

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

**SUBJECT:** Request approval of department recommendations for the 2013 deer hunting season antlerless deer quotas, permit levels, and unit designations.

**FOR:** May 2013 Board meeting

**TO BE PRESENTED BY:** Bill Vander Zouwen, Wildlife Ecology Section Chief

**SUMMARY:**

The department is recommending approval of two secretary's orders that modify the deer hunting season framework in herd control and CWD units, approval of antlerless quotas, and permit levels for "regular" season units. Where populations are below goals, we again propose limiting or eliminating antlerless harvest. Where they are substantially above goals, herd control seasons are recommended. Bonus buck regulations are recommended in CWD units only for bucks that are in addition to ones harvested under the authority of an archery or gun buck deer carcass tag, consistent with the limitations of 2011 ACT 50.

Herd control seasons (50 units plus 8 state park units):

01M, 15, 16, 21, 22, 22A, 27, 33, 46, 47, 51A, 51B, 54A, 54B, 54C, 57, 57B, 57C, 59B, 59C, 59D, 59M, 60A, 60B, 60M, 61, 61A, 62A, 62B, 63A, 63B, 64, 64A, 64M, 65A, 65B, 66, 67A, 67B, 68A, 68B, 69, 69C, 72, 72A, 73A, 73B, 73D, 74A, 74B, 77C, 77D, 77E, 77M, 80A, 80B, 80C, and 81.

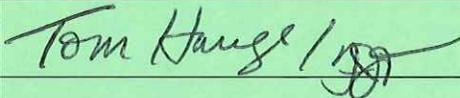
CWD Management Zone, limited bonus buck season (22 units comprising the entire zone):

54B, 70, 70A, 70B, 70C, 70D, 70E, 70F, 70G, 71, 73B, 73E, 75A, 75B, 75C, 75D, 76, 76A, 76M, 77A, 77B, 77C

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approval of department recommendations for the 2013 deer hunting season antlerless deer quotas, permit levels, and unit designations.

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

- Background memo
- Secretary's order for CWD units
- Secretary's order for non
- N/A

Approved by	Signature	Date
Tom Hauge, Bureau Director		5/8/13
Kurt Thiede, Administrator		8-3-13
Cathy Stepp, Secretary		5/9/13

DATE: May 7, 2013  
TO: Natural Resource Board Members  
FROM: Cathy Stepp, Secretary  
SUBJECT: 2013 Deer Season Recommendations

FILE REF: 2300

**Recommendations:** I'm offering the following 2013 deer season recommendations for Natural Resources Board (NRB) consideration and approval:

1. Approval of the antlerless quota and permit levels for deer management units (DMUs) recommended for regular gun deer seasons (Table 1 & Figure 1).
2. Approval of a Secretary's Order designating the 2013 Herd Control Units (Table 2, Figure 1); and
3. Approval of a Secretary's Order establishing the 2013 bonus buck requirements for the CWD Management Zone.

In April of each year, we bring our annual deer season and antlerless quota recommendations to the Natural Resources Board for consideration and approval. This year, we've moved the process back to provide an extra month of analysis and public input. Plus, we have had a winter that refuses to end in the far northwestern counties, and the extra time in the quota-setting process has been important for department biologists to assess the anticipated impacts. We have completed our analysis of the 2012 biological and harvest data to calculate updated population estimates, held public forums to share information on herd status and gather citizen perspectives, and made projections on likely scenarios for herd growth and harvests in 2013. I want to publicly thank our staff, and especially our local wildlife biologists and researchers for their work, and the public for the invaluable perspective they provided.

On that note, I want to emphasize that we again took extra steps in the quota-setting process to provide opportunity for public input. As you know, I've placed a high priority on reaching out to the public and providing them with new opportunities to participate in our deer management program. For the second year, we provided an on-line forum opportunity for those who are unable to attend a local deer forum meeting. I'm thrilled to say we had an unprecedented 13,300 people complete the survey from their home. Their feedback has provided us with valuable observations and opinions from every deer management unit of Wisconsin. The response to the survey was more than double the 2012 results, and it impacted many of our decisions about quota levels and season structure for individual units. I hope the public sees the value we put in their feedback and hope they will be pleased.

In addition to the on-line survey, department staff held 34 deer forums throughout the state to share information and listen to the public. Deer hunting shows, conventions, club meetings, and many other opportunities continue to provide us with an understanding of the current deer management issues before us. Clearly, Wisconsin hunters are very passionate about their deer as is evident from the wide spectrum of viewpoints on almost every issue. A short summary of some of the deer hunter forum survey results are provided at the end of this report. This information can already be found on the department's web site.

The 2013 deer season framework attempts to strike a balance between the social and biological interests expressed by hunters, landowners, farmers, foresters, businesses, and many other stakeholders from all corners of the state. Hunters are the backbone of our deer management system and we are striving to make the hunting season enjoyable and satisfying while fulfilling our obligations as herd managers. Without the enthusiasm and

participation of hunters and landowners, any management goal is unachievable. We need our partners, the landowners and the hunters, to help manage this deer herd.

