



MASSWILDLIFE

Annual Deer Review:

2019 Harvest Summary

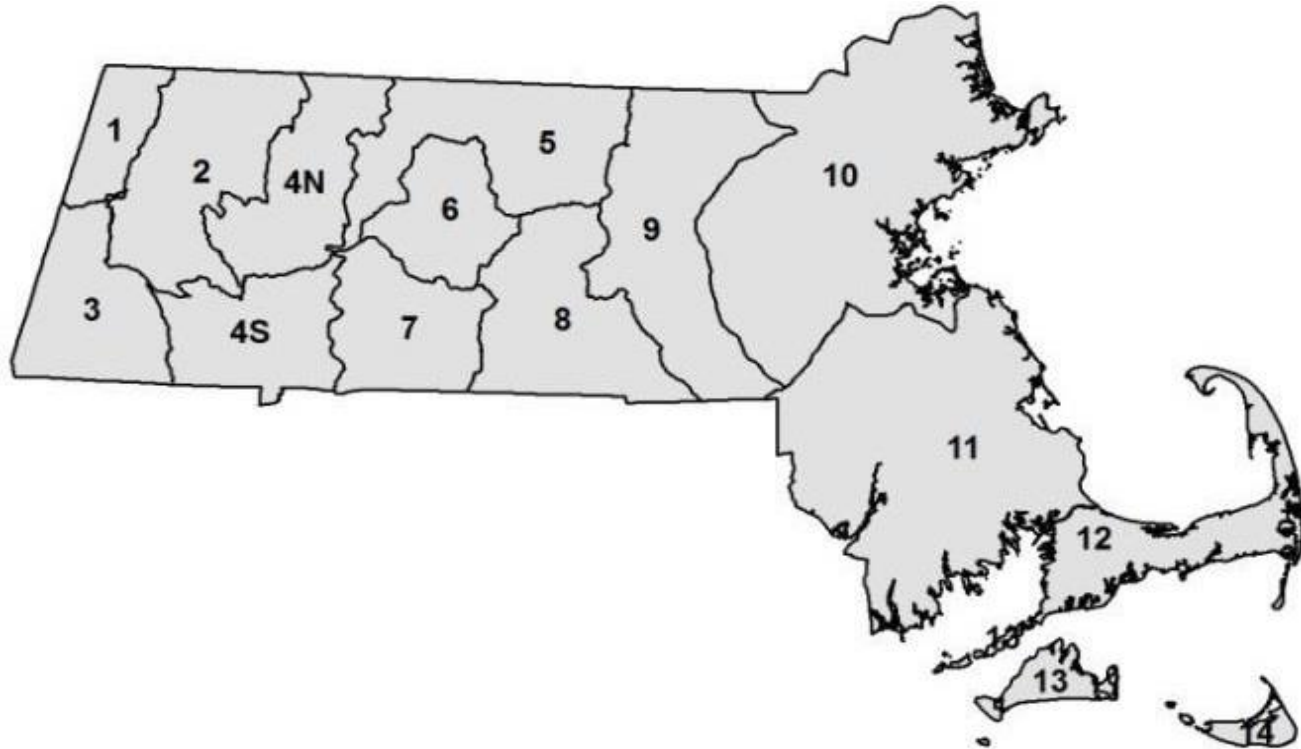
2020 Antlerless Deer Permit Allocation

Overview

- **Deer Management in Massachusetts**
- **2019 Deer Harvest and Trends**
 - Western and Central Regions (Zones 1-9)
 - Eastern Region (Zones 10-14)
- **Proposed 2020 Antlerless Deer Permit Allocations**

How Deer Numbers Are Managed

- **MassWildlife Allocates Antlerless Deer Permits by Zone**
 - Regulate **Female** Harvest by Zone
 - Target Direction: Increase, Stabilize, or Decrease
 - Harvest Data and Antlerless Permit Success Rates



Current Deer Density in Massachusetts 4

Hunting Access: #1 limitation to deer management

Hunting and antlerless permits only control deer numbers in areas with enough hunting access

Deer density can vary within each zone and can be over 50 deer/mi² in areas with little to no hunting access



GOAL: keep deer numbers below the point of major impacts to forest, but in balance with public desire and tolerance for deer

