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**JOB COMPLETION REPORT
SURVEYS AND INVESTIGATIONS**

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**FEDERAL AID IN WILDLIFE RESTORATION ACT
ILLINOIS**

Federal Aid Project No. W-99-R-3

Study XV: Wildlife Harvests

Job No. 2: Fur Harvest Survey, 1990-91

Prepared By:

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ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

4 October 1991

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Study XV - Job No. 2

JOB COMPLETION REPORT

SURVEYS AND INVESTIGATIONS PROJECTS

STATE OF ILLINOIS, PROJECT NO: W-99-R-3, STUDY XV: Wildlife Harvests

JOB NO. 2: Fur Harvest Survey, 1990-91

SUMMARY: The Illinois Department of Conservation (IDOC) issued 138 licenses to 137 fur buyers (133 residents; 4 non-residents) during 1990-91, a 14.4% decrease from 1989-90. About 36.2% fewer trapping licenses were issued during 1990-91 (2,979; 1 July 1991 estimate) than in 1989-90 (4,667). A preliminary estimate indicated that the number of raccoon (Procyon lotor) hunters decreased 9.5% to 20,400.

Reports required of all licensed fur buyers were used to estimate the harvest and its value to fur-takers during the 1990-91 season. Based on a 98.5% response, the total harvest of the 10 open-season furbearers was estimated at 129,997 pelts, a decrease of 21.1% from 1989-90. Total value of the harvest decreased 34.5% to \$346,766.90.

Raccoons and muskrats (Ondatra zibethicus) accounted for 88.8% of the total harvest and 72.5% of its value. The value of mink (Mustela vison) pelts harvested in Illinois surpassed that of muskrats for the first time in recent history. Pelt sales increased for mink (6.0%), opossum (Didelphis marsupialis) (26.9%), coyote (Canis latrans) (102.1%), and weasel (Mustela frenata, M. nivalis) (25.0%); they decreased for all other legal species. Low fur prices were probably responsible for a reduction in harvest effort and total harvest compared to the 1989-90 season.

The following table summarizes the 1990-91 statewide harvest:

Number of pelts sold by Illinois fur hunters and trappers during the 1990-91 season.

Species	Number of pelts sold	Average pelt value (\$)	Total value (\$)
Muskrat	44,624	0.95	42,392.80
Mink	3,358	15.85	53,224.30
Raccoon	70,845	2.95	208,992.75
Opossum	3,097	0.70	2,167.90
Red fox	2,386	6.25	14,912.50
Gray fox	308	3.45	1,062.60
Beaver	2,315	5.00	11,575.00
Striped Skunk	49	1.95	95.55
Weasel	5	0.50	2.50
Coyote	3,010	4.10	12,341.00
Total or mean	129,997	2.65	346,766.90

JOB COMPLETION REPORT

SURVEYS AND INVESTIGATIONS PROJECTS

STATE OF ILLINOIS, PROJECT NO:W-99-R-3, STUDY XV: Wildlife Harvests

JOB NO. 2: Fur Harvest Survey, 1990-91

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

PROCEDURES: Numbers of wild fur pelts taken in Illinois and sold by fur-takers during the 1990-91 season were estimated from fur purchase reports required of all fur buyers licensed by IDOC (Fig. 1). Approximately 15 days before the muskrat trapping season opened, we mailed fur purchase report forms and written instructions to maintain records of transactions throughout the season to all buyers. The reports of raw furs purchased were to be submitted no later than 20 March 1990. Buyers who failed to report by that date were mailed a reminder notice by 1st class mail on 24 April 1990. Buyers who failed to respond to the reminder by 5 May 1990 were mailed a second request by certified mail.

Only original pelt sales were used to avoid duplication. We corrected for out-of-state pelt sales, which varied from 0% to 26.9% for different species (Anderson, unpublished data). 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 Permit Office, IDOC. Fur hunting pressure was estimated from the number of raccoon, red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), and coyote hunters in the post-season hunter harvest survey, Federal Aid Project W-99-R-3, Study XV, Job No. 1.

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

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS:1990-91 Fur Seasons

The 1990-91 fur-bearing mammal seasons varied from 35 to 365 days in length (Table 1). Trapping seasons for all species except beaver (*Castor canadensis*), red fox, gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*) and coyote lasted 47 days in the northern management zone

and 45 in the southern. Opening dates in the northern and southern management zones (Fig. 2) were 13 November 1990 and 25 November 1990, respectively.

Red fox, gray fox, and coyote could be trapped legally for 35 days in the northern zone and 45 days in the southern zone starting 25 November 1990. The beaver trapping season opened simultaneously with that for all other species except fox and coyote and closed on 31 March, 1991 rather than 15 March as it had the previous season. Trappers could harvest beaver legally for 139 days in the northern zone and 127 days in the southern zone. Legislation passed during the spring legislative session legalized the use of snares in water sets. Restrictions on placement and construction of snares limited their effectiveness for taking all species except beaver.

A 58-day hunting season was in effect for raccoon and opossum; opening dates varied by zone. The statewide hunting season lasted 65 days for red and gray fox, 361 days for striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), and 365 days for coyote. No bag limits were in force for any furbearer. This was the first season that a State Furbearer Stamp was required to take or attempt to take fur-bearing mammals; approximately 20,420 were sold as of 1 July 1991.

Weather Conditions During the 1990-91 Season

In the northern zone, the first week of the fur harvest season was warm (4-8 degrees (F) above average) and dry (no precipitation). Mild conditions continued until late November, when a cold front caused highs to drop to the 40's and lows to the 20's and 30's. Statewide, precipitation was 1.1 inches above normal for the month. The greatest average precipitation occurred in northeastern Illinois (3.2 inches above normal). Precipitation in southern Illinois was slightly below average. Conditions for trapping, raccoon hunting and opossum hunting were good to excellent during November. Conditions were poor for canid hunting because of a lack of snow cover.

