

2009 DNR Bureau of Law Enforcement Deer Gun Season Report

Chief Conservation Warden Randy Stark

On behalf of the warden service, I would like to thank everyone for helping to make the 2009 deer season a safe one, and for helping us apprehend violators who endanger others or steal opportunity from law abiding hunters. You are the key to our success in protecting the people and natural resources in Wisconsin, on behalf of future generations.

WEATHER

Unseasonably warm weather was the norm from Bayfield County to Green County. This warm weather continued throughout the season, with a couple of days of rain mid-week.

There was no measurable snowfall covering the ground, and fields of corn were left standing because the ground was too wet for tractors and the crop contained high moisture content. None of the marshes or sedge meadows were frozen. A very dense fog reduced visibility in many parts of the state through the morning hours of opening day.

On the positive side, having the early fall conditions seemed to make it easy for a lot of young hunters or children accompanying hunters to sit out for long periods of time. Road hunting complaints were down, again likely due to hunters being able to sit in the woods longer.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Conservation wardens observed one of the quieter seasons experienced based on the number of hunters observed and contacted, type and overall number of complaints received and feedback about the number of deer harvested. A prevalent observation across the state was good hunter pressure opening day and Sunday morning, little pressure Monday through Wednesday (periods of rain these days), and light pressure the remainder of the season.

During contacts in the field, hunters communicated a combination of concern, frustration, and disappointment over low deer numbers; they often attributed the low numbers to issuing too many antlerless permits, earn a buck rules, and wolves, bear, and coyotes.

Sales of large holdings of paper company land fragmented into small private parcels are causing the permanent loss of yet more hunting opportunity. As paper company lands are being sold off to private individuals, this creates land access issues. When displaced hunters move to alternative nearby public land to hunt, they occasionally come into conflict with other hunters already on those properties. Some land is being withdrawn from the Managed Forest Law (MFL)-Open program when privately purchased.

Wardens in some parts of the state reported that public hunting grounds were crowded with hunters as urban sprawl is causing the loss of private hunting areas. This pressure has the potential to adversely affect the quality of the overall hunting experience on some state and federally owned properties.

Most hunters contacted in the field were aware of the changes proposed as earn a buck alternatives and wanted to discuss the deer management program in Wisconsin. The 16 day deer season was often a topic of discussion. The conversations were not unlike those that took place at the public hearings; generally hunters commented that they were not in favor of a 16 day season, especially the gun hunters who were also bow hunters. As the season progressed, and fewer deer were being seen and taken by hunters, more

hunters began to question the need for any change since in their view the deer population is already low. Some questioned the issuance of antlerless tags in the Deer Management Units they hunted when their perception is that the unit is below goal.

Wardens reported more sustained presence of hunters on public lands as compared to private lands.

Baiting and feeding continues to be a problem. Additional details are outlined in the Baiting and Feeding section of this report.

Wardens continue to report a decrease in the use of traditional deer drives. Reasons cited for reduced driving of deer include the landscape being increasingly intertwined with fragmented privately owned parcels of property, inability to obtain permission to cross neighboring properties, the presence of subdivisions interspersed on the landscape, and the dwindling size of groups. The number of hunting related shooting incidents involving deer drives was also down.

PASSING ON THE TRADITION THROUGH THE MENTORED HUNTING PROGRAM

Wardens heard numerous positive comments about the opportunities presented by new Mentored Hunting Program.

In the field and at registration stations, wardens had contact with many young hunters who had participated in a mentored hunt; the mentor most often being a parent or grandparent. Many mentored hunters shot their first deer this season. There was considerable excitement, and many lasting memories were made.

There were no hunting related shooting incidents involving any individuals participating in the mentored hunting program.

See addendum for mentored hunting stories.

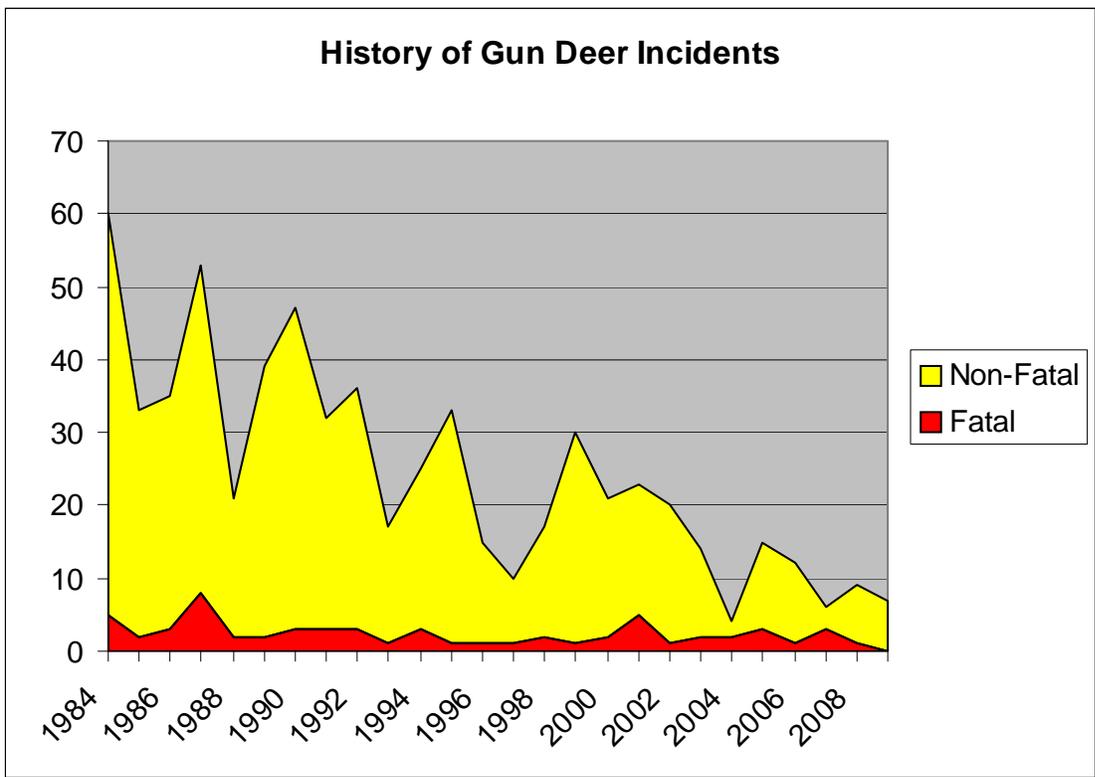
HUNTING RELATED SHOOTING INCIDENTS

On the statewide historical scale, **the 2009 Nine-Day Gun Deer Season was the fourth safest on record.** Our goal is to eliminate all injury and loss of life while hunting. We conduct thorough investigations to learn what happened in these incidents so we can work to prevent such incidents in the future.

There were a total of seven incidents, with no fatal incidents. **NOTE:** The investigation and Coroner's ruling of the death of a hunter in Rock County has not yet been completed. Investigators are awaiting reports from items submitted for analysis.

Deer drives contributed to 29% (2) of all of the incidents during the season.

Self inflicted injuries were involved in 57% (4) of the incidents this season. This was the fourth time in history that Wisconsin has had a gun deer season with less than 10 incidents. The first season was in 2004 with only 5 incidents reported. Below is a graph depicting the incidents for the gun deer season since 1984, which clearly shows hunting is a safe recreational activity and getting safer.



A positive downturn in trends was the number of incidents involving deer drives. Only 2 incidents occurred during deer drives. In addition, juveniles accounted for 2 of the incidents, which is also below the average of about 30%.

The incident rate for this season was 1.11 incidents per 100,000 hunters, well below the national average of three (3) incidents per 100,000.

There were no incidents involving any of the 9,907 age 10 and 11 mentored hunters.

All of Dunn County allowed rifles for the first time this season and no rifle incidents were reported. The new rifle zone in southwest Shawano County was implemented with no rifle related incidents. This was the third year that rifles were allowed to be used in Kewaunee County without incident. For the second year, there were no incidents involving rifles in the combined CWD Zones.

See addendum section for details on hunting related shooting incidents.

CONVICTED FELONS AND INTOXICATED HUNTERS

One of the goals of the warden service is to create a safe and enjoyable outdoor recreational environment for everyone. To this end, wardens have placed emphasis on removing criminal offenders and intoxicated hunters from the outdoor recreational environment.

While it is currently not illegal for a person with a felony conviction to purchase a hunting license in Wisconsin, it is against state and federal law for felons to possess firearms or participate in group deer hunting. During the 2009 deer gun season, the Hotline received eleven (11) complaints of felons in possession of firearms, and wardens arrested twenty nine (29) felons in possession of firearms in the field. This was a significant increase over 2008. Increased emphasis coupled with mobile data computing capacity in the field aids in detecting these offenders. This was the 12th most frequently encountered violation by wardens this past season.

Felons in Possession of a Firearm Cases 2003-2009

Year	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Number	29	9	16	9	3	10	14

Eleven subjects were arrested for going armed while intoxicated in the field during the 2009 nine day deer gun season. A review of the records of the eleven (11) individuals arrested for going armed while intoxicated during the season revealed that 5 of the 11 subjects, or 45% of them, had been arrested for at least one prior alcohol related arrest. One of the subjects arrested had multiple prior Operate a Motor Vehicle While under the Influence of Intoxicant arrests (OWI).

See addendum for more information.

HUNTER/USER CONFLICTS:

Some conflict is inevitable when over 600,000 hunters and many other outdoor users hit the woods at the same time. Analyzing the sources of conflict can be instructive in terms of developing strategies to reduce conflicts and create a safe and enjoyable outdoor recreational environment for everyone.

Wardens encountered a variety of user conflict during the 2009 deer gun season, some serious. An analysis of the conflicts wardens encountered reveal several reoccurring types: conflicts resulting from

property line interactions on both public and private lands; conflicts due to territorial disputes over a tree stand, blind, or bait placement on public lands; ATV/hunter conflicts; hunter/other user conflicts, over crowding on public lands, and hunting in the vicinity of residences. Wardens reported that there were fewer trespass complaints coming into sheriff's offices this year.

See addendum for details.

HUNTER HARASSMENT COMPLAINTS

While there were also fewer trespass complaints this year, wardens noted an increase in the number of conflicts and harassment complaints between hunters and landowners which leads to hunter harassment issues. There was a notable increase in hunter harassment complaints this year as compared to last year, going from four (4) hunter harassment complaints in 2008, to fifteen (15) this year.

SEARCH AND RESCUE EFFORTS

Being ready to respond to emergencies to enhance public safety is a major goal of the warden service. The local warden's knowledge of the area coupled with equipment furnished by the Department enhances efficiency and effectiveness during search and rescue efforts. The use of Global Positioning Systems (GPS), computer mapping software, portable radios, cellular phones, Mobile Data Computers and ATV's were all used this deer season to locate and guide lost individuals out of the woods. Wardens responded to ten (10) requests for search and rescue and assisted numerous local municipalities and sheriff's departments in search and rescue efforts.

See addendum for details.

GROUND BLINDS

Commercial camouflage ground blinds/tents continue to become more popular throughout the state, both on the ground and on elevated platforms. Wardens observed a number of hunters using camouflage ground blinds on DNR land and found good compliance with the blaze orange marking rule.

Although not required, wardens observed that some hunters on private property also displayed blaze orange on their ground blinds

Some hunters questioned the reasoning for only requiring blaze orange on ground blinds located on state lands, and not all lands when having a hunter completely camouflaged defeats the purpose of blaze orange clothing. Law enforcement recognizes the concerns, but the DNR does not currently have the authority to regulate the color of blinds used on private lands, but the agency does have authority to do so on lands that the DNR owns, manages or controls. There is some hunter confusion on the requirement not applying to county or federally owned property.

BUILDINGS SHOT

Reported Incidents of Buildings Shot 2006-2009

Year	2009	2008	2007	2006
Number	10	25	19	15

Increasing rural residential development means more buildings on the landscape. Fortunately, this year there was a significant reduction in the number of buildings shot. There were a total of ten (10) homes and barns struck by bullets or slugs during the 2009 deer gun season. In 50% of the incidents, the identity of the shooter was determined.

