

# **PRONGHORN**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Based upon landowner surveys, pronghorn populations are above desired levels in most units. Doe/fawn permit increases are recommended in many units according to our management strategies to assist with depredation issues. Either Sex permits were increased in a two units to provide more hunting opportunity. Due to high archery hunting pressure, disproportionate increases in nonresident permit sales and the results of a pronghorn hunter survey, we propose limiting the number of nonresident statewide archery permits to the 5 year (2014-2018) average

Total pronghorn harvest was 1287 in 2020 (highest since 1977) with 905 bucks taken. Populations have been stable and allowed hunters to harvest 700-800 bucks each of the past 10 years. 91% of harvested bucks were age 2 or older. Doe harvest was a 40-year high with 383 taken. Overall, 30% of the harvest was doe/fawn, the highest since 1987.

3,435 permits were issued in 2020, the highest on record. 50% of the buyers were archers, 45% were rifle hunters and 5% were muzzleloaders. Harvest by weapon type was 65% firearm, 18% bow, 9% muzzleloader, and 9% 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. Stabilize or decrease populations in all units.
2. Increase doe harvest in all units except in the Eastern Sandhills, Dismal and North Sioux.
3. Provide adequate doe permits in all units, except Eastern Sandhills, to handle any depredation complaints.

Recommendations for 2021 include: (including Landowner permits)

- Banner North – Add 30 D/F
- Banner South – Add 15 ES and 90 D/F
  - Banner South East D/F – Add 30 D/F, New subunit
- Box Butt East – Add 30 D/F
- Box Butte West – Add 90 D/F
- Cherry – Add 15 D/F
- Cheyenne – Add 30 D/F
- Garden – Add 15 ES and 75 D/F
- Prairie Muzzleloader – Add 9 ES permits according to protocol
- Remove hunting restriction to muzzleloader and archery permits on Fort Robinson SP and WMA.
- Limit nonresident archery permits to 250.

Summary: add 39 Either Sex permits, add 390 Doe/Fawn 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.

## RECOMMENDED PRONGHORN SEASONS AND HARVEST

**Season Dates:** Archery: August 20 through December 31, 2021  
 Firearm: October 9 through October 17, 2021 – October Firearm  
 November 1, 2021 through January 31, 2022 (Late Seasons)  
 Muzzleloader: September 18 through October 3, 2021

<u>2021 Season Recommendations</u>				<u>2020 Season</u>						
<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Gen<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>LO<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>Type<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>Authorized</u>	<u>Sold<sup>3</sup></u>	<u>Type<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>Harvest</u>		<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
							<u>B</u>	<u>D/F</u>	<u>Success</u>	<u>Age</u> <u>1.5</u>
Banner North	90	45	ES	90	135	ES	92	10	76%	10%
Banner South	90	45	ES	80	120	ES	82	12	78%	3%
Box Butte East	40	20	ES	40	60	ES	30	11	68%	0%
Box Butte West	60	30	ES	60	90	ES	58	3	68%	7%
Cherry	80	40	ES	80	121	ES	54	9	53%	7%
Cheyenne	40	20	ES	40	59	ES	36	4	67%	12%
Dismal	40	20	ES	40	60	ES	39	4	72%	10%
Eastern Sandhills	20	10	ES	20	30	ES	10	3	43%	13%
Garden	50	25	ES	40	58	ES	32	4	60%	3%
North Sioux	110	55	ES	110	162	ES	69	9	48%	13%
<b>All Oct Firearm</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>310</b>		<b>600</b>	<b>895</b>		<b>502</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>64%</b>	
Banner North Late	70	35	D/F	50	75	D/F	0	25	33%	-
Banner South Late	150	75	D/F	90	103	D/F	0	56	54%	-
Banner South East Late	20	10	D/F	NEW						
Box Butte East	70	35	D/F	50	68	D/F	1	29	44%	-
Box Butte West Late	120	60	D/F	60	90	D/F	0	32	36%	-
Cheyenne Late	60	30	D/F	40	58	D/F	0	18	30%	-
Cherry Late	30	15	D/F	20	27	D/F	0	7	26%	-
Dismal Late	20	10	D/F	20	26	D/F	0	13	50%	-
Garden Late	140	70	D/F	90	105	D/F	0	53	47%	-
North Sioux Late	80	40	D/F	80	87	D/F	1	35	41%	-
<b>Total Late D/F</b>	<b>760</b>	<b>380</b>		<b>500</b>	<b>639</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>42%</b>	
North Sioux MZ	28	14	ES	28	30	ES	20	0	67%	5%
Prairie MZ	128	64	ES	122	146	ES	85	3	60%	7%
<b>MZ Total</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>78</b>		<b>150</b>	<b>176</b>		<b>105</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>6%</b>
Multi-Species	3			3	3	ES	1	0	33%	0%
<b>Firearm and MZ Total</b>	<b>1299</b>	<b>768</b>		<b>1253</b>	<b>1713</b>		<b>610</b>	<b>340</b>		
Archery (SW, LO, Y)	UNL	UNL	ES	UNL(1710)	1710	ES	294	43	20%	12%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>		<b>2963</b>	<b>3432</b>		<b>904</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>9%</b>

<sup>1</sup>Gen – Non-Landowner LO – Landowner, All LO permits have a bonus D/F tag

<sup>2</sup>Permit Type: ES --- Either Sex D/F --- Doe Fawn

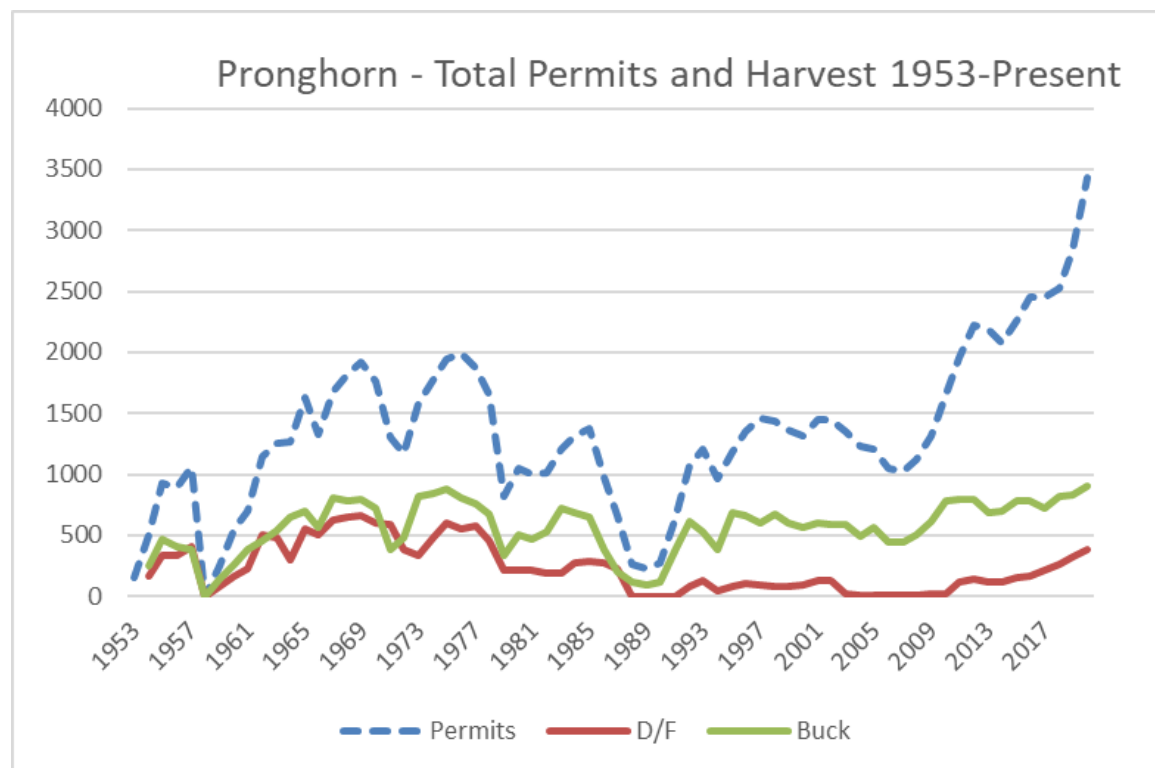
<sup>3</sup>Excesses of permits sold over number authorized are landowner permits

## HISTORIC PRONGHORN HARVEST

### Pronghorn Harvest 2001-2020

YEAR	PERMITS				HARVEST		
	Firearm	MZ	Total Archery	Nonresident Archery	Bucks	D/F	% Bucks Age 1
2001	883	154	414		601	127	
2002	882	168	400		585	123	
2003	822	162	368		586	17	
2004	706	165	359		497	5	
2005	657	171	372		565	5	26%
2006	456	116	480	61	444	5	18%
2007	419	106	501	69	444	4	15%
2008	417	113	590	80	505	7	10%
2009*	492	120	697	83	615	20	12%
2010	678	141	831	133	779	26	10%
2011	834	153	972	194	799	118	6%
2012	931	152	1140	244	798	137	15%
2013	951	145	1086	286	683	122	12%
2014	882	138	1053	237	696	121	15%
2015	898	164	1197	275	779	155	10%
2016	968	158	1316	329	781	168	8%
2017	1065	161	1257	300	718	210	13%
2018	1161	160	1164	264	823	263	10%
2019	1361	161	1318	356	825	321	10%
2020	1546	176	1710	543	904	383	9%

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



## 2021 Pronghorn Management Units

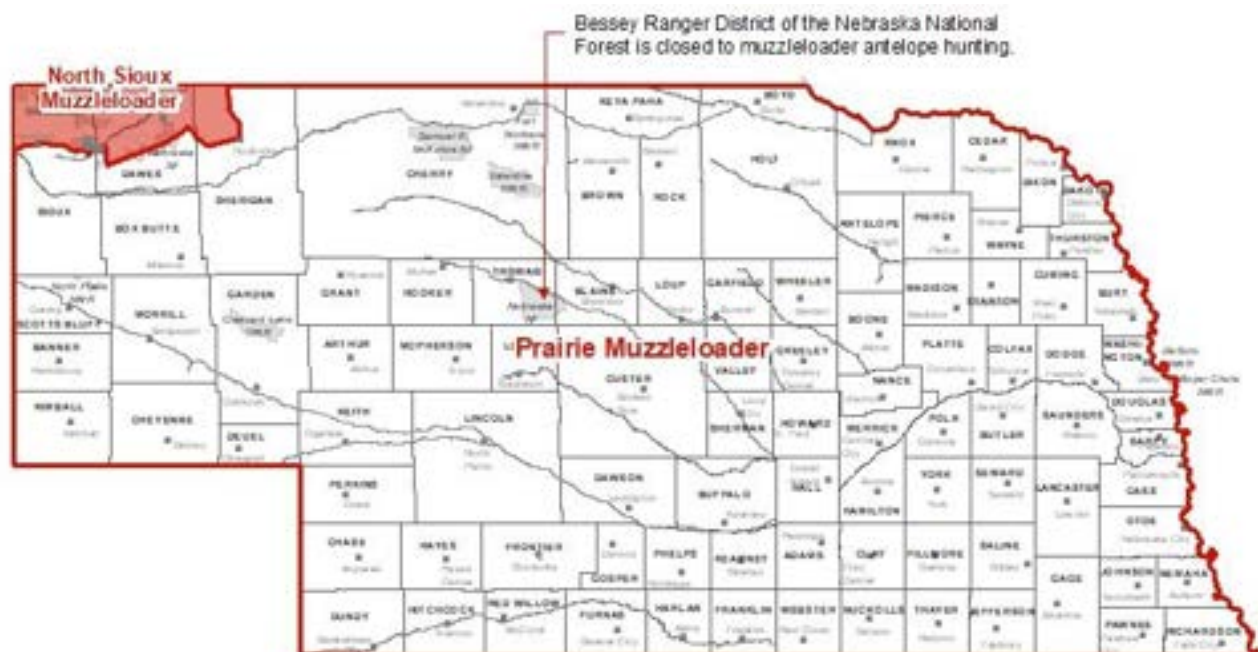


Antelope Firearm  Antelope Late Doe/Fawn

## 2021 Additional Doe/Fawn Pronghorn Unit: Banner South East



## 2021 Pronghorn Muzzleloader Units



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## **BANNER NORTH MANAGEMENT UNIT**

**2021 Recommendations:** 90 Either Sex and 45 (1 ES, 1 D/F) Landowner permits. No change from 2020.

**Banner North Late:** 70 Doe/Fawn only and 35 Landowner 2 Doe/Fawn only. This is an increase of 30 total D/F permits from 2020.

**General Information:** Hunter success for firearm season was 71% in 2020 compared to 71% in 2019. Success on late season doe/fawn was 31% compared to 31% in 2019. 8 bonus does were taken on landowner permits in 2020. In the 2020 Landowner survey, 71% reported that they had too many pronghorn, 56% reported moderate or severe damage and 66% said their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation complaints: 0

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** August aerial surveys could not be completed due to COVID-19. 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 decreasing the population.

### **2020 Harvest by Permit**

Permit	Permits Sold	Harvest			1 <sup>st</sup> Tag Success	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tag Success	% Age 1.5	% Ad Buck
		Bucks	D/F	Total				
Gen Oct Firearm	90	67	3	70	78%	-	8%	96%
LO Oct Firearm	45	25	7	32	58%	13%	14%	78%
<b>Total Oct Firearm</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>90%</b>
Gen Late D/F	50	0	19	19	38%	-	-	0%
LO Late D/F	25	0	6	6	16%	8%	-	0%
<b>Total Late D/F</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0%</b>
Archery	-	19	1	20	-	-	21%	95%
Muzzleloader	-	7	1	8	-	-	0%	88%
<b>Total Harvest</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>76%</b>



**Management Unit Harvest Comparisons:**

Year	Harvest			% Age 1.5	% AD Buck	% D/F	% Buck Harvest		
	Bucks	D/F	Total				Archery	MZ	% Rifle
2016	95	8	103	8%	92%	8%	7%	2%	91%
2017	99	4	103	14%	96%	4%	11%	3%	86%
2018	110	15	125	10%	88%	12%	15%	8%	77%
2019	107	24	131	5%	82%	18%	14%	7%	79%
2020	118	37	155	11%	76%	24%	13%	5%	82%

**Total Permits Authorized and Survey Data:**

Year	October Firearm <sup>1</sup> (unsold)	Special Seasons <sup>1</sup> (unsold)	Depredation Complaints	Surveys <sup>**</sup>		
				Pop Est	F:100D	B:100D
2016	114 ES	-	1	538	36	31
2017	126 ES	-	1	562	27	40
2018	126 ES	45 Banner North Late D/F	2	438	29	36
2019	126 ES	45 Banner North Late D/F	0	456	26	49
2020	135 ES	75 Banner North Late D/F	1	Not completed		
2021*	135 ES	105 Banner North Late D/F	0			

<sup>1</sup>Total Permit Quota, Limited Landowner Quota is 33% of total quota. The 2019 allocation was all LO October Firearm had a bonus doe/fawn tag. Bonus tag added to LO Late Season in 2020.

\* Recommended permits

<sup>\*\*</sup>Aerial survey results; fawns seen per 100 does, and bucks seen per 100 does.

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**

**2021 Recommendations:** 90 Either Sex and 45 (1 ES, 1 D/F) Landowner permits. This is an increase of 15 permits from 2020.

**Banner South Late:** 150 Doe/Fawn Only and 75 Landowner 2 Doe/Fawn Only. This is an increase of 90 permits from 2020.

**Banner South Late East:** 20 Doe/Fawn and 10 Landowner. Additional Subunit to respond to depredation/population complaints.

**General Information:** Hunter success for the firearm season was 73% compared to 77% in 2019. Late season success was 55%, compared to 51% last year. Eleven bonus does were taken on Landowner permits in 2020. In the 2020 Landowner survey, 69% reported that they had too many pronghorn, 44% reported moderate or severe damage and 64% said their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation complaints: 6

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** August aerial surveys could not be completed due to COVID-19. The objectives are to: 1) decrease the population through late season doe/fawn permits, and 2) maintain hunter success and buck quality through current either sex permit quotas. It is recommended to continue with late doe/fawn season to alleviate depredation complaints. Either Sex permits have increased in recent years 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. The additional Banner South East Late season is designed to assist with a concentration of depredation issues in the southeast portion of the unit.

### **2020 Harvest by Permit**

Permit	Permits Sold	Harvest			1 <sup>st</sup> Tag Success	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tag Success	% Age 1.5	% Ad Buck
		Bucks	D/F	Total				
Gen Oct Firearm	79	65	1	70	84%	-	2%	99%
LO Oct Firearm	39	17	11	28	56%	15%	7%	61%
<b>Total Oct Firearm</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>87%</b>
Gen Late D/F	90	-	46	46	48%	-	-	0%
LO Late D/F	13	-	11	11	46%	38%	-	0%
<b>Total Late D/F</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0%</b>
Archery	-	45	6	51	-	-	11%	88%
Muzzleloader	-	5	0	5	-	-	40%	100%
<b>Total Harvest</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>64%</b>

**Management Unit Harvest Comparisons:**

Year	Harvest			% Age 1.5	% AD Buck	% D/F	% Buck Harvest		
	Bucks	D/F	Total				Archery	MZ	% Rifle
2016	82	4	86	11%	95%	5%	17%	13%	70%
2017	96	41	137	15%	70%	30%	20%	11%	69%
2018	101	43	144	10%	70%	30%	20%	15%	65%
2019	119	68	187	5%	64%	36%	27%	10%	63%
2020	129	74	203	7%	64%	36%	25%	2%	72%

**Total Permits Authorized and Survey Data:**

Year	October Firearm <sup>1</sup> (unsold)	Special Seasons <sup>1</sup> (unsold)	Depredation Complaints	Surveys <sup>**</sup>		
				Pop Est	F:100D	B:100D
2016	75 ES	-	1	1074	40	46
2017	84 ES	75 Banner South Late D/F	7	1264	43	29
2018	84 ES	75 Banner South Late D/F (16 LO)	4	732	37	84
2019	105 ES	120 Banner South Late D/F (33 LO)	1	612	16	47
2020	120 ES	135 Banner South Late D/F (32 LO)	2 (1 DCP)	Not Completed		
2021*	135 ES	225 Banner South Late D/F 30 Banner South East Late D/F	6			

<sup>1</sup>Total Permit Quota, Limited Landowner Quota is 33% of total quota. The 2019 allocation was all LO October Firearm had a bonus doe/fawn tag. Bonus tag added to LO Late Season in 2020.

\* Recommended permits

<sup>\*\*</sup>Aerial survey results; fawns seen per 100 does, and bucks seen per 100 does.

ES – Either Sex                      D/F – Doe/Fawn

**Unsold Permits:** None.

**Expected Harvest:** 125 Bucks and 140 Does and Fawns

## **BOX BUTTE EAST MANAGEMENT UNIT**

**2021 Recommendations:** 40 Either Sex and 20 (1 ES, 1 D/F) Landowner permits. No change from 2020.

**Box Butte East Late:** 70 Doe/Fawn only and 35 Landowner 2 Doe/Fawn only. This is an increase of 30 permits from 2020.

**General Information:** Hunter success for firearm season was 62% compared to 69% in 2019. Late season success was 44%, compared to 44% last year. 4 bonus does were taken on Landowner permits in 2020. In the 2020 Landowner survey, 37% reported that they had too many pronghorn, 28% reported moderate or severe damage and 53% said their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation complaints: 1

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** The objective is to decrease the population, maintain hunter success, and buck quality while addressing depredation issues. Winter migrations into the area appear to continue but numbers of Antelope are much lower than historic highs. August aerial surveys could not be completed due to COVID-19. Winter concentrations remain 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. 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.

### **2020 Harvest by Permit**

Permit	Permits Sold	Harvest			1 <sup>st</sup> Tag Success	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tag Success	% Age 1.5	% Ad Buck
		Bucks	D/F	Total				
Gen Oct Firearm	40	25	3	28	70%	-	0%	89%
LO Oct Firearm	20	5	8	13	45%	20%	0%	39%
<b>Total Oct Firearm</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>73%</b>
Gen Late D/F	49	1	26	27	55%	-	-	4%
LO Late D/F	18	0	3	3	17%	-	-	0%
<b>Total Late D/F</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3%</b>
Archery	-	10	1	11	-	-	0%	91%
Muzzleloader	-	5	0	5	-	-	0%	100%
<b>Total Harvest</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>53%</b>

**Management Unit Harvest Comparisons:**

Year	Harvest			% Age 1.5	% AD Buck	% D/F	% Buck Harvest		
	Bucks	D/F	Total				Archery	MZ	Rifle
2016	46	31	77	0%	60%	40%	20%	15%	65%
2017	48	41	89	7%	54%	46%	4%	25%	71%
2018	46	41	87	2%	53%	47%	22%	11%	67%
2019	43	33	76	14%	57%	43%	19%	12%	70%
2020	46	41	87	2%	53%	47%	13%	6%	82%

**Total Permits Authorized and Survey Data:**

Year	October Firearm <sup>1</sup> (unsold)	Special Seasons <sup>1</sup> (unsold)	Depredation Complaints	Surveys <sup>**</sup>		
				Pop Est	F:100D	B:100D
2015	45 ES	39 Box Butte East Late D/F 30 Box Butte E. Central Late D/F (9 LO)	6	250	37	85
2016	45 ES	69 Box Butte East Late D/F (7 LO)	8	125	50	28
2017	45 ES	69 Box Butte East Late D/F (7 LO)	2	46	40	70
2018	45 ES	69 Box Butte East Late D/F	0	109	16	16
2019	45 ES	69 Box Butte East Late D/F (5 LO)	0	114	9	14
2020	60 ES	75 Box Butte East Late D/F	0	Not Completed		
2021*	60 ES	105 Box Butte East Late D/F	1			

<sup>1</sup>Total Permit Quota, Limited Landowner Quota is 33% of total quota. The 2019 allocation was all LO October Firearm had a bonus doe/fawn tag. Bonus tag added to LO Late Season in 2020.

\* Recommended permits

<sup>\*\*</sup>Aerial survey results; fawns seen per 100 does, and bucks seen per 100 does.

ES – Either Sex                      D/F – Doe/Fawn

**Unsold Permits:** None.

**Expected Harvest:** 50 Bucks and 50 Does and Fawns

## **BOX BUTTE WEST MANAGEMENT UNIT**

**2021 Recommendations:** 60 firearm Either Sex and 30 (1 ES, 1 D/F) Landowner permits. No change from 2020.

**Box Butte West Late:** 120 Doe/Fawn Only and 60 Landowner 2 Doe/Fawn Only. This is an increase of 90 permits from 2020.

**General Information:** Hunter success for firearm season was 75% in 2019 compared to 68% in 2018. Late season success was 47%, compared to 37% last year. Two bonus does were taken by Landowners in 2019. In the 2020 Landowner survey, 41% reported that they had too many pronghorn, 31% reported moderate or severe damage and 43% said their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation complaints: 1

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** The objective is to decrease the population and increase hunter opportunity while addressing depredation issues as a result of winter migration. August aerial surveys could not be completed due to COVID-19. Percent adult bucks harvested on the either sex permit remains high while percent yearling buck in the harvest continues to meet objectives. 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. This GMU also receives high use from archers and muzzleloader hunters. It is recommended to increase doe/fawn tags in the late season to provide opportunity to hunters and assist with depredation issues as they arise.

### **2020 Harvest by Permit**

Permit	Permits Sold	Harvest			1 <sup>st</sup> Tag Success	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tag Success	% Age 1.5	% Ad Buck
		Bucks	D/F	Total				
Gen Oct Firearm	60	45	0	45	75%	-	9%	100%
LO Oct Firearm	30	13	3	16	50%	3%	0%	81%
<b>Total Oct Firearm</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>95%</b>
Gen Late D/F	60	0	30	30	50%	-	-	0%
LO Late D/F	30	0	2	2	7%	0%	-	0%
<b>Total Late D/F</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0%</b>
Archery	-	72	9	81	-	-	10%	89%
Muzzleloader	-	24	1	25	-	-	0%	96%
<b>Total Harvest</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>77%</b>

**Management Unit Harvest Comparisons:**

Year	Harvest			% Age 1.5	% AD Buck	% D/F	% Buck Harvest		
	Bucks	D/F	Total				Archery	MZ	Rifle
2016	92	19	111	5%	83%	17%	36%	17%	47%
2017	89	21	110	2%	81%	19%	30%	18%	52%
2018	96	25	121	2%	79%	21%	30%	18%	52%
2019	127	33	160	10%	79%	21%	40%	17%	44%
2020	154	45	199	7%	77%	23%	41%	13%	47%

**Total Permits Authorized and Survey Data:**

Year	October Firearm <sup>1</sup> (unsold)	Special Seasons <sup>1</sup> (unsold)	Depredation Complaints	Surveys**		
				Pop Est	F:100D	B:100D
2015	75 ES	30 Box Butte West Late D/F 15 Box Butte West River Late D/F (5 LO)	0	822	65	29
2016	75 ES	30 Box Butte West Late D/F 15 Box Butte West River Late D/F	2	889	47	35
2017	75 ES	30 Box Butte West Late D/F 15 Box Butte West River Late D/F	3	1019	53	37
2018	75 ES	30 Box Butte West Late D/F 15 Box Butte West River Late D/F	1	1077	18	33
2019	75 ES	45 Box Butte West Late D/F 15 Box Butte West River Late D/F (3 LO)	1	1104	9	20
2020	90 ES	90 Box Butte West Late D/F	1	Not completed		
2021*	90 ES	180 Box Butte West Late D/F	1			

<sup>1</sup>Total Permit Quota, Limited Landowner Quota is 33% of total quota. The 2019 allocation was all LO October Firearm had a bonus doe/fawn tag. Bonus tag added to LO Late Season in 2020.

\* Recommended permits

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

ES – Either Sex      D/F – Doe/Fawn

**Unsold Permits:** None.

**Expected Harvest:** 140 Bucks and 90 Does and Fawns

## **CHERRY MANAGEMENT UNIT**

**2021 Recommendations:** 80 firearm Either Sex permits with 40 (1 ES, 1 D/F) Landowner Either Sex permits. No change from 2020.

**Cherry Late:** 30 Doe/Fawn permits with 15 Landowner 2 Doe/Fawn permits. This is an increase of 15 permit from 2020.

**General Information:** Hunter success for firearm season was 52% compared to 56% in 2019. Late season success was 26%, compared to 30% last year. 1 bonus doe was taken by Landowners in 2020. In the 2020 Landowner survey, 44% reported that they had too many pronghorn, 33% reported moderate or severe damage and 54% said their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation complaints: 0

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** August aerial surveys could not be completed due to COVID-19. The management objectives stabilize and slightly decrease the population while addressing depredation issues in problem areas through late season doe/fawn permits. 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.

### **2020 Harvest by Permit**

Permit	Permits Sold	Harvest			1 <sup>st</sup> Tag Success	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tag Success	% Age 1.5	% Ad Buck
		Bucks	D/F	Total				
Gen Oct Firearm	81	46	6	52	64%	-	9%	89%
LO Oct Firearm	40	8	3	11	25%	3%	0%	72%
<b>Total Oct Firearm</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>86%</b>
Gen Late D/F	20	0	7	7	35%	-	-	0%
LO Late D/F	7	0	0	0	0%	-	-	0%
<b>Total Late D/F</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0%</b>
Archery	-	9	0	9	-	-	11%	100%
Muzzleloader	-	7	0	7	-	-	14%	100%
<b>Total Harvest</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>82%</b>



**Management Unit Harvest Comparisons:**

Year	Harvest			% Age 1.5	% AD Buck	% D/F	% Buck Harvest		
	Bucks	D/F	Total				Archery	MZ	Rifle
2016	89	8	97	9%	92%	8%	22%	4%	73%
2017	67	10	77	6%	87%	13%	13%	12%	75%
2018	77	11	88	2%	88%	12%	19%	8%	73%
2019	77	25	102	18%	75%	25%	17%	9%	74%
2020	71	16	87	9%	82%	18%	10%	8%	82%

**Total Permits Authorized and Survey Data:**

Year	October Firearm <sup>1</sup> (unsold)	Special Seasons <sup>1</sup> (unsold)	Depredation Complaints	Surveys <sup>**</sup>		
				Pop Est	F:100D	B:100D
2016	113 ES	20 Cherry Late D/F	3	1279	41	38
2017	113 ES	20 Cherry Late D/F	1	1383	65	67
2018	113 ES	20 Cherry Late D/F (1 LO)	1	1624	18	34
2019	114 ES	30 Cherry Late D/F	1	1704	18	42
2020	120 ES	30 Cherry Late D/F (3 LO)	0	Not completed		
2021*	120 ES	45 Cherry Late D/F	0			

<sup>1</sup>Total Permit Quota, Limited Landowner Quota is 33% of total quota. The 2019 allocation was all LO October Firearm had a bonus doe/fawn tag. Bonus tag added to LO Late Season in 2020.

\* Recommended permits

<sup>\*\*</sup>Aerial survey results; fawns seen per 100 does, and bucks seen per 100 does.

