Prairie Chicken Hunter Activity 2019

Prepared by: Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism

Date: June 30, 2020

Executive Summary

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism conducts an online survey of greater prairie chicken (*Tympanuchus cupido*) hunters each year to estimate number of hunters, days hunted, and harvest. In 2019, 1,211 hunters were estimated to have gone afield a total of 6,435 days to hunt prairie chickens. An estimated 895 prairie chickens were harvested during an open prairie chicken season, with a hunter success rate of 34.8%.

Introduction

Kansas has two species of prairie grouse: the greater prairie chicken (*Tympanuchus cupido*) and lesser prairie chicken (*T. pallidicinctus*). Although both species are present in Kansas, the greater prairie chicken is more abundant than its slightly smaller relative and has a larger range across Kansas. The greater prairie chicken predominately utilizes tallgrass and mixed-grass prairie in eastern and northern Kansas, with large populations in the Flint Hills and Smoky Hills. Lesser prairie chickens are primarily found in mixed-grass and sand sagebrush prairies in southwestern Kansas, but their range is expanding into west-central Kansas.

Two distinct units are designated for hunting greater prairie chickens in Kansas: an east and southwest unit (see Figure 1). In the east unit, hunters can take prairie chickens during an early season, which runs from September 15 through October 15, and a regular season, which extends from the third Saturday of November through January 31. The southwest unit remains closed to hunting of prairie chickens, as the lesser prairie chicken is designated a threatened species by the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service. Hunters can harvest greater prairie chickens during an open season and must adhere to a two-bird daily bag limit and an eight-bird possession limit.

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism (KDWPT) conducts a survey following the completion of greater prairie chicken hunting seasons to obtain biological and social data needed for informed management. Based on data from the survey, KDWPT estimates harvest and hunter activity for greater prairie chickens in Kansas.

Methods

A random sample of hunter names from the 2019-2020 season was obtained from the KDWPT database of resident and non-resident permit purchasers. The $2.50 prairie chicken stamp allows KDWPT to identify all potential prairie chicken hunters during the season. As hunters were surveyed via email, only hunters with a valid email address were considered for inclusion in the online survey. Providing an email address is optional, thus not all hunters purchasing a prairie chicken stamp could be randomly surveyed by email. However, most hunters use email, with 85% of hunters voluntarily providing an email address. From the available pool of hunters, approximately 30% were chosen to receive the survey. After the prairie chicken season ended, selected recipients were sent an email containing a link to the online survey.

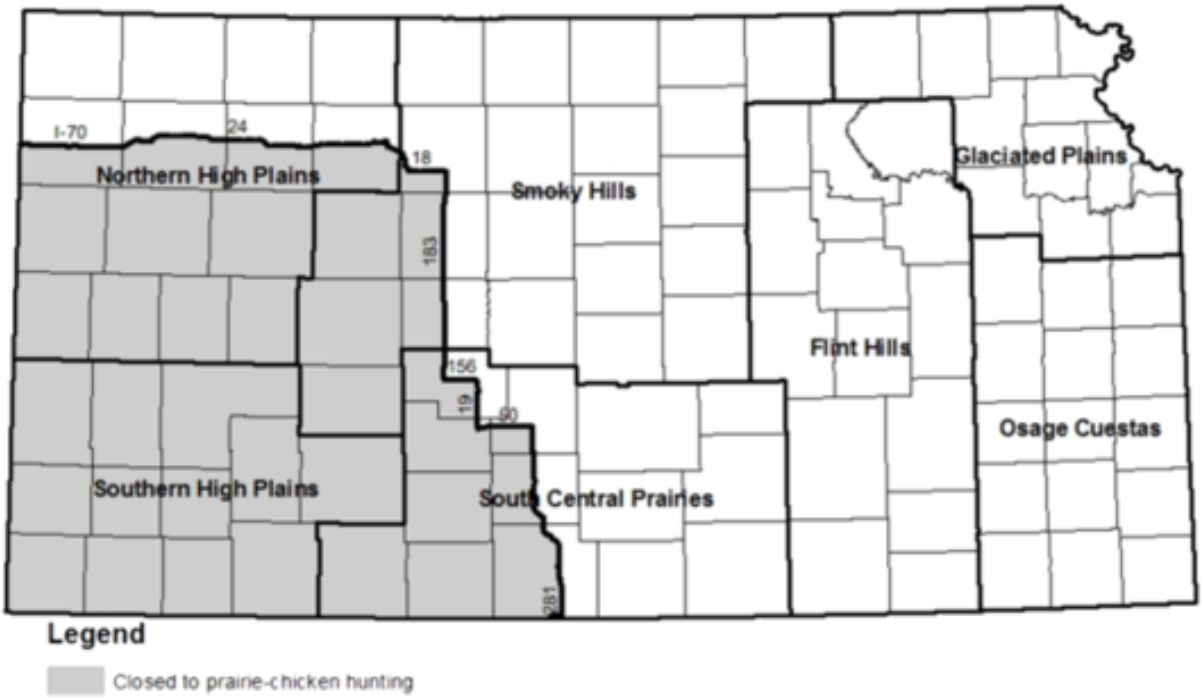

Figure 1: Map of small game management regions and unit closed to prairie chicken hunting in Kansas.