Reported Incidents of Buildings Shot 2009

Region	Rifle	Shotgun	Unknown
Northern			
Northeast			
West Central	3	1	1
South Central	1	3	1
Southeast			

ARRESTS AND CALLS FOR SERVICE

Top Ten Violations Encountered by Wardens during the 2009-2005 Deer Gun Season

2009 Rank	Violation	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	% Change
1	Illegal use of bait	334	308	331	254	221	8%
2	Trans. loaded gun in vehicle	88	129	120	106	102	-32%
3	Trans. uncased gun in vehicle	80	97	80	88	75	-18%
4	Hunt from an illegal elevated device	51	48	30	22	22	6%
5	Feeding wild animals violations	42	54	82	45	20	-22%
6	Failure to validate tag	35	72	65	48	67	-49%
7	Hunt without a license	35	17	27	32	23	106%
8	Hunt deer without backtag exposed	35	24	31	23	20	46%
9	Hunt w/in 50' of paved road center	25	53	62	44	51	-47%
10	Group deer hunt violation	35	29	30	14	19	21%

Summary of Total Violations by Year 2009- 2003

Summary by Year	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Total Number of Violations	1404	1400	1518	1394	1280	1156	1259
Juvenile	13	33	4	35	45	37	32
Adult	1391	1367	1514	1359	1235	1119	1227
Total Number of Seizures							
Illegal Deer	114	176	183	149	200	205	164
Illegal Bear	4	7	5	4	6	4	5
Other	105	106	144	89	99	72	76
Carkill Deer	10	12	9	13	21	17	20

- Total violations were essentially the same as 2008, with 1400 in 2008, and 1404 in 2009.
- The top violation in 2009 is illegal use of bait, 334 cases; an all time record number of illegal baiting cases.
- Overall, illegal baiting and feeding violations accounted for 27% of the total number of violations.

- Illegal feeding wild animal cases were the fifth most common violations with 42 violations, a decrease of 22% from 2008.
- Only 13 juveniles were cited for violations; a significant drop from 2008 (33), and a notable departure from the average of 31 juvenile violations over the past 7 years
- There was a notable drop in citations for loaded guns (-32%) and uncased guns (-18%) in vehicles.
- Hunting from within 50 feet of a roadway violations declined by 51% from 2008. This decline follows a prior 15% decline in 2008 over 2007.
- Hunting without a license jumped significantly (106%), from 17 in 2008 to 34 cases in 2009.
- There were 29 felon in possession of firearm cases made in the field, an all time record.
- The number of illegal deer seized by wardens dropped by 37%, from 176 in 2008 to 114 in 2009.

Calls to DNR Hotline- During the 2007- 2009 Nine Day Season

Type of call	2007	2008	2009
Found dead deer or other carcass	60	42	84
Baiting and feeding	39	27	48
Heard shots; believes poaching	26	17	23
Hunt within 50 feet of roadway center	27	37	20
Shoot from a vehicle	10	12	21
Hunt before or after hours	18	38	31
Possession of untagged deer	12	16	5
Possession of illegal deer	15	11	15
Miscellaneous	204	187	229
Total Hotlines	399	387	476
Calls to the Hotline not DNR violations or other calls for service/info	150	148	157
Total calls	549	535	633

The total number of calls handled by the Violation Hotline during the November 2009 9-day gun deer season was 633; an increase of over 18% from November 2008 (535).

There was an increased number of calls regarding deer carcasses being found by hunters or other members of the public on the sides of roads or in the woods (100% over 2008) and an increase in the number of complaints about illegal baiting and feeding (77% over 2008). There were also a number of calls regarding hunter harassment (15), felons in possession of firearms (11) and deer stands left on state property (16).

Not all the Hotline calls pertained to deer hunting during the 9-day deer season. Forty-four calls of the total hotline calls for 2009 pertained to ATV enforcement, trapping, illegal camping and environmental protection.

ILLEGAL BAITING AND FEEDING OF DEER

Illegal baiting and feeding continues to be the most prevalent violation and problem encountered in the field. Wardens from all regions uniformly renewed their recommendations to eliminate baiting and feeding for deer and create stiffer penalties, including consideration of license revocation for violators. Wardens continue to express concerns regarding baiting and feeding for deer including the potential for disease transmission, altering natural deer movement patterns, influencing distribution of deer on the landscape, cabin shooting, emotionally charged conflict and hunter frustration that results from the practice. Wardens are also spending considerable amounts of time and operational funding to address baiting and feeding violations.

Arrests for illegal baiting and feeding deer

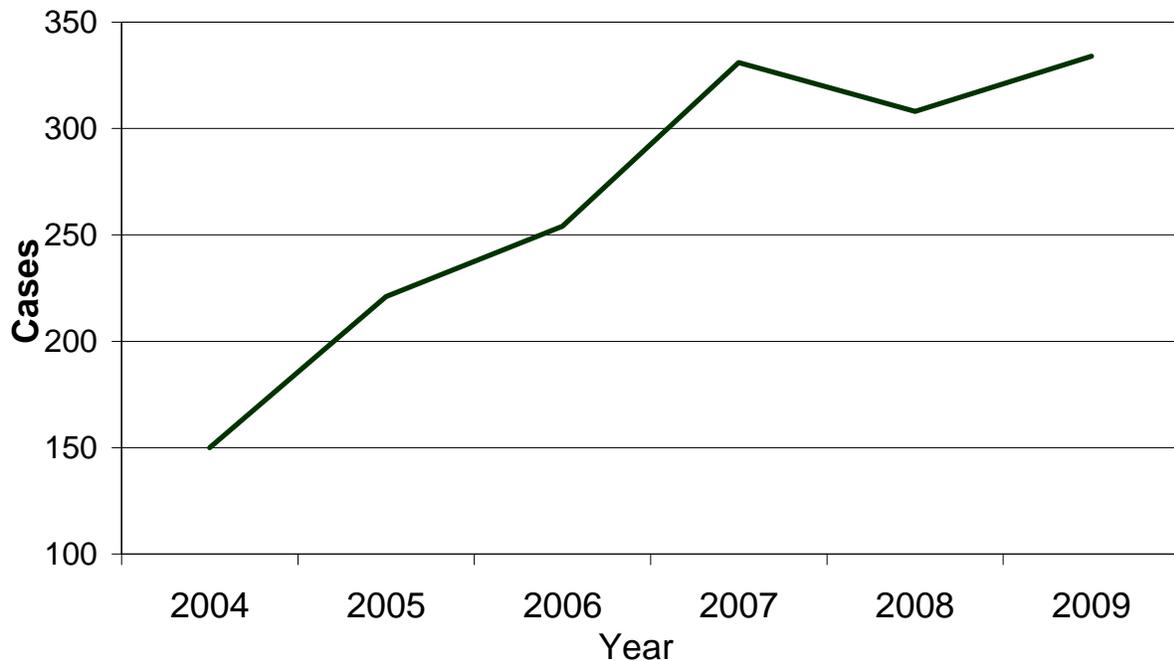
As noted earlier, illegal baiting and feeding was by far the most common violation encountered by wardens during the 2009 deer gun season, accounting for 27% of the enforcement actions. The number of illegal baiting violations was 334, which is an all time record number of baiting violations for any deer gun season. Baiting and feeding complaints called into the Hotline were up 77%

The number of illegal feeding cases (42), decreased 22% from 2008 (54), and decreased 48% from 2007 (82).

2009 Deer Gun Season Baiting and Feeding Cases by Region

Region	Baiting Cases	Feeding Cases
West Central	114	14
Northern	106	17
Northeast	79	3
South Central	24	8
Southeast	11	0
Total	334	42

Number of Baiting Cases 2004 -2009 Deer Gun Seasons



WOLF SHOOTINGS

There were sixty-one (61) radio collared wolves on the air during the 2009 regular firearm season. A total of seven wolves, four of the collared wolves and three non-collared wolves, were found dead during the 2009, 9-day gun deer season.

The locations where these wolves were recovered included:

- Crex Meadows, Burnett County, 11/22/09
- Fort McCoy, Monroe County, 11/24/09 (but may have been killed prior to season)
- Lincoln Township, Bayfield County, 11/29/09
- Black River State Forest, Jackson County, 11/30/09
- Colburn Wildlife Area, Adams County, 11/30/09
- St. Croix River, Douglas County, 11/30/09
- Gordon Lake area, Ashland County, 11/30/09

In addition, two wolves were reported shot on the Lac du Flambeau and Stockbridge Reservations.

An additional mortality signal was detected on a wolf in Vilas County that had previously moved into Michigan, but no signals were detected in the field at the indicated mortality site.

There is a growing resentment toward wolves, as evidence by a flyer found posted at Clark County Forest campgrounds and parking areas. The flyer that has a picture of a wolf in the cross hairs of scope, suggests wolves are the reason for hunters not seeing deer, and encourages hunters to “solve the problem.”

CUSTOMER SERVICE AND TAGGING SYSTEM

Many wardens said that they received fewer complaints from hunters this year about tags and felt the current tags were easy to understand and working well. The bold print indicating which weapon the tag is to be used for and what type of deer it is valid for seems to have eliminated many of the tagging problems from the past. In past years, hunters were frustrated with the continual changes that occurred with the prior tagging and licensing system. Hunters appear to be becoming more comfortable with the current deer tags and tagging requirements.

Wardens in the Northern Region, where most Deer Management Units (DMUs) were regular units, reported Herd Control tags were the main area of confusion for some hunters. Some hunters still have the impression that they can use these free antlerless tags anywhere, statewide, since one is issued with every deer license. As the Herd Control units change each year, new people are affected. Some hunters who could not use them in the past, now can due the unit designation, and others who have been able to use them for several years in their unit, no longer can.

While mistaken use of the Herd Control tags in regular DMUs was overall not a significant problem, there were still some antlerless deer killed and tagged with the Herd Control tags in regular deer management units. If the number of Herd Control Units continues to decline, wardens are suggesting that the license issuance system be designed to prompt/ask the purchaser at the time of sale if a Herd Control tag is desired. It would also force hunters to determine if the area they hunt is in Herd Control at time of sale and reduce the number of tagging mistakes happening later.

One area where tagging confusion does still appear to be somewhat of an issue, is where there are deer management units with different season structures is in close proximity to other types of deer management units. Parts of Dodge County, for example, are covered by 3 different types of units (CWD

units, Herd Control units and a Regular unit), each having different tagging options and requirements. Wardens continue to contact hunters who are confused about what unit they are in and what tag to put on a deer in these areas.

In the CWD zone, wardens have encountered numerous EAB stickers that were issued without the hunter's customer ID numbers being printed on the sticker before giving it to the hunter who registered the antlerless deer. In addition, many hunters were contacted in the field hunting with the special free CWD Deer Carcass Tags that were blank and did not have either the hunter's name or customer ID number filled in. Frequently these blank tags were validated and attached to a deer. Better training of the employees at the registration stations handing out these tags might alleviate some of the problems.

Several wardens reported issues with registration stations selling buck stickers, giving out buck stickers to friends, or registering car killed deer for buck stickers. Some wardens also continue to receive complaints about hunters bringing in harvested antlerless deer from a non-CWD units and then registering that deer again for the second time in a CWD area to receive a buck sticker.

Several complaints were also received about first year hunter education graduates having to go to a DNR Service Center to pick up their free antlerless carcass tag. Many felt they should be issued this tag automatically when they purchase their license. There were also a few complaints of a resident Armed Forces members who could not get the antlerless deer carcass tag they are entitled to purchase (for sold out units) at any license vendor. In these cases, the hunters were told that they could get these carcass tags from the DNR Service Center. The hunters replied that they had difficulty finding times when a DNR office was open. These situations will only increase next season with reduced hours of operation at the Service Centers.

CWD SEASONS

Hunters in the CWD zone were comfortable in understanding the season framework and tagging options since they have remained the same for a few years. Even though the same frustration was expressed by many hunters in the CWD zone about low deer numbers and they questioned the need for earn a buck, they were glad to be able to use a buck authorization from the previous year.

A new rule that restricted carcass transportation from the CWD zone went into effect on September 1, 2009. Initially, there were some issues for the registration stations along the border of the CWD and non-CWD areas, and there were questions from hunters about moving whole deer into adjacent areas.

Rifle use was allowed in all parts of the CWD zone in 2008. A number of towns in the Southeast and South Central Regions passed ordinances prohibiting rifles for deer hunting. This is a source of confusion for hunters, and creates some headaches for the county sheriff and local police departments who respond to complaints. When deer hunters rely on the state regulations pamphlet for rules, they might inadvertently violate local laws which are not so well publicized. It appears our hunters are making good choices on the use of rifles and shotguns for themselves, and no incidents related to rifle use were reported.

