

2013-14 OTTER PELT TAGGING REPORT

PERFORMANCE REPORT STATEWIDE WILDLIFE RESEARCH AND SURVEYS

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The 2013-14 furbearer harvest season was the third consecutive in which river otter harvest was allowed in Kansas in modern times. Though several key regulations were retained (season open statewide; 2 otter per trapper bag limit), several others were altered from the previous two seasons:

- 100 otter season quota was eliminated
- With no season quota, harvest opportunity would extend the entire season (Nov. 13 – March. 31; concurrent with beaver)
- Trappers no longer had to report harvests to the Department within 24 hours and relinquish the skinned carcass within 4 days of harvest, but they did have to present the pelt for tagging within 7 days of season close and relinquish the lower jaw at that time

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 2013, Kansas used white “KS ROTR” tags below number 0000825. A total of 46 KDWPPT employees and offices were issued tags for the 2013-14 furharvesting season. These were mostly in or near the primary otter range, but tags were also maintained by each of the 5 regional offices and the Pratt Operations Office.

CITES tags were affixed to the pelts of 158 otters taken in Kansas during the season. This does not include 6 otters that were taken during season by a Nuisance Animal Damage Control (NADC) permittee as this was not part of the fur harvest. During the first two seasons, 132 and 129 otters were taken respectively, including those taken after the 100 otter quota was reached.

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 108 furharvesters took otters. This included 58 individuals who took 1 otter and 50 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 KDWPPT employees or offices issued tags. After the season, each was responsible for inventorying unused tags and accounting for all tags they were issued. Unused tags were then destroyed, retained by each tagger, or returned to the Emporia office.

Figure 1. Counties from which otters have been taken during the first three harvest seasons in Kansas.

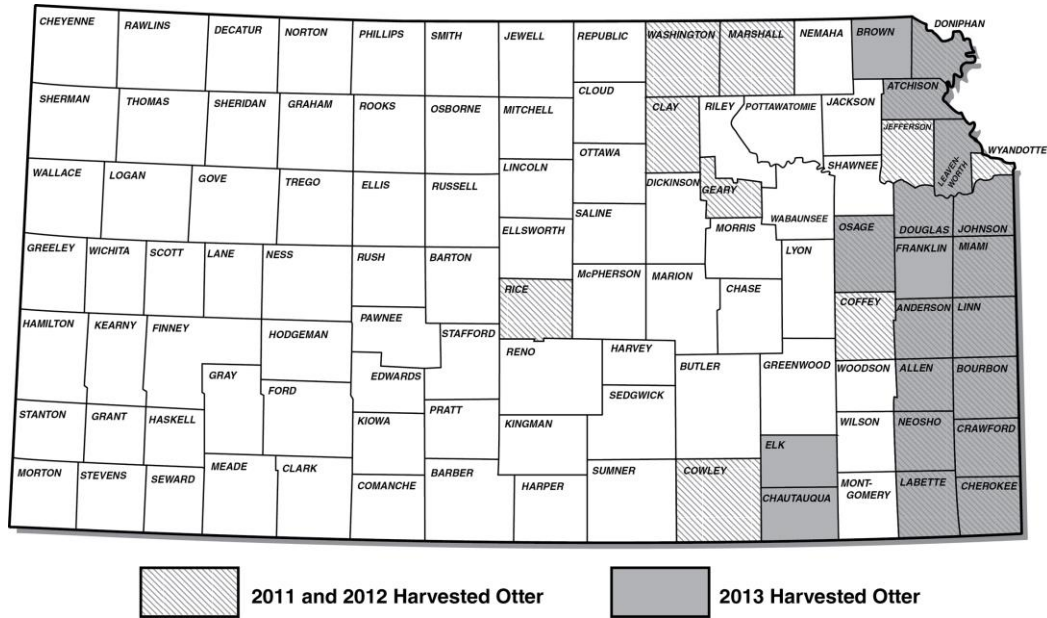


Figure 2. Reported number of otters taken per day during the 2013-14 furharvesting season (n=162).

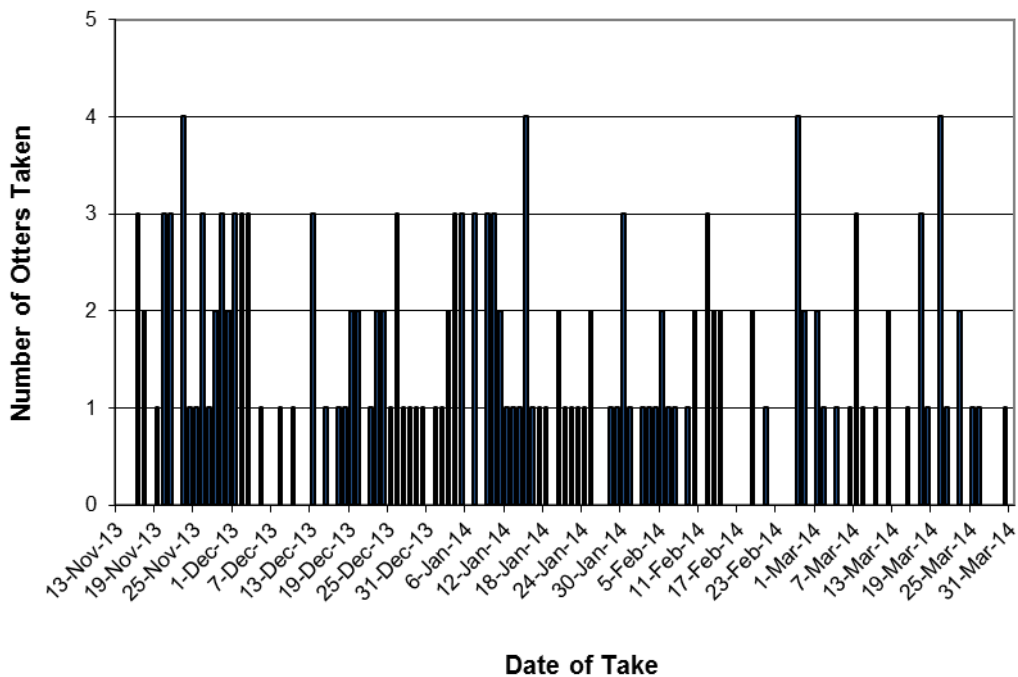


Table 1. Method of harvest and the primary species being trapped when otters were taken during the 2013-14 furharvesting season in Kansas.

Method of Harvest	Target Species					Subtotal Number	Percent
	Otter	Beaver	Raccoon	Mink	Salvage		
Foothold Trap	17	4	8	1		30	18.3
Body-gripping Trap	66	52	6			124	75.6
Cage Trap	2					2	1.2
Snare	2	3				5	3.0
Salvage					3	3	1.8
Subtotal Number	87	59	14	1	3	164	
Percent	53.0	36.0	8.5	0.6	1.8		100.0

Table 2. Location from which otters were taken during the 2013-14 furharvesting season in Kansas.

Harvest Location	Minimum Number of Unique Locations	Number of Otters	Percent of Otters
Reservoir/Lake	3	6	3.7
River	11	37	22.6
Creek	31	65	39.6
Pond	16	32	19.5
Strip Pit	8	12	7.3
Wildlife Area	3	12	7.3
	72	164	100.0

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