

2015

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Washington
Department of
**FISH and
WILDLIFE**



Madison Green with the Columbian black-tail she harvested in GMU 681 during the 2013 season

DISTRICT 17 HUNTING PROSPECTS

Pacific and Grays Harbor Counties

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DISTRICT 17 GENERAL OVERVIEW

District 17 is located in southwest Washington and consists of 12 game management units (GMUs): 618 (Matheny) 638 (Quinault Ridge), 642 (Copalis), 648 (Wynoochee), 658 (North River), 660 (Minot Peak), 663 (Capital Peak), 672 (Fall River), 673 (Williams Creek), 681 (Bear River), 684 (Long Beach) and 699 (Long Island). Administratively, District 17 includes all of Pacific and Grays Harbor counties and is one of four management districts (11, 15, 16, and 17) that collectively comprise WDFW's Region 6 (Figure 1). The northern portion of District 17 (north of Highway 12) includes the southwestern portion of the Olympic Mountains while the southern part of the district is situated in the Willapa Hills.

The landscape in District 17 is dominated by industrial forest land characterized by second and third growth forests. These lands are primarily dedicated to producing conifers such as Douglas fir, western hemlock, and occasionally cedar. A small number of stands focus production on red alder. Other kinds of habitats occur in the district and range from sub-alpine habitat in areas adjacent to Olympic National Park to coastal wetlands along the outer coast.



District 17 is best known for elk hunting opportunities in the Willapa Hills and waterfowl hunting opportunities around Willapa Bay, Grays Harbor, and in the Chehalis and Willapa River Valleys. High quality hunting opportunities exist for other game species, including Columbian black-tailed deer, black bears, and forest grouse. **Table 1** shows the estimated harvest for most game species in District 17 during the 2013 and 2014 seasons. Those numbers are compared to the five-year average. For more specific information on harvest trends, please refer to the appropriate section in this document.

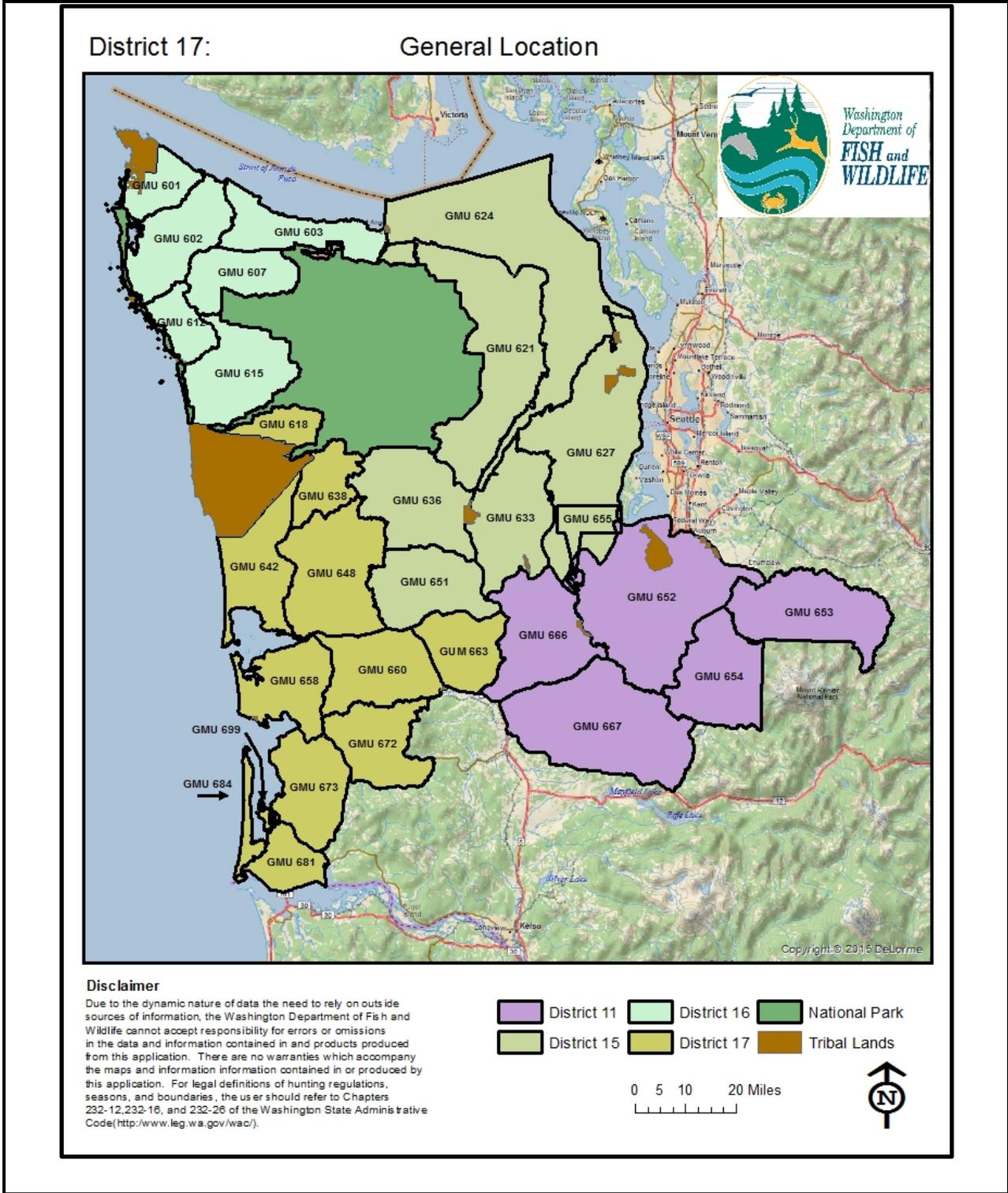


FIGURE 1. MAP DEPICTING THE GENERAL LOCATION OF DISTRICT 17 AND ALL OF WDFW ADMINISTRATIVE REGION 6.

Species	Harvest		
	5-yr avg.	2013	2014
Elk	644	628	652
Deer	1,553	1,492	1,602
Bear	102	97	63
Cougar	7	10	3
Ducks	23,130	25,426	24,012
Geese (late season)	2,446	2,030	2,612
Geese (early season)	336	371	489
Forest Grouse	6,102	3,050	4,206
Mourning Dove	77	252	16
Quail	82	0	0
Band-tailed pigeons	(pre 2013)148	No data	No data
Rabbits	143	77	108

TABLE 1. AVERAGE HARVEST FOR SELECTED GAME SPECIES DURING PREVIOUS 5 YEARS, AND YEARLY ESTIMATES FOR THE 2013 AND 2014 HUNTING SEASONS IN DISTRICT 17.

ELK

GENERAL INFORMATION, MANAGEMENT GOALS, AND POPULATION STATUS

The subspecies of elk in District 17 are Roosevelt elk. Unlike other areas in western Washington, Rocky Mountain elk were never introduced into the area and Roosevelt-Rocky Mountain elk hybrids do not occur. The state of Washington contains 10 distinct elk herds and a portion of two elk herds occurs in District 17:

- Olympic elk herd (GMUs 618, 638, 642, and 648)
- Willapa Hills elk herd (GMUs 658, 660, 663, 672, 673, 681, 684, and 699).

The quality of elk hunting in District 17 varies from marginal to excellent depending on the GMU. The greatest harvest opportunities occur in GMUs associated with the Willapa Hills elk herd area, specifically GMUs 658, 672, 673, and 681.

In Washington, elk are managed at the herd level, while harvest regulations are set at the GMU level. In general, each herd consists of several GMUs that collectively define the range of a population that minimizes interchange with adjacent elk populations.

Overall, District 17 is managed with the primary goal of promoting stable or increasing elk herds. Portions of the district (such as GMU 684) must balance overall herd objectives with the equally important mission of minimizing conflicts with people. Elk can cause severe impacts to crops such as hay or cranberries. Overall management objectives include maintaining herds to contain 15 bulls: 100 cows in the pre-hunting season population and a minimum of 12 bulls:100 cows in the post-season population.

Currently, WDFW does not use formal estimates or indices of population size to monitor elk populations in District 17. Trends in harvest, hunter success, and CPUE are used as surrogates to formal indices or estimates. WDFW recognizes limitations to using harvest data to monitor trends in population size. The agency developed a monitoring strategy for the Willapa Hills to:

- Determine elk population trends
- Quantify cow to calf ratios
- Quantify bull to cow ratios

Elk surveys conducted in District 17 during Mar/Apr of 2015 produced the following data:

Year	GMU	Sampling Units		Yrl	Sub	Mat	Unk	Total	bull:cow:calf	
		Surveyed	Cow							Calf
2015	658	7	345	125	72	9	1	15	567	24:100:36
	660	1	33	16	6	0	0	0	55	18:100:48
	672	5	208	57	29	6	0	36	336	17:100:27
	673	2	321	95	46	1	0	9	472	15:100:30
	Total	15 units	907	293	153	16	1	60	1,430	19:100:32

WDFW observed 1,430 elk during the 2015 survey. Bull to cow ratios averaged 19 bulls per 100 cows. This 19:100 statistic is well above the 12 bulls per 100 cow minimum that WDFW uses to benchmark breeding success. Calf to cow ratios measured 32 calves per 100 cows. The calf ratio indicates good elk production. Mature bulls, carrying antlers with five points or more, were scarce. Only one mature bull was seen during the entire survey. Hunters with a primary goal of finding a trophy bull are directed to look outside the Willapa Hills area and into the neighboring Olympic or St. Helens elk herds.

Future surveys will be conducted once per year, sampling different segments of the Willapa Hills elk herd.

All harvest data indicates that elk populations are stable in District 17. For more detailed information related to the status of Washington's elk herds, hunters should read through the most recent version of the Game Status and Trend Report which is available for download on the Department's website or by [clicking here](#).

WHICH GMU SHOULD ELK HUNTERS HUNT?

Probably the most frequent question we get from hunters is, “What GMU should I hunt?” The answer depends on individual preferences, such as what weapon is going to be used and what type of hunting experience the hunter is looking for. For example, GMU 699 is a small unit closed to muzzleloader hunters. Also, archery hunters are not allowed to harvest antlerless elk in every GMU.

Some hunters are looking for an opportunity to harvest a mature bull. Although large mature bulls do exist in District 17, they are not very abundant and we usually advise hunters seeking a mature bull to spend their efforts in either the Quinault Ridge (GMU 638), Matheny (GMU 618), or adjacent Clearwater (GMU 615) GMUs. All three GMUs are adjacent to Olympic National Park (ONP) and have the reputation of producing some very nice bulls.



The ideal GMU for most hunters would have high densities of elk, low hunter densities, and high hunter success rates. Unfortunately, this scenario does not readily exist in any GMU that is open during the general modern firearm, archery, or muzzleloader seasons in District 17. Those GMUs with the highest elk densities tend to have the highest hunter densities as well. For many hunters, high hunter densities are not enough to persuade them not to hunt in a GMU where they see lots of elk. For other hunters, they would prefer to hunt in areas with moderate to low numbers of elk if that means there are also very few hunters. Note, many industrial timber companies have begun limiting access or charging a fee to access their land. This change has effectively, and sometime dramatically, reduced the density of hunters on those lands.

The information in **Tables 2, 3 & 4** provides a general assessment of how District 17 GMUs compare with regard to harvest, hunter numbers, and hunter success during general modern firearm, archery, and muzzleloader seasons. The values presented are the five-year averages for each statistic. Total harvest and hunter numbers were further summarized by the number of elk harvested and hunters per square mile.

Comparing total harvest or hunter numbers is not always a fair comparison, since GMUs vary in size. For example, the average number of elk harvested in a five year period from 2009-2013 during the general modern firearm season in GMUs 681 and 673 was 36 and 116 elk, respectively. That total harvest may seem to indicate much higher density of elk in GMU 673

compared to GMU 681. However, by redefining that number as elk harvested/mi², we come up with an estimate of 0.436 harvested/mi² in GMU 673 and 0.330 harvested/mi² in GMU 681. Expressed as harvested/mi², elk densities are probably more similar between the two GMUs than total harvest indicates.

Each GMU was ranked from 1 to 11 for elk harvested/mi² (bulls and cows), hunters/mi², and hunter success rates for the 2009-2013 season. Three ranking values were summed to produce a final rank sum. GMUs are listed in order of least rank sum to largest. The modern firearm comparisons are the most straightforward because bag limits and seasons are the same in each GMU.

Archers should consider that antlerless elk seasons are not uniform across all GMUs. Antlerless elk may be harvested during the general season in six GMUs, and three GMUs are open during early and late archery seasons. These differences are important when comparing total harvest or hunter numbers among GMUs. Muzzleloader seasons are not uniform either. Some muzzleloader seasons are open during the early muzzleloader season while others are only available during the late muzzleloader season. Hunters should keep these differences in mind when interpreting the information provided in Tables 2 through 4.

MODERN FIREARM										
GMU	Size (mi ²)	Harvest			Hunter Density			Hunter Success		Rank Sum
		Total	Harvest per mi ²	Rank	Hunters	Hunters per mi ²	Rank	Success	Rank	
684	51	4	0.078	6	30	0.59	3	13%	2	11
681	109	36	0.330	2	240	2.20	9	15%	1	12
673	266	116	0.436	1	1011	3.80	10	11%	3	14
658	257	62	0.241	3	557	2.17	8	11%	4	15
672	257	34	0.132	4	337	1.31	7	10%	5	16
660	302	27	0.089	5	290	0.96	5	9%	7	17
638	153	10	0.065	7	111	0.73	4	10%	6	17
642	278	6	0.022	9	73	0.26	1	8%	8	18
663	210	2	0.010	10	64	0.30	2	3%	10	22
648	431	17	0.039	8	416	0.97	6	4%	9	23

TABLE 2. COMPARISON OF MODERN FIREARM GENERAL ELK SEASON: TOTAL HARVEST, HUNTER NUMBERS, AND HUNTER SUCCESS RATES USING RANK SUM ANALYSIS. DATA PRESENTED ARE BASED ON A FIVE-YEAR RUNNING AVERAGE (2009-2013).

MUZZLELOADER										
GMU	Size (mi ²)	Harvest			Hunter Density			Hunter Success		Rank Sum
		Total	Harvest per mi ²	Rank	Hunters	Hunters per mi ²	Rank	Success	Rank	
684	51	14	0.275	1	51	1.00	7	28%	1	9
642	278	3	0.011	6	20	0.07	2	14%	2	10
672	257	9	0.035	3	97	0.38	5	9%	3	11
660	302	10	0.033	4	98	0.32	4	9%	4	12
658	257	11	0.043	2	184	0.72	6	6%	5	13
638	153	2	0.013	5	41	0.27	3	6%	6	14
663	210	1	0.005	7	13	0.06	1	2%	7	15

TABLE 3. COMPARISON OF MUZZLELOADER GENERAL ELK SEASON: TOTAL HARVEST, HUNTER NUMBERS, AND HUNTER SUCCESS RATES USING RANK SUM ANALYSIS. DATA PRESENTED ARE BASED ON A FIVE-YEAR RUNNING AVERAGE (2009-2013).

*GMU 684 IS IN **BOLD** AND OPEN DURING BOTH EARLY AND LATE SEASON FOR ANY ELK*

** NOTE – MUZZLELOADER SEASONS WERE NEWLY OPENED FOR THE 2014 SEASONS IN UNITS 648, 673, 681.*

ARCHERY										
GMU	Size (mi ²)	Harvest			Hunter Density			Hunter Success		Rank Sum
		Total	Harvest per mi ²	Rank	Hunters	Hunters per mi ²	Rank	Success	Rank	
658	257	16	0.062	5	111	0.43	5	15%	2	12
673*	266	79	0.297	3	488	1.83	8	16%	1	12
699*	8	11	1.375	1	78	9.75	11	14%	3	15
681*	109	53	0.486	2	377	3.46	10	14%	4	16
638	153	5	0.033	9	53	0.35	3	10%	6	18
672*	257	52	0.202	4	483	1.88	9	11%	5	18
684*	51	2	0.039	7	19	0.37	4	9%	8	19
660*	302	12	0.040	6	135	0.45	6	9%	7	19
642	278	2	0.007	10	20	0.07	1	9%	9	20
663	210	1	0.005	11	27	0.13	2	4%	11	24
648	431	16	0.037	8	283	0.66	7	6%	10	25

TABLE 4. COMPARISON OF ARCHERY GENERAL ELK SEASON: TOTAL HARVEST, HUNTER NUMBERS, AND HUNTER SUCCESS RATES USING RANK SUM ANALYSIS. DATA PRESENTED ARE BASED ON A FIVE-YEAR RUNNING AVERAGE (2009-2013). *GMU 684 IS IN **BOLD** AND OPEN DURING BOTH EARLY AND LATE ARCHERY* * NOTE – GMUS WITH 3-PT. MINIMUM OR ANTLERLESS HARVEST RESTRICTIONS. ...

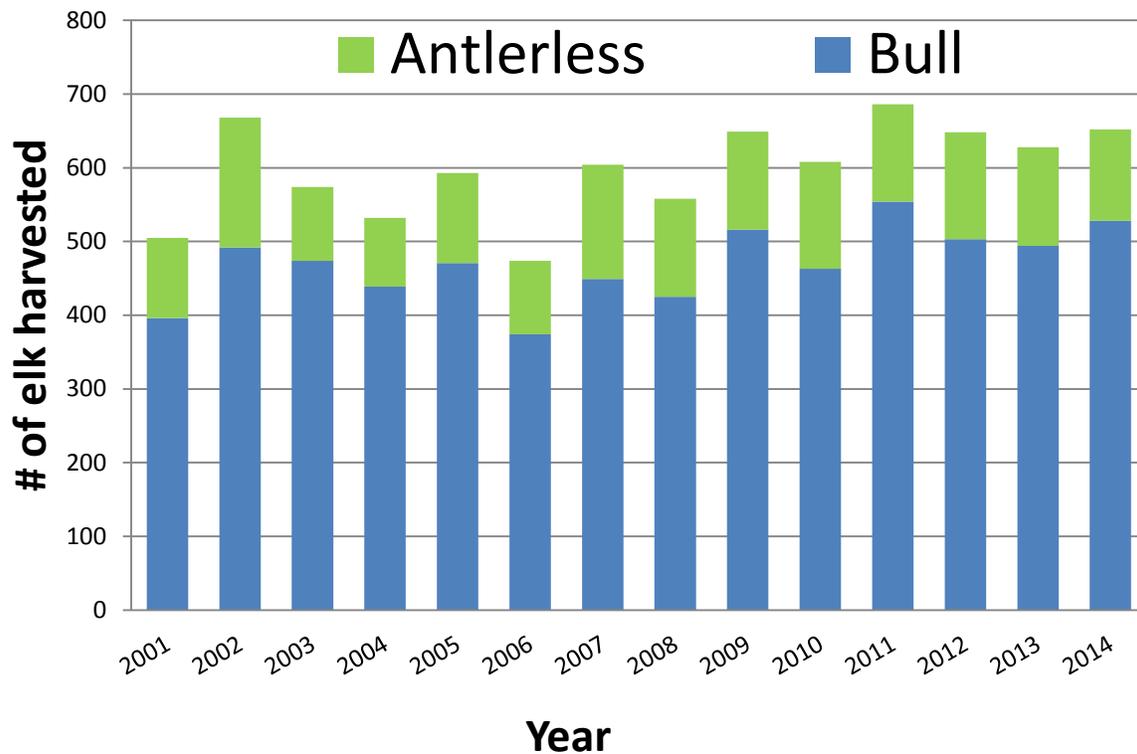
WHAT TO EXPECT DURING THE 2015 SEASON

Elk populations do not vary much from year to year, especially in District 17, which lacks the severe winter weather conditions that might result in a winter die-off. Consequently, the number of elk available for harvest is expected to be similar in size compared to the 2014 season. Hunter numbers do not typically change much from one year to the next, but recent actions by private timber companies to charge for access have reduced hunter numbers in those areas affected.

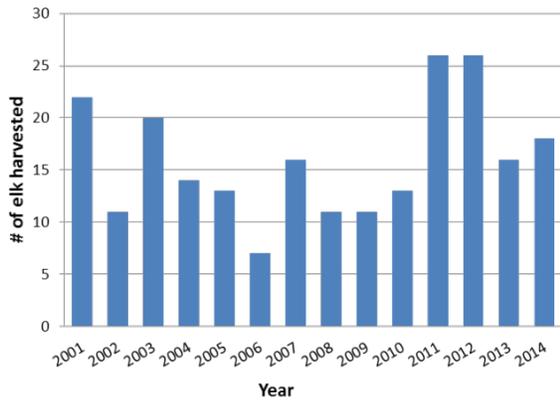
Weather can be dramatically different from year to year, and has the potential to influence harvest rates. As an example, 2012 was a hot and dry summer by western Washington standards, which produced extreme fire danger warnings and caused many timber companies to close their lands to public access during the latter part of the general early archery season and the entire early muzzleloader season. At the time of this report, the summer of 2015 has seen extreme drought conditions throughout the district and hunters may need to consider alternatives to their typical hunts. Since we are not able to predict long-term weather events, the best predictor of future harvest during general seasons is recent trends in harvest, hunter numbers, and hunter success.

