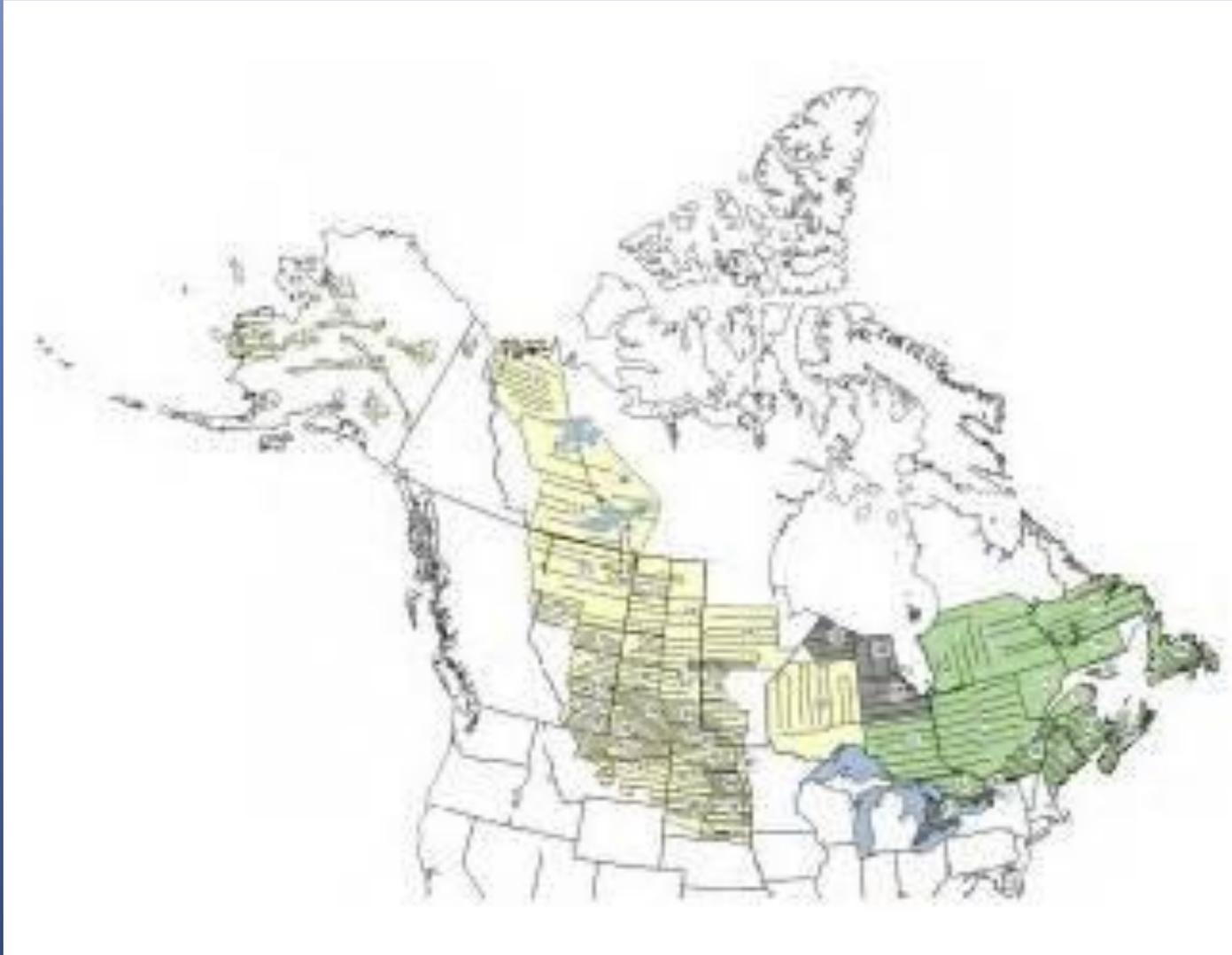
- Surveys and annual pre-season waterfowl banding efforts were conducted normally as COVID-19 related travel restrictions were lifted.
- Snow and ice cover maps from satellite photography show similar coverage in 2021 and 2022 leading to generally average spring phenology across the arctic/sub-arctic.



