



Tennessee Wild Turkey Management Program Status Report

***TN-NWTF State Board Meeting
June 25, 2022***

Roger Shields
Wild Turkey Program Coordinator

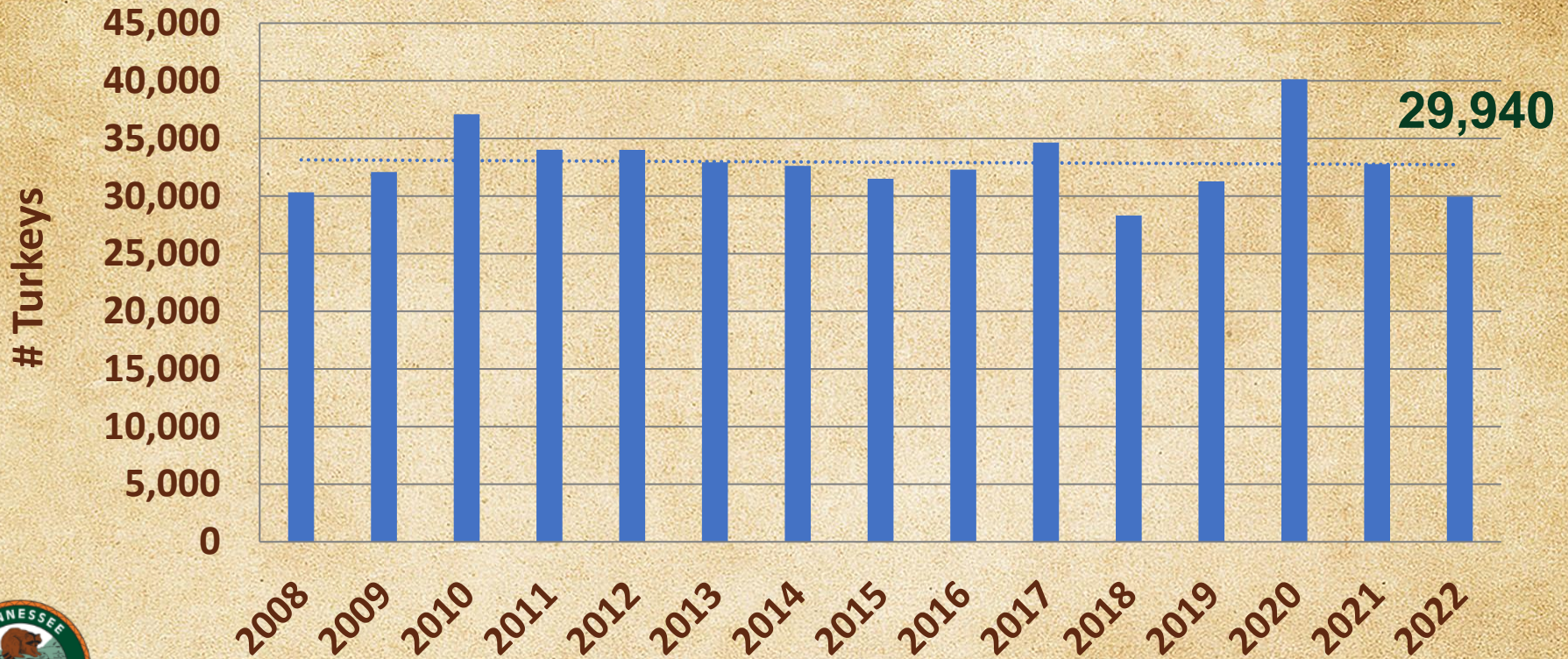




2022 Spring Turkey Season



Reported Spring Harvest 2008-2022



