



# Welcome

## Waterfowl Zone Line & Season Dates Open House



### Goals

- . Select waterfowl hunting season dates and zone lines that maximize hunter satisfaction by maximizing days afield and waterfowl numbers available to hunters
- . Select waterfowl hunting season dates and zone lines that promote retention and recruitment of waterfowl hunters
- . Better understand the needs and desired outcomes of waterfowl hunters
- . Increase the transparency and support for the process of setting waterfowl regulations

### Expected Outcomes

- . Standard waterfowl hunting season dates and zone lines for the next five years
- . Achieve a 65% level of support with the waterfowl hunting regulatory program over the next five years as measured by the *Illinois Waterfowl Hunter Survey*
- . Obtain a 75% level of support from the waterfowl hunting constituency groups for the process established to set waterfowl season dates and zone lines

### Process for Selecting Waterfowl Season Dates and Zone Lines

**Fall 2010:** Survey waterfowl management site superintendants and district and regional wildlife biologists on suggested duck season dates for their area

**February:** Update and analyze aerial waterfowl survey data

**February:** Start mail survey of Illinois waterfowl hunters (5,000)

**March:** Update freeze-up data map (20 year average)

**April - May:** Complete mail survey of Illinois waterfowl hunters and analyze results

**May:** Develop waterfowl hunting season and zone line alternatives based on previously gathered information

**June:** Hold five open houses to obtain public input on the alternatives

**July:** Division of Wildlife Resources' staff will recommend a preferred alternative or a modified alternative based on input from the open houses

**July - August:** Illinois Natural Resources Advisory Board (NRAB) will review staff recommended alternative and other alternatives and will forward their recommendation to the Director of IDNR

**July - August:** Director will consider staff and NRAB recommendations and will make the final decision to be sent to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for approval





# Zones and Splits for Duck Hunting Federal Options for Illinois Pros and Cons



## Current Options

### Statewide season with 1, 2, or 3 segments and no zones

- Pros**
- . Can provide for both early and late season hunting opportunities.
  - . Could provide up to 3 opening days.
  - . Could allow up to 2 extra weekends of hunting by closing on up to 4 weekdays.
  - . Could be closed during other major hunting seasons such as gun deer season.
- Cons**
- . Illinois is over 430 miles long north to south and the same dates would have to be used statewide. Hunters might get less time to hunt during their preferred season period.
  - . Major duck migrations could be missed during closed segments.
  - . With multiple split possibilities and variable opinions among hunters, selecting season dates that many would agree on would be difficult.
  - . Increased complexity of regulations would cause hunters to take careful note of when the season was open or closed.

### Two zones with up to 2 season segments in each zone

- Pros**
- . Can provide for both early and late season hunting opportunities.
  - . Could provide up to 2 opening days.
  - . Could allow an extra weekend of hunting by closing on 2 weekdays.
  - . Could be closed during other major hunting seasons such as gun deer season.
- Cons**
- . Major duck migrations could be missed during closed segments.
  - . With multiple split possibilities and variable opinions among hunters, selecting season dates that many would agree on would be difficult.
  - . Increased complexity of regulations would cause hunters to take careful note of when the season was open or closed.
  - . Could not effectively address major differences in hunter preference for season dates in current south zone.

### Three zones with no option to split the season into 2 different segments

- Pros**
- . Can vary season timing in 3 zones from north to south to allow for differences in migration and weather in a 430+ mile long state.
  - . Hunters are familiar with a system without split duck seasons.
  - . Having seasons without splits allows for more simplified regulations and a greater chance for consensus among hunters in regards to season dates.
- Cons**
- . Provides only one opening day
  - . Start date dictates the ending date and vice versa (e.g. you must start late to end late).
  - . Could not effectively address major differences in hunter preference for season dates in current south zone.

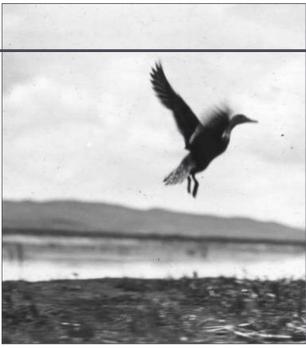
## Additional Options under Consideration by USFWS

### Three zones with the option to split the season into 2 different segments (Pending approval from USFWS for this option)

- Pros**
- . Can provide for both early and late season hunting opportunities in all three zones.
  - . Provides 2 opening days.
  - . Could allow an extra weekend of hunting by closing on 2 weekdays.
  - . Could be closed during other major hunting seasons such as gun deer season.
- Cons**
- . Major duck migrations could be missed during closed segments.
  - . With multiple split possibilities and variable opinions among hunters, finding season dates that many would agree on would be difficult.
  - . Increased complexity of regulations would cause hunters to take careful note of when the season was open or closed.
  - . Could not effectively address major differences in hunter preference for season dates in current south zone.

### Four zones with no option to split the season into 2 different segments **DNR proposed option** (Pending approval from USFWS for this option)

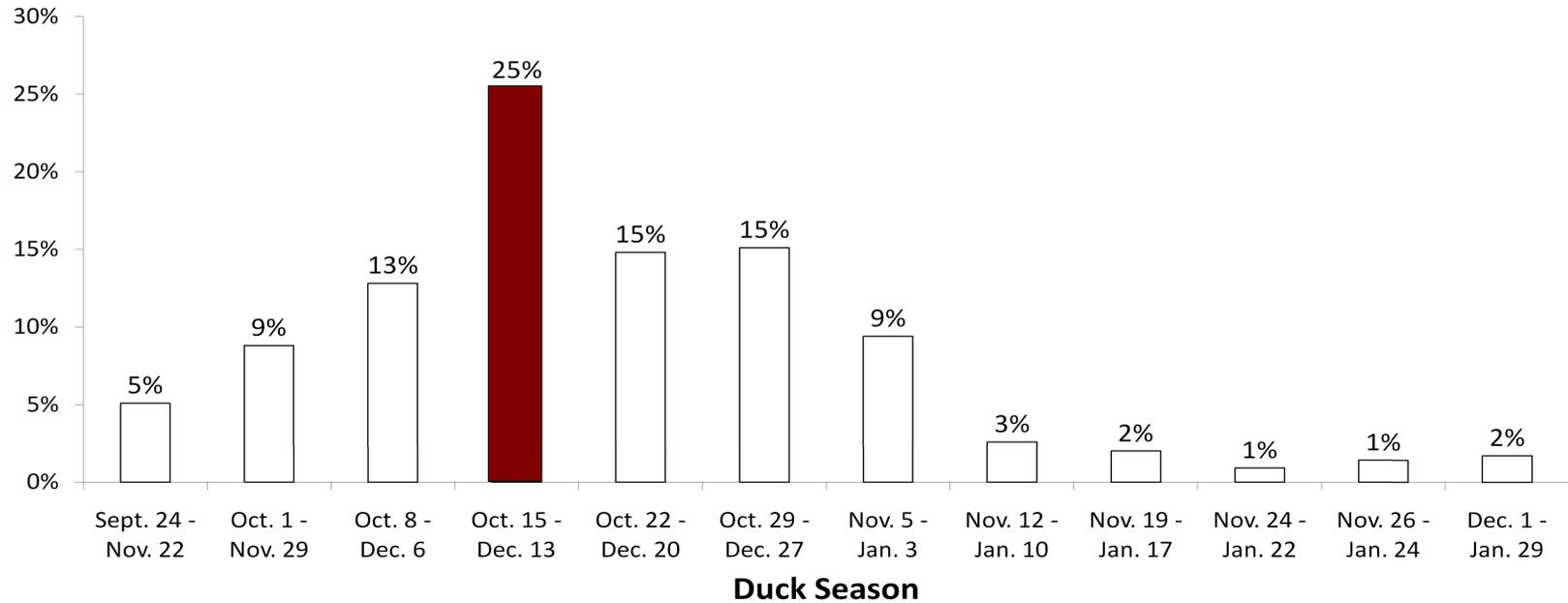
- Pros**
- . Can vary season timing in 4 zones from north to south to allow for differences in migration and weather in a 430+ mile long state.
  - . Hunters are familiar with a system without split duck seasons.
  - . Having seasons without splits allows for more simplified regulations and a greater chance for consensus among hunters in regards to season dates.
  - . Effectively addresses major differences in hunter preference for season dates in current south zone.
- Cons**
- . Provides only one opening day per zone.
  - . Start date dictates the ending date and vice versa (e.g. you must start late to end late).



