Deer Program Report

Prepared by MDWFP Deer Committee

2009

Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks

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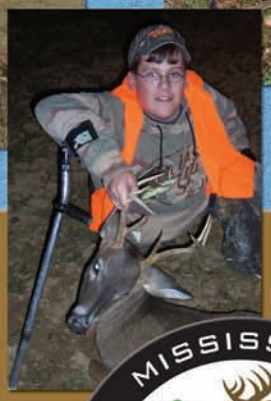
Mississippi Deer Program Report 2009

Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks
1505 Eastover Drive • Jackson, MS 39211

Wheelin' Sportsmen NWTF

Deer hunt for youth with disabilities



The 3rd annual Wheelin' Sportsmen Youth Hunt was held Nov. 7-9, 2008 at Bass Pro Shops in Pearl, MS. The event included a deer hunt for disabled youth and a benefit dinner. Sixty-two youths from Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama participated in the event. Thirty-two landowners and hunting clubs donated the use of their land and their time. The participants harvested 40 deer. The event was co-sponsored by NWTF, MDWFP, Bass Pro Shops, Primos Hunting Calls, the Mississippi Chapter of the NWTF, and the Greater Jackson Chapter of the NWTF.

Bass Pro Shops

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Dedication

In Memory of Bill Lunceford

1945-2007

This and all future Deer Data Books are dedicated to Bill Lunceford.

On September 20, 2007, the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks and the sportsmen of Mississippi lost a hero. William (Bill) Lunceford passed away as a result of complications due to a previous injury. Bill became a quadriplegic after a diving accident in 1979. After rehabilitation, he came back to work with the MDWFP as the Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP) Coordinator. He filled this role until his retirement on June 30, 2006. The work he completed in his position is immeasurable. Using a mouthpiece, wooden dowel, and large eraser, he typed faster than most of the staff. His knowledge of computer programs combined with deer management experience made the rest of the staff's roles easier. He combined the DMAP data for the entire state annually and produced reports to assist field biologists in making better deer management decisions. The data and reports eventually became the Deer Program Report. His work has impacted millions of acres of deer habitat in the state. He also assisted other states with the implementation of DMAP programs.

Bill was a man of Christian values, strong work ethic, and immense knowledge. It was impossible to not make friends with him. After his accident, he continued his passion of hunting deer. He designed a rifle mounted on a football helmet, with trigger activation by solenoid from a mouthpiece. He was a crack shot with this weapon, bagging several deer, and designed several versions in different calibers.

Bill traveled the state to give motivational speeches. He proved that adversity can be overcome. You just have to want to. Many lives have been touched, and changed, by Bill's time on Earth. As a firm believer, Bill can now walk again.

You will be missed.

2009

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Lieutenant Governor ***Phil Bryant***

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Billy Hudson, *Vice-Chairman*, Purvis
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Al Tuck, Deputy Director
Robert L. Cook, Deputy Administrator
Don Brazil, Director of Law Enforcement, Wildlife, and Fisheries

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Acknowledgments

Numerous people are responsible for the information presented in this report. The vision and work of Mississippi Game and Fish Commission patriarchs like Fannie Cook and Bill Turcotte initiated plans in the 1930s that ultimately provided Mississippi Sportsmen with the deer population we enjoy today.

Leaf River Refuge Manager Quinton Breeland, Upper Sardis Refuge Manager Garald Mize, and other dedicated Commission employees protected, trapped, and relocated hundreds of deer throughout the state during the days of Mississippi's deer restoration. In addition, game wardens of the deer restoration era protected a growing deer population through the early period of wildlife conservation. During this time in the history of Mississippi's Wildlife Management Agency, game wardens provided their own gun and vehicle. Mobile communication with other officers was little more than a futuristic dream. Wildlife enforcement, or the game warden that interfered with the "jacklighting" of deer and illegal harvest of game, was not a welcome sight to some hunters at that time. Refuge managers and game wardens of the restoration era are pioneers of the deer population restoration success of today.

Today the conservation officer is considered differently. Most men and women who enjoy the bountiful wildlife that exist today regard the conservation officer as a partner in wildlife conservation. As those who are responsible for the deer populations we treasure are remembered, the conservation officers of today should not be forgotten.

The Mississippi Legislature is also to be thanked for their historic and sustained funding of this agency. Since the establishment of the Game and Fish Commission in the days of the Great Depression, the Mississippi Legislature has funded efforts necessary for the wildlife conservation success story of the white-tailed deer.

The Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks and the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) Executive Committee are to be commended for the foresight and vision to allow the Wildlife Bureau to assemble a team of dedicated deer biologists.

Mississippi landowners have made deer in the Magnolia State a reality. Without landowner desire to have deer, most agency efforts would have proved ineffective. Those of us who hunt, study, and admire the white-tailed deer truly thank you.

This report would not have been possible without the efforts and cooperation of the MDWFP Wildlife Bureau technical staff and field personnel. An extra special appreciation is extended to Dene Smith and Tosha Jordan for assistance with many aspects of producing and mailing this report, and to Kourtney Wong who was responsible for the report design. Also, a special thanks is extended to Rick Dillard who coordinates the Magnolia Records Program on his own time.

Additionally, Mississippi's deer hunters deserve special recognition. Your data collection efforts, concern, and support for white-tailed deer are vital to the success of the White-tailed Deer Program.

Look for this information on www.mdwfp.com/deer. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us.

Cover photo courtesy of Jason L. Price (Priceless Photography: www.jasonlprice.com).

Special thanks and recognition goes out to Bill Lunceford. Bill had the vision and foresight to put the first DMAP Annual Report together in 1988. In 1993 the report changed to the Mississippi Deer Data book. Without Bill's vision of the DMAP program and the Deer Data Book, today's report would not have been possible.

Chad Dacus
Deer Program
Coordinator

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Regional Deer
Biologist

Chris McDonald
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William T. McKinley
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Biologist

Lann Wilf
Regional Deer
Biologist

FEDERAL AID IN WILDLIFE RESTORATION

A PITTMAN-ROBERTSON FUNDED PROJECT

This report is produced by the Technical Guidelines Project, Statewide Wildlife Development Project and Statewide Wildlife Investigations Project and is primarily funded by Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration.

White-tailed Deer Program Report 2008-2009

This buck was harvested by Richard Taylor on a DMAP property in Warren County.

The first Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP) report was completed in 1982. The DMAP report evolved into the Mississippi Deer Program Report in 1993. Since its inception, the purpose of this report was to consolidate all deer-related information obtained by the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) personnel. Compilation of these data provides managers the opportunity to analyze trends in deer harvest and physiological condition. In the future, managers will have a chronicled reference to more effectively critique effects of changes in season framework, hunter success, and climatic conditions on the deer population.

Decision makers such as the Mississippi Legislature and the Mississippi Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks have served the sportsmen of the state well. Deer harvest and management opportunities exist today that were considered far-fetched twenty-five years ago.

Annual mail surveys are used to monitor trends in hunter harvest and effort. There was no mail survey conducted following the 2006–2007 hunting season. The survey was conducted following the 2007–2008 hunting season collecting data from that season and the 2006–2007 season. Additionally, the survey was conducted following the 2008–2009 season. Caution should be used when reviewing this data due to collection methods and analysis changes.

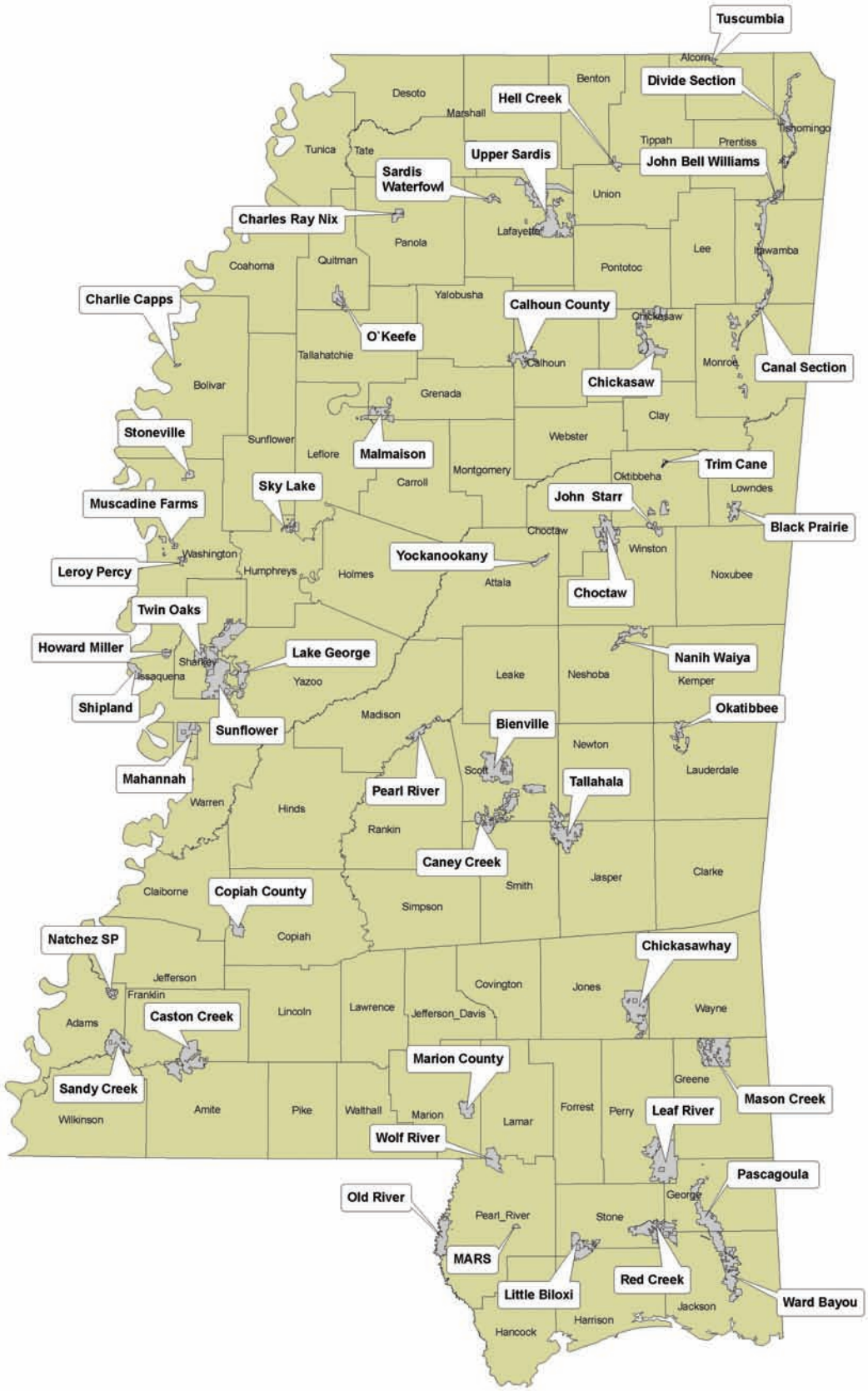
The MDWFP began using a new computer summary program (XtraNet) in 2004–2005. Data from 2001–2009 was analyzed using XtraNet, while data prior to 2001 was analyzed using DeerTrax, the old computer summary program. This may be the cause for drastic differences in some numbers. Once all of the historic data is entered into the XtraNet system, the numbers are expected to fall along the same trend and eliminate the drastic drop in the graphs and tables.

Sample methods were unchanged for the following data sets:

- Hunter effort and harvest information collected on state-operated WMAs
- Employee observations of deer mortality due to motor vehicle collisions
- Enforcement Division monitoring of deer hunting-related citations
- Deer research projects conducted in cooperation with Mississippi State University Forest and Wildlife Research Center

Department wildlife biologists continue to inform and educate sportsmen relative to deer management needs and issues. Our goals are to provide insight into current deer management needs while providing the leadership to identify and guide future issues. All known media sources were utilized in this process. In addition, public presentations were made to hunting, civic, and conservation groups throughout the state. This report captures a portion of the informational and educational efforts.

Wildlife Management Areas



Wildlife Management Areas 2008-2009

A summary of Wildlife Management Area (WMA) deer harvest and hunter activity is presented in **Figure 1**. The majority of data was collected from self-service permit stations. Mandatory check-in and harvest reporting is required from all hunters on most WMAs.

Throughout the year, conservation officers monitor compliance of hunters completing and returning permit cards on WMAs. Differences in compliance rates among WMAs are seen each year. These differences are mainly due to the degree of hunter acceptance of the check-in system. Some conservation officers assigned to WMAs have more aggressively informed hunters of the importance of accurate check-in than those on other areas. Also, some officers have enforced the mandatory check-in regulation more diligently. The size of a WMA and control of hunter access also affects compliance rates.

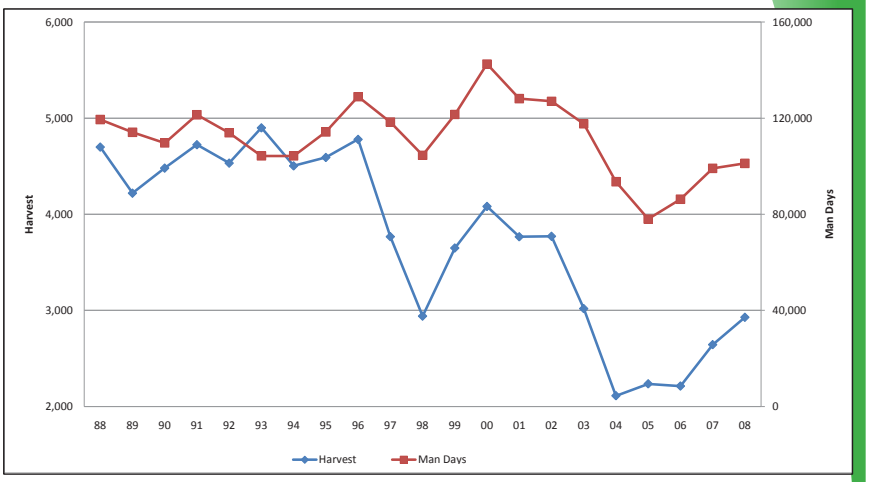


Figure 1. Wildlife Management Area Reported Deer Harvest and Hunter Man-days

Some WMAs provide very restrictive hunting opportunities due to size, habitat type, and management objectives. Location and soil region in which a WMA occurs impacts deer productivity. Because of these factors, as well as other unique differences among areas, caution should be exercised in comparing data between WMAs (**Table 2**).

Table 1. Wildlife Management Area Antler Criteria for the 2008-2009 Season

Wildlife Management Area	Minimum Antler Criteria	Wildlife Management Area	Minimum Antler Criteria
Bienville	12/15	**Nanih Waiya**	12/15
Black Prairie	12/15	**Natchez State Park**	12/15
Calhoun County	12/15	**Okatibbee**	12/15
Canal/John Bell	12/15	**O'Keefe**	15/18
Caney Creek	12/15	**Old River**	12/15
Caston Creek	12/15	**Pascagoula**	12/15
Charles Ray Nix	15/18	**Pearl River**	12/15
Chickasaw	12/15	**Red Creek**	12/15
Chickasawhay	12/15	**Sandy Creek**	12/15
Choctaw	12/15	**Sardis Waterfowl**	Hardened Antler Above Hairline
Copiah County	12/15	**Shipland**	15/18
Divide Section	12/15	**Stoneville**	15/18
Hell Creek	12/15	**Sunflower**	15/18
John Starr	12/15	**Tallahala**	12/15
Lake George	15/18	**Theodore A. Mars, Jr.**	Hardened Antler Above Hairline
Leaf River	12/15	**Tuscumbia**	12/15
Leroy Percy	15/18	**Twin Oaks**	15/18
Little Biloxi	12/15	**Upper Sardis**	12/15
Mahannah	16/20	**Ward Bayou**	12/15
Malmaison	15/18	**Wolf River**	12/15
Marion County	12/15	**Yockanookany**	12/15
Mason Creek	12/15		

*1st number indicates Inside Spread *2nd number indicates Main Beam Length

Reported hunter man-days for the 2008–2009 season increased by 2,045 man-days compared to last year. The 2006–2007 season showed the first increase in hunter effort in five seasons. We are now possibly beginning to recover from the past seasons' decrease. Reasons for these decreases varied. Hurricane Katrina certainly decreased hunter activity, as did the increase in fuel prices that followed the hurricane in 2005–2006. Hunter opportunity has generally remained stable or increased on most WMAs; therefore, opportunity is not likely a causative factor of this decrease.

Similar to hunter effort, total reported harvest increased by 285 deer compared to last season (**Figure 1**). The 2008–2009 season was the fifth and sixth seasons that many WMAs had a minimum inside spread restriction for legal bucks. Beginning with the 2007–2008 season, all WMAs with a minimum inside spread antler restriction implemented a minimum main beam length restriction also. A legal buck must meet either the minimum inside spread or the minimum main beam length. See **Table 1** to determine the antler criteria for each WMA. Harvest should continue to increase for a few years before leveling off. However, an increase in harvest can only be expected if hunter effort remains constant or increases.

Average success rate also increased across WMAs. Therefore, the increased harvest may be partially attributed to increased deer populations on the WMA system. Other behavioral changes within the deer herd are also likely culprits in the increased harvest.

Table 2. Wildlife Management Area Harvest Information for the 2008-2009 Season

Wildlife Management Area	Acreage	Total Harvest	Acres/ Deer	Buck Harvest	Acres/ Buck	Doe Harvest	Acres/ Doe	Total Man-days	Man-days/ Deer	Man-days/ Acre
Bienville	26,136	88	297	50	523	38	688	1,755	20	0.07
Black Prairie	5,673	25	227	8	709	17	334	162	6	0.03
Calhoun County	10,900	62	176	40	273	22	495	1,914	31	0.18
Canal/John Bell	28,930	116	249	52	556	64	452	3,660	32	0.13
Caney Creek	28,000	62	452	33	848	29	966	1,926	31	0.07
Caston Creek	27,785	70	397	47	591	23	1,208	4,286	61	0.15
Charles Ray Nix	4,000	82	49	32	125	50	80	1,107	14	0.28
Chickasaw	27,259	124	220	51	534	73	373	6,864	55	0.25
Chickasawhay	29,048	59	492	44	660	15	1,937	2,712	46	0.09
Choctaw	24,314	124	196	66	368	58	419	3,121	25	0.13
Copiah County	6,583	159	41	64	103	95	69	3,936	25	0.60
Divide Section	15,337	54	284	15	1,022	39	393	2,423	45	0.16
Hell Creek	2,284	22	104	5	457	17	134	146	7	0.06
John Starr	8,244	70	118	29	284	41	201	1,879	27	0.23
Lake George	8,383	19	441	11	762	8	1,048	548	29	0.07
Leaf River	41,780	135	309	77	543	58	720	9,769	72	0.23
Leroy Percy	1,642	10	164	6	274	4	411	382	38	0.23
Little Biloxi	6,923	32	216	13	533	19	364	2,619	82	0.38
Mahannah	12,675	193	66	73	174	120	106	1,792	9	0.14
Malmaison	9,696	120	81	32	303	88	110	2,461	21	0.25
Marion County	7,200	88	82	29	248	59	122	2,604	30	0.36
Mason Creek	28,000	53	528	33	848	20	1,400	2,771	52	0.10
Nanih Waiya	7,295	79	92	29	252	50	146	1,927	24	0.26
Natchez State Park	3,425	54	63	21	163	33	104	544	10	0.16
Okatibbee	6,883	23	299	7	983	16	430	929	40	0.13
O'Keefe	6,239	87	72	37	169	50	125	1,886	22	0.30
Old River	14,764	34	434	22	671	12	1,230	1,562	46	0.11
Pascagoula River	36,994	122	303	103	359	19	1,947	6,506	53	0.18
Pearl River	6,925	19	364	13	533	6	1,154	1,602	84	0.23
Red Creek	22,954	14	1,640	6	3,826	8	2,869	1,341	96	0.06
Sandy Creek	16,407	99	166	59	278	40	410	4,137	42	0.25
Sardis Waterfowl	4,000	19	211	9	444	10	400	146	8	0.04
Shipland	3,642	23	158	8	455	15	243	1,079	47	0.30
Stoneville	2,500	12	208	6	417	6	417	328	27	0.13
Sunflower	58,480	98	597	44	1,329	54	1,083	1,870	19	0.03
Tallahala	28,120	119	236	60	469	59	477	2,871	24	0.10
Theodore A. Mars, Jr.	900	1	900	1	900	0		34	34	0.04
Trim Cane	891	9	99	4	223	5	178	19	2	0.02
Tuscumbia	2,436	16	152	5	487	11	221	372	23	0.15
Twin Oaks	5,675	83	68	30	189	53	107	1,060	13	0.19
Upper Sardis	42,274	136	311	55	769	81	522	8,055	59	0.19
Ward Bayou	13,234	16	827	9	1,470	7	1,891	1,893	118	0.14
Wolf River	10,194	83	123	43	237	40	255	3,946	48	0.39
Yockanookany	2,379	15	159	7	340	8	297	220	15	0.09
TOTAL	657,403	2,928		1,388		1,540		101,164		
AVERAGE	**16,034**	**71**	**288**	**34**	**584**	**38**	**617**	**2,467**	**37**	**0.17**

2008-2009 WMA Deer Harvest Narratives

Bienville WMA
Written by: Scott Baker

Bienville WMA is 26,136 acres within the Bienville National Forest located north of Morton. For the fifth year, bucks must meet minimum antler requirements to be legal for harvest. For the 2008–2009 season, bucks must have an inside spread of at least 12 inches or one main beam length of at least 15 inches. The 2008–2009 season was the fourth year where antlerless deer were legal for harvest during gun season.

Deer harvest numbers consisted of 50 bucks and 38 does. Total harvest decreased 43% from the previous year and hunter effort decreased by 45%. The harvest and man-days for the 2007–2008 season appear to be the exception rather than the norm.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	74	1,924
2007-2008	154	3,169
2008-2009	88	1,755

Habitat conditions on Bienville WMA improved over the years due to management for the Red-cockaded woodpecker, which is an endangered species that resides on the WMA. However, in 2005, Hurricane Katrina damaged much of the hardwoods along creeks across the area. The MDWFP has proposed new openings in timber thinning/harvest areas which will provide additional food sources for wildlife.

As deer populations continue to grow in response to habitat improvements on the area, it has become necessary to increase antlerless hunting opportunities. For the 2009–2010 season, antlerless hunting opportunities on Bienville WMA will include archery season, Thanksgiving weekend of gun season with dogs, primitive weapon season, gun season without dogs, and January archery season.

Black Prairie WMA
Written by: Jerry Hazlewood

Black Prairie WMA is a 5,673-acre area located in Lowndes County. Black Prairie offers a draw hunt only by special permit through a random drawing. This hunt has provided very high success rates during the past several years. Hunter effort and harvest were both significantly lower than the previous year, with a harvest in 2008–2009 of 8 bucks and 17 does. Man-days of effort decreased 34% and harvest decreased 41%. There were no significant changes in deer hunting regulations, opportunity, or bag limits to account for the decrease in man-days of effort.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	29	103
2007-2008	42	244
2008-2009	25	162

Hunters who desire a quality buck are passing up young bucks and waiting for an opportunity to harvest a mature buck; therefore, fewer young bucks are being harvested. The result is an increase in buck quality because bucks are allowed to grow older. Habitat quality is maintained by keeping the deer population below carrying capacity, planting supplemental food plots, and planting summer agricultural crops on approximately 1,600 acres.

Calhoun County WMA
Written by: Brad Holder

Calhoun County WMA consists of 10,900 acres located near Bruce in Calhoun County. The area is unique because it offers extensive opportunity to those who hunt deer with dogs. Harvest on the WMA continues to be skewed towards bucks. Forty bucks and 22 does were harvested during the 2008–2009 season. Recorded weights of harvested bucks and does were down when compared to the past five seasons with the exception of 1.5 and 2.5 year old does. We would like to see more does than bucks harvested during future seasons. The result would be a smaller, healthier herd in which individual bucks would be better able to reach their full potential.

Privately managed loblolly pine plantations cover much of Calhoun County WMA. Large clear-cuts and a few hardwood draws dot the WMA's landscape. Timber thins, clear-cuts, and hardwood draws provide some seasonal food and cover. However, deer habitats across the WMA are slightly below average because of dense pine stands and canopy closure which reduces sunlight penetration and browse growth. Old logging decks and logging roads are managed as wildlife openings and kept in either native vegetation or planted in wheat, oats, or clover in winter.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	57	1,990
2007-2008	45	1,950
2008-2009	62	1,914

2008-2009 WMA Deer Harvest Narratives

Canal Section and John Bell Williams WMAs
Written by: Jerry Hazlewood

Canal Section WMA (26,000 ac.) and John Bell Williams WMA (2,930 ac.) share common boundaries and harvest data is combined. These areas stretch approximately 54 linear miles along the west side of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway from MS Hwy. 4 at Bay Springs Lake to five miles south of MS Hwy. 45 at Aberdeen. These WMAs lie in Tishomingo, Prentiss, Itawamba, and Monroe counties.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	131	3,912
2007-2008	165	4,512
2008-2009	116	3,660

During the past deer season, a total of 3,660 man-days were recorded for deer hunting with a harvest of 116 deer, consisting of 52 bucks and 64 does. The majority of usage and harvest occurred during the gun seasons with 1,961 man-days and 32 bucks harvested (doe harvest was not allowed during gun season). The man-day usage total decreased 19% and harvest decreased 30%. There were no changes in regulations or habitat to explain these increases. The poor state of the economy and high gasoline prices may have been factors causing the decrease in usage of the area.

Approximately 250 acres of the area are handicapped hunting only, 200 acres are archery only, and 100 acres are primitive weapon only for deer hunting. The WMAs have 164 winter food plots and 79 summer food plots. The winter food plots did exceptionally well due to the mild weather and adequate rainfall. Acorn production throughout the WMA was very good.

Caney Creek WMA
Written by: Scott Baker

Caney Creek WMA is 28,000 acres within the Bienville National Forest located near Forest. For the fifth year, bucks must meet minimum antler requirements to be legal for harvest. For the 2008–2009 season bucks must have an inside spread of at least 12 inches or one main beam length of at least 15 inches. Deer harvest numbers consisted of 33 bucks and 29 does. Total harvest decreased by 32% from last year and hunter effort decreased by 28%.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	63	2,347
2007-2008	92	2,674
2008-2009	62	1,926

As deer populations continue to grow in response to habitat improvements on the area, it has become necessary to increase antlerless hunting opportunities. For the 2009–2010 season, antlerless hunting opportunities on Caney Creek WMA will include archery season, Thanksgiving weekend of gun season with dogs, primitive weapon season, the gun season without dogs, and January archery season.

Measures are being taken to improve habitat conditions on the area. The U.S. Forest Service conducted timber harvest operations on Caney Creek WMA and continue spring prescribed burns, which should increase available browse for deer and other wildlife. As a result of the timber harvest operation, the MDWFP will be allowed to maintain several areas as permanent wildlife openings, which will improve habitat conditions on the area for years to come.

Caston Creek WMA
Written by: Josh Moree

Caston Creek WMA is a 27,785-acre WMA located within the Homochitto National Forest near Meadville, in Franklin and Amite counties. The fire-maintained pine stands combined with mixed pine-hardwood and hardwood stands provide good deer habitat. Total reported deer harvest increased 180% for the 2008–2009 hunting season, with 70 deer harvested, which consisted of 47 bucks and 23 does. Buck harvest increased by 30 and doe harvest increased by 15 compared to the previous season. Deer hunters accounted for 4,286 man-days, an increase from the previous season by 24%. Annual prescribed burns conducted by the U.S. Forest Service will continue to improve deer browse on the WMA.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	44	2,887
2007-2008	25	3,469
2008-2009	70	4,286

2008-2009 WMA Deer Harvest Narratives

Charles Ray Nix WMA
Written by: Brad Holder

Charles Ray Nix WMA is 4,000 acres located near the town of Sardis in Panola County. This WMA offers extensive opportunity to those who enjoy bow hunting. There are also primitive weapon hunts and a week-long youth rifle season. Participation in the primitive weapon hunts is allowed only by special permit through a random drawing.

Thirty-two bucks and 50 does were harvested during the 2008–2009 season. Colder weather increased deer movement and helped to increase hunter success. Weights and lactation rates from harvested does were generally below average when compared to averages for the Upper Thick Loess soil region. Weights from harvested bucks continue to be below average when compared to averages for the Upper Thick Loess soil region. These parameters indicate a deer herd too large to be supported at optimum levels of health by existing habitat. MDWFP managers expected a decline in deer health indices after agricultural production of soybeans and wheat was removed from the area two years ago. These large sources of food artificially inflated carrying capacity of the WMA and increased the population. Doe harvest must be increased to bring the herd into balance with available habitat which is steadily improving under current management objectives. WMA personnel will be looking to increase primitive weapon and rifle hunting opportunity during future deer seasons on Charles Ray Nix WMA.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	76	1,270
2007-2008	50	1,305
2008-2009	82	1,107

Charles Ray Nix WMA has a large amount of open ground and stands of upland hardwoods. Management on the WMA is directed towards small game (Northern bobwhite, Eastern cottontail, and mourning dove). Habitat management for those species benefits deer tremendously. Prescribed burning is used to a large extent on the WMA and a series of habitat improvement timber thins are currently being implemented in designated upland hardwood stands. These practices will increase browse quantity and quality as well as fawn cover. Designated areas are planted in cowpeas, soybeans, wheat, oats, and/or clovers. Acorns were slightly less abundant this past fall and winter but provided some additional forage.

Chickasaw WMA
Written by: Brad Holder

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	98	6,281
2007-2008	124	6,305
2008-2009	124	6,864

Chickasaw WMA is 27,259 acres located within the Tombigbee National Forest near Houston in Chickasaw and Pontotoc counties. Chickasaw WMA has a designated hunting area north of Highway 32 for those who wish to hunt deer with hounds.

A total of 51 bucks and 73 does were harvested this past season. Man-days continue to exhibit an increasing trend on the area, which is good. Hunters experienced decent success but indicated fewer buck sightings, although this season's buck harvest didn't represent a significant departure from the 2007–2008 season. Body weights for most buck and doe age groups were slightly above average when compared to averages for the Interior Flatwoods soil region. Lactation was slightly above the soil region average.

Chickasaw WMA is predominantly forested with stands of hardwoods and loblolly pines. Old logging roads, logging decks, and power line right-of-ways are managed as wildlife openings. Late-winter burning and thinning of designated pine stands, conducted by the U.S. Forest Service in 2007 and 2008, have helped to increase browse and cover. An average acorn crop this past winter provided additional forage.

Chickasawhay WMA
Written by: Josh Moree

Chickasawhay WMA is a large U.S. Forest Service area spanning across 29,048 acres in Jones County. The fire-maintained pine stands combined with scattered creeks and drains on the area attract many outdoor types. Total reported deer harvest increased 90% for the 2008–2009 hunting season, with 59 deer harvested, which consisted of 44 bucks and 15 does. Buck harvest increased by 27 and doe harvest increased only by one compared to the previous season. Deer hunters accounted for 2,712 man-days, a decrease from the previous season by 16%. Annual prescribed burns conducted by the U.S. Forest Service will continue to improve deer browse on the WMA.

A deer herd health evaluation was conducted on Chickasawhay WMA on March 25, 2009. A total of 10 does

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were collected. Overall herd health indices on Chickasawhay WMA were greater than historical values for the WMA but less than historical values for the Lower Coastal Plain soil region. The kidney fat index was 221% of historical value for the WMA and 72% of the historical soil region value. Reproductive timing was late with a mean conception date of January 28. The range of conception was January 15 to February 9. The reproductive potential was average with 1.7 fetuses per doe.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	75	2,829
2007-2008	31	3,245
2008-2009	59	2,712

Choctaw WMA
Written by: Brad Holder

Choctaw WMA is 24,314 acres located within the Tombigbee National Forest near Ackerman in Choctaw County.

The 2008–2009 season harvest consisted of 66 bucks and 58 does. Buck and doe harvest has exhibited an increasing trend over the past 11 seasons. Increased harvest of does is particularly positive for Choctaw WMA. Buck and doe body weights continue to be below average in most age classes when compared to averages for the Upper Coastal Plain soil region. These numbers along with a large percentage (67%) of 3.5+ year old does harvested indicate overpopulation. An increased doe harvest is needed to improve herd health parameters.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	111	5,655
2007-2008	106	3,542
2008-2009	124	3,121

Choctaw WMA is predominantly forested with stands of hardwoods and loblolly pines. Old logging roads, logging decks, and power line right-of-ways are managed as wildlife openings. Extensive late-winter burning and some timber thinning were conducted by the U.S. Forest Service in 2007, 2008, and 2009. These activities have helped to improve deer habitat on the WMA by stimulating the growth of food and cover. Acorns were less abundant this past fall and winter, so deer focused more on native vegetation and supplemental forages.

Copiah County WMA
Written by: Josh Moree

Copiah County WMA is comprised of 6,583 acres owned by the State of Mississippi. The WMA consists of pine stands with mixed pine-hardwood stands along the creeks and drains. Numerous permanent openings throughout the WMA are maintained with native vegetation and supplemental plantings. Habitat conditions on the WMA were improved prior to the 2008–2009 hunting season by conducting prescribed burns and creating additional permanent openings with funds provided by the National Wild Turkey Federation.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	77	729
2007-2008	136	3,383
2008-2009	159	3,936

Total reported deer harvest increased 17% to 159 (64 bucks and 95 does) for the 2008–2009 hunting season. Buck harvest decreased by six and doe harvest increased by 29 compared to the previous season. Deer hunting accounted for 3,936 man-days, an increase from the previous season by 16%.

Divide Section WMA
Written by: Jerry Hazlewood

Divide Section WMA (15,337 ac.) lies along both sides of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway from the northwest side of Bay Springs Lake northward to MS Hwy. 25 near Pickwick Lake. A small portion of the area is in Prentiss County and the remainder is in Tishomingo County. This WMA annually undergoes intense habitat management in order to increase the value to wildlife and provide a quality hunting experience. The WMA has 141 winter food plots and 78 summer food plots. The food plots range in size from one-half acre to two acres. Approximately one-third of the WMA is spoil area, which is material excavated during the construction of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway. This acreage has very low soil fertility and is still in early stages of plant succession.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	60	2,902
2007-2008	64	2,713
2008-2009	54	2,423

Divide Section WMA is a primitive weapon only area for deer with a season bag limit of two antlerless deer and

one legal antlered buck. Regulations state that a buck must have a minimum inside spread of 12 inches or one main beam of at least 15 inches to be legal for harvest. Approximately 950 acres of this area is devoted to youth and handicapped only deer hunting. Youth and handicapped hunters may use modern firearms.

There were 15 bucks harvested during the 2008–2009 season, an increase of one from the previous season. There were 39 does harvested, a decrease of 11 from the previous season. Man-days decreased 11% from the previous year. The poor state of the economy and high gasoline prices may have been factors causing the decrease in usage of the area.

The winter food plots on the area did exceptionally well due to mild weather and adequate rainfall.

Hell Creek WMA
Written by: Jerry Hazlewood

Hell Creek WMA is 2,284 acres located near New Albany in Tippah and Union counties. Deer hunting opportunity on this area is allowed only by special permit through a random drawing. There were no significant changes in deer hunting regulations, opportunity, or bag limits. The deer harvest of 22 deer consisted of 5 bucks and 17 does. The total harvest is a 100% increase and man-days of use for deer increased 54%. The deer population has shown a significant increase resulting in noticeable crop damage on the area. Hunter use and success should continue to increase over the next few years.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	12	99
2007-2008	11	95
2008-2009	22	146

Habitat management efforts to improve 400 acres of mid-rotation pine plantations by drastically thinning the stands should be beneficial to white-tailed deer on Hell Creek WMA for years to come.

John Starr Forest WMA
Written by: Brad Holder

John Starr Forest WMA is 8,244 acres located near Starkville in Oktibbeha and Winston counties. Total deer harvest has exhibited a decreasing trend over the past three seasons. This may be partially due to increased ground cover as the forest becomes thicker as a result of timber thins and wind damage. Twenty-nine bucks and 41 does were harvested during the 2008–2009 season. Harvested buck and doe body weights were slightly above average compared to figures for the Interior Flatwoods soil region.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	81	1,933
2007-2008	78	1,763
2008-2009	70	1,879

John Starr Forest WMA is predominantly forested with stands of loblolly pine and hardwoods. Old logging roads, logging decks, and power line right-of-ways are managed as wildlife openings. Some prescribed burning and timber thinning, conducted by Mississippi State University, has helped to enhance deer habitat. Hopefully the use of prescribed fire and thinning within pine plantations will be used to a greater extent in the future. Deer seemed to focus on supplemental forages early as acorns were much less abundant compared to the 2007–2008 season.