ADDENDUM – ORGANIZED BY SUBJECT

MENTORED HUNTING AND OTHER POSITIVE STORIES

Wisconsin has a hunting heritage like no other, and it's important to pass on the tradition of hunting to the next generation. Deer season presents an opportunity for seasoned hunters to pass on the rich history and tradition to the next generation of hunters. The Mentored Hunting Law brought a new wave of future hunters into the woods this season. These are a few of those experiences reported by our wardens.

Warden Jill Schartner (Drummond) reported many family groups (mothers, daughters, fathers, sons and grandsons/daughters) were seen again this year. Senior members of the families appeared to be holding these groups together, with younger family members commenting that they were "up north" to hunt, stating the hunting season is the one time each year they can spend quality time with their family.

Warden Jason Bayer (Phillips) checked an adult hunter coming out of the forest at the close of hours with a youth hunter who he was mentoring. The youth had hunter safety class certification and was old enough not to be required to have a mentor. The adult hunter was still there mentoring the youth hunter with one firearm present and sitting with him in the stand. The adult hunter said he wanted to make sure the youth was trained right and exposed to a proper hunt.

Warden Brad Dahlquist (Crandon) reported that he observed several youth hunting with family members throughout the gun deer season. A majority of the youth contacted in the field were not old enough to be involved in either the hunt or a mentored hunt. In a positive light, it was good to still see youth out hunting alongside family members. This could be attributed to family members actively carrying on the hunting tradition, and the mild weather.

Warden Matt Mackenzie (Ashland) reported meeting Tomas Landerer from Santiago, Chile who was a first-time deer hunter. Tomas is a high school foreign exchange student in Ashland and joined his host father David Martinsen's deer camp this year. He surprised all of them by shooting a buck. The TV station out of Duluth came to interview him, and the Duluth newspaper ran the story, too. Tomas and his host family agree this has been a lot of fun for everyone.

Warden Jeff King (Darlington) noted more young hunters are noticing and reporting violations. He investigated a baiting complaint and a report of a hunter shooting from the road turned in by a youth.

Warden Rick DeWitte (Cassville) encountered several older hunters who were taking younger hunters - their children as well as nieces, nephews and neighbor kids - deer hunting. One hunter said that he was going hunting for the first time in many years at the request of his young son.

Wardens were working in the Lima Marsh Area (Rock County) when they encountered a pickup truck pulled off the side of the road with a registered buck in the back and a couple of young kids in the front. Across the road they observed a man attempting to get close to a big white dog that appeared sick or injured. The man said that a neighbor had told him about the dog being seen in the same location for several days so he was trying to leash it in order to take it to a vet for care. The man was doing the right thing for the injured dog without knowing where the dog had come from or who it belonged to.

During opening weekend Warden Gottschalk (Beaver Dam) contacted a man and his very youthful "hunters," ages 8, 9, and 10 years of age. All were dressed in blaze orange and the youngsters were carrying BB guns with them. The young hunters were not only learning the aspects of what makes a safe and enjoyable hunt but also respect for others. One of the kids greeted a stranger who was also hunting

and began a conversation with him. His father informed him that it was okay to say hello, but to keep the conversation short so that the hunter could continue on.

Warden Barry Fetting (Marshfield) contacted a father this season that had his hands full. He had three children that were all of legal hunting age because of the new mentoring program. The father said that he was doing his best to mentor each of his children individually to at least “see some deer” and reported that two of his children had harvested antlerless deer and “were hooked, to say the least.”

Sometimes doing the wrong thing can turn into a positive message - Warden Paul Leezer (Wausau) reported that an adult hunter and his 16 year old son registered two antlerless deer that the 16 year old had harvested and tagged with Herd Control unit carcass tags. Upon returning home, and after the registration station had registered the deer, they learned that the Herd Control carcass tags were not valid for the unit in which the deer were harvested. Wanting to do the right thing, the adult returned to the registration station and reported that they had used the wrong tags and did not have valid tags for the two antlerless deer, knowing that a warden would likely have to follow up. Instead of hiding the fact that they made a mistake, the adult hunter used the circumstance as a learning tool to teach the 16 year old the importance of accepting responsibility and doing the “right” thing.

Warden Phil Dorn (Cumberland) reported that a hunter wounded a deer on public property and tracked it to a fenced and posted property. Dorn put the hunter in contact with the property owner who not only allowed the hunter on his land, but gave up his time on opening day to take the hunter out on his trails with his vehicle to help look for the deer. The two found the deer in a short time. The landowner helped field dress the deer and transported it out for the hunter.

Warden Paul Leezer (Wausau) and Warden Supervisor Randy Falstad (Wisconsin Rapids) contacted a group of 4 adult hunters and 6 non-hunting children pursuing deer in the Mead State Wildlife Area on the second Saturday of the season. All were having a great time except that the kids were seeing the deer and the hunters were coming up empty.

Wardens Joe Paul (Lakewood) and Mike Kitt (Peshtigo) were contacted by a hunter who had just shot an 8-point buck. When he shot the buck it ran right at him and died 10 feet in front of his ground blind. He said he thought it was going to run him over. The subject had a heart condition and the wardens dragged the buck out of the woods to the hunter’s vehicle and loaded it for him. He thanked Paul and Kitt for their “professional help.”

Warden Mike Young (Shiocton) and Deputy Warden Bill Fehrman observed a group of young hunters ages 18 to 22 tracking a deer. While listening on the family band radio, the wardens heard the kids waiting to get permission from landowners prior to going onto the next property to track the deer. When they finally found the deer, the wardens found they had tracked the deer about a mile.

One family was contacted where the mother had shot a buck and the father was field dressing it. Their 10 year old son was along and had gotten a deer during the youth hunt. The father had gotten a doe that morning. As the wardens were walking into the woods to check the hunters, they watched a buck enter the small woodlot. They told the hunters about it but they were content with the deer they had already harvested and appeared to want to take the time to take care of those deer. It was nice to see mom, dad, and son in the woods together.

Since the mentoring program began, Warden Mike Hirschboeck (Racine County) reports seeing many youth in the field being mentored. Hunters contacted while mentoring a youth had nothing but positive things to say such as “it’s great that my son or daughter can now actively engage in a hunt instead of

sitting by my side.” Hirschboeck has also seen an increase in youth ages 10 to 12 attending Hunter Education courses.

Warden Jason Roberts (Walworth County) contacted a young hunter that was hunting on private land in a deer stand. Roberts asked him to come down from the tree then watched as the young hunter unloaded his firearm and placed it into a hard gun case while still up in the tree. He lowered the entire cased firearm to the ground by a string. Roberts made a point to tell the hunter that he did a great job by unloading and lowering his firearm in a case. Roberts told him that accidents occur every year from hunters taking their loaded firearms into their tree stands.

DNR Biologist Jed Hopp (Balsam Lake) had a success story from a 10 year old mentored hunter from Barron. She shot her first deer, an 8 point buck, on opening day. She and her father sat for over 3 hours before the buck came in below their stand. It was too close and she couldn't get the gun aimed low enough, so they had to wait until it gave them another opportunity farther out about 80 yards. She said it wasn't hard to be patient for three hours while waiting for the deer because, she said “I took a little nap!” When asked about her plans for the rest of the season she stated "now I want to go back out and try for a doe."

HIGHLIGHTED ENFORCEMENT CASES REPRESENTATIVE OF DEER SEASON ARRESTS

Warden Shawna Stringham (Viroqua) and Steve Dewald (La Crosse) working in Vernon County, investigated a hunting license complaint. While Stringham talked to one hunter, Dewald noticed another hunter behind a barn grilling steaks. When Dewald noted that the steaks appeared to be venison, he asked which deer the venison had come from. Before the hunter could respond, a small girl quickly replied, “that's from the buck in the pole shed.” Dewald asked to see the buck and found an untagged buck with parts of the hindquarters removed. Enforcement action was taken.

Wardens Mike Nice (Richland Center) Shawna Stringham (Viroqua), and Randy Dunkel (Sturtevant) along with Deputy Warden Mike Williams investigated a shining and shooting complaint in Vernon County. The wardens located a dead deer in a field where the caller stated he heard two shots late the previous evening. A rifle, spotlight and marijuana were retrieved from the area where the suspect vehicle was spotted on the roadway the previous night. The wardens located the suspects. It was learned that the suspect and his girlfriend shined and shot the deer, left the area and came back to retrieve the deer later in the evening. The suspect then got scared after seeing the complainant, and threw out the rifle, spotlight and marijuana so he would not get caught. Enforcement action was taken.

Wardens Mike Nice (Richland Center) and Shawna Stringham (Viroqua) investigated a complaint of illegal shining and shooting in Richland, Crawford, and Grant Counties. The investigation revealed two deer were shot after midnight on two occasions in Crawford and Grant Counties. One of the deer was a buck and was never tagged or registered. The second deer was shot at night in a non-CWD area, transported to a registration station and registered as if it was shot in a CWD area. Enforcement action was taken.

Wardens John Collison (Trempealeau) and Bill Yearman (Eau Claire) assisted Minnesota Conservation Officer Joel Heyn and US Fish and Wildlife Service Refuge Officer Rob Hirschboeck with an investigation involving a subject illegally hunting and trapping on the Mississippi River. Numerous citations were issued to the subject, including trapping without a license, hunting without a license, duck hunting violations and closed area violations.

Wardens Dale Hochhausen (Stoddard) and Steve Dewald (La Crosse) received a complaint from citizens sitting in a van along a county road that they heard a bullet whiz past their vehicle. The wardens observed a deer drive taking place a few hundred yards away so watched the drive. A short time later they observed a man fire multiple shots from a rifle across the roadway at several deer. An untagged deer was found dead in an adjacent road ditch where a pool of blood was found on the road. When contacted, one member of the deer drive complained that other people shouldn't be on the road in their vehicle when they are hunting. Enforcement action was taken.

Warden Bob Jumbeck (Alma) and Steve Dewald (La Crosse) investigated a feeding complaint in Buffalo County on a subject that has been warned and/or cited for illegal baiting/feeding in 2004, 2007, and 2008. Wardens found a gravity box load of shell corn dumped on the ground adjacent to the hunting cabin. Enforcement action was taken, AGAIN.

Warden Stew Smith (Wisconsin Rapids) assisted the Wood County Sheriff's Department with a shoot from the vehicle case. The "hunter" was at the local tavern until it closed, but wanted his hunting buddies back at the camp to join him. The hunter drove to the camp and woke everyone with loud music through his PA system. After being told to go to bed, the hunter hopped back in his truck and drove out to the road, located only 75 feet away. Numerous rifle shots over the camp were heard by the hunters in camp. The truck took off, but came back again and fired 2 more rounds from the road. The Wood County Sheriff Department was able to apprehend the suspect and enforcement action was taken.

A landowner called Warden Wade Romberg (Friendship) to report that shots were being fired from the roadway adjacent to his property. As the landowner was investigating the area where the shots came from, the landowner heard shots on a different road, still on his land. The landowner went to that area and found a dead deer in the field just off the road and heard more shots from the area where the initial shots were fired. The landowner and his brother blocked the road and confronted the only vehicle on the road and obtained a confession from the hunter who admitted shooting at deer on all three occasions. Romberg responded and took enforcement action.

Friday evening before the gun season when no deer hunting is allowed, Warden Bill Miller (Adams) received a call that a man asked a landowner for permission to track a buck he shot with his bow and arrow. The two men lost the blood trail and before going separate ways the hunter told the landowner, "I hope that "crazy Miller" isn't waiting for me." Miller contacted the hunter near his vehicle with the bow and arrow. Enforcement action was taken.

Warden Bill Miller (Adams) received a call that a buck was shined and shot at about 10:00 pm in Adams County. Two men returned to the area at midnight and were apprehended. Miller learned that four men were involved when the deer was shot from a car. Two of them went after the buck with the rifle and flashlight. When the landowner investigated the shots, the two fled on foot hiding the rifle in a hollow tree. Miller contacted them and determined what they did, including killing a buck in Juneau County earlier in the day that was not tagged. At 5:00 am Miller saw one of the other two walking down a road and the fourth man was at a farm attempting to get a ride. All were apprehended, the gun was collected from the tree and enforcement action will be taken.

