

WOLF ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

5/19/2014 Wausau Howard Johnson Hotel

Introductions - Dave MacFarland, Committee Chair, thanked the guests in attendance for attending the meeting. An outline of Committee rules and discussion procedures were provided. Today, the Committee will develop harvest quota recommendations. Quotas can be controversial and so it is important to maintain respectful discussion. The goal is to develop quota recommendations with easily understandable outcomes, and to document the specific reasons behind each recommendation for consideration by the Department administration and Natural Resource Board. All members of the Committee should participate in discussions. The Committee will be provided data to make science-based recommendations. A summary of the Committee guidance on when and how to hold votes from the April meeting was provided. The Committee acts in an advisory capacity and will develop recommendations that are reviewed by the DNR Wildlife Policy Team and the DNR Secretary, with final approval by the Natural Resource Board. Opportunities exist for the public to provide comment at today's meeting, prior to the NRB meeting, and at the NRB meeting on June 25 in Milwaukee, WI. Committee member introductions were made: Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission, Timber Wolf Alliance, Wis. Conservation Congress, Wis. Cattleman's Association, Wis. Trappers Association, Wis. Wildlife Federation, Wis. Bear Hunters Association, Safari Club Int'l, Wis. Bowhunters Association, Wis. County Forest Association, USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services, DNR West-central District, DNR Northern District, DNR Southern District, DNR Northeast District, DNR Law Enforcement, DNR Customer Services, DNR Science Services, DNR Wildlife Damage Specialist, DNR Forest Wildlife Specialist, and DNR Large Carnivore Specialist. Guests in attendance included: The Humane Society, Timberwolf Information Network, Wis. Wildlife Federation, Northland College, DNR Science Services, DNR Big Game Section Chief, DNR Assistant Furbearer Ecologist, Timberwolf Alliance, Wisconsin citizens, and Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Post-delisting Monitoring Plan - Discussion directed by Dave MacFarland, Committee Chair, with comments provided by Committee members.

- A post-delisting excerpt from the 1999 wolf management plan was provided which highlighted factors that might warrant USFWS relisting of wolves including various scenarios of population decline, emergence of new diseases, or significant changes in wolf prey or regional habitat management practices. Cannot predict USFWS response to wolf harvest; currently within the 5-year post-delisting monitoring period.
- The USFWS post-delisting criteria does not mention management declines towards established population goals. The current wolf management plan contains ambiguous language that references a population number of 350 as both a population goal and as a population threshold. Unsure how the USFWS may interpret this language and differences between intentional management-related declines and declines due to other causes.
- The USFWS has not evaluated the 2013 harvest or population data yet.
- The 1999 wolf management plan does not prohibit a harvest during the 5-year post-delisting monitoring period in Wisconsin; this was specified in the Minnesota management plan.

2013-14 Wolf Population Surveys - Discussion directed by Dave MacFarland with comments provided by Committee members.

