

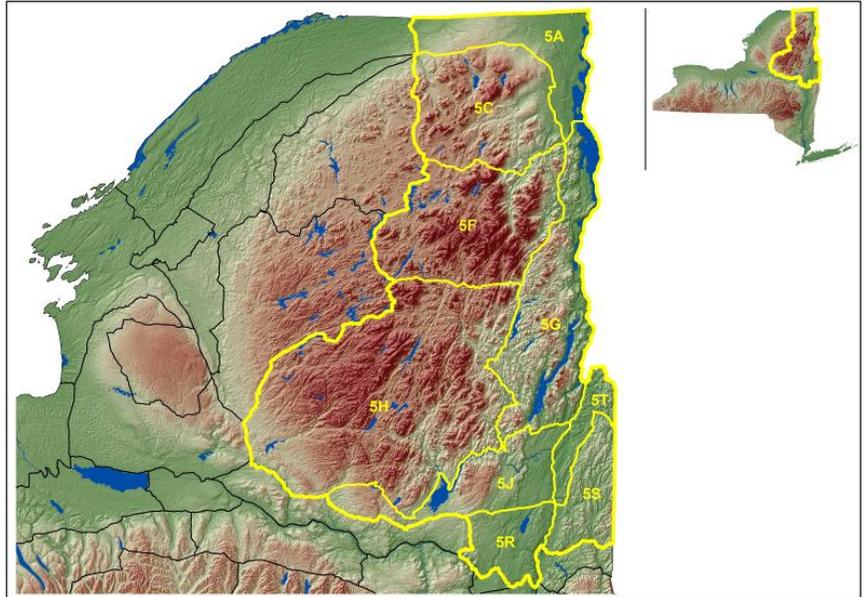
# 2017 DEER HUNTING FORECAST



Department of  
Environmental  
Conservation

## Region 5

Region 5 is the largest region in New York. Occupying the northeast corner of the state, the region varies from river bottom farmlands in the south, through the high mountain wilderness of the Adirondacks, to the flat farmlands in the St. Lawrence Valley in the north. Deer populations reflect this variety of terrain, with relatively dense populations in the south and north, and low populations in the mountainous areas. Deer hunting opportunities range from suburban woodlots to vast wilderness forests. The region consists of six Northern Zone [Wildlife Management Units \(WMUs\)](#), and three Southern Zone WMUs, as well as small parts of five other WMUs that are managed by other regions. The forecast for this upcoming season should be good news for Region 5 deer hunters. Despite patchy mast crops during the fall of 2016, back-to-back mild winters during 2015 and 2016 should result in an increase in deer numbers in most areas throughout the region. However, hunters may still observe the effects of severe winter conditions during 2013 and 2014 in the form of fewer bucks in older age classes. As long as weather conditions are fair, hunting effort is similar to recent years, and abundant mast crops do not hinder deer movement, buck take should remain similar to last year or slightly increase.



### Unit Summaries for the 2016 Season

Included in the discussion of most WMUs is a term called the Buck Take Objective (BTO). A BTO for a WMU is the desired number of antlered bucks expected to be harvested per mile<sup>2</sup> when the WMU's deer population is at the desired level as determined by the [Citizen Task Force](#). The BTO is not the estimated take for the coming season but rather is the objective of our management efforts. The annual buck harvest is used as a gauge of population size and its relationship to the desired population level.