When recipients did not respond to the initial survey request, they received follow up requests one and two weeks apart.

The harvest survey was designed to be concise, with questions limited to days hunted and primary county of hunting of upland gamebirds, days spent hunting prairie chickens during the early and regular season in each county utilized, and the number prairie chickens harvested by county and season. Depending on respondents' answers, a maximum of 27 questions were asked, with questions consisting of multiple choice, open-ended, and clickable maps. The 2019-2020 survey contained four special topic questions pertaining to proposed changes to season dates of prairie chicken hunting.

All survey summarization and statistical analysis was completed using the statistical program R. To estimate harvest and activity statistics, a result weight (total permits/usable survey responses) was used to extrapolate the raw numbers reported by hunters. Harvest and hunter activity statistics were compiled based on small game management regions (Figure 1) and at the statewide level.

Results

Licenses sold and survey responses
Hunters purchased a total of 5,651 prairie chicken stamps in Kansas for the 2019-2020 prairie

chicken season, of which 28.01% (n=1,583) were residents of Kansas and 71.99% (n= 4,068) were non-residents.

A sample of 1,719 hunters (30.42%) purchasing the prairie chicken stamp were randomly selected to receive the Kansas Prairie Chicken Hunter Activity Survey. The Department obtained a 56.2% response rate, consisting of 966 responses with usable data for estimation of prairie chicken harvest and hunter activity during the 2019-2020 season. Respondents took NA minutes on average to complete the survey.

Of the survey respondents, 81.57% (n=788) reported hunting upland game birds, excluding turkeys, and 18.43% (n=178) did not hunt any upland game bird during the 2019-2020 season. Of the hunters that reported hunting upland gamebirds, including prairie chicken, quail, and pheasant, 26.65% (n=210) specifically hunted for prairie chickens.

Upland hunters numbers across Kansas
Prairie chicken hunters used the small game management units to varying degrees (Table 1). The primary region both resident and non-resident hunters utilized was the Smoky Hills. Forty-nine percent of hunters utilized the Smoky Hills region for hunting upland gamebirds, including pheasants, quail, and prairie chicken. Although 33% of active hunters utilized the Northern High Plains, Southern High Plains, and South Central Prairies for hunting of upland gamebirds, portions of these regions are closed to prairie chicken hunting (see Figure 1).

Days spent hunting upland birds
Upland gamebird hunters reported hunting from 1 to 70 days during an open prairie chicken season and hunted an average of 6 days. Mean number of days spent hunting by active hunters was similar across management regions (Table 2).

Prairie chicken hunters across Kansas
Similar numbers of non-resident and resident hunters targeted prairie chickens (Table 3, residents: 49.52%, non-residents 50.48%). Among active hunters, Kansas residents appeared more interested in targetting prairie chickens than non-residents, with 47% of resident hunters specifically hunting prairie chickens compared to 19% of non-resident hunters. Hunters targetted prairie chickens for an average of 5 days, but resident hunters generally spent more days hunting prairie chickens than non-residents (Table 3).

Hunter participation by prairie chicken season
Of the two seasons available to hunt prairie chickens (early, regular), the majority of hunters targetting prairie chickens participated in the regular season (78.57%). A smaller proportion of hunters participated in the early season (46.67%). Although participation in the early season was moderately high, a limited number of hunters did all of their prairie chicken hunting during the early season (19.52%). A higher proportion of hunters targetting prairie chickens did all of their hunting during the regular season (51.43%). Additionally, hunters utilized both seasons to a limited degree (27.14%). In general, Kansas residents hunted more days during the early and regular seasons than non-residents (Table 4).

Prairie chicken harvests across Kansas
An estimated 895 prairie chickens were harvested statewide. Active hunters, both those specifically targetting and opportunistically harvesting prairie chickens, averaged 0.67 birds

and had a success rate of 31.98%. Resident hunters harvested more prairie chickens than non-resident hunters, 61.44 versus 38.56% of total harvest, but had similar average harvests (Table 5). For estimated prairie chicken harvests by season in each county see Table 6.

Special Topic: Potential Season Date Change

Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism is considering changes to the open dates of the prairie chicken hunting season. Currently, the season is split between an early (September 15 - October 15) and regular (third Saturday in November - January 31) season. Rather than a split season, KDWPT is exploring the possibility of a continuous open prairie chicken season from September 15 - January 31. To determine hunters' level of support for the change, survey recipients in the 2019 Prairie Chicken Hunter Activity survey were asked their level of support for the potential change. Most hunters supported a change to a continuous prairie chicken season (Figure 2).

