

Program Area: Wildlife Management

Subject: County deer advisory council governance of operations

Length of Public Input Period: 21 days

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These policies and procedures are intended to guide the operation and organization of the County Deer Advisory Councils (CDAC). They are being developed for the guidance of individual council members, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (the department) staff, and the public to allow orderly and transparent transaction of business and to ensure that all citizens of Wisconsin have an opportunity to be heard on deer hunting and deer management issues.

This draft guidance was developed by department staff and we will solicit comments on it for 21 days. All comments will be considered, revisions will be made to the guidance documents as needed, and final guidance will be made available to internal and external stakeholders.

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County Deer Advisory Councils Governance of Operations

These policies and procedures are intended to guide the operation and organization of the County Deer Advisory Councils (CDAC). They are published for the guidance of individual council members, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (the department) staff, and the public to allow orderly and transparent transaction of business and to ensure that all citizens of Wisconsin have an opportunity to be heard on deer hunting and deer management issues.

I. PURPOSE

CDAC Charter

County Deer Advisory Councils are advisory to the Department for the purpose of:

1. Gathering public opinion on deer populations goals, antlerless quotas, season options, and management zone/deer management unit boundaries
2. Reviewing & considering metrics on deer herd trends, impacts and human interactions
3. Providing the department with recommendations on deer populations, antlerless quotas, season options, and management zone/deer management unit boundaries

II. AUTHORITY

Administrative Rule: 10.104 (5)(b)(c)(d)(e) DEER POPULATION MONITORING.

County deer management advisory councils. The department shall establish county deer management advisory councils for the purpose of seeking comment from members of the public on the status of the deer herd at the county level. The council shall be chaired by the chairperson for the county delegation of the Conservation Congress established under s. 15.348, Stats., or a designee who shall be approved by the department. At least 3 members shall be individuals who held an annual license authorizing deer hunting in this state or another state in at least 7 of the 10 years previous to the year in which the individual is nominated, except if the individual served on active duty in the U.S. armed forces or national guard during the 10 years previous to the year in which the individual is nominated. If the individual served on active duty in the U.S. armed forces or National Guard, the number of years in which he or she is required to have held a deer hunting license equals 7 minus the number of years of active duty served during those 10 years. The advisory council may also be comprised of a representative of any of the following entities:

1. Tribal. For deer management units in the ceded territory as defined by s. NR 13.02 (1), the department shall provide the Wisconsin Chippewa bands those opportunities for tribal input into the department's deer management decisions described in and required by the parties' stipulations in the case of Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Indians, et al., v. State of

2. Agriculture.
3. Forestry.
4. Tourism.
5. Transportation.
6. Local government.
7. A local organization representing hunting interests.
8. A person who is enrolled as a participant in the Deer Management Assistance Program as established under subch. II

(c) Deer management functions. County deer management advisory councils will:

1. Gather public input on deer population objectives, antlerless deer harvest quotas, and hunting season framework options.
2. Review and consider metrics on deer herd trends, impacts, and human interactions.
3. Make recommendations to the department for deer population objectives every three years and will annually recommend antlerless deer permit quotas and hunting season framework options necessary to maintain the deer herd in balance with its range, population objective and sustainable harvest objectives. The recommendations of county deer management councils shall be presented to the board by the chair of the Conservation Congress.

(d) Operation of county deer management advisory councils.

1. The department shall establish guidance for the operation of county deer management advisory councils. Guidance may include, but is not limited to, any conditions which are necessary for the operation of meetings, selecting members, and establishing terms of service for members.
2. Whenever application is made to the department by a person interested in becoming a member of a council, the bureau of law enforcement may conduct a criminal history, character, and background check on the applicant. Upon becoming aware of information indicating prior illegal activity, the department shall make appropriate inquiry into criminal history and character of applicants for council membership and determine their suitability for the proposed activity.

(e) Effective term of season framework modifications recommended by deer management advisory councils. Modifications to the deer hunting season framework in a unit shall be effective for one year of annual deer hunting seasons.

Administrative Rule: 10.01(3) OPEN AND CLOSED SEASONS.

