



2020 DEER HARVEST SURVEY

Brian Frawley
July 15, 2021

MAJOR CHANGES IN 2020

- COVID-19 restrictions existed
- The combination license could be used to take antlerless deer in the entire Lower Peninsula in all firearm and muzzleloader seasons
- The area open to hunting during the early and late antlerless seasons included the entire LP (except for the island DMUs)
- The late antlerless firearm season was nine days longer, while the muzzleloader season in the SLP was seven days shorter



HARVEST TAGS SOLD, 2018-2020.

	Number sold in 2018	Number sold in 2019	Number sold in 2020	Change Between 2019 and 2020 (%)
Licenses or Harvest Tags				
Harvest Tags Issued				
Deer	210,911	201,987	153,802	-23.9
Combination	720,898	709,116	872,806	23.1
Antlerless	355,494	351,139	333,316	-5.1
Mentored Youth	11,361	10,142	12,020	18.5
Total Harvest Tags	1,298,664	1,272,384	1,371,944	7.8



2020 DEER HARVEST SURVEY

- 615,948 people purchased a license (2% increase)
- 26,403 of 60,583 questionnaires returned (44% response)
- Estimates standardized to be comparable with estimates from previous years



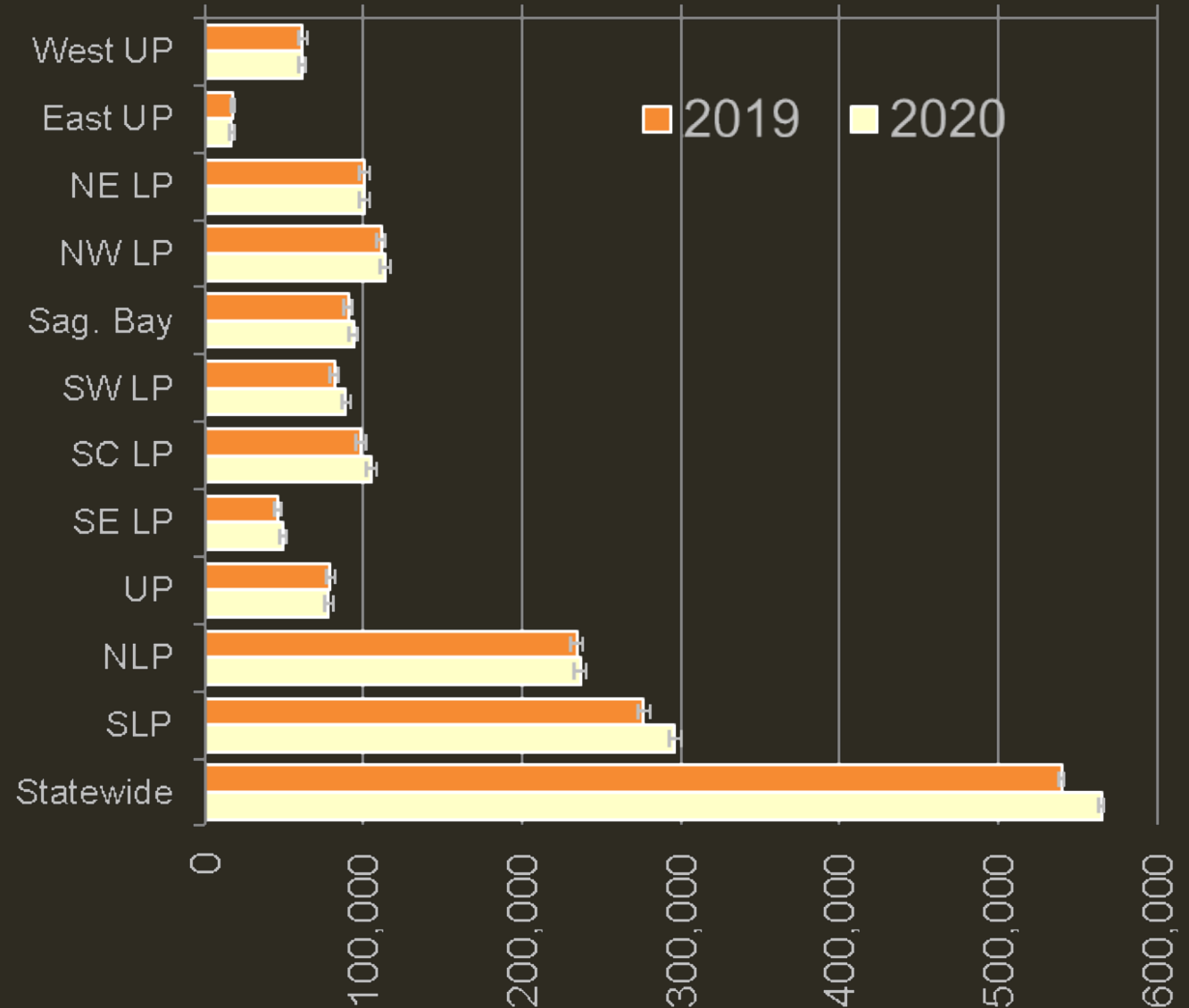
2020 DEER HARVEST SURVEY

- 615,948 people purchased a license (2% increase)
- 26,403 of 60,583 questionnaires returned (44% response)
- Estimates standardized to be comparable with estimates from previous years



