

**Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Natural Resources Board Agenda Item**

SUBJECT: Deer Stakeholder Committee Final Report

FOR: June 2021 Board meeting

TO BE PRESENTED BY: Bob Nack, Big Game Section Chief

SUMMARY:

The Deer Stakeholder Committee was formed in 2020 to address unintended challenges and consequences that were the result of changes that have occurred in the Wisconsin deer management program. The committee was convened to initiate discussions with stakeholders and hunters to accomplish the following goal and objectives:

Goal 1: Identify a deer hunting framework and potential programs to accomplish the following objectives.

- Objective 1: Address concerns and areas of conflict express by the snowmobiling, forestry, and agriculture communities.
- Objective 2: Provide deer hunting opportunities that are easy to understand and will support hunter recruitment, retention, and reactivation.
- Objective 3: Provide the best available tools to achieve population objectives and reduce the percent of deer with CWD.

The committee membership consisted of diverse stakeholder and agency representation from around the State. The committee met three times over the course of 2020 with assignments before and after each meeting. The group was facilitated by Credens and a final report was provided to the Department in March 2021. The report contains issues and solutions the group discussed that will be used as the foundation for considering changes to some aspects of the current deer management program.

RECOMMENDATION: Information Only

LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS (check all that are applicable):

- Background memo
- Final Report

- Type name of attachment if applicable
- Type name of attachment if applicable

Approved by	Signature	Date
Eric Lobner, Bureau Director	<small>DocuSigned by:</small> <i>Eric Lobner</i> <small>49A5E090CF88465...</small>	6/14/2021 11:33 AM CDT
Keith Warnke, Division Administrator	<small>DocuSigned by:</small> <i>Keith Warnke</i> <small>8D66747CE78D4CA...</small>	6/14/2021 12:23 PM CDT
For Preston D. Cole, Secretary	<small>DocuSigned by:</small> <i>Todd Ambs</i> <small>6793A7BA427C4CD...</small>	6/14/2021 12:55 PM CDT

cc: Board Liaison – AD/8

DS
WR

by Todd Ambs

March 1, 2021



**WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES**

Final Report

Deer Hunting Stakeholder Project

September 2020 – March 2021

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1. Executive Summary

Background:

In Fall 2020, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) convened a deer hunting stakeholder project group to identify a deer hunting framework and potential programs to accomplish:

- **Objective 1:** Address concerns and areas of conflict expressed by the snowmobiling, forestry, and agriculture communities.
- **Objective 2:** Provide deer hunting opportunities that are easy to understand and will support hunter recruitment, retention, and reactivation.
- **Objective 3:** Provide the best available tools to achieve population objectives and reduce the number of deer with Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD).

The DNR developed a **Charter** for this project group, and invited 20 external partners to provide their input in meeting the above objectives. The Charter is presented in **Section 2** of this report.

The project group, aka the Committee, convened over three facilitated meetings in October 2020, Nov 2020 and January 2021, respectively. The DNR also held a public listening session in December 2020 to solicit input on the three objectives. The Committee completed multiple assignments between meetings.

Section 5 of this report describes the project steps in detail. Due to the large number and diverse perspectives of Committee members, the process focused on identifying potential solutions with general acceptance, as input for future decisions by the DNR. It was not designed to force a consensus at this preliminary stage. Next steps, yet to be finalized, include obtaining broader public input using a different process.

Issues and concerns:

Within the context of the Charter objectives, the Committee identified 24 specific **issues** related to the following topics:

- Access to hunting opportunities
- Engagement of hunters and R3 (Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation)
- Role of County Deer Advisory Councils (CDACs)
- CWD
- Abatement of damage to agriculture and forests
- Deer donations
- Habitat
- Harvest authorizations
- Hunting seasons, and
- Snowmobiling

Section 3 of this report lists the issues in detail, grouped by the three Charter objectives.

Recommendations:

The Committee developed two broad categories of **recommendations** to address the above issues:

- Deer hunting season framework recommendations, discussed in **section 4a**, and
- Non-deer hunting season recommendations, discussed in **section 4b**.

Deer hunting season framework related recommendations:

The deer hunting season framework was divided into 7 components, listed as (a) through (g) in the table below. While the Committee did not identify issues or solutions for other components such as Archery / Crossbow season, some of its recommendations could affect those seasons.

The Committee generated multiple options for the 7 components. For each option within a component, the Committee members voted whether they:

- Preferred the option, or
- Could accept the option even if it was not preferred, or
- Could accept the option with changes, or
- Deemed the option a *deal breaker*.

Fifteen of the 20 member organizations submitted their votes, and one abstained.

Summary of results for the hunting season framework:

There is considerable diversity in the final results. It is advisable to review the full voting results and summary charts, provided in section 4a, before reaching any final conclusions.

Summary - Voting Results for Deer Hunting Season Framework	
(a) Gun Season	
<p>Options generally deemed acceptable (based on combined prefer and can accept votes received):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option #1, “Keep the traditional 9-day gun season” • Option #2, “Create a 16-day gun season, starting on the Saturday closest to Nov 15” • Option #3, “Change the start of the 9-day gun season to the Saturday closest to Nov 15” 	<p>Options with unclear results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option #4, “Create staggered opening days (e.g., forest vs farmland zone; or northern vs southern counties). Keep the traditional 9-day season for farmland zones; start the season a week earlier for the forest zones; both end on the same day; include Thanksgiving in the season” <p>Options generally deemed not acceptable (based on deal breaker votes received):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option #5, “Allow CDACs to implement a 30-day, uninterrupted firearms season that begins on the traditional 3rd Saturday of November, allowing for buck tags to be used for the entirety of the gun season, and allowing all weapons that may be used in the traditional 9-day gun season to be used for the entire 30 days. This season would replace the 4-day antlerless hunt and the Holiday Hunt”
(b) Holiday Hunt	
<p>Options generally deemed acceptable (based on combined prefer and can accept votes received):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option #1, “Keep traditional Holiday Hunt dates and regulations” • Option #2, “Keep traditional Holiday Hunt dates but allow either-sex harvest” 	<p>Options with unclear results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option #4, “Eliminate the Holiday Hunt and antlerless gun season. End all gun hunting by the last day of the annual Muzzleloader Hunt in December”

Summary - Voting Results for Deer Hunting Season Framework	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option #3, “Eliminate the Holiday Hunt, and replace with a 4-day antlerless-only gun hunt that overlaps with October youth hunt. The October hunt would be offered as an option for CDACs only in CWD affected counties” <p style="color: red;">Votes did not display a preferred direction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option #5, “Eliminate the Holiday Hunt, and add 7-days to the end of the current statewide December 4-day antlerless season” <p>Options generally deemed not acceptable (based on deal breaker votes received):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option #6, “Hold Holiday Hunt only when the County has not officially declared the snowmobile trails open” Option #7, “Eliminate Holiday Hunt due to selection of #5 in Gun Season Table”
(c) Antlerless Season	
<p>Options generally deemed acceptable (based on combined prefer and can accept votes received):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option #1, “Keep traditional 4-day antlerless season” Option #2, “Eliminate December rifle seasons in the northern forest zone (this is dependent on approval of a 16-day season in November and/or October antlerless season)” Option #4, “Add a state-wide 4 day antlerless-only gun hunt that overlaps with October youth hunt; this is in addition to the traditional 4-day antlerless season” Option #5, “Add a state-wide 4 day antlerless-only gun hunt that overlaps with October youth hunt; replace the traditional 4-day antlerless season” 	<p>Options with unclear results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option #3, “Keep traditional 4-day antlerless hunt but allow either-sex harvest” <p>Options generally deemed not acceptable (based on deal breaker votes received):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option #6, “Eliminate antlerless season due to selection of #5 in Gun Season Table”
(d) Youth Season	
<p>Options generally deemed acceptable (based on combined prefer and can accept votes received):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option #1, “Keep traditional 2-day Youth Season (this year, Oct 10-11)”. It also received multiple deal breaker votes. Option #2, “Change Youth hunt to 4 days by adding 2 days to the front of the existing Youth Season” Option #3, “Change Youth Hunt to have the same time period and length as the 9-day disability hunt. (Oct 3 – 11)” 	
(e) Earn-A-Buck	
78% of Committee members preferred the option: “Allow CDACs to offer an earn-a-buck option across all seasons. The option could reflect the previous version or some new modification”	
(f) Harvest Authorizations – Public / Private land	
Options generally deemed acceptable (based on combined prefer and can accept votes received):	Both options also received relatively similar votes as deal breakers .

Summary - Voting Results for Deer Hunting Season Framework	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option #1, “Keep current harvest authorizations” Option #2, “Eliminate private-public land distinction when issuing harvest quotas / antlerless tags” 	<p>Votes did not display a preferred direction.</p>
(g) Harvest Authorizations – Hunter Choice and Limits	
<p>Options generally deemed acceptable (based on combined prefer and can accept votes received):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option #1, “Keep current harvest authorization allocation process/numbers” Option #3, “Limit CDACs to issuing 0 to 2 free antlerless tags per license – apply statewide and not just for farmland zones. Would not affect bonus tags” Option #4, “Implement bag limits across DMUs for antlerless deer harvest within each farmland zone, not based on CDAC recommendation or land-type”. It also received multiple deal breaker votes. Option #5, “CDACs in farmland zones would develop a quota, implement a daily bag limit; allow hunters to shoot up to the daily bag limit, till quota is filled” 	<p>Options generally deemed not acceptable (based on deal breaker votes received):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option #2, “All deer hunting licenses should be hunter’s choice – to be used in any DMU, on public or private land, on a doe or a buck”

Recommendations not related to deer hunting season framework:

The Committee also identified recommendations that did not pertain to the deer hunting season framework, but were still deemed important contributors towards meeting the three Charter objectives.

- These recommendations were organized around topics in the tables below. Recommendations and/or topics that support multiple objectives have been repeated in the respective tables.
- These recommendations were not prioritized by the Committee.
- Detailed non-deer hunting season framework recommendations are provided in **section 4b**.

Objective 1: Address concerns and areas of conflict expressed by the snowmobiling, forestry, and agriculture communities.	
Topic	Summary Recommendation
Access	Open the trails/roads where access is limited. To encourage private property access, offer incentives to landowners through financial incentives, tax breaks, etc.
Damage Abatement	In areas where high ag damage exists, provide additional tags or establish harvest requirements for enrollees in the Ag Damage Program. For properties that are experiencing Forest damage, remove the public access requirement for small landowners to enroll in the Program or provide free forest damage harvest authorizations.
Habitat	When counties have diverse habitats that have capacity to hold different levels of deer (agricultural land has a higher capacity to hold more deer than forests), split the DMUs

Objective 1: Address concerns and areas of conflict expressed by the snowmobiling, forestry, and agriculture communities.	
Topic	Summary Recommendation
	in order to manage the deer population more precisely (2 counties already have approval to do so). Set numeric deer unit population goals based on ecological carrying capacity in forested systems and manageable population levels in farmland systems.
R3	Increase youth and new hunters special mentored hunts with participating landowners, especially landowners experiencing ag/forest damage.
Snowmobiling	Limit hunting opportunities that occur beyond mid-December while utilizing best management practices from counties (Oconto, Pepin, Marquette) where snowmobilers, landowners and CDAC work together to hold the Holiday Hunt. This could be done by exploring possible landowner incentives for opening snowmobile trails during late deer seasons.

Objective 2: Provide deer hunting opportunities that are easy to understand and will support hunter recruitment, retention, and reactivation	
Topic	Summary Recommendation
Access	Open the trails/roads where access is limited. To encourage private property access, offer incentives to landowners through financial incentives, tax breaks, etc.
Damage Abatement	Establish a program to match hunters with landowners enrolled in the Wildlife Damage and Abatement Program to support harvest objectives.
R3	Increase the length of the Youth Hunt and explore ways to promote youth hunting on properties experiencing agriculture or forest damage.

Objective 3: Identify the best available tools to achieve population objectives and reduce the percent of deer with CWD	
Topic	Summary Recommendation
Access	Open the trails/roads where access is limited. To encourage private property access, offer incentives to landowners through financial incentives, tax breaks, etc.
CWD	Extend seasons and perform targeted removal of deer outside of hunting seasons.
Damage Abatement	In areas where high ag damage exists, provide additional tags or establish harvest requirements for enrollees in the Ag Damage Program. For properties that are experiencing Forest damage, remove the public access requirement for small landowners to enroll in the Program or provide free forest damage harvest authorizations.
Deer Donation	Establish a program that connects hunters to people interested in accepting deer through the deer donation process. This idea is currently being explored and in process of being implemented.
Habitat	Consider splitting DMUs in order to manage deer in counties with diverse habitats that hold different levels of deer.
R3	Explore ways to promote youth hunting on properties experiencing agriculture or forest damage.

2. 2020 Deer Hunting Stakeholder Group Project Charter

From Wisconsin DNR (Sept 28, 2020)

Background:

White-tail deer hunting in Wisconsin is a fabric of our hunting heritage. Deer are important to society for several reasons including economic impacts, recreational pursuits and viewing, and the biological impact they play in Wisconsin's ecosystems. Activities associated with deer hunting and deer management have the potential to negatively impact other outdoor recreation user groups, necessitating the need to find balance between these interests and minimize conflict whenever possible. Over the last several years, a number of changes have occurred with WI deer management program that have resulted in some unintended challenges and consequences.

Specifically:

- Challenges expressed by the snowmobiling community due to antlerless gun deer hunting from Dec. 24 – Jan. 1st (aka Holiday Hunt).
- Forested landowners concerned with forest regeneration and the issuance of antlerless deer harvest authorizations.
- Challenges with the deer damage program.
- Challenges meeting population objectives in some deer management units.
- Continued increase in number of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) positive deer across the State.

Project Goals and Objectives:

Convene discussions with stakeholders and hunters to accomplish the following goal and objectives:

Goal 1: Identify a deer hunting framework and potential programs to accomplish the following objectives.

- Objective 1: Address concerns and areas of conflict expressed by the snowmobiling, forestry, and agriculture communities.
- Objective 2: Provide deer hunting opportunities that are easy to understand and will support hunter recruitment, retention, and reactivation.
- Objective 3: Provide the best available tools to achieve population objectives and reduce the number of deer with CWD.

Team Membership

Invited External Partners

- Governor's Snowmobile Council
- Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs
- Wisconsin Bowhunters Association
- Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
- Wisconsin Wildlife Federation
- Wisconsin County Forest Association
- US Forest Service
- Wisconsin Conservation Congress
- County Deer Advisory Oversight Committee
- Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation
- WI Farmers Union
- Department of Tourism, Office of Outdoor Recreation
- Wisconsin Green Fire
- Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association

- Industrial Forest Owner Representative
- Sporting Heritage Council – deer representative
- Quality Deer Management Association
- Whitetails Unlimited
- Board of Commissions for Public Lands
- Outfitter

Department Support Staff

- Bob Nack, Big Game Section Chief – (sole DNR representative on the Committee)
- Eric Canania, SOD Deer Biologist
- Brad Koele, Wildlife Damage Specialist
- Emily Iehl, Recreation Safety and Education Section
- Brad Hutnik, Forester
- Jesse Ashton, Law Enforcement
- Lacey Hillman, Law Enforcement
- Bob Holsman, Social Scientist, Analysis Services Section
- Tami Ryan, Wildlife Health Section Chief

Team Leader Role: Bret Owsley

- Ensures the team has direction, support, authority to act and accountability in carrying out their team charter.
- Establish meeting schedules and deadlines with the team, communicates progress to DNR leadership, encourages accountability of team members to complete assignments and meet deadlines and guide the team through potential barriers.
- Oversee the timely completion of deliverables.

Team Member Role

- Participate in all meetings and provide feedback on noted area of expertise.
- Assisting in meeting all project deadlines and complete assignments on time.
- Compile and present background information regarding deer impacts on WI Forest Community, the Agricultural Damage and Claims Program, and the Holiday Hunt.
- Each organization or agency will be asked to identify 2 representatives, a primary representative and a reserve. Only one will be allowed to participate in meeting discussions.

Expected Results/Project Deliverables:

This effort is intended for stakeholders to have an open discussion with the DNR to brainstorm ideas to address deer management in the State and to generate a variety of potential solutions to address the objectives identified above that would be acceptable to stakeholders involved. The results of this effort will be incorporated into future deer management discussions by the DNR and the Natural Resources Board (NRB). The list of ideas generated through this effort are in no way absolute or assured to be implemented.

Identified solutions may include changes to DNR policy, WI Administrative Code, and WI State Statutes. Statutory changes will be provided to the legislature for their consideration and Administrative Code changes may be pursued through the normal rule making processes.

Meeting Schedule and Timeline:

It is expected that the team will meet no more than 3 times, through February 19th, 2021.

3. Issues and Concerns

The Committee identified 24 issues and concerns related to the Charter objectives. Together, they focused on hunting season framework, as well as on issues that were related to the objectives but were not specific to hunting season framework. These issues and concerns helped create the Committee's recommendations.

Issues related to snowmobiling, forestry, and agriculture communities.	
1.	Forest health and regeneration are negatively impacted by an improperly managed deer herd and causes ecological and economic impacts in the local regions within WI.
2.	Economic impact: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. It varies across different stakeholders such as forestry, agriculture, snowmobilers, hunters. b. What are the best ways to balance the relative impacts on different stakeholders?
3.	Damage Abatement Program: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The current damage abatement program results in harassment of farmers, e.g., hunters call after hours, show up without informing the farmer, conflict between neighbors with different objectives. b. What are the best ways to reduce damage to farm land? c. Conflict between deer habitat and agriculture producers impacts the # of claims within the Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims program. d. Challenges in implementing DMAP or Forest Damage program on public lands.
4.	Snowmobiling is a \$250 million industry in Wisconsin annually while forestry comes in at \$24.9 billion annually. Snowmobiling and its economic impacts to the state are 1% of the forest industry. Achieving and maintaining the appropriate deer density to balance the statewide population with our habitat is critical to successful forest regeneration and a sustainable forest industry. This issue needs to be kept in proper perspective when implementing restrictions to deer hunting seasons based on snowmobiling conflicts. What are the best ways to pass laws and/or regulations to include snowmobile trails within the rules and regulations of public roads? How to balance the perceived risk of participating in outdoor activities during hunting seasons?
5.	What are the best ways to achieve a balance between: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ag damage issues vs. carrying capacity, hunter satisfaction and access issues? b. Forest regeneration issues vs. carrying capacity, hunter satisfaction and access issues? c. Societal and special interest groups' issues and potential areas of conflict (snowmobile riders, X-country skiers, hikers, park users, etc.)?
6.	Current tools for herd management – they are time consuming, complex and have requirements that are not liked by some stakeholders. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. E.g., smaller private land owners who are concerned about tree regeneration have two options (a) participate in DMAP which requires at least 160 acres; or (b) Use forest damage tags which require providing public access to the property – this is not liked by landowners.

Issues related to providing deer hunting opportunities that are easy to understand and will support hunter recruitment, retention, and reactivation.
7. What are the best ways to minimize farmer harassment and conflicts with hunters?
8. Hunting seasons & licensing / tag regulations: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What are the best ways to simplify hunting seasons and tag issuance regulations, procedures, etc.? 72 CDACs set county-based seasons and objectives / quotas, which vary county to county. This reduces the ability and desire of hunters to move county to county. b. Some counties would like to use tools such as season structure for herd management, but the tools are not available to CDACs (need legislation). c. Is the weapon-specific season structure hindering R3? d. Many hunters forgo other species hunting to not be in the woods during a deer season.
9. Public engagement: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. There is a lack of understanding of how money from deer license sales funds other conservation efforts in the state. b. There is a lack of understanding of how decisions / rules are made re: season structures. c. What are the best ways to educate the public about these issues?
10. Quota determination: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. There are different ways of determining quotas for public and private lands. Public lands have a greater burden to meet the herd quota. b. This affects people's desire to hunt
11. R3 and youth engagement: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What are the best ways to convert new hunters to life time license buyers? b. What are the best ways to increase youth interest and participation in natural resources? c. Remember – many issues have been discussed for many years; current structure is a result of those discussions. Dramatic changes could lose hunters.
12. What are the best ways to identify the concerns of woodland owners / farmers related to offering access to hunters?
13. There are conflicting interests of wildlife, regulations and the intersection with the development of additional areas for recreation and the promotion of outdoor recreation. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. How to create a broader voice for all outdoor recreation enthusiasts to break the “us vs. them” mentality?

Issues related to achieving population objectives and reducing the percent of deer with CWD.
14. Current county deer population management procedures require that the whole county is managed in the same way, even if there are hotspots in some parts and no deer in other parts. Counties do not have the ability to manage the county population differently at local levels within the county. There is resistance to break up the county cell.
15. In the current system, political boundaries of a county do not align with ecological boundaries. This reduces effectiveness of deer management.
16. Quota setting is missing a habitat-relationship in the CDAC metric process. What are the best ways to determine whether the land can actually carry that # of deer?
17. Tools for CDACs / DNR: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. CDACs do not have enough tools to, e.g., increase the population (particularly in the north). b. # of farmland zone antler-less deer tags issued with a license might send a wrong message to hunters. It is not effective at some point.
18. Deer donation: What are the best ways to incentivize or make the program more user friendly to help increase deer harvesting?
19. Areas with low deer densities – small # of deer have a big impact on regeneration of specific species, e.g. hemlock, cedar, hard woods, which cover a small % of area but are the primary cover for deer.
20. What are the best ways to minimize car / deer accidents?
21. CWD testing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. What are the best ways to balance CWD testing goals and deer harvest goals?
22. CWD – Private land owners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. There is a lack of tools / resources available to individual landowners and hunters who are focused on CWD management in their areas. What are the best ways to create viable options to allow landowners and hunters to address CWD in their areas? b. Private landowners make deer management decisions that affect CWD, deer browse, forestry, etc. – what are the best ways to get them to care / understand / have more information that will motivate them to increase deer harvest on their property?
23. CWD - How to secure county funding for disposal of positive carcasses?
24. CWD - How to increase harvest pressure on bucks in CWD areas?

4. Recommendations

The Committee's recommendations are organized in two groups:

- (a) Deer hunting season framework recommendations, and
- (b) Non-deer hunting season framework recommendations.

Detailed recommendations in each group are discussed below.

(a) Deer Hunting Season Framework Recommendations

The deer hunting season framework was divided into the 7 components listed below. While the Committee did not identify issues or solutions for other components such as Archery / Crossbow season, some of its recommendations could affect these seasons. The Committee generated multiple options for the following components:

- (a) Gun season
- (b) Holiday Hunt
- (c) Antlerless season
- (d) Youth season
- (e) Earn-a-buck
- (f) Harvest Authorizations – Public / Private land
- (g) Harvest Authorizations – Hunter Choice and Limits.

Fifteen of the 20 Committee member organizations submitted their final votes for options; one organization abstained. Only summary vote totals are shown to honor anonymity requests.

Interpreting the table:

- The 7 **components** of the deer hunting season are shaded in **green** in the following table.
- Each component had multiple **options**, numbered 1, 2, 3,... Earn-a-buck had a yes/no response.
- For each option, Committee members were asked to vote whether they:
 - **Preferred** that option, or
 - Could **accept** that option, even if it was not the preferred one, or
 - Could **accept with changes** (they were asked to specify their desired changes), or
 - Could not accept that option and if implemented, it would be a **deal breaker**.
- Within each component, each member was asked to vote for only one preferred option. They could mark multiple options as “can accept”, “accept with changes” or “deal breaker”.
- **Example (partial table screenshot below):**
 - 14 organizations voted for option #1 for the Gun Season - see last column to the right.
 - 4 out of 14 *preferred* this option; 6 marked it as *can accept*; 3 could *accept w/ change*; and 1 deemed it a *deal breaker*.
 - The cell with the most votes in a row is highlighted in **orange**.