Wolf Tracking Effort Report

- The Committee thanked Jane Wiedenhoef and Jean Bruner for compiling tracking data.
- Last year, the Committee discussed methodology and study design; will not cover this year.
- A map and summary of 2013-14 survey blocks was provided consisting of high, medium (blocks with good telemetry data or other data), and low (little evidence of wolf activity) priority blocks.
- A map of tracking effort was provided; some blocks inactive and not tracked, some tracked by DNR staff only, some tracked by volunteers only, and some tracked by both DNR and volunteers. The public may consider some inactive blocks occupied; if the public provides evidence of wolves in these areas, effort can be allocated to those blocks.
- Not all public reports are verified due to limited resources although data are considered; when verified observations (e.g., trail camera photos) are provided, further investigation is more feasible and local staff will follow-up.
- Volunteers considered of very good quality. Long-term declining trend in total number of volunteers enrolled although agency resources have been allocated to compensate. In 2013-14, 3 contract employees (seasonal USDA-Wildlife Services employees) were added. Volunteer experience levels monitored; DNR staff will track blocks surveyed by new/low experienced trackers. Volunteer recruitment is essential to develop and retain experience pool.
- Broadly, the effort was adequate for gathering data in 2013-14. This year, deep and soft snow caused animals to move less; wolf sign decreased and was more concentrated. Experienced trackers likely located wolves better than new trackers.
- High priority blocks - 112 surveyed by experienced trackers, 3 surveyed by inexperienced trackers, 4 blocks not surveyed (1 block surveyed by aerial count and 2 blocks surveyed from adjacent blocks). 2 packs identified from Michigan data, 1 pack absent from telemetry data (animals from adjacent packs have moved into territory), and 1 pack absent based on adjacent survey block data.
- Medium priority blocks - 14 surveyed by experienced trackers, 1 not tracked. 3 packs identified by aerial count.
- Inactive blocks - 24 total inactive blocks, 5 surveyed by experienced trackers, 2 surveyed by inexperienced trackers. 2 wolves detected in one block.
- Low priority blocks - 1 block in northern Marathon County listed as low priority but local perspective is that wolves occupy this area; considerable contiguous industrial timber land exists.
- 2013-14 - average of 29.2 miles per survey (record effort). Survey blocks added over time as population expanded; an adjusted total miles surveyed by year can be developed.
- Increasing long-term trend in tracking effort; 41% increase in DNR tracking effort and 4% decrease in volunteer effort. DNR effort supplemented decline in volunteer effort although increased recruitment and retention of volunteers needed.
- Every block must be tracked adequately to collect reliable data. Majority of surveys conducted by vehicle; some conducted by snowmobile, snowshoe, or ski. Wolves use roads as means of travel. Increasingly more industrial forest roads gated over time. Detectability varies by day; some days require more effort than others to locate wolves. Tracking information is only one data source; other sources include remote sensor cameras, public observations, radio telemetry, and aerial observations.

- Must manage zones 1-5 but cannot ignore zone 6 as wolves do exist in this zone and will not be counted if track surveys are not conducted there.
- In one unit, 18 wolves total detected and 1 surveyor detected 6 wolves in 2 packs (1/3 of total wolves). This is possible because the 1 surveyor surveyed the highest density area of the block and because wolves move.
- Comparisons will be drawn between survey methods used in other states; each method has strengths and weaknesses.
 - Each method yields usable results relative to each other, and data are consistent regardless of method over time. Wisconsin will generate more data with time. If there were really 3 times more wolves in the state as counted, the minimum winter count would not have resulted in the number calculated; the question is more a matter of what percent more is the population (i.e., 10, 20, 30% more).
 - Tracking effort is adequate where applied adequately, but there are parts of the state where effort is not applied adequately or at all. Tracking provides an index for what is occurring on the landscape. Identify ways to increase public input and to develop local trackers.
 - Survey effort has increased during previous years and if data has remained constant over previous years, acknowledgement that the population has decreased according to these data is warranted. Look at depredation levels, or other metrics, next year to determine if other data exists to indicate the population has decreased.
 - There is too much focus on the population number of 350 as complete counts are difficult; the population goal listed in the management plan is not an estimated population of 350, it is a minimum count of 350. Management actions are mandated to be based on a minimum count according to the plan; current federal regulations and delisting criteria mandates how the minimum wolf count can be conducted. The goal is to develop a minimum count; the tracking method has been conducted in Wisconsin for the past 35 years and it generates the data necessary to manage the population.

2013-14 Wolf Packs Tracked

- A table of 2013-14 wolf packs tracked was provided.
- 97% of 2012-13 pack areas surveyed in 2013-14; 6 packs not tracked (2 no longer existed), 2 surveyed by other agencies, 1 surveyed by observational data, and 1 pack existed in area inaccessible by trackers.
- 8% of 2011-12 packs not detected in 2012-13; 13% of 2012-13 packs not detected in 2013-14.
- 3.6 mean surveys per pack in 2012-13; 4.3 in 2013-14. Survey effort adequate to locate packs not previously detected.
- 17 new packs detected; indicates effort was adequate, although difficult to assess.
- In 2013-14, average pack size declined by about 1.5 wolves/pack; now 2.4 wolves/pack. Pack size is calculated annually. Pack sizes smaller in Wisconsin due to a smaller prey size (compared to large pack sizes in western North America where prey includes elk, bison, and/or caribou). Wisconsin average pack sizes are consistent with those in adjacent states and other areas where the primary prey is white-tailed deer.
- Updated minimum winter wolf count in 2013-14 is 660; reported as 558 at previous meeting.

