

190210

Title: Antler Point Restriction Trial in Florence County

The Problem:

The percentage of yearling bucks killed in Florence County is significantly greater than many other benchmark areas of Wisconsin. Said another way, nearly 2 out of 3 bucks taken in Florence County are yearlings! This age structure kill has resulted in lackluster enthusiasm for the sport, lower days afield resulting in decreased revenues for conservation efforts, poor economic results in the local area, and hunter exodus from the County.

These results are not surprising since the deer hunting culture is changing. Many hunters currently desire a quality experience which equates to sighting and potentially harvesting a buck of elevated age and size. Talking with many such hunters would indicate they have not harvested a buck for many years locally and they will travel to other states or provinces to have such an experience.

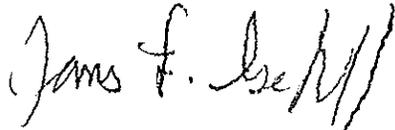
The Solution:

This proposal is to trial an antler point restriction of 3pts. or greater (on one side) for bucks harvested in Florence County for hunters aged 18 and over. A similar trial has been undertaken in other states, including a portion of our neighboring state to the north, Michigan. Many of these initial trials have expanded to larger areas and some are no longer trials but have been adopted long term. The Florence County trial would continue for the period of time necessary to determine if the public prefers a predominantly yearling based harvest or a harvest of higher age class animals.

Initially, the additional animals added to the population would be absorbed since Florence County overall deer numbers are trending significantly below goal. Future overall deer numbers would be managed with the existing doe permit system.

The Request:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Conservation Congress at its annual meeting held in Florence County on April 12, 2010 recommends that the Conservation Congress work with the Department to take action to correct this situation by introducing rule change implementing an antler point restriction trial in Florence County.



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