

News From the Enemy Camp and the Good Guys

Hunting License Sales Up By 3.5 Percent in NSSF Index of States

In a year when one word, "fewer," described life in America -- fewer jobs, fewer home sales, fewer purchases -- hunters were responsible for generating a welcome "more" category, as hunting license sales rose by 3.5 percent in 2009 in states that make up NSSF's Hunting License Sales Index.

The 12-state index comprises several states from four main regions of the United States. Nine of those states recorded hunting license sales increases from January through December of 2009 over the previous year, according to Southwick Associates, a research firm that monitored the license sales information.

"Many factors such as weather and the economy affect hunting license sales in any given year, but in 2009 the economy likely had a more significant effect," said Jim Curcuruto, NSSF's director of industry research and analysis. "While the reasons for the 3.5 percent increase are speculative, past research shows that during slow-downs in the nation's economy it is possible that people have more time to hunt and that hunters take the opportunity to fill their freezers with nutritious, high-protein meat acquired at lower

cost than if a similar amount was purchased at the supermarket."

States participating in the NSSF License Sales Index are New York and New Jersey in the Northeast; Florida, North Carolina, Louisiana and Tennessee in the Southeast; Minnesota, Indiana, Kansas and Texas in the Midwest; and Oregon and Utah in the West. States were selected for their ability to provide license sales data on a regular basis. The geographical selections were made to offset potential variation in license sales by region. As more states are able to provide necessary data, the number of states will be increased, said Curcuruto.

According to the index, license sales got off to a good start in the first half of 2009. In the key turkey hunting month of April, license sales rose by approximately 17 percent over the same month the previous year. In June, which is the start of the fiscal year in many states and, hence, the month when many annual licenses go on sale, sales increased by 16.2 percent. In the latter half of the year, which is when the bulk of hunting activity occurs and most licenses are sold, August and October sales were down, but September, November and December sales were up.

Curcuruto noted the findings were a bright spot when considering national hunting license sales totals from all 50 states showed little change from 2005 through 2007 (the most recent year that

figures are available). During that period, license sales have held at approximately 14.5 million annually, according to that U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Typically, hunting license sales data does not become available until 18 to 24 months after sales end. "NSSF and Southwick Associates saw there was a need to work directly with states to receive data in a more timely matter," said Curcuruto.

The NSSF Hunting License Sales Index is designed to be an indicator of hunting license sales but not an exact measure of all hunting license sales nationally. Should the 3.5 percent rise hold true nationwide, it would represent one of the largest percentage increases in hunting license sales in over 20 years.

The index is a new project involving NSSF and Southwick Associates. The 2009 data was the first released in what both parties expect to be an ongoing effort. NSSF performs this type of research to better equip its member base with information that will help them make more informed business decisions.

Results from the index were first reported to NSSF members and media at the recently concluded 2010 SHOT Show. "Due to positive feedback from those sessions, NSSF plans to continue funding this project in 2010," said Curcuruto.

Results are based on a weighted average of trends among participating states, so that states with larger hunter populations have a greater impact on the results than smaller states. Due

to confidentiality agreements, license sales data is not available on a per-state basis.

Quarterly Firearm and Ammunition Excise Taxes Up 29 Percent

According to the most recent Firearms and Ammunition Excise Tax Collection Report, released by the Department of the Treasury, firearm and ammunition manufacturers report excise tax obligations to be more than \$115.8 million in the third calendar quarter of 2009, up 29 percent over the same time period reported in 2008.

This dramatic increase follows a 52 percent increase in excise tax obligations from the previous quarter (2Q, 2009) and more than a year of record-high FBI background checks for firearm purchasers -- another strong indicator of firearm sales.

Excise tax obligations over the last reported 12 months, Oct. 1, 2008 to Sept. 30, 2009, were more than \$445.6 million, an increase of \$124 million or 38.6 percent over the preceding 12-month period, Oct. 1, 2007 to Sept. 30, 2008. The year's substantial increases in background checks and federal excise tax obligations began just prior to the 2008 elections and flourished despite a worsening economy.

