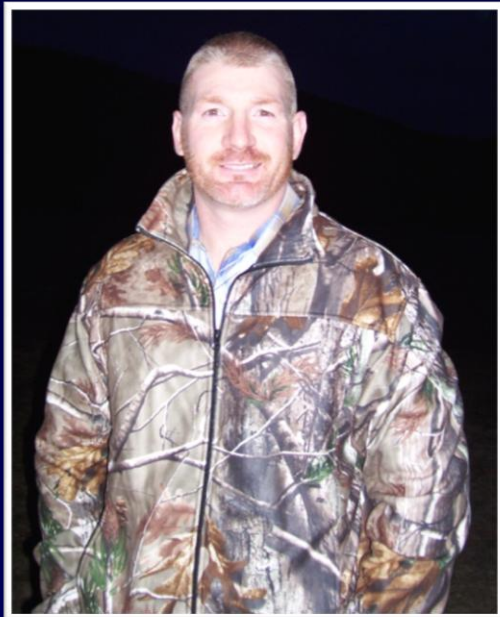


# Implementing a Successful Deer Management Program



**Kip Adams**

**Certified Wildlife Biologist – Dir. of Ed. & Outreach  
Quality Deer Management Association**



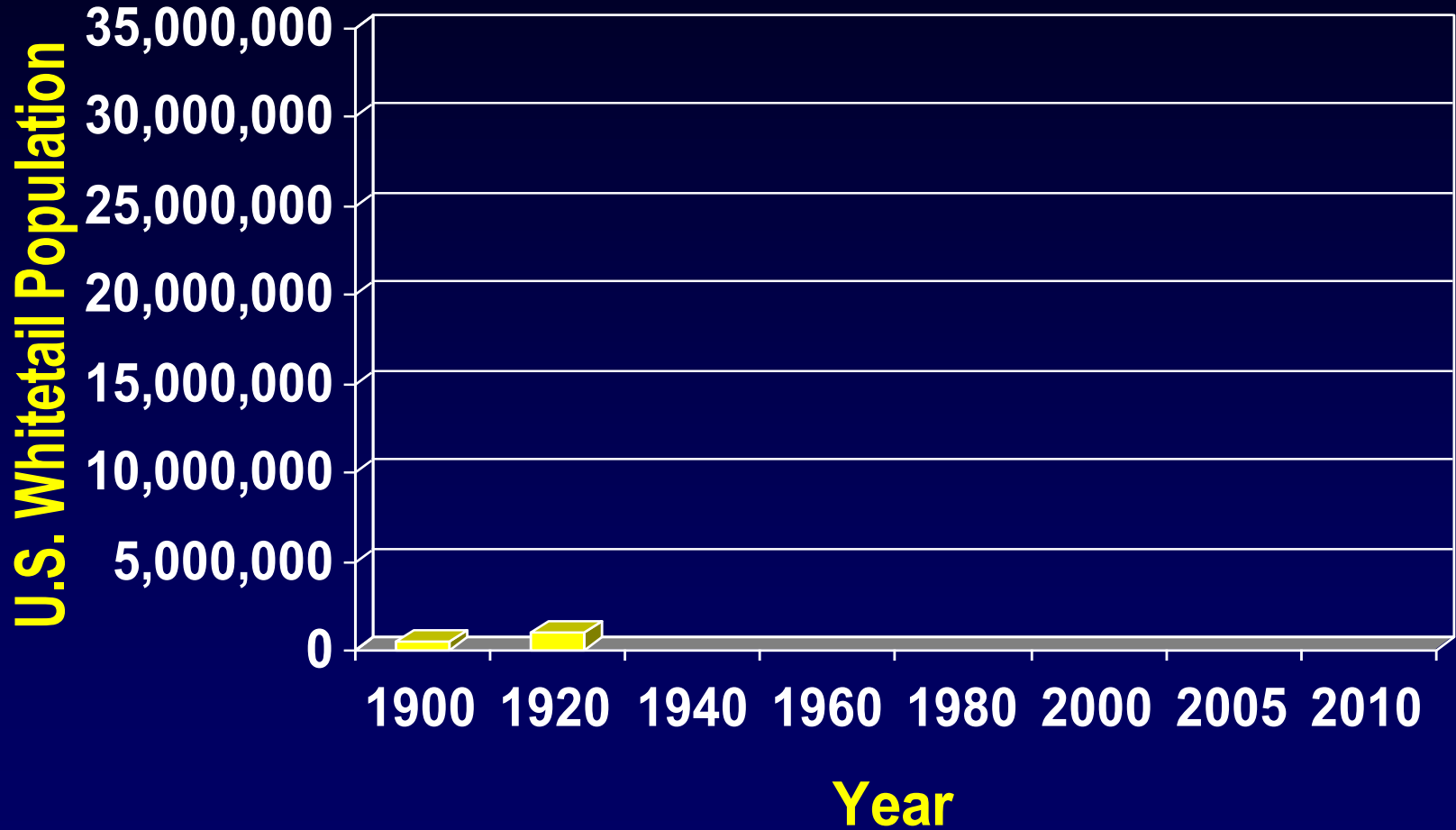
...QDMA...