2013-14 Preliminary Wolf Season Age Report

- Data are preliminary; just received from laboratory last week.
- 55% of harvest were young-of-the-year, 21% yearlings, and the remainder adults.
- 103 female reproductive tracts analyzed; scarring mostly occurred in adult animals.
- Tooth aging relies on seasonally differential growth rates (works well in bear; extended winter denning period), so there is some question regarding the accuracy of the data for wolves. Wolves tend to age young as they do not tend to develop distinct layers of cementum annuali.
- Analysis of reproductive tract scarring is targeted at identifying fresh scars; easy to distinguish between fresh scars and old scars (scoring system used to determine scar freshness). One animal age 7 showed no scars; possibly never reproduced or it previously reproduced but not recently (scars can degrade if a wolf is lowered in social status as it ages).
- Reproductive tracks not assessed in 20 wolves for various reasons; some were considerably decomposed. A shorter registration period following harvest would be useful.
- Wolf harvest season report released Tuesday, May 13; the evaluation of wolf carcasses harvested by the aid of hounds and additional information related to law enforcement actions included.

2014 Wolf Harvest Quota Recommendations - Discussion directed by Dave MacFarland with comments provided by Committee members.

- Must document reasoning behind recommendations for further consideration by DNR Wildlife Policy Team, DNR Secretary, and Natural Resource Board.
- Handout from Marathon County provided to the Committee. Map of agricultural density provided to the Committee to supplement Mladenoff habitat suitability map.

Recommended 2014 Harvest Objectives

- Reduce population towards management plan goal.
- Manage wolves for areas where they are encouraged to persist.
- Manage for a percent reduction to minimize warranting for a USFWS program review.
- Reduce population conservatively in case diseases or other factors also reduce population.
- Reduce population at similar rates to last year; a slow reduction is preferred. The 2013 goal was a harvest to result in a 10-15% population reduction; the reduction was 19%.
- Maximize recreational opportunities.
- Maintain a population adequate to generate funding for depredation compensation program. Consideration for funding may develop a dependence on generating these funds. Currently, sportsmen/women are funding the program, but 3,600 fewer people applied for wolf licenses in 2013 compared to 2012.
- Maintain an ecologically functioning population.
- Balance carnivore numbers with prey numbers.
- The Tribes are concerned with the 2012-2013 minimum count reduction of 19% considering reduced pack size data, high rates of harvest compared to other states in the region, high rates of adult animals harvested which may impact pack functioning, female reproductive tract data which indicates a large number of adult females are not reproducing, and Dr. Tim Van Deelen (UW-Madison) data showing that managing populations below carrying capacity may result in population instability. Must use all data and not pick and choose which data are important; must

consider human health and safety and depredation management. Dr. James Kroll (Wisconsin Deer Trustee) could not provide evidence that wolves were impacting the deer herd. Vehicle collisions and other mortality have been high. The Tribes recommend no harvest in 2014 to gather more data. The Tribes disagree with the notion of managing the wolf population at or just above the minimum viable population level as wolves have a legitimate right to exist.

