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JOB COMPLETION REPORT

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SURVEYS AND INVESTIGATIONS PROJECTS

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ILLINOIS

Federal Aid Project No. W-49-R-31

Study XV: Wildlife Harvests

Job No. 3: Fur harvest survey, 1983-84

By

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6 September 1984

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JOB COMPLETION REPORT

SURVEYS AND INVESTIGATIONS PROJECTS

STATE OF ILLINOIS

PROJECT NO. W-49-R-31

STUDY XV: Wildlife Harvests

JOB NO. 3: Fur harvest survey, 1983-84

ABSTRACT: The Illinois Department of Conservation licensed 219 individual fur buyers (204 residents; 15 non-residents) during 1983-84, a 9.1% decrease from 1982-83. The number of trapping licenses issued was estimated at 12,266, down 23.2%. The estimated number of raccoon hunters decreased 11.8% to 47,058.

Reports required of all licensed fur buyers were used to determine the annual furbearer harvest and its value to fur-takers during the 1983-84 season. Based on a 98.17% response from individual buyers, the total harvest of the 10 open season furbearers was estimated at 513,223 pelts, a decrease of 23.4% from 1982-83. Total value of the harvest decreased 29.4% to \$4,188,314.05. Muskrats (Ondatra zibethicus) and raccoons (Procyon lotor) were the two most important species accounting for 88.03% of the total pelt harvest and 82.59% of its value. The harvest of nine species decreased compared with the previous season. Only the beaver (Castor canadensis) catch increased. The harvest declines for striped skunk (Mephitis mephitis) and gray fox (Urocyon cinereoargenteus) may have been influenced by population changes. Other harvest drops were influenced by pre-season predictions of lower pelt prices, a reduction in the number of fur-takers, and adverse trapping and night-hunting conditions during much of the season.

The following table summarizes the 1983-84 statewide harvest:

Species	Estimated harvest	Average pelt price per pelt	Estimated total value to fur-takers
Muskrat	248,146	\$3.15	\$ 781,659.90
Mink	16,056	\$15.15	\$ 243,248.40
Raccoon	203,633	\$13.15	\$2,677,773.95
Opossum	22,289	\$0.85	\$ 18,945.65
Red fox	8,719	\$30.90	\$ 269,417.10
Gray fox	4,152	\$27.35	\$ 113,557.20
Beaver	2,742	\$5.45	\$ 14,943.90
Striped skunk	137	\$1.55	\$ 212.35
Weasel	60	\$0.65	\$ 39.00
Coyote	<u>7,289</u>	<u>\$9.40</u>	<u>\$ 68,516.60</u>
Totals or mean	513,233	$\bar{x} =$ \$8.20	\$4,188,314.05

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JOB COMPLETION REPORT

SURVEYS AND INVESTIGATIONS PROJECTS

STATE OF ILLINOIS

PROJECT No. W-49-R-31

STUDY XV: Wildlife Harvests

JOB NO. 3: Fur harvest survey, 1983-84

OBJECTIVE: To collect information on the annual fur-taker harvest of all open season furbearers in Illinois and its economic value.

PROCEDURES: Numbers of wild fur pelts taken in Illinois and sold by furtakers during the 1983-84 seasons were estimated from fur purchase reports required of all fur buyers licensed by the Department of Conservation (Fig. 1). Approximately 15 days before the muskrat trapping season opened, all buyers were mailed fur purchase report forms and written instructions to maintain records of their transactions throughout the season. The reports of raw furs purchased were to be submitted no later than 20 March 1984. Buyers failing to report by that date were mailed a reminder notice by 1st class mail on 15 April 1984. Only original pelt sales were used to avoid duplication. An adjustment factor of 6.1% was used to account for out-of-state pelt sales (Hubert 1984a). Average pelt prices for all sizes and grades were estimated from price data supplied by representative buyers during and after the open seasons. Numbers and distribution of fur buyer permittees and trapping pressure were determined from license sales records obtained from the License and Regi-Title Section, Illinois Department of Conservation. Fur hunting pressure was estimated from the number of raccoon, red fox (Vulpes vulpes), and coyote (Canis latrans) hunters in the post-season hunter harvest survey, Federal Aid Project W-49-R-31, Study XV, Job No. 1.

Information about the history of coyote harvest regulations was obtained from official Department of Conservation files. These records were supplemented by a review of the published Illinois Revised Statutes and Laws at the University of Illinois library. In addition, pertinent Department of Conservation publications were examined.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS:

1983-84 Fur Seasons

The 1983-84 fur-bearing mammal seasons varied from 30 to 359 days in length (Table 1). Trapping seasons for all species except beaver, red fox, gray fox, and coyote were 45 days long with the northern management zone

opening 10 days before the southern zone (Fig. 2). Red fox, gray fox, and coyote could be legally trapped for 30 days statewide beginning 30 November. Beaver trapping season was 96 or 106 days in length depending on zone and opened simultaneously with all other species except fox and coyote. A 56- or 58-day hunting season was in effect for raccoon and opossum (Didelphis marsupialis); opening dates varied by zone. The statewide hunting season lasted 60 days for fox and 359 days for striped skunk and coyote. No bag limits were in force for any furbearer.