# Breeding Population and Habitat Survey (PHAB)



# Survey Area: Traditional (tan) and Eastern (green)





# Eastern Survey Area Population Estimates



## 2022 Breeding Ducks in the Eastern Survey Area (millions)

Species	2022	2019	% Change from 2019	% Change from LTA
Mallard	1.2	1.03	+15%	-3%
Black Duck	0.8	0.72	similar	similar (1998-2019 avg)
Wood Duck*	1.0	1.02	similar	similar
Green-winged Teal	0.32	0.34	+7	-10%
Ring-necked Duck	0.64	0.71	-11%	similar
Common Goldeneye	0.71	0.50	+23%	similar

\* Wood Duck estimate from AFBWS and BBS

# Multi-Stock Harvest Management



- Approved by USFWS-SRC spring 2018 as the method by which general duck season will be determined in the Atlantic Flyway (liberal, moderate, restrictive, closed).
- Replaced Eastern Mallard AHM.
- Models a suite of species representing birds important to hunters/harvest and different habitat types.
- Optimal choice for the 2023-24 Atlantic Flyway duck season is the liberal regulatory alternative (60 days/6 birds).



# Traditional Survey Area Population Estimates



Species	2022	2019	% Change from 2019	% Change from LTA
<b>Mallard</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>-23%</b>	<b>+19</b>
<b>Gadwall</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>-18%</b>	<b>+30%</b>
<b>American wigeon</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>-25%</b>	<b>-19%</b>
<b>Green-winged teal</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>-32%</b>	<b>similar</b>
<b>Blue-winged teal</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>+19%</b>	<b>+27%</b>
<b>Northern shoveler</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>-17%</b>	<b>+15</b>
<b>Northern pintail</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>-21%</b>	<b>-54%</b>
<b>Redhead</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>+35%</b>	<b>+36%</b>
<b>Canvasback</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>similar</b>	<b>similar</b>
<b>Scaup</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>similar</b>	<b>-28%</b>



# Eastern Mallards



- New harvest strategy approved that utilizes an Integrated Population Model.
- Liberal: 4/day (2 Hens) Moderate: 2/day (1 hen) Restrictive: 1/day Closed
- This strategy functions independently of Multi-stock AHM which determines the general duck season .
- Harvest strategy recommends a liberal framework in 2023-24.

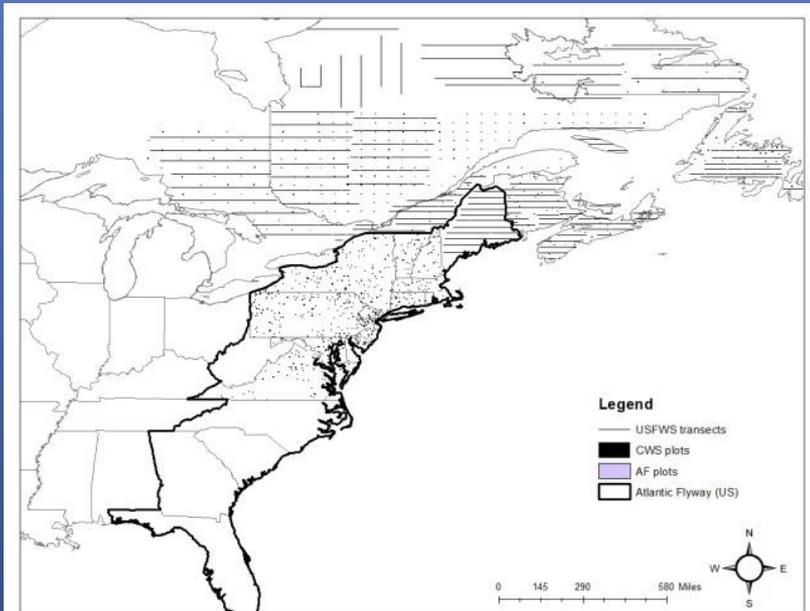
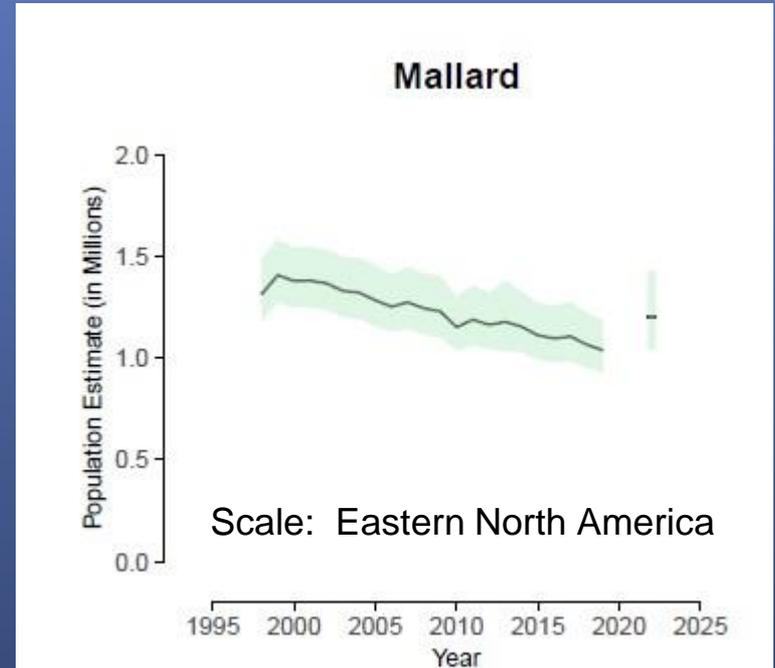


Figure 1. Map of eastern mallard range and surveys used to estimate population abundance.

