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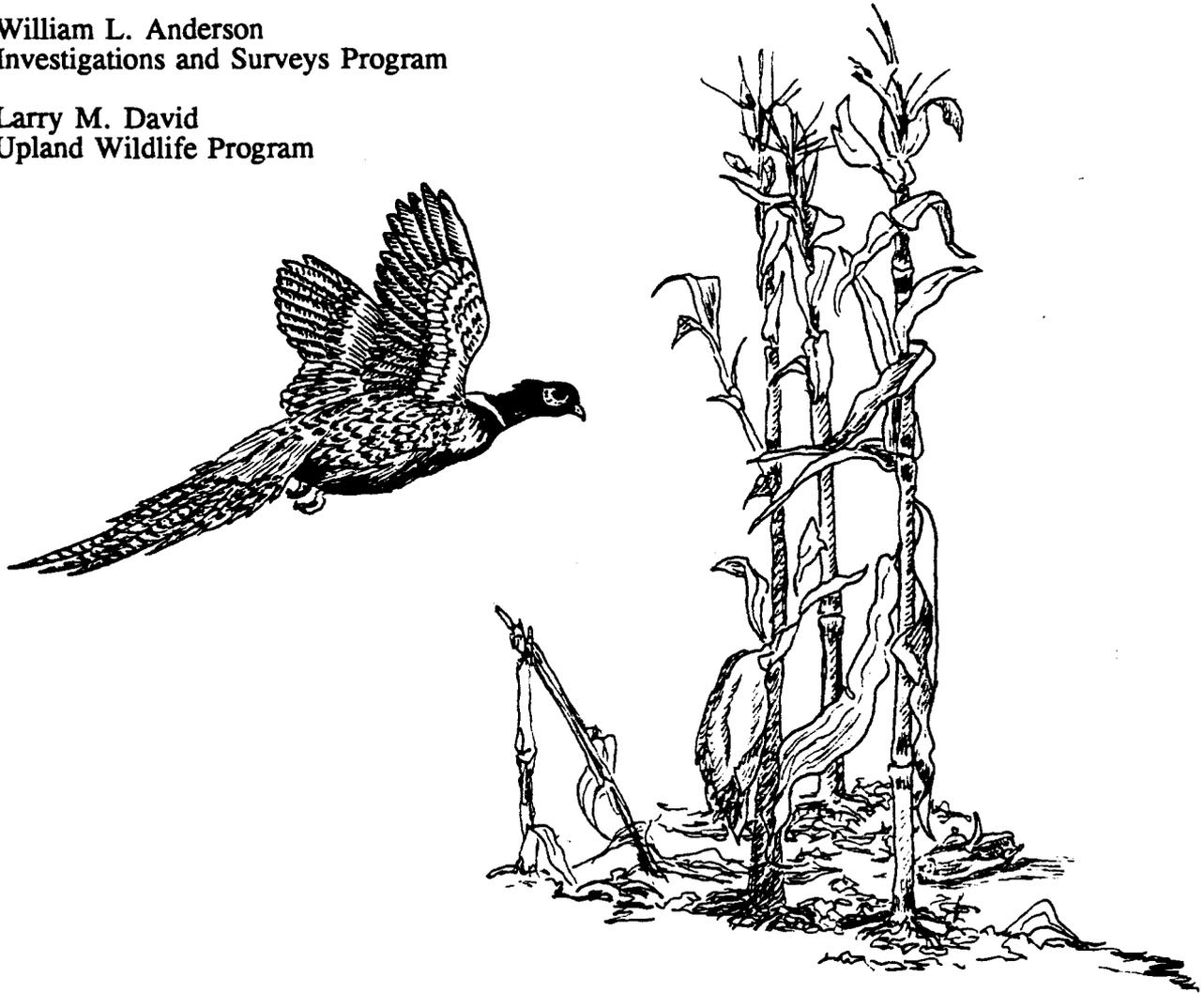
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# RESULTS OF THE 1990 ILLINOIS PHEASANT HUNTER SURVEY

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RESULTS OF THE 1990 ILLINOIS PHEASANT HUNTER SURVEY

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Abstract: Purchasers of (1989) Illinois hunting licenses who hunted pheasants were surveyed via mail-letter questionnaire to determine their activities and harvest during the 1990 season, and their attitudes and opinions of pheasant hunting regulations and management practices. The mailing list consisted of 1,051 individuals, 878 (84%) of which returned usable questionnaires. Because 305 (35%) of the respondents did not hunt pheasants in Illinois again in 1990, the effective sample was reduced to 573 active pheasant hunters. Of these hunters, 93% pursued wild pheasants (91% of days afield) and 23% shot game-farm pheasants (9% of days afield). Hunters of wild pheasants were afield an average of 7.7 days (46% in November and 48% in December), and they harvested an average of 4.8 pheasants; 23% took 0 pheasant, 16% took 1 pheasant, 14% took 2 pheasants, and 19% took 3-5 pheasants. Game-farm pheasant hunters were afield an average of 3.1 days, and they harvested an average of 5.4 pheasants. Majorities (>50%) of the hunters thought the opening date for the wild pheasant season (first Saturday in November) was about right, the closing date (Saturday or holiday closest to 1 January in North Zone) was too early, Illinois Pheasant Stamp funds should finance "pheasant habitat management on private lands", and "hunting wild pheasants on private land" should be the DOC pheasant program of highest priority. A plurality (44%) of the hunters believed the fee for State Controlled Pheasant Areas should fully cover all costs of operation; the maximum fee they were willing to pay averaged \$13.37 per day. On the average in 1990, Illinois pheasants hunters were 38 years of age, had hunted pheasants for 20 years, and spent \$294 (total \$30.8 million) on their sport. The management implications of these findings are discussed.

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The pheasant, which is of Asiatic origin, was successfully introduced in Illinois during the early 1900s (Preno and Labisky 1971:15). The first pheasant hunting season took place in 1915 (Robertson 1958:5), and the bird rapidly became a popular game

species in the Prairie State. From 1986 to 1990, an average of 99,000 hunters spent an average of 570,000 days afield and harvested an average of 370,000 wild pheasants in Illinois (Anderson and Campbell 1991). Throughout the years, pheasant populations have been consistently associated with intensive agriculture in the northeastern one-third of the state (Warner 1981).