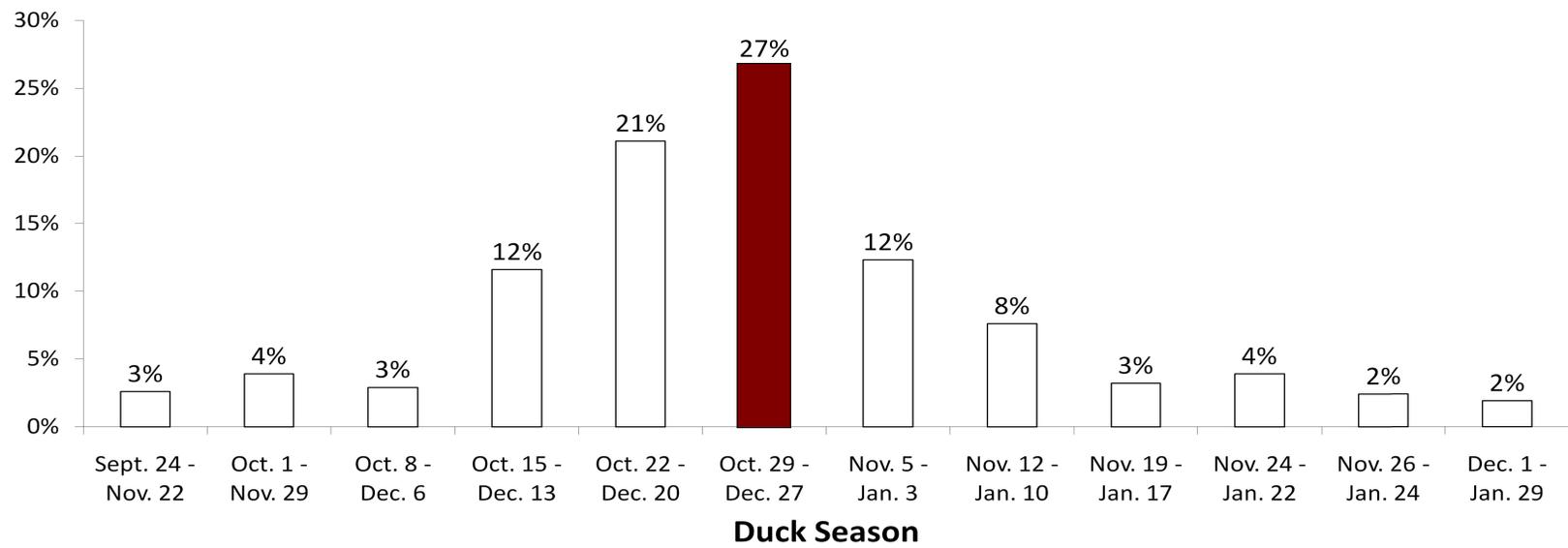
# Duck Season Date Preferences By Zone



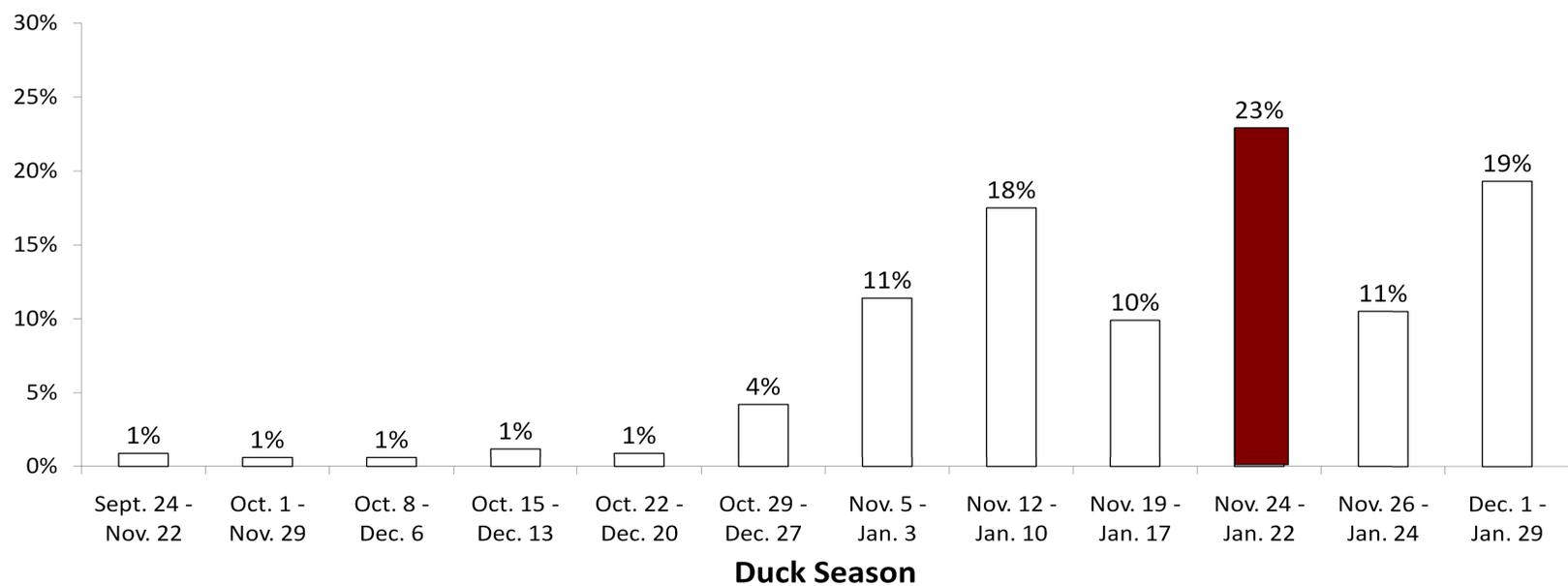
## North Zone Duck Season: Hunters' Preferences



## Central Zone Duck Season: Hunters' Preferences



## South Zone Duck Season: Hunters' Preferences

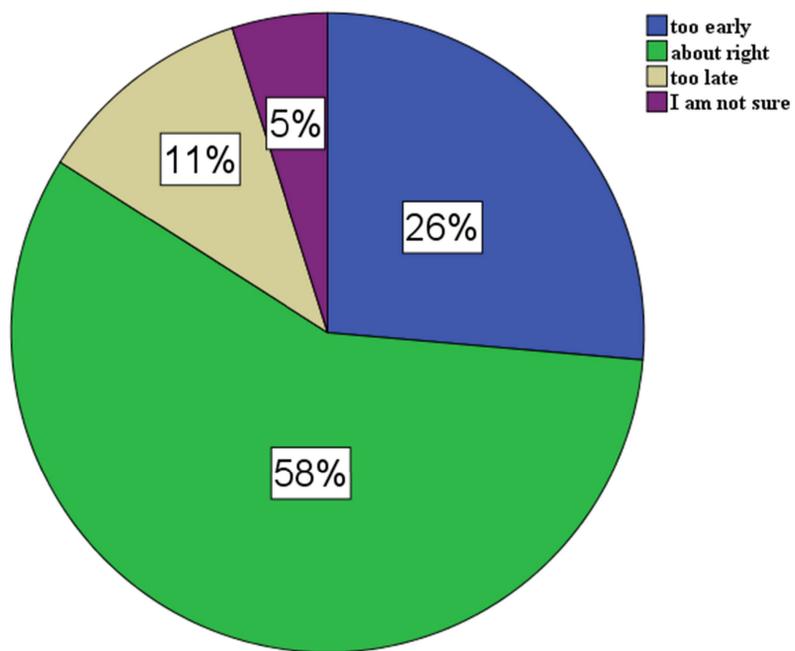




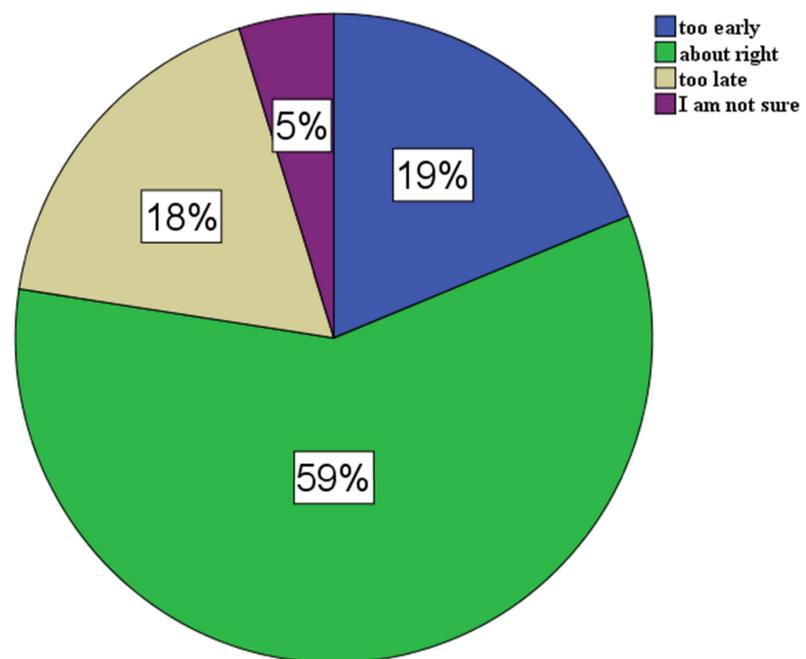
# Duck Hunter Opinions on 2010 Duck Seasons



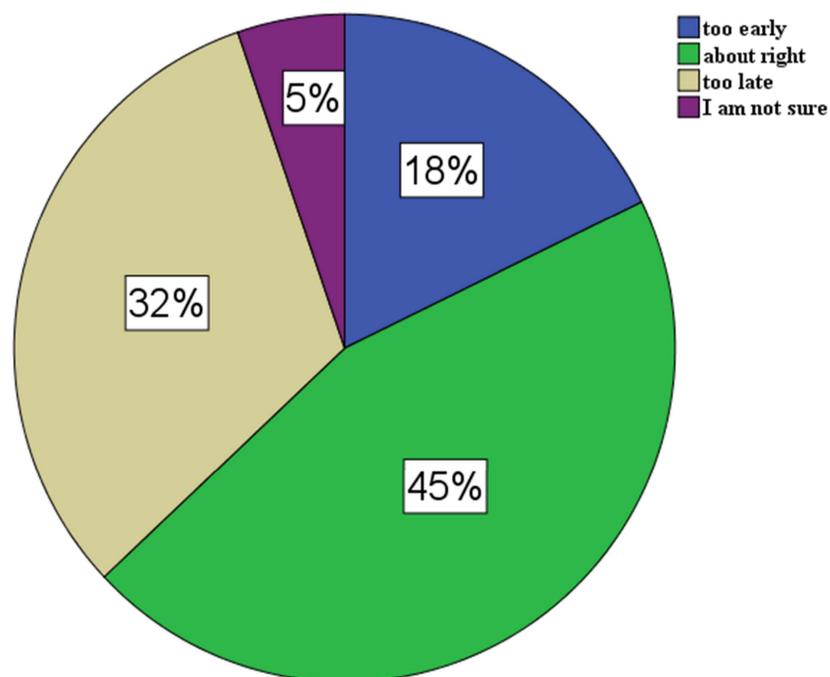
North Zone Hunters' Opinions about 2010 Duck Season (Oct. 16 — Dec. 14; n = 368)

