



2016-17 Deer Harvest Summary
Vista Mountain (North) Wildlife Management Association
Hamilton County

Six members provided deer harvest information on a total of 3,684 acres. This represents a decline in the number of landowners ($n = 9$) and acres (4,439 acres) that contributed to the report in 2015-16. In the North there are 7,847 acres under Vista Mountain WMA membership.

Harvest Trends

- The recommended (maximum allowable) buck harvest rate for the 2016-17 hunting season was 1 buck per 167 acres. The actual harvest of antlered bucks (1 buck per 217 acres) was more conservative than the allowable harvest rate and a little higher than last year (1 buck per 261 acres).
- 17 antlered bucks were reported in the harvest. Of the antlered bucks, 35% were spikes, 12% had 3-7 points, and 53% had 8+ points. There are declining trend lines for both antlered buck harvest and 8+ point buck harvest (**Figure 1**). Selective buck harvest is a likely explanation. Hunter density is also less than observed during the early days of the association.
- There is a relatively flat trend line for antlerless deer harvest since 2003 (**Figure 2**). The recommended doe harvest for 2016-17 was 1 doe per 83 acres. The actual harvest rate (184 acres/antlerless deer) was well short of the objective.
- The ratio of antlerless deer to adult bucks (1.2 to 1) in the harvest fell short of the recommended harvest ratio of 2 does per buck.

Vista Mountain WMA Buck harvest objectives:

- 1) Selectively harvest bucks that are approaching or have reached maturity, at least 4 ½ years old
- 2) Remove bucks that display inferior antler characteristics compared to other bucks in their same age class. This has included a culling strategy that removes spikes and 3 ½ year-olds with 7 or fewer points.

Age and Antler Information

- Harvest data, including age and antler data and jawbones were provided by 6 of the 7 properties that reported a deer harvest.
- Verified ages were available for 35 of the 37 harvested deer that were reported. This represents 95% of the total reported harvest, which is much better than last year's age verification rate (75%).

Bucks

There was antler data and verified ages for 17 of the 17 harvested, antlered bucks (**Table 1**). Of the 17 bucks, 82% (14 of 17) were cull bucks or were mature/approaching maturity, and therefore met the harvest criteria of the association. Conversely, 18% of the bucks should

not have been harvested, because they were immature bucks displaying good antler characteristics for their age. Comparatively, last year's "mistake rate" was 31%.

- 29% (5 of 17) of the bucks were **1.5 year-olds**. All were spikes and met the current harvest strategy.
- 12% (2 of 17) of the known-age bucks were **2.5 years old**. They were both 8-point bucks that did not meet the harvest criteria.
- 18% (3 of 17) of the known-age bucks were **3.5 years old**. Two had ≤ 7 antler points and therefore met the harvest criteria. The remaining buck had 8 antler points and failed to meet the current harvest strategy.
- 41% (7 of 17) of the known-age bucks were **4.5 years old or older**. All were considered mature or approaching maturity under the current harvest strategy. There is an increasing trend of 4.5+ year-old bucks in the harvest over the past 14 years (**Figure 3**).