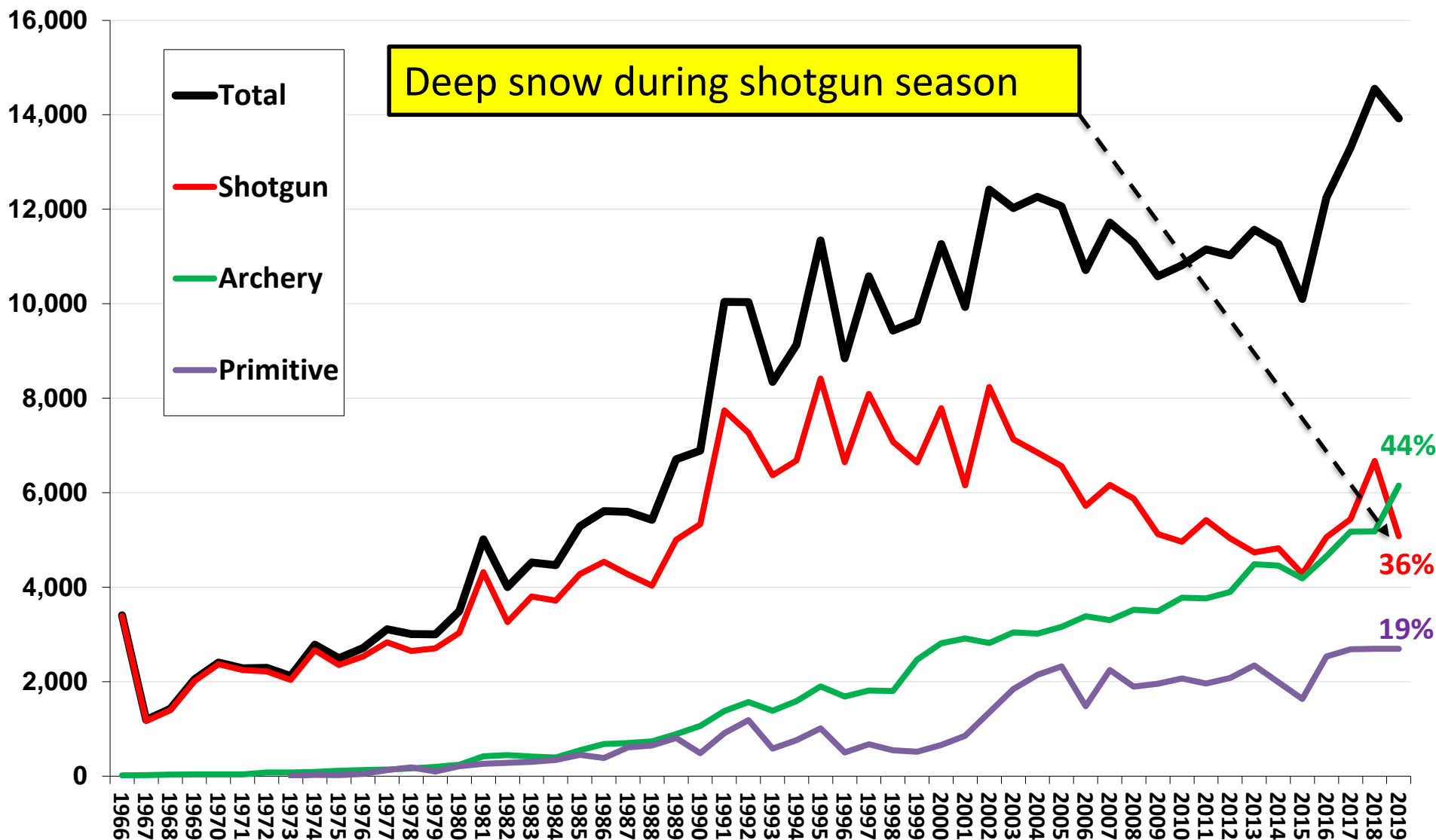
Management range of 12-18 deer/mi² of forest “Benchmark”

Statewide Harvest by Season

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	AVG 2016-2018	2019	
Archery	5,004	6,149	New Record
Shotgun	5,591	4,985	Drop
Primitive	2,639	2,692	2nd Highest Record
Youth/Para	133	94	
Total	13,368	13,920	2nd Highest Total

