



2018-19 Deer Harvest Summary
Southwest Hamilton Wildlife Management Association
Hamilton and Lampasas Counties

This report provides a deer harvest summary for the 2018-19 hunting season and discusses overall trends since the inception of the association in 1999. Trends and averages in this report are derived from association member-collected deer age and antler data. Sixteen members provided deer harvest information on a total of 7,467 acres, which represents an increase compared to last year (13 members and 6,807 acres). The total number of deer reported harvested was the lowest since the inception of the WMA. I suspect more deer were harvested, but not reported or available for this summary.

Harvest Trends

- The recommended (maximum allowable) buck harvest for the 2018-19 hunting season was 1 buck per 142 acres.
- The actual buck harvest (191 acres per buck) was more conservative than the allowable harvest rate and is less than the buck harvest rate in 2017-18 (158 acres per buck).
- 39 antlered bucks were harvested last season, as compared to 43 bucks during 2017-18. Of these, 20% were spikes, 15% had 3-7 points, and 65% had 8+ points.
- There is a declining trend, albeit relatively minor, in buck harvest from 1999 to 2018, but an increasing trend over the last few years in 8+ point bucks harvested (**Figure 1**). This declining trend may be influenced by selective buck harvest, a decline in hunter density and/or hunting effort (**Figure 2**).
- The recommended doe harvest for 2018-19 was 1 doe per 91 acres. The actual harvest rate of antlerless deer (1 antlerless deer per 213 acres) fell short of the harvest rate objective and was the lowest doe harvest rate on record. There is a declining trend in antlerless deer harvest from 1999 to 2018 (**Figure 3**).
- The ratio of antlerless deer to adult bucks in the harvest (0.89) was significantly less compared to past harvest rates and did not meet the recommended harvest ratio of 1.50 does per harvested buck.
- For the 2018-19 season 115 feral hogs were harvested at a rate of 1 hog harvested every 64 acres (**Figure 7**). This was significantly less than last seasons harvest of 219.

Southwest Hamilton WMA Buck harvest objectives:

- 1) Selectively harvest bucks that are approaching or have reached maturity, at least 4 ½ years old
- 2) Remove bucks that display inferior antler characteristics compared to other bucks in their same age class. This has included a management strategy that removes spikes and 3 ½ year-olds with 7 or fewer points.

Age and Antler Information

Bucks

There were some parts of antler data and verified ages for 38 of the 39 harvested, antlered bucks (**Table 1**). The chart in **Figure 5** outlines the buck harvest by age class and is very good to see 7 bucks (18% of antlered) harvested that were 5.5 years of age or older. We know on average peak antler development is around 6.5 years of age.

- 26% of the antlered bucks were **1.5 years old**. Nine of the 10 yearlings harvested were spike-antlered or had at least one un-branched antler and were considered management bucks.
- 13% (5 of 38) of the bucks were **2.5 years old**. Four had forked antlers and did not meet the harvest criteria of the association. Only 1 of the 5 bucks met the harvest criteria of the association.
- 21% (8 of 38) of the bucks were **3.5 years old**. Only 1 of these deer had 7 or fewer antler points and therefore, met the harvest criteria of the association. However, 7 of the 8 bucks harvested in this age class did not meet the harvest criteria for the WMA
- 36% of the bucks were **4.5 years old or older**. All 14 were considered mature or approaching maturity under the current harvest strategy. There is an increasing trend of 4.5+ year-olds in the harvest over the past 20 years (**Figure 4**).

Does

Ages were available for 32 of the 35 harvested does. Four doe fawns (12%) and 11 yearlings (34%) were reported harvested. Approximately 25% of the harvested does were ≥ 4.5 years old (**Figure 5**).

Field-dressed weights

The 2018-19 average field dressed weights (FDW) by age class can be observed in (**Table 1**). Weights were only collected on 37 of the 74 deer reported harvested.

