Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Wildlife and Heritage Service

Deer Management Permit General Conditions

Introduction: A landowner or agricultural lessee of a farm, orchard, nursery or a designated employee of a farm, orchard, or nursery (who receives a W2 form) may request that the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) investigate severe damage caused by deer for the purpose of having the Department reduce the deer population in the area. An investigation may also be requested for woodland areas that have a forest management plan or planting plan written by a DNR forester or a licensed private consulting forester. Upon receipt of a request for investigation, an investigator will be assigned by the DNR Wildlife and Heritage Service to review the request for eligibility. Factors to be considered include: (a) Type, extent, and severity of damage; (b) Time of year; and (c) Deer population surveys and estimates. Site investigations for the purpose of issuing a Deer Management Permit will be conducted at the discretion of the Service.

Deer Reduction Procedure: If the Service determines that deer population reduction is necessary, the reduction will be accomplished according to the following guidelines:

(1) A Deer Management Permit (DMP) may be issued to a landowner, agricultural lessee, or a designated employee (hereafter referred to as the permittee), who has sustained severe deer damage and economic loss to commercial agricultural crops (row crops, truck crops, pasture), orchard or nursery stock (including Christmas trees). An agricultural lessee or designated employee must secure permission of the landowner before applying for a DMP. Permits may also be issued for damage to woodland areas that have forest management plans or planting plans that have been written by a DNR forester or a licensed private consulting forester.

(2) A permittee may designate individuals to serve as their agents for the purpose of shooting deer under the authority of a DMP. The permittee shall notify the DNR Wildlife and Heritage Service by submitting an agent roster to the Wildlife and Heritage Service DMP contact person. The Department must approve all agents and their names must be listed on the permit. Background checks will be performed for all agents to ensure that they have not been convicted of any Natural Resources violations within the previous two years (see 9 below). Permittees can make modifications to the agent roster by contacting their DNR Wildlife and Heritage Service DMP contact person. **Permittees must provide DNRid numbers for all agents they wish to list on their permit. Most agents will already have a DNRid number, but those that do not can easily obtain one free of charge from a hunting license vendor or online at http://dnr.maryland.gov/service/getdnridcard.asp.**

(3) In order to be valid, each DMP must be signed by the permittee and agent conducting the shooting to indicate that the conditions of the DMP are understood and will be followed. The permittee and all agents must possess a signed copy of the DMP while taking deer under the authority of the permit. The Department may seek to revoke or temporarily suspend the DMP for any violation, fraud, or deceit in obtaining or using the permit.

(4) All permittees and their agents must adhere to the conditions in COMAR Regulation 08.03.04.02: Deer Management Permit Procedures, as described in this document. Any violation of this regulation may result in revocation of the DMP for a two-year period and criminal prosecution, if applicable.

(5) DMP's may be issued for a period not to exceed one year. Each DMP may be renewed annually by request of the permittee following the receipt and review of permittee's Master Confirmation Number Log Sheet.

(6) Each permittee will be authorized to take a specified number of deer under the authority of the DMP.

(7) All deer harvested under the DMP must be registered through the DNR deer and turkey check-in system. The shooter has 24 hours from time of harvest to call 1-888-800-0121 or visit http://gamecheck.dnr.state.md.us or use the smartphone app (http://dnr.maryland.gov/Pages/dnrapp.aspx) to finalize the reporting and receive a confirmation number. The shooter will use their DNRid number, 5-digit permit number, and 3-digit shooter code when checking in the deer.

Unless a confirmation number is obtained at the place of kill, before moving the deer it must be tagged with a shooter-provided tag that indicates DMP number, name, DNRid, date of harvest, and county of harvest. If a confirmation number is obtained at the place of kill, and the deer remains in the shooter's possession until processed for consumption, then a field tag is not required. Deer that have been checked in but do not remain in possession of the shooter (for instance when left with a butcher or given to family or a friend), must be tagged with a field tag that includes the shooter's name and deer confirmation number.

The confirmation number, along with the date, species, and sex, must be recorded on the shooter's log sheet or maintained electronically on a mobile smart device as proof the deer was reported through the DNR check-in system. These records must be available and furnished upon request. Additional log sheets may be photocopied if needed. <u>The confirmation number and relevant information must also be provided to the actual permit holder to be recorded on the DMP Master Log Sheet that is to be returned to the issuing DNR office by March 15 following the expiration date of the permit.</u>

(8) Deer taken under the terms of a DMP must be utilized by the permittee or agents, or donated to others. Permittees are encouraged to donate deer to charitable food programs.

(9) Permittees and agents must meet the legal requirement to possess a Maryland hunting license and firearm. This includes meeting the Maryland Hunter Education and Safety Requirement. Permittees and agents must meet this requirement anytime they are shooting deer under authority of the DMP (within deer season or out of deer season). Individuals that have been convicted of a violation of Natural Resources Article, Title 10, Annotated Code of Maryland, within a 2-year period before the date of the application for the deer management permit are not eligible to receive a DMP or serve as an agent.

(10) A DMP is valid seven days a week.

(11) Permittees and agents may use only those hunting devices that are legal for deer hunting in the location for which the DMP is valid, unless specified otherwise on the permit. Breech loading rifles that use bottleneck cartridges (i.e., .308, 30-06, .270, etc) are not permitted for shooting deer under authority of a DMP in those counties or zones that prohibit these rifles for deer hunting, unless an exception has been made by the county and is noted on the permit. Centerfire rifles that shoot straight-walled cartridges may be used in all counties when harvesting deer under authority of a DMP.