Figure #2, provides historic harvest data for the district and each individual GMU. Figure #3 and # 4 show district level information on hunter participation and success rates. These figures are intended to provide hunters with information to make an informed decision on where to hunt.

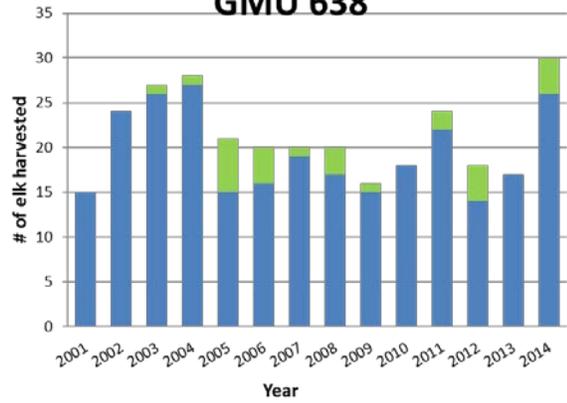
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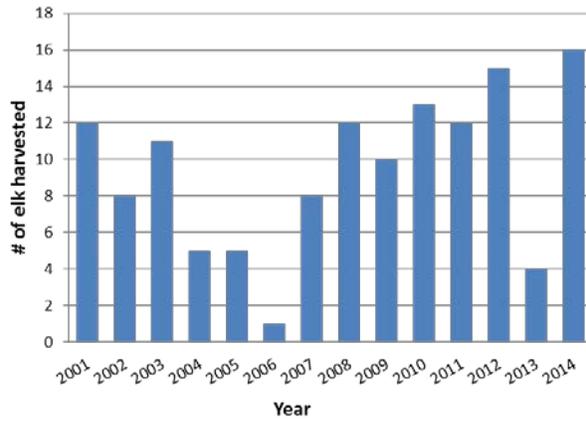
GMU 618



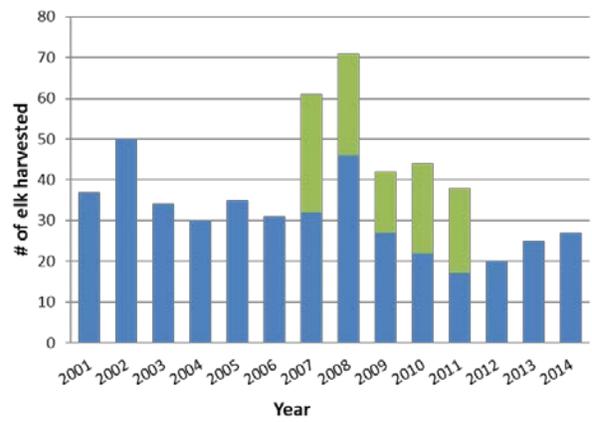
GMU 638



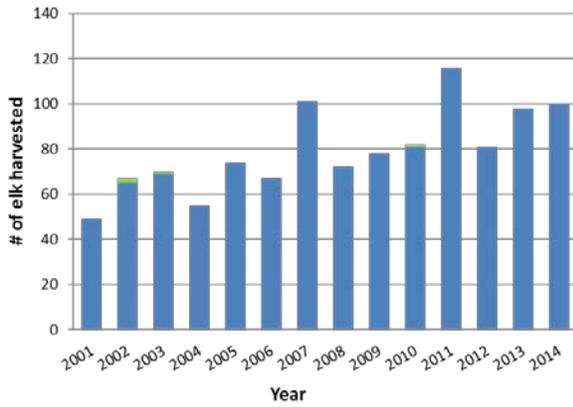
GMU 642



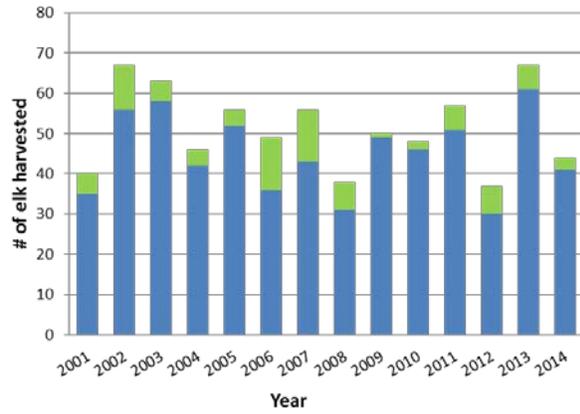
GMU 648



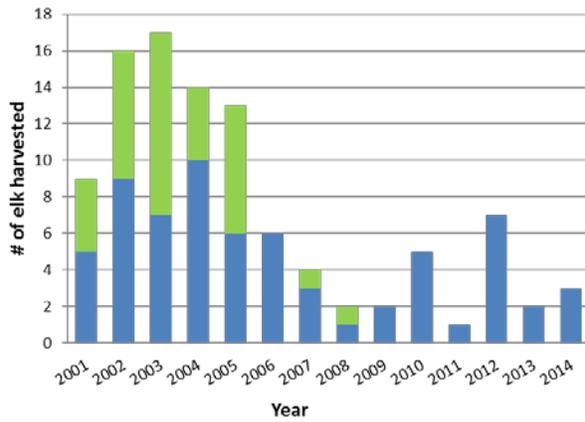
GMU 658



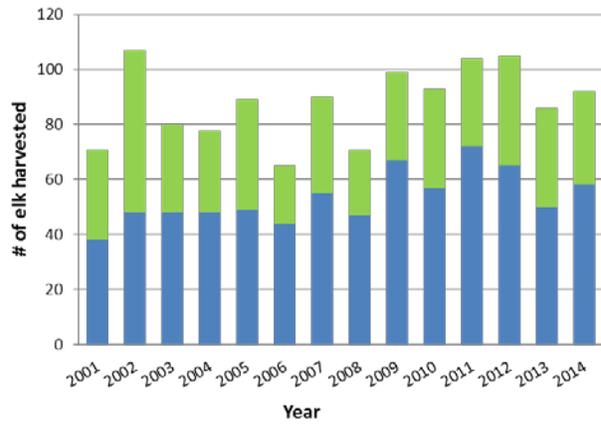
GMU 660



GMU 663



GMU 672



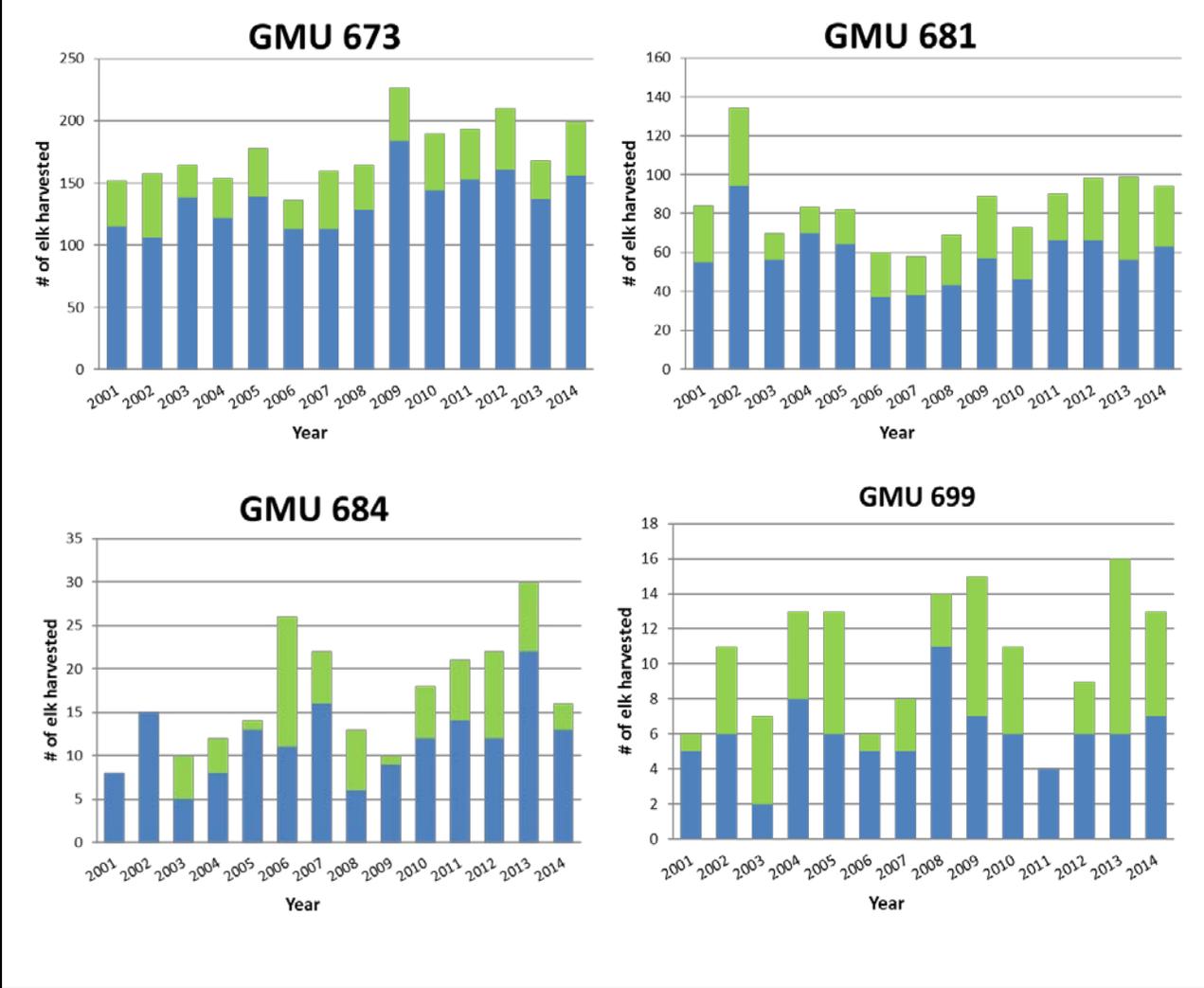


FIGURE 2. TOTAL BULL (BLUE) AND ANTLERLESS (GREEN) ELK HARVESTED DURING GENERAL MODERN FIREARM, ARCHERY, AND MUZZLELOADER DEER SEASONS COMBINED, 2001–2014. DISTRICT TOTAL WITH BREAKDOWN BY INDIVIDUAL GMU. HARVEST TOTALS DO NOT INCLUDE EITHER TRIBAL HARVEST OR ELK SPECIAL PERMIT HARVEST.

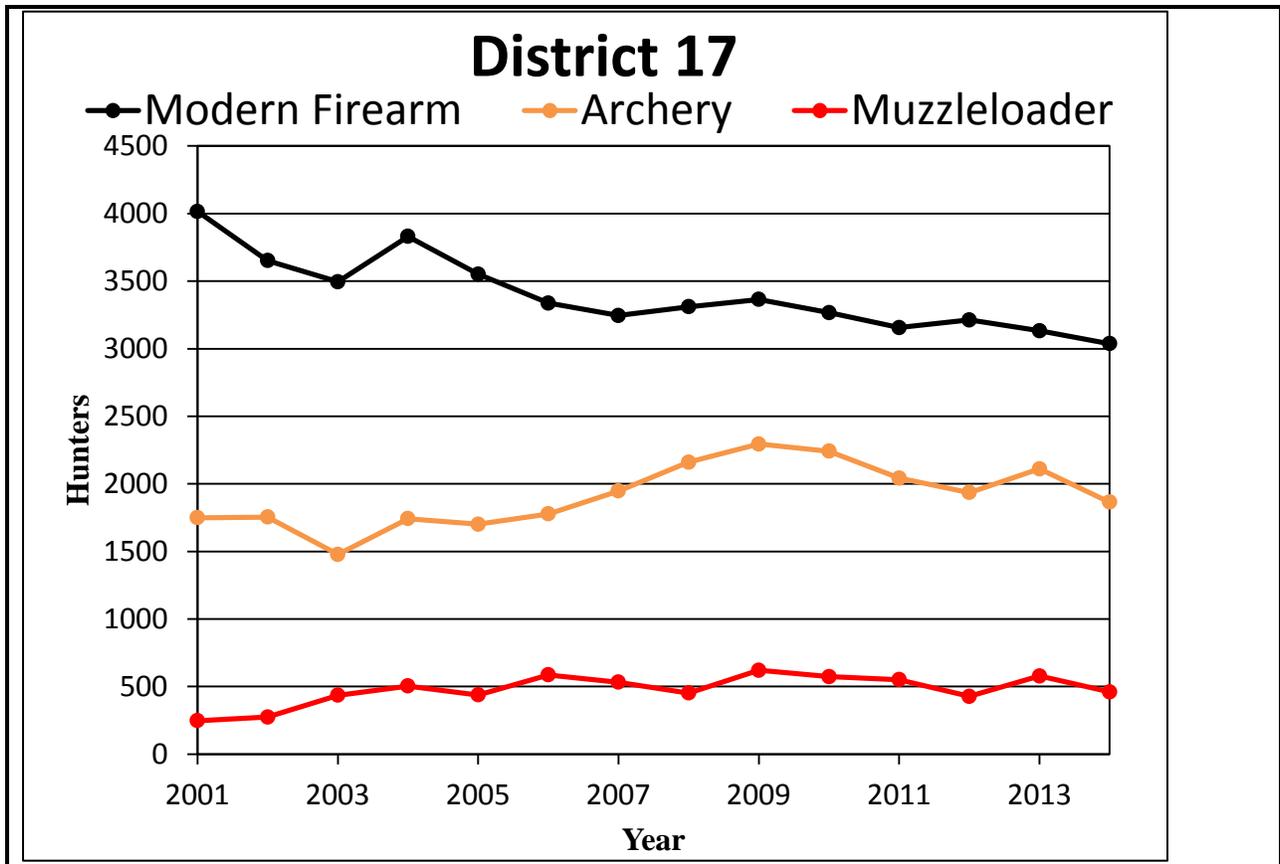


FIGURE 3. TOTAL ELK HUNTER PARTICIPATION DURING GENERAL SEASONS FROM 2001-2014 BY WEAPON TYPE: MODERN FIREARM (BLACK), ARCHERY (ORANGE), MUZZLELOADER (RED)

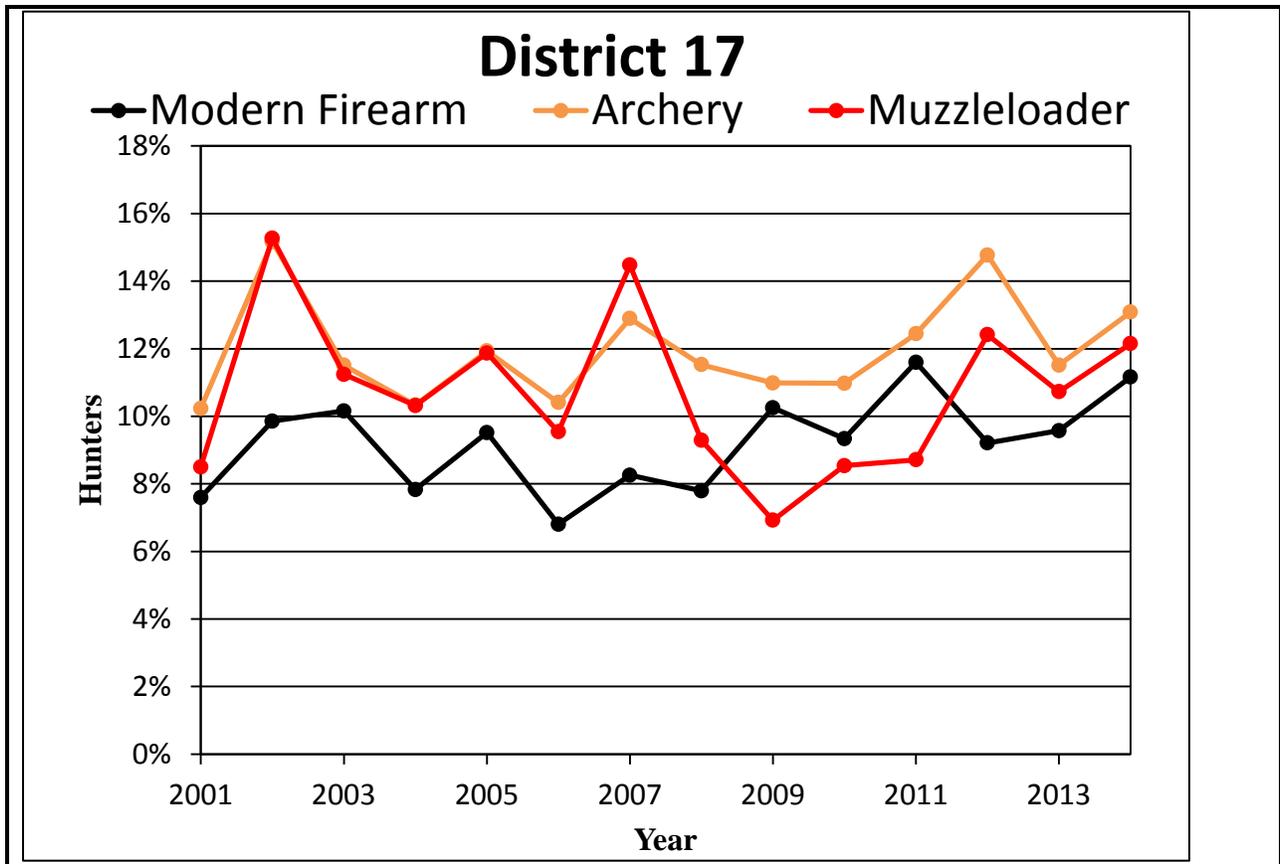


FIGURE 4. ELK HUNTER SUCCESS RATES DURING GENERAL SEASONS FROM 2001-2014 BY WEAPON TYPE: MODERN FIREARM (BLACK), ARCHERY (ORANGE), MUZZLELOADER (RED)

HOW TO FIND ELK

Like most places, when hunting elk in District 17, hunters need to do homework and spend time scouting before the season opens. Predicting where elk are located is especially difficult after hunting pressure increases. The majority of hunters spend their time focused on clearcuts. Elk often forage in clearcuts and are highly visible when they do. Those highly visible elk often attract other hunters. Consequently, clearcuts can get crowded in a hurry.

Many elk (especially bulls) do not frequently visit clearcuts during daylight hours. Instead, they spend most of their day in closed canopy forests, swamps, or regeneration stands (aka “reprod”).



Some generalities can be made about the landscape that will increase the odds of locating elk. When going to a new area, hunters will do best to cover as much ground as possible. Note areas where you see sign along roads and landings. Landings are often ungraveled, making it easy to see fresh tracks. Scouting will reveal what areas hold elk and where to focus their more intensive efforts.

After identifying areas with abundant elk sign, hunters should focus on stands that provide cover and are adjacent to clearcuts. During early seasons, when it is warm, these cover areas often include swamps, creek bottoms, river bottoms, or any place near water. Once the season progresses and temperatures cool, elk are less attracted to water and locating them becomes more difficult. Hunting pressure also can force elk to use areas that provide thicker cover or are more inaccessible to hunters because of topography.

Later in the season, consult a topographic map and find “benches” located in steep terrain with thick cover. Elk often use these benches to bed down during the day. Finally, don’t let a locked gate (provided that non-motorized access is allowed) keep you from going into an area to search for elk. Frequently, these areas hold elk that have not received much hunting pressure, making them less skittish and easier to hunt. A popular approach to hunting behind gates is to use mountain bikes with trailers. Biking on timber company lands is facilitated by high densities of well-maintained gravel roads.

ELK AREAS

There are two Elk Areas in District 17: Elk Area 6010 (Mallis or Raymond) and Elk Area 6064 (Quinault Valley). Nearly all permit opportunities in District 17 are antlerless elk hunts and are associated with these Elk Areas. Elk Areas 6010 was established in a location with chronic elk damage problems and its primary purpose is to provide antlerless harvest opportunities that help control the growth rate of herds in localized agricultural areas.

Elk Area 6064 was established to resolve problems that landowners had with elk hunters. Special restrictions apply in each Elk Area. In Elk Area 6064, only Master Hunters are allowed to hunt elk during general modern firearm, archery, and muzzleloader seasons.

The purpose of Elk Area 6010 is to alleviate elk damage on private agricultural lands. Elk Area 6010 does contain tracts of public or private timber company lands where elk are not problematic. Hunters that draw a permit in either Elk Area are encouraged to call the Private Lands Biologist (Scott Harris) in the Region 6 Office (360-249-4628 ext.234). Mr. Harris may be able to put you in contact with a landowner currently having problems with elk.

