



2019 BIG GAME RECOMMENDATIONS

- Pronghorn Antelope, Deer and Elk Seasons
- Bag Limits and Unit Areas



PRONGHORN

INTRODUCTION

Pronghorn populations are close to or slightly above desired levels in most units. Either Sex permit increases are recommended in three (3) units to provide more hunting opportunity. An increase in Doe/Fawn permits is recommended in Banner South, Box Butte West, Cherry, Dismal, and Garden units where depredation complaints continue.

Total pronghorn harvest was 1034 in 2018 with 823 bucks taken. Populations have been stable and allowed hunters to harvest 700-800 bucks each of the past 9 years. 90% of harvested bucks were age 2 or older. Doe harvest was a 30-year high with 211 taken.

2,521 permits were issued in 2018, the highest on record. 46% of the buyers were archers, 49% were rifle hunters and 5% were muzzleloaders. Harvest by weapon type was 64% firearm, 17% bow, 11% muzzleloader, and 8% crossbow.

Permit demand remains high and most gun hunters wait 3-5 years to draw a permit. Archery permits are unlimited and permit sales continue to be high. An archery success rate of 15-25% minimizes impact on herds. Archery season is primarily a recreational hunt.

Management goals are to:

1. Allow growth of pronghorn populations in Cherry, Dismal, and Eastern Sandhills units.
2. Stabilize populations at current levels in Box Butte East, Garden, North Sioux, Banner North and Banner South.
3. Increase doe harvest due to depredation complaints in all units except those in the Eastern Sandhills.

Recommendations for 2019 include: (including Landowner permits)

- Add bonus Doe/Fawn tag to October Firearm Landowner permits and make those Landowner permits valid for all open seasons
- Add 21 Either Sex and 36 Doe/Fawn permits in Banner South and Banner South Late
- Add 15 Doe/Fawn permits in Box Butte West Late
- Add 1 permit to Cherry Either Sex and 13 Doe/Fawn permits in Cherry Late and expand to the entire Cherry Unit
- Add 18 Either Sex permits in the Dismal Unit and open Dismal Late with 30 permits
- Add 6 Either Sex permits to Eastern Sandhills
- Add 63 Doe/Fawn permits to Garden Late due to depredation issues

Summary: add 46 Either Sex permits, add 157 Doe/Fawn permits and add bonus tags on 267 available Landowner October Firearm permits

Pronghorn Season Management:

Historically, Nebraska's pronghorn populations have had large fluctuations in response to population declines caused by winter storms, drought or other factors. Large permit reductions or season closures have been common, as staff has responded to significant changes in population estimates.

It is the intent of NGPC staff to incorporate specific harvest goals and management strategies that use biological data for making harvest recommendations. The specific goals and strategies may be adjusted in the future as we increase our understanding of our pronghorn herds.

Harvest Goals:

1. Maintain a minimum harvest success of 65%.
2. Yearling buck (age 1.5) harvest should be less than 20% of total buck harvest.
3. Maintain a maximum post-harvest buck/doe ratio of 1:4.

Management strategies:

1. Consider a **permit increase** when harvest success is greater than 75% and harvest goals 2 and 3 have been met and after evaluation of other population indicators.
2. Consider **issuing "either sex"** or doe/fawn permits and/or authorizing a depredation season when population objectives and/or cultural tolerance levels have been met or exceeded and after evaluation of all other population indicators.
3. Consider a **permit decrease** when harvest success is less than 65%, harvest goals 2 & 3 are met, and after evaluation of other population indicators.
4. Consider **closing the unit** to hunting when harvest success is less than 50% and/or buck/doe ratio is greater than 1:8, and/or the yearling buck harvest exceeds 50% of total buck harvest and after evaluation of other population indicators.
5. Consider **opening the unit** for pronghorn harvest after evaluation of population indicators.

ARCHERY PRONGHORN

2019 Recommendations: No changes.

Season Dates: August 20 through December 31, 2019.

Permits: Unlimited permits for one pronghorn of either sex, except one pronghorn with horns longer than ears on the Bessey Division of the Nebraska National Forest.

Area Open: Statewide, except closed on Fort Robinson State Park, Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge and Valentine National Wildlife Refuge.

General Information: Permit sales were the 4th highest on record, and archery success decreased to 22%, with 253 pronghorn taken by 1164 permit holders. Eleven percent (11%) of harvested bucks were age 1. One hundred-nine (109) pronghorn were taken in Dawes and Sioux counties. Crossbow harvest was 8% of total harvest. The use of crossbows is slowly increasing and now accounts for 32% of archery harvest.

Harvest Strategy: This is a recreational hunt that provides the only opportunity for non-residents to hunt pronghorn in Nebraska. Two hundred seventy-five (275) non-residents purchased archery permits. Success is low and allows hunters to pursue pronghorn in areas with low herd numbers without concern for herd reductions.

Expected Harvest: Two hundred (200) pronghorn.

Archery permits, harvest and success 2014 – 2018

Year	Permits Issued	Harvest			% Success	% Age 1.5	% Crossbow
		Buck	Doe/Fawn	Total			
2014	1053	163	16	179	17%	21%	20%
2015	1197	204	31	235	20%	20%	25%
2016	1316	202	21	223	17%	14%	28%
2017	1289	173	14	187	15%	17%	34%
2018	1164	221	32	253	22%	11%	32%

FIREARM PRONGHORN

(includes muzzleloader)

2019 Season <u>Recommendations</u>				2018 Season						
<u>Permits</u>										
<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>NLO</u>	<u>LO</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Authorized</u>	<u>Sold*</u>	<u>Type**</u>	<u>Harvest</u>		<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
							<u>B</u>	<u>D/F</u>	<u>Success</u>	<u>Age 1.5</u>
Banner North	84	42	ES	84	126	ES	84	3	69	10
Banner South	70	35	ES	56	84	ES	66	5	85	11
Box Butte East	30	15	ES	30	45	ES	31	0	69	0
Box Butte West	50	25	ES	50	75	ES	50	1	68	2
Cherry	76	38	ES	75	113	ES	58	7	56	2
Cheyenne	38	19	ES	38	57	ES	43	1	77	18
Dismal	36	18	ES	24	36	ES	31	0	86	0
Eastern Sandhills	20	10	ES	16	24	ES	14	3	67	19
Garden	30	15	ES	30	45	ES	30	0	67	7
North Sioux	100	50	ES	100	150	ES	84	9	62	14
All Oct Firearm	534	267		503	755		491	29	68	9
Banner North Late	30	15	D/F	30	45	D/F	0	11	24	--
Banner South Late	80	40	D/F	56	65	D/F	0	37	49	--
Box Butte East Late	46	23	D/F	46	69	D/F	0	40	58	--
Box Butte West Late	30	15	D/F	20	30	D/F	0	7	23	--
Box Butte West River Late	10	5	D/F	10	15	D/F	0	6	40	
Cherry Late	20	10	D/F	13	19	D/F	0	3	16	--
Cheyenne Late	40	20	D/F	40	20	D/F	1	26	45	--
Garden Late	76	38	D/F	34	51	D/F	0	28	55	--
North Sioux Late	80	40	D/F	80	92	D/F	0	43	47	--
Multi-Species Lottery	3			3	3		2		67	0
North Sioux MZ	26	13	ES	26	27	ES	23	0	85	23
Prairie MZ	100	50	ES	100	133	ES	87	1	65	13
TOTALS	1075	536		961	1324		604	231	60	13

*Excesses of permits sold over number authorized are landowner permits

NLO – Non-Landowner

LO - Landowner

**Permit Type: B --- Buck only ES --- Either Sex

D/F --- Doe Fawn

Season Dates: October 12 through October 27, 2019 – October Firearm
 November 1, 2019 through January 31, 2020 (Late Seasons)
 September 21 through October 6, 2019 - Muzzleloader

Permits: A total of 801 Either Sex, 189 Muzzleloader, and 618 Doe/Fawn permits are available to all firearm hunters, including landowners.

Area Open: See unit descriptions.

General Information: Success for the 2018 firearm season averaged 68%. 835 pronghorn (604 bucks and 231 doe/fawn) were harvested by 1324 firearm and muzzleloader hunters.

Population Strategy: Permit increases in Banner South, Cherry, Dismal, Eastern Sandhills and North Garden where populations are increasing. Stabilize population growth in all units and provide sufficient late season permits to respond to winter depredation.

Populations Status and Harvest Strategy: Expected harvest is 600 bucks and 250 doe/fawn in all firearm seasons and muzzleloader.

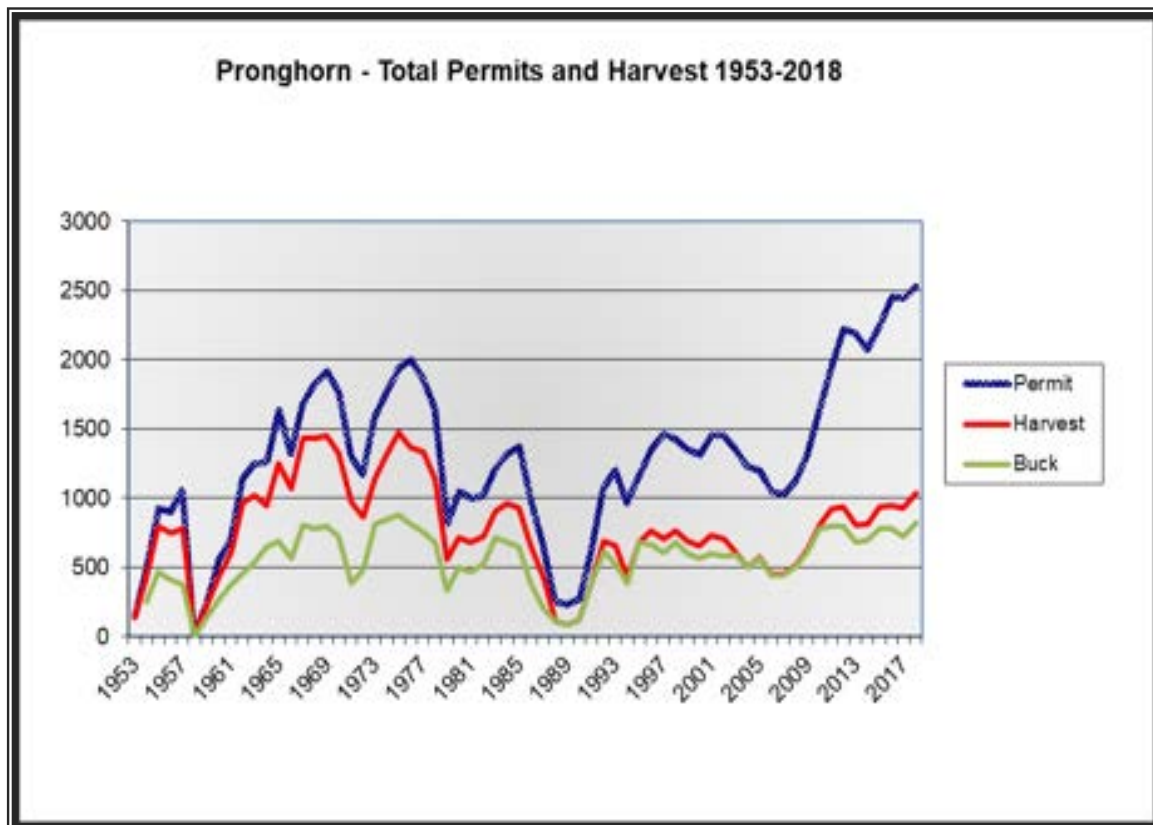
FIREARM PRONGHORN

(continued)

October and Late firearm permits, harvest and success 2002 – 2019

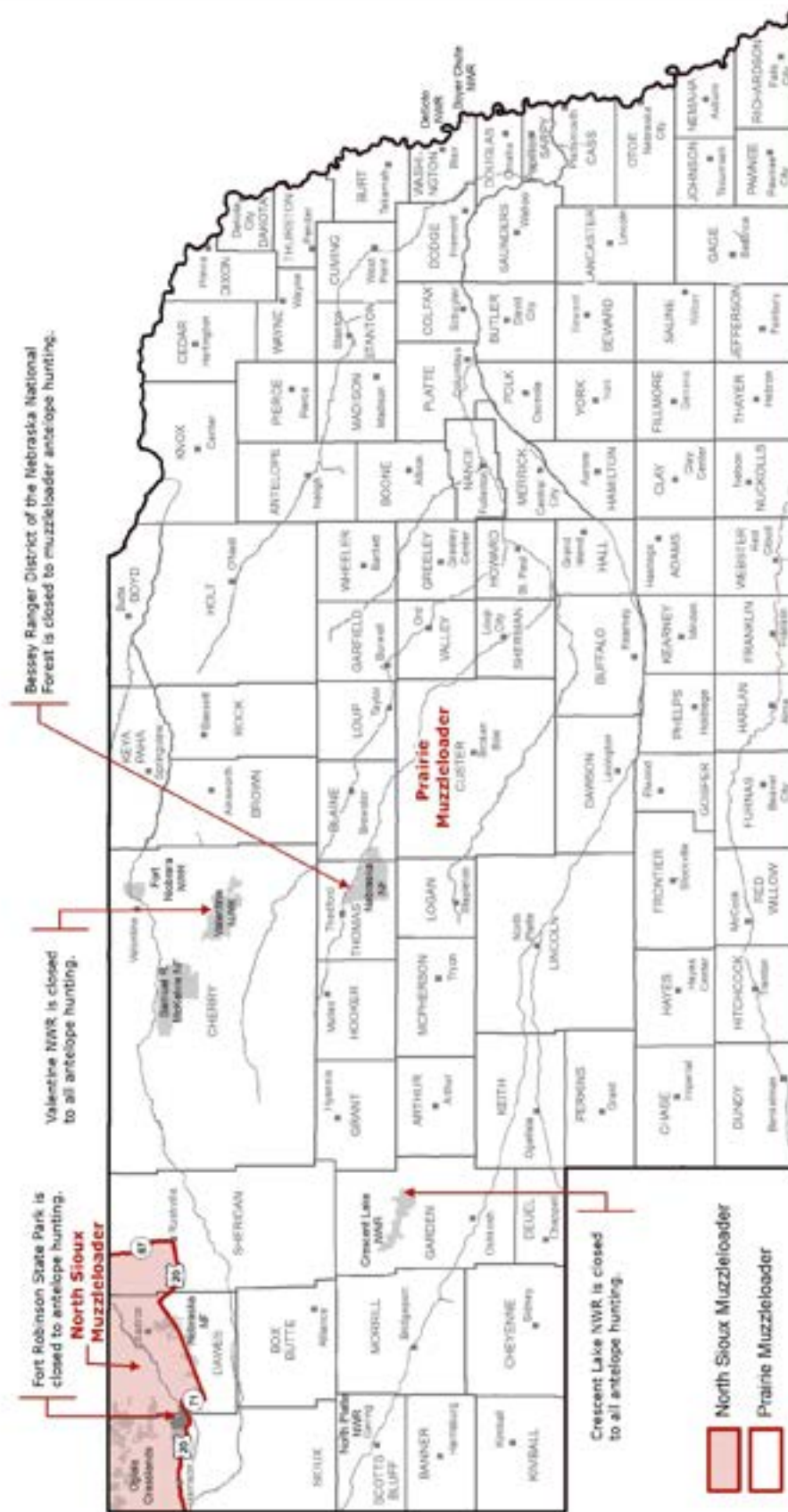
<u>Year</u>	<u>Permits Issued</u>	<u>Harvest</u>		<u>% Success</u>	<u>% Age 1.5</u>
		<u>Buck</u>	<u>Doe/Fawn</u>		
2003	822	427	4	55	
2004	706	399	0	57	
2005	657	419	0	64	26
2006	456	313	0	69	18
2007	419	306	0	73	15
2008	417	330	3	79	9
2009	492	410*	0	83*	11
2010	678	483	26	75	11
2011	834	474	89	68	6
2012	931	458	99	60	15
2013	951	431	102	56	9
2014	882	441	97	62	15
2015	898	479	96	64	8
2016	968	480	140	64	6
2017	1065	454	193	65	13
2018	1161	492	230	68	9

* Approximately, 30 kill records lost in 2009 at Scottsbluff.



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2019 ANTELOPE MUZZLELOADER UNITS



BANNER NORTH MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations: 84 Either Sex and 42 (1 ES, 1 D/F) Landowner permits. Landowner permits will receive an additional bonus doe/fawn permit. In 2018, 84 general and 42 landowner permits were allocated.

Banner North Late: 30 Doe/Fawn only and 15 Landowner Doe/Fawn only. No change from 2018.

Area Boundary: Valid for the entire Banner North Unit.

Season Dates: November 1, 2019 through January 31, 2020.

General Information: Hunter success for firearm season was 69% in 2018 compared to 71% in 2017. Success on late season doe/fawn was 24%. Depredation complaints: None.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: August aerial surveys indicate a relatively stable population, but tend to show annual fluctuations. The objective is to 1) alleviate depredation complaints through late season doe/fawn permits, and 2) maintain hunter success and buck quality through continuing with current either sex permit quotas. It is recommended to continue with the late doe/fawn season to help alleviate winter depredation events and to further assist with population stabilization goals.

<u>2018 Harvest Data</u>						
<u>Season</u>	<u>Ad Male</u>	<u>Ad Female</u>	<u>Fawn M</u>	<u>Fawn F</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>% Success</u>
Firearm	84	3	0	0	87	69
Firearm LS	0	11	0	0	11	24
Archery	16	1	1	0	18	--
Muzzleloader	9	0	0	0	9	--

Harvest comparisons for Firearm season:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Permits Issued</u>			<u>Harvest</u>	<u>%</u>		<u>%Age 1.5</u>	<u>Surveys***</u>	
	<u>Reg</u>	<u>LL</u>	<u>Type</u>		<u>Success</u>	<u>Adult Buck</u>		<u>F:100D</u>	<u>B:100D</u>
2013	76	38	ES	75	66	89	10	25	29
2014	76	38	ES	80	70	99	15	32	30
2015	76	38	ES	80	70	99	8	55	36
2016	76	38	ES	93	82	92	8	36	31
2017	84	42	ES	89	71	96	14	27	40
2018*	84	42	ES						
2018* ²	30	15	D/F						

* Recommended permits

***Aerial survey results; fawns seen per 100 does, and bucks seen per 100 does.

² - Late Season: November 1, 2019 through January 31, 2020

ES – Either Sex D/F – Doe/Fawn

Unsold Permits: None.

Expected Harvest: Expected harvest is 88 bucks and 33 doe/fawn.

BANNER SOUTH MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations: 70 Either Sex and 35 (1 ES, 1 D/F) Landowner permits. Landowner permits will receive an additional bonus doe/fawn permit. In 2018, 56 general and 28 landowner permits were issued.

Banner South Late: 80 Doe/Fawn Only and 40 Landowner Doe/Fawn Only. In 2018, 50 doe/fawn and 25 landowner permits were issued.

Area Boundary: Valid for the entire Banner South Unit.

Season Dates: November 1, 2019 through January 31, 2020.

General Information: Hunter success for the firearm season was 85% in 2018 compared to 82% in 2017. Late season success was 49%. Depredation complaints: One (1).

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: Population estimates in Banner South decreased dramatically in 2018, but these surveys tend to show annual fluctuations. The objectives are to: 1) stabilize population growth through late season doe/fawn permits, and 2) maintain hunter success and buck quality through current either sex permit quotas. It is recommended to increase the late doe/fawn season to alleviate depredation complaints. Either Sex permits have increased in 2016 and 2017, but it is recommended to increase current quotas as success rate remains high and % age 1.5 remains below minimum standards. Through observation and landowner contacts, it appears we have an opportunity for our hunters that is currently being underutilized.

<u>2018 Harvest Data</u>						
<u>Season</u>	<u>Ad Male</u>	<u>Ad Female</u>	<u>Fawn M</u>	<u>Fawn F</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>% Success</u>
Firearm	66	5	0	0	71	85
Firearm LS	0	31	2	4	37	49
Archery	20	0	1	0	21	--
Muzzleloader	15	0	0	0	15	--

Harvest comparisons for Firearm season:

	<u>Permits Issued</u>				%	%	%Age 1.5	<u>Surveys***</u>	
<u>Year</u>	<u>Reg</u>	<u>LL</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Harvest</u>	<u>Success</u>	<u>Adult Buck</u>		<u>F:100D</u>	<u>B:100D</u>
2014	44	22	ES	45	68	100	20	44	28
2015	44	22	ES	55	83	96	13	64	50
2016	50	25	ES	60	80	95	11	40	46
2017	56	28	ES	69	82	96	15	43	29
2017 ²	50	25	D/F	37	49	0	--	--	--
2018	56	28	ES	71	85	93	11	37	84
2018 ²	56	28	D/F	37	49	0	--	--	--
2019*	70	35	ES						
2019 ²	80	40	D/F						

* Recommended permits

***Aerial survey results; fawns seen per 100 does, and bucks seen per 100 does.

² – Late Season: November 1, 2019 – January 31, 2020

ES – Either Sex

D/F – Doe/Fawn

Unsold Permits: 16 late doe/fawn landowner permits.

Expected Harvest: Expected harvest is 81 bucks and 55 doe/fawn.

BOX BUTTE EAST MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations: 30 Either Sex and 15 (1 ES, 1 D/F) Landowner permits. Landowner permits will receive an additional bonus doe/fawn permit. In 2018, 30 general and 15 landowner permits were allocated.

Box Butte East Late: 46 Doe/Fawn only and 23 Landowner Doe/Fawn only. No change from 2018.

Area boundary: The entire Box Butte East unit is open for the late season.

Season Dates: November 1, 2019 through January 31, 2020.

General Information: Hunter success for firearm season was 69% in 2018 compared to 76% in 2017. Late season success was 58%. Zero (0) depredation complaints.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: The objective is to stabilize the population, maintain hunter success, and buck quality while addressing depredation issues as a result of suspected winter migration from adjacent units. August aerial surveys indicate lower population numbers in 2018 compared to 2017, but a steady downward trend since 2010. Surveys in this unit tend to show annual fluctuations. Winter concentrations remain high on agricultural areas spread throughout the unit. Percent of adult bucks harvested on either sex permits remains high while percent yearling buck in the harvest continues to meet objectives. Continued success on high quality bucks should also cause consideration for a permit increase in this unit. The lack of road access on the east side of the unit can limit hunters pursuing pronghorn, as a result, success can be variable from year to year. It is recommended to maintain the current permit allocation for 2019.

