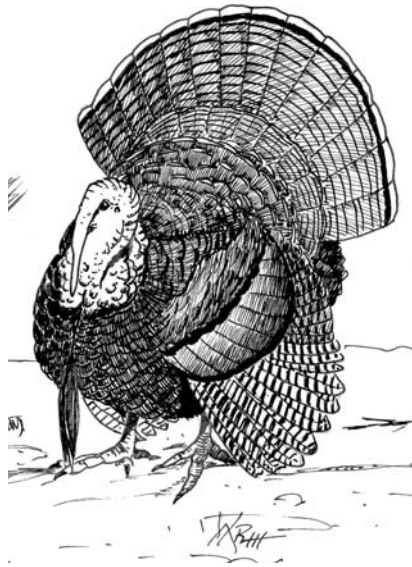


2006 FALL WILD TURKEY HARVEST REPORT



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INTRODUCTION

In Minnesota, monitoring wild turkey harvest is an important component of population management, including modeling to set permit numbers for future hunting seasons. Wild turkey populations, permit numbers available for fall hunting, and harvest have all increased since Minnesota's first fall hunting season in 1990. Fall wild turkey harvest is influenced by wild turkey population size, harvest pressure (number of permits available), and weather conditions during the fall hunting season.

METHODS

The 2006 fall turkey season took place from 18 October through 29 October (2, 5-day periods). Eight new permit areas were added this year; 32 permit areas were open for the fall season. There were 4,290 permits available for the 2006 fall wild turkey hunt with 4,167 applicants (Table 1 Figure 1). The number of permits offered this year was 120 permits lower than the 4,410 permits offered in 2005. Surplus permits were available to non-winners for under-subscribed areas. Fall turkey hunters are required to register their bird at a designated registration station within 24 hours of harvest. Information collected at registration include turkey age, sex, and date of harvest.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The 2006 registered fall wild turkey harvest was 618 birds; down from 2005 (681) and from the 5-year average of 710 (Table 1). The highest harvest occurred in permit area 341 with 79 turkeys registered (Table 2, Figure 2). Hunter success was the same as 2005 at 25%, but was below the long-term average of 32%. Season A (October 18-22) netted 59% of the harvest with 41% occurring during Season B (October 25-29).

Females comprised 58% of the overall reported harvest, with adult females accounting for 45% of the harvest (Tables 3 and 4). Juveniles made up 32% of the harvest (Table 4). This is lower than in 2005 (35%). Harvest age ratios are assumed biased by hunter preference for taking adult turkeys. Also, because age data are hunter reported, we assume that some juvenile birds are likely misclassified as adults (i.e., it is assumed that hunters are more likely to report shooting an adult).

Hunter numbers were down 176 this year reflecting a slight decrease from the 5-year average of 2,888 fall turkey hunters. Fall turkey hunting does not attract as many participants as the spring season. As more areas are opened for fall turkey hunting, it is expected that there will be reduced interference from other hunters and increased satisfaction. Hunter effort is one factor that impacts fall turkey harvest, and could have contributed to lower harvest levels in 2006.

Table 1. Fall wild turkey applications, permits, harvest and adjusted hunter success rates in Minnesota, 1990-2006.

Year	# Applicants	# Permits Available	# Permits Issued	# Turkeys Registered	Hunter Success (%) ¹
1990	4,522	1,000	951	326	38
1991	2,990	2,200	2,020	552	30
1992	2,782	2,200	2,028	588	32
1993	3,186	2,400	2,094	605	32
1994	3,124	2,500	2,106	601	32
1995	3,685	2,500	2,125	648	34
1996	4,453	2,500	2,289	685	33
1997	4,574	2,580	2,378	698	33
1998	4,526	2,710	2,483	828	37
1999	5,354	2,890	2,644	865	36
2000	5,263	3,090	2,484	735	33
2001	4,501	2,870	2,262	629	31
2002	5,180	3,790	2,945	594	22
2003	5,264	3,870	2,977	889	33
2004	5,878	4,380	3,277	758	26
2005	4,542	4,410	2,978	681	25
2006	4,167	4,290	2,802	618	25

¹ Success rates adjusted using a 10% non-participation rate based on hunter survey data.

Table 2. Fall wild turkey harvest and hunter success rates by permit area, Minnesota, 2006.

Permit Area	# Permits Available	# Permits Issued	# Turkeys Registered	Hunter Success (%)¹
228	100	73	16	22%
236	210	141	37	26%
337	100	59	13	22%
338	140	104	24	23%
339	140	83	22	27%
341	450	305	79	26%
342	350	183	34	19%
343	200	164	27	16%
344	150	121	22	18%
345	180	88	18	20%
346	300	173	35	20%
347	100	87	21	24%
348	250	174	37	21%
349	450	251	36	14%
420	10	8	3	38%
422	10	10	3	30%
425	10	9	2	22%
431	10	9	1	11%
433	10	10	0	0%
442	250	197	44	22%
443	100	69	9	13%
446	10	5	2	40%
447	10	2	0	0%
448	10	10	3	30%
449	10	9	3	33%
450	10	2	0	0%
461	200	142	38	27%
462	200	127	35	28%
464	60	25	7	28%
465	60	34	11	32%
466	120	64	23	36%
467	80	64	13	20%

¹ Success rates not adjusted for non-participants.

