



MDA Depredation Reports

Plant Protection Division Director – Mark Abrahamson

February 26, 2025

Wildlife Damage Reports

Wolf Depredation Program Finances

- Amount paid in claims by county for past five fiscal years
- Total revenue and expenditures for program
- Yearly report submitted in December since 2021

Elk Damage Payments

- Number of claims and amount paid by herd for past two fiscal years
- Yearly report submitted in December since 2016

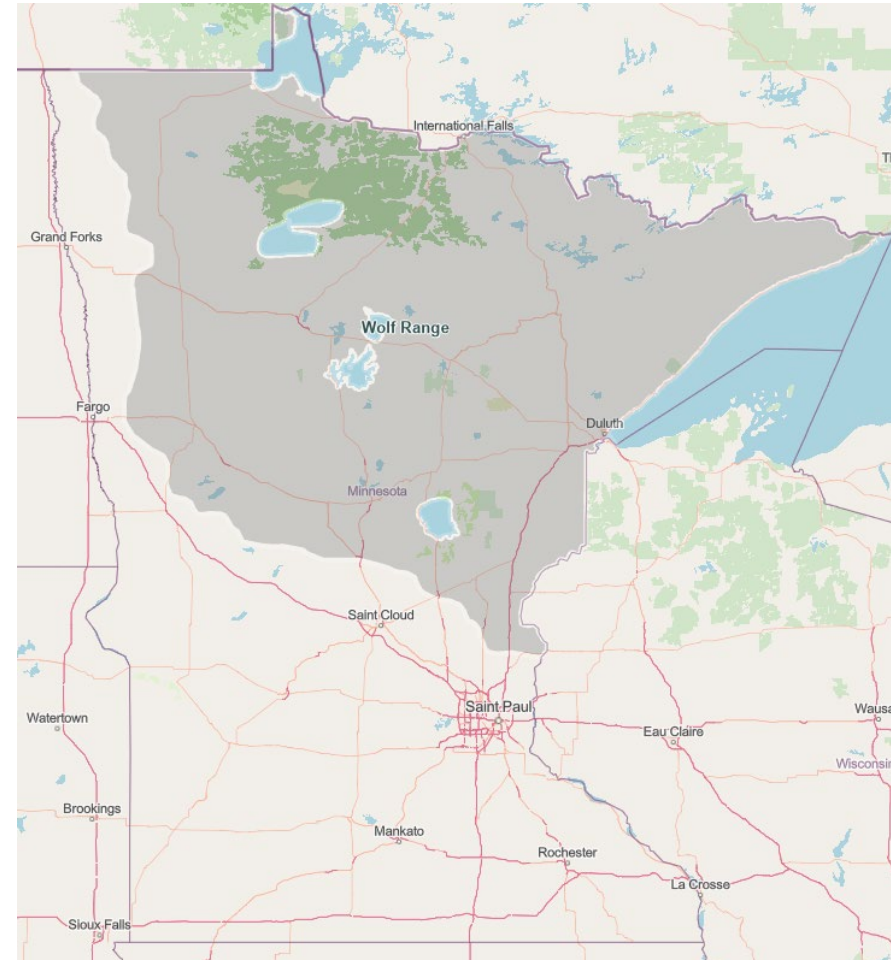
Cervidae Depredation on Minnesota Farms

- Options and recommendations to address crop and fence damage
- One time report submitted February 2025