<u>2018 Harvest Data</u>						
<u>Season</u>	<u>Ad Male</u>	<u>Ad Female</u>	<u>Fawn M</u>	<u>Fawn F</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>% Success</u>
Firearm	31	0	0	0	31	69
Firearm LS	0	34	0	6	40	58
Archery	10	1	0	0	11	--
Muzzleloader	5	0	0	0	5	--

Harvest comparisons for Firearm season:

	<u>Permits Issued</u>				%	%	%Age 1.5	<u>Surveys***</u>	
<u>Year</u>	<u>Reg</u>	<u>LL</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Harvest</u>	<u>Success</u>	<u>Adult Buck</u>		<u>F:100D</u>	<u>B:100D</u>
2014	30	15	ES	31	69	97	10	57	51
2014 ²	26	13	D/F	9	60	0	--	--	--
2014 ²	10	5	D/F	14	47	0	--	--	--
2015	30	15	ES	28	62	96	11	37	85
2015 ²	26	13	D/F	16	53	0	--	--	--
2015 ²	20	10	D/F	21	70	0	--	--	--
2016	30	15	ES	31	69	100	0	50	28
2016 ^{2^}	46	16	D/F	30	48	0	--	--	--
2017	30	15	ES	34	76	97	7	40	70
2017 ²	46	23	D/F	41	59	0	--	--	--
2018*	30	15	ES	31	69	100	0	16	16
2018* ²	46	23	D/F	40	58	0	--	--	--
2019*	30	15	ES						
2019* ²	46	23	D/F						

* Recommended permits

*** Aerial survey results; fawns seen per 100 does, and bucks seen per 100 does

² – Late Season November 1, 2019 – January 31, 2020

[^] - Box Butte East Central Late and Box Butte East Late were combined

ES – Either Sex

D/F – Doe/Fawn

Unsold Permits: Zero (0).

Expected Harvest: Expected harvest is 32 bucks and 40 doe/fawn.

BOX BUTTE WEST MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations: 50 firearm Either Sex and 25 (1 ES, 1 D/F) Landowner permits. Landowner permits will receive an additional bonus doe/fawn permit. In 2018, 50 general and 25 landowner permits were allocated.

Box Butte West Late: 30 Doe/Fawn Only and 15 Landowner Doe/Fawn Only. In 2018, 20 doe/fawn and 10 landowner permits were allocated.

Area boundary: The entire Box Butte West unit is open for the late season.

Season Dates: November 1, 2019 through January 31, 2020.

Box Butte West River Late: 10 Doe/Fawn only and 5 Landowner Doe/Fawn only. No change from 2018.

Area boundary: That portion of the Box Butte West Unit within five (5) miles of the Niobrara River from NE Hwy. 29 west to the Wyoming/Nebraska state line.

Season Dates: November 1, 2019 through January 31, 2020.

General Information: Hunter success for firearm season was 68% in 2018 compared to 63% in 2017. Combined late season success was 37%. Depredation complaints: One (1).

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: The objective is to allow for a slow increase in the population and increase hunter opportunity while addressing depredation issues as a result of winter migration. Aerial surveys indicate the population is stable. Percent adult bucks harvested on the either sex permit remains high while percent yearling buck in the harvest continues to meet objectives. Continued success on high quality bucks should also cause consideration for a permit increase in this unit. The terrain features and lack of complete road access in the unit creates visual limitations to hunters pursuing pronghorn and as a result, success can be variable from year to year. High archery and muzzleloader numbers also suggest that there is an opportunity to increase permits. It is recommended to increase doe/fawn tags in the late season.

<u>2018 Harvest Data</u>						
<u>Season</u>	<u>Ad Male</u>	<u>Ad Female</u>	<u>Fawn M</u>	<u>Fawn F</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>% Success</u>
Firearm	50	1	0	0	51	68
Firearm LS	0	5	0	2	7	23
Firearm RL	0	5	1	0	6	40
Archery	29	9	1	0	39	--
Muzzleloader	17	1	0	0	18	--

Harvest comparisons for Firearm season:

	<u>Permits Issued</u>				%	%	%Age 1.5	<u>Surveys***</u>	
<u>Year</u>	<u>Reg</u>	<u>LL</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Harvest</u>	<u>Success</u>	<u>Adult Buck</u>		<u>F:100D</u>	<u>B:100D</u>
2014	50	25	ES	43	57	98	2	33	33
2014 ²	20	10	D/F	5	17	0	--	--	--
2014 ²	10	5	D/F	4	29	0	--	--	--
2015	50	25	ES	50	67	98	4	65	29
2015 ²	20	10	D/F	11	37	0	--	--	--
2015 ²	10	5	D/F	2	20	0	--	--	--
2016	50	25	ES	44	59	98	5	47	35
2016 ²	20	10	D/F	10	33	0	--	--	--
2016 ²	10	5	D/F	5	33	0	--	--	--
2017	50	25	ES	47	63	98	2	53	37
2017 ²	20	10	D/F	11	37	--	--	--	--
2017 ²	10	5	D/F	5	33	--	--	--	--
2018	50	25	ES	51	68	98	2	18	33
2018 ²	20	10	D/F	7	23	0	--	--	--
2018 ²	10	5	D/F	6	40	0	--	--	--
2019*	50	25	ES						
2019* ²	30	15	D/F						
2019* ²	10	5	D/F						

* Recommended permits

*** Aerial survey results; fawns seen per 100 does, and bucks seen per 100 does

² – Late Season November 1, 2019 – January 31, 2020

ES – Either Sex

D/F – Doe/Fawn

Unsold Permits: Zero (0).

Expected Harvest: Expected harvest is 55 bucks and 25 doe/fawn.

CHERRY MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations: 75 firearm Either Sex permits with 38 (1 ES, 1 D/F) Landowner Either Sex permits. Landowner permits will receive an additional bonus doe/fawn permit. In 2018, 75 general and 38 landowner permits were allocated.

Cherry Late: 20 Doe/Fawn permits with 10 Landowner Doe/Fawn permits. In 2018, 13 doe/fawn and 7 landowner permits were allocated. For 2019, the late season unit will expand into the entire Cherry unit.

Area boundary: The entire Cherry unit is open for the late season.

Season Dates: November 1, 2019 through January 31, 2020.

General Information: Hunter success for firearm season was 56% in 2018 compared to 49% in 2017. Combined late season success was 16%. Depredation complaints: One (1).

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: Aerial surveys show a stable to slightly increasing population in the Sandhills. The management objectives are to allow for an increase in population yet address depredation issues in problem areas through late season doe/fawn permits. With depredation issues in the current late doe/fawn unit diminishing and low success, it is recommended to expand the late unit into the entire Cherry unit. The terrain features and lack of complete road access in the Cherry Unit creates visual limitations to hunters pursuing pronghorn and, as a result, success can be highly variable from year to year. Yearling buck harvest is below 20% of overall harvest and remains within objectives. With an expansion to the doe/fawn season, it is recommended to increase permits slightly.

<u>2018 Harvest Data</u>						
<u>Season</u>	<u>Ad Male</u>	<u>Ad Female</u>	<u>Fawn M</u>	<u>Fawn F</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>% Success</u>
Firearm	56	6	0	1	63	56
Firearm LS	0	2	1	0	3	16
Archery	15	1	0	0	16	--
Muzzleloader	6	0	0	0	6	--

Harvest comparisons for Firearm season:

	<u>Permits Issued</u>				%	%	%Age 1.5	<u>Surveys***</u>	
<u>Year</u>	<u>Reg</u>	<u>LL</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Harvest</u>	<u>Success</u>	<u>Adult Buck</u>		<u>F:100D</u>	<u>B:100D</u>
2014	75	38	ES	71	63	89	19	33	58
2014 ²	13	7	D/F	2	10	0	--	--	--
2015	75	38	ES	71	63	93	9	82	57
2015 ²	13	7	D/F	4	20	0	--	--	--
2016	75	38	ES	69	61	94	9	41	38
2016 ²	13	7	D/F	2	10	0	--	--	--
2017	75	38	ES	55	49	91	6	65	67
2017 ²	13	7	D/F	5	25	0	--	--	--
2018	75	38	ES	63	56	89	2	18	34
2018 ²	13	7	D/F	3	16	0	--	--	--
2019*	76	38	ES						
2019* ²	20	10	D/F						

* Recommended permits

***Aerial survey results; fawns seen per 100 does, and bucks seen per 100 does

² – Late Season: November 1, 2019 – January 31, 2020

ES – Either Sex

D/F – Doe/Fawn

Unsold Permits: One landowner late pronghorn season permit left.

Expected Harvest: Expected harvest is 65 bucks and 11 doe/fawn.

CHEYENNE MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations: 38 firearm Either Sex and 19 (1 ES, 1 D/F) Landowner permits. Landowner permits will receive an additional bonus doe/fawn permit. In 2018, 38 general and 19 landowner permits were allocated.

Cheyenne Late: 40 Doe/Fawn and 20 Landowner Doe/Fawn only. No change from 2018.

Area Boundary: Valid for the entire Cheyenne Unit.

Season dates: November 1, 2019 – January 31, 2020.

General Information: Hunter success for firearm season was 77% in 2018, compared to 65% in 2017. Cheyenne Central Late success was 43%. Depredation complaints: Zero (0).

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: Trend indicators, landowner contracts, and observations in adjacent management units indicate an increasing population in the Cheyenne Unit and the southern Panhandle. The objective is to stabilize the population, maintain hunter success, buck quality and increase opportunity; while addressing depredation issues through late season doe/fawn permits. Buck age data and percent success did meet goals. It is recommended to maintain the current permit quota.

<u>2018 Harvest Data</u>						
<u>Season</u>	<u>Ad Male</u>	<u>Ad Female</u>	<u>Fawn M</u>	<u>Fawn F</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>% Success</u>
Firearm	43	1	0	0	44	77
Firearm LS	1	25	1	0	27	45
Archery	15	2	0	0	17	--
Muzzleloader	15	0	0	0	15	--

Harvest comparisons for Firearm season:

	<u>Permits Issued</u>				%	%	%Age	<u>Surveys***</u>	
<u>Year</u>	<u>Reg</u>	<u>LL</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Harvest</u>	<u>Success</u>	<u>Adult Buck</u>	<u>1.5</u>	<u>F:100D</u>	<u>B:100D</u>
2014	30	15	ES	35	78	94	12		
2014 ²	10	5	D/F	3	20	0	--		
2015	34	17	ES	37	73	97	3		
2015 ²	10	5	D/F	6	40	0	--		
2016	34	17	ES	45	88	96	7		
2016 ²	10	5	D/F	8	53	0	--		
2017	38	19	ES	37	65	97	9		
2017 ²	10	5	D/F	7	47	0	--		
2018	38	19	ES	44	77	98	18		
2018 ^{2^}	40	20	D/F	27	45	0	--		
2019*	38	19	ES						
2019* ^{2^}	40	20	D/F						

* Recommended permits

*** Aerial surveys not conducted in this unit.

² - Late Season: November 1, 2019 – January 31, 2020

[^] - Cheyenne Central Late dissolved and permits valid for entire unit

ES – Either Sex

D/F – Doe/Fawn

Unsold Permits: None.

Expected Harvest: Expected harvest is 42 bucks and 30 doe/fawn.

DISMAL MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations: 36 firearm Either Sex and 18 Landowner permits. In 2018, 24 firearm either sex and 12 landowner permit were authorized.

Dismal Late: 20 Doe/Fawn only permits and 10 Landowner Doe/Fawn permits valid for the entire Dismal Unit. In 2018, no doe/fawn permits were authorized.

General Information: Hunter success for the Either Sex firearm season in 2018 was 86%. Thirty-six (36) hunters harvested 31 adult pronghorn males. Depredation complaints: Two (2).

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: Hunter harvest success may seldom reach 75% due to the fact that this unit is 100% private land with limited access. Harvest success in units with low permit quota's often fluctuate erratically from year to year, therefore multiple year trend data should be emphasized over annual fluctuations in the harvest data. The topographic landscape creates visual limitations requiring hunters to commonly spend a considerable amount of time trying to locate a quality pronghorn buck. Based on general observations, pronghorn numbers appear to be growing and stronger in the Dismal Unit in the last few years.

Two depredation complaints were received in 2018. Generally, landowners in the Dismal Unit have tolerance for pronghorn populations as there is limited agricultural cropland in this Sandhills pronghorn habitat. The population objective is to slow the growth of this herd. Staff recommends a slight increase to the permit quota to allow more opportunity and provide a tool for landowners to deal with some depredation issues in 2019.

<u>2018 Harvest Data</u>						
<u>Season</u>	<u>Ad Male</u>	<u>Ad Female</u>	<u>Fawn M</u>	<u>Fawn F</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>% Success</u>
Firearm	31	0	0	0	31	86
Firearm LS						
Archery	13	0	1	0	14	--
Muzzleloader	7	0	0	0	7	--

Harvest comparisons for Firearm season:

<u>Permits Issued</u>					%	%	%Age 1.5	<u>Surveys***</u>	
<u>Year</u>	<u>Reg</u>	<u>LL</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Harvest</u>	<u>Success</u>	<u>Adult Buck</u>		<u>F:100D</u>	<u>B:100D</u>
2014	16	8	ES	16	67	100	0		
2015	16	8	ES	16	71	88	13		
2016	24	12	ES	25	69	100	0		
2017	24	12	ES	24	64	97	14		
2018	24	12	ES	31	86	100	0		
2019*	36	18	ES						
2019* ²	20	10	D/F						

* Recommended permits

***Aerial surveys not conducted in this unit.

ES – Either Sex

D/F – Doe/Fawn

² - Late Season: November 1, 2019 – January 31, 2020

Unsold Permits: Zero.

Expected Harvest: Expected harvest is 40 bucks and 10 doe/fawn.

EAST SANDHILLS MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations: 20 firearm Either Sex permits and 8 Landowner, Either Sex permits. This is an increase from last year.

General Information: Regional variable densities of pronghorn combined with the lack of roads to locate pronghorn, make success highly variable in this unit (5-year average success rate is 56%). A significant increase in archery harvested pronghorn suggest a higher than predicted population. Firearm permits are not valid on the Halsey Nebraska National Forest Service lands. No depredation complaints were received in 2018.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: Management objectives are to allow the population to increase, but to address the depredation complaints by allowing either sex on all permits. Observed pronghorns are widespread and scattered throughout the unit ranging from single animals to herds of up to 60 animals. No recent surveys have been conducted in this unit, but general observations indicate that this unit can sustain a higher success and harvest rate.

<u>2018 Harvest Data</u>						
<u>Season</u>	<u>Ad Male</u>	<u>Ad Female</u>	<u>Fawn M</u>	<u>Fawn F</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>% Success</u>
Firearm	13	3	0	0	16	67
Prairie Muzzleloader	2	0	0	0	2	--
Archery	17	2	0	0	19	--

EAST SANDHILLS MANAGEMENT UNIT

Harvest comparisons for Firearm season:

	<u>Permits Issued</u>				%	%	%Age	<u>Surveys***</u>	
<u>Year</u>	<u>Reg</u>	<u>LL</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Harvest</u>	<u>Success</u>	<u>Adult Buck</u>	<u>1.5</u>	<u>F:100D</u>	<u>B:100D</u>
2014	14	7	BO	8	38	100	25		
2015	10	5	BO	12	80	92	9		
2016	10	5	ES	8	53	100	0		
2017	10	5	ES	8	53	100	0		
2018	16	8	ES	16	66	81			
2019*	20	10	ES						

* Recommended permit numbers

***Aerial surveys not conducted in this unit.

BO – Buck Only

ES – Either Sex

Unsold Permits: None. Sellout date for General East Sandhills: 6/27/2018. Sellout date for Landowner East Sandhills: 6/27/2018.

Expected Harvest: Expected harvest is a success rate of 60%.

GARDEN MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations: 30 firearm Either Sex and 15 (1 ES, 1 D/F) Landowner permits. Landowner permits will receive an additional bonus doe/fawn permit. In 2018, 30 general and 15 landowner permits were allocated.

Garden Late: 76 Doe/Fawn and 38 Landowner Doe/Fawn only. In 2018, 34 doe/fawn and 17 landowner permits were allocated.

Area Boundary: Valid for the entire Garden Unit.

Season dates: November 1, 2019 – January 31, 2020.

General Information: Firearm hunter success was 67% in 2018, compared to 67% in 2017. Garden Late success was 55%. Depredation complaints: Five (5) and one (1) depredation permit for five pronghorn were issued.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: The objective is to stabilize the population, while keeping hunter success and buck quality high. Recent severe winter conditions resulted in larger concentrations of pronghorn on agricultural fields within the Sandhill/Agriculture habitat interface throughout the unit as documented by five (5) depredation complaints and winter aerial counts. Percent adult bucks harvested on the either sex permit remains high while percent yearling buck in the harvest continues to meet objectives. The continued success on high quality bucks should also cause consideration for a permit increase in this unit. The terrain features and lack of complete road access creates visual limitations to hunters pursuing pronghorn, as a result, success can be highly variable from year to year. It is recommended to increase late doe/fawn season permits to further alleviate depredation complaints that occur throughout the unit and increase hunter opportunity.

<u>2018 Harvest Data</u>						
<u>Season</u>	<u>Ad Male</u>	<u>Ad Female</u>	<u>Fawn M</u>	<u>Fawn F</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>% Success</u>
Firearm	30	0	0	0	30	67
Firearm LS	0	24	2	2	28	55
Archery	21	0	0	0	21	--
Muzzleloader	7	0	0	0	7	--

Harvest comparisons for Firearm season:

	<u>Permits Issued</u>				%	%	%Age	<u>Surveys***</u>	
<u>Year</u>	<u>Reg</u>	<u>LL</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Harvest</u>	<u>Success</u>	<u>Adult Buck</u>	<u>1.5</u>	<u>F:100D</u>	<u>B:100D</u>
2014	30	15	ES	30	67	97	10		
2015	30	15	ES	31	69	97	0		
2016	30	15	ES	32	71	100	0		
2016 ²	30	15	D/F	23	51	0	--		
2017	30	15	ES	30	67	97	0		
2017 ²	34	17	D/F	29	57	0	--		
2018	30	15	ES	30	67	100	7		
2018 ²	34	17	D/F	28	55	0	--		
2019*	34	17	ES						
2019* ²	76	38	D/F						

* Recommended permits

***Aerial surveys not conducted in this unit

² - Late Season: November 1, 2019 – January 31, 2020

ES – Either Sex

D/F – Doe/Fawn

Unsold Permits: Zero (0).

Expected Harvest: Expected harvest is 30 bucks and 60 doe/fawn.

NORTH SIOUX MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations: 100 firearm Either Sex and 50 (1 ES, 1 D/F) Landowner permits. Landowner permits will receive an additional bonus doe/fawn permit. In 2018, 100 general and 50 landowner permits were allocated.

North Sioux Late: 80 Doe/Fawn only and 40 Landowner Doe/Fawn only permits. No change from 2018.

Area Boundary: That portion of the North Sioux Unit within 6 miles north of U.S. Hwy. 20 and south of U.S. Hwy. 20 to the Pine Ridge escarpment, between the Dawes-Sioux county line on the west and Davenport County Road on the east. Fort Robinson State Park, Fort Robinson WMA and Bordeaux Creek WMA are excluded from this unit.

Season dates: November 1, 2019 – January 31, 2020.

General Information: Hunter success for firearm season was 62% in 2018 compared to 62% in 2017. Severe winter conditions that have occurred in the last several years have resulted in larger concentrations of pronghorn on agricultural fields. It is recommended to continue with the doe/fawn late season and to increase late season permits to address depredation issues. Depredation complaints: One (1).

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: The objective is to maintain the current levels in the population, while keeping buck quality and hunter success rates high. Hunter success and yearling buck harvest continue to meet objectives. Historically, approximately 1/3 of the harvest for all seasons is in the Oglala National Grasslands.

<u>2018 Harvest Data</u>						
<u>Season</u>	<u>Ad Male</u>	<u>Ad Female</u>	<u>Fawn M</u>	<u>Fawn F</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>% Success</u>
Firearm	84	6	2	1	93	62
Firearm LS	0	32	8	3	43	47
Archery*	62	8	0	3	73	--
Muzzleloader	23	0	0	0	23	85

*Represents all pronghorn harvested on archery permits in Dawes and Sioux counties.

NORTH SIOUX MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

Harvest comparisons for Firearm season:

	<u>Permits Issued</u>				%	%	<u>%Age 1.5</u>	<u>Surveys***</u>	
<u>Year</u>	<u>Reg</u>	<u>LL</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Harvest</u>	<u>Success</u>	<u>Adult Buck</u>		<u>F:100D</u>	<u>B:100D</u>
2014	100	50	ES	104	71	91	13	50	41
2014 ²	60	30	D/F	38	58	0	--	--	--
2015	100	50	ES	114	79	92	10	48	55
2015 ²	60	30	D/F	39	55	0	--	--	--
2016	100	50	ES	103	69	88	2	33	39
2016 ²	60	30	D/F	32	36	0	--	--	--
2017	100	50	ES	85	62	92	7	68	48
2017 ²	60	30	D/F	35	39	0	--	--	--
2018	100	50	ES	93	62	90	14	53	61
2018 ²	80	40	D/F	43	47	0	--	--	--
2019*	100	50	ES						
2019* ²	80	40	D/F						

* Recommended permits

***Aerial survey results; fawns seen per 100 does, and bucks seen per 100 does

² – Late Season November 1, 2019 – January 31, 2020

Unsold Permits: 28 Landowner Late Season Doe/Fawn permits.

Expected Harvest: Expected harvest is 90 bucks and 10 doe/fawn. Total estimated harvest including all Limited Landowner permits, Firearm, Muzzleloader, Late Season and Archery permits.

Total Harvest: Combined harvest of archery, muzzleloader and firearm hunters.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Harvest</u>
2007	144
2008	172
2009	205
2010	271
2011	286
2012	344
2013	247
2014	261
2015	280
2016	250
2017	219
2018	232

NORTH SIOUX MUZZLELOADER MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations: 26 Either Sex and 13 (1 ES, 1 D/F) Landowner permits. No change from 2018.

General Information: Hunter success for muzzleloader season was 82% in 2018 compared to 50% in 2017.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: The objective is to maintain current levels in the population. Consistent with the pronghorn season setting guidelines, muzzleloader permits are an additional 25% of regular Firearm permits. Firearm permits remained the same; therefore, there is no change in Muzzleloader permits is recommended. Approximately 1/3 of the harvest for all seasons is in the Oglala National Grasslands.

<u>2018 Harvest Data</u>						
<u>Season</u>	<u>Ad Male</u>	<u>Ad Female</u>	<u>Fawn M</u>	<u>Fawn F</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>% Success</u>
North Sioux Muzzleloader	23	0	0	0	23	85

Harvest comparisons for Muzzleloader season:

	<u>Permits Issued</u>				%	%	%Age 1.5	<u>Surveys***</u>	
<u>Year</u>	<u>Reg</u>	<u>LL**</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Harvest</u>	<u>Success</u>	<u>Adult Buck</u>		<u>F:100D</u>	<u>B:100D</u>
2014	25	3	ES	22	79	95	29	50	41
2015	25	13	ES	20	74	85	11	48	55
2016	25	13	ES	21	81	86	14	33	39
2017	25	13	ES	14	50	100	7	68	48
2018	26	13	ES	23	85	100	23	53	61
2019*	26	13	ES						

* Recommended permits

** Landowners permits are Either Sex and the quota is 50% of the General permit quota.

*** Aerial survey results; fawns seen per 100 does, and bucks seen per 100 does.

ES – Either Sex

Unsold Permits: Twelve (12) Landowner permits.

Expected Harvest: Expected harvest in the muzzleloader season is 20 bucks and 2 does. Total estimated harvest including all Limited Landowner permits, Firearm, Muzzleloader, Late Season and Archery permits.

PRAIRIE MUZZLELOADER MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations: 100 Either Sex and 50 Landowner Either Sex permits. In 2018, 100 Either Sex and 50 Landowner permits were authorized.

