WACs 220-415-020 and 220-415-030

Deer General Seasons and Deer Special Permits

Brock Hoenes
Ungulate Section Manager, Game Division
Wildlife Program
Content

1. Recommendations not specific to a management zone
2. Brief statewide overview
3. Status update and recommendations for each deer management zone
4. Public comment summary
5. Questions
Deer Special Permits  
WAC 220-415-030

• Added language that clarifies the bag limit is one deer, even if permits are drawn in more than one category

• Added 10 antlerless permits for modern firearm and muzzleloader youth hunters in Designated Areas of Region 3
Deer Special Permits
WAC 220-415-030

• Hunter Education Instructor Incentive Permits
  – Increase the number of permits for Any White-Tailed Deer in Region 1 from 2 to 3
  – Increase the number of permits for Any Deer in Region 4 from 2 to 4
  – Increase the number of permits for Any Deer in Region 6 from 2 to 4
2015 Drought

(2001 and 2005 were previous years of statewide drought in Washington)

http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/

Intensity:
- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.
2015 Drought

U.S. Drought Monitor
West

September 15, 2015
(Released Thursday September 17, 2015)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT
2015 Drought

NARRATIVE TIMELINE OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST
2015 FIRE SEASON

Information is subject to changes and amendments over time.
2015 Drought

Warm Water Blamed for Huge Columbia River Sockeye Die-off

JULY 8, 2015  JOHN HARRISON
2015 Drought

Warm Water Blamed for Huge Columbia River Sockeye Die-off

Dozens of sturgeon found dead

Originally published July 16, 2015 at 6:56 am | Updated July 16, 2015 at 12:23 pm
2015 Drought

Warm Water Blamed for Huge Columbia River Sockeye Die-off

JULY 11, 2015 JOHN HARRISON

Dozens of sturgeon found dead

Originally published July 16, 2015 at 6:56 am | Updated July 16, 2015 at 12:23 pm

Bluetongue outbreak confirmed in Eastern Washington deer

UPDATE: Idaho confirms bluetongue-like outbreak killing whitetails in Clearwater region. See post here.

WILDLIFE -- A deadly outbreak of bluetongue among Spokane-region white-tailed deer -- which I reported earlier this week -- has been officially confirmed by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Although hundreds of deer may be dying from the disease in the state's drought-stricken eastern region, wildlife managers say this year's hunting seasons will not be affected.

WDFW veterinarian Kristin Mansfield said today that bluetongue is a common virus transmitted by biting gnats at water sources where deer congregate during dry conditions. Every year in late summer and early fall, some white-tailed deer are lost to bluetongue and a similar virus known as EHD (epizootic hemorrhagic disease).

She said the department does not know precisely how many deer have been affected, but reports are more widespread and numerous than in the past, probably because of the severe drought across the region.
2016-2017 Winter

Seven western states report heavy winter losses of deer, elk

Harsh winter took heavy toll on wildlife across western U.S.

Deer Hunting Limited In Colorado, Other Western U.S. States After Tough Winter

Phillips: Winter kills Idaho mule deer fawns at 2nd-highest rate in nearly 20 years
Statewide Deer Harvest 2001-2018

- Total Deer Harvest

- Drought
- Bad Winter

Information is subject to changes and amendments over time.
Black-Tailed Deer
General Season Harvest 2006-2019

Information is subject to changes and amendments over time.
Any ungulate population which falls 25% below its population objective for two consecutive years and/or if the harvest decreases by 25% below the 10-year average harvest rate for two consecutive years.
Black-Tailed Deer
General Season Harvest 2006-2019

Any ungulate population which falls 25% below its population objective for two consecutive years and/or if the harvest decreases by 25% below the 10-year average harvest rate for two consecutive years.
• Changed a legal deer from “Any Buck” to “Any Deer” in GMU 654 during the late-muzzleloader season

Where is the South Cascades Zone?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Permits</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GMU 485</td>
<td>Any Weapon</td>
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<td>GMU 510 65+</td>
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<tr>
<td>GMU 513 65+</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMU 516 65+</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMU 554 65+</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMU 560 65+</td>
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<tr>
<td>GMU 572 65+</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMU 574 65+</td>
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<tr>
<td>GMU 578 65+</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>GMU 572 Disabled, MF</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>GMU 574 Disabled, MF</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>GMU 578 Disabled, Archery</td>
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<tr>
<td>GMU 574 Disabled, Archery</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>GMU 578 Disabled, Archery</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>52</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
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Olympics