Total Statewide Deer Harvest

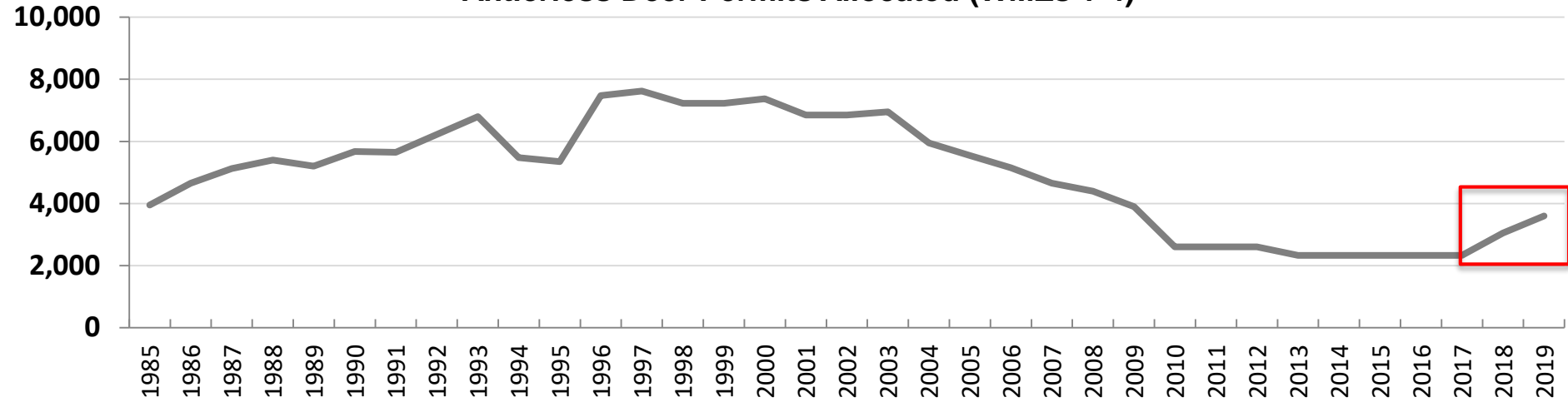




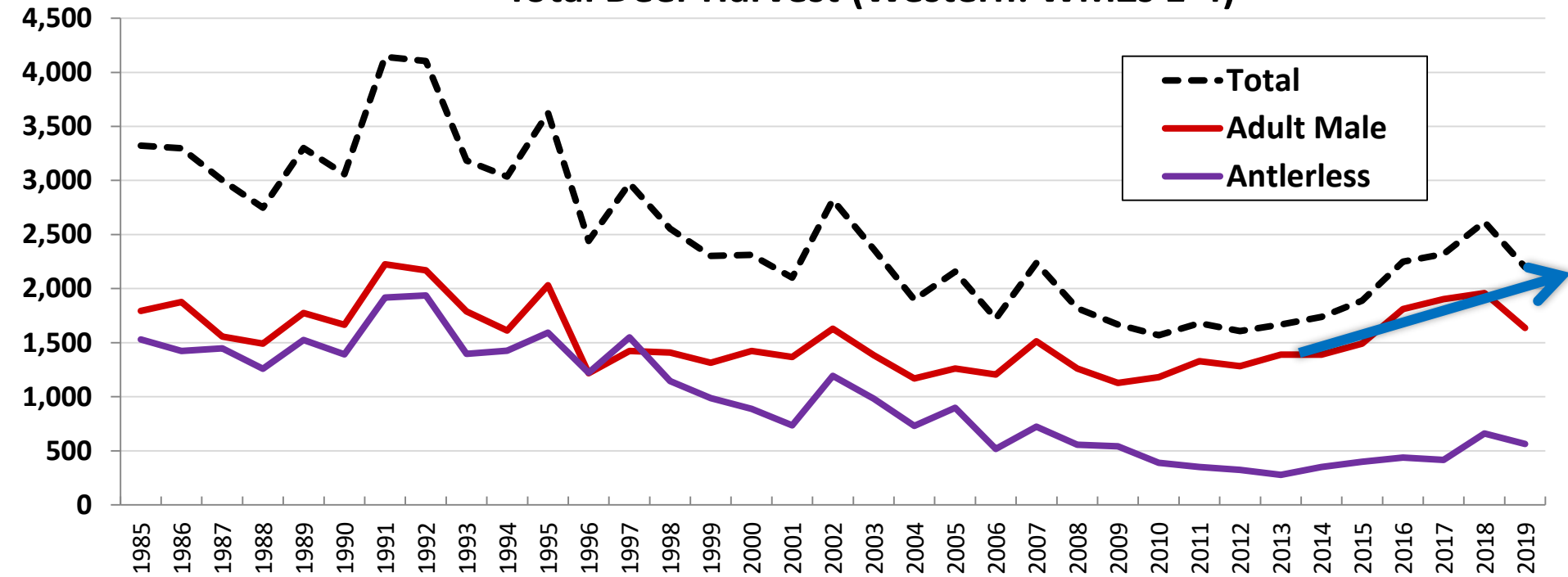
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Western and Central Massachusetts

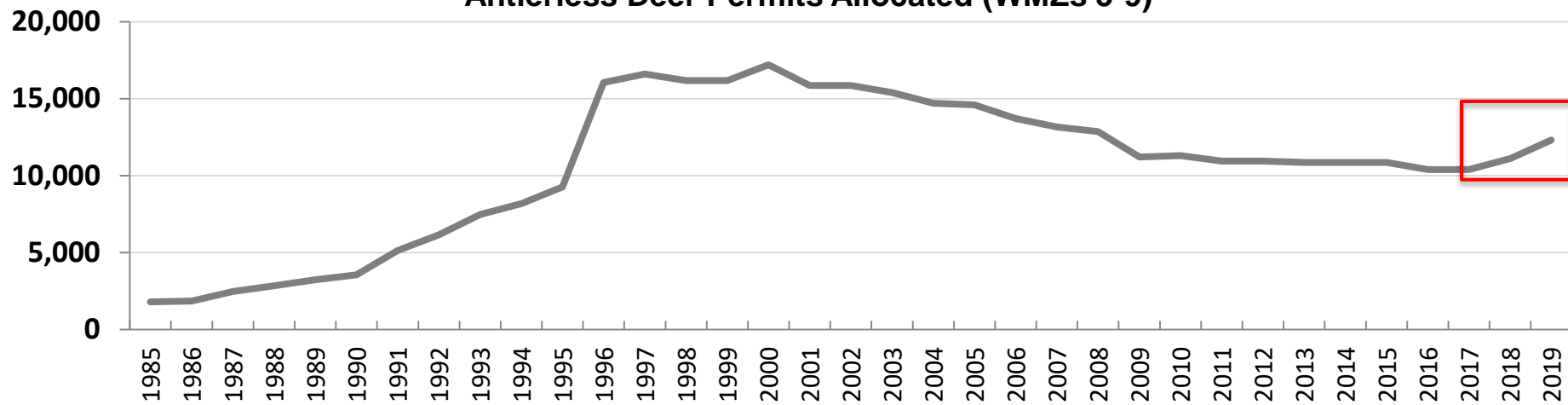
Antlerless Deer Permits Allocated (WMZs 1-4)



