



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS U.S. ARMY GARRISON
2218 6TH AVENUE
FORT RUCKER AL 36362-5105

IMRC-PWE

1 October 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: 2020–2021 Deer Harvest and Hunting Recommendations

1. In accordance with General Order No. 2017-01 "Assignment of Functions and Responsibilities within HQ, DA 5 Jan 2017," the DPW Natural Resources Branch has established game harvesting policy as required for the Whitetail Deer during the next hunting season. This harvesting policy is based solely on biological survey data and biological observations in the field environment of Ft. Rucker lands. This Harvesting Policy is in compliance with managing the Whitetail Deer population within the carrying capacity as required. Although total herd numbers and population density remain well below carrying capacity, the numbers are improving in accordance with our stated objective of "Restoring the Whitetail Deer Herd" on Installation Lands."
2. Fawn Recruitment continues to improve as we maintain an aggressive coyote and Feral Pig Trapping Program. Although we have documented 1035 Feral Pigs being removed in the past year, these invasive species remain a serious threat to all desirable game population species. Studies indicate that 80% of a total pig population must be removed annually to maintain control and we are not approaching this number.
3. Installation data analyzed includes harvest data, spotlight survey counts, infrared camera surveys, and comparisons with other local management areas within the region. Results of this analysis indicate that Fort Rucker's deer herd has improved since we established recovery program in FY12. Deer population densities are higher, recruitment has increased, and predator control has resulted in lower coyote populations. Although managed efforts are being made to control coyotes and feral hogs and a substantial number have been removed, there is still much work that needs to be done. Our infrared camera survey is conducted on 3,000 acre blocks each year in different areas of the Installation. A three year average is used to help account for varying hunting pressure in the different areas. The Whitetail deer population density survey indicates a three year average population density of 1 deer per 14 acres on the Installation. Our objective and target in restoring the population to "Carrying Capacity" is to maintain 1 deer per 25 acres throughout all Installation lands. Improvements in the deer population and animal quality have been documented each year, and a limited antlerless harvest is appropriate now. Recommend doe harvest has been set at slightly over half the projected buck harvest to maintain population growth while allowing appropriate recreational harvest.
4. In an effort to recognize and respond to hunters and political interests, it is the intent of DPW, Natural Resources to improve the total deer population numbers and overall animal quality; however, we also feel that a balanced approach may now be taken while proceeding with a cautious increase in antlerless harvesting. Rather than developing and managing an antlerless harvesting Lottery or Tagging System, it is in the interests of efficiency, available manpower and data collection to establish an "Antlerless Harvesting Limitation Quota" and manage it through

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ISPORTSMAN. When the antlerless harvesting quota has been reached as reported in ISPORTSMAN, the Doe season will be closed immediately and announced on the Sign-In website home page.

5. In accordance with FR 215-1, the following recommendations are proposed for the forthcoming hunting season:

a. ANTLERLESS DEER HARVEST – Total Antlerless Harvesting is monitored daily on ISPORTSMAN and hunting dates are in accordance with Alabama State Regulations and Hunting Dates on Public Lands. Total antlerless deer harvesting shall not exceed a total CAP of 55 animals of which 20 animals shall come from Training Areas 12-18, 19W-41 (South of Hwy 27) and 15 animals shall come from areas 1-11 (North of Hwy 27) and 20 animals in the bow only areas A-I, 19E.

b. BUCK HARVEST – 1 Buck per day, 3 points on one side minimum, 2 each per season maximum.

c. DEER BOW & GUN HUNTS – Archery Areas should remain open for Bow Hunting according to Alabama Bow Season Hunting dates on Public Land. Deer Gun Hunts should open and close according to Alabama Game Law on Public Lands.

d. CHECK STATION REQUIREMENT – It is mandatory that all harvested deer be checked in and documented at a designated check-in point for weight documentation and must be reported in the new ISPORTSMAN online game check program. Hunters are also required to submit an inside mouth photo to Natural Resources of all harvested deer to clearly reveal the "lower jaw rear teeth". Should hunters be discovered not reporting a harvested deer online within 24 hours, their permit shall be revoked for one (1) year following the offense.

e. ANNUAL YOUTH HUNT – It is recommended that one, late season, either sex gun hunt be designated for youth only. This hunt should be conducted during the Alabama Antlerless harvesting period for public lands. Antlerless harvest is recommended during the Youth Hunt and it is recommended that the antler restriction on bucks be waived for this one particular Youth Hunt; therefore, making any buck with antlers visible above the hairline a legal harvest.


6. The 2020-2021 Deer Harvesting Policy provided herein by the DPW, Natural Resources Branch have been very carefully analyzed and evaluated in an effort to restore and further improve the whitetail deer population and animal quality on Fort Rucker.

7. The point of contact for this action is Daniel M. Spillers, Fish and Wildlife Administrator, at (334) 255-2416 or email: daniel.m.spillers.civ@mail.mil.

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ALFRED T. TOWNSEND
Chief, Environmental Division
Directorate of Public Works


APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL _____ DATE 6 OCT 20
Whitney B. Gardner
COL, AV
Garrison Commander