

2025 LDWF Waterfowl Hunter Survey

REPORTED BY:

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INTRODUCTION

In March 2025, an email with a link to an online survey (Appendix 1) was sent to all Louisiana licensed hunters that registered for the Harvest Information Program (HIP) indicating that they planned to hunt waterfowl in Louisiana during the 2024-2025 season. The link was sent to 66,651 hunters with valid email addresses and 11,636 individuals (17.5%) responded to the survey. Most survey respondents were male (97.8%). Survey respondents ranged from 16 to 88 years of age with the average being 49.5 years of age; the mode was 60 years of age. On average, survey respondents have been hunting waterfowl for 31.1 years (range 1-79 years) with the mode being 30.0 years. Most survey respondents (54%) are not a member of a waterfowl or wetland conservation organization. Of those that are members of a waterfowl or wetland conservation organization most (41%) are members of Ducks Unlimited, followed by Delta Waterfowl (29%), Coastal Conservation Association (22%), Louisiana Wildlife Federation (5%), and another non-profit waterfowl or wetland conservation organization (4%). When asked where waterfowl hunters get information on the status of waterfowl management, population, seasons, regulations, etc., the majority of respondents indicated LDWF or other government agency websites or social media (30%) followed by word of mouth from other waterfowl hunters (21%), social media (14%), magazines (DU, Delta Waterfowl, other; 11%), internet waterfowl forums/chat rooms (10%), podcasts (7%), newspaper/sportswriters (print or online; 5%), and other (2%).







HUNTER ACTIVITIES

Survey respondents were asked which waterfowl seasons they hunted ducks or geese in Louisiana from the 2020-21 through the 2024-25 season. Seventy-five percent of respondents hunted during the 2024-2025 season and 17% did not hunt waterfowl in Louisiana during the last five waterfowl hunting seasons (*Figure 1*).

Cameron and Vermillion Parishes were hunted most often by survey respondents (11.3% and 10.0% of respondents, respectively), followed by Avoyelles (5.2% of respondents), Plaquemines (4.8% of respondents), and Jefferson Davis (4.0% of respondents) Parishes (Appendix 2).

Survey respondents were asked which zone (east or west) they hunted ducks and geese most frequently during the 2024-2025 waterfowl season. 56.9% of respondents hunted the west zone most frequently (Figures 2 & 3).

Survey respondents were asked the number of days they hunted ducks and/or geese in each of five geographic areas in Louisiana in addition to the number of days they hunted waterfowl out-of-state. Respondents hunted in areas B and D most frequently and out-of-state least frequently (*Figures 4 & 5*).

Survey respondents were asked how many days they hunted waterfowl during the 2024-2025 season on several types of property in Louisiana. Respondents hunted an average of 16 days on property owned/leased by a group or club of which they were a member followed by 15 days on property owned by them or a family member. The least number of days hunted was hunting with a commercial waterfowl guide (4 days) and hunting as a guest on property owned or leased by someone else (7 days) (Figure 6).

Survey respondents hunted primarily for geese an average of 8.4 days (range 1-70) during the 2024-2025 regular goose season. Respondents hunted for light geese an average of 4.1 days (range 1-30) during the 2024-2025 Conservation Order.

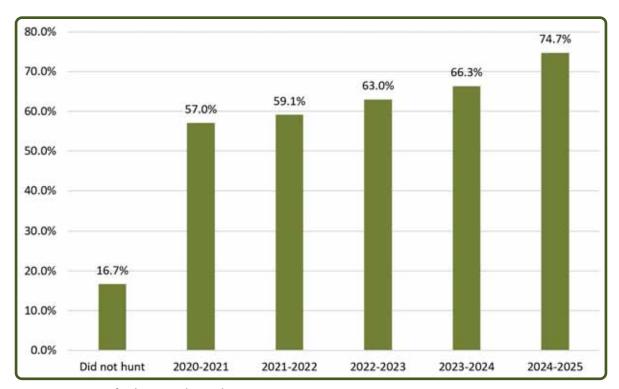


FIGURE 1. Waterfowl seasons hunted in Louisiana.



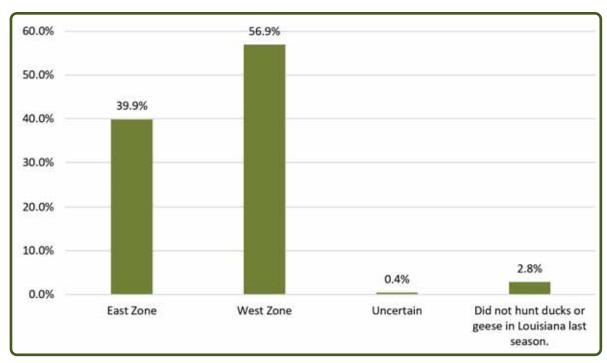
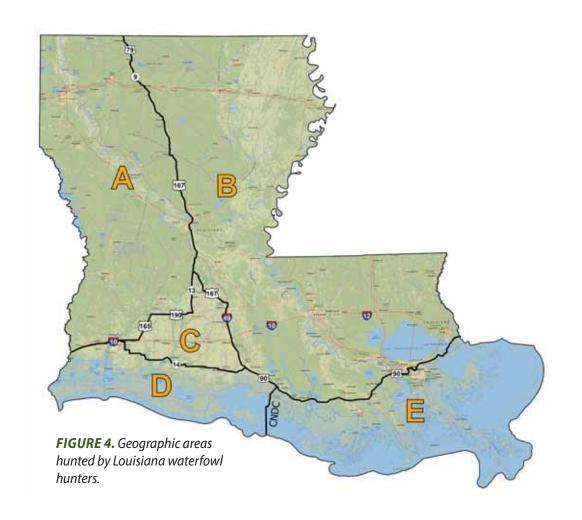


FIGURE 3. Louisiana waterfowl zones hunted by Louisiana waterfowl hunters during the 2024-2025 waterfowl season.



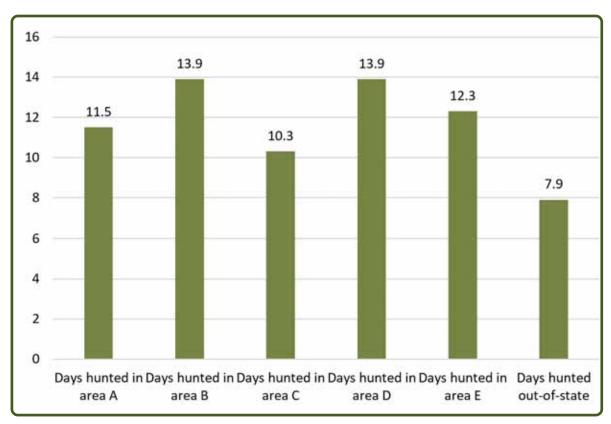


FIGURE 5. Average number of days hunting waterfowl by Louisiana waterfowl hunters by geographic area.

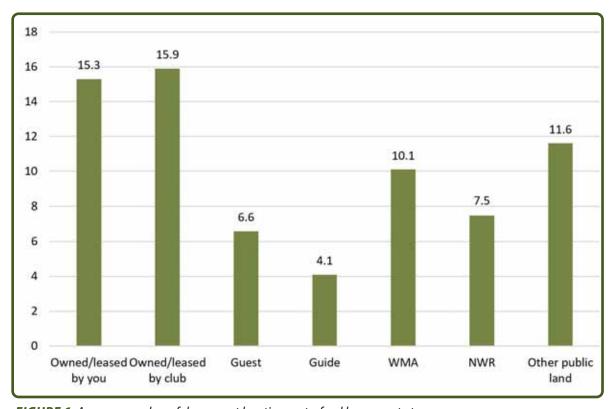


FIGURE 6. Average number of days spent hunting waterfowl by property type.

IN-STATE HARVEST

Louisiana hunters reported harvesting an average of 38.4 ducks per hunter (range 1-400, median 20, mode 30) during the 2024-2025 waterfowl season and an average of 11.9 geese per hunter (range 1-350, median 4, mode 2) during the regular goose season. They reported harvesting an average of 16.4 geese per hunter (range 1-512, median 6, mode 1) during the 2024-2025 Conservation Order.

OUT-OF-STATE HARVEST

Survey respondents were also asked how many waterfowl they harvested outside of Louisiana during the 2024-2025 waterfowl season. Louisiana licensed waterfowl hunters hunting out-of-state reported harvesting an average of 31.3 ducks per hunter (range 1-400, median 18, mode 12) and 19.0 geese per hunter (range 1-668, median 10, mode 2). During the Conservation Order Louisiana licensed hunters reported harvesting an average of 28.0 geese per hunter (range 1-400, median 12, mode 1) out-of-state.

HUNTER SATISFACTION QUESTIONS

Survey respondents were asked how many days they would expect to hunt and how many ducks and/or geese they would expect to bag in a good season. On average, respondents felt they would expect to hunt 23 days (range 1-85, median 20, mode 20) in order for the season to be a good season. Respondents felt they would need to harvest 81 ducks (range 1-500, median 60, mode 100; average ducks per hunt = 3.6) and/or 30 geese (range 1-1500, median 10, mode 10; average geese per hunt = 1.2) for the season to be a good season.

