

# **Citizen Advisory Committee Wildlife Management Unit 5A Final Report**

**June 3, 2008**



**Pennsylvania Game  
Commission**

**Governor's Office of  
Administration**



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# Pennsylvania Game Commission Citizen Advisory Committee: WMU 5A

## **Introduction and Overview**

An objective in the Pennsylvania Game Commission's (PGC) deer management plan was the use of local stakeholder groups to recommend a Wildlife Management Unit (WMU) specific deer population goal. Through a local Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC), comprised of representatives of stakeholder groups within WMU 5A, participants communicated population goal recommendations based on input actively solicited and obtained from individuals within each representative's stakeholder group. This is not the easiest of tasks as attested to by the CAC members.

After recruiting stakeholder representatives from individuals recommended by PGC field staff and other outside organizations, Bureau of Management Consulting (BMC) staff convened and facilitated an introductory and educational meeting on February 4, 2008. BMC staff asked CAC members to attempt to communicate with at least 10 representatives from each of their respective stakeholder groups. BMC facilitated a subsequent meeting on March 3, 2008, for the purpose of representatives providing stakeholder feedback, collectively discussing summaries of stakeholder perspectives, and reaching consensus, if possible, regarding a deer population goal recommendation for WMU 5A. CAC membership and attendance at both meetings is shown in Exhibit 1. Seven different stakeholder groups were represented at the first meeting. CAC members collected input from 48 people. Where possible, two members were selected per stakeholder group. Primary members were identified for each stakeholder group and were responsible for coordinating their results with their counterpart. Only the primary members were to attend the second meeting.

The following is documentation relative to this process. It includes meeting agendas, information requested of and provided by PGC staff, stakeholder representative findings, the context of various perspectives, and the resulting consensus that led to the CAC recommendation of a deer population goal for WMU 5A over the next five years:

*All four of the attending CAC primary members recommended to an increase of 12% in the WMU 5A deer herd.*

## **First Meeting Summary**

The purpose of the first meeting was to provide information to the members about the CAC process as well as background on deer management, both statewide, and within WMU 5A. BMC staff also polled members on their initial thoughts on the deer population in WMU 5A. This is presented as part of Table 1, which includes the complete voting history. The first meetings agenda is shown in Exhibit 2.

# Pennsylvania Game Commission Citizen Advisory Committee: WMU 5A

<b>Exhibit 1</b>			
<b>List of CAC Stakeholder Groups/Representatives and Attendance at Meetings</b>			
<b>Stakeholder Group</b>	<b>Representative (*Primary Member)</b>	<b>February 4</b>	<b>March 3</b>
1. Agriculture-Livestock/Cash Crops	Kelly Mountz	✓	
2. Agriculture-Livestock/Cash Crops	Ronald Weaner *	✓	✓
3. Business-Direct	Denis Miller *	✓	✓
4. Conservationist	Dennis Fillmore *	✓	✓
5. Conservationist	Karl Kleiner		
6. Forest Industry	Ronald Bennett *	✓	✓
7. Highway Safety	Randy Finkey		
8. Homeowner-Developed	David Hetrick *	✓	
9. Public Landowner	Zack Bolitho		
10. Rural Non-Farm Landowner	E.K. Sheldon Jr.	✓	Note <sup>1</sup>
11. Rural Non-Farm Landowner	Walter Beitsch	✓	
12. Sportsman-Resident	Barry Farnar *	✓	
13. Sportsman-Resident	Jerry Crider		

<b>Exhibit 2</b>	
<b>Citizen Advisory Committee</b>	
<b>Public Input for Deer Management Goals in Pennsylvania</b>	
<b>Meeting Agenda, February 4, 2008</b>	
<p><b>I. Introduction</b></p> <p>A. Stakeholder introductions</p> <p><b>II. Overview of the process</b></p> <p>A. Purpose</p> <p>B. Objectives</p> <p>C. Process/Consensus</p> <p>D. Role of participants</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">i. Primary versus secondary</p> <p>E. Meeting ground rules</p> <p>F. Questions</p> <p><b>III. Present Tabulation of Initial Thoughts</b></p>	<p><b>IV. PGC Presentations</b></p> <p>A. PGC responsibilities and mission</p> <p>B. History of deer management in Pennsylvania</p> <p>C. Deer resource information and management system</p> <p>D. Consequences of biological and social management at different deer population levels</p> <p>E. Questions</p> <p><b>V. Preparation Work for Second Meeting</b></p> <p>A. Consensus</p> <p>B. Stakeholder Opinion Worksheet</p> <p>C. Presentation Template for Stakeholder Summaries</p> <p>D. Agenda for second meeting</p> <p>E. Primary and secondary designation</p> <p><b>VI. Questions and Comments</b></p>

Prior to the first meeting, members received a document entitled “Pennsylvania Game Commission Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) Pilot Study, Objectives and Process Overview,” which explained each of the items under the second area covered in the agenda and the worksheet and template listed in the fifth area of the agenda. Highlights from the first meeting included reviewing the following information.