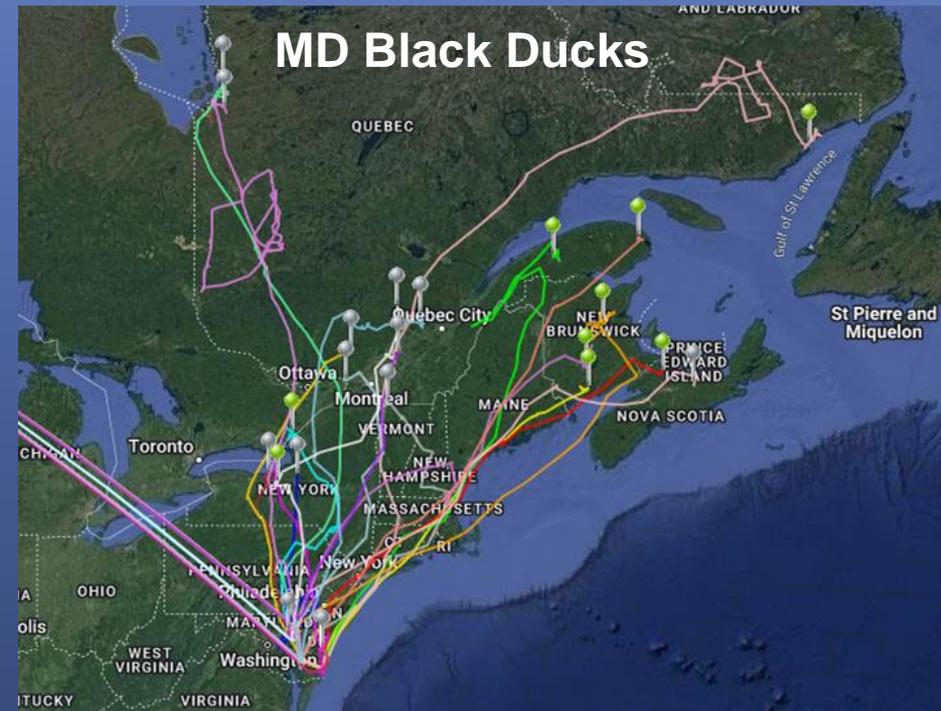
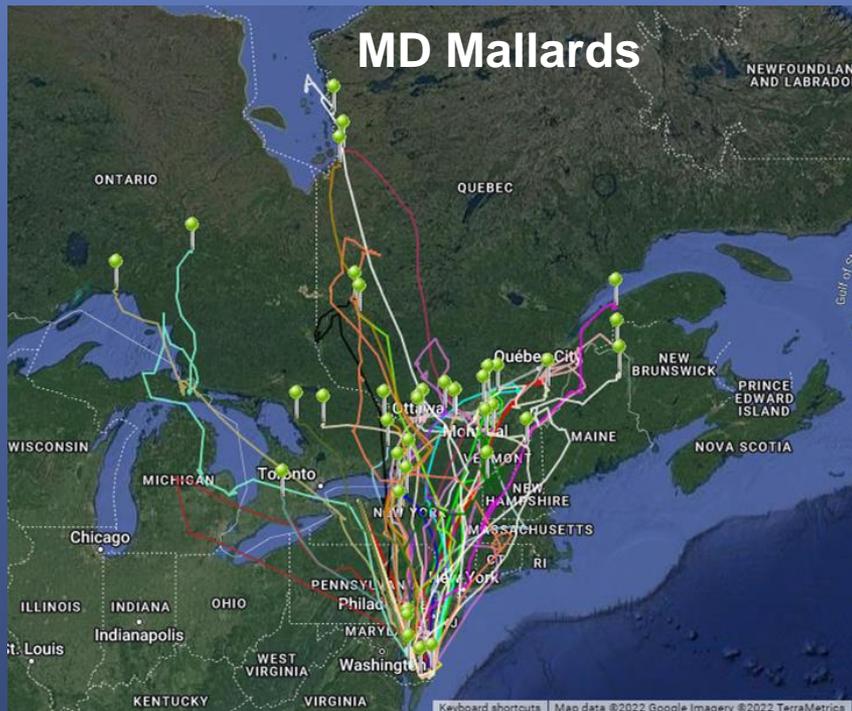




# Mallard and Black Duck Telemetry Projects



- Flyway applied 133 black duck and 338 mallard units late winter 2022 (MD applied 24 black duck and 36 mallard).
- GPS/GSM units with onboard data storage have worked as planned.
- Very early in a long term research project.