During the first half of December, high temperatures averaged 4 to 6 degrees above normal with average highs ranging from the low 40's in the north to the mid-50's in the south. Average low temperatures were in the mid-20's to low 30's in the north. Lows in the southern part of the state were 1-2 degrees above normal. Temperatures dropped near the end of the month, when below zero temperatures occurred in some northern parts of the state. Precipitation varied from 2-4 inches in the north to 6-9 inches in the south, and averaged 2.3 inches above normal for the state. Heavy precipitation toward the end of the month caused many rivers to crest above flood stage. Snowfall for the month was above normal in most parts of the state. Overall, conditions during December were above average for trapping, raccoon hunting, and opossum hunting, especially early during the month. Conditions for canid hunting were fair to poor.

Temperatures plummeted to the single digits and sub-zero single digits during the first 5 days of January. Overall, the first half of the month was slightly below normal as highs climbed to the 20's. A mild period then developed, sending highs into the 40's and 50's, but a very cold period occurred toward the end of the month, with temperatures falling to as low as 21 degrees below zero in northwestern Illinois. Precipitation was slightly (0.7

inches) below normal. Heavy snowfall occurred during the first week of January, but was near normal for the month in most sections. Conditions during January were generally poor for trapping because of fluctuating temperatures which caused freezing and thawing. Conditions for raccoon and opossum hunting were also poor, but those for canid hunting were fair to good.

Above-average temperatures occurred during the first week of February. Highs climbed into the 40's in the north and 70's in the south. Slightly below normal temperatures were recorded during the second week of the month. Temperatures during the remainder of the month fluctuated from above to below normal. Average precipitation was 0.81 inches below normal. Snow cover was below normal in most sections.

Although average temperatures were near normal during the first half of March, short-lived cold periods sent lows into the 20's. Maximum temperatures varied from the 40's to 60's. Above-normal temperatures developed after mid-month as highs climbed into the 40's in the north and 70's in the south. The month ended with temperatures below normal. Statewide, precipitation was 0.24 inches above normal. Heavy precipitation in some areas of the state interfered with spring beaver trapping.

Overall, weather conditions during the 1990-91 fur harvest season were good to excellent for water trapping, raccoon hunting, and opossum hunting. Conditions for canid hunting were generally poor in the northern part of the state because of below-normal snowfall during the first part of the season and periodic warm temperatures which reduced snow cover during the latter part of the season. Fluctuating temperatures probably hampered canid trapping during the latter part of the season. Weather conditions during the 1990-91 season had little effect on harvest effort compared to that of low fur prices.

Trends in Fur License Sales

Records of fur buyer permits sold by the Commercial Permit Office, IDOC, for 1990-91 were compiled prior to mailing out fur purchase report forms and instructions. A total of 137 individuals purchased 138 fur buyer permits during 1990-91. This represented a 14.4% decrease from 1989-90 in the number of persons licensed. Of the 137 buyers, 133 were residents and 4 were non-residents. The 133 residents bought 134 permits (Table 2).

More than 79% of all Illinois buyers resided in the Northwest Hills, Mississippi Border-South, Western Prairie-Forest, Grand Prairie, and Southern Plain wildlife management units (Table 2, Fig. 3). Fur buyer distribution within the state was not indicative of furbearer or fur harvest distribution.

About 2,979 trapping licenses (2,978 resident, 1 non-resident, 1 July 1991 estimate) were issued in Illinois during the 1990-91 season. This represented a 36.2% decrease from the previous year (1989-90 revised estimate of trapping license sales = 4,667; 4,662 resident and 5 non-resident). The decrease occurred throughout the state, was not confined to specific management units, and was probably caused by pre-season predictions of low fur prices which materialized as soon as the season opened.

Preliminary estimates indicated that the number of raccoon hunters decreased 4.2% from 22,539 in 1989-90 (Anderson et al. 1990) to 20,400 in 1990-91 (Anderson, unpublished data). Opossum hunters were estimated at 6,000, 8.6% more than the previous season (Anderson, unpublished data). As in earlier seasons, a majority of night hunters were in the northern, western, and southern management units (Fig. 3). This was expected because these units contain more forested acres than the central and east-central units.

Preliminary figures indicated that the number of red fox hunters increased 2.8% to an estimated 8,700 (Anderson, unpublished data). The number of coyote hunters decreased 1.0% to 34,300 (Anderson, unpublished data). Changes in estimates of the numbers of opossum, red fox, and coyote hunters were within those expected from sampling variation. The number of raccoon hunters probably decreased because of low pelt prices, but the additional cost of a State Furbearer Stamp may have discouraged a few individuals.

Fur Buyer Fur Purchase Survey

Reports of raw furs purchased were submitted by 135 of the 137 individual fur buyers (98.5%) when the survey was closed out on 15 June 1990. Of these, 26 did not buy any pelts during the 1990-91 season, and 19 purchased deer hides or capes only. The two 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 129,997 pelts were harvested and sold by Illinois fur-takers during the 1990-91 season (Table 3). This estimate included adjustment factors (by species) to account for out-of-state pelt sales (Anderson, unpublished data). No allowance was made for pelts harvested by hunters and trappers that were not sold.

Pelts harvested during the 1990-91 season brought \$346,766.90 to Illinois fur-takers. This represented a 34.5% decrease from the previous season (Table 4). Raccoons and muskrats accounted for 88% of the total harvest and 72.5% of its value. The value of mink pelts harvested in Illinois surpassed that of muskrats for the first time in recent history.