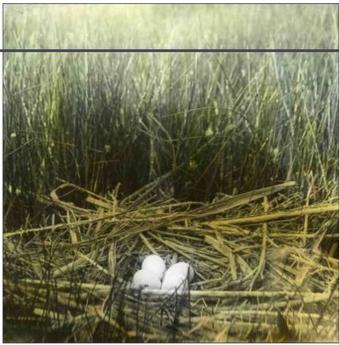


Central Zone Hunters' Opinions about 2010 Duck Season (Oct. 30 — Dec. 28; n = 642)

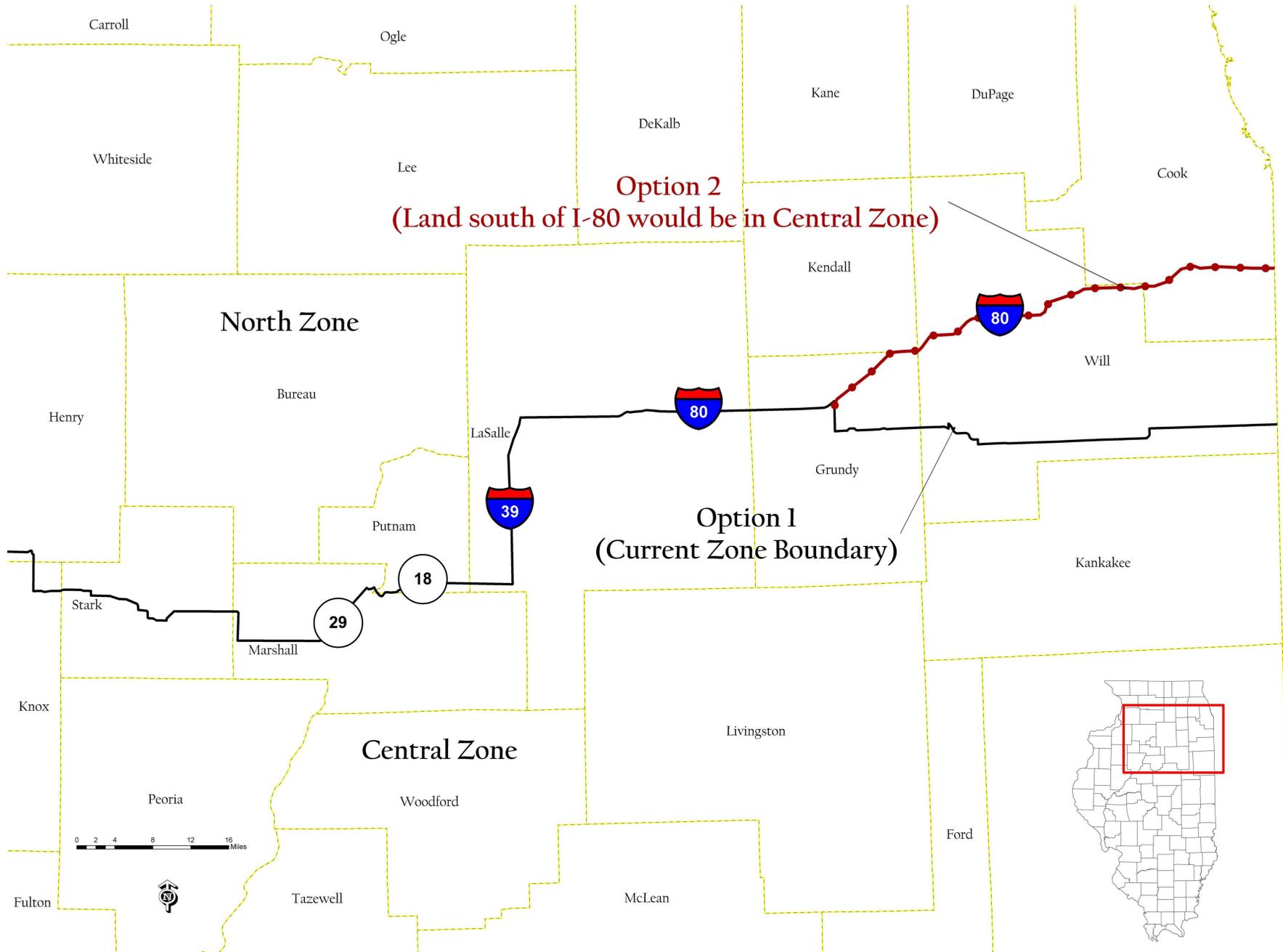


South Zone Hunters' Opinions about 2010 Duck Season (Nov. 25 — Jan. 23; n = 343)

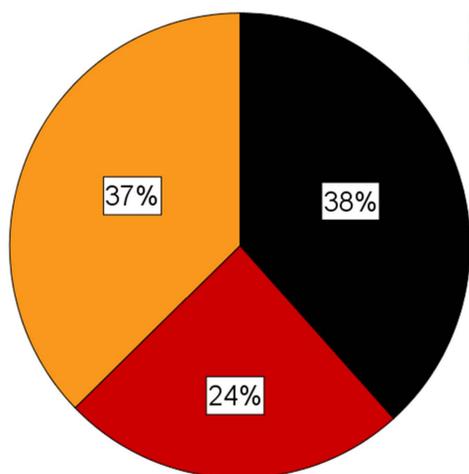




# Northeast Illinois Zone Boundary Options: Question #2 in survey

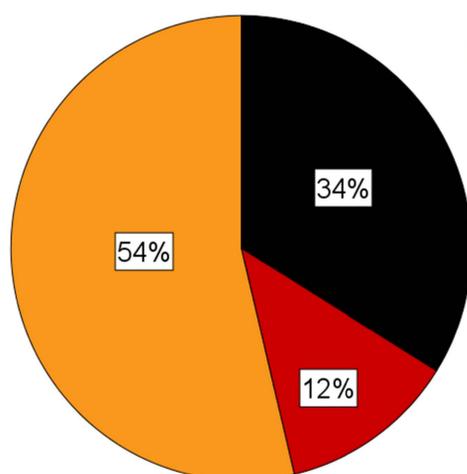


North Zone Hunters  
(n = 378)



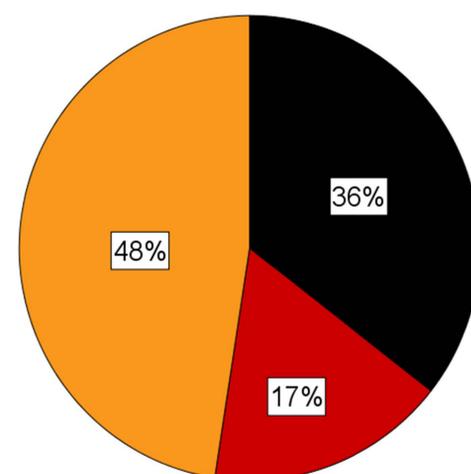
■ Option 1  
■ Option 2  
■ I have no opinion

Central Zone Hunters  
(n = 635)



■ Option 1  
■ Option 2  
■ I have no opinion

North & Central Zone Hunters  
(n = 1,013)