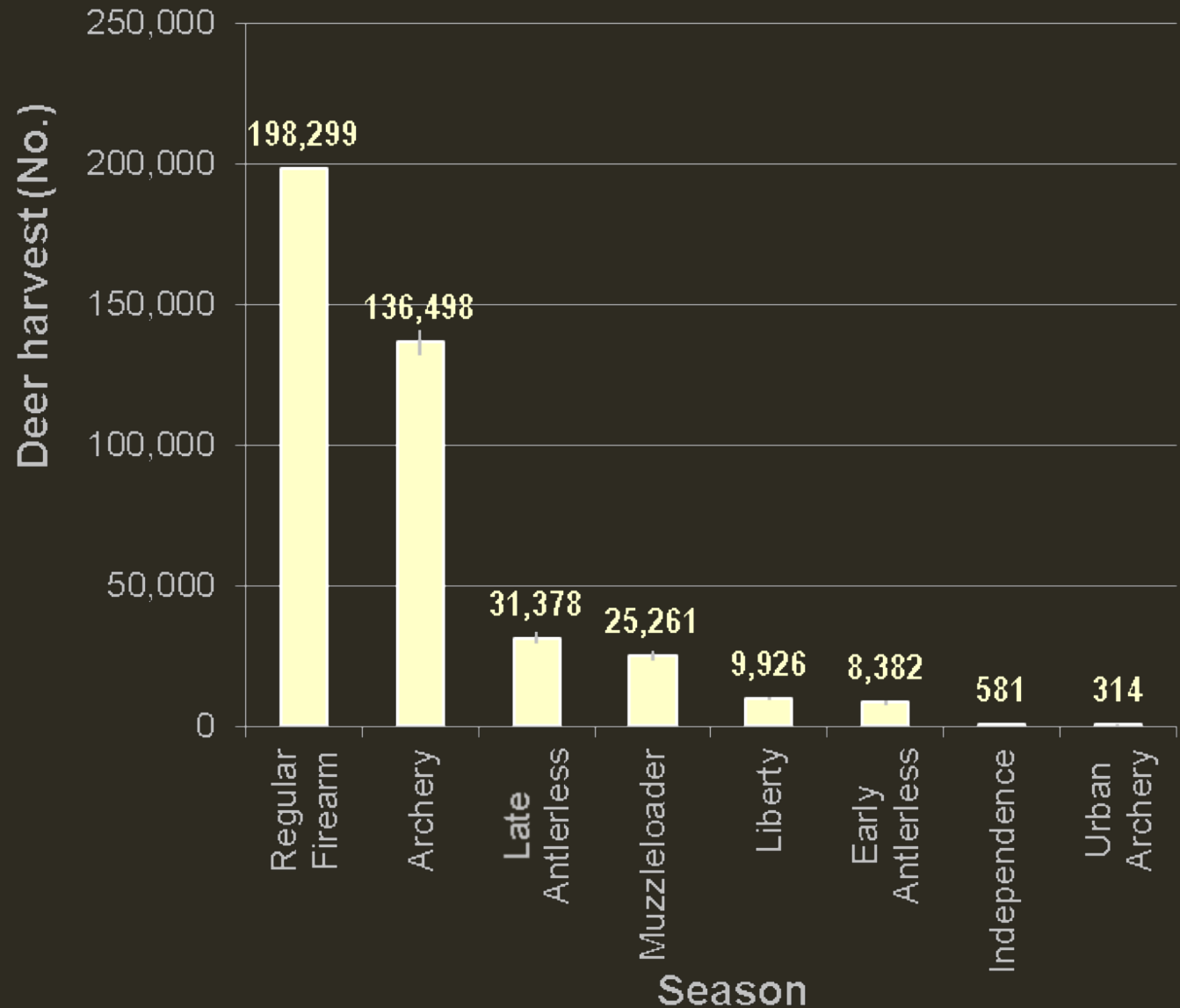
2020 DEER HUNTERS

- For all seasons combined, 565,132 people hunted deer, which was nearly 5% greater than last year.
- Hunter numbers only increased in the SLP.