The majority of individuals in support of a continuous prairie chicken season indicated two primary reasons for support 1) they would either like the opportunitiy to harvest prairie chickens during opening weekend of pheasant and quail season, and 2) they could take advantage of more days in October and November. In contrast, the primary reason indicated for respondents' opposition of a continuous prairie chicken season was that a longer season would negatively affect the population (Figure 3). Other factors affecting a respondent's support or opposition to the proposed season change appear in Table 7 and 8.

Table 1: Prairie chicken hunter activity in Kansas, 2019-2020.

Statistic	Flint Hills	Glaciated Plains	Northern High Plains	Osage Cuestas	Smoky Hills	South Central Prairies	Southern High Plains	Statewide
Resident								
Est Sample Size[1]	78	2	21	9	136	19	6	275
Active Upland Hunters[1,4]	63 (80.8)	2 (100.0)	17 (81.0)	7 (77.8)	109 (80.1)	15 (78.9)	5 (83.3)	220 (80.0)
Est Inactive Upland Hunters[1,2,4]	15 (19.2)	0 (0.0)	4 (19.0)	2 (22.2)	27 (19.9)	4 (21.1)	1 (16.7)	55 (20.0)
Specifically Pursued Chickens[3,4]	41 (65.1)	0 (0.0)	1 (5.9)	4 (57.1)	50 (45.9)	6 (40.0)	1 (20.0)	104 (47.3)
Non-resident								
Est Sample Size[1]	54	10	164	9	330	66	42	691
Active Upland Hunters[1,4]	45 (83.3)	8 (80.0)	136 (82.9)	7 (77.8)	274 (83.0)	55 (83.3)	35 (83.3)	568 (82.2)
Est Inactive Upland Hunters[1,2,4]	9 (16.7)	2 (20.0)	28 (17.1)	2 (22.2)	56 (17.0)	11 (16.7)	7 (16.7)	123 (17.8)
Specifically Pursued Chickens[3,4]	16 (35.6)	1 (12.5)	13 (9.6)	1 (14.3)	65 (23.7)	6 (10.9)	4 (11.4)	106 (18.7)
Overall								
Est Sample Size[1]	134	12	186	18	467	85	49	966
Active Upland Hunters[1,4]	110 (82.1)	10 (83.3)	153 (82.3)	15 (83.3)	384 (82.2)	70 (82.4)	40 (81.6)	788 (81.6)
Est Inactive Upland Hunters[1,2,4]	24 (17.9)	2 (16.7)	33 (17.7)	3 (16.7)	83 (17.8)	15 (17.6)	9 (18.4)	178 (18.4)
Specifically Pursued Chickens[3,4]	57 (51.8)	1 (10.0)	14 (9.2)	5 (33.3)	115 (29.9)	12 (17.1)	5 (12.5)	210 (26.6)

Note:

Some active hunters did not specify the primary region they hunted and are therefore only included in the satewide total. Additionally, statewide and overall totals may not equal sums of regional totals because of rounding errors.

[1] Because inactive hunters did not hunt in a specific region, region-specific counts are estimates using proportional methods.

[2] Denominator is the region sample size.

[3] Denominator is the number of active hunters for the region.

[4] Numbers in parentheses represent percentages.

Table 2: Average number of days hunted by upland gamebird hunters within small game management units, 2019-2020.

Statistic	Flint Hills	Glaciated Plains	Northern High Plains	Osage Cuestas	Smoky Hills	South Central Prairies	Southern High Plains	NA	Statewide
Resident									
Sample Size	62	2	17	7	108	15	5	1	217
Mean (SD)	7.81 (7.19)	11.5 (4.95)	11 (9.74)	12.57 (7.5)	9.45 (9.97)	9.33 (7.7)	9.4 (9.91)	3 (NA)	9.18 (8.92)
Median	5.5	11.5	8	14	5	7	8	3	6
Min, Max	1, 35	8, 15	2, 40	2, 25	1, 50	1, 26	1, 25	3, 3	1, 50
95% CI	5.98, 9.64	-32.97, 55.97	5.99, 16.01	5.63, 19.51	7.55, 11.35	5.07, 13.59	-2.9, 21.7	NaN, NaN	7.99, 10.37
Non-resident									
Sample Size	43	8	129	7	259	52	33	4	535
Mean (SD)	4.16 (3.02)	5.12 (4.91)	5.01 (4.49)	5 (2.45)	4.9 (5.61)	4.46 (3.9)	4.7 (5.68)	3.25 (1.71)	4.8 (4.96)
Median	3	3	4	5	3	3	3	3.5	3
Min, Max	1, 15	1, 15	1, 25	2, 10	1, 70	1, 26	1, 34	1, 5	1, 70
95% CI	3.23, 5.09	1.02, 9.22	4.23, 5.79	2.73, 7.27	4.21, 5.59	3.37, 5.55	2.69, 6.71	0.53, 5.97	4.38, 5.22
Overall									
Sample Size	105	10	146	14	367	67	38	5	752
Mean (SD)	6.31 (6.1)	6.4 (5.36)	5.71 (5.66)	8.79 (6.65)	6.24 (7.45)	5.55 (5.34)	5.32 (6.41)	3.2 (1.48)	6.07 (6.66)
Median	4	4.5	4	5	4	4	3	3	4
Min, Max	1, 35	1, 15	1, 40	2, 25	1, 70	1, 26	1, 34	1, 5	1, 70
95% CI	5.13, 7.49	2.57, 10.23	4.78, 6.64	4.95, 12.63	5.48, 7	4.25, 6.85	3.21, 7.43	1.36, 5.04	5.59, 6.55

