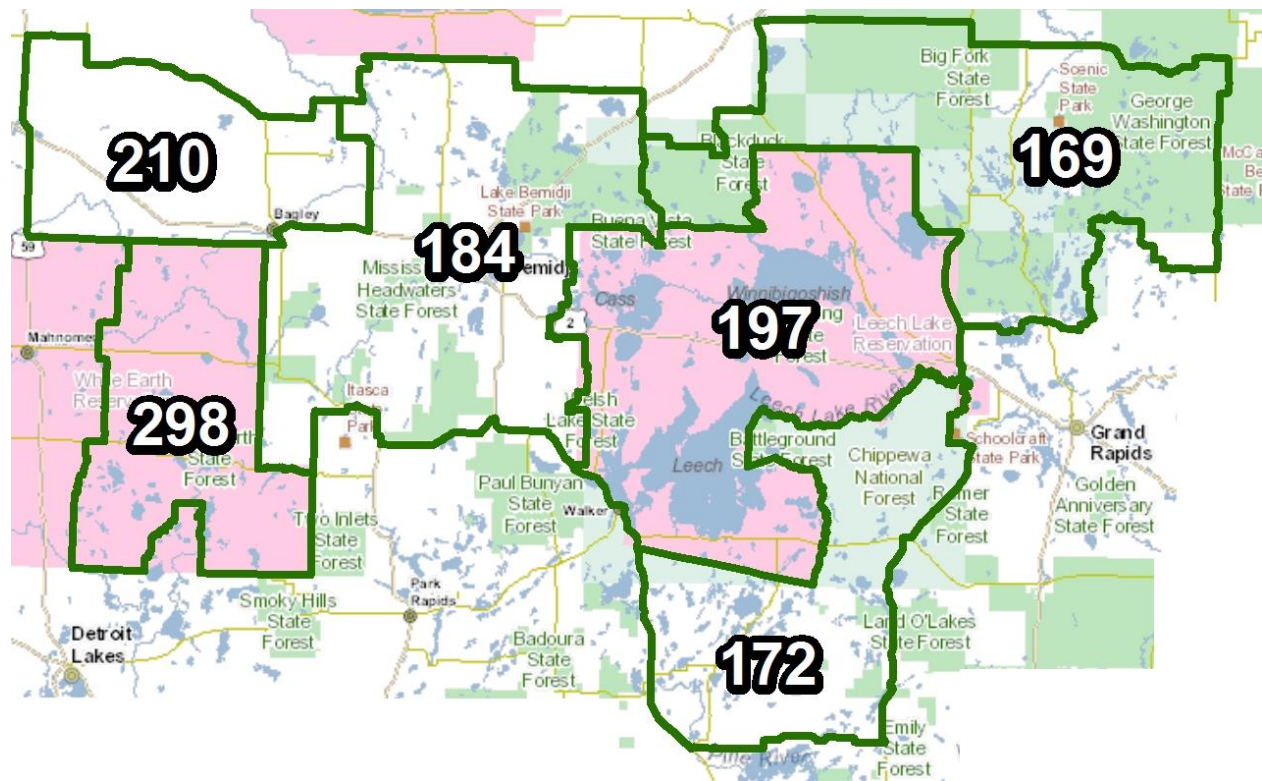


2015 Deer Population Goal Setting

Deer advisory team recommendations – Block 2: North Central Plains Moraines

The following pages represent deer population goals recommended by the 2015 deer advisory team for Block 2: North Central Plains Moraines (permit areas 169, 172, 184, 197, 210 & 298). Public comment regarding these recommendations will be accepted April 2-15, 2015. Prior to commenting on the advisory team recommendations, you may wish to review the background materials provided on the DNR Deer Management webpage (www.mndnr.gov/deer), including a description of the advisory team process.

Following each of the advisory team recommendations is a summary of factors cited by team members when making their recommendation. This information reflects the perspectives of individual team members; DNR has attempted to preserve the spirit and meaning of team members' comments and has not confirmed the accuracy of data cited.



2015 Deer Population Goal Setting

Deer Permit Area 169

Team recommendation:

Increase population by 50%

Support for recommendation:

Consensus by 80% supermajority: 8 "Support", 4 "OK", 2 "Do Not Support", 2 "Abstain" (1 via absence)

Factors cited by team members in their recommendation:

- Current deer population is low
- Deer harvest has significantly declined
- Hunter success in this permit area was the lowest in goal block
- Population needs a substantial increase
- A 50% increase will move the population in the right direction
- The wolves need more food
- Non-hunters support a 50% increase
- A 50% increase will have little agricultural impact
- Public input from meetings and online questionnaires strongly supports a population increase
- Most landowners buy property to hunt
- The majority of hunters and landowners would like to see increases
- This area has the least amount of agriculture in the goal block and no cities of significant size, minimizing the social impact

Factors cited by team members as concerns related to this recommendation:

- Prefer a 100% increase
- An increase of 117% would restore the deer population to levels set in the previous (2006) goal setting process
- Youth
- More wolves than deer being seen by deer hunters
- Non-hunters also report not seeing deer
- Current levels are sustainable for the amount of habitat available; increases will put excess pressure on what habitat is left
- Prefer No Change, current population appears close to low end of target set in 2006
- Harvest below 1 deer/sq. mile in 2014 would suggest a need to increase by >50%.
- A 50% increase may require closing the season given changes in habitat
- Need to use the best available science to determine goals

2015 Deer Population Goal Setting

Deer Permit Area 172

Team recommendation:

Increase population by 50%

Support for recommendation:

Consensus by 80% supermajority: 3 "Support", 9 "OK", 3 "Do Not Support", 1 "Abstain" (via absence)

Factors cited by team members in their individual preferences:

- High hunting pressure
- Low deer densities
- High hunter dissatisfaction
- Low hunter success rates
- Little demonstrated agricultural impact
- The majority of hunters and landowners would like to see increases
- Reported crop damage is minor-to-moderate
- Input at public meetings and from online questionnaires strongly support a population increase
- Most landowners buy property to hunt
- Harvest density is low when compared to hunter density

Factors cited by team members as concerns related to this recommendation:

- Prefer an increase of >50% (75-90%)
- Prefer a 25% increase
- A 50% increase in deer populations will expose thousands of people to Lyme disease since this is a major recreation and population area
- Concerns about landscaping damage
- Earlier years with conservative management had only slightly higher population estimates
- Need to use the best available science to determine goals
- This area, despite declining success rates, continues to get more hunters; we need to see post-population-crash results

2015 Deer Population Goal Setting

Deer Permit Area 184

Team recommendation:

Increase population by 50%

Support for recommendation:

Consensus by 80% supermajority: 1 "Support", 11 "OK", 3 "Do Not Support", 1 "Abstain" (via absence)

Factors cited by team members in their individual preferences:

- Public input suggested at least a 50% increase in the deer population
- Buck harvest has declined significantly
- A 50% increase is within the bounds of our ability to manage
- Hunters will accept this level of change
- Input at public meetings and from online questionnaires strongly supports a population increase
- Most landowners buy property to hunt
- The majority of hunters and landowners would like to see increases

Factors cited by team members as concerns related to this recommendation:

- Prefer an increase of >50% (75-108%)
- Prefer a 25% increase
- Need to use the best available science to determine goals
- Modeled trend in population appears stable, but doesn't align with public input
- Deer population has declined after severe winter of 2013-2014; the perception is that the population decline is due to predation
- A 50% increase in deer populations will expose thousands of people to Lyme disease since this is a major recreation and population area
- This area has a major transportation corridor, an increase would subject more people to deer vehicle collisions

2015 Deer Population Goal Setting

Deer Permit Area 197

Team recommendation:

Increase population by 50%

Support for recommendation:

Consensus by 80% supermajority: 5 "Support", 7 "OK", 3 "Do Not Support", 1 "Abstain" (via absence)

Factors cited by team members in their individual preferences:

- Deer population has declined significantly since 2011
- Low deer densities
- Low hunter success rates
- Low harvest levels
- Input at public meetings and from online questionnaires strongly supports a population increase
- Most landowners buy property to hunt
- Strong hunter and non-hunter support for a 50% increase in the population
- Team discussion suggests a 50% increase is a good starting point for change
- Subsistence harvest is important for tribal hunters
- Very heavy forest in this area; few people/cities
- Previously set goal of 5 deer per square mile is very low
- Low agricultural impacts in this area

Factors cited by team members as concerns related to this recommendation:

- Prefer an increase of >50% (75-97%)
- Loggers and hunters would like to see an even greater increase in the population
- This is a National Forest and tribal area; it must be managed differently with lower deer numbers
- This area is almost half wetland habitat and very susceptible to deer over-browsing
- This area has a major transportation corridor, an increase would subject more people to deer vehicle collisions
- A 50% increase in deer populations will expose thousands of people to Lyme disease since this is a major recreation and population area
- Need to use the best available science to determine goals

2015 Deer Population Goal Setting

Deer Permit Area 210

Team recommendation:

Increase population by 50%

Support for recommendation:

Consensus by 80% supermajority: 4 "Support", 8 "OK", 3 "Do Not Support", 1 "Abstain" (via absence)

Factors cited by team members in their individual preferences:

- Harvest has significantly declined since 2011
- Strong hunter and non-hunter support for a significant increase in the population
- DNR's population model showed a 5-year drop in estimates
- This will be a reasonable increase over 3-5 years
- A 50% increase would set deer numbers back to a point where more than 1 deer could be harvested by each hunter (managed/intensive strategies)
- Buck harvest has decreased by 34%

Factors cited by team members as concerns related to this recommendation:

- Prefer an increase of >50% (75-82%)
- Prefer a 25% increase
- Concerned about increased crop damage to farmers; this permit area has the most agriculture of all permit areas in this zone
- Because this area experienced a moderate winter in 2012-2013 and a severe winter in 2013-2014, the 2015 spring population should be evaluated before a 5-year goal can be set
- This area has a major transportation corridor, an increase would subject more people to deer vehicle collisions
- The population trend is down and would be on target if not for the past hard winter

2015 Deer Population Goal Setting

Deer Permit Area 298

Team recommendation:

Increase population by 50%

Support for recommendation:

Consensus by 80% supermajority: 8 "Support", 5 "OK", 2 "Do Not Support", 1 "Abstain" (via absence)

Factors cited by team members in their individual preferences:

- Low deer densities
- Low hunter numbers
- Low hunter success rates
- Low harvest levels
- This area supports state and tribal harvest
- Tribal harvest levels are unknown
- This area has few human population centers therefore impact will be low on communities
- Based on public input, 50% would be a good goal
- A 50% increase is consistent with the previously set goal
- This is the lowest harvest level in years and the last goal setting process wanted a population increase

Factors cited by team members as concerns related to this recommendation:

- Prefer an increase of >50% (75-218%)
- 10 deer per square mile is high but sustainable
- The success rate in this area is about 25% which is socially acceptable
- Need to use the best available science to determine goals