FINAL VOTES: Seasons and Options					
	Preferred	Can Accept	Accept w/ change	Deal Breaker	Total responses
(a) Gun Season					
1. Keep traditional 9-day Gun Season.	4	6	3	1	14
2. Create a 15 day gun season, starting on the Saturday closest to Nov 15	10	2	1	1	15

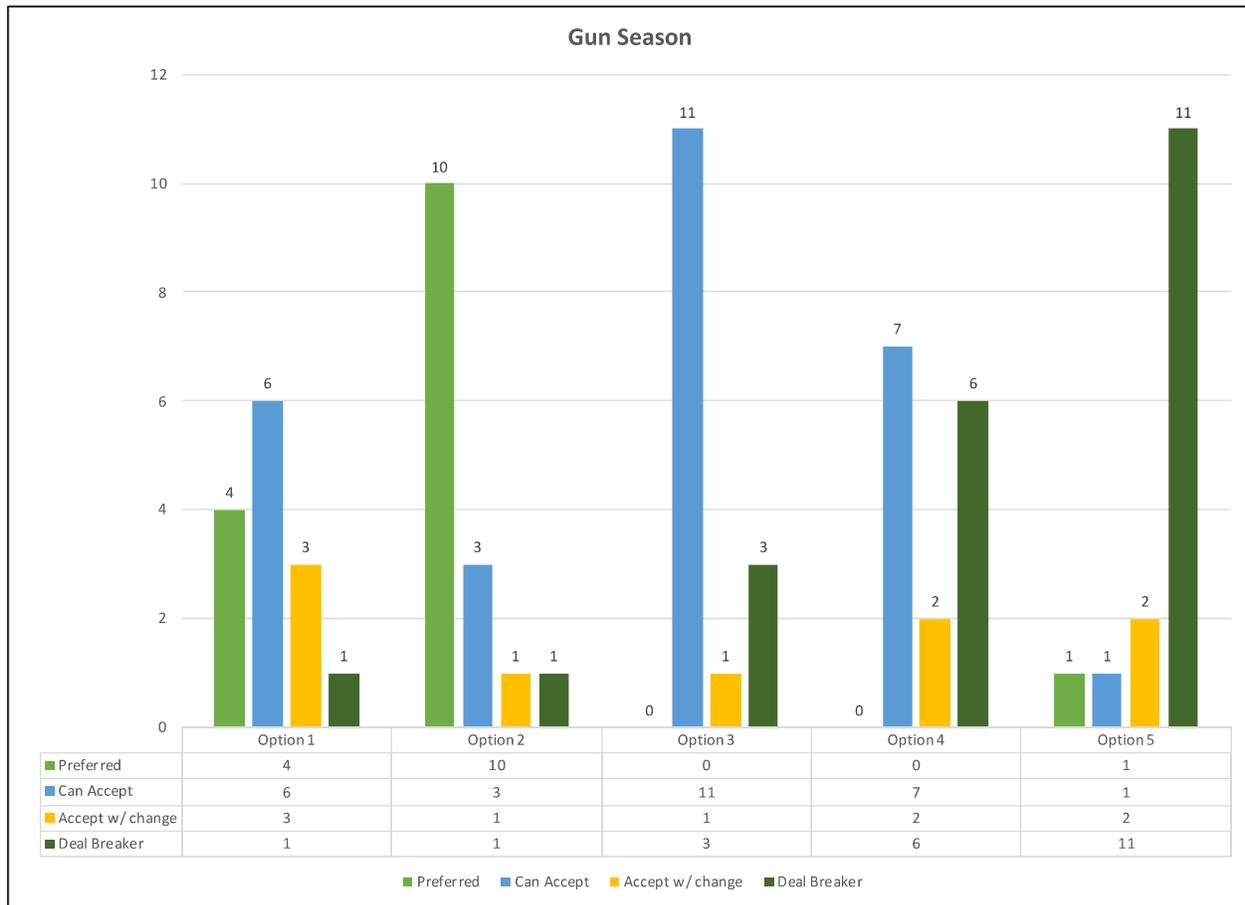
- Some organization did not vote for every item; total responses did not always add up to 15.

The following pages provide a summary of all votes for all options, and charts and summary results for each of the 7 components of the deer hunting season framework.

Deer Hunting Season Recommendations - Summary of Final Votes:

FINAL VOTES: Seasons and Options	Preferred	Can Accept	Accept w/ change	Deal Breaker	Total responses
(a) Gun Season					
1. Keep traditional 9-day Gun Season.	4	6	3	1	14
2. Create a 16-day gun season, starting on the Saturday closest to Nov 15.	10	3	1	1	15
3. Change the start of the 9-day gun season to the Saturday closest to Nov 15.	0	11	1	3	15
4. Create staggered opening days (e.g., forest vs farmland zone; or northern vs southern counties). Keep the traditional 9-day season for farmland zones; start the season a week earlier for the forest zones; both end on the same day; include Thanksgiving in the season.	0	7	2	6	15
5. Allow CDACs to implement a 30-day, uninterrupted firearms season that begins on the traditional 3 rd Saturday of November, allowing for buck tags to be used for the entirety of the gun season, and allowing all weapons that may be used in the traditional 9-day gun season to be used for the entire 30 days. This season would replace the 4-day antlerless hunt and the Holiday Hunt.	1	1	2	11	15
(b) Holiday Hunt					
1. Keep traditional Holiday Hunt dates and regulations.	3	9	2	1	15
2. Keep traditional Holiday Hunt dates but allow either-sex harvest.	1	7	2	3	13
3. Eliminate the Holiday Hunt, and replace with a 4-day antlerless-only gun hunt that overlaps with October youth hunt. The October hunt would be offered as an option for CDACs only in CWD affected counties.	5	3	5	2	15
4. Eliminate the Holiday Hunt and antlerless gun season. End all gun hunting by the last day of the annual Muzzleloader Hunt in December.	1	6	0	7	14
5. Eliminate the Holiday Hunt, and add 7-days to the end of the current statewide December 4-day antlerless season.	2	6	0	6	14
6. Hold Holiday Hunt only when the County has not officially declared the snowmobile trails open.	0	5	0	9	14
7. Eliminate Holiday Hunt due to selection of #5 in Gun Season Table.	1	2	1	10	14
(c) Antlerless Season					
1. Keep traditional 4-day antlerless season.	2	9	0	3	14
2. Eliminate December rifle seasons in the northern forest zone (this is dependent on approval of a 16-day season in November and/or October antlerless season).	1	7	2	4	14
3. Keep traditional 4-day antlerless hunt but allow either-sex harvest.	2	5	2	5	14
4. Add a state-wide 4 day antlerless-only gun hunt that overlaps with October youth hunt; this is in addition to the traditional 4-day antlerless season.	2	7	3	3	15
5. Add a state-wide 4 day antlerless-only gun hunt that overlaps with October youth hunt; replace the traditional 4-day antlerless season.	5	6	2	2	15
6. Eliminate antlerless season due to selection of #5 in Gun Season Table.	1	3	1	9	14
(d) Youth Season					
1. Keep traditional 2-day Youth Season (this year, Oct 10-11).	2	8	0	5	15
2. Change Youth hunt to 4 days by adding 2 days to the front of the existing Youth Season.	6	8	1	0	15
3. Change Youth Hunt to have the same time period and length as the 9-day disability hunt. (Oct 3 – 11).	5	7	0	3	15
(e) Earn-a-buck Option					
Allow CDACs to offer an earn-a-buck option across all seasons. The option could reflect the previous version or some new modification.	Yes 11				14
(f) Public-Private Land Harvest Authorizations					
1. Keep current harvest authorizations.	5	5	2	3	15
2. Eliminate private-public land distinction when issuing harvest quotas / antlerless tags.	6	5	0	4	15
(g) Hunter Choice and Limits					
1. Keep current harvest authorization allocation process/numbers.	8	5	0	2	15
2. All deer hunting licenses should be hunter's choice – to be used in any DMU, on public or private land, on a doe or a buck.	2	3	2	8	15
3. Limit CDACs to issuing 0 to 2 free antlerless tags per license – apply statewide and not just for farmland zones. Would not affect bonus tags.	4	5	2	4	15
4. Implement bag limits across DMUs for antlerless deer harvest within each farmland zone, not based on CDAC recommendation or land-type.	0	8	2	5	15
5. CDACs in farmland zones would develop a quota, implement a daily bag limit; allow hunters to shoot up to the daily bag limit, till quota is filled.	0	9	2	3	14

Gun Season – summary results:



Options generally deemed acceptable (based on combined *prefer* and *can accept* votes received):

- **Option #1**, “Keep the traditional 9-day gun season”
- **Option #2**, “Create a 16-day gun season, starting on the Saturday closest to Nov 15”
- **Option #3**, “Change the start of the 9-day gun season to the Saturday closest to Nov 15”

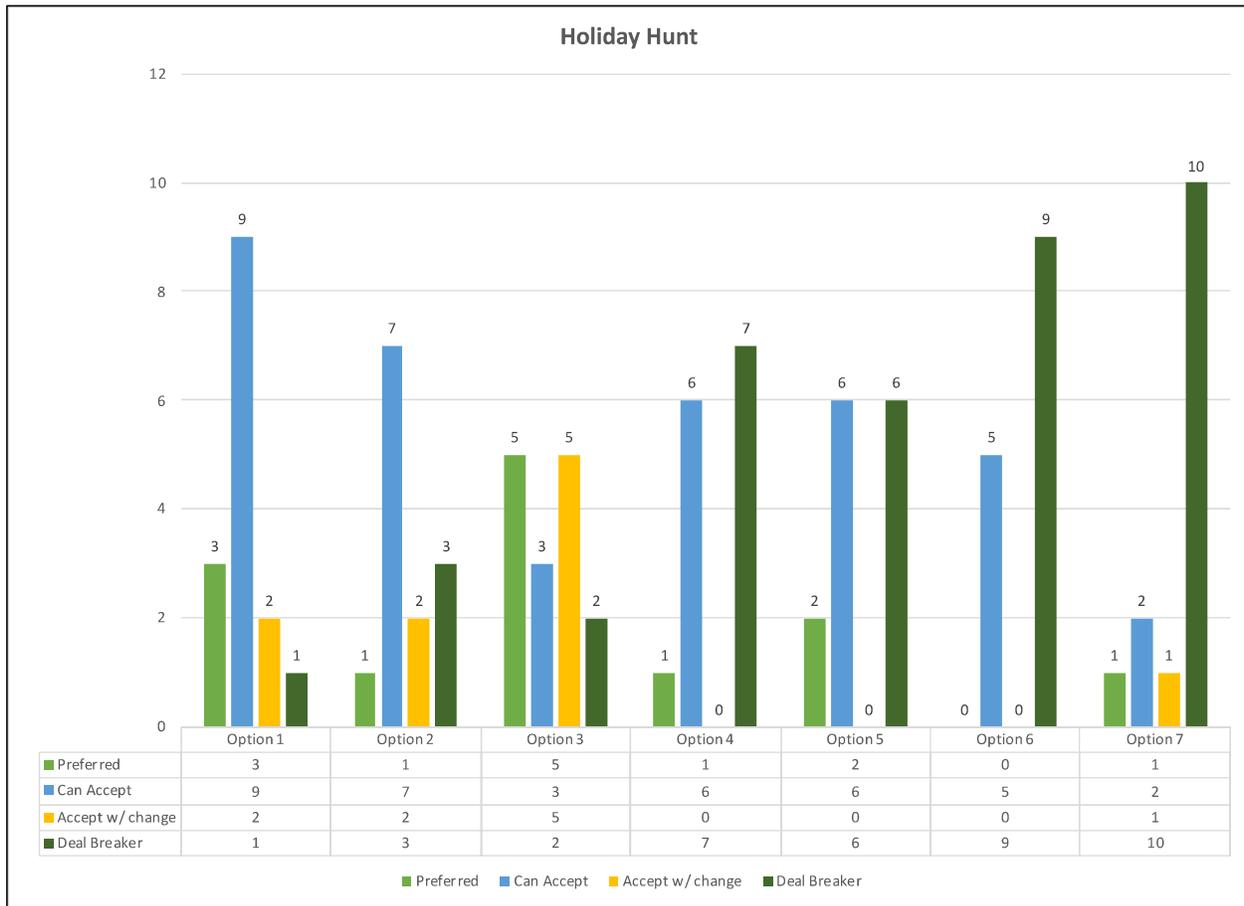
Options with unclear results (based on # of votes for and against):

- **Option #4**, “Create staggered opening days (e.g., forest vs farmland zone; or northern vs southern counties). Keep the traditional 9-day season for farmland zones; start the season a week earlier for the forest zones; both end on the same day; include Thanksgiving in the season”

Options generally deemed not acceptable (based on *deal breaker* votes received):

- **Option #5**, “Allow CDACs to implement a 30-day, uninterrupted firearms season that begins on the traditional 3rd Saturday of November, allowing for buck tags to be used for the entirety of the gun season, and allowing all weapons that may be used in the traditional 9-day gun season to be used for the entire 30 days. This season would replace the 4-day antlerless hunt and the Holiday Hunt”

Holiday Hunt – summary results:



Options generally deemed acceptable (based on combined *prefer* and *can accept* votes received):

- **Option #1**, “Keep traditional Holiday Hunt dates and regulations”
- **Option #2**, “Keep traditional Holiday Hunt dates but allow either-sex harvest”
- **Option #3**, “Eliminate the Holiday Hunt, and replace with a 4-day antlerless-only gun hunt that overlaps with October youth hunt. The October hunt would be offered as an option for CDACs only in CWD affected counties”

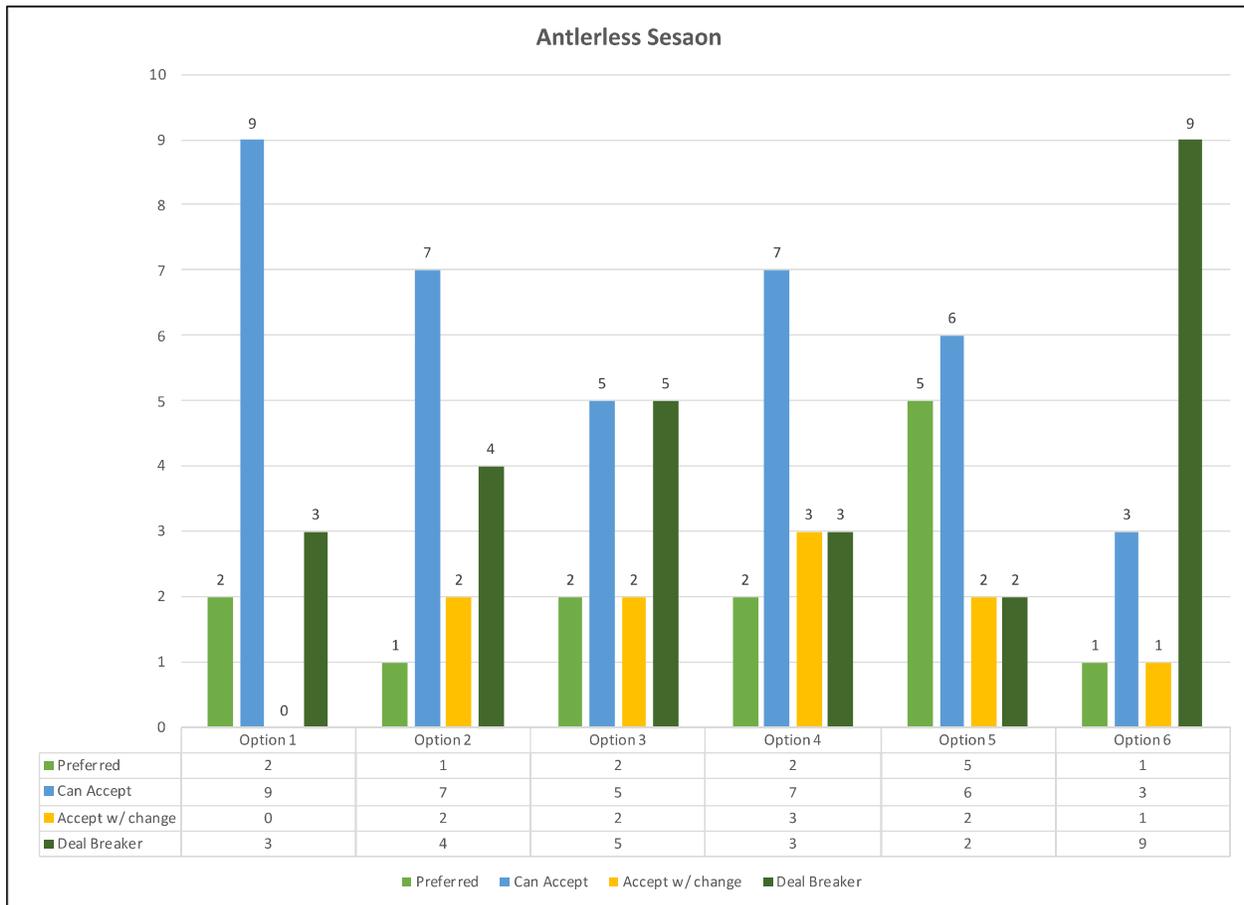
Options with unclear results (based on # of votes for and against):

- **Option #4**, “Eliminate the Holiday Hunt and antlerless gun season. End all gun hunting by the last day of the annual Muzzleloader Hunt in December”
- **Option #5**, “Eliminate the Holiday Hunt, and add 7-days to the end of the current statewide December 4-day antlerless season”

Options generally deemed not acceptable (based on *deal breaker* votes received):

- **Option #6**, “Hold Holiday Hunt only when the County has not officially declared the snowmobile trails open”
- **Option #7**, “Eliminate Holiday Hunt due to selection of #5 in Gun Season Table”

Antlerless Season – summary results:



Options generally deemed acceptable (based on combined *prefer* and *can accept* votes received):

- **Option #1**, “Keep traditional 4-day antlerless season”
- **Option #2**, “Eliminate December rifle seasons in the northern forest zone (this is dependent on approval of a 16-day season in November and/or October antlerless season)”
- **Option #4**, “Add a state-wide 4 day antlerless-only gun hunt that overlaps with October youth hunt; this is in addition to the traditional 4-day antlerless season”
- **Option #5**, “Add a state-wide 4 day antlerless-only gun hunt that overlaps with October youth hunt; replace the traditional 4-day antlerless season”

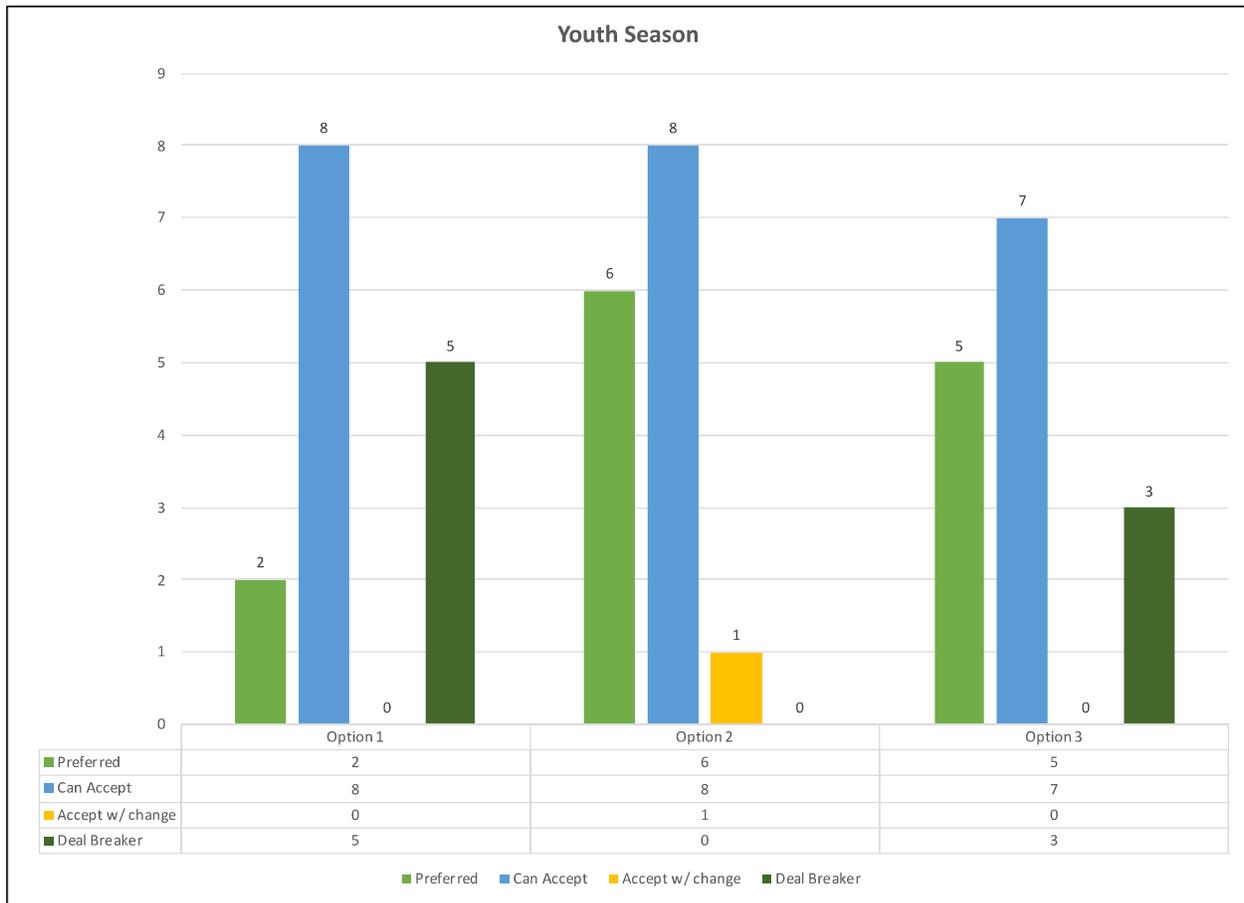
Options with unclear results (based on # of votes for and against):

- **Option #3**, “Keep traditional 4-day antlerless hunt but allow either-sex harvest”

Options generally deemed not acceptable (based on *deal breaker* votes received):

- **Option #6**, “Eliminate antlerless season due to selection of #5 in Gun Season Table”

Youth Season – summary results:



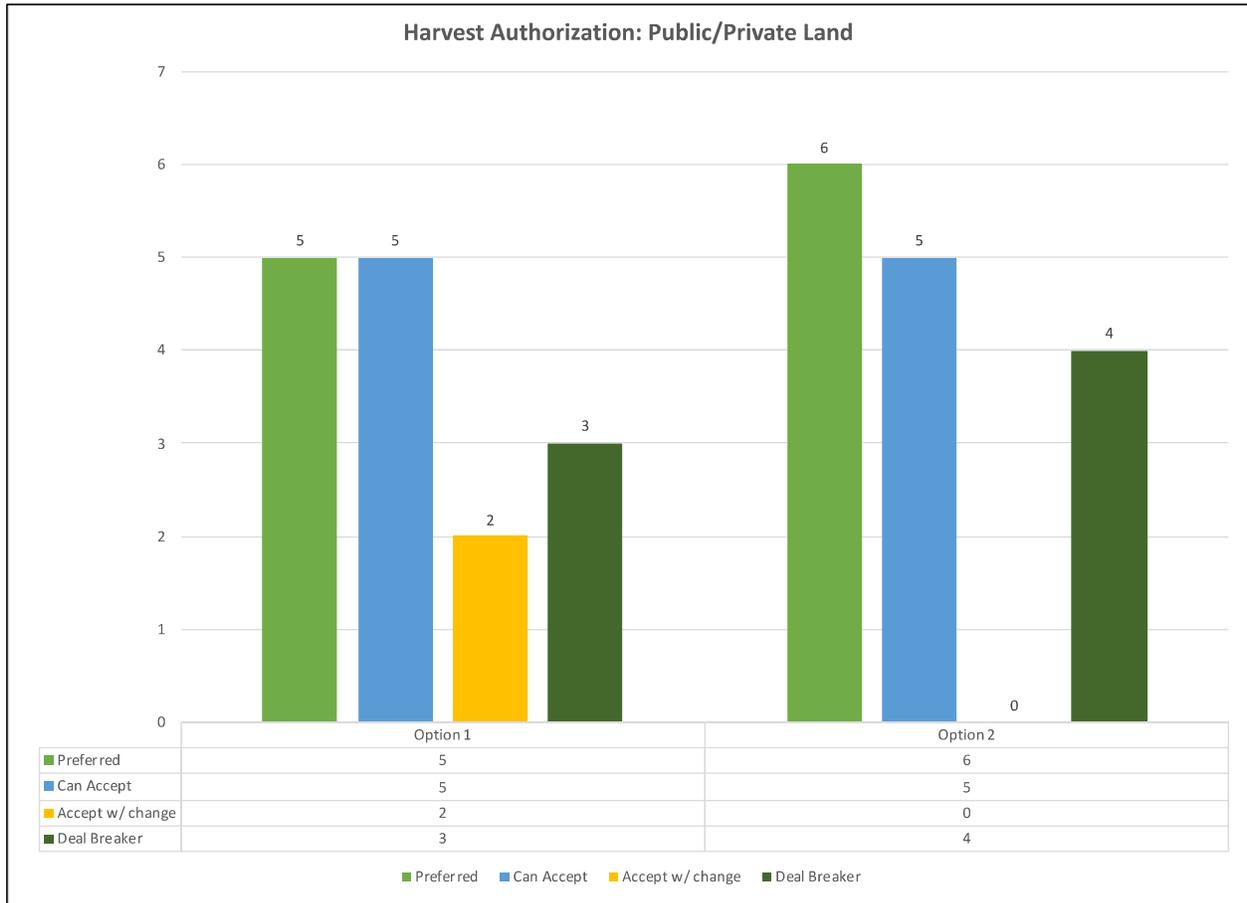
Options generally deemed acceptable (based on combined *prefer* and *can accept* votes received):

- **Option #1**, “Keep traditional 2-day Youth Season (this year, Oct 10-11)”
Option #1 also received multiple deal breaker votes
- **Option #2**, “Change Youth hunt to 4 days by adding 2 days to the front of the existing Youth Season”
- **Option #3**, “Change Youth Hunt to have the same time period and length as the 9-day disability hunt. (Oct 3 – 11)”

Earn-a-buck Option – summary result:

- 11 out of 14 (78%) members voted “yes” to the option: “Allow CDACs to offer an earn-a-buck option across all seasons. The option could reflect the previous version or some new modification”.

