Intensive management of native ungulates:

Conservation success inside a Pandora’s box

Randy W. DeYoung
Arms of Hertfordshire, England

Arms of Raon aux Bois, France

Arms of Dotternhausen, Germany

Arms of Thierachern, Switzerland

Arms of Friolzheim, Germany

Arms of Bauen, Switzerland

Arms of Albstadt, Germany

Arms of the Earls Bathurst

Arms of Gjennes, Norway

Arms of Hitra, Norway

Arms of Hjartdal, Norway

Arms of Voss, Norway

Logo of the Jerusalem Biblical Zoo
Expansion of the New World
Commerce, Market Hunting = Devastation of Wildlife Resource

40,000 bison pelts in Dodge City, Kansas ready for shipment to the East Coast (1878)
MISSISSIPPI DEER CAMP SCENE IN 1897

"The good old days" spoken of with much yearning by those who remember hunting as it used to be in Mississippi is shown in the above picture. Photo was made at Boyce Lake Hunting Camp near where Lambert, Miss., now stands. Dr. N. Yeates, of Lula, Miss., is the owner of the original picture. He says "there was no Lambert, no Marks or Yellow Dog Railroad. Nothing but virgin forest. There were deer and bear aplenty." A large black bear can be seen hanging behind the fifth man from the left. Of the six deer in the picture it will be noted that only two have spikes or antlers. The other four appear to be does.
KURIGER KILLS BUCK

One of the largest bucks taken during the 1949 deer season was shot by Randolph Kuriger, 3903, Greaves St., Jackson, at McGraw’s Camp near Lake George in Yazoo County. The big buck had 11 points and one had been shot off. He weighed close to 385 pounds and was “rolling in fat.”

Kuriger said this was his third buck, having shot the first one in 1939 and the second one in 1947. The one taken in 1949 was also the largest one of the three.

Kuriger said he had left the camp around 6:30 and had been on his stand about three and a half hours when the big full choke, and the shot was placed in the low came by. The hunter used a 12-gauge lungs of the buck.

Other sections of the delta deer area reported some large bucks, but none as large as the one taken by Kuriger has been reported.

KURIGER and BUCK
• Long, slow recovery
  – Legislation
  – Funding
  – Enforcement
  – Public demand

  – One of the largest, most successful conservation programs ever recorded
Unplanned, Uncoordinated, but Successful
North American Model of Conservation…

Fish and wildlife are reserved for the non-commercial use of individual hunters and anglers. Their populations are to be managed sustainably.

Seven pillars or tenets:

1. Wildlife belongs to the public.

2. Market hunting and commercial hunting are banned.

3. The allocation of wildlife is by law, not power, wealth, or position.

4. Under the law, every man and woman has an equal opportunity to hunt and fish.

5. Wildlife could be killed for food, fur, self defense, or protection of property. Non-frivolous use is not acceptable.

6. Wildlife is an international resource and should be managed as such.

7. Scientific management is the cornerstone to maintain viable populations.
Commerce in Wildlife Still Occurs....
Commerce in Wildlife Still Occurs....
North American Model...
Not Equipped for Overabundance
Texas today....
Texas... Independent Spirit
Proud History of Self-Reliance
(yes, this is the Alamo....)
97% Privately Owned: Major Challenge to Conservation

Public lands, limited hunting opportunity

Private lands, leased by state for bird hunting
Total Estimated Population by County: 2015

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 Vintage Population Estimates
Game-proof Fences

- Prevent ingress and egress of wildlife

- Long history of fencing, property rights due to the livestock industry
Supplemental Feeding, Baiting

• Widely accepted in Texas
  – Feeding wildlife for productivity
  – Hunting over bait

• Not common or illegal in most other US states
Culling, Selective Harvest
Leasing, Fee Hunting, Exotic Wildlife

- Little public hunting opportunity
- Must acquire land (become a landowner) or pay for access
Wildlife = Economic, Recreation Value

• Changes to property tax laws
  • Agricultural land use = different land value for tax purposes
  • Wildlife management can now receive same valuation with approved wildlife management plan

• New land purchases are for wildlife access, not ranching as a business enterprise
Incentive Programs: Engaging Landowners

• Encourage landowner contact with state management agency

• Encourage management to benefit all species of wildlife

• Incentives for participation:
  – Longer hunting seasons
  – Liberal harvest, bag limits
  – Ability to capture, transport, propagate deer
Managed Lands Deer Permit (MLDP)

Harvest quota approved for site, no matter how many hunters (no individual bag limit)

Longer hunting seasons
Acreage Enrolled in MLDP

During 2013:
Sites = 9,386
**Total = 23,598,618 ac**
Mule deer = 6,878,529
White-tailed deer = 16,720,089
Trap, Tag, and Transplant (TTT)

Capture, transport, release wild deer to other sites

During 2013:
68 permits, 2,702 deer authorized
2,069 moved:  M = 152; F = 2,069

Average cost/deer = $523
Total expenditures = $846,896
Deer Management Permit (DMP)

Capture, temporarily confine wild deer for selective breeding purposes

During 2013:
Pens = 385
F = 7,520
M = 385
Captive Breeding

- Large industry
  - Sale of captive stock to other breeders
  - Sale of deer for “restoration” or “improvement” of native populations
  - Sale for harvest: “shooter bucks”
Deer Breeder Permits

During 2014
N = 1,270 facilities
Release Sites: Breeder Deer

During 2014
N = 4,097
Breeder Deer Released

4/30/2013–4/30/2014
N = 28,115
M = 15,553
F = 12,582
Timing of Releases

4/30/2013–4/30/2014
N = 28,115
M = 15,553
F = 12,582

Many are for hunting purposes, shortly after release.
Trap, Transport, Process (TTP)

Capture, euthanize, donate meat
Originally for overabundant, urban deer, now used by large landowners

During 2013
Urban deer = 12
Ranch = 11
Positives

• Wildlife has value, promotes conservation and management

• Huge landowner participation

• Large acreage

• Net benefits to game and non-game species
Negatives

• Privatization of wildlife
  • Weaken “public trust”
  • Further liberalize captive deer management
  • Sale of meat, hides

• Disease concerns
  • Chronic wasting disease

• Decreased hunting opportunity
  • De facto “ownership”
  • Permit programs allow harvest to be monopolized by select few
  • Back to independent “kingdoms”!
Mixed blessing....