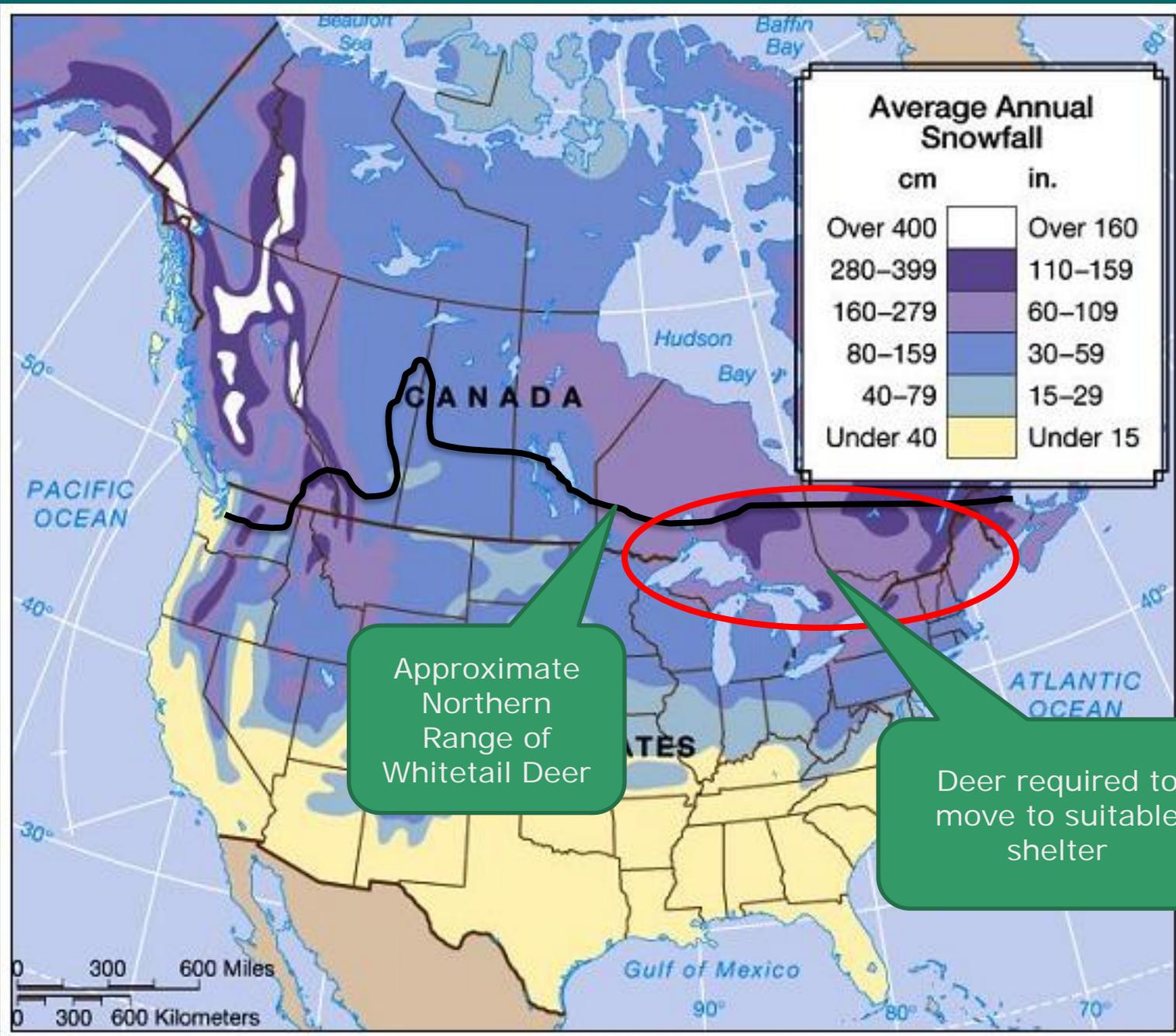


# Deer Winter Range Management Strategies in the Upper Peninsula

FMAC

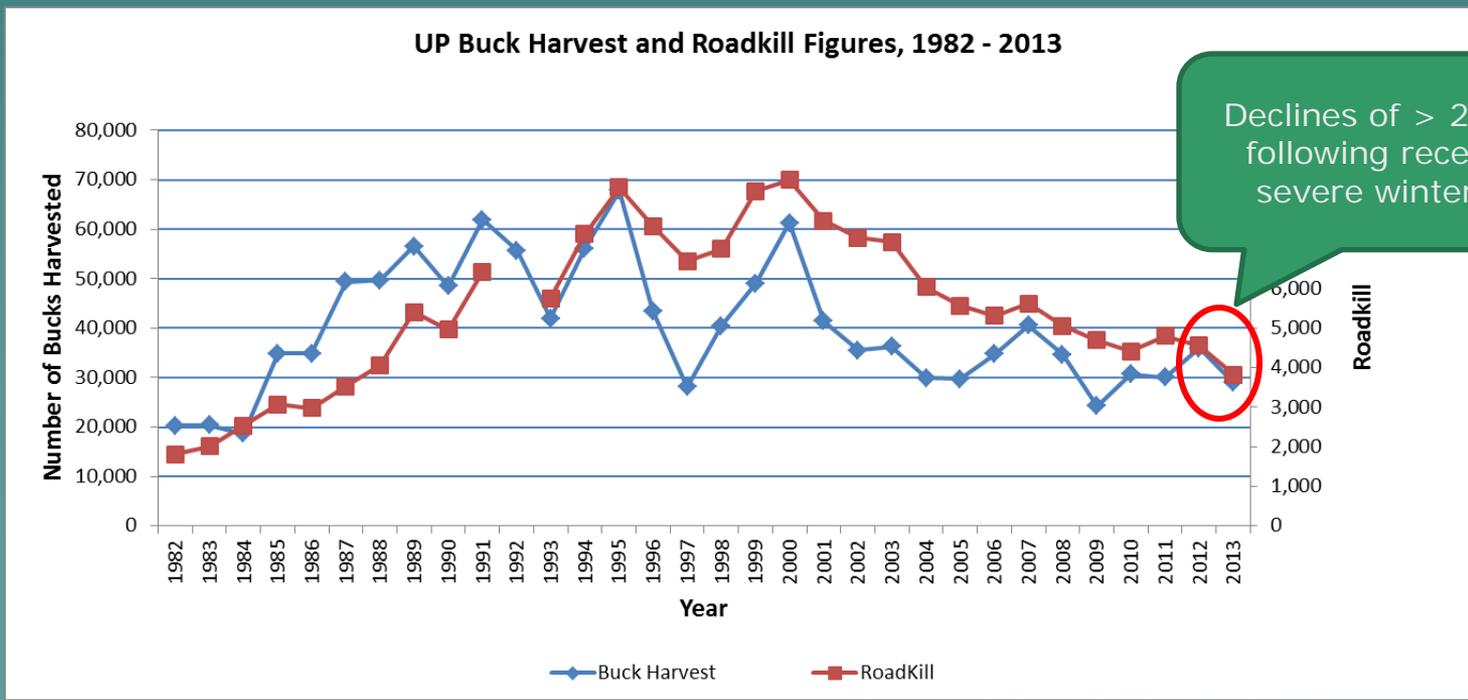
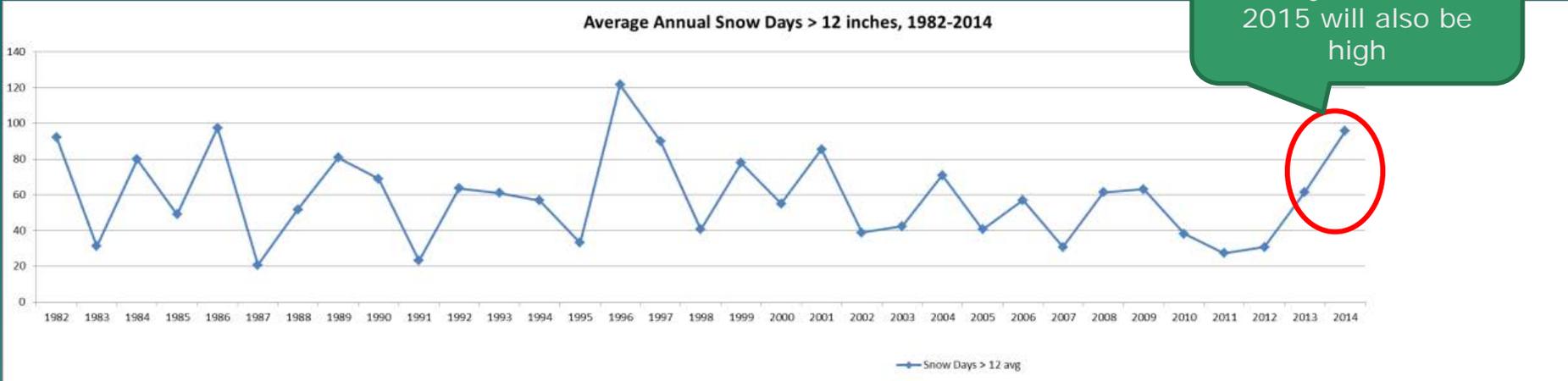
May 6, 2015





# Concerns with Deer Winter Range: Recent Severe Winters and Declining Deer Numbers

Increase in winter severity 2013-2014. 2015 will also be high



Declines of > 20% following recent severe winters



Deer winter habitat is a critical component of a healthy, sustainable deer herd in the upper peninsula. One of the key management challenges is effectively communicating best habitat and forest management practices among diverse landowners. Eighty percent of the UP deer wintering habitat, deer yards, are managed by others than the DNR. Identifying these landowners, bringing them together, communicating and working with them to improve professional management of these lands with best forestry and wildlife habitat management practices is critical for improving these important resources.

# In response to the concerns about UP deer winter range

- U.P. Habitat Workgroup re-formed in 2014 to focus on deer winter range in the UP
- Composed of representatives from:
  - Michigan Natural Resources Commission
  - Michigan DNR
  - Ottawa and Hiawatha National Forests
  - Natural Resources Conservation Service
  - Private and corporate forester's and consultants
  - Michigan Sportsman groups

# U.P. Habitat Workgroup Membership:

J.R. Richardson: Michigan Natural Resources Commission

Warren Suchovsky: DNR Forest Management Advisory Committee

Bernie Hubbard: Society of American Foresters

Jeff Joseph: Plum Creek Timber Company

George Lindquist: Regional Vice President, Michigan United Conservation Club

Randy Charles: U.S. Forest Service, Ottawa National Forest

Terry DeBruyn: U.S. Forest Service, Hiawatha National Forest

Terry Minzey, DNR U.P. Wildlife Supervisor

Dennis Nezich: DNR Forest Resources Division Field Coordinator

Tony Demboski: Upper Peninsula Sportsman's Alliance

Eric Steir: American Forest Management, Inc.

Jim Hammill: Iron Range Consulting and Services, Inc.