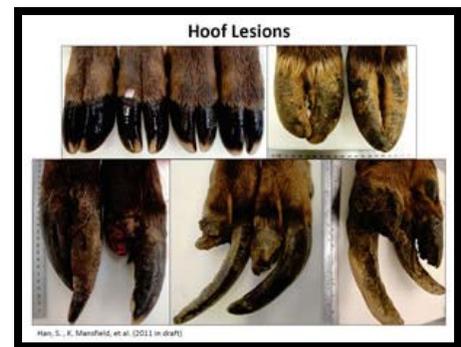
NOTABLE HUNTING CHANGES

1. Muzzel loader elk general season opportunities in GMUs 648, 673 and 681.
2. Antlerless elk permits for GMU 684
3. Youth antlerless elk special permits for units 648, 658, 673, and 6010
4. Several private timber companies in District 17 charge a fee to access areas previously open to the public. Hunters should contact landowners in areas they intend to hunt and determine the company's current policy. See private lands access section below for more information.

BACTERIAL HOOF DISEASE

The reports of elk with hoof deformities in southwest Washington increased sharply in 2008. Elk afflicted with severe hoof disease commonly show severely deformed or overgrown hooves and marked emaciation. The cause of this condition is considered an infectious treponeme bacterium. The same bacteria are linked to digital dermatitis in domestic sheep and cattle. Most reports of elk hoof disease have been concentrated in GMUs located within WDFW administrative Region 5.

Recent observations of hoof disease have included GMUs in the northern portion of the Willapa Hills elk herd area (e.g. GMUs 648, 660, 672, and 673). In response to the expansion of elk hoof disease, WDFW is working with specialists from a variety of state and federal agencies to identify the cause and anticipated impacts of this condition.



Hunters that see limping elk are directed to report their observations to the WDFW online reporting tool. The reporting tool can be located on WDFW's Wildlife Health website (http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/health/hoof_rot/) or by [clicking here](#).

DEER

GENERAL INFORMATION, MANAGEMENT GOALS, AND POPULATION STATUS

Columbian black-tails ("black-tails" or black-tailed deer) are the only species of deer that occur in District 17. Deer hunting opportunities in District 17 range from marginal to very good. The best opportunities to harvest a black-tail in District 17 occur in GMUs 663, 648, 672, and 660.

In Washington, black-tail harvest regulations are set at the GMU level. All areas of District 17 are managed with the primary goal of promoting stable or increasing deer populations while minimizing conflicts with people. Management objectives include maintaining deer populations that have a minimum of 15 bucks per 100 does in the post hunting season population.

WDFW does not attempt to survey deer populations to estimate their total numbers in District 17. Trends in harvest, hunter success, and CPUE are used as surrogates to a formal estimate of

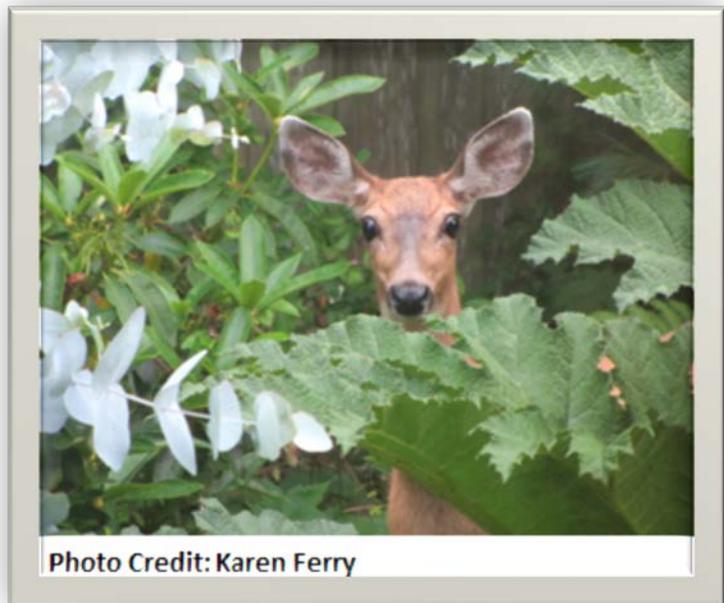
population size. WDFW recognizes the limitations of using harvest data to monitor trends in population size. We are currently evaluating new approaches to monitor black-tailed deer populations.

Finding an effective way to monitor black-tail deer populations has been an ongoing management challenge. Black-tailed deer are secretive and use densely vegetated habitats. Their ability to remain unseen substantially lowers their probability of detection through aerial surveys. Aerial surveys have been attempted, but very few deer were seen during those surveys. The small number of deer observed results in an insufficient sample size to monitor population trends or demographics (e.g. buck:doe and fawn:doe ratios).

Overall deer harvest increased in 2014. Harvest data indicates deer populations appear to be stable in most areas of District 17. For more detailed information on the status of black-tailed deer in Washington, hunters should read through the most recent version of the Game Status and Trend Report. This report is available for download on the Department's website or by [clicking here](#).

WHICH GMU SHOULD DEER HUNTERS HUNT?

“What GMU should I hunt?” is one of our most frequent questions. Answering that question is not always easy. The best answer depends on what weapon is going to be used and what type of hunting experience the hunter is seeking. Some hunters are looking for the best chance to harvest a large, mature buck, while others just want to harvest any legal deer, or simply be in an area with few hunters.



The ideal GMU for most hunters would have:

- High numbers of deer
- Low numbers of hunters
- High hunter success rates.

Unfortunately, the perfect scenario does not exist in any GMU that is freely open to the public during any season within District 17. GMUs with the highest deer numbers tend to have the highest hunter numbers as well. For many hunters, high hunter densities are not enough to persuade them to avoid a GMU with many deer. Others prefer to hunt areas with moderate to low numbers of deer if they can avoid other hunters.

Information in Tables 5 through 7 assesses GMUs by harvest, hunter numbers, and hunter success during general modern firearm, archery, and muzzleloader deer seasons. The values presented are the five-year averages for 2009-2013 for each statistic. Total harvest and hunter numbers are summarized by the number of deer harvested and hunters per square mile. A comparison of total harvest or hunter numbers is not always preferred because GMUs vary in size. For example, the average number of deer harvested over the 2009-2013 seasons during the general modern firearm season in GMUs 663 and 648 was 245 and 266 deer, respectively. Total harvest suggests that deer densities are quite similar between the two GMUs. However, when harvest is expressed as deer harvested/mi², the estimate is 1.167 in GMU 663 and 0.617 in GMU 648. These numbers indicate that deer densities are probably higher in GMU 663 than GMU 648.

Each GMU (excluding 618) was ranked from 1 to 11 for deer harvested/mi², hunters/mi², and hunter success rates. The three ranking values were summed to produce a final rank sum. GMUs are listed in order of lowest rank sum to largest. Comparisons are pretty direct since bag limits and seasons are the same for most GMUs. Differences that should be considered are:

1. GMU 681 had a 2-pt. minimum harvest restriction during all general seasons (2009-2013).
2. GMU 673 had a bag limit of any buck during the general archery season, while all other GMUs (except 681) had a bag limit of Any Deer.



MODERN FIREARM										
GMU	Size (mi ²)	Harvest			Hunter Density			Hunter Success		Rank Sum
		Total	Harvest per mi ²	Rank	Hunters	Hunters per mi ²	Rank	Success	Rank	
684	51	19	0.373	7	56	1.10	3	34%	1	11
642	278	68	0.245	8	276	0.99	2	25%	2	12
660	302	158	0.523	4	746	2.47	6	21%	4	14
672	257	155	0.603	3	715	2.78	8	22%	3	14
673	266	123	0.462	5	579	2.18	5	21%	5	15
663	210	245	1.167	1	1321	6.29	10	19%	6	17
648	431	266	0.617	2	1426	3.31	9	19%	7	18
638	153	13	0.085	10	97	0.63	1	14%	10	21
658	257	116	0.451	6	710	2.76	7	16%	8	21
681	109	25	0.229	9	168	1.54	4	15%	9	22

TABLE 5. COMPARISON OF MODERN FIREARM GENERAL DEER SEASON: TOTAL HARVEST, HUNTER NUMBERS, AND HUNTER SUCCESS RATES USING RANK SUM ANALYSIS. DATA PRESENTED ARE BASED ON A FIVE-YEAR RUNNING AVERAGE (2009-2013)

MUZZLELOADER										
GMU	Size (mi ²)	Harvest			Hunter Density			Hunter Success		Rank Sum
		Total	Harvest per mi ²	Rank	Hunters	Hunters per mi ²	Rank	Success	Rank	
673	266	41	0.154	1	123	0.46	8	34%	1	10
648	431	4	0.009	6	20	0.05	3	23%	2	11
663	210	8	0.038	3	48	0.23	7	15%	3	13
672	257	3	0.012	5	40	0.16	5	7%	5	15
684	51	3	0.059	2	26	0.51	9	12%	4	15
642	278	1	0.004	8	7	0.03	1	6%	7	16
658	257	4	0.016	4	58	0.23	6	6%	6	16
660	302	2	0.007	7	29	0.10	4	5%	8	19
638	153	0	0.000	9	6	0.04	2	0%	9	20

TABLE 6. COMPARISON OF MUZZLELOADER GENERAL DEER SEASON: TOTAL HARVEST, HUNTER NUMBERS, AND HUNTER SUCCESS RATES USING RANK SUM ANALYSIS. DATA PRESENTED ARE BASED ON A FIVE-YEAR RUNNING AVERAGE (2009-2013).

ARCHERY										
GMU	Size (mi ²)	Harvest			Hunter Density			Hunter Success		Rank Sum
		Total	Harvest per mi ²	Rank	Hunters	Hunters per mi ²	Rank	Success	Rank	
684	51	9	0.176	3	24	0.47	5	38%	1	9
663	210	90	0.429	1	435	2.07	10	22%	2	13
642	278	12	0.043	8	66	0.24	3	19%	3	14
672	257	60	0.233	2	355	1.38	9	17%	5	16
660	302	34	0.113	5	186	0.62	7	18%	4	16
638	153	3	0.020	9	25	0.16	1	11%	8	18
648	431	39	0.090	6	234	0.54	6	17%	6	18
658	257	5	0.019	10	42	0.16	2	12%	7	19
681	109	8	0.073	7	106	0.97	8	7%	9	24
673	266	4	0.015	11	114	0.43	4	4%	10	25
699	8	1	0.125	4	21	2.63	11	1%	11	26

TABLE 7. COMPARISON OF ARCHERY GENERAL DEER SEASON: TOTAL HARVEST, HUNTER NUMBERS, AND HUNTER SUCCESS RATES USING RANK SUM ANALYSIS. DATA PRESENTED ARE BASED ON A FIVE-YEAR RUNNING AVERAGE (2009-2013)

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING THE 2015 SEASON

Deer populations do not change dramatically between typical years. Winter weather conditions rarely cause winter die-offs within District 17. Consequently, the total deer numbers available for harvest are expected to be similar to the 2014 season.

Hunter numbers also do not change dramatically between typical years unless hunting regulations are significantly modified or access is closed. The best predictor of expected general season harvest is recent trends in

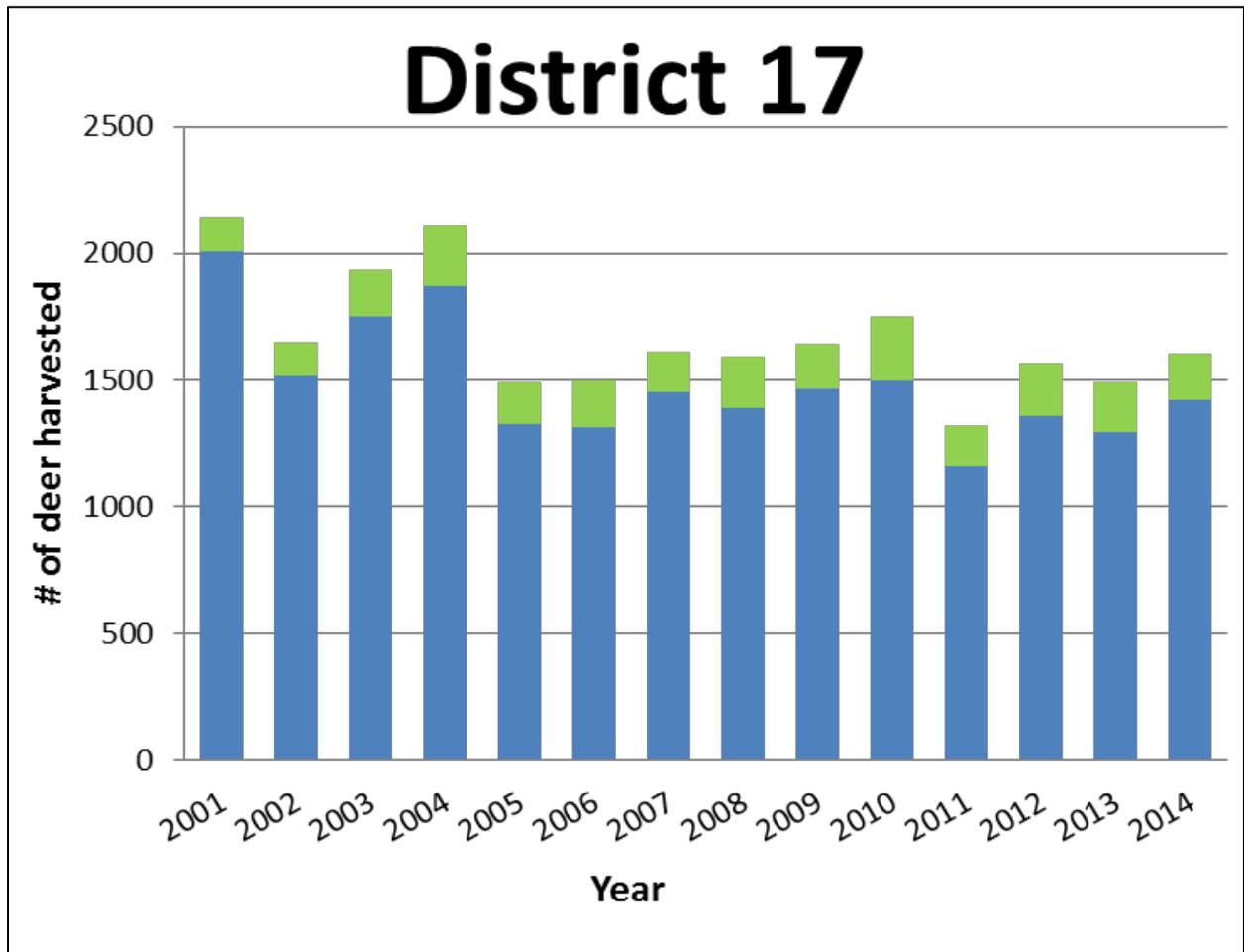
1. Harvest,
2. Hunter numbers, and
3. Hunter success.

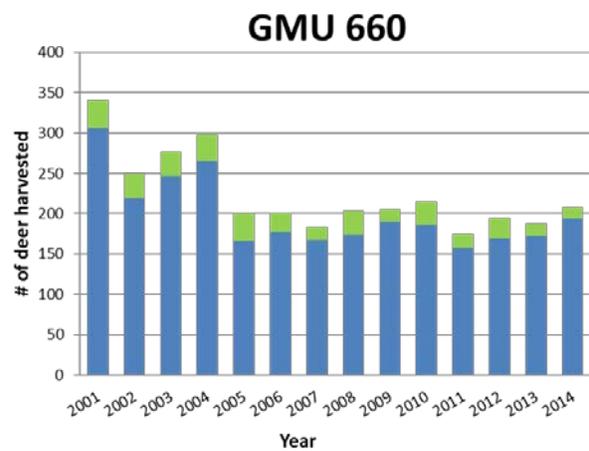
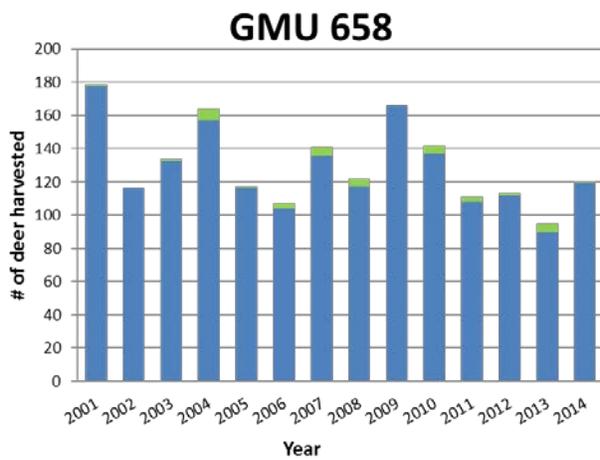
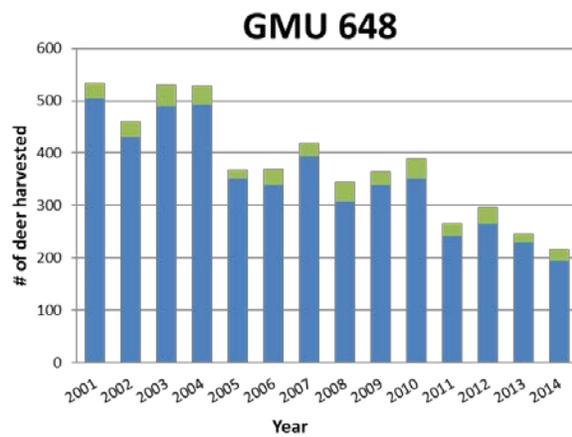
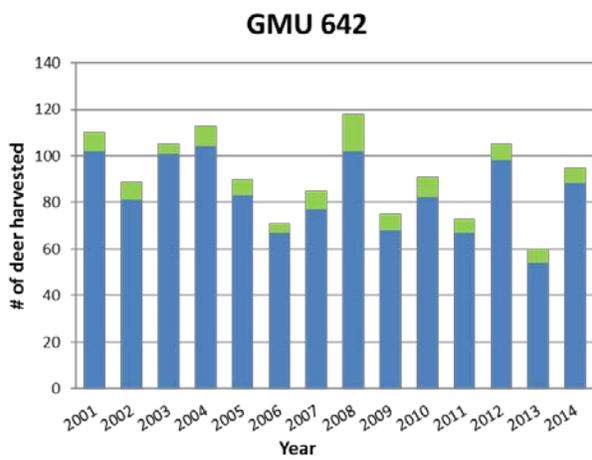
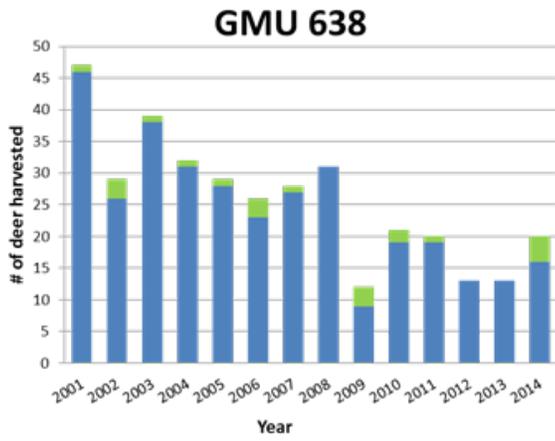
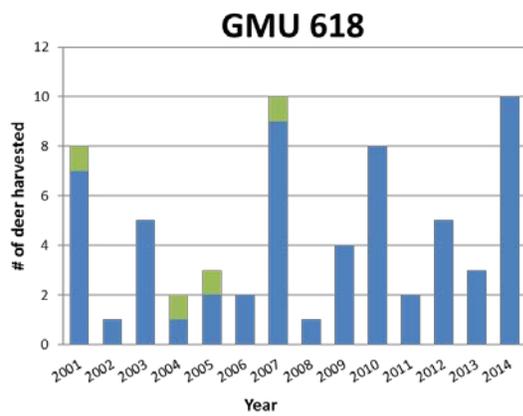
Figures 5 through 7 provide trend data for each of these statistics by GMU. The intent is to allow informed decisions on where to hunt in District 17.

HOW TO FIND AND HUNT BLACK-TAILS

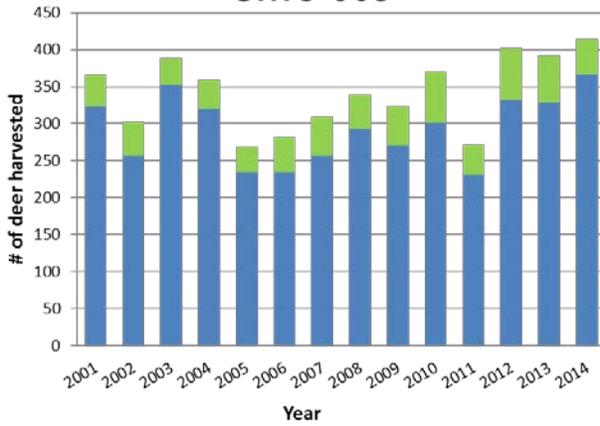
The key to harvesting a black-tail in District 17 is scouting. Black-tails occur throughout the district and in nearly every habitat type that is present. Deer numbers differ among habitat types and the highest deer densities are associated with five to seven-year old clearcuts. These young tree stands provide large amounts of both cover and food.

