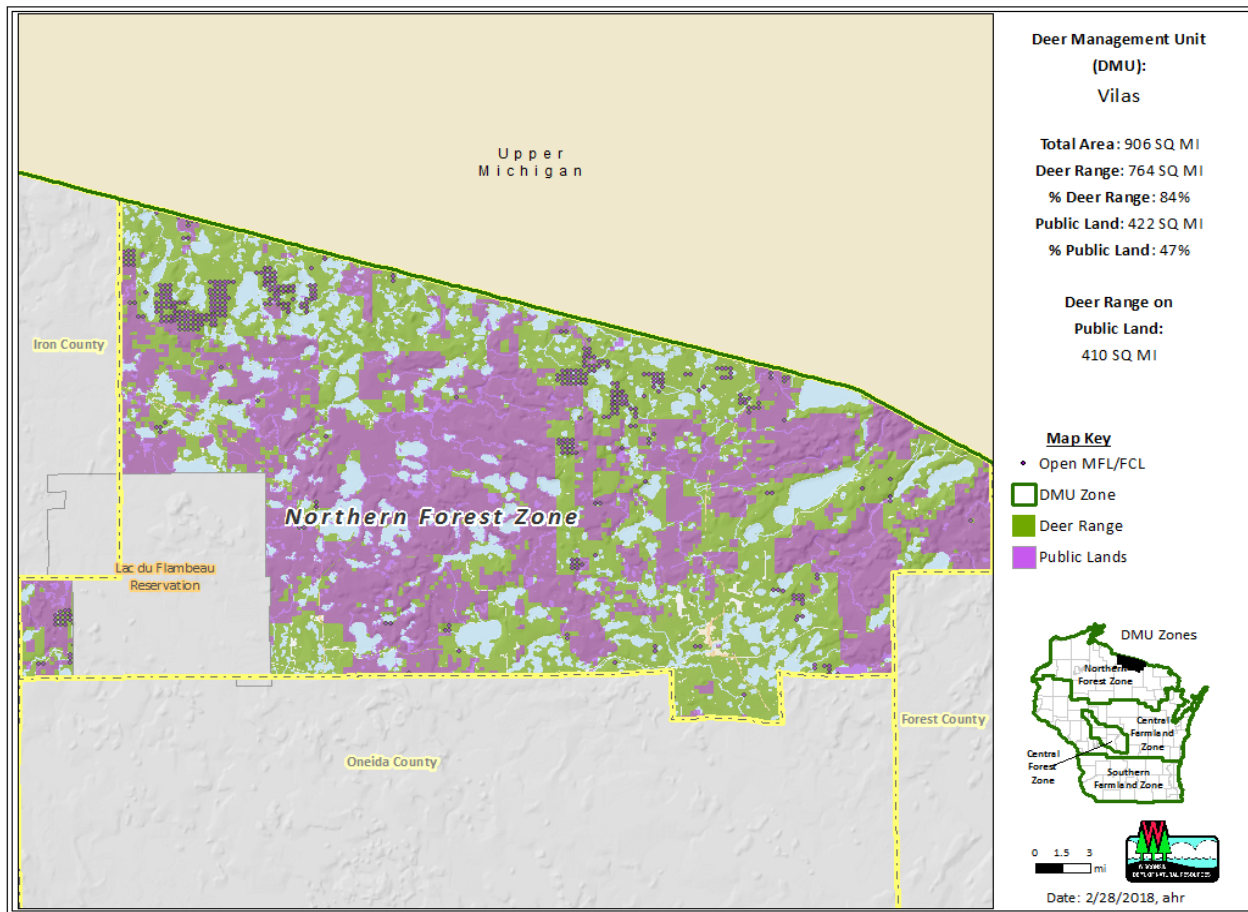# Vilas County Deer Metrics Report
Spring of 2024

Management Unit:

Manager's Note:

The Vilas County Deer Management Unit is located in the Northern Forest Zone. Approximately 84 percent of the unit is considered suitable deer range. The unit contains numerous lakes, bogs, and marshes. Sandy soils support forests consisting of aspen, pine and oak which are considered to be fair summer deer range. Deer are subject to impacts of severe winters but herds still manage to rebound during mild winters. Urban deer and associated feeding was common in the more populated areas of the unit but a county wide baiting and feeding ban went into effect in 2016. Over half of the unit is open to public hunting including the Northern Highland State Forest, Vilas County Forest, Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, Powell Marsh State Wildlife Area and a number of other properties open to the public such as industrial forest lands enrolled in open Managed Forest Land and Forest Crop Land programs. Public roads and access are abundant and hunter access is above average. As in most units, deer are not evenly distributed and hunters may find higher densities of deer near urban areas or in remote areas that have dense cover and natural food sources. Buck harvest density is typical of a northern forest unit. Hunter densities on opening day of the 9-day gun deer season average about 15 hunters per square mile of deer range. The current deer herd management objective is to maintain the population. Look for deer in younger forests where deer can find more foods and hiding cover.

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.
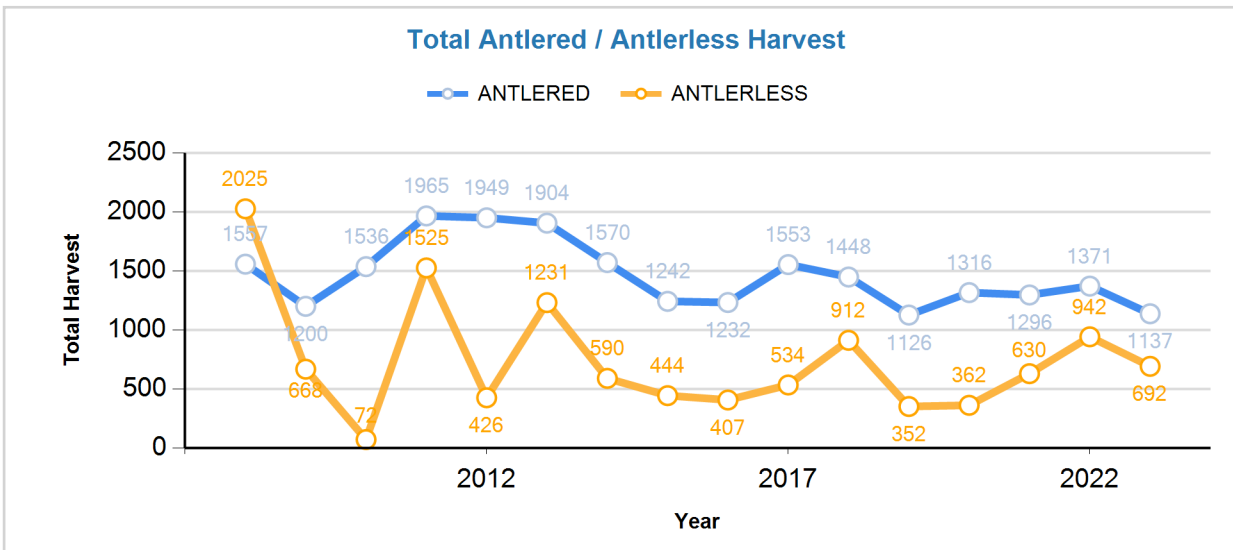
Northern Forest Management Zone

Total Area of Unit (Sq. Miles): 906.00

Deer Range of Unit (Sq. Miles): 764.00

Deer Management Unit Harvest History

Total Harvest for Vilas County - Northern Forest Management Zone

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total Harvest										
Antlered	1570	1242	1232	1553	1448	1126	1316	1296	1371	1137
Antlerless	603	444	407	534	912	352	362	630	942	692
Total	2173	1686	1639	2087	2360	1478	1678	1926	2313	1829
Gun										
Antlered	960	747	903	1080	1037	647	706	781	866	720
Antlerless	328	291	232	268	610	208	237	426	632	441
Total	1288	1038	1135	1348	1647	855	943	1207	1498	1161
Bow										
Antlered	269	198	107	144	132	125	163	137	115	97
Antlerless	46	26	14	16	70	24	16	48	77	54
Total	315	224	121	160	202	149	179	185	192	151
Crossbow										
Antlered	275	259	171	256	257	321	430	354	364	304
Antlerless	25	28	25	27	142	71	66	132	208	174
Total	300	287	196	283	399	392	496	486	572	478
Tribal*										
Antlered	66	38	51	73	22	33	17	24	26	16
Antlerless	204	99	136	223	90	49	43	24	25	23
Total	270	137	187	296	112	82	60	48	51	39
Youth Antlerless*										
Antlerless	0	0	216	250	217	120	173	125	128	76

