

## Characteristics of Hunter Access Programs in the United States

The following is a completion report for a survey of state wildlife agencies regarding hunter access program characteristics. The survey was conducted by Student Intern, Jacob Firle, undergraduate ecology major at Minnesota State University-Mankato in cooperation with Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Information was gathered by phone or e-mail during September through November 2007. A copy of the survey instrument is included at the end of this report as Appendix 1.

Surveys were sent to 22 states felt to have walk-in access program. Five states (Kentucky, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Vermont) did not respond. The 17 states that completed surveys are included in Table 1. All returned surveys are included in this report.

The survey was done in response to a request by the Minnesota State Legislature to provide a plan for a hunter access program for Minnesota.

For further information on this survey contact Richard Kimmel, DNR Wildlife Research Group Leader at [richard.kimmel@dnr.state.mn.us](mailto:richard.kimmel@dnr.state.mn.us) or 507-642-8478 ext. 225.

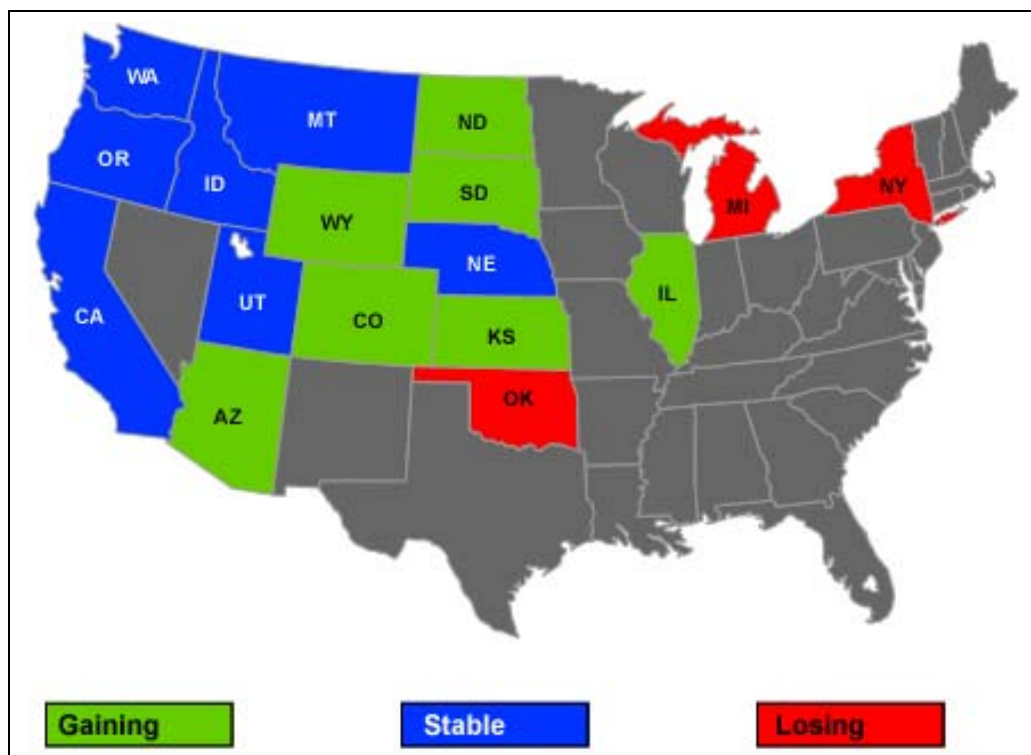


Table 1. Characteristics of North American Hunter Access Programs

<u>State</u>	<u>Program Name/s</u>	<u>Hunting Available</u>	<u>Total Acres</u>	<u>Acre Status</u>	<u>FTE'S</u>	<u>Annual Cost</u>	<u>Funding Source/s</u>	<u>Rating</u>
<i>Arizona</i>	Access Program, Adopt-A-Ranch, Landowner Respect Program	Upland/Big Game	2,000,000 <sup>i</sup>	Gaining	3.40	\$600,000	State Lottery, Native American Casino's	7.5
<i>California</i>	No Formal Name	Upland Game	2,000	Stable	N/A	\$60,000	Game Bird Stamps	8.0
<i>Colorado</i>	Small Game Walk-In Access Program, Big Game Access Program (Pilot)	Mainly Pheasants, others	270,000	Gaining	0.75	\$432,000	Access Permit	9.0
<i>Idaho</i>	Access Yes!	All Species Hunted	1,361,276	Stable	8.00	\$615,000 <sup>ii</sup>	Hunting Licenses, Donations	9.0
<i>Illinois</i>	Access Illinois Outdoors <sup>iii</sup>	All Species Hunted	250,000	Gaining	1.00	None	Fee from hunter to landowner	8.0
<i>Kansas</i>	Walk In Hunting Access Program	All Species Hunted	1,075,361	Gaining	0.50+	\$2,000,000	Hunting Licenses, PR Grant	10
<i>Michigan</i>	Hunting Access Program	All Species Hunted	25,943	Losing	N/A	N/A	Hunting Licenses	N/A
<i>Montana</i>	Block Management Hunting Access Program	All Species Hunted	8,300,000	Gaining	23	\$6,500,000	Hunting Licenses	8
<i>Nebraska</i>	CRP—Management Access Program	All Species Hunted	180,000	Stable	2.00	\$700,000	Hunting Licenses/Stamps, State Lottery	8.0
<i>New York</i>	Fish and Wildlife Management Act Cooperative Areas	Upland/Big Game Mainly Pheasants, also Upland/Big Game,	144,182	Losing	None	N/A	Hunting Licenses, Conservation Fund	5.0
<i>North Dakota</i>	Private Land Open To Sportsmen	Waterfowl	1,000,000	Gaining	12.00	\$10,000,000	Habitat Stamp	10
<i>Oklahoma</i>	No Formal Name	All Species	500,000	Losing	3.00	\$200,000	Land Access Permits	

<u>State</u>	<u>Program Name/s</u>	<u>Hunting Available</u>	<u>Total Acres</u>	<u>Acre Status</u>	<u>FTE'S</u>	<u>Annual Cost</u>	<u>Funding Source/s</u>	<u>Rating</u>
<i>Oregon</i>	Access and Habitat Program	Upland/Big Game, Waterfowl	2,017,055	Stable	4.00	N/A	Hunting Licenses, Tag Auctions	9.0
<i>South Dakota</i>	Walk-In Hunting Access Program, Lower Oahe Waterfowl Access Program, Controlled Hunter Access Program (Pilot)	All Species Hunted	1,230,197	Gaining	6	\$2,329,481	Hunting Licenses, Pitman-Robinson Fund, Non-Resident Waterfowl Licenses	8.0
<i>Utah</i>	Cooperative Wildlife Management Program, Walk-In Access Program, Landowner Association Program	All Species Hunted	2,060,000	Gaining	8.00	\$420,000	General Funds, Federal Aid (PR)	7.0
<i>Washington</i>	Private Lands Access Program	Upland/Big Game, Waterfowl	1,500,000	Stable	3.50	\$300,000	Pittman-Robinson Fund, Hunting Licenses	7.0
<i>Wyoming</i>	Walk-In Hunting, Hunter Management	Upland/Big Game, Waterfowl	1,386,953	Gaining	5.00	\$870,000	Donations, Conservation Stamps, Restitution Funds	8.0

<sup>i</sup> Lands impacted mostly by road access, not actual hunting land set aside

<sup>ii</sup> Estimated cost, includes other programs, actual cost is not known

<sup>iii</sup> Not a state run program, operated by a non-profit organization



# Arizona

## *Contact Information*

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## *Questions*

### **1) What is the current name/s of your states hunter access program/s?**

Within the Landowner Relations Program for the Arizona Game and Fish Department, there are 3 programs that deal with access: the Access Program, Adopt-A-Ranch Program, and the Landowner Respect Program.

#### **1a) What types of hunting access does it/they provide (species)?**

These programs can provide access for any big game, small game and wildlife viewing opportunities around the state of Arizona. The species are: Mule Deer, White-tailed deer, elk, bighorn sheep, pronghorn antelope, turkey, javelina, bison, black bear, mountain lion, Gambel's quail, Mearns quail, Scaled quail, Blue grouse, Sandhill cranes, several waterfowl species, jack rabbit, cottontail, etc.

### **2) How many total acres are enrolled in your states program/s (for what year)?**

Due to the ownership pattern in the state of Arizona, our program works a little differently than programs in other states. Many roads that provide access into public lands around Arizona are private roads, which give the owner of these roads control over access to thousands of acres of public lands. What our program does is works with landowners to keep these roads open to the public and if the landowner is willing open up private land to hunting. We deal with ranches more than acres, and we negotiate access agreements specific to each ranch or landowner we work with. These agreements can last from 1 year to a perpetual easement. We loosely throw out the number of ~2 million acres impacted by our program each year. This is a conservative figure, and actual acres impacted are likely quite a bit higher.

