Douglas County Deer Metrics Report
Spring of 2024

Management Unit:

Deer Management Unit
(DMU):
Douglas

Total Area : 1339 SQ MI
Deer Range : 1252 SQ MI
% Deer Range : 94%
Public Land : 669 SQ MI
% Public Land : 50%

Deer Range on
Public Land:
659 SQ MI

Map Key
- Open MFL/FCL
- Metro Subunit
- DMU Zone
- Deer Range
- Public Lands
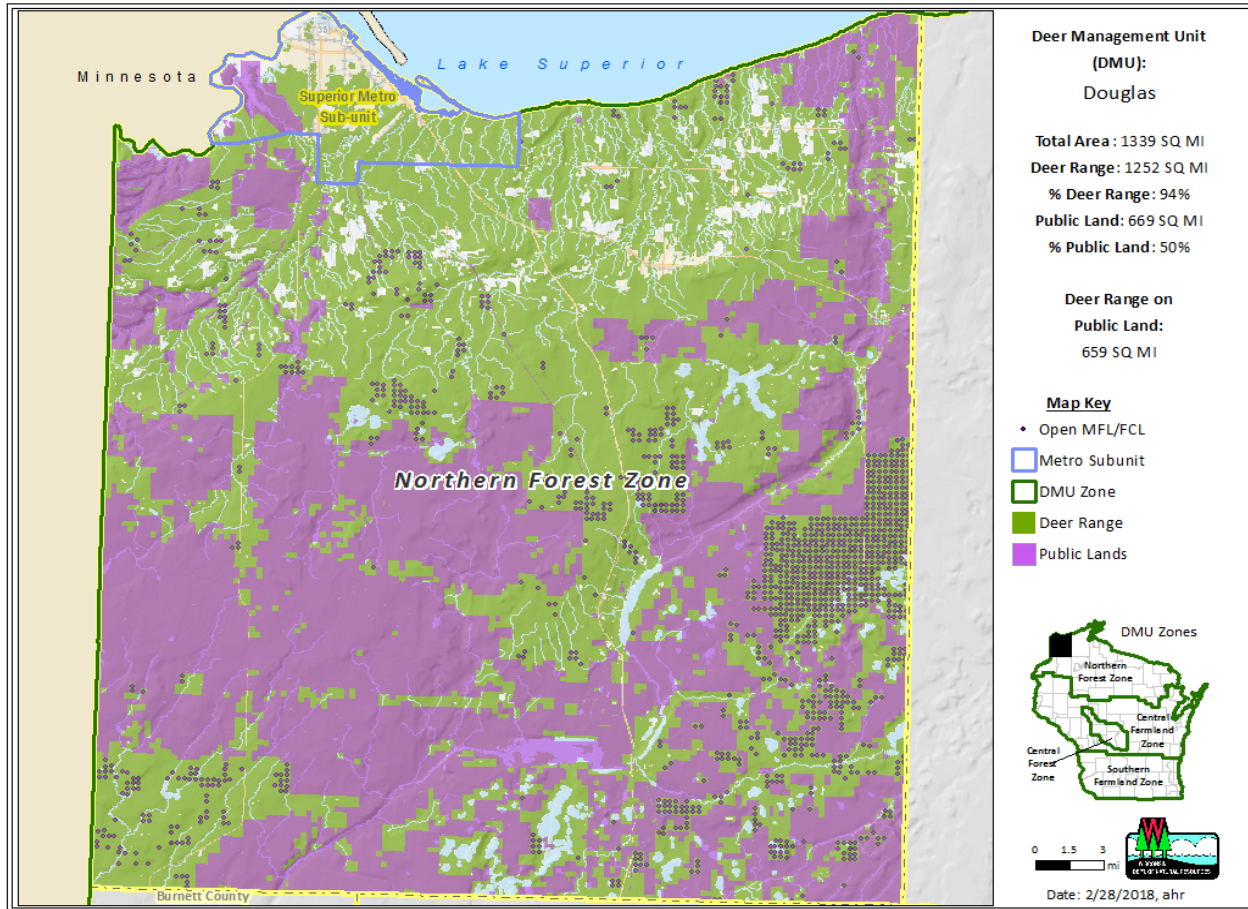
Manager's Note:

The Douglas County Deer Management Unit is located in the Northern Forest Zone. Approximately 95 percent of the unit is considered suitable deer range. Land cover varies greatly from north to south corresponding to soil types and landownership patterns. The northern one-third of the unit is a mixture of agricultural and forest lands comprised of aspen, fir-spruce and white pine dissected by steep drainages. The central portion consists of diverse forest types including aspen, oak, pine, spruce-fir uplands with large amounts of lowland alder and conifer swamps and bogs. The southern portion is heavily dominated by jack pine, red pine and scrub oak dotted with small seepage lakes and ponds. Approximately 52 percent of the unit is open to public hunting including Douglas County Forest, Douglas County Wildlife Area, Brule River State Forest, Red River Stream Bank Protection Area and thousands of acres of industrial forest land open to the public through the open Managed Forest Land and Forest Crop Land programs. Hunter densities on the opening day of the 9-day gun deer season average 8-12 hunters per square mile of deer range. Antlered buck harvest rates average 2-3 bucks per square mile of deer range. A Metro subunit lies within the unit surrounding the city of Superior and covers 35 square miles of mostly urban, suburban and municipal forest open to archery deer hunting through permits administered by the city. The current deer herd management objective is to increase the population as a whole in the county but to maintain the current level within the Superior metro-subunit.

Deer Management Unit Harvest History

Fawn to doe ratios collected in late summer give information on fawn recruitment and survival and are used as an input into the formula for annual deer herd abundance estimation. Fawn to doe ratios were summarized using groups of county deer management units. County deer management units were grouped based on location, habitat characteristics, and deer demography.
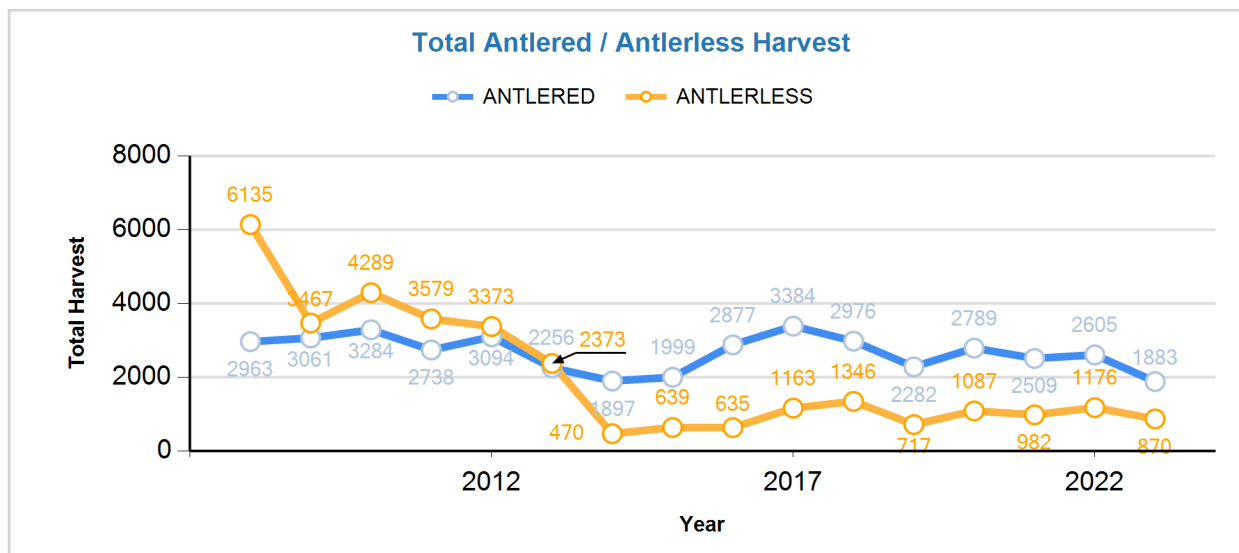
Northern Forest Management Zone

Total Area of Unit (Sq. Miles): 1,338.60

Deer Range of Unit (Sq. Miles): 1,252.40

Deer Management Unit Harvest History

Total Harvest for Douglas County - Northern Forest Management Zone

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total Harvest										
Antlered	1897	1999	2877	3384	2976	2282	2789	2509	2605	1883
Antlerless	499	639	635	1163	1346	717	1088	982	1176	870
Total	2396	2638	3512	4547	4322	2999	3877	3491	3781	2753
Gun										
Antlered	1339	1354	2033	2384	2174	1443	1646	1635	1771	1285
Antlerless	339	412	445	779	968	521	722	709	859	608
Total	1678	1766	2478	3163	3142	1964	2368	2344	2630	1893
Bow										
Antlered	290	301	334	365	251	268	323	228	214	143
Antlerless	56	79	38	104	113	50	93	80	98	82
Total	346	380	372	469	364	318	416	308	312	225
Crossbow										
Antlered	234	304	450	544	491	533	771	594	571	433
Antlerless	49	57	67	164	206	112	197	152	175	154
Total	283	361	517	708	697	645	968	746	746	587
Tribal*										
Antlered	34	40	60	91	60	38	49	52	49	22
Antlerless	55	91	85	116	59	34	76	41	44	26
Total	89	131	145	207	119	72	125	93	93	48
Youth Antlerless*										
Antlerless	0	0	415	431	410	294	427	336	346	217

