



## Minnesota's Wild Turkey Harvest – Fall 2016, Spring 2017

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### Summary of Season Structure

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This report summarizes the fall 2016 and spring 2017 Minnesota wild turkey harvest. The fall turkey season was 30 days in length (October 3- November 1) and allowed for an unlimited number of hunters to take one wild turkey of either sex in one of 12 pre-selected permit areas (501-512, Figure 1). Permits for archery and youth hunters were valid statewide (i.e., no restrictions on permit area).

Although significant changes were made to the spring turkey season structure in 2016, there were no major changes for the 2017 season. The spring turkey season was 49 days in length (12 April – 30 May) and allowed hunters to take one bearded wild turkey (tom, jake, or bearded hen). The spring turkey season was divided into six time periods with permits valid during a specified time period (A-F) and permit area (501-512; Figure 1). A restricted number of permits were available through a lottery system in each permit area during time periods A and B (A: April 12-18, and B: April 19-25). Permits not sold during the lottery process were available for over-the-counter surplus sales. Permits for the remaining time periods (C: April 26 – May 2, D: May 3-9, E: May 10-16, F: May 17-30) were available over-the-counter in unlimited quantities in each permit area. Hunters possessing a permit unfilled during time periods A-E were permitted to hunt during the final time period (F) in their respective permit area. Permits for archery and youth hunters were valid the entire season and statewide (i.e., no time period or permit area restrictions).

### Fall 2016 Season

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#### Permits Issued

Permits issued to hunters increased slightly from 8,210 permits in 2015 to 8,562 in 2016 (Table 1, Figure 2). Youth permit sales accounted for 23.4% of total license sales during the fall 2016 season which increased from 14.5% in fall 2015. This may reflect recent regulation changes which permit youth to hunt statewide (i.e., no permit area restrictions).

## Harvest

There were 1,111 harvested turkeys registered during the fall 2016 season which was a 1% decrease from 2015 (Table 1). Hunter success rates declined slightly (-0.7%) to 13.0% in 2016 from 2015 and remained below the 5-year average (13.9%). The greatest number of permits were issued in permit areas 507 and 508 and this effort was reflected in harvest with these two permit areas also registering the highest harvest numbers (Table 2). Statewide, females represented 54.4% of the total harvest while juvenile males (jakes) and mature males (toms) represented 15.7% and 30.0% of the total harvest respectively (Table 2).

## Spring 2017 Season

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### Permits Issued

There were 49,919 permits issued during the spring 2017 season, including 10,324 general lottery and landowner permits, 11,355 youth permits, 11,249 archery permits, and 16,991 surplus over-the-counter permits (Table 3). The total number of permits purchased remained relatively steady (<1% decrease) in 2017 (Table 4). Youth permit sales composed 22.7% of total permit sales in 2017, a slight decrease (<1%) from 2016 (Table 4). Archery permits accounted for 22.5% of total permit sales (Table 3). Archery permits issued increased 8.8% in 2017 (Table 4); this follows a 105% increase in spring 2016 after regulation changes expanded opportunity, allowing archery hunters to hunt statewide during any time period. Purchase of lottery permits declined by 8.9% from 2016, continuing a declining trend whereas purchase of surplus gun permits remained steady in 2017.

### Harvest

Hunters registered 11,854 turkeys (Tables 3, 4, 5, & 7), which was above the 5-year average (11,548 turkeys, Figure 3) and the best consecutive 5-year harvest average (11,610 turkeys during the 2008-2012 seasons). Although harvest remained the highest in the core turkey range in permit areas 507 (3,098 turkeys) and 501 (2,622 turkeys), harvest in permit area 508 (1,632 turkeys) surpassed 503 (1,373 turkeys) for the first time. Youth harvest (2,168 turkeys) declined 3.5% from 2016 whereas archery harvest (1,665 turkeys) increased 12% from 2016 (Table 3). The winter of 2016-2017 was again mild, and likely was not a significant factor beyond normal winter mortality for turkeys. Spring weather was variable, but generally warm and spring “green-up” was earlier than normal. Periods of rain during the A and B time periods may have impacted hunter participation and effort and could account for lower harvest rates during those periods in 2017.