Deer season framework modifications. The department may modify the deer hunting seasons and bag limits established in s. NR 10.01 (3) upon approval of the board and the issuance of an order of the secretary and publication in the official state newspaper.

The department may modify the bag limits and deer hunting seasons in the following ways:

- a. The bag limit shall be one antlerless deer per antlerless deer permit issued under s. NR 10.104 for all archery, crossbow, or firearm deer seasons. No person may harvest any buck deer except as authorized by ss. 29.173 (2) (b) and 29.193 (2) (cr) 1. and 4.
- b. The department may modify the deer hunting season dates and bag limit in a farmland zone by establishing that the firearm season reopens on December 24 and continues through January 1. Only antlerless deer [may be harvested?]
- c. Bonus antlerless deer hunting permits and tags shall be issued in sufficient numbers to achieve the population objective established for the unit after evaluating the results of population monitoring.
- d. Licenses for firearm deer hunting may include one or more carcass tags that are valid for taking one antlerless deer during a firearm season in a management zone, unit, or portion of a unit specified on the tag that is in a farmland zone or in a metropolitan deer management subunit. Where the department has established an objective to increase or maintain the deer population, the department may establish that the antlerless tag under this subdivision is not valid.
- e. Licenses for bow deer hunting may include one or more carcass tags that are valid for the taking of one antlerless deer statewide except that, when the department has established an objective to increase or maintain the deer population, the department may establish that the antlerless tags under this subdivision are not valid. Note that these tags are not valid in units where the department has not established a quota for the harvest of antlerless deer.
- f. For firearm and bow deer hunting licenses, one tag described in d. and e. is valid in any unit statewide for a person who obtains it while under 18 years of age except that, in units where the department has not established a quota allowing the harvest of antlerless deer, the department may establish that these tags are not valid.

III. TIMELINE & RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Every third year (beginning in 2014), each CDAC will review and recommend deer herd population objectives and management zone/deer management unit boundary changes for their county to the Department for the next three-year cycle. Population objective recommendations will be to increase, decrease, or maintain the current population.
2. Annually, CDACs will make recommendations to the Department on antlerless quotas/permit levels and season options to meet the population objectives for the county in accordance with current administrative code or state statute.
3. The population objective and boundary change recommendations will typically require three meetings to be held in the fall every third year, while the annual quota and permit level recommendations will generally require the CDAC to meet twice each spring. A minimum of two meetings is required to receive and consider public input on CDAC recommendations. However, the number and timing of the meetings are subject to change dependent on need by the Department.
4. Final CDAC population objective recommendations, antlerless quotas/permit levels, season option, and management zone/deer management unit boundary recommendations will be advanced by the Department directly to the Natural Resources Board (NRB).
5. The Department will share areas of concern or disagreement on final recommendations with the CDAC and NRB. The NRB has final decision making authority on population objective recommendations, antlerless quotas/permit levels, season options, and management zone/deer management unit boundary changes.
6. Through the course of CDAC deliberations and the gathering of public feedback, councils may want to make recommendations to the Department on a wide variety of items related to deer management, but which fall outside of the councils' specific advisory role as established in administrative rule. The Department will forward those recommendations through the appropriate channels for consideration and possible action. In most cases, the recommendation will be referred to the appropriate Department species advisory committee, Conservation Congress committee, or government entity for consideration and possible action. The Department will request a report from the responsible entity which outlines the appropriate course of action for the recommendation and provide it to the CDAC of origin. If policy or rule changes are warranted, the recommendation is likely to be referred back to the proper Conservation Congress committee for further action and the gathering of public feedback through the spring fish and wildlife hearing process.

IV. INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

Membership Requirements & Expectations

1. Term length for all stakeholder seats (excluding chair, alternate chair, and tribal members) is 3 years, beginning on September 1 and ending June 1 of the third year after appointment. For example, current seats were appointed in September, 2014 and will expire June 1, 2017 (after harvest quotas and permit levels have been decided for the year). All members that wish to

remain on the CDAC will need to reapply at that time. This term length does not apply to the chair and alternate chair positions as they are nominated through the Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC) delegate selection process. Chippewa tribal seat term length will be determined by the nominating tribal leadership.