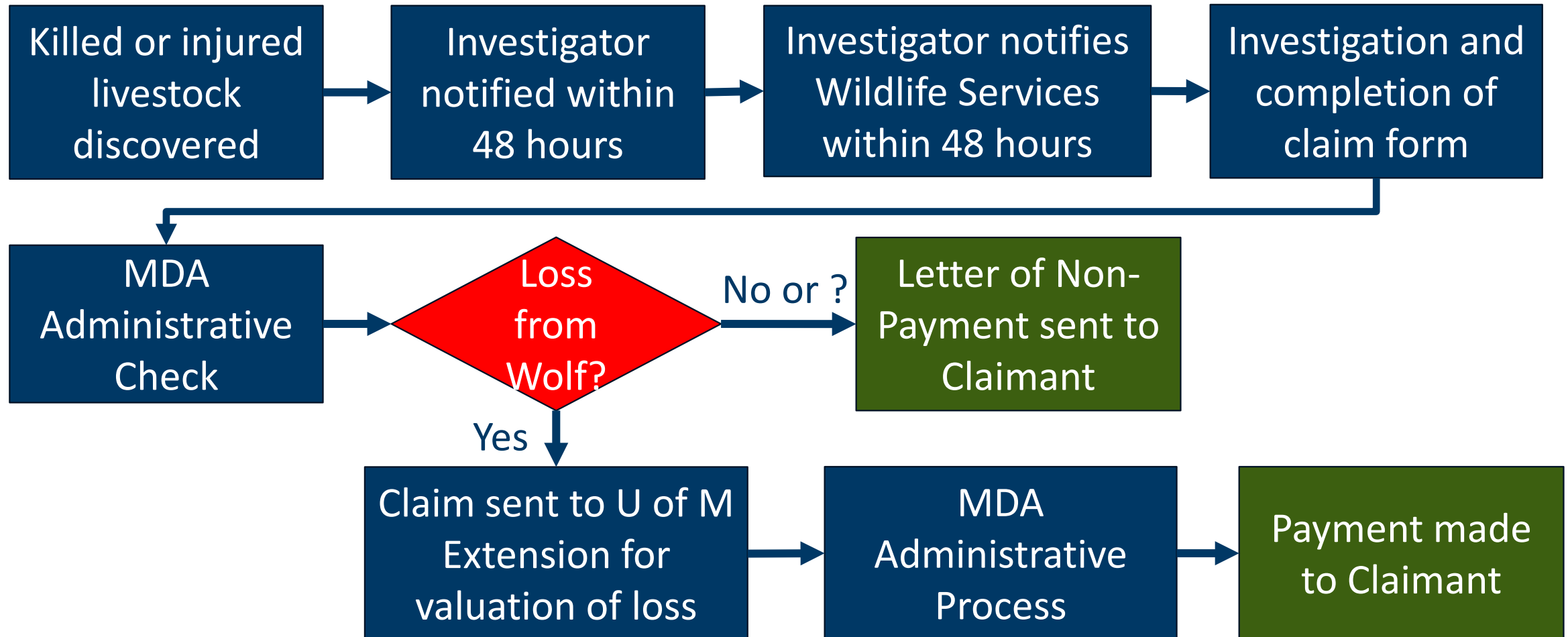
Wolf Depredation Program Finances

- **M.S. 3.737:**
- ... a livestock owner shall be compensated by the commissioner of agriculture for livestock that is destroyed by a wolf or is so crippled by a wolf that it must be destroyed...
- First enacted in 1977

Minnesota Wolf Range (shaded area)



