

FINAL REPORT

JUN - 7 2002

1999 Project Abstract

For the period ending June 30, 2001

TITLE: Enhancing Canada Goose Hunting Opportunities for Recreation and Management Purposes

PROJECT MANAGER: Ray Norrgard, Wetland Wildlife Program Leader

ORGANIZATION: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife

ADDRESS: Box 7, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4007

FUND:

LEGAL CITATION: ML 99, Chap. 231, Sec. 16, Subd. 13(K)

APPROPRIATION AMOUNT: \$

Overall Project Outcome and Results

This appropriation was for work with waterfowl conservation organizations to secure leases for goose forage areas and to increase public goose hunting opportunities. The project addressed the growing number of Canada geese and lack of suitable areas for public hunting. It provided 140 annual forage leases, improved hunting blinds on public land, and assistance to local governments to improve public hunting for Canada geese and help reduce local nuisance complaints.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

The project acquired 34 five-acre one-year forage leases on private land adjacent to public hunting areas in 2000. A change in project administration allowed enrollment of 106 (911 acres) private land leases by the Minnesota Waterfowl Association (MWA) for both forage and public hunting in 2001. The leases were marked by signs, identified in news releases, and announced on the Waterfowler.com website. Follow up landowner questionnaires in 2001 indicated that 652 individuals hunted 683 days on the sites and killed 1539 geese.

DNR improved 105 hunting blinds and constructed 12 new hunting blinds within the controlled hunting zones of Roseau River, Lac qui Parle, and Talcot Lake Wildlife Management Areas.

MWA collaborated with six local units of government to conduct special goose hunts. MWA also hosted a special meeting with communities offering special hunts to share experiences and collaborate on opportunities and challenges.

A special tour was conducted in western Minnesota provided for frank and open discussion of issues such as distribution of harvest and crop depredation by local populations of geese.

Analysis of blood samples of adult metro area geese found only 1.6% had lead levels above background, allaying any fears concerning consumption safety. This information was provided to the department of Health.

Date of Report: July 1, 2001
LCMR Final Work Program Report (Amended)

I. PROJECT TITLE: Enhancing Canada Goose Hunting Opportunities for Recreation and Management Purposes

Project Manager: Ray Norrgard, Wetland Wildlife Program Leader
Affiliation: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Section of Wildlife
Mailing Address: Box 7, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4007
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Total Biennial Project Budget:

LCMR: \$340,000.00 Amount Spent: \$288,408.41 Balance: \$ 51591.59

A. Legal Citation: ML 99, Ch. 231, Sec. 16, Subd. 13(K)

Appropriation Language: \$340,000 is from the future resources fund to the commissioner of natural resources to work with waterfowl conservation organizations to secure leases for goose forage areas and to increase public goose hunting opportunities.

B. Status of Match Requirement: No match required

II. and III FINAL PROJECT SUMMARY:

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IV. OUTLINE OF PROJECT RESULTS:

Result 1: Canada Goose Forage Leases The purpose of these leases was to enhance public hunting opportunities in areas where geese have created nuisance or crop depredation problems. Initial delays were encountered due to reluctance of DU legal staff to approve lease agreement forms. A total of 34 five-acre forage leases were completed the second year. Due to legal concerns by DU no hunting was allowed on the leases, however, hunting did take place on adjacent public lands. Result 1 was adopted by MWA after DU withdrew from the project. The next year 106 forage leases, totaling 911 acres in 15 counties were available for public hunting. The areas were appropriately signed, advertised in local papers, and were hunted by 652

individual hunters over 683 total hunter days, resulting in a harvest of 1539 geese.

Budget: LCMR Budget: \$140,000.00 Amount Spent: \$139,000.00 Balance: \$1000.00

Result 2: Public Blinds The purpose of this appropriation was to improve hunting opportunities on public lands through the construction of additional hunting blinds. The MN DNR rebuilt and improved 105 blinds and constructed 12 new blinds in the controlled hunt zones of Roseau River, Lac qui Parle, and Talcot Lake Wildlife Management Areas. In addition, several parking lots were improved to enhance hunter access to the blinds. These improvements received high use during the hunting season. Construction of blinds fell short of the goal of 150 due to limited available staff time. As a result expenditures were considerably less than the amount appropriated.

Budget: LCMR Budget: \$130,000 Amount Spent: \$ 68,393.29 Balance: \$ 61,067.00

Result 3: Controlled Hunts The purpose of this appropriation was to improve public hunting opportunities where Canada geese have created nuisance problems in urban areas. MWA provided support to two urban communities to hold four special hunts in the fall of 1999. Support included publicizing the hunts, soliciting applicants, conducting drawings, mailing permits, and conducting workshops. Six blinds were purchased as well. Work was expanded to six communities for special hunts the next year. A special meeting was hosted in January, 2001 to bring together urban communities and organizations participating in special hunts. The event allowed participants to share experiences, review success, and consider challenges. This meeting will provide the basis for future seminars on special hunts. Expenditures were greater than expected because the activities required a greater commitment of personnel than anticipated.