2. Members that wish to vacate their stakeholder seat at any time during their term must notify the chair and department. If the Department selects a replacement, the replacement will represent the stakeholder seat for the remainder of the term.
3. Members must be residents of the county in which they wish to hold a seat (exceptions for tribal members), own land within the county or work professionally for the federal, state, or county agency/organization which nominated them to the CDAC.
4. No department employee (full time or LTE) or current NRB member may be appointed to a CDAC. This would be viewed as a conflict of interest.
5. Council members are expected to reach out to their stakeholder communities to 1) create an awareness of upcoming CDAC processes and issues, 2) elicit input from their stakeholder community on current issues and decisions, and 3) provide an accurate representation of the sentiment of those citizens to CDAC members at scheduled meetings.
6. Council members are expected to accurately reflect the interests of the seat they are representing when participating in any CDAC capacity. For example, an individual representing the agricultural interest of their county may also be a hunter; however, when participating in his/her capacity as a CDAC member he/she should be careful to accurately reflect the issues and concerns of the larger agricultural community.
7. Council members are expected to attend CDAC training sessions as requested by the department.
8. Ideally, these members are involved in the local community and have excellent outreach and communication skills.

Membership Selection

Each CDAC is comprised of two WCC members and up to seven members filling representative stakeholder seats (Agriculture, Deer Management Assistant Program – DMAP, Forestry, Hunting Clubs, Transportation, Tourism and Local Government). These stakeholder positions are meant to provide a means for the various public interests in deer and deer management to be involved in local deer management decisions.

1. Partner agencies (DOT, Tourism, DATCP, etc.) may nominate someone to fill a vacant seat representing their interests on a CDAC.
2. A Conservation Congress delegate will serve as chair and a second delegate will serve as a non-voting alternate chair for the council.
3. All nominees (with the exception of the chair and alternate chair who will be assigned through the Wisconsin Conservation Congress) must complete and submit an [application](#).
4. Because these are department advisory committees, department staff will be responsible for vetting applications and obtaining approval from the Fisheries, Wildlife, and Parks Division

Administrator to fill all CDAC seats. The department will ensure that at least three members meet the deer hunting license requirements laid out in the Administrative Rule 10.104 (5).

5. The Conservation Congress representatives will work with their local wildlife and law enforcement liaisons to nominate the person to fill the seat representing the hunting interest.
6. The following describes ideal candidates for stakeholder seats on the council:
 - a. Chippewa Tribes – Chippewa tribe representation will be addressed between the department and tribal leadership. Individual tribal members who do not occupy a CDAC seat are welcome to provide input to CDACs through the public participation process.
 - b. Agriculture – Members representing the agriculture interests are required if the county is 30% agriculture or more. Representatives should be actively engaged in the agriculture community within the county the CDAC represents and should consider issues such as the biological and economic impact of deer densities on crop production, farm operations, and deer hunting. Additionally, they should understand the WI Wildlife Damage and Abatement Claims Program and techniques used to estimate wildlife damage to crops. Examples include someone identified by the county Land Conservation Department, Department of Agriculture, UW Extension agriculture outreach specialists, full-time agriculture farmers, orchardists, farm cooperatives, representatives from Farm Bureau or similar organization.
 - c. Forestry – Members representing the forestry stakeholder seat are required if the county is 30% forested or more. Representatives should be actively engaged in the forest industry within the county the CDAC represents and should consider issues such as the biological and economic impacts of deer densities on tree regeneration and habitat quality, invasive species, and deer wintering areas. Additionally, they should understand the basic principles of forest management and timber harvest methodologies. Examples include someone identified by the county forestry department (if applicable), loggers, private foresters, county or national forest managers, large industrial forest managers, etc.
 - d. Tourism – Members representing tourism should be actively engaged in the tourism or deer tourism industry within the county the CDAC represents including things such as increasing awareness of unique hunting opportunities and experiences, promoting ecotourism, integrating recreational activities with wildlife uses, and enhancing recreational non-hunting opportunities for deer. Examples include local resort or motel owners, regional or county tourism council members, sporting goods retailers, deer venison processors, Chambers of Commerce employees, etc.
 - e. Transportation – Members representing transportation should be actively engaged with highway safety and/or deer-vehicle collisions in the county the CDAC represents and should consider issues such as deer carcass disposal and deer vehicle collision reduction and mitigation efforts. Examples include a County Highway Commissioner, a County Highway Department representative, sheriff department or local police officers, local auto or motorcycle associations, deer removal contractors, etc.
 - f. Local Government (Urban) – Members representing local governments are required in counties that contain any portion of a metro deer management subunit. Individuals