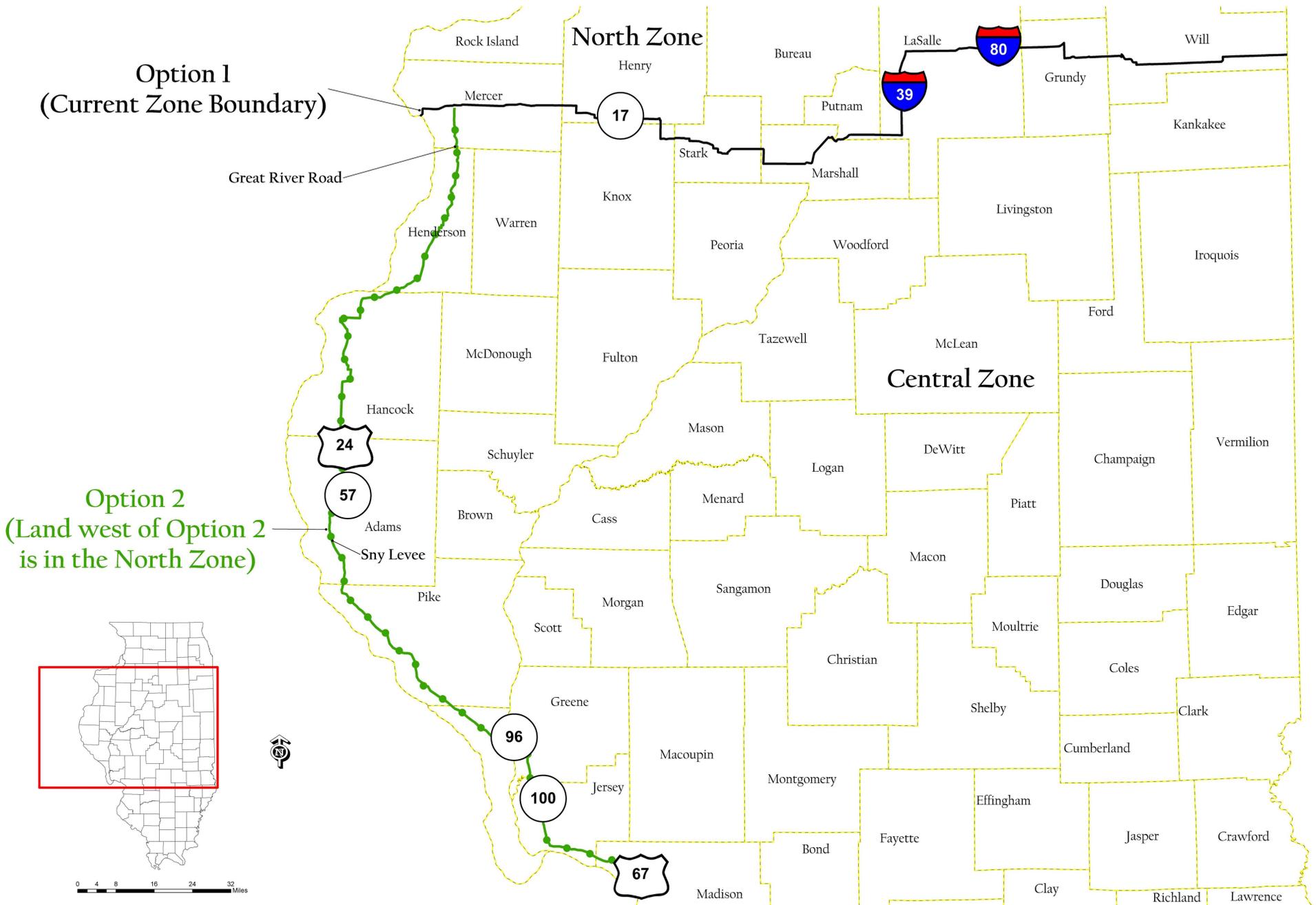


■ Option 1  
■ Option 2  
■ I have no opinion

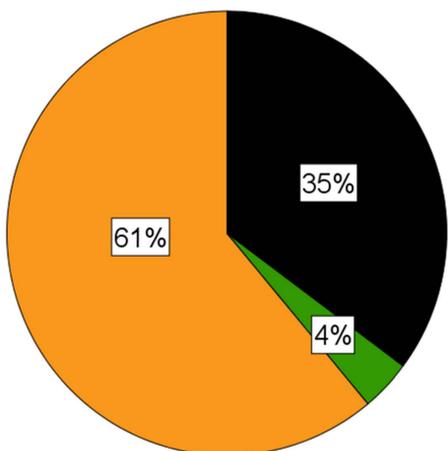




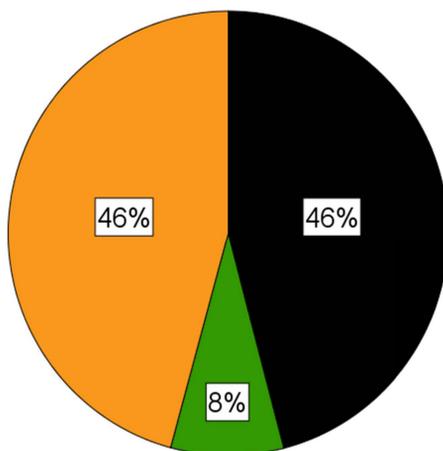
# Western Illinois Zone Boundary Options: Question #3 in survey



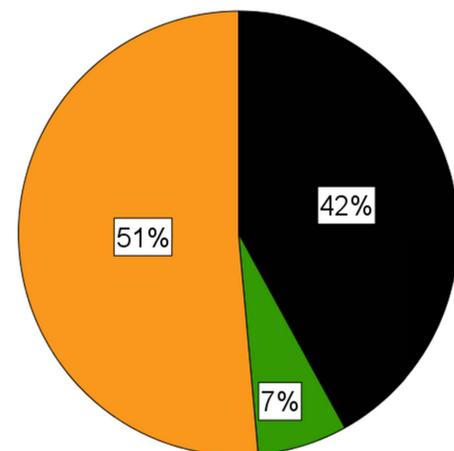
**North Zone Hunters**  
(n = 375)



**Central Zone Hunters**  
(n = 640)

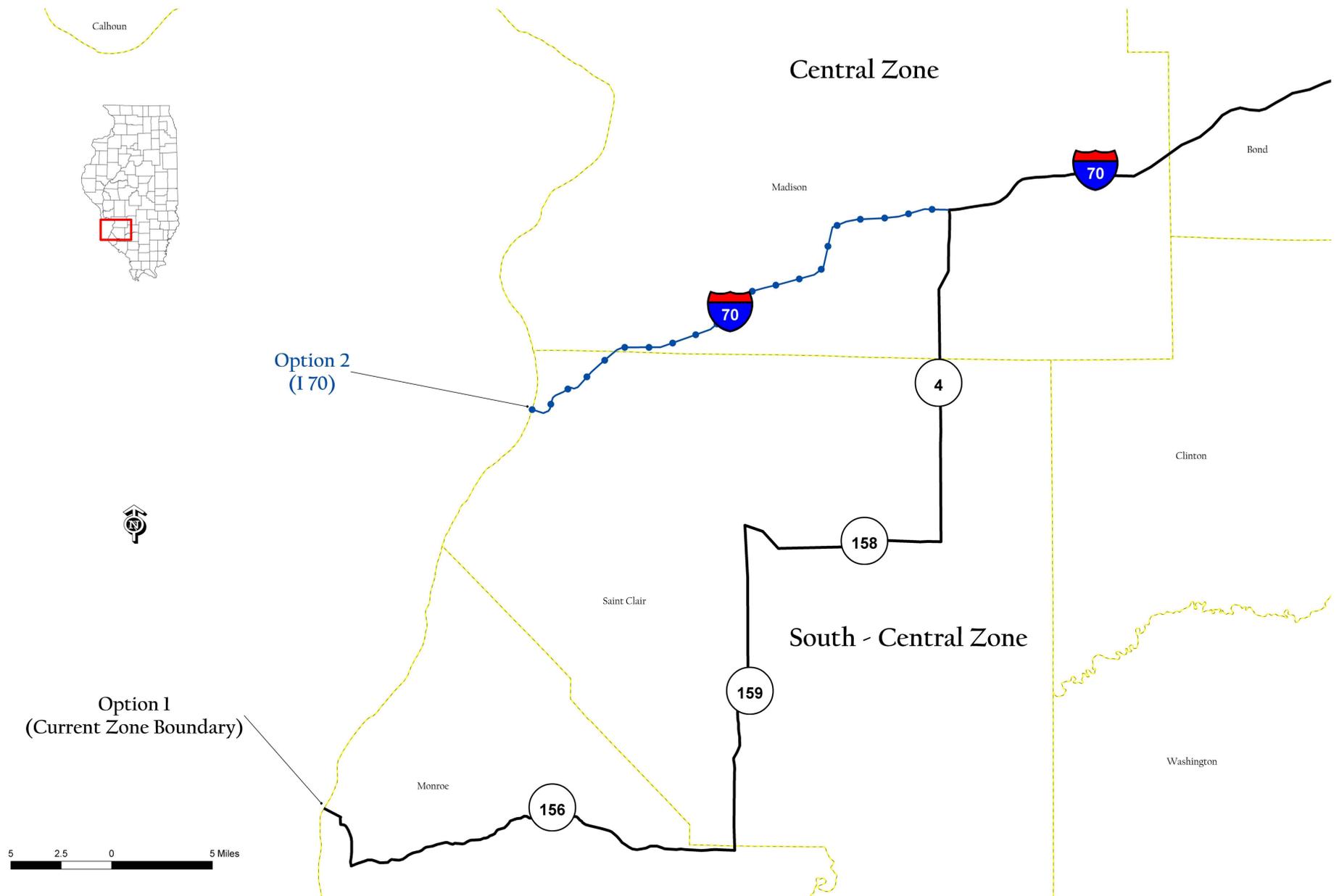


**North & Central Zone Hunters**  
(n = 1,015)

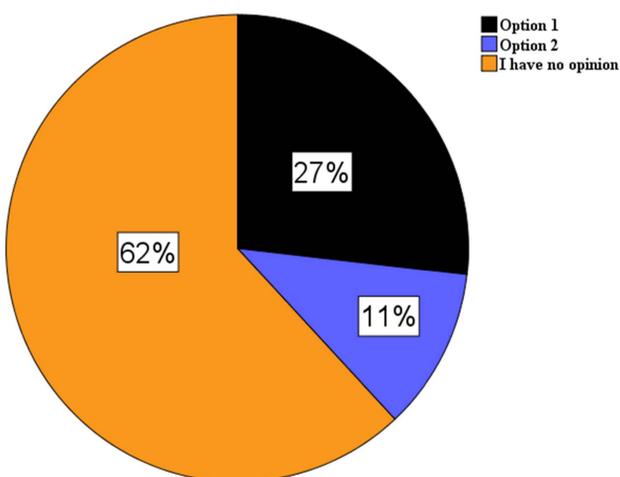




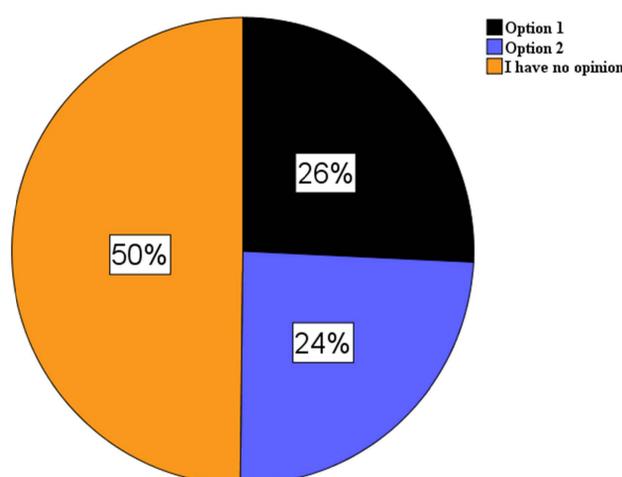
# Southwest Illinois Zone Boundary Options: Question #4 in survey



