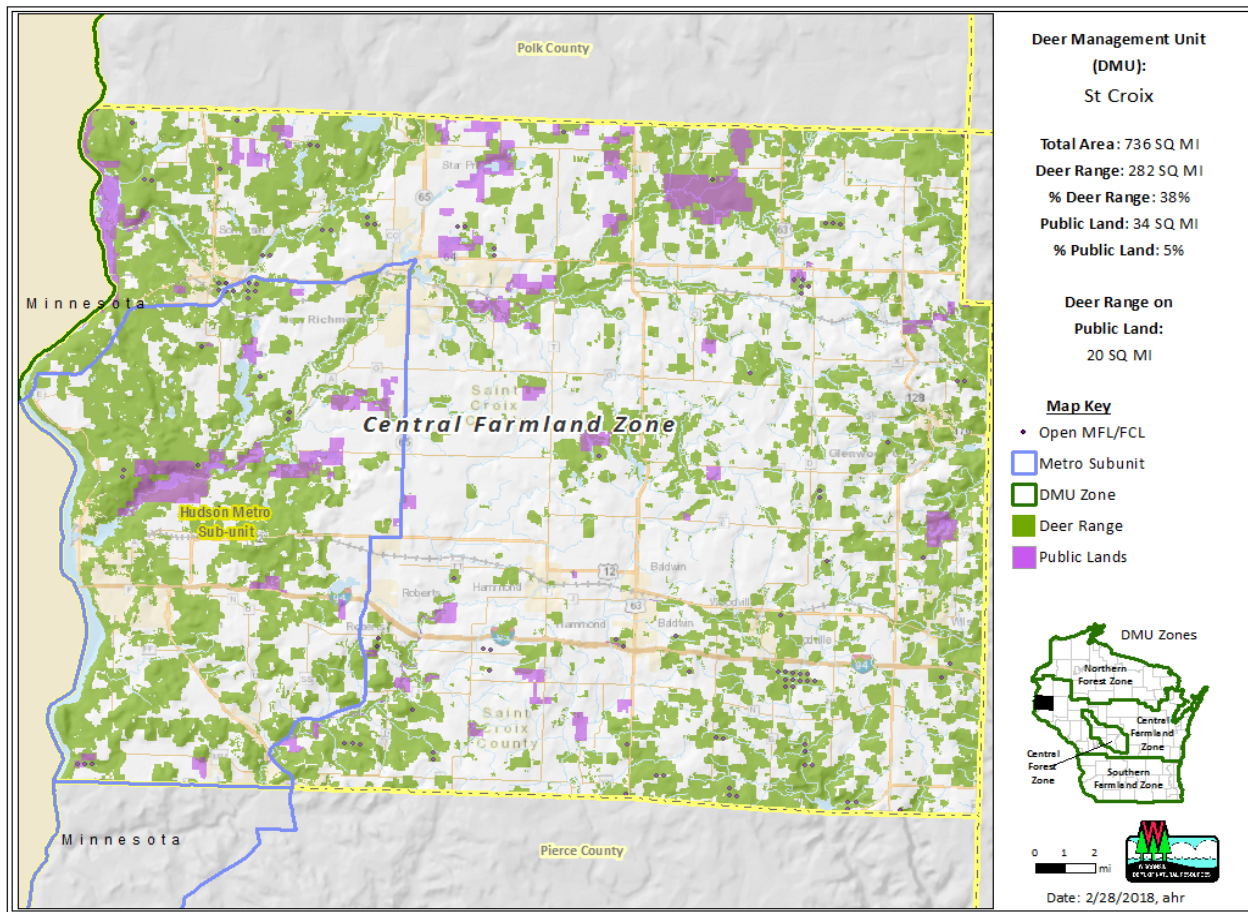


St. Croix County Deer Metrics Report

Spring of 2024

Management Unit:



Manager's Note:

The St. Croix Deer Management Unit is located in the Central Farmland Zone. Approximately 38 percent of the unit is considered suitable deer range (283 square miles). The predominant land-use in the unit is agriculture. Deer range is scattered throughout the unit and not evenly distributed. Suitable habitat is comprised of broken mixed-hardwood woodlots, wooded riverine systems including the Apple, Willow and St. Croix Rivers and scattered grassland and wetlands. The topography is dominated by flat agricultural lands in the central portion, extensive river bluffs along the St. Croix River in the west and wooded ridges with agriculture in the valleys in the far eastern portion. The southwest portion contains the Hudson Metro subunit which is a large urban interface with large growing communities influenced by the Twin Cities in Minnesota. This area provides additional hunting opportunities unique to Metro subunits. The vast majority of land in the county is in private landownership (~95%). Public hunting opportunities exist on over 8,500 acres of state-owned lands including the Cylon Wildlife Area, St. Croix County Islands Wildlife Area, small scattered fish and wildlife areas associated with the Western Prairie Habitat Restoration Area and ~4,000 acres of grassland-wetland habitat on St. Croix Wetland Management District properties. The Willow River State Park is located within the Hudson Metro subunit, providing public hunting access during the extended opportunities for Metro subunits. There are also over 3,000 acres enrolled in the Voluntary Public Access program providing public access to private lands. Hunter densities on opening day of the 9-day gun deer season average 19 hunters per square mile of deer range with an average harvest of 14 deer harvested per square mile of deer range. The general deer population trend in the county has been increasing. The current deer herd management objective is to stabilize the population.