representing the local government seat should understand urban deer issues and conflict resolution on such matters as land access, zoning, deer overabundance, deer/human interactions, deer feeding, ecological issues, and local weapon ordinances. Examples of appropriate local government representatives include county and local parks managers, local police chiefs, home owner association representatives, etc.

- g. Hunting Organization – Members representing the hunting community should be actively engaged in county hunting interests and opportunities while considering issues such as community involvement, recruitment and retention of hunters, and the perception of hunting by the non-hunting community. They should also be able to represent the interests of both private land and public land hunters. If the county has a county-wide alliance, it is preferable that the alliance endorse the nominee. Similarly, if there is not a county-wide alliance, the nominees should have the endorsement of a local conservation club.
 - h. Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP) – Members representing DMAP interests must own or be the authorized representative of the property enrolled in DMAP in order to be considered for that county's CDAC. Non-Wisconsin residents or the authorized representative of the property enrolled in DMAP may be considered for council membership as long as they own property in the county for which they apply and can attend CDAC meetings in person. DMAP council members will represent the interests of all private landowners in the county and be knowledgeable on deer biology and management, principles of wildlife management, and local deer densities. The department will contact participating DMAP cooperators to solicit their participation.
7. If a seat becomes vacant for any reason, the department will appoint someone who represents the same stakeholder interest based on the applications for that seat.

V. **ROLE OF WISCONSIN CONSERVATION CONGRESS**

Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC) delegates will serve as chair and alternate chair (non-voting) of the council. The WCC's county delegation is responsible for determining who will act as the CDAC chair and alternate chair for each CDAC (with the approval of the WCC Chair). Chairs and alternate chairs may not have been convicted of a fish or wildlife violation within the five years prior to their appointment to the CDAC. Chairs and/or alternate chairs who vacate their seat on the WCC may not continue to participate in the CDAC as a chair or alternate chair. If a chair or alternate chair is not reelected at the April Spring Hearings he/she can remain in the CDAC chair or alternate chair capacity until his/her term expires at the beginning of the May annual WCC convention.

Council Chair

1. The CDAC chair is responsible for facilitating the activities of the council. This includes but is not limited to:
 - a. Maintaining impartiality toward the views of all CDAC members and the public and remaining neutral except in order to make or break a tie in a decision making situation.

- b. Working with the Wildlife liaison to help schedule meetings and determine meeting locations in the timeframe requested by the department.
 - c. Keeping the council on-task and managing public comments to focus on the meeting objective and CDAC responsibilities.
 - d. Enforcing the rules of debate and restricting debate to the merits of the pending question.
 - e. Initiating council votes on recommendations and relaying the council recommendations to the department.
 - f. Ensuring meetings are run in accordance with [Robert's Rules of Order](#) and the guidelines provided here.
 - g. Ensuring the meetings provide a safe and respectful environment for discussion.
 - h. Providing all CDAC members and citizens with an opportunity to voice their opinion.
 - i. Recognizing who may have the floor.
2. The chair is a voting member of the CDAC. In this leadership role, the chair only votes in a decision making situation that would make or break a tie. If the chair vote makes a tie, then the motion is removed and a new motion must be proposed and voted on. If the total votes of council members results in a tie, then the vote of the chair can be used to break that tie.