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Table 1. Harvest Summary Data

Southwest Hamilton WMA - 2018-19 Season
Lampasas and Hamilton Counties

Annual Summary - Age, Weight, Antler, Sex Data

Age	Males Killed	% of Kill	Number Spikes Killed	Weight		Points		Inside Spread		Beam Circumference		Beam Length		Females Killed	% of Kill	Weight		Total Harvest	% of Total Harvest
				N	Ave	N	Ave	N	Ave*	N	Ave*	N	Ave*			N	Ave		
0.5	1	2.6%	1	0	0	1	2.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	12.5%	3	57	5	7.1%
1.5	10	26.3%	7	3	57	10	2.6	2	5.2	0	0.0	1	5.8	11	34.4%	8	64	21	30.0%
2.5	5	13.2%	0	1	97	5	7.4	1	7.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	12.5%	3	70	9	12.9%
3.5	8	21.1%	0	4	105	8	8.8	4	14.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	15.6%	2	73	13	18.6%
4.5	7	18.4%	0	5	133	6	9.7	4	15.0	1	3.5	1	17.0	3	9.4%	1	80	10	14.3%
5.5	4	10.5%	0	3	118	4	9.8	3	14.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	9.4%	3	65	7	10.0%
6.5	1	2.6%	0	1	118	1	4.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	6.3%	2	78	3	4.3%
7.5	1	2.6%	0	1	125	1	12.0	1	12.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0%	0	0	1	1.4%
8.5+	1	2.6%	0	0	0	1	10.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0%	0	0	1	1.4%
COMB	38	99.9%	8	18	108	36	7.1	15	12.8	1	3.5	2	11.4	32	100.1%	19	68	70	100.0%

* Inches

Comments: Fawns were not used in calculating Combined averages.
Verified age data were available from 38 of the 39 males (38 antlered and 1 buck fawn) reported harvested.
Verified age data were available from 32 of the 35 females reported harvested.
Deer of unknown age were not included in the calculations.

Table 1. Harvest Summary Data

Southwest Hamilton WMA - 2018-19 Season

Minimum and Maximum Weights by Age Class

AGE	BUCKS				DOES			
	SAMPLE SIZE	FIELD DRESSED WT. (lbs) AVE	MIN	MAX	SAMPLE SIZE	FIELD DRESSED WT. (lbs) AVE	MIN	MAX
0.5	0	0	0	0	3	57	40	72
1.5	3	57	50	65	8	64	55	75
2.5	1	97	97	97	3	70	64	75
3.5	4	105	90	115	2	73	70	76
4.5	5	133	125	145	1	80	80	80
5.5	3	118	115	125	3	65	60	71
6.5	1	118	118	118	2	78	75	80
7.5	1	125	125	125	0	0	0	0
8.5+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ALL	18				22			
1.5+	18	108	50	145	19	68	55	80

Figure 1. SW Hamilton WMA Buck Harvest
 (Maximum recommended for 2018 = 1 buck/142 ac. Actual = 1 buck/191 ac.)

