

Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Project: W-15-R-81**Job:** E2**Title of Job:** 2025 Spring Wild Turkey Success and Harvest

Christopher Crowder - Data & Biometry Program Manager

Carlie Gizel - Wild Turkey Program Manager

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The Nebraska spring wild turkey hunter survey is conducted each year at the end of the spring season by email. The season opened 25 March 2025 and closed on 31 May 2025. The objective of the survey is to obtain information on estimated spring turkey harvest and success. Information on age and sex composition of the harvest is also obtained. This year's survey was available to hunters from 16 June 2025 until 1 July 2025.

Caveats. For the spring 2025 season, 94.5% of unique permits sold were associated with an email address, and as such, the sample frame was representative of the population of permit buyers. A reminder email was sent to all non-respondents one week after the initial invitation was sent, but no further attempts were made to contact hunters who failed to respond to the survey. This yielded a hunter response rate of 22.9% and permit response rate of 30.6%. These response rates, compounded with the potential bias of successful hunters more readily responding to surveys, may inflate success and other estimates. Regulation changes implemented in spring 2023 reduced the number of permits hunters could purchase per season and put a quota of 10,000 on nonresident permits. Therefore, changes in permit sales observed in 2024 and 2025 were likely impacted by these regulation changes and do not reflect changes in the permit-buying behavior of spring turkey hunters. Likewise, the reduction in available permits may have reduced total harvest in 2024 and 2025.

Interpretations. Youth permits continue to be a strong component of overall spring permit sales, comprising 14.3% of the total permits sold for the spring 2025 season. Spring 2025 harvest was 17.8% higher than spring 2024 harvest (11,941), with an estimated total harvest of 14,068 turkeys in 2025. Overall harvest success was 52.7% compared to 46.7% for spring 2024 and 48.8% for spring 2023. Spring 2025 success rates were above the management goal for spring harvest success of 50%.

Take-home Message. Spring turkey hunters continue to enjoy modest success in Nebraska. The decrease in the number of permits sold and in total harvest compared to pre-2023 can be partially attributed to the reduction in the number of permits a hunter could purchase and the establishment of a quota for nonresident permits. For those spring hunters who went afield, success was greater than the 50% goal established by the Focus on the Future plan.

Methods. This year's survey was composed and administered in-house using Snap Survey development software (Snap v11) and Snap Webhosting service. An initial email invitation to participate in the survey for the spring 2025 season was sent to all permit buyers with an email on file, resulting in 19,727 survey invitations (92.1% of unique permit buyers). However, 493 bounced back as undeliverable, giving an effective sample size of 19,234 hunters. Initial invitations were emailed on 16 June 2025, and a reminder email was sent to all non-responding hunters on 24 June 2025. The survey was closed on 1 July 2025. Because nearly all permitted hunters provided an email address, no standalone version was available on the agency website for this year's survey—a standalone version was last utilized in 2022.

Results. At the end of the survey period, responses had been received from 4,405 spring turkey hunters, representing 5,884 individual permits for the spring 2025 season. This yielded a raw response rate of 22.9% and a permit response rate of 30.6%. Each survey respondent represents

4.86 unique spring 2025 permit buyers. Permit sales for the spring 2025 season (n =26,691) were 4.3% higher than spring 2024 sales (n = 25,581; Figure 2). Of all permits sold, 3,828 (14.3%) were youth permits and 22,863 (85.7%) were statewide regular and landowner permits. Of all unique permit buyers (n = 21,417), 80.2% bought only one permit and 19.8 % bought two permits. From the information provided by survey respondents, the estimated total turkey harvest for the spring 2025 season was 14,068 turkeys. Of these, an estimated 1,718 were harvested on youth permits and an estimated 12,350 were harvested on regular statewide permits (Table 16, Figure 3). The total estimated harvest of spring 2025 was 17.81% higher than that of spring 2024 (n=11,941). Overall success during the spring 2025 season was 52.7% compared to 46.7% in 2024 and 48.8% in 2023. Youth success increased to 44.8% and regular/landowner permit holders' success was higher at 54.0% (Table 15, Figure 4).

Participant Demographics

TABLE 1. Comparison of demographic factors among all permit buyers, permit holders sampled, and survey respondents for the spring 2025 turkey hunter survey.

Demographic Factor		Unique Permit Buyers	Effective Permit Holders Sampled	Survey Respondents
	Sample Size	21,417	19,234	4,405
Residency	Resident	62.4%	60.4%	46.6%
	Nonresident	37.6%	39.6%	53.4%
Sex	Male	92.1%	92.9%	95.9%
	Female	7.9%	7.1%	4.1%
Age	Median	36	38	50
	Mean	38.2	39.9	48.5

Table 2. Statistics on time respondents spent (in minutes) taking the 2025 survey.

	Descriptive Statistics					
	Total	Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
Duration of interview	28,910	0.0	26,331	4.8	6.0	7.8

Table 3. Number of resident, nonresident, and total respondents who indicated whether they hunted turkeys in Nebraska during the spring 2025 turkey season.

Did you hunt turkeys in Nebraska during the spring 2025 season?	Total	Resident	Nonresident
Yes	4,006 93%	1,864 93%	2,142 93%
No	306 7%	138 7%	168 7%

Figure 1. The total number of years of experience hunting turkeys reported by hunters who hunted during the spring 2025 season.