ES – Either Sex                      D/F – Doe/Fawn

**Unsold Permits:** None.

**Expected Harvest:** 80 Bucks and 35 Does and Fawns

## CHEYENNE MANAGEMENT UNIT

**2021 Recommendations:** 40 firearm Either Sex and 20 (1 ES, 1 D/F) Landowner permits. No change from 2020.

**Cheyenne Late:** 60 Doe/Fawn and 30 Landowner 2 Doe/Fawn only. This is an increase of 30 permits from 2020.

**General Information:** Hunter success for firearm season was 67% compared to 63% in 2019. Late success was 30% compared to 27% last year. There were no bonus does taken by Landowners in 2020. In the 2020 Landowner survey, 58% reported that they had too many pronghorn, 48% reported moderate or severe damage and 77% said their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation complaints: 0

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** The objective is to decrease 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 on the general permit. It is recommended to maintain the current permit ES quota and increase the D/F quota.

### **2020 Harvest by Permit**

Permit	Permits Sold	Harvest			1 <sup>st</sup> Tag Success	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tag Success	% Age 1.5	% Ad Buck
		Bucks	D/F	Total				
Gen Oct Firearm	40	32	3	35	88%	-	10%	91%
LO Oct Firearm	19	4	1	5	26%	0%	33%	80%
<b>Total Oct Firearm</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>90%</b>
Gen Late D/F	38	0	16	16	42%	-	-	0%
LO Late D/F	20	0	2	2	10%	-	-	0%
<b>Total Late D/F</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0%</b>
Archery	-	15	2	17	-	-	25%	88%
Muzzleloader	-	12	0	12	-	-	8%	100%
<b>Total Harvest</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>73%</b>

**Management Unit Harvest Comparisons:**

Year	Harvest			% Age 1.5	% AD Buck	% D/F	% Buck Harvest		
	Bucks	D/F	Total				Archery	MZ	Rifle
2016	80	12	92	7%	87%	13%	28%	19%	54%
2017	65	10	75	9%	87%	13%	25%	20%	55%
2018	74	29	103	18%	72%	28%	20%	20%	60%
2019	58	20	78	15%	74%	26%	21%	17%	62%
2020	75	25	92	14%	73%	27%	20%	13%	67%

**Total Permits Authorized and Survey Data:**

Year	October Firearm <sup>1</sup> (unsold)	Special Seasons <sup>1</sup> (unsold)	Depredation Complaints	Surveys <sup>**</sup>		
				Pop Est	F:100D	B:100D
2016	51 ES	15 Cheyenne Central Late D/F	0			
2017	57 ES	15 Cheyenne Central Late D/F	1			
2018	57 ES	60 Cheyenne Late D/F	5			
2019	57 ES	60 Cheyenne Late D/F	0	151	26	17
2020	60 ES	60 Cheyenne Late D/F	0	Not completed		
2021*	60 ES	90 Cheyenne Late D/F	0			

<sup>1</sup>Total Permit Quota, Limited Landowner Quota is 33% of total quota. The 2019 allocation was all LO October Firearm had a bonus doe/fawn tag. Bonus tag added to LO Late Season in 2020.

\* Recommended permits

<sup>\*\*</sup>Aerial survey results; fawns seen per 100 does, and bucks seen per 100 does.

ES – Either Sex                      D/F – Doe/Fawn

**Unsold Permits:** None.

**Expected Harvest:** 70 Bucks and 35 Does and Fawns

## **DISMAL MANAGEMENT UNIT**

**2021 Recommendations:** 40 firearm Either Sex and 20 Landowner permits (1 ES, 1 D/F). No change from 2020.

**Dismal Late:** 20 Doe/Fawn only permits and 10 Landowner 2 Doe/Fawn permits. No change from 2020.

**General Information:** Hunter success for the Either Sex firearm season was 68%, compared to 57% in 2019. Late season success was 46%. 3 bonus does were taken by Landowners in 2020. In the 2020 Landowner survey, 40% reported that they had too many pronghorn, 24% reported moderate or severe damage and 43% said their level of damage was unacceptable. Depredation complaints: 0

**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 stable in the Dismal Unit.

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 maintaining the Late D/F to provide a tool for landowners to deal with any depredation issues.

### **2020 Harvest by Permit**

Permit	Permits Sold	Harvest			1 <sup>st</sup> Tag Success	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tag Success	% Age 1.5	% Ad Buck
		Bucks	D/F	Total				
Gen Oct Firearm	40	27	2	29	73%	-	11%	93%
LO Oct Firearm	20	12	2	14	60%	10%	8%	86%
<b>Total Oct Firearm</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>91%</b>
Gen Late D/F	20	0	10	10	50%	-	-	0%
LO Late D/F	6	0	3	3	33%	-	-	0%
<b>Total Late D/F</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0%</b>
Archery	-	18	1	19	-	-	0%	95%
Muzzleloader	-	7	0	7	-	-	14%	100%
<b>Total Harvest</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>78%</b>

**Management Unit Harvest Comparisons:**

Year	Harvest			% Age 1.5	% AD Buck	% D/F	% Buck Harvest		
	Bucks	D/F	Total				Archery	MZ	Rifle
2016	55	3	58	0%	95%	5%	27%	27%	45%
2017	41	1	42	14%	98%	2%	32%	15%	54%
2018	51	1	52	14%	98%	2%	25%	14%	61%
2019	53	10	63	6%	84%	16%	26%	15%	58%
2020	64	18	82	8%	78%	22%	23%	9%	68%

**Total Permits Authorized and Survey Data:**

Year	October Firearm <sup>1</sup> (unsold)	Special Seasons <sup>1</sup> (unsold)	Depredation Complaints	Surveys <sup>**</sup>		
				Pop Est	F:100D	B:100D
2016	36 ES	-	1			
2017	36 ES	-	0			
2018	36 ES	-	0			
2019	54 ES	30 Dismal Late D/F (8 LO)	2			
2020	60 ES	30 Dismal Late D/F (4 LO)	0			
2021	60 ES	30 Dismal Late D/F	0			

<sup>1</sup>Total Permit Quota, Limited Landowner Quota is 33% of total quota. The 2019 allocation was all LO October Firearm had a bonus doe/fawn tag. Bonus tag added to LO Late Season in 2020.

\* Recommended permits

<sup>\*\*</sup>Aerial survey results; fawns seen per 100 does, and bucks seen per 100 does.

ES – Either Sex                      D/F – Doe/Fawn

**Unsold Permits:** None.

**Expected Harvest:** 55 Bucks and 20 Does and Fawns

## **EAST SANDHILLS MANAGEMENT UNIT**

**2021 Recommendations:** 20 firearm Either Sex permits and 10 Landowner, Either Sex permits. This is no change 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. Firearm success was 47%, compared to 67% in 2018. 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. In the 2020 Landowner survey, 14% reported that they had too many pronghorn, 14% reported moderate or severe damage and 11% said their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation complaints: 0

**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.

### **2020 Harvest by Permit**

Permit	Permits Sold	Harvest			1 <sup>st</sup> Tag Success	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tag Success	% Age 1.5	% Ad Buck
		Bucks	D/F	Total				
Gen Oct Firearm	20	8	1	9	45%	-	17%	89%
LO Oct Firearm	10	4	0	4	40%	0	0%	100%
<b>Total Oct Firearm</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>92%</b>
Archery	-	6	2	8	-	-	33%	75%
Muzzleloader	-	1	0	1	-	-	0%	100%
<b>Total Harvest</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>76%</b>

**Management Unit Harvest Comparisons:**

Year	Harvest			% Age 1.5	% AD Buck	% D/F	% Buck Harvest		
	Bucks	D/F	Total				Archery	MZ	Rifle
2016	15	1	16	0%	94%	6%	27%	27%	47%
2017	12	0	12	14%	100%	0%	25%	13%	67%
2018	32	5	37	19%	86%	14%	53%	6%	41%
2019	30	3	33	3%	91%	9%	40%	20%	40%
2020	19	3	23	21%	76%	24%	38%	5%	57%

**Total Permits Authorized and Survey Data:**

Year	October Firearm <sup>1</sup> (unsold)	Special Seasons <sup>1</sup> (unsold)	Depredation Complaints	Surveys**		
				Pop Est	F:100D	B:100D
2015	15 ES		0			
2016	15 ES		1			
2017	15 ES		0			
2018	24 ES		0			
2019	20 ES		0			
2020	20 ES		0			
2021*	20 ES		0			

<sup>1</sup>Total Permit Quota, Limited Landowner Quota is 33% of total quota. The 2019 allocation was all LO October Firearm had a bonus doe/fawn tag. Bonus tag added to LO Late Season in 2020.

\* Recommended permits

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

ES – Either Sex                      D/F – Doe/Fawn

**Unsold Permits:** None.

**Expected Harvest:** 25 Bucks and 5 Does and Fawns

## **GARDEN MANAGEMENT UNIT**

**2021 Recommendations:** 50 firearm Either Sex and 25 (1 ES, 1 D/F) Landowner permits. This is an increase of 15 permits from 2020.

**Garden Late:** 140 Doe/Fawn and 70 Landowner 2 Doe/Fawn only. This is an increase of 75 permits from 2020.

**General Information:** Firearm hunter success was 59%, compared to 67% in 2019. Garden Late success was 46% compared to 49% last year. There were seven bonus does taken by landowners in 2020. In the 2020 Landowner survey, 51% reported that they had too many pronghorn, 43% reported moderate or severe damage and 53% said their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation complaints: 3

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** The objective is to decrease 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. 2020 was a mild winter and these large concentrations were not present compared to the previous two years. 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 continue to alleviate depredation complaints that occur throughout the unit and increase hunter opportunity, and to increase either sex tags to increase hunter opportunity.

### **2020 Harvest by Permit**

Permit	Permits Sold	Harvest			1 <sup>st</sup> Tag Success	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tag Success	% Age 1.5	% Ad Buck
		Bucks	D/F	Total				
Gen Oct Firearm	39	30	0	30	77%	-	0%	100%
LO Oct Firearm	19	2	4	6	21%	11%	50%	33%
<b>Total Oct Firearm</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>89%</b>
Gen Late D/F	82	0	39	39	48%	-	-	0%
LO Late D/F	23	0	14	14	39%	22%	-	0%
<b>Total Late D/F</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0%</b>
Archery	-	25	2	27	-	-	8%	96%
Muzzleloader	-	10	0	10	-	-	10%	100%
<b>Total Harvest</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>53%</b>



**Management Unit Harvest Comparisons:**

Year	Harvest			% Age 1.5	% AD Buck	% D/F	% Buck Harvest		
	Bucks	D/F	Total				Archery	MZ	Rifle
2016	59	27	86	3%	68%	32%	32%	14%	54%
2017	50	34	84	0%	60%	40%	32%	10%	58%
2018	58	28	86	5%	67%	33%	36%	12%	52%
2019	62	50	112	8%	55%	45%	42%	10%	47%
2020	67	59	126	6%	53%	47%	21%	8%	71%

**Total Permits Authorized and Survey Data:**

Year	October Firearm <sup>1</sup> (unsold)	Special Seasons <sup>1</sup> (unsold)	Depredation Complaints	Surveys <sup>**</sup>		
				Pop Est	F:100D	B:100D
2016	45 ES	45 Garden Late D/F	10			
2017	45 ES	51 Garden Late D/F	0			
2018	45 ES	51 Garden Late D/F (2 LO)	3			
2019	45 ES	114 Garden Late D/F (21 LO)	5	589	30	59
2020	60 ES	135 Garden Late D/F (22 LO)	2	Not Completed		
2021*	75 ES	210 Garden Late D/F	3			

<sup>1</sup>Total Permit Quota, Limited Landowner Quota is 33% of total quota. The 2019 allocation was all LO October Firearm had a bonus doe/fawn tag. Bonus tag added to LO Late Season in 2020.

\* Recommended permits

<sup>\*\*</sup>Aerial survey results; fawns seen per 100 does, and bucks seen per 100 does.

ES – Either Sex                      D/F – Doe/Fawn

**Unsold Permits:** None.

**Expected Harvest:** 75 Bucks and 100 Does and Fawns

## **NORTH SIOUX MANAGEMENT UNIT**

**2021 Recommendations:** 110 firearm Either Sex and 55 (1 ES, 1 D/F) Landowner permits. No change from 2020.

**North Sioux Late:** 80 Doe/Fawn only and 40 Landowner Doe/Fawn only permits. No change from 2020.

**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.

**General Information:** Hunter success for firearm season was 47% compared to 64% in 2019. Severe winter conditions that have occurred in the last several years have resulted in larger concentrations of pronghorn on agricultural fields. High hunting pressure from archery deer, archery pronghorn and NS MZ pronghorn likely contributed to moving pronghorn off of public lands leading to decreased success in 2020. It is recommended to continue with the doe/fawn late season and to increase late season permits to address depredation issues. In the 2020 Landowner survey, 41% reported that they had too many pronghorn, 39% reported moderate or severe damage and 58% said their level of damage was unacceptable. Depredation complaints: 3

**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.

### **2020 Harvest by Permit**

Permit	Permits Sold	Harvest			1 <sup>st</sup> Tag Success	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tag Success	% Age 1.5	% Ad Buck
		Bucks	D/F	Total				
Gen Oct Firearm	110	52	6	58	52%	-	16%	89%
LO Oct Firearm	51	17	3	20	37%	2%	6%	85%
<b>Total Oct Firearm</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>89%</b>
Gen Late D/F	78	1	35	36	46%	-	-	3%
LO Late D/F	7	0	0	0	0%	-	-	0%
<b>Total Late D/F</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3%</b>
Archery	-	69	18	87	-	-	16%	94%
Muzzleloader	-	20	0	20	-	-	5%	100%
<b>Total Harvest</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>72%</b>

**Management Unit Harvest Comparisons:**

Year	Harvest			% Age 1.5	% AD Buck	% D/F	% Buck Harvest		
	Bucks	D/F	Total				Archery	MZ	Rifle
2015	203	61	264	10%	77%	23%	38%	8%	53%
2016	165	54	219	2%	75%	25%	34%	11%	55%
2017	148	48	196	19%	76%	24%	38%	9%	53%
2018	169	63	232	14%	73%	27%	37%	14%	50%
2019	142	62	204	15%	70%	30%	32%	14%	54%
2020	159	63	222	13%	72%	28%	39%	10%	51%

**Total Permits Authorized and Survey Data:**

Year	October Firearm <sup>1</sup> (unsold)	Special Seasons <sup>1</sup> (unsold)	Depredation Complaints	Surveys**		
				Pop Est	F:100D	B:100D
2016	150 ES (3 LO)	90 North Sioux Late D/F (24 LO)	0	1705	33	39
2017	150 ES (13 LO)	90 North Sioux Late D/F (20 LO)	2	2667	68	48
2018	150 ES	120 North Sioux Late D/F (28 LO)	1	1687	53	61
2019	150 ES (10 LO)	120 North Sioux Late D/F (34 LO)	1	1389	28	31
2020	165 ES (3 LO)	120 North Sioux Late D/F (33 LO)	2	Not completed		
2021*	165 ES	120 North Sioux Late D/F	3			

<sup>1</sup>Total Permit Quota, Limited Landowner Quota is 33% of total quota. The 2019 allocation was all LO October Firearm had a bonus doe/fawn tag. Bonus tag added to LO Late Season in 2020.

\* Recommended permits

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

ES – Either Sex                      D/F – Doe/Fawn

**Unsold Permits:** None.

**Expected Harvest:** 150 Bucks and 60 Does and Fawns

## **NORTH SIOUX MUZZLELOADER MANAGEMENT UNIT**

**2021 Recommendations:** 28 General Either Sex and 14 Limited Landowner. No change from 2020.

**General Information:** Hunter success for muzzleloader season was 67% compared to 71% in 2019. There is very little landowner interest in this permit.

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** Consistent with the pronghorn season setting guidelines, muzzleloader permits are an additional 25% of regular Firearm permits. Firearm permits did not increase. Recommending allowing harvest on Fort Robinson SP and WMA.

### **2020 Harvest:**

Permit	Permits Sold	Harvest			Success	% Age 1.5	% Ad Buck
		Bucks	D/F	Total			
Gen NS MZ	28	18	0	18	64%	6%	100%
LO NS MZ	2	2	0	0	100%	0%	100%
<b>Total NS MZ</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Harvest comparisons for Muzzleloader seasons:**

Year	Permits Authorized (unsold)		Type	Success	Harvest			% Age 1.5	% AD Buck
	Gen	Landowner			Bucks	D/F	Total		
2016	25	13 (12)	ES	81%	18	3	21	14%	86%
2017	25	13 (10)	ES	50%	14	0	14	7%	100%
2018	26	13 (12)	ES	85%	23	0	23	23%	100%
2019	26	13 (11)	ES	71%	20	0	20	25%	100%
2020	28	14 (12)	ES	60%	18	0	18	6%	100%
2021*	28	14	ES						

\* Recommended permits

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

ES – Either Sex

**Expected Harvest:** Expected harvest in the muzzleloader season is 20 bucks and 2 does.

## PRAIRIE MUZZLELOADER MANAGEMENT UNIT

**2021 Recommendations:** 128 Either Sex and 64 Landowner Either Sex permits. This is an increase of 9 permits from 2020.

**General Information:** Hunter success for muzzleloader season was 59% compared to 66% in 2019.

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

### **2020 Harvest:**

Permit	Permits Sold	Harvest			Success	% Age 1.5	% Ad Buck
		Bucks	D/F	Total			
Gen Prairie MZ	121	77	3	80	64%	8%	96%
LO Prairie MZ	24	8	0	8	33%	0%	100%
<b>Total Prairie MZ</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>97%</b>

### **Harvest comparisons for Muzzleloader seasons:**

Year	Permits Authorized (unsold)		Type	Success	Harvest			% Age 1.5	% AD Buck
	Gen	Landowner			Bucks	D/F	Total		
2016	92	46 (6)	ES	65%	82	4	86	7%	95%
2017	99	50 (16)	ES	60%	77	3	80	12%	96%
2018	100	50 (15)	ES	65%	87	1	88	13%	99%
2019	100	50 (22)	ES	66%	82	3	85	7%	97%
2020	122	61 (37)	ES	61%	85	3	88	7%	97%
2021*	128	64	ES						

\* Recommended permits

### **Harvest Distribution:**

Unit	Harvest
Banner North	8
Banner South	5
Box Butte East	5
Box Butte West	23
Cherry	7
Cheyenne	13
Dismal	7
Eastern Sandhills	1
Garden	8
South West	3

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

## **ARCHERY PRONGHORN**

### **2021 Recommendations:**

**Permits:** Residents: 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.

Nonresidents: 250 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 state and federal refuges that prohibit pronghorn hunting. Recommending allowing harvest on Fort Robinson SP and WMA in 2021.

**General Information:** Permit sales were the highest on record, and archery success was 20%, with 338 pronghorn taken by 1710 permit holders, of which 543 were nonresidents, the highest on record. Ninety three (93) pronghorn were taken in Dawes and Sioux counties, down from 109 in 2018. Crossbow harvest was 9% of total pronghorn harvest, up from 7%. The use of crossbows has been slowly increasing but decreased slightly from 2018 and now accounts for 33% of archery harvest.

**Harvest Strategy:** This is a recreational hunt that provides the only opportunity for non-residents to hunt pronghorn in Nebraska. Success is low and allows hunters to pursue pronghorn in areas with low herd numbers without concern for herd reductions. However, complaints of hunter crowding, particularly on the Oglala Grasslands, has been increasing. We propose limiting nonresident hunters to the 5 year average preceeding the increase in 2019 of 250.

**Expected Harvest:** 300 pronghorn.

### **Archery permits, harvest and success**

Year	Permits Issued	# Non Residents	Harvest			% Success	% Age 1.5	% Xbow
			Buck	Doe/Fawn	Total			
2016	1316	289	202	21	223	17%	14%	28%
2017	1289	300	173	14	187	15%	17%	34%
2018	1164	264	219	32	251	21%	11%	32%
2019	1318	356	232	16	254	19%	17%	30%
2020	1710	543	295	43	338	20%	12%	33%

### **Harvest Distribution**

Unit	Harvest	Unit	Harvest
Banner North	20	Dismal	19
Banner South	51	Eastern Sandhills	8
Box Butte East	11	Garden	27
Box Butte West	81	North Sioux	88
Cherry	9	Southwest	0
Cheyenne	20		

# DEER

## INTRODUCTION

Recommendations for the 2021 deer seasons are developed under the following objective:

*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 derived from input from landowners, hunters, general public and staff, and include data from landowner (LO) surveys, crop damage reports, deer vehicle collisions, deer harvest, hunter opinion and disease concerns.

Whitetail populations have reached levels where increased antlerless harvest is necessary. While not recovered to pre-2012 levels or even mid-2000's levels, most units have depredation issues at least at some local levels. We recommend permit quota increases and additional bonus AOWT tags in several many management units to stabilize whitetail populations. Depredation complaints along major river corridors have increased and continued high antlerless harvest is necessary. Staff encourage landowners to require their hunters to harvest antlerless deer along river corridors where crop damage is occurring. For WT, the 2020 LO survey showed that 32% of landowners felt the population was too high, 33% reported severe or moderate damage and 34% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable.

Mule deer harvest is declining from record and near record levels in many western deer management units in recent years. Cases of meningeal brain worm have been reported in several central and southwest units this fall and winter. We recommend continuing the high harvest in response to depredation issues in the southwest with minor permit quota and bag limit adjustments in some central management units. For MD, the 2020 LO survey showed that 13% of landowners felt there were too many, 14% reported severe or moderate damage and 10% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable.

### Deer Management Goals:

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

*Whitetail:* Stabilize populations in Blue Northwest, Blue Southeast, Elkhorn, Wahoo, Buffalo, Frenchman, Missouri, Platte, Republican, and Upper Platte. Decrease population in Calamus East, Calamus West, Keya Paha, Loup West, Loup East, Pine Ridge, Plains, and Sandhills.

<u>Summary</u>	<u>Change from 2019</u>	<u>Historic Rank</u>
Total Deer Harvest	Down 44 (-0.1%) to 60,266	#10
Deer Permit Sales	Up 10,194 (+7.9%) to 139,214	#3
Nonresident Permit Sales	Up 3,040 (+16.1%) to 21,958	#1
Whitetail Buck Harvest	Down 173 (-0.6%) to 29,726	#9
Whitetail Antlerless Harvest	Up 1,911 (+10.0%) to 21,102	#8
Mule Deer Buck Harvest	Down 1,312 (-15.3%) to 7,236	#25
Mule Deer Antlerless Harvest	Down 470 (-17.6%) to 2,202	#45

Due to COVID-19 related changes, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission did not operate in person checkstations and staff were not able to age deer. We did continue to collect antler spread information from hunters to collect yearling buck harvest data.

## **2021 Recommendation Summary/Highlights**

- Overall
  - 46,275 total Nov FA from 45,325 in 2020.
  - 32,100 total AO from 30,150 in 2020.
- Blue Northwest
  - Add 200 FA permits
  - Add 400 AO permits
- Blue Southeast
  - Add 200 FA permits
  - Add 400 AO permits
- Calamus East – add 200 FA permits
- Calamus West – add second bonus AOWT to Nov FA and AO
- Elkhorn – Add 200 FA permits
- Frenchman
  - Remove Frenchman portion of Republican River from River Antlerless
  - Firearm season bonus tags no longer valid on Southwest Reservoirs
  - Create Southwest Reservoirs AO SC permit valid for SW Reservoirs
    - Add 200 AO
  - Split Frenchman WT AO to Frenchman North and South WT Units to distribute AO WT pressure.
    - Add 250 AO
- Keya Paha – add second bonus AOWT to FA and AO
- Loup West – Shift 200 AD2 permits to Loup West WT permit
  - Shift 300 AO permits to New Loup West AOWT permit
- Pine Ridge
  - Only allow one Pine Ridge permit that allows the take of a mule deer buck per person per year.
  - Add 200 permits to Pine Ridge AO
  - Add Monroe, Warbonnet and Chadron Creeks to River Antlerless
- Plains – Add second bonus AOWT to Nov FA and AO permits
- Republican
  - Create Harlan County Reservoir AO permit, valid for 2 AOWT on Harlan County Lake USACE property. Add 200 2 AOWT permits.
- Sandhills
  - Add second bonus AOWT to Nov FA
- Wahoo
  - Add 150 FA permits
  - Add 300 AO permits
- River Antlerless – Additional boundaries
  - Extend January River antlerless to January 1 – 31 to increase antlerless harvest.
- Late Firearm Season – Extend one day (January 1 – 16) to encompass 3 full weekends.



## RECOMMENDED DEER SEASONS

**Season Dates:** **November Firearm:** November 13-21, 2021  
**Archery Season Dates:** September 1 – December 31, 2021  
**Muzzleloader Season Dates:** December 1-31, 2021  
**Late Antlerless Only Firearm:** January 1-16, 2022, All AO SCA, Youth and LO  
**October River Antlerless Firearm:** October 1-15, 2021, River Antlerless Only  
**River Antlerless Late Firearm:** January 1-31, 2022, River Antlerless Only

2021 Recommendations					
Unit Permit	Permits	Bag Limit	Unit Permit	Permits	Bag Limit
Blue Northwest	2400	1 AD	AO SC Blue NW	2200	1 AOWT
Blue Southeast	3700	1 AD	AO SC Blue SE	2400	1 AOWT
Buffalo WT	2100	1 WT	AO SC Buffalo	1000	2 AOWT
Buffalo MDCA	1000	1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT	AO SC Buffalo North	100	1 AO, 1 AOWT
Calamus East	1500	1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT	AO SC Calamus East	400	2 AOWT
Calamus West	1600	1 AD, 2 AOWT	AO SC Calamus West	300	3 AOWT
Elkhorn	2900	1 AD	AO SC Elkhorn	1000	1 AOWT
Frenchman MDCA	2000	1 AD, 1 AOWT	AO SC Frenchman	300	1 AO, 1 AOWT
Frenchman WT	1600	1 WT, 1 AOWT	AO SC Frenchman WT North	500	2 AOWT
Keya Paha	2500	1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 2 AOWT	AO SC Frenchman WT South	250	2 AOWT
Loup East	3300	1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 2 AOWT	AO SC Frenchman West	650	2 AO
Loup West	1000	1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 2 AOWT	AO SC SW Reservoirs	200	1 AOWT
Loup West WT	800	1 WT, 2 AOWT	AO SC Keya Paha	500	2 AOWT
Missouri	3200	1 AD <sup>2</sup>	AO SC Loup East	1500	3 AOWT
Pine Ridge	1200	1 AD <sup>2</sup>	AO SC Loup West	100	1 AO, 2 AOWT
Pine Ridge WT	1000	1 WT	AO SC Loup West WT	300	3 AOWT
Plains	1700	1 AD, 2 AOWT	AO SC Missouri	1000	2 AOWT
Platte MDCA	1400	1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT	AO SC Pine Ridge	400	1 AO, 1 AOWT*
Platte WT	1300	1 WT	AO SC Pine Ridge WT	600	2 AOWT
Republican MD	75	1 MD Buck	AO SC Plains	500	1 AO, 1 AOWT
Republican WT	3000	1 WT	AO SC Platte	200	1 AO, 1 AOWT
Sandhills	2000	1 AD, 2 AOWT	AO SC Platte WT	500	2 AOWT
Upper Platte	1200	1 AD	AO SC Platte North	400	2 AO
Wahoo	3800	1 AD <sup>2</sup>	AO SC Republican	1500	2 AOWT
			AO SC Harlan County Res	200	2 AOWT
			AO SC Sandhills	450	1 AO, 2 AOWT
			AO SC Upper Platte	250	1 AO, 1 AOWT
			AO SC Upper Platte WT	200	2 AOWT
			AO SC Wahoo	2,200	1 AOWT
			AO SC River Antlerless	12,000	2 AOWT
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>46,275</b>		<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>32,100</b>	
OTHER PERMITS					
WT SW Buck	Unlimited	1 WT Buck	Valid for all open seasons with the legal weapon		
Restricted SW Buck	Unlimited	1 Any buck	November Firearm, Not valid in the MDCA		
SW Buck	100	1 Any buck	November Firearm, Valid statewide		
Archery	Unlimited	1 AD*	Valid statewide		
Muzzleloader	Unlimited	1 AD*	Not valid for mule deer in MDCA units		
Resident Youth	Unlimited	1 AD*	Valid statewide		
NR Restricted Youth	Unlimited	1 AD*	Not valid in draw units		
Youth WT	Unlimited	1 WT	Valid statewide		
Landowner	Unlimited	1 AD, 1 AO	Valid for all open seasons with the legal weapon		
Special Landowner	Unlimited	1 AD	Valid for any weapon the Saturday-Monday before Nov Firearm		

AD – Any deer      AD<sup>2</sup> – Any deer except AO MD      AO – Antlerless Only      AOWT – Antlerless Only WT  
 B – Buck      NR – Non-Resident      WT – Whitetail      MD – Mule Deer  
 SW – Statewide      UNL – Unlimited      Buck – Male deer with antlers greater than six inches in length  
 SC – Season Choice: valid for all open seasons with the legal weapon      \* No Antlerless MD harvest on public land in the Pine Ridge Unit.

