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MANAGED LANDS DEER PERMITS MULE DEER PROGRAM INFORMATION 2011–2012

- The Managed Lands Deer Permit (MLDP) program for mule deer provides landowners involved in a formal management program with the State's most flexible season.
- The MLDP program is incentive based and habitat focused.
 - The incentive for participating landowners is an extended hunting season: **November 5, 2011 through January 1, 2012.**
 - The MLDP program for mule deer focuses on sound population management and active habitat improvement, not only for mule deer, but also for a broad spectrum of wildlife species.
 - Although numerous management practices are effective in increasing deer numbers (e.g., predator control, supplemental feeding, etc.), this program focuses on improving habitat conditions over the long-term that result in soil and water conservation, improved rangeland condition, and greater wildlife diversity.
- Participation in the MLDP program requires a written Wildlife Management Plan (WMP) approved by a Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) Biologist or Technician.
 - A TPWD Biologist or Technician, a landowner, or a landowner's designated agent may prepare the WMP.
 - A WMP prepared by a landowner or an agent must be in a format approved by TPWD and submitted to TPWD for approval.
 - Permits will not be issued unless the WMP has been approved.
- There is no fee or written application, other than the WMP, for the MLDP program. Landowners or their designated agents should contact their local TPWD Wildlife Biologist/Technician for information about the MLDP program or assistance with a WMP.
- New applicants who request participation in the mule deer MLDP program by August 15 will have their request approved/denied by November 1 of the same year.
- Permit requests received after August 15 will be processed as time permits, but may not be processed until the following year.
- Permits are issued by the TPWD Biologist/Technician, through the Texas Wildlife Information and Management System (TWIMS). Permits will be mailed out of Austin after a TPWD biologist enters or modifies a harvest recommendation in the database. Therefore, proper planning is required for one to receive permits by the time they are needed.
- Permits are valid only for the specific property for which they were issued.
- An approved WMP will include the following:

Harvest Recommendation: Annual harvest recommendations for bucks and/or antlerless mule deer will be provided. Recommendations will be based on survey results, harvest data, and landowner goals.

- The annual harvest recommendation will determine the number of permits to be issued and will establish the maximum harvest for the property.
- If permits are issued after the start of mule deer season, all mule deer harvested prior to permit issuance must be counted towards the harvest quota.
- Subsequent survey data may indicate a need to amend the harvest recommendation, which could result in a supplemental issuance of MLDPs.

Implementation of at Least 3 Habitat Management Practices Selected From Attachment A: Any additional habitat management practices not listed will be considered on a case by case basis. Management practices may only be counted once regardless if beneficial in more than one major category.

- Habitat management practices specified in the WMP must be accomplished within 3 years of initial permit issuance.
- The habitat management practices must maintain the habitat in an acceptable or improving condition.
- Periodic on-site evaluations will be conducted by TPWD to assess habitat condition and management plan progress.
- In the event that unforeseeable developments such as floods, droughts, or other natural disasters make the attainment of recommended habitat management practices impractical or impossible, the department may, on a case-by-case basis, postpone the requirements of this section.

Data Requirements:

- **Population Data:**
 - Mule deer population data for the current year and 2 preceding years.
 - Acceptable scientific survey techniques must be employed and approved by TPWD.
 - Annual fall surveys must be completed prior to total permit issuance. However, if the fall survey has not been completed, but the WMP is otherwise complete and approved, up to 30% of the anticipated number of permits may be issued before the surveys are completed.
 - Post-hunt aerial surveys (accompanied by sufficient herd composition data collected in the fall) will be accepted until March 15 for use during the following season.
- **Harvest Data:**
 - Mule deer harvest data from the 2 preceding years to include: number and sex of mule deer harvested, age, weight, and antler data (right-beam circumference, main beam length, antler spread, and number of points-left and right).
 - Harvest data must be submitted to a TPWD Biologist/Technician by **February 1, 2012**.