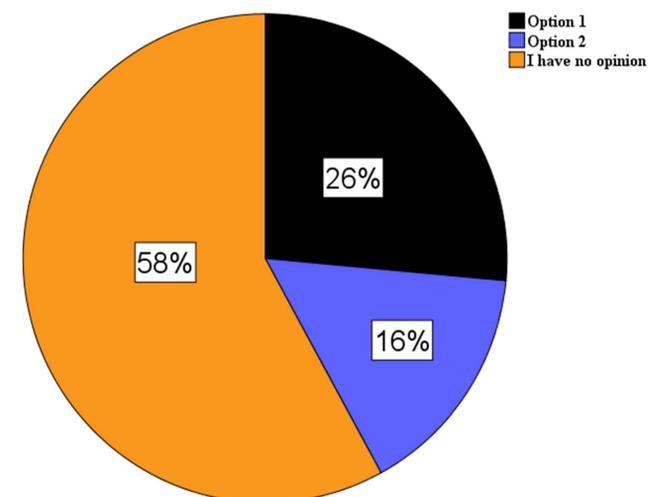
**Central Zone Hunters**  
(n = 612)



**South Zone Hunters**  
(n = 299)

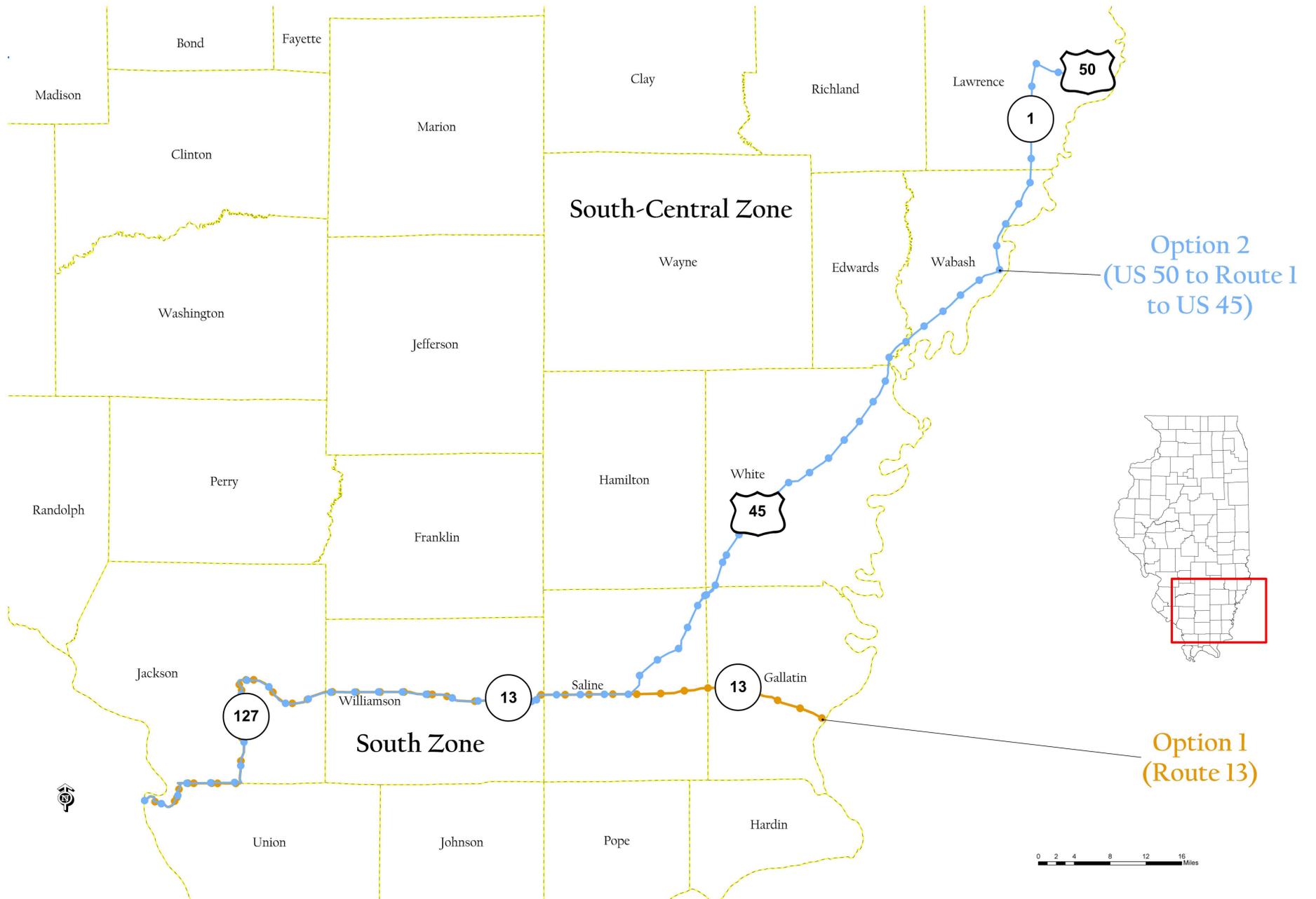


**Central & South Zone Hunters**  
(n = 911)

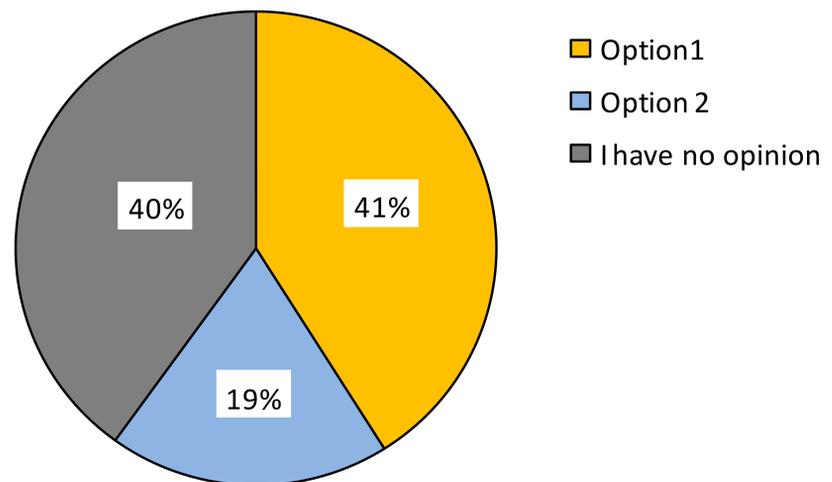




# Southern Illinois Zone Boundary Options: Question #5 in survey



## South Zone Hunters (n = 329)





# Proposed Waterfowl Zones & Season Dates: 2011-2015

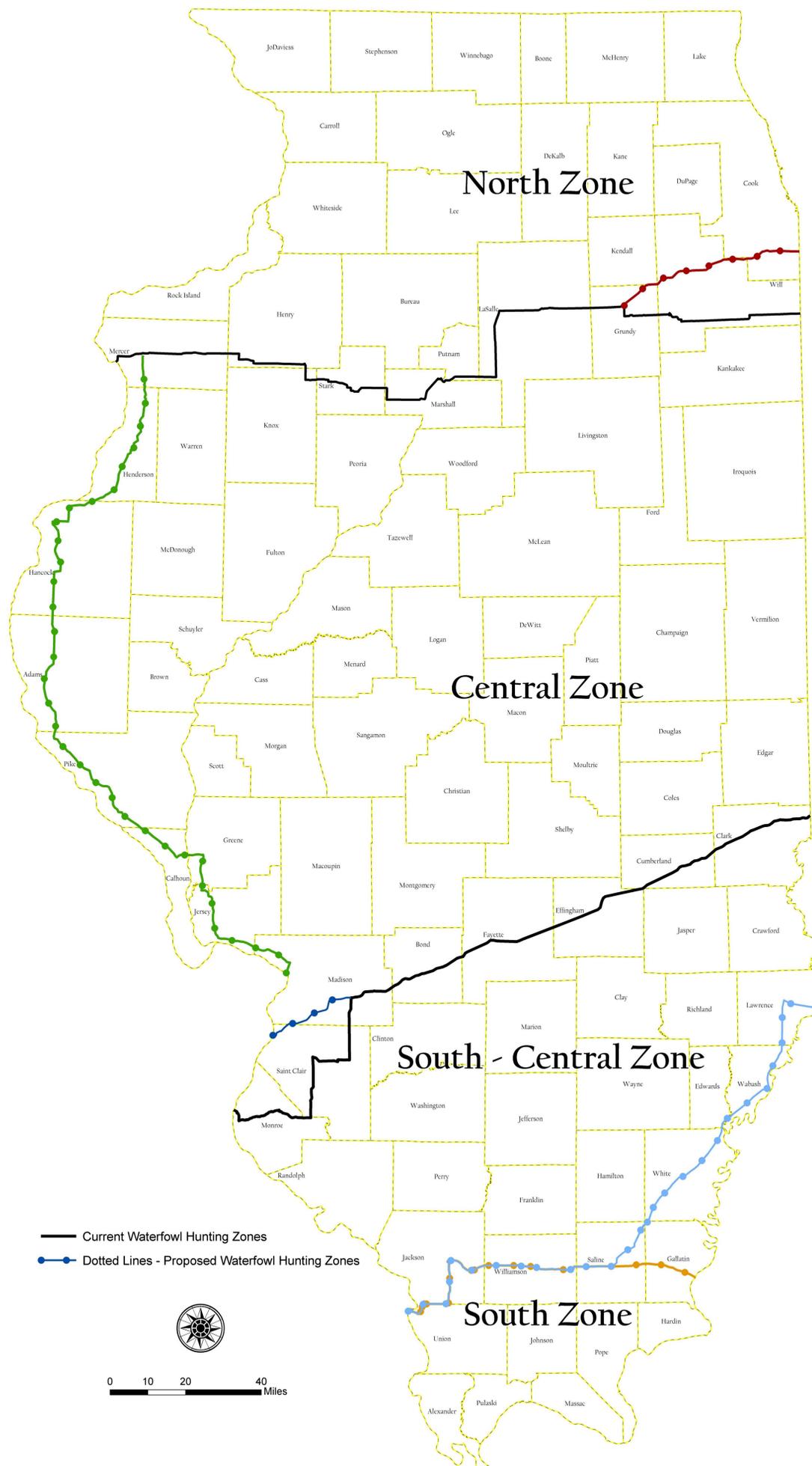


North Zone		
Year	Duck	Canada Goose
2011	Oct. 15 - Dec. 13	Oct. 15 - Jan. 7
2012	Oct. 20 - Dec. 18	Oct. 20 - Jan. 12
2013	Oct. 19 - Dec. 17	Oct. 19 - Jan. 11
2014	Oct. 18 - Dec. 16	Oct. 18 - Jan. 10
2015	Oct. 17 - Dec. 15	Oct. 17 - Jan. 9

Central Zone		
Year	Duck	Canada Goose
2011	Oct. 29 - Dec. 27	Oct. 29 - Nov. 13 Nov. 24 - Jan. 31
2012	Oct. 27 - Dec. 25	Oct. 27 - Nov. 11 Nov. 24 - Jan. 31
2013	Oct. 26 - Dec. 24	Oct. 26 - Nov. 10 Nov. 24 - Jan. 31
2014	Oct. 25 - Dec. 23	Oct. 25 - Nov. 9 Nov. 24 - Jan. 31
2015	Oct. 24 - Dec. 22	Oct. 24 - Nov. 8 Nov. 24 - Jan. 31

South-Central Zone		
Year	Duck	Canada Goose
2011	Nov. 12 - Jan. 10	Nov. 12 - Nov. 17 Dec. 3 - Jan. 31
2012	Nov. 10 - Jan. 8	Nov. 10 - Nov. 15 Dec. 3 - Jan. 31
2013	Nov. 9 - Jan. 7	Nov. 9 - Nov. 14 Dec. 3 - Jan. 31
2014	Nov. 8 - Jan. 6	Nov. 8 - Nov. 13 Dec. 3 - Jan. 31