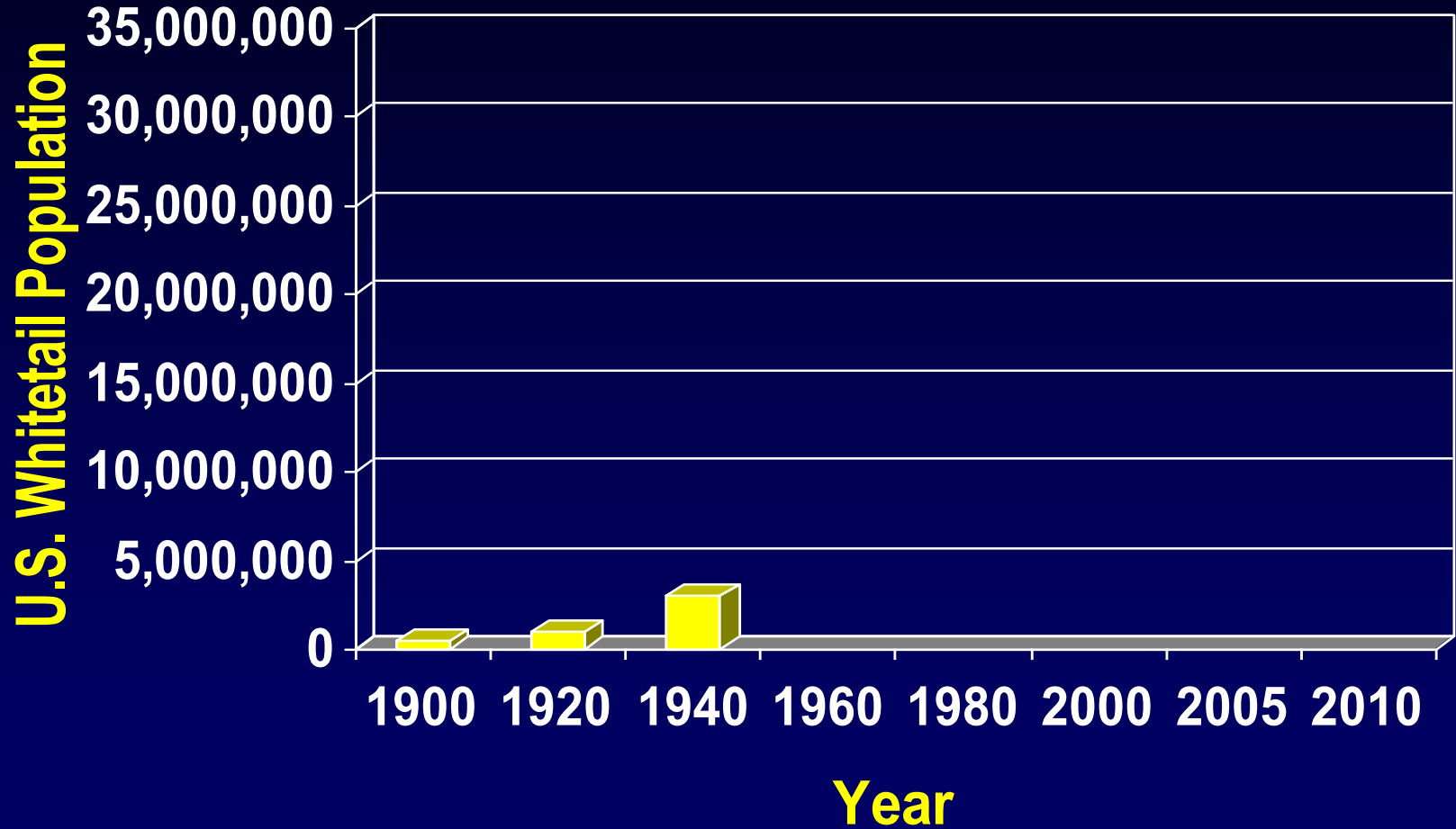
# Deer Population Trends



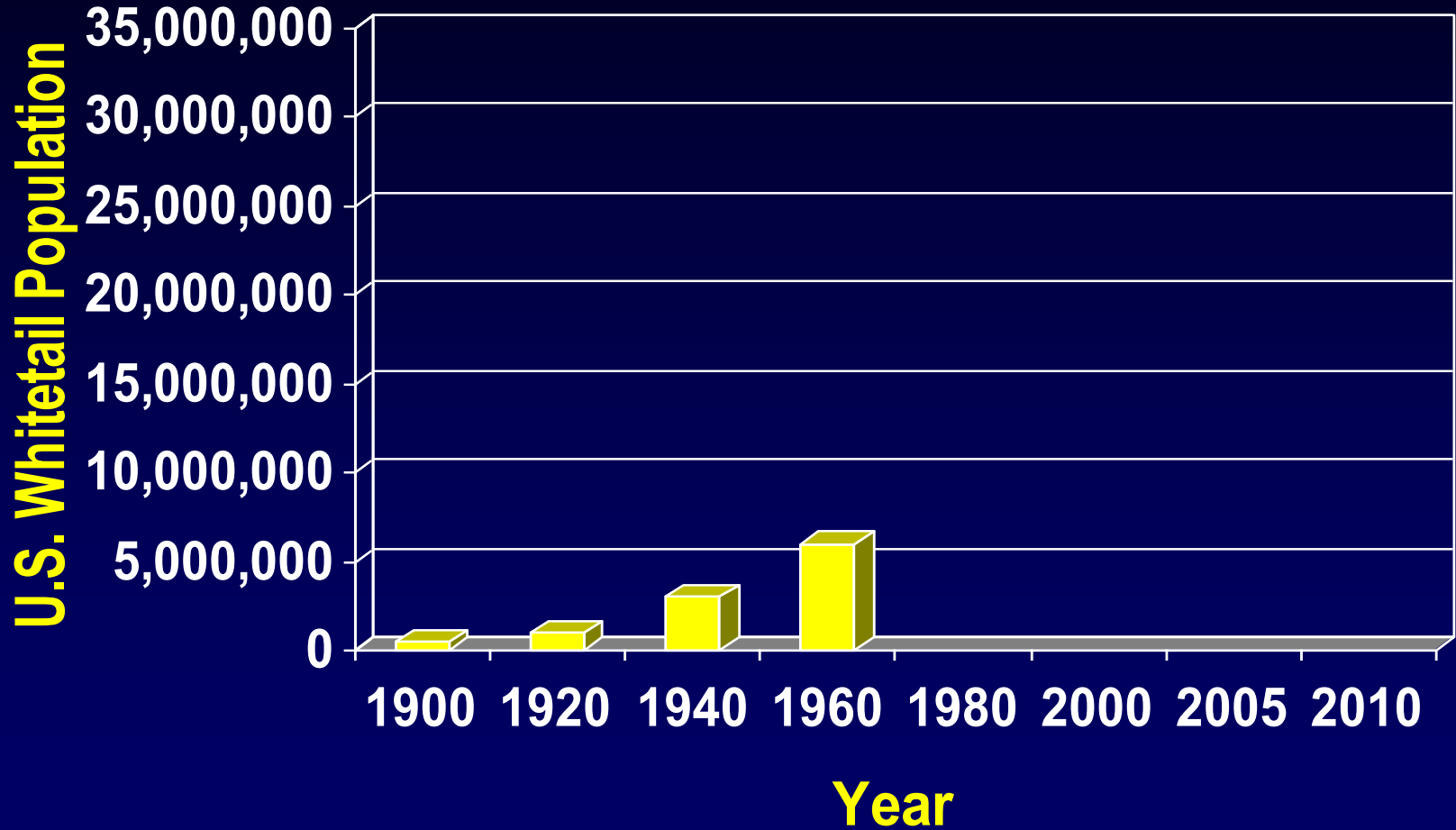
# Deer Population Trends



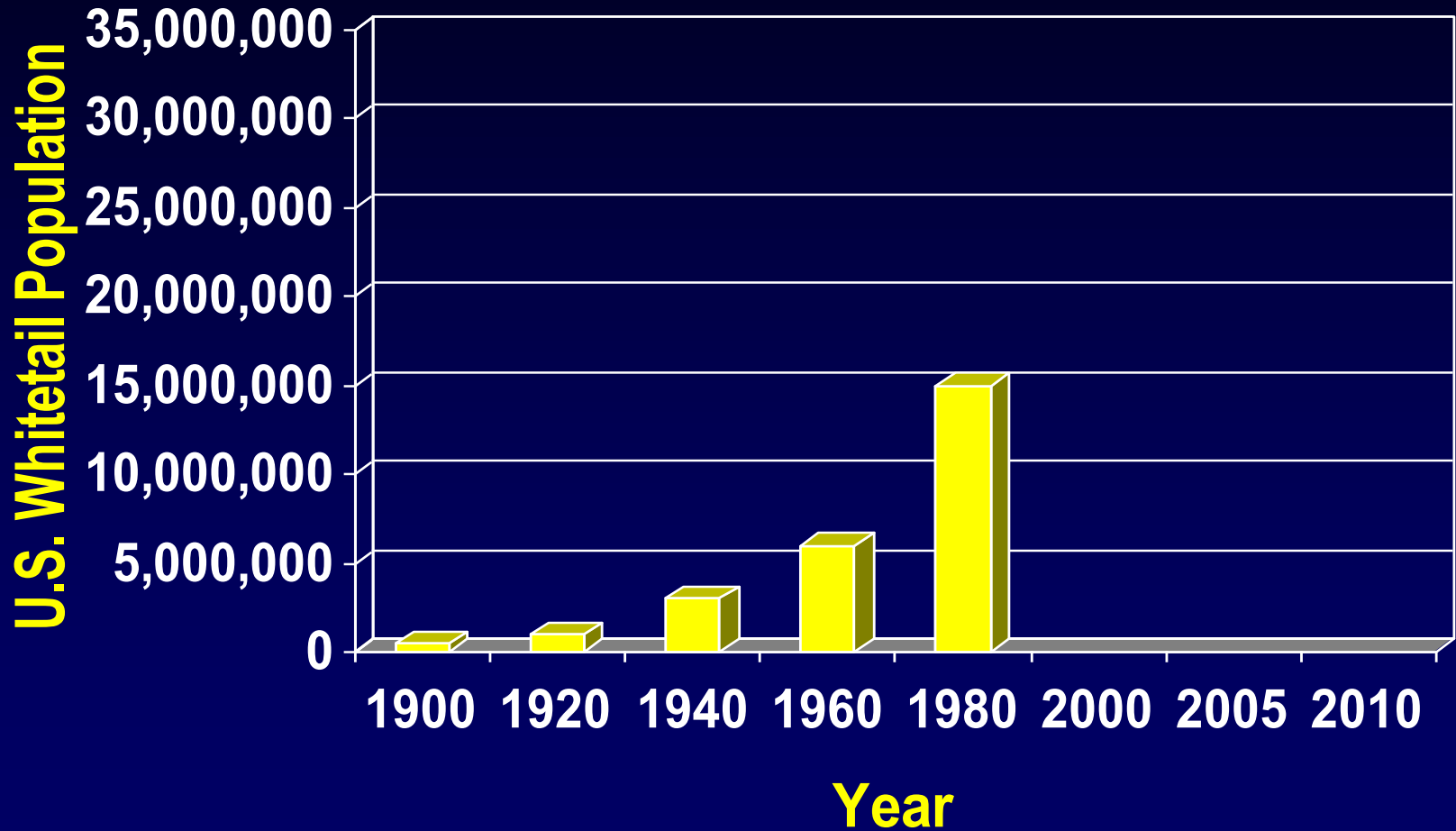
# Deer Population Trends



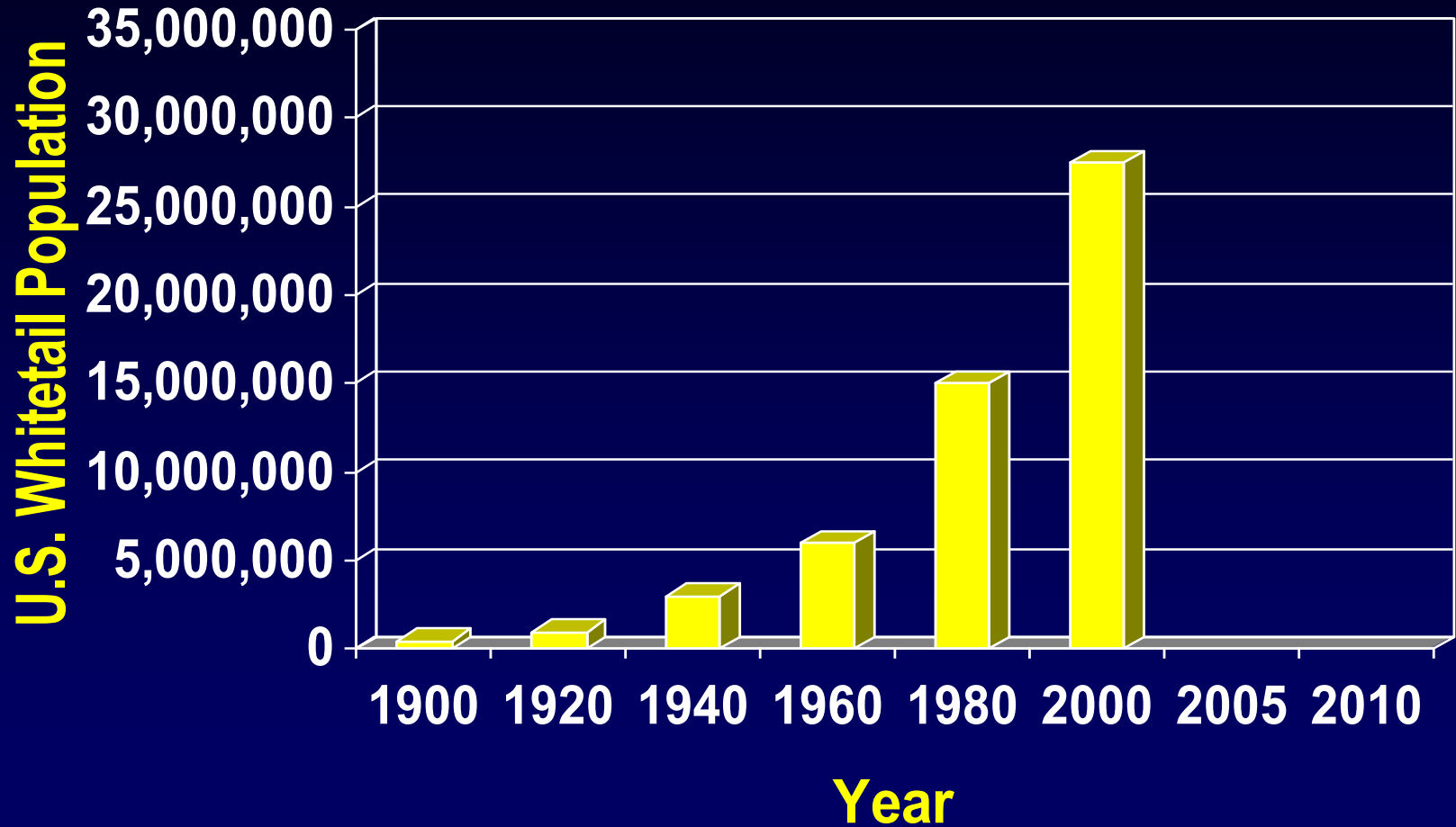
# Deer Population Trends



# Deer Population Trends

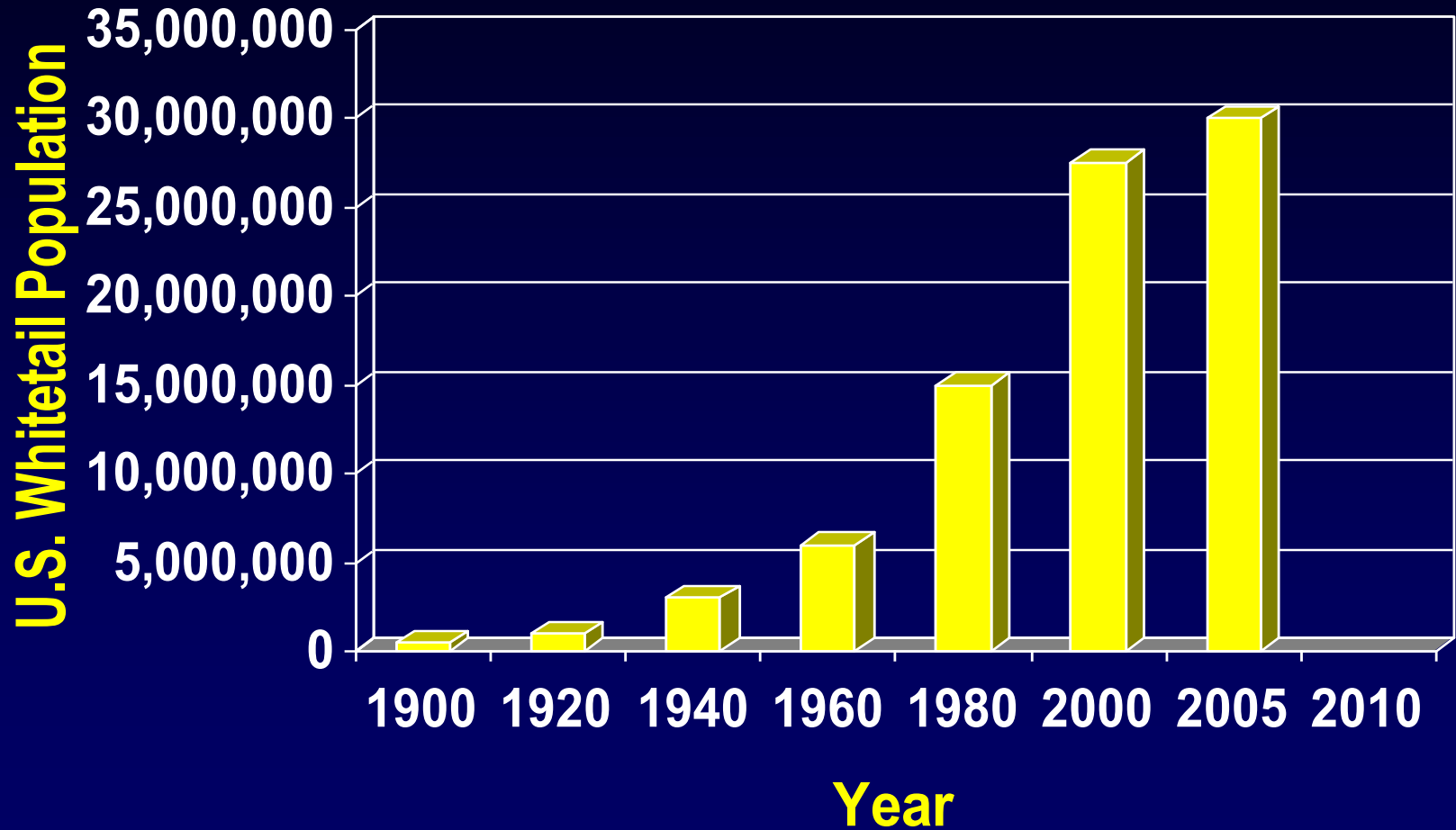


# Deer Population Trends

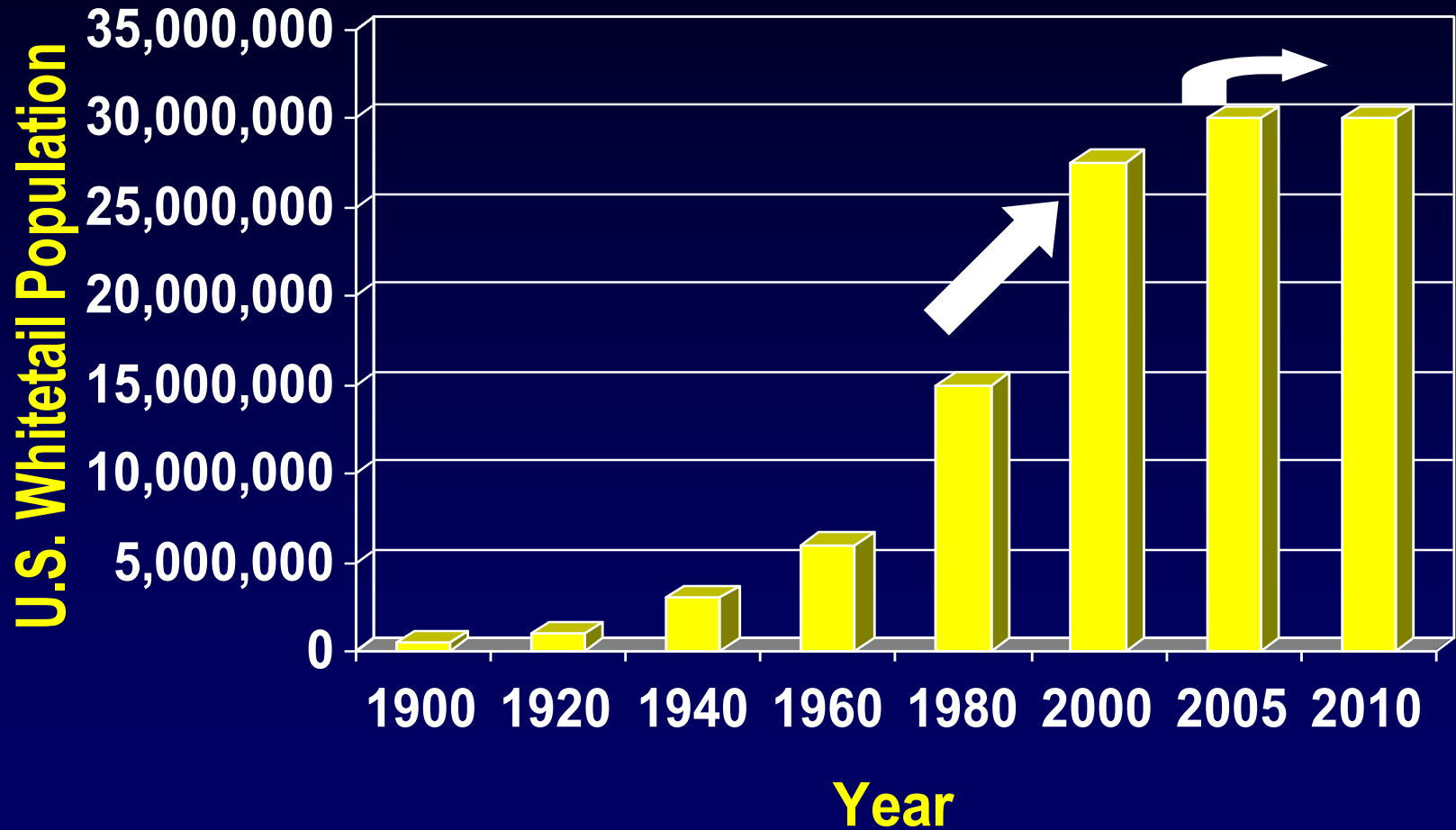




# Deer Population Trends



# Deer Population Trends



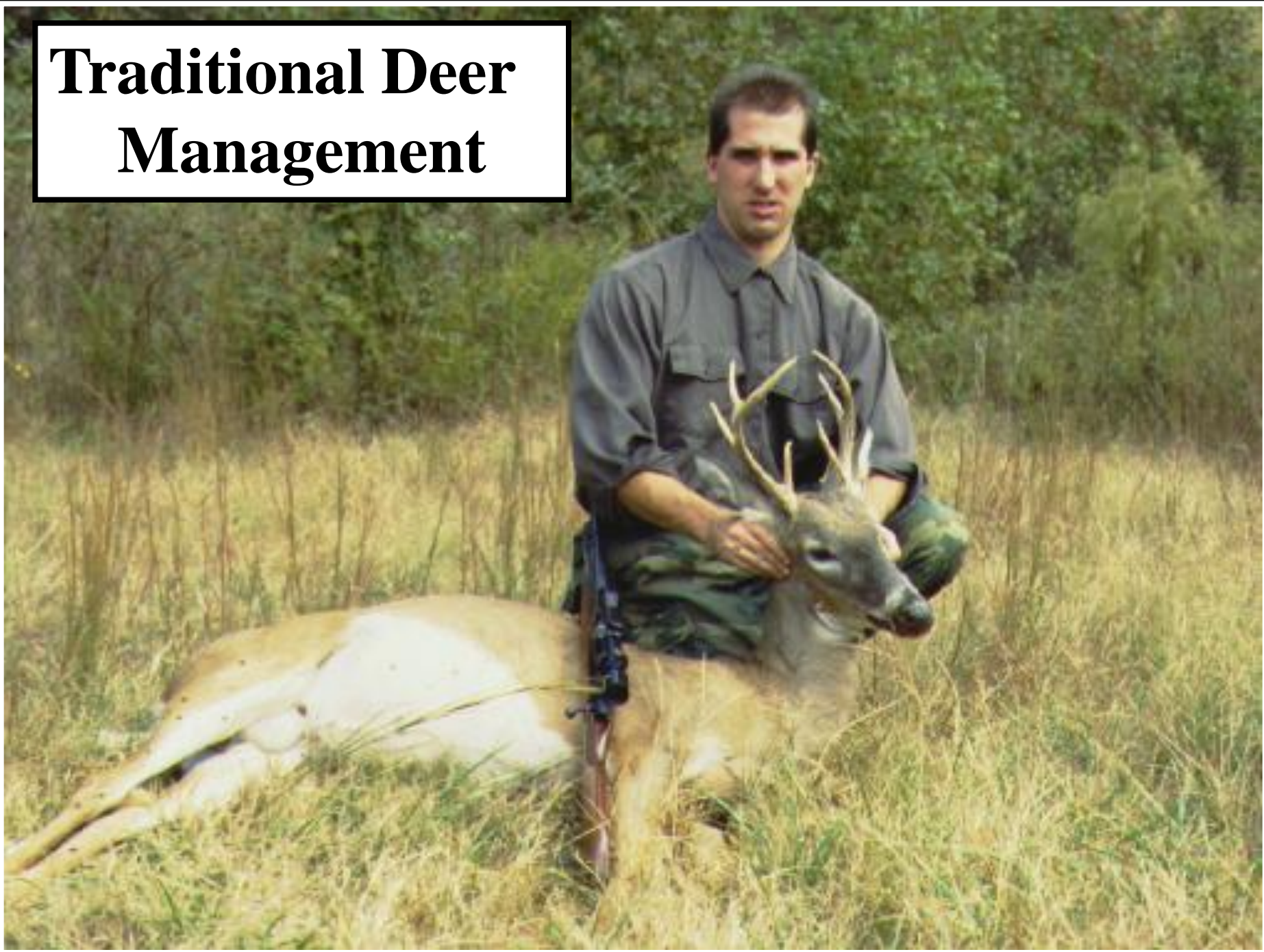
# Deer Management Strategies

- Traditional Deer Management
- Trophy Deer Management
- Quality Deer Management

