

El Dorado Wildlife Area News



Area News – Summer 2018

2018 Dove Hunting Outlook:

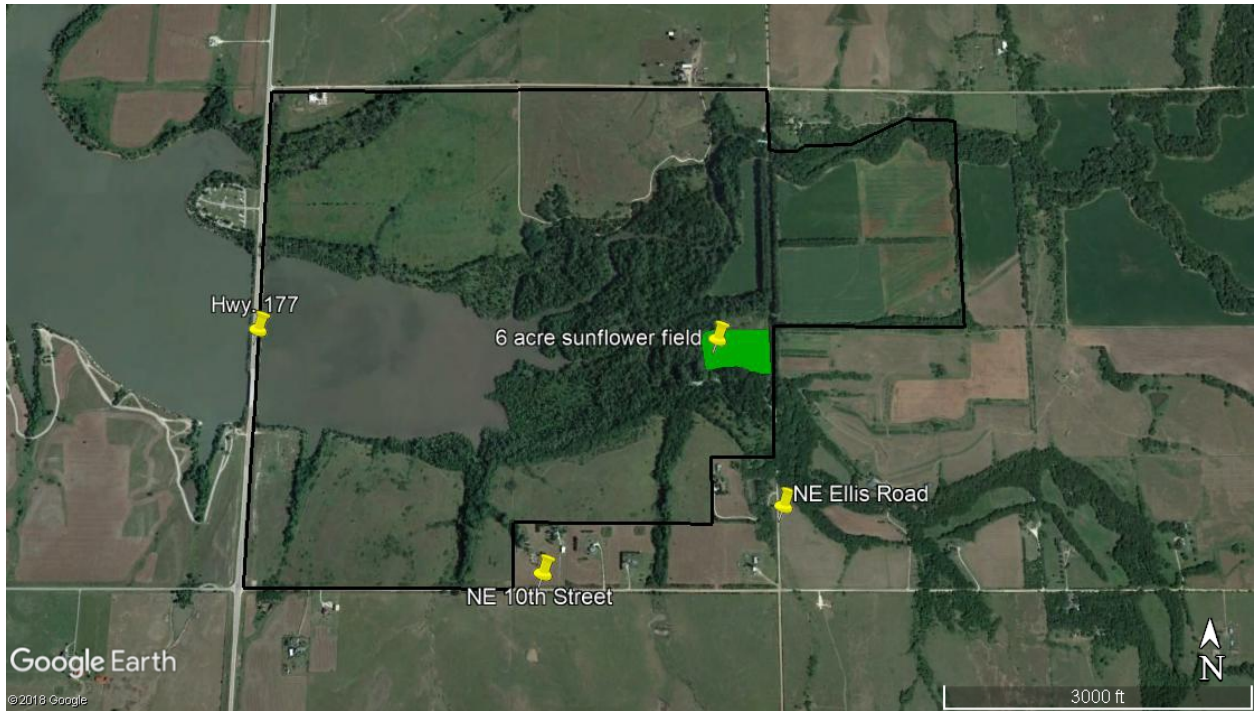
Three sunflower fields (6,10, 5 acres) will provide fair to good dove hunting opportunities at El Dorado Wildlife Area. Portions of these sunflower fields will be mowed (if conditions allow) to enhance dove use and hunter access. The 6-acre field is 0.1 miles north of the parking area that is north of the junction of NE 10th Street and NE Ellis Road. The 5-acre and 10-acre fields are south of 85th Street and can be accessed from the first parking area west of Cole Creek.

Dove hunters using these managed fields must use non-toxic shot.

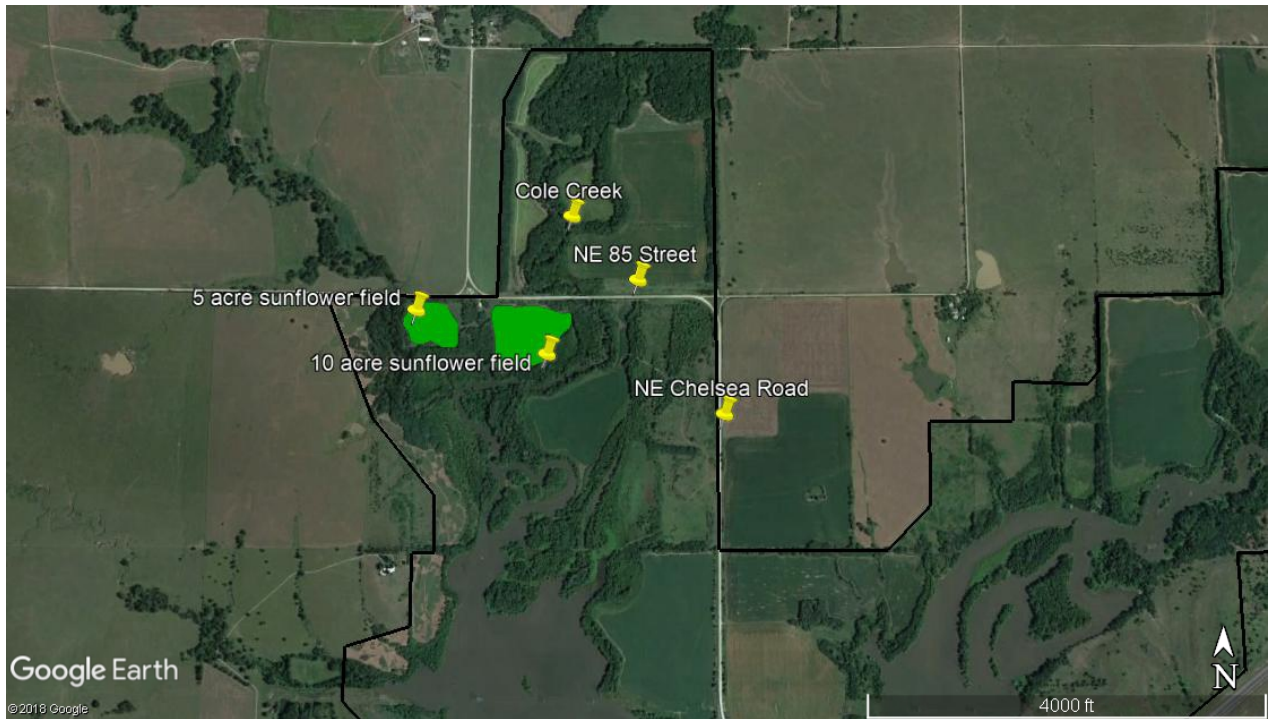
Dove hunters may be asked to obtain a permit prior to hunting and report harvest at the end of their hunt. Please assist area staff with evaluating these opportunities by following instructions located at permit stations posted at each field. Hunters are also reminded to please be courteous and aware of other hunting parties while using these fields.