Survey respondents were asked their level of satisfaction with the 2024-2025 waterfowl hunting season. There was mixed satisfaction for the number of days hunted, with 38.6% dissatisfied and 30.8% satisfied. Overall, hunters were dissatisfied with the number of waterfowl they saw (59.2% dissatisfied), the number of opportunities they had to shoot (53.9% dissatisfied), and the number of waterfowl they harvested (49.5% dissatisfied). Overall, hunters were dissatisfied with their 2024-2025 waterfowl hunting (47.8% dissatisfied; *Figure 7*).

In 2021, LDWF altered the boundaries of the migratory waterfowl zones for ducks, returning to two zones each with up to two splits (Figure 8). Survey respondents were asked their level of satisfaction with the current configuration of two waterfowl zones and splits. Survey respondents were satisfied (53%) with the geographic boundaries but tended to be dissatisfied (43% dissatisfied, 33% satisfied) with the dates of the season openings. Respondents were also dissatisfied (54%) with the dates of the season closings. There was no real consensus concerning the timing of closure between the season segments (26% dissatisfied, 35% satisfied, 39% neither dissatisfied nor satisfied). Respondents tended to be satisfied with both the timing of the youth hunts (47% satisfied) and timing of the veteran hunts (44% satisfied; *Figure 9*).

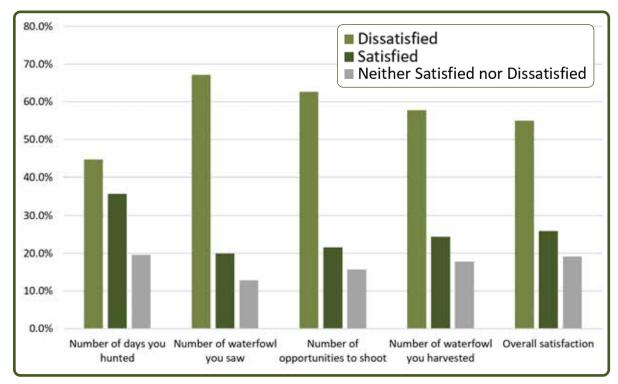


FIGURE 7. Waterfowl hunter satisfaction with days hunted, waterfowl seen, opportunities to shoot, waterfowl harvested, and overall for the 2024-2025 season.



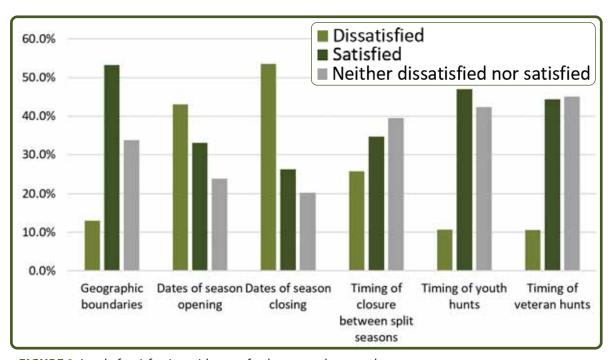


FIGURE 9. Level of satisfaction with waterfowl zones and season dates.

HUNTING SEASON QUESTIONS

Respondents were asked to rank in order the most important time periods that the duck season should be open in the zone that they hunt most frequently. Individuals hunting primarily in the West Zone preferred late November, followed by mid-November and early December (Figure 10). There was not a clear preference for time periods that the duck season should be open for those hunting primarily in the East Zone. However, late November, early December, and mid-December were the most preferred and late October and early November were the least preferred time periods for the duck season to be open (Figure 11).

We were also able to divide west zone hunters into areas (Figure 4) based on their responses to the geographic areas where they reported hunting the most days. Late November was universally ranked the most important time period for duck season to be open in all regions and late October was universally ranked as the least important time period. Mid-January was the second least important hunting time period for duck hunters in all regions but region D (Figure 12).

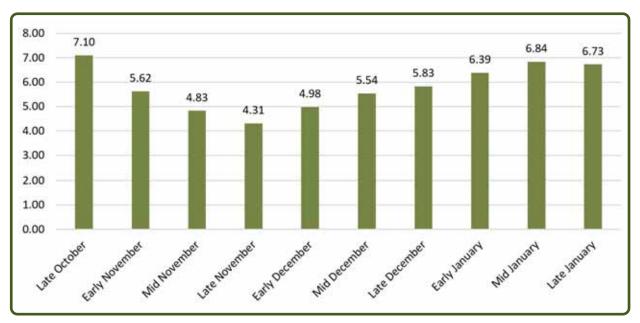


FIGURE 10. Preferences for time periods duck season should be open for hunters that hunt primarily in the West Zone. The lower the number the more preferred an option was.

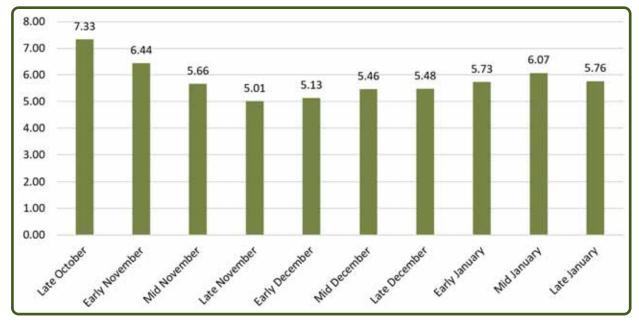


FIGURE 11. Preferences for time periods duck season should be open for hunters that hunt primarily in the East Zone. The lower the number the more preferred an option was.

Respondents were asked when the duck season should close for the zone that they hunt most frequently. For the west zone, 51% of hunters preferred the zone to close January 31 (Figure 13). Hunters that hunt primarily in the east zone also preferred (57%) the zone to close January 31 (Figure 14).

We also looked at season closure preferences by the geographic areas (Figure 4) where respondents hunted waterfowl. For each of the geographic areas January 31 was the most preferred closure date and closing on a Sunday, but earlier than the last Sunday in January, was the least preferred option (Figure 15).

Respondents were asked their preference for the duration of a split should their most frequently hunted zone implement a split season. Hunters in both the west zone and east zone preferred a 12 day split (Figures 16 & 17).

We also looked at hunter preference for split duration based on the geographic areas (*Figure 4*) where respondents hunt. Regardless of the geographic zone where respondents hunt, respondents preferred a 12 day split (Figure 18).

Youth and veterans/active duty military and National Guard are permitted two additional hunting days each to hunt outside the regular duck season. Hunters hunting primarily in the west zone were divided on how these additional hunting days should occur, with 31% preferring the youth and military hunts occur the same days (Saturday and Sunday) prior to the regular season and 30% preferring the youth hunt one weekend prior to the opening of the regular season and military/veterans hunt one weekend after the regular season closes (*Figure 19*). There also was not a clear preference for hunters hunting primarily in the east zone. Having the youth hunt one weekend prior to the opening of the regular season and military/veterans hunt one weekend after the regular season closes was preferred by 29% of respondents. Having youth and military occur on the same days (Saturday only) both before the regular season opens and after the regular season closes was preferred by 24% of respondents and 22% of respondents preferred that youth and military hunts occur the same days (Saturdays and Sundays) prior to the regular season opens (Figure 20).

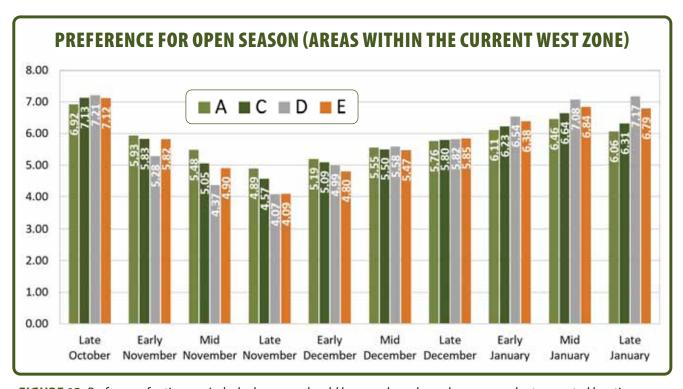


FIGURE 12. Preference for time periods duck season should be open based on where respondents reported hunting most frequently. See figure 4 for locations of geographic areas A, C, D, E. Area B is not included because it encompasses the entirety of the east zone, whose results are presented in Figure 11.

