

# Polk County Controlled Bow-Hunt 2008-09 Deer Report



Executive Summary  
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Bow-Hunt Administrators  
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Compiled by the  
Polk County Deer Task Force

The Polk County Deer Task Force believes that the White-tailed deer is a valuable part of our natural heritage. We support the perpetuation of the deer population in Polk County at ecologically acceptable levels.

-1997 Position Statement of the Polk County Deer Task Force

## Executive Summary

Based on the following results, it is recommended that the Polk County Controlled Bow-Hunt should be continued for the '09-'10 season throughout the Polk County Deer Management Zone. It is also recommended to continue expanding efforts in all areas including:

- West of I-80 in Urbandale
- Brown's Woods and Walnut Woods
- Clive
- Easter Lake to Cownie Park
- Pleasant Hill
- private property throughout the zone
- Johnston - Beaver Creek corridor



## Post Season Reports

### **Licenses Sold**

-The Polk County Deer Management Zone is divided into two zones. 1200 licenses were available for zone 48 which includes all of the cities, Polk County Conservation areas and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers areas. 400 licenses were available in zone 61 which is comprised of mostly rural areas not included in zone 48. Hunters purchased 906 antler-less licenses in zone 48 and 53 antler-less licenses in zone 61 for use in the Polk County Deer Management Zone.



### **Hunting Season**

-This year the IDNR allowed participating entities to use September 13, 2008 through January 25, 2009, for the Polk County Deer Management Zone bow-hunting season. Agencies could choose to use these dates for their season, or tailor their hunt to suit individual needs (as long as the dates were within the allowable season above). The hunt dates for the '09-'10 season will be September 12, 2009 through January 31, 2010.

### **Deer Harvest**

-Agencies reported that 558 antler-less deer had been harvested during the '08-'09 bow-hunt, which is an increase from 464 in the 2007-2008 season.

-There was a total of 610 antler-less deer harvested in the Polk County Deer Management Zone (including antler-less deer harvested in Camp Dodge with shotgun/muzzle).

23 incentive bucks were harvested during the '08-'09 bow-hunt

A total of \*666 deer were harvested during the '08-'09 season.

\* Count includes Camp Dodge (shotgun and muzzle any sex-tags)

### **Proficiency Testing**

-Polk County Information Technology Department developed a web based program to allow testing vendors to check the status of and update hunter proficiency testing results. Vendors administered 310 proficiency tests to 301 hunters.

### **Safety Record**

No injuries were reported from hunters or park visitors



## **Polk County Aerial Deer Surveys: 2009**

*by* Bill Bunger  
Iowa DNR

Helicopter surveys were flown on January 28<sup>th</sup> and February 15<sup>th</sup> using a Robinson R44 helicopter. Observers were Tom Litchfield & Bill Bunger. Bill Bunger was the navigator and recorded data. Darren Raleighs was the pilot. Conditions on January 28<sup>th</sup> for the survey were generally good with over 4 inches of snow over the area. The sky was clear all day which produced some shadows early and late in the day. Winds were light from the west. Temperatures stayed below 10 degrees for the day. Sighting conditions were reduced during the first 45 minutes due to heavy frost on trees and other vegetation but were good from mid-morning on until the last hour of the day, when shadows began to develop.

