

# Natural Resources Commission Meeting

NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries

June 13, 2019

# Proposed Orders

- For Information – NRC
  - Chronic Wasting Disease Regulations (Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 7 of 2019)
- For Action – NRC
  - Antlerless Deer License Quotas in the Upper Peninsula (Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 6 of 2019)

# NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries

- Fisheries Chief Update
  - 2020 Fish Regulations Proposals
- Wildlife Chief Update
  - Deer Harvest Survey Report
  - Chronic Wasting Disease Antler Point Restrictions Survey Results
  - Chronic Wasting Disease Regulations

# Department of Natural Resources

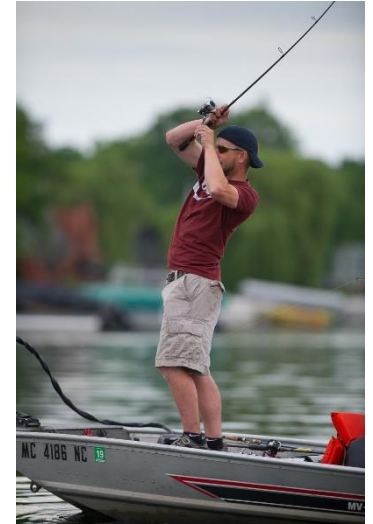
Fisheries Division  
Chief's Update

Jim Dexter, Chief

June 13, 2019

# Michigan Fishing Tournament Information System

- Since inception January 1, 2016-2018
  - More than 6,500 registered tournaments
  - 324 unique water bodies
  - 8 of top 10 waters in SW Michigan
  - Lake St. Clair #1 with 230 events
  - September 26-29 Bass Masters Elite Angler of the Year Tournament
  - 88 walleye and 3 muskie events registered



# Selfridge Air National Guard Base

- Two cooperative walleye rearing ponds
  - Lake St. Clair Walleye Association
  - 1 of 3 cooperative pond locations in LEMU
  - 2018 PFAS testing; surface and groundwater
  - High levels of PFAS found
  - Rearing on hold, more testing to occur



# AuSable River below Mio

- Intense interest in trophy trout potential
- 48,000 brown trout stocked annually
- Strain study 2010-2013
  - Results: Significant wild trout
- New study of stocked vs. wild trout
- Requires volunteers to hand clip trout
- Study wraps up after 2019 electrofishing



Thank You!

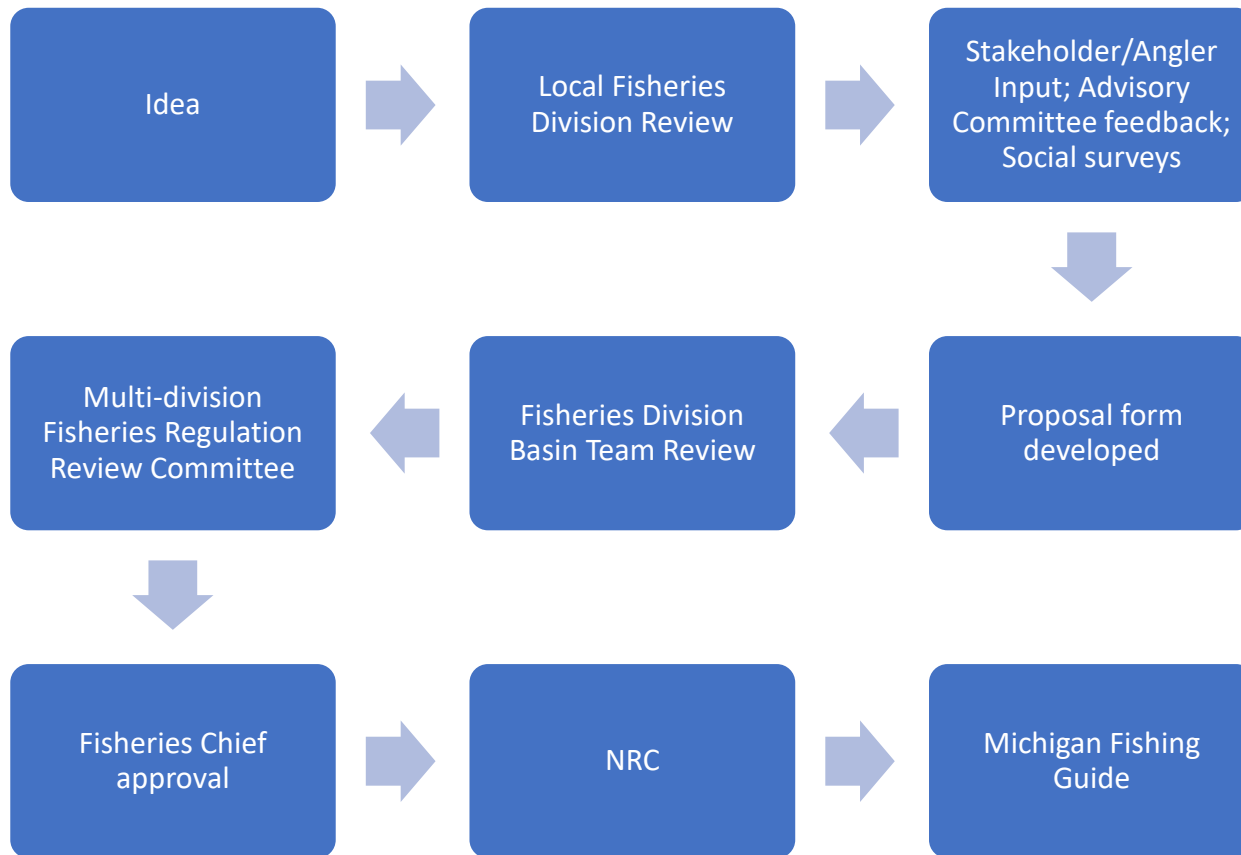


# 2020 Fisheries Regulation Proposals

Fisheries Division  
Seth Herbst, Ph.D.  
ASRA Unit Manager  
June 13, 2019

# Fisheries Order Proposal Process

- Addressing biological and/or social concerns



# 2020 Fisheries Orders Proposals

- 31 Regulation change proposals submitted
  - 2 statewide
  - 29 local/regional
- 7 Fisheries Orders (FOs) affected
- 26 proposals were supported and will be presented beginning in Aug.