### **3) Is the program/s gaining or losing acres or is it stable?**

Access in Arizona is becoming a very dynamic issue. The number of ranches cooperating with the Department increases each year.

#### **3a) Explain what the possible reason/s for this may be?**

The dedicated funding for the access programs is probably the most important reason we are able to continue to increase the number of cooperators utilizing our program. This funding does two things: allows us to keep staff in place to establish the trust needed to get landowners to allow access, and ensures we will have some funding to initiate access projects across the state.

Credibility and trust established by our staff and the program in general over the years is probably reason 1a for our continued expansion of the program. We have great people working in our program, which has built trust and credibility throughout the ranching community. Our regional, or field staff, are essential for creating relationship with landowners. Regional staff has the local knowledge of priority areas and important access point, and can foster very close working relationships with landowners, which is essential to the success of our program.

Building trust and credibility takes time, and if we were to lose any person in our staff, some of the trust would be lost until the new person was able to establish a relationship with the landowners in the area, however our program has also established a certain level credibility which helps our program withstand turn over in positions.

**4) What are the primary reasons why landowners chose to enroll or not enroll in the program/s?**

These are the top seven reasons why ranchers are closing off access in Arizona: vandalism, trespassing, littering, off-road activities, disruption of landowner operations liability Issues, undocumented Immigrants and drug trafficking (Southern Arizona)

Landowners with smaller properties are choosing not to participate in our program mostly because they purchased the property to enjoy for themselves, and have no interest in allowing others to use or cross their property.

The reasons why landowner chose to work with the Department and our program is the compensation we offer, and trust. The compensation we provide can be monetary, road maintenance, materials needed for ranching operations, or setting up volunteer projects. These volunteer projects provide manpower to do a variety of projects such as; a ranch clean up, a fence repair, or some other labor intensive project. The trust comes through time and effort by Department staff to understand and address (if possible) the concerns of the landowners.

**5) What (if any) financial gain or other benefit is given to landowners that enroll in this program/s? (Amount per acre if available)**

Landowners are given payments for allowing access to their property. This payment is negotiated with the landowner and depends on the number of hunters and/or wildlife viewers using the road or property to go hunting or wildlife viewing and how long the access is allowed. The payments to any single landowner cannot exceed a cost benefit analysis we complete for each project. This cost benefit analysis uses the economic value of hunting and wildlife viewing recreation (based on the National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service), and the number of hunters and wildlife viewers the using the property or road to determine the value the Department can justify for the access. Then it is up to our staff to negotiate what access is allowed, for how many years, and what the payment will be. The payments are not made on a per acre basis, but are based on the amount of opportunity the access provides.

**6) Are the lands left open for hunters to come and hunt whenever they chose or are hunters required to check-in before hunting (Include how they check-in: sign-in box, check-in at landowners home, call before hunting, other)?**

The amount or type of access is negotiated by our staff and outlined in our access agreements. Some ranches are open to hunting, some allow hunters to use roads to get to public lands, and some allow both. We have some ranches require a check in and some that don't require a check in. Some of our agreements allow year round access, others allow access during specific hunting seasons. It all depends on what the landowner is willing to agree to, and how much opportunity the access will provide.

We will provide a check in box and an "access permit" for ranches that want the check in. Most landowners that want a check in of some sort do not require a phone call, but again that case by case. We provide signs at access points that instruct hunters on what is required to gain access to each ranch or road.

**7) How many full time employees (FTE) equivalents are needed to administer the program/s?**

More than we have currently. At present, we have 8 people that work in the Landowner Relations Program; however, none of these people have access as 100% of their job duties. If I had to break down these positions into percent of time spent on access I would say we have 2 people that are 90% access, 3 people that are 50% access and 3 people that are 20% access.

Perhaps better way of explaining this is that the access programs are tools used by the Landowner Relations Program staff, and each person in our Landowner Relations Program is expected to be knowledgeable and promote our access programs as part of their job duties.

**8) What is the total annual cost of each program to your state?**

Right now we have a budget of \$600,000 per year to implement our access programs. Much of this goes to salary and operational costs. On the ground project funding for each program are as follows: the Access program is \$180,000, Adapt-A-Ranch \$30,000, Landowner Respect Program \$35,000.

**9) What funding source/s does your state use to generate money for the program?**

Our funding for access comes from 2 sources. \$500,000 is a dedicated amount from our Heritage (state lottery) funds. \$100,000 is an annual allocation (not a dedicated funding source) from an account that is provided to the state of Arizona by Native American Tribes that operate Casino's across the state.

**10) Is there any extra cost to hunters who choose to hunt on these lands or is it included in standard hunting fees/licenses?**

At present, there are no costs to the hunter to access these properties.

**11) On a scale of 1-10 (1-low, 10-high) how would you assess how well the program/s has worked thus far?**

I would say that this program is a 7 or 8. Just like anything, the more funding the better the program and there is always room for improvement, but we are able to build strong relationships with private landowners through our programs and address problems that lead to restricted access for hunters and wildlife viewers.

**11a) Explain why you feel this way.**

We are able to focus our efforts on lands that are critical for access. We can generate projects that are win-win situations with landowners and the Department. We have the ability to be flexible through our negotiations to provide access at a level that the landowner is comfortable with. We continue to build trust and support among the group of people that control the access to and habitat for much of the wildlife in the state. In my mind the biggest reason I think our program works is that it is based on the number of hunters and wildlife viewers that use the property rather than the number of acres opened up. Not all acres provide the same amount of hunting opportunity, but by basing our payments on hunting opportunity we are able to get the biggest bang for our buck.

**12) Is there any other information about your states program/s that could be useful to the Minnesota DNR when it considers its future access program?**

There isn't anything else about the program, but I do want to pass on a thought I have on access in general. Every state has it's own culture, values, norms, societal and political pressures. The success

or failure of any access program will rest on the people that administer the program understanding the culture and values of landowners and the ability to foster good working relationships with the landowners. Just a quick thought.

**13) Do you have report/s available on your program that you could be sent?**

We have many different internal reports, so I'm sure I could find something to send you if you let me know what information you are looking for. Our reporting is typically by ranches opened to access, and opened to access can mean roads, private acres, or both depending on the agreement.

# California

## *Contact Information*

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## *Questions*

**1) What is the current name/s of your states hunter access program/s?**

California does not yet have a formal access program like that in many other states. Legislation has been passed to initiate a program called the “Shared Habitat Alliance for Recreational Enhancement” Program. (Fish and Game code Sections 1570 – 1574). This program has yet to be formally established. Currently, public hunting on about 2,000 acres of private lands is offered through our “Game Bird Heritage Program”.

**1a) What types of hunting access does it/they provide (species)?**

Doves, quail, pheasant, rabbits

**2) How many total acres are enrolled in your states program/s (for what year)?**

2,000 (2007)

**3) Is the program/s gaining or losing acres or is it stable?**

Stable, although it may expand substantially in the future.

**3a) Explain what the possible reason/s for this may be?**

A large public access program on private lands has been difficult to establish in California, partially because there is a strong market for lands that offer quality hunting. It is difficult to compete with a modest amount of funding.

**4) What are the primary reasons why landowners chose to enroll or not enroll in the program/s?**

Individuals or businesses selling hunting access offer landowners substantial amounts for hunting rights. Landowners are concerned about liability.

**5) What (if any) financial gain or other benefit is given to landowners that enroll in this program/s? (Amount per acre if available)**

For the small program mentioned above (Game Bird Heritage Program), a conservation organization leases farmland, and the Department of Fish and Game grows wildlife food crops on it. We don't have information on the lease price. However, this is a somewhat unusual circumstance (for California),

**6) Are the lands left open for hunters to come and hunt whenever they chose or are hunters required to check-in before hunting (Include how they check-in: sign-in box, check-in at landowners home, call before hunting, other)?**

No check-in required. This may not be the case if the “Shared Habitat Alliance” program mentioned above comes about.

**7) How many full time employees (FTE) equivalents are needed to administer the program/s?**

Not applicable at this point.

**8) What is the total annual cost of each program to your state?**

Farming costs for the 2,000 acre program are about \$60,000. (About half of this is to purchase irrigation water.)

**9) What funding source/s does your state use to generate money for the program?**

Upland Game Bird Stamp funds.

**10) Is there any extra cost to hunters who choose to hunt on these lands or is it included in standard hunting fees/licenses?**

No extra cost.

**11) On a scale of 1-10 (1-low, 10-high) how would you assess how well the program/s has worked thus far?**

8

**11a) Explain why you feel this way.**

The small program that exists has worked well, but it only exists because of unique circumstances in that area. Establishing a larger program has been difficult.

