

**Improved Hunting Opportunities**

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**The Problem:**

Wisconsin does not manage the age structure of its deer herd. Any deer with an antler three or more inches in length is a legal buck. This regulation allows many 1.5 year old bucks with spike, fork-horn, and six point antlers to be harvested. The vast majority of bucks taken in Wisconsin are 1.5 years old. The result is a herd with a poor age structure where bucks are not allowed to reach maturity. Consequently, many hunters never have the opportunity to harvest a big buck.

States including: Arkansas, Michigan, Georgia, New York and others have regulations in place concerning antler size to protect young bucks. In Pennsylvania, since 2002, legal bucks must have three or more points on an antler in forested regions and four or more points in agricultural regions. This regulation is extremely successful and is supported by over 75% of hunters.

By increasing the age of bucks in the deer population, a more natural breeding ecology will be established - benefiting deer and hunters. Managing the age structure of the herd allows hunters the opportunity to harvest bigger bucks.

**BE IT RESOLVED**, the Conservation Congress at its annual meeting held in **Brown County on April 11, 2011**, recommends the DNR take action to correct this situation by introducing regulations that require a legal buck to have three or more points on an antler in forested regions and four or more points in agricultural regions – regulation not applicable to youths and disabled hunters.

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