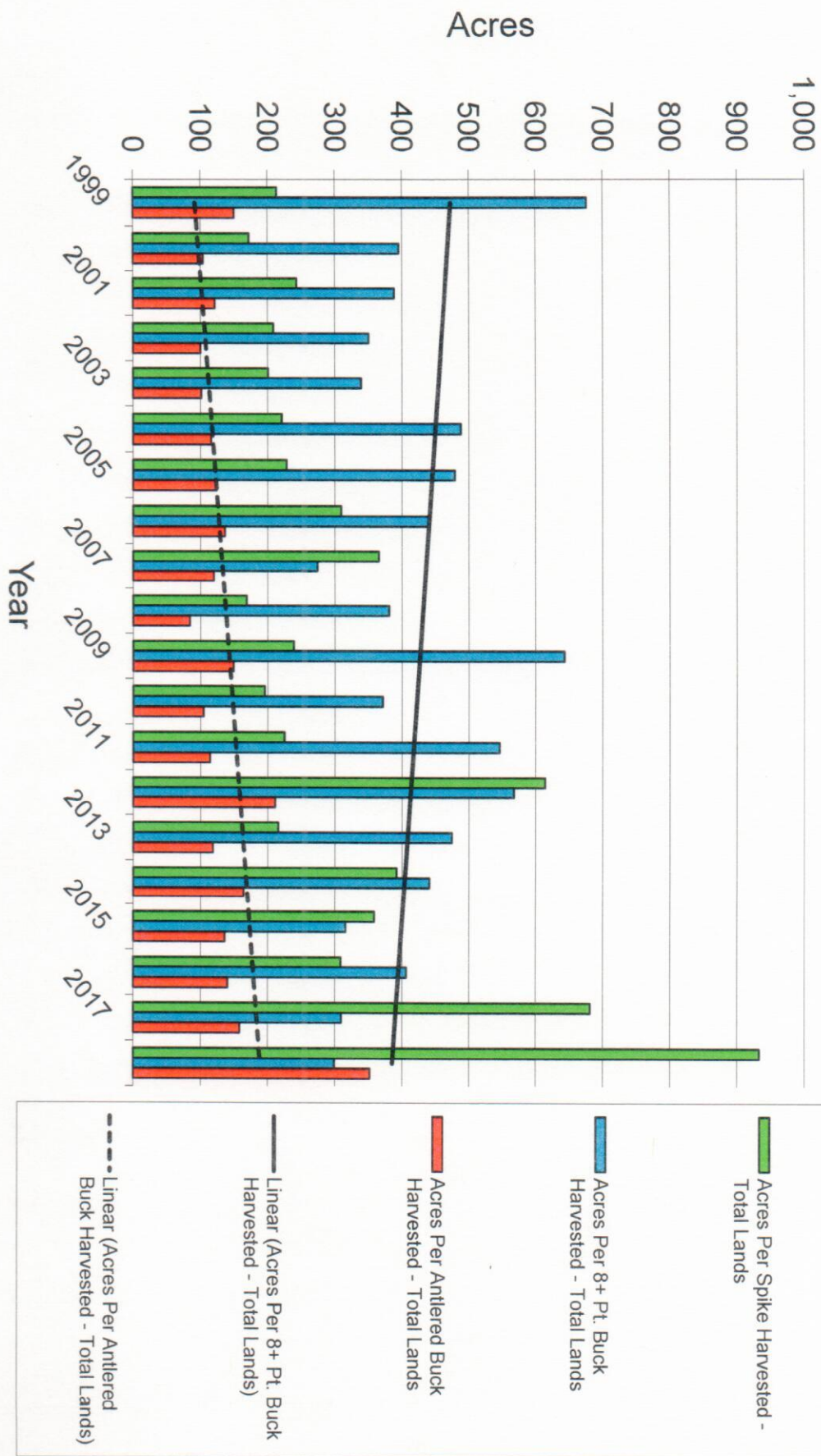


Figure 2. Hunter Density/Total Hunter Days
SW Hamilton WMA



Figure 3. SW Hamilton WMA Antlerless Harvest
 (Max. recommended 2018 = 1 antlerless/91 ac. Actual = 1/213 ac.)

