

Dept. of Natural Resources: Help shape deer management in Wisconsin

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MADISON, Wis. – Wisconsinites have two upcoming opportunities to weigh in on deer hunting across the state. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will host virtual public meetings in each county to discuss deer management Dec. 7-18 and a separate virtual public hearing Dec. 9 on the current white-tailed deer hunting season.

Every three years, [County Deer Advisory Councils \(CDACs\)](#) provide recommendations to the DNR that help determine the herd size objective (increase, decrease, maintain) for their county. Councils are made up of a chair and alternate-chair, who are members of the [Wisconsin Conservation Congress](#), and seven members of the public who represent various stakeholder groups.

CDACs provide the people of Wisconsin greater input into local deer management decisions and are important for shaping the next three years of deer hunting and management in the state.

The fall of 2020 marks the end of the last three-year cycle and meetings are being held this winter to determine the herd size objectives for the next three years (2021-2023). Councils develop their recommendations using two meetings separated by a public input period to provide transparency and multiple opportunities for public input.

During the preliminary objective setting meetings Dec. 7-18, Councils will meet via teleconference to review deer herd metrics and harvest data from the last three years and to provide a preliminary recommendation on the herd size objective for

the next three years. The DNR will also share preliminary recommendations on deer management unit and zone boundaries. The public is encouraged to register to speak at a meeting or provide written comments using the [Public Comment Sign-Up](#) form. The deadline to submit comments is Dec. 3.

Find out when meetings will be held for each county and how to listen in by visiting the [CDAC Find page](#). Additional questions can also be sent via email to: DNRCDACWebMail@wisconsin.gov. The meetings are open to all, and attendees are not required to submit a comment to attend.

Following the preliminary meetings, the DNR will hold an online public comment period on each county's management recommendations Jan. 4-13, 2021. Each council will then reconvene in late January to discuss the public input received and finalize their recommendations to the DNR. Final Council recommendations will be shared with the Natural Resources Board at their February meeting.

In addition to the CDAC meetings, the DNR will also host a virtual public meeting to gather public input on issues and concerns regarding the current white-tailed deer hunting season. This public input will be shared with the Deer Stakeholder Committee, convened by the DNR, to make recommendations for the deer hunting season. The white-tailed deer hunting season public meeting will take place 6-8 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 9.

The Deer Stakeholder Committee has been at work since early October 2020 to identify a deer hunting framework and potential programs to accomplish three objectives:

1. To address concerns and areas of conflict expressed by the snowmobiling, forestry and agriculture communities;
2. to provide deer hunting opportunities that are easy to understand and that will support hunter recruitment, retention and reactivation; and
3. to provide the best available tools to achieve population objectives and reduce the prevalence of deer with Chronic Wasting Disease.

The public is encouraged to participate. Anyone wishing to speak during the meeting should [register before 6 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 9](#). Those who register to speak will receive a confirmation email with information on how to join the meeting via Zoom. Those who do not register to speak may [watch the meeting on the DNR website](#).