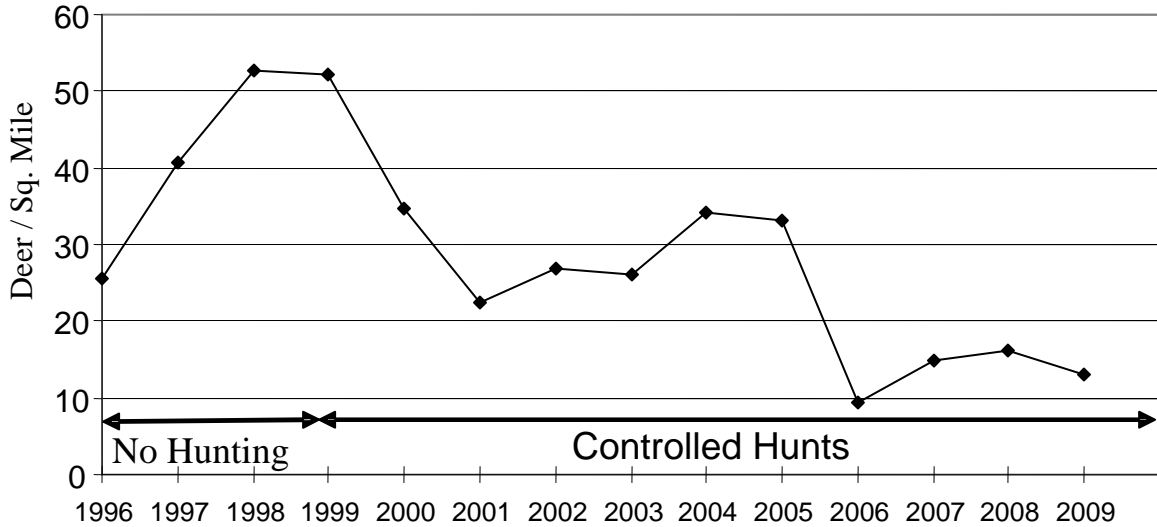
The areas surrounding Saylorville Lake were flown on February 15<sup>th</sup>. The sky was generally clear with high cirrus clouds. Temperatures were in the low twenties. Sighting conditions were not as favorable as snow depth was variable from the south to north end of the lake. Sighting conditions were marginal on the north and east sides of the lake, probably reducing the number of deer seen in some locations, especially of heavier cover.

The number of deer sighted for each area is reported in Table 1. Each area listed was divided up into discrete units and circled or flown systematically. Where necessary the helicopter was brought around to count areas more thoroughly. In some areas the deer ran as the helicopter passed overhead.

In the urban areas, which do not include the Saylorville Lake areas, the number of deer counted was down in 10 of the 17 areas surveyed (January 28<sup>th</sup>) when compared to 2008. Counts over all urban areas combined were down 4%. Five of these seventeen survey areas fall near or below the 30 deer/sq. mile goal.

The deer numbers in Water Works Park remain relatively stable as have harvest numbers over the last few years. They are also well below counts seen in 2004. This continues to reflect the value of steady hunting pressure.

**Figure 1. The number of deer observed at Water Works Park on the helicopter survey, 1996 – present.**



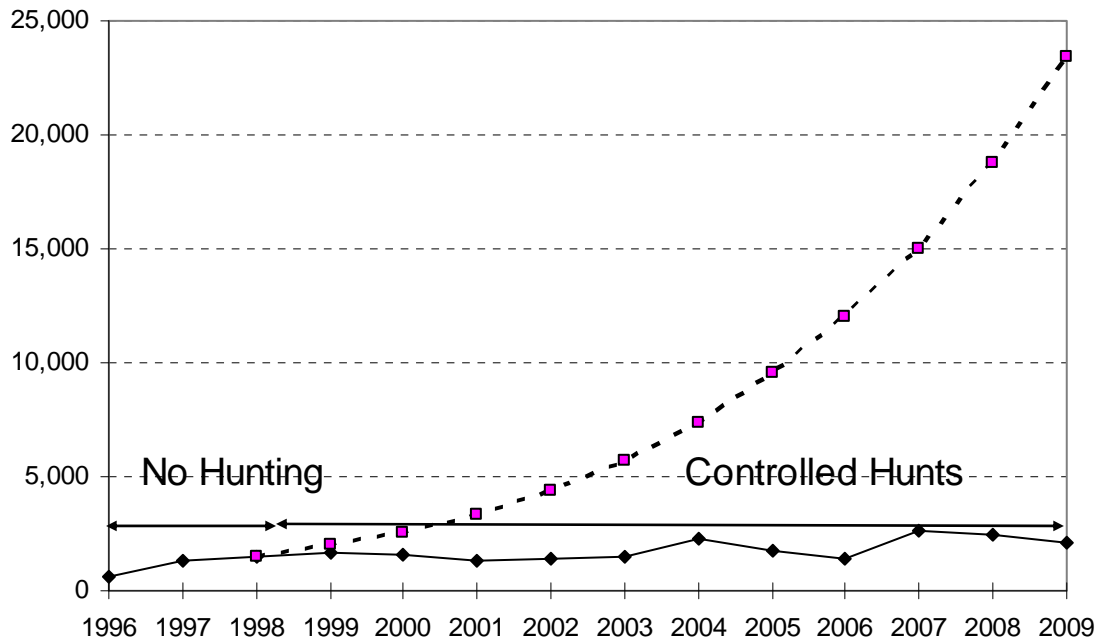
The Easter Lake/Des Moines River area shows signs of deer numbers trending downward. Increased access and hunting pressure may be starting to show results here.