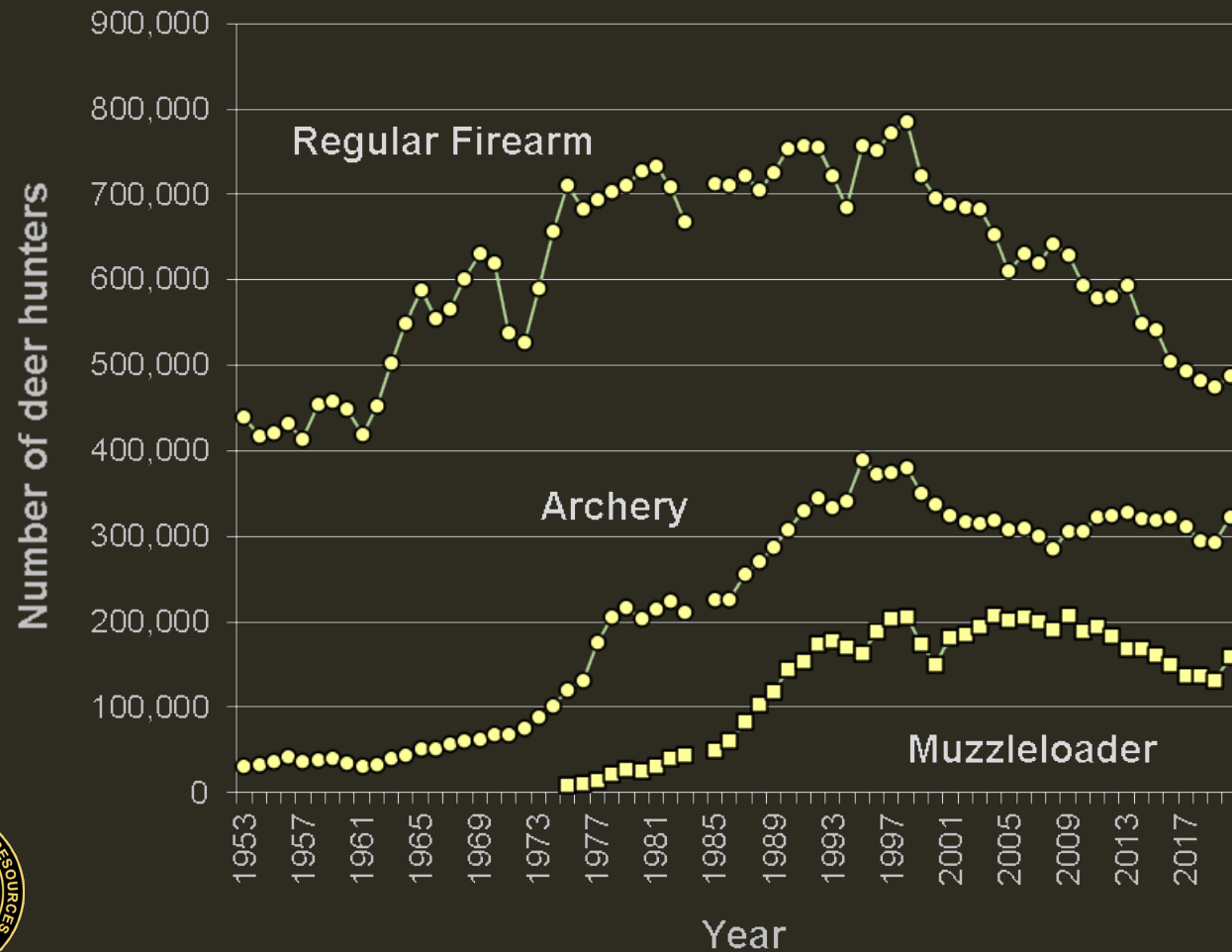


2020 DEER HUNTERS

Hunter numbers increased significantly the early antlerless (92%), late antlerless (74%), Independence (58%), muzzleloader (22%), Liberty (16%), archery (10%), and regular firearm (3%) seasons.