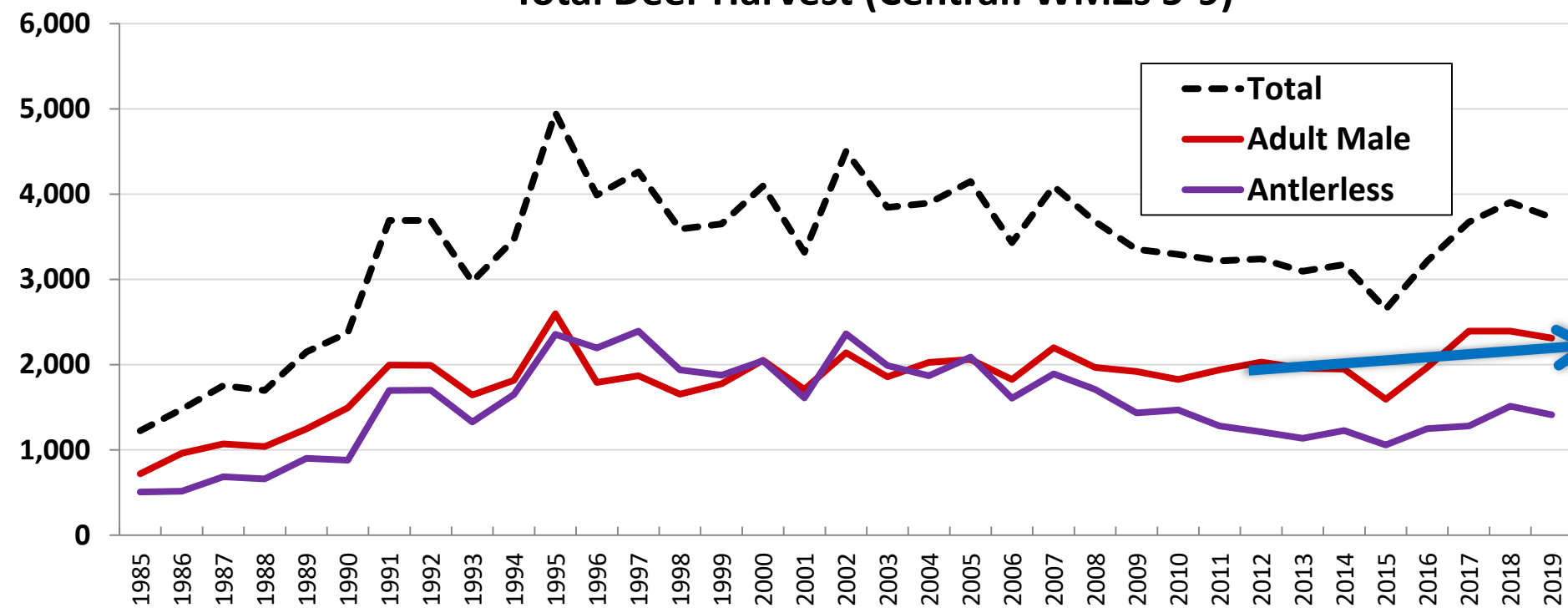
Total Deer Harvest (Western: WMZs 1-4)



Antlerless Deer Permits Allocated (WMZs 5-9)



