

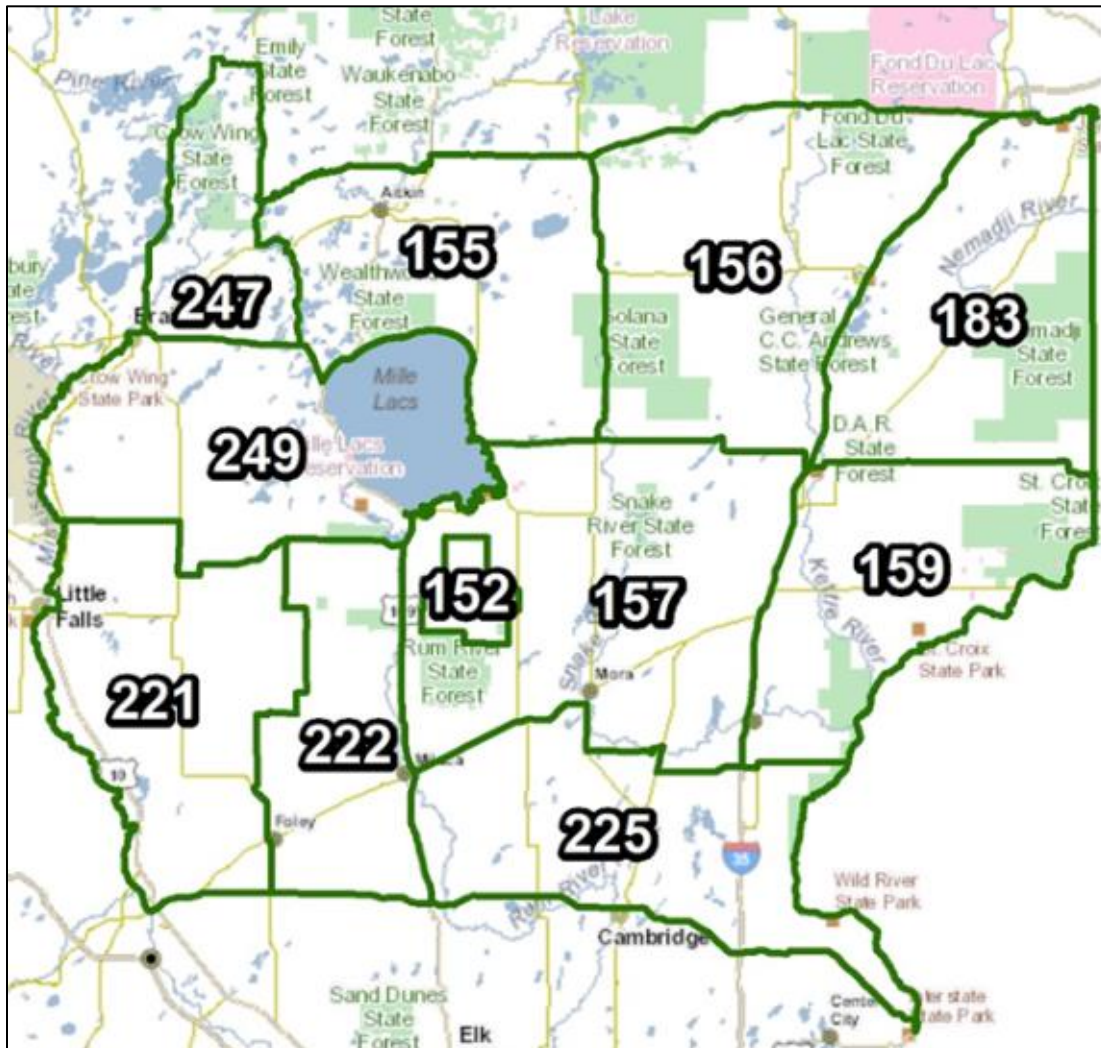
2015 Deer Population Goal Setting

Deer advisory team recommendations – Block 4: East Central Uplands

The following pages represent deer population goals recommended by the 2015 deer advisory team for Block 4: East Central Uplands (permit areas 152, 155, 156, 157, 159, 183, 221, 222, 225, 247 & 249).