To properly manage the pheasant resource and to establish bio-sociologically acceptable hunting regulations, the Illinois Department of Conservation (DOC) must be familiar with the activities and attitudes of pheasant hunters in the state. Thus, the purpose of the present study was to survey pheasant hunters to determine when and where they are in the field, characteristics of their pheasant harvest, and their opinions of pheasant hunting regulations and management practices. Surveys such as this one improve the DOC's understanding of the rank-and-file hunter--i.e., the feelings of the "silent majority"--toward the pheasant resource and the sport of pheasant hunting.

Another (follow-up) pheasant hunter survey is planned for the 1991 season, and surveys of other upland game hunters--including quail, mourning dove, and other species--are scheduled for the 1991 through 1993 seasons. A rabbit hunter survey was conducted following the 1989 season, and it will be repeated in about 1994 (Anderson and David 1991).

#### METHODS AND MATERIALS

A 4-page, 20-question questionnaire was developed specifically

for the 1990 Illinois Pheasant Hunter Survey (Fig. 1). This questionnaire and a letter of explanation (Fig. 2) were mailed to 1,051 pheasant hunters on 9 January 1991. Non-respondents were sent 2nd and 3rd copies of the questionnaire, and accompanying letters (Figs. 3 and 4), on 21 February and 22 March, respectively. As of 11 May 1991, 878 usable questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 84%.

Names (and addresses) making up the mailing list included those individuals who were identified via the annual Hunter Harvest Survey as having hunted pheasants in Illinois during the previous (1989) season (Anderson et al. 1990). The people on the list were notified by letters postmarked 31 October 1990 that they would receive a questionnaire at the close of the hunting season. The notice included a form for keeping records of hunting activity and pheasants harvested (Fig. 5).

Data were transferred from the filled-out questionnaires to a computer file using a data management program (IBM dBASE III+). The data were analyzed with a statistical program (IBM SPSS/PC+ V2.0). Since most of the state's pheasant hunting takes place in the North (upland game) Zone, the data were tabulated for the entire state and not relative to the individual zones.

#### HUNTING REGULATIONS IN 1990

For purposes of setting the 1990 hunting seasons for wild pheasants and other upland game species, the state was divided into north and south zones. The line that separated these zones was route US-36 from the Indiana state line west to Springfield, route

IL-29 north to Pekin, and route IL-9 west to the Iowa state line (see map on page 1 of Fig. 1).

The 1990 season for wild pheasants began on 3 November throughout the state and extended to 1 January in the North Zone and to 6 January in the South Zone. The bag limit was 2 cocks (males) per day and 4 in possession. Legal shooting time began at sunrise and ended at sunset.

For game-farm (pen-reared) pheasants, the season extended (with some exceptions) from 1 September to 15 April on private licensed preserves and from 7 November to 16 December on state controlled areas. On private licensed preserves, there was no daily bag limit and either sex could be taken. On state controlled areas, hunters were limited to 2 birds of either sex.

## FINDINGS

Of the 878 individuals who filled out and returned questionnaires, 90% purchased an Illinois resident hunting license again in 1990, 68% purchased an 1990 Illinois Pheasant Stamp for personal use, and 65% hunted pheasants again in Illinois in 1990 (Table 1). Thus, the effective sample for this survey was reduced to 573 active pheasant hunters.

### Hunter Activities

Of the 573 active pheasant hunters, 93% hunted wild pheasants and 23% hunted game-farm pheasants during the 1990 season (Table 2). In other words, 77% hunted wild pheasants only, 7% hunted game-farm pheasants only, and 16% hunted both types of pheasants.

When combined with data from the Hunter Harvest Survey (Anderson and Campbell 1991), these findings indicate there were 81,437 individuals who hunted wild pheasants only, 6,941 who hunted game-farm pheasants only, and 16,327 who hunted both wild and game-farm pheasants in Illinois in 1990-91. For hunters who pursued wild pheasants, 93.4% were active in the North Zone and 6.6% were active in the South Zone.

The hunters expended 91% of their days afield pursuing wild pheasants and 9% of their days shooting game-farm pheasants (Table 2). Hunters of wild pheasants devoted an average of 7.7 days to the field during the 1990 season (Table 3). In comparison, the annual Hunter Harvest Survey indicated that (wild) pheasant hunters spent an average of 6.2 days afield during the 1990 season (Anderson and Campbell 1991). When data in Table 2 and from the Hunter Harvest Survey were combined, an estimated 608,261 days afield were devoted to hunting wild pheasants and 63,109 days were devoted to game-farm pheasants in Illinois in 1990-91.

The hunters expended 46% of their (wild) pheasant-hunting days in November, 48% in December, and 6% in January (Table 3). The "use rate" (i.e., days hunted/number of days available to hunt) was greater for November (0.13) than for December (0.12) or January (0.05). This is in contrast to rabbit hunters whose use rate was greater in December than in November (Anderson and David 1991).

Of the hunters who pursued wild pheasants, 48% were in the field on opening day, and 37% were in the field on the second day, of the 1990 season (Table 4). In addition, 28% were afield on

opening day and on the second day, and 57% were afield on opening day and/or on the second day. Similarly, 45% of the hunters claimed to have been in the field during  $\geq 1$  of the last 4 days of the season in the North Zone.

Of the hunters who pursued game-farm pheasants during the 1990 season, 13% released their own birds, 26% were active on private licensed preserves, and 68% utilized state controlled areas (Table 5). These hunters spent an average of 4.3, 2.8, and 3.0 days, engaged in their respective activity. Therefore, of the total days devoted to hunting game-farm pheasants, 16.1% involved hunters who released their own birds, 21.9% took place on private licensed preserves, and 62.0% occurred on state controlled areas.

