

## **December 13, 2013 – Aerial Waterfowl Inventory Blog**

We flew the Illinois and Mississippi river waterfowl survey on Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup>. There wasn't much open water anymore. The old saying, "Stick a fork in it, I think we are done" comes to mind! A colleague of mine said, "you can tell the haves from the have nots". He was referring to hunters that have the ability to maintain open water and those that can't. Almost all of the Illinois River was frozen with the ducks piled into a few open water spots. This week was one of a few times since I began doing the survey in 2005 that Dardenne and Cuivre in St. Charles County, Missouri were frozen. These refuges generally hold 30,000 to 50,000 ducks each in December. The Illinois River had 108,665 total ducks which was nearly 40% below the 10-yr average for this week of December. The Mississippi River fared a little better than the Illinois, but it was still 22% below average. Pool 19 was almost completely frozen and most of the divers had departed. I guess we will have to hunt geese for the rest of the season. Good Luck and stay warm.... Stay tuned for more updates next week.....