**Quota and Permit Level Considerations:** Department staff committed a great deal of effort and attention to biological details, heeded the wishes of the public, as well as used their professional “gut” feelings in setting quota and permit levels this year. I am happy to say that the local biologists found a great deal of common ground with the public, and we have fulfilled promises to set reasonable permit levels and conservative quotas across the north. The word “unlimited” has been removed from our vocabulary when discussing permit levels, and we continue to show hunters that we want to reward them rather than give the perception of forcing them to do something they don’t want to do. And we are continuing the trend started in 2012 of setting permit levels based on historic demand in units where formula-generated permit levels far exceed reasonable levels.

The impacts of winter on the deer herd have recently become a topic of discussion among our partners as well as local wildlife managers. Up until the middle of March, winter’s impacts on the deer herd were not a concern. However, lingering cold temperatures, heavy crust and ice conditions, and late arriving heavy snows quickly turned a mild winter into one of potentially severe rankings. Already conservative quotas across the north were reduced even further as wildlife staff monitored conditions into the first weeks of May.

Of perhaps greater concern are the local reports in the farmland regions where high deer numbers have depleted natural winter browse over the years, resulting in stressed deer and direct losses this winter. It’s rare that we hear of starvation in the farmland, but these situations are clearly the result of malnutrition. It should serve as a reminder that over-abundant deer numbers might make for good hunting, but Mother Nature will ultimately balance things out and this is not a responsible way of managing the state’s deer herd.

Lastly, I would like to address the quota levels for those northern and central forest units that remain below goals after conservative quotas the past few years. While we realize that predators can make recovery slower, much of northern Wisconsin simply is not the deer habitat it used to be. Our maturing forest is not capable of supporting as many deer as it did 10 or 20 years ago. Our hunters realize this, and are pleased to see an increase in the amount of timber cutting that is occurring across the north. And while deer numbers remain lower than desired, the public feedback also indicated that hunters in most units do now wish to go to zero quotas. Some level of antlerless harvest can be sustained in most units and still allow herd growth. As a result, we have seventeen (17) units that are below goal, but we have recommended a small quota based on public feedback. By doing so we are able to keep the rules as simple as possible, allow an antlerless harvest during the archery season, reduce the amount of wasted deer shot accidentally, reduce the drastic swings in permit levels from year to year, allow some collection of biological data in the harvest, and provide some opportunity for those who wish to harvest a doe. Again, this is what the public requested and I’m happy to say we concur.

The 2013 gun deer season will offer the latest season opener possible. As a result, we may see reduced rutting activity which could impact the overall deer harvest. On the other hand, the late opener will offer hunters a higher likelihood that we will have some snow on the ground to aid in seeing deer while on stand. Regardless of the conditions, 2013 should see more deer in most areas across the state and provide world class deer hunting.

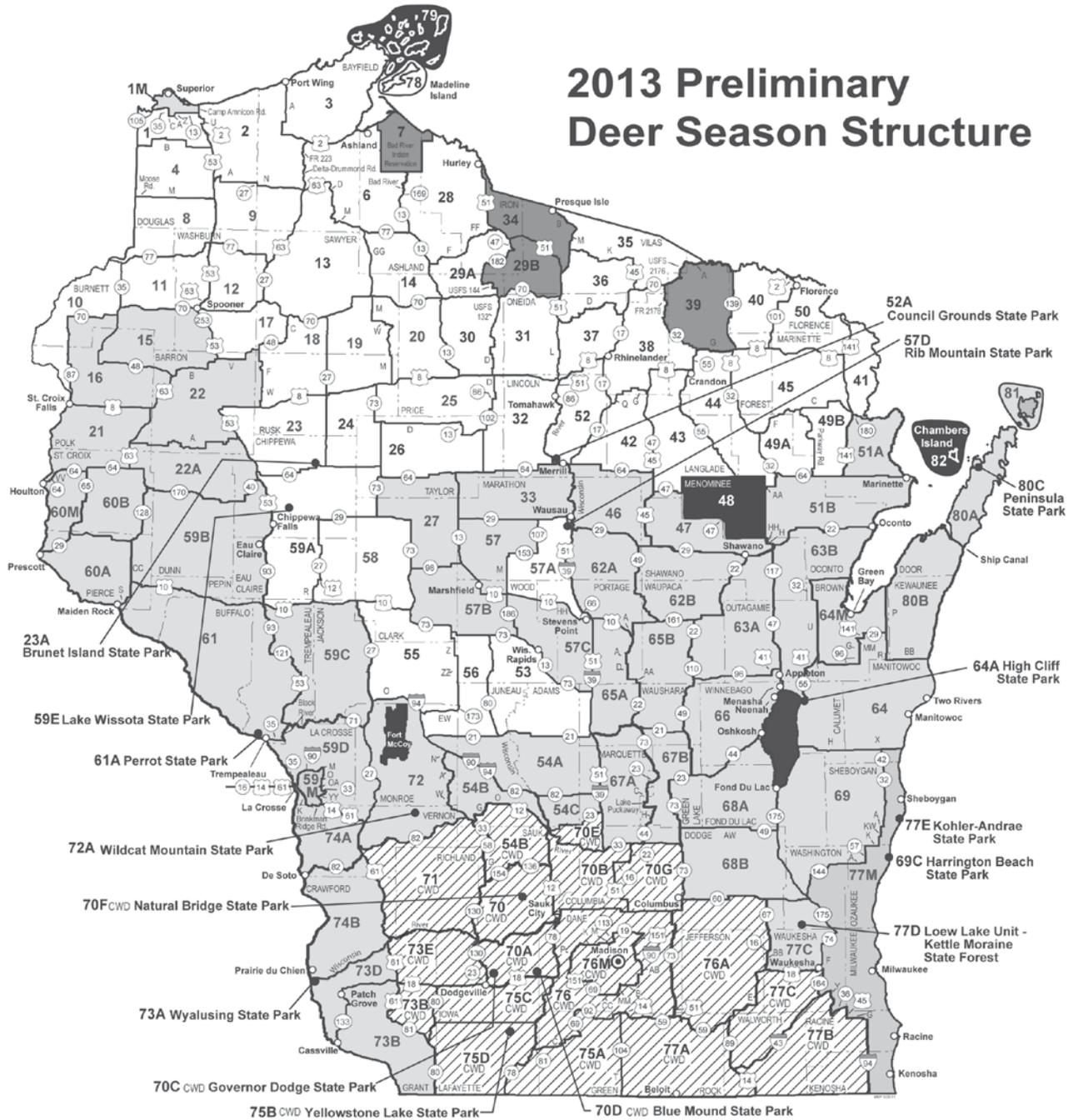
**Table 1. Recommended antlerless deer harvest quotas and bonus permit levels in Deer Management Units recommended for a Regular season structure in 2013**

