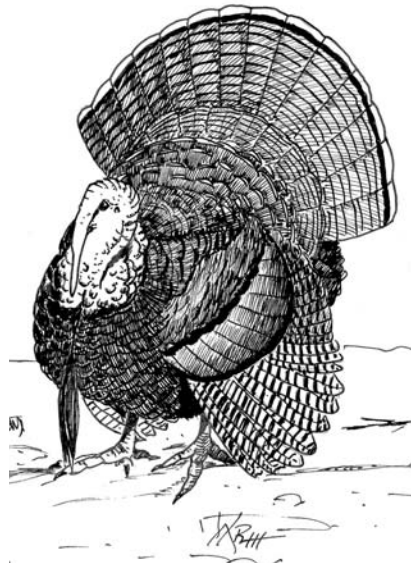


2007 SPRING TURKEY HARVEST REPORT



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Introduction

In Minnesota, monitoring wild turkey harvest is an important component of population management, which includes setting permit levels for subsequent seasons. Wild turkey populations, permit levels available for the spring season, and harvest have all increased substantially since Minnesota's first modern hunting season in 1978. Spring harvest is affected by a variety of factors including wild turkey population size, harvest pressure, access to land for hunting, interference by other hunters, and weather conditions during the spring hunting season.

Methods

Spring turkey hunting opportunities are now available in approximately half of Minnesota (Figure 1). The 2007 spring turkey season took place from 18 April through 31 May (6, 5-day time periods and 2, 7-day time periods). An archery permit was offered the last 2 time periods in any permit area with at least 50 permits per time period. Spring turkey hunters are required to register their bird at a designated registration station within 24 hours of harvest. During registration, sex, age, and harvest data are recorded.

Results

A total of 52,566 applications were received for the 33,976 available permits (Table 1). The chance of being drawn for a permit varies by permit area (PA) and time period selected by the hunter. There were 28,320 total regular permits and 3,072 archery permits issued. Surplus permits after the initial lottery drawing accounted for 8% (2,237) of regular permit sales.

A total of 9,412 turkeys were registered in spring 2007 compared to 8,241 in 2006 (Table 1, Figure 2). Overall hunter success was 33.2%, slightly higher than last year (29.6%) and slightly higher than the 5-year average of 32.0%. The highest harvest occurred in PA 349 where 592 turkeys were registered (Table 2). Most PAs (80%) showed increased ($n = 50$) or identical ($n = 3$) harvests from 2006. Hunter success by PA ranged from 9.4% (PA 456) to 75.0% (PA 422; Table 2). Hunters in the first 2 time periods had the highest success rates (44.1% and 39.5%, respectively), with lower success rates in subsequent time periods, following the 5-year trend (Table 3).

Youth hunts were included in this year's harvest report with 53 turkeys registered. Previous reports have not included the number of turkeys registered during youth hunts. Persons participating in youth wild turkey hunts must be at least 12 years of age and under 18 years of age by the beginning hunt date. Youth hunt permittees may hunt in open PAs and special seasons as designated by the commissioner. This year youth hunt seasons took place from 14 April through 20 May (6, 2-day time periods) (Table 3). There were 160 total youth hunt permits issued with an overall youth hunter success of 33.1%.

Discussion

Total harvest for spring 2007 (9,412) was slightly higher than spring 2006 (8,241). The increase occurred from increased harvests in all time periods compared to 2006. Weather conditions for spring hunting in 2007 were generally good, with rainy spells in the 7th and 8th time period (G and H), and temperatures above average. Hunters did comment on rain and wind causing problems in 26 PAs during the first 4 seasons from a survey of Spring 2007 turkey hunters.

Table 1. Spring and fall wild turkey applications, permits, and harvest in Minnesota, 1978-2007.

