

# **Citizen Advisory Committee Wildlife Management Unit 3B Final Report**

**March 27, 2007**



**Pennsylvania Game  
Commission**

**Governor's Office of  
Administration**



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# **Pennsylvania Game Commission Citizen Advisory Committee: WMU 3B**

## **Introduction and Overview**

An objective in the Pennsylvania Game Commission's (PGC) deer management plan was the use of local stakeholder groups to recommend a Wildlife Management Unit (WMU) specific deer population goal. Through a local Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC), comprised of representatives of stakeholder groups within WMU 3B, participants communicated population goal recommendations based on input actively solicited and obtained from individuals within each representative's stakeholder group. This is not the easiest of tasks as attested to by the CAC members.

After recruiting stakeholder representatives from individuals recommended by PGC field staff and other outside organizations, Bureau of Management Consulting (BMC) staff convened and facilitated an introductory and educational meeting on February 6, 2007. BMC staff asked CAC members to attempt to communicate with at least 10 representatives from each of their respective stakeholder groups. BMC facilitated a subsequent meeting on March 12, 2007, for the purpose of representatives providing stakeholder feedback, collectively discussing summaries of stakeholder perspectives, and reaching consensus, if possible, regarding a deer population goal recommendation for WMU 3B. CAC membership and attendance at both meetings is shown in Exhibit 1. Nine different stakeholder groups were represented. CAC members collected input from 264 people. Where possible, two members were selected per stakeholder group. In the case of 3B, this resulted in nine CAC members since three were not able to attend any of the meetings. Primary members were identified for each stakeholder group and were responsible for coordinating their results with their counterpart. Only the primary members were to attend the second meeting.

The following is documentation relative to this process. It includes meeting agendas, information requested of and provided by PGC staff, stakeholder representative findings, the context of various perspectives, and the resulting consensus that led to the CAC recommendation of a deer population goal for WMU 3B over the next five years:

*Six of seven attending CAC primary members recommended no change to the WMU 3B deer herd.*

## **First Meeting Summary**

The purpose of the first meeting was to provide information to the members about the CAC process as well as background on deer management, both statewide, and within WMU 3B. BMC staff also polled members on their initial thoughts on the deer population in WMU 3B. This is presented as part of Table 1, which includes the complete voting history. The first meetings agenda is shown in Exhibit 2.

# Pennsylvania Game Commission Citizen Advisory Committee: WMU 3B

<b>Exhibit 1</b>			
<b>List of CAC Stakeholder Groups/Representatives and Attendance at Meetings</b>			
<b>Stakeholder Group</b>	<b>Representative (*Primary Member)</b>	<b>February 6</b>	<b>March 12</b>
1. Agriculture	Douglas Ayers	✓	✓
2. Business (direct impact)	Scott Letterman	✓	
3. Business (indirect impact)	Daryl Holdren		
4. Conservation/Wildlife Recreation	William Sordoni		
5. Conservation/Wildlife Recreation	Bob Daniels	✓	✓
6. Forest Industry	Mel Lewis	✓	✓
7. Public Landowner	Joseph Dotzel, Jr.*	✓	✓
8. Public Landowner	Roy Seifert	✓	
9. Sportsman - resident	Dennis Brown	✓	✓
10. Rural non-farm landowner	Mark Madden	✓	✓
11. Sportsman-nonresident	Bruce Springer	✓	✓
12. Sportsman-nonresident	Patrick Burke		

<b>Exhibit 2</b>	
<b>Citizen Advisory Committee</b>	
<b>Public Input for Deer Management Goals in Pennsylvania</b>	
<b>Meeting Agenda, February 6, 2007</b>	
<p><b>I. Introduction</b></p> <p>A. Stakeholder introductions</p> <p><b>II. Overview of the process</b></p> <p>A. Purpose</p> <p>B. Objectives</p> <p>C. Process/Consensus</p> <p>D. Role of participants</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">i. Primary versus secondary</p> <p>E. Meeting ground rules</p> <p>F. Questions</p> <p><b>III. Present Tabulation of Initial Thoughts</b></p>	<p><b>IV. PGC Presentations</b></p> <p>A. PGC responsibilities and mission</p> <p>B. History of deer management in Pennsylvania</p> <p>C. Deer resource information and management system</p> <p>D. Consequences of biological and social management at different deer population levels</p> <p>E. Questions</p> <p><b>V. Preparation Work for Second Meeting</b></p> <p>A. Consensus</p> <p>B. Stakeholder Opinion Worksheet</p> <p>C. Presentation Template for Stakeholder Summaries</p> <p>D. Agenda for second meeting</p> <p>E. Primary and secondary designation</p> <p><b>VI. Questions and Comments</b></p>

