



# 2014 WISCONSIN CANADA GOOSE HARVEST REPORT

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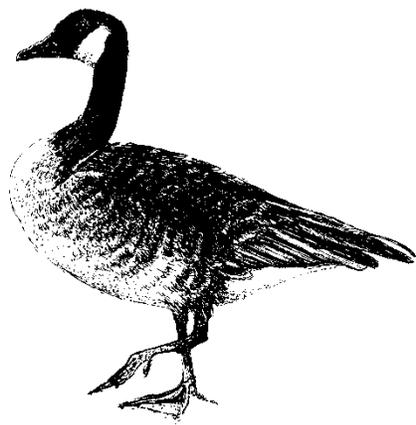
Season/ Zone	2014 Estimated Canada Goose Harvest
Early	21,732
Horicon	3,027
Exterior	31,932
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>56,691</b>





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## WISCONSIN 2014 CANADA GOOSE HARVEST REPORT

### INTRODUCTION

The management of Canada goose populations and hunting recreation has been a social and biological challenge for the state of Wisconsin since the 1950s (Miller 1998). Continental Canada goose management is based on several different breeding populations. The fall harvest of Canada geese in Wisconsin consists primarily of two populations. One population is the Mississippi Valley Population (MVP) that breeds along the southern Hudson Bay Coast in Ontario and migrates south primarily through Wisconsin and Michigan, and then Illinois, Indiana and western Ohio. Traditionally, many MVP geese wintered in Kentucky and Tennessee, and sometimes as far south as Mississippi (Brooke and Luukkonen 2010, Leafloor et al. 2003). However, in recent years many are wintering as far north as northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin. A second major population of geese contributing to Wisconsin's harvest is the resident or giant race which breeds in WI. Based on banding data, a small percentage of Wisconsin's goose harvest (~2%) also comes from the Eastern Prairie, Tall Grass Prairie and Southern James Bay Populations. The Mississippi Flyway Council (MFC) was established in 1952 to work cooperatively among the states, provinces and federal governments in the management of migratory birds and in 1956 the MFC established a Canada Goose Committee to manage the harvest and distribution of several Canada goose populations in the Flyway.

In the 1950s the MVP was the primary population of Canada geese in Wisconsin while the giant race was considered nearly extinct in the Flyway. During this period, the Horicon National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) in WI began managing specifically to support migrating MVP during the fall. Landscape changes, Horicon refuge management and an expanded refuge system in Illinois all contributed to an increase in fall/winter Canada goose populations and harvest levels in both states. In 1960 Wisconsin and Illinois agreed to establish a harvest quota system to cooperatively manage goose harvest and despite a number of changes, a quota system remained through 2006. During the early 1960s MVP geese steadily increased in numbers at Horicon with fall numbers exceeding 100,000 geese and harvest near 1,000 geese per day for only a 9 to 11 day season. This growing fall goose population began to cause significant agricultural crop depredation in WI and complaints by hunters in states to the south that WI was short stopping geese (Miller 1998). In 1965 agricultural damage payments began as a result of goose depredation in east central WI. Over a period of several years in the 1960s; social, political and biological forces surrounded goose management and resulted in actions such as hazing and a harvest of 30,000 geese in 3 days of shooting in 1966. In 1965 the MFC agreed to a winter Flyway population objective of 200,000 and in 1969 this was increased to 300,000. Several states in the Flyway wished to see an increase in the MVP goose population and a greater distribution of these birds to the south of WI while WI managers continued to express concern over increased goose concentrations in east central WI.

In the 1970s up to 80% (250,000-300,000 birds) of the MVP winter population stopped at Horicon and surrounding areas (Miller 1998). Agricultural and biological concerns over this concentration of birds led to the 1976 management strategy to reduce the peak fall population and encourage birds to move south. Altering land management in the Horicon NWR, and



increased harvest and disturbance helped to move geese out of the refuge but not necessarily to locations outside of WI. However, many hunters and goose watchers in Wisconsin opposed these efforts to redistribute goose concentrations. A number of biological and political concerns complicated management efforts. In 1979 the MFC prepared the first Flyway-wide management plan for the MVP in an attempt to create a more scientifically based management strategy. Revisions of this plan continue to guide the management of the MVP population with the most recent revision in 2010 (Brook and Luukkonen 2010).

Meanwhile, a few small remnants of the giant race of Canada geese were discovered in southern WI and elsewhere in the Flyway during the 1950s and 1960s. Restoration efforts to increase this population began in the 1960s and involved the releasing of birds from captive reared populations, translocation of birds within and among states and provinces and closure of Canada goose hunting in some areas (MF Giant Canada goose management plan 1996). Now giant Canada geese are the most abundant subspecies in the Flyway (Leafloor et al. 2003). The increase in the giant population began in urban and rural areas of southeast WI and this remains an area of high resident goose densities. Giant Canada geese have adapted well to the urban, suburban and agricultural landscapes in Wisconsin resulting in an increasing population and expanding distribution across the state. With this increasing population and distribution come both problems with agricultural damage and urban nuisance geese as well as increased hunting and viewing opportunities. Most recent harvest derivations indicate that giants are approximately 40% of the WI regular season Canada goose harvest and nearly all of the early September season harvest. The Wisconsin breeding population of giants steadily increased during the 1980s and 1990s but stabilized from 2005-2008. Since then it has shown a slowly increasing trend.

The MVP management plan provides the basis for evaluation and management of the MVP population and harvest. The annual harvest quota was being determined using the breeding population estimate (breeding adults) produced by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources as a trigger to determine different harvest levels. Based on the total MVP harvest level, the harvest quota in 2006 was distributed among the major and minor harvest states as follows; WI 35%, IL 33%, MI 20%, KY 12% and the minor harvest states a collective harvest of 80,500 geese. Annual harvest derivations for each state indicated the percentage of the annual Canada goose harvest for each state that comes from MVP, resident giants or other populations. The total harvest quota for the state of Wisconsin was determined by applying more recent derivations to the MVP harvest limit. This was the system that guided the Canada goose season framework for Wisconsin up until 2006.

### **Changing Canada Goose Harvest Management in the Mississippi Flyway**

Historically, there has been an emphasis on maintaining a high abundance of MVP geese via population objectives and harvest restraint. The simultaneous growth of giant Canada goose populations has provided more harvest opportunities, but has also expanded management challenges (e.g., human-goose conflict). There is some evidence that the annual regular hunting season changes intended to reduce harvest on MVP geese in low population years also reduced harvest on resident giants, allowing greater growth of that population. In addition, in the



Mississippi Flyway (14 states) nearly 70% of the total Canada goose harvest now consists of resident giant Canada geese. Therefore, it is believed that the resident giant population can “buffer” the MVP and other interior Canada goose populations from harvest impacts in most locations. In order to test this theory, in 2007 the MVP harvest states in the flyway set stable seasons for five years. By creating a stable hunting season framework and monitoring outcomes, the ability of giants to “buffer” the harvest of migrants was tested. On a flyway-wide level, the effects of this new strategy were predicted to increase overall harvest and harvest rate of giant Canada geese and thus slow or stabilize their population growth. Predicted effects on migrant goose populations included either an insignificant increase in harvest rate or an initial larger increase in harvest rate followed by declining abundance and declining harvest rate.

This 5 year trial of a stable hunting season was agreed to among MVP states in 2007, to determine if we could simplify hunting regulation changes, increase hunting opportunity and increase harvest on giant Canada geese without negatively impacting the MVP population. In Wisconsin, we agreed to a 15 day – 5 bird daily bag limit early September Canada goose season, an 85 day – 2 bird daily bag Exterior Canada goose season and a 92 day Horicon season with a 6 bird season limit and a 2 bird daily limit.

Wisconsin’s Canada goose harvest system provided excellent tools to monitor harvest as part of the evaluation of this strategy because of the 1-800 mandatory harvest reporting system. During the 5-year trial from 2007-2011 Exterior Zone harvest figures ranged from 31,570-43,958 while under the previous variable season structures of 2003-2006, the harvest ranged from 26,902 – 46,699 (Figure 5). It did not appear that the regulations had a significant impact on total harvest. Changes in annual goose production and fall weather are likely driving much of the total harvest variation observed over these years. With harsh, early winters, Wisconsin’s goose hunting season may effectively end, but this actually has a greater impact on MVP birds as they are driven south to Illinois where they continue to be hunted. Based on the heavy hunting pressure in Wisconsin early in the season (Figure 6, Figure 7) and low pressure later in the season, season length has had little impact on total harvest.

At the February 2012, Mississippi Flyway Council technical meeting, waterfowl biologists from across the flyway reviewed population status, harvest data and hunter/harvest surveys with the objective of charting the next step in Canada goose hunting regulations based on the prior 5 year stable regulations. Wisconsin’s detailed harvest data as reported in this document was important in the evaluation process. Across the Mississippi Flyway, giant Canada geese were harvested at a rate of 16% while in Wisconsin we harvested at a rate of 21%. At the same time, the Wisconsin and the Mississippi Flyway breeding populations of giant or Temperate Breeding (TBP) Canada geese had shown an increasing population trend. The steady increase observed from 1993-2000 was at a rate of 7.2% annual growth. However, this rate of increase began to slow and the average increase from 2001-2014 was only 1.2%. Nonbreeding TBP (1-2 year olds and failed breeders) often migrate north to Ontario for the summer molt in what is called a molt migration. These geese return to Wisconsin and Michigan in September just prior to or with the MVP birds that nest in northern Ontario. Early opening (prior to September 24) regular seasons help to target harvest of these birds and Wisconsin was recognized by the other states as having an effective season structure to provide additional harvest on these migrating TBP geese. With



regard to TBP geese it was believed that early opening dates (mid-September), additional hunting days and higher bag limits were all options to increase regular season harvest on TBP geese across the states. The use of these options would vary by state depending on the goals for the other Canada nesting populations of Canada geese harvested in that state.