## WMU 5A

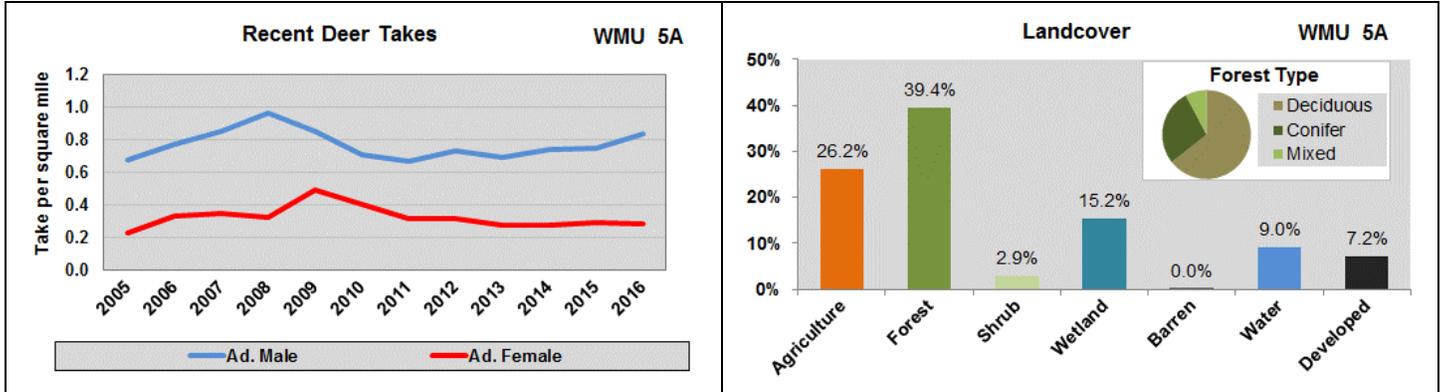
Area = 610 mile<sup>2</sup>

BTO =None

2016 Buck Take = 0.8 bucks harvested per mile<sup>2</sup>

2016 Total Deer Take = 1.2 deer harvested per mile<sup>2</sup>

This unit is located in the northeast corner of New York, bounded on the north by the Canadian border and on the east by Lake Champlain. The unit has mainly flat topography and a predominance of farm country interspersed with small second growth woodlots, some extensive wetlands, and apple orchards. Soils are generally shallow and rocky except in the Lake Champlain valley. The buck take has ranged from 0.7 to 1.0 per mile<sup>2</sup> over the past 10 years. The 2017 harvest is expected to be similar to or slightly higher than last year. Antlerless harvest is restricted to archery and muzzleloading seasons. There will again be early and late muzzleloading seasons for deer of either sex in this unit. Public access in this unit is limited to a few state forests and wildlife management areas. [Deer Management Permits \(DMPs\)](#) are not available in this unit.