## 2020 DEER SEASON HARVEST

Permit	Quota	Sold	Bag Limit	Harvest					% Success	
				Total	WT		MD			
					B	AO	B	AO	1 <sup>st</sup>	Bonus
Blue Northwest	2200	2198	1 AD	958	731	225	2	0	43%	8%
Blue Southeast	3500	3495	1 AD	1492	1241	245	5	1	43%	
Buffalo MDCA	1000	999	1 AD <sup>2</sup>	563	255	136	169	3	48%	
Buffalo Whitetail	2100	2094	1 WT	906	777	128	1	0	43%	13%
Calamus East	1300	1300	1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT	818	521	249	48	0	50%	
Calamus West	1600	1594	1 AD, 1 AOWT	852	461	182	186	23	46%	
Elkhorn	2700	2695	1 AD	1190	945	241	4	0	44%	6%
Frenchman MDCA	2000	2000	1 AD, 1 AOWT	1205	131	163	854	57	54%	
Frenchman WT	1600	1581	1 WT, 1 AOWT	913	581	327	2	3	46%	
Keya Paha	2500	2405	1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT	1579	1099	378	100	2	55%	10%
Loup East	3300	3297	1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 2 AOWT	2134	1206	893	32	3	48%	14%
Loup West	1200	1199	1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 2 AOWT	752	381	222	149	0	50%	10%
Loup West WT	600	452	1 WT, 2 AOWT	242	158	84	0	0	44%	8%
Missouri	3200	3193	1 AD, 1 AOWT	1977	1300	665	12	0	50%	12%
Pine Ridge	1200	1109	1 AD <sup>2</sup>	559	274	40	245	0	50%	
Pine Ridge WT	1000	995	1 WT	437	358	79	0	0	44%	
Plains	1700	1697	1 AD, 1 AOWT	1055	297	171	503	84	55%	
Platte MDCA	1400	1397	1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT	807	165	139	501	2	51%	7%
Platte WT	1300	1241	1 WT	469	409	56	4	0	38%	
Republican WT	3000	2992	1 MD Buck	1337	1073	261	3	0	45%	
Republican MD	75	64	1 WT	13	0	0	13	0	19%	
Sandhills	2000	1980	1 AD, 1 AOWT	1241	533	190	494	24	56%	7%
Upper Platte	1200	1195	1 AD	665	137	21	407	100	55%	
Wahoo	3650	3643	1 AD <sup>2</sup>	1642	1329	311	2	0	45%	
Nov. FA TOTAL/Avg	45,325	44,815		23,806	14,362	5,406	3,736	302	47%	9%
Landowner Deer	UNL	15,511	1 AD*	7366	3859	2022	1084	401	40%	7%
Archery Deer	UNL	20,341	1 AD*	5185	3778	679	652	76	25%	-
Muzzleloader Deer	UNL	7,746	1 Buck	1928	950	496	404	78	25%	-
Resident Youth Deer	UNL	6,975	1 Buck	3302	1737	502	916	147	47%	-
Youth WT Deer	UNL	4,152	1 WT Buck	1699	1217	464	15	3	41%	-
NR Rest Youth Deer	UNL	727	1 AD, 1 AO	310	149	55	93	13	43%	-
Rest Statewide Buck	UNL	1,179	1 AD*	515	233	3	279	0	44%	-
Statewide Buck	100	59	1 WT	38	7	0	31	0	64%	-
Statewide WT Buck	UNL	10,626	1 AD*	3171	3134	29	8	0	30%	-
Other TOTAL/Avg	UNL	67,316		23,514	15,064	4,250	3,482	718	40%	7%

AD – Any deer

AD<sup>2</sup> – Any deer except AO MD

AO – Antlerless Only

AOWT – Antlerless Only WT

B – Buck

NR – Non-Resident

WT – Whitetail

MD – Mule Deer

SW – Statewide

UNL – Unlimited

Buck – Male deer with antlers greater than six inches in length

\* - No Antlerless Mule Deer in the Pine Ridge Unit

## 2020 DEER SEASON HARVEST

Permit	Quota	Sold	Bag Limit	Harvest					% Success	
				Total	WT		MD			
					B	AO	B	AO	1 <sup>st</sup>	Bonus
Blue Northwest AO SC	1800	1798	1 AOWT	549	15	532	0	2	30%	
Blue Southeast AO SC	2000	2000	1 AOWT	535	11	524	0	0	27%	
Buffalo AO SC	1000	819	2 AOWT	340	10	328	0	2	31%	10%
Buffalo North AO SC	100	100	1 AO, 1 AOWT	48	0	16	0	32	40%	8%
Calamus East AO SC	400	189	1 AOWT	92	4	88	0	0	37%	12%
Calamus West AO SC	300	199	1 AOWT	93	2	90	0	1	32%	14%
Elkhorn AO SC	1000	998	1 AOWT	248	5	243	0	0	25%	
Frenchman AO SC	300	299	1 AO, 1 AOWT	146	1	68	1	76	39%	10%
Frenchman WT AO SC	500	500	2 AOWT	194	5	188	0	1	27%	12%
Frenchman West AO SC	650	646	2 AO	476	1	53	4	418	49%	25%
Keya Paha AO SC	500	327	2 AOWT	191	4	187	0	0	42%	17%
Loup East AO SC	1500	850	3 AOWT	381	8	372	0	1	30%	11/4%
Loup West AO SC	400	210	1 AO, 2 AOWT	109	2	85	0	22	37%	11/4%
Missouri AO SC	1000	1000	2 AOWT	456	8	448	0	0	33%	12%
Pine Ridge AO SC	200	199	1 AO, 1 AOWT	131	0	97	0	34	48%	18%
Pine Ridge WT AO SC	600	549	2 AOWT	307	9	297	0	1	40%	15%
Plains AO SC	500	463	2 AO	217	2	70	5	140	40%	7%
Platte AO SC	200	200	1 AO, 1 AOWT	100	2	66	0	32	34%	16%
Platte WT AO SC	500	496	2 AOWT	170	3	167	0	0	25%	8%
Platte North AO SC	400	395	2 AO	270	1	61	3	205	44%	24%
Republican AO SC	1500	1498	2 AOWT	666	21	644	0	1	34%	10%
Sandhills AO SC	450	377	1 AO, 2 AOWT	272	2	163	0	107	47%	15/10%
Upper Platte AO SC	250	250	1 AO, 1 AOWT	125	0	36	2	87	42%	8%
Upper Platte WT AO SC	200	170	2 AOWT	43	2	40	0	1	19%	6%
Wahoo AO SC	1900	1899	1 AOWT	544	12	531	0	1	28%	
River Antlerless	12000	10652	2 AOWT	6240	168	6052	2	18	40%	18%
AO SC TOTAL/AVG	30,150	27,083		12,943	298	11,446	17	1,182	35%	13 / 6%
ALL SEASONS	75,575/ UNL	139,214		60,264	29,725	21,102	7,235	2,202	38%	12 / 4 %

AD – Any deer

AD<sup>2</sup> – Any deer except AO MD

AO – Antlerless Only

AOWT – Antlerless Only WT

B – Buck

NR – Non-Resident

WT – Whitetail

MD – Mule Deer

SW – Statewide

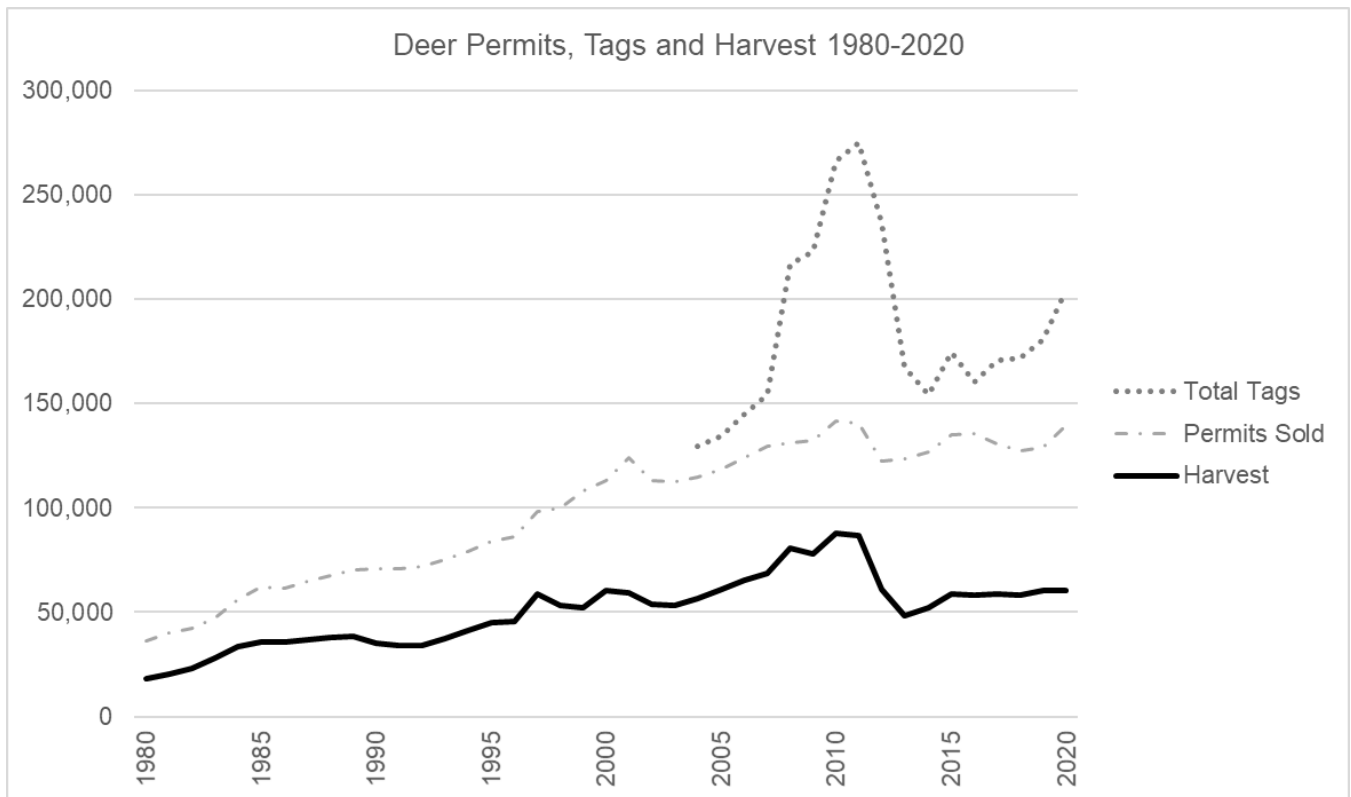
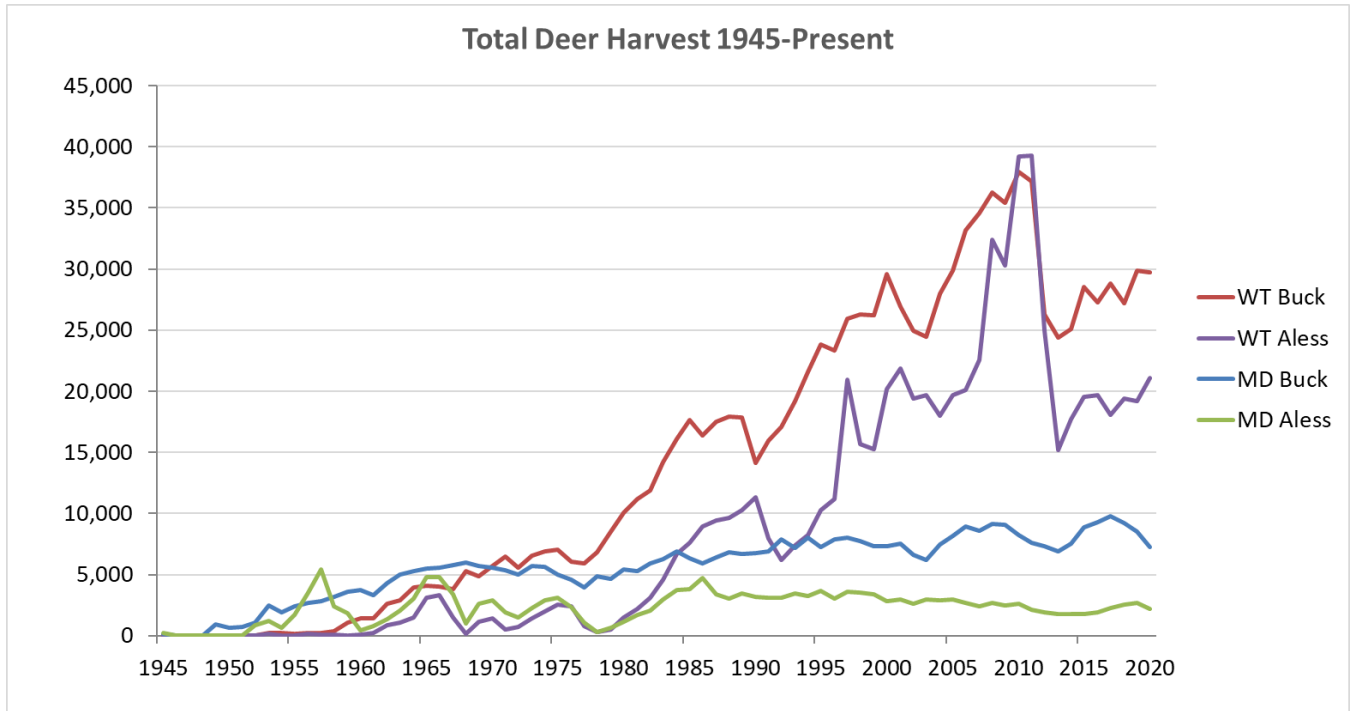
UNL – Unlimited

SC – Season Choice: valid for all open seasons with the legal weapon

Buck – Male deer with antlers greater than six inches in length

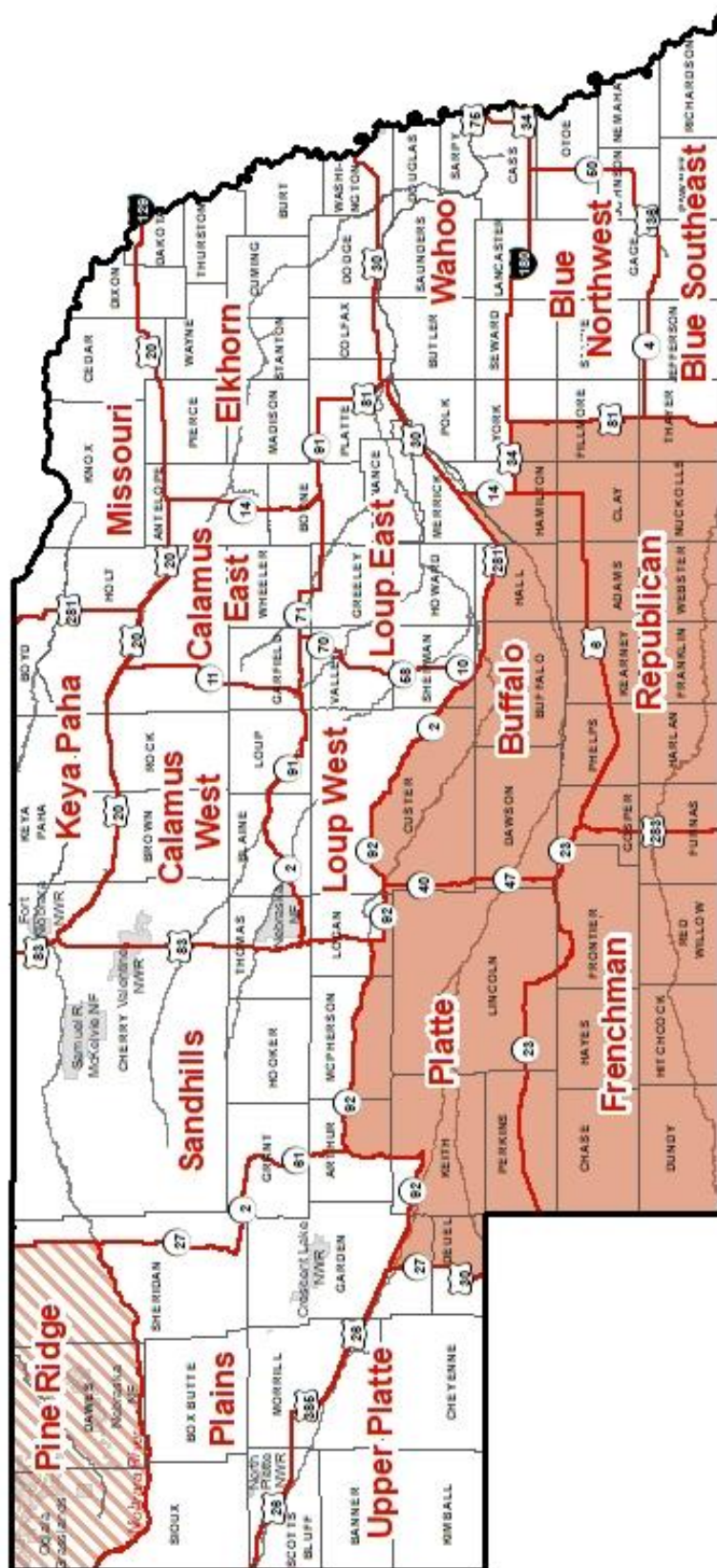
\* - No Antlerless Mule Deer in the Pine Ridge Unit

## HISTORIC DEER HARVEST AND PERMITS

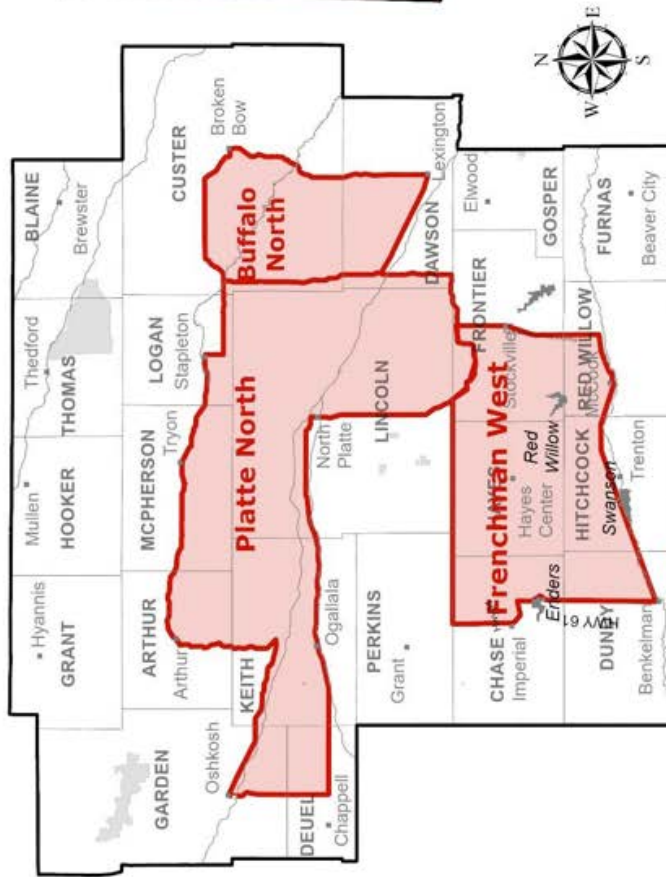


## DEER MANAGEMENT UNITS

### 2021 November Firearm and Antlerless Only Season Choice Units



## 2021 ADDITIONAL ANTLERLESS ONLY SEASON UNITS

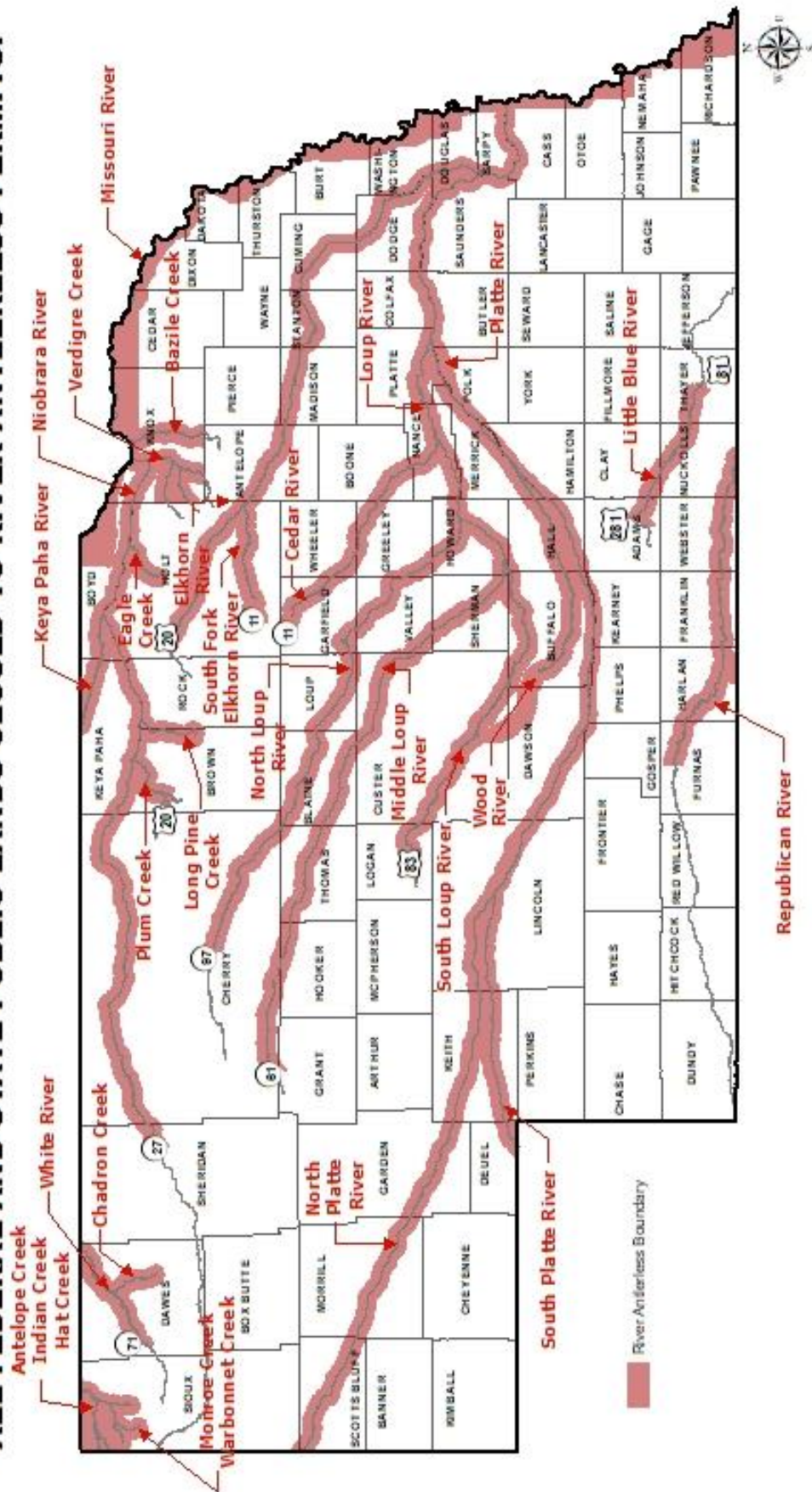


Medicine Creek WMA/SRA, Red Willow Reservoir WMA/SRA, Enders Reservoir WMA/SRA, and Swanson WMA/SRA are closed to the use of all Frenchman Antlerless Only Permits.



## 2021 RIVER ANTLERLESS UNIT

**ALL FEDERAL AND STATE PUBLIC LANDS CLOSED TO RIVER ANTLERLESS PERMITS.**



## **BLUE NORTHWEST MANAGEMENT UNIT**

### **2021 Recommendations:**

**Blue Northwest November Firearm:** 2400 Any Deer permits. This is an increase from 2200 in 2020.

**Blue Northwest Antlerless Only Season Choice:** 2200 permits for one antlerless whitetail deer. This is an increase from 1800 in 2020.

**General Information:** The percent of 1.5-year-old adult males decreased to 26% from 34% in 2019. Harvest for all seasons was 2081 adult whitetail males and 1248 antlerless whitetails. Landowner complaints decreased from last year. Landowner complaints increased from last year. For WT, the 2020 LO survey showed that 27% felt the population was too high, 26% reported severe or moderate damage and 25% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable. For MD, the 2020 LO survey showed that 6% felt there were too many, 4% reported severe or moderate damage and 3% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation complaints: 9 DCP: 8

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** Herd numbers appear to be within landowner tolerances. Hunter and landowner complaints about too few deer are declining. 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, provide more opportunity and increase buck age structure in the unit.

### **2020 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 Firearm	2200	2200	10/21/20	2	0	2	731	225	956	43
Blue NW AO SC	1800	1800	11/12/20	0	2	2	15	532	547	30
River Antlerless				0	0	0	1	12	13	
Landowner Deer				1	0	1	340	229	569	
Archery Deer				0	0	0	337	91	428	
Muzzleloader Deer				0	0	0	42	48	90	
Resident Youth				0	0	0	114	63	177	
Youth Whitetail				1	0	1	102	44	146	
NR Rest Youth				0	0	0	7	3	10	
Rest SW Buck				0	0	0	14	0	14	
Statewide Buck				0	0	0	0	0	0	
Statewide WT Buck				0	0	0	378	1	379	
<b>Totals</b>				<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	2081	1248	3329	

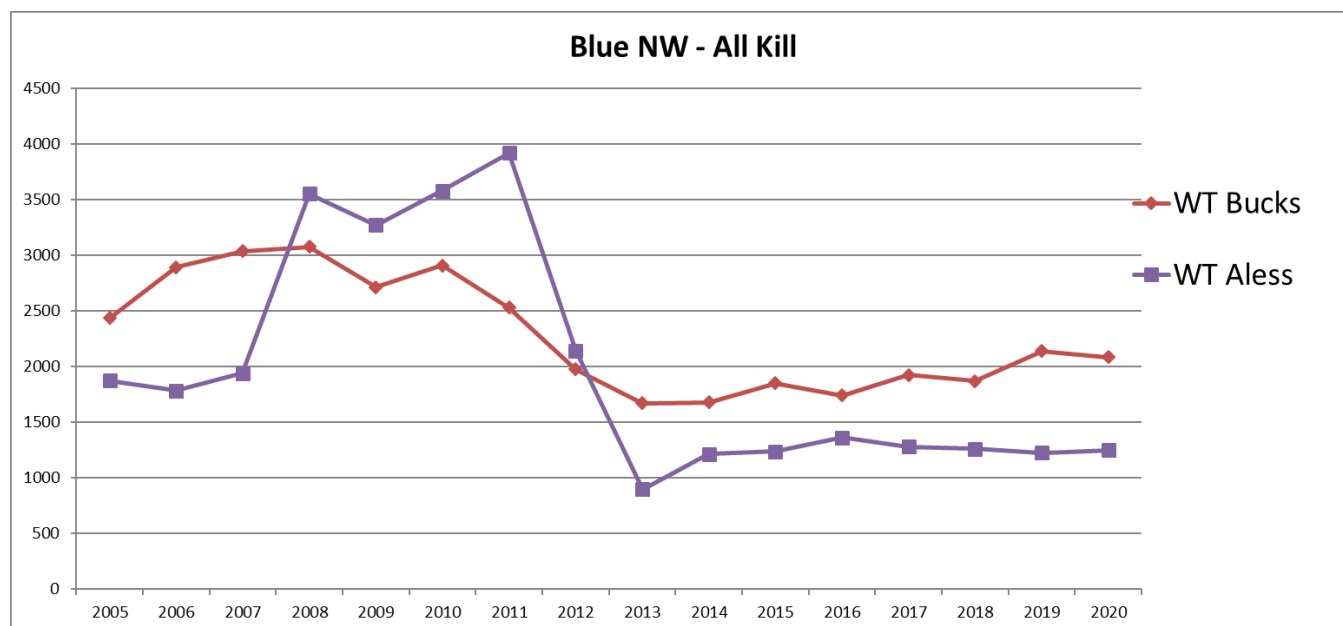


# **BLUE NORTHWEST MANAGEMENT UNIT**

(continued)

## **Harvest comparisons by year**

<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>
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
2019	6	2	9					2136	1223	3359	36	34	37	29
2020	4	2	6					2081	1248	3329	38	26	74	



## **Total Permits Authorized**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Nov. Firearm</u>	<u>Special Seasons</u>	<u>Depredation</u>	
			<u>Complaints</u>	<u>DCP</u>
2016	2450 (1 AD)	Blue NW SCA – 2300 (1 AOWT)		
2017	2450 (1 AD)	Blue NW SCA – 2000 (1 AOWT)	2	1
2018	2200 (1 AD)	Blue NW SCA – 1800 (1 AOWT)	4	3
2019	2200 (1 AD)	Blue NW SCA – 1800 (1 AOWT)	3	3
2020	2200 (1 AD)	Blue NW SCA – 1800 (1 AOWT)	3	2
2021*	2400 (1 AD)	Blue NW SCA – 2200 (1 AOWT)	9	8

\*Recommended permit numbers

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

<sup>2</sup> – No antlerless mule deer

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	5	2100	1	1400

## **BLUE SOUTHEAST MANAGEMENT UNIT**

### **2021 Recommendations:**

**Blue Southeast November Firearm:** 3700 Any Deer permits. This is an increase from 3500 in 2020.

**Blue Southeast Antlerless Only Season Choice:** 2400 permits for one antlerless whitetail deer. This is an increase from 2000 in 2020.