Many hunters will focus efforts in new clearcuts. Deer in clearcuts are much more visible than most other habitats. However, deer know they are exposed and typically use the clearcuts at night, early dawn, and dusk. Hunters should also explore areas adjacent to these openings. Those areas with cover are more likely to contain deer for the majority of the day.

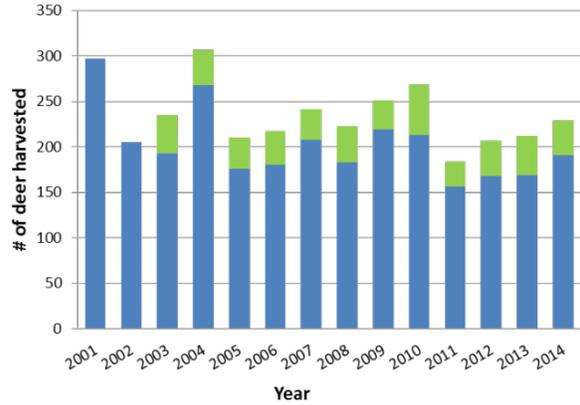




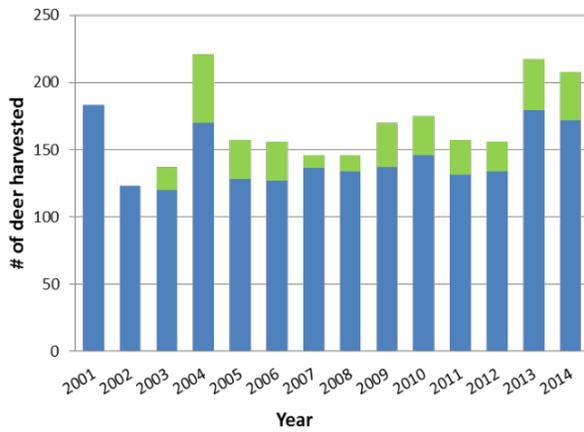
GMU 663



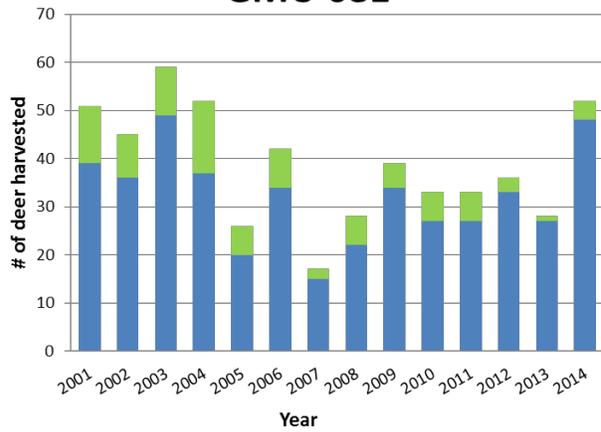
GMU 672



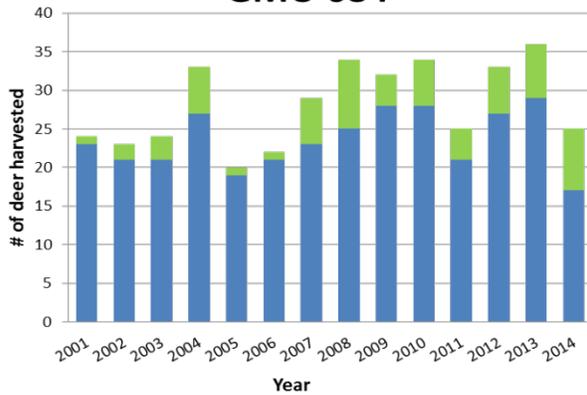
GMU 673



GMU 681



GMU 684



GMU 699

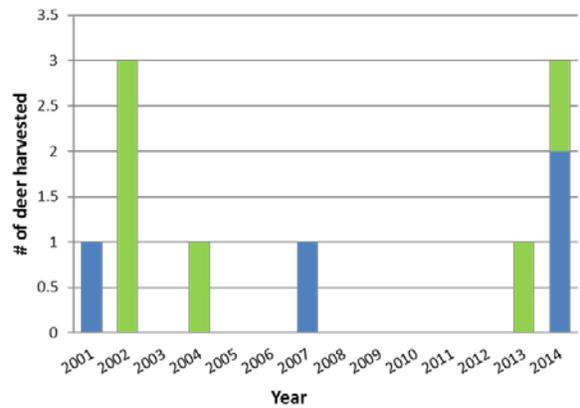


FIGURE 5. TOTAL BUCK (BLUE) AND ANTLERLESS (GREEN) DEER HARVESTED DURING GENERAL MODERN FIREARM, ARCHERY, AND MUZZLELOADER DEER SEASONS COMBINED, 2001–2014. DISTRICT TOTAL WITH BREAKDOWN BY INDIVIDUAL GMU. HARVEST TOTALS DO NOT INCLUDE TRIBAL HARVEST NOR DEER SPECIAL PERMIT HARVEST.

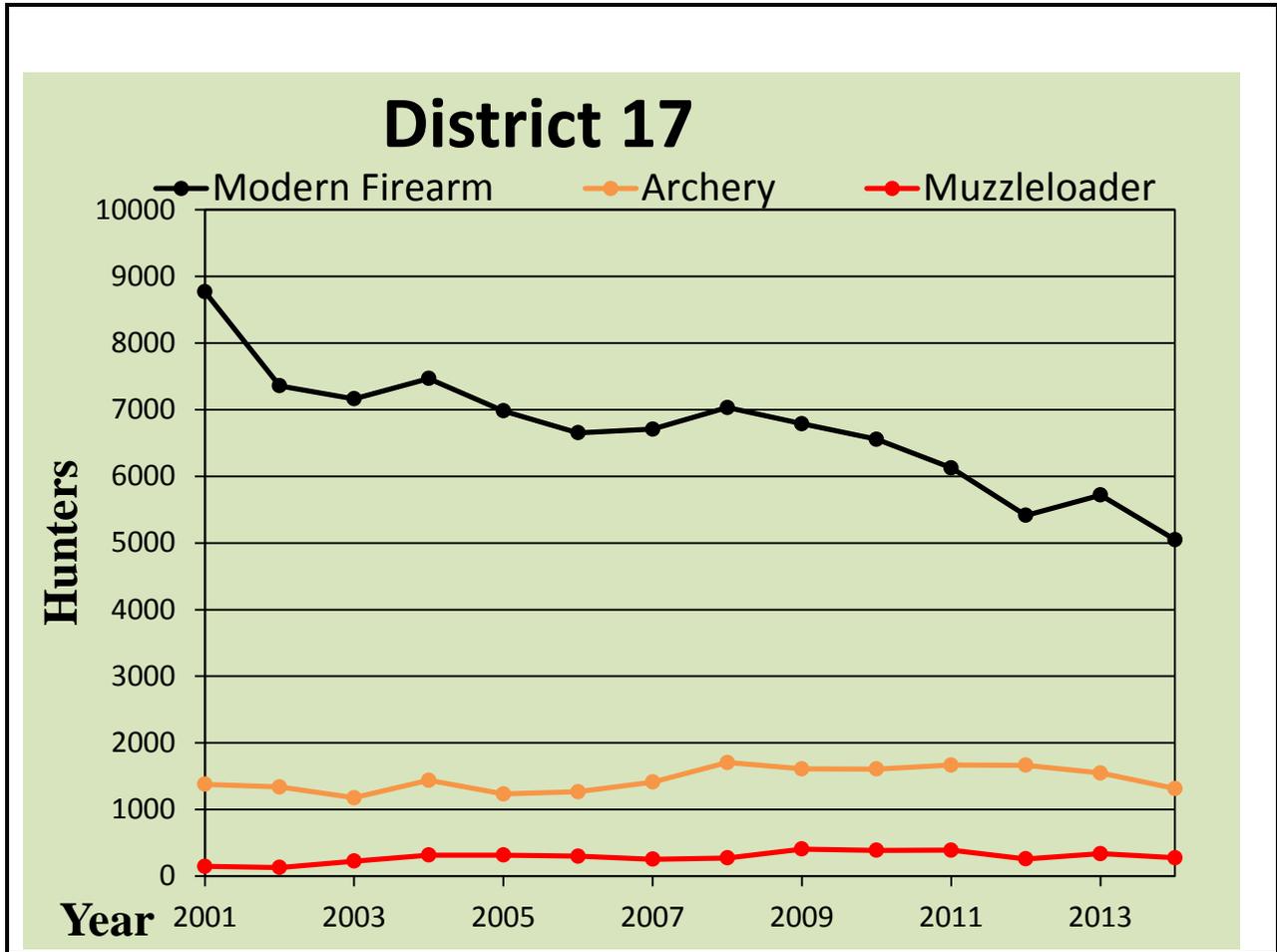


FIGURE 6. TOTAL DEER HUNTER PARTICIPATION DURING GENERAL SEASONS FROM 2001-2014 BY WEAPON TYPE: MODERN FIREARM (BLACK), ARCHERY (ORANGE), MUZZLELOADER (RED)

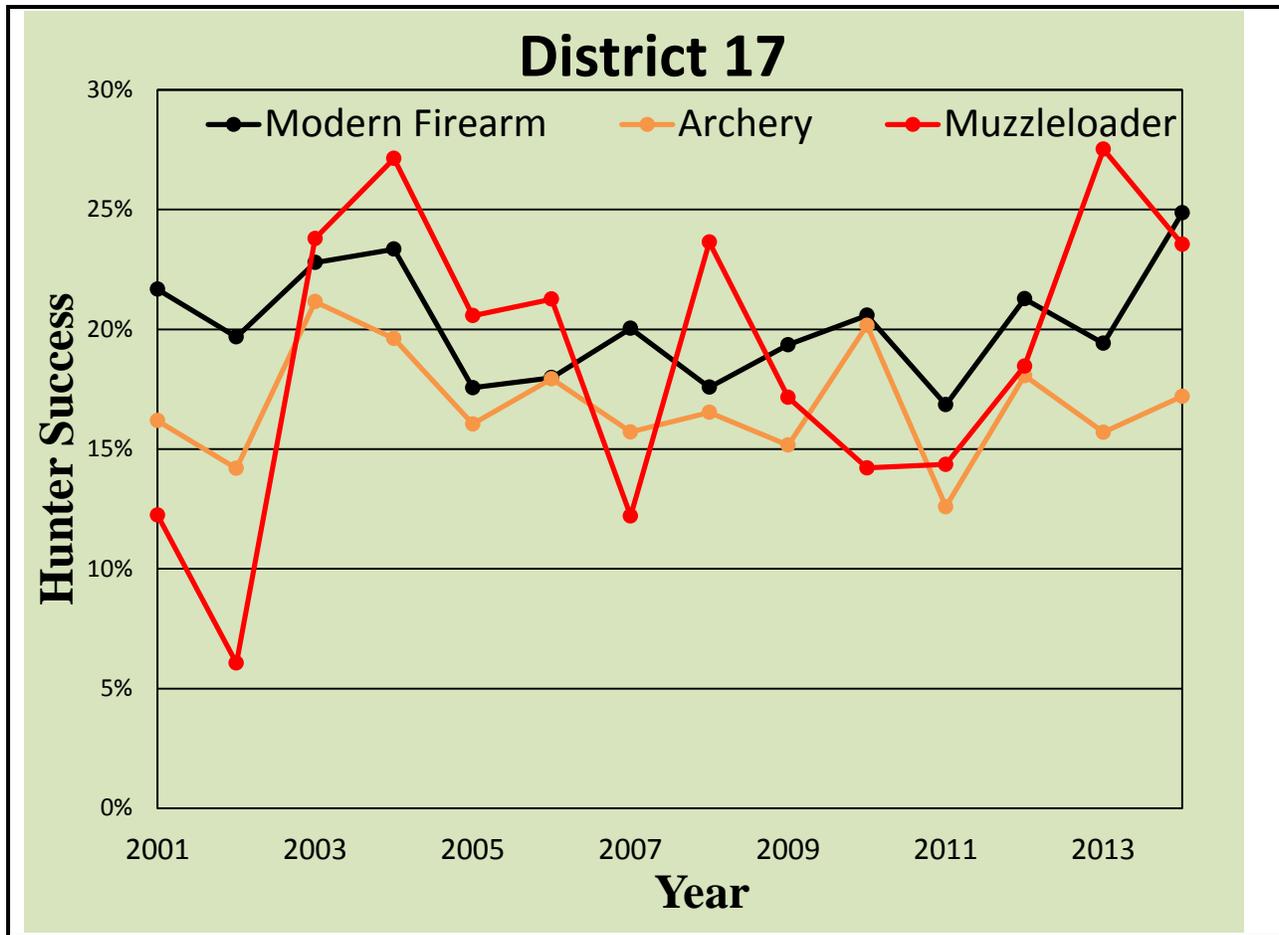


FIGURE 7. DEER HUNTER SUCCESS RATES DURING GENERAL SEASONS FROM 2001-2014 BY WEAPON TYPE: MODERN FIREARM (BLACK), ARCHERY (ORANGE), MUZZLELOADER (RED)

Large amounts of deer sign in an area indicate deer are in close vicinity. Over the past several years, deer in Capitol Forest (GMU 663) were fitted with GPS collars as part of a larger study throughout western Washington conducted by WDFW. The goal of this study is to better understand the effects timber management practices have on deer survival and productivity. These GPS collars automatically upload the deer’s location via satellite several times a day. The data gives biologists a detailed look at black-tailed deer movements and habitat use.

None of the deer monitored in our study used an area larger than 0.38 mi² (243 acres). The average home range size was just 0.14 mi² (86 acres). Some deer used an area no bigger than 45 acres in size during an entire year! Thus, if a hunter sees sign in an area, but no deer, they just need to be patient or change their approach.

The traditional approaches to hunting black-tails include still-hunting or sitting patiently in high use areas (clearcuts, highly traveled trails, funnels, etc.) until the deer show up. Less well-known or utilized is rattling and grunting to simulate two bucks that fighting over a “hot” doe. The rattling technique is more common with midwest and eastern white-tailed deer hunters, but can

be effective on black-tails as well. A quick Google search on this topic yields plenty of evidence to illustrate the effectiveness of this technique when conditions are right.

DEER AREAS

No Deer Areas are contained in District 17.

NOTABLE HUNTING CHANGES

1. Remove 2pt antler restriction in GMU 681 for all seasons
2. Many expanded special permit opportunities for both buck and antlerless deer
3. Archery
 - a. Extend GMU 648 late archery season to December 31st
 - b. GMU 673 early archery changed to any deer
 - c. GMU 638, 642, 681, 699 archery seasons changed to any buck
4. Muzzleloader
 - a. GMU 684 open to any deer
 - b. GMU 673 changed to any buck, season dates extend to Nov 25th – Dec 15th
5. Several private timber companies in District 17 are going to fee access programs in areas where they historically offered free access. Hunters should be aware of these changes and are advised to contact landowners in areas where they hunt to determine the company's current policy. See private lands access section below for more information.

BEAR

SUMMARY

Four percent of bear hunters had success last year. Since 2001, hunter success was between 4-8%.

Recent Trends: Declining Harvest

GMUs with Highest Harvest: 658, 681

GENERAL INFORMATION, MANAGEMENT GOALS, AND POPULATION STATUS

Black bears occur throughout District 17. Bear numbers vary among GMUs. The best places to harvest a bear probably occur in GMUs 658 and 681. Six other GMUs worth mentioning are 618, 660, 663, 673, 684, and 699. Unit 648 had a dramatic decline in harvest during 2014 relative to the five-year average.



Management Goals: Bear seasons are primarily designed to maintain stable black bear populations. Spring seasons are directed to areas where black bears cause measurable damage to young commercial timber stands or other sites of human-bear conflict. The existing bear populations are not expected have much impact to big game herds. Three statistics used to assess black bear harvest are.

- Proportion of females harvested
- Median age of harvested females,
- Median age of harvested males.

Surveys: WDFW does not conduct surveys of bears to estimate their numbers. The agency uses trends in harvest data as surrogates to formal population estimates or indices. Currently, black bear populations are believed to be stable in District 17.

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING THE 2015 SEASON

Most bears are probably harvested opportunistically during general deer and elk seasons. Overall, hunter success is low, but annual harvest can vary widely from year to year. Four percent of bear hunters in District 17 were successful in 2014. Since 2001, hunter success for this district has averaged 6% to 8%. Hunter success is likely higher for those that specifically hunt bears compared to hunters that take bear incidentally during deer or elk season.

Annual bear harvest in District 17 increased from 2002 to 2008. Harvest declined sharply during the 2009 season, then rebounded in 2010. Bear harvest remained stable until last year, when there was a sharp decline (Figure 8).

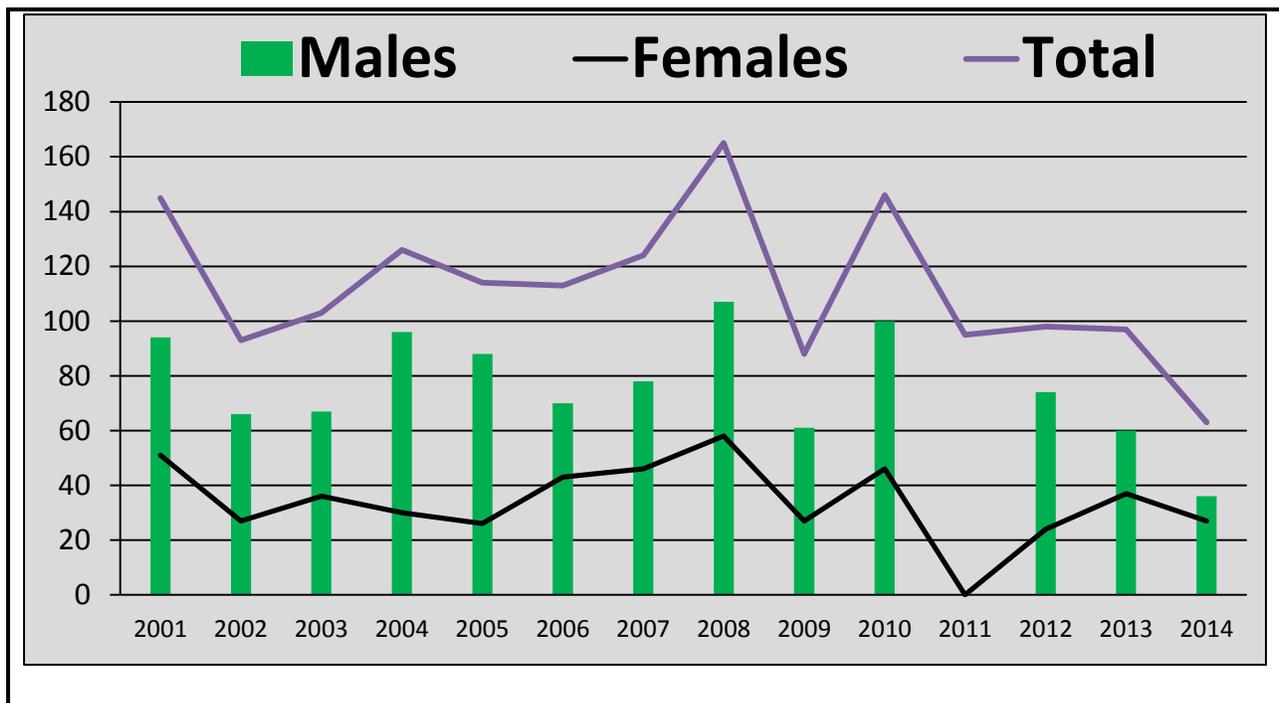


FIGURE 8. TRENDS IN THE NUMBER OF MALE AND FEMALE BLACK BEARS AND TOTAL NUMBER OF BEARS HARVESTED DURING THE GENERAL BEAR SEASON IN DISTRICT 17, 2001–2014. HARVEST ESTIMATES EXCLUDE BEARS HARVESTED DURING SPRING PERMIT SEASONS IN GMU 642. DOES NOT INCLUDE BEARS REMOVED BECAUSE OF CONFLICT WITH PEOPLE. THE SEX OF HARVESTED BEARS WAS NOT AVAILABLE FOR 2011.

