

APPENDIX 1: WILD TURKEY TIMELINE

- 1914 – Edward A. McIlhenny published the first book on turkey hunting with material originating from Charles Jordan: *The Wild Turkey and Its Hunting*. Jordan's friend John K. Renaud provided the manuscript to McIlhenny after Jordan, a game estate manager, was killed by a poacher in 1909.
- 1920-1930s – 30,000-200,000 wild turkeys survive in 21 states out of the 39 in their original range.
- 1920s-1950s – Much of the work to restore the wild turkey is rooted in a misguided effort to introduce farm raised birds into the wild.
- 1926 – A historical low occurred where only 13 states had a stated wild turkey season.
- 1929-1941 – The Great Depression sees many farms abandoned or gone fallow, which increases habitat needed for wildlife like wild turkeys to survive.
- 1933 – Aldo Leopold became the first professor of wildlife management in the U.S.
- 1934 – Congress passed the Fish & Wildlife Coordination Act so state agencies could work together.
- 1937 – The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937, also known as the Pittman-Robertson Act, taxed hunting guns and ammunition to pay for wildlife restoration efforts.
- 1939-1945 – World War II spurred technological advancements that would later aid in wild turkey restoration efforts, such as the cannon net and radio telemetry.
- 1943 – Henry Mosby and Charles Handley led the way in new wild turkey research and management practices detailed in their book *The Wild Turkey in Virginia*.
- 1948 – H.H. Dill and W.H. Thornsberry invented a cannon net that could be fired over a flock of birds.
- 1951 – Herman "Duff" Holbrook captures the first wild turkeys with a cannon net in the Francis Marion National Forest in Huger, South Carolina.
- 1958 – 20 states with wild turkeys have stated turkey seasons.
- 1959 – 320,000 wild turkeys estimated to be in the U.S. 31 states are now active in wild turkey restoration or well into the planning process. The first Wild Turkey Symposium is held between notable state biologists and game managers, resulting in the recognition that farm-raised turkeys do not survive or reproduce as compared to trapped and transferred turkeys.
- 1973 – 1.3 million turkeys are believed to be in the U.S., and 22 states have spring gobbler seasons. Tom Rodgers founded the National Wild Turkey Federation as a conservation organization.
- 1974 – 39 states now have turkey seasons; 16 of those states are outside its historical range.
- 1978 – 1.8 million wild turkeys are estimated in the U.S., and around 30 states now have seasons.
- 1980 – A groundbreaking for the NWTf's Wild Turkey Research Center in Edgefield, SC, was held. Wild turkey researcher James Earl Kennamer, Ph.D., was hired to lead wild turkey management.
- The 1980s – 47 states now have wild turkey populations, thanks to trap-and-transfer programs.
- 1990 – 3.5 million wild turkeys are estimated in the U.S.
- 1991 – For the first time, 49 states hold wild turkey seasons (Alaska is the exception).
- 1994 – 4.2 million wild turkeys are now pursued by 2.1 million hunters; An estimated 654,000 birds are taken annually.
- 1999 – 5.4 million wild turkeys are estimated in the U.S.
- 2004 – 6 million or more turkeys estimated to be in the U.S.
- 2014 – 6.2 million turkeys wild turkeys are estimated in the U.S.
- 2017 – 7 million wild turkeys are estimated in the U.S. after 200,000 wild turkeys have been transferred since the 1950s; this may prove the high-water mark in post-restoration populations, as a decline biologist predicted, including the late Wayne Bailey, follows.
- 2019 – 6.9 million wild turkeys and 2.5 million hunters are found in the U.S.
- 2021 – Another conservation organization for wild turkeys, Turkeys For Tomorrow, is founded.
- 2023 – 6 million (or slightly more) wild turkeys now estimated.