Year	Spring Applications	Spring Permits Available	Spring Permits Issued	% of Available Issued	Spring Harvest	% Spring Hunter Success ^a	Fall Applications	Fall Permits Available	Fall Harvest
1978	10,740	420	411	97.9	94	22.9	-	-	-
1979	11,116	840	827	98.5	116	14.0	-	-	-
1980	9,613	1,200	1,191	99.3	98	8.2	-	-	-
1981	8,398	1,500	1,437	95.8	113	7.9	-	-	-
1982	7,223	2,000	1,992	99.6	106	5.3	-	-	-
1983	8,153	2,100	2,079	99.0	116	5.6	-	-	-
1984	7,123	3,000	2,837	94.6	178	6.3	-	-	-
1985	5,662	2,750	2,449	89.1	323	13.2	-	-	-
1986	5,715	2,500	2,251	90.0	333	14.8	-	-	-
1987	6,361	2,700	2,520	93.3	520	20.6	-	-	-
1988	8,402	3,000	2,994	99.8	674	22.5	-	-	-
1989	13,007	4,000	3,821	95.5	930	24.3	-	-	-
1990	14,326	6,600	6,126	92.8	1,709	27.9	4,522	1,000	326
1991	15,918	9,170	8,607	93.9	1,724	20.0	2,990	2,200	552
1992	16,401	9,310	9,051	97.2	1,691	18.7	2,782	2,200	588
1993	17,800	9,625	9,265	96.3	2,082	22.5	3,186	2,400	605
1994	19,853	9,940	9,479	95.4	1,975	20.8	3,124	2,500	601
1995	21,345	9,975	9,550	95.7	2,339	24.5	3,685	2,500	648
1996	23,757	12,131	10,983	90.5	2,841	25.9	4,453	2,500	685
1997	25,958	12,530	11,610	92.7	3,302	28.4	4,574	2,580	698
1998	29,727	14,035	13,229	94.3	4,361	33.0	4,526	2,710	828
1999	39,957	18,360	16,387	89.3	5,132	31.3	5,354	2,890	865
2000	42,022	20,160	18,661	92.6	6,154	33.0	5,263	3,090	735
2001	41,048	22,936	21,404	93.3	6,383	29.8	4,501	2,870	629
2002	42,415	24,136	22,607	93.7	6,516	28.8	5,180	3,790	594
2003	44,415	25,016	22,770	91.0	7,666	33.7	5,264	3,870	889
2004	48,059	27,600	25,261	91.5	8,434	33.4	5,878	4,380	758
2005	49,181	31,748	27,638	87.1	7,800	28.2	4,542	4,410	681
2006	45,704	32,624	27,876	85.4	8,241	29.6	4,167	4,290	618
2007 ^b	52,566	33,976	28,320	83.4	9,412	33.2	-	-	-

^a Success rate not adjusted for non-participants.

^b Youth hunts included in 2007 data only.

Table 2. Spring wild turkey harvest and hunter success rates by permit area in Minnesota, 2007.

Permit Area	Permits Available	Permits Issued ^a	Registered Harvest	% Hunter Success (2007) ^b	% Hunter Success (3-5 Yr Ave) ^c
157	160	140	63	45.0	38.7 (4)
159	40	40	18	45.0	36.4 (4)
213 ^d	360	329	143	43.5	NA
214 ^e	200	172	63	36.6	37.9 (4)
215 ^e	600	516	241	46.7	40.9 (5)
218 ^d	560	506	272	53.8	NA
219 ^e	360	314	110	35.0	30.0 (5)
221	200	168	90	53.6	52.3 (5)
222	120	110	65	59.1	52.3 (3)
223	680	586	176	30.0	34.9 (5)
225	1,000	850	270	31.8	26.8 (5)
227	600	512	208	40.6	38.5 (5)
228	400	351	157	44.7	42.8 (5)
229 ^e	280	240	70	29.2	23.9 (5)
235	120	118	48	40.7	39.0 (5)
236	1,000	892	327	36.7	39.0 (5)
239 ^e	720	642	278	43.3	44.1 (5)
240 ^e	560	494	213	43.1	39.0 (5)
244	280	225	76	33.8	30.2 (5)
248	80	102	51	50.0	47.1 (4)
249	200	172	67	39.0	29.6 (5)
337	440	377	154	40.8	35.4 (5)
338	680	560	221	39.5	33.3 (5)
339	640	540	189	35.0	35.3 (5)
341	1,800	1543	540	35.0	34.3 (5)
342	1,800	1374	392	28.5	26.3 (5)
343	1,320	1159	478	41.2	40.5 (5)
344	1,000	832	244	29.3	25.1 (5)
345	1,400	1014	218	21.5	20.3 (5)
346	2,600	1861	434	23.3	24.1 (5)
347	1,200	1019	294	28.9	26.7 (5)
348	1,400	1190	319	26.8	25.4 (5)
349	3,400	2626	592	22.5	23.7 (5)
412 ^d	200	180	80	44.4	NA
416	80	72	29	40.3	40.2 (5)
417 ^d	360	324	120	37.0	NA
420	56	46	18	39.1	42.7 (4)
422	40	28	21	75.0	50.5 (5)
424	40	32	13	40.6	46.2 (3)
425	480	431	164	38.1	40.3 (4)
426	40	34	8	23.5	19.9 (5)
427	80	69	21	30.4	35.2 (5)
428	120	109	50	45.9	38.9 (5)
431	40	39	20	51.3	50.8 (5)

