

Wisconsin Wild Turkey Management Plan Revision Process
Public Input Survey – Summary of Results
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Overview

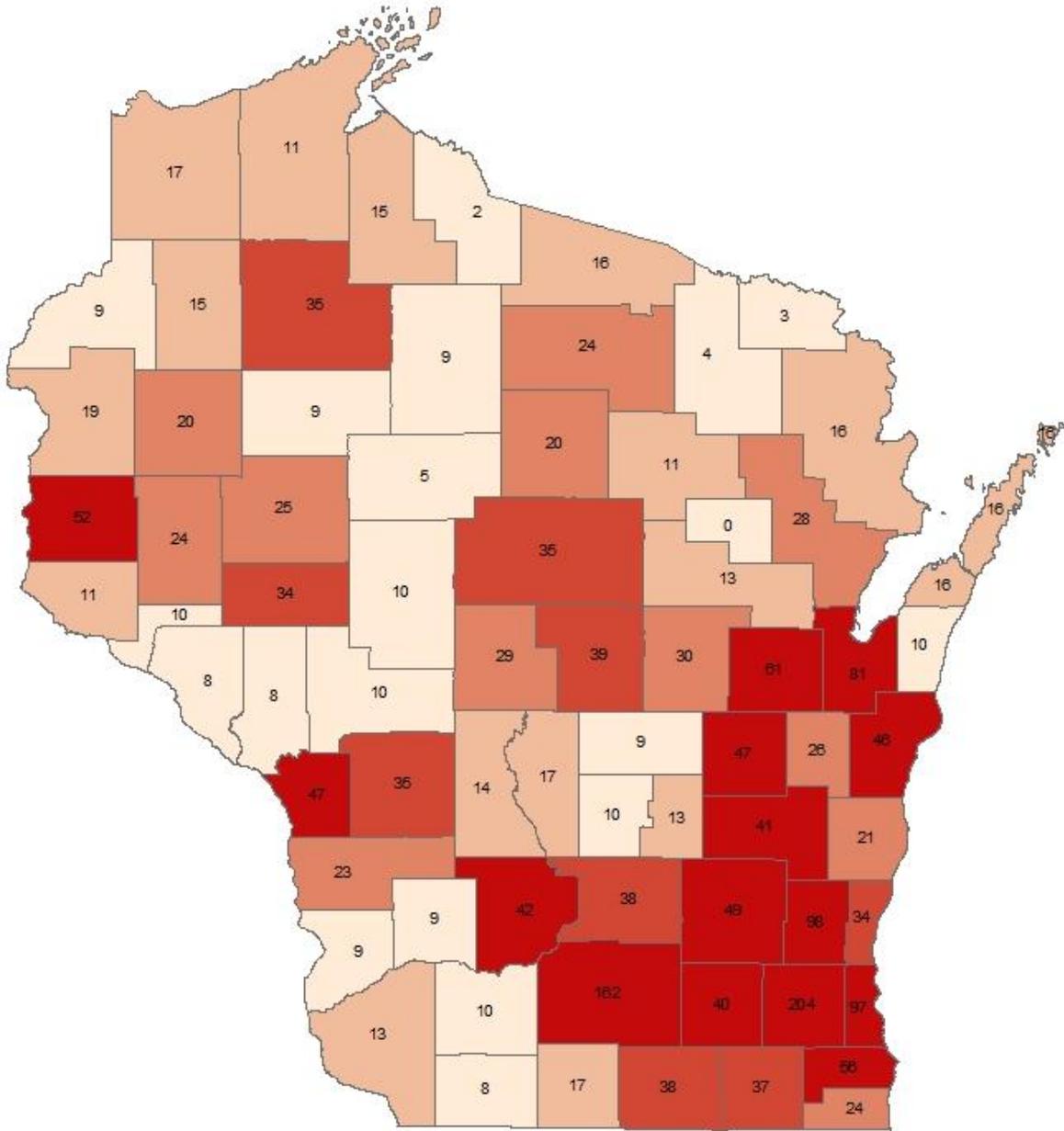
Following the successful reintroduction of wild turkeys to Wisconsin in the 1970s, turkeys have expanded their range so that they now occupy all counties in the state, and spring and fall turkey hunting have become very popular outdoor activities. The current Wisconsin Wild Turkey Management Plan, written in 1996, needs to be revised to include treatment of contemporary issues related to turkey management in the state. A critical part of the revision process includes soliciting, gathering, and analyzing input from the public regarding challenges and opportunities in turkey management and hunting in Wisconsin. During late April and early May of 2012, eleven public input sessions were held around the state, during which attendees were presented with background information and asked to complete a survey that addressed important issues related to the future direction of turkey management. The survey was also available online through the end of May. Information gleaned from this survey will help all of the partners involved in managing our state's turkey flock in developing a plan that protects the turkey resource, but also optimizes recreational opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts. A draft of the revised plan will be developed by the fall of 2012, with the final plan being submitted for approval by summer 2013. What follows is a summary of the responses to individual questions asked during the public input process.

