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**Department of Natural Resources
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**Results of the 1996-97 Illinois Pheasant
Hunter Survey**

**Administrative Report
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RESULTS OF THE 1996-97 ILLINOIS PHEASANT HUNTER SURVEY

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Abstract: Purchasers of the 1995 Illinois Habitat Stamp who hunted pheasants (*Phasianus colchicus*) the previous year were surveyed (mail-questionnaire) to determine their pheasant hunting activities, harvest, attitudes, and opinion, for the 1996-97 season. The mailing list consisted of 2,770 residents, 1,851 (67%) of which returned usable questionnaires. Of these respondents, 931 (50%) hunted pheasants in Illinois in 1996-97. Among these hunters, 818 (88%) had hunted wild pheasants (81% of days afield) and 309 (33%) had hunted game-farm released pheasants (19% of days afield). Hunters who pursued wild pheasants were afield an average of 6.4 days; 43% of the days occurred in November, 46% in December, and 11% in January. The hunters spent an average of 3.7 hours afield per day, and 46% of them used dogs for all their hunts. An average of 2.8 wild pheasants were harvested per hunter for the season; 85% of the hunters took ≤ 5 pheasants. Hunting success was higher in the North Zone (0.47 pheasant per hunter per day) than in the South Zone (0.35). About one-half (53%) of the hunters harvested rabbits, bobwhite quail, gray partridge, and/or mourning doves while pursuing wild pheasants. Of the hunters (29%) who hunted on CRP (U.S. Department of Agriculture's Conservation Reserve Program) land, 84% believed the program helped pheasant populations. The number of game-farm released pheasants harvested in Illinois was estimated to be 143,700 birds in 1996-97. A majority (70%) of the hunters thought the opening date for the wild pheasant season (first Saturday in November) was about right. Similarly, a majority (51%) of the hunters in the South Zone thought the closing date in that zone (15 January) was about right. In the North Zone, a plurality (44%) believed their closing date (8 January) was about right. Most (68%) hunters preferred sunrise for the beginning of daily shooting time for pheasants, and most (83%) thought the regulation that required upland game hunters to wear a blaze (hunter) orange hat was appropriate. The most important reasons pheasant hunters gave for enjoying their sport were "having a good time with friends", "challenge and excitement of hunting", and "watching bird dogs work". Although 93% of the hunters said they enjoyed their sport much or very much, enjoyment decreased when no pheasants were bagged and again when no pheasants were seen. The pheasant hunters were 99.8% male, averaged 39 years of age, and 74% of them were married. They had hunted pheasants for an average of 21 years. Implications of these findings are discussed.

Introduced in Illinois during the late 1800s and early 1900s, the pheasant has become a popular and durable game bird in the Prairie State (Robertson 1958:4, Preno and Labisky 1971:15-25). The species is intimately associated with intensive agriculture and the northeastern third of Illinois (Robertson 1958:13). During the 5 years from 1992-93 to 1996-97, an annual average of 82,900 hunters spent 490,500 days afield and harvested 286,500 wild pheasants in the state (Anderson and Campbell 1997). Many thousands of game-farm released pheasants are also harvested annually in Illinois. According to a survey conducted for the 1991-92 season, 45% of the pheasants harvested in the state were of game farm origin (Anderson and David (1992)).

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (DNR) needs information about the activities, attitudes, and opinions of the state's pheasant hunters. With such information, the DNR can more capably establish biologically and sociologically acceptable pheasant management programs and hunting regulations. Sportsmen, who spend countless hours in the great outdoors, are the DNR's "eyes and ears" for gathering information. By tapping this source of information, the DNR can improve its programs and sportsmen reap the benefits. Both the DNR and the sportsmen it serves profit from this cooperative partnership.

Illinois' pheasant hunters were previously surveyed following the 1990-91 and 1991-92 seasons (Anderson and David 1991 and 1992). As currently planned, each of the various groups of upland game hunters will be surveyed at approximately 5-year intervals. Thus, the next pheasant hunter survey is scheduled

for the 2001-02 season.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

A 6-page, 29-question questionnaire was developed specifically for the 1996-97 Illinois Pheasant Hunter Survey (Fig. 1). This questionnaire and a letter of explanation (Fig. 2) were mailed to 2,770 potential pheasant hunters on 27 January 1997. Non-respondents were sent 2nd and 3rd copies of the questionnaire, and accompanying letters (Figs. 3 and 4), on 10 March and 21 April, respectively. As of 5 June 1997, 1,851 usable questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 67%.

The mailing list for this survey was developed from information recorded on 1995 Illinois Habitat Stamp stubs. The stub was designed to capture the purchaser's name, mailing address, and game species (including pheasant) hunted during the previous year in Illinois (Fig. 5). License vendors were instructed to fill out the stubs and return them to the DNR Permit Office in Springfield. By systematically sampling the 237,325 stubs that were returned (total sales was 289,461), 2,770 purchasers were identified as pheasant hunters. These 2,770 people, all Illinois residents, were notified by a letter postmarked 1 November 1996 that they would receive a questionnaire at the close of the pheasant hunting season. The notice included a form for keeping records of hunting activity and pheasants harvested (Fig. 6).

Data were transferred from returned (filled-out) questionnaires to a computer file using a data management program

(Ashton-Tate dBASE IV). The data were analyzed with a statistical program (SPSS Inc. SPSS 6.1). Results were tabulated relative to the northern half of Illinois (North Zone), the southern half (South Zone), and the entire state.

HUNTING REGULATIONS IN 1996-97

For purposes of setting the 1996-97 hunting season dates for pheasants and other upland game, the state was divided into 2 zones: north and south. 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.

Illinois' 1996-97 pheasant hunting season began on 2 November in both the North and South Zones. The season extended through 8 January and 15 January, respectively, in the 2 zones. Legal shooting hours were from sunrise to sunset. The bag limit was 2 cock pheasants per day and 6 in possession.

FINDINGS

Of the 1,851 people who completed and returned questionnaires, 93% purchased a resident Illinois hunting license, and 92% purchased an Illinois Habitat Stamp, for the 1996-97 season (Table 1). One-half (50%) of the respondents hunted wild and/or game-farm released pheasants in Illinois, and 6.7% hunted wild pheasants in another state, in 1996-97.

Of the respondents who did not hunt wild pheasants in 1996-

97, one-third (32%) did not do so because there was "no place to hunt" (Table 2). Nearly as many of the respondents (31%) were "too busy" to hunt wild pheasants and 23% said there were "very few pheasants". Additional respondents said they did not hunt due to "age or health" (5.5%), "cost too much" (2.3%), or "friends don't hunt" (2.1%). The remaining 5.0% did not pursue pheasants in 1996-97 for a variety of reasons.

Pheasant Hunting Activities

Among the 931 respondents who pursued pheasants in Illinois during the 1996-97 season, 88% hunted wild pheasants and 33% hunted game-farm released pheasants (Table 3). There were 196 (21.1%) hunters who pursued both types of pheasants. In the 1991-92 Illinois Pheasant Hunter Survey, 81% of the active hunters hunted wild pheasants and 35% pursued game-farm released pheasants (Anderson and David 1992).