The total number of pelts harvested during 1990-91 was 21.1% less than in 1989-90. The muskrat and raccoon harvests declined by 33.5% and 14.9%, respectively. A reduction in harvest effort caused by low fur prices was probably responsible. Pelt sales increased for mink (6.0%), opossum (26.9%), coyote (102.1%), and weasel (25.0%); they decreased for all other legal species.

Trend data indicated that furbearer populations were stable or increased during 1990. Hubert (1990) reported a record number of raccoons sighted during the 1990 statewide spring spotlight census. The 38.6% increase from 1989 to 1990 was significant, and indicated that the population was higher than the previous year. Populations were stable from 1981 through 1989.

The percentage of firearm deer hunters who observed coyotes during the 1990 season increased 1.2% in the northern zone, 0.7% in the southern zone, and 0.9% statewide. This

indicated that the coyote population increased, especially in the northern management zone. The number of Nuisance Animal Removal Permits issued for beaver decreased 4.8% from 1989 to 1990. The small change suggested that the beaver population was stable during this period.

The annual adjusted road-kill index for opossum increased 40.6% during 1990 (Hubert 1991a). Precipitation was above-normal for 1990, and probably provided for abundant food resources and better survival than the previous year. An increase in harvest levels probably resulted from high populations and an increase in pelt value.

The unadjusted annual road-kill index for striped skunks increased 38.6% between 1989 and 1990 (Hubert 1991b). This increase was not reflected in the number of pelts sold, which declined from 55 in 1989-90 to 49 in 1990-91. Traditionally, few skunks are marketed by hunters and trappers because of disease concerns, consistently low pelt value, and the unpleasant odor associated with this species. Likewise, the change in the annual weasel harvest was not meaningful. Only a small number of weasels are trapped annually, and most of these are taken incidentally to trapping activity associated with more abundant species.

The red and gray fox harvests declined by 12.2% and 44.6%, respectively. Population trend data for these species were non-existent except for harvest information. However, major declines in fox numbers were unlikely because both average pelt prices and harvest pressure were less in 1990-91 than in 1989-90. As indicated earlier, the number of people who hunted red foxes was stable, but the number of trappers fell by 36.2%. Poor weather conditions during the latter part of the season may have contributed to lower harvest levels.

The muskrat harvest fell by 33.5% from the previous year. Much of the decline can be attributed to fewer trappers and a reduction in harvest pressure caused by lower pelt prices. Although the average value for mink pelts declined by 5.9%, this species remained an attractive target compared to other furbearers. An opportunistic shift in harvest effort probably accounted for the slight increase in the mink harvest.

The total value of the 1990-91 fur harvest was \$346,766.90, 34.5% less than the previous season. The change was caused by a decrease in the total harvest (especially for muskrat and raccoon) and a drop in the average prices paid (especially for raccoon). The average pelt prices for most species decreased compared to a year earlier, and the overall mean pelt price fell from \$3.20 to \$2.65.

After a period of greatly inflated pelt prices during the late 1970's, market values for most North American wild furs have dropped to more realistic levels. Although the prices being paid for raw furs are much lower than they were a few years ago, such prices are certainly not unusual when viewed from an historical perspective.

Distribution of Harvest Among Fur-takers

The distribution of the fur harvest among resource users is traditionally a source of controversy between hunters and trappers. Also, this aspect of the annual harvest is

potentially important in the establishment of sound regulations and the evaluation of management programs. The present survey requested licensed fur buyers to estimate the portion of pelts purchased from hunters for the six furbearers that could be legally harvested by hunting and trapping methods.

The percentage of the total harvest taken by hunters for species which could be hunted or trapped ranged from 2.1% for striped skunk to 72.7% for coyote (Table 5). By applying estimates from furhouse investigations (Sanderson 1990) and fur buyer estimates for canids, opossums, and skunks to the 1990-91 harvest figures, the number of pelts taken by hunters was estimated to be 67,301 or approximately 51.8% of the total harvest. As stated earlier, there were an estimated 20,400 raccoon hunters and 2,979 trappers during the 1990-91 season. Excluding fox hunters, coyote hunters, opossum hunters, and canid chasers, hunters made up 87.3% of all Illinois fur-takers. They accounted for 51.8% of the total harvest and 58.2% of its value.

The average fur hunter harvested 3.3 pelts valued at \$8.75 compared with the average trapper who took 21.0 pelts worth \$55.65. The distribution of harvest emphasizes the greater efficiency of trappers as well as the higher monetary rewards of trapping. The 1990-91 distribution values are similar to previous seasons (Hubert 1989, 1988, 1987a, 1986).

1975-1990 Fur Harvest Trends

Statewide furbearer harvest trend data for 1975 through 1990 are presented in Tables 6 through 11. During the 15-year period, total estimated pelt harvests (based on fur buyer surveys) ranged from 129,997 in 1990-91 to 948,392 in 1979-80. The average annual harvest during the past 15 seasons was 593,122 pelts valued at \$6,371,408.80. No allowances for out-of-state pelt sales were made in 1975 or 1976. Out-of-state sales adjustments for the 10 years from 1976 through 1986 averaged 4.6% (Hubert 1987b), but increased to 17.1% during the 1990-91 season (Anderson, unpublished data). Since 1975, the harvests of most species have undergone major fluctuations.

Deer Hide Purchases

Licensed fur buyers also reported the number of white-tailed deer (Odocoileus virginianus) hides that they purchased from hunters. An estimated 10,451 skins were sold to fur buyers during the 1990-91 season. The average price per hide was \$2.55, so the total value to hunters was \$26,650.05. Since the 1990 firearms deer harvest in Illinois exceeded 81,296, about 12.9% of the hides taken were sold. However, it is likely that a portion of the unsold skins were retained for personal use rather than discarded. Purchases totalled 7,795 deerskins in 1987-88 (Hubert 1988), 16,521 in 1988-89 (Hubert 1989), and 19,091 in 1989 (Bluett and Hubert 1990).