The weather during the month of November was generally unfavorable for fur-taking activities except during the first few days of the season in the northern zone. Average temperatures ranged from 2 to 3 degrees (3 to 5 degrees F) above normal throughout the state. During mid-November when the main fur seasons opened in the northern zone, temperature readings were above normal with maximum readings climbing into the 10 to 20 degree range (50 to 68 degrees F). However, temperatures dropped below normal in the fourth week sending maximum temperatures down to 0 to 10 degrees (32 to 50 degrees F). Monthly precipitation was above normal over the entire state with a few areas receiving record amounts. Most sections averaged 5 to 10 cm (2 to 4 in) above normal. Largest above normal variations were recorded in the southern zone, especially along the Mississippi and Illinois rivers where 2.5 to 7.5 cm (1 to 3 in) fell each week during the second and third weeks. At the end of the month, 2.5 to 10 cm (1 to 4 in) of snow was recorded mainly across the northeast portion of the state. The excessive November precipitation greatly hampered trapping (and to a lesser extent hunting) efforts early in the season when most of the fur-taking activity normally occurs. As a result, the November harvest of "trapped only" furbearers such as muskrat and mink (Mustela vison) was reduced. The catch of species taken by hunters and trappers like the raccoon and opossum was also suppressed.

Fur-taking conditions in general and night hunting conditions in particular tended to be poor to fair throughout December. However, canid hunting conditions were periodically good. Average monthly temperatures ranged from 5 to 8 degrees (9 to 14 degrees F) below normal throughout Illinois. The southwest section had the largest below normal variation (8 degrees C below normal). Temperatures were below normal for the entire month except for a brief period of above average readings in the southern zone during the second week. Many new minimum records were set as temperatures fell to -32 C (-25 F) in the northern zone. Several sections reported this to be the coldest December ever. In the fourth week, temperatures dropped 8 to 12 degrees (15 to 22 degrees F) below the normal. In contrast, precipitation was above normal over the entire state with the largest above normal variation in the southeast section. Heavy precipitation was recorded in many areas during the first three weeks of December which was followed by a rather dry spell. December had several snowstorms. An average of 20 to 45 cm (8 to 18 in) fell in the north and central sections, but only 2.5 to 10 cm (1 to 4 in) was recorded in the south. The abnormally cold and snowy weather had an adverse impact on night hunters and trappers, especially in the southern zone. The general presence of snow reduced night hunting activity and hampered trappers, but permitted fox and coyote hunters to operate throughout most of the month with more or less typical to above average success.

The weather in January was fair to good for fur-taking. Monthly temperatures averaged from normal to 3 degrees C (6 degrees F) below normal on a statewide basis. The southwest section had the largest below normal variation (3.1 degrees C below normal). January was the second straight month of below normal readings. The month started above normal, but fell below normal during the second week. The third week was extremely cold with minimum temperatures falling well below -15 C (0 F) and setting new records. By the end of the month temperatures were once again above normal. Precipitation was below normal in all sections of the state. Several areas reported a total of under 1.25 cm (0.5 in) during the month. Precipitation was light in the first three weeks, but in the fourth week it was heavy in the southern zone. Snowfall in January totaled 2.5 to 15 cm (1 to 6 in) in the south and 12.5 to 43 cm (5 to 17 in) in the north. Once again, the presence of snow and below normal temperatures made night hunting difficult, if not impossible, for most of the month. These same conditions permitted fox and coyote hunters to enjoy good success and beaver trappers were able to operate efficiently.

The weather during the 1983-84 season can be summarized as below average for water trapping (except beaver) and night hunting, average for land trapping, and average to above average for canid hunting. The below normal temperatures in December and January coupled with excessive amounts of precipitation in November and the first three weeks of December decreased the effectiveness of water trappers, land trappers, and night hunters during much of the season. However, land trappers were not as adversely impacted as the other two groups. Canid hunters, on the other hand, enjoyed suitable harvest conditions during much of December and January due to the continued presence of snow. Overall, the muskrat, mink, raccoon, and opossum catch by trappers as well as the harvest of raccoons, opossums, and gray foxes by night hunters was likely depressed by the weather. To a lesser extent the take of red foxes and coyotes by trappers was reduced. A more or less typical harvest of red foxes and coyotes by canid hunters and beaver by water trappers was recorded.