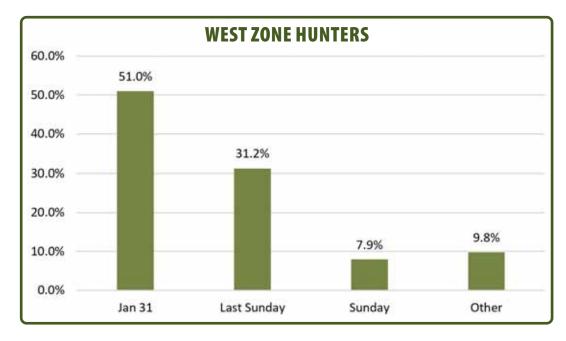


FIGURE 13. West Zone duck hunter preference for duck season closure. **Last Sunday** = the last Sunday in January

Sunday = On a Sunday, but earlier than the last Sunday in January

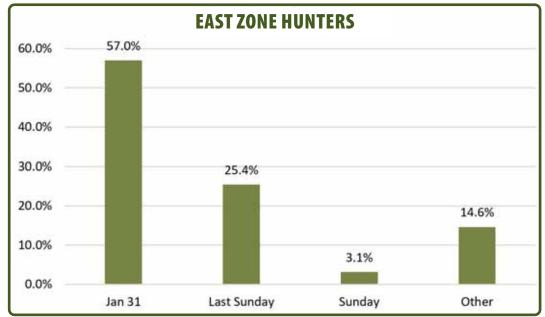


FIGURE 14. East Zone duck hunter preference for duck season closure. **Last Sunday** = the last Sunday in January

Sunday = On a Sunday, but earlier than the last Sunday in January

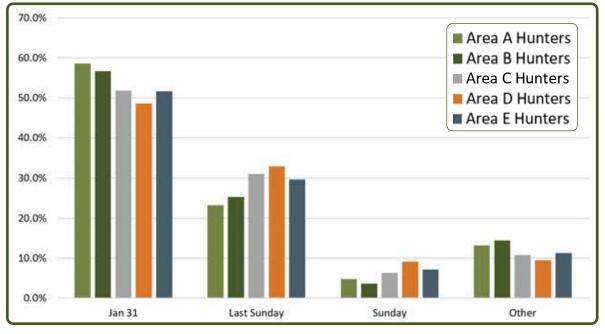


FIGURE 15. Hunter preference for duck season closure based on the geographic areas where they hunt.

Last Sunday = the last Sunday in January

Sunday = On a Sunday, but earlier than the last Sunday in January



FIGURE 16. West Zone duck hunter preference for split duration.

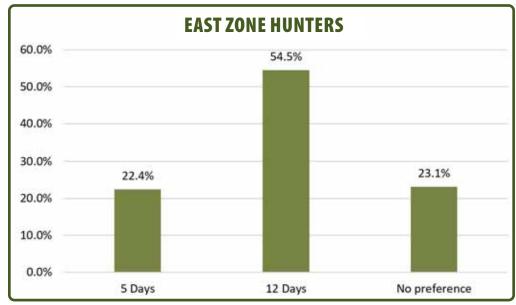


FIGURE 17. East Zone duck hunter preference for split duration.

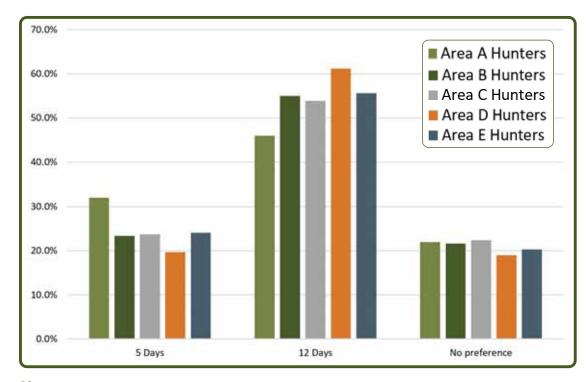


FIGURE 18. Split duration preference by area hunted.

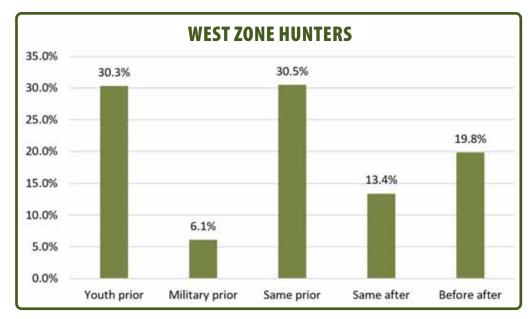


FIGURE 19. Preferences for youth and veterans/active duty military additional duck hunting days for hunters that hunt primarily in the West Zone.

Youth prior = Youth hunt one weekend prior to the opening of the first split and military/veterans hunt one weekend after the regular season

Military prior = Military/veterans hunt one weekend prior to the opening of the regular season and youth hunt one weekend after the regular season closes.

Same prior = Youth and military hunts occur the same days (Saturday & Sunday) prior to the regular season.

Same after = Youth and military hunts occur the same days (Saturday & Sunday) after the regular season closes.

Before after = Youth and military hunts occur the same days (Saturday only) both before the first split an after the regular season closes.

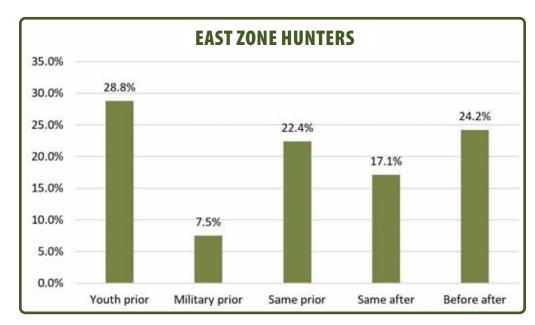


FIGURE 20. Preferences for youth and veterans/active duty military additional duck hunting days for hunters that hunt primarily in the East Zone.

Youth prior = Youth hunt one weekend prior to the opening of the first split and military/veterans hunt one weekend after the regular season.

Military prior = Military/veterans hunt one weekend prior to the opening of the first split and youth hunt one weekend after the regular season closes.

Same prior = Youth and military hunts occur the same days (Saturday & Sunday) prior to the regular season opens.

Same after = Youth and military hunts occur the same days (Saturday & Sunday) after the regular season closes.

Before after = Youth and military hunts occur the same days (Saturday only) both before the regular season opens an after the regular season closes.

ZONES AND SPLITS QUESTIONS

Louisiana will have the option to change the number of zones and splits for the 2026-2030 waterfowl seasons and must maintain that configuration for five years. Respondents were asked their preference for the zones/splits. The current format of two zones and up to two splits was preferred (42%). An alternative of four zones with no splits was the least preferred (3%) option (*Figure 21*). We also looked at zone/split preferences for hunters based on where they reported hunting. Respondents hunting in both the East and West Zones preferred the current format (45% and 46%, respectively) and the least preferred option was four zones (*Figure 22*). These trends were also similar for hunters based on the geographic area (*Figure 23*) where they reported hunting, with respondents in all five zones preferring the current format (*Figure 24*).

Respondents were asked their zone/segment preferences if Louisiana were to maintain two waterfowl zones, each with a maximum of three season segments. They were given four options for geographic boundaries to choose among (*Figure 25*). The current duck season east/west zones (option A) were the most preferred (36%), followed by an east/west zone with the east zone consisting of the current east zone and adding all lands south of hwy 90 and east of the Charenton Navigation & Drainage Canal with the west zone being the reminder of the state (26%, option C; *Figure 26*).

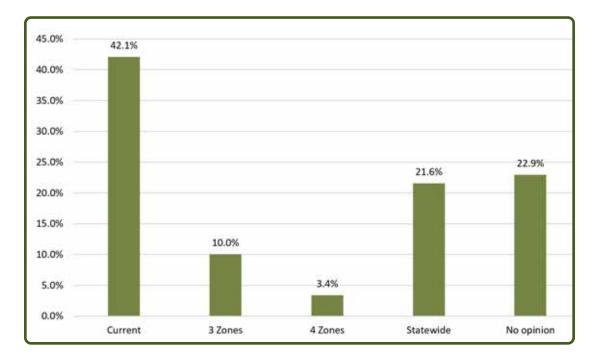


FIGURE 21. Preference for zones and splits for the 2026-2030 waterfowl seasons.

Current = the current format of 2 zones, each with the option of up to 2 splits and 3 opening weekends or 1 split and 2 opening weekends.

3 Zones = An alternative format of 3 zones with up to 1 split and 2 opening weekends.

4 Zones = An alternative of 4 zones with a straight (0 splits and 1 opening weekend) season.

Statewide = A statewide season. No zones with up to 2 splits and 3 opening weekends.

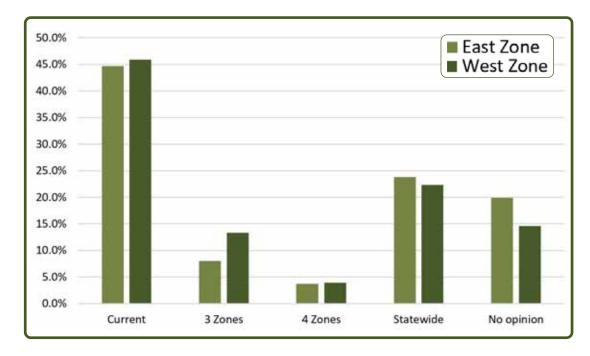


FIGURE 22. Preference for zones and splits for the 2026-2030 waterfowl seasons.