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

Total Antlered / Antlerless Harvest

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

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total Harvest										
Antlered	922	690	664	862	812	700	818	798	829	676
Antlerless	248	217	154	188	592	225	224	431	555	429
Total	1170	907	818	1050	1404	925	1042	1229	1384	1105
Gun										
Antlered	572	413	490	607	562	383	396	461	506	400
Antlerless	207	182	131	153	417	156	166	292	369	273
Total	779	595	621	760	979	539	562	753	875	673
Bow										
Antlered	165	115	61	89	74	79	95	84	69	57
Antlerless	26	21	7	15	55	13	11	33	42	32
Total	191	136	68	104	129	92	106	117	111	89
Crossbow										
Antlered	185	162	113	166	176	238	327	253	254	219
Antlerless	15	14	16	20	120	56	47	106	144	124
Total	200	176	129	186	296	294	374	359	398	343
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	120	140	123	82	110	77	73	61

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


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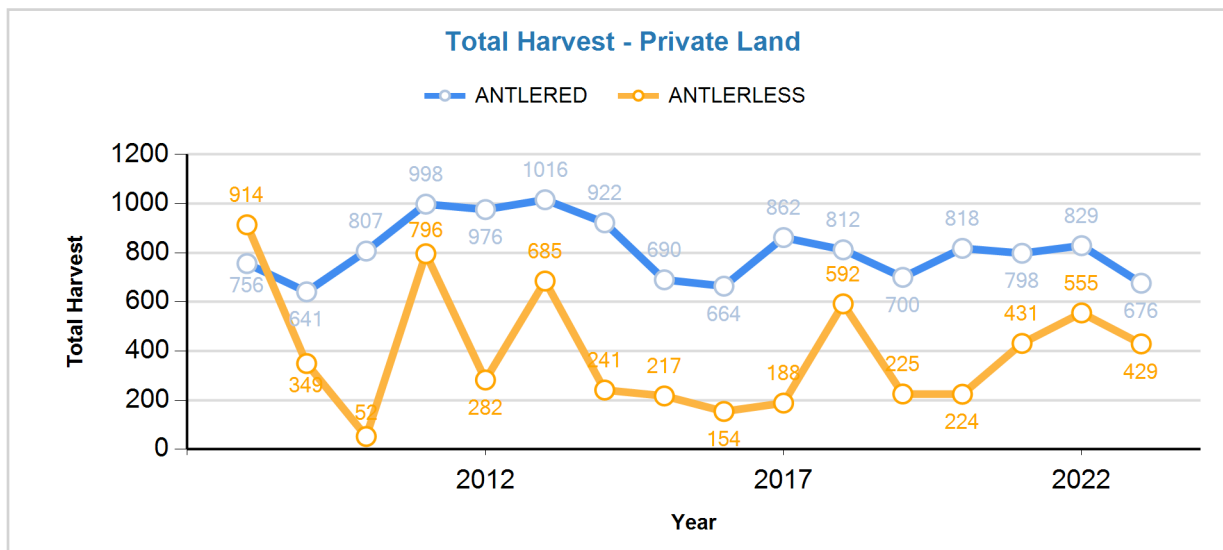
Total Harvest for Vilas County - Northern Forest Management Zone - Public Land

