

Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Project №: W-15-R**Title of Job: 2016 Grouse Wing Cooperator Survey**

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Postage-paid wing envelopes were mailed to 19 avid grouse hunters (“cooperators”) and all hunters with East-Zone grouse permits prior to the hunting season. Data recorded for each envelope includes date, hours hunted, county hunted, number of hunters in the party, grouse bagged, and one wing from each bird harvested by the party.

A total of 34 wing envelopes was returned by cooperators in 2016 in the west zone, containing 113 wings (Table 1). Approximately 67% of the 67 sharp-tail wings returned were juvenile, whereas 61% of the 46 prairie chicken wings were juvenile (Figure 1). Overall hunting success was 1.33 grouse per hunter-day, higher than in 2015. Harvest occurred mostly in September, declining monthly thereafter, with no harvest reported for December (Figure 1).

Table 1. Results of the 2016 prairie grouse cooperator survey, statewide.

Month	Wings Returned		Grouse/ Hunter-day*
	Sharptails (% juvenile)	Prairie Chicken (% juvenile)	
September	33 (70)	46 (63)	1.62
October	19 (79)	14 (43)	1.12
November	15 (47)	1 (0)	1.67
December	0 (NA)	1 (0)	1.00
January	0 (NA)	3 (0)	0.75
Total	67 (67)	65 (54)	1.33

* Based on reported harvest rather than on wing sample.

Figure 1. Production indices for grouse harvested by hunter-cooperators in the Grouse Cooperator Survey, 1996-2016.