# Statewide Fisheries Order Proposal Recommendation

## Coregonid regulations

- Protection of populations
- Address identification issues
- Added simplicity



# Local/Regional Fisheries Order Proposal Recommendations

- Removal of waters from different “types”
  - Change in ownership
  - Unsuitable habitat
- Northern Pike regulations on specific waters
- MI-WI boundary regulations
  - Smallmouth bass possession season
  - Muskellunge min. size limits and possession season
- Lake Sturgeon catch-and-immediate release season
  - St. Marys River
  - Portage-Torch Lakes
- Huron-Erie Corridor Walleye possession limit

# Statewide Yellow Perch Regulations

- Daily possession limit changed from 50 to 25 in 2019
- NRC requested review for addition of “no more than 5 fish greater than 12”
  - Multiple U.P. resolutions in support
- Fisheries Division review
  - No biological benefit
  - Lacked stakeholder and public support
- Recommendation:
  - Don't advance resolutions



*Illustration provided by Joseph Tomelleri©*

# Brook Trout Regulations

- Per NRC request, full review of 10 fish daily possession limit on U.P. streams will be presented this fall.
- Existing U.P. streams with 10 fish daily possession limit will sunset on Oct. 1, 2019



*Illustration provided by Joseph Tomelleri©*

Thank You!



# Wildlife Chief Update

Russ Mason

# Wildlife Chief Update

- Shiawassee River SGA Infrastructure Update
- MI Birds Program
- Wildlife Habitat Grant Application Period Now Open
- Amy Derosier is the new Planning and Adaptation Section Supervisor

Thank You!

# 2018 Deer Harvest Survey

Brian Frawley

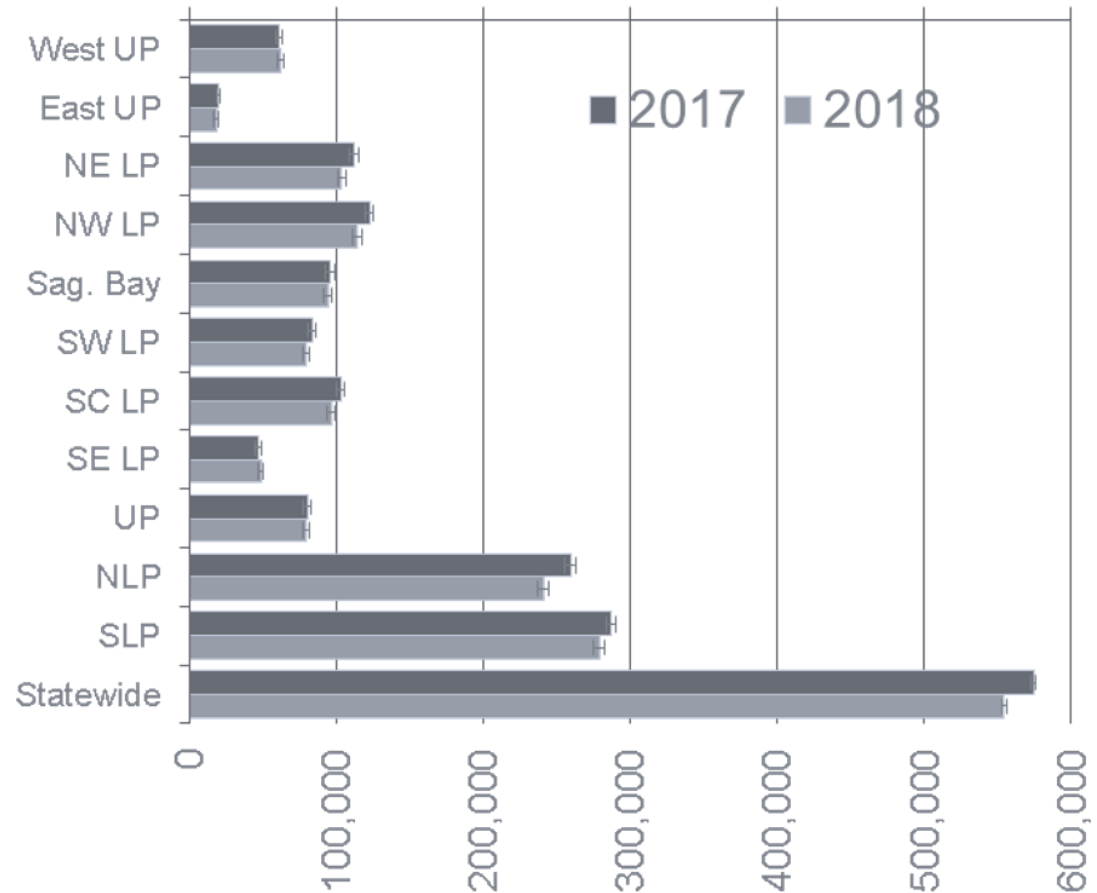
June 13, 2019

# 2018 Deer Harvest Survey

- 601,984 people purchased a license (3% decline)
- 27,980 of 59,493 questionnaires returned (47% response)
- 5,110 additional hunters completed the survey online
- Estimates derived from 33,090 hunters (mail and online respondents)
- Estimates standardized to be comparable with estimates from previous years