LONG-TERM DEER HUNTER TRENDS



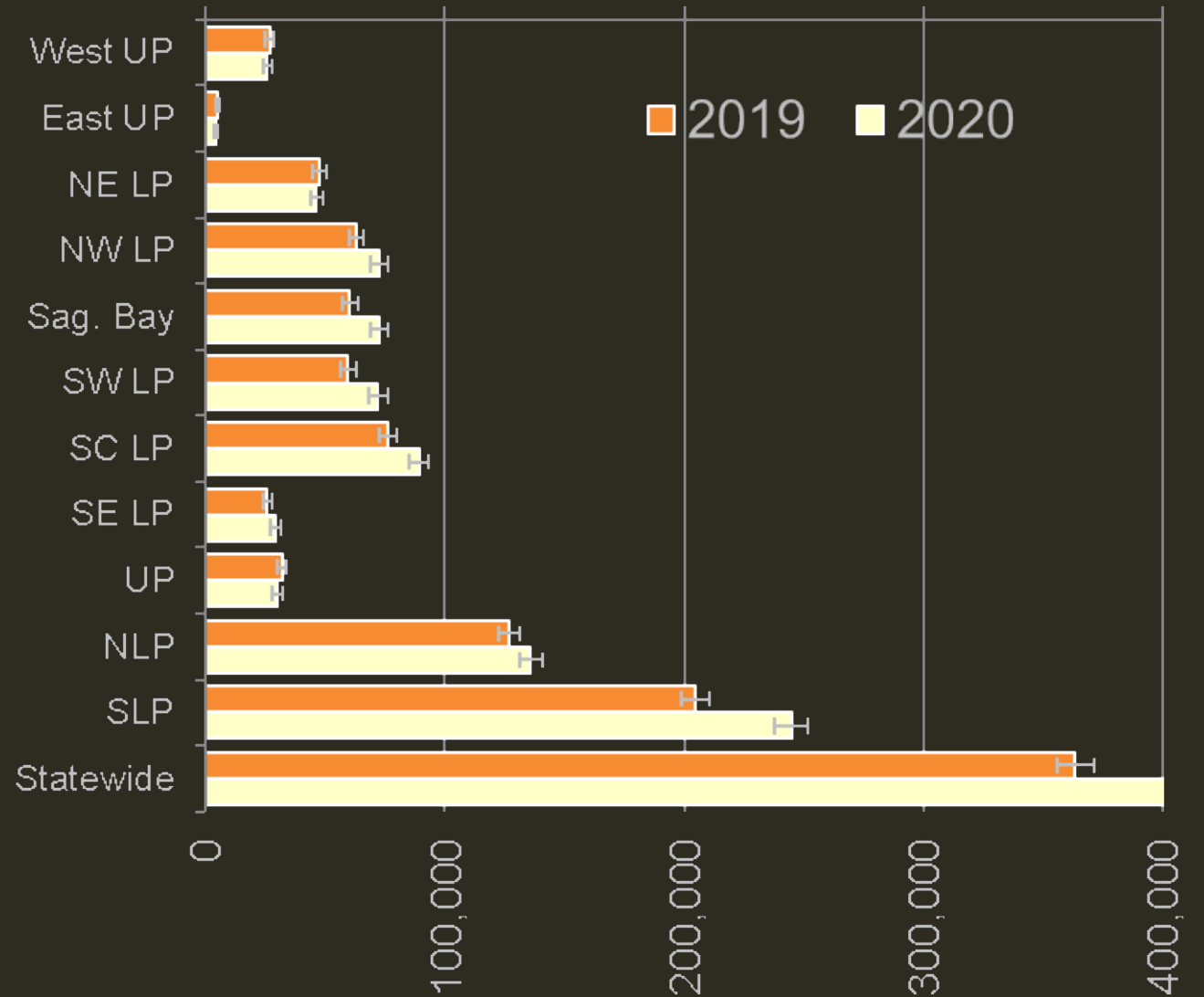
Fewer people hunting during the regular firearm and muzzleloader seasons.

The number of archers has been relatively stable.