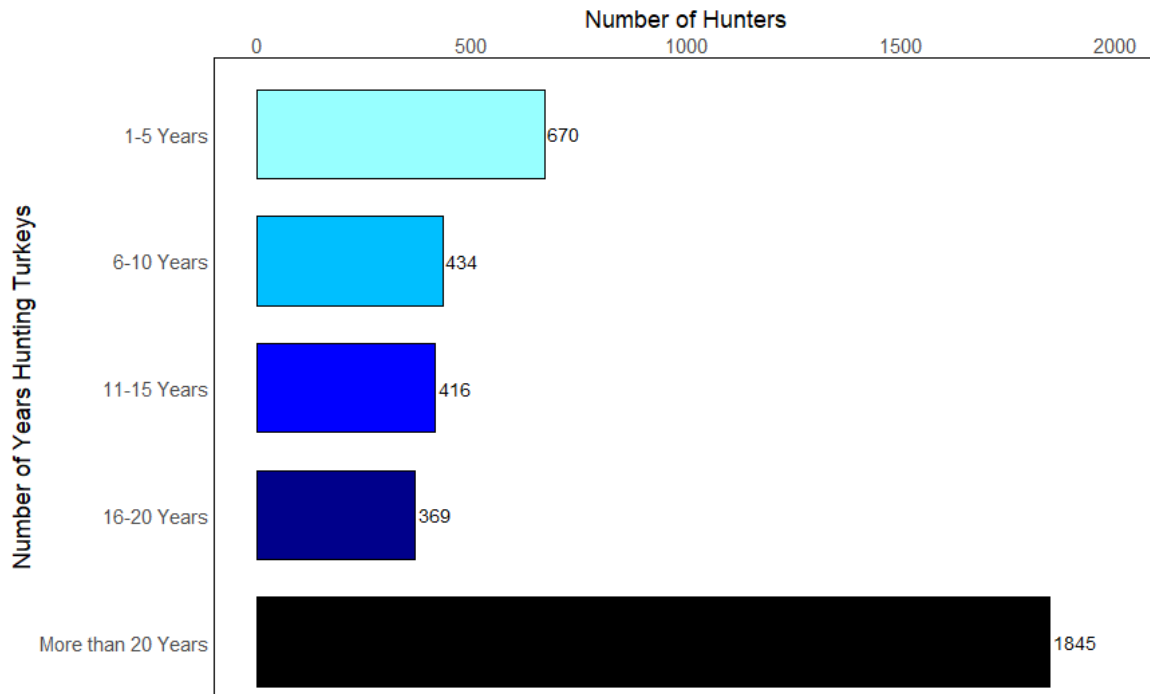
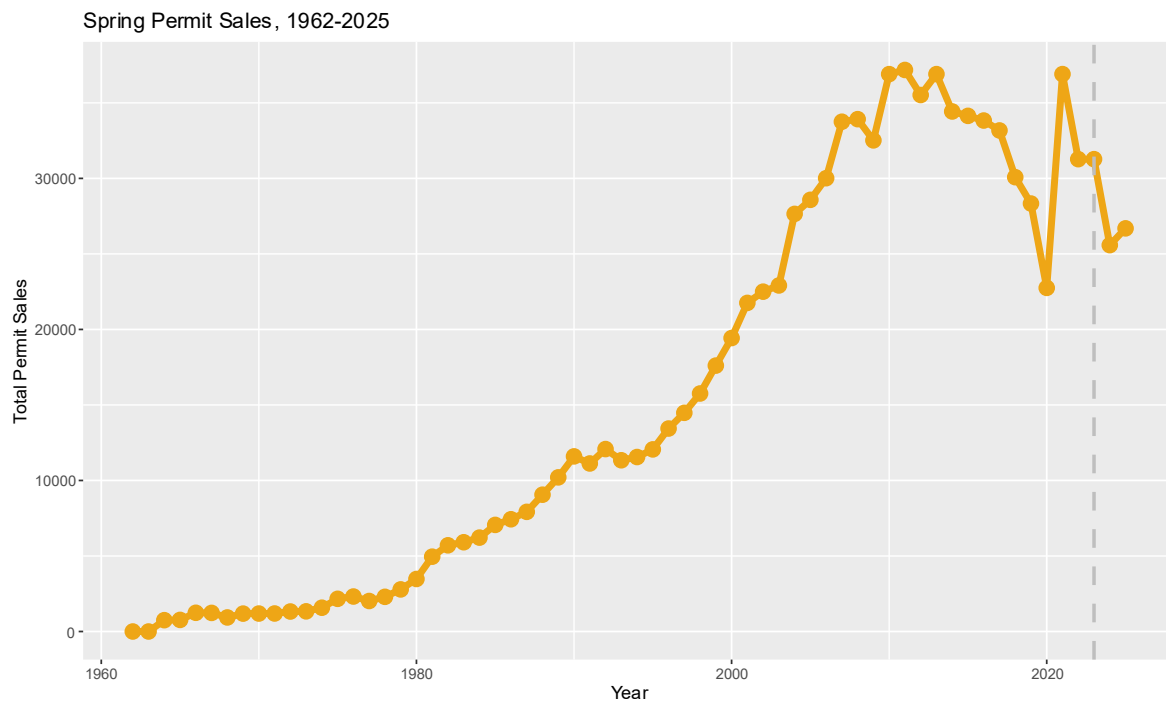


FIGURE 2. Spring turkey permit sales, 1964-2025. The dotted gray line represents regulation changes implemented in 2023.



Hunting Effort**Table 4.** Total and average number of days afield during the 2025 spring turkey season reported by resident, nonresident, and total hunter respondents who hunted.

How many days did you hunt turkeys during the 2025 spring season?	Total	Resident	Nonresident
Total	18,007	10,122	7,885
Mean days per hunter	4.49	5.43	3.68

Table 5. Among Nebraska residents survey participants, top ten counties of residence and raw number of respondents from each for the spring 2025 turkey season (n=2,007).

County		
Lancaster	279	20%
Douglas	243	12%
Sarpy	146	7%
Buffalo	94	4.5%
Hall	60	3%
Cass	58	3%
Lincoln	43	2%
Washington	43	2%
Adams	39	2%
Madison	39	2%

Table 6. Top ten counties most utilized for hunting during the spring 2025 turkey season by residency from survey participants.

Total			Resident			Nonresident		
Dawes	206	5%	Lancaster	98	5%	Dawes	183	9%
Custer	187	5%	Cass	86	5%	Custer	132	7%
Lincoln	177	5%	Buffalo	62	3%	Lincoln	116	6%
Knox	147	4%	Knox	61	3%	Knox	86	4%
Cherry	103	3%	Lincoln	61	3%	Keya Paha	81	4%
Lancaster	101	3%	Otoe	60	3%	Cherry	78	4%
Cass	98	3%	Gage	56	3%	Sioux	67	3%
Holt	97	3%	Custer	55	3%	Sheridan	63	3%
Keya Paha	94	2%	Seward	54	3%	Holt	60	3%
Jefferson	84	2%	Washington	45	2%	Boyd	58	3%

Table 7. Number and percentage of nonresidents who reported having been a Nebraska resident at some point in the past (n=2,263).

Have you ever been a resident the state of Nebraska?		
	Yes	113 5%
	No	2,150 95%

Table 8. Top ten states of residence for spring 2025 nonresident turkey hunters (n = 2,332).

State of Residence		
Colorado	343	15%
Missouri	208	9%
Arkansas	197	8.5%
Minnesota	150	6.5%
Iowa	140	6%
Mississippi	110	5%
Illinois	95	4%
Georgia	82	3.5%
Indiana	82	3.5%
Wisconsin	70	3%

Table 9. States most commonly reported for turkey hunting by resident, nonresident, and all survey participants who indicated they hunted outside Nebraska during the spring 2025 turkey season

Total			Resident			Nonresident		
Kansas	344	9%	Kansas	22	23%	Kansas	322	9%
Missouri	296	8%	Iowa	14	14%	Missouri	295	8%
South Dakota	205	5%	South Dakota	11	11%	South Dakota	194	5%
Iowa	196	5%	Wyoming	10	10%	Iowa	182	5%
Colorado	180	4%	Colorado	5	5%	Colorado	175	5%
Arkansas	160	4%	Minnesota	5	5%	Arkansas	160	4%
Wisconsin	160	4%	Montana	4	4%	Wisconsin	158	4%
Minnesota	157	4%	Florida	3	3%	Mississippi	155	4%
Mississippi	156	4%	Michigan	3	3%	Florida	152	4%
Florida	155	4%	Wisconsin	2	2%	Minnesota	152	4%

Table 10. Top ten counties of harvest for the first turkey harvested for resident, nonresident, and total hunter survey participants during the 2025 spring turkey season.

