



## MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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### INTEROFFICE COMMUNICATION

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January 3, 2022

TO: Daniel Eichinger, Director

INFORMATION: Natural Resources Commission

SUBJECT: Antlerless Private-Land Disease Management Firearm Deer Hunt for South of Highway M-32 in Alpena County

Authority:

The Department of Natural Resources (Department) may issue orders under Part 401 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, Act 451 of 1994 designating the kind of deer that may be taken and the geographic area in which a license is valid, when advisable in managing deer. A disease management deer hunt may be established in accordance with Section 3.101 of the Wildlife Conservation Order. The Director is authorized to establish a disease management deer hunt lasting no longer than nine days between January 2 and March 31 where additional harvest is deemed necessary to meet disease management objectives.

Background:

Bovine tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious disease that is close to being eradicated in the United States but still poses a significant risk to domestic livestock, wildlife, companion animals, and humans throughout the world. Michigan has become world-renowned for its research and expertise on managing this disease and over time, the Department has learned a great deal, including that continued assistance from hunters and others remains vitally necessary to make significant gains in battling TB into the future.

To date, more than 900 of over 300,000 deer tested in Michigan have been positive for TB. The majority of these TB-positive deer have been from deer management unit (DMU) 452, where the counties of Montmorency, Alpena, Oscoda, and Alcona meet.

The Department uses hunting as the primary tool for managing TB in Michigan. The majority (93 percent) of land in DMU 452 is private. The Department works with many local landowners on all aspects of deer herd management. Hunters in this area have been responsible for reducing the disease prevalence by over 50 percent.

The Department is part of the Michigan Bovine TB Eradication Project involving a multi-agency team of experts from the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural

Development, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Michigan State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to work collaboratively on new approaches to combat the disease.

The Department is committed to continuing work to eradicate TB. In 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2021, the Department authorized disease management firearm antlerless deer hunts on private land in specific areas with known TB-positive deer during the first two weekends in January to help reach surveillance goals and to reduce the risk of disease spread to new areas.

The Department has a surveillance goal of 2,800 deer in Alcona, Alpena, Montmorency, and Oscoda counties. From January 1 to December 10, 2021, over 2,470 deer have been tested for TB in Alcona, Alpena, Montmorency, and Oscoda Counties. Of that, three deer were confirmed as positive for the disease in Alpena County.

Accordingly, the Department recommends establishing a disease management firearm antlerless deer hunt on private land only south of Highway M-32 in Alpena County from January 6 through January 9, 2022, and from January 13 through January 16, 2022, in order to help manage the free-ranging deer population. The disease management firearm deer hunt is recommended to take place to help jump-start surveillance efforts for 2022 and continue to apply hunting efforts to areas most likely to have disease impacts on agricultural producers.

The following measures are recommended to be established:

- Licenses, including unused 2021 deer or deer combo licenses, universal antlerless licenses, and antlerless licenses for DMU 487 are valid.
- Commercial forest lands are open and licenses, including unused 2021 deer or deer combo licenses, universal antlerless licenses, and antlerless licenses for DMU 487 are valid on these lands.
- Only antlerless deer may be tagged.
- All rules and regulations for the firearm deer season apply.
- Disease control permits and deer management assistance permits issued for the 2021 license year are also valid during this time period.

Administrative:

The Department recommends extending the purchase date for licenses valid for DMU 487 to January 16, 2022.

Recommendation:

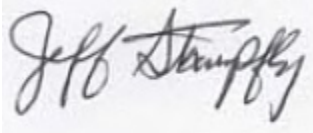
We recommend the disease management firearm deer hunt be established as described above.



Jared Duquette, Chief  
Wildlife Division



Gary Hagler, Chief  
Law Enforcement Division



Jeff Stampfly, Chief  
Forest Resources Division



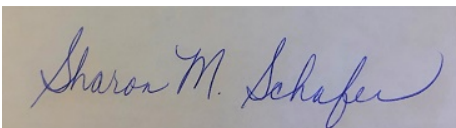
Ronald A. Olson, Chief  
Parks and Recreation Division



James Dexter, Chief  
Fisheries Division



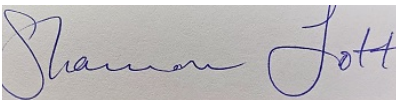
Kristin Phillips, Chief  
Marketing and Outreach Division



Sharon Schafer, Chief  
Finance and Operations Division



Mark Hoffman  
Chief Administrative Officer



Shannon Lott  
Natural Resources Deputy

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I approve the staff recommendation with an effective date of January 3, 2022.



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Daniel Eichinger, Director

January 5, 2022

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Date