

Biologist 'Eats Crow' This Year

Dan Timm, a duck and goose biologist with the Department of Fish and Game says he's "eating crow" this year because his prediction of a banner year for duck hunters in Alaska did not materialize.

"I predicted a good year for duck hunters this past fall," Timm says. "And now the hunters who failed to bag birds are not going to let me forget it."

Near-record numbers of breeding ducks in the state, combined with an early spring and favorable nesting conditions contributed to an excellent flight of birds from Alaska during the fall, Timm said. However, the weather failed to cooperate with most Alaska waterfowl hunters.

Timm said that because of the early spring, the birds were in better physical condition this fall, and many were strong enough to migrate south before the waterfowl season opened Sept. 1.

The birds which remained were treated to very mild weath-

er in September in Alaska's Interior and coastal areas. When cold weather and strong northerly winds finally came on Sept. 30, most of the ducks simply kept flying south and bypassed most of the good hunting spots.

Timm said that duck hunters had a poor season all over the state except for Kodiak Island and parts of Southeast Alaska in October.

Timm said however, that the surplus of birds which Alaskan hunters normally get are being taken in California, where waterfowl hunters are enjoying a very good hunting season. "Not much consolation for Alaskans though," he said.