History of Mink Harvest Regulations

The mink was first afforded protection by state statute in 1915 (Table 12). The first restricted harvest season was held from 1 November 1915 through 31 March 1916.

Hunting was a legal method of taking mink from 1915 until 1952. Harvest seasons have ranged from 42 to 152 days in length. Overall, mink harvest regulations have been relatively conservative since the late 1930's.

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.

During the 1990-91 season, harvests of all legal species except coyote and beaver were less than a third of their respective 16-year means. Season dates established for the 1991-92 season included 7-15 additional days for trapping. Extensions varied by species and management zones. The fox-hunting season was increased by 6 days; the season established for raccoon and opossum hunting included 10 additional days in the north and 8 additional days in the south.

Early market reports indicate that fur prices may increase during the 1991-92 season because many brokers were able to liquidate large inventories of pelts which were carried over from previous seasons. However, substantial increases seem unlikely. Recommendations for the 1992-93 season will be made using information about furbearer population levels, harvest levels, and harvest effort as this information becomes available. If population levels are stable and harvest levels remain well below the 16-year means for major species, season frameworks will be similar to those for 1991-92. Otherwise, adjustments may be necessary.

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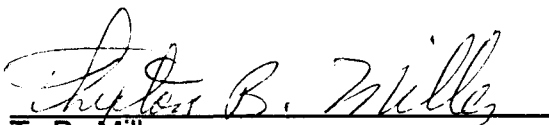
Original and related reports in this investigation are on file in the Division of Wildlife Resources office, IDOC, Springfield, Illinois 62706.

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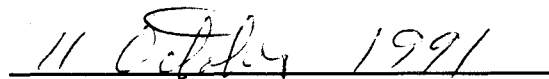
DATE: 4 October 1991

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Table 1. Illinois fur-bearing mammal seasons for 1990-91.

Species	^a		Trapping seasons	
	Hunting seasons		Northern zone	Southern zone
	Northern zone	Southern zone		
Muskrat, Mink, Weasel	Closed	Closed	13 Nov-29 Dec	25 Nov- 8 Jan
Raccoon, Opossum	13 Nov-13 Jan	25 Nov-23 Jan	13 Nov-29 Dec	25 Nov- 8 Jan
Striped skunk	Continuous open season		13 Nov-29 Dec	25 Nov- 8 Jan
Beaver	Closed	Closed	13 Nov-31 Mar ^b	25 Nov-31 Mar
Red fox, Gray fox	25 Nov-31 Jan	25 Nov-31 Jan	25 Nov-29 Dec	25 Nov- 8 Jan
Coyote	Continuous open season		25 Nov-29 Dec	25 Nov- 8 Jan

^a

Raccoon, opossum, and striped skunk hunting closed 24 hrs. on 16 and 17 Nov. and 14 and 15 Dec. and until 6PM on 18 Nov. and 16 Dec. during firearms deer season. Red fox and gray fox hunting closed 24 hrs. on 14 and 15 Dec. and until 6PM on 16 Dec. during firearms deer season. Coyote hunting closed 24 hrs. on 16 and 17 Nov. and 14 and 15 Dec. and until 6PM on 18 Nov. and 16 Dec. during firearms deer season except to those individuals possessing unfilled firearm deer permits.

^b

Those portions of Carroll, Whiteside, and Rock Island counties lying west of Illinois Rt. 84 from Interstate-80 north to the Jo Daviess County line were open to beaver trapping from 13 Nov.-29 Dec. 1990 only.

Table 2. Summary of resident fur buyer permits issued in Illinois for the 1990-91 season.

Wildlife management unit	Number of individual permittees		License type	
			Retail	Wholesale
Northwest Hills	19	(14.3) ^a	17	3
Northeast Moraine	8	(6.0)	5	3
Mississippi Border-North	9	(6.8)	8	1
Mississippi Border-South	15	(11.3)	12	3
Western Prairie/Forest	19	(14.3)	15	4
Central Sand Prairie	3	(2.2)	3	0
Grand Prairie	28	(21.0)	22	6
Southern Plain	25	(18.8)	25	0
Wabash Border	5	(3.8)	3	2
Shawnee Hills	2	(1.5)	1	1
Totals	133	(100.0)	111	23

^a Numbers in parentheses are percentages of statewide total.

Table 3. Composition of estimated fur harvest in Illinois and value to fur-takers during 1990-91 season.

Species	^a Total pelts		Total value	
	Number	Percent	Dollars	Percent
Muskrat	44,624	34.33	42,392.80	12.22
Mink	3,358	2.58	53,224.30	15.35
Raccoon	70,845	54.50	208,992.75	60.27
Opossum	3,097	2.38	2,167.90	0.62
Red fox	2,386	1.84	14,912.50	4.30
Gray fox	308	0.24	1,062.60	0.31
Beaver	2,315	1.78	11,575.00	3.34
Striped skunk	49	0.04	95.55	0.03
Weasel	5	<0.01	2.50	..
Coyote	3,010	2.31	12,341.00	3.56
Totals	129,997	100.00	346,766.90	100.00

^a Includes allowances for out-of-state pelt sales.

Table 4. Comparative fur harvest data for Illinois, 1989-90 vs. 1990-91.