**General Information:** Quality habitat continues to be removed from the landscape. Coyote populations continue to remain high. The percent of 1.5-year-old adult males decreased from 29% to 22%. Harvest for all seasons was 3021 adult whitetail males and 1613 antlerless whitetails. Landowner complaints increased from last year. For WT, the 2020 LO survey showed that 27% felt the population was too high, 32% reported severe or moderate damage and 29% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable. For MD, the 2020 LO survey showed that 0% felt there were too many, 0% reported severe or moderate damage and 0% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation complaints: 4 DCP: 1

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** Herd numbers appear to be within landowner tolerances. Hunter and landowner complaints about too few deer are declining. Fawn production appeared normal. There were a few reports of possible EHD deer during the fall of 2020. The population goal is to stabilize the population while maintaining an older buck age structure. Permit strategies are to allow limited growth in some areas of the unit while providing additional opportunity.

### **2020 Harvest Data - Blue Southeast**

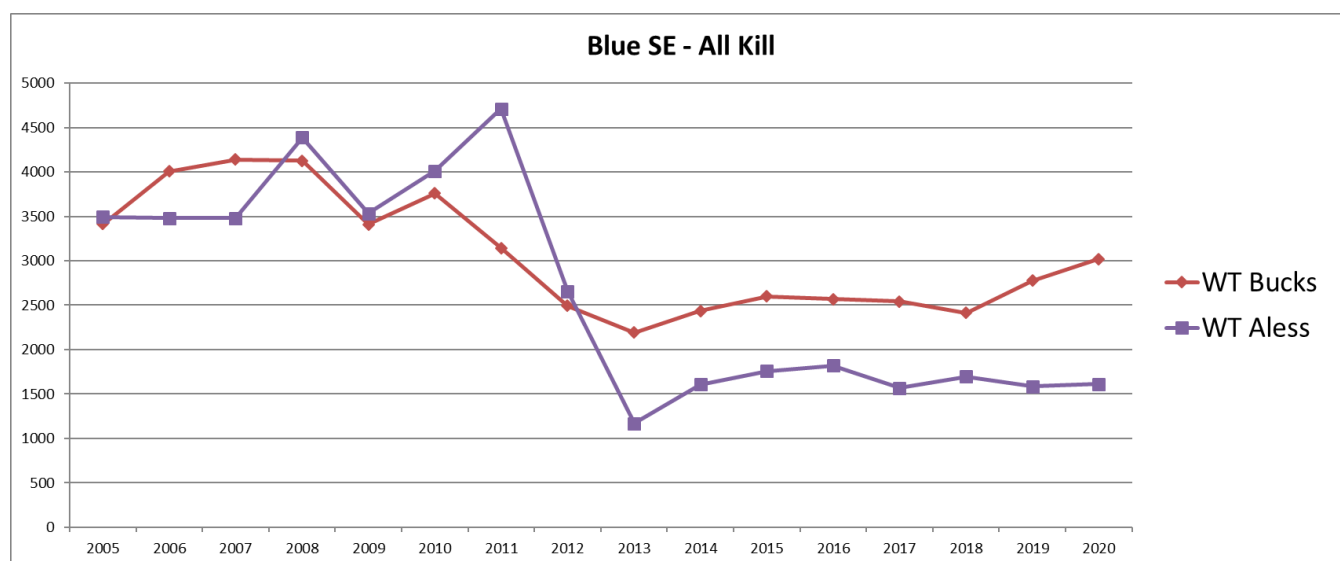
<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Blue SE Firearm	3500	3500	11/4/20	5	1	6	1241	245	1486	44
Blue SE AO SC	2000	2000	11/14/20	0	0	0	11	524	535	30
River Antlerless				0	2	2	7	360	367	
Landowner Deer				0	0	0	479	255	734	
Archery Deer				0	1	1	544	73	617	
Muzzleloader Deer				0	0	0	64	56	120	
Resident Youth				0	0	0	130	42	172	
Youth Whitetail				0	0	0	121	47	168	
NR Rest Youth				0	0	0	9	5	14	
Rest SW Buck				0	0	0	12	1	13	
Statewide Buck				0	0	0	1	0	1	
Statewide WT Buck				2	0	2	402	5	407	
<b>Totals</b>				<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3021</b>	<b>1613</b>	<b>4634</b>	

## BLUE SOUTHEAST MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

### Harvest comparisons by year

Year	Mule Deer							Whitetail Deer						
	Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age			Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age		
					1	2	3+					1	2	3+
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
2019	1	6	7					2778	1585	4363	36	29	32	39
2020	7	4	11					3021	1613	4634	35	22	78	



### Total Permits Authorized

Year	Nov. Firearm	Special Seasons	Depredation	
			Complaints	DCP
2016	3500 (1 AD)	Blue SE SCA – 2900 (1 AOWT)		
2017	3500 (1 AD)	Blue SE SCA – 2400 (1 AOWT)	3	2
2018	3500 (1 AD)	Blue SE SCA – 2400 (1 AOWT)	3	2
2019	3500 (1 AD)	Blue SE SCA – 2000 (1 AOWT)	1	0
2020	3500 (1 AD)	Blue SE SCA – 2000 (1 AOWT)	3	2
2021*	3700 (1 AD)	Blue SE SCA – 2400 (1 AOWT)	4	1

\*Recommended permit numbers

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

<sup>2</sup> – No antlerless mule deer

AO – Antlerless Only    AD – Any Deer

### Expected Harvest:

Unit	MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless
All Season	3	2700	2	1800

## **BUFFALO MANAGEMENT UNIT**

### **2021 Recommendations:**

**Buffalo MDCA:** 1000 permits for Any Deer<sup>2</sup> and one bonus antlerless whitetail valid during Muzzleloader and November Firearm seasons. No change from 2020.

**Buffalo Whitetail November Firearm:** 2100 permits for one whitetail. No change from 2020.

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

**Buffalo North Antlerless Only Season Choice:** 100 permits for one antlerless deer and one antlerless whitetail. No change from 2020.

**General Information:** Deer harvest for all seasons was 314 adult male mule deer, 83 antlerless mule deer, 2072 adult male whitetail and 1680 antlerless whitetail. Five cases of meningeal worm mortalities in mule deer were confirmed and continues to be an issue. Multiple EHD reports were received in 2020. For WT, the 2020 LO survey showed that 36% felt the population was too high, 34% reported severe or moderate damage and 39% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable. For MD, the 2020 LO survey showed that 19% felt there were too many, 17% reported severe or moderate damage and 18% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation complaints: 6 DCP: 4. All along Platte River

### **Population Status and Harvest Strategy:**

Mule deer populations have declined in the southern portion of the unit and appear to be decreasing in traditionally strong areas in the north portion of the unit. Buck age structure has remained stable. The population objective is to increase the herd in southern portions of the unit by maintaining current mule deer doe harvest. MD buck harvest has declined over the last 5 years. The MDCA permit was reduced in 2020 in response to reduced MD buck harvest.

The whitetail deer population is at desired levels in most areas except portions of the Platte River. Total buck harvest decreased 5% from last year with 79% 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 River. This will be accomplished by maintaining current bag limits and continuing the liberal use of River Antlerless permits.

### **2020 Harvest Data**

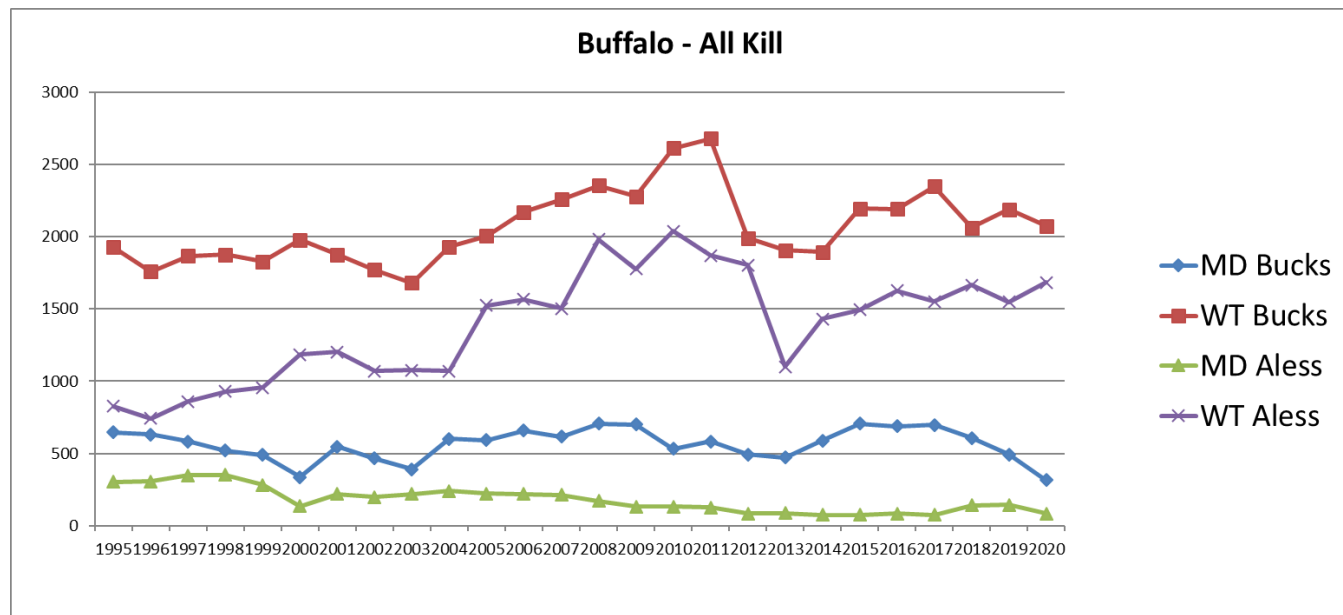
Permit Type	Permit Numbers			Mule Deer			Whitetail Deer			% Success
	Auth	Sold	Sellout	Buck	AO	Total	Buck	AO	Total	
Buffalo MDCA	1000	1000	8/19/20	169	3	172	255	136	391	48 / 8
Buffalo WT Firearm	2100	2100	11/12/20	1	0	1	777	128	905	43
Buffalo AO SC	1000	821	-	0	2	2	10	328	338	31 / 10
Buffalo North AO SC	100	100	11/12/20	0	32	32	0	16	16	40 / 8
River Antlerless				0	4	4	18	794	812	
Landowner Deer				59	29	88	242	105	347	
Archery Deer				18	2	20	261	48	309	
Muzzleloader Deer				1	0	1	55	35	90	
Resident Youth				54	10	64	152	48	200	
Youth Whitetail				2	0	2	93	40	133	
NR Rest Youth				9	1	10	10	3	13	
Rest SW Buck				0	0	0	11	0	11	
Statewide Buck				1	0	1	1	0	1	
Statewide WT Buck				0	0	0	190	2	192	
<b>Totals</b>				<b>314</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>2075</b>	<b>1683</b>	<b>3758</b>	

# BUFFALO MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

## Harvest comparisons by year

Year	Mule Deer								Whitetail Deer							
	Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age				Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age			
					1	2	3+						1	2	3+	
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	
2019	494	143	637	22	10	49	42		2190	1549	3739	41	21	29	51	
2020	314	83	397	21	14		86		2075	1683	3758	45	21		79	



## Total Permits Authorized

Year	Nov. Firearm	Special Seasons	Depredation	
			Complaints	DCP
2016	MDCA 1600 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> ) WT 1550 (1 WT)	Buffalo SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT)		
2017	MDCA 1600 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> ) WT 1550 (1 WT)	Buffalo SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT)	6	2
2018	MDCA 1600 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> ) WT 1550 (1 WT)	Buffalo SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT) Buffalo SCA North – 100 (2 AO)	11	5
2019	MDCA 1600 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> ) WT 1550 (1 WT)	Buffalo SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT) Buffalo SCA North – 100 (2 AO)	9	2
2020	MDCA 1000 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> ) WT 2100 (1 WT)	Buffalo SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT) Buffalo SCA North – 100 (1 AO, 1 AOWT)	7	3
2021*	MDCA 1000 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> ) WT 2100 (1 WT)	Buffalo SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT) Buffalo SCA North – 100 (1 AO, 1 AOWT)	6	4

\*\* Recommended permit numbers

<sup>2</sup> – No antlerless mule deer

MDCA – Mule Deer Conservation Area

AO – Antlerless Only AD – Any Deer

WT – Whitetail

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

## Expected Harvest:

Unit	MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless
All Season	300	2100	75	1700

## **CALAMUS EAST MANAGEMENT UNIT**

### **2021 Recommendations:**

**Calamus East November Firearm:** 1500 Any Deer<sup>2</sup> permits with Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tag. Antlerless mule deer are prohibited. This is an increase from 1300 in 2020.

**Calamus East Antlerless Only Season Choice:** 400 Antlerless Only Whitetail with Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tag. This is no change from 2020.

**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 slightly. Indices show a stable to growing population. Mule deer buck harvest was stable and is annually variable based on environmental conditions and hunter preference. The 2020 deer landowner survey indicated landowners in this unit generally felt the whitetail population was too high and damage to crops leaned toward unacceptable. For WT, the 2020 LO survey showed that 49% felt the population was too high, 49% reported severe or moderate damage and 44% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable. For MD, the 2020 LO survey showed that 7% felt there were too many, 9% reported severe or moderate damage and 10% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation complaints: 1 DCP: 1

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

### **2020 Harvest Data - Calamus East**

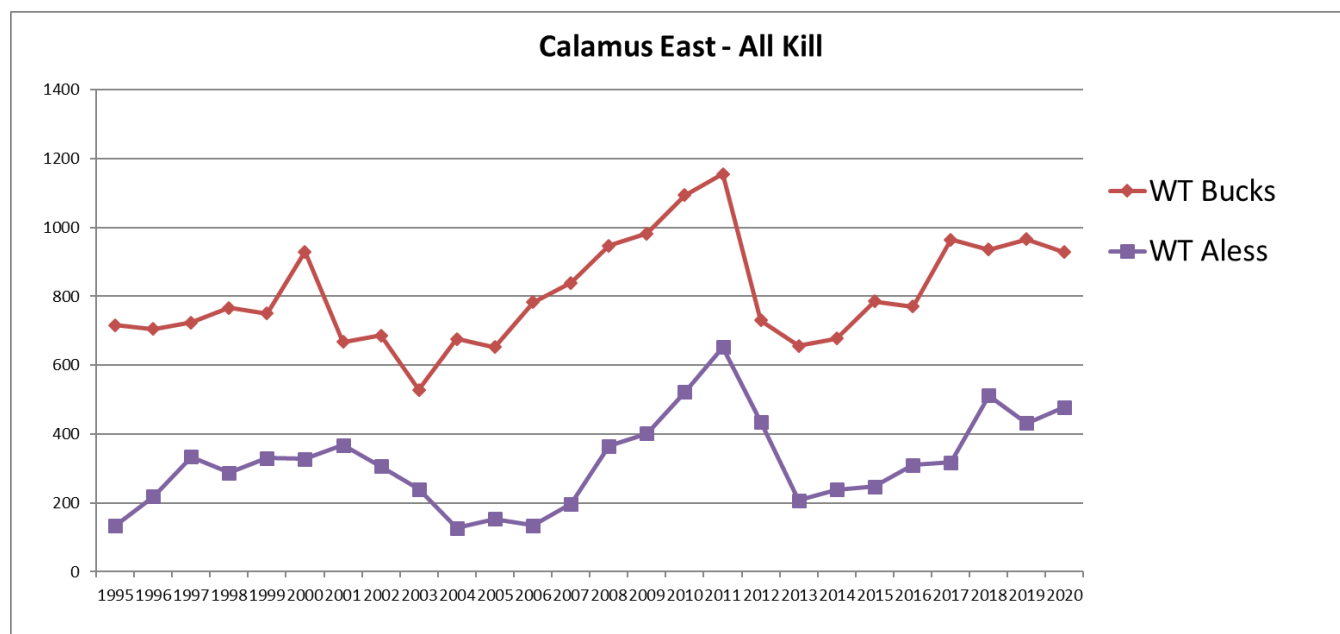
<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>%Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Calamus East FA	1300	1300	11/13/20	48	0	48	521	249	770	50 / 13
Calamus East AO SC	400	189	211	0	0	0	4	88	92	37 / 12
River Antlerless				0	0	0	2	68	70	
Landowner Deer				20	2	22	125	44	169	
Archery Deer				2	0	2	53	10	63	
Muzzleloader Deer				2	0	2	12	5	17	
Resident Youth				6	0	6	60	5	65	
Youth Whitetail				0	0	0	46	6	52	
NR Rest Youth				1	0	1	2	1	3	
Rest SW Buck				5	0	5	10	0	10	
Statewide Buck				0	0	0	0	0	0	
Statewide WT Buck				0	0	0	93	2	95	
<b>Totals</b>				<b>84</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>928</b>	<b>478</b>	<b>1406</b>	

## **CALAMUS EAST MANAGEMENT UNIT**

(continued)

### **Harvest comparisons by year**

Year	Mule Deer							Whitetail Deer						
	Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age			Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age		
					1	2	3+					1	2	3+
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
2019	80	10	90	11	36	28	36	966	432	1398	31	20	45	35
2020	84	2	86	2	10	90		928	478	1406	34	20	80	



### **Total Permits Authorized**

Year	Nov. Firearm	Special Seasons	Depredation	
			Complaints	DCP
2016	1150 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> )	Calamus East SCA – 200 (AOWT)		
2017	1150 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> )	Calamus East SCA – 200 (AOWT)	0	0
2018	1300 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT)	Calamus East SCA – 400 (2 AOWT)	1	0
2019	1300 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT)	Calamus East SCA – 400 (2 AOWT)	1	0
2020	1300 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT)	Calamus East SCA – 400 (2 AOWT)	0	0
2021*	1500 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT)	Calamus East SCA – 400 (2 AOWT)	1	1

\* Recommended permit numbers

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

<sup>2</sup> – No antlerless mule deer

AO – Antlerless Only    AD – Any Deer

### **Expected Harvest:**

Unit	MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless
All Season	90	1000	10	500

## **CALAMUS WEST MANAGEMENT UNIT**

### **2021 Recommendations:**

**Calamus West November Firearm:** 1600 Any Deer permits with two bonus antlerless whitetail. Antlerless mule deer is allowed during the firearm season. No antlerless mule deer harvest allowed on Nebraska National Forest – Bessey. In 2019, there were 1600 Any Deer permits with one bonus AOWT.

**Calamus West Antlerless Only Season Choice:** 300 Antlerless Only Whitetail permits with two Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tags. This is an additional bonus AOWT from last year.

Use of bonus and antlerless permits and harvest of mule deer does on Calamus West FA prohibited on Nebraska NF and Valentine NWR.

**General Information:** Mule deer buck harvest decreased 18% but age structure is excellent. Mule deer antlerless harvest decreased and is still below 20% of the harvest. Whitetail buck harvest decreased slightly, but age structure is still excellent. Whitetail antlerless harvest increased. For WT, the 2020 LO survey showed that 41% felt the population was too high, 46% reported severe or moderate damage and 46% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable. For MD, the 2020 LO survey showed that 18% felt there were too many, 28% reported severe or moderate damage and 31% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation complaints: 0

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** The objective for whitetails is to reduce the population from current levels and maintain age structure. The objective for mule deer is to maintain the population while providing opportunity to harvest mule deer does at sustainable rates (<20%).

### **2020 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	1600	1600	11/6/20	186	23	209	461	182	643	46 / 8
Calamus West AOSC	300	200	-	0	1	1	2	90	92	32 / 14
River Antlerless				0	0	0	1	29	30	
Landowner Deer				39	11	50	87	31	118	
Archery Deer				15	4	19	80	9	89	
Muzzleloader				35	12	47	32	14	46	
Resident Youth				35	6	41	71	7	78	
Youth Whitetail				1	0	1	28	8	36	
NR Rest Youth				5	0	5	7	1	8	
Rest SW Buck				19	0	19	18	0	18	
Statewide Buck				0	0	0	0	0	0	
Statewide WT Buck				0	0	0	74	2	76	
<b>Totals</b>				<b>335</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>861</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>1234</b>	

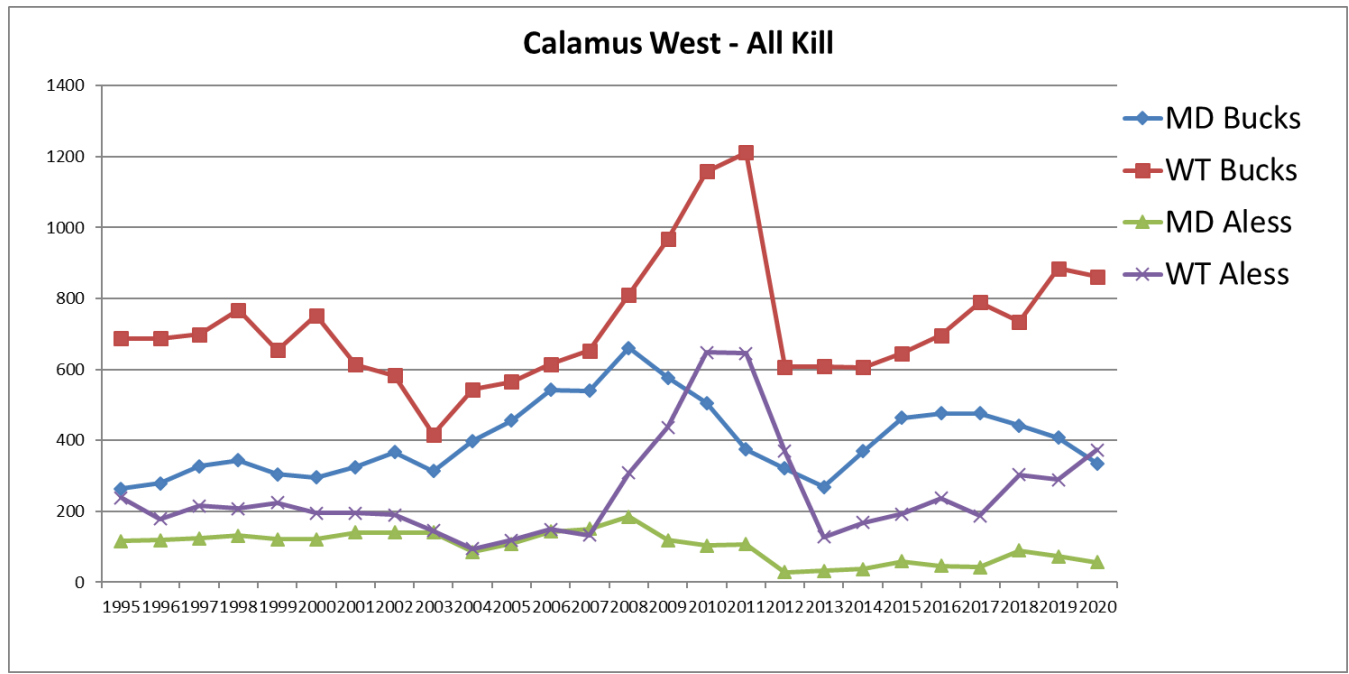


## CALAMUS WEST MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

### Harvest comparisons by year

Year	Mule Deer							Whitetail Deer						
	Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age			Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age		
					1	2	3+					1	2	3+
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
2019	408	73	481	15	7	37	56	885	289	1174	25	17	38	45
2020	335	57	392	15	11	89		861	373	1234	30	18	82	



### Total Permits Authorized

Year	Nov. Firearm	Special Seasons	Depredation	
			Complaints	DCP
2016	1450 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> )	Calamus West SCA – 150 (AOWT)		
2017	1450 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> )	Calamus West SCA – 150 (AOWT)	0	0
2018	1450 (1 AD)	Calamus West SCA – 150 (AOWT)	0	0
2019	1600 (1 AD)	Calamus West SCA – 300 (2 AOWT)	1	0
2020	1600 (1 AD, 1 AOWT)	Calamus West SCA – 300 (2 AOWT)	0	0
2021*	1600 (1 AD, 2 AOWT)	Calamus West SCA – 300 (3 AOWT)	0	0

\*\* Recommended permit numbers

<sup>2</sup> – 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
Calamus West	350	850	60	400

## **ELKHORN MANAGEMENT UNIT**

### **2021 Recommendations:**

**Elkhorn November Firearm:** 2900 Any Deer permits with no antlerless bonus tags. This is an increase from 2700 in 2020.

**Elkhorn Antlerless Only Season Choice:** 1000 Antlerless Only Whitetail permits with no antlerless bonus tags. No change from 2020.

**General Information:** Whitetail buck harvest was stable. The adult buck age structure improved and met unit goals for the fourth consecutive year. The trend indicates a stable to slightly growing population. Mule deer harvest remains low due to lack of adequate habitat in the unit. Historically, this unit had significant crop damage complaints from WT 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. For WT, the 2020 LO survey showed that 23% felt the population was too high, 24% reported severe or moderate damage and 23% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable. For MD, the 2020 LO survey showed that 6% felt there were too many, 3% reported severe or moderate damage and 3% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation complaints: 2. DCP: 2

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** The population objective is to stabilize the whitetail population. Management of mule deer with harvest restrictions is ineffective due to low density and very limited mule deer habitat in the unit.

### **2020 Harvest Data – Elkhorn**

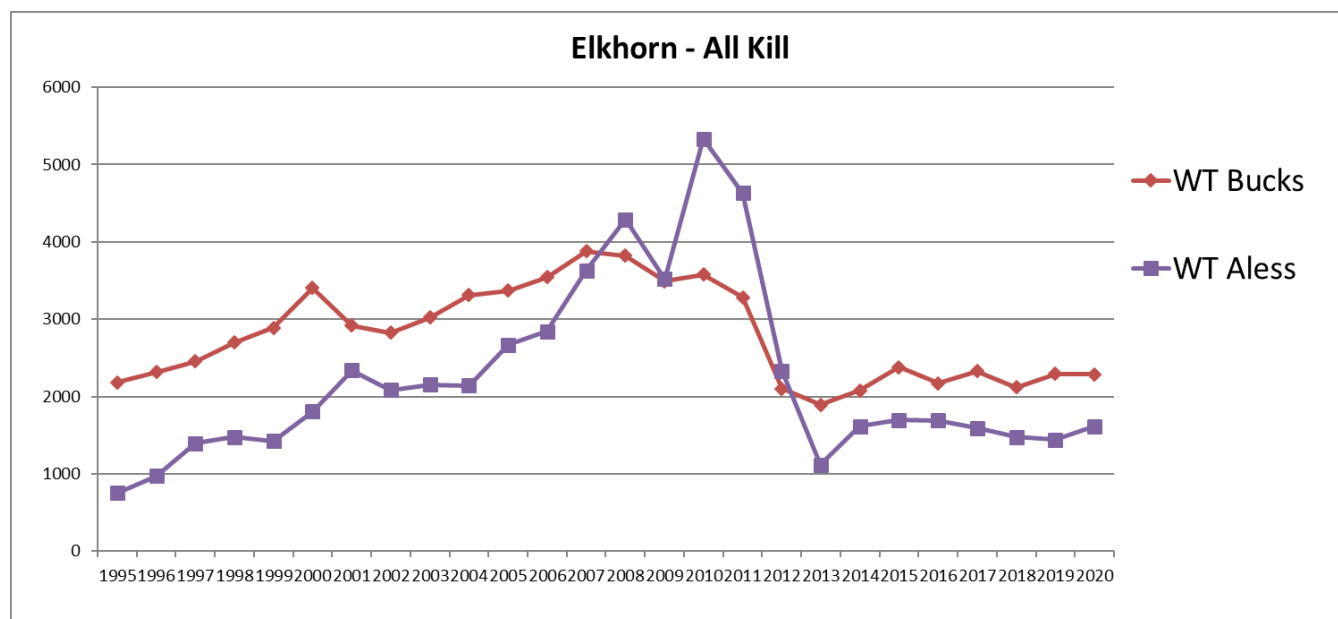
<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Elkhorn Firearm	2700	2700	10/22/20	4	0	4	945	241	1186	44
Elkhorn AO SC	1000	1000	11/4/20	0	0	0	5	243	248	25
River Antlerless				0	2	2	15	709	724	
Landowner Deer				3	1	4	408	206	614	
Archery Deer				2	0	2	265	63	328	
Muzzleloader				0	0	0	65	47	112	
Resident Youth				1	0	1	127	54	181	
Youth Whitetail				0	0	0	110	46	156	
NR Rest Youth				0	0	0	6	1	7	
Rest SW Buck				0	0	0	11	0	11	
Statewide Buck				0	0	0	0	0	0	
Statewide WT Buck				1	0	1	326	4	330	
<b>Totals</b>				<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2283</b>	<b>1614</b>	<b>3897</b>	

# ELKHORN MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

## Harvest comparisons by year

Year	Mule Deer							Whitetail Deer						
	Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age			Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age		
					1	2	3+					1	2	3+
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
2019	18	9	27	33				2295	1440	3735	39	32	43	25
2020	11	3	14	21				2283	1614	3897	41	29	71	



## Total Permits Authorized

Year	Nov. Firearm	Special Seasons	Depredation	
			Complaints	DCP
2016	2900 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> )	Elkhorn SCA – 2300 (AOWT)		
2017	2700 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> )	Elkhorn SCA – 1800 (AOWT)	0	0
2018	2700 (1 AD)	Elkhorn SCA – 1000 (AOWT)	2	0
2019	2700 (1 AD)	Elkhorn SCA – 1000 (AOWT)	0	0
2020	2700 (1 AD)	Elkhorn SCA – 1000 (AOWT)	0	0
2021*	2900 (1 AD)	Elkhorn SCA – 1000 (AOWT)	2	2

\*\* Recommended permit numbers

<sup>2</sup> – 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
Elkhorn	10	2300	5	1500

## **FRENCHMAN MANAGEMENT UNIT**

### **2021 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 in quota from 2020.

**Nonresident Allocation:** 8% of Frenchman MDCA permits.

**Frenchman Whitetail November Firearm:** 1600 permits for one whitetail and one antlerless whitetail. No change from 2020.