#### Characteristics of Pheasant Harvest

The hunters of wild pheasants reported harvesting an average of 4.8 birds in Illinois during the 1990 season (Table 3). Among these hunters, 23% took 0 pheasant, 16% took 1 pheasant, 14% took 2 pheasants, and 19% took 3-5 pheasants. For purposes of comparison, the annual Hunter Harvest Survey indicated that the 1990 wild pheasant harvest averaged 3.8 birds per hunter; 25% of the hunters took 0 pheasant, 54% took 1-5 pheasants, and 14% took 6-10 pheasants (Anderson and Campbell 1991).

One-half (50%) of the wild pheasant harvest occurred during November (Table 3). Another 44% of the harvest took place during December, and the remaining 6% of the pheasants were taken in January. The harvest rate (i.e., pheasants taken per day afield) was greatest during November (0.67), less during January (0.60),

and least during December (0.57).

The hunters of game-farm pheasants reported harvesting averages of 1.5 to 2.4 birds per day and 4.5 to 7.4 for the entire 1990 season (Table 5). Since 77.4% of the pheasant harvest consisted of wild birds (Table 2) and an estimated 372,920 wild birds were harvested during the 1990 season (Anderson and Campbell 1991), the remaining 22.6% equates to approximately 108,889 game-farm birds. Based on data in Tables 2 and 5, 17,608 of these birds were released by the hunters who shot them, 32,991 were taken on private licensed preserves, and 58,290 were taken on state controlled areas. DOC records indicate that 58,538 pheasants were actually harvested on the state controlled areas, and 119,663 were harvested on private licensed preserves, during the 1990 season (Willms and Evans 1991:19; T.L. Musser, pers. commun.). Our survey may have underestimated pheasant harvest (and days afield) on licensed shooting preserves due to the fact that these areas attract a high proportion of non-resident and senior (license-exempt) hunters (T.L. Musser, pers. commun.).

#### Attitudes and Opinions

Dates for Wild Pheasant Hunting Season. In recent years, the wild pheasant hunting season has opened on the first Saturday in November. When asked to express their opinion of this opening date, an overwhelming majority (70%) of the hunters thought it was about right (Table 6). Another 18% believed the date was too early and 10% believed it was too late.

Similarly, in recent years, the wild pheasant hunting season

in the North Zone has ended on the Saturday or holiday nearest 1 January. The hunters had a different view of this date--58% thought it was too early and 36% thought it was about right (Table 6). Only 3% of the hunters believed the ending date was too late.

Projects for Illinois Pheasant Stamp Funds. Hunters who participated in the survey were asked to rank selected management projects in the order they preferred for Illinois Pheasant Stamp funding (Table 7). A majority (53%) of the hunters selected "pheasant habitat management on private lands" as their first choice. Wild pheasant hunters (56%) were more supportive of this project than game-farm pheasant hunters (35%). The other projects may be listed according to the percentage of hunters who gave them a first-choice rating: "acquisition of many small scattered pheasant habitat areas" (23%), "pheasant habitat management on state lands" (19%), and "acquisition of a few large hunting areas" (8%). It is evident that hunters rate projects on private lands higher than projects on state lands, and they also prefer many small projects over a few large projects.

State Controlled Pheasant Hunting Areas. When asked whether they would hunt on a State Controlled Pheasant Area if they had the opportunity, 54% of the hunters indicated "yes" (Table 8). The percentage who would hunt on these areas was much higher for game-farm pheasant hunters (87%) than for wild pheasant hunters (51%).

The hunters were asked to indicate their preference among various DOC pheasant management programs (Table 8). A majority (63%) of the hunters chose "hunting wild pheasants on private land" as their first priority. Wild pheasant hunters (65%) were more

supportive of this program than game-farm pheasant hunters (43%). Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that a plurality of the latter opted for "hunting wild pheasants on private land" as their first choice. The order of priority for the other programs was: "hunting wild pheasants on public hunting areas" (25%), "hunting hand-reared pheasants on State Controlled Pheasant Areas" (13%), and "hunting hand-reared pheasants on private licensed hunting preserves" (1%). The game-farm pheasant hunters (30%) were more supportive of "hunting hand-reared pheasants on State Controlled Pheasant Areas" than the wild pheasant hunters (12%).

When asked how the daily fee should be set for hunting on State Controlled Pheasant Areas, a plurality (46%) of the wild pheasant hunters believed the fee should fully cover all costs of operation (Table 8). However, a plurality (40%) of the game-farm pheasant hunters opted for no extra fee--that is, funds from hunting license sales should pay added costs. For all hunters combined, 44% felt the fee should fully cover costs, 34% believed there should be no extra fee, and 22% thought the fee should be increased but should be kept below costs.

More than one-half (57%) of the hunters indicated a willingness to pay a maximum daily fee of \$10 (the fee in effect during the 1990 season) to hunt on a State Controlled Pheasant Hunting Area (Table 8). Another 25% said they would pay \$15 and 13% would pay \$20. Collectively, 43% expressed a willingness to pay more than the \$10 fee that was in effect in 1990. The average for all hunters was \$13.37 per day.

### Characteristics of Pheasant Hunters

Pheasant hunters who participated in the survey were, on the average, 38 years of age (Table 9). Game-farm pheasant hunters were older (average 40 years) than wild pheasant hunters (average 37 years). The hunters had hunted pheasants for an average of 20 years, 12% were members of Pheasants Forever, 3% were members of Quail Unlimited, and 4% belonged to the Illinois Wildlife Federation. Game-farm pheasant hunters were more apt to be members of organizations than were wild pheasant hunters.

### Economics of Pheasant Hunting

According to data provided by the respondents, active pheasant hunters spent an average of \$294 to pursue their sport in Illinois during the 1990 season (Table 10). More than one-third (38%) of the hunters spent <\$100 and only 5% spent >\$1,000. Hunters who pursued both wild and game-farm pheasants spent an average of \$550, which was much higher than the average expenditures for hunters who hunted game-farm birds only (\$289) and those who hunted wild birds only (\$243). When the averages were applied to the total number of pheasant hunters in the state, expenditures for pheasant hunting totaled \$30.8 million for the 1990 season (Table 10). In comparison, rabbit hunters spent an average of \$156 each, and a total of \$25.4 million, in Illinois during the 1989 season (Anderson and David 1991). In a 1985 national survey, small game hunters reported spending \$168 each for their sport (U.S. Department of the Interior 1988).

