2022 Proceedings

46th Annual Meeting

Midwest Deer & Wild Turkey Study Group

Held Jointly with the Southeastern Cervid and Wild Turkey Working Groups

Rock Springs 4-H Ranch Junction City, Kansas August 15-18, 2022



Compiled by Levi Jaster and Kent Fricke Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks





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Background

The Midwest Deer and Wild Turkey Study Group (MDWTSG) meeting is an annual gathering of wildlife managers sanctioned by and affiliated with the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. Primary objectives of the meeting include dissemination of deer and wild turkey management strategies, discussion of emerging or existing issues associated with deer and wild turkey management, and coordination of regional deer and wild turkey management or research efforts. The meeting location rotates among the Midwestern states that are active within the group.

Forums such as the MDWTSG meeting provide valuable opportunities for state deer and turkey biologists to become acquainted with emerging issues and exchange information and ideas related to deer and turkey research and management. The need for state fish and wildlife agencies to establish and maintain deer and turkey biologist positions and support travel of these biologists to the annual MDWTSG meeting is imperative for exchanging information to promote quality wildlife management and research in each state. It is more important than ever that state agencies are at the forefront of issues related to deer and turkey management in order to protect the heritage and recreational opportunities of hunting for future sportsmen and sportswomen.

Meeting Time and Place

The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) hosted the 2022 MDWTSG meeting at the Rock Springs 4-H Ranch near Junction City, Kansas on August 15-18. The MDWTSG appreciates the financial support provided by the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) and the National Deer Association (NDA) and logistical support provided by Jared McJunkin (NWTF).

Executive Summary

After several years of discussion both the Southeast and Midwest Deer and Turkey biologists elected to hold a joint meeting to provide fresh perspectives on topics of concern across the regions. The Tuesday morning session was a joint-session with SEWTWG, SECWG and Midwest Deer and Turkey Study Group (MDTSG). The opening talks served as a welcome to Kansas, habitat and game management at Rock Springs Ranch, as well as an overview of turkey/deer management in the state. This was immediately followed by several invited presentations to close out the morning session on Hunter Recruitment, Retention, and Reactivation.

Welcome to Kansas - Brad Loveless welcomed attendees to Kansas and discussed some of the challenges Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks staff face. Public lands represent a tiny proportion (1.8%) of the available land ownership in the state, second only to Rhode Island. Ever present threats to wildlife in the state centered around CWD, commercialization of wildlife and continued declines in wild turkey populations. All which pose challenges in a state where non-residents generate 75% of license revenue and there is considerable demand from NR hunters. Non-residents represent 35-40% of spring turkey harvest, and continued population declines have led to additional consideration for further season reductions (NR draw).

Rock Springs Ranch Youth Hunts & Habitat Management - Clint Thornton provided an overview of the facilities 730 acres in the Flint Hills and Tall Grass Prairie region of Kansas. He discussed native vegetative community restoration on the property focusing on cedar and woody species removal. The property hosts special youth hunts for turkey and deer each year with great success for young hunters.

Deer and Turkey Management in Kansas - Kent Fricke provided an overview of turkey management in Kansas. He indicated state abundance indices were showing similar trends to other states throughout the country, peaks in the mid-2000s and subsequent declines likely fueled by declining reproduction. Continued declining trends are leading to upcoming regulation change recommendations. Levi Jaster closed out the opening session with an overview of statewide deer management in Kansas. The first modern deer season was held in 1965 with an estimated population of 22,300 white-tailed deer. Now the statewide population is stable to slightly increasing with current harvests estimated around 70-80,000 and population estimates near 750,000.

Invited Speakers - Scott Taylor (Pheasants Forever), the National Wild Pheasant Conservation Plan Coordinator, provided an overview of AFWA's Small Game R3 Assessment. Matt Knox (VA) presented Rearranging the Deck Chairs on the Titanic, an overview of deer hunter declines over a 30+ year career in Virginia. Hank Forester (National Deer Association) presented on the Southeast Deer Partnership and R3 Efforts. Chris Chizinski (NE) gave a detailed presentation on hunter demographics in Nebraska. Nicholas Cole (USGS) and Brad Milley (USFWS) closed out the morning presentations by providing an introduction on Change Theory in the context of

managing CWD. The morning finished with a panel discussion that generated good discussion on how to reconcile increasing participation on public lands while simultaneously dealing with potential limited access as well as other ways to appeal to minority groups with R3 efforts.

Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning were breakout sessions for deer and turkey representatives. Deer breakout session topics included Change Theory, Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD - communication, surveillance, management and research) and disparities in deer abundance, hunter numbers, and hunting opportunities. Turkey breakout session topics included summaries of regional turkey research and conservation efforts, declining production and abundance, habitat management funding, harvest management, and upcoming or in progress research projects. Presenters included invited speakers representing state agencies, NGOs, academic institutions, and federal agencies followed by group discussions.