The data in Table 3, in conjunction with findings of the annual Illinois Hunter Harvest Survey (Anderson and Campbell 1997), suggest there were 58,600 individuals who hunted wild pheasants only, 10,600 who hunted game-farm released pheasants only, and 18,500 who hunted both types of pheasants, in Illinois during the 1996-97 season. In the 1991-92 Illinois Pheasant Hunter Survey, the estimates were 73,300, 21,500, and 17,100, respectively (Anderson and David 1992). For hunters who pursued wild pheasants, 70.9% were active in the North Zone and 29.1% were active in the South Zone in 1996-97.

The pheasant hunters spent 81% of their days afield pursuing

wild birds and 19% of their days shooting game-farm released birds in 1996-97 (Table 3). These findings, combined with those from Anderson and Campbell (1997), indicate that hunters spent an estimated 417,400 days afield pursuing wild pheasants and 97,900 days afield shooting game-farm released pheasants in Illinois in 1996-97. In the 1991-92 Illinois Pheasant Hunter Survey, the estimates were 616,700 and 136,300, respectively (Anderson and David 1992).

The respondents who hunted wild pheasants spent an average of 6.4 days afield during the 1996-97 season (Table 4). The number of days spent afield did not differ between hunters in the North Zone and those in the South Zone. Statewide, 60% of the hunters spent 1-5 days afield. In the 1991-92 Illinois Pheasant Hunter Survey (Anderson and David 1992), hunters reported spending an average of 7.1 days afield. The annual Illinois Hunter Harvest Survey indicated that (wild) pheasant hunters spent an average of 5.4 days afield, with 68% spending 1-5 days, in 1996-97 (Anderson and Campbell 1997).

The respondents who hunted wild pheasants expended 43% of their days afield during November, 46% during December, and 11% during January in 1996-97 (Table 4). The "use rate" (mean days afield/number of days available to hunt) was greater in November (0.10) than in December (0.09) or January (0.07). With the exception of January, use rates were similar for the North and South Zones. However, the few days available to hunt in January during the 1991-92 season (1 day in North Zone and 5 days in South Zone) had a relatively high use rate (0.29) that year

(Anderson and David 1992).

Of the respondents who hunted game-farm released pheasants, 10% released their own birds, 37% pursued their sport on private licensed preserves, and 67% visited state-controlled areas, during the 1996-97 season (Table 5). These hunters spent averages of 2.9, 3.7, and 3.1 days afield, respectively, to hunt game-farm released pheasants. Of the total days afield devoted to hunting game-farm released pheasants, 8% involved hunters who released their own birds, 36% took place on private licensed preserves, and 56% occurred in state-controlled areas.

Respondents who pursued wild pheasants hunted an average of 3.7 hours per day afield in 1996-97 (Table 6). More than one-half (54%) of the hunters were in the field between 3 and 4 hours per trip. Overall, the amount of time spent afield per day did not differ between hunters in the North Zone and those in the South Zone.

Slightly less than one-half (46%) of the respondents who hunted wild pheasants used hunting dogs for all of their pheasant hunts in 1996-97 (Table 7). Another 17% of the hunters had hunting dogs with them on some of their pheasant hunts, whereas the remaining hunters (37%) never had the company of a dog.

Pheasant Harvest

Of the pheasants reported harvested in the present (1996-97) survey, 48% were wild birds and 52% were game-farm released birds (Table 3). In the 1991-92 Illinois Pheasant Hunter Survey, the percentages were 55% and 45%, respectively (Anderson and David

1992).

Hunters of wild pheasants harvested an average of 2.8 birds per hunter for the entire 1996-97 season (Table 8). The average pheasant harvest per hunter per season was greater in the North Zone (3.0 pheasants) than in the South Zone (2.3 pheasants). Statewide, 40% of the hunters harvested no pheasants and 45% took 1-5 pheasants, during the 1996-97 season. In the 1991-92 Illinois Pheasant Hunter Survey, hunters reported harvesting an average of 4.0 pheasants in the North Zone, 3.1 in the South Zone, and 3.9 pheasants statewide (Anderson and David 1992). Thus, the disparity between hunters in the North and South Zones was detected by both surveys and is to be expected based on the distribution of pheasants in Illinois (Warner 1981). The annual Illinois Hunter Harvest Survey indicated the wild pheasant harvest averaged 3.1 birds per hunter per season in 1996-97; 29% of the hunters took no birds and 54% took 1-5 birds (Anderson and Campbell 1997).

One-half (50%) of the harvest of wild pheasants occurred in November, and 42% took place in December, during the 1996-97 season (Table 8). The remaining birds, 8% of harvest, were taken in January. The harvest rate (number of pheasants harvested per hunter per day afield) was greater in the North Zone (0.47) than in the South Zone (0.35). This difference was also evident in the 1991-92 Illinois Pheasant Hunter Survey (Anderson and David 1992). Statewide, harvest rates were highest in November and lowest in January during the 1996-97 season. In the 1991-92 survey, the harvest rate was slightly lower in December than in

January (Anderson and David 1992).

Respondents who hunted game-farm released pheasants harvested an average of 2.0 birds per hunter per day afield and 7.5 birds per hunter for the entire 1996-97 season (Table 5). Since an estimated 237,400 wild pheasants were harvested in Illinois in 1996-97 (Anderson and Campbell 1997), and this estimate represents 48.2% of all pheasants harvested (Table 3), the harvest of game-farm released pheasants equates to 255,100 birds. However, because of response bias, the actual harvest of wild pheasants appears to be 40-74% (\bar{x} =56.3%) of estimates calculated from data obtained with questionnaires (Hjersman 1951, Edwards 1959, Pfingsten 1980). If so, the actual pheasant harvest in Illinois in 1996-97 was more like 133,700 wild birds and 143,700 game-farm released birds. Based on data in Table 5, the game-farm released pheasants would include 11,100 birds that were released by the hunters who shot them, 69,500 birds that were associated with private licensed preserves, and 63,100 birds that were on state-controlled areas. According to DNR records, 125,623 pheasants were harvested on private licensed preserves (T.L. Musser, pers. commun.) and 53,400 were taken on state-controlled areas in 1996-97 (Willms and Wieda 1997).

Other Game Harvested

About one-half (53%) of Illinois' pheasant hunters harvested other species of upland game while in the field during the 1996-97 season (Table 9). The vast majority of these hunters (41% of all pheasant hunters) took ≥ 1 rabbits, while 24% targeted

bobwhite quail. Quail were much more apt to be taken by pheasant hunters in the South Zone (48%) than in the North Zone (13%), no doubt because quail are more abundant in the former. A small fraction (0.4%) of the pheasant hunters, all in the North Zone, harvested gray partridge. The season dates for these 3 species--rabbits, quail, partridge--coincided with the pheasant season in 1996-97.

For mourning doves, the 1996 season was split into 2 time periods: 1 September-14 October and 2-17 November. Thus, the last 16 days of the dove season overlapped the first 16 days of the upland game season. During this period, 9% of Illinois' pheasant hunters harvested ≥ 1 doves. The percentage of pheasant hunters who took doves was 8.5% in the North Zone and 10.5% in the South Zone.

