

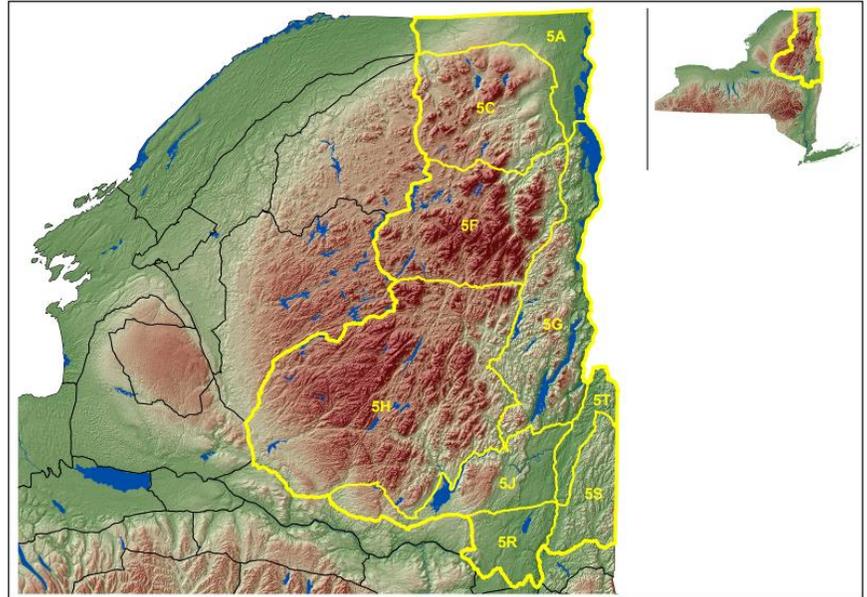
2018 DEER HUNTING FORECAST



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

Region 5

Region 5 is the largest region in New York. Occupying the northeast corner of the state, the landscape 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 larger populations in the south and north and low populations in the mountainous areas. Deer hunting opportunities range from suburban woodlots to vast wilderness forests. Six of the region's [Wildlife Management Units](#) (WMUs; 5A, 5C, 5F, 5G, 5H and 5J) are in the Northern Zone and three (5R, 5S and 5T) are in the Southern Zone.



Throughout much of the region, particularly the higher elevations of WMUs 5C, 5F and 5H, winter conditions strongly influence deer survival and population dynamics. The past three winters have been relatively mild, so deer hunters in the region should enjoy a 2018 harvest that is similar to or slightly higher than last year's.

Unit Summaries for the 2018 Season

Included in the discussion of most WMUs is a term called the Buck Take Objective (BTO). A BTO for a WMU is the number of antlered bucks expected to be harvested per square mile when the WMU's deer population is at the desired level as determined by a 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