**Frenchman Antlerless Only:** Permits are not valid on Red Willow WMA/SRA, Medicine Creek WMA/SRA, Swanson WMA/SRA or Enders WMA/SRA. See Additional AOSC Map or unit description for details.

**Frenchman North WT:** 500 permits for two antlerless whitetail. This is a new permit for 2020.

**Frenchman South WT:** 300 permits for two antlerless whitetail. This is a new permit for 2020.

**Frenchman:** 300 permits for one antlerless and one antlerless whitetail. No change from 2020.

**Frenchman West:** 650 permits for two antlerless deer. No change from 2020.

**Southwest Reservoirs Antlerless Only:** New permit for 2021. 200 permits for one AOWT. Valid only on Red Willow WMA/SRA, Medicine Creek WMA/SRA, Swanson WMA/SRA or Enders WMA/SRA.

**River Antlerless:** Remove Frenchman portion of Republican River.

**General Information:** WT buck harvest is 26% below the record harvest set in 2011. MD Buck harvest declined 15% from 2019. Buck age structure for both WT and MD is very good. For WT, the 2020 LO survey showed that 30% felt the population was too high, 36% reported severe or moderate damage and 33% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable. For MD, the 2020 LO survey showed that 29% felt there were too many, 39% reported severe or moderate damage and 37% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation Complaints: 6 WT, 15 MD. DCP Issued: 5 WT, 11 MD.

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** Aggressive antlerless MD harvest is helping to reduce mule deer populations in the western 2/3 of the unit. High harvest will continue in the core area of high numbers and depredation issues. Population objectives are to maintain mule deer numbers the eastern third and periphery of the unit and decrease numbers in Hayes, Hitchcock and Frontier Counties. 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. The removal of the Frenchman portion of the Republican River from River Antlerless will help reduce antlerless harvest along the river. The population objective is maintain overall whitetail numbers while allowing enough permits to handle all depredation complaints.

### **2020 Harvest Data – Frenchman**

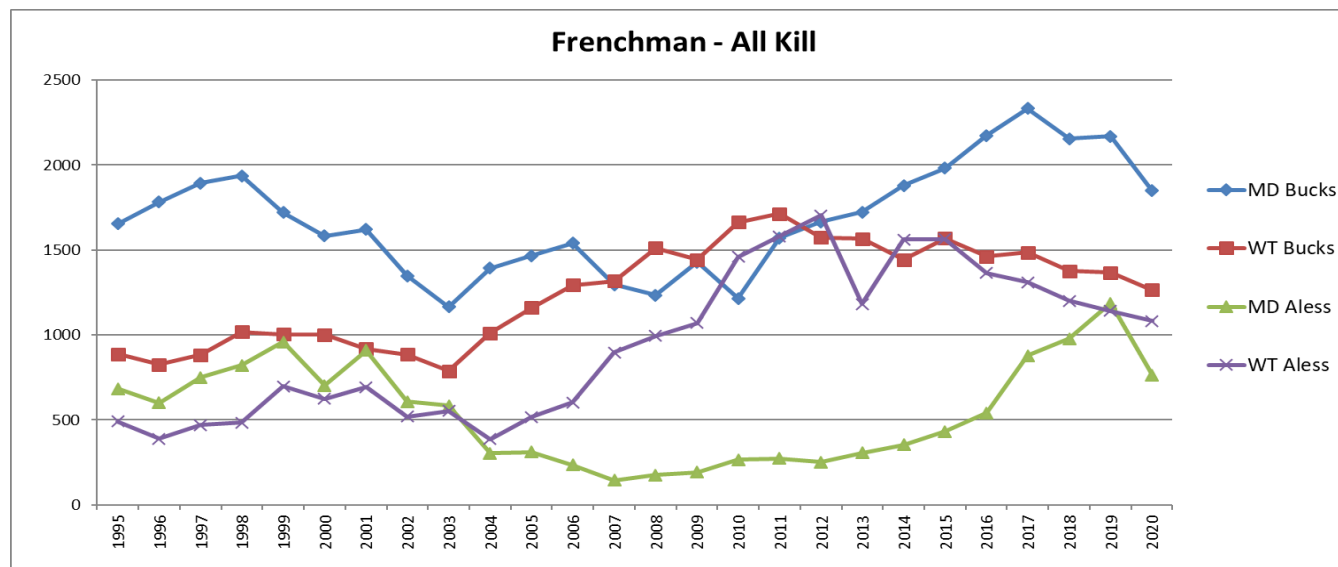
Permit Type	Permit Numbers			Mule Deer			Whitetail Deer			% Success
	Auth	Sold	Sellout	Buck	AO	Total	Buck	AO	Total	
Frenchman MDCA	2000	2000	8/3/20	854	57	911	131	163	294	54 / 6
Frenchman WT	1600	1600	11/6/20	2	3	5	581	327	908	46 / 12
Frenchman AO SC	500	500	11/20/20	1	76	77	1	68	69	39 / 10
FR WT AO SC	300	300	9/20/20	0	1	1	5	188	193	27 / 12
FR West AO SC	650	650	11/9/20	4	418	422	1	53	54	49 / 25
River Antlerless				0	1	1	7	133	140	
Landowner Deer				377	141	518	128	54	182	
Archery Deer				258	26	284	150	30	180	
Muzzleloader				0	0	0	31	13	44	
Resident Youth				324	41	365	63	21	84	
Youth Whitetail				2	0	2	58	27	85	
NR Rest Youth				0	0	0	0	4	4	
Rest SW Buck				0	0	0	1	0	1	
Statewide Buck				26	0	26	2	0	2	
Statewide WT Buck				0	0	0	107	1	108	
<b>Totals</b>				<b>1848</b>	<b>764</b>	<b>2612</b>	<b>1266</b>	<b>1082</b>	<b>2348</b>	

## FRENCHMAN MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

**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+
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
2019	2170	1187	3357	35	7	39	54	1367	1141	2508	45	15	39	46
2020	1848	764	2612	29	6	94		1266	1082	2348	46	18	82	



### **Total Permits Authorized**

Year	Nov. Firearm	Special Seasons	Depredation	
			Complaints	DCP
2016	MDCA 1900 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT) WT 1600 (1 WT/1 AOWT)	Frenchman SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT) Frenchman SCA West – 800 (1AO, 1AOWT)		
2017	MDCA 1900 (1 AD, 1 AOWT) WT 1400 (1 WT/1 AOWT)	Frenchman SCA – 800 (2 AOWT) Frenchman SCA West – 875 (2 AO)	12	2
2018	MDCA 2000 (1 AD, 1 AOWT) WT 1400 (1 WT/1 AOWT)	Frenchman SCA – 800 (2 AOWT) Frenchman SCA West – 1000 (2 AO)	23	3
2019	MDCA 2000 (1 AD, 1 AOWT) WT 1600 (1 WT/1 AOWT)	Frenchman SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT) Frenchman SCA West – 1250 (2 AO)	10	3
2020	MDCA 2000 (1 AD, 1 AOWT) WT 1600 (1 WT/1 AOWT)	Frenchman SCA – 300 (1AO, 1AOWT) Frenchman WT SCA – 500 (2 AOWT) Frenchman SCA West – 650 (2 AO)	29	16
2021*	MDCA 2000 (1 AD, 1 AOWT) WT 1600 (1 WT/1 AOWT)	Frenchman SCA – 300 (1AO, 1AOWT) Frenchman North WT SCA – 500 (2 AOWT) Frenchman South WT SCA – 300 (2 AOWT) Frenchman SCA West – 650 (2 AO) SW Reservoir SCA – 200 (1 AOWT)	21	16

\* Recommended permit numbers

<sup>2</sup> – No antlerless mule deer

MDCA – Mule Deer Conservation Area

AO – Antlerless Only AD – Any Deer

WT – Whitetail

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

### **Expected Harvest:**

Unit	MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless
Frenchman	1900	1200	800	1000

## **KEYA PAHA MANAGEMENT UNIT**

### **2021 Recommendations:**

**Keya Paha November Firearm:** 2500 Any Deer<sup>2</sup> permits with two Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tags. Antlerless mule deer are prohibited. No quota change from 2020, added a bonus tag.

**Keya Paha Antlerless Only Season Choice:** 500 Antlerless Only Whitetail with two Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tags. No quota change from 2020, added a bonus tag.

**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. WT adult buck harvest increased to a five year high, while age structure index still suggests a high WT population. Mule deer buck harvest decreased, but varies annually based on environmental conditions and hunter preference. For WT, the 2020 LO survey showed that 51% felt the population was too high, 51% reported severe or moderate damage and 53% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable. For MD, the 2020 LO survey showed that 12% felt there were too many, 14% reported severe or moderate damage and 23% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation complaints: 10 DCP: 5

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** Harvest of mature WT bucks still remains high in this unit with 90% of bucks harvested aged at 2.5 years or older. The mule deer adult buck age structure remained at 89% for bucks 2.5 or older. The objective for this unit is to increase the WT antlerless harvest to reduce the population. Bonus tags to the 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 addition of the Eagle Creek watershed into the River Antlerless zone in 2020 addressed most of the depredation issues. The population objective for mule deer is to maintain buck age structure while providing opportunity for hunters and landowners.

### **2020 Harvest Data - Keya Paha**

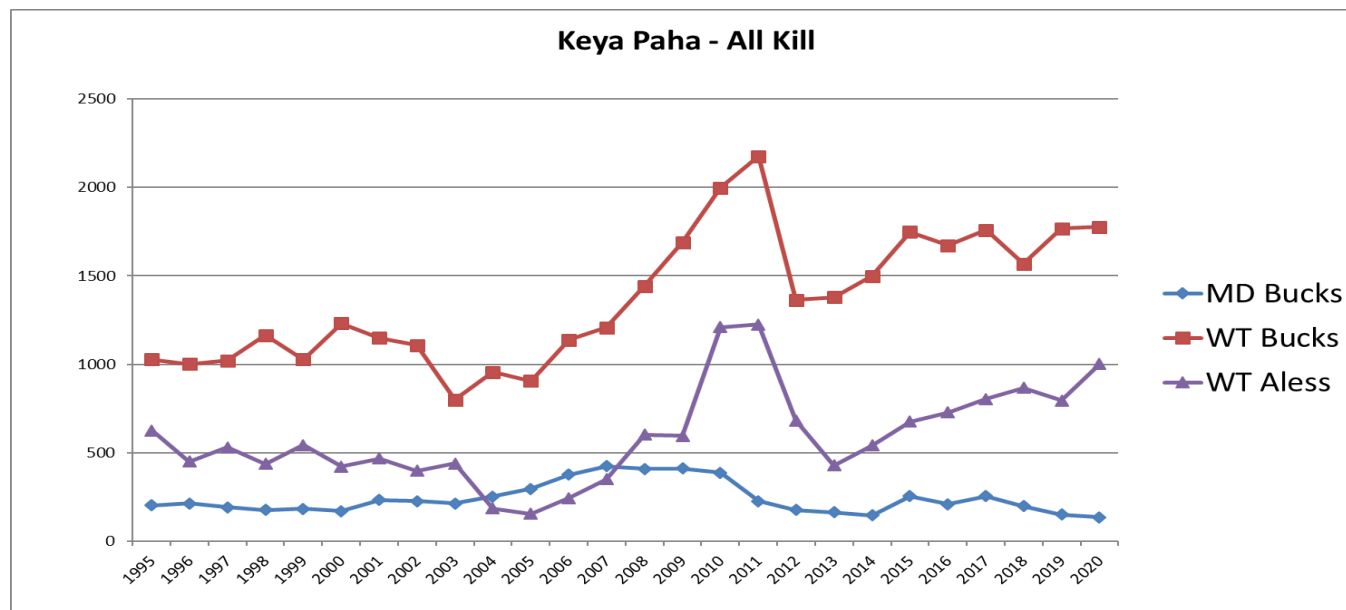
<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Keya Paha Firearm	2500	2204	-	100	2	102	1099	378	1477	55 / 10
Keya Paha AO SC	500	243	-	0	0	0	4	187	191	42 / 17
River Antlerless				0	2	2	10	280	290	
Landowner Deer				8	7	15	170	92	262	
Archery Deer				8	0	8	159	6	165	
Muzzleloader				7	2	9	87	21	108	
Resident Youth				5	3	8	95	10	105	
Youth Whitetail				1	0	1	45	18	63	
NR Rest Youth				1	1	2	16	9	25	
Rest SW Buck				3	0	3	11	0	11	
Statewide Buck				0	0	0	0	0	0	
Statewide WT Buck				1	0	1	80	0	80	
<b>Totals</b>				<b>134</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>1776</b>	<b>1001</b>	<b>2777</b>	

# KEYA PAHA MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

## Harvest comparisons by year

Year	Mule Deer							Whitetail Deer						
	Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age			Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age		
					1	2	3+					1	2	3+
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
2019	149	13	162	8	9	31	60	1767	794	2561	31	10	38	52
2020	134	17	151	11	13	87		1776	1001	2777	36	15	85	



## Total Permits Authorized

Year	Nov. Firearm	Special Seasons	Depredation	
			Complaints	DCP
2016	2300 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT)	Keya Paha SCA – 500 (2 AOWT)		
2017	2300 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT)	Keya Paha SCA – 500 (2 AOWT)	0	0
2018	2300 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT)	Keya Paha SCA – 500 (2 AOWT)	0	0
2019	2500 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT)	Keya Paha SCA – 500 (2 AOWT)	2	0
2020	2500 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT)	Keya Paha SCA – 500 (2 AOWT)	6	0
2021*	2500 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 2 AOWT)	Keya Paha SCA – 500 (3 AOWT)	10	5

\*\* Recommended permit numbers

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

<sup>2</sup> – No antlerless mule deer

AO – Antlerless Only AD – Any Deer

## Expected Harvest:

Unit	MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless
All Seasons	150	1800	15	1200

## **LOUP EAST MANAGEMENT UNIT**

### **2021 Recommendations:**

**Loup East November Firearm:** 3300 Any Deer<sup>2</sup> permits with two (2) bonus Antlerless Only Whitetail tags. Antlerless mule deer are prohibited. No change from 2020

**Loup East Antlerless Only Season Choice:** 1500 Antlerless Only Whitetail, with two (2) Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tags. No change from 2020.

**General Information:** Harvest of whitetail bucks decreased this year after exceeding expected results the previous five years. Antlerless harvest nearly met 50% goal in 2019 and did meet 50% in 2020. Indicators show a trend for WT population stabilization. The age of whitetail bucks remains high. Mule deer buck harvest and age structure remains stable. Severe flooding in March altered riverine habitat and crop planting in this unit greatly in 2019. The River Antlerless season extension in 2020 helped meet the 50% antlerless harvest goal. Sixteen (16) depredation complaints were received and eleven (11) damage control permits were issued. For WT, the 2020 LO survey showed that 43% felt the population was too high, 51% reported severe or moderate damage and 44% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable. For MD, the 2020 LO survey showed that 2% felt there were too many, 4% reported severe or moderate damage and 6% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable.

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** WT Buck harvest declined 10% from 2019. The objective for whitetails is to maintain high antlerless harvest to address the increasing deer herd. There were moderate EHD reports in this unit. Deer damage complaints have been typically located along the Loup River system, in the Fullerton area specifically the last 2 years. River Antlerless and Bonus tags on Firearm Permits have been the best choice for hunters to harvest antlerless deer. High permit numbers, extra antlerless bonus tags and a season extensions have boosted antlerless WT harvest and are helping to reduce the population.

### **2020 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 Firearm	3300	3300	11/13/20	32	3	35	1206	893	2099	48 / 14 / 3
Loup East AO SC	1500	648	-	0	1	1	8	372	380	30 / 11 / 4
River Antlerless				0	0	0	19	653	672	
Landowner Deer				8	0	8	323	190	513	
Archery Deer				3	0	3	188	30	218	
Muzzleloader				2	0	2	56	19	75	
Resident Youth				11	5	16	147	39	186	
Youth Whitetail				1	1	2	88	31	119	
NR Rest Youth				0	0	0	5	4	9	
Rest SW Buck				2	0	2	5	0	5	
Statewide Buck				0	0	0	0	0	0	
Statewide WT Buck				1	0	1	152	1	153	
<b>Totals</b>				<b>60</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>2197</b>	<b>2232</b>	<b>4429</b>	

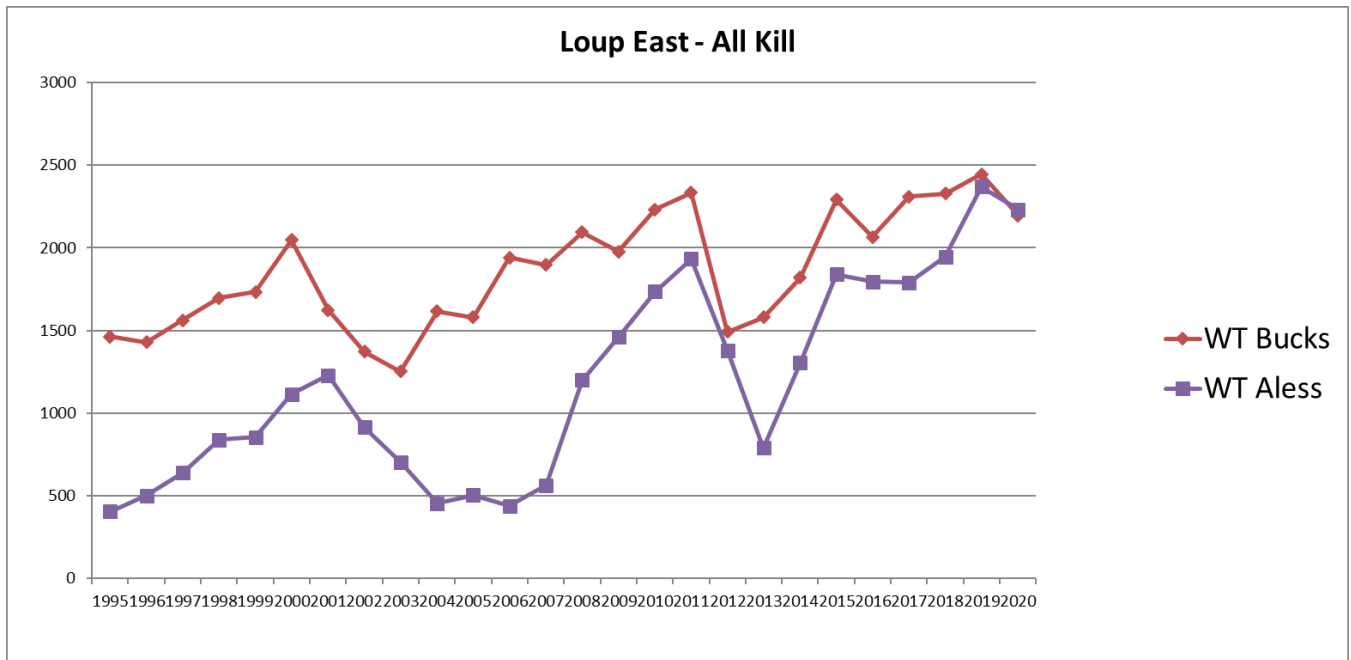


# LOUP EAST MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

## Harvest comparisons by year

Year	Mule Deer							Whitetail Deer						
	Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age			Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age		
					1	2	3+					1	2	3+
2016	69	8	77	10	35	33	31	2067	1769	3836	46	25	46	29
2017	95	12	105	11	31	35	33	2311	1791	4102	44	25	42	32
2018	67	10	77	14	30	40	30	2328	1947	4275	46	24	45	32
2019	66	11	77	14	32	48	20	2445	2370	4815	49	20	36	44
2020	60	10	70	14	25	75		2197	2232	4429	50	22	78	



## Total Permits Authorized

Year	Nov. Firearm	Special Seasons	Depredation	
			Complaints	DCP
2016	2150 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT)	Loup East SCA – 1500 (2 AOWT)		
2017	2400 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT)	Loup East SCA – 1500 (2 AOWT)	4	1
2018	2700 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT)	Loup East SCA – 1500 (2 AOWT)	17	3
2019	3000 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 2 AOWT)	Loup East SCA – 1500 (3 AOWT)	12	5
2020	3300 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 2 AOWT)	Loup East SCA – 1500 (3 AOWT)	14	10
2021*	3300 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 2 AOWT)	Loup East SCA – 1500 (3 AOWT)	16	11

\* Recommended permit numbers

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

<sup>2</sup> – No antlerless mule deer

AO – Antlerless Only AD – Any Deer

## Expected Harvest:

Unit	MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless
All Seasons	60	2200	10	2300

## **LOUP WEST MANAGEMENT UNIT**

### **2021 Recommendations:**

**Loup West November Firearm:** 1000 Any Deer<sup>2</sup> permits, with two Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tags. Permits not valid for antlerless mule deer. This is a reduction from 1200 in 2020.

**Loup West Whitetail November Firearm:** 800 Any Whitetail permits, with two Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tags. This is an increase from 600 in 2020

**Loup West Antlerless Only Season Choice:** 100 permits for 1 Antlerless Only and 2 Antlerless Only Whitetail. This is a reduction from 400 in 2020.

**Loup West Whitetail Antlerless Only Season Choice:** 300 permits for 3 Antlerless Only Whitetail. This is a new permit for 2021.

**General Information:** MD buck harvest has declined by nearly 50% the last 2 years. Two (2) cases of meningeal worm mortalities in mule deer were confirmed and many more symptomatic cases have been reported the last 2 years. WT buck harvest has remained steady and antlerless harvest increased 18% with the increase in permits and tags. For WT, the 2020 LO survey showed that 31% felt the population was too high, 14% reported severe or moderate damage and 20% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable. For MD, the 2020 LO survey showed that 18% felt there were too many, 16% reported severe or moderate damage and 20% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation complaints: 0 DCP: 0

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** The whitetail deer population appears to be increasing. The population objective for whitetail is to maintain the herd at the current level. River Antlerless permits, Loup West WT SCA and additional bonus tags will allow us to meet this objective and address any crop damage concerns in the unit. There appears to be little hunter interest in additional AOWT harvest in this unit.

Mule deer populations appear to be decreasing. Some of the decrease in buck harvest was due to the change in permit strategy implemented in 2020. Age structure remains good. The mule deer population experienced substantial disease mortality due to meningeal brain worm in 2019 and 2020, with 5 confirmed cases and 40+ suspect cases. The population objective is to allow the mule deer herd to grow, while maintaining the current age structure. This will be accomplished by a change in permit numbers that allow harvest of mule deer and allowing hunters to harvest more of the abundant WT deer in the unit. Increasing antlerless WT harvest is important to the management of mule deer in the unit.

### **2020 Harvest Data - Loup West**

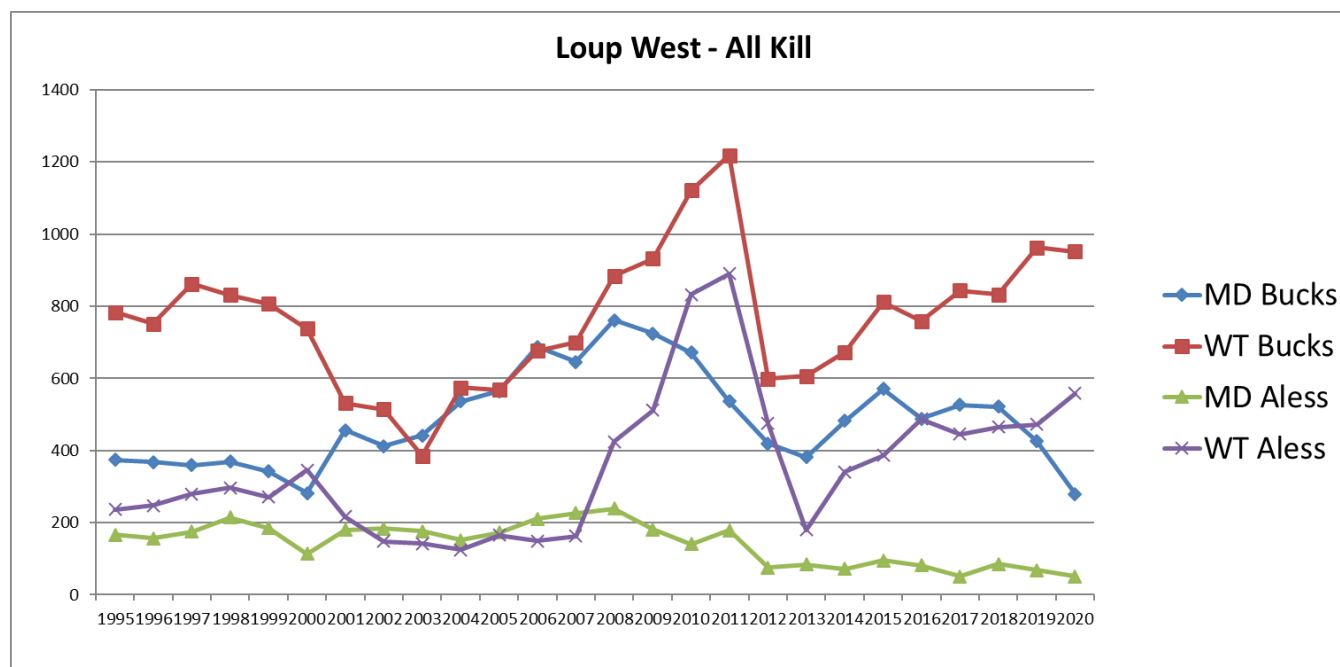
Permit Type	Permit Numbers			Mule Deer			Whitetail Deer			% Success
	Auth	Sold	Sellout	Buck	AO	Total	Buck	AO	Total	
Loup West Firearm	1200	1200	11/7/20	149	0	149	381	222	603	50 / 10 / 3
Loup West Whitetail	600	452	-	0	0	0	158	84	242	44 / 8 / 2
Loup West AO SC	400	211	-	0	22	22	2	85	87	37 / 11 / 4
River Antlerless				0	0	0	0	77	77	
Landowner Deer				38	21	59	121	45	166	
Archery Deer				10	1	11	73	9	82	
Muzzleloader				25	4	29	34	7	41	
Resident Youth				40	3	43	84	21	105	
Youth Whitetail				4	0	4	34	7	41	
NR Rest Youth				3	0	3	5	0	5	
Rest SW Buck				9	0	9	19	0	19	
Statewide Buck				1	0	1	0	0	0	
Statewide WT Buck				0	0	0	41	1	42	
<b>Totals</b>				<b>279</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>952</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>1510</b>	

# LOUP WEST MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

## Harvest comparisons by year

Year	Mule Deer							Whitetail Deer						
	Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age			Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age		
					1	2	3+					1	2	3+
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
2019	426	68	494	14	10	55	35	963	473	1436	33	19	41	40
2020	279	51	330	16	13	87		952	558	1510	37	17	83	



## Total Permits Authorized

Year	Nov. Firearm	Special Seasons	Depredation	
			Complaints	DCP
2016	1350 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT)	Loup West SCA – 500 (2 AOWT)		
2017	1500 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT)	Loup West SCA – 400 (2 AOWT)	0	0
2018	1700 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT)	Loup West SCA – 400 (1 AO, 1 AOWT)	0	0
2019	1700 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT)	Loup West SCA – 400 (2 AO)	0	0
2020	1200 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 2 AOWT) 600 (1 WT, 2 AOWT)	Loup West SCA – 400 (1 AO, 2 AOWT)	3	0
2021*	1000 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 2 AOWT) 800 (1WT, 2 AOWT)	Loup West SCA – 100 (1 AO, 2 AOWT) Loup West WT SCA – 300 (3 AOWT)	0	0

\* Recommended permit numbers

<sup>2</sup> – No antlerless mule deer

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

AO – Antlerless Only AD – Any Deer

WT – Whitetail

## Expected Harvest:

Unit	MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless
All Season	250	1000	40	700

## MISSOURI MANAGEMENT UNIT

### 2021 Recommendations:

**Missouri November Firearm:** 3200 Any Deer permits with Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tag. This is no change from 2020.

