

DMAP ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

4/21/2014 – Mead Wildlife Area, Milladore

Introductions:

Bob Nack, committee chair and DMAP coordinator for the DNR, provided a welcome for the morning and facilitated introductions. Membership from agencies and organizations in attendance included: DNR Wildlife Biologists, Safari Club International, Wisconsin Bow Hunters Association, DNR Area Supervisor, Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission, Wisconsin County Forest Association, Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association, Wisconsin Bear Hunters Association, Pheasants Forever, Wisconsin Conservation Congress, DNR Bureau of Science Services, DNR Forester, Wisconsin Consulting Foresters, Whitetails Unlimited and Ruffed Grouse Society. Membership organizations not in attendance included: US Forest Service, National Wild Turkey Federation, Quality Deer Management Association and US Fish and Wildlife Service. Sawyer Briel who is a newly appointed Communications Specialist with the DNR was also in attendance at this meeting. These are public meetings so anyone who wants to attend and engage in the discussion is welcome. There were no public appearances at this meeting.

Old business:

- ***Landowner agreement:*** A landowner agreement is in the process of being developed which must be signed once landowners are notified that they have been selected for DMAP enrollment in 2014. This would provide legal protection for any department staff gaining access to DMAP properties as well as provide DMAP landowners with information as to what will be occurring during their site visit and other activities.
 - Do we want to provide enrollees with a paper copy of this agreement or have an online version? There could be benefits to having both.
 - A great percentage of people prefer to communicate by email.
 - After some discussion the committee came to the consensus that an online version would be most efficient for both staff and those enrolling in the program.

- ***DMAP graphic:*** Based on previous comments from the advisory committee and DNR Secretary's office, a DMAP graphic was developed for use on DMAP related communications and outreach materials among other things.
 - There was a request made to possibly include a silhouette of a non-game species of wildlife in the graphic because DMAP would benefit not only game species.
 - Based on this request there was some concern that the focus should not stray from deer so there was a consensus that the included components are appropriate as is.
 - Therefore, the committee made the decision to move forward with gaining department approval on the use of a graphic with the DNR logo included in the bottom center.

DMAP calendar: A tentative calendar was created to outline the actions that would be taken to facilitate the next two years of program activities. For greater detail on the components of this calendar please see attachment.

- **Enrollment selections:** What type of criteria should be used to select level two and three enrollees in 2014? Discussion items included amount of acreage within in an application, cooperatives, enrollment in other programs such as Managed Forest Law and level of habitat diversity on a given property. Final decisions regarding this have yet to be made.
- **Site visits conducted by forester and biologist:** What criteria should be used to allocate antlerless tags? We should focus on what the habitat tells us during the site visit to initially determine the amount of antlerless tags. This will be discussed at a future meeting.
- **Regional workshops:**
 - How many workshops should be held around the state, and how often? Possibly one after deer season is over to collect and interpret biological data and one in the spring?
 - Who will be invited to these workshops? If all level one, two and three enrollees in each county will be invited they may need to be smaller and more frequent to accommodate that many people.
 - Could there be supplemental webinars or YouTube videos provided to level one enrollees?

DMAP overview: Bob outlined an overview document that was created to give DMAP applicants a way to understand what they will be receiving with their DMAP enrollment. The committee was asked to review this document. For greater detail on the final DMAP overview please visit our [DMAP](#) main web page.

- **Group cooperative:** The current definition of group cooperative states that each property enrolled must be within one-half mile of another property in the cooperative. This was clarified to say that this does not only include forested areas within a property and would encompass the total acreage within an ownership.
- **Primary contact:** Each group cooperative will specify a primary contact who will be required to carry out certain duties on behalf of the cooperative which would include the distribution of DMAP antlerless tags. However, in the case of violations for example antlerless tags being sold for more than the face value of the tag, who would be responsible for legal repercussions? Would it be the primary landowner that distributed the tags to all landowners in the cooperative? Or would it be the landowner that may not necessarily be the primary contact who sold some of their antlerless tags for higher than the face value of the tag?
- **Site visits:** The committee agreed that during the initial site visit for level two and three enrollees, both a DNR biologist and forester should be present. However, they recommended that it could be either one of those during any subsequent visits that may be necessary.
- **Management plans:**

- Will group cooperatives get a management plan per property in the cooperative, or will they get one management plan for the entire cooperative? The committee recommended that they will get one management plan per cooperative.
- ***Antlerless tags:***
 - There should be an equation to determine how many antlerless tags should get issued to each enrolled property (whether it is a cooperative or individual landowner). This would decrease inconsistency across the state.

