

# Michigan Department of Natural Resources

---

## Fisheries Division

Jim Dexter, Fisheries Chief

July 15, 2021

# Fisheries Orders - 200.20A

---

- ▶ Michigan has abundant coldwater fisheries resources and several regulations to protect those valued resources
- ▶ Coldwater fish species regulations are described in FO-200.20A
  - ▶ Lengthy and complex (30 pages)
  - ▶ Burdensome to review and amend
- ▶ To simplify, reorganized FO-200 into four separate FOs
  - ▶ FO-200 - Inland Rivers and Streams - Trout and Salmon Regulations
  - ▶ FO-252 - Statewide - Lake and Round Whitefish, Cisco, Rainbow Smelt, and Artic Grayling Regulations
  - ▶ FO-253 - Great Lakes and Connecting Waters - Trout and Salmon Regulations
  - ▶ FO-254 - Inland Lakes - Trout and Salmon Regulations



# Spring 2021 Fish Stocking

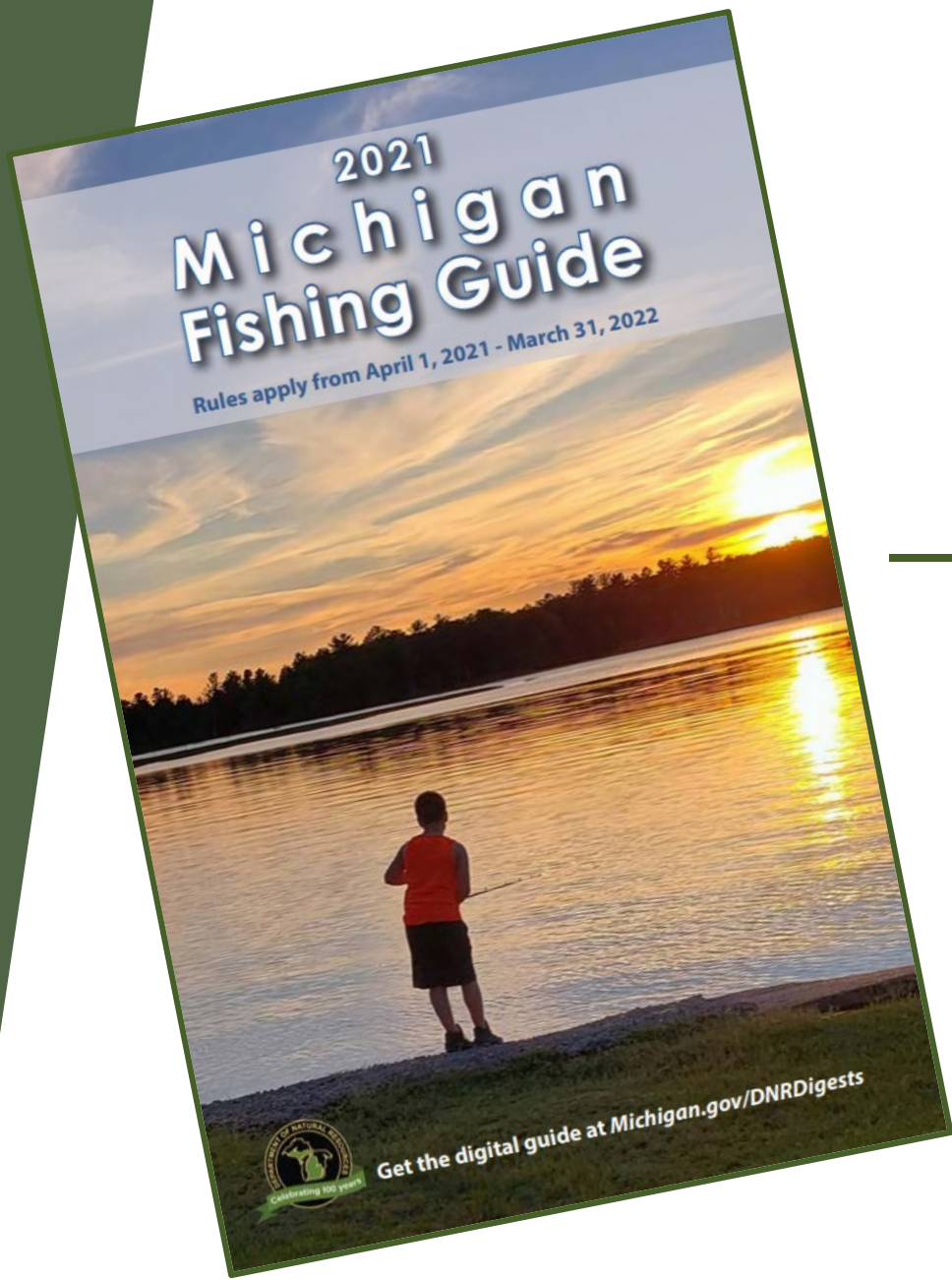
- ▶ 258 Stocking trips from six hatcheries
- ▶ Stocked at 573 sites
- ▶ 62,252 Miles driven
- ▶ Over 1,500 staff hours on stocking trips
- ▶ No steelhead yearlings due to COVID
- ▶ Most rearing assignments met or exceeded
  - ▶ Short on lake trout (otter predation)
  - ▶ Short on Atlantic salmon (mechanical issue early in cycle)
- ▶ Within 0.5% of overall (all species) rearing assignments



# 2021 Spring Walleye Production

- ▶ Directly stocked almost 9.5 million walleye fry
- ▶ 3.2 million spring fingerlings harvested from ponds
- ▶ Pond production was variable, but spring fingerling production was average
  - ▶ Good production in west UP ponds
  - ▶ Lower production than normal in southern LP
- ▶ Rapid warmup followed by very cold temps limited plankton availability
- ▶ Thompson facility had “experimental” walleye production year





# Thank You!

---

## Questions?



# Managing the Cormorant-Fisheries Conflict in Michigan

Presentation to the Natural Resource Commission on July 15, 2021

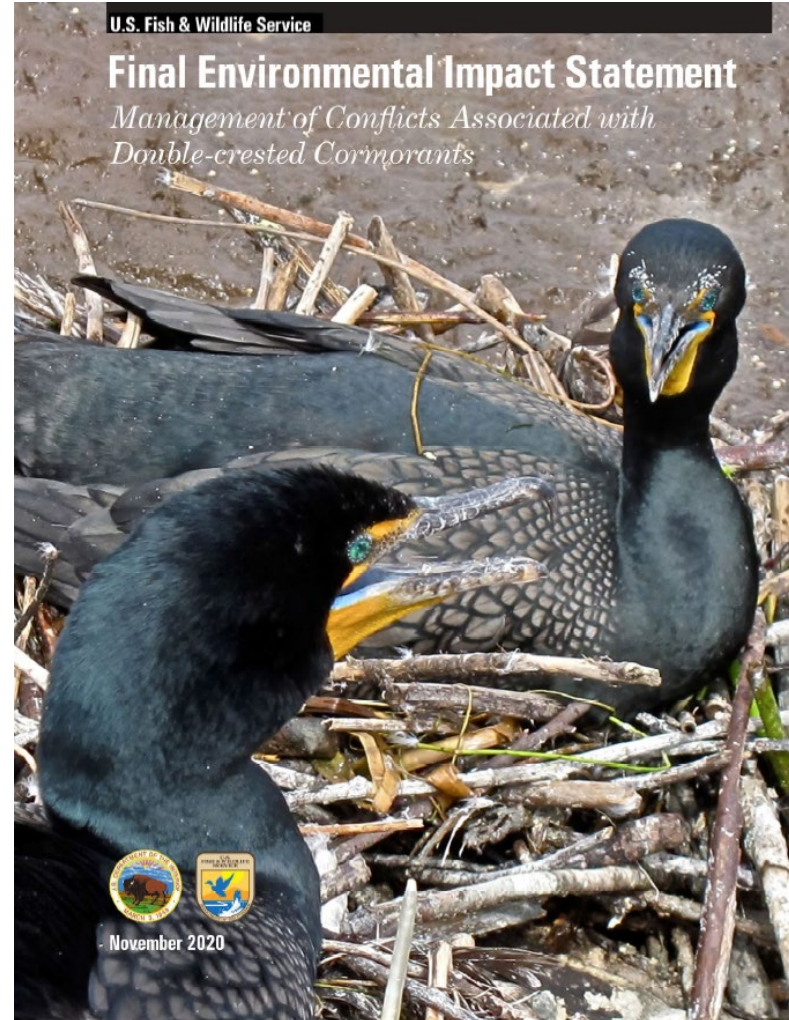
Randy Claramunt - Lake Huron Basin Coordinator, Fisheries Division