Species	Number of pelts taken		Change in harvest from		Average pelt price per pelt		Total value to fur-takers (dollars)		Change in value from	
	1989-90 ^a	1990-91 ^a	1989-90	1990-91	1989-90	1990-91	1989-90	1990-91	1988-89 (dollars)	1989-90 (dollars)
Muskrat	67,103	44,624	-22,479 (-33.5)		\$1.15	\$0.95	77,168.45	42,392.80	-34,775.65	(-45.1) ^b
Mink	3,169	3,358	+189 (+6.0)		\$17.85	\$15.85	56,566.65	53,224.30	-3,342.35	(-5.9)
Raccoon	83,284	70,845	-12,439 (-14.9)		\$4.00	\$2.95	333,136.00	208,992.75	-124,143.25	(-37.3)
Opossum	2,441	3,097	+656 (+26.9)		\$0.50	\$0.70	1,220.50	2,167.90	+947.40	(+77.6)
Red fox	2,716	2,386	-330 (-12.2)		\$9.60	\$6.25	26,073.60	14,912.50	-11,161.10	(-42.8)
Gray fox	556	308	-248 (-44.6)		\$5.85	\$3.45	3,252.60	1,062.60	-2,190.00	(-67.3)
Beaver	3,887	2,315	-1,572 (-40.4)		\$7.00	\$5.00	27,209.00	11,575.00	-15,634.00	(-57.5)
Striped skunk	55	49	-6 (-10.9)		\$1.95	\$1.95	107.25	95.55	-11.70	(-10.9)
Weasel	4	5	+1 (+25.0)		\$0.55	\$0.50	2.20	2.50	+0.30	(+13.6)
Coyote	1,489	3,010	+1,521 (+102.1)		\$3.05	\$4.10	4,541.45	12,341.00	+7,799.55	(+171.7)
Totals	164,704	129,997	-34,707 (-21.1)		$\bar{x} = \$3.20$	$\bar{x} = \$2.65$	529,277.70	346,766.90	-182,510.80	(-34.5)

^a Includes allowances (by species) for out-of-state sales (Anderson, unpublished data).

^b Numbers in parentheses indicate percent change between years.

Table 5. Estimated percentage of annual harvest taken by hunters for selected furbearers in Illinois, 1990-91.

Species	Estimated percentage of harvest taken by hunters	
	Furhouse studies ^b	Fur buyer estimates ^a
Raccoon	70.8	64.7
Opossum	-	38.0
Red fox	-	44.2
Gray fox	-	36.2
Striped skunk	-	2.1
Coyote	-	72.7

^a Based on present study.

^b Hubert 1989 , Sanderson 1990.

Table 6. Muskrat, mink, and weasel trapping seasons, harvests, and pelt price data for Illinois, 1975-1990.

Year	Season opening date (season length in days)		Estimated harvest		Average price per pelt (dollars)			
	Northern zone	Southern zone	Muskrat	Mink	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
1984	13 Nov (47)	25 Nov (45)	225,629	18,068	37	3.55	16.60	0.55
1985	13 Nov (47)	25 Nov (45)	170,025	10,021	22	2.50	14.70	0.45
1986	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	360,499	18,391	39	3.70	21.05	0.55
1987	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	297,737	14,009	37	4.00	23.05	0.80
1988	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	115,125	6,155	10	2.40	23.60	0.60
1989	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	67,103	3,169	4	1.15	17.85	0.55
1990	13 Nov (47)	25 Nov (45)	44,624	3,358	5	0.95	15.85	0.50
16-year averages			278,697	15,377	85	3.67	16.66	0.56

Table 7. Beaver trapping seasons, harvests, and pelt price data for Illinois, 1975-1990.

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	6.60
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
1984	13 Nov (108)	25 Nov (96)	3,683	6.80
1985	13 Nov (108)	25 Nov (96)	3,857	9.45
1986	15 Nov (106)	25 Nov (96)	8,960	12.40
1987	15 Nov (106)	25 Nov (96)	8,314	10.50
1988	15 Nov (106)	25 Nov (96)	5,241	7.80
1989	15 Nov (121)	25 Nov (111)	3,887	7.00
1990	13 Nov (139)	25 Nov (127)	2,315	5.00
16-year averages			4,378	7.88

Table 8. Raccoon and opossum hunting and trapping seasons, harvests and pelt price data for Illinois, 1975-1990.

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	Raccoon	Opossum	Raccoon	Opossum
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	25.20	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
1984	13 Nov (58)	25 Nov (58)	13 Nov (47)	25 Nov (45)	269,991	28,204	17.25	0.95
1985	13 Nov (58)	25 Nov (58)	13 Nov (47)	25 Nov (45)	206,278	17,633	13.80	0.95
1986	15 Nov (56)	25 Nov (58)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	306,261	38,502	18.95	1.15
1987	15 Nov (56)	25 Nov (58)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	261,418	35,749	14.10	1.00
1988	15 Nov (56)	25 Nov (58)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	137,807	8,137	6.40	0.80
1989	15 Nov (56)	25 Nov (58)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	83,284	2,441	4.00	0.50
1990	13 Nov (58)	25 Nov (58)	13 Nov (47)	25 Nov (45)	70,845	3,097	2.95	0.70
15-year Averages					241,904	30,999	15.54	1.29

^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, 1975-1990.

Year	Hunting season opening ^a date (season length in days)		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
1984	25 Nov (65)	25 Nov (65)	25 Nov (35)	25 Nov (45)	8,835	3,902	27.20	24.10
1985	25 Nov (65)	25 Nov (65)	25 Nov (35)	25 Nov (45)	6,240	2,757	17.55	16.15
1986	25 Nov (65)	25 Nov (65)	25 Nov (35)	25 Nov (45)	8,531	2,915	22.15	23.40
1987	25 Nov (65)	25 Nov (65)	25 Nov (35)	25 Nov (45)	7,939	2,944	16.75	25.05
1988	25 Nov (65)	25 Nov (65)	25 Nov (35)	25 Nov (45)	4,671	1,585	11.45	11.70
1989	25 Nov (65)	25 Nov (65)	25 Nov (35)	25 Nov (45)	2,716	556	9.60	5.85
1990	25 Nov (65)	25 Nov (65)	25 Nov (35)	25 Nov (45)	2,386	308	6.25	3.45
16-year Averages					8,950	5,243	31.30	24.38

^a Hunting season closed during firearms deer season.