Note:
Although hunters may have hunted gamebirds in multiple units, total days hunted by individual hunters only appear in the primary region of use, regardless of whether all hunting occured in that region. Additionallly, some active hunters might not have specified the primary region they hunted or the number of days hunted during an open prairie chicken seasons and therefore are not included in table. Thus sample size may differ from that reported in Table 1.

Table 3: Number of active hunters targetting prairie chickens and average number of days hunted within small game management units by residency status, 2019-2020.

Statistic	Flint Hills	Glaciated Plains	Northern High Plains	Osage Cuestas	Smoky Hills	South Central Prairies	NA	Statewide
Resident								
Survey Responses	57	2	2	2	51	2	1	104
Estimated Hunters	333	12	12	12	298	12	6	608
Avg Days Hunted (SD)	5.28 (6.49)	1.5 (0.71)	5 (7.07)	2 (1.41)	6.45 (7.23)	3.5 (2.12)	3 (NA)	6.32 (6.98)
95% CI	3.56, 7	-4.88, 7.88	-58.52, 68.52	-10.67, 14.67	4.42, 8.48	-15.55, 22.55	NaN, NaN	4.96, 7.68
Non-resident								
Survey Responses	19	2	14	2	70	4	1	103
Estimated Hunters	111	12	82	12	409	23	6	603
Avg Days Hunted (SD)	3.63 (2.5)	1.5 (0.71)	5 (6.61)	3 (2.83)	4.06 (3.75)	2.5 (1.29)	1 (NA)	4.3 (4.3)
95% CI	2.43, 4.83	-4.88, 7.88	1.18, 8.82	-22.43, 28.43	3.17, 4.95	0.45, 4.55	NaN, NaN	3.46, 5.14
Overall								
Survey Responses	76	4	16	4	121	6	2	207
Estimated Hunters	445	23	94	23	708	35	12	1211
Avg Days Hunted (SD)	4.87 (5.79)	1.5 (0.58)	5 (6.42)	2.5 (1.91)	5.07 (5.59)	2.83 (1.47)	2 (1.41)	5.31 (5.88)
95% CI	3.55, 6.19	0.58, 2.42	1.58, 8.42	-0.54, 5.54	4.06, 6.08	1.29, 4.37	-10.67, 14.67	4.5, 6.12

Note:
Some hunters might have utilized multiple small game management units while pursuing prairie chickens. Hunters counted in each management unit utilized, however hunters included only once in statewide totals. Thus, statewide totals may not be equivalent to that across management units.

Table 4: Number of active upland gamebird hunters targeting prairie chicken in the early and regular prairie chicken seasons.

