

2021 Pronghorn Production Surveys

PERFORMANCE REPORT STATEWIDE WILDLIFE RESEARCH AND SURVEYS

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The 2021 aerial pronghorn production surveys have been completed. These surveys are conducted in each of the three pronghorn hunting units with a target date range of July 15-31, but pushing into the first half of August as needed. These surveys are intended to evaluate sex and age ratios of the population, and are not intended to be population estimates. With smaller average herd size and habitat conditions typically less favorable for observing pronghorn, pronghorn visibility is lower during production surveys than during the winter counts, which have traditionally been used to determine population size.

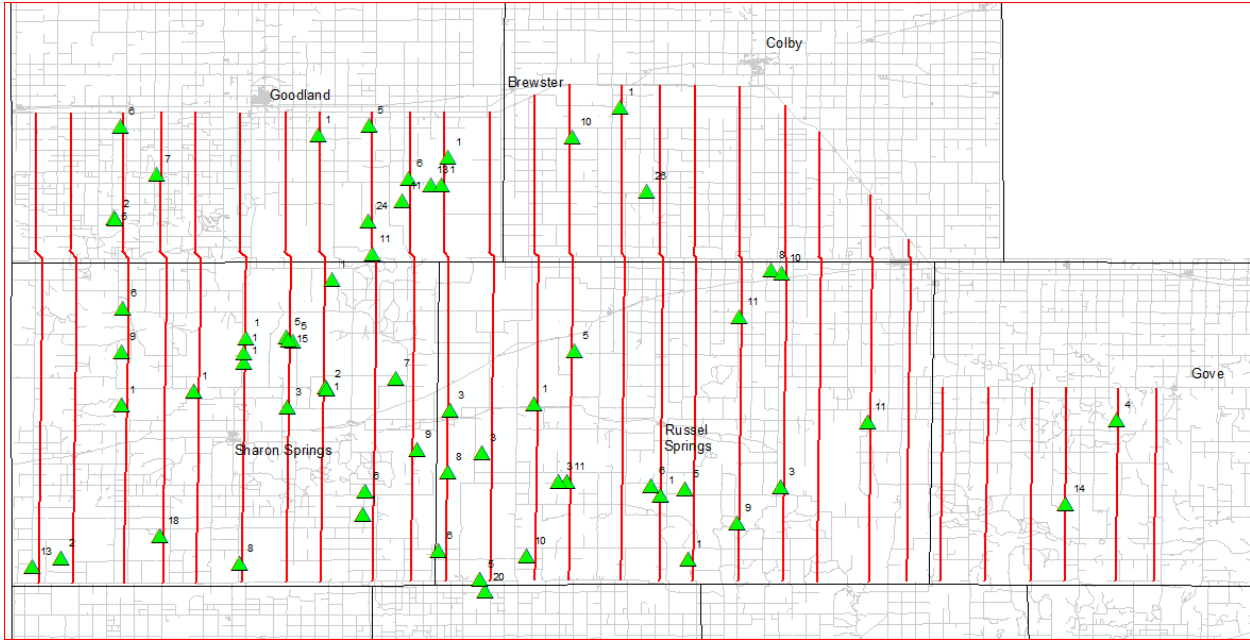
Total numbers of pronghorn observed in each pronghorn hunting unit and their respective buck:doe:fawn ratios are presented in **Table 1**. Survey routes and location of pronghorn observations for hunting units 2, 17 and 18 are provided in **Figures 1-3**, respectively. Trends in buck:doe and doe:fawn ratios since 2001 can be found in **Figures 4 and 5**.

We attempt to maintain a buck ratio of 35 bucks per 100 does. We have currently fallen below this objective rangewide, and specifically in Units 17 and 18. We've reduced permits in these units over the past several years, but increased archery harvest has offset much of our limited draw permit reductions, and buck harvest has remained high (see Fig 4). Limited draw permits have been reduced again for the upcoming season by about 20% in each unit.

Fawn ratios were mediocre in Units 2 & 17 but decent in Unit 18. Unit 18 has been plagued by poor production which has resulted in a major population decline, and this was a much needed result. In fact, this was the first time since 2010 that fawn:doe ratios were above 40:100. The other two units were at or very near their 5 year averages. Fawn ratios don't greatly influence hunter satisfaction with the current year's hunt since hunters rarely harvest fawns, but they do serve as a predictor of future opportunity.