* Tribal and Youth Antlerless data are included in above totals where they apply

Total Antlered / Antlerless Harvest

Total Harvest for Douglas County - Northern Forest Management Zone - Private Land

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total Harvest										
Antlered	1135	1126	1684	1964	1758	1391	1777	1562	1673	1234
Antlerless	284	337	347	659	752	474	663	670	712	581
Total	1419	1463	2031	2623	2510	1865	2440	2232	2385	1815
Gun										
Antlered	798	755	1220	1385	1298	884	1037	1025	1151	856
Antlerless	227	264	303	505	569	374	481	509	535	425
Total	1025	1019	1523	1890	1867	1258	1518	1534	1686	1281
Bow										
Antlered	173	174	177	209	132	147	204	127	121	84
Antlerless	28	43	19	59	65	25	54	57	57	57
Total	201	217	196	268	197	172	258	184	178	141
Crossbow										
Antlered	164	197	287	370	328	360	536	410	401	294
Antlerless	29	30	25	95	118	75	128	104	120	99
Total	193	227	312	465	446	435	664	514	521	393
Tribal*										
Antlered	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Antlerless	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Youth Antlerless*										
Antlerless	0	0	269	278	285	210	296	227	226	155

* Tribal and Youth Antlerless data are included in above totals where they apply


Total Harvest - Private Land
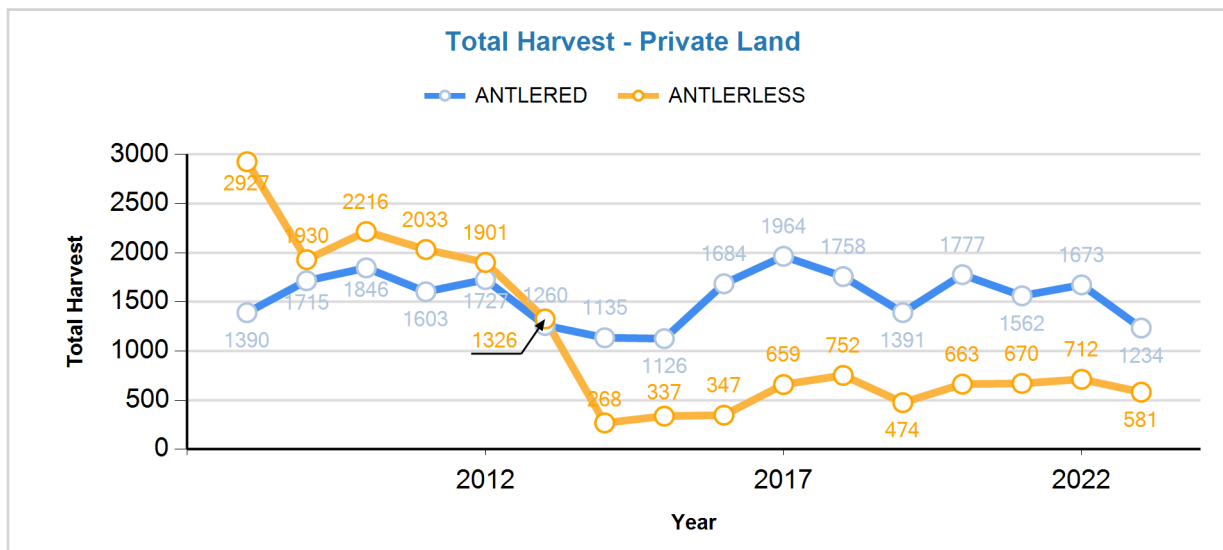
Total Harvest for Douglas County - Northern Forest Management Zone - Public Land