Manufacturers of firearms and ammunition pay a federal excise tax -- a major source of wildlife conservation funding -- on all firearms and ammunition manufactured (11 percent on long

guns and ammunition and 10 percent on handguns).

The report, which covers the time period of July 1, 2009 through Sept. 30, 2009, shows that \$29.85 million was due in taxes for pistols and revolvers, \$37.09 million for long guns and \$48.89 million for ammunition. Compared to the same quarter in 2008, collections were up 50.2 percent for handguns, 33.4 percent for ammunition and 11.5 percent for long guns.

Translation to Sales:

Using the latest collections as an indication of sales, a projection of \$1.08 billion was generated in the third quarter (calendar year) of 2009. Please keep in mind that although excise taxes are one of the best indicators of industry performance, they only reflect what excise taxes the manufacturers have filed and do NOT reflect retail mark-up and final retail sales.

Pistols and revolvers: \$29,854,743.52 / .10 = \$298,547,435.20 = \$298.5 million for handguns

Long guns: \$37,086,945.59 / .11 = \$337,154,050.82 = \$337.2 million for long guns

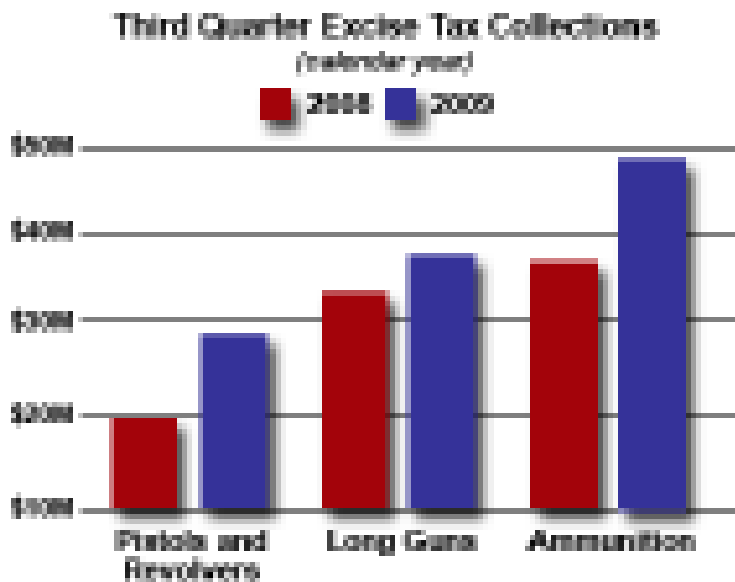
Ammunition: \$48,887,389.15 / .11 = \$444,430,810.45 = \$444.4 million for ammunition

Total estimation for the quarter: \$1.08 billion

Firearms Industry Hails Washington State Supreme Court Decision Second Amendment is an Incorporated Right

The National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) -- the trade association for the firearms industry - hailed today's ruling by the Washington State Supreme Court holding that the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding Americans are applicable to the states through the 14th Amendment.

"This decision by the Washington State Supreme Court is a welcomed development and vic-



tory for the rights of law-abiding firearms owners," said Lawrence G. Keane, NSSF senior vice president and general counsel. "America's firearms industry remains optimistic that the U.S. Supreme Court will rule in the upcoming *McDonald v. City of Chicago* case that the Second Amendment is a fundamental individual liberty that all states and local governments must respect."

The NSSF filed an amicus brief in support of the petitioner in *McDonald v. City of Chicago*, set to be heard by the High Court next month.

NSSF Wins Awards for Two Programs: Project ChildSafe and Don't Lie for the Other Guy Honored

Two nationwide initiatives developed by the National Shooting Sports Foundation—Project ChildSafe and Don't Lie for the Other Guy—have been recognized by the Associations Advance America (AAA) Awards program.