Attitudes and Opinions

Difficulty in Finding a Place to Hunt. One-fourth (27%) of the respondents who hunted wild pheasants indicated they had no difficulty in finding a place to hunt pheasants in Illinois during the 1996-97 season (Table 10). An equal proportion of the hunters experienced much difficulty in their attempts to find a place to hunt. A higher percentage of South-zone hunters than North-zone hunters experienced no difficulty in securing pheasant hunting places. Curiously, the same can be said for the percentage of hunters who experienced much difficulty.

Utilization and Evaluation of CRP Land. Slightly less than one-third (29%) of the respondents who hunted wild pheasants

knowingly pursued their sport on private farmland that was enrolled in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) (Table 11). Of these hunters, 84% felt the CRP helped pheasant populations. This view prevailed among hunters in the North Zone, South Zone, and statewide. In 1991-92, 26% of Illinois' pheasant hunters knowingly hunted on CRP land, and 82% of these hunters felt the program helped pheasant populations (Anderson and David 1992). In 1995-96, 39% of Illinois' quail hunters knowingly hunted on CRP land, 74% of which believed the program helped quail populations (Anderson and David 1997).

Dates for Opening and Closing Pheasant Season. Majorities of the (wild) pheasant hunters in the North Zone (70%), South Zone (69%), and statewide (70%) thought the first Saturday in November was about the right date for opening the pheasant season in Illinois (Table 12). When asked how they felt about opening the pheasant season on the same date (e.g., 1 November, 10 November, etc.) every year, a plurality (45%) responded negatively to this idea. North-zone hunters and South-zone hunters were in agreement on this issue. Majorities of the hunters in the North Zone (66%), South Zone (64%), and statewide (65%) preferred opening the season on a weekend.

A plurality of the (wild) pheasant hunters in the North Zone (44%) thought the 1996-97 closing date (8 January) in that zone was about right (Table 12). Similarly, a majority of the hunters in the South Zone (51%) liked the closing date (16 January) in that zone. Pluralities of hunters in both zones (42% and 44%,

respectively) preferred that the season close on a weekend or holiday rather than on a standard day.

Legal Shooting Time. When the (wild) pheasant hunters were asked to express their preference for the beginning of daily shooting time, the vast majority (68%) chose sunrise over 1/2 hour before sunrise (Table 13). North-zone hunters (68%) and south-zone hunters (74%) agreed on this point. Statewide, only 25% of the hunters opted for 1/2 hour before sunrise.

Wearing Blaze (Hunter) Orange Hat. An overwhelming majority (83%) of the (wild) pheasant hunters thought the regulation that required upland game hunters to wear a blaze (hunter) orange hat while afield was appropriate (Table 14). Three-fourths (76%) of the hunters personally liked the regulation. Hunters in both zones, North and South, expressed the same sentiments on this issue.

Importance of Pheasant Hunting to Hunters. The importance or worth of a recreational activity can be judged by the degree of satisfaction from, and level of commitment to, that activity (Filion and Parker 1984). Thus, the questionnaire for this survey contained 5 questions (questions #20-#23 and #25) relating to satisfaction/ commitment of pheasant hunting for Illinois hunters (Fig. 1).

One question asked hunters to rate the 4 top reasons (from 9 options) they enjoy pheasant hunting (Table 15). On a relative scale (100=perfect), "having a good time with friends" (49) was rated first and "challenge and excitement of hunting" (40) was second. Other important reasons included "fresh air, exercise,

healthy living" (34), "watching bird dogs work (32%), "nature, sunsets, animals, plants" (24), and "a good way to relax (21). "Shooting game" (14) and "eating game" (13) were near the bottom of the list.

Three additional questions asked (wild) pheasant hunters how much they enjoy their sport under various conditions or circumstances (Table 16). From a general perspective, almost all (93%) of the hunters indicated they enjoy pheasant hunting "much" or "very much". The percentage of hunters who fell into these categories dropped to 69% when no pheasants were bagged and to 32% when no pheasants were seen. Ardent hunters (those who spent ≥ 11 days afield) were more apt to say they enjoy pheasant hunting "very much" than a representative sample of all pheasant hunters. Quail hunters expressed essentially the same feelings about their sport in 1995-96 (Anderson and David 1997).

The 5th, and last, question about satisfaction/commitment of pheasant hunting dealt with how hunters would feel if they had to give up their sport (Table 16). Almost two-thirds (62%) of the hunters said they "would miss it but less than other recreational activities". A smaller percentage (33%) "would miss it more than any other recreational activity" and 5% "would probably not miss it very much". These findings essentially mirror those for rabbit hunters and quail hunters as regards their feelings about giving up their respective activities (Anderson and David 1996 and 1997).

Ardent pheasant hunters were much more apt to say they "would miss [their sport] more than any other recreational

activity" than pheasant hunters in general. Like ardent quail hunters (Anderson and David 1997), a majority (56%) of the ardent pheasant hunters conveyed these sentiments (Table 16).

Characteristics of Pheasant Hunters

Respondents who hunted wild pheasants in Illinois during the 1996-97 season were 99.8% male and averaged 39 years of age (Table 17). Three-fourths (74%) of them were married, compared to 19% who had never married and 7% who were divorced. They had hunted pheasants for an average of 21 years. This profile of pheasant hunters is quite similar to those for rabbit hunters and quail hunters in Illinois (Anderson and David 1996 and 1997).

DISCUSSION

The mailing list for the present (1996-97) pheasant hunter survey was developed by systematically selecting purchasers of the previous year's (1995) Illinois Habitat Stamp who (according to information on the stamp stub) had hunted pheasants the year before (1994). A similar approach was used for the 1991-92 Illinois Pheasant Hunter Survey, which sampled purchasers of the previous year's Illinois Pheasant Stamp^a (Anderson and David 1992). Participants in these surveys had to have hunted pheasants in Illinois in year i and again in year $i+2$ or $i+1$,

^aDiscontinued after the 1992 season. respectively. Thus, both surveys favored--i.e., over represented--the more ardent, more dedicated pheasant hunters.

Although 93% of the respondents to the present survey

purchased a hunting license again in 1996-97, only 50% of them hunted pheasants again in that year (Table 1). The 3 top reasons the inactive pheasant hunters gave for not hunting were "no place to hunt", "too busy", and "very few pheasants" (Table 2). In comparison, the 3 top reasons inactive quail hunters gave for not hunting were "very few quail", "too busy", and "no place to hunt" (Anderson and David 1997). For inactive rabbit hunters, the 3 top reasons were "too busy", "very few rabbits", and "no place to hunt" (Anderson and David 1996). It is noteworthy, that regardless of the upland game pursued, the 3 top reasons for not hunting were the same. However, the most important reason differed with each group of hunters: for pheasant hunters it was "no place to hunt", for quail hunters it was "very few quail", and for rabbit hunters it was "too busy". Relatively more pheasant hunters (58%) than quail hunters (51%) or rabbit hunters (45%) indicated they had moderate or much difficulty in finding a place to hunt (Anderson and David 1996 and 1997).

Members of the conservation and hunting fraternity are concerned about hunters dropping out of the hunting sports (Decker et al. 1993). In a recent national survey, the 5 top factors that strongly influenced inactive hunters in deciding not to hunt were "amount of free time", "lost interest", "work obligations", "family obligations", and "the perception of causing pain to animals" (Duda et al. 1995). The number of Illinois pheasant hunters has declined from a high of 261,000 in 1956 (Preno and Labisky 1971) to 77,000 in 1996 (Anderson and Campbell 1997).