On opening day, Warden Mike Rader (Wausau) Rader and Deputy Warden Chris Hamerla walked into an illegally baited stand and found a gut pile and drag trail, but no hunter. The wardens observed a flashlight and box of rifle cartridges at the base of the stand. Approximately 20 minutes later, the hunter returned and climbed into the stand with a rifle. The hunter was found to have taken an 8-point buck over bait that morning and to be hunting alone for a second buck that afternoon with no valid carcass tag. Enforcement action was taken.

The Adams County Sheriff's Department investigated the theft of 7 trail cameras and 4 tree stands. One property owner had 5 of the cameras and 3 of the stands taken from his land. That landowner had purchased a new camera and a \$600 GPS chip that was placed in the camera. Investigators were able to follow the GPS track to two of the stolen stands which were placed over illegal baits, and then on to the suspect's home. Warden Bill Miller (Adams) had previously cited the man for baiting in 2004 and 2006. Miller contacted the man in jail and issued him citations for baiting violations again this year.

Warden Eric Grudzinski (Mauston) was on patrol just after hunting hours ended when he saw a truck parked along the road. The window was down and three hunters were pointing into the woods. Grudzinski talked to the hunters and saw a gun barrel sticking up in the back seat. Upon opening the truck door, Grudzinski found yet another uncased and loaded rifle in the truck pointing toward him. Enforcement action was taken. Grudzinski had cited the men the previous year for baiting violations.

Warden Robin Barnhardt (Osseo) and Warden Supervisor Ron Cork checked a property in Jackson County for hunting activity and discovered evidence of baiting. While checking the property for hunters, Barnhardt observed a hunter in a tree stand dressed in full camouflage, hunting over a large amount of bait. Cork checked the property for additional hunters and discovered a field dressed untagged doe stashed nearby. Barnhardt escorted the first hunter out to the doe and discovered a field dressed untagged 8 point buck close to the doe. Cork located two additional hunters on the property. An investigation determined that one hunter had shot both deer, but had not tagged them. The third hunter in the group was found to also be hunting over bait. Enforcement action was taken.

Warden Mark Little (Tomah) investigated several violations that were occurring on private land that were spilling over into adjacent state property in the Meadow Valley Wildlife Area. The landowner was contacted and cited for a deer feeder found on his property. A boat was found discarded on state land. He was led to an area where ATV tracks entered state land from his property to two ladder stands that had been left out since the start of the archery season. This led to two other individuals who the landowner said owned the stands. One of those hunters had blazed a trail to a third stand and cut down trees and sawed off branches to install his ladder stand. When this man was contacted later at his house, he was observed hunting squirrels without wearing blaze orange as required. Enforcement action was taken and the boat was removed from state land.

Warden Scott Bowe (Cornell) and Environmental Warden Brian Knepper (Eau Claire) contacted an individual hunting without a license in Chippewa County on the last weekend of the season. He was in a tree stand armed with a 12 gauge shotgun loaded with slugs. He told Bowe and Knepper that he was just climbing the tree to see if he could do it with his sore elbow. He said if his elbow felt okay, he was planning to go to town and buy a license. Enforcement action was taken.

Warden Adam Hanna (Neillsville) checked two men who were standing on the roadway preparing to make a deer drive. Upon contact, Warden Hanna discovered the first man to have a blood-stained tag that had been on another person's buck, but then switched with his brother's tag. Neither this man nor his brother was in contact with the shooter. The shooter did not have a 2009 gun deer license. Hanna then checked the next man on the road only to find that he was in possession of his father's tags. Enforcement action was taken.

Warden Ken Thomson (Fall Creek) decided to walk through an area where he suspected a man was hunting without a license. Thomson observed a man carrying a tree stand, climbing sticks and a trail camera. When the man noticed Thomson, he dropped everything he was carrying, causing the warden to suspect that the hunter was going to run into the woods. Thomson identified himself and told the man to stop. Thomson talked to a nearby landowner, where he learned that the tree stand had been stolen. Using

the information Thomson had collected, the sheriff's department investigated the incident, and the man admitted that he stole the hunting equipment.

Warden Jim Jung (Rhinelander) reports that he and Warden Tim Otto (Antigo) walked into two stands on private property to check hunters. Both hunters were hunting over more than the two-gallon limit. Jung observed several turkey feathers near the bait pile and investigation revealed one hunter had shot two wild turkeys over bait without a permit prior to the gun deer season.

Warden Rich Thole (Boulder Junction) observed two duck hunters hunting on Boulder Lake the last night of the duck season. Thole observed the subjects hunting past legal hunting hours and operate a boat after sunset without any boat lights. The two hunters were also hunting over a shelled corn that was dumped in the water near the island where the two hunters hunted. Thole cited both subjects for hunting migratory birds over a baited area.

Warden Rich Thole (Boulder Junction) and Deputy Warden John Preuss contacted a musky fisherman from Michigan fishing on Presque Isle Lake. The subject had his live well open and the wardens observed live ciscoes in it. Thole questioned the fisherman and learned that he and other local musky fishermen had collected the ciscoes from the Manitowish Chain of Lakes and held them alive in other lakes near Presque Isle. The fishermen would then use the live ciscoes when they fished those lakes. The subject stated he and a friend took a tub of ciscoes from Island Lake and his friend stored them alive in Carlin Lake before he used them for musky bait on Presque Isle Lake. Thole cited two subjects for transporting live fish away from an inland lake (VHS violations).

While working by ATV, Warden Amie Egstad (Bayfield) drove to a town sand pit where hunters and ATVers are usually located. As Egstad drove into the sand pit, a town-owned dump truck was parked there with a hunter dressed sitting on top of the box. Egstad found out the hunter had a loaded rifle with him on the truck and he was waiting for another town worker to come back with the other dump truck since they were mixing sand and salt that day. Citation was issued.

Warden Amie Egstad (Bayfield) received a Hotline tip at 5:30 am on the second day of the season stating two hunters were hunting in the ditch line of a town road in Cornucopia. Egstad went to the site right away that morning and found one hunter sitting at the corner of two roads where he was hunting well within 50 feet of the roads' center. Another hunter was located up the road by the cabin driveway and the town road, and he was within 20 feet of the road center. This hunter also did not a gun deer license; he was unable to purchase one because he had not hunter education certificate. Egstad will refer a criminal charge for hunting deer without a license, and she issued citations for hunting too close to the road.

Warden Matt Mackenzie (Ashland) and John Windt (Hurley), assisted by Warden Supervisor Dave Oginski (Ashland), contacted two hunters after the close of hunting hours hunting deer out of the same blind with aid of a light over an illegal bait. A battery-powered flood light attached to the permanent blind located on private property was being used to aid in hunting after legal hunting hours.

Warden Jill Schartner (Drummond) received a phone call from a father and his son who reported they observed a vehicle crest the hill, hit the brakes, back up, shoot, and take off. Schartner investigated and citations were issued for firearms and tagging violations, as well as open intoxicants, trespass, and operating with a suspended driver's license.

Warden Lance Burns (Gordon) received several complaints of over-baited deer stands. At the first stand on opening morning not only was the stand over-baited with approximately 20 gallons of corn, but further investigation revealed the subject possessed his mom's deer tags, as she was injured and did not plan on

hunting, and the subject's 13 year-old son was alone hunting at another stand with 20 gallons of bait. Hunters under age 14 must be supervised by an adult and in this case the adult was approximately ½ mile away. Burns also cited two brothers who were in separate stands, both of which were baited with over 50 gallons of alfalfa hay, corn and mineral blocks.

Warden Jason Bayer (Phillips) and Warden Supervisor Casey Krueger (Tomahawk) worked contacted a hunting party that had been excessively over-baiting with corn, apples and crushed acorns. Six citations were issued to 6 hunters for hunting over illegal baits. Some of the baits were in excess of 25 gallons and the smallest bait pile was approximately 15 gallons.

Warden Christopher Spaight (Grantsburg) and Natural Resource Officer Kyle Anderson contacted four hunters on private property where shots had just been heard. Spaight ascertained that an antlerless deer had just been shot by two of the hunters and the other two were dragging out another untagged antlerless deer. None of the hunters in the group possessed a valid antlerless tag for that DMU.

Warden Jesse Ashton (Luck) received a Hotline tip on opening weekend of two untagged, gutted out deer approximately ¾ mile back on Polk County Forest Land. Upon responding, Ashton and Deputy Warden Larson located a vehicle at the parking area that had a doe with an unvalidated Herd Control tag on it (not a Herd Control unit). The wardens made contact with two hunters at dark coming out of the woods with an untagged buck fawn. Wardens were able to determine that the subjects had also shot two bucks they had gutted and not tagged back in the woods. All four deer were seized and numerous citations were issued.

Warden Jesse Ashton (Luck) overheard the Polk County Sheriff's office getting dispatched to a trespassing complaint. Ashton heard the deputy run four subjects he was familiar with. One of the subjects was still under revocation for shining and shooting deer several years earlier. A SKS rifle was seized which was actually the same rifle one of the subject's friends had used in the previous shining and shooting case, but had been returned by the court after the case was settled. Ashton seized the rifle for the second time in three years. The subject was issued a citation for hunting during a period of revocation and purchasing a license during a period of revocation. Ashton will be requesting further revocation.

Warden Jesse Ashton (Luck) was working a road hunting complaint near the Polk /Burnett County Line when he observed a vehicle stopped on a rural road. Ashton could see someone in blaze orange moving around in the vehicle. Ashton observed the subject reaching into the back seat, and there was an empty beer can on the front seat and a cooler in the back seat. Ashton asked the subject if he was reaching back to grab another beer and the subject stated "I don't have any deer." Ashton contacted the Burnett County Sheriff's Department and advised them he had what he believed was an intoxicated driver. While waiting for the deputy to arrive, Ashton asked the subject how his hunting season was going. He stated he only got one buck with his gun this year but last year he shot two bucks with his bow. One he tagged and one his brother tagged for him. Ashton advised the subject that it was illegal to group deer hunt while archery hunting. Citations will be issued for borrowing or loaning another's archery tags.

Warden Jon Hagen (Spooner) received a complaint of a hunter that had fired a shot across a roadway while vehicle traffic was present. The complainant was sincerely shaken by the incident as they had to stop their car to prevent being shot. After an investigation it was discovered that one person fired two rounds across the road at a buck that was pushed out during a deer drive. Incredibly, the hunter never saw the complainant driving down the road.

Warden Phil Dorn (Cumberland) located a suspect vehicle from a complaint of shooting from a roadway in Warden Jon Hagen's (Spooner) area earlier in the week. Dorn observed that the vehicle was road

hunting again in the same vicinity as the original complaint. Dorn followed the vehicle and radioed Hagen to respond. The wardens discovered two suspects had shot several deer on private property and tagged two of the deer with carcass tags from the wrong quota unit.

Warden Russ Fell (Rice Lake) received a Hotline complaint in Rusk County where a hunter observed a suspect shoot from a vehicle at a deer on the complainant's land. The vehicle left, however, the witness later located the vehicle and obtained a plate number. The vehicle and operator were located a day later. Amazingly, the suspect had changed the plates on the vehicle though he failed to change the business advertising on the side of the truck which was a dead giveaway. The suspect denied any involvement, the witness is willing to testify as to what he saw; the suspect now faces illegal hunting and motor vehicle violations.

Warden Sue Miller (Hayward) responded to the scene of a minor ATV accident after receiving information from EMS personnel on scene. Apparently, a hunter had shot a deer on private land and then attempted to remove it with an ATV. The deer was untagged and untagged when the hunter rolled the ATV into a wetland and pinned himself underneath it. The hunter called 911 on his cell phone for assistance. Miller subsequently gave him a ride back to the cabin and issued him a citation for the untagged deer. The ATV was not his and he did not have permission to hunt on the land where he shot the deer.

Warden Jason Roberts (Walworth County) responded to a complaint of road hunting in the town of Sharon, after a hunter in the woods heard several shots come from the road into the woods where he was hunting. Roberts was able to make contact with the suspects. Roberts found three .243 casings on the paved roadway along with deer blood and hair in the farm field. Roberts searched the vehicle and found an uncased handgun under the front seat of the truck belonging to the passenger. Roberts found that the two hunters had also purchased fraudulent resident deer licenses, as they were both residents of Illinois and were hunting with resident deer licenses. Citations were issued for shooting from a roadway, having an uncased firearm and two citations for fraud in obtaining a resident license.