Lake George WMA
Written by: Jackie Fleeman

Lake George WMA is an 8,383-acre tract located near Holly Bluff in Yazoo County. This area consists primarily of 17 year old replanted bottomland hardwood timber. The 2008–2009 season was the second year that area regulations required a legal buck to have an 18-inch main beam or a 15-inch spread. Also, hunters could apply for a tag that would allow them to harvest a buck with at least one unforked antler. Both of these regulations appear to be supported by the majority of the deer hunters in the area. Twenty of these special buck tags were given out for use on Lake George WMA, and one was reported as being used. Deer hunting man-days increased from 344 during the 2007–2008 season to 548 during the 2008–2009 season, continuing the trend of increased deer hunter man-days on the area. Buck harvest decreased by one to 11, and doe harvest increased to 8. Body weights were excellent on bucks and does, and antler indices were outstanding as well.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	15	297
2007-2008	17	344
2008-2009	19	548

Flooding occurred on the area in the spring and early summer causing some stress on the deer herd and caused

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poor lactation rates. Rainfall was consistent until late summer which resulted in good browse availability. This allowed the deer herd to recover from flood stress and have good body weights and antler production. Mast production was good where available, but most of the trees are not old enough to produce mast. This area has a fairly low deer density, but the herd is growing in numbers and in buck quality because of excellent habitat.

Leaf River WMA
Written by: Josh Moree

Leaf River is one of, if not the most, storied WMAs in Mississippi. The rich history and excellent hunting make this area a popular draw for south Mississippi hunters. The 41,780-acre WMA, located within the Desoto National Forest in Perry County, is a mix of fire-maintained pine stands and scattered creeks and drains. Annual prescribed burns conducted by the US Forest Service has improved deer habitat on the WMA.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	65	5,794
2007-2008	78	7,706
2008-2009	135	9,769

Total reported deer harvest increased 73% for the 2008–2009 hunting season, with 135 deer harvested, which consisted of 77 bucks and 58 does. Buck harvest increased by 35 and doe harvest increased by 22 compared to the previous season. Deer hunting accounted for 9,769 man-days, an increase from the previous season by 27%.

Leroy Percy WMA
Written by: Jackie Fleeman

Leroy Percy WMA is a 1,642-acre tract located about 5 miles west of Hollandale on MS Hwy 12. Only primitive weapons and archery equipment are allowed for deer hunting. Deer harvest consisted of six bucks and four does, which is down from the 13 deer harvested during the 2007–2008 season. This was the second year that area regulations required a legal buck to have a minimum 18-inch main beam or a 15-inch spread. Also, hunters could apply for a tag that would allow them to harvest a buck with at least one unforked antler. Nineteen tags were issued and no tags were reported as being used.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	10	554
2007-2008	13	540
2008-2009	10	382

Hunting pressure this season was down to 382 man-days compared to 540 man-days last season. All harvested bucks were between 3½ and 5½ years old with very good antler development. Average rainfall during the summer resulted in good browse conditions. The amount of browse is diminishing due to shading from canopy closure. Acorn production was good during the 2008–2009 season. Timber harvest in the form of thinning is needed.

Little Biloxi WMA
Written by: Josh Moree

The 6,923-acre Little Biloxi WMA, located in Stone and Harrison Counties, is a popular hunting destination for many coastal county residents. The WMA is located on lands owned by the U.S. Forest Service and Weyerhaeuser Company. Total reported deer harvest increased 88% for the 2008–2009 hunting season, with 32 deer harvested, which consisted of 13 bucks and 19 does. Buck harvest increased by five and doe harvest increased by 10 compared to the previous season. Deer hunting accounted for 2,619 man-days, an increase from the previous season by 33%.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	19	1,995
2007-2008	17	1,965
2008-2009	32	2,619

Mahannah WMA
Written by: Jackie Fleeman

Mahannah WMA is 12,675 acres located approximately 12 miles north of Vicksburg. Deer hunting is only allowed with a special permit through a random drawing except for the January archery hunt which is open to the public. This was the second year that area regulations required legal bucks to have a 16-inch minimum inside spread or a 20-inch

minimum main beam. Also, hunters could apply for a tag that would allow them to harvest a buck with at least one unforked antler. Four hundred and seventy of these special buck tags were issued on Mahannah WMA and forty eight were reported as being used. Both of these regulations appear to be supported by the majority of deer hunters on the area. Deer man-days increased to 1,792. Deer harvest increased to 193. Doe harvest increased from 74 to120. Buck harvest increased from 51 to 73 due to an increased use of the special buck tags. Extensive flooding occurred on the area from March through July resulting in stress on the deer herd. Lactation rates were poor and antler and body indices were down somewhat. Acorn production was excellent.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	152	1,755
2007-2008	125	1,646
2008-2009	193	1,792

A deer herd health evaluation was conducted on Mahannah WMA on February 23, 2009. A total of 11 does were collected consisting of one 1.5 year old doe and ten 2.5+ year old does. Overall, current herd health indices on Mahannah WMA are better than the expected values for the WMA and the Delta soil region as a whole. Dressed weight, kidney fat index, reproductive potential, and conception date indices are all slightly better than the expected values. Conception dates ranged from November 11 until January 15.

Selective timber harvest, increased antlerless deer harvest, and good mast crops have brought herd health indices on Mahannah above historic figures for the WMA and the soil region. However, high water during early to mid summer caused poor lactation rates in 2008, but reproductive effort rebounded in the winter of 2009.

Malmaison WMA
Written by: Brad Holder

Malmaison WMA is 9,696 acres located near Grenada in Carroll, Grenada, and Leflore counties. This area is unique because it encompasses parts of the loess hills and Mississippi Delta.

Total deer harvested increased by 23% compared to the 2007–2008 season, with 32 bucks and 88 does harvested during the 2008–2009 season. Weights and lactation for all doe age classes were below average when compared to averages for the Upper Thick Loess soil region. Buck weights for all age classes were below average. Deer density appears to be high as indicated by summer browse pressure on vegetation and food plots, and the large percentage (48%) of 3.5+ year old does in this past season's harvest. Increased doe harvest coupled with continued habitat management is critical to bring the local herd in balance with available forage and improve health indices. Fortunately doe harvest has exhibited an increasing trend over the past five seasons. Hopefully this increasing trend will continue.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	85	1,727
2007-2008	97	2,025
2008-2009	120	2,461

Malmaison WMA is predominantly forested with stands of bottomland and upland hardwoods. Many wildlife openings exist and are maintained in natural vegetation or planted in summer and winter forages such as clovers, wheat, oats, Austrian winter peas, and iron-clay cowpeas. Adequate rainfall and proper maintenance prompted good forage production. Acorn production was slightly below average. Habitat improvement in the form of timber thins will be implemented in designated forest stands on Malmaison WMA. These thins will increase natural browse, fawning cover, acorn production, and promote hardwood regeneration.

Marion County WMA
Written by: Josh Moree

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	80	2,101
2007-2008	73	2,334
2008-2009	88	2,604

Marion County WMA, located southeast of Columbia, is comprised of 7,200 acres owned by the State of Mississippi. The WMA consists mainly of fire-maintained longleaf pine stands with mixed pine-hardwood stands along the creeks and drains. Numerous permanent openings throughout the WMA are maintained with native vegetation and supplemental plantings.

Total reported deer harvest increased 21% to 88 (29 bucks and 59 does) for the 2008–2009 hunting season. Buck harvest decreased by 11 while doe harvest increased by 26 compared to the previous season. Deer hunting accounted for 2,604 man-days, an increase from the previous season by 12%.

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Mason Creek WMA
Written by: Josh Moree

Mason Creek WMA consists of over 28,000 acres located within the Desoto National Forest in Greene County. The fire-maintained pine stands combined with scattered creeks and drains on the area attract many visitors to the WMA. While there is no check-in station on Mason Creek, hunters are still required to record harvests on the daily permit card. Total reported deer harvest increased 43% for the 2008–2009 hunting season, with 53 deer harvested, which consisted of 33 bucks and 20 does. Buck harvest increased by nine and doe harvest increased by seven compared to the previous season. Deer hunting accounted for 2,771 man-days, an increase from the previous season by 31%.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	28	1,751
2007-2008	37	2,117
2008-2009	53	2,771

Habitat management has been very limited on Mason Creek WMA. However, plans are underway to improve wildlife habitat across the area. Creating additional permanent openings, thinning timber stands, and an improved prescribed fire regime are just some of the activities planned for Mason Creek WMA.

Nanih Waiya WMA
Written by: Jerry Hazlewood

Nanih Waiya WMA is 7,295 acres located near Philadelphia in Neshoba County. Man-days of deer hunting effort for the 2008–2009 season increased 7% from the previous year. Total deer harvest included 29 bucks and 50 does. The increase in usage and harvest over the past few years is most likely due to the development and maintenance of an extensive road and trail system throughout the bottomland allowing hunters unprecedented access. After seven hunting seasons on this WMA, deer hunting potential remains largely untapped, particularly in the more remote areas throughout the WMA. The early successional habitat, which comprises most of the WMA, has provided an abundant food supply for deer. Populations continue to remain at higher levels than when mature hardwood timber dominated the area. This early successional habitat is currently providing abundant deer forage, but will soon be reaching a closed-canopy stage over a large portion of the WMA. The openings created by Hurricane Katrina and smaller isolated storms will provide a short-term increase in the amount of deer browse available. In an effort to manage deer populations, doe harvest opportunity extends throughout the entire length of the deer season.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	61	1,420
2007-2008	100	1,794
2008-2009	79	1,927

Natchez State Park
Written by: Josh Moree

Natchez State Park consists of approximately 3,425 acres located in Adams County near Natchez. The park consists mainly of upland mixed pine/hardwoods. Approximately 2,200 acres of the park is open to limited deer hunting. Hunters are allowed only by special permit through a random drawing held each fall. Currently, youth gun, handicapped gun, archery, and muzzleloader hunts are available. Hunters will have more opportunity for deer hunting at Natchez State Park as the hunt dates were expanded for the 2009–2010 season.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	27	N/A
2007-2008	32	N/A
2008-2009	54	544

Total reported deer harvest increased 69% for the 2008–2009 hunting season, with 54 deer harvested, which consisted of 21 bucks and 33 does. Buck harvest increased by five and doe harvest increased by 17 compared to the previous hunting season. Deer hunters accounted for 544 man-days. Hunter use and deer harvest are expected to increase for the 2009–2010 season because more dates will be available for deer hunting.

Okatibbee WMA
Written by: Jerry Hazlewood

Okatibbee WMA is 6,883 acres located near Collinsville in Lauderdale County. Man-days decreased slightly from the previous year. A total of 23 deer were harvested, which included seven bucks and 16 does. The changes in man-days and harvest were only slightly different from the last few years.

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Hurricane Katrina and isolated storm damage has had a lasting impact on the WMA. Timber damage has opened many of the previously closed canopy stands. This has resulted in an increase in browse for deer. Some of the areas have been so severely damaged that reforestation in hardwoods was the best option to reclaim the areas. High winds damaged stands of mature, bottomland hardwood more than upland stands of mixed pine and hardwood. Downed timber from the storms is still scattered throughout much of the WMA and hunter access through the woods is limited, but roads and trails have been cleared.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	29	983
2007-2008	29	1,057
2008-2009	23	929

Winter food plots did extremely well and there was an exceptional acorn crop. Timber management practices are being implemented to increase production of deer browse. Most of the mature, upland pine stands have been thinned and burned.

O'Keefe WMA
Written by: Brad Holder

O'Keefe WMA is 6,239 acres located near Lambert in Quitman County. This area is unique because it is one of largest tracts of timber in the north Mississippi Delta outside of the Mississippi River levees.

Thirty-seven bucks and 50 does were harvested during the 2008–2009 season. This past season's harvest was the highest on record. Doe harvest increased significantly, presumably because the doe weight regulation was lifted. Seventeen fawns were harvested with 15 of them being does. Buck fawn harvest did not increase significantly. Cold weather early in the season forced deer to move more, which helped to increase hunters' success as well. Buck weights continue to exhibit a slightly increasing trend when compared to the past five seasons. Doe weights and lactation rates among all age classes were slightly below soil region averages. A lower percentage (27%) of 3.5+ year old does in this past season's harvest suggest a more balanced herd. Weights of bucks harvested during the 2008–2009 season were average for the Delta soil region.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	62	1,825
2007-2008	58	1,652
2008-2009	87	1,886

O'Keefe WMA is predominantly forested with stands of mature bottomland hardwoods. Open areas on the WMA include farmed fields and CRP or WRP fields. The WMA is surrounded by crop land which provides abundant, high-quality summer and winter forage in the form of soybeans and wheat. Summer and winter supplemental forages such as oats, wheat, clovers, and iron-clay cowpeas are planted in wildlife openings within the WMA. Supplemental forages did well this season with adequate rainfall. Acorn production was fair during the 2008–2009 season with Nuttall oaks being the better producer. Future timber thins will be implemented in designated forest stands to improve habitat. These thinnings will increase seasonal browse, fawning cover, acorn production, and promote hardwood regeneration.

Old River WMA
Written by: Josh Moree

Old River WMA, located in Pearl River County near Poplarville, is owned by the State of Mississippi. It is a mix of bottomland hardwoods and few upland areas covering 14,764 acres in the Pearl River Basin. The WMA was in the direct path of Hurricane Katrina as it roared through south Mississippi in August 2005. Increased sunlight from downed timber increased browse production and created dense cover for many wildlife species. Timber salvage operations conducted after the hurricane improved hunter access to the WMA. Total reported deer harvest decreased 19% to 34 (22 bucks and 12 does) for the 2008–2009 hunting season. Buck harvest decreased by six and doe harvest decreased by two compared to the previous season. Deer hunting accounted for 1,562 man-days, an increase from the previous season by 42%. Although man-days were up from the previous season, high water at the end of the season prevented many hunters from accessing the WMA.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	9	360
2007-2008	42	1,099
2008-2009	34	1,562

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Pascagoula River WMA
Written by: Josh Moree

Pascagoula River WMA, located in George and Jackson counties, is owned by the State of Mississippi. It is a mix of bottomland hardwoods covering 36,994 acres of the Pascagoula River Basin. Much of the WMA was heavily damaged by Hurricane Katrina; however, much effort has been taken to improve access and clear permanent openings across the WMA. Also, an increased presence of law enforcement personnel has improved hunter compliance.

Total reported deer harvest increased 22% for the 2008–2009 hunting season, with 122 deer harvested, which consisted of 103 bucks and 19 does. Buck harvest increased by 19 and doe harvest increased by three compared to the previous season. Deer hunting accounted for 6,506 man-days, an increase from the previous season by 88%.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	30	2,476
2007-2008	100	3,466
2008-2009	122	6,506

Pearl River WMA
Written by: Jackie Fleeman

Pearl River WMA is 6,925 acres along the Ross Barnett Reservoir north of Hwy 43, near Canton. There is a 1,500-acre Youth and Handicap Only area within the waterfowl refuge. This was the first year that regulations required bucks to have a minimum inside spread of 12 inches or a minimum main beam of at least 15 inches. Reported harvest consisted of 13 bucks and six does. Three new self service deer check stations were constructed on the area in 2007, which should result in better harvest data collection. Reported man-days increased from 1,585 to 1,692.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	N/A	N/A
2007-2008	15	1,585
2008-2009	19	1,602

Habitat conditions on the WMA were favorable for deer and improvements will continue. A carbon dioxide well was drilled in the Youth and Handicap Only Area in the summers of 2007 and 2008. As a result of this operation, Denbury Onshore has made improvements to a 30-acre cutover area within Hurricane Lake that is now a special handicapped area with 3 handicapped accessible blinds. Once the drilling is completed, the drill pad will be maintained as a permanent wildlife opening.

Red Creek WMA
Written by: Josh Moree

Red Creek WMA, located within the Desoto National Forest, is a 22,954-acre area spanning across Stone, George, and Jackson Counties. The WMA consists of fire-maintained pine stands combined with scattered creeks and drains. Akin to Little Biloxi WMA, the area is a popular draw for many coastal county residents. Total reported deer harvest decreased by one to 14 (6 bucks and 8 does) for the 2008–2009 hunting season. Buck harvest decreased by eight while doe harvest increased by seven compared to the previous season. Deer hunting accounted for 1,341 man-days, a decrease from the previous season by 61%. Red Creek WMA was reduced in size from over 90,000 acres to just under 23,000 acres prior to the 2008–2009 hunting season. This likely explains the reduction in man-days.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	17	4,003
2007-2008	15	3,419
2008-2009	14	1,341

Sandy Creek WMA
Written by: Josh Moree

Sandy Creek WMA, located near Natchez in Adams and Franklin counties, is a 16,407-acre WMA located within the Homochitto National Forest. The WMA consists mainly of upland mixed pine-hardwood and bottomland hardwood forests. Total reported deer harvest increased 22% for the 2008–2009 hunting season, with 99 deer harvested, which consisted of 59 bucks and 40 does. Buck harvest decreased by three while doe harvest increased by 21 compared to the previous season. Deer hunting accounted for 4,137 man-days, an increase from the previous season by 3%.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	36	2,628
2007-2008	81	4,007
2008-2009	99	4,137

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Sardis Waterfowl WMA
Written by: Brad Holder

Sardis Waterfowl WMA is 4,000 acres located north of Oxford in Lafayette County. This WMA provides deer hunting opportunity to youth only. The WMA's draw hunts provide youth hunters a unique opportunity to hunt an unpressured, high-density deer herd.

Nine bucks and 10 does were harvested during the 2008–2009 season. This was opposite the usual harvest of more bucks than does. Weights and lactation rates for does this past season remain below average for the Upper Coastal Plain soil region. This coupled with a high percentage of 3.5+ year old does in the harvest suggest overpopulation. Increased participation from youth hunters is needed to harvest a greater number of deer so that the health of the remaining deer will improve. MDWFP managers intend to provide additional deer hunting opportunity on the WMA to obtain adequate annual harvest.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	24	96
2007-2008	14	171
2008-2009	19	146

Sardis Waterfowl WMA is predominantly forested with stands of hardwoods and loblolly pine. Large fields are maintained in a grass and forb communities. Sardis Lake Corps of Engineers personnel assisted MDWFP managers with extensive late-winter, prescribed burning in 2009. This will help to maintain habitat quality within the large fields. Winter supplemental forages plots of clover and wheat became moderately established with adequate rain fall and cooler temperatures. A decent acorn crop provided additional forage this past fall and winter. Future timber thinning for habitat improvement will be coordinated by Sardis Lake Corps of Engineers resource managers and will be implemented in designated pine and hardwood stands on Sardis Waterfowl WMA. Thinning, coupled with prescribed burning, will increase seasonal browse, fawning cover, acorn production, and promote hardwood regeneration.

Shipland WMA
Written by: Jackie Fleeman

Shipland WMA consists of 3,642 acres and is the only state-owned land in the Batture soil region. The west boundary is the Mississippi River. Only primitive weapons and archery equipment are allowed for deer hunting. The WMA consists of bottomland hardwood and an approximately 100-acre sandfield. Timber thinning in the recent past has greatly increased the browse and escape cover on the WMA. This was the second year that area regulations required a legal buck to have an 18-inch main beam or a 15-inch spread. Also, hunters could apply for a tag that would allow them to harvest a buck with at least one unforked antler. Twenty of these special buck tags were issued on Shipland WMA and none were reported as being used. Hunting pressure increased to 1,079 man-days during the 2008–2009 season. Harvest included eight bucks and 15 does, which was up from 12 bucks and six does last season. Mast production was good. Normal rainfall during the summer resulted in adequate browse quality. Spring flooding resulted in a poor fawn crop, reduced body weights, and lower antler development.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	28	840
2007-2008	18	619
2008-2009	23	1,079

Stoneville WMA
Written by: Jackie Fleeman

Stoneville WMA (2,500 acres) is located about four miles north of Leland, MS. Most of the timber on the area was cut in the mid to late 1990s. This WMA has abundant browse and escape cover. Only primitive weapons and archery equipment are allowed for deer hunting. This was the second year that area regulations required a legal buck to have an 18-inch main beam or a 15-inch spread. Also, hunters could apply for a tag that would allow them to harvest a buck with at least one unforked antler. Twenty of these special buck tags were given out for use on Stoneville WMA and none were reported as being used. Hunting pressure decreased to 328 man-days during the 2008–2009 season. Deer harvest increased to 12. This harvest included six bucks and six does. Limited scientific data was collected because no personnel are assigned to this WMA. Normal rainfall during the summer resulted in good browse conditions. Acorn production was good.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	12	590
2007-2008	7	698
2008-2009	12	328

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Sunflower WMA
Written by: Jackie Fleeman

Sunflower WMA is a 58,480-acre U.S. Forest Service area in Sharkey County. This was the second year that area regulations required a legal buck to have an 18-inch main beam or a 15-inch spread. Also, hunters could apply for a tag that would allow them to harvest a buck with at least one unforked antler. Two hundred of these special buck tags were issued on Sunflower WMA and six were reported as being used. Both of these regulations appear to be supported by the majority of deer hunters on the area. Spring and summer flooding caused stress on the deer herd and resulted in poor lactation rates. Body weights and antler development were slightly below last year's figures. Normal rainfall during summer and fall resulted in good browse quality. Acorn production was excellent. Buck harvest decreased from 86 in 2007–2008 season to 44 in 2008–2009 season. Doe harvest increased from 31 to 54. Man-days decreased to 1,870.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	95	3,771
2007-2008	117	3,752
2008-2009	98	1,870

A deer herd health evaluation was conducted on Sunflower WMA on February 25, 2009. A total of nine does were collected with one doe being 1.5 years old and eight does being 2.5 years old or older. Generally, the herd health indices from the herd health evaluation were within the expected values for the WMA and the Delta soil region as a whole. The kidney fat index was 22% better than the historical Sunflower data and 31% better than the value for the Delta soil region. The mean conception date was January 4, which was five days later than average. The reproductive rate was about average with 1.9 fetuses per doe. The reproductive potential was low. The range of breeding was December 24 through February 4, which encompassed 42 days.

The herd went through a major stress period during the early to mid summer of 2008 when flood waters covered most of the WMA. The herd health evaluation suggests that harvest on Sunflower WMA has kept the deer population in balance with existing habit conditions and that the population could be increased.

Tallahala WMA
Written by: Scott Baker

Tallahala WMA is 28,120 acres within the Bienville National Forest located near Montrose. For the fifth year bucks must meet minimum antler requirements to be legal for harvest. For the 2008–2009 season bucks must have an inside spread of 12 inches or one main beam length of at least 15 inches.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	74	1,924
2007-2008	139	2,844
2008-2009	119	2,871

Deer harvest consisted of 60 bucks and 59 does. Total harvest decreased 14% from last year. Deer hunters accounted for 2,871 man-days which were up slightly from the previous year.

For the 2009–2010 season, antlerless hunting opportunities on Tallahala WMA will include archery season, Thanksgiving weekend of gun season with dogs, primitive weapon season, gun season without dogs, and January archery season.

The U.S. Forest Service continues to conduct spring prescribed burns on the WMA. This helps to encourage browse production during the spring and fall.

Theodore A. Mars Jr. WMA
Written by: Josh Moree

Theodore A. Mars Jr. WMA is a 900-acre WMA located south of Poplarville in Pearl River County. The property was recently acquired by MDWFP and public hunting opportunity began in 2007. The property consists of upland pine stands with scattered hardwood bottoms. The property was severely damaged by Hurricane Katrina. Plans are underway to convert the current loblolly pine stands back to a native longleaf pine ecosystem, which will improve the overall habitat across the WMA. MDWFP began harvesting timber and replanting longleaf pine seedlings in 2008. Additional habitat improvements include implementing a prescribed fire regime and controlling invasive cogongrass that is frequent across the WMA.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2007-2008	N/A	N/A
2008-2009	1	34

Deer hunting on Theodore A. Mars Jr. WMA is limited to youth hunters by a special permit draw. Deer hunting

is allowed on weekends only from opening of youth deer season to the last weekend in December. One buck was reported as harvested for the 2008–2009 hunting season with 34 reported man-days.

Trim Cane WMA
Written by: Jerry Hazlewood

Trim Cane is an 891-acre tract located in Oktibbeha County about 4 miles north of Starkville. The area has been developed primarily for waterfowl hunting. This was the first year this area has been open to deer hunting. Due to the small size of the area, deer hunting was restricted to wheelchair bound hunters using a random drawing for special permits. Three wheelchair accessible shooting houses were constructed and placed on winter food plots. Hunting was limited to Saturday afternoons only. The hunter success rate was extraordinary and could have been higher but some of the hunters were very selective. Four bucks and five does were harvested. The handicapped hunters were very appreciative of the unique opportunity and hospitality by the manager. Plans are to expand the number of hunt stations and improve access.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2008-2009	9	19

Tuscumbia WMA
Written by: Jerry Hazelwood

Tuscumbia WMA, located in Alcorn County, is a relatively new WMA. The area comprises 2,436 acres and consists primarily of abandoned agricultural fields and beaver slash. The area is divided geographically into two separate units. Unit 1(1400 ac.) is mainly permanent water and slash, which is not easily accessed and provides little deer habitat. Unit 2 (1200 ac.) has mostly abandoned agricultural fields and seven newly constructed waterfowl impoundments. Both units experience frequent flooding in the winter months.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	6	252
2007-2008	10	265
2008-2009	16	372

Archery hunting on Unit 2 is allowed October1 until just prior to the first waterfowl draw hunt. The popularity of this opportunity accounts for most of the increasing usage of the area for deer hunting (40% over last year). A total of 16 deer were reported harvested (5 bucks, 11 does). Effort and harvest numbers are low due to the small size of the area, limited deer habitat, and low public access.

Twin Oaks WMA
Written by: Jackie Fleeman

Twin Oaks WMA is 5,675 acres of bottomland hardwood five miles southeast of Rolling Fork. Deer hunting is allowed using archery gear and primitive weapons. Hunters are allowed only by special permit through a random drawing except for the January archery hunt, which is open to the public. This was the second year that area regulations required a legal buck to have an 18-inch main beam or a 15-inch spread. Also, hunters could apply for a tag that would allow them to harvest a buck with at least one unforked antler. Six hundred of these special buck tags were issued on Twin Oaks WMA, and 14 were reported as being used. Hunter effort decreased to 1,060 man-days during the 2008–2009 season. Buck harvest increased slightly from 29 to 30. Doe harvest increased from 49 to 53. Spring flooding on the area caused stress on the deer herd, resulting in poor lactation rates and below average body condition and antler development. Normal rainfall during the summer resulted in good browse conditions in late summer and fall. Acorn production was excellent.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	70	980
2007-2008	78	1,206
2008-2009	83	1,060

A deer herd health evaluation was conducted on Twin Oaks WMA on February 24, 2009. A total of six adult does were collected. Dressed weight, reproductive effort, and kidney fat indices were all better than expected values for the WMA and the Delta soil region. The mean conception date was December 26, which was one week earlier than the historical average and the soil region average. Conception dates ranged from December 18 through January 12, which encompassed 25 days. Even on a year with extensive flooding, all indices were either average or slightly above historical averages for Twin Oaks and the Delta soil region. Browse quantity and quality was good after flood waters receded. Acorn production was also good. Harvest data and herd health evaluation data suggest that harvest on Twin Oaks WMA has kept the deer population in balance with existing habit conditions.

2008-2009 WMA Deer Harvest Narratives

Upper Sardis WMA
Written by: Brad Holder

Upper Sardis WMA is 42,274 acres located within the Holly Springs National Forest near Oxford in Lafayette County. Upper Sardis WMA also encompasses portions of the Tallahatchie River bottoms owned by the Sardis Lake Corps of Engineers.

Total harvest continues to exhibit a decreasing trend when compared to the past three seasons. Fifty-five bucks and 81 does were harvested. Doe harvest continues to exhibit an increasing trend, which is positive. Hunters reported slightly higher deer observations, which may be related to colder conditions early in the 2008–2009 season. Buck weights and percent lactation among mature does are below average for the Upper Coastal Plain soil region. Declining averages combined with a large percentage (53%) of 3.5+ year old does in harvest indicate overpopulation. Increased harvest and forest habitat improvements are needed to improve the local herd's health.

Upper Sardis WMA is predominantly forested with stands of hardwoods and loblolly pines. Old logging roads, logging decks, and power line right-of-ways are managed as wildlife openings. Late-winter burning, conducted by the U.S. Forest Service, helped to improve deer habitat on the WMA by stimulating the growth of food and cover. Summer supplemental forage plots of cowpeas and soybeans did not develop well due to inadequate rainfall. Winter supplemental forage plots of wheat, oats, and/or clovers responded adequately to colder weather and increased rainfall. An average acorn crop provided additional forage. Current plans between the U.S. Forest Service and the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks are to implement habitat improvement timber thinnings in designated forest stands on Upper Sardis WMA using the new National Wild Turkey Federation Stewardship Program. These timber thinning will increase seasonal browse, fawning cover, acorn production, and promote hardwood regeneration. Funds generated from timber harvests will be used to improve habitat across Upper Sardis WMA.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	169	8,995
2007-2008	154	9,708
2008-2009	136	8,055

Ward Bayou WMA
Written by: Josh Moree

Ward Bayou WMA is a 13,234-acre parcel of bottomland hardwoods and some upland areas nestled within the Pascagoula River Basin. Many of the low-lying areas are boat accessible through navigable waters off the main river channel. Hunting access is often dependent upon rainfall and river levels. Total reported deer harvest increased by four to 16 (9 bucks and 7 does) for the 2008–2009 hunting season. Buck harvest increased by one and doe harvest increased by three compared to the previous season. Deer hunting accounted for 1,893 man-days, an increase from the previous season by 20%.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	2	1,112
2007-2008	12	1,571
2008-2009	16	1,893

Wolf River WMA
Written by: Josh Moree

Wolf River WMA, located in Lamar and Pearl River counties near Poplarville, is 10,194 acres owned by Weyerhaeuser Company. The WMA consists of various aged pine plantations interspersed with minor stream bottoms. Total reported deer harvest increased 66% for the 2008–2009 hunting season, with 83 deer harvested (43 bucks and 40 does). Buck harvest increased by 12 and doe harvest increased by 21 compared to the previous season. Deer hunting accounted for 3,946 man-days, an increase from the previous season by 33%.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	63	3,035
2007-2008	50	2,961
2008-2009	83	3,946

Yockanookany WMA
Written by: Brad Holder

Yockanookany WMA is 2,379 acres located in Attala County along the Yockanookany River approximately 12 miles east of Kosciusko. Archery and primitive weapon opportunities are by draw only.

2008-2009 WMA Deer Harvest Narratives

The 2008–2009 harvest consisted of seven bucks and eight does. Deer harvest was down significantly from last season. There was little hunting during archery season. Weights of harvested bucks and does were generally below average for the Upper Coastal Plain soil region. This indicated a herd to large for the local habitat to support at optimal levels of health. Increased harvest is critical to reduce herd size, and MDWFP managers would like to see an increased harvest during the 2009–2010 season.

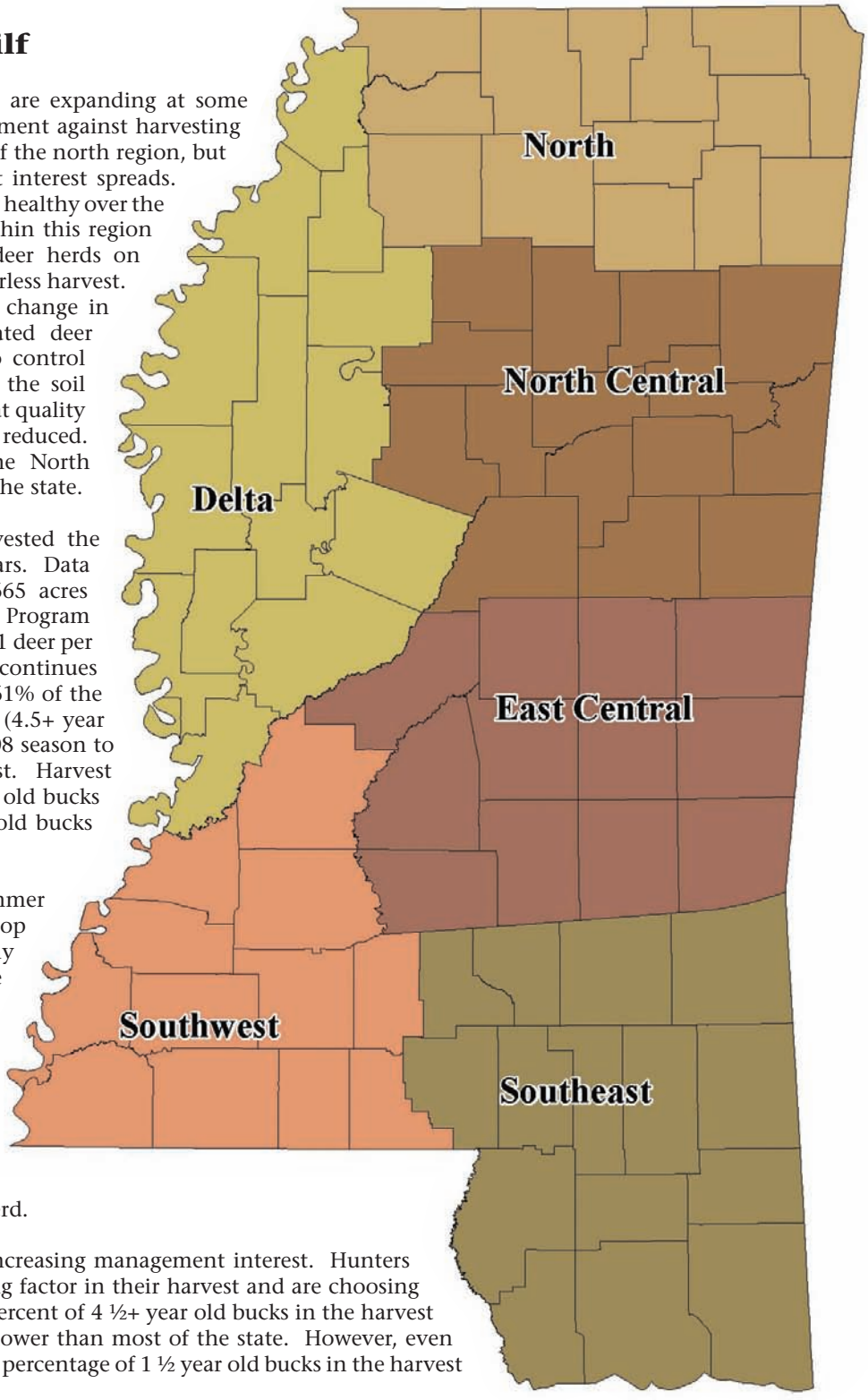
Yockanookany WMA is predominantly forested with stands of bottomland hardwoods. Existing wildlife openings are maintained in either native vegetation or planted in summer and winter supplemental forages such as oats, wheat, clovers, and cowpeas. Summer and winter supplemental forage plots developed well with adequate rainfall. Acorns were less abundant this past fall and winter. Deer seemed to use supplemental forage plots more during the 2008–2009 season. Hunters reported observing and harvesting deer in WMA supplemental forage plots. More wildlife openings should be developed in late-summer 2009 and future timber thinning within designated hardwood stands will increase browse, cover, acorn production, and hardwood regeneration.

Season	Harvest	Man-days
2006-2007	7	166
2007-2008	24	199
2008-2009	15	220

This buck was harvested on Leaf River WMA.

2008-2009 Regional Narratives

North Region
Written by: Lann M. Wilf



Deer herds in the North Region are expanding at some of the fastest rates in the state. Sentiment against harvesting antlerless deer is still strong in much of the north region, but seems to be changing as management interest spreads. Overall, the herd has appeared relatively healthy over the past five years. However, site visits within this region have revealed grossly overpopulated deer herds on lands that continue to refrain from antlerless harvest. These areas are in desperate need of a change in management. Fortunately, overpopulated deer herds in this region are much easier to control than in other areas of the state. Also, the soil fertility is high enough to allow the habitat quality to be restored after deer numbers are reduced. Therefore, management potential in the North Region is almost as high as any region of the state.

The North region DMAP clubs harvested the highest number of deer per acre in 10 years. Data was collected from 1,220 deer on 141,665 acres under the Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP). Harvest intensity increased from 1 deer per 172 acres to 1 deer per 116 acres. Harvest continues to be skewed towards females, with over 61% of the harvest being does. Mature buck harvest (4.5+ year olds) decreased from 22% in the 2007–2008 season to 15 % of the 2008–2009 total buck harvest. Harvest percentages increased on 1.5 and 2.5 year old bucks by 4% and 5% but declined on 3.5 year old bucks by 3%.