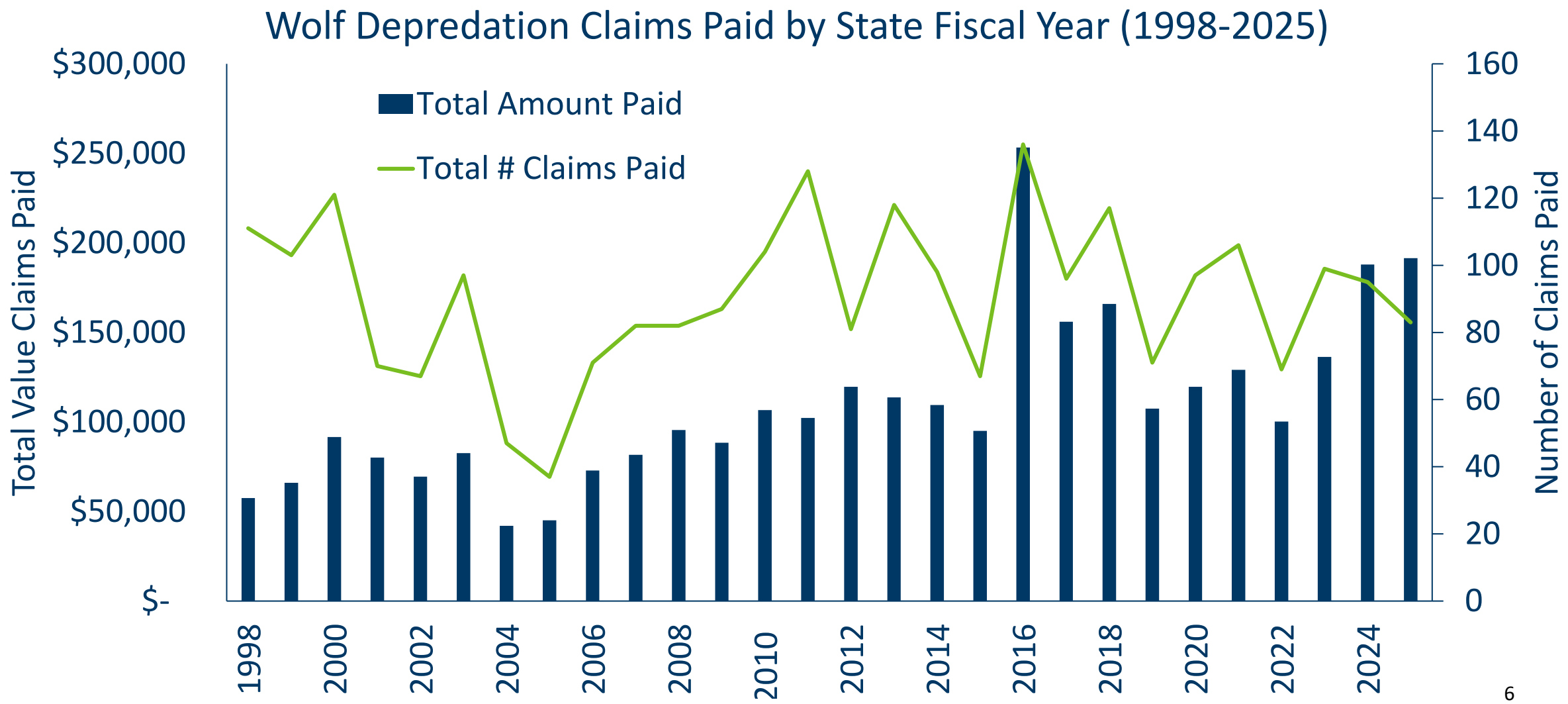
Wolf Depredation Program Finances



Wolf Depredation Program Finances

FY	Compensation App. \$/FY	Prevention App. \$ / Yr	Federal \$ Expended
2010/11	\$75k	\$ -	NA
2012/13	\$75k	\$ -	NA
2014/15	\$25k	\$ -	\$91,585
2016/17	\$225k/175k	\$ -	\$29,109
2018/19	\$175k	\$120k	\$37,655
2020/21	\$175k	\$ -	\$248,681
2022/23	\$175k	\$ -	\$82,920
2024/25	\$175k	\$45k	\$126,548

Wolf Depredation Program Finances



Wolf Depredation Program Finances

- **Depredation Prevention Grants:**

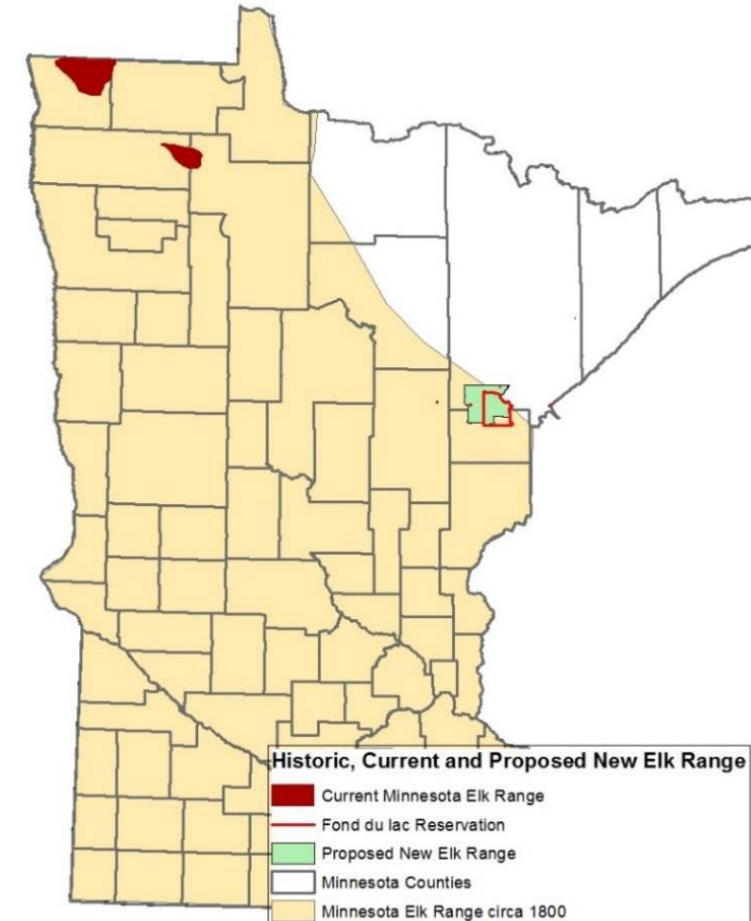
- Fencing/barriers
- Shelters for calving, lambing, etc.
- Guard animals and vet care
- Lights and alarms