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total Harvest										
Antlered	648	552	568	691	636	426	498	498	542	461
Antlerless	355	227	253	346	320	127	138	199	387	263
Total	1003	779	821	1037	956	553	636	697	929	724
Gun										
Antlered	388	334	413	473	475	264	310	320	360	320
Antlerless	121	109	101	115	193	52	71	134	263	168
Total	509	443	514	588	668	316	381	454	623	488
Bow										
Antlered	104	83	46	55	58	46	68	53	46	40
Antlerless	20	5	7	1	15	11	5	15	35	22
Total	124	88	53	56	73	57	73	68	81	62
Crossbow										
Antlered	90	97	58	90	81	83	103	101	110	85
Antlerless	10	14	9	7	22	15	19	26	64	50
Total	100	111	67	97	103	98	122	127	174	135
Tribal*										
Antlered	66	38	51	73	22	33	17	24	26	16
Antlerless	204	99	136	223	90	49	43	24	25	23
Total	270	137	187	296	112	82	60	48	51	39
Youth Antlerless*										
Antlerless	0	0	96	110	94	38	63	48	55	15

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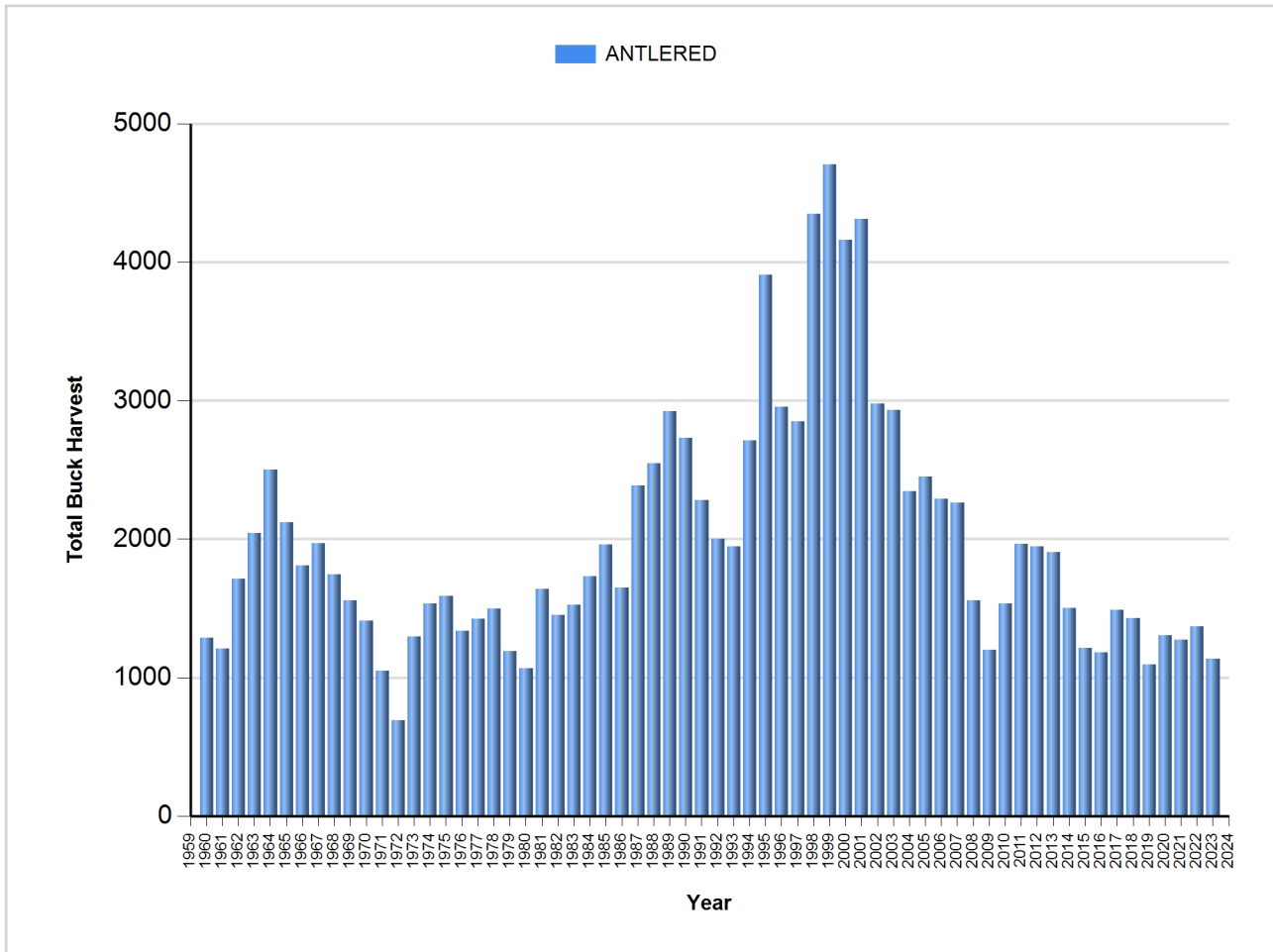

