

October 16th, 2014 – Aerial Waterfowl Inventory Blog

Saturday, October 18th, marks opening day of duck season in the north zone of Illinois, and due to the abundant rains over the last several weeks, most of the waterfowl areas are full of water along the Illinois and Mississippi rivers. The Emiquon Complex and Chautauqua National Wildlife Refuge are the standouts along the Illinois River this week. Nearly 52% of the ducks I observed along the Illinois River were found at these areas. Meanwhile, Hennepin & Hopper lakes harbor the largest concentration of ducks along the upper Illinois River.

I estimated 112,585 ducks on the Illinois River on October 16th which was 11% above the 10-yr average; however, we have 33% fewer ducks than last year at this time. Duck numbers along the Mississippi River fared worse than the Illinois River and were only 50% of the 10-yr average. Northern pintail and American green-winged teal comprised nearly 63% of total ducks along the Illinois River and 88% of ducks encountered along the Mississippi River. For more information go to <http://www.bellrose.org/>

Stay tuned for more updates next week.....