Technical Information for Migratory Game Bird Rule Development

Survey and Harvest Data

Migratory game bird management in the United States, including New Mexico, is a cooperative effort between state and federal governments. Management decisions are based on information gathered from bird population surveys, monitoring of harvest, hunter surveys, public comment, biological information, and environmental surveys. Migratory game bird banding and recovery data, surveys of birds on their breeding areas, as well as wetland condition surveys in waterfowl breeding areas provide the necessary information used to set hunting and harvest regulations for migratory game birds. In New Mexico, the establishment of migratory game bird hunting rules and regulations remains a cooperative process performed annually within the Flyway system. Both the Central and Pacific Flyways are involved in setting hunting regulations for migratory game birds in New Mexico and seasons are selected from within the guidelines of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's federal season frameworks. Survey and harvest data used in setting hunting rules and regulations for New Mexico are included in Figures 1–4.

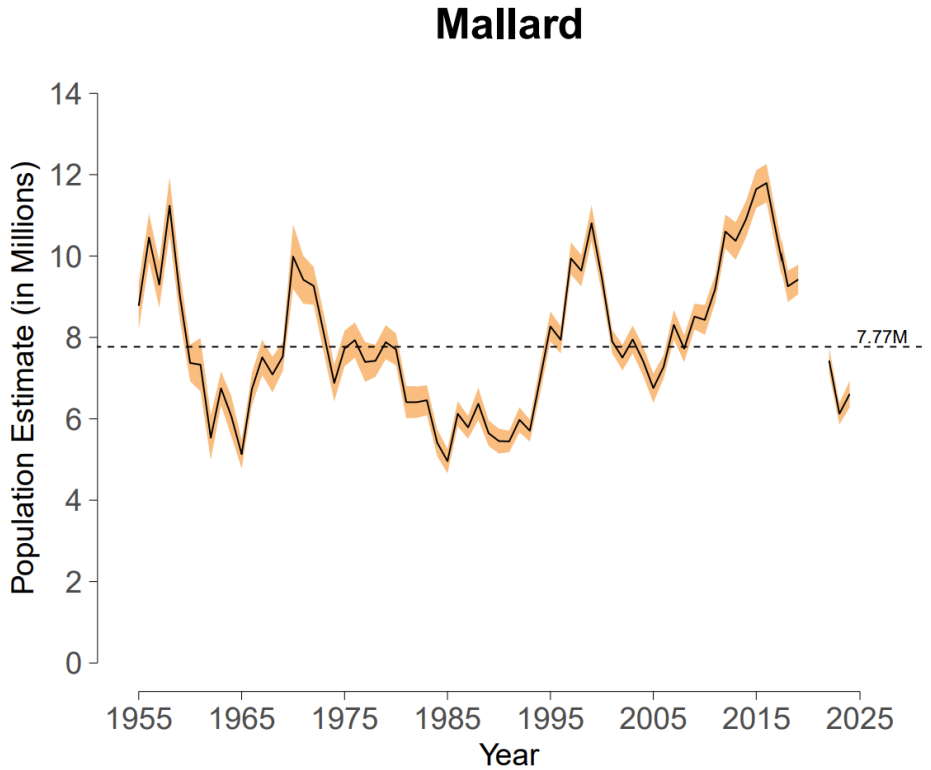

Figure 1. Breeding population estimate, 90% confidence interval, and North American Waterfowl Management Plan goal (dashed line) for mallards in the traditional survey area. Estimated mallard abundance for 2024 was 6.6 ± 0.3 million.

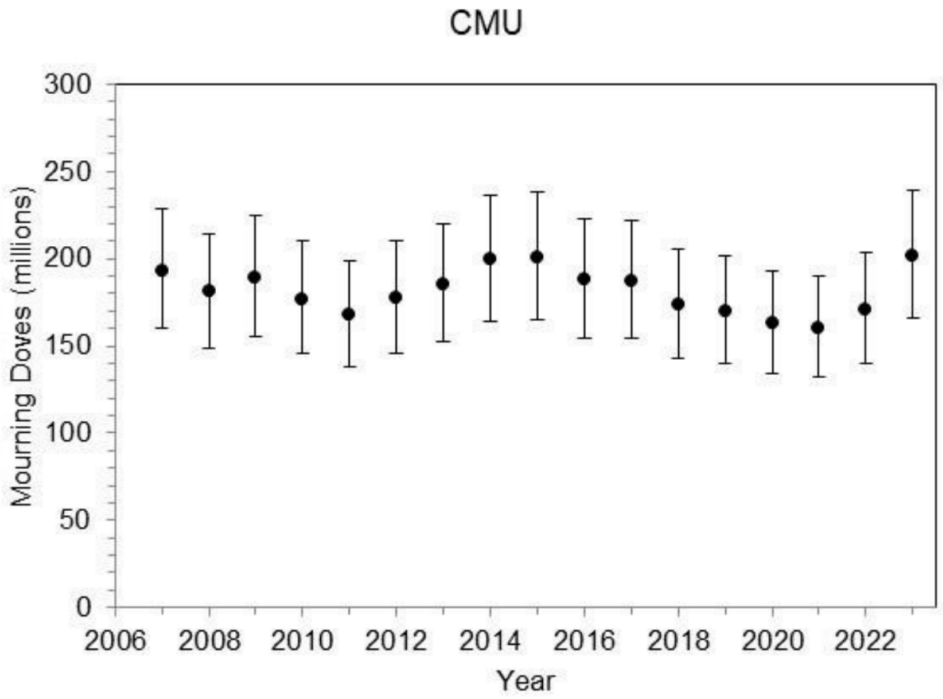

Figure 2. Estimates and 95% confidence intervals of mourning dove absolute abundance from an integrated population model. Figure shows abundance estimates for the Central Management Unit (CMU; which includes New Mexico) by year, 2007–2023. Estimates are based on band recovery, breeding bird survey indices, and harvest survey data.