**Table 1. Permits available, number of applicants, permits issued, registered harvest, and hunter success rates for fall wild turkey seasons in Minnesota, 1990-2016.**

| Year | Permits available | Applicants | Permits issued | Registered harvest | Hunter success (%) <sup>a</sup> |
|------|-------------------|------------|----------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1990 | 1,000             | 4,522      | 951            | 326                | 34.3                            |
| 1991 | 2,200             | 2,990      | 2,020          | 552                | 27.3                            |
| 1992 | 2,200             | 2,782      | 2,028          | 588                | 29.0                            |
| 1993 | 2,400             | 3,186      | 2,094          | 605                | 28.9                            |
| 1994 | 2,500             | 3,124      | 2,106          | 601                | 28.5                            |
| 1995 | 2,500             | 3,685      | 2,125          | 648                | 30.5                            |
| 1996 | 2,500             | 4,453      | 2,289          | 685                | 29.9                            |
| 1997 | 2,580             | 4,574      | 2,378          | 698                | 29.4                            |
| 1998 | 2,710             | 4,526      | 2,483          | 828                | 33.3                            |
| 1999 | 2,890             | 5,354      | 2,644          | 865                | 32.7                            |
| 2000 | 3,090             | 5,263      | 2,484          | 735                | 29.6                            |
| 2001 | 2,870             | 4,501      | 2,262          | 629                | 27.8                            |
| 2002 | 3,790             | 5,180      | 2,945          | 594                | 20.2                            |
| 2003 | 3,870             | 5,264      | 2,977          | 889                | 29.9                            |
| 2004 | 4,380             | 5,878      | 3,277          | 758                | 23.1                            |
| 2005 | 4,410             | 4,542      | 2,978          | 681                | 22.9                            |
| 2006 | 4,290             | 4,167      | 2,802          | 618                | 22.1                            |
| 2007 | 4,490             | 4,464      | 2,837          | 695                | 24.5                            |
| 2008 | 7,560             | 5,834      | 4,981          | 1,187              | 23.8                            |
| 2009 | 9,330             | 7,738      | 5,019          | 1,163              | 23.2                            |
| 2010 | 10,430            | 6,869      | 6,607          | 1,353              | 20.5                            |
| 2011 | 10,430            | 3,538      | 5,382          | 953                | 17.7                            |
| 2012 | Unlimited         | N/A        | 10,779         | 1,753              | 16.3                            |
| 2013 | Unlimited         | N/A        | 8,193          | 1,078              | 13.2                            |
| 2014 | Unlimited         | N/A        | 8,339          | 1,137              | 13.6                            |
| 2015 | Unlimited         | N/A        | 8,210          | 1,124              | 13.7                            |

| Year | Permits available | Applicants | Permits issued | Registered harvest | Hunter success (%) <sup>a</sup> |
|------|-------------------|------------|----------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2016 | Unlimited         | N/A        | 8,562          | 1,111              | 13.0                            |

<sup>a</sup> Success rates not adjusted for non-participation.

**Table 2. Permits issued, registered harvest by sex, total registered harvest, regular gun harvest, and hunter success rates during the 2016 fall wild turkey season in Minnesota.**

| Permit Area  | Regular permits issued <sup>a</sup> | Toms <sup>b</sup> | Jakes <sup>b</sup> | Hens <sup>b</sup> | Total registered harvest <sup>b</sup> | Regular gun harvest <sup>c</sup> | Regular gun success rates (%) |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 501          | 1,068                               | 52                | 20                 | 95                | 167                                   | 143                              | 13.4                          |
| 502          | 100                                 | 3                 | 2                  | 9                 | 14                                    | 10                               | 10.0                          |
| 503          | 675                                 | 33                | 9                  | 64                | 106                                   | 83                               | 12.3                          |
| 504          | 226                                 | 8                 | 6                  | 11                | 25                                    | 22                               | 9.7                           |
| 505          | 417                                 | 23                | 9                  | 25                | 57                                    | 47                               | 11.3                          |
| 506          | 226                                 | 8                 | 6                  | 21                | 35                                    | 30                               | 13.3                          |
| 507          | 1,635                               | 89                | 52                 | 154               | 295                                   | 245                              | 15.0                          |
| 508          | 1,242                               | 72                | 50                 | 131               | 253                                   | 214                              | 17.2                          |
| 509          | 130                                 | 13                | 5                  | 17                | 35                                    | 30                               | 23.1                          |
| 510          | 696                                 | 27                | 13                 | 72                | 112                                   | 72                               | 10.3                          |
| 511          | 62                                  | 1                 | 1                  | 0                 | 2                                     | 2                                | 3.2                           |
| 512          | 82                                  | 4                 | 1                  | 5                 | 10                                    | 7                                | 8.5                           |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>6,559</b>                        | <b>333</b>        | <b>174</b>         | <b>604</b>        | <b>1,111</b>                          | <b>905</b>                       | <b>13.8</b>                   |

