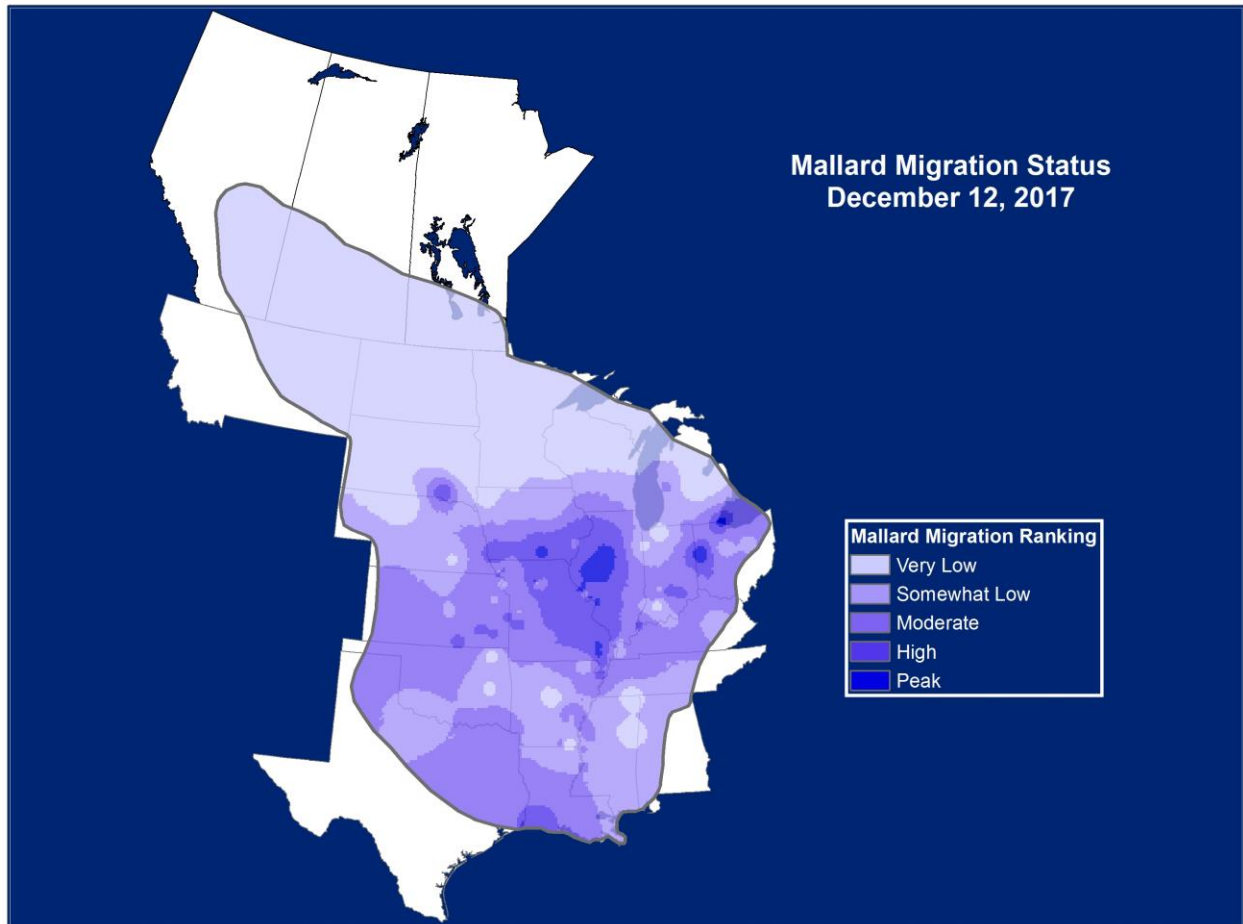


**December 22, 2017**  
**Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts**



This is the winter waterfowl ground count for December 18-22, 2017. Many of our staff are out for the holidays, so not all areas will be surveyed this week. I will update numbers next week as data arrives. Temperatures have been mild again this week, and the dry weather has continued. There are still impressive numbers of ducks being reported from aerial surveys and ground counts North of the Ohio River, and most of the Northern most states in the flyway are seeing very low numbers. The Mississippi River north of KY and to Iowa, is still holding nearly 800,000 ducks (142% Above AVE), more than half of which are mallards. This number is impressive, but even more impressive was a raft of 246,125 canvasbacks that were observed on pool 19 of the Mississippi river. Hopefully the cold front predicted next week will bring some new birds with it. Overall, most of the states wetlands are doing ok, but we are considerably dry for this time of year. Moist soil plants still look great across the state. Crops favored well in most places, and conditions for ducks should only improve with additional precipitation.