Sherry MacKinnon - Wildlife Ecologist, Upper Peninsula, Wildlife Division



# Timeline of Cormorant Management

- ▶ Public Resource Depredation Order (PRDO) 2003-2016
- ▶ The PRDO vacated in 2016
- ▶ **Testified** in Committee on Natural Resources, U.S. House of Representatives, 2018
- ▶ **Additional Hearing** Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, U.S. House of Representatives, Alpena, 2018.
- ▶ New Environmental Impact Statement 2020.
- ▶ Special Double-crested Cormorant **permit system** established in **March 2021** for State or Tribal fish and wildlife agencies.



# Cormorant - Depredation Orders vs Permits

## ► Depredation Order:

- Goal is to reduce economic loss
- Implemented via the 2003 EA
- Broad application (all lands and freshwaters in 24 states)

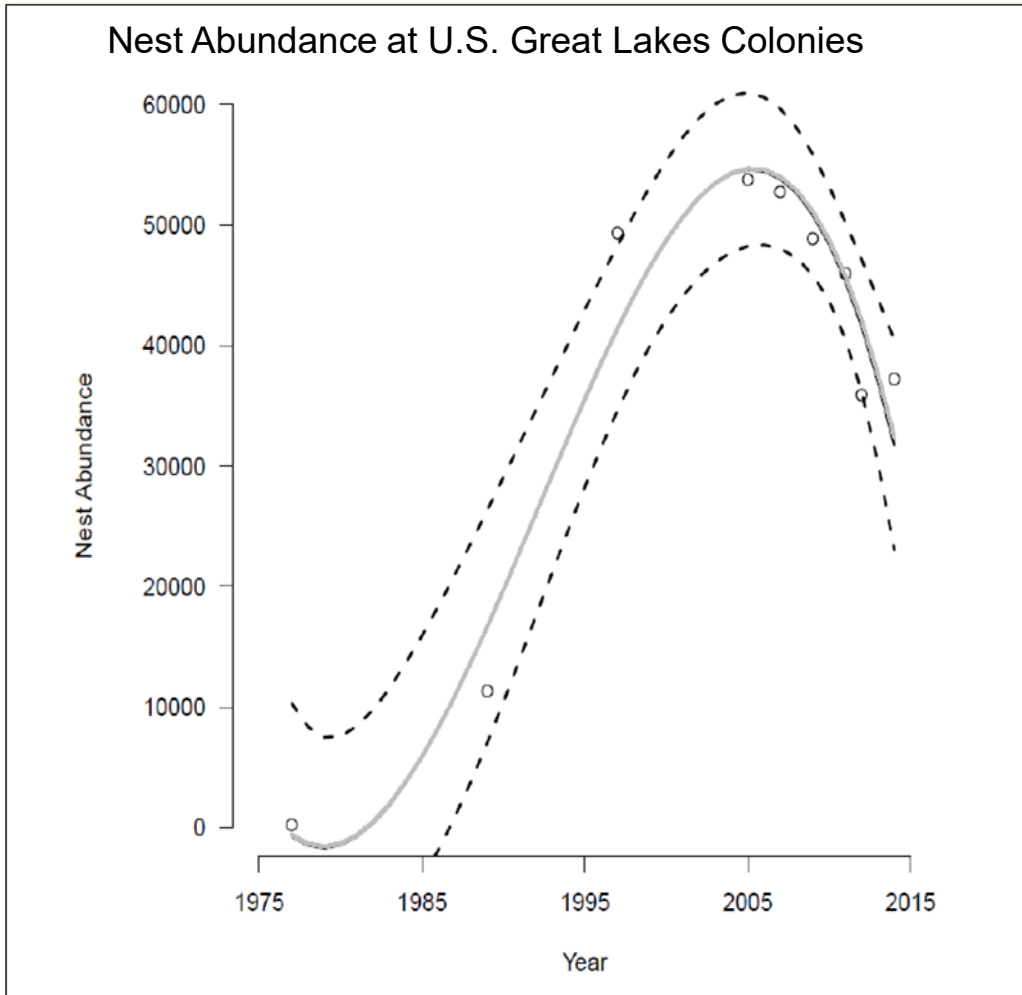
## ► Depredation Permits:

- Authorized take to reduce damage caused by birds or to protect human health and safety or personal property
- Specific number of individuals from a specific site by specified individuals
- Intended to provide short-term relief until long-term solutions can be implemented





# Cormorant Abundance



Wyman et al. Report, 2016



# New State Permit System

## 50 CFR §21.28: Special Double-crested Cormorant Permit

- FOR State or Tribal fish and wildlife agencies
- State- and Tribal-owned or operated aquaculture facilities, including hatcheries
- Health and Human Safety
- Threatened and endangered species
- State- or Tribal-owned property and assets
- Wild and Public-stocked fish

## 50 CFR §21.41: Individual Depredation Permits

- FOR individuals, States, Tribes
- Aquaculture facilities
- Health and Human Safety
- Threatened and Endangered Species
- Property
- Michigan applied for this permit in 2018 and 2019 but it did not cover free-swimming fish



# New State Permit System: Interior Region

## Maximum allowable take for each subpopulation of cormorants in the lower 48 states

Cormorant Subpopulation	States included in Subpopulation	Maximum Allowable Take Per Year Across Subpopulation
Atlantic	GA, NC, SC, CT, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT, VA	37,019
Florida	FL	1,314
Interior	NM, OK, TX, IL, IN, IA, MI, MN, MO, OH, WI, AL, AR, LA, KY, MS, TN, CO, MT, WY, KS, NE, ND, SD	78,632
Western	ID, OR, WA, AZ, UT, CA, NV	4,539
<b>Total</b>		<b>121,504</b>

- Permit information can be found at the USFWS website:  
<https://www.fws.gov/regulations/cormorant/>



# Requirements of the New Permit System

- ▶ Provide the history of double-crested cormorant conflicts in our state
- ▶ Provide the size/description of the area affected, timeline, seasons of conflict, and time of year control activities will occur.
- ▶ For each location(s), describe non-lethal methods used previously and/or plan on implementing
  - ▶ Hazing
  - ▶ Passive deterrents
  - ▶ Habitat management
  - ▶ Other changes