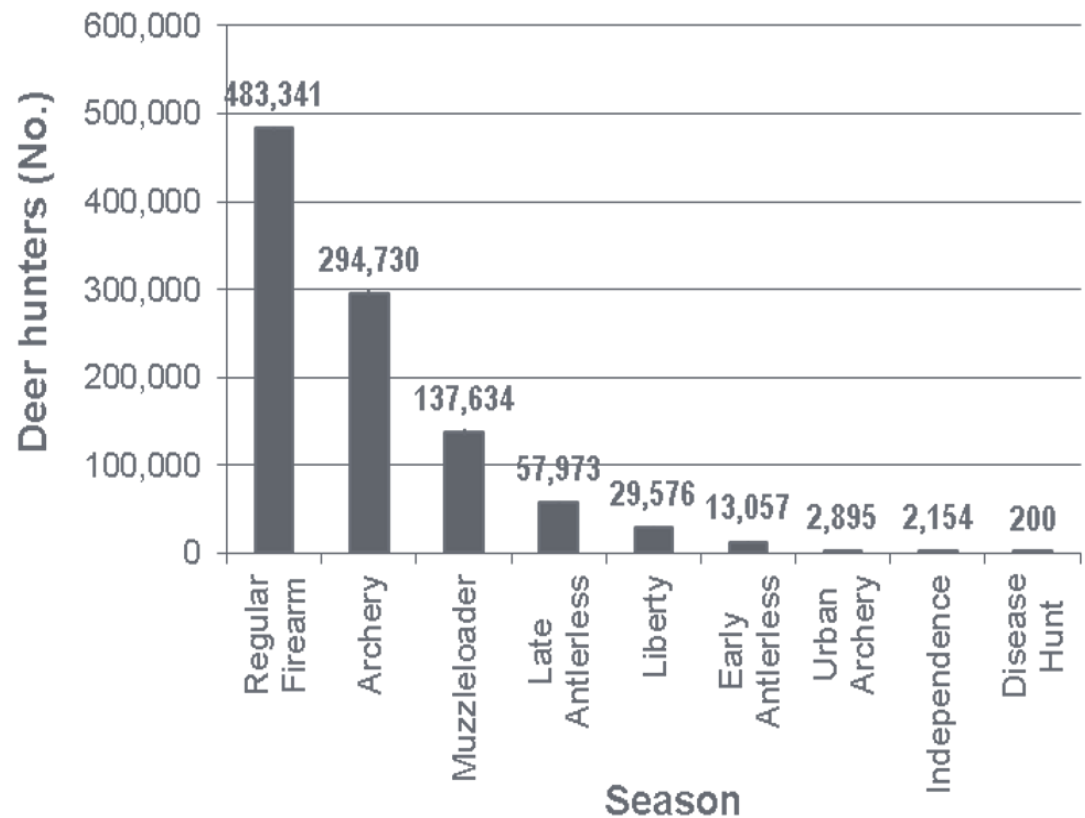
# 2018 Deer Hunters

- For all seasons combined, 554,000 people hunted deer, which was about 3% fewer than last year.
- Regionally, hunter numbers declined significantly in the NLP (-7%) and SCL (-3%).



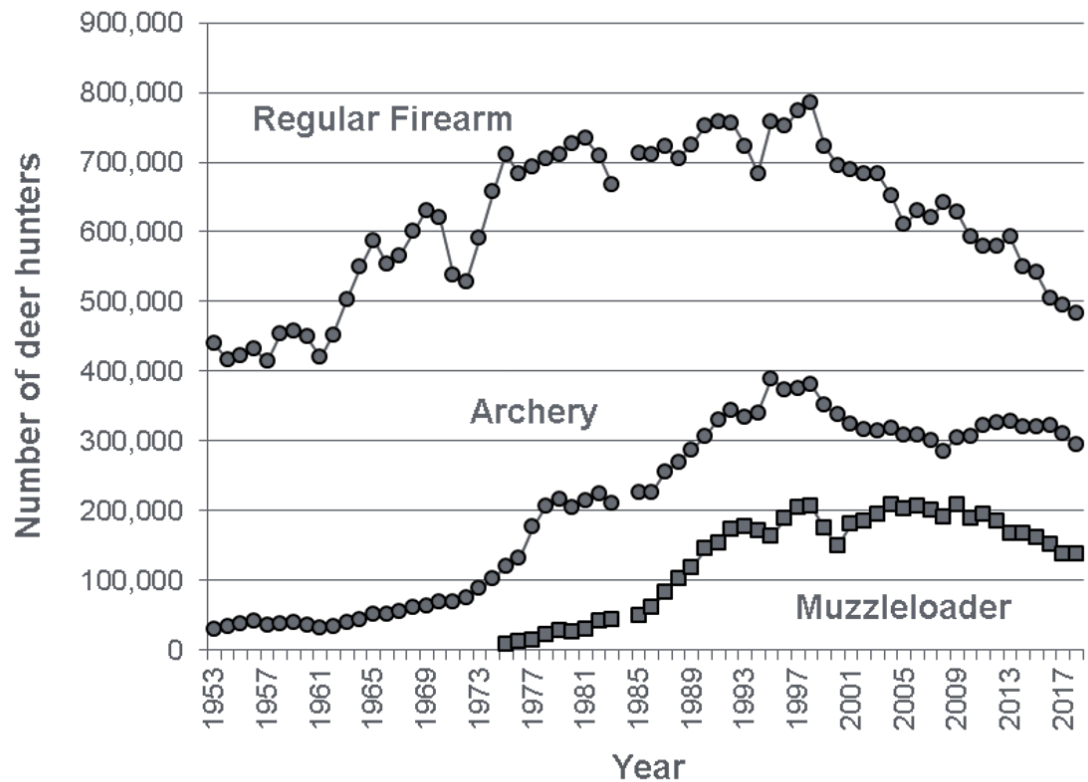
# 2018 Deer Hunters

- Hunter numbers declined significantly in regular firearm, archery, and disease surveillance seasons.
- Hunter numbers increased significantly in early antlerless, late antlerless, and Liberty (youth) seasons.



