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BEFORE THE PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE
GAME & FISHERIES COMMITTEE

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IN RE: DEER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
PUBLIC MEETING

BEFORE: MARTIN T. CAUSER, Co-Chair
GARY HALUSKA, Co-Chair
David Maloney, Member
Scott Hutchinson, Member
Justin Leventry, Member
Dan Moul, Member
Greg Raffensperger, Member
Steve McMullen, Member
Debora Kula, Member

HEARING: Thursday, April 25, 2013
5:59 p.m.

LOCATION: Coudersport Volunteer Fire
Department
171 Route 6 West
Coudersport, PA 16915

Reporter: Rhonda K. Thorpe

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1 WITNESSES: Gary Moore, Ned Karger,
2 Randy Santucci, Carl Roe,
3 Ron Cramer, Phil Wagner,
4 Rocco Camas, Mike Farzier,
5 Keith Kennedy, Bill Boyland, Bill Moretti, John
6 Temoshenko

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CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Good evening, everyone, and welcome. I'd like to call this meeting of the House Game & Fisheries Committee to order. This is a public hearing on the deer management program, and we start every Game & Fisheries Committee meeting with a Pledge of Allegiance. So if you'd join me in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE RECITED

CHAIRMAN CAUSER: I would like to again thank all of you for coming. I do want to say, first and foremost, thank you to the Coudersport Volunteer Fire Department for opening their facility for us to use this evening.

This is a very important topic, and it's a topic that we, as legislators, have heard a lot about. One of the first things that I've said when becoming Majority Chairman of the committee is that we're going to take a close look at the deer management program and look at all the details of it, and so this is the first hearing that we're having in that regard. The first action, I'll turn it over to Chairman Haluska for comments.

CHAIRMAN HALUSKA:

Thank you, Marty. Thanks for coming out, everybody. I've been on the Committee for about 19 years. I've been through a number of hearings on the deer management program,

1 the elk, black bear, and everything else. So it's good to hear
2 the input from everybody that comes, especially the public
3 comment period at the end after you listen to all the
4 testimony. So we appreciate you coming out tonight. And
5 obviously, Marty and I chair the Committee together. I'm the
6 Democratic chair, he's the Republican chair. So we want to get
7 your input. A lot of things that come through the committee
8 obviously affect the Game Commission and Fish Commission. So
9 we appreciate your comments.

10 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you, Gary. First I'd like
11 to have the members introduce themselves, and I'll start to my
12 left with Representative Maloney.

13 MR. MALONEY: Dave Maloney, Berks County,
14 Legislative District 130. Thank you.

15 MR. HUTCHINSON: Hello, my name is Scott Hutchinson,
16 and I'm actually a State Senator, former House member, but I am
17 particularly pleased to be here. I'm going to thank
18 Representative Causer for inviting me.

19 I'd like to say that as a legislator from the Laurel
20 area, I have a particular place in my heart for places that are
21 west of Harrisburg and north of Interstate 80. This is God's
22 country, and it's like my district, and so I'm very happy to be
23 here and hear your input, and look forward to working with the
24 representatives and my colleagues in the Senate as we talk
25 about these issues going forward.

1 So thank you, Representative Causer, for bringing
2 this hearing to this neck of the woods. Thank you.

3 MR. LEVENTRY: I'm Justin Leventry with Senator
4 Hutchinson's office.

5 MR. MOUL: Good evening, everyone. I'm
6 Representative Dan Moul from Adams County. It's easier if I
7 just say Gettysburg. Everyone seems to know where Gettysburg's
8 located. I will tell you it's the first time in Coudersport.
9 And I will tell you I've been in town for an hour. You have a
10 beautiful little town. I can't wait to explore it and some of
11 your fine establishments here. But I'm very pleased to be out
12 here tonight. Thank you.

13 MR. RAFFENSPERGER: I'm Greg Raffensperger. I'm the
14 majority executive director of the Committee.

15 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: As I said before, Marty Causer,
16 majority chairman.

17 CHAIRMAN HALUSKA: Gary Haluska, the Democratic
18 chairman. I live in Cambria County.

19 MR. MCMULLEN: Steve McMullen, Democratic executive
20 director.

21 MS. KULA: Deborah Kula, Fayette and Westmoreland
22 County. It's great to be here.

23 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: I want to thank all the members
24 for travelling from near and far to be here with us this
25 evening. As I said before, this is a very important topic, and

1 it's really a fact finding mission. We're here tonight to
2 gather information, to gather information from the people
3 testifying, the organizations testifying and also to get
4 information from the sportsmen, from all of you.

5 So I'm looking forward to the information that's
6 presented tonight. It helps the Game & Fisheries Committee a
7 great deal. So now we'll move to our first testifier, and
8 that's going to be Mr. Gary Moore. He's director of
9 legislative affairs with the Pennsylvania Federation of
10 Sportsmen's clubs. And Gary, welcome, and you're welcome to
11 proceed.

12 MR. MOORE: Good evening, Chairman Causer, Chairman
13 Haluska and members of the House Game & Fisheries Committee,
14 and also good evening to Senator Hutchinson. My name is Gary
15 Moore, director of programs and legislative affairs for the
16 Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs. It's a well
17 known conservational organization that was established in 1932.
18 Today membership is comprised of 225 clubs, five state-wide
19 groups, and represents more than 70,000 individuals.

20 Thank you for the invitation to provide testimony
21 about the Pennsylvania deer management program. Deer hunting
22 and camp usage are both directly affected by this process,
23 which has created an emotional uproar. No one rightly accepts
24 change, especially when deep-rooted traditions are involved.

25 Contention is expressed amongst sportsmen and women

1 with respect to deer population densities being at low levels
2 in some parts of the state. The current program seems to be
3 progressing in the right direction, but many have become
4 impatient. Modifications are being made to the program areas
5 where the habitat can support more deer. However, some areas
6 will never be able to rebound to historical population levels.
7 Concerns and views of the hunters need to be heard and thusly
8 implemented when they complement the program.

9 In 2005, the Pennsylvania Game Commission began
10 reducing deer numbers because deer health, habitat quality, and
11 deer/human conflicts were at unacceptable levels. Deer
12 populations in some parts of Pennsylvania were clearly reaching
13 the upper limits of the carrying capacity and in some instances
14 have exceeded that value. Only a reasonable number of wild
15 animals can occupy a particular ecosystem without upsetting the
16 balance.

17 Pennsylvania's hunters are fortunate to have an
18 agency dedicated to and responsible for the management of all
19 wild bird and wild mammals. The Pennsylvania Game commission
20 is responsible for this very complicated task. Much effort and
21 care was expended before any deer herd reduction measures were
22 finalized. The initial parameters of the deer management plan
23 and subsequent modifications have produced a relatively stable
24 population in most areas over the past five years.

25 Many tools and techniques are employed by the

1 Pennsylvania Game Commission to achieve the desired goals of
2 the deer management program. Atlas (phonetic) program
3 allocations, demount, red tags, antler restrictions and season
4 length primarily control the pathway of success. These
5 important management tools should never be mandated through
6 legislative initiatives.

7 Weather, predators, CWD, and EHD further complicate
8 the objectives. The basics of deer management include sound
9 science, historical data and experience, as well as many social
10 aspects. An extensive amount of information must be acquired,
11 assembled and analyzed on an annual basis to achieve a high
12 degree of proficiency.

13 Pennsylvania hunters should be encouraged that the
14 Pennsylvania Game Commission developed a deer management
15 program with an adaptive style. This displays an understanding
16 and willingness to modify certain parameters as time passes in
17 order to accomplish and maintain a satisfactory balance.
18 Emphasis was made by the Pennsylvania Game commission that this
19 program would be an evolving process, and everyone knew that
20 would not be free of imperfections. All of us recognize the
21 dynamics that are associated with each and every
22 accomplishment. Improved deer health, habitat, regeneration
23 and hunter success should be realized in most locations within
24 a few additional years of fine tuning.

25 The Wildlife Management Institute completed an

1 in-depth review of Pennsylvania's deer management plan and
2 produced a report in February of 2010 for the Pennsylvania
3 Legislative Budget Finance Committee. The components and
4 models used to guide Pennsylvania's deer management program
5 were endorsed by this exercise.

6 In addition, Pennsylvania's game management
7 initiatives are well-known and many have been adopted by other
8 states. A skillful blend of science --- that's wildlife
9 science --- and art in relation to dynamic human circumstances,
10 values and expectations is how the Institute defines wildlife
11 management.

12 While we may not all like it, the majority of our
13 members understand the need for proper deer management. Firm
14 and repetitive explanations are essential when an individual's
15 emotional world is abruptly invaded. Hunters must make a
16 sincere effort to understand all parts of this management
17 program, and acquire some knowledge about wildlife management
18 techniques and communicate with the Pennsylvania Game
19 Commission in a constructive way.

20 No one should hesitate to challenge an agency when
21 the best management practices are not employed, but when
22 certain forms of the program are not easily reconciled. An
23 orderly exchange of information usually occurs with an
24 understanding that's been developed at the start of a
25 conversation.

1 It's very important to establish that beginning
2 framework, which is known as a common ground. The outreach
3 program of the Pennsylvania Game Commission must continue with
4 a strong emphasis directed towards deer management,
5 easy-to-read materials that fully explain the successes and
6 shortcomings that may reduce some of the confusion and
7 animosity. The opinions and concerns of all citizens must be
8 addressed. This does add value to the management plan that
9 should be incorporated.

10 In closing, I leave you with excerpts from a recent
11 comment made by a Federation member, and they are: I think
12 that a culture was created in this state to have little regard
13 for the big picture and focus solely on making hunters happy.
14 Yes, there are social issues to be considered here, but so many
15 miss out on so much out there with their deer blinders on. If
16 time permits, I would be happy to take questions from the
17 committee. Again, thank you for the opportunity to present
18 testimony at this hearing.

19 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you. Thank you, Gary. We
20 will turn to questions. Are there questions by the members?
21 Representative Kula?

22 MS. KULA: In listening to your testimony, what do
23 you think the Game commission should do better? I mean can you
24 be specific?

25 MR. MOORE: As far as the wildlife techniques, I

1 think the Game Commission has all the tools that are necessary
2 to produce a very good deer management program. I think the
3 habitat has received degradation in certain areas, and there
4 has to be time for that to regenerate.

5 MS. KULA: And the deer management program has been
6 in effect for how many years now? I mean, the program that
7 we're currently under.

8 MR. MOORE: Probably close to ten years, eight to
9 ten years.

10 MS. KULA: Okay. And so how much longer is it going
11 to take to regenerate enough to kind of satisfy the hunters and
12 bring back the deer? I know in my area, that's what I hear
13 every day. There are no deer.

14 MR. MOORE: I'm not a wildlife expert. I did take
15 wildlife management as college curriculum. I have not
16 practiced it because I was in a law enforcement position before
17 retirement. But there are tow case studies --- nobody's going
18 to want to hear the years, but between 20 and 30 years. One
19 was in Arizona and the other one was in Wisconsin.

20 MS. KULA: And how many members of the Federation
21 are there? Do you know that?

22 MR. MOORE: 70,000, approximately 70,000.

23 MS. KULA: Are there any other specifics that you
24 think that the Game commission --- I mean that you see in your
25 history of dealing with wildlife?

1 MR. MOORE: From my position, I think the Wildlife
2 Management Institute endorsement of the Game Commission's
3 program --- they pretty much endorsed the entire program. I
4 think that's a lot of credibility to the Game Commission.

5 MS. KULA: Okay.

6 MR. MOORE: It takes a while for the habitat to
7 rebound and then get the population numbers back to some
8 semblance of where they were. But some of these areas are
9 never going to have the numbers that were there previous
10 because they exceeded the capacity or they're very close to the
11 carrying capacity.

12 MS. KULA: Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you, Representative Kula.
14 Additional questions? Senator Hutchinson?

15 MR. HUTCHINSON: I guess I'm sort of following up on
16 Representative Kula's --- you said 70,000 members. Does your
17 membership --- have they taken a formal position on whether
18 they support the current management of deer by the Game
19 Commission, or do they not take formal positions on things like
20 that?

21 MR. MOORE: The Membership does take formal
22 positions. There's not a formal position that I know of in the
23 last year or so that they continued to discuss the deer
24 management program at conventions and in the monthly club
25 meetings. And by and large, there's support for what the

1 Pennsylvania Fish & boat --- the Pennsylvania Game Commission
2 is pursuing, or the process that they're pursuing.

3 MR. HUTCHINSON: Do you ever hear from members
4 saying they don't want --- they don't like it --- or they're
5 complaining about deer numbers, et cetera?

6 MR. MOORE: We do hear that. They are not the
7 majority.

8 MR. HUTCHINSON: Thank you.

9 MR. MOORE: Let me add one other thing, too. It all
10 depends on what area of the state the membership is coming from
11 also. Some wildlife management units receive a lot more
12 attention with low numbers in discussions than others do.

13 MR. HUTCHINSON: I guess just one that springs to my
14 mind, one other comment or question that ---. Has your
15 organization ever thought about the management --- wildlife
16 management units themselves, the size, the way they're managed?
17 I mean, maybe that --- the size of them, I've heard people say
18 they're too big, they can't be making a decision out of
19 Harrisburg for these large swaths of land that are varied in
20 vegetation and forests, that that's not the best way to go. Do
21 you ever hear things or comments along those lines?

22 MR. MOORE: It is easier to manage a population of
23 wildlife as long as the habitat is very similar and in almost
24 equal state. The more variety you have in the wildlife
25 management unit, the more difficult it is going to be or is to

1 manage that population of whitetail deer.

2 MR. HUTCHINSON: All right. That's all I have.

3 Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you, Senator Hutchinson.
5 Representative Moul?

6 MR. MOUL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Gary
7 for your testimony. In your opinion --- and this is strictly
8 in your opinion --- how do we strike a balance between the
9 socioeconomic needs of a community and deer health? And the
10 reason I go to that is if we don't have wildlife for our youth
11 hunters to go after, they're going to get bored and not become
12 hunters. And I think that's something that we have to look at.

13 I mean if you look in this crowd today, I'd say the
14 average age in here is well above 40. No offense to the
15 audience, but --- I'm not going to say a number. Just above
16 40. And you know, I don't want it to become an issue. I mean,
17 it's probably already an issue. I'm just asking your opinion.

18 Where do we strike that balance of what the
19 community needs, getting youth involved, and deer health? How
20 would you strike that balance?

21 MR. MOORE: That is a difficult task, but it's one
22 that needs to occur.

23 MR. MOUL: I'm going to ask the same question to
24 PDP, by the way.

25 MR. MOORE: It's one that needs to occur in my

1 opinion. The social aspects that are deep rooted in tradition,
2 hunting camps and deer hunting in particular that we're talking
3 about this evening. The management needs to be sound by
4 science. But there also needs to be incorporation of the
5 social aspects with that management plan. And however the
6 social aspects can be intertwined in the management plan, that
7 needs to be incorporated. And I don't know how --- you don't
8 do it easily. You don't do that easily.

9 MR. MOUL: If it was easy, this would've been fixed
10 ten years ago. I get that. But I've been in the House now for
11 seven --- this is my seventh year, and fortunately from where
12 I'm from, this isn't nearly as big an issue as it is upstate.
13 But I have been hearing it all seven years. And I do
14 understand there's management that needs to be done.

15 But we also have other aspects, and you know, they
16 soon got to play a part in this so that we can keep the youth
17 involved and keep the economic impact coming, you know, or
18 regaining. So those are some different ingredients, and I
19 think we need to make sure that all the ingredients are in the
20 kettle when we cook.

21 MR. MOORE: The definition that the Wildlife
22 Management Institute uses addresses the social aspects. Okay?
23 There's the biology, there's the science, and there's also the
24 the social aspect. That's what needs to be worked into place.
25 I'm not necessarily saying that's the Game commission's

1 responsibility. The group, you know, population --- group
2 decisions need to be made. Brainstorming sessions.

3 MR. MOUL: Okay. Thank you. I appreciate your
4 answer.

5 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you, Representative. We've
6 also been joined by Representative Matt Gabler from Elk and
7 Clearfield counties. Thank you, Matt, for joining us tonight.

8 MR. GABLER: Thank you, Chairman. Glad to be here.

9 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Gary, I wanted to ask you a
10 question. It's pretty broad, actually. To summarize your
11 testimony, it appears --- it definitely appears that you think
12 the Game Commission's deer management plan is on the right
13 track. And I planned this hearing in Potter County because
14 this is an area that I hear a lot from of people about the deer
15 management program. We're sitting here in area 2G. And a lot
16 of hunters in area 2G complain about the deer herd. And I hear
17 a lot about DMAPs. And since we have a lot of state forest
18 land, can you talk about what the Federation thinks about, you
19 know, the DMAP situation? Do you think that's working
20 effectively? Do you think we should continue tin the same
21 track with DMAPs?

22 MR. MOORE: I don't know that I can answer the
23 Federation's position on that other than they support the
24 program that's in place by the Game commission and understand
25 that there has to be modifications made to it as time changes.

1 DMAPs used properly should not be an issue, and raised red
2 tags. You know, to balance --- where that balance is is --- I
3 think is what's up for debate.

4 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: And I can certainly ask the Game
5 Commission that. Just trying to get to the bottom of where
6 your organization falls. And basically looking at the whole
7 program, you think it's on the right track as far as.

8 MR. MOORE: As far as the science that I learned
9 whenever I was in college, what I've seen. I haven't practiced
10 wildlife management when I graduated. But knowing what I know
11 about wildlife management, it looks to be a very sound process.

12 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: We've got to keep order in the
13 room. There's going to be an opportunity for public comment.
14 But we've got to try to keep order in the room. I appreciate
15 your testimony and I appreciate you answering these questions.
16 And thank you for your testimony.

17 MR. MOORE: Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Sorry, Gary, there's one more
19 question by Representative Maloney.

20 MR. MALONEY: Thanks, Gary. I apologize. I know
21 you --- I had a few questions. I think, first of all, Gary, I
22 guess a couple things. You must have changed --- I think what
23 we got here in black and white wasn't exactly what you read.

24 MR. MOORE: What you have in black and white is what
25 I read. I skipped some of the paragraphs in the interest of

1 time. What is there is what I ---.

2 MR. MALONEY: All right. I understand that now.

3 Okay. And I'm not going ot try to take too much time, because
4 I know this is very important. And quite frankly, I would like
5 to hear from the sportsmen who are present. But a couple
6 things. I know you stated that and we all know that your
7 background is really fish. I know you come from the Fish
8 Commission, and I know now you're speaking here for deer
9 management.

10 So a couple things come to my mind about this. Your
11 testimony seems to me --- you mentioned a few things like the
12 Legislative Budget Finance Committee and that the legislature
13 should really be out of this. However, you use the Legislative
14 Budget Finance Committee's report for 2010. You don't mention
15 this past year's, which showed that we lost at least 285
16 million dollars a year due to tree certification.

17 That's just one thing that I thought was somewhat
18 bothersome to me. You talked about sound science. You know,
19 one of the masterminds of this debacle was a man by the name of
20 Gary Alt, who basically said many times that this was not done
21 by sound science, this was done by politics. So I just want to
22 clear that up.

23 I think something that I had not heard right out of
24 the get-go here is the consideration of the sportsmen, where
25 they fall in this, the fact that report and survey after report

1 and survey were done with people from their observation of
2 their backyard. We heard things like the hunters were too lazy
3 to go into the woods. See, these are some of things that we
4 heard and took place for the last ten years. So when I hear
5 and read and see these words that to me seem to be all over the
6 map, and I know your background is with fish, but to me, our
7 biggest problem here happens to be deer.

8 So I'm a little troubled that we're starting right
9 off with the Federation supports this. I haven't read that.
10 Quite frankly, I don't know of a single sportsman that supports
11 the program. So those are just my comments. You don't even
12 have to say anything, because I'm just not so sure that we got
13 off on the right track. So thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you, representative Maloney.
15 Thank you, Gary, for your testimony.

16 MR. MOORE: Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Our next testifier will be Mr. Ned
18 Karger. He's the land manager with Kane Hardwood --- with
19 Collins Pine Company, Kane Hardwood Division. Mr. Karger, you
20 can go ahead with your testimony.

21 MR. KARGER: Thank you. Good evening. I'm the land
22 manager for the Kane Hardwood Division of Collins Pine Company.
23 Collins Pine Company owns and manages 118,000 acres of private
24 forest land in northwestern Pennsylvania. We're one of the
25 largest private landowners in Pennsylvania, and all of our

1 properties are open to the public at no charge, and they're
2 involved in Pennsylvania Game Commission's forest game
3 cooperator program.

4 The forest game cooperator program is a cooperative
5 agreement between the landowners and the Game Commission where
6 the landowners agree to keep their land open to the public, and
7 the Pennsylvania Game Commission provides services such as
8 science, game law enforcement, and seasonings for habitat
9 improvement.