Table 1. Results of summer 2021 aerial pronghorn production survey for each pronghorn hunting unit.

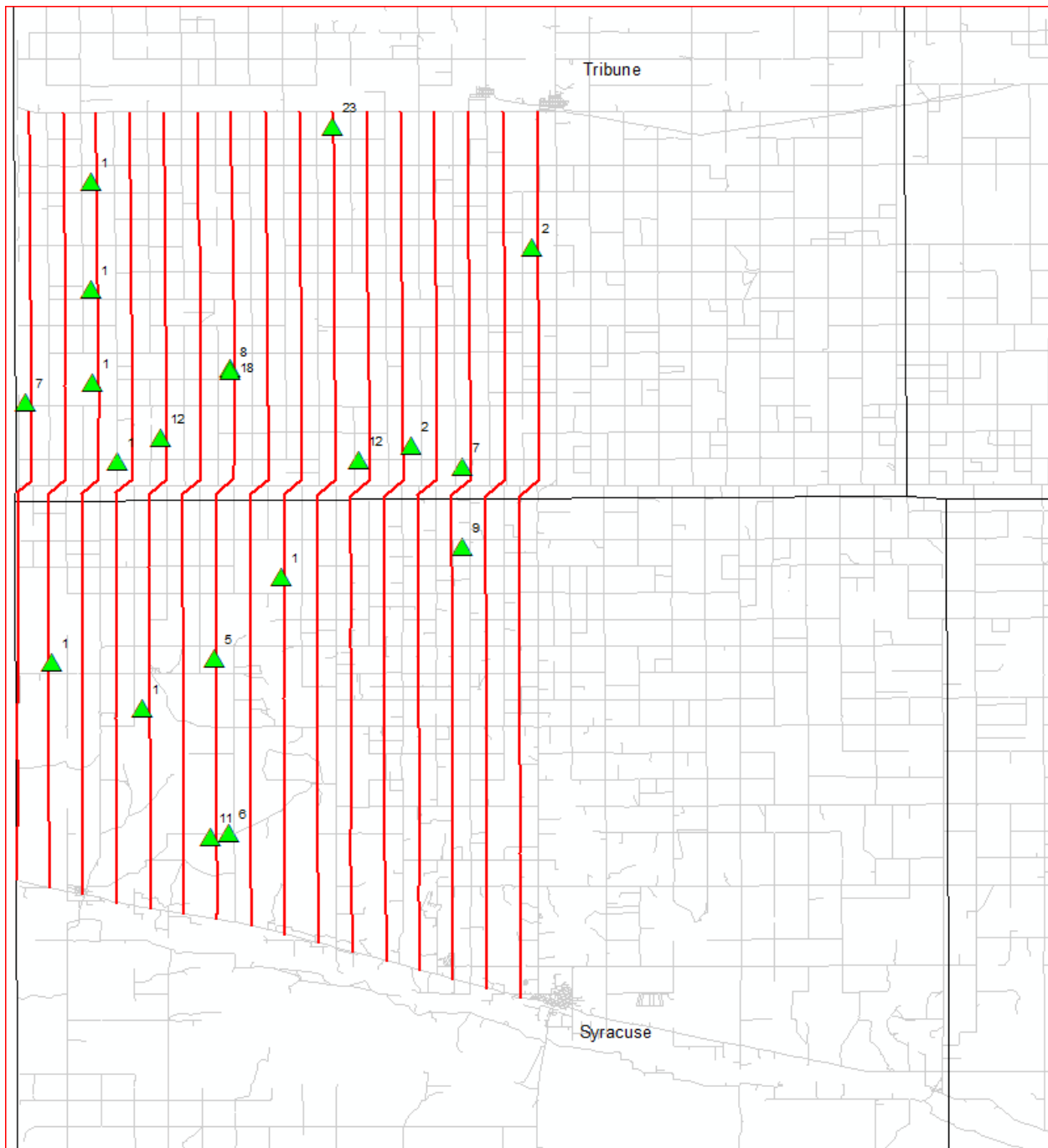
Unit	Number Observed			Ratio			Ratio – 5 year average		
	Bucks	Does	Fawns	Bucks	Does	Fawns	Bucks	Does	Fawns
2	81	228	95	36	100	42	37	100	41
17	16	78	35	21	100	45	36	100	45
18	11	44	25	25	100	57	27	100	34
Total	108	350	155	31	100	44	35	100	40



