

2016-17 OTTER PELT TAGGING REPORT

PERFORMANCE REPORT STATEWIDE WILDLIFE RESEARCH AND SURVEYS

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Kansas has had a river otter harvest season since 2011. The season is open statewide concurrent with beaver season (Nov 16, 2016-Mar 31, 2017), and like beaver, otters may only be trapped or salvaged. There was a 100 otter season quota for the first two seasons, but the season quota is now unlimited. A two otter per trapper bag limit has been in place since a season was first opened.

Like bobcats, river otters are CITES Appendix II (“look-alike”) species, and therefore must be pelt tagged. The pelt tagging process is accomplished with tags provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Management Authority, under the CITES Export Tag Program. In 2016, Kansas used white “KS ROTR” tags below number 0001360. A total of 47 KDWPT employees and offices were issued tags for the season. These were mostly in or near the primary otter range, but tags were also maintained by regional and district offices as well as the Pratt Operations Office.

CITES tags were affixed to the pelts of 132 otters taken in Kansas during the season. The number of otters taken annually since the otter harvest season was established is provided in **Figure 1**. This figure includes those otters incidentally taken after a 100 otter quota was reached the first two seasons.

Otters were taken in 21 counties. These counties are shown in **Figure 2**. Wilson county was the only new county where an otter had not been previously harvested during season. The number of otters taken each day of the season is presented in **Figure 3**.

Otters may be taken using trapping equipment authorized in K.A.R. 115-5-1 or salvaged during the harvest season. A total of 81 furharvesters took otters. This included 33 individuals who took one otter, 46 who took two, one who took three, and one who took four (otters over two were taken by NADC permit holders who took otters for damage). **Table 1** provides a breakdown of the methods furharvesters used to take otters and the primary species the trap was intended for at the time the otter was taken. **Table 2** provides the location from which otters were taken.

After the initial tag allocation, tag accountability was maintained via reports from KDWPT employees or offices issued tags. After the season, each was responsible for inventorying unused tags and accounting for all tags they were issued. Unused tags were then destroyed, retained by each tagger, or returned to the Emporia office.

Figure 1. Number of otters pelt tagged annually since the season was opened in 2011.

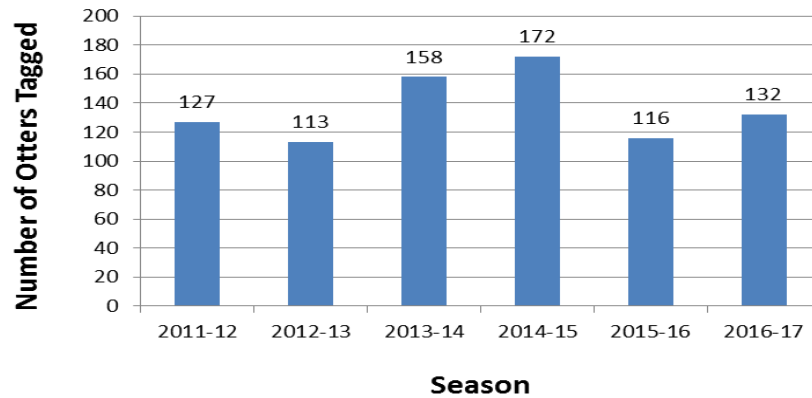


Figure 2. County of harvest of Kansas river otters.

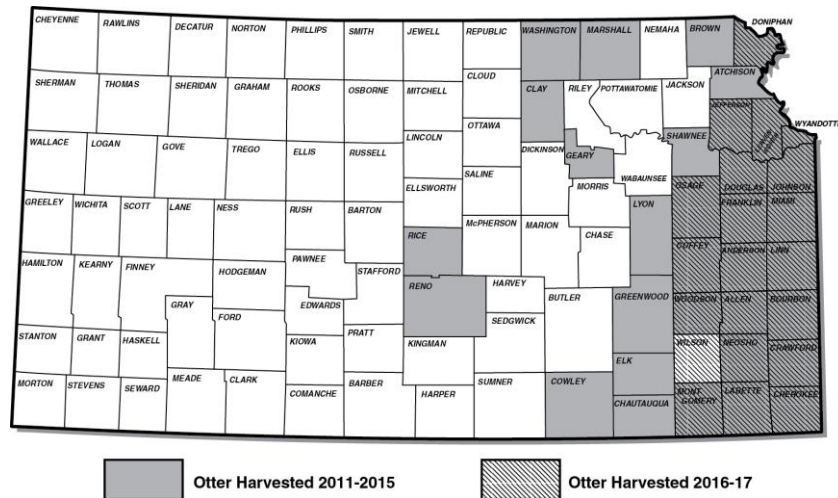


Figure 3. Reported number of otters taken per day during the 2016-17 furharvesting season (n=130).

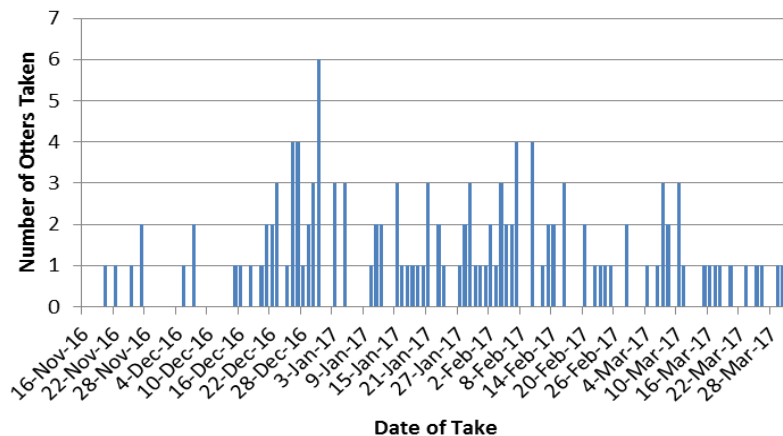


Table 1. Method of harvest and the primary species being trapped when otters were taken during the 2016-17 furharvesting season in Kansas.

Method of Harvest	Target Species					Subtotal Number	Percent
	Otter	Beaver	Raccoon	Unspecified	Salvage		
Foothold Trap	11	3				14	10.6
Bodygrip Trap	48	50	2	3		103	78.0
Cage Trap	2	2				4	3.0
Snare	3	1		2		6	4.5
Salvage					3	3	2.3
Unspecified	2					2	1.5
Subtotal Number	66	56	2	5	3	132	
Percent	56.9	48.3	1.7	4.3	2.6		100.0

Table 2. Location from which otters were taken during the 2016-17 furharvesting season in Kansas.

Harvest Location	Minimum Number of Unique Locations	Number of Otters	Percent of Otters
Reservoir/Lake	4	9	6.8
River	6	17	12.9
Creek	24	50	37.9
Pond	21	27	20.5
Strip Pit or quarry	2	5	3.8
Wildlife Area or marsh	4	12	9.1
Unspecified/Other	8	12	9.1
	69	132	100.0

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