Prior to the first meeting, members received a document entitled “Pennsylvania Game Commission Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) Pilot Study, Objectives and Process Overview,” which explained each of the items under the second area covered in the agenda and the worksheet and template listed in the fifth area of the agenda. Highlights from the first meeting included reviewing the following information.

- PGC Deer Management Program Goals:*
1. Maintain a healthy deer herd.
  2. Maintain healthy forest habitat for the deer herd.
  3. Reduce deer and human conflicts.

## Pennsylvania Game Commission Citizen Advisory Committee: WMU 3B

### *Objectives of CAC's:*

1. They provide an opportunity for the Game Commission to understand stakeholder values regarding deer management.
2. They provide an opportunity for stakeholders to interact with one another, facilitate communication among, and increase understanding of different stakeholder values and concerns.
3. They provide an opportunity for stakeholders to have direct input concerning deer population goals that ultimately affect all Pennsylvanians.
4. They provide an opportunity to inform stakeholders on the mission of the Game Commission, complexities of deer management, and the importance of proper management.

### *Outcome of CAC proceedings:*

1. The goal is to build consensus among the committee and agree on a recommendation to increase, decrease, or stabilize the deer population in their WMU.
2. *Definition of consensus: Consensus is reached if all but one member agrees with the other members.*
3. If a consensus has been reached, the committee will present the recommendation to the Game Commission in a written format that explains how each stakeholder group's concerns were considered in the decision.
4. If a consensus cannot be reached among committee members, a recommendation will be made following the guidelines given in the first meeting.

PGC staff grounded the process in an overview of the mission and history of the Commission, as well as details about the deer management program in conjunction with the goals of maintaining a healthy deer herd and a healthy forest habitat. Especially effective was the historical perspective on how deer management has been an emotional and controversial issue going back to the origins of the Commission. Specific deer and habitat data for WMU 3B was presented.

Members were provided with forms to collect opinions from other people within their stakeholder area as well as summarize the results into an overall report. For each stakeholder group, the goal was to speak with at least 10 other people. The meeting ended with questions, comments, and decisions as shown in Exhibits 3 and 4.

### **Exhibit 3**

#### **Questions, Answers, and Comments Following PGC Presentation on February 6, 2007**

1. Q - Clarify the allocation slide?  
A - The decline in the antlerless deer harvest is attributable to the decline in the allocation. Not a perfect fit.
2. Q- Clarify the agriculture v. timber slide?  
A - Green is forested land. Based on Landsat imagery.
3. Q - What is "adequate regeneration"?

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## Exhibit 3

### Questions, Answers, and Comments Following PGC Presentation on February 6, 2007

A – It's based on a sampling of permanent plots. The forest is able to regenerate itself. Plots are clustered samples (Was once one-fifth acre)

4. Q – What is the maturity of the deer population? What is the change in percent pregnant?

A – Harvest before antler restrictions is heavily skewed toward yearling bucks. Modeling is used for estimates. 10 percent of fawns in 3B are breeding. For three-year-olds, 1.7 is considered good; 1.5 is considered bad. Trend information is not readily available. For fawns, 30 percent or more is good. 3B is on the high end of the poor category.

5. Q - How does the 3B Wildlife Management Unit compare to others in southern Pennsylvania?

A – The shorter growing season here affects deer health. Converting county data to WMU data is a challenge. Not a high road kill unit. Sample size is low.

6. Q – How is regeneration in exclusion plots? Acid rain effect?

A – Fence is put up and regeneration occurs. Acid rain, insects, and soil conditions do play a role.

### Question for the Bureau of Management Consulting

1. Q - Did BMC attempt to get all the stakeholder groups to participate?

A – Yes, especially in 3B. BMC made 80-100 telephone calls to prepare for the most recent meetings. This included calls to representatives responsible for direct and indirect business perspectives.