2015	Nov. 14 - Jan. 12	Nov. 14 - Nov. 19 Dec. 3 - Jan. 31

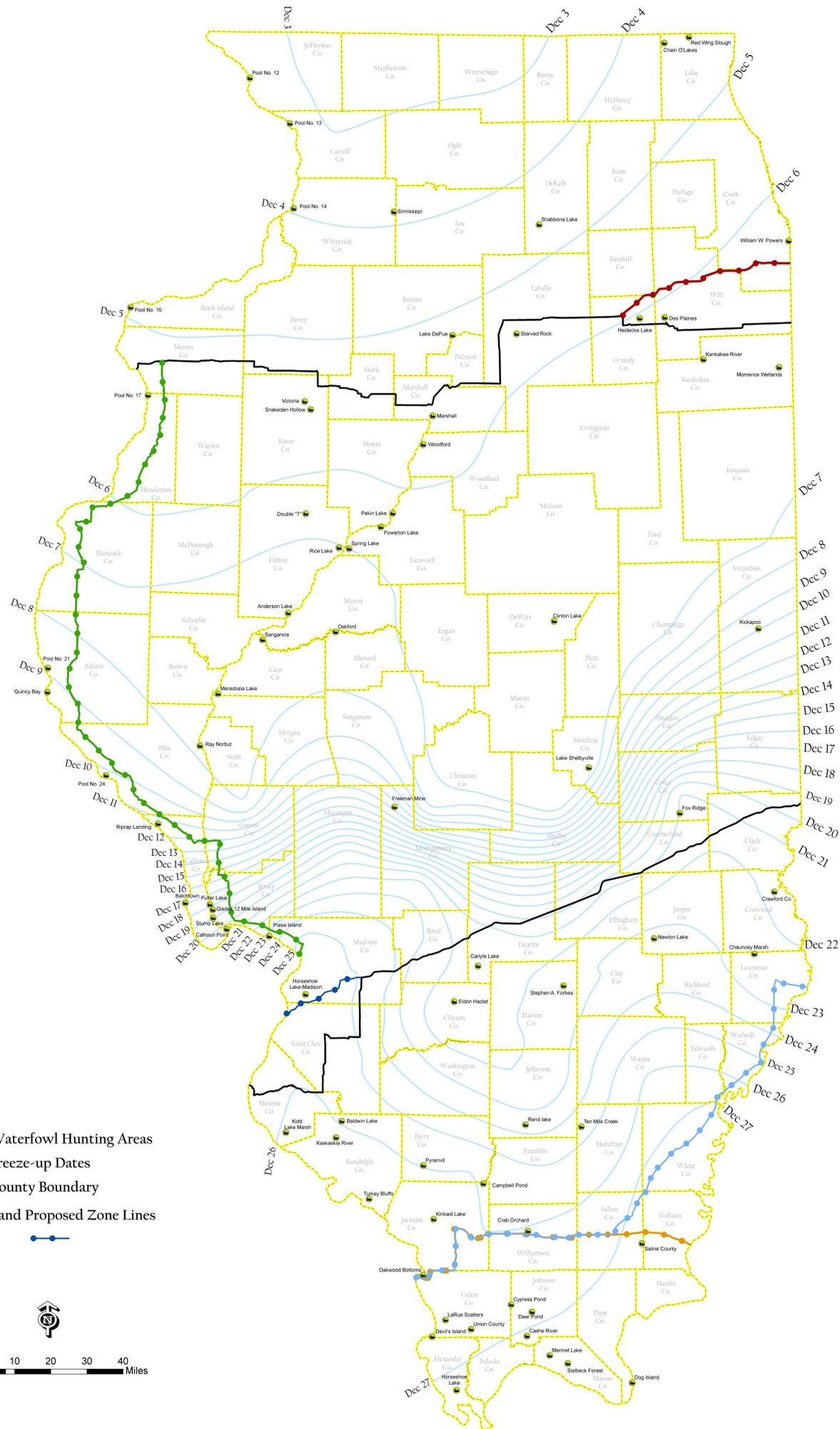
South Zone		
Year	Duck	Canada Goose
2011	Dec. 1 - Jan. 29	Dec. 1 - Jan. 31
2012	Nov. 29 - Jan. 27	Nov. 29 - Jan. 31
2013	Nov. 28 - Jan. 26	Nov. 28 - Jan. 31
2014	Nov. 27 - Jan. 25	Nov. 27 - Jan. 31
2015	Dec. 3 - Jan. 31	Dec. 3 - Jan. 31



All opening days are Saturdays, except in the South Zone where the opening days are on Thursday, to provide the latest possible season.



# 20 Year Average Freeze-Up Dates 1991-2010



Freeze-up is defined as the date when the average daily temperature falls below 32 degrees for at least 3 days in a row. Caution should be used when interpreting freeze-up dates because they are subject to extreme annual variation.

For example, freeze-up occurred on Nov. 5, 1991 in Alton but in 2009 it occurred on Dec. 30. In Quincy it varied from Nov. 5 in 1991 to Dec. 26 in 2001. In Carbondale freeze-up varied from Nov. 5, 1991 to Dec. 27, 2001

# Central Zone Aerial Survey Data



## Illinois and Mississippi Rivers

### Illinois Natural History Survey - Waterfowl Aerial Inventory Data

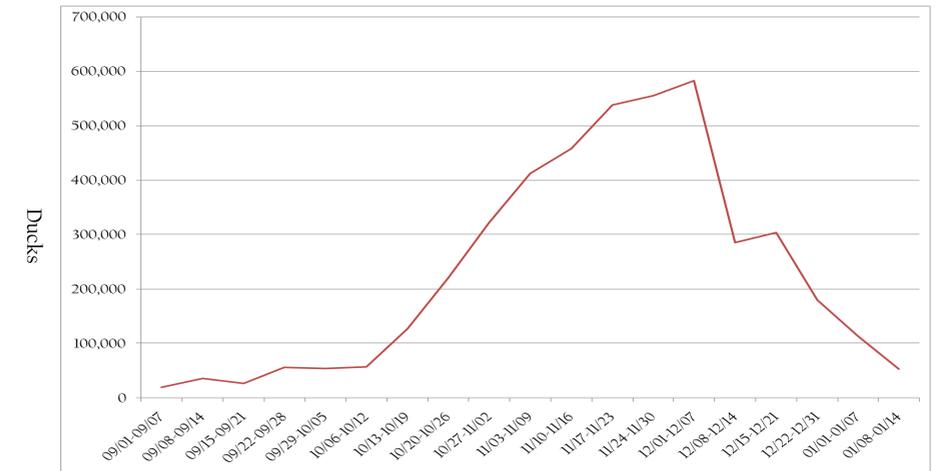
Sum of the 10-Year Mean Number of Ducks Observed per Week – 2000-01, 2002-03 through 2010-11

