

DTR Meeting March 9, 2013
Lee S Dreyfus University Center
Facilitator: Tricia Knoot
DNR: Karl Martin, Dan Storm

SCIENCE AND RESEARCH ACTION TEAM

MEETING GUIDELINES:

Turn off cell phones
Stay on task/time
Encourage participation by all
Listen with open mind
Be respectful of different opinions

QUESTIONNAIRE:

Methodology Comments

How/who gets to take survey?

- Random selection population
- Distribution lists?
- Concern with self-selected survey
- Self-selected survey can't be interpreted the same due to biases

Comparative Survey?

- Web versus random mailing

Notifications

- Email?
- News Releases?

What are you trying to find out with survey? Goals of survey?

- What the deer hunters thinks? Rural landowner? Wisconsin citizen?
- DNR has wider stakeholder perspectives than just deer hunters

Broad Comments

(In response to deer over-browsing question)

Relative to ownership

And land uses

Ownership goals

In preamble to questions: ask if farmer or timberland owner

Question #1 Not either/or e.g. A forester is concerned about browsing & over-browsing but is also almost always a deer hunter.

Deer Research and Science

- A) Amount of agricultural crop damage from deer
- B) Deer over-browsing of forest that prevent re-growth of some forest tree species

Sticky-Note: Deer effects on forest regeneration and understory plants.

Sticky-Note: Do most people asked this question know how to identify the signs? (Regards to B, E, F)

- C) Population, impacts and distribution of predators
- D) Amount of deer mortality during an average winter
- E) Deer over-browsing of food and cover needed by deer
- F) Deer over-browsing of food and cover needed by other wildlife
- G) The number of deer-vehicle accidents
- H) Potential disease risks to the deer herd

Sticky-Note:Rate of harvest in disease management

- I) Trends in deer antler and body size
- J) Surveys of hunters to measure satisfaction with deer hunts

Sticky-Note: Change wording to remove the word 'survey'. Suggestion: Measures of hunter satisfaction with deer hunts.

- K) Surveys of landowners to measure their attitudes towards deer management in their area

Sticky-Note: Change wording to remove the word 'survey'. Suggestion: Measures of landowners attitudes towards deer management in their area.

- L) Surveys of the general public to measure attitudes towards deer management in their area

Sticky-Note: Change wording to remove the word 'survey'. Suggestion: Measures of general public attitudes towards deer management in their area.

- M) Annual harvest information from fall deer hunting seasons

N) Information from Operation Deer Watch (citizen submittal of doe:fawn observations)

O) Information from Hunter Observation Surveys (hunters submit deer seen while hunting)

P) Impact of deer and deer hunting to Wisconsin's economy

New Items:

Sticky-Note: Diversity and stability of native plant communities

DTR RECOMMENDATIONS

People

4. In addition to providing hunting opportunities, the impacts of deer depredation on agricultural crops, forest regeneration and biodiversity, deer/vehicle collisions, the special significance of deer to the Ojibwe people and other factors also must be considered in management of Wisconsin's white-tailed deer with the Voight Intertribal Task Force (GLIFWC), the tribes serving as "co-managers" where appropriate.

Sticky-Note: Need to quantify forest effects e.g. 20 deer/sq mi is ok but 25 is too many, or 15% of seedlings browsed is ok, but 20% is too much.

DNR Research and Technical Publications (no comments/info needs)

1. We strongly suggest establishment of a research steering committee, with representation from user groups, stakeholders and regional WDNR biologists, and Tribal representatives. (Administrative)

2. A significant effort should be developed in Human Dimensions research. Wisconsin is blessed with two excellent researchers (Holsman at UW-SP and Petchenik in house), and a plan for long-term monitoring of trends and issues should be developed between them.

5. There is a need for a long-term research plan (developed through 1), based on needs assessments, and prioritized for funding. (Administrative)

6. Synergies with other agencies and greater cooperative efforts, particularly with those in forestry and geospatial disciplines, would help leverage funding and strengthen projects.

