

Fellow Deer Hunters:

It's now time to get down to the business of growing the SW MN Deer Herd. Now is the time to show up and help prompt change to increase deer herd numbers.

We have been meeting with the DNR and have been told from the Commissioner and Chief of Fish & Wildlife our requests will be listened to. In the past some of our complaints have been ignored and dismissed, however we are now seeing some commitment to increase deer numbers in SW Minnesota. We hunted with one of the top DNR Wildlife Officials this past fall in Jackson County and he stated two important things – that he recognized the SW herd is very low and that the DNR knows how to increase deer numbers. We need to help them in this regard. Our focus will be on management areas 237, 238, 250 & 295, which comprise most parts of Nobles, Murray, Cottonwood & Jackson Counties (more or less).

What are we up against?

- We have too few deer at this time.
- We are killing too many deer.
- Many factors including muzzleloader season, youth tags are permitting too many does to be taken.
- Far too many adults are filling youth only tags (this is illegal and hurting the herd).
- And so on.

We are taking steps to bring change and we are doing so as follows:

- Two meetings are being held for deer hunters to give input and listen:
 - o Jackson/Cottonwood Counties meeting near Jackson - March 2, 2009 @ 6:30 – HORSE BARN & HUNT CLUB – Directions: 4 miles north of Lakefield and 1.5 miles east on County Road 24 (Call Brent Rossow @ 507-662-5490 for more directions).
 - o Nobles/Murray Counties meeting near Worthington - March 3, 2009 @ 6:30 pm – SW MN BOW BENDERS CLUBHOUSE – Directions: from Worthington – Hwy 59/60 south, go ¼ mile west of Shines Junk yard to County Road 57, also known as Plotts Ave. Turn south and go ¾ mile south and it's on the east side of the road (Call Aaron Sieve @ 507-360-2655 for more directions).
- These will not be DNR conducted meetings but the Area Wildlife Supervisors will attend and be available to give input and answer questions.

- At the meetings we will listen to and record all ideas as to how to turn the herd numbers around.
- A committee will be created comprising of 8 – 12 people who will then take all the information gathered and make a written recommendation to the DNR. A committee chair will be selected to call committee meetings. I will draft the written recommendation. Our recommendations need to be done by late March to early April so our input can be considered for the 2009 season.
- The recommendations will be presented to the DNR in person in St. Paul to the management and top DNR officials by committee members.
- We will follow through with the DNR and monitor the herd as years pass by.

As you know this is not a matter of a quick fix. While a deer herd can be destroyed quickly, its recovery takes years. We do believe the DNR is listening to us now and will implement some changes. We need change to be implemented. We have seen deer managed broadly when more defined issues and problems deserve attention. We have seen expanded deer hunting opportunities (muzzleloaders, archery, crossbow, youth, etc.) result in overkill of deer. Based on our discussions with the DNR we believe they recognize the problems, how we got to this point and that steps need to be taken to turn it around. We need to push the issue, make our concerns heard and demand change.

Please plan on attending one of the meetings and invite others to attend. We need to expand our email contact list, so please email me back with contact names and addresses or forward this to those who share our concerns.

Kirk Schnitker
W: 763-252-0114
H: 763-421-3399