Harvest Authorizations – Public / Private Land – summary results:



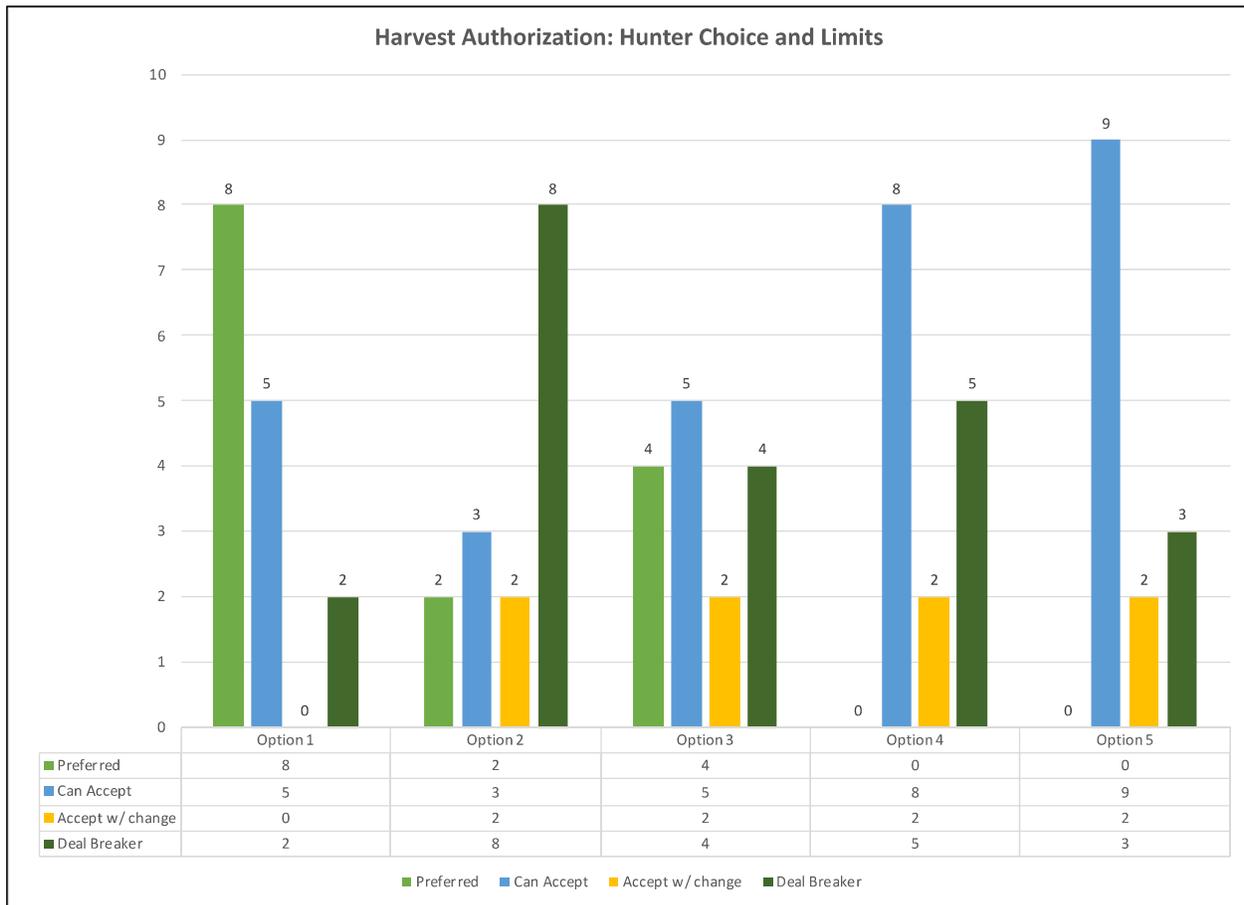
Options generally deemed acceptable (based on combined *prefer* and *can accept* votes received):

- **Option #1**, “Keep current harvest authorizations” *
- **Option #2**, “Eliminate private-public land distinction when issuing harvest quotas / antlerless tags”

Both options also received relatively similar votes as *deal breakers*.

* Responses to Option #1 above are based on a combination of two similar options for whom the Committee voted. The above results are averaged for those two options.

Harvest Authorizations – Hunter Choice and Limits – summary results:



Options generally deemed acceptable (based on combined *prefer* and *can accept* votes received):

- **Option #1**, “Keep current harvest authorization allocation process/numbers”
- **Option #3**, “Limit CDACs to issuing 0 to 2 free antlerless tags per license – apply statewide and not just for farmland zones. Would not affect bonus tags”
- **Option #4**, “Implement bag limits across DMUs for antlerless deer harvest within each farmland zone, not based on CDAC recommendation or land-type”
- **Option #5**, “CDACs in farmland zones would develop a quota, implement a daily bag limit; allow hunters to shoot up to the daily bag limit, till quota is filled”

Options generally deemed not acceptable (based on *deal breaker* votes received):

- **Option #2**, “All deer hunting licenses should be hunter’s choice – to be used in any DMU, on public or private land, on a doe or a buck”

Supplementary Statements for the Final Votes

When a Committee member responded to an option that it “*can accept that option with changes*”, the member was asked to specify the desired changes. Twelve member organizations provided such changes and other supplementary statements, listed below. Names of organizations have not been listed.

1. **Member Organization #1:** The Earn-a-Buck option should be paired with a clear demonstration that an antlerless deer was harvested. This could be accomplished by requiring submission of a sample for CWD testing. This would address enforceability of EAB and encourage disease management efforts.

Additional comments: Member Organization #1 supports science-based management of natural resources. There is strong evidence that hunting can address issues of ecological and economic concern related to deer populations. Where appropriate, increasing antlerless harvest for population control and increasing harvest pressure on bucks to reduce spread and prevalence of CWD infection is desirable. The proposals supported by this member organization expand hunting opportunities while maintaining mechanisms to control harvest where necessary. An earlier opener to the 16-day gun season should increase opportunities to achieve harvest goals sometimes affected by weather or deer activity. Maintaining the Holiday Hunt provides an opportunity for hunting when many hunters have opportunity and expanding it to include either-sex harvest should increase interest and may help increase buck harvest. Adding a 4-day antlerless season in October will help achieve harvest goals. The youth season expansion to 4 days increases opportunity. An earn-a-buck option provides an additional tool to encourage harvest and if combined with a requirement to provide a sample for CWD sampling encourages disease management. Eliminating the public-private land tag distinction increases opportunity for public land hunters and addresses population and habitat management. Providing CDAC’s with an option of issuing up to 2 free antlerless tags statewide increases the tools available to address population management.

2. **Member Organization #2:**

- Archery and Crossbow Season - Either Sex as DMU and Available Quota allow.*
September 11 - January 2, 2022
- Extended Archery and Crossbow Season - Either Sex as DMU and Available Quota allow.*
January 3 - 31, 2022) - only in DMU's Approving the Extended Season by CDAC's
- Youth Deer Season - weapon of choice. - Either Sex as DMU and Available Quota allow.*
October 2 - 10
- Gun Deer Hunt for Hunters with Disabilities. - Either Sex as DMU and Available Quota allow.*
October 2 - 10
- Gun Deer Season - 16 - Days - Either Sex as DMU and Available Quota allow.*
November 13 - 28
- Metro Sub-Unit Gun Deer Season - Either Sex as DMU and Available Quota allow.*
November 13 - December 8
- Muzzleloader Season - Either Sex as DMU and Available Quota allow.*
November 29 - December 8
- December Statewide Four-Day Antlerless-Only Season - Drop
- Antlerless-Only Holiday Hunt - Open Only in DMU's with available Antlerless Quota remaining.**
December 24 - January 2, 2022
- * A Deer license is valid for any given season that is open to deer harvest and is good for Antlerless take only if quota remains in the DMU. When the quota is filled for a given DMU

the Antlerless Season will be closed within 48 hours. A small number of deer may be registered "over quota" during this time-frame. Once a DMU has been filled, the remaining portion of that season is "Buck Only 3"+ antler on one side", unless the remaining portion of that season is Antlerless-Only, in which that season is closed to all deer harvest.**

- Mandatory registration by DMU (and public / private) designation. WDNR update kills by DMU each day by 9:00pm. Post data on remaining quota and notify public which DMU's are filled and closed to Antlerless Take. Again, allow a 48 hour grace period to ensure all kills are reported without penalty.
- If the Public / Private designation remains a tool of CDAC committees, then MFL OPEN should be treated as both for Antlerless Take.

3. Member Organization #3: Antlerless Season #2: Eliminate Dec. antlerless season in northern forest zone. PERIOD Not depending on any other changes.

4. Member Organization #4:

- Gun Season #2 and #3 - The opening day, Saturday, closest to Nov. 15th, but not before Nov. 15th.
- Gun Season #4 - If an option for CDACs and recommended by the CDAC
- Antlerless Season #2 and #4 - If an option for CDACs and recommended by the CDAC

5. Member Organization #5:

Gun Season: Preferred Response # 2, a 16-day season. The below points were intended to accompany the 16-day season proposal. They address most of the issues we have been dealing with and are a change, but offer some worthwhile considerations.

- Adds days to the # 1 deer management tool
- Could add an incentive to the 16-day season allowing hunters to receive a second buck tag by killing a prescribed number of does
- This could increase the buck kill in endemic areas
- Increase doe kill in overpopulated areas
- Reduce ag and forest damage where needed
- Reduce need for the holiday hunt or bonus antlerless hunts
- Reduce hunter / non-hunter conflicts (snowmobile vs hunter for example)
- Increase age sampling and CWD testing
- Increase food shelf donations
- Provide management on private lands where in 2019 86.5% of the antlerless kill took place
- Allow traditionalists to still enjoy hunting Thanksgiving week
- Helps realize the fact that hunters are choosing alternative weapon types and earlier harvests
- This would make the earliest possible opener Nov. 12th, and the latest Nov. 18th.

Holiday Hunt: Preferred Response # 1

- This appeared to be the most reasonable choice. Other options presented conflict with Muzzleloader and extended archery hunts, and were vague.

Youth Season: Preferred Response #2 ***Out of sequence...choosing this is predicated on the antlerless season choice below.

- A four-day youth season would allow travel time for families to take advantage of the hunt/weather, and introduce youths to hunting during the most beautiful time of the year.

Antlerless season: Preferred Response # 5

- A four-day antlerless hunt overlapping with the October youth hunt just makes sense

Public-Private Land Harvest Authorizations: Preferred response # 3

- Public /Private authorizations are tools necessary for many CDAC's to use. In 2019 86.5% of the antlerless harvest took place on private property. This split makes it possible for CDAC's to recommend a sufficient Quota and # of Authorizations to achieve that harvest level, yet protect public property from overharvest.

Hunter Choice and Limits: Preferred response #1

- This is clear, easy to understand, efficient, and enforceable

6. Member Organization #6

Part 1, A5 – This could be a Phase 2 option if a 16 day gun hunt is successful and there is a need to increase the season to 30 days.

7. Member Organization #7: Abstained from voting

8. Member Organization #8:

G, #3 – perhaps not for “any DMU”. Like to explore options for public/private on this.

9. Member Organization #9:

- My change for Gun Season #1 is: if also includes October antlerless hunt
- My change for Holiday Hunt #3 is: if CDAC authority is removed and implemented in all farmland zones
- My choice for Hunter Choice and Limits #3 is: If CDAC authority is removed and 1 to 2 free antlerless tags are issued per license

Additional statements:

1. Create a 16-day gun deer season starting on the Saturday closest to November 15th.
 - Relatively consistent dates which always includes a weekend opener and the Thanksgiving holiday.
 - Longer hunting opportunity allowing for a more relaxed, casual hunt that is easier to participate in while meeting other work and family obligations (such as thanksgiving dinner).
 - Spreads out hunting pressure over more days, possibly leading to less crowded, safer conditions and a better quality hunt.
 - Better chance to see bucks in the rut and deer active during legal hunting hours.
 - Less likely that a large portion of the season will be adversely impacted by bad weather. Warmer temperatures will help maintain hunting pressure and help recruitment.
 - Won't conflict with winter sports such as snowmobile trails and cross-country ski trails that can open on December 1.
 - Longer economic impact for restaurants, gas stations and motels (improves tourism).
 - Similar seasons occur in other nearby states and are well supported. A similar season in Wisconsin would provide some consistency across state boundaries.
2. Add a state-wide four day antlerless-only gun hunt that overlaps with October youth hunt. This replaces the traditional four-day antlerless season currently held in December.
 - Creates an additional hunt (and opening day) for antlerless deer (besides the regular gun deer season) when deer are more active during legal hunting hours and before they become nocturnal from high levels of baiting during the regular gun deer

- season. This helps to ensure an adequate antlerless harvest and aides in herd control.
- Overlapping with an extended youth hunt allows more family members to participate in the hunt. This creates additional opportunities for a family outing and an extended visit to other portions of the state (improves local tourism). Family participation in the youth hunt/antlerless hunt can be combined with other hunting opportunities (such as a prime period of the grouse hunting season).
 - Season won't conflict with winter sports such as snowmobile trails and cross-country ski trails that can start on December 1.
 - Moving antlerless season to four days in October will reduce the likelihood that bad weather will reduce participation.
 - Participation in the antlerless season in December was historically sparse with a miniscule deer harvest in the northern forest zone (ineffective as a herd control strategy)
3. Change youth hunt to four days by adding 2 days to the front of the existing youth season
 - Longer hunt increases opportunities for hunter recruitment and participation.
 - Overlapping an extended youth hunt with a four-day October antlerless hunt allows more family members to participate in the hunt. This creates additional opportunities for a family outing and an extended visit to other portions of the state (improves local tourism). Family participation in the youth hunt/antlerless hunt can be combined with other hunting opportunities (such as a prime period of the grouse hunting season).
 4. Eliminate private-public land distinction when issuing harvest quotas/antlerless tags.
 - Simpler and easier to understand and administrate.
 - Increases hunting opportunities (especially on public and open MFL lands). Hunters are able to move anywhere within a deer management unit boundary and use the same tag (also greatly reduces cost to the hunter and his/her family).
 - Increases hunter recruitment (more opportunities, less cost, less complicated). Improves hunters' chances to harvest a deer.
 - More equitable system. Does not require owning or having access to private lands to harvest a deer.
 - Less competition for antlerless tags, especially for those hunting on public lands. Less likely to need to take a half day off work on the day tags go on sale to wait in the "cue".
 - Puts less burden of increasing the deer herd solely on the backs of public land managers. Mitigates deer browse impacts across the landscape by insuring available antlerless tags will be used on both private and public lands.
 - Equalizes hunting pressure between private and public lands.
 5. All deer hunting licenses should be hunters' choice – to be used in any DMU, on public or private land, on a doe or a buck.
 - Will promote a deer herd with a more even ratio between antlered and antlerless deer.
 - Hunters won't be forced to shoot a buck or a doe.
 - Increases hunting opportunities and therefore higher hunter recruitment rates.
 - Simple and easy to understand.

- Will likely lead to slightly more does shot than bucks leading to gradual population changes rather than the big changes often seen with buck-only seasons or limited antlerless harvest seasons.
- Will lead to a more sustainable herd size with fewer impacts to forest resources.
- Lower deer numbers will result in the increase of average deer body size.
- Will increase the antlered buck population that currently is often a small portion of the total population caused by buck-only hunts. Will also likely lead to an increase in older bucks in the population which will lead to greater hunter recruitment.
- Gives subsistence type hunters the ability to harvest a deer every year, regardless of where they live or hunt in the state. This guaranteed harvest opportunity will increase hunter recruitment and retention.
- Gives public land managers some relief from deer browse impacts by insuring a base level of antlerless harvest on public lands every year. CDACs would still retain the authority to issue additional antlerless tags in overpopulated areas.
- Spreads responsibility for managing local deer populations to a wider segment of the hunting public. Limits the influence of any one special interest group on deer management.

10. Member Organization #10

- Gun Season #1 could support with changes that include the addition or extension of antlerless seasons statewide.
- Gun Season #3 does not always include Thanksgiving holiday.
- Holiday Hunt #1 and #2 is to support if the current holiday hunt dates are made available statewide. (Not at the discretion of CDACs)
- Holiday Hunt #3 could support if the holiday hunt that pairs with youth season #3. This would then be my preferred option if available.
- Antlerless Season #5 could support if paired with youth season #3. This would then be my preferred option if available.
- Public-Private Land Harvest Authorizations #3 is to support if Open MFL was changed to private for tag authorization purposes.

11. Member Organization #11

- (b) Holiday Hunt Option 3: Offer a 4-day antlerless-gun hunt that overlaps with October Youth Hunt in CWD affected counties.

12. Member Organization #12

- (b)3 - The October hunt could be either sex in CWD affected counties.

(b) Non-Deer Hunting Season Framework Recommendations

The tables below show recommendations from the Committee that **do not pertain** to the deer hunting season framework, organized by specific objectives they support. Topics and recommendations that pertain to multiple objectives appear multiple times.

Objective 1: Address concerns and areas of conflict expressed by the snowmobiling, forestry, and agriculture communities.	
Topic	Recommendation
Access	1. (Forest) - Reduce the number of inaccessible trails in counties where access is limited.
Damage Abatement	2. (Ag) - Establish zones where high ag damage exists from deer and compare to other parameters. Consider bonus tags/quotas or increasing/decreasing access to find balance.
Damage Abatement	3. (Ag) - Do not allow farmers to control the # of hunters on lands enrolled in program during the hunting season. This will open more lands to public hunting and help manage deer population.
Damage Abatement	4. (Ag) - Require a specified antlerless harvest (via registration) when ag damage claims exceed a certain \$ amount.
Damage Abatement	5. (Forest) - Remove the public access requirement for small private landowners that enroll in forest damage program or receive forest damage tags.
Damage Abatement	6. (Forest) - Increase harvest on significantly impacted public lands; DNR should directly offer the harvest authorizations to the public without enrolling in DMAP.
Damage Abatement	7. Private woodland owners (down to 10 acres) enrolled in DMAP with an approved property management plan, and with excessive browse pressure should be eligible for a reduced cost or free antlerless tag, to be filled on the impacted property, without requiring public access.
Damage Abatement + Access	8. (Ag and Forest) + Access - "match" hunters with landowners to support wildlife damage and abatement program – proposed online registration process for hunters with recent training, past records, some type of a vetting program etc. It would require landowners to register, too.
Habitat	9. When counties have diverse habitats that have capacity to hold different levels of deer (agricultural land has a higher capacity to hold more deer than forests), split the DMUs in order to manage the deer population more precisely (2 counties already have approval to do so). Set numeric deer unit population goals based on ecological carrying capacity in forested systems and manageable population levels in farmland systems.
R3	10. Increase youth and new hunters special mentored hunts with participating landowners, especially landowners experiencing ag/forest damage.
Snowmobiling	11. Hold holiday hunt when the county has not officially declared the trails open.
Snowmobiling	12. Use best practices from counties (e.g., Oconto, Pepin, Marquette) where snowmobilers, landowners and CDACs worked together to hold holiday hunts.
Snowmobiling	13. Do not extend any deer hunting seasons beyond mid-December. End all gun hunting by the last day of the annual Muzzleloader Hunt in December. This would ensure the 25,000-mile statewide snowmobile trail system can be put in, maintained, and opened (weather permitting) by approximately the 10th of

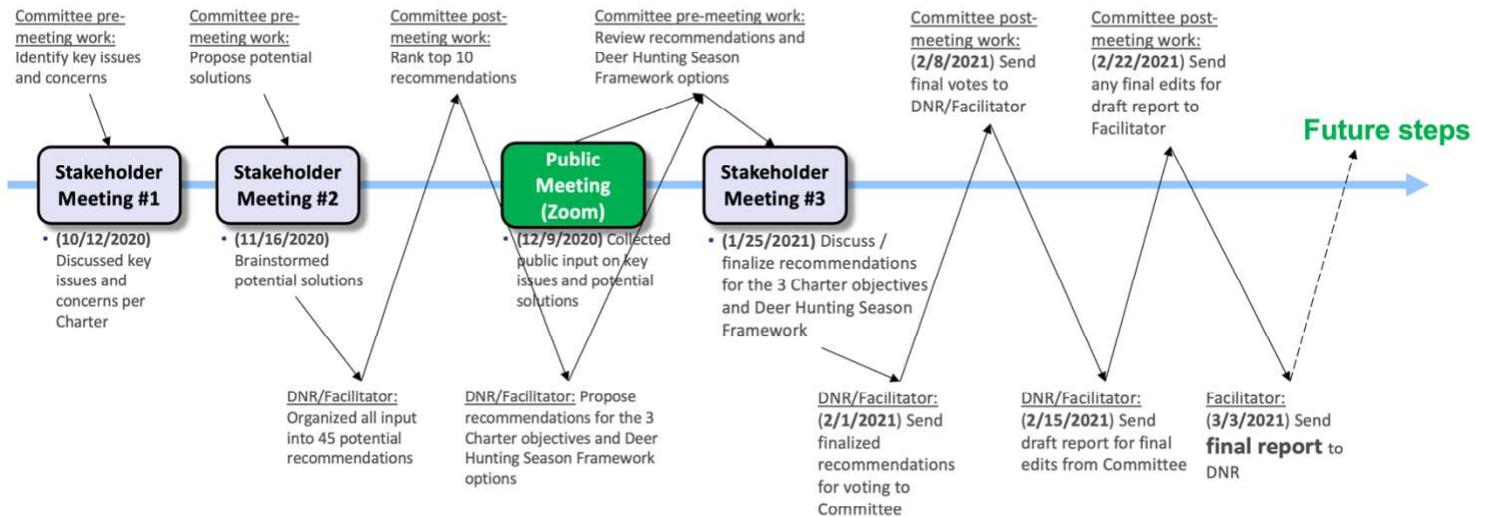
Objective 1: Address concerns and areas of conflict expressed by the snowmobiling, forestry, and agriculture communities.	
Topic	Recommendation
	December, which is 10 days after the Wisconsin Snowmobile Trail system can be legally opened (season is 1 Dec-31 Mar). No gun seasons past December 10 th to allow snowmobile trails to open when conditions permit.
Snowmobiling	14. Maintain snowmobiling opportunities through late season hunting seasons. Explore landowner incentives for opening snowmobile trails during late deer seasons.