2020 DEER HARVEST

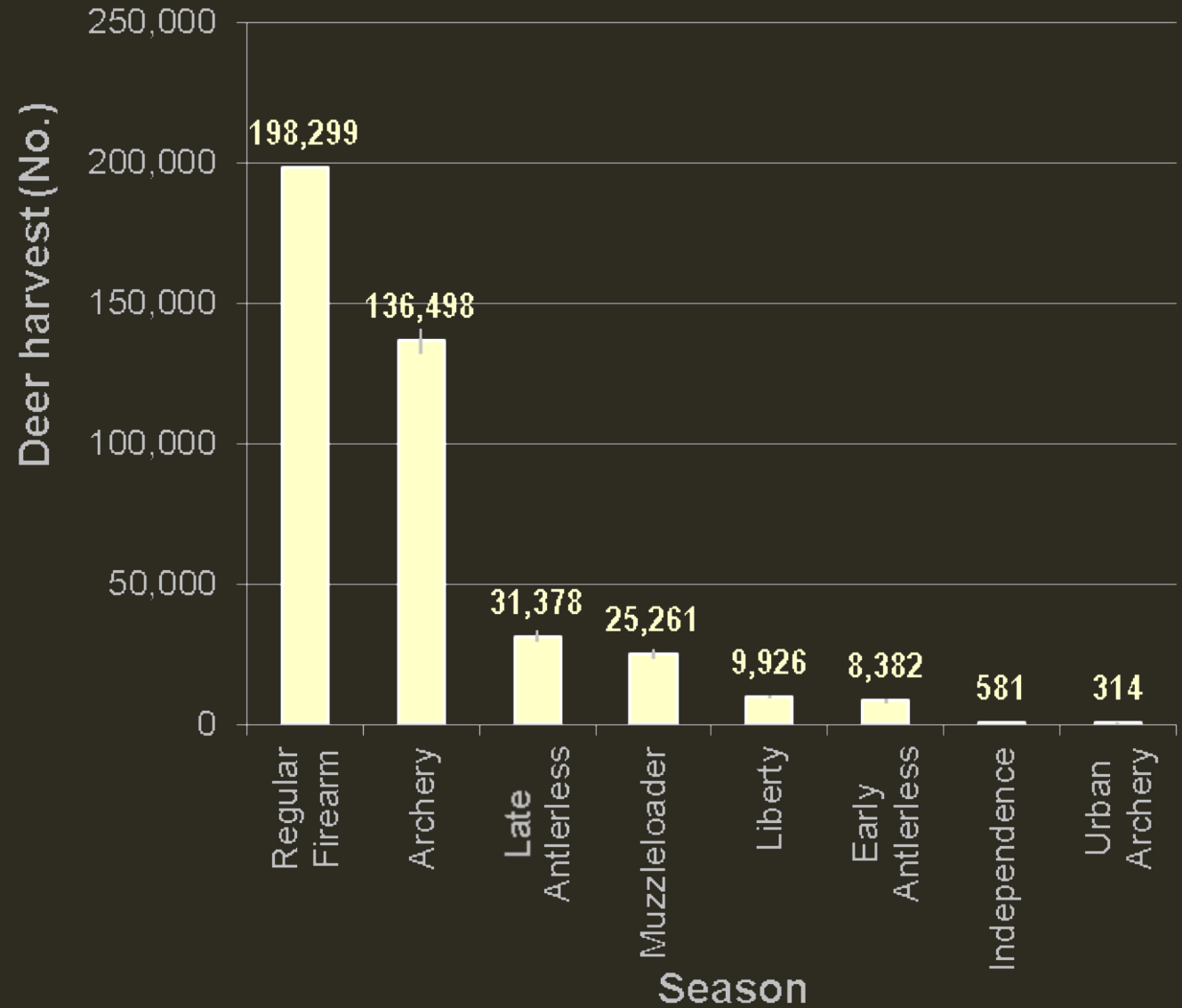
- In all seasons combined, 410,639 deer were harvested, which was an increase of about 13% from last year (363,678).
- Buck harvest was not significantly different from 2019, but antlerless deer harvest increased by 26%.
- Harvest increased significantly in the SLP (19%).