Current = the current format of 2 zones, each with the option of up to 2 splits and 3 opening weekends or 1 split and 2 opening weekends.

3 Zones = An alternative format of 3 zones with up to 1 split and 2 opening weekends.

4 Zones = An alternative of 4 zones with a straight (0 splits and 1 opening weekend) season.

Statewide = A statewide season. No zones with up to 2 splits and 3 opening weekends. We examined respondents zone/segment preferences if Louisiana were to maintain two waterfowl zones, each with a maximum of three season segments for hunters hunting primarily in the East Zone and the West Zone. Respondents in both the East and West Zones preferred option A (the current east/west zones) followed by option C (*Figures 25 & 27*).

Lastly, we examined respondents zone/segment preferences if Louisiana were to maintain two waterfowl zones, each with a maximum of three season segments for hunters based on the geographic area of the state in which they hunt (*Figure 23*). With the exception of respondents hunting in area E, option A (the current east/west zones) was the most preferred option. For respondents hunting in area E, option C was the most preferred option followed closely by both options A and D. Option B was the least preferred option for respondents hunting in all areas of the state (*Figure 28*).

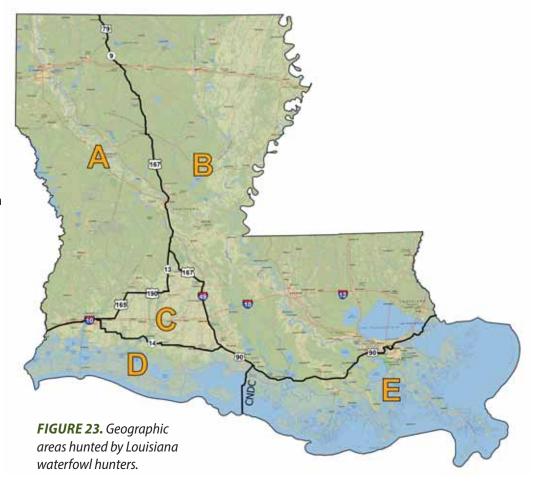
Respondents were asked their zone/segment preferences if Louisiana were to return to three waterfowl hunting zones, each with a maximum of two segments. They were given four options for geographic boundaries to choose among (*Figure 29*). The most preferred option was an east zone as currently configured; a west zone consisting mostly of the current west zone and a coastal zone for the remainder of the state (option D; *Figure 30*).

We also examined their zone/segment preferences if Louisiana were to return to three waterfowl hunting zones, each with a maximum of two segments for respondents hunting primarily in the east and west zones. They were given four options for geographic boundaries to choose among (*Figure 29*). Within both zones hunters preferred option D (an east zone as currently configured; a west zone consisting mostly of the current west zone and a coastal zone for the remainder of the state; *Figure 31*).

We also examined respondent zone/segment preferences if Louisiana were to return to three waterfowl hunting zones, each with a maximum of two segments based on the geographic area in which respondents hunt (*Figure 29*). They were given four options for geographic boundaries to choose among (*Figure 23*). Respondents hunting within each of the four geographic areas preferred option D (an east zone as currently configured; a west zone consisting mostly of the current west zone and a coastal zone for the remainder of the state; *Figure 32*).

Respondents were asked their preference for white-fronted goose hunting regulations. Most respondents (49%) did not have a preference for season length and daily bag limits. Of those that had a preference the majority (75%) preferred the current package of a 74 day season and three bird daily bag limit (*Figure 33*).

Respondents were asked their preferences for days/seasons should Louisiana be granted the opportunity to expand black-bellied whistling duck harvest. Respondents preferred an expanded opportunity to run concurrent with the teal season in early September, followed by having black-bellied whistling ducks being bonus birds in the bag during regular duck season. A standalone black-bellied whistling duck season was the third choice and no additional harvest opportunity for black-bellied whistling ducks was the least popular option (*Figure 34*).



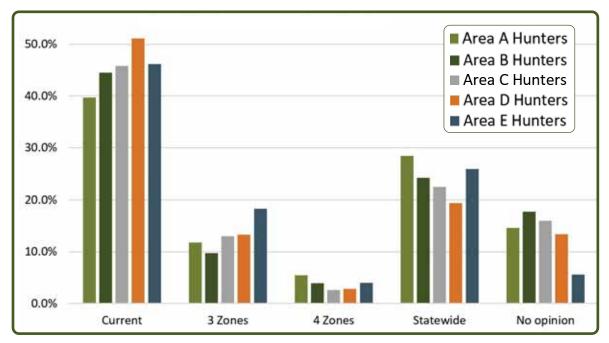


FIGURE 24. Preference for zones and splits for the 2026-2030 waterfowl seasons.

Current = the current format of 2 zones, each with the option of up to 2 splits and 3 opening weekends or 1 split and 2 opening weekends.

3 Zones = An alternative format of 3 zones with up to 1 split and 2 opening weekends.

4 Zones = An alternative of 4 zones with a straight (0 splits and 1 opening weekend) season.

Statewide = A statewide season. No zones with up to 2 splits and 3 opening weekends.

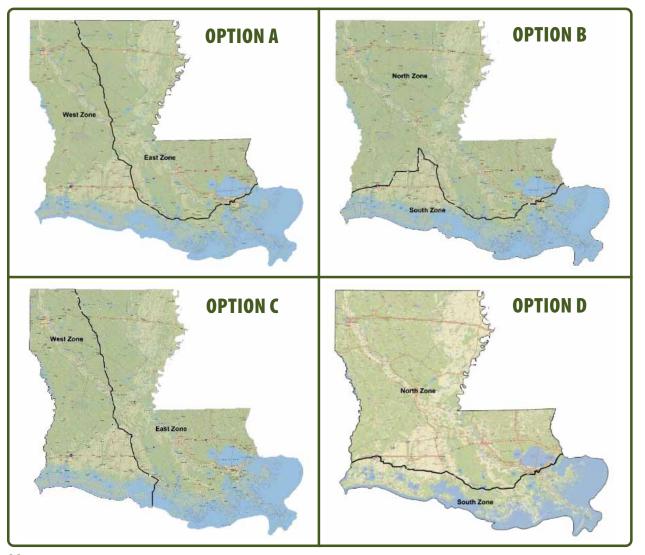


FIGURE 25. Zone/ segment options if Louisiana were to maintain two waterfowl zones, each with a maximum of three season segments.

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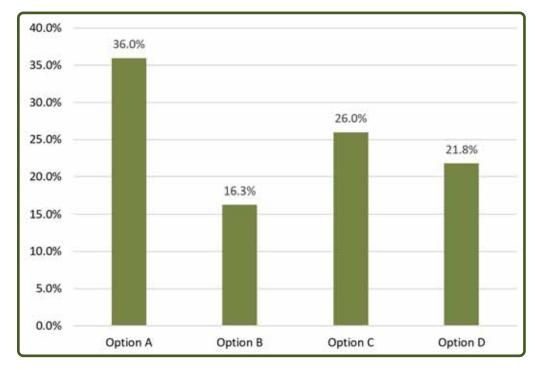


FIGURE 26. Preference for zone options if Louisiana were to maintain two waterfowl zones.

Option A = East/West Zones (same as the current duck zones).

Option B = North Zone consisting of the current East Zone and adding the portion of the current West Zone that lies north of the line heading from the Texas state line east on I-10, then north on hwy. 165, the east on hwy. 190, then north on hwy. 13, then south and east on hwy. 167 to Hwy. 90 South Zone remainder of state.

Option C = East/West Zones. East Zone consisting of current East Zone and adding all lands south of fed. Hwy. 90 and east of the Charenton Drainage & Navigation Canal. West Zone remainder of state.

Option D = North/South Zones. North Zone consisting of all lands to the north from the Texas state line east on I-10 to Hwy. 14, south and east to fed. Hwy. 90, and east to the Mississippi state line. South Zone remainder of state.

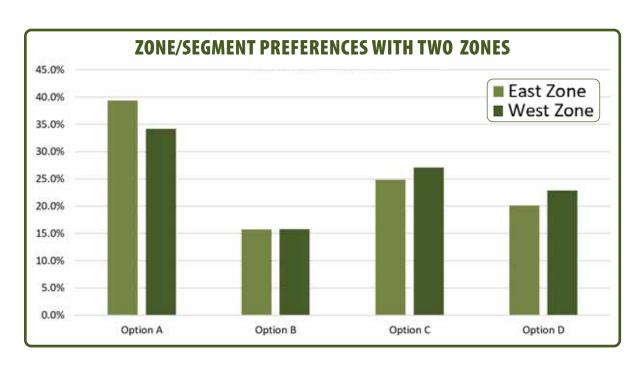


FIGURE 27. Preference for zone options for hunters hunting primarily in the East or West Zone if Louisiana were to maintain two waterfowl zones. Refer to figure 25 for option descriptions.

