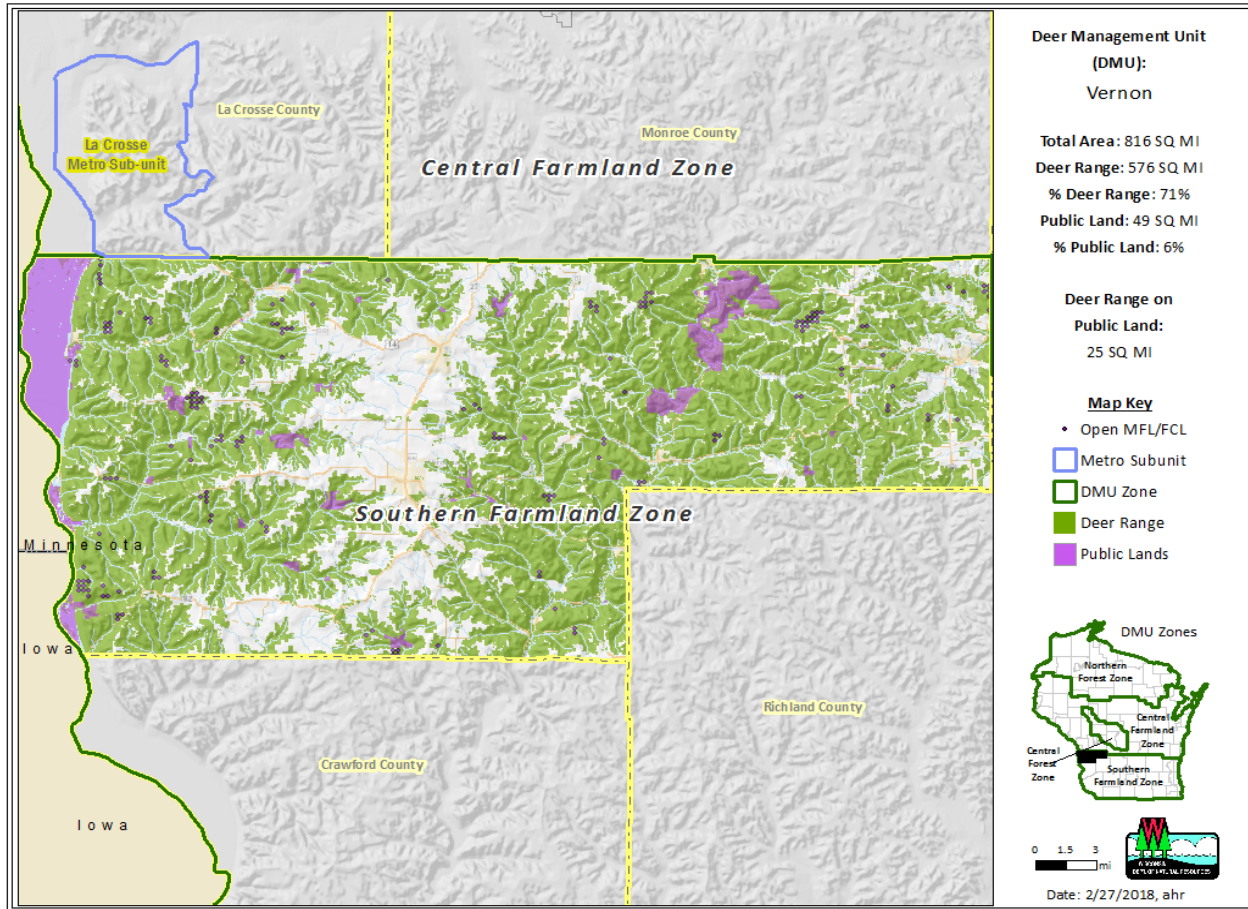


# Vernon County Deer Metrics Report

## Spring of 2024

### Management Unit:



### Manager's Note:

The Vernon County Deer Management Unit is located in the Southern Farmland Zone. Approximately 71 percent of the unit is considered suitable deer range. The unit is characterized by gently rolling east-west ridges extending from a broad main ridge, with narrow, strongly rolling north-south ridges branching off of these. Extensive woodlands that follow steep hillsides and stream corridors, mixed with cash grain and dairy agriculture on ridge tops and valleys typify this unit's habitat. There is a strong presence of organic and Amish agriculture in the unit. Oaks often dominate the woodlands, but without active management much of the oak is converting to more shade-tolerant tree species. South-facing slopes are often snow-free during much of the winter. Most of the land is privately owned, but there is a total of 47.3 square miles of publicly accessible land in the county. The Kickapoo Valley Reserve and the Wildcat Mountain State Park provide a substantial block of public land along the Kickapoo River. There are numerous other scattered smaller public land ownerships throughout the management unit. Rural residences, vacation developments and hobby farms are common throughout the unit. Hunter densities on opening day of the 9-day gun deer season average about 14 hunters per square mile of deer range, and about 4.5 - 5.5 bucks per square mile of deer range are harvested in the county. The county's 2020 harvest averaged about 15.4 deer/square mile of deer range. The current deer herd management objective is to stabilize the population. Chronic wasting disease was first confirmed in the county during 2017 when 3 deer tested positive for the disease. In 2020 an additional 15 deer tested positive for CWD, bringing the cumulative total to 37.