

QDMA's ***Whitetail Report 2016***

AN ANNUAL REPORT ON THE STATUS OF WHITE-TAILED DEER —
THE FOUNDATION OF THE HUNTING INDUSTRY IN NORTH AMERICA.

Compiled and Written by the QDMA Staff

QDMA Mission:

QDMA is dedicated to ensuring the future of white-tailed deer, wildlife habitat and our hunting heritage.

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INTRODUCTION



By Kip Adams

White-tailed deer are the most important game species in North America. More hunters pursue whitetails than any other species, and whitetail hunters contribute more financially than any other hunter segment. Collectively speaking, whitetails are the foundation of the entire hunting industry.

That's why I am so excited we can bring you this annual report on the status of whitetail hunting and management. We are in a unique position to be able to gather data from state wildlife agencies, the nation's leading deer researchers, and other sources to provide a true look at the "State of the Whitetail" for hunters, landowners, natural resource professionals and the media.

So, how are whitetails and deer hunters doing? There are some very positive trends occurring as yearling buck harvest rates are at a record low, and the percent-

age of 3½-year-old and older bucks in the harvest is at a record high. For the first time, every state that collects age data reported the majority of their buck harvest was at least 2½ years old. In fact, in 2014 hunters shot more 3½-year-old and older bucks than yearling bucks for the first time in recorded history! That is truly amazing. Hunters are clearly reaping the benefits of more naturally balanced age structures in herds across the whitetail's range.

On the flip side, overall deer harvests are down. Fewer antlered bucks were shot in 28 of 37 states (76 percent) in the 2014-15 deer season than during the 2013-14 season. The buck harvest dropped 4 percent in 2014 and that was 7 percent below the previous five-year average. Antlerless harvest was also down 11 percent in 2014. Twenty-nine of 37 states (78 percent) shot fewer antlerless deer in 2014 than 2013.

The biggest issues and trends included initiation of the Wild Harvest Initiative. This is an effort to quantify the harvest and consumption of wild game and fish in the U.S. and Canada. This could be huge as the results could show the world the importance of hunters and anglers to society. To help with this project, QDMA pledged \$50,000. Other issues included the continued spread of chronic wasting disease (CWD). Disease/captive deer was reported by state wildlife agencies as the single biggest deer management issue they deal with on a daily basis. Recent research unfortunately showed plants can uptake CWD prions and pass them to animals, and headlines out of Wyoming stated, "CWD kills 19 percent of deer herd annually." That's clearly not good news for hunters and deer managers in other states with CWD.

All of this information and much more is included in the following pages. I

hope you enjoy the data, interpretations, and QDMA's recommendations as you read this report. Each "Whitetail Report" is different, as they cover the most pressing issues of that year, so if you enjoy this one be sure to check out the other reports going back to 2009 at www.QDMA.com. Here's to a productive 2016 and a great deer season this fall.

Respectfully,
Kip Adams

Outlook for 2015-16 Deer Season

At the time of writing this Whitetail Report, some 2015-16 deer seasons were still underway, so the statistics highlighted in this report are all from the most recent hunting season that is complete (2014-15). However, some states have already issued press releases on the 2015-16 deer season and we've included six of the top headlines here as an outlook for the data you'll see in next year's Whitetail Report. If the early results hold true for the other states, 2015 was a good year for deer hunters.

Illinois - Illinois 2015 deer harvest up more than 10 percent over last year

Kentucky - Kentucky deer hunters set new record in 2015-16

Michigan - DNR: deer hunting harvest for Lower Peninsula rises 17 percent from 2014

Nebraska - Total deer harvest in Nebraska is up 11 percent from a year ago

Ohio - Hunters checked 12 percent more deer during this year's deer-gun hunting season

West Virginia - 2015 buck harvest up 77 percent from 2014



Cover photo by
Brian Murphy

PREVIOUS EDITIONS OF THE WHITETAIL REPORT



In various sections of this report, you will find references to previous editions of the *Whitetail Report*, which has been published annually since 2009. Every edition of the *Whitetail Report* is available as a free PDF on QDMA.com under the "Resources" menu.

ABOUT THE DEER HARVEST DATA IN THIS REPORT

The 2015-16 deer season is closed or nearing so for states and provinces across the whitetail's range, and biologists will be crunching data in the coming months to assess the outcome of this past season. For the 2016 Whitetail Report, QDMA compared harvest data from the three most recent seasons available 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15. We acquired harvest data from all 37 states in the Midwest, Northeast and Southeast (see map) that comprise the majority of whitetail habitat in the U.S. Unfortunately we were only able to acquire data from two Western

states (Montana and Wyoming) and three Canadian provinces (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Quebec). Our sincere appreciation goes out to these agencies but without the majority of data from the West or Canada we omitted them from these analyses. However, we did include a one-page summary on Canada using data from the three eastern provinces (see page 15).

The following data are from each state wildlife agency. Agencies use different techniques to collect this data, and some collect more data than others. Analyses among agencies may not always compare “apples

to apples,” but each state provided their best possible data. Also, analyses across years should provide valid comparisons for individual agencies. An important note about the “per square mile” figures presented in the following pages is that some states use total area for these statistics while others use deer habitat (and some differ on what is included in deer habitat). Therefore, we calculated per square mile estimates using each state's total area excluding water bodies. This allows estimates to be very comparable across years for a given state, but not always across states.

ANTLERED BUCK HARVEST



Whitetail Report Regions

Fewer antlered bucks (those 1½ years or older) were shot in 28 of 37 states (76 percent) in the 2014-15 deer season than during the 2013-14 season. Seven of 13 states in the Midwest, eight of 11 states in the Southeast, and all 13 states in the Northeast shot fewer bucks in 2014 than 2013. The total buck harvest was 2,609,635 and that was 4 percent fewer than in 2013. The Midwest's buck harvest had been declining substantially the past few years, but Midwest hunters fared much better than their eastern brethren as this region's buck harvest only dropped 2 percent from 2013 while the Southeast's dropped 3 percent and the Northeast's declined 13 percent. Six of 13 states in the Northeast had double-digit declines.

Overall, Texas shot the most bucks (325,008) and Rhode Island shot the fewest (922). Texas typically leads this category, but hunters from the Lonestar State shot fewer bucks per square mile (PSM; 1.2) than the national average (1.5). South Carolina hunters more than doubled the national average and

shot the most bucks PSM (3.3), while Nebraska and North Dakota shot the fewest (0.3 PSM).

Comparing the 2014 buck harvest to the previous five-year average paints a bleak picture for many states. Thirty of 37 states (81 percent) shot fewer bucks

in 2014 than their prior five-year average. The Southeast's 2014 buck harvest was 4 percent below its five-year average, the Midwest's was 7 percent below, and the Northeast was 12 percent below its five-year average. The Northeast was largely influenced by West Virginia's numbers. The Mountaineer State's

buck harvest declined 31 percent from 2013 to 2014, and the 2014 harvest was 30 percent below the state's five-year average. On the flip side Delaware and Tennessee each beat their five-year average by 4 percent and Georgia topped theirs by 12 percent.

Top-5 States Antlered Buck Harvest

State	2014 Harvest
Texas	325,008
Michigan	178,228
Georgia	149,498
Wisconsin	143,397
Pennsylvania	119,260

Top-5 States Antlered Buck Harvest Per Square Mile

State	2014 Harvest PSM
South Carolina	3.3
Michigan	3.2
Maryland	2.9
Pennsylvania	2.7
Georgia / Wisconsin	2.6

Top-5 States With Greatest Antlered Buck Harvest Increase 2014 vs. Five-Year Average

State	% Increase
Georgia	+12
Tennessee	+4
Delaware	+4
Texas	+2
Iowa	+2

5 States With Greatest Antlered Buck Harvest Decrease 2014 vs. Five-Year Average

State	% Decrease
West Virginia	-30
Florida	-17
Texas	-16
Iowa	-16
North Dakota	-16

ESTIMATED BUCK HARVEST Antlered Bucks 1½ Years and Older

State	2012	2013	2014	% Change 2013-14	2014	2009-13 avg.	% Change
					Bucks		2014 to 5 yr avg
Alabama	122,400	98,400	98,712	0	1.9	110,400	-11
Arkansas	96,956	91,132	89,617	-2	1.7	94,044	-5
Florida	89,025	65,357	64,223	-2	1.2	77,191	-17
Georgia	130,115	137,025	149,498	9	2.6	133,570	12
Louisiana	87,210	93,072	82,541	-11	1.9	90,141	-8
Mississippi	123,000	108,664	104,665	-4	2.2	115,832	-10
North Carolina	80,883	86,558	73,439	-15	1.5	83,721	-12
Oklahoma	62,394	52,197	51,775	-1	0.8	57,296	-10
South Carolina	116,673	114,482	99,946	-13	3.3	115,578	-14
Tennessee	88,549	94,596	95,470	1	2.3	91,573	4
Texas	304,035	330,535	325,008	-2	1.2	317,285	2
Southeast Total	1,301,240	1,272,018	1,234,894	-3	1.6	1,286,629	-4
Connecticut	6,442	5,280	4,894	-7	1.0	5,861	-16
Delaware	3,703	4,144	4,067	-2	2.1	3,924	4
Maine	15,385	16,736	15,986	-4	0.5	16,061	0
Maryland	30,493	32,114	28,281	-12	2.9	31,304	-10
Massachusetts	6,402	6,519	6,419	-2	0.8	6,461	-1
New Hampshire	6,659	7,171	6,743	-6	0.8	6,915	-2
New Jersey	17,752	18,511	17,412	-4	2.4	18,132	-4
New York	118,993	114,716	108,604	-5	2.3	116,855	-7
Pennsylvania	133,860	134,280	119,260	-11	2.7	134,070	-11
Rhode Island	1,067	1,020	922	-10	0.9	1,044	-12
Vermont	8,073	8,831	7,954	-10	0.8	8,452	-6
Virginia	96,853	106,349	88,311	-17	2.2	101,601	-13
West Virginia	71,628	74,528	51,205	-31	2.1	73,078	-30
Northeast Total	517,310	530,199	460,058	-13	1.9	523,755	-12
Illinois	69,681	57,769	60,721	5	1.1	63,725	-5
Indiana	45,936	46,240	45,686	-1	1.3	46,088	-1
Iowa	47,927	39,447	44,540	13	0.8	43,687	2
Kansas	43,321	41,236	42,178	2	0.5	42,279	0
Kentucky	64,183	67,760	66,080	-2	1.7	65,972	0
Michigan	222,640	203,057	178,228	-12	3.2	212,849	-16
Minnesota	97,136	87,865	81,036	-8	1.0	92,501	-12
Missouri	120,549	104,815	114,250	9	1.7	112,682	1
Nebraska	26,309	24,401	25,082	3	0.3	25,355	-1
North Dakota	24,727	18,645	18,266	-2	0.3	21,686	-16
Ohio	81,149	70,100	68,515	-2	1.7	75,625	-9
South Dakota	29,286	25,199	26,704	6	0.4	27,243	-2
Wisconsin	165,457	143,738	143,397	0	2.6	154,598	-7
Midwest Total	1,038,301	930,272	914,683	-2	1.2	984,287	-7
U.S. Total	2,856,851	2,732,489	2,609,635	-4	1.5	2,794,670	-7

*PSM: Per Square Mile in 2014

AGE STRUCTURE OF THE BUCK HARVEST

QDMA also acquired the age structure of the buck harvest data for most states. Thirty states reported the percentage of their antlered buck harvest that was 1½ years old, and 26 states reported the percentage that was also 2½ and 3½ years or older. All but one state in the Northeast and one in the Southeast collect age data. Conversely only eight of 13 states in the Midwest collect this information.

In 2014, the average percentage of the antlered buck harvest that was 1½ years old was 33 percent, which is the lowest national percentage ever reported! The line graph below shows how the yearling percentage of the antlered buck harvest in the U.S. has changed during the past 25 years.

Arkansas averaged the fewest yearlings in 2014 (8 percent of antlered buck harvest) and New York and Wisconsin reported the most (48 percent of antlered buck harvest). Importantly, Arkansas' number is

In 2014, the average percentage of the antlered buck harvest that was 1½ years old was 33 percent, which is the lowest national percentage ever reported!

the lowest yearling harvest percentage ever reported and the state has achieved this three years in a row. Arkansas implemented a statewide antler point restriction in 1998, and the state continues with an antler point or antler points/main beam restriction today. Notably, Arkansas has led the U.S. in harvesting the lowest percentage of yearling bucks for six of the past seven years! Also, even though New York and Wisconsin reported more yearlings in the harvest in

2014 than any other state, it was New York's lowest harvest ever recorded and Wisconsin's lowest since 2010.

West Virginia (43 to 26 percent), Maine (62 to 47 percent), Missouri (55 to 40 percent in non-APR counties), and Vermont (37 to 22 percent) had the biggest declines in percentage of yearlings over the two-year period from 2012 to 2014. Oklahoma (15 to 24 percent), Texas (14 to 21 percent), and Connecticut (40 to 45 percent) reported the largest increases in yearling buck harvest percentage from 2012 to 2014. Oklahoma and Texas increased this statistic but both states still do a great job protecting yearling bucks. Another notable for this year included the Midwest (34 percent) and Northeast (41 percent) reported their lowest percentage of yearling bucks to date.

Twenty-six of 30 states (87 percent) that we received age structure data from were able to also provide the percentage of bucks 3½ years and older in the harvest; kudos to these states for their data collection efforts. The average percentage of the antlered buck harvest that was 3½ years and older was 34 percent in 2014; this ties the highest percentage of 3½-year-old or older bucks ever reported. This

equals the percentage of 2½-year-olds and is higher than the percentage of yearlings! This is a testament to how far we've come as hunters and deer managers. This statistic ranged from 9 percent in New Jersey to 74 percent in Mississippi.

Top-5 States With Lowest Percentage of Yearling Bucks in Buck Harvest

State	2014 Percentage
Arkansas	8
Mississippi	13
Missouri (APR counties)	15
Kansas	16
Louisiana	17

Highest Percentage of Yearling Bucks in Buck Harvest

State	2014 Percentage
New York	48
Wisconsin	48
Maine	47
Maryland	47
New Hampshire	46
New Jersey	46

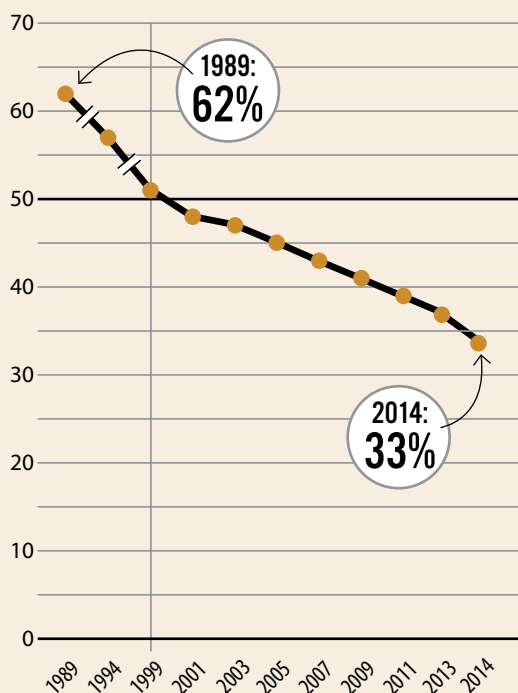
Top-5 States With Highest Percentage of 3½-Plus Bucks in Buck Harvest

State	2014 Percentage
Mississippi	74
Arkansas	67
Louisiana	67
Texas	62
Oklahoma	60

Lowest Percentage of 3½-Plus Bucks in Buck Harvest

State	2014 Percentage
New Jersey	9
New York	18
Tennessee	19
Ohio	20
Wisconsin	21

Percent Yearling Bucks in the U.S. Buck Harvest



PERCENTAGE OF BUCK HARVEST BY AGE CLASS

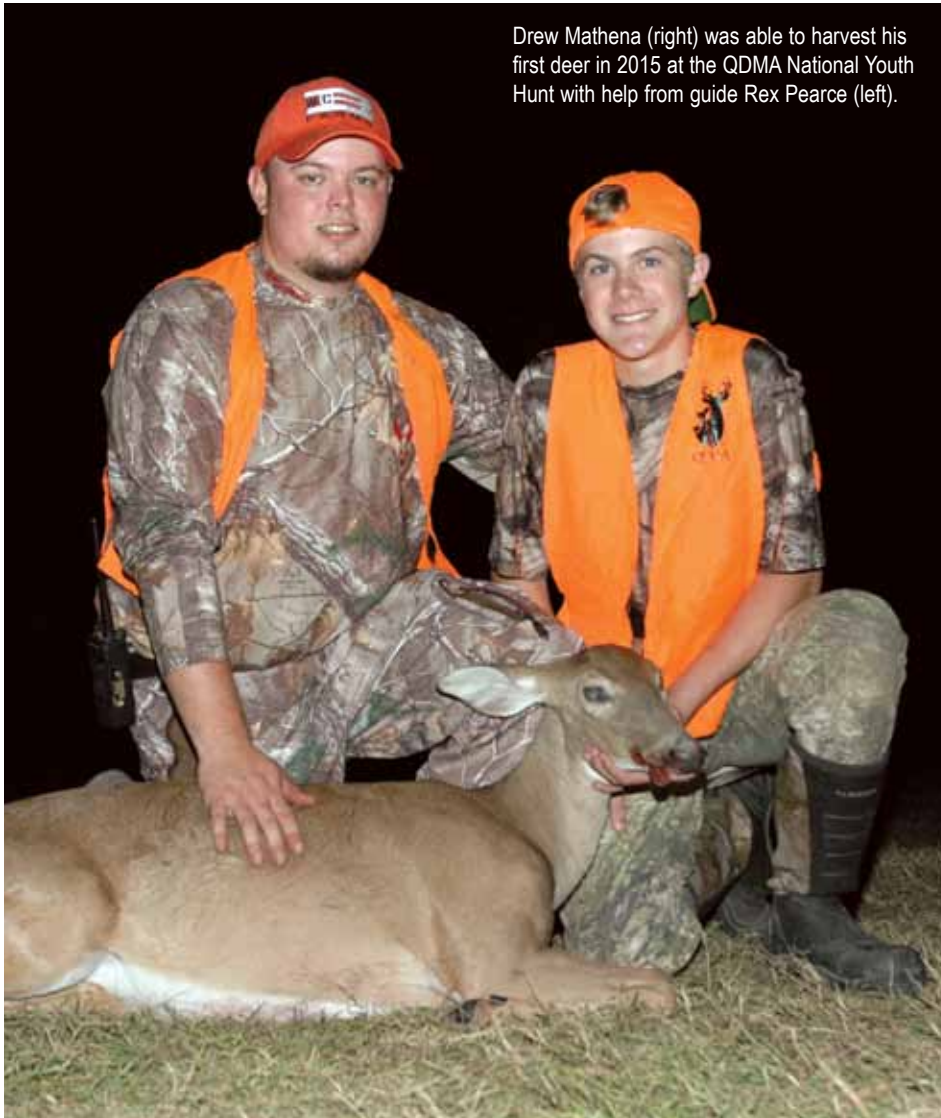
State	1½ Years Old			2½ Years Old			3½ and Older		
	2012	2013	2014	2012	2013	2014	2012	2013	2014
Illinois	40	44	42	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indiana	41	39	*	38	38	*	21	23	*
Iowa	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Kansas	14	21	16	41	33	35	45	46	49
Kentucky	32	28	28	39	43	44	29	29	28
Michigan	53	47	43	28	32	32	19	21	25
Minnesota	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Missouri**	25(55)	*	15(40)	44(24)	*	49(36)	31(22)	*	36(24)
Nebraska	28	25	24	38	40	39	34	35	36
North Dakota	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Ohio	46	48	45	31	32	35	23	20	20
South Dakota	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Wisconsin	54	53	48	27	28	31	19	19	21
Midwest Average	39	38	34	35	35	37	27	28	30
Connecticut	40	44	45	*	*	*	*	*	*
Delaware	*	53	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Maine	62	53	47	23	32	25	15	15	28
Maryland	55	53	47	*	*	*	*	*	*
Massachusetts	45	45	42	28	27	30	27	28	28
New Hampshire	43	45	46	28	32	29	29	23	25
New Jersey	56	39	46	37	41	45	7	20	9
New York	56	52	48	29	32	34	15	16	18
Pennsylvania	48	47	43	*	*	*	*	*	*
Rhode Island	37	33	36	28	36	38	25	31	26
Vermont	37	27	22	45	51	56	18	22	22
Virginia	47	48	43	31	22	29	21	30	28
West Virginia	43	34	26	34	40	47	23	26	27
Northeast Average	47	44	41	31	35	37	20	23	23
Alabama	28***	30***	28***	29***	35***	31***	43***	34***	41***
Arkansas	8	8	8	27	25	25	65	67	67
Florida	*	*	23***	*	*	44***	*	*	32***
Georgia	44	45	30	28	25	31	28	31	39
Louisiana	17***	15	17	16***	17	16	59***	68	67
Mississippi	12	**	13	16	**	13	72	**	74
North Carolina	*	*	40	*	*	36	*	*	24
Oklahoma	15	20	24	19	18	16	66	62	60
South Carolina	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Tennessee	44	43	37	38	40	44	18	17	19
Texas	14	23	21	19	19	17	67	58	62
Southeast Average	23	26	24	25	24	27	53	50	49
U.S. Average	37	36	33	30	31	34	32	34	34

*Data not provided/available

**Data from antler-point-restriction counties (non-antler-point-restriction counties)

***Data from check stations and/or DMAP areas

ANTLERLESS HARVEST



Drew Mathena (right) was able to harvest his first deer in 2015 at the QDMA National Youth Hunt with help from guide Rex Pearce (left).

Antlerless harvests vary widely among states and years due to differences in deer density, productivity, a state's goals (reducing, stabilizing, or increasing the deer population), weather, disease and other factors. However, we can learn much about an agency's management program by comparing the antlerless and antlered buck harvests. Continuing with the analysis of states in the Midwest, Northeast and Southeast, hunters from these regions harvested 2,958,256 antlerless deer in 2014. This was 11 percent below the 2013 antler-

less harvest. Overall, Texas topped the list with 265,104 antlerless deer, Georgia followed with 262,570, and Pennsylvania was third with 184,713.

Antlerless harvests were down across the board as the Southeast shot 9 percent fewer antlerless deer in 2014 than in 2013, the Midwest shot 12 percent fewer and the Northeast shot 14 percent fewer.

less deer per square mile than some areas have for a standing crop of bucks, does and fawns combined! Regionally, the Northeast (2.5) averaged shooting the most antlerless

deer PSM, followed by the Southeast (1.8) and the Midwest (1.3).

