



DCR-DWSP Deer Harvest Summary: 2020

The Department of Conservation, Division of Water Supply Protection (DWSP) manages 140,000-acres across the Quabbin, Ware River, Wachusett and Sudbury Watersheds. Forest health and tree regeneration are important land management goals for the Division because the forest acts as a biological filter for water quality. In response to high deer densities and deer impact on forest regeneration, DWSP opened watershed lands to deer hunting to restore and maintain balance in the forested ecosystem. These deer hunts are all regulated according to the Department of Fish and Game, Division of Fisheries and Wildlife's (MassWildlife) and DWSP's rules and regulations. Changes to the deer hunt may be applied annually based on an adaptive deer management approach. For the first time in 2020, Wachusett Reservoir Zone was open for all deer hunting seasons, and the Hardwick and New Salem Zones at Quabbin were open for the full 2-week shotgun season. The following DWSP hunting zones were open in 2020:

- Quabbin: Hardwick, New Salem, and Pelham Zones,
- Ware River watershed lands
- Wachusett Reservoir Zone,
- Wachusett watershed lands (outside of the Reservoir Zone),
- Sudbury Watershed

Harvest data were analyzed from the MassWildlife harvest database (MassFishHunt) and the DWSP online database in Smartsheet. All hunters are legally required to submit their harvest information to MassWildlife, and DWSP also requires reporting. DWSP biologists review the data and based on information available they compile a list of confirmed and unconfirmed (possible) harvests on watershed lands. Due to the nature of the analyses performed, the 2020 DWSP harvest totals must be displayed as a range of deer harvested in each hunting zone. The harvest analysis provided the following summary (confirmed # – total possible #):

- Hardwick: 14-16 deer
- New Salem: 8-12 deer
- Pelham: 14 deer
- Ware River: no data
- Wachusett Reservoir Zone: 33-50 deer
- Wachusett Watershed Lands (5-year permit): 8-110 deer
- Sudbury: 28-54 deer

In total, there were 105 confirmed harvests across all DWSP lands, and a possible total of 256. Because Ware River does not currently require access permits, no harvest data could be verified. **The 2020 results by DWSP hunting area are further broken down in the table on the next page.**

	Quabbin (Hardwick)	Quabbin (New Salem)	Quabbin (Pelham)	Ware River	Wachusett Reservoir Zone	Wachusett Watershed Lands (5-year permit)	Sudbury Reservoir	Totals
Size of hunt area	5,637 acres (8.8 sq. miles)	6,871 acres (10.7 sq. miles)	8,487 acres (13.3 sq. miles)	23,516 acres (36.7 sq. miles)	2,840 acres (4.4 sq. miles)	4,500 acres (7.0 sq. miles)	2,050 acres (3.2 sq. miles)	53,385 acres (83.4 sq. miles)
WMZ	6	6	6	5, 8	9	5, 8, 9	9, 10	
Deer season	Shotgun (Nov 30 - Dec 12)	Shotgun (Nov 30 - Dec 12)	Shotgun (Nov 30 - Dec 12)	All (Oct 19 - Dec 31)	All (Oct 18 - Dec 31)	All (Oct 18 - Dec 31)	All (zone 10: Oct 5 - Dec 31; zone 9: Oct 18 - Dec 31)	
DWSP permit type	1 year access	1 year access	1 year access	None	Lottery	5-year access	1 year access	
# hunters permitted	688*	688*	688*	N/A	334	2,596*	624	4,242
Controlled hunt antlerless permits	Option to purchase 1 antlerless permit if applied by Oct 31 deadline	Option to purchase 1 antlerless permit if applied by Oct 31 deadline	Option to purchase 1 antlerless permit if applied by Oct 31 deadline	N/A	1 per hunter required; up to 2 optional	None	None	
Adult male harvest (confirmed # - total possible)	5-7	4-6	3-3	Unknown	4-9	8-51	10-23	34-99
Female (confirmed # - total possible)	7-7	2-3	8-8	Unknown	21-30	0-50	15-26	53-124
Male fawn (confirmed # - total possible)	2-2	2-3	3-3	Unknown	8-11	0-7	3-4	18-30
Sub-legal male (confirmed # - total possible)	0-0	0-0	0-0	Unknown	0-0	0-2	0-1	0-3
Total deer harvested (confirmed # - total possible)	14-16	8-12	14-14	Unknown	33-50	8-110^	28-54	105-256
Largest deer (reported)	125 lbs, 9-points	160 lbs, 8-points	140 lbs, 8-points	Unknown	161 lbs, 10-points	Unknown	186 lbs, 10-points	
Success rate (deer harvested / # hunters)	2.0 - 2.3%*	1.2 – 1.7%*	2.0%*	Unknown	9.9 – 15.0%	< 1 – 4.2%	4.5 – 8.7%	2.5 – 6.0%
Deer harvested / sq. mile	1.6 – 1.8 deer/sq. mile	0.7 - 1.1 deer/sq. mile	1.1 deer/sq. mile	Unknown	7.5 – 11.4 deer/ sq. mile	1.1 – 14.3 deer/sq. mile	8.75 – 16.9 deer/sq. mile	1.3 – 3.1 deer/ sq. mile
Notes	** applicants same across all Quabbin zones (hunters that applied for Quabbin permit could hunt in any open Quabbin zone); success rate likely low because it's based on total number applicants	** applicants same across all Quabbin zones (hunters that applied for Quabbin permit could hunt in any open Quabbin zone); success rate likely low because it's based on total number applicants	** applicants same across all Quabbin zones (hunters that applied for Quabbin permit could hunt in any open Quabbin zone); success rate likely low because it's based on total number applicants	Access permits not currently required. No range in possible harvest numbers could be estimated.		*Due to a switch in DWSP application methods, this number may include some repeat applicants.		