

2018 NAWMP UPDATE: ASSESSMENT/IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY

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TITLE OF ACTIVITY: NAWMP Waterfowl Hunter Survey

Overview of purpose/issue: The purpose of the NAWMP hunter survey included: 1) identifying the key attributes important to hunting experiences; 2) assessing the knowledge, preferences, levels of use and support for waterfowl and wetlands conservation; 3) assessing importance of ecological goods and services provided by wetlands; 4) assessing decisions to participate in hunting and level of identity with waterfowl hunting and conservation; and 5) examining the social, political, economic and human capital capacity for conserving waterfowl and wetlands.

Summary of Key Results:

- Total of 8,123 completed surveys from waterfowl hunters in 49 states were returned (21% response rate)
- Respondents tend to be white male, avid waterfowl hunters based on frequency of years and days hunted and a majority strongly or very strongly identified as duck hunters and conservationists but not as bird watchers
- Most take day trips, almost 50% of hunters most often hunt on public land
- Most (~75%) satisfied if they harvest 3 ducks and will accept a bag limit of 4
- Most (80%) in AF, MF and CF would accept a 45 day season
- Harvest, travel time and competition are important to hunting choices, with large increases in utility for harvesting more than 1 duck, traveling <2 hours, and low competition from other hunters
- Relatively low levels of trust, but more trusting of waterfowl hunting/conservation organizations and state agencies
- Low involvement in organizations and conservation activities
- Concern for losing wetland benefits with most concern for losing hunting, wildlife habitat and clean water

Initial implications for the 2018 Update:

- We now have stakeholder input data to better understand tradeoffs associated with three fundamental NAWMP objectives
- The 1986 NAWMP population objective was based on providing harvest opportunity similar to the 1970s, survey results provide clues about the size of population and distribution/amount of habitat needed to provide desired hunting experiences.
 - Having places to hunt in close proximity to place of residence is key
 - Hunters appear to be more concerned about things that influence “quality” hunting compared to efforts focused on increasing opportunity through larger bag limits and to a lesser extent more days.
- We can now populate conceptual participation models pertaining to recruitment (decisions to hunt), retainment (identity formation), and support (conservation contributions) and set NAWMP hunter objectives and complete GAP analysis to identify limiting factors.