

**DRAFT**  
**HARDPAN**  
**PRONGHORN HERD**  
**MANAGEMENT PLAN**  
**PH-2**

**Game Management Units**  
**99 & 100**



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## HERD MANAGEMENT PLAN – PH-2 (HARDPAN) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**GMU's:** 99 and 100

**Land Ownership:** 99% Private, 1% State

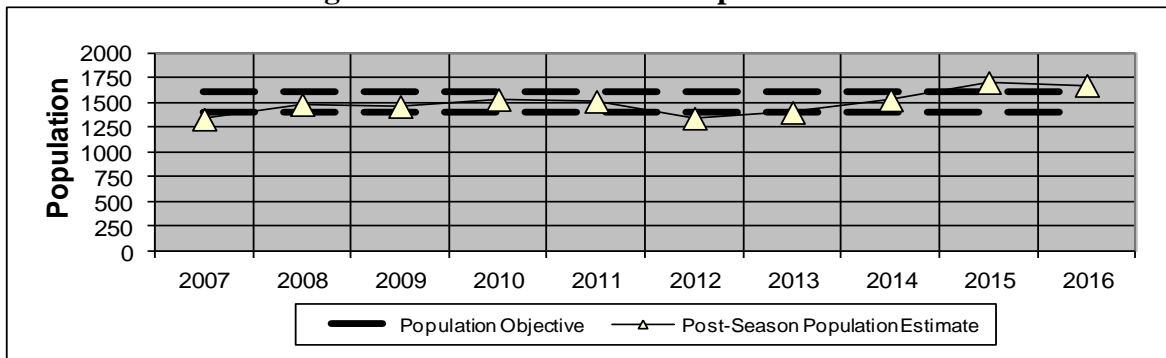
**Post-Season Population:**

*Current Objective – 1,400–1,600; 2016 Estimate – 1,672; Preferred Objective – 1,400–1,700*

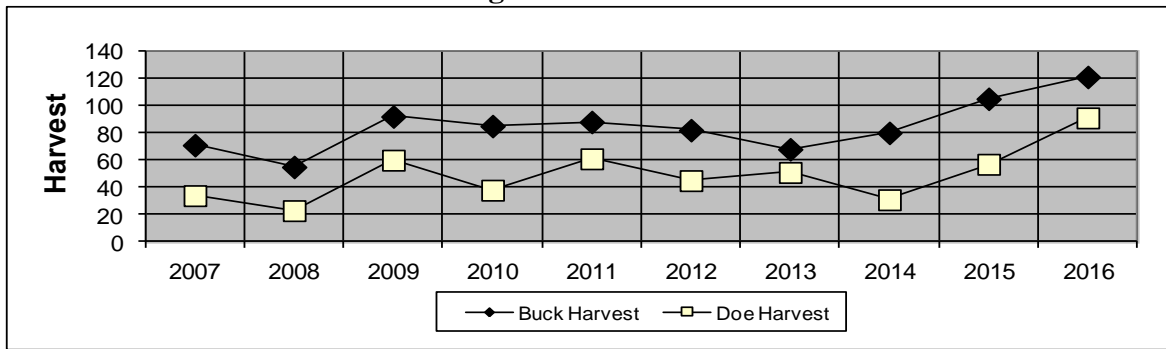
**Sex Ratio (Bucks/100 Does):**

*Current Post-hunt Objective – 25–30; 2016 Pre-hunt Observed – 44;  
2016 Post-hunt Modeled – 33; Preferred Post-hunt Objective – 25–30*

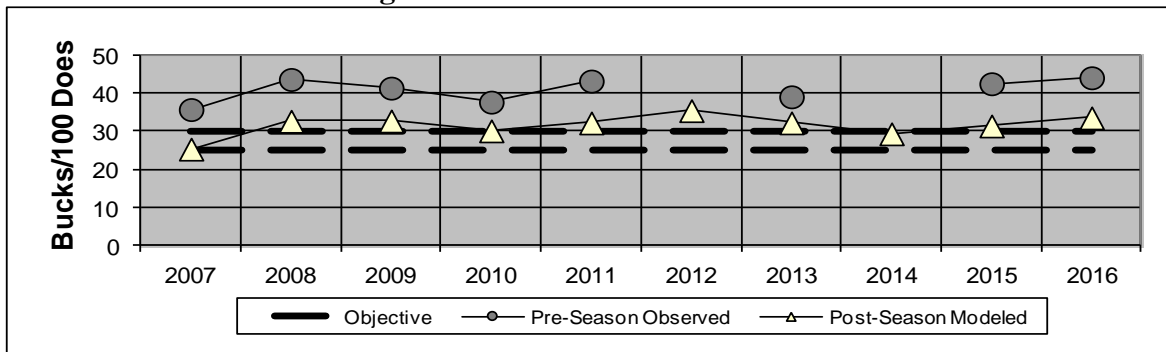
**Figure I. PH-2 Post-Season Population Estimate**



**Figure II. PH-2 Harvest**



**Figure III. PH-2 Post-Season Sex Ratios**



## **Background**

Over the past decade, the Hardpan pronghorn herd has been managed under the current management plan objectives of 1,400–1,600 pronghorn and 25–30 bucks/100 does that were established in 2007. This Herd Management Plan (HMP) and the population and sex ratio alternatives presented are the result of an update and revision of that plan.

The pronghorn population in the Hardpan has experienced an increase over the last decade from a low of approximately 1,331 in 2007 to a high of 1,700 animals estimated in 2015. The 2016 post-season estimate was 1,672 pronghorn. The 5 and 10-year population estimate averages for this pronghorn herd are 1,528 and 1,495 pronghorn, respectively. Since 2007, the modeled post-season buck/doe ratio estimates have averaged 31 bucks/100 does ranging from 25 bucks/100 does in 2007 to 35 bucks/100 does in 2012. The 2016 modeled post-season estimate was 33 bucks/100 does. Observed fawn/doe ratios have varied from a low of 35 fawns/100 does in 2009 to a high of 67 fawns/100 does in 2015 and has averaged 47 fawns/100 does.

## **Significant Issues**

The majority of public comments supported maintaining or slightly increasing the current population objective, and maintaining the current herd composition in the Hardpan pronghorn herd. Although there was some public support to slightly increase the current population level, concerns were also raised by landowners about potential crop damage and general intolerance for large numbers of animals. The majority of public input did not support reducing the herd composition objective. While changes in land use have resulted in a small decrease in pronghorn habitat, habitat conditions are sufficient to continue to sustain a pronghorn population of the size recommended in this plan.

## **Management Alternatives**

The CPW's preferred objectives for PH-2 are to manage for a post-season population of 1,400–1,700 with a modeled post-season herd composition of 25–30 bucks/100 does. These objectives are in line with public comments and population performance in recent years.

Other alternatives being considered in this HMP were: 1) reduce the population objective by 25% to 1,000–1,300 pronghorn, 2) increase the population objective by 25% to 1,900–2,300 pronghorn, and 3) increase the sex ratio objective to 35–40 bucks/100 does.

## **Strategies for Achieving Objectives**

**Population-** To maintain the population within objective, doe harvest will be increased slightly; this will be accomplished through allocations of doe pronghorn licenses, primarily during the general pronghorn rifle season.

**Herd Composition-** To maintain the herd within objective, buck harvest will be increased slightly; this will be accomplished through allocations of buck pronghorn licenses, primarily during the general pronghorn rifle season.