**Missouri Antlerless Only Season Choice:** 1000 Antlerless Only Whitetail permits with Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tags. No change from 2020.

**General Information:** The whitetail buck decreased slightly, while whitetail antlerless harvest increased with the additions to River Antlerless. Whitetail buck age structure remains desirable. Whitetail densities are highest in the western ½ of the unit. For WT, the 2020 LO survey showed that 27% felt the population was too high, 41% reported severe or moderate damage and 34% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable. For MD, the 2020 LO survey showed that 0% felt there were too many, 3% reported severe or moderate damage and 3% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation complaints: 9 DCP: 4

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** The objective is to maintain or increase antlerless harvest to stabilize herd growth. The age structure of the bucks in the harvest meet unit goals even with an increase in harvest from 2019, indicating more buck harvest is sustainable. The addition of the Verdigris and Bazile Creek watersheds in the River Antlerless zone helped increase antlerless harvest in the western ½ of the unit. The objective for the mule deer population is to allow the herd to grow as allowed by landowner tolerance and disease events.

### 2020 Harvest Data – Missouri

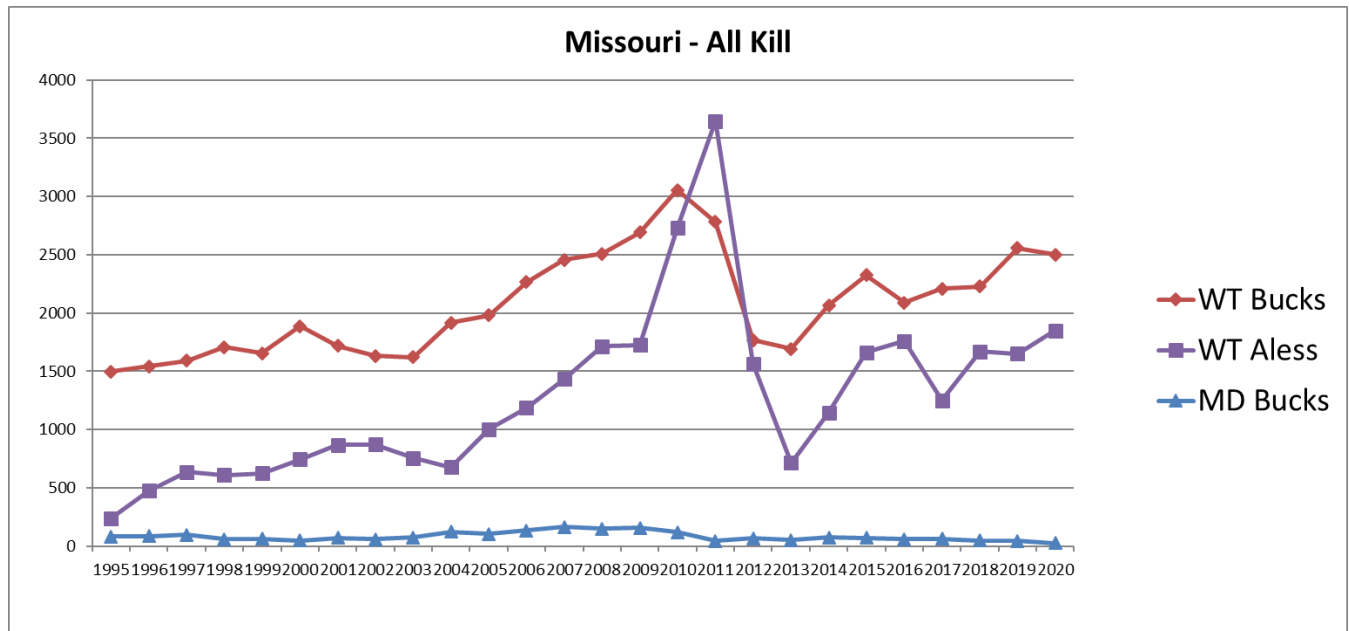
<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Missouri Firearm	3200	3200	11/10/20	12	0	12	1300	665	1965	50 / 12
Missouri AO SC	1000	1000	12/26/20	0	0	0	8	448	456	33 / 12
River Antlerless				0	2	2	8	426	434	
Landowner Deer				2	3	5	336	170	506	
Archery Deer				1	0	1	249	42	291	
Muzzleloader				2	0	2	65	25	90	
Resident Youth				5	1	6	159	39	198	
Youth Whitetail				2	0	2	111	24	135	
NR Rest Youth				0	0	0	28	7	35	
Rest SW Buck				0	0	0	5	0	5	
Statewide Buck				0	0	0	0	0	0	
Statewide WT Buck				1	0	1	232	2	234	
<b>Totals</b>				<b>25</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>2501</b>	<b>1848</b>	<b>4349</b>	

# MISSOURI MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

## Harvest comparisons by year

Year	Mule Deer							Whitetail Deer						
	Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age			Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age		
					1	2	3+					1	2	3+
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
2019	43	3	46	7				2559	1651	4210	39	23	36	41
2020	25	6	31	19	20	80		2501	1848	4349	42	22	78	



## Total Permits Authorized

Year	Nov. Firearm	Special Seasons	Depredation	
			Complaints	DCP
2016	2900 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> , 1 AOWT)	Missouri SCA – 1500 (2 AOWT)		
2017	2900 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> )	Missouri SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT)	3	3
2018	2900 (1 AD, 1 AOWT)	Missouri SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT)	7	3
2019	3200 (1 AD, 1 AOWT)	Missouri SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT)	5	4
2020	3200 (1 AD, 1 AOWT)	Missouri SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT)	10	5
2021*	3200 (1 AD, 1 AOWT)	Missouri SCA – 1000 (2 AOWT)	9	4

\* Recommended permit numbers

<sup>2</sup> – 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	30	2500	5	1900

## **PINE RIDGE MANAGEMENT UNIT**

### **2021 Recommendations:**

**Pine Ridge November Firearm:** 1200 permits valid for one Any Deer<sup>2</sup>. No quota or bag change from 2020. A person may obtain no more than one Pine Ridge permit that allows the take of a mule deer buck.

**Pine Ridge Whitetail November Firearm:** 1000 permits valid for one whitetail of either sex. No change from 2020.

**Pine Ridge Antlerless Only Season Choice:** 400 permits for one antlerless deer and one antlerless whitetail. This is an increase from 200 in 2020.

**Pine Ridge Whitetail Antlerless Only Season Choice:** 600 permits for two antlerless only whitetails. No change from 2020.

**River Antlerless:** Add Monroe, Warbonnet and Chadron Creeks to River Antlerless.

**Pine Ridge Special Area Restriction:** Antlerless Mule Deer harvest prohibited on all federal and state owned public land in the Pine Ridge Deer Management Unit. Antlerless mule deer harvest was allowed in the unit only on landowner permits in 2019.

**General Information:** Mule deer buck harvest was 23% below the 5 year average and 3% up from 2019. However, some of that decline is in response to the permit shift in 2019. Whitetail buck harvest was up 13% compared to the 5 year average and down 3 % from 2019. Age structure continues to be good for both species. For WT, the 2020 LO survey showed that 31% felt the population was too high, 31% reported severe or moderate damage and 35% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable. For MD, the 2020 LO survey showed that 14% felt there were too many, 24% reported severe or moderate damage and 20% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable. Depredation complaints: 0

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** Trend indicators and observations indicate slightly increasing numbers of both mule deer and whitetail. Mule deer numbers have increased to a point where it's necessary to allow a low level of antlerless harvest. Objectives are to increase hunter satisfaction in this largely public land unit, increase mule deer populations and buck age, while providing opportunity to harvest antlerless mule deer. Objective is to reduce whitetail population in areas of high densities and reduce species interaction to benefit mule deer.

### **2020 Harvest Data - Pine Ridge**

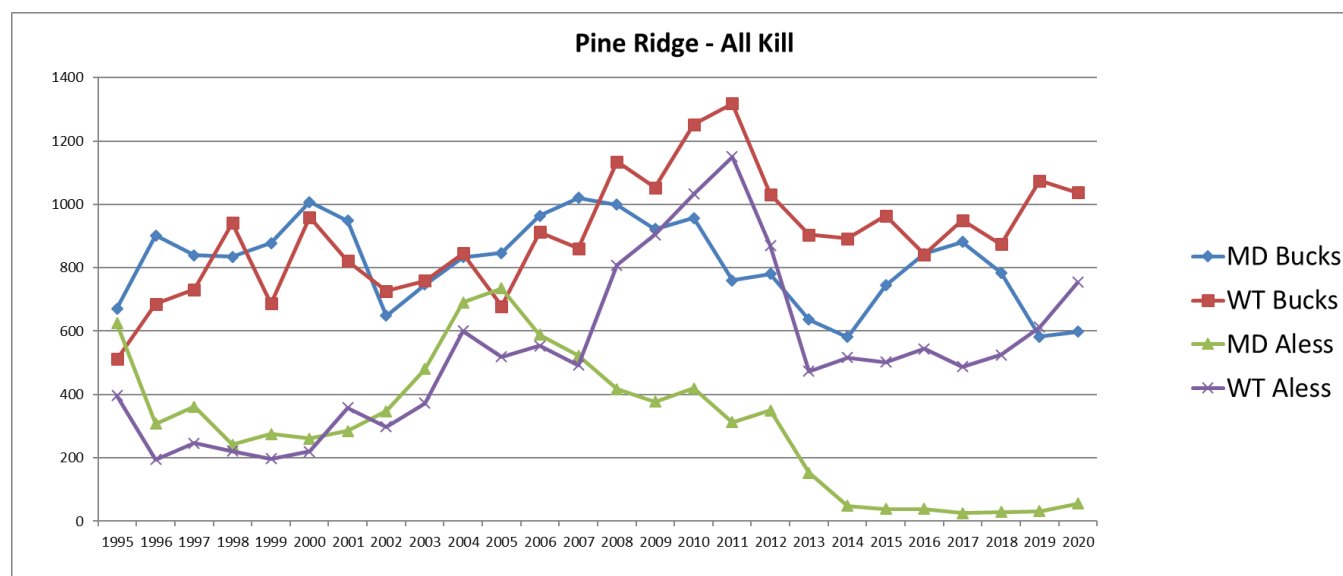
Permit Type	Permit Numbers			Mule Deer			Whitetail Deer			% Success
	Auth	Sold	Sellout	Buck	AO	Total	Buck	AO	Total	
Pine Ridge	1200	1109	8/4/20	245	0	245	274	40	314	50
Pine Ridge WT	1000	1000	11/14/20	0	0	0	358	79	437	44
Pine Ridge AO SC	600	551	49	0	34	34	0	97	97	48 / 18
Pine Ridge AO SC WT	200	200	8/22/20	0	1	1	9	297	306	40 / 15
River Antlerless				0	0	0	1	127	128	
Landowner Deer				87	15	102	74	44	118	
Archery Deer				70	1	71	95	18	113	
Muzzleloader				80	2	82	82	29	111	
Resident Youth				38	0	38	41	11	52	
Youth Whitetail				0	0	0	29	6	35	
NR Rest Youth				13	2	15	12	5	17	
Rest SW Buck				65	0	65	34	1	35	
Statewide Buck				0	0	0	1	0	1	
Statewide WT Buck				0	0	0	27	0	27	
Supertag				0	0	0	1	0	1	
<b>Totals</b>				<b>598</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>653</b>	<b>1038</b>	<b>754</b>	<b>1792</b>	

# PINE RIDGE MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

## Harvest comparisons by year

Year	Mule Deer							Whitetail Deer						
	Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age			Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age		
					1	2	3+					1	2	3+
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
2019	582	31	613	5	11	39	50	1075	612	1687	36	19	39	42
2020	598	55	653	8	18	82		1038	754	1792	42	18	82	



## Total Permits Authorized

Year	Nov. Firearm	Special Seasons	Depredation	
			Complaints	DCP
2016	2400 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> )	Pine Ridge SCA WT – 200 (AOWT)		
2017	2400 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> )	Pine Ridge SCA WT – 200 (AOWT)	2	0
2018	1650 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> ) 550 (1 WT)	Pine Ridge SCA WT – 400 (AOWT)	1	0
2019	1200 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> ) 1000 (1 WT)	Pine Ridge SCA WT – 500 (2 AOWT)	2	0
2020	1200 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> ) 1000 (1 WT)	Pine Ridge SCA – 200 (1AO, 1AOWT) <sup>+</sup> Pine Ridge SCA WT – 600 (2 AOWT)	2	0
2021*	1200 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> ) 1000 (1 WT)	Pine Ridge SCA – 400 (1AO, 1AOWT) <sup>+</sup> Pine Ridge SCA WT – 600 (2 AOWT)	2	1

\*Recommended permit numbers

+ Antlerless MD harvest on public land prohibited

AO – Antlerless Only

AD – Any Deer

<sup>2</sup> No antlerless mule deer

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

WT – Whitetail

## Expected Harvest:

Unit	MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless
All Season	600	1000	100	800

## PLAINS MANAGEMENT UNIT

### 2021 Recommendations:

**Plains November Firearm:** 1700 Any Deer with two bonus antlerless whitetail permits. Antlerless mule deer restrictions are on Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge. Addition of second bonus AOWT from 2020.

**Plains Antlerless Only Season Choice:** 500 Antlerless Only Season Choice permits with two Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tags. Antlerless mule deer restrictions are on Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge. Addition of second bonus tag from 2020.

**General Information:** Mule deer buck harvest was down 21% from the 5 year average and down 13% from 2019. Whitetail buck harvest was up 11% from the 5 year average and down 7% from 2018. Age structure remains good for both species. For WT, the 2020 LO survey showed that 27% felt the population was too high, 22% reported severe or moderate damage and 29% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable. For MD, the 2020 LO survey showed that 25% felt there were too many, 22% reported severe or moderate damage and 29% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation Complaints: 2

**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 reduce whitetail populations to reduce species interaction to benefit mule deer. This recommendation will continue the effort to maintain a relatively stable Mule deer population and address depredation problems areas through the use of Season Choice Antlerless Only permits.

### 2020 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 Firearm	1700	1700	11/4/20	503	84	587	297	171	468	55 / 7
Plains AO SC	500	466	34	5	140	145	2	70	72	40 / 7
River Antlerless				1	0	1	1	15	16	
Landowner Deer				77	39	116	36	18	54	
Archery Deer				45	8	53	39	6	45	
Muzzleloader				53	18	71	34	8	42	
Resident Youth				89	14	103	27	3	30	
Youth Whitetail				0	0	0	11	4	15	
NR Rest Youth				22	4	26	9	2	11	
Rest SW Buck				36	0	36	5	0	5	
Statewide Buck				0	0	0	0	0	0	
Statewide WT Buck				1	0	1	16	0	16	
<b>Totals</b>				<b>832</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>1139</b>	<b>477</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>774</b>	

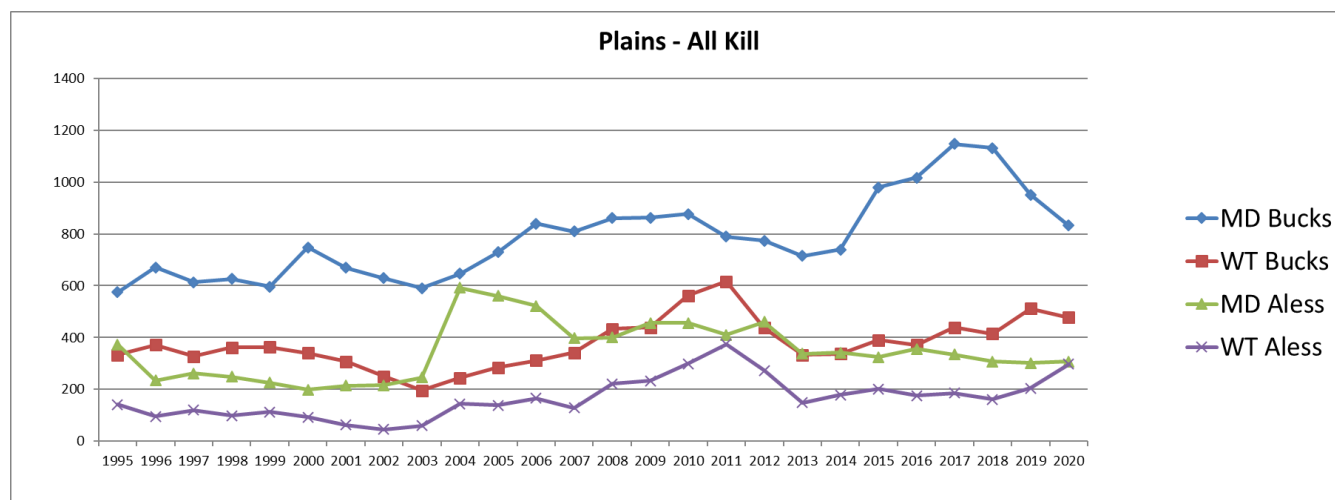


## PLAINS MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

### Harvest comparisons by year

Year	Mule Deer							Whitetail Deer						
	Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age			Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age		
					1	2	3+					1	2	3+
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	36	50	414	161	575	28	19	37	44
2019	951	302	1253	24	11	40	49	512	204	716	28	16	39	45
2020	832	307	1139	27	10	90		477	297	774	38	15	85	



### Total Permits Authorized

Year	Nov. Firearm	Special Seasons	Depredation	
			Complaints	DCP
2016	1500 (1 AD)	Plains SCA – 480 (AO)		
2017	1500 (1 AD)	Plains SCA – 480 (AO)	0	0
2018	1700 (1 AD)	Plains SCA – 500 (AO)	2	0
2019	1700 (1 AD)	Plains SCA – 500 (1 AO, 1 AOWT)	1	0
2020	1700 (1 AD, 1 AOWT)	Plains SCA – 500 (1 AO, 1 AOWT)	2	0
2021*	1700 (1 AD, 2 AOWT)	Plains SCA – 500 (1 AO, 2 AOWT)	2	0

\* Recommended permit numbers

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

<sup>2</sup> – No antlerless mule deer

AO – Antlerless Only    AD – Any Deer

### Expected Harvest:

Unit	MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless
All Season	900	500	325	350

## PLATTE MANAGEMENT UNIT

### 2021 Recommendations:

**Platte MDCA:** 1400 Any Deer<sup>2</sup> and one antlerless whitetail valid during November Firearm and Muzzleloader seasons. No change from 2020. **Nonresident Allocation:** 15% of Platte MDCA permits (210 permits).

**Platte Whitetail November Firearm:** 1300 permits for one whitetail. No change from 2019.

**Platte Antlerless Only Season Choice:** 200 permits for one antlerless deer and one antlerless whitetail. Valid for entire Platte Unit. No change from 2020.

**Platte Whitetail Antlerless Only Season Choice:** 500 permits for two antlerless whitetails. Valid for the entire Platte Unit. No change from 2020.

**Platte North Antlerless Only Season Choice:** 400 permits for two antlerless deer. No change from 2020

**General Information:** Whitetail buck harvest is only 1% below the 5-year average. Mule deer buck harvest is 15% below the 5-year average. Mule deer densities seem to be decreasing across most of the unit. Whitetail numbers exceed landowner tolerance on some portions of the Platte River where leasing is occurring. For WT, the 2020 LO survey showed that 37% felt the population was too high, 28% reported severe or moderate damage and 43% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable. For MD, the 2020 LO survey showed that 40% felt there were too many, 38% reported severe or moderate damage and 40% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation Complaints: WT 2, MD 1; DCP: WT 2, MD 0

1346 residents applied for 1190 MDCA permits (88% success) and 387 non-residents drew 210 MDCA permits (54% success).

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** Objectives are to maintain or reduce whitetail herds in riparian corridors and to decrease herds in uplands to limit competition between species and slow brainworm transmission with mule deer. Mule deer populations are declining across the unit due to a combination of meningeal brain worm and increased hunting pressure. Mule Deer objectives are to maintain age structure and decrease the population. There were thirteen confirmed reports of brainworm in mule deer in late 2019/early 2020. There were two confirmed cases in late 2020.

### 2020 Harvest Data – Platte

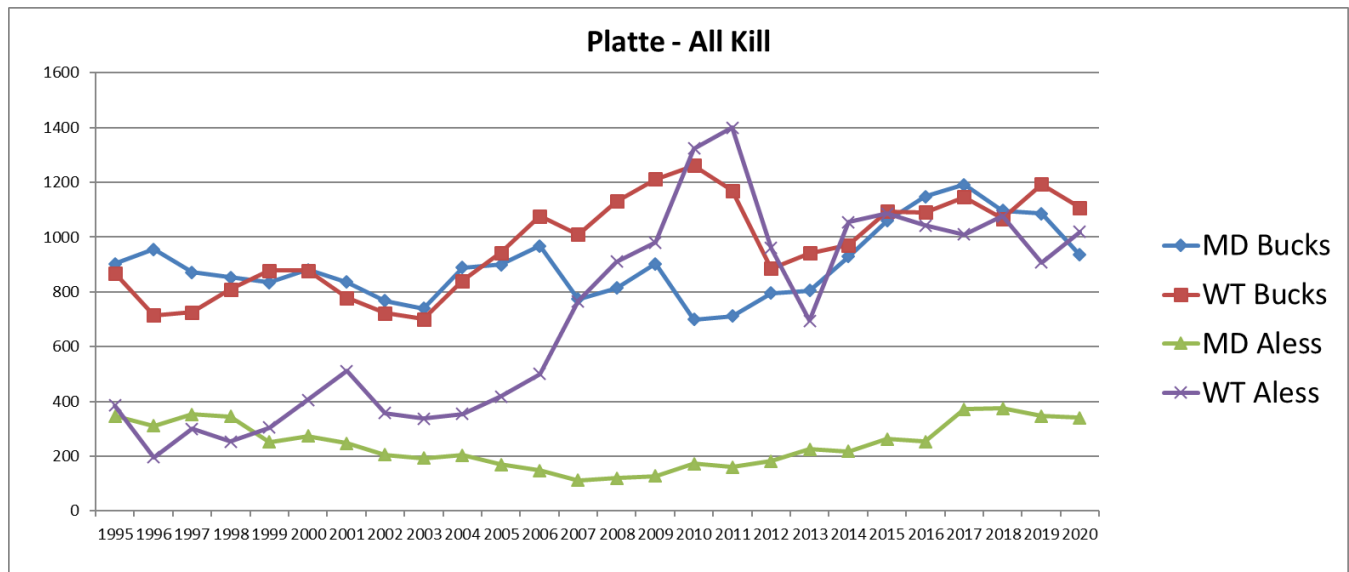
Permit Type	Permit Numbers			Mule Deer			Whitetail Deer			% Success
	Auth	Sold	Sellout	Buck	AO	Total	Buck	AO	Total	
Platte MDCA	1400	1400	8/3/20	501	2	503	165	139	304	51 / 7
Platte WT Firearm	1300	1242	-	4	0	4	409	56	465	38
Platte AO SC	200	200	9/26/20	0	32	32	2	66	68	34 / 16
Platte WT AO SC	500	498	-	0	0	0	3	167	170	25 / 8
Platte North AO SC	400	400	11/1/20	3	205	208	1	61	62	44 / 24
River Antlerless				0	2	2	7	400	407	
Landowner Deer				181	56	237	106	59	165	
Archery Deer				97	12	109	188	18	206	
Muzzleloader				3	2	5	34	9	43	
Resident Youth				142	29	171	67	14	81	
Youth Whitetail				0	0	0	52	27	79	
NR Rest Youth				0	0	0	9	1	10	
Rest SW Buck				1	0	1	4	0	4	
Statewide Buck				2	0	2	0	0	0	
Statewide WT Buck				1	0	1	61	2	63	
<b>Totals</b>				<b>935</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>1275</b>	<b>1108</b>	<b>1019</b>	<b>2127</b>	

# PLATTE MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

## Harvest comparisons by year

Year	Mule Deer							Whitetail Deer						
	Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age			Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age		
					1	2	3+					1	2	3+
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
2019	1085	346	1431	24	11	40	49	1193	907	2100	43	19	40	41
2020	935	340	1275	27	9	91		1108	1019	2127	48	18	82	



## Total Permits Authorized

Year	Nov. Firearm	Special Seasons	Depredation	
			Complaints	DCP
2016	MDCA 1300 (1 AD2, 1 AOWT) WT 1200 (1 WT)	Platte SCA – 800 (2 AOWT) Platte SCA North – 250 (2 AO)		
2017	MDCA 1300 (1 AD2, 1 AOWT) WT 1200 (1 WT)	Platte SCA – 800 (2 AOWT) Platte SCA North – 400 (2 AO)	4	3
2018	MDCA 1400 (1 AD2, 1 AOWT) WT 1300 (1 WT)	Platte SCA – 800 (2 AOWT) Platte SCA North – 450 (2 AO)	4	0
2019	MDCA 1400 (1 AD2, 1 AOWT) WT 1300 (1 WT)	Platte SCA – 800 (2 AOWT) Platte SCA North – 500 (2 AO)	3	1
2020	MDCA 1400 (1 AD2, 1 AOWT) WT 1300 (1 WT)	Platte SCA – 200 (1AO, 1AOWT) Platte WT SCA – 500 (2 AOWT) Platte SCA North – 400 (2 AO)	3	1
2021*	MDCA 1400 (1 AD2, 1 AOWT) WT 1300 (1 WT)	Platte SCA – 200 (1AO, 1AOWT) Platte WT SCA – 500 (2 AOWT) Platte SCA North – 400 (2 AO)	3	2

\*\* Recommended permit numbers

<sup>2</sup> – No antlerless mule deer

MDCA – Mule Deer Conservation Area

AO – Antlerless Only

WT – Whitetail

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

### 2021 Recommendations:

**Republican MDCA:** 75 Mule Deer Buck permits valid during November Firearm and Muzzleloader seasons. No change from 2020.

**Republican Whitetail November Firearm:** 3000 permits for one whitetail valid during the November Firearm season. No change from 2020.

**Republican Antlerless Only:** 1500 permits for two antlerless whitetail deer. Permits are not valid on Harlan County Lake USACE Property. No change from 2020.

**Harlan County Reservoir Antlerless Only:** 200 permits for two antlerless whitetail deer. Permits are valid only on Harlan County Lake USACE Property. New for 2021.

**General Information:** The whitetail population, particularly in the western half of the unit appears to have stabilized or slightly decreased. Buck age structure is good for whitetails. Mule deer buck harvest has changed little in the past five years but did show a slight decrease in the past four years, partially due to a decrease in the MDCA permit quota. The mule deer herd is compromised by extensive row crop agriculture and meningeal worm mortality although no meningeal worm mortalities were reported in the last 3 years. For WT, the 2020 LO survey showed that 32% felt the population was too high, 30% reported severe or moderate damage and 30% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable. For MD, the 2020 LO survey showed that 3% felt there were too many, 2% reported severe or moderate damage and 3% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation complaints: 3, 2 DCP issued.

**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 appears to be decreasing and 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 objective 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. Adding 200 AO permits valid only on Harlan County Reservoir will help with crop depredation issues on private land adjacent to Corps property. The population goal for mule deer is to allow the herd to grow by restricting the harvest of antlerless mule deer.