Objective 2: Provide deer hunting opportunities that are easy to understand and will support hunter recruitment, retention, and reactivation	
Topic	Recommendation
Access	1. (Forest) - Reduce the number of inaccessible trails in counties where access is limited.
Access / Engagement	2. Encourage private property access, e.g., through financial incentive, tax breaks, etc. in areas with high deer population. Offer incentives for landowners to open up currently closed land for antler-less deer.
Damage Abatement + Access	3. (Ag and Forest) + Access - “match” hunters with landowners to support wildlife damage and abatement program – proposed online registration process for hunters with recent training, past records, some type of a vetting program etc. It would require landowners to register, too.
R3	4. Youth hunt should have the same time period and length as the disability hunt.
R3	5. Increase youth and new hunters special mentored hunts with participating landowners, especially landowners experiencing ag/forest damage.

Objective 3: Identify the best available tools to achieve population objectives and reduce the percent of deer with CWD	
Topic	Recommendation
Access	1. (Forest) - Reduce the number of inaccessible trails in counties where access is limited.
Access / Engagement	2. Encourage private property access, e.g., through financial incentive, tax breaks, etc. in areas with high deer population. Offer incentives for landowners to open up currently closed land for antler-less deer.
CWD	3. Extend seasons and perform targeted removal of deer outside hunting seasons.
Damage Abatement	4. (Ag) - Establish zones where high ag damage exists from deer and compare to other parameters. Consider bonus tags/quotas/or increasing/decreasing access to find balance.
Damage Abatement	5. (Ag) - Do not allow farmers to control the # of hunters on lands enrolled in program during the hunting season. This will open more lands to public hunting and help manage deer population.
Damage Abatement	6. (Ag) - Require a specified antlerless harvest (via registration) when ag damage claims exceed a certain \$ amount.
Damage Abatement	7. (Forest) - Increase harvest on significantly impacted public lands; DNR should directly offer the harvest authorizations to the public without enrolling in DMAP.

Objective 3: Identify the best available tools to achieve population objectives and reduce the percent of deer with CWD	
Topic	Recommendation
Damage Abatement	8. Private woodland owners (down to 10 acres) enrolled in DMAP with an approved property management plan, and with excessive browse pressure should be eligible for a reduced cost or free doe tag, to be filled on the impacted property, without requiring public access.
Deer Donation	9. Connect hunters to recipients of deer; the recipient would process the deer or pay for it. DNR is working on it. Work through non-profit organizations – e.g., Salvation Army has a list of potential recipients, though the meat has to be processed through a meat processor before it can be donated.
Habitat	10. When counties have diverse habitats that have capacity to hold different levels of deer (agricultural land has a higher capacity to hold more deer than forests), split the DMUs in order to manage the deer population more precisely (2 counties already have approval to do so). Set numeric deer unit population goals based on ecological carrying capacity in forested systems and manageable population levels in farmland systems.
R3	11. Increase youth and new hunters special mentored hunts with participating landowners, especially landowners experiencing ag/forest damage.

5. Process for Committee Work



Facilitation and report writing services were provided by Credens LLC.

Due to the high complexity of the topics covered by the Charter objectives, and the number of organizations invited to participate, the process for the Committee's work involved many steps, as shown in the diagram above and discussed below.

1. Prior to the first meeting of the Deer Stakeholder Committee, the facilitators asked the Committee members to complete a "**pre-work**" assignment in which they identified their organization's key statewide issues and concerns related to the goals and objectives of the Committee Charter. The pre-work yielded 80+ preliminary ideas, many of them overlapping. The facilitators and Mr. Owsley consolidated them into 40+ ideas for Committee review during the **1st meeting on Oct 12, 2020**. During the meeting, the Committee identified specific issues focused on each of the three objectives from the Committee Charter. The output of the 1st meeting included 25 issues and 38 potential solutions, many of them broadly defined, with multiple ideas underneath each, and spread across the three objectives – at this point, these ideas were still in a preliminary stage. Other ideas that were shared by the Committee members but were not directly related to the Charter objectives were captured in the "parking lot".
2. Prior to the 2nd meeting of the Committee, the facilitators asked the Committee to complete another "**pre-work**" to provide feedback and enhancements to the output of meeting #1, and to identify potential solutions to the issues. This pre-work yielded 123 ideas from the Committee, many of which overlapped each other. The facilitators and Mr. Owsley consolidated the committee's pre-work, and organized the solutions into 64 potential solutions sorted into themes such as: Access/Engagement, CDACs, CWD, Damage Abatement, Deer Donation, Habitat, Harvest Authorization, R3, Seasons, and Snowmobiling. These 64 solutions are presented in the notes for meeting #2. The Committee's **2nd meeting was held on November 16, 2020** and discussed the 64 solution ideas to ensure all ideas were accurately captured. Following the 2nd meeting, the facilitators organized all input into 45 potential recommendations pertaining to 24 final issues, organized by specific

Charter objectives; some recommendations pertained to more than one objective.

3. The DNR also held a virtual **public meeting** via Zoom on December 9, 2020. The public was invited to participate and share their feedback about the Charter objectives. Public feedback was recorded during the meeting and received via email, and provided to the Committee as input to their subsequent discussions.
4. In mid-December 2020, the Committee members were asked to identify via email their “**top 10**” recommendations out of these 45; these votes were exploratory and non-binding in nature.
5. As preparation for the 3rd meeting, the facilitators and Mr. Owsley divided the recommendations into two broad groups:
 - a. 30 recommendations that were **directly related** to deer hunting season framework, organized by 7 specific components:
 - i. Gun season, with 5 options
 - ii. Holiday Hunt, with 7 options
 - iii. Antlerless season, with 6 options
 - iv. Youth season, with 3 options
 - v. Earn-a-buck, with a yes/no option
 - vi. Harvest authorizations – public vs private land, with 3 options, and
 - vii. Harvest authorizations – hunter’s choice and limits, with 5 options.
 - b. Other recommendations that were **not** related to deer hunting season framework, organized by each Charter objective.

In mid-January 2021, the Committee members were asked, as “**pre-work**”, to vote for their “top” option within each of the above 7 components. This was a non-binding vote, and was designed to help clarify / edit the options for final voting.

6. During the **3rd meeting on January 25, 2021**, the Committee reviewed the two groups of recommendations, and the “pre-work” votes for each of the 7 components of the hunting season framework. It provided specific edits to the hunting season framework components and accompanying options, making them ready for the **final round of voting by the Committee via email**, conducted in early February. In this round, Committee members were asked to specify, for each option within each of the 7 components, whether they:
 - a. Preferred that option, or
 - b. Could accept that option, even if it was not the preferred one, or
 - c. Could accept that option with changes (they were asked to specify their desired changes), or
 - d. Could not accept that option and if implemented, it would be a deal breaker.The facilitators compiled the results of the final round of voting.
7. The facilitators sought Committee feedback on a draft of their report in mid-February, and submitted the **final report** to the DNR in March 2021.

6. Committee Meeting #1 Notes: October 12, 2020

Opening Remarks, Bret Owsley

Committee lead Bret Owsley greeted the committee members and thanked all for their dedication and participation. Mr. Owsley explained that he is the liaison between the DNR and committee and will be happy to address questions and ensure all have the right information. This meeting is being recorded and will be available to the public.

Opening Remarks, Eric Lobner

DNR Wildlife Program Manager Eric Lobner introduced himself. He thanked committee members for participating. He understands that it takes a lot of commitment to participate. He feels that there is nothing more important than deer to Wisconsin and its conservation. The ecological and financial impacts of deer affect all aspects of Wisconsin.

DNR staff is attending this meeting to support the deer stakeholder group. Committee members are welcome to ask questions of them as needed. Staff is attending to explain science, recommendations and policies. Mr. Lobner noted this group is all about thinking and brainstorming new ideas. He encouraged members to raise all their ideas.

Staff from several agencies and organizations are here to provide info and science to the group. This is an important effort to Mr. Lobner and DNR Secretary Preston Cole. Secretary Cole had the idea to get this group together and focus on the holiday hunt, nuisance permits, agricultural damage and the deer season framework.

Mr. Lobner is excited to hear what the committee brings forward. He thanked all for taking the time to be part of this.

Committee Introductions, Owsley

The committee members introduced themselves and the organization they represent. The following members were in attendance:

Committee Members

Joel Artis, Buffalo County Outfitters
Elizabeth Baker, Sporting Heritage Council
Rob Bohmann, CDAC Oversight Committee
Ryan Brathal, WI Farmer's Union
Mike Brust, WI Bowhunters Association
Dan Eklund, US Forest Service
Ralph Fritsch, WI Wildlife Federation
Karen Gefvert, WI Farm Bureau Federation
Mark Grossman, Polk County Forest, WI County Forest Association
Shawn Hagan, The Forestland Group
Don Hamilton, Association WI Snowmobile Clubs
TJ Hauge, WI Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
Al Horvath, WI Conservation Congress
John Huff, WI Green Fire

Tom Kempen, WI Woodland Owners Association
John Krause for John Schwarzmann, Board of Commissioners of Public Lands
Dale Mayo, Snowmobile Recreation Council
Rick Mechelke, WI Bowhunters Association
Cassie Mordini, Office of Outdoor Recreation, WI Department of Tourism
Dave Newman, Association WI Snowmobile Clubs
Kevyn Quamme, WI Wildlife Federation
Terri Roehrig, WI Conservation Congress
Mike Spors, Whitetails Unlimited
Jake Wakcisak, WI County Forests

DNR Staff

Jesse Ashton, Conservation Warden
Eric Canania, Southern District Deer Biologist
Brad Koele, Wildlife Damage Specialist
Emily Iehl, R3 Coordinator
Lacey Hillman, Environmental Enforcement Section
Bob Holsman, Social Scientist
Brad Hutnik, Division of Forestry
Bob Nack, Chief Big Game Section, interim deer and elk specialist
Tami Ryan, Chief Wildlife Health Program

Project Introduction, Owsley

Mr. Owsley invited the committee to consider if the current deer season framework, structure and programs are the best for managing deer in Wisconsin? The committee will look at the deer hunting framework and consider three primary objectives. CWD is one part of deer management, but DNR hosted a separate CWD review recently, so it will not be the only focus here. The committee will review the bigger picture of Wisconsin's deer hunting framework.

Mr. Owsley asked the committee to consider why we are all here? Whitetail deer are important to all of us. They drove his passion to be outdoors. All members are all impacted by deer—in recreational ways, with business impacts, in their appreciation for the outdoors; for the committee, all these factors are important. The committee members all have a common purpose: they want deer to flourish, to provide a hunting season framework, and to be able to do all recreational pursuits without disruption.

Project Steps and Plan for the Day, Facilitator

1. The facilitator noted that the focus of the day is to identify **summary** issues; there are a lot of small issues and there is not time to address every single one.
2. The facilitator reviewed expectations and ground rules for the meeting. He reviewed project steps that will take place between now and February. Pre-work will be due from members before each meeting.
3. Today the committee will focus on creating a short list of key issues. They started with 90+ ideas but need to condense into a shorter list related to the three charter objectives.
4. The pre-work has been organized by charter **objective** and **category**:
 - a. Objective 1: Snowmobile, forestry and agriculture
 - b. Objective 2: Hunting opportunities and R3
 - c. Objective 3a: Deer population management

d. Objective 3b: CWD

5. Today, identify the key issues. Second meeting, identify solutions. Third meeting, finalize solutions.
6. Question: How will this be implemented? Is the intent to change deer structure again? Or just raise ideas? What is the final objective?
7. Owsley: All options are on the table. Is the deer season framework, and deer programs, the best ways to manage deer? We are looking for recommendations of changes that may affect DNR policy. We don't have to make changes, but we can make recommendations for changes. We are trying not to create any sideboards. If this Committee would like to address DNR policy changes, Administrative code changes or Statutory changes, we want to hear that discussion.
8. The facilitator explained that he will type issues into a worksheet. He reminded the committee to focus on the *what*—what are the issues, not *how* will we solve them. The end of the meeting will result in a clean list of summary issues.

Facilitated Discussion of Summary Issues, Facilitator**Objective 1: Agriculture damage, ecosystem health, snowmobile/recreation/tourism**

1. Adequate regeneration; deer population feeds on small plantings so it is tough to regenerate forests. How to maintain herd while regenerating forests? How to maintain herd that adequately allows the forest to regenerate?
2. What season structure balances herd management with snowmobiling opportunities?
3. Late season hunting affects snowmobiling and landowners.
4. Farmers are being harassed for participating in the agricultural damage program
5. Farmers get harassment from hunters trying to access properties, or by calling after hours. Farmers with deer eating their crops try to reduce the population. Neighbors with adjacent hunting property. Need to balance the needs of landowners and hunters.
6. Economic impacts are felt across all areas: forestry, ag, snowmobile, tourism, hunting. Solutions need to satisfy economic impacts. How to balance divergent economic interests between varying stakeholders?
7. What is the conflict between snowmobilers and late season hunters? What is the issue?
8. Private landowners with snowmobilers crossing their property. They don't want to open their property to snowmobilers during hunting seasons. Trails have to be prepped, signed, maintained for the season.
9. Some counties have late season hunts, some don't. Does the opening of trails differ when there is/isn't holiday hunt?
10. Depends on when there's enough snow. Some counties require trails remain closed until hunt is over. Late season hunts cause problems.
11. In the north, trail prep happens before December. In the south, agriculture, when the crops come off, plowing, and getting through woodlots affects trail prep. Timing is different between southern and northern counties.
12. In Vilas County, Christmas to New Year's is critical to tourism. Trails are on public land in the north. Logistics of opening trails, then closing them between holidays, is devastating for tourism.
13. Holiday hunt works only in southern counties. Not in northern counties. The Holiday Hunt can only occur in a Farmland Zone, not allowed in Forest Zones (Northern Forest, Central Forest)
14. Wildlife damage and abatement program: add overall reevaluation of damage and abatement program. Enrollment, claims, user access to properties. Changes have been made but there is room for more. County-to-county variations.

15. Do we need broader statements, for example, ag damage? Regeneration issues? Access issues? Start broad, then break down into manageable parts?
 - a. Ag damage issues vs carrying capacity, hunter satisfaction, access issues
 - b. Regen issues vs carrying capacity, hunter satisfaction, access issues
 - c. Special interests, societal group issues and areas of conflict within those groups vs carrying capacity, hunter satisfaction, access issues
16. Smaller private landowners have concerns about tree regeneration. 1) DMAP programs only issued with 160 acres +; 2) forest damage tags require public access; the requirements for forest damage tags are a dead end for landowners.
17. Landowners need tools but those are not easily used. The tools are not effective.
18. Regional regeneration failures to browse-sensitive species leads to lack of forest resiliency.
19. Challenges implementing tools currently available for herd management.

Objective 2: R3, season structure, landowner engagement, public engagement

1. How to simplify hunting seasons and tag issuances?
2. Whole counties are managed the same way, even though the deer population varies throughout the county. There is resistance to break up the county.
3. Public engagement: lack of public understanding about how money from deer license sales funds conservation throughout state.
4. Season structure: some counties would like to use tools to manage herd, but they are not available to CDACs and require legislation.
5. Public engagement: we need to help user groups, especially non-consumptive groups. How do we educate about how all groups work together? Public engagement includes processes, rules, regulations, season structure.
6. The general lack of understanding, education pertains to numerous topics.
7. Re-evaluate quota setting using public vs private lands.
8. Public land carrying capacity is lower because they can't get antlerless tags.
9. Affects people's desires to hunt public land; public landowners have greater burden to meet the herd quota.
10. Very complicated regulation system now with 72 CDACs. The season structure varies county to county. Hunters can't move county to county, and it is a barrier to harvest management and hunter's abilities to achieve goals.
11. Landowner incentives to open up properties to allow hunting? Regarding lands currently closed to hunters.
12. Support for the public/private land tag dichotomy.
13. Counties are too large to manage.
14. Lack of habitat uniformity across county.
15. Wants outreach or education for landowners/hunters around identifying ag damage. For private landowners who don't allow hunters access, knowledge about deer damage could encourage them to open up to hunters.
16. R3: Continue R3 programs. How to convert new hunters to lifetime license-buyers?
17. Could private landowners identify problems that private landowners have with allowing access? Would they need financial incentives?
18. Re-examine the benefits of an earlier rifle deer season. How could an earlier rifle season help with deer population management?
19. Re-evaluate the historical weapon-specific season structure; it creates a culture that doesn't allow R3 to improve and doesn't allow for new hunters. Introduce 4th R of "respect." Open up our minds to re-evaluate season structure as a way to improve R3.

20. CDAC members have a lot of tools to decrease deer #s, but few to increase deer #s. The north needs to increase deer herd size to incentivize hunters to come there.
21. Expand youth hunt to 4 days.
22. CDACs don't have enough tools.

Objective 3: Deer population management; CWD

1. How to incentivize deer donation program, increase deer harvest beyond what a hunter would use?
2. How to balance CWD testing and deer harvest goals?
3. Quota-setting is missing a habitat relationship metric. Quotas are set regardless of if the land can carry the same herd. Habitat metric needs to be built into quota system. Can the land actually carry that # of deer?
4. Tools for CDAC/DNR to manage herd – issue limitless antlerless # tags; issuing anything above 2 doesn't increase antlerless harvest and sends message that DNR wants to kill all the deer. The # of farmland zone antlerless deer tags issued with a license sends the wrong message and is not effective.
5. Antlerless-only season – is that a realistic option? It has not been implemented.
6. Deer Population mgt—the political boundaries of a county don't correspond to ecology of deer management.
7. Need habitat-based deer mgt, have CDACs to work across county boundaries.
8. Managing by county hampers effective herd management.
9. Lack of tools available to landowners/hunters who have CWD concerns and want to be more aggressive in managing CWD in their areas. There is not enough resources in their toolbox to manage CWD. How to create viable options to allow landowners and hunters to address CWD in their areas?
10. We need the ability to create an end point for CWD—place infected material in a dumpster in clay-lined landfill. Secure adequate funding to supply deer carcass dumpsters throughout the state to facilitate hunters who are trying to harvest more deer. Deer dumpsters need to be more accessible.
11. Current methods of preventing CWD spread are lacking. Restrictions on CWD spread are lacking. Better to restrict movement of carcasses throughout the State. CWD+ carcasses can move throughout the state.
12. The DNR Wildlife Health Program noted the need to increase harvest pressure on bucks in CWD areas.
13. Examine how winter weather, predation and baiting impact the DNR deer population assessments.
14. How can we increase youth interest and participation?
15. Examine the impacts of baiting on deer harvest.
16. State to sponsor a study on prion content in landfill leachate and semen straws.
17. Voluntary testing and processing? Mandatory and simplified testing for CWD?
18. No potential for population control with the current level of baiting in gun season. Baiting affects the ability to do population control. A legislative issue.
19. A small # deer have big impact on regeneration of specific species. For example, hemlock, cedar. Make up less than 1% landscape but are primary cover for deer.
20. Is there an issue with not enough CWD testing?
21. CWD goals are met through voluntary endeavors.
22. How to move from disease observation to active disease mgt / containment to address CWD rates in endemic area? How to snuff out sparks throughout state? How to address CWD in future?
23. Private landowners make decisions about harvesting deer on their property. How can we get private landowners to care/understand CWD, to motivate them to increase deer harvest on their property?

24. A statewide baiting and feeding ban would be helpful for multiple reasons.
25. Concern that cervid farms contribute to CWD.
26. People don't believe the forestry impact from deer browse. How to help public understand and harvest? This is bigger than CWD. Some landowners don't understand or care about forestry and deer quotas. Turn that into motivating them to harvest deer on their property.

Brainstorm Potential Solutions, Facilitator

1. Survey hunters to ask about CWD testing
2. All deer hunting licenses should be hunters' choice, to be used in any deer management unit, on a doe or buck.
3. Predator control is needed in the northeast; coyote population has increased a lot.
4. Have an earlier firearm antlerless season, even 2 days, in CWD-affected areas.
5. We have been involved in similar processes since 2000. Every time we change things, we lose hunters. We've already worked these things out. These are not new ideas. Our current structure is a result of those discussions. Many of us have been through this many times before. Drastic changes result in loss of hunters.
6. Eliminate the private/public land distinction when issuing harvest quotas / antler-less tags.
7. Public/private tags may work in northern forest zones, but are less effective in farmland zones.
8. Many of these solutions will not be one-size-fits-all. We're here to discuss disagreements and similarities. Not everyone will be 100% for or against.
9. BCPL supports eliminating public/private tags.
10. Restructure seasons so all rifle hunting is a 2 week-season in November.
11. Match hunters with landowners. Register hunters who want to participate in damage abatement program. Hunters would be vetted for training, past records, etc. Online database of hunters who want access to private land. Landowners would also register. Select location and dates.
12. Incentive would be to restore wildlife damage abatement and hunter relationship that has been damaged.
13. Some landowners want just the vetted hunters, but some may want additional incentive. Maybe two separate programs that work together?
14. Cap up to 2 (from 0 to 2) antler-less tags with a license; currently done in farmland zones. Do this statewide.
15. Consider an antler-less-only license, and charge more to shoot a buck. Make the license antler-free, and extra for buck.
16. May require legislative changes, such as more tools for CDAC, earlier gun season, extension of fun season, etc. Review legislative restrictions that influence the effectiveness of solutions. Will include "Earn-a-buck."
17. Earn-a-buck: Consider various versions – older version / voluntary enrollment / various forms—buck harvest issues.
18. Make all tools, all season structures available statewide.
19. Include sound science in deer management, more than it has over past 6 years. Decision-making of quotas and tags go back to local DNR biologists and managers. CDACs maintain yearly analysis, population goals, public input, etc.
20. Include buck hunting across different license types, during all antler-less hunting season.
21. Removing management zone boundaries? Yes.
22. Question for snowmobile groups: are there other solutions aside from no hunting when snowmobile trails are open?