Antlerless harvests were down across the board as the Southeast shot 9 percent fewer antlerless deer in 2014 than in 2013, the Midwest shot 12 percent fewer, and the Northeast shot 14 percent fewer. In total, 29 of 37 states (78 percent) shot

Top-5 States Antlerless Harvest

State	2014 Harvest
Texas	265,104
Georgia	262,570
Pennsylvania	184,713
Alabama	171,288
Wisconsin	158,689

Top-5 States Antlerless Harvest Per Square Mile

State	2014 Harvest PSM
Maryland	6.0
Delaware	5.2
New Jersey	4.8
Georgia	4.6
Pennsylvania	4.1

5 States With Lowest Antlerless Harvest Per Square Mile

State	2014 Harvest PSM
Maine	0.2
Nebraska	0.2
North Dakota	0.2
South Dakota	0.2
New Hampshire	0.5

Top-5 States Antlerless Deer Per Antlered Buck Harvested

State	2014 Ratio
Delaware	2.5
Maryland	2.1
New Jersey	2.0
Georgia	1.8
Alabama	1.7

fewer antlerless deer in 2014. Looking at a longer timeframe, the Southeast shot 6 percent fewer antlerless deer in 2014 than the prior five-year average (2009-2013), the Northeast shot 9 percent fewer, and the Midwest shot 22 percent fewer antlerless deer in 2014. Twenty-eight of 37 states (76 percent) shot fewer antlerless deer in 2014

than the prior five-year average.

Eight of 13 (62 percent) Midwest states shot more antlerless deer than antlered bucks, 9 of 13 (69 percent) Northeastern states shot more antlerless deer, and 6 of 11 (55 percent) Southeastern states shot more antlerless deer than antlered bucks in 2014. Reduced antlerless harvests are

necessary in areas where deer herds have been balanced with the habitat and/or when other mortality factors (such as predation or disease) are increasing. However, very few states should be harvesting more antlered bucks than antlerless deer on a regular basis.

ESTIMATED ANTLERLESS DEER HARVEST

State	2012	2013	2014	% Change 2013-2014	2009-2013 Average**	% Change 2014 to 5yr avg.**	2014 Antlerless PSM*	2014 Antlerless per Antlered
Illinois	111,130	90,845	84,999	-6	109,196	-22	1.5	1.4
Indiana	90,312	79,395	74,387	-6	81,755	-9	2.1	1.6
Iowa	67,681	59,953	57,053	-5	73,613	-22	1.0	1.3
Kansas	48,036	48,424	51,761	7	47,294	9	0.6	1.2
Kentucky	67,212	76,649	72,818	-5	61,419	19	1.8	1.1
Michigan	191,364	175,737	144,139	-18	199,491	-28	2.5	0.8
Minnesota	89,498	84,916	58,406	-31	91,947	-36	0.7	0.7
Missouri	189,380	147,109	142,503	-3	174,258	-18	2.1	1.2
Nebraska	24,974	15,213	17,730	17	29,676	-40	0.2	0.7
North Dakota	19,280	15,148	12,902	-15	29,554	-56	0.2	0.7
Ohio	137,761	120,503	107,286	-11	143,421	-25	2.6	1.6
South Dakota	31,782	23,548	14,453	-39	38,523	-62	0.2	0.5
Wisconsin	199,830	198,893	158,689	-20	194,089	-18	2.9	1.1
Midwest Total	1,268,240	1,136,333	997,126	-12	1,274,236	-22	1.3	1.1
Connecticut	6,979	7,269	6,500	-11	6,788	-4	1.3	1.3
Delaware	9,599	10,119	10,172	1	9,692	5	5.2	2.5
Maine	6,118	8,035	6,325	-21	6,482	-2	0.2	0.4
Maryland	57,048	63,749	58,602	-8	62,504	-6	6.0	2.1
Massachusetts	4,606	4,925	4,747	-4	4,890	-3	0.6	0.7
New Hampshire	4,953	5,369	4,653	-13	4,614	1	0.5	0.7
New Jersey	32,190	33,083	35,292	7	33,178	6	4.8	2.0
New York	123,964	128,851	130,068	1	123,011	6	2.8	1.2
Pennsylvania	209,250	218,640	184,713	-16	206,090	-10	4.1	1.5
Rhode Island	1,154	1,482	1,242	-16	1,231	1	1.2	1.3
Vermont	5,684	5,276	5,634	7	5,983	-6	0.6	0.7
Virginia	118,345	137,973	103,807	-25	133,415	-22	2.6	1.2
West Virginia	59,788	75,446	52,922	-30	64,572	-18	2.2	1.0
Northeast Total	639,678	700,217	604,677	-14	662,450	-9	2.5	1.3
Alabama	144,300	171,560	171,288	0	180,832	-5	3.4	1.7
Arkansas	116,531	122,067	118,458	-3	109,517	8	2.3	1.3
Florida	53,300	37,269	38,255	3	53,382	-28	0.7	0.6
Georgia	255,294	316,927	262,570	-17	283,493	-7	4.6	1.8
Louisiana	65,790	73,128	57,359	-22	66,871	-14	1.3	0.7
Mississippi	147,000	152,061	145,328	-4	154,344	-6	3.1	1.4
North Carolina	86,366	101,572	80,190	-21	92,839	-14	1.6	1.1
Oklahoma	45,454	35,812	45,490	27	44,846	1	0.7	0.9
South Carolina	101,181	111,324	103,006	-7	109,458	-6	3.4	1.0
Tennessee	88,410	73,898	69,405	-6	81,105	-14	1.7	0.7
Texas	242,325	295,042	265,104	-10	278,490	-5	1.0	0.8
Southeast Total	1,345,951	1,490,660	1,356,453	-9	1,444,500	-6	1.8	1.1
U.S. Total	3,253,869	3,327,210	2,958,256	-11	3,381,186	-13	1.7	1.1

*PSM: Per Square Mile in 2014 **To correct an error, data in these two columns have been updated since this report was first published.

AGE STRUCTURE OF THE ANTLERLESS HARVEST



QDMA also acquired the age structure of the antlerless harvest data for most states. Thirty states reported the percentage of their antlerless harvest that was fawns, and 26 states reported the percentage that was also 1½, 2½ and 3½ years or older. In 2014, the average antlerless harvest that was fawns was 23 percent; thus less than one in four

antlerless deer harvested was a fawn. The Southeast averaged the lowest percentage of fawns (15 percent) and the Midwest averaged the most (31 percent of the antlerless harvest). Individually Florida (6 percent) shot the fewest fawns and Wisconsin (45 percent) shot the most.

Monitoring the percentage of fawns in the antlerless harvest is one method for estimating the fawn recruitment rate, and this rate is one of the most important pieces of data a deer manager needs when assessing a herd's growth potential and applying a prescribed antlerless harvest.

The accompanying table also includes a state-by-state look at the percentage of the antlerless harvest in 2013 and 2014 that was 1½, 2½ and 3½ years or older.

Monitoring the percentage of fawns in the antlerless harvest is one method for estimating the fawn recruitment rate, and this rate is one of the most important pieces of data a deer manager needs when assessing a herd's growth potential and applying a prescribed antlerless harvest.

Monitoring how these percentages change over time is valuable and that's especially true for the 3½-years-and-older age class. This age class includes mature animals, and they typically are also the most productive individuals and most successful mothers. Nationally, over a third (35 percent) of the antlerless deer shot in 2014 reached

the 3½-year-and-older age class. The Southeast leads the regions with 42 percent of antlerless deer in this age class, and Maine and Texas lead all states with 53 percent being 3½ years and older.

Age structure data is the backbone of deer management programs. Monitoring the age

structure of the harvest is key for deer managers to make wise management decisions, including the appropriate number of antlerless deer to harvest annually in each deer management unit. Good age data prevents managers from under- or over-harvesting our deer herds. Many hunters learn how to estimate the age of deer they harvest and all hunters should provide every piece of data requested by their wildlife agency.

Lowest Percentage of Fawns in Antlerless Harvest

State	2014 Percentage
Florida	6
Mississippi	7
Texas	7
Arkansas	12
Louisiana	13

Highest Percentage of Fawns in Antlerless Harvest

State	2014 Percentage
Wisconsin	45
Ohio	42
Massachusetts	40
Pennsylvania	39
Illinois	33
Minnesota	33

Highest Percentage of 3½-Plus in Antlerless Harvest

State	2014 Percentage
Maine	53
Texas	53
Mississippi	52
New Hampshire	49
Oklahoma	49

PERCENTAGE OF ANTLERLESS HARVEST BY AGE CLASS

State	Fawn		1½ Years Old		2½ Years Old		3½ and Older	
	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014
Illinois	35	33	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indiana	29	*	25	*	26	*	20	*
Iowa	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Kansas	7	15	15	13	46	38	32	34
Kentucky	8	25	26	20	40	32	26	23
Michigan	28	28	24	18	17	19	30	35
Minnesota	*	33	*	*	*	*	*	*
Missouri	*	27	*	24	*	17	*	32
Nebraska	23	28	25	21	26	26	26	25
North Dakota	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Ohio	41	42	18	16	20	22	21	20
South Dakota	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Wisconsin	43	45	18	18	18	17	21	20
Midwest Average	27	31	22	19	28	24	25	27
Connecticut	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Delaware	34	*	24	*	20	*	22	*
Maine	33	18	17	15	21	13	29	53
Maryland	33	31	23	24	*	*	*	*
Massachusetts	46	40	17	19	16	18	21	23
New Hampshire	33	16	13	19	18	16	37	49
New Jersey	11	19	35	28	30	32	24	22
New York	31	31	22	19	19	20	27	30
Pennsylvania	39	39	19	19	*	*	*	*
Rhode Island	22	14	7	16	*	39	*	31
Vermont	17	28	18	12	13	15	48	45
Virginia	38	24	18	21	18	23	26	32
West Virginia	26	15	23	19	21	28	30	38
Northeast Average	30	25	20	19	20	23	29	36
Alabama	21**	16**	18**	20**	22**	20**	39**	44**
Arkansas	13	12	18	18	21	23	48	47
Florida	*	6**	*	18**	*	30**	*	46**
Georgia	37	19	20	25	20	25	23	31
Louisiana	12	13	21	20	21	22	46	45
Mississippi	*	7	*	23	*	18	*	52
North Carolina	*	23	*	21	*	25	*	31
Oklahoma	17	18	17	18	14	15	52	49
South Carolina	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Tennessee	18	26	30	24	28	28	23	22
Texas	7	7	18	18	22	22	52	53
Southeast Average	18	15	20	21	21	23	40	42
U.S. Average	25	23	21	19	23	23	32	35

*Data not provided/available

**Data from check stations and/or DMAP areas

DEER HARVEST BY WEAPON TYPE

The average hunter today has much longer seasons and more weapon opportunities than he or she had in the past. To assess how hunters take advantage of these opportunities, we surveyed state wildlife agencies to determine the percentage of the total deer harvest taken with a bow, rifle/shotgun, muzzleloader, or other weapon (pistol, etc.) during the 2014, 2013 and 2012 seasons. Nationally, muzzleloader hunters took 11 percent of the total deer harvest, bowhunters took 23 percent, and firearm (rifle/shotgun) hunters took 65 percent of the total deer harvest in 2014.

Nationally, muzzleloader hunters took 11 percent of the total deer harvest, bow hunters took 23 percent, and firearm (rifle/shotgun) hunters took 65 percent of the total deer harvest in 2014.

Regionally, bowhunters averaged the highest percentage of the harvest in the Northeast (30 percent). Muzzleloader hunters also averaged their highest percentage in the Northeast (16 percent). Surprisingly, firearm hunters in the Northeast took just over half of the deer (52 percent). In the Southeast, firearms reign supreme as three of four deer taken in 2014 (75 percent) were with a rifle or shotgun. Muzzleloading (10 percent) and bowhunting (15 percent) paled in comparison to the firearm harvest. In the Midwest muzzleloading was least popular



Despite advances in their technology and accuracy, the percentage of the annual deer harvest attributed to muzzleloaders has remained stagnant over the last decade. Hunters in the Northeast take the most advantage of these "primitive" firearms, using them for 16 percent of the region's deer harvest.

Top-5 States Percentage of Harvest by Bow

State	2014 Percentage
New Jersey	57
Connecticut	48
Ohio	46
Massachusetts	43
Illinois	39

Top-5 States Percentage of Harvest by Rifle/Shotgun

State	2014 Percentage
South Carolina	89
Texas	89
Alabama	86
Maine	86
South Dakota	85

Top-5 States Percentage of Harvest by Muzzleloader

State	2014 Percentage
Rhode Island	42
Tennessee	27
Virginia	25
New Hampshire	23
Indiana / Massachusetts / Vermont	20

at only 7 percent of the harvest, and a firearm harvest of 67 percent was far above the Northeast and close to the Southeast.

Individually, New Jersey leads the U.S. in the percentage of total harvest taken by archers (57 percent), South Carolina and Texas had the highest percentage taken by firearms hunters (89 percent), and Rhode Island tops the list with percentage taken by muzzleloader hunters (42 percent).

More hunters take advantage of bows and muzzleloaders today, and that's great for the future of hunting. More seasons to go afield help even "occasional" hunters stay engaged, and it greatly enhances the opportunities to mentor youth and new hunters. Finally, expanded opportunities help retain aging hunters, and every hunter is critically important to our wildlife management system.

PERCENTAGE OF DEER HARVEST BY WEAPON TYPE

State	Bow			Rifle/Shotgun			Muzzleloader			Other		
	2012	2013	2014	2012	2013	2014	2012	2013	2014	2012	2013	2014
Alabama	*	12	12	*	86	86	*	2	2	*	0	0
Arkansas	14	9	12	73	74	77	13	14	10	0	3	0
Florida	27	21	28	64	68	63	9	7	8	0	4	1
Georgia	16	16	16	82	81	82	3	3	2	0	0	0
Louisiana	8	7	6	82	81	83	10	12	11	0	0	0
Mississippi	17	18	17	57	60	66	26	22	17	0	0	0
North Carolina	7	8	11	79	77	78	11	11	11	3	4	0
Oklahoma	22	24	27	58	59	58	20	17	15	0	0	0
South Carolina	7	6	8	89	89	89	3	2	3	2	2	0
Tennessee	11	12	13	64	65	59	24	24	27	0	0	0
Texas	*	*	10	*	*	89	*	*	1	*	*	0
Southeast Average	14	13	15	72	74	75	13	11	10	0	1	0
Connecticut	40	*	48	43	*	36	7	*	7	10	*	10
Delaware	17	21	20	62	60	63	19	18	16	1	1	1
Maine	8	9	9	87	87	86	4	4	5	1	0	0
Maryland	31	34	34	51	46	49	18	20	17	0	0	0
Massachusetts	36	43	43	45	35	37	19	22	20	0	0	0
New Hampshire	27	31	28	43	44	46	26	21	23	4	4	3
New Jersey	52	56	57	35	32	32	13	12	11	0	0	0
New York	21	22	22	67	67	67	11	10	10	1	<1	1
Pennsylvania	26	15	31	66	64	62	8	22	7	0	0	0
Rhode Island	31	37	34	18	24	24	51	39	42	0	0	0
Vermont	24	23	23	49	60	45	18	17	20	13	0	12
Virginia	12	12	14	62	66	61	26	22	25	0	0	0
West Virginia	19	20	21	77	75	74	4	5	5	0	0	0
Northeast Average	26	27	30	54	55	52	17	18	16	1	0	2
Illinois	33	39	39	55	51	59	12	10	2	1	1	0
Indiana	26	19	29	51	52	51	22	20	20	1	9	1
Iowa	20	20	21	67	69	68	13	11	11	0	0	0
Kansas	28	29	34	67	63	61	5	5	4	0	4	0
Kentucky	14	15	15	73	72	74	11	11	11	2	2	0
Michigan	31	31	36	54	55	57	7	8	7	8	7	0
Minnesota	12	11	3	84	85	84	4	4	12	0	0	1
Missouri	16	20	19	76	75	77	6	5	4	0	0	0
Nebraska	*	10	*	*	82	*	*	6	*	*	2	*
North Dakota	16	16	18	78	77	76	1	1	1	3	6	5
Ohio	39	45	46	46	40	42	10	12	12	5	3	0
South Dakota	12	13	13	85	85	85	3	2	2	0	0	0
Wisconsin	26	26	27	72	73	71	2	2	2	0	0	0
Midwest Average	23	23	25	67	68	67	8	7	7	2	3	1
U.S. Average	21	21	23	65	65	65	13	12	11	1	1	1

*Data not provided/available

HOW DO STATE AGENCIES ESTIMATE DEER HARVESTS?

Every year we compile deer harvest estimates by state in our Whitetail Report and release them to the hunting public, and every year we receive multiple responses that go something like this:

“Those numbers can’t be accurate. I’ve never been asked how many deer I killed.”

It’s a common and perennial response, so here’s an explanation of how your state agency can have an accurate estimate of the deer harvest even if they didn’t talk to you, examine your deer, or require you to tag it. It’s possible through the science of random sampling.

Some states may be small enough or have a short enough deer season to physically count and examine every deer at mandatory check stations. But wildlife agencies in most states cannot do this. Lengthening seasons, large land areas and massive numbers of hunters make it impractical. Instead, states typically use one of three methods. First they may

Twenty-one of 33 states surveyed (66 percent) produced a total harvest estimate while 12 states reported a minimum harvest number.

require harvested deer to be reported and use that number as the minimum harvest estimate. The problem with this is even while it may be required, many hunters simply do not report their harvested deer. Second, they may use the minimum harvest method and then apply a correction factor to estimate what the total harvest is. The correction factor accounts for successful hunters who did not report their deer. Finally, many states use a survey method – usually a phone or mail survey – to randomly sample hunters and estimate things like days spent afield, harvest numbers, and species hunted. To get statistically accurate results with low margins of error, all you have to do is survey a large enough sample. Wildlife agencies do not have to survey anywhere near 100 percent of hunters to get a valid estimate of the harvest, one that is more than adequate for tracking trends and making statewide management decisions. In fact, you might be surprised how

few it takes to get a sound estimate.

Using an online random survey calculator, we ran the numbers for Georgia, which has a population of around 250,000 resident and non-resident deer hunters. You would only need to randomly survey about 2,500 hunters (1 percent of the population) to get results with a margin of error as low as 2 percent, and be 95 percent confident in that error rate. Try the calculator for yourself. You’ll see that the smaller the population you are surveying, the higher the percentage you must survey to maintain accuracy. If your population includes a total of 100 people, you will have to survey nearly all of them to get the same level of accuracy you can get by surveying only 1 percent of Georgia deer hunters. It’s the same reason why political analysts can predict the winner of an election hours, if not days, prior to the election actually occurring.

To learn the specific technique used and harvest estimate produced, we surveyed state wildlife agencies in the Midwest, Northeast and Southeast and asked whether the harvest figures they provided for this report (see pages 5 and 9) were minimum or total estimates and how they determined those numbers.

Twenty-one of 33 states (66 percent) produced a total harvest estimate while 12 states reported a minimum harvest number. The vast majority of states in the Northeast and Southeast calculate total estimates while more than half of Midwestern states provide a minimum harvest estimate.

With respect to technique used, eight states in the Midwest use mandatory reporting of harvested

deer and four employ a hunter survey. All Northeast states that responded to our survey use mandatory reporting and two (New York and Pennsylvania) also use a correction factor that accounts (and corrects) for hunters who do not report their harvest even though it is mandatory to do so. In the Southeast, eight of 11 states use hunter surveys to produce their harvest estimate.

STATE HARVEST ESTIMATES AND TECHNIQUES FOR DETERMINATION

State	Harvest Estimates	Technique
Midwest		
Illinois	Total	Mandatory Reporting
Indiana	*	*
Iowa	Minimum	Mandatory Reporting
Kansas	Minimum	Hunter Survey
Kentucky	Minimum	Mandatory Reporting
Michigan	Total	Hunter Survey
Minnesota	Minimum	Mandatory Reporting
Missouri	Minimum	Mandatory Reporting
Nebraska	Total	Mandatory Reporting
North Dakota	Minimum	Hunter Survey
Ohio	Minimum	Mandatory Reporting
South Dakota	Total	Hunter Survey
Wisconsin	Total	Mandatory Reporting
Northeast		
Connecticut	*	*
Delaware	Total	Mandatory Reporting
Maine	Total	Mandatory Reporting
Maryland	Minimum	Mandatory Reporting
Massachusetts	Minimum	Mandatory Reporting
New Hampshire	Total	Mandatory Reporting
New Jersey	*	Mandatory Reporting
New York	Total	Mandatory Reporting
Pennsylvania	Total	Mandatory Reporting
Rhode Island	Total	Mandatory Reporting
Vermont	Total	Mandatory Reporting
Virginia	Minimum	Mandatory Reporting
West Virginia	Total	Mandatory Reporting
Southeast		
Alabama	Minimum	Hunter Survey
Arkansas	Total	Mandatory Reporting
Florida	Total	Hunter Survey
Georgia	Total	Hunter Survey
Louisiana	Total	Hunter Survey
Mississippi	Total	Hunter Survey
North Carolina	*	Hunter Survey
Oklahoma	Minimum	Mandatory Reporting
South Carolina	Total	Hunter Survey
Tennessee	Total	Mandatory Reporting
Texas	Total	Hunter Survey

* data not available/provided

CANADA UPDATE



Susan C. Morse

By Rob Argue, QDMA Canada

It should be no surprise that the big story with Canadian deer herds was the damaging winter of 2013 and the subsequently shorter but more frigid winter of 2014.

The severity of a Canadian winter is the number one limiting factor for whitetails at their most northern limits. Increased predation, lower birthing rates and simply the general health of deer that survive to spring green-up are all greatly impacted by both the amount of snow received and duration of our winters. As I write this on December 21, 2015, it is raining outside on my still greenish lawn and a few degrees above freezing. A year

ago, we were already experiencing frigid cold temperatures and, worse yet in 2013, we already had six weeks of snow on the ground here in Eastern Ontario. Although this past hunting season was one of the poorest for hunting in recent years due to lower numbers, warm temperatures and nocturnal movement, it certainly bodes well looking forward and will hopefully give our herds the opportunity to bounce back in both health and numbers in 2016.

Data for this report was received from the eastern half of the country for 2014, including Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec and some harvest data from Ontario. Not all provinces record the same data, require mandatory reporting or monitor the harvests equally, but similar trends

can certainly be observed across the participating provinces.

One obvious trend resulting from the harsh winter was that the success rates were significantly lower than in recent years. From west to east, Ontario and Quebec hunters took just over 55,000 deer in each province, New Brunswick just over 10,000 and Nova Scotia's harvested just under 7,000. Quebec's harvest was roughly 53 percent antlered, New Brunswick 84 percent antlered and Nova Scotia had a 70 percent antlered harvest rate.

