

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

**PROJECT CODE NO.:** 06210

**TITLE:** White-tailed Deer Research/Management

**PROJECT JOB NO.:** 21012

**TITLE:** Wildlife Management Unit Citizen Advisory Committees

**PERIOD COVERED:** 1 July 2006 through 30 June 2007

**COOPERATING AGENCIES:** Bureau of Management Consulting

**WORK LOCATION(S):** Statewide

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**Abstract:** A Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) was completed in Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) 1B, 2C, 3B, and 5C. 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 1B recommended an increase in the deer population of 15% with improvement of the forest habitat health measure; the CAC in WMU 2C recommended an increase in the deer population of 25-50%; the CAC in WMU 3B recommended stabilization of the current deer population; and the CAC in WMU 5C recommended a decrease in the deer population of 40%. Individual final reports for each WMU were completed and are available on the PGC's website.

**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 objectives for a WMU.

**METHODS**

With the aid of trained facilitators, committee members worked together to provide a deer population objective recommendation to the Bureau of Wildlife Management's Deer Management Section. The Deer Management Section considered this recommended population objective 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 were to present 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 objective. 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 objective 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 1B, 2C, 3B, and 5C. The recommendation of the 1B CAC was to increase the deer population by 15% over the next 5 years in this WMU if the forest habitat measure improves. The recommendation of the 2C CAC was to increase the deer population by 25-50% over the next 5 years in this WMU. The recommendation of the 3B CAC was to stabilize the deer population over the next 5 years in this WMU. The recommendation of the 5C CAC was to decrease the deer population by 40% over the next 5 years in this WMU. Stakeholder groups represented on these committees can be found in Table 1. The Deer Management Section considered the recommendations of the CACs in conjunction with measures of deer and forest habitat health when making its recommendation to the Board of Commissioners. The status of CACs in each WMU can be found in Table 2.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Obtain a commitment for a primary and secondary representative for each stakeholder group from different geographic areas of the WMU.
2. Retain the requirement that no representative shall hold an office or position of authority for his stakeholder group or is a present or past affiliate of the PGC. 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, through 4 avenues: PGC field staff, PGC website, press release to the public, and outside organizations and agencies.
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 Citizen Advisory Committee.

Stakeholder Group	WMU 1B	WMU 2C	WMU 3B	WMU 5C
Homeowners	✓			✓
Resident Sportsman	✓	✓	✓	✓
Nonresident Sportsmen			✓	
Conservationists/Wildlife Recreationists	✓	✓	✓	✓ <sup>1</sup>
Business	✓	✓	✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓
Forestry	✓	✓	✓	✓
Agriculture	✓	✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓	✓
Public Landowner	✓	✓	✓	
Highway Safety	✓ <sup>1</sup>	✓		✓
Rural Non-agricultural Landowner	✓	✓	✓	✓
Motorist				✓

<sup>1</sup> Representative was unable to attend second meeting but forwarded input to facilitators for presentation at the meeting.

<sup>2</sup> Representative did not attend second meetings.

Table 2. Status of Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) in each WMU

WMU	Year CAC completed	Deer population recommendation	Percent (%) deer population increase or decrease	Deer Management Section recommendation
1A	2009 <sup>1</sup>			
1B	2007	Increase	15	Stabilize
2A	2008 <sup>1</sup>			
2B	2010 <sup>1</sup>			
2C	2007	Increase	25-50	Stabilize
2D	2010 <sup>1</sup>			
2E	2009 <sup>1</sup>			
2F	2011 <sup>1</sup>			
2G	2010 <sup>1</sup>			
3A	2009 <sup>1</sup>			
3B	2007	Stabilize	N/A	Stabilize
3C	2010 <sup>1</sup>			
3D	2011 <sup>1</sup>			
4A	2009 <sup>1</sup>			
4B	2006	Increase	10-20	Increase
4C	2008 <sup>1</sup>			
4D	2008 <sup>1</sup>			
4E	2008 <sup>1</sup>			
5A	2008 <sup>1</sup>			
5B	2009 <sup>1</sup>			
5C	2007	Decrease	40	Decrease
5D	2010 <sup>1</sup>			

<sup>1</sup> Anticipated year CAC will be completed. This is subject to change.