

# ***2018 Pronghorn Production Surveys***

## PERFORMANCE REPORT STATEWIDE WILDLIFE RESEARCH AND SURVEYS

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## 2018 Pronghorn Production Surveys

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The 2018 aerial pronghorn production surveys have been completed. These surveys are conducted in each of the three pronghorn hunting units from July 15-31 to evaluate sex and age ratios of the population. The results of these surveys 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.

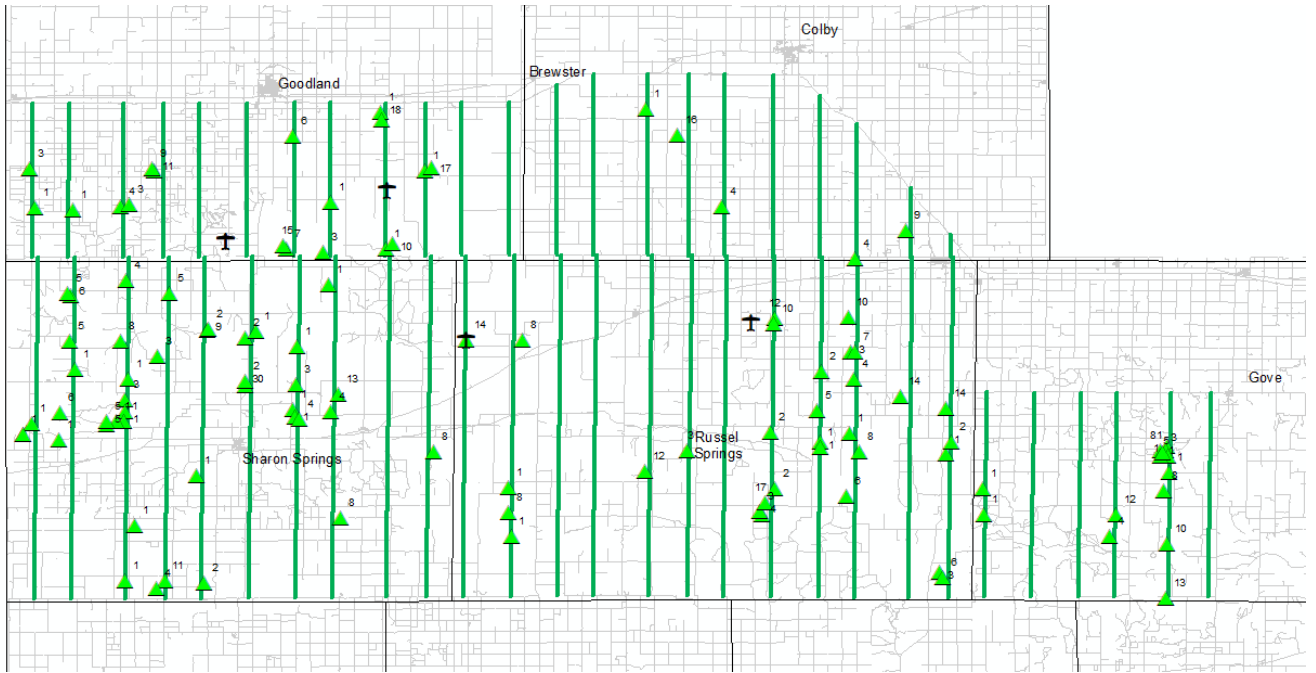
Total numbers of pronghorn observed in each pronghorn hunting unit and their respective buck:doe:fawn ratios are presented in **Table 1**. Survey routes and location of pronghorn observations for hunting units 2, 17 and 18 are provided in **Figures 1-3**, respectively. Trends in buck:doe and doe:fawn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

We attempt to maintain a buck ratio of 35 bucks per 100 does. The combined total in all units fell just below this objective. Units 2 and 17 were near the objective this year and their 5-year averages are at or above the objective. Ratios in Unit 18 have remained the lowest and below objective for the past 5 years. Limited draw permits were reduced in this unit for 2017 and further reductions will be given strong consideration again during the next regulatory cycle pending the outcome of the 2018 harvest season.

