

Title: QDM Trial in DMU 50

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The Problem:

The lack of trophy animals in DMU 50, has resulted in an exodus of hunters (indicated by declining hunter density data), a significant negative financial impact to the tourist based economy, and a lackluster level of enthusiasm by many of us who continue to believe there is a trophy out there for us. The percentage of bucks killed that are yearlings in **DMU 50** is approximately **65%**. This compares to **Buffalo county** (DMU 61) that is approximately **41%** and central state EAB units (DMU's 62B, 65B, 66) that is approximately 47%. Conservatively, this represents a 15% greater yearling harvest in DMU 50 than other benchmark areas of the state!

Although we can debate the significant factors that cause this, it is time for action to elevate the age of bucks in DMU 50 to provide the hunting experience that has proven to be obtainable in other areas of our state and the economic benefits that would indeed follow. This proposal is to trial an antler point restriction of 3pts. or greater per side for bucks harvested in DMU 50 for hunters over age 18. A similar trial has been undertaken in other midwestern and western states. The trial would continue for the period of time necessary to determine if the public prefers a predominantly yearling based harvest or a trophy based harvest.

The additional animals added to the population initially would be absorbed since DMU 50 overall deer numbers are trending significantly below goal. Future overall deer numbers would be managed with the existing doe permit system.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Conservation Congress at its annual meeting held in Florence County on April 13, 2009 recommends that the Conservation Congress work with the Department to take action to correct this situation by introducing rule change implementing an antler point restriction trial in DMU 50.

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Local Issue

contacted DNR
Biologist Jeremy Hultz,
but there was no
indication of response
to the proposal.