NSSF received an Award of Excellence for its Project ChildSafe program, the firearms safety education effort that has distributed 35 million gun lock safety kits. Don't Lie for the Other Guy, the NSSF program that works to prevent the illegal purchase of firearms, was named to the AAA Honor Roll.

NSSF is one of only 13 organizations nationally to receive an Award of Excellence in the first round of the 2010 Associa-

tions Advance America Awards program, a national competition sponsored by the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) and The Center for Association Leadership in Washington, D.C. Project ChildSafe is now in the running to receive a Summit Award, ASAE and the center's top recognition for association programs, to be presented at ASAE's 11th Annual Summit Awards Dinner at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C., on Sept. 29, 2010.

"The National Shooting Sports Foundation is honored to receive these awards for Project ChildSafe and Don't Lie for the Other Guy from ASAE and The Center for Association Leadership," said Steve Sanetti, president of NSSF. "It is through Project ChildSafe that NSSF promotes the safe and responsible use and storage of firearms to millions of gun owners throughout the country and through Don't Lie for the Other Guy that NSSF helps prevent illegal purchases of firearms by prohibited persons."

Project ChildSafe's goal is to help reduce firearms-related accidents through the distribution of free gun locking devices and safety education literature. With support from the firearms industry and U.S. Department of Justice grants, Project ChildSafe has distributed approximately 35 million gun lock safety kits to nearly every law enforcement department in the 50 states and U.S. Territories. Law enforcement then provides the safety kits free of charge to gun owners in their communities, reminding them to safely handle and store firearms in their homes. Through the efforts of Project ChildSafe and

other firearm safety programs, accidental firearms fatalities have dropped to their lowest levels since record-keeping began in 1903, including a 60 percent decrease in fatal firearms accidents among youth 14 and under in the last 10 years.

Through Don't Lie for the Other Guy, NSSF assists the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives in educating federally licensed firearms retailers on how to better detect and prevent illegal straw purchases of firearms. An advertising component of the program warns the public that to illegally purchase a firearm is a serious crime. Don't Lie for the Other Guy, which is funded by the firearms industry and U.S. Department of Justice grants, has been launched in 25 cities, with the focus in the past year along the U.S.-Mexico border. The program's straw purchase deterrence message—"Buy a gun for someone who can't and buy yourself 10 years in jail"—recently topped one billion media impressions.

The NSSF programs Don't Lie for the Other Guy, Project HomeSafe (the forerunner to Project ChildSafe) and Step Outside were previously recognized by ASAE, the last time coming in 2006 when Don't Lie received an Award of Excellence.

Now in its 20th year, the prestigious Associations Advance America Awards program recognizes associations that propel America forward—with innovative projects in education, skills training, standards-setting, business and social innovation, knowledge creation, citizenship and community service. Al-

though association activities have a powerful impact on everyday life, they often go unnoticed by the general public.

“NSSF’s programs truly embody the spirit of the Associations Advance America campaign. It is an honor and an inspiration to showcase these activities as an example of the many contributions associations are making to advance American society,” said 2009-2010 Associations Advance America Committee Chair Ping Wei, director of educational opportunities for the American Society of Civil Engineers.

For more information about NSSF’s Project ChildSafe, contact Bill Brassard at bbrassard@nssf.org, and for Don’t Lie for the Other Guy, contact Ted Novin at tnovin@nssf.org.

Firearms Industry Concerned Over United Nations Request for Firearms Trace Data

The National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) – the trade association for the firearms industry – has learned that the United Nations has filed its first firearms trace request. The move by the United Nations, which has long advocated for civilian disarmament, raised concerns from the NSSF.

“Firearms trace data is a law enforcement tool to help aid in specific criminal investigations,” said NSSF Senior Vice President and General Counsel Lawrence G. Keane. “Our concerns with

this trace request stem from UN-efforts to impose arms trade control treaties that would lead to a ban on the civilian possession and ownership of firearms, possibly even in the United States despite Second Amendment protections and the recent Supreme Court decision (*Heller v. District of Columbia*) reaffirming that Americans have an individual right to keep and bear arms.”

