

DRAFT Charter: Deer Advisory Committee

DATE APPROVED: _____

APPROVED BY: _____
Paul Telander, DNR Wildlife Section Chief

Purpose

To enhance dialogue between the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and deer management stakeholders on the State of Minnesota's deer management program.

Functions and Scope

1. The committee will provide input on deer management in Minnesota, including the priorities identified in the 2019-2028 Minnesota White-tailed Deer Management Plan.
2. The committee will:
 - Represent the breadth of deer management interests;
 - Learn about and contribute to understanding biological, social and economic aspects of deer management, including stakeholder group perspectives (excluding population goal setting);
 - Identify and inform DNR of significant deer management issues;
 - Facilitate dialogue between the public and DNR regarding issues;
 - Advise DNR on potential approaches to respond to issues; and
 - Advise on effective and publicly acceptable deer policies, research and monitoring priorities, programs and regulations.
3. The DNR will support the committee by:
 - Providing relevant information (e.g., available data, potential management alternatives);
 - Engaging them on deer plan implementation and program implementation/innovation;
 - Addressing issues deemed significant by the committee; and
 - Fostering dialogue, including feedback on how public and committee input influences decisions.

Desired Outcomes

- Shared understanding among members, DNR and the public on issues and potential solutions.
- Effective and well-supported actions to address identified deer management issues.
- Enhanced public-agency collaboration and partnership to collectively achieve deer management goals.

Authorization and Authority

The committee is authorized by the DNR Wildlife Section Chief and established in support of the 2019-2028 Minnesota White-tailed Deer Management Plan.

The committee is not a decision-making body and has no authority on deer management policy, research or operations. DNR may seek consensus recommendations from the committee, which DNR will strive to incorporate into their decision making, along with dissenting views.

Membership

Members will be appointed to three-year terms. At the end of the first term, DNR will solicit nominations for at-large members. Current members may reapply but may serve no more than two consecutive terms (six years).

Membership will include:

- At-large, unaffiliated deer hunting interests (no more than 4)
- At-large deer stakeholders representing non-hunting deer management values (no more than 4)
- Representatives of hunting organizations (no more than 4)
- Representatives of agriculture, forestry, conservation, environmental, public health, local/county governments or other stakeholder organizations (no more than 4-6)

Ex-officio members may include:

- Tribal representative(s) recommended/appointed by Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (one or more)
- Resource management organizations with local/statewide knowledge on specific deer issues (e.g., Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts)

Committee members will apply and be appointed to the committee. Organizations must nominate their representatives. DNR staff will review applications and nominations and make recommendations to the Wildlife Section Chief. DNR may remove a member from the committee based on conduct or inability to participate.

Recommended applicants will demonstrate:

1. Representation from all geographic regions in Minnesota and familiarity with regional management;
2. Diverse deer management interests, e.g., hunting, recreation, conservation, habitat, land management, socioeconomic; and
3. Effectiveness and respect working with those with different experience, background and perspectives.

Evaluation and Suspension

DNR will evaluate the committee annually. The Wildlife Section Chief may suspend the committee if its purpose is not being met, membership cannot be maintained as defined above, or per their discretion. The Wildlife Section Chief must reauthorize the committee at the midpoint (2023) and endpoint (2028) of the deer plan, or the committee will sunset.

Meetings

Meetings are open to the public and will occur approximately quarterly, convened by DNR. At least two, full-day meetings will be held in a central location; in-person attendance is preferred. Additional meetings may be held at alternative locations around the state to address local issues or view active management actions onsite, or may be held via video-conference.

DNR staff will develop agendas and organize meetings in consultation with committee members. Committee members are strongly encouraged to suggest agenda items. DNR staff will prepare technical information to inform discussion, including facilitating assistance from subject matter experts as needed. DNR will also provide meeting summaries, which may be made available to the public. Committee business shall take place at DNR-convened meetings only.

Participation and Communication

Members must attend the majority of meetings and arrive familiar with the agenda and any pre-work. Members will provide advance notice if they are unable to attend. Organizational representatives may name an authorized alternate to attend in their absence. Members agree to disclose conflicts of interest (e.g., if a member stands to benefit financially from a decision item).

The Big Game Program Supervisor is the main point of contact for the committee. Dialogue is also encouraged among committee members and with other DNR staff.

Committee members are expected to coordinate with the organizations or stakeholder interests they represent and discuss issues and information from the committee in their local communities. For external communications, including social media, members are free to express their views as private citizens; however, they should be clear that they do not speak for or represent the committee. Media requests involving the committee should be directed to the Big Game Program Supervisor or the Fish & Wildlife Outreach Chief.

Charter Maintenance

DNR may amend the charter as needed. The committee will review this charter annually and suggest any updates to DNR.