## WMU 5C

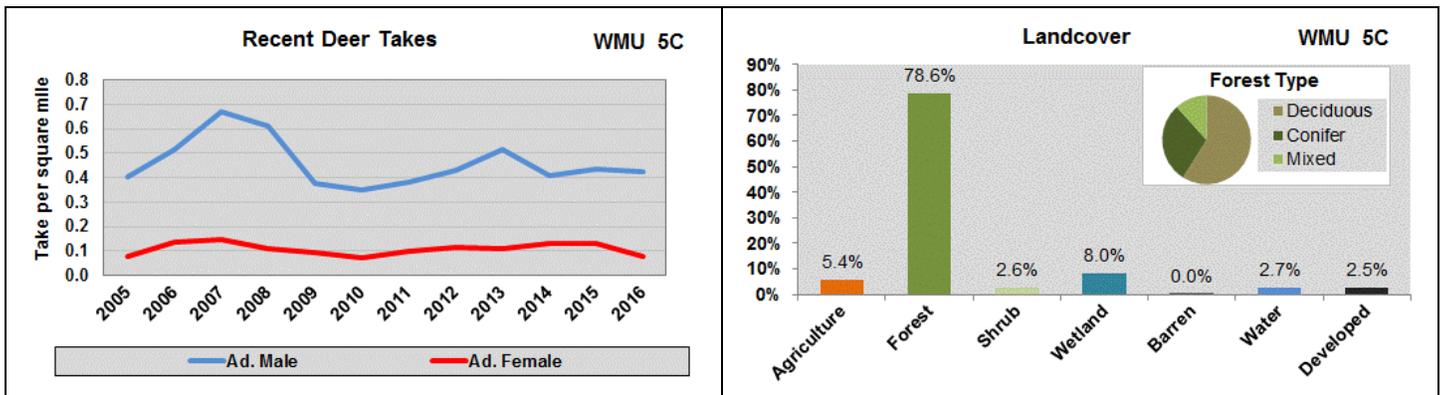
Area = 1,126 mile<sup>2</sup>

BTO =None

2016 Buck Take = 0.4 bucks harvested per mile<sup>2</sup>

2016 Total Deer Take = 0.5 deer harvested per mile<sup>2</sup>

This unit is a transition area from the farm country in the Champlain Valley to the peaks of the Adirondack Mountains. Deer population density is low, with the buck harvest ranging from 0.4 to 0.7 per mile<sup>2</sup>. The deer population is mainly controlled by winter weather in this unit. Winter conditions have been mild the past two years. Overall, buck harvest can be expected to remain stable, or slightly increase. Antlerless harvest is restricted to archery and early muzzleloading seasons when deer of either sex may be harvested in this unit. Public access in this unit is very good, with plenty of state forest preserve which is open to hunting, some Conservation Easements that are open to public hunting, and paper company leases available on large tracts. No DMPs are available in this unit.



## WMU 5F

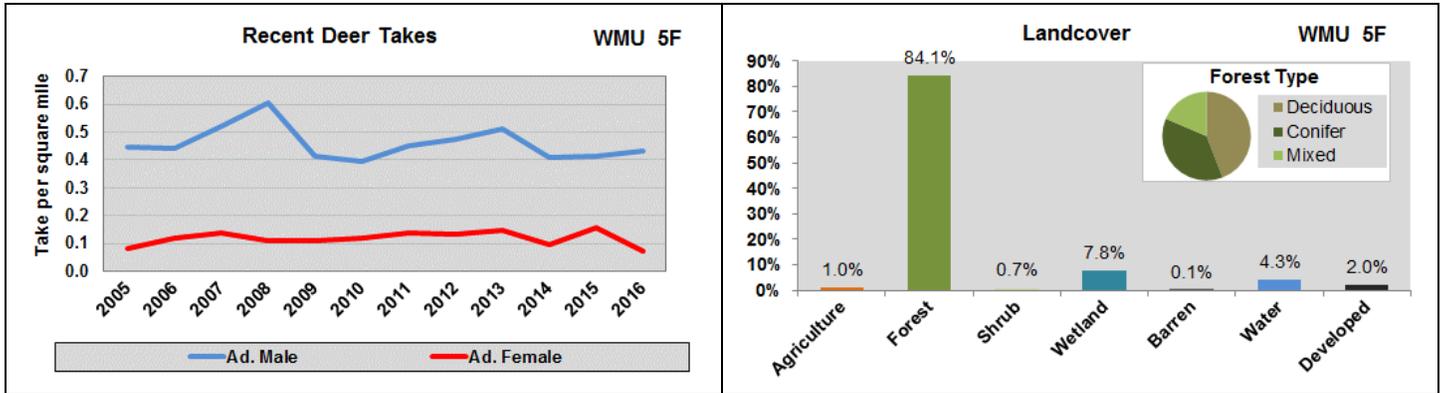
Area = 1,328 mile<sup>2</sup>

BTO = None

2016 Buck Take = 0.4 bucks harvested per mile<sup>2</sup>

2016 Total Deer Take = 0.5 deer harvested per mile<sup>2</sup>

This unit is dominated by the highest peaks in the Adirondack Mountains and is almost entirely forested. Elevations reach from around 1,000 feet to over 5,000 feet above sea level. Much of the land here is steep and remote with few roads and trails. The deer population is low, but the unit offers classic Adirondack wilderness hunting for those who are willing to hike or ride horses into the back country. The deer population in this unit is mainly controlled by winter weather, with the buck take consistently ranging from 0.4 to 0.6 per mile<sup>2</sup>. A similar buck take can be expected for the 2017 hunting season. In this unit, bucks that inhabit areas that are remote and difficult to access often live longer, affording hunters the opportunity to harvest mature animals with larger antlers. Antlerless harvest is restricted to archery and muzzleloader seasons. Public access is very good, with plenty of state forest preserve open to hunting. No DMPs are available in this unit.