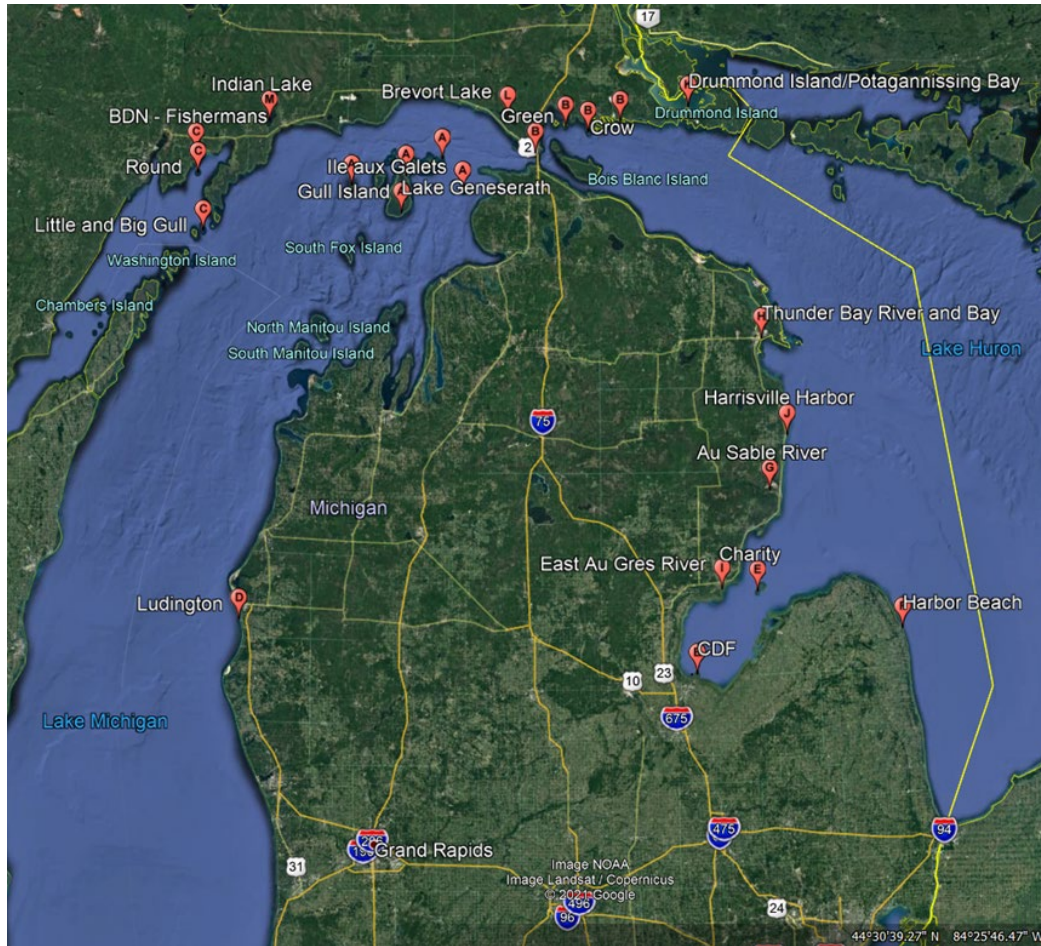


# Requirements of the New Permit System

- ▶ Proposed take of cormorants by life-stage (i.e. adults, active nests, etc.)
- ▶ Methods of take (i.e. shooting, nest-destroy, egg-oiling, etc.).
- ▶ Long-term plans to eliminate or significantly reduce the continued killing of double-crested cormorants or destruction of eggs/nests.



# Current Status of the DCCO-Fish Conflict in Michigan



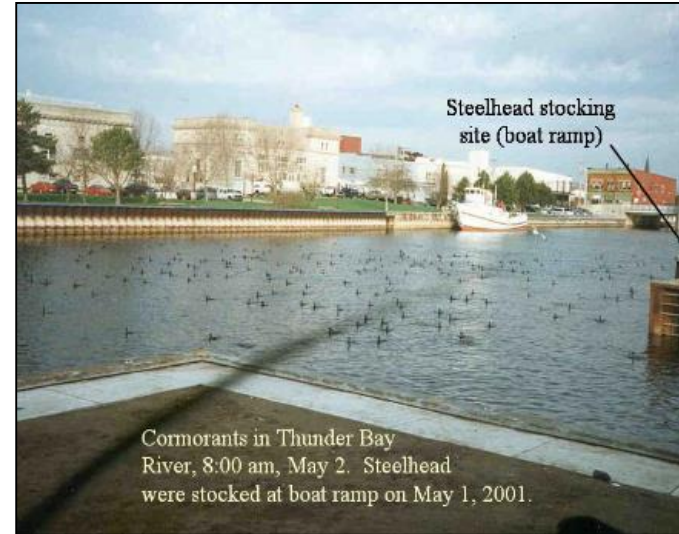
- ▶ Input from local biologists and stakeholders
- ▶ Three methods:
  - ▶ Fish stocking sites
  - ▶ Inland waterbodies
  - ▶ GLs Colonies
- ▶ Justification(s) provided in permit
- ▶ Approved permit issued on April 16, 2021
- ▶ Total of 11,050 approved including DCCO take of 9,650 and active nest take of 1,400



# Cormorant Management Techniques

## *Non-lethal Management*

- ▶ Harassment or animal behavior modification
- ▶ Avian Predator Notification (APN)
- ▶ Move locations of visual and auditory deterrents
- ▶ Begin when birds first arrive on location
- ▶ Consistent harassment and development of new techniques for our application





# Challenges to Implementing the New Permit System in Michigan

- ▶ Long-term Funding and Support Needed
- ▶ Fisheries and Wildlife Division administration and requirements
- ▶ Support for Sub-permittees:
  - ▶ USDA-Wildlife Services
  - ▶ Avian Predator Network (APN) volunteers
    - ▶ Fish stocking sites
    - ▶ Reinforcement of non-lethal
    - ▶ Training and coordination
  - ▶ Non-lethal harassment techniques







# **Parks and Recreation Division Beach Access Restrictions Under Certain Conditions**

---

LUOD No. 5 of 2021

# Background

---

- Surrounded by Great Lakes, Michigan is host to many seeking to enjoy the water. However, the beauty of Michigan's Great Lakes can be deceiving and hazardous to swimmers and water users.
- The Department is responsible for the management and operation of facilities that provide water access and beach opportunities across the state and has safety measures in place for use of these water facilities.
- Even with those measures, injuries, accidents and drownings continue to occur each year.



# LUOD

---

- Park and Recreation Officers' authority is land based, meaning enforcement is not possible once a person enters the water.
- This proposed land use order would prevent individuals from exiting a state managed beach area when entry is prohibited.



# LUOD

---

- This prohibition would prevent individuals from entering the water, when access is prohibited by signage and/or communication, during:
  - times of dangerous water conditions
  - while a water rescue is occurring
  - when bacteria or contaminants are present
  - when other issues are identified that would impact safety, such as vessel wreckage washing ashore to the beach





# LUOD

---

- Prohibiting access would not be predicated upon the flying of a red flag alone - but would be done after reviewing criteria to determine whether access should be restricted and the area of the access restriction.
- Any prohibition to access would only be in effect for the specific beach identified upon Parks and Recreation Division managed lands and would not extend to any other municipal beach or water access point or other Department managed lands.
- This LUOD would be a tool for staff to assist with the health, safety and welfare of visitors and guests.



---

# Questions

# Thank you!





# 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.

				Change Between 2019 and 2020 (%)
Licenses or Harvest Tags	Number sold in 2018	Number sold in 2019	Number sold in 2020	
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