Council Alternate Chair

1. The CDAC alternate chair is responsible for presiding over the meeting in the absence of the chair and taking notes to create a complete set of minutes for each meeting.
 - a. The alternate chair has all of the rights of a member of the council except that the alternate chair is a non-voting seat. The alternate may participate in discussion, make or second motions, and count as a hunting member of the council, if applicable.
 - b. In the event that the alternate chair is fulfilling the role of chair, the alternate would then have voting privileges. The voting privilege resides with the seat (chair), not the individual.
 - c. Meeting minutes must be completed utilizing the standardized form provided by the department.
 - d. Chairs and alternate chairs should work closely to ensure minutes from each meeting are complete, accurate, and provided to the department in keeping with deadlines provided by the department.
 - e. The alternate chair should submit forms by the deadline specified on the form. Department staff may contact CDAC chairs, alternate chairs, liaisons or other CDAC members for clarifications on any forms submitted before or after posting to the department website. Department staff will not complete forms in place of receiving a form from a CDAC.

Conservation Congress CDAC Oversight Committee

The mission of the WCC CDAC Oversight Committee, in conjunction with WCC leadership, is to oversee and manage the role of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress delegates in the CDAC process. The committee will operate in the following capacity:

1. Assist with filling CDAC chair and alternate chair seats with WCC delegates.
2. Work with WCC leadership to address any problems with WCC delegates' conduct, meeting leadership, or procedural concerns that may arise
3. Provide input to the department on the design and construction of forms, surveys, and other information gathering tools.
4. Work with department staff to guide the development and administration of the CDAC program and make recommendations on current and proposed CDAC policies.

VI. ROLE OF DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Central Office Staff

The department's big game program will provide statewide coordination of the CDAC effort by providing tools to help department staff and CDAC Chairs organize and run meetings. This includes developing meeting note templates, checklists, applications, public feedback methods, contact lists, a [website](#), binders of deer information and more. The CDAC website is the main source for all deer metric information, meeting forms, templates and other meeting resources. Completed preliminary and final recommendations, as well as meeting minutes, are posted on this website and visible to the public. The website is also a portal to online public input forms during the public comment period on council recommendations. Central Office staff is responsible for publicly noticing all CDAC meetings on the CDAC website and public hearing calendar and for approving all meetings, agendas, public surveys, etc. developed by CDAC's outside of those scheduled or provided by the department.

Field Staff

Local Wildlife Management staff will serve as the primary liaisons to each CDAC and will work with CDAC members to help schedule meetings, determine meeting locations and provide professional input on deer management issues. Wildlife liaisons will present deer harvest data, season summaries, population estimates, and additional metric information. Wildlife liaisons will share their professional opinion at CDAC meetings and are responsible for completing CDAC recommendation assessment forms. Wildlife liaisons should collect and keep the comment cards for 30 days in accordance with the Wildlife Management Records Disposition Authorization (RDA). Forestry and Law Enforcement staff will serve as contacts for the CDAC's on an as-needed basis. Meeting attendance for these contacts are encouraged, but not required.