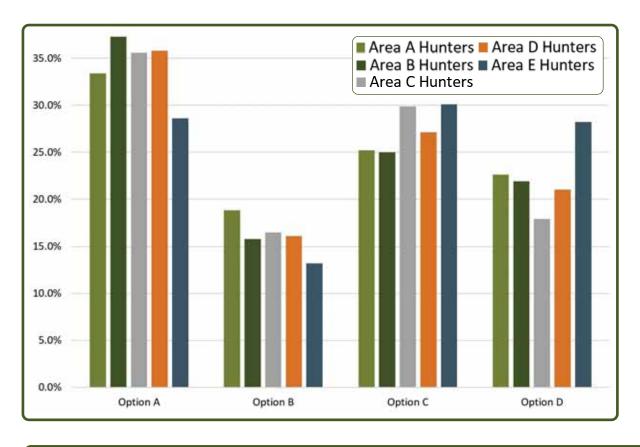


FIGURE 28. Preference for zone options for hunters hunting in different geographic areas of the state if Louisiana were to maintain two waterfowl zones. Refer to figure 25 for option descriptions.

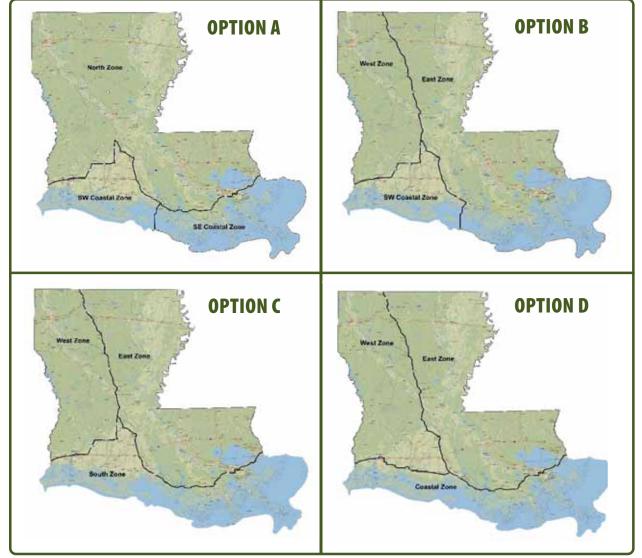


FIGURE 29. Zone/ segment options if Louisiana were return to three waterfowl hunting zones, each with a maximum of two segments.

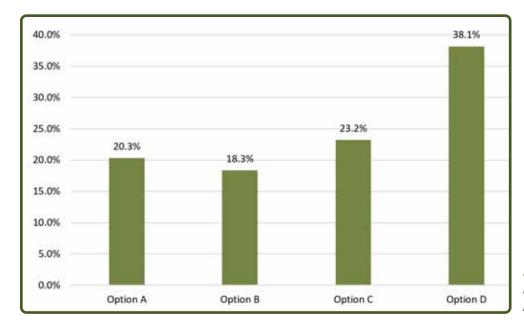


FIGURE 30. Preference for zone options if Louisiana were to return to three waterfowl hunting zones.

Option A = North zone consisting of the current east zone plus that portion of the current west zone that lies north of I-10 at the TX state line east to Hwy. 165, north to Hwy. 190, east to hwy. 13, north to Hwy. 167. Southwest coastal zone consisting of that portion of the state to the south of the above north zone, but west of the Charenton Drainage & Navigation Canal (CDNC). Southeast coastal zone consisting of all lands east of the CDNC and south of Hwy. 90.

Option B = East zone consisting of the current east zone plus lands south of fed. Hwy. 90 and east of the Charenton Drainage & Navigation Canal (CDNC). West zone consisting of the current west zone minus that portion that lies south of I-10 from the Texas state line east to Hwy. 165, north to Hwy. 190, east to Hwy. 13, north to Hwy. 167. Southwest coastal Zone remainder of state.

Option C = East zone as currently configured. West zone consisting of the current west zone minus that portion that lies south of I-10 from the Texas state line east to Hwy. 165, north to Hwy. 190, east to Hwy. 13, north to Hwy. 167. South zone remainder of state.

Option D = East zone as currently configured. West zone consisting of the current west zone minus that portion that lies south of I-10 from the Texas state line east to Hwy. 14, south and east to Hwy. 90. Coastal zone remainder of state.

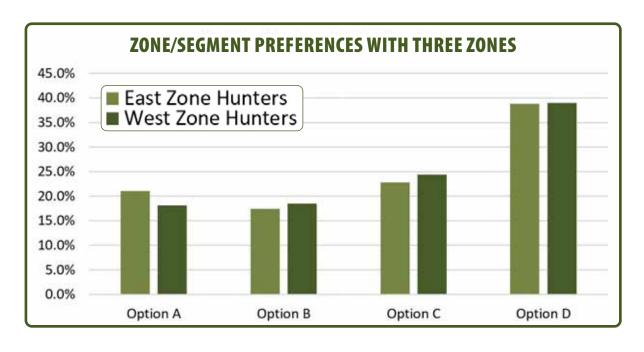


FIGURE 31. Preference for zone options by respondents within the waterfowl zones they primarily hunt if Louisiana were to return to three waterfowl hunting zones. Refer to figure 29 for option descriptions.

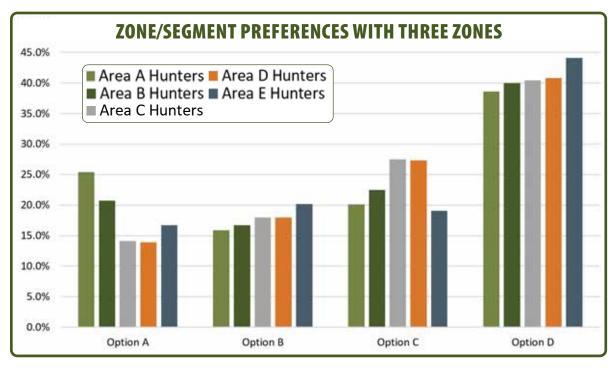


FIGURE 32. Preference for zone options for hunters hunting in different geographic areas of the state if Louisiana were to return to three waterfowl zones. Refer to figure 29 for option descriptions.

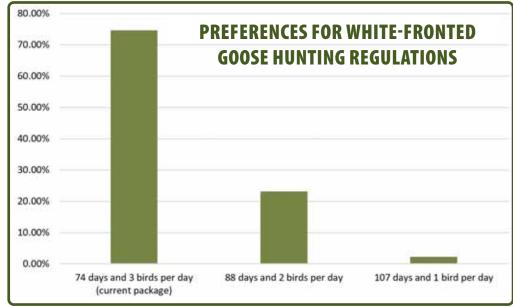


FIGURE 33. Preferences for white-fronted goose hunting regulations.

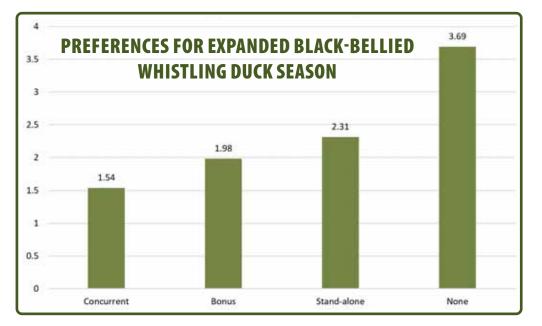


FIGURE 34. Preferences for black-bellied whistling duck harvest. The lower the number the more preferred an option was.

Concurrent = Concurrent with the teal season in early September

Bonus = Bonus black-bellied ducks in the bag during the regular duck season

Stand-alone = A stand-alone black-bellied season in early October

None = No additional harvest opportunity for black-bellied ducks should be permitted

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POLICY QUESTIONS

Survey respondents were asked their level of support or opposition for potential policy action for management of waterfowl and waterfowl hunting statewide by LDWF. Respondents strongly supported opening season segments on a Saturday (79% support; Figure 35). Respondents also strongly supported setting teal season as late in September as possible (76% support). There was also support for opening the September season on Friday only during years when the last day of September falls on a Saturday (51% support, 22% opposed, 28% neither oppose nor support). There was overall support for having a September season for Canada geese (45% support, 46% neither oppose nor support). Finally, there was support for elimination of the closed zone for Canada geese in southwest Louisiana (48% support, 46% neither oppose nor support).

Survey respondents were asked their level of support or opposition for potential policy action for management of waterfowl and waterfowl hunting statewide by LDWF. Respondents were opposed to prohibiting the use of all electronic/motorized decoys (65% opposed, 22% support; figure 36). Respondents were also opposed to a statewide closure of all ducking at noon including public and private lands (56% opposed, 36% support). There was no consensus among respondents concerning closure of the light goose Conservation Order hunting during splits (35% opposed, 28% support, 37% no preference). Finally, there was strong support (79% support) for expanding harvest opportunity for black-bellied whistling ducks in Louisiana.