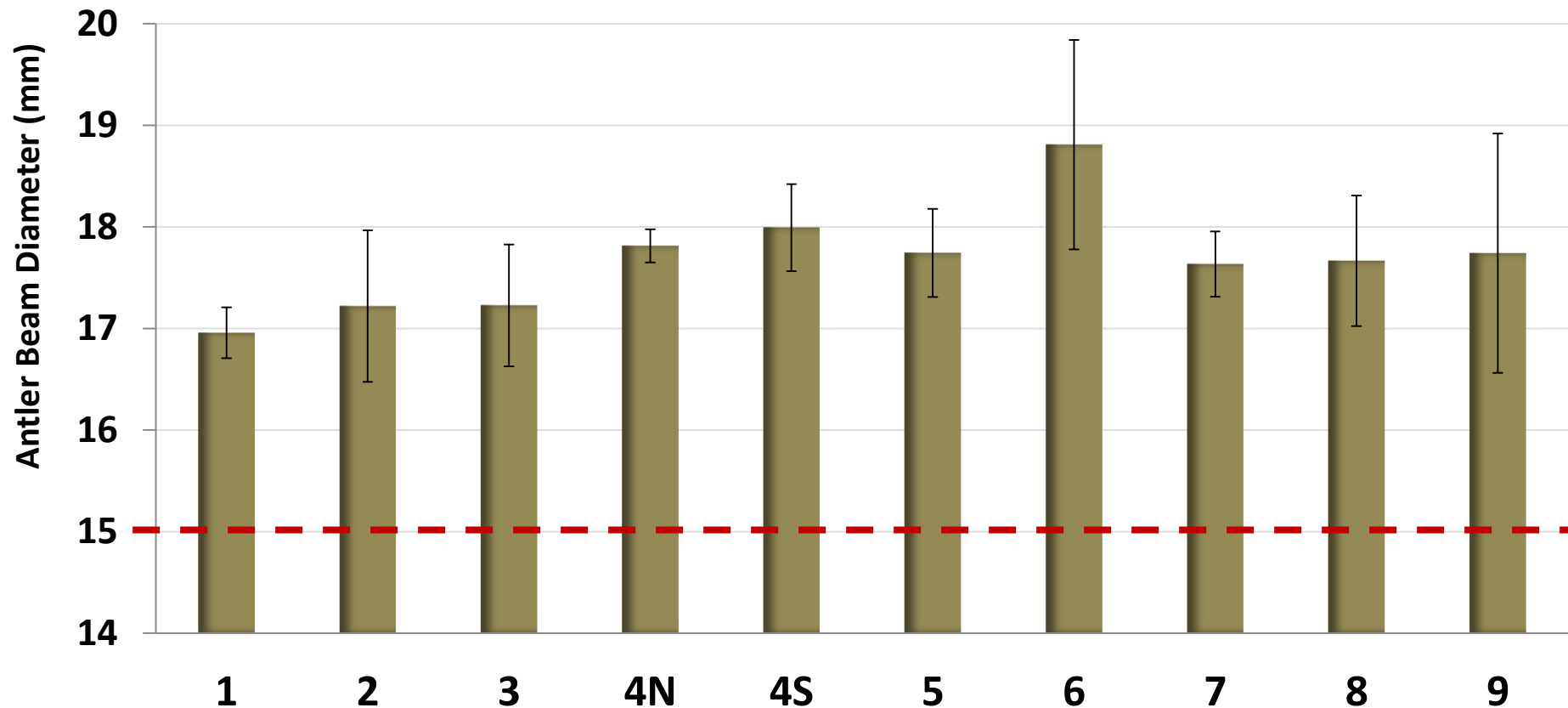
Total Deer Harvest (Central: WMZs 5-9)



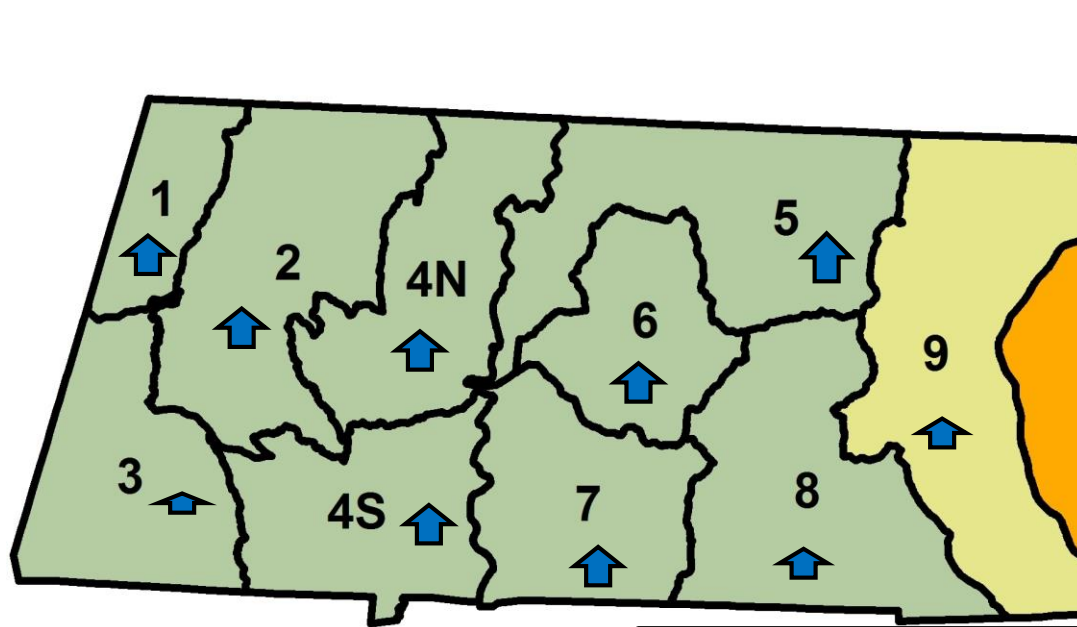
Deer Health and Condition

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Average Yearling Male Antler Beam Diameter: Western and Central Zones (AVG: 2017-2019)