- Wolves in areas of the western U.S. have limited their own population by decreasing prey populations; is it possible this is occurring in Wisconsin? Lowered deer numbers in Wisconsin are a result of increased antlerless harvest over time.
- The current management plan is 15 years old; the Committee should not be constrained by an old plan and goal of 350. The bear population is double the bear management plan goal but the current bear management objectives are not to reduce the population by 11,000 animals.
- The wolf population was reduced significantly in the past year; there is a lack of knowledge regarding pack size and structure, and the long-term effects of significant harvests. Some impacts may not be readily seen in the next couple years. Recommends a slowed reduction.
- Of 257 wolves harvested in 2013, only 19 were reproducing females. An adequate number of reproducing females should remain on the landscape.
- Beaver are managed below the ecological carrying capacity; precedence exists to do so with wolves.
- Consumptive user groups desire a lowered wolf population to decrease hunting hound depredation; wolf license sales are currently funding damages. Management must focus on packs causing depredations; USDA-WS and the USFS will not remove animals from public lands. Hound hunters should organize and target packs killing hounds; to do so they need enough tags in their possession to target harvests and the wolf population needs to be high enough to provide those harvest opportunities. A reduced population of 350 would not provide adequate harvest opportunities. Management should focus on removing the few animals that cause depredation.
- DNR West-central District - maintain population or slight decline, hunters still expressing some concerns. DNR Southern District - same recommendation, concerned with issuance of unlimited permits in zone 6 as illegal registrations do occur. DNR Northern District - liberal harvest in zone 6 but not unlimited permits.
- Zone 6 - Separate Zone 6 and issue unlimited permits. Manage zones 1-5 for population goals; work towards the management goal in zones 1-5. There were only 3 verified depredation controls in zone 6 and very few complaints; hunting opportunities should be liberal despite this. There is not a current problem in Zone 6; problems developed in other zones as populations increased. Public concerns must be considered. Issue a Zone 6-specific tag to try and reduce illegal registration (zone jumping); the licensing system is currently receiving applications for the 2014 harvest and it isn't likely feasible to update system before the harvest season.
- Zones 1-5 - Last two years the highest harvest rate was Zone 6 and the lowest were zones 1, 2 and 5, and intermediate to high in zones 3 and 4; the high, medium, and low strategy should still be considered. The Committee should develop recommendations to achieve outlined goals, and not try to predict how Tribal treaty agreements will impact permit allocation. Depredation incidents were previously high in Zone 3 and the harvest rate was set subsequently high last year; depredation was more evenly spread across all zones last year and harvest rates should thus be more evenly distributed among zones. Similar rates in zones 1 and 2 and in zones 3 and 4, respectively. Depredation control activities should compensate for controlling depredation.

Mortality Data - Discussion directed by Jen Stenglein, DNR Research Scientist, with comments provided by Committee members.

- In previous years, an individual-explicit model was presented to analyze effects of harvest on wolf population. The model was built to predict the recolonization of wolves from MN and MI and population growth. The model provided useful data during first two harvest seasons although it was not designed to model a harvested population or to predict the cascading effects of annual harvest. The last data point of population growth was 2012; errors have accumulated each harvest year since. Need to use or develop new models that describe harvested wolf populations.
- Identification of missing mortality - calibrated radio telemetry data to mortality. Overall, estimated a missing mortality of 1%; a 1% discrepancy in data annually. Missing mortality data considers account error of survey methods such as track counts.
- The Committee thanked Jen for the considerable work she did to try and make the population model fit data from a harvested population, although ultimately the model was unable to do so.

Individual-based Spatially-explicit Modeling - Discussion directed by Nathan Roberts, DNR Research Scientist, with comments provided by Committee members.

- Models are not 100% accurate and predict results only as good as the input data; are useful tools in management. Some data are typically never available; must make decisions using best available science.
- Must understand relationship between wolf population change and human-caused mortality to achieve management goals.
- Adams et al. 2008 Model
 - Provides a very useful study; used in MI and MN. Demonstrates the quadratic relationship of human removal and the non-linear effect on population change. Data exists around the 20% mortality rate but little at the 50-60% rate; caution necessary when extrapolating out to these removal rates.
- Fuller et al. 2003 Model
 - Found population stability to occur at 22% through literature review.
 - Wisconsin mortality data follows Fuller's relationship of population change.
- Population change graphs for Adams et al. and Fuller et al. models, a table of population reduction strategies by percent population, and a table of harvest various rates were presented.
 - A 10% population reduction - harvest of 180 (Adams et al.) or 150 (Fuller et al.) animals.
 - Unknown if the wolf populations from studies were at carrying capacity; a harvest rate of 20% indicates that these populations are likely under carrying capacity.
 - A non-harvest mortality rate of 14% was used to develop harvest scenarios based on 2012 and 2013 rates (includes depredation controls, vehicle collisions, and known illegal harvest, but not unknown illegal harvest; rates are underestimated at some level). In 2012, control mortality was 7.89% of over winter population and all other mortality was 6.04%; similar in 2013. Models assume non-harvest mortality decreases linearly as the population decreases; some uncertainty exists.
- Coyotes and other carnivores adapt to increased population reduction; some indications in the literature that wolf populations show a slight response as well. Most data are for areas where populations are reduced, but not drastically.