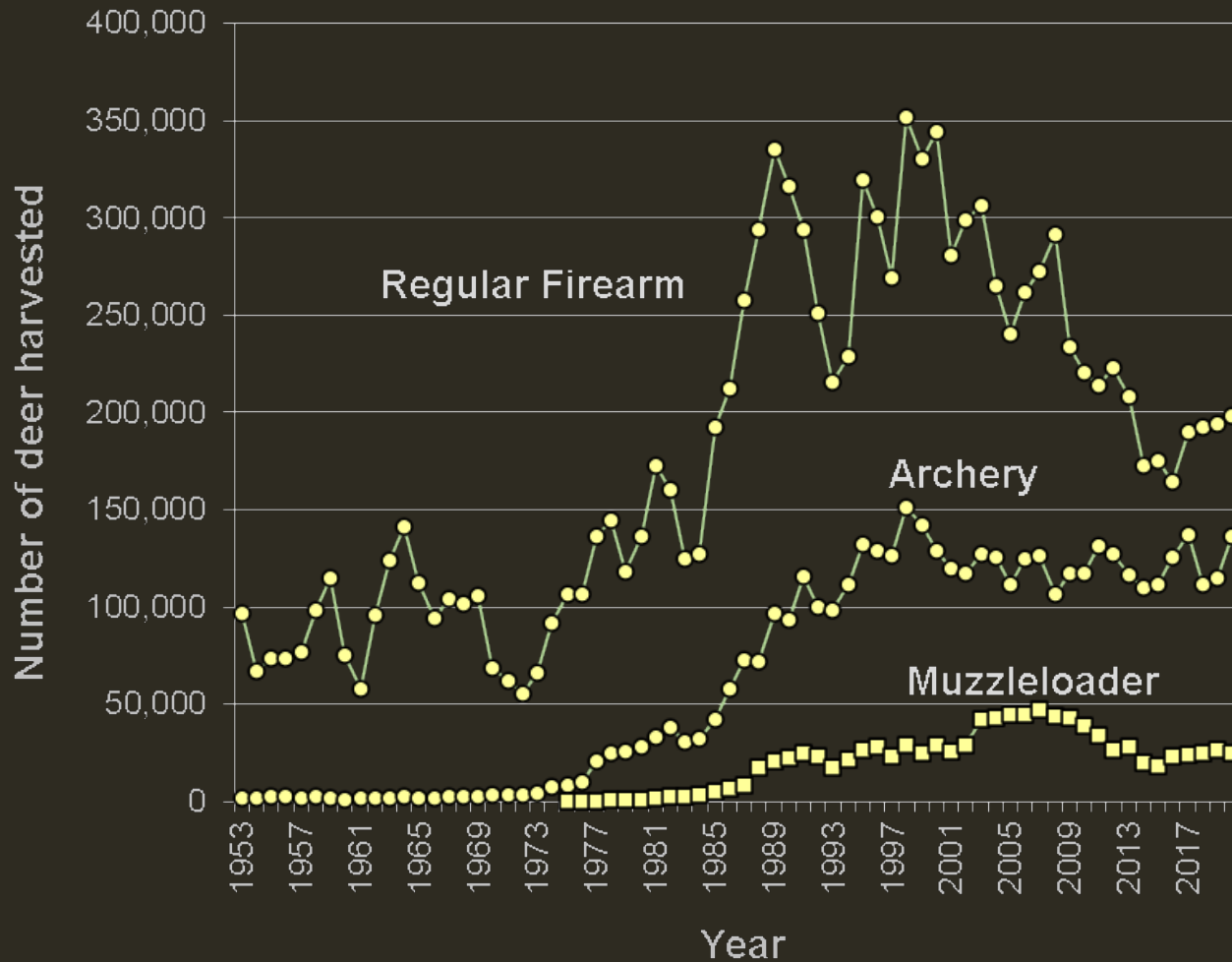
2020 DEER HARVEST

Harvest increased significantly in the early antlerless (206%), late antlerless (100%), archery (19%), and Liberty (17%) seasons

Harvest was unchanged in the remaining seasons (Independence, muzzleloader, regular firearm, and urban archery seasons).



LONG-TERM DEER HARVEST TRENDS



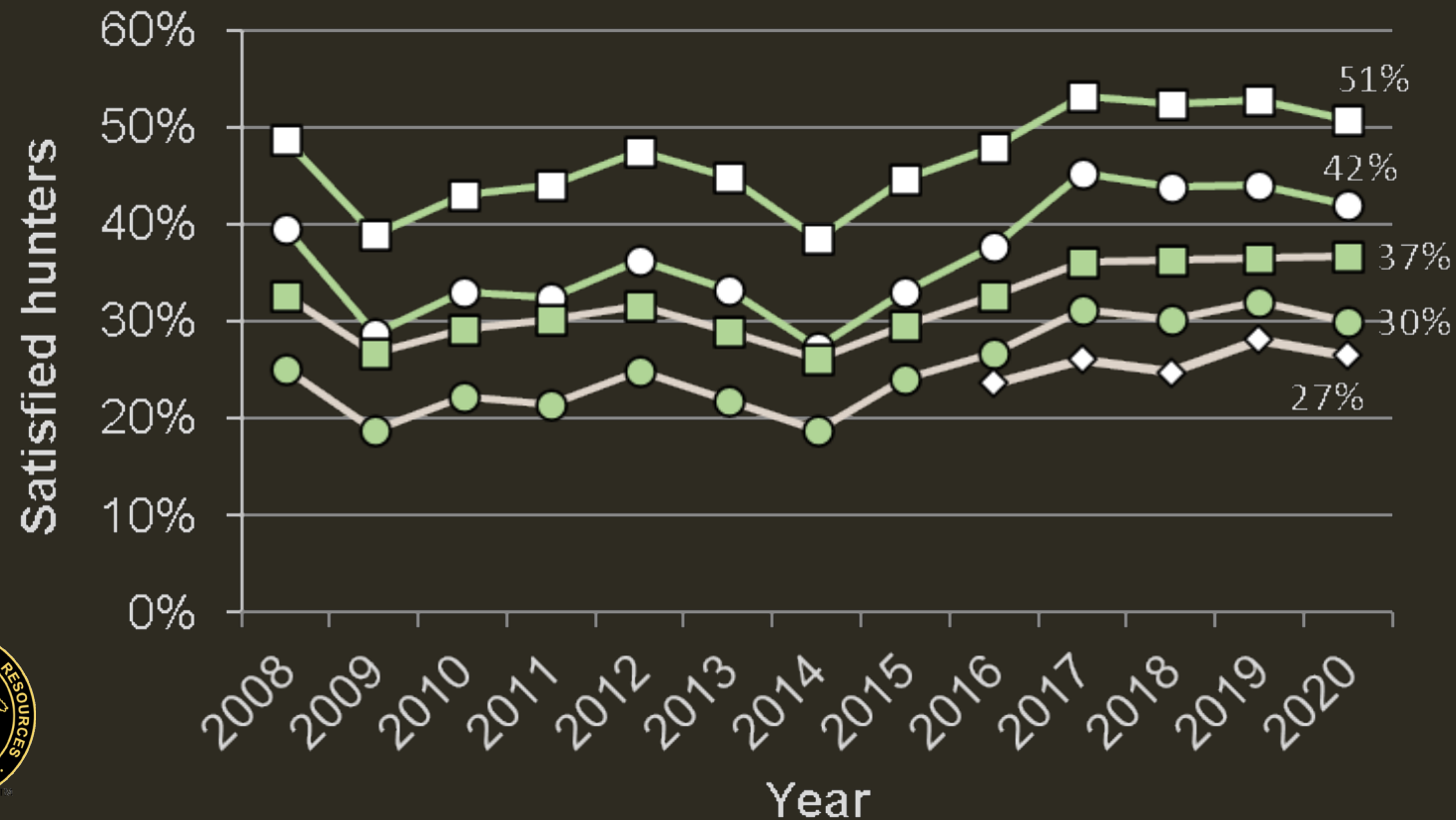
Fewer deer taken during the Regular Firearm and Muzzleloader seasons.