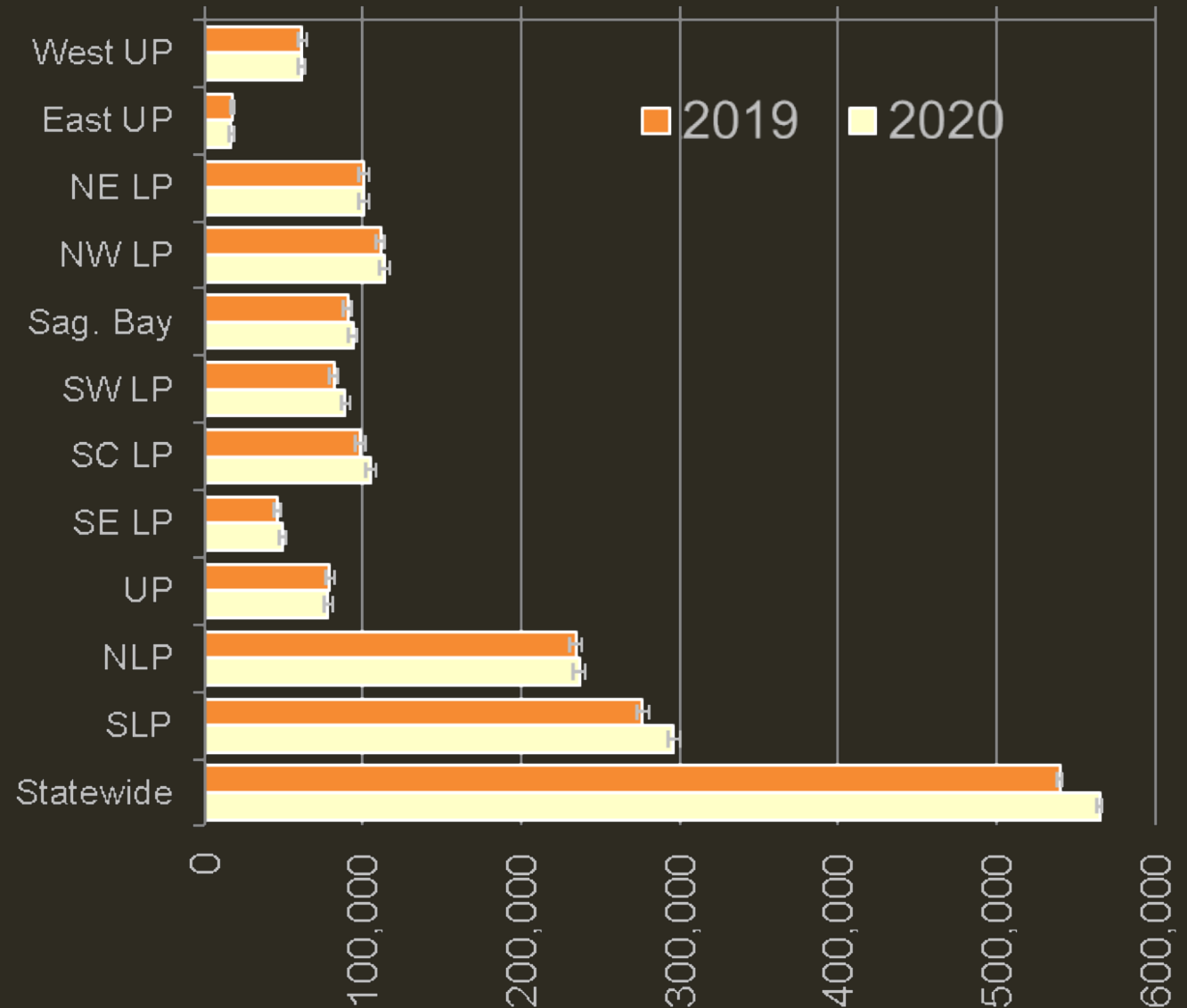
# 2020 DEER HARVEST SURVEY

- 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



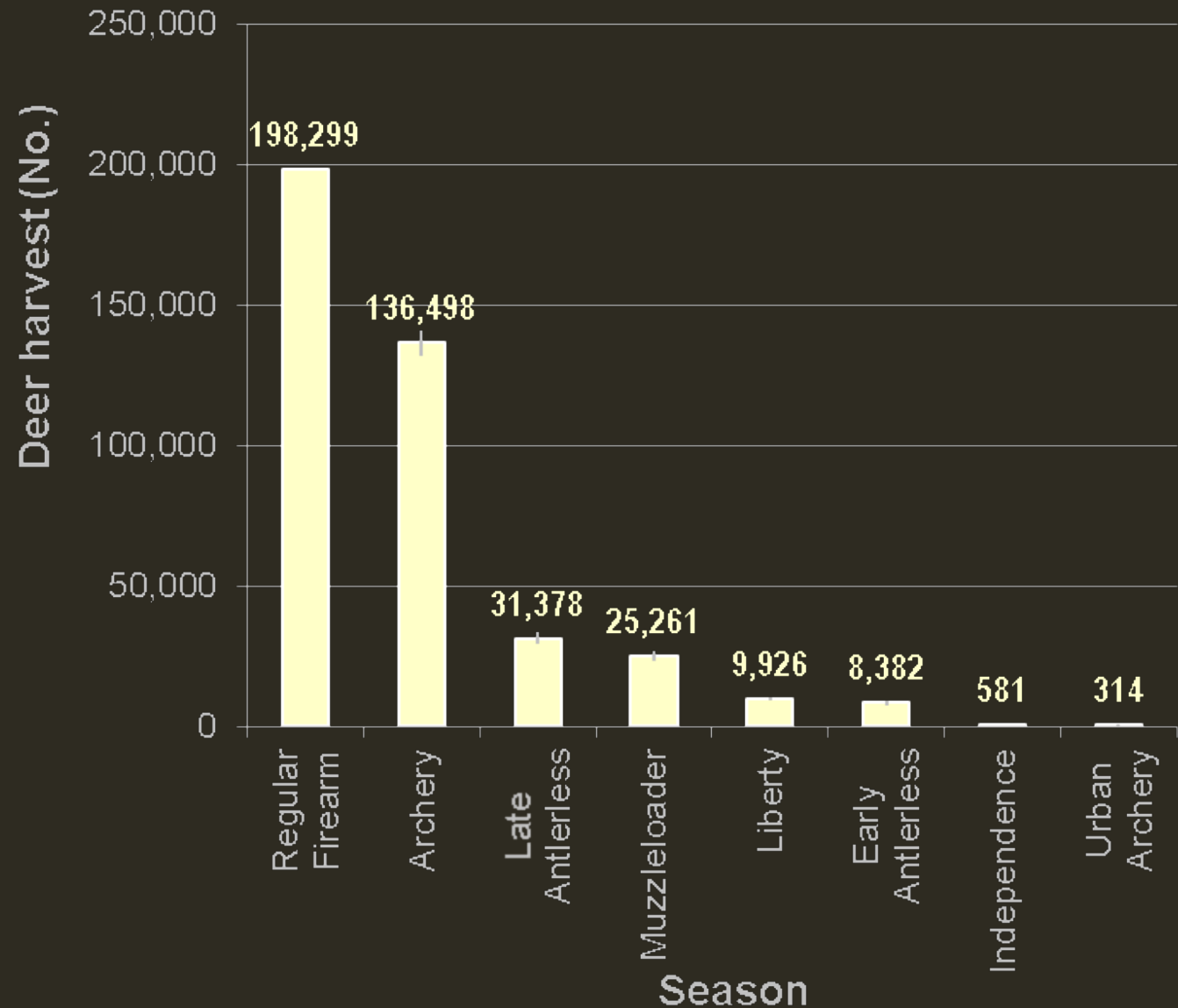
# 2020 DEER HUNTERS

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



