

2012-13 OTTER PELT TAGGING REPORT

PERFORMANCE REPORT STATEWIDE WILDLIFE RESEARCH AND SURVEYS

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The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) passed regulations allowing the first modern harvest season on river otters in Kansas during the 2011-12 furbearer harvest season. Regulations remained unchanged in 2012-13. Highlights included:

- Season open statewide
- 2 otter per trapper bag limit
- 100 otter season quota
- Season dates from Nov. 14 – March. 31 (concurrent with beaver), or ending 3 days after the 100 otter quota met
- Trappers must report harvests to the Department via telephone hotline within 24 hours of harvest and present the pelt for tagging and relinquish the skinned carcass within 4 days of harvest

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 2012, Kansas used white “KS ROTR” tags below number 0000610. A total of 36 KDWPT employees and offices mostly in or near the primary otter range were issued tags for the 2012-13 furharvesting season. Tagging was primarily conducted by law enforcement personnel from the law enforcement and public lands divisions. Tags were also maintained by each of the 5 regional offices.

CITES tags were affixed to the pelts of 113 otters taken in Kansas during the season. This included 8 otters that were taken during the 3-day grace period (January 26-28). Not counted towards the quota but included in the take were two otters confiscated and one otter salvaged by KDWPT during season. An additional 15 otters taken after the season closed are not included in this report. Two of these otters were taken for depredation, and the remainder were taken by trappers targeting beaver.

Otters were taken in 19 counties. These counties are shown in **Figure 1**. The number of otters taken each day of the season is presented in **Figure 2**.

Otters may be taken using trapping equipment authorized in K.A.R. 115-5-1 or salvaged during the harvest season. A total of 83 furharvesters took otters. This included 53 individuals who took 1 otter and 30 who took 2. **Table 1** provides a break down 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.

Regulations pertaining to otter harvest have been modified for the upcoming 2013-14 season. There will no longer be a season quota, but the 2 otter bag limit will remain. The season will still be concurrent with beaver season. Trappers will no longer be required to contact the Department within 24 hours of harvest, get the pelt tagged within four days, or relinquish the carcass. Rather, pelt tagging will now be done like bobcat (within seven days of season close), except that lower canine teeth must be turned in for aging at time of tagging. Information on tooth removal will be provided in the 2013-14 regulations summary.

Figure 1. Counties from which otters were taken during the 2011-12 and 2012-13 furharvesting seasons in Kansas.

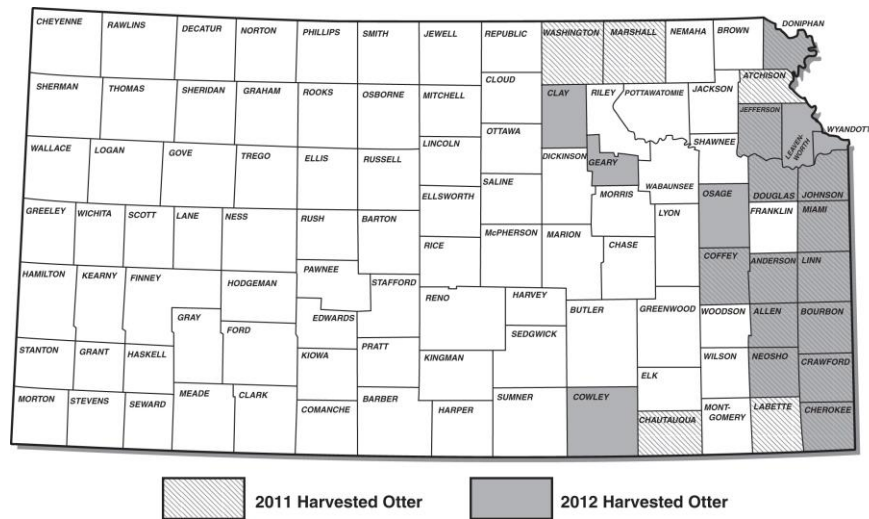


Figure 2. Reported number of otters taken per day during the 2012-13 furharvesting season (n=113).

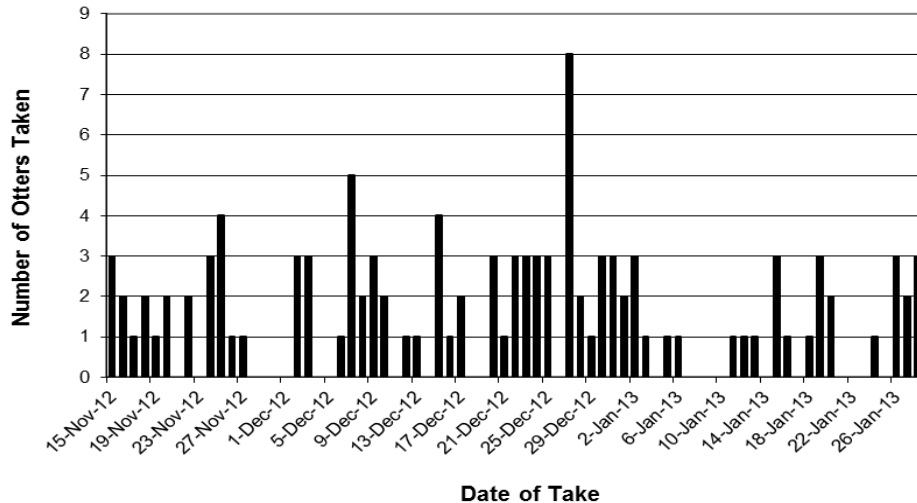


Table 1. Method of harvest and the primary species being trapped when otters were taken during the 2012-13 furharvesting season in Kansas.

Method of Harvest	Target Species						Subtotal Number	Percent
	Otter	Beaver	Raccoon	Bobcat	Salvage	Unspecified		
Foothold Trap	14	4	11	1			30	26.5
Body-gripping Trap	35	28	6			1	70	61.9
Cage Trap							0	0.0
Snare	3	2					5	4.4
Salvage					5		5	4.4
Unspecified or Other	3						3	2.7
Subtotal Number	55	34	17	1	5	1	113	
Percent	48.7	30.1	15.0	0.9	4.4	0.9		100.0

Table 2. Location from which otters were taken during the 2012-13 furharvesting season in Kansas.

Harvest Location	Number of Unique Locations	Number of Otters	Percent of Otters
Reservoir/Lake	3	7	6.2
River	8	24	21.2
Creek	21	40	35.4
Pond	unk	20	17.7
Strip Pit	unk	11	9.7
Wildlife Area	2	10	8.8
Unspecified	1	1	0.9
	35	113	100.0

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