Total			Resident			Nonresident		
Custer	146	8%	Lincoln	44	5%	Custer	113	8%
Lincoln	141	6%	Lancaster	40	4%	Dawes	110	7%
Dawes	125	5%	Knox	34	4%	Lincoln	97	6%
Knox	102	4%	Custer	33	4%	Knox	68	5%
Holt	79	3%	Buffalo	32	4%	Keya Paha	65	4%
Cherry	71	3%	Cass	30	3%	Cherry	58	4%
Keya Paha	71	3%	Otoe	30	3%	Sheridan	52	3%
Boyd	64	3%	Washington	29	3%	Holt	51	3%
Sheridan	63	3%	Holt	28	3%	Boyd	50	3%
Jefferson	54	2%	Sarpy	24	3%	Sioux	46	3%

Table 11. Top ten counties of harvest for the second turkey harvested for resident, nonresident, and total hunter survey participants during the 2025 spring turkey season.

Total			Resident			Nonresident		
Custer	63	9%	Lincoln	13	7%	Custer	54	11%
Lincoln	49	7%	Custer	9	5%	Lincoln	36	7%
Knox	33	5%	Otoe	9	5%	Keya Paha	32	6%
Keya Paha	32	5%	Lancaster	8	4%	Knox	30	6%
Dawes	28	4%	Gage	7	4%	Dawes	25	5%
Jefferson	21	3%	Washington	7	4%	Jefferson	17	3%
Boyd	19	3%	Sarpy	6	3%	Sioux	17	3%
Sioux	19	3%	Banner	5	3%	Holt	15	3%
Holt	18	3%	Boyd	5	3%	Sheridan	15	3%
Frontier	16	2%	Morrill	5	3%	Boyd	14	3%

Table 12. Distribution of harvest by week and weapon for resident, nonresident, and total hunters during the 2025 spring turkey season.

Week of season	Total		Resident		Nonresident	
	Hunted	Harvested	Hunted	Harvested	Hunted	Harvested
Early Archery & Youth Archery (25 March-4 April)	504 8%	190 7%	310 7%	68 7%	194 9%	122 8%
Youth Shotgun/Archery (5 April-31 May)	343 5%	116 5%	244 6%	56 6%	99 5%	60 4%
Week 1, any weapon (12-18 April)	1,357 21%	638 25%	864 20%	236 23%	493 23%	402 26%
Week 2, any weapon (19-25 April)	1,120 17%	435 17%	775 18%	193 19%	345 16%	242 16%
Week 3, any weapon (25 April- 2 May)	1,065 16%	407 16%	712 16%	160 16%	353 16%	247 16%
Week 4, any weapon (3-9 May)	890 14%	339 13%	601 14%	144 14%	289 13%	195 12%
Week 5, any weapon (10-16 May)	637 10%	181 7%	430 10%	63 6%	207 9%	118 8%
Late Season, any weapon (17-31 May)	596 9%	246 10%	390 9%	93 9%	206 9%	153 10%

Harvest Demographics**Table 13.** Turkey subspecies resident, nonresident and total hunters reported pursuing during the 2025 spring turkey season. The subspecies with the greatest share of hunters are highlighted.

Subspecies	Total	Resident	Nonresident
Eastern	391 9	215 11	176 7
Merriam's	1,232 29	268 14	964 41
Rio Grande	339 8	47 2	292 13
No particular subspecies	2,304 54	1,392 73	912 39

Table 14. Number of turkeys harvested by age and sex by resident, nonresident, and total hunters during the 2025 spring turkey season.

Number harvested	Total			Resident			Nonresident		
	0	1	2	0	1	2	0	1	2
Adult males (toms)	220 10%	1,516 66%	545 24%	111 13%	595 71%	129 16%	109 6%	921 48%	906 46%
Juvenile males (jakes)	1,293 74%	417 24%	27 2%	505 71%	202 28%	9 1%	788 78%	215 21%	18 2%
Bearded hens	1,541 99%	13 1%	- -	627 99%	6 1%	- -	914 99%	7 1%	- -
Unknown age/sex	1,539 99%	3 1%	1 0%	628 99%	1 1%	- -	911 99%	2 1%	1 0%

Access and Hunting Experience/Success**TABLE 15.** Spring turkey season harvest and success for both resident and nonresident permits purchased 2019-2025. Regular permits also include landowner permits.

Type	Statistic	Year						
		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Regular	Permits	24,793	18,453	32,279	27,141	21,941	22,275	22,863
	Harvest	16,834	11,540	18,770	14,781	10,784	11,076	12,350
	Success	67.9%	62.5%	58.1%	54.5%	49.2%	49.7%	54.0%
Youth	Permits	3,541	4,297	4,626	4,132	3,259	3,306	3,828
	Harvest	1,297	2,057	2,012	1,717	1,518	865	1,718
	Success	36.6%	47.9%	43.5%	41.6%	46.6%	26.1%	44.8%

TABLE 16. Summary of spring 2025 turkey hunter survey responses and estimated harvest. Regular permits also include landowner permits.

Residency	Permit Type	All Permits Sold	Respondent Permits	Reported Harvest	Success Rate	Estimated Harvest
Resident	Youth	2,719	117	49	41.8%	1138
	Regular	12,718	2388	1118	46.8%	5954
	Total	15,437	2505	1167	46.5%	7092
Nonresident	Youth	1,109	107	56	52.3%	580
	Regular	10,145	3272	2063	63.0%	6396
	Total	11,254	3379	2119	62.7%	6976

Table 17. Mean percentage of time hunting on specific land types during the 2025 spring season.

	Total	Resident	Nonresident
Private land where no specific fee for hunting was paid	59%	76%	44%
Private land where you paid a fee for hunting access	17%	5%	29%
Open Fields & Waters	4%	3%	4%
State Wildlife Management Areas	14%	13%	14%
Federal public lands open to hunting	6%	3%	9%

Table 18. Resident, nonresident, and total number of hunters who would hunt turkeys in Nebraska again in the future given their experiences during the 2025 spring season. See Appendix 1 and 2 for a list of responses to the question, “If no, why?”

Response	Total	Resident	Nonresident
Yes	3,617 97%	1,707 98%	1,910 96%
No	123 3%	36 2%	87 4%

Table 19. Factors influencing residents, nonresident, and total hunters’ decisions to hunt turkeys in Nebraska during the 2025 spring season. Choices with $\geq 40\%$ selection are in bold. Percentages may add to more than 100% as individuals could select multiple options. Responses for “other” are provided in Appendix 3.

	Total	Resident	Nonresident
Availability of public land to hunt	925 25%	363 21%	562 28%
Family and/or friends who live in state	1,544 42%	820 48%	724 36%
Ability to hunt a different or particular subspecies of turkey	1,224 33%	174 10%	1,050 52%
Availability of permits	1,609 43%	781 46%	828 47%
Permit costs	947 26%	521 30%	426 21%
Number of permits allowed per hunter	792 21%	280 16%	512 26%
Hunter success rate	863 23%	309 18%	554 28%
Turkey population abundance	1,362 37%	482 28%	880 50%
Other	578 16%	371 22%	207 10%

Table 20. Resident and nonresident agreement with statements on a five-point Likert scale relating to their Nebraska spring 2025 turkey hunting experiences. The agreement scores for each item with the highest frequency of selection by respondents are in bold.