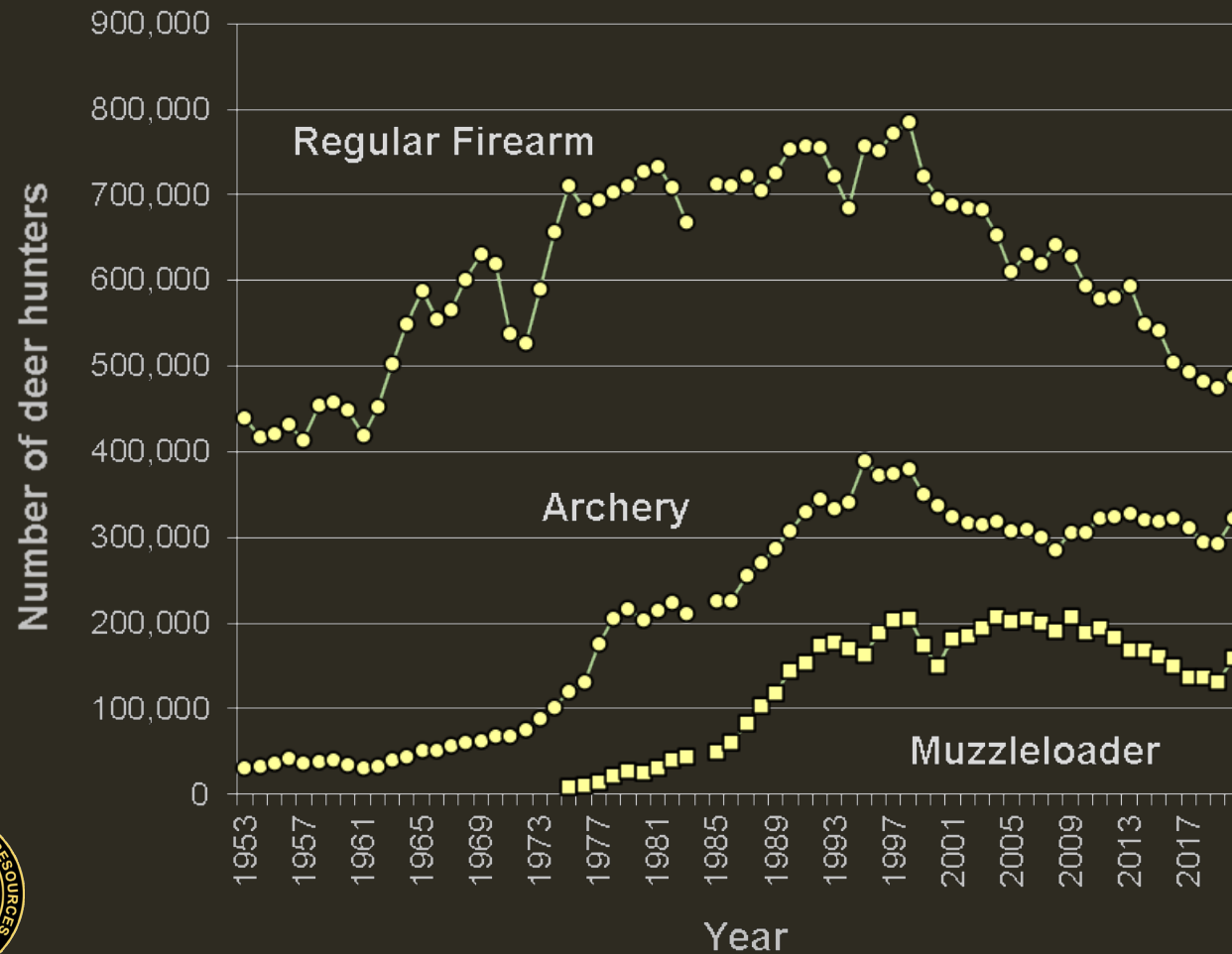
# 2020 DEER HUNTERS

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



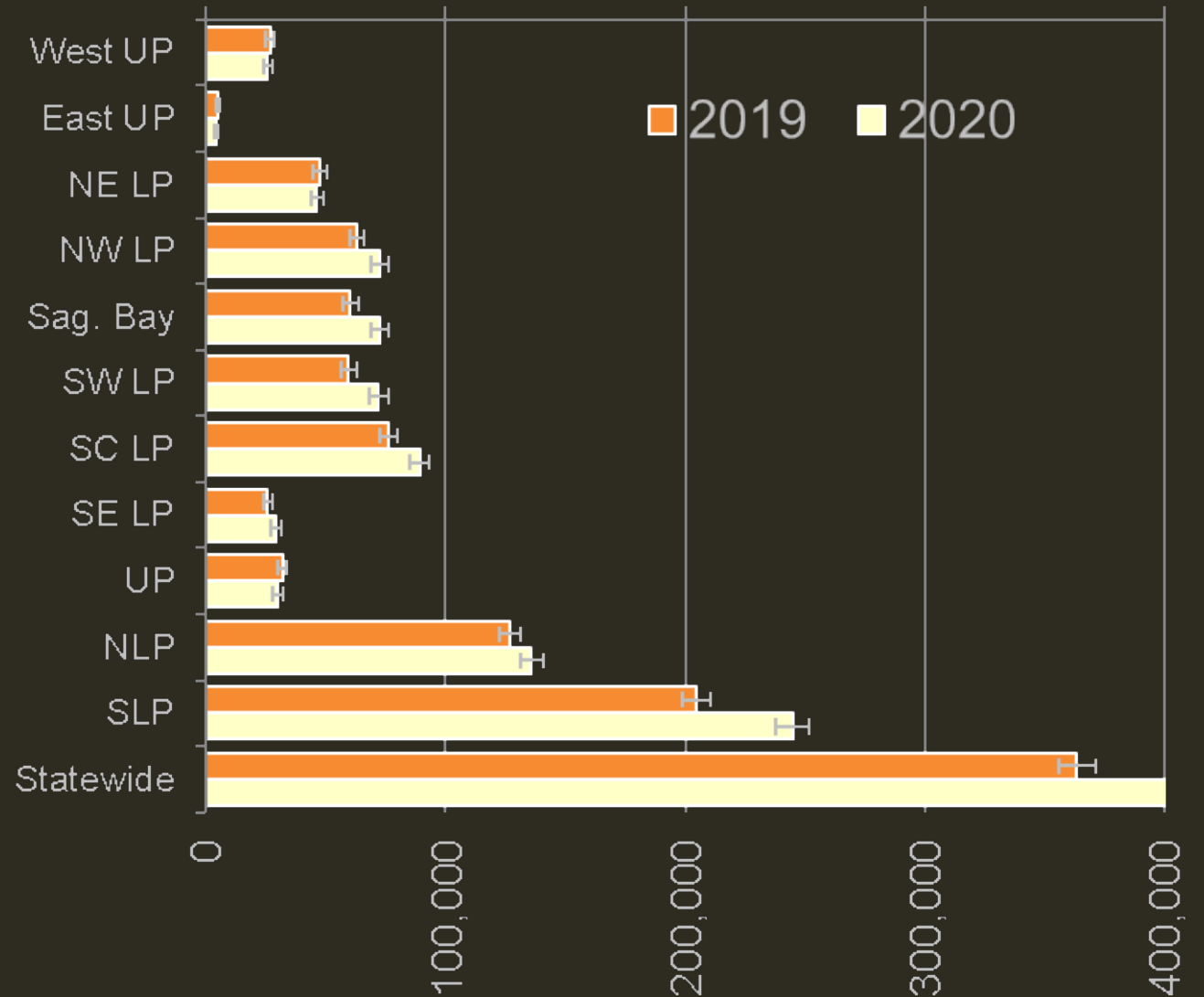
Fewer people hunting during the regular firearm and muzzleloader seasons.

The number of archers has been relatively stable.



