

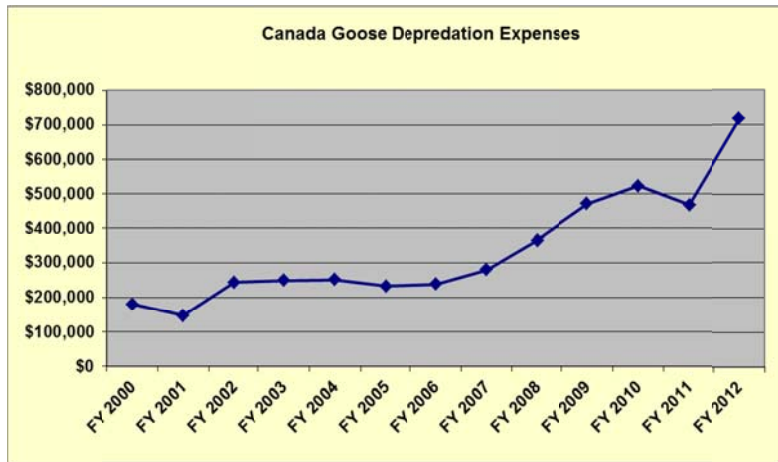
South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks



Canada Goose Management and Depredation Program - Overview

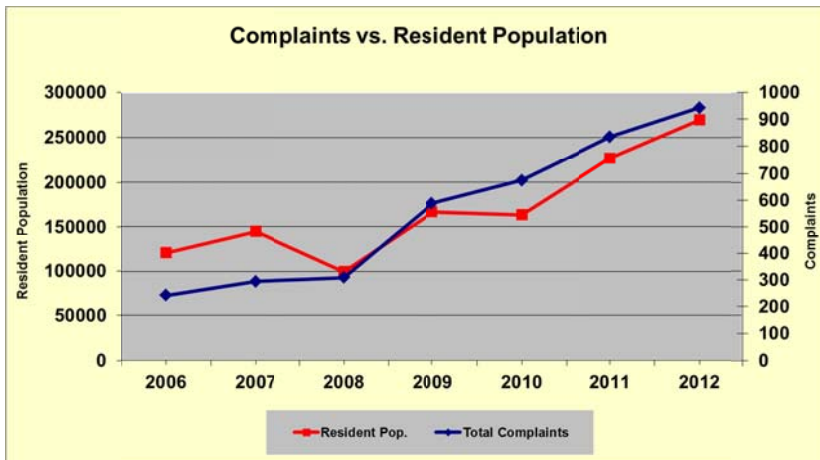
The resident Canada goose population in South Dakota has increased substantially over the past 10 years. As a direct result, Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) has expended more than \$4.3 million since 2000, on Canada goose damage abatement programs and services to meet agricultural producer demand.

GFP's management objective is 80,000 to 90,000 resident Canada geese; however, during the spring of 2012 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimated a spring population index of nearly 270,000 resident Canada geese in South Dakota. As this population has continued to increase, GFP's Canada goose depredation



abatement program expenditures have increased as well. During fiscal year 2012, GFP spent more than \$717,000 addressing Canada goose damage to growing crops. Based upon research conducted in 2009 by South Dakota State University and current commodity prices, GFP's efforts during the growing season of 2012 saved South Dakota agricultural producers more than \$2.4 million in crop damage caused from resident Canada geese.

GFP is using hunting seasons as the primary management tool to reduce this population,



but to this point have not seen success in reducing resident Canada goose numbers. GFP has utilized increased bag limits during the early fall Canada goose season during September as well as the August Management Take. As a result of this growing population, GFP continues to address the increased

agricultural producer demand to reduce and alleviate crop damage caused by resident Canada geese.

In another attempt to curtail goose damage to crops, during the spring of 2013 (April 1 – April 30), GFP will be initiating the Spring Canada Goose Program. The objectives of this experimental approach are to: 1) reduce crop damage on specific areas, 2) haze Canada geese away from areas with historic damage, 3) reduce the population at a very localized level, and 4) reduce GFP's damage abatement program efforts and expenditures. GFP will be evaluating the effectiveness of this management approach and will determine if this program was successful at meeting the identified objectives.



GFP asked interested volunteers to register in a random drawing for an opportunity to participate in this program. Over 1,300 volunteers registered. This program will utilize 140 volunteer hunters in six counties (Brookings, Day, Lake, Kingsbury, McCook and Minnehaha) to harvest resident Canada geese under GFP's Special Canada Goose Permit which is issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, on areas that have a long history of chronic crop damage. This program is not a hunting season and does not allow the use of calls, blinds, or decoys. Pass shooting or jump shooting will be the primary methods of harvest. Volunteer hunters also are required to donate all harvested Canada geese to identified Sportsmen Against Hunger (SAH) processors, which will salvage these birds for human consumption. Each permitted volunteer hunter will be authorized to harvest up to 50 Canada geese with a total of 7,000 Canada geese possibly being harvested with this program.

For more information about the Spring Canada Goose Program, please contact your local GFP Office.