Tracing a firearm is the process by which law enforcement tracks the chain of custody of a firearm through the licensed distribution system to the original (first) retail purchaser. In this particular case, the manufacturer declined to provide the information to the United Nations and instead advised UN officials to make its request through proper international law enforcement channels. This would ensure that ATF, the appropriate law enforcement entity responsible for handling such requests, would be aware of the world body’s actions.

“Some foreign states and well-funded non-governmental organizations, like the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), are using arms trade-control talks at the United Nations to restrict or ban the private ownership of firearms,” continued Keane.

Though this trace request appears to have been an isolated incident, members of the firearms industry are troubled by the precedent.

“We remain increasingly concerned that ongoing efforts to restrict or ban the civilian and private ownership of firearms taking place at the United Nations will severely restrict and frustrate the lawful international commerce in sporting firearms and ammunition products and undermine the United States’ national sovereignty and America’s cherished firearms freedoms protected by the Second Amendment and our hunting and shooting sports heritage,” concluded Keane.

Firearms Industry Fires Back against Proposed Ban on Traditional Shot Shells in California

The National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) – the trade association for the firearms, ammunition, hunting and shooting sports industry – criticized the introduction of a bill in California to ban traditional shot shells containing lead BBs in state wildlife areas.

The sponsor of the bill, Assemblyman Pedro Nava (D), announced the proposed legislation at a press conference, where he was flanked by representatives from the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) – the country’s largest anti-hunting group. Just yesterday the assemblyman, who is running for California attorney general, was endorsed by the Sierra Club California. The involvement of the HSUS and the timing of the endorsement demonstrate that the real motive behind the ban is to diminish

hunting in the state by making it much more expensive to buy ammunition, thereby forcing more hunters out of the field and keeping new hunters from going afield.

Wildlife management policy must be based on science, not on opinion or political or symbolic gesture. Assemblyman Nava's claim that traditional shot shells need to be banned to protect wildlife populations is simply not supported by sound science.

"Wildlife population management decisions and hunting regulations are best left to the professionals at the California Fish and Game Department based on sound science," said NSSF Senior Vice President and General Counsel Lawrence G. Keane. "The Legislature is not the appropriate forum for these decisions to be made."

The introduction of the traditional ammunition ban comes on the heels of the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Commission (FWP) rejecting a similar proposal in its state on the grounds that a ban lacked "biological justification."

"If Assemblyman Nava's bill passes," continued Keane, "it is the state and local economies that will need help. The proposed ban, while doing nothing to help wildlife, would force hunters to use other more costly ammunition alternatives. This would make hunting more expensive and ultimately lead to a decline in hunters, hunter support for wildlife conservation and hunter-generated income."

SHOT Show Thrives in Las Vegas

With firearms and ammunition sales having surged last year in a struggling economy, there were many positive signs this week at the industry's annual trade show -- the Shooting, Hunting and Outdoor Trade (SHOT) Show -- that indicated sales will remain robust in 2010.

The show's return to Las Vegas sparked a rise in attendance over the previous year, with buyers packing exhibit booths to review products and then placing orders on the latest shooting, hunting and outdoor gear.

Overall attendance was 58,444, only several hundred shy of the show's all-time record set at the 2008 Las Vegas Show and more than 11,000 above last year's show in Orlando. The show attracted an all-time high of 31,280 buyers, and the 1,804 media professionals attending established a new record.

The SHOT Show filled the Sands Expo & Convention Center for four days, January 19-22, reaffirming its stature as the world's premier exposition of firearms, ammunition, outdoor and tactical apparel, optics, cutlery, camping and related products and services. The show is owned and sponsored by the National Shooting Sports Foundation, the firearms industry's trade association.