## 2020 DEER HARVEST

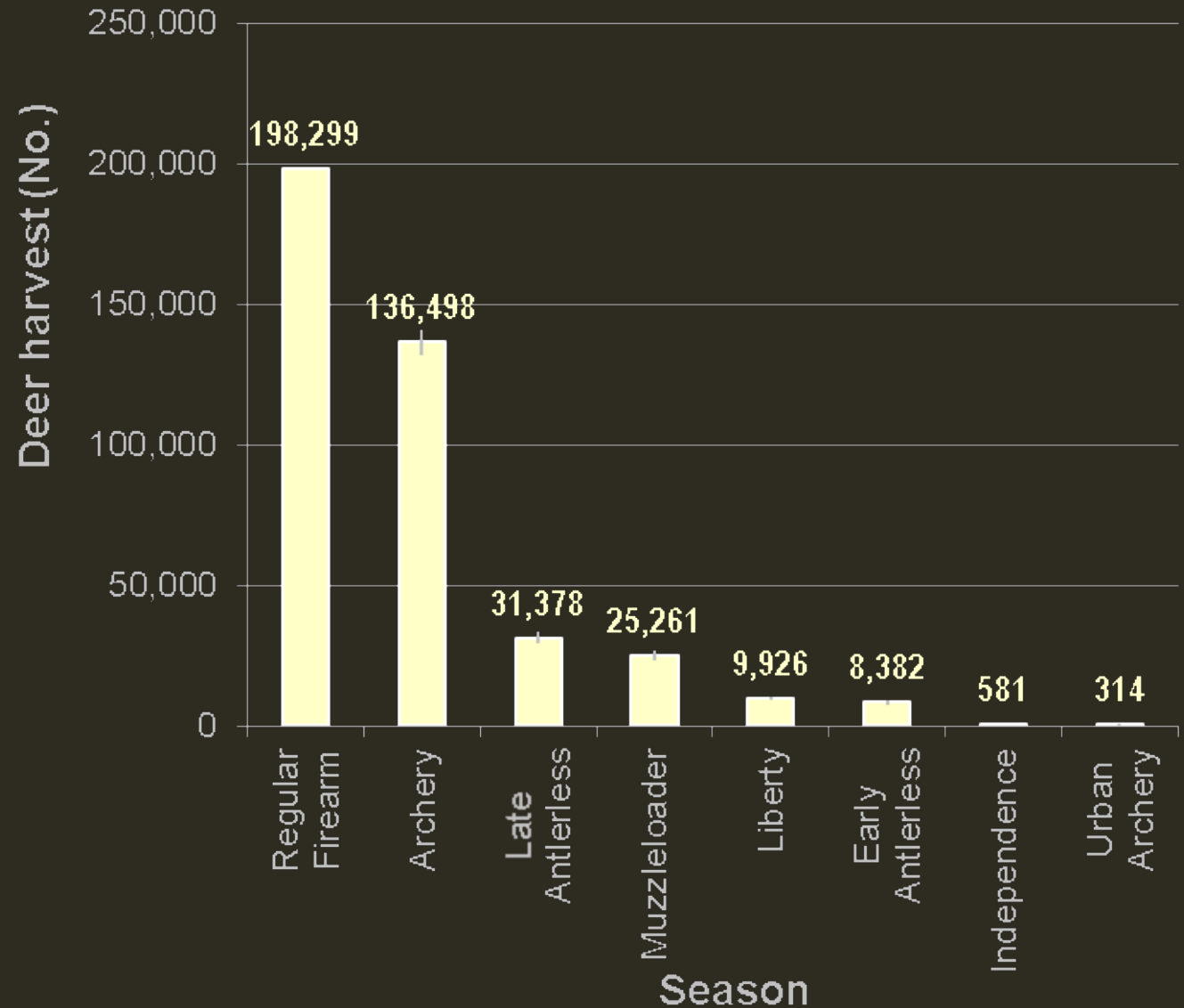
- In all seasons combined, 410,639 deer were harvested, which was an increase of about 13% from last year (363,678).
- Buck harvest was not significantly different from 2019, but antlerless deer harvest increased by 26%.
- Harvest increased significantly in the SLP (19%).