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total Harvest										
Antlered	762	873	1193	1420	1218	891	1012	947	932	649
Antlerless	215	302	288	504	594	243	425	312	464	289
Total	977	1175	1481	1924	1812	1134	1437	1259	1396	938
Gun										
Antlered	541	599	813	999	876	559	609	610	620	429
Antlerless	112	148	142	274	399	147	241	200	324	183
Total	653	747	955	1273	1275	706	850	810	944	612
Bow										
Antlered	117	127	157	156	119	121	119	101	93	59
Antlerless	28	36	19	45	48	25	39	23	41	25
Total	145	163	176	201	167	146	158	124	134	84
Crossbow										
Antlered	70	107	163	174	163	173	235	184	170	139
Antlerless	20	27	42	69	88	37	69	48	55	55
Total	90	134	205	243	251	210	304	232	225	194
Tribal*										
Antlered	34	40	60	91	60	38	49	52	49	22
Antlerless	55	91	85	116	59	34	76	41	44	26
Total	89	131	145	207	119	72	125	93	93	48
Youth Antlerless*										
Antlerless	0	0	146	153	125	84	131	109	120	62

* Tribal and Youth Antlerless data are included in above totals where they apply
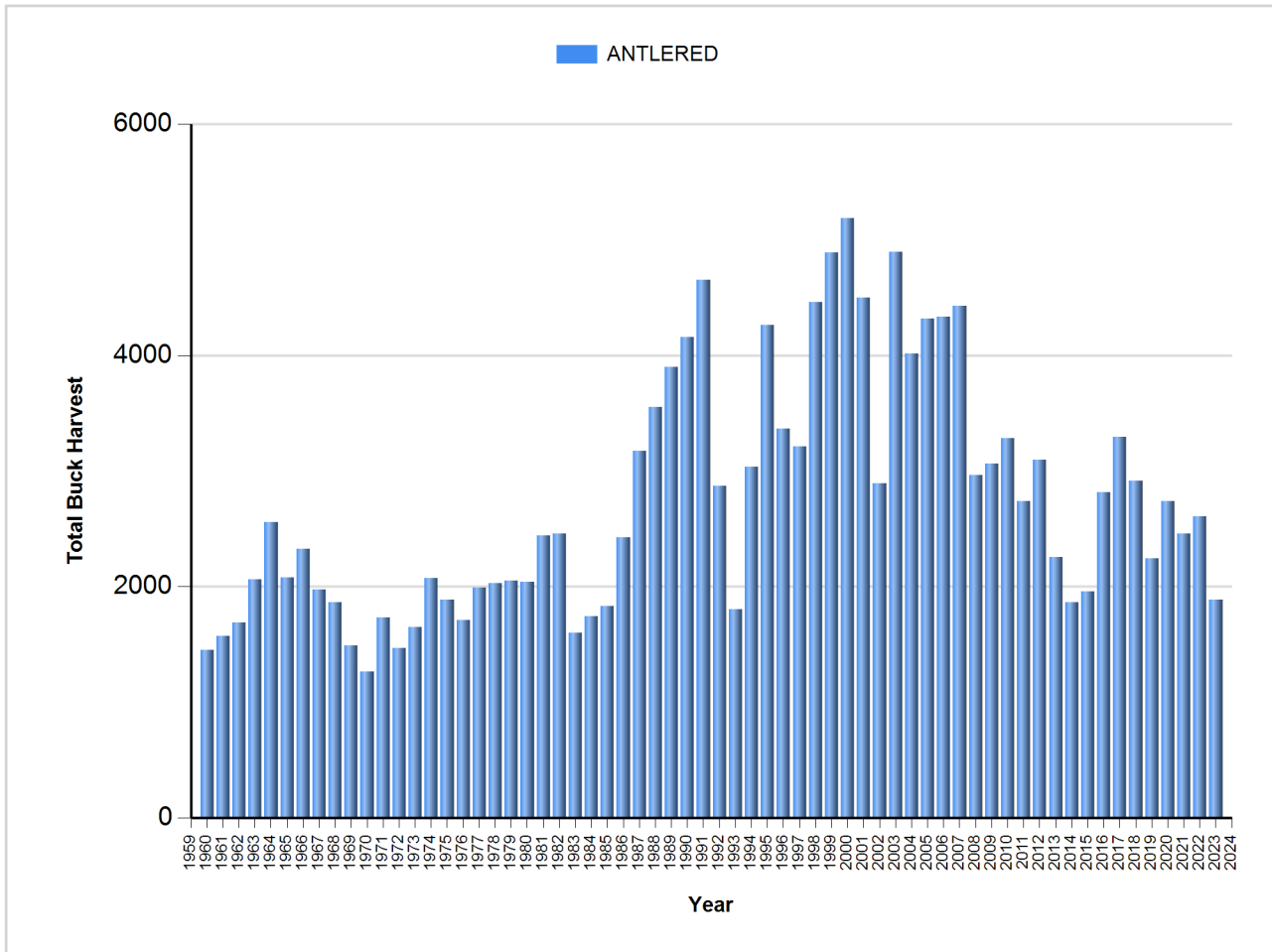
Total Harvest - Public Land
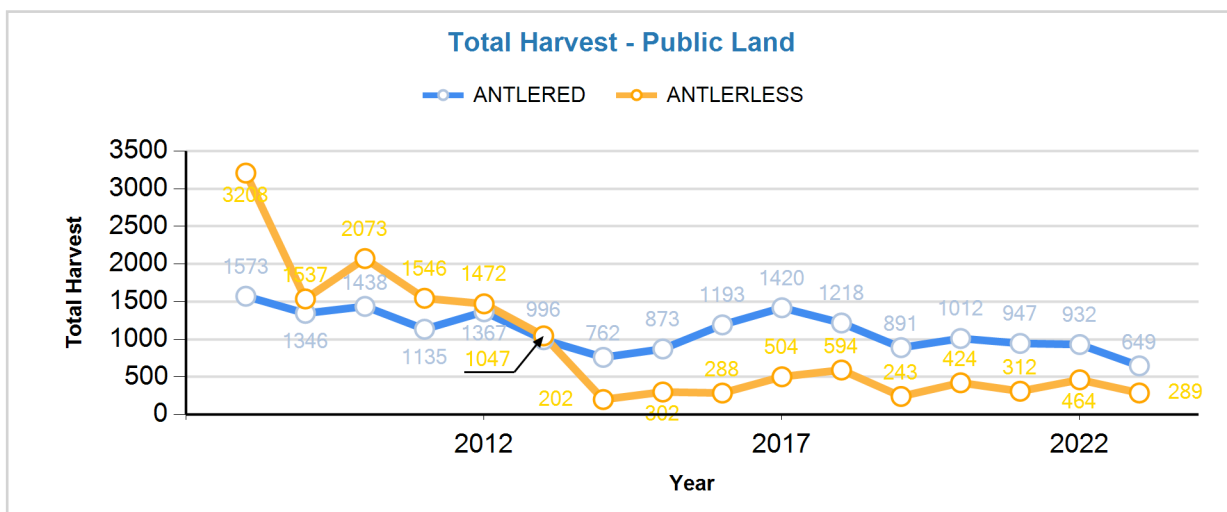
Total Deer Harvest 1960 - Present
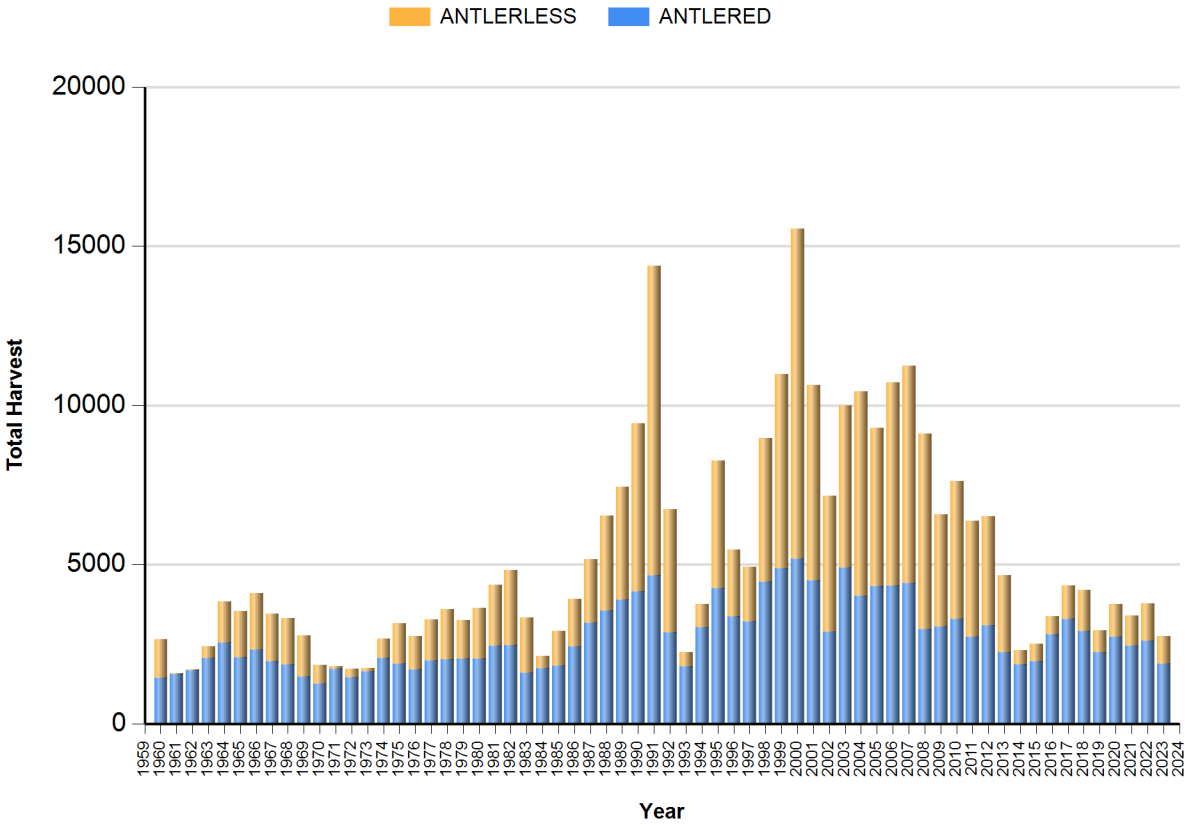
Total Buck Harvest 1960 - Present