Total surveys completed: 2,124 (2,047 submitted online; 77 from in-person sessions)

INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

1. How long have you been hunting turkey in Wisconsin? Please use whole numbers only. If this is your first year hunting turkey, please enter "1". If you are not a hunter, please check the box below.
 - *Average: 13.3 years (range: 1 – 44 years)*

2. Which county do you live in? If you are not a Wisconsin resident, please check the box below.
 - *Responses were received by hunters residing in all counties of Wisconsin with the exception of Menominee County. The number of surveys received from each county is depicted in the image on the following page.*



3. In order to apply for a spring or fall turkey permit with landowner preference, a Wisconsin resident must own at least 50 contiguous acres of land in Wisconsin. Under this definition, are you a Wisconsin landowner?

- 21.4% of respondents were landowners

ISSUE #1: Current Turkey Management Zone Structure

4. Do you think the current 7-zone structure provides enough opportunity to hunt different locations?
 - 80.9% responded "Yes"
 - 13.8% responded "No"
 - 5.1% responded "Unsure"

5. Do you believe that the current 7-zone structure increases, decreases, or doesn't impact a turkey hunter's chances of receiving a turkey permit?
 - 30.5% responded "Increases"
 - 15.6% responded "Decreases"
 - 38.6% responded "No impact"
 - 15.3% responded "Unsure"

6. Do you agree or disagree that the current 7-zone structure is necessary to manage the number of turkeys harvested?
 - 30.7% responded "Strongly agree"
 - 30.5% responded "Somewhat agree"
 - 18.7% responded "Neither agree nor disagree"
 - 11.3% responded "Somewhat disagree"
 - 8.8% responded "Strongly disagree"

7. Do you agree or disagree that the current 7-zone structure is necessary to reduce hunter interference rates?
 - 32.6% responded "Strongly agree"
 - 29.0% responded "Somewhat agree"
 - 17.0% responded "Neither agree nor disagree"
 - 11.7% responded "Somewhat disagree"
 - 9.7% responded "Strongly disagree"

ISSUE #2: Spring Wild Turkey Hunting Season

8. Do you hunt wild turkey during the spring season?
 - 97.4% of respondents stated that they hunt turkeys during the spring season

9. If you hunt during the spring turkey season, where do you typically hunt? A map of the Turkey Management Zones is available on the last page of this survey. If you do not hunt during the spring season, please check the box below.

- 32.7% of respondents hunt in Zone 1 during the spring season
- 21.0% of respondents hunt in Zone 2 during the spring season
- 23.4% of respondents hunt in Zone 3 during the spring season
- 12.2% of respondents hunt in Zone 4 during the spring season
- 6.2% of respondents hunt in Zone 5 during the spring season
- 2.9% of respondents hunt in Zone 6 during the spring season
- 1.6% of respondents hunt in Zone 7 during the spring season

10. When would you prefer Wisconsin's spring turkey season to open?

- 74.8% responded "at the same time it does now"
- 16.6% responded "earlier than it does now"
- 1.8% responded "later than it does now"
- 5.9% responded "no preference/unsure"

11. Would you support or oppose the spring turkey season opening and closing a week later in the northern zones (5, 6, and 7)? Please mark only one selection.