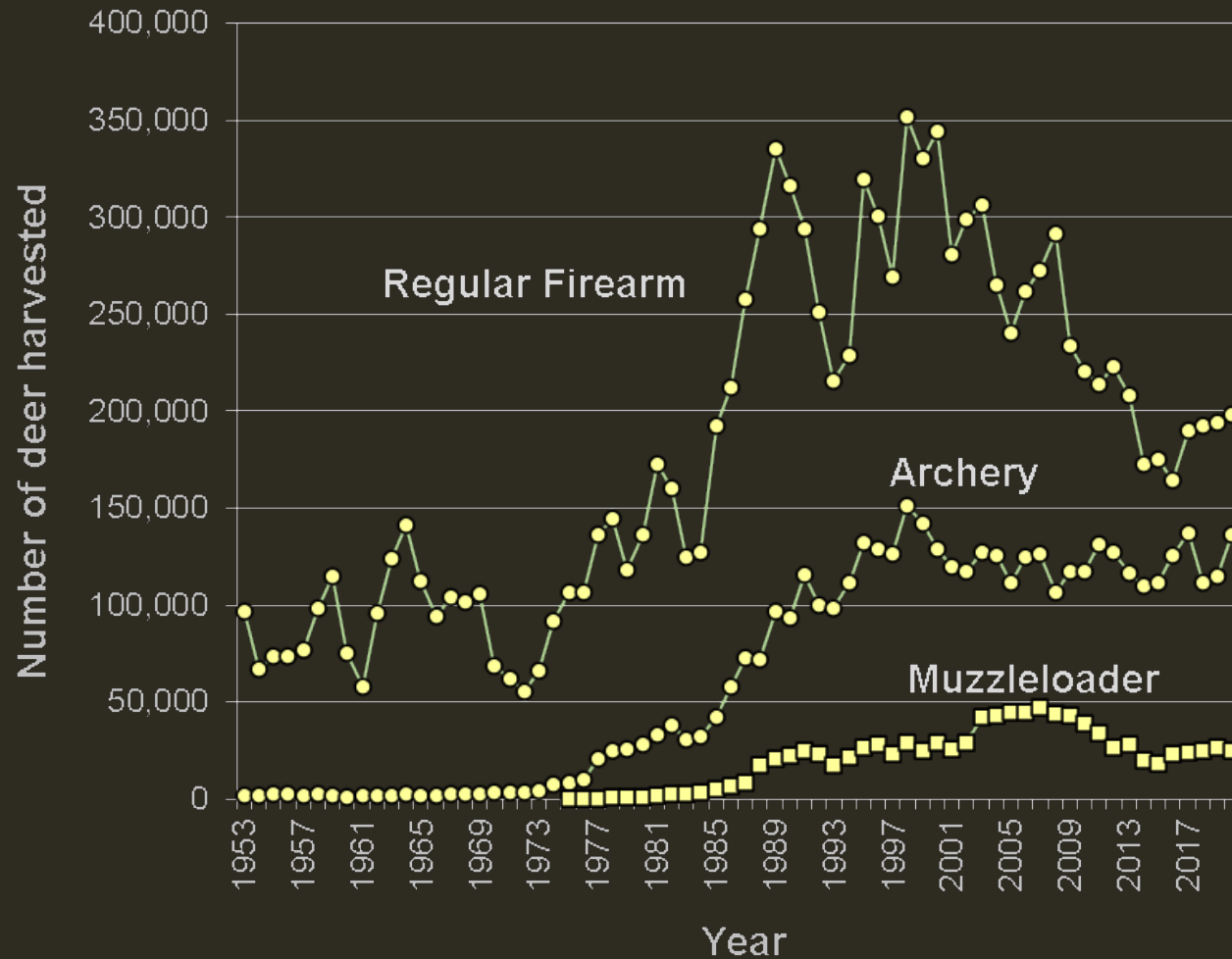
# 2020 DEER HARVEST

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



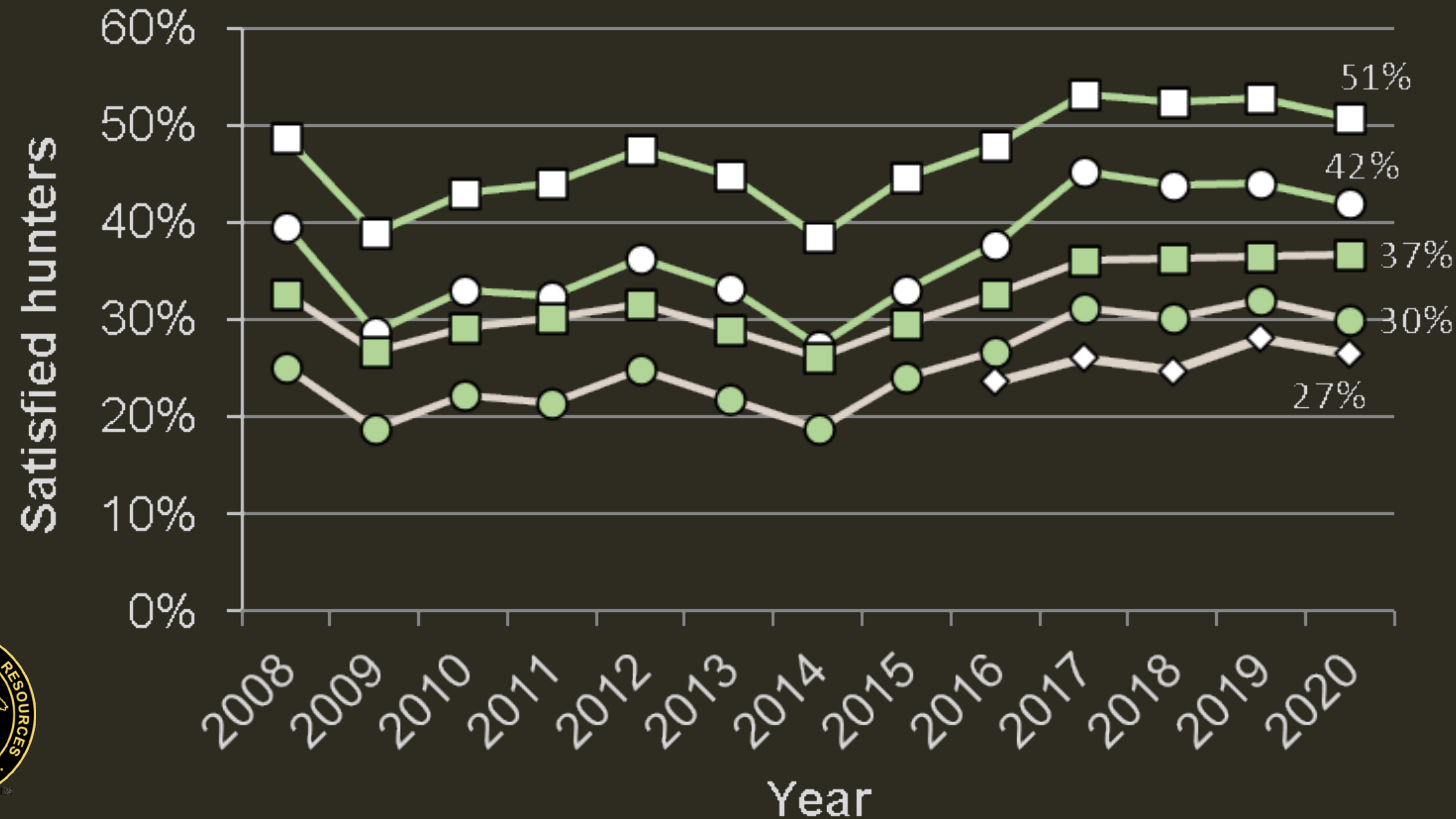
Fewer deer taken during the Regular Firearm and Muzzleloader seasons.

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%)

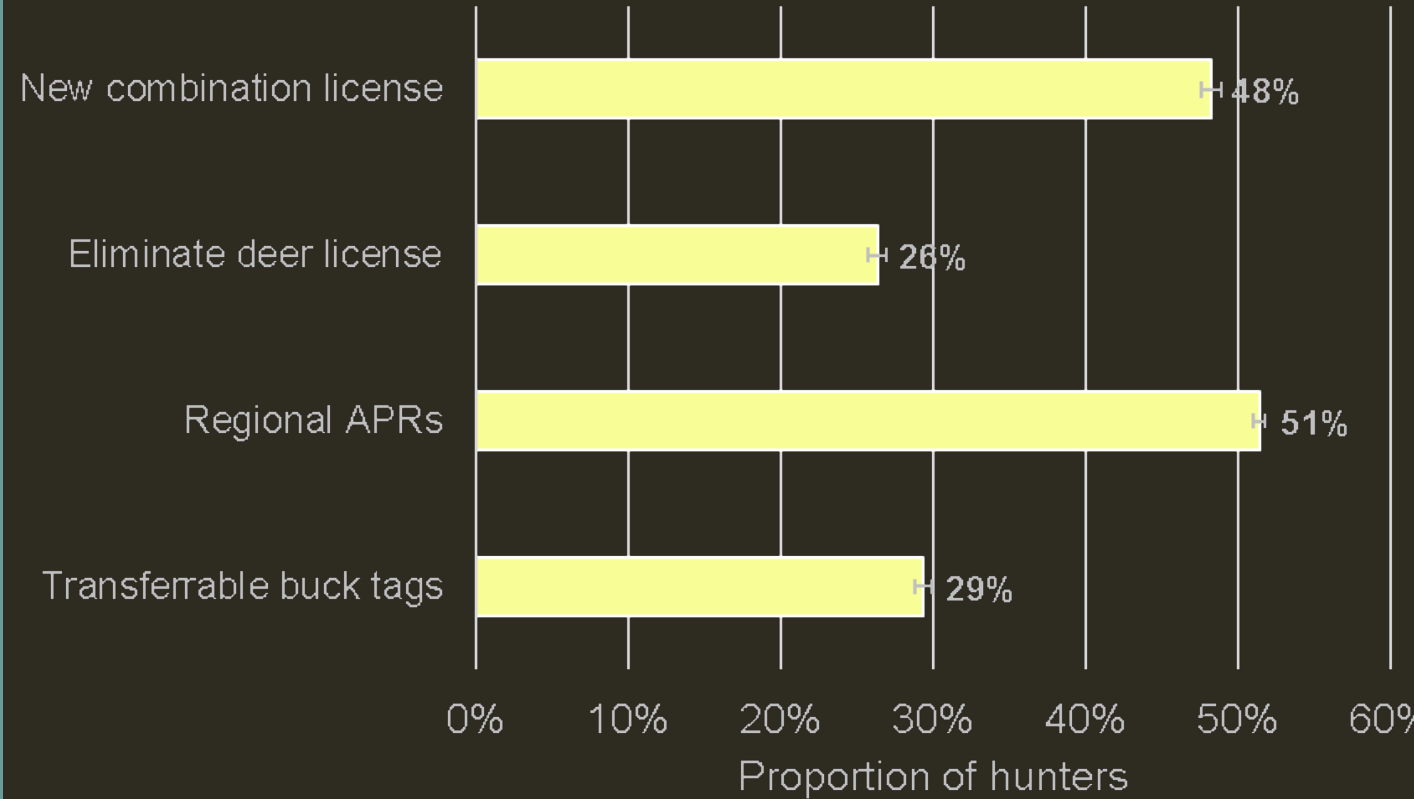
Bucks seen (30%)\*

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

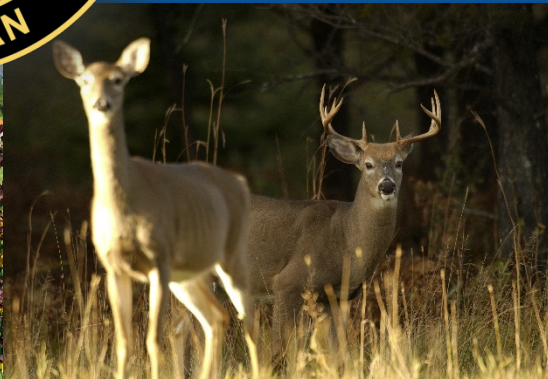




# State Land Review

Natural Resources Commission

July 15, 2021







# State Land Overview

**DNR manages 4.6 million acres of public lands and 6.4 million acres of mineral rights on behalf of the residents of Michigan**

- State forests: 3.9 million acres
- State parks & recreation areas:  
357,000 acres
- State game & wildlife areas:  
364,000 acres



*Green on map denotes DNR-managed public lands in Michigan*





# Management Issues

- Isolated land holdings may reduce conservation and recreation values
- Managing marginal land holdings may detract from best overall management of more critical lands
- Income from the sale of marginal lands allows acquisition of important private in-holdings





# 2013 Managed Public Land Strategy

- PA 240 of 2018 requires implementation of 2013 Managed Public Land Strategy
- Implementation includes a comprehensive review of ~240,000 acres of state-owned land to determine contribution to DNR mission
  - Includes:
    - Land less than 200 acres in size
    - Blocks of land that due to an irregular shape have extensive private-public boundary interface that is potentially difficult to manage
  - Does **not** include:
    - Trails
    - Developed boat launches
    - DNR facilities