Fawn ratios increased substantially in Unit 2, decreased substantially in Unit 17, and increased slightly in Unit 18. Fawn ratios don't greatly influence hunter satisfaction with the current year's hunt (though they do influence number of pronghorn observed in a given year), but serve as a predictor of future opportunity. Units 2 and 17 have both seen good fawn production in recent years and it appears some of this good production has been realized in the form of increased buck harvest. Conversely, production has remained low in Unit 18. Only 2 of the last 8 years have been above 30 fawns per 100 does in this unit. This low production is partly responsible for the current low buck ratios and reduced harvest opportunity.

**Table 1. Results of summer 2018 aerial pronghorn production survey for each pronghorn hunting unit.**

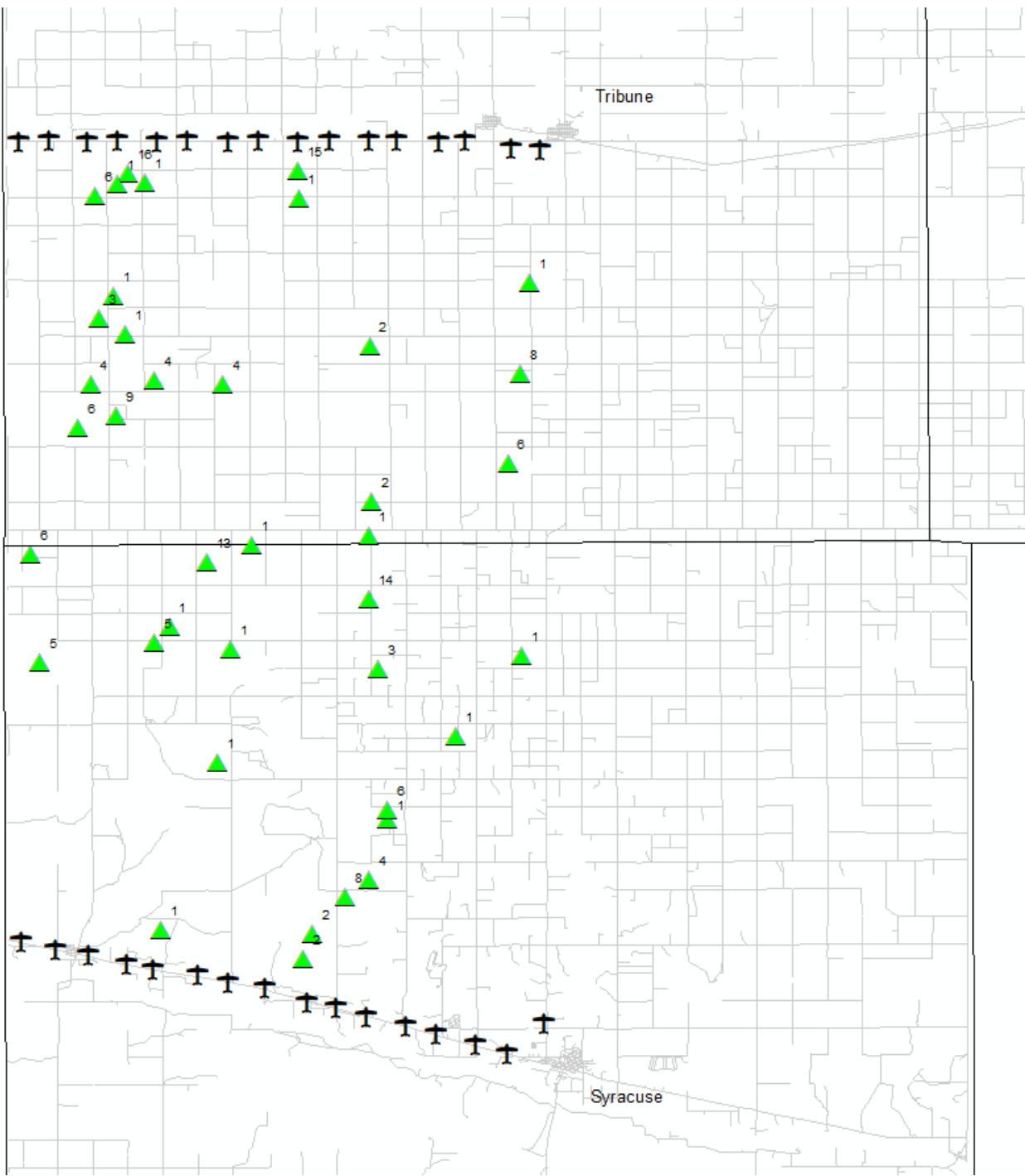
Unit	Ratio			Actual Number		
	Bucks	Does	Fawns	Bucks	Does	Fawns
2	33	100	50	103	314	156
17	33	100	42	32	96	40
18	25	100	29	12	48	14
Total	32	100	46	147	458	210



