

## Executive Summary

### Felsenthal NWR Deer Harvest Summary for 2016

Total deer harvested for the 2016/2017 season was 281, 42 during the muzzleloader hunt, 151 during the modern gun hunt, and 88 taken with a bow. The doe first rule and 2-deer bag limits were continued. The muzzleloader and modern gun hunts were both lottery hunts with 500 permits available for each hunt. Of the 500 permits available, 309 were filled for the muzzleloader hunt and 505 for the gun. The muzzleloader hunt was a 5-day hunt from October 15-19 and the gun hunt was a 4-day hunt from November 12-15.

Total deer harvested and checked during the muzzleloader were lower than in years past with only 42 deer checked as compared to approximately 90 in 2013, 2014, and 2015. Lower hunter numbers and unseasonably warm temperatures may have resulted in the decrease.

During the modern gun hunt 151 total deer harvested and checked which was similar to 2015/2016 but considerably lower than in years past. Much of the change can be contributed to hunt regulation changes such as the lowering the bag limit from 6 to 2 and reducing quota permits to 500.

Total deer harvested and checked for both lottery hunts for the 2016/2017 season was 193, 65 bucks and 128 doe, with a 1.97:1 doe to buck sex ratio. This year's harvest was 18% lower than last year and 36% lower than the 5-year average.

Approximately 200 doe were harvested throughout the season. As a general management rule, this meets the minimum harvest target objective for harvesting a doe per 100-200 acres of available moderate-quality habitat on approximately 40,000 acres within the refuge. Habitat conditions and herd health should be evaluated to determine if the harvest target objective should be increased or decreased.

Harvested deer were fairly evenly distributed among age all classes. In general, harvest totals are typically higher among younger deer (0.5-2.5). The increased harvest of fawns can most likely be contributed to the doe first rule. Harvested female fawns were slightly higher than desired at nearly 30%. A low percentage (6%) 1.5 year old females were harvested. There is uncertainty to why the harvest in that age class was low.

Average weights were within 10% of the 5-year average for the 1.5 and 2.5 year age classes with slight increases among 1.5 year old females and 2.5 year old bucks.

Lactation rates among 2.5-4.5 year old deer were excellent, ranging from 60% to 89%. Highest lactation rates were among the 3.5 year age class (89%). This is a good indication that deer are in good condition, thus herd densities are low and/or resources are abundant.

## Felsenthal NWR White-tailed Deer Harvest Summary for the 2016-2017 Season

### Archery (September 24, 2016-January 31, 2017)

	Harvest #	%
Male	13	15%
Female	75	85%
<b>Total Harvest</b>	<b>88</b>	

### Muzzleloader Lottery Hunt (October 15-19, 2016)

	Harvest #	%
Male	5	12%
Female	37	88%
<b>Total Harvest</b>	<b>42</b>	

### Gun Lottery Hunt (November 12-15, 2016)

	Harvest #	%
Male	60	40%
Female	91	60%
<b>Total Harvest</b>	<b>151</b>	

### 2016/2017 Season Total

	Harvest #	%	Ratio	5-year Average
Male	78	28%		91
Female	203	72%		208
<b>Total Harvest</b>	<b>281</b>		<b>2.6:1</b>	<b>299</b>

### Harvest Totals by County

	Ashley	Bradley	Union
Male	16	35	27
Female	39	76	88
<b>Total Harvest</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>115</b>

Tables below contain data from lottery hunts only

### Harvest Totals and Average Weight by Age Class

	Age Class	#	%	Weight (whole)lbs	5-year Average
Male	0.5	12	20%	65	
	1.5	12	20%	92	98
	2.5	13	22%	136	134
	3.5	11	18%	154	
	4.5	10	17%	169	
	5.5+	2	3%	185	
Female	0.5	33	27%	56	
	1.5	6	5%	95	82
	2.5	25	20%	92	97
	3.5	28	23%	98	
	4.5	14	11%	109	
	5.5 +	17	14%	101	

### Percent Lactation

Female	2.5	60%
	3.5	89%
	4.5	70%

### Antler Characteristics

Age Class	Average of Points	Average Score from 8pts +	Max Score from 8pts+
1.5	3	55.00	55
2.5	6.77	88.15	108.13
3.5	7.64	103.96	121.63
4.5	8.00	122.20	143.13

Historic Data