<sup>a</sup> Archery and youth permits were not included (valid in all permit areas).

<sup>b</sup> Total harvest for all license types.

<sup>c</sup> All firearm harvest, excluding harvest from youth and archery license holders.

**Table 3. Total permits sold, harvest, and success rate by type of permit during the spring 2017 wild turkey season in Minnesota.**

|                | Total permits sold | Harvest            | Success (%) <sup>a</sup> |
|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Lottery</b> | 10,324             | 3,836 <sup>b</sup> | 37.1                     |
| <b>Surplus</b> | 16,991             | 4,185              | 24.6                     |
| <b>Youth</b>   | 11,355             | 2,168              | 19.1                     |
| <b>Archery</b> | 11,249             | 1,665              | 14.8                     |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>49,919</b>      | <b>11,854</b>      | <b>23.7</b>              |

<sup>a</sup> Success rates not adjusted for non-participation.

<sup>b</sup> Includes military and military disabled veteran permit types.

**Table 4. Permits available, permits issued, registered harvest, and relative success rates from 1978-2017 for all spring wild turkey hunting seasons in Minnesota.**

| Year | Permits   |        |            | Harvest            |                          |
|------|-----------|--------|------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
|      | Available | Issued | Issued (%) | Registered harvest | Success (%) <sup>a</sup> |
| 1978 | 420       | 411    | 97.9       | 94                 | 22.9                     |
| 1979 | 840       | 827    | 98.5       | 116                | 14.0                     |
| 1980 | 1,200     | 1,191  | 99.3       | 98                 | 8.2                      |
| 1981 | 1,500     | 1,437  | 95.8       | 113                | 7.9                      |
| 1982 | 2,000     | 1,992  | 99.6       | 106                | 5.3                      |
| 1983 | 2,100     | 2,079  | 99.0       | 116                | 5.6                      |
| 1984 | 3,000     | 2,837  | 94.6       | 178                | 6.3                      |
| 1985 | 2,750     | 2,449  | 89.1       | 323                | 13.2                     |
| 1986 | 2,500     | 2,251  | 90.0       | 333                | 14.8                     |
| 1987 | 2,700     | 2,520  | 93.3       | 520                | 20.6                     |
| 1988 | 3,000     | 2,994  | 99.8       | 674                | 22.5                     |
| 1989 | 4,000     | 3,821  | 95.5       | 930                | 24.3                     |
| 1990 | 6,600     | 6,126  | 92.8       | 1,709              | 27.9                     |
| 1991 | 9,170     | 8,607  | 93.9       | 1,724              | 20.0                     |