Statewide: 1,986 responses

- 11.3% would "definitely support"
- 26.4% would "probably support"
- 43.3% were "neutral/unsure"
- 9.6% would "probably oppose"
- 9.4% would "definitely oppose"

Zone 5, 6, and 7 hunters only: 208 responses

- 18.8% would "definitely support"
- 22.6% would "probably support"
- 13.5% were "neutral/unsure"
- 20.7% would "probably oppose"
- 24.5% would "definitely oppose"

12. During the spring turkey season, which time period (A – F) do you most prefer to hunt? Please check the one answer that best describes your preference. Dates for the 2012 spring season are listed as examples.

- 35.6% responded "Period A"
- 30.7% responded "Period B"
- 17.4% responded "Period C"
- 7.9% responded "Period D"
- 2.9% responded "Period E"
- 1.5% responded "Period F"

13. On which day of the week would you prefer that the spring time periods begin? Currently, the time periods begin on Wednesday and run through the following Tuesday.

- 9.9% responded "Monday"
- 0.9% responded "Tuesday"
- 55.0% responded "Wednesday"
- 5.7% responded "Thursday"
- 4.1% responded "Friday"
- 8.8% responded "Saturday"
- 1.4% responded "Sunday"
- 14.3% responded "no preference/unsure"

14. The following are five possible impacts of having 6 time periods in the spring turkey season. Using the scale provided, rank each of the impacts according to how important you think they are.

1 = most important; 2 = second most important; 3 = third most important; 4 = fourth most important; 5 = least important

The six spring time periods...

Average Score

2.03	<i>Reduce hunter competition and interference rates</i>
3.38	<i>Influence how many turkeys are harvested</i>
3.01	<i>Influence a hunter's chances of harvesting a turkey</i>
2.96	<i>Better distribute hunting opportunity</i>
3.48	<i>Allow hunters to hunt on the same land during different time periods</i>

15. The following are four potential options for the spring turkey season structure. Using the scale provided, please tell us how much you would favor or oppose each of the following scenarios.

Option 1: Four 1-week time periods followed by one 2-week time period

- 7.8% "strongly favor"
- 27.9% "probably favor"
- 18.1% "neutral/unsure"
- 17.6% "probably oppose"
- 15.3% "strongly oppose"

Option 2: Three 1-week time periods followed by one 3-week time period

- 7.0% "strongly favor"
- 18.7% "probably favor"
- 19.2% "neutral/unsure"
- 29.3% "probably oppose"
- 25.6% "strongly oppose"

Option 3: The current system with six 1-week time periods

- 58.4% *“strongly favor”*
- 17.6% *“probably favor”*
- 10.9% *“neutral/unsure”*
- 5.7% *“probably oppose”*
- 7.5% *“strongly oppose”*

Option 4: A season that runs for 6 weeks straight, with no separate time periods

- 25.9% *“strongly favor”*
- 6.9% *“probably favor”*
- 4.6% *“neutral/unsure”*
- 9.4% *“probably oppose”*
- 53.1% *“strongly oppose”*

16. Given the choice between a shorter, earlier spring time period or a later, longer time period, when would you prefer to hunt?

- 51.0% *would prefer hunting during the “shorter, earlier” time period*
- 18.0% *would prefer hunting during the “later, longer” time period*
- 23.8% *have “no preference”*
- 6.4% *were “unsure”*

17. Imagine that the spring turkey season in Wisconsin ran for 6 weeks straight, with no separate time periods, and that permits were still limited within each zone. Do you agree or disagree that the spring permit drawing should then be eliminated, with permits available over-the-counter only?

- 21.3% *“strongly agree”*
- 16.8% *“somewhat agree”*
- 8.4% *were “neutral/unsure”*
- 12.8% *“somewhat disagree”*
- 40.7% *“strongly disagree”*

18. If Wisconsin eliminated the spring permit drawing, what would you like the spring season bag limit (total turkeys allowed for the entire season) to be? Please answer this question for the zone in which you typically hunt during the spring turkey season.

- 49.3% *responded “1 gobbler”*
- 41.2% *responded “2 gobblers”*
- 5.1% *responded “3 gobblers”*
- 3.8% *responded “4 gobblers”*
- 0.7% *responded “unsure/not applicable”*

19. Do you think that the current permit allocation system provides hunters with a fair chance at drawing a spring turkey permit for their desired **zone**? Please mark only one selection.

