

Commentary

Kinzua cooperative data shows deer size, antlers, health better

By Brad Nelson
Russell, Pa.

Bradford, Pa. — Since 2001 hunters have been bringing their deer to voluntary check stations on the Kinzua Quality Deer Cooperative in McKean County.

Each deer is weighed, aged and several antler measurements are taken. Without the assistance of hunters, it would be difficult to determine how the conditions of the deer herd have changed as new management strategies have been implemented.

For example, we now know how the two-week concurrent antlered and antlerless rifle season implemented in 2001, antler restrictions instituted in 2002 and the Deer Management Assistance Program, better known as DMAP, put into place in 2003 affected the size and antler characteristics of the deer herd.

Voluntary check stations are one of several monitoring methods used on the 74,000-acre Kinzua Quality Deer Cooperative, where the goals are simply to provide healthy deer, quality habitat and satisfied hunters. However, the balancing act to ensure that diverse forests are perpetuated and deer are plentiful enough to keep

hunters happy is not easy.

In 2001, hunters brought 151 deer to the voluntary check stations (37 does and 114 bucks). This was the first year of the two-week concurrent antlered and antlerless season but prior to the implementation of antler restrictions and DMAP.

Adult bucks averaged 114 pounds while yearling bucks averaged 96 pounds. Adult does weighed an average of 99 pounds while yearlings averaged 89 pounds. Fawns averaged about 54 pounds with male fawns averaging about 7 pounds heavier than females.

Fast forward to the present, with antler restrictions and DMAP in place and well established for several years. Hunters brought 193 deer to the check stations in the last four years (2009 through 2012) that included 149 bucks and 44 does.

Adult bucks averaged 141 pounds while yearling bucks averaged 105 pounds. Adult does weighed an average of 109 pounds while yearlings averaged 90 pounds. Fawns averaged 63 pounds with male fawns averaging about 12 pounds heavier than females.

A comparison of deer weights from 2001 with

(See Commentary Page 27)

Letters to the Editor

Commentaries and letters are the opinion of the writers; not necessarily that of *Pennsylvania Outdoor News*.

No need for longer bow season

We already have six weeks of bowhunting. That's enough for any archer. But I'd like to see the PGC change doe season to come in the second week of antler season everywhere or go back to the way it used to be — three days after buck season.

Bob Carey
Jackson Center, Pa.

Biologist: Deer not only problem

A recent news story provided an opportunity to clarify the purpose of the Game Commission's

Attention Readers

Pennsylvania Outdoor News invites letters from its readers. All letters must have the writer's name, complete address and phone number. (Phone numbers will not be printed.) Letters should be no longer than 250 words. Form letters will not be printed. *Pennsylvania Outdoor News* reserves the right to edit. Address letters to:

Letters to the Editor
Pennsylvania Outdoor News
PO Box 1393, Altoona, PA 16603-1393
E-mail: paoutdoornews@atlanticbb.net

current deer research. The Deer-Forest Study continues to be portrayed as an attempt to blame deer for poor forest regeneration, which could not be further from the truth.

I was misquoted in the report as saying "we want to make sure deer are the problem." This partial quote is misleading because it reinforces the idea that the purpose of the study is to show deer are the problem affecting forests.

The full quote is, "If we make a recommendation to reduce deer populations, we want to ensure deer are the problem." In other words, any recommendation to reduce a deer population must be because deer are actually the problem. If deer are not the problem, we will not recommend a reduction.

Since 2006, the Game Commission has stated

(See Letters Page 26)

Online Opinions

This issue's question

Game commissioners have signaled that they will pass a regulation this fall or winter to again allow deer baiting in the Southeast Special Regulations Area (see story on Page 1). Do you think that's a good idea?

Yes No

Online results from last issue's question

The Game Commission announced it will not operate mandatory deer-check stations in the two CWD management areas this fall. Do you think that's a good idea?

Yes 31 percent No 69 percent

★ Log on to our Website and give your online opinion! ★

www.outdoornews.com/pennsylvania

... (think) — proposed that
... restrictions that are curi-
... don't you think?

... is surveying deer hunters
... to try to attract the estimat-
... who are now hunting out of
... with bigger racks.

... a large number, these
... ant in these other states, and
... ies are significant," writes
... and former officer of the

... chuse to hunt out of state at
... travel to these locations
... ng a mature buck is much

... who prefer to hunt out of
... rated with the annual slash-
... pend their time and money
... tier chance to harvest a

... ticular could be the cause of
... n declining, continues
... DNR and its survey of
... then asked which issues
... g hunting regulations
... ximately 75 percent of deer
... of mature bucks in the herd."

... ar to Pennsylvania sports-
... with better antlers, yearling
... antlers, declining hunter
... ic benefit of deer hunting.