**12) Is there any other information about your states program/s that could be useful to the Minnesota DNR when it considers its future access program?**

N/A

**13) Do you have report/s available on your program that you could be sent?**

N/A

# Colorado

## *Contact Information*

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## *Questions*

### **1) What is the current name/s of your states hunter access program/s?**

Small Game Walk-In Access Program (initiated in 2001)

Big Game Access Program (2007 Pilot Program)

#### **1a) What types of hunting access does it/they provide (species)?**

The Small Game Program traditionally focused on pheasants although hunters could harvest any legal species of small game that might occur on a property. We have since expanded our focus to quail, doves and waterfowl. The small game program contains no clause to permit public big game hunting on enrolled properties.

Due to the success of the small game program and high demand for public access, the Big Game Access Program Pilot was initiated in 2007 to determine the feasibility of obtaining access for big game hunting, primarily eastern plains pronghorn and deer hunting opportunity.

### **2) How many total acres are enrolled in your states program/s (for what year)?**

The Small Game program has enrolled around 205,000 acres in 2007.

The Big Game Pilot enrolled approximately 65,500 acres in 2007.

### **3) Is the program gaining or losing acres or is it stable?**

The small game program is stable or increasing. The Big Game program was a pilot program in 2007.

#### **3a) Explain what the possible reason/s for this may be?**

N/A

### **4) What are the primary reasons why landowners chose to enroll or not enroll in the program/s?**

Landowners enroll because: they benefit financially from hunting, easier than leasing to private entities, less disturbance during the season from hunters seeking permission, minimized trespass problems, WIA brings in non-local revenue to small towns and communities, some landowners see WIA as a way to make a contribution to society

Landowners choosing not to enroll: Have family or friends that hunt on the land, They are not comfortable with public access, agricultural conflicts, A few just don't like hunting, A few lease to private clubs or individuals

### **5) What (if any) financial gain or other benefit is given to landowners that enroll in this program/s? (Amount per acre if available)**

We pay differently based on parcel size, quality and opportunity present. The general small game rate is between \$1-3 per acre, but we do offer a bonus payment for sprinkler corners that offer excellent pheasant cover and opportunity.

For waterfowl leases we are allowing landowners to “bid” the lease cost during 2007 so that we can establish a fixed rate in the future.

The Big game program offered landowners between \$0.25/acre and \$3/acre depending on how many seasons of access were offered and the type of habitat offered and whether the access is for pronghorn only or deer and pronghorn.

**6) Are the lands left open for hunters to come and hunt whenever they chose or are hunters required to check-in before hunting (Include how they check-in: sign-in box, check-in at landowners home, call before hunting, other)?**

The SG WIA program is true “Walk-In” hunting opportunity. The hunter must buy an SG Access Permit and then they can hunt any parcel enrolled without a check-in system or reservation. There is virtually no contact with the landowner from the hunters perspective.

The Big Game program also does not use check in boxes or reservation systems.

**7) How many full time employees (FTE) equivalents are needed to administer the program/s?**

Small game Walk-In takes about ½ to ¾ of an FTE. Only part of an FTE was used for the Big Game Pilot.

**8) What is the total annual cost of each program to your state?**

Gross cost is around \$360,000 for the small game program.

Gross cost for the Big Game program is approximately \$72,000.

**9) What funding source/s does your state use to generate money for the program?**

Colorado sells a permit that is required to access Walk-In Lands. The small game permit costs \$20 and is required for any hunter 18 years or older. This permit offsets a significant part of the overall program cost.

The Big game permit costs \$40, in addition to the normal license cost.

**10) Is there any extra cost to hunters who choose to hunt on these lands or is it included in standard hunting fees/licenses?**

The Walk-In Access Permit is required in addition to a hunting license.

**11) On a scale of 1-10 (1-low, 10-high) how would you assess how well the program/s has worked thus far?**

Small Game program is a “9”. It’s a win-win situation for the landowners and hunters. There are always improvements to be made but for the most part both groups are happy with the program.

Hunting seasons are just beginning on the Big Game Program so its too early to tell.

**11a) Explain why you feel this way.**

For the small game program, hunters recognize the importance and difficulty of obtaining access – approximately 45% of our pheasant hunters buy the access permit, which is surprisingly high. Prior to WIA, our pheasant hunter numbers annually declined by around 7.3%. After Walk-In, the decline in hunter numbers stopped completely, even in the face of

extreme drought which seriously hampered the quality of habitat and small game populations.

We also track landowner participation. Around 90% of the landowners that are accepted in 2005 (for example), will apply for Walk-In in 2006. Generally speaking, we have more landowners trying to get into the program than we can accept.

As before, we need to go through a hunting season on the big game side to evaluate how feasible it is.

**12) Is there any other information about your states program/s that could be useful to the Minnesota DNR when it considers its future access program?**

Colorado uses local non-profit groups to hold enrollment periods for landowners in the small game program. I write 9 Purchase Agreements with a variety of groups, (including a PF Chapter, two FFA clubs, local conservation districts) paying them on the basis of \$.50 per acre. They hold a sign-up period for landowners, then give us the landowner contracts to inspect. We inspect and approve or deny parcels of land on the basis of habitat quality, paying the contracting group on the basis of "acres accepted". The contracting service group is then tasked with posting the signs that we provide. After the season we pay the contractor fee and the rental fee, which the contractor then pays the landowner.

Contractors that are most successful are ones that have a strong tie to the agricultural community, such as a Conservation District (in Colorado these districts are housed in the NRCS offices). With some habitat training, they are very efficient to work with.

By the same token, a bad contractor can cause lots of problems for the program, so if you go this route, make sure that there is an "out" clause in the contract.

Colorado also uses our field staff to talk to landowners about WIA, and we do have the ability to contract with those landowners directly. We have had good success using this method as well.

Another thing to consider – it is important to manage hunter expectations beginning at inception of a program. As you can imagine, expectations are very wide-ranging, from the hunter that just wants a place to walk around versus the guy that expects to shoot a limit every time out and is disappointed when that doesn't happen.

Secondarily, its also important to emphasize to hunters that a Walk-In Program should never become the only tool in the hunting tool box. My perception is that many hunters use WIA lands exclusively and never try to obtain access to private hunting lands.

**13) Do you have report/s available on your program that you could be sent?**

Will have in the future. Contact me and I will forward at a later date.

# Idaho

## *Contact Information*

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## *Questions*

**1) What is the current name/s of your states hunter access program/s?**

Access Yes!

**1a) What types of hunting access does it/they provide (species)?**

All species that are available to hunt or fish in Idaho.

**2) How many total acres are enrolled in your states program/s (for what year)?**

108 Access Yes! Lease Agreements opening 634,956 private acres and 726,320 public acres of land for use by sportsmen for 2007.

**3) Is the program/s gaining or losing acres or is it stable?**

Fairly stable only due to the lack of increase in funding, there continue to be increased interest. We are investigating alternative compensation for landowners. A pilot project was started in 2006 to test forms of alternative compensation (i.e. big game hunting tags). The Pilot was controversial with sportsmen and was canceled.

**3a) Explain what the possible reason/s for this may be?**

N/A

**4) What are the primary reasons why landowners chose to enroll or not enroll in the program/s?**

Money was the primary reason, second reason being landowners felt they had some control of hunting and fishing access.

**5) What (if any) financial gain or other benefit is given to landowners that enroll in this program/s? (Amount per acre if available)**

The landowner creates their own BID for the Access Yes! program- containing all the criteria the landowners require for access to or through their property. The bid is ranked by a regional group of sportsmen as to the value of the hunting access and the cost of the lease agreement. Therefore financial cost of the lease will vary.

**6) Are the lands left open for hunters to come and hunt whenever they chose or are hunters required to check-in before hunting (Include how they check-in: sign-in box, check-in at landowners home, call before hunting, other)?**

Some landowners require personal check-in, limits on days of hunting, limits on hunter numbers- the rules of the ranch vary with each landowner. That is one of the reasons Access Yes! is so popular- it is flexible. We are working on a hunter management system- a hunter reservation system that can be managed by IDFG or by the landowner.

**7) How many full time employees (FTE) equivalents are needed to administer the program/s?**  
At current time 8 FTE- 1 in each IDFG Region and 1 at the headquarters office. There are additional part time employees and temp help during hunting seasons.

**8) What is the total annual cost of each program to your state?**  
In FY07 approximately \$615,000 was spent in lease costs and personnel.

