

Minnesota's Wild Turkey Harvest Fall 2022 - Spring 2023

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Summary of Season Structure

The fall 2022 turkey season opened on October 1st and closed on October 30. An unlimited number of permits were available, and hunters could harvest a single bird of any sex, in any permit area (Figure 1). All hunters, regardless of license type (archery/firearm), could hunt the entire season.

The spring 2023 hunting season was open April 12 through May 31. Hunters were limited to harvesting a single bird: either a tom, jake, or bearded hen. Firearm hunters were restricted to hunting one of 5 week-long time periods (A-E), in addition to the final two weeks of the season (F) if they did not harvest a bird earlier. Archery and youth hunters could hunt the entire season. An unlimited number of permits were available during all time periods, except for 3 permit areas that maintained a lottery during the A-C periods (511, 512) or A-B periods (502). All hunters declared a permit area at the time of license purchase but could harvest a bird within any permit area (Figure 1).

Fall 2022 Season

Permits Issued

The number of fall turkey hunters in 2022 (8,999) was similar to the number of hunters in fall 2021 (< 1% difference; Table 1; Figure 2) and was 10% above the 10-year average (8,181). The proportion of youth hunters was consistent with previous seasons (23%).

Harvest

The fall 2022 harvest (1,285) was 3% greater than the fall 2021 harvest (Table 1). Additionally, 2022 was the second-greatest harvest since the inception of a fall hunting season in 1990 (2012; 1,752 turkeys; Figure 2). Hunter success was 14.3% which was similar to the long-term average (14.1%). Hens comprised 53% of the total harvest with jakes and toms comprising 17% and 30% of the total fall harvest, respectively. Two permit areas, 507 and 508, accounted for 51% of the total fall harvest (Table 2). These two permit areas were also the most hunted, accounting for 48% of all fall permit sales (Table 2).

Spring 2022 Season

Permits Issued

The number of permits issued across all license types in 2023 stayed relatively constant from 54,491 hunters in 2022 to 53,574 in 2023 (Tables 3 and 4, Figure 3). The number of total permits issued fell less than 2.0% in 2023. Permit sales declined only slightly across all permit categories, though the decline was greatest among archery hunters (Table 4). Still, sales remained well above average compared to years prior to 2020 (Table 4; Figure 3). All hunters had to declare a permit area in 2023 but were not restricted to harvesting a bird in the declared area. Permit sales were greatest in permit area 507 and, along with units 508 and 501, comprised approximately 60% of all permit sales (Table 5).

Harvest

During the 2023 spring turkey season, 13,659 turkeys were harvested. The harvest total increased 11% compared to 2022 and is the second highest season harvest total for the modern turkey season (since 1978; Table 4, Figure 3). Permit areas 507, 501, and 508 saw the greatest harvests and comprised roughly 60% of the total harvest (Table 5). Harvest success increased among all license holders to an average success rate of 25.5% (Table 3).

Persistent snowpack across much of the northern portion of the turkey range at the open of the turkey season led to lower harvest during the A and B periods than has been typical. In 2023, the combined A and B period harvest accounted for approximately 43% of the total spring harvest (Table 6). Collectively, A-C periods accounted for approximately 60% of all spring turkey harvest (Table 6), whereas it accounts for more than 75% of the harvest in most years. The decline in harvest during the A season was compensated by greater proportional harvest during the C and F seasons.

Tables

Table 1. Permits issued, registered harvest, and hunter success rates for the ten most recent fall wild turkey seasons in Minnesota, 2013-2022.

Year	Permits issued	Registered harvest	Hunter success (%)^a
2013	8,060	1,137	14.1%
2014	8,236	1,216	14.8%
2015	8,109	1,213	15.0%
2016	8,496	1,176	13.8%
2017	7,650	1,015	13.3%
2018	6,719	834	12.4%
2019	6,481	855	13.2%
2020	8,408	1,136	13.5%
2021	9,026	1,238	13.7%
2022	8,999	1,285	14.3%

^a Total hunter success (registered harvest divided by all permits issued). Success rates not adjusted for non-participation or unregistered harvest.

Table 2. Permits issued, registered harvest by sex, and total registered harvest during the 2022 fall wild turkey season in Minnesota.

Permit area	General permits issued ^a	Youth permits issued	Toms ^a	Jakes ^a	Hens ^a	Total registered harvest ^a
501	826	239	42	15	76	133
502	83	26	4	0	8	12
503	630	153	37	21	70	128
504	230	69	10	4	17	31
505	399	111	27	8	25	60
506	295	88	21	8	22	51
507	1,604	546	106	57	178	341
508	1,733	474	68	59	183	310
509	286	193	23	25	47	95
510	673	128	46	20	52	118
511	115	28	3	1	2	6
512	115	28	0	0	0	0
Total	6,934	2,065	387	218	680	1,285

^a Total harvest for all license types.