# **Traditional Management is...**

The approach where any legal buck, regardless of age or antler quality, is harvested and few (if any) does are harvested.

# Traditional Deer Management





# Habitat Destruction



# Deer – Human Conflicts





# Trophy Management is...

The approach under only fully mature bucks with high scoring antlers (except “culls”) are harvested and does are aggressively harvested to maintain low deer density and optimum nutrition for remaining animals.

# Trophy Deer Management



# Quality Management is...

The approach under which young bucks are protected from harvest, combined with an adequate harvest of female deer to produce healthy deer herds in balance with existing habitat conditions.

# Quality Deer Management



# Four Building Blocks of QDM



HERD MANAGEMENT

HABITAT MANAGEMENT

HUNTER MANAGEMENT

HERD MONITORING

# Herd Management Simplified

The most important half-inch in deer management



# Hunters like to shoot bucks



**But do young bucks provide the same opportunities & excitement as mature bucks?**

**And do young bucks fulfill the role of mature bucks in a population?**





# Antlered Buck Management

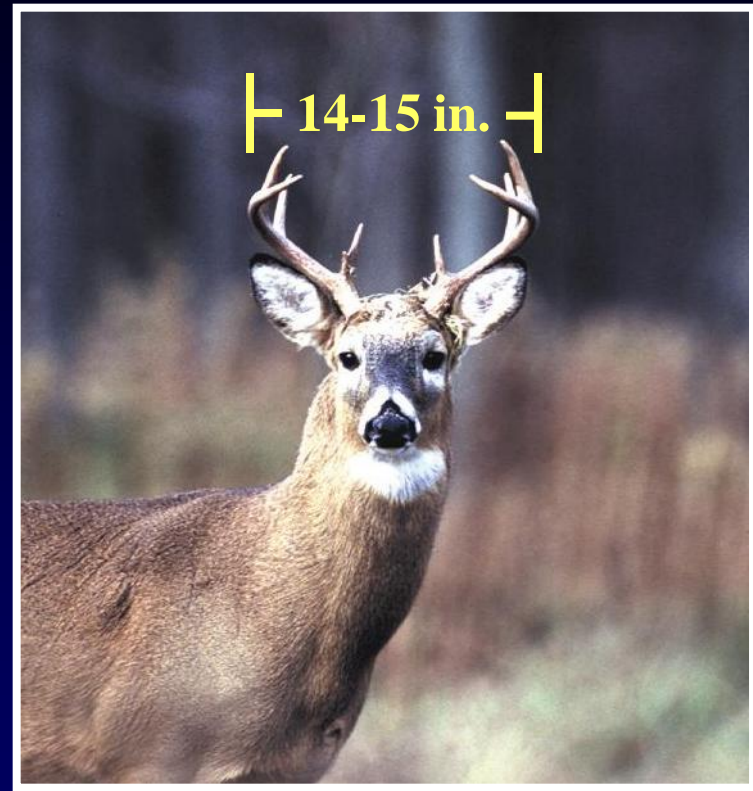
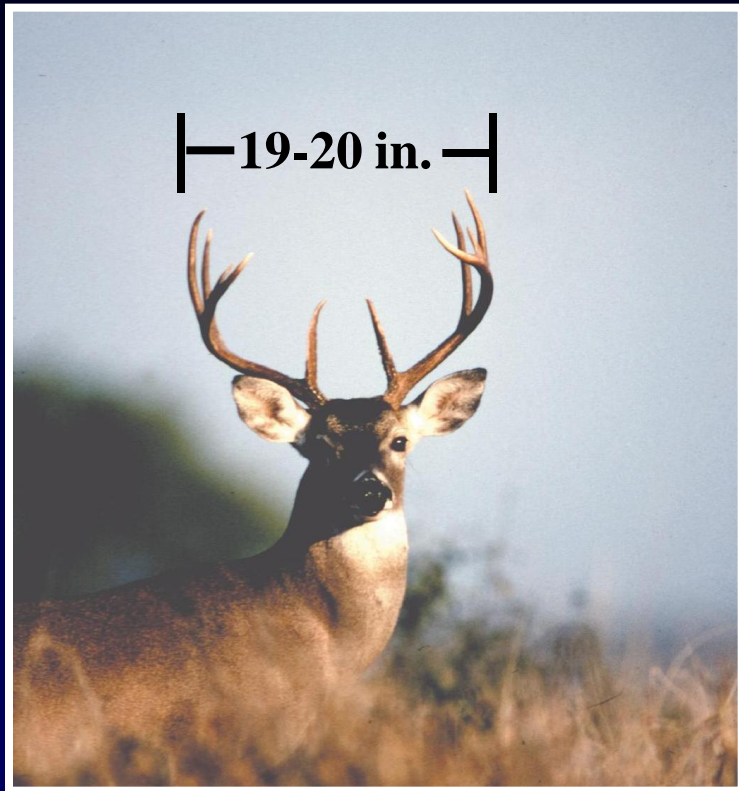