- No changes proposed for general seasons
Willapa Hills

- No changes proposed for general seasons

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<tr>
<th>Quality Permits</th>
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<tbody>
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</tr>
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<td>GMU 663 Modern Firearm</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMU 672 Modern Firearm</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Antlerless Permits</th>
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<th>2019</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GMU 660 Modern Firearm</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMU 663 Modern Firearm</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMU 660 Muzzleloader</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMU 663 Muzzleloader</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMU 673 Muzzleloader</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMU 660 Youth, Any Deer</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMU 663 Youth, Any Deer</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>GMU 663 Disabled, MF</td>
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<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMU 658 Disabled, Muzz</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMU 663 Disabled, Muzz</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>87</strong></td>
<td><strong>118</strong></td>
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North Cascades

- No changes proposed for general or special permit seasons
Islands

- No changes proposed for general seasons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Antlerless Permits</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orcas</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Juan</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lopez</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blakely</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whidbey</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orcas</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>45</td>
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<td>San Juan</td>
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<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lopez</td>
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<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whidbey</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whidbey Muzz, 2nd Deer</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>520</strong></td>
<td><strong>640</strong></td>
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Questions?
Mule Deer
General Season Harvest 2006-2018

Information is subject to changes and amendments over time.

Mule Deer Statewide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Harvest (Units)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>8,920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>9,203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>9,023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>10,101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>9,190</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>8,581</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>9,766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>10,439</td>
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<td>2014</td>
<td>10,575</td>
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<td>2015</td>
<td>12,156</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>9,658</td>
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<td>2017</td>
<td>7,197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>7,899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>8,590</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Drought Bad Winter 9,405
Mule Deer

Information is subject to changes and amendments over time.
Blue Mountains

- Buck:Doe ratios at objective
- Fawn:Doe ratios have hovered around long-term average (~55-60:100)
- No changes proposed for general or special permit seasons
Columbia Plateau

- 3 subherds
- Buck:Doe ratios at objective
- Fawn:Doe ratios have hovered around long-term average (~65-70:100) or have been increasing
- No changes proposed for general seasons
- Added 5 archery buck (3-pt. min) permits in GMU 379, Nov. 15-24

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Antlerless Permits</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GMU 133 2nd Deer</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>GMUs 139, 142, 284, 381 2nd Deer</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>GMU 290 Youth</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>452</strong></td>
<td><strong>378</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### East Columbia Gorge

- Initiated formal surveys in 2016
- Buck:Doe ratios at objective
- Fawn:Doe ratios have been stable (~60:100)
- Extended the season for archery Buck permits in Deer Area 5382 to include Sep. 1-25 and Dec. 1-8

#### Buck Permits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DA 5382</td>
<td>Modern Firearm</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>

**Total** 3 5

#### Antlerless Permits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DA 5382</td>
<td>Youth, Any Deer</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>GMU-382</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>GMU-382</td>
<td>Disabled</td>
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</table>

**Total** 6 3
East Slope Cascades

- 3 subherds
  - Surveys in Northern and Chelan subherds

- Buck:Doe ratios in the Northern subherd have declined in recent years to levels at the lower end of our objective (15-19:100)

- Fawn:Doe ratios declined below long-term average (~75:100), 2016-2018, but returned to normal in 2019

- No changes proposed for general seasons

<table>
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<th>Quality Permits</th>
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<td>GMU 231 Modern Firearm</td>
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<td>GMU 242 Modern Firearm</td>
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<tr>
<td>GMU 242 Muzzleloader</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>65</strong></td>
<td><strong>50</strong></td>
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</table>
• Historically, surveys conducted in spring to estimate abundance

• Mix of black-tailed deer and mule deer make it difficult to classify deer

• Ground surveys in December to estimate ratios, but not conducted since 2017 because few deer observed

• No changes proposed for general or special permit seasons
Northern Rocky Mountains