10 We work very well with the Game commission staff and
11 the wildlife conservation officers in the area. And they put
12 in a tremendous amount of time and effort to make the program
13 work. During the last few years, there have been a number of
14 vacancies in the regional wildlife conservation officer
15 positions that have required the existing WCOs and their
16 deputies to expand their coverage areas. And I've been told
17 that the Game commission is committed to refilling these
18 positions from the recently graduated class of the Ross Leffler
19 School of Conservation.

20 For many decades during the 20th century,
21 Pennsylvania's deer herd was out of balance with the forested
22 habitat. Often deer populations reached 40 to 80 deer per
23 square mile and ate almost all available food in the forest
24 understory. Preferred plants were almost eliminated, including
25 many desirable tree seedlings, wildflowers and rare plants.

1 Populations of birds and animals which need low brush and cover
2 were reduced. Foresters trying to encourage the germination
3 and development of desirable tree seedlings saw them being
4 browsed or killed before they could grow above the reach of the
5 deer. It was truly an unsustainable condition.

6 Many scientific studies documented these conditions.
7 Multiple studies with deer exclosure fencing show that
8 overbrowsing by deer was not the only --- what was a primary
9 factor in regeneration failures and the elimination of many
10 wildflowers and rare plants. Studies with controlled deer
11 populations inside of fences showed that when populations
12 exceeded 20 deer per square mile in forested areas, negative
13 impacts were evident. Populations of 10 to 20 deer per square
14 mile had much less of an impact and forest regeneration,
15 wildflowers and rare plants recovered and grew well.
16 Subsequent studies in these areas showed that increases in bird
17 and mammal species which utilize the low, brush cover for
18 habitat.

19 In 2000, a group of public and private landowners,
20 businesses and forest scientists formed the Kinzua Quality Deer
21 Cooperative on 74,000 acres in northern McKean County. This
22 area included a section of the Allegheny National Forest, the
23 Bradford Watershed and some large tracts of private forest
24 land, including two large tracts of Collins Pine company land.
25 Intensive monitoring of vegetation, hunter educational efforts,

1 deer population monitoring and deer check stations were all
2 used and have continued for the last 13 years.

3 The KQDC embraced the use of the Deer Management
4 Assistance program to bring the buck-doe ratio and deer habitat
5 into better balance. They also encourage antler restrictions
6 and the retention of young bucks. Within the first few years,
7 the results were undeniable.

8 Many more trophy bucks were being taken and
9 harvested deer were larger and healthier. More does were
10 producing twin offspring, which is an indication of improved
11 doe health. Tree seedlings were being browsed less and
12 wildflowers and other sensitive plants were beginning to
13 increase.

14 Hunters surveyed at the time realized they would see
15 fewer deer and chances to harvest deer would be reduced, but
16 many said they would still return to the area for the chance to
17 harvest the bigger deer and larger raked bucks. This effort
18 continues and many new scientific studies have been started on
19 this same landscaping.

20 While it's impossible to replicate the level of
21 scientific study and intensive monitoring everywhere in
22 Pennsylvania, the lessons learned can be replicated. A better
23 balance of deer populations with the available habitat can
24 result in healthier deer populations and healthier habitat.
25 This is certainly true in the large forested conditions of

1 Pennsylvania's northern tier.

2 Other parts of the state have very different
3 conditions. Some areas of the state have various mixtures of
4 forest, agricultural land, suburban and urban conditions in the
5 landscape. Many areas have unique mixes of private and public
6 forestlands and different amounts of open and posted land.
7 Each mix of habitat presents slightly different deer management
8 challenges and opportunities.

9 The changes to traditional deer management
10 strategies which have been established by the Pennsylvania Game
11 Commission over the last 10 to 12 years have improved their
12 ability to match strategies with a variety of conditions across
13 the state. I would like to comment on a few of the successful
14 new strategies.

15 First, wildlife management units or WMUs. The use
16 of WMUs have replaced the old county based system for the
17 allocation of antlerless deer licenses. WMUs group areas of
18 like habitat condition, instead of by political boundaries.

19 For instance, McKean County includes part of WMU 2F,
20 which includes the Allegheny National Forest and is dominated
21 by public lands intermixed with private forest lands. Limited
22 road systems can make hunter access difficult in many areas.
23 And local residential populations are low, so many hunters are
24 non-local Pennsylvanians and out of state hunters.

25 McKean County also includes part of WMU 3A. This is

1 primarily private forest lands with some agricultural lands.
2 These are generally more intensively managed and can support
3 more deer per square mile than MWU 2F. These are more local
4 residents generally spread out across the rural area, but still
5 many non-resident hunters. The public road network and smaller
6 size of forested tracts allow better hunter access.

7 A similar situation in WMU 2G. It's a heavily
8 forested mix of private and state-owned forest land, less
9 agricultural land than in 3A. And the terrain is steeper and
10 contains a different mix of forest tree species and less public
11 roads. There are some concentrations of local populations, but
12 many non-resident hunters. Forested habitats of WMU 2G cannot
13 support as high of a deer population as other parts of the
14 state.

15 The point is that the WMU system of antlerless
16 license allocation is an improvement over the old county based
17 system which could not take habitat, hunter access and other
18 factors into account. The WMUs are larger and the deer
19 populations have been reduced to be a more sustainable level on
20 the overall WMU. But deer populations are not evenly
21 distributed and local habitat conditions can vary across the
22 WMUs. And this brings me to the deer management assistance
23 program or DMAP.

24 The DMAP system is one of the major innovations
25 established by the Game Commission. DMAP allows landowners and

1 managers to deal with deer populations and habitat conditions
2 on their own lands in accordance with their individual
3 management plans. Landowners and managers, both public and
4 private, provide the habitat to support our wildlife
5 populations and are the most knowledgeable about their own
6 lands. Many monitor the effects of deer browsing in accordance
7 with their management objectives. They are in the best
8 position to decide whether to utilize DMAP as a management tool
9 to deal with the variety of conditions within the individual
10 WMUs.

11 I understand that some of you may have supported
12 legislation to restrict the use of DMAP on some ownerships,
13 such as public land. We do not support that effort. The
14 public agencies, including the DCNR, have very good
15 professionals and have developed excellent procedures and
16 protocols for monitoring deer populations and impacts. They
17 use DMAP judiciously and then review their data annually to
18 monitor progress toward their management plan goals. DMAP for
19 use as a management tool should not be removed from their
20 toolbox by legislation.

21 While my company keeps all of its land open to the
22 public, some private land managers use hunting and recreational
23 leases to manage public use. Currently those landowners are
24 not eligible to utilize DMAP. We support the extension of DMAP
25 to those landowners who are also providing wildlife ---or

1 habitat for wildlife so that they can better manage the impact
2 of the deer populations on their lands.

3 Antler restrictions. Another one of the innovations
4 in deer management implemented by the Game Commission was
5 antler restrictions. While some hunters, including myself,
6 were skeptical in the beginning, this had been a big success
7 with high levels of support from hunters. Recent modifications
8 to the rule, which dealt with brow tines, have been welcomed
9 and only increased hunter support, as evidenced by the
10 experiences on KQDC, other quality deer management properties
11 and throughout the state. This change in hunting regulations
12 has lead to more mature, larger bucks and better buck/doe
13 ratios.

14 Expanded seasons and hunting opportunities. We
15 support the Game commission's efforts to expand hunting
16 opportunities, such as early traditional and inline
17 muzzleloader seasons, early season --- early senior and junior
18 antlerless seasons, and crossbow seasons. These
19 non-traditional hunting opportunities are becoming increasingly
20 popular.

21 We also support the youth-mentored hunting
22 regulations. These efforts have expanded hunter opportunities
23 and recruited some new hunters, both residential --- and
24 residents and non-residents to the sport.

25 Concurrent seasons. We support the change to

1 concurrent seasons from the old system of separate antler and
2 antlerless seasons. In today's world and the current economy,
3 it's often difficult for hunters to find the time or bear the
4 expense of hunting in split seasons. In areas like the
5 northern tier, when non-local and out-of-state hunters
6 contribute to the local economies and are important components
7 in reaching deer density goals, the flexibility of the
8 concurrent season is important.

9 In the northern tier, many school districts are
10 closed for the first day or two of rifle season. The full
11 concurrent season gives a better opportunity for the youth
12 hunters to harvest an antlerless deer. The full concurrent
13 season also is less susceptible to short-term weather events,
14 like rain days or heavy snows, which limit the opportunities to
15 harvest antlerless deer and meet Game Commission deer harvest
16 goals. We realize that while the full concurrent season may
17 require slightly lower antlerless license allocations in some
18 WMUs, the benefits above --- the benefits stated above outweigh
19 that concern.

20 Our data indicate that deer populations and deer
21 browse impacts in our area dropped dramatically between 2002
22 and 2008 and have since been increasing. This is in line with
23 Game Commission data, although some of their monitoring metrics
24 use five year rolling averages, which are not as sensitive to
25 short-term changes. We believe the populations should be held

1 at current levels and not permitted to return to the
2 unsustainable, habitat-damaging levels of 15 to 20 years ago.
3 We encourage the Game commission to continue with their
4 innovative approaches to deer management, which has resulted in
5 improvements over the last 10 to 12 years.

6 Pennsylvania has a rich hunting tradition and an
7 abundance of excellent habitat that supports many wildlife
8 species, including the whitetail deer. The mature forests of
9 the state are being harvested, and successfully regenerating
10 the forest will ensure that hunting and recreational
11 opportunities will be available to future generations.

12 Successful regeneration of forest stands provides
13 early successional habitat of young forests --- which that's
14 the kind of habitat that's been declining across the state.
15 And this habitat is important for a number of species which
16 have been declining over the last few decades, such as the
17 Golden winged Warbler and the American Woodcock. This habitat
18 is also important for our deer populations as a source of food
19 and cover, more abundant in early successional habitats than in
20 the mature forests.

21 We maintain a website to provide information on our
22 company's DMAP and open-land policies. We are fielded many
23 inquiries each year during the fall and winter. And we've seen
24 a trend over the last few years of more inquiries on locations
25 of early successional habitat from woodcock and grouse hunters

1 during both the fall and winter seasons. Many are traveling
2 from outside the area and outside the state to hunt. These
3 hunters are buying Pennsylvania hunting licenses and
4 contributing to the local economy.

5 We understand that lower deer populations and
6 mixtures of early successional stands with more mature forest
7 stands create new and different challenges to deer hunters.
8 Successful hunters have had to adapt to the changing conditions
9 and have found that pre-season scouting and new techniques can
10 improve their chances of harvesting a deer. The favorite old
11 hunting spot may not be able to support the high deer
12 populations of the past and other areas may have more deer.

13 The habitat cannot --- the habitat just cannot
14 support high deer populations everywhere, and populations vary
15 across the landscape, but overall, the deer population is
16 healthier and so is the habitat. Bucks are reaching maturity
17 and carrying larger racks. Does are healthier and producing
18 more fawns.

19 Forest regeneration is improving. Wildlife,
20 wildflowers and rare plants are more common. Early
21 successional habitats and the associated species are
22 increasing. Ground and shrub nesting species have better
23 habitat. And the hunting opportunities are increasing during
24 the concurrent rifle seasons and the new and non-traditional
25 seasons.

1 While some hunters still remember fondly the days of
2 seeing 50 to 100 deer in a day, many recognize the improvements
3 in deer health, antler size, forest health, hunting
4 opportunities, and habitat for deer and a whole range of other
5 important species. Some may say that deer populations are
6 unhuntable or they're almost extinct. I think what they mean
7 is that the conditions are different and deer hunting has
8 definitely changed and deer populations are not consistently
9 high across the landscape.

10 I'll leave you with some pictures that were taken in
11 Potter County last winter and published on a local website.
12 They show 10 to 15 deer in a group occupying a very small area.
13 That's an unsustainable population which will have negative
14 impacts on that particular area. We still have a lot of deer
15 in Pennsylvania, but in most places they are in better balance
16 with their habitat. We are seeing the benefits of healthier
17 deer, healthier forests and healthier habitats for other
18 species.

19 I would like to thank the committee for holding this
20 hearing in the northern tier and listening to the various
21 opinions on deer management which have serious impacts on the
22 economy of our region, the forests of our --- the future of our
23 forests and the health of our deer and other wildlife
24 populations. Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you, Ned. Now, we'll take

1 questions from the Committee members. Representative Kula?

2 MS. KULA: Since I'm the person with the legislation
3 to take away the DMAP from public lands, I guess maybe I have
4 some questions. Now, I guess a lot of your testimony --- I
5 mean, from what I heard, basically you have pretty much said
6 that it's deer out there that are destroying the habitats, that
7 it's only the deer. I mean there's other animals out there
8 that continue to forage and --- you know, the forests and all
9 of that that seem to be a problem also; correct?

10 MR. KARGER: There are a multitude of wildlife
11 species out there, but the large deer populations that were
12 common in, you know, the second half of the last century were
13 having a significant impact. They were having the biggest
14 impact on the habitat, including eliminating a lot of shrub
15 species that are important for other wildlife.

16 MS. KULA: And do you know what the allocation is
17 for public lands for DMAP and how that's determined? I mean,
18 is there a criteria set up as to who determines how many are
19 given out int any particular area?

20 MR. KARGER: As far as on the public lands, what I
21 know is that many of the public lands have very good monitoring
22 procedures in place.

23 MS. KULA: By whom?

24 MR. KARGER: By the staff of DCNR, Game commission
25 lands, and other professionals that manage those lands. They

1 collect a lot of data on ---.

2 MS. KULA: I mean, can you give me for instance what
3 data you're talking about?

4 MR. KARGER: Okay. So deer browse data,
5 regeneration data. They monitor other sensitive plants.
6 Certain plants are more favorable --- the deer prefer certain
7 plants. So there are definitely indicator plants. When plants
8 --- when some plants are present, you know that the deer
9 population is better in balance. If the deer populations are
10 too high, those plants won't be present in an area. Many
11 areas, they do pellet group counts, which basically count deer
12 poop. And they estimate deer populations, that way there are
13 studies that were done with exclosures and deer population
14 inside the fences to be able to determine the metrics for that.

15 So there's a lot of different information that's
16 collected. And the land managers look at all this information,
17 and they also look at the available browse out there for deer
18 in certain areas and come to a determination of whether they
19 feel that the deer populations in a particular zone are in
20 balance with the habitat or that there's not enough deer. And
21 they only utilize the DMAP if they feel --- I mean, too many
22 deer. And they only use DMAP if they feel there's too many
23 deer. And they look at that information. We do the same thing
24 on our own lands.

25 So there are times when we have an area in DMAP and

1 the population will go down and it'll get into a better balance
2 and the monitoring will show that. And then they can take that
3 area out of DMAP for another --- for a year, or for the
4 subsequent years. So it's not always that once in DMAP, always
5 in DMAP. It's, you know, it delineates certain areas, and
6 study that area and then use it judiciously to match their
7 management objectives with the habitat.

8 MS. KULA: And when I talk with older hunters, and I
9 mean we're talking even older than me. We're talking maybe
10 70s, that have been hunting for 50 years or more. You never
11 --- I mean, this is what they're saying to me. We never had
12 this problem. We always could go out and see deer. We could,
13 you know, go to our same tree stand far out in the woods. Same
14 thing every year after year after year. And we could see deer.

15 We could go to that same spot now, sit in the same
16 tree stand and not see a deer even anywhere, not see a deer.
17 So I mean it doesn't make sense to me that you're giving out
18 more DMAP tags to kill the few deer that are out there, which
19 will eventually end up being no deer.

20 MR. KARGER: During the period, over that 70-year
21 period, the habitats have certainly changed. So some areas
22 they carry too many deer for too long, and it had detrimental
23 effects. The fact that you can --- I think most of those
24 hunters probably remember when spikes and four points were
25 pretty common bucks to be taken in those areas. And now

1 they're --- you know, the bucks that are in there are fewer of
2 them.

3 But the bucks that are there are much bigger,
4 they're eight points or larger. And you know, so that's one
5 indication. But definitely habitats have changed. And for a
6 long time we did have --- we had too many deer and it was
7 affecting populations of many species of both plants and
8 animals.

9 MS. KULA: Okay. That's all for now. Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Chairman Haluska?

11 CHAIRMAN HALUSKA: Thanks, Marty. I sat on the
12 Forestry Task Force for a lot of years, the Agricultural
13 Committee for 18 years before this year when I chaired this
14 committee. Been on this committee 19 years, so I've been
15 through the Gary Alt --- everybody wants to vilify Gary alt,
16 but I really would hate to see what the deer populations or
17 deer herd would be today if it wasn't for some of the things
18 that Gary alt brought to the table. It wasn't a perfect
19 solution, but it was very helpful.

20 I asked our former state forester at a forestry Task
21 Force meeting, Jim Grace. I said, Jim, how do you manage a
22 deciduous hardwood forest that's 80 to 90 years old. He said,
23 jeez, I don't know, he says we never had one before. And
24 that's true. Pennsylvania is now in a state that we've never
25 had before. So you know, times change, the DMAP is a tool in

1 the toolbox. The Game commission has a lot of work to do, I
2 understand that. They have 400 and some species that they're
3 supposed to take care of.

4 Deer management is very tricky. The north central,
5 obviously we're in the hotspot right here. Where I live in
6 Cambria County, if it wasn't for all the farmers, we would have
7 a lot less deer there, because their acorn crop got wiped out.
8 All our fruit trees got wiped out last year by the late season
9 frost. We wouldn't have hardly anything there if it wasn't for
10 the farmers. So I'm glad the limited area has a lot of
11 farming, because it supports a lot of our deer population,
12 there's no doubt about that. And up here, you don't have that
13 luxury in a lot of the places up here.

14 So you know, I think the Game commission's trying to
15 do their job. Obviously, they're getting pulled in 30
16 different directions. I've been through a lot of those
17 meetings and everything. And people just have to, you know,
18 work with the Game commission and not against it and try to
19 give the public input, the comments.

20 The commissioners, they have to take that to heart.
21 The biologist come back to the Commissioners and tell them what
22 they think they should do. The Commissioners tender that a
23 little bit with the public comments they get from their people.

24 And the people --- the biologists don't get
25 everything they want, believe me. They want a lot of things

1 that they don't get because the Commissioners temper it because
2 of the sportsmen and their input. So it's a work in progress
3 and hopefully we'll find out a little bit more as we go on
4 tonight.

5 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you, Gary. Representative
6 Moul?

7 MR. MOUL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you
8 for your testimony. A couple of things, and please don't take
9 me the wrong way. Again, I come from south central
10 Pennsylvania, where we have completely different conditions
11 than what are going on up here. One of the things you provided
12 us with these pictures of the deer, the herds --- and I don't
13 think that's a real good representation because you know,
14 depending on what time of the year, even down my neck of the
15 woods, deer herd up in January, February, and anybody can drive
16 along and take a picture. That's just common, so I don't know
17 if that's a real good representation of what we're trying to
18 get at here.

19 And I'm going to agree with you. I don't think
20 there's too many people in this room that are going to disagree
21 that the antler restrictions was probably a good thing. I
22 probably see a lot of heads going, yeah, we are seeing bigger
23 racks. But you know, how many DMAP permits does your company
24 request? Do you know what the success rate of those permits
25 might be?

1 MR. KARGER: The success rate varies across our
2 different parties, just at first. We have success rates on
3 some smaller properties that are easily accessible, you know
4 where you may only have ten tags, and we'll get the report from
5 the Game Commission that the success might be 40 percent, 50
6 percent. And some of the larger properties for access may only
7 be five to ten percent success rate. But it really varies
8 quite a lot by property. We utilize ---.

9 MR. MOUL: So who determines --- when you want DMAP
10 tags, did you reequest PGC to come out and analyze the number
11 of deer that you have on these lands and they tell you how
12 many, or do you request them and they just supply them?

13 MR. KARGER: The way the DMAP procedure works is you
14 have to put in application for a particular --- we own a number
15 of different properties. Some of them are small properties,
16 some of them are large, a couple thousand acres.

17 We took a look at whether we're --- if we have
18 forestry operations there when we're trying to favor
19 regeneration, that might be an indication that we --- you know,
20 an area where we might want to utilize the DMAP tool. We have
21 some properties we use bell counts, we do regeneration surveys
22 that look at deer browse, whether it's excessive or not. And
23 those are the kind of monitoring things that go into deciding
24 where we're going to apply each year for DMAP tags.

25 Generally, when you apply for additional tags in an

1 area, you are supplying with around --- you can request
2 different levels, but the general is one per 50 acres. So
3 that's not one more deer that's going to be harvested on 50
4 acres, because the success rates vary from five to 40 percent
5 on those different areas.