Hunters across all provinces used primarily rifles/shotguns followed by archery equipment and then muzzle-loaders. The exception to this rule was Nova Scotia where significantly more hunters use blackpowder versus archery gear.

Moving to the enforcement of deer hunting legislation, all provinces reported having fewer conservation/wildlife officers to respond to hunting violations with an increased demand on their time in 2015. Predator populations were also reported as

either increasing or stable.

Increased winter stress/mortality, predation and a lack of law enforcement resources all had negative effects on our deer herds in recent years. The good news is that many of these pressures can be mitigated by individual hunters and landowners. Although none of us can control Mother Nature, we can alter forestry practices and habitat management activities to help deer survive harsh winters, target predatory species through either hunting or trapping, and we can all certainly do a better job of reporting poaching and illegal activities to our provincial natural resource agencies. Much of the Canadian deer's future is truly in the hands, chainsaws and phones of all of us!

STATE WILDLIFE AGENCIES' BIGGEST ISSUES/CONCERNS MANAGING DEER

Numerous issues and concerns impact state wildlife agencies' abilities to effectively manage deer populations. Some issues are regional such as severe winter weather in the extreme north, while others are universal throughout the whitetail's range like disease. We surveyed stakeholders at the 2014 North American Whitetail Summit to gauge their opinion of the biggest issues impacting deer management, and those results can be found online at QDMA.com. State wildlife agencies only represented one of six stakeholder groups voting on those issues. Also, since not every state was represented at the Whitetail Summit, and since some issues are very regional or state specific, for this report we asked state wild-

life agencies to list two of the biggest issues/concerns relating to deer management in their jurisdiction. Many important issues were highlighted and can be seen in the accompanying table. However the top two issues by far were disease/captive deer and hunter access. Disease/captive deer was listed by 17 of 34 states (50 percent), and hunter access was listed by nine states (26 percent). The next closest issues were hunter recruitment and habitat change/loss as both were listed by five states (15 percent).

QDMA Recommendations

Interestingly, only Maine included predation as one of its biggest issues, and

only West Virginia listed baiting/feeding, although others may have included that within disease concerns. Importantly New Jersey included "too few deer staff," and we wholeheartedly agree. Because of the sheer volume of hunters who pursue deer and as a result the revenue generated by deer hunters, we feel every state's deer program should include additional staff to work on this keystone species.

Disagree with what's listed for your state? If your personal top issue isn't listed, that doesn't mean it's not important to your state wildlife agency. It just means it likely doesn't require as much time or resources or it isn't having as large an impact as the issues included in this table.

STATE AGENCIES' BIGGEST ISSUES/CONCERNS RELATING TO DEER MANAGEMENT

	Issue 1	Issue 2
Southeast		
Alabama	hunter recruitment	adequate data collection
Arkansas	CWD/disease	commercialization/hunter expectations
Florida	educating hunters on managing deer in low quality habitats	low hunter recruitment
Georgia	captive deer	female deer harvest
Louisiana	feral swine	intensive forest management practices
Mississippi	high fence enclosures	chronic overpopulation/nutritional stress
North Carolina	CWD	hunter retention/recruitment
Oklahoma	hunter access	captive cervids
South Carolina	lack of regulatory flexibility	*
Tennessee	under-harvest of deer	CWD
Texas	land fragmentation/habitat loss	CWD/captive cervids
Northeast		
Connecticut	*	*
Delaware	agricultural damage	outside interests
Maine	deer wintering areas	predation
Maryland	political interference	lack of access for deer hunting
Massachusetts	lack of hunting access	restrictive bylaws
New Hampshire	winter severity	management of wintering habitat
New Jersey	hunter access	too few deer staff
New York	urban/suburban deer abundance	hunter access
Pennsylvania	CWD	lack of hunter harvest reporting
Rhode Island	difficulty in establishing new management tools	degradation of resource by nuisance concerns
Vermont	*	*
Virginia	declining deer hunter numbers	hunter access
West Virginia	hunter misperception of QDM	baiting/feeding
Midwest		
Illinois	CWD	hunters lack of concern for CWD
Indiana	*	*
Iowa	hunter access	CWD
Kansas	hunter access	increasing social and political pressure to privatize wildlife
Kentucky	disease concerns relative to captive cervid industry	deer population modeling
Michigan	decreasing hunter numbers	CWD/TB
Minnesota	balancing deer numbers with hunter desires	informing public that monitoring deer pops is not a perfect science
Missouri	CWD	*
Nebraska	disease	crop damage
North Dakota	loss of habitat	CWD
Ohio	inability to effectively communicate with hunters	lack of unified, engaged deer hunting voice
South Dakota	habitat loss	hunter access
Wisconsin	CWD	habitat changes

* Data not provided

UPDATE ON CWD / CAPTIVE CERVIDS

By now every deer hunter has heard of chronic wasting disease (CWD), and unfortunately more are being directly impacted by it every year. Chronic wasting disease is an always fatal disease found in most deer species, including elk, moose, mule and white-tailed deer, and CWD has now been identified in 23 U.S. states, two Canadian provinces and Korea (from an elk imported from Canada in 1997). Contagions spread through urine, feces, saliva, blood, deer parts, and especially via live deer. Importantly, there is no vaccine or cure. New research shows plants uptake prions from infected soil, and hamsters fed prion-contaminated plant samples developed prion disease. In addition, recent research provides evidence of some infection in humanized mice. These results do not cast a favorable light for CWD, deer, and American agriculture.

CWD is also very, very expensive. For example, according to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) Texas had been testing about 2,500 deer per year for a cost of \$75,000. However, once CWD was confirmed in two captive white-tailed deer herds, TPWD had to test 7,000 deer in 2015 for a cost to sportsmen and women of \$210,000! That money could be far better spent on habitat acquisition and management, hunter access, and other hunter related items.

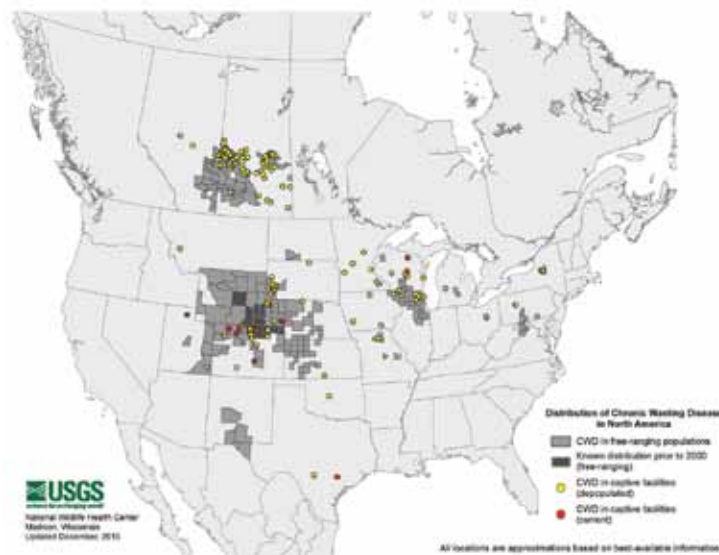
To help combat the spread of CWD, Vermont and Virginia banned the use of deer urine attractants last year. Pennsylvania had previously banned its use in the state's disease management areas. This is yet another example of how CWD negatively impacts hunters once it is confirmed in an area.

While many states are taking additional precautions to safeguard their wild deer herds from CWD, North Carolina made national news by going against the wishes of the state's sportsmen and wildlife professionals by greatly expanding captive deer farming opportunities. Given the lack

of a practical live animal test for CWD, moving live deer among captive facilities is the most likely pathway for introducing CWD into new areas and/or captive facilities. As such, the vast majority of the scientific community strongly discourages live transport of deer among facilities, and that's why many states have closed their borders to the movement of deer.

CWD made numerous other headlines in 2015 and some of the biggest included:

- Michigan confirms first case of CWD in free-ranging white-tailed deer
- Missouri Department of Conservation reports 11 new cases of CWD in Missouri



deer

- CWD detected in Medina County (TX) captive deer
- CWD positive white-tailed deer found on Eau Claire County (WI) farm
- Eau Claire County (WI) whitetail herd destroyed due to CWD
- Latest round of testing finds CWD in new hunt areas (WY)
- Experimental CWD vaccine fails initial testing
- CWD kills 19 percent of deer herd annually (WY)

If you're like most deer hunters, the line between breaking and old news relative to CWD has probably become a little blurry, and maybe that's the point. If you just glazed over the above headlines, perhaps CWD is in the news way too often. Maybe it's even becoming commonplace.

What's that mean for the individual hunter who lives in a CWD-positive area? Or what does it mean for the future of hunting as a whole? Well, when CWD news becomes everyday news – that's not a good sign. And, when prevalence of an always fatal disease continues to spread and be introduced in new areas, deer hunters everywhere can expect to be impacted in a very negative way. This will directly impact what hunters see when they go afield, the annual harvest and ultimately hunter participation and retention. It will in effect change the hunting tradition locally. What about for their neighbors?

Dispersing younger deer will ensure they experience the same thing down the road. What's it mean for you and us as deer hunters at large? Inclusive of topics such as health risks and population control, it can potentially mean a loss of how deer and deer hunting are perceived by the non-hunting public, why we hunt will be trivialized and possibly could begin to unweave the fabric of a long-standing deer hunting culture in North America.

QDMA Recommendations

Disease transmission among free ranging and from captive to free-ranging deer is a major threat to the future of wildlife management and hunting in North America. The QDMA recommends a continued and strengthened effort by wildlife professionals to study, monitor and evaluate solutions for minimizing the spread of CWD – and not take a “learn to live with it” attitude, as appears to have settled among some in the hunting and professional community. The QDMA also recommends maintaining or enhancing strict movement restrictions (like border closings, etc.) and testing protocols on captive deer, as well as returning/maintaining full authority over captive deer facilities and regulations with the state/provincial wildlife agencies. Currently, some state/provinces have this authority while the Department of Agriculture shares it or maintains sole possession in others.

STATE-OWNED LAND OPEN TO DEER HUNTING



and 20 of 29 states (69 percent) reported that the volume of land available in 2015 was more than compared to one decade earlier. No states reported less land open to deer hunting. That's a very positive statistic, especially considering the importance of the issue. Much of this acreage is

There are at least 50 million total acres of state-owned land open to the public today for deer hunting, and 20 of 29 states (69 percent) reported that the volume of land available in 2015 was more than compared to one decade earlier.

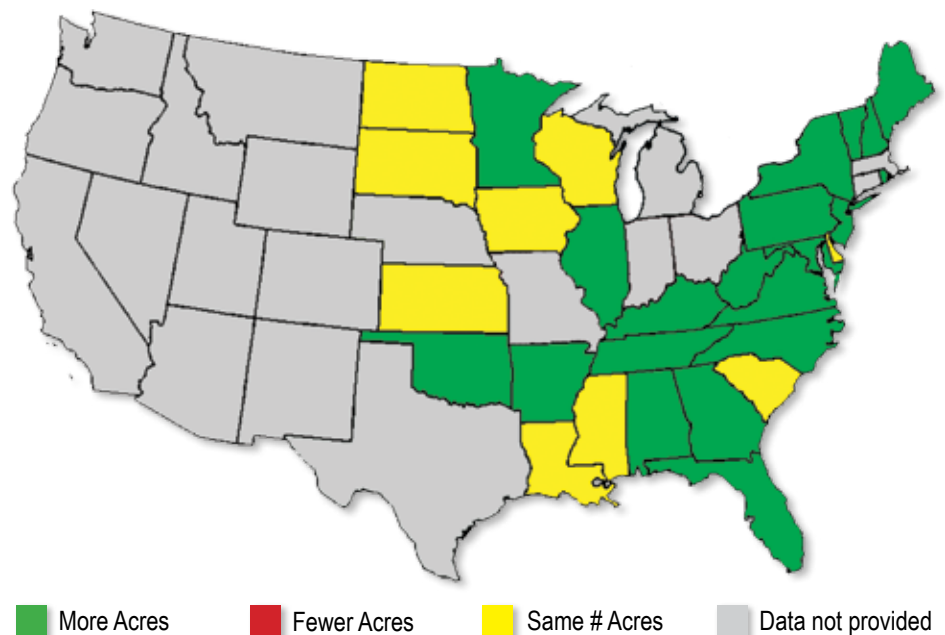
actively managed by each state's wildlife agency, while some lands are administered by other governing bodies, such as state parks or forests.

Of course, opportunity and access vary widely by state. Some maintain 1 percent or less of the total state area in accessible public hunting ground, while others provide north of 10 or even 20 percent.

Research shows that finding a place to hunt is critical in maintaining an individual's interest in the sport of deer hunting. Thus, hunting access is a very big deal to individual hunters. However, a net-loss trend of hunter access at a national scale directly impacts our ability to manage entire deer populations through hunting. That's a much bigger deal. It's also why public access remains to be one of the largest issues facing deer hunting today, and why we at QDMA are interested in learning more about current trends in hunting access. Since we routinely survey state wildlife agencies in the Midwest, Northeast and Southeast about a whole host of topics, we figured this year we'd also ask about the total acreage of state-owned lands opened to deer hunting today versus 10 years ago. The results may surprise you.

Believe it or not, there are at least 50 million total acres of state-owned land open to the public today for deer hunting,

CHANGE IN ACREAGE OF STATE-OWNED LANDS OPEN TO DEER HUNTING, 2005 TO 2015



QDMA Recommendations

Even though the vast majority of white-tailed deer hunting and management occurs on private lands throughout North America, we feel that maintaining, promoting and increasing public hunting access will remain an important tool in the fight against declining hunter numbers. Therefore, QDMA recommends that all states increase general public awareness of current access points for deer hunting through new and innovative techniques, such as Smartphone apps and online interactive mapping programs. Also, efforts should be made to open up more state-owned lands presently closed to deer hunting. This, more than anything, will produce the fastest, greatest impact. Finally, a unique way that states and private landowners can work together to increase public hunting land is through landscape-level conservation easements, where the state purchases development rights and in trade the private landowner maintains open recreational opportunities.



STATE-OWNED LANDS OPEN TO DEER HUNTING

State	State Owned Acres	% of Total State Area	2015 vs. 2005 More/Less/Same
Alabama	780,000	2	more
Arkansas	3,900,000	12	more
Florida	5,900,000	17	more
Georgia	481,000	1	more
Louisiana	1,100,000	4	same
Mississippi	672,839	2	same
North Carolina	562,415	2	more
Oklahoma	1,838,360	4	more
South Carolina	1,095,607	6	same
Tennessee	1,507,750	6	more
Texas	*	*	*
Southeast Total	17,837,971		
Connecticut	*	*	*
Delaware	75,000	6	same
Maine	92,462	<1	more
Maryland	390,000	6	more
Massachusetts	300,000	6	*
New Hampshire	230,000	4	more
New Jersey	660,000	14	more
New York	4,000,000	13	more
Pennsylvania	4,000,000	14	more
Rhode Island	50,000	7	more
Vermont	345,000	6	more
Virginia	267,700	1	more
West Virginia	348,484	2	more
Northeast Total	10,758,646		
Illinois	359,369	1	more
Indiana	*	*	*
Iowa	450,000	1	same
Kansas	420,000	1	same
Kentucky	624,626	2	more
Michigan	4,000,000	11	*
Minnesota	4,000,000	8	more
Missouri	1,012,082	2	*
Nebraska	1,000,000	2	*
North Dakota	2,000,000	5	same
Ohio	*	*	*
South Dakota	1,031,000	2	same
Wisconsin	7,000,000	20	same
Midwest Total	21,897,077		
U.S. Total	50,493,694		

* Data not provided

Top States

Acreege of State-Owned Land Open to Deer Hunting

State	Total Acres
Wisconsin	7 million
Florida	5.9 million
Michigan	>4 million
Minnesota	4 million
New York	4 million
Pennsylvania	4 million

Top-5 States

Percentage of State Area That is State-Owned and Open to Deer Hunting

State	Percentage
Wisconsin	20
Florida	17
New Jersey	14
Pennsylvania	14
New York	13

BEAR, COYOTE AND BOBCAT POPULATION TRENDS

Fawn recruitment rates have dramatically declined in many states during the past decade (see page 28). One suggested reason for this decline is increasing predator populations in many locations. To determine if these increases were actually occurring, we surveyed state wildlife agencies in the Midwest, Northeast and Southeast and asked whether the bear, coyote and bobcat populations in their states were increasing, decreasing, or stable.

With regard to black bears, they are increasing in 18 of 26 states (69 percent), stable in seven states (27 percent), and only declining in Minnesota. Bear populations are increasing in all 10 Southeastern states that have them. Seven states reported no bears while some didn't answer this survey question.

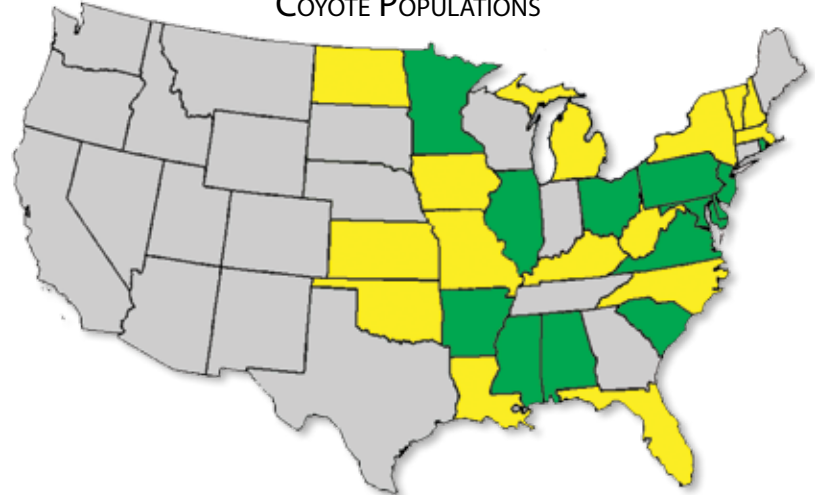
Coyotes are increasing in 18 of 28 states (64 percent), stable in 15 states (54 percent), and declining in none. Coyote populations are increasing in only 33 percent of Midwestern states, 50 percent of Southeastern states, and 50 percent of Northeastern states. The big coyote expansion of the recent past



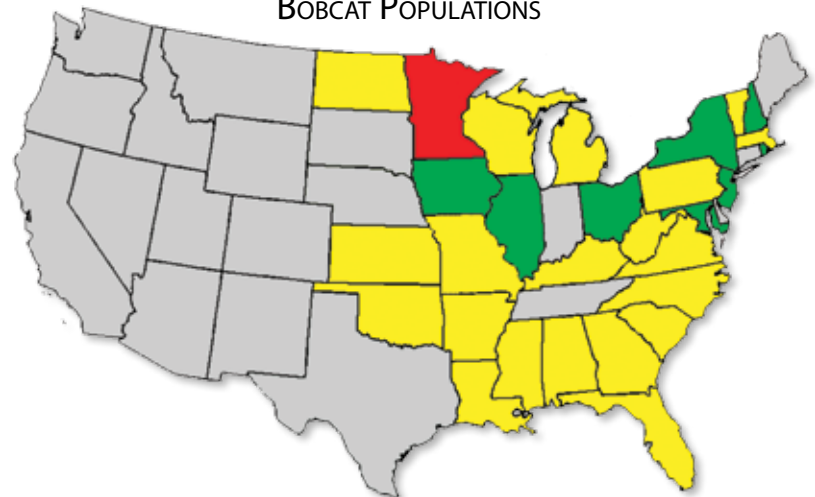
BEAR POPULATIONS



COYOTE POPULATIONS



BOBCAT POPULATIONS



■ Increasing
 ■ Decreasing
 ■ Stable
 ■ Data not available

appears to be over. All states that responded to this question reported having coyotes.

Bobcats are only increasing in eight of 29 states (28 percent), while they are stable in 20 states (69 percent), and declining in Minnesota. Bobcat populations are stable throughout the Southeast, in 60 percent of Midwestern states, and in half of the Northeastern states. Only Delaware reported having no bobcats.

QDMA Recommendations

Two states (Maryland and New Jersey) reported increases in all three predator populations, and nine states reported increases in two of three species. These and other predators provide an important component in the wildlife populations in their areas. Predators add richness, stability, and a sense of “wildness” to the environment. However, just like deer and other game species, their numbers need to be managed to be in balance with what the habitat and prey base can support. Monitoring population trends and impacts on other species allows state wildlife agencies to manage these species with appropriate hunting and trapping seasons.



BEAR, COYOTE AND BOBCAT POPULATION TRENDS BY STATE

State	Bear	Coyote	Bobcat
Southeast			
Alabama	increasing	increasing	stable
Arkansas	increasing	increasing	stable
Florida	increasing	stable	stable
Georgia	increasing	*	stable
Louisiana	increasing	stable	stable
Mississippi	increasing	increasing	stable
North Carolina	increasing	stable	stable
Oklahoma	increasing	stable	stable
South Carolina	increasing	increasing	stable
Tennessee	increasing	*	*
Texas	*	*	*
Northeast			
Connecticut	*	*	*
Delaware	none	increasing	none
Maine	increasing	*	*
Maryland	increasing	increasing	increasing
Massachusetts	increasing	stable	stable
New Hampshire	stable	stable	increasing
New Jersey	increasing	increasing	increasing
New York	increasing	stable	increasing
Pennsylvania	stable	increasing	stable
Rhode Island	none	increasing	increasing
Vermont	stable	stable	stable
Virginia	increasing	increasing	stable
West Virginia	stable	stable	stable
Midwest			
Illinois	none	increasing	increasing
Indiana	*	*	*
Iowa	none	stable	increasing
Kansas	stable	stable	stable
Kentucky	increasing	stable	stable
Michigan	stable	stable	stable
Minnesota	decreasing	increasing	decreasing
Missouri	increasing	stable	stable
Nebraska	none	*	*
North Dakota	none	stable	stable
Ohio	stable	increasing	increasing
South Dakota	none	*	*
Wisconsin	*	*	stable

* Data not provided



TRENDS IN WILDLIFE OFFICER NUMBERS



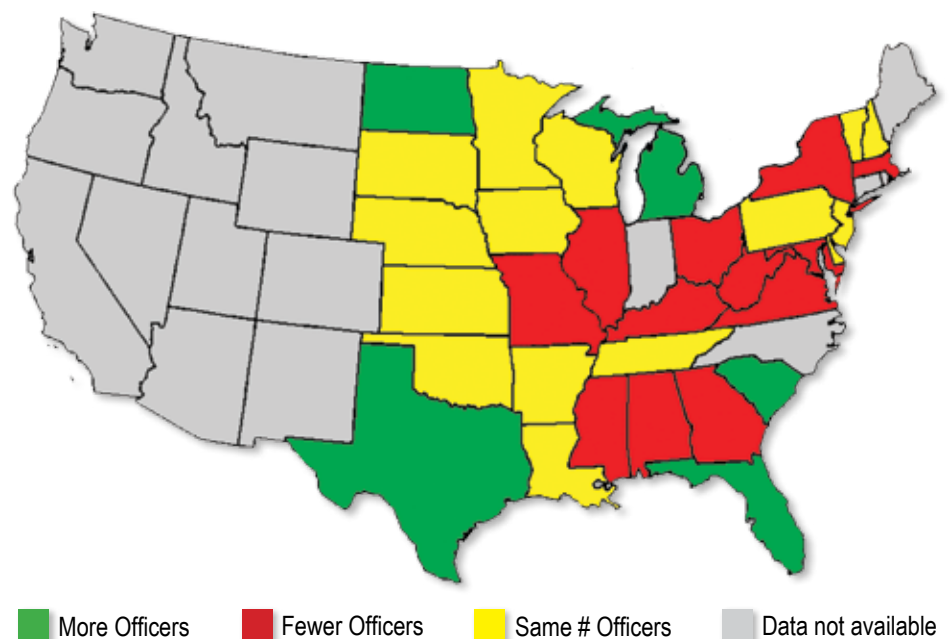
Crimes involving deer and other game animals unfortunately happen all too often and give law-abiding hunters a bad name. Luckily, an entire profession exists and is dedicated to protecting wildlife and upholding game laws throughout North America. In fact, this line of work is a direct descendent of the European “gamekeeper” and even pre-dates wildlife biologists. These men and women go by many names – game warden, agent, ranger, trooper, as well as conservation, wildlife or law enforcement officer, to name a few. However, no matter what they’re called where you live and hunt, each and every one of them is integral to our way of life, defending against game violators and ensuring that citizens everywhere continue to have the ability to enjoy activities such as hunting, fishing, and trapping.