Harvest in Archery season has been stable.



DEER HUNTER SATISFACTION

- Overall deer hunting experience
- Number of deer taken
- Size of antlers seen
- Number of deer seen
- Number of antlered deer seen



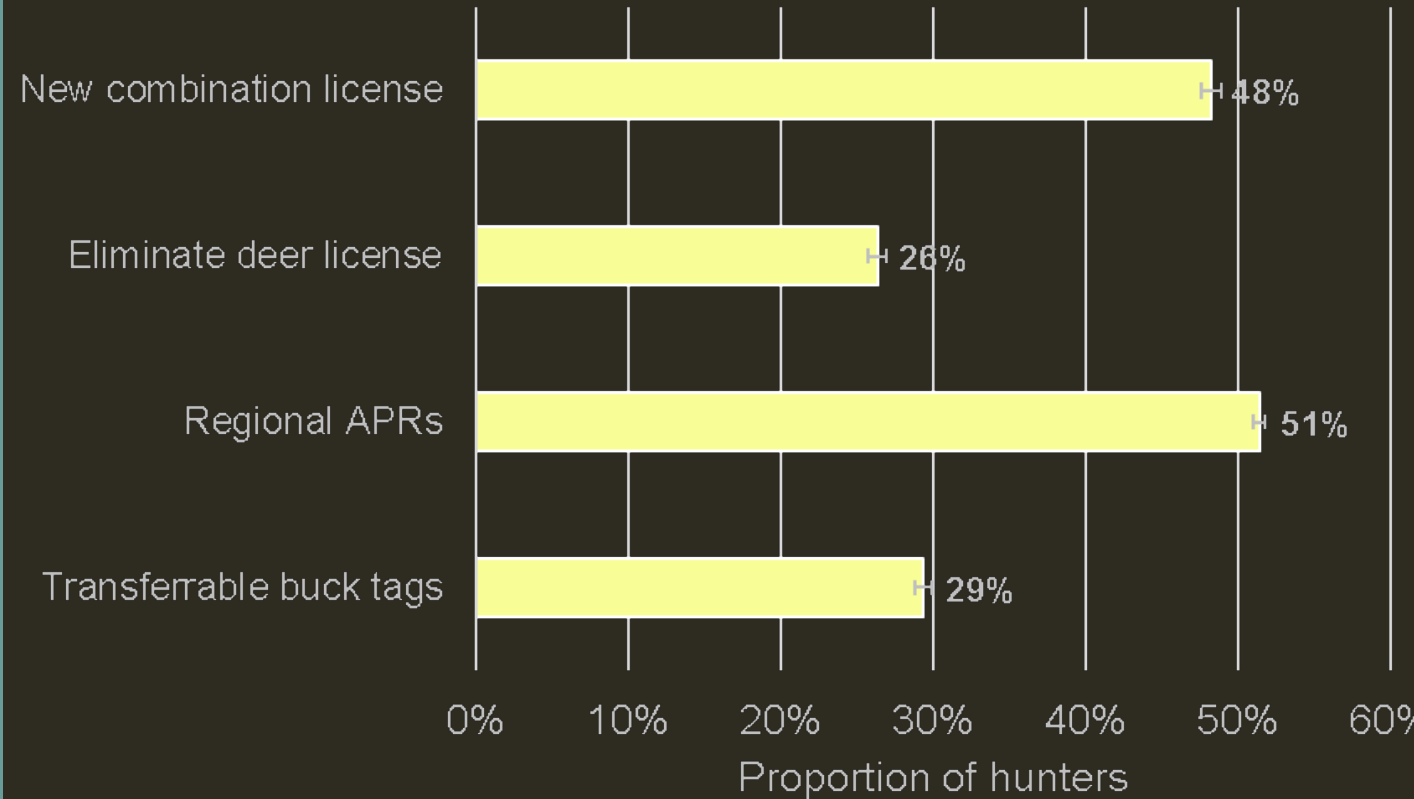
Most levels of satisfaction declined, except for the number of deer harvested

- Experience (51%)*
- Deer seen (42%)*
- Deer taken (37%)
- Bucks seen (30%)*
- Size of antlers (27%)*