▲ Location and number of pronghorn observed

— 2021 Summer Route

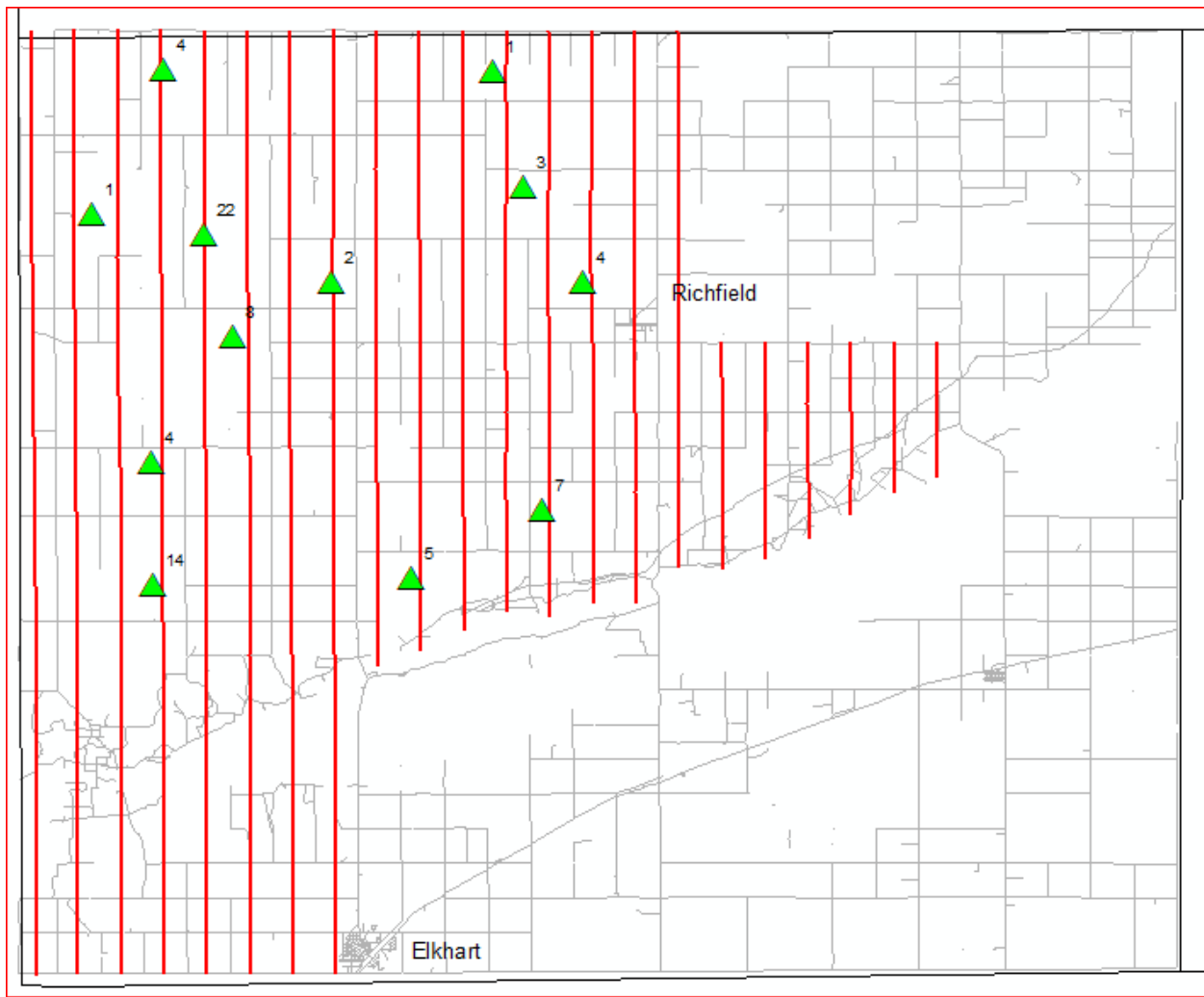
Figure 1. Unit 2 – Survey area and pronghorn observations (Sherman, Wallace, Thomas and Logan Counties).



▲ Location and number of pronghorn observed

— 2021 Summer Route

Figure 2. Unit 17 – Survey route and pronghorn observations (Hamilton & Greeley Counties).