Trends in Fur License Sales

Records of fur buyer permits sold by the License and Regi-Title Section, Illinois Department of Conservation, for 1983-84 were compiled prior to mailing out fur purchase report forms and instructions. A total of 219 individuals purchased 221 fur buyer permits during 1983-84. This represents a 9.1% decrease from 1982-83 in the number of persons licensed. Of the 219 buyers, 204 were residents and 15 were non-residents. The 204 residents bought 206 permits (Table 2). Just under 56% of all resident buyers were headquartered in the Western Prairie/Forest, Grand Prairie, and Southern Plain management units (Table 2, Fig. 3). Fur buyer distribution within the state is not indicative of furbearer or fur harvest distribution.

Trapping licenses issued statewide in 1983-84 numbered approximately 12,266 (12,256 resident, 10 non-resident - 1 July 1984 estimate), a decrease of 23.2% from the previous year (1982-83 revised estimate of trapping license sales = 15,966). The decrease occurred throughout the state

and was not confined to specific management units. The decline may have been due in part to the decrease in the average pelt prices for raccoon and coyote, but is probably associated with poor water trapping conditions early in the season, a lack of interest on the part of trappers due to pre-season predictions of low fur prices, and a brighter employment picture in the rural labor market. Raccoon hunter numbers decreased 11.8% from an estimated 53,355 in 1982-83 to 47,058 in 1983-84 (Ellis 1984). The change is likely due to sampling variation or somewhat reduced interest due to lower pelt prices. As in previous seasons, most of these hunters were in the northwestern, western, and southern management units (Fig. 3). The number of red fox hunters increased 15.2% to an estimated 18,847, and the estimated number of coyote hunters climbed 25.5% to 34,213 (Ellis 1984). Both increases may be attributed to the availability of tracking snow throughout much of the winter. Opossum hunters were estimated to number 16,566 or 17.4% fewer than the previous season (Ellis 1984).

Fur Buyer Fur Purchase Survey

Reports of raw furs purchased had been submitted by 215 of the 219 (98.17%) individual fur buyers when the survey was closed out on 31 May 1984. Of these, 32 stated they did not buy any pelts during the 1983-84 season. The four buyers who failed to report were assumed to have purchased raw furs at the same rate as the buyers who submitted records of their activities.

An estimated total of 513,223 pelts was harvested and sold by Illinois fur-takers during the 1983-84 season (Table 3). This estimate includes an adjustment factor of 6.1% to account for out-of-state pelt sales (Hubert 1984a). No allowance was made for pelts harvested by hunters and trappers that were not sold.

Muskrats and raccoons were the two most important furbearers in terms of harvest and value (Table 3). Together these species accounted for 88.03% of the total pelt harvest and 82.59% of its value. Other top-ranking species included mink, opossum, red fox, and coyote. The 1983-84 pelt harvest was valued to fur-takers at \$4,188,314.05, about \$1,743,140 less than the previous year (Table 4).

The total fur harvest for 1983-84 represented a 23.4% decrease in pelts taken compared with the 1982-83 season (Table 4). All changes were influenced by the increase in allowance for out-of-state pelt sales in 1983-84. Also, as noted above, 3,700 fewer trapping licenses were sold. Major declines (> 25%) in the raccoon, opossum, gray fox, and striped skunk harvests occurred. The decreases for raccoon and opossum were primarily due to the poor night hunting and trapping conditions which prevailed during most of the season. A slight decline in pelt prices may also have played a role, but population declines can be ruled out (Hubert 1984b, 1984c). In contrast, the lower skunk catch can be attributed to a continuing population decline (Hubert 1984d), weather variations, and a continued lack of interest on the part of fur-takers and buyers. The major drop in the gray fox harvest was probably the combined result of poor hunting conditions and fewer fox-takers. However, a decline in the statewide gray fox population compared with the previous year can not be ruled out.

Minor drops (5 to 25%) in the muskrat, mink, red fox, weasel (Mustela frenata, M. rixosa), and coyote harvests were recorded in 1983-84 (Table 4). Census data are not available, but apparently the 1983 statewide muskrat population was similar to that in 1982. Therefore, the decline in the muskrat catch can be attributed to the poor water trapping conditions during much of the season that were mentioned above and the sizeable reduction in trapping pressure. In fact, the average muskrat catch per trapper was almost identical to 1982-83 (Hubert 1984a). The probable causes for the drop in the mink harvest are the same as those for muskrat. The lower red fox catch seemed to result from the reduction in trapping pressure and less than ideal land trapping conditions in December, but the cause of the lowered coyote harvest is less clear. Neither a reduced catch by trappers nor a population decline seemed to be a factor (Hubert 1984a, unpublished data). Therefore, sampling variation or a reduction in hunter efficiency may have been involved. The change in weasel harvest is not meaningful. Weasel catch and population data are limited. Most weasels are trapped incidentally to other species. Pelt prices remain low and no interest in weasels exists.

A minor increase (5 to 25%) in the beaver catch took place between 1982-83 and 1983-84 (Table 4). Beaver trappers were not as adversely impacted by weather conditions as the water trappers pursuing other species. In addition, the statewide beaver population may have been somewhat higher in 1983-84, but supportive data are not available. Sampling variation is the factor most likely involved in the harvest change.