Grant Round	FY	General Fund	Fed Fund
1	2018	\$120k	\$ -
2	2019	\$120k	\$ -
3	2020-2021	\$ -	\$60k
4	2021-2022	\$ -	\$60k
5	2022-2023	\$ -	\$60k
6	2024-2025	\$45k	\$60k
7	2025	\$45k	\$ -

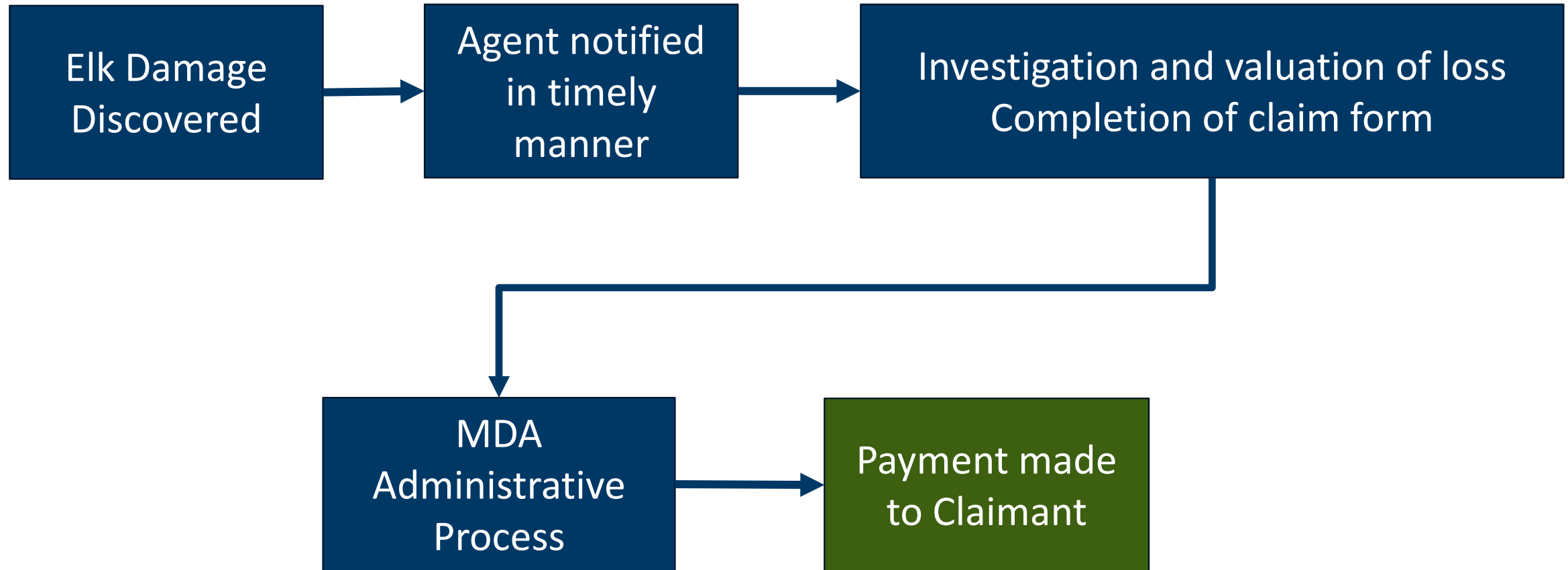
Elk Damage Payments

- **M.S. 3.7371:**
- ...a person who owns an agricultural crop or pasture shall be compensated by the commissioner or agriculture for an agricultural crop, or fence surrounding the crop or pasture, that is damaged or destroyed by elk as provided in this section.