	Total					Resident					Nonresident				
	Strongly Disagree		Neutral		Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree		Neutral		Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree		Neutral		Strongly Agree
"I saw too many hunters"	1,553	903	950	212	126	683	401	452	126	85	870	502	498	86	41
	41%	24%	25%	7%	3%	39%	23%	26%	7%	5%	44%	25%	25%	4%	2%
"I was satisfied with the number of turkeys seen"	469	707	936	932	703	308	440	433	378	190	161	267	503	554	513
	13%	19%	25%	25%	18%	18%	25%	25%	22%	10%	8%	13%	25%	28%	27%
"I was satisfied with the amount of land open to public hunting"	413	529	1,780	576	374	283	291	819	220	112	130	238	961	356	262
	11%	15%	48%	16%	10%	16%	17%	47%	13%	7%	7%	12%	49%	18%	14%
"Overall, I was satisfied with the quality of my hunting experience"	163	346	889	1,156	1,197	109	232	520	531	359	54	114	369	625	838
	4%	9%	24%	31%	32%	6%	13%	30%	30%	20%	3%	6%	18%	31%	42%

FIGURE 3. Estimated spring turkey harvest, 1964-2025. The dotted gray line represents regulation changes implemented in 2023.

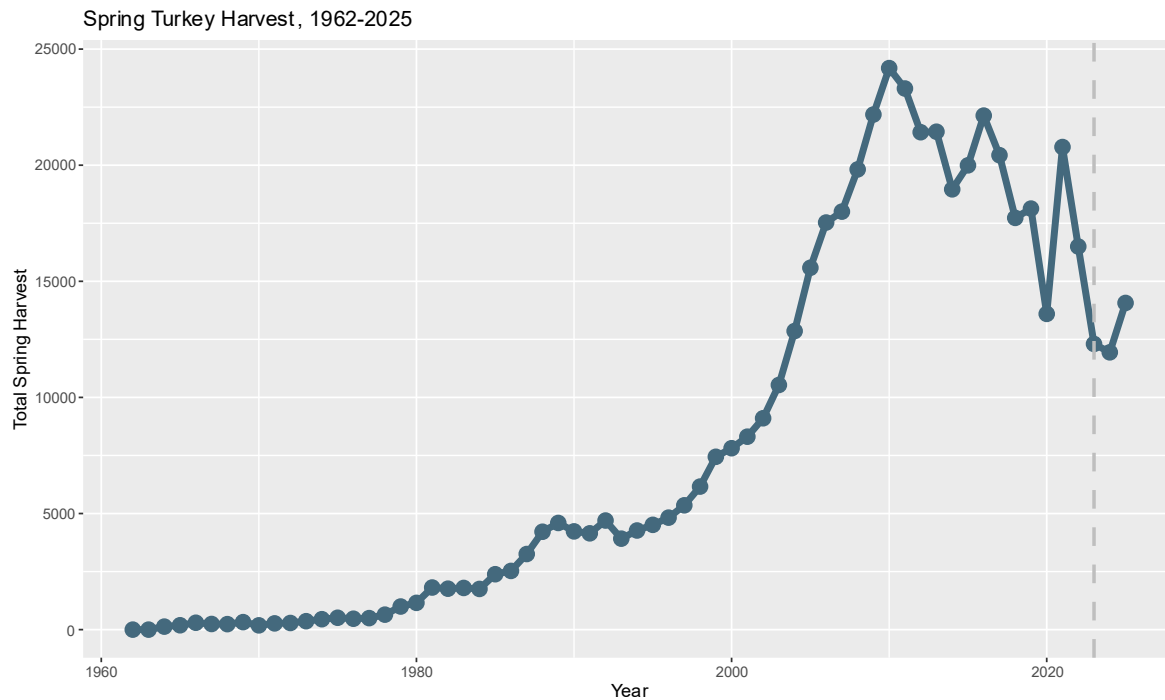
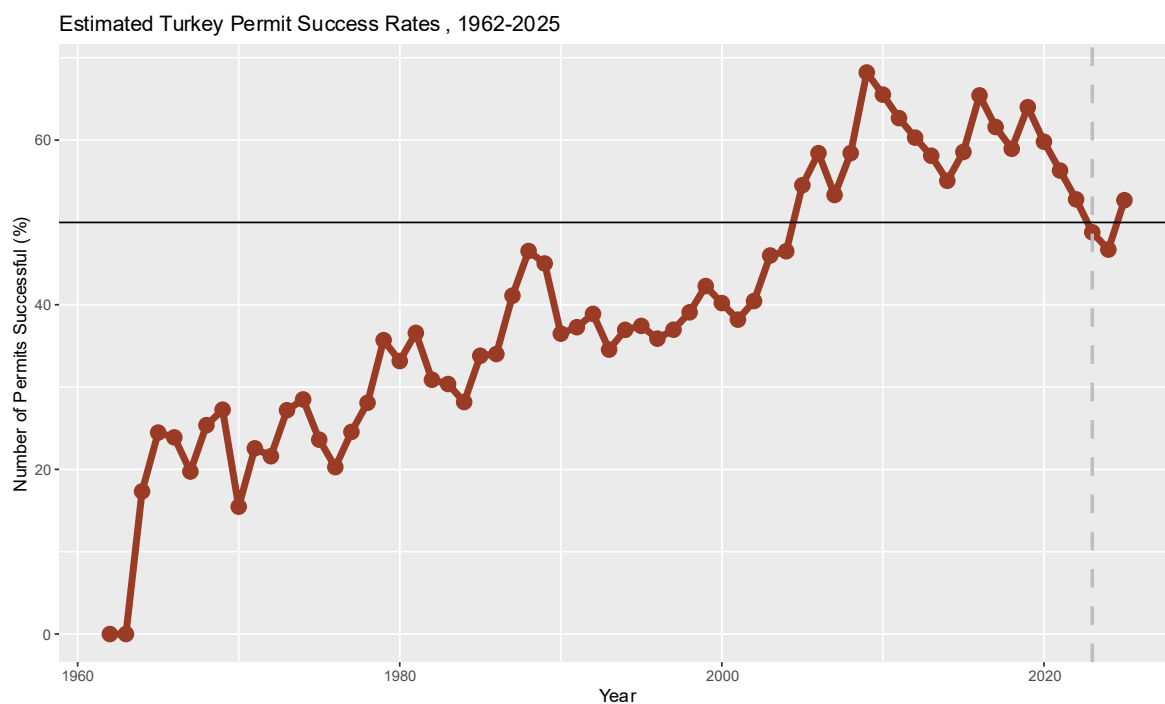
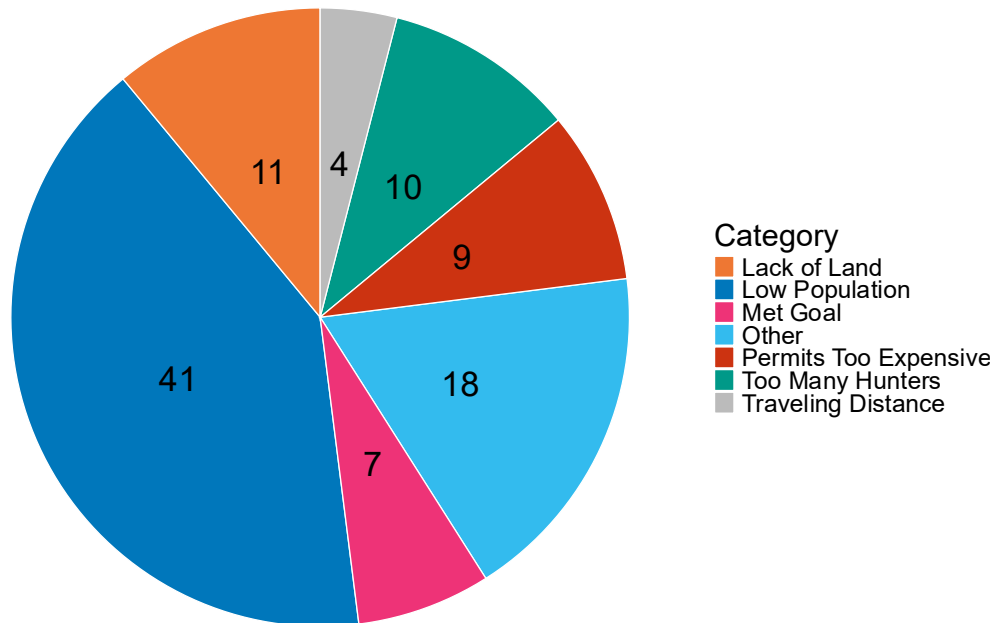