Most bears were harvested in GMUs 658, and 681 (Figure 9). Analyzing the number of bears harvested per square mile indicates a greater bear density in GMUs 699 followed by 684 and 681. Bear harvest in 2014 was markedly better than the five-year average in GMUs 618, 681, and 699. Bear harvest in 2014 declined notably in GMUs 642, 648, 660, 663, and 672 compared to the five-year average (Figures 9 and 10).

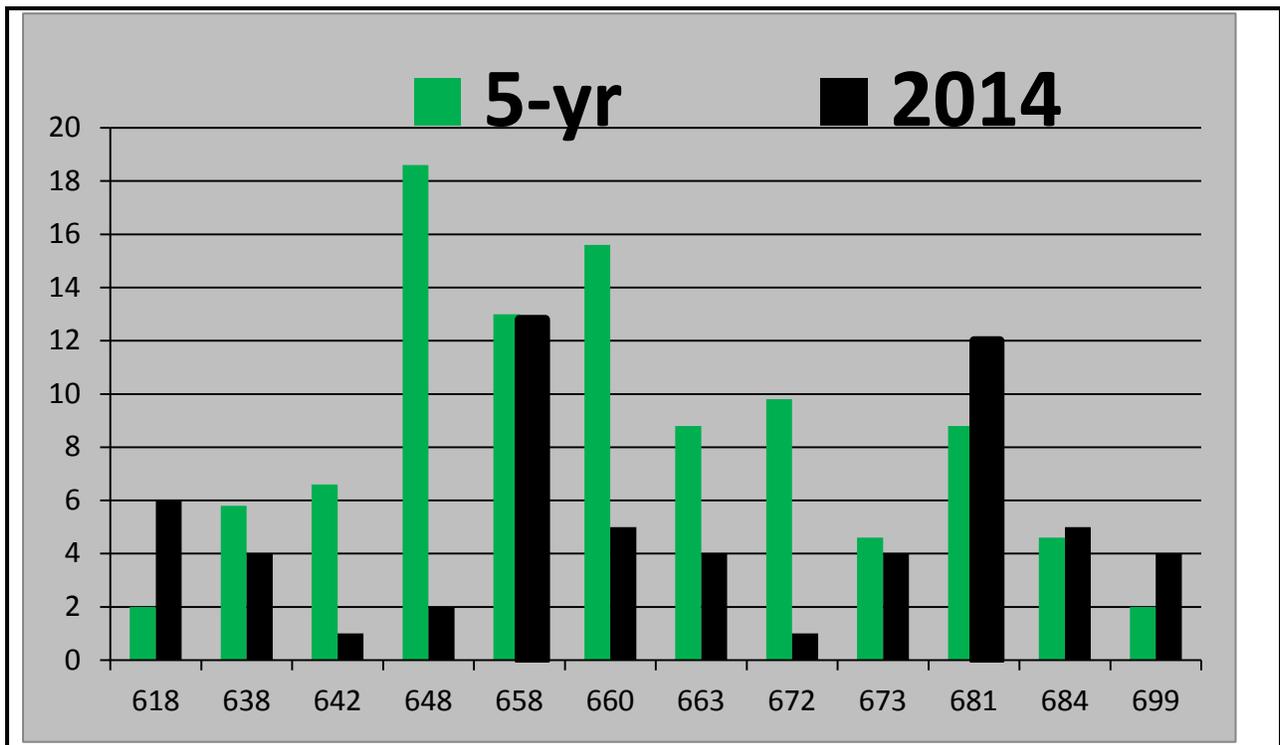


FIGURE 9. NUMBER OF BEARS HARVESTED BY GMU DURING THE 2014 SEASON IN DISTRICT 17 COMPARED TO THE FIVE-YEAR AVERAGE.

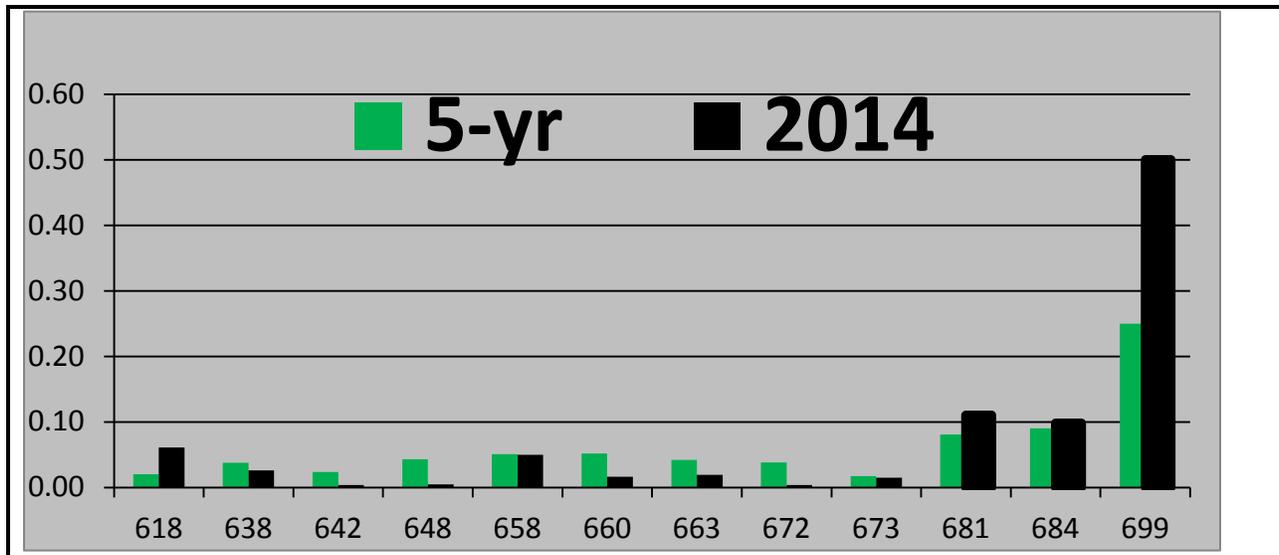


FIGURE 10. THE NUMBER OF BEARS HARVESTED PER SQUARE MILE BY GMU DURING THE 2014 SEASON IN DISTRICT 17 COMPARED TO FIVE-YEAR AVERAGE HARVEST.

HOW TO LOCATE AND HARVEST A BLACK BEAR

Black bears are common and occur at high densities in some locales. However, bears in District 17 are seen infrequently because of thick vegetation that dominates the landscape. Consequently, scouting is extremely important when hunting for black bears.

Black bears occupy a variety of habitat types, so it can be difficult to narrow down where to find them. Because bears have an incredible sense of smell, hunters should focus on open terrain (e.g. clearcuts). When out in the open, a bear can be seen from a distance without alerting it. In dense cover, a bear is likely to smell a hunter before being seen and move to avoid an encounter.

Bears are often located in clearcuts containing a large amount of berry-producing shrubs. Examples include:

- Elderberries
- Salmon berries
- Huckleberries
- Black berries
- Salal berries.

During the fall, hunters should seek clearcuts with these types of shrubs and search for bear sign. Fresh sign indicates that a bear is visiting that stand. Hunters who are patient and watch these areas for extended periods of time can increase their chance to harvest a bear.

NOTABLE CHANGES

Spring Bear special permit seasons were added to GMU 681 and 684 for the 2015 season.

COUGAR

GENERAL INFORMATION, MANAGEMENT GOALS, AND POPULATION STATUS

Cougars occur throughout District 17, but densities vary among GMUs. Cougar populations in District 17 are managed primarily to maintain a stable cougar population. Beginning in 2012, WDFW changed the system for managing cougar harvest in Washington. WDFW shifted away from using season length or permit seasons to manage the number of cougars harvested, and implemented a standard season coupled with harvest guidelines. The intended goal was to allow a longer season without weapon restrictions. Cougar seasons would close for a specific area once harvest reached or exceeded a harvest guideline.

To accomplish harvest goals, WDFW established a series of hunt areas with standard season dates of September 1 through April 30. Harvest numbers are examined starting January 1. Any hunt area that meets or exceeds the harvest guideline may be closed. If you plan to hunt cougar after January 1, take a moment to confirm that the cougar season is still open in the area you plan to hunt. Harvest quotas for each hunt area located in District 17 are provided in Table 8.

For more information related to the new harvest guidelines management approach, please visit WDFW's website or [click here](#).



Hunt Area	Harvest Guideline	2013-2014 Harvest
618, 636, 638	4-5	0
642, 648, 651	6-8	2
658, 660, 663, 672, 673, 681, 684, 699	9-12	1

TABLE 8. HARVEST GUIDELINES AND 2014 HARVEST LEVELS COUGAR HUNT AREAS LOCATED IN DISTRICT 17.

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING THE 2015 SEASON

Cougar harvest in District 17 is highly variable (Figure 11). The variability may be due to the prohibition on hound hunting and trapping. Most cougars are taken opportunistically by deer and elk hunters. Since 2001, the average number of cougars harvested in District 17 was six animals. Young males are overrepresented in the harvest. Most cougar harvest in District 17 has occurred in GMU 648. Since 2001, cougar harvest in GMU 648 (Wynoochee) has typically accounted for over half of the harvest in District 17.

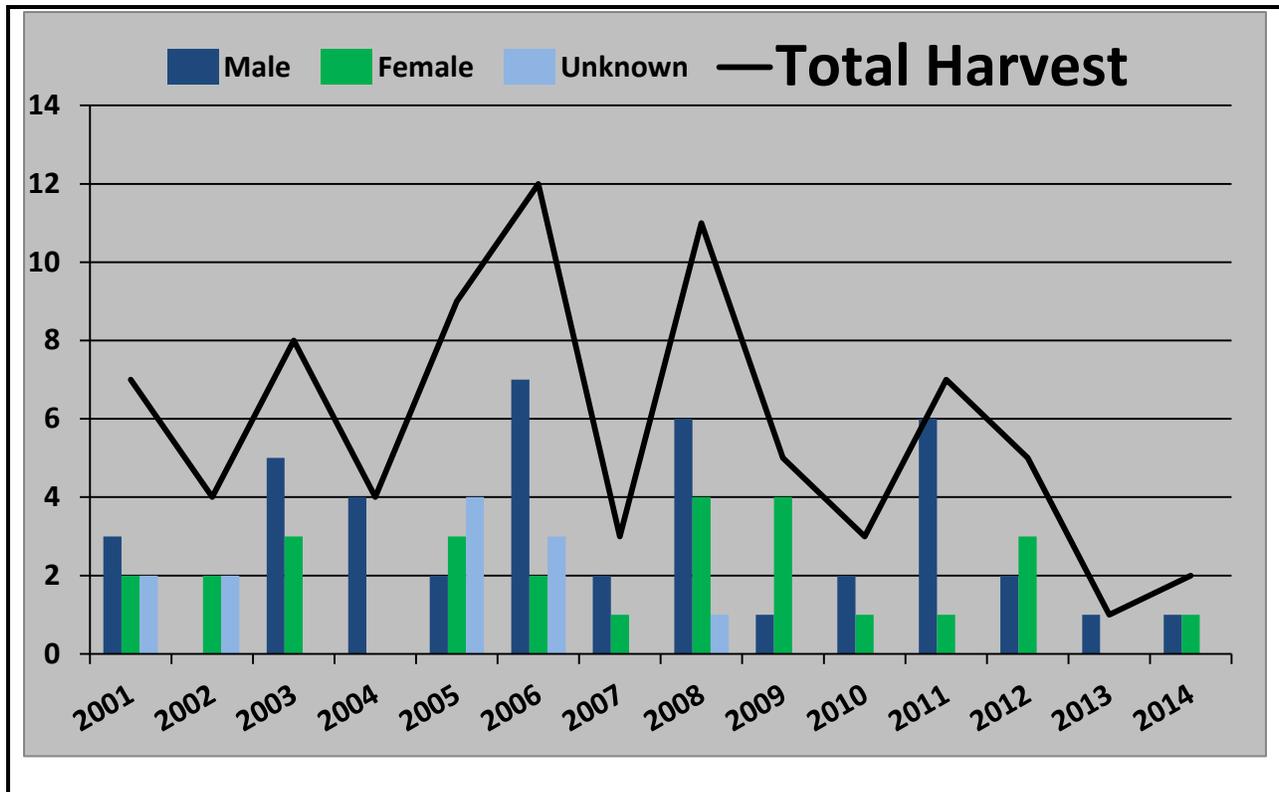


FIGURE 11. ESTIMATED COUGAR HARVEST IN DISTRICT 17, 2001–2014.

NOTABLE CHANGES

One month was added to the late cougar season. The season ends April 30, unless closed early. Remember, a new tag and license is required after March 31.

DUCKS

COMMON SPECIES

A wide variety of ducks occur in District 17. Common dabbling ducks include northern pintail, American wigeon, mallard, green-wing teal, and northern shoveler. Species of divers, including bufflehead, scaup, and common goldeneye, are present, but occur in low numbers. Nesting wood ducks can be located in the Chehalis River Valley early in the season and provide a unique hunting opportunity. Sea ducks, including scoters and long-tailed ducks, are seen occasionally in Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor.

Mallards are the most abundant species of duck in Washington. Consequently, mallards constitute the majority of ducks harvested statewide (typically $\geq 50\%$). In contrast, American wigeon are the most abundant species of duck in District 17. . During recent aerial survey flights of Willapa Bay, American wigeon typically comprise 50%–60% of the ducks observed. Hunters should expect to primarily harvest American wigeon, northern pintail, and mallard. Green-winged teal are abundant early in the season, but decrease in numbers as the season progresses.



MIGRATION CHRONOLOGY

Very few ducks are found during late-spring and early summer. Beginning in mid to late September, birds will migrate south from Alaska. Duck numbers will continue to increase until peaking in late October and early November. The migrating ducks are believed to concentrate in District 17 as resting areas. They do not appear to remain in the district for long periods of time. Consequently, the number of ducks located inside District 17 likely varies on a daily basis. Total duck numbers decline precipitously once the flow of migrants from Alaska has stopped. By Christmas, duck numbers are typically 5% of what they were at the end of October (see Figures 12 and 13). Unlike eastern Washington, major weather events do not alter migration chronology in coastal Washington. Regardless of weather events, duck numbers decline at about the same point in time each year.

CONCENTRATION AREAS

In general, waterfowl concentrations occur in Willapa Bay, Grays Harbor, and the Chehalis and Willapa River Valleys. Where concentrations occur, they are dependent on many factors (e.g. hunting pressure, weather, food, etc.) and can change daily.

Aerial composition flights were conducted monthly in Willapa Bay during the 2014 (see Figure #12) season. Waterfowl concentrations shift around the bay between each flight. Hunters should scout a few days before hunting to locate where concentrations of ducks are currently found.

POPULATION STATUS

Breeding duck populations in western Washington were not monitored until 2010 when WDFW developed and began flying established transects in five select areas of western Washington. Surveys are flown during the month of April. One of the selected areas occurs in District 17 and is associated with the Chehalis River Valley. In 2015, the breeding population in the Chehalis River Valley was estimated at 5,093 ducks. The 2015 estimate represents a 7% decline from the 5,550 estimated in 2014, but is still 11% greater than the 4,569 ducks two years earlier, in 2013..

The number of ducks that occur in District 17 during established hunting seasons is strongly related to the status of breeding duck populations in Alaska. The 2015 breeding population survey estimated the breeding population in Alaska at 3.5 million ducks, a 6% increase from the 2013 estimate of 3.3 million and 5% below the long-term average of 3.7 million.

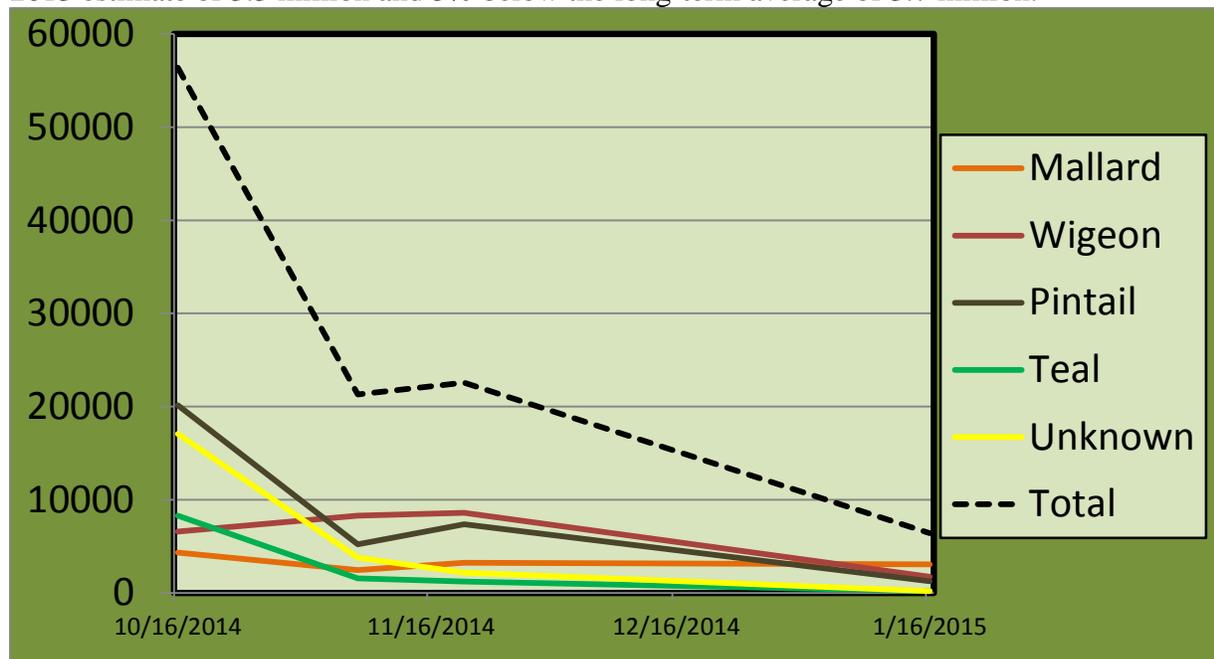
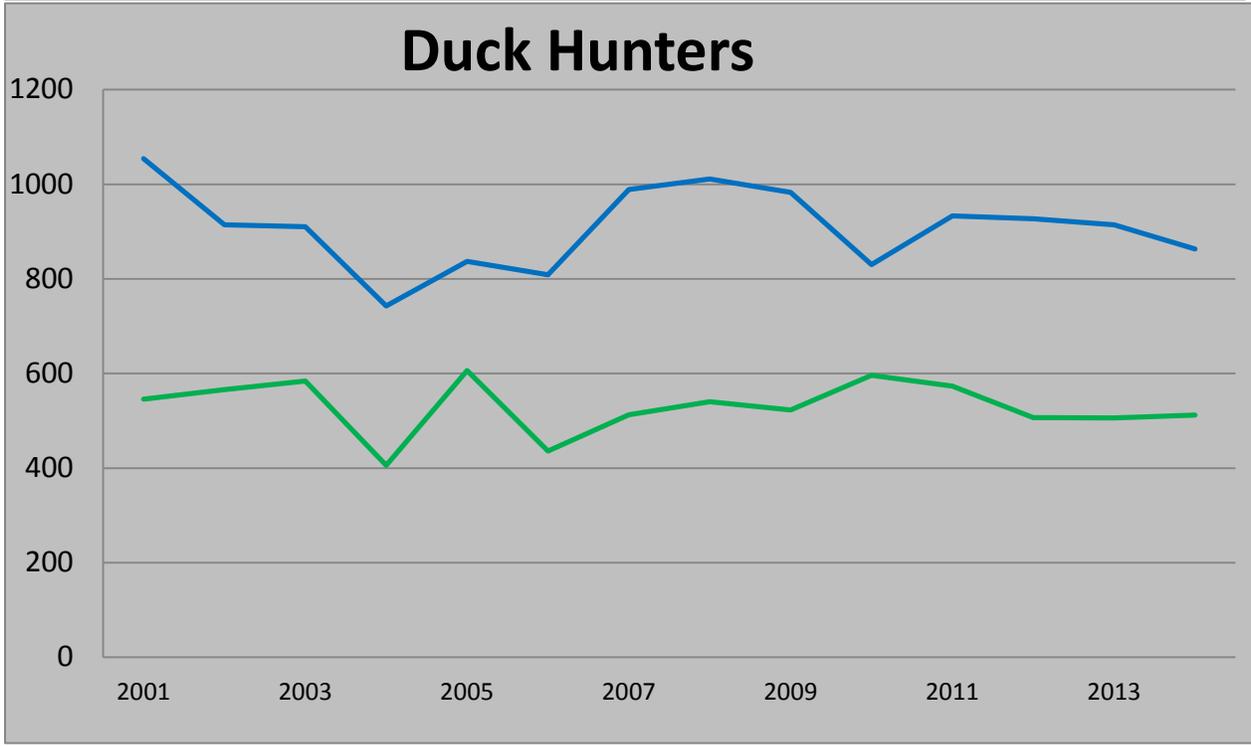
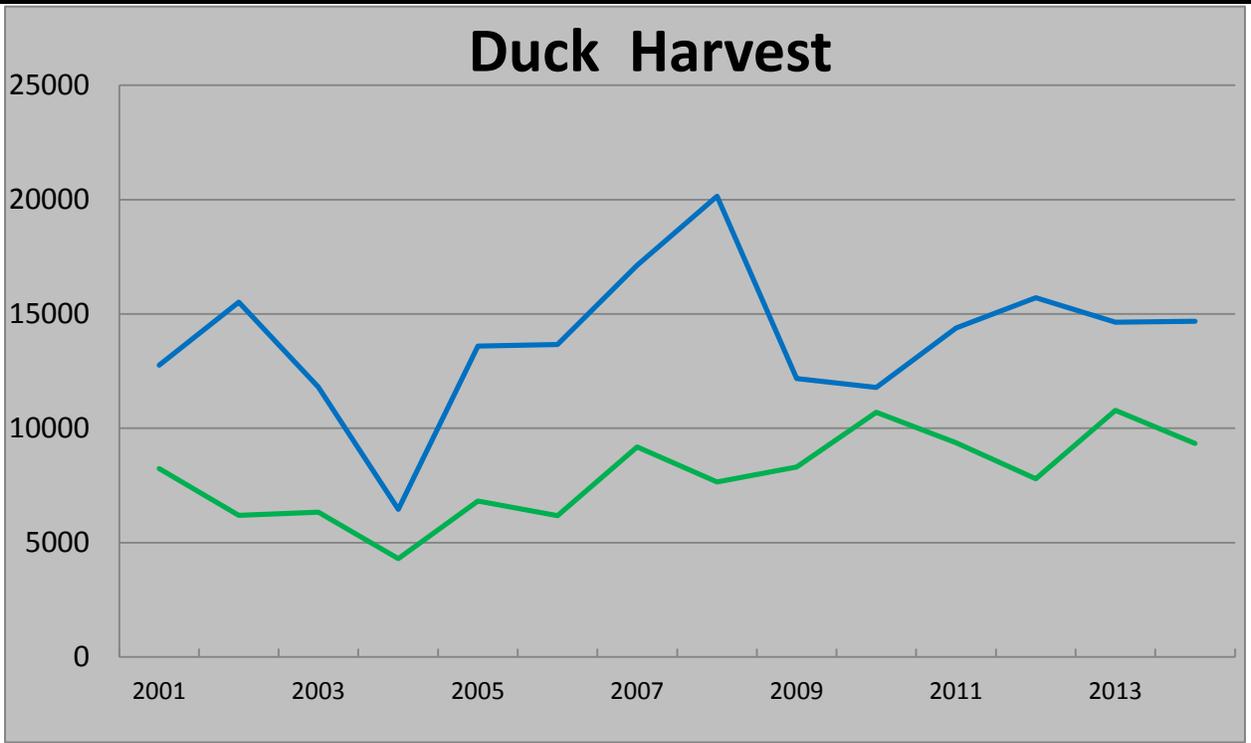


