

Deer Management Standing Team Charter

Title: Deer Management Standing Team

Sponsors: Nick Wiley - Division of Hunting and Game Management
Tim Breault - Division of Habitat and Species Conservation
Gil McRae - Division of Fish and Wildlife Research Institute

Sponsor Representative: Paul Schulz—Division of Hunting and Game Management

Team Leader: Robert E. Vanderhoof – Division of Hunting and Game Management

Team Members (their DOI & % of time): Attached

Issue: Deer in Florida are highly valued by hunters and non-hunters for recreational purposes. In addition, they cause damage to commercially grown crops, as well as residential gardens and landscaping. Proper management of the state's deer population is necessary to provide for the positive while minimizing the negative.

White-tailed deer management involves inherent differences of opinion about the best course of action. There are levels of uncertainty regarding various solutions and needs to be addressed as part of an adaptive management process. The current deer management process affects hunters, landowners, consultants, county and state agencies, conservation organizations, and the concerned public.

Goal(s): Provide for fact-based management of the white-tailed deer resource in order to maintain a healthy population consistent with both biological and cultural carrying capacities and provide recreational use compatible with sustainable yield of the population.

Deliverables:

- Recommendations for development of statewide and management area plans.
- Identification of research needs and priorities.
- Recommendations for agency regulations and policies.
- Recommendations for recreational opportunities to address user interests, needs, and demands.

Timeframe for completion: Ongoing

Standing Team Entities: The Deer Management Standing Team will be composed of 3 entities; the Working Group, the Stakeholder Group, and the Subject Matter Action Teams (Fig. 1).

The Working Group is the primary decision making arm of the Deer Management Standing Team and as such identifies and prioritizes issues, assembles Subject Matter Action Teams (SMAT) to deal with those issues and assigns action items to the teams. This group also finalizes as necessary SMAT proposals and submits them to the Stakeholder Group for comment, and ultimately to the Commission for action.

Representation on the Working Group will be approved by one or more of the Standing Team Sponsors. The group will consist of nine members including a team leader. The Division of Habitat and Species Management will provide four representatives, Division of Hunting and Game Management will provide two, and the Division of Law Enforcement, Office of Licensing and Permitting, and the Florida Wildlife Research Institute will provide one each for a total of nine voting members.

The Subject Matter Action Team is a temporary team of subject matter experts assembled by the Working Group to develop a specific proposal or research a specific issue. Each SMAT will contain at least one member of the Working Group and may be made up of members outside the Deer Management Standing Team.

Representation on subject matter action teams will be chosen by the member of the Working Group leading the team.

The Stakeholder Advisory Group is a self constituted voluntary association of individuals, organizations and entities sharing a common interest in the management and conservation of white-tailed deer and their associated habitat. It's membership will not include employees of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. This group will discuss issues, explore common interests, evaluate scientific information, review and comment upon proposals for regulations, management activities and research of white-tailed deer.

There will be an initial facilitated meeting to set up the Stakeholder Advisory Group. The current list of FWC stakeholders will be used to develop a list of groups and individuals who will be invited to participate. The Working Group will review that list and identify any additional individuals who also should be invited. At this meeting, participants will identify the representatives for the Stakeholder Advisory Group which will be drawn from the following categories:

- Agriculture Industry
- Hunting Organizations
- Large Private Landowners involved in Commercial Leasing Activities
- Large Federal and State Lands Managers
- Small Landowners (Those owning less than 640 acres)
- Conservation Organizations/Entities

No more than two members of the Stakeholder Advisory Group shall be chosen from each of the above categories. Representatives will be chosen by consensus of the Stakeholder Group.

Decision Making: Making decisions is easy when we have all the information and are in full agreement. Unfortunately this is rarely the case and our challenge is to make decisions with incomplete information when we have different opinions. However, we cannot allow our failure to make decisions impede the required rapid progress needed on deer management.

The Working Group-- Decisions of the group shall be made in a manner that accommodates diverse views and finds areas of agreement and common ground. Where possible, decisions shall be adopted by consensus and acclamation. Failing consensus 'soft' decisions can be made by 50% +1 of the voting members. (soft decisions are routine, procedural and organizational matters)

Hard final decisions will be made by approval of 75 % of the voting representatives present. (Hard decisions are those substantive matters where the group will express its opinion or take action to materially affect deer management). Any voting member may call for a 'hard' decision vote. Votes will be by voice vote unless any representative calls for a secret written ballot. The Deer Management Standing Team Leader will lead the group's discussions.

