

Pheasant and quail numbers are good in the southwest region of the state, according to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission's 2011 Upland Game Forecast.

The forecast, produced annually, synthesizes the best available information regarding the relative abundances of small and upland game from wildlife surveys and biologists.

"The southwest region looks to be a good bet again this year for both pheasants and quail," said Jeff Lusk, Game and Parks' upland game program manager. "Although abundance indices for pheasants were lower in the Southwest compared to last year, abundance was at the five-year average and above the 10-year average."

Pheasant abundance also looks good in the Panhandle, where this year's regional index was at the five- and 10-year averages.

Quail abundance was highest in the Republican, Southeast and West Platte quail units. Statewide, quail numbers appear to be rebounding from the lows resulting from the winter of 2009 and wet, stormy spring of 2010.

Hunters are reminded that the forecast offers a regional assessment of game population abundance, and conditions at any specific location may differ from regional estimates.

"Hunters should still scout the areas they intend to hunt before the hunting season," Lusk said. The 2011 Upland Game Forecast can be obtained online at OutdoorNebraska.org or by calling 402-471-0641.