Total Harvest - Public Land
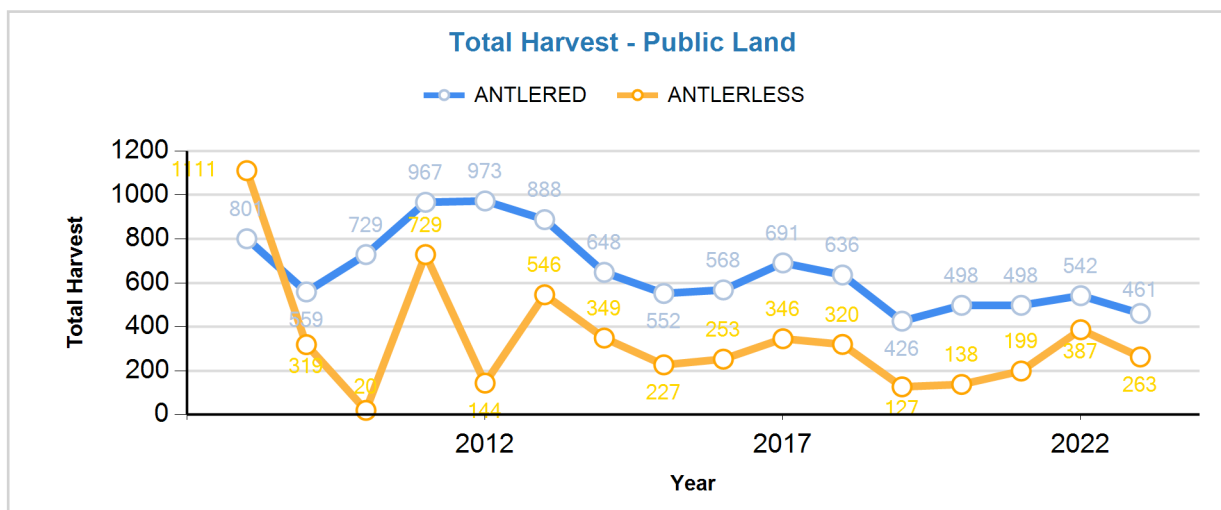
Total Deer Harvest 1960 - Present
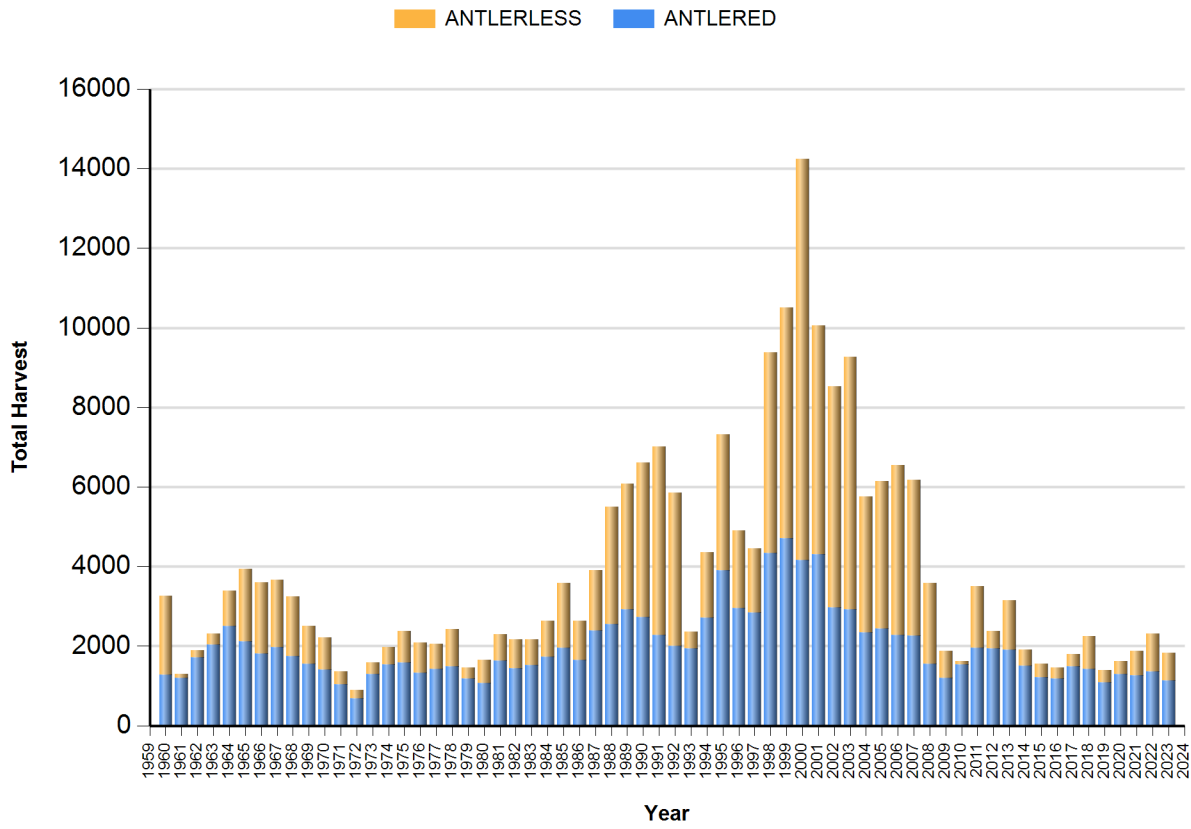
Total Buck Harvest 1960 - Present