6 And we take a look at the monitoring data each year,
7 and if we feel that the deer populations are imbalanced, we're
8 not having browse issues on our harvested areas, we won't
9 include that area in DMAP. If it's an area where we are seeing
10 browse impact, we feel there's a higher deer population from
11 our monitoring in those areas that we will request DMAP.
12 Thanks.

13 MR. MOUL: Are you managing for Forestry, or are you
14 managing for deer sportsmen?

15 MR. KARGER: We're managing for forestry --- that's
16 pretty much our --- that's our ---.

17 MR. MOUL: I understand that completely, but that
18 being said, you benefit by having lower deer herds.

19 MR. KARGER: Absolutely, because we benefit by
20 having the deer in balance with the habitat so that we can grow
21 trees. Just like a farmer would have the deer in balance with
22 there so their crops don't all get eaten. We're trying to
23 regenerate trees.

24 MR. MOUL: Right, but it's safe to say that if you
25 had no deer, none of the crops would be eaten?

1 MR. KARGER: No, but no deer is not a good ---.

2 MR. MOUL: I get that.

3 MR. KARGER: There is actually a level of too few
4 deer. When we do regeneration, we kind of favor certain
5 species in the forest. Species like oak and maple and cherry.
6 There's other species that if there's no deer browse, such as
7 bing cherry, which is a non-commercial species, deer like bing
8 cherry. It's one of the first things that they eat. If
9 there's not enough deer in an area, we have problems with bing
10 cherry. So we try to balance that. Not enough deer is not a
11 good thing for a forest either.

12 MR. MOUL: All right. I'm not trying to bust your
13 ---.

14 MR. KARGER: No, I understand.

15 MR. MOUL: I'm just trying to get a good grip on
16 ---.

17 MR. KARGER: Zero deer is not a good situation,
18 because that would present a whole different set of problems
19 for us. That's not what we're looking for.

20 MR. MOUL: All right. Well, let me finish the
21 question. Thank you for making those lands that you don't have
22 to make open, making them open for the hunters. I do realize
23 that, and I do want to say thank you for that. Thank you for
24 your testimony and your answers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

25 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you, Representative Moul.

1 Representative Maloney?

2 MR. MALONEY: Thank you, sir. Thank you, Mr.
3 Chairman. I would start off with what was just ended with
4 Representative Moul. Being that I'm a hunter and have hunted
5 over a majority of this state, I appreciate anybody and
6 everybody who is on the same team. So opening up anybody's
7 land to hunters, to me, has always been part of the process.
8 So I certainly appreciate that.

9 But having said that, I would be remiss if I didn't
10 ask you a few questions that really bother me. You did just
11 state with Representative Moul that your interest is trees. We
12 get that. We also know that, you know, the FSC certification
13 was contingent upon the reduction of deer in the forest.

14 So we know that that's your interest. We get it. I
15 think all hunters get it. I think our reports state that the
16 certification that came down not only 4285 million for one
17 year, but continuing to go to the billion dollar mark.

18 So having said that, it seems to me that some of the
19 things that you said here --- I'm going to give you an example.
20 Many scientific studies documented these conditions. Well, you
21 answered Representative Kula with respect to certain impacted
22 studies that I've never seen. I don't think anybody here in
23 this room has ever seen those studies. So it would be
24 interesting to see those things.

25 The general speaking to me many times is a very

1 political statement. Even though we know the facts are
2 something different, will spew some sort of number so that
3 people think that what was said was untrue. So I get that in
4 the political arena.

5 However, to me, I like to work with facts. I have
6 hunted over the majority of the northern tier, and quite
7 frankly, it has been alarming for years. And if it wasn't for
8 the private owners who have eliminated or refused any kind of
9 deer or doe hunting, I don't believe we would have the deer
10 that we have.

11 You can go from camp to camp to camp, and you can
12 ask questions. I probably shouldn't admit how many hours and
13 days I've spent in the woods. My wife is sitting in the back
14 here and she can tell you.

15 However, the facts of the matter are I'm the real
16 deal. So I know what the circumstance is out there. I've
17 looked at mass crop in parts of the forest where I could've
18 roller skated down the hill and there wasn't any deer.

19 So what troubles me is that most of what I heard
20 from you --- and I understand your position wholeheartedly.
21 Listen, I'm not trying to be harsh. My point is it's very
22 obvious to me of what your special interest is. And I think
23 that the hunters out there, you know, they probably wonder if
24 you have somebody on the Commission or in the state that has
25 some special interest in your company. I wouldn't doubt it. I

1 don't know. But to me, that's what it looks like.

2 I don't know where this data is. You speak without
3 across the state, improving your ability to match strategies
4 with conditions across the state. I mean, I don't see that.

5 MR. KARGER: I was speaking specifically about a
6 piece of wildlife management units as opposed to political
7 boundaries or antlerless allocation at the county levels.

8 MR. MALONEY: Okay.

9 MR. KARGER: And I'd be glad to take out and show
10 you some of the study areas and introduce you to some of the
11 scientists that worked on the studies.

12 MR. MALONEY: And where would those studies be?

13 MR. KARGER: Many of them were done in the northern
14 tier.

15 MR. MALONEY: On your land?

16 MR. KARGER: No. Not all of them. Some on our
17 land, some on Allegheny National forest land, some through the
18 Forestry Science ---.

19 MR. MALONEY: So you work on the state land with
20 these studies?

21 MR. KARGER: Before I worked for Collins Pine, I
22 worked for the Allegheny National Forest and Forest Research
23 Station and collected data on studies.

24 MR. MALONEY: Okay. I guess the more questions I
25 ask, the worse it gets. But thank you very much, I appreciate

1 it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Additional questions? Thank you,
3 Ned. I appreciate your testimony from your perspective. And
4 like I said before, we're gathering information from all
5 different interest groups, everyone interested in the deer
6 management program, so I appreciate your perspective. And
7 thank you for your testimony.

8 MR. KARGER: Thank you for the opportunity.

9 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Our next testifier will be Mr.
10 Randy Santucci. Randy's the president of the Unified Sportsmen
11 of Pennsylvania. Randy, if you want to introduce yourself and
12 proceed with your testimony.

13 MR. SANTUCCI: Thank you. I provided a packet that
14 will have some exhibits to follow along as I zip through here.
15 I'd like to thank Chairmen Causer and Haluska for the
16 opportunity here today and for all the reps. And I want to
17 pretty much read verbatim what I prepared. I think it's the
18 best way to keep me from doing two things: Missing issues and
19 rambling, because I do go on about this sometimes and time is
20 always an issue. I provided a packet. I'll go right into my
21 testimony.

22 Again, my name is Randy from Unified Sportsmen. We
23 are probably --- as it's well known on the other side of this
24 issue from the Federation of Sportsmen's clubs and I would like
25 to basically provide some evidence of I think some of the

1 history and some of the issues I think inside of the agency
2 that possibly bring us to this juncture today as we've been for
3 the past several years.

4 The management of our whitetail deer resource
5 determines the economic impacts in rural settings like these,
6 predicated on hunter success. That success or lack thereof can
7 often be tied to whether hunters are on public overharvested
8 land, producing little to no enjoyment, versus suburban,
9 privately-managed or posted lands, which do produce higher
10 success rates. I would like to define success as not only is
11 harvesting the deer, but seeing them as well. The main
12 difference is private posted lands have circumvented the PGC
13 deer program. These dynamics are why legislators hear
14 different stories from different constituents.

15 I previously requested from Representative Causer a
16 few things through my testimony I'd like to see if we could get
17 a hand count from the audience if there was some interest in
18 regard to developing an opinion. The House Democratic Policy
19 committee public hearing on deer management was held in DuBois
20 in 2006.

21 I provided each representative a DVD copy of the
22 hearing. This DVD is lengthy at over tow hours, but I cannot
23 request or plead too strong the importance of legislators here
24 today to make time in the evening to watch this DVD. Its
25 content is truly shocking and addresses the identical issues

1 that bring many here today. Testimony was heard from Centre
2 County Commissioner Scott Conklin, sportsmen and business
3 owners passionately identifying problems from lack of deer.

4 The decaying aspects of this deer program were
5 identified back then and continue today. Representative
6 Staback expressed that such a vast statewide outcry was
7 certainly credible. Representative Hanna expressed frustration
8 that the PGC would not attend the hearing. And Dan Surra spoke
9 out strongly, criticizing the Game commission.

10 Based on where we stand today, is it not accurate to
11 make the statement that legislators and sportsmen alike were
12 misled by this deer management program? If we ignore credible
13 data now and continue down this road, we will certainly meet
14 Einstein's definition of insanity, doing the same thing over
15 and over again, expecting a different result.

16 The Unified sportsmen of Pennsylvania, who I
17 represent here today, stands with the Eastern Firearms
18 Coalition and the Allegheny County Sportsmen's League. We have
19 joined together committed, condemning and exposing this
20 damaging deer management program. Collectively, our coalition
21 speaks for over 150 sporting and shooting clubs with over
22 300,000 members.

23 Pennsylvania's current deer management is arguably
24 proving to be one of the most damaging programs in history
25 enacted on the Commonwealth's sporting and rural economic

1 community. The extensive outcry for sportsmen, elected
2 officials, and business owners has been by and large ignored by
3 the PGC.

4 The legislative budget and finance study released in
5 November 2012, which you can see there, Exhibit One, which is a
6 summarized version, recently identified a current annual
7 potential loss to the Commonwealth of \$285 million dollars from
8 hunters quitting since 2001 compared to the modest benefit of
9 only \$1.2 million per year to DCNR from sales of certified
10 timber. Economically, this has been a bust. IN using
11 certification to justify charging more for 100-year old timber,
12 that has only been under certification for eight or ten years
13 to me seems questionable.

14 Unified put together a chart, and that's Exhibit
15 Two, compounding each year of lost hunter expenditures since
16 2001. Whether you use the more conservative annual sportsmen
17 expenditure from Unified, or the one considerably higher from
18 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, losses equate to an
19 estimates \$1.8 to \$3 billion over the last ten years in the
20 Commonwealth. Some within the PGC are on record stating these
21 losses are misleading, and this money was just spent on other
22 items and in other areas within the Commonwealth.

23 The ignorance of that position from leadership of an
24 outdoor agency is disturbing. Businesses were closed or scaled
25 back, local tax dollars were lost and Pittman-Robertson funds

1 on sporting purchases were obviously reduced. Is the \$80
2 million lost to Harrisburg from closing sports show not having
3 an impact in that area? Is State College not feeling the
4 effects from NCAA sanctions from the Sandusky scandal?
5 Pennsylvania's been sucker-punched, and legislators need to
6 understand who is doing that punching.

7 This deer program is a vision of a bio-diverse force
8 in a few biologists' minds' eye. It was biased strongly and
9 almost exclusively for forestry goals, and I believe we've
10 heard some of that here already testified today, and minimally
11 to our hunting and stream and the economics thereof.

12 The points I bring here today are to show that our
13 Game commission and DCNR objectives have shifted away from
14 sporting concerns to pure biology. If we do not address this
15 issue today, we will end up like the State of California that
16 recently passed legislation forcing eco-based management of
17 fish and game, essentially throwing hunting and fishing and
18 connected socioeconomic aspects to the wind. Giving
19 environmentalists this control would be a nightmare for
20 Pennsylvania.

21 Pennsylvania has experienced an inordinate decline
22 in hunting interest since 2004. You see Exhibit Three. Those
23 were prepared a few years ago, but I think the apex there in
24 2004 and the decline that shows the impact from the reduced
25 deer after the current seasons and the excessive doe harvest

1 that happened over the two or three years. This deer program
2 disenfranchised the license-buying hunter. The unacceptable
3 part of this is, as you know, hunters do the heavy lifting,
4 paying most of the freight for wildlife management in the
5 state. We've lost too many before their time.

6 Youth interest in participation became a
7 particularly high casualty, competing with today's technology.
8 Deer hunting with adequate deer to stir excitement and
9 adrenaline can compete with technology, but sitting in a tree
10 stand all day with few to no deer sightings or taking one's gun
11 for a walk in a deerless woods cannot. I believe as a fair
12 statement that we are not here today because all is good in the
13 neighborhood.

14 The PGC goals set to justify deer reduction work:
15 Healthy deer, healthy habitat and reducing deer/human
16 conflicts. All three are arbitrary, arguable in intent and
17 questionable in their design. To substantiate that claim, see
18 Exhibit Four.

19 From 2010, WMI audited the PGC's management program,
20 page 35. This page exhibits embryo data from the Pennsylvania
21 Game commission. That at that time was the accepted indicator
22 of deer health. 1.5 embryo average per two-year-old adult doe,
23 obtained by examination of roadkill deer, was an indicator of
24 healthy deer.

25 As you can see highlighted at the bottom of the

1 chart, the average fawn to doe ratio of each WMU column from
2 the years 2000 to 2008 never went below 1.51, indicating by
3 the PGC's own barometer deer were healthy. Since this evidence
4 came to light, the PGC abandoned this method of determining
5 deer health. The accomplice in this extreme reduction of our
6 deer herd is DCRN. The DCNR is a land manager and should not
7 be involved in doe allocations. A recent testimony for that
8 position is by your own Committee representative Debbie Kula's
9 bill dated February 20th, 2013, House Bill 870, to remove
10 utilization of DMAP on public lands.

11 Personal note on that, DMAP on private lands is one
12 thing. If the landowner wants to make their deer a normal
13 density, that's fine. But I think public lands have a
14 different responsibility.

15 I recently met with DNCR secretary Richard Allan and
16 staff in Harrisburg to dispute his claim in a letter to me
17 stating hunters will flock to the northern central region. I
18 was accompanied by Tim Horner, president of Sinnemahoning
19 Sportsmen's Club; Clinton County Commissioner Adam Coleman;
20 retired Commissioner Tom Bossert; and Jack Kraft, who is a past
21 president of the Potter County Visitor's Association. A letter
22 from Tina Johns Solak, executive director of the Cameron County
23 Chamber of Commerce, supporting our position was also presented
24 to the secretary. That's Exhibit six. This group was highly
25 representative and I feel credible as we identify the degrading

1 economic and hunting circumstances from these excessive
2 reduction of the deer herd.

3 Implausibly, in a letter to Legislative Budget and
4 Finance Executive Director Phil Durgin --- that's Exhibit 6A
5 --- DCNR Secretary Allan identifies that declining deer numbers
6 have no relation to declining hunter numbers, citing a study
7 from Dr. Rosenberry from the PGS. That's one thing I'd like to
8 perhaps ask a question for audience. How many people here feel
9 that, you know, the decline in the deer herd has caused a
10 decline in the number of hunters?

11 A little history is critical to understanding how we
12 ended up here today. Board certification is continually denied
13 by PGC and DCNR as being behind any aspect of deer reduction.
14 Coincidentally, DCNR is the recipient of certification awards
15 for the last eight years. Legislators --- let me read an
16 excerpt from the legislative budget study and you decide, and I
17 think Representative Maloney had touched on this already.

18 FSC certification was contingent upon DCNR reducing
19 the number of deer in the state. SCS, the organization that
20 conducted DCNR's initial certification stipulated that one of
21 the conditions of certification was to reduce the number of
22 deer in DCR forests. DCNR then worked with the Pennsylvania
23 Game commission to create the DMAP program, which has a lot of
24 DCNR and other land owners to reduce the numbers of deer on
25 their properties beyond PGC's normal permit allocation process.

1 Let's be clear on one thing. The DMAP program is
2 only --- it's a small portion of our doe allocation, but it is
3 still I think layered over top of what's already there,
4 probably already too many. So the DCNR aspect on public lands
5 I think is somewhat significant because once you get down so
6 low, even 50 more doe tags can be too many.

7 Further pressure from forestry and the biological
8 community was made apparent on January 9th, 2000, when Dr.
9 Susan Stout presented testimony from the society of American
10 Foresters, Deer and Farm Committee. That's Exhibit Eight.

11 We have little confidence in the current worth of
12 commissioners, because you have systematically turned on the
13 recommendations of your professional staff and the
14 recommendations of scientists, land managers, and agency
15 personnel explaining the damage that your decisions have
16 caused.

17 There's a growing consensus that you should be held
18 personally liable and personally legally liable for the
19 decisions you make on Tuesday and thereafter and there are
20 consequences.

21 That was read to our commissioner back in 2000
22 before things got --- which I think is pretty much a strong-arm
23 tactic that should've never been employed in our group of
24 commissioners.

25 Furthermore, pressure from the Forest and Biological

1 Committee was --- whoops, did that wrong.

2 From that same testimony that we heard a reference
3 today regarding Scott --- or should I say WMI, which is the
4 Wildlife Management Institute. From that same testimony,
5 foresters also urge adopting Scott Williamson's deer reduction
6 recommendation from the deer management working group. That's
7 Exhibit Eight.

8 For those that do not recognize the name Scott
9 Williamson, he chaired the deer management working group. He
10 and WMI was the organization that awarded the 2010 contract to
11 do the audit of the Pennsylvania Game Commission's deer
12 management program. It doesn't seem appropriate or ethical
13 contracting one of the original deer reduction architects to
14 audit the PGC deer management program. I don't know how many
15 knew that, but that's something that's been kicked around ever
16 since it happened. And it's very questionable.

17 Fast forward to 2010, Dr. Stout was coauthor of a
18 report, Exhibit Nine, identifying reducing deer numbers have
19 not produced anticipated results on forest plant species. And
20 I quote, we suggest that decreasing deer populations alone may
21 not provide (sic) plant diversity in overbrowsed, depauperate
22 forests without additional restoration strategies to mitigate a
23 browse-legacy layer dominated by browse-resistant species. In
24 short, reducing deer numbers is not producing results
25 predicated to an appreciable level.

1 Legislators, our sportsmen pay the freight for most
2 wildlife management in the state, consumptive and
3 non-consumptive life. We are top-funding conservationists and
4 undeniably the top economic stimulating group of all wildlife
5 shareholders. Hunting contributes inordinately more to the
6 economy than bird watching and/or animal viewing in most
7 segments of our rural business sector.

8 The recent U.S. Fish & Wildlife Survey identified
9 that 88 percent of wildlife observation, feeding and
10 photography happens around the home, Exhibit Ten. That aspect
11 clearly identifies why hunting is by far a more significant
12 economic stimulator. Sportsmen have tremendous travel expenses
13 and spend significant amounts of money on equipment to
14 participate in the sport of hunting, feeding Pittman-Robertson.

15 In reality, one who pays for the tickets generally
16 walks through the turnstile. In the real world, business must
17 show results, and make no mistake, our whitetail deer are big
18 business. Over 80 percent of our hunters buy their license
19 primarily to hunt whitetail deer.

20 Legislators, your action is now needed more than it
21 was in 2006, as the hole is much deeper, in reigning in an
22 agency at times now identified as broke. The legislative
23 relief in the worlds of recently retired PGC Commissioner Tom
24 Boop. In 10 or 12 years, our great hunting tradition has all
25 been all but destroyed.

1 Now, that said, there are several aspects in the
2 deer management program that I want to touch on that I think
3 are highly identifying of how this agency has shifted so far
4 from the licensed buyer, from socioeconomic to pure biology,
5 pure forestry.

6 In 2001, the doe season changed from three days to
7 two weeks. This was a 400 percent increase of hunting
8 opportunity, which included two Saturdays. This combining of
9 the buck and doe seasons was obviously implemented as a rapid
10 deer reduction move, and accomplished its goal.

11 Concurrent seasons of one or two years should've
12 immediately been followed with severe cuts in doe allocations
13 to balance the reduction achieved. The elimination of the
14 first five days of doe hunting from this concurrent season has
15 now grown into 12 management units. This backing off the
16 program came from hunter disgust of no deer sightings conveyed
17 to the Commissioners and pressure from sportsmen and groups
18 like USP.

19 Stating again, the 400 percent increase in the doe
20 season could not sustain hunting, with doe allocations where
21 they were previously for a three-day season, and some units
22 even more. This migration back toward pre-2001 management
23 criteria should be recognized for what it is, a movement back
24 to what worked and is needed.

25 Cal DuBrock and the deer staff of the PGC is now

1 lobbying commissioners again to have a concurrent season
2 reinstated statewide, another testimonial to their complete
3 disregard to the socioeconomic aspects in the tradition of deer
4 hunting. Many hunters today would like to return to the
5 traditional two-week buck season followed by the doe season.

6 That's one thing there I think --- and I don't know
7 personally how strong that position was, and I would like
8 again, I could ask for a hand count in this audience that how
9 many would like to see the seasons back to the two-week buck,
10 followed by the doe season? Thank you?

11 Dr. Rosenberry, head deer staff biologist, is on
12 record since 2005, identifying doe allocation requests are for
13 herd stabilization, not continued reduction. Last year, Dr.
14 Rosenberry requested from commissioners a staggering 86 percent
15 in doe allocation here in management unit 2G. The PGC Board of
16 Commissioners granted only half of Dr. Rosenberry's request at
17 43 percent, which was an additional 10,000 permits for 2G.
18 That itself was still intolerable.