Adequate moisture during the summer of 2008 resulted in a decent fawn crop throughout most of the region. Many areas had lactation percentages in the high 80s while other counties had less than optimal lactation rates that dropped into the 40s and 50s. Average lactation rates increased by 5% and body weights on does increased by 2 pounds in the mature age class. The percent of 3 ½+ year old does in the harvest decreased to 44%, which suggests a stable or slowly expanding herd.

Buck harvest is changing due to increasing management interest. Hunters are realizing that age is a major limiting factor in their harvest and are choosing to let some state legal bucks go. The percent of 4 ½+ year old bucks in the harvest is on an increasing trend, but is still lower than most of the state. However, even with the increase in management, the percentage of 1 ½ year old bucks in the harvest continues to be high at 20%.

The frequent summer rains in the summer of 2008 resulted in a great acorn crop last fall. This inhibited the ability of hunters to see and harvest deer. This also deceived hunters by causing underestimation of actual deer numbers on their properties. This trend will probably continue in 2009–2010 because the stage is set for another big mast crop this fall. In turn, deer visibility will be low, but herd health, productivity, and fawn production should be high. These factors will cause this herd to increase even faster.

2008-2009 Regional Narratives

North Central Region
Written by: William T. McKinley

The North Central region DMAP clubs harvested the highest number of deer per acre in 11 years. Data were collected from 5,297 deer on 403,272 acres under the Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP). Harvest increased from 1 deer per 100 acres to 1 deer per 83 acres, representing a total increase of 264 deer but a decrease of 52,368 acres. Harvest continues to be skewed towards females, with over 58% of the harvest being does. Mature buck harvest (4.5+ year olds) remained stable from the 2007–2008 season at 23% of the total buck harvest. Harvest percentages increased on 1.5 year old bucks by 3% but declined on 2.5 and 3.5 year old bucks by 3% and 1%, respectively. Overall, the herd appears relatively healthy over the past five years. However, site visits reveal localized areas that are vastly overpopulated and in desperate need of a change in management.

A generally wet summer in 2008 produced abundant deer food for much of the North Central Region. Acorn crops were good, but not as good as 2007. Food plots grew well, and had more deer use than 2007. Reports from hunters indicate deer movement was good throughout much of the season. Many DMAP clubs experienced record high deer harvests. The increased food supplies did not result in increased lactation in does, as one might have expected. Lactation rates actually fell by 3% in the 2.5+ year old does. Doe weights varied by 1 pound from the previous year.

Reports of hemorrhagic disease (HD), commonly known as blue-tongue, were very low in 2008. Only 4 deer were reported as suspects of the disease. As it usually occurs in 2-3 year cycles, hunters should not be surprised to see more cases in 2009.

Some interesting trends have become apparent when examining the harvest data for the North Central Region over the past 15 years. Mature (3.5+) doe body weights are on a slight increasing trend. The percent of mature bucks in the harvest has steadily increased from 5% in 1994 to 23% in 2008. Management emphasis has shifted from traditional deer management of harvesting every legal buck to more quality deer management. Quality deer management includes allowing more bucks to reach older age classes and also includes habitat manipulation in favor of wildlife. This habitat manipulation likely explains the increasing trend in doe body weight. However, this increasing interest in deer management has not been able to stabilize the deer herd's growth in the North Central Region. The percent of 3.5+ year old does in the harvest has shown an increasing trend since 1998. Currently, the percent of 3.5+ year old does is 48%. This indicates an increasing deer herd. This theory is further strengthened by running population reconstructions on several clubs throughout the regions. Deer herds peaked in the early 90's but are currently experiencing a second peak, with many clubs having more deer now than then. Increasing the deer harvest is the only way to combat this burgeoning deer herd.

East Central Region
Written by: Amy C. Blaylock

The East Central Region had another relatively successful deer season. However, two years of good acorn crops have disappointed many food plot hunters. Areas with good acorn crops dispersed deer away from food plots into hardwood bottoms and therefore decreased deer movement.

Many areas planted in CRP pines have experienced canopy closure. These stands of pine are just about ready for their second thin. Once these areas have been thinned, the amount of sunlight reaching the ground should increase the amount of deer browse available. Therefore, the outlook for future deer habitat is positive.

Total deer harvested on DMAP properties decreased by 178 deer from the 2007–2008 deer season; however, it has leveled off and remained stable over the past 10 years. Acres per deer harvested have remained relatively stable around 1 deer per 100 acres. Buck and doe body weights have increased by a few pounds from the 2007–2008 hunting season. This is likely a result of good acorn crops. We should expect another summer of good fawn production in 2009. Lactation rates for 2.5+ year old does have remained between 65%-70% over the past 10 years. The percentage of 3.5+ year old does in the harvest increased to 49%.

Bucks 4.5+ years old decreased from 22% to 19% in 2008. Harvest of 1.5 year old bucks increased to 18%. Harvest of 1.5 year old bucks should decrease in 2009–2010 because of the implementation of the new antler criteria for Zone 1 of a minimum 10 inch inside spread or minimum 13 inch main beam.

Reports of hemorrhagic disease in east-central Mississippi remained about the same as last season. HD/blue-tongue was found in 5 counties in East Central Mississippi. Samples were taken from hunter harvested and road killed deer for chronic wasting disease testing. No occurrence of CWD was found.

2008-2009 Regional Narratives

Delta Region
Written by: Lann M. Wilf

The 2008–2009 hunting season tended to be challenging for many hunters in low lying areas of the Delta. Lower than optimal fawn recruitment was widespread throughout much of the region last year because of the spring and early summer flood of 2008. Many parcels in the Delta remained underwater until June. This high water caused abnormal concentrations of deer in higher areas, significant herd displacement in many cases, and in some areas resulted in substantial mortality. When the stress associated with these occurrences is considered, it is logical that this flood caused a reduction in body condition and antler development along with a reduction in fawn recruitment. Therefore, many hunters in the Delta did not see normal numbers of impressive bucks or the normal number of total deer as a result of this flood. Several quality mature bucks were harvested, but the 2008–2009 season was nothing like the 2007–2008 season in that regard.

Analysis of the harvest data for the past 10 years shows an increasing trend in the total number of deer harvested on DMAP properties in the Delta region. However, the harvest was down this year by nearly 18%. The highest harvest occurred in the 2006–2007 hunting season with 9,436 deer harvested (3,727 bucks and 5,709 does). The harvest decreased significantly this year to 7,957 deer (3,421 bucks and 4,536 does). The lowest harvest in the last ten years occurred in the 2000–2001 season with 6,594 total deer taken. The expansion of deer populations and subsequent harvest is a direct result of the enrollment of approximately 500,000 acres of farmland in CRP and WRP, which has increased available deer habitat. The population in the Delta region is expanding rapidly on average, and continued intense harvest is needed to control the deer density and maintain herd health on normal weather years.

For the past 9 hunting seasons, average body weights for bucks and does has remained stable. However, weights decreased slightly this year, by two pounds on average. During the 2008–2009 season antler measurements for 4.5+ year old bucks also decreased slightly. The harvest percentage of 3.5+ year old bucks remained high at 64%. The percentage of 3.5+ year old does in the harvest remained stable at 44%.

Reports of hemorrhagic disease, or blue-tongue, throughout the region were non-existent. Samples were collected once again for chronic wasting disease. All samples tested negative for the disease and chronic wasting disease has not been found in Mississippi.

Some small scale flooding was present again in the spring of 2009, but these floods were not as wide-spread or long-term as the floods of 2008. Dry conditions have been consistent since the wet spring, which may result in a lower than average mast crop. This spring's flood water should not have any significant adverse affects on deer herd in this region. However, if dry conditions persist through summer, antler production and body condition could be reduced going into the 2009–2010 deer season.

Southwest Region
Written by: Chris McDonald

Mother Nature teased deer hunters during the 2008–2009 deer hunting season. Opening day of the deer gun season was one the coldest opening days on record. This led many hunters to believe that the hunting season would be a cold one, unlike previous seasons. Hunters did not sleep well the night before due to anticipation of good deer movement during the cold weather. Boy, were hunters disappointed. Hunters reported a disappointing opening day with complaints mainly surrounding limited deer movement. Was it too cold for Mississippi deer? Some think deer decided just to bed down and wait out the cold weather, just as many hunters did. Although many deer were harvested on opening day, the number did not meet expectations.

Overall, the deer harvest was average for the 2008–2009 hunting season. The acorn crop was good (mainly red oaks) and lasted until early spring. Typical rollercoaster weather was seen throughout the season. Overall warm weather and abundant natural food limited success on food plots. Hunters hunting natural food sources reported more deer observations than food plot hunters once again. Several good bucks were harvested in the region, with at least 4 bucks scoring 170+ inches gross.

Deer herds along the Mississippi River were affected by the 2008 spring flood. Maternal stress associated with the flood led to an increase in fetal/fawn mortality. This was evident by decreased lactation rates and lower fawn observations reported by hunters. Deer harvest on some properties was limited by hunters due to their concern of over-harvest of the deer herd. However, the flood actually helped over-populated deer herds in the region by removing deer.

Analysis of DMAP harvest data indicated that most biological parameters for harvested deer were stable compared to previous years, with the exception of decreased lactation rates on properties along the Mississippi River. Harvest of mature bucks remained high with 63% of harvested bucks being 3.5 years old or older.

2008-2009 Regional Narratives

Reports of hemorrhagic disease were moderate. Samples were collected once again for chronic wasting disease testing. All samples tested negative for the disease and it has not been found in Mississippi.

Southeast Region Deer Narrative
Written by: Amy Blaylock and Chris McDonald

The Southeast Region saw a 10-year low in total deer harvest during the 2005–2006 hunting season due to Hurricane Katrina. However, harvest data now indicates that total deer harvest in the Southeast Region has rebounded to pre-Hurricane Katrina levels. Total deer harvested on DMAP properties decreased by 18 deer from the 2007–2008 deer season. One deer per 131 acres was harvested, which is the most deer harvested on a per acre basis in the past 10 years.

The combination of antler restrictions and limited hunting opportunity after Katrina has improved the age structure of harvested bucks. DMAP data indicate that 61% of harvested bucks were 3.5 years old or older for the 2008–2009 season, a 10-year high. Average buck and doe body weights have remained relatively stable for the past 10 years.

Hurricane Katrina provided more deer habitat by thinning dense timber and creating more natural openings. With more deer habitat created, biological parameters of harvested deer should increase, theoretically. However, that is not the case in the Southeast Region. Most biological parameters have stabilized or slightly decreased compared to pre-Katrina levels. The explanation is most likely habitat quality and herd numbers. Although Katrina increased deer habitat, it possibly just created more poor quality habitat. Due to low soil fertility, the region is recognized as having poor deer habitat in general. With many deer protected from harvest post-Katrina, the quality of new habitat may not have been adequate to support extra deer. Thus, habitat and herd numbers just balanced out one another.

Randy Hooks harvested this buck on private land in Copiah County. The buck scored 165 gross/ 158 1/8 net typical.

Trail cam photo of the buck harvested by Randy Hooks in Copiah County.

Road Kill Survey Report 2008-2009

MDWFP personnel have monitored statewide deer road kill since January 1997. All dead deer observed on or adjacent to roads and highways are recorded during the personnel's regular course of travel from October 1–January 31. The cause of death of these animals is assumed to be a vehicle collision. The specific location by county is recorded for every deer observed. Personnel also record their monthly mileage. In the past the average number of deer observed per 10,000 miles was calculated by district. However, with changing district lines and MDWFP personnel routinely traveling outside their home district, we have changed this to a statewide average and not district averages.

Graphical monthly statewide summaries of these data are presented in **Figure 2**. The precise value and accuracy of this method of data collection have not been critically evaluated. No evaluation has been made to determine if number of vehicles on the highways has increased, decreased, or remained constant. Therefore, any inferences or interpretation of these data should be approached cautiously. Every effort has been made to standardize sampling protocol.

When these data are examined graphically, fluctuations over time are apparent. Certain assumptions may be logical. For example, an increase in observed deer vehicular related mortality is a result of an increase in deer activity. Data are currently collected from October–January. Activity peaked during the fall and winter around breeding seasons, when deer activity is at its highest.

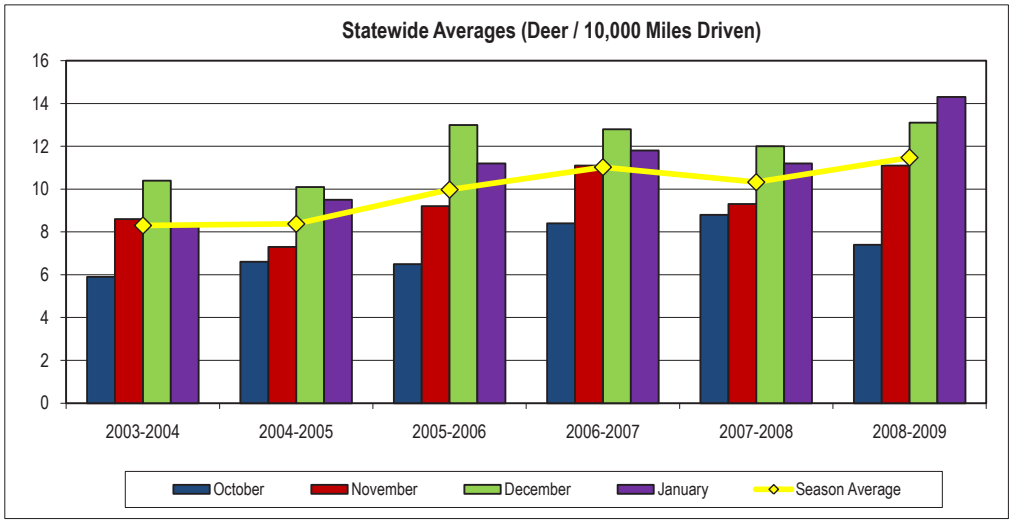


Figure 2

A second assumption is if deer numbers are fluctuating annually and the number of deer observed is density dependent, then in lower population years, fewer road-killed deer will be observed. Conversely, during high population years, a greater number of road-killed deer will be observed. In addition to increasing or expanding deer herds, road kill observations may be heavily influenced by weather conditions and mast availability. During the 2008–2009 deer season, observed road kills were substantially higher than that of the previous six years. This year's observed road kill season average was 1.2 deer higher than 2007–2008 and was 0.5 deer higher than 2006–2007, which was the highest year in the past six years. This past winter, observed road kills decreased only during the month of October. Observed road kills increased slightly in November and December, but significantly increased in January. This is most likely due to increased deer numbers because mast availability was high throughout most regions of the state.

We also collect road-kill data from State Farm Insurance Company. According to State Farm's estimates there were 13,954 deer-vehicle collisions in Mississippi during 2007–2008 and 13,197 in 2006–2007. These estimates fit the increasing trend from MDWFP personnel's road-kill observations. Also, Mississippi was 25th in the nation in total deer-vehicle collisions. Michigan had the highest with 104,676 total deer-vehicle collisions, and Pennsylvania followed having 102,166. The deer-vehicle collisions in these states are a result of exceedingly high deer densities and a high number of vehicles on the roads.

Table 3. Statewide Averages (Deer/10,000 Miles Driven)

Month	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	Avg. all Years
October	5.9	6.6	6.5	8.4	8.8	7.4	7.3
November	8.6	7.3	9.2	11.1	9.3	11.1	9.4
December	10.4	10.1	13.0	12.8	12.0	13.1	11.9
January	8.3	9.5	11.2	11.8	11.2	14.3	11.1
Season Avg.	8.3	8.4	10.0	11.0	10.3	11.5	

The data from State Farm has been projected for the whole insurance industry, based on State Farm's known auto insurance market share within each state. This data is based on actual comprehensive and collision claims, and as such, would not include deer-vehicle collisions where the policy holder had only liability insurance coverage, which is typically carried on older vehicles in some states.

Depredation by Deer

Conservation officers annually deal with agricultural depredation by deer. Landowners who experience deer depredation problems are required to apply for a permit before any action is taken to harass or remove problem animals. The process for permit issuance includes an on-site evaluation by an MDWFP officer to verify the occurrence of depredation. Permits are issued primarily for agricultural damage, but ornamental vegetation is included. Miscellaneous problems such as deer on airport runways also occur and are handled on a case-by-case basis. Property owners should know that permits are not issued in every situation.

A total of 141 depredation permits were issued in 42 counties during 2008, which was substantially higher than the 81 permits issued during 2007. The number of counties that had recorded depredation permits also increased from 32 to 42. Counties where depredation permits were issued and the number of permits issued by county are shown in **Figure 3**. This high number of permits can be attributed to rising deer populations throughout most of the state. Counties with the most depredation problems are generally counties with the most rapidly expanding deer populations. Cases of deer depredation included damage to soybeans, corn, cotton, peas, sweet potatoes, watermelons, pumpkins, gourds, peanuts, pecans, okra, tomatoes, milo, numerous garden and truck crops, flowers, ornamental trees, and interference on airports.

The preferred method of controlling deer depredation problems is adequate hunter harvest. This lowers the deer population to levels that are in balance with the environmental carrying capacity of the habitat. Normally this involves cooperation with adjoining landowners and hunting clubs.

Alternative direct methods used to solve depredation problems include scare or harassment tactics, assorted chemical applications, electric fencing, and traditional fencing at a height that eliminates deer access. High fencing around gardens and small problem areas is costly but provides assured control on a long-term basis with little or no maintenance.

In some instances, after other control measures have been exhausted, deer will be lethally removed. This process seldom provides a long-term solution but is used in some problem situations.

Depredation problems will continue to occur in Mississippi as long as abundant deer populations exist. Extensive problems with agricultural depredation can be controlled with adequate antlerless harvest. Instances of urban depredation are increasing due to escalating deer numbers and urban sprawl. Urban deer problems are magnified in cities where bowhunting has been banned.

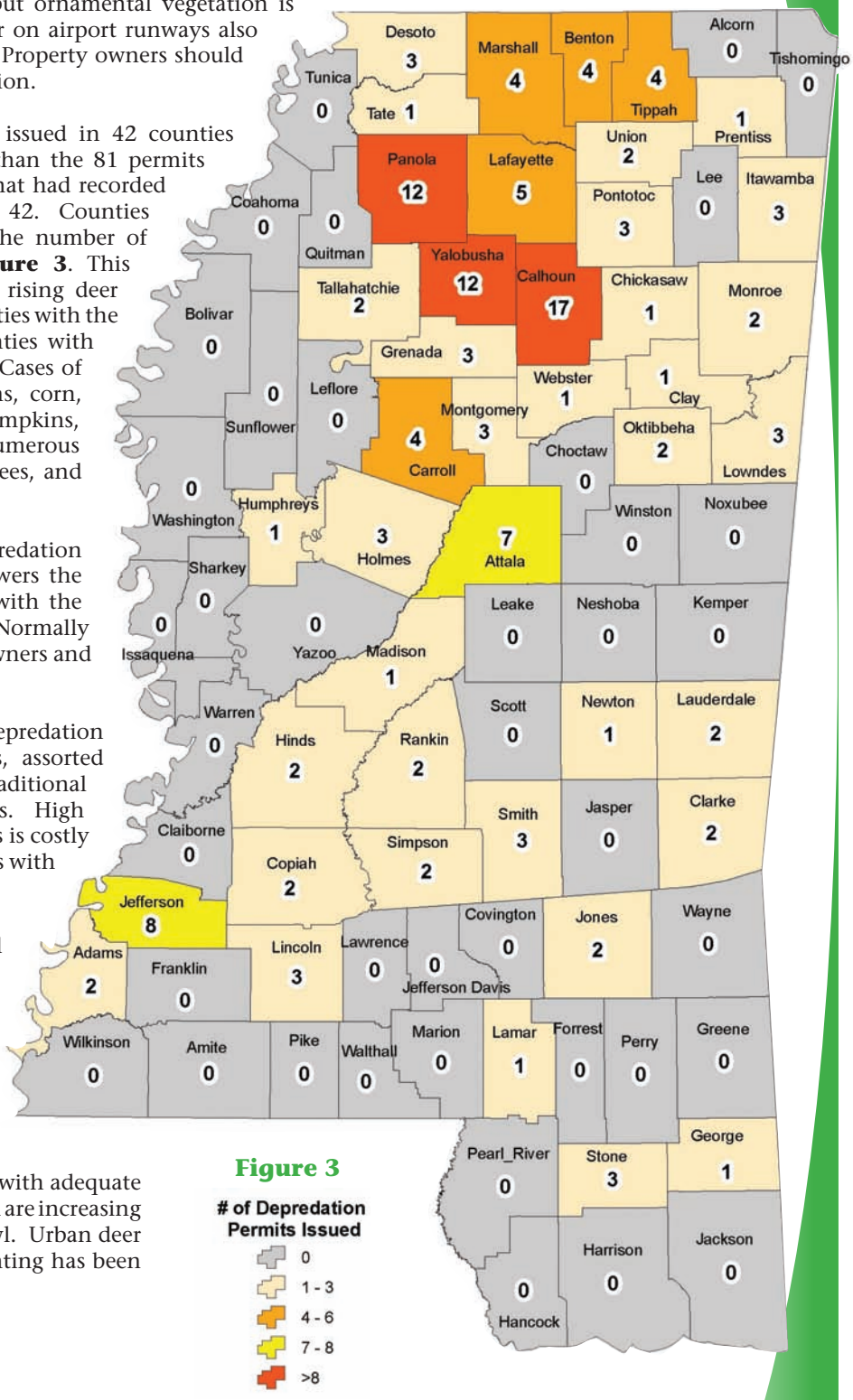


Figure 3

Chronic Wasting Disease

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is a progressively degenerative fatal disease that attacks the central nervous system of members of the deer family. To date, it has been diagnosed in elk, mule deer, black-tailed deer, moose, and white-tailed deer. CWD is one of a group of diseases known as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs). These diseases are characterized as transmissible because they can be transmitted from one infected animal to another. They are further classified as spongiform due to the "spongy-like" areas which form in the brain of the infected animal, hence the encephalopathy portion of the name.

The scientific community generally accepts that the infectious agents of CWD are prions. Prions are abnormal proteins that seem to have the ability to alter the structure of normal proteins found in the body of the animal they enter. Logical natural methods of prion transmission include, but may not be limited to, secretions and excretions from infected animals. A study conducted at Colorado State University found that CWD can be transmitted experimentally from saliva and blood. Also, human activity contributes to environmental prion contamination. Prions are hideously durable and impervious to most disinfectants and natural conditions, remaining in the environment for years.

Animals suffering from CWD typically behave abnormally by separating themselves from their usual social group. They often stand alone, with a drooped posture, and may not respond to human presence. As the disease progresses, they will appear very skinny on close examination and will salivate, drink, and urinate excessively.

The goal for the 2008–2009 monitoring period was to test approximately 1,500 deer statewide. Routine testing involved Mississippi hunters in this disease monitoring effort. Hunters throughout the state were asked to voluntarily submit the heads of harvested deer for CWD testing. Additionally, samples were obtained from taxidermists and deer processing facilities. Most of these samples came from wildlife management areas, national wildlife refuges, Choctaw Tribal Lands, and Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP) cooperators.

A total of 1,335 samples were taken from free-ranging white-tailed deer in Mississippi during 2008–2009. Samples were obtained from hunter harvested animals, spring herd health evaluations, target animal surveillance, and road-killed animals. Samples were obtained from 77 counties (**Figure 4**). The samples were submitted to the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study at the University of Georgia following the 2008–2009 hunting season and 1,313 of those samples were tested for evidence of the CWD agent using immunohistochemistry. The remaining 22 samples were not tested because the containers did not contain testable specimens. Evidence of CWD was not detected in all of the tested samples. Additionally, 55 samples were taken from white-tailed deer within high-fenced enclosures and submitted to the National Veterinary Services Laboratories for testing. Evidence of CWD was not detected in any of the enclosure samples. See page 39 for more information regarding CWD surveillance for high-fenced enclosures.

The MDWFP, in cooperation with the Mississippi Board of Animal Health and the U.S. Department of Agriculture/ Veterinary Services will continue target animal surveillance. A target profile animal is any adult cervid that is emaciated and shows some neurological disorder. These target animals should be reported to the local county conservation officer, who has been trained to properly handle them and coordinate their transport to the appropriate laboratory for CWD testing. Most deer exhibiting symptoms of CWD are actually suffering from other conditions or diseases common to white-tailed deer in Mississippi. Malnutrition, hemorrhagic disease, brain abscesses, and other conditions may cause some of the same symptoms. However, due to the seriousness of CWD and the importance of early detection and control, it is necessary to test target animals for infection. The ability to diagnose disease is dependent on quick reporting because deer carcasses deteriorate rapidly in Mississippi's climate.

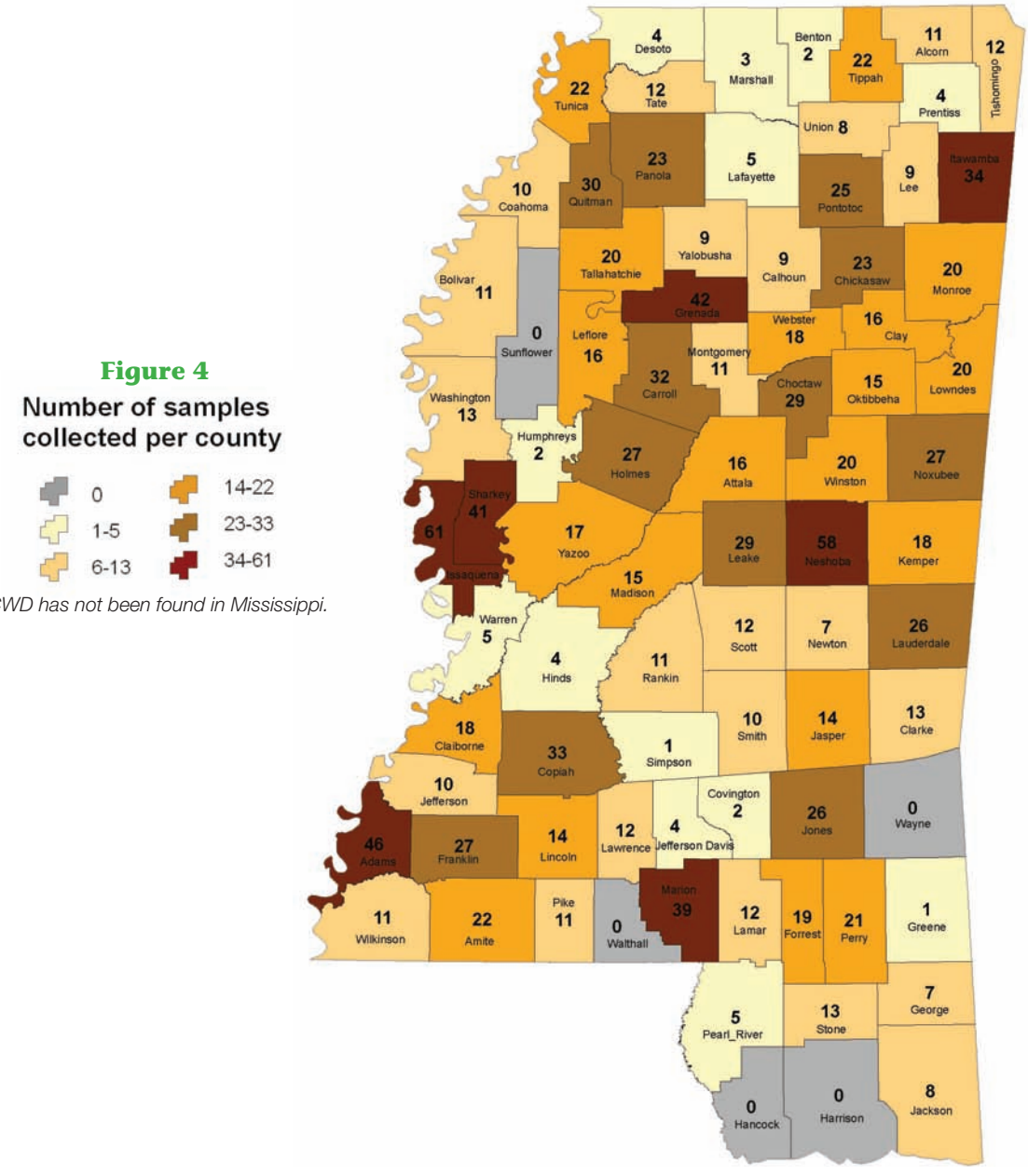
In 1967, CWD was first recognized at a captive mule deer research facility in Colorado. A Wyoming research facility documented the disease in deer and elk in 1978. CWD was then documented in free-ranging deer in Colorado and Wyoming in the 1980s. Further testing from 1996 through the end of 2001 found additional positive animals (either captive or wild elk or deer) in Kansas, Nebraska, Montana, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and the Canadian provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta. Then in February 2002 the first case was confirmed east of the Mississippi River in Wisconsin, in wild white-tailed deer. In 2004, CWD was found in New York and West Virginia. As of July 1, 2008, there are 11 states with CWD infected wild populations (Colorado, Illinois, Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, South Dakota, Utah, Wisconsin, West Virginia, and Wyoming) and two Canadian provinces (Alberta and Saskatchewan). Additionally, CWD has been found in captive cervid populations in all of the above states as well as Minnesota, Montana, and Oklahoma.

Chronic Wasting Disease

All public health officials maintain that venison is safe for human consumption. However, hunters who wish to take additional steps to avoid potential unnecessary contact with prions or environmental contamination can do the following:

- Avoid shooting, handling, or consuming any animal that appears sick. Contact the MDWFP at 601-432-2199 if you see or harvest an animal that appears sick.
- Wear latex gloves when field dressing or processing deer.
- Avoid eating or contact with brain, spinal cord, spleen, lymph nodes, or eyes.
- Cut through the spinal cord only when removing the head. Use a knife designated solely for this purpose.
- Bone out meat to avoid cutting into or through bones. Remove all fat and connective tissue to avoid lymph nodes.
- Dispose of all carcass material, including the head, in a landfill or pit dug for carcass disposal purposes.
- Either process your animal individually or request that it be processed without adding meat from other animals.
- Disinfect knives and other processing equipment in a 50% bleach solution for a minimum of one hour.
- Discontinue baiting and feeding which unnaturally concentrate deer.

Figure 4



** CWD has not been found in Mississippi.*

Hemorrhagic Disease

Hemorrhagic Disease (HD), sometimes referred to as Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) or blue-tongue (BT), is considered the most important viral disease of white-tailed deer in the United States. Different subtypes of two closely related viruses cause HD: EHD and BT. Technically, there are five subtypes of BT virus and two subtypes of EHD virus. A distinguishable difference does not visually exist between these diseases, so wildlife managers normally group the symptoms into one category and refer to the condition as HD.

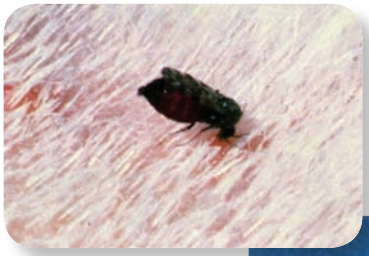
Biting midges of the genus *Culicoides* transmit HD; therefore the disease is seasonal, based on the abundance of midge vectors. Normal occurrence of HD is late summer through fall (approximately late July–November). Deer that become infected with the HD virus may exhibit a variety of outward symptoms. Some mildly infected deer will exhibit few symptoms. Others, which contract a more potent form of the virus, will appear depressed, become feverish, have swollen areas around the head or neck, and may have trouble breathing. However others, which become infected with a particularly potent form of the virus, can die within 1 to 3 days. Normal mortality rates from HD are usually less than 25 percent. However, rates greater than 50 percent of the population have been documented. On a brighter note, HD has destroyed no free-ranging deer population.

HD is first suspected when unexplained deer mortality is observed in late summer or early fall. Typically, archery hunters who are scouting during late September are the first to observe carcasses in the woods. On some occasions HD deer are found dead during the late summer in or adjacent to water. The fever produced by the disease causes the sick deer to seek water. These deer subsequently succumb to the disease in creeks and ponds.

Hunters will most frequently encounter the evidence of HD while observing harvested deer during the winter months. During the high fever produced by HD, an interruption in hoof growth occurs. This growth interruption causes a distinctive ring around the hoof, which is readily identifiable on close examination. Hoof injury, as well as bacterial or fungal infection can cause a "damaged" appearance on a single hoof. HD is not considered unless involvement is noticed on two or more hooves.

Fortunately, people are not at risk by HD. Handling infected deer or eating the venison from infected deer is not a public health factor. Even being bitten by the biting midge that is a carrier of the virus is not a cause of concern for humans. Deer, which develop bacterial infections or abscesses secondary to HD, may not be suitable for consumption.

The case is not as clear regarding domestic livestock. A small percentage of BT infected cattle can become lame, have reproductive problems, or develop sore mouths. Variations exist between BT and EHD virus infection in cattle and domestic sheep. Sheep are usually unaffected by EHD but can develop serious disease symptoms with the BT virus.



Biting Midge (*Culicoides* spp.) transmits EHD

Occasionally over-population of the deer herd has been blamed for outbreaks of HD. Abnormally high deer populations are expected to have greater mortality rates because the deer are in sub-optimal condition. The spread of the virus would be expected to be greater in dense deer herds. However, an outbreak of HD cannot be directly attributed to an overpopulated deer herd.

Mouth Lesions from EHD

HD can be diagnosed several ways. A reliable tentative diagnosis can be made after necropsy by a trained biologist or veterinarian. A confirmed diagnosis can only be made by isolating one of the viruses from refrigerated whole blood, spleen, lymph node, or lung from a fresh carcass.

MDWFP biologists have been monitoring the presence of HD in Mississippi by several methods: sudden, unexplained high deer mortality during late summer and early fall, necropsy diagnosis, isolation of EHD or BT virus, and observation of hoof lesions on hunter-harvested deer. HD or previous HD exposure is always present in Mississippi deer herds. Previous HD exposure is good. Exposure yields antibodies to future outbreaks of the disease. Without the antibody presence, significant mortality would occur. See **Table 4** for the virus isolation results from the 2008 deer herd health evaluations.

Hoof Sloughing from EHD

The 2008–2009 hunting season produced a low HD occurrence. Evidence of HD was reported in 46 deer scattered across 19 counties during the 2008–2009 hunting season (**Figure 5**). Researchers have documented a distinctive 2–3 year cycle in HD outbreaks. Assuming that these cyclic outbreaks occur, we can expect a higher occurrence of HD during the 2009–2010 hunting season.

Hemorrhagic Disease

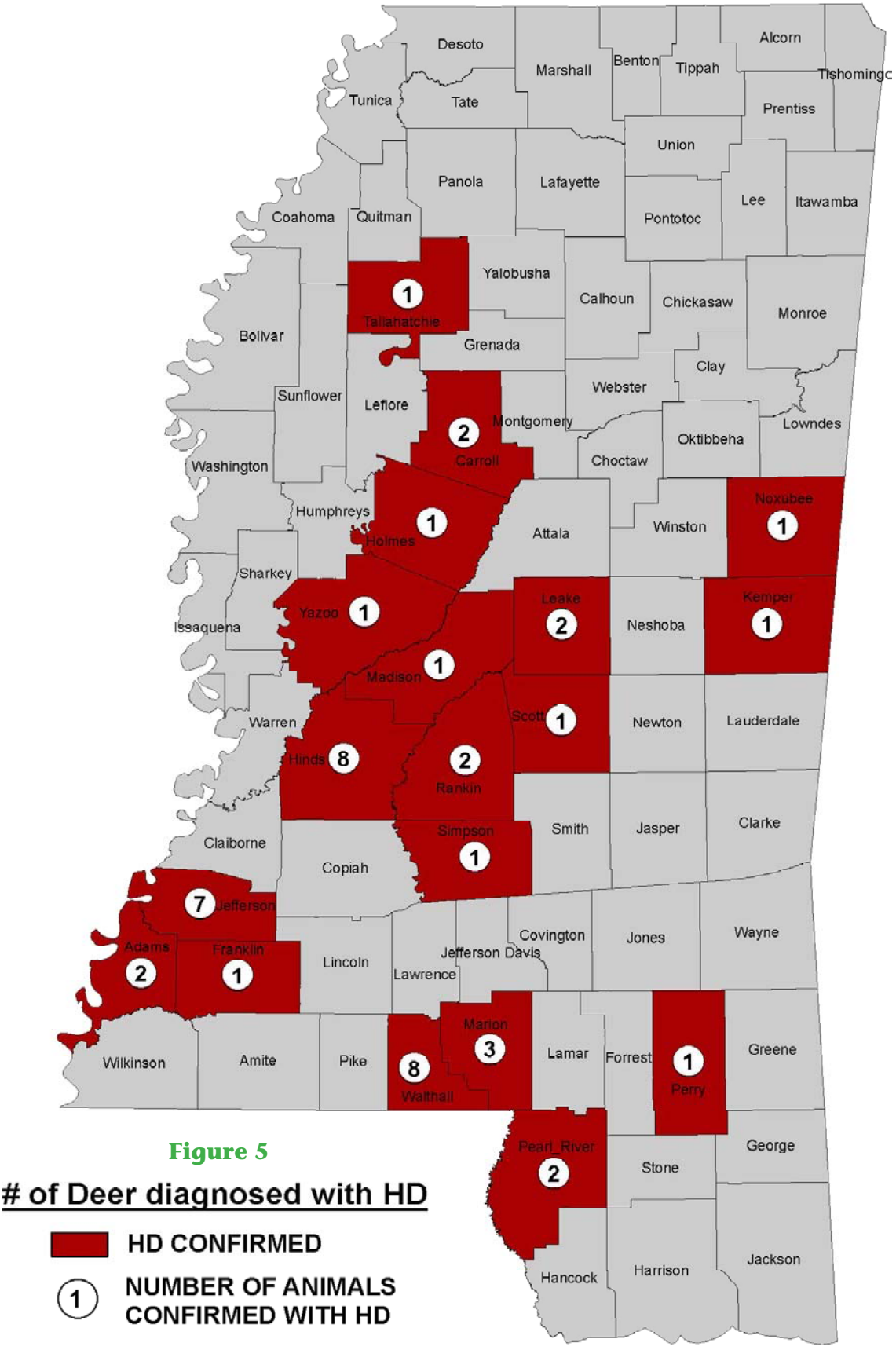


Figure 5

# of Deer diagnosed with HD

HD CONFIRMED

1 NUMBER OF ANIMALS CONFIRMED WITH HD

2009 Deer Herd Health Evaluations

Deer herd health evaluations are conducted by MDWFP biologists annually. Evaluation sites are selected each year based on a specific need for additional information, which cannot be obtained from hunter-harvested deer. These sites may be on DMAP cooperator lands, WMAs, open public lands, or areas with a special deer management concern. Some sites are sampled annually, others on a rotational schedule of two–three years and some locations on an as-needed basis.