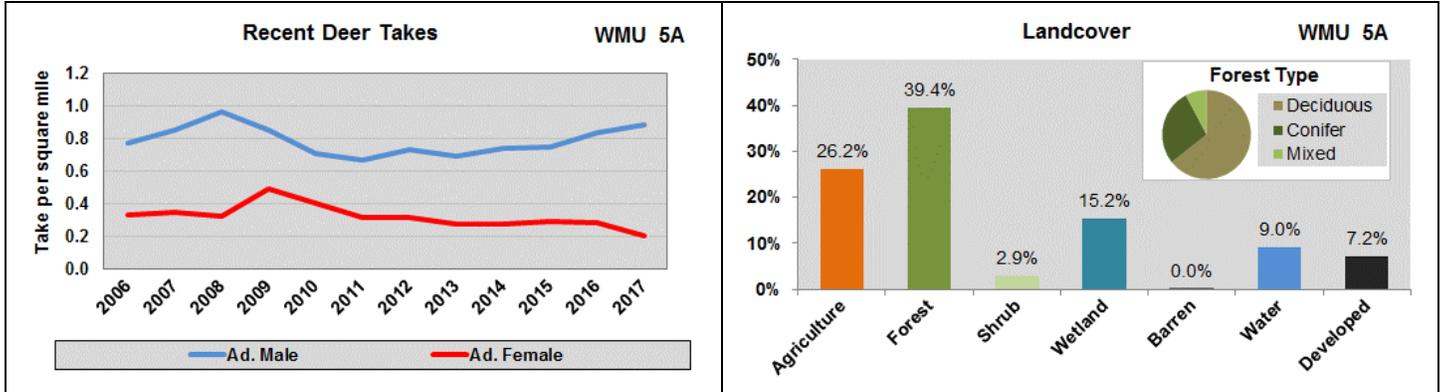
Area = 610 mile²

BTO =None

2017 Buck Take = 0.9 bucks harvested per mile²

2017 Total Deer Take = 1.2 deer harvested per mile²

This WMU 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 square mile over the past 10 years. The 2018 harvest is expected to be similar to or slightly higher than last year's. Antlerless harvest in 5A is restricted to archery and muzzleloading seasons; [Deer Management Permits \(DMPs\)](#) are not available. There will again be early and late muzzleloading seasons for deer of either sex this year. Public access in this unit is limited to a few state forests and wildlife management areas.



WMU 5C

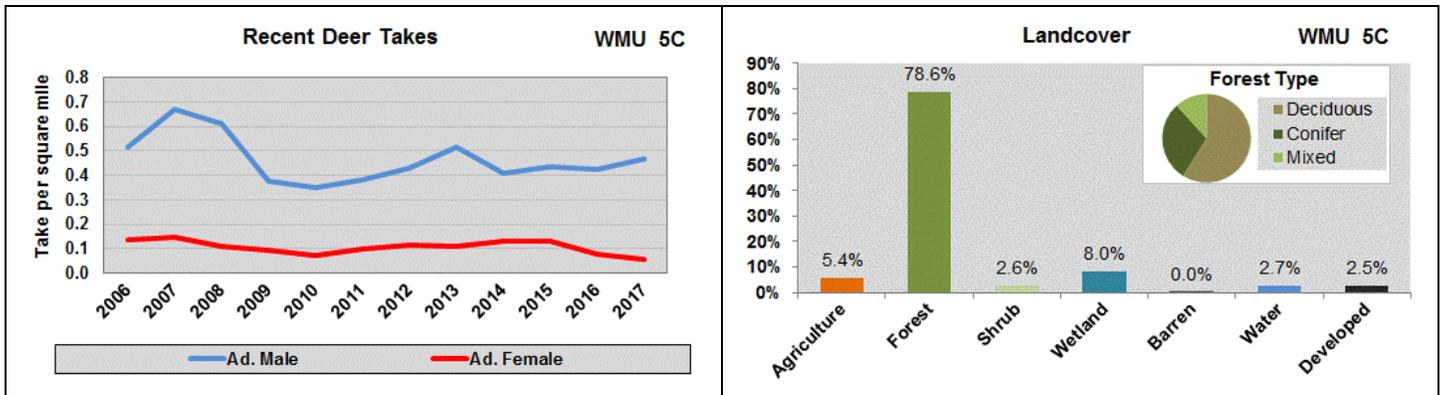
Area = 1,126 mile²

BTO =None

2017 Buck Take = 0.5 bucks harvested per mile²

2017 Total Deer Take = 0.5 deer harvested per mile²

This WMU covers the transition 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 square mile. The deer population is mainly controlled by winter weather in this unit. The 2017-18 winter was a bit more severe than the previous two, but deer survival should not have been impacted strongly. Buck harvest should remain stable or slightly increase this year. Antlerless harvest in 5C is restricted to archery and early muzzleloading seasons, when deer of either sex may be harvested. No DMPs are available. Public access in this unit is very good, with plenty of state forest preserve that is open to hunting, some conservation easements that are open to public hunting, and paper company leases available on large tracts.