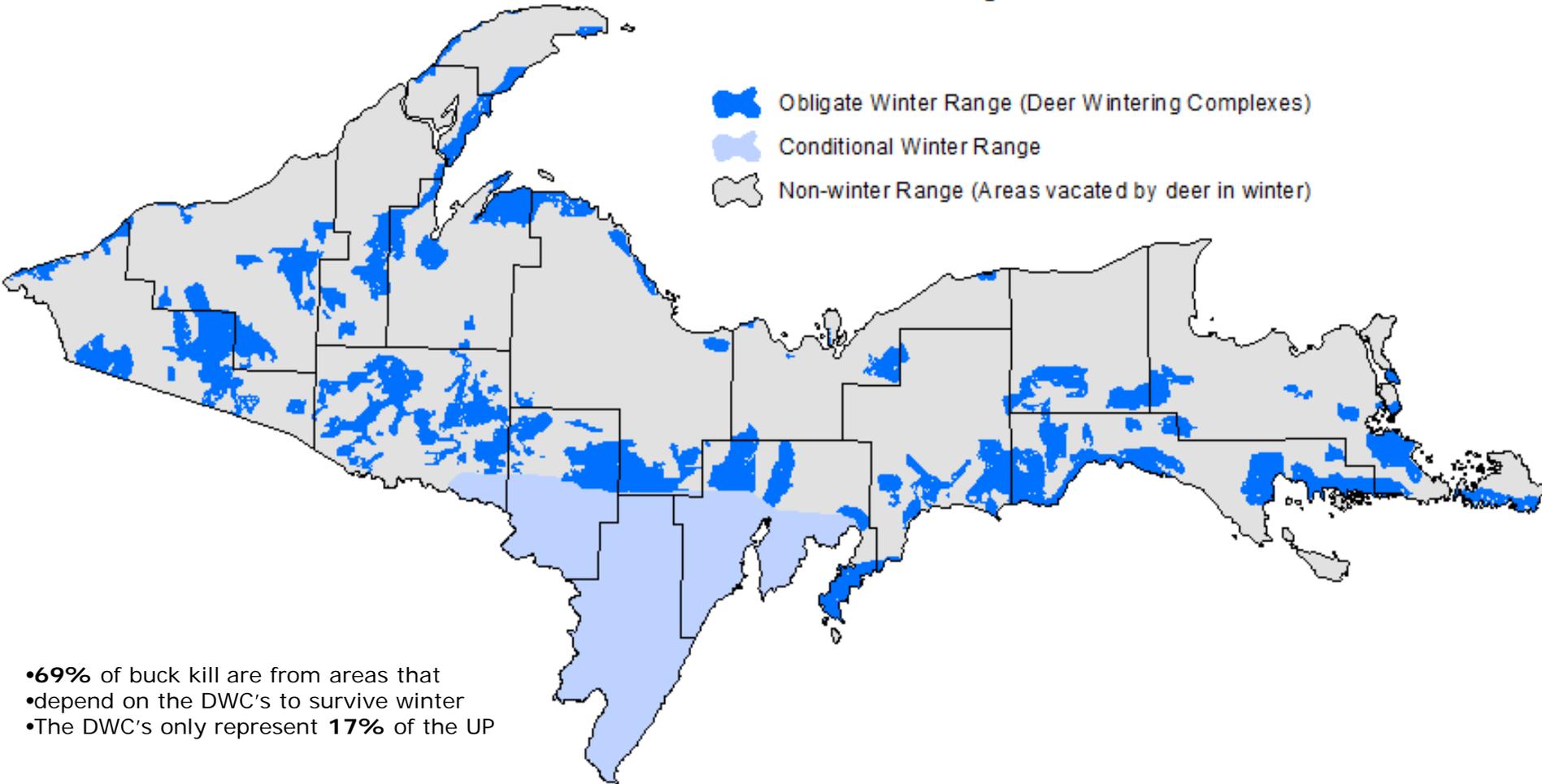
Matt Watkeys: Marquette County Conservation District



# Winter Deer Distribution in the UP

U.P. Deer Winter Range

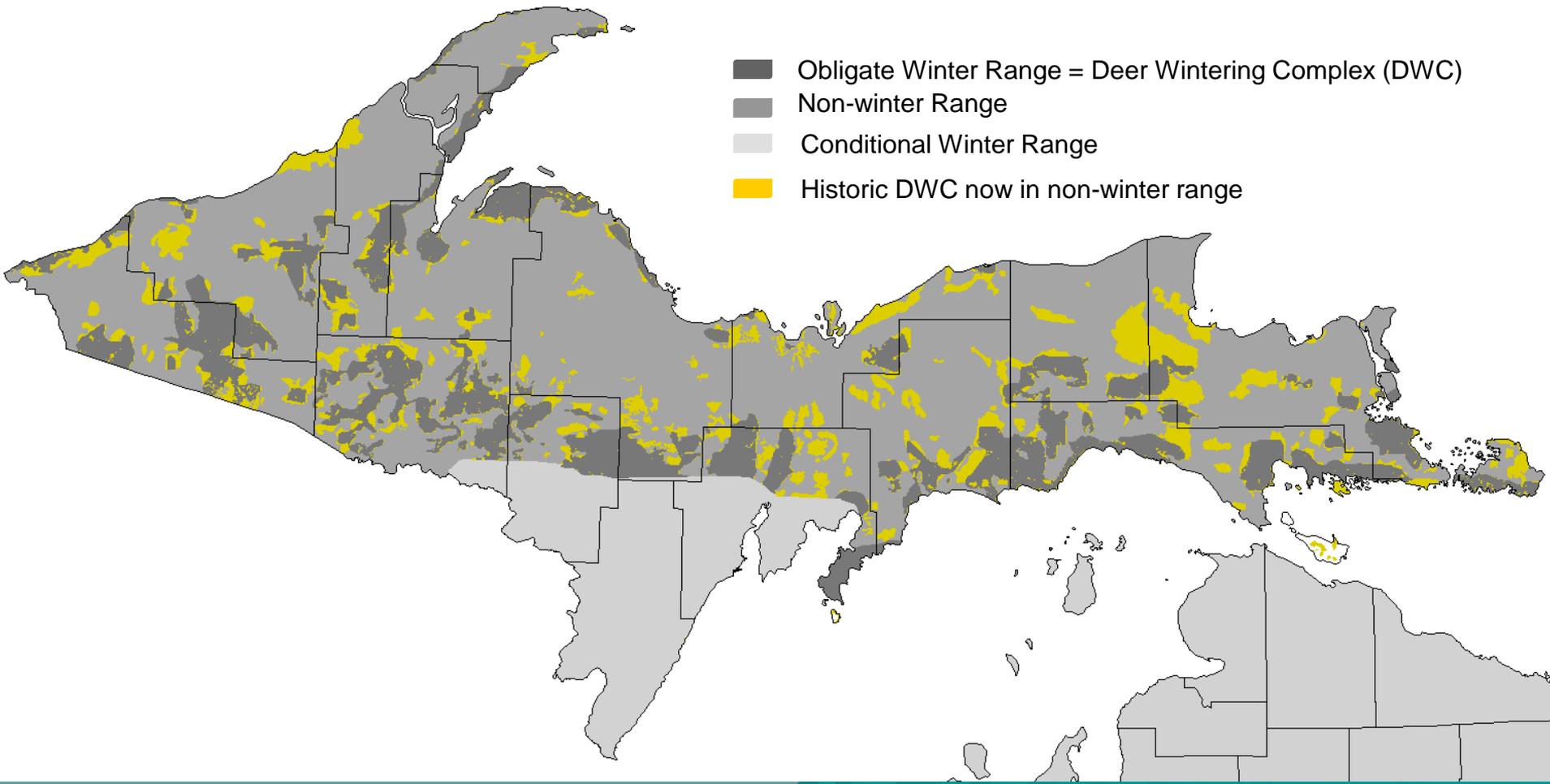
-  Obligate Winter Range (Deer Wintering Complexes)
-  Conditional Winter Range
-  Non-winter Range (Areas vacated by deer in winter)