Below 15 mm can indicate stress or poor/"over-browsed" habitat



Antlerless Deer Permits (WMZs 1-9)

Recommend no changes to antlerless deer permit allocations for the 2020 season

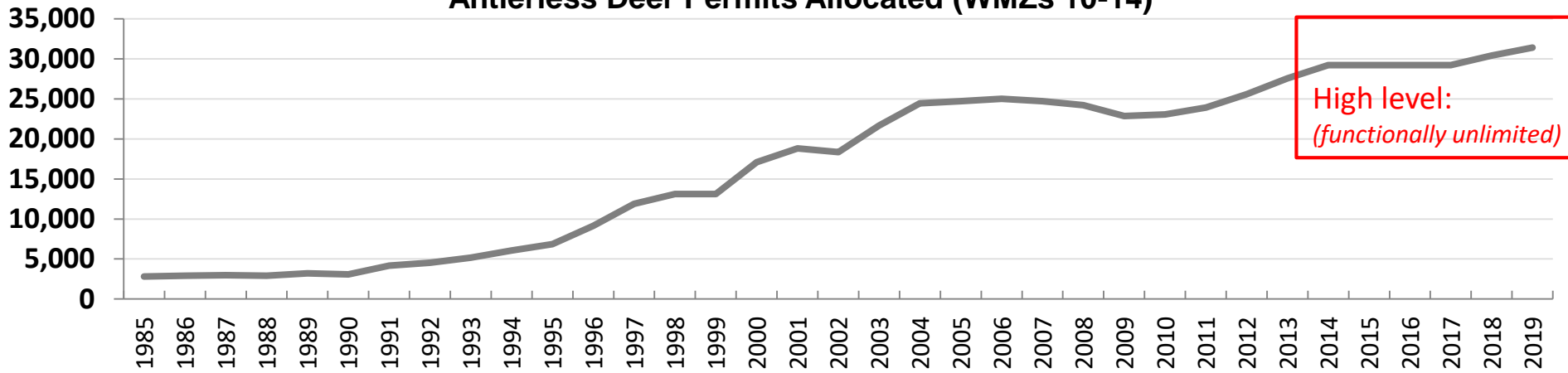
Continue with the same levels as last year to stabilize deer numbers within the management range and assess trends



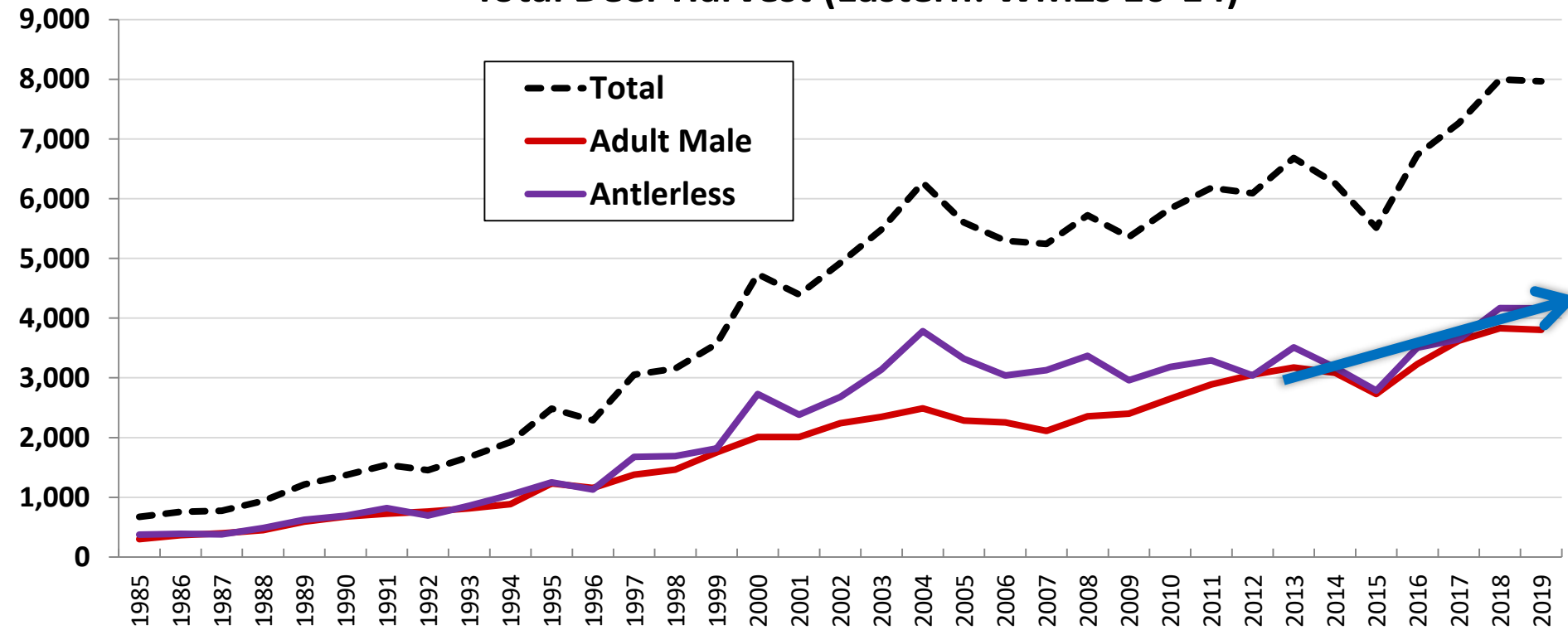
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Eastern Massachusetts