FIGURE 12. TOTAL DUCKS OBSERVED DURING FOUR AERIAL SURVEY FLIGHTS IN WILLAPA BAY FROM OCTOBER 2014 TO JANUARY 2015.

HARVEST TRENDS AND 2015 PROSPECTS

Breeding duck numbers in Alaska are the biggest factor affecting duck hunters. Duck numbers further north appear comparable to last year. We should still expect great hunting opportunities in District 17 during the 2015 season. Hunter numbers have remained stable. Both the total number of ducks harvested and the number of ducks harvested per hunter day have been increasing since 2009 (Figure 13). Hunters may expect greater duck harvest in Grays Harbor County. Pacific County has both fewer hunters and fewer ducks, but the number of ducks harvested per day is equivalent.

Note – Severe drought conditions are occurring in 2015, which could carry into the fall/winter. A continuing drought could dramatically change the migration patterns of ducks during the waterfowl season, especially inland.



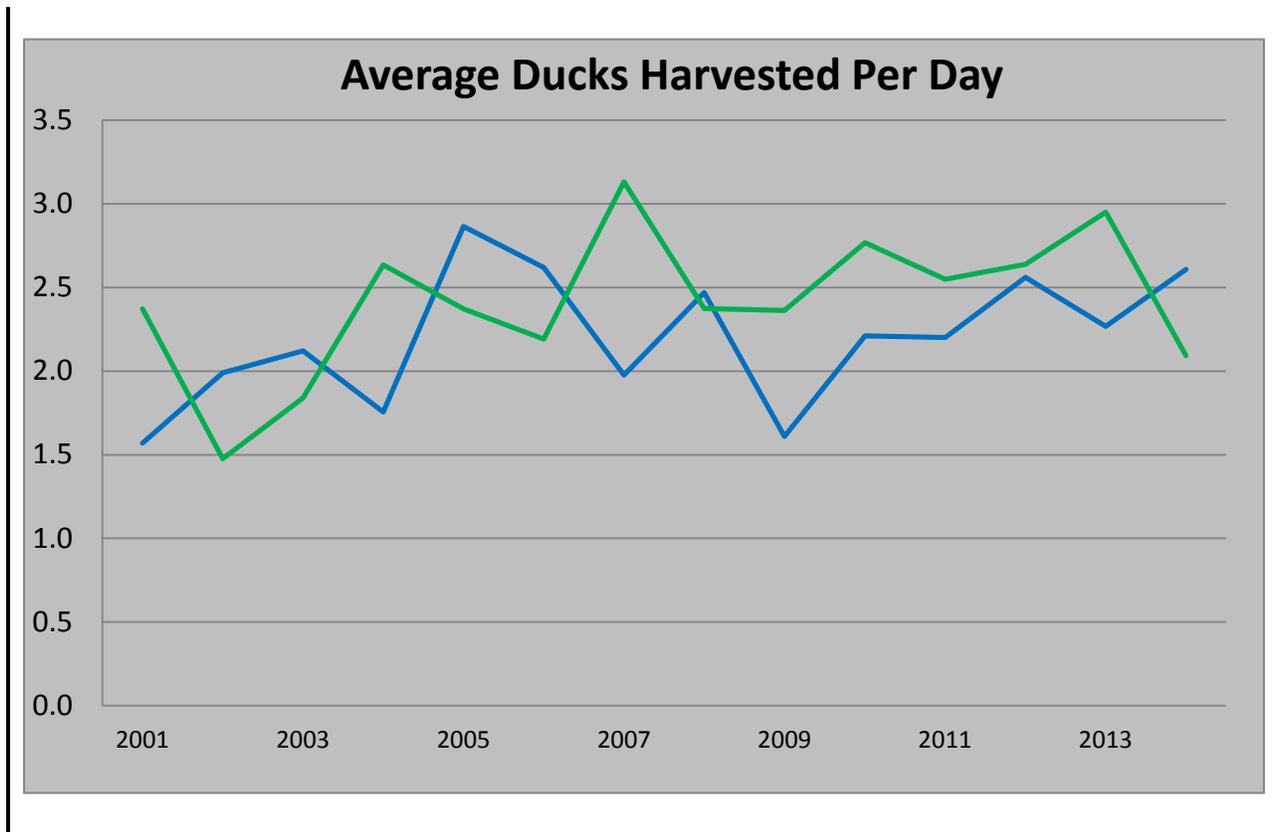


FIGURE 13. TRENDS IN THE NUMBER OF DUCK HUNTERS, TOTAL DUCKS HARVESTED, AND AVERAGE NUMBER OF DUCKS HARVESTED PER DAY IN GRAYS HARBOR COUNTY (BLUE), PACIFIC COUNTY (GREEN), 2001–2014

HUNTING TECHNIQUES

Duck hunting techniques should vary depending on where you choose to hunt. Traditional setups work best when hunting inland waters around ponds and rivers, or feeding areas. Birds are most active in early morning and late afternoon, as they move between resting sites and feeding areas.

The tides influence hunting the coastline of Willapa Bay or Grays Harbor. Regardless of the time of day, ducks along the coastline tend to move very little at either low or high tide. Hunters can expect very little movement during tidal extremes. However, bird activity and opportunities increase when the tide is going out or coming in. A perfectly timed tide can provide success to coastline hunters at p.m., unlike traditional waterfowl hunting that is typically limited to early morning and late afternoon. See [“Let’s Go Waterfowling.”](#)

PUBLIC LAND OPPORTUNITIES

There are a number of WDFW Wildlife Areas in District 17 that offer good waterfowl hunting opportunities. Figure 16 is intended to provide hunters with the general location of these wildlife areas, but hunters should visit the WDFW waterfowl hunting page ([click here](#)) for more detailed information. The website includes waterfowl information related to their location, current waterfowl management activities, and common species. Other public land opportunities occur on the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge. For more information about hunting on the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge, please visit their website or [click here](#).

GEESE AND BRANT

COMMON SPECIES

The sub-species of Canada geese found in District 17 include western, dusky, lesser, taverner, Aleutian, Vancouver, and cackler. Large numbers of black brant can be found in Willapa Bay beginning

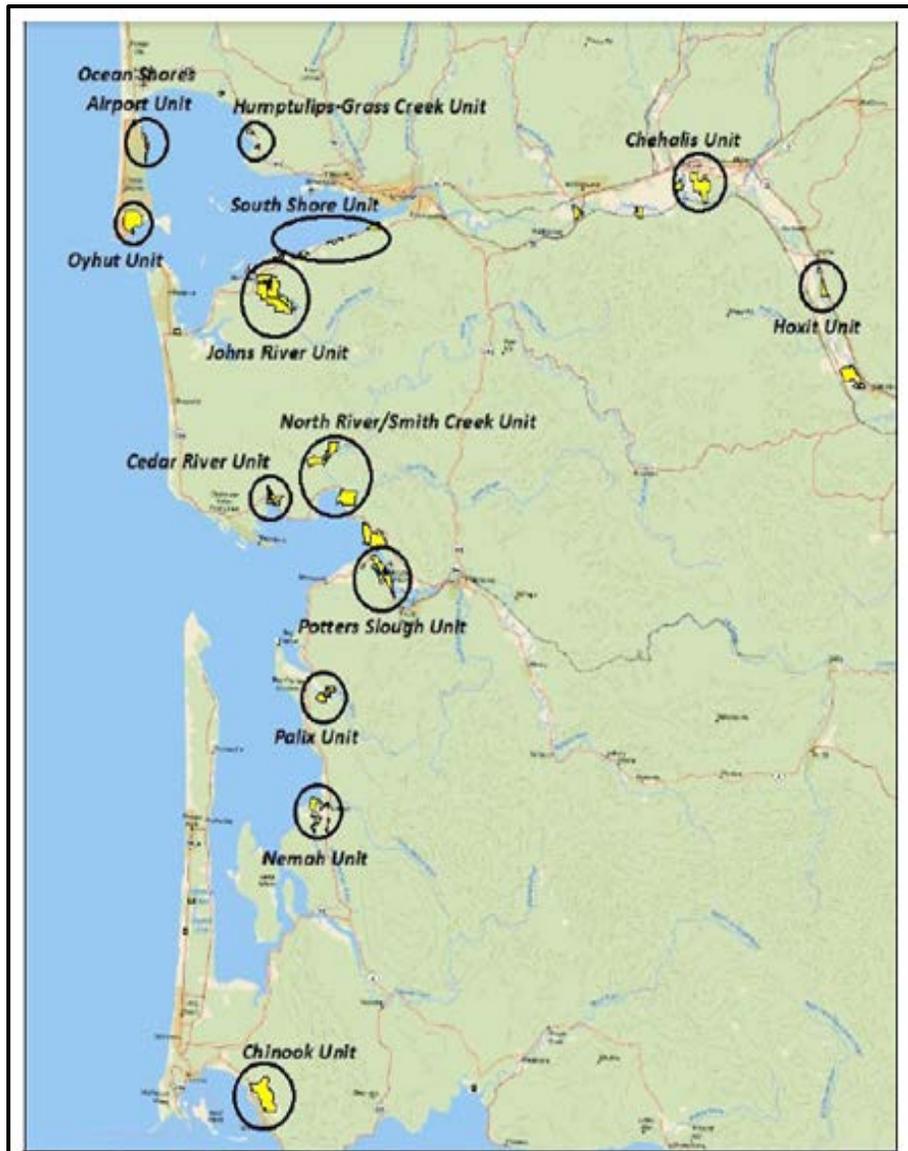


Figure 16. Map depicting the location of WDFW wildlife areas that offer waterfowl hunting opportunities in District 17.

in late January and early February.

MIGRATION CHRONOLOGY AND CONCENTRATION AREAS

The timing of migration for geese in District 17 is nearly identical to that described for ducks. Few geese reside locally in the district. Starting in September, waves of migrant geese begin showing up from Alaska. One distinct difference between ducks and geese is that goose numbers do not decline in late November as sharply as duck numbers. Many geese choose to over-winter in the agricultural areas of District 17 where they find food. Brant are mostly found in Willapa Bay starting in the latter half of December or early January.

Geese concentrate in agricultural lands around the Willapa and Chehalis River Valleys. Some properties routinely have geese on them. Generally, the specific fields where geese congregate change on a weekly basis. The Chehalis and Willapa River Valleys are not expansive, so relocating geese is not difficult.



Local resident dark goose captured and fitted with a satellite transmitter on Willapa National Wildlife Refuge.

POPULATION STATUS

Very few geese breed in District 17. Consequently, WDFW does not survey for breeding geese within the district. Long term goose nest surveys have occurred elsewhere in Washington.

Portions of the lower Columbia River have small, but relatively stable breeding populations.

Wintering populations of geese are hard to survey effectively because geese forage widely in agricultural areas, making them difficult to locate. The number of geese observed in Washington during the midwinter-waterfowl surveys has been relatively stable since the early 2000s.

HARVEST TRENDS AND 2015 PROSPECTS

Goose harvest was stable or somewhat better in 2014 compared to 2013. Given the current trends in goose populations further north, the goose hunting opportunities in District 17 are expected to remain consistent. Pacific populations of large geese appear to be greater than last year. Cackling geese have also seen a modest increase from 2014. Most goose harvest should occur in Grays Harbor County during the regular season (Figures 17 and 18). Hunters can expect to harvest an average of one goose per day. Hunter numbers during both the regular

season and early season have been relatively stable during recent years (Figures 17 and 18). Goose hunter numbers in Grays Harbor County could drop during the 2015 season as a consequence of incorporating the county into Goose Management Area 2B.

HUNTING TECHNIQUES

Goose hunting is almost standardized. Goose hunters find agricultural areas where geese feed and set up well before daylight in portions of the field where geese concentrate. In District 17, feeding geese tend to congregate in pastures containing cattle operations. Most goose hunting opportunities occur on private property. You must obtain permission before hunting private lands.

SPECIAL REGULATIONS

Both Pacific and Grays Harbor counties are contained within Goose Management Area (GMA) 2B. Special regulations apply in GMA 2B to prevent harvest of dusky Canada geese. These special regulations include:

1. Hunters must possess a valid migratory bird hunting authorization for Goose Management Area 2B to hunt geese, except during the September goose season
2. February and March seasons are open only on private lands.
3. Hours are 30 minutes after the start of official waterfowl hunting hours to 30 minutes before the end of official waterfowl hunting hours.
4. The season is closed for dusky Canada geese. If a hunter takes a dusky Canada goose, the authorization will be invalidated and the hunter will not be able to hunt geese in Goose Management Areas 2A & 2B for the rest of the season or the Special Late Goose Season.

We strongly recommend that hunters review the most recent Washington State Migratory Waterfowl and Upland Game Season Pamphlet to ensure they are in compliance with current regulations. Pamphlets are available at any retailer that sells hunting licenses or they can be downloaded from WDFW's website ([click here](#)).

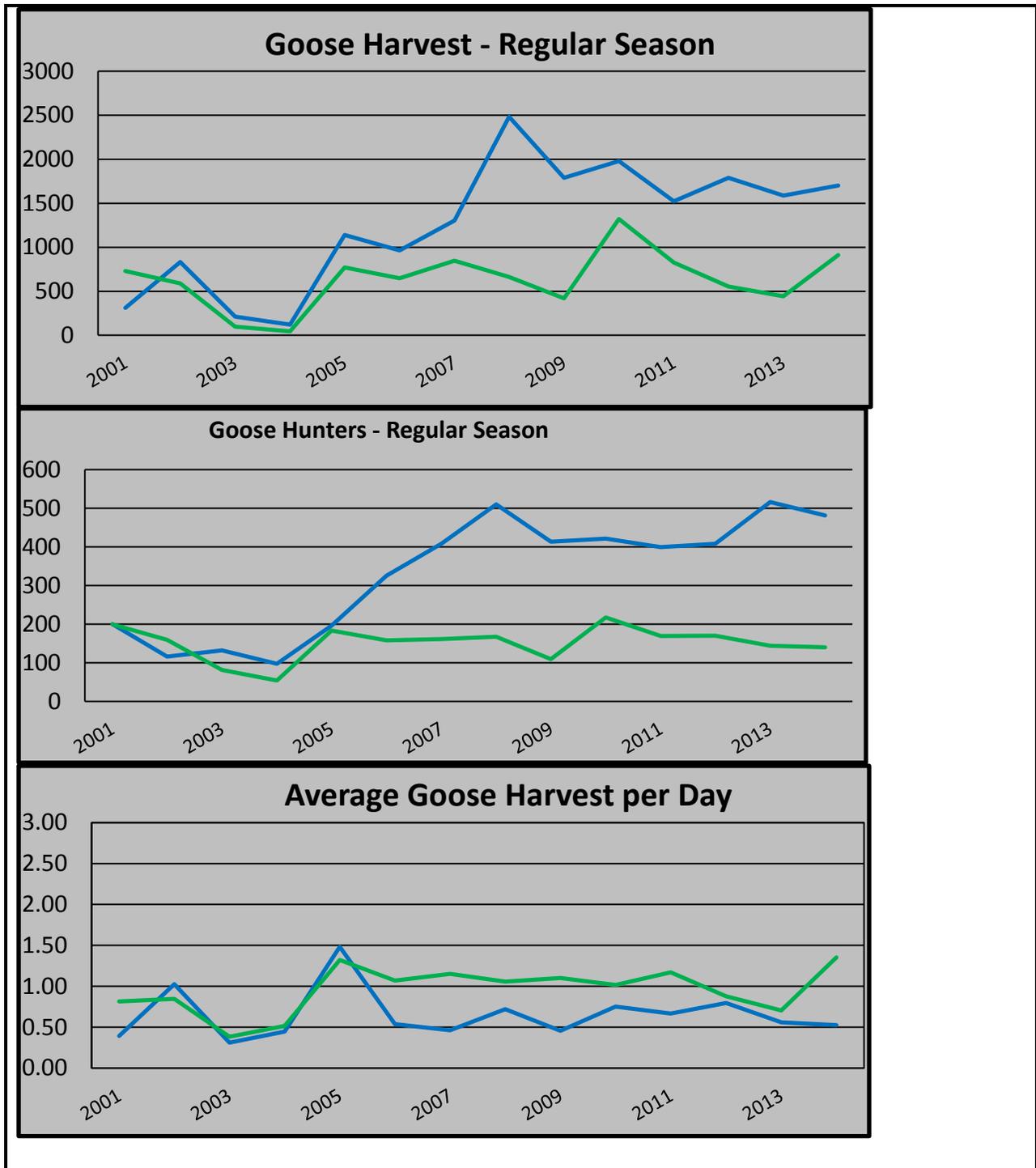


FIGURE 17. TOTAL GOOSE HARVEST, GOOSE HUNTER NUMBERS, AND AVERAGE NUMBER OF GEESSE HARVESTED PER DAY DURING REGULAR GOOSE SEASONS IN GRAYS HARBOR COUNTY (BLUE), PACIFIC COUNTY (GREEN) FROM 2001–2014.