# Long-term Deer Hunter Trends

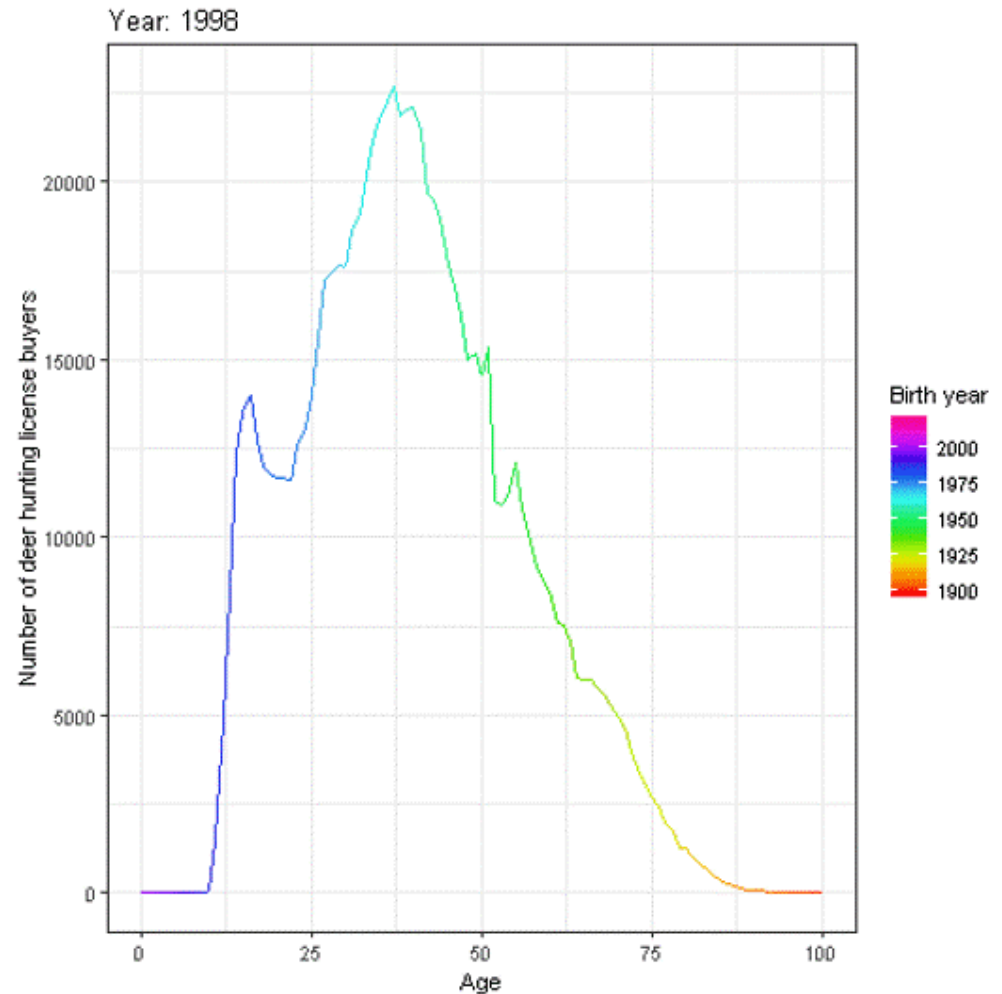
- Fewer people hunting during the regular firearm and muzzleloader seasons.
- The number of archers has been stable.





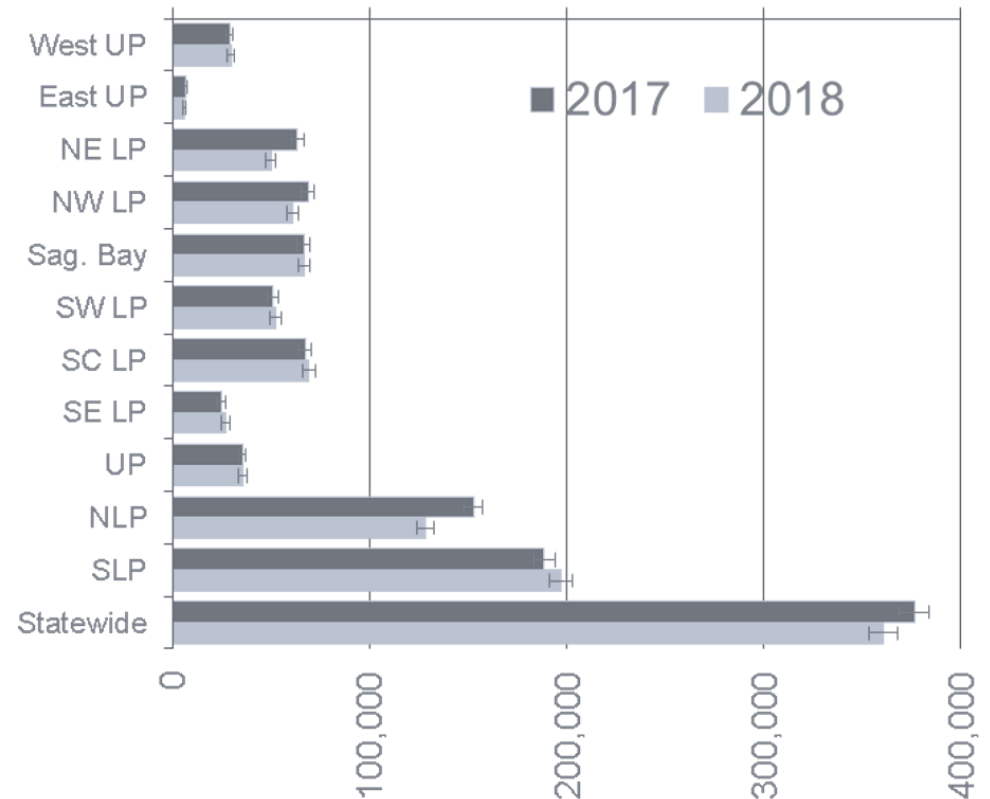
# Long-term Deer Hunter Trends

- Fewer people buying licenses. Overall number of hunters declining about 2-3% per year.