Again this year, most of the deer observed in the Browns Woods/Walnut Woods area remain off of the public lands and on private properties. At least two feeding stations were observed in this area. The area east of 63<sup>rd</sup> adjacent to the airport still has high numbers. This entire area, (south of the Des Moines River, south to HWY 5 and between the west edge of the airport, west to I-35), show evidence of maintaining high deer numbers.

Counts in the Urbandale areas seem to show a slight downturn in deer numbers across surveyed areas.

It would seem expanded hunting opportunities in several communities has begun a downturn in deer numbers across the metro area. This accomplishment can continue by increasing access to deer with hunting pressure and maintaining pressure in areas that are being hunted.

**Figure 2. The number of deer observed on the helicopter survey of Polk county, 1996-present. The solid line represents the actual counts while the dotted line represents the number of deer that we would expect to see if no antler-less deer had been removed with the controlled hunts that began in 1998.**



## Bow-Hunt Administrators

- City of Des Moines: Mike Gaul 208-0310  
- Administers public property bow-hunting; allows private property bow-hunting
- Des Moines Water Works: Scott Atzen 283-8702, Regina Olmstead 283-8769
- City of Johnston: Jim Sanders 727-7760  
- Administers public property bow-hunting; allows private property bow-hunting
- Polk County Conservation: Brian Herrstrom 967-4889, c 249-1753
- US Army Corps of Engineers (Saylorville Lake): Tyler Hill 276-4656 ext. 6512
- City of Urbandale: S.K. Prophet 278-3900  
- Administers public property bow-hunting; allows private property bow-hunting
- Walnut Woods State Park (IDNR): Tim Gedler 285-4502
- City of West Des Moines: Sally Ortegies 222-3447  
-Administers public property bow-hunting
- City of Clive: Kelly Canfield 223-5246  
-Administers public property bow-hunting
- City of Pleasant Hill: Heath Ellis 208-5212  
- Administers public property bow-hunting; allows private property bow-hunting

## Advisory Organizations

- The following organizations serve in an advisory capacity to the Polk County Deer Task Force (in addition to the organizations listed above).
- Iowa Dept. of Natural Resources: Bill Bunger (515) 975-8318, Willie Suchy (515) 281-8660
- City of Ankeny, City of Des Moines Animal Control, City of Grimes, City of Polk City, Dallas County Conservation Board
- Archery Field and Sports, Des Moines Audubon, Des Moines Founders' Garden Club, Des Moines Izaak Walton League, Happy Apple Orchard and Sporting, IDNR Law Enforcement, Iowa Bow Hunters Assoc. (IBA), National Field Archery Association, Polk County Conservation Board, Polk County Board of Supervisors, Sierra Club and Westwood Neighborhood Association.

Table 1. Results from the helicopter deer surveys in Polk county, 1996 to present.

**Deer Sighted**

Area Surveyed	Area (Square Miles)	Deer Sighted													
		1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>Des Moines</b>															
DSM Water Works Park Area	3.91	100	159	206	204	136	88	105	102	134	130	37	58	63	51
D.M, South of Grand	1.37			56	45	39	50	49	36	63	56	18	53	66	49
Easter Lake & Des Moines River East	6.74	26	43	58	135	145	110	163	132	146	239	84	418	233	209
DSM airport west-63rd													150	164	188
<b>Des Moines River:</b>															
Saylorville Dam-Riverview Park	2.61	83	115	83	150	124	122	162	209	296	184	153	278	238	143
<i>South of I-80*</i>														63	21
<b>West Des Moines</b>															
Browns & Walnut Woods	4.20	43	132	149	106	128	86	91	155	226	167	137	301	216	232
Jordan Creek/South Woods	0.22									63	56	38	10	25	35
<b>Walnut Creek:</b>															
Raccoon River to I-80	0.79	0	1	7	5	23	14	14	25	42	19	30	50	19	40
Clive Area	0.30													23	15
<b>Urbandale</b>															
Living History Farms	0.41				20	20	10	42	16	34	26	30	25	43	23
West of I-80	1.38	59	229	285	261	270	225	146	203	336	177	227	340	172	147
<b>Ankeny</b>															
Margo Frankel Woods	0.78	15	14	35	4	23	12	6	0	28	15	8	15	15	17
Rock Creek	2.91	26	74	38	51	49	79	24	39	44	27	52	66	92	58
<b>Johnston</b>															
<i>Des Moines River: North I-80*</i>														175	122
Beaver Creek (Johnston)	0.59													100	74
<b>Four Mile Creek:</b>															
North of I-80	4.45	58	128	128	158	117	103	86	80	104	127	16	124	202	136
I80 -Des Moines River	5.29	7	41	51	99	79	39	83	87	100	107	118	174	165	179
<i>Pleasant Hill west</i>	0.93											48	71	59	86
<b>Pleasant Hill East</b>	2.27											25	31	150	162
Totals:	38	417	936	1096	1238	1153	938	971	1084	1616	1330	973	1,943	1,822	1,758