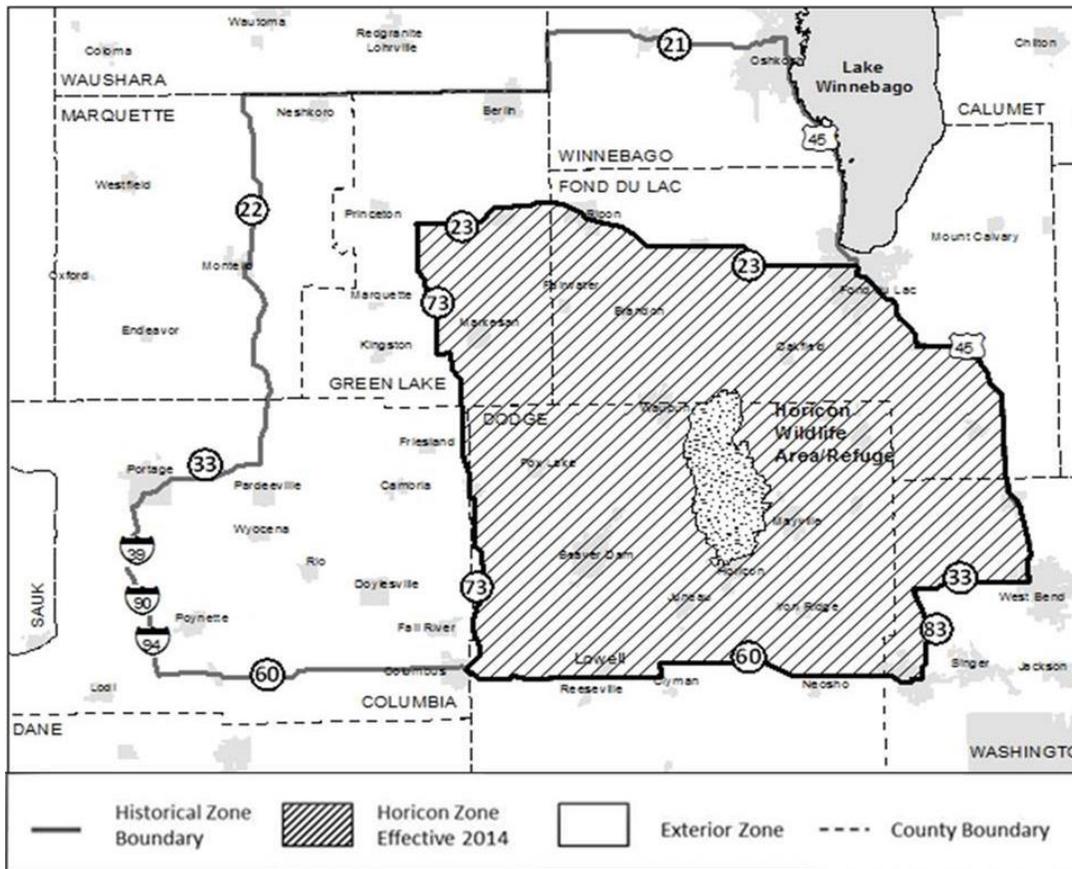
In contrast to the data related to TBP Canada geese which suggested opportunities for liberalizing hunting season parameters, the MVP data supported a cautious approach. Several years of low to moderate production, high adult harvest in 2009 and a flat to slightly declining breeding population trend for the MVP all contribute to a decision to avoid changes that might result in increased harvest. Wisconsin is most dependent upon the MVP (about 60% of regular season harvest) to support our Canada goose hunting opportunities with Illinois and Michigan also somewhat dependent upon the MVP. While breeding ground conditions are the primary force driving population change, significant harvest during low population cycles could drive the MVP lower, slow population recovery and reduce hunting opportunity in Wisconsin. In Wisconsin, most regular season Canada goose hunting pressure and harvest occurs in late September and October. In the Exterior zone, 78% of the season harvest occurs in the first half of the season prior to November 1 and 88% of the Horicon harvest occurs during the first period (Appendix Table 8). As a result, harvest management decisions that change season structure in September and October have the greatest potential to change harvest rates on Canada geese in Wisconsin.

With the background of mixed results toward TBP and MVP goals, the MFC agreed to a small step toward greater liberalization of Canada goose hunting regulations. The states that share the MVP could increase their regular season Canada goose hunting season length from 85 to 92 days with a 2 bird bag limit or shorten the season to 78 days with a 3 bird daily bag limit. The northern states with high MVP harvest (Wisconsin, Michigan and Illinois) agreed to increase the hunting season length and maintain a 2 bird daily bag limit while the southern MVP states increased the daily bag limit with a shorter season, recognizing that a greater proportion of their harvest is TBP geese. While this change provided an extra week of harvest opportunity for Wisconsin in 2013 and 2014, it had a relatively small impact on overall harvest. Less than 900 geese or 1-2% of total harvest were harvested during these additional 7 days during 2013 and 2014 (Appendix Table 11).

A disproportionate number of Horicon Zone harvested geese are from the MVP, so there has been a need for special harvest management in this zone. In addition, the Horicon zone provides a unique hunting opportunity with reduced hunter pressure which has been maintained to control MVP harvest. However, the county level harvest data also indicated that parts of the Horicon zone were being underutilized. As a result, we began to evaluate in 2012 the possibility of reducing the size of the zone to better represent the core around Horicon Marsh. This potential change was consistent with philosophy of small steps toward liberalization since shifting a specific area from the more restrictive Horicon Zone to the Exterior zone would allow more liberal hunting regulations. An analysis of MVP band return data confirmed that MVP harvest is much higher in and around the marsh. The area of the state with the highest band recoveries for MVP Canada geese was the eastern portion of the Horicon zone (Dodge, Fond du Lac, Washington Counties) which is closest to the Horicon marsh. These analyses were presented to



advisory committees and in public meetings during 2012-13 to collect input on a potential change to the Horicon Zone boundary. The most frequently suggested alteration to the zone line involved moving the northern boundary south to Hwy 23 and the western boundary east to Hwy 73 (Figure 1). Active permit holders who hunted the Horicon zone in 2012 responded favorably on post hunt mail surveys, with 63% in support of shrinking the zone boundaries to Hwy 23 and 73. Votes from the 2013 Spring Rule Hearings also supported this move, so in August of 2013, staff proposed and the Natural Resources Board approved, a conversion of 48% of the area of the Horicon Zone to Exterior Zone beginning in 2014 through revised boundaries. Along with this boundary change, harvest recording regulations for the Horicon Zone were simplified and standardized with the Exterior Zone Canada goose harvest. The Horicon Zone goose hunters then needed to register their harvest via the goose 1-800 call system used by Exterior Zone and Early season hunters for many years. This reduced area was the most concentrated area of harvest representing 82% of total zone harvest so it was believed that harvest controls will still be sufficient to protect against over harvest of the MVP.



**Figure 1.** 2014 Horicon Goose Zone Boundary Change

Harvest quantity, distribution and hunter participation are all important pieces of information for the evaluation of these management decisions. This report is a summary of the 2014 management of harvest. Data gathered for this report are based on information from the 1-800 Canada goose harvest registration system and a Horicon zone hunter mail survey. This series of



reports has been and continues to be instrumental in making decisions for the management of Canada geese in Wisconsin.

## BREEDING POPULATIONS

In 2014, surveys for MVP geese in northern Ontario indicated average numbers compared to recent years but still remain below the long term average. The adult breeding population was estimated at 323,099, which is similar to the 2013 estimate of 319,693 and ~8% below the 1989-2013 average of 352,048 breeding birds (Brook and Hughes, June 2014). The minimum MVP breeding population threshold as established by the management plan is 255,000 (Brook and Luukkonen, 2010). In Wisconsin, the 2014 breeding population estimate for resident giant Canada geese decreased for the third time in the last several years and was at 126,299 compared to the previous year's estimate of 138,925 (Van Horn et al. 2014).

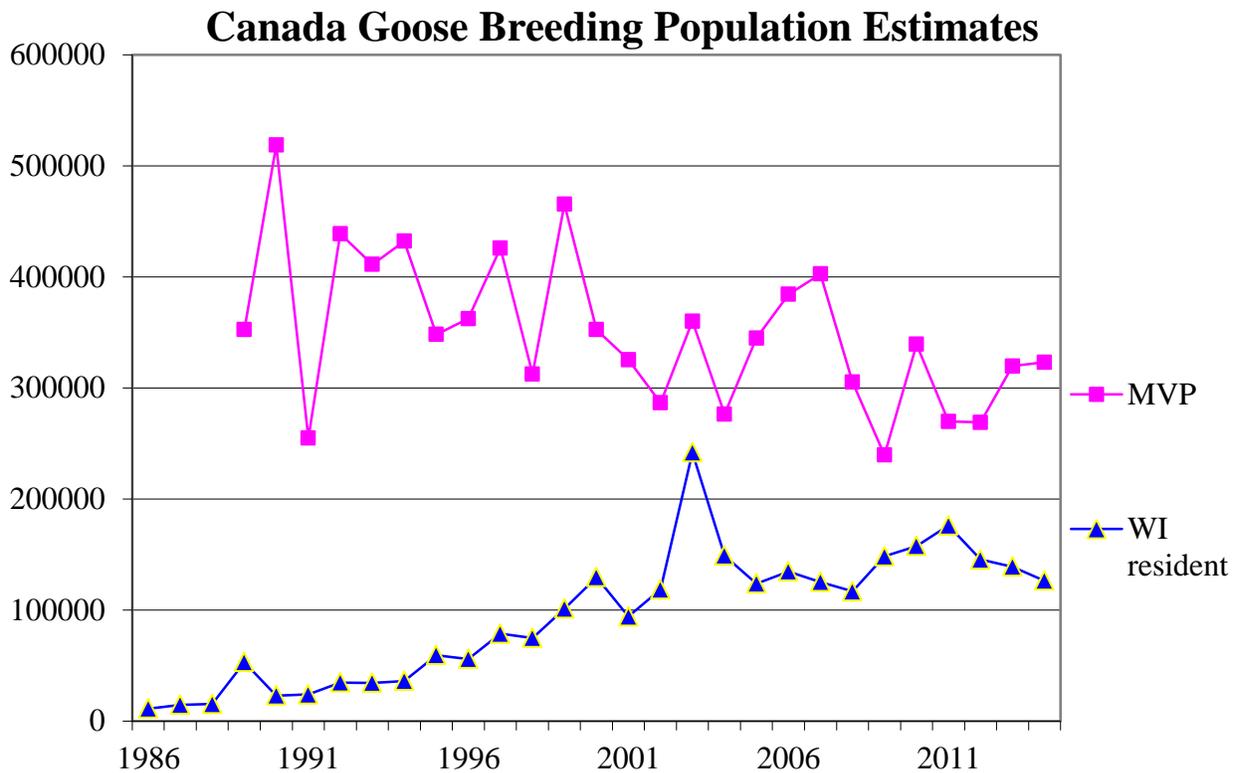


Figure 2.



## **METHODS**

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources collects Canada goose harvest data for all zones using call-in reporting; in 2014 the Horicon Zone reporting requirements were changed to make reporting consistent statewide:

### **1-800 Reporting System**

During the statewide Early September season, Exterior zone and Horicon zone in the regular season, all Canada goose hunters were required to report their harvest using the 1-800-99-GOOSE telephone call-in system within 48 hours. The Horicon Zone was added to this system in 2014 to bring a consistent statewide system of monitoring Canada goose harvest in Wisconsin and simplify regulations. With this system hunters report the following information: DNR customer number, date of harvest, county of harvest and number of geese harvested. This information is electronically recorded and summarized in a harvest database that is reviewed weekly during the season to track harvest levels. Department law enforcement personnel around the state conduct field checks of Canada goose hunters to assure compliance with the reporting requirement. Results of these field checks provide a compliance rate that is used to adjust the reported harvest to estimate total Canada goose harvest.