19 This program supports Commissioner Tom Boop's
20 farewell letter identifying deer management as entirely
21 subjective. How you come off of six years of stabilization
22 with a massive correction factor requested of what Dr.
23 Rosenberry went after, to me, I still can't get a
24 substantiating solid answer.

25 This year, wildlife management 2G was split into two

1 units, creating 2H. The new 2G is approximately 70 percent the
2 size of the previous 2G unit. 70 percent of last year's 33,000
3 doe allocations would be 23,100 permits. The doe allocation
4 set for the new smaller 2G unit this year are 28,000. This
5 equates to an additional 4,900 or 20 percent more doe permits
6 in the new 2G when viewed from a total landmass perspective.
7 Once Again, smoke and mirrors deer management ends up
8 increasing doe allocations here in 2G.

9 Recently, USBS elicited from West Virginia, our
10 neighboring state, a similar habitat, a buck to doe ratio
11 guideline chart identifying how many doe to harvest in relation
12 to bucks to achieve a specific increase or decrease in your
13 herd, Exhibit 11. This is a general guideline on the ratio of
14 buck to doe harvest that West Virginia uses.

15 Pennsylvania's doe harvest in 16 to 22 management
16 units this year still falls into the category identified by the
17 West Virginia parameters as rapid reduction of your herd. This
18 circumstance has been this way since 2001. Is this a valid
19 barometer of Pennsylvania deer management? It's a neighboring
20 state and similar habitat. I'm not a biologist, but something
21 that works right next door, you would think would have some
22 relevance here.

23 Harvest numbers remain highly refuted by sportsmen,
24 and today harvest determination is 13 times the number of deer
25 physically checked by the agency. 25,000 deer get checked,

1 336,000 are claimed to be harvested through their estimated
2 formula. Certainly a quantum leap. An independent analysis of
3 harvest numbers identified a relative impossibility of
4 harvesting this many deer in the Commonwealth.

5 In 2012, Executive Director Carol Roe presented
6 results of a survey to the House Game & Fisheries Committee
7 during his 2012 annual report. Some members here may recall
8 it. That survey encompassed questioning the general population
9 of the state regarding deer and deer management, then presented
10 those results to your committee.

11 This study conveniently identified that only 18
12 percent surveyed believed we did not have enough deer. This
13 certainly gave the impression to the committee that current
14 deer management program is accepted and working. The problem
15 is this survey was of the general public, which 92 percent of
16 which do not hunt.

17 And certainly most do not comprehensively understand
18 deer management or particularly the socioeconomic aspects of
19 whitetail deer. How can a game management agency take, accept
20 and present this survey as validating evidence for their deer
21 management program? One of the deer staff biologists recently
22 authored an article titled Enough in the August edition of Game
23 News, the official publication of the agency, which is Exhibit
24 13, hunters are ridiculed and demeaned and compared to spoiled
25 children.

1 Sportsmen of this state do not deserve this
2 disrespect. Is this article not an indicator of an underlying
3 attitude from this deer staff towards hunters and our
4 tradition? Legislators, this is another mus-read.

5 Lastly, to further identify hunters and social
6 aspects are not part of the PGC deer management criteria read
7 Dr. Rosenberry's 2013 antler allocation supporting information
8 link on the GPC website, and that's Exhibit 14. It identifies
9 eight steps to determine allocation. The very first step is
10 titled, do people want fewer deer? And again, the response of
11 management general public survey is the barometer of whether we
12 need more deer.

13 Additionally, all eight steps make no mention of
14 hunting for economics when determining doe allocation. This
15 aspect again identifies this agency's incredible shift away
16 from their Title 34 mandate and the license-buying customer.
17 Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you, Randy. There was a lot
19 of information there. There's a lot of exhibits here.

20 MR. SANTUCCI: Yes. Don't get a lot of
21 opportunities.

22 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Questions from the members?
23 Chairman Haluska?

24 CHAIRMAN HALUSKA: Randy, I just want to speak to
25 one aspect. Obviously the 1.7 million acres, am I correct,

1 close to 1.7 ---?

2 MR. SANTUCCI: Of what? Game lands?

3 CHAIRMAN HALUSKA: Yes.

4 MR. SANTUCCI: 1.5.

5 CHAIRMAN HALUSKA: 1.5 million acres of game lands.

6 The Game Commission does have control of that. They can manage
7 that however they want. The 2.1 million acres the DCNR
8 controls, obviously the Game Commission can't tell them what to
9 do with their land.

10 The DCNR basically is not in the game management,
11 they're into timber harvesting. They're into a lot of other
12 things, the trail systems and everything else that they have.
13 You have to remember, we have 12 million people in the state,
14 and less than a million hunters. That's less than 10 percent.

15 The other 90 some percent of those lands that DCNR
16 manages, so it's really tough to say the 10 percent can tell
17 the 90 percent, hey, we're going to do this with the land that
18 you own. So we have to be really careful there when we try to
19 dictate to DCNR what they do on their property, because
20 everybody owns that land, not just the 10 percent that the Game
21 Commission controls.

22 But I understand the Game Commission can manage
23 their land, but when you mix the state forests, the state parks
24 and all the private land like we heard tonight, you know, they
25 manage their property, they own their property, and it all

1 intermixes. So it makes the job even tougher for the Game
2 Commission. If there were boundaries and fences in the game
3 lands they could do an excellent job, but obviously, everything
4 transfers back and forth, so ---. And it's a little tougher
5 job working with DCNR when they have other objectives other
6 than just managing for wildlife.

7 MR. SANTUCCI: Yeah. I respectfully represent --- I
8 understand that. And the part of that I have a problem with is
9 the economic, socioeconomic aspects that have been identified.
10 Again, I think if we look at what was driving the economies of
11 our small rural towns up here. How many here think it's bird
12 watchers, and how many here think it's deer? That's something
13 I think we need to identify.

14 Now, granted there's a certain responsibility there
15 to all aspects, as you said, to the public. But when we're
16 talking about indicators in the forest trillium, and I've heard
17 that today, a flower. Very few people care when they walk in
18 the woods that they're going to find that flower, or find the
19 specific indicator that is a specific benchmark, if you will,
20 of how much deer pressure there is there.

21 This social aspect of this thing I think is where
22 we're missing the boat with deer management. When all eight of
23 your criteria to determine doe allocations have no social, no
24 hunting aspects, no --- I think it's been identified here today
25 very clearly that forestry initiatives, everything is what is

1 driving the bus almost over.

2 CHAIRMAN HALUSKA: But I think if you did a little
3 bit of research, you'd really be surprised how many bird
4 watchers there are in the state. I'm serious. I mean, in the
5 southern Alleghenies, we've done programs to find out why
6 people were coming in. I was shocked that there was that many
7 people that actually bird watched. That's just one aspect
8 other than deer hunting.

9 MR. SANTUCCI: It is. I was given permission today
10 by Jack Frapp. Many people here may know Jack Frapp; he runs a
11 bed and breakfast in Austin, in our county here. Jack used to
12 have over 50 or more people, you know, renting his rooms and so
13 forth and so on. And I think the quote that Jack said to me
14 --- this was back at the PC&N program here at the Coudersport
15 High School. If you remember a few years back, guys, it was
16 held at the high school. Jack made the comment, Randy, my next
17 bird watcher to rent a room will be my first.

18 So this gentleman has lost --- his entire business
19 shut down when the hunters walked away. There hasn't been any
20 substantiating other entities to fill those voids. So that's
21 the part of this I think --- and I believe, I'm sensitive --- I
22 hear a lot of representation, I heard it today that the Golden
23 winged Warbler. I just have a difficult time as a sportsman,
24 as a hunter, as an outdoorsman, as a resident of Pennsylvania,
25 having business owners come to me as present of a statewide

1 group and really singing the blues. You know, we've lost 40
2 percent, 50 percent of our business now since this deer
3 management thing's happened. And that's why I try to bring the
4 legislators that the pendulum has swung too far the other way,
5 and that's kind of where ---.

6 CHAIRMAN HALUSKA: Right. And our 117 state parks
7 that we have across the state, obviously DCNR manages those.
8 Those are also economic engines for rural Pennsylvania. I
9 think they can do a better job managing them myself, but
10 there's a lot of things to look at. And I understand the deer
11 populations have really hurt traditional hunting here. And
12 believe me, in Cambria County, there's a lot of people who have
13 camps up here. And they used to come up to hunt. There's more
14 deer at home, there's more deer in southwestern Pennsylvania
15 right now, so they're migrating down there because there's
16 better hunting. And you know, that's part of the problem and I
17 understand that.

18 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you, Chairman Haluska.
19 Representative Maloney?

20 MR. MALONEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you,
21 Randy, for being here. One quick comment I would make with
22 respect to you actually being here is --- you know, hunters
23 across the state like to know that it's hunters and people who
24 understand, people who know what it takes to continue. That's
25 who they like to hear from.

1 And I think, if I'm not mistaken, you're the
2 probably the only guy here today that came on your own nickel.
3 So I appreciate that. I think it speaks volumes.

4 And it's easy to, you know, speak for the check
5 writer. So to me, it's the sportsmen that are being heard here
6 today. By your testimony, some of the things that I've known
7 about were in this report, some of the things that you touched
8 on.

9 I do have a question with respect to the independent
10 analysis of harvest numbers identifying the relative
11 impossibility of harvesting this many deer. If you can get me
12 that, I'd like to see that. I think that's important. And I
13 think it goes in line with a lot of things we heard here today.
14 I think many times evidence as to the things that we've known
15 and seen go a long way. So I appreciate it. Give up our time
16 and thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you. Representative Gabler?

18 MR. GABLER: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And
19 thank you for your testimony. I got to say, I took great
20 interest in the part of your testimony where you were talking
21 about the FSC certification. And I got to say, that in
22 conversations that I've had, many times --- I've looked at this
23 certification with a bit of skepticism, because it does, as you
24 suggested in your testimony, it does seem as though we are some
25 kind of certifying something that is difficult to view what

1 value added there is. And I just was wondering if you could go
2 in a little bit more in depth to that, because it does speak
3 directly to kind of how --- you know, how we have disagreements
4 over the management of some certain public lands.

5 MR. SANTUCCI: Forest certification is as you're
6 saying is very limited to the scope. The forest certification
7 program is only eight to ten years old here in the states, and
8 we're stamping timber right now FSC, and it is marketing as,
9 quote, unquote, a higher price because it's from a sustainable
10 forest. You know, this timber is obviously 100 years old,
11 whatever it may be. It was long before certification was even
12 thought of.

13 My camp is up --- and the things that hit me
14 personally, I'm up in the 2F area. Back in '85, if you
15 remember the tornadoes going through. And I seen a lot of
16 areas with a half a mile wide swaths, just right to the ground.
17 Then of course timbering companies came in and salvaged what
18 they could. Now in the next 20 years from '85, '95, you know,
19 maybe even 15 and 18 years, supposedly we have all of these ---
20 too many deer.

21 That's been all reestablished. It's all early
22 succession timber. It's all coming back, some of the pole
23 stage timber. So back when we, quote, unquote, had this
24 devastating, damaging amount of deer, these areas bounced back.

25 So certification I think is --- again, beauty is in

1 the eye of the beholder. Under the certification to be
2 achieved for the seafood industry, it can be --- and again, I
3 think it's in my person opinion, it is a green aspect. We hear
4 a lot of green today.

5 I think we have to be careful on that aspect right
6 now with our forests. Because like I said, what's happened in
7 California, if we're not careful that we make sure that the
8 indicators that are in here are not indicators --- or should be
9 indicators that drive our economy, not as much whether a low
10 percentage of people care to see trillium. I'd like know in
11 this room how many people know what trillium even is.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I do.

13 MR. SANTUCCI: Do you really?

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes, I've looked 37 years.

15 And I'll tell you what. If you look back at the history, 1968,
16 Pennsylvania shot 128,000 deer, second to Texas. How many deer
17 did we kill last year?

18 MR. SANTUCCI: How many ---?

19 MR. GABLER: Let me ask you a question about that
20 ---.

21 MR. SANTUCCI: I can answer that question though.
22 And when you talk about harvest numbers and subjectability, in
23 1986 and our Game Commission representatives can attest to
24 this, we changed our philosophy, our management --- harvest
25 philosophy of how we determine harvest.

1 We used to come out --- in 1985, we harvested
2 146,000 deer. That was the accepted terminology back then.
3 That was changed in 1986. It jumped 157 percent. Just with
4 the change in the methodology of determining harvest.

5 So there is certainly a lot of room for talk in
6 regards to harvest numbers and accuracies thereof because our
7 harvest rates of our sportsmen is only 35 percent. I
8 continually hear from --- and again, hen the rubber hits the
9 road, there have been surveys done in magazines how many
10 sportsmen believe that these harvest numbers are reasonable or
11 accurate, it's come back as high as 86 percent do not believe
12 them. So I think harvest numbers in themselves are very, very
13 difficult to pull a full amount as the accurate barometer of
14 where we stand with deer management. Either way right now,
15 until we get a better system on harvest determination.

16 MR. GABLER: I'll just conclude by saying that I
17 think that it's very illuminating to have this conversation. I
18 think that certainly I very much appreciate it and I'm very
19 much a supporter of the timber industry and the economic impact
20 that has certainly across this whole region. But I think that
21 there's a very strong argument here that getting a
22 certification for the sake of a certification is questionable
23 in value. And especially when you see --- as your Exhibit 6A
24 mentions, one of the reasons to justify this certification was
25 to talk about the morale of DCNR staff. I got to say, that's a

1 questionable barometer. We need to be looking at the much
2 harder facts besides the morale of a group of staff.

3 And so I think your point is well made. And these
4 are just sort of things that we can take back, and you know, it
5 seems I guess just overall that having sustainable forest is
6 --- I don't think there's anyone in this room that will
7 disagree with that. But it's a subjective set of criteria
8 pulled out of the air so that we can put a stamp on a piece of
9 lumber. It's questionable, and I think it's something that
10 needs to be looked at a lot harder. I appreciate that.

11 MR. SANTUCCI: Absolutely and I just wanted to ---
12 you know, we're not Neanderthals, you know, Unified Sportsmen
13 and the sportsmen here that want to see more deer. I heard
14 today some reference to well, you guys used to see 50 to 100
15 deer, you just have to adapt. Well, I'd be happy if I saw 25
16 deer opening da y. This is the point.

17 This pendulum has swung from --- we keep hearing
18 that hunters don't go far enough in the woods, you want to see
19 100 deer. We're so far from that now that this is why the
20 hunter declined, the youth hunter interest. There's a letter
21 in there from a teacher from up at Williamsport High School.
22 And he sees that his students right now --- we're not going to
23 get our youth out there. I don't care how many seasons we
24 have. Until we get game in the woods, you're not going to get
25 kids back out there to compete against the technologies and so

1 forth and so on. Thank you. I appreciate the chance to
2 testify to ---.

3 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you. Representative Kula?

4 MS. KULA: Thank you. Thank you, Randy. And I
5 thank you for bringing up the DMAP legislation and I have
6 legislation coming our next week for co-sponsorship to go back
7 to the three-day doe season. I'm hoping with the two that
8 we'll get people excited about first days again, to get them
9 out there, to you know, maybe bring in the kids. I hope that
10 will work. You didn't talk about antler restrictions. I
11 didn't hear that.

12 MR. SANTUCCI: Well, you know, antler restrictions
13 again I think has been kind of 60/40, depending on the
14 neighborhood you go to. I personally don't prefer them only
15 because I know some guys have limited time to hunt.

16 If a hunter --- and I've always felt this. If a
17 hunter is satisfied, if what makes his hunting experience
18 fulfilled is harvesting a four-point buck, then God bless him.
19 I mean --- I brought this up to Gary Alt back when he was doing
20 the statewide tour. And I asked Gary, and I said, Gary, what
21 percentage of hunters do juniors and seniors make up, and he at
22 that time told me about 15 percent. And I wanted to back --- I
23 said, well, can we do this without bringing the juniors and
24 seniors in? Well, the commissioners overrode --- they went for
25 the juniors but didn't go for the seniors.

1 And here we are today --- and I don't know if the
2 committee knows, but the antler restrictions were just voted
3 out of committee and Senate for seniors. So we're taking the
4 antler restrictions off the seniors. You see the systematic
5 movement of going back to where we were. So that's my point.

6 Every aspect --- and again, two-week season,
7 three-day season. If we had a --- the biggest problem is doe
8 permanent allocation. We could stay with the two-week season
9 if we made the adjustment to allow the situation to be what it
10 is. But as long as they're going to hold the line or minimal
11 reduction --- I think this year they dropped 80,000 or 90,000
12 statewide over 800,000 or 900,000, that's still less than ten
13 percent. You have a situation to where unless you adjust those
14 allocations down, you have to chop the season.

15 But if you want to allow the opportunity of two
16 weeks, then we got to take a hard look at where we went from
17 three days --- and as I mentioned in my testimony, we went from
18 three days to 12 days. 400 percent increase plus two
19 Saturdays.

20 So the intent here was to drastically reduce the
21 deer herd. If you look at the harvest in the following two
22 years, they went up maybe around 200,000. I know around
23 500,000 in '02, '03. So they accomplished this goal in a
24 couple of years.

25 But after that point, we're all sitting around

1 scratching our heads, when is this going to end. Am I right
2 guys? So we're all sitting around here going okay, you did
3 what you wanted to do, when are you going to give us a break.
4 And it's just been --- held the line since then.

5 And antler regulations, there are a lot of issues
6 there. I presented one recently with the CWD thing, which has
7 --- we used to harvest a lot of our buck, almost 80 percent
8 year and a half. CWD has been identified minimally detected in
9 deer a year and a half or younger. So we had to have a
10 built-in inoculation in this state, when we were harvesting a
11 high percentage of young deer.

12 And going to an antler regulation thing, we've
13 allowed deer to get older, which does cause a potential
14 transmission of the CWD prions down the road, another year,
15 another two years. We've identified in our disease management
16 plan at the Game Commission that when we have a disease
17 management area, the executive director is allowed to rescind
18 antler regulation. What's that say? It's obviously beneficial
19 to CWD. We'll harvest more deer to be able to get those deer
20 out of the --- so again, antler regulations, I don't think are
21 the big issue here. That was a social thing, in my opinion,
22 too. I think it hurt a lot of hunters that were happy that ---
23 you know, one harvest whatever.

24 And I'll be honest with you. I wait for big deer.
25 But there's many years I didn't get a deer for a couple years.

1 And it's the last day of the season and I don't have any deer
2 meat, well, I'm not paying for it (phonetic). We lost that.
3 We can't do that anymore.

4 You know, so it is a lot of social restrictions that
5 were brought in with this that I think hurt the hunting as a
6 whole. And antler regs are a slippery slope. I said, that's a
7 50/50, 60/40. I don't know if that's one you can argue about.
8 So thank you for the question.

9 MS. KULA: Thank you, Randy. Thank you, Mr.
10 Chairman.

11 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Randy, thank you. You presented a
12 lot of information and it actually gives us a lot of
13 information for --- I can foresee potential questions to Mr.
14 Roe. So thank you for your testimony.

15 Our next testifier is Mr. Carl roe, the executive
16 director of the Pennsylvania Game Commission. Carl, welcome,
17 and we look forward to your testimony.

18 MR. ROE: Chairman Causer, Chairman Haluska, members
19 of the Game & Fisheries Committee, Senator Hutchinson and
20 representative Gabler, it's good o se you again here tonight.
21 Ultimately, before I get started, I'd like to recognize --- we
22 have our commissioner for this region, Mr. Dave Putnam, is also
23 here.

24 AS always, it's a pleasure to be here before you and
25 discuss the deer management program with the Pennsylvania Game

1 Commission. In 2001, the Pennsylvania Game commission invited
2 a number of stakeholder groups to meet and discuss deer
3 management and come up with a series of goals that should form
4 the basis of our deer program.

5 From that discussion, we developed a program based
6 on five basic goals. The program strives to develop a healthy
7 herd, healthy habitat and an acceptable level of deer/human
8 conflict. In addition to those initial three goals, we have
9 recently added two other goals that provide recreational
10 opportunity for our sportsmen, and improving the information
11 and education of our deer program.

12 The basic element of the deer program is to keep the
13 deer herd in balance with the habitat available to it within
14 the wildlife management unit. In other words, have a
15 sustainable herd based on the conditions of the WMU. We've
16 established specific measures for the first three goals and are
17 confident of the second science on which they are based.

18 The measurement for herd health consists of two
19 factors. The first is disease. Chronic wasting disease, or
20 other diseases present. The second measure is the fawn to doe
21 ratio. We look at the ratio of the harvest to see if there are
22 any changes in that ratio of doe to fawn. A change would
23 indicate less fecundity or increased predation. We would then
24 determine that cause.