7. Research projects should be of an applied nature, rather than basic research with clearly defined application to the needs for managing Wisconsin's deer and habitat resources. (Administrative)

8. Project results should be extended to the public through media, workshops and field days, as part of the DMAP program and regional stakeholder conferences. (DMAP)

Chronic Wasting Disease

2. There is a clear need for a new sampling protocol for CWD in Wisconsin, one that gives a true picture of the progress of the disease; but more importantly, one designed to detect spread. (Herd Health/CWD)

Sticky-Note: Justification is faulty! This is a weakness of DTR.

Sticky-Note: What's the basis for dismissing current protocol? Are we not already measuring increase in prevalence and spatial extent?

8. WDNR should work closely (through the local biologist) with the Conservation Congress in developing goals and strategies at the county level.

9. We feel use of human dimensions research to anticipate, rather than reacting to issues as they arise would be very effective. (Herd Health/CWD)

Harvest Data, Herd Health and Productivity

1. Involving the public in data collection produces many benefits, including buy-in on management and harvest strategies and cost-efficiencies of data collection.

Sticky-Note: Getting "buy-ins" from hunters on deer population estimates would be great – good luck!

Sticky-Note: Why aren't we collecting more valuable information at check-in stations?

2. Each field biologist should be required to organize and conduct at least one field necropsy study each year, conducted along with cooperators and volunteers during late winter.

Sticky-Note: Do we have baseline data describing a "healthy" deer applicable to different parts of our state? Sand country versus Agriculture? North versus South?

Sticky-Note: What information would you get? How would it be used?

Sticky-Note: Can you estimate fecundity late winter?

Population Management

1. Limit the use of SAK/accounting style models to monitoring deer population size and trends at the state and regional levels.

Sticky-Note: Cost of losing DMU-level time-series of N_{sak} ?

Sticky-Note: Potential for estimating precision of SAK? Empirical estimates of SAK?

Sticky-Note: DMU versus DMAP (1, 3, 4) Since we'll be changing to DMAP is it more appropriate to use DMAP? Shouldn't eliminate any of these.

2. Do away with population goals and population estimates at the DMU level.

Sticky-Note: (2 & 3) What tools/information is currently being used aside from SAK for DMU population goals & estimates? Density? Acres of habitat? What else?

Sticky-Note: Existing deer management plan established population goals to balance carrying capacity of the land with hunter success and level of crop damage and forestry impacts and car collisions. We still need a realistic goal population.

3. Replace the current DMU population goal definition of comparing the deer population estimate with the desired population goal for the DMU with a simplified goal statement of increase, stabilize or decrease population density.

Sticky-Note: Do states with subjective goals tend to have less intensive harvests? e.g. Fewer deer/sq mile or fewer deer/hunter?

Sticky-Note: How do we know when we have attained the goal?

Sticky-Note: Cost of going to a subjective assessment of herd from a quantitative.

4. Develop a set of metrics to monitor progress towards the DMU goal of increase, stabilizing, or decreasing population density.

Sticky-Note: What metrics could be used to monitor or measure deer impacts on plant communities?

Sticky-Note: Links to studies or summary of findings on the current status of deer damage to Wisconsin plants, forests and crops.

5. Reduce the number of DMUs and combine the Farmland regions. (Regulations/Season)

Sticky-Note: Definition of "farmland regions"?

Sticky-Note: Is it possible to "simplify" and combine farmland regions? What criteria were used in establishment of current DMUs?

Predator Studies and Management

1. Continue to conduct research on the impacts of predators on the deer herd.

2. Involve the public as much as practical with field-based research projects.

5. Geospatial studies of predator distribution and densities, especially for wolves, should be encouraged and developed to assess long-term trends and issues.

Closing Comments

How to share info?

 Email is preferred method

Future meetings

 Different location? Less number of meetings? Web or phone?

Next meeting

 April 6th

Send comments to:

DanielJStorm@wisconsin.gov