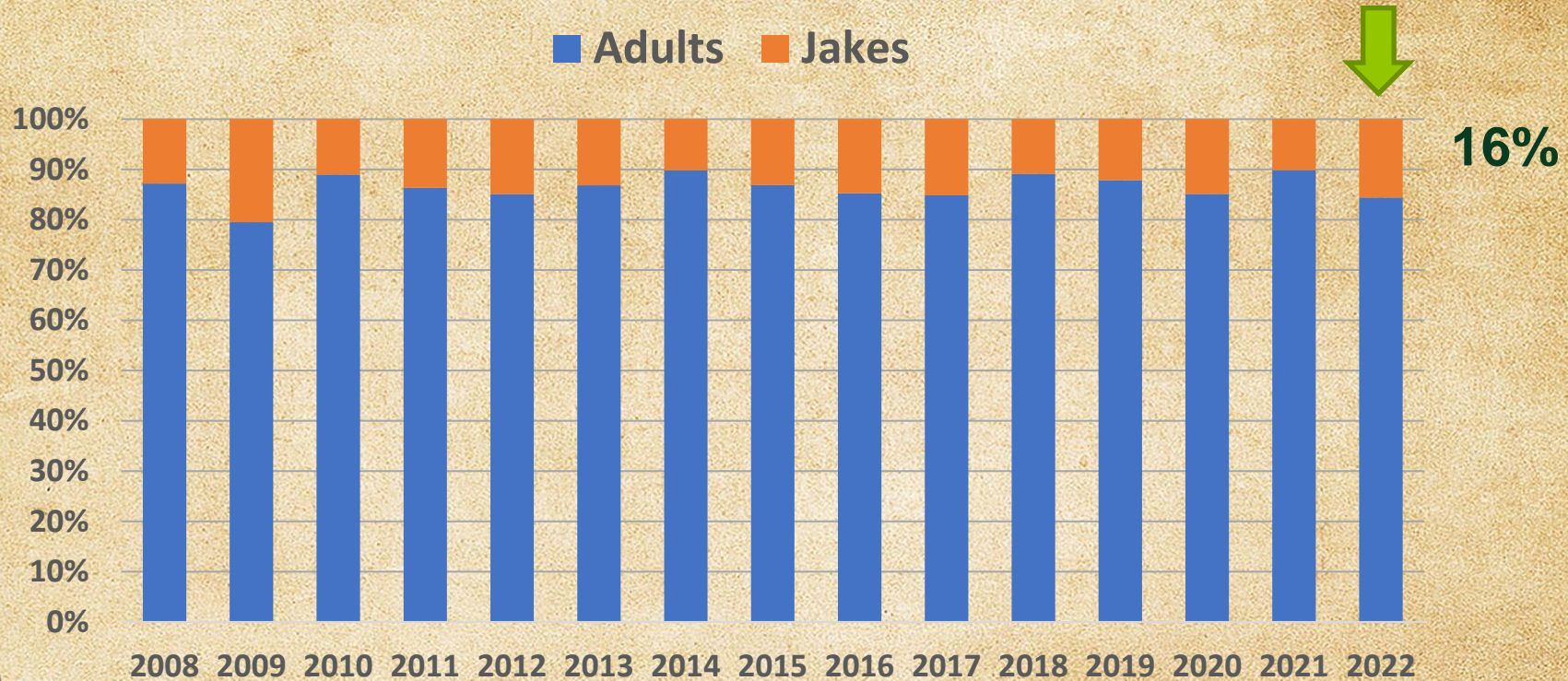
Spring Harvest - Hunter Success

	Proportion of Successful Hunters	
# of Birds Harvested	2022	2017-2021 5-Yr Average
1	68%	63%
2	22%	22%
3	9%	10%
4+	0	5%
Total # Successful Hunters	21,209	21,259