... ed across Michigan, like in
... s, fewer hunters will leave to
... a will attract hunters and
... e writes. "Maybe hunter num-
... er quality deer herd will cause
... Let's find out."

... he Pennsylvania Game
... plan is smart and perhaps
... are will be more than a few
... at premise.

... f fishing and hunting photographs. Enclose a
... nograph to: *Pennsylvania Outdoor News*,
... paoutdoornews@atlanticbb.net

... or toll-free (877) 800-1297

... 8-3453 or (877) 494-4246
... Jennifer Chamberlain
... on, Stephanie Meybaum,

... en, Aaron Geddis, Ronnie Anderson

... e Tiss

... (63) 546-5913

... #22-186) is published bi-weekly, 26 times
... N., Suite 130, Plymouth, MN 55442-3271.
... onal mailing offices.

... (two years). Single copy: \$2.50.
... ylvania Outdoor News Inc.,
... 442-3271



Copyright 2013

food available per deer.

At an average of 63 pounds, fawns now have a much better chance of surviving severe winter conditions than they did 12 years ago.

Changes have also occurred in antler characteristics. In 2001, the average inside spread of a harvested buck brought to a check station was 10 inches and the average beam diameter was 20.8 millimeters. In 2012, the average inside spread of a buck brought to the check stations was 14.8 inches and the beam diameter was 28.4 millimeters.

Will deer continue to get heavier and racks continue to get larger or have weights and rack sizes reached a plateau after almost a decade of antler restrictions and liberal antlerless seasons?

Only time will tell, but one thing is certain, hunters remain the key to providing good data by bringing their deer to the check stations.



5000 acres of Private Farms in West Kentucky



CCWO OUTFITTERS

Offering:

- Whitetail Hunts
- Spring Gobbler Hunts
- New D.I.Y. Hunt Options
- Bow, Muzzleloader, Rifle



270-704-5974

www.HuntCCWO.com

DEER & GEESSE in NORTHERN NEW YORK



GREAT DEER HUNTING...

Have an entire farm for your own, exclusive use!
Multiple food plots and established stand sites for each member of your hunting group! Bow, muzzleloader or gun. St. Lawrence County is always near to the top in buck take each year!

• **CANADA GEESSE & DUCKS** - 100% success 3 years running! Fully guided field & water hunts during BOTH a Sept. early goose season & the regular season. Discounted boat rentals for afternoon fishing too!

• **LODGING** - All of our trips include lodging in one of our four 2 bedroom log/timber cabins right on the St. Lawrence River. All are fully furnished with complete kitchens, all linens and porches overlooking the river!

See our trail cam pictures of this years bucks on Facebook - The St Lawrence Experience!

THE ST. LAWRENCE EXPERIENCE
866-576-4600 • www.TheStLawrenceExperience.com

HUNT ALABAMA INDIAN CREEK LODGE

CALL TODAY TO KILL A TROPHY THIS SEASON!

- Trophy Whitetail
- Wild Boar
- Wild Turkey
- Meals & Lodging Included
- 36 Years in Business

HUNT BOAR YEAR 'ROUND!

GREENVILLE, AL

PH: 334-382-6951 Cell: 334-391-4691
jsherling@centurytel.net

Long Island Duck Hunts

Sea Ducks, Brant & Divers

- Custom 28' Aluminum Duck Boat
- Specializing in Layout Hunts
- Can comfortably accommodate up to six hunters

Take Advantage of SUNDAY HUNTING in NY State!



The Finest Trophy Sea Duck Hunting NY has to offer!
631-445-8001

Specializing in Bass, Bear, Deer & Grouse

- Now booking for smallmouth bass
- Family vacation packages
- Corporate retreats
- Bear Hunts

Guided Bear Hunts Available



NEW CLIENTS & VETERANS - ASK ABOUT OUR DISCOUNT!

800-248-0554 • 1174 Cove Rd., Seboeis, Maine 04448

Hunt Newfoundland, Canada with Notch Mountain Outfitters

SUCCESS RATE:

95% Moose | 100% Caribou | 100% Baited Bear (Spring & Fall)

Own & Operate (4) Lodges - Hunt area combined 5,000 sq. miles



All Inclusive Moose Hunts \$4,000!

RANDY PARSONS OWNER/OPERATOR

HOME/OFFICE 709-672-3589
MOBILE 709-672-8607 • FAX 709-672-3843
randyparsons2004@hotmail.com
www.notchmountainoutfitters.com

OHIO TROPHY BUCK Outfitters

793 South 2nd Street
Coshocton, OH 43812

567-203-7048

tmoores@ohiotrophybuck.com

Offering semi-guided and un-guided Whitetail and Turkey hunts All Fair chase (125" Minimum)

- ▶ 6 hours from Harrisburg
- ▶ Free hunt opportunity
- ▶ Over the counter Tags
- ▶ Easy payment plan
- ▶ Coshocton County #1 in Ohio

15% OFF ALL REMAINING HUNTS!