Of the \$30.8 million spent for pheasant hunting in 1990-91, an estimated \$23.9 million (78%) was directed toward wild pheasants and \$6.9 million (22%) was directed toward game-farm pheasants (Table 11). Wild pheasant hunters (including those who also hunted game-farm birds) spent an average of \$244 per hunter, \$39 per day afield, and \$64 per pheasant harvested. Averages for game-farm pheasant hunters (including those who also hunted wild birds) were \$296 per hunter, \$109 per day afield, and \$63 per pheasant harvested.

#### DISCUSSION

To develop the mailing list for this survey, it was necessary to select individuals who had indicated on the annual Hunter Harvest Survey that they had hunted pheasants in Illinois during the previous (1989) season. Thus, the mailing list was 1 year old at the time the survey was conducted, and many (35%) of the respondents did not hunt pheasants again in 1990-91. Because the on-again-off-again pheasant hunters were eliminated, the sample was biased in favor of the more ardent, more dedicated hunters. In this context, it is noteworthy that active hunters in the present survey spent 24% more days afield pursuing wild pheasants and harvested 26% more wild pheasants (Table 3), on the average, than pheasant hunters in the 1990 Hunter Harvest Survey (Anderson and Campbell 1991).

In contrast to rabbit hunters (Anderson and David 1991), the month of November is more important to Illinois (wild) pheasant hunters than either December or January. These hunters made

greater use of the days available to hunt, and harvested pheasants at a higher rate, in November than during the other 2 months (Table 3). The first 2 days of the season appear particularly important-- 57% of the hunters ventured afield on one or both of these days (Table 4). Collectively, these 2 days accounted for 11.0% of the total days afield by pheasant hunters during the 1990 season. However, other studies--which were conducted >30 years ago<sup>in comparable</sup>--showed that 20-44% of the pheasant hunting pressure occurred on opening day and 48-85% occurred during the first week (Allen 1947, Leedy and Hicks 1945, Harper et al. 1951, Blouch 1956, Robertson 1958). For the entire 1990 season, one-half (50%) of the hunters were afield  $\leq 5$  days and 13% were afield  $\geq 16$  days (Table 3).

Although the hunters reported harvesting an average of 4.8 wild pheasants in 1990-91, one-fourth (23%) of them took no birds and more than one-half (53%) took  $\leq 2$  birds (Table 3). At the other extreme, 14% of the hunters harvested  $\geq 11$  pheasants. Based on these data, it appears that most wild pheasant hunters spend relatively few days afield and harvest, at most, 1 or 2 birds. And, although they were satisfied with the traditional opening of the season on the first Saturday in November, most of the hunters would like to see the closing date extended past the first week in January (Table 6).

It is reasonable to expect avid pheasant hunters to opt for extending the season later into a period when pheasants are vulnerable to hunting. The hunter success rate was highest in November, declined in December, and increased again in January (Table 3). Studies in Iowa indicate that about 20% of all pheasant

hunting trips occur during the last 2 weeks of the season (Farris et al. 1977). More than 45% of Illinois pheasant hunters were afield on  $\geq 1$  of the last 4 days of the 1990 season (Table 4). Farris et al. (1977) attributed at least part of the high interest in late-season hunting to the Christmas-New Year holiday period.

Because harvest rates increase in late season, wildlife biologists who are responsible for protecting pheasant populations usually oppose extending the closing dates. Other reasons for caution with late-season hunting include harassment and illegal kill of hens, high fall non-hunting mortality, declines in quantity and quality of habitat, and the likelihood of severe weather (Edwards 1988).

Game-farm pheasants contributed appreciably (22.6% or 108,889 birds) to the estimated 481,809 pheasants harvested in Illinois during the 1990 season. More than one-half (54% or 58,290) of the game-farm birds were taken on State Controlled Areas, 30% (32,991) were taken on private licensed preserves, and 16% (17,608) were released by the hunters who shot them. Although the pheasants represent a considerable investment on the part of the agency or individuals who released them, they pay large "dividends" (\$63 per bird) to the economy.

When asked to rank management projects in the order they preferred for Illinois Pheasant Stamp funding, a majority of the hunters picked "pheasant habitat management on private lands" first (Table 7). The other projects received little support: 23% for "acquisition of many small scattered pheasant habitat areas", 19% for "pheasant habitat management on state lands", and 8% for

"acquisition of a few large hunting areas". A majority of the hunters also preferred "hunting wild pheasants on private land" over other DOC pheasant management programs (Table 8). It appears that the state's pheasant hunters support, by margins of more than 2 to 1, the using of stamp-generated funds and DOC energies for habitat management on private lands to the purchase and/or management of public lands.

A plurality (44%) of the hunters believed the daily fee should be sufficient to cover all costs of operating State Controlled Pheasant Areas (Table 8). However, a majority (57%) indicated an unwillingness to pay more than \$10 per day, which was the fee that was in effect during the 1990 season. For all the hunters who responded, the amount they would be willing to pay averaged \$13.37 per day.

Based on the findings of this survey, the current opening date and daily bag limit for the pheasant season in Illinois should continue unchanged into the mid-1990's. The reasons for selecting the dates for closing the season should be fully explained to the hunting public via an educational program. The impact of late-season hunting on pheasant hen movements is currently under investigation in Illinois. It is also recommended that most of the monies generated by the Illinois Pheasant Stamp be used for funding habitat management to benefit pheasants on private lands, and the daily fee on State Controlled Pheasant Areas be increased to cover a greater proportion of the cost of operating these facilities.

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Table 1. Percentage of respondents to the 1990-91 Illinois Pheasant Hunter Survey who purchased a resident Illinois hunting license, purchased  $\geq 1$  Illinois Pheasant Stamps and hunted pheasants (wild and/or game-farm) in Illinois in 1990-91 (n = 878).

Activity	Number	Percentage
*Purchased resident Illinois hunting license	791	90.1
*Purchased Illinois Pheasant Stamp for personal use	595	67.8
*Purchased $\geq 1$ additional Illinois Pheasant Stamps not for personal use	65	7.3 <sup>a</sup>
*Hunted pheasants in Illinois	573	65.3

<sup>a</sup>4.8% purchased 1 additional stamp, 2.2% purchased 2 additional stamps, and 0.3% purchased 3 additional stamps.