**Saylorville Reservoir**

Camp Dodge	2.23	55	71	93	105	108	69	73	68	195	165	148	234	148	109
Jester Park, Mile Long															
Bridge to Hwy 17	4.82	88	158	161	95	95	132	127	108	189	82	110	133	221	165
Polk City Barrier Dam Refuge	3.11	41	92	117	133	125	89	113	135	230	135	89	198	150	166
Dam to MLB (west side)	1.92		61	62	24	38	34	61	50	109	46	67	98	114	86
Dam to MLB (east side) <i>a</i>	2.55		41	72	94	83	85	86	50	137	94	55	66	127	91
MLB to Hwy 17 (east side)	4.18		35	33	53	77	80	-	-		142	123	124	208	134
<b>Chichaqua &amp; Skunk River</b>		96	85		197	109	-	-	187	133	106	181	210	-	154
<b>Yellow Banks &amp; DSM River</b>	1.75	24	52	62	77	67	122	81	98	77	78	29	110	92	77
Totals:	<b>21</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>595</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>702</b>	<b>611</b>	<b>541</b>	<b>696</b>	<b>1,070</b>	<b>848</b>	<b>802</b>	<b>1,173</b>	<b>1,060</b>	<b>982</b>

\*Not added to total in column to prevent adding twice, (Saylorville Dam-Riverview Park. Pleasant Hill sub-survey area).

*a* (does not include Polk City refuge)

Area Surveyed	Area (Square Miles)	Deer per Square Mile													Change (2008 to 2009)	
		1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008		2009
<b>Des Moines</b>																
DSM Water Works Park Area	3.91	26	41	53	52	35	23	27	26	34	33	9	15	16	13	-19%
D.M, South of Grand	1.37	0	0	41	33	28	36	36	26	46	41	13	39	48	36	-25%
Easter Lake & Des Moines River East	6.74	4	6	9	20	22	16	24	20	22	35	12	62	35	31	-11%
DSM airport west-63rd																
<b>Des Moines River:</b>																
Saylorville Dam-Riverview Park	2.61	32	44	32	57	48	47	62	80	113	70	59	107	91	55	-40%
<i>South of I-80*</i>																
<b>West Des Moines</b>																
Browns & Walnut Woods	4.20	10	31	35	25	30	20	22	37	54	40	33	72	51	55	8%
Jordan Creek/South Woods	0.22	0								286	255	173	45	114	159	39%

Area Surveyed	Area (Square Miles)	Deer per Square Mile														Change (2008 to 2009)
		1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	
<b>Walnut Creek:</b>																
Raccoon River to I-80	0.79	0	1	9	6	29	18	18	32	53	24	38	63	24	51	113%
Clive Area	0.30													77	50	-35%
<b>Urbandale</b>																
Living History Farms	0.41				49	49	24	102	39	83	63	73	61	105	56	-47%
West of I-80	1.38	43	166	207	189	196	163	106	147	243	128	164	246	125	107	-14%
<b>Ankeny</b>																
Margo Frankel Woods	0.78	19	18	45	5	29	15	8	0	36	19	10	19	19	22	16%
Rock Creek	2.91	9	25	13	18	17	27	8	13	15	9	18	23	32	20	-38%
<b>Johnston</b>																
<i>Des Moines River: North I-80*</i>																
Beaver Creek (Johnston)	0.59													169	125	-26%
<b>Four Mile Creek:</b>																
North of I-80	4.45	13	29	29	36	26	23	19	18	23	29	4	28	45	31	-31%
180 -Des Moines River	5.29	1	8	10	19	15	7	16	16	19	20	22	33	31	34	10%
<i>Pleasant Hill west</i>	0.93											48	71	63	92	46%
<b>Pleasant Hill East</b>	2.27											26	31	66	71	8%
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>-4%</b>
<b>Saylorville Reservoir</b>																
Camp Dodge	2.23	25	32	42	47	48	31	33	30	87	74	66	105	66	49	-26%
Jester Park, Mile Long																
Bridge to Hwy 17	4.82	18	33	33	20	20	27	26	22	39	17	23	28	46	34	-26%
Polk City Barrier Dam Refuge	3.11	13	30	38	43	40	29	36	43	74	43	29	64	48	53	10%
Dam to MLB (west side)	1.92	-	32	32	13	20	18	32	26	57	24	35	51	59	45	-24%
Dam to MLB (east side) <i>a</i>	2.55	-	16	28	37	33	33	34	20	54	37	22	26	50	36	-28%
MLB to Hwy 17 (east side)	4.18	-	8	8	13	18	19	-	-	-	34	29	30	50	32	-36%
<b>Chichaqua &amp; Skunk River</b>																
<b>Yellow Banks &amp; DSM River</b>	1.75	14	30	35	44	38	70	46	56	44	45	17	63	53	44	-17%
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>28.9</b>	<b>29.2</b>	<b>37.8</b>	<b>34.1</b>	<b>29.7</b>	<b>26.3</b>	<b>33.9</b>	<b>52.0</b>	<b>41.2</b>	<b>39.0</b>	<b>57.1</b>	<b>51.6</b>	<b>47.8</b>	<b>-8%</b>