### **Horicon Mail Survey**

Canada goose hunters in the Horicon zone were mailed a hunter questionnaire to obtain harvest information as they have in past years. The questionnaire was sent to 100% of the permit holders and mailed at the end of each time period. The Horicon hunters were selected randomly in proportion to the number in each time period. Response rates for questionnaires (Appendix Table 1) in the Horicon zone this year and historically has been around 50%. We continued the Horicon mail survey for the 2014 harvest season so that we had overlapping data with the 1-800 harvest registration system newly established for this zone. This allowed us to compare the 2 methods of estimating harvest during the transition from one system to another.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Early September Canada Goose Season Hunter Participation and Harvest**

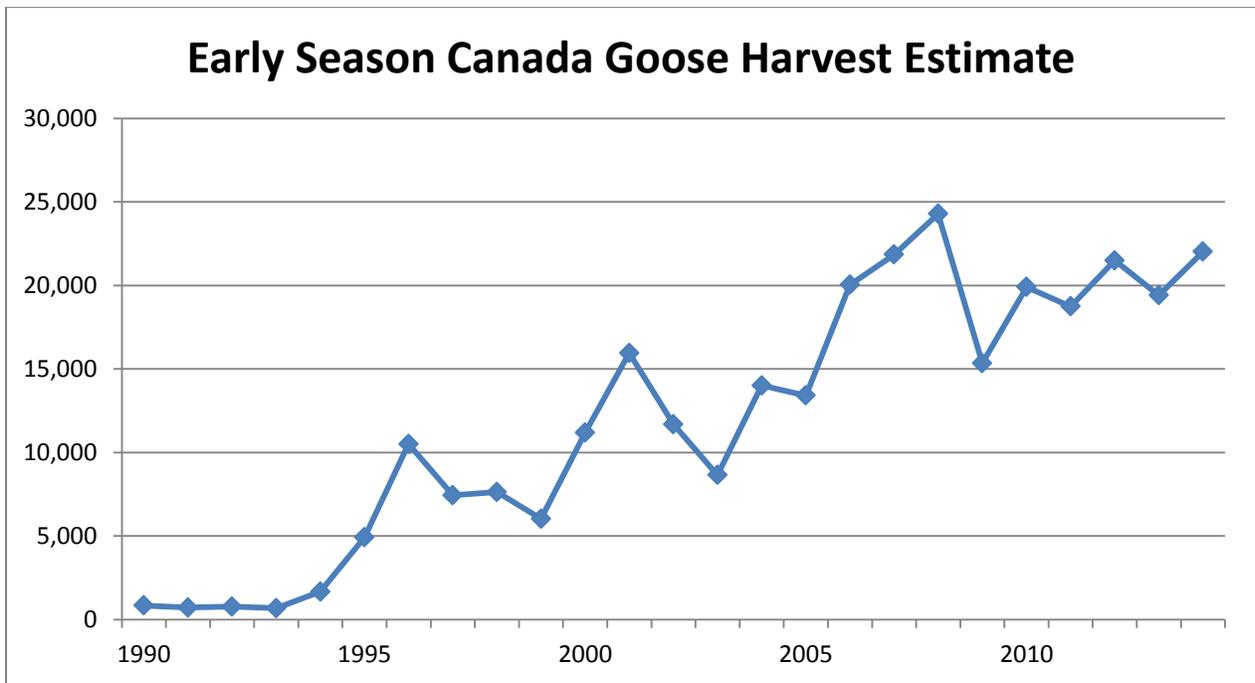
The Early September season is an important part of Wisconsin's Canada goose management program. This season offers hunters an additional recreational experience outside of the regular season and directs harvest pressure onto our resident giant Canada geese. In 2014, the season was open from September 1-15 with a 5 bird daily bag limit as allowed by federal rule, which was unchanged from previous years.

The number of applicants for the early season Canada goose permit was 59,017 which was the third year in a row that permit numbers increased (Appendix Table 19). Prior to 2003, the number of early permit holders had been steadily increasing. However, in 2004 the Conservation Patron license increased from \$110 to \$140 and then to \$165 in 2005 and the number of patron



licenses began declining. We believe this also triggered a several year decline in Canada goose permit holders from 2004-2011 since all conservation patron license holders were provided an early goose permit. We have no data to assess the percent of the total applicants that actively hunt during this period although the federal HIP data suggests relatively stable overall (early and regular season) active Canada goose hunter numbers in Wisconsin the last several years. Conservation patron license customers are offered an early goose permit as part of the combined license package so some of these permit holders may have had little intent to hunt during this season even though they had a permit. The harvest figures for this year show that 4,520 hunters were successful in harvesting one or more geese during the early season, which up slightly from 4,228 in 2013.

At an estimated 21,737 geese, the 2014 early September Canada goose harvest was up from last year and was our 3<sup>rd</sup> highest harvest on record. All of the counties with the highest early season harvest were similar to 2013 and previous years.



**Figure 3.**



**Table 1.**

<b>Top 10 counties - Early Season Harvest - 2014</b>			
County	Rank	Estimated Kill	Percent of Early Total
Manitowoc	1	1309	6.0%
Brown	2	934	4.3%
Marathon	3	854	3.9%
Dodge	4	844	3.9%
Polk	5	833	3.8%
Waukesha	6	775	3.6%
Outagamie	7	614	2.8%
Door	8	594	2.7%
Kewaunee	9	589	2.7%
Winnebago	10	565	2.6%

### **Regular Season Hunter Participation and Characteristics**

In 2014, 85,661 individuals received a Wisconsin Canada goose regular season hunting permit (Exterior or Horicon). This was an increase of 2,244 or +2.6% from 2013 and marks the second year in a row which permit numbers increased and is an important shift from a decreasing trend over the last several years. As with the early season permit the cost of the conservation patron license is thought to be the primary cause of the decline. As part of the combined license package, a conservation patron holder is offered an Exterior zone or Horicon Canada goose permit. A change in 2014 was to make it easier for someone to obtain a Horicon zone permit in the same manner as Exterior permits rather than having an application deadline.

#### **Exterior Zone**

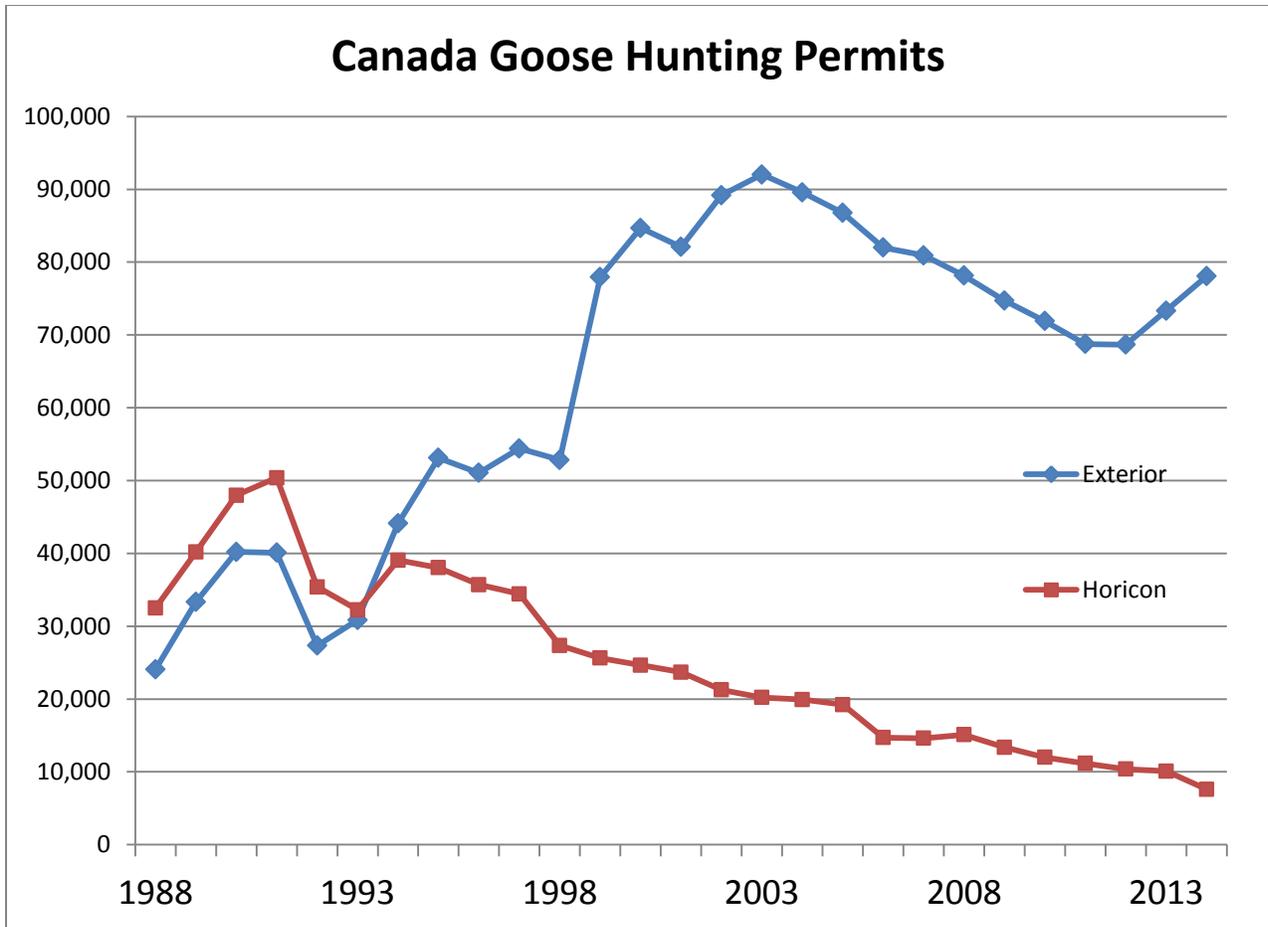
Exterior Zone permits totaled 78,056 in 2014 (Figure 4). This represents 91% of the total regular season permits, which is slightly higher than recent years and likely a result of the reduced size of the Horicon Zone and fewer permits in that zone. However, we have no associated state estimate of how hunters many were actively hunting geese. Estimates of the number of active Wisconsin goose hunters derived from US Fish and Wildlife Service Harvest Information Program (HIP) estimates for 2014 will not be available until July, 2015; however, federal estimates suggest the number of active Wisconsin Canada goose hunters the last several years have been stable near 40,000-45,000. Previous comparisons of state and federal hunter estimates suggest that about 50% of the Exterior zone permit holders are active goose hunters, which would indicate about 39,000 hunters in the Exterior zone pursued geese.



The number of Exterior goose permits issued, by county of residence, was similar when compared to recent years (Appendix Table 3). In descending order, the counties with the highest number of permits issued were Waukesha, Dane, Outagamie, Winnebago and Brown. These counties also have some of the highest human populations in the state.

### **Horicon Zone**

The Horicon Zone was a large area that included all of Green Lake and parts of Dodge, Fond du Lac, Marquette, Washington and Columbia counties. However, in 2014 the zone was reduced to focus the special Horicon zone harvest management on a small area that supported over 80% of the hunting in the original area. All of Marquette and Winnebago, nearly all of Columbia, 2/3 of Green Lake and a portion of Fond du Lac counties were changed from Horicon to Exterior zone. Horicon zone permit holders received a permit that allows a total season harvest of 12 Canada geese in 2014 which is up from 6 in 2013. We anticipated a drop in permit holders which allowed an increase in harvest per permit holder. There has been a gradual decline in the number of Horicon permits over the last 20 years and the size change in 2014 likely contributed to the decline of 2,500 to 7,604 (Figure 4). The percentage of total regular season hunters represented by the Horicon permits in 2014 was 9% which is lower than in recent years (Appendix Table 2). The percentage of active Horicon zone hunters (those who actually hunted) from all time periods decreased from 51% in 2013 to 43% in 2014, primarily in Period 1. The mean number of trips taken by active hunters in Period 1 increased from 4.6 in 2013 to 4.7 in 2014 and during Period 2, the mean number of trips decreased from 4.2 to 4.0 in 2014 (Appendix Table 7). Harvest success of active hunters in 2014 was below recent years with 39% of Period 1 hunters being successful and but only 23% of period 2 hunters being successful compared to an average success rate of the previous 4 years of 48% for Period 1 and 40% for Period 2.