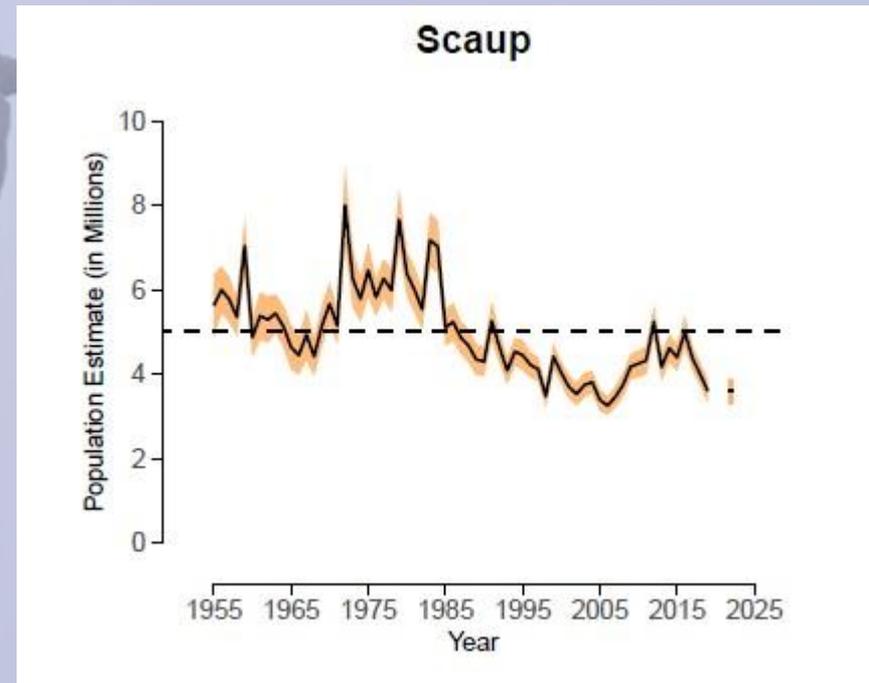
# Scaup Season



- Restrictive “hybrid” season for 2022-23.

- 40 days 1 bird/day and 20 consecutive days 2 birds/day.

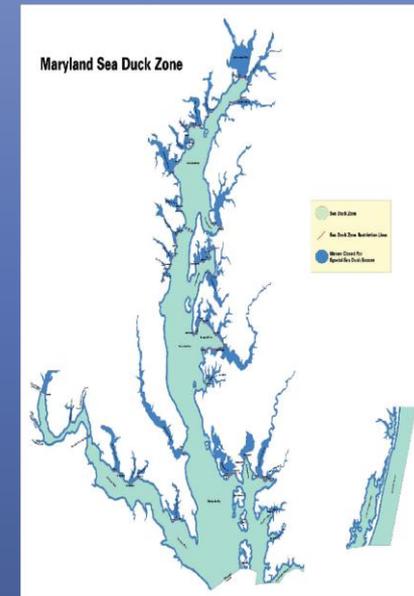
- States choose where to place 20 days of 2 birds/day but must be consecutive.