- Mule deer occur throughout the zone, but in low numbers
- White-Tailed deer are management priority in this zone
- No formal surveys for mule deer
- No proposed changes for general or special permit seasons
Okanogan Highlands

- Mule deer present throughout the zone, but much more common in western portion

- No formal surveys for mule deer

- No changes proposed for general or special permit seasons
Questions?
White-Tailed Deer

North Cascades
Okanogan Highlands
Selkirk
Columbia Basin
Palouse
Blue Mountains

Information is subject to changes and amendments over time.
Blue Mountains

- Pre-hunt ground surveys

- Ratio estimates vary widely from year to year
  - Avg. F:D = 51:100
  - Avg. B:D = 42:100
  - 2019 estimates similar

- Removed opportunity to harvest antlerless whitetailed deer in GMU 166 during the early archery season

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<th>Quality Permits</th>
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<td>DA 1040 Youth</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>GMU 186 Youth</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
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</table>
Columbia Basin

- White-Tailed deer occur in very low numbers
- Meets the criteria of an “At-Risk” ungulate population, but mule deer are the management priority in this zone
- No formal surveys
- No proposed changes for general or special permit seasons

Information is subject to changes and amendments over time.
North Cascades

- White-Tailed deer occur in very low numbers
- Mule deer are the management priority in this zone
- No formal surveys
- No proposed changes for general or special permit seasons
Okanogan Highlands

- White-Tailed deer occur throughout the zone, but are more common in the eastern portion.

- Pre-hunt ground surveys conducted in the eastern portion to estimate buck:doe ratios, but sample sizes are usually very low (<100)
  - Avg. B:D = 32:100

- No proposed changes for general or special permit seasons.
Palouse

- White-Tailed deer occur throughout the zone

- North of Snake River
  - Pre-hunt ground survey
  - Buck:Doe ratio fluctuates around the long-term average (~25-30:100)
  - Fawn:Doe ratios declined below the long-term average (~50:100), 2015-2017, but have since rebounded

- South of Snake River
  - Mule deer are the management priority
  - No formal survey

- No proposed changes for general or special permit seasons
Selkirk

- No proposed changes to general or special permit seasons
District 1
GMUs 101, 105, 108, 111, 113, 117, & 121
### District 1

**GMUs 101, 105, 108, 111, 113, 117, & 121**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Season Buck Harvest in GMU 101 by Species, 2006-2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ![Pie chart](chart)

- White-Tailed Deer
- Mule Deer
- Black-Tailed Deer

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Information is subject to changes and amendments over time.
District 1
GMUs 101, 105, 108, 111, 113, 117, & 121
Buck:Doe Ratios

Bucks per 100 Does
GMUs 105-121

Information is subject to changes and amendments over time.
Fawn:Doe Ratios

Fawns per 100 Does
GMUs 105-121

Information is subject to changes and amendments over time.
District 1—“At-Risk” Assessment

- Data limited to general season buck harvest during modern firearm, archery, and muzzleloader seasons
At-Risk Assessment

2010-2019

2006-2010 & 2015-2019

2001-2010

10 Highest Years

Information is subject to changes and amendments over time.
Information is subject to changes and amendments over time.
District 1—Hunter Numbers
Information is subject to changes and amendments over time.
District 1—Hunter Success

29%
Information is subject to changes and amendments over time.
% 4-5 Pt. Bucks in Harvest

GMU 105
AVG. = 47%

GMU 108
AVG. = 45%

GMU 111
AVG. = 44%

GMU 113
AVG. = 51%

GMU 117
AVG. = 46%

GMU 121
AVG. = 51%
% 4-5 Pt. Bucks in Harvest

GMU 117

GMU 121

Information is subject to changes and amendments over time.
Regional Comparisons

- 2 Data Analysis Units from Idaho Panhandle
- 6 Hunt Districts from NW Montana
- General either-sex white-tailed deer seasons for all weapon types
- General seasons with late rut hunting opportunity
- No antler-point restrictions
Regional Comparisons
Buck Harvest 2009-2018

Northern Agriculture White-tailed Deer Harvest
- Antlered
- Antlerless
- Minimum Buck Harvest

Northern Forest White-tailed Deer Harvest
- Antlered
- Antlerless
- Minimum Buck Harvest

NW Montana

District 1
Antler-Point Restrictions (APRs)

• Although APRs have shown minimal biological benefits, they remain popular with many hunters.