**Figure 4.**

Horicon zone hunters are primarily hunters that have previous experience in this zone. In 2014, 84% of the Horicon zone hunters had also hunted there in 2013, and 93% had previous experience in the zone, which is consistent with other years (Appendix Tables 4 and 5). The Horicon time periods serve to distribute hunter harvest pressure across the fall season. Since 2008, there have been only 2 periods, roughly splitting the 92 days season in half, with no overlap. There is typically a strong preference for time Period 1 (5,427 applicants) compared with only 2,178 applicants for Period 2 (Appendix Table 2). About 36% of the Horicon zone hunters reported spending the majority of their time on private lands which is similar to previous years (Appendix Table 17). After several years of 66-68% of the Horicon zone goose hunters also engaging in duck hunting, this proportion increased to 72% in 2010, and 73% in 2011 and 2012, after a decreased to 64% in 2013, and it once again increased to 74% in 2014.



## **Regular Season Harvest**

### **Statewide**

The statewide regular season Canada goose harvest in 2014 was 34,959 (Appendix Table 8). Statewide harvest figures suggest that our season structure continues to effectively manage harvest despite annual changes in production. The 2014 statewide regular season harvest was 22% lower than 2013. This likely reflects an early onset of winter in early November and considerable acreage of un-harvested corn in southern and central counties. Harvested grain fields are the most commonly hunted locations for Canada geese and without crop harvest, hunter opportunity declines. The early onset of winter likely resulted in an early movement of Canada geese out of Wisconsin and south into Illinois.

**Table 2.**

**Top 10 counties - Statewide Harvest for 2014  
(all zones-regular season)**

County	Rank	Estimated Kill	% of Statewide Total
Dodge	1	2,752	7.7%
Brown	2	1,967	5.5%
Manitowoc	3	1,601	4.5%
Dane	4	1,590	4.5%
Fond Du Lac	5	1,421	4.0%
Kewaunee	6	1,264	3.5%
Waukesha	7	1,202	3.4%
Outagamie	8	1,192	3.3%
Racine	9	1,126	3.2%
Winnebago	10	902	2.5%

The county level harvest distribution illustrates the continued concentration of geese and goose harvest in areas associated with the Horicon zone (Dodge and Fond du Lac counties) which have high MVP harvest (Table 2). In addition, the east-northeast counties of Brown, Manitowoc, Kewaunee, Outagamie and Winnebago represent a region of high Canada goose harvest. The counties with the highest harvest have all been in the top 10 in recent years and the top several have remained largely unchanged.

### **Exterior Zone**

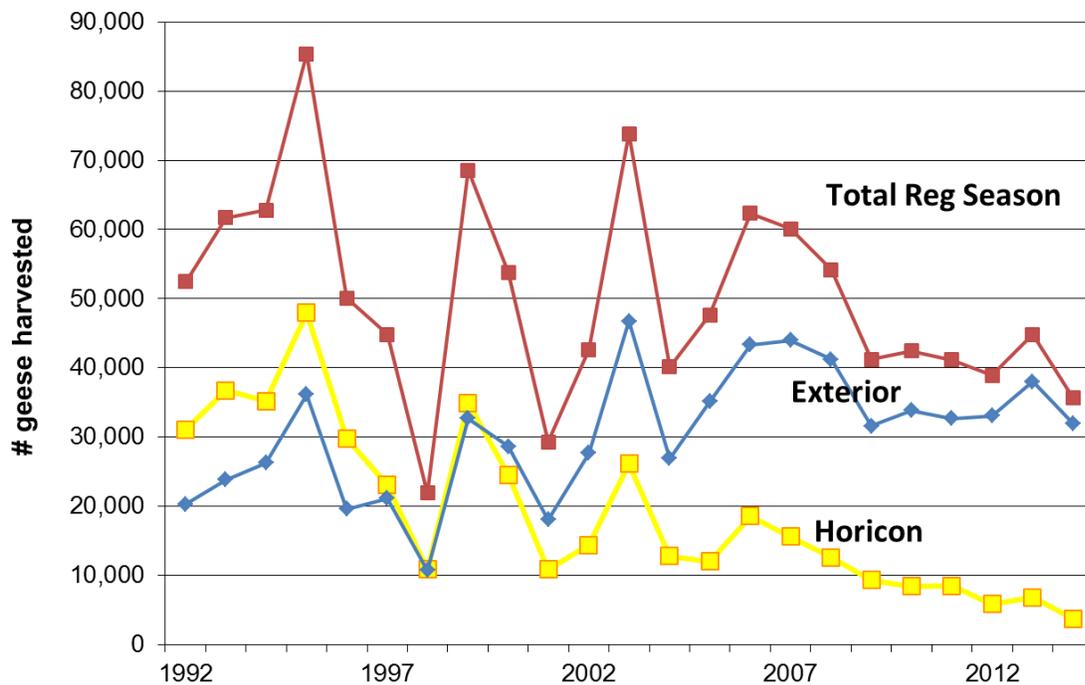
The Exterior Zone represents all areas of the state outside of the Horicon zone. The opening of the Exterior Zone begins the day after the September 15 close of the early goose season. During early September most Canada geese in the state are the locally nesting geese. The Ontario nesting MVP geese begin arriving in Wisconsin the third week of September but do not peak in numbers until mid-October so starting the Exterior Zone season the day after the early season



allows higher harvest on locally nesting geese in this season. In addition, hunter participation and harvest are highest in late September and early October.

The total Exterior zone harvest in 2014 was 31,932 Canada geese which represents 90% of the statewide regular season harvest (Appendix Table 8). This proportion of the statewide total was up from recent years likely resulting from the reduced size of the Horicon Zone and reduced participation there (85% in 2013, 84% in 2012). The harvest was lower than in 2013 but remains within the range of harvest we have seen over the last several years. The list of the top 10 harvest counties was similar to recent years, and represents the southern and eastern portions of the state, excluding those areas in the Horicon zone. These counties also overlap with several of the counties that have the highest human populations, suggesting we are taking advantage of harvest potential in areas where high goose numbers have greater potential to create nuisance problems.

## Regular Season Canada Goose Harvest 1990-2014



**Figure 5.**

*Note: This figure is based on state estimates*

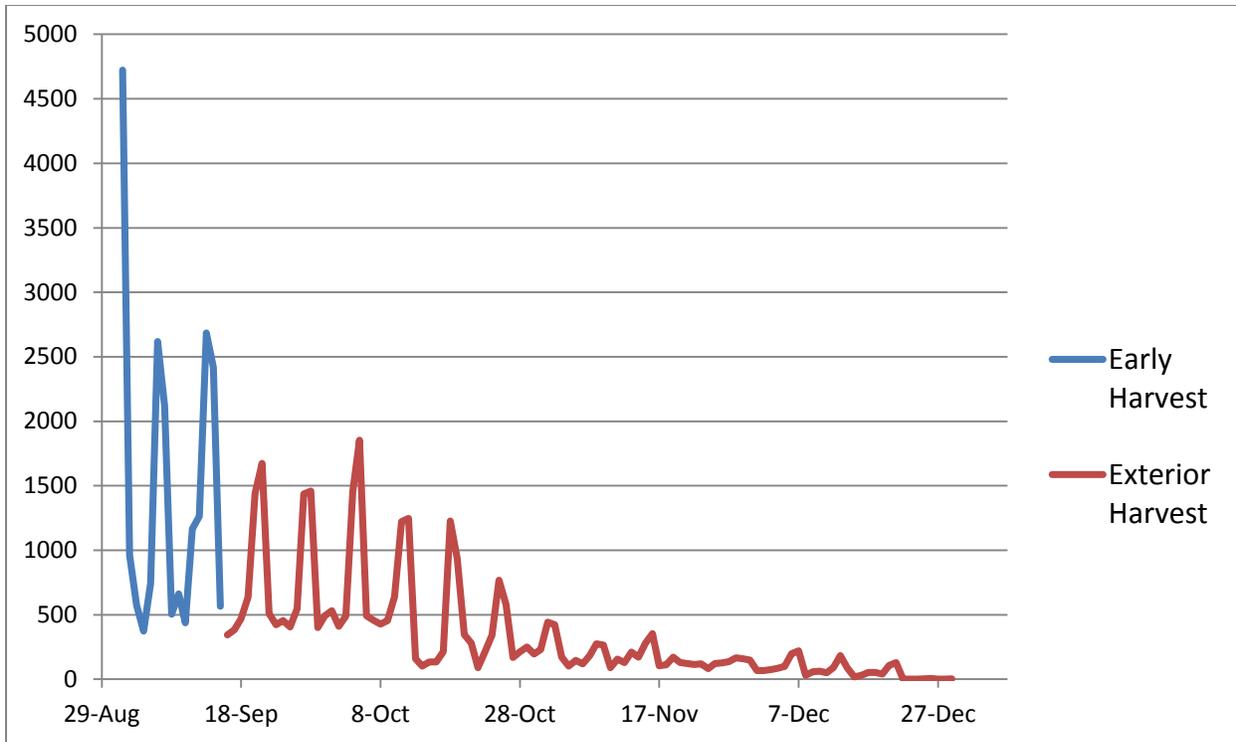


**Table 3.**

**Top 10 counties - Exterior Harvest - 2014**

County	Rank	Estimated Kill	% of Exterior Total
Brown	1	1,967	6.2%
Manitowoc	2	1,601	5.0%
Dane	3	1,590	5.0%
Kewaunee	4	1,264	4.0%
Waukesha	5	1,202	3.8%
Outagamie	6	1,192	3.7%
Racine	7	1,126	3.5%
Winnebago	8	902	2.8%
Marathon	9	868	2.7%
Calumet	10	835	2.6%

Harvest of Canada geese continues to be highest on weekends and most of the Exterior zone harvest occurs in late September and October (Figure 6 & Appendix Table 11). With the regular opener again on a weekday we saw similar opening day harvest compared to 2013. Daily and weekly harvest levels drop off considerably during November and December when participation is low. In 2014, an early onset of winter in early November resulted in a movement of geese south into Illinois. In addition, considerable acreage of corn was not harvested before winter arrived reducing the areas suitable for goose hunting. These 2 factors likely contributed to the decline in harvest compared to 2013. Late season hunting opportunities were limited up to the season close although there are relatively few active goose hunters in December. Throughout the season, reports from hunters indicated that geese were often utilizing areas where they were not accessible to hunters (within municipal areas closed to hunting). Canada goose harvest is particularly low during the traditional 9 day gun deer hunting season at the end of November and 2014 was no exception. In 2014, 8,012 individuals (10.3%) harvested at least one goose out of 78,056 Exterior zone permit holders (Appendix Table 16). This proportion has remained relatively unchanged for several years. While these figures may seem low we have no measure of how many of these permit holders actively hunted geese because conservation patron license holders can automatically obtain this permit. Of successful hunters, 30% harvested a single goose and 32% harvested 2 geese. These percentages are similar to 2009-2013.