FIGURE 4. Estimated spring turkey hunter success rate per permit, 1964-2025. The black horizontal line represents the success-rate goal of 50% established in the Focus on the Future plan. The dotted gray line represents regulation changes implemented in 2023.



Appendix

Appendix 1. Categorization of text responses from hunters who indicated that they would not hunt in Nebraska again in response to the question, “If no, why?” Each response was categorized to at least one topic depending on the content of the response. Numbers represent the percent of responses categorized to that topic.



Appendix 2. Unedited text responses from hunters who indicated that they would not hunt in Nebraska again when answering the question, “If no, why?”.

Only if I can afford private land hunting
Not worth the fight with other hunters, a lot easier to spend weekends out of state that has lower pressure and higher bird numbers
Turkey population seemed low. And although I didn't see a ton of hunter pressure you can tell birds were pretty pressured because they were all pushed to adjacent private ground.
I will only hunt deer.
Less permits available
Not enough birds
Not worth all the time plus i just give the birds away
Bird numbers are so bad-I mean it's actually quite sad. Nebraska has gone downhill substantially in the last 5 years. It's just not really worth the time.
Turkey population is way down especially for not seeing many turkeys during youth opening weekend
Waste of money since there isn't enough hunting space
Minimal turkeys on public lands, not enough roosting capabilities for Merriams
I was fortunate to fill my tag early in the archery only season. I went back with a friend that had a tag in late April into May. During that time, there were a lot of hunters, mostly non-residents like myself. It wasn't too crowded but definitely a limiting factor.

I shot my Merriams
There are 2 big issues: 1. the quantity of birds have significantly decreased. In areas like Chadron, I used to see 3x to 5x the amount of birds. Your studies have also shown this. This year, for the multiple hunting parties I joined, bird sightings were at an all time low. 2. A huge area with incredible quality in the wild-cat hills (Scottsbluff) has all burned down. The habitat loss is significant. There were fires in Chadron too. I get it, most turkey hunters in Nebraska have their farm and it's easy. But for non-residents, especially coming from Colorado where there is public land everywhere, it's pretty crazy how little HUNTABLE public land is left in NE (pan-handle area). I used to see a lot of non-resident turkey hunters in the wild-cat hills. It finally hit a point where I see more turkeys in Colorado than I do in NE. 10+ years ago, it was worth the price (license, travel, etc) because there was good habitat and you were near guaranteed to see birds. At the big price increase, with little habitat and low bird populations, it's just not worth it.
The private land I hunt was sold
Been there, done that. Time to move on and experience a different state.
Permit is too expensive. Turkey numbers are too low.
Numbers are down, no turkeys.
There's not enough public land and the turkey numbers are too low. I hunted hard 9-10 days and didn't even see one gobbler on public land. I only heard one gobble, and I think it was a jake which I don't shoot.
Not enough turkeys. My age
Long travel distance and not my favorite destination or terrain or subspecies to hunt turkeys in.
Too much hunting pressure from non residents like myself. No toms or even jakes were seen on any public piece state or federal owned. Lots of hens on public but no male turkeys remained. Out of the 20 + private land owners we tried getting access to. All were very bitter towards put of state hunters believing over hunting from non residents has had great negatives effects on the local turkey populations. Everyone would Benefit from a draw system for non resident tags.
I might hunt again, but I'd try much earlier. I did not really care to harvest a turkey, but rather I just wanted to see some country new to me.
The numbers are down significantly from previous seasons. I think that selling 2 tags has lead to over harvesting areas that once held great numbers of Turkeys. Nebraska is a beautiful state that has mismanaged the Turkey population if you want to maintain the
Way to expensive I can buy multiple turkeys for what a permit cost.
Did not hear or see many
Population needs to increase, too many hunters shooting way too many birds.
Not much of a hunter it turns out!
Bad experience with outfitter
Just chasing 49, and i can hunt easterns at home in illinois.
Nebraska game and parks need to separate the parks into its own. Too much money is wasted on Mahoney State park for people who hate hunting. Just make Nebraska Game and Fish
To expensive and you need to end your fall season
To many out of state hunters not enough access to land everything is privately owned anymore and the land Game and parks pays farmers for is trash 3/4of the time
I hunted in Spring 2025 in Northern Kansas and Southern Nebraska. Kansas had a lot more number of birds. I took a a Tom in KS and All I saw in Nebraska was Jakes and hens. If was weird driving across the boarder to NE and how much different the hunt was.
Trying to kill turkeys in all 49 states
Not interested.
The DNR website said there was an abundance of turkeys and we heard nothing and saw nothing. Spent a lot of money and came home with nothing
Non residents spring turkey price has gone up to high over the last 5 years

There are no birds
Not enough turkeys
Couldn't get on birds
\$143 to kill a wild turkey is just not justifiable anymore. You sold 10k tags in 1 day in january which is difficult to know if you can go at that point. Ive ate my tag 2 years in a row.
They took out all the cotton wood trees on George Sysas where they roosted. Completely ruined that area for turkeys.
Way too many hunters for the number of birds on public. They were all pushed to private
Saw very few turkeys, very little access to public land in Eastern Nebraska, on several hunts other hunter arrived late and setup well within 100 yards of me even after I contacted them and explained where I was already setup
Saw no turkey even went on a guide hunt and saw zero turkeys. They said it has never been so low of number that they have hunt
Wanted a Merriams and I got one.
Lack of birds, to many out of state hunters, price of permits is to high
tp much \$
Weather, to windy for me.
We only saw a hand full of Tom's vs 50 plus hens
They would not gobble after fly down and the wind never stopped. Rough terrain to make a move in.
Lack of large public land areas. All public areas are small surrounded by private land; I am tired of going out year after year on public land, only to see turkey on adjacent private land. This makes hunting impossible.
Large time commitment driving from out of state to Nebraska to hunt turkeys multiple times. Might hunt there again in the future but as of now I'm unsure.
Permit cost to high, and to many hunters on public ground
Not enough public, poor land management and it's not much more expensive to go to a different state.
Disappointed in the number of toms seen.
Not enough birds. Too many predators. Would rather go to South Dakota and try.
Bird population is critically low.
Too expensive and very few turkeys. It is also very hard to get a license with the limited quantity available to no residents!!
As I live on the Western Slope Colorado, a 8 hour drive is a bit of a stretch. Where I hunt in Colorado and Wyoming is closer.
Compared to the last time I hunted there 8 years ago the turkeys were way down. I suspect from the draught. I'll give Nebraska a break. I don't need to harvest anything to be successful but when you hardly hear any gobbling, I think I'll pass. Good luck with your future management. Its cool country!
Checked it off my list. Not a lot of birds.
Numbers seem to be down and. Too Many ticks.
You advertise you have this great turkey hunting. Put your turkey population is so low! Very disappointing! Youvneed to do more to get the turkey population ip.
This was for my grand slam, i was successful at completing my slam so now im moving on to my next dream hunt.
Not many turkeys in late season
we have hunted the same ranch in western Nebraska for years and the population is in serious decline. the number of coyotes we heard, and saw was off the.
Turkey tags are harder to obtain now plus I am satisfied with my catch
Nebraska dose not know how to manage big game. They kill them all till its to late.