Antlerless Deer Permits Allocated (WMZs 10-14)



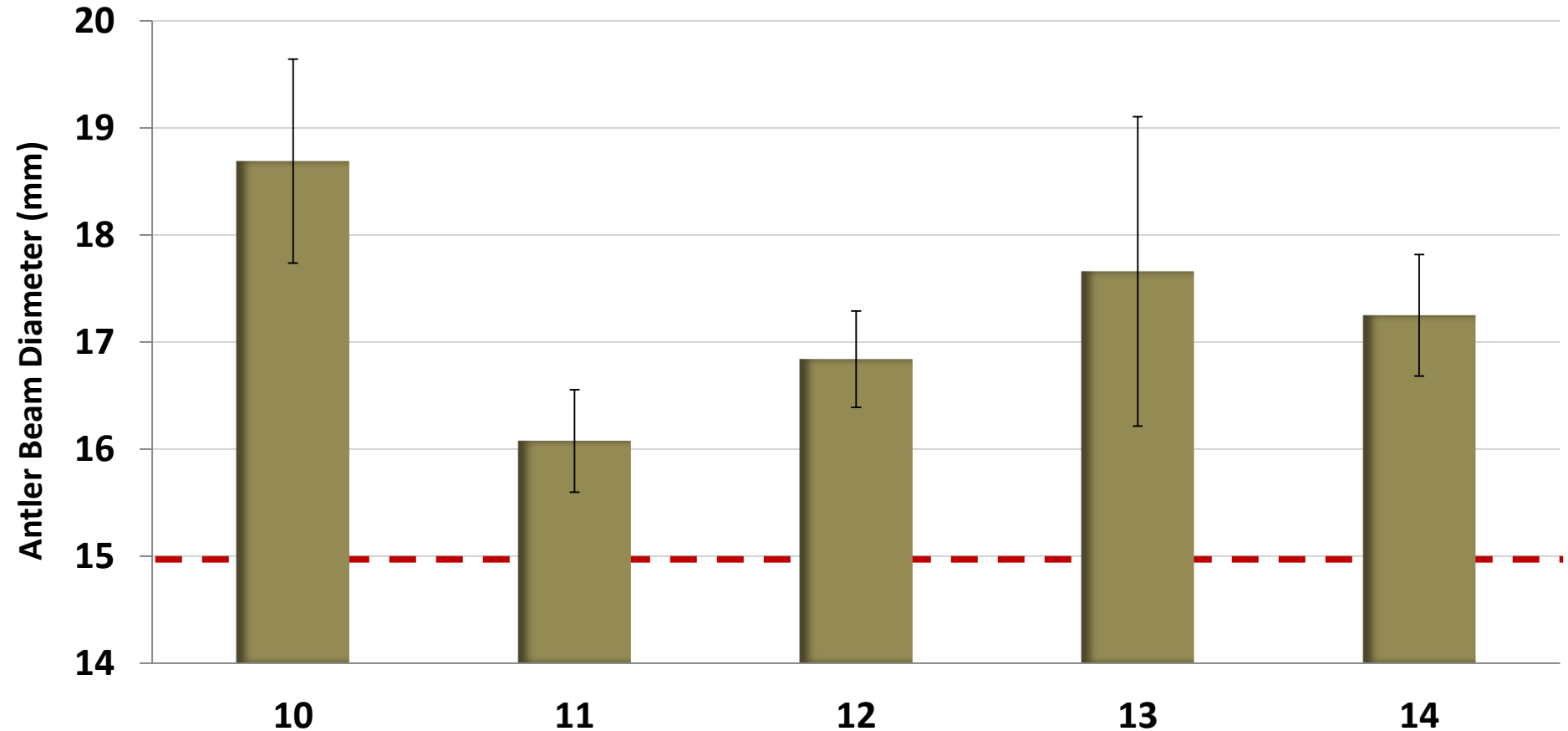
Total Deer Harvest (Eastern: WMZs 10-14)



Deer Health and Condition

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Average Yearling Male Antler Beam Diameter Eastern Zones (AVG: 2016-2018)



- Below 15 mm can indicate stress or poor/"over-browsed" habitat

Deer Density to Management Range

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Antlerless Deer Permits

(WMZs 10-14)

Recommend no changes to antlerless deer permit allocations for the 2020 season

(Zones 10, 11, 13 and 14 essentially unlimited)