Deer Mgmt Unit	Recom. Antlerless Quota	Recom. Number of Permits	2012 Permit Comparison	Deer Mgmt Unit	Recom. Antlerless Quota	Recom. Number of Permits	2012 Permit Comparison
1	400	1,150	1,125	41	750	2,325	3,100
2	1,500	3,725	4,525	42	200	450	2,675
3	50	150	3,000	43	400	1,025	4,100
4	300	850	1,200	44	200	750	3,500
6	760	2,025	3,500	45	400	1,075	3,725
7	0	0	0	49A	200	450	450
8	700	1,800	2,575	49B	1,000	3,200	3,825
9	700	2,025	2,850	50	500	1,575	4,500
10	800	1,375	1,375	52	500	1,350	2,800
11	1,300	3,000	3,675	53	4,100	7,000	6,400
12	1,300	3,525	3,200	55	2,800	6,625	7,025
13	800	2,650	2,625	56	450	525	200
14	400	1,275	2,100	57A	2,500	3,800	4,200
17	1,200	3,175	3,000	58	6,000	8,200	10,000
18	1,200	2,925	2,875	59A	5,000	5,800	6,400
19	1,100	2,950	3,225	78	75	200	300
20	900	2,850	2,400	<b>Total</b>	<b>46,885</b>	<b>102,200</b>	<b>138,650</b>
23	3,000	8,575	5,500				
24	700	1,625	2,125				
25	1,500	4,000	4,050				
26	900	2,000	2,000				
28	200	525	2,500				
29A	100	400	1,225				
29B	0	0	0				
30	100	300	300				
31	100	275	2,475				
32	500	1,025	4,225				
34	0	0	0				
35	300	775	0				
36	300	825	0				
37	300	850	1,425				
38	300	900	2,775				
39	0	0	0				
40	100	325	3,600				

<b>Season Framework</b>		
	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
Buck Only Units	6	4
Regular Units	50	46
Herd Control	44	50

# 2013 Preliminary Deer Season Structure



- Regular Unit** - Bucks plus \$12 bonus antlerless permits
- Herd Control Unit** - Bucks plus \$2 antlerless permits
- Bucks Only** - (DMUs 7, 29B, 34, & 39)
- Non-Quota Area** - No permits issued by DNR
- CWD Unit** - 1 archery buck, 1 gun buck, plus antlerless permits. Bonus Buck rules apply.

• Unit 48 firearm season is for tribal members only - season set by Menominee Tribe

**Table 2. Deer Management Units recommended for Herd Control designation in 2013**

Deer Mgmt Unit	Goal over-winter density	Estimated overwinter density	Gun antlerless harvest needed to get within 20% of goal	Maximum historic antlerless gun kill without Herd Control season structure
01M	10	39	780	5
15	25	35	6445	6423
16	25	39	6590	3471
21	25	52	8070	2373
22	25	34	4140	2669
22A	25	39	6430	3215
27	25	47	6960	1883
33	25	32	2900	2255
46	25	37	4970	2859
47	25	54	9570	2329
51A	25	53	8025	2942
51B	25	61	17790	3977
54A	25	34	5845	4788
54B	25	57	7015	4778
54C	25	69	4780	1243
57	25	44	3790	1344
57B	25	45	6365	2962
57C	30	40	3885	3037
59B	25	35	9840	5759
59C	25	55	22448	8199
59D	25	45	9625	4031
59M	15	49	1635	320
60A	25	38	3040	1632
60B	25	40	1645	797
60M	15	32	1390	727
61	25	56	36175	9185
62A	30	49	9125	6019
62B	30	103	30890	5361
63A	30	76	18100	4293
63B	25	75	14740	2569
64	25	73	14345	3869
64M	15	64	4200	916
65A	30	39	2340	2206
65B	30	66	14750	5067
66	30	83	10400	2702
67A	25	57	13520	5917
67B	25	74	10810	3426
68A	30	80	7200	2133
68B	25	47	4885	1504