The work of the group can only be achieved if a sufficient representation of the members is present, therefore for any meeting a quorum will be ¾ of the voting members. Participation by telephone or video link is acceptable.

Stakeholder Advisory Group—This group will determine their own process for making decisions and otherwise conducting business and develop their own charter if they so choose. FWC will provide a facilitator to assist and guide this group in their deliberations.

Subject Matter Action Teams—Members shall make decisions in a manner consistent with the Code of Conduct outlined below.

Communication: It is incumbent upon each representative in both the Working Group and Stakeholder Advisory Group that they communicate group decisions to those whom they represent. Failure in this regard will not be viewed as a group deficiency, but rather one of individual irresponsibility. Additional tools will be utilized to the greatest extent possible to foster clear and open communication including use of electronic communication options such as e-mail, web sites and web postings.

Dispute Resolution: Members and representatives shall endeavor to resolve disputes through reasonable discussion and through the adopted decision making process. In the event that a dispute is unresolved by these means the matter shall be declared unresolved and moot and 'laid upon the table' or 'parked', i.e. set aside without resolution or further discussion. A matter 'laid upon the table' can only be reopened by decision of the group.

Meeting Requirements and Logistics: Meetings of the Stakeholder Advisory Group will occur separately from the Working Group as will those of the Subject Matter Action Teams. Recognizing the difficulty and inconvenience of scheduling meetings that all representatives and members can attend, the group intends to conduct much of its work between formal meetings. All groups will communicate by e-mail, phone and other means as needed. To facilitate collaboration and work flow, a public SharePoint site will be provided that is accessible to all members of each group at which documents, discussion, records, decisions and other material can be made freely available.

A summary record and record of decisions will be prepared and distributed within 10 days of each meeting of the Stakeholder Advisory Group and the Working Group.

Code of Conduct: The group, members and representatives declare their commitment to a process that fairly and equitably balances the interests of all participants and the management of white-tailed deer. The group will conduct its business with courtesy and consideration for all views. Members will strive for candid discussion of difficult issues in face-to-face situations. Confrontational public approaches are recognized as generally unproductive to the process.

Members will make every effort to be flexible and open to new ideas and to the input of fellow Members. No extreme positions that would result in dramatic win/lose proposals for the group will be introduced into discussions. Members will fairly represent their own and other's views in their interactions with the media and use the media to advance the progress of successful white-tailed deer management.

Roles and Responsibilities of Sponsor, Team Leader, and Team Members

Sponsor (Division Directors) – The executive(s) in charge. Responsible for final selection of team members, approving charter, acting as spokesperson with SLT, working with Sponsor's Representative to resolve coordination issues, and monitoring team progress.

Sponsor Representative (Paul Schulz) – Person who serves as the liaison to the team from the sponsor. The sponsor representative is the person the team leader goes to when there are issues he/she needs guidance or assistance on. Likewise, if the sponsors have issues with the team, the sponsor representative serves to communicate these issues to the team.

Team Leader (Robert E. Vanderhoof) – Serves as project manager for the team, and is therefore empowered to negotiate project scope, resource allocations, work assignments, and deadlines to ensure the quality and completion of project deliverables. Responsible for managing meeting logistics (notice, set meeting dates, times, and locations), preparing and distributing meeting agenda, meeting facilitation, and coordination of team outputs (reports, briefings, etc.).

SMAT Team Members - Serve as subject matter experts, attend scheduled meetings, and collaborate actively with other team members to produce written proposals and other deliverables.

Working Group Members – Attend scheduled meetings, communicate group decisions to those whom you represent, actively participate in discussions, support group decisions, coordinate SMAT teams and secure additional resources as needed to ensure the completion of product deliverables.

Stakeholder Advisory Group Members - agree to commit the time and resources necessary to fulfill their representative role and to actively solicit and present the views of their interest group.