Warden Mike Hirschboeck (Racine County) responded to a complaint of a dog being caught in a foot hold trap. Upon Hirschboeck's arrival the dog was released from the trap. While on the scene, Hirschboeck observed a tree stand with approximately 15 gallons of apples placed out. One 5 gallon pile was 10 yards from the stand, the second was 20 yards and the third was 30 yards from the stand. Hirschboeck also observed feathers sticking straight up from the ground about 15 yards from the stand and a closer look revealed a 1 ½ double coil trap under the feathers. The owner of the property admitted to placing the apples out and using sight exposed bait closer than 25 feet of his trap.

On opening day Wardens Mike Hirschboeck (Racine) and Recreational Safety Warden John Bronikowski (Sturtevant) were patrolling in the town of Raymond. The wardens observed an ATV being operated directly at the wardens. The wardens observed the operator of the ATV begin swerving between both lanes of traffic. Hirschboeck stopped his squad and the operator of the ATV also stopped. The operator of the ATV stated "I thought you were my dad and that's why I stopped." The operator of the ATV was operating an unregistered ATV, operating an ATV on the roadway and transporting an uncased bow.

Warden Jason Roberts (Walworth County) and Warden Supervisor Jennifer Niemeyer (Sturtevant) worked the early morning hours of Thanksgiving and contacted a man shining fields with his headlights a 4:30 am. Wardens made contact with the suspect and found that he had firearms in the vehicle. Citation issued.

Warden Supervisor Jennifer Niemeyer (Sturtevant) observed an untagged gutted deer along side the road. Further in the woods were three individuals gutting out another deer that was not tagged either. Niemeyer asked the hunter what stand he shot the deer from. The hunter was reluctant to answer and Niemeyer later found out why - the stand and it was illegally baited with a mineral block. The hunter said someone trespassed and put the mineral block on his property but he decided to hunt it the stand anyway. The individual was cited for hunting over bait and warned for untagged deer.

Warden Jason Roberts (Walworth County) and Warden Supervisor Jennifer Niemeyer (Sturtevant) worked a late hunting complaint in Walworth County. Roberts and Niemeyer contacted two deer hunters hunting from a wheeled hay wagon converted into a deer stand 16 minutes after the close of hunting hours. The wardens watched as one of the hunters began to unload his firearm as the wardens approached. They found pumpkins approximately 150 yards from the deer stand. The hunter told Roberts that he was hunting coyotes and not deer, though he didn't have a small game license.

Wardens Kyle Drake (Waukesha County) and Regional Warden Kevin Mickelberg (Milwaukee) in conjunction with the Menomonee Falls Police Department responded to a complaint of slugs flying over a house. Two hunters were contacted on an adjoining property located on top of a hill next to the Village of Lannon limits and a county park. It seems that the subjects became bored and started target practicing at trees and bricks. Then one hunter started shooting with slugs at flying geese. The subject actually hit a flying goose at about 50 yards. That was an impressive shot, but so was the list of citations the two individuals received.

Waukesha County Wardens Kyle Drake and Mitch Groenier were called to the scene of shots being fired near a house at 8:20 am. It was determined that a neighbor shot three antlerless deer out of the kitchen window of his house. The deer had been coming in to feed at three "bird feeders" that somehow had spilled cracked corn all over the area. The subject had a container of buck lure hanging from each feeder and a trail cam set over each. The wardens viewed the photos on the trail camera and saw that there were several pictures of deer at the feeders. The last two pictures on the camera show one of the deer from that morning at the feeder and then the subject dragging the dead deer away from the feeder a few minutes later.

Wardens Nick Blankenheim and Ron Cork contacted a subject on Sunday of the opening weekend outside of Black River Falls who was found to have a 30-06 rifle cased, but fully loaded with one round in the chamber on the back rack of an ATV. The subject also operated the ATV on a roadway illegally, and the ATV was unregistered. A citation was issued for possessing a loaded firearm on a vehicle.

Warden Bob Lee (Washington County) and Recreational Warden John Plenke arrested a hunter after observing him harvest a doe and drag the doe out of a marsh without a tag. The hunter was leaving the deer behind to retrieve later when the wardens made contact. No valid explanation was provided for why the hunter did not tag the deer.

Warden Bob Lee (Washington County) contacted and ultimately arrested a hunter for littering and failing to wear his back tag while hunting in the Theresa Marsh. In addition, this subject's firearm and a companion were found out in the Marsh hunting without a license. The unlicensed hunter also had an outstanding warrant for his arrest. Lee seized the firearm and the subject with a warrant was turned over to the Washington County Sheriff's Dept.

Wardens Mark Pearce (Sheboygan), Recreational Safety Warden John Plenke (Waukesha), and Supervisor Joe Jerich (Plymouth) investigated a complaint of shining and shooting a 10 point buck. Witnesses from nearby residences watched the incident play out and obtained a license plate number.

The suspect vehicle was stopped a short time later. A shotgun was seized and two suspects identified. Wardens recovered the buck and shotgun slug at the scene..

Warden Supervisor Joe Jerich (Plymouth) and Regional Warden Kevin Mickelberg (Milwaukee) investigated a report of a shining and shooting incident in Washington County that occurred shortly after closing hours. After collecting evidence at the scene, they found the suspect had shot a deer while on the way home from hunting. He stated he was frustrated as he hadn't observed any deer during the day. The wardens seized the firearm used in the violation and charges are pending.

Wardens Tom Truman (Winneconne), Jason Higgins (Oshkosh), Ben Nadolski (Waupun), and Regional Warden Byron Goetsch (Green Bay) contacted several hunters on private property off of Rush Lake. Wardens documented excessive baiting near three of the stands prior to the season opener. Three individuals were found hunting over the illegally baited sites. Each of the hunters brought out approximately 10 more gallons of apples and corn which was to be placed after the day's hunt.

While working closing hours, Warden Jason Higgins (Oshkosh) and Tom Truman (Winneconne) were watching people hunting on public and private land near Rush Lake. A subject hunting from a tree on state land was observed shooting 10 minutes after hours. In addition to shooting after hours, Truman also found an untagged buck lying near the stand.

Warden Joe Paul (Lakewood) contacted a hunter who had cut trees on public land and who had an illegal bait out in 2008. Paul asked the hunter to come down from his stand. The hunter began swearing at Paul for ruining his hunt. Paul had found more illegal bait and newly cut trees at this location. The same hunter was contacted three days later with a loaded gun in a vehicle and issued another citation.

Wardens Mike Stahl (Oconto Falls) and Warden Supervisor Goerlinger (Peshtigo) made contact with a vehicle on Star Lake Road while investigating a different complaint. Subjects stated they were "road hunting" and they thought they just saw a deer. A check of guns in the vehicle found that one of them was not completely enclosed and the other was loaded. Subject then mentioned he could not afford any more citations as Paul issued him two on opening weekend.

Using some available technology, Warden Mike Stahl (Oconto Falls) was able to apprehend a non resident who fraudulently purchased a resident deer license when a vehicle with non resident plates was found parked at a hunting area. When the subject was contacted investigation revealed that he fraudulently purchased illegal resident licenses for the last several years.

Wardens Mark Schraufnagel (Shawano East) and Warden Todd Schaller (Central Office) made contact with an individual hunting 14 minutes after the close of the season. Schraufnagel observed that the hunter appeared younger than the birth date on his license. The hunter stated that he must have accidentally grabbed his dad's backtag as they both have the same name. A records check indicated that the hunter had not purchased his own license.

Warden Dave Oginski Jr. (Wausaukee) and Chief Warden Randy Stark contacted a hunter with too much bait in the Town of Pembine. The hunter's son had placed the bait for his father. Wardens discovered hair from a deer consistent with a deer having been shot at the bait. The wardens followed the hunter back to the deer camp. An investigation revealed that the son had placed too much bait, hunted over illegal bait, failed to validate a tag, fail to register a deer, and borrowed an agricultural tag.

On Wednesday, Warden Todd Wippermann (Clintonville) and Recreational Safety Warden April Dombrowski (Oshkosh) were walking some state property looking for illegal baiting and tree stands.

They found a recently dumped deer carcass and a boned-out turkey. Evidence at the scene pointed to a suspect that lived about 3 miles away. The subsequent investigation revealed that the that in addition to the litter violation, a subject shot the turkey illegally with a slug, during the closed season, without a license/permit, etc. Numerous citations resulted from this incident.

Warden Jeff Knorr (Fremont) turned onto a town road and observed a lone hunter placing a deer in pick-up truck parked on the roadway. The hunter stated he just shot the doe back in the woods. Knorr inspected the deer and found the hunter had not validated the carcass tag. In getting to the deer, Knorr did not observe the spent .30-30 rifle shells on the roadway at the time, but the hunter knew they were there. As Knorr was completing paperwork in his squad, the hunter tried to nonchalantly kick the spent shells into the ditch. Investigation revealed that this deer was shot from the road.

On Saturday, at 12:49 am, Warden Jeff Knorr (Fremont) observed a vehicle drive past his location. It stopped on the roadway, shined a light when a shot rang out from the vehicle. The driver and passenger were both arrested for hunting deer with aid of artificial light and transported to the Waupaca County Jail. Investigation revealed that these individuals had done this on multiple occasions over the last 3 years in both Waupaca and Door Counties.

Warden Mike Young (Shiocton) and Deputy Warden Bill Fehrman (Shiocton) were watching two hunters in the field with binoculars when a truck drove past them and parked along the woods. The wardens watched as the driver got out, opened the back of his truck, and proceeded to throw deer parts into the ditch line. A citation for littering was issued.

Warden Mike Young (Shiocton) checked a hunter on private property while the hunter was in a tree stand. The hunter stated he was wondering if he would see any wardens this year. The subject had a resident license and all appeared legal. When Young walked out of the woods he observed a car with Illinois plates. A check of the plate showed it belonged to the hunter. The second contact with the hunter resulted in him stating he lives in Illinois but works in Wisconsin and had purchased the license illegally.

Warden Nate Ackerman (Green Lake) led an investigative effort for an large game fish kill on Lake Puckaway. Other DNR staff involved were Warden Dave Algrem (Wautoma), Warden Judi Nigbor (Montello), Warden Supervisor Carl Mesman (Wautoma), Fish Manager Dave Bartz (Montello) and Fish Technician Dave Paynter (Montello). The investigation began on the Friday of the deer season and continues. The fish kill was the result of a contractor not tending the pound nets and removing game fish as required which resulted in the death of the game fish which included including walleye and northern pike. The initial count for walleyes were over 1500 with many of them being 25+ inches. The contract was terminated and the boats and nets of the commercial fisher were seized. Enforcement action is pending.

Warden Judi Nigbor (Montello) found a hunter hunting in camouflage clothing in an elevated box stand over bait. When the hunter saw Nigbor, he hid in his stand, but forgot that his gun was hanging in plain view inside the stand. The hunter knew it was illegal to bait, but was just trying to keep the deer from going over to his neighbor's property where they would be shot.

Warden Judi Nigbor (Montello) and Warden Supervisor Carl Mesman (Wautoma) checked a deer camp. When they entered the camp they saw two vehicles with out of state license plates parked in camp. The wardens spoke with two non-hunting members at the camp and found out that one hunter (still out in the woods) was a nonresident from California. Nigbor walked the property and found the nonresident hunter with a resident deer hunting license. A second hunter was also found on the property hunting after hours.

On the final day of the deer season, Wardens Robert Stroess (Manitowoc) and Matthew Groppi saw a truck with an expired Missouri license plate apparently involved with a deer drive in Manitowoc County. The wardens watched one hunter in a posting position and heard other hunters driving out a pine plantation. After the drive, the wardens contacted the hunters. The one who they saw posting was wearing a 2008 backtag belonging to a different person and he said he purchased his license but didn't have it with him. The truth was that he hadn't purchased a license at all.

Warden Andy Lundin (Green Bay) and Warden Supervisor George Protogere (Green Bay) were working together on the second day of the season and checked a group of hunters behind a farm. The group had one deer tagged. Some of the men were working on a car that had Minnesota plates attached. One of the hunters said it was his car and he had accidentally locked his keys and gun in the trunk after arriving. Fortunately, one of his family members had an extra gun for him and he was the one who had shot and tagged the dead deer. Upon checking, the man was found to have a fraudulently obtained resident license.