Table 3. Total permits issued, harvest, and hunter success rates by permit type during the spring 2023 wild turkey season in Minnesota.

	Total permits issued	Harvest	Hunter success (%) ^a
General	29,543	9,234	31.3%
Youth	12,343	2,569	20.8%
Archery	11,688	1,856	15.9%
Total	53,574	13,659	25.5%

^a Success rates (registered harvest divided by number of permits issued) not adjusted for non-participation or unregistered harvest.

Table 4. Permits issued, registered harvest, and hunter success rates for the ten most recent spring wild turkey hunting seasons in Minnesota, 2014-2023.

Year	General permits issued	Youth permits issued	Archery permits issued	Registered harvest ^a	Hunter success (%) ^b
2014 ^c	35,451	7,374	4,893	11,425	24.4%
2015 ^c	34,554	7,042	5,046	11,694	25.6%
2016 ^c	32,535	7,101	10,336	12,277	25.0%
2017 ^c	31,605	6,984	11,237	11,803	24.1%
2018 ^c	28,667	6,022	11,399	10,706	23.6%
2019	28,295	6,169	11,794	10,699	23.0%
2020	34,173	14,292	14,729	13,996	22.1%
2021	32,520	12,598	12,966	12,070	20.8%
2022	29,603	12,551	12,337	12,309	22.6%
2023	29,543	12,343	11,688	13,659	25.5%

^a Includes all license types.

^b Total hunter success (registered harvest divided by number of permits issued). Success rates not adjusted for non-participation or unregistered harvest.

^c Permits issued, registered harvest, and hunter success (%) were reviewed and adjusted to address inconsistencies in data query and previous reporting.

Table 5. Permits issued by license type and total registered harvest within each permit area during the 2023 spring wild turkey season in Minnesota^a.

Permit area	Archery permits declared	General permits declared	Youth permits declared	Total registered harvest
501	1,426	5,980	1,640	2,530
502	167	703	174	238
503	1,070	3,372	1,237	1,568
504	455	817	425	417
505	700	1,831	643	894
506	558	1,172	638	526
507	3,091	7,207	3,828	3,572
508	2,208	5,223	2,161	2,118
509	369	870	543	503
510	1,409	1,983	827	1,164
511	152	232	142	80
512	83	153	85	49
Total	11,688	29,543	12,343	13,659

^a Beginning in 2020, all hunters declared but were not restricted to harvesting a turkey in their declared permit area.

Table 6. Permits issued and harvest by license type and time period for the spring 2023 wild turkey season in Minnesota.

Time period	Archery permits issued ^a	Youth permits issued ^a	General permits issued	Registered harvest ^b	Percent of total harvest ^b
Any	11,688	12,343			
A			5,632	3,122	22.9%
B			6,196	2,721	19.9%
C			7,048	2,710	19.8%
D			5,667	2,142	15.7%
E			3,022	960	7.0%
F			1,978	2,002	14.7%

^a Archery and youth permits were valid during any time period.

^b Includes harvest from all license types.