General Information: Hunter success for muzzleloader season was 65% in 2018, compared to 60% in 2017. Permits issued: 135.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: The objective is to allow limited opportunity to muzzleloaders throughout this region. According to the pronghorn season setting guidelines, Muzzleloader permits will be 25% of the unit allocation.

<u>2018 Harvest Data:</u>				
Season	Ad Male	Doe/Fawn	TOTAL	% Success
Firearm	87	1	88	65

Harvest comparisons for Muzzleloader season:

		<u>Permits Issued</u>			%	%	%Age <u>1.5</u>	<u>Surveys***</u>	
<u>Year</u>	<u>Reg</u>	<u>LL**</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Harvest</u>	<u>Success</u>	<u>Adult Buck</u>		<u>F:100D</u>	<u>B:100D</u>
2014	91	19	ES	77	70	97	9		
2015	91	46	ES	85	62	99	4		
2016	92	46	ES	86	65	95	7		
2017	99	50	ES	80	60	96	12		
2018	100	50	ES	88	65	99	13		
2019*	100	50	ES						

* Recommended permits

** Landowner permits are Either Sex and the quota is 50% of the General permit quota

*** Aerial surveys not conducted in this unit

ES – Either Sex

Unsold Permits: Fifteen (15) Landowner permits.

Expected Harvest: Expected harvest is 80 adult bucks and 5 doe/fawn.

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DEER

INTRODUCTION

Recommendations for the 2019 deer seasons are developed under the goal of: Provide quality hunting and viewing opportunities within the limits of the deer resource while maintaining deer numbers at a level that most landowners will accept in terms of damage.

Deer season recommendations are made after considering input from landowners, hunters, general public and staff, and include data from landowner surveys, crop damage reports, deer vehicle collisions, deer harvest, hunter opinion and disease concerns.

Recovery from whitetail population declines that occurred in 2012 has been slower than expected in units adjacent to the Missouri River. Most deer units in central and western Nebraska are fully recovered. Permit reductions are recommended to increase whitetail populations in the Missouri River corridor while permit increases are recommended in several central Nebraska units to limit whitetail population growth. The Loup East whitetail population is fully recovered and depredation complaints are very high. Staff will encourage landowners to require their hunters to harvest antlerless deer along river corridors where crop damage is occurring.

Mule deer harvest is near record levels in many deer management units west of Kearney. Mule deer permit increases are recommended in several units to address crop depredation and to provide additional recreational opportunity.

Deer Management Goals:

Mule Deer: Increase populations in Calamus West, Keya Paha, Loup West, and Pine Ridge; maintain populations at current levels in Sandhills, Plains, Loup West, and Upper Platte; limit growth in Buffalo and Platte. Decrease population in Frenchman.

Whitetail: Increase populations in Blue Northwest, Blue Southeast, Calamus West, Elkhorn, Republican and Wahoo. Limit growth in Frenchman, Pine Ridge, Plains, Platte, Republican, Sandhills, and Upper Platte. Decrease population in Loup East.

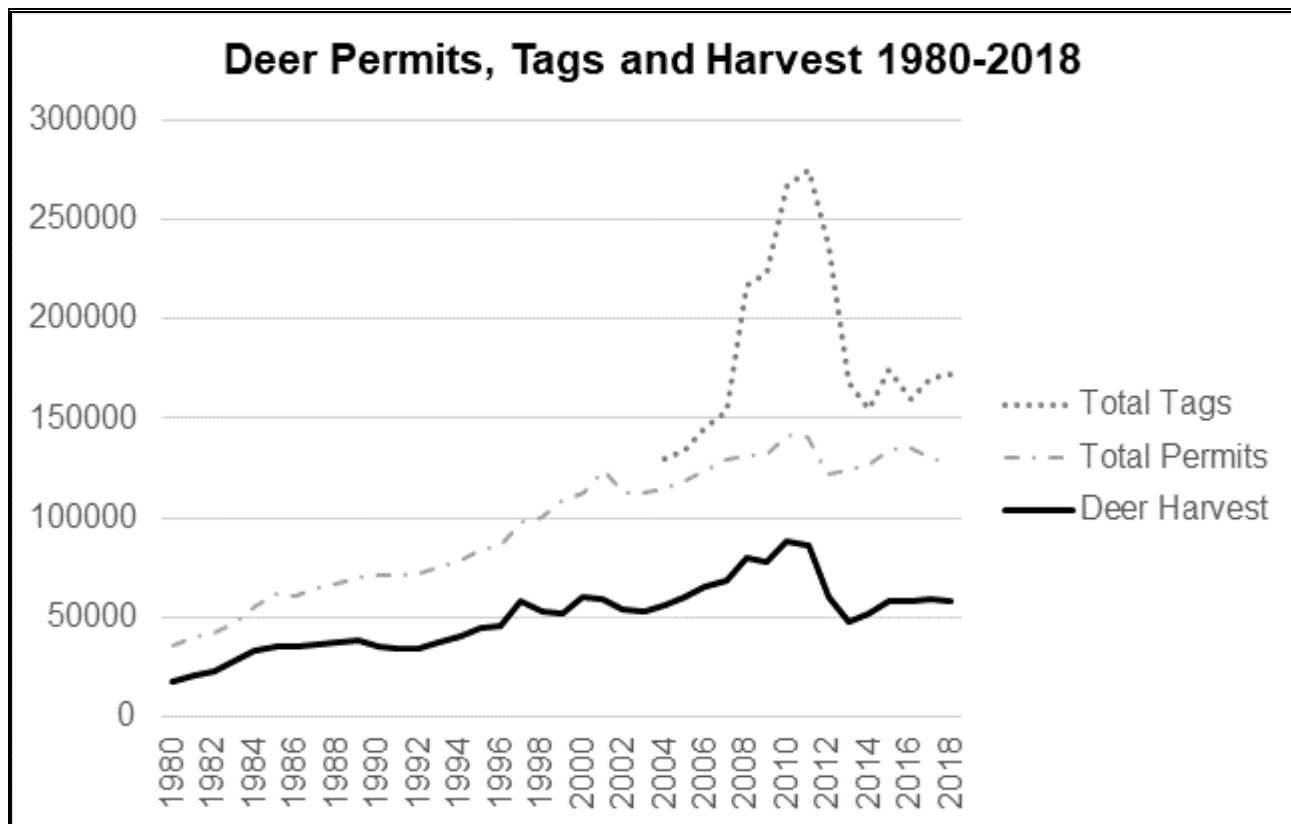
<u>2018 Summary</u>	<u>Change from 2017</u>	<u>Historic Rank</u>
Total Deer Harvest	Down 555 (-1%) to 58,348	#14
Deer Permit Sales	Down 3415 (-3%) to 127,332	#9
Nonresident Permit Sales	Up 1,315 (+8%) to 18,142	#1
Whitetail Buck Harvest	Down 1,592 (-6%) to 27,194	#13
Whitetail Antlerless Harvest	Up 1,316 (+7%) to 19,375	#16
Mule Deer Buck Harvest	Down 551 (-6%) to 9,250	#3
Mule Deer Antlerless Harvest	Up 272 (12%) to 2,529	#38
Age 3 and older WT Bucks	Up 2% to 37%	#1
Age 3 and older MD Bucks	Up 3% to 52%	#1

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission staff aged 14,777 whitetail deer and 4,912 mule deer.

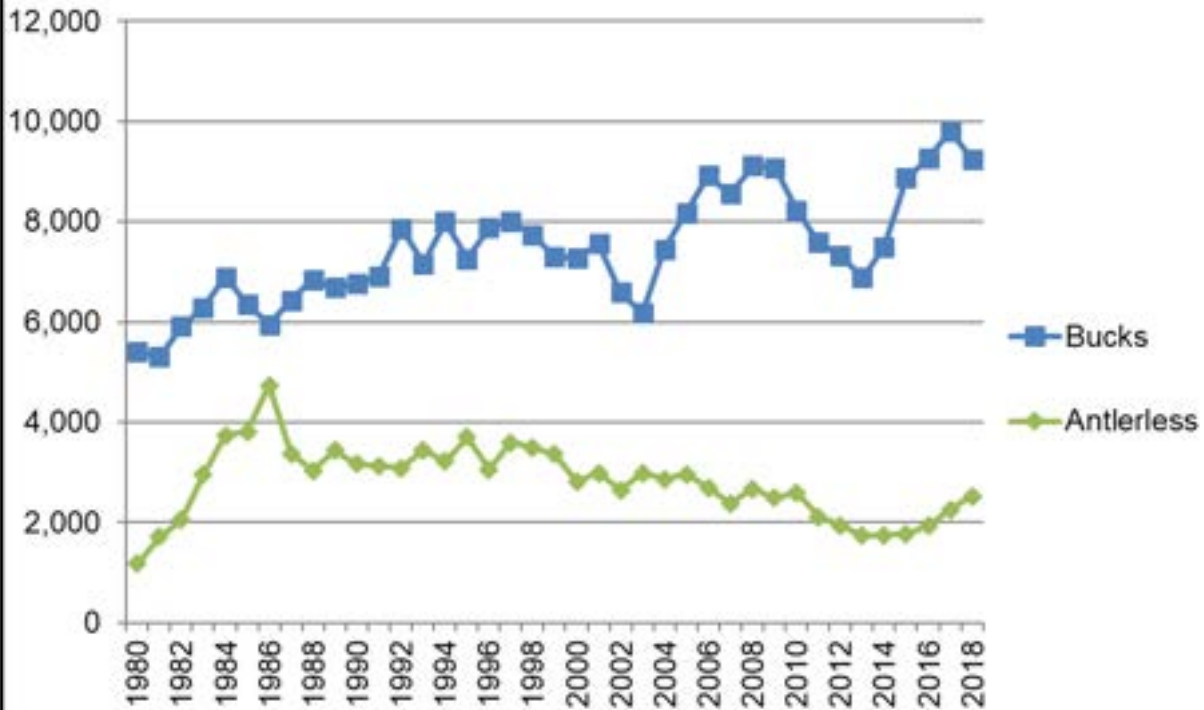
2019 Recommendation Summary

1. Blue Southeast AOSC: remove 400 Antlerless permits.
2. Calamus West: add 150 Any Deer permits and add “no Mule Deer Does in Bessey Ranger District” on Any Deer Permit.
3. Frenchman WT: add 200 Any Whitetail, 1 Antlerless Only Whitetail permits.
4. Frenchman AOSC: add 200, 2 Antlerless Only Whitetail permits.
5. Frenchman West Antlerless Only Season Choice: add 250, 2 Antlerless Only permits.
6. Loup East: add second bonus Antlerless Only Whitetail tag, making bag of Any Deer², 2 Antlerless Only Whitetail.

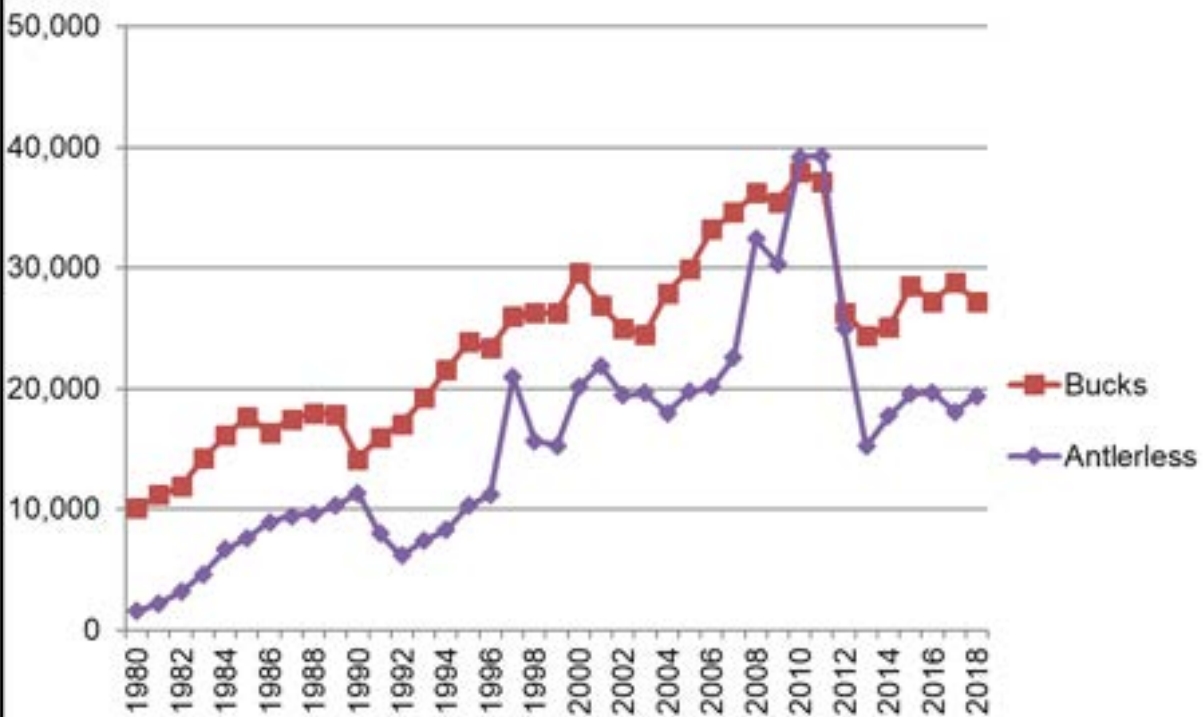
Add 300 Any Deer², 2 Antlerless Only Whitetail.
7. Loup East AOSC: add a second bonus Antlerless Only Whitetail, making the permit 3 Antlerless Only Whitetail.
8. Missouri: Add 300 Any Deer permits.
9. Pine Ridge AOSC: add 100 Antlerless Only Whitetail permits, add bonus Antlerless Whitetail.
10. Plains: add 200 Any Deer permits and add 20 Antlerless Only permits.
11. Platte North Season Choice Area: add 50, TWO Antlerless Only permits.
12. Sandhills: add 300 Any Deer permits and add “no Mule Deer Does in McKelvie Ranger District and Valentine NWR” on Any Deer Permit.
13. Sandhills AOSC: add 100 Antlerless Only and add bonus Antlerless Only Whitetail tag.
14. Upper Platte AOSC: add bonus Antlerless Only tag.
15. Wahoo: remove 200 Antlerless Only Whitetail permits; remove 400 Any Deer² permits.
16. Statewide Buck: add 10 Any Buck permits.