25 At present, all the WMUs except two have good herd

1 health. We have concerns in 2A and 5B where CWD has been
2 detected. The population transfer of the deer are increasing
3 in four units, decreasing in one unit, and stable in all of the
4 others.

5 The habitat health issue is measured by using forest
6 inventory samples of the U.S. Forest Service. We determine if
7 there's sufficient regeneration occurring to have a forest
8 replace itself. We measure seedlings and density to see the
9 condition of the forest. It is rated as poor, fair or good. We
10 then look at the browse rate fro deer. We use the sample of
11 one --- a scale of one to five to see what the browse rate is
12 for that WMU. We then look at the browse impact to see if the
13 effect of the browse on the regeneration.

14 There are two WMUs that have good regeneration. The
15 rest have fair regeneration at this time. In all of the WMUs
16 the deer impact on regeneration is decreasing or is stable.
17 And the deer impact --- there are only two WMUs at a deer
18 impact that is too high.

19 The final measure is deer/human conflict. We
20 recently completed a survey of all citizens determined how they
21 feel about deer and the conflict that they have with them. The
22 survey was conducted by an outside company and has sample sizes
23 large enough from each wildlife management unit to have a
24 strong confidence interval.

25 At the statistical level, the survey revealed that

1 54 percent said this deer herd was just about right, 20 percent
2 said it was too high and 18 percent that it was too low, and
3 eight percent said they really didn't know. By wildlife
4 management units, only two of the 22 WMUs had a majority that
5 they said they felt the deer herd was too low.

6 What I've described up to this point is the first
7 portion of this deer management process involving the staff of
8 the Game Commission. What happens after the staff has counted
9 the data is that we provide that information to our Board
10 Commissioners, who are the ones responsible for making
11 decisions regarding which direction they want the deer herd to
12 go. We provide them with the best information available and
13 make informed decisions on whether to allow the deer herd to
14 increase, decrease or stay the same. Based on the number of
15 antlerless licenses, they allocate to each WMU. And we can
16 talk a little bit later about length of season and how that
17 affects allocations also.

18 Since 2005, when herd reduction ended, the Board has
19 only voted to decrease the herd in three metropolitan WMUs.
20 The rest of the state is seeing a herd that is stabilizing or
21 even increasing in some areas. Outside of the metropolitan
22 areas, the number of antlerless licenses the board issues a day
23 is nearly identical to the numbers that were issued in the
24 1990s.

25 In addition to stabilizing the number of antlerless

1 licenses that are available, the Board has also responded to
2 request those who wished to see a separate buck antlerless
3 season. And approximately half the state moved to a split
4 season for the first five days of the regular deer season. We
5 continue to monitor that aspect of program, to see if it is
6 something that allows us to strike a balance of providing sound
7 management while bringing adequate recreational opportunities
8 for our hunters.

9 Moving forward, a major concern for the future of
10 the deer program is discovery of chronic wasting disease in a
11 free-ranging herd. We've established two disease management
12 areas. One is in York and Adams County, and as a result of the
13 positive and captive herd. And the other is in Blair and
14 Bedford County, where we have three positives. And I'll call
15 it a free-ranging herd, not necessarily a wild herd. We didn't
16 even discuss about blending (phonetic) the source of that CWD
17 in that area.

18 The ladder is --- most problematic is that there are
19 over 112 livestock operators that have businesses in Blair and
20 Bedford County. This could pose a difficult situation with the
21 movement of deer from one facility to the other. This year, we
22 will increase surveillance by testing more deer to determine
23 the prevalence of CWD. Our overall goal is to slow down the
24 spread of disease to other parts of the state.

25 Deer management has been a controversial issue for

1 the last 100 years, and I'm sure we'll continue on so for the
2 future. I've read quotes from each step date (phonetic) since
3 the 1920s that there are too many deer and there are too few
4 deer. We recognize that we will not be able to meet everyone's
5 expectation when it comes to deer.

6 Rather, our focus is on developing a plan that is
7 scientifically based. I believe we have done so, as evidenced
8 by the fact that the lawsuits against the Commission have been
9 unsuccessful and the program itself withstood the scrutiny of
10 an audit directed by the Legislative Budget & Finance
11 Committee. In addition to noticing that our program is at the
12 forefront when compared to our neighboring state, the report
13 concluded that the scientific foundation of the PGC management
14 system is sound. And I'll be glad to answer any questions,
15 which I'm sure will be plenty.

16 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you, Carl, for your
17 testimony. I guess I'll start out. You're in an area
18 obviously where there's a lot of sportsmen --- discontent.
19 That's a good word to use. Discontent from sportsmen of the
20 number of deer. Maybe you can talk a little bit more about how
21 the Commission comes to the antlerless allocation numbers. I
22 know, we talk constantly about how it's science-based, but we
23 know it's not all truly science based. So talk about --- if
24 you would, about the antlerless allocation, and even you
25 recently had a commission meeting. So talk about the results

1 of that meeting and what numbers you're putting forward.

2 MR. ROE: You're absolutely right. There is a mix
3 --- I call it a three-legged stool. There's a science leg, a
4 social leg and political leg to deer management. Our staff, my
5 staff, brings the science leg to the table. Myself, senior
6 management and the Board of Commissioners bring the social and
7 political aspects of that.

8 So as you've seen and those of you who attended our
9 deer briefing two weeks ago, as you recall, the commissioners
10 get a decision sheet from each WMU that shows population, shows
11 the fawn to doe ratio, shows browse rate. If you want to pass
12 it out, you can take a look at it. These --- I'll just give
13 the ones.

14 But those of --- over 14 of you attended the
15 meeting. For all of the science that we bring to the table and
16 all of the studies that we've done, that's just part of the
17 question. That's why with just science that came to the table
18 we would still have two-week concurrent seasons and would not
19 be having any discussion about anything else. Because that's
20 what the deer team would like.

21 Clearly, when the commissioners and senior
22 management team says wait a minute, we're hearing these are the
23 things, we need to make some adjustments. And we've made a lot
24 of adjustments over the last four or five years. So that's how
25 that allocation happens.

1 AS you see at the bottom of this sheet when it goes
2 down, there are recommendations over the allocations for a
3 two-week concurrent and what I'm going to call the split
4 season. And the decision point is do you want to increase the
5 herd for whatever reason, decrease the herd for a specific
6 reason, meaning bad regeneration or too much deer impact, or
7 keep the deer herd stable.

8 AS I mentioned in my testimony, since about 2006
9 we've tried to keep the deer herd stable in most of the units.
10 However, when we went to the split season we found that you
11 needed 20 percent or more allocation to keep --- preclude the
12 deer herd from increasing. So in this specific area in 2G,
13 although maybe not in this immediate area, we saw the deer herd
14 increasing.

15 And as testimony was given earlier, we did increase
16 the allocation to stop that increase, not to bring it down to
17 where it was, but to stop that increase. That was the intent.
18 So it's just not a scientific approach, as I've said, between
19 the senior management team and the agency and the commissioners
20 we bring the social aspect, and obviously we hear you.

21 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: I found interesting in your
22 testimony, you talked about, you know your three goals with the
23 program. You know, develop a healthy herd, healthy habitat,
24 acceptable level of deer/human conflicts, and then you added
25 --- since then you've added two additional goals, providing

1 recreational opportunity for sportsmen and improving
2 information and education on the program. From my perspective
3 is that the Game Commission hearing the outcry, hearing what
4 people in this room are saying about deer management?

5 MR. ROE: Clearly we didn't do a very good job with
6 the information education side to begin with. I will say those
7 goals included, with that team that Randy identified, including
8 Unified Sportsmen, including the legislators, including people
9 from industry. And there are about 30 people at that meeting.
10 I wasn't with the agency at the time, but that group of people
11 came up with these goals --- which in fact includes the last
12 two goals --- we did a very poor job early on explaining the
13 long term what we were trying to do with the program.

14 I think we've done better than that over the last
15 four or five years. That outreach, a lot more information.
16 Our whole program is transparent, there's nothing in deer
17 management that you can't find on our website. As we mentioned
18 to you a couple weeks ago, every study, all the statistics, all
19 the results are there. So it's as transparent program.

20 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Well, I have additional questions,
21 but I'm going to move on for now. Representative Kula?

22 MS. KULA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you,
23 Carl, for your testimony. And I'm going to bring this up, and
24 you'll know the reason. Are staff and the Board in serious
25 conflict over the direction of deer management?

1 And the reason I'm asking, just yesterday in the
2 House, we voted on a bill that changed the terms of the
3 commissioners. And I voted against the bill. The reason
4 presented for the bill was that the Commission is unresponsive
5 to legislators and sportsmen. But if there's a big difference
6 in view between the Commission, staff and the Board of
7 Commissioners over doe allocations, exactly who was
8 unresponsive?

9 MR. ROE: Whom was unresponsive to whom? I guess
10 I'm trying to --- I guess the first part, I mean have several
11 issues there. One is I will start by saying any independent
12 agency in any state, by the result of it being independent,
13 builds into a certain adversarial relationship with the
14 legislature and sometimes with the governor's office. By its
15 very independent nature, that's part of the business. And
16 that's why our forefathers, or foremothers if you wish, made it
17 that way so in fact there wouldn't be a political swings in
18 wildlife management that wildlife can't sustain over a period
19 of time.

20 Is there internal conflict? Clearly not. Once the
21 Board of Commissioners makes a decision on the deer management
22 the direction of by WMU. We're going to follow that 100
23 percent. Is the deer team always happy with those decisions?
24 No. Do they have to be happy? No. Their responsibility is to
25 bring the best scientific data to the table.

1 That's what I require of them and I specifically
2 tell them do not superimpose what you think the social and
3 political aspects are. Your job as scientists are to bring the
4 science. Senior management and the commission work on the
5 social and political aspect to it, and that's why you see the
6 changes in decisions.

7 Did the deer team grumble --- did the deer team
8 grumble on Tuesday after the decisions were made? Absolutely.
9 But they got their marching orders at that point in time. But
10 this is where we're going for the next year and that's the
11 decision we're moving out.

12 MS. KULA: That's all I have for right now. Thank
13 you.

14 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Representative Moul?

15 MR. MOUL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you,
16 Carl, for your testimony. I just want to touch on something I
17 heard in Randy's testimony and a response from the audience.
18 What brought us to having concurrent back and doe versus
19 separate seasons? Can you tell us how we got there?

20 MR. ROE: Absolutely. In previous times when you
21 had a three-day doe season, we had swings of harvests reaching
22 our harvest goal from anywhere from 15 percent to 75 percent.
23 If you had a wipeout of two days out of the three-day season
24 for snow or weather, you may only achieve 15 percent of the
25 requirements that you want --- or that we want. And that calls

1 as populations to in fact explode. The two-week season allows
2 a more stable take over time because you have a longer time to
3 take the deer, and you have less variations in the takes in the
4 wildlife management unit.

5 MR. MOUL: I understand that. But I guess I'm
6 showing my age here that I think by having it all together, and
7 some hunters --- I shouldn't --- I won't call them sportsmen.
8 I'll call them hunters at this point. Get the mentality of
9 it's brown it's down, when you can shoot --- just, you know,
10 some of the people. Which takes amount of deer out in too
11 short of a time frame. You know? You see what I'm trying to
12 get at? And is there any chance of going back? Is there any
13 talk about it within the Board, going back to having separate
14 seasons as opposed to keeping them together?

15 MR. ROE: The allocation really drives the take, not
16 the length of the season. In other words, we averaged in the
17 past summer between 3.5 and 4 licenses to take one deer. And
18 that's also inclusive for DMAP, interestingly enough. The
19 rate's about the same. So allocations would drive that they
20 --- not necessarily the length of the season.

21 Now, does the length of the season the impact on
22 that sometimes? We know it does to a certain degree based upon
23 our initial study that we need a 20 percent more allocation in
24 the shorter season to achieve the same goal. The goals are
25 really to increase the deer herd, keep it stable or have it

1 lower in the WMU. So the length of season can change, but we
2 would adjust the allocation based upon the length of the
3 season.

4 MR. MOUL: Okay. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, if I can
5 do something that's a little non-normal. Curiosity speaking,
6 and since we got the audience involved a little while ago --- I
7 know what it is where I'm from. By a show of hands, how many
8 hunters here would like to have Sunday hunting? How many would
9 not want to keep it the way it is? Same as it is down home.
10 50/50. I was curious about that since I'm way out of my
11 territory.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: For small game, yes. Small
13 games, yes. Not deer.

14 MR. MOUL: We have small game in Pennsylvania?

15 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Senator Hutchinson?

16 MR. HUTCHINSON: I had lots of questions, but I'm
17 going to try and focus on this. My contention and my belief
18 always --- and you mentioned about the Game Commission being an
19 independent agency. And that is true. But my feeling is that
20 as an independent agency, their responsibility is to a specific
21 group, and that group are the sportsmen of Pennsylvania.

22 So that being said, I guess my first question is,
23 you referenced it and it was also referenced by an earlier
24 testifier about surveying the people of Pennsylvania. What
25 about a survey of the hunters of Pennsylvania about what they

1 feel about the number of deer out there?

2 MR. ROE: We don't do 100 percent surveys obviously.

3 MR. HUTCHINSON: I'm not saying you could.

4 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: We have to keep order in the room.

5 MR. HUTCHINSON: I'm just curious. You obviously
6 are relying on this 18 percent and that's --- I'd be curious to
7 hear what the numbers are for hunters, and it's only hunters,
8 what they feel about the number of deer in Pennsylvania.

9 MR. ROE: We can provide that to you. As a matter
10 of fact, within that survey, we extracted hunters to see that
11 clearly hunters want more deer than the average person does.
12 But again, it depends upon where you are and what wildlife
13 management unit.

14 If your azaleas are being eaten every year and you
15 better replace them, you're not too happy with deer. If your
16 family's had three car collisions with deer over the last two
17 years, you're not very happy with deer. So more people are
18 impacted beyond just the hunters and there are more
19 stakeholders than just them.

20 We're starting to get letters now recently from
21 farmers who --- I think there was testimony in Franklin last
22 year where a guy lost over 440,000 of his crop to deer. So
23 there are more stakeholders. Although hunters are clearly our
24 most important stakeholders, there are other people who are
25 offended by the deer population, including forestry operations

1 and agriculture as Representative Haluska mentioned earlier.

2 MR. HUTCHINSON: I agree. There are other
3 stakeholders. But still, your primary responsibility is those
4 who are paying to run your agency. One other pet peeve of mine
5 over the years --- and I guess I just never see this happening
6 or at least the movement seems too slow. The accuracy of
7 harvest numbers, has the Commission tried to, I don't know,
8 work --- specifically ask hunters if they got a deer the year
9 before and tried to make these numbers much more accurate than
10 just doing a survey and spreading out?

11 I know other states that they ask that question when
12 you apply for a license. Did you get whatever species in the
13 previous year, and that helps increase accuracy. Some kind of
14 making the report more mandatory or something to make those
15 numbers harder and more applicable numbers about the harvest.

16 MR. ROE: Well, first, I'll say our harvest estimate
17 has been peer reviewed and published in the Journal of Wildlife
18 Management and totally accepted. It was also totally accepted
19 in the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee's report.

20 Either the sample size --- and all of you are
21 familiar with sample size. When you run your election, you get
22 a sample size of 400 or 500 and you say that's 95 percent
23 accurate. Our sample size in every wildlife management unit is
24 much larger than 500 for the harvest. So our confidence
25 interval was very good in each one of those units from a

1 sampling point of view.

2 The second part is, we've also surveyed I think it
3 was around 23,000 or 24,000 hunters for a hunter/trapper survey
4 each year. And those of you who were at the meeting the last
5 two weeks ago, you saw those lines parallel each other. Our
6 estimates were one line. The results from the hunter survey
7 were basically coincidental all the way across.

8 So yes, two different sources were validating those
9 numbers as being accurate. And you know, we will never get 100
10 percent compliance. And if we are already at 95, 96 percent
11 confidence interval, is it worth spending more dollars to get
12 the 98 percent? That's a question we ask ourselves all the
13 time.

14 MR. HUTCHINSON: Finally, this is more comment than
15 question. I do feel that there is another reason to have a
16 separate doe season is to --- is an economic reason. There are
17 many small businesses that see, you know, a bump in excitement,
18 a bump in coming to stay in their hotels or eat lunch at their
19 dinners, all those economic kind of activities, by having a
20 separate doe season. And I think that's something that also
21 should be part of the equation when you're making that decision
22 about future doe seasons. So that's all I have for this point.
23 Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you, Senator.
25 Representative Maloney?

1 MR. MALONEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think I'm
2 going to make some of my questions shorter for time's sake.
3 And I think you're pretty certain where I stand with this.

4 I guess there's a few things that I found
5 interesting. I know in previous testimony you had talked about
6 providing for more impact or more special interest folks. And
7 I do have to compliment --- at least in the verbiage here, we
8 say providing recreational opportunity for our sportsmen.

9 And as Senator Hutchinson already mentioned, that is
10 your mission. That is what you're to be doing. And I think
11 where I believe the rub comes in is the fact that I believe the
12 sportsmen who, by evidence, by the Congressional Sportsmen's
13 Foundation, I shared these facts with you before, that they're
14 alarmed that Pennsylvania's going the other way.

15 I think everybody here knows where my passion is.
16 I've introduced legislation. I want to help and fertilize and
17 plant the seed of our young people. To me, that's where my
18 heart is. I believe we're to be on the same team. And I'd
19 like to make that perfectly clear.

20 I'd like to even tell the audience here today. I
21 drove 250 miles one way to get here today. I come from the
22 southeast.

23 I don't really have a problem with deer where I
24 live, but I said earlier that I do hunt the rest of the state.
25 I don't hunt at home just to dispatch a deer. Yes, I was

1 fortunate enough in my life to shoot some major buck and be in
2 the Pocono record book, and all those blessings.

3 But my heart is with Pennsylvania. And I do believe
4 that the state land has been neglected. I do believe that the
5 things that we have heard here today with testimony are
6 evidences of that.

7 I know when you talked about 100 years. To me, I'd
8 take the one zero off and say that the biggest impact complaint
9 that I've heard in my lifetime is the last ten years. So I see
10 in here, Carl, also about the scientific part of this.

11 And yet we hear that it's difficult. It's not
12 really a science. It has all these circumstances around these
13 that don't allow us to really get the right data.

14 And I think what you're going to hear from me in my
15 comments right now is the fact that I believe it's very
16 frustrating because I think we should be on the same team. And
17 to hear over and over, as I said before, that we have data and
18 that it's scientific, and then we biologists and commissioners
19 and others before that just downright absolutely disagree. And
20 I think when you talked about decisions a question for you
21 would be the deer management team, or the biologist team, where
22 was their training from? Was it in deer management? I don't
23 think so.

24 MR. ROE: Yes, as a matter of fact it was.

25 MR. MALONEY: And where was that?

1 MR. ROE: Penn State, North Carolina State, a couple
2 other places ---.

3 MR. MALONEY: And it was specifically in deer
4 management?

5 MR. ROE: Most of the studies were done on deer
6 management, yes. Either a Master's or a Doctorate
7 dissertation.

8 MR. MALONEY: I don't understand that to be that
9 way, so again ---.

10 MR. ROE: I'll provide their credentials.

11 MR. MALONEY: Okay. We talked about the rate of
12 allocations from a certain amount of years and the different
13 things that I heard, you said that you actually had to increase
14 allocation in a local WMU here. Well, I think you pretty much
15 heard from the local people that they couldn't imagine why that
16 allocation would be increased. I heard you personally say many
17 of times that if a deer lived here, he'd have to bring his own
18 lunch.

19 I think there's parts to me about this that I
20 believe it's our responsibility to manage these forests and
21 these lands with a proper management of the whitetail
22 especially, which we noted 80 to 85 percent of license holders
23 purchased that for the pursuit of a whitetail.

24 So for me, if we don't have food plots designed to
25 bring deer in, if we don't have the senior forest and the young

1 forest and have a combination of true --- what I call true land
2 management, then I think it looks like it's just a crapshoot.

3 And when we talked about decisions, you said that
4 the decisions have their political side, they have their
5 three-legged stool you referred to. We talk about economics
6 all the time. We know I put you on the spot, the money that
7 you gave to the Hawk Mountain Sanctuary. Is that a commission
8 decision, or is that your executive decision?

9 MR. ROE: It's my executive decision. I'd like to
10 remind everyone that we're not the Pennsylvania deer
11 commission. We're the Pennsylvania Game Commission responsible
12 for 465 species. Hawk Mountain is one of the international
13 known sites for raptors. And that's part of our responsibility
14 also.

15 MR. MALONEY: Now, wait a second. I understand.
16 I've heard you say that before. But we've already been over
17 the fact that your number one mission is for the sportsmen.