## Exhibit 4

### Information Regarding the Second CAC Meeting, March 13, 2007

The following stakeholder groups decided primary/secondary membership on the CAC as follows (for those groups with two members):

Stakeholder Group	Primary member	Secondary member
Public Landowner	Joseph Dotzel, Jr.	Roy Seifert

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## Second Meeting Summary

The purpose of the second meeting was for the members to present their findings, ask questions of one another, and attempt to move towards consensus. The agenda is shown in Exhibit 5.

<b>Exhibit 5 Citizen Advisory Committee Public Input for Deer Management Goals in Pennsylvania Meeting Agenda, March 12, 2006</b>	
<b>I. Quick review</b> A. Review of CAC handout document B. Process for this meeting  <b>II. Interest Group Presentations</b> A. Presentations B. Clarification C. Initial tally of interest group positions  <b>Break</b>  <b>III. Discussion/Consensus</b>	<b>IV. Next Steps</b> A. BMC completes summary of proceedings B. Summary is sent to CAC members and Game Commission staff C. PGC staff incorporates the recommendation into the deer management plan presented to the Commissioners  <b>V. Questions and Comments</b>  <b>VI. Evaluation of the Process</b>

For each stakeholder group, four questions were posed for the members to answer. In addition, members were asked to collect comments to answer why those among their stakeholder group feels the way they do. The individual stakeholder reports are included as Appendix A.

The questions are as follows:

- A. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) increasing, decreasing, or stable?
- B. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) too high, too low, or about right?
- C. In your opinion, do you think the deer herd should increase, decrease, or remain the same?
- D. In your opinion, by what percentage should the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) increase or decrease?

At the beginning of this discussion, BMC tabulated the results of stakeholder sentiment reported at March 12 meeting and displayed it on a table that was subsequently compared to the results of CAC member sentiment that they provided at the beginning of the February 7 meeting. As indicated in Table 1, some results were unchanged and some demonstrated variance.

The individual reports mainly conveyed the view that the deer herd was currently decreasing with mixed opinions on whether the deer herd should increase or decrease. The facilitators presented estimates of increases and decreases and no change positions reported by the stakeholder representatives. The responses almost evenly divided, with a slight tilt in favor of decreasing the deer herd.

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After a thorough discussion, the group decided to vote on two possible alternatives: (1) To recommend a 5 percent reduction in the deer herd, or (2) To recommend that the deer herd be kept the same, with the provision that help be given to those areas with high deer densities (farmers, land adjunct to farms. Six members of the group voted to recommend no change in the deer herd, while one member voted to decrease it by 5 percent. Some of the key “whys” of the discussion are included in Appendix B.

The following is the consensus decision:

*Six of seven attending CAC primary members recommended no change to the WMU 3B deer herd.*

<b>Table 1</b>			
<b>CAC Voting Summary for WMU 3B Deer Herd Questions and Consensus Decision</b>			
Question	February 6, 2007 Initial Vote	March 12, 2007 Presentation Results	March 12, 2007 Consensus Decision
In your opinion, is the deer herd in WMU3B increasing, decreasing, or stable?			
o Increasing	0	0	
o Decreasing	6	6	
o Stable	2	1	
o Do Not Know	1	0	
In your opinion, is the deer herd in WMU3B too high, too low, or about right?			
o Too High	3	4	
o Too Low	3	2	
o About Right	3	1	
o Do Not Know	0	0	
Over the next five years, do you think the deer herd in WMU 3B should increase, decrease, or remain the same?			
o Increase	3	3	
o Decrease	3	3	
o Remain The Same	2	1	<b>X</b>
o Do Not Know	1		
Increase by approximately how much (percent)?	5-10, 10-15, 25-30	10, 10-50, 20, 26, 30, 50	Not Applicable
Decrease by approximately how much (percent)?	20 (3)	20 (2) 25, 28, 45	Not Applicable
Number of present CAC members	12	7	
Number of stakeholder feedback collected by CAC members	Not Applicable	264	

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## APPENDIX A: Individual Stakeholder Reports

### 1. Conservation/Wildlife Recreation – Bob Daniels (33 responses)

#### Answers to Questions

A. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) increasing, decreasing, or stable?