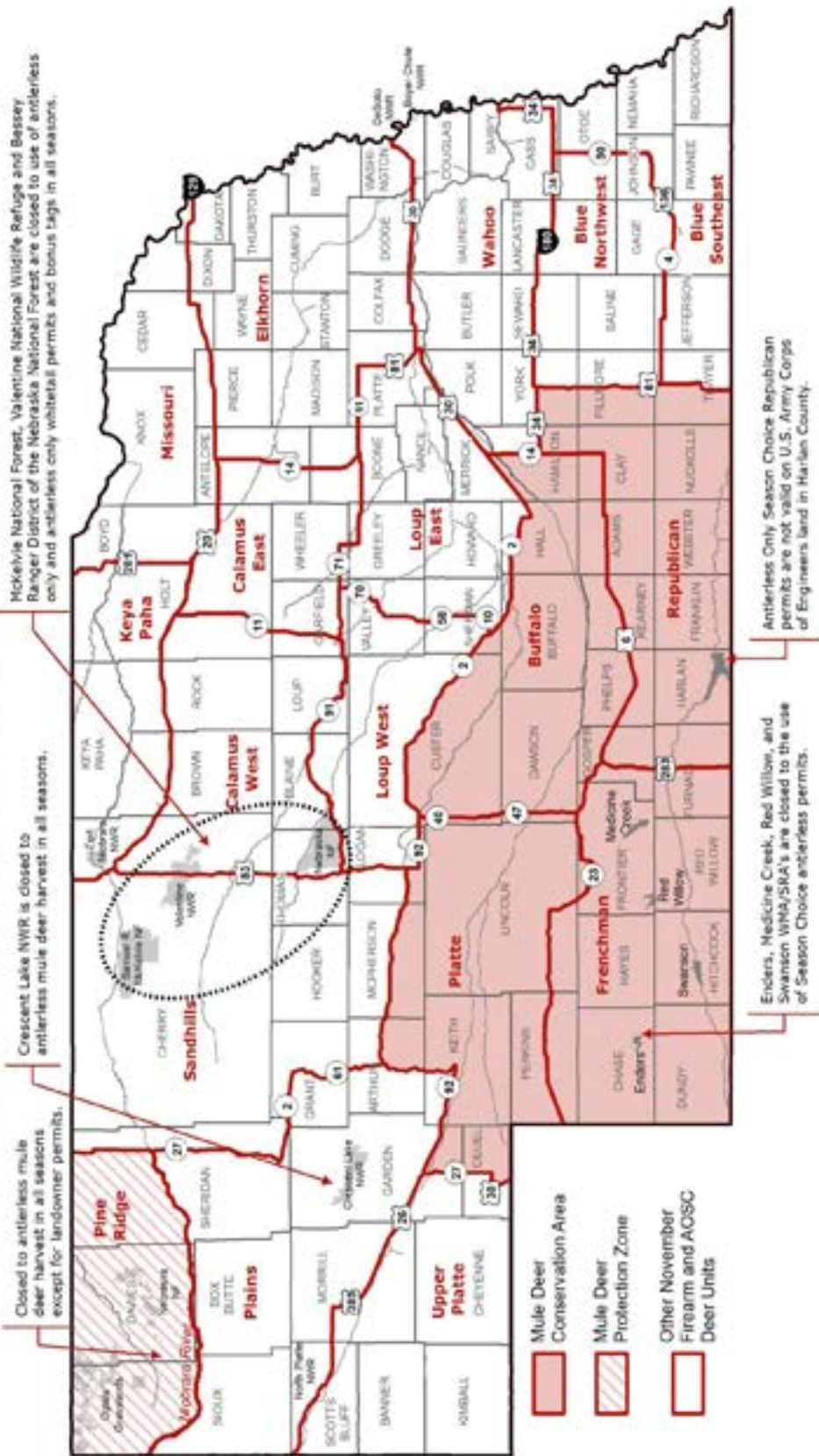
Mule Deer Harvest 1980-2018



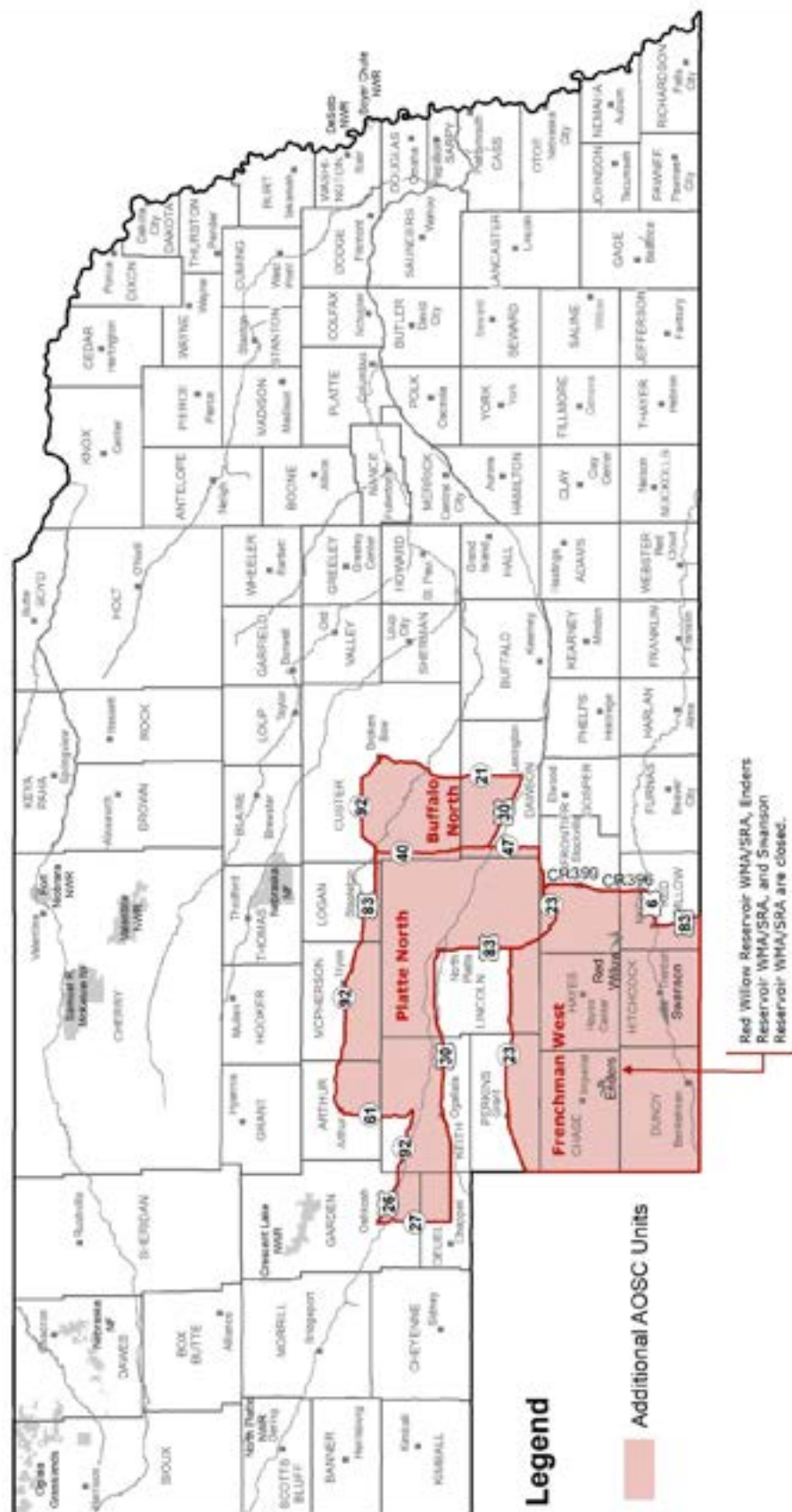
Whitetail Harvest 1980-2018



2019 NOVEMBER FIREARM UNITS AND ANTLERLESS ONLY SEASON CHOICE UNITS

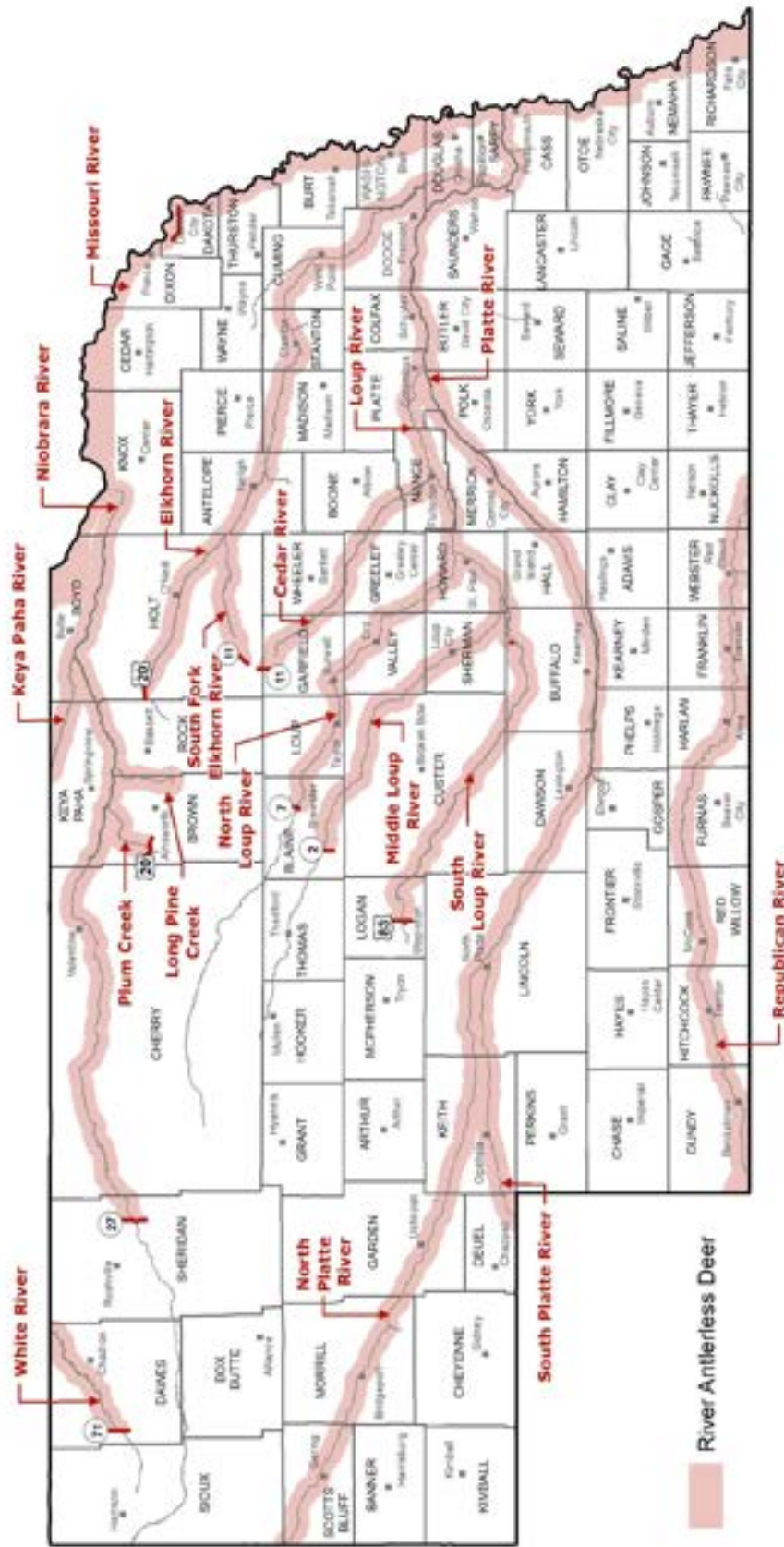


2019 ADDITIONAL ANTLERLESS ONLY SEASON CHOICE UNITS



2019 RIVER ANTLERLESS UNIT

ALL FEDERAL AND STATE PUBLIC LANDS CLOSED TO RIVER ANTLERLESS PERMITS



River Antlerless Deer



RECOMMENDED DEER SEASONS

2019 Recommendations

Management Unit	Permits	Bag Limit	Management Unit	Permits	Bag Limit
Mule Deer Conservation Area: Nov. 16 – 24 (firearm) and Dec. 1-31, 2019 (muzzleloader)			Antlerless Only SCA Season Dates: Sept. 1-Dec. 31, 2019 with bow, Dec. 1-31, 2019 with muzzleloader; Nov. 16-24, 2019 and Jan. 1-15, 2020 with any weapon		
Buffalo MDCA	1600	1 AD ²			
Frenchman MDCA	2000	1 AD, 1 AOWT			
Platte MDCA	1400	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT			
Republican MD	100	1 Mule Deer Buck			
November Firearm Season Dates: November 16-24, 2019					
Blue Northwest	2200	1 AD	Blue NW SCA	1800	1 AO
Blue Southeast	3500	1 AD	Blue SE SCA	2000	1 AO
Buffalo WT	1550	1 WT	Buffalo SCA	1000	2 AOWT
			Buffalo North SCA	100	2 AO
Calamus East	1300	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	Calamus East SCA	400	2 AOWT
Calamus West	1600	1 AD	Calamus West SCA	300	2 AOWT
Elkhorn	2700	1 AD	Elkhorn SCA	1000	1 AOWT
Frenchman WT	1600	1 WT, 1 AOWT	Frenchman SCA	1000	2 AOWT
Keya Paha	2500	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	Keya Paha SCA	500	2 AOWT
Loup East	3000	1 AD ² , 2 AOWT	Loup East SCA	1500	3 AOWT
Loup West	1700	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	Loup West SCA	400	1 AOWT, 1 AO
Missouri	3200	1 AD ²	Missouri SCA	1000	2 AOWT
Pine Ridge	1650	1 AD ²	Pine Ridge SCA	0	None
Pine Ridge WT	550	1 WT	Pine Ridge WT SCA	400	2 AOWT
Plains	1700	1 AD	Plains SCA	500	1 AO, 1 AOWT
Platte WT	1300	1 WT	Platte SCA	800	2 AOWT
Republican WT	3000	1 WT	Republican SCA	1500	2 AOWT
Sandhills	2000	1 AD	Sandhills SCA	450	1 AO, 1 AOWT
Upper Platte	1200	1 AD	Upper Platte SCA	250	1 AO, 1 AOWT
Wahoo	3650	1 AD ²	Wahoo AO SCA	1900	1 AOWT
WT SW Buck	Unlimited	1 WT Buck	Frenchman West AOSC	1250	2 AO
Restricted SW Buck	Unlimited	1 Buck Only	Platte North AOSC	500	2 AO
Unrestricted SW Buck	50	1 Any buck			
TOTALS	45,050		TOTALS	18,550	
Archery Season Dates: September 1 – December 31, 2019					
Archery	Unlimited	1 AD*	Valid statewide, including MDCA units		
Muzzleloader Season Dates: December 1 – 31, 2019					
Muzzleloader	Unlimited	1 AD*	Not valid for mule deer in MDCA units		
Other Seasons: September 1, 2019 – January 15, 2020					
Resident Youth	Unlimited	1 AD*	DeSoto NWR: October 27-28, 2018; December 8-9, 2018		
NR Restricted Youth	Unlimited	1 AD ² (not valid in draw units)	October Muzzleloader	0	None
Youth WT	Unlimited	1 WT	December Muzzleloader	0	None
Landowner	Unlimited	1 AD, 1 AO			
River Antlerless: September 1, 2019 – January 15, 2020					
	12,000	2 AOWT			

AD – Any mule deer or whitetail deer AO – Antlerless Only
AD² – Any deer except AO MD WT – Whitetail
Buck – Male deer with antlers greater than six inches in length
* - No Antlerless Mule Deer in the Pine Ridge Unit

NR – Non-Resident UNL – Unlimited
SW – Statewide

2018 DEER SEASONS HARVEST

<u>PERMITS</u>					
<u>Management Unit</u>	<u>Authorized</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Bag Limit</u>	<u>Harvest</u>	<u>% Success</u>
Buffalo MDCA	1600	1600	1 AD ²	808	51
Frenchman MDCA	2000	2000	1 AD, 1 AOWT	1399	70
Platte MDCA	1400	1400	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	907	65
Republican Mule Deer	100	100	1 MD Buck	24	24
Blue Northwest	2200	2200	1 AD	955	43
Blue Southeast	3500	3500	1 AD	1517	43
Buffalo Whitetail	1550	1550	1 WT	747	48
Calamus East	1300	1300	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	845	65
Calamus West	1450	1450	1 AD ²	745	51
Elkhorn	2700	2700	1 AD ²	1144	42
Frenchman Whitetail	1400	1400	1 WT, 1 AOWT	935	67
Keya Paha	2500	2249	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	1514	67
Loup East	2700	2700	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	1855	69
Loup West	1700	1700	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	1074	63
Missouri	2900	2900	1 AD, 1 AOWT	1926	66
Pine Ridge	1650	1650	1 AD ²	875	53
Pine Ridge Whitetail	550	550	1 WT	256	47
Plains	1700	1700	1 AD	1049	62
Platte Whitetail	1300	1157	1 WT	500	43
Republican Whitetail	3000	3000	1 WT	1546	52
Sandhills	1700	1700	1 AD ²	1096	64
Upper Platte	1200	1200	1 AD	743	62
Wahoo	3650	3650	1 AD ²	1554	43
November Firearm TOTAL	43,750	43,356		24,014	55
Archery	UNL	16,797	1 AD*	3957	24
Muzzleloader	UNL	7,167	1 AD*	1997	28
Unrestricted Statewide Buck	40	40	1 Buck	26	
Restricted Statewide Buck	UNL	835	1 Buck	448	54
Whitetail Statewide Buck	UNL	9,181	1 WT Buck	2981	32
Landowner	UNL	13,983	1 AD, 1 AO	7106	51
Youth Resident	UNL	6,603	1 AD*	3458	52
Youth Whitetail	UNL	3,794	1 WT	1631	43
Youth Non-resident Restricted	UNL	614	1 AD*	294	48
Other Either Sex/Buck TOTAL		59,014		21,898	37

*Not valid for antlerless mule deer in specified areas

2018 DEER SEASON HARVEST

<u>PERMITS</u>					
<u>Management Unit</u>	<u>Authorized</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Bag Limit</u>	<u>Harvest</u>	<u>% Success</u>
Blue Northwest SCA	1800	1800	1 AOWT	551	31
Blue Southeast SCA	2400	2365	1 AOWT	696	29
Buffalo SCA	1000	773	2 AOWT	454	59
Buffalo North SCA	100	100	2 AO	79	79
Calamus East SCA	400	163	1 AOWT	87	53
Calamus West SCA	300	199	1 AOWT	97	49
Elkhorn SCA	1000	1000	1 AOWT	262	26
Frenchman SCA	800	575	2 AOWT	287	50
Frenchman West SCA	1000	1000	2 AO	880	88
Keya Paha SCA	500	265	2 AOWT	178	67
Loup East SCA	1500	718	2 AOWT	303	42
Loup West SCA	400	158	2 AOWT	87	55
Missouri SCA	1000	1000	2 AOWT	447	45
Pine Ridge WT SCA	400	400	1 AOWT	165	41
Plains SCA	500	462	1 AO	206	45
Platte SCA	800	565	2 AOWT	278	49
Platte North SCA	450	450	2 AO	361	80
Republican SCA	2000	1353	1 AOWT	463	34
Sandhills SCA	350	327	1 AO	173	53
Upper Platte SCA	250	250	1 AO	113	45
Wahoo SCA	1900	1900	1 AOWT	519	27
River Antlerless	12,000	9038	2 AOWT	5728	63
DeSoto October MZ	125	37	2 AO	7	19
DeSoto December MZ	125	64	2 AO	13	20
TOTAL	31,100	24,962		12,434	50
All Deer Permits TOTAL	74,890*	127,332			

AD – Any mule deer or whitetail deer AO – Antlerless Only
AD² – Any deer except AO MD WT – Whitetail
Buck – Male deer with antlers greater than six inches in length
* Does not account for UNLIMITED unit permits

NR – Non-Resident
SW – Statewide UNL – Unlimited

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BLUE NORTHWEST MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

Blue Northwest: 2200 Any Deer permits. No change from 2018.

Antlerless Only Season Choice Blue Northwest: 1800 permits for one antlerless whitetail deer. No change from 2018.

General Information: EHD deaths in the Blue Northwest were insignificant in 2018. Habitat conditions were good in 2018. Fawning conditions appeared average. The percent of 1.5-year-old adult males decreased from 44% to 32%. Harvest for all seasons was 1866 adult whitetail males and 1258 antlerless whitetails. Landowner complaints decreased from last year. Three (3) crop damage complaints were received in 2018. Three (3) damage control permits were issued for Blue Northwest in 2018.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: Herd numbers appear to be within landowner tolerance. Hunter and landowner complaints about too few deer were less than last year.

The population goal is to allow limited growth in Blue Northwest while increasing an older buck age structure. Permit strategies are to allow limited growth in some areas of the unit and increase buck age structure in the unit. No changes are recommended.

2018 Harvest Data - Blue Northwest

<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Blue NW	2200	2200	11/1/18	0	0	0	729	226	955	43
AO SC Blue NW	1800	1800	11/14/18	0	0	0	12	539	551	31
Landowner				1	0	1	405	250	655	
Archery				1	0	1	219	75	294	
Muzzleloader				0	0	0	45	56	101	
Youth				0	0	0	94	60	154	
Youth WT				0	0	0	70	44	114	
Restricted NR Youth				0	0	0	7	3	10	
Restricted SWB				0	0	0	5	0	5	
WT SWB				1	0	1	278	1	279	
River Antlerless				0	0	0	0	4	4	
Totals				3	0	3	1864	1258	3122	

BLUE NORTHWEST MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are shown below:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>							<u>Whitetail Deer</u>						
	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>			<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>		
					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>
2014	3	0	3					1675	1211	2886	42	29	43	28
2015	3	1	4					1849	1237	3086	40	44	34	21
2016	2	3	5					1738	1361	3099	44	39	38	23
2017	6	2	8					1924	1275	3199	40	44	35	21
2018	3	0	3					1864	1258	3122	40	32	40	28

Total Permits Authorized

<u>Year</u>	<u>Nov. Firearm</u>	<u>Bag Limit</u>	<u>Special Seasons</u>
2014	2450	1 AD	Blue Northwest SCA – 2000 (1 AOWT)
2015	2450	1 AD	Blue Northwest SCA – 2000 (1 AOWT)
2016	2450	1 AD	Blue Northwest SCA – 2300 (1 AOWT)
2017	2450	1 AD	Blue Northwest SCA – 2000 (1 AOWT)
2018	2200	1 AD	Blue Northwest SCA – 1800 (1 AOWT)
2019***	2200	1 AD	Blue Northwest SCA – 1800 (1 AOWT)

** Recommended permit numbers

² – No antlerless mule deer

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

AO – Antlerless Only AD – Any Deer

Expected Harvest:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>MD Buck</u>	<u>WT Buck</u>	<u>MD Antlerless</u>	<u>WT Antlerless</u>
All Season	3	1800	1	1250

BLUE SOUTHEAST MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

Blue Southeast: 3500 Any Deer permits. No changed from 2018.

Antlerless Only Season Choice Blue Southeast: 2000 permits for one antlerless whitetail deer. In 2018, 2400 Antlerless Only Whitetail permits were authorized.

General Information: EHD deaths in the Blue Southeast were insignificant in 2018. Habitat conditions were good in the majority of the unit with flooding along the Missouri River in 2018. Fawning appeared to be average. The percent of 1.5-year-old adult males decreased from 35% to 29%. Harvest for all seasons was 2408 adult whitetail males and 1679 antlerless whitetails. Landowner complaints decreased from last year. One (1) crop damage complaint was received in 2018. Zero (0) depredation permits were issued for Blue Southeast in 2018.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: Herd numbers appear to be within landowner tolerance. Hunter and landowner complaints about too few deer were similar to last year.

The population goal is to allow limited growth in some areas of Blue Southeast while maintaining an older buck age structure. Permit strategies are to allow limited growth in some areas of the unit. Fewer Antlerless Only Whitetail permits are recommended.

2018 Harvest Data - Blue Southeast

<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Blue NW	3500	3500	11/6/18	1	1	2	1187	328	1515	43
AO SC Blue NW	2400	2365	35	0	0	0	23	673	696	29
Landowner				1	0	1	273	196	469	
Archery				1	0	1	350	67	417	
Muzzleloader				0	0	0	81	41	122	
Youth				1	0	1	85	53	138	
Youth WT				0	0	0	76	46	122	
Restricted NR Youth				0	0	0	7	1	8	
Restricted SWB				0	0	0	4	0	4	
WT SWB				0	0	0	318	6	324	
River Antlerless				0	0	0	10	284	294	
Totals				4	1	5	2414	1695	4109	

BLUE SOUTHEAST MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are shown below:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>							<u>Whitetail Deer</u>						
	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>			<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>		
					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>
2014	3	4	7					2437	1607	4044	40	30	37	33
2015	3	2	5					2598	1757	4355	40	37	30	33
2016	3	8	11					2567	1822	4389	41	32	36	32
2017	4	5	9					2542	1569	4111	38	35	34	31
2018	4	1	5					2414	1695	4109	41	29	36	35

Total Permits Authorized

<u>Year</u>	<u>Nov. Firearm</u>	<u>Bag Limit</u>	<u>Special Seasons</u>
2014	3500	1 AD	Blue Southeast SCA – 2400 (1 AOWT)
2015	3500	1 AD	Blue Southeast SCA – 2400 (1 AOWT)
2016	3500	1 AD	Blue Southeast SCA – 2900 (1 AOWT)
2017	3500	1 AD	Blue Southeast SCA – 2400 (1 AOWT)
2018	3500	1 AD	Blue Southeast SCA – 2400 (1 AOWT)
2019***	3500	1 AD	Blue Southeast SCA – 2000 (1 AOWT)

** Recommended permit numbers

² – No antlerless mule deer

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

AO – Antlerless Only AD – Any Deer

Expected Harvest:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>MD Buck</u>	<u>WT Buck</u>	<u>MD Antlerless</u>	<u>WT Antlerless</u>
All Season	3	2600	2	1500

BUFFALO MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

Buffalo MDCA: 1600 permits for one mule deer buck or any whitetail valid during Muzzleloader and November Firearm seasons. No change from 2018.

Buffalo Whitetail: 1550 permits for one whitetail. No change from 2018.

Antlerless Only Season Choice Buffalo: 1000 permits for two antlerless whitetails. No change from 2018.

Antlerless Only Season Choice Buffalo North: 100 permits for two antlerless deer. No change from 2018.

General Information: Deer harvest for all seasons was 608 adult male mule deer, 142 antlerless mule deer, 2061 adult male whitetail and 1666 antlerless whitetail.

Five (5) depredation complaints were received along the Platte River and two (2) along the Wood River in 2018. Four (4) kill permits were issued for whitetails along the Platte River. No meningeal worm mortalities in mule deer were reported and no EHD reports were received in 2018.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy:

Mule deer populations have declined in the southern portion of the unit and remained stable to slightly increasing in the north portion of the unit. Buck harvest decreased 13% from last year with 91% of harvested mule deer bucks age 2 or older. Mule deer surveys indicate 59 fawns per 100 does. The population objective is to increase the herd in southern portions of the unit by maintaining current mule deer doe harvest restrictions and stabilize the herd in the northwest portion of the unit by allowing limited doe harvest in the AOSC Buffalo North sub-unit.

The whitetail deer population is at desired levels in most areas except portions of the Platte and South Loup Rivers. Total buck harvest decreased 11% from last year with 81% of harvested whitetail bucks age 2 or older. The population objective is to keep whitetail herds at current levels in upland portions of the unit and decrease the whitetail herds on the Platte and South Loup Rivers. This will be accomplished by maintaining current bag limits on Buffalo MDCA, Buffalo WT, Buffalo SCA permits, and continuing the liberal use of River Antlerless permits.

BUFFALO MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

2018 Harvest Data - Buffalo:

<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Buffalo MDCA	1600	1600	10/8/18	373	2	375	380	53	433	51
Buffalo WT	1550	1550	11/7/18	3	0	3	651	93	744	48
AO SC Buffalo	1000	773	227	1	1	2	12	440	452	59
AO SC Buffalo North	100	100	11/23/18	1	67	68	0	11	11	79*
Landowner				114	50	164	304	138	442	
Archery				24	4	28	204	30	234	
Muzzleloader				1	0	1	60	22	82	
Youth				78	17	95	123	64	187	
Youth WT				3	0	3	76	34	110	
NR Youth Restricted				7	0	7	8	1	9	
Statewide Buck				1	0	1	0	0	0	
WT SWB				0	0	0	214	1	215	
Restricted SWB				1	0	1	7	0	7	
River Antlerless				1	1	2	22	779	801	
Totals				608	142	750	2061	1666	3727	

*includes bonus tags

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are shown below:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>							<u>Whitetail Deer</u>						
	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>			<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>		
					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>
2014	590	72	662	11	24	39	36	1883	1437	3320	43	23	33	44
2015	707	76	783	10	24	44	32	2195	1495	3690	41	29	27	44
2016	688	84	772	11	21	45	34	2194	1612	3806	42	24	27	49
2017	696	74	770	10	16	43	40	2327	1541	3868	40	22	30	47
2018	608	142	750	19	9	41	50	2061	1666	3727	45	19	28	53

Total Permits Authorized

<u>Year</u>	<u>Nov. Firearm</u>	<u>Bag Limit</u>	<u>Whitetail Only</u>	<u>Special Seasons</u>
2014	1600 MDCA	1 AD ²	1550 (1 WT)	Buffalo SCA – 500 (2 AOWT)
2015	1600 MDCA	1 AD ²	1550 (1 WT)	Buffalo SCA – 500 (2 AOWT)
2016	1600 MDCA	1 AD ²	1550 (1 WT)	Buffalo SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT)
2017	1600 MDCA	1 AD ²	1550 (1 WT)	Buffalo SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT)
2018	1600 MDCA	1 AD ²	1550 (1 WT)	Buffalo SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT) Buffalo SCA North – 100 (2 AO)
2019**	1600 MDCA	1 AD ²	1550 (1 WT)	Buffalo SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT) Buffalo SCA North – 100 (2 AO)

** Recommended permit numbers

² – No antlerless mule deer

MDCA – Mule Deer Conservation Area

AO – Antlerless Only AD – Any Deer

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

Expected Harvest:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>MD Buck</u>	<u>WT Buck</u>	<u>MD Antlerless</u>	<u>WT Antlerless</u>
All Season	700	2300	150	1700

CALAMUS EAST MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

Calamus East: 1300 Any Deer permits with Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tag. Antlerless mule deer are prohibited. This is no change from 2018.

Antlerless Only Season Choice Calamus East: 400 Antlerless Only Whitetail with Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tag. This is no change from 2018.

General Information: The whitetail adult buck kill was slightly lower than expected harvest goals, but age structure continues to be desirable. Antlerless only harvest increased in response to bonus tags and increased permits. Indices show a trend for a growing population. Mule deer buck harvest decreased but is annually variable based on environmental conditions and hunter preference. One (1) deer complaint was received in this unit.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: The objective in this unit is to continue to use bonus antlerless only tags to stabilize the population. Also, whitetail buck harvest and age data trends indicate a stable or slightly growing population. The objective for the mule deer population is to allow the herd to grow as allowed by landowner tolerance and disease events.