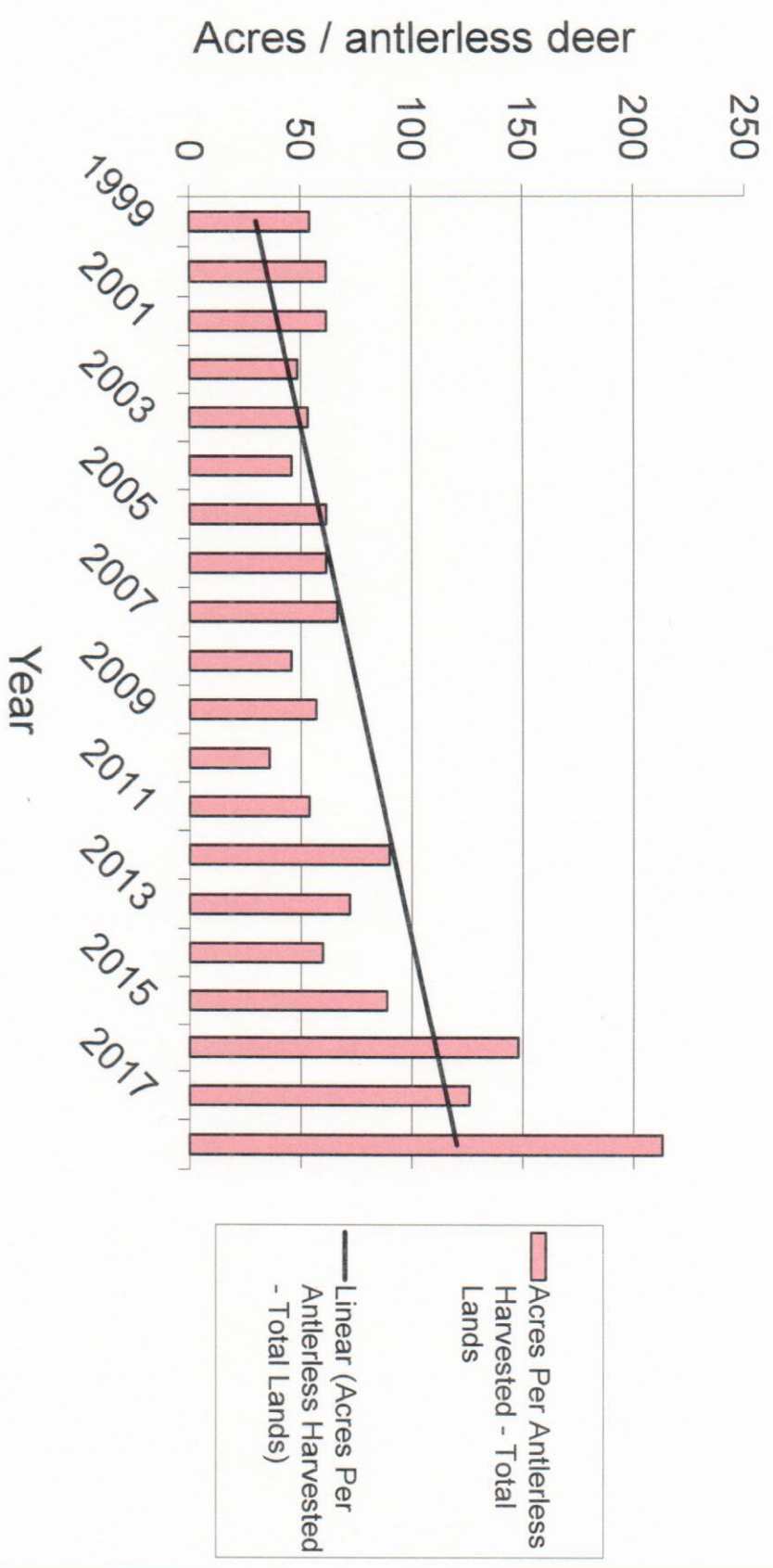