Looking for other states to hunt in the coming years
Better opportunities locally
No birds
Too many hunters on public land.
Not enough public land. Then you go ask a land owner and the answer is always no, no matter how respectful you are. I saw a lot of turkeys but they were all on private land. The little public land this state does have, is way over hunted and gave the species too much pressure. Nebraska public land is a joke, so respectfully I will save myself the money and time from now on, and I don't agree with I have to pay a landowner to be a successful hunter. Nebraska should be ashamed of itself !
Lack of birds
Poor access and information
No birds to hunt.
Lack of turkeys to hunt
The private property we hunted was too steep for an old man too hike around on.
Numbers are terrible, very similar to deer. Very poorly managed, very similar to deer. The game and parks system in Nebraska is a complete joke and is a laughing stock of the outdoor industry.
Turkeys were not there. I may go back in future but have more desire to go to other states first.
Not enough public hunting on the east half of the state
Too much non resident hunting / pressure. Would come back if less tags available for non residents. With the state offering a large amount of public in the pine ridge area. Brings too many hunters to the area.
I plan on trying something different. Not enough turkeys on the national forest lands like there used to be.
Didnt see any turkeys other than hens.
Expense of outfitter
not sure, may look for another state with a higher population?
No turkeys
low bird numbers
Too many hunters on public and private landowner wouldn't let you in unless you wanted to pay \$500-800 per bird.
I may hunt Nebraska again but I've checked it off my list so i have no plans to return in the near future.
Hardly any birds on public land lots of birds around but all on private
I spent \$3200 with an outfitter and they paired me with an another hunter and it was always a challenge as to who had the best spot. I'll never hunt with someone II spent \$3200 with an outfitter and they paired me with an another hunter and it was always a challenge as to who had the best spot. I'll never hunt with someone. I don't know again for sure. It was just an awful lot of my to spend and not get a bird
Not enough public land. If I had access to private, I'd consider it.
Im not inclined to, but if i tried again it wouldnt be along the eastern border
Public land wasn't managed where birds would feed so hunting was difficult. Flew off roost on to private managed land and stayed till roost
The turkey population is almost nothing now. Used to be great. Wont waste the money to come back again.
Numbers too low
I would like to try new areas instead of revisiting unless I can find more Mirriam's birds elsewhere in the state
Too far and too expensive
Not enough birds. I would love to come back if there were ample amounts of turkey.

Bird numbers are down to much. Once numbers go back up I will hunt again
Expensive
No Birds
Always looking for new experiences. Loved the people in Nebraska.
I was able to harvest one turkey. I will likely not make such a long trip again.
south east nebraska access is tricky without an outfitter or knowing poeple. The public land guys are concentrated on few places. Didn't see many birds either.
Outfitter retired no other options
Outfitter we went with was below par, over hunted the spots we had rights to.

Appendix 3. Unedited text responses from hunters who indicated that “other” factors influenced their decision to hunt turkeys during the spring turkey season in 2025.

I live in Nebraska
Been hunting NE for almost 20 years.
Brother in law has some land I can hunt. I enjoy getting out a few times a season.
You have an archery only season.
Just to get out and hunt.
I'm stationed here so having the ability to gain “residency” through being stationed here-paramount
a new destination and new experiences with my daughter
I live here
I own a small amount of land in the area and enjoy turkey hunting in that area
Reasonable driving distance from home state
I own 400 acres of farmland in Nebraska
Having private land to hunt
I like to hunt them and own the land to do it on.
Surrounding states are too expensive and most years I've had good luck.
I live here
First state to open of the ones I planned to hunt, which allowed me to get out earlier.
Just enjoy seeing other states and habitat types
Turkey population getting better, glad to get a tag, didn't draw in kansas
see some country, meet some people
Opportunity to hunt on friends land.
I live here. Kansas non resident licenses are too expensive or I would go there.
A friend asked me to.
A friend asked me to go.
The numbers are way down in our area but we just enjoy hunting turkeys.
Was great affordable place to hunt now have friends but the cost for a permit is getting to be insan
I live here
The Nebraska Turkey population continues to decline. The Nebraska Game and Parks is fully aware.
Friends have come from out of state and we've hunted together for 15 years.

I hunt here because I live here.
Opportunity to hunt other than the fall. I'm a landowner and I like to utilize my property.
Limited hunting permits in Kansas/extending my season
Met someone who offered private land access, would not have hunted otherwise
I like to spend time in the woods or on the water, killing or catching is not that important to me.
It's something I've always done
Close to where we stay
Family owns property in state
private land access
We own a house there
We own a ranch there.
proximity to home
Where I live
just like to get into the outdoors
like hunting in the spring.
... close to home and work
College graduation present for my son
Resident
The time to do so
I live here
My son/s wanted to go out to try and get their first turkey, but limited on time due to sports
Private land access
Friend who had never hunted wanted to try turkey hunting
Trying to harvest a turkey in as many states as I can.
Proximity to home and timing of season in relation to other State's turkey seasons
Early open to season compared to nearby states
Youth season for son and archery season, proximity
Free access to private land
I live in Nebraska
I live on 160 acres and I hunt what is in season but no turkeys for 5 years. Where did they go?
Relationship with guide
I go with friends. It's a vacation.
hunted this property in previous years
this is where I live
i like hunting and I live in Nebraska
Private land to hunt
Proximity to other states I was hunting
Because my friends and family hunt turkey every year together
Permission to hunt on private land. Ability to hunt the entire NE turkey season.
I live here and love turkey hunting.
Outfitter
travel distance/proximity to my home state

I like to hunt my own land
Location and experience
I wish they go to only one tag so turkey numbers come back
Family land owned in Nebraska
Chance to challenge myself to successfully harvest a wild turkey
Own my land to hunt on it
I live here, so this is where I hunt
scheduling of other life happenings, other responsibilities.
I live here and didn't have time or desire to travel to hunt turkey.
NE is semi-close to me
I live in Nebraska
My private land.
I have just been hunting here annually for 20 years.
To hunt
Later season dates allow for opportunities vs neighboring states to me
Hunt on my farm and farms of my neighbors
Landowner access
Landowner
able to find private land to hunt
Outfitter is excellent
Mostly I like coming to Nebraska because it's less crowded and I can usually find a turkey to hunt.
Length of season
Private land access with observed turkey population
Enjoy the outdoors and hunting
Tradition
I live here
I reside here.
Private land available to me and i live here.
access to private land
History of I ting in NE with success and numbers of birds. KS and NE have fallen off in the past
I love to hunt anything
Enjoyment. Need to reduce # of permits a person can buy to 1 until population builds back.
access to private land to hunt turkey
I found a place to hunt finally
Being a resident I don't have to travel far. Non resident hunters on public land are numerous
Because I live here
I have private land to hunt
Hunted on my own property
Needed state for US super slam
I live here
Retired and just seeing new and different to me places.
Had never been to Nebraska