Table 10. Striped skunk hunting and trapping seasons, harvest, and pelt price data for Illinois, 1975-1990.

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		
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 (361)	Continuous (361)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	341	1.50
1983	Continuous (361)	Continuous (361)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	137	1.55
1984	Continuous (361)	Continuous (361)	13 Nov (47)	25 Nov (45)	232	1.05
1985	Continuous (361)	Continuous (361)	13 Nov (47)	25 Nov (45)	358	2.50
1986	Continuous (361)	Continuous (361)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	119	1.85
1987	Continuous (361)	Continuous (361)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	233	1.40
1988	Continuous (361)	Continuous (361)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	176	2.10
1989	Continuous (361)	Continuous (361)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	55	1.95
1990	Continuous (361)	Continuous (361)	13 Nov (47)	25 Nov (45)	49	1.95
16-year Averages					749	1.91

^a Hunting season closed during firearms deer season.

Table 11. Coyote hunting and trapping seasons, harvests, and pelt price data for Illinois, 1975-1990.

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
1984	Continuous (359)	25 Nov (35)	25 Nov (45)		6,847	8.30
1985	Continuous (365)	25 Nov (35)	25 Nov (45)		6,347	9.25
1986	Continuous (365)	25 Nov (35)	25 Nov (45)		9,167	13.70
1987	Continuous (365)	25 Nov (35)	25 Nov (45)		9,652	9.35
1988	Continuous (365)	25 Nov (35)	25 Nov (45)		3,513	3.50
1989	Continuous (365)	25 Nov (35)	25 Nov (45)		1,489	3.05
1990	Continuous (365)	25 Nov (35)	25 Nov (45)		3,010	4.10
16-year Averages					6,776	13.33

^a Hunting season closed during firearms deer season except from 1985 through 1990 when holders of unfilled firearm deer permits could harvest coyotes.

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

Table 12. Mink harvest regulations in Illinois, 1915-1990^a.

Season	Zone ^b	Season dates	Season length (days)
1915-16	Statewide	1 Nov - 31 Mar	152
1916-17	Statewide	1 Nov - 31 Mar	151
1917-18	Statewide	1 Nov - 31 Mar	151
1918-19	Statewide	1 Nov - 31 Mar	151
1919-20	Statewide	1 Nov - 15 Mar	136
1920-21	Statewide	1 Nov - 15 Mar	135
1921-22	Statewide	1 Nov - 15 Mar	135
1922-23	Statewide	1 Nov - 15 Mar	135
1923-24	Northern	1 Nov - 15 Feb	107
through	Central	15 Nov - 1 Feb	79
1924-25	Southern	15 Nov - 15 Jan	62
1925-26	Northern	1 Nov - 1 Mar	121
through	Central	15 Nov - 1 Mar	107
1926-27	Southern	15 Nov - 15 Feb	93
1927-28	Northern	1 Nov - 1 Mar	122
	Central	15 Nov - 1 Mar	108
	Southern	15 Nov - 15 Feb	93
1928-29	Northern	1 Nov - 1 Mar	121
	Central	15 Nov - 1 Mar	107
	Southern	15 Nov - 15 Feb	93
1929-30	Northern	1 Nov - 15 Feb	107
through	Central	15 Nov - 1 Feb	79
1932-33	Southern	15 Nov - 15 Jan	62
1933-34	Northern	15 Nov - 15 Mar	121
through	Central	1 Dec - 1 Feb	63
1934-35	Southern	1 Dec - 15 Jan	46
1935-36	Northern	15 Nov - 15 Mar	122
	Central	1 Dec - 1 Feb	63
	Southern	1 Dec - 15 Jan	46
1936-37	Northern	15 Nov - 15 Mar	121
	Central	1 Dec - 1 Feb	63
	Southern	1 Dec - 15 Jan	46

Table 12. Continued.

Season	Zone	Season dates			Season length (days)
1937-38	Northern	15 Nov	-	31 Jan	78
through	Central	15 Nov	-	15 Jan	62
1938-39	Southern	15 Nov	-	15 Jan	62
1939-40	Northern	15 Nov	-	31 Jan	78
through	Central	15 Nov	-	15 Jan	62
1942-43	Southern	1 Dec	-	15 Jan	46
1943-44	Statewide	15 Nov	-	31 Jan	78
through					
1944-45					
1945-46	Statewide	15 Nov	-	15 Jan	62
through					
1948-49					
1949-50	Statewide	1 Dec	-	31 Jan	62
through					
1950-51					
1951-52	Statewide	15 Nov	-	15 Jan	62
through					
1954-55					
1955-56	Northern	15 Nov	-	31 Dec	47
through	Southern	1 Dec	-	15 Jan	46
1958-59					
1959-60	Northern	15 Nov	-	31 Dec	47
through	Southern	25 Nov	-	15 Jan	52
1960-61					
1961-62	Northern	20 Nov	-	31 Dec	42
through	Southern	1 Dec	-	15 Jan	46
1962-63					
1963-64	Northern	20 Nov	-	31 Dec	42
through	Southern	25 Nov	-	10 Jan	47
1964-65					
1965-66	Northern	15 Nov	-	20 Dec	36
through	Southern	25 Nov	-	5 Jan	42
1966-67					
1967-68	Northern	16 Nov	-	31 Dec	46
through	Southern	25 Nov	-	5 Jan	42
1968-69					

Table 12. Continued.