Table 2. Relative pheasant harvest and hunter activity for wild pheasants and for game-farm pheasants in Illinois in 1990-91 (n = 566).

Type of Pheasant Hunted	Percentage		
	Hunters	Days Afield	Pheasant Harvest
Wild	92.9 <sup>a</sup>	90.6	77.4
Game-farm	22.6 <sup>a</sup>	9.4	22.6

<sup>a</sup>77.4% of the hunters hunted wild pheasants only, 7.1% hunted game-farm pheasants only, and 15.5% hunted both types of pheasants.

Table 3. The number of days afield and the number of pheasants harvested by respondents who hunted wild pheasants in Illinois in 1990-91 (n = 526).

Parameter	Days Afield	Pheasants Harvested
	<u>November</u>	
Mean	3.6	2.4
Percentage	46	50
Use (harvest) rate	0.13 <sup>a</sup>	0.67 <sup>b</sup>
	<u>December</u>	
Mean	3.6	2.1
Percentage	48	44
Use (harvest) rate	0.12	0.57
	<u>January</u>	
Mean	0.5	0.3
Percentage	6	6
Use (harvest) rate	---	0.60
	<u>Entire Season</u>	
Mean	7.7 <sup>c</sup>	4.8 <sup>d</sup>
Percentage	100	100
Use (harvest) rate	0.13	0.62

<sup>a</sup>Mean days divided by number of days available to hunt.

<sup>b</sup>Mean pheasants harvested divided by mean days hunted.

<sup>c</sup>49.6% hunted 1-5 days, 25.4% hunted 6-10 days, 13.2% hunted 11-15 days, and 12.8% hunted 16-47 days.

<sup>d</sup>23.2% of the hunters harvested 0 pheasant, 16.2% harvested 1 pheasant, 13.9% harvested 2 pheasants, 18.8% harvested 3-5 pheasants, 14.0% harvested 6-10 pheasants, and 13.9% harvested 11-56 pheasants.

Table 4. Percentage of wild pheasant hunters who were active on the first day, second day, and last 2-4 days of the pheasant hunting season in Illinois in 1990-91 (n = 526).

Dates of Activity	Weather <sup>a</sup>		Percentage of Hunters
	Mean temp.	Precip.	
Hunted on opening day (Sat., 3 Nov.)	63°	No	48.3 <sup>b</sup>
Hunted on second day (Sun., 4 Nov.)	64°	Yes	36.9 <sup>b</sup>
Hunted on $\geq 1$ of last 4 days in North Zone (Sat., 29 Dec. - Tues., 1 Jan.)			45.2 <sup>c</sup>
Hunted on $\geq 1$ of last 2 days in South Zone (Sat., 5 Jan. - Sun., 6 Jan.)			8.0 <sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Recorded at Piper City.

<sup>b</sup>27.6% were afield on opening day and on the second day, and 57.2% were afield on opening day and/or on the second day.

<sup>c</sup>46.0% (n = 487) for hunters who usually hunted in counties in the North Zone.

<sup>d</sup>11.4% (n = 35) for hunters who usually hunted in counties in the South Zone.

Table 5. Type of area or condition, number of days afield, and number of pheasants harvested by respondents who hunted game-farm pheasants in Illinois during the 1990-91 season (n = 128).

Type of Area or Condition	Percentage of Hunters	Days Afield per Hunter <sup>a</sup>	<u>Pheasants Harvested</u>	
			Per Day <sup>a</sup>	Per Hunter <sup>a</sup>
Released own birds	12.5	4.3	1.7	7.4
Private licensed preserve	25.8	2.8	2.4	6.7
State controlled area	68.0	3.0	1.5	4.5
All areas/conditions		3.1	1.7	5.4

<sup>a</sup>For hunters who were active in the respective area or condition.

Table 6. Attitudes of pheasant hunters toward the dates used for the wild pheasant hunting season in Illinois in 1990-91. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

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Responses to the question, "In recent years, the wild Illinois pheasant hunting season has opened on the first Saturday in November. In your opinion, is that opening date:"

	(522) <sup>a</sup>
*About right	70.1%
*Too early	18.4
*Too late	9.6
*No opinion	1.9

Responses to the question, "In recent years, the Illinois wild pheasant season has ended on the Saturday or holiday nearest January 1 in the North Zone and one week later in the South Zone. In your opinion, is that closing date:"

	(522)
*About right	36.4%
*Too early	58.0
*Too late	3.1
*No opinion	2.5

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<sup>a</sup>Respondents who hunted wild pheasants  $\geq 1$  days in Illinois in 1990-91.

Table 7. Attitudes of pheasant hunters toward the types of projects that Illinois Pheasant Stamp funds should support. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Responses to the question, "As a purchaser of an Illinois Pheasant Stamp, please rank the following projects in the order you prefer for Pheasant Stamp funding: ("1" for your 1st choice, "2" for your 2nd choice, and so on)."

	<u>Type of Pheasant Hunted</u>		
	<u>Wild</u>	<u>Game-farm</u>	<u>Combined</u>
	(506) <sup>a</sup>	(122) <sup>a</sup>	(545) <sup>a</sup>
*Pheasant habitat management on private lands	55.9% <sup>b</sup>	35.2%	53.4%
*Pheasant habitat management on state lands	18.0	26.2	18.9
*Acquisition of a few large hunting areas	5.3	15.7	7.5
*Acquisition of many small scattered pheasant habitat areas	23.1	26.2	23.3

<sup>a</sup>Respondents who hunted wild, game-farm, and wild and/or game-farm pheasants, respectively,  $\geq 1$  days in Illinois in 1990-91.

<sup>b</sup>Percentage who selected the project as their first choice.

Table 8. Attitudes of pheasant hunters toward the management and utilization of state-owned controlled pheasant hunting areas in Illinois. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Responses to the question, "If you had the opportunity, would you likely hunt a State Controlled Pheasant Area one or more days per year?"