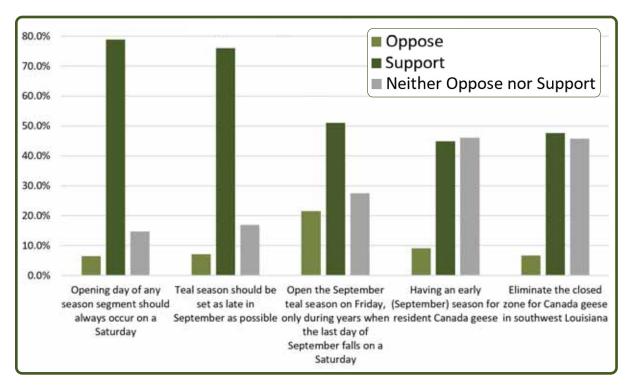


FIGURE 35. Level of support for potential policy action for management of waterfowl and waterfowl hunting statewide by LDWF.

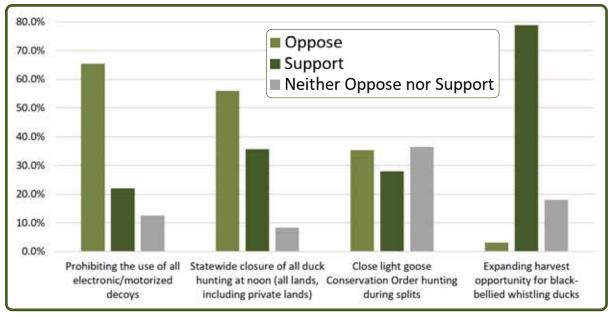


FIGURE 36. Level of support for potential policy action for management of waterfowl and waterfowl hunting statewide by LDWF.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

In an effort to evaluate factors affecting duck hunter recruitment and retention, survey respondents were asked questions concerning abilities to identify ducks. Most (82%) indicated they do not know someone that quit duck hunting due to difficulty with species/sex identification (*Figure 37*). Similarly, most (80%) indicated that ability to identify species/sex of ducks has not prevented someone they know from getting into duck hunting (*Figure 38*).

Respondents were asked their opinion on how the timing of waterfowl migration to Louisiana has changed since 2020. Most (76%) felt that waterfowl migration occurs later now than it did in 2020 (*Figure 39*). Respondents were also asked their opinion on how the number of wintering waterfowl in Louisiana has changed since 2020. The majority (89%) felt that the number of waterfowl wintering in Louisiana has decreased (*Figure 40*).

Survey respondents were asked their opinion concerning factors impacting waterfowl migration to Louisiana. Respondents felt the most important factors impacting waterfowl migration to Louisiana were, in order of importance, 1) Increase in unharvested crop acreage in states north of Louisiana, 2) Changes in rice agriculture in Louisiana, 3) Loss and degradation of Louisiana coastal marshes, 4) Increased rice and grain crop production in states north of Louisiana, and 5) Warmer winters reducing the need for waterfowl to migrate to Louisiana. Respondents felt the two least important factors impacting waterfowl migration to Louisiana were higher backwaters on the Mississippi River and its tributaries and overharvest due to liberal seasons and bag limits (*Figure 41*).

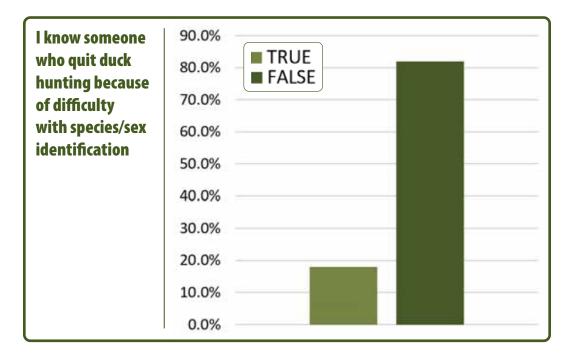


FIGURE 37. Knowledge of individuals quitting duck hunting because of difficulty with species/sex identification.

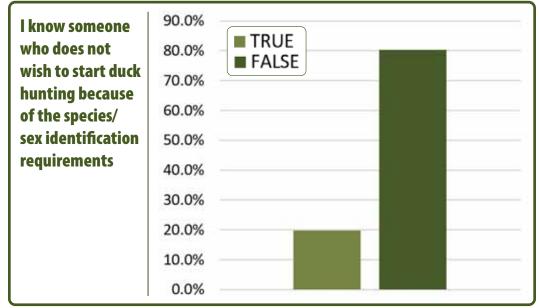


FIGURE 38. Knowledge of individuals electing to not begin duck hunting because of difficulty with species/sex identification.

CHANGE IN THE TIMING OF WATERFOWL **MIGRATION TO LOUISIANA SINCE 2020**

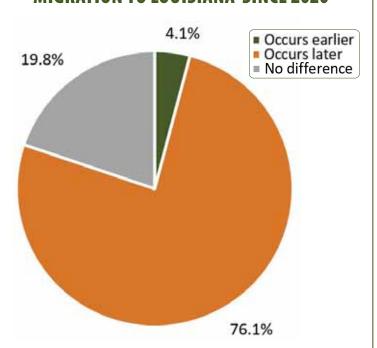


FIGURE 39. Opinions on changes in the timing of waterfowl migration to Louisiana since 2020.

CHANGE IN THE NUMBER OF WINTERING **WATERFOWL IN LOUISIANA SINCE 2020**

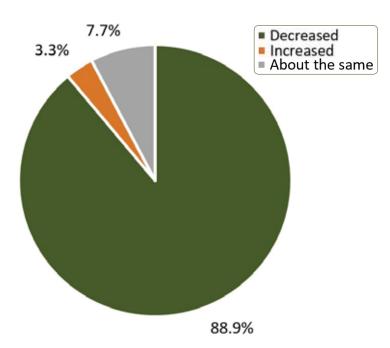


FIGURE 40. Opinions on changes in the number of waterfowl wintering in Louisiana since 2020.

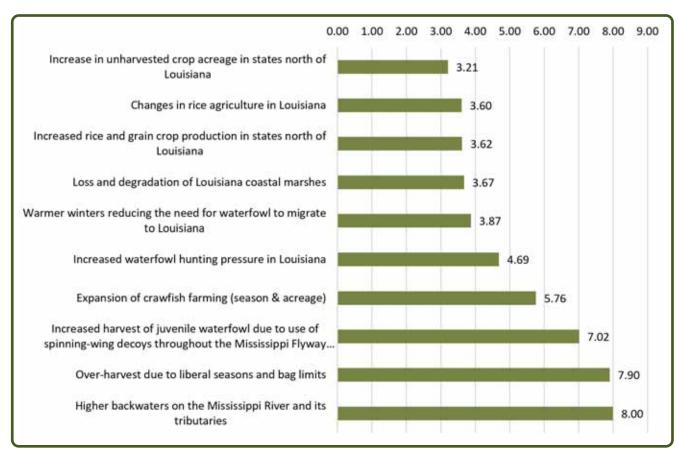


FIGURE 41. Factors affecting waterfowl migration to Louisiana based on survey respondent opinions. The lower the number the more important respondents felt the factor was.

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA QUESTIONS

Survey respondents were asked which waterfowl seasons they hunted ducks or geese on Louisiana WMAs from the 2020-21 through the 2024-25 season. Sixty-eight percent of respondents reported they did not hunt waterfowl on Louisiana WMAs in the last five waterfowl seasons (Figure 42). Twenty- to twenty-two percent of waterfowl hunters hunted WMAs during the last five waterfowl seasons.

Survey respondents indicating they hunted waterfowl on WMAs in the last five years were asked to rate their satisfaction with their experiences hunting waterfowl on public WMAs in Louisiana from 2021-2025. Overall, respondents were dissatisfied with their experiences hunting waterfowl on Louisiana WMAs (Figure 43). Most (50%) were dissatisfied with the dispersion/crowding of hunters. Hunters were also dissatisfied with the number of waterfowl they saw (64%), number of opportunities they had to shoot (64%), and the number of waterfowl they harvested (53%). Hunters were generally satisfied (47%) with the WMA regulations. Forty-five percent of respondents indicated they were dissatisfied with their overall duck hunting experience at WMAs.

Survey respondents indicating they hunted waterfowl on WMAs in the last five years were asked their level of support for potential policy action for management of waterfowl and waterfowl hunting on WMAs in Louisiana by the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission. Overall, there tended to be support for the potential policy actions (Figure 44). Forty-eight percent of respondents indicated they would support the designation of specific areas on WMAs as no hunting sanctuaries. Most (58%) respondents supported limiting hunting on WMAs to four days per week. Closure of all waterfowl on WMAs at noon was supported by 46% of respondents and 53% of respondents supported designating additional areas of WMAs as limited access areas. Increasing the use of lotteries to reduce crowding on WMAs was supported by 47% of respondents. Restricting horsepower of surface drive motors was supported by 42% of respondents. Elimination of all use of surface drive motors, however, was opposed by 51% of respondents.