69	25	44	10885	3236
72	20	52	19445	5963
73B	20	42	5150	2110
73D	20	37	3340	1192
74A	25	41	4180	1652
74B	20	40	11745	3146
77C	20	53	4970	2219
77M	15	28	5370	611
80A	15	39	3965	915
80B	25	97	17075	2593
81	15	70	1075	354

\*Maximum antlerless harvest without herd control season structure was set more than 10 years ago

**2012 Herd Monitoring Data:** Annually, department staff undertakes a post-hunt review of the biological and harvest data from the previous year and calculates updated population estimates for each DMU. Annual herd monitoring data (much of which is now being collected with the help of volunteers) includes information on fawn production, age structure, body condition, and harvest data. Using registration stub data, we again had the opportunity to compare hunter deer sightings to the previous year in 2012. Within the CWD management zone, population assessments are also guided by aerial fixed-wing and helicopter surveys conducted during the winter.

The Winter Severity Index during the winter of 2011-12 was one of the mildest ever recorded, and yet summer fawn:doe observations were 12% below the long-term average. While the WSI index is showing the winter of 2012-13 to be moderate across much of the north, it arrived well into February and remained well beyond normal conditions. Hard crusted snow and lingering depths will, no doubt, have an impact on direct losses to primarily fawns and older deer, and will likely impact recruitment this spring. We have taken these factors into consideration and are recommending very conservative harvest goals that will allow herd growth across the entire northern forest region.

We aged 26,091 deer during the 2012 season (a 5% decrease from 2011). This information is used to estimate what the pre-hunt population was in September, primarily by measuring the percent of the harvest that are 1.5 year old deer. Our aging efforts have also documented the increasing proportion of older bucks in the farmland regions over the past two decades.

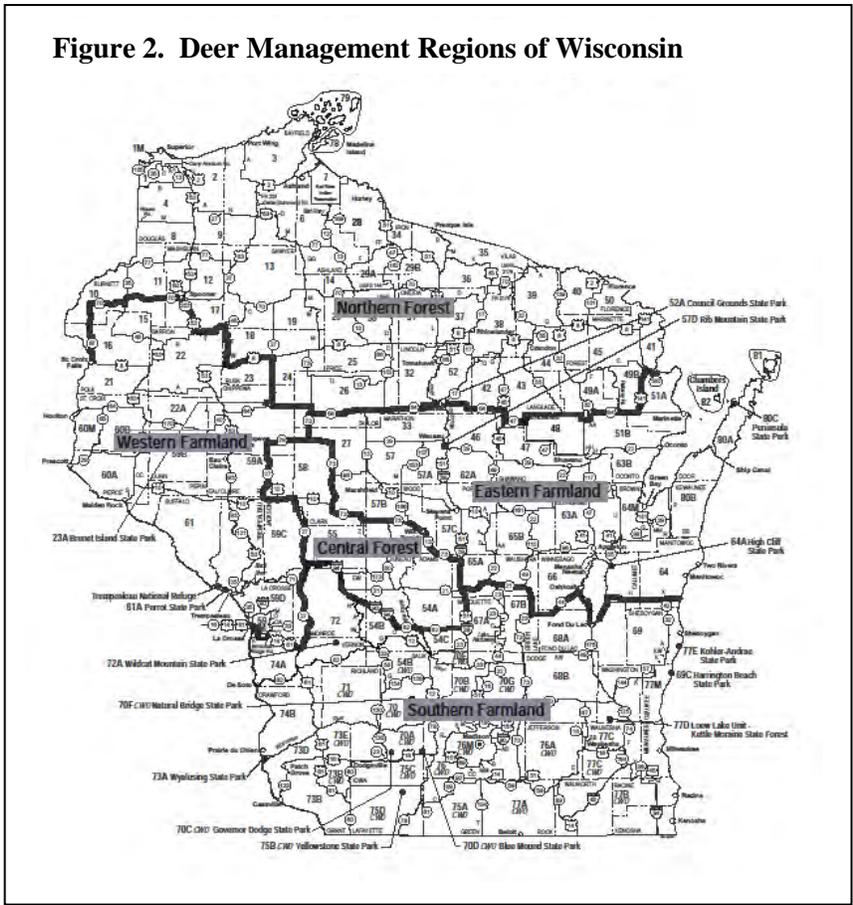
Tables 3 and 4 provide a summary of antlered and antlerless harvests in recent years, as well as a comparison in the 2011 and 2012 harvests by Wisconsin five deer management regions (Figure 2).