23. Yes, we are open to other solutions. For example, could the hunting seasons be flexible so that holiday hunts are held only when snow is not on the trails?
24. Limit baiting and feeding, ban 3 days before and during the gun season.
25. Expand DNR Forestry Browse Survey across the state, to help understand if the land can carry the # deer.
26. Add to ag damage program to allow other groups to get forestry damage tags without burden of joining DMAP. Make it easy to participate in Ag Damage program. Many in north have tribal rights, so it is a discussion among co-managers.
27. Counties represent politics, not deer habitat. Management decisions are being made based on politics, not on-the-ground science. Go back to Units that represent common habitat types.
28. Remove antler-less only hunting season, need to identify something different.
29. CDACs use harvest and population goals to give DNR a # antler-less permits, based on harvest of previous year. That is reviewed by DNR advisory committee county by county. CDACs don't do much to impact deer population in a county. Recommendations from CDACs are vetted by biologists and foresters; the role of CDAC is limited to issuing antler-less permits. They were created originally because the deer #s were so low. If consider removing antler-less only season, consider that CDACs will be eliminated.
30. CDACs work very hard. County control is important, but we need to break down by habitat type.
31. Hotspots, damage abatement could be resolved with different control—not counties.
32. Request to allow all participants to vote, not just one per organization. Need more input.
 - a. There is one vote per organization. Will discuss further with staff.
 - b. It's incumbent upon people to discuss within their organization, find consensus, then vote that way.
 - c. We have a hand-picked committee, people can say it's already stacked.
 - d. There are 20 organizations, and we will have a public input progress.

Reflections and Next Steps, Facilitator and Owsley

- Notes will be sent sooner before the next meeting.
- Appreciate everyone's input. We asked if other orgs should be represented. Multiple organizations were recommended to us that we added.
- Request to look at the issues list while looking at solutions; second meeting prework will include all notes, input, materials.
- Concern about participants not being able to see all notes at once. Solution could be, Google doc, Miro?

Next Steps

The committee's next steps are

- Oct 26: DNR sends Meeting #1 notes and pre-work for Meeting #2
- Nov 2: Meeting #2 pre-work and feedback on notes due
- Nov 16: Meeting #2
- Nov 25: DNR sends Meeting #2 summary notes

Appreciation and Adjournment

- Mr. Owsley thanked everyone for a great meeting. He expressed appreciation with everyone's participation and involvement. He feels this was a great first step to accomplishing the committee charter. He invited committee members to share comments via phone or email.
- The facilitator thanked everyone for their input. Staff looks forward to continuing this conversation.

- The meeting was adjourned at 1:04 pm.

Zoom chat from this meeting (unedited):

08:59:44 From Bob Nack - Big Game Section Chief : the presenter is not allowing me to unmute myself

08:59:53 From Daryl Harrison to Brent Alderman(Privately) : Brent, is it set so participants CAN unmute themselves?

09:01:24 From Tami Ryan, WI DNR : I cant unmute

09:01:27 From Eric C : I cannot either

09:01:29 From Elizabeth Baker's iPhone to Brent Alderman(Privately) : as a participant I also cannot I mute myself

09:01:34 From John Huff : host wont allow us to unmute

09:01:38 From drmay : Dale Mayo, I cannot unmute either

09:01:48 From Michael Spors : I cannot, host not allowing

09:02:01 From Don Hamilton : I cannot either

09:02:57 From Ben Jaster to Brent Alderman(Privately) : Do they want participants to be able to unmute themselves?

09:03:21 From Michael Spors : I still cannot

09:03:24 From Emily : I just muted myself and can't unmute again!

09:03:32 From Ben Jaster to Brent Alderman(Privately) : I just changed the settings so that participants can unmute

09:03:54 From Ben Jaster : Hi all, I just changed settings so that participants will now be allowed to unmute themselves.

09:04:11 From Emily : That worked.

09:05:03 From Michael Spors : Alt a worked for me

09:10:18 From Rick : Rick Mechelke WI Bowhunters

09:21:03 From Brent Alderman to Bret Owsley(Privately) : callers can press *9 on their phones to unmute

09:34:45 From Ryan Brathal WI Farmer's Union : Thanks Bob!

09:48:26 From Tom Kempen - WWOA - Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association to Brent Alderman(Privately) : Brent, what is the R3 he referenced?

09:48:30 From Tom Kempen - WWOA - Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association to Brent Alderman(Privately) : and what is CDAC?

09:52:22 From Elizabeth Baker- Sporting Heritage Council deer rep to Brent Alderman(Privately) : structure makes sense

09:53:20 From Tom Kempen - WWOA - Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association : What is R3 and CDAC?

09:54:26 From Bob Holsman- : R3= Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation of hunters

09:54:57 From Bob Holsman- : CDAC= County Deer Advisory Committees

09:54:59 From Ryan Brathal WI Farmer's Union : CDAC= Citizen Deer Advisory Committee

09:58:06 From Tom Kempen - WWOA - Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association : thank you

09:59:34 From Dale Mayo, Snowmobile Recreation Council : can you please send me this mornings email again?

10:19:38 From Tom Kempen - WWOA - Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association : How do hunters find out that a farmer applied for deer damage compensation?

- 10:23:19 From Brad Koele, Wisconsin DNR : A list of agriculture producers enrolled in the Wildlife Damage Program is posted on DNR's Website at the following link:
<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/WildlifeHabitat/hunt.html>
- 10:23:41 From Tom Kempen - WWOA - Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association : thank you
- 10:39:30 From Terri Roehrig - WCC Vice Chair : I like that Brad!
- 10:49:08 From Shawn Hagan - TFG, Large Landowners : Question to Brad Koele (or other WDNR folks), MFL Open lands treated as Public Land or Private Land in the issuance of Antlerless Tags?
- 10:53:41 From Jake Walcisak - WI County Forest Assoc. : I strongly agree with Dan Ecklunds comments.
- 10:56:48 From Jesse Ashton WDNR Law Enforcement : If they are open to public hunting they Public land tags are to be used.
- 11:12:20 From Terri Roehrig - WCC Vice Chair : Agree with you TJ
- 11:18:46 From Bob Holsman- : To follow up on Nack's comment, our research shows very few hunters are interested in harvesting more than 2 deer in year.
- 11:20:41 From Tom Kempen - WWOA - Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association : antler-less deer hunting only? No one hangs an antler-less deer head in their living room. Take away the buck option and you will diminish the desire to hunt.
- 11:25:26 From Terri Roehrig - WCC Vice Chair : Tom - the antlerless only option is one of the tools that CDACs have to use but they have gotten pushback when proposed. If this isn't a realistic tool then why have it as a tool for them to use?
- 11:26:28 From Tom Kempen - WWOA - Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association : agreed.
- 11:46:48 From Tom Kempen - WWOA - Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association : Can that working document be sent in email to everyone?
- 12:29:43 From Jesse Ashton WDNR Law Enforcement : EAB works to reduce the deer population, but I don't think it is practical unless we had in person registration in those areas. The amount of fraud with people calling in deer that were not actually harvested would be very high.
- 12:57:36 From TJ Hauge - WI BHA : 40 people on a Zoom call is a challenge on its own, let alone with this conversation topic. I want to thank everyone for the professionalism and those running the meeting for doing a good job moderating this.
- 12:59:03 From dan eklund US Forest Service : Like to Echo TJ comments about the professionalism and good job managing the group. Much appreciated.
- 13:00:01 From Terri Roehrig - WCC Vice Chair : Agree with the great moderation!
- 13:00:07 From Terri Roehrig - WCC Vice Chair : Could you use Miro?
- 13:00:09 From Ryan Brathal WI Farmer's Union : Great point Jesse

7. Committee Meeting #2 Notes: November 9, 2020

Attendance

The second meeting of the DNR Deer Stakeholder Committee met virtually on November 16, 2020. The committee members and DNR staff denoted in bold below were in attendance.

Committee Members

Joel Artis, Buffalo County Outfitters
Elizabeth Baker, Sporting Heritage Council
Rob Bohmann, CDAC Oversight Committee
Becky Brathal, WI Farmer's Union
Mike Brust, WI Bowhunters Association
Dan Eklund, US Forest Service
Ralph Fritsch, WI Wildlife Federation
Karen Gefvert, WI Farm Bureau Federation
Mark Grossman, Polk County Forest, WI County Forest Association
Shawn Hagan, The Forestland Group
Don Hamilton, Association WI Snowmobile Clubs
TJ Hauge, WI Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
Al Horvath, WI Conservation Congress
John Huff, WI Green Fire
Tom Kempen, WI Woodland Owners Association
John Krause, Board of Commissioners of Public Lands
James Lanier, Quality Deer Management Association
Dale Mayo, Snowmobile Recreation Council
Rick Mechelke, WI Bowhunters Association
Cassie Mordini, Office of Outdoor Recreation, WI Department of Tourism
Dave Newman, Association WI Snowmobile Clubs
Kevyn Quamme, WI Wildlife Federation
Terri Roehrig, WI Conservation Congress
John Schwarzmann, Board of Commissioners of Public Lands
Mike Spors, Whitetails Unlimited
Dan Vandertie, Wisconsin Farm Bureau
Jake Walcisak, Taylor County Forest, WI County Forest Association

DNR Staff

Jesse Ashton, Conservation Warden
Eric Canania, Southern District Deer Biologist
Brad Koele, Wildlife Damage Specialist
Emily Iehl, R3 Coordinator
Lacey Hillman, Environmental Enforcement Section
Bob Holsman, Research Scientist
Brad Hutnik, Division of Forestry
Bob Nack, Chief Big Game Section, Interim Deer and Elk Specialist
Tami Ryan, Chief Wildlife Health Program

Opening Remarks, Bret Owsley

Committee lead Bret Owsley welcomed attendees. He noted that this was a big week for deer enthusiasts as deer season opened next week. He expressed appreciation for everyone's involvement and invited all to participate in an open discussion. He reviewed ground rules and expectations for the meeting.

Mr. Owsley explained that in Wisconsin deer touch all aspects of our lives, especially through hunting and tourism. The goals of this committee are to outline a deer hunting framework and identify ways to accomplish 3 objectives: 1) Address areas of conflict expressed by snowmobilers, forestry and agriculture; 2) Provide deer hunting opportunities that are easy to understand and will support hunter recruitment, retention and reactivation; 3) Achieve deer population objectives and reduce the percent of deer with Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD).

Mr. Owsley explained the committee's work with an analogy to building a house: this committee is all about the footings. It is the deer hunting structure and associated programs that make up the base of the project, as the footings of a house do. Committee members submitted comments in multiple areas through the meeting pre-work. But the committee needs to complete the base before the comments in other areas can be addressed. Mr. Owsley noted that all comments are valuable and have helped him to consider other issues in new ways.

The focus of the committee's work is the deer hunting structure and associated programs. The current hunting structure includes:

- Archery and Crossbow Seasons
- Extended Archery and Crossbow Season
- Youth Deer Season
- Gun Deer Hunt for Hunters with Disabilities
- Traditional 9-Day Gun Deer Season
- Metro Sub-Unit Gun Deer Season
- Muzzleloader Season
- December Statewide 4-Day Antlerless-only Season
- Antlerless-only Holiday Hunt

Current deer hunting programs include:

- Deer Management Assistance Program
- Wildlife Damage Abatement Program
- Forest Damage Shooting Permit Program

The committee is invited to consider if the current season structure and programs are adequate. One potential answer is yes, the status quo is adequate. But DNR assembled this committee of experts to consider if there are any changes that might be beneficial. These items are the foundation of what the committee needs to discuss first.

Mr. Owsley reminded the committee that they are representing entire organizations and should provide input representing more than a single person's perspective. He noted that a lot of feedback and ideas were received, enough that staff is considering future discussions to address topics raised that were outside this committee's scope.

Mr. Owsley thanked the committee for their thoughtful work. He reminded the committee that late submissions slow down document compilation, thanked those who submitted on time, and encouraged all to submit on time in the future.

Project Steps and Plan for the Day, Facilitator

The facilitator reviewed the project steps completed thus far. He noted that the facilitators and Mr. Owsley accommodated as many of the late pre-work submissions as possible, but balanced waiting for late submissions versus delaying the project. The committee will be asked to complete post-work after today's meeting which will be collated for the third meeting.

The pre-work for today's meeting identified 25+ issues and 100+ individual ideas. Those were combined into the "Issues and Solutions" document sent to the committee last week. That document will not be edited further.

The facilitators and Mr. Owsley then organized those ideas into the following themes:

- Access/Engagement
- CDACs
- CWD
- Damage Abatement
- Deer Donation
- Habitat
- Harvest Authorization
- R3
- Seasons
- Snowmobiling

All the pre-work was summarized into 64 potential solutions. This list will be used by the committee going forward. Many ideas in the "Potential Solutions" document affect more than a single committee objective; there is a lot of overlap between solutions correlating to objectives.

Meeting attendees were given time to review the "Issues and Solutions" document. Original submissions are in black font. Submissions added from the meeting pre-work are blue font. Some ideas have been moved, rephrased, and combined. Other ideas were moved to lists of general comments or issues for future consideration.

Discussion of Proposed Solutions, Facilitator

In this discussion, the categories, issue #s and objective #s refer to the document "64 potential solutions 11-15-2020 FINAL.pdf" that was sent to the committee in advance of this meeting; it is appended to this document.

Note: Item numbers for specific recommendations are subject to change across multiple versions of the document based on Committee discussions.

Access/Engagement

- #1 addresses private land access issues. It does not reflect solutions regarding hunting access on public land. Public land is managed through specific programs, many of which are included in the Harvest Authorization solutions section.
- Add "access" to solution #15.

CDACs

- These ideas capture the theme that CDACs should have all available tools to use.
- Should CDACs be removed from this document? What do CDACs have to do with season structure?
- #3: Don't restrict the tools or season structure to management zones.
 - Provide all tools to all Deer Management Units (DMUs) statewide.
- Change #4 category to "Seasons."
 - "CDAC" is not needed in #4. Re-word to "Recommend earn-a-buck season option."
- Is Earn-a-Buck statutory? Some recommendations will be implemented with internal actions, some will require the Natural Resources board, and some are statutory.
 - This group can make recommendations without regards to implementation mechanism.
- CDACs are advisory only, re-word #3 to allow CDACs to make recommendations regarding season framework to DNR. Replace "all" with "more."
- The intent is to provide more options regarding season structure to CDACs.

CWD

- Regarding #13 surveying hunters, that is already done so this suggestion is redundant.
 - A statewide survey and focus groups were done recently and lots of information will be released.
 - Yes, remove #13 here.
- Could Wisconsin work with other states on CWD issues?
 - There is already a Wisconsin CWD plan in place. DNR's Wildlife Management Program (WMP) has regular communications with other states and regional agencies. It works collaboratively on a committee about midwestern strategies and research.
- CWD spreads across counties and baiting/feeding is promoting the spread. DNR could raise fines for baiting/feeding in counties near CWD zones. Law enforcement could focus on the zones where it is spreading. Baiting/feeding doesn't stop as soon as CWD is found.
 - How will that influence the season structure? Is this a topic for future discussion?
 - Most of the CWD issues do not relate to season structure.
- The current \$343 fine is not a deterrent to anyone the warden cites. In MN the citation is much stricter and includes a mandatory big-game license revocation and the weapon confiscation. The warden cited 90 people and the current fine was not a deterrent.
 - Changing the fine or citation would be a statutory change.
- CWD ideas are good comments but there is not much specific to deer season framework or programs.
- Today we identify the *what*, and later we will identify the *how*.
- The major issues to accomplish with CWD are reduced prevalence and preventing its spread. Why were the baiting/feeding issues moved to the parking lot?
 - Here we are focusing on season structure and programs.
 - But baiting *is* a season issue.
 - Does it affect when a season happens? Does it directly influence start/end to season dates? If no, then does it fit with the DNR's CWD group rather than this committee?
 - Is baiting already part of the CWD management discussion?
 - The WI baiting/feeding ban is statutory. The CWD response plan includes a recommendation of a baiting/feeding ban, but since it is legislative, the group decided not to take it up. This committee should consider legislative recommendations.

- The baiting/feeding ban ideas are not lost. The committee could recommend a statewide baiting and feeding ban.

Via Meeting Chat Function:

- Clarify how DNR is viewing Managed Forest Law (MFL) lands. Are they public or private?
 - MFL open land is considered public for antlerless authorizations.
 - This is a problem for most large landowners in MFL. As you know, the focus on these lands is to grow trees. To not allow the use of antlerless tags in a county that issues tags only for private or disproportionately for private lands doesn't support MFL owners.

Damage Abatement

- Move #15 to the Access category.
- Background to #16: DMAP is housed in DNR's WMP, not Forestry. #16 was considered in the past and WMP decided not to implement it due to not enough staff.
- #20 a is already allowed so remove.
- #20 b is allowed; a rented farm needs approval from the landowner who can designate an authorized representative to participate.
 - Leased properties are also allowed in the forest damage abatement program.
- #20 c: Any landowner can participate in DMAP. Is the intent to be eligible for antlerless tags?
- What do these have to do with season structure?
 - These are programs associated with season structure, to address areas where seasons may not work fully. The programs are built around harvesting deer and issuing permits around the seasons.
- #17 might hurt the whole program. This will cause farmers to not participate. It is not a good option.
 - Some items will fall off during the voting process.
 - Of 350 landowners, only 20 enroll in open access. Yes, a requirement like #17 would likely reduce participants.
- #21 is already being done so remove.
 - Yes, we already do this. The bigger issue is, can DNR issue the tags and manage the process? It exists for DMAP, but not through the Forest Damage Program.
 - Yes, we can sell tags through DMAP.
 - To increase harvest on significantly impacted public lands, DNR should directly offer the harvest authorization to the public without enrolling in DMAP.
- #16 and #20 c should be the same acreage: reduce both to 10 acres.
 - Combine #16 and #20c.
- Discussion on public hunting access.
- We need to educate hunters to buy into this. But it is a nightmare to administer this. I rely on an informed and receptive public to reduce deer numbers where they need to be reduced, but there is a big disconnect there. We need hunters' assistance and more education.
- Eliminate #20, it is duplicated in #16.
- #23 Add "for small private landowners."
- The goal is growing trees, not eliminating deer, but when managing large tracks of land, we have to rely heavily on the public to help. Anything we can do to help educate the public and hunters is a plus.
- Add "Change designation of MFL Open harvest authorization to private land instead of public." Does this create LE issues regarding access?

- Eliminating the public/private land designation is a simple solution.

Deer Donation #25

- The Big Game Section worked on this and ran out of staff time to implement. It is worth keeping here but it is something DNR is working on. The intent was to match hunters who have venison with those who want venison.
 - Nebraska has a similar program.
 - Donated meat has to be processed through a licensed meat processor.
 - The Deer Donation program already does this.
 - QDMA was actively involved and it didn't work out this fall. Working through the nonprofits is a good idea.

Habitat #26

- It is hard to tell where you are in a forest using county boundaries. Even GPS doesn't always help.
- This is the basis for effective deer management. This would not take away county control. It opens more tools.
- Discussion about splitting DMUs.
 - This is already being tried in some counties; Douglas County is moving in this direction.
- Managing per ecological unit: how would it work for hunter participation? Would it be complicated enough to prevent new hunters from starting?
 - Unlikely that it would prevent new hunters. It might encourage people to get more permits in specific areas where we need help reducing deer population.
 - For decades when this was done, it did not affect people coming into hunting. It will not be an obstacle to R3.
 - CDACs are capable of using public opinion and managing this effectively.
 - New hunters understand that there are a lot of regulations to follow.
 - Access and perceptions about if you'll see any deer are the concerns noted in surveys as obstacles, not that there are too many rules. Regulation complexity gets mixed up with not agreeing with regulations.
- No changes to #26.

Harvest Authorization #27 - #41

- Public versus private tags is a key issue here. One of the main reasons for that separation is for hunters who don't have property to hunt on. Without that designation we can't manage antlerless tags in those areas, so deer could be perceived to be overharvested. Restricting harvest on public lands is to allow more antlerless deer to survive. It will hopefully improve hunter opportunity in the long run.
- Many of the recommendations come from buying a tag but having few opportunities compared to years ago.
 - We have forest regeneration monitoring now, so in the future we will be able to compare regeneration on public/private lands.
 - CDACs work hard, but we need to work with CDACs to understand habitat carrying capacity. CDACs are struggling to increase population in areas that aren't equipped to sustain a herd. Carrying capacities vary significantly.
- #29, #30: Clarify, weapon specificity.

- Currently, if you buy archery and gun tags, you have 2 buck tags. This proposal would allow the tags to be non-weapon specific. It would allow all hunters the opportunity to have 2 buck tags. It wouldn't change weapon-specific seasons, but it would change how you use your tags. "On opening day of gun season allow all unused buck tags to be used for remainder of the season." Starting on opening day of the gun season, remove weapon specificity for buck tags.
- Remove #24.
- #38 is two issues; separate into 2 issues.
- What is the intent of #33? Is it referring to time prior to CDACs? Is it something we can do?
 - "Support science-based wildlife management" is already done. Remove? Add to list of future ideas?
 - Move #33 to future discussion list.
- #40 is opposite to other recommendations.

This list can still be further collapsed; a post-meeting assignment will ask the committee to note which ideas are duplicative or can be condensed.

R3 #42 - #43

No changes.

Seasons #44 - #64

- Recommend eliminating #52 and #47 because they are part of the current season structure.
 - Keep #47. The 9-day season has been hampered frequently by weather.
- Add "Create 14-day gun season" to help with R3 and we could then eliminate the northern December seasons.
- Suggest a 16-day season.
 - That continues to be voted down. We would need to provide more information since it doesn't have the support it needs to be approved broadly.
- Discussion about deer season length.
- Suggestion to have multiple season openers which vary by region, similar to duck seasons.
 - Add: "Stagger opening days (e.g., forest/farmland zone, northern/southern)."
- Specific edits to #43, #53.
- Opening earlier is a different issue than extending to a 16-day season. Do we have both listed?
- Needs to start the season sooner so it does not go into December.
 - Add: "Start gun season sooner so ends by December 1."
- Discussion about various season structure issues to ensure that each issue is separate.
- Clarify that #43 is about holiday hunt.
- Discussion about holiday hunts overlapping with farmland zones concurrent with snowmobiling.
- Discussion about where holiday hunts can take place.

Snowmobiling #56 - #63

- #56 Snowmobile trails are throughout the state, in all zones. Is this about the holiday hunt? Change "snowmobiling" to "holiday hunt." Eliminate #56.
- #57: This is already occurring; clubs work with private landowners. Eliminate.
- #62: This is not feasible because season dates have to be set far in advance.
- Is the snowmobile conflict more about private/public land access, and not about hunter conflicts?
 - #62: This is the Same as #58.

- #61: This is already being done.

General comment

- Recommendation to eliminate #47 because it is currently happening; it is the status quo. Why is the status quo listed for this idea, but not all items? Discussion about issues that are status quo.

Next Steps, Facilitator

The facilitator reviewed the committee's next steps:

- November 30: DNR will send summary solutions from today's meeting. Post-work that includes preliminary voting will be assigned to the committee. In the post-work committee members will vote first, then make suggestions about editing the solutions. Doing a mock vote now will help inform which items need to be combined. Instructions will be sent and each organization will get one vote.
- December 9: Public meeting via Zoom. This will be a structured, facilitated discussion with members of the public. All committee members are encouraged to attend.
- December 21: Post-meeting work due.
- December – January: The facilitators will compile all input and prepare pre-work for meeting #3.
- January 2021: The third committee meeting will be scheduled for the final week in January. The committee will be assigned pre-work for this meeting and possibly post-work.
- February: Final report compiled.

