



Minnesota's Wild Turkey Harvest - 2015

This report summarizes the fall 2014 and spring 2015 Minnesota wild turkey harvest information. The fall turkey season was 30 days in length (October 4- November 2) and allowed for an unlimited number of hunters to take one wild turkey of either sex. The spring turkey season regulated harvest and distributed hunting pressure by allocating permits across 12 permit areas (Figure 1) and 8 time periods using a quota system for the first 3 time periods. The first time period began on April 15, and the final time period concluded on May 28.

During spring, adult hunters interested in pursuing turkeys for the first 3 time periods were required to apply for a permit through a lottery system but youth hunters were able purchase a permit over-the-counter, and hunt in any permit area. Preference for this lottery system was determined by the number of years a valid but unsuccessful application had been submitted since last receiving a permit. Hunters could apply individually or in a group of up to 4 hunters. Successful applicants were notified through U.S. Mail and unsuccessful applicants were awarded a preference point.

Alternatively, firearms hunters could simply purchase a permit for one of the last 5 seasons, while persons with an archery turkey license could hunt the last 5 time periods in their entirety. The goal of this system is to provide quality turkey hunting opportunities by managing hunter interference rates while allowing hunters to take the harvestable surplus of turkeys.

Fall 2014 Turkey Season

The number of permits issued to hunters increased slightly from 8139 permits in 2013 to 8,339 in 2014 (Table 1, Figure 2). Hunters still needed to select and hunt within one of the twelve permit areas. There were 1,137 turkeys harvested during fall 2014, which was a 5.5 percent increase from 2013 (Table 1). Hunter success rates in 2014 remained similar to 2013 (13.6% vs. 13.2% respectively), and remain below the 5-year average (16%).

Spring 2015 Turkey Season

There were 46,675 permits issued during the spring season, including 13,085 general lottery and landowner permits, 11,333 youth permits, 5,052 archery permits, and 17,205 surplus over-the-counter permits (Table 6). The number of youth permits declined from 2014 by 7 percent (-846), while archery permits increased by three percent (153). The total number of permits purchased decline from 2014 by three percent (1529). Hunters registered 11,734 turkeys (Table 3 and 5), which was the third highest harvest recorded and above the 5-year average (10,990) (Figure 3). Success rates by license type are found in Table 6. The winter of 2014-15 was mild compared to the previous two winters,

and likely was not a significant mortality factor beyond normal winter mortality. Spring weather began very favorably, and the A season harvest was near a record. However wet and sometimes cold weather hampered several of the other seasons, likely depressing effort and harvest.

Table 1. Permits available and issued, applicants, registered harvest, and hunter success rates for fall wild turkey seasons 1990 – 2014, Minnesota.

Year	Permits available	Applicants	Permits issued	Registered harvest	Hunter success (%) ^a
1990	1,000	4,522	951	326	34
1991	2,200	2,990	2,020	552	27
1992	2,200	2,782	2,028	588	29
1993	2,400	3,186	2,094	605	29
1994	2,500	3,124	2,106	601	29
1995	2,500	3,685	2,125	648	30
1996	2,500	4,453	2,289	685	30
1997	2,580	4,574	2,378	698	29
1998	2,710	4,526	2,483	828	33
1999	2,890	5,354	2,644	865	33
2000	3,090	5,263	2,484	735	30
2001	2,870	4,501	2,262	629	28
2002	3,790	5,180	2,945	594	20
2003	3,870	5,264	2,977	889	30
2004	4,380	5,878	3,277	758	23
2005	4,410	4,542	2,978	681	23
2006	4,290	4,167	2,802	618	22
2007	4,490	4,464	2,837	695	24
2008	7,560	5,834	4,981	1,187	24
2009	9,330	7,738	5,019	1,163	23
2010	10,430	6,869	6,607	1,353	20
2011	10,430	3,538	5,382	953	18
2012	Unlimited	N/A	10,779	1,753	16
2013	Unlimited	N/A	8,193	1,078	13
2014	Unlimited	N/A	8,339	1,137	14

^a Success rates not adjusted for non-participation.

Table 2. Permits issued, registered harvest, and hunter success during the 2015 Minnesota spring wild turkey season.

Permit Area	Regular Permits Issued ^a	Total Registered Harvest ^b	Regular Gun Harvest ^c	Regular Gun Success Rates
501	8124	3004	2480	30.5%
502	725	228	185	25.5%
503	3323	1432	1072	32.3%
504	797	322	243	30.5%
505	2665	1001	972	36.5%
506	1053	388	266	25.3%
507	7235	2960	2143	29.6%
508	3476	1220	879	25.3%
509	246	141	81	32.9%
510	2382	966	660	27.7%
511	134	38	27	20.1%
512	31	12	8	25.8%

^a Permits issued for the Camp Ripley disabled veterans hunt, archery, and youth permits were not included.