*Statewide bag limit reduced to 3 & no “bonus” birds beginning 2021 season

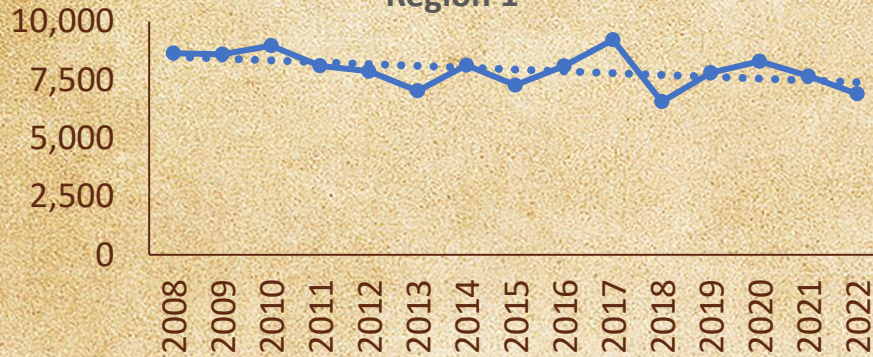


Gobbler Age Distribution of Harvest



Regional Harvest - 15 Years

Region 1



Region 2



Region 3

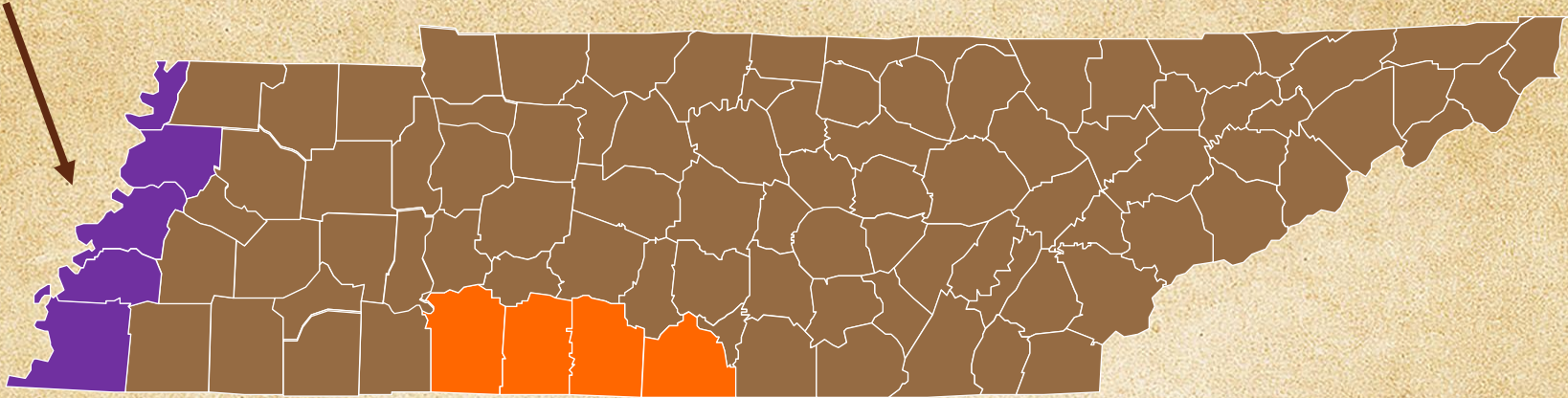


Region 4



Delayed Spring Season Openers

Mississippi Alluvial Valley Unit



Southern-middle Tennessee Counties



Total Reported Harvest in 9 Delayed Opening Counties

- **Total reported harvest for the entire respective seasons**
 - Season length was 14 days shorter in 2021 & 2022

	2022	2021	2016-2020 5-Yr Average
MAV Unit	578	492	616
So-middle TN Counties	1,422	1,561	1,784
Total	2,000	2,053	2,400



Opening Weekends Reported Harvest in 9 Delayed Opening Counties

- Reported harvest for the Young Sportsman Hunt and Opening weekend of the regular season**

	2022	2021	2016-2020 5-Yr Average
Young Sportsman Hunt			
MAV Unit	46	40	22
So-middle TN Counties	102	132	85
Opening Weekend			
MAV Unit	133	130	94
So-middle TN Counties	429	591	432



Take Home Message

- **2022 spring turkey season was down 9% from 2021**
 - Lower than the 5-year avg. by 10%
- **2-week delay does not appear to hurt early harvest #s**
- **Additional data being collect**
 - Hunter harvest survey obtaining effort data
 - Harvest rate study (gobbler banding project)
 - Values and opinion surveys to inform regional-based management approach



Regulation Changes

- **Season pushed back 2-weeks statewide (except where already 2-weeks delayed)**
- **Bag limit dropped to 2 statewide**
 - Only 1 can be a jake
- **Fanning (or reaping) prohibited on WMAs**
- **Some WMA-specific changes**
 - New quota areas (2 WMAs)
 - 1st 14 days, 1-bird limit (5 WMAs)



Fanning/Reaping

- **Fanning/reaping is defined as:**

hunting or stalking wild turkeys while holding or using for hunter concealment any of the following items: a tail fan, a partial or full decoy with a tail fan, or a tail fan mounted to a firearm. Tail fans include those made of real or synthetic feathers or an image or likeness of a tail fan applied to any material.



Middle Tennessee Wild Turkey Research Project



- Final field season of study
- Finishing 1-year extension to investigate season timing impacts
- Sampled hunter-harvested birds for disease surveillance
 - >140 samples collected (much better coverage this year!)