**Table 3. Deer Harvest by Season Compared to Prior Years**

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Archery Season Harvest	113,918	116,010	99,284	87,241	83,833	90,200	94,267
Total Gun Harvest	393,306	402,563	352,601	241,862	253,038	257,511	274,047
Total Antlerless Harvest	326,249	345,143	310,366	194,715	185,211	193,954	199,830
Total Buck Harvest	177,359	171,142	138,507	134,156	148,378	150,839	165,457
Total Deer Harvest	507,224	518,573	451,885	329,103	336,871	347,711	368,314

**Table 4. 2012 Deer Harvest by Region and Difference from 2011.**

Deer management region	2012 total harvest	Change from 2011	Change in bucks	Change in gun buck	Change in archery buck	Change in antlerless
Northern Forest	71,102	-8%	-1%	3%	-12%	-13%
Central Forest	20,986	15%	16%	16%	17%	15%
Eastern Farmland	92,739	6%	11%	13%	6%	2%
Western Farmland	79,314	12%	19%	23%	9%	7%
Southern Farmland	104,080	10%	10%	12%	6%	11%



**Regular Season & Zero Quota Units:** For 2013, we have recommended 50 units for a regular gun deer season framework (down from 56 in 2012) which includes four (4) units recommended for a zero antlerless quota (compared to six (6) in 2012 including units 7, 29B, 34, and 39). For each of these four units, we took into consideration local comments and support for zero quotas, as well as population estimates that indicate these units are more than 20% below goals. This will be five consecutive years that these same four units have had buck-only seasons, and it is evident that they are not recovering at a rate that would normally be expected. None-the-less, zero quotas will maximize herd growth, but we question whether these units can bounce back to established populations goals until habitat becomes more favorable to support more deer.

There are seventeen (17) additional units that are below goals, but within 20% of goal. Public feedback indicated a desire for some permits in each of these units. As a result, we have established modest antlerless quotas that will allow limited doe harvest during all hunting seasons, provide needed aging data, and simplify rules while still allowing herd growth. A small quota will also lessen the year to year “roller coaster” changes in annual permit levels. Hunters want consistency and at least a small quota in each unit can help minimize that.

In addition to the zero quota units already discussed, there were two other units where quotas were zero in 2012 (units 35 and 36). These herds have shown growth, as anticipated. We have recommended a very small quota in each of these units for 2013 that will continue to promote herd growth.

**Herd Control Units:** The number of units designated as herd control units has increased from 44 in 2012 to 50 in 2013. These units will have antlerless harvest permits available at \$2/permit, and will be made available to all hunters who wish to purchase them. Recent history using available season frameworks shows that it is not likely that sufficient numbers of deer will be taken in most herd control units to slow herd growth. In only a few units within the farmland regions of the state are we having success in managing local deer herds to goals. Generally, these tend to be fringe units on the edge of farmland and forested regions, and their season structure has a pattern of alternating between herd control and regular seasons from year to year.

The main increase in the number of herd control units for 2013 occurs in the northwest farmlands. This is the same area where department staff honored public requests for a conservative, limited quota and regular season structure in 2012 rather than designating herd control status. That strategy didn't work, and instead allowed significant herd growth. The regular season structure certainly is preferred by hunters and provides a more controlled harvest environment with limited \$12 permits. However, in most farmland units hunters have shown an inability to remove sufficient numbers of deer to stabilize local deer herds in these highly productive units. Overall, designating units as regular units where possible is a visible gesture to hunters that we have heard their concerns to take a conservative approach. We understand that to many hunters, herd control efforts are perceived as a de-valuing of the deer resource. I want to assure hunters that the department has not lost our enthusiasm and appreciation for deer. Deer are a keystone of the Wisconsin culture. As deer hunters ourselves, we regard them at the highest value possible and continue to recognize them as the most socially and economically important wild animal in our state. However, we must all take our responsibilities to manage the herd very seriously. This year in particular, we have seen what happens to local deer herds that become out of balance with their habitat. No amount of food plots or waste crops can prevent losses when natural browse has been depleted because of too many deer. Situations like this became reality this year. The prolonged winter of 2012-13 should be remembered as we attempt to determine how to manage deer in the future, and by what techniques we use to monitor the herd and their habitat.

**CWD in Washburn County:** In March of 2012, we received the news of a CWD positive deer in unit 15 within Washburn County. We initiated a surveillance strategy based on a great deal of input from the public. Thanks to overwhelming cooperation by our hunters, over 1000 deer were surveyed from the area during the 2012 hunting season. No additional positive samples were collected. Based on this comprehensive sampling, all indications are that CWD is not yet widespread here, it is at a very low prevalence rate, and we may have discovered it early. It is very possible there are more infected deer in the area, but we need to continue sampling, especially in the immediate vicinity of the first positive. At this point, we are not confident on the geographic extent of the disease. When we have this information, we will work with the Citizen-based Advisory Team to discuss future management options.

**CWD in New Areas:** Survey results from the 2012 season resulted in the discovery of CWD in our wild deer herd in Juneau, Adams, and Portage Counties. Public information meetings were held in each county during February. Based upon input and feedback received from the meetings, plans are in place to conduct more