Due to this importance, coupled with news out of Illinois recently where agency budget cuts forced the layoff of 33 wildlife officers all at once, we wanted to know how many wildlife officers were currently employed nationally and how this compared to the past. To do this we surveyed state wildlife agencies in the Midwest, Northeast and Southeast and asked them to provide the number of full-time, volunteer, and other staff with law enforcement duties now as well as 10 years ago.

Nationally speaking, fewer than 7,000 wildlife officers were on duty in 2015, which averaged about one officer every 250 square miles. About half of the 31 states that responded to the survey had the same number of officers as a decade ago; while five states (16 percent) had more and 12 (39 percent) had fewer.

Midwestern states employed 1,925 law enforcement officers last year, averaging one for every 410 square miles. This ranged from one officer every 126 square miles in Wisconsin to the national low of one per 1,865 square miles in North Dakota. Four of 12 Midwestern states (33 percent) had fewer in 2015 than 2005.

CHANGE IN WILDLIFE OFFICER NUMBERS BY STATE, 2005 TO 2015



Nationally speaking, fewer than 7,000 wildlife officers were on duty in 2015, which averaged about one officer every 250 square miles.

With 1,776 staff assigned to some form of law enforcement duty in the Northeast during 2015, the average of one wildlife officer for every 134 square miles was the lowest of the three regions. This ranged from one person every 28 square miles in Maryland to an officer every 272 square miles in Virginia. Here, five of nine states (55 percent) reported having fewer officers than 10 years ago.

In the Southeast, the regional average was one wildlife officer for every 234 square miles. Though this was close to the national average, it was the result of having well over 3,000 wildlife officers on staff, the most of any region. Moreover, Florida employed more than any other state with 853 full-time and 59 voluntary wildlife officer staff, and maintained the Southeast's highest density of one wildlife officer for every 59 square miles. Texas was on the other end with an officer for every 491 square miles. Luckily, only three of 10 states (30 percent) in this region had fewer

officers on duty last year when compared to a decade earlier.

QDMA Recommendations

Seeing how vital hunting regulations and seasons are to sustainable game management and thus directly impacting the quantity and quality of animals we see when afield, and the fact that wildlife officers protect these rules against potential violations and other would-be criminal activity, we feel confident that just about every law-abiding hunter, fisherman and trapper out there would like to see more officers on duty than there actually are.

Unfortunately this is directly impacted by budgets and need. You can positively impact the first by purchasing a license or permit annually, as well as recruiting more new hunters into the fold, as each influences Pittman-Robertson funding distribution to your state agency. More money equals more officers. In addition, you can impact the second by reporting both actual and suspected game violations as they happen. Too many times offenses go unreported, and only when the true volume of wildlife-related crime is known can an agency justify hiring more officers.

NUMBER OF WILDLIFE OFFICERS BY STATE

State	Full-Time	Other Staff	Volunteers	Total	WO PSM**	More/Less/Same as 10 years Ago
Alabama	125	33	0	158	321	less
Arkansas	160	0	0	160	325	same
Florida	853	0	59	912	59	more
Georgia	185	12	0	197	292	less
Louisiana	206	0	0	206	210	same
Mississippi	180	35	0	215	218	less
North Carolina	*	*	*	*	*	*
Oklahoma	117	50	0	167	411	same
South Carolina	252	73	106	431	70	more
Tennessee	198	50	0	248	166	same
Texas	532	0	0	532	491	more
Southeast Total	2,808	253	165	3,226	234	
Connecticut	*	*	*	*	*	*
Delaware	24	1	0	25	78	same
Maine	*	*	*	*	*	*
Maryland	201	9	140	350	28	less
Massachusetts	100	0	0	100	78	less
New Hampshire	41	15	0	56	160	same
New Jersey	50	0	0	50	147	same
New York	273	0	0	273	173	less
Pennsylvania	207	0	365	572	78	same
Rhode Island	*	*	*	*	*	*
Vermont	40	8	0	48	196	same
Virginia	145	0	0	145	272	less
West Virginia	114	43	0	157	153	less
Northeast Total	1,195	76	505	1,776	134	
Illinois	79	0	0	79	703	less
Indiana	*	*	*	*	*	*
Iowa	85	0	0	85	657	same
Kansas	80	96	0	176	465	same
Kentucky	127	0	0	127	311	less
Michigan	218	0	0	218	259	more
Minnesota	175	0	0	175	455	same
Missouri	204	2	120	326	211	less
Nebraska	50	a few	0	50	1,536	same
North Dakota	37	0	0	37	1,865	more
Ohio	138	0	0	138	297	less
South Dakota	77	6	0	83	913	same
Wisconsin	181	250	0	431	126	same
Midwest Total	1,451	354	120	1,925	410	
U.S. Total	5,454	683	790	6,927	257	

* Data not provided
** WO PSM (Wildlife Officer per square mile)

**Top-6 States
Highest Wildlife Officer Density**

State	Sq. Mi. per Officer
Maryland	28
Florida	59
South Carolina	70
Delaware	78
Massachusetts	78
Pennsylvania	78

**5 States
With Lowest Wildlife
Officer Density**

State	Sq. Mi. per Officer
North Dakota	1,865
Nebraska	1,536
South Dakota	913
Illinois	703
Iowa	657

DEER VIOLATION TRENDS



This New York buck, estimated to be 3½ years old by the hunters on a QDM Cooperative in Washington County, was shot by a poacher at night from a public road last November. The poacher shot the buck the evening before New York's Southern Zone regular season opened, removed the head and abandoned it in a ditch. A \$1,000 reward was offered by QDMA's Upper Hudson River Valley Branch, but no arrests had been made as of press time.

Deer-hunting rules are constantly changing, and for good reason. To stay on top of population dynamics in a deer herd, managers need to regularly monitor and adapt to trends in that population. Dates. Boundary lines. Bag limits. Antler Restrictions. The list goes on and on. However, sometimes when the rules change not everyone gets the message. This can lead to confusion for some hunters, and unfortunately, mistakes for others. And doubly unfortunate, some folks just plain like to cut corners or perhaps even

learned to break the law as a means to an end, resulting in a small, yet shameful segment of habitual violators. With all of these ingredients in the mix, we're left with a myriad of reasons game laws can be broken – some are minor, while others are tied to much larger issues.

Therefore, along with investigating national trends among wildlife officers, we also surveyed state wildlife agencies in the Midwest, Northeast and Southeast and asked them to provide the number of and most common “deer-related” viola-

tions handled by their agency in the last year.

At least six states in each region reported the total number of violations from their jurisdiction. From those, the Southeast cataloged the most with 12,399 offenses, followed by the Northeast (7,984) and Midwest (5,393). States in the Southeast ranged from 288 violations in South Carolina to 3,800 in Georgia, while Midwestern states ranged from 124 violations in South Dakota to 1,951 in Missouri. Interestingly, the fewest and greatest num-

ber of violations reported from a single state both originated in the Northeast; Massachusetts had the least (69) and West Virginia had the most (5,000).

The most common violation reported by far was failure to tag, check, register, or report a deer that had been legally harvested, with 10 of 27 states (37 percent) listing some variation of that answer. Seven of 27 states (26 percent) reported hunting, taking or unlawful possession of a deer without license or permit as their most common violation. Other violations included hunting over bait, trespassing, hunting without the appropriate amount of orange clothing and shooting from the road.

Most Common Deer-Related Violations

1. Not Tagging/Checking/Registering/Reporting Deer
2. Hunting/Taking/Unlawful Possession of a Deer without License/Permit
3. Hunting Over Bait
3. Trespassing
4. Hunting Without Orange
4. Shooting From the Road

Top-5 States With Fewest Deer-Related Violations

State	Total Violations
Massachusetts	69
Vermont	107
South Dakota	124
New Hampshire	145
South Carolina	288

5 States With Most Deer-Related Violations

State	Total Violations
West Virginia	5,000
Georgia	3,800
Alabama	3,296
Missouri	1,951
Tennessee	1,880

QDMA Recommendations

Even though several states either did not have or did not report data pertaining to “deer-related” violations, we know that at a minimum 25,000 plus violations occur annually; or at least they did last year. When accounting for unreported violations, it’s very possible that number could be double. The good news is that many violations are preventable. It appears that if more deer hunters took the effort to be properly licensed, or tagged and reported their successful harvest, we could certainly reduce the vast number of civil violations that are occurring, freeing up wildlife offi-

cers’ time to deal with more serious issues, such as those egregious and criminal in nature.

In the end deer hunters need to abide by all game regulations and statutes, regardless of severity of the violation. We need to do this for two reasons: 1) to avoid being fined and/or receive jail time (obvious) and likely the more important 2) because they have a purpose. Wild game laws both promote social justice and equity and they help support/maintain huntable wildlife populations. It’s our responsibility as hunters to be informed and abide by these regulations.

MOST COMMON DEER VIOLATIONS BY STATE

State	Most Common Violation	No. Deer Violations**
Alabama	hunting over bait	3,296
Arkansas	tagging/checking	*
Florida	taking deer at night	*
Georgia	hunting without orange	3,800
Louisiana	failure to tag deer	1,273
Mississippi	hunting without license	1,862
North Carolina	*	*
Oklahoma	*	*
South Carolina	illegal antlerless deer	288
Tennessee	no license	1,880
Texas	improperly tagged deer	*
Southeast Total		12,399
Connecticut	*	*
Delaware	trespassing	*
Maine	*	*
Maryland	failure to check in or tag	649
Massachusetts	hunting on posted property	69
New Hampshire	*	145
New Jersey	failure to register	461
New York	failure to report harvest	*
Pennsylvania	unlawful taking or possession of deer	1,553
Rhode Island	no written permission	*
Vermont	hunting over bait	107
Virginia	tagging/checking	*
West Virginia	illegal possession	5,000
Northeast Total		7,984
Illinois	*	1,100
Indiana	*	*
Iowa	failure to tag	*
Kansas	take deer without tag or permit	377
Kentucky	*	*
Michigan	tagging violations	*
Minnesota	hunting over bait	680
Missouri	failure to check deer	1,951
Nebraska	trespass	*
North Dakota	*	*
Ohio	hunting without a deer permit	1,161
South Dakota	shooting from road	124
Wisconsin	hunting over bait	*
Midwest Total		5,393
U.S. Total		25,776

* Data not available

** For number of deer violations, we asked for that number in 2015. Some states provided data from 2014 and some from 2015.

POACHING HOTLINE CONVICTION RATES

TURN IN POACHERS HOTLINE DIRECTORY



Most states provide toll-free hotlines for reporting poaching activity. A list of those numbers is available on QDMA.com by navigating to the resources menu and selecting “Turn in Poachers.”

To help your local conservation officers anytime you witness a poaching incident, collect the following information: vehicle make and model, license plate number, suspect description and location (GPS coordinates or address).

When collecting information on poaching suspects, stay a safe distance and do not put yourself in harm’s way.

Most states provide toll-free hotlines for reporting poaching and other illegal activities related to wildlife, but are they effective? We wondered this exact thing, so we surveyed state wildlife agencies in the Midwest, Northeast and Southeast and asked them of all reported “deer-related” violations handled by their agency, what proportion originated from their toll-free hotline, and of those what percentage ended in a conviction.

Unfortunately there were a lot of blank spaces when we received the completed surveys. We’re unsure if this info is not tracked, or if we simply asked the wrong department. However, we felt inclined to share the data we received with you regardless. Because there were so few responses we are not providing hard analysis, but one general observation is that among the positive responses we noticed a wide varia-

The proportion of “deer related” violations originating from the state’s hotline ranged from less than 3 percent in Alabama to 75 percent in Massachusetts, and conviction rates from those calls ranged from 23 percent in Kansas to 95-98 percent in Minnesota.

tion in both utilization and conviction rates of poaching hotlines. For example, the proportion of “deer-related” violations originating from the state’s hotline ranged from less than 3 percent in Alabama to 75 percent in Massachusetts, and conviction rates from those calls ranged from 23 percent in Kansas to 95-98 percent in Minnesota.

QDMA Recommendations

Apparently for some states, when you call in a game violation to your poaching hotline, there is a very high conviction rate for those offenses. So, our recommendation to all deer hunters is to program those numbers into your cell phone and use them whenever you suspect illegal activity. You can find a list of state-by-state Turn in

Poachers hotline numbers at QDMA.com under the “Resources” link. In addition, we feel that more needs to be learned about why and how it works so well in some states and not in others. We will follow up on this issue and promise to fill in more of the blanks found in the table below, to help develop a better way to track this information, and finally to help determine the key points of successful programs so those can be duplicated in other areas to establish high conviction rates in all states.

DEER VIOLATIONS REPORTED THROUGH POACHING HOTLINES

State	% From Poaching Hotline	% Convicted
Southeast		
Alabama	<3	>90
Arkansas	*	*
Florida	*	*
Georgia	*	*
Louisiana	8	*
Mississippi	*	*
North Carolina	*	*
Oklahoma	*	*
South Carolina	*	*
Tennessee	*	95
Texas	*	*
Northeast		
Connecticut	*	*
Delaware	25	90-95
Maine	*	*
Maryland	*	90-95
Massachusetts	75	72
New Hampshire	*	85
New Jersey	3	*
New York	*	*
Pennsylvania	*	*
Rhode Island	*	*
Vermont	7	*
Virginia	12	66
West Virginia	*	80
Midwest		
Illinois	8	50
Indiana	*	*
Iowa	*	*
Kansas	21	23
Kentucky	*	*
Michigan	*	*
Minnesota	11	95-98
Missouri	11	91
Nebraska	*	*
North Dakota	*	*
Ohio	*	*
South Dakota	44	*
Wisconsin	*	*

* Data not provided

Top-5 States Conviction Rates Through Poaching Hotlines

State	Percentage
Minnesota	95-98
Tennessee	95
Delaware	90-95
Maryland	90-95
Missouri	91

LAST YEAR SINCE HUNTING LICENSE PRICE INCREASE



Hunting license sales and the associated Pittman-Robertson funds that accompany them are the lifeblood of state wildlife agencies. One of the simplest and best ways for wildlife enthusiasts to support wildlife and management programs in their state is by purchasing a hunting license. Even if you do not hunt you should buy one and encourage your friends to do so.

Since these funds are so important to management programs, we surveyed

state wildlife agencies in the Midwest, Northeast and Southeast to determine the last year they increased the price of their resident hunting license. Overall, the years ranged from 1984 (Kansas) to 2016 (Maine). Thirty-two states provided the year, and eight states (25 percent) increased their price within the last five years. Ten states (31 percent) increased their price five to 10 years ago, and 14 states (44 percent) increased their price more than 10 years ago, including two states that haven't raised the price of their

resident hunting license since the 1980s!

QDMA Recommendations

What does it cost to spend a day at your favorite sporting or entertainment event? Far more than it does for an annual hunting license. We realize that no one wants to spend more for a hunting license, however license sales provide the bulk of funding for state wildlife agencies, and many states' licenses are well below the cost

of living increases since their price was last raised. Maybe that is why many state agencies have unfilled positions and have had to cut programs and services during the past few years. Whether you like your state agency or not, we hope you realize our natural resources suffer from underfunded agencies. The next time you buy your hunting license, take a moment to realize how much you get for that special piece of paper. You may even consider adding \$1 or more to support wildlife and/or your local venison donation program.

LAST HUNTING LICENSE PRICE INCREASE

State	Year
Alabama	2015
Arkansas	1995
Florida	2008
Georgia	1992
Louisiana	*
Mississippi	1996
North Carolina	2014
Oklahoma	2009
South Carolina	2003
Tennessee	2015
Texas	2010
Southeast Average	2006

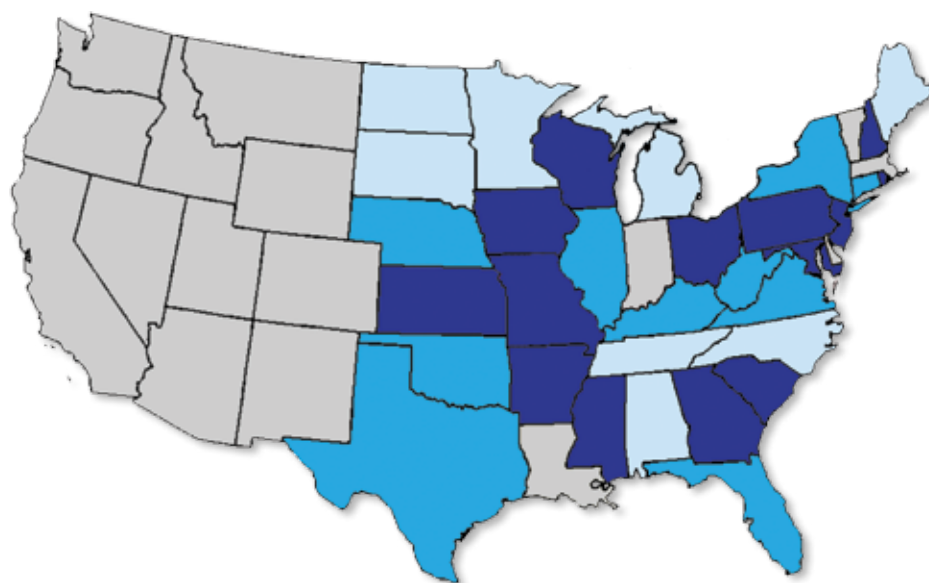
Connecticut	*
Delaware	2007
Maine	2016
Maryland	1988
Massachusetts	*
New Hampshire	2003
New Jersey	1999
New York	2009
Pennsylvania	1999
Rhode Island	1999
Vermont	*
Virginia	2011
West Virginia	2010
Northeast Average	2004

Illinois	2010
Indiana	*
Iowa	1991
Kansas	1984
Kentucky	2007
Michigan	2014
Minnesota	2013
Missouri	2003
Nebraska	2009
North Dakota	2013
Ohio	2004
South Dakota	2014
Wisconsin	2005
Midwest Average	2006

U.S. Average 2005

* Data not provided

YEARS SINCE LAST HUNTING LICENSE PRICE INCREASE



Less than 5 years
 5 to 10 years
 Over 10 years
 Data not provided

FAWN RECRUITMENT RATES AND HOW AGENCIES ESTIMATE THEM



There's much confusion by hunters on how their state wildlife agency estimates the fawn recruitment rate. The primary techniques are by using the ratio of fawns to adults in the antlerless harvest and by using hunter observation or trail-camera surveys. Each technique can provide good indices to the true fawn recruitment rate, and when collected over multiple years they can provide very helpful trend data. Each technique has advantages and disadvantages, and since data is collected differently by each, they do not always provide

directly comparable estimates across states. However, each does provide comparable data across years for a given state. The important point is for states to collect this data and monitor any changes over time.

The fawn recruitment rate is one of the most important measures of herd productivity, and it directly impacts the number of antlerless deer that can be harvested annually as well as the number of bucks you can realistically expect to have available for harvest. It also alerts managers to potential problems such as high fawn pre-

duction rates. The fawn recruitment rate is a measure of the number of fawns per adult doe (1½ years and older) alive in the fall pre-hunt population. Basically, this index records the number of fawns that survive to approximately six months of age and expresses that number in relation to the number of adult does in the population. The fawn recruitment rate is lower than the number of fetuses per doe and the number of fawns born in the spring, since not all fetuses survive to become fawns and not all fawns survive until fall. Many hunters feel the fawn recruitment rate is higher than it actually is because they assume all adult does have twin fawns each

Top-5 States Fawn Recruitment*

State	2015 Rate
Kentucky	1.25
South Dakota	0.91
Wisconsin	0.83
South Carolina	0.80
Ohio	0.78

5 States With Lowest Fawn Recruitment*

State	2015 Rate
Rhode Island	0.20
Oklahoma	0.30
Florida	0.40
Virginia	0.40
Arkansas	0.41

5 States With Largest Decline in Fawn Recruitment* From 2005 to 2015

State	Total Decline
South Carolina	-0.29
Maryland	-0.24
Wisconsin	-0.24
Maine	-0.16
Illinois	-0.15

* Fawns per Adult Doe

year; many may give birth to twins, but the actual recruitment rate is far less than two fawns per adult doe.

We surveyed state wildlife agencies in the Midwest, Northeast and Southeast and asked them to provide estimated fawn recruitment rates for 2015 and the technique they used to estimate it. We conducted similar surveys in past years, so we already had state-by-state fawn recruitment rates for 2005 and 2010. Our new data allowed us to compare regional fawn recruitment rates and see if/how the average rates changed during the past decade. This analysis is especially timely given the recent expansion of coyote and other predator populations (see page 20).

Nationally, the average fawn recruitment rate declined significantly from 2005 to 2015 by dropping from 0.69 fawns per doe to 0.58 fawns per doe. Georgia was the only state to recruit more fawns per doe in 2015 than 2005. Every other state recruited fewer. The Midwest recruited significantly more fawns per doe (0.82) than the Southeast (0.50) or Northeast (0.48) in 2015, and the national average of 0.58 meant that on average it took almost four does to recruit two fawns last year!