Gobbler Banding Project



- **2nd year of 4-year project**
- **384 Birds banded in 2 years**
 - 178 in 2021; 206 in 2022
- **107 Bands recovered in 2 years**
 - 41 in 2021; 66 in 2022



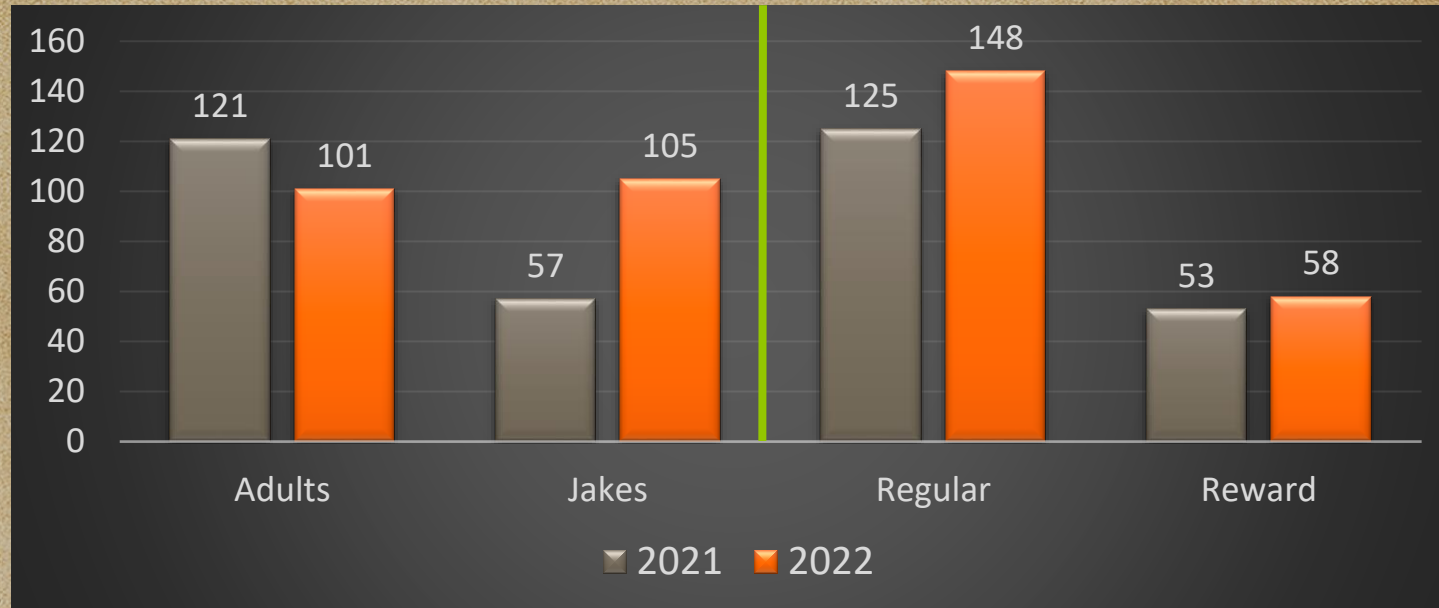
Banding Sites



- 46 total sites (30 private; 16 public)
- UT wild turkey project also banded birds



