

# 2015 Deer Goal Setting –Background on Advisory Team Process and Recommendation Development

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## 2015 Deer Goal Setting

### Background on deer population goal-setting process

Between 2005 and 2007, Minnesota DNR engaged the public to determine population goals for deer permit areas (DPAs) across the state. Goals for portions of the state were revisited in 2012.

In 2013, Minnesota DNR initiated a new public process to revisit deer population goals in Southeast Minnesota. The new process emphasized collection of public input (mail surveys, online questionnaires and public meetings) prior to convening stakeholder advisory teams selected to represent the diversity of perspectives related to deer management.

This public process is continuing in additional portions of the state through 2016. The 2014-2015 process focuses on five goal-setting blocks in northeast, north-central and east-central Minnesota (Fig. 1). Each goal-setting block is comprised of 5-11 permit areas that share similar habitat types.

**Figure 1. Deer Goal Setting Blocks 2014-2016.**



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## Deer advisory teams

A citizen advisory team was selected for each block through an open nomination process (Oct. – Nov. 2014) and announced publically on the DNR website in February 2014. Over 250 nominations were received across all five goal setting blocks. The advisory teams consisted of 15-17 individuals representing archery, firearm and muzzleloader hunters as well as nonhunters, area residents and landowners, farmers, orchard owners, land managers, local business owners, and members of hunting and conservation organizations.

Team members were required to attend at least one public meeting in their block (between February 2-19) and two team meetings (between February 24 – March 24). The teams reviewed the Goal Setting Packet, University of Minnesota reports documenting the results of hunter and landowner surveys, summaries of verbal comments submitted at public meetings, results from questionnaires completed at public meetings and online, public comments submitted by mail and email, and an informational packet documenting harvest statistics and population estimates for each deer permit area. These materials are also available on the MN DNR deer management webpage at [www.mndnr.gov/deer](http://www.mndnr.gov/deer).

Between the first and second advisory team meetings, team members reviewed the previously mentioned materials, spoke with members of their communities and completed an initial recommendation for each permit area. Team members were also asked to explain factors influencing their preference regarding the population goal. At the final team meeting, members reviewed the population goal options and were asked to provide an initial preference regarding goals for each deer permit area. This initial poll was followed by a group discussion by permit area. After approximately 10-15 minutes of discussion, the meeting facilitator called for consensus on a deer population goal recommendation for the permit area under discussion. The rule of decision was consensus; to forward a recommendation to the DNR, the team had to achieve a supermajority of at least 80% of non-abstaining members indicating either “support” or “ok”, with no more than 2 team members abstaining (Table 1.). If supermajority could not be achieved, team members were asked to individually provide a brief statement on the permit area to the DNR for review.

## Team Recommendation Fundamentals

### *Deer Population Goal Options*

The advisory teams’ population goal recommendations were articulated as a desired direction and magnitude of change from the deer population at the time of goal setting (i.e., increase 25% or 50%, decrease 25% or 50%, or remain the same).

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## *Level of Consensus:*

Support- I support the option

OK- I am ok with the option

No- I do not support the option.

**Table 1. Tallies required to meet a supermajority**

<b>For teams with 15 members (Blocks 1, 3, 5):</b>	<b>Support/OK</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Supermajority (80%)	12 or more	3 or fewer	0
Supermajority (80%)	12 or more	2 or fewer	1
Supermajority (80%)	11 or more	2 or fewer	2

<b>For teams with 16 members (Block 2):</b>	<b>Support/OK</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Supermajority (80%)	13 or more	3 or fewer	0
Supermajority (80%)	12 or more	3 or fewer	1
Supermajority (80%)	12 or more	2 or fewer	2

<b>For teams with 17 members (Block 4):</b>	<b>Support/OK</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Supermajority (80%)	14 or more	3 or fewer	0
Supermajority (80%)	13 or more	3 or fewer	1
Supermajority (80%)	12 or more	3 or fewer	2

## **Next Steps**

The advisory teams have provided a recommendation for deer population goals in each permit area in Blocks 1-5. Minnesota DNR will be taking public comment on the permit area recommendations from April 2-April 15, 2015. Population goal recommendations and public comment will advance for consideration and approval by the DNR Commissioner in May. Any adjustments made to team recommendations will be communicated to the team and public.

Announcement of final population goals is anticipated by June, 2015.