Business Meeting

Meeting Funds

- Funds held by NWTF
- No issues raised from members with NWTF holding funds

State Reports

• Reminder to send in state reports to Kent and Levi

Meeting Report

• Will be summarized and finalized by Levi and Kent, Kansas

Storage of past reports and documents

- Everyone is satisfied with documents being stored by University of Wisconsin 2023 Meeting Host
 - North Dakota will host
 - Planned for Medora in late September

Director Action Items

There are no director action items.

Director Information Items

Periodic joint meetings between adjoining regional cervid and wild turkey working groups will further information sharing and coordination efforts of all participating states.

Time and Place of Next Meeting

The 2023 MDWTSG annual meeting will be hosted by the North Dakota Game and Fish Department, in Medora, North Dakota on September 25-28, 2023 at the Rough Riders Hotel and Conference Center.

Appendix 1: Meeting Agenda



Joint Meeting of the Midwest Deer and Wild Turkey Study Group and Southeast Cervid and Wild Turkey Working Groups

August 15-18, 2022 | Rock Springs Ranch Junction City, Kansas

Agenda

Monday, August 15	
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5:00-9:00	Dinner on Your Own Arrival and Check-in Light Evening Social	Leadership Lodge	
Tuesday, August 16			
7:00-8:30	Breakfast	Cafeteria	
8:30-9:00	Welcome, Introductions, Announcements Heritage Hall Welcome to Kansas Brad Loveless, KDWP Secretary Rock Springs Ranch Youth Hunts & Habitat Management Clint Thornton Deer and Turkey Management in Kansas Levi Jaster & Kent Fricke		
9:00-10:15	Joint Meeting-Hunter Recruitment, Retention, and Reactivation AFWA's Small Game R3 Assessment Scott Taylor, Pheasants Forever Rearranging the Deck Chairs on the Titanic Matt Knox, Virginia Southeast Deer Partnership, R3 Efforts Hank Forester, National Deer Assoc.		
10:15-10:30	Break		
10:30-12:00	Joint Meeting-Hunter Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation Who is hunting Nebraska's turkeys? Chris Chizinski, University of Nebraska Theory of Change Nicholas Cole, USGS and Brad Milley, USFWS Panel Discussion		
12:00-1:30	Lunch	Cafeteria	
1:30-3:30	Breakout Meetings Deer Turkey	Heritage Hall A Heritage Hall B	
3:30-4:00	Break		

4:00-5:00	Business Meetings Midwest Deer and Turkey Southeast Cervid Southeast Turkey NWIF	Heritage Hall A Heritage Hall B1 Heritage Hall B2 Heritage Hall C		
6:00-9:00	Catered Dinner and Social	Cafeteria Green Space		
Wednesday, Augu	nst 17			
7:00-8:30	Breakfast	Cafeteria		
8:30-12:00	Breakout Meetings Deer Turkey	Heritage Hall A Heritage Hall B		
12:00-1:30	Lunch	Cafeteria		
1:30-5:00	Breakout Meetings Deer Turkey	Heritage Hall A Heritage Hall B		
6:00-9:00	BBQ Dinner and Social	Cafeteria Green Space		
Thursday, August 18				
7:00-8:30	Breakfast	Cafeteria		
7:00-9:00	Departure			



Joint Meeting of the Midwest Deer and Wild Turkey Study Group and Southeast Cervid and Wild Turkey Working Groups

August 15-18, 2022 | Rock Springs Ranch Junction City, Kansas

Deer Breakout Agenda Heritage Hall A

Tuesday, August 16

1:30-3:30 Theory of Change - Antlerless Harvest

Nicholas Cole, USGS & Brad Milley, USFWS

Wednesday, August 17

8:30-10:00 Chronic Wasting Disease - Communications & Surveillance

- Kansas CWD Messaging Campaign | Levi Jaster, Kansas
- Iowa CWD Ambassador Program | Tyler Harms, Iowa
- Michigan Surveillance Program | Chad Stewart, Michigan
- Panel Discussion

10:00-10:30 Break

10:30-12:00 Chronic Wasting Disease - Management & Research

- 20 Years of CWD Management | Daniel Skinner, Illinois
- Iowa Incentivized Harvest Program | Tyler Harms, Iowa
- Contact Rates Around Bait Sites | Samantha Courtney, Michigan State
- Panel Discussion

12:00-1:30 Lunch

1:30-3:00 Disparities in deer abundance, hunter numbers, and hunting opportunities

- Midwest and Southeast Similarities and Differences | Kip Adams, NDA
- · Suburban Deer Population Response to Culling | Dwayne Etter, Michigan
- Panel Discussion

3:00-3:30 Break

3:30-5:00 Disparities in deer abundance, hunter numbers, and hunting opportunities (cont.)