### 2020 Harvest Data – Republican

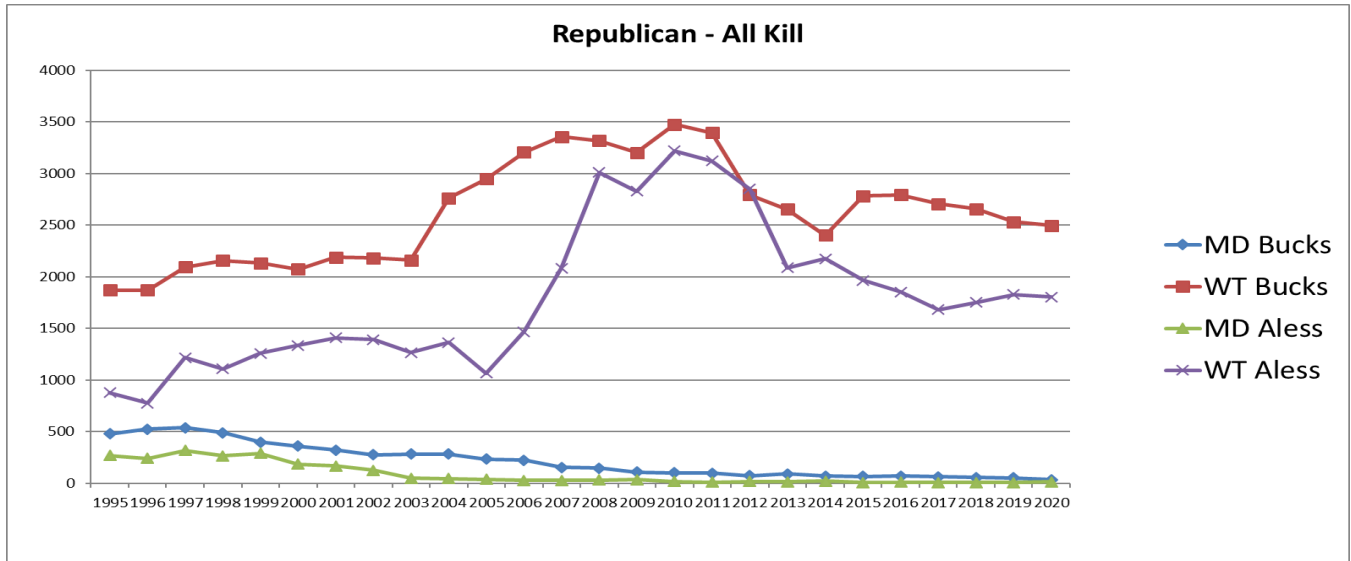
<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Republican WT	3000	3000	11/2/20	3	0	3	1073	261	1334	45
Republican MD	75	64	8/3/20	13	0	13	0	0	0	19
Republican AO SC	1500	1441	-	0	1	1	21	644	665	34 / 10
River Antlerless				0	1	1	13	538	551	
Landowner Deer				8	7	15	306	144	450	
Archery Deer				5	0	5	365	66	431	
Muzzleloader				0	0	0	70	55	125	
Resident Youth				4	2	6	146	42	188	
Youth Whitetail				1	0	1	129	52	181	
NR Rest Youth				0	0	0	0	0	0	
Rest SW Buck				0	0	0	11	0	11	
Statewide Buck				0	0	0	1	0	1	
Statewide WT Buck				0	0	0	360	1	361	
<b>Totals</b>				<b>34</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>2495</b>	<b>1803</b>	<b>4298</b>	

# REPUBLICAN MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

## Harvest comparisons by year

Year	MuleDeer							WhitetailDeer						
	Buck	AO	Total	%AO	%BuckAge			Buck	AO	Total	%AO	%BuckAge		
					1	2	3+					1	2	3+
2016	70	10	80	12	26	37	37	2795	1852	4647	40	23	35	42
2017	61	7	68	10				2695	1674	4369	38	27	34	39
2018	55	6	61	10				2658	1752	4410	40	19	40	40
2019	52	5	57	9				2533	1830	4363	42	22	42	36
2020	34	11	45	24	11	89		2495	1803	4298	42	21		79



## Total Permits Authorized

Year	Nov. Firearm	Special Seasons	Depredation	
			Complaints	DCP
2016	MDCA 100 (1 MD Buck) WT 3000 (1 WT)	Republican SCA – 2000 (1 AOWT)		
2017	MDCA 100 (1 MD Buck) WT 3000 (1 WT)	Republican SCA – 2000 (1 AOWT)	0	0
2018	MDCA 100 (1 MD Buck) WT 3000 (1 WT)	Republican SCA – 2000 (1 AOWT)	5	0
2019	MDCA 100 (1 MD Buck) WT 3000 (1 WT)	Republican SCA – 1500 (2 AOWT)	0	0
2020	MDCA 75 (1 MD Buck) WT 3000 (1 WT)	Republican SCA – 1500 (2 AOWT)	3	0
2021*	MDCA 75 (1 MD Buck) WT 3000 (1 WT)	Republican SCA – 1500 (2 AOWT) HCR SCA – 200 (2 AOWT)	3	2

\* Recommended permit numbers

<sup>2</sup> – No antlerless mule deer

MDCA – Mule Deer Conservation Area

AO – Antlerless Only

WT – Whitetail

AD – Any Deer

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

## Expected Harvest:

Unit	MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless
All Seasons	45	2500	5	1800

## **SANDHILLS MANAGEMENT UNIT**

### **2021 Recommendations:**

**Sandhills November Firearm:** 2000 permits for Any Deer and two antlerless whitetail bonus tags. Antlerless mule deer restrictions on McKelvie National Forest Service Lands and the Valentine National Wildlife Refuge. Addition of bonus AOWT for 2021.

**Antlerless Only Season Choice Sandhills:** 450 Antlerless Only permits with 2 additional Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tags. Permits are not valid on Valentine National Wildlife Refuge or McKelvie National Forest lands. No change from 2020.

**General Information:** Mule deer buck harvest was 13% below the 5 year average and down 17% since 2019. Whitetail buck harvest was 25% above the 5 year average and up 5% since 2019. For WT, the 2020 LO survey showed that 47% felt the population was too high, 44% reported severe or moderate damage and 50% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable. For MD, the 2020 LO survey showed that 31% felt there were too many, 31% reported severe or moderate damage and 41% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation complaints: 5

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** Trend indicators show an increasing population of both whitetail and mule deer. Objectives for mule deer are to stabilize numbers while addressing depredation issues through antlerless harvest on Season Choice permits, and to maintain the current buck age structure. Objectives for whitetails are decrease the population through an additional bonus AOWT. This recommendation provides the basis for slight population growth unit-wide for mule deer 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.

### **2020 Harvest Data – Sandhills**

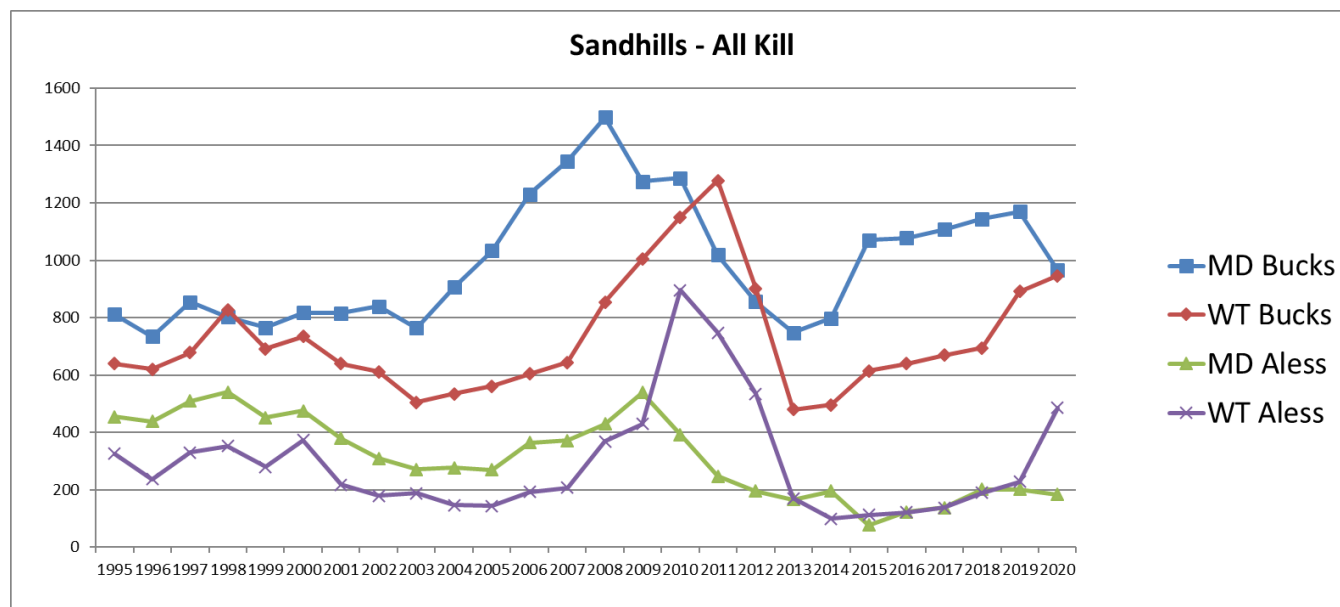
<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Sandhills Firearm	2000	2000	10/7/20	494	24	518	533	190	723	56 / 7
Sandhills AO SC	450	377	-	0	107	107	2	163	165	47 / 15 / 10
River Antlerless				0	0	0	5	37	42	
Landowner Deer				76	22	98	87	48	135	
Archery Deer				67	8	75	59	7	66	
Muzzleloader				138	12	150	81	24	105	
Resident Youth				76	9	85	56	7	63	
Youth Whitetail				0	0	0	17	5	22	
NR Rest Youth				20	1	21	11	4	15	
Rest SW Buck				94	0	94	45	1	46	
Statewide Buck				1	0	1	0	0	0	
Statewide WT Buck				0	0	0	50	0	50	
<b>Totals</b>				<b>966</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>1149</b>	<b>946</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>1432</b>	

# **SANDHILLS MANAGEMENT UNIT**

(continued)

## **Harvest comparisons by year**

Year	Mule Deer							Whitetail Deer						
	Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age			Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age		
					1	2	3+					1	2	3+
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
2019	1169	201	1370	15	9	24	67	892	228	1120	20	12	31	57
2020	966	183	1149	16	5	95		946	486	1432	34	11	89	



## **Total Permits Authorized**

Year	Nov. Firearm	Special Seasons	Depredation	
			Complaints	DCP
2016	1500 (AD <sup>2</sup> )	Sandhills SCA – 150 (AO)		
2017	1500 (AD <sup>2</sup> )	Sandhills SCA – 250 (AO)	0	0
2018	1500 (AD)	Sandhills SCA – 350 (AO)	4	0
2019	1500 (AD)	Sandhills SCA – 450 (AO, AOWT)	1	0
2020	1500 (AD, 1 AOWT)	Sandhills SCA – 450 (AO, 2 AOWT)	4	0
2021*	1500 (AD, 2 AOWT)	Sandhills SCA – 450 (AO, 2 AOWT)	5	0

\* Recommended permit numbers

<sup>2</sup> – 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	1000	900	200	500

## UPPER PLATTE MANAGEMENT UNIT

### 2021 Recommendations:

**Upper Platte November Firearm:** 1200 Any Deer permits. No change from 2020.

**Antlerless Only Season Choice Upper Platte:** 250 Antlerless Only permits and an Antlerless Only Whitetail bonus tag. No change from 2020.

**Antlerless Only Season Choice Upper Platte Whitetail:** 200 permits for 2 Antlerless Only Whitetail. No change from 2020.

**General Information:** Mule deer buck harvest was 8% above the 5 year average and 9% down from 2019. Whitetail buck harvest was down 3% to the 5 year average and down 4% from 2019. Due to COVID-19 we did not age by tooth wear/replacement, % 1.5 year olds were aged based off of antler spread. For WT, the 2020 LO survey showed that 25% felt the population was too high, 18% reported severe or moderate damage and 27% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable. For MD, the 2020 LO survey showed that 18% felt there were too many, 18% reported severe or moderate damage and 25% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable. Depredation complaints: 0

**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 and an additional AO SCA Whitetail permit.

### 2020 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	10/18/20	407	100	507	137	21	158	55
Upper Platte AO SC	250	250	9/18/20	2	87	89	0	36	36	42 / 8
Upper Platte WT AO SC	200	170	-	0	1	1	2	40	42	19 / 6
River Antlerless				0	0	0	5	98	103	
Landowner Deer				99	45	144	35	18	53	
Archery Deer				50	13	63	29	3	32	
Muzzleloader				55	26	81	14	3	17	
Resident Youth				84	24	108	24	7	31	
Youth Whitetail				0	1	1	15	4	19	
NR Rest Youth				19	4	23	6	4	10	
Rest SW Buck				45	0	45	7	0	7	
Statewide Buck				0	0	0	0	0	0	
Statewide WT Buck				0	0	0	29	0	29	
<b>Totals</b>				<b>761</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>1062</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>537</b>	

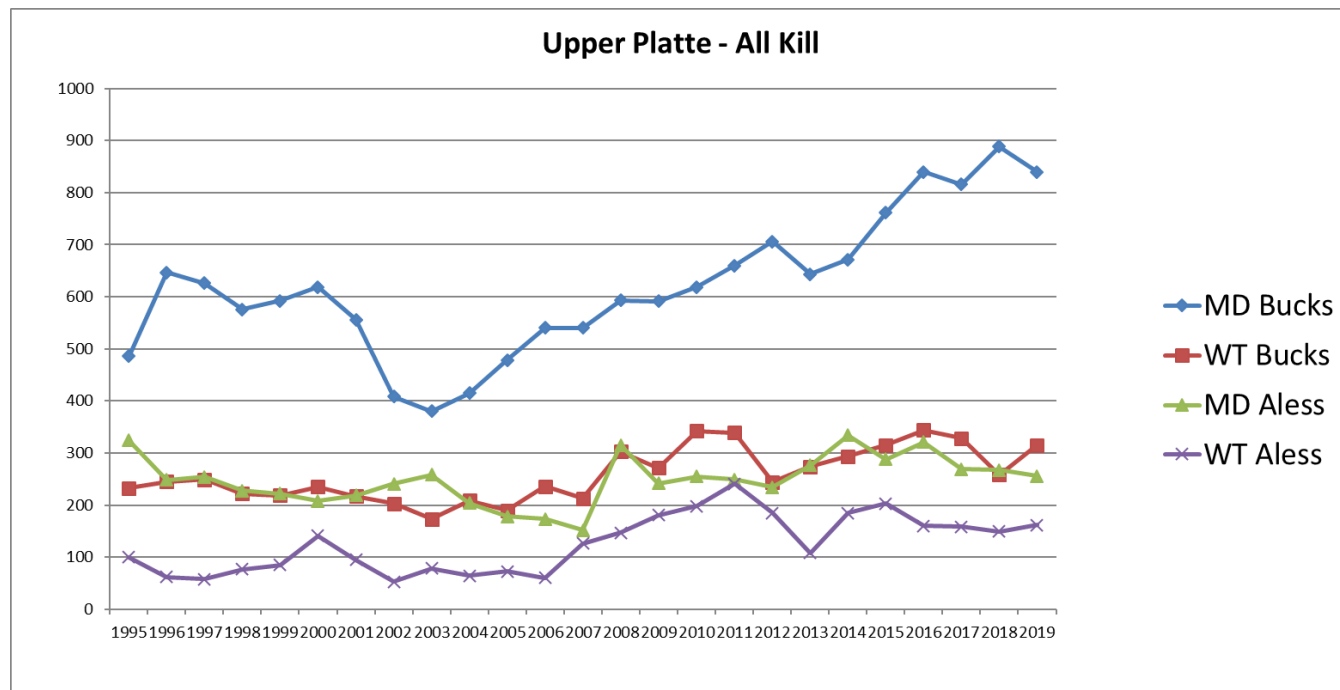


# UPPER PLATTE MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

## Harvest comparisons by year

Year	Mule Deer							Whitetail Deer						
	Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age			Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age		
					1	2	3+					1	2	3+
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
2019	840	256	1096	23	19	37	44	315	162	477	34	21	37	42
2020	761	301	1062	28	13	87		303	234	537	44	15	85	



## Total Permits Authorized

Year	Nov. Firearm	Special Seasons	Depredation	
			Complaints	DCP
2016	1200 (AD)	Upper Platte SCA – 240 (1 AO)		
2017	1200 (AD)	Upper Platte SCA – 240 (1 AO)	0	0
2018	1200 (AD)	Upper Platte SCA – 250 (1 AO)	2	0
2019	1200 (AD)	Upper Platte SCA – 250 (1 AO, 1 AOWT)	1	0
2020	1200 (AD)	Upper Platte SCA – 250 (1 AO, 1 AOWT) Upper Platte WT SCA – 200 (2 AOWT)	0	0
2021*	1200 (AD)	Upper Platte SCA – 250 (1 AO, 1 AOWT) Upper Platte WT SCA – 200 (2 AOWT)	0	0

\* Recommended permit numbers

AOWT – Antlerless Only Whitetail

WT – Whitetail

<sup>2</sup> – No antlerless mule deer

AO – Antlerless Only AD – Any Deer

## Expected Harvest:

Unit	MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless
All Seasons	800	300	275	250

## **WAHOO MANAGEMENT UNIT**

### **2021 Recommendations:**

**Wahoo November Firearm:** 3800 Any Deer<sup>2</sup> permits. This is an increase from 3650 in 2020.

**Antlerless Only Season Choice Wahoo:** 2200 permits valid for one Antlerless Only Whitetail deer. This is an increase from 1900 in 2020.

**General Information:** The percent of 1.5-year-old adult males in the harvest decreased from 35% to 29% (this info was collected from less or more than 11 antler spread reported by hunters). Harvest for all seasons was 3426 adult whitetail males and 2700 antlerless whitetails. Landowner complaints increased in 2020. For WT, the 2020 LO survey showed that 20% felt the population was too high, 26% reported severe or moderate damage and 25% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable. For MD, the 2020 LO survey showed that 1% felt there were too many, 1% reported severe or moderate damage and 3% reported that their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation Complaints: 14. DCP: 13

**Population Status, Goals and Harvest Strategy:** Population numbers appear to be stable and within landowner tolerance. Hunter and landowner complaints about too few deer were less than last year. There were a few reports of possible EHD deer during the fall of 2020. 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 while maintaining high pressure along the Platte River corridor with River Antlerless permits.

### **2020 Harvest Data – Wahoo**

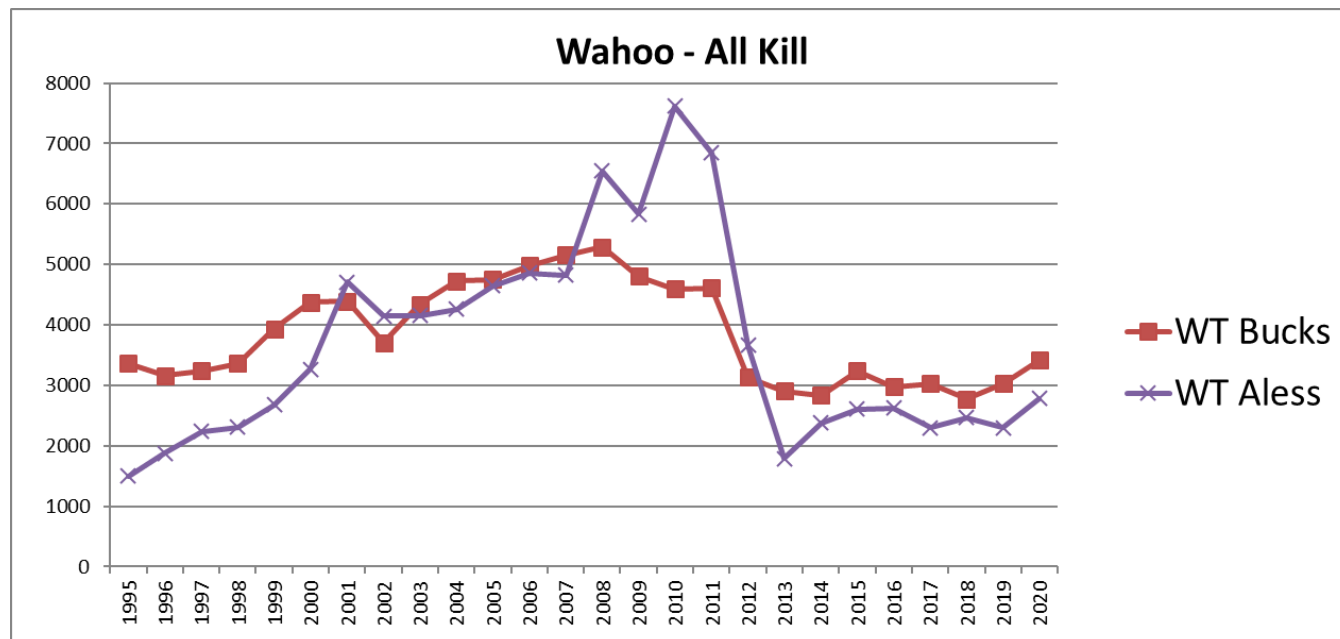
<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Permit Numbers</u>			<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>% Success</u>
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Sellout</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Wahoo Firearm	3650	3650	11/2/20	2	0	2	1329	311	1640	45
Wahoo AO SC	1900	1900	11/11/20	0	1	1	12	531	543	28
River Antlerless				1	2	3	48	1296	1344	
Landowner Deer				1	2	3	456	270	726	
Archery Deer				1	0	1	644	150	794	
Muzzleloader Deer				1	0	1	92	78	170	
Res Youth				2	0	2	174	69	243	
Youth WT Deer				0	1	1	128	68	196	
NR Rest Youth				0	0	0	7	1	8	
Rest SW Buck				0	0	0	10	0	10	
Statewide Buck				0	0	0	1	0	1	
Statewide WT Buck				0	0	0	516	5	521	
<b>Totals</b>				<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>3417</b>	<b>2779</b>	<b>6196</b>	

# WAHOO MANAGEMENT UNIT

(continued)

## Harvest comparisons by year

Year	Mule Deer							Whitetail Deer						
	Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age			Buck	AO	Total	%AO	% Buck Age		
					1	2	3+					1	2	3+
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
2019	8	6	14					3028	2301	5329	43	35	39	26
2020	8	6	14					3417	2779	6196	45	29	71	



## Total Permits Authorized

Year	Nov. Firearm	Special Seasons	Depredation	
			Complaints	DCP
2016	4050 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> )	Wahoo SCA – 2600 (1 AOWT)		
2017	4050 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> )	Wahoo SCA – 2100 (1 AOWT)	8	7
2018	3650 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> )	Wahoo SCA – 1900 (1 AOWT)	9	7
2019	3650 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> )	Wahoo SCA – 1900 (1 AOWT)	9	6
2020	3650 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> )	Wahoo SCA – 1900 (1 AOWT)	13	11
2021*	3800 (1 AD <sup>2</sup> )	Wahoo SCA – 2200 (1 AOWT)	14	13

\* Recommended permit numbers

<sup>2</sup> – 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	10	3400	5	2700

## **RESTRICTED STATEWIDE BUCK**

### **2021 Recommendations:**

**Season Dates:** November 13-21, 2021

**Permits:** Unlimited permits for Any Buck. No change from 2020.

**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:** 1179 permits issued in 2020. Harvest was 279 mule deer bucks and 233 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.

### **2020 Unit Breakdown**

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>		<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>Unit</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>		<u>Whitetail Deer</u>	
	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>			<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>
Blue NW	0	0	14	0		Loup West	9	0	19	0
Blue SE	0	0	12	1		Missouri	0	0	5	0
Buffalo	0	0	11	0		Pine Ridge	65	0	34	1
Calamus East	5	0	10	0		Plains	36	0	5	0
Calamus West	19	0	18	0		Platte	1	0	4	0
Elkhorn	0	0	11	0		Republican	0	0	11	0
Frenchman	0	0	1	0		Sandhills	94	0	45	1
Keya Paha	3	0	11	0		Upper Platte	45	0	7	0
Loup East	2	0	5	0		Wahoo	0	0	10	0

### **Harvest and permit comparisons by year**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Permits</u>		<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>%Success</u>
	<u>Quota</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
2016	Unlimited	2211	463	0	463	496	0	496	43
2017	Unlimited	505	210	0	210	96	0	96	61
2018	Unlimited	835	305	1	306	141	1	142	54
2019	Unlimited	846	242	0	242	182	1	183	50
2020	Unlimited	1179	279	0	279	233	3	236	44
2021*	Unlimited								

\*Recommended permit numbers

**Expected Harvest:** 300 mule deer bucks and 200 whitetail bucks.

## STATEWIDE BUCK

### 2021 Recommendations:

**Season Dates:** November 13-21, 2021 (firearm)

**Permits:** 100 buck permits. No change from 2020.

**Area Open:** Statewide.

**General Information:** This is a very limited, elevated price permit that was new in 2018. 41% of permits went to nonresidents and 87% of harvest was in the MDCA in 2020. Due to issues with the permit system, only 59 of these permits sold. Permit likely would have sold out.

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** Statewide buck permits have little impact on populations.

### Harvest and permit comparisons by year

<u>Year</u>	<u>Permits</u>		<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>%Success</u>	<u># NR</u>
	<u>Quota</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>		
2018	40	40	24	0	24	2	0	2	65	
2019	50	50	21	0	21	0	0	0	42	13
2020	100	59	31	0	31	7	0	7	64	24
2021*	100									

\*Recommended

### 2020 Unit Breakdown

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>		<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>Unit</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>		<u>Whitetail Deer</u>	
	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>			<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>
Blue NW	0	0	0	0		Loup West	1	0	0	0
Blue SE	0	0	1	0		Missouri	0	0	0	0
Buffalo	1	0	1	0		Pine Ridge	0	0	1	0
Calamus East	0	0	0	0		Plains	0	0	0	0
Calamus West	0	0	0	0		Platte	2	0	0	0
Elkhorn	0	0	0	0		Republican	0	0	1	0
Frenchman	26	0	2	0		Sandhills	1	0	0	0
Keya Paha	0	0	0	0		Upper Platte	0	0	0	0
Loup East	0	0	0	0		Wahoo	0	0	1	0

**Expected Harvest:** 55 mule deer bucks and 10 whitetail bucks on 100 permits

## STATEWIDE WHITETAIL BUCK

### 2021 Recommendations:

#### Season Dates:

September 1 – December 31 (archery)

November 13-21, 2021 (firearm)

December 1 -31 (muzzleloader)

**Permits:** Unlimited permits. Valid for one whitetail buck.

**Area Open:** Statewide.

**General Information:** This is a “Season Choice” permit that can be used during archery, muzzleloader and November firearm seasons. 3134 whitetail bucks were harvested with this permit in 2020. 10,626 permits were issued.

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

#### Harvest and permit comparisons by year

<u>Year</u>	<u>Permits</u>		<u>Mule Deer</u>			<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>%Success</u>
	<u>Quota</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
2016	Unlimited	10,419	19	0	19	3061	39	3129	30
2017	Unlimited	10,998	9	0	9	3167	25	3192	29
2018	Unlimited	9,181	10	0	10	2942	29	2971	32
2019	Unlimited	9,109	9	1	10	2915	28	2943	32
2020	Unlimited	10,626	8	0	8	3134	29	3163	30
2021*	Unlimited								

\*Recommended

#### 2020 Unit Breakdown

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>		<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>Unit</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>		<u>Whitetail Deer</u>	
	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>			<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>
Blue NW	0	0	378	1		Loup West	0	0	41	1
Blue SE	2	0	402	5		Missouri	1	0	232	2
Buffalo	0	0	190	2		Pine Ridge	0	0	27	0
Calamus East	0	0	93	2		Plains	1	0	16	0
Calamus West	0	0	74	2		Platte	1	0	61	2
Elkhorn	1	0	326	4		Republican	0	0	360	1
Frenchman	0	0	107	1		Sandhills	0	0	50	0
Keya Paha	1	0	80	0		Upper Platte	0	0	29	0
Loup East	1	0	152	1		Wahoo	0	0	516	5

**Expected Harvest:** 3000 whitetail bucks on 10,000 permits

## STATEWIDE ARCHERY

### 2021 Recommendations:

**Season Dates:** September 1 - December 31

**Permits:** Unlimited Any Deer permits.

**Area Open:** Statewide, except antlerless mule deer harvest is prohibited on public land in the Pine Ridge DMU or on Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge.

**General Information:** Harvest was 4430 adult males and 755 antlerless deer taken on 20,341 permits. Nonresidents purchased 24% of statewide archery permits. Crossbow hunters harvested 26% of all deer on this permit. Permit sales increased 15%, MD Buck harvest decreased 7% and WT Buck harvest increased 6% from 2019. 58% of all archery MD buck harvest occurred in the MDCA.

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** Archery deer season has little impact on statewide populations.

### Harvest comparisons by year

Year	Permits	Mule Deer				Whitetail Deer				% Success	% NR	% XBow
		Buck	AO	Total	%AO	Buck	AO	Total	%AO			
2016	17,373	512	56	568	10	2834	625	3461	18	23	17	19
2017	16,998	605	44	649	7	2922	542	3464	19	24	18	22
2018	16,797	615	53	668	8	2662	627	3289	19	24	20	24
2019	17,668	699	55	754	7	3586	601	4187	14	28	22	26
2020	20,341	652	76	728	10	3778	679	4457	15	25	24	28

### 2020 Unit Breakdown

Unit	Mule Deer		Whitetail Deer		Unit	Mule Deer		Whitetail Deer	
	Buck	AO	Buck	AO		Buck	AO	Buck	AO
Blue NW	0	0	337	91	Loup West	10	1	73	9
Blue SE	0	1	544	73	Missouri	1	0	249	42
Buffalo	18	2	261	48	Pine Ridge	70	1	95	18
Calamus East	2	0	53	10	Plains	45	8	39	6
Calamus West	15	4	80	9	Platte	97	12	188	18
Elkhorn	2	0	265	63	Republican	5	0	365	66
Frenchman	258	26	150	30	Sandhills	67	8	59	7
Keya Paha	8	0	159	6	Upper Platte	50	13	29	3
Loup East	3	0	188	30	Wahoo	1	0	644	150

**Expected Harvest:** 4,700 deer on 17,000 permits

MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless
600	3500	50	600

## STATEWIDE MUZZLELOADER

### 2021 Recommendations:

**Season Dates:** December 1 through December 31

**Permits:** Unlimited Any Deer permits.

**Area Open:** Statewide, except antlerless mule deer harvest is prohibited on public land in the Pine Ridge DMU or on Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge. Muzzleloader hunters are not allowed to take mule deer in the Mule Deer Conservation Area on statewide muzzleloader permits.

**General Information:** 7746 permits were issued. Harvest was 1380 adult males and 502 antlerless deer. 28% of permits were issued to nonresidents, up from 26% in 2019.