	<u>Type of Pheasant Hunted</u>		
	<u>Wild</u>	<u>Game-farm</u>	<u>Combined</u>
	(520) <sup>a</sup>	(126) <sup>a</sup>	(567) <sup>a</sup>
*Yes	51.0%	86.5%	53.8%
*No	30.8	7.9	29.1
*Don't know	18.2	5.6	17.1

In your opinion, Department of Conservation pheasant management programs should be given the following priorities: (rank statements below in priority order, "1" for your 1st choice, "2" for your second choice, and so on).

	<u>Type of Pheasant Hunted</u>		
	<u>Wild</u>	<u>Game-farm</u>	<u>Combined</u>
	(511)	(122)	(553)
*Hunting wild pheasants on private land	65.2% <sup>b</sup>	43.4%	63.1%
*Hunting wild pheasants on public hunting areas	24.2	27.4	24.8
*Hunting hand-reared pheasants on private licensed hunting preserves	1.3	2.6	1.4
*Hunting hand-reared pheasants on State Controlled Pheasant Areas	11.7	30.0	13.4

(continued)

Table 8 (Continued).

Responses to the question, "In your opinion, how should the daily fee be set for hunting a State Controlled Pheasant Area?"

	<u>Type of Pheasant Hunted</u>		
	<u>Wild</u>	<u>Game-farm</u>	<u>Combined</u>
	(508)	(122)	(550)
*No extra fee, funds from hunting license sales should pay added costs	32.7%	40.2%	33.8%
*The Controlled Pheasant Area fee could be increased, but should be kept below cost of operation	21.3	25.4	21.8
*Controlled Pheasant Area fee should fully cover all costs of operation	46.0	34.4	44.4

Responses to the question, "What is the maximum daily fee you would be willing to pay to hunt a State Controlled Pheasant Hunting Area?"

	<u>Type of Pheasant Hunted</u>		
	<u>Wild</u>	<u>Game-farm</u>	<u>Combined</u>
	(471)	(126)	(515)
\$10	57.3%	53.2%	57.4%
\$15	23.8	31.7	24.9
\$20	14.0	10.3	13.0
\$25	3.4	4.8	3.3
\$30	0.4	0.0	0.4
\$35	1.1	0.0	1.0
Mean	\$13.46	\$13.34	\$13.37

<sup>a</sup>Respondents who hunted wild, game-farm, and wild and/or game-farm pheasants, respectively,  $\geq 1$  days in Illinois in 1990-91.

<sup>b</sup>Percentage who selected the program as their first choice.

Table 9. Some characteristics of pheasant hunters in Illinois in 1990-91. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Characteristic	<u>Type of Pheasant Hunted</u>		
	Wild	Game-farm	Combined
Mean age in years	(524) <sup>a</sup> 37.4	(128) <sup>a</sup> 40.1	(571) <sup>a</sup> 38.0
Mean years hunted pheasants	(523) 20.1	(128) 20.9	(569) 20.3
Membership in organizations	(504)	(123)	(547)
Pheasants Forever	10.7	14.6	11.5
Quail Unlimited	2.4	7.4	2.8
Illinois Wildlife Federation	4.0	9.9	4.4
Other organizations	9.5	9.4	9.5 <sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Respondents who hunted wild, game-farm, and wild and/or game-farm pheasants, respectively,  $\geq 1$  days in Illinois in 1990-91.

<sup>b</sup>Includes local sportsmen's clubs (3.8%), Ducks Unlimited (3.1%), National Rifle Association (1.3%), and 13 miscellaneous organizations (1.3%).

Table 10. Estimated expenditures by pheasant hunters in Illinois in 1990-91. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Money Spent	Percentage of Hunters			
	Wild Only (436)	Game-farm Only (39)	Wild and Game-farm (88)	All Pheasants (568)
< \$100	41.0	30.8	22.7	37.7
\$100 - \$250	33.5	35.9	29.5	32.9
\$250 - \$500	15.8	20.5	15.9	16.2
\$500 - \$1,000	6.9	7.7	18.2	8.6
\$1,000 - \$2,000	2.1	5.1	8.0	3.2
> \$2,000	0.7	0.0	5.7	1.4
Mean	\$243	\$289	\$550	\$294
Total* (in millions)	\$19.8	\$2.0	\$9.0	\$30.8

\*Based on an estimated 97,764 wild pheasant hunters in Illinois during the 1990 season. The 97,764 hunters included 81,437 who hunted wild pheasants only and 16,327 who hunted both wild and game-farm pheasants. An additional 6,991 hunters hunted game-farm pheasants only.

Table 11. Estimated expenditures for hunting wild and game-farm pheasants in Illinois in 1990-91.

Parameter	Wild Pheasants	Game-Farm Pheasants	All Pheasants
Hunters	97,761 <sup>a,c</sup>	23,268 <sup>b,c</sup>	104,705 <sup>c</sup>
Days afield	608,261 <sup>a</sup>	63,109 <sup>b</sup>	671,370
Pheasants harvested	372,920 <sup>a</sup>	108,889 <sup>b</sup>	481,809
Total expenditures	\$23,900,000 <sup>d</sup>	\$6,900,000 <sup>d</sup>	\$30,800,000 <sup>d</sup>
Per hunter	\$244	\$296	\$294
Per day afield	\$39	\$109	\$46
Per pheasant harvested	\$64	\$63	\$64

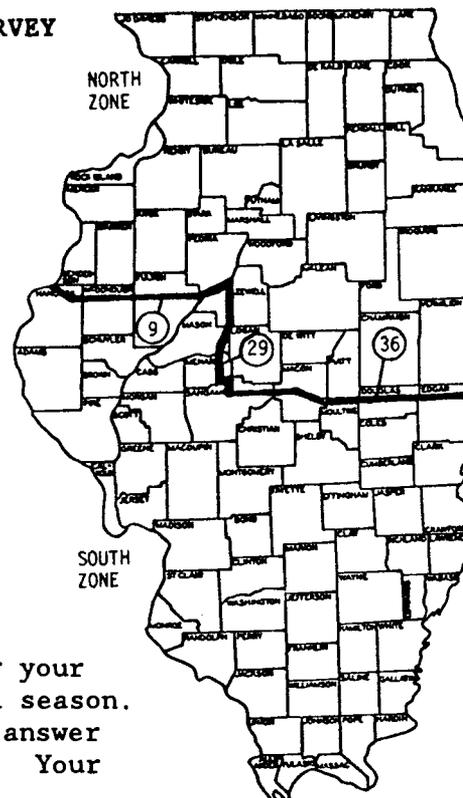
<sup>a</sup>Estimates were from Anderson et al. (1991).