DMAP application and roll out plan: Bob took some time to discuss the plans to roll out the new DMAP application and online database that was discussed at the previous meeting. Sawyer Briel who is a new Communications Specialist within the DNR discussed his part in this effort.

- Sawyer intends to help finalize a press release and social media push that will be implemented just prior to the application opening on April 29th.
 - Sawyer posed the question to the committee as to whether or not we should do a “soft” introduction this year to help moderate enrollment and staff workload. The committee came to the consensus that we should advertise fully to get a complete gauge on interest in the first year.
- The online application is slated to open on April 29th and close on May 30th for level two and three applications. All level one applications will be accepted for enrollment on a continuous basis.
- A hard copy of the application is also in the process of being finalized and will be available upon request. All potential applicants will be encouraged to apply through our online database but for those that do not have access to the internet this will be an option.

Cooperator data collection: As a part of the program overview discussed earlier and something that will be discussed with 2014 DMAP enrollees, is the part they will play in collecting biological data on the deer they harvest as well as observational data while out hunting etc. The following discussion focused on suggested data to be collected and whether or not it should be mandatory. A handout was also provided which outlined biological data that was collected by DMAP programs in other states.

- What will the department be able to use and what will be collected purely for the benefit of the landowner?
- There should be a number of components that will be mandatory for enrollees to collect and the rest would only be collected by those that are interested.
- We need to include a metric to determine the relationship between the deer population and their effect on the surrounding habitat. Could we conduct pellet counts on various properties? Are there other habitat measurements that could be taken?
- ***Jawbone removal for aging:*** This should be mandatory for every deer harvested on a DMAP property. How would they get aged? Would they mail the jawbone to the

biologist? Or would they keep them to bring to a regional workshop? Could the local biologist have an “aging day”?

- ***Antler measurements:*** In terms of antler dimensions, what the department collects right now is simply whether or not bucks have forked or spiked antlers. Other DMAP programs ask for a number of different antler measurements. DMAP enrollees in our state would likely be interested in this in order to map antler development in the bucks that use their property. Items such as number of points, base measurements and inside spread should be considered.
- ***Lactation status:*** Would does still be lactating during deer seasons in November? A number of committee members said that they have harvested deer during those times that were still lactating. This type of information would be important to indirectly assess fawn recruitment in the area.
- ***Weight:*** How valuable is this information? How could we standardize this across the state? DMAP enrollees would need to decide on whether to collect live (pre-dressed) or dressed weight from their deer and use scales that were reliable.
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- ***Tissue samples for disease testing:*** This should be included in DMAP data collection but are there any concerns with asking DMAP enrollees to potentially handle diseased tissue?
- ***Deer observation journal:*** Could we ask DMAP enrollees to collect their observational data while hunting in a journal and record it in our online database? Include this in summer deer observations to determine fawn: doe ratios.
- ***Fat indices?*** Should we collect a metric that would give an indication of fat stores such as kidney fat or sternum fat? This may not be beneficial to collect during the hunting season because most deer are in their peak physical condition during that time.

DMAP cooperator survey: Bob Holsman who is a Social Scientist with the DNR and is a member of this committee, took a few minutes to provide an introduction to a survey he is working on that will be given to DMAP enrollees at the beginning and end of their three-year enrollment period.

- Something to consider with this survey is what we want the end result to be. Have we completely determined what we want enrollees to get out of this program? That may be a future point of discussion.

Updates:

- ***YFI video:*** Jeremy Holtz who is a Wildlife Biologist with the DNR and is a member of this committee, took a few minutes to discuss a video that is in production for the Young Forest Initiative. This program will likely partner with DMAP in many ways so DMAP may be included within the content of the video.
- ***DMAP field support:*** Bob provided a brief update on the process of obtaining program support through additional field staff.

Next meeting date: If there is a time sensitive issue that needs to be addressed, there may need to be an email discussion prior to this time.

- An initial meeting date was set to May 20th at the Mead Wildlife Area or through conference call based on agenda. One discussion point will be the human dimensions survey.