For a brochure and map of the entire wildlife area please visit the El Dorado Wildlife Area web page (ksoutdoors.com) and click on the brochure tab at the top of the page. For more information please call (620)767-5900 or (316)322-7513.





El Dorado Wildlife Area – 2018 Managed Dove Hunting Location – Shady Creek Area



El Dorado Wildlife Area – 2018 Managed Dove Hunting Locations – Cole Creek Area

Dove Field Hunters Required to Use Non-Toxic Shot:

Beginning in 2013 many managed dove fields on KDWPT public wildlife areas required the use of non-toxic shot. Designated fields at El Dorado Wildlife Area have been included in this requirement and will continue to include all sunflower fields. Signs designating this requirement will be posted at each field.

Lead exposure has long been recognized as a significant threat to waterfowl populations. Concerns arose when large concentrations of lead from spent shotgun shells began to accumulate in traditional waterfowl hunting locations. It was discovered that waterfowl could ingest the lead shot while feeding, and that the lead was toxic and could lead to illness or death. It was also found that some animals that scavenged lead poisoned carcasses could also ingest remaining lead and become afflicted, thus impacting an entire food chain. Losses from lead poisoning were estimated to be significant, and as such a nation-wide ban on the use of lead shot for waterfowl hunting was implemented decades ago.

Concerns of lead exposure to other wildlife species, including doves has become more common. Managed dove hunting fields can provide fast-paced gunning opportunities leading to the deposition of significant quantities of lead within some fields. This lead can potentially be ingested by species foraging in these fields such as doves, ducks, geese, prairie chickens, and non-game species such as songbirds. Concerns may be elevated in fields where no-till planting has been employed (increasingly common) for its soil building and erosion control benefits. As the name implies, no-till planted fields do not incorporate ground tillage into planting preparations. Lead deposited in these fields may be more likely to remain available to wildlife at the ground surface as compared to conventionally planted fields where tillage is incorporated into plans and where lead could be mixed beneath the soil surface.

Non-toxic shot availability and price has improved and its use should help to insure the responsible conservation of our wildlife resources and preservation of our treasured hunting heritage.



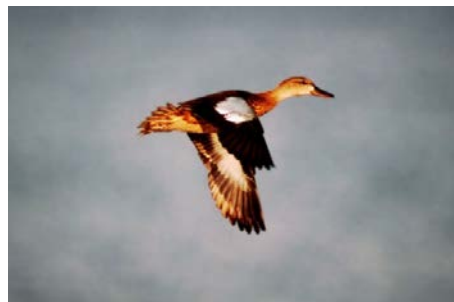
Early Teal Season Looks to Have Potential:

Recent changes in habitat conditions may enhance opportunities for waterfowl hunters early this year with the beginning of the teal season on September 8. Above average populations, liberal limits, and improved habitat conditions following recent rains, leave room for hunters to be optimistic about the upcoming season. The early teal season in the Low Plains Zone has been set from September 8 through September 23.



The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has reported that blue-winged and green-winged teal populations remain strong and are significantly above long-term averages. Although teal populations are estimated to be below those seen throughout the flyway in 2017, fall teal flights are still predicted to be good.

Perhaps most importantly, habitat conditions are improving with recent rains. During most years, lake habitats lack significant food resources. This year however may be different as many plants became established within dewatered zones at the upper ends of the lake. Recent rains have caused lake levels to rise within the edges of these zones, shallowly flooding many of those plants which now will provide food and cover for wetland wildlife species including waterfowl. In most years, lake habitats provide water only, but this year the lake has the potential to provide water, food, and cover but additional rain will be needed to maintain lake levels within these habitat areas. If lake levels persist or increasingly rise into these plant zones the lake should be more attractive to migrating waterfowl and have greater ability to hold waterfowl once they arrive. Weather will undoubtedly play a part (as it always does) in determining the extent of waterfowl use this year as well. Hunters are encouraged to visit the area website to view weekly waterfowl population and habitat condition updates.



Would you like more information about the El Dorado Wildlife Area?

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