The available evidence suggests that the number of hunters who hunted wild pheasants, as well as their days afield and harvest, decreased (-19%, -32%, and 39%, respectively) in Illinois from 1991-92 to 1996-97 (Anderson and Campbell 1997). Similar decreases were noted for the number of hunters who pursued game-farm pheasants (-25%), the days they spent afield (-28%), and the number of birds they bagged (-55%) (Anderson and David 1992 and present study). With regards to wild pheasants, much of Illinois received unusually high levels of precipitation during May and June 1996--conditions that were not conducive to pheasant reproduction. DNR population surveys indicate that pheasant numbers declined by as much as 50% from 1995 to 1996 (L.M. David, unpubl. data).

By wide margins, hunters in the North (70%) and South (69%) Zones felt that the first Saturday in November was about the right date for opening the wild pheasant season in Illinois (Table 12). Conversely, pluralities (45-47%) of the hunters rejected the idea of opening the season on the same date (e.g., 1 November, 10 November, etc.) every year. In addition, 44% of the pheasant hunters in the North Zone and 51% of those in the South Zone believed the closing dates (8 January and 15 January, respectively) were about right. However, a plurality of North-zone (42%) and South-zone (44%) hunters would like for the season to end on a weekend or holiday. These sentiments are almost identical to those expressed by quail hunters in 1995-96 (Anderson and David 1997). Although unanticipated changes in habitat conditions or population trends could require altering

the pheasant season dates at some point in the future, we see no reason for making any such changes at the present time.

The pheasant hunters expressed strong support (68%) for using sunrise as the beginning of legal pheasant hunting time each day (Table 13). Only 25% of the hunters opted for the alternative: 1/2 hour before sunrise. Thus, we recommend that legal hunting continue to begin at sunrise each day during the pheasant season in Illinois.

The pheasant hunters also showed strong support (83%) for the regulation that requires upland game hunters to wear a blaze (hunter) orange hat when afield (Table 14). Upland game hunters must also wear a blaze orange upper outer garment during the firearm deer seasons in those counties open to these seasons. As a consequence, the blaze orange requirement changes 8 times during the upland game season, depending on whether first firearm deer season, second firearm deer season, muzzleloader-only deer season, or handgun-only deer season is in or out. Because hunters find these regulations confusing and difficult to remember, we believe the blaze-orange requirement should be simplified. In our opinion, upland game hunters should be required to wear both a blaze orange hat and an upper outer garment at all times while in the field.

Like rabbit hunters in 1994-95 and quail hunters in 1995-96, pheasant hunters were asked a series of questions designed to shed light on their satisfaction from and level of commitment to their sport. Pheasant hunters listed "having a good time with friends" as the top reason for enjoying their sport (Table 15).

Other important reasons for enjoying pheasant hunters included "challenge and excitement of hunting"; "fresh air, exercise, healthy living"; and "watching bird dogs work". The pheasant hunters gave "shooting game" a low rating as a source of satisfaction. However, they also indicated that satisfaction decreased when no pheasants were bagged and again when no pheasants were seen (Table 16). These findings are similar to those previously reported for rabbit hunters and quail hunters (Anderson and David 1996 and 1997).

Many investigators have reported high levels of satisfaction among hunters with regards to their sport (Duda et al. 1995). For Illinois pheasant hunters, 62% would miss pheasant hunting if they had to give it up, and 33% would miss it more than any other recreational activity (Table 16). Rabbit hunters and quail hunters have views similar to pheasant hunters about their sports (Anderson and David 1996 and 1997). Duda et al. (1995) reported that almost all active hunters are very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with their hunting activities.

It appears that pheasant hunters, like rabbit hunters and quail hunters, do not have to consistently take game to derive satisfaction from their sports. Nevertheless, the act of taking game on occasion is essential to the overall hunting experience. As the Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset (1972:110-111) has aptly stated, "...one does not hunt in order to kill; on the contrary, one kills in order to have hunted". In this context, it seems appropriate to repeat the final paragraph from our report for the 1995-96 Illinois Quail Hunter Survey:

Most studies have found that killing game is not as important to hunter satisfaction as many other aspects of hunting (Duda et al. 1995). Hunters derive multiple satisfactions from their sport. Under the multiple satisfaction approach to wildlife management, aspects of hunting other than game bagged and days spent afield are important to wildlife managers (Hendee 1974). The quality of the hunting experience found by the hunter depends on the extent to which he fulfills the desired mix of satisfactions he seeks. The job of the wildlife manager includes perceptive judgement of the experiences and satisfactions that hunters seek and managers can provide (Hendee 1974).

Findings of other workers, and those of our surveys of rabbit, quail, and pheasant hunters in Illinois (Anderson and David 1996 and 1997), suggest that managers can respond to hunter satisfaction data in several ways. These include designing programs to (1) increase hunter access to private land, (2) improve hunting quality on public land, (3) increase game populations, (4) reduce hunter conflicts and interactions in the field, (5) accommodate social needs of hunters, and (6) compete with other recreational activities.

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Table 1. Percentage of respondents to the 1996-97 Illinois Pheasant Hunter Survey who purchased a resident hunting license, purchased a habitat stamp, hunted pheasants in Illinois, and hunted pheasants in another state, during the 1996-97 season (n=1,851 state residents).

| Activity | Number | Percentage |
|---|------------------|------------|
| Purchased resident Illinois hunting license | 1,723 | 93.1 |
| Purchased Illinois Habitat Stamp | 1,697 | 91.7 |
| Hunted pheasants in Illinois | | |
| Wild pheasants | 818 | 44.2 |
| Game-farm released pheasants | 309 | 16.7 |
| Total | 931 ^a | 50.3 |
| Hunted wild pheasants in another state | 124 ^b | 6.7 |

^aIncludes 622 respondents who hunted wild pheasants only, 113 respondents who hunted game-farm or hand-reared released pheasants only, and 196 respondents who hunted both types of pheasants.

^bOf the 818 respondents who hunted wild pheasants in Illinois, 70 (8.6%) also hunted wild pheasants in another state.

Table 2. Reasons given by respondents to the 1996-97 Illinois Pheasant Hunter Survey for not hunting wild pheasants in Illinois during the 1996-97 season (n=826).

| Reason | Percentage |
|---------------------------|------------|
| No place to hunt | 31.7 |
| Too busy | 30.6 |
| Very few pheasants | 22.8 |
| Age or health | 5.5 |
| Cost too much | 2.3 |
| Friends don't hunt | 2.1 |
| Unfavorable weather | 1.9 |
| Hunted other game species | 1.3 |
| Too many hunters | 1.0 |
| Too dangerous | 0.2 |
| Others ^a | 0.6 |

^aIncludes 5 miscellaneous reasons.

Table 3. Relative hunter activity and pheasant harvest for wild pheasants and for game-farm released pheasants in Illinois during the 1996-97 season. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

| Type of Pheasant Hunted | Percentage | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| | Hunters | Days Afield | Pheasant Harvest |
| | (931) | (6,030) | (4,411) |
| Wild | 87.9 ^a | 81.0 | 48.2 |
| Game-farm released | 33.2 ^a | 19.0 | 51.8 |

^a66.8% of the hunters hunted wild pheasants only, 12.1% hunted game-farm released pheasants only, and 21.1% hunted both types of pheasants.