The total value of the 1983-84 fur harvest was \$1,743,140.35 (29.4%) less than the previous season (Table 4). The change was due to a combination of the decrease in total pelt harvest (especially for muskrats, raccoons, gray foxes, and coyotes) and a decline in the average prices paid for raccoon and coyote. Even though the average pelt prices for 7 of the 10 species surveyed increased compared with a year earlier, the overall average pelt price declined from \$8.85 to \$8.20 (Table 4). The 1983-84 average pelt prices reflect a continued stable market demand for the long-haired furs of raccoon, red fox, gray fox, and coyote, and a continued reduction in demand for the short-haired furs of muskrat, mink, and beaver. After a 6-year period of greatly inflated pelt prices from 1976 through 1981, the market values for most wild furs are beginning to stabilize at realistic levels. As a whole, the prices paid for all major species in Illinois remained good.

Distribution of Harvest Among Fur-takers

The distribution of the fur catch between hunters and trappers is traditionally a source of controversy. Also, this aspect of the annual harvest is potentially important in the establishment of sound regulations and the evaluation of management programs. During the 1983-84 season, the percentage of animals harvested by hunters was monitored for two species as part of certain furhouse studies in Federal Aid Project W-49-R-31. Also, the present survey requested licensed fur buyers to estimate the portion of pelts purchased from hunters for the six fur-bearers that could be legally harvested by hunting or trapping methods.

The percentage of total harvest taken by hunters for species which may be hunted or trapped under current regulations ranged from 20.5% for striped skunk to 76.1% for coyote (Table 5). By applying the estimates from fur house investigations and fur buyer estimates for canids and skunks to the 1983-84 harvest figures, the number of pelts taken by hunters was estimated to be 162,909 or approximately 31.7% of the total harvest for the year. As stated earlier, there were an estimated 47,058 raccoon hunters and 12,266 licensed trappers during the 1983-84 season. Excluding fox hunters, coyote hunters, opossum hunters, and canid chasers, fur hunters made up 79.3% of all Illinois fur-takers. These hunters harvested 31.7% of all pelts taken. The average fur hunter harvested 3.5 pelts valued at \$43.68 compared with the average trapper who took 28.6 pelts worth \$173.87. The distribution of harvest emphasizes the greater efficiency of trappers as well as the higher monetary rewards of trapping. The 1983-84 distribution values were similar to previous seasons (Hubert 1981, 1982, 1983).

1975-1983 Fur Harvest Trends

Statewide furbearer harvest trend data for the years 1975 through 1983 are presented in Tables 6 through 11. During the 9-year period, total estimated pelt harvests based on fur buyer surveys ranged from 513,223 in 1983 to 948,392 in 1979, and averaged 726,001. No allowances for out-of-state pelt sales were made in 1975 or 1976. Out-of-state sales adjustments for the last seven seasons have averaged 4.5%. Since 1975, the harvests of most species have undergone major fluctuations.

History of Coyote Harvest Regulations

The coyote was first afforded protection by state statute on 1 October 1973 (Table 12). Prior to that date no regulations concerning the harvest of coyotes existed in Illinois. The first restricted coyote harvest season was held from 1 September 1973 through 1 March 1974. Subsequent hunting seasons have ranged from 175 to 359 days, and trapping seasons have varied from 30 to 182 days. No coyote bag limits have ever existed. Overall, coyote harvest regulations have been extremely liberal through the years.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

This investigation provides the only source of harvest and value data for all 10 open season species of furbearers. The information serves as a base for assessment of population trends and regulatory management. The fur harvest survey should be continued.

No alterations in the length or timing of the current furbearer seasons or management zones are recommended based on the data contained in this report. The maintenance of stable seasons and zones permits more realistic year to year comparisons of harvest information and associated biological data are easier to interpret. However, additional recommendations for harvest regulations are contained in the job reports for certain related furbearer studies. Those recommendations should also be considered.

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Table 1. Illinois fur-bearing mammal seasons for 1983-84.

Species	Hunting seasons ^a		Trapping seasons	
	Northern zone	Southern zone	Northern zone	Southern zone
Muskrat, Mink, Weasel	Closed	Closed	15 Nov-29 Dec	25 Nov- 8 Jan
Raccoon, Opossum	15 Nov-13 Jan	25 Nov-23 Jan	15 Nov-29 Dec	25 Nov- 8 Jan
Striped Skunk	Continuous open season		15 Nov-29 Dec	25 Nov- 8 Jan
Beaver	Closed	Closed	15 Nov-28 Feb ^b	25 Nov-28 Feb
Red Fox, Gray Fox	30 Nov-31 Jan	30 Nov-31 Jan	30 Nov-29 Dec	30 Nov-29 Dec
Coyote	Continuous open season		30 Nov-29 Dec	30 Nov-29 Dec

^a Raccoon, opossum, striped skunk, and coyote hunting closed 24 hrs. on 18 and 19 Nov. and 9 and 10 Dec. and until 6 PM on 20 Nov. and 11 Dec. during firearms deer season. Red fox and gray fox hunting closed 24 hrs. on 9 and 10 Dec. and until 6 PM on 11 Dec. during firearms deer season.