Table 3. Age and sex structure of fall wild turkey harvest by permit area, Minnesota, 2006.

Note: Age and sex are hunter reported and subject to error.

Permit Area	Male		Female		Unknown	Total
	Juvenile	Adult	Juvenile	Adult		
228	1	8	2	5	0	16
236	0	9	8	20	0	37
337	2	4	2	5	0	13
338	3	11	3	7	0	24
339	3	4	1	14	0	22
341	14	18	12	35	0	79
342	7	3	7	17	0	34
343	3	10	3	11	0	27
344	2	3	1	16	0	22
345	2	7	4	5	0	18
346	4	7	5	19	0	35
347	3	4	2	12	0	21
348	8	6	2	21	0	37
349	5	6	8	17	0	36
420	2	1	0	0	0	3
422	0	1	0	2	0	3
425	0	0	0	2	0	2
431	0	0	0	1	0	1
433	0	0	0	0	0	0
442	7	13	8	16	0	44
443	5	3	0	1	0	9
446	0	1	0	1	0	2
447	0	0	0	0	0	0
448	0	0	0	3	0	3
449	0	0	2	1	0	3
450	0	0	0	0	0	0
461	12	10	5	11	0	38
462	15	6	1	13	0	35
464	3	2	1	1	0	7
465	0	1	3	7	0	11
466	8	4	3	8	0	23
467	3	3	0	7	0	13
Total	112	145	83	278	0	618

Table 4. Age and sex structure of fall wild turkey harvest in Minnesota, 1990-2006.

Note: Age and sex are hunter reported and subject to error.

Year	Male			Female			Unknown Age/Sex	Total
	Juvenile	Adult	Unknown	Juvenile	Adult	Unknown		
1990	67 (21%)	83 (25%)		85 (26%)	91 (28%)			326
1991	121 (22%)	80 (15%)		211 (38%)	140 (25%)			552
1992	120 (20%)	86 (15%)		208 (35%)	174 (30%)			588
1993	110 (18%)	112 (19%)		184 (30%)	196 (32%)		3(<1%)	605
1994	105 (17%)	83 (14%)		210 (35%)	203 (34%)			601
1995	131 (20%)	136 (21%)		194 (30%)	187 (29%)			648
1996	96 (14%)	141 (20%)		224 (33%)	224 (33%)			685
1997	115 (16%)	130 (19%)		215 (31%)	238 (34%)			698
1998	152 (18%)	139 (17%)		261 (32%)	274 (33%)		2(<1%)	828
1999	141 (16%)	213 (25%)		253 (29%)	258 (30%)			865
2000	101 (14%)	175 (24%)		206 (28%)	253 (34%)			735
2001	81 (13%)	119 (19%)		178 (28%)	251 (40%)			629
2002	94 (16%)	109 (18%)	2 (<1%)	169 (28%)	205 (35%)	3 (<1%)	12 (2%)	594
2003	121 (14%)	237 (27%)		164 (18%)	347 (39%)	1 (<1%)	19 (2%)	889
2004	90 (12%)	276 (37%)		82 (11%)	296 (40%)		1 (<1%)	745
2005	103 (15%)	129 (19%)		135 (20%)	309 (45%)		5(<1%)	681
2006	112 (18%)	145 (23%)		83 (13%)	278 (45%)			618

