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Chadrad Communications, Inc.
226 Bordeaux St - Chadron, NE 69337
308-432-5545 fax 308-432-5601
E-mail: kcsr@chadrad.com

(S.D.)-Pheasant Numbers Down Across The State

By: Chris Fankhauser Posted at: 08/30/2013 03:47 PM

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) - A tally of young pheasants across South Dakota indicates the bird numbers are down 64 percent from last year.

The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Department released its annual brood count Friday showing 1.52 pheasants per mile, down from 4.19 in 2012.

The survey tracks pheasant numbers over time. The actual population size is estimated after the pheasant hunting season ends, with more information included from hunters and a winter rooster-to-hen ratio survey.

The report blames months of persistent drought in 2012, a cold, wet spring this year and a reduction in habitat.

The group Pheasants Forever used the release of the report to urge Congress to strengthen conservation policies.

South Dakota's pheasant season opens Oct. 19 and runs through Jan. 5.

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