Budget: LCMR Budget: \$35,000.00 Amount Spent: \$46,877.00 Balance: \$(11,877.00)

Result 4: Information The purpose of this appropriation was to provide information to the public concerning Canada goose behavior and hunting. A special tour was conducted by MWA for DNR field and central office staff to explore goose hunting and management issues. Negotiations were conducted to create a goose hunting video but were ultimately withdrawn due to projected costs. Notices were placed in local papers to advertise goose hunting opportunities created under result 1. Analysis of blood samples of adult metro geese were conducted to answer questions concerning safety of consumption. Only 1.6% were found to contain blood levels above background. This information was provided to the Department of Health. Work on a web site was initiated by MWA but was not completed before the end of the project. Some savings were realized due to the realization that accomplishments would fall short of the goal.

Budget: LCMR Budget: \$35,000.00 Amount Spent: \$34,138.12 Balance: \$861.88

V. **DISSEMINATION:** See result 4 above.

VI. **CONTEXT:**

- A. **Significance:** The issue of goose overpopulation is growing in the upper Midwest. Urban flocks pose an existing problem in Minnesota, and there are growing complaints about goose flocks associated with major state wildlife management areas. In addition, experience in the Dakotas and Canadian provinces indicates that snow and blue goose populations are on the rise and could eventually pose problems in Minnesota.
- B. **Budget Context:** The majority of the public funding for public blind development has been on major wildlife management areas and funded through general funds and fee accounts in the Division of Fish and Wildlife. This project will work with ongoing Division of Fish and Wildlife acquisition programs to ensure acquisitions address this problem.

1. Budget: (See Attachment A for breakdown by Result)

Personnel

\$23,766.22

MWA Staff Salaries 489 hrs @\$30/hr=\$14,658.74

DU Staff Salaries 225 hrs @\$30/hr=\$6745.26

DNR Laborer 189 hours @ \$12.50/hr=\$2362.46

Contracts	\$224,144.22
Other (<i>travel, supplies, legal</i>)	\$40,497.97
Office Supplies	\$1,041.26
Blind Supplies	\$25,579.80
Other Supplies and Equipment	\$9699.57
Direct Operating Costs	\$2856.00
Printing	\$300.78
Legal Fees for Lease Development	\$500.00
Health Risk Assessment Supplies	\$520.56
TOTAL:	\$288,408.41

2. Budget Detail: see Attachment A

VII. COOPERATION: Ducks Unlimited (DU) and Minnesota Waterfowl Association completed Result 1 and the Minnesota Waterfowl Association (MWA) completed Results 3 and 4. The project was done in cooperation with the Division of Wildlife, Department of Natural Resources, which was responsible for Result 2, and a portion of result 4.

VIII. LOCATION: This is a statewide project, with concentrations near the Twin Cities, Fergus Falls, Grand Rapids and major wildlife management areas.

Attachment A: Deliverable Products and
Related Budget (Amended)

LCMR Project Biennial Budget

Budget Item	Result 1 Forage Leases	Result 2 Public Blinds	Result 3 Controlled Hunts	Result 4 Information
Wages Salaries & Benefits ¹				
MWA Staff Salary @\$30/hr	\$1,958.74		\$6700.00	\$6,000.00
DU Staff Salary @\$30/hr	\$6745.26			
DNR Technical/Laborer @ \$20/hr		\$207.76		\$2154.46
Space Rental				
Printing and Advertising				
Communications, Telephone, Mail, etc.				
Contracts				
Professional/technical ²	\$40754.74	\$34544.34	\$35844.92	\$25,000.22
Other Contracts	\$88,000.00			
Local Automobile Mileage				
Other Travel Expenses in MN				
Travel Outside MN				
Office Supplies	\$1041.26			
Other Supplies		\$25,579.80	\$4332.08	\$520.56
Tools and Equipment		\$5205.39		\$162.32
Office Equipment and Computers				
Other Capital Equipment				
Other Direct Operating Costs ³		\$2856.00		
Land Acquisition				
Land Rights Acquisition				
Buildings or Other Land Improvement				
Legal Fees ⁴	\$500.00			
COLUMN TOTAL	\$139,000.00	\$68,393.29	\$46,877.00	\$34138.12

¹ Will not supplant existing funding for DNR positions.

² Subtotals include mileage and expenses incurred as part of the contract. Contracts under Result 3 exceeded expectations due to the need for additional help asked for by local units of government.

³ Special local contracts and communications expenses related to blind construction.