	Statistic	Flint Hills	Glaciated Plains	Northern High Plains	Osage Cuestas	Smoky Hills	South Central Prairies	Statewide
Early								
Resident								
	Sampled Hunters (%)	35 (3.6)	2 (0.2)	1 (0.1)	1 (0.1)	36 (3.7)	0 (0.0)	70 (7.2)
	Est Total Hunters	205	12	6	6	211	0	409
	Avg Days Hunted (SD)	3.17 (2.66)	1.5 (0.71)	6 (-)	3 (-)	3.33 (3.58)	- (-)	3.51 (3.34)
	95% CI	2.26, 4.08	-4.88, 7.88	-, -	-, -	2.12, 4.54	-, -	2.71, 4.31
	Est Days Hunted	649	18	35	18	702	0	1439
Non-resident								
	Sampled Hunters (%)	8 (0.8)	0 (0.0)	2 (0.2)	1 (0.1)	17 (1.8)	0 (0.0)	28 (2.9)
	Est Total Hunters	47	0	12	6	99	0	164
	Avg Days Hunted (SD)	3 (1.2)	- (-)	1.5 (0.71)	1 (-)	3.06 (1.78)	- (-)	2.86 (1.6)
	95% CI	2, 4	-, -	-4.88, 7.88	-, -	2.14, 3.98	-, -	2.24, 3.48
	Est Days Hunted	140	0	18	6	304	0	468
Overall								
	Sampled Hunters (%)	43 (4.5)	2 (0.2)	3 (0.3)	2 (0.2)	53 (5.5)	0 (0.0)	98 (10.1)
	Est Total Hunters	252	12	18	12	310	0	573
	Avg Days Hunted (SD)	3.14 (2.45)	1.5 (0.71)	3 (2.65)	2 (1.41)	3.25 (3.1)	- (-)	3.33 (2.96)
	95% CI	2.39, 3.89	-4.88, 7.88	-3.58, 9.58	-10.67, 14.67	2.4, 4.1	-, -	2.74, 3.92
	Est Days Hunted	790	18	53	23	1006	0	1907
Regular								
Resident								
	Sampled Hunters (%)	42 (4.3)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.1)	1 (0.1)	33 (3.4)	2 (0.2)	76 (7.9)
	Est Total Hunters	246	0	6	6	193	12	445
	Avg Days Hunted (SD)	4.52 (5.06)	- (-)	4 (-)	1 (-)	6.33 (5.92)	3.5 (2.12)	5.41 (5.52)
	95% CI	2.94, 6.1	-, -	-, -	-, -	4.23, 8.43	-15.55, 22.55	4.15, 6.67
	Est Days Hunted	1111	0	23	6	1223	41	2404
Non-resident								
	Sampled Hunters (%)	15 (1.6)	2 (0.2)	14 (1.4)	1 (0.1)	58 (6.0)	4 (0.4)	89 (9.2)
	Est Total Hunters	88	12	82	6	339	23	521
	Avg Days Hunted (SD)	3 (2.2)	1.5 (0.71)	4.79 (6.1)	5 (-)	4 (3.33)	2.5 (1.29)	4.08 (4.03)
	95% CI	1.78, 4.22	-4.88, 7.88	1.27, 8.31	-, -	3.12, 4.88	0.45, 4.55	3.23, 4.93
	Est Days Hunted	263	18	392	29	1357	58	2124
Overall								
	Sampled Hunters (%)	57 (5.9)	2 (0.2)	15 (1.6)	2 (0.2)	91 (9.4)	6 (0.6)	165 (17.1)
	Est Total Hunters	333	12	88	12	532	35	965
	Avg Days Hunted (SD)	4.12 (4.52)	1.5 (0.71)	4.73 (5.89)	3 (2.83)	4.85 (4.56)	2.83 (1.47)	4.69 (4.8)
	95% CI	2.92, 5.32	-4.88, 7.88	1.47, 7.99	-22.43, 28.43	3.9, 5.8	1.29, 4.37	3.95, 5.43
	Est Days Hunted	1375	18	415	35	2580	99	4528

Note:
Some hunters might have utilized multiple small game management units while pursuing prairie chickens or hunted during one or both seasons. Hunters counted in each season utilized. Hunters counted in each management unit utilized, but only included once in statewide totals. Thus, statewide totals may not be equivalent to that across management units.

Table 5: Number of prairie chickens harvest by active hunters within the small game management units by residency status.

Statistic	Flint Hills	Glaciated Plains	Northern High Plains	Osage Cuestas	Smoky Hills	Statewide
Resident						
Total Harvest (%)[1]	28 (18.3)	1 (0.7)	2 (1.3)	1 (0.7)	61 (39.9)	94 (61.4)
Avg Harvest (SD)	1.75 (1.53)	1 (-)	2 (-)	1 (-)	2.03 (1.77)	0.85 (1.45)
95% CI	0.93, 2.57	-, -	-, -	-, -	1.36, 2.7	0.42, 1.28
Est Harvest[2]	164	6	12	6	357	550
Est Successful Hunters[2,3]	94	6	6	6	170	275
Non-resident						
Total Harvest (%)[1]	11 (7.2)	-	7 (4.6)	1 (0.7)	40 (26.1)	59 (38.6)
Avg Harvest (SD)	1.83 (1.33)	-	1.17 (0.41)	1 (-)	2 (1.69)	0.51 (1.12)
95% CI	0.43, 3.23	-	0.74, 1.6	-, -	1.19, 2.81	0.11, 0.91
Est Harvest[2]	64	-	41	6	234	345
Est Successful Hunters[2,3]	35	-	35	6	111	187
Overall						
Total Harvest (%)[1]	39 (25.5)	1 (0.7)	9 (5.9)	2 (1.3)	101 (66)	153 (100)
Avg Harvest (SD)	1.77 (1.45)	1 (-)	1.29 (0.49)	1 (0)	2.02 (1.72)	0.67 (1.3)
95% CI	1.13, 2.41	-, -	0.84, 1.74	1, 1	1.52, 2.52	0.38, 0.96
Est Harvest[2]	228	6	53	12	591	895
Est Successful Hunters[2,3]	129	6	41	12	281	462

Note:

When small game management unit for harvest was unknown, harvest only included in statewide total.

[1] Proportion calcuated using overall statewide harvests.

[2] Estimates calculated using a result weight (number of permits purchased divided by usable survey responses).

[3] Successful hunters were those that harvested at least 1 prairie chicken during an open season.

Table 6: Estimated number of prairie chicken stamp buyers targetting prairie chickens in each county, the estimated effort expended by hunters, and the estimated prairie chicken harvests by prairie chicken stamp buyers targetting or oppuntistically hunting prairie chickens during the 2019-2020 early and regular season.