**Figure 6.**

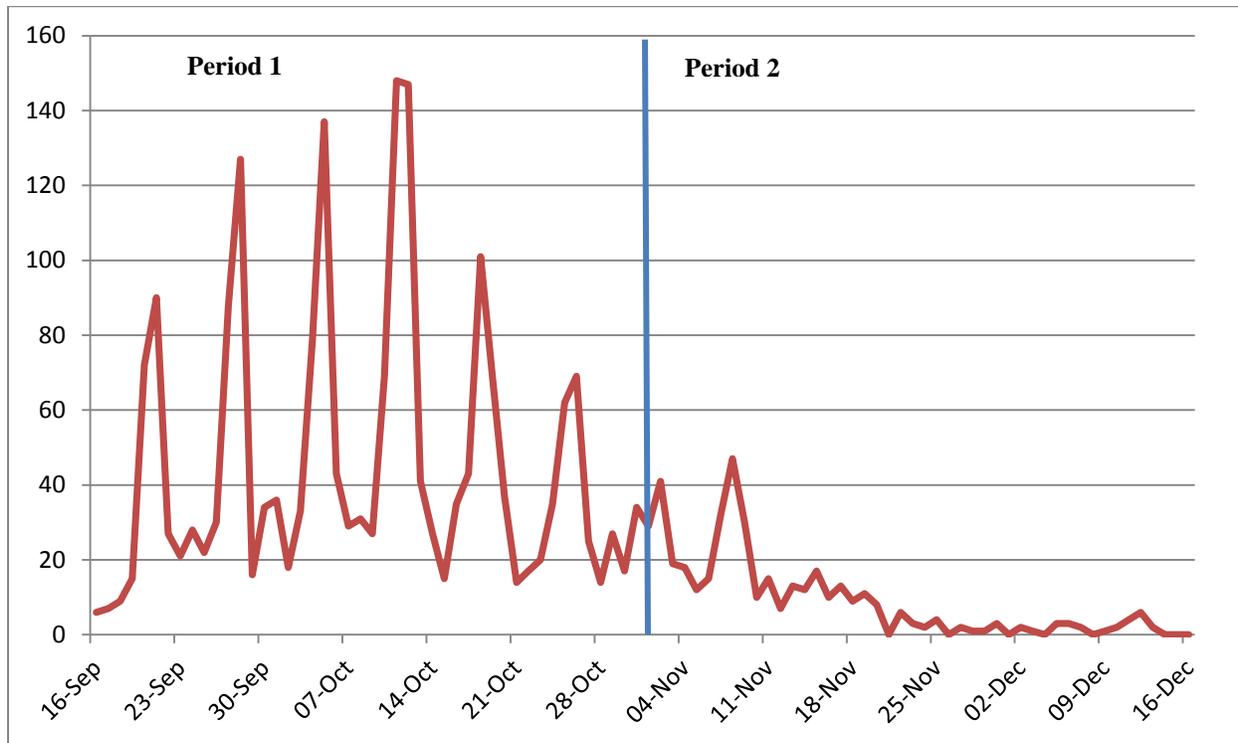
### **Horicon Zone**

The total Canada goose harvest as reported by the 1-800 mandatory harvest monitoring system for the Horicon Zone in 2014 was 3,027. This made up 9% of the statewide regular season harvest (Appendix Table 8). Harvest was down from 2013 (6,799) and down from other recent years, likely reflecting the reduced size of the zone and fewer hunters. The overall number of Horicon zone permit holders was down from 2013.

With the addition of the Horicon Zone to the 1-800 mandatory harvest reporting system, better and more consistent data is available on daily harvest. Harvest of Canada geese in the Horicon zone, similar to the Exterior, continues to be highest on weekends and most of the Horicon zone harvest occurs in early and mid-October (Figure 7 & Appendix Table 12). Daily and weekly harvest levels drop off considerably during the H2 Period in November and December. In 2014, and early onset of winter in early November resulted in a movement of geese south into Illinois. In addition, considerable acreage of corn was not harvested before winter arrived reducing the areas suitable for goose hunting. These 2 factors likely contributed to the decline in harvest compared to 2013. Late season hunting opportunities were limited up to the season close although there are relatively few active goose hunters in December. If this pattern is also observed in 2015, we will likely eliminate the 2 time periods and just have one Horicon Zone season permit in 2016.



While we incorporated harvest reporting in the Horicon Zone to the 1-800 system in 2014, we continued the mail survey for one more year so that we could compare the two harvest estimates. The mail survey estimated that harvest in the Horicon Zone at 3,590 geese which was 16% higher than the 1-800 estimate of 3,027. This higher harvest estimate is likely a result of unsuccessful Horicon hunters not returning their surveys which would bias the estimate high. Nevertheless the two estimates are similar enough to allow us to compare the future estimates to our past harvest history.



**Figure 7**

The areas directly adjacent to the Horicon Marsh National Wildlife Refuge and state Wildlife Management area (portions of Dodge and Fond du Lac Counties) continue to represent a high percentage of the Horicon zone harvest, with 93% occurring in these two counties alone. In the past Winnebago and Columbia counties represent a significant portion of the zone's area but contribute relatively little to the harvest. For this reason we removed the area north of Hwy. 23 and west of Hwy 73 from the Horicon zone and designated it as part of the Exterior zone effective in 2014.

In the first year of the size reduction of the Horicon Zone, it appears that harvest levels in that area differ little from what was experienced across the state. The harvest success of Wisconsin Canada goose hunters varies from year to year based on weather, crop harvest timing, migration and goose populations. The overall statewide Canada goose harvest declined by 21% from 2013, which is within normal variation, while counties that were part of the old Horicon Zone declined



by a similar level, 24%. Of the 5 counties that gained Exterior Zone area resulting from the boundary change, Columbia and Marquette showed harvest increases. As expected, the number of Horicon Zone hunters continued to decline but the zone boundary change likely contributed to a steeper decline in 2014. Despite this zone level decline, statewide Canada goose hunter numbers continued an increasing trend in 2014.

**Table 4.**

Counties affected by boundary change		Columbia	Dodge	Fond du Lac	Green Lake	Marquette	Washington	Winnebago		Total
2013	Horicon	253	4090	1350	470	174	259	203		6799
	Exterior	362	257	382	1	318	885	925		3130
	<b>Total</b>	<b>615</b>	<b>4347</b>	<b>1732</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>492</b>	<b>1144</b>	<b>1128</b>		<b>9929</b>
2014	Horicon	2	2459	863	45	0	221	0		3590
	Exterior	710	292	558	258	540	738	902		3998
	<b>Total</b>	<b>712</b>	<b>2751</b>	<b>1421</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>959</b>	<b>902</b>		<b>7588</b>

## MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Two primary populations of Canada geese are found in Wisconsin during the fall and winter; the Temperate Breeding Population of giant Canada geese which nest in Wisconsin and adjacent states and the northern Ontario nesting geese of the Mississippi Valley Population (MVP). The management of the MVP is guided by a cooperative management plan among several states and Ontario and is acknowledged by the US Fish and Wildlife Service for management of this population (Brook and Luukkonen 2010). Similarly, the management of the giant Canada goose population in the Mississippi Flyway is also guided by a cooperative management plan (Zenner et al. 1996). Wisconsin's Canada goose management is guided by these 2 plans as well as the Wisconsin Waterfowl Strategic Plan 2008-2018 (Van Horn and Benton 2007). The goal of Canada goose management in Wisconsin is to manage the two populations in a way that balances the different and sometimes conflicting societal perspectives of Canada geese. This goal is reached through the following:

- Provide for both abundant and quality Canada goose hunting opportunities and monitor statewide and local harvest levels. Part of quality hunting opportunities is to simplify hunting regulations at the state and flyway level where possible.
- Work with flyway partners in cooperative monitoring of MVP and resident giant Canada goose populations, survival and harvest with the objective of maintaining a higher rate of harvest on giant Canada geese than MVP Canada geese.
- Address conflicts between abundant Canada goose populations and people through integrated management techniques including hunting where appropriate



- Seek to manage the statewide Wisconsin breeding population of Canada geese near 125,000.

The monitoring of harvest as described in this report is an important part of implementing these strategies along with annual population surveys, banding efforts and public input.

### **Mississippi Valley Population:**

While giant Canada geese provide about 40% of Wisconsin's regular Canada goose harvest and nearly all of the early season harvest, Wisconsin is still dependent upon MVP Canada geese for about 60% of our annual regular season goose harvest. This is in contrast to most other Mississippi Flyway states where over 70% of their Canada goose harvest consists of resident giant Canada geese. For example, Minnesota harvests over 90% resident geese and has a much larger population of these birds, which is why regulations may vary even among neighboring states. The MVP breeding population has been generally stable to slightly declining over the last 20 years. The rate of adult MVP harvest (not including crippling loss) was within or below the targeted range of 8-10% from 2003-2013. However, in years with a late winter and poor nesting conditions, the harvest rate on adult birds increased above this range because fewer young of the year were in the fall flight.

To be consistent with the MVP management plan and in the long-term interest of maintaining the MVP population as a sustainable resource, Wisconsin harvest management decisions need to continue to take steps to maintain a relatively low harvest rate on MVP geese in the state. The earlier opening of the Exterior zone Canada goose season provides for the high harvest in the early part of the season but with a lower proportion of MVP geese. In addition, maintenance of a 2 bird daily bag limit when MVP are present in Wisconsin controls the rate of harvest on this population. Daily harvest records allow us to document this high early harvest and schedule season dates which reduce pressure on the MVP while maintaining an abundant harvest opportunity. The mid-September opening of the Exterior zone season has allowed Wisconsin to increase harvest but shift it away from the mid-October peak of MVP presence in the state. Based on the variability of breeding ground conditions and the relatively low and stable harvest rates, it appears that the MVP population change is driven primarily by breeding conditions and not by harvest; however, because of periods of low recruitment there is still a need to remain cautious about MVP harvest management.

The area around the Horicon Marsh contained within the Horicon zone remains a focal area of MVP migration through Wisconsin, so a shift in harvest pressure from this area to other parts of the state is helpful in reducing the harvest rate on this population. Over the last several years, these harvest reports have shown a decline in Horicon zone hunter permits and harvest while maintaining a quality hunting experience. Further, these reports have shown that few hunters (~5%) fill the maximum harvest tags during the entire season demonstrating that this regulation is not the limiting factor affecting harvest opportunity (Appendix Table 14). Despite the restrictions, about 11.7% of the statewide regular season Canada goose harvest in 2014 came from the 2 counties (out of 72) containing the Horicon Marsh (Dodge and Fond du Lac) so the potential for a high Canada goose harvest in this area remains (Appendix Table 10). This



proportion was lower than the nearly 20% level observed in recent years because of the zone boundary change.

## **Temperate Nesting Goose Population**

During the last 20+ years, the Wisconsin nesting population of temperate nesting (also known as TNP, resident or giant) Canada geese has grown and provided an additional hunting resource that is more widely distributed around the state than the MVP. However, this increase has also generated considerable conflict between abundant geese present year round and human outdoor activities. Many of the same management strategies designed to reduce harvest on MVP are also intended to provide hunters with an opportunity to harvest the abundant giant Canada goose resource and help address human-goose conflicts. We have liberalized and simplified Canada goose harvest regulations over the last several years, eliminated subzone restrictions and now have the maximum number days (107) of Canada goose hunting allowed by international treaty. The last five year average harvest rate on giant Canada geese in Wisconsin was over 21%, indicating that our current season structure has been helping us reach our goal of increased harvest pressure on locally nesting giant Canada geese. The 15 days of September hunting in the early season now accounts for roughly 1/3 of the total statewide fall goose harvest. The county level data shown in this report indicate that our early and Exterior zone Canada goose hunting are highest in many of the same counties where our human population is highest and where many Canada goose control operations are requested.