Table 4. Number of days spent afield by respondents who hunted wild pheasants in Illinois during the 1996-97 season. The season extended from November 2 to January 8 in the North Zone and from November 2 to January 15 in the South Zone. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

| Parameter | North Zone (537) | South Zone (220) | Entire State (766) ^a |
|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| <u>November</u> | | | |
| Mean days | 2.73 | 2.81 | 2.75 |
| Percentage of days | 43 | 44 | 43 |
| Use rate ^b | 0.10 | 0.10 | 0.10 |
| <u>December</u> | | | |
| Mean days | 2.98 | 2.87 | 2.94 |
| Percentage of days | 47 | 45 | 46 |
| Use rate | 0.10 | 0.09 | 0.09 |
| <u>January</u> | | | |
| Mean days | 0.66 | 0.74 | 0.68 |
| Percentage of days | 10 | 11 | 11 |
| Use rate | 0.08 | 0.05 | 0.07 |
| <u>Entire Season</u> | | | |
| Mean days | 6.37 | 6.42 | 6.37 ^c |
| Percentage of days | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Use rate | 0.10 | 0.09 | 0.10 |

^aIncludes 9 hunters not identified as to zone.

^bMean days divided by number of days available to hunt.

^c60% of the hunters were afield 1-5 days, 21% were afield 6-10 days, 15% were afield 11-20 days, and 4% were afield 21-61 days.

Table 5. Type of area or condition, number of days afield, and number of pheasants harvested by respondents who hunted game-farm released pheasants in Illinois during the 1996-97 season. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

| Type of Area or Condition | <u>Hunters</u> | <u>Days Afield</u> | | <u>Pheasants Harvested Per Hunter</u> | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|------------|---|---------------|------------|
| | Percentage | Per Hunter | Percentage | Per Day | Per Season | Percentage |
| | (305) | | (1,147) | | | (2,283) |
| Released own birds | 9.8 | 2.9 | 8.4 | 1.8 | 5.3 | 7.7 |
| Private licensed preserves | 36.7 | 3.7 | 36.1 | 2.7 | 9.9 | 48.4 |
| State-controlled areas | 66.9 | 3.1 | 55.5 | 1.6 | 4.9 | 43.9 |
| All areas/ conditions | 100 | 3.8 | 100 | 2.0 | 7.5 | 100 |

Table 6. Number of hours spent per day afield by respondents who hunted wild pheasants in Illinois during the 1996-97 season. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

| Number of Hours | Percentage of Hunters | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|------------|--------------------|
| | North Zone | South Zone | Entire State |
| | (510) | (212) | (738) ^a |
| <1 | 0.8 | 0.5 | 0.8 |
| 1-2 | 22.2 | 10.8 | 18.8 |
| 3-4 | 53.5 | 54.8 | 54.0 |
| 5-6 | 19.0 | 29.2 | 21.8 |
| >6 | 4.5 | 4.7 | 4.6 |
| Mean | 3.7 hours | 3.7 hours | 3.7 hours |

^aIncludes 16 hunters not identified as to zone.

Table 7. The proportion of hunts for wild pheasants that involved the use of hunting dogs in Illinois during the 1996-97 season. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

| Proportion of Hunts | Percentage of Hunters | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|------------|--------------------|
| | North Zone | South Zone | Entire State |
| | (533) | (222) | (772) ^a |
| All | 44.0 | 51.7 | 46.3 |
| 75-99% | 3.6 | 3.2 | 3.4 |
| 50-74% | 5.4 | 5.9 | 5.4 |
| 25-49% | 3.8 | 2.7 | 3.5 |
| 1-24% | 4.7 | 4.5 | 4.7 |
| None | 38.5 | 32.0 | 36.7 |

^aIncludes 17 hunters not identified as to zone.

Table 8. Number of pheasants harvested by respondents who hunted wild pheasants in Illinois during the 1996-97 season. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

| Parameter | North Zone (537) | South Zone (220) | Entire State (766) ^a |
|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| <u>November</u> | | | |
| Mean pheasants | 1.50 | 1.13 | 1.40 |
| Percentage of harvest | 50 | 50 | 50 |
| Harvest rate ^b | 0.55 | 0.40 | 0.51 |
| <u>December</u> | | | |
| Mean pheasants | 1.25 | 0.96 | 1.16 |
| Percentage of harvest | 42 | 42 | 42 |
| Harvest rate | 0.42 | 0.33 | 0.39 |
| <u>January</u> | | | |
| Mean pheasants | 0.23 | 0.18 | 0.22 |
| Percentage of harvest | 8 | 8 | 8 |
| Harvest rate | 0.35 | 0.24 | 0.32 |
| <u>Entire Season</u> | | | |
| Mean pheasants | 2.98 | 2.27 | 2.78 ^c |
| Percentage of harvest | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Harvest rate | 0.47 | 0.35 | 0.44 |

^aIncludes 9 hunters not identified as to zone.

^bMean pheasants harvested divided by mean days hunted.

^c40% of the hunters harvested 0 pheasants, 45% harvested 1-5 pheasants, 9% harvested 6-10 pheasants, 5% harvested 11-20 pheasants, and 1% harvested 21-220 pheasants.

Table 9. Percentage of (wild) pheasant hunters who harvested other species of upland game while pursuing wild pheasants in Illinois during the 1996-97 season. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

| Other Species | Percentage of Hunters | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|------------|--------------------|
| | North Zone | South Zone | Entire State |
| | (529) | (219) | (761) ^a |
| Rabbits | 41.6% | 40.2% | 41.4% |
| Bobwhite quail | 13.4 | 48.4 | 23.7 |
| Gray partridge | 0.6 | 0.0 | 0.4 |
| Mourning dove | 8.5 | 10.5 | 9.2 |
| All 4 species combined | 48.0 | 65.8 | 53.2 |

^aIncludes 13 hunters not identified as to zone.

Table 10. The level of difficulty that respondents experienced in finding a place to hunt wild pheasants in Illinois during the 1996-97 season. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

| Level of Difficulty | Percentage of Hunters | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|------------|--------------------|
| | North Zone | South Zone | Entire State |
| | (221) | (534) | (770) ^a |
| None | 23.5 | 29.1 | 27.3 |
| Little | 14.5 | 15.7 | 15.5 |
| Moderate | 38.9 | 27.7 | 30.7 |
| Much | 23.1 | 27.5 | 26.5 |

^aIncludes 15 hunters not identified as to zone.

Table 11. Utilization and evaluation of CRP (U.S. Department of Agriculture's Conservation Reserve Program) land by respondents who hunted wild pheasants in Illinois during the 1996-97 season. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

| Subject | Percentage of Hunters | | |
|--|-----------------------|------------|--------------------|
| | North Zone | South Zone | Entire State |
| Hunted pheasants on CRP land: | (533) | (222) | (770) ^a |
| Yes | 27.4 | 30.6 | 28.6 |
| No | 55.0 | 49.1 | 53.2 |
| Don't know | 17.6 | 20.3 | 18.2 |
| Effect of CRP land on quail populations: | (145) | (68) | (219) ^b |
| Helped | 86.2 | 79.4 | 84.0 |
| Hurt | 0.7 | 0.0 | 0.5 |
| None | 6.9 | 13.2 | 8.7 |
| Don't know | 6.2 | 7.4 | 6.8 |

^aIncludes 15 hunters not identified as to zone.