## WMU 5G

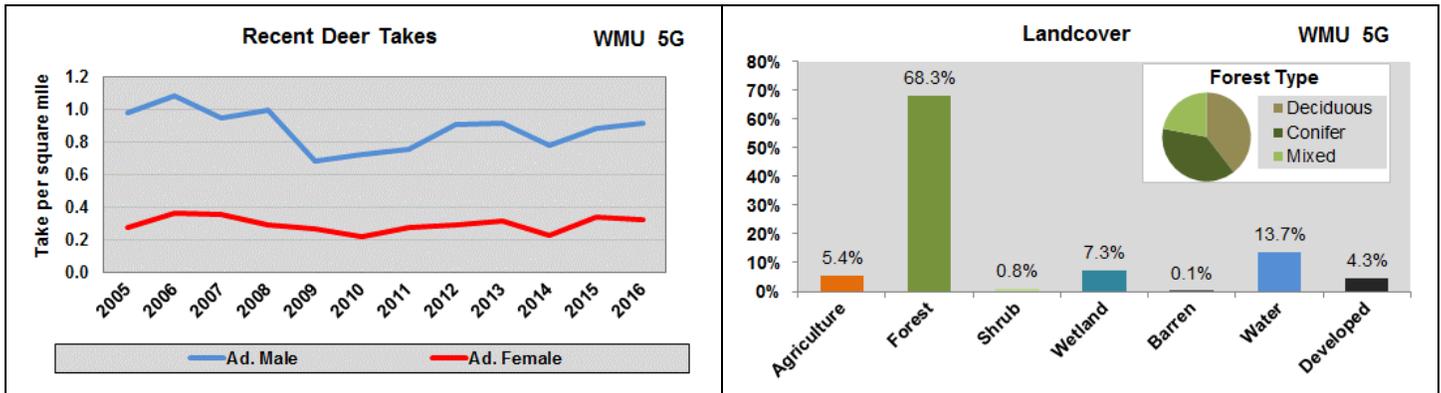
Area = 1,113 mile<sup>2</sup>

BTO = None

2016 Buck Take = 0.9 bucks harvested per mile<sup>2</sup>

2016 Total Deer Take = 1.3 deer harvested per mile<sup>2</sup>

This unit covers most of the Lake Champlain Valley and the eastern foothills of the Adirondacks. The topography ranges from rolling farms near the lake to steep forested hills to the west. The buck harvest over the last 10 years has ranged from 0.7 to 1.1 bucks per mile<sup>2</sup>. Buck take can be expected to remain stable or slightly increase this year. Both the early and late muzzleloading seasons will be for deer of either sex. Public access is good, with quite a bit of state forest preserve open to hunting in the western part of the unit. No DMPs are available.