**9) What funding source/s does your state use to generate money for the program?**  
License and donation, and a SuperHunt drawing: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/superhunt/> Sportsmen apply for a SuperTag or a SuperHunt where, if successful they can hunt in any open hunt in the state, for the species that they have applied for- or the SuperHunt, for elk, deer, moose or antelope anywhere in the state that there is an open hunt. The proceeds go towards supporting the Access Yes! Program

**10) Is there any extra cost to hunters who choose to hunt on these lands or is it included in standard hunting fees/licenses?**  
No, not at this time. We are currently investigating an additional conservation stamp to be required to use Access Yes! areas to help with program funding.

**11) On a scale of 1-10 (1-low, 10-high) how would you assess how well the program/s has worked thus far?**  
9+

**11a) Explain why you feel this way.**

Landowners continue to sign up, feedback from sportsmen is great. The program continue to expand and have great support. We struggle with finding more funding.

**12) Is there any other information about your states program/s that could be useful to the Minnesota DNR when it considers its future access program?**  
Landowner Liability. Here is the link to the Idaho statute that provides landowners relief from liability when they provide hunting access: <http://www3.state.id.us/cgi-bin/newidst?sctid=360160004.K>

**13) Do you have report/s available on your program that you could be sent?**  
<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/ifwis/huntplanner/accessyesguide.aspx>

# Illinois

## *Contact Information*

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## *Questions*

**1) What is the current name/s of your states hunter access program/s?**

[Access Illinois Outdoors](#)

**1a) What types of hunting access does it/they provide (species)?**

[Deer, turkey, bird, coyote or any huntable species that can be provided by the landowner.](#)

**2) How many total acres are enrolled in your states program/s (for what year)?**

[250,000 acres - 2007](#)

**3) Is the program/s gaining or losing acres or is it stable?**

[Gaining](#)

**3a) Explain what the possible reason/s for this may be?**

[More interest in additional income gained from hunting.](#)

**4) What are the primary reasons why landowners chose to enroll or not enroll in the program/s?**

[Revenue](#)

**5) What (if any) financial gain or other benefit is given to landowners that enroll in this program/s? (Amount per acre if available)**

[Landowners set their own fee.](#)

**6) Are the lands left open for hunters to come and hunt whenever they chose or are hunters required to check-in before hunting (Include how they check-in: sign-in box, check-in at landowners home, call before hunting, other)?**

[Hunters are required to schedule the hunt with the landowner prior to hunt.](#)

**7) How many full time employees (FTE) equivalents are needed to administer the program/s?**

[2 but only have 1.](#)

**8) What is the total annual cost of each program to your state?**

[None](#)

**9) What funding source/s does your state use to generate money for the program?**

[The state does not fund us or help us financially.](#)

**10) Is there any extra cost to hunters who choose to hunt on these lands or is it included in standard hunting fees/licenses?**

[There is an access fee paid to the landowner.](#)

**11) On a scale of 1-10 (1-low, 10-high) how would you assess how well the program/s has worked thus far?**

8

**11a) Explain why you feel this way.**

It's an excellent program to provide hunting access for both resident and non-resident hunters and provides additional revenue to the landowners at no additional expense to them. It costs the state nothing and the land is kept on the tax roles.

**12) Is there any other information about your states program/s that could be useful to the Minnesota DNR when it considers its future access program?**

N/A

**13) Do you have report/s available on your program that you could be sent?**

Yes

# Kansas

## *Contact Information*

**Date:** Oct 2007

**Name:** Mike Mitchner

**Title:** Chief of Wildlife

**E-mail:** mikewm@wp.state.ks.us

**Phone:** (620) 672-5911

## *Questions*

**1) What is the current name/s of your states hunter access program/s?**

Walk In Hunting Access Program.

**1a) What types of hunting access does it/they provide (species)?**

All Species huntable in the State of Kansas.

**2)How many total acres are enrolled in your states program/s (for what year)?**

1,075,361 acres.

**3) Is the program/s gaining or losing acres or is it stable?**

Increasing.

**3a) Explain what the possible reason/s for this may be?**

It is a program popular with landowners in the state, more so in West than in East probably due to land ownership patterns.

**4) What are the primary reasons why landowners chose to enroll or not enroll in the program/s?**

To make more money off of land, to gain benefit of additional KDWP patrol, to not be bothered by hunters seeking permission.

**5)What (if any) financial gain or other benefit is given to landowners that enroll in this program/s? (Amount per acre if available)**

Average cost per acre is \$1.47.

**6) Are the lands left open for hunters to come and hunt whenever they chose or are hunters required to check-in before hunting (Include how they check-in: sign-in box, check-in at landowners home, call before hunting, other)?**

Land is open during the contract period some are Sept - Jan others are Nov. - Jan.

**7) How many full time employees (FTE) equivalents are needed to administer the program/s?**

One FTE spends 50% of time coordinating, 29 dist biologists spend a portion of their time in addition to other duties.

**8) What is the total annual cost of each program to your state?**

Approximately \$2,000,000 including salaries, leases, and consumables such as signage and atlases

**9) What funding source/s does your state use to generate money for the program?**

Hunting license Dollars and a PR Grant.

**10) Is there any extra cost to hunters who choose to hunt on these lands or is it included in standard hunting fees/licenses?**

It is included in standard license fee

**11) On a scale of 1-10 (1-low, 10-high) how would you assess how well the program/s has worked thus far?**

10

**11a) Explain why you feel this way.**

It has been a very popular program to hunters, landowners, employees, and legislators in Kansas

**12) Is there any other information about your states program/s that could be useful to the Minnesota DNR when it considers its future access program?**

N/A

**13) Do you have report/s available on your program that you could be sent?**

Various things like brochures, atlas etc.

# Michigan

## *Contact Information*

**Date:** Oct 2007

**Name:** Mark Sargent

**Title:** Michigan Department of Natural Resources Private Lands Office

**E-mail:** sargentm@michigan.gov

**Phone:** (517) 241-0666

## *Questions*

**1) What is the current name/s of your states hunter access program/s?**

The current program name is Michigan Hunting Access Program (HAP).

**1a) What types of hunting access does it/they provide (species)?**

Hunting is allowed for all open hunting seasons.

**2) How many total acres are enrolled in your states program/s (for what year)?**

Currently there are 25,943 acres enrolled in HAP (Down from 188,000).

**3) Is the program/s gaining or losing acres or is it stable?**

The program is losing acres

**3a) Explain what the possible reason/s for this may be?**

This decline has incurred for several reasons including, ownership changing hands, private individuals taking over leasing the property, problems associated with having the property open to the general hunting public and reduced priority to wildlife division's staff.

**4) What are the primary reasons why landowners chose to enroll or not enroll in the program/s?**

With the increase in land prices it is difficult for the state to offer competitive prices so landowners chose to sell their land for money or not enroll at all. It is not unusual for a small group of hunters to offer the landowner slightly more than the state offer with the understanding that instead of being open to public hunting the landowner will only have to be concerned with a small group of hunters. Landowners opening their lands to public hunting through the HAP also have many of the same problems associated on state lands open to hunting. These issues include over use, littering, driving vehicles in areas off limit to vehicles such as farm fields, hunter conflicts, etc. When these problems reach a certain level the farmer either drops from the program or becomes involved in a lease with individual hunters.

Those that chose to enroll do so for financial benefits provided by the program and for a better system of granting hunters access to their property

**5) What (if any) financial gain or other benefit is given to landowners that enroll in this program/s? (Amount per acre if available)**

HAP lease rates are negotiated based on a fixed financial scale based upon the general hunting value of the lease acreages and is approved by the Natural Resource Commission every 4-8 years.

**6) Are the lands left open for hunters to come and hunt whenever they chose or are hunters**

**required to check-in before hunting (Include how they check-in: sign-in box, check-in at landowners home, call before hunting, other)?**

This is negotiated with the landowner. Some have self check-in boxes and others require check-in with the landowner.

**7) How many full time employees (FTE) equivalents are needed to administer the program/s?**

N/A

**8) What is the total annual cost of each program to your state?**

N/A

**9) What funding source/s does your state use to generate money for the program?**

Funding comes from a portion of every hunting license sold in the state.

**10) Is there any extra cost to hunters who choose to hunt on these lands or is it included in standard hunting fees/licenses?**

No, it is included in regular hunting license fees

**11) On a scale of 1-10 (1-low, 10-high) how would you assess how well the program/s has worked thus far?**

N/A

**11a) Explain why you feel this way.**

N/A

**12) Is there any other information about your states program/s that could be useful to the Minnesota DNR when it considers its future access program?**

N/A

**13) Do you have report/s available on your program that you could be sent?**

Reports are included.

