

Sandhill Crane Status

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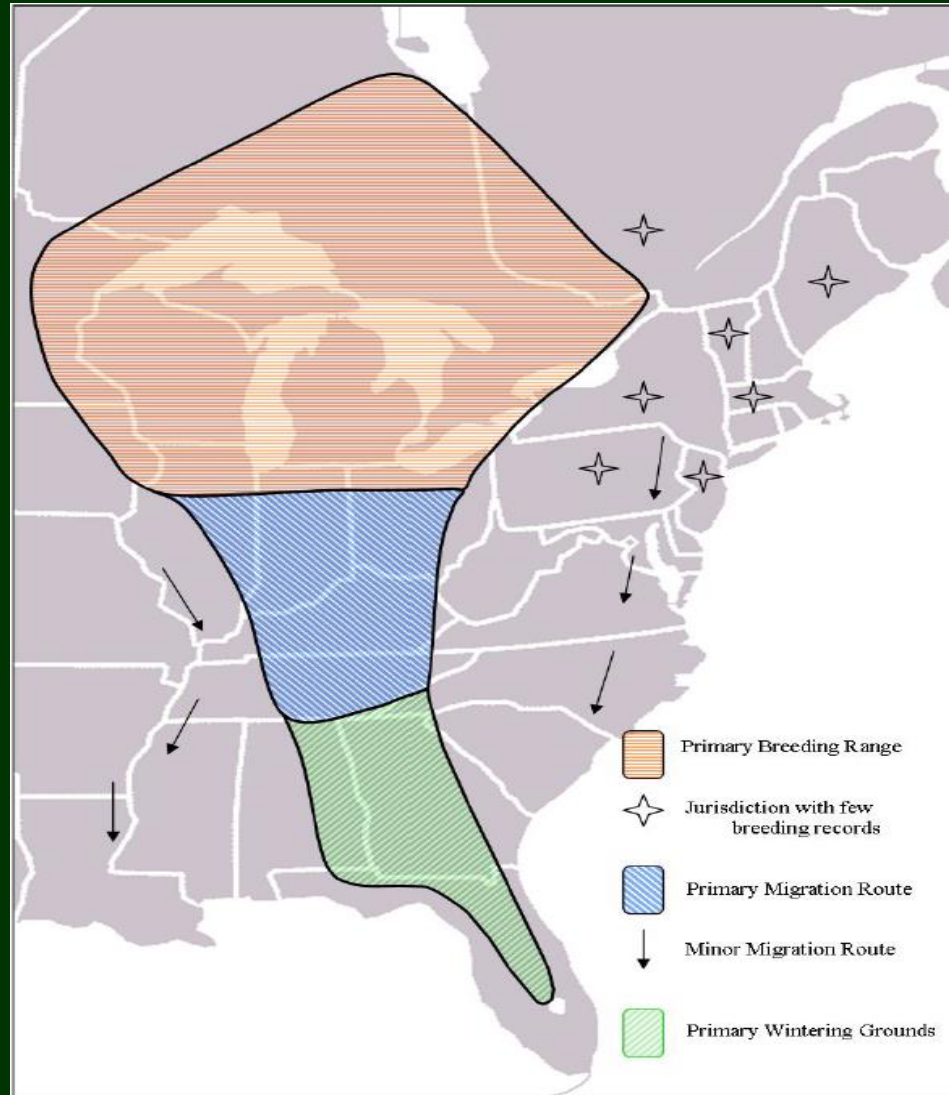
Waterfowl & Wetlands Specialist

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Eastern Population Sandhill Cranes



Adapted from Walkinshaw (1973), Jones et al. (2005), King (2008), Melvin (2008), Sutherland and Crins (2008), and International Crane Foundation unpublished data.