• Because of that popularity, they warrant consideration as a social issue.

• The Department has committed to considering APRs during the 2021-2023 season setting process.

• Public outreach and support is critical when APRs are being considered.
Public Comment

- Common themes included:
  - Reducing antlerless harvest
  - Predator management
  - Antler-Point restrictions

- The Department has already eliminated or substantially reduced antlerless harvest in areas where it was warranted

- The Department has already liberalized bear seasons and has proposed changes to cougar seasons

- The Department has committed to considering APRs during the 2021-2023 season setting process
Questions?

Information is subject to changes and amendments over time.
Antler Points

4 Points (n = 641)

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<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6+</td>
<td>6%</td>
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</table>

5+ Points (n = 441)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>17%</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>33%</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6+</td>
<td>15%</td>
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Antler Points

- Idaho
- N = 1,045

- Washington

Figure 4. Percentage of bucks with ≥5 points on left antler of 1,045 white-tailed deer bucks checked at Panhandle Region Check Stations (1980-2012)
Information is subject to changes and amendments over time.
Antler Points

GMU 117

GMU 121

Information is subject to changes and amendments over time.
Antler Point Restrictions

Q113. Do you support or oppose a 3-point antler restriction general season for white-tailed deer in all of eastern Washington? (As asked of deer hunters.)

- Strongly support: 25
- Moderately support: 19
- Neither support nor oppose: 4
- Moderately oppose: 14
- Strongly oppose: 28
- Don't know: 11

44% Support
42% Oppose

Q114. What percentage of the state’s Game Management Units would you prefer to be under a 3-point antler restriction general season for white-tailed deer? (As asked of deer hunters.)

- 100%: 15
- 76% - 99%: 0
- 75%: 0
- 51% - 74%: 0
- 50%: 0
- 26% - 49%: 6
- 25%: 3
- 1% - 24%: 12
- 0%: 14
- Don't know: 39

Only 15% were in support of a statewide APR.
NW Montana-Buck Harvest
Any ungulate population which falls 25% below its population objective for two consecutive years and/or if the harvest decreases by 25% below the 10-year average harvest rate for two consecutive years.
Antler-Point Restrictions (APRs)

- Very little information in the literature that has evaluated the biological benefits of APRs

Evaluation of Antler-based Selective Harvest Criteria on Harvest and Antler Size of Male White-tailed Deer in Florida

Bradley S. Cohen, Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602
Erin H. Leone, Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, 1105 SW Williston, Gainesville FL 32601

Peer-Reviewed Articles

What Predicts Support for Antler Point Restrictions?

SUSAN A. SCHROEDER, L. LOUIS CORNICK
The Pennsylvania State University
The Graduate School
School of Forest Resources

WHITE-TAILED DEER ANTLER POINT RESTRICTIONS, SURVIVAL RATES, AND DEER HUNTER SUPPORT: REALITY

Wildlife Technical Articles

Effects of Various Approaches to Quality Deer Management on White-tailed Deer Harvest

Christopher E. Shaw, Department of Forestry, Wildlife, and Fisheries, University of Tennessee, 2431 Joe Johnson Drive, Knoxville, TN 37996
Craig A. Harper, Department of Forestry, Wildlife, and Fisheries, University of Tennessee, 2431 Joe Johnson Drive, Knoxville, TN 37996

Abstract: Quality deer management (QDM) is increasingly promoted and practiced throughout the range of white-tailed deer Odocoileus virginianus.
Antler-Point Restrictions (APRs)

- Not always supported by the majority and never universally supported
- Public outreach and support is critical

44% Support

42% Oppose

Only 15% were in support of a statewide APR
Antler-Point Restrictions (APRs)

- Rare for states to implement APRs at a statewide level
Effects of APRs on Reproduction

- Study Period 1999-2006
- APRs implemented 2002
- Documented increase in the number of mature bucks
- Found no effect of APRs on reproductive parameters monitored
  - Date of conception
  - Productivity (embryos/doe)
  - Sex ratio of embryos