With regard to technique used to estimate the fawn recruitment rate, states were pretty split on their method of choice. Thirteen states used observation or trail-camera surveys while 14 states used the

ratio of fawns to adults in the antlerless harvest. Two states used other methods, and four states used two methods to estimate this important statistic.

QDMA Recommendations

Surprisingly, several states do not estimate their fawn recruitment rate. Given the importance of this index, the QDMA strongly encourages all deer managers (large and small, public and private) to do so. This statistic should be estimated annually and compared across years to identify changes in herd health and/or fawn survival rates.

MULTI-YEAR FAWN RECRUITMENT RATES (NUMBER OF FAWNS PER ADULT DOE) AND ESTIMATE TECHNIQUES BY STATE

State/Province	2005	2010	2015	Method
Alabama	*	*	*	*
Arkansas	*	*	0.41	observation survey
Florida	*	*	0.40	camera and spotlight surveys
Georgia	0.37	0.52	0.54	fawns/doe in harvest
Louisiana	0.60	0.58	0.56	fawns/doe in harvest
Mississippi	0.60	0.47	*	doe lactation rates
North Carolina	*	*	0.50	observation survey
Oklahoma	*	*	0.30	spotlight survey
South Carolina	1.09	0.88	0.80	population reconstruction and camera survey
Tennessee	*	*	*	*
Texas	0.54	0.53	*	herd composition surveys
Southeast Average	0.64	0.60	0.50	
Connecticut	*	0.50	*	*
Delaware	*	*	*	observation survey
Maine	0.81	0.75	0.65	doe lactation rates
Maryland	0.68	0.60	0.44	fawns/doe in harvest and observation survey
Massachusetts	*	*	*	yearling buck antler beam diameter
New Hampshire	0.68	0.63	0.58	fawns/doe in harvest
New Jersey	*	*	*	*
New York	*	*	0.44	fawns/doe in harvest
Pennsylvania	0.70	0.70	0.63	fawns/doe in harvest
Rhode Island	*	0.40	0.20	fawns/doe in harvest
Vermont	*	*	*	*
Virginia	0.47	0.44	0.40	fawns/doe in harvest and observation survey
West Virginia	*	*	0.52	observation survey
Northeast Average	0.67	0.57	0.48	
Illinois	0.65	0.55	0.50	fawns/doe in harvest
Indiana	*	*	*	*
Iowa	*	1.30	*	percentage of buck fawns in harvest
Kansas	0.71	0.64	0.63	spotlight survey
Kentucky	*	*	1.25	historical research
Michigan	0.53	0.39	*	*
Minnesota	*	*	*	*
Missouri	*	*	*	*
Nebraska	*	*	*	*
North Dakota	*	*	*	*
Ohio	0.84	0.81	0.78	fawns/doe in harvest
South Dakota	*	0.95	0.91	observation survey
Wisconsin	1.07	1.07	0.83	observation survey
Midwest Average	0.76	0.82	0.82	
U.S. Average	0.69	0.66	0.58	

* Data not provided

URBAN DEER HUNTING PROGRAMS



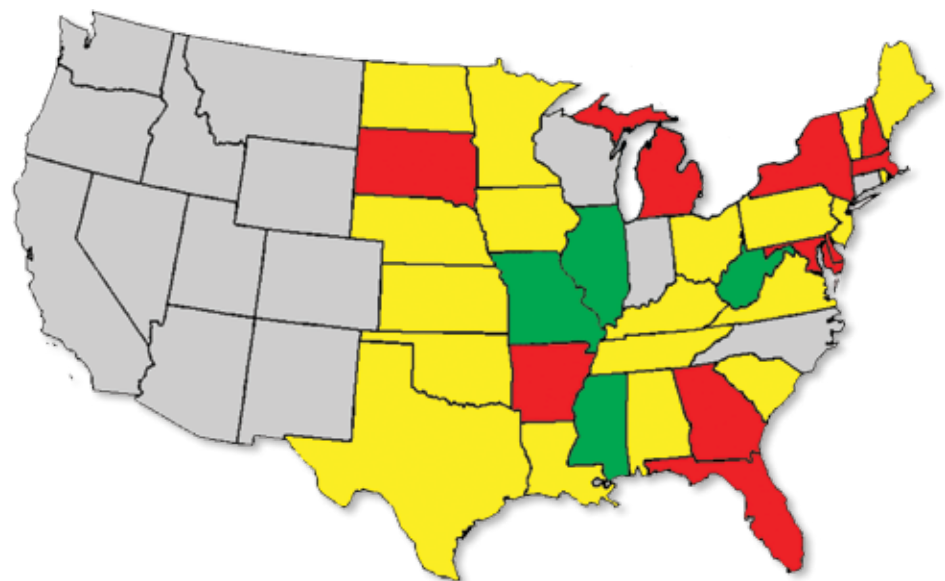
The human population in the United States has doubled since 1953. Over the same time period we have literally lost millions of acres of forest and agricultural land, both being converted to uses more suitable for residential and commercial needs. For many niche-specific resident animals, this conversion means loss of critical wildlife habitat; however, white-tailed deer are highly adaptable and opportunistic. They actually thrive in such settings. In fact, in many areas on the fringe of urban development, their presence is problematic because as the landscape becomes more fragmented, issues such as restrictive zoning, high (deer) productivity and limited hunting access creates the perfect storm for deer populations to explode. For people living in urban environments this means dealing with increased human-deer conflicts, landscape and garden damage, proliferation of zoonotic diseases and deer-vehicle collisions to name a few. For wildlife agencies this potentially means a lot of deer and little to no way to manage them. It also means balancing any management decisions they do make with often vociferous, opposing public views.

To better understand how much involvement and resources are dedicated toward managing urban deer populations, we asked state wildlife agencies in the Midwest, Northeast and Southeast if they

currently had an urban deer management plan in place, roughly how much time they spend on urban deer issues, and how that time estimate compares to a decade ago.

Twenty of the 35 states (57 percent)

CHANGE IN TIME SPENT ON URBAN DEER ISSUES, 2005 TO 2015



■ Less Time ■ More Time ■ Same Amount of Time ■ Data not available

that responded to our survey currently have an urban deer management plan. Regionally, the Midwest has the most states (nine of 12, or 75 percent) with a plan and the Southeast has the least at five of 11 states (45 percent); however some, like Tennessee, are working on one as this is written.

Overall, and somewhat predictably, there is also a very wide variation in the amount of time spent on urban deer issues among states. Some agencies spend less than 1 percent of their time, such as Minnesota and Vermont, and some spend more than 75 percent of their time, such as Massachusetts. On average, it appears that Northeast biologists spend more time (19 percent) on urban deer issues when compared to the other two regions. The good news, at least for the time being, is that although the human interactions and issues related to urban deer may be growing, most wildlife agencies (19 of 33 states, 57 percent) are spending the same amount of time today as they did 10 years ago. Only 10 of those 33 states (30 percent) are spending more time.

QDMA Recommendations

QDMA recommends that all state and provincial wildlife agencies develop and implement an urban deer management plan, because although the average wildlife agency only spends about 10 percent of their time on the issue today, the fact remains that human populations are growing rapidly and land conversion is happening at an exponential rate. We predict that for a significant proportion of states this will become a bigger issue over time, and agencies will see an increasing demand for dedicated, trained staff to oversee such

programs. Urban areas are also where most non-hunting public opinions are formed, and where the “locavore” movement is strongest. Therefore, we feel that a sound management approach that mixes science-based population management with the active promotion of healthy living provided from deer hunting is the best means to welcome more new, non-traditional hunters into our ranks. After all, according to U.S. Census data, 36 percent of the United States’ population lived in rural areas in 1950. Today it’s lower than 20 percent.

URBAN DEER MANAGEMENT BY STATE

State	Urban Plan	% Time	More/Less/Same
Alabama	no	<5	same
Arkansas	yes	15	more
Florida	no	<5	more
Georgia	yes	15	more
Louisiana	no	<5	same
Mississippi	yes	1-2	less
North Carolina	yes	10	*
Oklahoma	no	10	same
South Carolina	yes	5	same
Tennessee	no	5	same
Texas	no	1	same
Southeast Average		7	
Connecticut	*	*	*
Delaware	no	5-10	more
Maine	yes	≤5	same
Maryland	yes	50	more
Massachusetts	no	>75	more
New Hampshire	no	10	more
New Jersey	yes	5	same
New York	no	25	more
Pennsylvania	yes	15	same
Rhode Island	no	10	same
Vermont	no	<1	same
Virginia	yes	15	same
West Virginia	yes	5	less
Northeast Average		19	
Illinois	yes	30	less
Indiana	*	*	*
Iowa	yes	10	same
Kansas	yes	5	same
Kentucky	no	<5	same
Michigan	no	10	more
Minnesota	yes	<1	same
Missouri	yes	<5	less
Nebraska	no	1	same
North Dakota	yes	5	same
Ohio	yes	10-15	same
South Dakota	yes	<5	more
Wisconsin	yes	*	*
Midwest Average		8	
U.S. Average		11	

* Data not provided

Top States

With Highest Percentage of Time Spent on Urban Deer Issues

State	% of Time
Massachusetts	>75
Maryland	50
Illinois	30
New York	25
Arkansas	15
Georgia	15
Pennsylvania	15
Virginia	15

5 States

With Lowest Percentage of Time Spent on Urban Deer Issues

State	% of Time
Minnesota	<1
Vermont	<1
Nebraska	1
Texas	1
Mississippi	1-2

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE THE DEER WOODS (AT HOME)

Some hunters feel their state wildlife agency's deer project leader is unfamiliar with the state's hunting culture, tradition or passion for deer hunting. Given the interactions we have had with numerous states' deer project leaders, we felt this assumption was false, so we surveyed state wildlife agencies in the Midwest, Northeast and Southeast and asked which

Most deer project leaders are far more passionate deer hunters than many of their constituent hunters realize.

state their deer project leader was born or raised in and how avid a deer hunter they are.

Contrary to some hunters' opinions, most deer project leaders are intimately familiar with their state's hunting culture and history, as 22 of 35 (63 percent) run the deer program in the state they were born or raised in, and five more run the deer program in a neighboring state to where they were born or raised. The Southeast has the most "fidelity" as nine of 11 states (82 percent) have homegrown deer biologists running their programs. The remaining two states have deer project leaders one-state removed from their stomping grounds. Six of 12 (50 percent) Midwestern deer project leaders work in

their home state, and seven of 12 (58 percent) Northeastern deer project leaders work in their home state. Interestingly, of the 35 deer project leaders who responded to our survey, six are from Pennsylvania. No other state produced more than two current deer project leaders.

With regard to hunting avidity, most deer project leaders are far more passionate deer hunters than many of their constituent hunters realize. To respect the privacy of some deer project leaders, we only show this data on a regional basis. We asked deer project leaders to rank themselves on a scale of one to 10 with one being a non-hunter and 10 being an extremely passionate deer hunter. The overall average was 8.6 and this ranged from 8.3 in the Northeast to 8.4 in the Southeast and 9.0 in the Midwest. One deer project leader ranked himself a 10 and said this should be a requirement for the job. This individual connects well with the hunters in his jurisdiction in large part because he is one of them! Overall, we found that 97 percent of the deer project leaders fit in the avid to very avid categories.

QDMA Recommendations

Deer management programs vary widely across the whitetail's

range, and it's interesting the number of deer project leaders who make their way home to practice their craft. This can provide tremendous benefits to the deer management program given their personal knowledge of the state's history, culture and hunting traditions. With respect to hunting avidity, 20 of 35 deer project leaders (57 percent) ranked themselves a nine or 10 (out of 10). We like those high numbers partly because they match ours and partly because they are a promising sign for the future of our deer management programs.

DEER PROJECT LEADERS' HOME STATES

State Employed in	State Born or Raised in	Deer Hunting Avidity
Alabama	Florida	
Arkansas	Arkansas	
Florida	Florida	
Georgia	Georgia	
Louisiana	Louisiana	
Mississippi	Mississippi	
North Carolina	North Carolina	
Oklahoma	Kansas	
South Carolina	South Carolina	
Tennessee	Tennessee	
Texas	Texas	
Southeast Average		8.4
Connecticut	*	
Delaware	Washington, DC	
Maine	Alaska	
Maryland	Pennsylvania	
Massachusetts	Pennsylvania	
New Hampshire	CO born/NH raised	
New Jersey	New Jersey	
New York	Pennsylvania	
Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania	
Rhode Island	Rhode Island	
Vermont	Vermont	
Virginia	GA/VA	
West Virginia	West Virginia	
Northeast Average		8.3
Illinois	Illinois	
Indiana	*	
Iowa	Iowa	
Kansas	New York	
Kentucky	Ohio	
Michigan	Pennsylvania	
Minnesota	Pennsylvania	
Missouri	Missouri	
Nebraska	ND born/NE raised	
North Dakota	Wisconsin	
Ohio	Ohio	
South Dakota	Idaho	
Wisconsin	Wisconsin	
Midwest Average		9.0
U.S. Average		8.6

* Data not provided

STATES WITH A DEER PROJECT LEADER BORN/RAISED IN THAT STATE



WILD HARVEST INITIATIVE



In 2015, QDMA pledged \$50,000 over the next five years to help fund the Wild Harvest Initiative, an effort to quantify the harvest and consumption of wild game and fish in the United States and Canada.

The Wild Harvest Initiative is a multi-year project that will be led and managed by Conservation Visions Inc., a private conservation organization focused on building broad coalitions for biodiversity and sustainable-use conservation approaches. In addition to measuring the wild animal protein harvested and consumed in the United States and Canada, the initiative will also determine the ecological and financial costs of hypothetically attempting to replace this wild protein with that from livestock. This comparison should illuminate the real significance of wild protein to food security.

“We’ve known for well over a century that conservation of the world’s ecosystems is critical to human well being and that the sustainable use of wild resources brings enormous and unique benefits to human beings everywhere,” said Shane Mahoney, founder and CEO of Conservation Visions Inc. “It’s time we know how much.”

“This project will have global implications regarding systems for healthy and sustainable sources of protein for human

consumption and the vital role that sportsmen, wildlife and wild lands play in this equation,” said QDMA CEO Brian Murphy.

The Wild Harvest Initiative will be the first-ever measurement of the amount of wild protein harvested by hunters and fishermen and shared with their families and friends. The initiative will not examine commercial harvest practices but will focus solely on personal harvest by hunters and fishermen through:

- Highlighting the importance of recreational wild animal harvest to human food provisioning in the US and Canada.
- Drawing attention to the importance of maintaining habitat for the conservation of all wild species, including those that contribute to human food security.
- Raising awareness and concern for wild lands and the wildlife habitats those lands provide.
- Offering a broader understanding of the benefits achieved through sound land and water management approaches.
- Outlining the protein and nutritional benefits of wild food as alternatives to other protein sources.
- Analyzing costs necessary for the expansion of agricultural systems to replace current wild protein harvests.

- Catalyzing wider conversations about the sustainability of wild meat procurement, the importance of animal protein consumption to all humans, and the organic aspect of wild animal protein.

- Describing the minimal ecological impacts of hunting and angling for harvesting wild food as well as the social, health, economic and environmental benefits these activities provide.

- Discussing how access to wild food is governed and help identify what governance structures or policy platforms best lead to equitable human access and benefits sharing.

- Providing common ground for discussions and public engagement in wildlife conservation issues, leading to wider-reaching and more effective coalitions for conserving wildlife and wild lands.

“We hope and expect the Initiative will appeal to a variety of public sectors,” said Mahoney. “The trending locavore movement, 100-mile diet, and emphasis on organic and free-range food are all signs that people, in general, are becoming more concerned about the quality of their food. Well, wild protein harvested from nature is as high quality as it gets. It is our original diet.”

QDMA's Recommendations

QDMA is proud to support this landmark initiative because it will document the nutritional, economic, and environmental benefits of wild animal consumption and demonstrate the vital role that hunters and anglers play in food security and wildlife conservation.

The Wild Harvest Initiative was launched in June. To assist and learn more visit <http://www.conservationvisions.com/wild-harvest-initiative>

QDMA: ENSURING THE FUTURE OF DEER HUNTING

QDMA unveiled its REACH Program in 2006, and it has been transforming the future of deer hunting throughout North America for the better ever since. REACH is the acronym for Research, Educate, Advocate, Certify, and Hunt. It represents an aggressive national education and outreach program designed to benefit hunters, landowners, and deer managers in several ways. Specifically, the program addresses all of QDMA's core mission elements and was developed with input from QDMA members, state agency personnel, and conservation leaders from around the globe. QDMA's goals for the program are ambitious, and they directly benefit all deer hunters, QDMA members or not. Here is a brief synopsis of each element of REACH:

RESEARCH

Sound deer management decisions require reliable information, and this information generally comes from research. Through REACH, QDMA is involved in all areas of white-tailed deer research including biology, ecology, management, hunting, diseases and human dimensions. QDMA helps design, coordinate, and fund practical research projects that increase knowledge and improve management. Since 2006, QDMA has contributed more than half a million dollars to support important research projects in several states.

EDUCATE

Since its earliest days, QDMA has been a recognized leader in educating hunters, landowners, wildlife professionals and the public on all aspects of whitetail biology and management and habitat improvement. However, the types of information desired by these groups as well as the tools available to deliver this information constantly change, and QDMA is keeping pace. QDMA continues with educational activities such as seminars, field days, and the ever popular *Quality Whitetails* magazine, but through REACH it also includes delivery methods such as television, DVDs, and Web-based opportunities.

ADVOCATE

Each year there are countless threats to the future of deer hunting and management at the local, state and national levels. These issues impact everyone who pursues white-tailed deer in the fall. Due to QDMA's growth and strong support from the professional wildlife community, it is considered the most respected and influential whitetail organization in North America. As a result, QDMA serves as the leading advocate for the wise management of white-tailed deer and the protection of



our deer-hunting heritage. QDMA also maintains strong ties with its members, other conservation organizations, state and federal agencies, and other groups with an interest in whitetail hunting and management. In fact, recently the QDMA helped host two national summits to start a conversation about the biggest issues impacting deer and deer hunting, and as a result launched and became a principal partner organization of the National Deer Alliance. Since 2006, the QDMA has engaged in nearly 750 legislative and management issues. Every day QDMA fights for all deer hunters across North America!

CERTIFY

In 2006, QDMA created an individual certification program that includes three levels of potential achievement, and each must be completed in sequence. Deer Steward I provides students with a comprehensive understanding of the key principles of deer and habitat biology, ecology, and management. Deer Steward II teaches students how to apply the principles learned

in Level I through hands-on and field experience. Finally, Deer Steward III, the most prestigious, must be earned through an individual's long-term service to white-tailed deer and/or the QDMA. QDMA also launched the Land Certification Program in 2012, and more recently offered our inaugural Deer Steward module in 2015. The goal of these programs is to create more knowledgeable hunters and managers and to have improved deer herds and habitats.

HUNT

Hunting is an essential tool for sound deer management and part of our sporting heritage. However, in many states hunter numbers have declined, and existing hunter recruitment programs are proving only marginally effective. In response, QDMA developed an innovative youth and new hunter education and outreach program comprised of two parts: the Mentored Hunting Program and our new membership-based Rack

Pack. Unlike most other programs which involve a one-time contact with a young person or new hunter, this outreach program attacks the loss of hunting in a couple of ways. First, it combines the use of a grassroots, in-person program with a sense of achievement, by involving individuals never exposed to hunting and pairing them up with experienced hunters, thereby providing the opportunity to go through the "steps" of learning to hunt and "earning" your place in the brotherhood of deer hunting. Second, the Rack Pack allows involved youth members to experience a true feeling of belonging, and it accomplishes this through a groundbreaking supplemental youth-led, multimedia approach. The goal of these programs is to produce more deer hunters and better ambassadors for hunting, not simply to take more kids deer hunting.

The following pages are a brief synopsis of what was accomplished in the last 12 months within each of these mission areas.

2015 ADVOCACY UPDATE



Every year, QDMA monitors legislation, regulation changes and policy on behalf of deer hunters, supporting initiatives that help ensure the future of white-tailed deer, wildlife habitat, and our hunting heritage – and opposing those that do not. This past year was the busiest for QDMA's advocacy team, and what follows is a look at QDMA's actions on legislation and policy during 2015.

Since 2006 QDMA has engaged in nearly 750 major initiatives. In 2015 we engaged in 86 legislative, regulatory or policy issues; 28 at the national level and 58 at the state level in 24 states and Canada (see map). Regionally, this included eight states in the Midwest, seven in the Southeast, and nine in the Northeast. QDMA's engagement ranged from comments on appropriating funds for wildlife habitat protection and enhancement, to increasing fines for poaching, creating venison donation tax credits, ensuring the right to hunt, and more. Below is a sample of some of the advocacy issues.

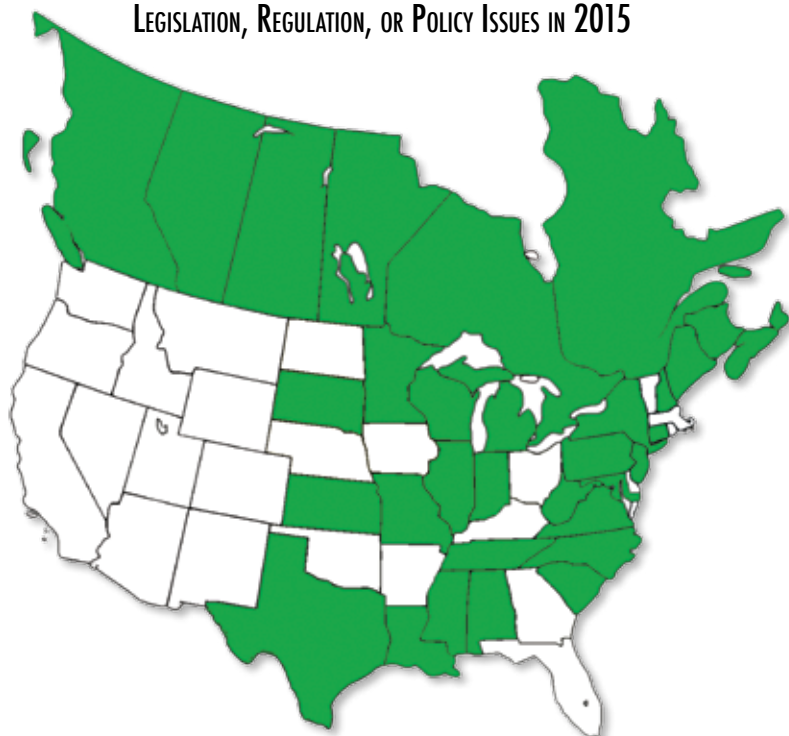
- Supported Bipartisan Sportsmen's Act of 2015 (federal)
- Opposed Maryland Senate Bill 748 which would allow commercial sale of wild venison
- Supported Kansas HCR 5008 to provide the right to hunt, fish and trap
- Opposed Indiana House Bill 1453 which would allow canned hunting
- Supported Connecticut House Bills 5028, 5147 and 5284 to allow Sunday hunting

- Supported South Dakota House Bill 1192 to appropriate funds for wildlife habitat protection and enhancement
- Supported Canada Bill C-655 to make it an offense to interfere with anyone hunting, fishing, trapping or sport shooting
- Supported New York Assembly Bill 1159 providing the right to hunt, trap and fish

- Supported Tennessee House Bill 1185 to increase poaching fines and restitution
- Opposed Wisconsin Governor Walker's proposal to cut 18 science research positions from the Wisconsin DNR
- Opposed Alabama Senate Bill 123 to allow hunting over bait and charge \$50 per bait site
- Urged Congress to delist the gray wolf in Wyoming and the Great Lake states and return wolf management to the state wildlife agencies
- Supported New York Assembly Bill 7166 to create a venison donation tax credit
- Supported South Carolina Senate Bill 454 – the Deer Management Bill

If you have questions about any of these items, or if there are emerging issues in your state that you'd like to discuss with QDMA, contact Kip Adams. No other deer organization fights as hard for hunters' rights as QDMA. We need your help to increase QDMA's effectiveness at fighting for deer hunters, so please consider becoming a member of QDMA today if you are not one already, or help by signing up your hunting friends and family.