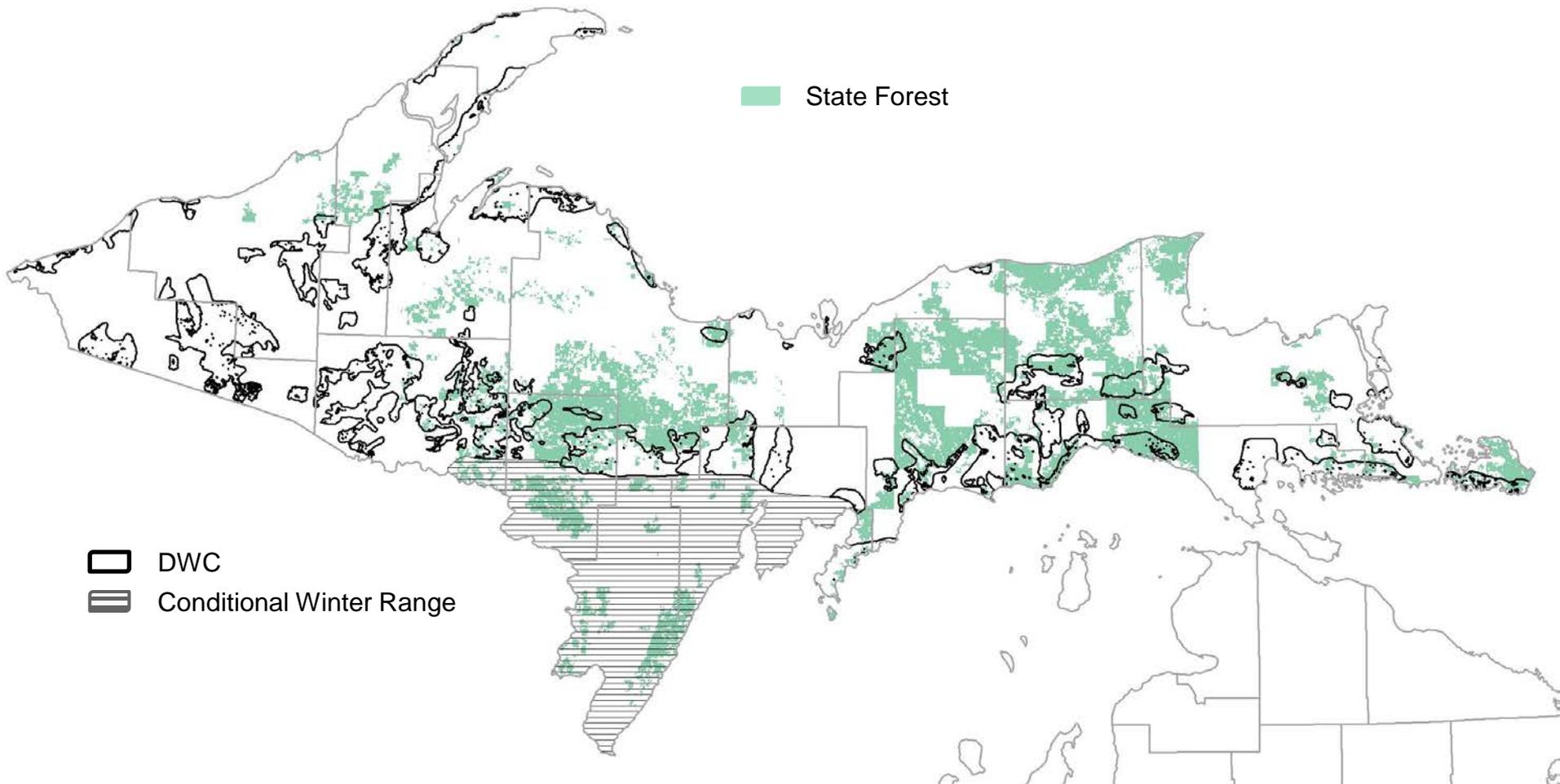
- **69%** of buck kill are from areas that depend on the DWC's to survive winter
- The DWC's only represent **17%** of the UP