Live here
Proximity to other hunts planned
ability to hunt on private land
Number of permits available and a friend suggested from hunting there the year before.
Because i live here
State Resident
Tradition
I love to hunt, it give me another season to spend time with friends and family and get back outdoor
first time cross bow hunter at 71 years old
I live in this state
Just wanted to hunt
Need better control of predators Need to eliminate May season
Live in state and like to turkey hunt
Nebraska had available tags and it was on the way to other states that I planned to hunt.
I live in Nebraska.
Permits cost too much-Look at how much a butterball turkey costs in a store costs compared to permit
Resident of Nebraska
I already have a deer lease in Nebraska
I had a referral for an outfitter that many had hunted with him before,
We have permission to hunt private ground and the season opens before my home state.
A good spring activity. Too many mushroom hunters. Turkeys get pushed off public
Long standing relationship with outfitter
I live here and I own land here.
Access to private/ personal property to hunt.
I live here
I know the land I hunting through past deer hunting seasons
Grandsons first.
Youth opportunities
Private access
private land hunt
I just like to hunt turkey and the accessibility to be able to do so.
Friend with private access
Its what i do every year
Enjoy hunting turkeys will probably hunt Kansas next year
Proximity to home
I just love hunting the different terrain and areas of Nebraska.
Own ground here
Enjoyment of hunting experience
I love hunting
I enjoy it

Chasing 49
The group I hunt with wanted to hunt Nebraska
Me and my brother started in 1992 in Antelope county. I was loving it from day one and still do
I'm an outfitter so I also guide turkey hunts
I live here, it makes sense to hunt here.
Chance to enjoy the outdoors
Proximity to my residence
Tradition
Generosity toward youth hunter with not having an age limit allows me to travel and hunt with my kid
Resident of nebraska
Hunting turkeys in farm country
Short drive from my house
Took my grandson
Gave it a go with a buddy that's been doing it for fifteen years said it's getting worse every year
I live here
I simply enjoy turkey hunting.
Had a good private farm to hunt where I have had success in prior years, saw no birds at all this yr
Youth season dates worked with our schedule
girlfriend said she wanted to try turkey hunting, so we did
state wide permits with long season
Friend had a lease - not a NE resident
I live in Nebraska and I'd love to hunt wild turkeys
Good numbers on my private ground
Nebraska resident
Hunting turkeys is a whole different skill
Just love to hunt turkeys. Just wish there were some to hunt
Able to hunt with my daughter.
My friend introduced me to turkey hunting in NE.
To obtain a tag in another state
Take my nephew turkey hunting
Where I live and have always hunted
It's become a tradition to hunt turkeys each year and in remembrance of my dad.
I have hunted in many states but had not hunted in Nebraska.
Home state love turkey hunting
Opening weekend is a tradition for my kids, my extended family, and myself.
Hunted with a friend whom was experienced in hunting in Nebr.
I had family that had hunted in Nebraska. That influenced me to hunt there.
Not enough permits. Need multiple birds or you will put outfitters out of business
I live here
Nebraska resident
Friend swt up hunt

I like to hunt thunder chickens!
Friends annual hunting tripnfor over 20 years
Bonding activity with friends
I live here
A friend wanted me to go along and he had hunted there several times before.
Have my own land to hunt
Its where i live
Look forward to hunting with the guide I hire.
Taking my kids hunting
Land owner
Ability to hunt family owned land.
Availability to hunt on my own private ground.
To observe wildlife, be outdoors
Earlier season
I live here
My daughter wanted this hunting trip to try and kill a merriam
I'm a landowner.
Knowledge of places to go
Trying to kill in every state
I just like to hunt
Like hunting turkeys and not a far way to go
Sharing hunting with my son, like my dad did with me.
Hunting with old friends
It's where i live
Hunt with my son
The platte river access program land should be open to bowhunters during the archery turkey season.
Spent time with my grandpa
Getting my kids involved in the sport
Enjoy calling turkeys on family land.
I enjoy hunting the family farm and spending time with family.
Have access to private ground and want to try something new
I have a few turkeys on my own land.
Early season dates compared to other states I hunt
Home state
Turkey numbers still low but better the last year
Person said hw sw a bnunch of turkeys where I hunted. Saw a bunch of tracks but no turkeys
Oppertunity to be outdoors harvest a turkey and enjoy the the meat besides calling is a thrill.
I live here and own the land.
Tag along with other hunters
Association with good people landowners allowing access for mentoring grandsons and their success.

Purchased some land so I had the opportunity to hunt this year and had family that were great guides
Where i have permission to hunt some private ground.
I own land with good turkey numbers
Chasing US slam and early archery season while other states were still closed
It's the state I live in and is the only state I have an opportunity to hunt a majority of my time.
Enjoy outdoors and seeing wild game. Hunting success not necessary.
Knew of private land I could hunt on
Grew up doing it
Home
March hunting opportunities
They are delicious
Merriam
I live here and love to hunt
My dad's friend asked me if I wanted to go
It is great to allow youth the opportunity at a lesser cost
Because I'm a resident
Own land
Granddaughter graduated hunter safety so first year eligible to hunt and take along
Personal experiences from previous years
To be outdoors with the opportunity to harvest a animal
Land owner
Just one my favorite animals to hunt
I own my own property and hut it for turkeys each spring.it would be nice to have moreturkeys around
I live in Nebraska and just like turkey hunting
Access to private land
I live here and wasn't going to travel this year to hunt turkeys
Trip with family and friends
Food; vacation
taking my son out
New state
Proximity to my residence.
Opportunity to hunt in a very different habitat - the Bessey Unit in the Sandhills
Only because I live here, the above are not a factor.
Enjoyment and subsistence.
My kid wanted to try so we tried
I live here
I live here
Have been hunting turkeys in Nebraska my whole life. I live in Nebraska.
i have been hunting turkeys in Nebraska for over twenty years. the numbers keep going down
Fantastic Outfitter

friend has private land
I just like the opportunity to get out, see nature and hunt turkeys
First time never tried it before and thought it would be fun!
Private property accessibility
Property I own
Had permission on private land
Previously owned land in Neb. Developed relationships and land access during that time
Just enjoy turkey hunting, and getting into the outdoors
It's just something to go do in the spring
Different sub species
Nature lover
Paying for a Lease to Hunt Deer & anything else. Get money's worth hunt more species.
I live in Nebraska
Have grown up hunting in the area that we hunted. Teaching my son how to hunt. Saw birds but missed.
Permission of farmers/landowners
No factors, i just enjoy being out in nature
I'm from Nebraska and I love it there.
It's where I live and have access to land
I just love the great state of Nebraska, it has the best turkey hunting in the Midwest.
I live here.
Hunted there for many years with the same outfitter
Recent land purchase that holds turkeys
State I live in
State of residence
Like seeing and hunting turkeys in new places/terrain
I hunt whatever season is open and available. Even if population numbers are abysmal.
Trying to shoot one in all 49 states
Outfitter friend
I live here
Tradition.
I live 5 miles from Nebraska. I only archery hunt, so I love the early archery season.
Early archery season
Invitation to join a friend's annual NE hunt. He is a NE non-res.
I live here
Earlier season compared to my home state is why I love Nebraska's season
I hunted with my dad.
Resident
Live here and own dad owns land here.
In the past there had been turkeys
Personal property to hunt