| Year              | Permits   |                     |            | Harvest            |                          |
|-------------------|-----------|---------------------|------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
|                   | Available | Issued              | Issued (%) | Registered harvest | Success (%) <sup>a</sup> |
| 1992              | 9,310     | 9,051               | 97.2       | 1,691              | 18.7                     |
| 1993              | 9,625     | 9,265               | 96.3       | 2,082              | 22.5                     |
| 1994              | 9,940     | 9,479               | 95.4       | 1,975              | 20.8                     |
| 1995              | 9,975     | 9,550               | 95.7       | 2,339              | 24.5                     |
| 1996              | 12,131    | 10,983              | 90.5       | 2,841              | 25.9                     |
| 1997              | 12,530    | 11,610              | 92.7       | 3,302              | 28.4                     |
| 1998              | 14,035    | 13,229              | 94.3       | 4,361              | 33.0                     |
| 1999              | 18,360    | 16,387              | 89.3       | 5,132              | 31.3                     |
| 2000              | 20,160    | 18,661              | 92.6       | 6,154              | 33.0                     |
| 2001              | 22,936    | 21,404              | 93.3       | 6,383              | 29.8                     |
| 2002              | 24,136    | 22,607              | 93.7       | 6,516              | 28.8                     |
| 2003              | 25,016    | 22,770              | 91.0       | 7,666              | 33.7                     |
| 2004              | 27,600    | 25,261              | 91.5       | 8,434              | 33.4                     |
| 2005              | 31,748    | 27,638              | 87.1       | 7,800              | 28.2                     |
| 2006              | 32,624    | 27,876              | 85.4       | 8,241              | 30.0                     |
| 2007 <sup>b</sup> | 33,976    | 28,320              | 83.4       | 9,412              | 33.2                     |
| 2008 <sup>b</sup> | 37,992    | 31,942              | 84.1       | 10,994             | 34.4                     |
| 2009 <sup>b</sup> | 42,328    | 36,193              | 85.5       | 12,210             | 33.7                     |
| 2010 <sup>b</sup> | 55,982    | 46,548 <sup>c</sup> | 83.0       | 13,467             | 28.9                     |
| 2011 <sup>b</sup> | Unlimited | 43,521 <sup>c</sup> | N/A        | 10,055             | 23.1                     |
| 2012 <sup>b</sup> | Unlimited | 38,906 <sup>c</sup> | N/A        | 11,325             | 29.1                     |
| 2013 <sup>b</sup> | Unlimited | 34,281 <sup>c</sup> | N/A        | 10,390             | 30.3                     |
| 2014 <sup>b</sup> | Unlimited | 43,305 <sup>c</sup> | N/A        | 11,447             | 26.4                     |
| 2015 <sup>b</sup> | Unlimited | 41,623 <sup>c</sup> | N/A        | 11,734             | 28.2                     |
| 2016 <sup>b</sup> | Unlimited | 39,648 <sup>c</sup> | N/A        | 12,313             | 31.1                     |
| 2017 <sup>b</sup> | Unlimited | 38,670 <sup>c</sup> | N/A        | 11,854             | 30.7                     |

<sup>a</sup> Success rates not adjusted for non-participation.

<sup>b</sup>Youth hunt data included.

<sup>c</sup>Permits issued to archery hunters were not included. There were 2,462, 3,911, 4,550, 4,899, 5,052, 10,343, and 11,249 permits issued to archers in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017, respectively.

**Table 5. Permits issued, registered harvest, and hunter success during the 2017 spring wild turkey season in Minnesota.**

| Permit area  | Regular permits issued <sup>a</sup> | Total registered harvest <sup>b</sup> | Regular gun harvest <sup>c</sup> | Regular gun success rates (%) |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 501          | 6,667                               | 2,622                                 | 2,037                            | 30.6                          |
| 502          | 620                                 | 177                                   | 131                              | 21.1                          |
| 503          | 3,235                               | 1,373                                 | 964                              | 29.8                          |
| 504          | 725                                 | 311                                   | 181                              | 25.0                          |
| 505          | 2,217                               | 904                                   | 671                              | 30.3                          |
| 506          | 1,033                               | 426                                   | 267                              | 25.8                          |
| 507          | 6,586                               | 3,098                                 | 2,002                            | 30.4                          |
| 508          | 3,770                               | 1,632                                 | 1,044                            | 27.7                          |
| 509          | 332                                 | 204                                   | 106                              | 31.9                          |
| 510          | 1,922                               | 1,014                                 | 577                              | 30.0                          |
| 511          | 103                                 | 53                                    | 20                               | 19.4                          |
| 512          | 105                                 | 40                                    | 21                               | 20.0                          |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>27,315</b>                       | <b>11,854</b>                         | <b>8,021</b>                     | <b>29.4</b>                   |

<sup>a</sup> Permits issued for the Camp Ripley disabled veterans hunt, archery, and youth permits were not included.

<sup>b</sup> Total harvest for all license types.

<sup>c</sup> All lottery, military, and surplus permit harvest, excluding youth and archery licenses.