County	Early Season			Regular Season		
	Estimated Hunters	Estimated Days Hunted	Estimated Harvest	Estimated Hunters	Estimated Days Hunted	Estimated Harvest
Allen	6	6	6	0	0	0
Barton	6	6	0	23	94	0
Butler	29	152	12	105	328	41
Chase	53	152	35	41	164	18
Cheyenne	0	0	0	29	53	0
Clay	6	12	0	23	82	0
Cloud	23	53	6	6	29	6
Coffey	6	18	0	0	0	0
Dickinson	6	6	0	6	12	0
Elk	23	53	0	6	6	0
Ellis	6	35	0	29	105	6
Ellsworth	6	23	6	35	76	18
Geary	6	12	0	6	29	0
Graham	6	35	0	29	82	12
Greenwood	18	23	0	35	129	6
Harvey	0	0	0	6	12	0
Jackson	12	18	0	6	6	0
Jewell	12	23	0	18	41	0
Lincoln	53	164	41	35	99	0
Lyon	29	35	0	47	82	18
Marion	6	6	0	12	35	6
McPherson	0	0	0	23	94	6
Mitchell	41	105	18	58	170	12
Morris	6	6	0	12	29	0
Nemaha	0	0	0	6	12	0
Neosho	0	0	0	6	29	0
Norton	0	0	0	0	0	6
Osborne	70	193	23	135	497	58
Ottawa	29	47	6	35	111	18
Phillips	18	18	0	35	88	12
Pottawatomie	35	82	0	23	193	12

Table 6: Estimated number of prairie chicken stamp buyers targetting prairie chickens in each county, the estimated effort expended by hunters, and the estimated prairie chicken harvests by prairie chicken stamp buyers targetting or oppuntistically hunting prairie chickens during the 2019-2020 early and regular season. *(continued)*

County	Estimated Hunters	Estimated Days Hunted	Estimated Harvest	Estimated Hunters	Estimated Days Hunted	Estimated Harvest
Pratt	0	0	0	12	47	0
Rawlins	12	18	12	23	199	0
Reno	0	0	0	6	12	0
Republic	0	0	0	6	41	0
Rice	0	0	0	6	23	23
Riley	23	47	6	0	0	0
Rooks	18	29	12	53	222	23
Rush	6	6	0	12	23	12
Russell	58	146	23	88	287	18
Saline	29	70	6	53	257	0
Sedgwick	0	0	0	6	6	0
Sheridan	0	0	0	12	53	6
Sherman	0	0	0	0	0	6
Smith	23	88	12	41	269	18
Stafford	0	0	0	6	12	0
Sumner	0	0	0	6	12	0
Thomas	0	0	0	6	29	0
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	6
Wabaunsee	58	205	12	58	287	0
Washington	0	0	0	12	53	0
Woodson	0	0	0	6	6	0
NA	6	18	0	6	6	0

Note:
Estimates calculated using a result weight (number of permits purchased divided by usable survey responses).