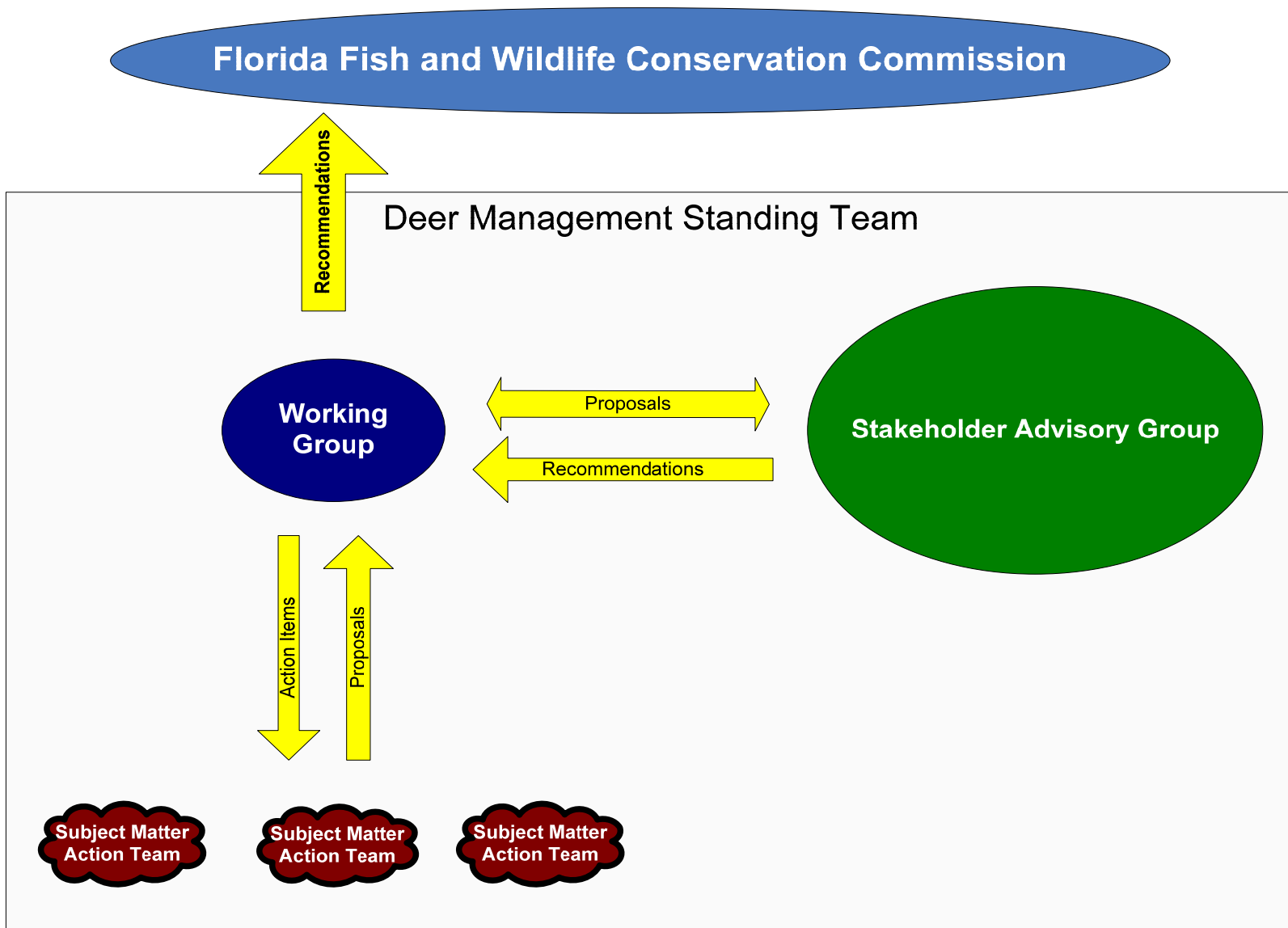


Figure 1. The Deer Management Standing Team entities and relationships.

Initial Team Members (Affiliation):

Estimated average annual time commitment – 150 person days (total)

Working Group:

Mike Abbott (HSC)
Joe Bozzo (HSC)
Mike Brooks (HSC)
John West (LE)
Roland Garcia (OED)
Arlo Kane (HSC)
Susan Weaver (OLP)
Cory Morea (HGM)
Tim O' Meara (FWRI)
Robert Vanderhoof (Group Leader)

Stakeholder Advisory Group:

Members yet to be named

Subject Matter Action Teams:

Membership in this group is *ad hoc* and ephemeral. Teams are action oriented and issue-driven.