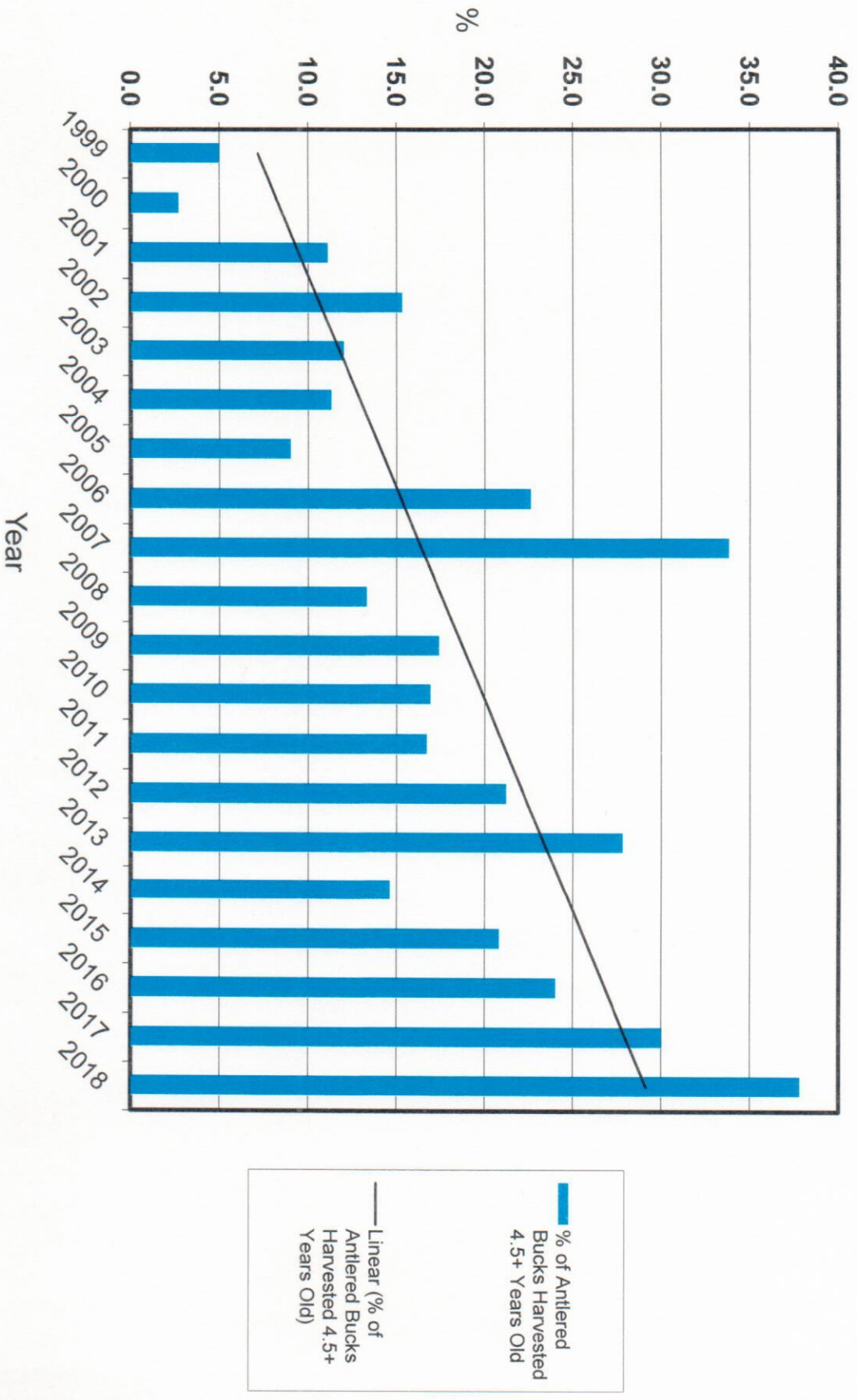