Figures

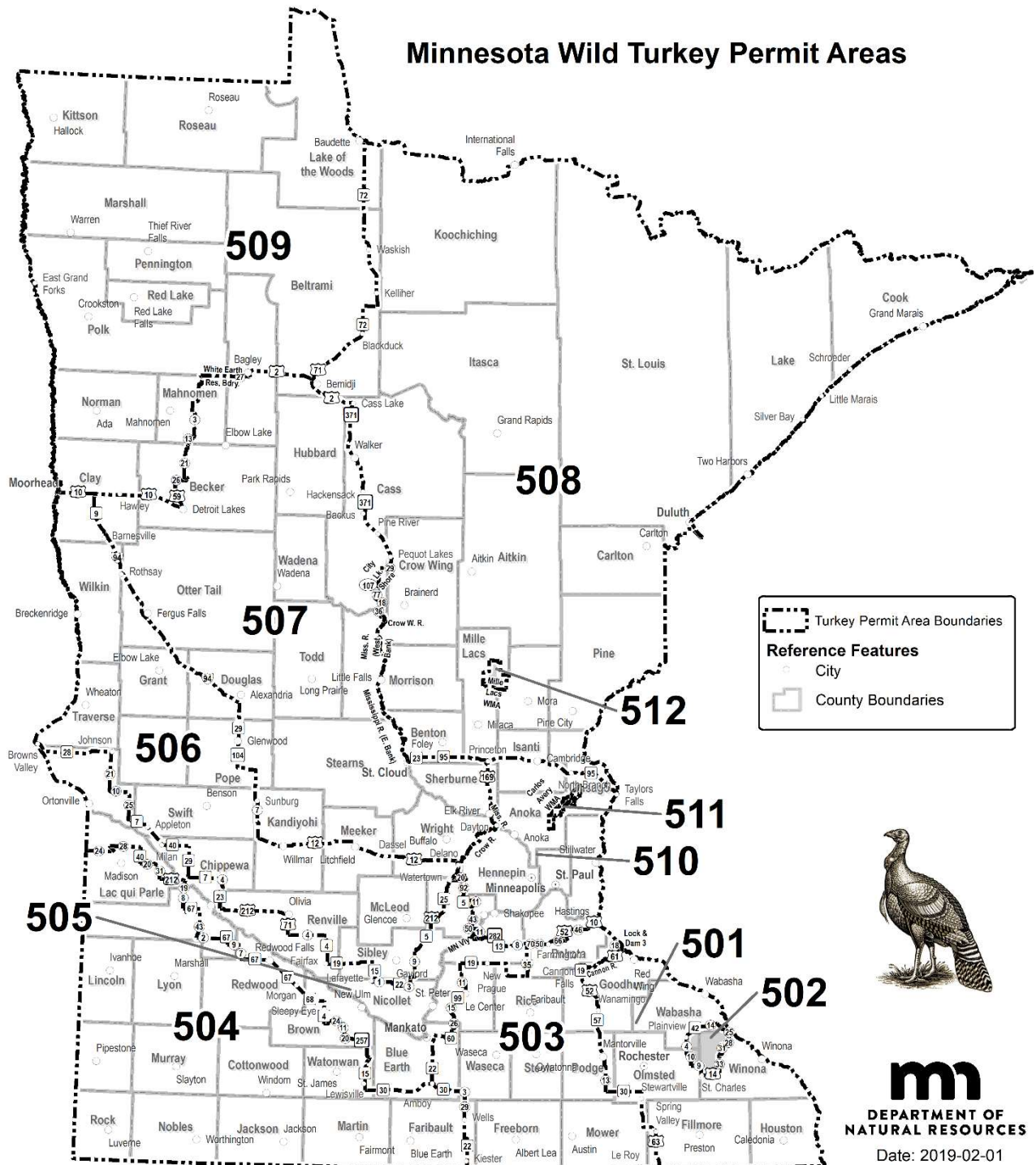


Figure 1. Permit areas open for hunting during fall 2022 and spring 2023 wild turkey seasons in Minnesota.

