

WHITE-TAILED DEER MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Raised by Working Group December 16, 1999

Population/Management

- Current management is good, deer numbers are good, any-deer permit system is working.
- Need to consider geographic differences in the deer population. Northern and eastern Maine are still problem areas.
- Consider more predator control in downeast Maine.
- Concerned about the quality of bucks and low deer numbers in northern Maine.
- Put more emphasis on increasing the deer herd in eastern Maine. Conduct more research in order to determine what factor(s) are suppressing the deer herd in the downeast area.
- Interactions between deer and bear, moose, and coyote.
- Don't manage all areas of the state the same way.
- Manage for quantity rather than quality, central Maine is okay.

Habitat

- Need greater emphasis on locating all deer wintering areas.
- Logging operations are harvesting too much spruce-fir forests and are affecting deer winter survival in some parts of the state.
- Habitat changes in northern Maine are negatively affecting deer.

Deer Damage/Impacts

- Deer are becoming too abundant in central and southern Maine resulting in damage to habitat, crops, ornamentals, and other property.
- Concerns about the impact of high deer densities on forest regeneration, vehicle collisions, and the risk to human health (Lyme disease, etc.).

White-tailed Deer Issues and Concerns

Use Opportunity

- Need to balance hunting opportunity between firearms hunters and other hunting groups (archers, muzzleloaders).
- Maximize hunting opportunities in certain areas instead of managing for trophy bucks.
- Increase the length of the muzzleloading season and allow extra deer.
- Concerns about posted land and firearm discharge ordinances creating obstacles to effective regulation and management of deer populations.
- Hunting and viewing opportunity is important, including quality and quantity of deer available, availability of mature (trophy) deer, and ensuring a quality experience.