Figure 4. The proportion of 4.5+ year-old bucks in the antlered buck harvest, SW Hamilton WMA.



█ % of Antlered Bucks Harvested 4.5+ Years Old
 — Linear (% of Antlered Bucks Harvested 4.5+ Years Old)

Figure 5. Harvest by age class

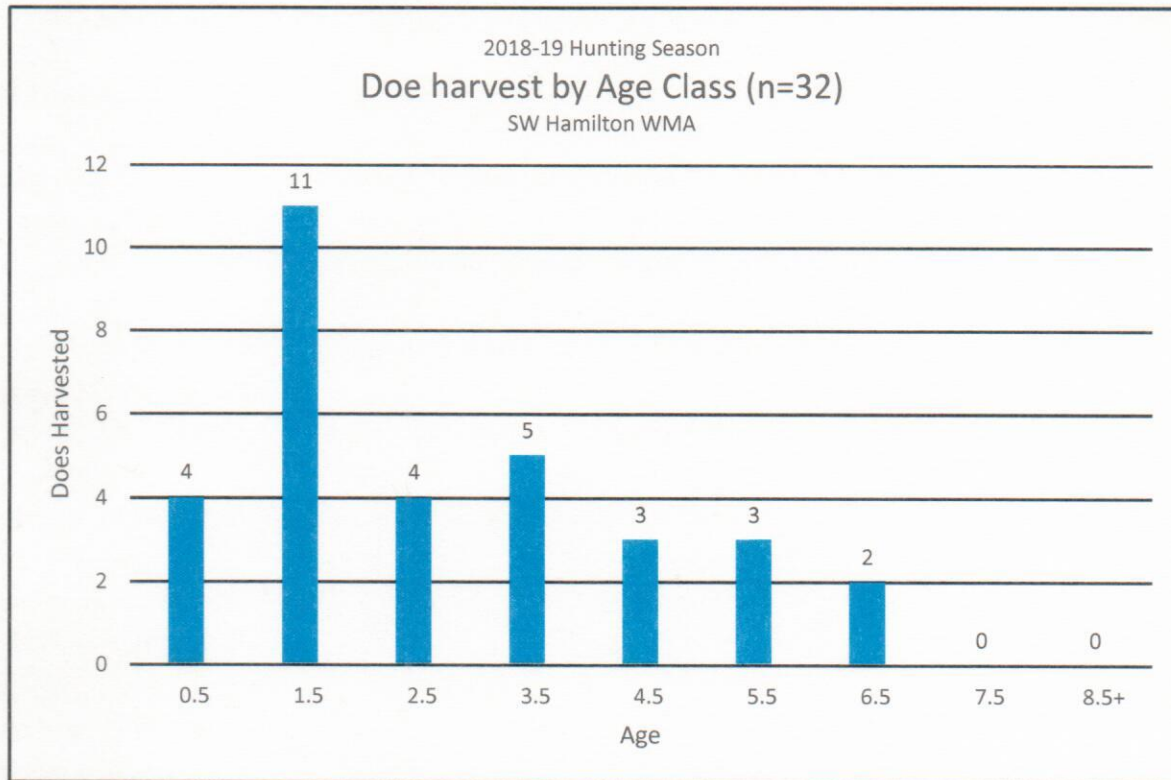
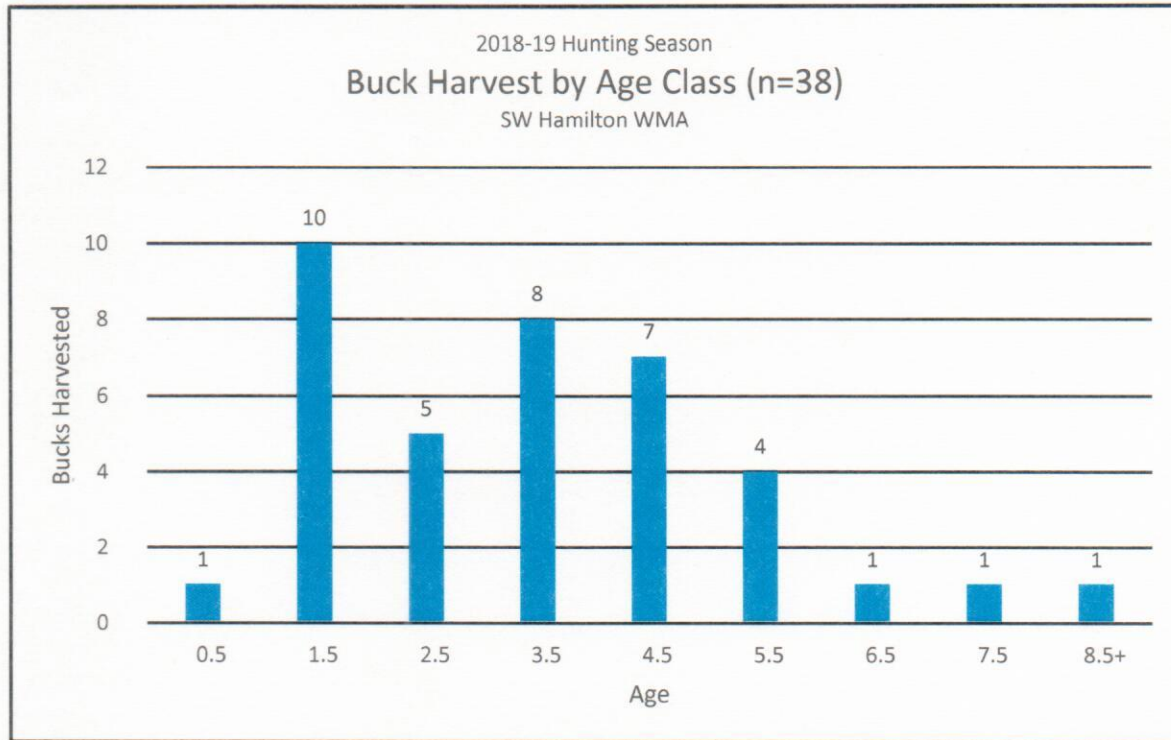


Figure 6. Feral hog harvests SW Hamilton WMA, 2007-2018

