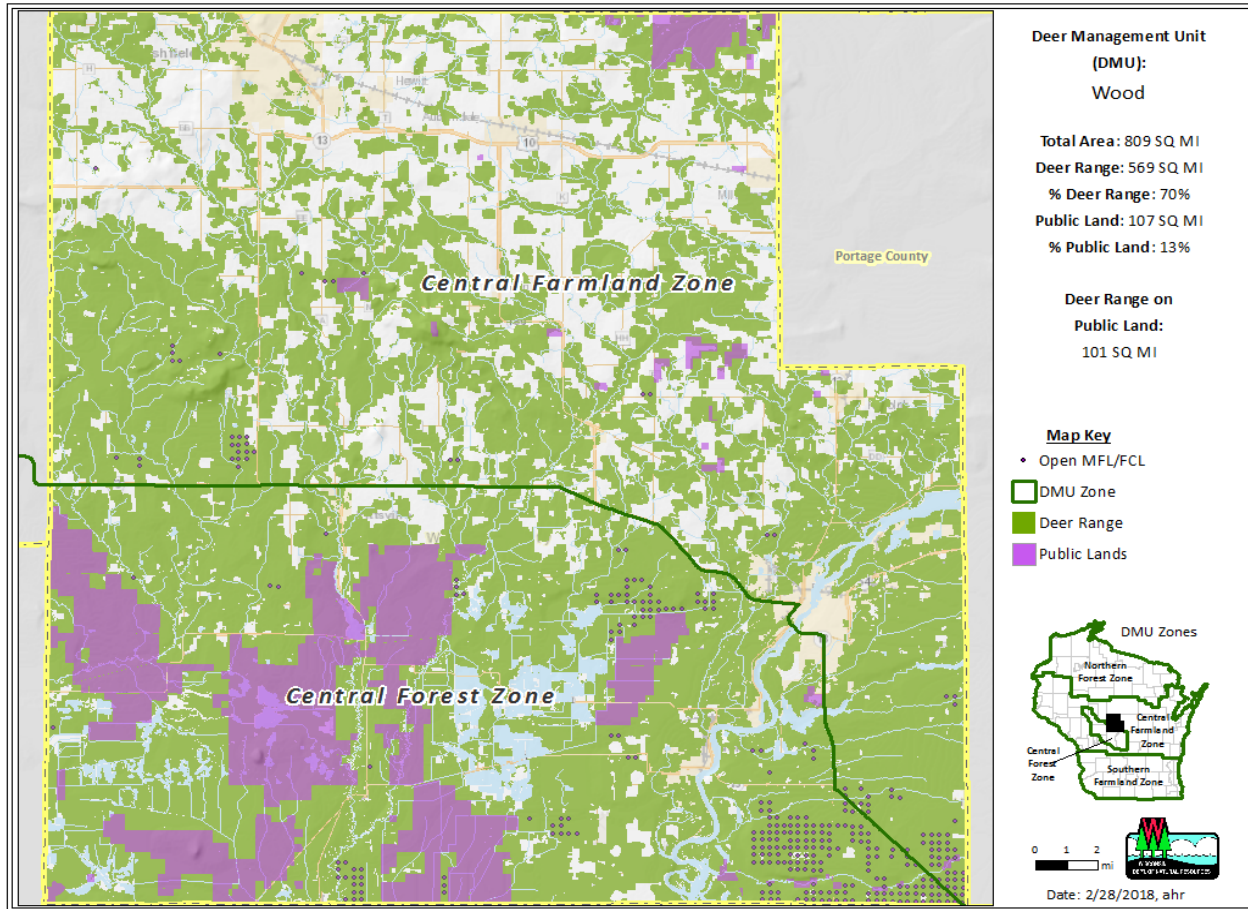


Wood County Deer Metrics Report

Spring of 2024

Management Unit:



Manager's Note:

The Wood County Deer Management Unit is split into two different management zones. The area South and West of Hwy 73 and Hwy 13 is in the Central Forest Zone. The area North of this unit is in the Central Farmland Zone. Approximately 70 percent of the unit is considered suitable deer range. The two major cities in the unit are Marshfield and Wisconsin Rapids. The terrain throughout the unit is primarily flat with occasional mounds or buttes of sandstone along with numerous wetlands. The unit is 809 square miles in area, of which 69 percent (557 square miles) is forested land, with the remaining landscape primarily agricultural lands dotted with fragmented woodlots. The majority of agricultural land lies in the northern one-third of the unit north of State Highway 73/13 and includes areas with center-pivot irrigation systems. Primary agricultural production includes cranberries, corn, soybeans, alfalfa and even Christmas trees. Forested lands are a mix of state-managed lands, county-managed forests and private forest lands enrolled in the open Managed Forest Law program. The unit offers ample public hunting opportunities on over 139 square miles of land open to the public that includes the Wood County Wildlife Area, a portion of the Meade Wildlife Area, and Wood County Forest lands. A considerable portion of the unit east of the Petenwell Flowage is industrial forest and managed forest law lands. With the recent Managed Forest law rule changes and the potential purchasing approximately 6,000 acres for future development of a CAFO in this area hunters should confirm whether the block of land they typically hunt has not changed its status from "open" to "closed". Vehicle-deer collisions as well as crop damage to both agricultural crops and ornamentals caused by deer do occur in this unit when populations are relatively high. Deer inhabiting the Central Forest Zone are susceptible to severe winters similar to deer in the Northern Forest Zone but with less frequency. The current deer herd management objective is to maintain the population in both the Central Forest and Central Farmland Zone portions of the County.