## WMU 5H

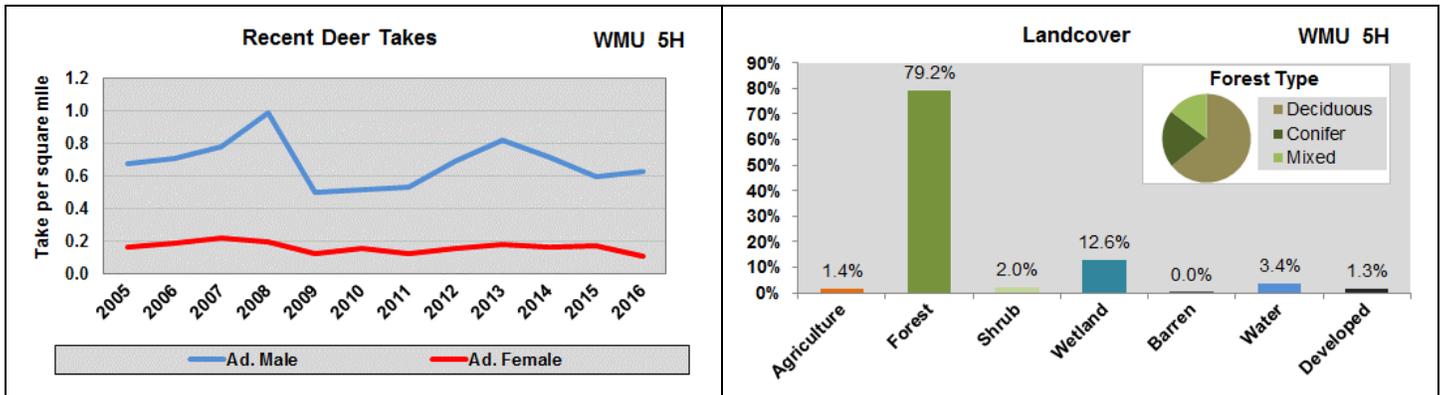
Area = 3,047 mile<sup>2</sup>

BTO = None

2016 Buck Take = 0.6 bucks harvested per mile<sup>2</sup>

2016 Total Deer Take = 0.8 deer harvested per mile<sup>2</sup>

This large unit comprises most of the central Adirondack Mountains, and is almost entirely forested. Elevations range from around 1,000 feet to over 4,000 feet above sea level. Much of the land here is steep and remote, with few roads and trails. The deer population is low and sensitive to harsh winters, with buck take ranging from 0.5 to 1.0 over the past decade. The unit offers classic Adirondack wilderness hunting for those who are willing to hike or ride horses into the back county. The deer herd is recovering from severe winters during 2013 and 2014. Due to mild winter conditions this past year, winter mortality was likely minimal. The buck take is expected to be similar to 2016 and may increase slightly. The early muzzleloading season will be for deer of either sex. Public access in this unit is very good, with plenty of state forest preserve which is open to hunting, and paper company leases available on large tracts. No DMPs are available in this unit.



## WMU 5J

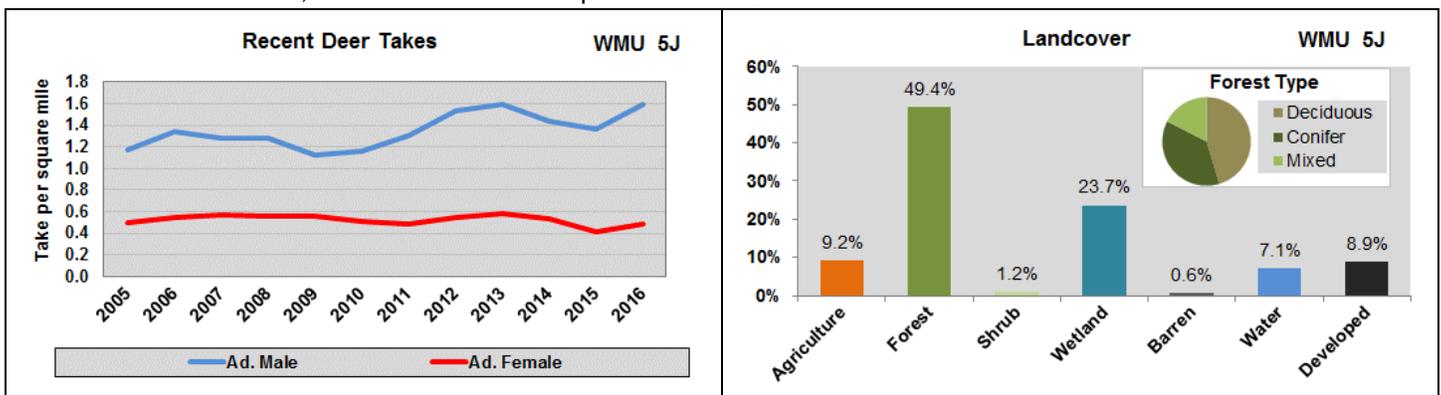
Area = 674 mile<sup>2</sup>

BTO = None

2016 Buck Take = 1.6 bucks harvested per mile<sup>2</sup>

2016 Total Deer Take = 2.2 deer harvested per mile<sup>2</sup>

This unit comprises the transition area from the Hudson and Mohawk River valleys to the foothills of the Adirondacks. The topography ranges from farm country in the eastern and southern portions to steep forested hills to the west and north. Buck harvest has ranged from 1.1 to 1.6 bucks per mile<sup>2</sup> over the past 10 years. Buck take is expected to remain stable or slightly increase this year. Both the early and late muzzleloading seasons will be for deer of either sex. Public access is fair in this unit, with some state forest preserve. No DMPs are available in this unit.