2018 Harvest Data - Calamus East

<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Calamus East	1300	300	11/12/18	69	2	71	504	270	774	65
AO SC Calamus East	400	163		0	0	0	5	82	87	41
Landowner				6	0	6	176	65	241	
Archery				4	0	4	43	11	54	
Muzzleloader				3	0	3	15	9	24	
Youth				4	1	5	52	10	62	
Youth WT				0	0	0	44	7	51	
NR Youth Restricted				0	0	0	3	2	5	
WT SWB				1	0	1	86	0	86	
Restricted SWB				1	0	1	5	0	5	
River Antlerless				0	0	0	3	55	58	
Totals				88	3	91	936	511	1447	

CALAMUS EAST MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are shown below:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>							<u>Whitetail Deer</u>						
	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>			<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>		
					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>
2014	80	8	88	9	28	33	40	678	239	917	26	23	47	31
2015	92	11	103	11	20	51	29	784	249	1033	24	29	37	34
2016	67	17	84	20	23	54	23	765	306	1071	29	32	45	23
2017	112	15	127	12	12	51	37	961	318	1279	25	22	46	32
2018	88	3	91	3	13	47	40	936	511	1447	35	20	50	30

Total Permits Authorized

<u>Year</u>	<u>Nov. Firearm</u>	<u>Bag Limit</u>	<u>Special Seasons</u>
2014	1150	1 AD ²	Calamus East SCA – 200 (AOWT)
2015	1150	1 AD ²	Calamus East SCA – 200 (AOWT)
2016	1150	1 AD ²	Calamus East SCA – 200 (AOWT)
2017	1150	1 AD ²	Calamus East SCA – 200 (AOWT)
2018	1300	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	Calamus East SCA – 400 (2 AOWT)
2019**	1300	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	Calamus East SCA – 400 (2 AOWT)

** Recommended permit numbers

² – No antlerless mule deer

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

AO – Antlerless Only AD – Any Deer

Expected Harvest:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>MD Buck</u>	<u>WT Buck</u>	<u>MD Antlerless</u>	<u>WT Antlerless</u>
All Season	90	1000	5	500

CALAMUS WEST MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

Calamus West: 1600 Any Deer permits. Antlerless mule deer is allowed during the firearm season. No antlerless mule deer allowed on Nebraska National Forest – Bessey. This is an increase from 1450 Any Deer permits in 2018.

Antlerless Only Season Choice Calamus West: 300 Antlerless Only Whitetail permits with an Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tag. This is no change from last year.

General Information: Mule deer buck harvest decreased slightly, but continues to be higher than the 5-year average (410). Mule deer antlerless increased but is still below 20% of the harvest. Whitetail buck harvest decreased slightly, but age structure is still excellent. Whitetail antlerless harvest increased as desired. One (1) depredation complaint was received in this unit in 2018. Deer were collected and tested for CWD in 2018, with zero (0) positives.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: The objective for whitetails is to continue to allow the population to stabilize and allow increased opportunity to harvest bucks. The objective for mule deer is to maintain the population while providing opportunity to harvest mule deer does at sustainable rates (<20%).

2018 Harvest Data – Calamus West

<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Calamus West	1450	1450	11/5/18	245	41	286	376	83	459	51
AO SC Calamus West	300	199		0	1	1	1	95	96	38
Landowner				47	17	64	87	36	123	
Archery				23	6	29	52	11	63	
Muzzleloader				40	20	60	29	12	41	
Youth				51	4	55	67	9	76	
Youth WT				3	0	3	30	10	40	
NR Youth Restricted				2	0	2	6	1	7	
WT SWB				1	0	1	71	0	71	
Restricted SWB				30	0	30	13	0	13	
River Antlerless				0	1	1	2	46	48	
Totals				442	90	532	734	303	1037	

CALAMUS WEST MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are shown below:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>							<u>Whitetail Deer</u>						
	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>			<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>		
					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>
2014	370	38	408	9	20	33	47	606	169	775	22	17	33	45
2015	464	59	523	11	23	35	41	640	190	830	23	24	26	50
2016	476	46	522	9	13	38	49	696	231	927	25	24	28	48
2017	474	43	517	8	17	36	47	785	187	972	19	21	38	41
2018	442	90	532	17	12	43	45	734	303	1037	29	16	44	40

Total Permits Authorized

<u>Year</u>	<u>Nov. Firearm</u>	<u>Bag Limit</u>	<u>Special Seasons</u>
2014	1450	1 AD ²	Calamus West SCA – 150 (AOWT)
2015	1450	1 AD ²	Calamus West SCA – 150 (AOWT)
2016	1450	1 AD ²	Calamus West SCA – 150 (AOWT)
2017	1450	1 AD ²	Calamus West SCA – 150 (AOWT)
2018	1450	1 AD	Calamus West SCA – 300 (2 AOWT)
2019**	1600	1 AD	Calamus West SCA – 300 (2 AOWT)

** Recommended permit numbers

² – No antlerless mule deer

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

AO – Antlerless Only AD – Any Deer

Expected Harvest:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>MD Buck</u>	<u>WT Buck</u>	<u>MD Antlerless</u>	<u>WT Antlerless</u>
All Season	500	850	90	400

ELKHORN MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

Elkhorn: 2700 Any Deer permits with no antlerless bonus tags. No change from 2018.

Antlerless Only Season Choice Elkhorn: 1000 Antlerless Only Whitetail permits with no antlerless bonus tags. No change from 2018.

General Information: Whitetail buck harvest decreased slightly. The trend indicates a stable population. The adult buck age structure improved and met unit goals for the second consecutive year. Mule deer harvest remains low due to lack of adequate habitat in the unit. Historically, this unit had significant crop damage complaints from whitetail deer, mostly along the river corridors. If high deer concentrations develop in the future, most can be addressed along the rivers with the River Antlerless Permit. No deer damage complaints were received in this unit.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: The population objective is to allow the whitetail herd to grow, particularly in non-riverine areas by maintaining a reduced number of antlerless permits. Also, it is the goal to maintain an older cohort of bucks in the harvest by maintaining a reduced number of either sex permits. Management of mule deer with harvest restrictions is ineffective due to low density and very limited mule deer habitat in the unit.

2018 Harvest Data – Elkhorn

<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Elkhorn	2700	2700	11/1/18	3	0	3	906	235	1141	42
AO SC Elkhorn	1000	1000	11/9/18	0	1	1	14	247	261	19
Landowner				3	1	3	397	186	583	
Archery				1	0	1	195	64	259	
Muzzleloader				1	1	2	68	44	112	
Youth				0	0	0	130	62	192	
Youth WT				0	0	0	90	32	122	
NR Youth Restricted				0	0	0	10	11	21	
WT SWB				0	0	0	279	5	284	
Restricted SWB				0	0	0	7	0	7	
River Antlerless				0	2	2	21	589	610	
Totals				8	4	12	2117	1475	3592	

ELKHORN MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are shown below:

Year	<u>Mule Deer</u>							<u>Whitetail Deer</u>						
	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>			<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>		
					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>
2014	16	11	27	41	83	17	0	2077	1614	3691	44	38	46	16
2015	12	8	20	40	75	13	13	2379	1694	4073	42	45	41	14
2016	14	8	22	36				2169	1689	3858	43	44	41	15
2017	10	3	13					2285	1578	3863	41	38	45	17
2018	8	4	12	33				2117	1475	3592	41	33	47	20

Total Permits Authorized

<u>Year</u>	<u>Nov. Firearm</u>	<u>Bag Limit</u>	<u>Special Seasons</u>
2014	2900	1 AD ²	Elkhorn SCA – 1800 (AOWT)
2015	2900	1 AD ²	Elkhorn SCA – 1800 (AOWT)
2016	2900	1 AD ²	Elkhorn SCA – 2300 (AOWT)
2017	2700	1 AD ²	Elkhorn SCA – 1800 (AOWT)
2018	2700	1 AD	Elkhorn SCA – 1000 (AOWT)
2019**	2700	1 AD	Elkhorn SCA – 1000 (AOWT)

** Recommended permit numbers

² – No antlerless mule deer

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

AO – Antlerless Only AD – Any Deer

Expected Harvest:

Unit	MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless
All Seasons	10	2300	1	1500

FRENCHMAN MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

Frenchman MDCA: 2000 Any Deer permits with one Antlerless Whitetail Only bonus tag (via application and draw) valid during Muzzleloader and November Firearm seasons. No change from 2018.

Frenchman Whitetail: 1600 permits for one whitetail and one antlerless whitetail. An increase from 1400 in 2018.

Antlerless Only Season Choice Frenchman: 1000 permits for two antlerless whitetail. Permits are not valid on Red Willow WMA/SRA, Medicine Creek WMA/SRA, Swanson WMA/SRA or Enders WMA/SRA. An increase from 800 in 2018.

Antlerless Only Season Choice Frenchman West: 1250 permits for two antlerless deer. Permits are not valid on Red Willow WMA/SRA, Swanson WMA/SRA or Enders WMA/SRA. An increase from 1000 in 2018.

Frenchman West AO SC Unit Boundary: That portion of the Frenchman Unit west of a line commencing at Moorefield, NE on NE Hwy. 23; then south on County Road 399 to Stockville, NE; then south on County Road 396 on U.S. Hwy. 6/34 (Indianola, NE); then west on U.S. Hwy. 6/34 to U.S. Hwy. 83; then south on U.S. Hwy. 83 to the Nebraska-Kansas state line.

Nonresident Permit Allocation: 8% of Frenchman MDCA permits (152 permits) for nonresidents.

General Information: Deer harvest for all seasons was 2155 adult male mule deer, 979 antlerless mule deer, 1377 adult male whitetail and 1202 antlerless whitetail. Whitetail buck harvest is 13% below the record harvest set in 2011. Four (4) whitetail deer depredation complaints were received in 2018 and three (3) kill permits were issued (on the Republican River and two near Medicine Creek WMA). Six (6) mule deer depredation complaints were received in 2018. Mule deer populations continue to grow in the Frenchman Unit, and have reached cultural carrying capacity in some areas in Hayes, Hitchcock and Frontier Counties.

Permit demand for Frenchman Mule Deer Conservation Area permits exceeds supply. Preference points are issued to those unsuccessful in drawing a MDCA permit. 2501 residents applied for 1840 Frenchman MDCA permits (74% success).

591 nonresidents applied for 160 Frenchman MDCA permits (27% success).

Population Status and Harvest Strategy:

Mule deer populations appear to have improved in the eastern Frenchman Unit and population growth may be less in the west. 91% of harvested mule deer bucks are age 2 or older and 59% are age 3 and older. Mule deer surveys indicate 66 fawns per 100 does. Population objectives are to increase mule deer the eastern third of the unit and stabilize or decrease numbers in the western two-thirds while maintaining some older bucks. This will be accomplished with existing antlerless mule deer permits and bonus tags and by including a portion of Frontier and Red Willow Counties east of Highway 83 in Frenchman West AO SC unit.

The whitetail deer herd is stable or slightly decreasing, but staff has received concerns with low whitetail populations in some areas along the Republican River. 78% of harvested whitetail bucks are age 2 or older and 45% are age 3 and older. The population objective is to continue to stabilize or slightly decrease the herd on much of the Republican River while maintaining older bucks.

FRENCHMAN MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

2018 Harvest Data – Frenchman

Permit Type	Permit Numbers			Mule Deer			Whitetail Deer			% Success
	Auth	Sold	Sellout	Buck	AO	Total	Buck	AO	Total	
Frenchman MDCA	2000	2000	6/26/18	1043	31	1074	151	174	325	70
Frenchman WT	1400	1400	11/2/18	8	6	14	581	340	921	67
AO SC Frenchman	800	575	225	0	8	8	10	269	279	50
AO SC Frenchman West	1000	1000	1/13/19	14	730	744	5	131	136	88
Landowner				470	151	621	137	59	196	
Archery				240	14	254	143	20	163	
Muzzleloader				1	1	2	63	7	70	
Youth				356	37	393	66	13	79	
Youth WT				0	0	0	83	23	106	
NR Youth Restricted				0	1	0	1	0	1	
Restricted SWB				0	1	0	3	1	4	
WT SWB				3	0	3	130	2	132	
River Antlerless				0	0	0	4	163	167	
Totals				2155	979	3134	1377	1202	2579	

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are show below:

Year	Mule Deer								Whitetail Deer						
	Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age				Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age		
					1	2	3+						1	2	3+
2014	1878	353	2231	16	11	32	58		1444	1560	3004	52	23	31	46
2015	1983	432	2415	18	13	36	51		1568	1565	3133	50	24	32	44
2016	2175	532	2707	19	12	39	50		1462	1365	2827	48	23	36	41
2017	2334	885	3219	27	8	37	55		1486	1310	2796	47	22	34	41
2018	2155	979	3134	31	9	32	59		1377	1202	2579	47	22	33	44

Total Permits Authorized

Year	Nov. Firearm	Bag Limit	Whitetail Only	Special Seasons
2014	1700 (MDCA) (8% NR quota)	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	1600 (1 WT/1 AOWT)	Frenchman SCA – 1400 (2 AOWT) Frenchman SCA West – 300 (1AO, 1AOWT)
2015	1800 (MDCA) (8% NR quota)	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	1600 (1 WT/1 AOWT)	Frenchman SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT) Frenchman SCA West – 400 (1AO, 1AOWT)
2016	1900 (MDCA) (8% NR quota)	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	1600 (1 WT/1 AOWT)	Frenchman SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT) Frenchman SCA West – 800 (1AO, 1AOWT)
2017	1900 (MDCA) (8% NR quota)	1 AD, 1 AOWT	1400 (1 WT/1 AOWT)	Frenchman SCA – 800 (2 AOWT) Frenchman SCA West – 875 (2 AO)
2018	2000 (MDCA) (8% NR quota)	1 AD, 1 AOWT	1400 (1 WT/1 AOWT)	Frenchman SCA – 800 (2 AOWT) Frenchman SCA West – 1000 (2 AO)
2019**	2000 (MDCA) (8% NR quota)	1 AD, 1 AOWT	1600 (1 WT/1 AOWT)	Frenchman SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT) Frenchman SCA West – 1250 (2 AO)

** Recommended permit numbers
² – No antlerless mule deer

MDCA – Mule Deer Conservation Area
 AO – Antlerless Only AD – Any Deer

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

Expected Harvest: (includes all seasons, some not listed individually)

Unit	MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless
All Season	2200	1450	1100	1300

KEYA PAHA MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

Keya Paha: 2500 Any Deer permits with an Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tag. Antlerless mule deer are prohibited during the firearm season. No change from 2018.

Antlerless Only Season Choice Keya Paha: 500 Antlerless Only Whitetail with an Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tag. No change from 2018.

General Information: Whitetail antlerless harvest still continues to be a difficult objective to achieve in this unit even as harvest indicates a high whitetail population. Whitetail adult buck harvest decreased, while age structure index still suggests a high whitetail population. Mule deer buck harvest decreased as well, but varies annually based on environmental conditions and hunter preference. Two (2) depredation complaints were received in 2018. Deer were collected for CWD testing in 2018. One (1) positive was detected in the far western portion of the unit.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: Harvest of mature whitetail bucks still high in this unit with 88% of bucks harvested aged at 2.5 or older. The mule deer adult buck age structure remained at 87% for bucks 2.5 or older. The objective for this unit is to increase whitetail antlerless harvest to stabilize a growing whitetail population. Bonus tags on November Firearm permits did not achieve expected antlerless kill again this year but continue to be the best tool for antlerless harvest in this unit. The population objective for mule deer is to maintain buck age structure while providing opportunity for hunters and landowners.

2018 Harvest Data - Keya Paha

<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Keya Paha	2500	2249		138	0	138	1013	363	1376	67
AO SC Keya Paha	500	265		0	1	1	5	177	182	51
Landowner				14	5	19	119	59	178	
Archery				10	0	10	120	9	129	
Muzzleloader				10	0	10	71	14	85	
Youth				15	1	16	81	21	102	
Youth WT				0	0	0	50	12	62	
NR Youth Restricted				4	2	6	16	0	16	
WT SWB				0	0	0	76	1	77	
Restricted SWB				6	0	6	6	0	6	
River Antlerless				0	0	0	10	216	226	
Totals				197	9	206	1567	872	2439	

KEYA PAHA MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are shown below:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>							<u>Whitetail Deer</u>						
	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>			<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>		
					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>
2014	145	13	158	8	7	29	64	1499	540	2039	26	10	32	58
2015	254	16	270	6	21	33	46	1746	675	2421	28	13	25	61
2016	207	16	223	7	14	32	54	1667	781	2448	30	13	31	56
2017	252	14	266	6	13	37	50	1755	727	2482	31	15	31	54
2018	197	9	206	4	12	31	57	1567	872	2439	35	12	38	50

Total Permits Authorized

<u>Year</u>	<u>Nov. Firearm</u>	<u>Bag Limit</u>	<u>Special Seasons</u>
2014	2050	1 AD ²	Keya Paha SCA – 500 (2 AOWT)
2015	2300	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	Keya Paha SCA – 500 (2 AOWT)
2016	2300	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	Keya Paha SCA – 500 (2 AOWT)
2017	2300	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	Keya Paha SCA – 500 (2 AOWT)
2018	2500	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	Keya Paha SCA – 500 (2 AOWT)
2019**	2500	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	Keya Paha SCA – 500 (2 AOWT)

** Recommended permit numbers

² – No antlerless mule deer

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

AO – Antlerless Only AD – Any Deer

Expected Harvest:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>MD Buck</u>	<u>WT Buck</u>	<u>MD Antlerless</u>	<u>WT Antlerless</u>
All Seasons	275	1750	15	900

LOUP EAST MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

Loup East: 3000 Any Deer permits with two (2) bonus Antlerless Only Whitetail tags. This is a change from 2018 when 2700 Any Deer permits with Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tags were issued. Antlerless mule deer are prohibited.

Antlerless Only Season Choice Loup East: 1500 Antlerless Only Whitetail, with two (2) Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tags. This is a change from last year when there were 1500 Antlerless Only Whitetail with one (1) Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tags were issued.

General Information: Harvest of whitetail bucks has exceeded expected results the previous five years, but antlerless harvest has been below desired numbers. Indicators show a trend for a growing whitetail population. The age of whitetail bucks remains high. Mule deer buck harvest and age structure remains stable. Twelve (12) deer damage complaints were received this past year and five (5) Deer Damage Permits were issued.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: High deer populations will accommodate additional buck harvest while maintaining desired age structure. The objective for whitetails is to increase the harvest of antlerless deer to address the increasing deer herd. Deer damage complaints have been typically located along the Loup River system, but in 2018 became more widespread throughout the unit. River Antlerless and bonus tags on Firearm permits have been the best choice for hunters to harvest antlerless deer, the harvest has not been high enough to reduce the deer herd as desired. Media and landowner letters may be used to attempt to increase the antlerless harvest to desirable levels.

2018 Harvest Data - Loup East

<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Loup East	2700	2700	11/6/18	32	3	35	1175	645	1820	68
AO SC Loup East	1500	718		0	0	0	9	294	303	30
Landowner				9	2	11	358	173	531	
Archery				4	0	4	178	28	206	
Muzzleloader				5	1	6	83	32	115	
Youth				13	2	15	153	42	195	
Youth WT				1	0	1	109	29	138	
NR Youth Restricted				1	0	1	2	1	3	
WT SWB				0	0	0	230	1	231	
Restricted SWB				2	0	2	10	0	10	
River Antlerless				0	2	2	21	702	723	
Totals				67	10	77	2328	1947	4275	

LOUP EAST MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are shown below:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>							<u>Whitetail Deer</u>						
	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>			<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>		
					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>
2014	66	6	72	8	51	12	37	1820	1304	3124	42	26	45	29
2015	67	13	80	16	40	37	23	2304	1844	4148	44	28	42	30
2016	69	8	77	10	36	33	31	2067	1769	3836	46	28	46	26
2017	95	12	105	11	31	35	34	2311	1791	4102	44	25	42	33
2018	67	10	77	14	30	40	30	2328	1947	4275	46	24	45	31

Total Permits Authorized

<u>Year</u>	<u>Nov. Firearm</u>	<u>Bag Limit</u>	<u>Special Seasons</u>
2014	2150	1 AD ²	Loup East SCA – 750 (2 AOWT)
2015	2150	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	Loup East SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT)
2016	2150	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	Loup East SCA – 1500 (2 AOWT)
2017	2400	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	Loup East SCA – 1500 (2 AOWT)
2018	2700	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	Loup East SCA – 1500 (2 AOWT)
2019**	3000	1 AD ² , 2 AOWT	Loup East SCA – 1500 (3 AOWT)

** Recommended permit numbers

² – No antlerless mule deer

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

AO – Antlerless Only AD – Any Deer

Expected Harvest:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>MD Buck</u>	<u>WT Buck</u>	<u>MD Antlerless</u>	<u>WT Antlerless</u>
All Seasons	75	2300	10	3000

LOUP WEST MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

Loup West: 1700 Any Deer permits, with Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tags. Permits not valid for antlerless mule deer. No change from 2018.

Antlerless Only Season Choice Loup West: 400 permits for 1 Antlerless Only and 1 Antlerless Only Whitetail. No change from 2018.

General Information: Mule deer harvest for all seasons was 522 adult mule deer bucks and 85 antlerless mule deer. Whitetail harvest for all seasons was 832 adult whitetail bucks and 465 antlerless whitetail deer. No depredation complaints were received in 2018. The Loup West deer management unit had its first CWD positive from a whitetail in Valley County.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: The whitetail deer population has recovered from the EHD event of 2012 and appears to be stable or slightly increasing. Whitetail bucks harvest was similar to 2017 (843), but has declined 32% since 2011. In 2018, 77% of harvested whitetail bucks age 2 or older. The population objective for whitetail is to maintain the herd at the current level. River Antlerless permits and Loup West SCA permits will allow us to meet this objective and address any crop damage concerns in the unit.

Mule deer populations appear to be stable in this unit. Mule deer buck harvest was similar to 2017 (525) with 90% of the harvested bucks age 2 or older. Hunters and landowners have expressed interest in the mule deer population within this unit. Some landowners have expressed concern about the increase in mule deer in some areas. Mule deer surveys indicate 64 fawns per 100 does. The population objective is to allow the herd to grow, while maintaining this older cohort of bucks. The will be accomplished by maintaining the Loup West permit quota and allowing limited harvest of antlerless mule deer on Loup West SCA permits.

2017 Harvest Data - Loup West

<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Loup West	1700	1700	11/12/18	330	4	334	509	231	740	63
AO SC Loup West	400	158	202	1	19	20	5	62	67	56
Landowner				62	30	92	81	46	127	
Archery				15	5	20	50	12	62	
Muzzleloader				28	8	36	37	10	47	
Youth				62	16	78	70	10	80	
Youth WT				0	0	0	28	15	43	
NR Youth Restricted				5	3	8	5	1	6	
WT SWB				0	0	0	43	0	43	
Restricted SWB				19	0	19	4	0	4	
River Antlerless				0	0	0	0	78	78	
Totals				522	85	607	832	465	1297	

LOUP WEST MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are shown below:

Year	Mule Deer							Whitetail Deer						
	Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age			Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age		
					1	2	3+					1	2	3+
2014	486	73	559	13	20	39	41	680	335	1015	34	22	37	41
2015	571	95	666	14	21	47	32	812	386	1198	32	27	36	36
2016	488	84	572	14	13	46	41	760	486	1246	39	22	34	44
2017	525	51	576	9	17	33	50	843	444	1287	34	20	35	45
2018	522	85	607	14	10	38	52	832	465	1297	36	23	34	43

Total Permits Authorized

Year	Nov. Firearm	Bag Limit	Whitetail Only	Special Seasons
2014	1350	1 AD ²		Loup West SCA – 250 (2 AOWT)
2015	1350	1 AD ²		Loup West SCA – 400 (2 AOWT)
2016	1350	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT		Loup West SCA – 500 (2 AOWT)
2017	1500	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT		Loup West SCA – 400 (2 AOWT)
2018	1700	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT		Loup West SCA – 400 (1 AO, 1 AOWT)
2019**	1700	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT		Loup West SCA – 400 (1 AO, 1 AOWT)

** Recommended permit numbers

² – No antlerless mule deer

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

AO – Antlerless Only AD – Any Deer

Expected Harvest:

Unit	MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless
All Season	500	850	100	600

MISSOURI MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

Missouri: 3200 Any Deer permits with Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tag. This is an increase from 2900 Any Deer permits from last year.