- 51.8% responded “definitely yes”
- 32.6% responded “probably yes”
- 5.8% responded “neutral/unsure”
- 5.1% responded “probably no”
- 4.7% responded “definitely no”

20. Do you think that the current permit allocation system provides hunters with a fair chance at drawing a spring turkey permit for their desired **time period**? Please mark only one selection.

- 34.0% responded “definitely yes”
- 37.9% responded “probably yes”
- 9.2% responded “neutral/unsure”
- 11.5% responded “probably no”
- 7.4% responded “definitely no”

ISSUE #3: Fall Wild Turkey Hunting Season

21. Do you hunt wild turkey during the fall season?

- 66.1% responded “yes”

22. If you hunt during the fall turkey season, where do you typically hunt?

- 26.1% responded “Zone 1”
- 25.5% responded “Zone 2”
- 23.5% responded “Zone 3”
- 11.7% responded “Zone 4”
- 7.0% responded “Zone 5”
- 3.5% responded “Zone 6”
- 2.7% responded “Zone 7”

23. When would you prefer Wisconsin’s fall turkey season to open? Please mark only one selection.

- 62.6% responded “at the same time it does now”
- 5.2% responded “earlier than it does now”
- 5.6% responded “later than it does now”
- 26.7% responded “no preference/unsure”

24. Do you believe that the fall turkey season should be shorter, longer, or the same length that it is now? At this time we are unable to provide specific examples, but we'd like to use this opportunity to measure interest in possible changes. In 2012, the regular fall season will run from September 15th through November 15th (62 days), and the extended season in Zones 1-5 will run from November 26th through December 31st (36 days). Please mark only one selection.

- 55.3% responded *"the same length as it is now"*
- 12.9% responded *"shorter than it is now"*
- 10.4% responded *"longer than it is now"*
- 21.4% responded *"no preference/unsure"*

25. Currently, individuals apply for a permit to hunt turkeys during the fall season, and must have their application drawn (or, purchase an over-the-counter permit, if available) in order to hunt. Would you prefer that the fall permit drawing be eliminated and replaced with over-the-counter sales of fall turkey licenses only? Assume that any hunter wishing to purchase a fall turkey license would be able to do so, and that a bag limit would be established for each license. Please mark only one selection.

- 35.7% *"strongly prefer elimination"*
- 20.5% *"somewhat prefer elimination"*
- 19.5% *"unsure/no preference"*
- 8.8% *"somewhat prefer the fall drawing remain"*
- 15.4% *"strongly prefer the fall drawing remain"*

26. If Wisconsin eliminated the fall permit drawing, what would you like the fall season bag limit (total turkeys allowed for the entire season) to be? Assume that any hunter wishing to purchase a fall turkey license would be able to do so. Please answer this question for the zone in which you typically hunt during the fall turkey season. Please mark only one selection.

- 50.5% responded *"1 turkey"*
- 29.7% responded *"2 turkeys"*
- 2.9% responded *"3 turkeys"*
- 1.2% responded *"4 turkeys"*
- 6.2% responded *"unlimited with a tag"*
- 9.4% responded *"unsure/not applicable"*

ISSUE #4: Permit Allocation

27. From the list below, please rank the items according to how much influence you believe they have on the annual changes in the size of the turkey population *in the zone in which you typically hunt turkey during the **spring season***. Use "1" to mark the most influential factor, "2" for the second most influential, and so on, so that "5" marks the least influential factor.

Average Score

2.92	<i>Spring harvest (gobblers only)</i>
3.23	<i>Fall harvest (either sex)</i>
1.73	<i>Weather</i>
2.08	<i>Predation</i>

28. Using the scale provided, please tell us if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

a) Wisconsin resident landowners (residents who own at least 50 contiguous acres of land in Wisconsin) should have top priority in the permit drawings.

- 30.3% "strongly agree"
- 23.9% "somewhat agree"
- 14.2% "neutral/unsure"
- 17.0% "somewhat disagree"
- 14.6% "strongly disagree"

b) All landowners, resident and non-resident, should have equal preference for turkey permits.

- 18.8% "strongly agree"
- 20.1% "somewhat agree"
- 13.5% "neutral/unsure"
- 24.6% "somewhat disagree"
- 23.1% "strongly disagree"

c) The landowner preference category should be eliminated.