# Historic DWC's now in Non-winter Range

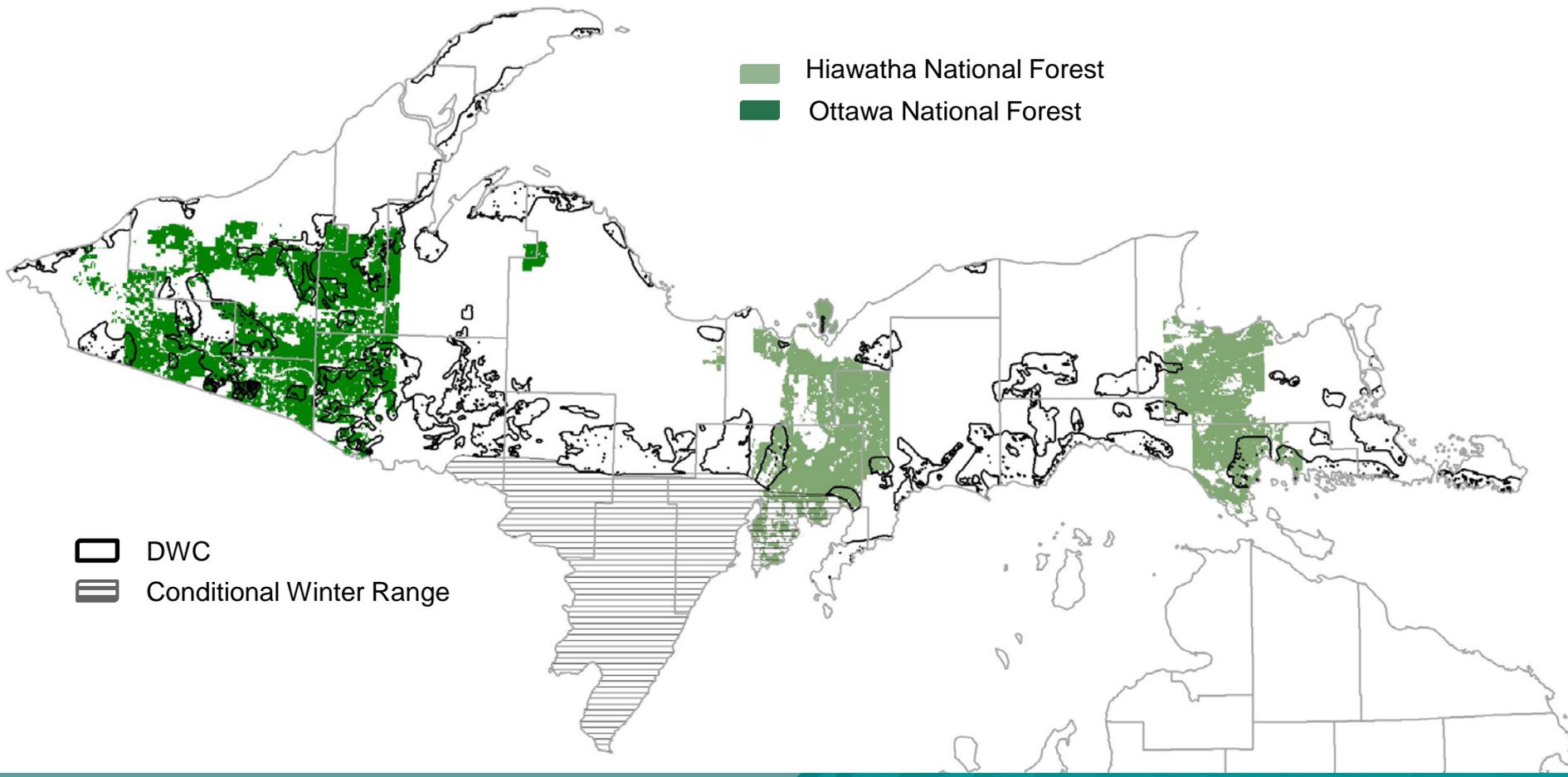
- Obligate Winter Range = Deer Wintering Complex (DWC)
- Non-winter Range
- Conditional Winter Range
- Historic DWC now in non-winter range