# Antler Point Restrictions



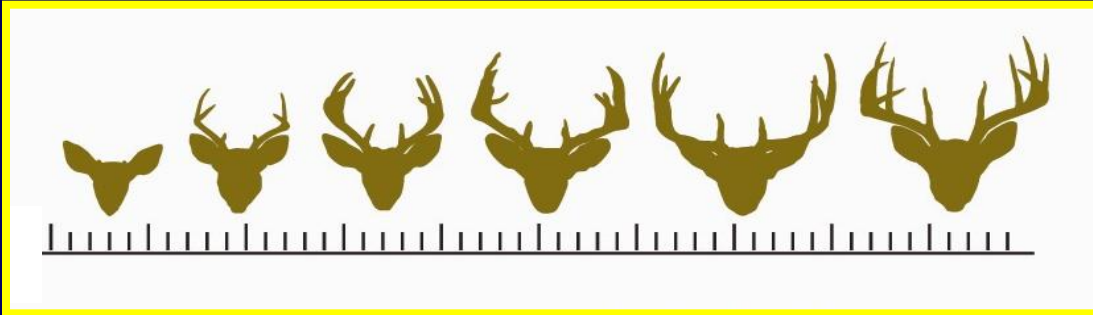
**Simple, but can be ineffective  
in high-quality habitats.**

# Antler Spread Restrictions



**Generally better than antler points, but may protect some mature bucks with narrow antlers.**

# Age Restrictions



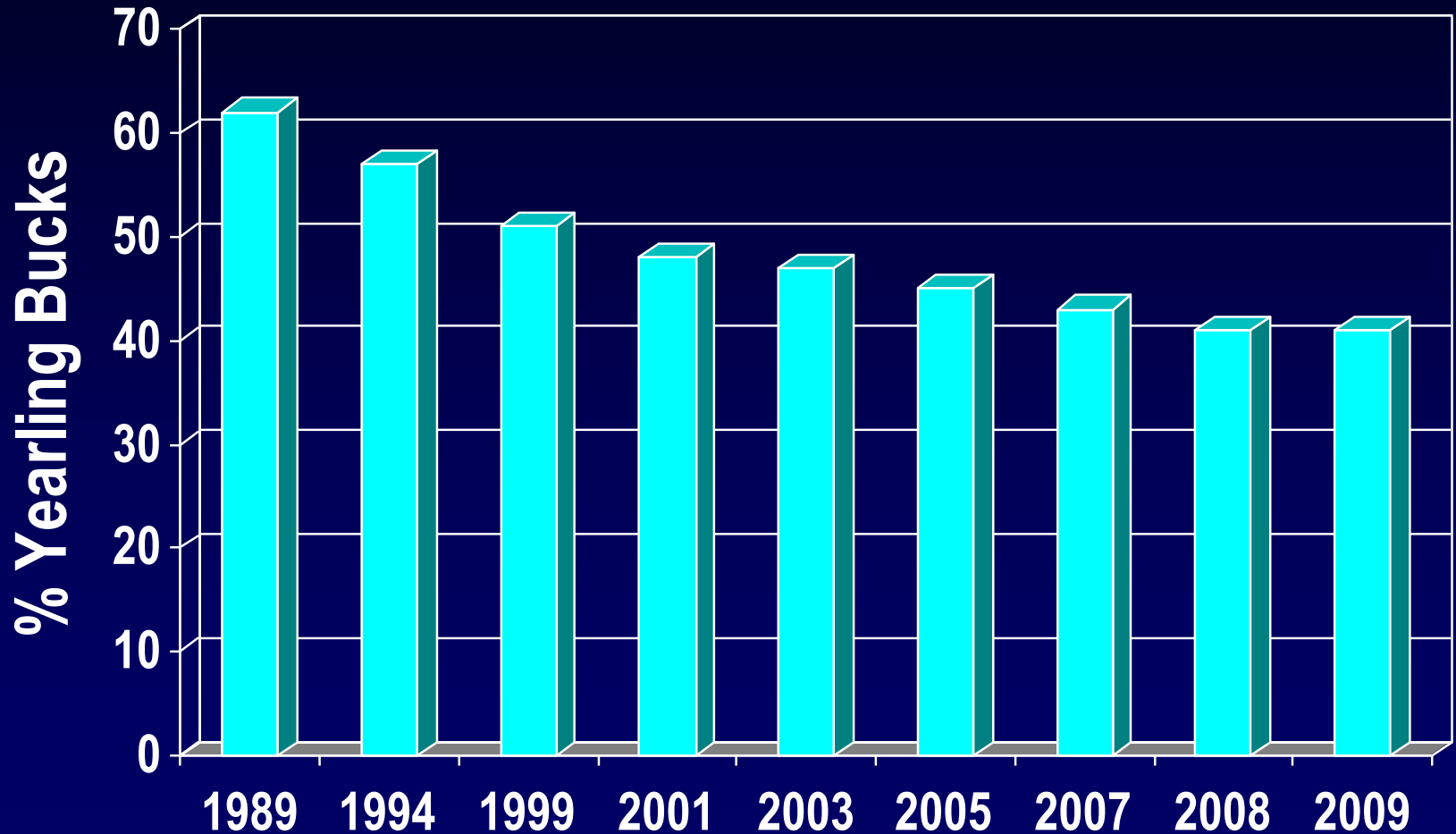
**Very good but requires field judging skill**