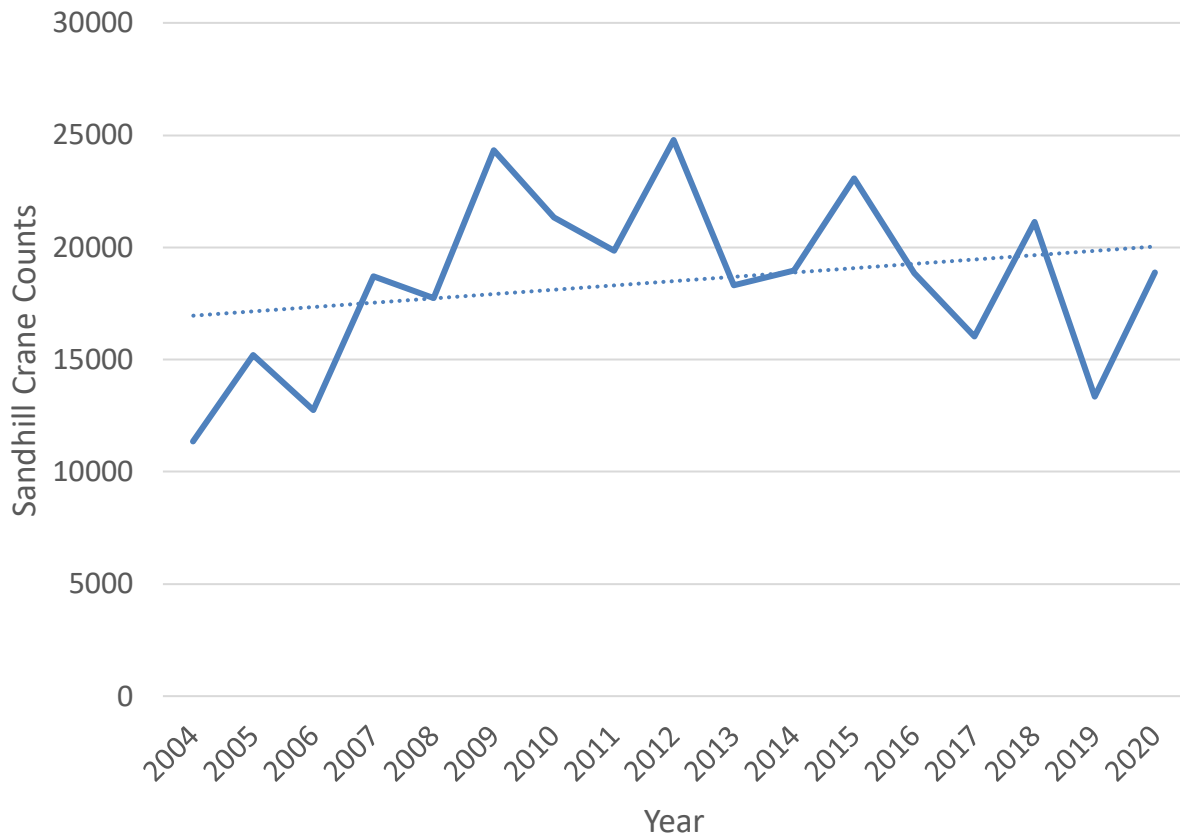
Population Status – USFWS Fall Index Survey

Figure 1. Total number of Eastern Population sandhill cranes counted, 1979 – 2020.