Agricultural crop damage from Canada geese, particularly during the spring continues to be a concern for farmers in Wisconsin in areas where Canada geese concentrate. Consideration of agricultural damage issues remains important in our overall approach to managing Wisconsin's Canada goose populations. The department can issue a spring agricultural damage permit for those with eligible claims, which authorizes the removal of Canada geese by shooting from May 15-August 31. Applicants must have (or expect to have) crop damage in excess of \$1000 and be enrolled in the wildlife damage abatement and claims program. In 2014, 66 spring Canada goose shooting permits were issued and 338 geese were killed.

Similarly, consideration of Canada goose problems in urban areas is another important aspect of management of goose management in Wisconsin. Initially, many of the Wisconsin breeding Canada geese were found in more suburban and urban counties, however, resident breeders continue to increase in distribution across the state. As we monitor breeding populations and harvest we can evaluate our effectiveness at using recreational harvest to assist in managing problems that result from concentrations of Canada geese in urban areas. To target these birds in the fall, the early Canada goose season remains an important part of our management strategy and contributes a significant proportion of the overall harvest. In addition, site specific Canada goose control measures (nest and egg control, adult take) will continue to be implemented in some areas to mitigate nuisance goose problems. The nuisance goose control efforts of US Department of Agriculture - Wildlife Services staff resulted in the removal of 1,521 adult and juvenile Canada geese at 27 sites in 2014; with the majority of these removals occurring in urban centers where hunting does not sufficiently address these urban goose conflicts (Lovell, 2014). Beginning in 2010, in addition to the federal requirement, Wisconsin added its own mandatory



reporting for nest and egg depredation permits to better monitor control efforts around the state. In 2014, 118 nest and egg depredation permits were issued with 607 nests treated.

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## Appendix - Harvest and Participation Data

**Table 1.** *Number of surveys mailed, returned, and response rate for the 2014 Canada goose season.*

Zone and Period	# Mailed	# Returned	Percent Response
Horicon 1	5,426	2,796	51.5%
Horicon 2	2,178	1,299	59.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,604</b>	<b>4,095</b>	<b>53.9%</b>

**Table 2.** *Permits issued, active hunters, percent active, and number of successful hunters by zone and time period. Active and successful hunters derived from questionnaire data. Percent successful applies to active permit holders, except for Exterior Zone where it applies to all permit holders.*

Zone and Period	Permits Issued (hunters)	Active Hunters	% Active	# Successful	% Successful
Horicon 1	5,427	2,654	48.9%	1,038	39.1%
Horicon 2	2,178	795	36.5%	185	23.3%
Exterior	78,056			8,012	10.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>85,661</b>			<b>9,235</b>	<b>10.8%</b>



**Table 3.** Number of goose permit applicants by zone and county of residence. (Continued on next page).

County	Horicon		Exterior	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Adams	5	0.1	185	0.2
Ashland	5	0.1	334	0.4
Barron	23	0.3	1,035	1.3
Bayfield	2	0	230	0.3
Brown	53	0.7	2,894	3.7
Buffalo	13	0.2	412	0.5
Burnett	8	0.1	434	0.6
Calumet	23	0.3	625	0.8
Chippewa	25	0.3	860	1.1
Clark	10	0.1	393	0.5
Columbia	272	3.6	1,666	2.1
Crawford	14	0.2	310	0.4
Dane	321	4.2	4,469	5.7
Dodge	1,247	16.4	504	0.6
Door	9	0.1	706	0.9
Douglas	7	0.1	577	0.7
Dunn	15	0.2	561	0.7
Eau Claire	37	0.5	1,096	1.4
Florence			59	0.1
Fond Du Lac	872	11.5	1,161	1.5
Forest	1	0	169	0.2
Grant	72	0.9	523	0.7
Green	18	0.2	585	0.7
Green Lake	151	2	639	0.8
Iowa	21	0.3	373	0.5
Iron	3	0	126	0.2
Jackson	8	0.1	201	0.3
Jefferson	97	1.3	1,997	2.6
Juneau	22	0.3	581	0.7
Kenosha	48	0.6	1,132	1.5
Kewaunee	6	0.1	614	0.8
La Crosse	92	1.2	1,840	2.4
Lafayette	19	0.2	200	0.3
Langlade	9	0.1	310	0.4
Lincoln	30	0.4	623	0.8
Manitowoc	19	0.2	1,776	2.3
Marathon	56	0.7	1,558	2



County	Horicon		Exterior	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Marinette	15	0.2	826	1.1
Marquette	30	0.4	592	0.8
Menominee			6	0
Milwaukee	583	7.7	2,517	3.2
Monroe	19	0.2	505	0.6
Oconto	12	0.2	771	1
Oneida	31	0.4	922	1.2
Outagamie	118	1.6	3,349	4.3
Ozaukee	116	1.5	1,250	1.6
Pepin	1	0	157	0.2
Pierce	27	0.4	616	0.8
Polk	24	0.3	1,141	1.5
Portage	36	0.5	1,075	1.4
Price	4	0.1	340	0.4
Racine	82	1.1	2,301	2.9
Richland	12	0.2	158	0.2
Rock	108	1.4	1,840	2.4
Rusk	4	0.1	264	0.3
St. Croix	34	0.4	1,415	1.8
Sauk	58	0.8	1,100	1.4
Sawyer	10	0.1	402	0.5
Shawano	20	0.3	716	0.9
Sheboygan	80	1.1	1,984	2.5
Taylor	8	0.1	361	0.5
Trempealeau	26	0.3	610	0.8
Vernon	47	0.6	474	0.6
Vilas	29	0.4	459	0.6
Walworth	36	0.5	1,346	1.7
Washburn	3	0	504	0.6
Washington	500	6.6	1,783	2.3
Waukesha	686	9	4,641	5.9
Waupaca	34	0.4	1,146	1.5
Waushara	12	0.2	493	0.6
Winnebago	248	3.3	2,929	3.8
Wood	48	0.6	1,596	2
Unknown	396	5.2	2,583	3.3
Non. Resident	474	6.2	3,126	4



**Table 4.** *Goose hunting in past zones.*

Current Zone	Past Horicon	Past Exterior
Horicon	92.7%	7.3%

**Table 5.** *Percent hunting geese in 2014 that also hunted in 2013.*

Zone	% That Hunted in 2013
Horicon	84.3%

**Table 6.** *Past and present duck hunting by goose permit.*

Zone	Duck Hunted in 2013	Duck Hunted in 2014
Horicon	60.8%	73.5%

**Table 7.** *Mean number of hunting trips by zone and time period. Applies to active permit holders only.*

Zone/Period	Mean # of Trips	Maximum # of Trips
Horicon 1	4.7	33
Horicon 2	4.0	30



**Table 8.** Harvest by zone and time period. The estimated harvest was derived from questionnaire data in the Horicon zone. Reported harvest in the Horicon and Exterior Zone is from mandatory reporting. The reported harvest for the Horicon and Exterior zone was adjusted by a compliance rate of 82.8% for Horicon and 83.0% for the exterior to obtain the expanded harvest.

Zone/Period	Estimated Harvest	Reported Harvest	Expanded Harvest
Horicon 1	3,155	2,161	2,610
Horicon 2	435	345	417
Exterior		26,610	31,932
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,590</b>	<b>29,116</b>	<b>34,959</b>

**Table 9.** Exterior zone goose harvest by county (continued on next page).

County	Reported Kill	Expanded Kill	Percent
Adams	261	313	1.0%
Ashland	58	70	0.2%
Barron	498	598	1.9%
Bayfield	96	115	0.4%
Brown	1639	1,967	6.2%
Buffalo	169	203	0.6%
Burnett	177	212	0.7%
Calumet	696	835	2.6%
Chippewa	486	583	1.8%
Clark	346	415	1.3%
Columbia	592	710	2.2%
Crawford	108	130	0.4%
Dane	1325	1,590	5.0%
Dodge	243	292	0.9%
Door	644	773	2.4%
Douglas	58	70	0.2%
Dunn	140	168	0.5%
Eau Claire	165	198	0.6%
Florence	22	26	0.1%
Fond Du Lac	465	558	1.7%
Forest	14	17	0.1%
Grant	107	128	0.4%
Green	178	214	0.7%
Green Lake	215	258	0.8%
Iowa	61	73	0.2%
Iron	17	20	0.1%
Jackson	48	58	0.2%
Jefferson	588	706	2.2%
Juneau	190	228	0.7%
Kenosha	550	660	2.1%
Kewaunee	1053	1,264	4.0%
La Crosse	121	145	0.5%



**Table 9.** *Exterior zone goose harvest by county (continued on next page).*

County	Reported Kill	Expanded Kill	Percent
Lafayette	31	37	0.1%
Langlade	157	188	0.6%
Lincoln	137	164	0.5%
Manitowoc	1334	1,601	5.0%
Marathon	723	868	2.7%
Marinette	277	332	1.0%
Marquette	450	540	1.7%
Menominee	3	4	0.0%
Milwaukee	9	11	0.0%
Monroe	96	115	0.4%
Oconto	471	565	1.8%
Oneida	60	72	0.2%
Outagamie	993	1,192	3.7%
Ozaukee	529	635	2.0%
Pepin	11	13	0.0%
Pierce	104	125	0.4%
Polk	597	716	2.2%
Portage	370	444	1.4%
Price	101	121	0.4%
Racine	938	1,126	3.5%
Richland	73	88	0.3%
Rock	582	698	2.2%
Rusk	156	187	0.6%
Sauk	247	296	0.9%
Sawyer	157	188	0.6%
Shawano	299	359	1.1%
Sheboygan	686	823	2.6%
St. Croix	473	568	1.8%
Taylor	249	299	0.9%
Trempealeau	108	130	0.4%
Vernon	91	109	0.3%
Vilas	31	37	0.1%
Walworth	686	823	2.6%
Washburn	304	365	1.1%
Washington	615	738	2.3%
Waukesha	1002	1,202	3.8%
Waupaca	686	823	2.6%
Waushara	208	250	0.8%
Winnebago	752	902	2.8%
Wood	484	581	1.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,610</b>	<b>31,932</b>	



**Table 10.** Horicon Zone goose harvest by county. The estimated harvest was derived from questionnaire data.

County	Total Estimated Harvest	% of Harvest
Columbia	2	0.1%
Dodge	2,459	68.5%
Fond du lac	863	24.0%
Green Lake	45	1.3%
Washington	221	6.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,590</b>	