(12) During the deer hunting season, permittees and their agents shooting deer under the authority of a DMP must possess a current, valid Maryland hunting license. Exempt from this requirement are persons allowed to hunt on the property without a license as described by Natural Resources Article Section 10-301 and outlined below:

A resident of Maryland (and their spouse) who owns property and who hunts only on that property. This also applies to: (1) the landowner's children and grandchildren if they are under the age of 16; and (2) the landowner's children and grandchildren, and the spouse of the children or grandchildren, regardless of age, if the child, grandchild, or their spouse, lives on the property, has worked on the property for at least 30 days during the preceding 12 months, or manages the property. Each person must individually qualify under these criteria. To qualify for this exemption a landowner does not need to live on the property but must be able to prove ownership.

A person (and spouse) who: (1) holds land under lease for agricultural purposes (or a sharecropper); and (2) lives on this farmland; and (3) hunts only on this farmland. This also applies to: (1) the lessee's children and grandchildren if they are under the age of 16; and (2) the lessee's children and grandchildren, and their spouses, if the child, grandchild, or spouse of the child or grandchild, lives on the property, has worked on the property for at least 30 days during the preceding 12 months, or manages the property.

A nonresident (and spouse) who owns a contiguous piece of farmland that is in both Virginia and Maryland may hunt on the Maryland portion of his or her property without a Maryland hunting license, if the person's primary residence is on the Virginia portion of the property. This also applies to the owner's children and grandchildren if they are under the age of 16.

A Maryland resident serving in the United States Armed Forces while on official leave in Maryland (whether stationed in Maryland or outside Maryland). You must possess a copy of official leave orders while hunting.

(13) Persons shooting on a DMP will be designated on the permit as either an exempt agent or as a non-exempt agent. Anyone not meeting the requirements below will be listed as a non-exempt agent.

Exempt agents are:

- the permittee, and
- persons who are exempt from the requirement to possess a hunting license for the property for which the DMP has been issued (see #10 above), and
- persons who are employees of the permittee's commercial farming operation (i.e., recipients of federal W-2 forms).

During the firearm and muzzleloader deer hunting seasons in Deer Management Region A, non-exempt agents may only take antlerless deer on the days designated for the taking of antlerless deer. Exempt agents shooting on a valid Deer Management Permit may take antlerless deer during the entire firearm and muzzleloader deer seasons.

(14) All deer taken on DMP's must be antlerless with the following exception. DMP's for antlered deer may be issued to resolve severe damage by buck antler rubbing to nursery or orchard stock. DNR will determine the number of antlered deer to be taken. Permittees must take any antlers with a portion of skull plates attached to DNR for repossession within 10 calendar days of being harvested. Permits for taking antlered deer will be valid for no more than 30 days, or until November 15 of the calendar year for which the permit is issued, whichever comes first.

(15) The holder of a DMP shall not carry a loaded weapon in a vehicle. In addition, the DMP does not authorize an individual holding a DMP to shoot from or across a public road.

(16) Individuals acting under the authority of a DMP may not possess or be under the influence of any alcoholic beverages, narcotics, or controlled dangerous substances while attempting to take deer under the authority of a DMP.

(17) Permittees and agents must wear blaze orange according to Annotated Code of Maryland, Natural Resource Article Section 10-418 anytime they are using a firearm to shoot deer under the authority of a DMP, or when shooting deer under the authority of a DMP with any weapon during the designated deer firearm or muzzleloader seasons.

(18) A permittee or agent may not hunt or shoot at deer within 150 yards of any building or camp occupied by human beings, unless permission is granted by the occupant. This distance is 50 yards when using archery equipment on private land in Allegany, Calvert, Carroll, Cecil, Frederick, Garrett, Harford, Montgomery, St. Mary's, Washington, Wicomico, and Worcester counties, and 100 yards in Anne Arundel County. When operating under the authority of a DMP in Howard County while using archery equipment, the safety zone is also 50 yards. In Harford County, archers must use a tree stand when hunting or shooting between 50 and 100 yards. In Montgomery and Washington counties, archers must be in an elevated position if hunting or shooting between 50 and 100 yards (Annotated Code of Maryland, Natural Resources Article Section 10-410). It is also prohibited to discharge a firearm within 300 yards of a public or nonpublic school. This prohibition only applies during school hours or when the building is occupied. This safety zone does not apply to colleges, universities, or home schools.

(19) A completed and signed Master Copy of the Confirmation Number Log Sheet provided by DNR must be sent to the issuing DNR office no later than March 15 following the expiration date of the permit. This document also serves as your request for a permit renewal.

(20) The State and DNR employees will be held harmless for any accidents or damage that result from the actions of any landowner, agricultural lessee or agents acting under the authority of a DMP.

Appeal Procedure. A person who has applied to the DNR Wildlife and Heritage Service for relief from damage by deer and is denied a DMP has 15 days to file a petition for a hearing with the Director. The Director will render a decision in writing to the complainant within 15 days following the date of the hearing. If the complainant is further aggrieved, they may initiate proceedings for an appeal to Department of Natural Resources Assistant Secretary, Land Resources Service, Tawes State Office Building, Annapolis, Maryland 21401.

(Revised 3/14/24)