## WMU 5R

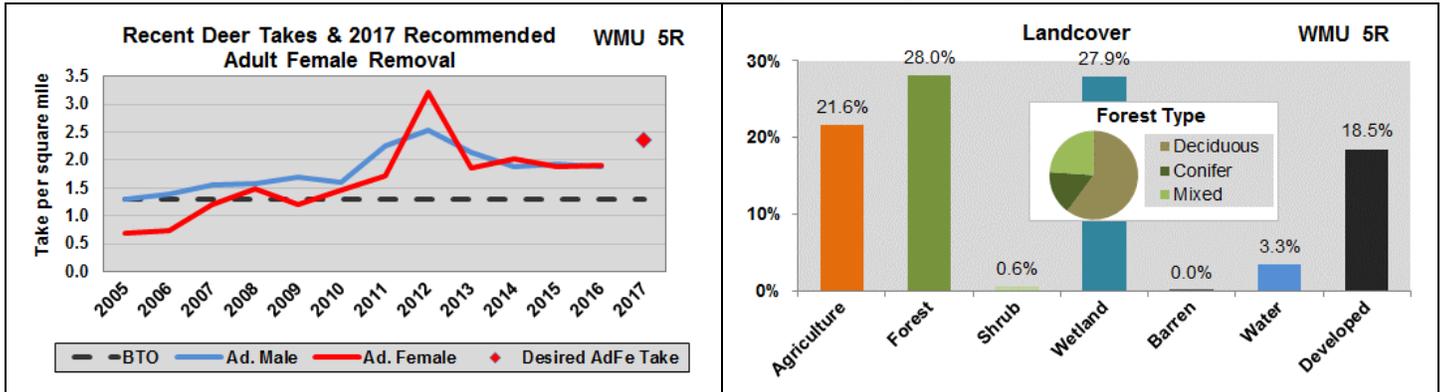
Area = 373 mile<sup>2</sup>

2016 Buck Take = 1.9 bucks harvested per mile<sup>2</sup>

BTO = 1.3 bucks harvested per mile<sup>2</sup>

2016 Total Deer Take = 4.3 deer harvested per mile<sup>2</sup>

This unit is comprised of small farms and suburban developments, mostly in southern Saratoga County. The buck harvest has remained above objective for the past decade, ranging from 1.4 to 2.5 bucks per mile<sup>2</sup>. Because of this, the DMP allocation will remain high in an attempt to decrease the population toward the objective. Both resident and non-resident hunters will have high odds of obtaining a 1<sup>st</sup> permit DMP, and some second DMPs will be issued to resident hunters. There is limited public access in this unit, which is complicated by expanding development.