Comments from the Public in Attendance

- **Many people and groups attended today's meeting; public comments are allowed prior to quota recommendation discussion to allow comments to be considered by the Committee.**
- **Comment 1** - The Menominee are the longest living inhabitants of Wisconsin, second to wolves. Wolves are brothers and killing them is senseless. People have invaded wolf territory and taken their lands, and then blamed the wolves for human-wolf conflicts. People have the audacity to set numbers on how many live and die, and if they live or die, and people make trophies of wolves for the sake of killing them. Wolves existed in Wisconsin prior to humans and never needed to be managed by people; same with other species. People need management, not wildlife. People are killing the Menominee Nation's brother along with everything else. Speaks on behalf of those who were not invited to participate, the wolves.
- **Comment 2** - The views of the Ho-Chunk and the wolves are very rarely expressed by the Committee. Wolves are brothers and the Ho-Chunk have no tradition of hunting wolves in Wisconsin; the Committee talks about wolf hunting tradition which is not a tradition in Wisconsin. The Ho-Chunk only hunt to feed their people; they are caretakers of the resources that the earth provides.
- **Comment 3** - Expressed appreciation for the opportunity to speak. The Committee should consider how to sustain a healthy wolf population and has not done so to-date. The USFWS clearly states that a population decrease in 3 consecutive years will trigger a federal review of the wolf management program, and Wisconsin's wolf population has decreased the past 2 years. Human caused mortality data from 2013 shows that >440 wolves have been removed, which is too high. Effects of harvest mortality on non-harvest mortality rates are unknown. Science must drive Committee discussion and decision-making; must ensure the long-term viability of population. Recommends suspending harvest in 2014.
- **Comment 4** - Concerned that the 19% population decline last year and the methods of harvest are not supported by Wisconsin voters. The Committee does not represent diverse viewpoints on wolf management. Recommends suspending harvest in 2014, and unsporting harvest methods and electronic calling. The high harvest rate raises social and ethical concerns and isn't supported by sound science. Independent surveys in 2013 indicated that 79% of Wisconsin citizens support wolves and 81% opposes trophy hunting for wolves.
- **Comment 5** - Does not take a stance on regulated wolf harvest but recommends a reduction in quotas. Recommends a conservative approach for harvest in the Central Forest as there are few depredation issues there.
- **Comment 6** - Supports wolves in Wisconsin and the 1999 wolf management plan as a balance between social and ecological carrying capacities. Should continue to use the existing plan to develop a harvest quota consistent with reaching the minimum population goal.
- **Comment 7** - Interest in wolf management and sociopolitical conflicts.
- **Comment 8** - Douglas County. Opposes the wolf hunt, hound hunting for wolves, and current hound loss reporting requirements. Developing a petition for greater public input in the process.
- **Comment 9** - Trapping, hound hunting, poison, and other harvest methods are ethically wrong and desire improvements to get Wisconsin to a good place in management.

- Comment 10 - Volunteered 17 years as a tracker and 10 years as a tracker coordinator. Recommends science-based management and not rhetoric; considerable rhetoric expressed and little biology by Committee. High non-harvest mortalities resulted in considerable mortalities.
- Comment 11 - Does not view the Committee with credibility; there are 6 representatives of the anti-wolf viewpoint on the Committee but not 6 wildlife advocacy groups. Concerned that some volunteer trackers are only doing so to locate wolves for harvest. Concerned that the Committee is stuck on the goal of 350 animals when the ecological carrying capacity is much higher. Recommends an end to depredation reimbursements for hounds or the ban of hound use statewide, and an end to the wolf hunt. There are other methods to reduce conflicts with livestock and depredation without an established harvest season.
- Comment 12 - Has lived up north for the past 33 years. Saw a wolf 30 years ago and was thrilled. The population goal back then was to build the wolf population to a point to where they could survive, and did not focus on a cap level. The goal was supposed to be the bottom for a healthy population. The assumption that the only people that want wolves in Wisconsin are those who do not live in wolf country or deal with them is untrue and should not be propagated. At one time, seeing wolves was a unique experience in Wisconsin. Some wolves cause depredation and should be removed from the population.
- Comment 13 - With the Committee, no population number or goal will ever be enough; once a level is reached, the Committee will lower the goal. All Committee members do is whine about wolves and propagate false information. Neither the wolf harvest nor the Committee is working to reduce sociopolitical wolf conflicts. The Committee has not acknowledged human culpability for human-wolf conflicts. The Committee lacks a social scientist as a member. Disappointed that the Committee never acknowledges wolves existing for the sole purpose of existing.
- Dave MacFarland thanked everyone for their attendance and providing their comments.