<sup>b</sup>Based on estimates for wild pheasants and percentages in Table 2.

<sup>c</sup>Includes 16,327 individuals who hunted both wild and game-farm pheasants.

<sup>d</sup>Calculated from data in Tables 2 and 10.

1990-91 ILLINOIS PHEASANT HUNTER SURVEY



INSTRUCTIONS

Please answer the questions on the following pages for your pheasant hunting activities in Illinois during the 1990-91 season.

If you did not hunt pheasants in Illinois in 1990-91, answer only the questions that apply to you (PART I and PART IV). Your opinions are important even if you did not hunt.

Report only your kill. DO NOT report the kill of others with whom you may have hunted. Your responses are strictly confidential and will never be associated with your name. Since you are a part of a small, randomly selected group, your participation is very important.

If you can't remember exact figures, give your best estimate. When completed, insert questionnaire into the self-addressed envelope and mail. Comments are welcome but please write them on a separate sheet of paper to receive proper attention.

1990-91 ILLINOIS PHEASANT HUNTER SURVEY

PART I:

1. Did you purchase a resident Illinois hunting license for the 1990-91 season?  
(circle number of appropriate answer)

Yes.....1                      No.....2

2. Did you purchase an Illinois State Pheasant Stamp for your personal use for the 1990-91 season? (circle number of appropriate answer)

Yes.....1                      No.....2

3. Did you purchase one or more additional Illinois State Pheasant Stamps not for your personal use in 1990? (circle number of appropriate answer)

Yes.....1                      No.....2

If yes, how many additional stamps did you purchase?

Number purchased \_\_\_\_\_

4. Did you hunt pheasants in Illinois during the 1990-91 season?  
(circle number of appropriate answer)

Yes.....1                      No.....2

Figure 1. The 1990 Illinois Pheasant Hunter Survey questionnaire (continued).

IF YOU DID NOT HUNT PHEASANTS IN ILL. DURING THE 1990-91 SEASON, SKIP TO PART IV.

PART II. The following questions apply only to the hunting of wild free-living pheasants. If you hunted only game-farm or hand-reared released pheasants, skip to Part III.

5. If you answered "yes" to question 4, please answer the following questions about the number of different days you hunted wild pheasants in Illinois and the number of wild pheasants you harvested for each month of the 1990-91 season? (write in the number of days and number of pheasants that apply)

Number of days in Nov. 1990 \_\_\_\_\_ Number of wild pheasants harvested \_\_\_\_\_

Number of days in Dec. 1990 \_\_\_\_\_ Number of wild pheasants harvested \_\_\_\_\_

Number of days in Jan. 1991 \_\_\_\_\_ Number of wild pheasants harvested \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of days.... \_\_\_\_\_ Total number of wild pheasants ... \_\_\_\_\_

6. In which county did you hunt wild pheasants most in Illinois in 1990-91?

Name of county.....\_\_\_\_\_

7. Did you hunt wild pheasants in Illinois on opening day (Saturday, November 3) of the 1990-91 season? (circle number of appropriate answer)

Yes.....1                      No.....2

8. Did you hunt wild pheasants in Illinois on the second day (Sunday, November 4) of the 1990-91 season? (circle number of appropriate answer)

Yes.....1                      No.....2

9. Did you hunt wild pheasants on any of the last day four days (Saturday, Dec. 29 thru Tuesday, Jan. 1) of the 1990-91 season in the North Zone? (circle number of appropriate answer)

Yes.....1                      No.....2

10. Did you hunt wild pheasants on any of the last two days (Saturday Jan. 5 thru Sunday, January 6) of the 1990-91 season in the South Zone? (circle number of appropriate answer)

Yes.....1                      No.....2

PART III. The following questions (11 and 12) apply to game-farm or hand-reared released pheasant hunting only.

11. Did you hunt game-farm or hand-reared released pheasants in Illinois in 1990-91?

(circle number of appropriate answer)

Yes.....1                      No.....2

12. If you answered "yes" to question 11, on how many days did you hunt hand-reared pheasants and how many pheasants did you kill under the following conditions?

(circle number of all that apply and enter number of days and birds)

- a. Released your own birds.....1 Number of days \_\_\_\_\_ Number harvested \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Private licensed preserve.....2 Number of days \_\_\_\_\_ Number harvested \_\_\_\_\_
- c. State Controlled Pheasant Area.3 Number of days \_\_\_\_\_ Number harvested \_\_\_\_\_

PART IV. Opinion Questions. Please answer even if you did not hunt in 1990-91.

13. The Department of Conservation operates 8 state-owned Controlled Pheasant Hunting Areas located around the state. Hunters pay \$10 per day to hunt game-farm released pheasants (limit of 2 birds of either sex per day) on these areas. Each hunter is allowed one permit (reservation) per year, but may hunt additional days on a standby basis. A State Controlled Pheasant Area is not the same as a private licensed hunting preserve. With these facts in mind, what is your opinion on the following issues?

a. If you had the opportunity, would you likely hunt a State Controlled Pheasant Area one or more days per year?