Historic High: 1999 - 4,706

Historic Low: 1972 - 689

Antlerless Tag Issuance & Success for Vilas 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	75	450	1,250	1,500
Issued	75	450	1,250	1,502
Killed	27	122	303	223
Success Rate (%)	36.0	27.1	24.2	14.8
Bonus- Private				
Available	150	1,050	1,250	1,500
Issued	150	1,049	1,249	1,502
Killed	68	309	411	329
Success Rate (%)	45.3	29.5	32.9	21.9
Bonus- Total				
Available	225	1,500	2,500	3,000
Issued	225	1,499	2,499	3,004
Killed	95	431	714	552
Success Rate (%)	42.2	28.8	28.6	18.4

Herd Abundance

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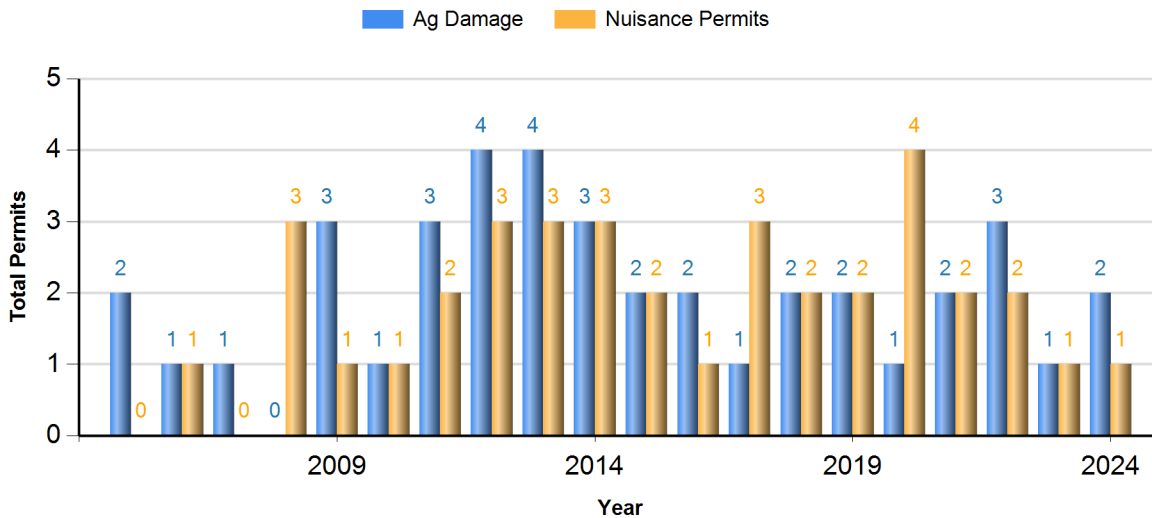