Season	Zone	Season dates		Season length (days)
1969-70	Northern	15 Nov	- 31 Dec	47
	Southern	25 Nov	- 5 Jan	42
1970-71	Northern	16 Nov	- 31 Dec	46
	Southern	25 Nov	- 5 Jan	42
1971-72	Northern	15 Nov	- 31 Dec	47
	Southern	24 Nov	- 4 Jan	42
1972-73	Statewide	11 Nov	- 31 Jan	82
1973-74	Statewide	10 Nov	- 31 Jan	83
1974-75	Statewide	9 Nov	- 31 Jan	84
1975-76	Northern	8 Nov	- 15 Jan	69
	Southern	15 Nov	- 23 Jan	70
1976-77	Northern	13 Nov	- 6 Jan	55
	Southern	20 Nov	- 13 Jan	55
1977-78 through 1978-79	Northern	15 Nov	- 29 Dec	45
	Southern	25 Nov	- 8 Jan	45
1979-80	Northern	10 Nov	- 9 Dec	30
	Southern	20 Nov	- 19 Dec	30
1980-81 through 1983-84	Northern	15 Nov	- 29 Dec	45
	Southern	25 Nov	- 8 Jan	45
1984-85 through 1985-86	Northern	13 Nov	- 29 Dec	47
	Southern	25 Nov	- 8 Jan	45
1986-87 through 1989-90	Northern	15 Nov	- 29 Dec	45
	Southern	25 Nov	- 8 Jan	45
1990-91	Northern	13 Nov	- 29 Dec	47
	Southern	25 Nov	- 8 Jan	45

^aHunting and trapping permitted from 1915-16 through 1952-53; only trapping permitted from 1953-54 through 1990-91.

Table 12. Continued.

^bFrom 1923-24 through 1942-43 the northern zone included the area north of the southern boundaries of Henderson, Warren, Knox, Peoria, Woodford, Livingston, Kankakee, and Iroquois counties; the southern zone included the area south of the northern boundaries of Madison, Bond, Fayette, Effingham, Jasper, and Crawford counties; the central zone included the remainder of the state.

From 1955-56 through 1964-65 the northern zone included the area north of the southern boundaries of Pike, Greene, Macoupin, Montgomery, Shelby, Cumberland, and Clark counties.

From 1965-66 through 1972-73 and 1979-80 through 1990-91 the northern zone included the area north of U.S. Route 36.

From 1975-76 through 1978-79 the northern zone included the area north of U.S. Route 36 from the Indiana state line to Springfield, Route 29 from Springfield to Pekin, and Route 9 from Pekin to Dallas City, then due west to the Mississippi River.

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
 DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES
 FURBEARER PROGRAM

REPORT OF RAW FURS PURCHASED

SEASON OF 1990-91

FUR BUYER LICENSE NUMBER(S) _____ () RESIDENT () NON-RESIDENT

44HU (FOR OFFICE USE)

	MUSKRAT	MINK	RACCOON	OPOSSUM	RED FOX	GRAY FOX	BEAVER	SKUNK	WEASEL	COYOTE	DEER	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? _____% DATE _____

APPROXIMATELY WHAT PERCENT OF THE ILLINOIS SKUNKS WERE BOUGHT FROM HUNTERS? _____% ZIP CODE _____

APPROXIMATELY WHAT PERCENT OF THE ILLINOIS COYOTES WERE BOUGHT FROM HUNTERS? _____%

Figure 1. Report of raw furs purchased form used for the 1990-91 season.