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** Muzzleloader deer season is a recreational season that has little impact on statewide deer populations. A total of 72% of the harvest was adult bucks, and 75% of the harvest was whitetail deer.

### Harvest comparisons by year

<u>Year</u>	<u>Permits</u>	<u>MuleDeer</u>				<u>WhitetailDeer</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>	
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
2019	6741	415	77	492	16	965	425	1390	31	28
2020	7746	404	78	482	16	950	496	1446	34	25

### 2020 Unit Breakdown

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>		<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>Unit</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>		<u>Whitetail Deer</u>	
	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>			<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>
Blue NW	0	0	42	48		Loup West	25	4	34	7
Blue SE	0	0	64	56		Missouri	2	0	65	25
Buffalo	1	0	55	35		Pine Ridge	80	2	82	29
Calamus East	2	0	12	5		Plains	53	18	34	8
Calamus West	35	12	32	14		Platte	3	2	34	9
Elkhorn	0	0	65	47		Republican	0	0	70	55
Frenchman	0	0	31	13		Sandhills	138	12	81	24
Keya Paha	7	2	87	21		Upper Platte	55	26	14	3
Loup East	2	0	56	19		Wahoo	1	0	92	78

**Expected Harvest:** 2000 deer on 7500 permits

<u>MD Buck</u>	<u>WT Buck</u>	<u>MD Antlerless</u>	<u>WT Antlerless</u>
400	1000	100	500



## STATEWIDE YOUTH

### 2021 Recommendations:

**Season Dates:** September 1 – December 31 (archery)  
 November 13 - November 21, 2021 (firearm)  
 December 1-31 (muzzleloader)  
 January 1-16, 2022 – 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 or Platte.

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

**Area Open:** Statewide, except antlerless mule deer harvest is prohibited on public land in the Pine Ridge Unit or on Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge.

**General Information:** Harvest on all Youth permits was 5348. 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.

### Harvest comparisons by year

Year	Permits	Mule Deer				Whitetail Deer				%Success
		Buck	AO	Total	%AO	Buck	AO	Total	%AO	
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
2019 (all)	11,093	1235	156	1391	11	2986	971	3957	25	48
2020 (all)	11,854	1024	163	1187	12	3103	1021	4124	25	45
2020 Resident Youth	6975	916	147	1063	14	1737	502	2239	22	52
2020 Youth Whitetail	4152	15	3	18	17	1217	464	1681	28	41
2020 NR Rest. Youth	727	93	13	106	12	149	55	204	27	48

### 2020 Unit Breakdown

Unit	Mule Deer		Whitetail Deer		Unit	Mule Deer		Whitetail Deer	
	Buck	AO	Buck	AO		Buck	AO	Buck	AO
Blue NW	1	0	223	110	Loup West	47	3	123	28
Blue SE	0	0	260	94	Missouri	7	1	298	70
Buffalo	65	11	255	91	Pine Ridge	51	2	82	22
Calamus East	7	0	108	12	Plains	111	18	47	9
Calamus West	41	6	106	16	Platte	142	29	128	42
Elkhorn	1	0	243	101	Republican	5	2	275	94
Frenchman	326	41	121	52	Sandhills	96	10	84	16
Keya Paha	7	4	156	37	Upper Platte	103	29	45	15
Loup East	12	6	240	74	Wahoo	2	1	309	138

**Expected Harvest:** 5500 deer on 11,000 permits

MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless
1250	3000	150	1000

## **LIMITED LANDOWNER DEER**

### **2021 Recommendations:**

**Season Dates:** September 1 – December 31 (archery)  
 November 13 - November 21 (firearm)  
 December 1-31 (muzzleloader)  
 January 1-16, 2022 – Firearm or archery (antlerless only)

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

**Area Open:** On property owned or leased for agricultural purposes by the qualifying landowner.

**General Information:** 15,511 Landowner permits were issued. Total harvest was 7,366 deer. The definition for immediate family was liberalized in 2019. This is the only statewide permit with a bonus antlerless tag. 3.9% were issued to nonresidents.

**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.

### **Harvest comparisons by year**

<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>	
2015	14,204	1346	518	1864	28	3757	1879	5636	33	53*
2016	14,079	1430	464	1899	24	3443	1849	5309	35	44 / 8
2017	14,888	1589	458	2047	22	3731	1859	5590	33	45 / 8
2018	13,983	1345	448	1793	25	3490	1823	5313	34	43 / 8
2019	14,296	1242	398	1640	24	3763	1832	5595	33	43 / 8
2020	15,511	1084	401	1485	27	3859	2022	5881	34	40 / 7

### **2020 Unit Breakdown**

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>		<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>Unit</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>		<u>Whitetail Deer</u>	
	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>			<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>
Blue NW	1	0	340	229		Loup West	38	21	121	45
Blue SE	0	0	479	255		Missouri	2	3	336	170
Buffalo	59	29	242	105		Pine Ridge	87	15	74	44
Calamus East	20	2	125	44		Plains	77	39	36	18
Calamus West	39	11	87	31		Platte	181	56	106	59
Elkhorn	3	1	408	206		Republican	8	7	306	144
Frenchman	377	141	128	54		Sandhills	76	22	87	48
Keya Paha	8	7	170	92		Upper Platte	99	45	35	18
Loup East	8	0	323	190		Wahoo	1	2	456	270

**Expected Harvest:** 7200 deer on 15,000 permits

<u>MD Buck</u>	<u>WT Buck</u>	<u>MD Antlerless</u>	<u>WT Antlerless</u>
1100	3700	400	2000

## **SPECIAL LANDOWNER DEER**

### **2021 Recommendations:**

**Season Dates:** November 6 - November 8 (firearm)

**Permits:** Unlimited Any Deer permits. Up to 4 permits available per qualifying landowner, one per person. Up to two permits for hunters under 19, up to two permits for hunters over 19.

**Area Open:** On property owned or leased for agricultural purposes by the qualifying landowner.

**General Information:** New permit for 2021.

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** This permit provides landowners special opportunity to hunt their land prior to the firearm season. No estimate to how broadly this permit will be used.

**Expected Harvest:** Unknown

MD Buck	WT Buck	MD Antlerless	WT Antlerless

## RIVER ANTLERLESS

### 2021 Recommendations:

**Season Dates:** September 1 – December 31 (Archery)  
 October 1-15 (Firearm)  
 November 13-21 (Firearm)  
 December 1-31 (Muzzleloader)  
 January 1-31, 2022 (Firearm)

**Permits:** 12,000 permits for two antlerless whitetail deer. 10,652 permits were issued in 2020.

**Area Open:** See unit definition and map. All state and federal public lands are closed.

**2021 Additions:** Monroe and Warbonnet Creeks in Sioux Co.; Chadron Creek in Dawes Co..

**2021 Removals:** Republican River west of Hwy 283.

**General Information:** This \$14 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, an inexpensive permit and bonus tags make this a very popular permit.

### Harvest comparisons:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Permits</u>		<u>MuleDeer</u>			<u>WhitetailDeer</u>			<u>%Success</u>
	<u>Quota</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Total</u>	
2015	12,000	10,501	0	19	19	161	5545	5706	38 / 16
2016	12,000	9,065	1	22	23	169	4946	5117	40 / 17
2017	12,000	8,947	2	13	15	173	5038	5211	40 / 18
2018	12,000	9,038	1	12	13	200	5515	5715	44 / 20
2019	12,000	8,976	1	24	25	169	5129	5298	41 / 18
2020	12,000	10,652	2	18	20	168	6052	6220	40 / 18
2021*	12,000								

### 2020 Unit Breakdown

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>		<u>Whitetail Deer</u>			<u>Unit</u>	<u>Mule Deer</u>		<u>Whitetail Deer</u>	
	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>			<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>	<u>Buck</u>	<u>AO</u>
Blue NW	0	0	1	12		Loup West	0	0	0	77
Blue SE	0	2	7	360		Missouri	0	2	8	426
Buffalo	0	4	18	794		Pine Ridge	0	0	1	127
Calamus East	0	0	2	68		Plains	1	0	1	15
Calamus West	0	0	1	29		Platte	0	2	7	400
Elkhorn	0	2	15	709		Republican	0	1	13	538
Frenchman	0	1	7	133		Sandhills	0	0	5	37
Keya Paha	0	2	10	280		Upper Platte	0	0	5	98
Loup East	0	0	19	653		Wahoo	1	2	48	1296

**Expected Harvest:** 6,000 antlerless whitetail deer on 12,000 authorized permits

# ELK

## INTRODUCTION

Statewide elk populations have reached cultural carrying capacity. We have been working with landowners closely over the last 2 years to understand their level of tolerance for elk in Nebraska and will continue doing so. In 2020, we surveyed landowners where we have elk about their opinions on elk and overall, 36% reported that they had too many elk, 46% reported moderate or severe damage and 50% said their level of damage was unacceptable. We increased antlerless permits by 40% and increased antlerless harvest by 84% in 2020. We also developed a deterministic model to help project elk populations to evaluate harvest structure and permit allocations.

The recommendations reflect the following goal:

- Stabilizing and reducing elk populations in all units.
- Providing quality bulls in all units.

## 2020 Season Highlights:

- Average bull was 5.23 years, an increase of 0.08 from 2019 and ranked #2
- Main beam length average was 48.2 inches – an increase from 46.9 last year. Ranked #1.
- Bull success only decreased from 89% to 88%, despite a 25% increase in permits - the record is 91% in 2012.
- Cow success increase from 45% to 59% despite a 40% increase in cow permits.
- Antlerless harvest was 210, 96 higher than last year and 88 higher than the previous high of 122 in 2017.
- Antlered bull harvest of 133 was the highest on record – 25 higher than the previous record in 2019.
- 6,000 people applied for 501 elk permits
- 45 cows were harvested in the early private land cow seasons (Aug. 15 – Sept. 20), compared to 23 in 2019 and 18 in 2018.
- 10 bulls were harvested in the early archery season (Sept. 1-20), compared to 5 in 2019 and 6 in 2018.

**Bull standards:** Bull harvest is a once-in-a-lifetime 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

## 2021 Overall Changes

Statewide, add 78 bull permits (53% increase)

Statewide, add 267 antlerless permits (75% increase)

Split antlerless season in Niobrara West and North Platte River Elk Management Units.

Total permits recommended: 851 permits (230 bull and 621 antlerless)

## ELK

<b><u>Season Dates:</u></b>	Bull Season:	Archery: Sept. 1 – Oct. 31 Firearm: Sept. 21 – Oct. 31
	Antlerless:	August 1 – January 31, 2022 Private Land Only: August 1 – Sept. 20
	Early General Antlerless:	August 1 – October 31
	Late General Antlerless:	November 1 – January 31, 2022

**General Information:** Success for the 2020 season was 88% for bulls and 59% for antlerless permits. In 2020, 506 hunters harvested 133 antlered bulls and 210 antlerless elk.

**Population Strategy:** Permit increases in all units. Stabilize and/or reduce population in all units and provide sufficient antlerless permits to respond to depredation. Due to increased permit numbers, we recommend a split in the antlerless season 2 additional units. Permits are split vary by unit to accomplish unit harvest objectives and deal with varying depredation issues. In areas with crop depredation issues, this will force more hunters to hunt early while crop depredation is occurring. Where stored crop issues occur, higher amounts of permits will be used late to ensure enough antlerless harvest during that time. This will also assist in lowering hunter crowding during the bull season and improve access.

**Expected Harvest:** 180 bulls and 310 cows.

<u>2021 Season Recommendations</u>		<u>2020 Season</u>							
<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Quota<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>Sold<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>Success</u>	<u>Harvest</u>			<u>Bull Criteria</u>		
				<u>Bull</u>	<u>Cow</u>	<u>Calf</u>	<u>% 6 Pt</u>	<u>MBL</u>	<u>Age</u>
Ash Creek Bull	18	18	94%	17	-	-	94%	47.0	4.2
Bordeaux Bull	39	30	83%	25	-	-	96%	49.5	5.7
Box Elder Bull	30	21	90%	19	-	-	95%	49.6	5.9
Hat Creek Bull	30	27	89%	24	-	-	96%	48.8	5.4
Niobrara East Bull	18	9	78%	7	-	-	57%	40.0	3.0
Niobrara West Bull	30	12	83%	10	-	-	100%	47.2	4.5
North Platte River Bull	60	30	93%	28	-	-	93%	47.9	5.1
Lottery/Auction	5	5	60%	3	-	-	100%	53.4	5.7
<b>Total Bull</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>48.2</b>	<b>5.2</b>
Ash Creek Antlerless, E/L <sup>2</sup>	60	27	52%	-	16	2	-	-	-
Bordeaux Antlerless, E/L <sup>2</sup>	90	51	49%	-	49	1	-	-	-
Box Elder Antlerless, E/L <sup>2</sup>	75	36	36%	1	26	3	-	-	-
Hat Creek Antlerless, E/L <sup>2</sup>	75	39	69%	-	25	1	-	-	-
Niobrara East Antlerless	51	24	33%	-	16	2	-	-	-
Niobrara West Antlerless	120	30	50%	-	22	4	-	-	-
North Platte River Aless	150	45	27%	-	40	2	-	-	-
<b>Total Antlerless</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>851</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>48.2</b>	<b>5.2</b>

<sup>1</sup>Includes LO allocation of 33%.

<sup>2</sup>See Units for Early/Late allocations

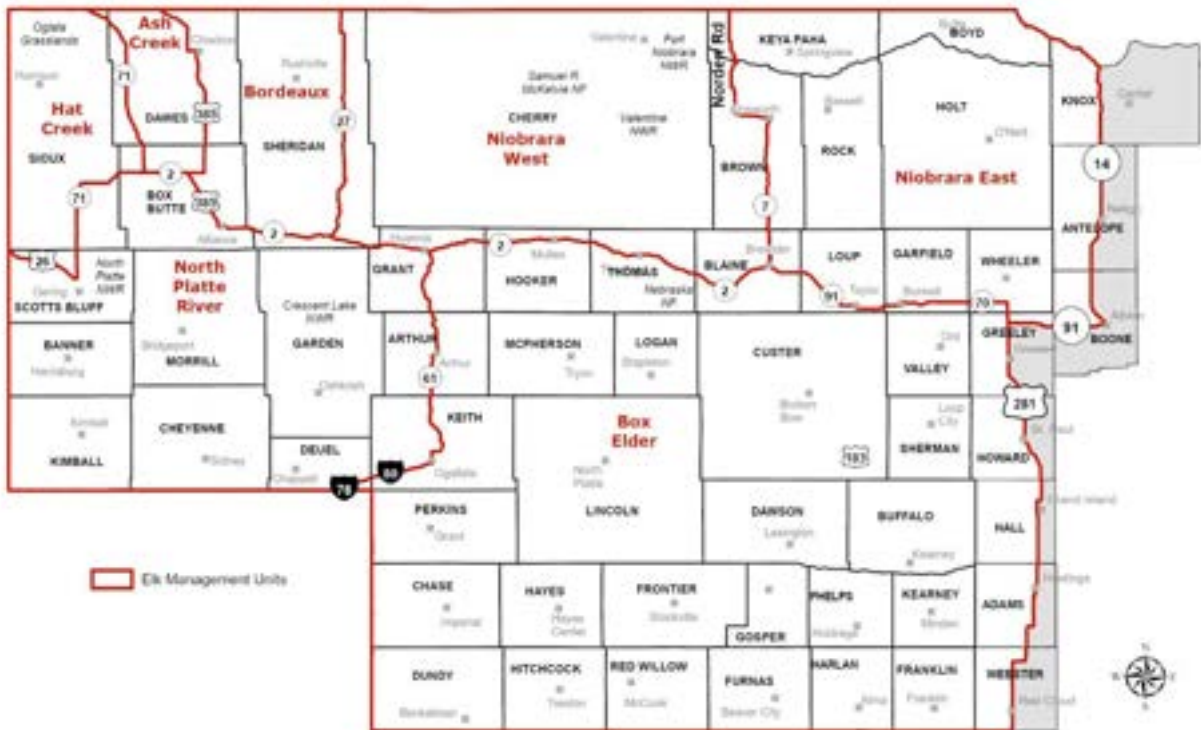
# ELK

## Permits, Harvest and Success 2016-2021

Permits Issued				Harvest				% Success		Bull Criteria		
Year	Bull	AO	Total	Bull	Cow	Calf	Total	Bull	AO	% 6 point	Avg. Main Beam Length	Mean Age
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	108	107	7	222	89	45	88	46.9	5.2
2020	152	354	506	134	194	15	343	88	59	93	48.2	5.2
2021*	230	621	851									

\* - recommended

## 2021 ELK MANAGEMENT UNITS



## ASH CREEK UNIT

### 2021 Recommendations:

	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Antlerless</u>
General:	12	Early: 15 Late: 25
Landowner:	6	20

**General Information:** Overall hunter success was the same at 67% in 2019 and 2018. Hunter success for bull permits was 100%. Hunter success on antlerless only permits was 52%. In the 2020 Landowner survey, 34% reported that they had too many elk, 38% reported moderate or severe damage and 41% said their level of damage was unacceptable. Depredation complaints: 1.

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** General observations, landowner contacts, and harvest data would indicate a stable to slightly increasing elk population in this unit. Objectives are to maintain harvested bull age and quality through maintaining current permit quotas, while addressing depredation complaints with Antlerless Only permits. Bull quality measurements meet Management Approach minimum criteria. We recommend increasing antlerless permits to meet objectives. Model projects 15% decline in population in this unit with this permit allocation.

<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>
2016	12	24	36	10+	11	1	22+	75	50	58	100	47.0	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	12	13	1	26	100	52	67	92	45.7	5.0
2020	18	39	57	17	16	2	35	94	67/41	46	94	47.0	4.2
2021*	18	60	78										

\* Recommended permit numbers

+ Includes statewide auction and lottery permits.

**Unsold Permits:** None.

**Expected Harvest:** Expected harvest is 15 bulls and 30 cows.



## **BORDEAUX UNIT**

### **2021 Recommendations:**

	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Antlerless</u>
General:	26	Early: 25 Late: 35
Landowner:	13	30

**General Information:** Overall hunter success was 71% in 2020 compared to 65% in 2019. Hunter success for bull permits was 83%. One additional bull was harvested by hunters with auction/lottery permits. Hunter success on antlerless only permits was 67%. In the 2020 Landowner survey, 24% reported that they had too many elk, 50% reported moderate or severe damage and 32% said their level of damage was unacceptable. Depredation complaints: 3.

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** General observations, landowner contacts, and harvest data indicate a stable to slightly increasing elk population in this unit. Variable access in this unit can affect success rates. Objectives are to maintain bull age and quality while increasing hunter opportunity. Bull quality measurements meet management approach minimum criteria's. Increased antlerless permits will address depredation issues while improving landowner/hunter/agency relations and providing more hunter opportunity. We recommend increasing both bull and antlerless permits to meet objectives. Model projects 5% decline in population in this unit with this permit allocation.

<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>
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	24+	24	1	49	96	49	65	96	48.0	5.5
2020	30	75	105	26+	49	1	76	83	85/67	78	96	49.5	5.7
2021*	39	90	129										

\* Recommended permit numbers

+ Includes statewide auction and lottery permits.

**Unsold Permits:** None.

**Expected Harvest:** Expected harvest is 32 bulls and 58 cows.

## **BOX ELDER MANAGEMENT UNIT**

### **2021 Recommendations:**

	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Antlerless</u>
General:	20	Early: 25 Late: 25
Landowner:	10	25

**Unit Boundary:** Expand unit eastward to Hwy 281.

**General Information:** In 2020, overall success was 68% compared to 55% in 2019. Success was 90% for bull hunters and 59% for antlerless hunters. In the 2020 Landowner survey, 28% reported that they had too many elk, 39% reported moderate or severe damage and 44% said their level of damage was unacceptable. A landowner meeting in September 2020 indicated that there were too many elk in areas with corn in this unit.

Depredation complaints: 14. DCP issued: 14, killed 8 elk.

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** Landowner reports, staff observations and harvest data of elk indicate an increasing and expanding population. Staff have recommended additional Landowner zones outside the traditional zone.

Landowner and sportsmen support for elk in most parts of this unit is high, however depredation issues have caused support to wane in some areas. Antlerless elk harvest increased 130% from 2019. Model projects 10% decline in population in this unit with this permit allocation.

<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>
2016	12	36	48	7	21	2	23	58	64	63	100	52.0	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	15	12	1	28	100	36	55	87	45.9	4.9
2020	21	51	72	20 <sup>1</sup>	26	3	49	90	59/47	68	95	49.6	5.9
2021*	30	75	105										

\* Recommended permit numbers

+ Includes statewide auction and lottery permits.

<sup>1</sup>Include one adult antlerless bull harvested on an antlerless permit

**Unsold Permits:** None.

**Expected Harvest:** Expected harvest is 27 bulls and 45 cows.

## HAT CREEK UNIT

### 2021 Recommendations:

	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Antlerless</u>
General:	20	Early: 20 Late: 30
Landowner:	10	25

**General Information:** Overall hunter success was 59% in 2020 compared to 78% in 2019. Success for bull permits was 89%, 46% for early antlerless permits, and 41% for late antlerless permits. In the 2020 Landowner survey, 42% reported that they had too many elk, 62% reported moderate or severe damage and 57% said their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation complaints: 3 DCP's issued: 1(0 killed)

**Landowner Meetings:** Held on November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020 in Crawford.

**Hat Creek North:** Questionnaires were filled out representing 18 LO's regarding the portion of the Hat Creek GMU north of Highway 20. Twelve LO's requested a reduction in population size. Four requested no reduction. One requested both (not too many except when they bunch up). One did not signify a choice but indicated they wanted to maintain enough to hunt and charge as part of their operation.

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** General observations and harvest data would indicate an increasing elk population in this unit. Objectives are to maintain bull age and quality, while addressing depredation complaints with antlerless only permits. Bull quality measurements meet management approach minimum criteria's. Increased antlerless permits will address depredation issues while improving landowner/hunter/agency relations and providing more hunter opportunity. We recommend increasing bull permits slightly and increase antlerless permits to meet objectives. Model projects 5-10% decline in population in this unit with this permit allocation.

<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>
2016	21	39	60	18+	12	1	31	81	33	50	94	46.0	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	22+	27	0	49	95	69	78	82	48.1	5.6
2020	27	60	87	25+	25	1	51	89	46/41	57			
2021	30	75	105										

\* Recommended permit numbers

+ Includes statewide auction and lottery permits.

**Unsold Permits:** None.

**Expected Harvest:** Expected harvest is 26 bulls and 45 cows.

## **NIOBRARA EAST UNIT**

### **2021 Recommendations:**

	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Antlerless</u>
General:	12	34
Landowner:	6	17

**General Information:** In 2020, overall success was 43%, with 83% success for bulls and 33% for antlerless. In the 2020 Landowner survey, 30% reported that they had too many elk, 47% reported moderate or severe damage and 51% said their level of damage was unacceptable. Depredation complaints: 2.

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** In 2019, the Niobrara River Unit was split into two units, Niobrara East and Niobrara West. General observations and reports would indicate an increasing and expanding elk population in this unit. Objectives are to increase bull hunter opportunity, while addressing depredation complaints. Bull quality measurements have been short of management approach minimum criteria's despite reports of many large bulls in the unit. Increasing bull permits will help us to stay ahead of row crop depredation issues as elk continue to expand eastward while increasing hunter opportunity. Increased antlerless permits will address depredation issues while improving landowner/hunter/agency relations and providing more hunter opportunity. We recommend increasing both bull and antlerless permits to meet objectives. Model projects 10% decline in population in this unit with this permit allocation.

<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>
2016 <sup>1</sup>	6	24	30	5	9	0	14	83	38	47	80	43.2	5.0
2017 <sup>1</sup>	6	24	30	7+	14	1	22+	100	63	70	88	41.2	4.3
2018 <sup>1</sup>	9	30	39	9	20	1	30	100	70	77	78	42.6	4.4
2019	6	24	30	5	7	1	13	83	33	43	80	39.8	4.5
2020	9	30	39	7	16	2	25	78	60	64	57	40.0	3.0
2021*	18	51	69										

\* Recommended permit numbers

+ Includes statewide auction and lottery permits.

<sup>1</sup> Data from Niobrara River Management Unit

\$ Very low sample size

**Unsold Permits:** None.

**Expected Harvest:** Expected harvest is 15 bulls and 30 cows.

## NIOBRARA WEST UNIT

### 2021 Recommendations:

	<u>Bull</u>	<u>Antlerless</u>
General:	20	Early: 50 Late: 30
Landowner:	10	40

**General Information:** In 2020, overall success was 75%. Success was at 83% on bull permits and 67% on antlerless permits. In the 2020 Landowner survey, 44% reported that they had too many elk, 58% reported moderate or severe damage and 65% said their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation complaints: 4 (previous to meetings) Numerous calls and complaints regarding elk after the LO meeting. DCP Requests: 6(DCP requests offered at LO meetings)

**Landowner Meetings:** Held on November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020 in Valentine.

**East Herd:** Questionnaires were filled out representing 5 LO's regarding the herd east of Valentine. Two LO's requested a reduction in population size. One requested no reduction. One requested both (not to many except when they bunch up). And another did not signify either.

**Nenzel Herd:** Questionnaires representing 12 LO's were filled out regarding the herd south of Nenzel and other small herds along the Niobrara River. Overall consensus was to reduce the population. 9 LO's requested a reduction in population and 3 indicated they wanted no reduction in population.

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** In 2019, the Niobrara River Unit was split into two units, Niobrara East and Niobrara West. The elk near Valentine and west of Valentine have continued to expand in number, and crop depredation issues arise annually. General observations and harvest data indicate an increasing elk population scattered along the Niobrara River in several different herds. 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. Model projects 10% decline in population in this unit with this permit allocation.

<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>
2016 <sup>1</sup>	6	24	30	5	9	0	14	83	38	47	80	43.2	5.0
2017 <sup>1</sup>	6	24	30	7+	14	1	22+	100	63	70	88	41.2	4.3
2018 <sup>1</sup>	9	30	39	9	20	1	30	100	70	77	78	42.6	4.4
2019	9	30	39	6	12	3	21	67	50	54	100	45.7	5.8
2020	12	39	51	12	22	4	26	83	67	75	100	47.2	4.5
2021*	30	120	150										

\* Recommended permit numbers

+ Includes statewide auction and lottery permits.

<sup>1</sup> Data from Niobrara River Management Unit

\$ Very low sample size

**Unsold Permits:** None.

**Expected Harvest:** Expected harvest is 26 bulls and 72 cows.

## **NORTH PLATTE RIVER UNIT**

### **2021 Recommendations:**

	<u><b>Bull</b></u>	<u><b>Antlerless</b></u>
General:	40	Early: 70 Late: 30
Landowner:	20	50

**General Information:** Overall hunter success was 82% in 2020 compared to 48% in 2019. Success for bull permits was 93%, compared to 80% in 2019. Success on antlerless permits was 70% compared to 27% in 2019. Two Landowner meetings were held to gather input on the Reddington and Hwy 88 herd. In the 2020 Landowner survey, 40% reported that they had too many elk, 37% reported moderate or severe damage and 57% said their level of damage was unacceptable.

Depredation complaints: Three (3).

**Landowner Meetings:** Held on November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at Bridgeport and Gering.

**Reddington Herd:** Questionnaires were filled out representing 5 LO's regarding the Reddington herd. Three LO's requested a reduction in population size. Two requested no reduction.

**Hwy 88 herd:** Questionnaires were filled out representing 9 LO's regarding the Hwy 88 herd. Four LO's requested a reduction in population size. Four requested no reduction. One signified it was too many when in a group.

**Population Status and Harvest Strategy:** General observations, landowner reports, and harvest data would indicate an increasing elk population in this unit. This unit contains several different elk herds throughout the area and landowner tolerance has decreased in some areas. Objectives are to maintain bull age and quality, while addressing depredation complaints with antlerless permits to reduce the population. We recommend an increase in antlerless permits as well as an increase in bull permits to accomplish these GMU objectives. Model projects 20-25% decline in population in this unit with this permit allocation.

<u><b>Permits Issued</b></u>				<u><b>Harvest+</b></u>				<u><b>% Success</b></u>			<u><b>Antlers and Age+</b></u>		
<u><b>Year</b></u>	<u><b>Bull</b></u>	<u><b>AO</b></u>	<u><b>Total</b></u>	<u><b>Bull</b></u>	<u><b>Cow</b></u>	<u><b>Calf</b></u>	<u><b>Total</b></u>	<u><b>Bull</b></u>	<u><b>AO</b></u>	<u><b>Overall</b></u>	<u><b>% 6point</b></u>	<u><b>Avg. Main Beam Length</b></u>	<u><b>Mean Bull Age</b></u>
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	24	12	0	36	80	27	48	83	47.4	4.8
2020	30	60	90	29+	40	2	71	93	70	82	93	47.9	5.1
2021*	60	150	210										

\* Recommended permit numbers

+ Includes statewide auction and lottery permits.

**Unsold Permits:** None.

**Expected Harvest:** Expected harvest is 45 bulls and 90 cows.