Post Hunt Deer Population Estimates
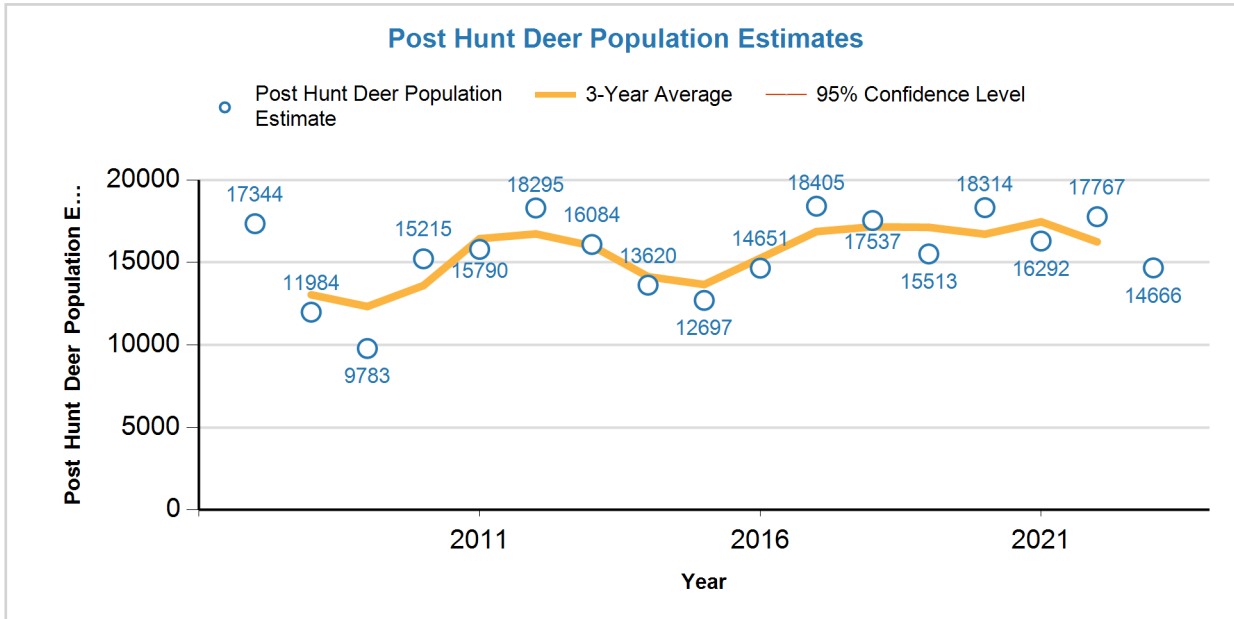
Deer Impacts – Agriculture & Nuisance Impacts