▲ Location and number of pronghorn observed

— 2018 Summer Route

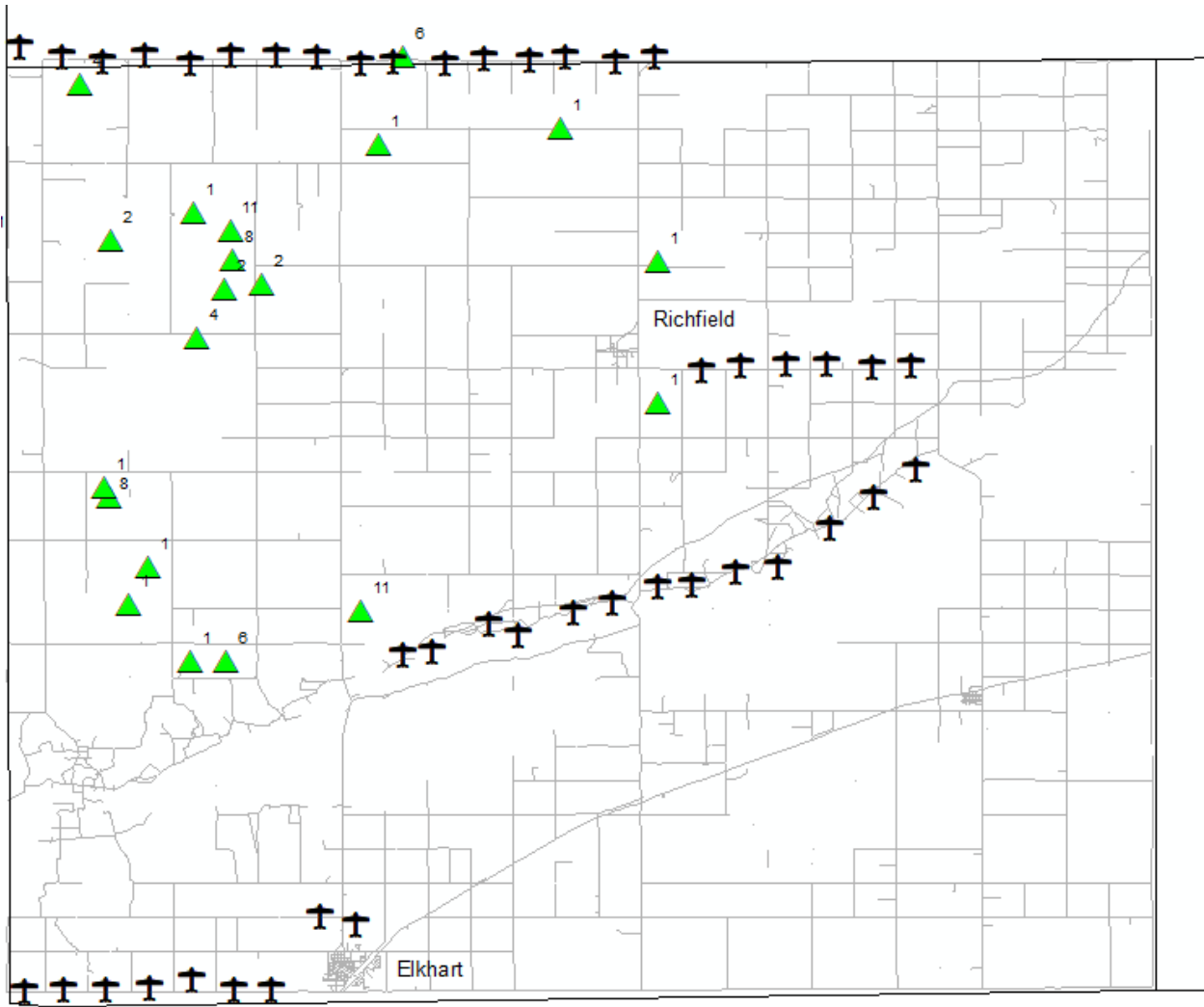
**Figure 1. Unit 2 – Survey area and pronghorn observations (Sherman, Wallace, Thomas and Logan Counties).**