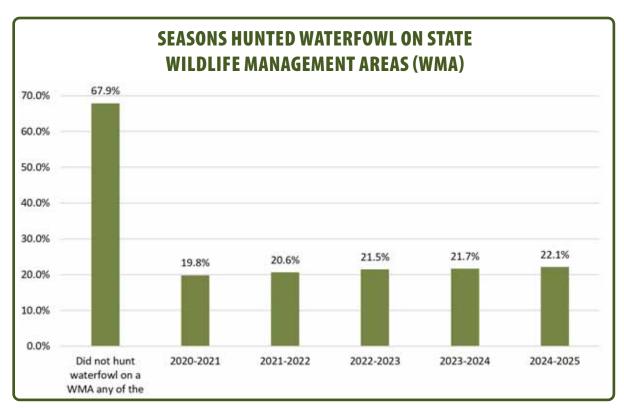


FIGURE 42. Waterfowl seasons hunted on Louisiana WMAs.

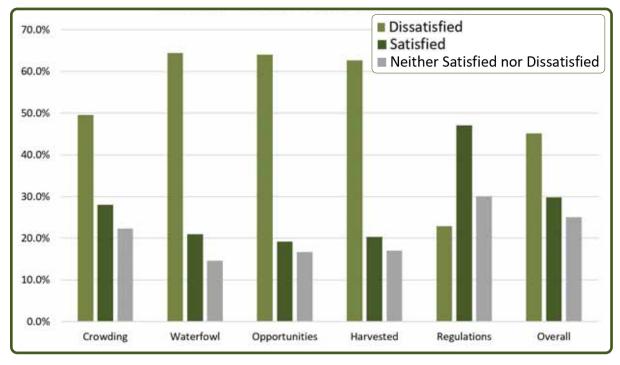


FIGURE 43. Satisfaction of survey respondents with their hunting experiences on Louisiana WMAs.

Crowding = Hunter dispersion/crowding

Waterfowl = Number of waterfowl you saw

Opportunities = number of opportunities to shoot

Harvest = Number of waterfowl you harvested

Regulations = WMA regulations

Overall = Overall duck hunting experience at WMAs

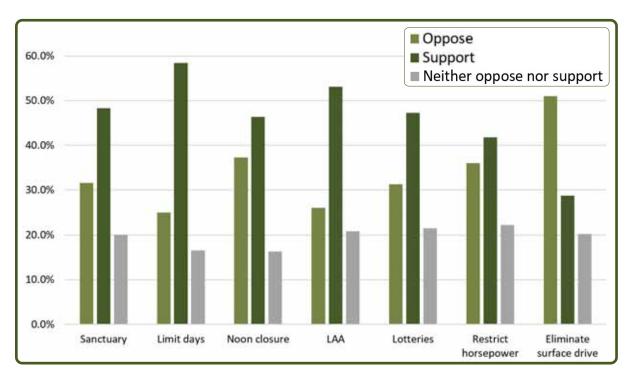


FIGURE 44. Level of support or opposition for potential policy action for management of waterfowl and waterfowl hunting on Louisiana WMAs.

Sanctuary = Designate specific areas on WMAs as no hunting sanctuary areas for waterfowl

Limit days = Limit hunting on WMAs to four days per week

Noon closure = Closure of all waterfowl hunting on WMAs at noon

LAA = Designate additional areas of WMAs as limited access areas (motorless only)

Lotteries = Increase the use of lotteries to reduce crowding on WMAs

Restrict horsepower = Restrict horsepower of surface drive motors

Eliminate surface drive = Eliminate all use of surface drive motors

APPENDIX 1. List of Questions Asked in the 2025 Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Online Waterfowl Hunter Survey

2025 LOUISIANA WATERFOWL HUNTER SURVEY

I. Hunter Activity: 1. During which of the following waterfow [] 2020-2021 [] 2021-2022 [] 2022-2023 [] 2023-2024 [] 2024-2025 [] Did not hunt waterfowl the last 5 seas	ons.
	owl Zone did you hunt ducks and geese most frequently in Louisiana during the 2024-2029 are boundaries. (Please mark one response)
	nd ecologically distinct areas in Louisiana. How many days did you hunt ducks and/or gees 24-2025 waterfowl season? (Please type "0" if you didn't hunt in one or more of the areas

Days hunted Uncertain

Days hunted Out of State

Did not hunt ducks in Louisiana last season

waterfowl season? (Please click and choo [] (Select name of parish)	se one from th	ne drop-down l	list below)			
5. How many days did you hunt waterfow Use your best estimate - type "0" if none or leased by you or you have a group or leased by a group hunting with a commercial waterfowl wildlife Management Area (WMA) A National Wildlife Refuge (NWR)) our family or club in whic e else where y	ch you are a m	ember	operty during	the 2024-202	25 season?
6. How many days did you hunt <u>primarily</u> geese) during the 2024-2025 waterfowl so a line of the 2024-2025 waterfowl so a	eason? (Please he <u>regular goo</u> c. 1; Dec. 14 - ec. 8; Dec. 21 snow geese or Jan. 27 - Marc	e type "0" if yo o <u>se season</u> Jan. 26 - Jan. 5; Jan. 1 · Ross's geese) o h 2	u didn't hunt primari 8 - Feb. 7 during the <u>Conservat</u>	ly for geese ar	_	
7. How many ducks and/or geese did you type "0" if you did not harvest any ducks of a light species. Ducks (all species) during the result of the species of the s	or geese) egular season		during the 2024-2025	waterfowl sea	ason, in Loui s	siana? (Please
3. How many ducks and/or geese did you cype "0" if you did not harvest any ducks (all species) [] Ducks (all species) [] Geese (all species) during the recommendation of the left of th	or geese) egular season		during the 2024-2025	waterfowl sea	ason, out-of-	state ? (Please
I. Hunter Satisfaction: 9. How many days would you expect to hewaterfowl season? (Please type "0" in the Expected days hunting ducks as Expected ducks bagged (all specific processes and Expected geese bagged (all specific processes).	e appropriate k nd/or geese cies) cies)	olock if you do	not expect to hunt o	harvest duck	s or geese)	
10. How satisfied were you with the follow	_	024-2025 wate	•	e mark one re		ch category)
	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	No opinion
Number of days you hunted	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Number of waterfowl you saw	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Number of opportunities to shoot	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Number of waterfowl you harvested	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Overall Satisfaction	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

4. In which parish of Louisiana did you hunt ducks and geese most frequently in Louisiana during the most recent (2024-2025)

11. Indicate your level of support or opposition to each p $\underline{\text{statewide}}$ by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fi	•	•	•			fowl hunting
	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither Oppose nor Support	Support	Strongly Support	No Preference
Opening day of any season segment should always occur on a Saturday	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Teal season should be set as late in September as possible	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Open the September teal season on Friday, only during years when the last day of September falls on a Saturday	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Having an early (September) season for resident Canada geese	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Eliminate the closed zone for Canada geese in southwest Louisiana	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
12. Please indicate your level of support or opposition to hunting statewide by the Louisiana Department of Wildli			_			
Prohibiting the use of all electronic/motorized decoys	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Statewide closure of all duck hunting at noon (all lands, including private lands)	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Close light goose Conservation Order hunting during splits	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Expanding harvest opportunity for Black-bellied whistling ducks	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
13. I know someone who quit duck hunting because of di[] True [] False14. I know someone who does not wish to start duck hun[] True [] False				ation requi	rement.	
 15. In your opinion, how, if at all, has timing waterfowl m [] Occurs much earlier [] No difference [] Occurs later [] Occurs much later 16. In your opinion, how, if at all, has the number of wint [] Greatly decreased [] Somewhat decreased [] About the same [] Somewhat increased [] Greatly increased [] No opinion 			Ü			