# U.P. Habitat Workgroup Representation:

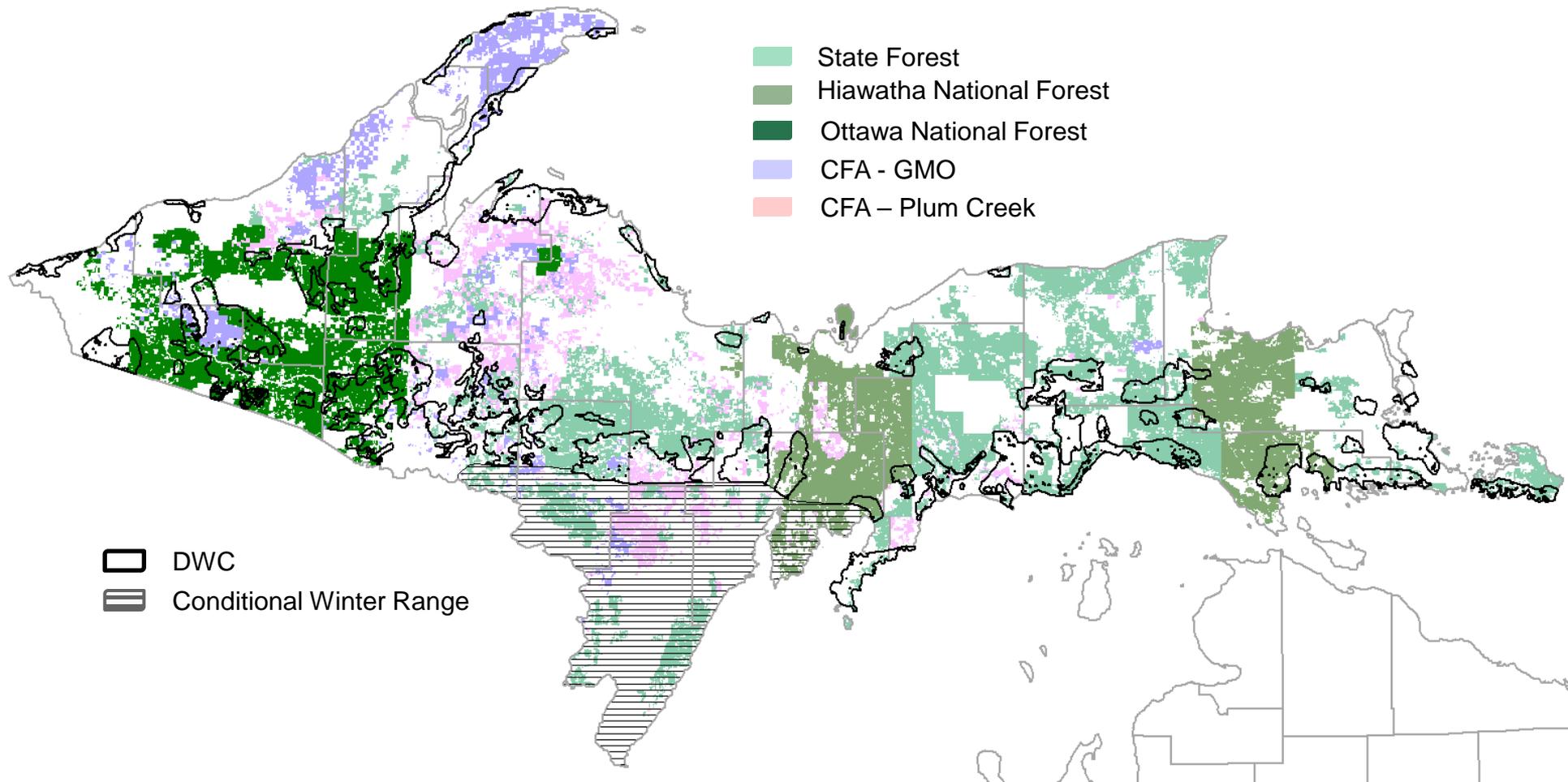


# U.P. Habitat Workgroup Representation:



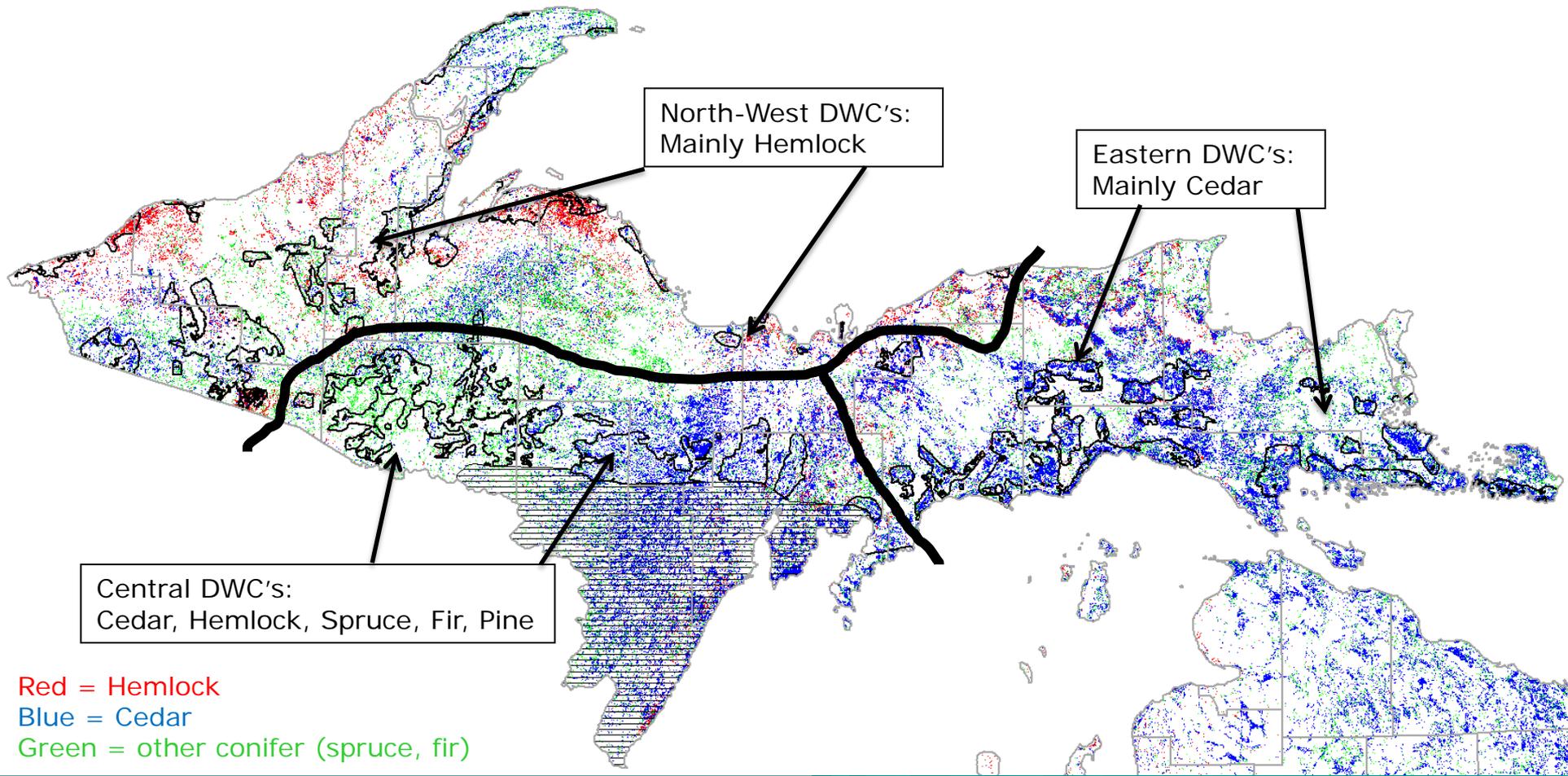
# U.P. Habitat Workgroup Representation:

Group Represents 50% of DWC Acreage



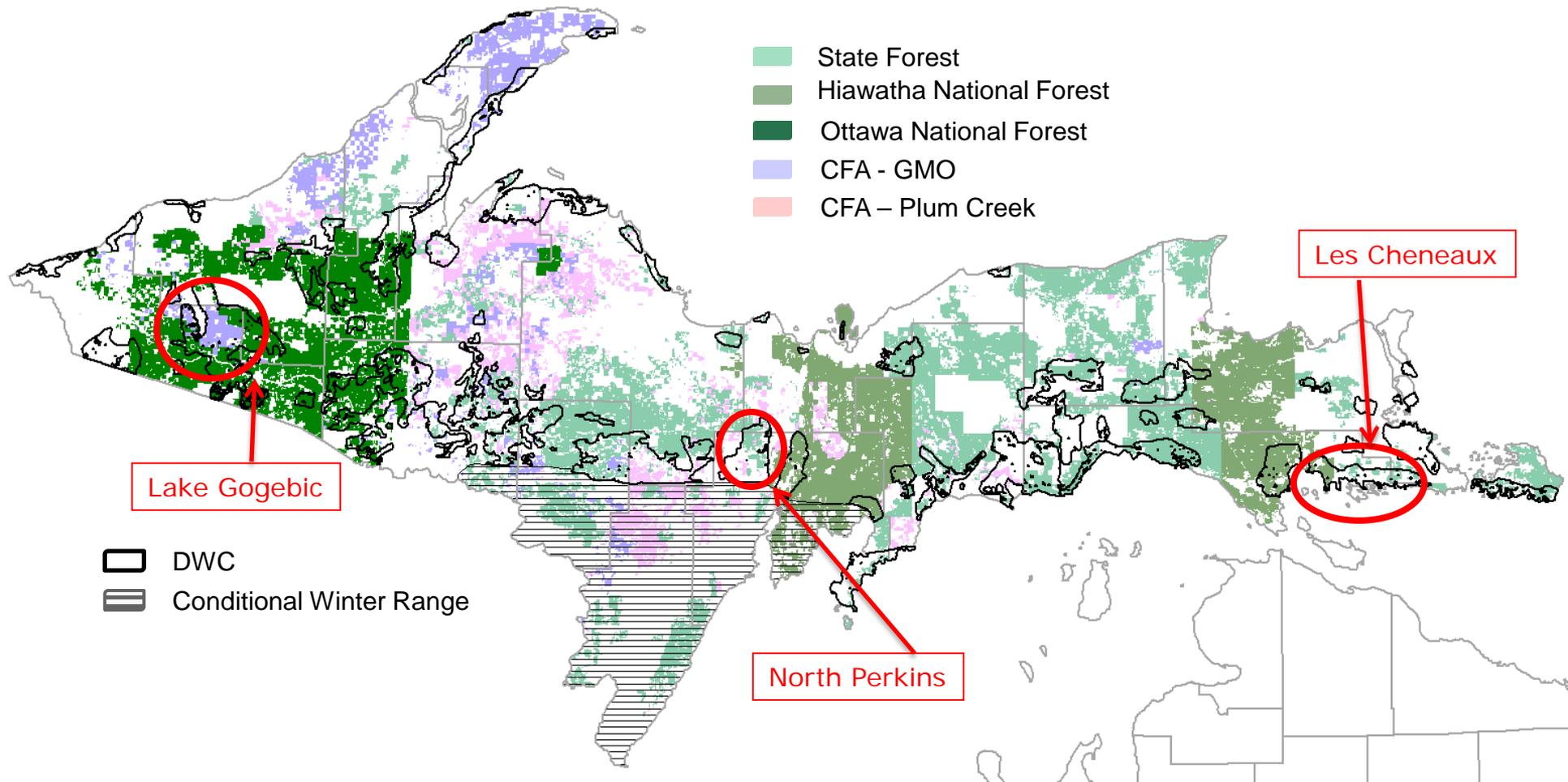
# Types of DWC's

3 general categories based on shelter arrangements



# Possible Priority DWC's to start

To have representation in groups members





STATE OF MICHIGAN - DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES - [www.michigan.gov/dnr](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr)

# DEER WINTERING COMPLEXES in Delta County



**Legend:**

**Deer Wintering Complexes**  
(DWC; circa 2013):

- DWC portion on Public Land (State or Federal land)
- DWC portion on "Private" Land (meaning not on State or Federal land)