^b Total harvest for all license types. Twenty-two turkeys were registered without a permit area designation.

^c All lottery, military, and surplus permit harvest, excluding youth and archery licenses.

Table 3. Permits available, permits issued, registered harvest, and relative success rates from 1978 – 2015 for all spring wild turkey hunting seasons in Minnesota.

Year	Permits			Registered harvest	Success (%) ^a
	Available	Issued	Issued (%)		
1978	420	411	97.9	94	23
1979	840	827	98.5	116	14
1980	1,200	1,191	99.3	98	8
1981	1,500	1,437	95.8	113	8
1982	2,000	1,992	99.6	106	5
1983	2,100	2,079	99.0	116	6
1984	3,000	2,837	94.6	178	6
1985	2,750	2,449	89.1	323	13
1986	2,500	2,251	90.0	333	15
1987	2,700	2,520	93.3	520	21
1988	3,000	2,994	99.8	674	23
1989	4,000	3,821	95.5	930	24
1990	6,600	6,126	92.8	1,709	28
1991	9,170	8,607	93.9	1,724	20
1992	9,310	9,051	97.2	1,691	19
1993	9,625	9,265	96.3	2,082	23
1994	9,940	9,479	95.4	1,975	21
1995	9,975	9,550	95.7	2,339	25
1996	12,131	10,983	90.5	2,841	26
1997	12,530	11,610	92.7	3,302	28
1998	14,035	13,229	94.3	4,361	33
1999	18,360	16,387	89.3	5,132	31
2000	20,160	18,661	92.6	6,154	33
2001	22,936	21,404	93.3	6,383	30
2002	24,136	22,607	93.7	6,516	29
2003	25,016	22,770	91.0	7,666	34
2004	27,600	25,261	91.5	8,434	33
2005	31,748	27,638	87.1	7,800	28
2006	32,624	27,876	85.4	8,241	30
2007 ^b	33,976	28,320	83.4	9,412	33
2008 ^b	37,992	31,942	84.1	10,994	34
2009 ^b	42,328	36,193	85.5	12,210	34
2010 ^b	55,982	46,548 ^c	83.0	13,467	29
2011 ^b	Unlimited	43,521 ^c	N/A	10,055	23
2012 ^b	Unlimited	38,906 ^c	N/A	11,325	29
2013 ^b	Unlimited	34,281 ^c	N/A	10,390	30
2014 ^b	Unlimited	43,305 ^c	N/A	11,447	25
2015 ^b	Unlimited	41,623 ^c	N/A	11,734	28

^a Success rates not adjusted for non-participation

^b Youth hunt data included

^c Permits issued to archery hunters were not included. There were 2,462, 3,911, 4,550, 4,899, and 5052 permits issued to archers in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015 respectively.

Table 4. Permits available and issued by license type (resident and non-resident) and time period for the spring 2015 wild turkey season, Minnesota.

Time period	Permits available	Permits issued			
		General lottery ^a	Surplus	Youth ^b	Archery ^c
A 4/15-19	5,936	5,230	8	X	
B 4/20-24	5,936	3,383	1,834	X	
C 4/25-29	5,936	4,457	782	X	
D 4/30-5/4	Unlimited	7	8,209	X	X
E 5/5-9	Unlimited	4	2,082	X	X
F 5/10-14	Unlimited	1	923	X	X
G 5/15-21	Unlimited	3	2,172	X	X
H 5/22-28	Unlimited	0	1,248	X	X
Total ^a	Unlimited	13,085	17,205	11,333	5,052

^a includes landowner licenses.

^b Youth permits were valid for all time periods.

^c Archery permits were valid for time periods D-H.

Table 5 Total harvest by time-period, spring 2015 wild turkey season, Minnesota.

Time period	Total Harvest	Percent Harvest
A	3055	26.0
B	1961	16.7
C	1888	16.1
D	2491	21.2
E	811	6.9
F	327	2.8
G	732	6.2
H	469	4.0
Total	11,734	100

Table 6. 2015 Total permits issued, harvest and success rate by type of permit.

	Total Permits Sold	Harvest	Success Rate ^a
Lottery	13,085	4,579	35
Surplus	17,205	4,251	25
Youth	11,333	2,326	21
Archery	5,052	578	11
Total	46,675	11,734	25

^a Success rates not adjusted for non-participation.