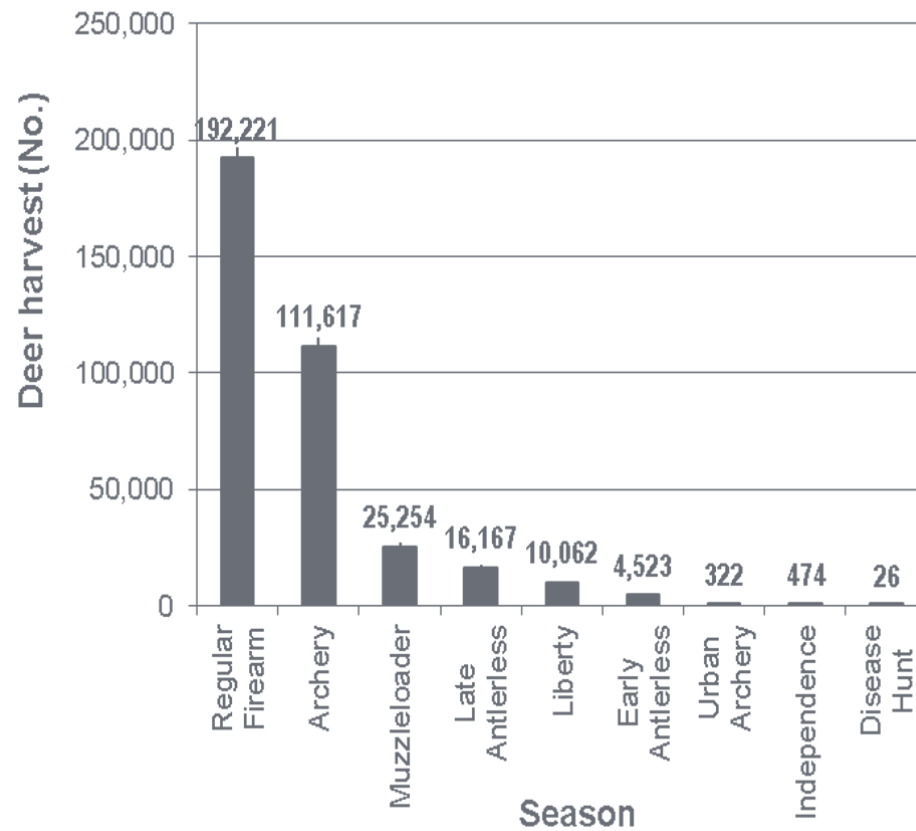


# 2018 Deer Harvest

- In all seasons combined, 360,700 deer were harvested, which was about 4% less than last year.
- Harvest decreased significantly in the NLP (-16%).

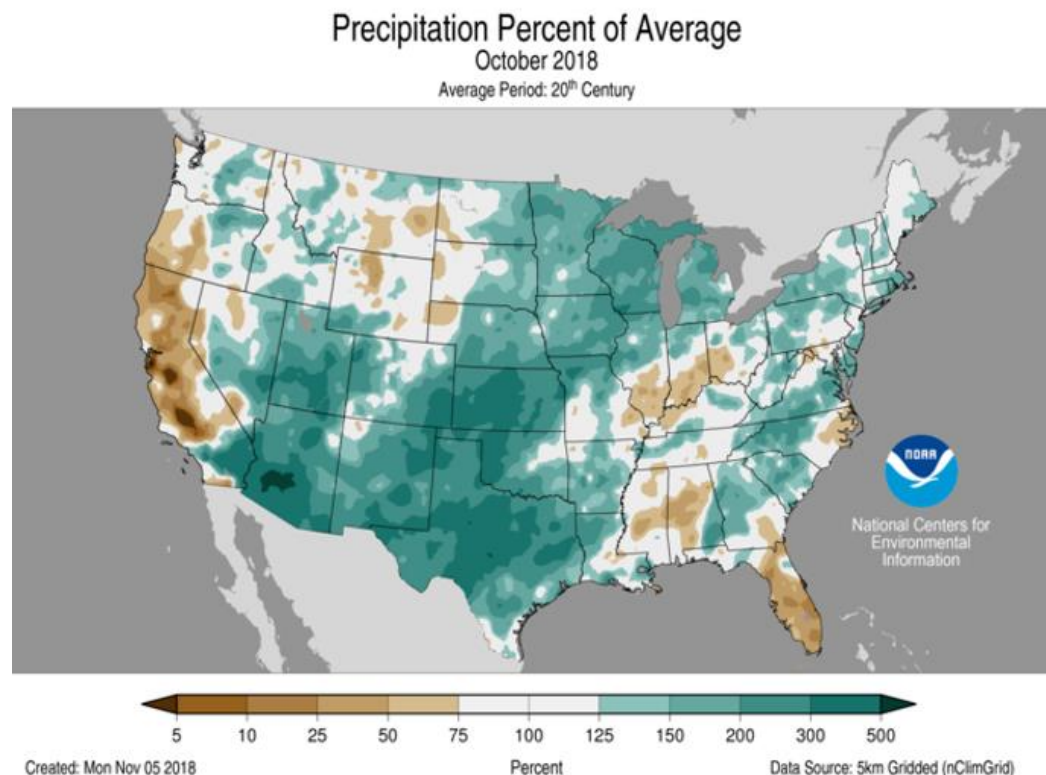


# 2018 Deer Harvest



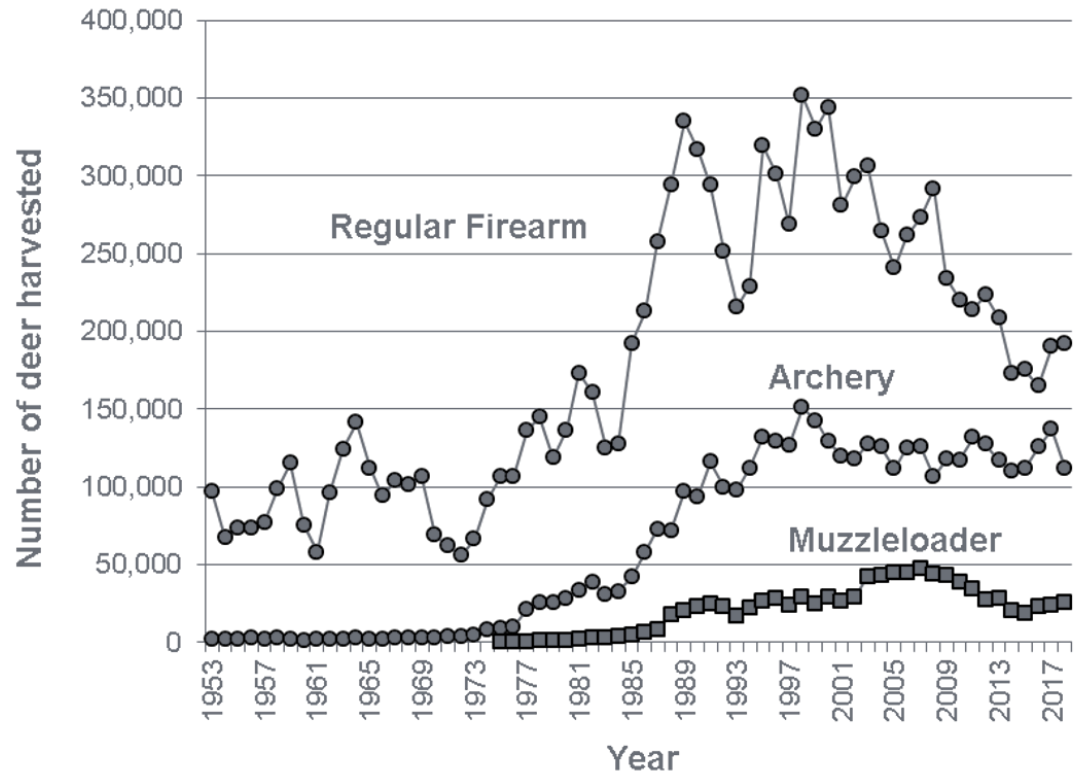
# 2018 Archery Season Harvest

- Much-above-average precipitation in the Upper Midwest in October 2018, especially in the UP and NELP (i.e., >200% above normal).