Antlerless Only Season Choice Missouri: 1000 Antlerless Only Whitetail permits with Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tags. No change from 2018.

General Information: The whitetail buck harvest increased and was more than expected, while whitetail antlerless harvest increased to more desirable levels. Whitetail buck age structure remains desirable. Five (5) deer damage complaints were received and four (4) Deer Damage Permits were issued in 2018.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: The objective is to maintain antlerless harvest to stabilize growth. The age structure of the bucks in the harvest meet unit goals even with an increase in harvest, indicating more buck harvest is sustainable. The objective for the mule deer population is to allow the herd to grow as allowed by landowner tolerance and disease events.

2018 Harvest Data – Missouri

<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Missouri	2900	2900	11/7/18	30	3	33	1234	659	1893	67
AO SC Missouri	1000	1000	1/15/19	0	0	0	25	422	447	28
Landowner				6	4	10	263	118	381	
Archery				1	0	1	154	32	186	
Muzzleloader				1	4	5	57	28	85	
Youth				7	0	7	156	38	194	
Youth WT				1	0	1	96	40	136	
NR Youth Restricted				2	0	2	21	5	26	
WT SWB				1	0	1	209	1	210	
Restricted SWB				0	0	0	1	0	1	
River Antlerless				0	0	0	11	327	338	
Totals				49	11	60	2227	1670	3897	

MISSOURI MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are shown below:

Year	Mule Deer							Whitetail Deer						
	Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age			Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age		
					1	2	3+					1	2	3+
2014	75	4	79	5	29	48	13	2067	1144	3211	36	23	47	31
2015	71	9	80	11	30	55	15	2296	1647	3943	42	26	45	29
2016	59	12	71	16	17	58	25	2090	1738	3828	45	28	46	26
2017	65	4	69	6	17	39	44	2208	1249	3457	36	28	44	28
2018	49	11	60	18	20	30	50	2227	1670	3897	43	20	48	32

Total Permits Authorized

Year	Nov. Firearm	Bag Limit	Special Seasons
2014	2900	1 AD ²	Missouri SCA – 750 (1 AOWT)
2015	2900	1 AD ²	Missouri SCA – 1500 (2 AOWT)
2016	2900	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	Missouri SCA – 1500 (2 AOWT)
2017	2900	1 AD ²	Missouri SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT)
2018	2900	1 AD, 1 AOWT	Missouri SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT)
2019**	2900	1 AD, 1 AOWT	Missouri SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT)

** Recommended permit numbers

² – No antlerless mule deer

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

AO – Antlerless Only AD – Any Deer

Expected Harvest:

Unit	MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless
All Seasons	60	2200	10	1800

PINE RIDGE MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

Pine Ridge: 1650 permits valid for one mule deer buck or any whitetail and 550 permits valid for one whitetail of either sex. Antlerless mule deer restriction in the entire Pine Ridge unit, except landowner permits. No change from 2018.

Antlerless Only Season Choice Pine Ridge: 500 Antlerless Only Whitetail permits with an additional bonus Antlerless Only Whitetail. Antlerless mule deer restriction in the entire Pine Ridge unit, except landowner permits. In 2018, 400 Antlerless Only Whitetail permits were authorized.

General Information: Harvest for all seasons was 784 adult mule deer bucks and 29 antlerless mule deer; 874 adult whitetail bucks and 525 antlerless whitetail deer. Mule deer buck harvest was 2% above the 5-year average, but 11% down from 2017. Whitetail buck harvest was down 4% compared to the 5-year average and down 8% from 2017. Overall buck harvest was down 9% from 2017. 77% of mule deer bucks harvested were 2.5 or older. 80% of whitetail bucks harvested were 2.5 or older. Antlerless whitetail harvest was up 8% from 2017. Drought, wildfires, predation, and disease have impacted deer populations in this unit in recent years. There were two (2) depredation complaints.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: Trend indicators and observations indicate slightly increasing numbers of both mule deer and whitetail. Objectives are to increase hunter satisfaction, increase mule deer populations and buck age, while beginning to stabilize whitetail populations through an increase in antlerless permits in 2019. 77% of harvested mule deer bucks are age 2.5 or older. 79% of harvested whitetail bucks are age 2.5 or older. In 2011, an antlerless mule deer restriction was initiated on all state and federal lands in an effort to increase mule deer abundance. In 2014, antlerless mule deer harvest was restricted unit-wide on private and public lands, with the exception of landowner permits.

An aerial survey was also initiated in 2014 to monitor deer population trend data in the western Pine Ridge. This aerial survey ended in the winter of 2018. Mule deer recovery unit-wide appears slow, considering a total restriction (with the exception of landowner permits) on antlerless harvest since 2014. For 2018, a restructuring of the 2200 issued permits was initiated, allocating 1650 permits for one mule deer buck or any whitetail and 550 for an either sex whitetail. In 2018, 228 samples were tested for chronic wasting disease (CWD). Of those 228 tested, 68 tested positive resulting in a 29.8% detection rate. It is recommended to increase the Antlerless Only Whitetail Season Choice permits to 500, as well as adding a bonus Antlerless Only Whitetail to the permit, thus improving hunter satisfaction and landowner/hunter/agency relations. With traditionally low success rates on the bonus tag, it is assumed to increase harvest only slightly and would have no negative impacts.

PINE RIDGE MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

2018 Harvest Data - Pine Ridge

<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Pine Ridge	1650	1650	10/10/18	440	1	441	356	78	434	53
Pine Ridge WT Buck	550	550	10/31/18	3	0	3	201	52	253	47
AO SC Pine Ridge	400	400	11/2/18	1	0	1	7	157	164	41
Landowner				81	26	107	66	36	102	
Archery				60	2	62	41	10	51	
Muzzleloader				61	0	61	62	23	85	
Youth				65	0	65	31	13	44	
Youth WT				1	0	1	23	13	36	
NR Youth Restricted				14	0	14	22	4	26	
WT SWB				0	0	0	44	1	45	
Restricted SWB				58	0	58	12	0	12	
River Antlerless				0	0	0	9	138	147	
Totals				784	29	813	874	525	1399	

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are shown below:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>							<u>Whitetail Deer</u>						
	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>			<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>		
					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>
2014	597	50	647	8	17	35	48	901	518	1419	37	14	36	51
2015	744	39	783	5	33	33	34	964	502	1466	34	25	31	44
2016	844	39	883	4	14	39	47	842	544	1386	39	22	41	37
2017	880	26	906	3	19	42	39	948	487	1435	34	18	42	40
2018	784	29	813	4	23	33	44	874	525	1399	38	20	33	47

Total Permits Authorized*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Nov. Firearm</u>	<u>Bag Limit</u>	<u>Whitetail Only</u>	<u>Special Seasons</u>
2014	2400	1 AD ²		Pine Ridge SCA WT – 200 (AOWT) ²
2015	2400	1 AD ²		Pine Ridge SCA WT – 200 (AOWT) ²
2016	2400	1 AD ²		Pine Ridge SCA WT – 200 (AOWT) ²
2017	2400	1 AD ²		Pine Ridge SCA WT – 200 (AOWT) ²
2018	1650	1 AD ²	550 (1 WT)	Pine Ridge SCA WT – 400 (AOWT) ²
2019**	1650	1 AD ²	550 (1 WT)	Pine Ridge SCA WT – 500 (2 AOWT) ²

** Recommended permit numbers

² – No antlerless mule deer

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

AO – Antlerless Only AD – Any Deer

Expected Harvest:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>MD Buck</u>	<u>WT Buck</u>	<u>MD Antlerless</u>	<u>WT Antlerless</u>
All Season	775	875	30	600

PLAINS MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

Plains: 1700 Any Deer permits. Antlerless mule deer restrictions are on Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge. No change from 2018.

Antlerless Only Season Choice Plains: 500 Antlerless Only Season Choice permits with an additional Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tag. Antlerless mule deer restrictions are on Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge. In 2018, 500 Antlerless Only Season Choice permits were authorized.

General Information: Harvest for all seasons was 1131 adult mule deer bucks, 308 antlerless mule deer; 414 adult whitetail bucks, and 161 antlerless whitetail deer. Mule deer buck harvest was up 14% from the 5-year average and maintained similar numbers compared to last year. Whitetail buck harvest was up 6% from the 5-year average, but decreased 4% since 2017. Overall buck harvest was down 1% from 2017. 86% of mule deer bucks harvested were 2.5 or older. 80% of whitetail bucks harvested were 2.5 or older. Antlerless mule deer harvest was up 22% from 2017. Antlerless Whitetail harvest was down 4% from 2017. In 2018, 251 samples were tested for chronic wasting disease (CWD). Of those 251 tested, 45 tested positive resulting in a 17.9% detection rate. There was one (1) depredation complaint.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: Trend indicators, observations and landowner contacts indicate slightly increasing numbers in mule deer. Population objectives are to maintain mule deer and whitetail populations at their current levels. This recommendation will continue the effort to maintain a relatively stable deer population and address depredation problems areas through the use of Season Choice Antlerless Only permits. With the traditionally low success rates of an additional Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tag, staff recommends the addition of an Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tag to the Season Choice permit to improve hunter satisfaction and landowner/hunter/agency relations. The bonus will increase harvest only slightly and would have no negative impacts.

2018 Harvest Data – Plains

<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Plains	1700	1700	11/10/18	703	93	796	216	37	253	62
AO SC Plains	500	462	38	1	135	136	3	66	69	45
Landowner				120	36	156	56	26	82	
Archery				45	1	46	24	7	31	
Muzzleloader				69	17	86	35	4	39	
Youth				118	22	140	21	5	26	
Youth WT				1	0	1	20	5	25	
NR Youth Restricted				24	3	27	4	1	5	
WT SWB				0	0	0	21	0	21	
Restricted SWB				50	1	51	8	0	8	
River Antlerless				0	0	0	5	10	15	
Super Tag ME				0	0	0	1	0	1	
Totals				1131	308	1439	414	161	575	

PLAINS MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are shown below:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>							<u>Whitetail Deer</u>						
	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>			<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>		
					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>
2014	739	324	1063	30	24	27	49	341	171	512	33	28	29	43
2015	980	325	1305	25	23	30	47	391	201	592	34	31	31	38
2016	1017	356	1373	25	17	39	47	371	176	547	30	22	41	37
2017	1118	325	1443	23	12	32	56	433	168	601	28	16	37	47
2018	1131	308	1439	22	14	37	49	414	161	575	28	20	38	42

Total Permits Authorized

<u>Year</u>	<u>Nov. Firearm</u>	<u>Bag Limit</u>	<u>Special Seasons</u>
2014	1500	1 AD	Plains SCA – 480 (AO)
2015	1500	1 AD	Plains SCA – 480 (AO)
2016	1500	1 AD	Plains SCA – 480 (AO)
2017	1500	1 AD	Plains SCA – 480 (AO)
2018	1700	1 AD	Plains SCA – 500 (AO)
2019**	1700	1 AD	Plains SCA – 500 (1 AO, 1 AOWT)

** Recommended permit numbers

² – No antlerless mule deer

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

AO – Antlerless Only AD – Any Deer

Expected Harvest:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>MD Buck</u>	<u>WT Buck</u>	<u>MD Antlerless</u>	<u>WT Antlerless</u>
All Season	1100	425	325	195

PLATTE MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

Platte MDCA: 1400 permits valid for one mule deer buck or any whitetail deer and one antlerless whitetail (via application and draw) valid during Muzzleloader and November Firearm seasons. Nonresident permit allocation of 15% of Platte MDCA permits (195 permits). No change from 2018.

Platte WT: 1300 permits for one whitetail. No change from 2018.

Antlerless Only Season Choice Platte: 800 permits for two antlerless whitetails. No change from 2018.

Antlerless Only Season Choice Platte North: 500 permits for two antlerless deer. An increase from 450 in 2018.

Nonresident Permit Allocation: 15% of Platte MDCA permits (210 permits) are allocated for nonresidents.

General Information: Harvest for all seasons was 1096 adult mule deer bucks and 374 antlerless mule deer; 1067 adult whitetail bucks and 1076 antlerless whitetail deer. Mule deer densities seem to be stabilizing in some areas in the unit. No depredation complaints were taken for mule deer in 2018. Whitetail numbers exceed landowner tolerance on some portions of the Platte River where leasing is occurring. Three (3) depredation complaints were received in 2018 and one (1) depredation permit was issued.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: Whitetail buck harvest is 9% below records set in 2010. Mule deer buck harvest is at a 20-year high. Age of bucks remains high. Objectives are to maintain whitetail herds at current levels in riparian corridors and decrease herds in uplands to limit competition and brainworm transmission with mule deer. Mule deer populations are stable to slightly increasing in the Loess Canyon portion of the unit south of I-80, and remain stable in northern Sandhills habitats. There were several reports of sick mule deer in 2018, with some confirmed cases of meningeal worm. Mule deer surveys indicate 75 fawns per 100 does. Objectives for mule deer are to allow growth in the southwest Platte Unit and stabilize in the remainder of the unit.

Demand for Platte mule deer permits exceeds supply. In 2018, 1115 resident applicants drew 1115 permits (100% draw success) in the first application period. The remaining 75 permits sold out to residents in a short period of time. 210 of 296 non-residents drew permits (71% draw success).

PLATTE MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

2018 Harvest Data – Platte

Permit Type	Permit Numbers			Mule Deer			Whitetail Deer			% Success
	Auth	Sold	Sellout	Buck	AO	Total	Buck	AO	Total	
Platte MDCA	1400	1400	7/9/18	601	2	603	180	124	304	65
Platte WT	1300	1157	143	1	1	2	430	68	498	43
AO SC Platte	800	564	236	0	0	0	10	268	278	49
AO SC Platte North	450	450	11/7/18	6	275	281	3	76	79	80
Landowner				203	62	265	93	37	130	
Archery				84	7	91	132	24	156	
Muzzleloader				0	0	0	38	14	52	
Youth				196	27	223	64	11	75	
Youth WT				1	0	1	54	16	70	
NR Youth Restricted				1	0	1	2	0	2	
WT SWB				0	0	0	51	0	51	
Restricted SWB				1	0	1	1	0	1	
Unrestricted SWB				2	0	2	0	0	0	
River Antlerless				0	0	0	9	438	447	
Totals				1096	374	1470	1067	1076	2143	

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are shown below:

Year	Mule Deer							Whitetail Deer						
	Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age			Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age		
					1	2	3+					1	2	3+
2014	922	214	1136	19	22	44	34	963	1055	2018	52	26	37	37
2015	1060	262	1322	20	20	45	35	1094	1085	2179	50	25	39	36
2016	1148	254	1402	18	24	41	35	1091	1042	2133	49	23	35	43
2017	1184	363	1547	24	13	37	50	1142	1000	2142	47	21	32	47
2018	1096	375	1470	25	13	36	51	1067	1076	2136	50	20	34	46

Total Permits Authorized

Year	Nov. Firearm	Bag Limit	Whitetail Only	Special Seasons
2014	1200 (MDCA)	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	1200 (1WT)	Platte SCA – 800 (2 AOWT) Platte SCA North – 200 (2 AO)
2015	1200 (MDCA)	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	1200 (1WT)	Platte SCA – 800 (2 AOWT) Platte SCA North – 200 (2 AO)
2016	1300 (MDCA)	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	1200 (1WT)	Platte SCA – 800 (2 AOWT) Platte SCA North – 250 (2 AO)
2017	1300 (MDCA)	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	1200 (1WT)	Platte SCA – 800 (2 AOWT) Platte SCA North – 400 (2 AO)
2018	1400 (MDCA)	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	1300 (1WT)	Platte SCA – 800 (2 AOWT) Platte SCA North – 450 (2 AO)
2019**	1400 (MDCA)	1 AD ² , 1 AOWT	1200 (1WT)	Platte SCA – 800 (2 AOWT) Platte SCA North – 500 (2 AO)

** Recommended permit numbers

² – No antlerless mule deer

MDCA – Mule Deer Conservation Area

AO – Antlerless Only AD – Any Deer

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

Expected Harvest:

Unit	MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless
All Season	1100	1100	400	1200

REPUBLICAN MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

Republican MDCA: 100 antlered Mule Deer Buck permits (Republican MDCA) via application and draw (Mule Deer Conservation Area permits, valid during November Firearm and Muzzleloader seasons). No change from 2018.

Republican Whitetail: 3000 permits for one whitetail valid during the November Firearm season. No change from 2018.

Antlerless Only Season Choice Republican: 1500 permits for two antlerless whitetail deer. Permits are not valid on Harlan County Reservoir Corps of Engineers property. This change is recommended to make the Republican Unit consistent with the rest of the Season Choice units in the Southwest District. Antlerless whitetail harvest is expected to remain the same with this change.

General Information: Mule deer harvest for all seasons was 55 adult mule deer bucks and 6 antlerless mule deer. Whitetail deer harvest for all seasons was 2658 adult whitetail bucks and 1752 antlerless whitetail deer. Whitetail buck harvest has recovered from the EHD event of 2012. Mule deer buck harvest has changed little in the past five years but did show a slight decrease in the past two years. The mule deer herd is compromised by extensive row crop agriculture and meningeal worm mortality although no meningeal worm mortalities were reported in 2017 or 2018. No cases of suspected EHD mortality were reported and no depredation complaints were received in 2018; however, 27 whitetails tested positive for CWD in 2017. Most were in the extreme western portion of the unit. Chronic wasting disease may be an issue to deal with in the future.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: The mule deer herd is low but appears to be stable. The whitetail herd is too high on the river corridors in the western portion of the unit but is much lower in the eastern portion. The number of age 2 and older whitetail bucks in the harvest has remained in the 70-80% range in the past years.

The population goal for whitetails is to reduce the herd on the Republican River in the western portion of the unit with Season Choice and River Antlerless permits and allow growth of the herd in upland habitats and in the eastern portion of the unit. The population goal for mule deer is to allow the herd to grow by restricting the harvest of antlerless mule deer.

2018 Harvest Data – Republican

<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Republican MDCA	100	100	8/7/18	23	0	23	0	1	1	24
Republican WT	3000	3000	10/31/18	1	0	1	1205	340	1545	52
AO SC Republican	2000	1353	647	0	0	0	18	445	463	34
Landowner				15	5	20	315	169	484	
Archery				3	0	3	249	58	307	
Muzzleloader				1	1	2	107	55	162	
Youth				11	0	11	149	62	211	
Youth WT				0	0	0	159	60	219	
NR Youth Restricted				0	0	0	0	0	0	
WT SWB				1	0	1	441	3	444	
Restricted SWB				0	0	0	3	0	3	
River Antlerless				0	0	0	12	559	571	
Totals				55	6	61	2658	1752	4410	

REPUBLICAN MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are shown below:

Year	Mule Deer							Whitetail Deer						
	Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age			Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age		
					1	2	3+					1	2	3+
2014	70	18	88	21	22	22	56	2413	2182	4595	47	20	38	41
2015	64	7	71	10	18	36	45	2784	1965	4749	41	32	28	40
2016	70	10	80	12	26	37	37	2795	1852	4647	40	23	35	42
2017*	61	7	68	10	0	80	20	2695	1674	4369	38	27	34	39
2018**	55	6	61	10	0	50	50	2658	1752	4410	40	19	40	40

* sample size of 5 bucks

* sample size of 2 bucks

Total Permits Authorized

Year	Nov. Firearm	Bag Limit	Whitetail Only	Special Seasons
2014	100 MDCA	1 MD buck	3000 (1 WT)	Republican SCA – 2000 (2 AOWT)
2015	100 MDCA	1 MD buck	3000 (1 WT)	Republican SCA – 2000 (1 AOWT)
2016	100 MDCA	1 MD buck	3000 (1 WT)	Republican SCA – 2000 (1 AOWT)
2017	100 MDCA	1 MD buck	3000 (1 WT)	Republican SCA – 2000 (1 AOWT)
2018	100 MDCA	1 MD buck	3000 (1 WT)	Republican SCA – 2000 (1 AOWT)
2019	100 MDCA	1 MD buck	3000 (1 WT)	Republican SCA – 1500 (2 AOWT)

** Recommended permit numbers

² – No antlerless mule deer

MDCA – Mule Deer Conservation Area

AO – Antlerless Only

AD – Any Deer

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

Expected Harvest:

Unit	MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless
All Seasons	60	2700	10	1800

SANDHILLS MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

Sandhills: 2000 Any Deer permits. In 2018, 1700 Any Deer permits were issued. Antlerless mule deer restrictions on McKelvie National Forest Service Lands and the Valentine National Wildlife Refuge.

Antlerless Only Season Choice Sandhills: 450 Antlerless Only permits with an additional Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tag. Permits are not valid on Valentine National Wildlife Refuge or McKelvie National Forest lands. In 2018, 350 Antlerless Only permits were available.

General Information: Harvest for all seasons was 1144 adult male mule deer, 201 antlerless mule deer; 688 whitetail bucks and 190 antlerless whitetail deer. Mule deer buck harvest was 10% above the 5-year average and up 4% since 2017. Whitetail buck harvest was 11% above the 5-year average and up 3% since 2017. Overall buck harvest was up 4%. 93% of mule deer buck harvest was 2.5 or older. 94% of whitetail buck harvest was 2.5 or older. Antlerless mule deer harvest increased 42% from 2017. Whitetail antlerless harvest increased 43% from 2017. In 2018, 222 samples were tested for chronic wasting disease (CWD). Of those 222, 13 tested positive resulting in 5.9% detection rate. There was one (1) depredation complaints.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: Trend indicators show an increasing population of both whitetail and mule deer. Objectives for mule deer are to slowly stabilize numbers with an increase in the number of antlerless only permits while addressing depredation issues through antlerless harvest on Season Choice permits, and to maintain the current buck age structure. Objectives for whitetails are to slowly stabilize the population through an increased number of Antlerless Only Season Choice with the addition of a bonus Antlerless Only Whitetail. The recommendation provides the basis for slight population growth unit-wide while increasing hunting opportunities; and addressing deer depredation in problem areas through the use of Firearm, Season Choice Antlerless Only permits and River Antlerless permits.

2018 Harvest Data – Sandhills

<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Sandhills	1700	1700	10/21/18	613	36	649	411	36	447	64
AO SC Sandhills	350	350		2	107	109	3	61	64	53
Landowner				95	18	113	46	32	78	
Archery				50	6	56	30	4	34	
Muzzleloader				158	18	176	54	16	70	
Youth				106	11	117	33	7	40	
Youth WT				2	0	2	22	5	27	
NR Youth Restricted				21	5	26	10	3	13	
WT SWB				1	0	1	48	0	48	
Restricted SWB				96	0	96	36	0	36	
River Antlerless				0	0	0	1	26	27	
Totals				1144	201	1345	694	190	884	

SANDHILLS MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are shown below:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>							<u>Whitetail Deer</u>						
	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>			<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>		
					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>
2014	797	194	991	20	14	28	58	496	100	596	17	15	34	52
2015	1070	77	1147	7	13	27	60	615	113	728	16	17	28	55
2016	1078	123	1201	9	9	39	52	639	121	760	15	16	36	48
2017	1098	137	1235	11	6	24	70	670	133	803	17	9	36	55
2018	1144	201	1345	15	7	22	71	694	190	884	21	6	36	58

Total Permits Authorized

<u>Year</u>	<u>Nov. Firearm</u>	<u>Bag Limit</u>	<u>Special Seasons</u>
2014	2000	1 AD	Sandhills SCA – 100 (AO) Sandhills SCA WT – 100 (AOWT)
2015	1500	1 AD ²	Sandhills SCA WT – 100 (1 AOWT)
2016	1500	1 AD ²	Sandhills SCA – 150 (AO)
2017	1500	1 AD ²	Sandhills SCA – 250 (AO)
2018	1700	1 AD	Sandhills SCA – 350 (AO)
2019**	2000	1 AD	Sandhills SCA – 450 (AO, AOWT)

** Recommended permit numbers

² – No antlerless mule deer

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

AO – Antlerless Only AD – Any Deer

Expected Harvest:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>MD Buck</u>	<u>WT Buck</u>	<u>MD Antlerless</u>	<u>WT Antlerless</u>
All Season	1275	715	235	325

UPPER PLATTE MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

Upper Platte: 1200 Any Deer permits. No change from 2018.

