

DNR Report

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I cannot believe we are already into July, I have had only a couple of meetings since my last article so this is not going to be a very big report.

First off, history may be made this coming elk season here in Wisconsin in 2022. The DNR's elk committee recommended that a quota of 8 elk permits be available. That recommendation was then approved by the DNR's Policy Team, and then by the NRB. The northern herd in Northern Wisconsin is growing but is still in need of more elk to allow for more bull elk to be harvested. The southern herd in the Jackson County area may have a huntable herd by the year 2023, we will have to see how calf recruitment ends up being to trigger a hunt then.

Now for the possibility for history making. Yes, there has been history of hunters wanting to harvest an elk with archery equipment, but they either didn't feel confident with their equipment or didn't think they would have the time to use archery equipment versus a firearm. Well, a WBH member has drawn a 2022 elk harvest permit. This is a great opportunity for our organization and this lucky hunter.

A Deer Advisory meeting was held at the Meade Wildlife Center in May, my first in-person DNR meeting since covid. The DNR is possibly looking at improving the way CADAC's work and are provided information to help them be more effective. There was a lot of discussion pertaining to the lack of use or purchasing of antlerless permits by hunters. I made two comments pertaining to this on-going problem. #1 Return to one free antlerless permit to all archery hunters purchasing a license. #2 Hunters are now harvesting deer at the extent of their comfort level and desire no matter what the permit levels are set at. Another comment I made was on how most hunters don't just use their land just before the hunt or during the hunt like in the past. Most lands especially in northern Wisconsin do not have a person on them until maybe the day before the gun deer season and then no one until the next gun deer season. Now landowners are using and improving their lands throughout the whole year which makes for entirely different land use scenario. This may be having some effect on deer movements and deer activity. Some discussion was held on what the Deer Stake Holders have recommended that the department review. Expanding the Youth Deer hunt was on top of the agenda, the antlerless allocation process, multiple free antlerless deer permit availability, a good reason to have public/private land harvest permits, and possibly going back to in person registration. In person registration possibly allows for more accurate count of animals harvested and definitely allows for more aging of deer harvested which is a key to the SAK formula that is used in estimating our deer populations here in Wisconsin.

This year has been really good for some of our WBH youth members. First the WBH awarded it's Learn to Hunt Bear permit to a youth, which is great. Since that time, I have been offered 2 other Bear Harvest permits which I transferred to the two other youth that applied for our LTH permit. So, I will this year be providing two free bear hunts to these two youth. How awesome is that to have this opportunity to these three youth to go bear hunting. Thank You to the two adults who offered their Bear Harvest permits to these youth.