Permit Area	Permits Available	Permits Issued^a	Registered Harvest	% Hunter Success (2007)^b	% Hunter Success (2-5 Yr Ave)^c
433	40	37	21	56.8	50.8 (4)
440	600	517	154	29.8	33.4 (5)
442	1,280	1114	352	31.6	34.1 (5)
443	600	531	175	33.0	30.2 (5)
446	40	36	14	38.9	42.0 (3)
447	40	28	11	39.3	33.0 (3)
448	56	53	33	62.3	58.3 (4)
449	56	55	23	41.8	49.3 (4)
450	56	47	17	36.2	32.1 (5)
451	56	51	30	58.8	56.9 (5)
454	40	34	10	29.4	31.4 (3)
456	40	32	3	9.4	7.1 (3)
457	40	36	19	52.8	37.2 (5)
458	56	33	10	30.3	35.9 (3)
459	200	172	36	20.9	26.6 (5)
461	720	619	239	38.6	36.4 (5)
462	800	693	263	38.0	36.8 (5)
463	160	148	61	41.2	36.0 (5)
464	240	211	83	39.3	31.2 (5)
465	280	229	61	26.6	27.5 (5)
466	520	434	93	21.4	34.2 (5)
467	320	272	70	25.7	33.5 (5)
Unknown			9		
Total	33,976	28,320	9,412	33.2	

^a 3,072 permits were issued to archery hunters and not included in these figures.

^b Success rate not adjusted for non-participants.

^c Number in parenthesis equals the number of years data was available.

^d New permit area or boundary changes.

^e Permit areas with name changes.

Table 3. Spring wild turkey hunter success by time period in Minnesota, 2007.

Time Period	Permits Issued	Registered Harvest	% Hunter Success (2007) ^a	% Hunter Success (5 Yr Ave) ^a
A) April 18-22	3,863	1,703	44.1	42.2
B) April 23-27	3,713	1,467	39.5	40.4
C) April 28-May 2	3,831	1,191	31.1	31.2
D) May 3-7	3,680	1,094	29.7	27.2
E) May 8-12	3,746	1,227	32.8	33.3
F) May 13-17	3,172	920	29.0	29.7
G) May 18-24	3,324	1,012	30.4	24.4
H) May 25-31	2,831	745	26.3	26.0
Youth Hunt				
U) May 19-20	1	0	0.0	-
V) May 12-13	7	1	14.3	-
W) May 5-6	3	0	0.0	-
X) April 28-29	17	0	0.0	-
Y) April 21-22	124	47	37.9	-
Z) April 14-15	8	5	62.5	-
Total	28,320	9,412	33.2	32.0

^a Success rate not adjusted for non-participants.

Figure 1. Turkey permit areas open to spring hunting in Minnesota, 2007.