# Montana

## *Contact Information*

**Date:** Oct 2007

**Name:** Alan Charles

**Title:** Coordinator, Landowner/Sportsman Relations

**E-mail:** acharles@mt.gov

**Phone:** (406) 444-3798

## *Questions*

**1) What is the current name/s of your states hunter access program/s?**

Block Management Hunting Access Program

**1a) What types of hunting access does it/they provide (species)?**

All huntable species – big game/waterfowl/upland bird to include turkey

**2) How many total acres are enrolled in your states program/s (for what year)?**

2007 – 1250 landowners have enrolled 8.3 million acres

**3) Is the program/s gaining or losing acres or is it stable?**

Stable to gaining

**3a) Explain what the possible reason/s for this may be?**

Successful program

**4) What are the primary reasons why landowners chose to enroll or not enroll in the program/s?**

Landowners value the incentives package, which includes compensation and/or services, liability protection, livestock loss reimbursement, complimentary non-transferable license, and the focus of the program is on helping the landowner manage public hunting on private land which remains under the control of the landowner.

**5) What (if any) financial gain or other benefit is given to landowners that enroll in this program/s? (Amount per acre if available)**

No fee per acre is paid, as FWP does not lease the land away from the landowner. Instead, the landowner is eligible to receive up to \$12,000 per year in payment to offset potential impacts associated with the public using the private land (average payment per landowner is \$3,000 per year). Payment is made using a formula that allows for payment of \$10/per hunter day (a hunter day is anytime a hunter enters the property in the course of a day; a group of 3 hunters hunting for 3 days equals 9 hunter days).

**6) Are the lands left open for hunters to come and hunt whenever they chose or are hunters required to check-in before hunting (Include how they check-in: sign-in box, check-in at landowners home, call before hunting, other)?**

Most Block Management Areas require some sort of sign in to provide for accountability of who is on the property; on some areas, hunters administer their own permission by signing rosters, daily coupons, etc; on other areas, the landowners or FWP employee issues permission slips to a limited number of

hunters;

**7) How many full time employees (FTE) equivalents are needed to administer the program/s?**

Montana FWP currently commits 23 FTE to administering this program; about 15 of those FTE translate into 40-45 season employees hired to assist in hunter management activities;

**8) What is the total annual cost of each program to your state?**

FWP currently commits about \$6.5 million to this program; about \$4.1 million is paid to landowners in impact payments;

**9) What funding source/s does your state use to generate money for the program?**

Multiple ear-marked license fees from various licenses;

**10) Is there any extra cost to hunters who choose to hunt on these lands or is it included in standard hunting fees/licenses?**

Hunter pay no extra cost to use the program;

**11) On a scale of 1-10 (1-low, 10-high) how would you assess how well the program/s has worked thus far?**

8+

**11a) Explain why you feel this way.**

Multiple surveys of landowners and hunters have indicated high levels (80+%) of satisfaction in key areas; Program has opened or maintained public access to significant portions of the state (which is 64% privately-owned), allowing for effective game management and continued retention and recruitment of Montana hunters;

**12) Is there any other information about your states program/s that could be useful to the Minnesota DNR when it considers its future access program?**

The sooner a program is started, the less difficult it is to maintain access in an arena where nationwide trends indicate increased privatization of public wildlife and increased loss of traditional public access to private land;

Another reason Montana has had success with the program is the involvement throughout of a citizen's committee comprised of landowners and hunters who have helped build, shape, and monitor the program;

**13) Do you have report/s available on your program that you could be sent?**

Reports are available on [fwp.mt.gov](http://fwp.mt.gov), under "hunting," "hunting access," "private land/public wildlife", with a website devoted to Block Management also available;

# Nebraska

## *Contact Information*

**Date:** Oct 2007

**Name:** Steven P. Riley

**Title:** Wildlife Division Assistant Administrator

**E-mail:** [steve.riley@ngpc.ne.gov](mailto:steve.riley@ngpc.ne.gov)

**Phone:** (402) 471-5420

## *Questions*

**1) What is the current name/s of your states hunter access program/s?**  
Conservation Reserve Program—Management Access Program (CRP-MAP)

**1a) What types of hunting access does it/they provide (species)?**

All

**2) How many total acres are enrolled in your states program/s (for what year)?**

180,000

**3) Is the program/s gaining or losing acres or is it stable?**

Stable

**3a) Explain what the possible reason/s for this may be?**

Limited funding

**4) What are the primary reasons why landowners chose to enroll or not enroll in the program/s?**

Lots of reasons: want to facilitate hunting, to stop trespassing, reduce liability, money, added law enforcement, others.

**5) What (if any) financial gain or other benefit is given to landowners that enroll in this program/s? (Amount per acre if available)**

They receive \$1-\$5 per acre depending upon the habitat management work they agree to do.

**6) Are the lands left open for hunters to come and hunt whenever they chose or are hunters required to check-in before hunting (Include how they check-in: sign-in box, check-in at landowners home, call before hunting, other)?**

Wide open.

**7) How many full time employees (FTE) equivalents are needed to administer the program/s?**

That's hard to say. We have probably more than a dozen people who work on the program, but none of it is full time. I would guess it would probably be 2 FTEs, but it only works out to be that few do to the local availability of distributed staff.

**8) What is the total annual cost of each program to your state?**

About \$700,000

**9) What funding source/s does your state use to generate money for the program?**

Habitat Stamp Funds, Hunting License Funds, Pheasants Forever Chapter Contributions and Lottery Funds from the Nebraska Environmental Trust.

**10) Is there any extra cost to hunters who choose to hunt on these lands or is it included in standard hunting fees/licenses?**

No.

**11) On a scale of 1-10 (1-low, 10-high) how would you assess how well the program/s has worked thus far?**

8

**11a) Explain why you feel this way.**

It has been very positively perceived. It has increased and dispersed hunting access, it has helped us manage private land habitats and to spread the word about early-successional habitat management, it was a catalyst to establishing mid-contract management as a part of CRP nationally.

**12) Is there any other information about your states program/s that could be useful to the Minnesota DNR when it considers its future access program?**

There are lots of examples of programs around the country and that Minnesota should easily be able to craft a program that will suit its needs. I would offer that, as you begin to work through this process, I would be willing to consult with you on details regarding all aspects of the program and even what you might consider doing to get this idea through your internal processes (may be the largest obstacle).

**13) Do you have report/s available on your program that you could be sent?**

Yes, I will see if Emily Munter, our hunting access committee chair, can send you a draft of the report she has been coordinating.

# New York

## *Contact Information*

**Date:** Oct 2007

**Name:** Jed Hayden

**Title:** New York State Department of Wildlife Conservation

**E-mail:** jmhayden@gw.dec.state.ny.us

**Phone:** (518) 402-8943

## *Questions*

**1) What is the current name/s of your states hunter access program/s?**

Fish and Wildlife Management Act Cooperative Areas

**1a) What types of hunting access does it/they provide (species)?**

Big game (white-tailed deer, black bear), small game (many species), and trapping (furbearers)

**2) How many total acres are enrolled in your states program/s (for what year)?**

As of 2007 there are 144,182 acres enrolled.

**3) Is the program/s gaining or losing acres or is it stable?**

Losing

**3a) Explain what the possible reason/s for this may be?**

Competing land values, lack of an incentive for landowners to get involved, after enrolling, participating landowners are not prepared for the influx of public use after enrolling, participating landowners offer only limited public access changes in social values of rural landowners lack of personnel to administer the lands and/or agreements, some FWMA Cooperative Areas have been purchased or gifted to the State.

**4) What are the primary reasons why landowners chose to enroll or not enroll in the program/s?**

Unknown

**5) What (if any) financial gain or other benefit is given to landowners that enroll in this program/s? (Amount per acre if available)**

At this point, no financial benefit is offered, but the possibility of doing this is being explored

**6) Are the lands left open for hunters to come and hunt whenever they chose or are hunters required to check-in before hunting (Include how they check-in: sign-in box, check-in at landowners home, call before hunting, other)?**

Both, it depends on the particular FWMA

**7) How many full time employees (FTE) equivalent are needed to administer the program/s?**

There are no full time employees currently administering the program. If we had one or two, it would greatly benefit the program

**8) What is the total annual cost of each program to your state?**

It is unknown, very little.

**9) What funding source/s does your state use to generate money for the program?**

Conservation Fund, money from hunting and fishing licenses.

**10) s there any extra cost to hunters who choose to hunt on these lands or is it included in standard hunting fees/licenses?**

There is no extra cost

**11) On a scale of 1-10 (1-low, 10-high) how would you assess how well the program/s has worked thus far?**

Early on it was a great success. However at this point it is about a 5

**11a) Explain why you feel this way.**

Our agency needs to dedicate more time and effort into this program to recruit new cooperators and maintain current ones.