# Antler Restrictions

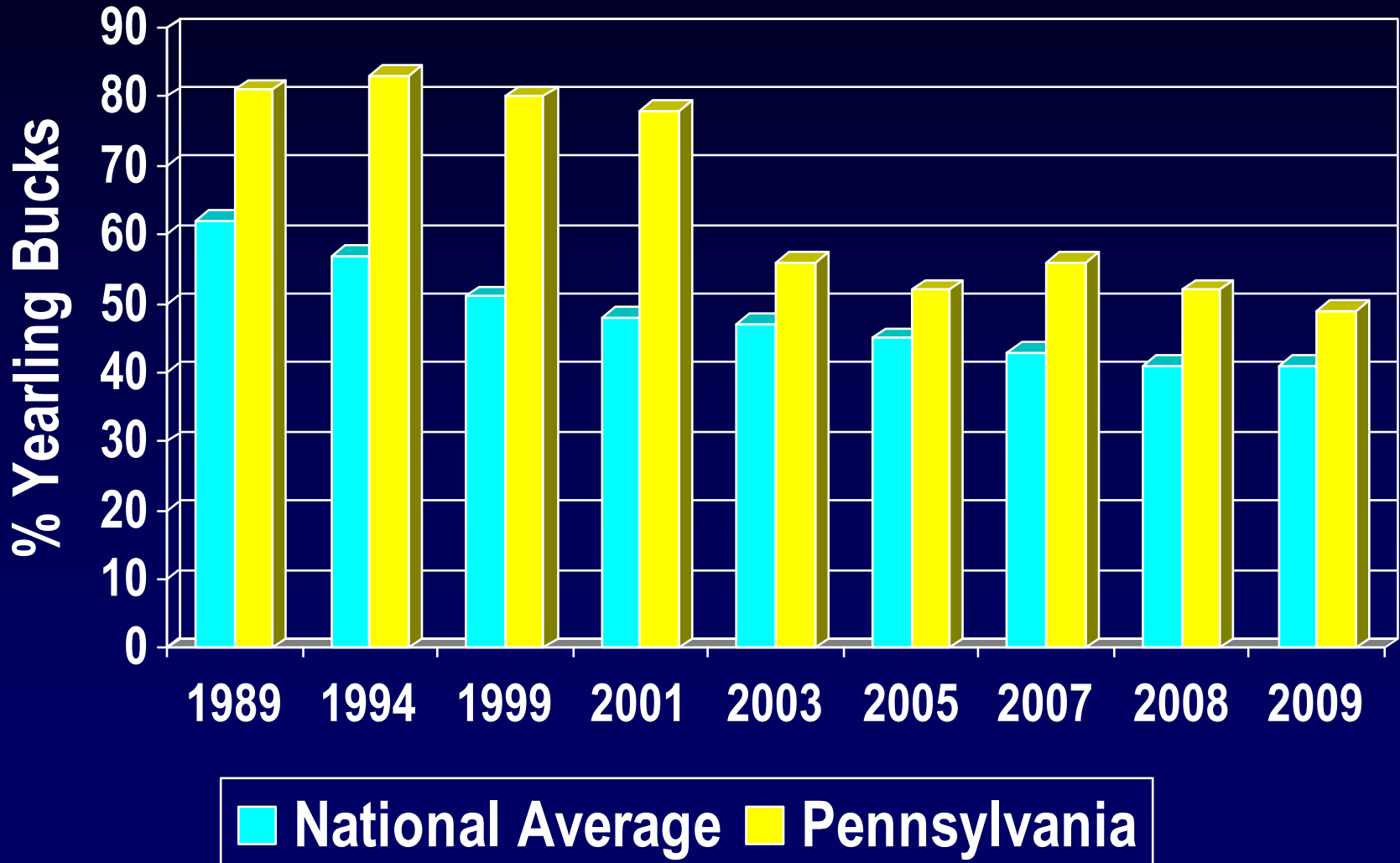


As of 2008, 22 states had antler restrictions

# Buck Harvest Trends – 1½ years



# Buck Harvest Trends – 1½ years



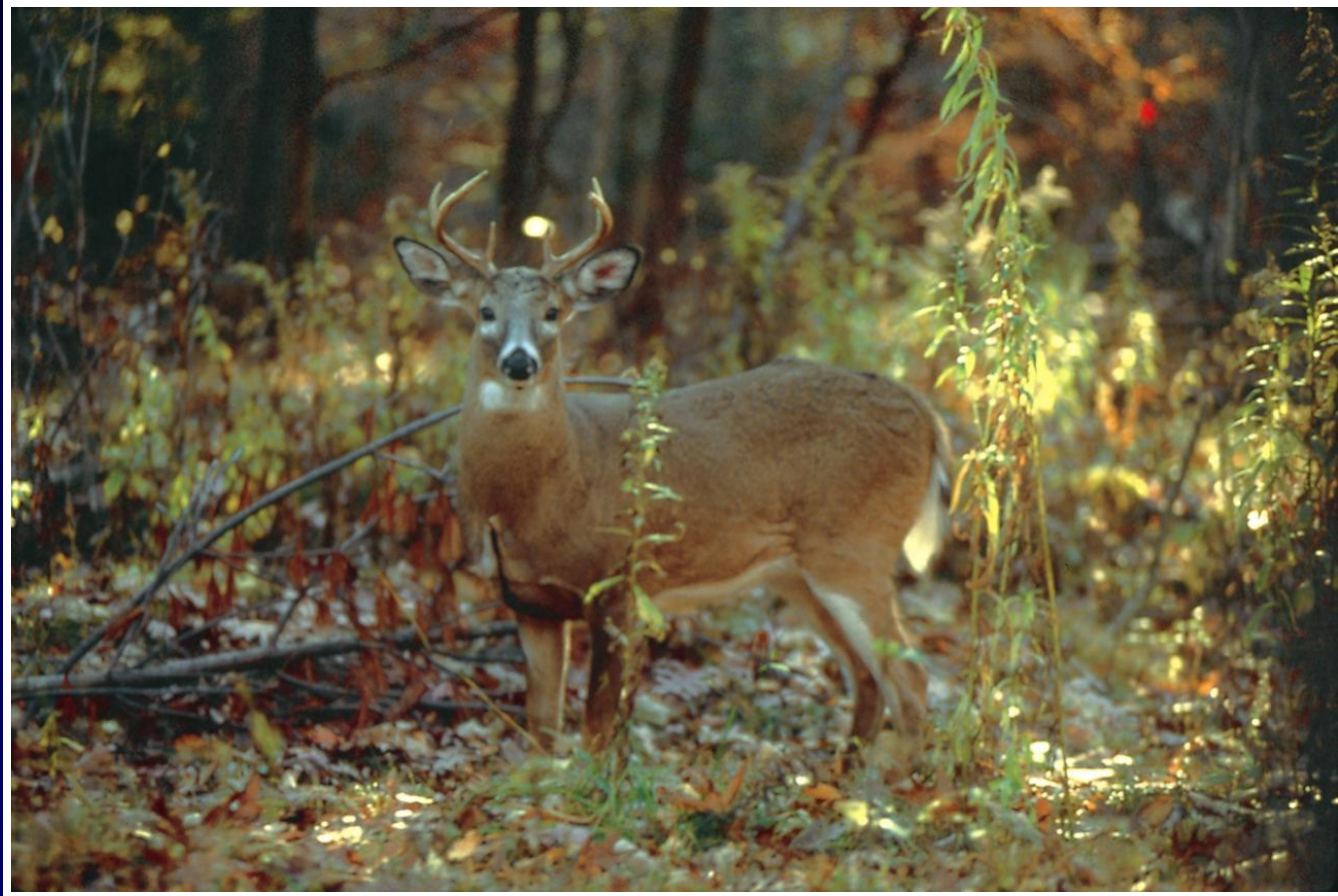
# **How Fast Can Yearling Bucks Grow**

**If You,**

**“Let Them Go  
So They Can Grow”**



# Buck – Age 1.5 years



# Buck – Age 2.5 years



# Buck – Age 3.5 years



# Buck – Age 4.5 years



# Increased Harvest Opportunities





**Deer Herd**

---

**Habitat**

---

**Deer Herd**

---



**Habitat Deer Herd**

---

**Habitat**

---



**Deer Herd**

---

**Habitat**

---

# Why Harvest Does?

To Control Population Growth And Density





# To Balance The Sex Ratio



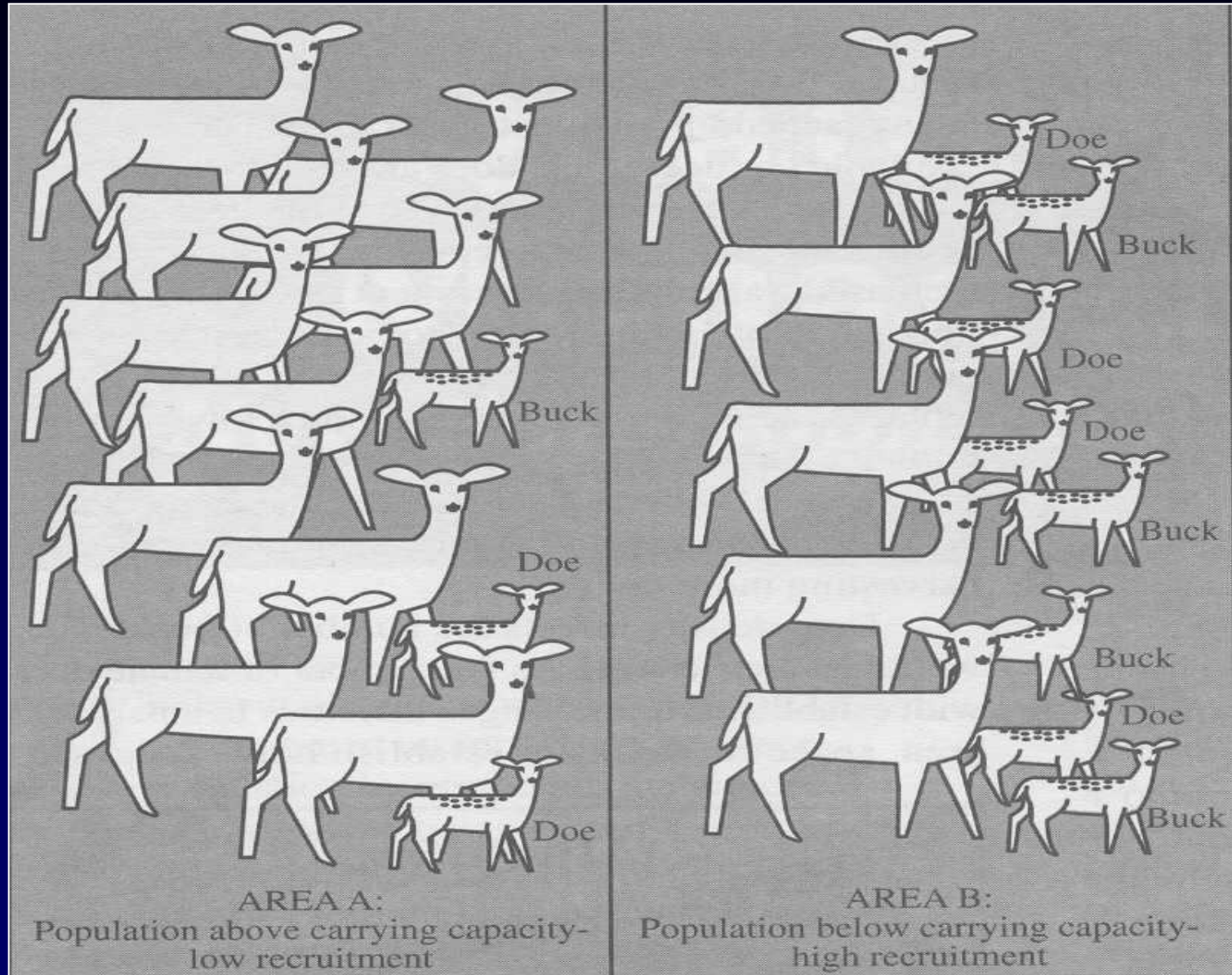
# To Make Room For And Improve The Quality Of Young Bucks



# To Increase Reproductive Success and Recruitment



# Carrying Capacity and Recruitment

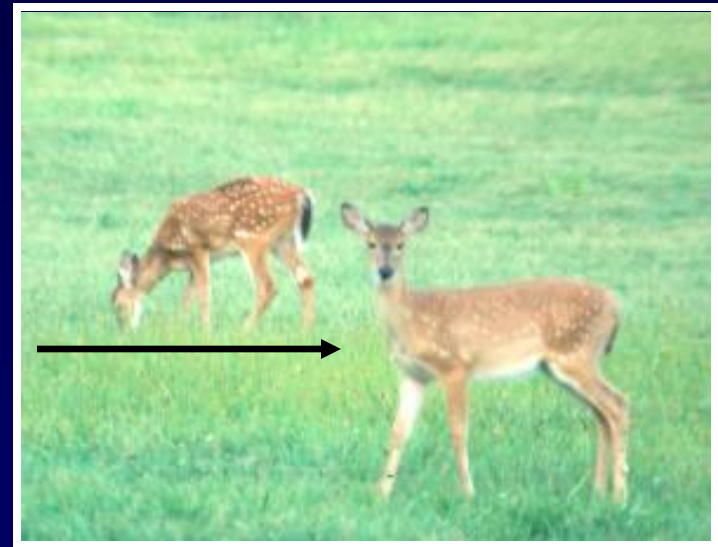


# Antlerless Deer Management

## When?

As early as fawns are weanable –  
about 60 days.

Spots will be gone  
or very indistinct.



# Why Harvest Early?

To reduce the harvest of buck fawns.

Fawns are easiest to distinguish from adult does early in the season.