# Long-term Deer Harvest Trends

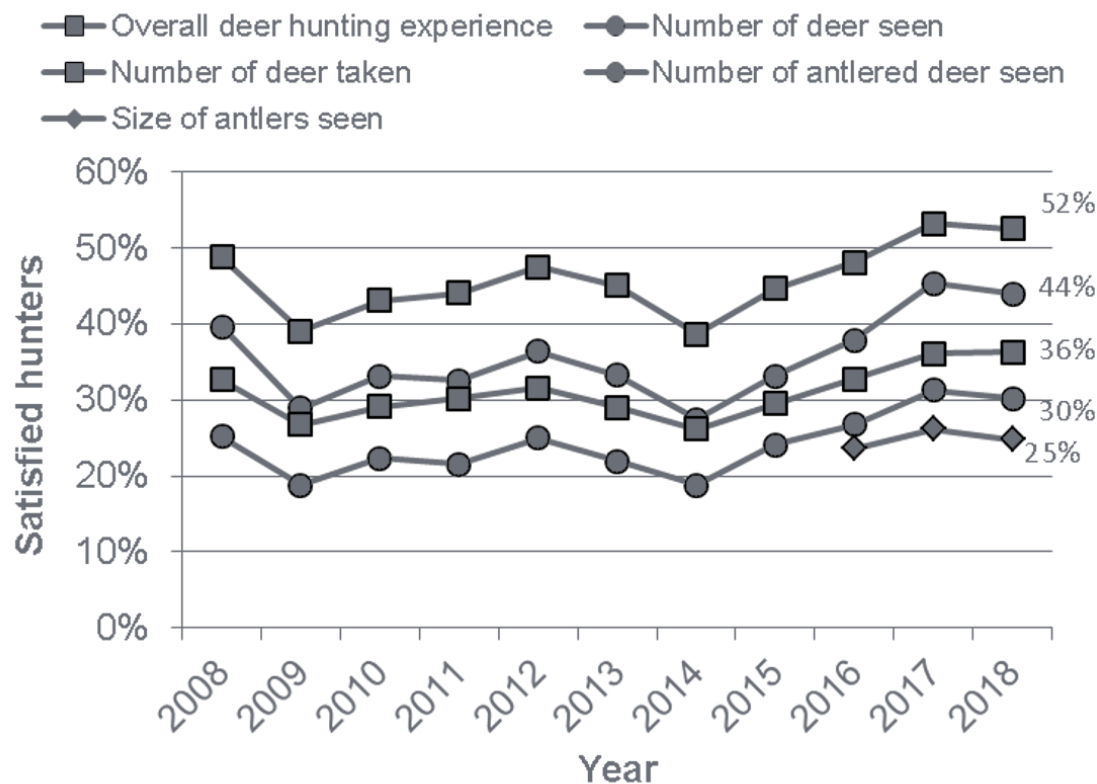
- Fewer deer taken during the Regular Firearm and Muzzleloader seasons.
- Harvest in Archery season has been stable.



# Deer Hunter Satisfaction

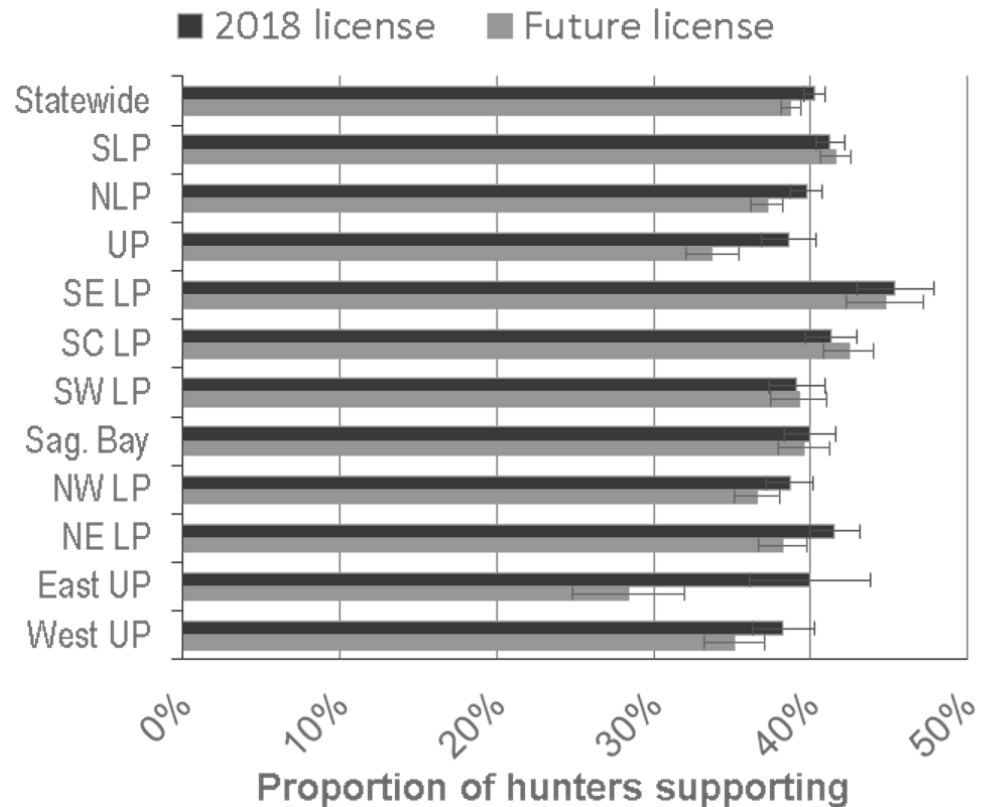
- Hunter satisfaction similar to last year