17. Rank, in order of importance, factors impacting	g waterrowi migr	ation to Louisi	anar			
[] Loss and degradation of Louisiana coastal man	shes					
[] Changes in rice agriculture in Louisiana[] Increased waterfowl hunting pressure in Louisiana	iana					
[] Expansion of crawfish farming (season & acrea						
[] Increased rice and grain crop production in sta						
[] Increase in unharvested crop acreage in states						
[] Warmer winters reducing need for waterfowl t[] Increased harvest of juveniles due to use of sp	•		the Mississinni Fly	way and Ca	nada	
Over-harvest due to liberal seasons and bag lir		rys tilloughout	. the Mississippi Fry	way and Ca	iiaua	
[] Higher backwaters on the Mississippi River and						
18. There are currently 3 options for structuring w	hite-fronted (sne	ckle-helly) god	ose hunting regulati	ions Louisia	ana's currer	nt seasor
is 74 days and 3 birds per day. Which combination						
(Please mark one response)	, ,		, ,			
[] 74 days and 3 birds per day (current package)						
[] 88 days and 2 birds per day [] 107 days and 1 bird per day						
[] No preference						
10.161	. اد د : الد ما راد ما الد د	والمرام مراكبة المراد	المناسات والمناسبة والمناسبة	l - l - · · · · / -		
19. If Louisiana is granted the opportunity to expa preference for the timing of that season?	na biack-beillea v	vnistiing duck	narvest with addition	onai days/s	eason, wna	it is your
[] I have no opinion on these						
[] Concurrent with the teal season (9 or 16 days	in late Septembe	r), contingent	on the length of the	e early teal :	season.	
[] A stand-alone black-bellied season (9 or 16 day	•					
[] Bonus black-bellied whistling ducks in the bag	during the regula	ır duck season	; similar to mergans	sers or coot	s (ie. 6 duc	ks and 3
black bellied whistling ducks) [] No additional harvest opportunity for black-be	llied whistling du	rks should he	nermitted			
[] No additional marvest opportunity for stack se	med Willstillig ad	ens siloula be	permitted			
I. Wildlife Management Area Questions:						
20. During which of the following seasons did you	hunt waterfowl o	on a state Wild	llife Management A	reas (WMA	ر)? (Please r	mark all
that apply)			G	•	, ,	
[] 2020-2021						
[] 2021-2022						
[] 2022-2023 [] 2023-2024						
[] 2024-2025						
[] Did not hunt waterfowl on a WMA any of the I	ast 5 seasons.					
21. Please rate your satisfaction with your experie Louisiana from 2021-2025. (Please mark one response			lic Wildlife Manage	ment Areas	s (WMAs) ir	1
	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	No Opinio
Hunter Dispersion/Crowding	[]	[]	[]	[]		
Number of waterfowl you saw	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Number of opportunities to shoot	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	
	L J	L J	L J	L J	[]	
Number of waterfowl you harvested	[]	[]	L J	[]	[]	[]

[]

[]

[]

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[]

Overall duck hunting experience at WMA

WMA Regulations

22. Please indicate your level of support or opposition to each potential policy action for management of waterfowl and waterfowl hunting on public Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. (Please mark one

response for each statement)

	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither	Support	Strongly Support	No Preference
Designate specific areas on WMAs as no-hunting sanctuary areas for waterfowl	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Limit hunting on WMAs to 4 days per week to allow 3 days for wildlife to move and feed without disturbance	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Closure of all waterfowl hunting on WMAs at noon rather than the current 2:00 PM closure	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Designate additional areas of WMAs as limited access areas (motorless only)	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Increase the use of lotteries to reduce crowding on WMAs where crowding has been identified as a problem	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Restrict horsepower of surface drive (air-cooled) motors	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Eliminate all use of surface drive (air cooled) motors	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

II. Zones & Splits:

23. In 2021, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries altered the boundaries of the Migratory Waterfowl Zones for ducks, returning to 2 zones, each with the option of 2 splits, during the season. How satisfied have you been with the current configuration of Louisiana's two waterfowl zones?

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	No opinion
Geographic boundaries	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Dates of season opening	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Dates of season closing	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Timing of closure between split seasons	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Timing of youth hunts	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Timing of veteran hunts	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]



24. Please rank (in order of highest priority) the most important time periods that the duck season should be open in the zone the you hunt most frequently (Enter 1 for the most important through 10 for the least important) [] Late-October [] Early-November [] Mid-November [] Late-November [] Early-December [] Mid-December [] Late-December
[] Early-January
[] Mid-January
[] Late-January
25. Louisiana will have the option to change the number of zones and splits for the 2026-2030 waterfowl seasons, and must maintain that configuration for five years. What is your preference for the zones/splits options? (Please mark one response.) [] The current format option of up to 2 zones, each with the option of 2 splits and 3 opening weekends or 1 split and 2 opening weekends. [] An alternative format of up to 3 zones, each with 1 split and 2 opening weekends [] An alternative format of up to 4 zones, each with a straight (0 splits and 1 opening weekend) season [] A statewide season. No zones with up to 2 splits and 3 opening weekends.
[] No opinion
26. If Louisiana were to maintain 2 waterfowl zones, each with a maximum of 3 season segments (2 splits), which of the 4 options for geographic boundaries would you prefer? [] Option A. East/West Zones (same as current duck zones)

- [] Option B. North/South Zones
 - North Zone consisting of the current East Zone and adding the portion of the current
 - West Zone that lies north of the line heading from the Texas state line east on I-10, then north on hwy. 165, the east on hwy. 190, then north on hwy. 13, then south and east on hwy. 167 to Hwy. 90
 - South Zone remainder of state



- [] Option C. East/West Zones.
 - East Zone consisting of current East Zone and adding all lands south of fed. Hwy. 90 and east of the Charenton Drainage & Navigation Canal.
 - West Zone remainder of state.



[] Option D. North/South Zones

- North Zone consisting of all lands to the north from the Texas state line east on I-10 to Hwy. 14, south and east to fed. Hwy. 90, and east to the Mississippi state line.
- South Zone remainder of state



27. If Louisiana selected to return to 3 waterfowl hunting zones, each with a maximum of 2 segments (1 split), which of the 3 options for geographic boundaries would you prefer?

- [] Option A.
 - North Zone consisting of the current East Zone plus that portion of the current West Zone that lies north of I-10 at the TX state line east to hwy. 165, north to hwy. 190, east to hwy. 13, north to hwy. 167.
 - Southwest Coastal Zone consisting of that portion of the state to the south of the above north zone, but west of the Charenton Drainage & Navigation Canal (CDNC).
 - Southeast Coastal Zone consisting of all lands east of the CDNC and south of Hwy. 90.



[] Option B.

- East Zone consisting of the current East Zone plus lands south of fed. hwy. 90 and east of the Charenton Drainage & Navigation Canal (CDNC).
- West Zone consisting of the current west zone minus that portion that lies south of I-10 from the Texas state line east to hwy. 165, north to hwy. 190, east to hwy. 13, north to hwy. 167
- Southwest Coastal Zone remainder of state



[] Option C.

- · East Zone as currently configured.
- · West Zone consisting of the current west zone minus that portion that lies south of I-10 from the Texas state line east to hwy. 165, north to hwy. 190, east to hwy. 13, north to hwy. 167
- South Zone remainder of state.



[] Option D.

- · East Zone as currently configured
- West Zone consisting of the current west zone minus that portion that lies south of I-10 from the Texas state line east to hwy. 14, south and east to hwy. 90
- Coastal Zone remainder of state



b. Where do you get information on the status of waterlowl management, populations, seasons, regulations, etc. Choose all that
pply.
] LDWF or other government agency websites or social media
] Social Media: Facebook, X (Twitter), other
] Podcasts
] Internet waterfowl forums/chat rooms
] Magazines (DU, Delta, Wildfowl, other)
] Newspaper/sportswriters (print or online)
] Word of mouth (other waterfowl hunters)
] Other (Please specify)
7. We welcome comments and suggestions about this waterfowl survey or waterfowl hunting in Louisiana in this section. Note that
omments may be published without identification of the survey respondent.

APPENDIX 2. Parishes Hunted Most Frequently by Survey Respondents During the 2024-2025 Waterfowl Season

PARISH	*PERCENT
Acadia	2.2%
Allen	0.5%
Ascension	0.3%
Assumption	0.3%
Avoyelles	5.2%
Beauregard	0.6%
Bienville	0.4%
Bossier	1.7%
Caddo	1.4%
Calcaiseu	2.1%
Caldwell	1.1%
Cameron	11.3%
Catahoula	2.7%
Claiborne	0.5%
Concordia	1.7%
DeSoto	0.4%
East Baton Rouge	0.2%
East Carroll	0.4%
East Feliciana	0.2%
Evangeline	2.4%
Franklin	0.6%
Grant	0.8%
Iberia	0.8%
Iberville	0.9%
Jackson	0.1%
Jefferson	0.5%
Jefferson Davis	4.0%
Lafayette	0.3%
Lafourche	1.7%
LaSalle	1.8%
Lincoln	0.1%
Livingston	0.4%
Madison	0.7%
Morehouse	2.3%
Natchitoches	1.3%
Orleans	0.6%
Ouachita	2.2%
Plaquemines	4.8%
Pointe Coupee	0.7%

DADIGII	*DED 0511
PARISH	*PERCENT
Rapides	2.6%
Red River	0.6%
Sabine	0.5%
St. Bernard	2.4%
St. Charles	0.8%
St. Helena	0.0%
St. James	0.1%
St. John	0.4%
St. Landry	3.2%
St. Martin	2.0%
St. Mary	2.3%
St. Tammany	2.2%
Tangipahoa	0.6%
Tensas	1.0%
Terrebonne	4.3%
Union	1.0%
Vermilion	10.0%
Vernon	0.5%
Washington	0.1%
Webster	0.4%
West Baton Rouge	0.1%
West Carroll	0.2%
West Feliciana	0.7%
Winn	0.4%
Uncertain	1.4%

^{*}Percent = percent of respondents indicating they hunted ducks and geese most frequently in that Parish during the 2024-2025 waterfowl season.