Continue with current high level of permits and extended archery season

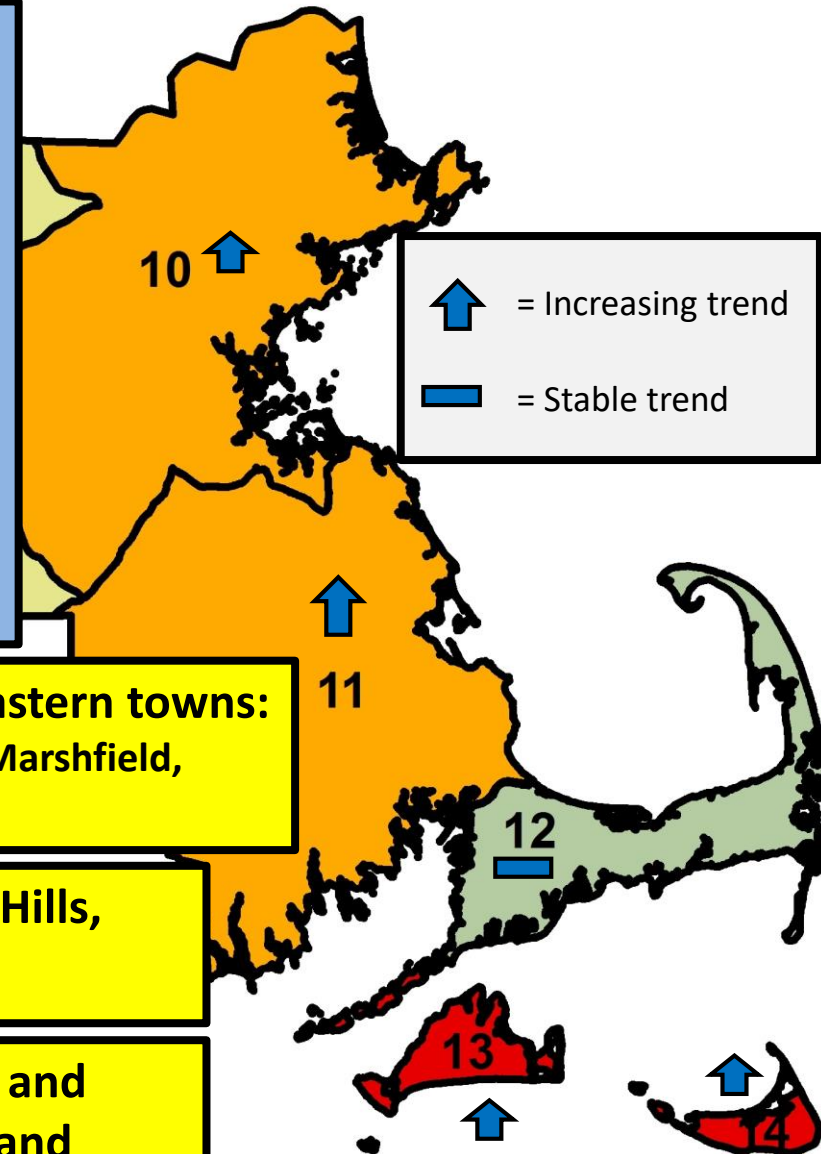
Continue efforts to improve hunting access

Our efforts led to opening of over 2500 acres in eastern towns:

Andover, Carlisle, Dover, Framingham, Harvard, Hingham, Marshfield, Medfield, Sherborn, Sudbury, Westborough, Weston, etc.

DCR opened over 13,000 acres of land in the Blue Hills, Wachusett Reservoir, and Sudbury Reservoir

MassAudubon, Trustees, Sudbury Valley Trustees, and other groups have opened up over 3000 acres of land





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Staff Recommendations

- **Western and Central Regions (Zones 1-9)**
 - We made some conservative increases in antlerless permit allocations over the past few years to begin to stabilize deer numbers
 - We would like to continue with the previous permit levels to begin to stabilize deer numbers within the management range of 12-18 deer/mi² and to better see the trends over the next few years.
- **Eastern Region (Zones 10-14)**
 - Well above our management range of 12-18 deer/mi², except zone 12
 - Permit availability is not the limitation, hunting access is
 - We would like to keep the antlerless deer permit allocation at the current high levels, and focus attention on increasing hunting access

Proposed 2020 Antlerless Deer Permit Allocations

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WMZ	2019 Allocation	2020 Allocation	Proposed Change	Population Trend
1	600	600	Recommend no changes to antlerless deer permit allocations	Stable/Increasing
2	300	300		Stable/Increasing
3	1,600	1,600		Stable/Increasing
4N	600	600		Stable/Increasing
4S	500	500		Stable/Increasing
5	1,500	1,500		Stable/Increasing
6	300	300		Stable/Increasing
7	2,400	2,400		Stable/Increasing
8	2,600	2,600		Stable/Increasing
9	5,500	5,500		Stable/Increasing
10	12,000	12,000		Increasing
11	13,000	13,000		Increasing
12	1,000	1,000		Stable/Increasing
13	2,700	2,700		Increasing
14	2,700	2,700		Increasing



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Questions