Time constraints normally limit the number of locations biologists sample each year. Deer collections are conducted during the months of February, March, and April. Collection timing must be late enough to insure that all does have been bred, but early enough to precede the spring green-up when foliage density reduces the ability to readily observe and identify deer. The sampling window is most critical in the southern portion of the state where late breeding is a chronic problem and early green-up of native vegetation occurs.

Biologists complete an application for approval to conduct each herd health evaluation during a specific time period. The MDWFP Deer Committee reviews these applications and denies or grants approval. Other agency personnel assist the biologist in charge of the deer collection. When non-agency personnel are participating in the process, specific prior approval is obtained on the application.

During a typical herd health evaluation, biological data regarding reproduction, body condition, and disease are collected from mature females. A minimum of 10 mature females is necessary to obtain an adequate sample size to assess herd parameters. Mature does are collected during the late afternoon on existing food plots or at night with the aid of a light and truck platform, which has been designed specifically for this purpose. Other deer are occasionally taken by mistake during the collection process. Data are obtained from all deer but the purpose of the evaluation is to obtain reproductive, physical condition, and disease data from mature females. All measurements and data are obtained from the deer on site or at a convenient nearby location. All deer are donated to a charitable institution or to an individual determined needy by agency personnel. Neither deer nor portions thereof are utilized by any MDWFP employees. Receipts are obtained from every deer donated. Rarely, instances have occurred where deer had to be disposed of in a manner where human utilization was not possible.

Reproduction

Reproductive data collected during herd health evaluations include conception dates, fawning dates, number of corpus lutea per doe, and number of fetuses per doe. Conception dates and fawning dates are determined using a fetal aging scale. Fetal length is measured on the fetal aging scale and the length is used to calculate conception date and fawning date. Breeding date ranges for Mississippi are presented in **Figure 6**. Data from the 2009 statewide deer herd health evaluations are given in **Table 5**. Data were collected from 242 deer on 25 sites across the state.

In **Table 5**, conception date ranges and corresponding fawning dates are given for each collection site. The earliest conception date (8-November) was detected at Black Bear Plantation in Issaquena County. The latest conception date (3-March) was detected on Camp McCain in Grenada County. Mean fawning dates based on the conception dates ranged from 14-June on Black Bear Plantation in Issaquena County to 4-September on Ward Bayou WMA in Jackson County. The statewide average conception date was 1-January and the corresponding state average fawning date was 17-July.

Sample sizes for each collection site are given as N1 or N2. Different groupings by age and sex are mandatory to accurately interpret condition and reproductive data. Total 1½+ year old fecund (capable of breeding) does are represented as N1. Mature 2½+ year old does are represented as N2. Both N1 and N2 deer are utilized to calculate conception dates, but only N2 deer are considered in the sample when reproductive rates and condition data are compared.

Data comparing conception ranges and mean conception dates are self-explanatory. Average number of corpus lutea (CLs) is determined by examination of the ovaries of each N2 deer in the sample and counting the number of CLs present at the time of collection. A CL is a structure in the ovary which forms when an egg is released. The CL functions to maintain pregnancy by the release of hormones. As in domestic livestock, healthy deer on a high plane of nutrition will produce more eggs than deer in poor condition. Therefore, CL data provide a quantitative index to gauge not only reproductive performance at a specific site but also provide a general index to overall herd condition. CL data ranged from a low of 1.4 CLs per doe on Natchez State Park WMA in Adams County to a high of 2.3 CLs per doe on Twin Oaks WMA in Sharkey County.

Average number of fetuses are also self-explanatory, but will, in most instances, be a lower number than average number of CLs because all CLs do not represent a viable fetus. As the average number of CLs provides an index to reproductive rates and herd condition, the average number of fetuses per doe provides an additional index to determine site-specific herd health. Average number of fetuses per doe ranged from a low of 1.3 on Natchez State Park WMA in Adams County to a high of 2.1 on Black Bear Plantation in Issaquena County.

Body Condition

Body condition data collected during herd health evaluations include dressed weight and kidney fat index (KFI). Average dressed weight only includes N2 deer. A wide range of weights are apparent due to soil type, deer herd condition, and habitat type. In general, dressed weight is a reliable indicator to help gauge herd condition but should not be used to compare different sites unless all soil and habitat types are uniform.

KFI provides a quantitative index to energy levels within a deer herd. KFI is calculated by expressing the weight of the kidney fat as a percentage of the kidney weight. Substandard kidney fat levels were found at several areas. The highest value during 2009 was seen on Oxbow Hunting Club in Warren County.

2009 Deer Herd Health Evaluations

Disease

During deer herd health evaluations, blood serum samples are collected from each deer. The serum samples are tested for antibodies to the various sub-types of hemorrhagic disease (HD). HD can be caused by several different strains of either the epizootic hemorrhagic disease (EHD) virus or the blue-tongue (BT) virus. The presence of antibodies indicates previous exposure, not current infection. Due to time constraints, the serotype information described is for the 2008 Deer Herd Health Evaluations. Deer from 16 of the 17 collection sites tested positive for the EHD virus, and deer from 15 of the 17 collection sites tested positive for the BT virus. The specific serotypes are found in **Table 4**.

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) samples were also taken on most of the deer collected during the 2009 herd health evaluations. There was no incidence of CWD found in any samples.

Table 4. 2008 Serologic Test Results for Antibodies to EHDV and BTV in Mississippi White-tailed Deer

Location	County	Number of Samples	Prevalence	Serotypes
Sligo	Adams	10	70%	E1, E2, B10, B11, B17
Cotton Branch	Franklin	6	33%	E2
NASA Stennis Space Center	Hancock	8	88%	E1, E2, B11
Clifton Plantation	Holmes	6	67%	E1, E2, B10, B11
Mahannah WMA	Issaquena	11	73%	E1, E2, B10
Pace HC	Jefferson Davis	7	57%	E1, E2, B10, B17
Cameron Plantation	Madison	8	63%	E1, E2, B10
Horseshoe Lake HC	Madison	11	100%	E1, E2, B10, B11
Marion County WMA	Marion	7	86%	E1, E2, B10
Big O HC	Monroe	9	89%	E1, E2, B10, B11
Sunflower WMA	Sharkey	11	36%	E1, E2, B10
Twin Oaks WMA	Sharkey	9	67%	E1, E2, B10
Jumper Lake HC	Tippah	9	67%	E1, E2, B10
Davis Island	Warren	8	63%	E1, E2, B10
Ashbrook Island	Washington	12	0%	
Smallwood/JA Young	Winston	9	67%	E1, E2, B10
Breakwater HC	Yazoo	10	100%	E1, E2, B10, B11

E1 = EHDV-1, E2 = EHDV-2, B2 = BTV-2, B10 = BTV-10, B11 = BTV-11, B13 = BTV-13, B17 = BTV-17

From the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study College of Veterinary Medicine, The University of Georgia, Athens, GA

2009 Deer Herd Health Evaluations

Table 5. Deer Herd Health Evaluation Summary

#	Soil Area	Collection Site	Date of Collection	N1	N2	Range of Conception		Mean Conception Date	Mean Fawning Date	Average # CLs	Average # Fetuses	Average Dressed Weight	Average KFI
1	Batture	Ashbrook Island, Washington County	19-Feb	10	8	16-Nov	27-Dec	11-Dec	25-Jun	1.6	1.6	87.1	108.7
2	LThick	Beck's Bay, Wilkinson County	17-Mar	2	2	31-Dec	7-Jan	4-Jan	19-Jul	2.0	2.0	88.0	116.0
3	Batture	Black Bear Plantation, Issaquena County	2-Feb	14	11	8-Nov	22-Dec	30-Nov	14-Jun	1.9	2.1	98.0	83.9
4	UThin	Box B, Carroll County	10-Mar	8	7	5-Dec	2-Jan	18-Dec	2-Jul	2.0	1.9	83.6	105.8
5	UThick	Bozeman Property, Madison County	10-Mar	12	12	30-Nov	12-Jan	18-Dec	2-Jul	1.9	1.8	90.4	73.9
6	UCP	Camp McCain, Grenada County	3-Mar	12	12	17-Dec	3-Mar	9-Jan	24-Jul	1.7	1.5	74.9	71.7
7	LCP	Camp Shelby, Forrest County	17-Mar	24	20	5-Jan	1-Feb	17-Jan	1-Aug	1.9	1.8	64.8	76.3
8	UCP	Canal Section WMA, Itawamba County	3-Mar	11	10	17-Dec	3-Feb	12-Jan	27-Jul	2.0	1.6	72.9	72.8
9	LCP	Chickasawhay WMA, Jones County	25-Mar	10	10	15-Jan	9-Feb	28-Jan	12-Aug	1.8	1.7	63.9	31.4
10	BP	Circle M Plantation, Noxubee County	11-Mar	11	10	13-Dec	14-Jan	29-Dec	13-Jul	2.2	1.9	94.3	111.2
11	Delta	Cypress Bend, Tallahatchie County	18-Feb	9	7	6-Dec	21-Jan	20-Dec	4-Jul	2.0	1.9	100.7	128.8
12	UThin	Dry Creek Lodge, Madison County	18-Feb	5	5	30-Dec	28-Jan	10-Jan	25-Jul	1.8	1.5	95.6	102.8
13	UThick	Hamer WMA, Panola County	2-Mar	12	11	29-Nov	17-Jan	15-Dec	29-Jun	1.9	1.9	79.5	70.2
14	UCP	Interstate Still Hunting Club, Lauderdale County	24-Mar	16	14	10-Jan	5-Feb	19-Jan	3-Aug	2.0	2.0	80.7	63.0
15	Delta	Mahannah WMA, Issaquena County	23-Feb	11	10	25-Nov	15-Jan	26-Dec	10-Jul	2.1	2.0	99.0	174.4
16	LThick	Natchez Park, Adams County	3-Mar	9	9	11-Dec	2-Jan	23-Dec	7-Jul	1.4	1.3	82.7	153.6
17	LThick	Oxbow, Warren County	4-Mar	2	2	21-Dec	12-Jan	1-Jan	16-Jul	2.0	2.0	116.0	411.0
18	Delta	Panther Swamp NWR, Yazoo County	5-Mar	11	11	25-Nov	12-Jan	23-Dec	7-Jul	2.0	1.9	97.3	80.2
19	CF	Pascagoula WMA, George County	23-Mar	4	4	30-Jan	5-Feb	2-Feb	17-Aug	1.5	2.0	73.5	71.6
20	Delta	Sunflower WMA, Sharkey County	25-Feb	9	8	24-Dec	4-Feb	3-Jan	18-Jul	1.6	1.9	98.5	132.7
21	Delta	Twin Oaks WMA, Sharkey County	24-Feb	5	4	18-Dec	12-Jan	26-Dec	10-Jul	2.3	1.8	111.0	261.3
22	CF	Ward Bayou WMA, Jackson County	23-Mar	1	1	20-Feb	20-Feb	20-Feb	4-Sep	2.0	2.0	80.0	21.0
23	IF	Weyerhaeuser - Kemper Co., Kemper County	3-Mar	16	14	27-Dec	10-Feb	12-Jan	27-Jul	2.0	2.0	81.6	106.4
24	UThin	Wilderness West, Holmes County	9-Mar	7	7	14-Dec	17-Jan	31-Dec	15-Jul	1.7	1.4	85.7	117.9
25	BP	Yates Property, Noxubee County	11-Mar	11	11	17-Dec	28-Jan	4-Jan	19-Jul	1.8	1.9	85.5	97.7
			Total:	**242**	**220**	**Average:**		**1-Jan**	**17-Jul**				

N1=Total 1.5+ year-old fecund (capable of breeding) does N2=Mature 2.5+ year-old does

2009 Deer Herd Health Evaluations

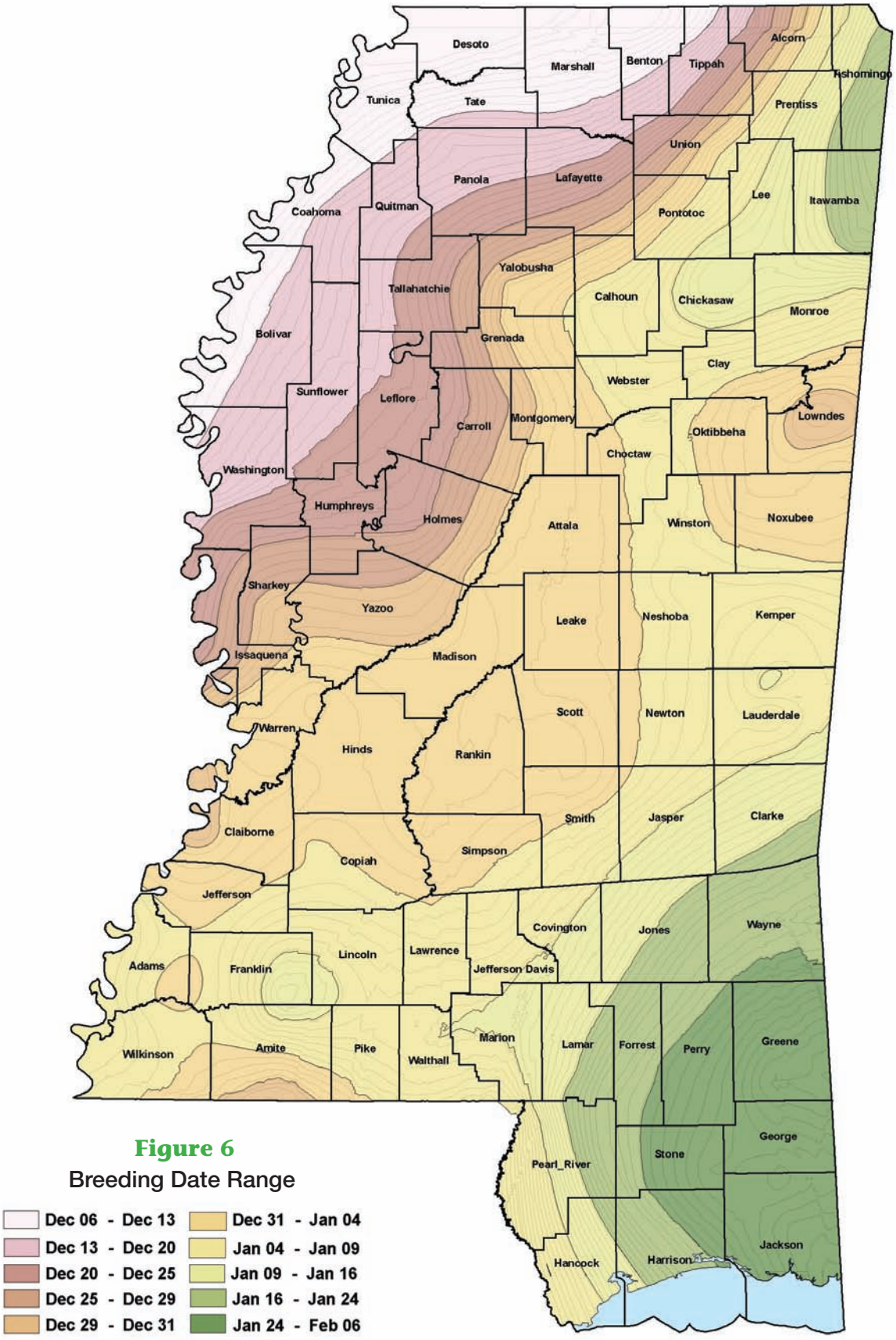


Figure 6
Breeding Date Range

Mail Survey Data 2008-2009

Resident Hunter Survey Results

Survey methods changed beginning with the 2003–2004 season. All data collected after this change, which includes the 2008–2009 data, must be looked at carefully. A survey was not conducted immediately after the 2006–2007 season; however, harvest estimates for the 2006–2007 season were obtained during the 2008 survey.

Table 6 displays the deer harvest results from the 2009 Survey of Mississippi Resident and Non-resident Hunters. Changes from the 2008 survey are displayed in **Table 7**.

Total resident deer hunters by user group (gun, archery, and primitive weapons) are shown in **Figure 7**. Archery and gun hunter numbers increased slightly, while primitive weapon hunter numbers declined by 7%. This decline in primitive weapons hunters occurred after a 13% increase immediately following the implementation of the new primitive weapon definition in 2005.

Deer hunting man-days by user group are shown in **Figure 8**. A long-term evaluation of hunter man-days reveals a declining trend that began in the mid 1980s. For the first time since 2004, total hunter numbers increased. The bulk of the increase was in gun hunters, as archery and primitive weapons hunters have remained relatively constant for the past six years.

Total resident deer harvest for the 2008–2009 season is depicted in **Figure 9**. This graph includes the harvest of bucks and does from archery, primitive weapon, and gun deer seasons. Total resident deer harvest increased by almost 3,000 compared to the 2007–2008 season and the percent of successful hunters decreased by 5%. However, over 75% of the resident hunters harvested a deer in 2008–2009. Additionally, the average seasonal harvest remained at 2 deer per hunter.

Archery and primitive weapon hunters harvested 35% of total deer harvest and 42% of total doe harvest. Archery and primitive weapon hunters harvested more does than bucks. On average it took archery hunters 9.75 man-days, primitive weapons hunters 9.54 man-days, and gun hunters 10 man-days to harvest a deer. This is the first year that all three weapons classes were even in man-days per deer harvested.

Non-Resident Hunter Survey Results

Total hunter numbers increased significantly from the 2007–2008 season (**Figure 10**). Both buck and doe harvest increased (**Figure 11**). Man-days increased substantially for all weapons (**Figure 12**). However, success rates for non-resident hunters decreased from the 2007–2008 season.

2008–2009 Summary (Resident and Non-Resident Combined)

The total number of deer harvested increased by about 5,200 from the 2007–2008 season. A total of 132,862 deer hunters spent 2,897,831 man-days deer hunting and harvested 132,167 bucks and 148,687 does, for a total of 280,854 deer. It took an average of 10.3 man-days per deer harvested. Hunters spent an average of 21.8 man-days hunting during the season.

This buck harvested on January 11th in Monroe County and was in full velvet. He weighed 175 pounds, had 14 points, and no testicles.

Mail Survey Data 2008-2009

Table 6. Mail Survey Summary for the 2008-2009 Season

	Total Harvest			Total Hunters			Average Seasonal Harvest		Total Man-days			Percent Successful Hunters	
	Resident	Non-Res	Total	Resident	Non-Res	Total	Resident	Non-Res	Resident	Non-Res	Total	Resident	Non-Res
Total Deer	249,993	30,861	280,854	111,487	21,375	132,862	2.24	1.44	2,521,904	375,927	2,897,831	75.2	67.6
Buck	117,388	14,779	132,167				1.05	0.69				58.2	46.1
Doe	132,605	16,082	148,687				1.19	0.75				57.1	46.7
Archery Total	41,148	3,624	44,772	34,471	5,334	39,805	1.19	0.68	401,204	57,805	459,009	58.6	42.8
Buck	11,956	1,018	12,974				0.35	0.19				23.9	15.3
Doe	29,192	2,606	31,798				0.85	0.49				50.5	35.9
Primitive Total	46,272	4,845	51,117	51,396	7,166	58,562	0.90	0.68	441,398	59,401	500,799	58.6	51.1
Buck	19,565	1,751	21,316				0.38	0.24				31.7	22.7
Doe	26,707	3,094	29,801				0.52	0.43				41.4	34.7
Gun Total	162,573	22,393	184,966	104,190	18,851	123,041	1.56	1.19	1,625,793	247,718	1,873,511	71.1	66.3
Buck	85,867	12,011	97,878				0.82	0.64				55.1	46.4
Doe	76,706	10,382	87,088				0.74	0.55				44.9	39.3

Table 7. Changes in Mail Survey Data from the 2007-2008 Season to the 2008-2009 Season

	Total Harvest			Total Hunters			Average Seasonal Harvest		Total Man-days			Percent Successful Hunters	
	Resident	Non-Res	Total	Resident	Non-Res	Total	Resident	Non-Res	Resident	Non-Res	Total	Resident	Non-Res
Total Deer	2,969	2,267	5,236	1,394	3,721	5,115	0.00	-0.18	139,193	67,204	206,397	-5.3	-6.8
Buck	-935	1,132	197				-0.03	-0.08				-4.0	-8.1
Doe	3,905	1,135	5,040				0.02	-0.10				-1.7	-2.6
Archery Total	6,557	411	6,968	715	893	1,608	0.16	-0.04	10,970	17,643	28,613	3.5	-6.0
Buck	2,652	151	2,803				0.07	-0.01				2.7	-4.2
Doe	3,905	259	4,164				0.10	-0.04				1.0	-2.3
Primitive Total	2,497	-318	2,179	-3,710	595	-3,115	0.11	-0.11	17,785	12,063	29,848	4.5	-5.5
Buck	3,701	-596	3,105				0.09	-0.12				6.2	-8.6
Doe	-1,204	278	-926				0.01	0.00				2.9	0.6
Gun Total	-6,085	2,175	-3,910	776	2,857	3,633	-0.07	-0.07	96,920	35,771	132,691	-5.0	-4.4
Buck	-7,289	1,577	-5,712				-0.08	-0.01				-3.6	-4.2
Doe	1,203	598	1,801				0.01	-0.06				-1.5	-1.8

Positive numbers indicate an increase and negative numbers indicate a decrease from the 2007-2008 Season.

Mail Survey Data 2008-2009

Figure 7. Total Deer Hunters--Resident

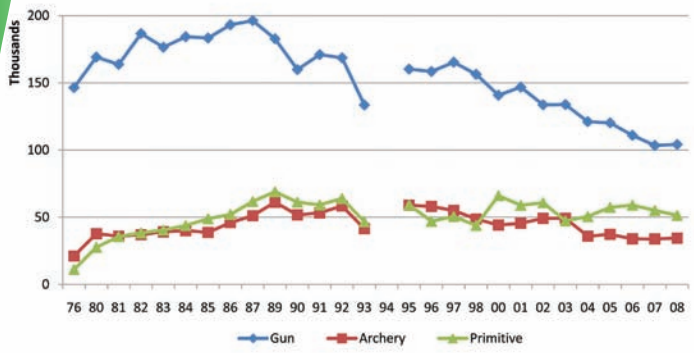


Figure 8. Total Man-days--Resident

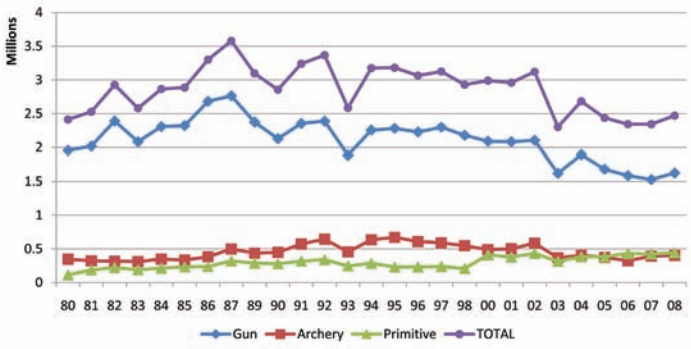


Figure 9. Total Deer Harvest--Resident

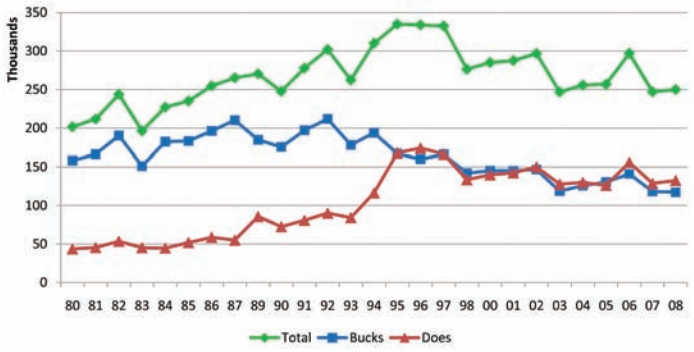


Figure 10. Total Deer Hunters--Non-resident

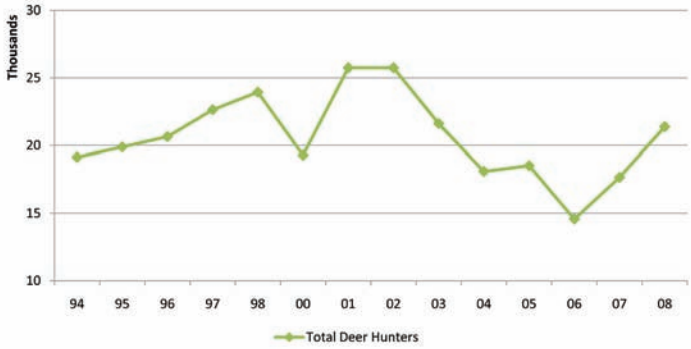


Figure 11. Total Deer Harvest--Non-resident

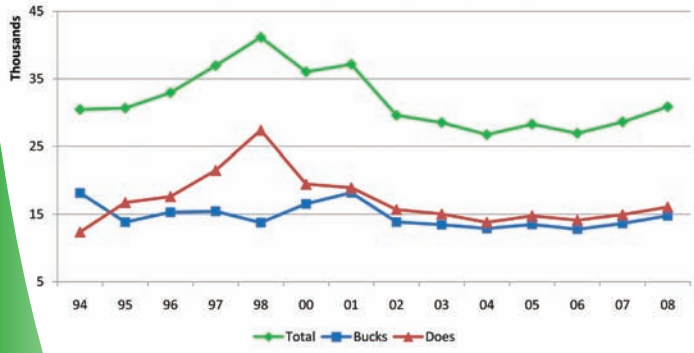
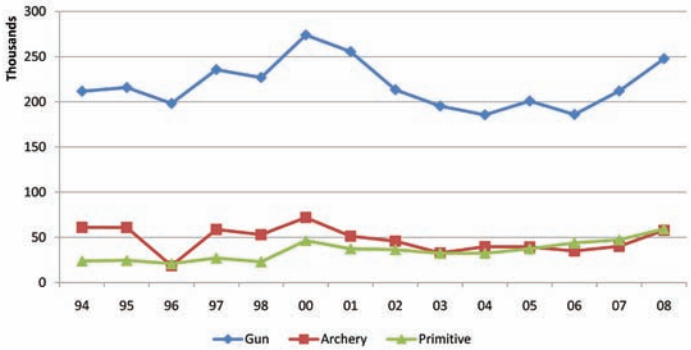


Figure 12. Total Man-days--Non-resident



Mississippi Bowhunter Observations

The MDWFP began distributing Bowhunter Observation Books for the 2005–2006 deer archery season. Efforts to increase distribution of the books increased during the following years. Five prizes were donated for the 2008–2009 season to increase participation. Southern Outdoor Technologies donated a Sportsman's Condo, Hunting Solutions donated a Millenium climbing stand, Mississippi Bowhunters Association donated a Millennium hang-on stand and stick ladder, Primos donated a Double Bull blind, and Mossy Oak donated a suit of Mossy Oak camouflage. Casey Brunning, Trey Gore, Charles K. Smith, Phillip Brown, and Mike Brewer were winners of the prizes. The prizes were given away in December through a random drawing of returned observation books. To be eligible for the drawing, bowhunters must record the deer they observe during each bowhunt in Mississippi and return the book by the deadline.

Bowhunter Observation Books were distributed through sporting goods stores, feed stores, and were available online. Over 2,000 books were distributed during September 2008. A total of 155 books were returned by the December 1st deadline. Participating bowhunters observed 7,343 total deer yielding 1.14 deer per hour. Bowhunters recorded 6,425.25 hours in 67 counties. A description of deer observed is shown in **Table 8**. Total hours of observation by county are presented in **Figure 13**. Data collected was not sufficient to estimate sex ratio and fawn crop by county.

Bowhunter Observation Books produced very similar statewide estimates for the past four years (**Table 9**). According to this data, Mississippi had about 2.5 does for every buck, and about 1 fawn for every 2 does going into the 2008 hunting season.

We plan to continue distributing Bowhunter Observation Books during 2009. If you would like to assist the MDWFP in collecting deer observation data during archery season, and automatically enter into the random drawings, you may download the book from our website, www.mdwfp.com/deer, or you may email williamm@mdwfp.state.ms.us or call 601-432-2199 to request a book. If calling or emailing, please provide a physical address to mail the book. Thanks to all bowhunters who have assisted in collecting this data.

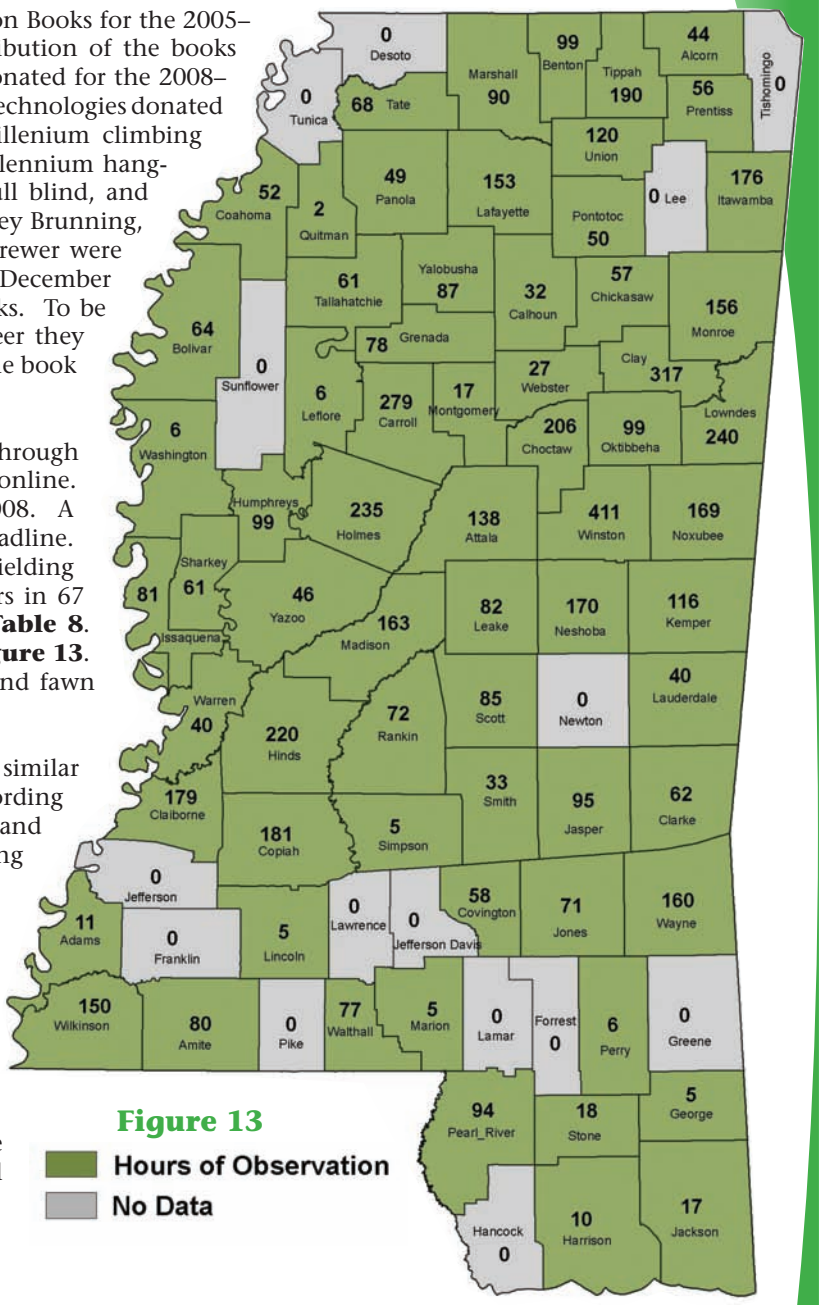


Figure 13

Hours of Observation

No Data

Table 8. Total Hours and Deer Observed in 2008

Total Hours	2-3 Points	4-7 Points	8+ Points	Does	Fawns	Unknown Deer
6,425.25	578	503	277	3,394	1,621	970

Table 9. Bowhunter Observation Results 2005-2008

Year	Total Deer Observed	Sex Ratio	Fawn Crop	Deer Observed Per Hour
2005	1,262	1 Buck : 2.4 Does	0.6 Fawns : 1 Doe	1.06
2006	3,803	1 Buck : 2.69 Does	0.52 Fawns : 1 Doe	1.11
2007	6,008	1 Buck : 2.92 Does	0.43 Fawns : 1 Doe	1.06
2008	7,343	1 Buck : 2.5 Does	0.48 Fawns : 1 Doe	1.14

Antler Regulations

The 2008–2009 hunting season was the fourth season for Deer Management Zone 2 in southeast Mississippi. This zone includes private and open public lands south of U.S. Hwy. 84 and east of MS Hwy. 35. Within the zone, deer hunting opportunity is allowed October 15 through February 15. The objectives of Deer Management Zone 2 were as follows:

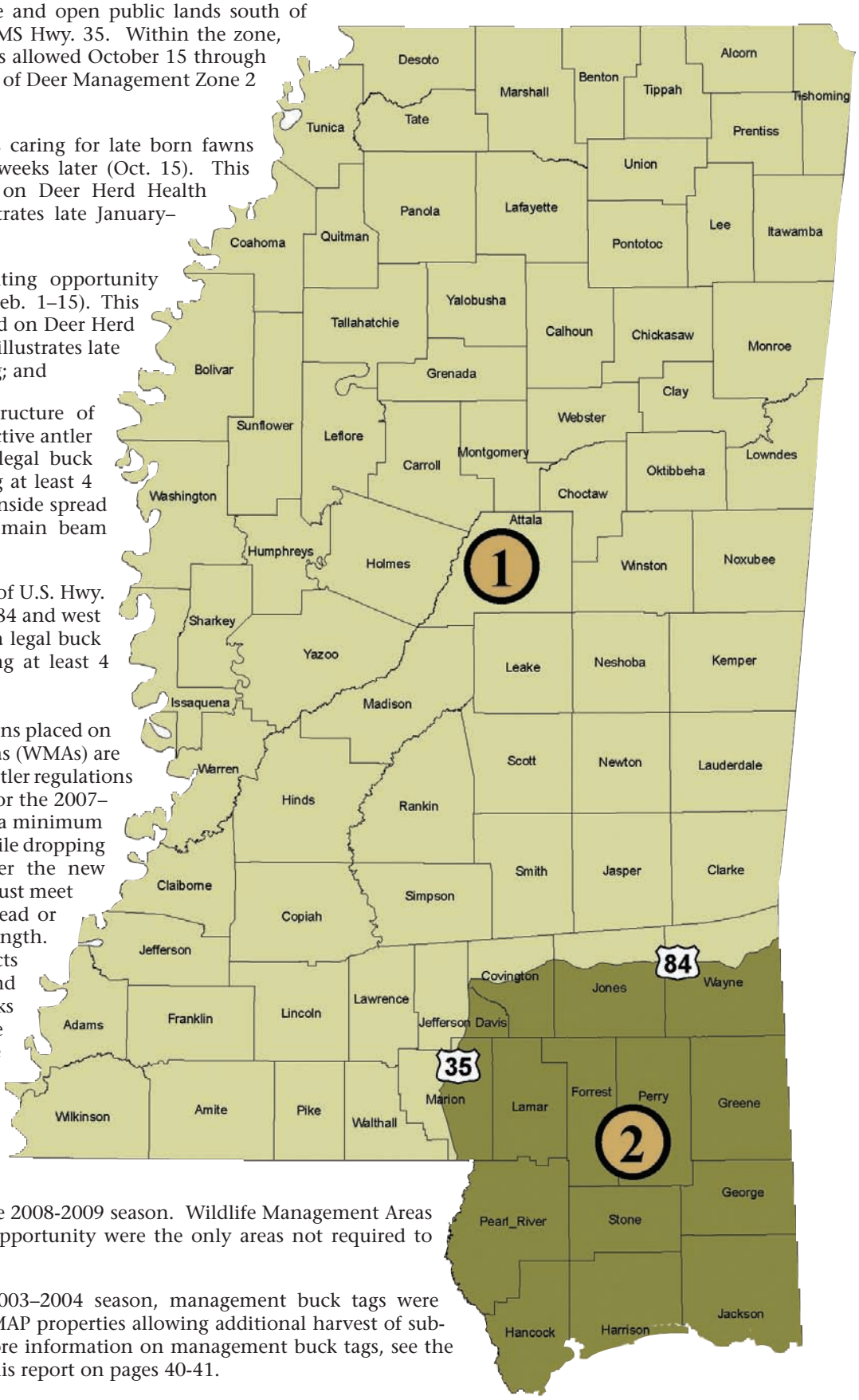
1) To protect adult does caring for late born fawns by opening the season two weeks later (Oct. 15). This recommendation was based on Deer Herd Health Evaluation Data, which illustrates late January–early February breeding;

2) To provide more hunting opportunity during the breeding period (Feb. 1–15). This recommendation was also based on Deer Herd Health Evaluation Data, which illustrates late January–early February breeding; and

3) To improve the age structure of adult bucks through more restrictive antler regulations. In 2008–2009, a legal buck in Zone 2 was defined as having at least 4 antler points AND a minimum inside spread of 10 inches OR a minimum main beam length of 13 inches.