**Table 11.** Exterior zone goose harvest by date. Bold numbers indicate weekends (continued on the next page).

Date	Reported Kill	Expanded Kill	Cumulative Kill	Percent	Cumulative Percent
16-Sep-14	270	324	324	1.0%	1.0%
17-Sep-14	307	368	692	1.2%	2.2%
18-Sep-14	376	451	1,144	1.4%	3.6%
19-Sep-14	515	618	1,762	1.9%	5.5%
<b>20-Sep-14</b>	<b>1108</b>	<b>1,330</b>	<b>3,091</b>	<b>4.2%</b>	<b>9.7%</b>
<b>21-Sep-14</b>	<b>1285</b>	<b>1,542</b>	<b>4,633</b>	<b>4.8%</b>	<b>14.5%</b>
22-Sep-14	397	476	5,110	1.5%	16.0%
23-Sep-14	331	397	5,507	1.2%	17.2%
24-Sep-14	348	418	5,924	1.3%	18.6%
25-Sep-14	315	378	6,302	1.2%	19.7%
26-Sep-14	426	511	6,814	1.6%	21.3%
<b>27-Sep-14</b>	<b>1111</b>	<b>1,333</b>	<b>8,147</b>	<b>4.2%</b>	<b>25.5%</b>
<b>28-Sep-14</b>	<b>1090</b>	<b>1,308</b>	<b>9,455</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>29.6%</b>
29-Sep-14	314	377	9,832	1.2%	30.8%
30-Sep-14	378	454	10,285	1.4%	32.2%
01-Oct-14	410	492	10,777	1.5%	33.8%
02-Oct-14	361	433	11,210	1.4%	35.1%
03-Oct-14	373	448	11,658	1.4%	36.5%
<b>04-Oct-14</b>	<b>1141</b>	<b>1,369</b>	<b>13,027</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>40.8%</b>
<b>05-Oct-14</b>	<b>1405</b>	<b>1,686</b>	<b>14,713</b>	<b>5.3%</b>	<b>46.1%</b>
06-Oct-14	365	438	15,151	1.4%	47.4%
07-Oct-14	352	422	15,574	1.3%	48.8%
08-Oct-14	321	385	15,959	1.2%	50.0%
09-Oct-14	351	421	16,380	1.3%	51.3%
10-Oct-14	463	556	16,936	1.7%	53.0%
<b>11-Oct-14</b>	<b>876</b>	<b>1,051</b>	<b>17,987</b>	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>56.3%</b>
<b>12-Oct-14</b>	<b>892</b>	<b>1,070</b>	<b>19,057</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>59.7%</b>
13-Oct-14	89	107	19,164	0.3%	60.0%
14-Oct-14	58	70	19,234	0.2%	60.2%
15-Oct-14	96	115	19,349	0.4%	60.6%



Date	Reported Kill	Expanded Kill	Cumulative Kill	Percent	Cumulative Percent
16-Oct-14	99	119	19,468	0.4%	61.0%
17-Oct-14	136	163	19,631	0.5%	61.5%
<b>18-Oct-14</b>	<b>925</b>	<b>1,110</b>	<b>20,741</b>	<b>3.5%</b>	<b>65.0%</b>
<b>19-Oct-14</b>	<b>708</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>21,590</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>67.6%</b>
20-Oct-14	250	300	21,890	0.9%	68.6%
21-Oct-14	217	260	22,151	0.8%	69.4%
22-Oct-14	149	179	22,330	0.6%	69.9%
23-Oct-14	160	192	22,522	0.6%	70.5%
24-Oct-14	251	301	22,823	0.9%	71.5%
<b>25-Oct-14</b>	<b>576</b>	<b>691</b>	<b>23,514</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	<b>73.6%</b>
<b>26-Oct-14</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>24,012</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>75.2%</b>
27-Oct-14	109	131	24,143	0.4%	75.6%
28-Oct-14	163	196	24,338	0.6%	76.2%
29-Oct-14	179	215	24,553	0.7%	76.9%
30-Oct-14	147	176	24,730	0.6%	77.4%
31-Oct-14	158	190	24,919	0.6%	78.0%
<b>01-Nov-14</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>25,354</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>79.4%</b>
<b>02-Nov-14</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>25,732</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>80.6%</b>
03-Nov-14	125	150	25,882	0.5%	81.1%
04-Nov-14	67	80	25,962	0.3%	81.3%
05-Nov-14	111	133	26,095	0.4%	81.7%
06-Nov-14	88	106	26,201	0.3%	82.1%
07-Nov-14	137	164	26,365	0.5%	82.6%
<b>08-Nov-14</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>26,628</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>83.4%</b>
<b>09-Nov-14</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>26,929</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>84.3%</b>
10-Nov-14	74	89	27,018	0.3%	84.6%
11-Nov-14	130	156	27,174	0.5%	85.1%
12-Nov-14	107	128	27,302	0.4%	85.5%
13-Nov-14	172	206	27,509	0.6%	86.1%
14-Nov-14	143	172	27,680	0.5%	86.7%
<b>15-Nov-14</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>27,959</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>87.6%</b>
<b>16-Nov-14</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>28,312</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>88.7%</b>
17-Nov-14	87	104	28,416	0.3%	89.0%
18-Nov-14	93	112	28,528	0.3%	89.3%
19-Nov-14	141	169	28,697	0.5%	89.9%
20-Nov-14	108	130	28,826	0.4%	90.3%
21-Nov-14	101	121	28,948	0.4%	90.7%
<b>22-Nov-14</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>29,060</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>91.0%</b>
<b>23-Nov-14</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>29,178</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>91.4%</b>
24-Nov-14	69	83	29,261	0.3%	91.6%
25-Nov-14	102	122	29,383	0.4%	92.0%
26-Nov-14	105	126	29,509	0.4%	92.4%
27-Nov-14	114	137	29,646	0.4%	92.8%
28-Nov-14	137	164	29,810	0.5%	93.4%
<b>29-Nov-14</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>29,968</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>93.8%</b>
<b>30-Nov-14</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>30,115</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>94.3%</b>



Date	Reported Kill	Expanded Kill	Cumulative Kill	Percent	Cumulative Percent
01-Dec-14	55	66	30,181	0.2%	94.5%
02-Dec-14	56	67	30,248	0.2%	94.7%
03-Dec-14	63	76	30,324	0.2%	95.0%
04-Dec-14	71	85	30,409	0.3%	95.2%
05-Dec-14	83	100	30,509	0.3%	95.5%
<b>06-Dec-14</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>30,707</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>96.2%</b>
<b>07-Dec-14</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>30,926</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>96.9%</b>
08-Dec-14	25	30	30,956	0.1%	96.9%
09-Dec-14	48	58	31,014	0.2%	97.1%
10-Dec-14	52	62	31,076	0.2%	97.3%
11-Dec-14	42	50	31,127	0.2%	97.5%
12-Dec-14	74	89	31,216	0.3%	97.8%
<b>13-Dec-14</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>31,399</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>98.3%</b>
<b>14-Dec-14</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>31,486</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>98.6%</b>
15-Dec-14	16	19	31,505	0.1%	98.7%
16-Dec-14	26	31	31,536	0.1%	98.8%
17-Dec-14	43	52	31,588	0.2%	98.9%
18-Dec-14	43	52	31,639	0.2%	99.1%
19-Dec-14	33	40	31,679	0.1%	99.2%
<b>20-Dec-14</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>31,786</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>99.5%</b>
<b>21-Dec-14</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>31,914</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>99.9%</b>
25-Dec-14	2	2	31,916	0.0%	100.0%
26-Dec-14	2	2	31,919	0.0%	100.0%
28-Dec-14	4	5	31,924	0.0%	100.0%
29-Dec-14	1	1	31,925	0.0%	100.0%
30-Dec-14	2	2	31,927	0.0%	100.0%
03-Jan-15	2	2	31,930	0.0%	100.0%
04-Jan-15	1	1	31,931	0.0%	100.0%
08-Jan-15	1	1	31,932	0.0%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,610</b>	<b>31,932</b>			

**Table 12.** Horicon zone goose harvest by date. *Bold numbers indicate weekends (continued on the next page).*

Date	Reported Kill	Expanded Kill	Cumulative Kill	Percent	Cumulative Percent
16-Sep-14	6	7	7	0.2%	0.2%
17-Sep-14	7	8	16	0.3%	0.52%
18-Sep-14	9	11	27	0.4%	0.88%
19-Sep-14	15	18	45	0.6%	1.48%
<b>20-Sep-14</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>4.35%</b>
<b>21-Sep-14</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>7.94%</b>
22-Sep-14	27	33	273	1.1%	9.02%
23-Sep-14	21	25	298	0.8%	9.86%
24-Sep-14	28	34	332	1.1%	10.97%



Date	Reported Kill	Expanded Kill	Cumulative Kill	Percent	Cumulative Percent
25-Sep-14	22	27	359	0.9%	11.85%
26-Sep-14	30	36	395	1.2%	13.05%
<b>27-Sep-14</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>3.5%</b>	<b>16.56%</b>
<b>28-Sep-14</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>653</b>	<b>5.0%</b>	<b>21.59%</b>
29-Sep-14	16	19	673	0.6%	22.23%
30-Sep-14	34	41	714	1.4%	23.58%
01-Oct-14	36	43	757	1.4%	25.02%
02-Oct-14	18	22	779	0.7%	25.74%
03-Oct-14	33	40	819	1.3%	27.06%
<b>04-Oct-14</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>914</b>	<b>3.2%</b>	<b>30.21%</b>
<b>05-Oct-14</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>1080</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	<b>35.67%</b>
06-Oct-14	43	52	1132	1.7%	37.39%
07-Oct-14	29	35	1167	1.2%	38.55%
08-Oct-14	31	37	1204	1.2%	39.78%
09-Oct-14	27	33	1237	1.1%	40.86%
10-Oct-14	69	83	1320	2.8%	43.62%
<b>11-Oct-14</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>1499</b>	<b>5.9%</b>	<b>49.52%</b>
<b>12-Oct-14</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>1676</b>	<b>5.9%</b>	<b>55.39%</b>
13-Oct-14	41	50	1726	1.6%	57.02%
14-Oct-14	27	33	1758	1.1%	58.10%
15-Oct-14	15	18	1777	0.6%	58.70%
16-Oct-14	35	42	1819	1.4%	60.10%
17-Oct-14	43	52	1871	1.7%	61.81%
<b>18-Oct-14</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>65.84%</b>
<b>19-Oct-14</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>2076</b>	<b>2.8%</b>	<b>68.60%</b>
20-Oct-14	37	45	2121	1.5%	70.07%
21-Oct-14	14	17	2138	0.6%	70.63%
22-Oct-14	17	21	2158	0.7%	71.31%
23-Oct-14	20	24	2182	0.8%	72.11%
24-Oct-14	35	42	2225	1.4%	73.50%
<b>25-Oct-14</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>2300</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>75.98%</b>
<b>26-Oct-14</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>2383</b>	<b>2.8%</b>	<b>78.73%</b>
27-Oct-14	25	30	2413	1.0%	79.73%
28-Oct-14	14	17	2430	0.6%	80.29%
29-Oct-14	27	33	2463	1.1%	81.36%
30-Oct-14	17	21	2483	0.7%	82.04%
31-Oct-14	34	41	2524	1.4%	83.40%
<b>01-Nov-14</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>2559</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>84.56%</b>
<b>02-Nov-14</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>2609</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>86.19%</b>
03-Nov-14	19	23	2632	0.8%	86.95%
04-Nov-14	18	22	2653	0.7%	87.67%
05-Nov-14	12	14	2668	0.5%	88.15%
06-Nov-14	15	18	2686	0.6%	88.75%
07-Nov-14	32	39	2725	1.3%	90.02%
<b>08-Nov-14</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>2781</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>91.90%</b>
<b>09-Nov-14</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>2818</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>93.10%</b>