**12) Is there any other information about your sates program/s that could be useful to the Minnesota DNR when it considers its future access program?**

No

**13) Do you have report/s available on your program that you could be sent?**

Yes, A document will be e-mailed

# North Dakota

## *Contact Information*

**Date:** Oct 2007

**Name:** Kevin Kading

**Title:** Private Lands Coordinator

**E-mail:** [kkading@nd.gov](mailto:kkading@nd.gov)

**Phone:** (701) 328-6371

## *Questions*

**1) What is the current name/s of your states hunter access program/s?**

Private Land Open To Sportsmen (PLOTS)

**1a) What types of hunting access does it/they provide (species)?**

Program is mainly focused on pheasants, but many PLOTS tracts offer big game and waterfowl hunting in addition to upland game.

**2) How many total acres are enrolled in your states program/s (for what year)?**

As of August 2007, the PLOTS program reached 1 million acres; a goal that was set by Governor John Hoeven in 2003.

**3) Is the program/s gaining or losing acres or is it stable?**

The program still has a lot of interest from landowners. Reaching 1 million acres was a goal that was reached two full years ahead of schedule. The original goal was 1 million acres by 2009. The Department will focus on maintaining 1 million acres as its next goal.

**3a) Explain what the possible reason/s for this may be?**

There are many challenges that face the PLOTS program in the next few years. The unknown future of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres in the state plays a large role in the PLOTS Program and the habitat base it creates for wildlife. The Department is concerned that if a large amount of CRP acres expire and are not eligible for re enrollment into CRP that wildlife populations will suffer. If wildlife populations decline, a loss of hunters could result in a loss of PLOTS program funding.

**4) What are the primary reasons why landowners chose to enroll or not enroll in the program/s?**

PLOTS provide another option for landowners when making decisions on their land. Financial incentives provided by the program are a major factor. Some landowners like the fact they are creating habitat, allowing people to have a place to hunt and securing the hunting heritage of North Dakota and our country.

**5) What (if any) financial gain or other benefit is given to landowners that enroll in this program/s? (Amount per acre if available)**

There is not a set amount per acre for the entire PLOTS program. Under the PLOTS acronym, there are many types of program agreement lengths, payment types, cost share assistance, incentives etc... Some payments are made annually while some are made one-time upfront. Annual payments range from \$1-\$12 per acre for short term contracts. Upfront payments vary depending upon length of agreement and amount of acres the landowner enrolls.

**6) Are the lands left open for hunters to come and hunt whenever they chose or are hunters**

**required to check-in before hunting (Include how they check-in: sign-in box, check-in at landowners home, call before hunting, other)?**

Land enrolled in PLOTS is open from Sept. 1 to April 1 for Walking Access Only. Hunters do not need to sign in, or check with landowners before hunting on PLOTS. The Department produces a PLOTS Guide that shows the locations of PLOTS tracts and other public lands open for hunting in the state free of charge.

**7) How many full time employees (FTE) equivalents are needed to administer the program/s?**

Three administrative level staff are located in the Department headquarters and 9 field biologists are located in field offices throughout the state. The Dept. also contributes funding for a shared position with the US Fish and Wildlife Service to work on private lands.

**8) What is the total annual cost of each program to your state?**

The private lands budget for the Department is approximately \$10 million.

**9) What funding source/s does your state use to generate money for the program?**

The sale of habitat stamps on every hunting license sold in North Dakota goes into a fund. Interest off of the Department's general fund goes into this fund as well. No state taxpayer dollars go into the PLOTS program; it is all hunter license money.

**10) Is there any extra cost to hunters who choose to hunt on these lands or is it included in standard hunting fees/licenses?**

This is included in their hunting license. There are specific restrictions for nonresident hunters for certain dates of which they cannot hunt but there is no extra cost for any hunter to hunt PLOTS.

**11) On a scale of 1-10 (1-low, 10-high) how would you assess how well the program/s has worked thus far?**

10

**11a) Explain why you feel this way.**

Surveys from our constituents show that their overall satisfaction of the PLOTS program is satisfactory to very satisfactory. The Department feels the program is well received by hunters, landowners, government officials, legislators, decision makers, rural communities and others.

**12) Is there any other information about your states program/s that could be useful to the Minnesota DNR when it considers its future access program?**

An asset to our program is the diverse portfolio of programs offered under PLOTS. The flexibility of agreement lengths, payment options and payment types is attractive to landowners. Piggy-backing on federal farm programs such as CRP, EQIP, WRP etc... makes funding go much farther. Creative partnerships help cover landowner's share of habitat development costs.

**13) Do you have report/s available on your program that you could be sent?**

The Department has acreage reports, survey information, director's reports and other information available upon request.

# Oklahoma

## *Contact Information*

**Name:** Mike Sams

**Title:** Senior Biologist

**E-mail:** mgsams@brightok.net

**Phone:** 405-590-2584

## *Questions*

**1) What is the current name/s of your states hunter access program/s?**

No specific name just require a land access permit to gain access

**1a) What types of hunting access does it/they provide (species)?**

All species

**2) How many total acres are enrolled in your states program/s (for what year)?**

Approximately 500,000

**3) Is the program/s gaining or losing acres or is it stable?**

Losing

**3a) Explain what the possible reason/s for this may be?**

The timber companies that we lease from are selling off property

**4) What are the primary reasons why landowners chose to enroll or not enroll in the program/s?**

Our program consist of agreements with 3-4 timber companies who's motivation is increased law

enforcement to curb arson fires primarily

**5) What (if any) financial gain or other benefit is given to landowners that enroll in this program/s? (Amount per acre if available) To my knowledge leases are just \$1/year to make it legal with the primary motivation of curbing arson fires**

**6) Are the lands left open for hunters to come and hunt whenever they chose or are hunters required to check-in before hunting (Include how they check-in: sign-in box, check-in at landowners home, call before hunting, other)? Open to hunting whenever**

**7) How many full time employees (FTE) equivalents are needed to administer the program/s?**

Three FTEs with help form other agency folks during times of high fire danger

**8) What is the total annual cost of each program to your state?**

Approximately, \$200,000

**9) What funding source/s does your state use to generate money for the program?**

## The sell of Land Access Permits

**10) Is there any extra cost to hunters who choose to hunt on these lands or is it included in standard hunting fees/licenses? Must purchase the Land Access Permit at \$16/year resident & \$25/year non-resident.**

**11) On a scale of 1-10 (1-low, 10-high) how would you assess how well the program/s has worked thus far? 8**

**11a) Explain why you feel this way. Access is charged regardless of what activity you participate in (i.e., hunting, hiking or horseback riding need permit). Would be a 10 if the lands were not selling off.**

**12) Is there any other information about your states program/s that could be useful to the Minnesota DNR when it considers its future access program?**

**13) Do you have report/s available on your program that you could be sent? I will check**

# Oregon

## *Contact Information*

**Date:** Oct 2007

**Name:** Matthew Keenan

**Title:** Access and Habitat Program Coordinator

**E-mail:** Mathew.t.keenan@state.or.us

**Phone:** (503) 947-6087

## *Questions*

**1) What is the current name/s of your states hunter access program/s?**

Access and Habitat Program

**1a) What types of hunting access does it/they provide (species)?**

Deer, elk, chukar, grouse, quail, pheasant, waterfowl, predators

**2) How many total acres are enrolled in your states program/s (for what year)?**

2,017,055 (2003-2005)

**3) Is the program/s gaining or losing acres or is it stable?**

Stable

**3a) Explain what the possible reason/s for this may be?**

N/A

**4) What are the primary reasons why landowners chose to enroll or not enroll in the program/s?**

They Enroll because we pay them on a per-acre basis, or to control damage to crops by ungulates.

They choose not to enroll if they want to limit hunting or if they have had problem with hunters

(vandalism/etc)

**5) What (if any) financial gain or other benefit is given to landowners that enroll in this program/s? (Amount per acre if available)**

Approximately \$2.25/acre

**6) Are the lands left open for hunters to come and hunt whenever they chose or are hunters required to check-in before hunting (Include how they check-in: sign-in box, check-in at landowners home, call before hunting, other)?**

Some projects are "open to hunt", others are "permission only". For permission only areas, we provide maps to locate the areas, the hunters must visit the area to find the name of the landowner on the sign, then look up the phone number of the landowner, and call for permission. The landowner decides who he gives permission to, and for what seasons.

**7) How many full time employees (FTE) equivalents are needed to administer the program/s?**

4

**8) What is the total annual cost of each program to your state?**

N/A

**9) What funding source/s does your state use to generate money for the program?**

\$2 fee on all hunting licenses, special tag auctions/raffles,

**10) Is there any extra cost to hunters who choose to hunt on these lands or is it included in standard hunting fees/licenses?**

No extra cost

**11) On a scale of 1-10 (1-low, 10-high) how would you assess how well the program/s has worked thus far?**

9

**11a) Explain why you feel this way.**

The public, as well as the agency, seem to be very satisfied with the program. There are several great access areas with bountiful hunting opportunities.

