



DCR-DWSP Deer Harvest Summary: 2021

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. No new changes from 2020 were applied to hunts in 2021. The following DWSP hunting zones were open in 2021:

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

For maps of the huntable watershed lands, see below:

Watershed lands (includes Ware River, Sudbury, Quabbin (off-reservation) and Wachusett lands (not including Reservoir zone): <https://mass-eoeaa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=d8c82c7e758240c8bbce9fe9bbc7bbbc>

Quabbin Reservoir control zones: <https://mass-eoeaa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=3963f3140b0d4ac2b0e5d59dbd2107b1>

Wachusett Reservoir control zones: <https://mass-eoeaa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=462067248db14a1fbdde362b38b13ed8>

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 2021 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: 17-18 deer
- New Salem: 8-17 deer
- Pelham: 12-15 deer
- Ware River: no data
- Wachusett Reservoir Zone: 28-43 deer
- Wachusett Watershed Lands (5-year permit): 3-107 deer
- Sudbury: 28-43 deer

In total, there were 96 confirmed harvests across all DWSP lands, and a possible total of 232. Please note that 11 harvests were counted as unconfirmed in both the Wachusett Reservoir Zone and in the Wachusett watershed lands. Because Ware River does not currently require access permits, no harvest data could be verified. **The 2021 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 29 - Dec 11)	Shotgun (Nov 29 - Dec 11)	Shotgun (Nov 29 - Dec 11)	All (Oct 18 - Dec 31)	All (Oct 18 - Dec 31)	All (Oct 18 - Dec 31)	All (zone 10: Oct 4 - 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	640*	640*	640*	N/A	310	2,931*	486	4,367
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	N/A	N/A	
Adult male harvest (confirmed # - total possible)	5-6	6-15	7-10	Unknown	4-18	0-57	13-22	35-128
Female (confirmed # - total possible)	10-10	2-2	5-5	Unknown	20-21	3-40	10-14	50-92
Male fawn (confirmed # - total possible)	2-2	0-0	0-0	Unknown	4-4	0-8	5-6	11-20
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)	17-18	8-17	12-15	Unknown	28-43^	3-107^	28-43	96-232*
Largest deer (reported)	182 lbs, 9-points	193 lbs, 8-points	193 lbs, 8-points	Unknown	123 lbs, 3-points	Unknown	142 lbs, 10-points	
Success rate (deer harvested / # hunters)	2.7 - 2.8%*	1.3 - 2.7%*	1.7 - 2.2%*	Unknown	9 - 14%	< 1 - 3.7%	5.8 - 8.8%	2.1 - 5.2%
Deer harvested / sq. mile	1.9 - 2.0 deer/sq. mile	0.7 - 1.6 deer/sq. mile	0.8 - 1.1 deer/sq. mile	Unknown	6.4 - 9.8 deer/ sq. mile	0.4 - 15.3 deer/sq. mile	8.8 - 13.4 deer/sq. mile	2.0 - 4.9 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.	^Total possible harvest # includes 11 deer that could have been harvested in either the Wach Res zone or Wach watershed lands	*Due to a switch in DWSP application methods, this number may include some repeat applicants. ^Total possible harvest # includes 11 deer that could have been harvested in either the Wach Res zone or Wach watershed lands		*Total possible harvest accounts for the 11 harvests that were counted twice in the Wach Res zone and Wach watershed lands