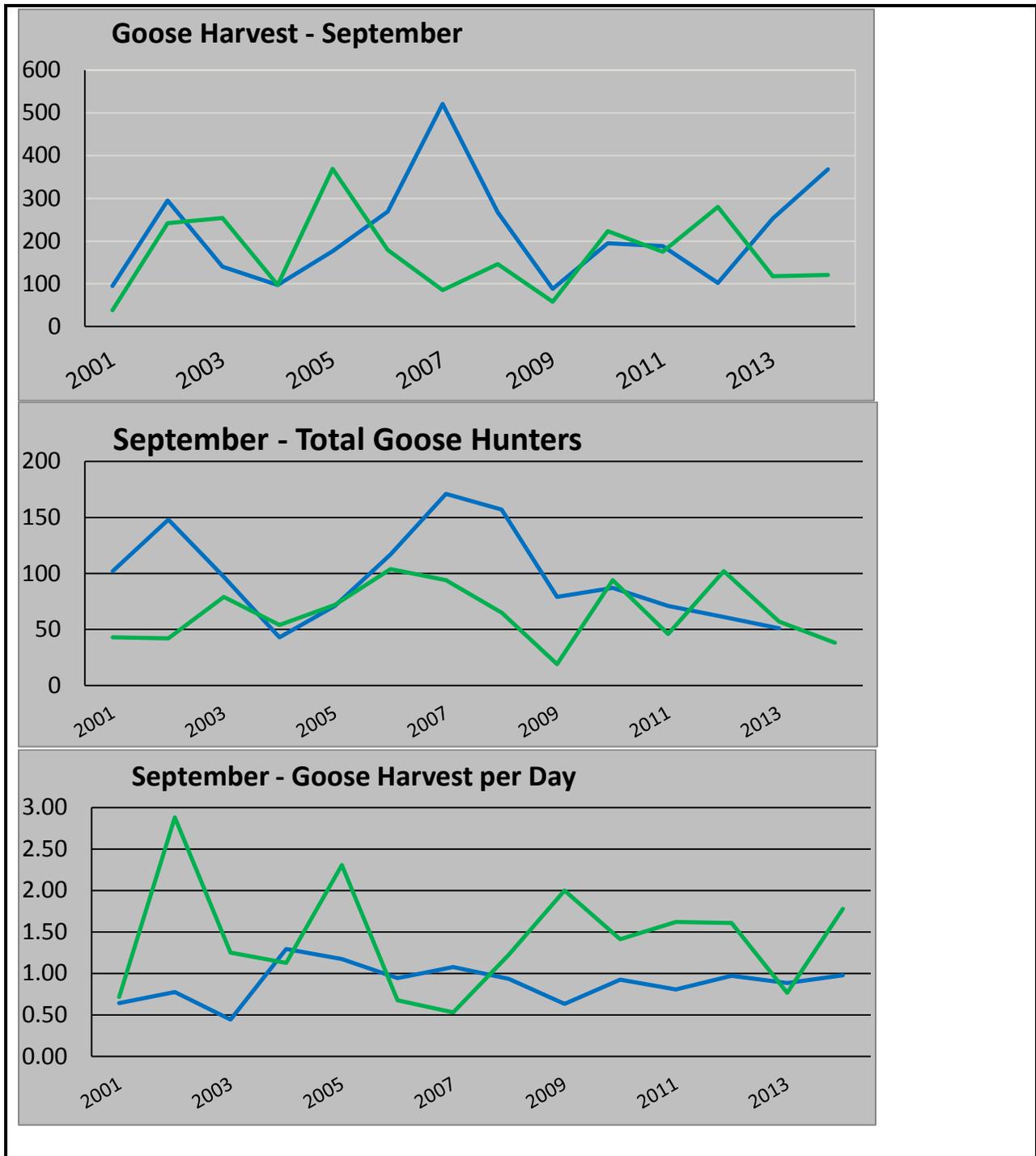


FIGURE 18. TOTAL GOOSE HARVEST, GOOSE HUNTER NUMBERS, AND AVERAGE NUMBER OF GEESSE HARVESTED PER DAY DURING EARLY GOOSE SEASONS IN GRAYS HARBOR COUNTY (BLUE), PACIFIC COUNTY (GREEN) FROM 2001–2014.

PUBLIC LAND OPPORTUNITIES

Many wildlife areas in District 17 provide a chance to hunt geese. Look at Figure 16 and the Public Land Opportunities in the Duck Section for more details. Additionally, some landowners have enrolled in WDFW's Private Lands Access Program. Those lands provide additional hunting opportunities for the public. See the Private Lands Access Program section for more details.

NOTABLE HUNTING CHANGES

- Grays Harbor County now included in Goose Management Area 2B.
- The season is closed to taking dusky Canada geese.

FOREST GROUSE

SPECIES AND GENERAL HABITAT CHARACTERISTICS

There are three species of grouse that occur in District 17-- ruffed grouse, blue grouse (sooty), and spruce grouse. Ruffed grouse are the most abundant and occur at lower elevations and valley bottoms. Spruce grouse can be located in lodgepole pine, subalpine fir, and Engelmann spruce stands. In District 17, these habitats are only present in parts of the Olympic National Forest located in the northern part of the District (GMU 638). Blue grouse can be found in habitats that occur at elevations between ruffed and spruce grouse habitat, but overlap does occur.

POPULATION STATUS

WDFW does not conduct any standardized or formal surveys to monitor grouse populations in District 17. Instead, we use harvest data trends as surrogates to formal population estimates or indices of population size. Total harvest numbers tend to vary with hunter numbers (Figure 19) so CPUE is the best indicator of population trends. In District 17, grouse populations appear to have declined slightly since 2001 as CPUE has slowly declined from 0.32 birds per hunter day to 0.17 birds per hunter day during the 2013 season (Figure 20).

HARVEST TRENDS AND 2015 PROSPECTS

The total number of grouse harvested in District 17 has gradually been declining since 2001 (Figure 19). Grays Harbor County saw a small increase in grouse harvest during 2014. Last year, about half the number of hunters reported hunting grouse compared to five years earlier. Most grouse are taken from Grays Harbor County. Hunters average one grouse per three to five days of effort.

HUNTING TECHNIQUES AND WHERE TO HUNT

A generally effective way to hunt grouse is by walking roads and shooting birds as they flush, or after they roost in a nearby tree. Grouse occur in higher densities along roads with little traffic. Consequently, hunters should target roads behind locked gates or decommissioned roads. To learn more about hunting grouse, please visit WDFW's upland bird hunting webpage or [click here](#).

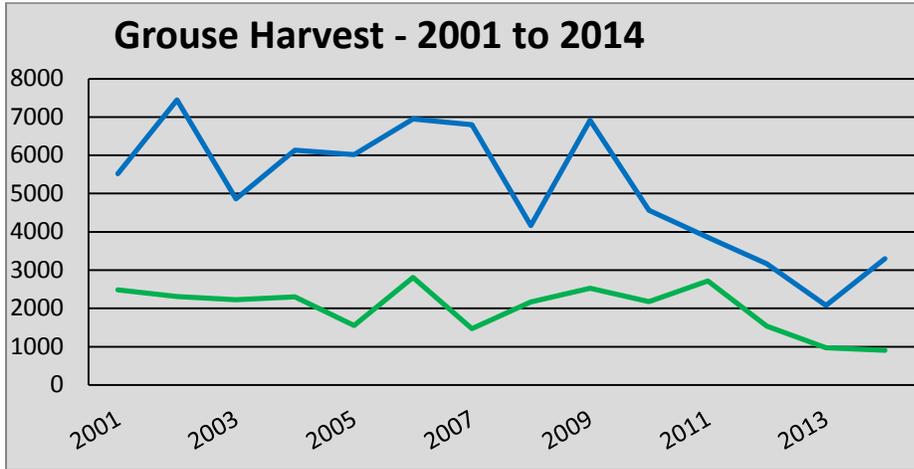


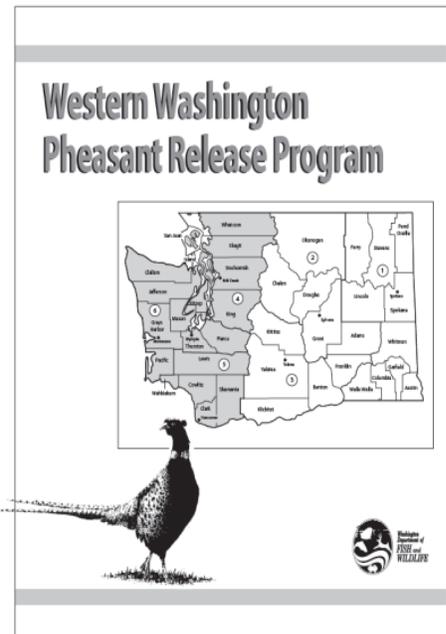
FIGURE 19 – GROUSE HARVEST WITHIN DISTRICT 17 FROM 2001-2014

PHEASANTS

All pheasant hunting opportunities in District 17 are provided by the Western Washington Pheasant Release Program. District 17 does not have self-sustaining populations of pheasant. The primary intent of the release program is to provide an upland bird hunting opportunity and to encourage participation from young and older-aged hunters. Each year, 30,000 to 40,000 pheasants are released at 25 sites. Two of those sites (Chehalis River and Chinook) occur in District 17. The Chinook Release Site is located in Pacific County and the Chehalis River Release Site is located in Grays Harbor County. To locate maps for the Chehalis River and Chinook Release Sites and learn more about the Western Washington Pheasant Release Program, [click here](#).

Hunters should be aware that special regulations apply on western Washington pheasant release sites. Notably:

- Hunters must purchase a western Washington pheasant license



- Non-toxic shot is required
- Hunting hours are between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm.

QUAIL

Mountain quail rarely occur in District 17. This district does not contain any sizable population. Mountain quail sightings are rare. The few sightings that occur are usually located in five to 10 year old clear cuts with abundant shrub cover and pine saplings. Some sightings occur in brushy cover located adjacent to agricultural land. Since 2001, annual harvest and hunter numbers have averaged just 89 birds and 25 hunters.

TURKEYS

There are no sizable turkey populations in District 17. Only two turkeys were reported harvested in District 17 from GMU 672. The only area known to hold any number of birds is in the Willapa River Valley on Department of Natural Resources lands in the southern part of GMU 672. All other flocks known to occur in District 17 are small (10-15 birds), occur on private agricultural lands, and, based on their behavior, are thought to be pen-raised birds that were released by adjacent landowners who no longer wanted to take care of them.

The turkeys that can be found in District 17 are eastern wild turkeys. Approximately 400 eastern wild turkeys were introduced into southwest Washington from 1987-2000. Introduction programs have been discontinued because populations did not appear to expand and habitat suitability models indicated southwest Washington habitats were not likely to support viable turkey populations.

BAND-TAILED PIGEONS

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Band-tailed pigeons (“band-tails”) are the largest species of pigeon in North America. They inhabit mountainous forests in the western U.S., with large coastal populations occurring from British Columbia south to northern California. During the breeding season (April to September), band-tailed pigeons are found below 1,000 feet elevation. In autumn, they feed mainly on berries, nuts, grains, acorns, and fruits.



POPULATION STATUS AND TREND

WDFW monitors band-tail populations using a standardized population index survey. These surveys occur at 15-16 mineral sites where band-tails are known to congregate. Since WDFW initiated the standardized mineral site survey, the population index indicates band-tail populations have fluctuated through the years, but have never declined to levels that would warrant more limited harvest opportunities.

HARVEST TRENDS AND 2015 PROSPECTS

Band-tailed pigeon harvest in District 17, and statewide, showed an increasing trend until it declined sharply following the 2009 season. However, this decline in harvest was associated with a similarly sharp decline in hunter numbers, so harvest declines are not believed to be associated with a similarly sharp decline in population size. Harvest in District 17 (see Figure 20) has typically accounted for 30% of the statewide harvest. Annual harvest in Grays Harbor County has averaged 80 birds since 2002, which is the highest average annual harvest among the 19 counties where band-tails are harvested. The next closest average annual harvest occurs in Pacific County, with an average annual harvest of 52 birds.

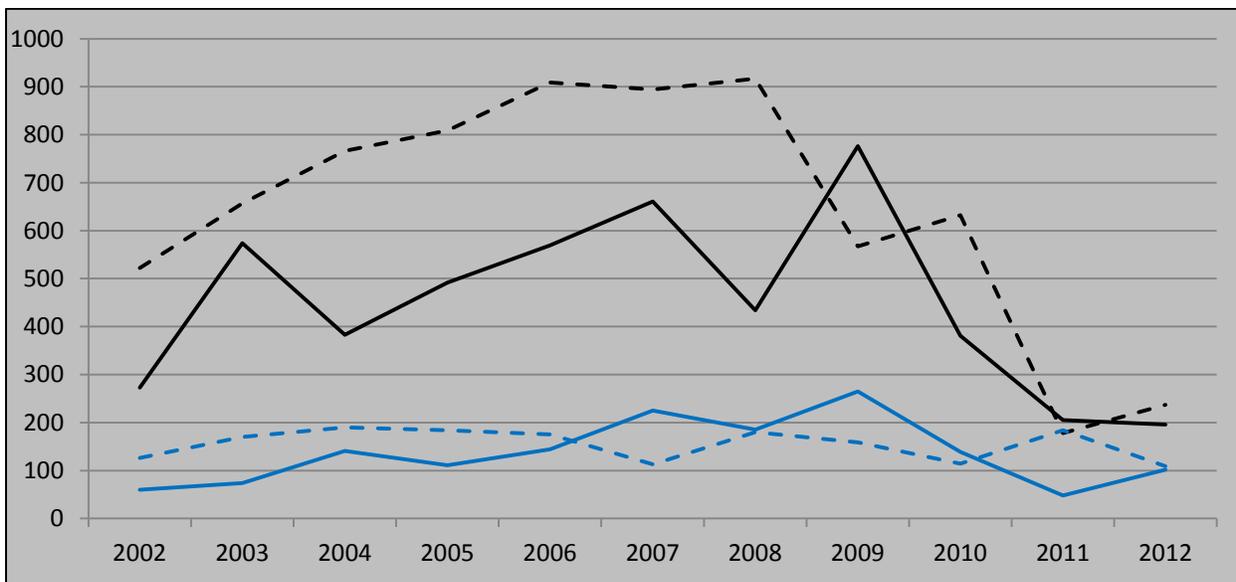


FIGURE 20. BAND-TAILED PIGEON HARVEST TRENDS IN DISTRICT 17 (SOLID BLUE) AND STATEWIDE (SOLID BLACK) SINCE 2002. ALSO INCLUDED IS THE NUMBER OF HUNTERS (DASHED BLACK) AND THE MEAN NUMBER OF BAND-TAILED PIGEONS OBSERVED AT EACH OF THE MINERAL SITES VISITED DURING STANDARDIZED SURVEYS (DASHED BLUE), 2002–2012. NEITHER SURVEY DATA NOR HARVEST DATA WERE AVAILABLE FOR 2014.

WHERE AND HOW TO HUNT BAND-TAILED PIGEONS

Band-tailed pigeons frequently congregate in areas with red elderberry and cascara. These small trees are most abundant in five to ten year old clearcuts where hunting can be exceptionally good. The key to harvesting band-tails is scouting. Which clearcuts will be used by band-tails is hard to predict. Hunters need to locate feeding, roosting, and watering sites. Upon finding a good site, sit patiently and wait for pass shooting opportunities to occur.

Band-tails often congregate at seeps and mineral sites. They show strong site fidelity to these locations and often return to the same seeps year after year. WDFW conducts annual surveys at such mineral sites to assess changes to the band-tailed population. These mineral sites are not abundant and are hard to find. If a hunter is lucky enough to locate a mineral site where band-tails congregate, they will likely be successful during the season.

SPECIAL REGULATIONS

Since band-tail seasons were re-opened in 2002, hunters are required to purchase a migratory bird authorization. Harvest must be submitted using harvest cards submitted to WDFW after the season has closed. These regulations will apply in 2015 as well. At the time of this writing, 2014 harvest and survey data was not available. Hunters should review the 2015 Migratory Waterfowl & Upland Game Seasons Pamphlet once it becomes available to confirm season dates and any other regulation changes.

OTHER SMALL GAME SPECIES

Other small game species and furbearers that occur in District 17, but were not covered in detail, include cotton-tail rabbits, snow-shoe hares, coyotes, beaver, raccoons, river otter, marten, mink, muskrat, and weasels. Additional migratory birds include snipe and coot. Crows are also abundant in District 17.

MAJOR PUBLIC LANDS

Unfortunately, District 17 is not well known for its large amount of public land opportunities. However, public land opportunities do exist on lands administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Department of Natural Resources (DNR), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), WDFW, and Grays Harbor County.

GMUs with the greatest amount of public land include GMU 618, 638 and GMU 663 (Figure 22). Large tracts of DNR lands also occur in GMUs 660, 672, and 673. The USFWS Willapa National Wildlife Refuge occurs in portions of GMUs 681 and 684. GMU 699 is what its name implies, an island, and the entire GMU is part of the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge (Figure 22).

The majority of all other public land opportunities in District 17 occur primarily on WDFW Wildlife Areas or on lands managed by Pacific and Grays Harbor counties. For more

information related to the location of WDFW Wildlife Areas, see Figure 16 and visit WDFW's hunting access website at http://wdfw.wa.gov/hunting/hunting_access/ or by [clicking here](#).

New for 2014 is a web application showing the Washington State Public Lands Inventory provided by the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office. To access this map go to <http://publiclands.smartime.com/#Map> or [click here](#).

For more information on resources available to locate public lands please see the Online Tools and Maps section below.

PRIVATE INDUSTRIAL FORESTLANDS

GENERAL INFORMATION

The vast majority of hunting opportunities, especially for big-game and upland birds, occur on private industrial forestlands. Timber companies that own large tracts of land and are the most well-known include Rayonier, Weyerhaeuser, Hancock, Green Diamond, and Campbell Global. However, hunters should be aware that there are many other smaller timber companies that have operations in District 17, but are not mentioned here.

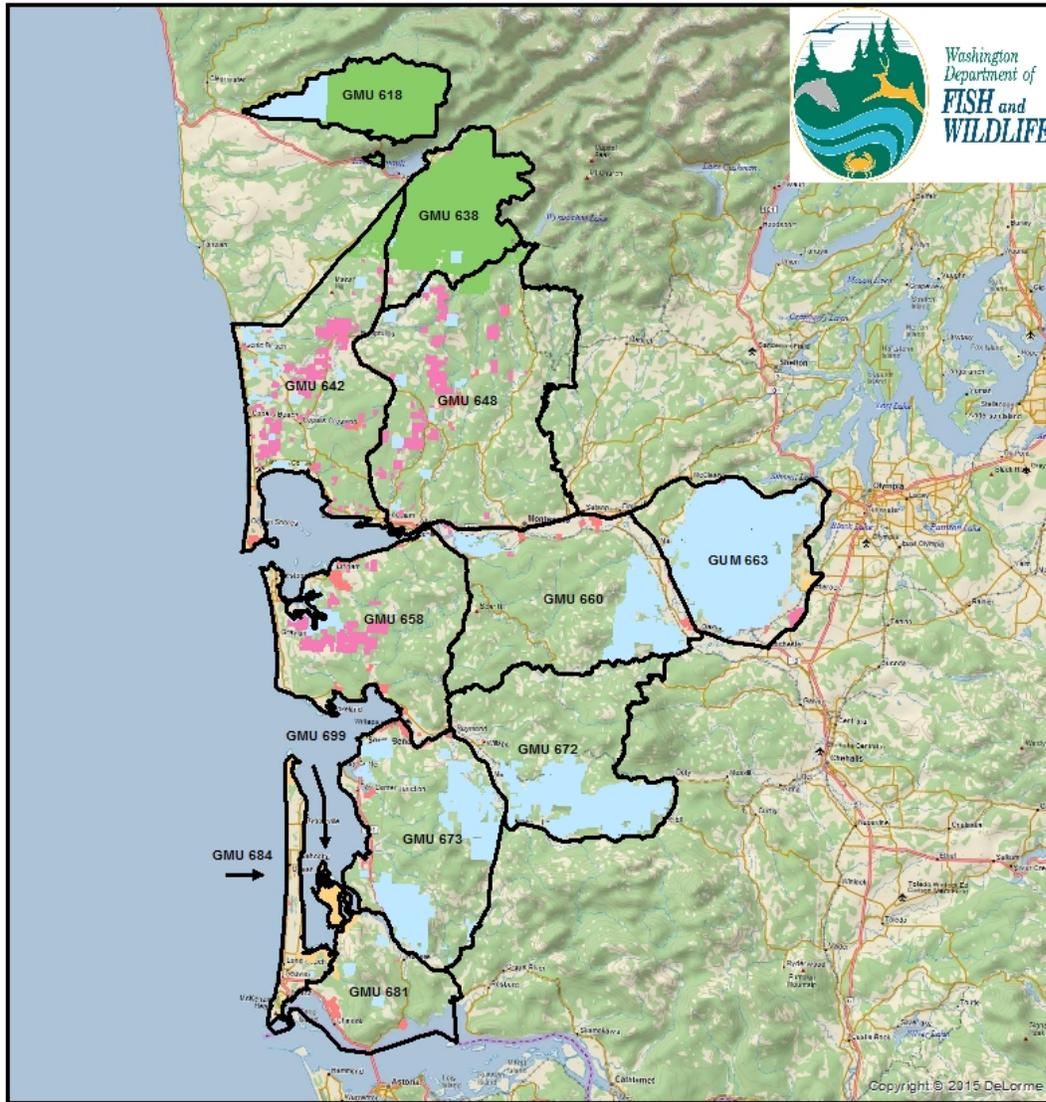
WDFW recognizes that some of the best hunting opportunities occur on private industrial forestlands and works cooperatively with private timber companies to maintain reasonable public access during established hunting seasons. Private industrial forestlands have always been open for public access, but hunters should always remember they are being granted access to private property and access to that property is a privilege.