Historic High: 2000 - 5,189

Historic Low: 1970 - 1,264

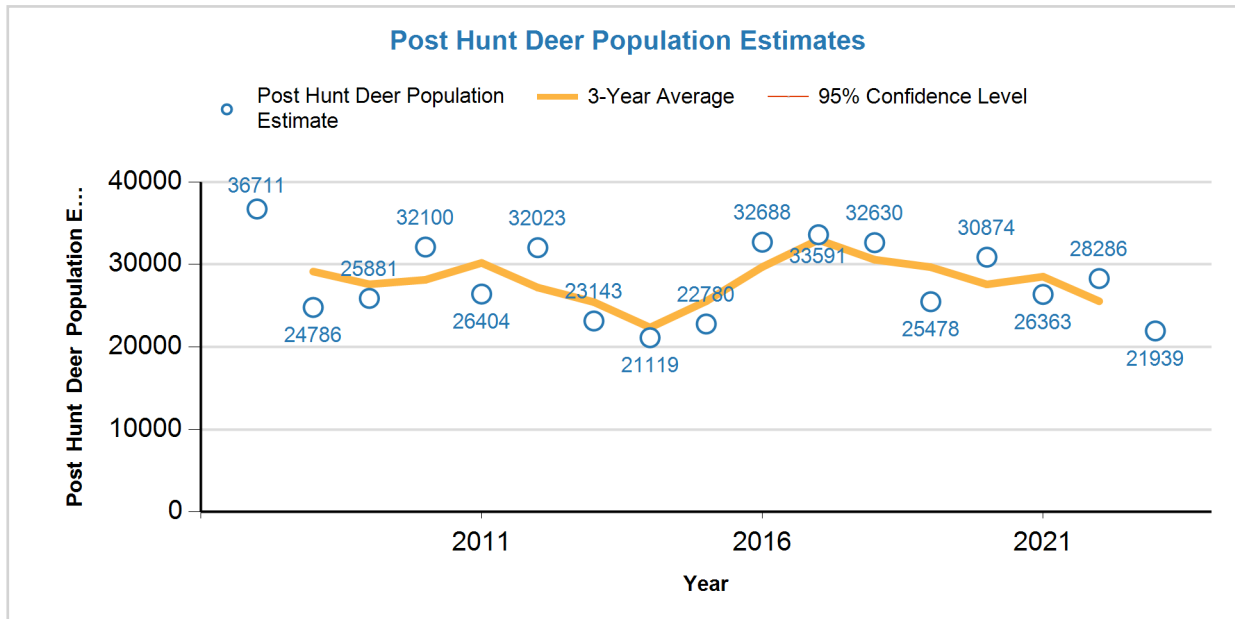**Antlerless Tag Issuance & Success for Douglas County - Northern Forest**