Increasing = 6                  Decreasing = 16                  Stable = 7                  Do Not Know = 5

B. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) too high, too low, or About right?

Too High = 11                  Too Low = 10                  About Right = 6                  Do Not Know = 4

C. In your opinion, do you think the deer herd should increase, decrease, or remain the same?

Increase = 6                  Decrease = 12                  Remain Same = 4                  Do Not Know = 4

D. In your opinion, by what percentage should the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) increase or decrease?

Percent Increase = 26                                  Percent Decrease = 28

#### Whys

- Habitat should be managed for all species
- Habitat should be managed for biodiversity

#### Benefits

- Improved habitat
- Healthier and larger bucks
- More people encouraged to hunt and benefit local economy
- Healthy habitat will eventually be able to sustain larger deer herd

#### Consequences

- Crop damage
- Insurance costs
- Landscape damage

## **Pennsylvania Game Commission Citizen Advisory Committee: WMU 3B**

### **2. Sportsmen – Resident – Dennis Brown** (152 responses)

#### **Answers to Questions**

A. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) increasing, decreasing, or stable?

Increasing = 96%      Decreasing = 0      Stable = 4%      Do Not Know = 0

B. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) too high, too low, or About right?

Too High = 92%      Too Low = 0      About Right = 4%      Do Not Know = 4%

C. In your opinion, do you think the deer herd should increase, decrease, or remain the same?

Increase = 94%      Decrease = 0      Remain Same = 3%      Do Not Know = 3%

D. In your opinion, by what percentage should the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) increase or decrease?

Percent Increase = 30

Percent Decrease = Not reported

#### **Whys**

- Increase will bring more hunters and revenue to the sport

#### **Benefits**

- Help PGC gain license fee increase and more hunters
- More revenue for PGC
- Increased youth involvement
- Restore hunter confidence in PGC

#### **Consequences**

- Habitat damage
- Need to monitor WMU for habitat damage

## **Pennsylvania Game Commission Citizen Advisory Committee: WMU 3B**

### **3. Public Landowner – Joseph Dotzel** (20 responses)

#### **Answers to Questions**

A. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) increasing, decreasing, or stable?

Increasing = 5%      Decreasing = 30%      Stable = 60%      Do Not Know = 5%

B. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) too high, too low, or About right?

Too High = 35%      Too Low = 15%      About Right = 50%      Do Not Know = 0

C. In your opinion, do you think the deer herd should increase, decrease, or remain the same?

Increase = 15%      Decrease = 40%      Remain Same = 45%      Do Not Know = 0

D. In your opinion, by what percentage should the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) increase or decrease?

Percent Increase = 50

Percent Decrease = 25

#### **Whys**

- To allow the habitat to recover from decades of over browsing
- Increase biological diversity
- Reduce cost of recovery for forest stands

#### **Benefits**

- Healthy habitat will eventually be capable of supporting larger herd

#### **Consequences**

- Hunters, especially young hunters, discouraged by low deer numbers
- Rejuvenation of the sport of hunting

### **4. Sportsman-nonresident – Bruce Springer** (11 responses)

#### **Answers to Questions**

A. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) increasing, decreasing, or stable?

Increasing = 10%      Decreasing = 45%      Stable = 45%      Do Not Know = 0

## **Pennsylvania Game Commission Citizen Advisory Committee: WMU 3B**

B. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) too high, too low, or About right?

Too High = 9%              Too Low = 18%              About Right = 73%              Do Not Know = 0

C. In your opinion, do you think the deer herd should increase, decrease, or remain the same?

Increase = 18%              Decrease = 9%              Remain Same = 73%              Do Not Know = 0

D. In your opinion, by what percentage should the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) increase or decrease?

Percent Increase = 25%

Percent Decrease = 15%

### **Whys**

- Good balance with herd and habitat
- Good hunting and habitat
- Stick with long term effort

### **Benefits**

- Healthy herd
- Maintain integrity of forest
- PGC antler restrictions mean buck are getting larger

### **Consequences**

- Local business owners hurt
- Hunters frustrated if not seeing deer
- Decreased interest in the sport

## **5. Forest Industry – Mel Lewis (27 responses)**

### **Answers to Questions**

A. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) increasing, decreasing, or stable?