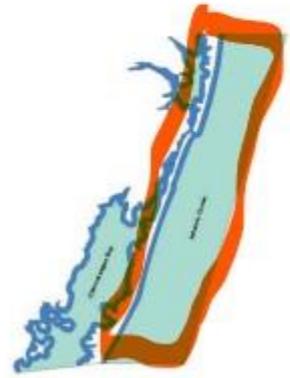
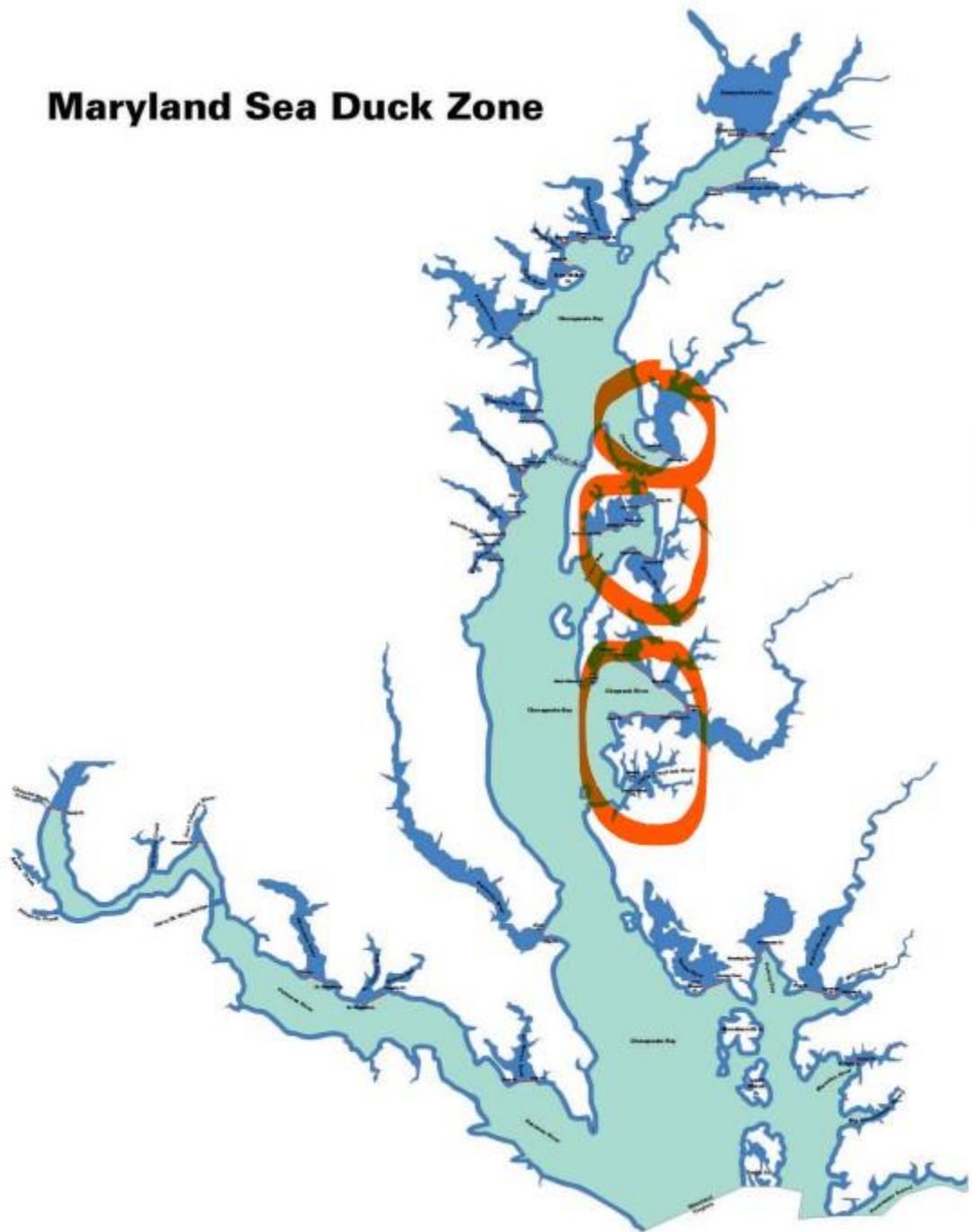
# Reminder: Special Sea Duck Season Eliminated



- A special season was no longer appropriate for sea ducks as these seasons can only be applied to species that are overabundant or lightly utilized.
- The Department did not make changes to the Sea Duck Zone and attendant hunting opportunity.
- **The daily bag limit in the regular duck season has been reduced to 4 sea ducks per day with no more than 3 scoters, 3 long-tailed ducks, or 3 eiders.**
- Hunters may pursue sea ducks during the 60 day regular duck season, however sea ducks will always count towards the regular daily bag limit regardless of where they are harvested.



# Maryland Sea Duck Zone



# Atlantic Population (AP) Canada Geese





# 2022 AP Monitoring



- **Breeding Pair Survey** conducted normally in mid-June.
  - No surveys in 2020 or 2021.
- **Pre-season Banding**
  - Not conducted in 2020 or 2021 due to COVID.
  - Conducted in 2022 (3,098 birds banded).
  - 103 GPS/GSM solar powered neck collars deployed.
  - Weather based model predicted average productivity, confirmed by banding data.