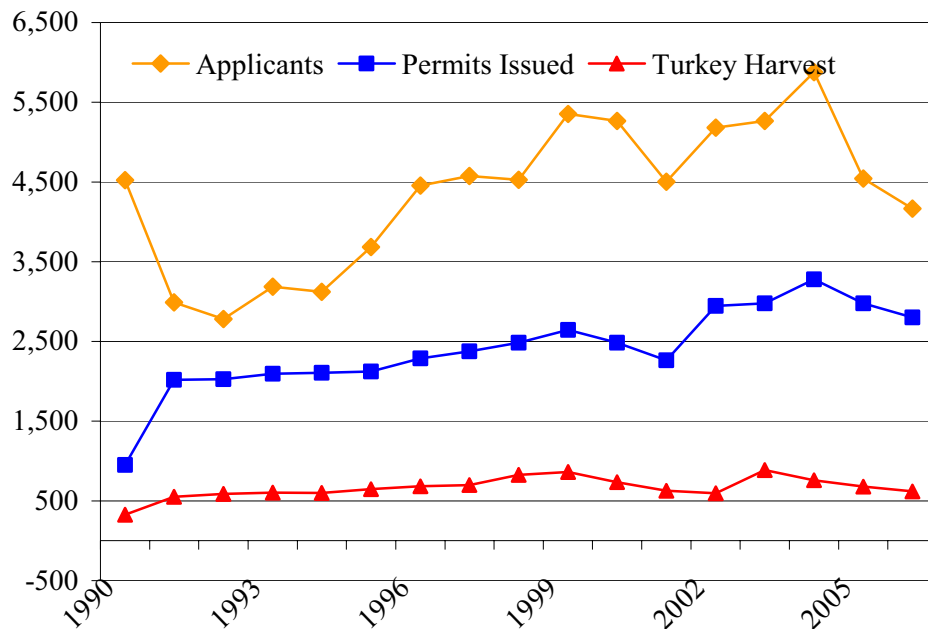


Figure 1. Number of applicants, permits issued, and harvest for the fall wild turkey hunting season in Minnesota, 1990–2006.

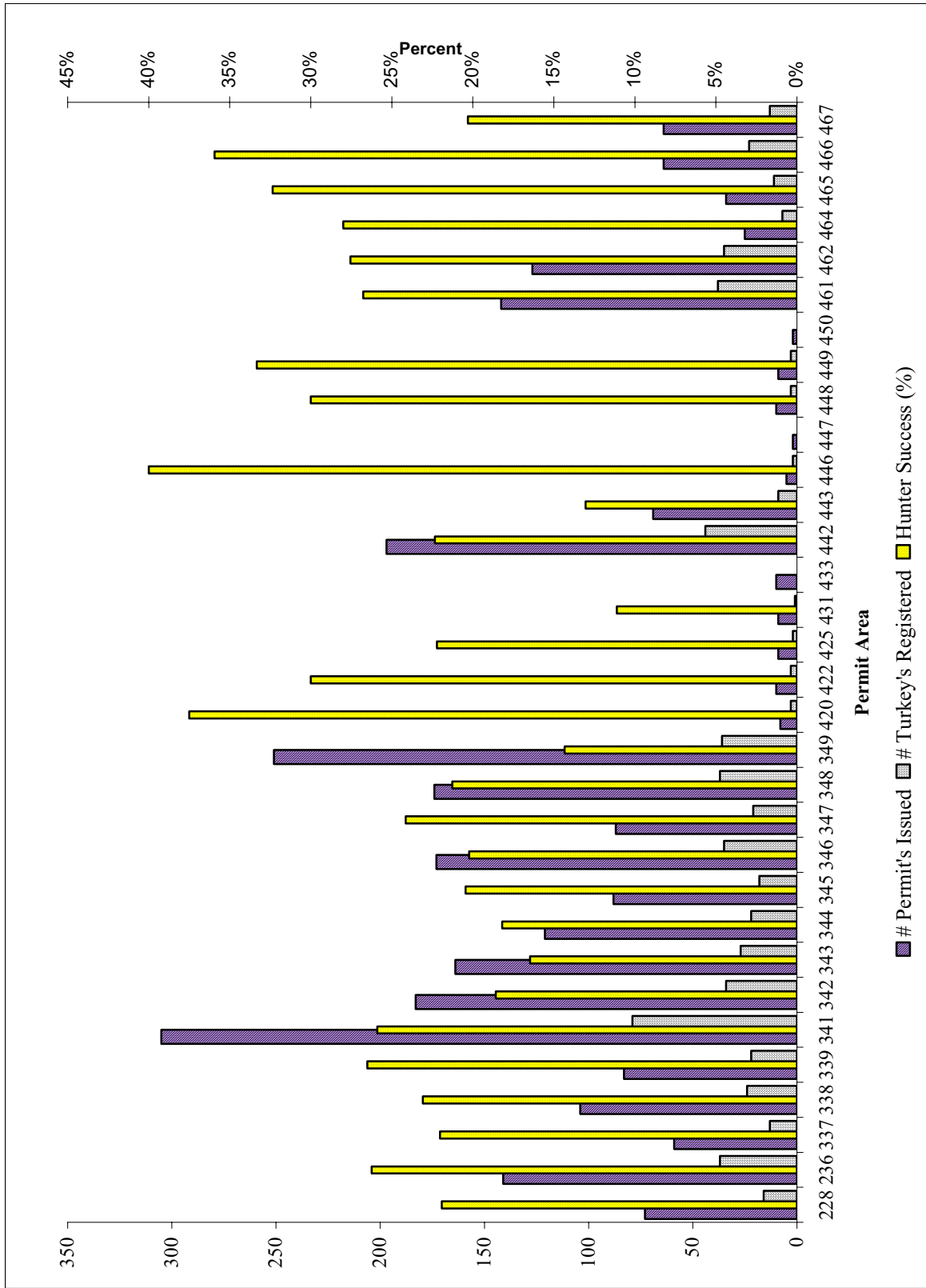


Figure 2. Total harvest, permits issued, and hunter success rate by permit areas for the 2006 fall wild turkey hunting season in Minnesota.