From the opening to closing bells, the mood was upbeat. Retailers like Glenn Duncan, owner of Duncan's Outdoor Shop in Bay City, Mich., said he values the SHOT Show for the opportunity it affords to learn about exciting new products. "It's good to see the industry offering so many

new products -- guns, ammunition, targets and more -- and I really appreciated that the exhibitors were willing to take the time to give me the attention I needed." Among the products Duncan found interesting were new models of firearms introduced by Taurus International and Smith & Wesson, and Winchester's 410 ammo.

Manufacturers like Dwight Van Brunt of Kimber were equally pleased. "This is an amazing show," said Van Brunt. "We came in with some trepidation, wondering if it was going to be busy the whole time. We were slammed 45 minutes into the show. You couldn't see the color of my carpet, and it stayed that way for the first two days. This show is great."

Scott Hanes of Remington Arms said, "There's a lot of excitement, and people are very positive. I was a little surprised that there would be this big of a positive attitude at this time of year because last year was so big. You figure you're going to have a little bit of a downfall later on. I'm not seeing it."

Mike Slack of optics company Leupold & Stevens said, "This booth has been absolutely flooded with people. I can't remember a busier SHOT Show ever." He added, "How could you not come to the SHOT Show? If you're a dealer, this is the place to be. You just can't miss it."

Professional shooter Doug Koenig, who was representing Smith & Wesson, said, "It's been packed, every day, non-stop, all day. And the buzz has been really good. I think it's going to be another great year for Smith & Wesson."

Greg Sesselmann of Scent-Lok said, "This is where we get to communicate with each other. People are generating business, coming up with new ideas. There's that synergy of working together on these things that you just can't do over the phone."

Exhibiting companies numbered 1,633 -- about 125 of them international -- covering 700,000 net square feet in the convention center's halls and the Venetian Hotel's meeting rooms.

The show got off to a grand start at NSSF's opening-night State of the Industry Dinner, where NSSF President Steve Sanetti welcomed more than 1,500 industry professionals, saying, "With sales and revenues in much of our industry at a decade-long high despite the worst recession in a generation, we have thrived. I have to say that the state of the industry in 2010 is about as strong as I've seen it. We have millions of new firearms owners that have joined our ranks since we last met in Orlando -- a testament to the popularity of firearms ownership in America and proof that hunting and target shooting remain popular activities among all ages."

Comedian Dennis Miller provided the evening's entertainment. Many celebrities were on hand at the show, including actor Seven Seagal, who is launching a new line of tactical gear. "My impression of the SHOT Show is it's amazing," said Seagal. "It's probably the greatest gathering of special technology for police and military I've ever seen in one place. It's extremely impressive."

In addition to the sale of hunting and shooting gear, the SHOT Show is known for its many

educational seminars for firearms retailers. The pre-show SHOT Show University seminars were completely full and featured presentations by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and marketing experts. For the first time, the show provided seminars for law enforcement professionals, sponsored by NSSF and Law Officer Magazine, which complemented the show's law enforcement product section.

The record turnout of members of the outdoor media was notable since the press publicizes the show's many products to their hunting and shooting readers and viewers.

J. Wayne Fears, outdoor writer, said, "I've been coming to every SHOT Show since the first one in 1979. It's extremely valuable in that I get an opportunity in one place to meet all of the people who produce the products that I write about."

At the State of the Industry Dinner, veteran journalist Dave Petzal of Field & Stream received the Grits Gresham Shooting Sports Communicator Award presented by the Professional Outdoor Media Association.

NSSF took the opportunity at a press conference to correct confusion about one of the industry's most misunderstood products, the AR-style modern sporting rifle. NSSF reinforced that modern sporting rifles are semi-automatic, firing one round with each pull of the trigger, that they are widely used for target shooting and hunting, and that they should not be confused with similar looking military rifles.

Prior to the show, NSSF presented Clark County officials with an

award of appreciation for realizing a 25-year effort to open the world-class Clark County Shooting Park. NSSF also recognized the important role Sen. Harry Reid (D-Nev.) and the rest of the state's congressional delegation played in securing the federal assistance necessary to make the park a reality.