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<sup>1</sup> Both representatives from the rural non-farmer landowner stakeholder group attended the first meeting, however a primary member was not chosen. Neither representative attended the second meeting.

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### *PGC Deer Management Program Goals:*

1. Maintain a healthy deer herd.
2. Maintain healthy forest habitat for the deer herd.
3. Reduce deer and human conflicts.

### *Objectives of CAC's:*

1. They provide an opportunity for the Game Commission to understand stakeholder values regarding deer management.
2. They provide an opportunity for stakeholders to interact with one another, facilitate communication among, and increase understanding of different stakeholder values and concerns.
3. They provide an opportunity for stakeholders to have direct input concerning deer population goals that ultimately affect all Pennsylvanians.
4. They provide an opportunity to inform stakeholders on the mission of the Game Commission, complexities of deer management, and the importance of proper management.

### *Outcome of CAC proceedings:*

1. The goal is to build consensus among the committee and agree on a recommendation to increase, decrease, or stabilize the deer population in their WMU.
2. *Definition of consensus: Consensus is reached if all but one member agrees with the other members.*
3. If a consensus has been reached, the committee will present the recommendation to the Game Commission in a written format that explains how each stakeholder group's concerns were considered in the decision.
4. If a consensus cannot be reached among committee members, a recommendation will be made following the guidelines given in the first meeting.

PGC staff grounded the process in an overview of the mission and history of the Commission, as well as details about the deer management program in conjunction with the goals of maintaining a healthy deer herd and a healthy forest habitat. Especially effective was the historical perspective on how deer management has been an emotional and controversial issue going back to the origins of the Commission. Specific deer and habitat data for WMU 5A was presented.

Members were provided with forms to collect opinions from other people within their stakeholder area as well as summarize the results into an overall report. For each stakeholder group, the goal was to speak with at least 10 other people. The meeting ended with questions, comments, and decisions as shown in Exhibits 3 and 4.

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## Exhibit 3

### Topics During the Questions and Comment Period, February 4, 2008

1. Season length.
2. Forest regeneration rating scale.
3. Definition of negative interactions.
4. Interviewing people outside of stakeholder group.

## Exhibit 4

### Information Regarding the Second CAC Meeting, March 3, 2008

The following stakeholder groups decided primary/secondary membership on the CAC as follows (for those groups with two members):

Stakeholder Group	Primary member	Secondary member
Agriculture-Livestock/Cash Crops	Ronald Weaner	Kelly Mountz

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## Second Meeting Summary

The purpose of the second meeting was for the members to present their findings, ask questions of one another, and attempt to move towards consensus. The agenda is shown in Exhibit 5.

<b>Exhibit 5 Meeting Agenda, March 3, 2008</b>	
<b>I. Introduction</b> A. Stakeholder Introductions  <b>II. Overview of the CAC Process</b> A. Background & Purpose B. Objectives C. Process/Consensus D. Role of Participants, PGC Staff, and Facilitators E. Meeting Ground Rules F. Operational Ground Rules G. Questions About the CAC Process  <b>III. Present Tabulation of Initial Thoughts</b>	<b>IV. PGC Presentations</b> A. PGC Responsibilities and Mission B. History of Deer Management in Pennsylvania C. Deer Resource Information and Management System D. Consequences of Biological and Social Management at Different Deer Population Levels E. Questions  <b>V. Preparation Work for Second Meeting</b> F. Consensus G. Stakeholder Opinion Worksheet H. Presentation Template for Stakeholder Summaries I. Agenda for Second Meeting J. Primary and Secondary Designation  <b>VI. Questions and Comments on the CAC Process</b>

For each stakeholder group, four questions were posed for the members to answer. In addition, members were asked to collect comments to answer why those among their stakeholder group feels the way they do. The individual stakeholder reports are included as Appendix A.

