



QUALITY DEER MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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Date: 27 January 2008
To: Pennsylvania Game Commission
From: Steve Trupe, President, Pennsylvania State Chapter QDMA
Kip Adams, Director of Education and Outreach – Northern Region
Re: 2008-09 Deer Season

On behalf of the Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA) and the Pennsylvania State Chapter we wish to voice our views on the proposed changes to Pennsylvania's 2008-09 deer season. The QDMA is an international nonprofit wildlife conservation organization dedicated to ethical hunting, sound deer management and preservation of the deer-hunting heritage. Among QDMA's nearly 50,000 members are more than 2,500 of the nation's leading wildlife and forestry professionals. As such, QDMA is widely regarded as the most respected whitetail organization in the U.S.

The Pennsylvania Game Commission has made great strides in the past several years with respect to deer management. Pennsylvania's deer herd is more in balance with the available habitat, it has a more balanced adult sex ratio, it has a more complete male age structure, and it has provided some incredible hunting experiences. Antlerless deer harvests have been predictable based on allocation rates within consistent seasons, and Pennsylvania hunters have had some fantastic buck hunting. These improvements were made possible by antler restrictions, concurrent seasons, the deer management assistance program (DMAP), the October antlerless season and a science-based approach to antlerless license allocations.

However, improvements do not come easily and they are not accepted by all stakeholders. We understand there are places in Pennsylvania where the deer population is below what the habitat can support, and we understand there are places where the deer population remains above this balance point. We also recognize the controversy surrounding deer densities in Pennsylvania.

The QDMA supports the Game Commission listening to hunters and trying to improve their hunting opportunities. We support you trying to provide an influx of dollars into rural economies during our hunting seasons. We support that potential changes will be thoroughly researched to provide unbiased information to use in future management recommendations. We understand there are political pressures on the Game Commission to make changes to the deer season, and we recognize the existing budget constraints and support a license fee increase so the Game Commission can return to full strength with regard to manpower and programs. Finally, we support the Game Commission's deer management program and its measurable goal system of herd health, habitat health and deer-human conflicts.

The future of deer hunting.