Next year's SHOT Show is slated for January 18-21, 2011, at the Sands Expo & Conference Center in Las Vegas.

National Shooting Sports Foundation Launches 'Insights,' A New Radio Show Produced by Award-winning Walker Agency

Each week listeners are invited to learn about the history, excitement and value of hunting and the shooting sports on a new radio show called "Insights," sponsored by the National Shooting Sports Foundation and produced by the Walker Agency.

"We are excited about the possibilities this new radio program offers NSSF, our industry and our sports," said Mark E. Thomas, NSSF managing director, marketing communications. "'Insights' will help NSSF reach a new audience of hunters and shooters, and will inspire potential participants who are listening to try our sports."

The show increases NSSF's presence on radio and complements its existing efforts on cable television and in Web-based and

traditional media to support NSSF's members and grow the shooting sports.

Host John Quaintance will delve into the world of hunting and target shooting to report on a range of fascinating topics, ranging from the history of the American flintlock, to the development of the modern conservation movement, to great hunting and shooting tips that will help millions safely enjoy their sports, as well as the latest news and information from NSSF, the trade association of the firearms industry.

"Our experience in creating interesting and entertaining radio programs that have collectively won more than 85 broadcast awards gives assurance that 'Insights' will attract listeners, and once we have them 'by the ears' we can encourage them to enjoy the shooting sports," said Mike Walker of the Walker Agency.

Scheduled to launch March 1, 2010, the program will be offered to radio stations on a barter basis. For those who can't receive the program via radio, the shows will also be available for download at www.NSSF.org/Insights and available as podcasts on iTunes.

NSSF encourages its member companies to let their local radio stations know about this free daily radio program. Station managers should contact NSSF for a sample program and to learn more about adding the show to their lineup.

John Quaintance is an Emmy Award-winning former television and radio reporter with over 30 years of broadcasting experience.

His reports have been seen and heard on ABC, CBS and CNN.

The show is sponsored by NSSF, produced by Pete Walker and edited by Mike Walker. For information about becoming a broadcast affiliate, contact Mike Walker, mike@walkeragency.com, 602-569-0340.

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State News

ALABAMA

Prescribed Burns Planned for Wind Creek State Park

State parks personnel will be conducting several prescribed burns along State Highway 128 within Wind Creek State Park from mid-February to mid-March as part of a Piedmont longleaf ecosystem restoration project. This project will be following approved burn plans and permits from the Alabama Forestry Commission and the Alexander City Fire Department.

Prescribed fire is a safe way to apply a natural process that benefits various habits, reduces wildfire risk and ensures ecosystem health. Wildlife habitat and animals such as deer, turkeys, and quail flourish in areas that are maintained with prescribed fire. Some rare animals such as the red-cockaded woodpecker and the gopher tortoise require fire-adapted habitats to survive.

Recently Gov. Bob Riley designated February 2010 as Prescribed Fire Awareness Month. The official proclamation encourages all Alabamians to learn about the importance of prescribed burning to the stewardship of our natural resources and its role in the protection of our citizens from wildfires.

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources promotes wise stewardship, management and enjoyment of Alabama's natural resources

through five divisions: Marine Police, Marine Resources, State Lands, State Parks, and Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries. To learn more about ADCNR, visit www.outdooralabama.com.

ARKANSAS Commission sets hunting seasons in Arkansas

Commissioners from the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission today formally approved regulation changes as part of the 2010-11 hunting season-setting process. One change would allow hunters, 65 and older, to participate in the January portion of the statewide youth season.

The 2008-09 season was the first season that hunters 65 and over were allowed to harvest a deer when accompanying a youth hunter during the November youth season. After examining the harvest data, less than 5 percent of the harvest during the two-day youth season was attributed to 65+ hunters. The move will simplify deer hunting regulations, while providing additional hunting opportunities without negatively affecting the resource.