\*Not added to total in column to prevent adding twice, (Saylorville Dam-Riverview Park. Pleasant Hill sub-survey area).

*a* (does not include Polk City refuge)

**2008-2009 Deer Harvest**

**POLK-DALLAS URBAN ZONE 48**

<b>A. Polk County Conservation (PCC) Public Areas: Brian Herrstrom 967-4889</b>		
	<b>Incentive Buck</b>	<b>Antler-less</b>
Jester Park		33
Incentive Buck (3 allotted)	0	
Sycamore Trail (includes Area C in Johnston)		26
Incentive Buck (2 allotted)	1	
Easter Lake		12
Incentive Buck (2 allotted)	1	
Brown's Woods		31
Incentive Buck (3 allotted)	0	
Thomas Mitchell Park		3
Incentive Buck (2 allotted)	1	
Mally's Weh-Weh-Neh-Kee Park		3
Incentive Buck (included with Thomas Mitchell)	0	
Four Mile Greenbelt		7
Incentive Buck (included with Thomas Mitchell)	0	
Yellow Banks Park		25
Incentive Buck (3 allotted)	0	
Four Mile Trail		9
Incentive Buck (1 allotted)	0	
<b>Polk County Conservation (PCC)</b>	<b>Harvest Total</b>	<b>3</b>
		<b>149</b>

<b>B. City of Clive Public Areas: Kelly Canfield 223-5246</b>		
	<b>Incentive Buck</b>	<b>Antler-less</b>
Greenbelt Park: East of NW 114th		1
Incentive Buck (None allotted at this time)	0	
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>City of Clive Private Property</b>		
None at present date		0
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>City of Clive</b>	<b>Harvest Total</b>	<b>0</b>
		<b>1</b>

<b>C. City of Des Moines Public Areas: Michael Gaul 208-0310</b>		
	<b>Incentive Buck</b>	<b>Antler-less</b>
Cases Lake: Hartford Ave	1	7
Carney: SW 30th & Bell Ave	0	0
Crocker Woods: Prospect Rd. & Hickman Rd.	0	9
Ewing Park	0	12
Laurel Hill Woods	0	2
MacRae Park	0	3
Pioneer Park	0	6
Ashworth Park	0	15
Incentive Buck (7 allotted)		
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>54</b>

<b>City of Des Moines Private Property</b>		
	<b>Incentive Buck</b>	<b>Antler-less</b>
SW / Airport Area (South of Waterworks Park, West of Fleur to limits)	1	38
SE / Easter Lake and Ewing Parks Area (SE 14th east, South of DM River to Limits)	1	38
South of Grand Area (West of Terrace Hill to 63rd, South of University to Waterworks)	4	37
MacRae Park Area	0	6
Prospect / Beaverdale Park Area	0	5
East Area (East and Northeast area of city) Incentive Buck (7 allotted)	0	9
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>City of Des Moines</b>	<b>Harvest Total</b>	<b>7</b>
		<b>187</b>