Was able to take my child
Own land and lease n land
Family activity
familiarity with hunting territory, but very disappointed in number of birds seen / heard.
For the experience
Born and raised here, but this is the fewest #
Having hunted in Nebraska for 13-14 years and having gotten to know people from the state.
I just like to hunt turkeys
hunt annually with family
It's where I live and am not real serious about it.
I've enjoyed hunting there for more years than I can remember - great people/ friends and good hunti
I live in the states. I do believe the permit it too high.
Family owned land
I live here
Love sitting and observing the day waking up and enjoying the stuff I see. Love taking the naps
season still open at the end of May and I can drive 13 hours to hunt
Had 2 Tom's and 3 jakes on property . First turkeys in several years so finally bought a permit hunt
Landowner
Outfitter said I could hunt KS and NE. Did not get drawn for KS. I'll never use the outfitter again.
Local convenient land to hunt
I live in Nebraska, so it is my closest and best option.
I'm a resident here
Hunt with friends
New challenge I'm a adult taking on the interesting challenge
Like to hunt and be outdoors and it's challenging.
Access to private ground within easy access.
I own land in nebraska
Landowner
I am a resident so just more convenient
only place for me to go
I'm a Nebraska Resident
i live here
Private land I have to hunt
FEED MY FAMILY/HOBBY
Teaching my grandkids. Hunting private ground.
I own land in NE
access to private land
I was invited to hunt with friends from West Virigina that have friends which own a ranch!
Relatively close for an out of state trip
It's where I live
I have a place that I can hunt

It's where I live and close by
Our family owns hunting and fishing property along the North Platte River.
I hunt
Being outdoors
I am a Nebraska resident.
Invited to hunt with friends going to Nebraska to hunt.
Makes great Turkey Tacos
I live here
Inherited a shotgun I wanted to use to harvest my first turkey
home state
I live here and I like hunting them
I live here
I live here and it would be prohibitively expensive and time consuming to hunt elsewhere.
Live here
My dad brought me here to hunt for my high school graduation present
Private land
We had permission to hunt private ground
I enjoy bowhunting turkey's and have a place to hunt in the state.
Wanted to hunt different subspecies.
Hunted with Whiskey Slough worst guide I've ever used
Access to private land
Veterans hunt with Patriot Outdoors
I like hunting
Private land to hunt
Love hunting
Hunt because I enjoy spending time with friends, most of which I grew up with. Enjoy the outdoors
Turkeys on my land.
I live on the land I hunt and saw them frequently in my back yard
I'm an optimist who enjoys being disappointed by the NGPC.
I live there
Residency
I live here
Private ground
Earlier season dates
I go with a Christian ministry-skyquest outdoors
The turkey hunters in my family hunt here together.
Need the exercise
just like to hunt turkeys
Live here
We have a lease in Knox county
Friend ask me to come and short drive from mn

I live here
Private land to hunt on
For fun
I love to hunt
We live in this state
I have hunted turkeys for over 20 years and enjoy hunting whether I harvest any or not.
Back up tag
Its where I live
Family that visit to hunt
I live here
went with friends with relatives in state
Private land to hunt
Different activity
We have an outfitter we hunt with that has been great and its a great trip when we come.
I inherited a friends bow that passed away, and to honor him, I hunted with it.
I enjoy hunting turkeys
I live here.
Midway point between other hunting partners across the country
extending the hunting season and seeing a different part of the country
Property I own
Early archery session
Live here
I live here with access to a lot of my own private land.
Started hunting Nebraska with daughter for youth experience. would recommend youth license until 18
resident
Access to the entire season and not having to apply for a specific week to hunt.
Having time to go is a primary factor
Excellent experience with the Guide I use
Just enjoy being out when I get the chance.
I own a ranch
Landowner permit availability
To harvest a merriam
Resident
Outfitter
Hunter Safety Group went
state wildlife management recommendation
It's what I do
I live here and have land
Seeing all the different types of animals I don't have in my home state.
Outfitter has land leased in NE. I usually hunt KS also but didn't draw a tag this year.
Try something new

I have access to private land with high availability of turkeys
Close drive from home state
Property is close that i hunt
Friend told me to give it a try.
Close to Colorado
I live in Scottsbluff county
I just like being outside learning how to hunt myself.
Hunt on my own land
its where i live
I lease the ground so I hunt. 4 yrs ago we would see 100's now we see mor coyotes.
The fun of it and my fanily has for a long time
not as far away as Kansas
Wanting to get a turkey for the grand slam
Proximity to my home state
I live in Nebraska.
Knew an outfitter there.
I live here
Where I live
It's the state I live in.
Guide who had availability when I was free to hunt.
I reside here
Had never visited the state.
Permission to hunt high quality private land.
Resident
I just love to hunt and be outdoors
Hunting with group of friends.
Opportunity to hunt a different state, the challenge
I live here
This is the state I live in
First year as a resident
Amount of turkey we see on the farmland during the year.
Fortunate enough to have huntable private land
health reasons
trying to kill one in 49 states
Home state
Landowner
Proximity to where we were hunting in KS made it easy to run up and try to hunt NE.
I live here
Recommendations from friends. Will come back. Great experience, great people and great hunts
I enjoy the outfitter that I use and his land access
Just a great experience always, even if you don't harvest one.

Liked the outfitter we used
access to private land via 'pay-to-play' hunting
Specific archery season prior to other seasons
Landowner
Only hunted to show new hunter how/where to hunt.
Access to private land
Live here
I love hunting
Permits are to high cost wise
Hunted with spouse
Closeness to where we live
I live here
I have hunted a particular spot (medicine creek) for several years. I am very displeased with the a Scenery.
Just wanted to give it a second chance because of price is not worth it anymore
Turkeys on my land.
The internet
Outfitter
Keeping tradition alive
I enjoy the experience and challenge of calling a mature tom to me.
I live here and like to hunt turkeys
Tried archery hunting for turkey
Just what I love to do!
In the areas hunted, there was a large population of jakes and small population of toms.
My husbands passion for spring turkey hunting
Just wanted to go out and hunt and stay at the cabin at medicine creek for awhile.
i live here
I like turkey huntng
I enjoy hunting these birds
I am a Nebraska resident
Children wanted to go.
Past success.
Invited by friends 7 years ago. Had a good time, good hunts, and overall good experience
Something to get me outdoors
Been going several years with a buddy enjoy turkey hunting
I live in Nebraska
SYC hunter
My dad takes me hunting
Private land available to hunt
I own my own land to hunt
I live in Nebraska and wanted to hunt

Experience Nebraska
Na
I wish there were more permits for non resident to get I think there would be more hunters
Went with a guide that I had hunted with before.
Because that's where the turkeys lived where I wanted to hunt!