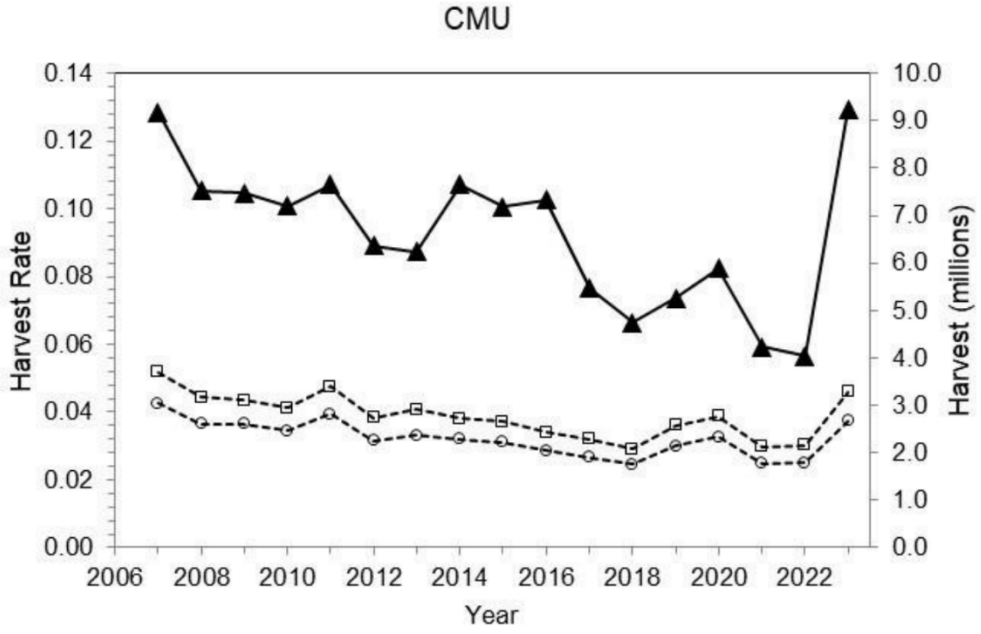

Figure 3. Estimated harvest (triangle) and harvest rates of mourning dove in the Central Management Unit (CMU; which includes New Mexico) by year, 2007–2023. Harvest rates are presented separately for hatch-year (square) and after-hatch-year (circle) doves.

Year	Colorado[a]	Idaho	Montana	Utah	Wyoming	Total
1987	1,443	10,686	1,447	1,578	2,327	17,481
1992	3,181	5,801	5,264	2,810	2,248	19,304
1995	2,284	6,864	3,681	1,528	1,671	16,028
1996	1,255	8,334	2,974	1,849	2,526	16,938
1997	1,604	8,132	3,595	2,450	2,255	18,036
1998	1,273	8,067	3,415	2,185	3,162	18,102
1999	1,102	8,761	3,141	2,292	4,205	19,501
2000	749	9,337	3,598	2,416	3,890	19,990
2001	666	7,160	4,585	1,522	2,626	16,559
2002	1,355	7,698	4,843	1,869	3,038	18,803
2003	745	7,822	4,964	2,546	3,446	19,523
2004	1,410	7,152	4,637	2,239	3,072	18,510
2005	1,052	7,668	5,588	2,646	3,911	20,865
2007	1,743	8,262	6,509	2,401	3,907	22,822
2008	1,080	6,123	6,419	3,708	3,826	21,156
2009	1,162	6,934	6,329	2,283	3,613	20,321
2010	985	5,776	7,335	3,242	3,726	21,064
2011	1,347	5,029	6,642	1,498	2,978	17,494
2012	413	3,432	5,876	2,109	3,587	15,417
2013	1,594	5,228	7,218	2,732	3,588	20,360
2014	1,258	6,064	6,555	2,783	3,008	19,668
2015	1,089	6,454	9,493	3,698	3,596	24,330
2016[b]	1,135	5,445	7,507	3,298	4,879	22,264
2017	1,658	4,066	7,149	2,994	3,725	19,592
2018	1,908	4,469	7,553	2,770	5,101	21,801
2019	1,879	4,428	7,511	3,106	4,366	21,290
2020	1,446	5,096	9,264	3,222	6,608	25,636
2021	3,141	3,091	7,783	3,889	6,059	23,963
2022	1,526	3,957	6,844	2,330	3,975	18,632
2023	1,740	4,200	10,169	5,631	5,527	27,267
2024	1,421	5,432	7,280	4,824	5,952	24,909
3-yr Mean	2,136	3,749	8,265	3,950	5,187	23,287
All yr Mean	1,441	6,385	5,930	2,654	3,682	20,091

[a] Colorado counts include migrants that had arrived at the staging area in the San Luis Valley.

[b] Wyoming added six new survey areas per management plan guidelines.

Figure 4. Fall pre-migration indicies for Rocky Mountain sandhill cranes.