- Experience (52%)
- Deer seen (44%)
- Deer taken (36%)
- Bucks seen (30%)
- Size of antlers (25%)



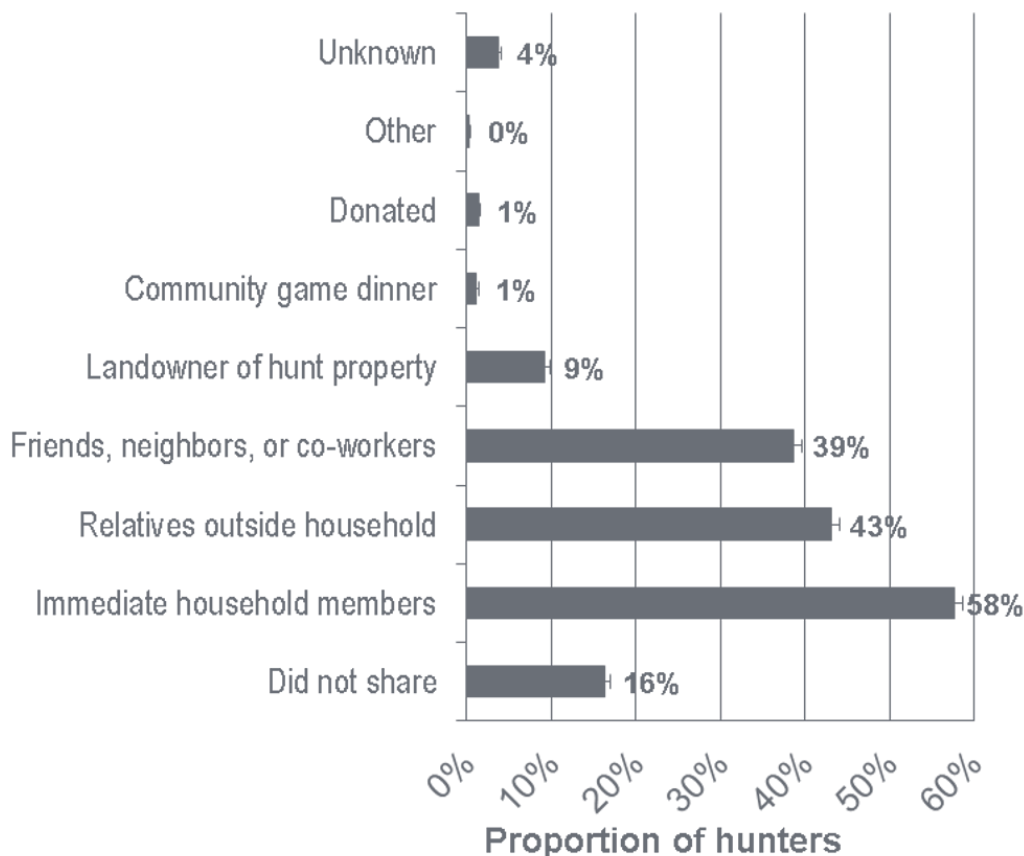
# Discounted Antlerless License

- Support for the discounted antlerless license.
- More hunters supported the discounted antlerless type than opposed.
- UP hunters were less supported of expanding this license type.



# Venison Sharing

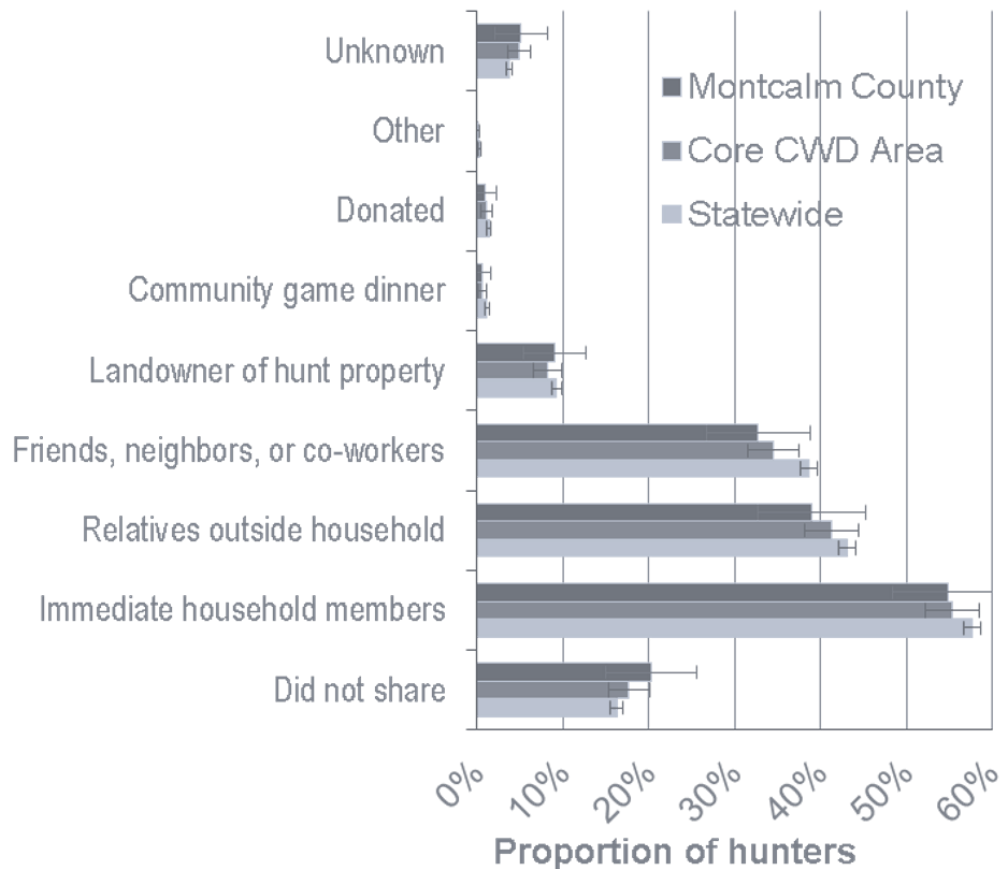
- 84% of hunters shared venison.
- Sharing occurred most often among members of hunters' households (58%), relatives (43%), and friends, neighbors, or coworkers (39%).
- Overall level of sharing was similar to 2013 estimate.





