



QUALITY DEER MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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Date: 13 June 2019
To: Senator Howard Marklein
From: Jacob Pries, Policy Intern
Re: Earn-A-Buck Program

On behalf of the Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA), we would like to state our support for allowing the Earn-A-Buck (EAB) program in Wisconsin to be considered as a viable deer management option. The EAB program provides an effective way to manage the deer population and Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) within the state. This program has proven results and is a necessary tool that should be an option for managers. Wisconsin's Monroe County Central Farmland Zone has a goal of maintaining the white-tailed deer population at 22,000 deer and after the 2018 hunting season the population was approximately 29,000 deer. The two previous hunting seasons that implemented the EAB program saw hunters harvest 5,500 and 6,700 antlerless deer which is on the 5,000 deer per year pace needed to maintain the deer population. The proven results from the EAB program are exactly what the state of Wisconsin needs to maintain the state's deer population, ensure the preservation of the white-tailed deer hunting heritage, and safeguard Wisconsin from the spread of CWD through overpopulation.

Whitetails are the most popular big game animal in the U.S., and whitetail hunters are the foundation of the nearly \$67 billion hunting industry. According to the National Shooting Sports Foundation, approximately three of every four hunters pursue whitetails. The white-tailed deer hunting industry contributes to a \$17.9 billion outdoor economy that directly supports 168,000 jobs in Wisconsin. To place this in perspective, the outdoor industry, to which deer hunters belong, provides twice as many jobs to the state of Wisconsin than the dairy industry.

We recognize EAB regulations are often controversial and generally disliked by sportsmen and women. However, few strategies (if any) are more effective at increasing the antlerless deer harvest in an area. Sportsmen and women should be well informed by their state wildlife agency on the annual target and achieved antlerless harvests and how they impact the agency's deer management program. Hunters should have the opportunity to provide input on their desired strategy for achieving the target antlerless harvest, and state wildlife agencies should accommodate these desires where appropriate. In situations where the target antlerless harvests are not being reached, state wildlife agencies should employ additional measures and/or strategies, such as EAB, to ensure deer herds are being managed at levels in balance with what the habitat can support. On behalf of the QDMA, we would like to thank you for your time, your dedicated service to the state of Wisconsin, and your consideration of this matter.

Respectfully,

Jacob Pries
Policy Intern
Quality Deer Management Association