(circle number of appropriate answer)

Yes.....1                  No.....2                  Don't know.....3

b. In your opinion, Department of Conservation pheasant management programs should be given the following priorities: (rank statements below in priority order, 1" for your 1st choice, "2" for your 2nd choice, and so on)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Hunting wild pheasants on private land.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hunting wild pheasants on public hunting areas.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hunting hand-reared pheasants on private licensed hunting preserves.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hunting hand-reared pheasants on State Controlled Pheasant Areas.

c. In your opinion, how should the daily fee be set for hunting a State Controlled Pheasant Area? (circle number of the statement that matches your opinion best)

- 1...No extra fee; funds from hunting license sales should pay added costs.
- 2...The Controlled Pheasant Area fee could be increased, but should be kept below the cost of operation.
- 3...Controlled Pheasant Area fee should fully cover all costs of operation.

d. What is the maximum daily fee you would be willing to pay to hunt a State Controlled Pheasant Hunting Area? (circle number of appropriate answer)

\$10.....1      \$15.....2      \$20.....3      \$25.....4      \$30.....5      \$35.....6

14. About how much money do you think you spent for pheasant hunting in Illinois during the 1990-91 season (or the last season you hunted)? Include license fees, travel and gasoline, lodging, food and drink, dogs and their maintenance, guns, ammo, clothing, boots, and other equipment purchased for the 1990-91 season. (circle number of appropriate answer)

- |                       |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Less than \$100.....1 | \$500 to \$1000.....4  |
| \$100 to \$250.....2  | \$1000 to \$2000.....5 |
| \$250 to \$500.....3  | More than \$2000....6  |

15. As a purchaser of an Illinois Pheasant Stamp, please rank the following projects in the order you prefer for Pheasant Stamp funding: ("1" for your 1st choice, "2" for your 2nd choice, and so on)

- Pheasant habitat management on private lands.....\_\_\_\_\_
- Pheasant habitat management on state lands.....\_\_\_\_\_
- Acquisition of a few large pheasant hunting areas.....\_\_\_\_\_
- Acquisition of many small scattered pheasant habitat areas.....\_\_\_\_\_

16. In recent years, the wild Illinois pheasant season has opened on the first Saturday in November. In your opinion, is that opening date: (circle number of appropriate answer)

- about right?....1    too early?.....2    too late?.....3    No opinion.....4

17. In recent years, the Illinois wild pheasant season has ended on the Sunday or holiday nearest to January 1 in the North Zone and one week later in the South Zone. In your opinion, is that closing date: (circle number of appropriate answer)

- about right?....1    too early?.....2    too late?.....3    No opinion.....4

18. How many years have you hunted pheasants?      Number of years \_\_\_\_\_

19. How old were you on your last birthday?      Years of age \_\_\_\_\_

20. Are you a member of a sportsmen's organization that represents your pheasant hunting interest in Illinois? (circle number of appropriate organization(s) listed)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Pheasants Forever.....	1.....	2
Quail Unlimited.....	1.....	2
Illinois Wildlife Federation.....	1.....	2

Other (write in) \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your cooperation.  
POSTAGE IS PREPAID

Illinois



Department of Conservation

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CHICAGO OFFICE • ROOM 4-300 • 100 WEST RANDOLPH 60601  
MARK FRECH, DIRECTOR

Dear Fellow Sportsman:

You are one of a select group of Illinoisans asked to furnish information on your pheasant hunting activities during the past hunting season.

The information supplied by you and other selected hunters is vital to the management of the Illinois ring-necked pheasant. Our goals are to safeguard pheasant populations, to grant maximum pheasant hunting opportunity to licensed pheasant hunters, and to maintain an attractive level of hunter success.

The information you provide will be used to better understand the characteristics of our pheasant population and our pheasant hunters. It also will help us understand how pheasant hunters view their sport.

Your reply is very important, even if you did not hunt pheasants or were not successful. Only a limited number of pheasant hunters can be contacted, therefore, your response is urgently needed.

Please take a few minutes to fill out the parts of the questionnaire that apply to you. If you do not remember exact figures, please give your best estimate.

Drop the completed questionnaire in the mail. Postage is prepaid.

Sincerely,

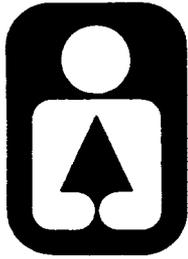
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey M. Ver Steeg". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over the typed name.

Jeffrey M. Ver Steeg  
Chief  
Division of Wildlife Resources

JMV:nb

Figure 2. The letter that accompanied the first mailing of the questionnaire.

Illinois



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MARK FRECH, DIRECTOR - KATHY SELCKE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Dear Fellow Sportsman:

Recently we mailed you a Pheasant Hunter Questionnaire, and requested that you fill it out and return it as soon as possible. We have not received your form at this time. Perhaps you have misplaced the questionnaire or have not found time to complete it.

We are enclosing another questionnaire which we hope you will complete and return to us. If you have already returned a questionnaire, please discard this one. The information supplied by you and other pheasant hunters being sampled will be of great value to the Department of Conservation in better directing the management of our ring-necked pheasant resources.

Please fill out the questionnaire completely and return it even if you did not hunt pheasants or were not successful.

Please drop the completed questionnaire in the mail. Postage is prepaid. Your prompt attention will be sincerely appreciated.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey M. Ver Steeg  
Chief

Division of Wildlife Resources

JMV:WA:nb

Enclosure

Figure 3. The letter that accompanied the second mailing of the questionnaire.

Illinois



# Department of Conservation

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MARK FRECH, DIRECTOR - KATHY SELCKE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Dear Fellow Sportsman:

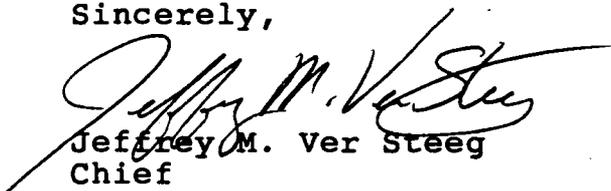
This letter is to remind you that we still would like to receive a report of your pheasant hunting activities for the past season. We do not like to keep bothering you, but this information is very important and only you can supply it.

Another copy of the questionnaire is enclosed. We hope you will complete it and return it as soon as possible. If you have already returned a questionnaire, please discard this one. Your response is needed, even though you did not hunt pheasants or had an unsuccessful season.

Postage is prepaid for returning the questionnaire. Please drop the completed questionnaire in the mail. Your prompt attention will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey M. Ver Steeg

Chief

Division of Wildlife Resources

JMV:WA:nb

Enclosure

Figure 4. The letter that accompanied the third mailing of the questionnaire.