The questions are as follows:

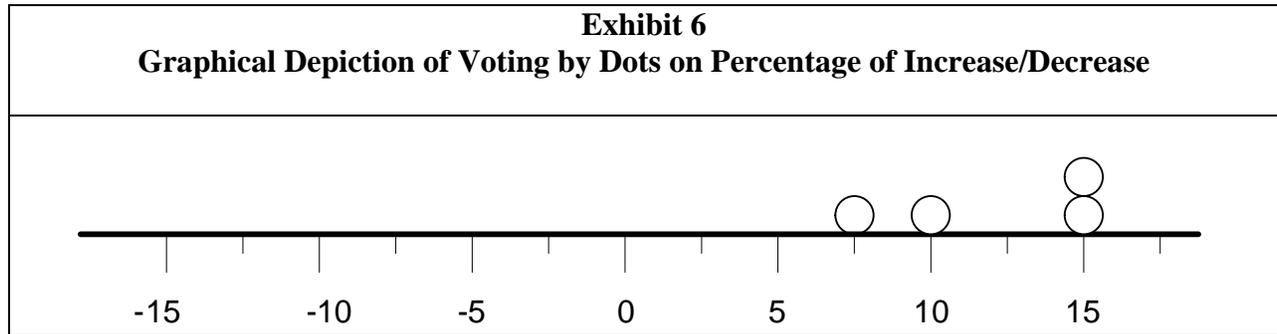
- A. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 5A) increasing, decreasing, or stable?
- B. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 5A) too high, too low, or about right?
- C. In your opinion, do you think the deer herd should increase, decrease, or remain the same?
- D. In your opinion, by what percentage should the deer herd in your area (WMU 5A) increase or decrease?

At the beginning of this discussion, BMC tabulated the results of stakeholder sentiment reported at the March 3 meeting and displayed it on a table that was subsequently compared to the results of CAC member sentiment that they provided at the beginning of the February 4 meeting. This is shown in Table 1.

A second exercise provided each stakeholder the opportunity to place a dot on a graph at the place they felt best represented the type of increase or decrease that should take place, if any, based on their experience within their stakeholder group, what they learned during the survey process, and what they learned from PGC and each other during the course of the two meetings.

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This graphical depiction provided the stakeholders with a starting point for their discussion. This is illustrated in Exhibit 6.



Once each stakeholder group presented their information and completed the dot exercise, the members could see that they were all in agreement as to an increase in the deer herd. The question was how much of an increase was suitable.

The following is the consensus decision:

*All four of the attending CAC primary members recommended an increase of 12% to the WMU 5A deer herd.*

<b>Table 1</b> <b>CAC Voting Summary for WMU 5A Deer Herd Questions and Consensus Decision</b>			
Question	February 4, 2008	March 3, 2008	March 3, 2008
	Initial Vote	Presentation Results	Consensus Decision
In your opinion, is the deer herd in WMU5A increasing, decreasing, or stable?			
○ Increasing	1	0	
○ Decreasing	5	4	
○ Stable	3	0	
○ Do Not Know	0	0	
In your opinion, is the deer herd in WMU5A too high, too low, or about right?			
○ Too High	1	0	
○ Too Low	4	3	
○ About Right	4	1	
○ Do Not Know	0	0	
Over the next five years, do you think the deer herd in WMU 5A should increase, decrease, or remain the same?			
○ Increase	3	3	<b>X</b>
○ Decrease	2	0	
○ Remain The Same	4	1	
○ Do Not Know	0	0	
Increase by approximately how much (percent)?	Not Covered	30 (3)	<b>12</b>
Decrease by approximately how much (percent)?	Not Covered	Not Applicable	
Number of present CAC members	9	4	

**Pennsylvania Game Commission Citizen Advisory Committee: WMU 5A**

**Table 1  
CAC Voting Summary for WMU 5A Deer Herd Questions and Consensus Decision**

<b>Question</b>	<b>February 4, 2008</b>	<b>March 3, 2008</b>	<b>March 3, 2008</b>
	<b>Initial Vote</b>	<b>Presentation Results</b>	<b>Consensus Decision</b>
Number of stakeholder feedback collected by CAC members	Not Applicable	48	

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## APPENDIX A: Individual Stakeholder Reports

### 1. Conservation/Wildlife Recreation – Dennis Fillmore (7 responses)

#### Answers to Questions

A. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 5A) increasing, decreasing, or stable?

Increasing = 0                  Decreasing = 4                  Stable = 2                  Do Not Know = 0

B. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 5A) too high, too low, or About right?