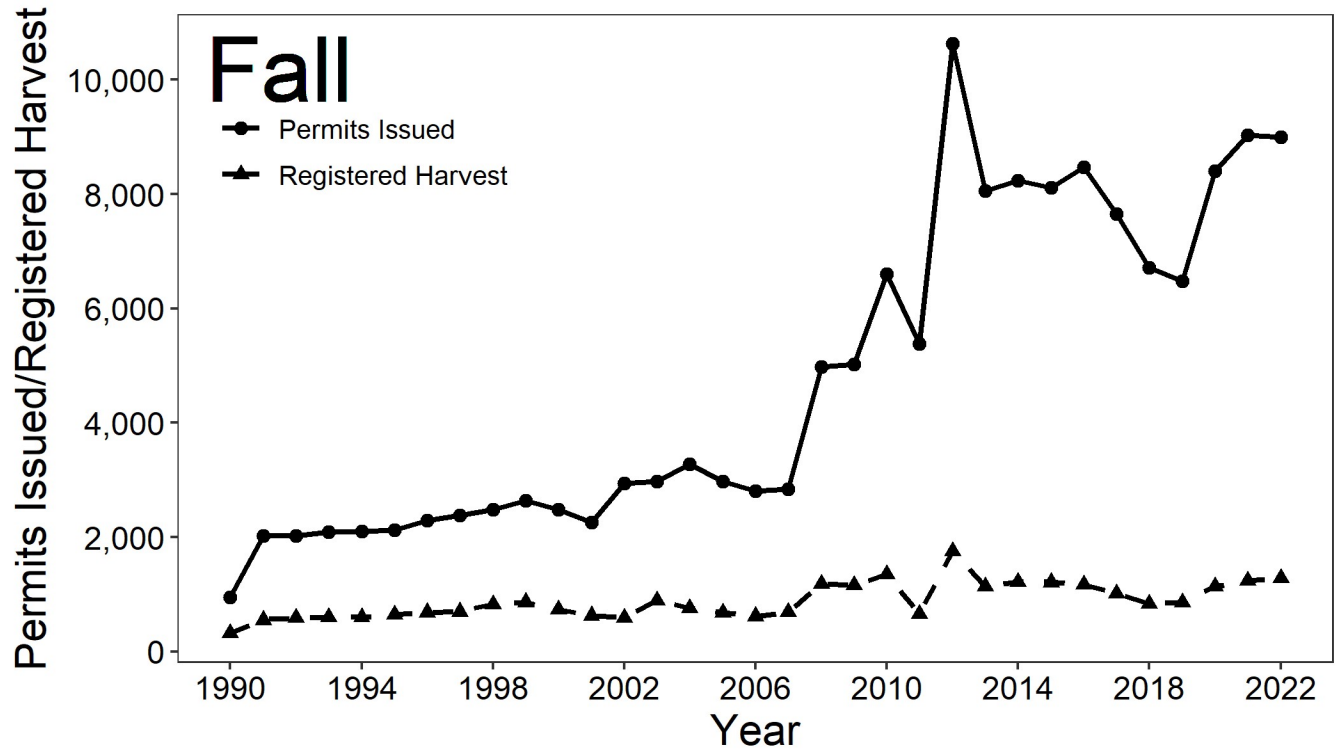


Figure 2. Permits issued and registered harvest for fall wild turkey seasons in Minnesota, 1990-2022.

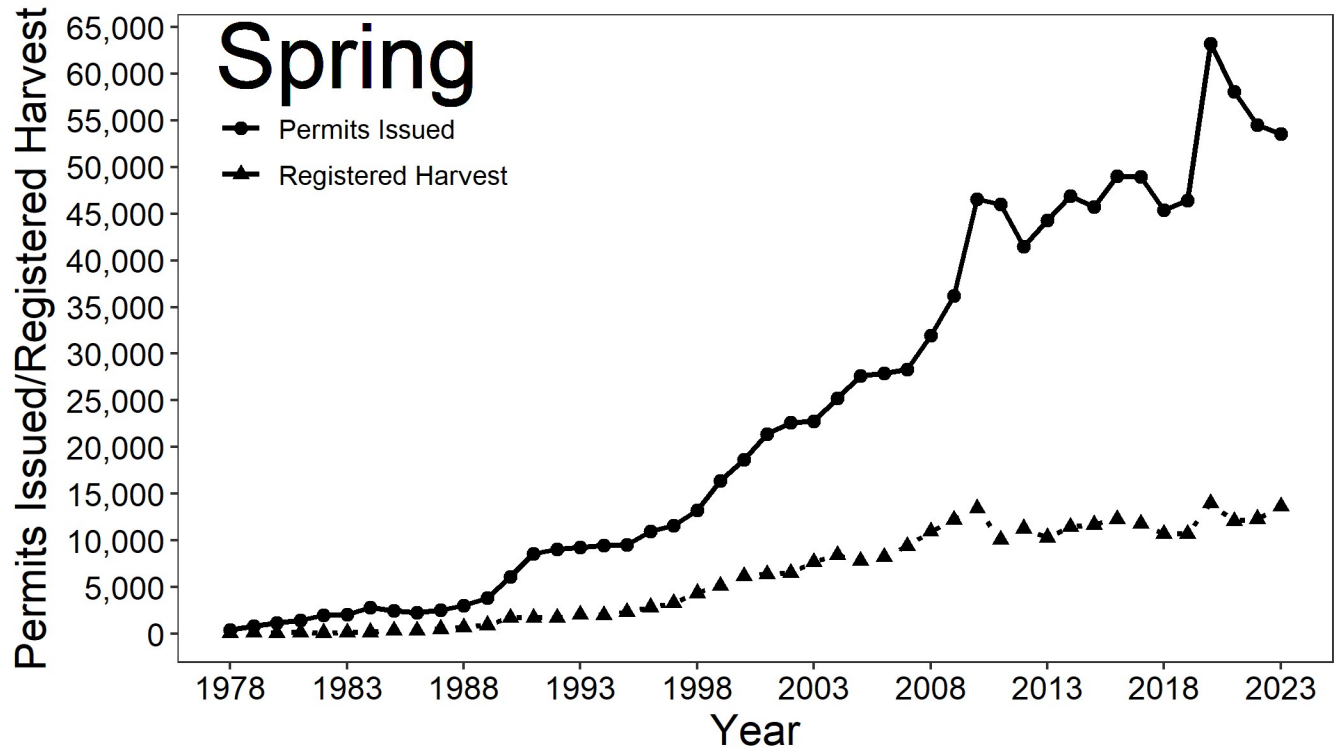


Figure 3. Permits issued and registered harvest for spring wild turkey seasons in Minnesota, 1978-2023.