WMU 5F

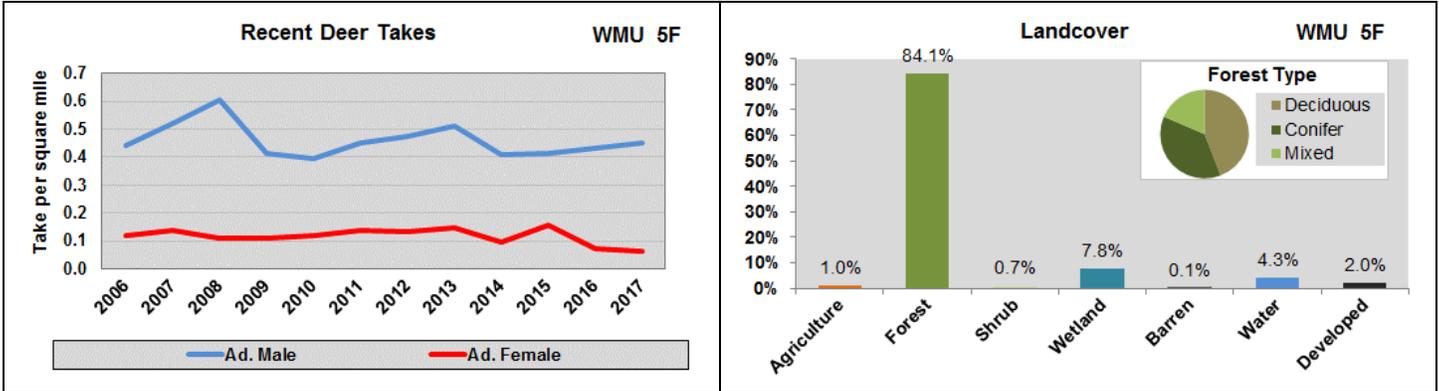
Area = 1,328 mile²

BTO = None

2017 Buck Take = 0.5 bucks harvested per mile²

2017 Total Deer Take = 0.5 deer harvested per mile²

This WMU 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 backcountry. 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. 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 square mile. A similar buck take can be expected for the 2018 hunting season. Antlerless harvest in 5F is restricted to archery and muzzleloader seasons; no DMPs are available. Public access is very good, with plenty of state forest preserve open to hunting.



WMU 5G

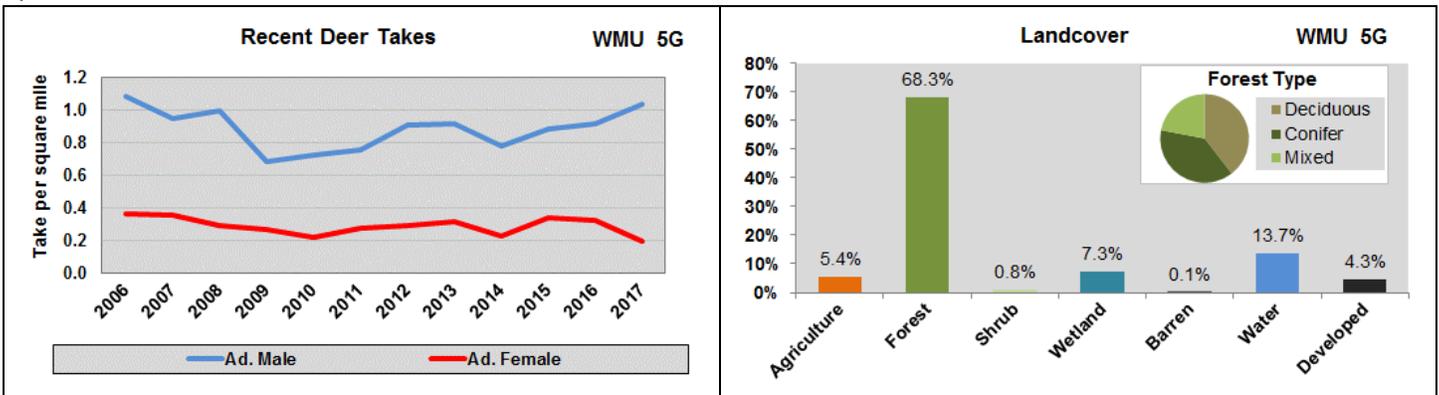
Area = 1,113 mile²

BTO = None

2017 Buck Take = 1.0 bucks harvested per mile²

2017 Total Deer Take = 1.3 deer harvested per mile²

This WMU 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. Winter conditions are generally more mild in this unit than in the units to the west. The buck harvest over the last 10 years has ranged from 0.7 to 1.0 bucks per square mile. 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