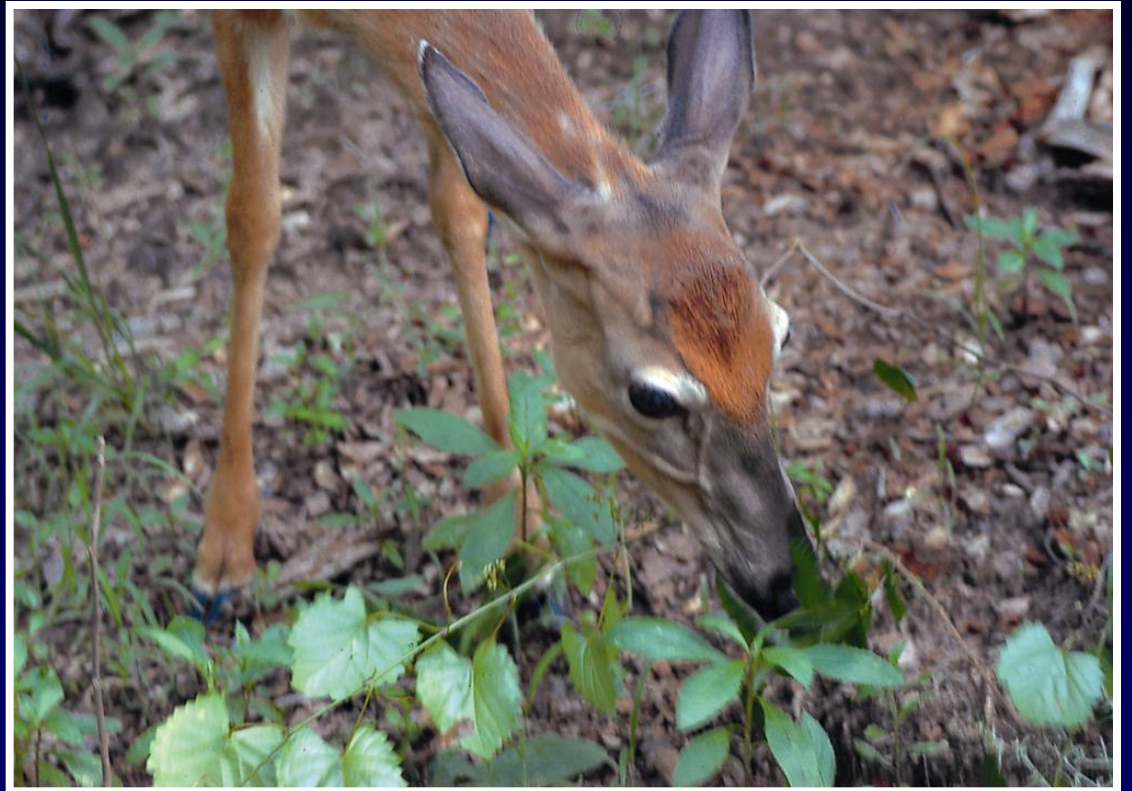


**This is a buck fawn in  
December – Could you  
tell it was not a doe?**



# To Increase Nutrition For Other Deer

Each deer  
eats about  
one ton of  
forage  
annually!





# **Nutritional Gains By Early Harvest**

**Let's say you harvest 20 does and you harvest them 60 days earlier than usual.**

**20 does X 60 days X 5 lbs food/ day =**

**6,000 lbs of forage saved!**

**That's the amount of forage from 2 typical  
1-2 acre food plots!**

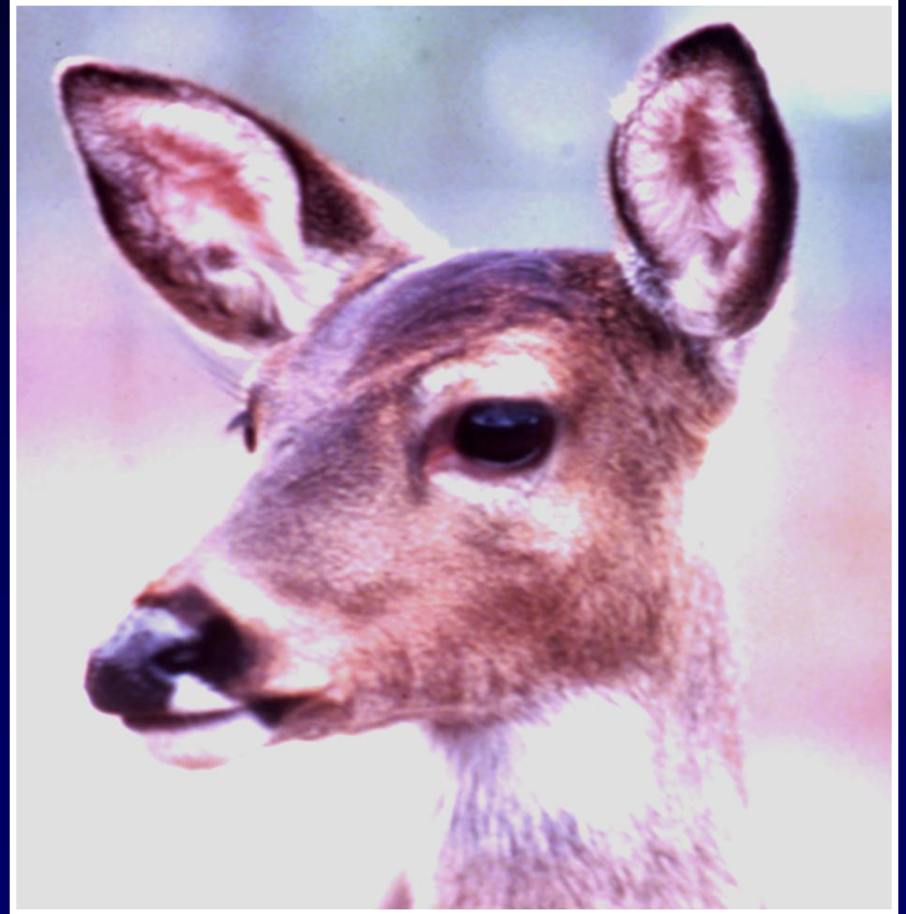
# To Improve The Sex Ratio Prior To The Rut



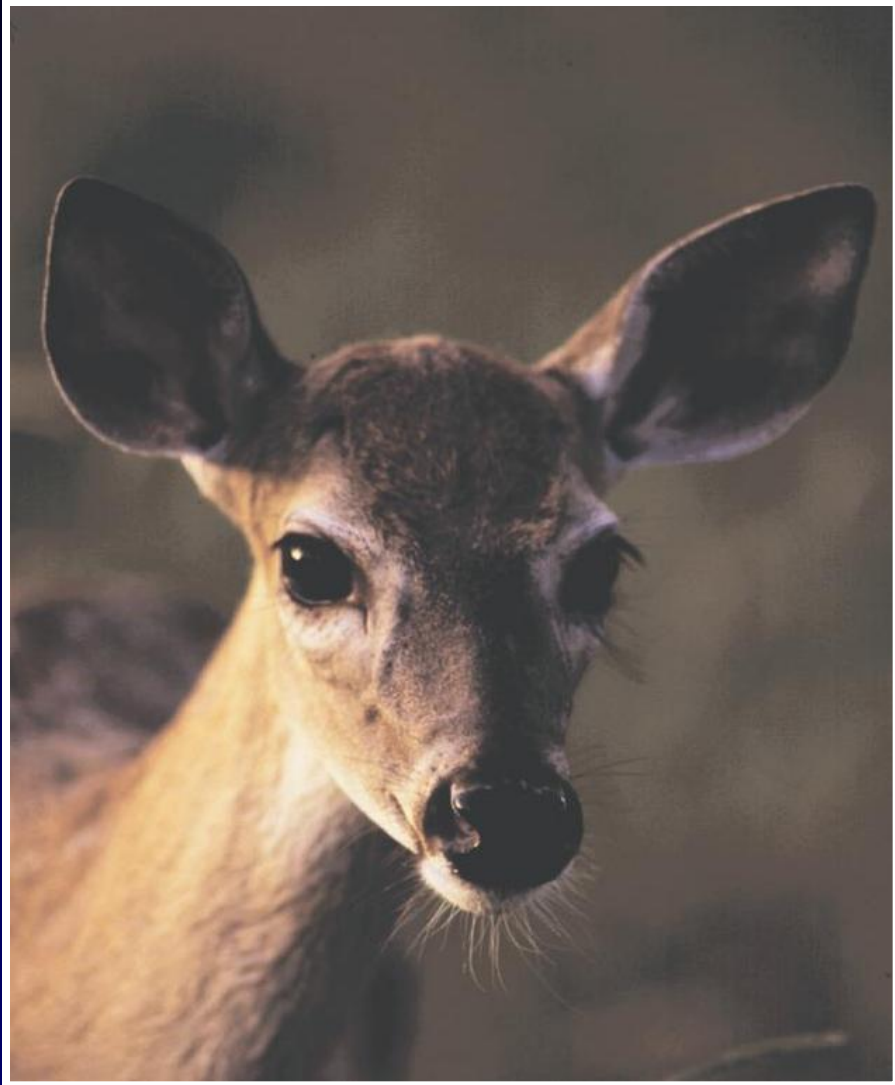
# To Increase Competition For Breeding



# Selective Antlerless Harvest



# Doe Fawn



# Buck Fawn





# Things are Improving



**How do you apply QDM on  
public lands?**



# Quality Deer Management...

- **Balance deer herd with habitat**
- **Balance adult sex ratio**
- **Balance age structure.**