A complaint was received by Warden Mike Neal (Baileys Harbor) about a deer being shot from the road near Baileys Harbor. Upon responding to the area, a Door County Sheriff's Deputy stopped the vehicle, and found the deer was still alive and kicking inside of the bed of the truck. Enforcement action taken.

Warden Jeff King (Darlington) and Deputy Warden Chuck Earhart observed a slow moving vehicle on a secluded Benton Township Road. The driver's side window was down and the driver dressed in blaze orange was looking out the window. King made contact and found that several rounds of loose shotgun slugs and an uncased firearm. A rifle was found in the back seat and not properly cased. The man was cited for an uncased firearm in a vehicle.

Warden Rick DeWitte (Cassville) and Warden Supervisor Chuck Horn observed a vehicle parked along a Grant County road on last day of deer season. The driver was observed to be in possession of an uncased firearm in the front of the vehicle. DeWitte contacted the driver and found him to be in possession of a loaded, un-cased AK 47 rifle which he stated that he had just loaded for his hunting partner. A partially cased, loaded rifle belonging to his partner was found on the front passenger seat. An additional loaded firearm belonging to the driver was located in the rear cargo area of the vehicle. Both individuals were issued citations for possession, transportation of loaded firearms in a vehicle.

Warden Joe Frost (Dodgeville) assisted by Intern Ryan Caputo investigated numerous complaints of illegal tree stands and blinds on state land. Several unattended and unmarked tree stands and blinds were seized and one citation was issued.

Warden Joe Frost (Dodgeville) and Deputy Warden Alan Erickson cited several hunters for loaded guns in and on vehicles. In one case that was an accident waiting to happen, wardens observed a vehicle moving slowly through a public hunting area. Wardens pulled up to the vehicle when it stopped and observed the occupants moving frantically as they tried to move a loaded rifle from the front seat to the back seat. The sling got hung up on a second loaded gun in the back seat. The muzzle of one loaded gun was pointed at the passenger's abdomen during this maneuver.

Warden Marty Stone (Fennimore) was observing two hunters in a field, one with a back tag, one without. A short time later, the hunters became aware of Stone. One hunter pointed his rifle at Stone's squad in an attempt to use his scope to identify Stone. Stone attempted to contact the two but one hunter fled. A perimeter was set up and a search by multiple law enforcement officers took place for the fleeing suspect. A short time later the fleeing suspect was arrested. The two were arrested on multiple charges of obstructing a warden, endangering safety by use of a weapon, hunting deer without a license, and in addition there were several outstanding warrants.

On Thanksgiving morning, Warden Dave Youngquist (Spring Green) stopped a vehicle that was driving out of public land with a 12 foot tall silver maple tree sticking out of the back of his SUV. The driver first said that it was a tree from a property next to DNR land where he had permission to hunt. When asked if having permission to hunt gave him permission to take a tree from the property, he said, "well no." Youngquist called the landowner and the landowner said that he had not given anyone permission to take trees from his land. Once the subject showed Youngquist where the tree was taken from it was obvious that it came from DNR land and he said he knew it was on DNR land when he took it because he always runs his dogs in the area. Enforcement action was taken.

Warden Tyler Strelow (Madison) checked the hunter's license and found the hunter to be hunting with a firearm and displaying a 2009 Archery backtag. Strelow checked a second hunter on the property and found him to be gun deer hunting without a license and displaying an expired 2008 Archery backtag that wasn't even his. A third hunter was found who had a valid license and would register any deer killed by the group in his name. These hunters had been doing this for four years, and stated that they were glad they got caught because they had been pushing their luck for too long. Warden Strelow issued several citations and will be asking for revocation of licenses for all three hunters and confiscation of firearms from the two hunters hunting without license.

Wardens Nate Kroepelin (Madison) and Deputy Warden Greg Stacey were on patrol in northern Dane County when they observed two hunters standing behind some farm buildings with a deer lying on the ground. Wardens made contact with them and found the deer was a buck that one of the hunters had shot, but didn't have a buck tag for as it was in an earn a buck area. The hunter shot the deer several hours earlier and had it back at the house for nearly an hour. The hunter called his sister to come and give him a buck tag and they were waiting for her. The hunter was cited.

Warden Ryan Ellifson (Jefferson) contacted a father and son who were hunting private land leased for public hunting. Ellifson observed two uncased firearms on the front seat of their truck. The rifle used by the 14 year old son was unloaded lying on the seat. The shotgun that the father was using was also uncased, but unlike his son's, it was loaded with five slugs. A citation was issued to the father for the loaded firearm in the vehicle. The 14 year old was given a warning for his uncased firearm.

Warden Mike Dieckhoff (Beloit) was able to close a baiting complaint, a permanent tree stand on state property, a subject with an uncased firearm in a vehicle and a subject hunting deer without a backtag displayed.

Warden Boyd Richter (Janesville) and intern Kyle Plautz investigated a Hotline complaint of late shooting on the outskirts of the city of Janesville. A suspicious vehicle was stopped and several violations were uncovered. The driver of the vehicle was revoked and referred to Janesville Police who issued a citation. The individual was also in possession of a 2009-2010 Earn-a-Buck Buck Sticker without having harvested any deer in 2009. The individual had been "gifted" the sticker by a friend. Richter issued both subjects citations for group hunting violations.

Warden Paul Nadolski (Poynette) received a complaint of tree stands being placed on state owned land the night before opener, and they determined the names of the suspects. Opening morning, Nadolski, Warden Supervisor David Holmes and Deputy Warden Joel Green happened upon the suspects at a gas station. They were advised of the complaint involving the stands, and admitted that they had left them there. One of the suspects was wanted on a warrant from a nearby county. That subject was arrested and taken to jail.

Wardens David Horzewski (Reedsburg) and Gary Eddy (Madison) were checking deer hunters near the 400 State Bike Trail, when a hunter was observed walking away from his deer stand at the close of the deer season. Warden Horzewski observed a deer lying in the field near the hunter's stand. Warden Eddy investigated the deer in the field and then located a second deer, neither had been field dressed or tagged. Eddy remained in the field until a utility vehicle arrived after dark with two people loading up the deer from the field. Eddy and Horzewski contacted the hunter and found him to be in violation for not tagging the deer.

Warden Heather Gottschalk (Beaver Dam) and Warden Supervisor David Holmes (Poynette) received a Hotline about a suspect that shot a deer several minutes early the day before. Prior to making contact the wardens did a background on the suspect and found that he had harvested an archery buck deer in a CWD unit and the department had no record of having earned a buck authorization sticker for that deer. Upon investigation, it was determined the deer was shot in a non earn a buck deer management unit and it was transported to a registration station within the CWD area where he fraudulently obtained an earn a buck sticker.

Wardens in several areas of the state reported an increase in shining and shooting activity. This is consistent with experience - in years of lower deer kills, this type of activity tends to increase. Some people apprehended for these violations cite frustration of not seeing deer during legal hunting hours. Several of the complaints received took place in the vicinity of homes and create a public safety issue with the shooting of firearms in the dark at deer without any sense of what lies beyond. There was good public cooperation in calling these situations in.

BAITING AND FEEDING

Observations

- The number of baiting and feeding complaints called into the Hotline increased by 77% in 2009 from 2008.
- Wardens continue to encounter a high incidence of baiting and feeding violations in the northern two-thirds of the state.
- While there are significantly fewer baiting and feeding violations in the southern counties where baiting and feeding has been illegal now for several years owing to the detection of CWD, there was a slight increase in the number of baiting and feeding cases in these regions this year.
- Increased efforts to conceal illegal baiting activity have been observed in some areas.
- In nearly all cases made, the violators know that what they are doing is illegal. One hunter was cited for the third time for illegal baiting in the last 6 seasons.
- Wardens continue to report that with the smaller land parcels being bought by hunters and non-hunters, an increasing number of hunters are relying on bait to draw and hold deer on small parcels.
- Positive progress continues to be made regarding the size of the illegal bait piles. While wardens still encounter some very bait sites of the several hundred gallon size, most illegal bait piles are now smaller – generally in the 5-25 gallon range.
- Wardens in the north continue to report that significant over baiting takes place the weekend before the season by people from out of the area. They place a large amount of bait out the weekend before to hold the deer on their property for the week.
- Again this year, most cases are made on the opening day, with the vast majority of those made opening morning. This is when wardens have the highest probability of finding someone on an illegally baited stand. The odds of finding someone hunting an illegally baited stand go down quickly after opening morning. In many cases the wardens were not able to apprehend the suspects because they never showed up to hunt the illegal baits when the wardens were in the area.

- Working baiting and feeding complaints is a priority from a disease prevention and hunter equality of opportunity standpoint. However, it is also a mileage intensive endeavor during extremely difficult budgetary times. Consequently, wardens did less pre-season scouting to prioritize and save mileage for patrols and complaint response during the season.

General sentiments from conversations with hunters in the field

Very similar to the past few years, wardens heard the following general themes from hunters during conversations with hunters in the field:

- While many hunters are strong advocates of baiting, there are many hunters who feel baiting and feeding for deer should be eliminated.
- The general perception of those opposed to baiting and feeding is that these practices alter deer movement patterns during the season and reduces equal opportunity.
- Wardens continue to hear some hunters, both those on private property and those who hunt on public lands, that while they would not otherwise bait, they feel they must place bait to compete and have an equal opportunity at harvesting deer.

REPRESENTATIVE CONFLICTS:

Following are some descriptions of the conflicts representative of those encountered by wardens in the field:

Wardens reported the unusually warm weather on opening weekend resulted in multiple users on state lands, particularly in the Southeast region. Some deer hunters commented that other users (hikers, bird watches, pheasant hunters, dog trainers, and bike riders) on state lands were interrupting the hunt. Some hunters, as well as wardens, feel all users should wear blaze orange while on state land during the gun deer season.

Warden Mark Pearce (Sheboygan County) reported an incident the Sheboygan County Sheriff's Department was involved with regarding a complaint of trespass on private property, where hunters refused to leave. Hunters claimed property was enrolled in "Managed Forest Law Program, and is public property." Pearce advised the Sheriff's Department that there are several property tax break levels within the program, which have various levels of hunter access. A DNR Forester will follow-up to determine if a violation occurred.

Warden Mark Pearce (Sheboygan Co.) reported an armed confrontation between hunters. The Sheboygan CO Sheriff's Department arrested two subjects for misdemeanor Disorderly Conduct. Two different subjects had permission to be on the same lands of a third party. A loud verbal confrontation ensued between the subjects, including threats and one subject firing a shotgun into the ground approximately 30-40 yards from the other subject.

Warden Stu Pfeiffer (Mercer) investigated a complaint from three hunters on Iron County forest lands who arrived on opening morning to find that the trees their stands had been cut down.

Warden Jill Schartner (Drummond) responded to a scene where two hunters called the Sheriff's Department stating they were being harassed by five other hunters. They reported they were hiding in the woods, afraid to come out because they could see the five other hunters in two trucks, looking for them. Upon investigation, it was determined tempers flared on both sides and an argument that began over the use of tree stands left on public land. Citations were issued to the subjects involved for back-tag

violations, group hunting violations and one hunter was cited for hunting deer without a license as a non-resident.

Warden John Krull (Superior) received one complaint well after the fact of one group of hunters bullying and intimidating a second group from hunting “their” area of Douglas County Forestry land.

Warden Lance Burns (Gordon) received complaints of hunters putting stands near other hunters’ stands on public property. Most of these complaints revolve around baited areas and how they feel they have “staked their territory” because they have been baiting there.

Warden Kelly Crotty (Florence) reports that several complaints were received of hunter harassment issues. One subject talked with Crotty at a registration station and advised him that subjects were blocking roads with deadfalls on the Nicolet National Forest to prevent him from accessing the roads with his jeep.

Warden Kelly Crotty (Florence) was contacted by a hunting group that is having a dispute regarding a gate that leads to several different properties. One night shortly after hunting hours a barrage of shots went off near one of the hunting parties in a way that appeared to be a form of intimidation.

Spooner Team Wardens report ATVs illegally operating on public lands has upset some hunters. Hunters with the motivation to get way back into the woods are very upset to have walked all the way to their hunting spot only to have an ATV come through and disturb the area.