Percentage Difference from Peak Duck Abundance			
Survey Period	IL & MS Rivers Combined	Mississippi River	Illinois River
Oct. 9 -Dec. 4	-11 %	-16 %	-7 %
Oct. 16 -Dec. 11	-5 %	-9 %	-2 %
Oct. 23 -Dec. 18	<b>Peak</b>	-1 %	<b>Peak</b>
Oct. 30 -Dec. 26	-1 %	<b>Peak</b>	-4 %
Nov. 6 -Jan. 3	-7 %	-3 %	-13 %
Nov. 13 -Jan. 10	-17 %	-10 %	-25 %

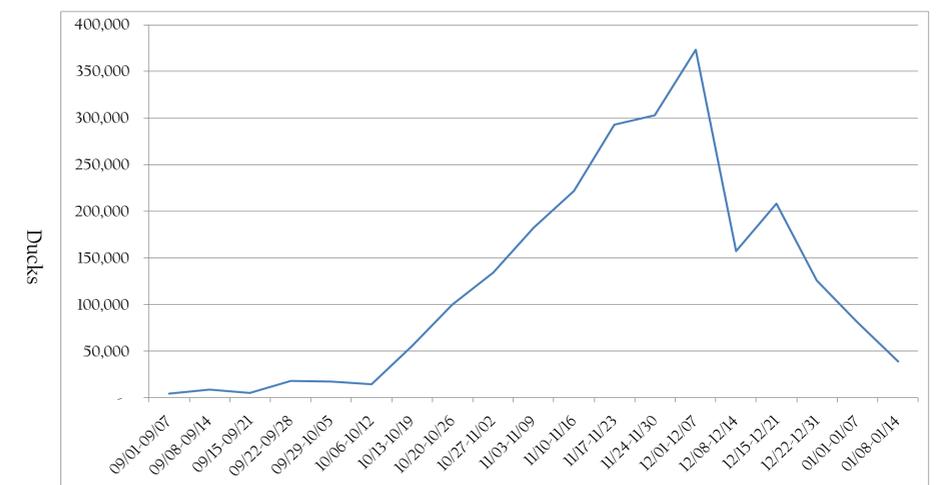
Data collected during aerial waterfowl surveys provide biologists with a useful index of duck abundance. Percentages shaded in yellow represent duck population estimates of equal value because they are within the range of error associated with this sampling technique ( $\pm 10\%$ ).



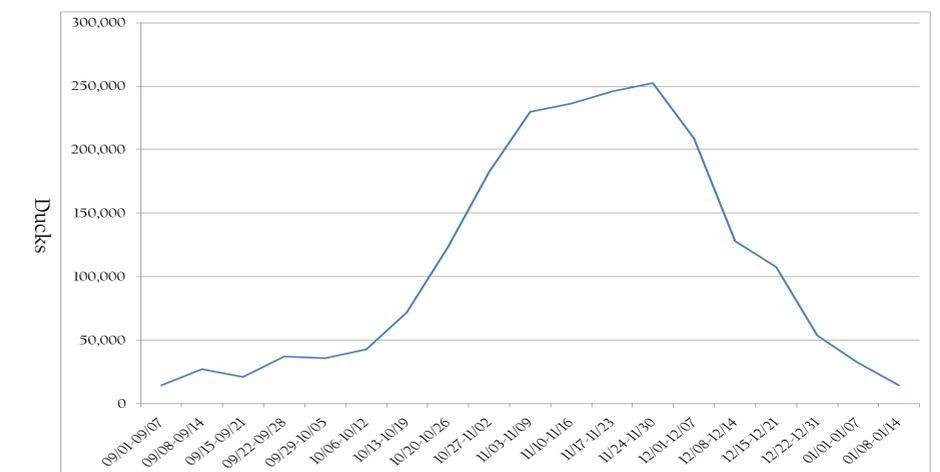
Illinois and Mississippi Rivers Combined



Mississippi River (Swan Lake to New Boston)



Illinois River (from Hennepin/Hopper to Meredosia Lake)

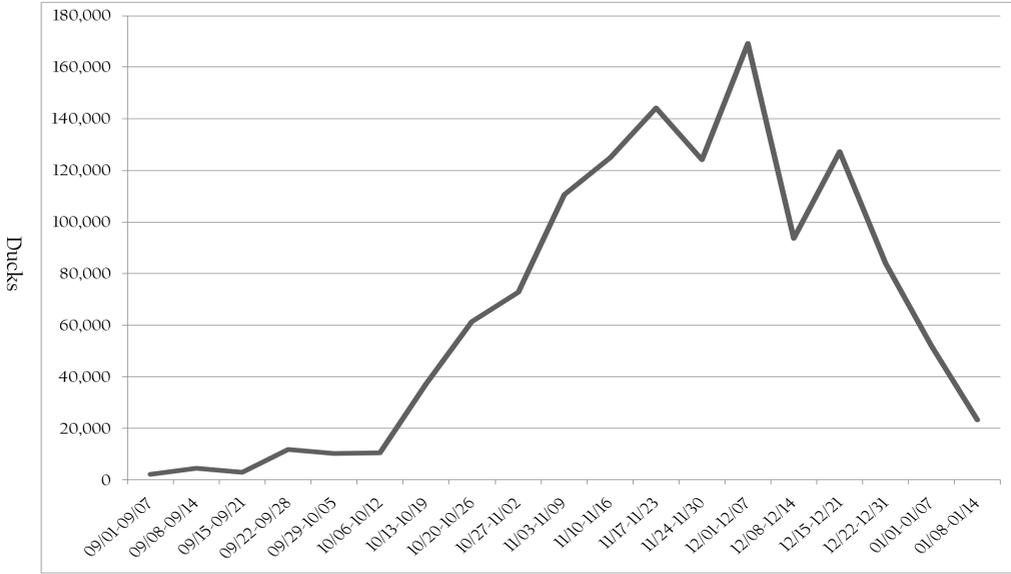


# Central Zone Aerial Survey Data

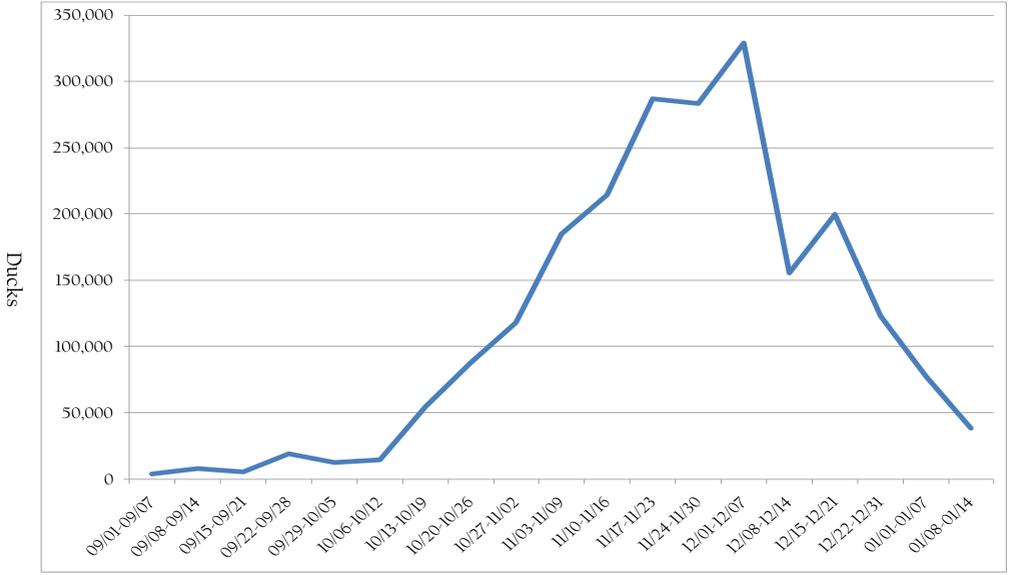


## Mississippi River Area and Upper Mississippi River

Mississippi River Area (MRA):  
Swan Lake, Gilbert Lake, Long Lake, Dardenne Club, Cuivre  
Club and Batchtown Refuge



Upper Mississippi River - North of the MRA



Sum of the 10-Year Mean Number of Ducks Observed  
per Week – 2000-01, 2002-03 through 2010-11

Percentage Difference from Peak Duck Abundance		
Survey Period	MRA	Upper Mississippi River
Oct. 9 -Dec. 4	-19 %	-17 %
Oct. 16 -Dec. 11	-11 %	-9 %
Oct. 23 -Dec. 18	-2 %	-2 %
Oct. 30 -Dec. 26	Peak	Peak
Nov. 6 -Jan. 3	-2 %	-2 %
Nov. 13 -Jan. 10	-10 %	-10 %

Data collected during aerial waterfowl surveys provide biologists with a useful index of duck abundance. Percentages shaded in yellow represent duck population estimates of equal value because they are within the range of error associated with this sampling technique ( $\pm 10\%$ ).