**12) Is there any other information about your states program/s that could be useful to the Minnesota DNR when it considers its future access program?**

This is my second week on the job – if you ask me later I probably will have an answer.

**13) Do you have report/s available on your program that you could be sent?**

See number 12.

# South Dakota

## *Contact Information*

**Date:** Oct 2007

**Name:** William Smith

**Title:** Wildlife Biologist

**E-mail:** Bill.Smith@state.sd.us

**Phone:** (605) 773-3096

## *Questions*

### **1) What is the current name/s of your states hunter access program/s?**

Walk-In Area program, Lower Oahe Waterfowl Access program, Elk Access Program, Controlled Hunter Access Program (in development/pilot process for 2008), GFP Special Management leases

#### **1a) What types of hunting access does it/they provide (species)?**

Walk-In Area (all species with bonus incentives for undisturbed cover for pheasant hunting), Lower Oahe Waterfowl Access (focus on goose hunting, with some duck and some upland game bird hunting), Elk Access Program (elk only), Controlled Hunter Access Program (species allowed to be hunted will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis), GFP Special Management leases (all species).

### **2) How many total acres are enrolled in your states program/s (for what year)?**

Walk-In Area program (1,158,611.5 acres); Lower Oahe Waterfowl Access program (33,819 acres), Elk Access (17,995 acres), Controlled Hunter Access Program (still under development--no acres yet), GFP special management leases (19,771 acres).

### **3) Is the program/s gaining or losing acres or is it stable?**

Walk-In Area program is gaining acres since 2000, Lower Oahe Waterfowl Access program relatively stable, Elk Access stable, Controlled Hunter Access program will be new in 2008, GFP special management leases is stable.

#### **3a) Explain what the possible reason/s for this may be?**

Walk-In Area program changes in payment rates a few years back increased interest in the program. The other programs have smaller budgets but enrollments are more limited by human resources.

### **4) What are the primary reasons why landowners chose to enroll or not enroll in the program/s?**

Why to enroll--absentee landowners, driving not allowed on enrolled areas, payment rates and state statutes hold landowners who open their land to public hunting at the lowest liability level (i.e. they do incur any additional liability).

Why not to enroll--lots of hunter use, commercial leases sometimes will pay more. On the Walk-In Area program, landowners cannot control the number of hunters on the property at a given time.

### **5) What (if any) financial gain or other benefit is given to landowners that enroll in this program/s? (Amount per acre if available)**

Walk-In Area (up to \$1/acre for access plus a bonus of \$5/acre for permanent, undisturbed habitat in pheasant areas)

Lower Oahe (negotiated)

Elk Access (negotiated plus a bonus for number of elk harvested)

Controlled Hunter Access Program (will pay based on hunter use.

Cooperator will be paid \$6/hunter day base plus a bonus of \$2/a hunter-day if there is no species restriction and \$2/hunter-day if enrolled acreage is open for hunting for the entire species for all species allowed to be hunted.)

GFP Special management leases (negotiated but based on reduced grazing or cropping)

**6) Are the lands left open for hunters to come and hunt whenever they chose or are hunters required to check-in before hunting (Include how they check-in: sign-in box, check-in at landowners home, call before hunting, other)?**

Walk-In Area hunters can come and go as pleased--no checking in.

Lower Oahe Waterfowl Access have to check in on the decoy only areas for goose hunting, but can come and go on the pass shooting areas. There are also some areas that hunters can decoy or pass shoot that are open without checking in)

Elk Access--hunters must check in with rancher.

Controlled Hunter Access Program--hunters will have to check in.

GFP Special management leases--most are open without checking in, but on one, rifle deer and antelope hunters need to check in with the rancher.

**7) How many full time employees (FTE) equivalents are needed to administer the program/s?**

We have no FTE's who's sole jobs are administering the program. These programs are implemented largely by our 50 conservation officers scattered throughout the state, plus one seasonal intern, about 75% of my time. At this time, we estimate it cost us about 1500 man-days to implement and deliver all the access programs

**8) What is the total annual cost of each program to your state?**

Walk-In Area program (\$2 million)

Lower Oahe (\$200,000)

Elk Access (\$18,331)

GFP Special Management Area (\$111,150)

Controlled Hunter Access (unknown)

**9) What funding source/s does your state use to generate money for the program?**

Walk-In Area Program--hunting license sales, half of surcharge on most hunting licenses, Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Funds

Lower Oahe--sales of a special 3-day nonresident waterfowl license and some funding from the surcharge on most hunting licenses.

Elk Access, Special GFP Management Areas--general hunting licenses and funding from the surcharge on most hunting licenses.

**10) Is there any extra cost to hunters who choose to hunt on these lands or is it included in standard hunting fees/licenses?**

Hunters using these lands do not pay any extra fees.

**11) On a scale of 1-10 (1-low, 10-high) how would you assess how well the program/s has worked thus far?**

8

**11a) Explain why you feel this way.**

Lack of FTEs solely working on access issues. Having some FTEs working solely on access would allow more program consistency and uniform delivery. MT and WY have some dedicated FTEs for access with delivery handled by field staff. Both of their structures are good models. Herein SD, we have the occasional conflicts pop-up when staff have to split time on access and other duties because of overlapping deadlines and priorities.

**12) Is there any other information about your sates program/s that could be useful to the Minnesota DNR when it considers its future access program?**

See our 2005 Walk-In Area program survey

<http://www.sdgifp.info/Publications/WalkIn05.pdf>

**13) Do you have report/s available on your program that you could be sent?**

I will send some Hunting Atlases and Lower Oahe Waterfowl Access Guides.

# Utah

## *Contact Information*

**Date:** Oct 2007

**Name:** Boyde Blackwell

**Title:** Private Lands Public Wildlife Program Coordinator

**E-mail:** boydeblackwell@utah.gov

**Phone:** (801) 538-4776

## *Questions*

**1) What is the current name/s of your states hunter access program/s?**

Cooperative Wildlife Management Program (CWMU)

Walk-in Access Program (WIA)

Landowner Association Program (LOA)

**1a) What types of hunting access does it/they provide (species)?**

CWMU- Limited entry permit draw system CWMU's must be 8,000 acres for deer, pronghorn, 10, 000 acres for elk and moose.

WIA – open access, register when entering property, WIA properties have a minimum of 80 contiguous acres.

LOA – Limited entry areas only, LOA's are provided permits depending on private land mass on a hunting unit. The LOA may sell these permits an in turn allow hunting on their private lands on the unit.

**2) How many total acres are enrolled in your states program/s (for what year)?**

CWMU – 2 million acres

WIA – 60,000+ Acres

LOA – not available

**3) Is the program/s gaining or losing acres or is it stable?**

CWMU – Stable 103 different CWMU properties registered

WIA – gaining 29 properties and increasing

LOA - Stable

**3a) Explain what the possible reason/s for this may be?**

CWMU – Size requirement limits these to only productive hunting units

WIA – New program in Utah, it is growing very quickly

LOA – most limited entry units have an association on them

**4) What are the primary reasons why landowners chose to enroll or not enroll in the program/s?**

CWMU - In almost all cases it's a monetary gain response and to help mitigate wildlife damages to

private lands. In some cases it's being able to keep their lands open but being paid to do so is pretty

good too.

WIA – Some monetary gain but not a lot it more for the landowner that wants to regulate how his lands are being used by sportsmen with some gain involved.

LOA – Completely monetary gain and to help mitigate wildlife damages to private lands.

**5) What (if any) financial gain or other benefit is given to landowners that enroll in this program/s? (Amount per acre if available)**

CWMU – Owners are allowed to sell permits for market value (which has really increased over the years)

WIA – Landowners are paid approximately \$1.00/acre if they provide good quality habitat to enroll their property in the program

LOA – The association is allowed to sell their permit for market value.

**6) Are the lands left open for hunters to come and hunt whenever they chose or are hunters required to check-in before hunting (Include how they check-in: sign-in box, check-in at landowners home, call before hunting, other)?**

CWMU – This is a limited entry draw system, sportsmen draw for a limited number of permits available for any individual CWMU.

WIA – Users are required to sign in at a kiosk when using a property, some properties require call first

LOA – The lands are left open during regularly scheduled hunts.

**7) How many full time employees (FTE) equivalents are needed to administer the program/s?**

CWMU – 2

WIA – 4

LOA - 2

**8) What is the total annual cost of each program to your state?**

CWMU - \$10,000

WIA - \$400,000

LOA - \$10,000

**9) What funding source/s does your state use to generate money for the program?**

CWMU – General funds, some federal aid (PR)

WIA – General funds

LOA – General funds, some federal aid (PR)

**10) Is there any extra cost to hunters who choose to hunt on these lands or is it included in standard hunting fees/licenses?**

There are no extra costs involved in sportsmen's use of these programs

**11) On a scale of 1-10 (1-low, 10-high) how would you assess how well the program/s has worked thus far?**

CWMU – 8

WIA – 7

LOA - 7

**11a) Explain why you feel this way.**

CWMU – For the most part this program works very well however in some cases the monetary greed issue over comes the pure intent of the program. This requires constant oversight to make sure that the public permit holders are provided equal opportunity that the private hunters are allowed.