- Providing reliable harvest data, including accurate ages as determined by tooth wear and replacement, is a requirement for program participation. A suggestion for untrained individuals is to remove and label one jawbone from every deer harvested for a wildlife biologist to age at a later date. Jawbones must be labeled in such a way that the biologist can identify the deer on the data sheet (e.g., Deer #1). *For more information on the deer-aging technique, please visit:*

http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/publications/pwdpubs/media/pwd_bk_w7000_0755.pdf

- Once permits are issued, all mule deer harvested on that property must be tagged with the appropriate MLDP. **Completion of the hunting license log and use of a hunting license tag are not required for deer harvested under the authority of a MLDP.**
 - All deer harvested under the authority of a MLDP must be tagged with a MLDP immediately by the person who killed the deer, or the person who killed the deer shall immediately take the carcass by the most direct route to a tagging station (location where permits are maintained on the permitted property) where an appropriate MLDP shall be attached.
 - A properly executed MLD Permit meets “proof-of-sex” requirements.
- If a landowner/agent receives MLDPs prior to the beginning of hunting season and subsequently decides not to participate in the program, they must return all permits prior to the opening day of the extended season. **After the extended season begins, landowners are required to comply with the permit issuance.**
- **Non-Compliance:**
 - The department reserves the right to deny further issuance of MLD permits to a landowner who exceeds the harvest quota specified by the WMP or who does not otherwise abide by the WMP.
 - Failure to submit harvest data by the assigned deadline constitutes noncompliance.
 - A property for which the department denies further permit issuance under this subsection is ineligible to receive MLD permits for a period of three years from the date of denial.
 - **Should permits be denied, there is a formal review process that a landowner or agent can pursue. Appeals must be received by TPWD within 10 working days of the applicant receiving MLDP denial notification.**

For Additional Information:

On Wildlife Management Plans and/or Managed Lands Deer Permits, please contact the nearest TPWD Biologist or Technician through the following web page:

http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/land/technical_guidance/biologists/



ATTACHMENT A

ACCEPTABLE HABITAT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES MULE DEER MLDP PROGRAM

Rangeland Restoration:

1. Prescribed Fire (promote warm-season, perennial bunchgrasses and control undesirable exotic plants and invasive woody species; long-term burning plan is recommended)
2. Brush Management (herbicidal/mechanical control of undesirable woody plants such as mesquite, juniper, creosote, and tarbush to benefit forbs, grasses, and desirable woody species)
3. Grassland Restoration (use aeration, disking, contour ripping or other practices to reduce woody plant competition and/or improve rainfall infiltration—may include range reseeding of native grasses or grass/forb mix)
4. Exotic Plant Control (e.g., Tamarisk, African or desert Rue-Peganum harmala-Caltrop family)
5. Riparian Management (fence along riparian areas to control timing and duration of livestock grazing and/or plant native trees and shrubs (native cottonwood, willow, hackberry, walnut) to improve wildlife habitat and stabilize stream banks)

Soil and Water Conservation:

1. Erosion Control (construct berms and header/spreader dams to slow water runoff and gradually repair erosive gulleys with rip-rap, anchored hay bales, or other erosion-control techniques)
2. Water Conservation (construct berms, dams, and earthen tanks and promote growth of perennial bunchgrasses to reduce runoff)
3. Water Development for Wildlife (improve water distribution as appropriate, modify troughs and drinkers to make them wildlife-friendly, create and maintain trough or windmill overflows, create earthen tanks)
4. Spring Enhancement (fencing to protect springs and seeps from livestock trampling and control of excessive woody plant densities at springheads to promote increased water flows)

Grazing Management:

1. Livestock grazing deferment (total ranch rest to increase wildlife food and cover)
2. Rest-rotation livestock grazing (periodic rest of each pasture)
3. Proper stocking rates (to improve wildlife food and cover)
4. Appropriate grazing system (e.g., winter stockers)
5. Appropriate class of grazing animal (to match available range resources and wildlife goals)
6. Netwire-fence modifications (to improve herd movements of pronghorn and/or bighorn)

Population Management:

1. Control exotic animals as appropriate (to reduce competition with native wildlife)