

Prairie Chicken Harvest Report (2002)

Nine individuals drew permits for the 2002 greater prairie chicken season. This was down from 25 during the 2001 season. Four of the permits were for falconry hunting and 5 were for shotgun/archery hunting.

Of the 9 permittees contacted for a post-season harvest survey (phone), 3 (33%) did not hunt and 6 (67%) did. Two of the 4 falconers hunted and 4 of the 5 shotgun/archery permittees hunted.

The reported harvest for the 6 hunters was 2 birds (both males as reported by the hunters). None of the hunters reported having hit birds that were not recovered. Two of the hunters each harvested 1 prairie chicken (one falconer and one by shotgun). The remaining 4 hunters were unsuccessful. Hunter success rate was 33% or 0.3 bird/hunter.

We did not collect wings during the 2002 season. The decision was made to forego wing collection due to the very low numbers of birds harvested. In theory, wings would tell us something about the sex and age composition of the hunted population, but since harvest has been minimal we glean no real information via wing collection.

All hunters reported being strongly satisfied with their hunting experience. Hunters would like to see the season continue, liked the change in the season dates and/or extended hunting period, and asked if CDOW had plans to re-visit the requirement for landowner approval.