^bIncludes 6 hunters not identified as to zone.

Table 12. Attitudes of pheasant hunters toward the dates used for opening and closing the wild pheasant hunting season (Illinois 1996-97 season). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

*Responses to the following questions:

"For many years, the Illinois wild pheasant season has opened on the first Saturday in November. In your opinion, is that opening date:"

| | <u>North Zone</u> | <u>South Zone</u> | <u>Entire State</u> |
|-------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| | (527) | (216) | (800) ^a |
| About right | 70.1% | 69.0% | 69.5% |
| Too early | 11.8 | 14.4 | 12.0 |
| Too late | 13.5 | 9.7 | 13.5 |
| No opinion | 4.6 | 6.9 | 5.0 |

"Would you prefer to have the Illinois wild pheasant season open on the same date (e.g. Nov. 1 or Nov. 10, etc.) every year rather than on the first Saturday of November?"

| | <u>North Zone</u> | <u>South Zone</u> | <u>Entire State</u> |
|------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| | (521) | (220) | (799) ^a |
| Yes | 30.1% | 29.5% | 30.4% |
| No | 46.5 | 45.0 | 45.3 |
| No opinion | 23.4 | 25.5 | 24.3 |

"Would you prefer that the Illinois wild pheasant hunting season open on a weekend (Saturday or Sunday) or on a week day (Monday thru Friday)?"

| | <u>North Zone</u> | <u>South Zone</u> | <u>Entire State</u> |
|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| | (524) | (218) | (799) |
| On a weekend | 66.2% | 63.7% | 65.4% |
| On a week day | 15.3 | 13.8 | 15.0 |
| No opinion | 18.5 | 22.5 | 19.6 |

"In 1996-97, the Illinois wild pheasant season ended on January 8 in the North Zone and on January 15 in the South Zone. In your opinion, are those closing dates:"

| | <u>North Zone</u> | <u>South Zone</u> | <u>Entire State</u> |
|-------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| | (510) | (210) | (720) |
| About right | 43.9% | 51.0% | 46.0% |
| Too early | 42.7 | 30.0 | 39.0 |
| Too late | 6.7 | 3.3 | 5.7 |
| No opinion | 6.7 | 15.7 | 9.3 |

Table 12. Continued - page 2.

"Would you prefer to have the Illinois wild pheasant season close on a weekend or holiday rather than on a standard date (e.g., Jan. 8 and Jan. 15)?"

| | <u>North Zone</u> | <u>South Zone</u> | <u>Entire State</u> |
|------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| | (522) | (219) | (798) |
| Yes | 41.9% | 44.3% | 42.7% |
| No | 27.6 | 27.4 | 27.6 |
| No opinion | 30.5 | 28.3 | 29.7 |

^aIncludes 57-58 hunters not identified as to zone.

Table 13. Attitudes of pheasant hunters toward legal shooting time during the wild pheasant season (Illinois 1996-97 season). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Responses to the question,

"For several years, the Illinois pheasant hunting regulations have allowed hunting to begin daily at sunrise. Would you prefer that legal hunting time for pheasant hunting begin at sunrise or 1/2 hour before sunrise?"

| | <u>North Zone</u> | <u>South Zone</u> | <u>Entire State</u> |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| | (524) | (220) | (801) ^a |
| Sunrise | 68.0% | 74.1% | 68.4% |
| 1/2 hour before sunrise | 26.3 | 19.5 | 25.2 |
| No opinion | 5.7 | 6.4 | 6.4 |

^aIncludes 57 hunters not identified as to zone.

Table 14. Attitudes of pheasant hunters toward the regulation that requires upland game hunters to wear a blaze (hunter) orange hat while hunting wild pheasants (Illinois 1996-97 season). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Responses to the following questions:

"Beginning in 1993, the Illinois pheasant, quail, rabbit, and gray partridge hunting regulations have required the wearing of a blaze (hunter) orange hat while hunting.

*"In your opinion, is this regulation appropriate or inappropriate for pheasant hunters in Illinois?"

| | <u>North Zone</u> | <u>South Zone</u> | <u>Entire State</u> |
|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| | (526) | (216) | (800) ^a |
| Appropriate | 82.3% | 84.7% | 83.2% |
| Inappropriate | 13.7 | 11.1 | 12.8 |
| No opinion | 4.0 | 4.2 | 4.0 |

*"How do you personally feel about this regulation?"

| | <u>North Zone</u> | <u>South Zone</u> | <u>Entire State</u> |
|------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| | (525) | (217) | (800) ^a |
| Like it | 75.6% | 76.1% | 76.2% |
| Dislike it | 15.6 | 14.7 | 15.4 |
| No opinion | 8.8 | 9.2 | 8.4 |

^aIncludes 58 hunters not identified as to zone.

Table 15. In order of importance, reasons given by (wild) pheasant hunters for enjoying their sport (Illinois 1996-97 season). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

| Reason | Rating ^a | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|------------|--------------------|
| | North Zone | South Zone | Entire State |
| | (503) | (213) | (772) ^b |
| Having a good time with friends | 49 | 48 | 49 |
| Challenge and excitement of hunting | 39 | 43 | 40 |
| Fresh air, exercise, healthy living | 36 | 32 | 34 |
| Watching bird dogs work | 28 | 39 | 32 |
| Nature, sunsets, animals, plants | 27 | 19 | 24 |
| A good way to relax | 21 | 21 | 21 |
| Getting away from work and home | 17 | 16 | 17 |
| Shooting game | 14 | 14 | 14 |
| Eating the game | 13 | 12 | 13 |
| Others | 2 | 2 | 2 |

^aOn a scale of 0 to 100 after transforming the original scoring so that 1=100, 2=75, 3=50, and 4=25 (see question #25 in Figure 1).

^bIncludes 56 hunters not identified as to zone.

Table 16. Indicators of the importance of (wild) pheasant hunting to hunters (Illinois 1996-97 season). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

*Responses to the question,

"In general how much enjoyment do you get from pheasant hunting?"

| | North <u>Zone</u> (523) | South <u>Zone</u> (219) | Entire <u>State</u> (798) ^b | Ardent ^a <u>Hunters</u> (140) |
|-------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|--|
| Very much | 68.0% | 59.8% | 65.4% | 80.7% |
| Much | 26.2 | 31.5 | 27.8 | 13.6 |
| Some | 5.0 | 7.8 | 5.9 | 4.3 |
| Very little | 0.8 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 1.4 |

*Responses to the question,

"How much enjoyment do you get from a pheasant hunting trip if you don't bag at least one pheasant?"

| | North <u>Zone</u> (524) | South <u>Zone</u> (220) | Entire <u>State</u> (801) ^b | Ardent <u>Hunters</u> (140) |
|-------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| Very much | 35.3% | 25.5% | 31.8% | 41.4% |
| Much | 38.0 | 37.3 | 37.1 | 34.3 |
| Some | 22.3 | 29.5 | 25.3 | 17.9 |
| Very little | 4.4 | 7.7 | 5.8 | 6.4 |

*Responses to the question,

"How much enjoyment do you get from a pheasant hunting trip if you don't see any pheasants?"

| | North <u>Zone</u> (524) | South <u>Zone</u> (220) | Entire <u>State</u> (801) ^b | Ardent <u>Hunters</u> (140) |
|-------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| Very much | 11.6% | 8.2% | 10.5% | 12.1% |
| Much | 22.3 | 19.1 | 21.1 | 24.3 |
| Some | 40.5 | 38.6 | 39.2 | 33.6 |
| Very little | 25.6 | 34.1 | 29.2 | 30.0 |

Table 16 - continued.