Appreciation and Adjournment, Facilitator and Owsley

The facilitator thanked the committee for taking time to work today. He noted that great input was shared, and he is looking forward to updating the document with today's input.

Mr. Owsley stated his appreciation for everybody's time and effort. He noted that this process may feel messy, but that there is indeed a process which is moving the committee along. Despite feeling nervous after the committee's first meeting, today's work has put the committee on a solid path. He reminded the committee that everyone will lose something in the final report because all are trying to compromise. The committee may recommend keeping season structure and programs the same, but there is an opportunity to understand multiple perspectives from this process. He wished good luck to everyone going outdoors this weekend, and a happy Thanksgiving.

Document used in the 11/16/2020 Meeting #2

Note: Item numbers for specific recommendations are subject to change across multiple versions of the document based on Committee discussions.

Document used in the 11/16/2020 Meeting #2				
Category	Proposed Solution	Obj 1	Obj 2	Obj 3
Access / Engagement	1. Encourage private property access, e.g., through financial incentive, tax breaks, etc. in areas with high deer population		x	x
Access / Engagement	2. Offer incentives for landowners to open up currently closed land for antler-less deer		x	x

Document used in the 11/16/2020 Meeting #2				
Category	Proposed Solution	Obj 1	Obj 2	Obj 3
CDAC	3. Provide all tools to all CDACs regarding season framework. This may include: extended archery, holiday hunt, December 4 day antlerless. Review legislative restrictions that influence effectiveness of solutions / tools.			x
CDAC	4. Allow local CDACs to recommend earn-a-buck program. The program could reflect the previous version or some new modification.			x
CWD	5. Consider mandatory CWD testing in affected areas / units			x
CWD	6. Increase CWD testing and venison donation in areas with high deer population.			x
CWD	7. Instead of increasing buck harvest on bucks in CWD areas, decrease the overall deer numbers. Over-harvesting of bucks is not desired by hunters.			x
CWD	8. Offer additional buck authorizations (tags) upon providing proof of testing a harvested deer.			x
CWD	9. Base carcass movement restrictions on unit-specific prevalence rates			x
CWD	10. Extend seasons and perform targeted removal of deer outside hunting seasons			x
CWD	11. Reduce reporting time for participants in testing, to help make timely and informed decisions about consumption of deer, carcass movement and disposal			x
CWD	12. State should be more involved in carcass disposal, landfill leachate studies, and the distribution of information on CWD			x
CWD	13. Survey hunters to understand why they don't participate in CWD testing			x
CWD	14. Use part of hunting license fees for carcass dumpster program in CWD areas			x
Damage Abatement	15. (Forest) - Reduce the number of inaccessible trails in counties where access is limited. It's not news that our hunting population is aging. Allowing more controlled 4-wheel access to remote areas will help balance harvest and promote regen. It would also spread hunters out and provide a better outdoor experience.	x	x	
Damage Abatement	16. Private woodland owners (down to 10 acres) enrolled in DMAP with an approved forest management plan, and with excessive browse pressure should be eligible for a reduced cost or free doe tag, to be filled on the impacted property, without requiring public access	x		x
Damage Abatement	17. (Ag) - Do not allow farmers to control the # of hunters on lands enrolled in program during the hunting season. This will open more lands to public hunting and help manage deer population.	x		x

Document used in the 11/16/2020 Meeting #2				
Category	Proposed Solution	Obj 1	Obj 2	Obj 3
Damage Abatement	18. (Ag) - Establish zones where high ag damage exists from deer and compare to other parameters. Consider bonus tags/quotas/or increasing/decreasing access to find balance.	x		x
Damage Abatement	19. (Ag) - Require a specified antlerless harvest (via registration) when ag damage claims exceed a certain \$ amount	x		x
Damage Abatement	20. (Forest & DMAP) - Expand / revise private lands forestry damage deer tags; examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Allow other groups to get forestry damage tags without requiring them to join DMAP. b. Allow farmers who both rent and own land to participate in DMAP. c. Allow smaller landowners (e.g., lower from 160 acres to 40 acres) to participate in DMAP d. Encourage specific landowners and/or groups of landowners with deer overpopulation issues to join DMAP. 	x		x
Damage Abatement	21. Forest) - Increase harvest on significantly impacted public lands; Allow county forester or public land manager to issue antlerless deer harvest permits on public lands	x		x
Damage Abatement	22. (Ag) - Make it easy to participate in the Ag Damage Program (WDACP)	x		
Damage Abatement	23. (Forest) - Remove the public access requirement for private landowners that enroll in forest damage program or receive forest damage tags.	x		
Damage Abatement + Access	24. (Ag and Forest) + Access - "match" hunters with landowners to support wildlife damage and abatement program – proposed online registration process for hunters with recent training, past records, some type of a vetting program etc. It would require landowners to register, too. Would need some incentive to private landowners to provide such access.	x	x	
Deer Donation	25. Connect hunters to recipients of deer; the recipient would process the deer or pay for it.			x
Habitat	26. When counties have diverse habitats that have capacity to hold different levels of deer (agricultural land has a higher capacity to hold more deer than forests), split the DMUs in order to manage the deer population more precisely. Set numeric deer unit population goals based on ecological carrying capacity in forested systems and manageable population levels in farmland systems. Use ecologically based deer management unit boundaries which are at an appropriate scale for management. Basing season structure and tag issuance on an appropriate management unit will provide better outcomes.	x		x

Document used in the 11/16/2020 Meeting #2				
Category	Proposed Solution	Obj 1	Obj 2	Obj 3
Harvest Authorization	27. Give property owners priority on antlerless permits; consider free antlerless tags to property owners. This would reduce pressure on habitat around baiting sites.	x		x
Harvest Authorization	28. All deer hunting licenses should be hunter's choice – to be used in any DMU, on doe or a buck.		x	x
Harvest Authorization	29. Allow greater flexibility – e.g., remove weapon specificity; provide an option for a 2 nd buck tag beginning on the opening day of firearms season.		x	x
Harvest Authorization	30. Implement a preference point system for antler-less deer tags		x	x
Harvest Authorization	31. Cap from 0 to 2 antler-less tags with a license, statewide and not just for farmland zones			x
Harvest Authorization	32. Consider antler-less only license, with ability to upgrade to a buck with additional fees. Other states issue licenses for specific gender, antler-less, etc. with differential fees.			x
Harvest Authorization	33. Delegate to public land managers and local wildlife biologists the responsibility of recommending annual antlerless quotas for the areas they manage. Manage wildlife based on scientific evidence.			x
Harvest Authorization	34. Doe tags should be DMU specific			x
Harvest Authorization	35. Eliminate public / private tag distinction; Eliminate private-public land distinction when issuing harvest quotas / antler-less tags			x
Harvest Authorization	36. Implement a bag limit to antler-less deer harvest within farmland zones; this will help reduce negative impressions caused by high tag numbers			x
Harvest Authorization	37. In areas struggling to reestablish healthy populations, reexamine population estimation procedures			x
Harvest Authorization	38. Increase doe harvest by giving out more tags; Create antler-point restrictions encourage shooting more does to offset lower number of yearling bucks.			x
Harvest Authorization	39. Increase hunter opportunity by restricting quota tags on public forested land, so that more does survive and increase the population.			x
Harvest Authorization	40. Offer additional tag to donors where additional antlerless harvest is recommended. For every two antlerless deer hunters harvest in an over populated antlerless unit, give them a harvest permit for a buck, in that year or the next. The two antlerless deer could be donated to the food pantry program.			x
Harvest Authorization	41. Public / private tags are necessary for the CDACs to allow the population to grow (and hunting opportunity) on public land while helping reduce numbers on private land;			x

Document used in the 11/16/2020 Meeting #2				
Category	Proposed Solution	Obj 1	Obj 2	Obj 3
	Allow the public/private quota as a tool for the CDACs. Don't require them as some counties may be okay with just a county wide quota regardless of public/private land			
R3	42. Increase youth and new hunters special mentored hunts with participating landowners, especially landowners experiencing ag/forest damage. Giving youth and new deer hunters additional opportunity in high deer density hunting areas incentivizes them to become long-term licensees.	x	x	x
R3	43. Youth hunt should have the same time period and length as the disability hunt		x	
Seasons	44. Change season structure; examples: a. Replace with a 3-4 day antlerless-only gun hunt that coincides with October youth hunt. This could be offered in all DMUs or only in CWD affected counties. b. Addition of a 7-day season to the end of the current statewide December 4-day antlerless season.	x	x	x
Seasons	45. Eliminate December rifle seasons in the northern forest zone	x		x
Seasons	46. Allow CDACs to implement a 30-day, uninterrupted firearms season that begins on the traditional 3rd Saturday of November, allowing for buck tags to be used for the entirety of the gun season, and allowing all weapons that may be used in the traditional 9-day gun season to be used for the entire 30 days. This season would replace the 4-day antlerless hunt and the Holiday Hunt.		x	x
Seasons	47. Include buck hunting during the antler-less hunting season		x	x
Seasons	48. Keep the traditional dates for the 9-day deer gun hunting season. Promoting the tradition will keep hunters engaged.		x	x
Seasons	49. Expand youth hunt to 4 days; keep special youth, Disabled veteran hunts with a hunter's choice tag and expand to 4 days		x	
Seasons	50. Eliminate antlerless-only season as an option for CDACs			x
Seasons	51. Schedule an early gun antler-less hunting period in October for 3 days, only in overpopulated antlerless areas.			x
Seasons	52. Allow buck harvest during all open seasons. Do not restrict to antlerless only during holiday hunt or December 4 day hunt.			x
Seasons	53. Allow late season bow hunting			x
Seasons	54. Earlier rifle season (e.g., for antler-less only) might help with deer population management			x
Seasons	55. Extend any deer hunting seasons beyond mid-December			x
Seasons	56. Start the 9-day gun season earlier in November (during deer rut)			x
Snowmobiling	57. Allow snowmobiling in farmland zones and not in forest zones since forest zones are more likely to have snowmobiling trails	x		x
Snowmobiling	58. Allow private landowners to decide whether to allow snowmobile trail	x		

Document used in the 11/16/2020 Meeting #2				
Category	Proposed Solution	Obj 1	Obj 2	Obj 3
Snowmobiling	59. County must officially declare snowmobiling trails open and usable for riding; otherwise, trail riding does not affect holiday hunt	x		
Snowmobiling	60. End all gun hunting by the last day of the annual Muzzleloader Hunt in December. This would ensure the 25,000 mile statewide snowmobile trail system can be put in, maintained, and opened (weather permitting) by approximately the 10th of December, which is 10 days after the Wisconsin Snowmobile Trail system can be legally opened (season is 1 Dec-31 Mar).	x		
Snowmobiling	61. Maintain snowmobiling opportunities through late season hunting seasons. Explore landowner incentives for opening snowmobile trails during late deer seasons.	x		
Snowmobiling	62. Use best practices from counties (e.g., Oconto, Pepin) where snowmobilers, landowners and CDACs worked together to hold holiday hunts. Learn from pilot efforts and then adopt across the state.	x		
Snowmobiling	63. Hold holiday hunt when snow is not on the snowmobiling trails	x		
Snowmobiling	64. No gun seasons past December 10 th to allow snowmobile trails to open when conditions allow.	x		

Zoom chat from this meeting (unedited):

09:38:01 From Rick Mechelke to Brent Alderman(Direct Message) : It seems many of these have little to do with season structure. The goal of the second meeting will be geared towards solutions to issues that were mentioned. I want to keep everyone's focus on issues/solutions that are centered around the deer season framework and associated programs. I understand we discussed County Deer Advisory Councils and how they operate at our first meeting but we should focus on how they (CDACs) use the deer season framework. I have attached the current deer season framework to give you an idea of what I mean when I say deer season framework and associated programs.

Looking back out our Committee Charter, we should be asking what is the best season framework to address (snowmobile, agriculture, forestry, herd management/health) concerns. This can be handled in the Pre-work assignment but I think additional thought before the next meeting will be helpful, to ensure that we are moving in the right direction.

09:39:33 From Rick Mechelke to Brent Alderman(Direct Message) : I meant to quote all but the first sentence

09:43:36 From Shawn Hagan : Clarify how DNR is viewing MFL lands. Public or Private?

09:47:39 From Bret Owsley : MFL Open is considered public for our antlerless authorizations

10:04:08 From Shawn Hagan : This is a problem for most large landowners in MFL. As you know, the focus on these lands is to grow trees. To not allow the use of antler less tags in a county that issues tags only for Private or disproportionately for Private Lands, doesn't support MFL owners.

10:11:43 From Brad Hutnik WDNR : Great point. Sounds like a potential solution would be to include open MFL in private lands, not public. We should include this in the document.

10:22:22 From Rick Mechelke to Brent Alderman(Direct Message) : Maybe the first question on the following solutions should "does this solution pertain to a season structure"?

10:30:07 From Daryl Harrison : This comment is in the notes.

10:30:22 From Daryl Harrison : included in the notes. Thanks

11:55:54 From Shawn Hagan : Sorry, Need to leave for another engagement.

12:09:45 From Bret Owsley : Thanks Shawn!

12:29:05 From Terri Roehrig : Keep separate

12:29:49 From Terri Roehrig : I have to drop for a work call. I will catch up with rest of meeting. Thank you!

12:47:06 From Brad Hutnik WDNR : I have to leave for another meeting. Great discussion!

13:03:11 From Becky Brathal : Thank you Raj you did a great job herding us cats!!

13:08:02 From Dale Mayo : I have to take a call. Thanks everyone!

8. Public Listening Session Notes: December 9, 2020

Opening Remarks, Bret Owsley

Committee lead Bret Owsley welcomed attendees and thanked everyone for attending. With muzzle season just ended and antlerless season in the northern zones kicking off, this is a perfect time to discuss Wisconsin's deer seasons. Mr. Owsley looks forward to an interesting conversation and appreciates everyone's involvement. He thanked the technical support staff making the online meeting possible.

Background, Bret Owsley

The Deer Stakeholder Committee was convened by the Wisconsin DNR in 2020 to discuss deer management issues. The purpose of tonight's meeting is to solicit attendees' input on issues specific to the current whitetail deer hunting season structure.

Comments from this session will be collected and shared with the Committee in January. Tonight's input is valued and will be considered for the Committee's final recommendations. In early March the Committee will publish a full report. The public will have another opportunity to comment on the final recommendations after they are published in 2021.

This committee works on a statewide scale. Mr. Owsley encouraged participants to comment on statewide issues. Local, county, and area issues are best suited for CDACs. CDAC schedules are available on the DNR website and meetings are happening this week and next.

The Committee's goal is to identify a deer hunting framework and potential programs to accomplish the Committee's objectives: 1) Address areas of conflict expressed by snowmobilers, forestry and agriculture; 2) Provide deer hunting opportunities that are easy to understand and will support hunter recruitment, retention and reactivation; 3) Achieve deer population objectives and reduce the percent of deer with Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). Objective three is focused on population objectives because a separate DNR group is working on CWD issues.

Mr. Owsley presented the 2020 Wisconsin deer hunting seasons and current deer management programs. These are the items open for discussion by the Committee. He presented the 2020 Deer Season Structure and Management Zones, which include geographic forest and farmland zones. The Committee includes representatives from conservation, tourism, snowmobile, forestry, agriculture, landowners, etc. There is a wide array of members on the committee bringing many perspectives.

Expectations and Ground Rules, Facilitator

The facilitator reviewed the ground rules and guidelines for the meeting. All participants are muted upon joining and should use the "raise hand" function to indicate that they want to speak.

The facilitator thanked participants for joining the meeting. He encouraged all to share comments and suggestions. The Committee is interested particularly in comments related to the deer season such as snowmobiling, forestry, agriculture, hunting opportunities, hunter recruitment, retention and reactivation, population objectives and reducing CWD spread.

Public Comments

Counties listed below were referenced by the public participants as part of their comments; the comments do not represent an official opinion re: the counties mentioned.

- Does CWD affect the northern forest zone?

- **Owsley:** CWD was originally found in southern zones, but it has spread into central and northern zones. It is a statewide issue.
- How can I get deer tested for CWD?
- **Owsley:** DNR recommends getting deer tested and disposing of the carcass appropriately. There are dumpsters throughout the State for carcass disposal. The DNR website lists CWD testing and disposal sites.
- I heard there was a herd of elk in Northern Wisconsin and that there was a sighting of shed elk neckbands. Are there other spots in Wisconsin where there are elk?
- **Owsley:** There are Northern and Central elk herds. Elk are on the landscape and are moving; sometimes the collars do fall off.
- *Vilas County:* We have had a massive decrease of deer population since 2007. This year we did not see any deer on 80 acres, but we saw predator tracks. The Northern Forest Zone is too large to apply a management principal across it all. I request that the DNR reestablish a smaller deer management unit to account for disparities across counties. Please add additional permits to address predator control and help the deer population rebound. The hunter population falls because there is nothing for them to hunt.
- *Association of WI Snowmobile Clubs:* Over the past 4 to 5 years we have had issues with the Holiday Hunt, including conflict with CDACs and local communities. When we had a lot of early snow, we decided not to open all the trails due to the Holiday Hunt. Tourists were upset they could not ride snowmobiles. Then a warmer January came and there was not enough snow to open the snowmobile trails. The recent warmer winters in Central and Southern zones affect when we can open the trails and we don't know if we're going to have snow. The Holiday Hunt is the best tool to reduce the herd but CDACs want more tools used earlier in the year to reduce the herd. That would mitigate conflict with Holiday Hunt.
- *Rock Ridge:* The Richland County CDAC is limited on what tools we have to limit the herd. What other tools is the Committee looking at to limit the deer population? Earn-a-Buck?
 - **Owsley:** We have not put any sideboards on the Committee. The bigger conversation has been on using season/program structure to lower deer populations. Would an earlier antlerless season help? Everything is on the table.
- *Adams County:* Snowmobile clubs are eager to not have a Holiday Hunt, but so are landowners. I hope that there are more tools to encourage others to harvest antlerless deer. In Central Farmland we have too many deer, but not enough hunters to affect the deer population.
- *Bayfield County:* I have hunted this area since 1980 and the last few years have been very disappointing. I fear that the population is very low; I'm not sure of the reasons, but I know hunter license numbers are low. Something needs to be done about the number of doe permits allowed in Bayfield County. Hunter enjoyment is waning during the gun deer season, and I'm hoping something can be done to stop issuing doe permits and get the herd back up.
 - **Owsley:** I encourage you to talk to the Bayfield CDAC, since they set the quota. Let your voice be heard there because quota recommendations are made at that level.
- *Central Forest and Farmland:* I see three dynamics at work: 1) public land that used to host hunters is now bought up; 2) habitat structure has changed in last 15 years; 3) hunters don't move deer like they used to, now hunters want to sit in a deer stand.
 - **Owsley:** Those are all good points; there are thousands of variables regarding seeing and not seeing deer.
- *Vilas County:* No baiting is allowed here but it is allowed in Iron County, just a few miles away, and it draws deer away. Is there any discussion about baiting/no baiting?

- **Owsley:** Baiting/feeding has been brought up with the Committee. Baiting and feeding is a legislative issue, so the Committee cannot make decisions on it but can make recommendations. There are state statutes regarding CWD positive tests and baiting.
- I want more uniformity about baiting and feeding; the current structure creates conflicts and competition for deer in border areas.
- *Shawano County:* We have baiting ban due to bordering counties with CWD. Yet CWD hasn't been found in the wild, only in deer farms. The committee voted to decrease the deer population. Deer plots decrease shooting opportunities. What can we do about that, if we want to see that law change? What is the difference between food plots and baiting?
 - **Owsley:** That rule is legislative, so changes need to be made through the legislature. The Conservation Congress has asked about baiting/feeding, and this Committee could make a recommendation about it as well. Food plots are larger in size than bait piles. A bait pile serves multiple deer in one location. Food plots are gone after the food is gone and the deer move away, while a bait pile has food continually restocked.
- When CWD is only found contained in a deer farm, why does that affect hunters if we're not seeing CWD in the wild?
 - **Owsley:** If CWD is on a captive facility, it is on the landscape. DNR looks for deer-to-deer contact. DNR tries to prevent CWD from spreading and does targeted sampling to determine if it is in the wild herd.
- *Richland and Sauk Counties:* It is interesting to hear the different concerns in different parts of the State. We have a great system in place of regional zones and county CDACs. The beauty of our system is the stakeholder groups, like this and CDACs. Richland County has a population and disease issue, and we'd like to control the population and reduce CWD. We have put together some solutions: 1) A longer gun season into December; 2) Bonus buck tags; 3) All CWD+ deer hunters get a replacement either-sex tag as incentive to harvest another deer; 4) Allow buck hunting in all seasons to incentivize hunting. We have sent these recommendations to the DNR and Conservation.
- *Forest County:* Our deer population is very low. But on our property, we saw the most deer in 10 years because we've been practicing forestry. We planted hardwoods and pines spaced out by foresters, which increased deer forage and browse. On state land we could harvest trees and open up the canopy to allow for more browsing. I also recommend the committee talk to federal agencies about harvesting national properties.
- *Waupaca County:* We have the highest deer per mile population in the state. No matter how many tags we issue, we have the same doe harvest every year. The CDAC feels our hands are tied and we need more tools, like bonus buck tags. Everyone wants to be able to shoot a buck, and we should issue one buck tag for all seasons. To get an additional buck tag, hunters would need to shoot a doe or two. Give people the opportunity to shoot a buck, but motivate them to shoot does as well.
 - **Owsley:** This meeting is to gain input on these issues. Thank you for your solutions and your involvement with the CDAC.
- *Door County:* I'm a CDAC participant and was disappointed in the public turnout at the meeting. They voted to decrease the population. One way to do that is if you shoot 2-3 does, you have the opportunity to hunt another buck. As a public participant I know people will call in their antlerless tags and then harvest a buck. Some people are not going to go on the honor system, they just want to hunt another buck.
- Recognize that habitat drives deer capacity. I've encouraged people to regenerate young forests, as that drives deer browse and population. Everyone on the CDAC board recognizes more tools are needed than just issuing more antlerless tags. We issue over 5000 tags, and less than 1000 are utilized. It is not the availability of tags, but something else that drives the intention to harvest deer.

I think that only 1% of hunters will cheat the system; I know many who don't want to have to shoot a doe before getting another buck. Are there other tools for CDACs or from the DNR to incentivize young forest regeneration projects? That would meet the objectives of more deer sightings and controlling populations.

