

Mountains and Northeast Kingdom Regional Working Group

6pm SUNDAY JULY 21st 2013

Morrisville Forest Parks and Recreation Extension Office

Fish and Wildlife Department Staff: Adam Murkowski, Scott Darling

Fish and Wildlife Board Members: Justin Lindholm, Theresa Elmer

Mountains and NEK Working Group Members: Leonard Westover, Robert Whalen, Jim Euber, George Gattone

A. QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, & GENERAL DISCUSSION

1. Seems like Dept and working groups to look at APR. Doing opposite of what public wanted it to do. 3 ½ yr. old's decreasing, number of points decreasing in 3 ½ yr old's. Don't need it where we are. The alternate way to down pressure on yearling deer. (season length, license choices). They recognized there may be more 2 ½'s, but fewer 3 ½ yr older.
2. Concerned about # of points in 3 ½ + yr olds.
3. After APR, saw more buck signs in WMU O2.
4. Not hearing particular hunter satisfaction.
5. Potentially change the boundaries of C area, moving C onto Rte. 14 Eastern part of C could be D1. Move D1 to eastern side of 14.

B. CROSSBOW DISCUSSION

1. Have a minimum age requirement as opposed to disabilities.
2. The hunters in 20's and 30's mixed on crossbow issue. They are in favor of older hunters having that opportunity.
3. Discussed expanding opportunity as a goal of the Dept. Felt it was good to interest more people in hunting.
4. They feel it won't be a disaster if opened up to everyone to use.
5. Could increase revenues.
6. They felt that if you make them legal, make them legal in all seasons.

C. APR DISCUSSION

1. Adam presented an overview of APR biological review

2. Discussed role of deer in inheritability on antler development, and influence of females on potential antler development.

3. Discussed environmental influences on antler development and on buck population

4. Large scale map of WMA's would be helpful at next meeting.

5. Felt APR has run its course, no data says we need to keep it. Look at other ways like other states to take the pressure off bucks.

6. Our Rifle season is shorter than other northern tier states.

D. GROUP DISCUSSION

Question 1: What did deer hunters perceive as the goal/objective of the current Antler Point Regulation?

- Big deer, bigger antlers, more, older deer.
- Did not include increasing # deer harvested.
- Tried to match the quality of the bucks harvested in other states.
- APR to protect bucks so people could see more deer after previous hard winters hurt our deer population.
- There was a perception of other states implementing this as well.

Question 2: Based off of information in the survey and/or biological review has the current APR moved us towards these goals/objectives?

- Goal of bigger deer has not been met, but APR has contributed to seeing more deer and higher hunter satisfaction.
- Given changes in winter, have we been doing this long enough to evaluate the APR?
- Public perception is the APR was kind of successful.
- If hunters read the report and data they may change their perceptions of the current APR.

Question 3: What are/should be the goals/objectives of Vermont's deer/buck management?

- #1 is health of deer herd.
- #2 is hunter satisfaction which means different things to different people.
- Scott reviewed, deer hunter survey question #18.
- See more deer.
- Increase chance to harvest more deer.
- Quality deer (antler growth, body weight).

Question 4: If goals/objectives are not currently being met or were not met prior to APR implementation how can they be achieved?

- Not addressed during the meeting.