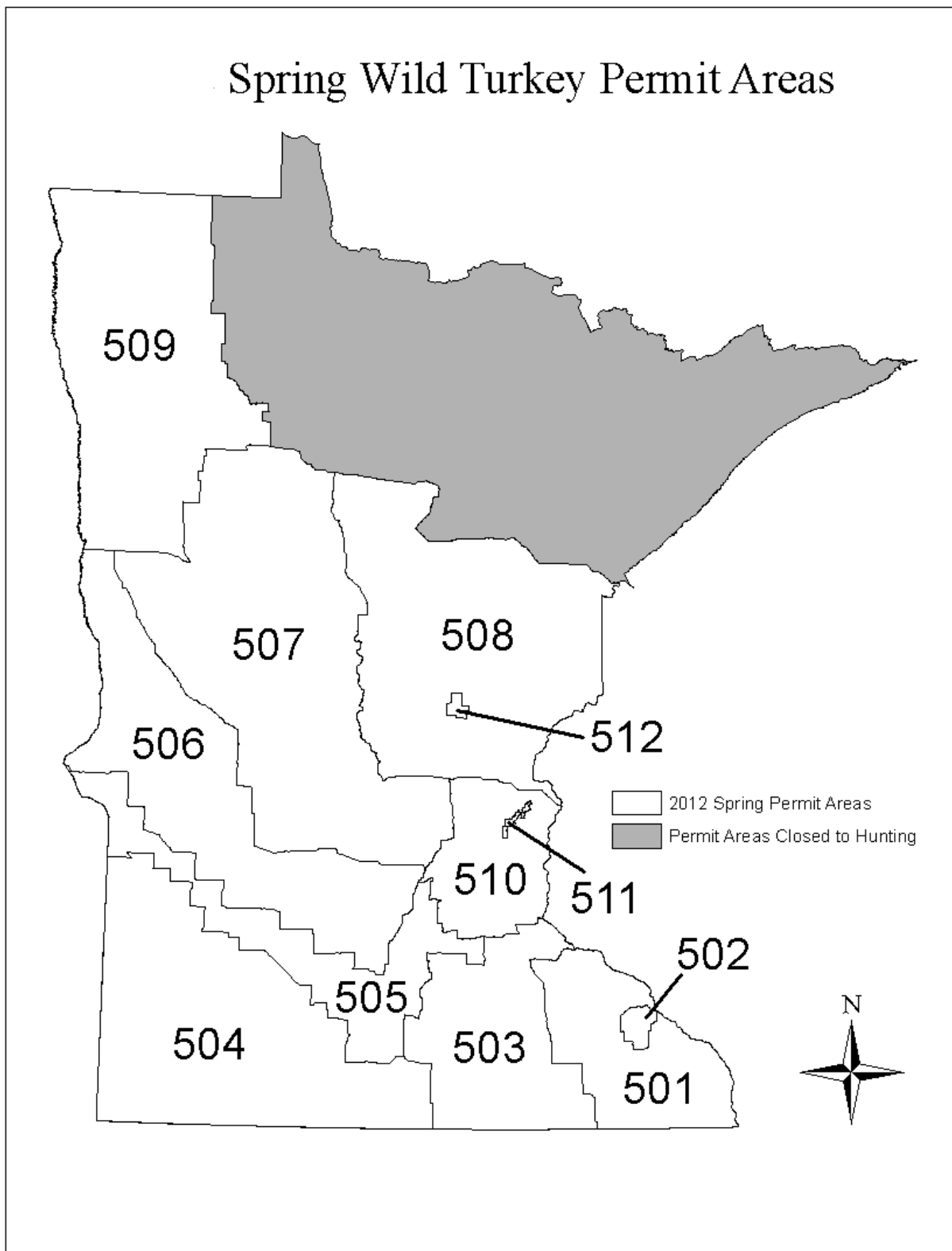


Figure 1. Permit areas open for hunting during the 2015 spring turkey hunting season, Minnesota.