Commentary

(From Page 3)
weights from 2009 through 2012 is below. It shows weight comparison of deer brought to KQDC check stations in 2001 and 2009 through 2012.

Number of deer brought to the check station:	
2001	2009-12
151 deer	193 deer
Adult bucks: 114 pounds	141 pounds
Yearling bucks: 96 pounds	105 pounds
Adult does: 99 pounds	109 pounds
Yearling does: 89 pounds	90 pounds
All fawns: 54 pounds	63 pounds

It is obvious from these data that the two-week concurrent season, antler restrictions, and DMAP have combined to produce bigger, healthier deer on the Kinzua Quality Deer Cooperative. Antler restrictions have allowed bucks to grow older and thus gain more weight.

The largest average weight gain has occurred in adult bucks (27 pounds). Both adult does and fawns have shown significant weight gains most likely because the two-week concurrent antlered and antlerless rifle season and DMAP have resulted in a lower deer population, which means more food available per deer.

At an average of 63 pounds, fawns now have a much better chance of surviving severe winter conditions than they did 12 years ago.

The Kinzua Quality Deer Cooperative is part of the Allegheny National Forest.

Map by Zuir Kelley

The entire 74,000 acres of the KQDC is open to public hunting.

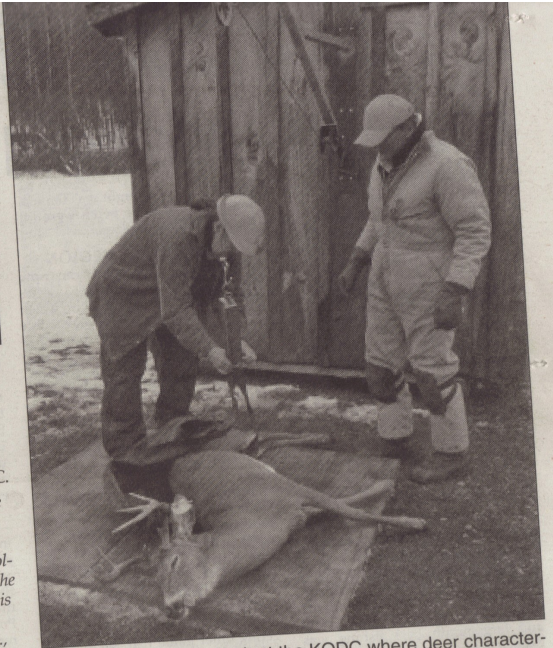
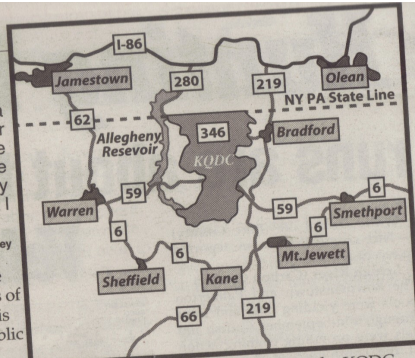
Located in Wildlife Management Unit 2F and DMAP units 135, 1981 and 1996, the area lies west of the town of Bradford and east of the Allegheny Reservoir.

This year check stations will be located on Route 59 at Harrison's Restaurant and on Route 346 at the Willow's Restaurant. As an incentive, hunters who bring a deer to the check station will receive a free orange hat while supplies last, and a free raffle ticket for a chance to win a rifle.

More than just the size and antler characteristics of the deer

are monitored on the KQDC. For more information on habitat changes and hunter preferences, visit our website at www.kqdc.com or on facebook at www.Facebook.com/TheKQDC.

(Brad Nelson was forest wildlife biologist for the Allegheny National Forest from 1986-2009 and served as regional wildlife biologist for the Southern Region of the Forest Service from 2009-11. He is currently retired from the Forest Service and living in Russell, Pa., where he is the wildlife biologist for the Kinzua Quality Deer Cooperative.)



A hunter weighs in a buck at the KQDC where deer characteristics are carefully charted to judge the success of management regulations.
Photo courtesy of the Kinzua Quality Deer Cooperative

Guides & Outfitters

Please support our advertisers • and tell them you saw their ad in Outdoor News!

CCW OUTFITTERS
5000 acres of Private Farms in West Kentucky

Offering:

- Whitetail Hunts
- Spring Gobbler Hunts
- New D.I.Y. Hunt Options

South Branch Lake Camps
www.southbranchlakecamps.com

Specializing in Bass, Bear, Deer & Grouse

- Now booking for smallmouth bass
- Family vacation packages
- Corporate retreats
- Bear Hunts

Guided Bear Hunts Available

NEW CLIENTS & VETERANS - ASK ABOUT OUR DISCOUNT!

800-248-0554 • 1174 Cove Rd., Seboeis, Maine 04448