^b Those portions of Jo Daviess, Carroll, Whiteside, and Rock Island counties lying west of Illinois Rt. 84 and US Rt. 20, from Interstate-80 north to the Wisconsin line were open to beaver trapping from 15 Nov.-29 Dec. 1983 only.

Table 2. Summary of resident fur buyer permits issued in Illinois for the 1983-84 season.

Wildlife management unit	Number of individual permittees	License type	
		Retail	Wholesale
Northwest Hills	20 (9.8) ^a	19	2
Northeast Moraine	18 (8.8)	13	5
Mississippi Border-North	11 (5.4)	9	2
Mississippi Border-South	21 (10.3)	15	7
Western Prairie/Forest	26 (12.7)	25	1
Central Sand Prairie	3 (1.5)	3	0
Grand Prairie	49 (24.0)	32	17
Southern Plain	39 (19.1)	29	10
Wabash Border	15 (7.4)	13	2
Shawnee Hills	2 (1.0)	1	1
Totals	204 (100.0)	159	47

^a Numbers in parentheses are percentages of statewide total.

Table 3. Composition of estimated fur harvest in Illinois and value to fur-takers during 1983-84 season.

Species	Total pelts ^a		Total value	
	Number	Percent	Dollars	Percent
Muskrat	248,146	48.35	\$ 781,659.90	18.66
Mink	16,056	3.13	243,248.40	5.81
Raccoon	203,633	39.68	2,677,773.95	63.93
Opossum	22,289	4.34	18,945.65	0.45
Red Fox	8,719	1.70	269,417.10	6.43
Gray Fox	4,152	0.81	113,557.20	2.71
Beaver	2,742	0.53	14,943.90	0.36
Striped skunk	137	0.03	212.35	0.01
Weasel	60	0.01	39.00	-
Coyote	7,289	1.42	68,516.60	1.64
Totals	513,223	100.00	\$ 4,188,314.05	100.00

^a Includes 6.1% allowance for out-of-state pelt sales.

Table 4. Comparative fur harvest data for Illinois, 1982-83 vs. 1983-84.

Species	Number of pelts taken		Change in harvest from 1982-83	Average pelt price per pelt		Total value to fur-takers (dollars)		Change in value from 1982-83 (dollars)
	1982-83 ^a	1983-84 ^b		1982-83	1983-84	1982-83	1983-84	
Muskrat	297,872	248,146	-49,726 (-16.7) ^c	\$2.75	\$3.15	819,148.00	781,659.90	-37,488.10 (-4.6)
Mink	17,768	16,056	-1,712 (-9.6)	\$13.90	\$15.15	246,975.20	243,248.40	-3,726.80 (-1.5)
Raccoon	292,189	203,633	-88,556 (-30.3)	\$14.55	\$13.15	4,251,349.90	2,677,773.95	-1,573,575.95 (-37.0)
Opossum	35,548	22,289	-13,259 (-37.3)	\$0.95	\$0.85	33,770.60	18,945.65	-14,824.95 (-43.9)
Red fox	9,780	8,719	-1,061 (-10.8)	\$30.40	\$30.90	297,312.00	269,417.10	-27,894.90 (-9.4)
Gray fox	5,943	4,152	-1,791 (-30.1)	\$26.35	\$27.35	156,598.05	113,557.20	-43,040.85 (-27.5)
Beaver	2,517	2,742	+225 (+8.9)	\$4.95	\$5.45	12,459.15	14,943.90	+2,484.75 (+19.9)
Striped skunk	341	137	-204 (-59.8)	\$1.50	\$1.55	511.50	212.35	-299.15 (-58.5)
Weasel	74	60	-14 (-18.9)	\$0.50	\$0.65	37.00	39.00	+2.00 (+5.4)
Coyote	8,180	7,289	-891 (-10.9)	\$13.85	\$9.40	113,293.00	68,516.60	-44,776.40 (-39.5)
Totals	670,212	513,223	-156,989 (-23.4)	$\bar{x} = \$8.85$	$\bar{x} = \$8.20$	5,931,454.40	4,188,314.05	-1,743,140.35 (-29.4)

^a Includes 3.5% allowance for out-of-state sales.

^b Includes 6.1% allowance for out-of-state sales.

^c Numbers in parentheses indicate percent change between years.

Table 5. Estimated percentage of annual harvest taken by hunters for selected furbearers in Illinois, 1983-84.