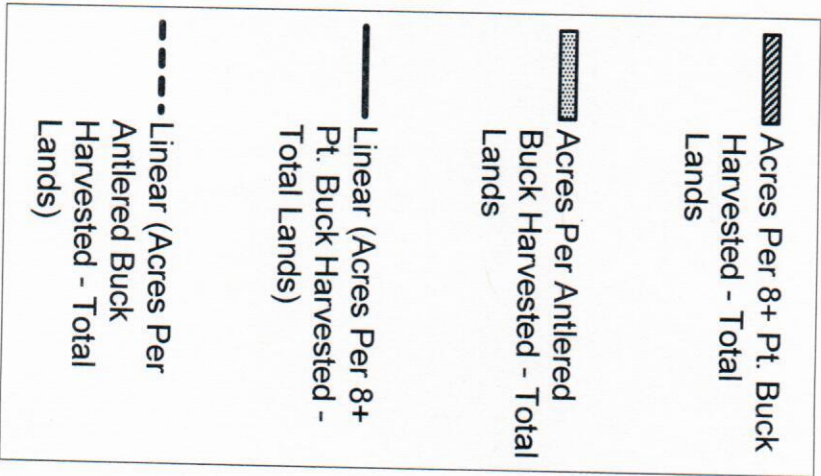
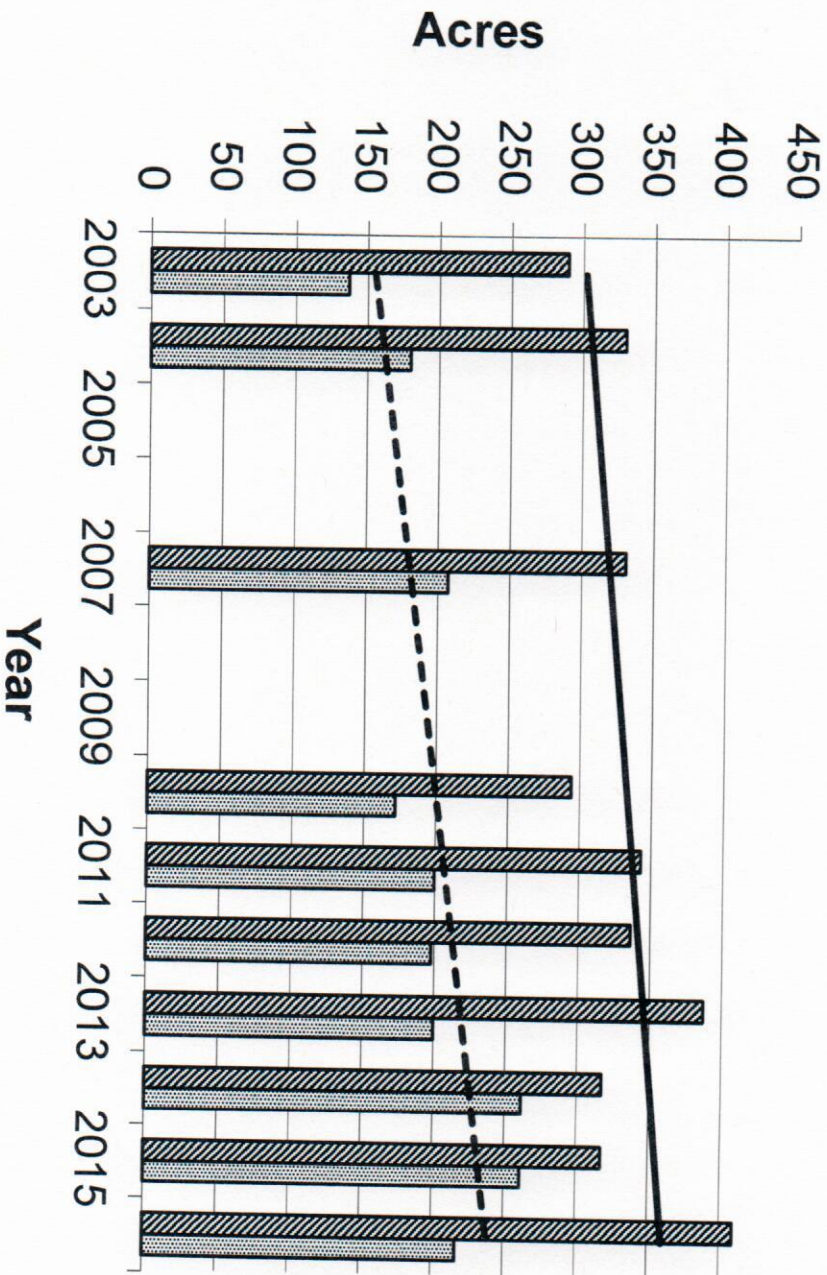
Does

- Ages were verified for 18 of the 20 harvested does.
- Approximately 39% of the harvested does were ≤ 2.5 years old, while 61% were ≥ 3.5 years old. This likely indicates an under-harvest of does during the 2016-17 season. It is not an indication of fewer young deer. Recruitment has been at or above the long term average for the past couple of years.

This summary report was completed by:

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Figure 1. Buck Harvest, Vista Mtn WMA-North
 Max. rec. harvest 2016-17 = 167 ac./buck
 Actual 2016-17 harvest = 217 ac./buck