WIA – this is a new program in Utah and we are still evaluating its benefits and successes

LOA – This program has caused a feeling of entitlement by some landowners and can be a draw back or source of contention in the program. This often stems from the monetary greed issue as well.

**12) Is there any other information about your states program/s that could be useful to the Minnesota DNR when it considers its future access program?**

None that I can think of

**13) Do you have report/s available on your program that you could be sent?**

Nope sorry

# Washington

## *Contact Information*

**Date:** Oct 2007

**Name:** Mick Cope

**Title:** Upland Game Section Manager

**E-mail:** copemgc@dfw.wa.gov

**Phone:** (360) 902-2691

## *Questions*

**1) What is the current name/s of your states hunter access program/s?**

Private Lands Access Program

**1a) What types of hunting access does it/they provide (species)?**

Waterfowl, upland game birds, turkey, forest grouse, deer, elk

**2) How many total acres are enrolled in your states program/s (for what year)?**

1.15 Million acres in 2007

**3) Is the program/s gaining or losing acres or is it stable?**

After recent declines (2003-2005) it has stabilized. There may be loss when CRP acres drop out in 2008.

**3a) Explain what the possible reason/s for this may be?**

The decline was due to loss of CRP acres, changes in administration (required lands to be made available to public via mapping), and attrition. CRP plays a big role as we partnered with FSA and the NRCS to get landowners enrolled. Stability is because people are happy with the program and they have current farm bill contracts

**4) What are the primary reasons why landowners chose to enroll or not enroll in the program/s?**

Enroll: Increased awareness by enforcement officers, special hunting seasons (big game only), help in qualifying for federal farm bill programs (e.g., CRP).

Not Enroll: public visibility, poor hunter ethics, increased costs to them.

**5) What (if any) financial gain or other benefit is given to landowners that enroll in this program/s? (Amount per acre if available)**

Washington has no monetary payment to landowners for access. Benefits include more EBI points for farm bill agreements (if in an agreement with WDFW for habitat protection), WDFW signs provided, increased awareness by WDFW enforcement officers.

**6) Are the lands left open for hunters to come and hunt whenever they chose or are hunters required to check-in before hunting (Include how they check-in: sign-in box, check-in at landowners home, call before hunting, other)?**

Some areas are "Feel Free to Hunt" (no checking in), others are "Register to Hunt" (sign in box, but no landowner contact), and others are "Written Permission" where a permit from the landowner is

required. Some Written Permission areas require calling landowner prior to hunting.

**7) How many full time employees (FTE) equivalents are needed to administer the program/s?**

We have 7 FTEs to manage the private lands program, which includes habitat development and access management. These seven probably use about half of their time on access related issues.

**8) What is the total annual cost of each program to your state?**

Again, the budget is for habitat and access. Total budget is about \$600,000, but only about \$300,000 is dedicated to access issues.

**9) What funding source/s does your state use to generate money for the program?**

Current funding is through Pittman Roberson contract and state license sales revenue as a match.

**10) Is there any extra cost to hunters who choose to hunt on these lands or is it included in standard hunting fees/licenses?**

No. We are, however, trying to get legislation passed to help fund this program better.

**11) On a scale of 1-10 (1-low, 10-high) how would you assess how well the program/s has worked thus far?**

7

**11a) Explain why you feel this way.**

For not paying landowners directly, it has worked amazingly well.

**12) Is there any other information about your states program/s that could be useful to the Minnesota DNR when it considers its future access program?**

Try to set up your program with a variety of options for landowners and hunters to consider. Some landowners want more control than others and some hunters want to work harder to gain access than others. If you are going to pay landowners who participate, have good, understandable criteria for choosing those who will get the cash. Try to provide as many non-monetary incentives as possible so the program cost is not prohibitive.

**13) Do you have report/s available on your program that you could be sent?**

We have our annual PR report that is available up through 2006.

# Wyoming

## *Contact Information*

**Date:** Oct 2007

**Name:** Matt Buhler

**Title:** State Access Coordinator

**E-mail:** matt.buhler@wgf.state.wy.us

**Phone:** (307) 473-3428

## *Questions*

**1) What is the current name/s of your states hunter access program/s?**

Our main program is the Private Lands Public Wildlife Access Program. We have three subprograms: Walk-in Hunting, Walk-in Fishing, and Hunter Management Areas. We provide hunting for elk, deer, antelope, moose, mountain lion, upland birds, waterfowl, turkeys, rabbits, and sandhill cranes

**1a) What types of hunting access does it/they provide (species)?**

We provide hunting for elk, deer, antelope, moose, mountain lion, upland birds, waterfowl, turkeys, rabbits, and sandhill cranes.

**2) How many total acres are enrolled in your states program/s (for what year)?**

Hunter Management Area information: HMA: 842,538, WIA: 563,530 (2007)

**3) Is the program/s gaining or losing acres or is it stable?**

The Program continues to grow, however we have almost reached our funding amount.

**3a) Explain what the possible reason/s for this may be?**

N/A

**4) What are the primary reasons why landowners chose to enroll or not enroll in the program/s?**

Management of hunters, monetary compensation, and additional law enforcement.

**5) What (if any) financial gain or other benefit is given to landowners that enroll in this program/s? (Amount per acre if available)**

A small monetary payment is made to landowners based upon number of acres enrolled.

**6) Are the lands left open for hunters to come and hunt whenever they chose or are hunters required to check-in before hunting (Include how they check-in: sign-in box, check-in at landowners home, call before hunting, other)?**

We have both unlimited access throughout the season and also access broken down into time periods. It all depends on how/when we and the landowner(s) want hunters to access property.

**7) How many full time employees (FTE) equivalents are needed to administer the program/s?**

There are five FTE's in the PLPW Access Program.

**8) What is the total annual cost of each program to your state?**

Our current budget is \$170,000 for administration/operations and \$700,000 in easement payments.

**9) What funding source/s does your state use to generate money for the program?**

We receive funds from several sources that include: Donations from hunters/anglers; Donations from organizations; portion of conservation stamp sales; State Restitution funds; and interest.

**10) Is there any extra cost to hunters who choose to hunt on these lands or is it included in standard hunting fees/licenses?**

No

**11) On a scale of 1-10 (1-low, 10-high) how would you assess how well the program/s has worked thus far?**

8. We just had a survey conducted and around 84% of hunters and anglers were either satisfied or very satisfied with the access provided to them.

**11a) Explain why you feel this way.**

We provide access to around 2.9 million private and public acres for almost every huntable species in Wyoming. All this access is free of charge to them. Additionally, we provide this access close to their home so they do not have to travel very far.

**12) Is there any other information about your states program/s that could be useful to the Minnesota DNR when it considers its future access program?**

No

13) Do you have report/s available on your program that you could be sent?

Reports are available online at: <http://gf.state.wy.us/wildlife/access/index.asp> and <http://gf.state.wy.us/wildlife/access/plpw/index.asp>.

**Appendix 1.** Survey instrument used to obtain information on hunter access programs.

***Contact Information***

**Date:**

**Name:**

**Title:**

**E-mail:**

**Phone:**

***Questions***

**1) What is the current name/s of your states hunter access program/s?**

**1a) What types of hunting access does it/they provide (species)?**

**2) How many total acres are enrolled in your states program/s (for what year)?**

**3) Is the program/s gaining or losing acres or is it stable?**

**3a) Explain what the possible reason/s for this may be?**

**4) What are the primary reasons why landowners chose to enroll or not enroll in the program/s?**

**5) What (if any) financial gain or other benefit is given to landowners that enroll in this program/s? (Amount per acre if available)**

**6) Are the lands left open for hunters to come and hunt whenever they chose or are hunters required to check-in before hunting (Include how they check-in: sign-in box, check-in at landowners home, call before hunting, other)?**

**7) How many full time employees (FTE) equivalents are needed to administer the program/s?**

**8) What is the total annual cost of each program to your state?**

**9) What funding source/s does your state use to generate money for the program?**

**10) Is there any extra cost to hunters who choose to hunt on these lands or is it included in standard hunting fees/licenses?**

**11) On a scale of 1-10 (1-low, 10-high) how would you assess how well the program/s has worked thus far?**

**11a) Explain why you feel this way.**

**12) Is there any other information about your states program/s that could be useful to the Minnesota DNR when it considers its future access program?**

**13) Do you have report/s available on your program that you could be sent?**