- *Vilas County*: We did a lot of work with the Forest Service to clear habitats. How many wolves are in the areas that have too many deer? We have large predation in our area; I had three wolves today. If you have too many deer, you may trap some of my wolves and bring them to your land.
- Regarding regeneration of forest land, we were in a forest management program for many years. We noticed that there is a long waiting list for cutting forests. Could DNR contract with other loggers to more aggressively manage it? There are areas ready for clearing but have to wait many years.
 - **Owsley**: Brad Hutnik is our DNR Forester on the call.
 - **Hutnik**: It varies where you are in the state and it is linked to markets. It also depends on what kind of timber sales you're trying to do, such as pulp versus saw log, etc. Stronger markets lead to higher demand. Also, we have fewer loggers in the southern areas. Stay in contact and if you're vigilant you can get it cut.
- Is property management education available for landowners that have a large forest on their property?
 - **Hutnik**: DNR's Division of Forestry has a strong outreach program for landowners.
- Regarding the wolf situation, my forest property has well-established wolf packs and they regulate the deer population well. In my southern property there is a lone wolf not making a difference. In a 20-mile difference I can see the impact of wolves and predators.
- I have three points: 1) Regarding hunter recruitment, I want to emphasize the lack of new hunters relative to previous years. A young hunter in an area where they don't see anything discourages them. Are there recruitment programs with schools? There are mentor programs, are there others? 2) Regarding large tracts of land owned by paper companies, are they involved in any of the CDAC programs, and how much influence do they have? 3) Regarding methods of hunting, the number of hunters is less, but there are also fewer people moving the deer, probably due to fewer younger hunters. Over the last 3 years I've seen fewer hunters. People aren't moving the deer, which affects sightings.
 - **Owsley**: We used to have just hunter safety. Now we also have Mentored Hunt, Learn to Hunt and Hunt for Food programs. We track the success of these programs and are trying to engage more adult hunters as well. Our programs are listed on the DNR website.

Regarding paper companies, we look for a forestry component on every CDAC. Those could be private or county foresters. This Committee includes local and county foresters.

I don't know if we have studies on hunter tactics, but I will look into it. I have also seen a change in hunter tactics and long drives are now the exception, not the rule. It is more sitting in a stand now rather than driving the deer.

- In the northern forest over a 4-day period I did not see a single hunter. That influences deer movement. Adams County has a dense deer population, and Douglas County is not as dense, so they should be managed differently. I presume the CDACs are taking different approaches; are those approaches being heard by the DNR?
 - **Owsley**: I've seen only a few instances of a CDAC recommendation being changed by the DNR. Overwhelmingly, CDAC recommendations are approved as provided because they reflect local decisions made by local individuals who know the area. The DNR serves as technical experts for CDACs, and CDACs make recommendations based on experience.
- Is there a consideration to localize the large Northern Forest zones?

- **Owsley:** Smaller DMUs has been a big conversation with this Committee. The DNR has approved some recommendations to split a county. This is one of the bigger Committee conversations.
- I appreciate the disparities between northern to southern counties. The CDACs need to come together because there are disparities between adjacent counties in the same zone. Hunters go where the deer are and we just don't have deer up here.
- **Wood County:** I hunt in the Central Forest Zone. It is buck-only and I would like to leave it as is; I don't want any does harvested in that area. On the public land you don't see a lot of deer, and what you do see are young bucks. The deer density is low. There are lot of predators: wolves, coyotes, and recently, bobcats.
 - **Owsley:** We are doing a statewide review of the hunting season framework and programs. The CDACs provide recommendations on harvest quotas. You could attend the final season meeting and provide your input on the local scale there.

Comments Submitted Via Email, Summarized (full text also presented below)

- Why are separate doe tags needed for different counties? Tags should be usable on public or private land.
- I recommend an "earn a buck tag" that carries over from one year to the next. That would incentivize hunters to cull does late in the season.
- We need more tools at the County level to help manage the herd and control CWD.
- Hunting in the Bayfield County has been poor for several years. Why does the DNR issue so many doe permits for northern counties? I think none should be issued for 3-4 years to rebuild the herd. The economy is suffering from the lack of hunters during the gun deer season.
- It is rare to see any deer in Vilas County. Deer have exited the forest to escape the wolves and go to feeders. Enforce the no baiting and feeding laws and bring the wolf population down to the targeted level of 360 statewide. I want the hunting to return to Wisconsin for my children and grandchildren.
- CWD is an important topic. In Shawano County deer are mainly in deer farms. But baiting is now illegal here. Hunting would be easier with baiting allowed to get more into a shooting range. The numbers of deer killed during hunting is not enough to manage the population. What is the difference between bating and a food plot?

Closing Remarks, Facilitator

The facilitator noted that tonight's comments will be an input to the Committee's meeting in late January. In February or March, the Committee will deliver its final report to DNR. In mid-2021, there will be opportunity for public feedback on the Committee recommendations. He thanked all for sharing their thoughts and noted that the facilitators appreciated this good conversation.

For more information about the Committee, or to see the recoding of tonight's meeting, visit: www.dnr.wi.gov . Search for "Deer Stakeholder."

Closing Remarks, Owsley

Mr. Owsley thanked participants for taking the time to share their opinions and perspectives on the deer season. This is something all are passionate about, and participants' time is so valuable, that he appreciates tonight's participation.

He explained that the recording of this meeting will be on the Committee website. He invited all to look at the DNR's deer metrics website that provides data per county. He recommended that participants sign up for Gov Delivery to receive information from the DNR on all things deer related.

Mr. Owsley encouraged participants to look up their local CDAC meeting schedule. January 4-13 is the public CDAC comment period and January 19-25 is the final CDAC meeting. Those meetings will be virtual.

Mr. Owsley encouraged all to stay engaged and involved. He appreciated tonight's thoughtful input. He noted that the Committee has a lot to think about, and tonight's participants provided a lot of feedback for the committee.

He thanked all for participating, wished everyone the best of luck in their hunting, and a safe and happy winter.

Appendix: Comments Submitted Via Email, Full Text

- **Sent:** Tuesday, December 8, 2020 8:38 AM

To: Alderman, Brent L - DNR <BrentL.Alderman@wisconsin.gov>

Subject: LACK OF DEER IN THE COUNTY AND NATIONAL FOREST.

I HAVE HUNTED DEER FOR THE LAST 20 YEARS IN VILAS COUNTY. FOR THE LAST FEW YEARS IT HAS BEEN A REAL CHALLENGE TO SAY THE LEAST, TO SEE ANY DEER AT ALL ! ALL THE DEER HAVE EXITED THE FOREST, AND NOW LIVE NEAR RESIDENTS AND IN TOWN, FOR TWO REASONS.... ESCAPE THE WOLVES, AND HEAD TO THE FEEDERS. . UNLESS YOU CAN SEE A FIRE HYDRANT OR A CABIN ROOFTOP FROM YOUR STAND, YOU ARE NOT GOING TO SEE ANY DEER !! SIMPLE SOLUTION TO THIS., FIRST ENFORCE THE NO BAITING AND FEEDING LAWS, SECOND BRING THE WOLF POPULATION DOWN TO THE TARGETED 350 ANIMALS IN THE STATE. I'M NOW 70 YRS OLD, NOT A WHOLE LOT OF YEARS LEFT, BUT MY CHILDREN ALSO REMEMBER THE GOOD YEARS OF HUNTING VILAS AND FLORENCE CO . PLEASE BRING THAT BACK FOR THEM.... THANK YOU

- **Sent:** Tuesday, December 8, 2020 12:16 PM

To: Alderman, Brent L - DNR <BrentL.Alderman@wisconsin.gov>

Subject: Questions about Deer Management in Bayfield and surrounding counties

Brent,

Hunting in the county has been poor for several years.

Why does the DNR issue so many doe permits for northern counties? Especially Bayfield.

In my opinion, there should be none issued for 3-4 years to rebuild the herd. We have bought them just to keep others from shooting a doe. The economy is suffering from a lack of hunters as well during the Gun deer season.

- **Sent:** Tuesday, December 8, 2020 4:43 PM

To: Alderman, Brent L - DNR <BrentL.Alderman@wisconsin.gov>

Subject:

I don't understand why we have to buy separate doe tags for different counties to be able to hunt it should be like it use to be where tags were good for public or private

- **Sent:** Tuesday, December 8, 2020 6:56 PM

To: Alderman, Brent L - DNR <BrentL.Alderman@wisconsin.gov>

Subject: Question for the Statewide Deer Stakeholder meeting

Hello,

Has there been any thought to having an "earn a buck tag" that carries over from one year to the next to give incentive to hunters to get out in the late seasons and cull some does?

Thanks for taking my question,

- **Sent:** Wednesday, December 9, 2020 6:33 PM
To: Alderman, Brent L - DNR <BrentL.Alderman@wisconsin.gov>
Subject: question for stakeholder meeting
Objective 3: CWD has been a hot topic. I do not know of any deer in the wild (in the area I reside, Shawano County). These are mainly in the deer farms. That being said, baiting is now illegal in this area. This area just voted to decrease the population again yesterday. We have an abundance of deer in this area and the numbers of deer killed during hunting is not enough to manage the population with the habitat and car kills. It would be more manageable with baiting to get more of them into a shooting rage. What is the difference between baiting and a food plot? Aren't they all still eating from the same place?
- **Sent:** December 9, 2020 at 7:53:40 PM CST
To: "Alderman, Brent L - DNR" <BrentL.Alderman@wisconsin.gov>, douglasduren@sbcglobal.net
Cc: "Owsley, Bret R - DNR" <Bret.Owsley@wisconsin.gov>, "Kamal, Raj - MUN" <rkamal@credensllc.com>
Subject: Re: Question for the Statewide Deer Stakeholder meeting
Raj, Bret, Brent & Doug,
Thank you for allowing me to participate in both the meeting Monday and the Meeting tonight. I just wanted to reiterate what Doug stated that we need more tools at the County level to help manage the herd and control CWD. Please let me know if there is anything that I can do to help the Richland County CDAC.
Take care and Stay Safe!
- **Sent:** December 9, 2020 at 8:23 PM CST
To: "Alderman, Brent L - DNR" <BrentL.Alderman@wisconsin.gov>, douglasduren@sbcglobal.net
Cc: "Owsley, Bret R - DNR" <Bret.Owsley@wisconsin.gov>, "Kamal, Raj - MUN" <rkamal@credensllc.com>
Subject:
Thank you for hosting this meeting. Virtual platforms have become the norm lately, but do have their challenges. I am the president of a multi county watershed association and work very closely with WDNR, extension, and County LCDs. We have had to resort to this type of platform as well. You did a great job!
Thank you again. It is great to hear what is being seen and done throughout the entire state. You can only get the statics on the WDNR website. It's great to hear from the public and their real-time experiences and what they are seeing in their areas.
Again, well done. Thank you.

9. Committee Meeting #3 Notes: January 25, 2021

Attendance

The third meeting of the DNR Deer Stakeholder Committee met virtually on January 25, 2021. The committee members and DNR staff denoted in bold below were in attendance.

Committee Members

Joel Artis, Buffalo County Outfitters
Elizabeth Baker, Sporting Heritage Council
Rob Bohmann, CDAC Oversight Committee
Becky Brathal, WI Farmer's Union
Mike Brust, WI Bowhunters Association
Dan Eklund, US Forest Service
Ralph Fritsch, WI Wildlife Federation
Karen Gefvert, WI Farm Bureau Federation
Mark Grossman, Polk County Forest, WI County Forest Association
Shawn Hagan, The Forestland Group
Don Hamilton, Association WI Snowmobile Clubs
TJ Hauge, WI Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
Al Horvath, WI Conservation Congress
John Huff, WI Green Fire
Tom Kempen, WI Woodland Owners Association
John Krause, Board of Commissioners of Public Lands
James Lanier, Quality Deer Management Association
Dale Mayo, Snowmobile Recreation Council
Rick Mechelke, WI Bowhunters Association
Cassie Mordini, Office of Outdoor Recreation, WI Department of Tourism
Dave Newman, Association WI Snowmobile Clubs
Kevyn Quamme, WI Wildlife Federation
Terri Roehrig, WI Conservation Congress
John Schwarzmann, Board of Commissioners of Public Lands
Mike Spors, Whitetails Unlimited
Dan Vandertie, Wisconsin Farm Bureau
Jake Walcisak, Taylor County Forest, WI County Forest Association

DNR Staff

Jesse Ashton, Conservation Warden
Eric Canania, Southern District Deer Biologist
Brad Koele, Wildlife Damage Specialist
Emily Iehl, R3 Coordinator
Lacey Hillman, Environmental Enforcement Section
Bob Holsman, Research Scientist
Brad Hutnik, Division of Forestry
Bob Nack, Chief Big Game Section, Interim Deer and Elk Specialist
Tami Ryan, Chief Wildlife Health Program

Opening Remarks, Bret Owsley

Committee lead Bret Owsley welcomed the Committee members to their third and final meeting. Mr. Owsley thanked the Committee members for their time and effort. This group has accomplished a lot through pre-work, assignments, and strong participation in meetings. He thanked everyone for taking time to work with DNR and move the deer season structure forward. He looks forward to a great meeting and is excited to see where the issues go from here.

Today the Committee will review what has been accomplished, review the preliminary votes submitted prior to this meeting, and discuss individual hunting season components. Mr. Owsley reviewed the goal and three objectives of the Committee. He noted that all solutions discussed were in concert with each objective, so the group is moving towards accomplishing its goal. He reviewed the current Wisconsin hunting season framework. The Committee's conversation has focused on the 9-day, antlerless and holiday hunts; archery and crossbow seasons have not been part of the discussion thus far. As such, today's discussion will focus on the 9-day, antlerless and holiday hunting seasons.

Project Steps and Plan for the Day, Facilitator

The facilitator welcomed the Committee and said he is grateful for the group's active participation. He summarized the Committee's work thus far:

- 1) The Committee created a list of issues and concerns related to all three charter objectives.
- 2) The Committee brainstormed solutions to the issues and concerns list; this exercise netted 100+ solutions. Those were consolidated, netting 45 unique ideas. Then, 16 Committee organizations ranked those ideas.
- 3) The facilitators and Mr. Owsley divided the solutions into non-hunting season and hunting season recommendations.
- 4) Most recently, the Committee members submitted preliminary votes on the proposed solutions. Nine organizations responded with their votes.

The focus of today's meeting is to finalize the wording and options for each season option. The Committee will discuss each option today; final voting will happen via email over the next two weeks. The output from today will be a full document with Committee agreement on the options for voting.

Voting Details, Owsley

Mr. Owsley explained that each organization will build their preferred season structure by voting for their top option in each season category. Each organization will submit one vote. Detailed instructions for voting will be provided via email. The facilitators will compile the votes and share with the Committee.

Season Structure Discussion, Facilitator

1. Gun Season

Key discussion points about the gun season structure were:

- The start and end dates of a 16-day season. Preferences varied across regions.
- A longer gun season would reduce the herd in some areas which is not a desirable outcome.
- An earlier start in the north is beneficial because of better opportunity for good weather.
- Control of harvest and population is driven by quotas, not season dates.
- A 16-day season option could be given to the CDACs to decide.
- Concern about the potential for 72 different gun season dates if left to each county.

- Request for a consistent plan throughout the State to accommodate hunters' vacation plans.
- Concern that this option has been rejected by the Conservation Congress in the past.
- The importance of including Thanksgiving in the gun season dates.
- Since habitat and populations vary across the State, the Northern or forest zones could open one week earlier.

Following the discussion, the final Gun Season options are:

1. Keep traditional 9-day Gun Season
2. Create a 16-day gun season, starting on the Saturday closest to Nov 15
3. Change the start of the 9-day gun season to the Saturday closest to Nov 15
4. Create staggered opening days (e.g., forest vs farmland zone; or northern vs southern counties); traditional 9-day season for farmland zones; start the season a week earlier for the forest zones; both end on the same day; include Thanksgiving.
5. Allow CDACs to implement a 30-day, uninterrupted firearms season that begins on the traditional 3rd Saturday of November, allowing for buck tags to be used for the entirety of the gun season, and allowing all weapons that may be used in the traditional 9-day gun season to be used for the entire 30 days. This season would replace the 4-day antlerless hunt and the Holiday Hunt.

2. Holiday Hunt

Key discussion points about the Holiday Hunt season structure were:

- Snowmobile groups had voiced the most opposition to the Holiday Hunt. There has been no strong advocacy for a Holiday Hunt from this Committee, but rather a willingness to do something different.
- Anything done to eliminate the Holiday Hunt should have something to replace it in order to harvest deer; the snowmobiling community expressed its appreciation.
- Replace Holiday Hunt with a hunt similar to the old T-Zone hunts.
- Consider making the Holiday Hunt coincide with the Youth Hunt.
- The December and Holiday Hunts are useful for those who harvest during the 9-day season and await CWD test results before consumption. If a test is positive, the later seasons provide an opportunity to hunt again.
- Support for the addition of an extra antlerless harvest season.
- Note that the Holiday Hunt has been eliminated in forest zones.
- State statute is a factor to consider.
- Eliminate the Holiday Hunt and extend the October hunt as an option for CDACs.
- Keep the Holiday Hunt dates but allow an either-sex option.
- End all gun hunting by end of the Muzzleloader Hunt.
- Eliminate Holiday Hunt and add 7 days to the antlerless season.

After discussion, the final Holiday Hunt options are:

1. Keep traditional Holiday Hunt regulations/dates
2. Keep traditional Holiday Hunt dates but allow either-sex season
3. Eliminate the Holiday Hunt and replace with a 4-day antlerless-only gun hunt that overlaps with October youth hunt. The October hunt would be offered as an option for CDACs only in CWD-affected counties.
4. Eliminate the Holiday Hunt and antlerless gun season - End all gun hunting by the last day of the annual Muzzleloader Hunt in December.

5. Eliminate the Holiday Hunt, and add 7-days to the end of the current statewide December 4-day antlerless season
6. Hold Holiday Hunt only when the County has not officially declared the snowmobile trails open
7. Eliminate Holiday Hunt due to selection of #5 in Gun Season Table

3. Antlerless Season

Key discussion points about the Antlerless Season structure were:

- Are there major conflicts with a December 4-day Antlerless Season?
- The Antlerless Season is dependent upon the addition of a 16-day season in November for some groups.
- One option is for no counties to open snowmobile trails until the December hunt is finished.
- All subsequent seasons may depend on what happens with the 16-day season.
- Wording should be consistent with the Holiday Hunt option.
- Add “either-sex” option to traditional 4-day Antlerless Hunt.
- Would an October Antlerless Season be a season addition or replacement?
- An October hunt work should coincide with the Youth Hunt.
- Would this option be imposed Statewide, or added as a CDAC tool?

After discussion, the final Antlerless Season options are:

1. Keep traditional 4-day antlerless season
2. Eliminate December rifle seasons in the northern forest zone (dependent on approval of a 16-day season in November and/or October antlerless season)
3. Keep traditional 4-day antlerless hunt but allow either-sex harvest
4. Add a state-wide 4 day antlerless-only gun hunt that overlap with October youth hunt; this is in addition to the traditional 4-day antlerless season
5. Add a state-wide 4 day antlerless-only gun hunt that overlap with October youth hunt; replace the traditional 4-day antlerless season
6. Eliminate antlerless season due to selection of #5 in Gun Season Table

4. Youth and Earn-a-Buck Seasons

Key discussion points about the Youth and Earn-a-Buck Season structures were:

- Change Youth Hunt to 4 days.
- Earn-a-Buck should be an available tool to be used by CDACs across all seasons.

After discussion, the final Youth and Earn-a-Buck Season options are:

1. Keep traditional 2-day Youth Season (this year, Oct 10-11)
2. Change Youth Hunt to 4 days by adding 2 days to the front of the existing Youth Season
3. Change Youth Hunt to have the same time period and length as the 9-day disability hunt. (Oct 3 – 11)
4. Allow CDACs to offer an earn-a-buck option across all seasons. The option could reflect the previous version or some new modification.

5. Harvest Authorizations: Public/Private Land Distinction

Key discussion points about Harvest Authorizations: Public-Private Land Distinction were:

- It would be impossible to manage deer in the northern counties without the private-public land distinction.

- The public-private distinction discourages hunters in the north.
- Eliminating the private-public distinction places the burden on public lands to carry the herd.
- This is a habitat issue, not a tag allocation issue.
- Some counties depend on the public-private land distinction. This is a positive tool.

After discussion, the final Harvest Authorizations: Public/Private Land Distinction options are:

1. Eliminate private-public land distinction when issuing harvest quotas / antler-less tags.
2. Keep public/private harvest authorizations as a tool for the CDACs.

6. Harvest Authorizations: Hunter's Choice and Limits

Key discussion points about Harvest Authorizations: Hunter's Choice and Limits were:

- Limiting the number of deer one hunter can harvest does not lead to population control.
- Bonus tag sales fund programs.
- A goal is to remove impediments to harvesting in farmland zones and allow for county-to-county hunting.
- Expanding DMUs to farmland zones and distinguishing between DMUs and statewide.
- CDACs in farmland zones could develop a quota, implement a daily bag limit, and allow hunters to shoot up to the daily bag limit, until the quota is filled.

After discussion, the final Harvest Authorization: Hunter's Choice and Limits options are:

1. Keep current harvest authorization allocation process/numbers
2. All deer hunting licenses should be hunter's choice – to be used in any DMU, on public or private land, on a doe or a buck.
3. Limit CDACs to issuing 0 to 2 free antler-less tags per license – this would apply statewide and not just for farmland zones. This would not affect bonus tags.
4. Implement bag limits across DMUs for antler-less deer harvest within each farmland zone, and not based on CDAC recommendation or land-type.
5. CDACs in farmland zones would develop a quota, implement a daily bag limit; allow hunters to shoot up to the daily bag limit, till the quota is filled.

Discussion of Next Steps, Facilitator

The facilitator explained that Committee members will receive an email by February 1 with instructions for submitting final votes by February 8. The facilitators will track the votes per organization, which can be shared with the committee. Votes will reflect each organization's preferred season structure.

By the middle of February, Committee members will receive a draft report which includes the process, notes, and summary of votes. The committee will have one week to submit edits. The final report is due to the DNR by March 3. The final report will include the documents that have been shared in order to document the evolution of the Committee's ideas and recommendations.

Key discussion items included:

- The issues of this discussion are interlocked. Instead of voting yes or no, would it be possible to label each option as preferred, acceptable, not acceptable?
 - Facilitator will explore options with Bret.
- Is the Committee going to submit individual recommendations or a single committee recommendation?

- The report will reflect both convergence and divergence of member opinions. All opinions will be represented in the final report.
- A decision-maker may look directly at one organization, instead of at the Committee as a whole. That is a concern.
 - The report could hide votes of individual organizations. That would eliminate bias regarding which organization voted for what, and present a committee-wide view.

Discussion of Next Steps, Owsley

This meeting and the coming vote conclude the Committee's work. The work thus far has been the planning process, and next comes implementation. Much of the work ahead depends on what the Committee's recommendations are. Next steps include a more detailed public input process and a report to the Board. Each recommendation might have its own track to implementation. The final vote will be similar to the pre-work, with some minor modifications to better represent the range of preferences expressed by the Committee. Primary representatives will submit one vote per organization per category.

Committee members informally voted on whether to submit additional input in the form of a short position statement explaining their votes. The majority of the Committee was in support of providing position papers.

Appreciation and Adjournment, Facilitator and Owsley

The facilitator thanked the committee members for their work and suggestions. He noted that the facilitators appreciated the members' time and active participation.

Mr. Owsley explained that each will member receive a survey about the Committee, process, and a message asking if they want to remain involved. He is impressed that the Committee whittled 100+ issues down to a manageable list of solutions and recommendations. Mr. Owsley appreciates everybody's time, involvement and dedication, especially as the Committee worked through deer and holiday seasons. He hopes that all 20 organizations will vote and respond after this meeting. He noted that the committee's value is its diversity of thought and said that he has appreciated the diversity of opinions expressed by the Committee. He will be in touch about implementation.

