

DNR Update

At this time of year my DNR meetings workload is on the lighter side. In fact, since my last update to you, I have not had any face-to-face meetings, just a couple Zoom calls. However, there are a few things worth mentioning to you at this time.

One big piece of information that I would like to share with members is the fact that the Natural Resources Board (NRB), at their February meeting, approved the proposed changes to Deer Management Units (DMU's) for the Northern Forest and Central Forest. While I feel these new DMU's will not totally fix the issues of declining deer numbers in the north, they may help move some of the harvest to where deer are somewhat more abundant. It's a start!

Bear and turkey hunting permits have been drawn, and successful recipients have been notified by mail. Excess harvest permits for the various zones will go on sale later in March. If you desire to transfer a harvest permit to a youth, you must do so at least ten days before the season the permit is valid for.

Applications for elk hunting permits must be completed by May 31. Successful harvest applicants will be notified in early June. Remember, there are elk hunts in the Northern Elk Management Zone and the Central Forest Elk Management Zone, with each having their own harvest quota levels. There will be cow harvest permits available in the Central Forest Elk Management Zone for the 2025 elk hunt.

The future of wolf management in Wisconsin is still anyone's guess. There is currently a bill being proposed at the federal level to delist wolves. I pray that the bill passes, allowing us some options for managing wolves in the lower 48 states. But even if it does pass, it does not guarantee that we will have a wolf harvest season in Wisconsin in 2025. The DNR wolf committee has not met in a couple of years, so the necessary data and qualifications to hold a hunt might not be in place.

The Wisconsin DNR/Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC) Spring Hearings will be held in all seventy-two counties in the State of Wisconsin on April 14th, beginning at 6:00 p.m. If you cannot or do not wish to attend in person, you can go on the DNR's website to vote and/or comment on the questions until 6:00 p.m. on April 16th. There are not many questions on the spring hearing questionnaire this year. There are a few that do somewhat affect bowhunting, but none that will affect our ability to hunt with archery equipment here in Wisconsin. I urge all WBH members to attend the spring hearings in your county and make your voice heard and your vote count.

Your county CDAC's are another way for you to have input in the management of whitetailed deer here in Wisconsin. Your local CDAC has a fair amount of influence when it comes to setting antlerless harvest goals, whether on public or private lands. The CDAC's also had a fair amount of influence in the changing of the DMU's in the North and Central Forest Management Zones.

Good luck hunting and enjoy God's great outdoors!

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