D. **Des Moines Water Works:** Scott Atzen 283-8702, Regina Olmstead 283-8769

	<b>Incentive Buck</b>	<b>Antler-less</b>
2201 George Flagg Parkway, 50321 Incentive Buck (10 allotted)	6	37
<b>Des Moines Water Works</b>	<b>Harvest Total</b>	<b>6</b>
		<b>37</b>

E. **City of Johnston Public Areas: Jim Sanders 727-7760**

	<b>Incentive Buck</b>	<b>Antler-less</b>
Area A: Army Corps of Engineers (See USACE totals)		
Area C: Sycamore Trail (See PCC totals)		
Area E: City of Johnston - 156 Acres Incentive Buck (None allotted at this time)	0	3
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>City of Johnston Private Property</b>		
Pioneer		8
Other Incentive Buck (2 allotted)	2	4
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>City of Johnston</b>	<b>Harvest Total</b>	<b>2</b>
		<b>15</b>

F. **City of Pleasant Hill: Heath Ellis 208-5212**

	<b>Incentive Buck</b>	<b>Antler-less</b>
City Property	0	0
Private Property	0	15
Four Mile Bike Trail (See PCC totals) Incentive Buck (None allotted at this time)		
<b>City of Pleasant Hill</b>	<b>Harvest Total</b>	<b>0</b>
		<b>15</b>

<b>G. City of Urbandale Public Areas: S.K. Prophet 278-3900</b>			
		<b>Incentive Buck</b>	<b>Antler-less</b>
City Parks			7
Incentive Buck (2 allotted)			
<b>Sub-total</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>City of Urbandale Private Property</b>			
Living History Farms (LHF) (West of I-35)			25
Incentive Buck (4 allotted)			
Other Private Property		3	46
Incentive Buck (4 allotted)			
<b>Sub-total</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>City of Urbandale</b>	<b>Harvest Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>78</b>

<b>H. City of West Des Moines Public Areas: Sally Ortgies 222-3447</b>			
		<b>Incentive Buck</b>	<b>Antler-less</b>
South Woods		2	20
Incentive Buck (2 allotted)			
<b>Sub-total</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>City of West Des Moines Private Property</b>			
None at present date		0	0
<b>Sub-total</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>City of West Des Moines</b>	<b>Total Harvest</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>20</b>

<b>I. USACE: (Corps of Engineers): 276-4656 Scott Rolfes ext. 6508; Tyler Hill ext. 6512</b>			
		<b>Incentive Buck</b>	<b>Antler-less</b>
Saylorville			26
(No Buck Incentive Issued for this area)			
Polk City Refuge			5
(No Buck Incentive Issued for this area)			
<b>USACE</b>	<b>Total Harvest</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>31</b>

<b>J. Walnut Woods State Park: Tim Gedler 285-4502</b>			
		<b>Incentive Buck</b>	<b>Antler-less</b>
Walnut Woods State Park			8
(No Buck Incentive Issued for this area)			
<b>Walnut Woods State Park</b>	<b>Total Harvest</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>

**Total Antlerless Deer Harvested Zone 48 541**

**Total Incentive Bucks Harvested Zone 48 23**

**Antler-less tags available zone 48: 1200 Sold: 906**

**POLK-DALLAS RURAL ZONE 61**

K. **Camp Dodge: Mary Jones 252-4648**

	<b>Buck**</b>	<b>Antler-less</b>
Archery	4	17
Shotgun / Muzzle loader	24	34
**Buck (Normal seasons and any-sex tags allowed)		
<b>Camp Dodge</b>	<b>Total Harvest</b>	<b>28</b>
		<b>51</b>

L. **IDNR ELECTRONIC LICENSING (ELSI)**

	<b>Buck</b>	<b>Antler-less</b>
Doe		18
Button Buck	2	
Shed Buck	3	
<b>ELSI</b>	<b>Total Harvest</b>	<b>5</b>
		<b>18</b>

**Total Antler-less Deer Harvested Zone 61** **69**

**Total Bucks Harvested Zone 61** **33**

Antler-less tags available zone 61: **400** **Sold: 53**

**Total Antler-less Deer Harvested (Bow)** **Total 558**

\* Count including Camp Dodge (shotgun/muzzle) and ELSI **610**

**Incentive Bucks** **Total 23**

**Bucks: Camp Dodge\*\* and ELSI** **Total 33**

\*\*Normal seasons (shotgun/bow) and any-sex tags allowed

**Total Bucks Harvested** **56**

**Total Deer Harvested** **666**