CONNECTICUT 2010 Midwinter Waterfowl Survey Results

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) conducted the annual Midwinter Waterfowl Survey on January 4, 2010. The survey is conducted

throughout the Atlantic Flyway, and is used as an index of long-term wintering waterfowl trends. The Atlantic Flyway is a bird migration route that generally follows the Atlantic Coast of North America and the Appalachian Mountains. The states and Canadian provinces that make up the Atlantic Flyway all participate in the survey. In Connecticut, the survey is conducted from a helicopter and a census is obtained from the coast, the three major river systems, and selected inland lakes and reservoirs.

Survey conditions for the 2010 Midwinter Waterfowl Survey were excellent. Prolonged cold weather in the weeks prior to the survey resulted in many of the inland lakes and ponds being frozen. When inland water areas freeze, waterfowl concentrate along the coast and on the major river systems. Clear skies and moderate winds on the day of the survey led to unlimited visibility and good flying conditions.

Counts of all puddle ducks were above their short-term (5-year) averages. The mallard count was the highest in over 15 years, as was the count for American black ducks. American wigeon and gadwall counts also were above their respective five-year averages. Following a recent trend, however, most puddle ducks were observed in urban sanctuaries, often associated with supplemental feeding activities. "The Department discourages citizens from feeding waterfowl for a number of reasons, including increased risk of disease transmission, potential for poor nutrition, and a clouding of the real issue facing waterfowl and wildlife in general in Connecticut

– loss of suitable habitat,” said Rick Jacobson, Acting Director for the DEP Wildlife Division. The Department has published a brochure, “Do Not Feed Waterfowl,” that outlines the potential hazards of feeding waterfowl. It is available on the Department’s Web site at www.ct.gov/dep/lib/dep/wildlife/pdf_files/game/NoFeedWF.pdf.

The scaup count was well below that of last year and continued to be lower than the historical wintering numbers for Connecticut. Declines in scaup numbers throughout North America continue to be of concern for biologists nationwide. Habitat changes on the breeding grounds may be a factor in the long-term decline of scaup. Mergansers were abundant but below levels observed last year and just under the five-year average. The counts for common goldeneyes also were less than last year. Counts for buffleheads and long-tailed ducks were above those from last year and slightly above their five-year averages.

Atlantic brant numbers were lower than last year and below the recent average. Canada goose counts were high for this survey and the highest recorded in a decade.

Connecticut Midwinter Waterfowl Survey Results for Major Species*

IOWA

Trumpeter Swan Shot in Woodbury County

Public assistance is being sought in the investigation of a trumpeter swan shot and killed over the past weekend in Woodbury County.

Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) officers are investigating the shooting death of a trumpeter swan that was found Sunday in the backwaters of the Little Sioux River near Oto. The swan had a single rifle shot through its neck. It is illegal to shoot swans.

The DNR has been releasing captive produced young swans on state wetlands since 1995 with a goal to reestablish a wild, free flying population of trumpeter

swans to Iowa. So far, the program has been successful to the point that a new modern-day record of 40 successful nesting pairs of trumpeter swans was recorded during 2009.

Anyone with information regarding this incident is asked to call DNR Conservation Officers Stacey Sisco at 712-301-6735 or Steven Griebel at 712-301-4009 or the TIP (Turn in Poachers) hotline at 800-532-2020.

Quail Forever Awards Local Hunter \$100 Prize for Assisting Wildlife Bureau with Survey

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources is studying small game populations and harvest on public wildlife areas in southern Iowa to learn more about hunter use and harvest on the areas. This is the second year of the study.

Quail Forever supports any research aimed to guide better management and sustainability of the native bird and offered a \$100 prize to a hunter who chose to participate in the survey.

Nearly 100 hunters were surveyed about their small game experience, which includes quail, pheasant, rabbit and squirrel. The survey was designed to measure the harvest during the season and timing of when the harvest occurred.