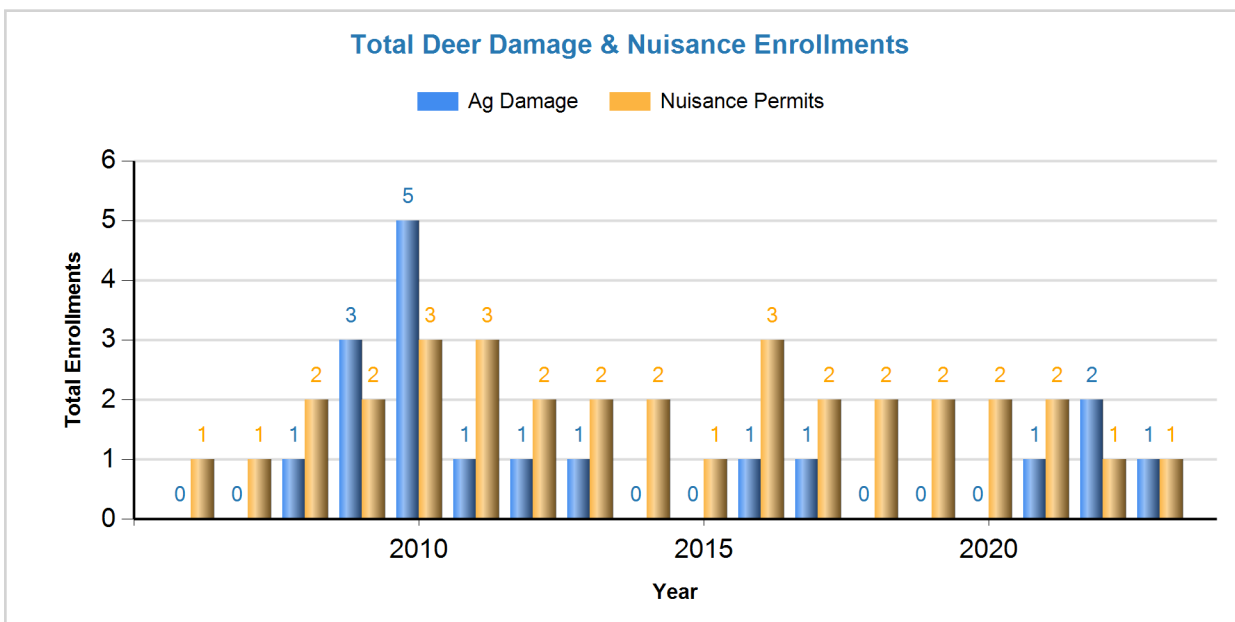| Year	2020	2021	2022	2023
Farmland - Public				
Issued				
Killed				
Success Rate (%)				
Farmland - Private				
Issued				
Killed				
Success Rate (%)				
Farmland - Total				
Issued				
Killed				
Success Rate (%)				
Bonus- Public				
Available	400	300	675	570
Issued	400	300	675	575
Killed	204	115	259	151
Success Rate (%)	51.0	38.3	38.4	26.3
Bonus- Private				
Available	600	900	1,000	1,330
Issued	600	900	1,001	1,331
Killed	307	361	401	383
Success Rate (%)	51.2	40.1	40.1	28.8
Bonus- Total				
Available	1,000	1,200	1,675	1,900
Issued	1,000	1,200	1,676	1,906
Killed	511	476	660	534
Success Rate (%)	51.1	39.7	39.4	28.0

Herd Abundance

Deer herd abundance is estimated annually with hunter-collected data and a mathematical model to get post hunt deer population estimates.
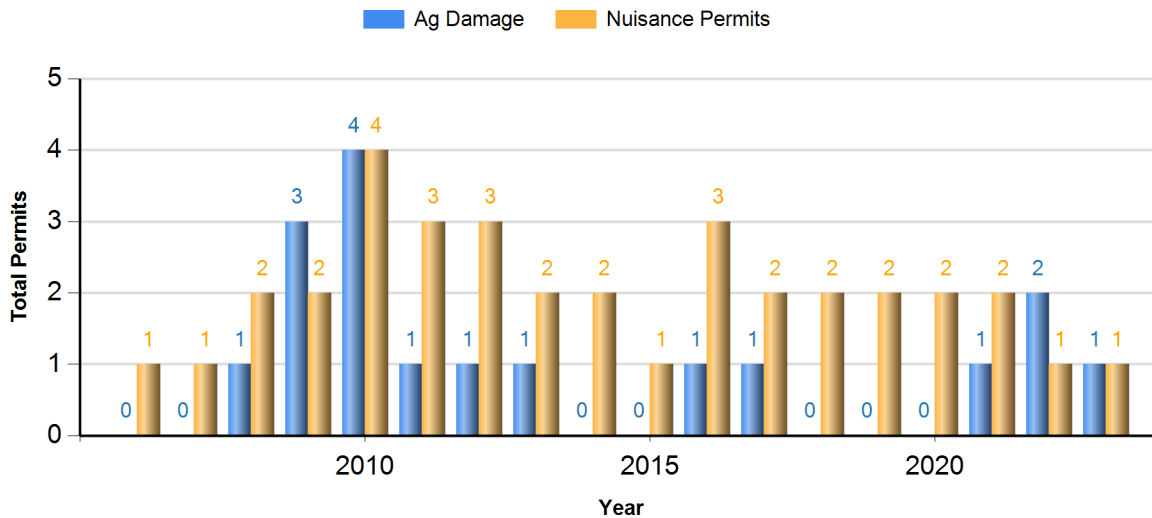
Post Hunt Deer Population Estimates