**Table 6. Permits available and issued by license type (resident and non-resident) and time period for the spring 2017 wild turkey season in Minnesota.**

| Time period              | Permits available | General lottery <sup>a</sup> | Surplus            | Youth  | Archery       |
|--------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|--|---------------|
| A: Apr. 12-18            | 7,010             | 5,802                        | 358                | Not applicable – Youth and archery permits were valid during all time periods. |               |
| B: Apr. 19-25            | 7,010             | 4,504                        | 1,873              |  |               |
| C: Apr. 26-May 2         | Unlimited         | 5                            | 7,215              |  |               |
| D: May 3-9               | Unlimited         | 4                            | 4,359              |  |               |
| E: May 10-16             | Unlimited         | 5                            | 2,012              |  |               |
| F: May 17-30             | Unlimited         | 4                            | 1,174 <sup>b</sup> |  |               |
| <b>Total<sup>a</sup></b> | <b>Unlimited</b>  | <b>10,324</b>                | <b>16,991</b>      | <b>11,355</b>  | <b>11,249</b> |

<sup>a</sup> Includes landowner licenses.

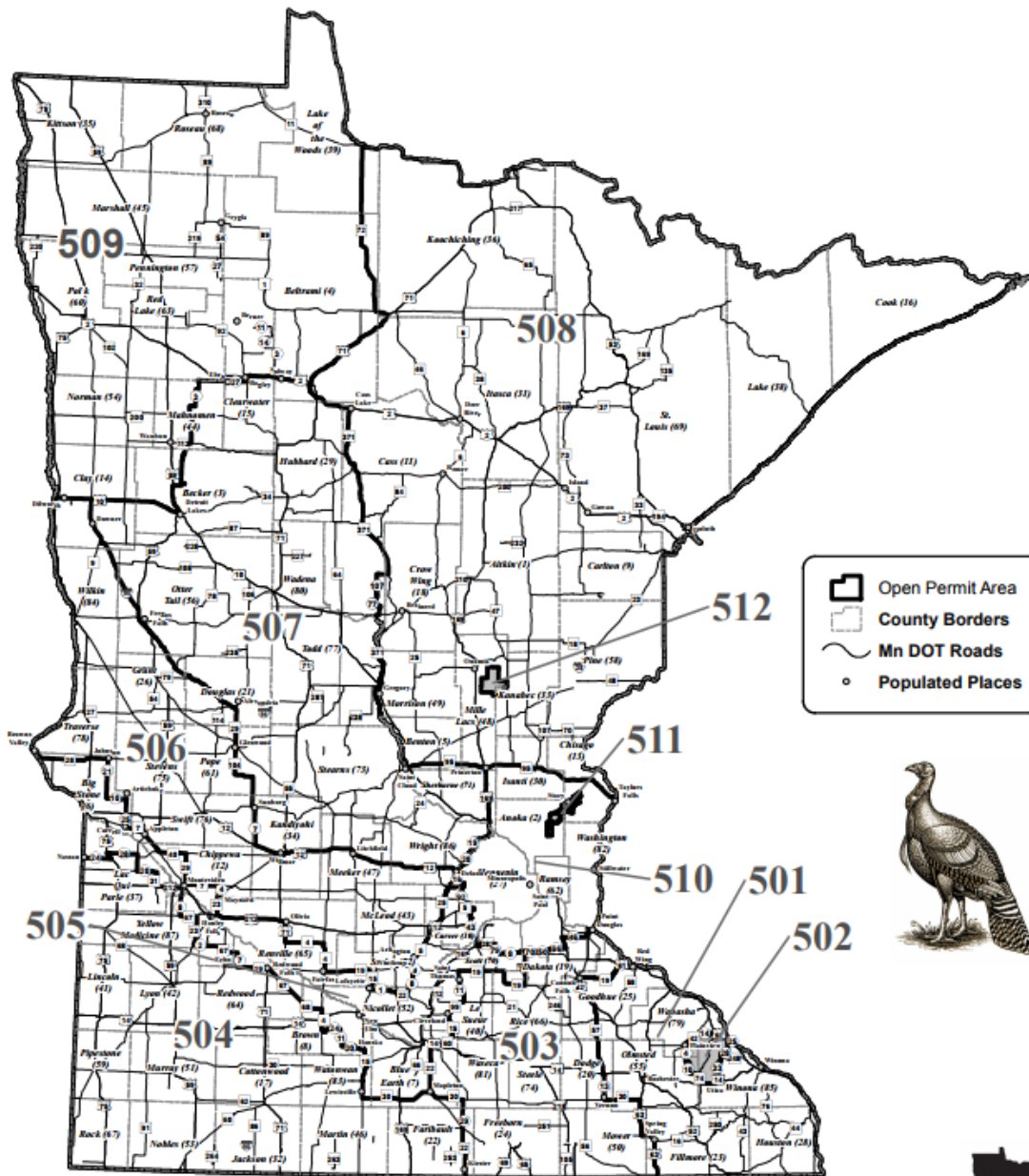
<sup>b</sup> Number of surplus licenses sold for this time period. Actual number of hunters in unknown because all unsuccessful hunters from previous time periods were permitted to hunt in the final (F) season.