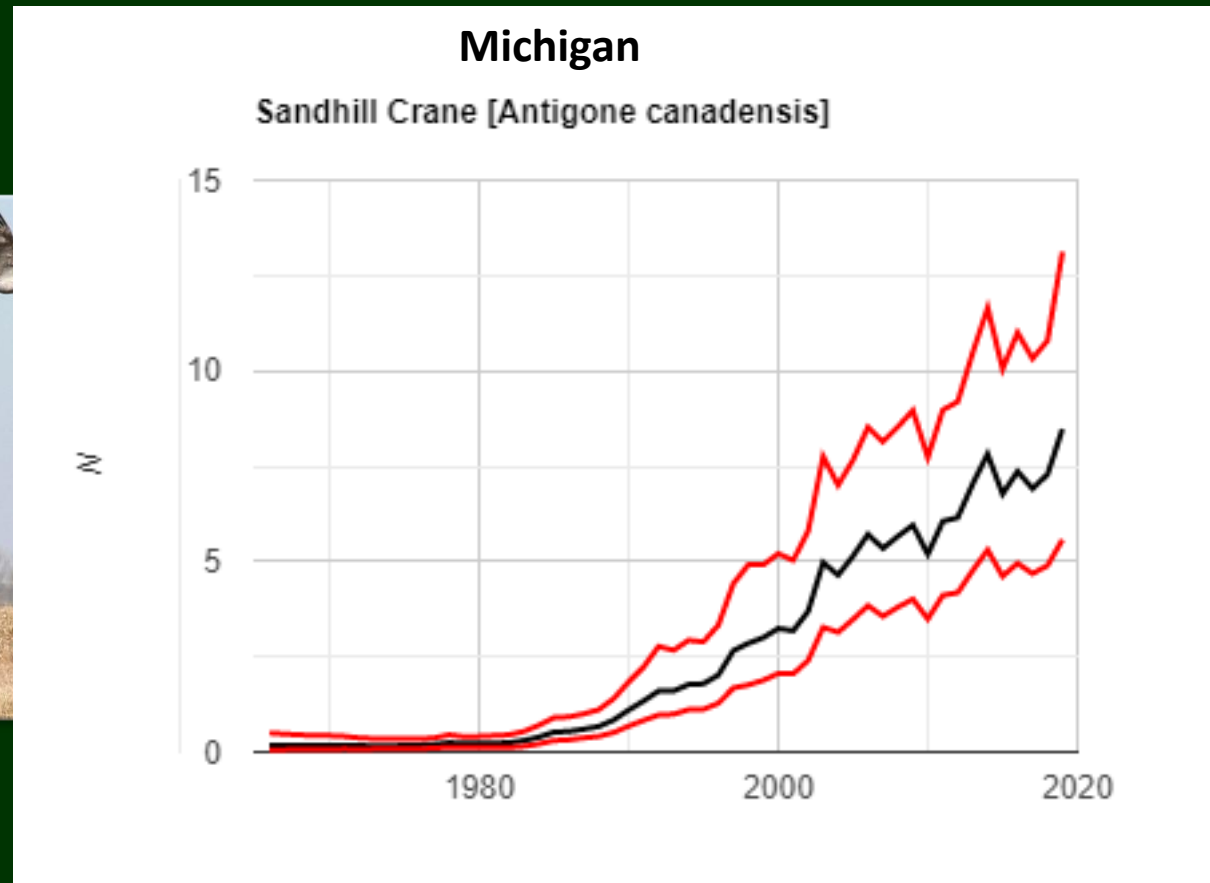


Population Status – USFWS Fall Index Survey

Sandhill Crane Counts During the USFWS Fall Staging Survey of Sites in Michigan



Population Status – North American Breeding Bird Survey, 1966-2019



U.S. Geological Survey's, North American Breeding Bird Survey, 1966-2019 (Sauer et al. 2020). Red lines above and below the black index represent the 95% confidence intervals.



Federal Agricultural Damage Permits



Year	# Permits Issued	# Cranes Authorized	# Cranes Killed
2006	13	206	130
2007	13	193	81
2008	10	160	76
2009	12	223	93
2010	21	395	243
2011	65	1,717	843
2012	76	1,810	1,136
2013	85	2,002	1,216
2014	85	1,955	1,101
2015	74	1,675	913
2016	91	1,620	NA
2017	120	2,268	NA
2018	132	2,515	NA
2019	121	2,370	NA
2020	122	2,596	NA
Totals	1,040	21,705	5,832

Steps to Establish a Hunting Season



- Name sandhill cranes a game species (NRC or Legislature)
- Establish hunting license, set fee, & allow application (Legislature)
- Develop hunt plan (DNR)
- Establish first hunt in regulations (NRC or Legislature)
- Set up lottery system for permits (DNR)
- Obtain FWS approval through Mississippi Flyway process (DNR)
 - Hunting season proposal



EP Sandhill Crane Federal Guidelines

- Guidelines for harvest provided 3-year average FWS fall survey index is above 30,000 cranes
- Provides for coordination of harvest among Mississippi and Atlantic Flyway states and provinces to ensure sustainable, science-based harvest
- Allows for initial maximum harvest permit issuance of 10% of the 3-year average of the USFWS fall survey index
 - FWS fall survey is an index and underestimate of the total population
 - Not all permits will likely be issued and not all permits will result in harvest
- 3 states have initiated hunting seasons
 - KY, TN, AL



EP Sandhill Crane Harvest

Table 14. Estimated harvest and number of permits sold for Eastern Population sandhill cranes.

YR	KY		TN		AL		TOTAL	
	Harvest	Tags Issued ¹	Harvest	Tags Issued ¹	Harvest	Tags Issued ¹	Harvest	Permits Issued
2011	50	534	No Season		No Season		50	534
2012	92	570	No Season		No Season		92	570
2013	87	570	350	1,200	No Season		437	1,770
2014	96	704	393	1,200	No Season		489	1,904
2015	75	694	161	1,200	No Season		236	1,894
2016	171	672	586	1,200	No Season		757	1,872
2017	119	660	830	2,319	No Season		949	2,979
2018	60	1,432	555	2,711	No Season		615	4,143
2019	96	1,237	746	2,958	291	1,200	1,133	5,395
2020	65	1,035	630	2,700	391	1,200	1,086	4,935
Average	91	811	531	1,936	341	1,200	584	2,600

¹Each tag allows a hunter to take one crane.

From USFWS 2021 Status and Harvests of Sandhill Cranes Report (Seamans 2021).



Thank You