Legend: ○ Post Hunt Deer Population Estimate — 3-Year Average — 95% Confidence Level

Data points (Year, Estimate):
- 36711
- 24786
- 25881
- 32100
- 32023
- 26404
- 23143
- 22780
- 21119
- 32688
- 33591
- 32630
- 30874
- 25478
- 26363
- 28286
- 21939

Y-axis: Post Hunt Deer Population E... (0 to 40000)
X-axis: Year (2011, 2016, 2021)

Deer Impacts – Agriculture & Nuisance Impacts

View trends in county and statewide enrollment, shooting permit, Ag Damage, and Nuisance harvest numbers over the years.

Total Deer Damage & Nuisance Enrollments

Legend: ■ Ag Damage ■ Nuisance Permits

Values (Ag Damage / Nuisance Permits per year):
- 0, 1
- 0, 1
- 1, 2
- 3, 2
- 5, 3
- 1, 3
- 1, 2
- 1, 2
- 0, 2
- 0, 1
- 1, 3
- 1, 2
- 0, 2
- 0, 2
- 0, 2
- 1, 2
- 2, 1
- 1, 1

Y-axis: Total Enrollments (0 to 6)
X-axis: Year (2010, 2015, 2020)

Total Deer Damage & Nuisance Shooting Permits Issued

Deer Impacts – Deer Vehicle Collision

Deer-vehicle collisions (DVCs) are one of the most visible negative impacts that deer populations have on society. As managing deer involves balancing the positive benefits of deer with their negative impacts, it makes sense to consider DVCs when making deer management decisions.
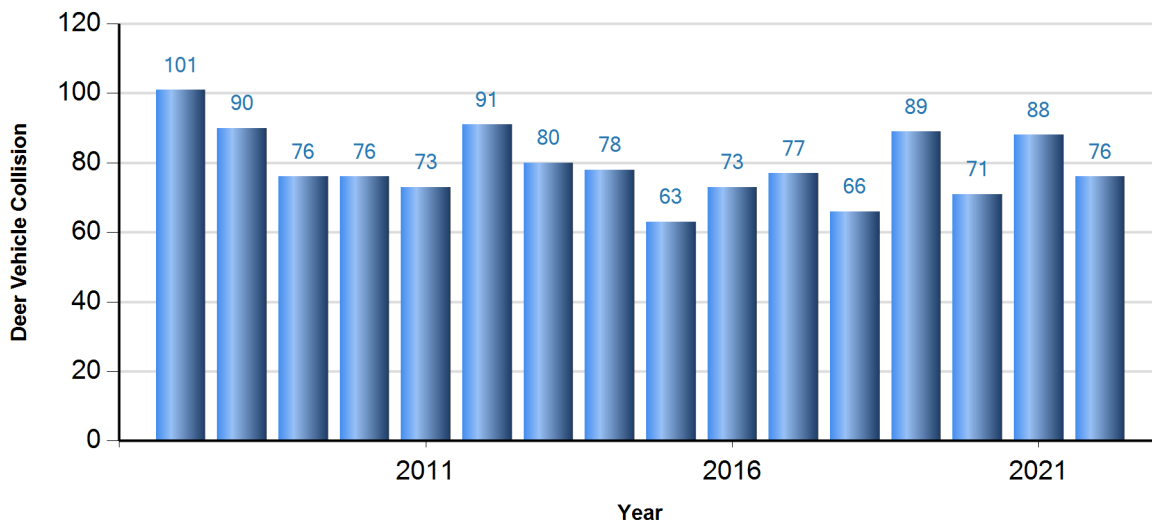
Hunter Dynamics - Hunter Field Observations

This metric provides voluntary hunter observation data that is collected either during the process of registering a deer, or from submitted field observations through an on-line reporting form.

Deer Seen Per Hunted Hour