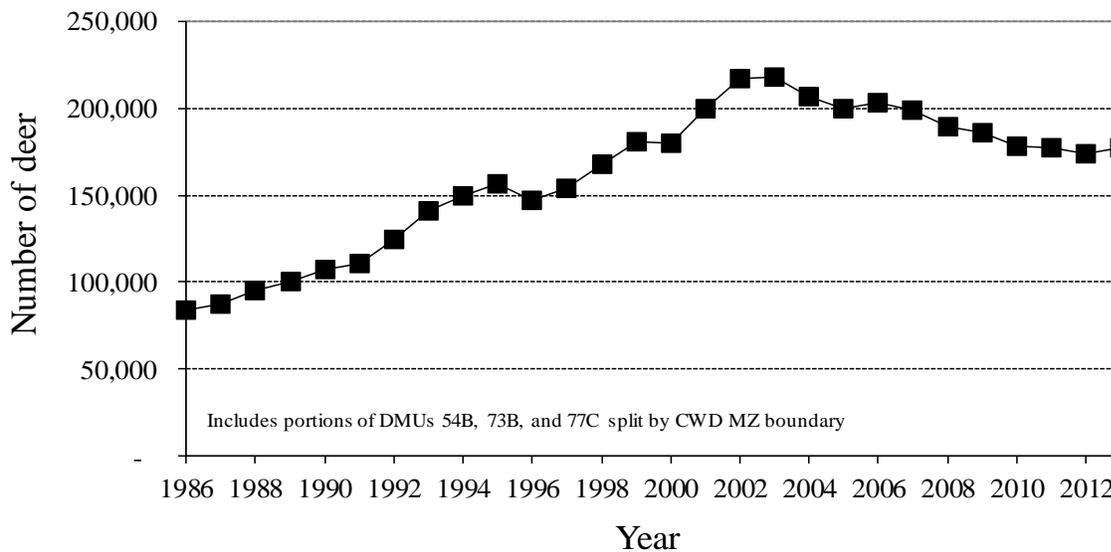
comprehensive surveillance during the 2013 deer season in the three counties utilizing hunter harvested deer. The testing of sick deer and agricultural damage deer has been occurring since the disease was discovered and will continue throughout the year.

In addition, two CWD detections were also discovered outside the current CWD-MZ in Grant and Waukesha counties. Due to their close proximity to the CWD Management Zone boundary as well as the current review of CWD management via the Deer Trustee Report implementation process, hunting season regulations will remain unchanged for the 2013 season. A ban on baiting and feeding and deer rehabilitation has been implemented in Washington County due to the Waukesha County positive. We will continue to respond to sick deer reports and test deer for CWD when deemed appropriate, as well as, conduct continued surveillance from hunter harvested deer during the 2013 deer season in the vicinity of these CWD positive deer. Samples may also be collected from road kills, urban deer removal programs, taxidermists, and meat processors.

**CWD Management Zone:** The deer season in the CWD Management Zone is proposed to be identical to 2012. This includes no October firearm season, or a winter private lands surveillance hunt during January-March. CWD management zone archery and gun hunters may again harvest either a buck or doe as their first deer. If hunters wish to pursue additional deer including antlered bucks, they will be able to do so under the Bonus Buck regulations.

The 2011 season was the first year without earn-a-buck requirements and resulted in a much reduced antlerless harvest and increased buck harvest in the CWD zone. This trend continued in 2012, and we are seeing CWD prevalence rates increase along with overall deer numbers. Aerial flights conducted this winter verify a growing number of deer on an already deer-rich landscape. The increase in the overall buck kill has both good and bad ramifications. From a disease perspective, we know that adult males have the highest prevalence of the disease, so an increased buck harvest can increase the probability of removing these deer from the herd. However, the reduced antlerless harvest will result in herd growth throughout the CWD zone with little hope of slowing it under the current season framework.

**Fig. 3. Estimated posthunt deer population within the CWD Zone**



## 2013 Deer Forum Survey Summary

### Attendance

During the last two weeks in March, Wildlife staff held 34 deer forums around the state to share information about deer management and gather information from hunters and others interested in deer. As an alternative to traveling to a live meeting, the public was able to obtain unit-specific information and contribute feedback through the DNR website. Over 700 people attended a live forum, while more than 13,300 surveys were completed through the DNR website.

### Reponses by Deer Region

The Northern Forest deer management region received the most survey responses for the second year in a row (38%), followed by the Southern Farmland (23%), Eastern Farmland (17%), Western Farmland (14%), and Central Forest (8%).

<b>Region</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Central Forest	1034	8
Eastern Farmland	2351	17
Northern Forest	5082	38
Southern Farmland	3069	23
Unknown	15	1
Western Farmland	1817	14

### Responses by Type of Deer Hunting

The majority of respondents identified themselves as both gun and bow deer hunters (65%), while relatively few respondents replied that they do not hunt deer (1.6%).

<b>Type</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Both	8623	65
Gun Only	3940	30
Bow Only	584	4
Don't Hunt	221	2

### Reponses by Deer Management Unit

Respondents were asked to identify the Deer Management Unit (DMU) for which they were providing feedback. DMU 61 received the highest number of responses with 263. Next was DMU 54A (262 respondents), 69 (250), 55 (247 respondents), and 45 (245 respondents).

**Number of Deer in Your DMU Compared to Data on DMU Fact Sheet**

Statewide, 35% of respondents indicated the number of deer in their DMU was “Somewhat Lower” than the data on the DMU fact sheet. The next most popular response was “Much Lower” (33% which was down considerably from 2012 (47%), followed by “Equal” (17%).

Number	Frequency	Percent
Much Higher	112	1
Somewhat Higher	444	4
Equal	2127	17
Somewhat Lower	4407	35
Much Lower	4173	33
Unsure	1499	1

Central Forest respondents had the highest percentage of their total respondents indicating the number of deer in their DMU was “Much Lower” than the data on the DMU fact sheet (43%). The next highest percentage came from the Northern Forest respondents (41%) indicating deer numbers were “Much Lower” than the DMU fact sheet; Eastern farmland (26%); Southern Farmland (26%); and Western Farmland (23%).