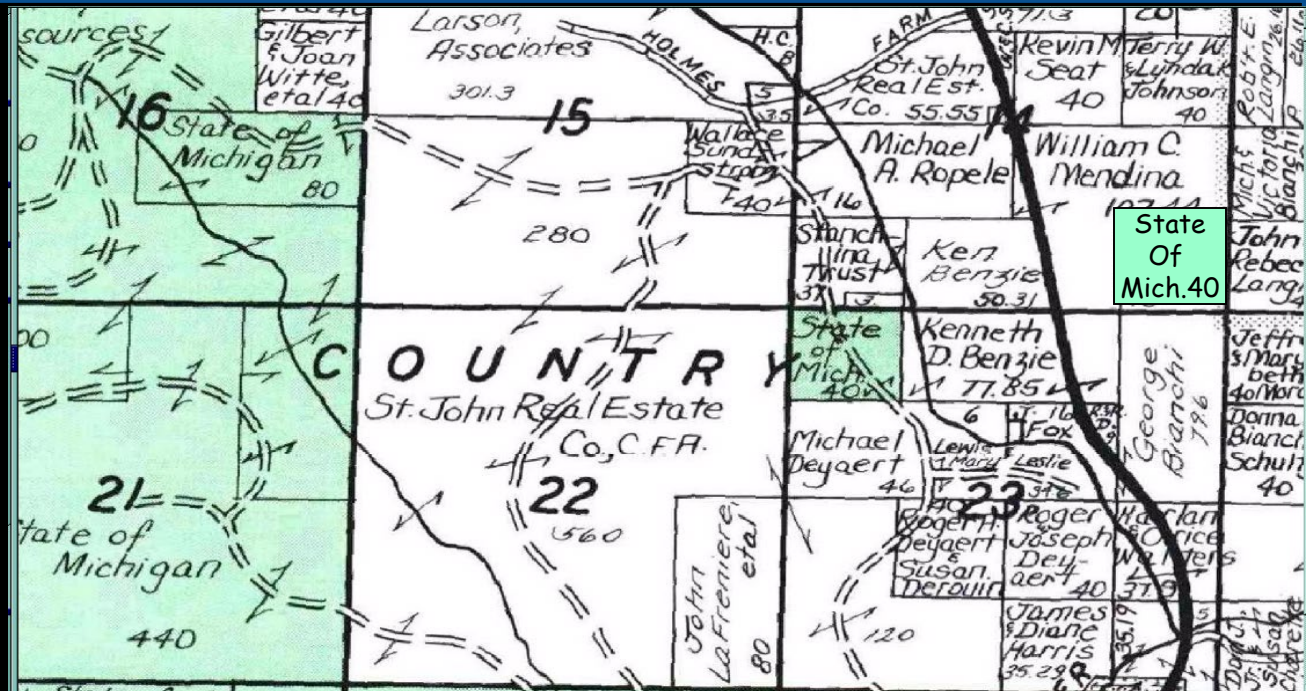


# Review Process

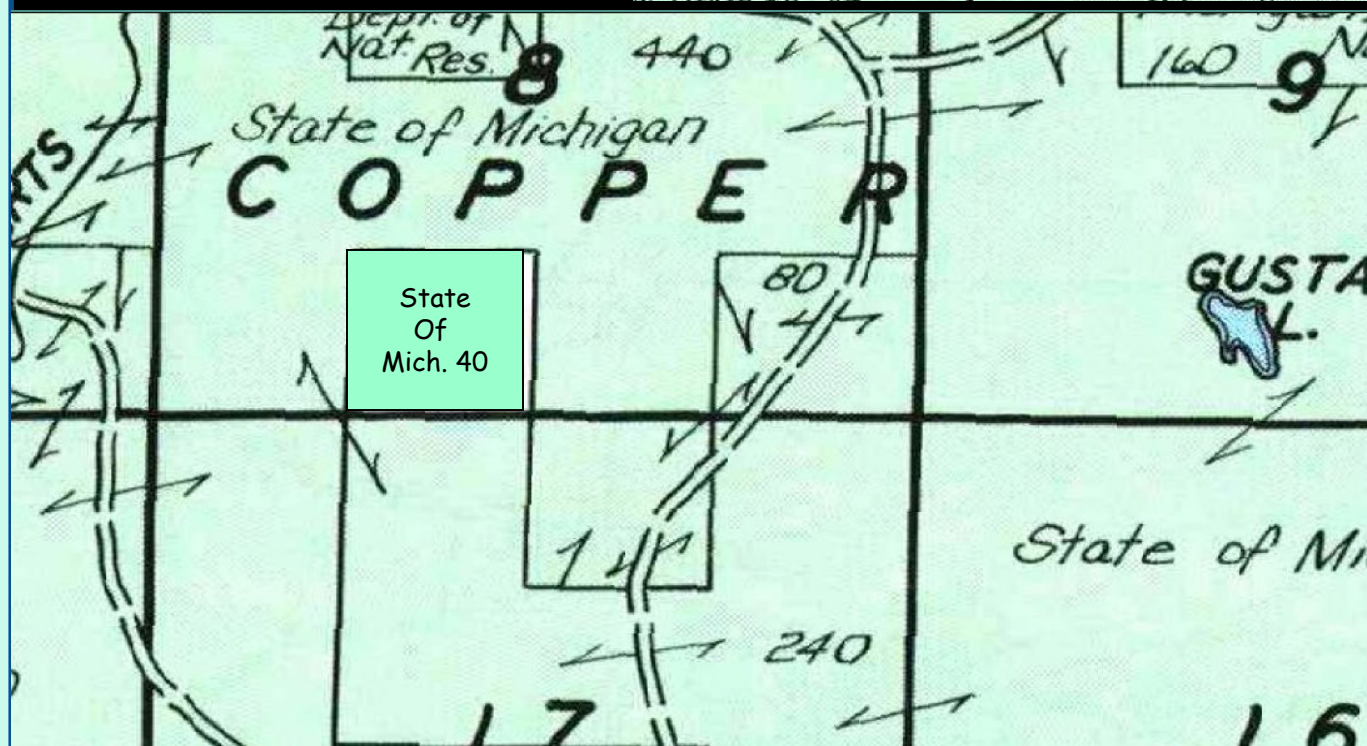
- Review groups of 10 counties at a time; internal review for Group 1 began in September 2020
- All parcels receive multi-disciplinary and multi-level review to develop recommendations
- Public review is integral part of the overall process







## Isolated Parcels





# Parcel Evaluation

All parcels are evaluated for:

- Pertinence to the DNR mission
- Presence or absence of significant natural and cultural resources or recreation opportunity
- Legal access for public use and DNR management
- Adjacent land use and ownership
- Access to a river, lake, or stream
- Meet purposes for which it was purchased (if purchased)







# Parcel Classification

- All parcels are classified into one of the following categories:
  - Retain under state ownership and DNR administration
  - Offer to a local unit of government or alternate conservation organization
  - Make available for a land exchange
  - Dispose





# Program Review

- Title and deed restrictions
- Mineral evaluation
- Renewable energy site evaluation
- Environmental concerns (EGLE)
- Critical Dune/High Risk Erosion Area (EGLE)





# Public Review

- Parcel recommendations and additional information available on DNR website
- Opportunity to submit comments on specific parcel recommendations via online interactive map
- Two virtual public meetings scheduled to provide an overview of the process and accept comment
- Comments also accepted at [DNR-StateLandReview@michigan.gov](mailto:DNR-StateLandReview@michigan.gov)







# Final Parcel Recommendations

- DNR's Land Exchange Review Committee (LERC) reviews and considers public comment
- LERC makes final recommendation to DNR Director for each parcel
- DNR Director makes a decision on the final classification of each parcel at a public Natural Resources Commission meeting





# Next Steps

- Send notices to local units of government
- Notify alternate conservation organizations – retain if no interest
- Make land available for land exchange and market for 2 years
- Sale of surplus parcels by auction
- If no bids, land remains available for direct purchase







# Questions?

[Michigan.gov/PublicLands](https://Michigan.gov/PublicLands)

[DNR-StateLandReview@michigan.gov](mailto:DNR-StateLandReview@michigan.gov)