Wardens Barry Fetting (Marshfield), Stewart Smith (Wisconsin Rapids), Paul Leezer (Wausau), Warden Supervisor Randy Falstad (Wisconsin Rapids), and two Wood County Sheriff Department deputies responded to a reported hunting accident in northern Wood County. The initial complaint indicated that a subject was shot in the leg, and was possibly “shot out of a tree stand.” The owner of the property had been involved the week before deer season with a trespassing case in which he fired a “warning” shot at the trespasser. The owner had been telling other people that he had shot the trespasser in the leg and this information was passed on to the DNR Hotline as if it had just happened. Upon arrival, the wardens and deputies approached the landowner and quickly determined that no one was injured at the property. The landowner was carrying a concealed .410 handgun. Additionally, illegal bait was found at the location.

There were a number of instances where landowners would not allow hunters to recover deer from their property. As land continues to become fragmented with private ownership; this could become increasingly prevalent problem in the future.

Wardens Mike Cross (Prairie du Chien) and Mitch Groenier (Waukesha) responded to a 911 call in Crawford County regarding an altercation between a landowner and a hunter. Upon arrival, the wardens found the hunter sitting on the ground next to his vehicle bleeding from above the eye. The investigation revealed that the landowner had contacted the hunter earlier in a tree stand situated on the fence line between public land and private land. The landowner made it known that the hunter was very close to the property line and that tree stands on state land need to be removed daily. After a short conversation, the landowner left and walked back to the residence. The hunter became upset, started to yell, and fired a couple shots. Several minutes later, the hunter drove up the driveway to the landowner’s residence, exited the vehicle, and threw his keys out into the lawn. The hunter made threatening comments and gestures and when the hunter attempted to kick one of the landowner’s friends in the head, the hunter was subdued with a punch to the face. Enforcement action was taken.

Warden Barry Fetting (Marshfield) received a baiting and feeding Hotline tip in which the caller reported that he and his neighbor, and his neighbor's son engaged in a heated argument regarding an illegal bait and stand placement and a physical altercation erupted. The caller told Fetting that he was transported to the hospital following the incident where he received medical treatment for multiple injuries to his head and face. The entire incident took place in the presence of the caller's young son. The altercation was investigated by the Wood County Sheriff's Department. Charges are pending.

Warden Eric Grudzinski (Mauston) received a complaint of a stolen deer. A hunter killed a small buck and hung it up at a camper along the road. The hunter and his friend went to town for dinner and when they returned the deer was gone. The hunters also noticed that someone had also routed the exhaust from their generator towards the camper. The hunters were upset about the deer, but felt lucky that they hadn't gone to sleep in the camper. This case is under investigation.

Warden Joe Paul (Lakewood) reported a group who hunted an area for many years got upset when another group moved into "their" area on public lands where tree stands could legally be left up overnight. The hunters cut the chains off a tree stands and left them on the ground. They also destroyed a ground blind that was built by a first time hunter and left notes near the stands telling the hunters to leave the area. The harassed hunter was confronted by the other group of hunters who said they would be playing loud music so the hunters would not see any deer. The harassed hunter got a plate number and Paul took enforcement action for hunter harassment.

Warden Dave Oginski Jr. (Wausaukee) and the Marinette County Sheriff's Department investigated a complaint of hunter harassment near the City of Marinette. Two hunters were hunting within 75 yards of each other. The second hunter came out and made threats that he was going to shoot the other hunter at dark. Contact was made and both hunters were removed from the woods and a citation was issued to the second hunter for disorderly conduct.

Warden Tom Truman (Winneconne) reported he is seeing hunters getting more territorial on state lands with the use of bait and tree stands. In addition, Truman heard from many private property owners that individuals are coming off of state lands onto their properties and feels that the Department should be posting these lands better. Private landowners are getting very upset over this issue.

Warden Ben Nadolski (Waupun) investigated a complaint of an individual who was hunting from a natural ground blind on state land who found someone had dumped oil on the blind and the ground around it.

Warden Mark Schraufnagel (Shawano) investigated a complaint of two hunters arguing over a hunting area on the Navarino Wildlife Area. Each of the hunters contended that the other hunter had told them to leave the area. Schraufnagel explained to both the hunters that the land was public land and neither had the right to tell anyone to leave.

Warden Jim Horne (Shawano) assisted the Shawano County Sheriff's Department in attempting to locate a subject who reportedly shot in the direction of hunters, including his father. The subject then pushed a vehicle from the trail with his vehicle and deflated the tires. The Sheriff's Department made contact with the subject who was arrested. The subject was upset that a group of hunters was conducting a deer drive on the property he was currently hunting.

Warden Dave Oginski Jr. (Wausaukee) reported more and more hunters on public land are trying to claim a spot as theirs. This is a growing problem, especially since some counties are allowing stands to stay up on county property for multiple days.

Warden Nate Ackerman (Green Lake) a complaint from an individual who was disturbed by seeing gut piles near a walking trail on Green Lake Conservancy property. Complainant was also concerned about hunters hunting too close to houses. Ackerman found no hunters hunting near any of the houses. The property was bought with state money and managed by the Sanitary District and is open to public hunting. Quite a few people walk the wooded trails and it is a multi-use area.

Warden Mike Neal (Sister Bay) reported that two different hunters called him regarding a conflict between the waterfowl hunters and the deer hunters. The deer hunters were mad because of the numbers of waterfowl hunters using public land (Nature Conservancy) and their shooting was scaring the deer, and then the deer hunters aren't seeing any deer. One individual wanted the waterfowl season to be closed during the nine day gun deer season because he has hunted the Nature Conservancy land for the last 30 years and the duck hunters are getting too numerous and are now interfering with his deer hunting.

Hunters accessing the Tri-County ATV trail in Iowa, Lafayette and Green Counties were encountering ATV's this season. The county investigated a case of a hunter on the ATV trail with a truck, which is prohibited.

Warden Mike Nice (Richland Center) received a report of a hunter sitting in a tree-stand on the line fence when the hunter was approached by another hunter from the adjacent land. The second hunter was upset the stand was on the line fence. Words were exchanged and the second hunter reportedly went back to the truck where he took out a handgun and pointed it at the hunter in the tree-stand. The second hunter then pointed the handgun in the air and shot off several rounds. The incident was reported the Richland County Sheriff's Department.

Warden Nathan Kroeplin (Madison) fielded several calls from the public about trespassing issues and Kroeplin explained that they should call the Dane County Sheriff's Office. Several other complaints came in about individuals hunting too close to houses.

Warden Dave Wood (Madison) investigated a complaint of duck hunters in the Town of Middleton hunting too close to houses. These issues seem to be more frequent all the time as hunters try and find new places to hunt and cities encroach on the rural landscape.

Some comments were received from bikers and hikers using the Military Ridge and Glacial Drumlin State Trails in Dane and Jefferson Counties indicating that they felt unsafe with hunters close to the trail.

Warden Ryan Ellifson (Jefferson) reports that the issue of tree stands being left on state property continues. There were a couple of small arguments regarding tree stands left in the woods which did not result in any violence or heated exchanges, just phone calls to the warden or Hotline.

Pressure on public lands was once again very heavy with access to private property being very difficult. Jeff King (Darlington) felt that pressure on public lands is increasing and approaching saturation level in some areas.

Overcrowding is an issue on some popular public hunting areas. Warden Heather Gottschalk (Beaver Dam) met a man and his two young kids leaving a state property early one morning. When she stopped to speak to them, they stated that there were too many hunters on the property and they didn't feel safe. Gottschalk gave them directions to some other state property that was nearby that she knew to be less heavily used.

Synopsis of Individual Hunting Incidents by Region

SCR (South Central Region)

11-21-09 Grant County – Non-fatal incident. Shooter was standing outside a vehicle unloading a 30.06 bolt action rifle that had the muzzle inside the vehicle. The shooter unintentionally discharged the firearm, and bullet struck the vehicle door post. Victim was standing on the opposite side of vehicle and was injured by fragments from the door post and the bullet. Shooter and victim were part of the same hunting party.

11-21-09 Green County – Non-fatal incident, self inflicted. Shooter/victim was attempting to locate the blood trail from a wounded deer. He attempted to cross a small creek on a log and lost his footing on the slippery surface. While trying to maintain his hold on his firearm, he discharged it and a 12 gauge shotgun slug struck him in the upper thigh.

NER (Northeast Region)

11-24-09 Outagamie County – Non-fatal incident, self inflicted. Shooter/victim slipped while walking down a hill. His 20 gauge shotgun discharged striking him in the left foot.

11-28-09 Shawano County – Non-fatal incident. Shooter and victim were part of the same hunting party and standers on a deer drive. Unknown to the shooter, the victim had changed location. Shooter heard noise, saw movement and fired shot striking victim in the upper right arm. Shooter was using a 44 magnum lever action rifle.

NOR (Northern Region)

11-21-09 Price County – Non-fatal incident, self inflicted. Shooter/victim shot self in the hand while unloading a .45 caliber semi-automatic handgun.

11-22-09 Barron County – Non-fatal incident. Victim was struck in the thigh by a .270 caliber rifle bullet. Victim was walking in a grass waterway between two corn fields. Two shooters shot several times in the direction of the victim at deer that were running from the cornfield.

WCR (West Central Region)

11-22-09 St Croix County – Non-fatal incident, self inflicted. Shooter/victim was in an elevated stand with a 30-30 lever action rifle leaning against the stand. He was repositioning himself when the rifle discharge hitting the shooter/victim in the right hand.

SEARCH AND RESCUE SITUATIONS

- Warden Lance Burns (Gordon) assisted the Douglas County Sheriff's Department and the Dairyland Fire Department in attempting to locate a hunter who spent the night in the woods on a cold, rainy night. The hunter was able to walk out on his own while the search was being organized and the situation ended on a very good note.
- Warden Brad Dahlquist (Crandon) aided the Forest County Sheriff's Department with two lost hunters near the town of Blackwell. Earlier in the day, a member of the same hunting party was rescued out of the woods after experiencing seizures. Later that evening, two other members of the same hunting party went to retrieve their friend's tree stand and became lost. The two hunters were later found after searching for approximately 2 hours. Dahlquist also noted three other lost hunter incidents throughout the gun deer season.

- Warden Chris Spaight (Grantsburg) assisted the Burnett County Sheriff's Department when he located a vehicle vs. power pole accident. The vehicle was occupied and live power lines were down across the vehicle and surrounding area. Spaight monitored the operator trapped in the vehicle, handled traffic control and kept the general public back from the live wires. Emergency personnel eventually extracted the frightened operator from the vehicle without further incident.
- Warden Dave Swanson (Minong) responded to a 911 call of a hunter stuck 16 feet up in a tree after a tree stand mishap. The hunter was using a two piece climbing stand and the bottom half had fallen to the base of the tree leaving only the seat which quickly made the hunter's legs and feet go numb. Swanson directed Minong Fire personnel by radio to the location and had them bring a ladder. The hunter was safely extracted from his precarious perch in the tree and, despite being quite embarrassed, was grateful.
- Warden Paul Nell (Horicon) responded to call from the Dodge County Sheriffs Department of a hunter who had fallen and could not move his legs. Nell took EMS personnel to the scene with his squad truck and transported the victim out to the ambulance since other units were unable to get to the hunter due to the distance from the road and a muddy picked cornfield. It turned out that the hunter slipped and fallen onto rocks. Nell later arrested the hunter for going armed while intoxicated.
- Wardens Mike Cross (Prairie du Chien) and Mitch Groenier (Waukesha) responded to a 911 call in Crawford County on the evening of the Saturday opener. The 911 caller reported a hunter was hanging from either a harness or a rope from a tree stand on private property. Fire and EMTs were paged out. Upon arrival, the wardens found that the hunter had been safely removed from the tree. Apparently, the hunter had begun to climb down the tree using a 2-piece climbing stand when the platform slipped off his feet. The hunter hung onto the upper portion of the tree stand, similar to a gymnast on the parallel bars. After receiving some oxygen and getting the feeling back in his upper extremities, the hunter was escorted out of the woods.
- Wardens Mark Schraufnagel (Shawano East), Todd Schaller (Central Office), Jim Horne (Shawano East), and Bill Engfer (Central Office) responded to a call of a hunter shouting for help. The man had become disorientated and lost in the fog on opening day. A hunter located the man and assisted him back to his hunting party.
- Warden Dave Algrem (Wautoma) assisted the Waushara County Sheriff's Department in locating a lost hunter. The hunter did not have his compass with him and he got turned around in a spruce swamp – one of the thickest places Algrem in the county. The warden used his computer to get an aerial view of the location. The hunter had his cell phone and was in communication with a police dispatcher. Algrem was able to hear the hunter call out and drove his ATV into the swamp on a trail that he was vaguely familiar with. The hunter walked to the sound of Algrem's voice.
- On Thanksgiving Day, Warden Steve Sanidas (Milwaukee) assisted the Muskego Police and Fire Department with the rescue of 2 stranded waterfowl hunters from an island on Little Muskego Lake. The hunters were stranded, when their boat broke free from the tree branch it was secured to and drifted across the Lake. The hunters had left their cell phones in their vehicle at the boat landing and were unable to call for help. Muskego Police received a call about the unoccupied boat on the lake and Sanidas observed one of the hunters standing on the island signaling for assistance. The hunters were picked up by Muskego Fire Department personnel and shuttled to the location of their boat. The hunters were grateful for the assistance and returned to the boat landing unharmed.