VII. MEETINGS

1. As advisory councils to the Department of Natural Resources, all CDAC meetings are subject to sections 19.81-19.98, Wis. Stats., [Wisconsin's Open Meetings Law](#). The department is responsible for publicly noticing all CDAC meetings on the CDAC website and public hearing calendar as far in advance as possible, but no less than 24 hours prior to the meeting.
2. The department will provide CDAC members with a range of available dates in which to hold their meetings. CDAC chairs and alternates will work with their council members and department liaisons to determine a meeting date (within the provided parameters) and location and notify the department at DNRCDACWEBMAIL@wisconsin.gov.
 - a. Council members are not authorized to incur costs on behalf of the CDACs. Meeting facilities that are available for the public to use free-of-charge will be utilized whenever possible. If no free facility can be identified, CDAC chairs should work with the Wildlife liaison to identify a low-cost facility. If a cost is involved, the determination to utilize and secure a facility will be made by the department.
 - b. Council members should announce CDAC meetings and ask local media to provide the public with the meeting information as a Public Service Announcement. Any marketing that incurs a cost must be authorized in advance by the department. Press release templates and information is available on the CDAC member resources web page.
3. Meeting agendas will be provided by the department and utilized by CDACs statewide to ensure each county follows the same procedure and to guide decision making. Agendas will include the opportunity for open discussion on county-specific items. Agendas can be found on the CDAC member resources website.
4. Minutes should be a concise summary, reflective of what transpired. Minutes will include an accurate record of CDAC member attendance, indicating if each CDAC member is in attendance, excused absence (unavoidable conflict, notified chair of absence) or unexcused absence (did not notify chair of absence) is required.
5. Meeting minutes and recommendation forms must be completed and submitted to department staff at DNRCDACWEBMAIL@wisconsin.gov by the date indicated on the form.
6. A quorum must be present at a CDAC meeting for any voting action to be taken. If a quorum is not present, then the meeting may continue as informational only.
 - a. A quorum is a majority of the voting committee members (seats filled, not including the alternate chair who is a non-voting member or the seats that are not filled). *[For example, if your CDAC has 6 members including the chair and alternate, two voting member needs to be present in addition to the chair to conduct business (because then 3 voting members would be present for a council that has 5 voting members)].*
 - b. If a quorum is not present and a vote on a decision item is required, then the CDAC may choose to reschedule the meeting with a quorum present within the timeline determined by the department or advance the CDAC recommendation when a quorum was previously present.
7. All CDAC meetings will provide an opportunity for citizen participation.
 - a. Citizens wishing to testify to the council must sign up using the public appearance cards at the meeting prior to the start of the meeting.

- b. Citizen comments and testimony may be limited by the chair to three minutes per individual.
 - c. CDAC members may ask clarifying questions of citizens presenting testimony, but members should not get into debates with the public.
 - d. Chairs should review the public appearance cards during the public comment period of the meeting and can utilize the cards as a means to call citizens to the floor to testify or if they don't wish to speak, the chair can summarize the comments for the council.
 - e. Wildlife liaisons to the CDAC's should collect and keep the comment cards for 30 days in accordance with the Wildlife Management Records Disposition Authorization (RDA).
8. Citizens should not interject at-will during the meeting with their thoughts or questions, but should limit their comments to the designated period. These are working meetings of the County Deer Advisory Councils and after listening to public input, council members need time to discuss the issues amongst themselves and determine their course of action/decision.
 9. Following a CDAC meeting, members of the public may provide input and feedback on the meeting to department staff by emailing DNRCDACWEBMAIL@wisconsin.gov.
 10. CDAC meetings and efforts to gather public opinion outside of those scheduled by the department must receive prior review and approval from department central office staff. This may include, but is not limited to meetings, agendas, social surveys, etc. All meetings must follow procedures outlined in this document including the minimum 24-hour public notice, collection and submission of meeting minutes, quorum requirements, and citizen participation.

VIII. Removal from a CDAC

If a council member is found to be underperforming or remiss in their duties as outlined above (*membership requirements*), the department may remove and/or replace them.

1. Grounds for removal may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Failure to accurately reflect the perspective of the larger stakeholder community the seat is intended to represent.
 - b. Failure to attend a scheduled CDAC meeting without advanced notice to the CDAC chair. Because no action items can be voted on if a quorum is not present, attendance by CDAC members is critical. If a council member is unable to attend a CDAC meeting it is his/her responsibility to notify the committee chair in advance of the meeting of the unavoidable conflict.
 - c. Disrespectful, disruptive, or threatening behavior will not be tolerated. Council members are expected to treat other council members, department staff and the public with respect regardless of their position on any issue.
 - d. Any conviction of a fish or game law during a council member's tenure on the CDAC.
 - e. Any physical, mental or other circumstances that renders the member no longer able to fulfill his or her responsibilities. For example, if a person moves out of the county, is no longer employed in the position that was the reason for their holding a seat on the CDAC, or is not participating as a functional member of the council.

2. CDAC members who are being removed from their seat will be notified in writing by the department and provided the reason(s) for removal.
3. The WCC's [CDAC Oversight Group](#), in conjunction with WCC leadership, will be responsible for overseeing the activities of the chairs and alternate chairs and administering any disciplinary action that may be necessary (such as removal from the leadership positions).

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