The second segment of duck season is now open and will remain open until Sunday, January 28. The goose season will remain open until Monday, February 15, 2018. The Western KY youth waterfowl dates are February 3-4, 2018. Remember that adults that are taking youth out for the youth hunt can still hunt geese, but may not take any ducks. The future of the sport will always be reliant on kids being introduced to waterfowling. Please try to take a kid hunting whenever possible. Good luck to all, and remember to be safe whenever you are out pursuing birds this hunting season.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Species Composition</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Ballard WMA	42, 650 Ducks 120 CA geese 2000 WF geese 500 Snow geese	87% Mallard, 7% GW Teal, 3% Gadwall and 3% mixed Shoveler, Pintail, Wigeon, Wood Duck and Merganser.	Water levels are looking great for most of our MSU impoundments and Hunt units. We are still waiting on the river to rise enough to send water to other areas that depend on higher river levels for holding capacity. Temps have been warm for the most part, but we are expecting some cold weather this weekend. We picked up several ducks from a week ago.
Boatwright WMA	9,283 Ducks 12 CA geese	95% Mallard, 2% Bufflehead, 2% GW Teal and 1% mixed Gadwall, Shoveler and black duck.	
Birdsville Island	Not surveyed		
Kentucky/Barkley Lakes	Not surveyed		
Duck Island	Not surveyed		.
Barren River Lake	200 Ducks 4,286 Sandhill Cranes		Moist Soil Units are extremely Dry. Peters Creek MSU is 20% full. Long Creek- Calvert Springs main units are full, but units above and below the main spring are only 50% full. All other units are dry. Winter wheat planted this year on Long Creek Unit looks good. All units have good moist soil vegetation, as well as

			corn, millet, milo, & buckwheat that was planted.
Doug Travis WMA	2,300 ducks	90% mallards, 5% gw teal, 4% ringneck ducks, 1% mix dabblers	The area is 65% flooded, and 3 wells are running.
Cave Run Lake	422 Ducks 200 CA Geese 2000+ Coots	57% divers (100 Bufflehead, 50 Ring-necked duck, 20 Scaup and various other or unknown divers) & 43% Puddle ducks (70 mallard, 65 gadwall, 1 Pintail and 3 shoveler), and 100 unidentified ducks	
Clear Creek WMA	Not surveyed		
Peabody WMA	731 Ducks 12 CA Geese	425 Mallards, remaining were divers	
Sloughs WMA	17,401 Ducks 95 CA geese 10,355 WF geese 16,000 Snow geese 160 Swans	95% mallard, with remaining 5% a mix of gadwall, shovelors, pintails, ring-necked ducks, and green winged teal.	Conditions continue to be dry and unseasonably warm across the area, with the Pond Creek marsh complex still at 60-70% water capacity for what is typical this time of year. However, it appears the first significant push of mallards have arrived on the WMA. Snow geese continue to move between the refuge and north in to Indiana throughout the day. White-front geese have been in mixed flocks with snow geese, either loafing on Pond Creek marsh, or feeding on dry-land

			corn/wheat fields across the refuge. Rains predicted on Friday and Saturday and the arrival of a major cold front, should improve hunting across the region as waterfowl seek new food sources and become concentrated as shallow water begins to freeze.
Yellowbank WMA	Not surveyed		Most units have sheet ice except for refuge where ducks are keeping open water.
Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds)	Not surveyed		
Herrington Lake	20 CA geese		
Taylorsville Lake	Not surveyed		
Cedar Cr./Dix R. WMA	Not surveyed		
Green River WMA	Not surveyed		