Species	Estimated percentage of harvest taken by hunters	
	Furhouse studies	Fur buyer estimates ^a
Raccoon	68.0 (Hubert 1984d) ^b	60.1
Opossum	58.8 (Hubert 1984b)	39.1
Red fox	-	44.9
Gray fox	-	44.4
Striped skunk	-	20.5
Coyote	-	76.1

^a Based on present study.

^b Authority listed in parentheses.

Table 6. Muskrat, mink, and weasel trapping seasons, harvests, and pelt price data for Illinois, 1975-1983.

Year	Season opening date (season length in days)		Estimated harvest			Average price per pelt (dollars)		
	Northern zone	Southern zone	Muskrat	Mink	Weasel	Muskrat	Mink	Weasel
1975	8 Nov (69)	15 Nov (70)	445,737	18,009	181	2.90	6.00	0.50
1976	13 Nov (55)	20 Nov (55)	256,315	14,253	311	4.44	13.95	0.54
1977	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	300,314	12,910	147	5.10	13.20	0.60
1978	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	422,354	19,814	147	5.00	15.20	0.65
1979	10 Nov (30)	20 Nov (30)	460,674	22,971	145	6.35	20.15	0.50
1980	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	421,585	26,607	85	6.50	18.90	0.60
1981	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	325,415	24,478	53	4.30	17.45	0.50
1982	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	297,872	17,768	74	2.75	13.90	0.50
1983	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	248,146	16,056	60	3.15	15.15	0.65

Table 7. Beaver trapping season, harvests, and pelt price data for Illinois, 1975-1983.

Year	Season opening date (season length in days)		Estimated harvest	Average price per pelt (dollars)
	Northern zone	Southern zone		
1975	6 Dec (85)	6 Dec (85)	2,337	4.50
1976	18 Dec (80)	18 Dec (80)	1,548	7.00
1977	15 Nov (60)	25 Nov (60)	2,425	7.00
1978	15 Nov (90)	25 Nov (90)	3,386	7.25
1979	10 Nov (111)	20 Nov (101)	7,345	14.40
1980	15 Nov (106)	25 Nov (96)	7,338	10.60
1981	15 Nov (106)	25 Nov (96)	4,145	6.40
1982	15 Nov (106)	25 Nov (96)	2,517	4.95
1983	15 Nov (106)	25 Nov (96)	2,742	5.45

Table 8. Raccoon and opossum hunting and trapping seasons, harvests and pelt price data for Illinois, 1975-1983.

Year	Hunting season opening date (season length in days) ^a		Trapping season opening date (season length in days)		Estimated harvest		Average price per pelt (dollar)	
	Southern zone		Northern zone		Raccoon	Opossum	Raccoon	Opossum
	date	length	date	length				
1975	8 Nov (63)	15 Nov (64)	8 Nov (69)	15 Nov (70)	310,593	49,874	14.00	1.10
1976	13 Nov (54)	13 Nov (64)	13 Nov (55)	20 Nov (55)	187,377	42,153	17.17	1.21
1977	15 Nov (60)	25 Nov (60)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	237,315	46,198	18.00	2.05
1978	15 Nov (60)	25 Nov (60)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	292,728	25,097	27.25	2.65
1979	10 Nov (34)	20 Nov (37)	10 Nov (30)	20 Nov (30)	381,006	38,626	25.50	3.35
1980	15 Nov (56)	25 Nov (58)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	314,777	46,710	19.40	1.45
1981	15 Nov (56)	25 Nov (58)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	314,963	55,729	22.50	1.05
1982	15 Nov (56)	25 Nov (58)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	292,189	35,548	14.55	0.95
1983	15 Nov (56)	25 Nov (58)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	203,633	22,289	13.15	0.85

^a Hunting season closed during firearms deer season.

Table 9. Red and gray fox hunting and trapping seasons, harvest, and pelt price data for Illinois, 1975-1983.

Year	Hunting season opening date (season length in days) ^a		Trapping season opening date (season length in days)		Estimated harvest		Average price per pelt (dollars)	
	Northern zone	Southern zone	Northern zone	Southern zone	Red fox	Gray fox	Red fox	Gray fox
1975	8 Nov (63)	15 Nov (64)	8 Nov (69)	15 Nov (70)	11,247	7,132	34.00	16.00
1976	20 Dec (45)	17 Nov (52)	27 Nov (41)	4 Dec (41)	7,206	6,166	45.61	27.67
1977	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)	9,715	9,086	47.45	31.05
1978	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)	13,582	9,525	61.50	42.95
1979	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)	14,136	10,547	48.40	43.80
1980	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)	13,965	8,716	44.80	36.40
1981	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)	13,533	7,649	46.75	28.75
1982	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)	9,780	5,943	30.40	26.35
1983	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)	8,719	4,152	30.90	27.35

^a Hunting season closed during firearms deer season.

Table 10. Striped skunk hunting and trapping seasons, harvest, and pelt price data for Illinois, 1975-1983.