# Venison Sharing

- Sharing estimates were similar among hunters in Montcalm County (80%), the Core CWD Area (82%), and statewide (84%).



Thank You!

# Antler Point Restrictions Study Survey in the Core CWD Area

Brian Frawley

June 13, 2019

# The Effects of APRs on CWD

- Under APRs, regulations would protect most 1½-year-old bucks from harvest because their antlers would be too small to harvest legally.
- Although the APRs may produce older deer, the effects of APRs on CWD management are generally unknown.
- The NRC requested that the DNR measure the support for a study investigating the effects of mandatory APRs on CWD in the 5-county Core CWD Area.

# The Effects of APRs on CWD

- The proposed study would look at the effects of mandatory APRs on deer numbers, antlerless harvest, and the sex and age composition of the deer herd.
- For the proposed study, the DNR would divide the 5-county area in half and enforce mandatory APRs in one area (i.e., APR Area) and maintain the current rules in the other area (i.e., Control Area). In the APR Area, only bucks with at least four points on one antler could be taken.

# APR Survey Process

- The guidelines for evaluating APR proposals did not apply to the survey because this project was requested by the NRC, rather than initiated by a local group.
- We measured current support for APRs to establish a baseline to measure any changes that may occur in the future. If the field study is completed, hunters' support for APRs will be measured again to determine whether support for APRs changed.

# APR Survey Process

- Hunters were asked (1) “Do you support the proposed antler-point restrictions in the county where you hunt?” and (2) “Do you support this proposed antler-point restriction study?”
- The percentage of support was measured by dividing the number of “yes” responses by the sum of those responses indicating “yes” or “no”.

# APR Survey Process

- Randomly selected a sample of hunters.
- Sent a cover letter with an enclosed questionnaire and postage-paid return envelope via first-class mail.
- Initial mailing was followed by two additional questionnaires to non-respondents.



# APR Survey Summary

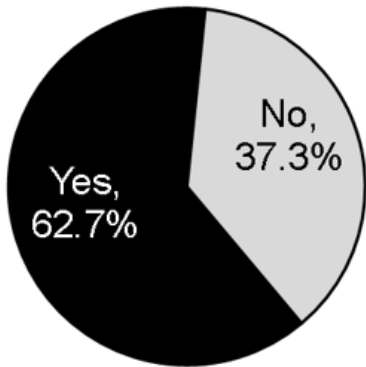
Table 1. The estimated number of hunters in the 5-county Core CWD Area and the number of hunters selected to receive the opinion survey about mandatory APR regulations in Core CWD Area, Michigan.

Total number of hunters <sup>a</sup>	Number of people included in sample <sup>a</sup>	Number of questionnaires that were undeliverable	Number of questionnaires returned	Response rate (%)
64,642	4,447	74	2,992	68

<sup>a</sup>Estimated number of people that hunted deer in the 5-county Core CWD Area in 2017 (Frawley 2018).

# Support for Mandatory APRs

Table 2. The proportion of hunters supporting mandatory antler point restrictions in the 5-county Core CWD Area, Michigan, in 2019.

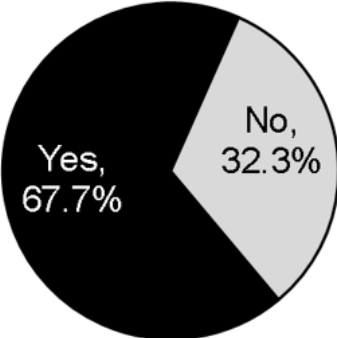
Response	Percentage of hunters <sup>a</sup>	95% CL <sup>b</sup>	Responses (%)
Yes (Supported mandatory APR regulations)	62.7	1.8	
No (Did not support mandatory APR regulations)	37.3	1.8	

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of hunters that hunted deer in the 5-county Core CWD Area; hunters that failed to provide an answer (<1%) were not used to measure support for mandatory APRs.

<sup>b</sup>95% confidence limits.

# Support for the APR

Table 3. The proportion of hunters supporting the APR study in the 5-county Core CWD Area, Michigan, in 2019.

Response	Percentage of hunters <sup>a</sup>	95% CL <sup>b</sup>	Responses (%)
Yes (Supported APR study)	67.7	1.7	
No (Did not support APR study)	32.3	1.7	

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of hunters that hunted deer in the 5-county Core CWD Area; hunters that failed to provide an answer (<1%) were not used to measure support for mandatory APRs.

<sup>b</sup>95% confidence limits.

Thank You!

# Deer/CWD Regulations

Chad Stewart, Deer Management Specialist

Wildlife Division

June 13, 2019

# Recap of Proposed Regulations

- Move Liberty hunt earlier 1 week
- Redefining bait to allow scented materials
- Proposed baiting/feeding ban in CWD Core Area of the Upper Peninsula
- Allowing antlerless deer to be taken during archery season in 6 DMUs in the UP
- Adding Barry, Lenawee, and Midland counties to CWD Management Zone
- APR Experiment in CWD Core in LP

# Potential Changes for June Order

- Redefining bait to allow scented materials
  - Recommend adding “inaccessible for contact” to “inaccessible for consumption”
    - Eliminates need for height requirements
    - Eliminates concern for attractant that can be consumed
  - Requires Commissioner support for inclusion into WCO

# Potential Changes for June Order

- Roadkill movement
  - Director's Authority
  - Prohibit movement of all roadkill carcasses out of county of origin
    - Must be possessed and used in the same county where it was hit
    - Exceptions for deboned meat and bone-in quarters



# UP CWD Recommendations

- Held additional 3 listening sessions specific to CWD
- Follow up meeting with UP CWD Working Group
  - Group Recommendations
    - Localized baiting and feeding ban
    - Increased antlerless quotas
    - Carcass movement restrictions

Thank You!