Antlerless Only Season Choice Upper Platte: 250 Antlerless Only permits and an Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tag. In 2018, 250 Antlerless Only permits were authorized.

General Information: Harvest for all seasons was 888 adult male mule deer and 265 antlerless mule deer; 258 adult male whitetail and 149 antlerless whitetail deer. Mule deer buck harvest was 12% above the 5-year average and 9% up from 2017. Whitetail buck harvest was down 16% compared to the 5-year average and down 21% from 2017. Overall buck harvest was the same as 2017. 81% of mule deer bucks harvested were age 2.5 age or older. 82% of whitetail bucks harvested were 2.5 years or older. Antlerless mule deer harvest was down 21% from 2017. Antlerless whitetail harvest remained the same as 2017. There was one (1) depredation complaint.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: Trend indicators, observations and landowner contacts indicate increasing mule deer numbers and stable whitetail populations. Population objectives are to maintain mule deer and whitetail populations. This recommendation will continue the effort to maintain a relatively stable deer population and address depredation problems through the use of Season Choice Antlerless Only permits and River Antlerless permits. The addition of the Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tag is intended to improve hunter satisfaction and landowner/hunter/agency relations. With traditionally low success rates on the bonus tag, harvest will increase slightly and would have no negative impact.

2018 Harvest Data – Upper Platte

<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Upper Platte	1200	1200	10/21/18	492	83	575	141	27	168	62
AO SC Upper Platte	250	250	11/1/18	0	92	92	0	21	21	45
Landowner				97	41	138	19	12	31	
Archery				45	6	51	28	6	34	
Muzzleloader				77	16	93	14	2	16	
Youth				110	22	132	13	9	22	
Youth WT				2	0	2	8	5	13	
NR Youth Restricted				22	5	27	4	1	5	
WT SWB				1	0	1	23	0	23	
Restricted SWB				41	0	41	7	0	7	
Statewide Buck Only				1	0	1	0	0	0	
River Antlerless				0	0	0	1	66	67	
Totals				888	265	1153	258	149	407	

UPPER PLATTE MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are shown below:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>							<u>Whitetail Deer</u>						
	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>			<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>		
					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>
2014	664	329	993	33	27	33	40	287	185	472	39	22	39	39
2015	761	288	1049	27	28	35	37	315	203	518	39	25	37	38
2016	840	321	1161	27	23	42	35	344	160	504	32	18	43	39
2017	814	269	1083	25	18	39	43	328	150	478	31	22	40	39
2018	888	265	1153	23	19	37	44	258	149	407	37	18	38	44

Total Permits Authorized*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Nov. Firearm</u>	<u>Bag Limit</u>	<u>Special Seasons</u>
2014	1200	1 AD	Upper Platte SCA – 240 (1 AO)
2015	1200	1 AD	Upper Platte SCA – 240 (1 AO)
2016	1200	1 AD	Upper Platte SCA – 240 (1 AO)
2017	1200	1 AD	Upper Platte SCA – 240 (1 AO)
2018	1200	1 AD	Upper Platte SCA – 250 (1 AO)
2019**	1200	1 AD	Upper Platte SCA – 250 (1 AO, 1 AOWT)

** Recommended permit numbers

² – No antlerless mule deer

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

AO – Antlerless Only AD – Any Deer

Expected Harvest:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>MD Buck</u>	<u>WT Buck</u>	<u>MD Antlerless</u>	<u>WT Antlerless</u>
All Seasons	875	300	275	190

WAHOO MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

Wahoo: 3650 Any Deer permits. Antlerless mule deer are prohibited in the November Firearm Season. No change from 2018.

Antlerless Only Season Choice Wahoo: 1900 permits valid for one Antlerless Only Whitetail deer. No change from 2018.

General Information: EHD deaths in the Wahoo Unit were not significant in 2018. The percent of 1.5-year-old adult males in the harvest decreased from 42% to 40%. Harvest for all seasons was 3032 adult whitetail bucks and 2294 antlerless whitetail deer. Landowner complaints stayed the same as last year. Nine (9) crop damage complaints were received in 2018. Six (6) depredation permits were issued for Wahoo in 2018.

Population Status, Goals and Harvest Strategy:

Population numbers appear to be within landowner tolerance. Hunter and landowner complaints about too few deer were similar to last year.

The population goal for this unit is to allow limited but slow growth in some areas of the Wahoo Unit while increasing an older buck age structure. Permit strategies are to allow limited growth in some areas of the unit and increase buck age structure. No changes are recommended.

2018 Harvest Data – Wahoo

<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Wahoo	3650	3650	11/5/18	0	0	0	1213	341	1554	43
AO SC Wahoo	1900	1900	11/12/18	0	1	1	24	494	518	27
Landowner				1	0	1	295	185	480	
Archery				4	2	6	450	159	609	
Muzzleloader				4	0	4	74	68	142	
Youth				0	0	0	149	79	228	
Youth WT				0	0	0	110	72	182	
NR Youth Restricted				0	0	0	4	5	9	
WT SWB				1	0	1	380	6	386	
Restricted SWB				0	0	0	9	0	9	
River Antlerless				0	6	6	59	1035	1094	
Totals				10	9	19	2767	2444	5211	

WAHOO MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are shown below:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>							<u>Whitetail Deer</u>						
	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>			<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>% Buck Age</u>		
					1	2	3+					1	2	3+
2014	3	6	9					2836	2373	5209	46	36	41	23
2015	7	6	13					3235	2566	5801	45	40	39	20
2016	9	5	14					2977	2626	5603	47	38	41	21
2017	9	6	15					3032	2290	5326	43	42	40	18
2018	10	9	19					2767	2444	5211	47	40	40	20

Total Permits Authorized

<u>Year</u>	<u>Nov. Firearm</u>	<u>Bag Limit</u>	<u>Special Seasons</u>
2014	4050	1 AD ²	Wahoo SCA – 2100 (1 AOWT)
2015	4050	1 AD ²	Wahoo SCA – 2100 (1 AOWT)
2016	4050	1 AD ²	Wahoo SCA – 2600 (1 AOWT)
2017	4050	1 AD ²	Wahoo SCA – 2100 (1 AOWT)
2018	3650	1 AD ²	Wahoo SCA – 1900 (1 AOWT)
2019**	3650	1 AD ²	Wahoo SCA – 1900 (1 AOWT)

** Recommended permit numbers

² – No antlerless mule deer

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

AO – Antlerless Only AD – Any Deer

Expected Harvest:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>MD Buck</u>	<u>WT Buck</u>	<u>MD Antlerless</u>	<u>WT Antlerless</u>
All Season	10	2800	5	2300

DESOTO NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES

2019 Recommendations:

DeSoto: Season will be managed by DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge office with access permit available at their office. Will utilize Muzzleloader and Wahoo SCA permits.

Boyer: Season will be managed by DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge office with access permit available at their office. Will utilize Muzzleloader and Wahoo SCA permits.

General Information: The Desoto NWR consists of over 10,000 acres, lying in both Iowa and Nebraska. Most the land lies on the Iowa side of the channelized Missouri River; however, a significant holding is west of the channel. All of the refuge is open to hunting, except for an area surrounding the refuge visitor center and offices. A reciprocal agreement allows Iowa and Nebraska hunters to hunt all refuge lands. Archery hunting is allowed in marked areas on the perimeter of the refuge. Boyer Chute NWR is now managed as part of the DeSoto NWR. Boyer Chute lies entirely on the Nebraska side of the Missouri River channel. The reciprocal agreement with Iowa does not apply to Boyer Chute.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: The goal on this area is to maintain a deer population for observation by visitors to the refuge, to protect the habitat from permanent damage in forested areas and to maintain deer numbers at a tolerable level for adjacent producers. Success continues to be low since the flood of 2011.

2018 Harvest Data – Desoto and Boyer Chute National Wildlife Refuges

<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Unsold</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Muzzleloader – Oct.	125	37	88				0	8	8	19
Archery							16	10	26	
Muzzleloader – Dec.	125	64	61				2	10	12	20
AO SC Wahoo							0	5	5	
Totals							18	33	51	

Expected Harvest: No permits are allocated for 2019.

RESTRICTED STATEWIDE BUCK

2019 Recommendations:

Season Dates: November 16-24, 2019

Permits: Unlimited permits for Any Buck.

Area Open: Statewide except that mule deer bucks may NOT be harvested in the Mule Deer Conservation Area (Buffalo, Frenchman, Platte and Republican Units).

General Information: 835 permits issued in 2018. Harvest was 305 mule deer bucks and 141 whitetail bucks. This permit is available to nonresidents.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: Statewide buck permits have little impact on populations, but harvest on these permits may impact buck age structure.

Expected Harvest: 350 mule deer bucks and 150 whitetail bucks.

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are shown below:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Permits</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
		<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
2014	1629	217	5	222	372	5	377	37
2015	2129	400	1	401	531	6	537	44
2016	2211	463	0	463	496	0	496	43
2017	505	210	0	210	96	0	96	61
2018	835	305	1	306	141	1	142	54

*Includes unknown species

Total Permits Authorized

<u>Year</u>	<u>Nov. Firearm</u>	<u>Permits Sold</u>	<u>% Success</u>
2014	Unlimited	1629	37
2015	Unlimited	2129	44
2016	Unlimited	2211	43
2017	Unlimited	505	61
2018	Unlimited	835	54
2019***	Unlimited		

*** - Recommended permit numbers

STATEWIDE WHITETAIL BUCK

2019 Recommendations:

Season Dates:

September 1 – December 31 (archery)

November 16 – 24, 2019 (firearm)

December 1 -31 (muzzleloader)

Permits: Unlimited whitetail buck permits.

Area Open: Statewide.

General Information: This is a “Season Choice” permit that can be used during archery, muzzleloader and November firearm seasons. 2942 whitetail bucks were harvested with this permit in 2018. 9181 permits were issued.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: This permit is preferred by hunters who wish to hunt in multiple seasons or units.

Expected Harvest: 3000 whitetail bucks on 10,000 permits

<u>Year</u>	<u>Permits</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% AO</u>	<u>% Success</u>
		<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>		
2014	9,467	9	1	10	2614	50	2664	2	28
2015	10,497	30	1	31	3090	42	3132	1	30
2016	10,419	19	0	19	3061	39	3129	1	30
2017	10,998	9	0	9	3167	25	3192	1	29
2018	9,181	10	0	10	2942	29	2971	1	32

STATEWIDE ARCHERY

2019 Recommendations:

Season Dates: September 1 - December 31

Permits: Unlimited Any Deer permits.

Area Open: Statewide, except antlerless mule deer may not be harvested in the Pine Ridge Unit or on Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge.

General Information: Harvest was 3277 adult males and 680 antlerless deer taken on 16,797 permits. Nonresidents purchased 20% of all archery permits. Crossbow hunters harvested 24% of all deer on this permit.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: Archery deer season has little impact on statewide populations. Due to limited harvest of mule deer, archers may hunt mule deer in the Mule Deer Conservation Areas.

Expected Harvest: 3500 deer on 17,000 permits

MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless
600	3000	50	600

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are shown below:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Permits</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>				<u>Whitetail Deer</u>				
		<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>% AO</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>% AO</u>	<u>% Success</u>
2014	16,692	353	57	410	14	2899	614	3513	17	24
2015	17,477	467	57	524	11	3030	578	3608	16	24
2016	17,373	512	56	568	10	2834	625	3461	18	23
2017	16,998	605	44	649	7	2922	542	3464	19	24
2018	16,797	615	53	668	8	2662	627	3289	19	24

STATEWIDE MUZZLELOADER

2019 Recommendations:

Season Dates: December 1 through December 31

Permits: Unlimited Any Deer permits.

Area Open: Statewide, except antlerless mule deer may not be harvested in the Pine Ridge deer unit on Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge. Muzzleloader hunters will not be allowed to take mule deer in the Mule Deer Conservation Area on statewide muzzleloader permits.

General Information: 7167 permits were issued. Harvest was 1453 adult males and 544 antlerless deer.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: Muzzleloader deer season is a recreational season that has little impact on statewide deer populations. A total of 73% of the harvest was adult bucks, and 68% of the harvest was whitetail deer.

Expected Harvest: 2000 deer on 7500 permits

MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless
500	1000	100	400

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are shown below:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Permits</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>				<u>Whitetail Deer</u>				<u>% Success</u>
		<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	
2014	7691	252	102	354	29	781	526	1307	40	22
2015	7541	405	110	515	21	855	520	1375	38	25
2016	7742	407	94	501	19	848	498	1346	37	24
2017	7500	472	95	567	17	888	398	1286	31	25
2018	7167	460	87	547	16	993	457	1450	32	28

STATEWIDE YOUTH

2019 Recommendations:

Season Dates:

September 1 – December 31 (archery)
 November 16 - November 24, 2019 (firearm)
 December 1-31 (muzzleloader)
 January 1-15, 2020 – Firearm or archery (antlerless only)

Permits: Unlimited, except that no youth may obtain more than one Youth permit that allows the take of a mule deer buck.

Resident Youth: Unlimited permits for Any Deer. One permit limit.

Nonresident Youth: Unlimited permits for Any Deer. One permit limit. Not valid in Draw Units of Frenchman, Platte, or Republican.

Youth Whitetail (resident/nonresident): Unlimited permits for Any Whitetail.

Area Open: Statewide, except antlerless mule deer may not be harvested in the Pine Ridge Unit or on Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge.

General Information: Harvest on all Youth permits was 5383 (1311 mule deer bucks, 179 antlerless mule deer, 2817 adult male whitetail, and 1076 antlerless whitetail). Resident and Nonresident youth are allowed to purchase two \$8.00 Youth permits, but no more than one may allow the take of a mule deer.

Expected Harvest: 6000 deer on 12,000 permits

MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless
1500	3200	150	1000

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are shown below:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Permits</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>				<u>Whitetail Deer</u>				<u>% Success</u>
		<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>% AO</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>% AO</u>	
2014 (all)	12,294	1145	232	1377	17	2554	1238	3792	33	42
2015 (all)	12,384	1301	205	1506	14	3100	1208	4308	28	47
2016 (all)	12,005	1439	210	1649	13	2967	1145	4112	28	48
2017 (all)	11,732	1502	162	1664	10	3217	986	4203	23	50
2018 (all)	11,011	1311	179	1490	12	2817	1076	3893	28	49
2018 Resident Youth	6603	1193	160	1353	12	1537	568	2105	27	52
2018 Youth Whitetail	3794	15	0	15	0	1148	468	1616	25	43
2018 Nonresident Youth	614	103	19	122	16	132	40	172	23	48

LANDOWNER DEER

2019 Recommendations:

Season Dates:

September 1 – December 31 (archery)
November 16 - November 24, 2019 (firearm)
December 1-31 (muzzleloader)
January 1-15, 2020 – Firearm or archery (antlerless only)

Permits: Unlimited Any Deer permits with one antlerless only bonus tag.

Area Open: On property owned or leased by the qualifying landowner.

General Information: 13,983 Landowner permits were issued. Total harvest was 7106 deer. Landowner permit eligibility was liberalized in 2010. Children who live away from home are eligible. This is the only statewide permit which retains a bonus antlerless tag.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: This permit provides landowners with multiple seasons to harvest deer. This permit was first used in 2008 and was designed to increase antlerless kill and to give landowners more opportunity to harvest deer.

Expected Harvest: 7600 deer on 15,000 permits

MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless
1600	3700	450	1900

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are shown below:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Permits</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>				<u>Whitetail Deer</u>				<u>% Success</u>
		<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%AO</u>	
2014	12,944	1103	419	1522	28	3146	1836	4982	37	50
2015	14,204	1346	518	1864	28	3757	1879	5636	33	53
2016	14,079	1430	464	1899	24	3443	1849	5309	35	51
2017	14,888	1589	458	2047	22	3731	1859	5590	33	53
2018	13,983	1345	448	1793	25	3490	1823	5313	34	51

RIVER ANTLERLESS

2019 Recommendations:

Season Dates:

September 1 – December 31 (Archery)
October 1 - 10 (Firearm)
November 16 – 24, 2019 (Firearm)
December 1 – 31 (Muzzleloader)
January 1-15, 2020 (Firearm)

Permits: 12,000 permits for two antlerless whitetail deer. 9038 permits were issued.

Area Open: Within three miles of the landward banks of the following rivers: Missouri, Platte, South Platte, North Platte, Republican, Loup and Keya Paha; from the mouth of Long Pine Creek to a point five (5) miles south of U.S. Hwy. 20 where Long Pine Creek crosses the west side of Section 19, T29N R20W; the Niobrara River from the mouth to NE Hwy. 27; the Elkhorn River from the mouth to Stuart, NE, from the mouth of the South Fork of the Elkhorn River to NE Hwy. 11; the North Loup River from the mouth to NE Hwy. 7; the Cedar River from the mouth to NE Hwy. 11; the Middle Loup River from the mouth to NE Hwy. 2; the South Loup River from the mouth to U.S. Hwy. 83; the White River between NE Highway 71 and the South Dakota state line; from the mouth of Plum Creek in Brown County to U.S. Hwy. 20.

The Missouri River corridor bounded on the west from the NE/SD border south on U.S. Hwy. 281 to NE Hwy. 12, then east to NE Hwy. 20, then east to U.S. Hwy. 75, then south to NE Hwy. 67, then east and south to U.S. Hwy. 136, then east to NE Hwy. 67, then south to U.S. Hwy. 73, then east and south to the KS/NE border. Note: All state and federal public lands are closed.

General Information: This \$11 multi-season permit targets 1900 miles of river corridors (1/6 of the state) which include some of the best whitetail deer habitat in Nebraska. This permit is the only permit which allows firearm hunting in October for antlerless deer.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: Whitetail populations and crop damage are higher in river corridors than in any other area of the state. It is desirable to reduce whitetails in these areas. Access is limited, but a liberal season, inexpensive permit and bonus tags make this a very popular permit.

Expected Harvest: 5000 antlerless whitetail deer on 12,000 authorized permits

Harvest comparisons for all seasons are shown below for River Antlerless:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Permits</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
		<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
2014	7000	0	6	6	103	4140	4243	61
2015	10,501	0	19	19	161	5545	5706	55
2016	9065	1	22	23	169	4946	5117	57
2017	8947	2	13	15	173	5038	5211	58
2018	9038	1	12	13	200	5515	5715	63

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ELK

INTRODUCTION

Statewide elk populations appear stable but annual harvest variation occurs at the unit level due to herd movement, herd size and hunter access to private land. It is common for large elk herds to remain on a small number of landowners during significant portions of the season. This can reduce harvest opportunity for hunters.

These recommendations reflect goals of:

- ▶ Increasing bull age and quality in Ash Creek, Bordeaux Creek, Hat Creek, Niobrara River, and North Platte River elk units
- ▶ More effectively manage the Niobrara River Unit
- ▶ Increase cow harvest in Box Elder Unit

2018 Season Highlights:

- Average bull was 5.1 years, an increase of 0.3 from 2017 and ranked #2
- Main beam length average was 46.7 inches – an increase from 46.4 last year (47 inches is #1)
- Bull success decreased slightly from 87% to 83% - the record is 91% in 2012
- Cow success decreased from 57% to 51%
- Cow/calf harvest was 117, the third highest on record – 2016 and 2017 were 122
- Bull harvest (99) ranked #3 – in 2012 there were 105 bulls
- 4272 people applied for 345 elk permits
- 18 cows were harvested in the early private land cow seasons (Aug. 15 – Sept. 21)
- 6 bulls were harvested in the early archery season (Sept. 1-21)

Bull standards: Bull permits are a once-in-a-lifetime for many hunters and most hunters hope to harvest a quality bull. Harvest standards for each unit are designed to maintain older age bulls:

- 70% success on bull permits
- Six (6) or more antler points (on 1 antler) of 90% of bulls harvested
- Minimum average main beam length of 45 inches
- Minimum average bull age of 5 years

2019 Recommendations

Split Niobrara River Unit into West Niobrara and East Niobrara Units and absorb Boyd Unit

Add six (6) bull permits: East Niobrara Unit (+6)

Add twenty-four (24) cow permits: East Niobrara Unit (+24)

Delete three (3) bull permits: Boyd Unit (-3)

Delete three (3) cow permits: Boyd Unit (-3)

Total permits recommended: 374 permits (122 bull and 252 cow)

2018 Elk Harvest

	<u>Permits Issued</u>		<u>Harvest</u>			<u>% Success</u>			
<u>Management Unit</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Antlerless</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Cow</u>	<u>Calf</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Antlerless</u>	<u>Main Beam Length</u>	<u>Mean Age</u>
Ash Creek	12	27	12	13	1	100	52	45.7	5.1
Bordeaux	24	51	15	24	1	63	49	48.2	6.3
Box Elder	15	36	13	13	0	87	36	45.5	5.4
Boyd	3	3	0	3	0	0	100	--	--
Hat Creek	21	39	19	17	1	90	46	49.8	5.6
Niobrara River	9	30	9	20	1	100	70	42.7	4.4
N. Platte River	30	45	26	21	2	87	51	46.0	4.2
Lottery/Auction	5	0	5	0	0	100	0	50.2	5.4
Total	119	231	99	111	6	83	48	46.7	5.1

2019 Permit Recommendations

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Bull</u>		<u>Antlerless</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	<u>General</u>	<u>LO</u>	<u>General</u>	<u>LO</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Antlerless</u>
Ash Creek	8	4	18	9	12	27
Bordeaux	16	8	34	17	24	51
Box Elder	10	5	24	12	15	36
Boyd (consolidating unit)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hat Creek	14	7	26	13	21	39
Niobrara East	4	2	16	8	6	24
Niobrara West	6	3	20	10	9	30
North Platte River	20	10	30	15	30	45
Auction/Lottery	5	0	--	0	5	0
Total	83	39	168	84	122	252