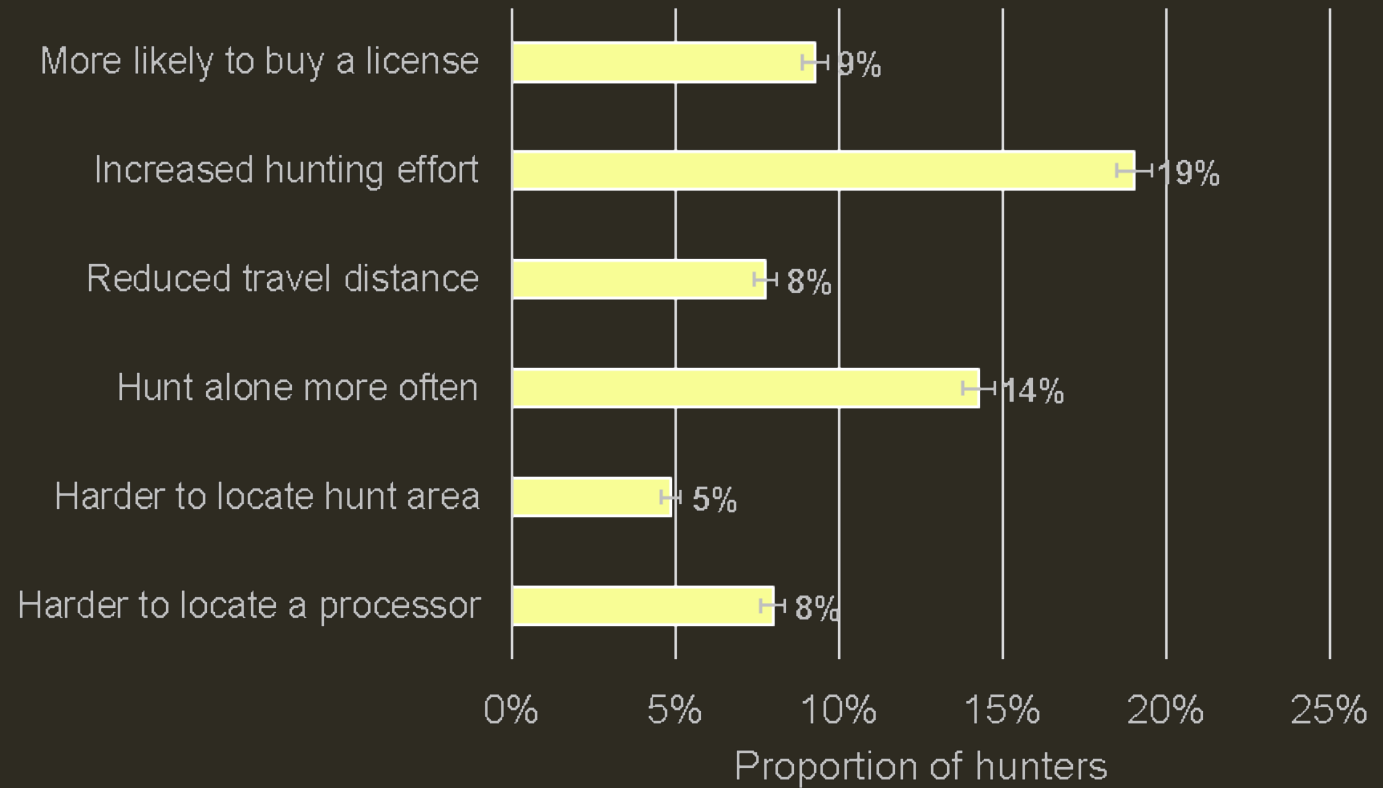
POTENTIAL DEER REGULATIONS

- 48% of hunters supported changing the combination license (1 buck and 1 doe statewide)
- 26% supported eliminating the single deer license
- 51% supported regional APRs on the buck tag
- 29% supported allowing hunters to transfer an unused buck tag



EFFECTS OF COVID-19

- 9% of hunters more likely to purchase a license
- 19% hunted more often
- 8% reduced distance traveled
- 14% more likely to hunt alone
- 5% harder to locate a hunt area
- 8% harder to locate a processor



SUMMARY

- 2% increase in the number of license buyers
- 5% increase in the number of people that went afield
- 13% increase in deer harvested (buck harvest was unchanged but antlerless deer harvest increased by 26%)
- Most levels of satisfaction (except harvest) declined
- Less than 50% of hunters supported the regulation changes that were evaluated, except 51% supported regional APRs
- 9% of hunters were more likely to purchase a license and 19% of hunters spent more time afield because of COVID-19
- Increased harvest of antlerless deer also reflected that hunters with a combination license could take antlerless deer in the LP in the firearm and muzzleloader seasons, and that the antlerless seasons were expanded (more area and days)



THANK YOU