Too High = 1                  Too Low = 2                  About Right = 3                  Do Not Know = 0

C. In your opinion, do you think the deer herd should increase, decrease, or remain the same?

Increase = 1                  Decrease = 0                  Remain Same = 6                  Do Not Know = 0

D. In your opinion, by what percentage should the deer herd in your area (WMU 5A) increase or decrease?

Percent Increase = 20

Percent Decrease = N/A

#### Whys

- Most feel herd is stable
- Suburban deer is becoming a problem

#### Of Those Wanting an Increase:

A. Number willing to tolerate an increase in negative interactions: 1

B. Number not willing to tolerate an increase in negative interactions: 0

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## **2. Forest Industry – Ronald Bennett** (15 responses)

### **Answers to Questions**

A. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 5A) increasing, decreasing, or stable?

Increasing = 1                  Decreasing = 10                  Stable = 1                  Do Not Know = 3

B. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 5A) too high, too low, or About right?

Too High = 1                  Too Low = 10                  About Right = 1                  Do Not Know = 3

C. In your opinion, do you think the deer herd should increase, decrease, or remain the same?

Increase = 10                  Decrease = 1                  Remain Same = 1                  Do Not Know = 3

D. In your opinion, by what percentage should the deer herd in your area (WMU 5A) increase or decrease?

Percent Increase = 30 (Average)                  Percent Decrease = 0

### **Whys**

- Nostalgia

### **Of Those Wanting an Increase:**

A. Number willing to tolerate an increase in negative interactions:                  10

B. Number not willing to tolerate an increase in negative interactions:                  0

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### 3. Agriculture – Livestock/Cash Crop – Ronald Weaner (15 responses)

#### Answers to Questions

A. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 5A) increasing, decreasing, or stable?

Increasing = 0                  Decreasing = 15                  Stable = 0                  Do Not Know = 0

B. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 5A) too high, too low, or About right?

Too High =                  Too Low = 11                  About Right = 4                  Do Not Know = 0

C. In your opinion, do you think the deer herd should increase, decrease, or remain the same?

Increase = 11                  Decrease = 0                  Remain Same = 4                  Do Not Know = 0

D. In your opinion, by what percentage should the deer herd in your area (WMU 5A) increase or decrease?

Percent Increase = 30 (Average)                  Percent Decrease = 0

#### Whys

- Most individuals hunted and wanted to see more deer
- Hunters are discouraged
- Crop damage was minimal
- 14-1 against Sunday hunting
- Most individuals were not well informed

#### Of Those Wanting an Increase:

A. Number willing to tolerate an increase in negative interactions:                  11

B. Number not willing to tolerate an increase in negative interactions:                  0

### 4. Business -- Direct – Dennis Miller (11 responses)

## **Pennsylvania Game Commission Citizen Advisory Committee: WMU 5A**

### **Answers to Questions**

A. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 5A) increasing, decreasing, or stable?

Increasing = 0                  Decreasing = 7                  Stable = 4                  Do Not Know = 0

B. In your opinion, is the deer herd in your area (WMU 5A) too high, too low, or About right?

Too High = 0                  Too Low = 7                  About Right = 4                  Do Not Know = 0

C. In your opinion, do you think the deer herd should increase, decrease, or remain the same?

Increase = 7                  Decrease = 0                  Remain Same = 4                  Do Not Know = 0

D. In your opinion, by what percentage should the deer herd in your area (WMU 5A) increase or decrease?

Percent Increase = 30 (Average)                  Percent Decrease = 0

### **Whys**

- New generation of hunters are not excited, they become discouraged when they don't see a deer.
- Spending time and money outside our state on hunting.

### **Of Those Wanting an Increase:**

A. Number willing to tolerate an increase in negative interactions:                  7

B. Number not willing to tolerate an increase in negative interactions:                  0

**Total response for all stakeholder groups = 48**

## **Pennsylvania Game Commission Citizen Advisory Committee: WMU 5A**

### **APPENDIX B: CAC Member Points During Consensus Discussion and Decision**

The focus of the discussion was on the “whys” underlying opinions to increase or decrease the deer herd.

- Hunters pay cash to private landowners as an incentive to open up their land to hunting.
- Red Tag areas should not be limited.
- Insurance companies must work with the Game Commission.

***Conclusion:*** *All four of the attending CAC primary members recommended an increase of 12% to the WMU 5A deer herd.*