Illinois Natural History Survey - Waterfowl Aerial Inventory Data

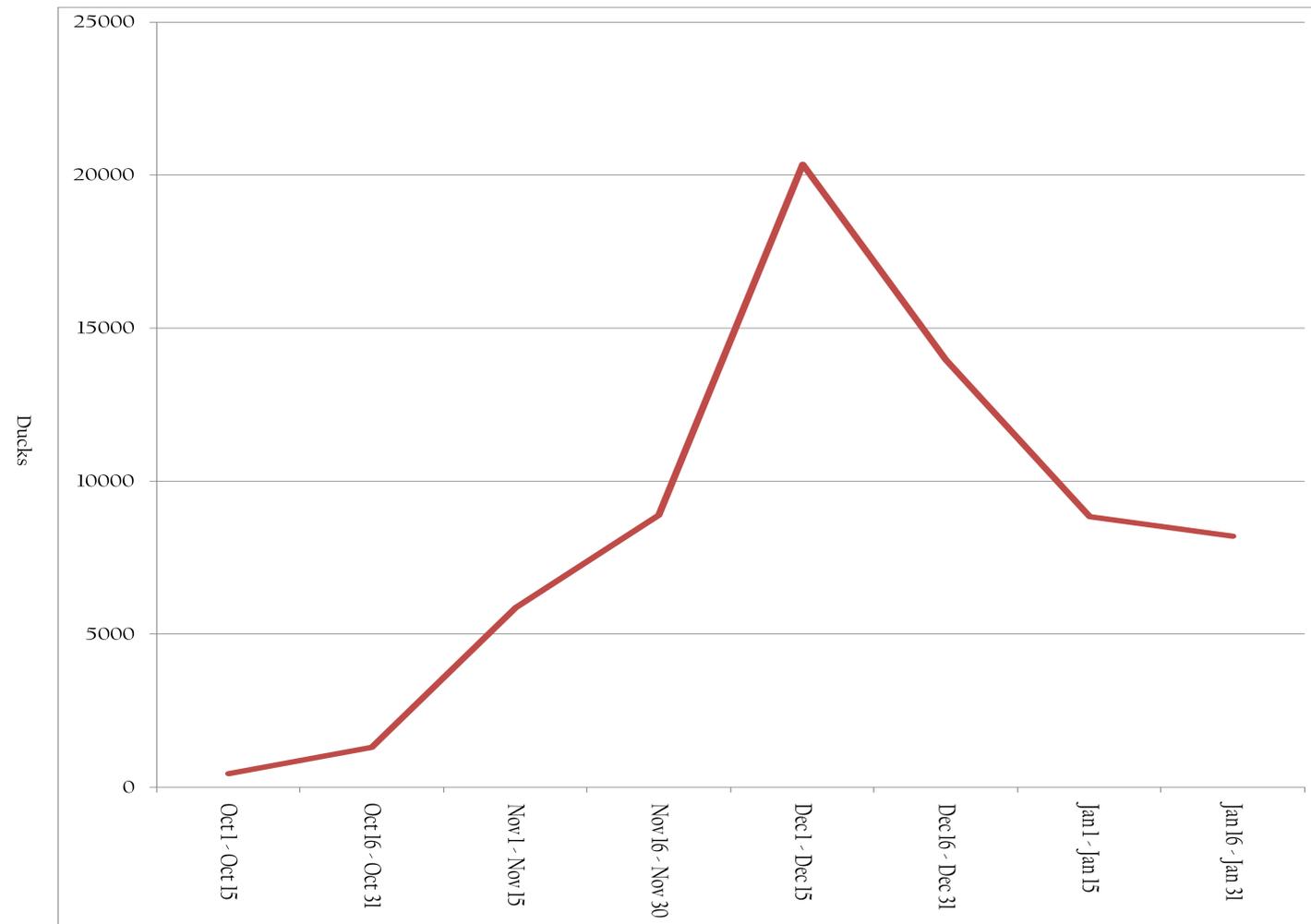


# North & Central Zone Aerial Survey Data

## Northeast Illinois

Sum of the 10-Year Mean Number of Ducks Observed  
per Week – 2001-02 through 2010-11

Percentage Difference from Peak Duck Abundance	
Survey Period	Northeast Illinois Survey Areas
Oct. 8 -Dec. 8	-39 %
Oct. 23 -Dec. 22	-16 %
Nov. 8 -Jan. 8	-4 %
Nov. 23 -Jan. 23	Peak

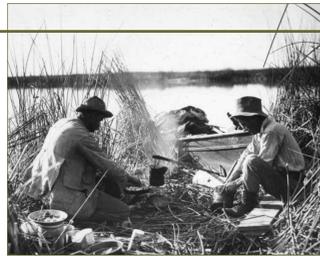


Northeast Illinois Survey Areas (Kankakee River, Braidwood Lake, Mazonia FWA, Dresden Lake, Goose Lake Prairie SNA, DesPlaines River, Heidecke Lake, Illinois River Quarries, LaSalle Lake, and Lake Renwick)

Data collected during aerial waterfowl surveys provide biologists with a useful index of duck abundance. Percentages shaded in yellow represent duck population estimates of equal value because they are within the range of error associated with this sampling technique ( $\pm 10\%$ ).



IDNR, Division of Wildlife Resources- Waterfowl Aerial Inventory Data



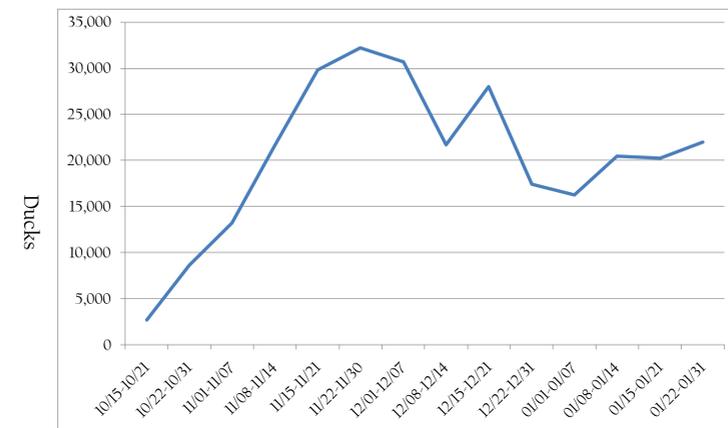
# South Zone Aerial Survey Data

## Carlyle Lake / Keck's Marsh, Rend Lake and Crab Orchard / Union County / Horseshoe Lake / Cache River

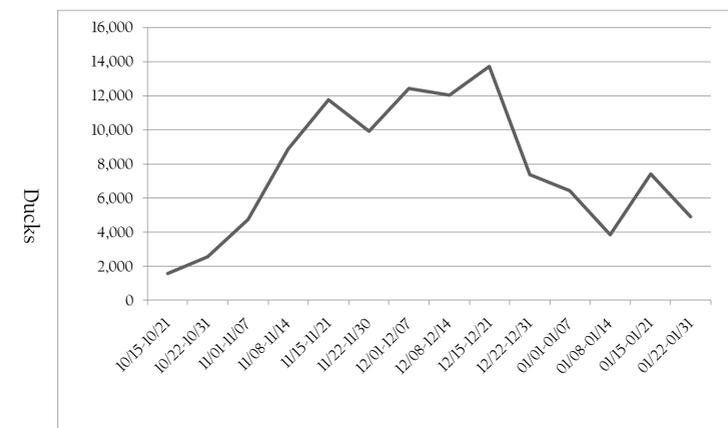
Sum of the 10-Year Mean Number of Ducks Observed  
per Week – 2001-02 through 2010-11

Percentage Difference from Peak Duck Abundance			
Survey Period	Carlyle Lake and Keck's Marsh	Rend Lake	Crab Orchard, Union County, Horseshoe Lake, and Cache River
Oct. 18 -Dec. 10	-19 %	-23 %	-43 %
Oct. 26 -Dec. 18	-6 %	-8 %	-26 %
Nov. 4 -Dec. 25	-2 %	-2 %	-16 %
Nov. 11 -Jan. 4	Peak	Peak	-8 %
Nov. 18 -Jan. 11	-1 %	-6 %	-5 %
Nov. 25 - Jan. 18	-5 %	-11 %	-2 %
Dec. 4 -Jan. 26	-11 %	-17 %	Peak

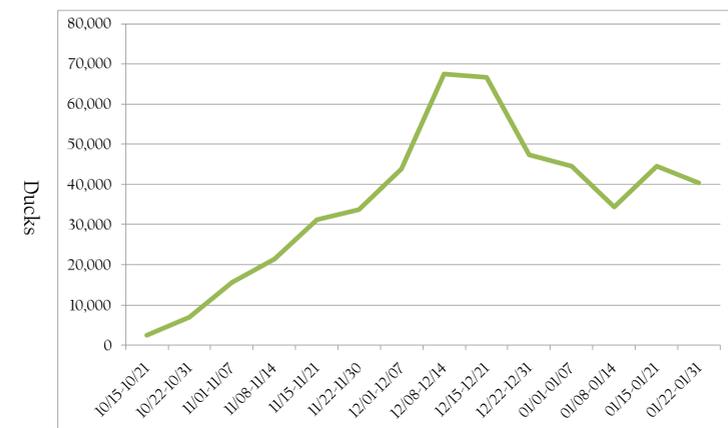
Carlyle Lake and Keck's Marsh



Rend Lake



Crab Orchard, Union County, Horseshoe Lake, and Cache River



Data collected during aerial waterfowl surveys provide biologists with a useful index of duck abundance. Percentages shaded in yellow represent duck population estimates of equal value because they are within the range of error associated with this sampling technique ( $\pm 10\%$ ).



IDNR, Division of Wildlife Resources - Waterfowl Aerial Inventory Data