Area	Percent (%)						Total #
	Much Higher	Somewhat Higher	Equal	Somewhat Lower	Much Lower	Unsure	
Central Forest	1	2	12	34	43	9	1000
E. Farmland	1	3	18	39	26	12	2254
Northern Forest	1	3	14	33	41	9	4847
S. Farmland	1	4	19	34	26	16	2921
Unknown	0	0	62	31	0	8	13
W. Farmland	1	5	22	34	23	14	1727
Total #	112	444	2127	4407	4173	1499	12762

**Amount of Importance to be Given to Specific Factors**

Respondents were asked to rate the amount of importance that should be given to ten specific considerations when establishing the number of antlerless permits for a particular DMU. The considerations included:

- Amount of agricultural crop damage from deer
- Deer over-browsing of forests that prevent re-growth of some forest tree species
- Number of predators
- Amount of deer mortality during an average winter
- Deer over-browsing of food and cover needed by other wildlife
- Deer over-browsing of food and cover needed for future generations of deer
- The number of deer-vehicle accidents
- Potential health risks to the deer herd
- Enough deer to provide hunters a reasonable chance to bag a deer
- Hunter satisfaction with the number of deer

Ranking of considerations based on percentage of statewide respondents that felt “A lot of importance” should be given were as follows, and were exactly the same order of ranking as in the 2012 survey:

1. Predators (58%)
2. Chance to bag a deer (55%)
3. Hunter satisfaction (49%)
4. Winter mortality (45%)
5. Deer herd health risks (37%)
6. Over-browsing effects on future deer numbers (33%)
7. Over-browsing effects on regrowth (26%)
8. Over-browsing effects on other wildlife (23%)
9. Ag crop damage (17%)
10. Deer-vehicle accidents (10%)

**Number of Antlerless Permits Available in 2012**

Statewide, the majority of respondents (47%) indicated there were too many antlerless permits available in the DMU in which they hunt (down from 55% last year). Forty-one percent felt there were an acceptable number of antlerless permits available (up from 33%) and 5% indicated too few antlerless permits were available in their DMU last season (up from 4%).

<b>Permits</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Too Few	579	5
Acceptable #	5005	33
Too Many	5762	47
Unsure	1002	6

The Central Forest deer region respondents (55%) had the highest percentage indicate they believed too many antlerless permits were available in their DMU in 2012, followed by Northern Forest respondents (53%), Southern Farmland (43%), Western Farmland (40%), and Eastern Farmland (39%). The number of respondents that said permit levels were “too few” or “acceptable” went up in all regions, while the number saying there were “too many” decreased in all regions.

<b>Area</b>	<b>Permits (%)</b>				<b>Total #</b>
	<b>Too Few</b>	<b>Acceptable #</b>	<b>Too Many</b>	<b>Unsure</b>	
Central Forest	5	32	55	8	969
E. Farmland	2	49	40	9	2173
Northern Forest	7	33	53	7	4729
S. Farmland	2	44	43	11	2789
Unknown	15	77	8	0	13
W. Farmland	4	49	40	6	1675
<b>Total #</b>	<b>579</b>	<b>5005</b>	<b>5762</b>	<b>1002</b>	<b>12348</b>

**What Type of Antlerless Permit System would be Appropriate for 2013?**

Statewide, 34% of respondents indicated a “Moderate number” of antlerless permits would be appropriate for the DMU in which they hunt (up from 28% in 2012). Twenty-three percent of respondents indicated a “Small number” of antlerless permits would be appropriate, 12% felt a “Buck Only” system would be appropriate (down from 19%), while 12% believe some other system would be appropriate (down from 15%).

<b>System</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent of all Responses</b>
Buck Only	1542	12
Small #	2872	23
Moderate #	4215	34
High #	1442	12
CWD	443	4
Unsure	332	3
Other System	1514	12

Regionally, Northern Forest respondents indicated the highest amount of support for a “Buck Only” antlerless permit system for 2013 (24%). Northern and Central Forest respondents also indicated the largest support for a “Small number” of antlerless permits available in 2013 (30%). Western Farmland (41%), Eastern Farmland (40%), and Central Forest (37%) respondents indicated the highest support for a “Moderate number” of antlerless permits in 2013.

<b>Area</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>							<b>Total</b>
	<b>Buck Only</b>	<b>Small #</b>	<b>Mod. #</b>	<b>High #</b>	<b>CWD</b>	<b>Unsure</b>	<b>Other System</b>	
Central Forest	12	30	37	7	0	2	17	970
E. Farmland	4	19	40	18	1	3	14	2176
Northern Forest	24	30	29	4	0	2	11	4735
S. Farmland	5	16	33	16	13	4	14	2791
Unknown	0	23	46	8	0	8	15	14
W. Farmland	5	17	41	21	1	3	12	871
<b>Total</b>	1542	2872	4215	1442	443	332	1514	12360

BEFORE THE STATE OF WISCONSIN  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

In the matter of a Secretary's Order pertaining to modification of 2013 deer hunting regulations in select deer management units that are not CWD units.

**FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER**

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

1. It is unlikely the deer population in deer management units 01M, 15, 16, 21, 22, 22A, 27, 33, 46, 47, 51A, 51B, 54A, 54B, 54C, 57, 57B, 57C, 59B, 59C, 59D, 59M, 60A, 60B, 60M, 61, 62A, 62B, 63A, 63B, 64, 64M, 65A, 65B, 66, 67A, 67B, 68A, 68B, 69, 72, 73B, 73D, 74A, 74B, 77C, 77M, 80A, 80B, and 81 will be reduced to within 20% of the overwinter population goals established in s. NR 10.104, Wis. Adm. Code, under the current deer hunting rules. In making this determination, the department compared the harvest required to reduce the deer population to goal to the harvest likely to occur under the existing season structure based on deer harvest data from past seasons, including the sex and age of the registered kill.

**CONCLUSION OF LAW**

1. According to s. 10.01(3)(ed), Wis. Adm. Code, the department may, upon making the above findings, modify the deer permit issuance procedures.

**ORDER**

1. *Free Antlerless Permits.* Notwithstanding all other provisions of Ch. NR 10, Wis. Adm. Code, which remain in effect, special deer hunting permits for antlerless deer issued under s. NR 10.104, Wis. Adm. Code and s. 29.177, Stats., shall be issued free of charge for use in deer management units 01M, 15, 16, 21, 22, 22A, 27, 33, 46, 47, 51A, 51B, 54A, 54B, 54C, 57, 57B, 57C, 59B, 59C, 59D, 59M, 60A, 60B, 60M, 61, 61A, 62A, 62B, 63A, 63B, 64, 64A, 64M, 65A, 65B, 66, 67A, 67B, 68A, 68B, 69, 69C, 72, 72A, 73A, 73B, 73D, 74A, 74B, 77C, 77D, 77E, 77M, 80A, 80B, 80C, and 81. Hunters may receive one special permit with their archery license and one special permit with their gun license, or two special permits with their conservation patron license. Additional antlerless deer carcass tags may be obtained at no charge, except for a \$2.00 handling fee authorized under s. 29.556, Stats. and s. NR 19.02, Wis. Adm. Code, for the above units except 61A, 64A, 69C, 72A, 73A, 77D, 77E, and 80C where additional antlerless deer carcass tags may be purchased only by those who have obtained a state park access permit for these units.

Dated at Madison, Wisconsin, \_\_\_\_\_

STATE OF WISCONSIN  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL  
RESOURCES

\_\_\_\_\_  
By Cathy Stepp, Secretary

BEFORE THE STATE OF WISCONSIN  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

In the matter of a Secretary's Order pertaining to modification of 2013 deer hunting regulations in deer management units that comprise the CWD Management Zone.

**FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER**

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

1. The deer population in deer management units or portions of deer management units 54B, 70, 70A, 70B, 70E, 70G, 71, 73B, 73E, 75A, 75C, 75D, 76, 76A, 76M, 77A, 77B, 77C, which are located in the CWD Management Zone, are estimated to be above the goals established in NR 10.41(3)(b).

**CONCLUSION OF LAW**

1. According to s. NR 10.01(3)(et)2., Wis. Adm. Code, the department may, upon making the above findings, modify the deer season to require that hunters shall first tag an antlerless deer during the archery or firearm hunts or with an agricultural shooting permit, before they may tag a buck with either weapon in that deer management unit or units during the either sex hunts listed in s. NR 10.01(3)(et). This requirement shall also apply in state parks that are within or adjoining these units. This requirement does not apply to hunters who are using their archery or gun buck deer carcass tags established in ss. NR 10.104(7)(a)1. and (b).

**ORDER**

1. *Bonus Buck*. Notwithstanding all other provisions of Ch. NR 10, Wis. Adm. Code, which remain in effect, hunters shall harvest or tag an antlerless deer in deer management units or portions of deer management units 54B, 70, 70A, 70B, 70C, 70D, 70E, 70F, 70G, 71, 73B, 73E, 75A, 75B, 75C, 75D, 76, 76A, 76M, 77A, 77B, 77C, which are located in the CWD Management Zone, with either a bow or a gun during any deer season where earn-a-buck regulations are in place, or with an agricultural shooting permit in an area where earn-a-buck regulations are in place, before they may harvest a buck with either weapon. The requirement to harvest or tag a legally harvested antlerless deer before harvesting or tagging a buck includes state parks and federal properties that are within or adjoining these units including; Belmont Mound, Blue Mound, Devil's Lake, Governor Dodge, Mirror Lake, Natural Bridge, New Glarus Woods, Rocky Arbor, Tower Hill and Yellowstone state parks. One antlerless deer is required to authorize the harvest of one buck in these units or in state parks with gun deer seasons that are within or adjoining these units. Multiple bucks may be harvested with each weapon if each buck taken is pre-qualified by a legally harvested or tagged antlerless deer. Deer harvested as described in this paragraph shall be transported in accordance with s. NR 10.105 (2).

This requirement does not apply to hunters who are using their archery or gun buck deer carcass tags established in ss. NR 10.104(7)(a)1. and (b).

Dated at Madison, Wisconsin, \_\_\_\_\_

STATE OF WISCONSIN  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL  
RESOURCES

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By Cathy Stepp, Secretary