18 MR. ROE: I would offer you take paragraph 13, but I
19 would offer you might want to read the first 12 paragraphs,
20 under that section of the law.

21 MR. MALONEY: This is my point, sir. You have
22 talked and you have come to the ---.

23 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Representative Maloney --- we can
24 have a civil discussion. Let each one answer. You can
25 continue.

1 MR. MALONEY: I think, Carl, the point is, is that
2 we talk about economics. When we talk about coming to the
3 legislature for more money, that we don't have enough money,
4 and yet we give that type of money to an agency that is not
5 very friendly to hunters, that is the real difficulty. And I
6 think decisions like that belie us. That's my bigger point.

7 That's why I preface my comments the way I did. I
8 don't think that helps the public relations between the
9 sportsmen and the agency. I've known so many of these agents
10 and these personnel individuals from land management to WCOs
11 for decades, literally for decades. I have tremendous
12 relationships with many of them.

13 And we go to a point of what Representative Kula
14 talked about earlier. Many of them disagree with the decisions
15 that are coming down from the top. As a matter of fact, most
16 of them do. Many of them are hunters. I don't know where some
17 of the rhetoric comes from.

18 So to me, my objective here is to understand that
19 the direction of this agency for a sportsman, as we said
20 earlier, should be the number one objective. When we talk
21 about the economic loss --- I'm going to share something with
22 you. Somebody said, I think almost juvenile, that there wasn't
23 any real impact on Pennsylvania from the loss of the sportsman
24 show in Harrisburg. To me, when I heard that, that was an
25 insult.

1 I went to our appropriations finance guru. After
2 the last update on the last quarter of the revenue coming into
3 the state, and he said --- he said to all of us, that it was
4 level. We just got one this week. And I tell you the sales
5 tax is alarmingly low.

6 I asked him after the first meeting, I said, sir,
7 have you calculated the possibility that the loss of the
8 revenue from the sportsman show would impact the state? He
9 said no, we got the rest of them.

10 MR. ROE: If I could try to answer some of those.
11 First of all, I'm totally in agreement with the Eastern Sports
12 Show. They have tremendous economic impact at the state, local
13 and individual level.

14 I know one more lady, that she called up right away,
15 spent about two months making dog biscuits. It sounds crazy.
16 She sells 80 percent of her sales at these sports shows. She
17 had dog biscuits and nowhere to use them.

18 As far as Hawk Mountain is concerned, the executive
19 director and five of the people I know on the staff are big time
20 hunters up there. They're people hunting, they understand
21 also. But their mission is a little bit different.

22 Let me kind of keep a perspective on what
23 allocations really are. Let's say we put 16,000 additional
24 allocations in 2G. Sounds like a lot; right? Right, 16,000
25 more?

1 Since we've used more deer, more allocations to get
2 one deer, that means 4,000 deer would be killed. 2G is over
3 4,000 square miles. That's one deer per square mile of that
4 16,000 allocation to achieve.

5 MR. MALONEY: Hold on. Can I just understand
6 something, Carl, just if I could, just so you don't --- because
7 I don't want to hear too far and I forget about it, if that's
8 okay. Chairman, is that all right? I think what I had trouble
9 understanding with that calculation is we don't know that.
10 It's an assumption.

11 MR. ROE: No. We know for a fact that it takes four
12 --- there's not quite that many deer there. It's what the
13 allocation will allow you to take. And we know that's
14 approximately 16,000 allocation will result in 4,000 deer being
15 taken. It takes four antlerless tags to harvest one deer.

16 MR. MALONEY: Okay. All right. So does that mean
17 --- Carl, does that mean that if you were to increase the
18 allocation to 20,000, we'd get that many more deer kills?

19 MR. ROE: You would get more --- you would probably
20 get one more thousand deer taken, yes.

21 MR. MALONEY: So no matter what the allocation is,
22 the percentage is going to come out to more dead deer?

23 MR. ROE: Of course. If you increase the allocation
24 ---.

25 MR. MALONEY: Regardless of what we know for the

1 population of deer?

2 MR. ROE: I'm not sure where you're going. We base
3 the allocation on whether there's an increase in the deer herd,
4 keep the herd stable, or decrease the deer herd, as I passed
5 that sheer that went around by. That's the decision that the
6 commissioners make. They use the allocation to achieve that
7 goal, one of those three goals, increase, decrease or stay the
8 same.

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: There's not enough deer ---.

10 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: We're not going to get to public
11 comment very soon. Do you have any additional?

12 MR. MALONEY: No, I'm done.

13 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Representative Gabler, you're
14 next. Representative Gabler, do you have questions?

15 MR. GABLER: Thanks. Just to follow up on that, I
16 guess what the point was in that line of questioning was how do
17 you know where you reach the point of diminishing returns on
18 the allocation? The point is --- if the assumption is if
19 you've got a proper population, and you know that 4,000 ----
20 excuse me, 16,000 tags result in 4,000 ---. At a certain
21 point, if you reach the theoretical limit of that population,
22 you're going to get diminishing returns. You could
23 theoretically put out 100,000 tags and still get perhaps 4,000
24 deer if you're at the point of diminishing returns.

25 MR. ROE: Exactly, that's why we monitor that take

1 every year. If you look on the decision sheet here, it shows
2 that that allocation to take ratio. That's built into the next
3 year's allocation. So that allocation changes.

4 And we're seeing that in some areas, up here in 2G
5 and to a certain degree we seen that move from, several years
6 ago, about 3.8 to about 4.2 now. To me, that's hunter behavior
7 changing. Hunters are consciously maybe not taking deer.

8 So in the future, the allocation would be higher,
9 but the results would still be the same. In other words, if
10 you want to take a thousand deer in the future, and the ratio
11 is one in each five now i an allocation --- right now it's
12 still only 4,000.

13 MR. GABLER: Got it. Now I just wanted to tie in
14 with that. I actually had three short questions, and I know
15 I'm at the end here and I'm keeping everyone from commuting
16 home, so I'm going to keep it very brief. I had a couple of
17 questions.

18 And first I wanted to thank the chairman of the
19 Committee. I am not a member of the Committee, I am from a
20 neighboring district and I know these issues are of utmost
21 importance to my constituents, so the opportunity to be here
22 and ask questions and participate is much appreciated on my
23 part so I want to thank everyone.

24 Two questions first about --- kind of referencing to
25 a previous testifier. Mr. Karger had talked to us a bit about

1 WMUs and he talked to us about early successional habitats. So
2 first I wanted to ask with --- and we can all agree that early
3 successional habitat provides the highest support for higher
4 deer populations. Is the Game Commission doing everything that
5 it can on the game lands, on its public managed lands, to make
6 sure that we're managing those lands to maximize the amount of
7 early successional habitat that's available so that we can
8 maximize the deer that those lands can sustain?

9 MR. ROE: Absolutely. You can see that the number
10 of acres that we've increased over the last four or five years.
11 We hired some summer interns to be able to help us mark timber.
12 We are achieving over 8,000 acres a year now in game lands now
13 to get to the drive in early successional.

14 In addition to that, when we see competing
15 vegetation, we probably have one of the best burn programs in
16 the state. We'll put a torch to it and get the competing
17 vegetation out of the way, because it is more than deer.
18 That's why we've evolved this program from strictly from a
19 regeneration point where we have two decision points on deer
20 impact now. Because at one point --- as we all know, it's not
21 only deer.

22 So if we have a situation where we're not getting
23 regeneration, and if deer impact is not there, we're not going
24 to reduce the herd anymore. There are other causes there. And
25 the individual owner needs to take steps to effect change,

1 whatever programs to get there, whether that be competing
2 vegetation or whatever, daylighting (phonetic) or whatever the
3 case may be to make that regeneration happen. That's why we
4 added the two deer impact --- I will say decision points or
5 statistics in the last two or three years.

6 MR. GABLER: Thank you. And the other thing I
7 wanted to go into was the question about wildlife management
8 units. And Mr. Karger talked about the benefit of moving away
9 from political boundaries, because political boundaries don't
10 really mean anything to a deer obviously.

11 But you know, speaking specifically to 2g, and you
12 mentioned that 2G has been 4,000 square miles, and I believe
13 that was just divided. Do you think that that's enough?
14 Because I know previously I was always kind of skeptical of the
15 idea that the conditions near Johnsonburg would any way
16 resemble the conditions near Williamsport.

17 Are we sure that we're getting something where ---
18 because I mean, we could envision a situation where managing
19 such a large WMU, if the commission's goal is to try to manage
20 a population near Williamsport, so you increase an allocation,
21 and more deer are taken out of the area near Johnsonburg, that
22 I've been told certainly doesn't have any, is there a need for
23 us to look ever further at maybe --- further microtargeting to
24 make sure we're hitting the mark on our management?

25 MR. ROE: The challenge is having a size large

1 enough --- a sample size that you can make a decision on. When
2 we were managing by counties, counties were lumped together
3 into really 26 units rather than the 22 that we have now to get
4 the sample sizes large enough to be able to make decisions. So
5 I think we're about --- and I know habitat changes within miles
6 of each other. So I mean, what scale do you go down to satisfy
7 the person in the tree stand here who is not seeing any deer,
8 and on the other ridge line the guy is killing three deer?

9 MR. GABLER: Well, I will say that I do appreciate
10 the movement toward --- because I think that it seems that the
11 division of 2G was appropriate. I'm hoping to see in the
12 future to see how the data plays out.

13 My last question that I have is just a reference to
14 your own testimony. You had mentioned --- I guess it was
15 toward the bottom of page two, you said outside the
16 metropolitan areas, the number of antlerless licenses that the
17 board issues today is nearly identical to the numbers that were
18 issued in the 1990s.

19 I wanted to ask --- now, the main --- a big, major
20 variation would be the DMAP program; right? The DMAP program
21 is very different from the '90s; is that correct? So would
22 that be --- could you just address how that might affect the
23 take and affect the conditions that the sportsmen are seeing
24 out there?

25 MR. ROE: Absolutely. Like I said, the numbers are

1 pretty much the same. On DMAP this past year --- well, '11/'12
2 season, we took a report of DMAP and ours were 3,933 across the
3 state. Now if you break that out, that's basically irrelevant.

4 Obviously 2D has probably more DMAP than any other
5 WMU because the amount of public land, the DCNR owns most of
6 that public land. And 2G, 1,401 deer were taken in 2G over a
7 --- reported over a 4,000 square mile area. That's one third
8 of deer per square mile. I mean I hate to evaluate that to
9 that kind of a quasi-macro level, but if you're taking DMAP,
10 DMAP is pretty much insignificant in the overall take because
11 we took over 200,000 for the allocation across the state.

12 MR. GABLER: All right. I appreciate the
13 opportunity. I thank you for your testimony and thank you, Mr.
14 Chairman, for the opportunity.

15 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: You know, one question that comes
16 up with DMAP is when we look at the numbers --- look at the
17 total DMAP allocation, if you bring that down to level of
18 public land, DCNR land, and you look at what's actually coming
19 off public land as far as DMAPs. And then we see legislation
20 that could potentially put a moratorium on DMAPs on public
21 land, and you look at the big picture, it does make you wonder
22 --- you said a couple times, insignificant. You know, being
23 that the state land --- the DCNR land is where we're hearing
24 that there are very few deer, and if it is insignificant, why
25 wouldn't we put a moratorium on state land for a certain period

1 of time?

2 MR. ROE: I can't speak --- we don't have DMAP game
3 plans. Clearly, I mean that's none of our business. We're
4 supposed to manage for the maximum sustained yield that we can
5 keep in balance with the habitat on those game lands. So we
6 don't DMAP at all. It becomes as question of what do you want
7 and how do you deal with DCNR and their ability to achieve
8 their mandated mission, which is not unfortunately sometimes
9 wildlife management.

10 I mean, we do a lot of work on DCNR property in an
11 effort to increase carrying capacity in some places. We just
12 don't have the recover group (phonetic) to be able to do it
13 more than we do it already. And we'd love to be able to do it.

14 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: I appreciate your testimony and I
15 want to get to the public comment time. Because there's been a
16 lot of presented here. But I also want to touch on something
17 that Senator Hutchinson had spoke about. And you spoke about
18 the Game commission being an independent agency, and that at
19 times automatically causes some friction with the legislature.

20 But I have to point out that yes, the Game
21 Commission is an independent agency, but when the people of the
22 state are not happy with the independent agency and they're not
23 satisfied, the place they come is the legislature. The
24 legislature is the place to voice their concern with their
25 elected representatives. And I think that's why you're seeing

1 legislation being introduced to put moratoriums on DMAPs, to
2 place the agency under the earth process (phonetic) for
3 regulations, to take a look at potential mergers, to look at
4 antler restrictions.

5 Things are being introduced, and I hope that the
6 message is coming back to the Commission that the elected
7 representatives of the people are hearing from the sportsmen
8 that there's, as Gary said, discontent. And this is where the
9 buck stops. And we are hearing from people and I hope that
10 you're hearing from us.

11 MR. ROE: I guess being that I've been watching it
12 for about ten years, I just see the level of discontent from
13 ten years ago now coming way, way down. Gary, you will
14 remember the hearing that was two and a half hours on enough
15 deer, and I think it was around 2006, something like that. The
16 letters that we get are much less than they were five, six,
17 seven years ago.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You don't respond.

19 MR. ROE: I mean I'm talking about across the state
20 obviously. And then --- we're sensitive to that. I mean, we
21 have continued to make changes to the program to accommodate
22 some of the wishes. I mean that's why we have half the WMUs
23 are in split season, that's why some cases the commisioners
24 have allowed allocations to go down so the deer herd will go up
25 in a couple WMUs. So we're sensitive to it, but our mission is

1 wildlife management for not only the current generation, but
2 our grandchildren. I mean if there's not a forest there, 75
3 years from now there won't be.

4 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: We're hearing constantly that the
5 legislature or the political process should stay out of deer
6 management, should stay out of dealing with these issues. But
7 at the same time, my point is when there's discontent, when the
8 legislature is constantly hearing from people that there is
9 unsatisfactory --- discontent, that it's the duty of the
10 legislature to get involved.

11 MR. ROE: I would disagree with that.

12 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: I appreciate your testimony and I
13 look forward to the public comments period, so thank you. Now,
14 we had a sign in sheet and I have a list of people who have
15 signed up when they first came in the door to offer a brief
16 public comment. And I know that some people have laughed at me
17 when I said it was brief, but I am interested and I know the
18 Committee is interested in what you folks have to say.

19 I would ask you to please try to keep it brief.
20 Please refrain from any stories that you might have. We're
21 interested in real information, and we certainly welcome you
22 folks coming up and offering some real information and your
23 perspective.

24 The first person on the list is Ron Cramer. And if
25 you would step up to the table here for microphone purposes,

1 use the microphone on the table. Please identify yourself,
2 where you live, and if you have any affiliations with any
3 organizations, that would be helpful.

4 MR. CRAMER: Thank you. My name is Ron Cramer from
5 Ogle, Pennsylvania. I'm a member of the United Sportsmen as
6 well as several sportsmen's associations and clubs.

7 My comments --- and as I was sitting here tonight I
8 could've made many more, but my comments are basically I've
9 hunted in Potter County for a little over 30 years, and I
10 remember the days with a lot of deer. And I'm not saying that
11 we need to be able to see the deer that we saw back in the
12 early '80s. But I hunt public land and private land. I'm
13 fortunate enough to have some areas on private land. And I'm
14 not going to dispute the fact that there's a lot of crop damage
15 on private land. Because where I see and target deer is
16 private land.

17 When I go up to 3A, or I go up above Lyman Lake or a
18 lot of the state forest lands, I spent a lot of time walking
19 trails. You know, I'll be dropped off on the top, and I'll
20 walk a trail all the way to the bottom to be picked up. Last
21 year, a bout five and a half days of hunting state land, I saw
22 three deer.

23 But my point is, I have seen the deer herds
24 diminished greatly on public land where you can argue that it's
25 high on private ground. Some areas it may be high, some areas

1 it may not be. It depends on how they manage their private
2 ground, whether they let people hunt or not.

3 Regarding the transparency of the PGC, I'm not going
4 to debate whether or not they're being transparent or not. But
5 what I will say is with talking a lot of hunters that I deal
6 with, the perception is that they do not trust the PGC. And I
7 believe that they need the trust of the sportsmen. And whether
8 or not their information is correct or incorrect is immaterial.
9 But what they do need is they need the trust of the sportsmen.

10 The last point I would like to make, and this would
11 go to, I'm sorry, Representative Haluska, I'm sorry. You
12 mentioned that 90 percent --- there's an additional 90 percent
13 of the people in the state that also own the state forest land.
14 And with all due respect --- you're absolutely right, they have
15 every right to be on that land as much as we do.

16 But please remember, they also have the right to be
17 on the state game lands as well. They are only restricted at
18 certain times of the year when there's hunting. And that is
19 for their safety.

20 And so anybody in the state can go on a state game
21 land as well as a state forest. So to say that they own that
22 land, too, even though they may not necessarily own the state
23 game lands, they have just as much access to it as I do. Thank
24 you.

25 CHAIRMAN HALUSKA: I just want to make a little

1 comment. Some of you back there were offended by putting a
2 conservation stamp. And when we introduced the conservation
3 stamp, it was so everybody would put money into the state game
4 lands. My comment at that point was we got to be really
5 careful here because if we give them ownership, then we're
6 going to lose that control of the game lands.

7 So the conservation stamp is hanging on my wall at
8 home because we didn't do it, and I think that was one of the
9 reasons. Because once they buy in, they're going to take
10 ownership. And so many people buy in, we could've had
11 problems.

12 So we avoided that by not doing the conservation
13 stamp, because some of the hunters were arguing that these
14 people come on our lands, why don't they help us pay for them.
15 But the trouble is once they invest, then they have more of a
16 say. And obviously, I think the game lands, the way it is, the
17 hunters and Game Commission pretty much control everything that
18 goes on there.

19 MR. CRAMER: Your point is well taken and I don't
20 disagree with that. But my point is they are welcome to use
21 that state game land, you know, pretty much any time they want
22 except for certain seasons, and that is for their safety. So
23 they don't necessarily have to have ownership to be able to use
24 it. And that's kind of my point there. They're welcome to
25 use that land just the same as I do.

1 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you. The next testifier is
2 Phil Wagner.

3 MR. WAGNER: Good evening. My name is Phil Wagner.
4 I'm from Mifflinburg in Union County, part of the 4G. Just to
5 give you a little geographic lesson, we are not north of
6 Interstate 80. That's one reason I wanted to comment, it isn't
7 just north of Interstate 80's problem. Ninety (90) percent of
8 our county lies south of Interstate 80, so we border Interstate
9 80 pretty much.

10 I must also say that Tom Boop, the PGC Commissioner,
11 was planning to come along with me today. We left at two
12 o'clock to get here. He called me at 1:30 and said, Phil, I
13 can't go. I have a legal matter that needs to be attended to,
14 because he's an attorney. So I have to report to him tomorrow.

15 The first thing I want to say is there's only one
16 real thing here that I think the state legislature on the whole
17 should consider. \$1.2 million is the increase in certified
18 timber. The State of Pennsylvania has lost \$285 million in a
19 year's time. If the taxpayers of Pennsylvania find this out,
20 good luck. It's that simple.

21 All the other things that we talked about here
22 tonight are important, but I don't think as important as what
23 that statement says. And it wasn't done by an independent
24 study, it was done by your people. The second thing, I hunted
25 from a cabin in Union County, close to R.B. Winter State Park.

1 Mr. Putnam I'm sure knows where it is. Ever since I was 12,
2 I'm 61.

3 The last eight or nine years, we don't open our
4 cabin anymore for deer season. My father, my grandfather all
5 hunted from that camp, but we don't have the --- we don't see
6 enough deer for anybody to come and hunt anymore.

7 I do hunt from another camp down the road about four
8 miles for deer. In the last four years, I've made 62 drives,
9 either as as driver or a flanker. I've hunted that same area,
10 most of that area, ever since I was 12. I've seen four deer:
11 Three doe and one buck. And we probably average 18 drivers on
12 the drive.

13 Now, the years I'm going to talk about here, I
14 scribbled this down since I walked in the door. The years I'm
15 going to talk about here --- I might miss it by a year or two,
16 but it's a very good rough estimate over the last ten years.

17 I started this thing ten years ago, going to PGC
18 meetings in January primarily and talking to the Board. I
19 probably was there four or five times. Towards the end, one
20 day prior to the meeting starting, there were several people
21 from Union County with me. And a gentleman and his son came in
22 and sat down in front of me, and we proceeded to talk. It was
23 Randy Santucci from the Pittsburgh area, and he was mad.

24 The deer had already been destroyed in north central
25 for a large part, and it had just started in the southwest. I

1 could never forget what Randy said. He said, when I leave here
2 today, this management plan will change.