Historic, Current and Proposed Elk Ranges



Elk Damage Payments



Elk Damage Payments

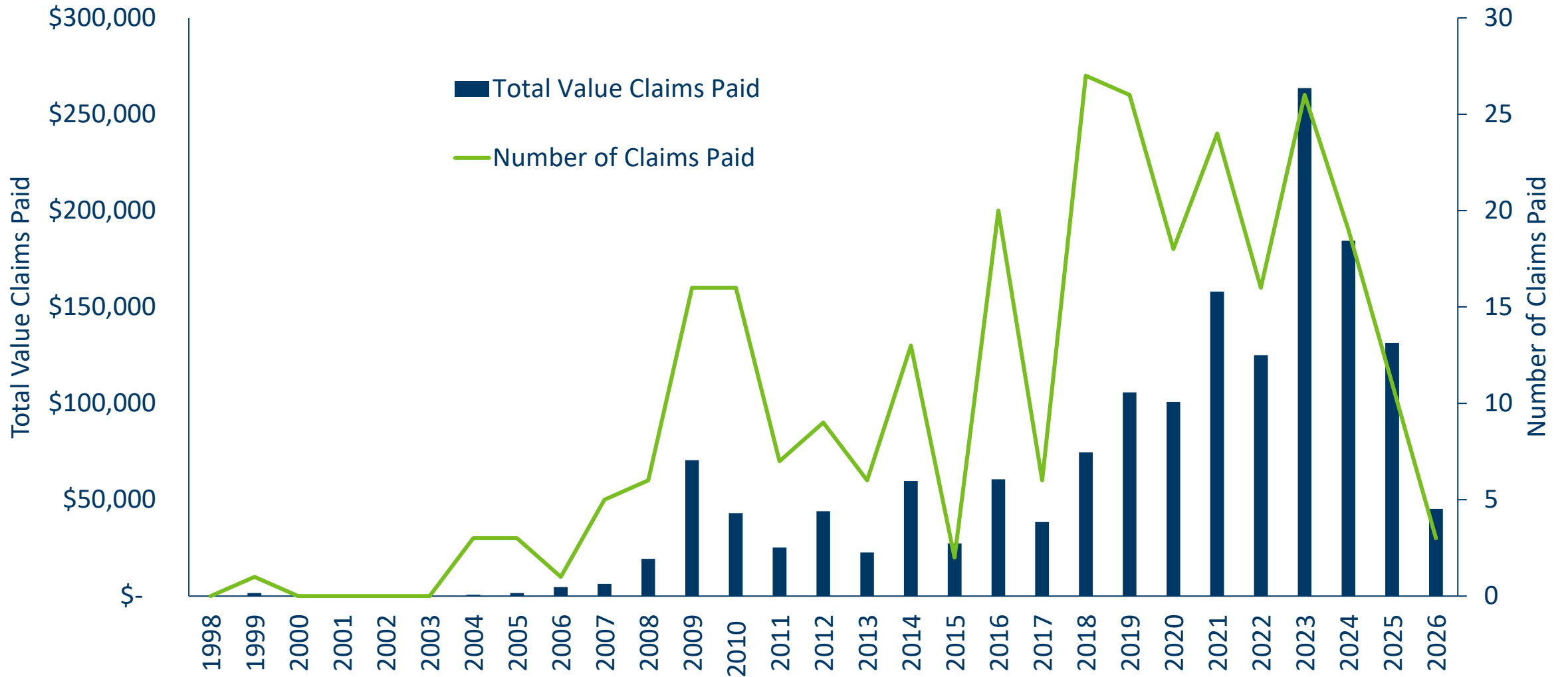
- **1987** – MS 3.7371 enactment with \$20k limit
 - Claims evaluated by county extension agent or crop adjuster
- **1995** – Crop adjuster option removed
- **2009** – Compensate amount expressly appropriated for this purpose
- **2011** – Fence damage included
- **2016** – Annual report required
- **2017** – Approved agents may evaluate claims
- **2024** – Rule repealed and statute language updated

Elk Damage Claim Payments

FY	Approp./FY	Additional Uses for \$	Approved Agent \$	# Agents
2010/11	\$75k			
2012/13	\$75k			
2014/15	\$75k			
2016/17	\$125k			
2018/19	\$155k	Pay Agents up to \$30k/yr	\$3,100 / \$2,839	5
2020/21	\$155k	Pay Agents up to \$30k/yr	\$2,865 / \$4,446	4
2022/23	\$155k	Pay Agents up to \$10k/yr Grants up to \$20k/yr	\$4,676 / 3,978	1
2024/25	\$155k	Pay Agents up to \$10k/yr Grants up to \$40k/yr	\$4,138 / \$3,716	1

Elk Damage Claim Payments

Elk Damage Claims Paid by State Fiscal Year (1998-2026)