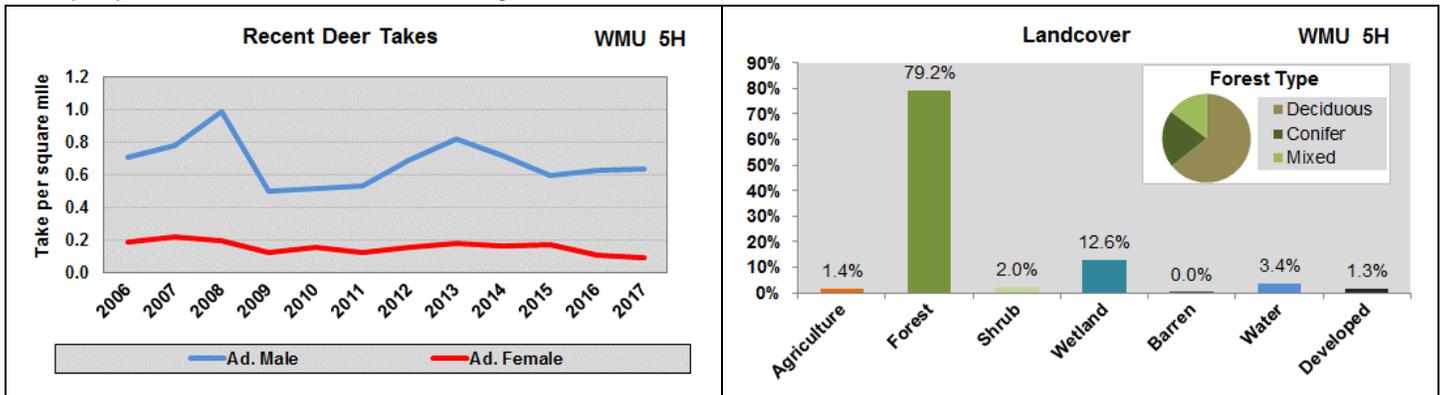
Area = 3,047 mile²

BTO = None

2017 Buck Take = 0.6 bucks harvested per mile²

2017 Total Deer Take = 0.8 deer harvested per mile²

This large WMU 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 bucks per square mile over the past decade. The unit offers classic Adirondack wilderness hunting for those who are willing to hike or ride horses into the backcountry. The deer population declined through the severe winters of 2013 and 2014 and has not yet rebounded, even though winter conditions were exceptionally mild in 2015 and moderate in 2016 and 2017. Buck harvest is not expected to change much from 2017 to 2018. The early muzzleloading season will be for deer of either sex. Public access in 5H is very good, with plenty of state forest preserve that is open to hunting, as well as paper company leases that are available on large tracts. No DMPs are available in this unit.