# Ungava Snow and Ice Conditions



# Changes in AP CAGO Management Strategies



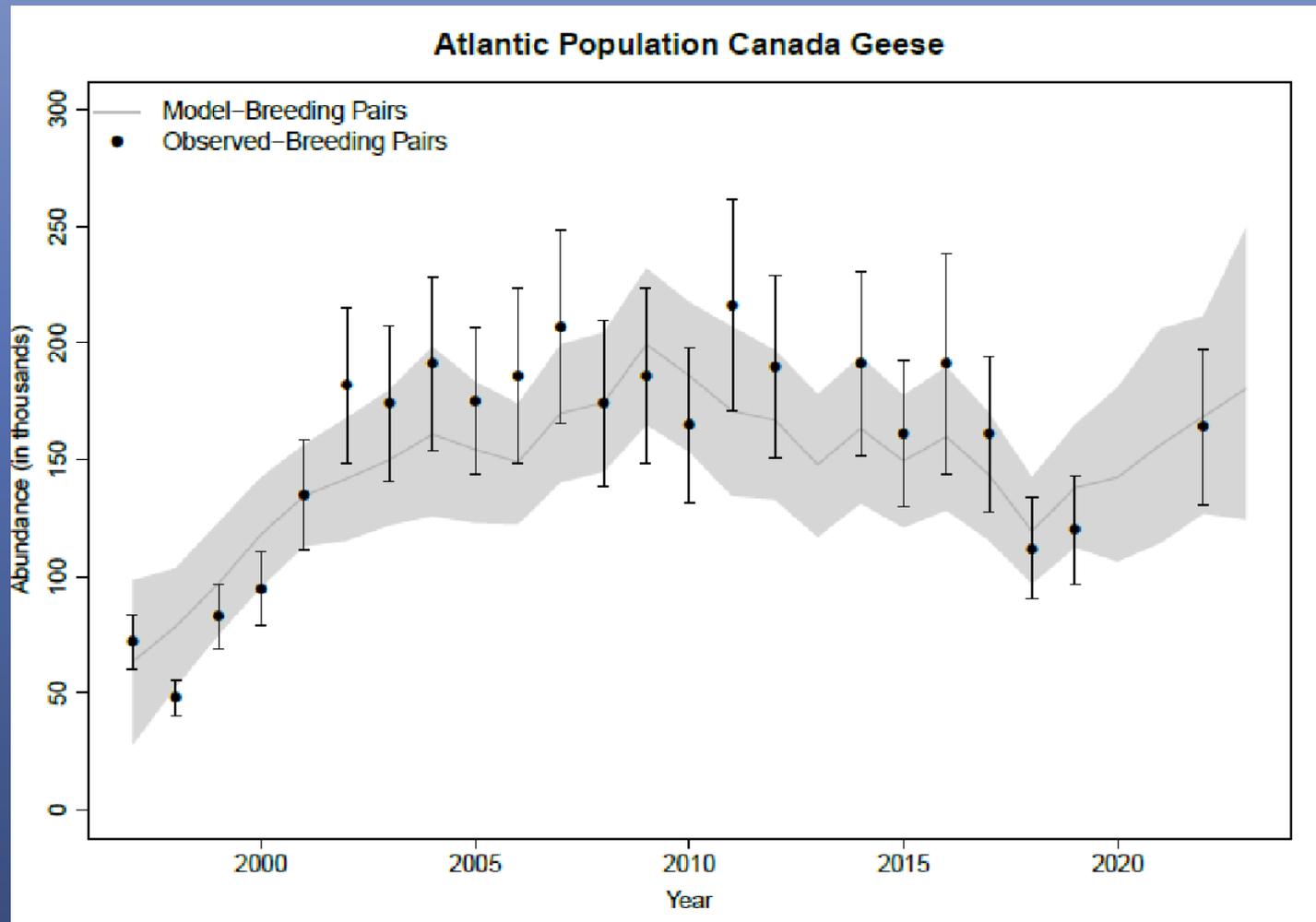
- The 3 year running average of the pair estimate to determine the hunt package was replaced by an Integrated Population Model (IPM) in 2021.
- The IPM makes better use of all the available demographic data on AP Canada geese and is capable of making out-year predictions.
- Use of the out-year prediction allows for a quicker response to population change under the current regulatory system.
- Revised AP Canada Goose Harvest Strategy is more conservative in all packages and requires a bag limit of 1 per day in all U.S. AP hunt zones when the restrictive package is recommended.

# AP Canada Goose Harvest Strategy



Population Thresholds (Breeding Pairs)	Harvest Package	Target Adult Harvest Rate	Packages for Chesapeake Region AP Areas	Packages for Mid-Atlantic and New England Region AP Areas
> 160,000	Liberal	7%	45 days and 2 geese/day	45 days and 3 geese/day
$\leq 160,00$ and $> 125,000$	Moderate	5%	30 days and 2 geese/day	30 days and 3 geese/day
$\leq 125,000$ and $\geq 60,000$	Restrictive	3%	30 days and 1 goose/day	30 days and 1 goose/day
< 60,000	Closed	0%	Closed	Closed

# AP Breeding Pairs



# AP Pair Estimates and Hunting Implications



- AP CAGO Breeding Pair Data

- 2022 - 164,000 pairs

- 2021 - No survey

- 2020 - No Survey

- 2019 - 120,000 pairs

- 2018 - 112,000 pairs

- In 2021 AFC recommended keeping restrictive seasons for 2022-2023 although the harvest plan called for a moderate (30 day/2 bird per day) package.
- In 2022 the AFC recommended the liberal package (45 days/ 2 bird per day) for 2023-24 based on a predicted breeding pair estimate of 180,500 in 2023.