- Virginia's 2nd Buck Permit | Matt Knox, Virginia
- Kansas Hunting Access Programs | Wes Sowards, Kansas
- Panel Discussion



Joint Meeting of the Midwest Deer and Wild Turkey Study Group and Southeast Cervid and Wild Turkey Working Groups

August 15-18, 2022 | Rock Springs Ranch Junction City, Kansas

Turkey Breakout Agenda Heritage Hall B

Tuesday, August 16

1:30-3:30 Overview,

Overview, 12th National Wild Turkey Symposium | Kent Fricke, Jeremy Wood Southeastern Turkey Research Synthesis | Jeremy Wood Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza | Dave Stallknecht, SCWDS National Wild Turkey Federation Update | Mark Hatfield Hunter Safety Task Force Update | Jim Coffey, Jay Cantrell

Wednesday, August 17

8:30-10:00

Low production and associated declines in abundance

- Predator control approaches | Jeremy Wood, Emily Rushton, Kent Fricke
- Monitoring productivity and recruitment in Wisconsin | Chris Pollentier
- Panel discussion

10:00-10:30 Break

10:30-12:00 Habitat funding approaches

- Mandatory (FL Stamp, SC Tags) | Buddy Welch, Jay Cantrell, Ricky Lackey
- Voluntary (AR Stamp) | Jeremy Wood
- Panel discussion

12:00-1:30 Lunch

1:30-3:00 Harvest management approaches

- State turkey management plans | Roger Shields, Amy Silvano
- Turkey harvest strategies and frameworks | Adam Butler, Kent Fricke
- Panel discussion

3:00-3:30 Break

3:30-5:00 In-Progress and Upcoming Research Projects

- Missouri, Iowa, Tennessee, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Mississippi, Alabama, Texas
- Poult capture

Appendix 2: Attendance List

First Name	Last Name	Agency	Email
Chris	Cook	AL Division of Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries	Chris.Cook@dcnr.alabama.gov
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Appendix 3: Meeting Dates and Location HistoryHistorical host state, location and dates for MDWTSG annual meetings.

Year	State	Location	Date
1977	Missouri	Fountain Grove Wildlife Area	January 17-19
1978	Wisconsin	Wyalusing State Park	January 16-17
1979	Iowa	Rathburn Fish Hatchery	January 15-18
1980	Minnesota	Whitewater State Park	January 21-24
1981	Indiana	Harrison-Crawford State Park	January 19-22
1982	Ohio	Lake Hope State Park	January 18-21
1983	Nebraska	Louisbille 4-H Camp	January 17-21
1984	Kansas	Camp Aldrich	January 16-19
1985	South Dakota	Black Hills	May 7-10
1986	North Dakota	Camp-of-the-Cross	January 20-23
1987	Michigan	Kellogg Biological Station	January 27-29
1988	Illinois	Touch of Nature	February 1-4
1989	Missouri	YMCA Camp of the Ozarks	January 23-26
1990	Wisconsin	Bethel Horizons Prairie Center	January 15-18
1991	Iowa	Conservation Education Center	January 14-17
1992	Minnesota	Whitewater State Park	January 13-16
1993	Indiana	Harrison-Crawford State Park	January 11-14
1994	Ohio	Canter's Cave 4-H Park	January 30-February 2
1995	Nebraska	Mahoney State Park	January 15-18
1996	Kansas	Camp Pecusa	January 14-16
1997	South Dakota	Camp NeSoDak	August 24-27
1998	North Dakota	Camp Grafton	August 9-12
1999	Ontario	Blue Springs Scout Reserve	August 15-18
2000	Michigan	Thunder Bay Resort	August 20-23
2001	Illinois	Dixon Springs Ag. Station	August 19-22
2002	Missouri	Conception Abbey	August 18-21
2003	Wisconsin	Bethel Horizons Prairie Center	August 24-27
2004	Iowa	Conservation Education Center	August 22-25
2005	Minnesota	Eagle Bluff Envir. Learning Center	August 21-24
2006	Indiana	Camp Ransburg, BSA	August 20-23
2007	Ohio	Canter's Cave 4-H Park	August 19-22
2008	Nebraska	Fort Robinson State Park	September 14-17
2009	Kansas	Rock Springs 4-H Camp	September 14-17
2010	North Dakota	Camp Grafton	August 22-25
2011	Michigan	Ralph A. MacMullen Center	September 25-28
2012	South Dakota	Custer State Park	October 16-19

2013	Illinois	Allerton Park	August 18-21
2014	Missouri	YMCA Camp of the Ozarks	September 45181
2015	Wisconsin	Perlstein Conference Center	September 8-11
2016	Kentucky	General Butler State Resort Park	August 22-25
2017	Iowa	Honey Creek State Park Resort	August 28-31
2018	Minnesota	Camp Ripley	August 27-30
2019	Indiana	Brown County State Park	August 12-14
2020	Ohio	Virtual	August 18
2021	Nebraska	Virtual	August 18
2022	Kansas	Rock Springs 4-H Camp	August 15-18