

PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION
BUREAU OF WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT
RESEARCH DIVISION
PROJECT ANNUAL JOB REPORT

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TITLE: White-tailed Deer Research/Management

PROJECT JOB NO.: 21012

TITLE: Wildlife Management Unit Citizen Advisory Committees

PERIOD COVERED: 1 July 2005 through 30 June 2006

COOPERATING AGENCIES: Bureau of Management Consulting

WORK LOCATION(S): Statewide

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DATE: 14 June 2006

Abstract: A Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) was completed in Wildlife Management Unit (WMU) 4B. Committee members communicated population goal recommendations based on input actively solicited and obtained from individuals within each member's stakeholder group. The CAC in WMU 4B recommended an increase in the deer population of 10-20%.

OBJECTIVES

1. To provide an opportunity to inform stakeholders on the mission of the Game Commission, complexities of deer management, and the importance of proper management.
2. To provide an opportunity for the Game Commission to understand stakeholder values regarding deer management.
3. To provide an opportunity for stakeholders to interact with one another and increase understanding of different stakeholder values and concerns.
4. To provide an opportunity for stakeholders to have direct input concerning deer population goals for a WMU.

METHODS

With the aid of trained facilitators, committee members worked together to provide a deer population goal recommendation to the Bureau of Wildlife Management's Deer Management Section. The Deer Management Section considered this recommended population goal into its deer management recommendations for the WMU in question.

Each member represented a group of stakeholders and was vested with the decision-making power of that group. Members presented values and concerns of their stakeholder group and not their own individual viewpoint. Members were encouraged to consider all relevant biological and social data as it pertained to their constituents. Input was sought from all members equally. Members were to foster a cooperative atmosphere and worked towards consensus on a recommendation

for a deer population goal. Recommendations were made by consensus, defined as all but one member in agreement, and not the majority. The Committee was disbanded following completion of the assigned tasks.

Game Commission staff worked with the committee as advisory members. Staff provided technical information on deer management including biological and social data and needed background material. Staff had no voting or vetoing power within the meetings.

Facilitators worked with Game Commission staff to choose stakeholder groups to be represented. Facilitators interviewed and selected members to the advisory committee and organized and conducted committee meetings. Facilitators were the main point of contact for committee members and lead meetings. Facilitators were responsible for focusing advisory committee interaction in a positive manner.

If the committee reached consensus, the recommendation formed the basis of the public input recommendation for the deer population goal for the WMU in question for the next 5 years. The Deer Management Section staff considers the recommendation as one of the 3 measures (i.e., deer health, forest habitat health, and CAC recommendation) used to formulate its recommendation to the Board of Commissioners. If consensus was not reached, the Deer Management Section would consider the input of all members and data, and recommend an appropriate deer population trend to the Commission.

RESULTS

A CAC was completed in WMU 4B. The recommendation of this CAC was to increase the deer population by 10-20% over the next 5 years in WMU 4B. Stakeholder groups represented on this committee can found in Table 1. The recommendation of the CAC was considered in conjunction with measures of deer and forest habitat health by the Deer Management Section for WMU 4B.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Obtain a commitment for a primary and secondary representative for each stakeholder group from different geographic areas of the WMU. Both members would attend the first meeting to gather information on the WMU and receive instructions on collecting stakeholder input. The secondary member would forward all input to the primary member for the second meeting. Only primary members would attend the second meeting while secondary members would serve as the alternates.

2. Retain the requirement that no representative shall hold an office or position of authority for his stakeholder group. This increases community involvement and benefits the credibility of the CAC process.

3. Maintain the current time frame for meetings, i.e., Meeting 1-early February, Meeting 2-early March.

4. Begin identifying potential members in the summer, July/August, and contacting potential members in the fall, October.

5. Continue to use facilitators not associated with the Game Commission.

6. Continue to minimize direct involvement of Game Commission staff and stakeholder organizations to keep the CAC process a free exchange of ideas and information between stakeholders.

Table 1. Stakeholder groups for each CAC.

Stakeholder Group	WMU 4B
Homeowners	✓
Resident Sportsman	✓
Nonresident Sportsmen	✓ ¹
Conservationists/Wildlife Recreationists	✓ ²
Business	✓
Forestry	✓
Agriculture	✓
Public Landowner	✓
Highway Safety	✓
Municipalities/Planning Boards	✓
Rural Non-agricultural Landowner	✓

¹ Representative was unable to attend due to medical reasons. We were unable to identify a replacement on short notice.

² Representative failed to attend both meetings.