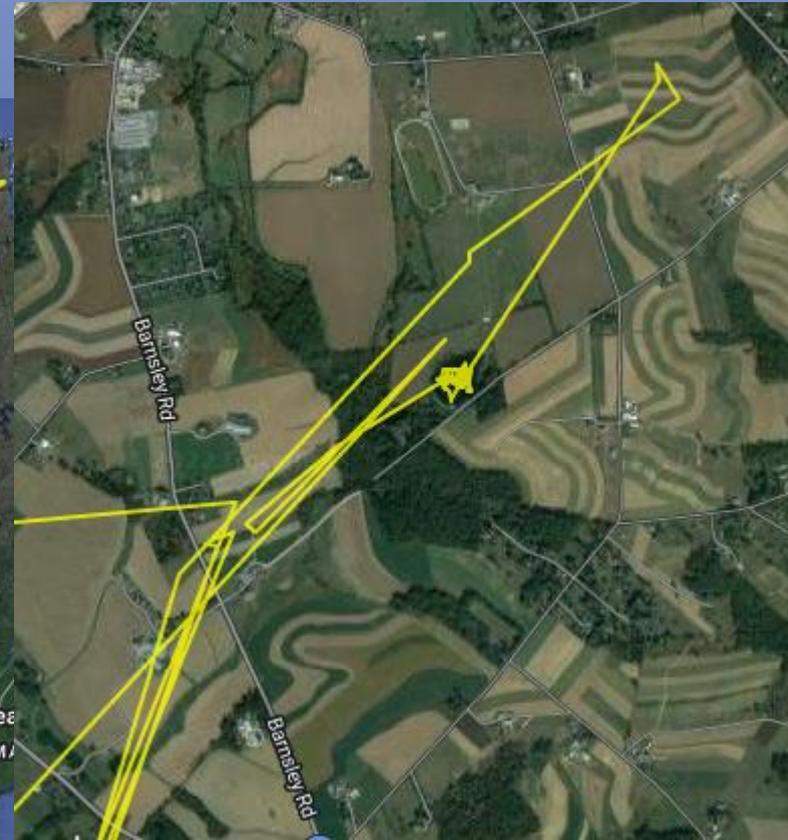
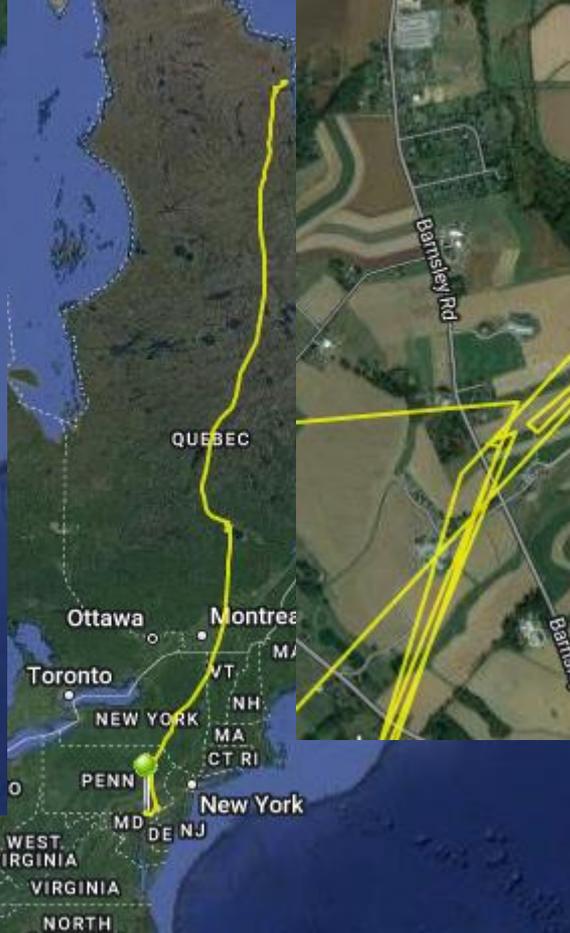
# AP Canada Goose Telemetry Project



- This project will apply 400+ GPS/GSM units to adult female AP Canada geese over 3 years.
- It will modernize understanding of migration routes, timing, and nesting ecology.
- Most units will be deployed on the sub-arctic nesting grounds however a small percentage will be applied on wintering areas (MD, VA, NC).
- These units will continue to provide information beyond the 3 primary years of the project.



# GPS-GSM Goose Data





Questions?