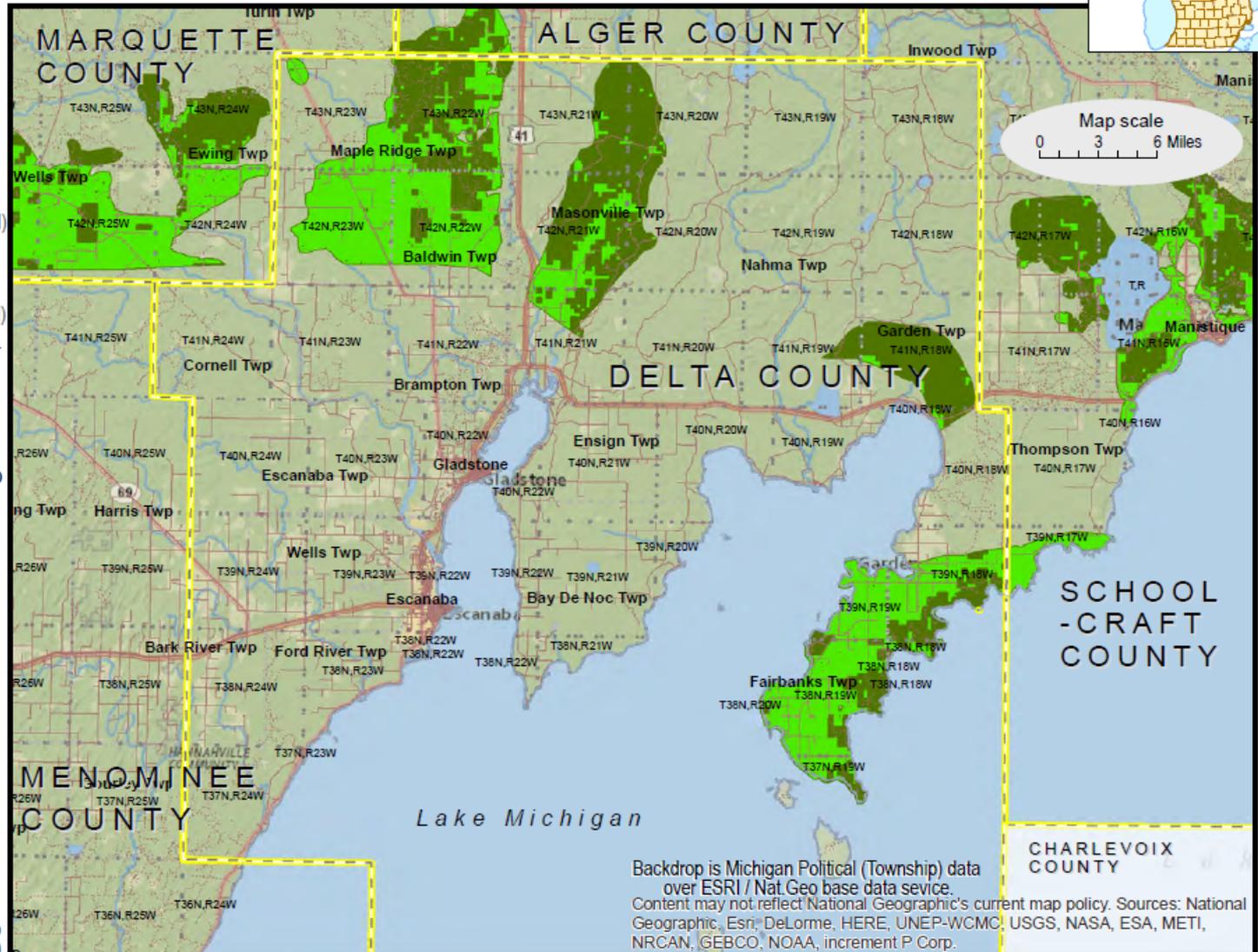
These are special landscape areas, which are not created exclusively using land ownership patterns, so they can go across or include multiple land ownership types in one DWC.

See the back of this map for help reading this map and important notes about DWC.

Note: When referring to an area, DWCs do not have unique names, so when describing one, use the County name & the Town Range block - labelled on map like:



Revised 10/17/2014  
DNR Wildlife Division map  
(-WLD/ MS)



Backdrop is Michigan Political (Township) data over ESRI / Nat.Geo base data service. Content may not reflect National Geographic's current map policy. Sources: National Geographic, Esri, DeLorme, HERE, UNEP-WCMC, USGS, NASA, ESA, METI, NRCAN, GEBCO, NOAA, increment P Corp.

# U.P. Habitat Workgroup Mission:

- Improving and conserving critical U.P. winter deer habitat. by:
  - Developing comprehensive habitat strategies
    1. Cover type specific silviculture strategies for each identified UP deer winter range complex, primarily focused on land not managed by DNR
    2. Encourage private landowners to participate in maintenance and enhancement of deer winter habitat
      - Identifying best management practices
      - Identifying communication strategies and incentives
      - Use in forest planning efforts, forest stewardship program, various habitat grant opportunities, qualified forest program
    3. Outreach via training plus strategies available online

# How we will have an impact:

- ◆ State Land
  - Guidance of DWC Plans
  - Application of current state guidelines on state forest land
  - Provide grants for habitat improvement on private land such as shelter plantings
- ◆ Federal Land
  - Guidance on DWC Plans
  - Conservation of primary winter shelter per current forest plans
  - Plan participation such as opportunity areas
- ◆ Corporate
  - Guidance on DWC Plans
  - Agreements with state similar to the Plum Creek – DNR agreement
- ◆ Private
  - Access to guidelines via website
  - Opportunities to participate in habitat improvement grants

# U.P. Habitat Workgroup Deliverables:

(How can a planner use this information?)

## Webpage on DNR website (in development) containing:

- Static and dynamic winter range maps
  - Is a property in obligate, conditional or non-winter range?
  - Deer Wintering Complex (DWC) are online now <http://bit.ly/updeerdwc>
- Winter range strategies for shelter and food resources
  - What cover type strategies are recommended for the property based on it's location in winter range?
- Detailed management plans for specific deer wintering complexes
  - If located in obligate winter range, is there a detailed plan written for a DWC that that area? This might identify more detailed location strategies such as shelter tree planting recommendations.

## Outreach:

- Meetings such as these to notify forest planners about these resources
- Provide field trips to sites that demonstrate various strategies

# For more information contact:

Terry Minzey, UP Regional Wildlife Supervisor  
Phone: 906-485-1031, ext 311  
Email: [minzeyt@michigan.gov](mailto:minzeyt@michigan.gov)

Steve Carson, Michigan DNR DWC Coordinator  
Phone: 906-563-9077  
Email: [carsons1@michigan.gov](mailto:carsons1@michigan.gov)

Dennis Nezich, FRD Field Coordinator  
Phone: 906-226-1351  
Email: [nezichd@michigan.gov](mailto:nezichd@michigan.gov)

Jim Hammill, Iron Range Consulting & Services  
Phone: 906-875-6487  
Email: [ironrangeconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:ironrangeconsulting@gmail.com)