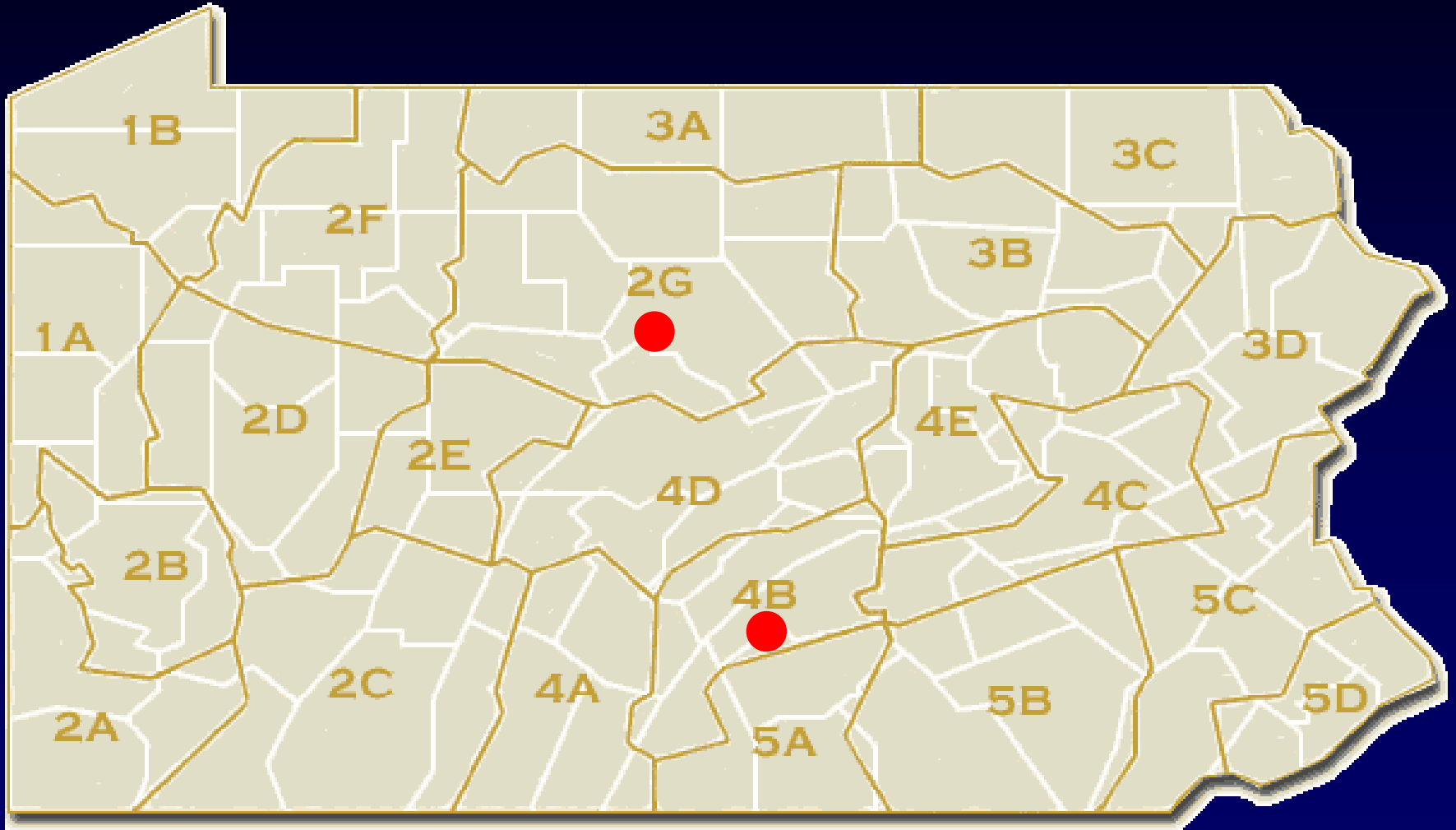
# Antler Restrictions



As of 2008, 22 states had antler restrictions

# Deer Harvest Rates

~Public vs. Private~

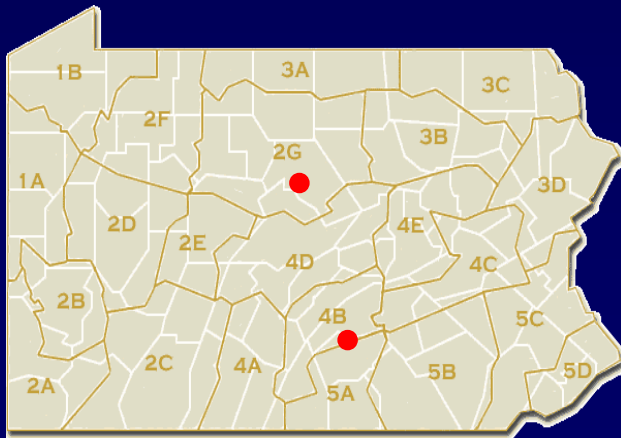


# Deer Harvest Rates

## ~Public vs. Private~

### For Antlered Deer:

- **WMU 2G has the most public land in PA**
- **It also has the lowest buck harvest rate**
- **In 2009, only 8% of 1.5-year-olds bucks were harvested**

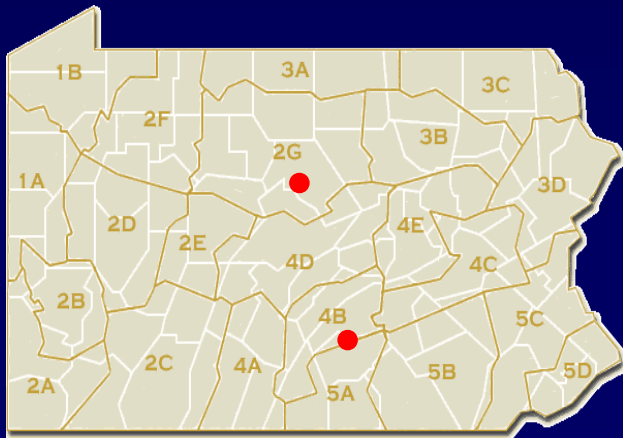


# Deer Harvest Rates

## ~Public vs. Private~

For Antlerless Deer:

WMU	Private	Public
4B	23%	26%
2G	16%	4%



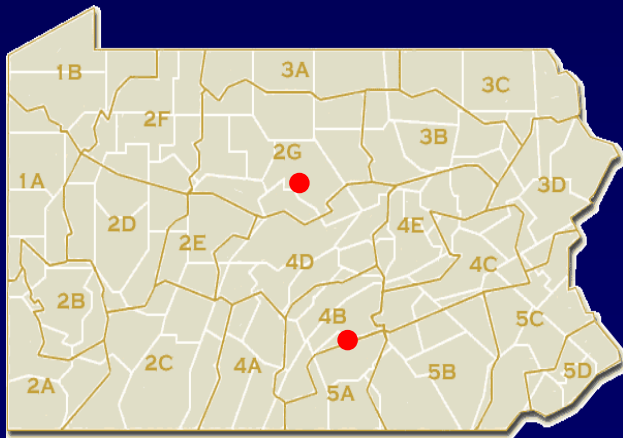
96% of antlerless deer in WMU  
2G survived the hunting season!

# Deer Harvest Rates

## ~Public vs. Private~

So, QDM is not a public vs. private land issue

- QDM can be practiced/applied on any lands
- It simply needs to be tailored to the site (state, region, etc.)



**How do you apply QDM on  
small tracts?**

# Establish a QDM Cooperative





# **QDM Cooperative is...**

**A group of landowners and hunters working together to improve the quality of the deer herd and hunting experiences on their collective acreage.**

# QDM Cooperatives...

- Spreading across the whitetail's range
- Michigan is among the leaders  
(at least 75 established QDM co-ops)
- QDMA involved in co-op at Bear Creek.



# Cooperative Benefits ...

- Nearly half of QDMA members hunt less than 250 acres
- About 60% hunt less than 500 acres
- How many acres do bucks use?



# Cooperative benefits include...

- Reduced management costs
- Reduced trespassing
- Ability to share data for better ‘picture’
- Membership discounts, etc.
- **Increased acreage to manage.**



**Does good deer hunting require large tracts of private land?**



# Does good deer hunting require large tracts of private land?



8.5 years  
35 acres

# Does good deer hunting require large tracts of private land?



**14 points**  
**138 inches**  
**30 acres**

# How do you do this where you hunt?



HERD MANAGEMENT

HABITAT MANAGEMENT

HUNTER MANAGEMENT

HERD MONITORING



# How do you do this where you hunt?



HERD MANAGEMENT  
HABITAT MANAGEMENT  
HUNTER MANAGEMENT  
HERD MONITORING

# How do you do this where you hunt?



# How do you do this where you hunt?



# How do you do this where you hunt?



**QDMA's**  
**Whitetail Report 2011**

*An annual report on the status  
of white-tailed deer, the foundation  
of the hunting industry in North America.*

HERD MANAGEMENT  
HABITAT MANAGEMENT  
HUNTER MANAGEMENT  
HERD MONITORING

# How do you do this where you hunt?



HERD MANAGEMENT  
HABITAT MANAGEMENT  
HUNTER MANAGEMENT  
HERD MONITORING

# Quality Deer Management Association



**[www.QDMA.com](http://www.QDMA.com)**

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