Zone 1 includes areas north of U.S. Hwy. 84 plus areas south of U.S. Hwy. 84 and west of MS Hwy. 35. In 2008–2009, a legal buck in Zone 1 was defined as having at least 4 antler points.

Inside spread antler restrictions placed on many Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) are in their fifth year of existence. Antler regulations on most WMAs were amended for the 2007–2008 hunting season to include a minimum main beam length restriction while dropping the 4 point restriction. Under the new antler regulations, legal bucks must meet either the minimum inside spread or the minimum main beam length. Results from studies on the effects of the "four-point law" and apparent over-harvest of bucks on some WMAs support these antler regulations. See the "Wildlife Management Area Harvest Information for the 2008–2009 Season" table on page 3 to determine which WMAs did not have inside spread and main beam restrictions during the 2008-2009 season. Wildlife Management Areas offering exclusive youth opportunity were the only areas not required to have antler restrictions.



Beginning in the 2003–2004 season, management buck tags were issued to WMAs and DMAP properties allowing additional harvest of sub-optimal bucks. For more information on management buck tags, see the Deer Tags section of this report on pages 40-41.

High Fenced Enclosures 2008-2009 Permit Year

Permits

Public Notice W1-3780 requires owners of enclosures containing white-tailed deer to obtain an annual Facility Permit from the MDWFP. The permit is valid from July 1 through June 30. For the 2008–2009 permit year, 78 facility permits were issued, 8 permits were denied, and 7 permits are still pending. Eight permits were denied due to facilities not meeting the minimum acreage requirements. Additionally, 6 breeder permits and 1 deer transport permit were issued.

Enclosure Management Assistance Program

As required by Public Notice W1-3780, all permitted high-fenced enclosures containing white-tailed deer must be enrolled in the Enclosure Management Assistance Program (EMAP). The owner of a permitted high-fenced enclosure must work with an MDWFP approved wildlife biologist to manage the white-tailed deer herd within the enclosure. The wildlife biologist must submit an annual management plan for the permitted high-fenced enclosure, which is incorporated into the Annual Facility Permit Application.

EMAP is a sub-level of DMAP (Deer Management Assistance Program). The starting point of EMAP is goal/objective setting by the enclosure owner to manage the white-tailed deer herd within their enclosure. Once goals and objectives are set, biological data are collected from harvested white-tailed deer, (i.e., weights, antler measurements, lactation data on does, and a jawbone pulled to determine the age of each deer harvested). The enclosure owner is responsible for the collection of biological data. The wildlife biologist is responsible for supplying the enclosure owner with harvest data sheets and jawbone tags.

After analyzing the harvest data and evaluating the habitat, the biologist will discuss harvest strategies with the enclosure owner to meet specific goals within limitations of maintaining a healthy herd and habitat. The wildlife biologist must submit EMAP deer harvest data to the MDWFP annually in the same manner as DMAP data are submitted. However, EMAP and DMAP deer harvest data will be maintained separately by the MDWFP.

EMAP cooperators receive a harvest summary report after each hunting season. This report contains a detailed analysis of current and historical harvest as well as graphs and charts that show trend directions while facilitating data interpretation. Progress towards the goals and objectives stated in the annual management plan will be continuously evaluated using this report.

For management of deer herds within high-fenced enclosures and upon the request of the wildlife biologist as outlined in the annual management plan, the MDWFP may issue management buck and doe tags to EMAP properties to allow the harvest of does and management bucks in excess of the annual and daily bag limits.

For the 2008–2009 hunting season, harvest data were submitted for 34 enclosures, with 290 bucks and 443 does harvested. For management purposes, 145 buck tags were issued to 10 enclosures, and 320 doe tags were issued to 13 enclosures. Fifty-eight buck tags were reported as used.

Chronic Wasting Disease Surveillance

Regulations adopted by the Mississippi Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (Public Notice W1-3780) allow the movement of captive white-tailed deer from one permitted high-fenced enclosure to another permitted high-fenced enclosure within Mississippi only if the high-fence enclosure from which the deer originate is participating in the Mississippi White-tailed Deer Herd CWD Certification Program. No person may import a live white-tailed deer into Mississippi pursuant to Section §49-7-54, Mississippi Code of 1972.

It is the responsibility of the enclosure/breeding pen owner to obtain sampling supplies and collect samples. Retropharyngeal lymph nodes and obex tissue must be collected for testing. The MDWFP supplies sampling data sheets to the enclosure/breeding pen owner. Once samples are collected, the MDWFP submits samples to the testing laboratory and supplies test results back to the enclosure/breeding pen owner. The contract laboratory for all captive CWD testing is the National Veterinary Services Laboratories. Visit www.mdwfp.com/deer for more information regarding the Mississippi White-tailed Deer Herd CWD Certification Program.

For the 2008–2009 permit year, 55 samples were taken from white-tailed deer within high-fenced enclosures and submitted to the National Veterinary Services Laboratories for CWD testing. All samples were tested and evidence of CWD was not detected in any of the samples.

Nicole McClendon with her first buck. She harvested the buck on private land in Rankin County.

Deer Tags

Management Buck Tags

During the 2003–2004 season sub–4 point bucks were legal for harvest for the first time since 1995. Sub–4 point tags were issued by biologists to DMAP properties on a limited basis for management purposes. During the 2005–2006 season, tags were expanded to include management bucks. Management buck tags were issued to DMAP properties allowing additional harvest of sub-optimal bucks. Tagged bucks did not count against the annual bag limit. During the 2006–2007 season, tagged bucks did not count against the annual and daily bag limit. The management buck harvest criteria were for an individual property and were determined by the DMAP biologist. A written management justification issued by the MDWFP must accompany any request for such a permit. Management bucks harvested under this permit must be identified with a tag immediately upon possession.

Permits were issued to the following WMAs for the 2008–2009 season: Charles Ray Nix, Lake George, Leroy Percy, Mahannah, Malmaison, Pearl River, Shipland, Stoneville, Sunflower, Twin Oaks, and Yockanookany. A total of 1,442 permits were issued to these WMAs and 68 of these permits were used. The number of buck tags issued to WMAs since the 2003–2004 season has increased from 164 to a high of 1,819 for the 2007–2008 season; however, reported usage of these tags remains low (**Figure 14**).

Permits were issued to the following 149 DMAP properties for the 2008– 2009 season:
11 Shot, 3 Creeks, 6 Mile, Archer Island, Arkabutla COE, Ashbrook, Attala Deer Camp, Atwood, Aust, B & J, Barefoot, Bayou Boyz, Beck's Bay, Beech Ridge, Bellweather, Big Black Widlife, Big O, Big River Farms, Bighorn Sportsman, Black Bayou, Black Bear, Black River, Bonanza, Box B, Bozeman, Breakwater, Brierfield, Brooksville, Burke, Buzzard Roost, Cameron Plantation, Canemount Plantation, Casey Jones, Catfish Point, Cedar Ridge, Chad Bradford, Champion Hill, Chesterfield, Chief, Clifton Plantation, Coahoma County Conservation League, Coyote Crik, Cypress Bend, Dancin' Coyote, Dancing Rabbit, Deer Creek, Deviney Free Range, Donaldson Point, Double Deuce, Duck Lake, DVP Farms, Eastline, Egypt, Elliote Lake Farm, Ellislie, Fairview, Floyd Melton, Fort Knox, Gaddis Farm Heifer Pasture, Goat Hill, Greasy Bayou, Grimp, Halifax, Hardtimes, Higgs, Hillside NWR, Hoffman Farms, Homewood, Horseshoe, Hunters Chapel, Hutchenson, Independence, Info Lab, Irwin, Itta Bena, Jack Robertson, Jay Powell, Jeff H.C., Lake Charles, Las Calinas, Lockhart Dalewood, Luckett, Lucky Buck, Mabry, Magna Vista, Magna Vista Section, Merigold, Millbrook, Miller Point, Montgomery Farms, Moore Farms, Morgan Brake NWR, Mt. Ararat Plantation, NAS Meridian, Noxubee NWR, Noxubee-Kemper County Line, Outback, Outpost, Oxbow, P & W Farms, Palmer Farms, Palmyra, Panther Swamp NWR, Paradise, Parker-Gary, Pinecrest, Pinhook, Prewitt, Providence (Hinds Co.), Providence (Holmes Co.), Pushmataha, Red Gate, Refuge, Richard Reid,Riverbend (Rankin Co.), Riverland, Riverside, Rosedale, Scotland, Smallwood, Solitude, Stardivant, Strong, Sun Creek, TCP, Thorton, Togo Island, Triple C, Triple Creek, Uncle Henry Farms, Valley Farms, W.F. Anderson, W.W. Miller, Ward Lake, Wasilla Valley, West Hill, Whitetail Reserve, Wilderness West, Wildwood, Williams Farms, Willow Break, Willow Oaks 1, Willow Oaks 2, Wolf Creek Outfitters, Wood Burn, Woodstock, Yalabusha Farms, Yazoo NWR, and Yellow Creek. A total of 2,554 permits were issued to these properties and 1,011 of these permits were used. The number of DMAP properties receiving tags has increased from 13 to 149 since the 2003–2004 season. The number of buck tags issued to DMAP properties since the 2003–2004 season has increased from 358 to 2,554, and the number of buck tags used since the 2003–2004 season has increased from 262 to over 1,000 for the past two hunting seasons (**Figure 15**).

DMAP Antlerless Tags

MDWFP issues antlerless tags to DMAP properties. This allows the harvest of antlerless deer in excess of the annual and daily bag limits. These tags have been issued since the implementation of DMAP. When antlerless seasons were liberalized statewide, the need for antlerless tags was reduced. However, some landowners and managers still have the need for more antlerless harvest than state bag limits allow.

Antlerless tags are issued by DMAP biologists, based on an individual landowner's or manager's need. The tags can only be used on antlerless deer on the property to which they were issued.

DMAP biologists issued 4,768 tags to 185 DMAP clubs during the 2008–2009 season. The increase in tags issued since the 2003–2004 season correlates to increased interest in deer management in Mississippi (**Figure 16**).

Fee Management Assistance Program

The Fee Management Assistance Program (FMAP) was implemented during the 1989–1990 season. It began as a pilot program in two north-central counties at the request of local conservation officers to control expanding deer populations. Under this program, doe tags were purchased for $10 each at a rate of one per 50 acres. The landowner or club was required to show proof of ownership or hunting control. FMAP allowed the permittee to harvest antlerless deer in addition to the state bag limit. This program was accepted and quickly spread statewide. Sportsmen realized they could properly harvest does and still maintain a huntable population.

Initially, a large number of permits were sold. However, liberalization of antlerless opportunity has occurred throughout the state. This has decreased the need for permits in most areas to the point of considering termination of the program. There were only 51 permits sold during the 2008–2009 hunting season.

Continuation of the program is recommended because it provides an opportunity to harvest antlerless deer in excess of the season bag limit on specific areas that are in excess of the environmental carrying capacity.

Deer Tags

Figure 14. Buck Tags Issued and Used on WMAs

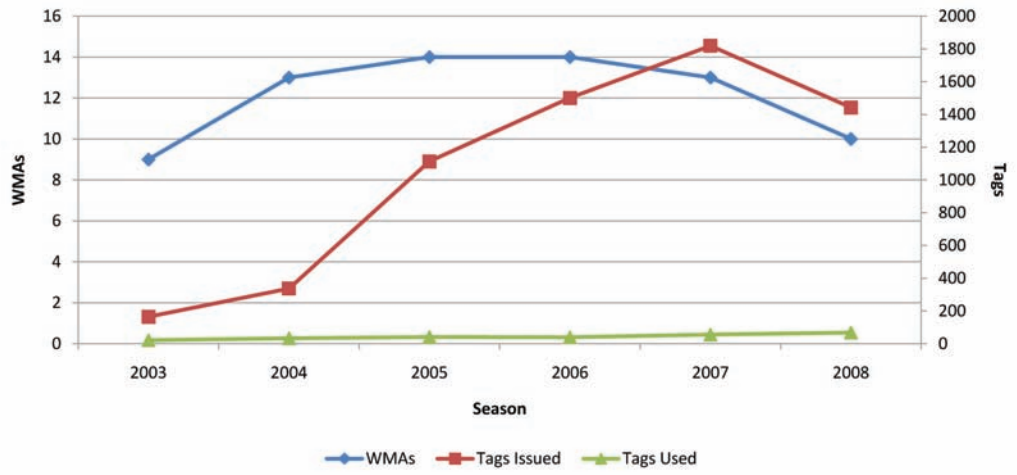


Figure 15. Buck Tags Issued and Used on DMAP Properties

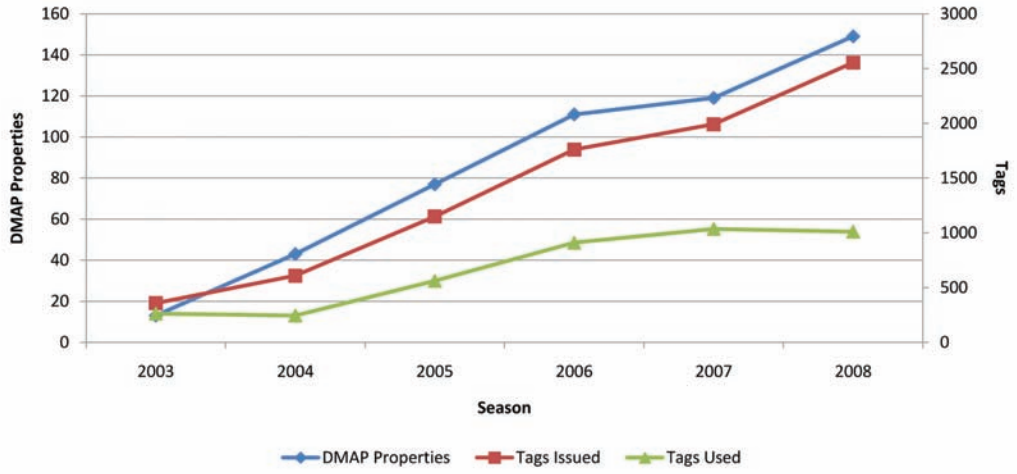
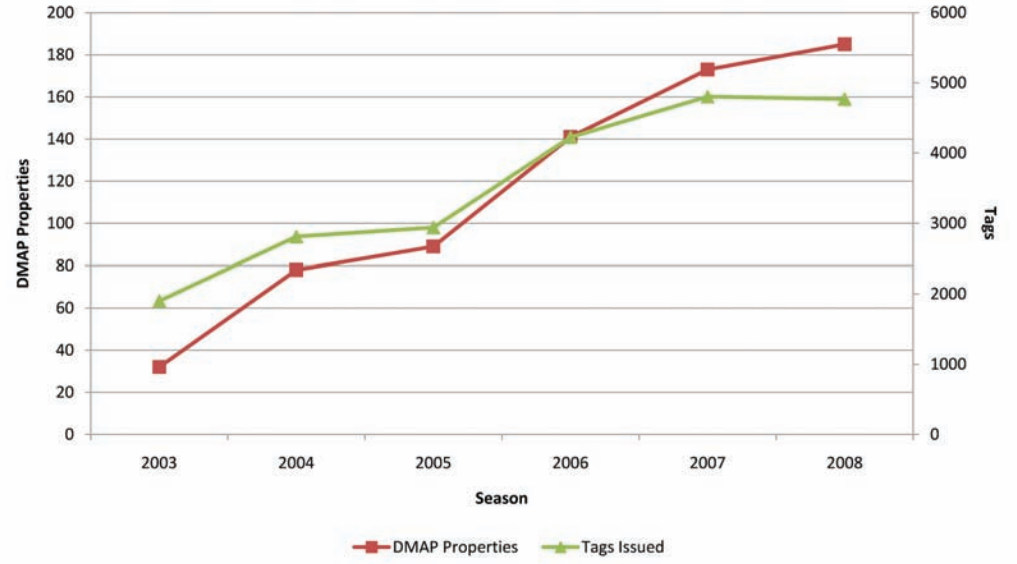


Figure 16. Antlerless Deer Tags Issued on DMAP Properties



Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP)

Through a cooperative research program with Mississippi State University in 1976, the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks gained information which provided biologists with the ability to evaluate population density relative to carrying capacity, using condition indicators rather than population estimates or browse surveys. This cooperative Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP) directly involved hunters in management through the collection of biological data. The interpretation of these data, in consultation with a biologist, is the guiding principle of DMAP. From a two-county pilot project in its first year, DMAP grew steadily until participation peaked in 1994 at almost 1,200 cooperators with over 3.25 million acres under management.

SPECIAL NOTE: Beginning with the 2001 data, the MDWFP began using a new computer summary program (XtraNet). This may be the cause for drastic differences in some numbers. Once all of the historic data is entered into the XtraNet system the numbers are expected to fall along the same trend, thus eliminating the drastic drop currently observed in the graphs and tables. Additionally, the statewide summary table and all graphs include harvest reports from Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) and National Wildlife Refuges (NWRs) that collect deer harvest data. WMA and NWR data is not included in the soil region summary tables.

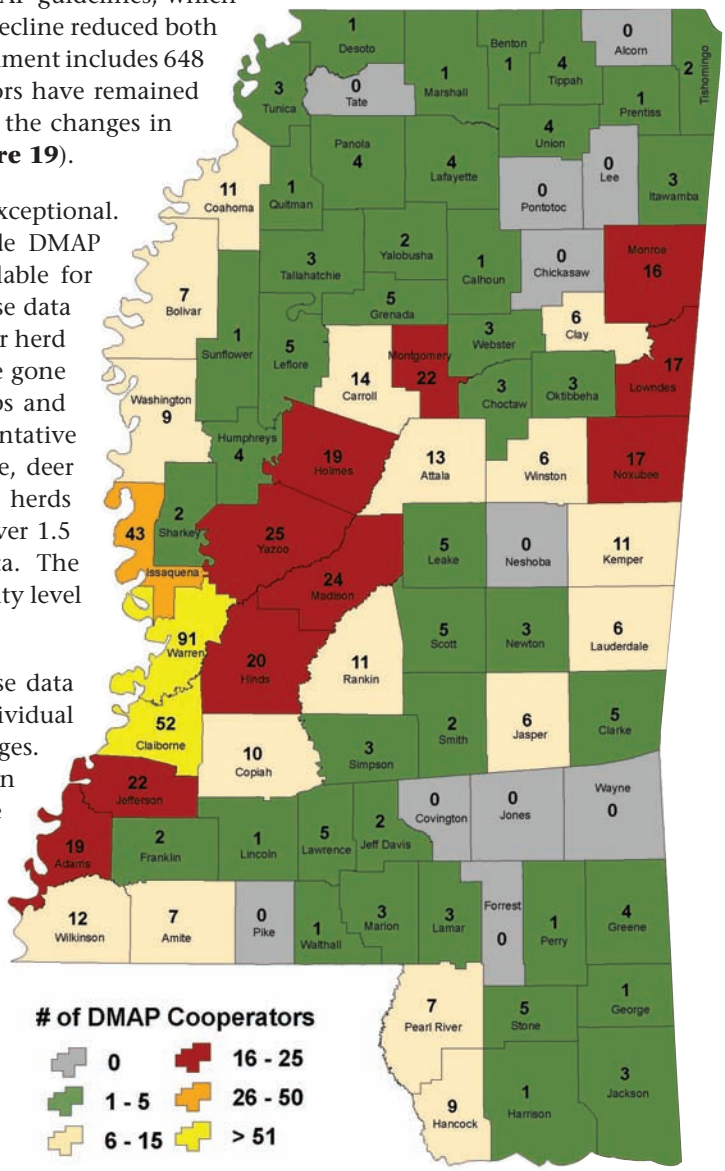
Liberalized season structure and bag limits during the mid-1990's allowed land managers the flexibility to meet harvest objectives outside DMAP guidelines, which resulted in a decline in DMAP participation (**Figure 18**). This decline reduced both total acreage and number of cooperators in DMAP. Current enrollment includes 648 private cooperators on 1,569,858 acres. Total DMAP cooperators have remained relatively stable since 2002. Total DMAP harvest has mirrored the changes in cooperators and acreage in DMAP over the past few years (**Figure 19**).

The ability to collect and analyze DMAP data has been exceptional. Hundreds of thousands of deer are now part of the statewide DMAP database. In excess of 10,000 deer have annually been available for comparative purposes since 1983 (**Figure 19**). Analysis of these data over time captured the obvious trends and subtle changes in deer herd condition and structure. These trends and changes would have gone undocumented and possibly undetected without DMAP. Clubs and landowners participating in DMAP may or may not be representative of hunter goals and objectives on a statewide basis. Therefore, deer condition and herd structure on DMAP lands may not reflect herds on un-managed lands. However, a data source representing over 1.5 million acres is credible and can be used to examine trend data. The extensive statewide coverage of private lands DMAP at the county level can be seen in **Table 10**.

All DMAP data are evaluated based on soil region. These data are presented in **Tables 15-25**. These summaries allow individual DMAP cooperators to compare their data to soil region averages. In these tables are two sets of averages as well. The first is an average from 1991–1994 and the second is of the last five years (2004–2008). The 1991–1994 average is the four years prior to the 4-point law. Significant differences are obvious when comparing these averages.

A significant trend in DMAP data is obvious. The average age of all harvested bucks has increased from 2.1 years old in 1991 to 2.9 years old in 2008 (**Figure 21**). In addition, these older age class bucks are being produced and harvested on a declining acreage base (**Figure 22**). One possible reason for the drop in acres per 3½ year old bucks over the last couple of

Figure 17. DMAP Cooperators by County



Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP)

seasons is the more liberalized use of management buck tags which allowed DMAP properties to harvest sub-optimal adult bucks. In addition, the average spread, number of points, beam length, and circumference on all harvested bucks has increased proportionally.

The percentage of harvested bucks in the older age classes (4½+) has increased as well (**Figure 23**). This increase is the result of a shift in buck selection by hunters from younger age class bucks (1½ year olds) to older animals. Notice in the same graph, the corresponding decline in the percentage of younger age class bucks, which occur in the annual harvest. These are very evident when comparing the past 10 years to the 1991–1994 average. The slight increase in 1½ year old bucks since 2005 can be attributed to the more wide scale use of management buck tags as well.

Statewide condition data for harvested deer on WMAs, NWRs, and DMAP properties are presented in **Table 14**. This table presents trend data on various antler parameters such as spread, main beam length, circumference, and points. Other information, such as weight and lactation data are also provided in this table.

Soil region condition data for harvested deer on DMAP properties only are presented in **Tables 15-25**. These tables also present trend data on various antler parameters such as spread, length, circumference, and points. Other information, such as weight and lactation data are provided in these tables as well. WMA and NWR harvested deer are not included in the soil region tables to give a better representation of the deer herd on private lands participating in DMAP.

A comparison of WMAs/NWRs to DMAP properties reveals some interesting trends as well. On DMAP properties doe harvest has exceeded buck harvest since the early 1990's, but on WMAs/NWRs doe harvest has only exceeded buck harvest 4 out of the past 8 years. Since 2004, acres per deer harvested have declined on both DMAP and WMAs/NWRs. Since 2003 on WMAs/NWRs, it is taking fewer acres to produce 3½+ year old bucks (**Table 13**). This is most likey due to the implementation of minimum spread /main beam criteria on these WMAs/NWRs. Bucks harvested on DMAP properties on average were ½ a year older, main beams were 2½ inches longer, and inside spread was 2 inches wider than bucks harvested on WMAs/NWRs. One thing to remember about the harvest data from WMAs/NWRs is that these are minimum harvest numbers. Compliance with turning in data on some WMAs and NWRs is poor.

Michael Burkley harvested this buck with a bow and arrow in Jefferson County. The buck scored 190 5/8 gross / 164 3/8 net typical.

Trail cam photo of the buck harvested by Michael Burkley in Jefferson County.

Mississippi DMAP Data

Figure 18. DMAP Acreage & Cooperators

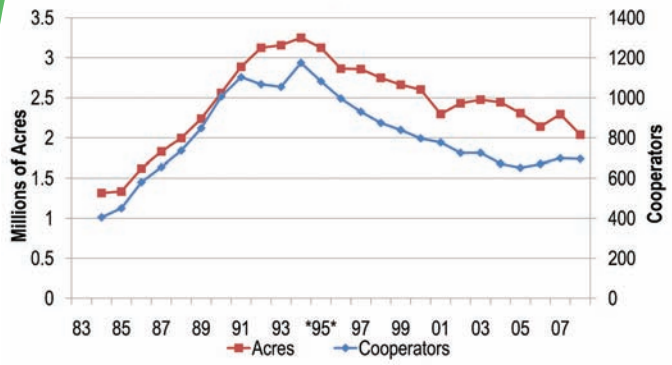


Figure 19. DMAP Deer Harvest

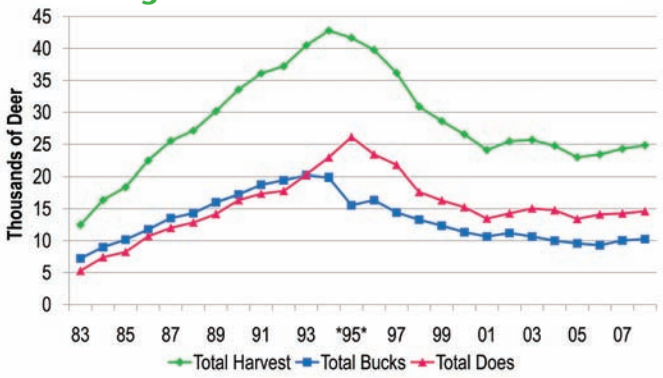


Figure 20. Acres/Deer Harvested

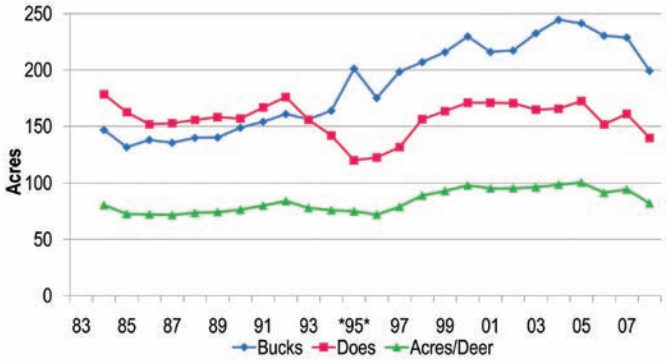


Figure 21. Average Age All Bucks

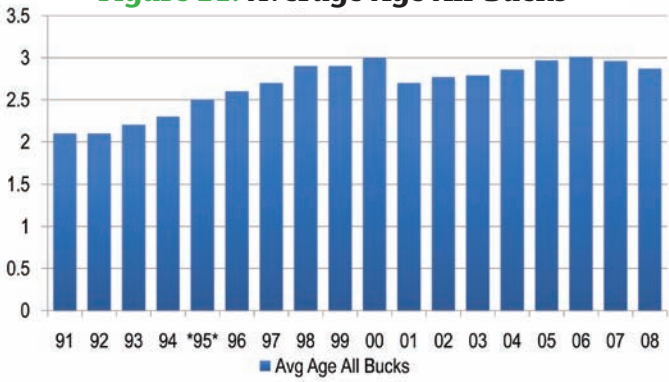


Figure 22. Acres/3.5+ Year Old Bucks

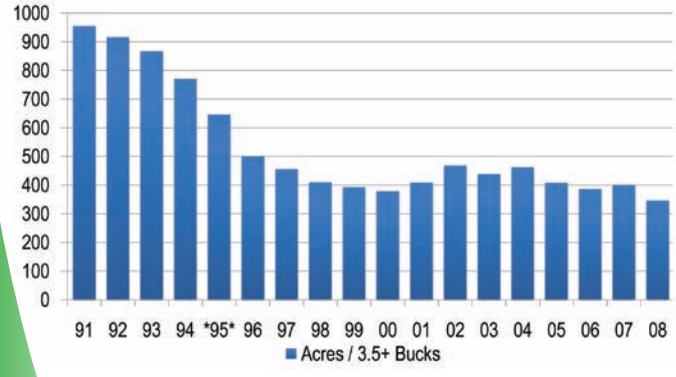


Figure 23. Percentage of Bucks by Age Class

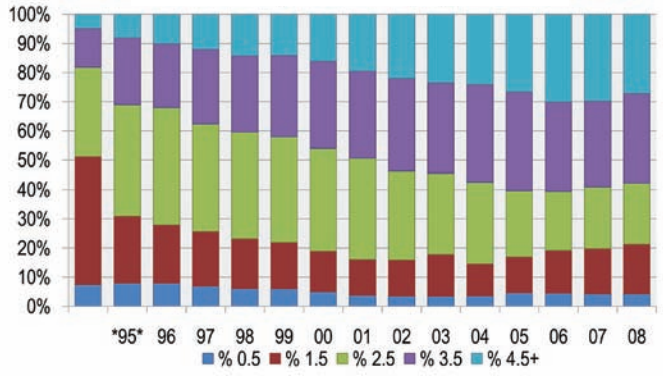


Table 10. DMAP Participation and Harvest by County During the 2008-2009 Season

County	Cooperators	Acres	Harvest		
			Bucks	Does	Total
Adams	19	57,933	302	510	812
Alcorn	0				
Amite	7	27,227	95	165	260
Attala	13	50,144	360	403	763
Benton	1	5,000	8	1	9
Bolivar	7	37,484	196	275	471
Calhoun	1	1,700	1	10	11
Carroll	14	24,050	187	344	531
Chickasaw	0				
Choctaw	3	4,481	21	22	43
Claiborne	52	90,706	704	1,105	1,809
Clarke	5	21,537	57	118	175
Clay	6	19,485	120	135	255
Coahoma	11	56,475	255	221	476
Copiah	10	25,646	111	220	331
Covington	0				
Desoto	1	5,000	15	10	25
Forrest	0				
Franklin	2	3,400	19	38	57
George	1	750	1	3	4
Greene	4	9,752	38	41	79
Grenada	5	16,685	94	244	338
Hancock	9	21,131	35	57	92
Harrison	1	1,400	0	0	0
Hinds	20	33,734	297	410	707
Holmes	19	33,422	169	372	541
Humphries	4	5,300	16	15	31
Issaquena	43	93,479	649	619	1,268
Itawamba	3	17,348	109	71	180
Jackson	3	7,002	23	30	53
Jasper	6	12,218	49	107	156
Jefferson	22	60,925	302	531	833
Jeff Davis	2	1,242	12	16	28
Jones	0				
Kemper	11	25,548	143	166	309
Lafayette	4	10,363	71	102	173
Lamar	3	7,988	22	23	45
Lauderdale	6	33,600	99	171	270
Lawrence	5	13,080	50	89	139
Leake	5	13,822	86	102	188
Lee	0				
Leflore	5	9,070	56	68	124
Lincoln	1	3,642	21	30	51
Lowndes	17	24,989	110	189	299
Madison	24	46,827	287	762	1,049
Marion	3	9,248	46	48	94
Marshall	1	2,190	9	6	15
Monroe	16	44,499	175	286	461
Montgomery	22	36,021	247	400	647
Neshoba	0				
Newton	3	7,078	48	69	117
Noxubee	17	47,171	301	471	772
Oktibbeha	3	4,250	12	33	45
Panola	4	6,650	30	126	156
Pearl River	7	21,417	93	75	168
Perry	1	1,778	5	7	12
Pike	0				
Pontotoc	0				
Prentiss	1	6,000	7	9	16
Quitman	1	7,100	0	0	0
Rankin	11	24,211	120	187	307
Scott	5	15,460	87	107	194
Sharkey	2	4,690	34	36	70
Simpson	3	14,000	42	54	96
Smith	2	9,467	47	30	77
Stone	5	8,757	45	36	81
Sunflower	1	1,585	5	0	5
Tallahatchie	3	4,815	12	35	47
Tate	0				
Tippah	4	16,248	68	160	228
Tishomingo	2	5,529	8	8	16
Tunica	3	9,264	29	76	105
Union	4	17,690	41	48	89
Walthall	1	5,600	34	25	59
Warren	91	150,864	1,188	1,536	2,724
Washington	9	34,634	203	276	479
Wayne	0				
Webster	3	10,227	55	115	170
Wilkinson	12	34,887	223	307	530
Winston	6	19,837	89	161	250
Yalobusha	2	7,350	26	67	93
Yazoo	25	47,756	389	649	1,038
TOTAL	648	1,569,858	8,908	13,238	22,146

Mississippi DMAP Data

Table 11. Harvest Summary of Bucks by Age Class

Season	Sample	0.5 Bucks		1.5 Bucks		2.5 Bucks		3.5 Bucks		4.5+ Bucks		Avg. Age All Bucks	Total 3.5+ Bucks	Acres/ 3.5+ Buck
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%			
1991	17,850	1,250	7.0	8,392	47.0	5,280	29.6	2,200	12.3	677	3.8	2.1	2,877	960
1992	17,631	1,410	8.0	8,025	45.5	5,154	29.2	2,255	12.8	831	4.7	2.1	3,086	847
1993	18,585	1,301	7.0	8,527	45.9	5,488	29.5	2,489	13.4	852	4.6	2.1	3,341	740
1994	19,128	1,530	8.0	7,063	36.9	6,529	34.1	3,020	15.8	1,045	5.5	2.2	4,065	685
1995	14,650	1,172	8.0	3,391	23.1	5,503	37.6	3,367	23.0	1,187	8.1	2.5	4,554	560
1996	16,350	1,308	8.0	3,246	19.9	6,489	39.7	3,601	22.0	1,697	10.4	2.3	5,298	500
1997	14,405	1,296	9.0	2,737	19.0	5,474	38.0	3,601	25.0	1,585	11.0	2.4	5,186	456
1998	13,278	1,062	8.0	2,257	17.0	4,913	37.0	3,452	26.0	1,859	14.0	2.5	5,311	410
1999	12,336	740	6.0	1,974	16.0	4,441	36.0	3,454	28.0	1,727	14.0	2.9	5,181	393
2000	11,329	566	5.0	1,586	14.0	3,965	35.0	3,399	30.0	1,813	16.0	3.0	5,211	379
2001	10,639	404	3.8	1,319	12.4	3,660	34.4	3,192	30.0	2,064	19.4	2.7	5,256	468
2002	11,258	394	3.5	1,396	12.4	3,411	30.3	3,580	31.8	2,466	21.9	2.8	6,046	438
2003	10,737	374	3.5	1,546	14.4	2,974	27.7	3,328	31.0	2,512	23.4	2.8	5,841	456
2004	10,100	362	3.6	1,121	11.1	2,818	27.9	3,373	33.4	2,424	24.0	2.9	5,797	463
2005	9,719	452	4.7	1,205	12.4	2,196	22.6	3,285	33.8	2,576	26.5	2.9	5,861	408
2006	10,246	460	4.5	1,506	14.7	2,070	20.2	3,125	30.5	3,074	30.0	3.0	6,199	387
2007	10,026	426	4.3	1,564	15.6	2,115	21.1	2,938	29.3	2,978	29.7	3.0	5,915	401
2008	10,234	438	4.3	1,750	17.1	2,129	20.8	3,142	30.7	2,763	27.0	2.9	5,905	346

1995 Four points or better' law initiated and bag limit changed from 5 bucks and 3 antlerless to 3 bucks and 5 antlerless with DMAP and FMAP participants exempt from the annual bag limit; 2 additional antlerless deer may be taken with achery equipment.