STATES/PROVINCES WHERE QDMA ENGAGED IN LEGISLATION, REGULATION, OR POLICY ISSUES IN 2015



QDMA MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

In 2015 QDMA had more than 60,000 members in all 50 states and Canada. Since the beginning, QDMA has worked to educate its members and all deer hunters about the benefits of the Quality Deer Management (QDM) philosophy. This effort – aided by the support of numerous member-volunteers, corporate sponsors, and other QDM advocates – has rapidly increased awareness and implementation of QDM throughout North America, resulting in healthier, more balanced deer populations and more rewarding hunting experiences.

As QDMA continues to grow in membership and influence, the nonprofit association will work to secure a sustainable future for wild white-tailed deer through practical research and by advocating for wise policy and regulation that will pro-



Top-10 States QDMA Membership

1. Michigan
2. Louisiana
3. South Carolina
4. Pennsylvania
5. Georgia
6. Mississippi
7. North Carolina
8. Florida
9. New York
10. Alabama

tect our hunting heritage. Additionally, QDMA members and advocates continue to attract, assist, educate and guide young and new hunters to ensure they become tomorrow's stewards of whitetails and all wildlife.

To join QDMA or start a local Branch, please visit QDMA.com or call (800) 209-3337.



QDMA - A COMMUNITY Sharing the Passion

Your support enables QDMA to share our:

- ★ Educational Resources in Your Community
- ★ Commitment to Recruit and Mentor New Hunters
- ★ Powerful Voice on Whitetail Hunting and Management Issues
- ★ Resources to Fund Whitetail Research Projects

*Join us in making a difference
in your community by becoming
a member today!*



**Make a Difference -
Keep it Local!**



QDMA COMMUNICATIONS: THE TRUSTED SOURCE

QDMA is reaching more deer hunters than ever before in its history, and the results can be seen in statistics found in this very report, like the decline in harvest rates of yearling bucks and the reciprocal climb in the harvest of older bucks.

When QDMA was founded in 1988, our communication tools were limited to a printed newsletter. Today, QDMA broadcasts its educational message on a wide range of channels, including e-mail newsletters, social media, QDMA.com, web video, and the printed membership magazine *Quality Whitetails*.

Unique in hunting communications, QDMA is known for reliable, science-based information about whitetail biology to aid hunters. Every article, whether printed or distributed digitally, is reviewed by at least three wildlife biologists on the QDMA Staff, in addition to staff editors, ensuring that information is not only useful and interesting but that it is supported by proven research and the latest scientific knowledge about whitetails. Whether we're talking about food plot crops, whitetail rut behaviors, or buck home-range size, we base our guidance on tested principles

of biology, agronomy, and forestry. In today's media environment, where more voices than ever are shouting to get the attention of deer hunters, it's good to know you can always turn to QDMA for filtered, fact-checked information about deer biology, behavior and management.

And more hunters than ever are doing so. In 2015, QDMA reached record numbers of followers through e-mail, social media and web. Nearly 2 million people visited QDMA.com to learn more about deer and deer hunting. QDMA's Facebook fanbase continued growing organically and will soon reach 200,000, providing millions of impressions each month for QDMA's educational message. Twitter and Instagram contribute strongly as well, adding millions more impressions in 2015. Finally, given QDMA's membership growth, our flagship publication *Quality Whitetails* is reaching a record number of readers.

In 2016, QDMA will also launch its first e-book aimed at guiding new deer hunters to success in the woods while also provid-



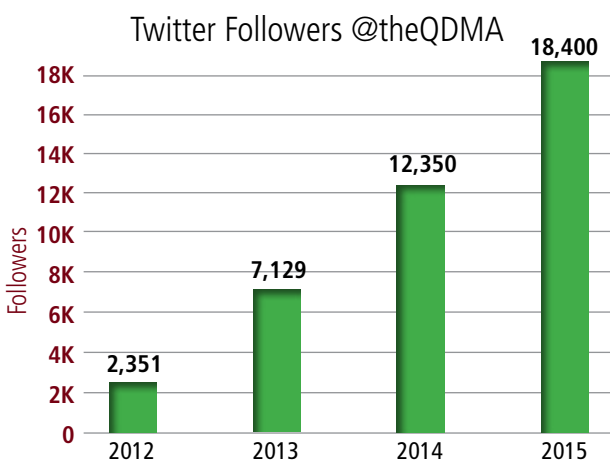
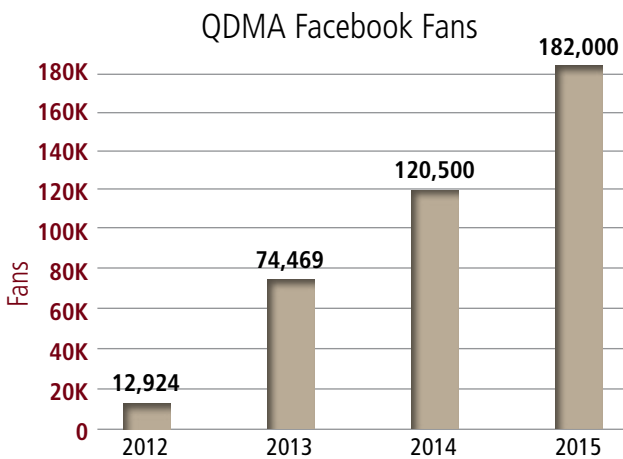
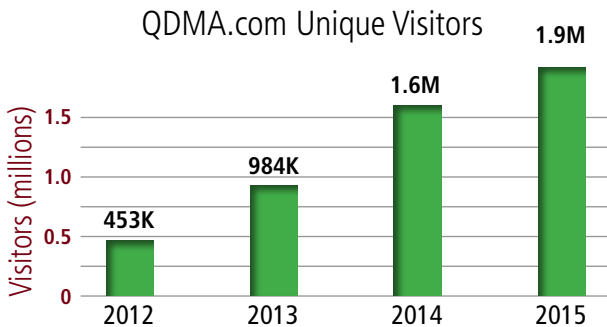
QDMA launched its Instagram account in January 2015 and began approaching 16,000 followers by the end of the year.

ing them with knowledge of deer behavior, biology and sound management. Combined with QDMA's existing books, posters, and free web resources, the e-book will help QDMA continue to reach every segment of the deer-hunting public with our message of more rewarding, exciting deer hunting through smart deer management.



Kentucky native Brian Grossman joined the QDMA Communications team in 2015 as Communications Manager.

Become a QDMA member today and start learning how to get the most out of your deer hunting!



QDMA CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS UPDATE



Over 1,500 Deer Stewards and Counting!

QDMA's Deer Steward Certification program is a personal educational experience designed to offer landowners, hunters, and natural resource professionals an opportunity to learn from the nation's top experts about QDM. The first two levels are courses, and Level III is an application; all three need to be taken in succession. By taking Levels I and II, graduates are able to design and implement their own personal comprehensive, property-specific white-tailed deer management plan. Level III is an honor earned after giving back to the

resource over a long period of time, rather than something you can learn in a course.

To date, 1,420 individuals have completed some level of the Deer Steward program, with 918 Level I, 461 Level II, and 41 Level III graduates, representing 44 states and the nation's capitol, four Canadian provinces, one of the U.S. Virgin Islands and Australia. Nearly 100 more were also enrolled and engaged in the Level I class online at the time of this printing, bringing the total to over 1,500 individuals! Since 2007, QDMA has held 19 Level I classes and 16 Level II classes in

the following states: Alabama, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Mississippi, North Carolina, New York, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas.

To learn more about the Deer Steward Certification program, or about registering for an upcoming course, visit www.QDMA.com and navigate to the Deer Steward Courses page under the "Advanced Ed" menu option.

Online Deer Steward Courses

In the ninth year of the Deer Steward Certification program, QDMA's popular educational series continued to offer the option to take the first level online, making it as convenient and affordable as it's ever been, and boy was it popular. After three years of availability, well over 600 people have registered to participate in the Level I course from the comfort of their home or office, matching or slightly exceeding the inaugural year's volume of participants for the second year in a row.

The good news is that it never sells out! All that is required is a high-speed Internet connection and you can enroll in the Level I class online. Once registered, attendees gain access to a digital recording of one of our previous Deer Steward Level I courses (filmed in front of a live audience

BILL WINKE'S MIDWEST WHITETAIL AND INAUGURAL CANADIAN SITE AMONG 2016 DEER STEWARD LOCATIONS



Level 1

May 20-23

Moravia, Iowa
Midwest Whitetail
Field Trip

September 8-12

Cayamant, Quebec
Fishing Package w/
Eastern Canada Outfitters

Level 2

June 10-13

Bradley, S.C
Cedar Ridge
Plantation

July 8-11

Windsor, Ill.
Anseeuw Farm

For more information, visit QDMA.com or contact QDMA Certification Programs Manager Matt Ross by e-mail at mross@qdma.com or by calling (518) 886-1732.

QDMA FINANCIAL STATEMENT

As a grassroots member-centric organization, QDMA strives to maximize mission delivery and member value. To achieve this, QDMA exercises extreme fiscal discipline to enable consistent revenue growth and expense containment. This approach has proven successful as QDMA continues to experience sustained growth while maintaining its reputation as one of the leanest and most efficient nonprofit wildlife conservation organizations in the United States.

The Internal Revenue Service has ruled that QDMA qualifies under the provisions of Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code as an organization created for charitable, educational, and scientific purposes and, therefore, is exempt from federal income taxes. Donations to QDMA are deductible by the donor as charitable contributions for federal tax income purposes. QDMA's Federal Employer Identification Number is 57-0941892.

Notes to Spreadsheets:

2013 and 2014 financial information audited by Royals and Associates, Athens, Georgia.

2013 and 2014 financial information compiled by Turner and Patat, Athens, Georgia.

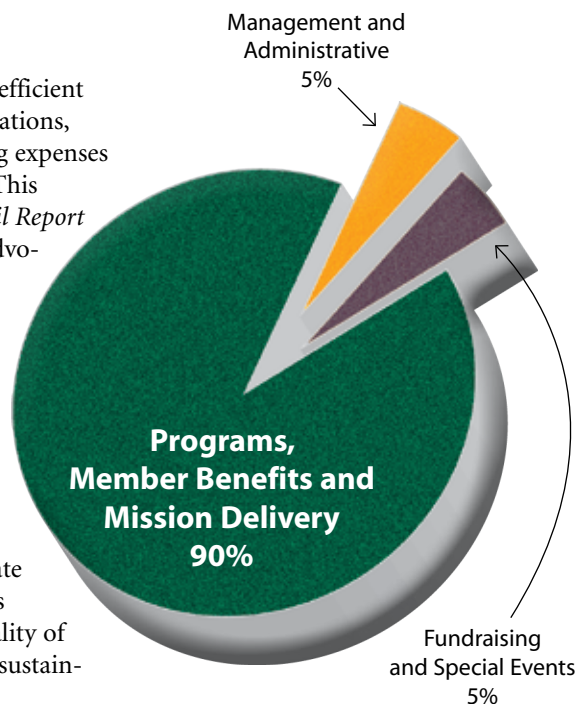


QDMA is among the most efficient non-profit conservation organizations, with 90 percent of operating expenses directed toward member services and mission delivery, especially in communities where our grassroots volunteers are active.



WHERE DOES YOUR MONEY GO?

QDMA is among the most efficient and effective non-profit organizations, with 90 percent of our operating expenses going toward mission delivery. This includes producing the *Whitetail Report* you are reading now, but also advocating for sound deer management in policy and regulation, working to secure our hunting heritage, supporting practical whitetail research to advance our hunting knowledge, and improving deer management and hunter education at the grassroots level throughout North America. When you donate to QDMA, your support enables action that will improve the quality of your deer hunting and secure a sustainable future for whitetails.



Statement of Financial Activities

Revenues	2013	2014
Advertising & Corporate Support	\$464,043	\$738,696
Member Program Services	\$2,074,539	\$2,159,775
Fundraising & Donations	\$1,262,574	\$1,440,101
Membership Dues	\$796,419	\$986,736
Other Income	\$91,354	\$71,851
Total Revenues	\$4,688,929	\$5,397,159

Expenses	2013	2014
Total Expenses	\$3,261,059	\$3,550,021
Increase in Net Assets	\$92,944	\$165,011
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	\$1,941,330	\$2,034,274
Net Assets at End of Year	\$2,034,274	\$2,199,285

Statement of Financial Position

ASSETS	Dec. 31, 2013	Dec. 31, 2014
Current Assets		
Cash Accounts	470,801	458,841
Accounts Receivable	141,490	198,278
Inventory	485,738	504,075
Investments	469,008	627,380
Total Current Assets	1,567,037	1,788,574
Property & Equipment		
Net of Accumulated Depreciation	1,866,175	1,826,212
TOTAL ASSETS	3,433,212	3,614,786

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities	2013	2014
Accounts Payable	272,865	302,057
Total Deferred Liabilities	1,126,073	1,113,444
TOTAL LIABILITIES	1,398,938	1,415,501

Net Assets	2013	2014
Unrestricted Net Assets	1,941,330	2,034,274
Increase in Net Assets	92,944	165,011
Total Net Assets	2,034,274	2,199,285
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	3,433,212	3,614,786

2014 HONOR ROLL OF DONORS

QDMA would like to thank and recognize those who were generous donors to QDMA in 2014. Through financial support beyond membership and participation in other programs, these donors are securing QDMA's mission: *To ensure the future of white-tailed deer, wildlife habitat and our hunting heritage.*

Donor Recognition Categories

FOUNDER'S CIRCLE \$5,000+
CHAIRMAN'S CIRCLE \$1,000-\$4,999
DIRECTOR'S CLUB \$500-\$999
LEADERSHIP CLUB \$250-\$499
QDMA PATRON \$100-\$249

Please consider becoming a donor by contributing to QDMA. Your support is tax-deductible and will be greatly appreciated and used wisely to further our mission. Contact Jeff Beall, Director of Advancement, to learn about several options for Planned Giving.

jbeall@qdma.com

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QDMA Board Member Nicole Garris and her husband Joe Holt at the Major Donor Social at the 2014 National Convention. Nicole was a Founder's Circle donor in 2014 and member of QDMA's Brothers-Hamilton Legacy Society.

THE RACK PACK – QDMA'S YOUTH PROGRAM

SUPPORT THE NEXT GENERATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH INVOLVEMENT

Another deer season is behind us. We hope yours was filled with productive hunts and precious memories. We also hope you took some time to introduce hunting to the next generation. The Rack Pack would like to ask every deer hunter to think about the role you can play in growing youth involvement in your community. Can you commit to signing up a new member, helping organize a youth hunt, championing a food plot competition or sponsoring a classroom? With your help, we can accomplish our goal of ensuring the future of deer hunting for generations to come.



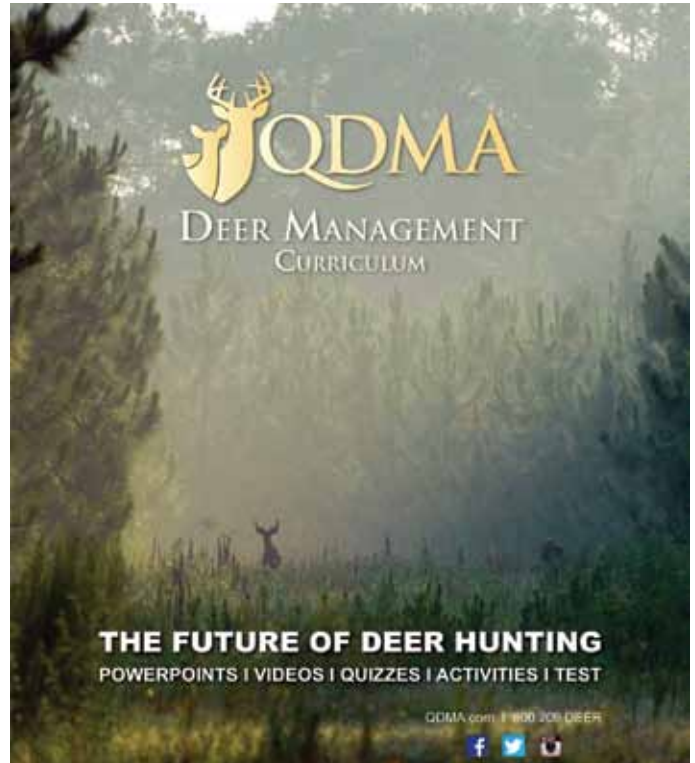
4-H FOOD PLOT PROJECT

The Rack Pack received the “Friends of the Extension” award for our part in the South Carolina 4-H Food Plot Project. Over 100 youth are planting food plots, gaining knowledge and a Rack Pack membership. Well over 100 youth from the state have been planting a quarter-acre food plot, keeping a record book and in the end being judged on their project. We would like to replicate this project in more states.



YOUTH HUNTS

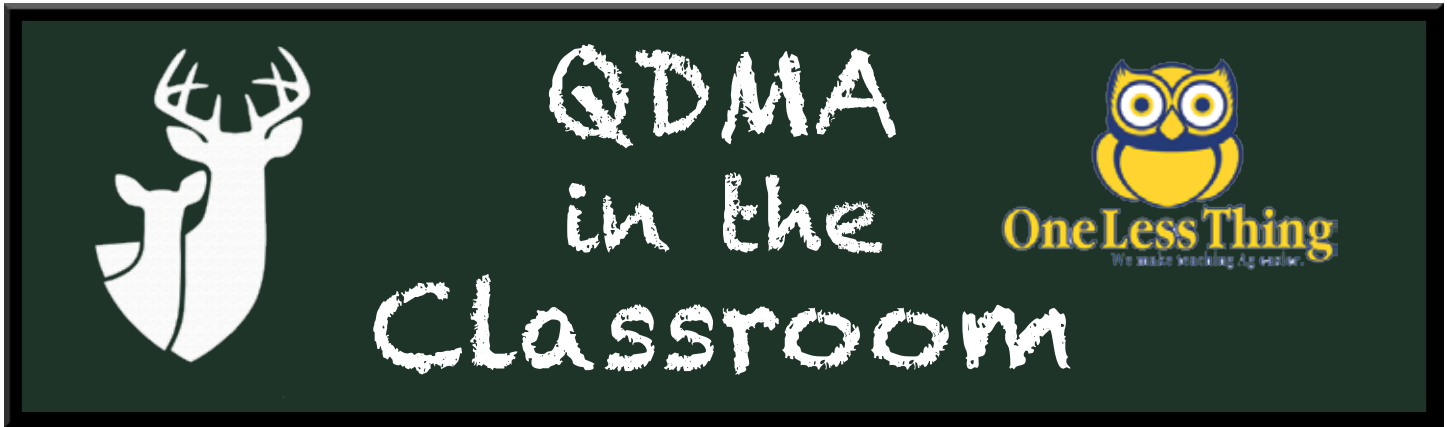
QDMA guided or sponsored over 500 youth afield in 2015 through organized youth hunts with countless others being mentored by QDMA members. We hosted four military youth hunts and at the time of this printing had hosted 61 military youth, taking 57 deer in partnership with the National Guard. Our National Youth Hunt, held last October, enjoyed a 100 percent success rate for the second time in three years. Our #FirstDeer campaign continues to try to enlighten all hunters that our most rewarding hunts are when we mentor a new hunter! Help us create new hunters.



QDMA'S NEW DEER MANAGEMENT CURRICULUM

When we launched QDMA's Classroom Curriculum in 2015 at the FFA National Convention as part of an updated Classroom Membership, we had students running to grab their teachers to sign up. Can you imagine learning about sound deer management for a week or two of grade school? Would you like the youth in your neck of the woods learning the benefits of Quality Deer Management? We need you to help get the word out or sponsor classrooms in your area.

QDMA's new Deer Management Curriculum is offered in partnership with OneLessThing.net, an online resource for educators. The curriculum contains everything needed to teach a unit on whitetail management, including presentations, videos, quizzes, activities and a test. Presentations cover deer biology, history, management, aging and judging, trail-camera surveys, and more. The curriculum comes with a one-year “QDMA in the Classroom” membership, *Aging and Judging Bucks on the Hoof* DVD, six issues of *Quality Whitetails* magazine, and a combo pack of three QDMA educational posters. See page 43 for more info.



The Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA) is a non-profit wildlife conservation organization *dedicated to ensuring the future of white-tailed deer, wildlife habitat and our hunting heritage.*

QDMA is a recognized leader in educating deer hunters, wildlife professionals, the public and the next generation on all aspects of whitetail biology, management and habitat improvement.

With the advent of their youth education and outreach program, the Rack Pack, QDMA wanted to do more for the classrooms throughout the country.

Thus our QDMA in the Classroom membership was created. With the addition of a full deer biology and management curriculum, this is the best resource available to educate the next generation of deer hunters and stewards.

Deer Biology and Management Curriculum:

1. Deer Senses and Biology Presentation
2. Deer History and Management Presentation
3. Deer ID and Aging Presentation
 - Aging on the Hoof Activity
 - Aging and Judging DVD & Worksheet
 - Jawbone Aging Worksheet and Quiz (With 3-part video series)
4. Camera Survey Presentation
 - Camera Survey Analysis Activity
 - Management Plan Lab
5. Cumulative Test

Additional items: Guided Notes, QDMA's Whitetail Report, Crossword, Word Find, Careers in Conservation Blog, QDMA Approved Resources Guide

Classroom Membership - \$60

Sign up for QDMA's Classroom Membership and your class will receive ...