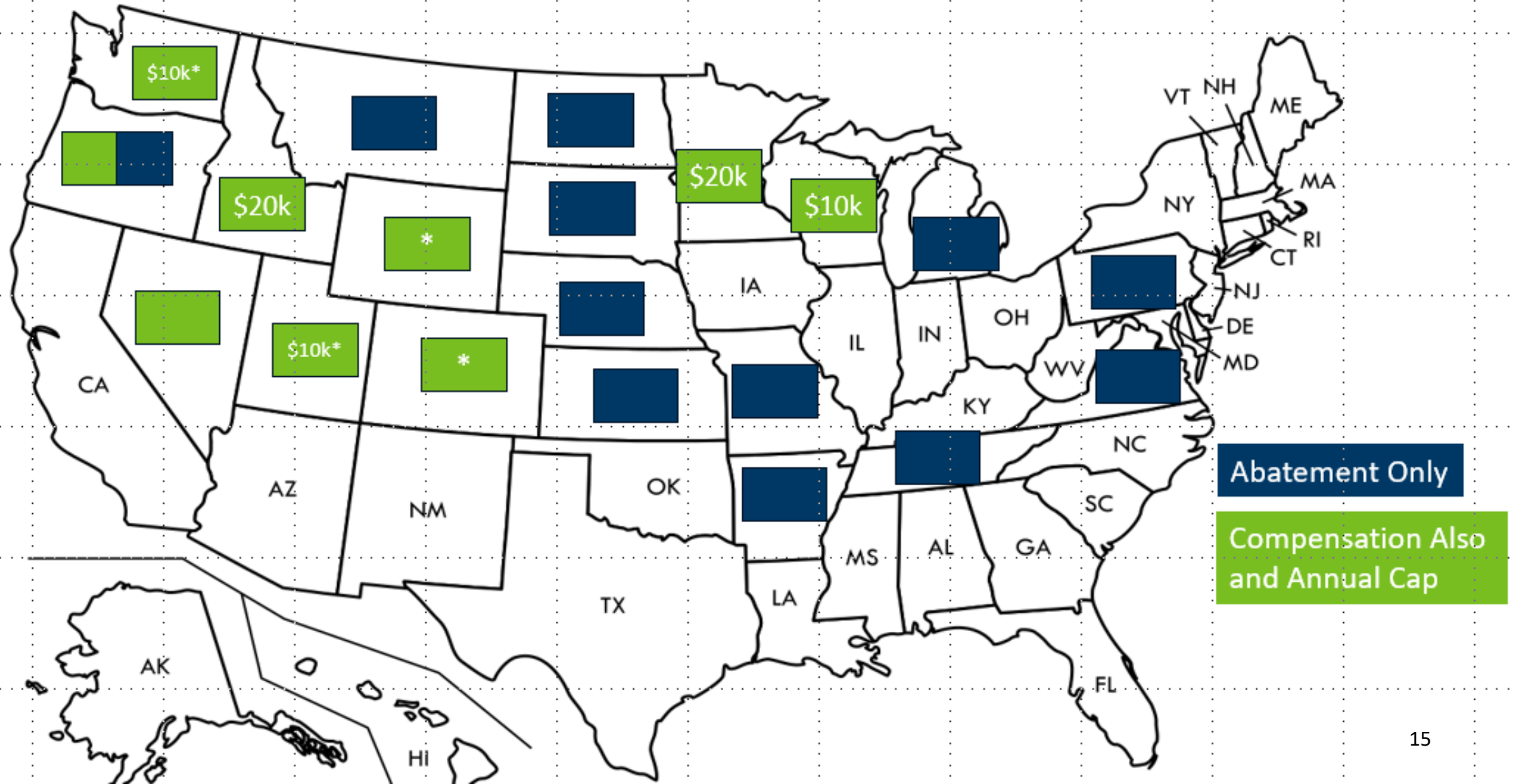
Elk Damage Claim Payments

Herd	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Caribou-Vita	\$25,677	\$15,512	\$26,335	\$111,630	\$72,213	\$15,154	\$12,633
Kittson Central	\$60,779	\$140,245	\$98,665	\$131,968	\$92,111	\$116,266	\$32,633
Grygla	\$ -	\$2,214	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Unaffiliated	\$14,272	\$ -	\$ -	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$ -	\$ -

Elk Damage Claim Payments

Damage Type	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Fence	\$9,627	\$5,388	\$2,958	\$16,062	\$10,382	\$ -	\$ -
Stored Forage	\$15,350	\$38,077	\$23,658	\$82,081	\$ -	\$7,787	\$ -
Standing Crop	\$75,751	\$114,507	\$98,384	\$165,456	\$173,941	\$123,632	\$45,266
Losses Exceeding Cap	\$11,954	\$22,125	\$29,911	\$71,839	\$53,212	\$36,482	\$ -