Recently, there has been an increasing trend of timber companies restricting public access and shifting towards a permit system to limit the number of hunters that hunt on their lands. One of the primary reasons for access restrictions and loss of access is hunter disrespect of the landowner's rules. When hunting on private industrial forest lands, WDFW reminds hunters to remember the following.

HUNTING ON PRIVATE LANDS IS A PRIVILEGE, SO TREAT THEM WITH RESPECT

- ✓ **Obey Posted Signs**
- ✓ **Leave Gates As You Found Them**
- ✓ **Pack Out Your Trash**
- ✓ **Be Courteous**

District 17: Major Public Lands



Disclaimer

Due to the dynamic nature of data the need to rely on outside sources of information, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions in the data and information contained in and products produced from this application. There are no warranties which accompany the maps and information contained in or produced by this application. For legal definitions of hunting regulations, seasons, and boundaries, the user should refer to Chapters 232-12, 232-16, and 232-26 of the Washington State Administrative Code (<http://www.leg.wa.gov/wac/>).

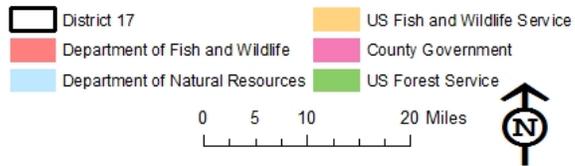


FIGURE 21: LOCATION OF PUBLIC LANDS OPEN TO PUBLIC ACCESS WITHIN EACH GMU OF DISTRICT 17

IMPORTANT CHANGES FOR THE 2015 SEASON

There are a variety of fee access programs that are in place and they vary by area and by company. However, all programs that WDFW is aware of, at the time of this writing, fall into the three general categories, which include Permit-Unlimited, Permit-Limited, and Leases. These fees will also apply to all other outdoor recreational activities including hiking, camping, mountain biking, fishing, etc. General descriptions of these three programs are as follows.

Permit-Unlimited: Hunters will be required to purchase an access permit, but there will be an unlimited number of permits available. Only holders of a valid permit will be allowed to recreate in areas associated with the permit. Permit cost is anticipated to be between \$50 and \$100.

Permit-Limited: There will be a set number of permits available on a first come, first served basis. Only people who have secured one of the limited permits will be allowed to recreate in areas associated with that permit. Permit cost is anticipated to be several hundred dollars. This type of system was implemented by Weyerhaeuser in their Pe Ell unit (GMUs 672 and 506) during the 2013 season.

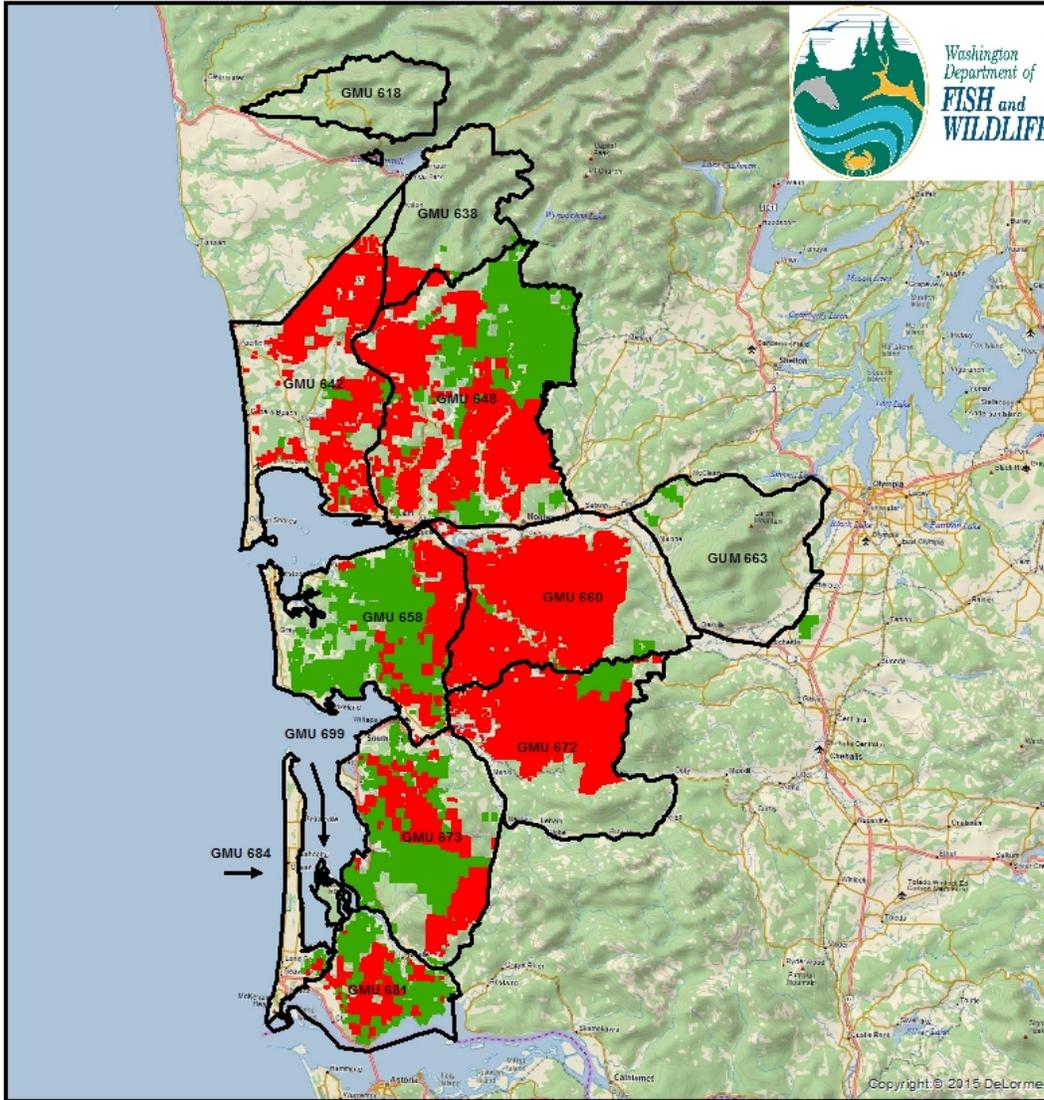
Leases: Designated tracts of land are leased to an individual, or groups of individuals, and only the lessee and their families are allowed to access that particular track of land. The cost of a lease can be several thousand dollars.

Hunters need to be aware that many timber companies are charging these access fees in areas where they have historically offered free access. Consequently, it is very important that hunters take the time to contact landowners in areas where they plan to hunt so they know whether or not the company's access policy for that area has changed.

Figure 22 represents areas in District 17 where WDFW knows timber companies will be requiring a fee to recreate on their property. However, the broad implementation of access programs by several timber companies since the 2013 season has been a very dynamic process that always seems to be changing. So, it is important to highlight that Figure 23 represents what has been presented to WDFW as of August 4. It is very possible that some of the areas presented as "free access" (green) could very well become "fee access" (red) areas by the time hunting seasons begin on September 1. Thus, hunters should use this map as a general reference and should understand it is ultimately their responsibility to contact the appropriate timber company to determine how hunter access will be managed in the areas they plan to hunt.

District 17:

Private Forest Lands Access



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- District 17
- Private Forest Lands - Fee Access
- Private Forest Lands - Free Access

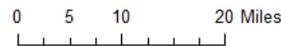


FIGURE 22. MAP OF PRIVATE TIMBER COMPANY OWNERSHIP IN DISTRICT 17. DARK GREEN = FREE ACCESS. RED = PERMIT AND FEE REQUIRED. MAP REPRESENTS DATA AVAILABLE ON AUGUST 4, 2015 AND MAY CHANGE AT ANY TIME.

BASIC ACCESS RULES

Specific rules related to hunter access on private industrial forestlands vary by company. WDFW encourages hunters to make sure they are aware of the rules in areas they plan to hunt. Most timber companies provide these rules on their website or will provide them to hunters who call to inquire about access (see below for contact information). However, hunters are encouraged to follow these basic rules if they find themselves in an area they are not familiar with and are in doubt about specific landowners rules. The following are intended to be a general guideline of the basic access rules that are common-place on many private industrial forestlands. Timber companies may have more or less restrictive rules in place and ultimately, it is the hunter's responsibility to make sure they are familiar with those rules.

- ✓ Respect the land owner and other users.
- ✓ Obey all posted signs.
- ✓ Drive slow with headlights turned on when driving on roads opened to public access.
- ✓ Avoid areas of active logging.
- ✓ No camping, littering, ORV's, off road driving, target shooting or forest product removals. An open gate does not mean the road is open to public motorized access.
- ✓ Gate closures apply to all motorized vehicles including motorcycles and quads. This includes vehicles with electric motors.
- ✓ Private forest lands are usually closed to public access during hours of darkness.

All users of private forest lands need to be aware that failure to obey landowner rules can result in prosecution for trespass and/or receive a *Persona nongrata* from the landowner.

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF ACCESS ALLOWED BY MAJOR TIMBER COMPANIES

Hancock: Hancock industrial forestlands have different levels of access based on management area. All Hancock industrial forestlands in GMUs 658, 673, and 681 are only open to non-motorized access. During modern firearm seasons, they will open some key main lines to disperse hunters and allow access to interior areas.

Rayonier: Rayonier currently has three levels of access: seasonal permit, recreational lease, and general access. For seasonal permit and recreational lease areas, access is only allowed for the permit and or lease holders and is subject to access rules established by Rayonier. Areas open for general access are managed under the dot system. They will green dot some of the red dot roads for hunting seasons. District 17 GMUs that have Rayonier lands include 638, 642, 648, 658, 673, and 681. Maps and other information are available on their web site.

Green Diamond: Green Diamond manages hunter access using the dot system and posts access rules at their gates. All of their lands in District 17 are currently open to non-motorized public

access. As hunting seasons approach they will usually begin opening additional roads to public access if fire danger is low. District 17 GMUs with Green Diamond ownership are 642, 648, 658, and 660.

Campbell Global: Campbell Global uses the dot system to manage hunter access and posts access rules at their gates. As hunting season approaches they will normally open some roads to motorized access for the hunting seasons if fire danger is low. District 17 GMUs with timberlands managed by Campbell Global are 648, 658, 672, 673, and 681.

Weyerhaeuser: Weyerhaeuser currently has three levels of access in District 17: general access permit areas, enhanced permit areas, and lease areas. For permit and lease areas, access is only allowed for the permit and or lease holders and is subject to rules established by Weyerhaeuser. District 17 GMUs with Weyerhaeuser ownership are 648, 658, 660, and 672.

HEADS UP FOR ARCHERY AND MUZZLELOADER HUNTERS

Private timber companies have traditionally opened their lands to modern firearm hunters during established seasons. Archery and muzzleloader hunters should be aware they may not have full access, and access levels during their respective seasons varies by year and by landowner. Most often, access is influenced by industrial fire classification issued by DNR. Hunters are urged to respect the landowners by adhering to any access restrictions they have in place.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE “DOT” SYSTEM

The Dot system is used by several timber companies in District 17. Rayonier, Weyerhaeuser, Green Diamond, and Campbell Global all use this system. The Dot system is a system of colored dots posted at the start of a road to indicate what level of access is allowed beyond that point. It is intended to give the public a clear understanding of what roads are open to public motorized access.

Normally under the dot system, access is granted for daylight hours only. Landowners usually understand that some hunters will go in an hour or so early to get to their hunting areas and sometimes they may come out a little late. Hunters should always stop and read signs. While several landowners use the Dot system they all have their own minor differences. In some cases landowners will close gates in the evenings to prevent unauthorized access.

- Red Dot – no motorized access
- Yellow Dot – Motorized access on weekends only
- Green Dot – Motorized access for licensed vehicle on maintained roads
- No Dot – Some land owners use this. It means the same as a Red Dot.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR MAJOR TIMBER COMPANIES

Some landowners have hotlines and/or web sites where hunters can find information about public access. However, it is important to realize they do not have staff dedicated to answering

hunter questions. Hunters are encouraged to call the WDFW Region 6 office in Montesano (360-249-4628) if they have questions related to public access on private industrial forest lands.

Timber Company	GMUs	Phone Number	Website
Hancock	658, 673, 681	1-360-795-3653	No website
Hancock	All other GMUs	1-800-782-1493	https://hancockrecreationnw.com/
Rayonier	All	1-360-533-7000	http://www.rayonierhunting.com/
Green Diamond	All	1-360-426-3381	http://www.greendiamond.com/recreation/
Weyerhaeuser	All	1-800-636-6531	http://www.wyrecreationnw.com/

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF HUNTER ACCESS IN EACH GMU

One of the most common questions we get from hunters is “What is hunter access like in GMU [enter GMU number]?” Generally, this question is referring to the amount of motorized access and not access in general. It is important to differentiate the two because in general, hunters enjoy a high level of access in all District 17 GMUs. However, type of access varies between motorized and non-motorized access.

The following rating system was developed for District 17 GMUs to give hunters a general idea of what type of access is available in the GMU they are thinking of hunting. For the purposes of this exercise, access ratings are specific to the level of motorized access that is allowed and does not refer to the level of access in general. Several GMUs have some type of fee access areas that grant the permit or lease holders a higher level of access. The following ratings are based on a hunter not having a lease or permit. Each GMU was given a rating of excellent, good, and poor with the level of access associated with each rating as follows:

- **Excellent**---most if not all of the main logging roads are open, as well as most of the spur roads.
- **Good**---There is a mix of open and closed roads with most main logging roads open, but many of the spur roads are closed to motorized access.
- **Poor**---Most of the GMU is closed to motorized access, but is open to non-motorized access.

Information provided is a brief description of major landowners and the level of motorized access a hunter can expect. Access rules change through the seasons and vary by year. Information is updated when available. Hunters are encouraged to contact the WDFW Region 6 office in Montesano (360-249-4628) if they have questions related to hunter access that have not been answered.

GMU 618 (Matheney) Access rating = Excellent

Unit 618 is dominated by federal lands included in the Olympic National Forest. The minority of land not managed by the US Forest service is under state management via the Washington Department of Natural Resources.

GMU 638 (Quinault Ridge) **Access rating = Good**

The majority of GMU 638 is associated with the Olympic National Forest and managed by the U.S. National Forest Service. There are numerous small landowners in areas outside of the National Forest. Much of the more productive areas of this GMU are private lands that are not considered industrial forest lands. The Quinault valley is not recommended for hunters who are not familiar with land ownership boundaries. Rayonier also has some recreational lease areas that are signed.

GMU 642 (Copalis) **Access rating = Poor**

The primary landowner in this GMU is Rayonier. They have recreational lease, seasonal permit, and general access areas in this GMU.

GMU 648 (Wynoochee) **Access Rating = Poor**

Overall, GMU 648 consists mostly of private industrial forestlands, but there are also several smaller landowners. Primary landowners in GMU 648 include Weyerhaeuser, Rayonier, Green Diamond, Fruit Growers, Grays Harbor County, and Campbell Global. A portion of the GMU comprises the Hoquiam and Aberdeen watersheds, which are closed to all public access. In addition, several landowners have a cooperative road management agreement with WDFW. Hunters should be advised to read and follow all posted signs. Rayonier has a few leased access areas in this GMU that are signed. The majority of Rayonier lands in this GMU are managed under their general access program.

GMU 658 (North River) **Access rating = Good**

Primary land owners are Hancock, Rayonier, Weyerhaeuser, Grays Harbor County, Campbell Global, Green Diamond, and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Overall, access is good, but will vary among landowners. The majority of Hancock property will be gated, but some main logging roads will be open during the general modern firearm season. DNR lands in this GMU are surrounded by private forest lands, but are accessible by non-motorized access across private timber lands. Many of the landowners that surround the public lands will open gates for reasonable access to public lands for hunting seasons once fire seasons are over. Rayonier has some recreation leases and general access areas in this GMU. Access to Weyerhaeuser lands in this GMU is restricted to permit and lease holders.

GMU 660 (Minot Peak) **Access rating = Poor**

The primary landowner in GMU 660 is Weyerhaeuser. All of their lands in this GMU are managed under their general access permit program. A small portion of this GMU is owned by DNR. To prevent elk from being pressured onto farms in the Chehalis Valley, motorized access is limited on DNR lands.

GMU 663 (Capitol Peak) **Access rating = Excellent**

The majority (>80%) of GMU 663 is owned and managed by DNR and most roads are open to motorized access. This area also has ORV trails. Hunters are advised to make sure they read and adhere to all posted rules.

GMU 672 (Fall River) **Access rating = Good**

The primary landowners in GMU 672 are Weyerhaeuser and DNR. All Weyerhaeuser lands in this GMU are only accessible to permits holders.

GMU 673 (Williams Creek) **Access rating = Poor**

Access in this GMU is quite variable and depends on the landowners. Primary private timberland owners are Hancock, Rayonier, and Campbell Global. DNR also owns large tracts of land. In most areas, Hancock will limit access to non-motorized access, but will open a few of the main logging roads during the general modern firearm season to disperse hunters and allow some interior access. Rayonier has recreational lease, seasonal permit, and general access areas in this GMU.

GMU 681 (Bear River) **Access rating = Good**

Hunters can expect a little lower level of access than in the past. The dot system is used by some owners but it is not consistent because of the checkerboard ownership. Primary private landowners are Hancock, Rayonier, Weyerhaeuser, and The Nature Conservancy. Rayonier has some leased lands in this GMU. Portions of the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge occur in GMU 681 and hunters planning to hunt on Refuge lands should contact the Refuge before doing so because special regulations do apply in some areas details ([click here for website](#) phone: 360-484-3482). Nature Conservancy lands are open to hunting. Weyerhaeuser has recreational lease and permit access areas in this GMU.

GMU 684 (Long Beach) **Access rating = Poor**

With the exception of Leadbetter Point, the majority of this GMU consists of private property. Hunters are advised to make sure they have permission to access private property before they actively hunt in GMU 684. Portions of the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge occur in GMU 684, and hunters planning to hunt on refuge lands should contact the refuge beforehand. Special regulations apply for hunting on the refuge ([click here for website](#) phone: 360-484-3482).

GMU 699 (Long Island) **Access rating = Poor**

The entire GMU is owned and managed by the USFWS. Access is by boat only, but camping is allowed in designated areas. Hunters should contact the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge for more details ([click here for website](#) phone: 360-484-3482).

PRIVATE LANDS ACCESS PROGRAM

There are several private landowners in District 17 who are enrolled in WDFW's Private Lands Access Program. However, at the time of this writing, Cooperative Agreements with these landowners had not been finalized. Even though there are no indications landowners will not renew their Cooperative Agreements for the 2015 hunting season, we were hesitant to provide that information in this document. Hunters are encouraged to call the Region 6 office in Montesano (360-249-4628) or periodically check for updated information in this document or on WDFW's Hunter Access website located at http://wdfw.wa.gov/hunting/hunting_access/ or [click here](#).

ONLINE TOOLS AND MAPS

Most GMUs in District 17 are a checkerboard of ownerships and sometimes it can be extremely difficult to determine who owns the land where a hunter wishes to hunt. However, there are several online tools and resources that many hunters do not know about, but provide valuable information that helps solve the landowner puzzle. The following is a list and general description of tools and resources that are available to the general public.

Department of Natural Resources Public Lands Quadrangle (PLQ) Maps

The best source for identifying the specific location of public lands are DNR PLQ maps which can be purchased for less than \$10 on DNR's website ([click here](#)).

Online Parcel Databases

Technology has come a long way and has made it much easier for the general public to identify tax parcel boundaries and the associated landowner. However, because this technology has not been readily available in the past, there are several hunters who are not aware it exists.

Pacific County tax parcels can be searched using Mapsifter, which is a user-friendly mapping program that allows users to zoom in to their area of interest, click on a parcel, and identify who the owner of that parcel is. The Pacific County Mapsifter tool can be located at <http://pacificwa.mapsifter.com> or by [clicking here](#).

Grays Harbor tax parcels can be searched using GIS mapping software that is available on the Grays Harbor County website located at <http://www.ghc-gis.org/info/GIS/> or by [clicking here](#). Unfortunately, this parcel mapping tool is not as user friendly as the Mapsifter tool.

WDFW's GoHunt Tool

WDFW's GoHunt Tool has been revamped and provides hunters with a great interactive tool for locating tracts of public land within each GMU. The GoHunt Tool can be accessed on WDFW's Hunting website or by [clicking here](#).