Public comment regarding these recommendations will be accepted April 2-15, 2015. Prior to commenting on the advisory team recommendations, you may wish to review the background materials provided on the DNR Deer Management webpage (www.mndnr.gov/deer), including a description of the advisory team process.

Following each of the advisory team recommendations is a summary of factors cited by team members when making their recommendation. This information reflects the perspectives of individual team members; DNR has attempted to preserve the spirit and meaning of team members' comments and has not confirmed the accuracy of data cited.



2015 Deer Population Goal Setting

Deer Permit Area 152

Team recommendation:

Increase population by 50%

Support for recommendation:

Consensus by 80% supermajority: 11 "Support", 2 "OK", 3 "No", 1 "Abstain"

Factors cited by team members in their recommendation:

- Previous (2006) goal was to stabilize the population here, but instead it has decreased
- Deer population is very low and rapidly declining
- Harvest numbers are low
- Hunter success rates are low
- Low antlerless-to-buck ratio
- Survey data supports a 50% increase
- Low hunter satisfaction
- This area has been overharvested in the past
- Can support a 50% increase but would prefer a larger increase

Factors cited by team members as concerns related to this recommendation:

- A 50% increase will be a drop in the bucket
- This area actually needs a population increase of 100-250%
- Would like to know the population estimate for this area
- A 50% increase is acceptable, but a 25% increase would be preferred
- Need to better understand the impact previous regulations have had on the herd in this area
- This is an area that should have no deer harvest until herd rebounds
- Difficult to make a recommendation for a permit area this small, surrounded by another permit area

2015 Deer Population Goal Setting

Deer Permit Area 155

Team recommendation:

Increase population by 50%

Support for recommendation:

Consensus by 80% supermajority: 13 "Support", 3 "OK", 1 "No"

Factors cited by team members in their recommendation:

- Deer population was hit hard by 2013-2014 winter
- Previous (2006) goal was to stabilize the population here, but instead it has decreased; a 50% increase from current levels will restore the population to 2012 levels
- Low hunter success rates
- Deer population in this area is rapidly declining
- Data supports a 50% increase
- Buck harvest has declined 40%
- This area has high hunter populations
- Little evidence of herbivory or deer browse problems in this area
- Great deer habitat in this area, can support higher populations
- Prefer a population increase of >50%, but 50% is acceptable

Factors cited by team members as concerns related to this recommendation:

- A 50% increase is too strong for this area
- Deer population here is currently at a Reasonable Carrying Capacity
- The deer population will recover quickly in this area

2015 Deer Population Goal Setting

Deer Permit Area 156

Team recommendation:

Increase population by 50%

Support for recommendation:

Consensus by 80% supermajority: 17 "Support"

Factors cited by team members in their recommendation:

- Low harvest rates
- Low hunter satisfaction
- Low hunter success rates
- Landowner and hunter survey data supports a 50% increase
- A 50% increase is acceptable; anything less would be a mistake
- Current population is below the level set by previous (2006) goals
- A 50% increase would still keep the population at a reasonable level
- Only a small portion of this permit area is agriculture
- 2014 had lowest buck harvest in 10 years
- Population is rapidly declining in this area
- This area can support a higher population
- Deer population was hit hard by 2013-2014 winter (heavy snow, winter severity index)
- This area has a high number of complaints about wolves

Factors cited by team members as concerns related to this recommendation:

- Prefer a population increase of >50% (75-100%)

2015 Deer Population Goal Setting

Deer Permit Area 157

Team recommendation:

Increase population by 50%

Support for recommendation:

Consensus by 80% supermajority: 14 "Support", 2 "OK", 1 "No"

Factors cited by team members in their recommendation:

- Deer population is too low and declining
- Hunter and landowner survey data support a 50% increase
- Deer population was hit hard by 2013-2014 winter
- Hunting pressure is increasing in this area
- Have spoken to many farmers in this area who would like to see the deer population increase
- Low hunter success rates
- Low harvest numbers
- Great deer habitat in this area, some agricultural land; can support higher populations
- Predator populations are increasing in this area

Factors cited by team members as concerns related to this recommendation:

- A 50% increase is a minimum
- A 50% increase is too high, but some increase may be warranted
- Need more public education on the benefits of healthy ecosystems
- Prefer a 25% increase

2015 Deer Population Goal Setting

Deer Permit Area 159

Team recommendation:

Increase population by 50%

Support for recommendation:

Consensus by 80% supermajority: 11 "Support", 5 "OK", 1 "No"

Factors cited by team members in their recommendation:

- Deer threatened by wolves and coyotes in this area
- Deer population has decreased significantly over the last 10 years
- An increase of at least 50% is needed to reestablish the deer herd
- Low harvest numbers , including buck harvest
- Low hunter and landowner satisfaction
- Current deer populations are too low to sustain hunting and predator populations
- Deer population was hit hard by 2013-2014 winter
- A 50% increase in the population would still be below the level set by the previous goal-setting process
- Sufficient habitat is available to support an increased population

Factors cited by team members as concerns related to this recommendation:

- Increases in predator populations
- Prefer a population increase of >50%
- Prefer a population increase of 25%
- Low 2014 harvest means the population in this area is probably already increasing
- Current population is consistent with previously set goals
- Increasing the population would put it above a Reasonable Carrying Capacity

2015 Deer Population Goal Setting

Deer Permit Area 183

Team recommendation:

No team recommendation – see individual preferences below

Individual preferences:

- 1 team member prefers no change in the population
- 3 team members prefer a population increase of 25%
- 8 team members prefer a population increase of 50%
- 5 team members prefer a population increase of >50% (50-250%)

Factors cited by team members in their individual preferences:

- The current deer density is close to the 2006 goal level
- Prefer a 25% increase because extreme swings in wildlife management aren't good for wildlife or hunters
- Would like to see a gradual increase in the deer herd for this area; revisit in 3 years
- Statistics show a high deer density in this area, but hunter success rates and harvest numbers are low
- The predator population in this area is too high
- Low hunter satisfaction
- Buck harvest declining
- Deer population declining
- Hunter and landowner surveys support at 50% increase
- Prefer at least a 100% increase

2015 Deer Population Goal Setting

Deer Permit Area 221

Team recommendation:

Increase population by 50%

Support for recommendation:

Consensus by 80% supermajority: 8 "Support", 7 "OK", 2 "No"

Factors cited by team members in their recommendation:

- Current deer population is so low that a 50% increase would only bring the population back to the levels set by the previous goal-setting process
- There is strong evidence that the current deer population is too low
- Local deer populations vary within the permit area, but pockets of low populations outweigh pockets of high populations
- Hunters in this area have been very vocal about a lack of deer
- A 50% increase is probably ok in the short term, but should be stabilized

Factors cited by team members as concerns related to this recommendation:

- A 50% increase may be slightly too much, but a considerable increase is needed
- Concerned about variation in the deer population between the eastern and western ends of this permit area
- Harvest levels are still good
- This permit area has good potential habitat
- Prefer a 25% increase, but 50% is ok
- Prefer a 25% increase, 50% is too much
- Data support an increase of <50%
- Have heard a lot about deer damage to trees in this area

2015 Deer Population Goal Setting

Deer Permit Area 222

Team recommendation:

Increase population by 50%

Support for recommendation:

Consensus by 80% supermajority: 10 "Support", 5 "OK", 2 "No"

Factors cited by team members in their recommendation:

- People familiar with this area believe the deer population is lower than what DNR estimates
- Local residents suggest a significant population increase is needed
- Deer population has declined dramatically (at least 50%) over last 10 years
- A 50% increase would restore the population to levels set by the previous (2006) goal-setting process
- This area has been over-harvested for years
- Increasing hunting pressure
- Low hunter success rates
- Low hunter satisfaction
- Local landowners report a significant decrease in the deer population throughout the year, not just during hunting season
- Young people are losing interest in hunting because the population is so low

Factors cited by team members as concerns related to this recommendation:

- A 50% increase may be slightly high for this area – need to revisit goals more often if 50% is approved
- Current population is above previously set goals
- Hunter success in this area is reasonable
- A 50% increase would put the deer population above a Reasonable Carrying Capacity
- Concerned about tree regeneration
- Prefer a 25% increase in this area

2015 Deer Population Goal Setting

Deer Permit Area 225

Team recommendation:

Increase population by 25%

Support for recommendation:

Consensus by 80% supermajority: 5 "Support", 10 "OK", 2 "No"

Factors cited by team members in their recommendation:

- Deer population is so low that youth are becoming uninterested in hunting
- No deer depredation at family apply orchard
- Deer population has declined in this area
- A 25% increase is appropriate because it represents a gradual increase in the herd, which can be tracked better if revisited more often (every 3 years)
- A 25% increase will support healthy ecosystems with more hunter opportunities
- Local residents report population has decreased, but not to a level that would warrant more than a 25% increase
- Hunter and landowner survey data supports at most a 25% increase
- High hunter success rates
- High population estimate
- Local landowners asking for an increase in the population

Factors cited by team members as concerns related to this recommendation:

- Many hunters and landowners believe the deer population here is much lower than what the DNR estimates
- Prefer a 50% increase, but 25% is a start
- A 25% increase is still too high - hunter and landowner survey data supports "No change" or a 10% increase
- Prefer "No Change", but 25% is acceptable
- Prefer an increase of >50%
- Buck harvest has not declined

2015 Deer Population Goal Setting

Deer Permit Area 247

Team recommendation:

No team recommendation – see individual preferences below

Individual preferences:

- 2 team members prefer a population decrease of 25%
- 4 team members prefer no change in the population
- 9 team members prefer a population increase of 25%
- 1 team member prefers a population increase of 50%
- 1 team member prefers a population increase, but did not specify magnitude

Factors cited by team members in their individual preferences:

- Concerns about long term damage to native vegetation and forests, especially Jack and White Pine
- Landowners in this area do not seem concerned about deer browse
- Concerns about loss of timber productivity
- Landowner surveys indicate support to reduce deer populations
- Hunter and landowner surveys indicate support to increase deer populations by 10-25%
- Local deer populations vary widely throughout this permit area - need better tools to decrease populations in problem areas only
- Consider rezoning for the urban/lake region
- Large amount of permit area is forest or wetland
- Low hunter satisfaction
- Deer population has decreased due to severe winters
- Population is currently below the previously set goal
- Population is currently too high

2015 Deer Population Goal Setting

Deer Permit Area 249

Team recommendation:

Increase population by 50%

Support for recommendation:

Consensus by 80% supermajority: 11 "Support", 4 "OK", 2 "No"

Factors cited by team members in their recommendation:

- Hunters' experience (based on public comment) does not match with DNR's population estimates
- A 50% increase would restore the population to levels set by the previous (2006) goal-setting process
- This area has been overharvested for many years
- Hunters and landowners support a population increase
- Youth are losing interest in hunting in this area
- Current population is extremely low
- Current population does not support subsistence harvests

Factors cited by team members as concerns related to this recommendation:

- There are varying opinions within this permit area
- Consider splitting 249 into two zones
- Support a 25-50% increase
- In 2014, hunter success rates were 42%
- Deer population estimates still at 15 deer per square mile
- Buck harvest has declined only slightly
- Increasing deer in this area will only feed more wolves
- The deer population is already above the level set by the 2006 goal
- A 50% increase would lead to greater browse damage to forests
- Would prefer an increase of less than 50%
- Hunter and landowner survey data support "No Change" in the population