Table 12. Comparison of WMAs and National Wildlife Refuges vs. Private Lands DMAP

	Acres		Total Deer		Bucks		Does		Acres/Deer		Acres/Buck		Acres/Doe	
	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public
2001	1,651,465	672,467	21,362	2,934	9,162	1,571	12,200	1,363	77	229	180	428	135	493
2002	1,784,033	664,467	22,878	2,740	9,779	1,488	13,099	1,252	78	243	182	447	136	531
2003	1,819,587	684,967	23,401	2,431	9,442	1,278	13,959	1,153	78	282	193	536	130	594
2004	1,858,150	627,746	23,042	1,844	9,152	903	13,890	941	81	340	203	695	134	667
2005	1,731,207	691,346	21,552	2,295	8,875	1,140	12,677	1,155	80	301	195	606	137	599
2006	1,684,716	628,991	23,766	2,331	9,335	1,124	14,431	1,207	71	270	180	560	117	521
2007	1,764,699	691,071	23,198	2,832	9,258	1,582	13,940	1,250	76	244	191	437	127	553
2008	1,623,833	741,189	22,533	3,544	9,066	1,735	13,467	1,809	72	209	179	427	121	410

Table 13. Comparison of Bucks Harvested on WMAs and National Wildlife Refuges vs. Private Lands DMAP

	Average Age		Average Points		Average Length		Average Spread		Acres/3.5+	
	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public
2001	2.7	2.4	7.2	6.8	15.9	14.1	13.0	11.3	359	1,582
2002	2.8	2.5	7.3	6.8	16.3	14.2	13.2	11.4	346	1,359
2003	2.9	2.1	7.2	5.7	16.5	12.1	13.3	10.1	346	2,429
2004	2.9	2.6	7.2	7.1	16.4	15.1	13.4	12.6	361	2,299
2005	3.0	2.4	7.2	6.2	16.6	13.6	13.6	11.2	305	2,181
2006	3.1	2.4	7.1	6.3	16.5	14.0	13.5	11.6	298	1,634
2007	3.0	2.7	7.1	6.6	16.5	14.1	13.6	11.5	324	1,033
2008	2.9	2.6	7.0	6.4	16.2	14.2	13.5	11.8	308	1,060

Figure 24. Total Deer Harvest-- Private vs. Public

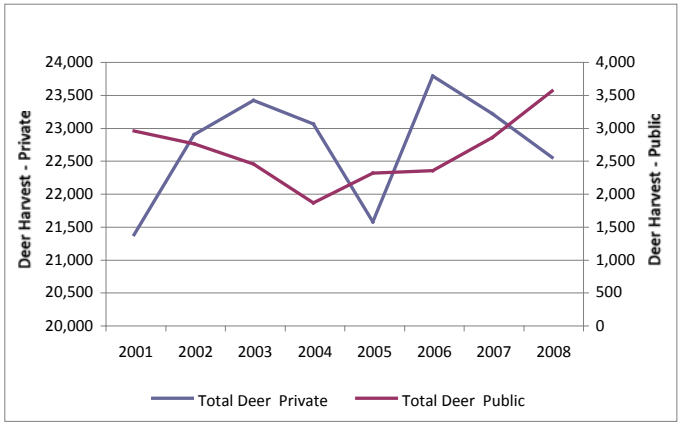


Figure 25. Acres/Deer Harvested-- Private vs. Public

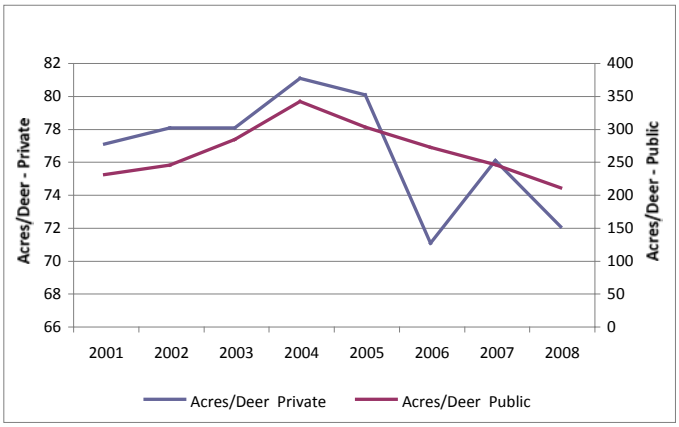


Figure 26. Acres/3.5+ Year Old Buck Harvested-- Private vs. Public

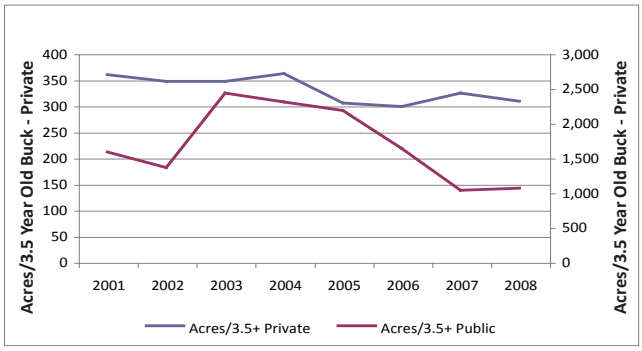


Figure 27. Average Age All Bucks-- Private vs. Public

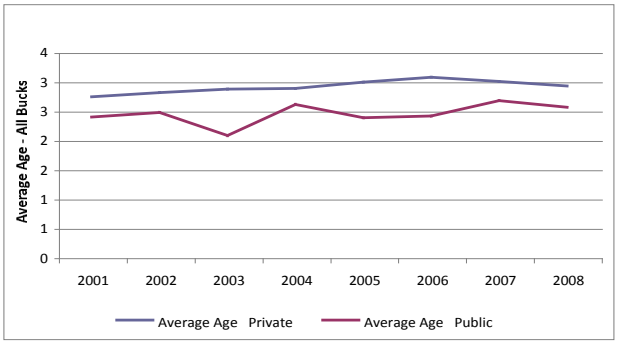


Table 14. Statewide Compiled Data (DMAP, NWR, WMA)

	Season										Average	
	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02	'01	'00	'99	'91-'94	'04-'08
Acres	2,365,022	2,455,770	2,313,707	2,422,553	2,485,896	2,504,554	2,448,500	2,323,932	2,602,586	2,662,032	3,105,186	2,408,590
Total Deer	26,077	26,030	26,097	23,847	24,886	25,832	25,618	24,296	26,557	28,624	39,138	25,387
Bucks	10,801	10,840	10,459	10,015	10,055	10,720	11,267	10,733	11,329	12,336	19,562	10,434
Does	15,276	15,190	15,638	13,832	14,831	15,112	14,351	13,563	15,228	16,288	19,576	14,953
Acres/Deer	91	94	89	102	100	97	96	96	98	93	79.5	95.2
Bucks	219	227	221	242	247	234	217	217	230	216	159	231.2
Does	155	162	148	175	168	166	171	171	171	163	160	161.6
Avg. Age ALL Bucks	2.9	3.0	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.7	3.0	2.9	2.2	2.9
Avg. Points ALL Bucks	6.9	7.0	7.0	7.1	7.2	7.1	7.3	7.2	6.7	6.6	4.8	7.0
Avg. Length ALL Bucks	15.9	16.2	16.3	16.4	16.4	16.0	16.0	15.7	14.6	14.2	10.4	16.2
Avg. Spread ALL Bucks	13.2	13.3	13.3	13.4	13.4	13.0	13.0	12.8	11.9	11.6	8.7	13.3
Acres/ 3.5+ Bucks	397	401	383	405	459	452	434	463	379	393	808	409
% 0.5 Yr. Bucks	4.3	4.3	4.5	4.7	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.8	5.0	6.0	7.5	4.3
Weight	63.8	67	66	73	66	71	75	66	64	63	63	67
% 1.5 Yr.	17	16	15	12	11	14	12	12	14	16	44	14
Weight	115	113	114	114	112	111	118	115	116	118	115	114
Points	3.0	2.7	3.0	3.0	3.4	3.6	4.5	4.1	4.4	4.5	3.2	3.0
Circumf.	2.2	2.0	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.2	2.2
Length	6.5	5.5	6.6	6.6	7.2	7.4	9.0	8.3	8.4	8.7	6.8	6.5
Spread	6.2	5.5	6.0	6.2	6.7	6.6	7.5	7.3	7.4	7.4	6.0	6.1
% 2.5 Yr.	21	21	20	23	28	28	30	34	35	36	31	23
Weight	150	148	148	149	149	148	150	145	147	149	148	149
Points	6.9	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.8	6.8	7.0	6.9	6.9	7.0	6.6	6.9
Circumf.	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.4
Length	14.7	14.7	14.7	14.6	14.5	14.4	14.7	14.3	14.4	14.5	14.0	14.6
Spread	12.2	12.0	12.0	11.9	12.0	11.7	11.9	11.6	11.7	11.9	11.4	12.0
% 3.5 Yr.	31	29	31	34	33	31	32	30	30	28	14	32
Weight	169	169	169	170	169	172	169	166	168	170	163	169
Points	7.8	7.8	7.8	7.7	7.7	7.8	7.8	7.8	7.9	7.9	7.5	7.8
Circumf.	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.9	4.0	4.0	3.9	4.0
Length	17.4	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.3	17.6	17.2	17.1	17.4	17.4	16.7	17.4
Spread	14.2	14.1	14.1	14.1	14.0	14.1	13.9	13.8	14.1	14.2	13.5	14.1
% 4.5+ Yr.	27	30	30	27	24	23	22	19	16	14	5	27
Weight	182	184	185	185	185	186	184	182	182	183	173	184
Points	8.3	8.4	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.5	8.1	8.3
Circumf.	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.4	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.5
Length	19.4	19.9	19.7	19.7	19.7	19.7	19.5	19.4	19.6	19.4	18.6	19.7
Spread	15.6	15.8	15.8	15.7	15.7	15.6	15.5	15.4	15.6	15.5	14.9	15.7
# 4.5 Yr.	1699	1846	1673	1627	1454	1508	1482	1247	1257	1183	589	1660
Weight	181	182	183	181	182	184	182	179	181	182	173	182
Points	8.2	8.3	8.2	8.3	8.2	8.2	8.3	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.1	8.2
Circumf.	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.4	4.4	4.2	4.4
Length	19	19.6	19.3	19.2	19.4	19.4	19.2	19.0	19.4	19.1	18.6	19.3
Spread	15.3	15.6	15.5	15.4	15.6	15.4	15.3	15.1	15.5	15.4	14.8	15.5

Table 14. continued

	Season										Average	
	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02	'01	'00	'99	'91-'94	'04-'08
# 5.5 Yr.	721	740	837	648	525	571	579	466	395	372	151	694
Weight	182	186	186	189	189	190	186	185	186	185	174	186
Points	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.6	8.4	8.5	8.5	8.4	8.6	7.9	8.4
Circumf.	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.5	4.6	4.6	4.4	4.6
Length	19.8	20.1	19.9	20.4	20.2	20.2	20.0	20.1	19.9	20.1	18.9	20.1
Spread	15.8	16.0	15.9	16.1	16.0	15.9	15.9	15.9	15.9	15.8	15.1	16.0
# 6.5 Yr.	270	351	328	235	193	198	146	159	125	112	44	275
Weight	188	188	191	192	192	191	191	187	186	187	176	190
Points	8.5	8.5	8.3	8.5	8.1	8.4	8.4	8.3	8.6	8.5	8.3	8.4
Circumf.	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.5	4.7
Length	20.3	20.7	21.0	20.7	20.4	20.4	20.6	20.6	20.4	19.9	19.4	20.6
Spread	16.3	16.4	16.4	16.4	16.1	15.8	16.4	16.3	16.1	16.0	15.2	16.3
# 7.5 Yr.	60	80	98	77	64	70	45	63	39	48	18	76
Weight	185	189	192	192	189	190	192	183	187	189	168	189
Points	8.1	8.6	8.6	8.3	8.7	8.3	8.6	9.0	8.1	8.6	7.4	8.5
Circumf.	4.6	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.8	4.7	4.7	4.8	4.9	4.4	4.7
Length	20.0	21.3	21.0	20.6	20.8	20.6	20.2	20.0	20.6	19.8	18.3	20.7
Spread	16.1	16.5	16.3	16.0	16.6	16.6	15.3	15.8	16.2	15.8	15.0	16.3
# 8.5+ Yr.	45	63	58	46	27	34	44	36	29	23	11	48
Weight	182	189	186	195	183	185	180	190	183	179	171	187
Points	7.9	8.3	7.7	7.8	8.0	7.8	8.0	8.4	7.4	9.1	7.5	7.9
Circumf.	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.7	4.6	4.7	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.6
Length	19.6	20.8	20.8	19.8	18.6	19.2	20.1	19.5	19.6	20.4	18.5	19.9
Spread	15.9	16.6	16.3	15.5	15.0	15.1	15.7	15.2	16.5	16.4	14.4	15.9
Doe Age Classes												
% 0.5 Yr.	7	7	7	7	7	6	7	5	7	10	13	7
% 1.5 Yr.	23	24	20	20	22	23	22	23	23	22	59	22
% 2.5 Yr.	22	23	21	22	25	23	23	26	23	24	66	22
% 3.5+ Yr.	48	47	52	50	47	48	48	46	47	45	70	49
Doe Weights												
0.5 Yr.	61	67	64	65	64	67	66	64	63	62	11	64
1.5 Yr.	98	98	98	97	96	96	99	97	96	96	23	97
2.5 Yr.	110	110	109	111	109	108	110	108	107	108	24	110
3.5+ Yr.	115	117	116	117	115	116	116	117	114	115	42	116
% Doe Lactation												
1.5 Yr.	10	11	11	13	11	10	12	10	12	13	60	11
2.5 Yr.	47	59	59	57	56	56	58	58	61	64	96	56
2.5+ Yr.	58	68	68	66	63	64	65	66	68	71	108	64
3.5+ Yr.	63	72	71	70	67	68	69	70	72	75	115	69
All Antlerless H'vst												
% 0.5 Yr. Bk. Fawns	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	4	7	3
% 0.5 Yr. Doe Fawns	7	7	7	7	7	6	6	5	7	9	10	7
% 1.5 Yr. Does	22	23	20	20	21	23	21	23	22	21	22	21
% 2.5 Yr. Does	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	23	22	22
% 3.5+ Yr. Does	46	46	51	49	46	47	47	44	46	43	39	47

Mississippi Soil Resource Areas

Figure 28

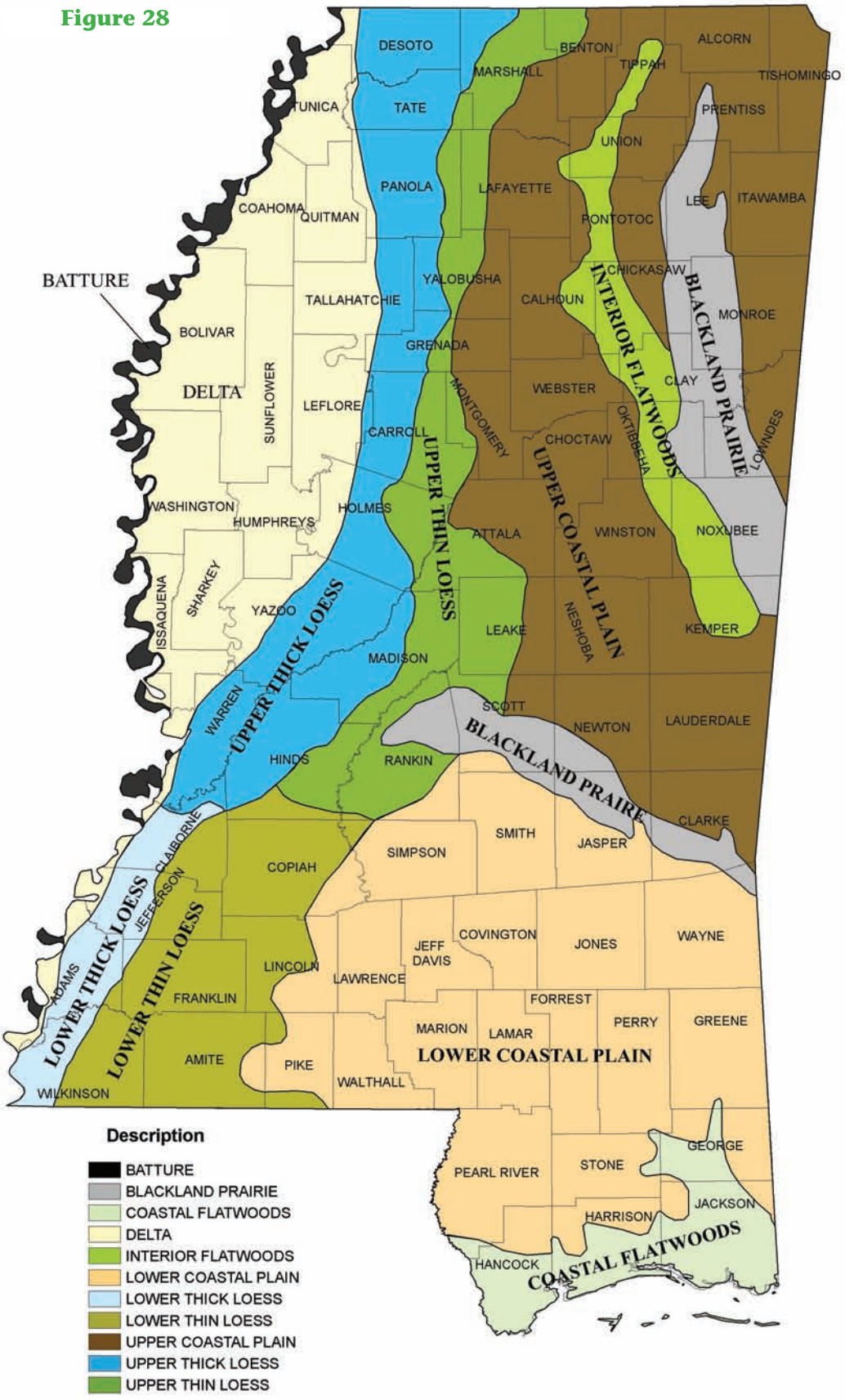


Table 15. Batture Soil Resource Area Summary of DMAP Data

	Season										Average	
	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02	'01	'00	'99	'91-'94	'04-'08
Acres	262,267	320,090	258,907	264,074	253,078	247,359	251,762	230,792	178,239	171,795	172,527	271,808
Total Deer	3,712	5,284	4,689	4,524	4,327	4,849	4,835	4,425	3,191	2,950	2,906	4,510
Bucks	1,792	2,140	1,909	1,854	1,676	1,963	1,996	1,681	1,300	1,308	1,449	1,876
Does	1,920	3,144	2,780	2,670	2,651	2,886	2,839	2,744	1,891	1,642	1,457	2,634
Acres/Deer	71	61	55	58	58	51	52	52	56	58	60	60
Bucks	146	150	136	142	151	126	126	137	137	131	119	145
3.5+ Bucks	183	190	165	181	205	174	193	225	232	239	693	185
Does	137	102	93	99	95	86	89	84	94	105	120	103
Avg. Age ALL Bucks	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.2	3.1	3.3	3.2	2.4	3.5
% 0.5 Yr. Bucks	1	4	4	3	3	4	3	4	7	5	6	2.8
Weight	67	71	69	68	71	84	73	65	70	70	73	69.4
% 1.5 Yr.	8	8	6	6	5	5	5	9	7	6	28	7
Weight	118	124	124	115	116	112	119	114	130	129	134	120
Points	2.2	2.6	2.5	2.2	2.4	2.5	3.0	2.9	4.4	4.4	3.9	2.4
Circumf.	2.1	2.1	2.3	2.2	2.4	2.0	2.3	2.5	2.9	2.8	2.4	2.2
Length	5.7	5.7	6.7	5.1	5.7	5.4	5.5	6.9	9.2	9.5	8.2	5.8
Spread	6	5.7	6.0	5.4	6.0	5.7	6.1	7.1	8.7	8.6	7.1	5.9
% 2.5 Yr.	17	13	11	15	14	14	21	24	27	34	49	14
Weight	165	170	166	160	167	167	166	163	168	167	169	165
Points	7.3	7.3	7.4	7.3	7.4	7.8	7.7	7.7	7.7	7.8	7.5	7.3
Circumf.	3.7	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.5	3.7
Length	16.2	16.9	17.0	16.4	17.1	16.8	16.5	16.3	16.7	16.8	15.5	16.7
Spread	13.6	13.9	13.9	13.4	14.0	13.8	13.6	13.4	13.7	13.7	13.0	13.8
% 3.5 Yr.	34	31	33	35	34	39	38	37	35	36	14	33
Weight	185	188	183	184	185	188	185	183	188	189	187	185
Points	8.2	8.1	8.0	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.5	8.5	8.2	8.1
Circumf.	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.2
Length	19	19.3	19.4	19.7	19.6	19.6	19.1	19.0	19.9	19.9	18.7	19.4
Spread	15.6	15.7	15.5	15.7	15.8	15.6	15.3	15.4	16.2	16.1	15.4	15.7
% 4.5+ Yr.	40	45	46	42	44	38	33	27	24	19	4	43
Weight	192	197	193	192	193	196	194	192	202	197	198	194
Points	8.6	8.5	8.3	8.5	8.5	8.6	8.5	8.4	8.5	8.6	8.5	8.5
Circumf.	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.6
Length	20.4	21.2	20.9	21.1	20.9	20.9	20.6	20.8	21.4	20.9	20.8	20.9
Spread	16.5	17.0	16.6	16.6	16.8	16.6	16.3	16.4	17.1	17.0	16.8	16.7
% Doe Lactation												
1.5 Yr.	5	10	11	6	6	11	6	7	10	11	14	8
2.5 Yr.	31	69	64	52	59	55	47	57	63	70	58	55
3.5+ Yr.	49	77	77	67	69	65	59	65	77	75	68	68
Doe Age Classes												
% 0.5 Yr.	3	8	7	6	6	7	6	5	9	11	11	6
% 1.5 Yr.	29	27	20	19	21	18	21	24	24	18	20	23
% 2.5 Yr.	28	24	23	27	25	27	31	30	25	28	30	25
% 3.5+ Yr.	40	41	51	49	48	47	42	41	42	43	39	46
Doe Weights												
0.5 Yr.	64	72	68	68	66	68	69	64	67	68	68	68
1.5 Yr.	98	104	104	99	98	101	100	98	104	106	108	101
2.5 Yr.	113	117	114	114	112	112	114	113	115	114	121	114
3.5+ Yr.	122	124	121	121	119	122	123	121	123	124	126	121

Table 16. Delta Soil Resource Area Summary of DMAP Data

	Season										Average	
	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02	'01	'00	'99	'91-'94	'04-'08
Acres	326,662	267,536	287,435	287,166	299,682	271,625	264,979	231,185	178,239	269,772	254,153	293,696
Total Deer	2,412	2,471	2,774	2,625	2,704	2,732	2,772	2,495	3,476	3,503	3,909	2,597
Bucks	1,152	1,016	1,056	1,112	1,071	1,135	1,261	1,038	1,360	1,469	1,830	1,081
Does	1,260	1,455	1,718	1,513	1,633	1,597	1,511	1,457	2,116	2,034	1,457	1,516
Acres/Deer	135	108	104	109	111	99	96	93	84	77	66	113
Bucks	284	263	272	258	280	239	210	223	215	184	140	271
3.5+ Bucks	503	448	462	359	490	419	427	463	243	375	962	452
Does	259	184	167	190	184	170	175	159	138	133	124	194
Avg. Age ALL Bucks	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.2	3.1	3.0	3.0	2.9	3.1	3.0	2.1	3.0
% 0.5 Yr. Bucks	2	4	6	3	4	4	3	6	5	5	8	3.7
Weight	79	76	74	76	74	69	75	67	69	73	70	75.7
% 1.5 Yr.	22	21	19	8	6	7	6	8	9	12	41	15
Weight	127	126	125	124	128	126	133	123	134	135	134	126
Points	2.7	2.4	2.3	2.4	3.4	3.4	4.2	3.7	4.1	5.0	3.5	2.6
Circumf.	2.2	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.6	2.3	2.4	2.7	2.4	2.2
Length	6.0	5.0	5.0	5.3	7.1	8.3	8.9	6.4	8.1	9.2	7.3	5.7
Spread	6.0	5.0	4.9	5.5	7.0	7.4	8.3	7.8	7.8	7.9	6.4	5.7
% 2.5 Yr.	18	16	14	18	26	24	30	30	32	34	36	18
Weight	172	169	171	171	174	175	170	165	167	168	169	171
Points	7.2	7.4	7.3	7.3	7.5	7.7	7.3	7.4	7.4	7.8	7.3	7.3
Circumf.	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.7
Length	15.8	16.6	16.5	16.5	16.9	16.6	15.7	15.6	15.6	15.8	15.1	16.4
Spread	13.4	14.0	13.9	13.5	14.2	13.6	13.0	13.0	13.1	13.2	12.8	13.8
% 3.5 Yr.	28	27	31	38	37	38	37	33	36	33	12	32
Weight	192	194	191	190	191	191	187	184	191	191	187	191
Points	8.2	8.2	8.4	8.1	8.3	8.2	7.9	8.1	8.2	8.2	8.1	8.2
Circumf.	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.0	4.0	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.3
Length	18.7	19.5	19.3	18.9	19.0	18.8	18.2	18.3	19.0	18.6	18.0	19.1
Spread	15.6	16.0	15.9	15.5	15.7	15.2	14.8	14.7	15.6	15.5	14.9	15.7
% 4.5+ Yr.	30	32	30	33	28	27	24	24	18	16	4	31
Weight	204	205	201	200	199	200	197	199	204	202	197	202
Points	8.3	8.4	8.6	8.6	8.5	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.5	8.8	8.4	8.5
Circumf.	4.6	4.7	4.5	4.7	4.6	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.6	4.6	4.4	4.6
Length	20.2	20.9	20.5	20.5	20.7	20.1	19.8	19.9	21.0	20.8	19.5	20.6
Spread	16.4	17.1	16.6	16.6	16.6	15.9	16.2	15.9	17.0	16.6	15.8	16.7
% Doe Lactation												
1.5 Yr.	8	16	16	16	13	11	12	14	20	18	16	14
2.5 Yr.	41	64	61	59	58	59	60	57	68	70	58	57
3.5+ Yr.	52	71	71	68	67	68	69	70	76	78	71	66
Doe Age Classes												
% 0.5 Yr.	6	7	10	9	9	8	7	7	8	10	12	8
% 1.5 Yr.	27	22	21	20	22	25	21	22	22	20	21	22
% 2.5 Yr.	26	26	21	24	27	24	26	26	23	23	27	25
% 3.5+ Yr.	41	45	48	48	43	43	46	45	47	47	41	45
Doe Weights												
0.5 Yr.	66	70	70	69	67	72	73	70	70	69	66	68
1.5 Yr.	106	108	109	105	104	106	107	103	107	107	109	106
2.5 Yr.	119	119	119	119	117	120	120	116	117	117	121	119
3.5+ Yr.	128	129	127	126	124	127	126	125	124	123	129	127

Table 17. Upper Thick Loess Soil Resource Area Summary of DMAP Data

	Season										Average	
	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02	'01	'00	'99	'91-'94	'04-'08
Acres	257,372	265,719	296,625	293,330	254,975	256,886	240,703	240,941	196,733	234,944	210,775	273,604
Total Deer	5,039	4,486	5,371	4,636	4,172	4,075	3,572	3,739	2,909	3,722	2,732	4,741
Bucks	1,718	1,678	1,981	1,794	1,563	1,485	1,398	1,412	1,142	1,509	1,443	1,747
Does	3,321	2,808	3,390	2,842	2,609	2,590	2,174	2,327	1,767	2,213	1,457	2,994
Acres/Deer	51	59	55	63	61	63	67	64	68	63	78	58
Bucks	150	158	150	164	163	173	172	171	172	155	146	157
3.5+ Bucks	279	287	265	292	287	296	315	347	392	399	1,179	282
Does	77	95	88	103	98	99	111	104	111	106	169	91
Avg. Age ALL Bucks	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.2	2.4	2.8
% 0.5 Yr. Bucks	7	6	6	6	4	5	5	6	6	8	7	5.7
Weight	64	66	67	68	69	74	69	70	69	69	72	66.8
% 1.5 Yr.	22	21	17	16	15	12	9	11	12	17	53	18
Weight	122	115	115	118	114	112	124	120	121	128	132	117
Points	2.5	2.3	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.8	4.4	3.5	4.2	4.4	3.9	2.5
Circumf.	2.2	2.0	2.0	2.1	2.0	2.2	2.5	2.2	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.1
Length	5.8	4.5	5.5	5.7	5.7	5.9	8.4	7.4	8.2	8.8	8.1	5.5
Spread	5.8	4.9	5.0	5.5	5.4	5.9	7.4	7.2	7.6	7.7	6.9	5.3
% 2.5 Yr.	17	17	19	23	25	23	29	32	38	36	28	20
Weight	157	151	155	156	154	154	160	154	156	161	163	155
Points	6.9	6.9	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.2	7.4	7.2	7.2	7.3	7.0	6.9
Circumf.	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.7	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5
Length	15.0	14.8	15.1	15.1	14.7	15.0	15.2	14.7	14.8	15.1	14.9	14.9
Spread	12.4	12.2	12.4	12.4	12.4	12.6	12.6	12.2	12.2	12.6	12.5	12.4
% 3.5 Yr.	29	28	28	33	34	34	34	31	31	28	11	30
Weight	175	175	176	178	176	178	176	173	179	186	190	176
Points	7.9	7.8	7.9	7.9	7.8	8.0	8.0	7.9	8.2	8.3	8.1	7.9
Circumf.	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.3	4.3	4.1
Length	17.9	17.9	18.2	18.1	17.9	18.1	17.6	17.4	17.9	18.2	18.6	18.0
Spread	14.6	14.6	14.7	14.7	14.4	14.7	14.4	14.2	14.5	14.9	15.3	14.6
% 4.5+ Yr.	25	28	29	22	23	26	23	20	13	11	2	26
Weight	186	189	190	191	189	192	193	188	193	201	211	189
Points	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.5	8.2	8.2	8.3	8.3	8.6	8.8	8.6	8.3
Circumf.	4.7	4.6	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.6	4.7	4.5	4.6	4.8	5.0	4.6
Length	19.7	20.1	20.1	19.9	19.8	19.9	19.9	19.6	20.3	20.4	21.1	19.9
Spread	15.9	15.9	16.0	16.0	15.9	15.8	16.0	15.8	16.1	16.3	17.1	16.0
% Doe Lactation												
1.5 Yr.	13	9	12	13	11	9	13	8	11	13	12	12
2.5 Yr.	55	56	58	59	57	54	66	61	64	64	60	57
3.5+ Yr.	67	73	71	73	68	66	70	70	72	77	66	70
Doe Age Classes												
% 0.5 Yr.	7	6	6	7	7	7	7	6	6	10	12	7
% 1.5 Yr.	22	23	19	19	20	22	20	21	24	22	23	21
% 2.5 Yr.	22	22	21	22	23	20	22	22	22	25	25	22
% 3.5+ Yr.	49	50	54	52	50	51	51	51	48	43	41	51
Doe Weights												
0.5 Yr.	62	69	65	65	65	67	65	66	64	66	66	65
1.5 Yr.	105	101	101	102	100	99	106	102	103	104	107	102
2.5 Yr.	115	115	113	115	113	113	115	113	115	117	120	114
3.5+ Yr.	122	122	120	122	120	121	122	123	122	125	128	121

Table 18. Lower Thick Loess Soil Resource Area Summary of DMAP Data

	Season										Average	
	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02	'01	'00	'99	'91-'94	'04-'08
Acres	148,390	146,792	144,025	139,886	146,916	159,976	153,658	148,853	166,906	193,570	233,912	145,202
Total Deer	2,695	2,730	2,699	2,364	2,608	2,875	2,864	2,731	3,022	3,515	6,077	2,619
Bucks	1,033	1,026	1,030	1,054	1,102	1,117	1,218	1,239	1,252	1,407	2,776	1,049
Does	1,662	1,704	1,669	1,310	1,506	1,758	1,646	1,492	1,730	2,108	1,457	1,570
Acres/Deer	55	54	53	59	56	56	54	55	55	55	39	55
Bucks	144	143	140	133	133	143	126	120	129	138	84	138
3.5+ Bucks	215	239	223	228	206	255	218	244	284	313	417	222
Does	89	86	86	107	98	91	93	100	96	92	73	92
Avg. Age ALL Bucks	3.2	3.1	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.0	3.0	2.8	3.0	3.2	2.4	3.2
% 0.5 Yr. Bucks	3	4	4	6	3	2	3	3	5	7	7	3.7
Weight	60	62	61	109	63	64	67	70	66	61	63	71.1
% 1.5 Yr.	12	11	9	9	9	10	9	13	14	14	34	10
Weight	107	106	113	111	107	112	121	113	111	119	117	109
Points	2.7	2.6	2.7	3.1	3.1	3.5	4.4	3.6	3.6	3.8	3.1	2.8
Circumf.	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.2	2.4	2.6	2.4	2.2	2.4	2.2	2.1
Length	4.5	4.2	7.0	5.9	6.5	7.3	9.1	7.8	6.0	7.0	6.5	5.6
Spread	5.7	5.4	6.6	6.1	6.2	6.8	7.8	7.1	6.3	6.7	6.0	6.0
% 2.5 Yr.	17	21	20	19	24	31	28	31	34	35	38	20
Weight	144	147	147	148	145	152	149	148	150	149	151	146
Points	6.9	7.0	7.0	7.2	6.8	7.2	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.0	6.9	7.0
Circumf.	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.3	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.5
Length	14.3	14.7	14.4	14.8	14.0	14.5	14.6	14.1	14.3	14.2	14.3	14.4
Spread	11.9	12.2	11.7	12.0	11.8	11.9	11.9	11.2	11.6	11.6	11.8	11.9
% 3.5 Yr.	32	31	29	34	35	27	31	30	27	26	16	32
Weight	163	164	166	165	165	169	168	164	170	168	169	165
Points	7.8	7.8	7.7	7.7	7.8	7.9	8.0	7.7	8.0	7.9	7.9	7.8
Circumf.	4.2	4.0	4.3	4.0	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.1
Length	17.1	17.4	17.5	17.2	17.2	17.3	17.1	16.8	17.3	17.2	17.1	17.3
Spread	13.9	13.9	14.0	14.0	13.6	13.8	13.7	13.6	14.0	13.7	13.8	13.9
% 4.5+ Yr.	36	33	39	32	30	31	29	24	20	18	5	34
Weight	175	178	181	181	183	185	184	183	184	186	182	180
Points	8.2	8.5	8.4	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.7	8.4	8.6	8.5	8.4	8.4
Circumf.	4.4	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.4	4.6	4.7	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.5
Length	18.8	19.6	19.4	19.3	19.3	20.0	19.6	19.2	19.9	19.5	19.5	19.3
Spread	14.9	15.3	15.4	15.2	15.3	15.4	15.5	15.4	15.6	15.5	15.4	15.2
% Doe Lactation												
1.5 Yr.	8	9	9	9	7	6	12	9	8	11	9	9
2.5 Yr.	48	59	55	61	49	59	65	58	62	62	60	55
3.5+ Yr.	64	73	74	76	65	73	75	74	72	78	72	70
Doe Age Classes												
% 0.5 Yr.	6	6	6	8	7	5	4	4	7	9	10	7
% 1.5 Yr.	21	24	21	20	24	26	23	24	24	21	24	22
% 2.5 Yr.	21	22	19	21	22	20	20	22	23	19	25	21
% 3.5+ Yr.	52	48	54	51	48	50	53	50	48	51	42	51
Doe Weights												
0.5 Yr.	61	63	64	67	61	64	67	66	63	61	60	63
1.5 Yr.	93	93	98	97	94	96	101	98	96	96	97	95
2.5 Yr.	108	110	110	110	110	111	110	111	112	110	111	109
3.5+ Yr.	114	113	116	118	116	117	116	117	117	116	118	116