Year	Hunting season opening date (seasons length in days) ^a		Trapping season opening date (season length in days)		Estimated harvest	Average price per pelt (dollars)
	Northern zone	Southern zone	Northern zone	Southern zone		
1975	8 Nov (63)	15 Nov (64)	8 Nov (69)	15 Nov (70)	-	1.00
1976	Closed	Closed	13 Nov (55)	20 Nov (55)	821	2.25
1977	15 Nov (60)	25 Nov (60)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	1,503	2.20
1978	15 Nov (60)	25 Nov (60)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	1,633	2.55
1979	10 Nov (34)	20 Nov (37)	10 Nov (30)	20 Nov (30)	3,111	2.60
1980	15 Nov (56)	25 Nov (58)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	1,625	2.00
1981	15 Nov (56)	25 Nov (58)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	840	2.15
1982	Continuous (359)	Continuous (359)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	341	1.50
1983	Continuous (359)	Continuous (359)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	137	1.55

^a Hunting season closed during firearms deer season.

Table 11. Coyote hunting and trapping seasons, harvests, and pelt price data for Illinois, 1975-1983.

Year	Hunting season opening date (season length in days) ^a		Trapping season opening date (season length in days)		Estimated harvest	Average price per pelt (dollars)
	Statewide		Northern zone	Southern zone		
1975	1 Sep (175)		8 Nov (69)	15 Nov (70)	2,833	8.00
1976	1 Sep (175)		27 Nov (41)	4 Dec (41)	3,882	16.07
1977	1 Sep (175)		1 Sep (45) ^b 30 Nov (30)	1 Sep (45) ^b 30 Nov (30)	7,678	16.75
1978	1 Sep (175)		30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)	9,891	31.35
1979	Continuous (359)		30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)	9,831	22.85
1980	Continuous (359)		30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)	8,412	19.25
1981	Continuous (359)		30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)	10,390	24.45
1982	Continuous (359)		30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)	8,180	13.85
1983	Continuous (359)		30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)	7,289	9.40

^a Hunting season closed during firearms deer season.

^b Split trapping season; season total length = 75 days.

Table 12. Coyote hunting and trapping regulations in Illinois, 1915-1983.

Season	Season length (days)		Special regulations
	Hunting	Trapping	
1915-16 through 1972-73	Continuous open season	Continuous open season	Not protected by state statute
1973-74	1 Sep.-1 Mar. (176)	1 Sep.-1 Mar. (182)	First protected by state statute on 1 Oct. 1973; hunting season closed during deer season (6 days)
1974-75	1 Sep.-28 Feb. (175)	9 Nov.-31 Jan. (84)	Hunting season closed during deer season (6 days)
1975-76	1 Sep.-28 Feb. (175) 1 Sep.-28 Feb. (175)	8 Nov.-15 Jan. (69) 15 Nov.-23 Jan. (70)	Hunting season closed during deer season (6 days)
1976-77	1 Sep.-28 Feb. (175) 1 Sep.-28 Feb. (175)	27 Nov.-6 Jan. (41) 4 Dec.-13 Jan. (41)	Hunting season closed during deer season (6 days)
1977-78	1 Sep.-28 Feb. (175)	1 Sep.-15 Oct. (45) 30 Nov.-29 Dec. (30)	Split trapping season; hunting season closed during deer season (6 days)
1978-79	1 Sep.-28 Feb. (175)	30 Nov.-29 Dec. (30)	Hunting season closed during deer season (6 days)
1979-80 through 1983-84	Continuous open season (359)	30 Nov.-29 Dec. (30)	Hunting season closed during deer season (6 days)

^a Northern zone includes area north of US Route 36 from Indiana state line to Springfield, Route 20 from Springfield to Pekin, and Route 9 from Pekin to Dallas City, then due west to the Mississippi River.

STATE OF ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES
FURBEARER SECTION

REPORT OF RAW FURS PURCHASED

SEASON OF 1983-84 WMU _____
 FUR BUYER LICENSE NUMBER(S) _____ () RESIDENT () NON-RESIDENT

	MUSKRAT	MINK	RACCOON	OPOSSUM	RED FOX	GRAY FOX	BEAVER	SKUNK	WEASEL	COYOTE	OTHER (LIST)
1. RAW FURS BOUGHT FROM ILLINOIS HUNTERS AND TRAPPERS											
2. RAW FURS BOUGHT FROM OTHER ILLINOIS FUR BUYERS											
3. RAW FURS BOUGHT FROM OUTSIDE OF ILLINOIS											

APPROXIMATELY WHAT PERCENT OF THE ILLINOIS RACCOONS WERE BOUGHT FROM HUNTERS? _____ % SIGNED _____
 APPROXIMATELY WHAT PERCENT OF THE ILLINOIS OPOSSUMS WERE BOUGHT FROM HUNTERS? _____ % FIRM NAME _____
 APPROXIMATELY WHAT PERCENT OF THE ILLINOIS RED FOXES WERE BOUGHT FROM HUNTERS? _____ % ADDRESS _____
 APPROXIMATELY WHAT PERCENT OF THE ILLINOIS GRAY FOXES WERE BOUGHT FROM HUNTERS? _____ % _____ ZIP CODE _____
 APPROXIMATELY WHAT PERCENT OF THE ILLINOIS COYOTES WERE BOUGHT FROM HUNTERS? _____ % DATE _____
 APPROXIMATELY WHAT PERCENT OF THE ILLINOIS SKUNKS WERE BOUGHT FROM HUNTERS? _____ % _____

Figure 1. Report of raw furs purchased form used for the 1983-84 season.