Elk Damage Claim Payments



Cervidae Impacts on Minnesota Farms

- Elk destroying fencing
- Deer and elk damaging field crops
- Deer and elk damaging stored livestock feed
- Deer damaging fruit and vegetable crops

Deer Damage to Stored Livestock



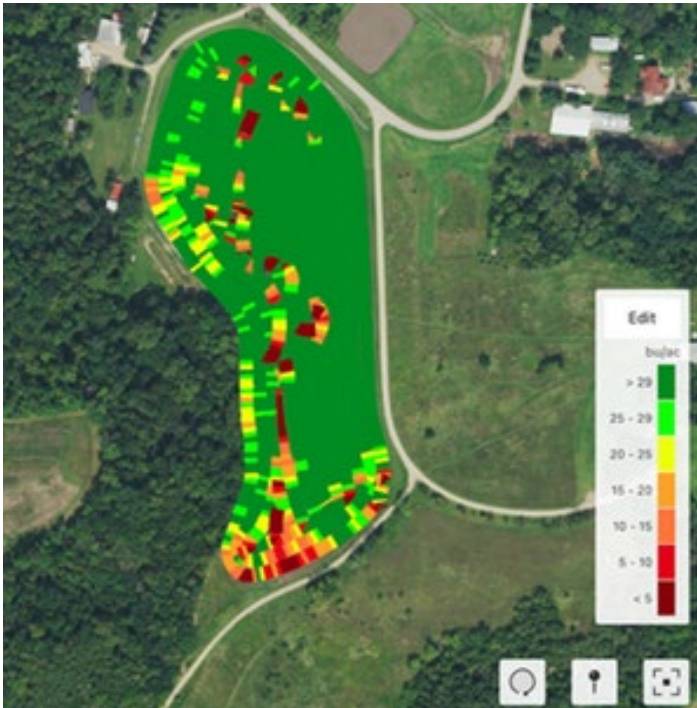
Photo Credit: Jim W



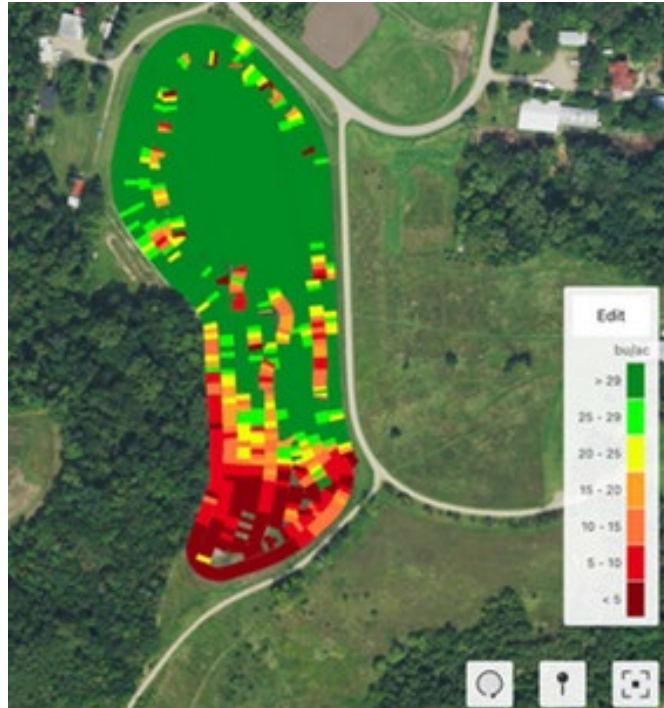
Photo Credit: Jim W

Deer Damage to Field Crops

2015- 34 bu/acre



2017- 31 bu/acre



2019- 13 bu/acre

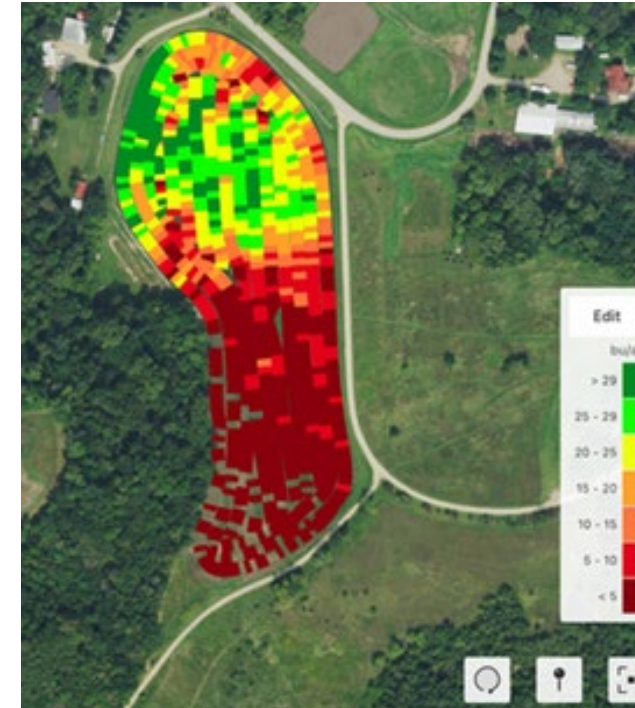


Photo credit: Les A

These yield maps show how increased pressure from deer has impacted soybean yields.

Deer Damage to Vegetable Crops

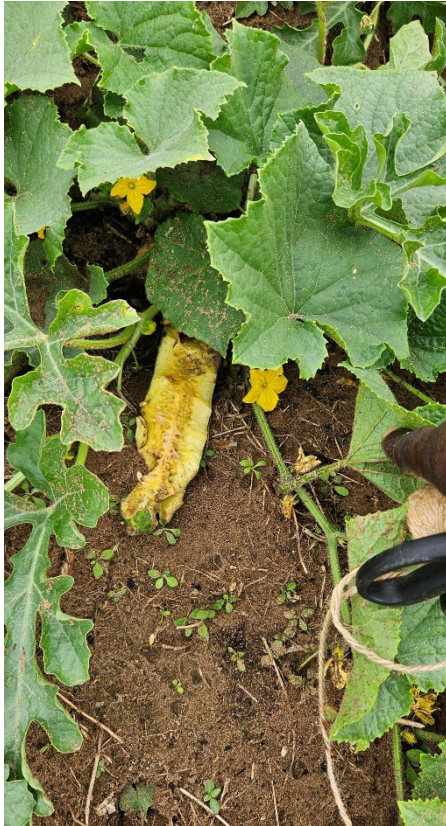


Photo Credit: Minnesota African
Immigrant Farmer Grower Association

Unprotected vegetable
farms can be easily
devastated by deer



Photo Credit: Minnesota African
Immigrant Farmer Grower Association

Current Programs to Mitigate Depredation

Abatement programs

- Seasonal hunting of deer and elk
 - Early antlerless season
 - Landowner licenses (issued to owners or tenants of 8 acres or more)
- DNR's wildlife damage program
 - Funding for fencing and other mitigation materials (up to \$5,000)
 - Requires a signed CDMA
- Removal permits for deer
 - To be used while damage is happening - outside the hunting season
- Depredation Deer Antlerless permits (DDAP)
 - In areas where damage has occurred, allows taking additional antlerless deer during the hunting season

Elk Damage Compensation Program

- Establish partnership with USDA APHIS to evaluate elk damage claims
- Add requirements for abatement measures for repeat compensation claims
- Increase the \$20,000 cap on individual claims
- Transfer general fund appropriation to an agriculture fund for both elk and wolf depredation and allow funds to carry over to subsequent years