2013 Quota Recommendations - Discussion directed by Dave MacFarland with comments provided by Committee members.

- Recommends a reduction of 10-12% to test that the new models will work and to gather more data. Use a less aggressive harvest strategy. The 2013 goal was a 12.5% decrease and in reality it was 19%; there may be some error considering the unusual nature of the winter and difficult tracking conditions. Several members recommend a harvest of 12.5%. At the 12.5% rate, if minimum winter counts were low, there is a possibility that the rate of harvest would stabilize the population, not decrease it.
- It isn't prudent to use the current plan to continue to drive the population down towards goal if there is uncertainty regarding the future goal; could be higher or lower. Use a slower decrease to allow for identification of a new goal. The 350 goal was a political compromise, not biological.
- The current plan exists and the Committee should continue to work towards goal through liberal harvest (a quota of 250 is considered liberal); do not need to drive population down to goal in one year though. Working towards goal may alleviate some public concerns. If it is desired to increase the population at a later time, the population has shown a capacity to do so.
- The rate of decrease in Zone 3 should be lowered.
- Recommends a population decrease of 5%; effects of harvest on the wolf social structure, population, and the results of packs being eliminated are unknown.
- Recommends a population decrease of 10% according to models; 180 quota.

- Recommends a goal to stabilize or only slightly reduce the population.
- The Adams et al. model indicates a sustainable mortality level is 29%. Recommends an additional 25% to work towards current management goal.
- Recommends a quota of 20-25%.
- Recommends a quota of 300; this is a harvest rate of 45% and would trigger USFWS program review. In 2013, livestock depredations decreased, there were 6 human-safety concerns, and hunting dog depredations increased. At the county-level there are considerable negative sentiments towards wolves.
- The Wis. Wildlife Federation voted to maintain the goal of 350 animals; voted on 3-5 times with only 2 or 3 persons voting against this goal, listed in meeting minutes (not provided).
- Recommends population growth or at least a stabilize objective. Wolves are brothers to the Tribes. The Committee wants for wolves but also wants for themselves; there are no indications that wolves and humans cannot coexist. Concerned with the high rate of illegal harvest and other non-harvest related mortalities.
- Several Committee members recommend a decreased rate of harvest compared to 2013.
- Some uncertainty in the models exists; used 80% error bars on graphs as the 95% confidence interval was too broad for useful interpretation. Higher error rates are expected with smaller harvested populations (i.e., wolf in comparison to bear). Both model graphs assume a 14% non-harvest mortality (built in). Graphs represent potential harvest scenarios in addition to non-harvest mortalities. Must use caution as harvest data for when the wolf population was 660 do not exist. At a statewide level, the two models appear predictive of data but not at the zone-level (likely too small of a data set to be predictive; does not mean that zones are too small for achieving management objectives but too small to predict change by models). Confidence in models will build with additional years and data; unsure how much data are needed at this point.
- Depredation controls in Great Lakes Region are typically 5-10% of the minimum winter count.

Quota recommendation process

- Members wrote down their preferred quota as well as the lowest and highest quota they would consider acceptable. Results used to guide discussion and provide additional information for DNR Wildlife Policy Team, DNR Secretary, and NRB. **This is a recommendation of harvest quotas; this is not a vote.**
 - A graphical representation of recommendations was provided. A high range of diversity exists among recommendations.
 - Recommendations - mean preferred quota (156), mean high recommendation (196 quota), mean low (131). A 160 quota intersects 9 member's recommendation graphs; a low quota level intersects 5 member's recommendation graphs; a high quota level intersects 5 member's recommendation graphs.
- In 2013, a 45% overall mortality resulted in a decrease of 150 wolves (minimum winter count).