Table 19. Upper Thin Loess Soil Resource Area Summary of DMAP Data

	Season										Average	
	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02	'01	'00	'99	'91-'94	'04-'08
Acres	118,371	140,064	115,927	99,511	169,948	172,989	182,097	166,790	181,754	187,806	221,531	128,764
Total Deer	1,961	1,688	1,732	1,382	1,966	1,919	1,921	1,787	2,020	2,459	3,045	1,746
Bucks	763	713	659	575	873	836	933	879	999	1,004	1,656	717
Does	1,198	975	1,073	807	1,093	1,083	988	908	1,021	1,455	1,457	1,029
Acres/Deer	60	83	67	72	86	90	95	93	90	76	73	74
Bucks	155	196	176	173	195	207	195	190	182	187	134	179
3.5+ Bucks	325	411	343	263	435	460	514	417	520	567	1,365	355
Does	99	144	108	123	155	160	184	184	178	129	163	125
Avg. Age ALL Bucks	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.6	3.2	3.2	2.4	2.6
% 0.5 Yr. Bucks	7	6	5	6	4	4	7	4	4	6	7	5.5
Weight	64	66	61	66	62	66	99	66	58	62	63	64.1
% 1.5 Yr.	22	21	15	19	15	22	24	16	15	16	52	18
Weight	113	107	107	116	115	117	121	117	116	118	112	111
Points	3.1	2.6	3.0	3.5	3.8	4.1	4.6	4.1	4.2	4.3	3.2	3.2
Circumf.	2.1	1.9	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.3	2.5	2.3	2.2	2.2
Length	6.6	4.9	6.0	7.3	7.3	8.3	9.2	7.9	8.5	8.3	6.7	6.4
Spread	6.3	5.0	6.1	7.0	6.9	7.1	7.7	7.1	7.2	7.1	5.8	6.2
% 2.5 Yr.	21	23	25	27	34	27	31	35	47	45	31	26
Weight	146	144	141	144	143	147	147	147	142	145	144	144
Points	6.6	6.6	7.0	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.7	6.7	6.6	6.8	6.5	6.6
Circumf.	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.4
Length	14.8	14.1	14.3	13.9	13.7	13.9	14.0	14.0	13.8	14.4	13.6	14.1
Spread	12.1	11.1	11.6	11.1	11.1	11.4	11.4	11.7	11.3	11.7	11.0	11.4
% 3.5 Yr.	30	29	30	33	35	30	24	29	27	26	9	31
Weight	166	160	155	158	156	158	159	154	158	166	164	159
Points	7.3	7.5	7.4	7.2	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.2	7.8	7.9	7.9	7.3
Circumf.	4.1	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.9	3.7	4.0	4.1	4.1	3.9
Length	16.7	16.2	16.1	15.9	15.7	15.8	16.2	15.5	16.7	17.3	17.3	16.1
Spread	13.6	12.9	12.7	13.0	12.7	12.9	13.3	12.5	13.3	14.0	14.0	13.0
% 4.5+ Yr.	20	22	25	15	13	17	14	17	8	7	2	19
Weight	170	172	168	168	170	172	171	166	171	171	174	170
Points	8.3	8.1	8.0	7.8	7.8	7.9	8.1	7.8	8.1	8.4	8.4	8.0
Circumf.	4.5	4.4	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.4
Length	18.8	18.4	18.0	18.0	18.4	18.0	18.3	17.8	18.7	19.0	19.3	18.3
Spread	15.2	14.6	14.5	14.3	14.4	14.3	14.6	14.2	15.0	15.2	15.4	14.6
% Doe Lactation												
1.5 Yr.	15	9	11	23	18	10	18	11	10	13	9	15
2.5 Yr.	51	57	54	61	54	54	63	52	59	59	54	55
3.5+ Yr.	65	69	65	61	70	70	71	66	67	70	65	66
Doe Age Classes												
% 0.5 Yr.	9	8	9	8	6	10	11	7	5	11	12	8
% 1.5 Yr.	22	23	22	21	23	26	25	25	26	23	24	22
% 2.5 Yr.	22	20	17	23	24	19	20	24	26	28	25	21
% 3.5+ Yr.	46	49	53	48	48	45	45	44	43	38	39	49
Doe Weights												
0.5 Yr.	59	62	60	62	61	72	74	66	63	63	60	61
1.5 Yr.	96	92	90	95	92	96	98	96	89	92	93	93
2.5 Yr.	105	105	103	109	106	104	106	107	102	102	104	106
3.5+ Yr.	111	112	110	109	111	112	112	112	109	110	111	111

Table 20. Lower Thin Loess Soil Resource Area Summary of DMAP Data

	Season										Average	
	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02	'01	'00	'99	'91-'94	'04-'08
Acres	138,086	136,602	103,713	134,023	181,458	174,977	182,708	173,908	223,985	230,662	214,591	138,776
Total Deer	1,514	1,609	1,552	1,405	2,243	2,515	2,336	2,186	2,776	3,426	3,892	1,665
Bucks	536	612	522	531	840	919	925	840	1,043	1,157	1,705	608
Does	978	997	1,030	874	1,403	1,596	1,411	1,346	1,733	2,269	1,457	1,056
Acres/Deer	91	85	67	95	81	70	78	80	81	67	55	83
Bucks	258	223	199	252	216	190	198	207	216	199	126	228
3.5+ Bucks	486	461	340	303	359	394	380	424	430	391	578	390
Does	141	137	101	153	129	110	129	129	130	102	99	131
Avg. Age ALL Bucks	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.0	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8	3.2	3.2	2.4	3.0
% 0.5 Yr. Bucks	6	5	5	4	2	2	2	2	4	8	9	4.4
Weight	64	66	66	69	69	74	131	71	61	60	62	66.7
% 1.5 Yr.	12	14	15	11	10	15	13	12	11	13	39	12
Weight	112	107	110	116	109	115	123	121	115	115	110	111
Points	2.9	2.6	2.9	3.7	3.0	3.8	4.4	4.0	3.8	4.2	2.8	3.0
Circumf.	2.3	1.8	2.1	2.3	1.8	2.4	2.6	2.5	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.0
Length	6.2	4.8	5.4	7.6	6.5	7.7	9.0	7.7	7.4	8.0	5.8	6.1
Spread	5.7	5.3	5.8	7.0	7.7	7.1	7.7	6.9	6.8	6.8	5.6	6.3
% 2.5 Yr.	21	26	19	21	24	28	29	33	35	28	30	22
Weight	144	146	150	148	144	149	151	143	144	145	142	147
Points	6.6	6.7	7.1	6.6	6.6	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.9	6.8	6.3	6.7
Circumf.	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3
Length	13.9	14.2	14.7	14.1	13.5	13.8	14.1	13.9	14.1	13.7	13.6	14.1
Spread	11.4	11.5	11.6	11.5	11.0	10.9	11.3	10.9	11.3	11.1	10.7	11.4
% 3.5 Yr.	32	28	29	38	38	33	31	30	28	27	16	33
Weight	165	167	166	164	162	168	167	164	163	163	163	165
Points	7.6	7.6	7.3	7.3	7.5	7.6	7.7	7.7	7.5	7.6	7.5	7.4
Circumf.	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.9	3.7	4.0	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.9
Length	17.0	17.2	16.8	16.2	16.3	16.8	17.1	16.5	17.0	16.6	16.7	16.7
Spread	13.7	13.6	13.2	12.9	13.3	13.4	13.6	13.3	13.5	13.4	13.3	13.3
% 4.5+ Yr.	29	27	33	26	26	23	26	24	22	24	7	28
Weight	177	178	181	177	179	181	182	180	176	177	176	178
Points	8.0	8.2	8.1	8.2	8.1	8.3	8.3	8.2	8.2	8.3	8.3	8.1
Circumf.	4.4	4.5	4.3	4.5	4.3	4.5	4.5	4.4	4.3	4.5	4.4	4.4
Length	19.1	19.8	18.8	18.7	18.7	19.1	19.2	19.4	18.9	18.9	19.2	19.0
Spread	15.1	15.3	15.1	14.7	14.8	14.9	14.9	15.1	15.0	14.9	15.0	15.0
% Doe Lactation												
1.5 Yr.	16	13	10	9	11	10	12	14	9	10	11	12
2.5 Yr.	54	63	66	62	64	61	61	63	60	62	61	62
3.5+ Yr.	71	75	74	74	72	74	77	74	74	77	75	73
Doe Age Classes												
% 0.5 Yr.	8	7	7	7	6	4	6	3	7	9	10	7
% 1.5 Yr.	21	22	19	21	25	25	25	25	24	22	23	22
% 2.5 Yr.	22	23	17	17	19	20	20	23	23	22	24	20
% 3.5+ Yr.	49	47	57	55	50	51	50	49	46	47	43	52
Doe Weights												
0.5 Yr.	64	69	65	67	64	64	73	70	61	59	59	66
1.5 Yr.	98	96	97	99	96	98	101	99	95	95	94	97
2.5 Yr.	109	110	107	110	107	109	110	108	107	104	107	109
3.5+ Yr.	116	116	116	115	115	115	116	116	114	113	115	115

Table 21. Black Prairie Soil Resource Area Summary of DMAP Data

	Season										Average	
	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02	'01	'00	'99	'91-'94	'04-'08
Acres	139,874	130,197	144,996	143,406	175,040	164,342	167,715	134,003	142,720	155,976	156,927	146,703
Total Deer	1,225	1,076	851	907	1,105	1,162	1,261	1,033	1,246	1,328	1,994	1,033
Bucks	518	506	361	382	444	518	585	486	540	629	857	442
Does	707	570	490	525	661	644	676	547	706	699	1,457	591
Acres/Deer	114	121	170	158	158	141	133	130	115	117	79	142
Bucks	270	257	402	375	394	317	287	276	265	248	186	331
3.5+ Bucks	471	428	744	801	858	798	623	486	539	551	913	660
Does	198	228	296	273	265	255	248	245	203	223	139	248
Avg. Age ALL Bucks	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.6	3.2	3.2	2.4	2.9
% 0.5 Yr. Bucks	5	1	1	3	2	1	2	3	7	4	8	2.6
Weight	71	76	64	74	71	58	55	54	62	60	64	71
% 1.5 Yr.	9	11	10	9	8	19	19	16	15	17	49	9
Weight	119	112	118	123	118	114	116	110	114	116	113	118
Points	3.8	3.3	3.7	4.0	4.4	4.7	5.1	4.7	5.1	4.9	3.3	3.8
Circumf.	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.5	2.5	2.7	2.5	2.7	2.6	2.2	2.5
Length	8.1	6.7	8.6	8.7	9.7	8.9	9.7	8.5	9.7	9.0	6.9	8.4
Spread	7.8	6.6	7.0	8.1	8.1	7.1	7.6	6.7	8.1	7.6	6.3	7.5
% 2.5 Yr.	22	23	25	25	40	37	31	33	29	34	23	27
Weight	148	146	144	146	148	137	141	129	132	142	143	147
Points	7.0	7.0	6.8	6.9	7.0	6.5	6.8	6.5	6.5	6.6	6.1	6.9
Circumf.	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.3	3.5
Length	14.6	14.6	14.7	14.6	15.0	13.8	14.0	13.4	13.5	14.0	13.7	14.7
Spread	11.9	11.8	12.0	12.0	12.3	11.1	11.0	10.8	10.9	11.3	10.9	12.0
% 3.5 Yr.	44	37	39	39	36	28	33	31	28	30	15	39
Weight	159	155	158	161	167	158	155	154	154	158	160	160
Points	7.8	7.8	7.6	7.5	7.8	7.5	7.5	7.6	7.8	8.0	7.3	7.7
Circumf.	3.9	3.8	3.9	4.0	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.7	3.9
Length	16.6	16.5	16.3	16.6	17.3	16.7	16.5	16.1	16.6	16.6	16.4	16.6
Spread	13.5	13.5	13.1	13.3	14.1	13.0	13.2	13.1	13.1	13.4	13.2	13.5
% 4.5+ Yr.	21	28	25	24	15	16	16	17	21	15	6	22
Weight	177	165	180	181	181	180	172	170	174	177	173	177
Points	8.4	8.6	8.3	8.2	8.1	8.1	8.2	8.5	8.3	8.6	8.0	8.3
Circumf.	4.3	4.2	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.6	4.4	4.3	4.5	4.4	4.2	4.4
Length	18.8	18.5	18.8	19.0	18.4	18.7	18.8	18.7	18.7	18.5	18.4	18.7
Spread	15.1	14.6	14.8	14.9	14.3	14.6	15.1	15.0	14.6	14.8	14.5	14.7
% Doe Lactation												
1.5 Yr.	15	12	17	23	18	11	12	8	12	16	14	17
2.5 Yr.	50	51	54	65	59	56	65	58	52	58	57	56
3.5+ Yr.	64	66	73	70	70	63	71	66	66	66	66	69
Doe Age Classes												
% 0.5 Yr.	8	4	3	6	6	3	7	5	8	10	12	6
% 1.5 Yr.	21	24	20	26	21	28	20	25	24	23	24	22
% 2.5 Yr.	21	23	21	22	32	22	20	20	18	20	19	24
% 3.5+ Yr.	50	49	56	46	41	47	54	51	50	47	47	48
Doe Weights												
0.5 Yr.	63	73	64	68	67	58	53	53	55	62	59	67
1.5 Yr.	99	97	97	96	96	93	96	90	90	95	95	97
2.5 Yr.	110	107	106	107	106	105	104	100	101	105	105	107
3.5+ Yr.	116	115	113	116	113	112	111	110	109	111	113	114

Table 22. Upper Coastal Plain Soil Resource Area Summary of DMAP Data

	Season										Average	
	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02	'01	'00	'99	'91-'94	'04-'08
Acres	469,389	475,462	472,877	508,673	477,952	541,156	542,090	515,966	557,521	705,830	879,440	480,871
Total Deer	4,370	3,948	3,992	4,005	3,891	3,760	3,996	3,808	4,786	5,409	8,488	4,041
Bucks	1,773	1,728	1,689	1,723	1,660	1,659	1,856	1,905	2,155	2,648	4,677	1,715
Does	2,597	2,220	2,303	2,282	2,231	2,101	2,140	1,903	2,631	2,761	1,457	2,327
Acres/Deer	107	120	118	127	123	144	136	135	116	130	105	119
Bucks	265	275	280	295	288	326	292	271	259	267	188	280
3.5+ Bucks	630	607	623	686	858	737	707	729	631	762	997	681
Does	181	214	205	223	214	258	253	271	212	256	237	207
Avg. Age ALL Bucks	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.8	3.2	2.4	2.6
% 0.5 Yr. Bucks	7	4	3	4	5	2	3	3	4	6	7	4.5
Weight	59	64	60	65	65	63	62	59	59	58	58	62.7
% 1.5 Yr.	19	18	17	14	16	18	20	16	20	21	51	17
Weight	108	107	108	107	109	108	113	112	112	113	108	108
Points	3.8	3.5	3.9	3.8	4.1	4.3	4.7	4.6	4.7	4.7	3.2	3.8
Circumf.	2.3	2.1	2.3	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.1	2.3
Length	7.6	6.8	8.0	7.6	8.2	8.7	9.2	9.1	9.2	9.3	6.7	7.6
Spread	6.9	6.5	6.9	6.8	7.5	7.4	7.5	7.6	7.7	7.5	5.8	6.9
% 2.5 Yr.	28	27	30	31	40	33	32	39	35	38	24	31
Weight	140	136	137	137	140	137	139	138	137	138	134	138
Points	6.8	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.9	6.6	6.6	6.7	6.0	6.6
Circumf.	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.3
Length	14.1	13.8	13.8	13.3	13.8	13.4	14.1	13.7	13.7	14.0	13.2	13.7
Spread	11.6	11.1	11.1	10.9	11.1	10.8	11.3	11.1	11.1	11.3	10.5	11.1
% 3.5 Yr.	26	29	31	31	27	30	28	28	27	25	14	29
Weight	151	150	153	151	152	154	152	152	150	156	152	151
Points	7.6	7.4	7.3	7.0	7.3	7.1	7.3	7.4	7.5	7.5	7.1	7.3
Circumf.	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.6	3.8
Length	16.3	16.2	15.8	15.6	15.8	15.7	15.7	15.9	16.1	16.4	15.6	15.9
Spread	13.2	13.0	12.8	12.6	12.6	12.7	12.7	12.7	12.9	13.2	12.7	12.9
% 4.5+ Yr.	20	22	19	19	13	16	16	14	14	10	5	19
Weight	164	160	168	164	167	165	165	167	164	171	164	165
Points	8.1	8.2	7.9	7.8	8.0	7.9	7.9	8.0	8.1	8.3	7.6	8.0
Circumf.	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.2
Length	18.3	18.1	17.8	17.4	17.8	17.9	18.2	18.4	18.2	18.3	17.7	17.9
Spread	14.7	14.4	14.4	14.1	14.5	14.4	14.3	14.4	14.8	14.8	14.1	14.4
% Doe Lactation												
1.5 Yr.	11	11	11	12	13	14	14	11	12	16	13	12
2.5 Yr.	50	49	53	56	57	51	55	59	57	65	56	53
3.5+ Yr.	63	68	69	68	67	69	68	71	67	72	65	67
Doe Age Classes												
% 0.5 Yr.	10	7	7	7	8	5	8	6	8	10	11	8
% 1.5 Yr.	21	22	20	22	22	24	23	25	23	24	24	21
% 2.5 Yr.	19	21	19	20	25	21	19	24	24	23	20	21
% 3.5+ Yr.	50	50	55	51	45	50	50	45	45	43	45	50
Doe Weights												
0.5 Yr.	59	60	59	62	63	63	61	60	58	57	58	61
1.5 Yr.	88	88	89	89	89	87	90	89	87	89	89	89
2.5 Yr.	99	98	97	99	100	97	100	100	97	99	99	99
3.5+ Yr.	105	106	107	107	106	106	105	107	103	104	105	106

Table 23. Lower Coastal Plain Soil Resource Area Summary of DMAP Data

	Season										Average	
	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02	'01	'00	'99	'91-'94	'04-'08
Acres	369,675	396,999	332,657	397,543	397,659	402,461	343,592	334,038	202,709	264,521	308,965	378,907
Total Deer	1,547	1,470	1,376	1,142	1,468	1,500	1,590	1,512	1,506	1,721	2,944	1,401
Bucks	773	712	654	541	596	698	838	819	686	812	1,467	655
Does	774	758	722	601	872	802	752	693	820	909	1,457	745
Acres/Deer	239	270	242	348	271	268	216	221	135	154	104	270
Bucks	478	558	509	735	667	577	410	408	295	326	210	578
3.5+ Bucks	1,097	1,182	1,147	1,636	1,446	2,064	1,108	1,152	672	740	1,098	1,302
Does	478	524	461	661	456	502	457	482	247	291	209	508
Avg. Age ALL Bucks	2.8	2.8	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.3	2.5	2.4	2.9	3.2	2.4	2.7
% 0.5 Yr. Bucks	1	2	2	3	4	3	2	3	3	3	10	2.6
Weight	67	60	58	68	71	60	62	61	55	58	56	64.7
% 1.5 Yr.	15	11	19	11	16	13	11	12	15	18	47	14
Weight	108	104	109	109	104	110	113	111	109	108	102	107
Points	3.7	3.2	3.9	4.0	3.7	4.2	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.5	2.7	3.7
Circumf.	2.3	2.0	2.4	2.7	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.4	1.9	2.3
Length	7.5	6.5	8.5	8.9	7.3	8.5	8.9	8.6	8.4	8.5	5.4	7.7
Spread	6.7	5.9	7.2	7.5	6.4	7.0	7.2	7.8	7.2	6.9	5.3	6.7
% 2.5 Yr.	30	35	29	36	33	56	47	53	38	35	25	33
Weight	136	136	132	135	138	136	134	134	132	131	126	135
Points	6.6	6.7	6.6	6.8	6.6	6.5	6.7	6.7	6.9	6.4	5.2	6.7
Circumf.	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.1	2.8	3.2
Length	13.8	13.6	13.6	13.5	13.6	13.6	13.7	13.6	13.6	12.9	11.5	13.6
Spread	11.4	11.2	11.0	10.9	11.2	10.9	10.9	10.9	11.2	10.7	9.3	11.1
% 3.5 Yr.	32	31	34	31	33	20	27	22	30	28	14	32
Weight	147	149	142	148	149	147	142	151	152	145	146	147
Points	7.3	7.6	7.6	7.3	7.4	7.2	7.5	7.7	7.5	7.3	7.1	7.4
Circumf.	3.7	3.8	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.5	3.5	3.7
Length	15.5	15.6	15.4	15.0	15.5	15.5	15.2	16.2	15.5	15.3	15.0	15.4
Spread	12.7	12.7	12.4	12.6	13.0	12.5	12.4	13.0	12.8	12.5	12.1	12.7
% 4.5+ Yr.	21	22	16	18	14	9	13	10	14	16	6	18
Weight	156	156	157	153	154	156	155	162	158	158	155	155
Points	7.9	8.1	8.2	7.9	8.0	8.0	8.2	8.1	8.0	8.2	7.5	8.0
Circumf.	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.1
Length	17.2	17.8	17.8	17.2	17.6	17.7	17.8	18.2	17.7	17.8	17.0	17.5
Spread	13.9	14.2	14.4	13.9	14.6	13.9	14.5	14.8	14.5	14.3	13.8	14.2
% Doe Lactation												
1.5 Yr.	10	13	11	15	12	6	19	8	21	17	14	12
2.5 Yr.	47	54	60	48	52	60	58	61	63	68	58	52
3.5+ Yr.	64	61	62	68	66	64	66	70	73	70	68	64
Doe Age Classes												
% 0.5 Yr.	5	6	5	4	5	4	3	5	7	6	11	5
% 1.5 Yr.	18	19	18	17	19	20	19	20	18	22	23	18
% 2.5 Yr.	19	23	23	23	30	38	30	40	25	24	21	24
% 3.5+ Yr.	58	53	54	56	46	38	48	35	51	48	45	54
Doe Weights												
0.5 Yr.	56	60	57	62	63	57	55	57	55	57	54	60
1.5 Yr.	87	89	88	88	88	83	88	86	90	87	86	88
2.5 Yr.	98	99	99	96	96	96	95	93	95	97	95	98
3.5+ Yr.	104	103	103	101	102	101	100	99	101	101	100	102

Table 24. Coastal Flatwoods Soil Resource Area Summary of DMAP Data

	Season										Average	
	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02	'01	'00	'99	'91-'94	'04-'08
Acres	26,283	58,046	49,790	47,790	63,810	55,927	55,650	55,650	55,742	52,850	46,517	49,144
Total Deer	136	158	110	47	67	148	156	178	161	161	177	104
Bucks	54	122	63	23	29	82	89	116	96	93	105	58
Does	82	36	47	24	38	66	67	62	65	68	1,457	45
Acres/Deer	193	367	453	1,017	952	378	357	313	346	328	526	471
Bucks	487	476	790	2,078	2,200	682	625	480	579	568	1,332	833
3.5+ Bucks	306	691	2,165	2,987	4,908	3,728	2,319	2,140	2,729	1,229	3,445	2,211
Does	321	1,612	1,059	1,991	1,679	847	831	898	849	777	3,219	1,064
Avg. Age ALL Bucks	2.8	3.0	2.6	3.3	2.5	2.1	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.7	2.0	2.8
% 0.5 Yr. Bucks	1	0	2	0	0	3	0	1	1	1	17	0.5
Weight	175	0	58	0	0	70	0	48	39	45	36	46.6
% 1.5 Yr.	8	15	11	9	10	11	8	6	9	8	31	11
Weight	97	101	120	106	94	96	83	106	95	106	96	103
Points	2.5	2.6	4.2	2.0	4.5	4.6	4.0	4.1	4.2	3.3	2.5	3.2
Circumf.	1.9	2.1	2.4	0.0	2.9	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.3	1.9	1.4	1.8
Length	6.3	4.5	7.9	0.0	7.6	9.2	6.9	7.9	8.0	7.4	4.3	5.3
Spread	6.7	6.6	7.2	0.0	5.5	7.1	5.6	6.6	6.5	7.6	5.7	5.2
% 2.5 Yr.	34	18	46	18	48	68	64	72	68	39	29	33
Weight	139	137	143	114	128	130	125	122	126	120	120	132
Points	6.3	6.8	7.1	4.8	5.8	5.9	6.2	5.9	6.0	5.8	4.9	6.2
Circumf.	2.9	3.5	3.5	2.9	3.3	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.6	2.4	3.2
Length	14.4	13.6	14.3	13.3	12.8	12.1	12.6	12.3	12.3	11.4	10.0	13.7
Spread	12.0	11.0	12.6	10.3	11.2	9.7	9.9	9.8	9.8	9.5	7.8	11.4
% 3.5 Yr.	34	28	27	32	29	16	19	16	17	35	16	30
Weight	148	140	152	146	130	134	132	139	135	136	115	143
Points	7.0	7.0	8.0	7.6	7.0	6.5	7.3	7.2	7.0	6.6	5.1	7.3
Circumf.	3.5	3.2	4.0	3.9	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.8	3.6	3.2	2.5	3.6
Length	15.7	15.1	16.4	16.7	15.5	14.5	15.2	15.6	15.1	13.6	10.7	15.9
Spread	12.6	12.0	13.3	13.5	12.3	12.2	13.2	12.3	12.6	10.9	8.9	12.7
% 4.5+ Yr.	24	39	15	41	13	3	9	5	6	17	6	26
Weight	161	162	145	160	132	141	155	165	154	155	116	152
Points	8.0	7.6	7.8	7.9	8.3	6.0	7.9	8.5	7.5	7.5	5.1	7.9
Circumf.	4.5	4.1	3.8	4.3	3.9	3.3	4.2	4.1	3.8	3.8	2.8	4.1
Length	17.4	16.9	16.3	17.9	16.4	11.9	16.5	18.9	15.8	16.9	11.5	17.0
Spread	14.0	14.1	13.2	13.9	12.7	9.1	13.2	14.8	12.4	13.0	9.6	13.6
% Doe Lactation												
1.5 Yr.	15	7	0	0	43	22	7	18	16	0	6	13
2.5 Yr.	18	38	33	60	33	77	50	50	59	80	65	36
3.5+ Yr.	50	71	55	56	45	43	65	47	51	56	67	56
Doe Age Classes												
% 0.5 Yr.	3	11	3	14	18	3	8	8	6	5	0	10
% 1.5 Yr.	14	34	20	19	21	30	22	22	24	13	10	22
% 2.5 Yr.	30	17	10	24	18	38	35	41	38	25	23	20
% 3.5+ Yr.	53	38	67	43	44	30	35	30	32	57	67	49
Doe Weights												
0.5 Yr.	70	86	37	44	48	70	68	61	66	57	0	57
1.5 Yr.	91	87	81	89	81	83	77	84	81	76	41	86
2.5 Yr.	96	92	78	79	92	92	85	86	88	84	69	87
3.5+ Yr.	99	94	98	98	92	96	89	90	92	93	90	96

Table 25. Interior Flatwoods Soil Resource Area Summary of DMAP Data

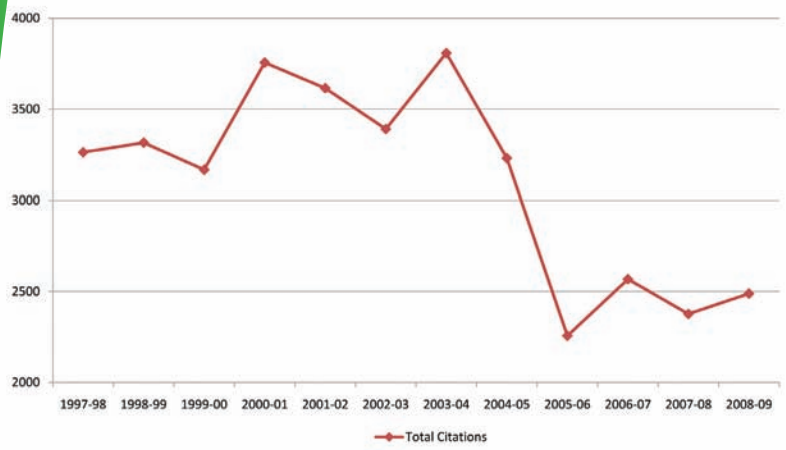
	Season										Average	
	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02	'01	'00	'99	'91-'94	'04-'08
Acres	135,772	144,756	145,333	143,029	126,756	111,604	113,544	119,354	40,870	38,770	69,015	139,129
Total Deer	1,607	1,548	1,382	1,263	885	881	772	929	397	429	1,107	1,337
Bucks	761	761	685	586	398	527	394	484	179	199	517	638
Does	846	787	697	677	487	354	378	445	218	230	1,457	699
Acres/Deer	84	94	105	113	143	127	147	128	103	90	63	104
Bucks	178	190	212	244	318	212	288	247	228	195	135	218
3.5+ Bucks	503	510	521	636	845	1,024	789	632	486	487	642	603
Does	160	184	209	211	260	315	300	268	188	169	120	199
Avg. Age ALL Bucks	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.4	2.6	1.8	2.4	2.5	3.2	3.2	2.4	2.4
% 0.5 Yr. Bucks	7	8	6	9	11	7	9	7	4	9	9	8.1
Weight	57	65	63	62	62	61	66	68	59	64	63	61.9
% 1.5 Yr.	30	25	27	28	13	51	17	15	15	18	45	25
Weight	107	109	106	112	107	104	113	115	117	119	111	108
Points	3.0	2.9	3.1	2.7	3.7	2.8	4.9	4.9	5.4	4.4	3.0	3.1
Circumf.	2.0	2.1	2.4	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.6	2.5	2.9	2.4	2.2	2.1
Length	6.2	5.8	6.7	6.0	7.1	5.7	9.3	9.5	11.9	9.0	6.5	6.4
Spread	5.3	4.9	5.9	5.3	6.8	5.4	6.9	7.4	9.0	7.9	6.0	5.6
% 2.5 Yr.	23	28	23	22	35	21	34	35	34	33	25	26
Weight	140	142	140	139	145	134	143	139	145	144	137	141
Points	6.7	6.8	6.5	6.4	6.7	5.9	6.8	6.7	6.6	6.7	5.7	6.6
Circumf.	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.1	3.3
Length	14.5	14.5	13.6	13.5	14.1	12.7	14.2	13.7	14.4	14.0	13.0	14.0
Spread	11.6	11.5	10.9	10.8	11.6	10.2	11.3	11.1	11.4	12.0	10.1	11.3
% 3.5 Yr.	27	26	27	26	25	14	29	28	30	25	16	26
Weight	156	153	158	156	159	163	161	159	160	164	153	157
Points	7.3	7.5	7.3	7.8	7.4	7.2	7.6	7.9	8.2	7.3	7.1	7.5
Circumf.	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.6	3.7
Length	15.9	16.0	16.3	15.9	15.5	15.5	16.0	16.4	16.6	15.0	15.6	15.9
Spread	12.8	12.4	12.8	12.6	12.6	12.9	12.7	13.2	13.5	12.5	12.5	12.6
% 4.5+ Yr.	13	14	17	15	17	7	12	15	17	15	5	15
Weight	169	171	174	179	179	161	181	173	179	179	176	175
Points	8.1	8.5	8.5	8.1	8.2	7.6	8.5	8.9	8.0	8.6	8.5	8.3
Circumf.	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.5	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.3	4.2
Length	18.4	18.5	18.5	18.1	18.5	17.4	18.7	18.5	19.4	18.8	18.5	18.4
Spread	14.3	14.3	14.8	14.4	14.6	14.5	15.0	15.0	14.7	16.0	15.0	14.5
% Doe Lactation												
1.5 Yr.	10	8	9	12	15	9	11	13	12	8	15	11
2.5 Yr.	58	53	58	59	51	53	51	54	69	51	53	56
3.5+ Yr.	65	75	68	69	66	71	73	67	66	67	65	68
Doe Age Classes												
% 0.5 Yr.	11	7	7	10	11	9	11	7	6	5	11	9
% 1.5 Yr.	24	25	27	23	22	31	19	24	27	27	28	24
% 2.5 Yr.	23	24	25	19	27	18	22	27	26	26	20	23
% 3.5+ Yr.	43	44	41	48	41	42	48	43	41	42	42	43
Doe Weights												
0.5 Yr.	59	57	54	56	59	55	55	60	56	58	60	57
1.5 Yr.	91	92	90	90	93	92	94	91	94	94	93	91
2.5 Yr.	105	102	106	103	106	103	101	103	105	105	103	105
3.5+ Yr.	109	109	109	111	114	112	110	114	114	114	111	110

Enforcement of Deer Hunting-Related Citations 2008-2009

The Law Enforcement Bureau began monitoring all statewide citations at the district and county levels during the 1996–1997 deer season. The eight most common deer hunting citations from October 1–January 31 were extracted from the database and summarized. Citation totals by county are shown in **Table 27**. Yearly trends in various citations show some variability.

A total of 2,488 citations were written during the 2008–2009 deer hunting season. This is an increase of 112 citations from the previous season. The total number of citations was at an all time high in 2003–2004. Over the past 4 hunting seasons, citations have been significantly lower (**Table 26** and **Figure 29**). The decline in citations can be attributed to a number of occurrences: violations actually decreased, fewer hunters in the woods, and new or no officers in an area.

Figure 29. Total Citations



It is logical to assume that if fewer citations were written for a specific violation, then a decreased incidence of that violation occurred. The total number of baiting violations was the only group that notably decreased during the 2008–2009 deer season. This can be primarily attributed to officer discretion because of confusion regarding Public Notice Number W-3796, which took effect during this season. Hopefully, having the parameters for feeding and baiting specified will help officers make stronger cases and deter baiting in future seasons.

Many violations are still occurring at dangerously high levels. Failure to wear hunter orange, which decreased slightly this year, is a good example. Many hunters still refuse to wear hunter orange. This law is in place to protect hunters. Trespassing also still occurs at a high rate, indicating that anyone could be on the land without a hunter's knowledge. The most common citation in the past deer season was hunting from public roads, which also poses a significant safety threat.

The number of licensed hunters continues to decline. This could be another reason for the general decrease in citations. With fewer hunters taking to the field, the number of violations should decrease. However, many hunters are ignoring license requirements and taking their chances. This is evident by the increase in citations for no hunting license.

With more hunters managing their land for bigger deer, many poachers are trying to take advantage of the results that managers have created. More large-antlered bucks on roadsides equal more temptations. Many would-be hunters are giving in and turning to poaching. This is evidenced by the number of trespassing and headlighting citations written each year.

Our officers are doing a good job across the state, but they need the help of sportsmen. Hunters can assist our officers by reporting wildlife violations by calling **1-800-BE-SMART**. Most counties have only 2 officers, but with concerned sportsmen, they have eyes and ears all over the county.