WMU 5J

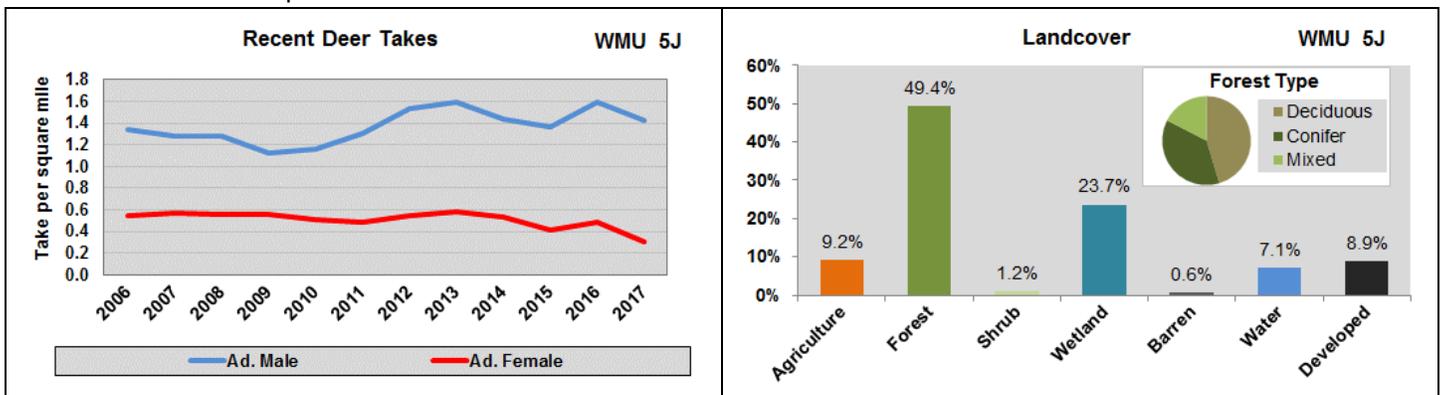
Area = 674 mile²

BTO = None

2017 Buck Take = 1.4 bucks harvested per mile²

2017 Total Deer Take = 1.9 deer harvested per mile²

This WMU 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 square mile over the past 10 years. Given recent winter conditions and recent reductions in antlerless harvest, the 2018 buck take should be similar to or slightly greater than the 2017 buck take. Both the early and late muzzleloading seasons will be for deer of either sex. Public access is fair in 5J, with some state forest preserve. No DMPs are available in this unit.



WMU 5R

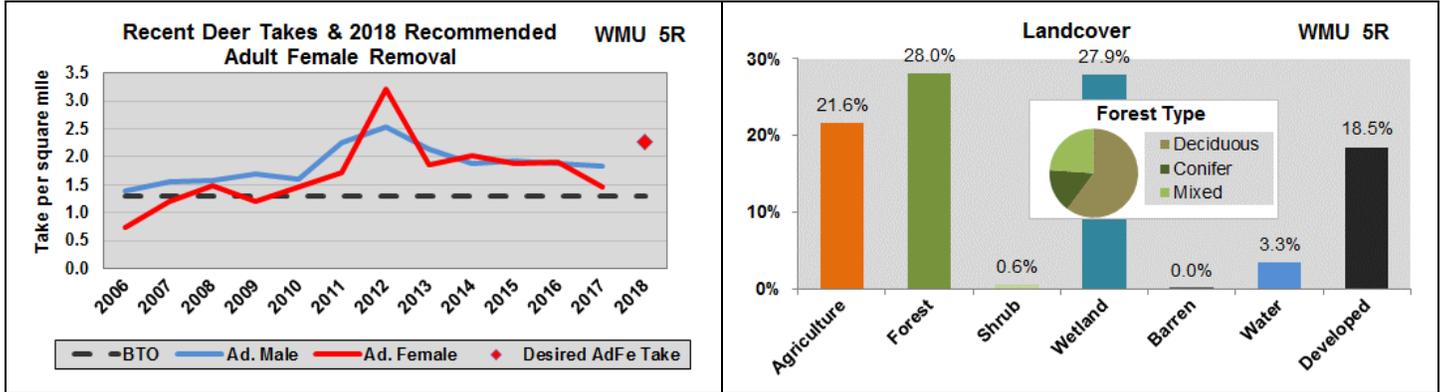
Area = 373 mile²

2017 Buck Take = 1.8 bucks harvested per mile²

BTO = 1.3 bucks harvested per mile²

2017 Total Deer Take = 3.8 deer harvested per mile²

This WMU comprises 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 square mile. 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 1st or 2nd choice DMP in 5R. There is limited public access in this unit, which is complicated by expanding development.