Figure 2. Furbearer management zones for the 1983-84 season.

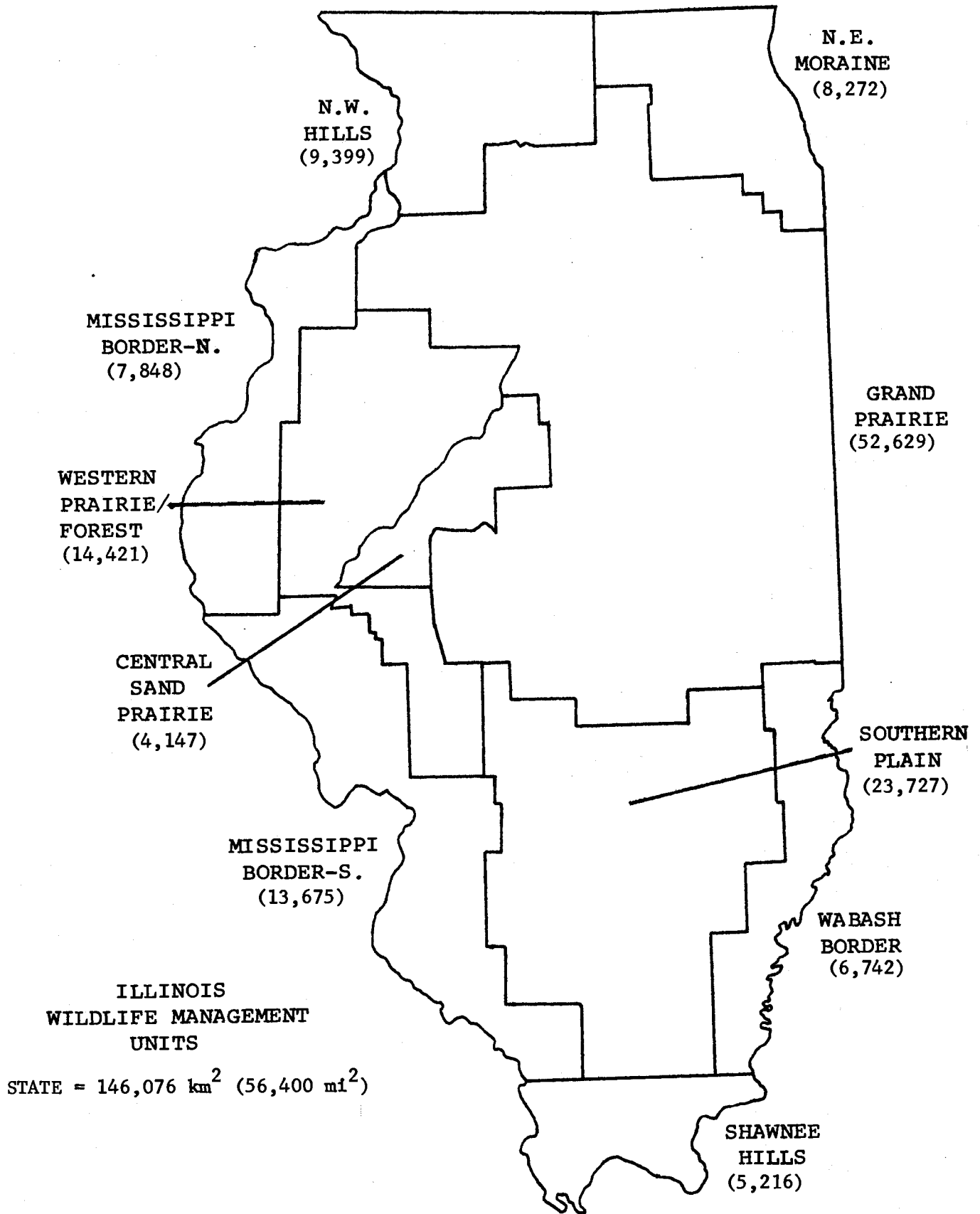


Figure 3. Area (km²) of wildlife management units in Illinois.

~~UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA~~
~~639.1109773F866 C001~~
~~FUR HARVEST SURVEY SPRINGFIELD, ILL.~~
~~1983/84~~



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