“We are investigating one of the many factors involved with upland game management,” said Mark McInroy, upland game research technician with the DNR. “We know hunter harvest is rarely a cause of population declines, but on small, local scale and under certain circumstances, hunters can indeed over-harvest game even within the confines of

Species	2010	2009	Five-year Avg.
Atlantic Brant	1,000	1,700	1,400
Black Duck	3,200	2,900	2,000
Bufflehead	1,100	700	900
Canada Goose	4,800	3,500	3,300
Canvasback	0	100	100
Mallard	2,500	1,400	1,100
Merganser	900	1,800	1,100
Mute Swan	700	700	800
Old Squaw	200	100	100
Common goldeneye	400	800	800
Scaup	800	1,900	2,200

* rounded to nearest hundred

current seasons and bag limits. We do not anticipate that this is happening in Iowa, but this study is a way of double checking, to see if it is occurring on public wildlife areas."

The 2009-10 survey included hunters from Michigan, Kentucky, South Carolina, Illinois and Indiana, with the most being from southern Iowa.

"Hunter cooperation is the key. Without that, we would not have any data," McInroy said.

Randy Phillips, from Keosauqua, won the prize.

MINNESOTA

DNR seeks comments on bear hunting, game refuge and small game rules

Citizens interested in proposed rule changes pertaining to the Lac qui Parle Game Refuge, bear outfitting, bear hunting, trapping, falconry, goose and mourning dove hunting may submit written comments to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) through Friday, May 21.

The rule changes do not include any of the deer hunting, waterfowl, furbearer or small game proposals discussed at 2010 public input meetings.

"The rules in this package have been discussed in most cases for several years," said Jason Abraham, DNR rules specialist. "Many of the proposals were the subject of public input meetings in years past and received support."

A copy of the proposed rules and additional information about the rules process is available online.

The DNR will accept written comments supporting or opposing the rule changes, or requests for a public hearing through 4:30 p.m. on May 21. Comments must be submitted to: Jason Abraham, Box 20, DNR, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4020, or by e-mail at jason.abraham@state.mn.us.

NEBRASKA

Prescribed Burns

Scheduled This Spring

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission will conduct prescribed burns on wildlife management areas (WMA) this spring when conditions are favorable.

The primary goal of a burn is to reduce invasive species competing with native species. Burning improves the quality of habitat available to a variety of wildlife.

Areas (WMAs unless otherwise noted) scheduled for burning, by region, are:

Northeast – George Syas, Wilkinson, Council Creek, Sunny Hollow, Dr. Bruce Cowgill, Don Dworak, Dead Timber State Recreation Area, Ponca State Park

Southwest – Oxford

South-central – Bittern's Call, Alexandria, Kissinger Basin

Southeast – Schilling, Gifford Point, Tobacco Island, Hamburg Bend

Sutherland Reservoir Waterfowl Meeting Scheduled

The public is invited to attend an informational meeting to discuss the future of waterfowl hunting on Sutherland Reservoir, according to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. The meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. on March 24 at Butchs Steakhouse in Hershey.

Commission staff will present information regarding current waterfowl and waterfowl hunter use on the Lincoln County reservoir, which is owned by Nebraska Public Power District.

Light Goose Conservation Action Begins Feb. 6

Efforts to control the light goose population continue with the Light Goose Conservation Action, which begins Feb. 6, according to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

The dates for the conservation action are: Zone 1, Feb. 6-April 18; Zone 2, Feb. 6-April 1 and Zone 3, Feb. 6-April 18.

White and blue-phase snow geese and Ross geese may be taken statewide during the conservation action, but different regulations apply in each zone. Read the 2009 Nebraska Waterfowl Guide, which includes regulations for the 2010 conservation action, at <http://www.ngpc.state.ne.us/hunting/guides/waterfowl/waterfowl.asp>.

Considerable effort has been put toward the reduction of the mid-continent snow goose population. This population attracts attention because of the damage to Arctic