WMU 5S

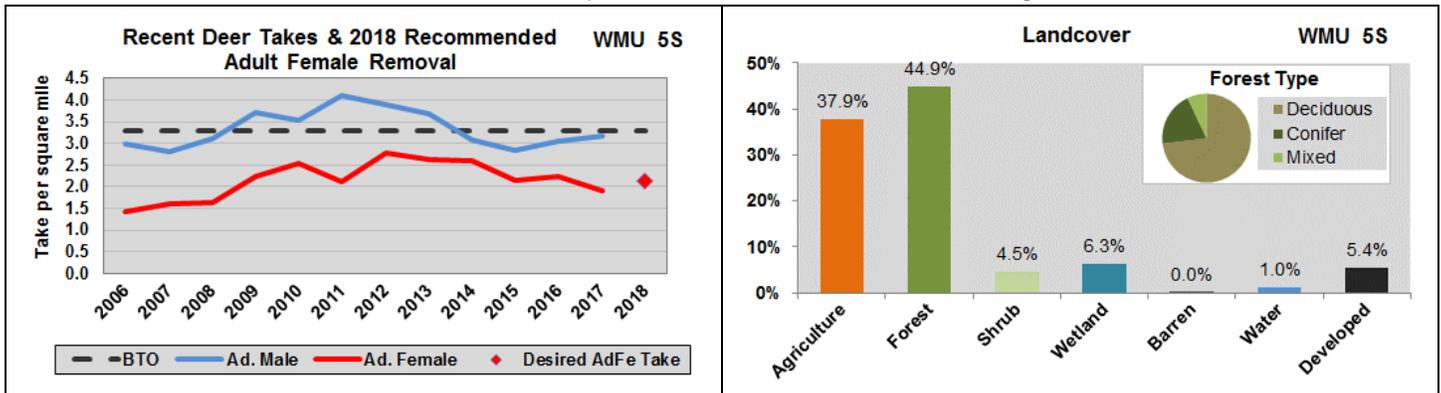
Area = 422 mile²

2017 Buck Take = 3.2 bucks harvested per mile²

BTO = 3.3 bucks harvested per mile²

2017 Total Deer Take = 5.8 deer harvested per mile²

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 landscape 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 4.1 bucks per square mile over the past 10 years. Buck take for the upcoming season is expected to be similar to the 2017 buck take and may slightly increase. We have increased the DMP quota modestly for 2018, but because many applicants are interested in this WMU, DMPs will only be available to applicants with preference points. There is limited public access in 5S, with some state forest land in the eastern part of the unit and one wildlife management area.



WMU 5T

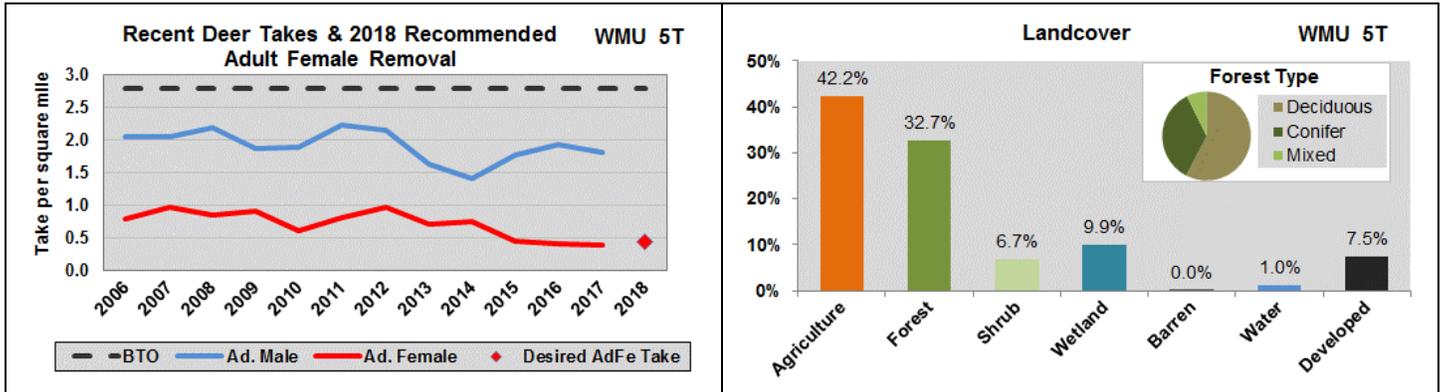
Area = 223 mile²

2017 Buck Take = 1.8 bucks harvested per mile²

BTO = 2.8 bucks harvested per mile²

2017 Total Deer Take = 2.4 deer harvested per mile²

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 landscape is mostly open farm country with interspersed woodlots on small rolling hills. The buck harvest in 5T has fluctuated below the 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