▲ Location and number of pronghorn observed

— 2021 Summer Route

Figure 3. Unit 18 – Survey route and pronghorn observations (Morton County).

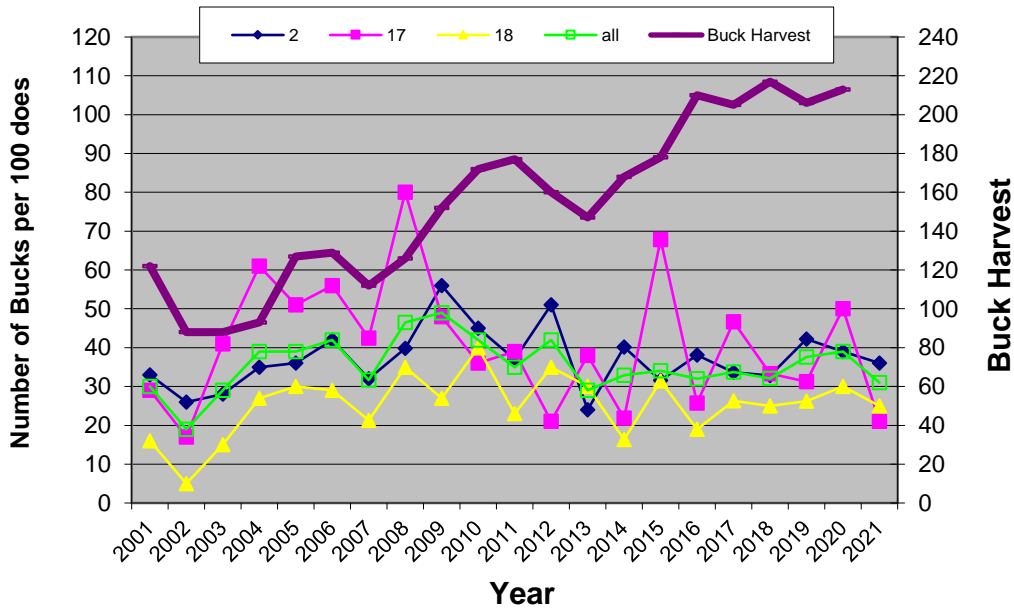


Figure 4. Number of pronghorn bucks per 100 does for each unit since 2001, and total annual buck harvest.

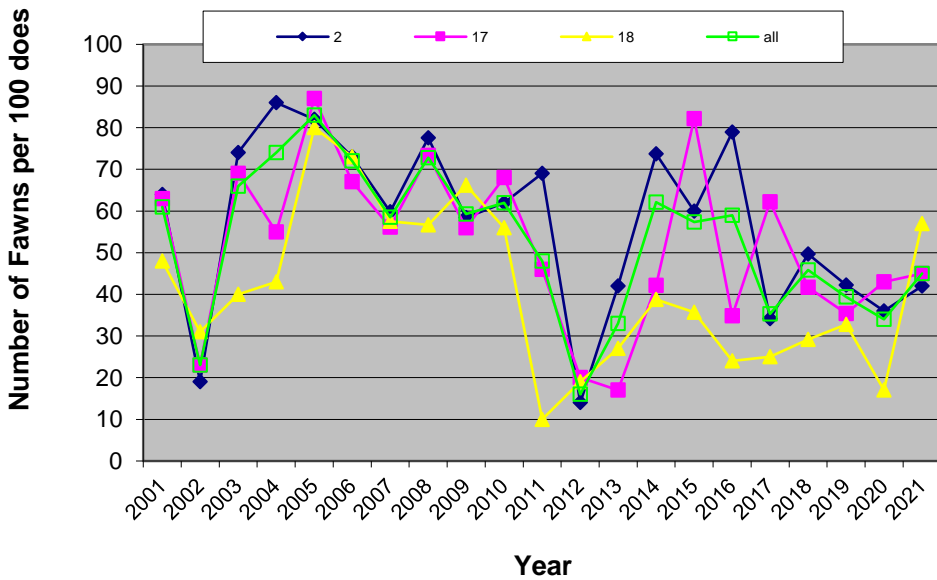


Figure 5. Number of pronghorn fawns per 100 does for each unit since 2001.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

This program receives Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the U.S. Department of the Interior and its bureaus prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex (in educational programs). If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility, or if you desire further information, please write to:

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