



Private Lands Deer Management Permit Program Summary January 14, 2013

Goal

To develop a voluntary deer management program for landowners or their lessees that provides greater flexibility in herd and harvest management and promotes habitat conservation and hunting heritage efforts. The program would be for parcels of sufficient size to successfully implement herd and wildlife management measures and to reduce potential concerns of hunters on adjacent properties where management programs differ.

Program Description

The Private Lands Deer Management Permit program would promote wildlife management on private lands by providing incentives to landowners or hunt clubs that develop and implement wildlife management plans and gather and provide deer population and harvest data. The plans would include habitat management and/or hunting heritage efforts. Benefits to enrollment in this program would include greater flexibility in deer hunting seasons and deer harvest opportunities to enhance land managers' ability to reach deer herd management goals, provide data related to deer management and provide recreational hunting opportunities.

Although participation requirements have not been finalized for the Private Lands Deer Management Permit program, the following conditions are being considered:

- A written Wildlife Management Plan (WMP) developed or approved by a Certified Wildlife Biologist (CWB; certified by The Wildlife Society)
- Annual deer surveys (camera, spotlight or aerial) conducted under the guidance of a CWB, using FWC-approved standards to estimate and monitor the deer population
- Annual harvest recommendations for antlered and antlerless deer developed by a CWB that are intended to help reach the deer management objectives for the property
- A minimum level of active habitat management, wildlife management and conservation-related activities for youth (e.g., FWC's Youth Hunting Program)
- A minimum size of 10,000 contiguous acres (cooperatives would be allowed)
- All deer harvested on the permitted property would be tagged and harvest information provided to FWC by April 1.
- Applications submitted 45 or more days in advance of the zonal season start date would be processed before the start of the season. Applications will be processed as time allows for those submitted later.
- No state application fees are anticipated

Participation in the Private Lands Deer Management Permit program would allow:

- Hunters on the permitted property to use any legal method of take (archery, crossbow, muzzleloading gun and modern firearms) during the entire deer season. For example, could use firearms during archery or muzzleloading gun season, etc.
- Permittee would designate 128 day season in Zone A within the zonal start and end dates with one break allowed. Zone A has a 33 day break in the season that could be included in the 128 day hunting season selected by the permittee. One break in the selected season would be allowed. All other zones have a 128 day deer season without any breaks.

Although details concerning the application and management plan have not been finalized, participants likely would provide the following types of information:

Landowner and Property Information

- Landowner's name and contact information
- Lessee name and contact information (if applicable; landowner consent required)
- CWB's name, contact info and certification information
- Property map
- Property size (acres)
- Location description using the Public Land Survey System (Section-Township-Range)
- Latitude/longitude (GPS) coordinates for approximate center of property
- Directions from closest town or major road intersection to primary entrance
- Must be signed and approved by a CWB and the landowner
- Desired deer hunting season dates for Zone A (up to 128 days within the zonal deer season, including 33 day break with one break in the season allowed)

Land Management Information

- Summary of land management objectives and wildlife habitat conservation goals for the permitted property
- Description of land uses and wildlife habitat(s) on the property and conservation practices conducted
- Maps, acreages and locations of proposed habitat management practices
- Current and desired future condition of wildlife habitat
- At least 3 of the following approved conservation/wildlife management practices which are conducted annually and impact 10% or more of the permitted land:
 - o Prescribed burning
 - o Silvicultural practices that benefit wildlife (thinning, herbicide, etc)
 - o Mechanical treatment (mowing, disking, roller chopping)
 - o Management for rare, threatened or endangered species
 - o Rotational grazing
 - o Allowing FWC or its partners to conduct wildlife surveys or research
 - o Wetland restoration or enhancement
 - o Conservation easements
 - o Food plots

- Wildlife openings
- Invasive vegetation management
- Host youth hunts or other Florida Youth Conservation Centers Network events
- Other

Deer Management Information

- Deer population management goals
- Summary of harvest data from the preceding 2 years (Optional)
- An annual population survey and harvest recommendation for antlered and antlerless deer
- Survey method used to determine deer population density

Although program and permit details have not been finalized the following conditions are being considered:

- All deer harvested on the permitted property while the permit is valid would be tagged with an appropriate tag provided by the FWC.
- If property is in more than one zone, the applicant could select season dates for the zone of their choice.
- Method of take permits (archery, crossbow, muzzleloading gun) would be required for all hunters participating during those zonal seasons.
- The property would remain eligible to receive deer depredation permits.