



In reporting on the Atlantic Flyway count, the Department explained that the midwinter survey is conducted to learn information about winter habitat conditions and to get data on long-term waterfowl trends. Because observers tally only what they see and at times all the waterfowl present are not visible, it is not possible to make an actual count of all the waterfowl in the Flyway. Over several years, however, the data do provide a general picture of trends. For most of the geese the midwinter survey is a reliable head-count.

The Department also pointed out that the midwinter survey data do not have a direct cause-and-effect relationship with the annual waterfowl hunting regulations, but that the survey is only one of several sets of information used in establishing hunting regulations each year.

The extensive survey covers the main waterfowl wintering areas of Mexico and Canada as well as all States except Alaska. It is coordinated by the Fish and Wildlife Service's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. The entire job must be completed as soon as possible to guard against duplicate counts of birds that may move from one area to another because of weather changes.

On the first day of the survey, hundreds of waterfowl observers in the United States, Canada and Mexico use cars, boats, and airplanes to see how many waterfowl of each species can be observed in the assigned areas. Men and equipment from the Fish and Wildlife Service, State game and fish departments, the United States Armed Forces, the Canadian Wildlife Service, fish and game departments of the Canadian Provinces, and private organizations all cooperate in carrying out this important survey.

The States in the Atlantic Flyway are: Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia.

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