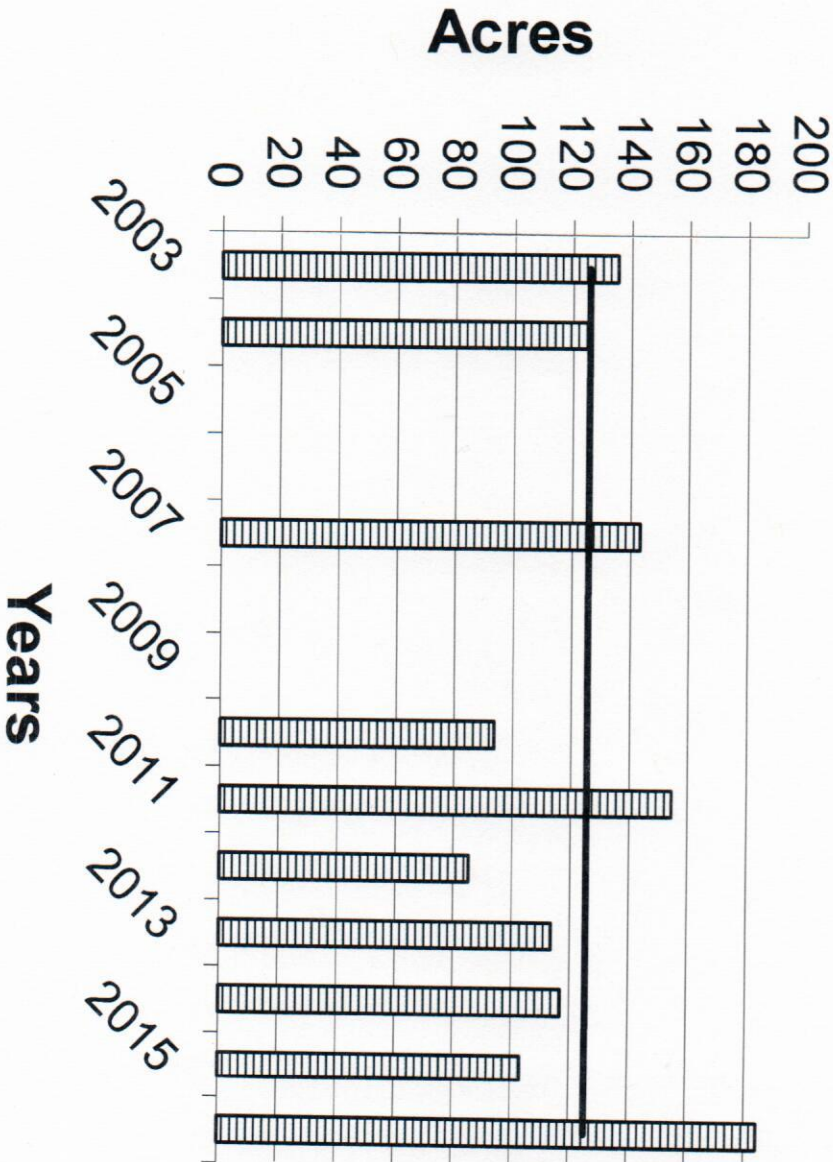




Figure 2. Antlerless Harvest, Vista Mtn. WMA-North
 Recommended 2016-17 = 83 ac/antlerless deer;
 Actual 2016-17 = 184 ac./antlerless deer

 Acres Per Antlerless Harvested - Total Lands
 Linear (Acres Per Antlerless Harvested - Total Lands)