Six Issues of
Quality Whitetails Magazine



Aging and Scoring Bucks
on the Hoof DVD



Three Poster Combo Pack

QDMA's Deer Biology and Management Curriculum



HOW TO SIGN UP: Visit OneLessThing.net

2015 QDMA BRANCH HIGHLIGHTS



No doubt, the heart and soul of the QDMA is our volunteers. As a grassroots, member-based conservation organization, our network of local volunteers is integral to helping QDMA spread our mission and the message about Quality Deer Management (QDM).

Here's a look at what our volunteer members and Branch officers accomplished through their hard work in 2015.

2015 Branch Accomplishments

- QDMA Branches raised over \$2.4 million for conservation.

- QDMA Branches contributed thousands of pounds of venison to venison donation programs and soup kitchens.

- QDMA Branches conducted numerous educational events (field days, seminars and workshops) across the whitetail range.

- QDMA Branches enrolled over 11,600 QDMA members, including 806 youth and 802 Life or Sponsor members.

- QDMA Branches hosted 96 fundraising events across the United States and Canada.

- QDMA Regional Directors formed 26 new Branches.

- QDMA Regional Directors maintained 191 active Branches in the United States and Canada.

- QDMA Branches or Branch members were directly involved in at least 86 advocacy issues in their locales involving white-tailed deer legislation or regulations.

It was a great year for QDMA Branches and for those impacted by their efforts. Importantly, we look forward to an even better 2016.

Would you like to become a volunteer leader in your local hunting community, helping spread QDMA's message of sound deer management? Consider starting an official QDMA Branch – that's our name for local groups of QDMA members who join together for fellowship, fundraising, and promotion of the philosophy. By volunteering to help lead a QDMA Branch, you get to know other like-minded deer hunters in your area and have fun working together to grow QDMA membership and QDM knowledge in your community. QDMA Branches host annual fundraisers, field days, youth hunts, and other educational and promotional events.

QDMA needs volunteer leaders like you! Join the fun by sending an e-mail to backyard@qdma.com and letting us know you would be willing to help form or grow a QDMA Branch in your area. We look forward to working with you to ensure the future of white-tailed deer, wildlife habitat and our hunting heritage!



SPECIAL BRANCH EVENTS IN 2015

Many QDMA Branches host phenomenal events. Here is an example from each Regional Director's region to highlight some of the great work performed by QDMA volunteers.

REGION 4: The **Rum River Branch** of Minnesota supported and helped fund a land acquisition in Isanti County. The Spencer Brook Wildlife Management Area was purchased to preserve hundreds of acres of premium lands for wildlife habitat and public hunting. The **Cedar Bottom Branch** of Wisconsin sponsored a Youth and Ladies Day in Navarino. Activities included trout fishing, ATV training, a rock climbing wall, sporting clays, 3D archery and more. The event hosted over 600 women and youth and allowed them to experience the outdoors at no charge. Money well spent!

REGION 8: The **Heart of Illinois Branch** hosted a youth antler hunt at Oak Ridge Sportsman's Club in Mackinaw. A total of 56 kids searched for 188 antlers put out by the Branch, and each kid received an engraved QDMA 2015 antler. The **West Central Illinois Branch** held its annual Antler Scramble in New Windsor. Open to kids age 17 and under, registration for the Antler Scramble shed hunt filled up well in advance, and the 110 youth participants each received a T-shirt, lunch, and one antler to take home.

REGION 7: Multiple QDMA Branches in Kentucky (**Derby City, Kentucky Heartland, Barren River, Owensboro and Northern Kentucky Branches**) hosted a youth deer hunt for 55 children from military families that had absent parents, who were either lost in combat or still serving overseas. As part of the program, the children were introduced to hunter ethics, shot placement, deer aging, archery and more. The youth killed 52 deer over a four-day period from four different properties across the state. The **Derby City Branch** donated six CVA Scout .243 rifles in support of the Taylorsville Lake WMA youth hunt put on by the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation Officers in the Spencer County area.

REGION 9: The **Northeast Louisiana, South Louisiana, Central Louisiana and Red River Branches** purchased a Track Chair for an injured Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries agent. Sgt. Scott Bullitt was shot in the line of duty in May as he was returning to his vehicle after making contact with two individuals parked at a secluded boat ramp. Although the bullet missed his spine, it created extensive nerve damage that may or may not allow Sgt. Bullitt to walk again. For the fourth straight year the **Bayou Branch** of Thibodaux, Louisiana has continued to raise the bar for QDMA Branches. In 2015 they raised an all-time high of \$73,005 and recruited 440 memberships.

REGION 10: The **Gulf Coast Branch** of Alabama sponsored a Making Memories Hunt that takes up to 40 people with special-needs hunting. The **Southwest Mississippi Branch** gave \$500 in local scholarships.

REGION 3: The **Northwest Indiana Branch** teamed up with the Indiana DNR to develop wheat and clover food plots at the LaSalle Fish and Wildlife Area. The **Mid Michigan Branch** held their 2015 Field Day outside of Gladwin, with nearly 70 people in attendance. The **Barry County Branch** of Michigan participated in the second annual Youth Day held in Hastings. The event was put on by conservation groups around the area to get kids involved in the outdoors and ensure the future of hunting.

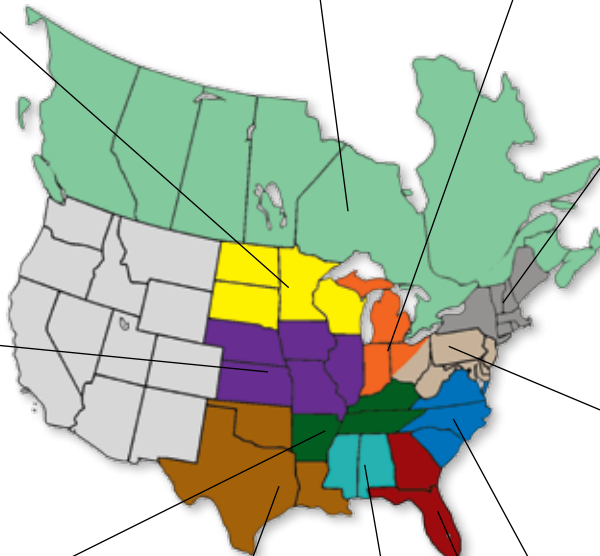
REGION 1: The **Greater Rochester Southern Tier Branch** of New York presented all the veterans at its banquet with a Lake Ontario fishing charter. The veterans later enjoyed fishing Lake Ontario, where they caught 14 king salmon. The **First New Hampshire Branch** donated \$500 to start the New Hampshire Sportsman's Foundation to help fund hunting and fishing licenses to veterans in need of financial help. The **Upper Hudson River Valley Branch** and the **New York State Advisory Council** worked hard to get legislation sponsored that would increase minimum poaching fines.

REGION 2: The **Pennsylvania State Advisory Council** supported and participated in the Pennsylvania Wildlife Leadership Development Committee's Whitetail Field Academy, held at Penn State University's Stone Valley Recreation Area. The **Southeast Pennsylvania Branch** hosted "A Day of Whitetail Education" at Cabela's in Hamburg. A capacity crowd gathered to learn about white-tailed deer.

REGION 5: The **ACE Basin and Mid-Carolina Branches** of South Carolina partnered with the South Carolina Forestry Commission to host a Military Appreciation Deer Hunt. Four National Guardsmen, along with six auction winners from QDMA banquets, participated in the hunt and harvested eight deer. Additionally, Branches in Region 5 donated approximately 4,500 pounds of venison in 2015.

REGION 6: The **Morgan County Branch** of Georgia donated \$500 to the local 4-H shotgun team. The **Georgia Foothills Branch** gave a \$500 scholarship and presented the Georgia DNR Law Enforcement Division \$750 worth of trail-cameras. The **Griffin G2 Branch** of Georgia made a \$500 donation to buy ammunition for a youth shooting day and paid to have a local youth's first buck mounted. The **Devils Garden Branch** of Florida gave \$1,000 in scholarships to local youth.

CANADA: The **Northern New Brunswick Branch** successfully lobbied the New Brunswick government to re-open Zone 3 in the northwestern corner of that province, to a limited antlered deer season in 2015. This area has been closed to deer hunting since 1993 but thanks to the herd monitoring efforts of the Branch and their relationship with the New Brunswick government, over 2,700 square kilometers are now again available for public deer hunting. The **Northern New Brunswick Branch** also held the largest Canadian banquet of 2015 in Edmunston with over 225 people in attendance.



QDMA'S WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT COOPERATIVE COORDINATOR - MICHIGAN



Anna Mitterling (shown above, speaking) started her new role as Michigan's Wildlife Cooperative Coordinator in January of 2015. The position is housed by the Michigan United Conservation Clubs and funded by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, QDMA, and Pheasants Forever. There are over 90 Cooperatives in Michigan, 68 of those are actively engaged with the Michigan Wildlife Cooperative program, and six new Cooperatives held official kick-off meetings this year. Below is a summary of some of the Michigan Wildlife Cooperatives Program's accomplishments for 2015.

In August, Anna partnered with the Michigan QDMA Council to plan a QDMA Branch and Cooperative Leader Rendezvous - a two day event hosting about 50 deer leaders from around Michigan. Speakers covered topics from CWD, dealing with trespassers, prescribed burns, trophy deer, the Michigan Deer Management Plan, habitat grants, etc. There were some breakout sessions where the group talked about "WHY" they are involved with QDMA and Wildlife Cooperatives. The thought being that people are more attracted to WHY we do something, versus what we do. If we are able to promote and communicate WHY Cooperatives have value, we are more likely to see productive and active Cooperatives in Michigan.

Michigan has over 20 QDMA Branches across the state. Anna attended several Branch habitat days to promote cooperatives. Some Branches had events specifically to promote the creation of more Cooperatives within their region. As a result of these events and cooperative promotion from other QDMA avenues, seven Cooperatives formally started this year, with several more in the early stages of planning a cooperative.

Anna is working with DNR and the Nature Conservancy to create a simple process for landowners in deer Cooperatives to quantify deer browse and make management decisions with the information they collect. She will be working with several pilot groups this winter to try out some sampling methods.

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) positive deer were found in Meridian Township, not too far from Lansing, Michigan. Anna has been engaged in helping spread information to Cooperative leaders and keeping them in the loop on regulation changes and the most recent information provided by DNR regarding the state of CWD in this localized area.

In Northern Michigan, there is a long standing bovine tuberculosis (TB) prevalence in the wild deer herd. The DNR has been trying to motivate hunters to submit heads for surveillance purposes. Anna is

working with the local Cooperatives and QDMA Branches to provide opportunities for youth, veterans, farmers, and hunters to increase harvest opportunity as well as provide some habitat improvement funds for landowners to provide quality habitat for wildlife.

Michigan has a unique Cooperative program called the Michigan Pheasant Restoration Initiative. The program began in 2010, focuses on using agency and organization partnerships, as

well as landowner Cooperatives to fund and form pheasant-based Cooperatives around the state in some priority pheasant habitat areas. Anna works closely with this program, working to equip Farm Bill Biologists and Cooperative leaders to form and enhance pheasant Cooperatives.

CRP general signup is occurring this winter and will be available from December to February. To take advantage of this, Anna is working with the Farm Bill Biologist to plan events to promote CRP and Wildlife Cooperatives in December and January throughout Southern Michigan.

For more information please visit www.mucc.org/cooperatives or contact Anna at amitterling@mucc.org.



QDMA'S WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT COOPERATIVE SPECIALISTS - MISSOURI

Missouri Cooperatives have grown in size, experience, numbers, and types.

"It's exciting to see how Cooperatives are evolving," said Brian Towe, QDMA's Cooperative Specialist in southern Missouri. "We really are learning from one another."

To date approximately 204,000 private-land acres have been impacted through efforts made by landowners and land managers - an accomplishment worth applauding, although the diversity in practices is equally notable.

Many of these accomplishments can be attributed to the inclusion of multiple species and habitats in overall goals. In most circumstances, improving deer herds and deer herd health is the "hook" that attracts a land manager to the Cooperative philosophy. By highlighting efforts made through the practicing of quality deer management (QDM) and how it can be beneficial for a wide array of wildlife, a variety of sportsmen can be attracted. While it's always a balancing act to negotiate the various mindsets, it has been made easier by highlighting common goals and interests, especially as it relates to habitat management.

Cooperative Activities

A yearly review of goals and objectives with membership is common among the most active Cooperatives. This is an integral task to ensuring member's activities are in line with long-term accomplishments. However, the most exciting activities have been the immediate efforts made to reach the end target. These activities often involve a Cornerstone of QDM, habitat management.

Forestland management is a major component of Missouri's whitetail range as the Missouri Department of Conservation (DOC) estimates more than 14 million acres of forestland in the state. Cooperative members completed forest stand improvement projects on 42 reported acres. Prescribed burning in Southern portions of the state is a tool widely used. It is commonly utilized to thin undesirable woody vegetation and restores natural plant communities that existed prior to modern fire suppression. Cooperatives burned an estimated 842 acres of forestland during late

winter and early spring. Even more impressive were the efforts made in a Cooperative mindset, as neighbors assisted neighbors with their burn efforts. Ted Slinkard, the leader and a founding member of Mayfield Hollow Wildlife Cooperative, not only assisted his fellow Cooperative members with prescribed burns but traveled a few hours to assist a member of the Upper Ozark QDM Cooperative perform a burn.

Fire lines and drip torches were also utilized to manage over 120 acres of early-successional habitat and warm-season grass plantings. Members of the River Aux Vases QDM Cooperative utilized burn equipment purchased for the Co-op by another member. Vern Bauman donated proceeds for the purchase after several members assisted him with a burn conducted the year prior, actions taken in the truest sense of neighbors cooperating with neighbors.

Herd monitoring techniques via camera surveys and harvest data collection are both exciting and humbling to most. Cooperative members utilize the survey not just to assist with the establishment of annual harvest guidelines, but also as a method to test their ability to age deer on the hoof. The harvest data then becomes their litmus test. As one might guess it has made for many light-hearted moments.

Antler scoring events, Co-op Days, a predator hunt, food plot tours, a youth event and general meetings all served as outreach efforts for recruitment and relationship building. Of the 48 wildlife and habitat cooperatives currently documented, 26 reportedly held a Cooperative function. In all, more than 100 meetings and Cooperative events were held.

Future Forecast

The expansion and demand of landscape management through the efforts of private landowners seems almost like a novel idea. However, Missouri landowners and hunters have shown they are willing to make an effort to improve habitat and deer herd health. In recognition, the QDMA and DOC are partnering once again by providing a second Cooperative Specialist Position in Missouri. This will provide an opportunity for further expansion of Cooperatives themselves and to diversify the services provided.



Alex Foster recently joined QDMA as Missouri's second Wildlife Management Cooperative Specialist. Alex will be working with landowners in the northern half of the state. He will join Brian Towe, who will cover the southern half of Missouri.

The second position was filled in January of 2016. Introduction efforts and a strategic approach to Cooperative development will be a priority. Coverage area was largely determined by residency of the Specialists. Brian will continue to provide a majority of the services to the lower regions of the state while Alex Foster will focus on the upper reaches.

Joint efforts will be made to provide a better networking structure for Cooperative leadership and their members with other Cooperatives throughout the state. The objective would be to provide a venue for support efforts and of more importance to some, assistance with those efforts. To further this project, a leadership development program would lay out a general road map for establishment methods and the resources available. This is something that is desperately needed as many Cooperative leaders understand how to host a startup meeting but are unsure of how to proceed once the neighbors are on board. Ultimately, the success of the Cooperative Program hinges on proper guidance and tools. A task that Brian and Alex are excited to tackle.

For more information on Cooperative development contact Brian at (573) 397-1664 or Alex at (800) 209-3337.

NATIONAL DEER ALLIANCE: 2015 NORTH AMERICAN DEER SUMMIT



Above: NDA leaders, Board members, and Summit speakers address stakeholder questions and input at the 2015 North American Deer Summit.

Stakeholders representing state wildlife agencies, NGOs, landowners, researchers, the hunting industry and, of course, hunters got to work on behalf of deer at the North American Deer Summit in Louisville, Kentucky, held in conjunction with the 2015 QDMA National Convention. Their challenge was to select five from the list of the top-20 issues impacting deer hunting that were identified at QDMA's inaugural Whitetail Summit in 2014 and to develop specific action items for each. These were the five issues attendees wanted to work on and/or the issues they felt the National Deer Alliance (NDA) could impact the soonest. These action items will be the NDA's marching orders over the next two to three years. The five issues and action items are listed below:

Hunter Recruitment & Retention

Petition the Council to Advance Hunting and Shooting Sports for NDA to join their Board.

Capitalize on the positive image of hunters feeding the hungry.

Summarize and share the contributions of hunters to big-picture conservation.

While the NDA is clearly a deer-driven organization, and deer are clearly what drives the hunting industry (which depends on recruitment and retention), some great work is being done by the Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports and some other organizations. Our best play is to ensure we have deer to hunt now and in the future, but tying into existing efforts will help the overall effort.

Political Influences on Hunting

Advocate for scientific (rather than political) decision-making and for wildlife

agencies to maintain authority.

Integrate grassroots action; develop a mechanism to easily contact legislators, as well as e-mail alerts for hot issues.

Get some political allies involved in the NDA; review successful models for advocacy (i.e., Congressional Sportsman's Foundation and United States Sportsmen's Alliance), and possibly align with them and other similar organizations.

This was a hot one as Summit attendees saw little value in politicians making deer policy. The key here is to organize and unite behind good science that will help politicians better understand deer issues.

Landscape Change/Habitat Loss

Better explain how habitat improvement for deer benefits other natural resources.

Participate actively in Farm Bill development.

Work with state/federal agencies and private landowners to encourage active habitat management.

This one is clearly dead center in the NDA wheelhouse. The deer organizations (QDMA, Whitetails Unlimited, and the The Mule Deer Foundation) who comprise the core of the NDA collectively know more about the connection between habitat and deer than all the other conservation organizations together. The NDA will leverage the combined knowledge base and strength of all three to impact wildlife habitat issues like never before.

Public Perception of Hunting

Promote the food attributes and healthy lifestyle benefits of hunting.

Promote the true values of hunting; make sure messages are tailored and delivered by and to traditional and non-tradi-

tional hunters.

Develop a hunter code of conduct that builds a positive popular image.

A great deal of the conversation at this year's Summit centered on natural foods, healthy eating and the value of hunting deer for the table. This all fits in the context of the locavore movement which is gaining traction across the continent (especially with younger, health conscious influencers). Both keynote speakers, Shane Mahoney and Steven Rinella, really drove these points home. We're on it!

Captive Deer Industry

Advocate to ensure deer are classified as wildlife and not livestock.

Encourage elected officials to pay more attention to science-based information.

Advocate/partner for more funding for disease research.

Spokespeople from the deer farming industry attended the Summit intent on finding common ground with those opposed to deer farming to work together in the common interest of deer and deer hunting. Further talks will be scheduled to identify common ground and explore ways to work together for deer.

The NDA's next steps are to develop specific strategies to address these action items and measure results. Rest assured it won't be easy, but anything worth doing rarely is. QDMA and its NDA partners recognize this and look forward to meeting these challenges head on for the benefit of hunters and deer.

For more information about the National Deer Alliance, visit

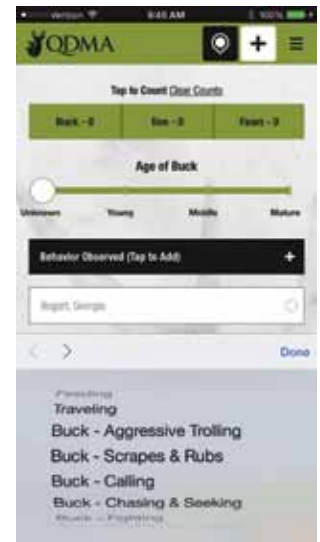
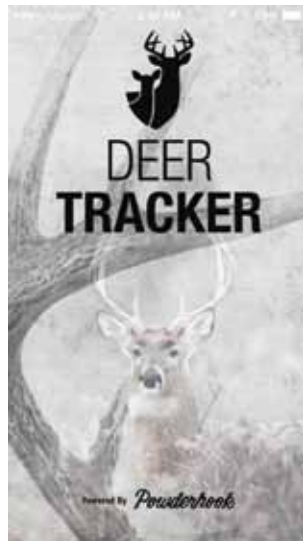
www.nationaldeeralliance.com

QDMA LAUNCHES "DEER TRACKER" MOBILE APP IN 2015

QDMA announced the launch of our first-ever mobile app in September 2015: *Deer Tracker*. The new app was made possible through a partnership with Powderhook, Cabela's, Bushnell and Hunting Lease Network. Through the end of the 2015 hunting season, Deer Tracker was being used by thousands of deer hunters throughout the United States to report observed deer activity.

QDMA's Deer Tracker app allows hunters to submit reports based on observed deer activity or deer they harvest. Based on this user-driven data, the app generates a heat map estimating the likelihood of seeing deer activity during hunting hours in a selected area (as seen in the screen images shown here). You can also read observation and harvest reports near you, and reports are interactive. Users can "like" or comment on photos and harvest reports.

All reports are anonymous and loca-



tions are generalized, so it is impossible to pinpoint the actual property where reports originated.

QDMA's Deer Tracker is available for

iPhone and Android devices through Google Play and the Apple app store, and it's free. Visit deertrackerapp.com to download.

QDMA WEBSITE RESOURCES

In the world of white-tailed deer management and hunting, knowledge is king. As an addendum to other portions of this year's *Whitetail Report*, our flagship magazine *Quality Whitetails*, and other benefits QDMA offers its members and non-members alike, here is a sample of the quality free content found on QDMA.com.

Whitetail Biology: Whitetail Bucks Are Not Territorial.

A buck can vanish from your hunting area for many reasons. Let's list one factor you don't have to worry about: Being chased out of its home range by a more aggressive buck.

Quality Deer Management: Can Ticks Affect Fawn Survival?

People who witness fawns with head, ears and eyes completely encrusted with ticks often ask QDMA whether ticks can affect fawn survival. The short answer. Read this to learn more.

Habitat Improvement: Does Logging or Habitat Work Push Deer Away?

If you lease hunting land, few sights

are more disheartening than the appearance of skidders, log loaders and logging trucks, especially just before or during hunting season. Will this have a significant impact on deer activity? Read this article to find out.

Herd Management: Top 5 Factors Causing Deer Population Declines

Hunters throughout the whitetail's range are complaining of declining deer populations. Are these declines real, and if so, what are the driving factors?

Herd Monitoring: Have We Killed Too Many Does?