Zoom chat from this meeting (unedited):

- 09:23:16 From Shawn Hagan : When Antlerless Quota's are set by DMU, is it the Departments goal to see these Quota's met?
- 09:23:53 From Shawn Hagan : 16-Day Gun Season starting the 2nd Saturday prior to Thanksgiving and ending the Sunday after Thanksgiving.
- 09:27:10 From Becky Brathal : no
- 09:28:19 From Bret Owsley : I believe when the CDACs set a quota, they are setting that number with the hope of accomplishing a population objective (increase, decrease, maintain). Yes, I believe the goal is to get as close as the quota as possible.
- 09:29:33 From Becky Brathal : Ending Dec 1st, takes in consideration the snowmobile start time.
- 09:36:21 From Shawn Hagan : As a counter to Mike's comments: Population control by hunters will come with Antlerless harvest. CDAC's have a say in how many tags are issued. No Antlerless tags and a mild to normal winter, the population grows.
- 09:39:20 From Jesse Ashton WDNR Law Enforcement : Every time a 16 day season has been proposed at the Conservation Congress spring meetings it has not passed by a large

- margin. I agree with targeted antlerless harvest in problem areas with incentives (extra buck tag)
- 09:40:14 From Don Hamilton : These changes appear to best meet our overall objectives. Later, if we eliminate the other, "late" seasons would offset the "overharvest" concern and also help to meet our objectives.
- 09:46:21 From Becky Brathal : Bret, You said that an explanation would be given with each of these, or just for this item?
- 09:46:43 From Bret Owsley : For each one
- 09:46:52 From Becky Brathal : Thank you.
- 09:54:29 From Don Hamilton : Concur.
- 09:54:33 From Becky Brathal : Agreed
- 10:01:14 From Jesse Ashton WDNR Law Enforcement : A staggered opening day may work. You could separate it forest units vs. farmland zones. Earlier gun season finishing up north before Dec might make the snowmobile clubs happy. You may have people that can hunt both openers. Many people go up north but also hunt down south if they live there. Might be easier for the hundreds of thousands of bow hunters and crossbow hunters statewide.
- 10:01:25 From Don Hamilton : Yes.
- 10:01:58 From Becky Brathal : I agree with the language
- 10:02:35 From Becky Brathal : keep it
- 10:14:54 From Kevyn Quamme : eliminate holiday hunt and replace it with an October Antlerless hunt, in combination with other Oct specialty hunts.
- 10:16:27 From Mike Spors : The youth hunt should always stand alone. The kids should never have to compete with other gun hunters at the same time. Notwithstanding complicating regs and creating enforcement issues.
- 10:17:21 From Emily lehl : Agree with Bob. The holiday hunt also has the same benefit of Thanksgiving, where people have time off to get together, conduct drives, etc.
- 10:19:02 From Don Hamilton : Suggest "eliminate the Holiday Hunts and create October antlerless hunts."
- 10:20:23 From John Krause : BCPL supports a four day October antlerless hunt in all DMU's
- 10:21:00 From James Lanier : Same time, all together.
- 10:21:15 From Don Hamilton : Same time is good.
- 10:21:58 From John Krause : BCPL Supports same time
- 10:22:33 From Jesse Ashton WDNR Law Enforcement : If we go with an October antlerless hunt it should be earlier in October. When the traditional T-Zone antlerless hunts were held it was later during the pre rut and there was a large number of bucks being misidentified and shot and left in the woods. There are a lot of bucks on there feet during mid to late Oct.
- 10:25:40 From Don Hamilton : Which part would be optional? Just the October piece, the eliminating the Holiday hunt piece, or both?
- 10:27:00 From Don Hamilton : Concur with Bret.
- 10:27:36 From TJ : Can we just add the October option without removing another tool?
- 10:28:19 From Bret Owsley : That is a proposed option for the Antlerless season, next slide
- 10:29:15 From TJ : sorry. just got vaccinated. I've been told I can only read in Russian now
- 10:30:08 From Don Hamilton : 3 is good.
- 10:31:25 From TJ : 2nd Eric
- 10:33:34 From Becky Brathal : No objection to adding gun.
- 10:34:31 From Don Hamilton : Concur.

10:38:03 From Don Hamilton : Yes.

10:54:40 From Don Hamilton : "assumes the approval..."

10:57:54 From James Lanier : The first weekend in October, coincides with the youth hunt.

11:00:21 From TJ : Add the tool without removing another

11:01:07 From John Huff : An October antlerless hunt statewide would be good and Bob's comments on minimizing conflict with archers makes sense

11:01:47 From John Huff : Green Fire would support an October gun hunt and prefer either-sex

11:02:24 From James Lanier : CDAC approval needed I would say.

11:07:13 From Shawn Hagan : Shut down Antlerless Hunts by DMU as Quotas are filled. But keep December rifle hunts an option IF, quota still exists.

11:08:12 From Dave Newman - AWSC : Is there a reason we are using 3-4 day? When the Youth Hunt is only 2 days.

11:08:56 From John Schwarzmann : If the October hunt is a CDAC option it won't be used.

11:11:03 From Jake Walcisak : WCFA supports this as a statewide opportunity as well. Separate from CDAC approval.

11:11:18 From Don Hamilton : Ditto.

11:12:13 From Mike Spors : WTU concurs with statewide and will always advocate for the most opportunity for the greatest number of deer hunters

11:14:16 From Don Hamilton : This would encourage/allow hunters to harvest deer in Oct, get them tested for CWD; and if necessary or desired, harvest additional deer in Nov..

11:16:22 From Dave Newman - AWSC : Agree to change to 4 day for this and the youth hunt. Do we need to change #3 under Holiday Hunt to make the language the same?

11:28:47 From Terri Roehrig : Bret - that was something I was thinking about. Do we need link them?

11:29:27 From James Lanier : I would link them. What a great family/friends opportunity.

11:29:52 From Becky Brathal : I don't think we should link them. To give more voting options.

11:29:59 From John Schwarzmann : linking would increase family participation and youth mentoring.

11:30:09 From Dave Newman - AWSC : I don't think it is necessary to link them.

11:30:56 From Don Hamilton : They are separate categories. Each org can Link them with their vote.

11:31:19 From John Krause : bcpl agrees

11:33:59 From Becky Brathal : hahaha!!

11:34:05 From Jake Walcisak : Three good options for youth hunt.

11:34:51 From Jake Walcisak : yes

11:35:21 From John Huff : Remove tthe word season

11:35:23 From Becky Brathal : Option is more appropriate

11:36:48 From Don Hamilton : Argee....it should apply to all weapon choices.

11:37:12 From Don Hamilton : ...not youth, disabled, etc...

11:37:20 From James Lanier : Yes, on the cdac - that is what I thought option meant.

11:39:46 From Dave Newman - AWSC : Agree with Mike

11:40:08 From John Huff : The sentence should remain as phone registration makes it unenforceable. The deer must be regstered somehow in person.. I propose it be through CWD testing.

12:00:14 From John Krause : I don't know of any northern forest cdac who would be ok with eliminating public/private land tag distinction. Keeping the second sentence on #25 is misleading.

- 12:02:17 From dan eklund US Forest Service : I would disagree with Mike's contention. This burdens public land managers to grow a herd it likely can't and reduces public hunters options to harvest a deer.
- 12:04:02 From dan eklund US Forest Service : They are clearly written.
- 12:04:16 From Shawn Hagan : MFL Open landowners do not want the burden of deer numbers that exceed carrying capacity. Either eliminate the Public/Private OR MFL Open needs to be considered Private moving forward.
- 12:04:31 From John Schwarzmann : The public private tags take away hunting opportunities. In many areas with a mix of private and public, boundary deliberations are not always visible adding to the difficulty in keeping a separate tag.
- 12:10:38 From Jake Walcisak : you can choose zero
- 12:15:11 From Shawn Hagan : 15 Looks good.
- 12:23:44 From TJ : Any consideration to making them daily bag limits until a units quota is met?
- 12:26:48 From John Schwarzmann : cdac's are supposed to be advisory and not control the herd at their whim.
- 12:30:19 From Shawn Hagan : Agree with TJ if we are talking Antlerless Quota's and bag limits by DMU.
- 12:34:19 From Shawn Hagan : #2. All deer hunting licenses should be hunter's choice - to be used in any DMU, on public or private land on a doe or a buck. When the Antlerless Quota has been met for a given DMU, It is closed to Antlerless kill.
- 12:38:16 From dan eklund US Forest Service : This was similar to a WDNR deer committee recommendation in 2007. funny
- 12:41:47 From Shawn Hagan : My intent for #2 was to make it more palatable to CDAC's to control numbers, BUT give more folks the opportunity to kill an Antlerless Deer within a given DMU. The way #2, currently reads sounds like the Wild West!
- 12:44:53 From Jesse Ashton WDNR Law Enforcement : I would agree with Bob
- 12:45:04 From John Krause : we agree
- 12:45:21 From Jesse Ashton WDNR Law Enforcement : I agree with Bob also
- 12:47:55 From John Krause : That would be good.
- 12:51:38 From Don Hamilton : For historical purposes, may be helpful for each org to summarize how and or why their vote(s) met the agreed Objectives
- 12:54:47 From John Krause : That's a good point
- 12:56:09 From Shawn Hagan : Have each organization Create their Ideal Deer Season Structures. List the Types of Hunts and Dates preferred. At bottom bullet top five points of concern or interest.
- 13:10:40 From Tom Kempen - WWOA : Not have the half page position paper.
- 13:11:55 From Tom Kempen - WWOA : no additional input please
- 13:12:06 From Becky Brathal : not additional
- 13:12:24 From John Krause : Support having clarifying input
- 13:12:41 From Dave Newman - AWSC : AWSC would like to provide a position paper
- 13:12:42 From James Lanier : I would like to be able to comment. 1/2 page on whatever we like
- 13:12:54 From Jesse Ashton WDNR Law Enforcement : I would like option 2
- 13:13:10 From TJ : option 2
- 13:13:13 From Terri Roehrig : Position paper
- 13:13:17 From Don Hamilton : half page based on the Objectives
- 13:13:19 From Shawn Hagan : Option 2
- 13:13:20 From Jake Walcisak : 2
- 13:13:23 From Bob Nack : option 3

13:13:32 From TJ : Bob Nack is to blame for this
13:13:36 From Mike Spors : WTU option two, depending on board decision
13:13:51 From James Lanier : perfect
13:16:59 From Terri Roehrig : THANK YOU!
13:17:27 From James Lanier : Great meeting! Thanks to all!
13:17:29 From Mike Spors : Thanks everyone

10. Parking Lot Items

Comments listed here have not been edited.

Meeting #1 ideas

CWD	a. Reduce reporting time for participants in testing.
CWD	b. State should be more involved in carcass disposal, landfill leachate studies, and the distribution of information on CWD.
CWD	c. Use part of hunting license fees for carcass dumpster program in CWD areas.
CWD	d. Consider mandatory CWD testing in affected areas / units.
CWD	e. Increase CWD testing and venison donation in areas with high deer population.
CWD	f. Offer additional buck authorizations (tags) upon providing proof of testing a harvested deer.
CWD	g. Base carcass movement restrictions on unit-specific prevalence rates.
CWD	h. Increase fines / penalties (e.g., revocation) for baiting and feeding in counties with new CWD spread, to help reduce the spread.
Harvest Authorization	i. Delegate to public land managers and local wildlife biologists the responsibility of recommending annual antlerless quotas for the areas they manage. Manage wildlife based on scientific evidence.

Meeting #2 pre-work general comments (not related to a specific issue or solution)

1. The situation is that WI has a varied whitetail population, statewide, regionally and by county. The goal would be to create seasons and bag limits to address population variations without over complicating the rules and regulations. Most counties have areas of over population and under population especially below highway 8.
2. Season time and lengths does not look to be the problem with agricultural damage.
3. Most counties in the Northern Forest do not have Holiday hunts and should not over interfere with snowmobiling.
4. Our season structure is accepted by most groups, we need to figure out how to accomplish harvest goals within the current season structure.
5. S#6 – Not season structure related.
6. S#10,12,13,14,15,16,21 - Not season structure related. S#25,S#30,34,35,36,37,38
7. I22 – I 25 do not pertain to the scope of this Committee’s work on Deer Hunting Seasons.
8. Can we get a harvest breakdown by current seasons?
9. So Bret I am attempting to understand a couple of items of recent from you. The USFS main issue revolves around deer numbers and damage to forest resources both trees and ground flora. We are open to hunting across 99% of the National Forest and we encourage use. The Season lengths and methods have really no bearing on our concerns regarding damage because the quota for antlerless is the issue and that is not part of this group’s charge. Further, dealing with forestry tag issuance matters is not really a deer season framework issue either unless they can only be used during a current open season (archery, gun, muzzleloader, holiday, etc. This is not the case, they can and have been used outside the normal season(s) structure like ag tags as well.
10. Question #1- Are we supposed to review the results of pre-work and meeting #1 and provide comment? Feedback? Solutions? Not sure what you asked for. A bit dense at the moment here but is that not what we did as a group, and are you asking me to vote? Need clarity pls.

11. Question /Comment #2- Since we are to remain focused on the deer season framework structure I wonder if this is the right venue to discuss damage issues? I understand like bear and wolf again, the department tries to use hunting to reduce the damage but changing the dates, lengths or methods will not likely solve that under any “season framework”. Those are hot spot issues or quota setting problems in my thoughts which would remove them from this exercise as not “framework addressable”.
12. I have a solution, let’s have a deer damage committee or better yet maybe a public land CDAC in the north that solicits issues and concerns from public land managers and gives input to quotas rather than fighting it out in 7 CDACS like the NF and BCPL would have to do now.
13. General Comment (all from one participant):
I find this exercise to be substantially flawed.
While I have no problem seeking solutions and new ideas to improve the process, the primary focus and stated direction of this committee is to consider (adjust?) the “deer season framework”. Furthermore, it appears that each primary member will be voting on these adjustments to the “deer season framework”. If the committee was to consider adjusting forestry practices or agricultural issues, it would seem appropriate to heavily weight the committee with representatives from those fields; however, in this case when the “hunting season framework” is what’s under consideration, the pure hunting groups are woefully underrepresented, with 4 or 5 out of the 20 representatives. While groups from forestry and agriculture, who generally oppose a substantial deer population, are represented in larger numbers. Hunters, who have the largest stake in the “deer season framework” have little hope that their interests will be defended in a voting situation on this committee. In all my years of working with the DNR, as a hunter, I have never been asked to be on a committee to consider forestry or agriculture practices. If you want to consider the “deer season framework” – ask deer hunters - that aren’t representing other, usually conflicting, interests. Which, by the way, we have done and continue to do each year at the spring hearings and CDAC meetings. Deer hunting in Wisconsin is fraught with traditions. History has shown that when we make changes that disrupt those traditions – we lose hunters. And while it hopefully has occurred to the Department, hunters are your primary management tool. Disappoint enough of them and you will lose the main tool you have to control the population, which will then cause more damage, not less. There is an ugly rumor going around that the Department is weak on wolf control and even CWD in hopes that they will decimate the herd enough to offset the loss of hunters. As I said, I will happily continue to work to improve the process, and look at everything including damage concerns and even the deer seasons framework, but if this is just a backdoor way to make changes that hunters don’t support, I cannot support it or lend our name to it.
14. *Note: This is an overall solution that encompasses all of the issues and solutions identified.* New Solution: My deer hunting season solution is to change who and how we communicate to the key stakeholders (hunters, snowmobilers, ag, forestry). We need the communications, message and education to come from each of these groups rather than from the DNR. If we want buy in, we want participation these groups need to see and hear how it is working well in other areas of WI. While the DNR can help craft the messages and communications, the specific users groups should be able to provide input to those communications. We need to ensure we are communicating the What’s In It For Me (WIIFM) for each stakeholder group, show them the benefits and the consequences of not participating through specific case studies. Also recommend a cascaded communication approach. Start with communications from specific hunters/sport groups (clubs, alliances, etc), then follow up with backing and support from larger groups (WI Bowhunters, BHA, etc) then a 3rd communication from the DNR or state agencies

that support and endorse previous messages. We need to get at the hearts and minds of our stakeholder groups and include the what, why, how and when.

15. Note: This is an overall solution that encompasses all of the issues and solutions identified. New Solution: My deer hunting season solution is to pilot different solutions across different parts of WI before we fully implement to the entire state. Let's try it, see how it goes for 3-5 years and make changes instead of just moving forward with big swooping changes. This allows us to study the pilot solutions in the areas, get feedback from the key stakeholder groups and refine as we move forward. I would recommend we work with the CDACs to execute pilot programs. It would allow us to reach to a smaller stakeholder group and become more engaged with them about the solution being piloted.
16. #2 a-b It is in everyone's best interest to work together as we are here and as we have in the past. All of these interests are interrelated and symbiotic to each other.
17. S#8 Ask Waupaca Co CDAC about the idea of an antlerless only season
18. New S#29. Return more control to DNR. Support DNR biologists if they disagree with CDAC's and have the local knowledge and data to prove it. Many DNR biologist just go with the flow and agree with CDAC's unless they are way off base in fear of the public and political fallout.
19. I#16 - My Deer Hunting Solution is New-- I believe a critical part of the herd population estimates the DNR uses is faulted. I believe this is due to a combination of issues such as: The harvest impact of baiting, the heavy predator load and fawn loss, the high estimate of buck recovery rates in the Northern Forest counties which is shown as 75%, the effect of winter and the WSI estimates. I believe A combination of these factors contributes to herd estimates that are higher than the actual numbers. The Northern Forest counties have all dropped off in harvest while population estimates keep showing that a positive season is expected. The fact that all of these counties are performing in similar manner indicates that there is something wrong with the formulation of estimates. This assertion is worth investigating, because if it is true, more tools, and different seasons, etc. are not the answer. If you survey the northern forest cdac chairs, I am sure you will find little confidence in the herd estimates they are receiving. Example: Northern forest counties combined buck kill in 2018 vs 2017 was down 5.1% and down in 2019 27% vs. 2018
20. S#35 We have suggested point restriction to the hunters in the past. Not well received.
21. I#2 new solution: ACKNOWLEDGE the economic impacts! Let's be honest and transparent with the stakeholder groups and invite input how to mitigate from the stakeholder groups and express the desire to balance the impacts across the groups.
22. I# 5b New Solution - My deer hunting solution is to encourage specific landowners and/or groups of landowners with deer overpopulation issues to join DMAP. Landowners would benefit by being able to work directly with DNR foresters/biologist and their neighbors in controlling deer numbers and other deer management issues on their specific properties.
23. My deer hunting solution to encourage testing and hunter participation in managing CWD is to develop app-based information on management unit opportunities that includes information on testing sites, carcass movement restrictions, and carcass disposal options through the Hunt Wild app or a similar system (e.g. OnX). (This is mostly complete in Hunt Wild)

Ideas for future consideration (feedback not related to charter objectives)

1. CWD - Cervid farms (controlled by DATCP) contribute to CWD spread.
2. CWD - Current methods of restricting CWD spread are not effective. How should we move from disease observation / prevalence tracking to active disease management and containment?

3. What are the best ways to improve voluntary testing and processing?
 - What are the best ways to build more flexibility in enrollment in the program?
 - What are the best ways to accommodate county-to-county variations in the program?
4. Expand DNR forestry browse survey across the state – will help understand if the land can carry the # of deer.-Solution
5. CDACs should manage deer across county lines.
6. Educate landowners and hunters on how to id damage to forests and crops while they are hunting; could help with empathy with landowner / farmers. Educate landowners who do not open their property on the damage; could help them open the land.
7. Predator control – coyote population has escalated and they take a substantial # of young deer. It curtails expansion of deer population in north-eastern WI.
8. Limit baiting and feeding, ban 3 days before and during the gun season.
9. State-wide baiting and feeding ban can be conducive to multiple solutions for deer management
10. What about landfill leachate that often goes to our water treatment facilities that don't take prions from the waste? What about areas where the leachate may enter the water table? Why isn't the state in the lead on these issues? We currently have CWD in 37 counties, how do we prevent it from expanding further, or at the very least slow that process? Why aren't we depopulating positive farms immediately? Why do we allow shooting facilities to continue in operation when they have positive animals? Shouldn't DATCP get on this? Shouldn't we be reinitiating our research, and stepping up funding to do so? PFA's are becoming an issue, if they are in our water supply, isn't that a concern that should also be addressed?
11. Manage movement of infected carcasses across the state.
12. State to sponsor studies on prion content in landfill leachate and semen straws
13. More funding to supply deer carcass dumpsters across the state. Accelerate the dumpster and kiosk programs
14. Help user groups, especially non-consumptive groups about how all groups work together. Public engagement includes processes, rules, regulations, season structure.
15. Introduce the 4th R of "respect"
16. QDMA's Field to Form and Rack Back program
17. Include sound science in deer management. CDACs have engaged the public. Decision making should go to local DNR biologists and managers; CDACs maintain their role of population goals, public input, etc.
18. Background: Recommendations from CDACs are then vetted by biologists and foresters; the role of CDACs is limited to issuing antler-less permits. CDACs look at opinions of counties, and the science.
19. DNR leadership in the CDAC process to better advocate for all stakeholders (e.g., education, advocacy, agriculture, forestland owners/managers, tourism, transportation, hunters, wildlife managers, law enforcement) and not just hunters.
20. #11h: ban baiting for habitat, deer health, and hunting concerns
21. #4 S#4d – I strongly disagree with the idea of include snowmobile trails within the rules and regulations of public roads? This would not create a viable solution and has nothing to do with season structure.
22. #7 - My deer hunting solution is New--State could vet hunters by a written survey they would have to fill out to qualify for inclusion in hunters accessing private properties. The vetting could be stringent in safety protocols, behavior, and other areas to make those who contact landowners more acceptable to them. Landowners could be surveyed with their main concerns...and some of those could be incorporated. Hunters records could be checked for game or law violations to help insure good people are recommended

23. Issue #8e and a NEW ISSUE - My Deer Hunting Solution is New -- The predator load in many counties is a herd limiting factor. High fawn predation results in having many counties where it is rare to observe a doe with two fawns, and often does observed in the fall don't have any fawns with them. High predator numbers are and have been the number one complaint in surveys of CDAC attendees in wolf country. I do not believe the DNR considers this an issue that needs to be dealt with. Now that wolves have been de-listed, I have concerns that the DNR will raise the USFW recovery ceiling from the current 350. That will be an unprecedented re-allocation of deer to predators over hunters, who provide 85% of the fish and wildlife program funding. If they are serious about R3 that should not happen.
24. Issue #11 - My Deer Hunting Solution is New --Kids have more fun and may be more interested in hunting if they have a positive experience. In regards to deer, that happens more often when they see and have opportunities to take a deer. In many counties, that is not happening without a bait pile. In my opinion, the practice of baiting does not teach hunting techniques, and is questionable from an ethical standpoint. Older hunters who are deliberating quitting hunting are also enthused by seeing more deer. Seeing deer enhances the experience of hunting...sitting for days or years without seeing them, is negatively impacting R3 efforts.
25. Issue #13. Non-consumptive recreationists would receive greater voice if they were contributing monetarily to management through additional user fees or excise taxes on recreational equipment. This has been thrown around for years, but hunters are generally reluctant to give non-hunters much voice in the wildlife management decision-making processes.
26. S#34 Finally, the biggest problem that we need to find a better solution to – ACCESS
27. My deer hunting solution to simplify regulations is to institute a statewide Baiting and Feeding Ban. This will also address many other deer hunting issues including disease management, unequal distribution of deer, engagement of novice hunters, and satisfaction of hunters. This is a new solution.
28. Issue #19 - New Solution - My deer hunting solutions is to ban baiting statewide. The negative issues relating to baiting and feeding deer outnumber the positives.
29. My deer hunting solution is to update the Deer Environmental Analysis produced in 1995 to provide a better understanding of deer management issues and to serve as a guide to future management decisions. Providing this resource to hunters and decision makers will lead to more informed deer management decisions. This is a new solution.