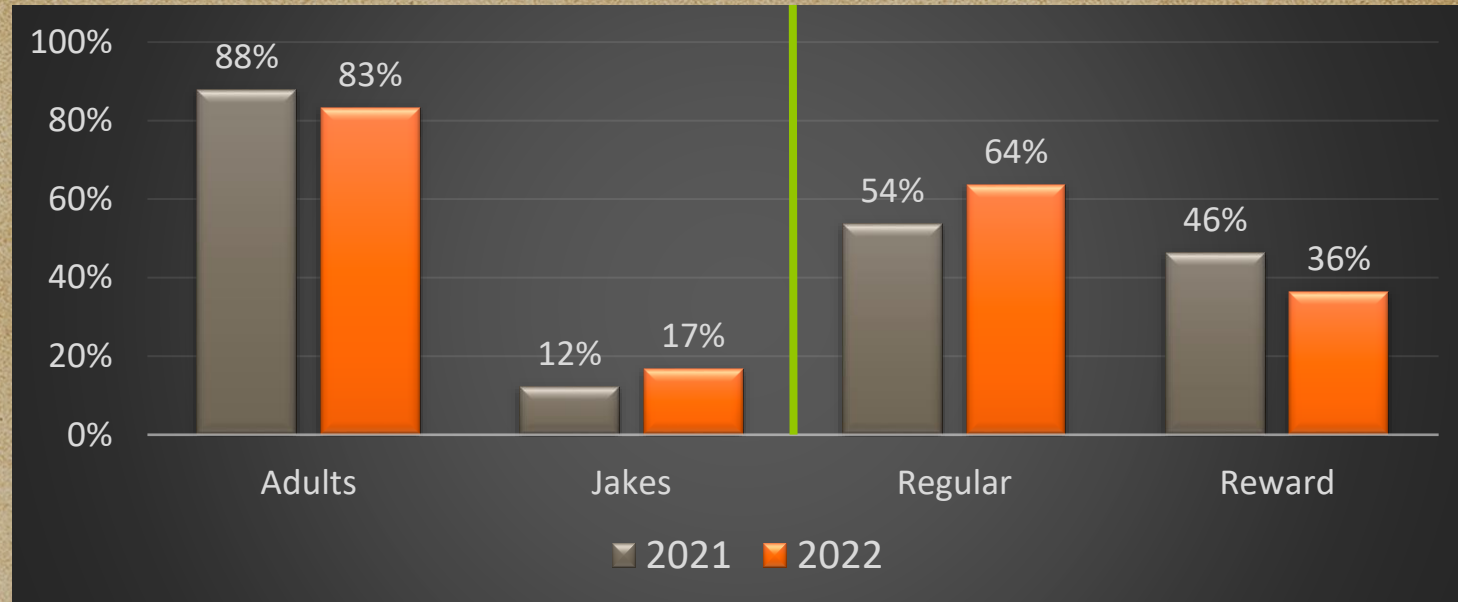
2-Year Banding Results



- **384 Total Gobblers Banded**
 - 222 Adults; 162 Jakes
 - 273 Regular bands; 111 Reward bands



2-Year Band Reporting



- **107 Total bands reported (28% reporting rate)**
 - 85% Adults; 15% Jakes
 - 60% Regular bands; 40% Reward bands



Reward Band Funding



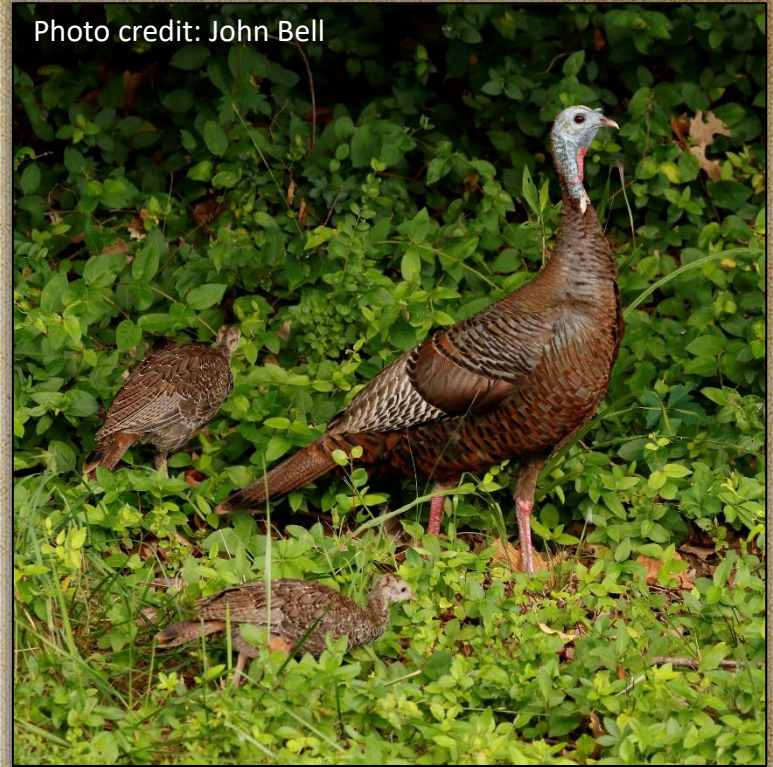
- **TN-NWTF Chapter assistance with reward payments**
 - **Year 1 Total: \$1,513.34**
 - 19 rewards
 - **Year 2 Total: \$1,672.14**
 - 22 rewards
- **Future reward payments will be from Turkey Transfer funds**



Wild Turkey Observation Survey

- **Summer “Brood” Survey**
 - But not just broods
- **Submit observations online or via cell phone app**
- **Visit:**
www.tn.gov/twra/turkeyobs

Photo credit: John Bell



Other TWRA Updates

- **Jason Maxedon Named TWRA Executive Director**
 - 22 years with the agency
 - Previously served as a Deputy Director and Region 1 Program Mgr and WMA Mgr
 - From Newbern, TN



THANK YOU !!!



Questions?