## WMU 5S

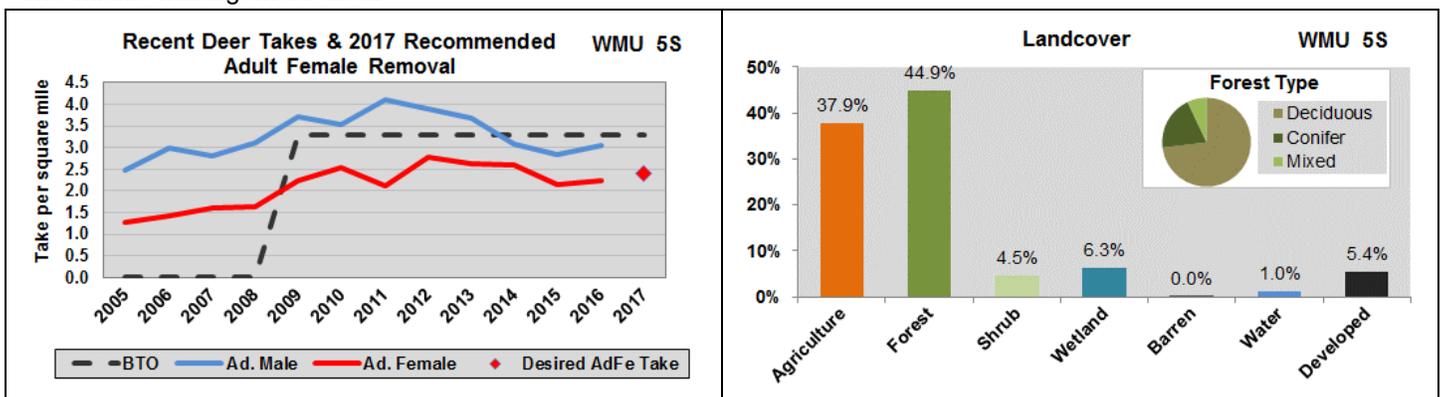
Area = 422 mile<sup>2</sup>

2016 Buck Take = 3.0 bucks harvested per mile<sup>2</sup>

BTO = 3.3 bucks harvested per mile<sup>2</sup>

2016 Total Deer Take = 5.9 deer harvested per mile<sup>2</sup>

This unit consists of farm country stretching from the Hudson River valley on the west to the Taconic Highlands along the Vermont border on the east. The topography is primarily farms interspersed with woodlots on small rolling hills, with some larger forested ridges in the eastern portion of the unit near Vermont. The buck harvest has ranged from 2.8 to 3.7 over the past 10 years. Buck harvest for the upcoming season is expected to be similar to 2016 and may slightly increase. Resident hunters will have low odds of obtaining a 1<sup>st</sup> permit DMP this year, as only applicants with preference points will receive them. There is limited public access in this unit, with some state forest land in the eastern part of the unit and one wildlife management area.



## WMU 5T

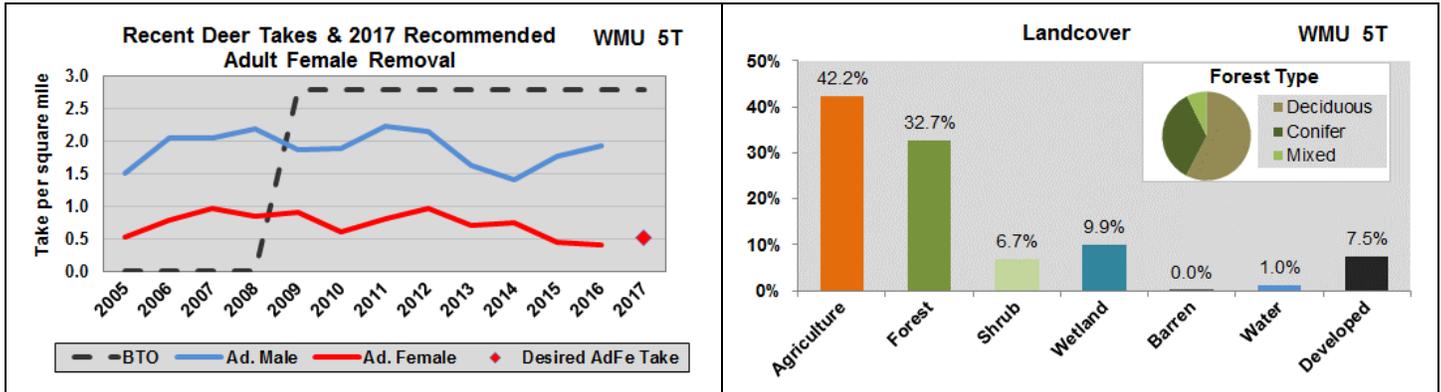
Area = 223 mile<sup>2</sup>

2016 Buck Take = 1.9 bucks harvested per mile<sup>2</sup>

BTO = 2.8 bucks harvested per mile<sup>2</sup>

2016 Total Deer Take = 2.4 deer harvested per mile<sup>2</sup>

This unit is made up of the Hudson River valley on the eastern side of the river in northwestern Washington County, plus some areas in northeastern Washington County in the Champlain valley. The topography is mostly open farm country with interspersed woodlots on small rolling hills. The buck harvest in this unit has been stable, but below objective for several years. To allow the herd to grow toward the objective, no DMPs will be issued this year. There is limited public access in this unit.



Jim Stickle  
Region 5 Big Game Biologist