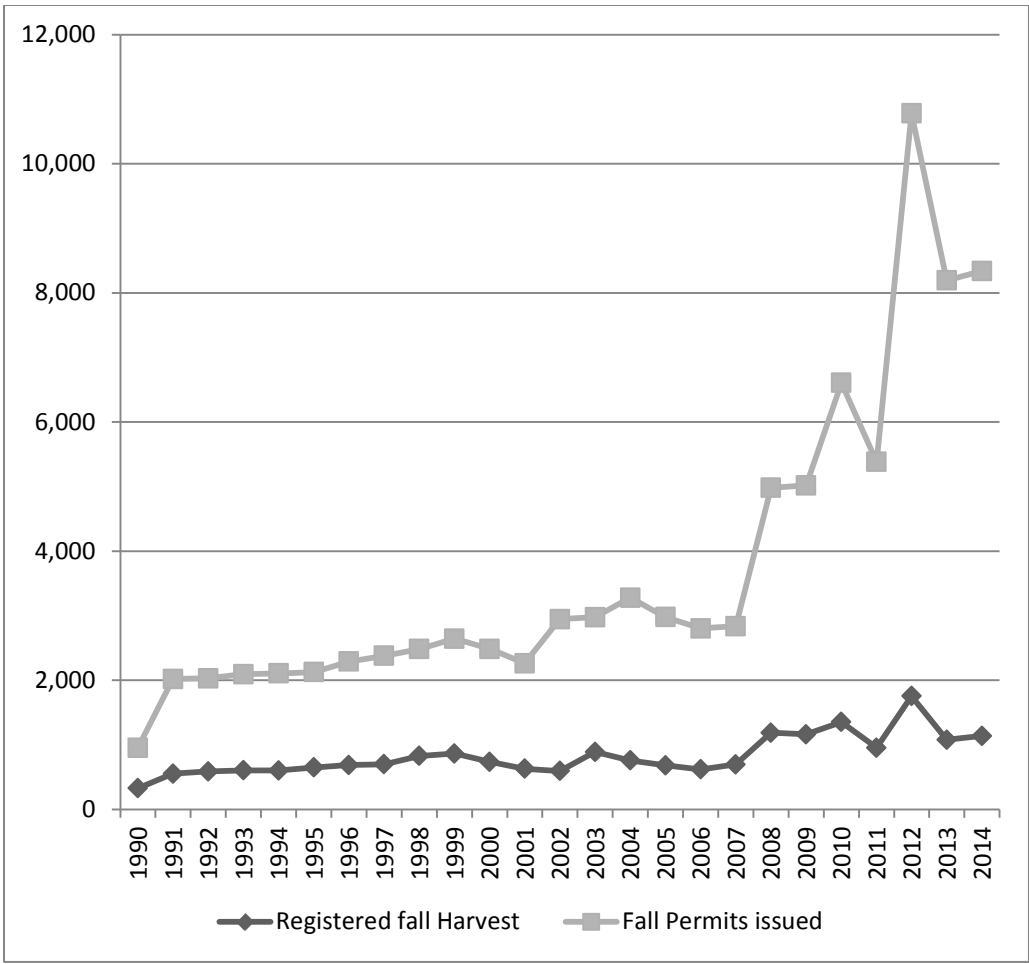


Figure 2. Permits issued and registered harvest for fall wild turkey seasons, 1990-2014, Minnesota.

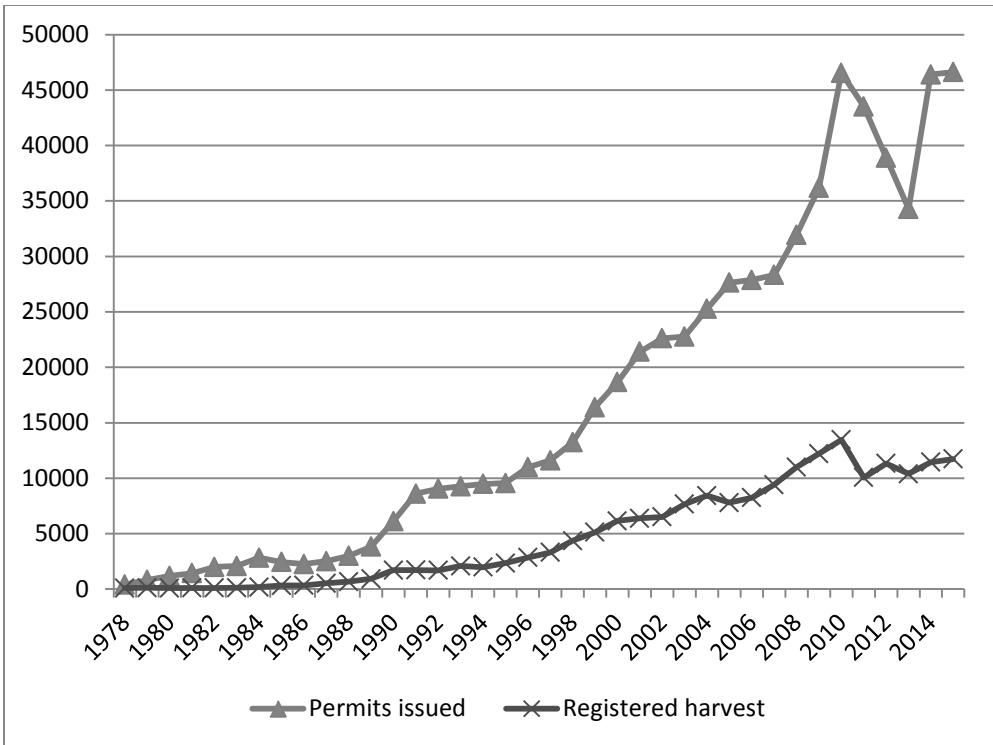


Figure 3. Permits issued and registered harvest for spring wild turkey seasons, 1978-2015, Minnesota.

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