Zone-specific Quota Recommendations

- The NRB meeting to approve quotas will be held Wednesday, June 25, 2014.
- Using the mean preferred harvest of 156; developed zone-specific harvest quotas:
 - Zone 1 - Recommended quota - 35 (11.9% harvest rate)

- In 2013, 23% harvest rate.
 - Zone 2 - Recommended quota - 15 (11.8% harvest rate)
 - In 2013, 17% harvest rate.
 - Zone 3 - Recommended quota - 40 (50% harvest rate).
 - In 2013, 72% harvest rate.
 - Zone 4 - Recommended quota - 8 (50.0% harvest rate).
 - In 2013, 48% harvest rate.
 - Zone 5 - Recommended quota - 20 (19.8% harvest rate).
 - In 2013, 25% harvest rate.
 - Zone 6 - Recommended quota - 35 (128% harvest rate).
 - In 2013, 88% harvest rate.
 - General consensus is for a high quota in zone 6 and that the population is higher than reported (i.e., >100% harvest rate recommended).
 - Recommendations for a harvest rate in zone 6 of 120% and unlimited harvest.
- Adams et al. model indicates a 5% reduction based on these quotas.
- Fuller et al. model indicates a 20% reduction based on these quotas.
- Is this a legitimate process for the Committee to decide quota recommendations?
 - No - the quota does not result in a great enough reduction in animals.
 - No - sportsman's groups are underrepresented compared to biologists.
 - The process incorporated each member's input; the mean quota was calculated from each members preferred recommendation. The process has been used in the past, with continued use it builds consistency in quota setting.
 - If these quotas reduce the population by 12%, then it is acceptable; data is currently lacking whether this will occur.
 - Zone 6
 - Recommendation to take Zone 6 quota and distribute it to other zones; unlimited quota in Zone 6.
 - It would be unfair to those who have already applied for 2014 wolf permits, and it is unlikely that the licensing system could accommodate this change by fall.
 - Leave Zone 6 open until the end of the harvest season. Registration violations occurred as some hunters registered wolves in the wrong zone to keep other zones open longer; a zone open until the end of the season perpetuates this risk.
 - Consider Zone 6-specific permits for future years; zone-specific permits could reduce but not eliminate all registration violations. Zone-specific tags may reduce harvest opportunities.
- All data and recommendations will be presented to the DNR Wildlife Policy Team, DNR Secretary, and NRB; recommendations may be altered with further consideration.
- A portion of the quota will be allocated to the Tribes; Tribes have legal right to 50% of the quota in the Ceded Territory. In harvest year 1, Tribes received 50% of the quota; in harvest year 2, Tribes received 10%. Whether to increase quotas according to Tribal allocation can be presented to the Wildlife Policy Team.
- The population will be higher in the fall at the time when the hunting and trapping season begins. Recommended quotas are based on the minimum winter count with the expectation that the population will be considerably higher at the time of harvest.

Summary of Issues Voted on by the Committee

- Recommendation to lower the permit:quota ratio to increase harvest success rates (7% ratio). The main reason that people who drew permits but didn't purchase tags was because of quick zone closure. Overall, survey participants did not want decrease permit levels but desired increased success rates. Currently harvesting at a 17% permit level which is higher than all other states (don't have trapping rates from other states). If ratio decreased, the quota will still be reached. It is expected that the rush to harvest will be greater in 2014; was high in 2012, and higher in 2013.

Should the permit:quota allocation level be adjusted for the 2014 harvest?

- **Keep the permit:quota level set at 10% (i.e., 10 permits to 1 quota).**
** Voted on and (9 yes)
- **Change the permit:quota level to 8% (i.e., 8 permits to 1 quota).**
** Voted on and (8 yes)
- The permit:quota level will remain at 10%.

Additional Information

- Dave MacFarland is working to identify a 3rd party Committee facilitator to start in June.

Next Meeting: The June WAC meeting will be on Thursday, June 26, 2014.

July Meeting: The July WAC meeting will be on Tuesday, July 22, 2014.

August Meeting: The August WAC meeting will be on Wednesday, August 27, 2014.