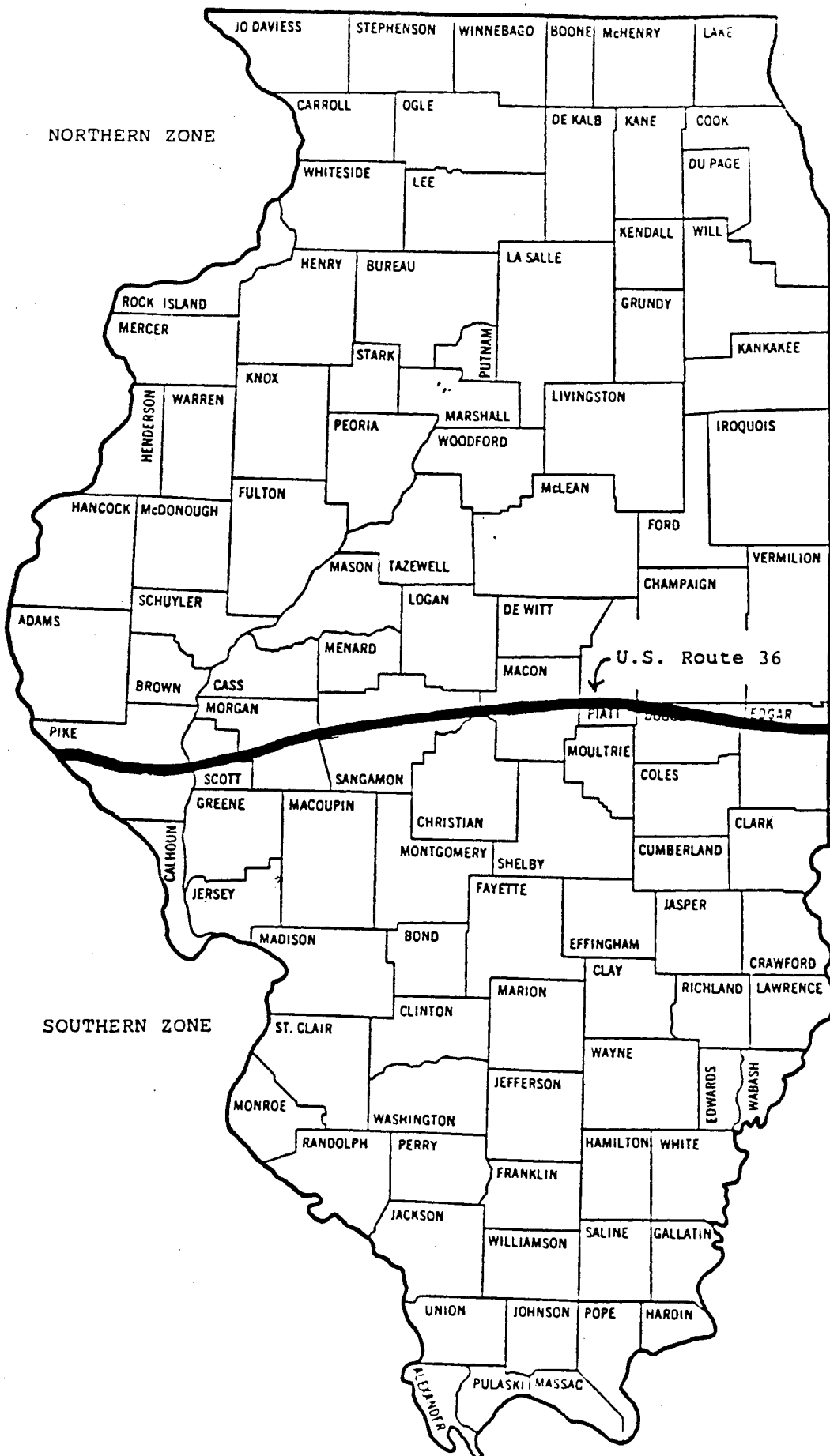


Figure 2. Furbearer management zones for the 1990-91 season.

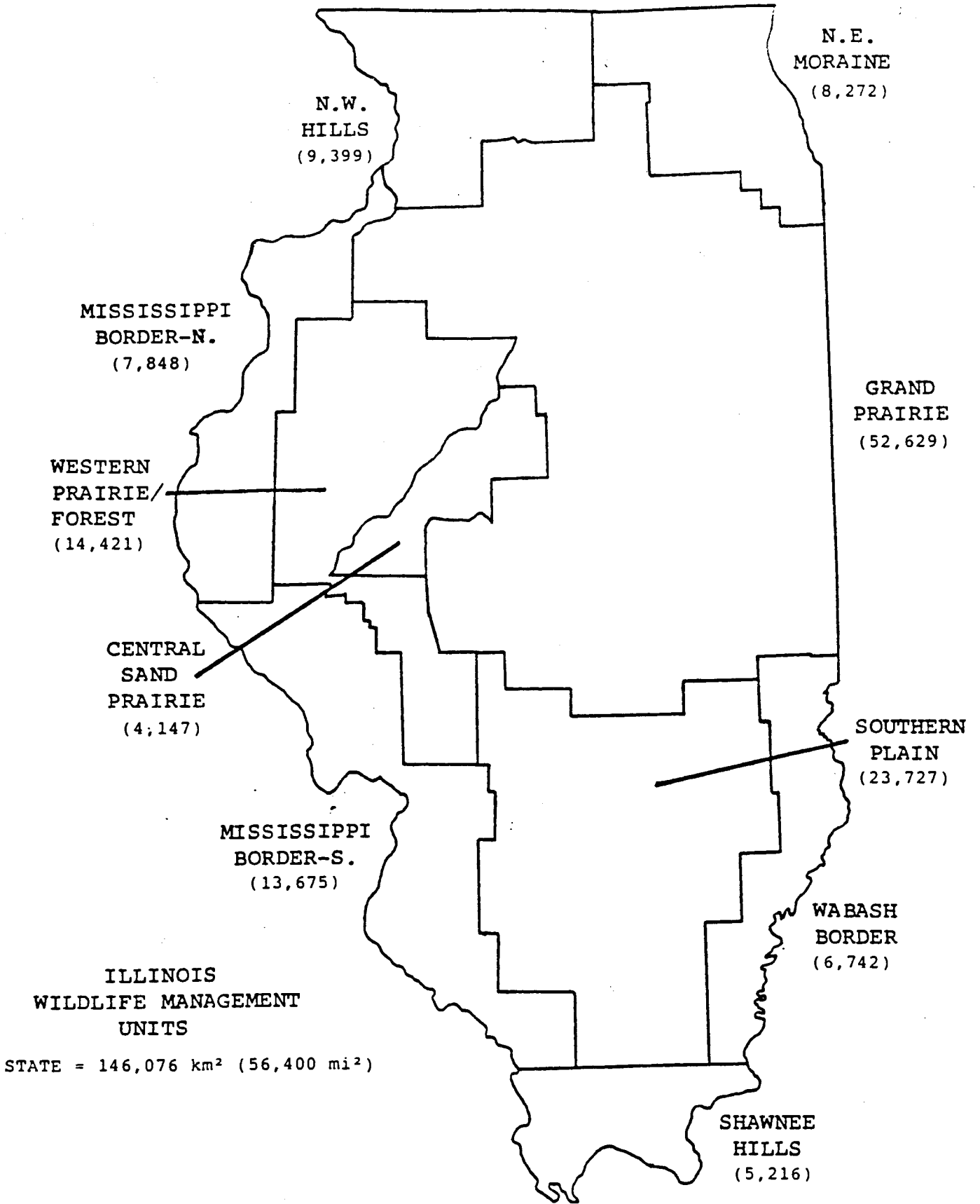


Figure 3. Area (km²) of wildlife management units in Illinois.

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