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


Total Deer Damage & Nuisance Enrollments
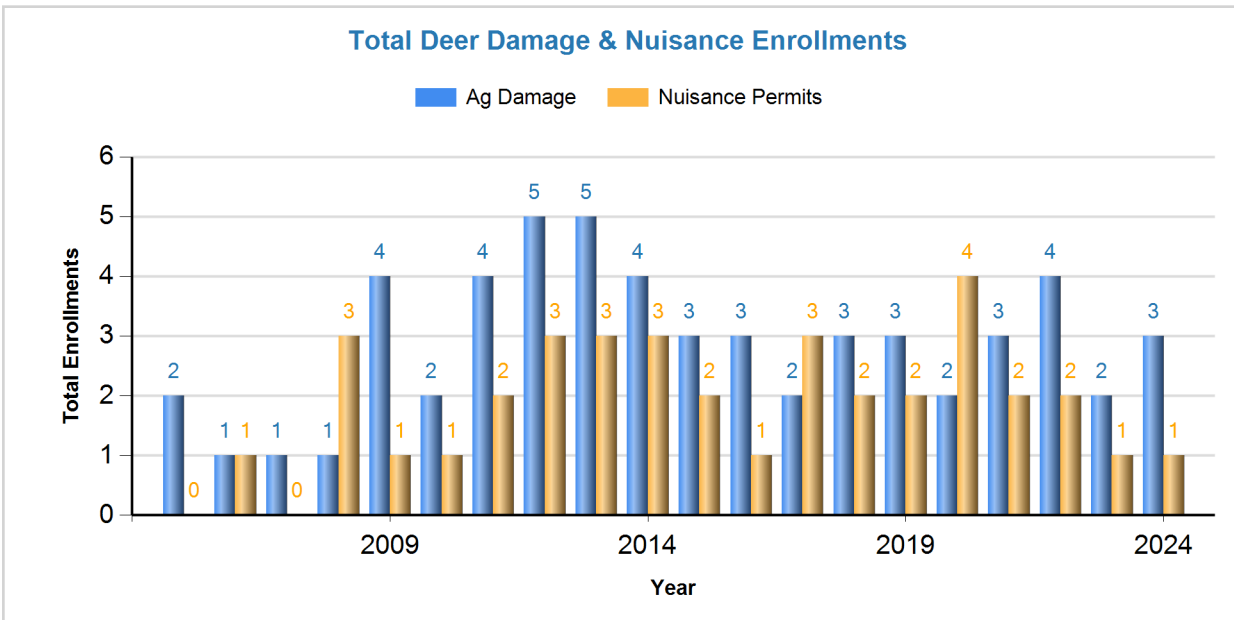
Total Deer Damage & Nuisance Shooting Permits Issued

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.
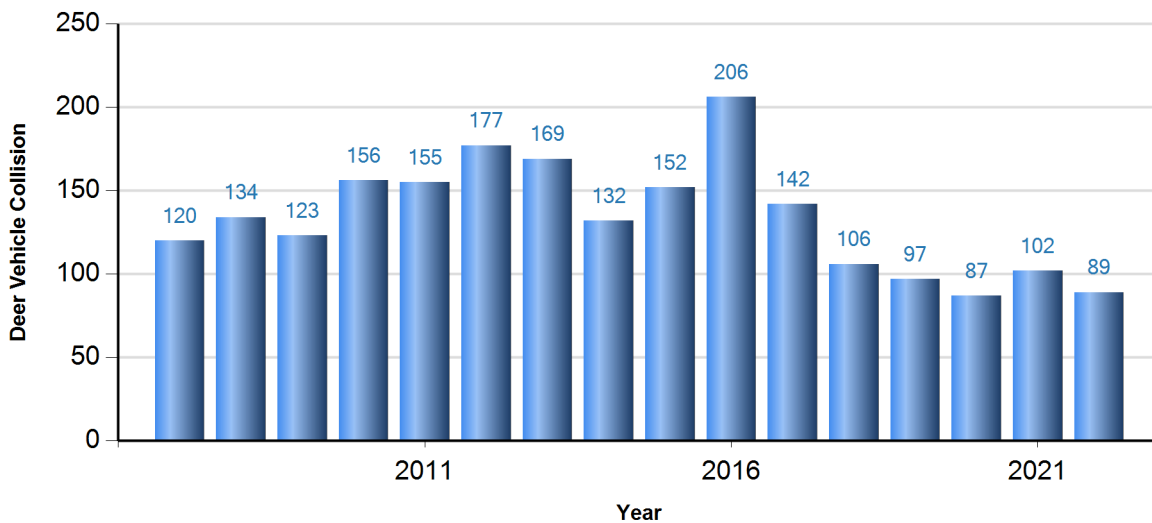
Hunter Dynamics - Hunter Field Observations

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