Date	Reported Kill	Expanded Kill	Cumulative Kill	Percent	Cumulative Percent
10-Nov-14	10	12	2830	0.4%	93.50%
11-Nov-14	15	18	2848	0.6%	94.09%
12-Nov-14	7	8	2856	0.3%	94.37%
13-Nov-14	13	16	2872	0.5%	94.89%
14-Nov-14	12	14	2886	0.5%	95.37%
<b>15-Nov-14</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>2907</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>96.05%</b>
<b>16-Nov-14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2919</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>96.45%</b>
17-Nov-14	13	16	2935	0.5%	96.97%
18-Nov-14	9	11	2946	0.4%	97.33%
19-Nov-14	11	13	2959	0.4%	97.77%
20-Nov-14	8	10	2969	0.3%	98.08%
21-Nov-14	0	0	2969	0.0%	98.08%
<b>22-Nov-14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2976</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>98.32%</b>
<b>23-Nov-14</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2979</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>98.44%</b>
24-Nov-14	2	2	2982	0.1%	98.52%
25-Nov-14	4	5	2987	0.2%	98.68%
26-Nov-14	0	0	2987	0.0%	98.68%
27-Nov-14	2	2	2989	0.1%	98.76%
28-Nov-14	1	1	2990	0.0%	98.80%
<b>29-Nov-14</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2992</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>98.84%</b>
<b>30-Nov-14</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2995</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>98.96%</b>
01-Dec-14	0	0	2995	0.0%	98.96%
02-Dec-14	2	2	2998	0.1%	99.04%
03-Dec-14	1	1	2999	0.0%	99.08%
04-Dec-14	0	0	2999	0.0%	99.08%
05-Dec-14	3	4	3002	0.1%	99.20%
<b>06-Dec-14</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3006</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>99.32%</b>
<b>07-Dec-14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3008</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>99.40%</b>
08-Dec-14	0	0	3008	0.0%	99.40%
09-Dec-14	1	1	3010	0.0%	99.44%
10-Dec-14	2	2	3012	0.1%	99.52%
11-Dec-14	4	5	3017	0.2%	99.68%
12-Dec-14	6	7	3024	0.2%	99.92%
<b>13-Dec-14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3027</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<b>14-Dec-14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3027</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
15-Dec-14	0	0	3027	0.0%	100.00%
16-Dec-14	0	0	3027	0.0%	100.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2506</b>	<b>3027</b>			



**Table 13.** *Weekday of reported kill in percent. Data from mandatory reporting in the Exterior and Horicon zones.*

Zone/ Period	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Horicon 1	31.4%	8.8%	6.7%	7.5%	6.9%	12.0%	26.8%
Horicon 2	13.9%	12.7%	14.2%	9.5%	12.1%	15.6%	22.0%
<b>Horicon Total</b>	<b>29.0%</b>	<b>9.3%</b>	<b>7.7%</b>	<b>7.7%</b>	<b>7.6%</b>	<b>12.5%</b>	<b>26.1%</b>
Exterior	27.2%	7.4%	8.6%	9.1%	9.2%	11.4%	27.0%
<b>All Zones</b>	<b>28.1%</b>	<b>8.4%</b>	<b>8.2%</b>	<b>8.4%</b>	<b>8.4%</b>	<b>12.0%</b>	<b>26.6%</b>

**Table 14.** *Horicon Zone season bag derived from mandatory reporting data, 2014.*

Bag	Number of	
	Hunters	Percent
0	6,782	89.2%
1	207	2.7%
2	266	3.5%
3	118	1.6%
4	90	1.2%
5	47	0.6%
6	28	0.4%
7	18	0.2%
8	18	0.2%
9	11	0.1%
10	10	0.1%
11	4	0.1%
12	6	0.1%

**Table 15.** *Number of birds harvested per permit holder and active permit holder by zone. Hunter numbers derived from applications, questionnaires and 1-800 registration.*

Zone	Birds/Permit Holder	Birds/Active Permit Holder
Horicon	0.47	1.04
Exterior	0.41	N/A



**Table 16.** *Exterior Zone season bag derived from mandatory reporting data.*

Bag	Number of Hunters	Percent
0	70,044	89.7%
1	2,416	3.1%
2	2,574	3.3%
3	696	0.9%
4	846	1.1%
5	326	0.4%
6	307	0.4%
7	158	0.2%
8	156	0.2%
9	91	0.1%
10	95	0.1%
11	58	0.1%
12	55	0.1%
13	31	0.0%
14	29	0.0%
15	26	0.0%
16	21	0.0%
17	14	0.0%
18	18	0.0%
19	12	0.0%
20	10	0.0%
21	7	0.0%
22	6	0.0%
23	5	0.0%
24	11	0.0%
25	4	0.0%
26	10	0.0%
27	5	0.0%
28	2	0.0%
29	1	0.0%
30	2	0.0%
31	5	0.0%
32	1	0.0%
33	1	0.0%
34	1	0.0%
35	2	0.0%
36	1	0.0%
39	2	0.0%
41	1	0.0%
43	1	0.0%
46	2	0.0%
58	1	0.0%
85	1	0.0%
101	1	0.0%



**Table 17.** *Percent of time spent hunting private land by zone.*

Zone	No Answer	< 25%	25-49%	50-75%	> 75%
Horicon	55.0%	8.2%	0.6%	1.8%	34.5%

**Table 18.** *Number of active hunters, percent paying blind access fee, mean days hunted, mean payment per trip, and total access fees paid by zone.*

Zone	Active Hunters	Percent Paying	Mean Days	Mean Payment	Total Paid
Horicon	3,449	29.3%	4.5	\$15.75	\$71,623.23

**Table 19.** *Number applicants, active hunters, and birds harvested during the September early Canada goose season.*

Year	# of Applicants	# of Active Hunters	Harvest
1990	19,561	6,408	842
1991	4,772	1,983	712
1992	5,383	2,024	772
1993	2,982	1,636	679
1994	20,724	7,114	1,668
1995	13,343	7,923	4,928
1996	21,378	8,979	10,506
1997	28,761		7,435
1998	29,580		7,627
1999	73,799		6,032
2000	69,716		11,192
2001	74,268		15,952
2002	75,565		11,687
2003	76,728		8,650
2004	76,294		14,007
2005	74,437		13,410
2006	68,152		20,034
2007	66,207		21,760
2008	63,904		24,276
2009	60,567		15,342
2010	55,927		19,900
2011	52,906		18,746
2012	53,596		21,302
2013	55,657		19,407
2014	59,017		21,732

**Table 20.** *Early September Canada goose harvest by date (bold numbers indicate weekends).*



Date	Reported Kill	Expanded Kill	Cumulative Kill	Percent	Cumulative Percent
01-Sep-14	3,825	4,705	4,705	21.6%	21.6%
02-Sep-14	779	958	5,663	4.4%	26.1%
03-Sep-14	464	571	6,234	2.6%	28.7%
04-Sep-14	303	373	6,606	1.7%	30.4%
05-Sep-14	603	742	7,348	3.4%	33.8%
<b>06-Sep-14</b>	<b>2,121</b>	<b>2,609</b>	<b>9,957</b>	<b>12.0%</b>	<b>45.8%</b>
<b>07-Sep-14</b>	<b>1,715</b>	<b>2,109</b>	<b>12,066</b>	<b>9.7%</b>	<b>55.5%</b>
08-Sep-14	408	502	12,568	2.3%	57.8%
09-Sep-14	537	661	13,229	3.0%	60.9%
10-Sep-14	354	435	13,664	2.0%	62.9%
11-Sep-14	943	1,160	14,824	5.3%	68.2%
12-Sep-14	1,024	1,260	16,083	5.8%	74.0%
<b>13-Sep-14</b>	<b>2,175</b>	<b>2,675</b>	<b>18,759</b>	<b>12.3%</b>	<b>86.3%</b>
<b>14-Sep-14</b>	<b>1,958</b>	<b>2,408</b>	<b>21,167</b>	<b>11.1%</b>	<b>97.4%</b>
15-Sep-14	459	565	21,732	2.6%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,668</b>	<b>21,732</b>			

**Table 21.** *Early September Canada goose harvest by county, 2014.*

County	Reported Kill	Expanded Kill	Percent
Adams	67	82	0.4%
Ashland	59	73	0.3%
Barron	329	405	1.9%
Bayfield	142	175	0.8%
Brown	759	934	4.3%
Buffalo	185	228	1.0%
Burnett	169	208	1.0%
Calumet	369	454	2.1%
Chippewa	288	354	1.6%
Clark	361	444	2.0%
Columbia	355	437	2.0%
Crawford	149	183	0.8%
Dane	345	424	2.0%
Dodge	686	844	3.9%
Door	483	594	2.7%
Douglas	52	64	0.3%
Dunn	94	116	0.5%
Eau Claire	55	68	0.3%
Florence	19	23	0.1%
Fond Du Lac	326	401	1.8%
Forest	37	46	0.2%
Grant	81	100	0.5%
Green	160	197	0.9%
Green Lake	60	74	0.3%



County	Reported Kill	Expanded Kill	Percent
Iowa	76	93	0.4%
Iron	40	49	0.2%
Jackson	41	50	0.2%
Jefferson	376	462	2.1%
Juneau	103	127	0.6%
Kenosha	172	212	1.0%
Kewaunee	479	589	2.7%
La Crosse	100	123	0.6%
Lafayette	20	25	0.1%
Langlade	123	151	0.7%
Lincoln	64	79	0.4%
Manitowoc	1,064	1,309	6.0%
Marathon	694	854	3.9%
Marinette	147	181	0.8%
Marquette	127	156	0.7%
Menominee	1	1	0.0%
Milwaukee	3	4	0.0%
Monroe	118	145	0.7%
Oconto	368	453	2.1%
Oneida	194	239	1.1%
Outagamie	499	614	2.8%
Ozaukee	164	202	0.9%
Pepin	2	2	0.0%
Pierce	51	63	0.3%
Polk	677	833	3.8%
Portage	278	342	1.6%
Price	147	181	0.8%
Racine	397	488	2.2%
Richland	75	92	0.4%
Rock	266	327	1.5%
Rusk	206	253	1.2%
Sauk	137	169	0.8%
Sawyer	283	348	1.6%
Shawano	256	315	1.4%
Sheboygan	458	563	2.6%
St. Croix	272	335	1.5%
Taylor	246	303	1.4%
Trempealeau	121	149	0.7%
Vernon	90	111	0.5%
Vilas	34	42	0.2%
Walworth	405	498	2.3%
Washburn	319	392	1.8%
Washington	405	498	2.3%
Waukesha	630	775	3.6%
Waupaca	412	507	2.3%
Waushara	128	157	0.7%



County	Reported Kill	Expanded Kill	Percent
Winnebago	459	565	2.6%
Wood	311	383	1.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,668</b>	<b>21,732</b>	

**Table 22.** *Early September season bag derived from mandatory reporting data, 2014.*

Bag	Number of Hunters	Percent
0	54,497	92.3%
1	1,225	2.1%
2	829	1.4%
3	614	1.0%
4	449	0.8%
5	547	0.9%
6	173	0.3%
7	117	0.2%
8	125	0.2%
9	81	0.1%
10	112	0.2%
11	45	0.1%
12	51	0.1%
13	23	0.0%
14	23	0.0%
15	34	0.1%
16	16	0.0%
17	7	0.0%
18	13	0.0%
19	3	0.0%
20	10	0.0%
21	5	0.0%
22	2	0.0%
23	1	0.0%
24	2	0.0%
25	5	0.0%
26	1	0.0%
27	2	0.0%
29	1	0.0%
35	1	0.0%
36	2	0.0%
41	1	0.0%



**Table 23.** *Percent of successful bags containing 1 or 2 geese.*

Zone	Period	Percent of 1 Kill Bags	Percent of 2 Kill Bags
Horicon	1	51.9%	48.1%
	2	53.4%	46.6%
	<b>All Periods</b>	<b>52.1%</b>	<b>47.9%</b>





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