LO – Landowner

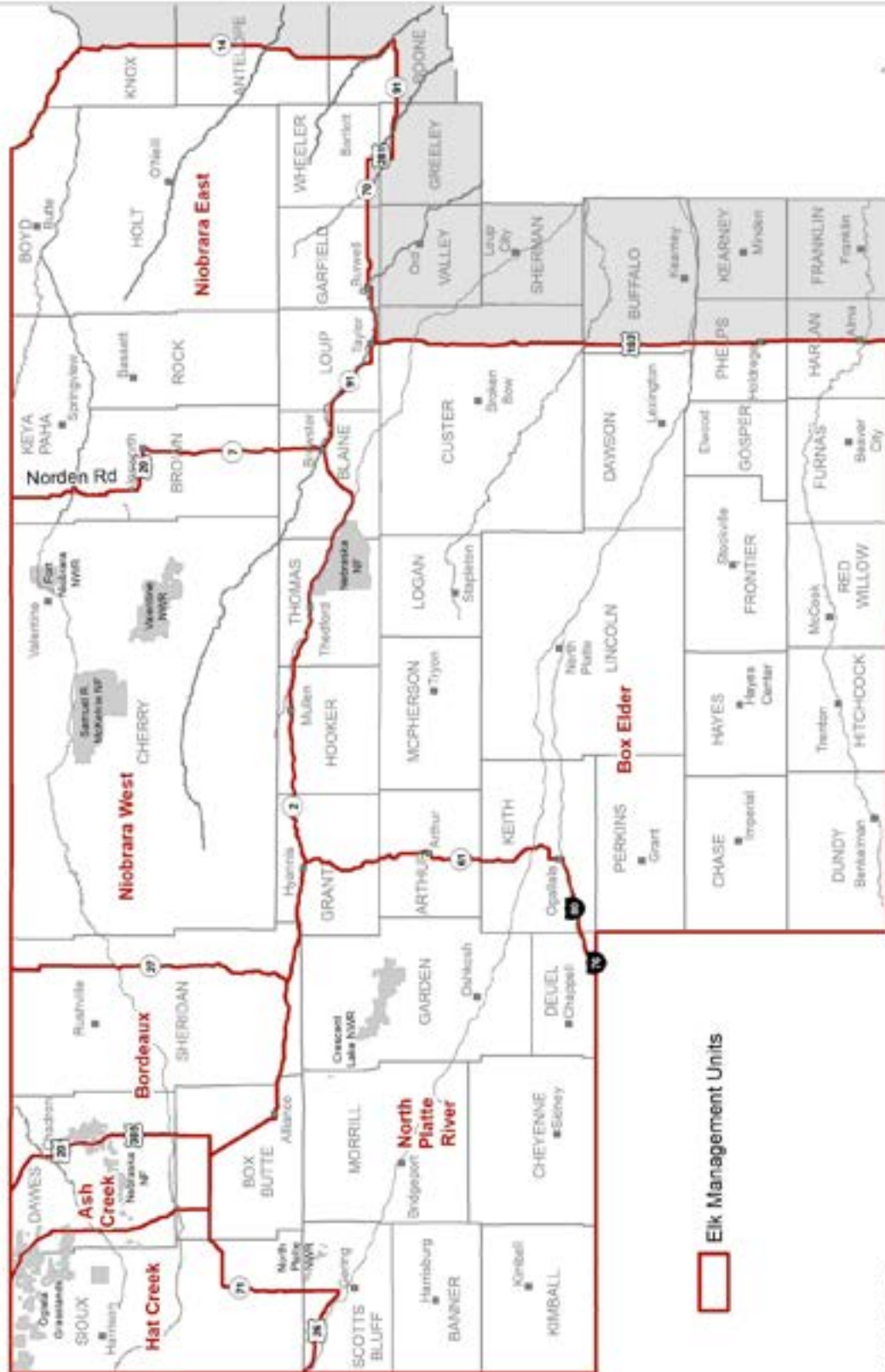
2019 Season Dates	Bull Permit Holders	Firearm: September 21 – October 31 Archery: September 1 – October 31
2019 Season Dates	Antlerless Permit Holders	Early: August 15 – October 31 Private Land Only: August 15 – September 20 Late: December 1 – January 15

Elk Permits, Harvest and Success – 2013 – 2018

<u>Permits Issued</u>				<u>Harvest</u>				<u>% Success</u>		<u>Antlers and Age</u>		
<u>Year</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Cow</u>	<u>Calf</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>%6point</u>	<u>Avg. Main Beam Length</u>	<u>Mean Bull Age</u>
2014	117	192	309	95	73	8	176	81	42	84	44.3	4.6
2015	122	198	319	105	77	7	189	86	42	93	47.0	4.7
2016	116	210	326	88	104	8	200	76	53	91	46.4	4.9
2017	116	213	329	103	112	10	225	88	57	88	46.4	4.8
2018	119	231	350	99	111	6	216	83	48	91	46.7	5.1
2019*	122	252	374									

* - recommended

2019 ELK MANAGEMENT UNITS



ASH CREEK UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Antlerless</u>
Non Landowner:	8	18
Landowner:	4	9

2019 Season Dates: Bull Season - Firearm: Sept. 21 – Oct. 31
 Bull Season - Archery: Sept. 1 – Oct. 31
 Antlerless Only Season - Private: Aug. 15 – Oct. 31 and Dec. 1 – Jan. 15
 Antlerless Only Season - Public: Sept. 21 – Oct. 31 and Dec. 1 – Jan. 15

General Information: Overall hunter success was the same at 67% in 2018 and 2017. Hunter success for bull permits was 100% harvesting 12 adult bulls. Hunter success on antlerless only permits was 52%. There were no depredation complaints in 2018.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: Providing population estimates and classification has been difficult given low densities and the lack of consistent elk wintering grounds. Drought and wildfires in 2012 appear to still be having an effect in the redistribution of the elk within this unit. General observations, landowner contacts, and harvest data would indicate a relatively stable to slightly increasing elk population in this unit. Objectives are to increase harvested bull age and quality through maintaining current permit quotas, while addressing depredation complaints with Antlerless Only permits. With the exception of bull age, other bull quality measurements meet Management Approach minimum criteria. Bull permits were decreased in 2015/2016 in an effort to increase bull age and quality measurements. No change in permits is recommended.

<u>Permits Issued*</u>				<u>Harvest</u>				<u>% Success</u>			<u>Antlers and Age</u>		
<u>Year</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Cow</u>	<u>Calf</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Overall</u>	<u>%6point</u>	<u>Avg. Main Beam Length</u>	<u>Mean Bull Age</u>
2014	15	24	39	12 ⁺	11 ⁺	0	23 ⁺	67	42	51	92	45	4.6
2015	15	24	39	12 ⁺	9	0	21 ⁺	67	38	49	100	47.9	4.6
2016	12	24	36	10 ⁺	11	1	22 ⁺	75	50	56	100	47	4.4
2017	12	27	39	11 ⁺	14	2	27 ⁺	83	59	67	91	45.6	3.9
2018	12	27	39	12	13	1	26	100	52	67	91	45.7	5.1
2019**	12	27	39										

* Permits authorized followed by (permits issued), except where all authorized permits were issued

** Recommended permit numbers

+ Includes statewide auction and lottery permits.

++ Lottery and auction data is included only for antler and age data, not for harvest success data

Unsold Permits: None.

Expected Harvest: Expected harvest is 12 mature bulls and 14 cows.

BORDEAUX UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Antlerless</u>
Non Landowner:	16	34
Landowner:	8	17

2018 Season Dates: Bull Season - Firearm: Sept. 21 – Oct. 31
 Bull Season - Archery: Sept. 1 – Oct. 31
 Antlerless Only Season - Private: Aug. 15 – Oct. 31 and Dec. 1 – Jan. 15
 Antlerless Only Season - Public: Sept. 21 – Oct. 31 and Dec. 1 – Jan. 15

General Information: Overall hunter success was 53% in 2018 compared to 77% in 2017. Hunter success for bull permits was 63% harvesting 15 adult bulls. One (1) additional bull was harvested by hunters with auction/lottery permits. Hunter success on antlerless only permits was 49% harvesting 24 adult cows and 1 calf. One cow tested positive for CWD in Sheridan County. This is the first hunter harvested confirmed case in the Bordeaux management unit. There was one (1) depredation complaint.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: Providing population estimates and classification has been difficult given low densities and the lack of consistent elk wintering grounds. Drought and wildfires in 2012 appear to still be having an effect in the redistribution of the elk within this unit. General observations and harvest data would indicate a relatively stable elk population in this unit. Given the past extreme conditions a cautious approach towards harvest objectives is recommended to continue. Objectives are to increase harvested bull age and quality through current permit quotas, while addressing depredation complaints with Antlerless Only permits. No change is recommended.

<u>Permits Issued*</u>				<u>Harvest</u>				<u>% Success</u>			<u>Antlers and Age</u>		
<u>Year</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Cow</u>	<u>Calf</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Overall</u>	<u>%6point</u>	<u>Avg. Main Beam Length</u>	<u>Mean Bull Age</u>
2014	24	51	75	19 ⁺	17	0	36 ⁺	75	33	47	85	47	4.9
2015	24	51	75	24 ⁺	21	2	47 ⁺	92	45	60	92	47.9	5.1
2016	24	51	75	19 ⁺	30	1	50 ⁺	71	61	63	100	49.9	5.8
2017	24	51	75	23	36	1	60 ⁺	88	73	77	100	51.3	5.7
2018	24	51	75	16 ⁺	24	1	41 ⁺	63	49	53	94	48.2	6.2
2019**	24	51	75										

* Permits authorized followed by (permits issued), except where all authorized permits were issued

** Recommended permit numbers

¹ Some permits were refunded

+ Includes statewide auction and lottery permits

++ Lottery and auction data is included only for antler and age data, not for harvest success data

Unsold Permits: None.

Expected Harvest: Expected harvest is 22 mature bulls and 34 antlerless elk.

BOX ELDER MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Antlerless</u>
Non Landowner:	10	Early: 12 Late: 12
Landowner:	5	12 (valid Early and Late)

2019 Season Dates: Bull Season - Firearm: Sept. 21 – Oct. 31
 Bull Season - Archery: Sept. 1 – Oct. 31
 Early Antlerless Only Season: Aug. 15 – Oct. 31
 (valid on private land only from Aug. 15 – Sept. 20)
 Late Antlerless Only Season: Dec. 1 – Jan. 15

General Information: During the 2018 Box Elder Unit elk season, hunters harvested 15 mature bulls (100% 6 pt.) and 13 antlerless elk. Hunter success was 87% for bull hunters and 36% for antlerless hunters. Two statewide bull permits were filled in the Box Elder unit in 2018. There were four (4) depredation complaints.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: Elk in this cedar covered loess hills area are difficult to observe and some egress of elk does occur from the unit. Staff has recommended additional Box Elder Landowner zones outside the traditional elk zone, which indicates that the elk herds in the Box Elder Unit are expanding.

Landowner and sportsmen support for elk in this unit is positive. Antlerless elk harvest remains low despite increased antlerless permits in the last five years. We recommend a split antlerless season in order to increase hunter effort, particularly in the early season, and result in increased antlerless elk harvest.

<u>Permits Issued</u>				<u>Harvest</u>				<u>% Success</u>			<u>Antlers and Age</u>		
<u>Year</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Cow</u>	<u>Calf</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Overall</u>	<u>%6point</u>	<u>Avg. Main Beam Length</u>	<u>Mean Bull Age</u>
2014	9	30	39	8	12	0	20	89	40	51	75	42	4.9
2015	12	36	48	11	9	1	21	92	28	44	91	46.4	4.8
2016	12	36	48	7	21	2	23	58	64	63	100	52	5.9
2017	12	36	48	10	7	4	21	83	31	44	90	47.6	6.2
2018	15	36	51	15 ⁺	13	1	27	87	36	51	100	45.5	5.4
2019**	15	36	51										

** – Recommended permits

* – Includes statewide auction and lottery permits

++ – Lottery and auction data is included only for antler and age data, not for harvest success data

Unsold Permits: None.

Expected Harvest: Expected harvest is 10 mature bulls and 20 antlerless elk.

BOYD COUNTY MANAGEMENT UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

Recommended to be consolidated with Niobrara East unit.

	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Antlerless</u>
Non-Landowner:	2	2
Landowner:	4	4

2018 Season Dates: ~~Bull Season – Firearm: Sept. 21 – Oct. 31~~
~~Bull Season – Archery: Sept. 1 – Oct. 31~~
~~Antlerless Only Season – Private: Aug. 15 – Oct. 31 and Dec. 1 – Jan. 15~~
~~Antlerless Only Season – Public: Sept. 21 – Oct. 31 and Dec. 1 – Jan. 15~~

General Information: Three (3) cows were harvested in 2018.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: No landowner complaints were received this year. Historically, hunting success has been difficult to predict in this unit. Indicators suggested this herd is stable. Consolidation with the Niobrara East unit will continue to offer hunting opportunity and to maintain a low population in this area of the state.

<u>Permits Issued</u>				<u>Harvest</u>				<u>% Success</u>			<u>Antlers and Age</u>		
<u>Year</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Cow</u>	<u>Calf</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Overall</u>	<u>%6point</u>	<u>Avg. Main Beam Length</u>	<u>Mean Bull Age</u>
2014	3	3	6	1	3	0	4	33	100		100	31	2
2015	3	3	6	1	0	0	1	33	0		100	37	unk
2016	3	3	6	0	1	1	2	0	67		0	0	0
2017	3	3	6	2	3		5	67	100				2
2018	3	3	6	0	3	0	3	0	100	50	n/a	n/a	n/a
2019**	0	0	0										

** – Recommended permits

Unsold Permits: None.

Expected Harvest: None.

HAT CREEK UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Antlerless</u>
Non Landowner:	14	26
Landowner:	7	13

2018 Season Dates: Bull Season - Firearm: Sept. 21 – Oct. 31
 Bull Season - Archery: Sept. 1 – Oct. 31
 Antlerless Only Season - Private: Aug. 15 – Oct. 31 and Dec. 1 – Jan. 15
 Antlerless Only Season - Public: Sept. 21 – Oct. 31 and Dec. 1 – Jan. 15

General Information: Overall hunter success was 62% in 2018 compared to 72% in 2017. Hunter success for bull permits was 90% taking 19 adult bulls. Hunter success on antlerless only permits was 46% with hunters harvesting 17 adult cows and 1 calf. Two (2) additional bulls were harvested with lottery/auction permit. There were two (2) depredation complaints.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: Providing population estimates and classification has been difficult given low densities and the lack of consistent elk wintering grounds. Drought and wildfires in 2012 appear to have redistributed the elk with some suspected movement into Wyoming. Given the past extreme conditions, a cautious approach towards harvest objectives is recommended to continue. General observations and harvest data would indicate a relatively stable elk population in this unit. Objectives are to increase harvested bull age and quality through current permit quotas, while addressing depredation complaints with antlerless only permits. Harvest data indicates average bull quality/age remains near minimum objectives. No change in permits is recommended.

<u>Permits Issued*</u>				<u>Harvest</u>				<u>% Success</u>			<u>Antlers and Age</u>		
<u>Year</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Cow</u>	<u>Calf</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Overall</u>	<u>%6point</u>	<u>Avg. Main Beam Length</u>	<u>Mean Bull Age</u>
2014	27	45	72	22	13	1	36	81	31	50	77	41	4.0
2015	24	39	63	22 ⁺	15	1	37	88	41	59	86	46.1	4.0
2016	21	39	60	18 ⁺	12	1	31	81	33	50	94	46	4.9
2017	21	39	60	18 ⁺	25	1	44	81	67	72	82	45.4	4.7
2018	21	38	60	21 ⁺	17	1	37	90	46	62	100	45.3	5.6
2019**	21	39	60										

* Permits authorized followed by (permits issued), except where all authorized permits were issued

** Recommended permit numbers

+ Includes statewide auction and lottery permits

++ Lottery and auction data is included only for antler and age data, not for harvest success data

Unsold Permits: None.

Expected Harvest: Expected harvest is 20 bulls and 20 cows.

NIOBRARA EAST UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Antlerless</u>
Non Landowner:	4	16
Landowner:	2	8

2019 Season Dates: Bull Season - Firearm: Sept. 21 – Oct. 31
 Bull Season - Archery: Sept. 1 – Oct. 31
 Antlerless Only Season - Private: Aug. 15 – Oct. 31 and Dec. 1 – Jan. 15
 Antlerless Only Season - Public: Sept. 21 – Oct. 31 and Dec. 1 – Jan. 15

General Information: This is a split of the Niobrara River Unit and absorption of the Boyd Unit. Success on bull permits was 77% in 2018.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: The elk herd has expanded in size. The elk east of Valentine have expanded considerably, with elk occurring from Valentine to Newport in high numbers. Crop depredation occurs annually. Sustainable herds of elk now occur west to east in a 150-mile portion of the Niobrara unit. Sightings of bull and cow elk have occurred regularly east of Highway 281 the past three years, indicating elk will continue to expand eastward in suitable habitat and creating management challenges with no permits valid in this area. Elk harvest, both bull and cow, has been variable geographically in the unit on an annual basis. Some years; harvest is concentrated on western elk herds, other years on eastern – but rarely evenly distributed throughout the unit. Splitting the unit will provide more consistency in elk harvest. Expanding the unit east will provide opportunity and management as the herd continues to expand. Additionally, by usurping the Boyd Unit into a large unit, the inconsistent presence of elk will be mitigated for both landowners and general permit holders.

<u>Permits Issued*</u>				<u>Harvest</u>				<u>% Success</u>			<u>Antlers and Age</u>		
<u>Year</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Cow</u>	<u>Calf</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Overall</u>	<u>%6point</u>	<u>Avg. Main Beam Length</u>	<u>Mean Bull Age</u>
2014 ⁺⁺⁺	9	12	21	9	4	3	16	100	58	79	67	41.0	4.9
2015 ⁺⁺⁺	9	18	27	7	10	0	17	78	56	63	100	43.4	4.8
2016 ⁺⁺⁺	6	24	30	5	9	0	14	83	38	47	80	43.2	5.0
2017 ⁺⁺⁺	6	24	30	7 ⁺	14	1	22 ⁺	100	63	70	88	41.2	4.3
2018 ⁺⁺⁺	9	30	39	9	20	1	30	100	70	77	78	42.6	4.4
2019^{**}	6	24	30										

* Permits authorized followed by (permits issued), except where all authorized permits were issued

** Recommended permit numbers

+ - Includes statewide auction and lottery permits

++ - Lottery and auction data is included only for antler and age data, not for harvest success data

+++ - Data from Niobrara River Unit

Unsold Permits: None.

Expected Harvest: Expected harvest is 5 bulls and 16 cows.

NIOBRARA WEST UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Antlerless</u>
Non Landowner:	6	20
Landowner:	3	10

2019 Season Dates: Bull Season - Firearm: Sept. 21 – Oct. 31
 Bull Season - Archery: Sept. 1 – Oct. 31
 Antlerless Only Season - Private: Aug. 15 – Oct. 31 and Dec. 1 – Jan. 15
 Antlerless Only Season - Public: Sept. 21 – Oct. 31 and Dec. 1 – Jan. 15

General Information: Overall success of the Niobrara River Unit was 77% in 2018 compared to 70% in 2017. Hunter success was at 100% on bull permits and 70% on Antlerless Only permit. There were two (2) depredation complaints.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: General observations and survey data indicates an increasing elk population scattered along the Niobrara River in several different herds throughout. The Wilderness area north of the Niobrara River on Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge was opened to elk hunting with primitive weapons in 2016, and it is recommended to continue with the public land opportunity. For 2019, it is recommended to split the Niobrara River Unit into two units, Niobrara East and Niobrara West. The elk herd has expanded in size – both geographically and numerically – since the creation of the Niobrara River Unit was created in 2006. The elk near Valentine and west of Valentine have continued to expand in number, and crop depredation issues arise annually. Splitting the unit will provide more consistency in elk harvest, which will provide better management opportunities for bull harvest (recreational opportunity) and cow harvest (population control).

<u>Permits Issued*</u>				<u>Harvest</u>				<u>% Success</u>			<u>Antlers and Age</u>		
<u>Year</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Cow</u>	<u>Calf</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Overall</u>	<u>%6point</u>	<u>Avg. Main Beam Length</u>	<u>Mean Bull Age</u>
2014 ⁺⁺⁺	9	12	21	9	4	3	16	100	58	79	67	41.0	4.9
2015 ⁺⁺⁺	9	18	27	7	10	0	17	78	56	63	100	43.4	4.8
2016 ⁺⁺⁺	6	24	30	5	9	0	14	83	38	47	80	43.2	5.0
2017 ⁺⁺⁺	6	24	30	7 ⁺	14	1	22 ⁺	100	63	70	88	41.2	4.3
2018 ⁺⁺⁺	9	30	39	9	20	1	30	100	70	77	78	42.6	4.4
2019^{**}	9	30	39										

* Permits authorized followed by (permits issued), except where all authorized permits were issued

** Recommended permit numbers

1 – Some permits were refunded

+ - Includes statewide auction and lottery permits

++ - Lottery and auction data is included only for antler and age data, not for harvest success data

+++ - Data from Niobrara River Unit

Unsold Permits: None.

Expected Harvest: Expected harvest is 8 bulls and 20 cows.

NORTH PLATTE RIVER UNIT

2019 Recommendations:

	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Antlerless</u>
Non Landowner:	20	30
Landowner:	10	15

2019 Season Dates: Bull Season - Firearm: Sept. 21 – Oct. 31
 Bull Season - Archery: Sept. 1 – Oct. 31
 Antlerless Only Season - Private: Aug. 15 – Oct. 31 and Dec. 1 – Jan. 15
 Antlerless Only Season - Public: Sept. 21 – Oct. 31 and Dec. 1 – Jan. 15

General Information: Overall hunter success was 65% in 2018 compared to 68% in 2017. Hunter success for bull permits was 87%, taking 26 adult bulls; compared to 94% in 2017. Hunter success on antlerless only permits was 51% harvesting 21 adult cows and 2 calves. One bull tested positive for CWD in Banner County. There were no depredation complaints.

Population Status and Harvest Strategy: Providing population estimates and classification has been difficult given low densities and the lack of consistent elk wintering grounds. General observations, landowner reports, and harvest data would indicate a stable to slightly increasing elk population in this unit. This unit contains several different elk herds throughout the area. Staff will continue analyzing past years' harvest data and herd sizes/locations to identify whether or not there is a potential need to divide the unit into smaller management units to better focus harvest on older age bulls. Splitting the unit may also help target antlerless harvest. Objectives are to increase bull age and quality, while addressing depredation complaints with antlerless only permits. With the decrease in bull tags in 2018 and increase in cow tags, continued monitoring is recommended.

<u>Permits Issued*</u>				<u>Harvest</u>				<u>% Success</u>			<u>Antlers and Age</u>		
<u>Year</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Cow</u>	<u>Calf</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Bull</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Overall</u>	<u>%6point</u>	<u>Avg. Main Beam Length</u>	<u>Mean Bull Age</u>
2014	27	27	54	24	13	4	41	89	63	76	95	47.0	4.9
2015	30	27	57	28	13	3	44	93	59	77	96	47.6	5.1
2016	33	33	63	29	20	2	51	88	67	77	75	43.4	4.0
2017	33	33	63	32 ⁺	13	1	46	94	42	68	87 ⁺	45.3	4.3
2018	30	45	75	26	21	2	49	87	51	65	81	49.5	4.2
2019**	30	45	75										

* Permits authorized followed by (permits issued), except where all authorized permits were issued

** Recommended permit numbers

+ - Includes statewide auction and lottery permits

++ - Lottery and auction data is included only for antler and age data, not for harvest success data

Unsold Permits: None.

Expected Harvest: Expected harvest is 28 bulls and 22 cows.

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