**Table 7. Total harvest by time period during the spring 2017 wild turkey season in Minnesota.**

| Time period  | Total harvest | Harvest (%) |
|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| A            | 3,793         | 32.0        |
| B            | 2,815         | 23.7        |
| C            | 2,041         | 17.2        |
| D            | 1,383         | 11.7        |
| E            | 665           | 5.6         |
| F            | 1,157         | 9.8         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>11,854</b> | <b>100</b>  |



# Wild Turkey Permit Areas



DATE: 2016-12-02

Figure 1. Permit areas open for hunting, fall 2016 and spring 2017 wild turkey seasons in Minnesota.

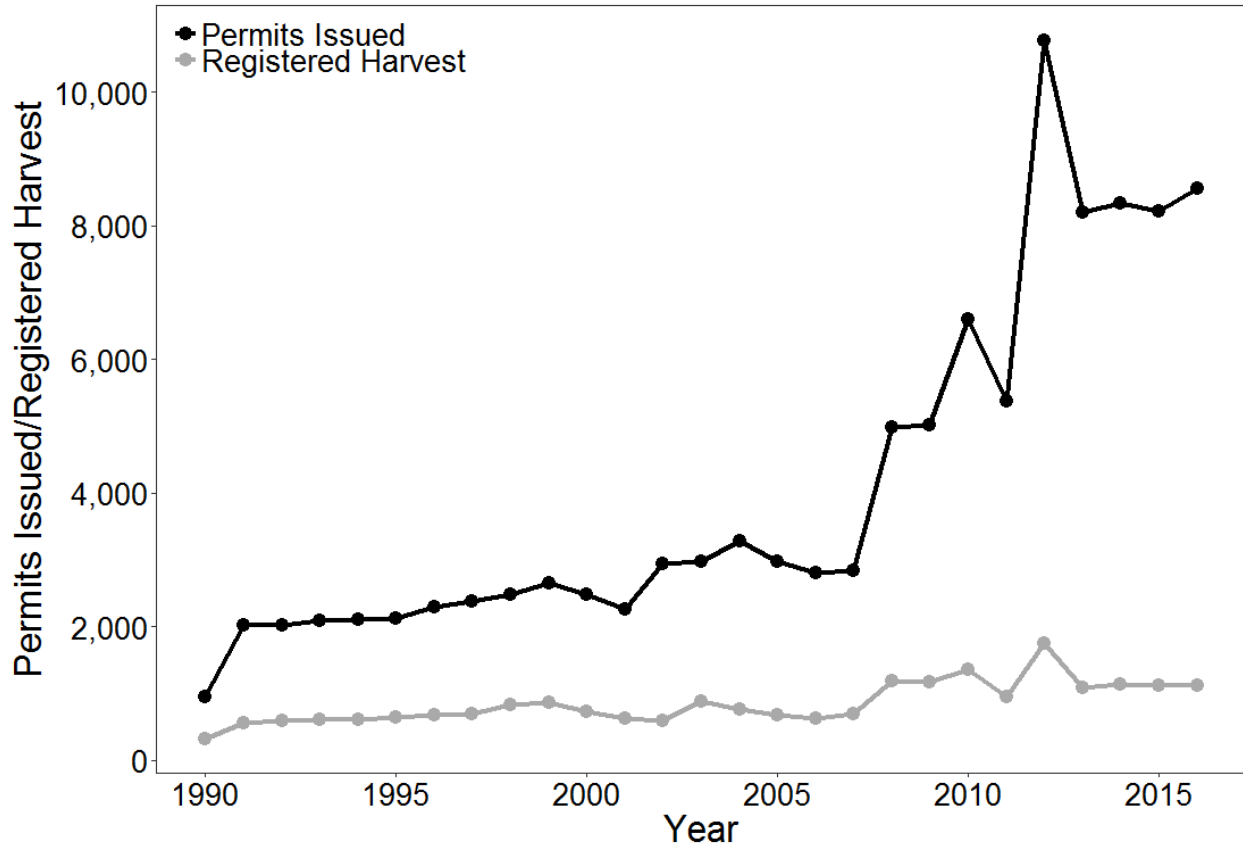
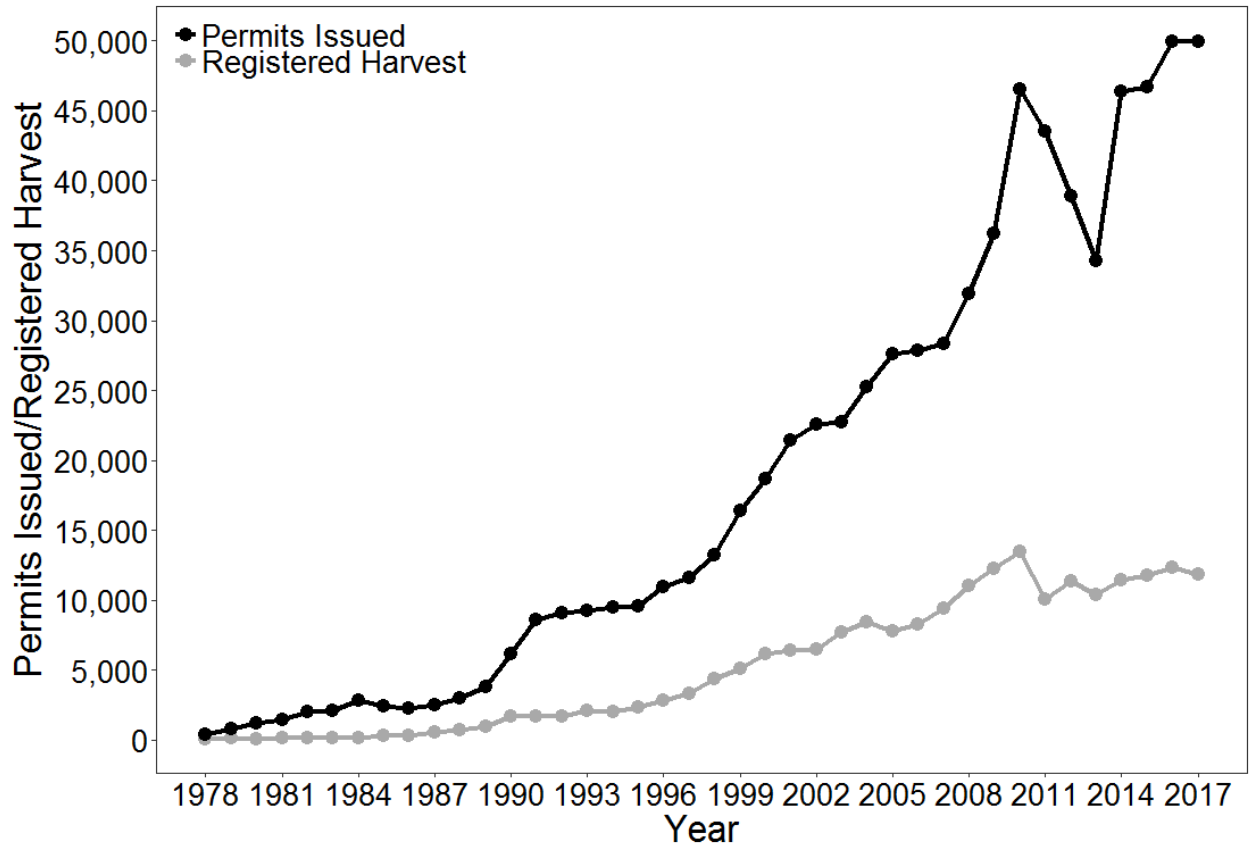


Figure 2. Permits issued and registered harvest for fall wild turkey seasons in Minnesota, 1990-2017.



**Figure 3. Permits issued and registered harvest for spring wild turkey seasons in Minnesota, 1978-2017.**