

# Black Duck Management Strategy in North America:

## Hunter Fact Sheet

- The Migratory Bird Convention (Treaty) of 1916 guides the continental conservation and harvest management of waterfowl in North America. Management is the joint responsibility of the Canadian and U.S. Federal governments.
- Annual waterfowl harvest regulations are established by the two federal governments in consultation with State and Provincial / Territorial Wildlife Management Agencies.
- Although the black duck population has been relatively stable since the 1990s, it has declined from historical levels. This decline is most noticeable in the western and southern areas of the black duck range and less noticeable in the core range including Eastern Quebec and Atlantic Canada, New England, and Mid-Atlantic Regions.
- Over 90% of North American ducks and geese are harvested in the U.S. mostly due to a much larger human population relative to Canada. Historically, black duck harvest is unique in that harvest has been about equally shared between the U.S. and Canada.
- Due to the history of shared harvest and the importance of black ducks to both countries, waterfowl managers in the U.S. and Canada agreed to implement an international adaptive harvest management (AHM) strategy to guide the establishment of annual black duck harvest regulations. The goals of Black Duck AHM are:
  - Maintain a black duck population that meets legal requirements and provides consumptive and non-consumptive use appropriate to the amount of black duck habitat,
  - Maintain societal values associated with the hunting tradition, and
  - Maintain the historical and relatively equal share of the black duck resource between Canada and the U.S.
- Shared access to the black duck resource means each country is allowed to take about 50% (no more than 60% and no less than 40%) of the total allowable, continental harvest in any given year. Harvest in each country is controlled through daily bag limits and season lengths.
- Harvest regulations, including daily bag limits and season lengths, are typically more liberal in Canada than in the U.S. because there are fewer hunters in eastern Canada (115,939 in 2011) than in the eastern U.S. (658,500 in 2011). In addition, many areas in Canada have very short hunting seasons due to an earlier freeze-up, allowing for higher bag limits to maintain a balance in the harvest between the two countries.
- For more information about Black Duck AHM please see the brochure “Black Duck Management Strategy in North America”.