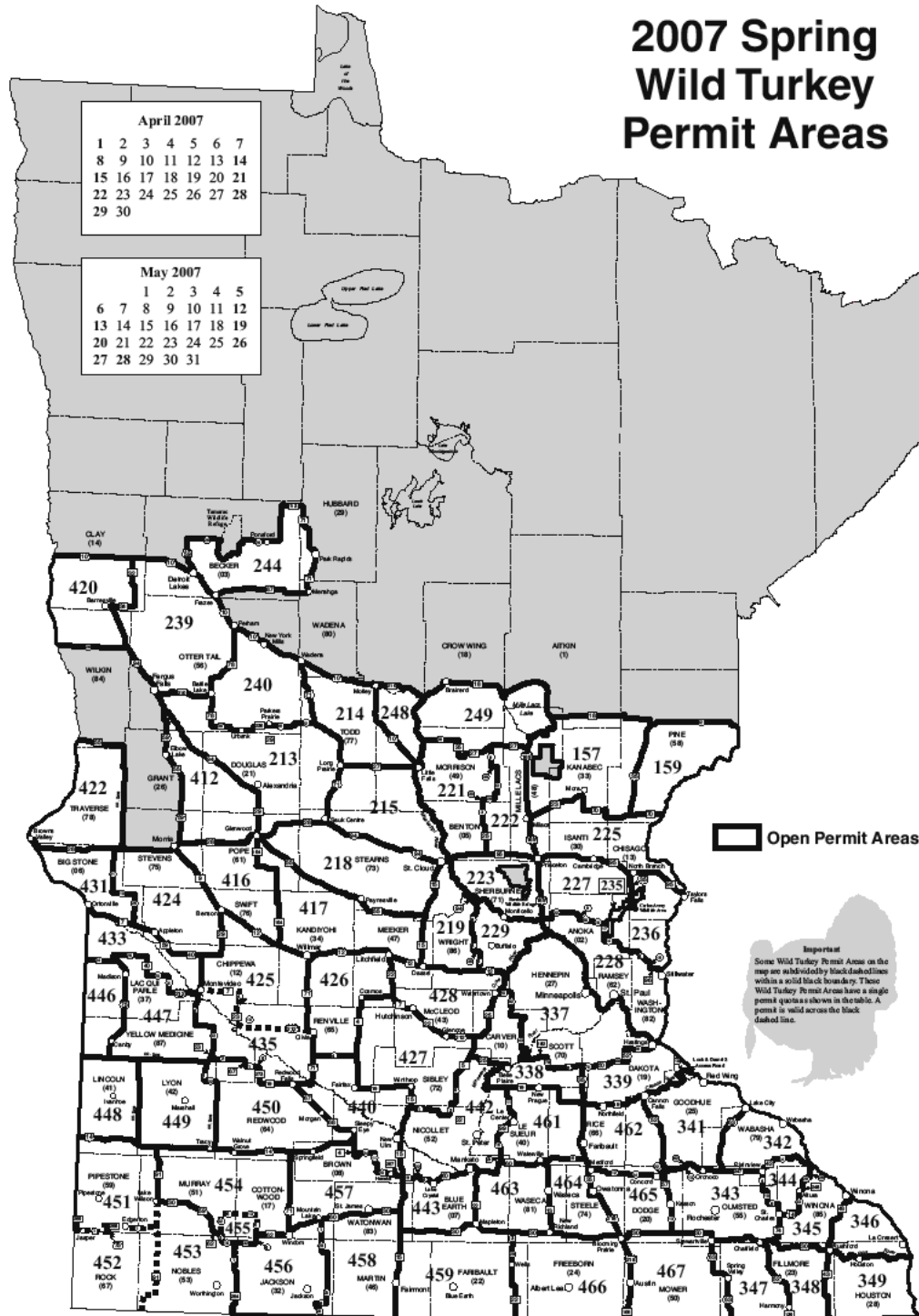


Figure 2. Total harvest and hunter success rates for the spring wild turkey hunting season in Minnesota from 1978 to 2007.