3 And I said, no, it won't. These men sit up there,
4 but it's not going to happen. And he realized I was right.

5 Over the last ten years, I've had three tours of
6 Union County. Back in 2004 I think the first tour of people, I
7 had Gary Alt, ex-Executive director Vernon Ross, Commissioners
8 Shyden (phonetic), Boop, Moore, Isabella, melody Zullinger form
9 the Federation at that point in time were there, and we spent
10 150 miles in one day travelling around remote locations, mostly
11 on DCNR state forest land.

12 It wasn't a planned trip. I had figured where I was
13 going but hadn't quite looked at previous sites. It was in
14 March after the snow had cleared. There was acorns all over
15 the ground.

16 And Gary Alt sat across from me at a table like this
17 at the Union County Sportsmen's Club in Weikert, southwestern
18 side of Uniontown, and told me two things. First off, he said,
19 I have to go make a phone call, excuse me, my wife is filing
20 divorce papers. He said it was either my job or her.

21 The second thing was, he said, Phil, I don't see
22 that you have a problem with deer here in Union County, and the
23 amount of feed I saw today --- not just acorns, but the amount
24 of grapevine that you have scattered at these different sites
25 --- I didn't know this. He said, if you had a problem with

1 feed, the deer have these grapevines ate down to the ground.

2 Yesterday while I was fishing, I fished the day
3 before in an area, its first run in Union County, and there was
4 a lot of grapevines and I had on a new pair lightweight waders.
5 And when I left yesterday morning, I thought I was going to put
6 my hip boots on before I tear them. I tore my hip boots
7 yesterday on the grapevines.

8 The next thing, in 2006, I did some soil tests on
9 DCNR state land. It was in January, I called a friend of mine,
10 it was Sunday afternoon. I called him and I said let's go to
11 the mountain. I want to get some ground samples.

12 I went to six different sites on state forest land
13 basically within a half mile around 192 east or west, had Penn
14 State do the testing of the soil samples the next day. Had a
15 tour scheduled the following day, Tuesday, with Secretary
16 DiBerardinis of DCNR, two of his assistants and the forestry
17 state agency. I can't think of their names offhand. Marvin
18 Benner (phonetic), maybe. I can't think of the other one. And
19 a couple people from Bald Eagle State Forest.

20 Anyhow, the test results on the six sites came back
21 4.16. That meant the ground was approximately 975 times more
22 acidic than it should be. DCNR found fault and said you didn't
23 take your soil samples accurately. I told them I went down
24 four and a half to five inches to get a soil sample, and they
25 said, well, you have to go eight or nine to get a true sample.

1 So I went about two weeks and I called DiBerardinis'
2 house in Philadelphia and talked to his wife, asked for him, he
3 wasn't available, but he'll call you. Nothing happened. I
4 called again, he's in the tub, I'll have him call you back if
5 you hear anything. I e-mailed him. I wasn't going to take
6 more soil samples without getting a permit --- without getting
7 permission because I had the attitude that my backside was
8 about to be in a sling.

9 They would never let me take more soil samples. I
10 suggested I have the acid test done anywhere they wanted to
11 have it done.

12 Right now, our kill around Harvey Interstate Park, I
13 feel very justified in sitting and saying that we kill less
14 than one doe per square mile. And the buck kill probably isn't
15 any better. In a large area along Route 192, where there's
16 multiple cabins in back off the roads, a lot of them aren't
17 open. But there were two bucks killed this year, a 6-point and
18 an 11-point.

19 DCNR land in union County has hardly any deer left.
20 What deer we have are on private land, and that's because the
21 land's posted and they'll let so many people in. I shot a buck
22 this year on private land, first buck I probably killed in ten
23 years.

24 As to your question, I think a while ago as to
25 non-legal besides bucks that you see. I can truthfully sit

1 here and tell you I don't know when I saw a small buck in Union
2 County, let alone pass one up.

3 People don't go to Harrisburg to the Game Commission
4 meetings anymore, and I'm a perfect example of it. I haven't
5 attended for several years because it's a waste of time and
6 money. You go down there, you have five minutes to talk. It
7 was year ago, when I first started going, you had five minutes
8 to talk, you gave your five-minute speech, nobody said a word
9 to you, thank you, you left.

10 The last time or two I was there, they started to
11 ask questions, and that was fine. No problem. But one time,
12 Commissioner Isabella fell asleep. One other time I was there,
13 it's always play-off, football season, when they have a
14 meeting, so that keeps the crowd down for one thing because
15 some guys won't walk away from the TV set. They want to see
16 the football game. But the bigger reason why they don't come,
17 they don't get anything they ask for, nothing. They don't even
18 get it considered.

19 So that is the reason why I don't go. I don't go
20 anymore. I'm better off e-mailing legislators, talking to
21 legislators, talking to my representative at Union County, Fred
22 Keller. Fred's behind this completely, I think, what he tells
23 me.

24 So something has to be done. Every year that goes
25 by that we don't do something, this gets critical, critical and

1 really dire. Let me tell you folks, it's bad.

2 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you very much. Next is
3 Rocco Camas. I have to stress that we have to keep the
4 comments brief. If everyone's going to take up that much time,
5 and I know rocco, we're not going to get to everybody on the
6 list.

7 MR. CAMAS: My name is Rocco Camas from Bradford. I
8 was born July 4th, 1942, which makes me that young 70 we were
9 talking about, general 80. They always call me the firecracker
10 baby. Well, after listening to the people tonight, I think
11 we've got to light the fuse.

12 This is the third time I've sat before a committee.
13 One was at Pitt, and I think Sam smith was there at Pitt. The
14 other one, you brought the Game commission to Pitt, and now
15 tonight. I don't see much change dealing with the allocations.

16 I got involved years ago and I talked to Jim
17 Zielinski. He had a radio program and he got me to go to a
18 Unified Sportsmen meeting in Milesburg. After being there, I
19 joined --- and that was when Gary alt was going full bore. So
20 myself and Jim Zielinski and a gentleman by the name of Charlie
21 Bogiano (phonetic) sat down and I started a petition. They
22 wrote the narrative, and I was in charge.

23 In the course of the next year, I had 1,500
24 signatures. Well, in the meantime Gary Alt left. So when I
25 went to the meeting, I said well, fellows, he left. Nobody

1 seemed to know, that thing about his wife, maybe it's true.
2 But I always used it as a reference that when Gary Alt finds
3 out two Italian fellows by the name of Bogiano and Camas were
4 on his trail, and Camas' uncle Guido had a cement factory who
5 specialized in shoes, it was time to get out of town.

6 So after that in 2005, the republicans get up and
7 leave now. Ed Rendell is a good friend of mine. Okay. I got
8 a call showing --- and of course I met him when he was the
9 mayor in Philadelphia. And I got a meeting with him and Keith
10 Kennedy, another gentleman that's here, we went to Harrisburg
11 with a gentleman, George Miles (phonetic). And we went with
12 Mr. Grace, Mr. DiBerardinis and the Governor.

13 And the Governor was very unfair and he said to us
14 when we walked in the room, he said, I'm from Philadelphia, I
15 know nothing about hunting. So he said plead your case. So we
16 pled our case.

17 The thing we wanted was the fur report. So he says,
18 you got it. So that next April, some lady came form somewhere
19 --- and she didn't do it right, and you'll read the bottom area
20 where Marvin Benner said she didn't do it right, she just ---
21 the big section of the Allegheny National Forest.

22 Then in '07 --- that's that petition there. There
23 was 210 signatures of emergence in Bradford, elder, and Mount
24 Joy of how the impact of no deer had affected the business.
25 And it's even worse now.

1 We have a camp in Marchburg, Pennsylvania. It's
2 been there since 1927. It's probably the oldest, if not the
3 oldest. We used to get 18 guys, now we get four. I gave that
4 petition there to Senator Scarnati in '08.

5 We had a little discussion, we didn't see eye to
6 eye. But if you see Senator Scarnati tomorrow, Senator, ask
7 him if he still has Rocco's report. We're on a first-name
8 basis. So, okay. Collins Pine, when we went to the one when
9 we brought the Game Commission to Pitt, I got up and said ---
10 and it was a true fact --- Collins Pine whacked the timber from
11 forestry road 176, which comes off 321, all the way to South
12 Penn Hollow, which is West Gordon Street, by the Bradford Water
13 Treatment Plant. They took what they wanted, they laid the
14 rest down. Man or beast cannot go in there now.

15 The next gentleman that stood up was the
16 predecessor, Mr. Buller (phonetic). He said that's a tough act
17 to follow. He said that's just what we did.

18 Now, if you gentlemen want proof, I know the lady
19 that does aerial photographs. I'm more than happy to solicit
20 her to get you pictures to show you what Collins Pine did.

21 The gentleman at Collins Pine, all he said was
22 biodiversity, can't grow habitat. But he never said how much
23 fertilization they did. Never. Nobody.

24 Two buddies of mine lived in Bradford, were loggers.
25 They cut the whole town of what we call songbird, years ago.

1 And they cut over behind the golf course, a national forest.

2 They sprayed it with a helicopter with phosphorous
3 and nitrogen. The forest came back so fast it went right on by
4 the deer. The vegetation was just boom, it just went, they
5 couldn't keep up with it.

6 The other thing, were you people aware that the game
7 wardens patrol forest property, private land in McKean County?
8 Are you familiar with that?

9 Marty, turn that picture over and show them. Mr.
10 Moul, I'll let you see it next.

11 What it is, those are the different things that they
12 tacked onto the three. Now, if a guy would put a tree stand up
13 and damage the tree, you'd have riots. Now, they're patrolling
14 --- I don't know on their time or Game time, but somebody's
15 getting paid double. And I wish the Committee could find that
16 out for me.

17 As far as the doe season, stop the shooting. Give
18 them a rest. Close it three years at least.

19 When my family was young, it was nothing to take the
20 kids out at night to go see a deer. You could drive a hundred
21 miles now and not see anything.

22 Another one of my buddies who has a handicapped son,
23 they were out over here at the Port Allegheny area. They were
24 on a handicapped road. They were down in the woods with this
25 fellow. The game warden came down and he finds them. He never

1 asked to see what --- I don't think he knew what his handicap
2 was.

3 But the young fellow who lives in Washington, it's
4 only a half an arm on his left hand. His father was as Vietnam
5 veteran, he was affected with Agent Orange, and when the kid
6 was born he got a defect. Now, the game warden --- the guy's
7 handicapped, why did you fine him \$200?

8 That's the mentality of the deer --- of the game
9 wardens up here, get the fine, get the money, ask questions
10 later. They don't ask. Okay.

11 The other thing --- and I'm going to finish now ---
12 is the last two years, if you had a doe permit from the McKean
13 County treasury, you could not hunt a doe west of 219 in 2F,
14 but if you had Kinzua quality deer tag, a Water Authority tag,
15 a Seneca Resource tag, Collins Pine tag, you could shoot a
16 deer. It didn't make sense. The guy that bought the tag
17 couldn't use it. But if you had a DMAP, shoot anything you
18 want.

19 So gentlemen, as I said, a good friend of mine said
20 to me one day if there's ever a fight, he wanted to be on my
21 side. I'm ready to fight, and I hope you can help us.

22 One other thing, I just thought of another one.
23 Eight Game commissioners on the committee? Okay. Take four
24 Democrats, four republicans, one independent. The independent
25 has to be an independent for at least 15 years, and he would be

1 the tie breaker. Because the way it stands now, it's all
2 political. You got the environmentalists and all the Audubon
3 society, all the people who kill the deer. You can't have
4 that. I've seen the good, the bad, and the ugly. And it's
5 ugly. Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Mike Frazier?

7 MR. FRAZIER: I'm a beef farmer from Potter county
8 and I've been involved with deer hunting for a while. I guess
9 the reason we're here today is because the economic report came
10 back in November that we're losing \$285 million a year ---.

11 BRIEF INTERRUPTION

12 MR. FRAZIER: And I'm here to tell you that's \$285
13 million out of the pockets of the Pennsylvania citizens doing
14 business in the state. They're not buying any gas, their
15 cabins are ---.

16 BRIEF INTERRUPTION

17 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: If you gentlemen could take this
18 to the back of the room, that would help.

19 MR. FRAZIER: Not going to their camps in the
20 summertime to maintain them, because there's no reason to
21 maintain them if there's no deer to go hunting for in the fall.
22 Those mom and pop grocery stores aren't making money if they
23 don't come up for a week or two. The beer guy ain't making any
24 money because he ain't selling beer because no one has to go up
25 through to the bar anymore. Even the people in Philadelphia

1 that are in the illegal business of selling women ain't coming
2 up no more. Usually couldn't get rid of them.

3 My heart goes out to these people, because as far as
4 money goes we went through government mistakes. I used to have
5 a bird dog training business. I sold pet supplies to get a
6 little bit out of the business. Then the government passed a
7 law or a treaty with Mexico.

8 We went through --- this state, we were going
9 through deer management, because it was small game. We lost
10 our rabbits and our birds and that. I was born and raised in
11 Fayette county and in Fayette County, you're there to be a
12 hunter, as far as your makeup. And everybody owned a Beagle
13 and everybody owned a bird dog, and now there's not hardly any
14 small game left because of this treaty was a major part of our
15 reality.

16 What they made us this year do with our hunting
17 license is to buy Hawk Mountain. That's another slap to the
18 face.

19 Another mistake the government made --- this is just
20 a little history of government screw-ups. They got more roads
21 (phonetic) in this state. I'm a farmer. It's as high mazed
22 (phonetic) thing to get control. It gets on your fences, it
23 knocks your wife off fences. You got a cow running loose on
24 the neighbor's property, causing neighbor wars. And that's
25 another screw-up of a poorly run government.

1 I'm here to tell you that if you can kill all the
2 deer in the whole state, okay, but you can't get rid of any of
3 them older trees, you got to do a soil test --- I'll ask the
4 farmers. I just spent \$1,000 last week on one and a half tons
5 of fertilizer. If you don't fertilize the line stuff with a pH
6 of 5 or 5.5, you're not going to grow any trees.

7 If you go up and take the soil test in a national
8 forest or find an estuary that way up there, that's where all
9 the coal fire, acid rain, it's an area northeast --- northwest
10 district and all of north central.

11 If the tree farmers can't spend money to fertilize
12 it, then why kill all the deer off? They can't spend money,
13 but my line --- which Dr. Sharpter (phonetic) has proven
14 techniques. If you can't lie a forest, the big one you
15 designed, then why kill the deer off? Every other farmer got
16 to pay for fertilizer in the line. Why can't the tree farmers
17 pay for it?

18 And another thing is that the deer that people want
19 to hunt, the reason they have hunting camps is to hunt public
20 land. A lot of people or hunters don't own a farm like me.
21 They got to hunt on public land.

22 And as you bring the deer back on public land, you
23 ain't going to sell gas at the gas station, you're nto going to
24 sell hot dogs at the convenience store, and you ain't going to
25 sell any beer at the beer garden or the beer distributors.

1 That's about what I have to say, because public land is the key
2 to bringing the deer back and get this economy going.

3 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you very much for your
4 testimony. Mr. Keith Kennedy? And if you could please
5 summarize your comments, it would be appreciated.

6 MR. KENNEDY: My name is Keith Kennedy. I live over
7 here in Bradford. And that's my sweetheart. I live in the
8 Allegheny National Forest in McKean County. When I came here
9 tonight, I wasn't sure if I wanted to offer any comments or
10 not. And the first one is, I just want to say how deeply
11 appreciative I am to you people for wanting to listen to the
12 sportsmen because our Game Commission doesn't want to hear it.

13 I know that Mr. Causer asked Mr. Roe if he is
14 seeking input from the hunters; he didn't answer your question.
15 He went on to say what a poor job they had done with their
16 education. And I think honestly it's highly unfair and it's
17 irresponsible on the part of the Game Commission to continue to
18 ignore those of us who purchase our license annually.

19 We look at them to manage our deer herd, and baed on
20 what we as consumers or sportsmen view as viable deer numbers
21 rather than cave in to the pressures of the DCNR, forestry
22 companies, auto insurances, the Allegheny National Forest and
23 those who view deer as detrimental to a healthy forest. They
24 blame everything on the deer.

25 I read an article in a recent Pennsylvania --- what

1 was it, Pennsylvania Outdoor News where somebody was talking
2 about the declining health of the snowshoe rabbits. And
3 someone put it in there that one of the biggest detriments to
4 the success of the snowshoe rabbit today is the deer, because
5 they've eaten all the browse.

6 Now, I'm no rocket scientist, I want you to know
7 that. But as far as I know, coyotes, fox, owls, bobcats,
8 hawks, eat a whole lot more snowshoe hare than rabbits --- than
9 I mean the deer do.

10 But anyway, all these agencies that are involved in
11 providing information for Pennsylvania Game Commission to
12 reduce the deer herd, they had placed their population
13 estimates, they demand more DMAP permits, doe tags, continued
14 decimation of our herd.

15 They claim they have sound scientific evidence
16 demanding the practices all aimed at eliminating deer. Well,
17 as we've heard tonight, there's a lot of what are these
18 scientific practices, and I want to cite one personal
19 experience that I witnessed at the Allegheny National Deer
20 Check Station.

21 This is the first year that they implemented antler
22 restrictions. I was there, and fortunately I killed a very
23 nice buck on Monday, and I took it down Tuesday morning to show
24 off.

25 While I was there, a 12-pound buck that was killed

1 in Warren County near sugar Grove, Pennsylvania was brought in.
2 And coincidentally, two hunters from Cleveland came in with two
3 spiked bucks. I said that the two spiked buck guys, you know,
4 those are illegal now. My advice to them was get in the truck
5 and get out of Pennsylvania before anybody sees you.

6 So anyway, at the end of all this, the season, I
7 went down to see this ranger that I know quite well. And i
8 said, can I see the results of your deer check. He proudly
9 printed it out, and I was sitting there looking at the 14
10 points, 13 points, 12 and so forth. And I said, this 12-poind
11 wasn't killed here at KGBC. And he said, well, I know but it
12 was brought to our check station. And I said, yes, but you
13 represented that it came through KGBC land.

14 Incidentally, where are those two spikes that were
15 brought through? They were not on the list. I said, you know
16 what, you know what this says to me? All this is bogus. You
17 guys write down whatever you want to make yourselves look good,
18 and you'll omit what might not. I said, how can I believe
19 anything that's said here? You omit it. I saw those two spike
20 come through but they're not in your list.

21 So anyway, the money that the Game Commission gets
22 from the oil and timber resources on our state game land has
23 simply become more important to the PGC than what we as hunters
24 and businesspeople who financially support you guys. It is
25 rumored there's a secret escrow account in the amount of a

1 significant amount of money put aside by Shell or somebody at
2 Marcellus Oil interests, which is available to the PGC at its
3 discretion, yet it's not showing on the books as assets. And I
4 just think this is --- it is rumored, but I think it needs
5 investigated.

6 We as hunters need a way to make PGC listen to us.
7 They talk about the deer. We say, where are all these deer?
8 Well, I live in the Allegheny National Forest, and I've gone
9 along with them.

10 I've participated in some of the counts, in which
11 they claim 18 to 27 deer per square mile. I seen these figures
12 that they publish through the AQDC, which again is an agency of
13 five major timber industries. They want to see the deer gone.
14 And I wonder how? Where are all of these deer?

15 Mr. Camas mentioned earlier, we went to see Governor
16 Rendell, who gave us \$25,000 to do two fleers (phonetic). And
17 we designated the areas that we wanted gone over, which
18 coincided with this pellet count that the forestry did. And
19 the fleer showed seven to nine deer per square mile, where the
20 forestry was saying 18, to 27.

21 The forestry told me they doubted the validity of
22 the fleer because they believe that counting deer poop pellets
23 is more accurate to determine deer density than actually seeing
24 them on film. And I find this very interesting.

25 I guess today, I've progressed to the point where i

1 never agreed with having outside governmental interference with
2 the Game Commission, but I guess I've come to believe that
3 perhaps this is the only way to have them hear what we have to
4 say.

5 I have five trail cameras out stretched out over a
6 12-mile area of road on top of the hill where I live. I
7 recently checked one. It had 467 pictures on it. 41 of those
8 pictures were deer. They've been the same doe and the same
9 twin fawns over and over and over again. Fox, coyotes, ravens,
10 rabbits, turkey, but the same three deer. Which I think is
11 pathetic. And that's over a food plot that I even keep.

12 I guess the bottom line is I believe that the
13 Pennsylvania Game Commission is no longer a title. It's become
14 an acronym. It means Greed, Arrogance and Money Ensure
15 Commissioners Offering Management Mandates Ignoring Sportsmen
16 Seeking Input Opportunities Nothing. And that's what we get
17 from them.