If you're truly seeing fewer deer while hunting, how do you determine if it's related to a factor out of your control, or if it's in fact from overharvest? Here, the author describes a valuable technique to help hunters answer this question.

Deer Hunting: 5 Tips to Getting and Keeping Youth Interested in Hunting

Have you often wondered what separates kids who develop a passion for deer hunting, from those who don't? While there's no guaranteed formula for getting and keeping our kids involved in hunting, there are certainly things we can do as a



parent or mentor to increase the odds of them developing that lifelong passion.

Food Plots: QDMA's Guide to Summer Food Plots

Here is a quick guide to all the useful information available on the QDMA website to help you decide what to plant, and how to plant it, including profiles of several species you should consider for use in summer food plots.

Find these and many more articles at QDMA.com!

HELP ENSURE QDMA'S FUTURE



By Jeff Beall

You know that QDMA promotes better deer and better deer hunting each year. Through the support of members like you, corporate sponsors who believe in our mission, and donors, we pursue and achieve the QDMA mission.

Hopefully you have also joined a Branch and enjoyed a local banquet or perhaps even attended a National Convention – or have plans to join us in January in Louisville, Kentucky. These events fund national efforts as well as local initiatives in their “home range.” Giving like this provides for QDMA’s annual work, but it does not sustain the long-range planning required for the continued life of our association.

You may be asking yourself, “Why should I be concerned about the continued life of QDMA? Haven’t y’all made it just fine for nearly 30 years?”

Yes, we have enjoyed longevity and have accomplished much through your support, but our membership ebbs and flows due to conditions not related to deer or hunting, and so do short-term cash donations. Non-profit organizations like ours must rely upon planned giv-

ing to build the balance sheet, providing QDMA the financial stability necessary for long-term planning and mission delivery beyond next year. Gifts other than cash add value to the association and can benefit the donor by sheltering income made now and in the future from taxation. Just in the last several months, QDMA members like you have added QDMA to their will, offered gifts of real estate, and committed to long-term monthly and annual donations.

What are Planned Gifts?

They are gifts anyone can afford, because they cost nothing during your lifetime. They’re perfect for donors who worry they can’t afford a cash donation.

What qualifies as a planned gift?

- Gifts through one’s will
- Retirement plans allow for giving up to \$100,000 per year.
- Paid up Life Insurance
- Land, securities and other assets

Why should you consider planned giving to QDMA? Gifts like these mentioned above provide valuable, lasting capital for the organization. They’re also easy. You do not need the help of a lawyer, bank or financial advisor to facilitate. The QDMA Staff has the expertise to close these gift transactions following your instructions.

We want to recognize your commitment in any way you wish, either publicly or anonymously. Giving of this type automatically qualifies for each and all of our sponsorship levels and is acknowledged by all appropriate measures.

We invite you to join those who exhibit the highest ideals of the Quality Deer Management Association and support it through “gifts anyone can afford.”

Contact QDMA Director of Advancement Jeff Beall at 843-830-0087 or jbeall@qdma.com to discuss the various ways you can provide financial support for the QDMA. Thank you!

- Make a donation to QDMA in memory or honor of a relative, close friend, or fellow QDMA member.
- Become a Life Member of QDMA.
- Be an active Branch member by attending all activities.
- Attend our next National Convention (January 28-31, 2016, in Louisville, Ky.).
- Attend QDMA’s Deer Steward Certification courses.
- Join QDMA’s Land Certification Program.
- Provide gift memberships to family, fellow hunters and neighbors.
- Involve your children or grandchildren in the “Rack Pack” Program.
- Include QDMA in your will, or participate in a variety of other Planned Giving categories.
- **800-209-3337** - Call our toll-free number to donate by credit card.
- **www.QDMA.com** - Visit our website to donate through PayPal.
- Send a personal check to our National Headquarters: P.O. Box 160, Bogart, GA, 30622
- Contact Jeff Beall, QDMA Director of Advancement: jbeall@qdma.com

LEGACY SOCIETY UNDERGOES NAME CHANGE



Al Brothers (left), who is often referred to as the father of Quality Deer Management, with QDMA Founder and Senior Advisor Joe Hamilton (right).

Inaugural members of the Aldo Leopold Legacy Society and those scheduled for induction in 2016 decided to change the name of the Legacy Society to more accurately reflect the intent of this group. The general consensus among the group was to focus on the noble white-tail by paying tribute to Al Brothers, the renowned father of Quality Deer Management, and to Joe Hamilton, the founder of the Quality Deer Management Association. Henceforth, the official name will be the Brothers-Hamilton Legacy Society.

Just as these pioneers have impacted white-tailed deer management for many years, a major gift to QDMA today will protect our hunting heritage for future generations. Contributions will be placed in the special Brothers-Hamilton Legacy Society Restricted Fund, ensuring the future of QDMA and supporting our hunting heritage protection programs. These programs include our focused efforts such as advocating for fair and effective deer-hunting legislation, research to improve our national whitetail population, and delivering quality outdoor education and instruction to the next generation of North American hunters.

On behalf of approximately 62,000

members, volunteers, and staff we are asking for your support today so conservationists can continue to enjoy our wildlife resources tomorrow. The Brothers-Hamilton Legacy Society is an opportunity to leave your legacy, your “track,” to protect North America’s hunting heritage for all to enjoy.

In recognition and honor of our society members, each inductee’s name will be published annually in *Quality Whitetails* and recognized yearly at the National Convention. New society members will

be inducted into this exclusive circle at the annual National Convention. Members who have made their contribution and are awaiting induction will be listed in select publications throughout the year as a Brothers-Hamilton Legacy Society member. Each donor will receive an exclusive navy sports coat with the distinct Legacy Society patch, labeling, and accessories. At the National Convention, society members will be VIP guests at our major donor reception and attend a special breakfast with QDMA senior leadership. In cases where anonymity is preferred, the request of the donor will be acknowledged.

ELIGIBILITY FOR INDUCTION INTO THE BROTHERS-HAMILTON LEGACY SOCIETY

- Gifts of \$10,000 or more. Only one individual per family can become a Brothers-Hamilton Legacy Society member per contribution.

RECOGNIZED LEVELS OF SUPPORT:

- Bronze Society Member \$10,000*
- Silver Society Member - \$25,000
- Gold Society Member - \$50,000

**Society members will be recognized for accrued donations beyond the Bronze level.*

To become a member of the Brothers-Hamilton Legacy Society or for more information, please contact QDMA’s Director of Advancement, Jeff Beall:

jbeall@qdma.com



QDMA inducted its first members of the Aldo Leopold Legacy Society, shown here, at the 2014 National Convention. The group has since decided to change the name to the Brothers-Hamilton Legacy Society to honor Al Brothers of Texas and QDMA founder Joe Hamilton of South Carolina.

2015 QDMA CONSERVATION & BRANCH ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS



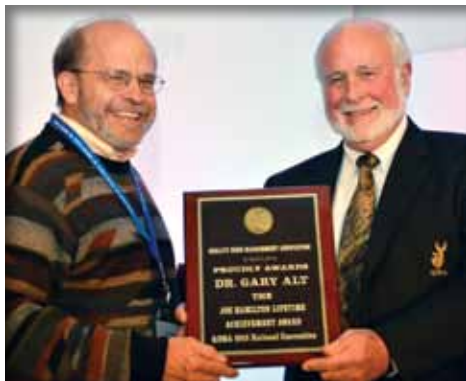
The Volunteer Appreciation Award was created to recognize a member who didn't fit neatly into another award category but who was truly deserving of recognition. Snooky McCullar of South Carolina has a passion for getting more youth involved in the Rack Pack program. He is a Branch president and is working on Level III of Deer Steward. Snooky is pictured (right) with QDMA's Youth Education and Outreach Manager Hank Forester.



The Rack Pack 4-Point Award went to Katelyn Sette of West Virginia, who serves on the Rack Pack Field Staff where she actively blogs about her hunting and outdoor pursuits inviting other youth to try their hand. Katelyn, whose blogging nickname is "The Dangerous Duppa," received the award from QDMA Board Member Mark Thomas.



The Wildlife Officer of the Year Award was presented to Sgt. Scott Herndon of the Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources, who has gone beyond his primary role of law enforcement to promote youth involvement in hunting. He and his team have also been strongly involved in the Kentucky QDMA Military Youth Hunt.



QDMA Founder Joe Hamilton presented QDMA's Lifetime Achievement Award named in his honor to his long-time friend and fellow wildlife biologist Dr. Gary Alt (left) of Pennsylvania. Dr. Alt has over 30 years of experience as a wildlife biologist and extensive experience in public relations, education, and the use of mass media to win support for conservation programs.



QDMA Communications Director Lindsay Thomas Jr. presented the Signpost Communicator of the Year Award to outdoor writer Will Brantley of Kentucky, who has been a strong supporter of QDMA for several years. Will is the former editor of Realtree.com and recently took a new position as Hunting Editor for Field & Stream magazine. He is working on becoming a Level II QDMA Deer Steward.



Roland Dugas III (left) of Louisiana received the 2015 AI Brothers Deer Manager of the Year Award, presented by Joe Hamilton. A QDMA member since 2003, Roland has enhanced wildlife habitat through timber harvests and the establishment of 160 acres of sanctuary and 30 acres of food plots. His property is enrolled in the state's DMAP and is a partner with the state's black bear restoration program.



Joe Hamilton presented the AI Brothers Professional Deer Manager of the Year award to wildlife biologist Tony Vidrine (left) of Louisiana. Tony oversees 11 WMAs and 18 employees. A long-time supporter of QDMA, he has helped the South Louisiana, Central Louisiana, and Acadiana Branches with numerous field days, seminars, youth hunts and banquets.



The Farm Country Whitetails Branch of Minnesota earned the New Branch of the Year award with its inaugural banquet netting \$15,000 and capturing 140 members, including 20 national sponsors and 28 Rack Pack members. Branch president Zach Krause (left) and officer Sinjin Bell (right) attended the National Convention and accepted the award.



Joe Shreves (left) of Kentucky earned the Volunteer of the Year Award, presented by QDMA CEO Brian Murphy. Joe is a tireless committee member and Branch volunteer for the Derby City Branch. Thanks to Joe's leadership, four Branches now participate in the QDMA Kentucky Military Youth Hunt annually, growing the hunt to 47 kids of military families.



The Bayou Branch of Tibodeaux, Louisiana, earned the Branch of the Year Award. Among many accomplishments, their 2014 banquet added 478 QDMA members, and the Branch donated 12 Ruger youth rifles for QDMA's National Youth Hunt. Louisiana representatives Darren Boudreaux (left) and Vic Blanchard (right) accepted the award on behalf of the Branch and are pictured here with QDMA Board Member Mark Thomas.



Jeff Eames of the First New Hampshire Branch, pictured here with QDMA Regional Directors Mike Edwards (left) and Ryan Furrer (right), was named the QDMA Branch President of the Year. Under his leadership, the First New Hampshire Branch annually conducts seminars, educational events, youth events, and a 140- to 175-person banquet. Jeff and the Branch also had a nominee selected for the QDMA National Youth hunt in 2014.



QDMA's Event of the Year was the 2014 Kentucky QDMA Military Youth Hunt. Held in October, the hunt involved 47 children from across the state who took 41 deer during the hunt. All of the participants were children from military families with a parent or parents actively serving, having served or who died in service to our country. For most of the children, it was their first time taking a deer. Four QDMA Branches – Derby City, Kentucky Heartland, Barren River and Owensboro – partnered to host the hunt with the mission “to pass on our hunting heritage by providing a safe and rewarding hunting opportunity to children of our local military.” Officers and volunteers from each of the Branches, and several of the youth hunters from the 2014 hunt, were able to attend and appear on stage to receive the award, which was presented by QDMA's Youth Education and Outreach Manager Hank Forester.



QDMA's Agency of the Year was the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, whose recent accomplishments include closing state borders to movement of captive deer and the development of a mentored youth program. L-R: FWC Commissioner Rick Hanas, Hunting & Game Management Division Director Diane Eggeman, Deer Program Coordinator Cory Morea, Joe Hamilton of QDMA, and FWC Executive Director Nick Wiley.



We present annual awards to the QDMA Branches that recruit the most new QDMA members and the most new Sponsor members. In the past year, one Branch won both! QDMA Board member Robert Manning (right) presented the awards to David Galloway and Michael Cochran of the Lowcountry Branch of South Carolina, which recruited 493 new QDMA members and 72 Sponsor members!

CONTACT A QDMA BRANCH NEAR YOU

Branch Name	Town	State	Branch Contact	Phone	Email
Auburn University Toomer's Branch	Auburn	Alabama	Will Howell	(205) 908-6140	wrh0010@tigermail.auburn.edu
Gulf Coast Branch	McIntosh	Alabama	Russ Sims	(251) 509-9313	rsims3006@gmail.com
Lake Martin Branch	Opelika	Alabama	Fletcher Scott	(256) 234-5858	mcoosae@gmail.com
Central Arkansas Branch	Little Rock	Arkansas	Rob Mynatt	(901) 581-2363	rob.mynatt@ustrust.com
Delta Droptine Branch	Lake Village	Arkansas	Joey Williamson	(870) 265-1206	sales@southernaquaculturesupply.com
N.E. Arkansas Branch	Jonesboro	Arkansas	Lorne Shive	(901) 598-6111	lorneshive22@gmail.com
Saline-Bartholomew Branch	Monticello	Arkansas	Brison Reed	(870) 723-5125	bandmlandmgmt@yahoo.com
Delaware Branch	Georgetown	Delaware	Andrew Martin	(302) 934-8310	amartin@dewildlands.org
Delaware State Chapter	Millsboro	Delaware	Chip West	(302) 238-0137	deqdma@gmail.com
Devil's Garden Branch	Clewiston	Florida	Marc Proudfoot	(863) 673-2034	marc.proudfoot@gmail.com
Longleaf Branch	Tallahassee	Florida	Jim McConnaughay	(850) 545-2381	jnmconnaughay@mcconnaughay.com
Georgia Foothills Branch	Clarksville	Georgia	Mark Lovell	(706) 499-2432	landman@hemc.net
Griffin G2 Branch	Milner	Georgia	Cameron Perdichizzi	(404) 427-3519	Cameronp@snjindustrial.com
Morgan County Branch	Madison	Georgia	James Ball	(404) 580-7155	samball@madisonrealtyinc.com
Ocmulgee Branch	Kathleen	Georgia	Terry Peavy	(478) 256-0266	hunterpeavy@cox.net
UGA Branch	Athens	Georgia	Zach Grifenhagen	(706) 681-2734	zachgrif@gmail.com
Valdosta State Branch	Valdosta	Georgia	Taylor Hawthorne	(678) 446-5249	tehawthorne@valdosta.edu
Heart of Illinois Branch	Normal	Illinois	Ross Fogle	(309) 310-7958	hoiqdma@gmail.com
Illinois State Chapter	North Henderson	Illinois	Chase Burns	(309) 368-0370	chase@wcqdma.com
Kaskaskia River Watershed Branch	Carlyle	Illinois	Joel Tucker	(618) 444-9327	joel.a.tucker@hotmail.com
Rock River Branch	Hillsdale	Illinois	Scott Searl	(563) 529-2787	scott.searl@mchsi.com
Southern Illinois Branch	Murphysboro	Illinois	Matt Duffy	(618) 806-1405	matthew.duffy@countryfinancial.com
Southern Illinois University Branch	Carbondale	Illinois	Cole Craft	(217) 369-0871	ccraf2@aol.com
West-Central Illinois Branch	North Henderson	Illinois	Chase Burns	(309) 368-0370	chase@wcqdma.com
Indiana Heartland Branch	New Castle	Indiana	Tony Wright	(765) 529-6138	sunnyridgefarm@hotmail.com
Northwest Indiana Branch	Valparaiso	Indiana	Bryan McFadden	(219) 263-9283	urbandeerhunt@comcast.net
Purdue University Branch	North Manchester	Indiana	Grant Schuler	(260) 450-0399	gschule@purdue.edu
Eastern Iowa Whitetails Branch	Cedar Falls	Iowa	Jake Huff	(319) 415-6226	jakehuff2@gmail.com
Mid Iowa Branch	Granger	Iowa	Terry Sedivec	(515) 999-2184	tsedivec@netzero.com
Bluestem Branch	EL Dorado	Kansas	Timothy Donges	(316) 641-0011	tim.donges@hotmail.com
Heartland Whitetails Branch	Atchison	Kansas	Tyler Donaldson	(913) 426-6892	bossmedia13@gmail.com
Barren River Branch	Bowling Green	Kentucky	Kraig Moore	(270) 781-5265	kriagmoore@bellsouth.net
Derby City Branch	Louisville	Kentucky	Steve Daniels	(502) 548-8517	steve@tcky.biz
Kentucky Heartland Branch	East View	Kentucky	Tony Lawson	(270) 925-1470	bigdeerhuntertony@gmail.com
Kentucky State Advisory Council	Louisville	Kentucky	Pete Blandford	(502) 231-2625	pete_blandford@yahoo.com
Northern KY Tri-State Branch	Alexandria	Kentucky	Phil Griffin	(859) 866-4602	phil.griffin@griffincr.com
Owensboro Branch	Owensboro	Kentucky	Brad Hoffman	(270) 929-9200	bustntails@yahoo.com
West Kentucky Branch	Murray	Kentucky	Jesse Maupin	(270) 970-9453	westkentuckyqdma@gmail.com
Acadiana Branch	Martinville	Louisiana	Brett Deshotes	(337) 349-9605	deshotesbrett@yahoo.com
Bayou Branch	Thibodaux	Louisiana	Ben Caillouet	(985) 859-6270	qdmabayoubranch@gmail.com
Central Louisiana Branch	Alexandria	Louisiana	Bob Stevens	(318) 445-9224	stevensb@rapides.k12.la.us
Louisiana Delta Branch	Pineville	Louisiana	Paul Ferrell	(318) 792-1893	paul@honeybrake.com
Louisiana State Chapter	New Roads	Louisiana	Darren Boudreaux	(225) 573-2035	dboudr5@hotmail.com
Northeast Louisiana Branch	Newellton	Louisiana	Justin Forsten	(423) 618-8402	winterquartersmgr@hotmail.com
Red River Branch	Bossier City	Louisiana	David Hooper	(318) 453-9101	dhooper4@hotmail.com
South Louisiana Branch	Lafayette	Louisiana	Chip Vosburg	(337) 962-8448	mgvosburg@bellsouth.net
Southwest Louisiana Branch	Sulphur	Louisiana	Justin Lanchos	(337) 912-4964	justinlanchos@gmail.com
Webster Parish Branch	Minden	Louisiana	Mitzi Thomas	(318) 377-3065	mindenfarmandgar@bellsouth.net
Downeast Branch	East Machias	Maine	Mike Look	(207) 255-4167	michaellook501@hotmail.com
Maryland State Chapter	Westminster	Maryland	E.W. Grimes	(410) 984-3356	ewgrimes@marylandqdma.com
Bachman Valley Branch	Westminster	Maryland	Barry Harden	(410) 346-0990	bharden@marylandqdma.com
Mountain Maryland Branch	Swanton	Maryland	A.J. Fleming	(301) 387-5465	afleming13@verizon.net
Frostburg State University Branch	Walkersville	Maryland	Jonathan Yoder	(301)-845-6177	cakeiser0@frostburg.edu
Barry County Branch	Hasting	Michigan	Mike Flohr	(269) 838-6268	mikeflohr@hotmail.com
Bluewater Branch	Clyde	Michigan	Dan Snyder	(586) 524-8812	snyderperformance@gmail.com
Cadillac Area QDMA Branch	Tustin	Michigan	Timothy Liponoga	(231) 878-9245	gamehuntrr@gmail.com
Capital Area Branch	Mason	Michigan	Dick Seehase	(517) 993-8475	dseehase@partsplacenapa.com
Central Michigan Branch	Sumner	Michigan	Jarred Waldron	(517) 403-9328	headhunter01jarred@yahoo.com
Clinton/Ionia County Branch	St. Johns	Michigan	Chad Thelen	(517) 819-6344	cthelen8@hotmail.com
Costabella Branch	Clare	Michigan	Kasey Thren	(231) 598-3200	mecostacountyqdma@gmail.com
Eaton County Branch	Dewitt	Michigan	Aaron Lundy	(517) 643-1220	alundy@airliftcompany.com
Mackinac Branch	Mulliken	Michigan	Billy Keiper	(906) 322-5425	keiperw@mail.gvsu.edu
Michiana Branch	Cassopolis	Michigan	Mike Seigel	(574) 339-3001	ms101@comcast.net
Michigan State Chapter	Grand Rapids	Michigan	Michael Goynes	(616) 446-1980	tenpointinv@cloud.com
Mid-Michigan Branch	Gladwin	Michigan	Matt Bednorek	(989) 317-5383	mbednorek@gmail.com
Montcalm County Branch	Sheridan	Michigan	Michael Myers	(989) 613-0670	michaelmyers1990@yahoo.com

Branch Name	Town	State	Branch Contact	Phone	Email
Northeast Michigan Branch	Herron	Michigan	Irvin Timm	(989) 727-2594	vickytimm@exede.net
Northern Jack Pine Branch	Rose City	Michigan	Nicole Mouro	(989) 450-0062	nicole@walkeragencyinsurance.com
Northwest Michigan Branch	Maple City	Michigan	Andrew Milliron	(231) 944-4887	ironwayoutdoors@gmail.com
Shiawassee River Branch	Bancroft	Michigan	Dan Malzahn	(989) 277-5698	crambell210@gmail.com
South Central Michigan Branch	Coldwater	Michigan	Matt DuCharme	(517) 227-1668	matthew_ducharme@dell.com
Southeast Michigan Branch	Maybee	Michigan	Scott Homrich	(734) 654-9800	scotth@homrich.com
Southwest Michigan Branch	Bloomingdale	Michigan	Chad Brown	(269) 744-8176	dustyhat5000@gmail.com
Thumb Area Branch	Ubley	Michigan	Mark Lemke	(989) 658-8821	markjlemke@yahoo.com
Tip of the Mitt Branch	Harbor Springs	Michigan	Jim Rummer	(231) 330-2276	rummerj@charemid.org
West Central Michigan Branch	Newaygo	Michigan	Forrest Couch	(616) 318-2205	tyeshack@yahoo.com
West Shore Branch	Freesoil	Michigan	Don Schwass	(231) 464-7150	dschwass87@gmail.com
Farm Country Whitetails Branch	Blue Earth	Minnesota	Zach Krause	(507) 383-1004	zkrause.dc@gmail.com
Heart O' Lakes Whitetails Branch	Little Canada	Minnesota	Steve Kulsrud	(651) 239-9041	svkulsrud@comcast.net
Minnesota State Chapter	Henning	Minnesota	Pat Morstad	(218) 821-2302	ptmorstad@arvig.net
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