Table 26. Statewide Citations Summary by Most Frequent Violations During Deer Season

Season Totals	Hunt From		No Hunter Orange	No License		Baiting	Trespassing	Headlighting	Total Citations
	Motor Vehicle	Public Road		Resident	Non-Resident				
2008-2009	81	748	311	383	130	279	240	316	2488
2007-2008	33	575	401	356	102	544	207	158	2376
2006-2007	59	609	363	341	115	554	223	303	2567
2005-2006	57	528	271	445	68	365	343	179	2256
2004-2005	104	725	652	391	125	689	283	261	3230
2003-2004	136	914	700	482	159	724	330	363	3808
2002-2003	99	867	658	491	184	569	240	282	3390
2001-2002	120	840	702	491	179	781	275	227	3615
2000-2001	236	1137	612	505	118	519	297	332	3756
1999-2000	238	938	415	422	87	449	318	299	3166
1998-1999	433	1037	409	378	152	356	290	260	3315
1997-1998	476	1063	403	335	112	313	278	282	3262

Table 27. Citations Summary of Most Frequent Violations During 2008-2009 Deer Season

County	Hunt from Motor Vehicle	Hunt from Public Road	No Hunter Orange	No License Resident	No License Non-Resident	Baiting	Trespassing	Headlighting	Total Citations
Adams	0	2	3	5	1	1	1	0	13
Alcorn	0	12	3	2	1	1	9	2	30
Amite	5	9	6	0	6	6	0	5	37
Attala	0	14	3	10	4	27	5	8	71
Benton	0	15	5	2	3	4	0	0	29
Bolivar	0	2	2	1	2	0	0	0	7
Calhoun	0	18	2	5	0	1	0	7	33
Carroll	0	1	4	1	0	10	3	3	22
Chickasaw	0	16	2	5	0	4	2	2	31
Choctaw	0	6	2	4	1	1	0	2	16
Claiborne	4	17	5	7	1	0	11	12	57
Clarke	0	8	6	5	1	11	2	2	35
Clay	0	5	4	6	2	0	1	3	21
Coahoma	0	2	3	3	3	0	3	0	14
Copiah	0	9	10	11	1	4	1	2	38
Covington	0	6	2	1	0	1	1	4	15
Desoto	0	4	7	5	2	1	5	1	25
Forrest	0	6	4	11	1	3	1	0	26
Franklin	1	6	3	4	4	0	3	1	22
George	0	19	9	12	5	2	4	7	58
Greene	0	6	7	8	1	15	0	0	37
Grenada	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
Hancock	2	5	1	3	0	4	2	4	21
Harrison	0	10	2	9	0	0	6	0	27
Hinds	0	3	5	6	0	1	6	4	25
Holmes	0	4	0	7	1	0	0	5	17
Humphreys	0	1	5	1	0	7	0	0	14
Issaquena	1	0	3	5	2	0	5	1	17
Itawamba	0	29	9	14	6	10	12	17	97
Jackson	0	16	2	12	2	0	12	6	50
Jasper	2	5	12	10	5	16	5	2	57
Jeff Davis	3	6	4	1	5	4	3	8	34
Jefferson	0	9	2	0	1	2	3	7	24
Jones	0	11	5	7	7	11	0	9	50
Kemper	0	4	5	6	2	9	1	2	29
Lafayette	0	19	2	4	2	4	7	7	45
Lamar	0	2	12	2	0	8	4	0	28
Lauderdale	0	1	13	6	3	7	4	1	35
Lawrence	0	6	0	2	0	0	4	0	12
Leake	0	6	1	2	0	1	4	4	18
Lee	0	4	4	4	0	0	0	0	12
Leflore	0	5	0	1	0	0	3	2	11
Lincoln	0	6	0	1	0	0	0	5	12
Lowndes	1	3	3	5	0	3	0	1	16
Madison	2	9	2	8	0	2	11	2	36
Marion	3	11	0	1	0	0	0	12	27
Marshall	0	8	8	9	2	9	4	2	42
Monroe	0	32	2	16	5	4	8	4	71
Montgomery	0	8	0	0	0	2	3	6	19
Neshoba	5	3	0	1	0	7	0	7	23
Newton	0	6	10	8	1	21	2	4	52
Noxubee	0	15	3	0	2	0	4	0	24
Oktibbeha	0	2	2	0	0	0	4	0	8
Panola	2	22	8	12	3	1	3	15	66
Pearl River	39	42	4	2	0	0	2	39	128
Perry	0	61	5	11	1	1	0	9	88
Pike	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	4
Pontotoc	0	10	4	3	0	0	7	4	28
Prentiss	0	11	1	2	0	1	5	0	20
Quitman	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Rankin	4	6	8	7	1	4	12	5	47
Scott	0	7	0	3	1	1	0	0	12
Sharkey	0	5	4	8	1	0	2	0	20
Simpson	0	8	0	4	0	6	0	7	25
Smith	0	14	7	14	1	1	5	8	50
Stone	0	9	2	5	0	3	0	0	19
Sunflower	0	4	1	2	0	1	0	4	12
Tallahatchie	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Tate	0	15	14	15	3	8	3	7	65
Tippah	0	7	1	4	0	3	0	0	15
Tishomingo	0	11	2	4	0	0	1	1	19
Tunica	2	5	7	0	0	0	5	1	20
Union	0	14	0	1	0	0	9	7	31
Walthall	0	4	5	3	4	5	1	4	26
Warren	0	2	3	6	1	1	0	0	13
Washington	1	8	2	0	1	0	0	2	14
Wayne	1	18	14	5	18	14	8	6	84
Webster	0	13	2	2	0	0	4	4	25
Wilkinson	0	2	5	0	7	4	0	0	18
Winston	0	9	0	1	2	0	0	3	15
Yalobusha	0	5	0	3	0	0	0	0	8
Yazoo	3	3	1	5	1	0	4	5	22

2008-2009 Hunting Incident/Accident Summary

A hunting incident/accident is one in which a person is injured by the discharge of a hunting firearm, bow and arrow, or a fall from a hunting tree stand arising from the activity of hunting.

There were 36 total hunting related incident/accidents investigated in Mississippi during the 2008–2009 hunting season, a substantial increase from last season. Of these, 19 were firearm/bow related with 1 fatality and 17 were tree stand related with 2 fatalities.

The majority of hunting incidents occurred while deer hunting, but there were also incidents reported while dove, duck, goose, hog, rabbit, quail, and squirrel hunting (**Figure 30**).

Firearm related accidents increased from last year and treestand accidents were stable. Hunting accidents declined from 2001 until 2006; however, the total number of accidents increased substantially this year to 36 (**Figure 31**).

Sportsmen, Hunter Education Instructors, and Conservation Officers in Mississippi should be commended for keeping hunting among the safest of sports. Volunteer instructors and Conservation Officers certified 10,302 sportsmen in Hunter Education during the 2008–2009 season (**Figure 32**). Hunting accidents in Mississippi average about one injury for every 13,000 licensed hunters, which is an average of around seven injuries per 100,000 participants. When compared to other sports such as football, which averages around 3,500 injuries per 100,000 participants, hunting is a very safe sport.

Youths 12–15 years of age must complete a Hunter Education course to hunt unsupervised. Youths 12–15 years of age may hunt without a Hunter Education certificate if under the direct supervision of a licensed adult 21 years of age or older. Youths under 12 years of age must be under adult supervision while hunting. An apprentice license is available for residents over the age of 15 which do not have the required certificate of hunter education. This apprentice license may be purchased only one time by a resident and the apprentice hunting licensee must be accompanied by a licensed or exempt resident hunter at least 21 years of age when hunting. With these hunter education requirements, we are confident accident numbers will continue to decline.

Figure 30. Hunting Incident by Animal Hunted

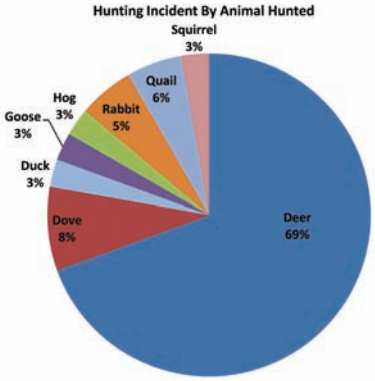


Figure 31. Hunting Incidents

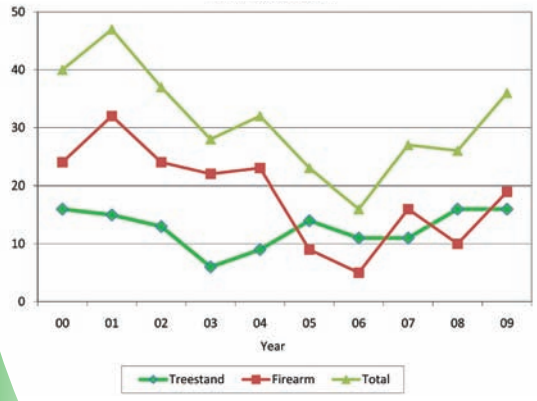
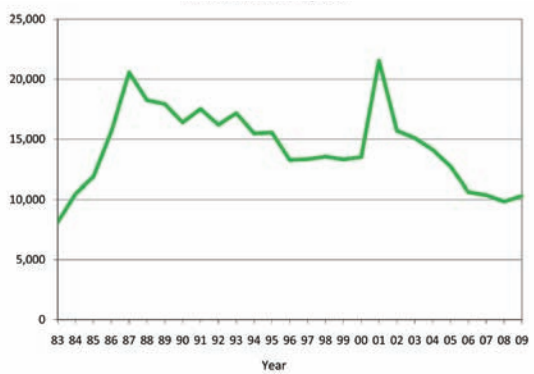


Figure 32. Students Trained by Year



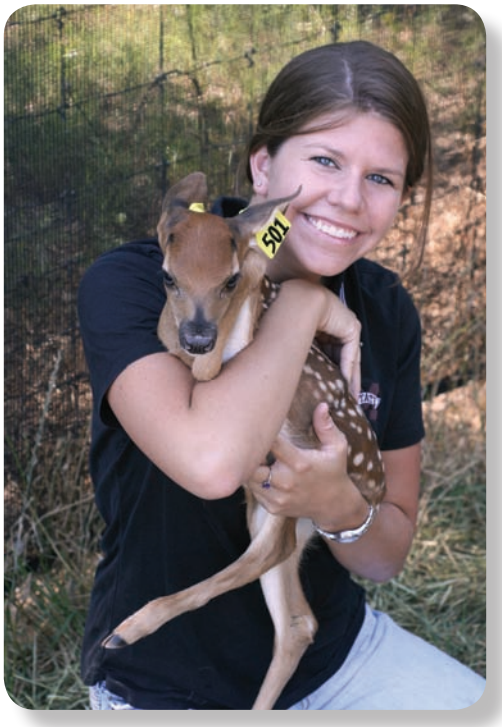
2008-2009 Research Project Summaries

Estimating Antler Size from Pictures: Computer Software for the Hunting Public

Jeremy Flinn, Steve Demarais, Ken Gee, Bronson Strickland, and Stephen Webb

Jeremy Flinn

Widespread use of trail cameras has generated immense amounts of buck pictures. Biologists, researchers, and hunters want to estimate antler size using these pictures for educational, management, and entertainment reasons. Mississippi State University, MDWFP, and the Noble Foundation have cooperated to develop a computer program that will estimate antler size from photographs. Hunters will be able to access the free program online, upload their photographs, and estimate characteristics such as inside spread, main beam length, and gross score. These characteristics are becoming increasingly common as antler restrictions and may be difficult to field judge without proper training. The program has shown preliminary accuracy within 5% of gross Boone & Crockett score. Final results will be published soon after this publication becomes available. For access and information on the "MSU Antler Scoring Software" visit the deer page on the MSU Extension Service's website at www.msucares.com/wildfish/wildlife/deer.html.



Emily Flinn

Effects of Age and Gender on Leg Bone Growth

Emily Flinn, Bronson Strickland, and Steve Demarais

Leg bones increase in length from a cartilaginous zone near their tip. Growth in these zones ceases when animals reach sexual maturity. As part of long-term research investigating Mississippi's regional variation in antler and body size, we compared rates of closure of leg bone growth zones. This project will provide us with a better understanding of the physiological processes that control body size of white-tailed deer. Using x-rays of the leg bones of captive deer, we determined if growth plates have ossified, signifying that the bones have ceased growth. Ossification varies greatly with age. For example, some growth plates ossify by 6 months of age, while others ossify by 3½ years of age. Bones with a later ossification allow a longer time period for an animal to respond to habitat improvements (i.e. nutrition) and compensate with greater bone growth. Females ceased growth at a younger age than males. Ossification of the distal radius occurred at 2½ years of age for females and at 3½ years of age for males. Stopping body growth at a younger age allows females to put more resources into fawn production.

This 8 point buck was harvested by Brandon Schwartz on Sunflower WMA.

2008-2009 Research Project Summaries

Effectiveness of Selective Harvesting for Increasing Antler Size in White-tailed Deer

Stephen L. Webb, Steve Demarais, Bronson K. Strickland, Randy W. DeYoung, and Ken L. Gee

Selective harvesting in wild deer populations is commonly used to increase antler size. However, in free-ranging populations, response due to selection is unknown or difficult to quantify because antlers are positively influenced by other management practices such as prescribed fire, habitat management, and population control. We used quantitative genetics models to determine how white-tailed deer antlers responded to selection and what population demographic variables (i.e., population size, age structure, and mating ratio) were most influential in improving antler size. We validated our genetics models by comparing our results with a controlled deer breeding program; modeled antler points and score increased (2.2–4.3 antler points and 19.1–38.5 inches, respectively) after 8 years of selection, similar to observed increases in antler points (3.2) and score (36.3 inches). In modeled free-ranging populations, mating ratio and age structure were more important in influencing antler size than size of the population. However, response to selection in free-ranging populations was even after 20 years of selection. These results show that selective harvesting of free-ranging white-tailed deer is not an efficient way to modify population-level genetic characteristics related to antler size. Response in free-ranging deer is lower because individual reproductive success is lower, breeding is done by a large number of bucks, and reproductive and survival rates are lower; all of which reduce the amount of improvement that can be made to antlers due to selection. Therefore, selective harvesting should be justified only for controlling population numbers and improving cohort antler size but not for changing the genetic characteristics of free-ranging populations. Support for this project was provided by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries at Mississippi State University and the Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation.

Stephen L. Webb

White-tailed Deer Buck Movements: Effects of Moon Phase and Rut

Stephen L. Webb, Ken L. Gee, Steve Demarais, Bronson K. Strickland, and Randy W. DeYoung

Many hunters get "fired-up" to head into the field in search of a trophy buck during the rut, especially if the moon phase is "right"; whenever "right" may be. We fitted GPS collars on bucks in Oklahoma during the rut to intensively monitor their movements relative to the rut and moon phase. Males moved a total of 4.6 miles/day during the rut, compared to 3.9 miles/day after the rut, a reduction of almost ¾ of a mile after the breeding season. Previous research at MSU found that deer movement paths were straighter during the rut. Straighter and longer movement paths may enable bucks to increase encounters with receptive females during the rut. During the rut, moon phase did not affect buck movement rates. Buck movements appeared to be primarily related to their search for receptive does. So, the best time to hunt for your trophy buck may be during the rut when bucks move longer distances regardless of moon phase. Support for this project was provided by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries at Mississippi State University and the Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation.

This buck was harvested by Laken Morrow killed on opening youth weekend November 16th on a DMAP property in Panola County.

2008-2009 Research Project Summaries

Effects of Hunter Density on Buck Movements

Andy Little, Steve Demarais, Ken Gee, and Stephen Webb

How many times have you wondered what would happen to that young buck you just passed because it didn't meet your management criteria? Would he end up being seen and harvested by another hunter? Would having more hunters on your property cause bucks to become less available for harvest because they would seek heavy cover or become nocturnally active? Researchers at Mississippi State University and the Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation are examining these questions on a 5,000 acre property during the 2008 and 2009 two-week rifle hunting seasons in Oklahoma. Deer movements will be compared at three hunter densities: 1 hunter per 75 acres, 1 hunter per 250 acres, and no hunters on a sanctuary area.

Preliminary data reveals that during 2008, hunters in the high density area observed 7 collared bucks 20 times whereas 5 collared bucks were observed 8 times in the low density area. Despite hunter density being more than double in the high density area, hunters observed only 22% of deer in the area compared to a 19% observation rate in the low density area. Average hourly buck movements were greatest (309 yards/hour) in the high hunter density area compared to the low hunter density area (201 yards/hour) while bucks in the sanctuary area moved 283 yards/hour. Final conclusions will be drawn after the 2009 hunting season. Financial support for this project is provided by the Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation.

Andy Little

Magnolia Records Program

By: Rick Dillard

The year 2009 marks the 9th year of the Magnolia Records Program. Since the beginning, over 5,200 deer have been scored, with more than 3,300 meeting the minimum requirements (125 inches for typical and 155 inches for non-typical). An analysis of those bucks meeting the minimum requirements indicates that counties in the western region of the state as well as those in the east-central region have the highest average antler scores (**Figure 33**). The total number of bucks qualifying for Magnolia Records in each county is depicted in **Figure 34**.

The 2008–2009 hunting season was not quite as productive as the previous season with regard to the number of trophy bucks harvested. However, some outstanding bucks were still taken. The largest typical buck scored 170 2/8 and was taken by Alton Marler in Adams County. The largest non-typical buck scored 180 and was taken by C.W. Cole in Simpson County. Rick Saucier's buck from Winston County was the largest taken by muzzleloader and scored 159 1/8 typical. Michael Burkley's 164 3/8 buck from Jefferson County was the largest typical taken by archery. Lastly, the largest non-typical archery buck was harvested by Clifford Welch in Wilkinson County and scored 172 2/8.

For many hunters, the true measure of a bonafide trophy is a buck with an inside spread surpassing 20 inches. To date, over 580 deer with inside spreads greater than or equal to 20 inches have been entered. The widest deer on record was harvested by Richey Buchanan in Lowndes County in 2007 with an inside spread of 27 inches.

Many outstanding bucks, too numerous to list here, are entered in Magnolia Records each year. To view all entries and their photos visit www.mdwfp.com and look for Magnolia Records.

Figure 33

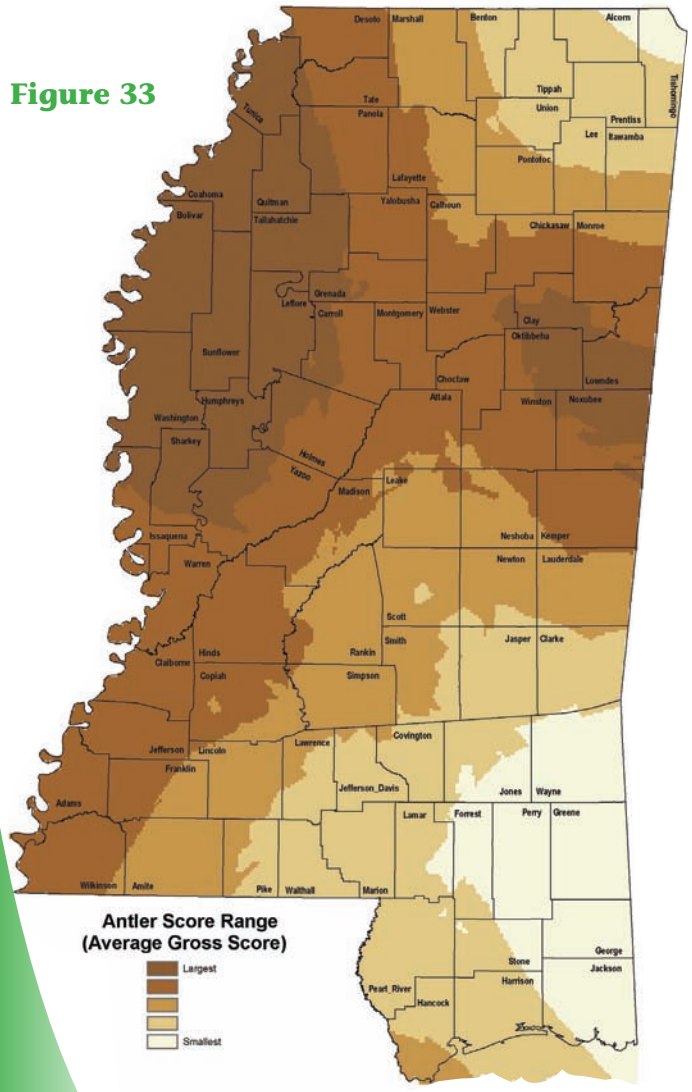
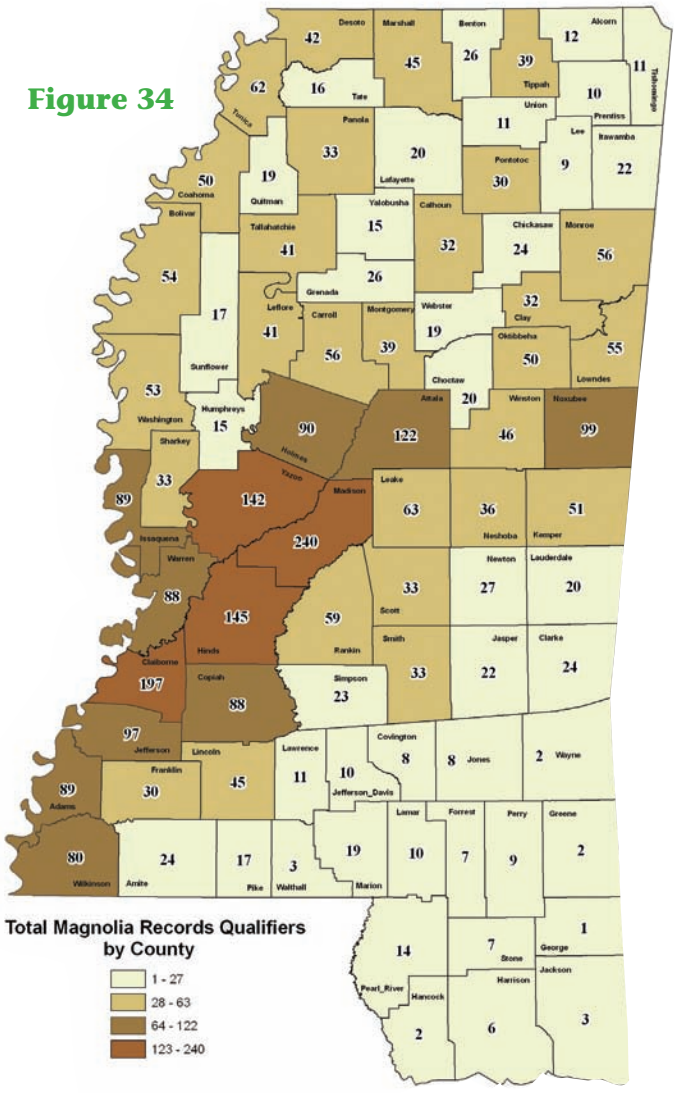


Figure 34



Pope and Young Deer Taken in Mississippi

Table 28. Top 10 Non-Typical Trophies (Minimum Score 155)

Rank	Score	Status	Taken By	Season	County
1**	236 1/8	1	Tracy Laird	2003-04	Adams
2	204	1	Denver Eshee	1996-97	Webster
3	195 5/8	1	Damon C. Saik	2000-01	Madison
4	187 3/8	2	Angus Catchot	2006-07	Washington
5	178 3/8	2	Wyn Diggs	2006-07	Holmes
6	177 3/8	2	Adam McCurdy	2005-06	Holmes
7	173 3/4	1	Jimmy Riley	2000-01	Adams
8	172 2/8	2	Clifford Welch	2008-09	Wilkinson
9	170 3/8	2	Roger Tankesly	2007-08	Madison
10	165 5/8	1	James Goss, Jr.	1987-88	Washington

Table 29. Top 10 Typical Trophies (Minimum Score 125)

Rank	Score	Status	Taken By	Season	County
1	167 2/8	2	Rob Stockett, III	2007-08	Tallahatchie
2	165 6/8	2	Carl Taylor	2004-05	Issaquena
3	164 7/8	1	James House	1999-00	Issaquena
4	164 3/8	2	Michael Burkley	2008-09	Jefferson
5	161 2/8	2	Lance Johnson	2008-09	Bolivar
6	160 1/8	1	Odis Hill, Jr.	1989-90	Washington
7	159 6/8	1	Steve Nichols	1986-87	Washington
8	158 4/8	1	John Harvey	1989-90	Adams
9	158 1/8	3	Randy Hooks	2008-09	Copiah
10	157 1/8	3	Ryan H. McCarty	2006-07	Clay

** OFFICIAL STATE RECORD
+ TIES
1 - IN BOWHUNTING RECORDS OF NORTH AMERICAN WHITETAIL DEER
2 - OFFICIALLY SCORED AND ACCEPTED
3 - OFFICIALLY SCORED AND PENDING
4 - OFFICIALLY SCORED BUT NOT ENTERED

William North harvested this non-typical buck that scored 155 6/8 gross and 146 3/8 net on a DMAP property in Holmes County.

Boone and Crockett Deer Taken in Mississippi

Table 30. Top 25 Non-Typical Trophies (Minimum Score 195)

Rank	Score	Status	Taken By	Season	County
1 **	295 6/8	1	Tony Fulton	1994-95	Winston
2	225	1	Richard Herring	1988-89	Lowndes
3	221 2/8	1	Milton Parrish	1972-73	Holmes
4	220 3/8	1	Dean Jones	1976-77	Oktibbeha
5	219 6/8	2	Brian Smith	2006-07	Marshall
6	219 2/8	1	Matt Woods	1997-98	Hinds
7	217 5/8	1	Mark Hathcock	1977-78	Carroll
8	216 5/8	4	(Pick up) Matthew Freeny	1989-99	Winston
9	212 5/8	2	Stephen McBrayer	2005-06	Pontotoc
10	212	1	Wayne Parker	1999-00	Madison
11	210	4	(Pick up) Chip Haynes	2000-01	Madison
12	209 6/8	1	Ronnie Strickland	1981-82	Franklin
13	207 6/8	2	Shelby Tate	2007-08	Amite
14	207 3/8	1	Larry Reece	2001-02	Madison
15	205 6/8	1	Joe Shurden	1976-77	Lowndes
16	205 5/8	2	Terry Cruse	2007-08	Chickasaw
17	205 2/8	2	Jimmy Baker	2007-08	Webster
18	205	1	(Pick up) Tommy Yateman	1959	Lowndes
19	204	1	Denver Eshee	1996-97	Webster
20	202 5/8	1	George Galey	1960'S	Carroll
21	202 4/8	1	William Westmoreland	2001-02	Pontotoc
22	202 3/8	4	Rob Heflin	1998-99	Humphreys
23 +	202 1/8	1	Oliver Lindig	1983-84	Oktibbeha
23 +	202 1/8	2	Bobby Smith	1992-93	Tate
25	201 6/8	1	Jimmy Ashley	1985-86	Wilkinson

** OFFICIAL STATE RECORD
+ TIES
1 - IN RECORDS OF NORTH AMERICAN BIG GAME
2 - OFFICIALLY SCORED AND ACCEPTED
3 - OFFICIALLY SCORED AND PENDING
4 - OFFICIALLY SCORED BUT NOT ENTERED

Rickey Stevens harvested this buck on Divide Section WMA.

Boone and Crockett Deer Taken in Mississippi

Table 31. Top 25 Typical Trophies (Minimum Score 170)

Rank	Score	Status	Taken By	Season	County
1 **	182 7/8	1	Glen Jourdan	1986-87	Noxubee
2	182 2/8	1	R. L. Bobo	1955-56	Claiborne
3	181 5/8	1	Ronnie Whitaker	1980-81	Wilkinson
4	180 4/8	1	W. F. Smith	1968-69	Leflore
5	180 2/8	1	Steve Greer	1995-96	Madison
6	179 2/8	1	Marlon Stokes	1988-89	Hinds
7	178 5/8	1	Grady Robertson	1951-52	Bolivar
8	176 6/8	2	Paul Warrington	2007-08	Bolivar
9	176 5/8	1	Sidney Sessions	1952-53	Bolivar
10	176 1/8	1	J.D. Hood (Mike Steadman-owner)	1972-73	Monroe
11 +	175 2/8	1	Johnnie Leake, Jr.	1977-78	Wilkinson
11 +	175 2/8	1	Charlie G. Wilson, II	2001-02	Neshoba
13	175	2	Kyle Gordon	2005-06	Madison
14 +	174 6/8	1	O. P. Gilbert	1960-61	Coahoma
14 +	174 6/8	1	Jeremy Boelte	1997-98	Adams
16 +	174 1/8	1	William Ladd	1999-00	Noxubee
16 +	174 1/8	4	Unknown (Mike Shell-owner)	1940	Warren
16 +	174 1/8	1	Bill Walters	1995-96	Coahoma
19	173 5/8	1	Geraline Holliman	1982-83	Lowndes
20	173 3/8	1	Richard Powell	1994-95	Coahoma
21	173 2/8	4	Allen Hunley	2007-08	Hinds
22	173	2	Steve Simmons	2007-08	Tallahatchie
23	172 5/8	1	Adrian Stallone	1983-84	Adams
24 +	172	1	Barry Barnes	2003-04	Yazoo
24 +	172	1	Nan Foster New	1977-78	Adams

** OFFICIAL STATE RECORD
+ TIES
1 - IN RECORDS OF NORTH AMERICAN BIG GAME
2 - OFFICIALLY SCORED AND ACCEPTED
3 - OFFICIALLY SCORED AND PENDING
4 - OFFICIALLY SCORED BUT NOT ENTERED

This buck was harvested with a bow and arrow by Jerry Caldwell on Yazoo National Wildlife Refuge. The buck scored 172 1/8 gross / 152 6/8 net typical.

In Conclusion

Status

As in previous reports, data in this report were collected from a wide array of sources. The 2008–2009 season continued to indicate a diverse statewide deer herd. Unique deer populations continue to exist in all regions of the state.

Condition data and field habitat evaluations conducted by biologists continued to document the effects of current and long-term overpopulation in some areas of the state. Degradation of deer habitat and noticeable substandard condition indicators such as low reproduction were prevalent. Many locations in the state have experienced on-going damage of native browse by overpopulation of the deer herd since the early 1970s. Deer habitat on poorer soils has been damaged at a greater level than habitat on more fertile soils. In addition, habitat damage on lower fertility soils requires a longer recovery time than habitats on more fertile soils such as the Mississippi Delta. Reduction of deer populations to levels where habitat can recover is unacceptable to most hunters. The result has been continued over-use of quality browse species by deer.

Declines in deer condition and habitat quality have occurred in regions of the state where extensive acreage was converted from agriculture to pine monocultures in the late 1980s. Assorted federal and state incentive programs perpetuated this condition by providing cost-share opportunities to landowners. The result was increased acreage of densely planted plantations on sites with a history of agriculture. Incorrect herbicide applications on pine plantations prevented competition and thereby eliminated browse plants. This resulted in decreased body weights and reproduction. Minimal amounts of deer forage were found in these sites, which allowed only a moderate deer population to cause over-utilization of the browse present. The result was poor herd health due to a lack of quality and quantity of native browse plants. However, most of these pine monocultures are at mid-rotation age (14–20 years old). Timber thinning has begun on some of these sites, resulting in additional browse production because sunlight is finally reaching the forest floor. These thinnings, along with mid-rotation stand improvements (i.e., wildlife friendly herbicide applications and/or prescribed fire) will drastically improve browse production.

For the sixth year, additional buck tags were offered to landowners and hunting clubs which either suffer from extreme overpopulation and wish to reduce total deer numbers, or to remove lower quality bucks that do not meet their management objectives. This tool is effective for the removal of management bucks on above-average habitat. Legislation was passed in 2003 allowing the harvest of sub-four point bucks by special permit and was altered to include management bucks in 2005. Landowners or clubs must meet certain requirements, such as cooperating with an approved wildlife biologist and be enrolled in DMAP for a minimum of one year to be eligible for these tags. A written justification from the biologist must be approved by the MDWFP Deer Committee before management tags will be issued to a property. The biologist recommendations are used to determine the management buck criteria on individual properties.

Currently the MDWFP Deer Committee consists of a statewide coordinator and four regional deer biologists working with landowners and hunting clubs across Mississippi. Additionally, the MDWFP Deer Committee works hand-in-hand with the MDWFP Wildlife Management Area biologists and other public lands to provide deer management recommendations.

Recommendations

Statewide variance in parameters such as breeding dates, condition indices, and changes in habitat quality continue to warrant intelligent site-specific deer management recommendations. Because of the extreme diversity in management needs across the state, landowners can implement these recommendations only if they are provided with a season framework that offers maximum opportunity or with special permits that allow additional opportunity.

A liberal antlerless season framework is mandatory if landowners are to meet management goals. Antlerless opportunity should be provided to allow landowners in all regions of the state the opportunity to manage deer populations. Decision makers will receive an increasing number of negative reports associated with antlerless hunting opportunity, as behavioral changes in the deer population create changes that make deer less visible to hunters. Continued complaints will arise as hunters incorrectly associate decreasing deer populations to antlerless season opportunity. These complaints will be more frequent in areas of the state with poor soil quality, previously high deer populations, and/or declining habitat quality.

An effective method to monitor statewide harvest on a county basis is needed to take deer management to the next level in Mississippi. Harvest data, which would include sex, harvest method, and county of harvest would provide information from which detailed analyses of the deer herd could occur. A telephone-based reporting system, which provides this type of information, is currently in use in many states across the Southeast. Harvest data at a county level are instantly available to wildlife officials in these states. Voluntary implementation of a similar, efficient and cost-effective system, known as Tel-Chek, began in 2002, but has been underutilized. A mandatory tagging and reporting system like Tel-Chek would provide biologists with much needed data, and law enforcement officers with a new tool to catch violators.

Current harvest estimates are collected via a statewide mail survey. This mail survey encompasses all hunted species in Mississippi. Since the survey includes questions regarding spring turkey harvest, it is not mailed until after the turkey season ends. This causes a time-lag in receiving the deer harvest estimates and makes evaluating any regulation changes extremely difficult. In order to receive more timely deer harvest estimates, a deer-only mail survey is needed until a mandatory harvest and reporting system is put into place statewide.

Evaluation of the Four-Point Law led to a recommendation by the MDWFP Deer Committee to eliminate this law. During the 2009 Legislative Session, legislators passed a bill that will allow the harvest of sub-four point bucks statewide. For the 2009–2010 hunting season, the state will be divided into three Deer Management Zones, with minimum inside spread or main beam length criteria based on local parameters taking the place of one statewide point based criteria. Additionally, the antlerless bag limit will change from 3 antlerless deer with any weapon and 2 additional antlerless deer with archery equipment to 5 antlerless deer with any weapon. This will give the hunter more flexibility to manage the deer herd on their property. For youth hunters 15 years-old and younger, one of the 3 buck bag limit may be any buck regardless of antler points, spread, or main beam length.

Photo Credit: Jason L. Price

Research funding should continue. Continued advancement of the state Deer Program hinges on the professional association and interaction with current deer research projects. The MDWFP Wildlife Bureau Technical Staff has benefited professionally from this relationship with Mississippi State University for over 20 years. Many of the advances in management of Mississippi's deer herd would not have occurred without this relationship. The opportunity to find answers which address practical management questions should continue to receive priority.

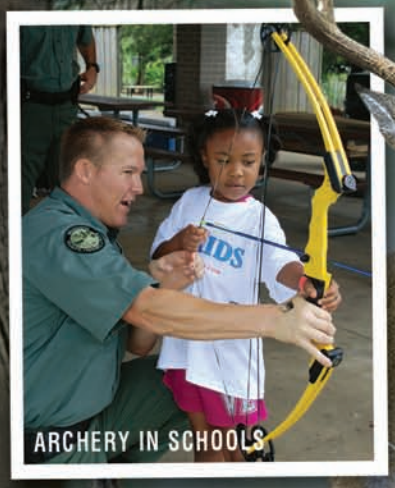
Existing data collection procedures on public and private lands must continue if responsible harvest recommendations for these lands are expected. Extensive data exists from which objective evaluations can be conducted to examine the effects of changes in habitat, hunting opportunity, and harvest schemes. The annual mail survey will continue to be a valuable tool to monitor trends in a variety of important categories.

Information and education should remain the top priority of the Deer Program in Mississippi. Deer management needs are well documented in most regions of the state. Landowner and hunter understanding, acceptance, and support of sound deer management will continue to determine the success of deer management in Mississippi. Deer management objectives should be better communicated to the users of this resource. Without landowner and hunter support, success is not expected. When provided the freedom, sportsmen in Mississippi have proven they can make informed decisions that benefit the deer resource if they are provided with the correct management and biological information.

Notes

Notes

Notes



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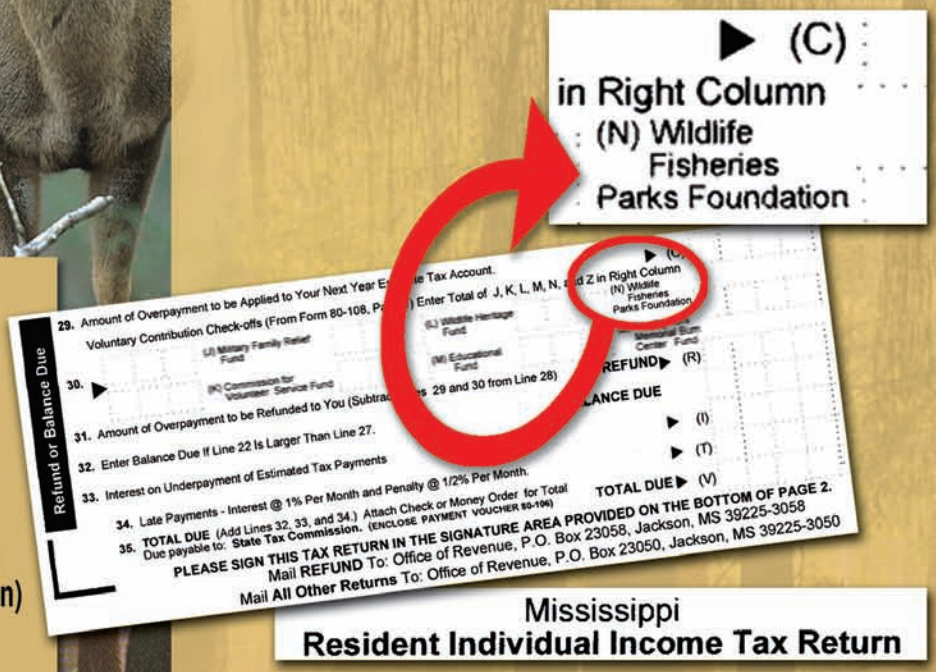

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