Statewide: 1,921 responses

- 19.2% "strongly agree"
- 13.1% "somewhat agree"
- 17.6% "neutral/unsure"
- 24.3% "somewhat disagree"
- 25.7% "strongly disagree"

Non-landowners only: 1,506 responses

- 23.5% "strongly agree"
- 16.1% "somewhat agree"
- 20.5% "neutral/unsure"
- 25.0% "somewhat disagree"
- 14.8% "strongly disagree"

d) Residents should have priority over non-residents in the permit drawings.

- 67.8% "strongly agree"
- 20.2% "somewhat agree"
- 4.9% "neutral/unsure"
- 2.9% "somewhat disagree"
- 4.2% "strongly disagree"

ISSUE #5: Turkey Damage

29. Do you agree or disagree that crop damage from turkeys is a significant problem in the Turkey Management Zone in which you live?

- 4.6% *“strongly agree”*
- 24.0% *“somewhat agree”*
- 20.9% *“neutral/unsure”*
- 35.7% *“somewhat disagree”*
- 14.8% *“strongly disagree”*

ISSUE #6: Wild Turkey Stamp Program

30. Now that you’ve seen the presentation on the revision process for the statewide Wild Turkey Management Plan, how would you say that your understanding of how revenue from sales of the Wild Turkey Stamp is spent has changed?

- 6.7% *responded “greatly increased”*
- 24.0% *responded “somewhat increased”*
- 28.1% *responded “remained the same”*
- 41.3% *responded “didn’t view the presentation”*

31. Do you agree or disagree that the money generated by sales of the Wild Turkey Stamp is well-spent? Please mark only one selection.

- 12.6% *responded “strongly agree”*
- 31.1% *responded “somewhat agree”*
- 20.4% *responded “neither agree nor disagree”*
- 4.4% *responded “somewhat disagree”*
- 3.1% *responded “strongly disagree”*
- 28.4% *responded “I don’t have a good understanding of this issue”*

32. Do you think that the cost of the Wild Turkey Stamp (\$5.25) is reasonable? Please mark only one selection.

- 79.1% *responded “Yes”*
- 15.9% *responded “No, it should cost less”*
- 5.0% *responded “No, it should cost more”*

33. Using the scale provided, please tell us how important it is that each of the following items be funded by the revenue from sales of the Wild Turkey Stamp.

1 = not important at all

3 = neither important nor unimportant

4 = somewhat important

2 = somewhat unimportant

5 = very important

Average Score

3.56

Habitat improvement

3.20

Land acquisition

3.41

Turkey research

3.22

Education & outreach

3.16

Hunter recruitment & retention

3.17

Equipment purchase for habitat work

3.19

Law enforcement

3.22

Increasing access to private lands

34. How do you think the revenue from sales of the Wild Turkey Stamp should be divided across the Wild Turkey Management Program? Please mark only one selection

- 22.8% responded *"proportional to the distribution of turkeys"*
- 21.5% responded *"proportional to the distribution of hunters"*
- 24.8% responded *"in areas with marginal habitat/low turkey numbers"*
- 21.7% responded *"equally across the state"*
- 9.2% responded *"unsure/no opinion"*

35. Do you agree or disagree that revenue from the sales of the Wild Turkey Stamp should be made available to individuals and organizations outside of the Wisconsin DNR? For example, a non-profit organization might receive an award to hold educational events for novice turkey hunters, or a county forestry department might receive funding to improve turkey habitat on their lands.

- 19.3% responded *"strongly agree"*
- 40.7% responded *"somewhat agree"*
- 13.9% responded *"neutral/unsure"*
- 9.8% responded *"somewhat disagree"*
- 13.6% responded *"strongly disagree"*

36. Should the Wild Turkey Stamp Program be continued?

- 70.0% responded *"Yes"*
- 7.3% responded *"Yes, but it should be consolidated with the other 2 stamp programs"*
- 9.6% responded *"No, purchase of the Wild Turkey Stamp should be optional for hunters"*
- 6.7% responded *"No, the Wild Turkey Stamp should be completely discontinued"*
- 6.6% responded *"unsure"*