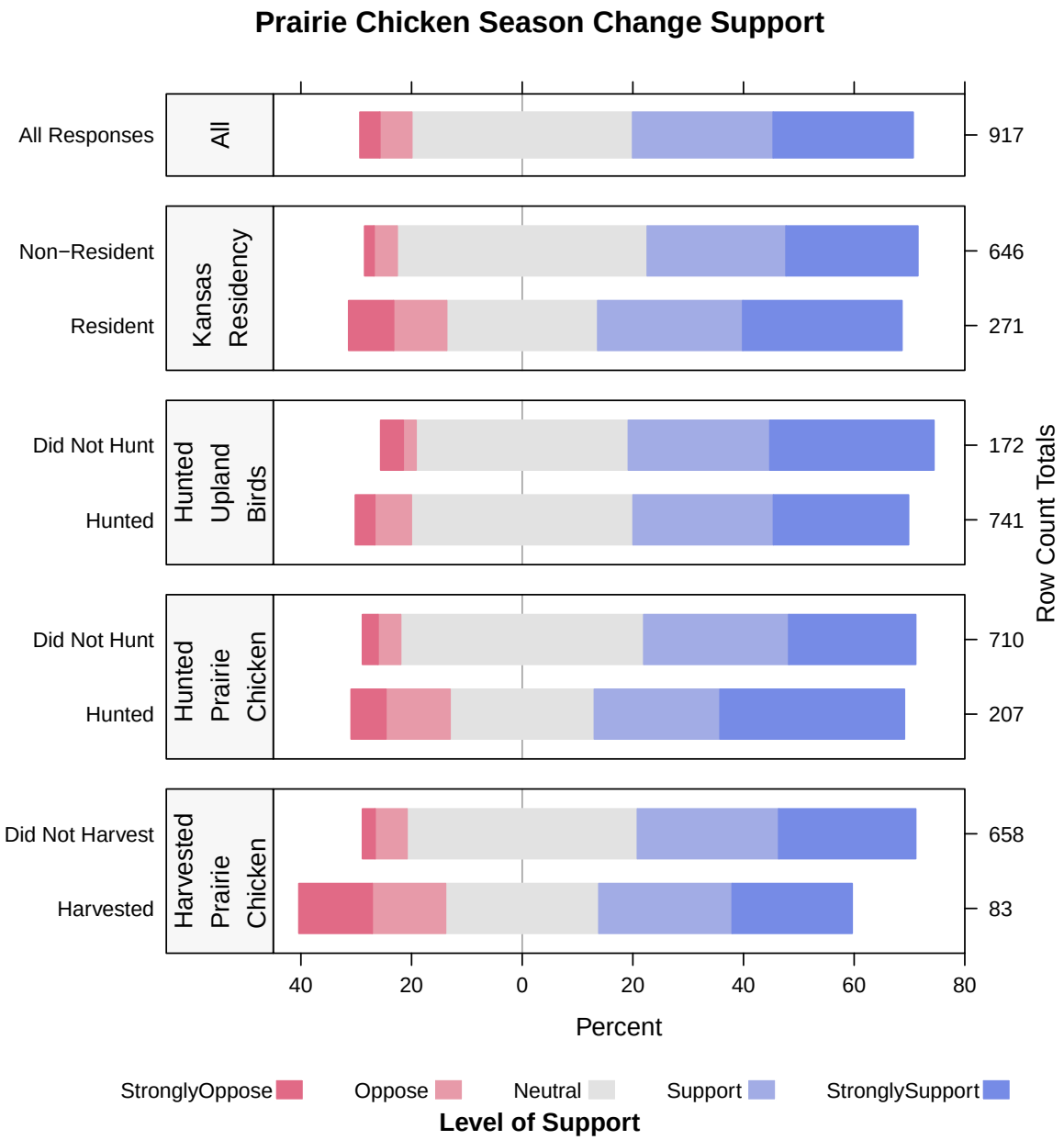

Figure 2: Respondents' level of support for a continuous open prairie chicken season from September 15 - January 31.