Vista Mountain-North WMA - 2016-17 Season
Hamilton County

Table1. Annual Summary - Age, Weight, Antler, Sex Data

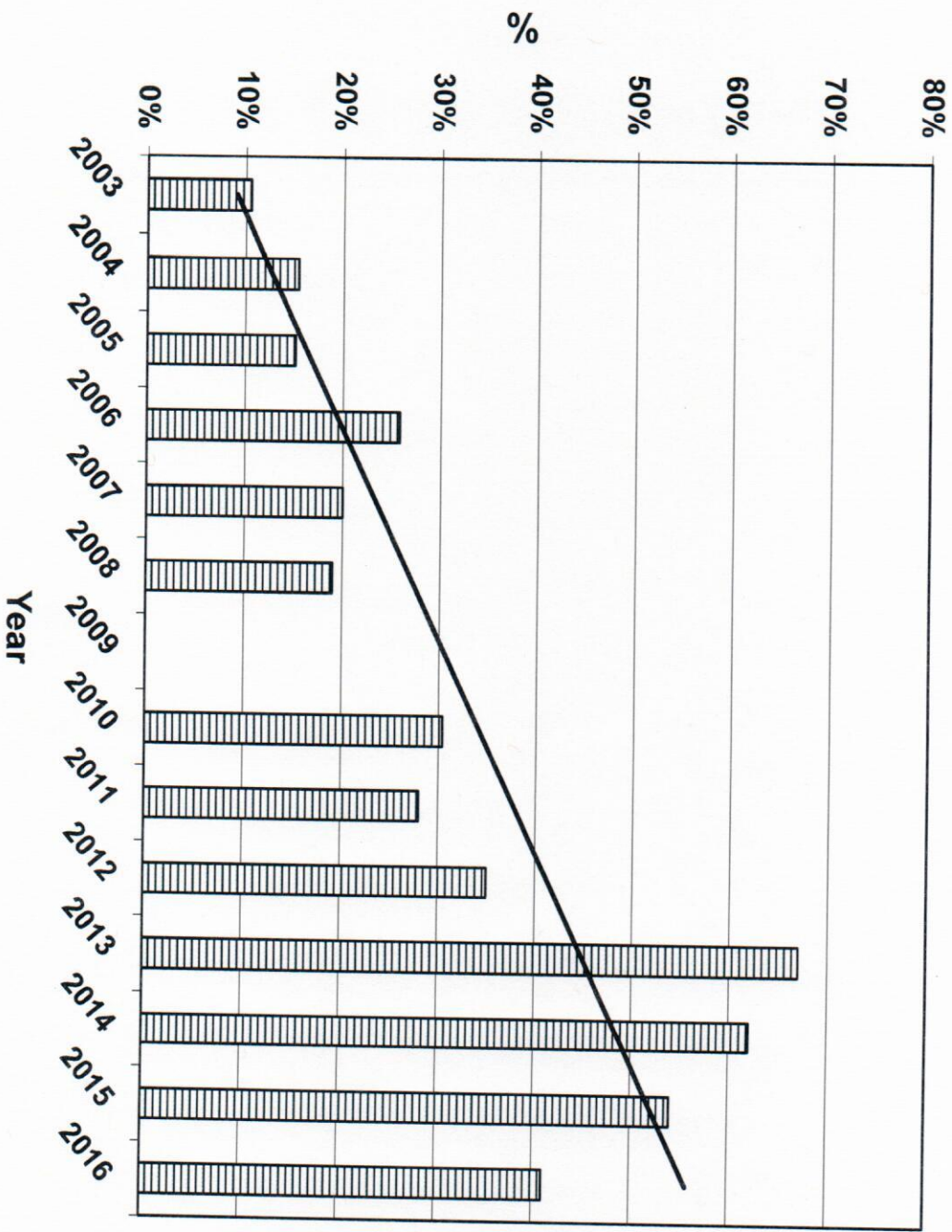
Age	Males Killed	% of Kill	Number Spikes Killed	Weight		Points		Inside Spread		Beam Circumference		Beam Length		Females Killed	% of Kill	Weight		Total Harvest	% of Total Harvest
				N	Ave	N	Ave	N	Ave*	N	Ave*	N	Ave*			N	Ave		
0.5	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%
1.5	5	29.4%	5	3	66	5	2.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	27.8%	3	71	10	28.6%
2.5	2	11.8%	0	0	0	2	9.0	1	15.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	11.1%	1	72	4	11.4%
3.5	3	17.6%	1	2	79	3	5.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	16.7%	3	75	6	17.1%
4.5	3	17.6%	0	2	115	3	8.3	2	17.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	22.2%	2	75	7	20.0%
5.5	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	16.7%	2	78	3	8.6%
6.5	3	17.6%	0	2	118	3	11.7	2	17.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.6%	0	0	4	11.4%
7.5	1	5.9%	0	0	0	1	12.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0%	0	0	1	2.9%
8.5+	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%
COMB	17	99.9%	6	9	91	17	6.9	5	17.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	18	100.1%	11	74	35	100.0%



* Inches

Comments: Fawns were not used in calculating COMBined averages.
Verified age data were available from 17 of the 17 males reported in the harvest.
Verified age data were available from 18 of the 20 females reported harvested.
Deer of unknown age were not included in the calculations.

Adult Males - Antler Points by Age Class
1.5 year old - 5 spikes
2.5 years old - 1 with 8 points and 1 with 10 points
3.5 years old - 1 spike, 1 with 7 points and 1 with 8 points
4.5 years old - 1 with 7 points, 1 with 8 points and 1 with 10 points
6.5+ years old - 4 with 10-13 points

Figure 3. The proportion of 4.5+ year-old bucks in the harvest
 Vista Mtn. WMA - North 2003-2016



 % of Antlered Bucks Harvested 4.5+ Years Old
 Linear (% of Antlered Bucks Harvested 4.5+ Years Old)