- Warden Mark Pearce (Sheboygan Co.) was assisted by the Sheboygan County Sheriffs Department on a lost hunter call in the Sheboygan Marsh on closing Sunday night. The lost individual, a 64 year old male, was a member of 3 person party. All members had cell phones but none had a compass. This was the first time hunting in the area for 2 of the 3 group members including the lost hunter. The Sheriffs Department was unable to do a GPS track on the cell phone due to the fact the lost hunter had dropped his cell phone in water. The lost hunter was able to walk out to a squad car by following the lights and siren approximately 1 ¼ mile from where he went into the marsh.

EXAMPLES OF CASES INVOLVING FELONS HUNTING

- Warden Michael Green (Wisconsin Dells) and Warden Eric Grudzinski (Mauston) made contact with a subject who was a felon, was hunting without a license, and shot multiple deer while his hunting privileges were revoked. The individual shot (6) deer over this time period. Charges will be filed in Sauk County Court.
- Warden Paul Nell (Horicon) and Deputy Warden Sean Neverman (Poynette) saw a vehicle that was parked alongside the road near private property. Nell determined the registered owner of the vehicle was a convicted felon and had purchased a deer hunting license. The wardens contacted the hunter later in the morning. Nell arrested the hunter for being a felon in possession of a firearm and found him in possession of marijuana and drug paraphernalia. The hunter was also cited for group deer hunting violations for two deer killed in the 2007 gun deer season.
- Warden John Buss (Sauk City) received a complaint of a felon hunting without a license, and hunting over illegal bait. Warden Buss and Deputy Warden Travis Hilliard were assisted by the Sauk County Sheriffs Department, but the felon fled on approach and hid his firearm before the wardens could make contact. The firearm was recovered the next day. After all the violations were sorted out, 18 citations were issued for baiting, feeding, loan and borrow tags, group deer hunting violations, hunting without licenses and fail to display back tags. The (felon in possession of a firearm) charge is being referred to the District Attorney.
- Wardens Boyd Richter (Janesville) and Mike Dieckhoff (Beloit) investigated a baiting complaint on the Friday before the gun deer season near the Evansville Public Hunting Grounds. While searching for evidence, several gunshots were heard on the property. Wardens investigated and found two subjects target practicing with a rifle and shooting in the direction of a factory on the edge of Evansville. Contact was made and one of the subjects was found to be a convicted felon. Further investigation revealed several other violations including: possession of a firearm by a felon, possession of a velvet antler without a permit, 2008 group deer hunting violations and possession of drug paraphernalia. Citations were issued and criminal charges are pending for felon in possession of a firearm and possession of drug paraphernalia.
- Wardens Dave Wood (Madison) and Recreational Safety Warden Catherina Nooyen (Madison) arrested a convicted felon who had been hunting opening weekend. The suspect was using his brother's backtag and carcass tags and had shot 3 deer. He also had marijuana and a marijuana pipe in his possession. The wardens seized 3 deer and 2 rifles. The suspect was charged with felon in possession of a firearm, possession of THC (marijuana) second offense, and 3 criminal counts of hunt deer without a license. He was booked into jail.

- On opening morning, Warden David Walz (Watertown) and Warden Supervisor Jeremy Plautz observed a hunter using a rifle to look through the scope at the wardens. The wardens made contact with the hunter who had a loaded 7 mm rifle. The man was subsequently arrested for being a convicted felon and for intentionally pointing a loaded firearm at someone, a criminal charge of endangering safety by use of a dangerous weapon.
- Warden Dave Youngquist (Spring Green) and Deputy Warden Al Erickson found a person that they knew to be a felon who went out in the field with no back-tag on and no firearm, but with a back pack. Another hunter was encountered in a stand who was not wearing back tag, but had his back tag and license in his pocket. Upon contacting the felon and his companion, it was discovered that a ten point buck on the property had been shot by the companion of the felon and tagged by the felon illegally under the group deer hunting law. His buck sticker had been earned for him when another person harvested a doe in the early antlerless season with the felon tagging this doe. Citations were issued to the group and the ten point buck was confiscated for the food pantry.
- Warden Jeff King (Darlington) working in Yellowstone Lake State Park observed a hunter walk out onto a public roadway that he knew may have a felony conviction, therefore should not possess a firearm. King ran a criminal history check and found information that suggested that the man was in fact a convicted felon. The case will be referred to the Lafayette County District Attorney for review.
- Warden Eric Grudzinski (Mauston) contacted multiple hunters and found that one of them was using a yellow colored back tag from 2003. The hunter was a convicted felon, did not have a license, and was in possession of a gun that had the serial number defaced. Several citations and charges are pending.
- Wardens Eric Grudzinski (Mauston) and Gary Eddy (Madison) assisted Warden Mike Green (Wisconsin Dells) and Deputy Warden Sean Neverman with a complaint of a convicted felon who was borrowing tags from his mother. The suspect was also on probation and was wearing an electronic monitoring device. The suspect had been revoked in 2008 for other deer hunting related charges. Grudzinski and Green conducted surveillance on the property and witnessed the suspect holding a rifle and hunting for several hours. The wardens eventually contacted the hunter and enforcement action was taken.
- Warden Matt Modjeski (Sparta) investigated a complaint of Managed Forest Law land (MFL) being leased for deer hunting. Modjeski contacted three hunters from North Carolina who admitted they and a friend from Florida leased the land for 2009 for hunting. The landowner's son, who was a convicted felon, was arrested for possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of marijuana and being a felon in possession of a firearm. Enforcement action will also be taken for the MFL violation.
- Wardens Tom Truman (Winneconne), Jason Higgins (Oshkosh), and Dave Algrem (Wautoma) investigated a complaint of 3 individuals that were shooting in the direction of 2 hunters while shooting at a deer. One of the individuals is a felon and was observed shooting a deer with a rifle and hunting without a back tag. Criminal charges are being referred to the District Attorney's Office.
- Wardens Mike Stahl (Oconto Falls) and Stephan Fabian (Green Bay Environmental Enforcement) assisted Oconto Falls Police Department Officer Jamie Kuhn with a stop of a convicted felon who had a loaded, uncased shotgun in the vehicle. The subject was found to have been deer hunting in Shawano County using his daughter's license. Subject was cited for driving while intoxicated by

Officer Kuhn and arrested for being felon in possession of a firearm, going armed while intoxicated and hunting deer without a license.

- Wardens Mike Kitt (Peshtigo) and Warden Supervisor Goerlinger (Peshtigo) responded to a complaint of a convicted felon hunting without a license on opening morning. The subject was found hunting behind his house and arrested for hunting deer without a license and transported to jail for being a felon in possession of a firearm.
- Warden Bryan Lockman (New London) received complaint from the New London Police Department that two people they arrested had some possible DNR violations from when they were hunting earlier in the day. Warden Lockman interviewed three individuals and determined that a felon on parole, wearing his girlfriend's backtag, shot and killed an antlerless deer and had his 15 year old son tag the animal. One deer and firearm were seized. The hunter was issued citations and criminal charges will be referred for hunting without a license and felon in possession of a firearm.
- Wardens Darren Kuhn (Kewaunee) and David Allen (Kewaunee) apprehended one felon in possession of a firearm who was hunting deer without a license. This individual was recently released from probation supervision had a relative purchase him a new gun once he was off of probation. The hunter kept the firearm in the woods throughout the nine day season in an effort to avoid being discovered as a felon with a firearm. He was cited for hunting with more than the legal amount of bait, failing to wear required blaze orange clothing and was charged criminally for hunting deer without a license and being a felon in possession of a firearm.
- Warden Supervisor Joe Jerich (Plymouth) encountered a subject that he recognized as a convicted felon who was hunting deer with a firearm. Jerich turned this subject over to the Washington County Sheriff's Department to address the crime of felon in possession of a firearm.
- Warden Eric Grudzinski (Mauston) was contacted by State Trooper Dave McCarthy regarding a potential deer tagging violation that McCarthy discovered during a traffic stop. McCarthy determined the driver of the car was in possession of an untagged deer. The driver was also a convicted felon and had a rifle with him in the car. McCarthy arrested the suspect on felony drug violations and for being a felon in possession of a firearm. Grudzinski obtained consent to search the car and seized a quartered up deer and two deer hearts. Grudzinski determined that the suspect killed the deer in Taylor County during the gun deer season, but never tagged it.
- Wardens Brad Peters (Merrill) and Ron Nerva (Tomahawk), along with deputies from the Lincoln County Sheriff's Department checked a cabin after several reports of illegal hunting by subjects prohibited from possessing firearms. Wardens located one individual who had been hunting deer without a license, had a loaded and un-cased gun in a vehicle, illegal bait under a yard light, and untagged venison in a freezer. Investigation into several of the violations is continuing.

INTOXICATED SUBJECTS REMOVED FROM THE HUNTING ENVIRONMENT

Note: a .08 blood alcohol concentration is presumed impaired

- On the afternoon of opening day, Warden Andy Lundin (Brown County) received a request for assistance from an Oneida Tribal Warden. When Lundin arrived, the 43 year old hunter was found to have been sitting on the ground in a bag chair near a construction site. On the ground next to the chair was an empty Olde English 800 Malt Liquor 40 oz bottle, still wrapped in the brown paper bag. There were also two empty PBR 12 oz bottles which the hunter denied ownership of. The hunter had

a loaded 20 gauge shotgun and had already missed four shots at a deer on tribal property. Lundin conducted sobriety tests and the hunter failed. The preliminary breath test (PBT) result was .14. The hunter had multiple prior motor vehicle driving while intoxicated arrests.

- Wardens Jason Happe (Outagamie County) and Truman (Winnebago) contacted two hunters who were parked near the warden's squad. After checking hunting licenses, it was found that both hunters had been drinking. One hunter failed the field sobriety test and blew a .179 on the PBT.
- Wardens Paul Nell (Horicon) and Regional Warden Barbara Wolf were patrolling the Horicon Marsh State Wildlife area when their attention was drawn to a hunter sitting in a tree wearing a blue shirt. The hunter said she'd removed her blaze orange coat because she was warm. Nell noted an odor of intoxicants and after field sobriety tests, it was determined the hunter was under the influence of intoxicants. Nell believed the hunter was impaired due to a combination of alcohol and prescription medication.
- Warden Phil Dorn (Barron County) checked a hunter that had just returned from afield and placed a loaded rifle against his vehicle. Dorn detected a strong odor of intoxicants from the hunter during the contact. Dorn initiated field sobriety testing and subject had a PBT reading of .26 BAC.
- Warden Scharbarth (Portage County) and Deputy Warden Ben Mott received a Hotline complaint of intoxicated hunters. Four hunters were drinking beer in the parking lot at a public hunting area and throwing bottles into the woods. A short time later all four took firearms out of the vehicles and proceeded to enter the woods on the state property. The wardens arrived in time to contact the group just prior to them getting into their vehicles. Based on the investigation two subjects were arrested, PBT readings on the subjects were .195 and .230.
- On the opening day of deer season Warden Ken Thomson (Eau Claire Co) and Recreational Safety Warden Bill Yearman observed a hunter sitting on the side of a logging road with his deer rifle in a heavily hunted public hunting area. Thomson noticed that he had an open can of beer. The wardens stopped and talked to the man and determined that the hunter was intoxicated.