▲ Location and number of pronghorn observed

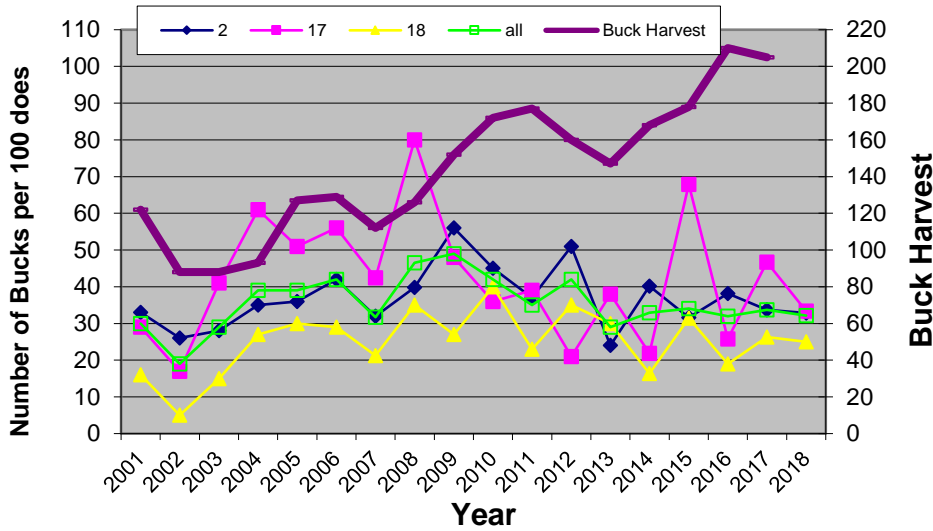
† 2018 Summer Route

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

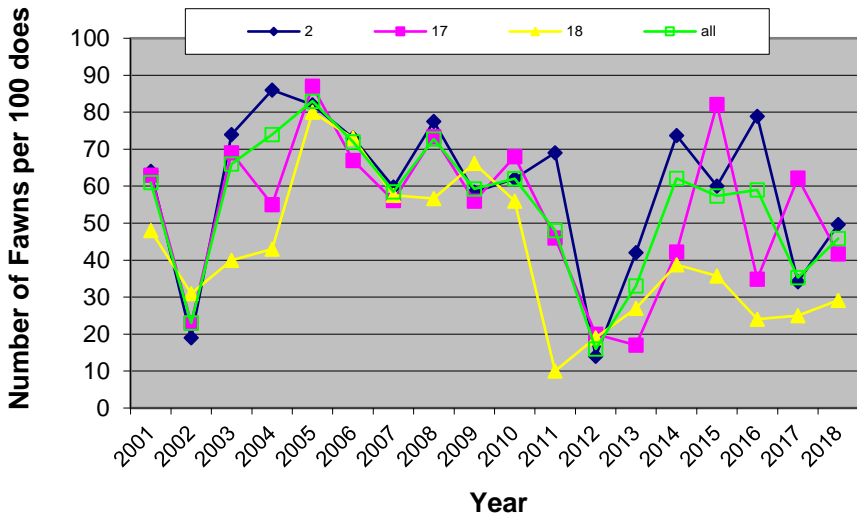


- ▲ Location and number of pronghorn observed
- ⊥ 2018 Summer Route

**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.**

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