Table 16. Continued - page 2.

*Responses to the question,

"If you had to give up pheasant hunting, how would you feel?"

| | <u>North Zone</u> (523) | <u>South Zone</u> (220) | <u>Entire State</u> (800) ^b | <u>Ardent Hunters</u> (140) |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| Would miss it more than any other recreational activity | 36.7% | 26.4% | 32.9% | 56.4% |
| Would miss it but less than other recreational activities | 59.1 | 67.7 | 62.3 | 42.9 |
| Would probably not miss it very much | 4.2 | 5.9 | 4.8 | 0.7 |

^aHunters who spent ≥ 11 days afield.

^bIncludes 56-57 hunters not identified as to zone.

Table 17. Some characteristics of (wild) pheasant hunters (Illinois 1996-97 season). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

| Characteristic | North Zone | South Zone | Entire State |
|------------------------|------------|------------|--------------------|
| Gender | (529) | (221) | (808) ^a |
| Male | 99.8% | 99.5% | 99.8% |
| Female | 0.2 | 0.5 | 0.2 |
| Age in years | (529) | (221) | (808) ^a |
| Mean | 38.9 | 39.0 | 39.1 ^b |
| Marital status | (528) | (220) | (805) ^a |
| Married | 74.4% | 74.1% | 73.6% |
| Never married | 18.6 | 17.3 | 18.9 |
| Widowed | 7.0 | 0.9 | 0.2 |
| Divorced or separated | 0.0 | 7.7 | 7.3 |
| Years hunted pheasants | (529) | (221) | (807) ^a |
| Mean | 21.7 | 18.9 | 20.7 ^c |

^aIncludes 57-58 hunters not identified as to zone.

^b0.9% were ≤ 15 years of age, 5.2% were 16-20 years, 21.3% were 21-30 years, 32.9% were 31-40 years, 22.0% were 41-50 years, 9.0% were 51-60 years, 3.4% were 61-64 years, and 5.3% were ≥ 65 years.

^c13.9% had hunted 1-5 years, 15.8% had hunted 6-10 years, 28.0% had hunted 11-20 years, 22.5% had hunted 21-30 years, and 19.8% had hunted ≥ 30 years.

1996-97 ILLINOIS PHEASANT HUNTER SURVEY



INSTRUCTIONS

Please answer the questions on the following pages for your pheasant hunting activities in Illinois during the 1996-97 season. If you did not hunt pheasants in Illinois in 1996-97, 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, postage-paid envelope and mail. Comments are welcome but please write them on a separate sheet of paper to receive proper attention.

PART I: General hunting questions.

1. Did you purchase a resident Illinois hunting license for the 1996-97 season?
(circle the number of the appropriate answer)

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

2. Did you purchase a 1996 Illinois Habitat Stamp for your own personal use?
(circle the number of the appropriate answer)

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

3. Did you hunt wild pheasants in another state during the 1996-97 season?
(circle the number of the appropriate answer)

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

Figure 1. The questionnaire used for conducting the 1996-97 Illinois Pheasant Hunter Survey (continued).

4. Did you hunt wild pheasants in Illinois during the 1996-97 season?
 (circle the number of the appropriate answer)

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

4a. If "yes", go on to Part II.

4b. If you answered "no" to question 4, why did you not hunt wild pheasants in Illinois in 1996-97?
 (circle the number of the one most appropriate answer)

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Age or health.....1 | No place to hunt.....2 | Cost too much.....3 |
| Unfavorable weather...4 | Friends didn't hunt...5 | Too dangerous.....6 |
| Very few pheasants.....7 | Too many hunters.....8 | Too busy/had to work.....9 |

Other (write in) _____

IF YOU DID NOT HUNT PHEASANTS IN ILLINOIS DURING THE 1996-97 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 1996-97 season? (write in the number of days and number of pheasants that apply)

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Number of days in Nov. 1996 _____ | Number of wild pheasants harvested _____ |
| Number of days in Dec. 1996 _____ | Number of wild pheasants harvested _____ |
| Number of days in Jan. 1997 _____ | Number of wild pheasants harvested _____ |

6. In which county, or counties, did you hunt wild pheasants most in Illinois in 1996-97?

| | <u>County</u> | <u>Number of Days</u> |
|-------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| Hunted most | _____ | _____ |
| Second most | _____ | _____ |
| Third most | _____ | _____ |

7. On what proportion of your pheasant hunting days listed above did you use a hunting dog(s)?
(circle the number of the appropriate answer)

- | | |
|---|--|
| All my pheasant hunting days.....1 | 75-99% of my pheasant hunting days.....2 |
| 50-74% of my pheasant hunting days....3 | 25-49% of my pheasant hunting days.....4 |
| 1-24% of my pheasant hunting days.....5 | None of my pheasant hunting days.....6 |

8. Please rate the level of difficulty you experienced in finding a place to hunt wild pheasants in Illinois in the 1996-97 season? (circle the number of the appropriate answer)

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| No difficulty.....1 | Little difficulty.....2 |
| Moderate difficulty.....3 | Much difficulty.....4 |

9. Did you hunt wild pheasants in 1996-97 on private farmland that was enrolled in the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)? (circle the number of the appropriate answer)

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

9a. If you answered "yes" to question 9, in your opinion, what effect did the land management on the CRP fields that you hunted have on wild pheasant populations in 1996-97?
(circle the number that best represents your opinion)

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Helped.....1 | Hurt2 |
| No effect.....3 | Don't know.....4 |

10. While you were hunting wild pheasants in Illinois during the 1996-97 season, did you also shoot (harvest) any rabbits, quail, gray partridge (Huns), or mourning doves? (circle the number of the appropriate answer)

- | | |
|-----------|----------|
| Yes.....1 | No.....2 |
|-----------|----------|

10a. If you answered "yes" above, how many of each species did you harvest?

- | | |
|-------------------|-------|
| Cottontail rabbit | _____ |
| Bobwhite quail | _____ |
| Gray partridge | _____ |
| Mourning dove | _____ |

11. On a typical wild pheasant hunting trip in Illinois in 1996-97, about how many hours per day did you hunt?
(circle the number of the appropriate answer)

- Less than 1 hour.....1 1-2 hours.....2 3-4 hours.....3
5-6 hours.....4 Over 6 hours.....5
-

PART III. The following questions (12 and 13) apply to hunting of game-farm or hand-reared released pheasants in Illinois only.