- Increase the \$155,000 annual appropriation so more claims can be covered
- Expand compensation program to cover damage done by deer

DNR Wildlife Damage Program

- Increase the maximum amount allowed for abatement materials
- Allow for temporary solutions on specialty crop farms
- Waive the hunt management requirement on CDMAs on farms where landowners are not comfortable with hunting on their property
- Increase staff dedicated to the Wildlife Damage Program
- Create consistent messaging throughout DNR about cervid damage management programs
- Improve technology used to track complaints and permits

Hunting seasons and shooting permits

- To increase landowners' willingness to allow hunting on private land, consider requiring hunters to carry liability insurance, naming the property owner as additional insured
- Award antlerless only permits for the landowner lottery for elk hunting permits
- Change hunting rules to encourage the taking of antlerless deer (i.e., “earn a buck”)
- Expand the use of removal permits to be used during hunting seasons
- Coordinate special intensive deer hunts in areas where depredation is persistent

Hunting seasons and shooting permits (continued)

- Reduce the acreage ownership requirement (currently 80 acres) to obtain a landowner hunting license
- Allow more landowner licenses for owners of greater acreages and allow them to be transferred to any licensed hunter
- Encourage meat processors to participate in the Venison Donation Program by awarding priority points in AGRI grants
- Combine the removal permits and DDAPs into a low cost damage management permit that can be used inside or outside of regular hunting seasons

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