18 They talked about our forest. Our forest is in
19 trouble, there's no question about it, but it's not because of
20 deer. Acid rains, aluminum toxicity, beech blight, the
21 hemlock, red rotten cherry. There's all kinds of things that
22 are affecting our forest. The deer aren't doing it.

23 Is that brief enough? Our deer herd is gone. I can
24 tell you this, I did hunt every day, the first day of the buck
25 season and I never saw a deer until Thursday, not one deer. My

1 buddy who was with me saw three.

2 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you very much for your
3 testimony. Mr. Bill Boylan?

4 MR. BOYLAN: First of all, I'd like to thank you,
5 representative Causer. Mr. Gabler, it's nice to see you could
6 make this meeting. And I want to thank all of you for the
7 opportunity to voice our opinions here.

8 Background, my name is Bill Boylan. I'm from
9 Johnsonburg, Pennsylvania. I'm an avid hunter, and even more
10 avid fisherman. I was born and raised in Johnsonburg, and what
11 i would like to say here before you is --- and I will keep it
12 very brief, is --- and I'll kind of extend this to what Mr.
13 Santucci was saying. And by the way, Rocco, it's good to see
14 you again.

15 MR. CAMAS: Thank you.

16 MR. BOYLAN: Back when Rocco was talking about when
17 he joined the Unified Sportsmen, I was a board member of the
18 Unified Sportsmen. And I had a disagreement with the tactics
19 that they used at that time. I never thought that we should
20 pursue court remedies to the problems that we have with our
21 game program. I'm not a member of the Federation, I'm not a
22 member of the Unified.

23 What I will say is that when you look at this
24 situation, there are so many things that come to mind, but I'd
25 like to extend a little bit more, coming from a little bit

1 different perspective. We've talked about the loss of revenue.
2 And you know, I'm not exactly sure on the certification how
3 that works. But I'll say one thing, this relates to something
4 that's really important in the state, and that's jobs.

5 If you look at what we've done to promote the wine
6 industry, the tourist industry, and I guess even the elk
7 industry, when you look at this, what was done with our deer
8 industry is we have just devastated our rural communities
9 throughout this state.

10 The Unified's, I have seen. I tried to put together
11 some numbers, but the empirical data does exist. And I would
12 implore you to --- and if it's an important issue that we show
13 the actual factual data, I would suggest that since this ---
14 somebody said travesty here before me has happened, is that the
15 loss of revenue of the communities throughout the state and
16 loss of jobs as a result of the program management of the PGC
17 would be --- would not start with millions, it may start with a
18 B.

19 But the empirical data does exist out there. I'm
20 financial person in the financial industry. And I know that
21 there are certain aspects and groups in the state that should
22 probably help to sponsor --- we can spend hundreds of thousands
23 of dollars for aerial surveys. And we can spend millions of
24 dollars on an elk center with the great elk experiment that's
25 going on in this state right now.

1 The whole program was designed behind the tourists.
2 The Pennsylvania Wilds was --- I think was that maybe at some
3 point somebody thought that that would replace revenue that was
4 used for generations here to --- in our areas and other areas
5 throughout the state that we have lost, gentlemen and ma'am.

6 And why? We have an unresponsive Game Commission.
7 We know all of the stories we've heard over and over again, all
8 of the rhetoric, everything that goes on. But nothing seems to
9 change. The USDA years ago did a study that said that 15 to 20
10 deer per square mile is an adequate management level. The
11 gentleman from --- the testimony from the forestry gentleman
12 here actually said 10 to 20 was an advisable number. Where are
13 they finding those deer?

14 There are areas here that may be two deer per square
15 mile, four deer per square mile. And we all know that here.
16 But how does that relate to economics and jobs?

17 What have we actually lost in dollars in this area
18 as a result of the continuation of this program? I can tell
19 you one thing: The best testimony of the initial testifiers
20 here that I heard tonight was Randy Santucci. And I can tell
21 you that when I heard and have seen what he's been doing with
22 the Unifields now, I'm going to rejoin the Unifields. I will
23 support them. And I would suggest every other sportsman in
24 this room do the same.

25 The Federation seems to run in lockstep with the

1 Pennsylvania Game Commission and reiterate the same things over
2 and over, but there's no change. How does that relate to
3 economics? What does it do? How --- could we sponsor or
4 somebody sponsor the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and
5 Industry? Chambers of Commerce throughout this state could
6 support the economic study to show that actual dollar impact.
7 Because the data exists. We don't know that, just like we
8 don't know the science and the actual true numbers of the Game
9 Commission with the deer populations.

10 But it is in fact the deer industry, what used to be
11 the deer industry. And as a company in an industry, if you
12 look at this situation of where we are today, I would say if we
13 could hold people accountable and Mr. Roe was the CEO of a
14 company, he would've been fired years ago.

15 If I saw --- in my neck of the woods, there are
16 billboards out there now for the promotion of the hundred years
17 of elk. Why are we spending money on that? We have a pretty
18 good forest industry, a lot of people come to Elk County to see
19 the elk herd. There's also conflicts, as Mr. Roe is well
20 aware.

21 But my point is, the elk and the tourist industry
22 related to the game industry in the state is --- the elk, bird
23 and everything else is just a pimple on the ass of the true
24 industry. That is the fact. Remember Jim Zielinski, Rocco,
25 how we used to have these meetings, and we talked about the

1 deer industry ---?

2 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: If you could summarize.

3 MR. BOYLAN: Sure. That's pretty much my story. I
4 would think that you should focus on it from an economic level
5 and a jobs level and take that to heart. Because the thing
6 that I know that's happening here, and many people related it
7 here, at this meeting is that look at these rural communities
8 and communities throughout the state and how they've been
9 devastated economically by this policy. And I thank you for
10 that opportunity to speak to you tonight.

11 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you very much. Mr. Bill
12 Moretti?

13 MR. MORETTI: I want to thank all you guys for
14 coming out on this also. We really appreciate it. I'm Bill
15 Moretti, Gibsonia, Pennsylvania, which is down in Allegheny
16 County. Okay. I'll get to that later.

17 I hunt a lot on the northern tier. I hunted all my
18 life, love it. Love just being out, have the opportunity to
19 hunt on the big properties where you can go for days and not
20 run into posted property. It's great, you know? I thank
21 property owners for that.

22 Let me start with the DMAPs up in this area. This
23 year, I hunted up here --- I'm an avid archery hunter. Okay?
24 I only hunt the gun season. I try to help my kids with the
25 archery, which we can't hunt it up here no more because it's

1 pretty bad.

2 But this year, gun season I got to carry a gun, and
3 I hunted in an area in Cameron County just right below here;
4 okay? And I was really surprised at what I seen. Nothing, for
5 one, which I can handle that. I'm experienced, I go out ---
6 I'm a trophy hunter. I don't shoot doe. Any point, roll
7 (phonetic), I love the antler restriction. I lived by that for
8 probably since I was a teenager, 17, 16.

9 But anyhow, the DMAPs --- I've been four days up
10 here straight, and I hunt dark. I never see my camp in
11 daylight. It's dark to dark, kind of four days straight. I
12 never seen a deer, okay, in four days. Which I had no problem
13 with that. I'm glad my kids weren't carrying a gun, because
14 they got deer earlier in the year.

15 But anyhow, what really shocked me was I was hunting
16 in part of the DMAP area. Why would there be DMAP tags issued
17 in an area like that is way beyond my belief that it could even
18 happen. I mean, if there's going to be DMAP tags issued, I
19 think that they should be --- study a little bit more of the
20 deer situation in that area. Okay.

21 And another thing that a lot of people may not be
22 aware of, that you guys may not be aware of, is I'm not
23 positive on this, but if you have a DMAP tag, even though the
24 season --- the doe season starts up here in the second week, I
25 believe a DMAP, if you have a tag, that starts the first week.

1 So that's an extra week of DMAP hunting.

2 Moving on --- I want to just give a couple little
3 things here. Okay. I've hunted here since I was old enough to
4 hunt with my dad. My dad showed me pictures. And what it was
5 like back when he grew up, back in the '40s, he shot big bucks
6 year after year after year.

7 The forest back then was very young, you know. And
8 I think it all goes back to we didn't have the technology we
9 had today, that --- the soil once again. We had the young
10 forest. They called it the big herd.

11 I mean, I never seen anything like 50 to 100 deer in
12 a herd. But that's what they called it back then. And there
13 was numerous deer and numerous big bucks that were shot then.
14 So they can be raised with a little more doe out there in a
15 herd. I think a lot of that goes back to your soil testing.

16 Okay. I would like to move on to the 2B area, which
17 is Allegheny County. I live on the borderline of Allegheny and
18 Butler. I live in farm country. We have about a four and a
19 half month deer season there, two months of gun season.

20 I'm a property owner. I own a few properties, which
21 I'm fortunate that I can hunt. But I leave it open just so if
22 I want to go to our neighbor's to hunt that I'm not going to be
23 that bad guy that --- like, you can only hunt your property but
24 still let it come over to ours.

25 So I do welcome it, but I think the season is way

1 too long up in that area. The township I live in, we do not
2 have a red light. We do not have --- there's a couple housing
3 plans, but they're more southbound.

4 I understand you got to control deer in the City of
5 Pittsburgh. We're way off the city, way off the city. Like I
6 said, I'm in farm country.

7 And what I had asked you guys --- and you know, I
8 think they took into consideration at least at the Harrisburg
9 meeting, you know, if it's at all possible, move that line of
10 2B down to possibly the Pennsylvania Turnpike and try to
11 control the deer in the city. My area is a lot of open
12 country, and believe me, us landowners are really getting upset
13 because when you got that last month of gun season --- I'm
14 talking gun. I'm not talking muzzleloader or archery, I'm
15 talking straight gun.

16 It gets a little frustrating to see the people we
17 have hunting in one small area that's open to every hunter
18 statewide. It really pollutes our area, and it's really caused
19 a lot of people to post properties. I would like to see a
20 change and I hope you guys can, you know, discuss that a little
21 further. I'd really appreciate that.

22 If Sunday hunting would go into effect, I think that
23 every property owner down that way would post property. I
24 think that there would be definitely no hunting whatsoever.

25 The deer herd down there, we have a decent deer

1 herd. Two years ago, we had one much better. I'm an avid
2 archery hunter. I work hard in the summer and I play hard in
3 the fall. Again, I get a chance to hunt just about every day.

4 If I can go back to two years ago, where I've seen
5 numerous bucks --- I don't shoot too many; it's hard to find
6 that one that I really want. But go back two years ago,
7 hunting almost every day of the season, I seen --- this sounds
8 like a lot, which if it --- I seen 56 buck.

9 This year I hunted the same properties, the exact
10 same properties, same feed on that was there two years ago with
11 the corn and soybeans. And now some of these I can see for a
12 mile in the field, you know, the same deer. This year I've
13 seen 14 in the same properties.

14 So I just want to let you guys know that it's
15 starting to happen down there too, don't let it get away from
16 there. Okay? That's about all I got to say about that.

17 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you very much. John
18 Temoshenko?

19 MR. TEMOSHENKO: Good evening. I appreciate you
20 guys taking the time. I traveled three and a half hours to get
21 here. A couple weeks ago I traveled four hours to get to
22 Harrisburg to go these gentlemen's --- how you doing, guys?
23 Good to see you. We're all almost on a first name basis.

24 But anyhow, first of all, I want to know ---.

25 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Where are you from, sir?

1 MR. TEMOSHENKO: I'm from Butler county, south
2 Butler County, in Saxonburg. First meeting I went to in
3 Franklin, I believe it was in June. These guys had it on a
4 Monday morning --- I think it was 7:00 in the morning for
5 public comment. Who's going to attend? Why would you do that?
6 So no one comes.

7 The next meeting, Harrisburg. Okay. Sunday
8 afternoon, one o'clock. We have to drive four hours to get
9 there and then drive four hours to get back. Who's going to
10 come?

11 The last meeting they had, the second day of trout
12 season for up here. Most of these guys not only hunt, they
13 like to fish. Do you go to the meeting or do you go fishing
14 with your family? They need to be more hunter friendly to get
15 people there for comment.

16 On a Saturday afternoon, drive in Friday night, get
17 a room, maybe stay the next night, tell them Sunday. No wonder
18 they can't get anyone there let alone they aren't listening to
19 anybody. These doe allocations up here are ridiculous. There
20 was one Commissioner, Schlemmer, he's the president now. I
21 think he's a good guy. He's the one that tried to lower these
22 all over the place, while these guys were all fighting to get
23 them higher.

24 I believe this guy is a real sportsman, and I think
25 that's who you should be talking to from these guys. Because

1 as far as I know, I don't think these guys ever ran anything.
2 I have a business, okay. For 32 years. I know how to make
3 stuff work.

4 This is as business they're running. You're selling
5 doe --- or deer tags, hunting license, and hunting licenses are
6 falling over the years. Well, if this was a normal business,
7 you'd figure out why, because there is no deer and you'd fix
8 that. They care not to.

9 Antler restriction, I like it for the simple reason,
10 pass them little forkies, pass them little spikes up. The kids
11 get to shoot them. We want to get kids more involved in
12 hunting. That's their opportunity.

13 I don't even shoot a spike or a four-pointer or even
14 six-points, being a man, or any deer. I'm happy just seeing
15 them. But that's why I like the antler restrictions. As far
16 as it working, no one is shooting them anymore. There's no one
17 out there.

18 I didn't see a guy the first day of gun season up
19 here last year anywhere. Okay. A buck this big, it was this
20 big last year, so why didn't someone shoot him last year?
21 Before that, he was still an eight-point.

22 Why didn't someone shoot him the year before?
23 There's no one after these deer. And that's why you're getting
24 bigger deer up here. Not because antler restriction, there's
25 no one to kill them anymore. There's no on out there.

1 2G, you got 4,000 square miles, this is last year.
2 They switched it with that age thing going on 6,000 doe tags,
3 which I'd like know in that zone now how many DMAP tags you're
4 going to add onto that 6,000. Because 6,000 here, is it 28,000
5 here now? They don't balance. You know, that's weird, 6,000
6 here in one-third, you got two-thirds here. Something's goofy
7 there.

8 So how are they going to make up for here, because
9 what I read, I believe from Mr. Putnam saying they're going to
10 let the DMAP guys start taking over at least for the tags now.
11 And if that's the case, I don't know what we need him up here
12 for anymore. You're doing his job. Is it true you said that,
13 you're going to start taking over the DMAP tags?

14 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Sir, just speak into the mic.
15 You're offering testimony. We're not asking questions.

16 MR. TEMOSHENKO: Okay. I'd like answers.

17 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: I'm interested in what you have to
18 say.

19 MR. TEMOSHENKO: I've come a long way to get some
20 answers here. So I hope we can get a few.

21 Anyhow, from what I heard from two meetings ago,
22 they were saying, oh, there's at least eight deer per square
23 mile up here. I don't believe that. But let's use eight deer
24 per square mile. They gave up 33,000 doe tags last year.
25 That's 8.25 deer per square mile in tags, that's just doe tags,

1 not counting bucks.

2 Then you got DMAP tags and I added up all --- as
3 close I could in these zones up here, all the DMAP areas, which
4 was 629, I think, square miles and the tags come to 2 -- -- or
5 10.2 deer per square mile. That's 18.4 deer per square mile in
6 those DMPA maps, overwrapped with the regular tags; okay?

7 The deer aren't there. I want to know how you can
8 sell those tags? How can you sell tags for a deer that don't
9 exist? How can you sell 18 tags per square mile, when they're
10 claiming there's less deer there? How can you do that? I
11 don't understand that.

12 I know Wal-Mart can't advertise 100 TVs for sale
13 when they only got 50 there. So there's wrong with that, and I
14 think somebody better look into this and see what's going on
15 here.

16 2B where my buddy just said. I live in southern
17 Butler County, which is open like he said from I believe
18 September 15th for bow until almost February. And you can use
19 a rifle up in this area. And well, I just want to show you
20 their scientific way of managing deer there.

21 There's a hundred doe tags that I bought for me.
22 Okay? A hundred. I can take these and I could've killed a
23 hundred deer last year. Is that management? How do you manage
24 deer when one person can go shoot a hundred deer, plus a buck,
25 101, but I could've got 200. I could've got 300.

1 And there's guys in those areas with nothing better
2 to do. They aren't working, don't have a job, don't care, and
3 they go out and kill 30, 40, 50 deer a year. And then they try
4 to get rid of them.

5 Well, I asked Mr. Roe on a TV broadcast live, I
6 called in and asked him, hey, how is that ethical. And his
7 answer was well, they take them deer for them food banks and
8 they feed them people with it, so it's ethical. I mean what
9 are you going to do when we run out of deer down there? Are we
10 going to give them gift certificates from Wendy's? It's
11 ridiculous. It's not even sportsmanlike.

12 I think down there, if they have a problem with some
13 deer, which is south toward Pittsburgh, not where I'm at, they
14 pretty much wiped them out up there. They want to keep them
15 down toward the city where they need to? Hey, go for it. Open
16 a competitive archery season, whatever. I don't care.

17 But there are all these people coming up to our
18 area, just open farmland, a lot of hunting area there, and
19 wiping them out. There's hardly any deer left up in most areas
20 unless the guys were smart enough to post their land. And
21 that's where you got some deer left.

22 I'm almost done. For these harvest deer numbers,
23 why don't they put a card in your hunting license; okay? You
24 have to send it in or get on the computer to get a receipt, yes
25 or no, I got a doe, yes or no, I got a buck. Okay. You get a

1 receipt from --- if you send them in the mail --- and I been
2 there before. I was put in jail one time for not sending a
3 deer report card in to Emporium. Years ago, true story. When
4 you pay them, they're \$25, because I sent it in.

5 But anyhow, on this computer, you get a receipt off
6 there, yes or no, so they have something to show I sent that
7 card in. If you want to be an idiot and not send it in, then
8 you don't get a license the next year, you're done, you're done
9 for a year. Do it the next year, you're back in. That would
10 help get the numbers of how many deer are killed pretty much
11 perfect. They'd have to. I mean, that should be mandatory.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: How many deer did you see?

13 MR. TEMOSHENKO: How many deer did I see this year?
14 I hunted the first day of buck season in an area where --- oh,
15 gosh, it was near some houses, okay, probably a half a mile
16 down from me, so there's always a lot of deer in this area.
17 And I used to see, oh, heck, 25, 30 deer a day there. I guess
18 it was probably eight years ago, nine years ago.

19 And I seen two deer the first day, they were cute.
20 I was glad I got to see a deer. But I have twins at home that
21 are going to be four next month, if you can believe that. I'm
22 an old guy, but yeah.

23 I want to take them hunting someday. Okay? When
24 they're 12. When they're old enough, smart enough to handle a
25 gun. None of this five, six, seven year old stuff. That's

1 bad. And I want to show them a deer. I want to show them how
2 a deer acts. I want to let them know what wind does. I want
3 to let them know what everything does. Well, how am I going to
4 show them how to hunt now when I can't show them a deer? I
5 can't.

6 So one more thing. They spent how much money on new
7 game lands this year? Millions of dollars, new game lands when
8 our game lands can't hold a deer. So why don't they take that
9 money instead of buying more ground for trees or whatever they
10 do with it, and start putting the money into our game lands
11 already making deer habitable along with their birdies and
12 squirrels and everything else they seem to like, and fix them
13 up first before they buy anything else?

14 Then once you fix them up, and you got them managed
15 correctly, which shouldn't be too hard to do --- they did it
16 for the elk. And there's like, what, eight deer and one elk,
17 then that's okay. That's our elk, we're proud of them. And
18 fix them up first. Then they can concentrate on getting more
19 land.

20 What good's the land we have if we can't hunt on it?
21 Why go out and buy more land ---? You know, you buy a square
22 mile, and what, to put four more deer on it? Who cares?

23 But anyhow, these tags I spent a lot of money on to
24 prove a point. We never use them, haven't shot a doe in ten
25 years. But if any of you would like to take them with you and

1 advertise what a fine job these guys are doing managing their
2 deer --- this is scientific somehow --- but I think it has
3 something to do with dollar bills, other than deer management.

4 If any of you want to take these with you and show
5 them to your people and tell them what's going on, I'll loan
6 them to you, because I need to frame these when I'm done.
7 That's all I have to say.

8 CHAIRMAN CAUSER: I want to thank everyone for
9 coming out tonight, thank all the testifiers, special thanks to
10 all of the members for travelling to Potter county. And we
11 received a lot of very good information tonight and gathering
12 information that the Committee can use in dealing with many of
13 the issues. So this meeting is adjourned.

14 * * * * *

15 MEETING CONCLUDED AT 9:32 P.M.

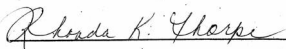
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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify, as the stenographic reporter, that the foregoing proceedings were taken stenographically by me, and thereafter reduced to typewriting by me or under my direction; and that this transcript is a true and accurate record to the best of my ability.


Court Reporter