12. Did you hunt game-farm or hand-reared released pheasants in Illinois in 1996-97?
(circle the number of the appropriate answer)

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

13. If you answered "yes" to question 12, on how many days did you hunt hand-reared pheasants and how many hand-reared pheasants did you kill under the following conditions?
(circle the number of all that apply and enter number of days and birds)

- a. Released your own birds on private land....1 No. of days _____ No. harvested _____
b. Private licensed hunting preserve.....2 No. of days _____ No. harvested _____
c. State-owned controlled pheasant area*.....3 No. of days _____ No. harvested _____

* All state sites where pheasants are released for hunting and a fee is paid to hunt. This includes sites where reservations are accepted, where all permits are issued by daily drawing, and public/private partnership areas that are owned by the state but operated by a private vendor.

PART IV. Opinion Questions. Please answer, even if you did not hunt in 1996-97.

14. Beginning in 1993, the Illinois pheasant, quail, rabbit, and gray partridge hunting regulations have required the wearing of a blaze (hunter) orange hat while hunting.

a. In your opinion, is this regulation appropriate or inappropriate for pheasant hunters in Illinois?
(circle the number that best represents your opinion)

- Appropriate.....1 Inappropriate.....2 No opinion.....3

b. How do you personally feel about this regulation?

- Like it.....1 Dislike it.....2 No opinion.....3

15. For many years, the Illinois wild pheasant season has opened on the first Saturday in November. In your opinion, is that opening date: (circle the number that best represents your opinion)

- About right?.....1 Too early?.....2 Too late?.....3 No opinion.....4

16. Would you prefer to have the Illinois wild pheasant season open on the same date (e.g. Nov. 1 or Nov. 10, etc.) every year rather than on the first Saturday of November (Note: with a same date opening, the first day of hunting would occur on a weekday in most years)?

Yes.....1 No.....2 No opinion.....3

17. In 1996-97, the Illinois wild pheasant season ended on January 8 in the North Zone and on January 15 in the South Zone. In your opinion, are those closing dates:
(circle the number that best represents your opinion for the zone you hunt most)

About right? Too early? Too late? No opinion

North Zone.....1.....2.....3.....4

South Zone.....1.....2.....3.....4

18. Would you prefer to have the Illinois wild pheasant season close on a weekend or holiday rather than on a standard date (e.g., Jan. 8 and Jan. 15)? (circle the number that best represents your opinion)

Yes.....1 No.....2 No opinion.....3

19. For several years, the Illinois pheasant hunting regulations have allowed hunting to begin daily at sunrise. Would you prefer that legal hunting time for pheasant hunting begin at sunrise or ½ hour before sunrise? (circle the number that best represents your opinion)

Sunrise.....1 ½ Hour before sunrise.....2 No opinion.....4

20. In general, how much enjoyment do you get from pheasant hunting?
(circle the number of the most appropriate answer)

Very much..1 Much....2 Some....3 Very little.....4

21. How much enjoyment do you get from a pheasant hunting trip during which you don't bag at least one pheasant? (circle the number of the most appropriate answer)

Very much....1 Much....2 Some....3 Very little.....4

22. How much enjoyment do you get from a pheasant hunting trip during which you don't see any pheasants? (circle the number of the most appropriate answer)

Very much....1 Much....2 Some....3 Very little.....4

23. If you had to give up pheasant hunting, how would you feel?
(circle the number of the most appropriate answer)

Would miss it more than any other recreational activity.....1

Would miss it but less than other recreational activities.....2

Would probably not miss it very much.....3

24. Would you prefer that the Illinois wild pheasant hunting season open on a weekend (Saturday or Sunday) or on a week day (Monday thru Friday)? (circle the number of the answer that best represents your opinion)

On a weekend.....1 On a week day.....2 No opinion.....3

25. From the list below, please rank the top four reasons you enjoy hunting pheasants. (enter "1, 2, 3, or 4" for the four most appropriate answers, number 1 is the top reason)

Having a good time with friends..... _____

Getting away from work and home..... _____

Watching bird dogs work..... _____

A good way to relax..... _____

Fresh air, exercise, healthy living..... _____

Nature, sunsets, animals, plants..... _____

Challenge and excitement of hunting..... _____

Shooting game..... _____

Eating the game..... _____

Other (write in) _____

26. How many years have you hunted pheasants? Number of years _____

27. How old were you on your last birthday? Years of age _____

28. What is your gender? (circle appropriate number)

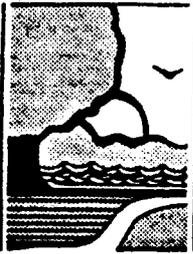
Male.....1 Female.....2

29. What is your marital status? (circle the number of the appropriate answer)

Married.....1 Never married.....2 Widowed.....3 Divorced or separated...4

Thank you for your cooperation.

POSTAGE IS PREPAID



ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

524 South Second Street, Springfield 62701-1787

Jim Edgar, Governor ● Brent Manning, 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. You were selected because you indicated on your 1995 Illinois Habitat Stamp stub that you are a pheasant hunter.

The information supplied by you and other selected hunters is vital to the management of Illinois pheasants. Our goals are to safeguard pheasant populations, to grant maximum pheasant hunting opportunity to licensed 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 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.

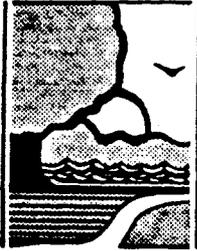
Drop the completed questionnaire in the mail. Postage is prepaid.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey M. Vex Steeg
Chief

Division of Wildlife Resources

JMV:LD:ld



ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

524 South Second Street, Springfield 62701-1787

Jim Edgar, Governor ● Brent Manning, 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 haven't 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 Natural Resources 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,

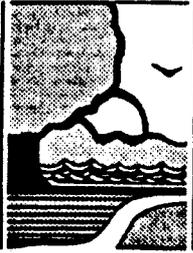
Jeffrey M. Ver Steeg
Chief
Division of Wildlife Resources

JMV:LD:ld

Enclosure

2

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



ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

524 South Second Street, Springfield 62701-1787

Jim Edgar, Governor ● Brent Manning, 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 don't 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:LD:ld

Enclosure

3

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

| | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|---|---------------|
| Habitat Stamp ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION 1995 | | | 142999 |
| Name | County of Residence | *Check species hunted last season <input type="checkbox"/> Rabbit <input type="checkbox"/> Quail <input type="checkbox"/> Pheasant <input type="checkbox"/> Squirrels <input type="checkbox"/> Furbearers <input type="checkbox"/> Crow <input type="checkbox"/> Doves <input type="checkbox"/> Woodcock <input type="checkbox"/> Deer <input type="checkbox"/> Partridge <input type="checkbox"/> Groundhog | |
| Address | City, State & Zip Code | | |
| Signature of Applicant | Date | | |
| (This Stub To Be Returned To Department) | | | |
| Habitat Stamp ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION 1995 | | | 143000 |
| Name | County of Residence | *Check species hunted last season <input type="checkbox"/> Rabbit <input type="checkbox"/> Quail <input type="checkbox"/> Pheasant <input type="checkbox"/> Squirrels <input type="checkbox"/> Furbearers <input type="checkbox"/> Crow <input type="checkbox"/> Doves <input type="checkbox"/> Woodcock <input type="checkbox"/> Deer <input type="checkbox"/> Partridge <input type="checkbox"/> Groundhog | |
| Address | City, State & Zip Code | | |
| Signature of Applicant | Date | | |
| (This Stub To Be Returned To Department) | | | |

Figure 5. The stubs that were attached to the 1995 Illinois Habitat Stamps.

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