Increasing = 8%              Decreasing = 46%              Stable = 46%              Do Not Know = 0

B. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) too high, too low, or About right?

Too High = 40%              Too Low = 22%              About Right = 38%              Do Not Know = 0

## Pennsylvania Game Commission Citizen Advisory Committee: WMU 3B

C. In your opinion, do you think the deer herd should increase, decrease, or remain the same?

Increase = 22%          Decrease = 42%          Remain Same = 36%          Do Not Know = 0

D. In your opinion, by what percentage should the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) increase or decrease?

Percent Increase = 20

Percent Decrease = 20

### Whys

- Hunters want an increase because it means more deer
- Decrease opinion stems from a concern for the habitat and the impact on other wildlife
- Decrease opinion says that the ratio of doe to bucks is too high

### Benefits

- Increase will produce better hunting
- Decrease will produce a better forest for all, better habitat

**Consequences** - Implied by the above. Not explicitly stated.

## 6. Agriculture – Douglas Ayers (10 responses)

### Answers to Questions

A. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) increasing, decreasing, or stable?

Increasing = 10%          Decreasing = 60%          Stable = 30%          Do Not Know = 0

B. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) too high, too low, or About right?

Too High = 60%          Too Low = 0          About Right = 40%          Do Not Know = 0

C. In your opinion, do you think the deer herd should increase, decrease, or remain the same?

Increase = 0          Decrease = 70%          Remain Same = 30%          Do Not Know = 0

D. In your opinion, by what percentage should the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) increase or decrease?

Percent Increase = Not reported

Percent Decrease = 45

## Pennsylvania Game Commission Citizen Advisory Committee: WMU 3B

### Whys

- Decrease will allow farmers to survive
- Decrease will allow farmers to grow all crops
- Most negative impact felt by farmers near posted property, suburbs, and game lands

### Benefits

- Farmers get better profit
- Less friction between farmers and the PGC
- Cheaper food

### Consequences

- Equalize balance
- More expensive food
- Decreased viability for farming
- Farmers forced to sell land

### 7. Rural Non-Farm Landowner – Mark Madden (11 responses)

#### Answers to Questions

A. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) increasing, decreasing, or stable?

Increasing = 0                  Decreasing = 8                  Stable = 3                  Do Not Know = 0

B. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) too high, too low, or About right?

Too High = 0                  Too Low = 7                  About Right = 4                  Do Not Know = 0

C. In your opinion, do you think the deer herd should increase, decrease, or remain the same?

Increase = 6                  Decrease = 0                  Remain Same = 5                  Do Not Know = 0

D. In your opinion, by what percentage should the deer herd in your area (WMU 3B) increase or decrease?

Percent Increase = 10-50%

Percent Decrease = 20%

### Whys

- Increase would help hunter interest

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### **Benefits**

- Decrease would bring insurance issues down
- Decrease would produce healthier and larger deer (based on current PGC policy)

### **Consequences**

- Property value is reduced

**Total response for all stakeholder groups = 264**

## **Pennsylvania Game Commission Citizen Advisory Committee: WMU 3B**

### **APPENDIX B: CAC Member Points During Consensus Discussion and Decision**

The focus of the discussion was on the “whys” underlying opinions to increase or decrease the deer herd.

- Decrease would mean less farmers being hurt
- Increase would address scarcity of deer in mountains
- Decrease would mean PGC will take heat
- Hunters might go for no change in the deer population with the footnote that WMU needs to be redefined
- Forest regeneration will mean bigger herds in the future
- Private property owners do not always allow hunting access

#### *Additional Issues included:*

- WMU is too large
- WMUs need to be redefined
- Antler restrictions seen as positive
- Public land adjacent to private land provides best hunting opportunities
- More education needed
- Farmers want more cooperation from PGC
- Need more food sources within forest areas
- CAC primary members agreeing with the recommendation to stabilize the deer population requested that help be given to those areas with high deer densities (farmers, land adjunct to farms).

***Conclusion:*** Six of seven attending CAC primary members recommended no change to the WMU 3B deer herd.