# Hemorrhagic Disease



# Hemorrhagic Disease



- Virus spread by midges/gnats (aka no-see'ums)
- EHD and Bluetongue (BT) strains
- Only affects deer – no human consequences
- First identified in the 1950s in New Jersey
- Identified in Maryland in the 1970s
- Moving northward
- “Heavy” localized outbreaks every 3 – 5 years
- Localized impacts to deer population for 2 – 3 years
- No long term effects

# Hemorrhagic Disease



- Total MD Reported Suspect EHD deer deaths for 2022 = 75+ from 20+ locations
- Eleven MD counties reporting suspect EHD deer deaths broken down by numbers of deer per county, below:

Anne Arundel -1

Caroline - 7 (EHD-2 virus and BT virus detected by SCWDS)

Charles – 5 (BTV-11 detected by SCWDS)

Dorchester - 3

Frederick - 1

Montgomery - 7

Prince George's - 1

Talbot - 3

Washington - 9

Wicomico – Worcester 50+ (EHDV-2 detected by SCWDS)

# Hemorrhagic Disease



- Total MD Reported Suspect EHD deer deaths for 2020 = 352 from 126 locations
- 17 MD counties reporting suspect EHD deer deaths broken down by numbers of deer per county, below:

Anne Arundel -71

Baltimore - 9

Calvert - 19

Carroll - 4

Cecil - 15

Charles - 34

Frederick - 2

Harford - 1

Howard - 2

Kent - 42 (EHDV-6 detected by SCWDS)

Montgomery - 28 (EHDV-6 detected by SCWDS)

Prince George's - 19

Queen Anne's - 66

St. Mary's - 16

Somerset - 4

Talbot - 18

Wicomico - 2

# Deer Harvest Through October 17 2021 vs. 2022



County	Percent Change
St. Mary's	102.2
Caroline	93.1
Calvert	83.2
Charles	80.4
Washington	60.0
Garrett	59.9
Cecil	58.3
Kent	53.2
Frederick	49.9
Talbot	47.9
Anne Arundel	46.5
Queen Anne's	45.2
Grand Total	40.3
Prince George's	35.2
Carroll	31.4
Dorchester	31.1
Baltimore	30.2
Harford	29.0
Allegany	26.5
Howard	21.0
Somerset	16.2
Montgomery	12.5
Worcester	-3.9
Wicomico	-17.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>40.4</b>

# Hemorrhagic Disease



**Questions?**

**2023 WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION  
ANNUAL SCHEDULE AND MONTHLY DRAFT AGENDA**

**JANUARY 18, 2023 - VIRTUAL**

- Annual Election of the Chair and Vice Chair (Group)
- Proposed Migratory Game Bird Seasons and Bag Limits (Bill Harvey and Josh Homyack)
- 2023 Legislative Session Update (Paul Peditto)

**FEBRUARY 15, 2023 - VIRTUAL**

- Migratory Game Bird Proposals Update (Bill Harvey and Josh Homyack)
- 2023 Legislative Session Update (Paul Peditto)

**MARCH 15, 2023 – IN PERSON**

- Migratory Game Bird Proposals – Commission’s Vote Required (Bill Harvey and Josh Homyack)
- Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee Report (Bill Harvey)
- 2023 Legislative Session Update (Paul Peditto)
- Call for Conservationist, Employee, and Farmer of the Year Nominations (Group Discussion)

**APRIL 19, 2023 - VIRTUAL**

- 2023 Legislative Session Outcome (Paul Peditto)
- WAC Legislative Concepts Review (Group Discussion)

**MAY 17, 2023- NO MEETING SCHEDULED**

**JUNE 21, 2023 – IN PERSON**

- Wildlife and Heritage Service FY23 and FY24 Budget Update (TBD)
- WHS Administration Update (TBD)

**JULY 19, 2023 - NO MEETING SCHEDULED**

**AUGUST 16, 2023 - VIRTUAL**

- Natural Heritage Program Update (Jonathan McKnight)
- Wildlife Diversity Advisory Committee (Jonathan McKnight)
- WHS Information and Education Program Update (Chris Markin)

**SEPTEMBER 20, 2023 – FIELD DAY OR BUSINESS MEETING OR NO MEETING**

**OCTOBER 18, 2023 - VIRTUAL**

- WHS Regional Operations Program Update (Harry Spiker)
- Migratory Game Bird Status Update (Josh Homyack)
- Internal Bi-Annual Game Species Regulations Concepts (Karina Stonesifer)
- 2024 WAC Annual Schedule and Draft Monthly Agenda – WAC Review

**NOVEMBER 15, 2023 - VIRTUAL**

- Presentation of the 2022 Conservationist and Employee of the Year Award (Paul Peditto)
- WHS Game Program Update (Karina Stonesifer and staff)

**DECEMBER 15, 2023 – NO MEETING SCHEDULED**