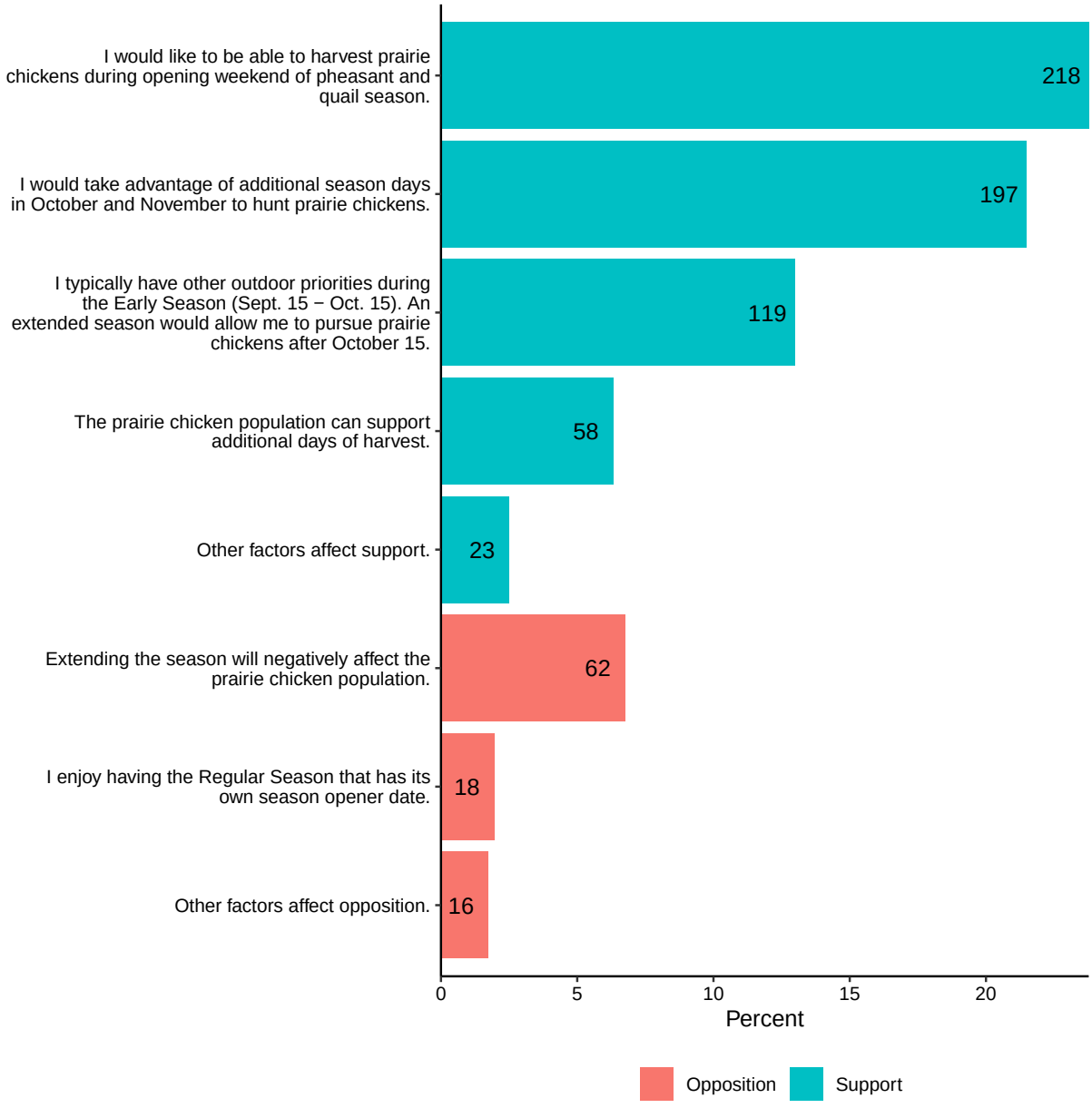

Figure 3: Indicated reasons for support or opposition of a continuous prairie chicken open season. Sample size for reasons are included inside bars.

Table 7: List of additional reasons affecting support of a continuous prairie chicken open season supplied by respondents.

Reason For Support
-Wider date range for trip to KS -When pheasant and quail hunting I don't have to worry about whether or not prairie chicken season is open -Split seasons are very confusing -I DO NOT TRAVEL ACROSS THE ENTIRE STATE TO HUNT, OTHER STATES HAVE HUNTABLLE HABITAT ! -Cooler weather
-It's very rare to get a chicken later on in upland season but between Oct 15 through the opener it'd give me additional opportunities to go hunt. -I would strongly support an extended falconry season throughout the period. Falconry hunting is difficult with limited success and mirrors nature. -Bird populations are down significantly in my area. Shooting any birds at this time does not feel appropriate. -I think the season should run into February instead of earlier than November. November has gotten to be too hot for bird hunting oftentimes. -I grew up hunting chickens when the season opened the weekend before pheasant/quail and we used to take advantage of that. If you didn't want a continuous season maybe rethink what it was. So basically have the early season from 9/15-10/15 but then open it up again the 1st Saturday of November til January 31st.
-I typically am hunting other species during the later portion of the season. The currently closed time would be the time I have less competing seasons (and would have more time to hunt). -Early season is very warm. Open at the end of October allows more upland hunting opportunities. -I enjoy hunting the birds when it's not as hot and can get the dogs out and work longer -That is the period of time we travel out to Kansas to hunt pheasants. -Rules should be less confusing for hunting.
-There seems to be plenty of chickens, but I am not the expert. -It really depends on when we are available to go out there if it was open all the time it would make it better for us -n/a -Hunter harvest and interested in prairie chickens is low enough that longer seasons will have no impact on populations -Mainly would give flexibility in opportunities to hunt, especially if warm weather didn't allow hunting in the early season. I do feel the populations would allow a bit more harvest from birds we have been seeing but that is a limited perspective.
-I don't believe the additional days of open season will significantly impact the population. Therefore I support simplifying the season dates.

Note:
Reasons may contain spelling or grammatical errors, as they appear exactly how entered on survey.

Table 8: List of additional reasons affecting opposition of a continuous prairie chicken open season supplied by respondents.

Reason For Opposition
-I'd rather the early season be altered (later date or exclusion areas) to protect fall lekking sites -close is opener of Pheasant so people dont shoot them while hunting pheasants -I think they should remain closed on the regular pheasant/quail opener. -I don't see that extending the season would negatively affect the population given the hunting practices. I just don't think that it's necessary to change the season. -There is no valid scientific reason to entertain this idea.
-Prairie Chicken should coincide with the normal upland pheasant and Quail season only. -Seems to work well -Season that coincides with opening pheasant & quail will have a negative impact on prairie chicken. -See previous comment. -I'm not entirely sure if there would be a big difference changing the dates. Why not just regulate by bag limit?
-I'm concerned about a dramatic increase in harvest on opening day of Pheasant and Quail season. -I liked the prairie chicken opener on the weekend before the pheasant and quail opener as it was 25 yrs. ago. It gave some significance to this amazing bird only found in a few states. With the changes in management (complete burning every year and early intensive grazing, I'm afraid the bulk of the greater p.c. population will never recover unless something in the managment of the grasslands changes. Loss of CRP in the west may hurt lessers in the long run. -The upland bird with the least population in the state (save woodcock) would have the longest season. Additionally, there would probably be a lot of taking of hen pheasant with the excuse being, "I thought it was a prairie chicken." -Split season relieves hunting pressure and can improve hunting. -They don't need anymore pressure
-read previous comments

Note:
Reasons may contain spelling or grammatical errors, as they appear exactly how entered on survey.